

# CityPULSE

a newspaper for the rest of us

www.lansingcitypulse.com

December 11-17, 2013

FREE



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Demolition planned for 85-year-old convent in Moores Park Neighborhood



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Review of "Ghost the Musical," playing through Sunday at the Wharton Center



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Music Street Brewing Co. coming to Michigan Avenue summer 2014



## JIM HARRISON

Michigan's leading literary light at 76, talks to our Bill Castanier see page 23

SPECIAL PULL-OUT  
Holiday Section

# HOME

for the holidays

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT TO  
CityPULSE

- How to ready your home for holiday guests
- Safely deck the halls this season
- Secrets to successful holiday baking & more!

SEE PAGE 11

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# HOLIDAY WISH LIST!

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**SUNDAY DECEMBER 22, 2013 3 PM**

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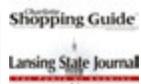
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# Feedback

*Editor's note: Dozens of City Pulse readers took to our website and social media last week to weigh in on our featuring the state Christmas tree as Eyesore of the Week. Most felt we hit the nail on the head, but others think we should take our critical opinions elsewhere. Here's what they had to say.*

## In defense of the tree

I hope the column this week was a joke! Maybe Tim Holmes with his high-paying Hollywood clients can afford to spend 12 hours with 5 guys to decorate a 30-foot tree, but I am grateful that the city of Lansing chose a more economical plan. Most of us view the tree from a distance, and it looks just fine. In fact, it looks great and makes me smile!

— Nancy Kelly, from [lansingcitypulse.com](http://lansingcitypulse.com)

Perfection is over-rated, and un-attainable. I like it.

— Matthew Taylor

## Against the tree

If they wanted to use these blankets of lights...why bother killing a tree to hold them up? Just build some kind of frame... might actually look better and we get to save a tree. Colors are "better" this year but could we use someone NOT colorblind next year and actually HAVE an Xmas tree?

— Barbara LeBouton West

I watched them light the Rockefeller Center tree last night, turned to my husband and said, "THAT'S how you light a tree!!" Am convinced they need to return to hand-strung lights.

— Cindy Stone

They may as well wrap lights around a giant condom. Just sayin'.

— Gene Willacker

The decorating job my 1 year old added to our tree looks better than this and she added the pig from her farm yard animal bath toys to our tree.

— Kenny J. Hatch

Gone is the warm, nostalgic glow of tree lights from days gone by. It's been replaced with the disconcerting glare of LED. So sad.

— Shawn Marie Hardy

I love it more when hand hung lights. Does not take away the look of a Christmas Tree. Using the wrap, lights just disfigures a beauty of the tree.

— Sue Brown

The need to contract the tree decorating out to professionals. That thing is almost as garish as last year's.

— Matthew Rick

## Solutions

Since there seem to be so many all-knowing tree lighting critics around, why don't we open this up for volunteers next year?

— Tom Woodman

If people don't like it — next year have them decorate it.

— Pat Johnson

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

Now you have two ways to sound off:

### 1.) Write a letter to the editor:

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

### 2.) Write a guest column:

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

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

## This week on [lansingcitypulse.com](http://lansingcitypulse.com) ...

**BREAKING RULES TO CHANGE RULES, DEC. 6:** U.S. Sen. Carl Levin, D-Detroit, visited Michigan State University last week to explain how he sided against fellow Democrats over filibuster vote: "This was a temporary victory for Democrats." Speaking at a MSU College of Law lecture, Levin said Senate Democrats unleashed a debate about the means and ends of getting legislation passed.

**THIS WEEK FROM CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE, DEC. 6:** Topics include bad long-term news for Michigan wetlands, the need for more "middle-skilled" workers, an increased need for healthy foods and more.

**READY TO WEAR, DEC. 5:** When it opens in February, the newly renovated Knapp's Building in downtown Lansing will be home to Michigan's first fashion and design incubator. The incubator, called The Runway, opened its application process last week for its designer-in-residence program. A public meet-and-greet event is scheduled for Tuesday at 5:30 p.m.

**NOTES FROM NEIL, DEC. 5:** In this week's column, Neil Rajala recaps his favorite fiction books from 2013, including Jim Harrison's latest collection of novellas, "Brown Dog," and Jonathan Lethem's latest on multiple generations of New York activists.

Check out these stories and more only at [lansingcitypulse.com](http://lansingcitypulse.com)

# CityPULSE

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Miller: Laughable fee for FOIA policy request and why HB 4001 makes sense



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Lansing-area couple's lifelong love of art carried over to their kids, with interesting results



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Movie Review: "Philomena" — Judi Dench in an incredible true story about a mother's love



**COVER ART**

JIM HARRISON by JOE BENGHAUSER

## CITY PULSE ON THE AIR

**THIS WEEK** Architect Craig Borum, Organist Scott Smith, Shawn Dhanak, Get Covered America spokesman, Scott Hagerstrom, director of Americans for Prosperity-Michigan, Holly Wilson of Consumers Mutual Insurance of Michigan and Robin Schneider of the National Patients Rights Association



Editor & Publisher  
Berl Schwartz

7 p.m. Wednesdays

**IMPACT 89FM**

## THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



# Convent coming down

**Some Moores Park residents saddened by St. Casimir's plans to demolish its 85-year-old convent. Also, saving what's left in three LCC houses downtown.**

St. Casimir Parish Community is set to demolish an 85-year-old convent at the church's Moores Park Neighborhood campus. To the disappointment of some neighbors who want to see it preserved, the building is beyond repair, a church official said last week.

Father William Luggar said the convent had slowly fallen into disrepair and now faces plumbing, roofing and foundational problems he estimated would cost \$250,000 to bring up to code.

"It was one of those things we couldn't afford to keep up," Luggar said.

An application for a demolition permit has been filed with the city. Luggar said the church is waiting on the final go-ahead from the city to start demolition. The next use for the parcel is unclear.

However, the news set off a string of disappointed comments on Preservation Lansing's Facebook page, a local nonprofit that focuses on restorative projects throughout the city.

Bonnie Tracy-Faraone, who lives in the Moores Park neighborhood, is a critic of the demolition. In an email, she said the convent stands out positively on Barnes and argued that while the interior may need work, the building itself is far from an eyesore. She also believes the neighborhood wasn't properly notified of the plan.

"I cannot tell for certain what the entire neighborhoods' view is because this kind of came out of nowhere," she said. "There is absolutely nothing wrong with that building from the exterior. In fact, it's the nicest structure on Barnes."

Luggar said the two-story structure housed up to 20 nuns at one point, and it was used as a school until the mid 1970s. After that it was used for a variety of educational programs, by the Knights of Columbus and, most recently, local nonprofits.

Peter Dougherty, outreach coordinator for the Meta Peace Team (formerly Michigan Peace Team), said his organization worked in the convent for about three years before moving at the end of last summer. He said the church was exploring other tenants, particularly within the Diocese of Lansing, to use the building.

"Whatever that plan was didn't work out," he said, adding that his organization and Pax Christi Michigan, another nonprofit organization, were asked to leave. Dougherty cited water leakage as one of the ongoing problems in the building.

who is also the secretary of the Moores Park Neighborhood Organization. "I'm not worried about it."

Molnar said she was speaking individually and not on behalf of the neighborhood group. Chong-Anna Canfora, interim president of the Moores Park Neighborhood Organization, declined to comment.

St. Casimir received parochial status in September 1921 and settled on the present-day adjacent lots on Barnes and Sparrow avenues, according to the church's website. The convent was built in 1928 as the church continued to grow.

## LCC houses on way out

In other demolition news, materials inside three houses owned by Lansing Community College downtown are up for salvage, though not as many as some preservationists hoped.

Last month, Midland-based demolition company Bierlein started removing materials inside the houses at the corner of Capitol Avenue and Saginaw Street to be given to Habitat for Humanity's ReStore project. Some of the larger objects, such as doors and wood paneling, will be given to Habitat for Humanity once demolition starts, LCC spokeswoman Ellen Jones said. She could not say when demolition will begin.

LCC's plans to turn the three properties into a park-like entrance to the downtown campus angered local preservationists who deemed the houses historic. The college bought the properties, which had tenants living there at the time, in May 2012 for \$400,000. The houses, at 617 N. Capitol, 205 W. Saginaw and 211 W. Saginaw, were built in 1888, 1902 and 1898, respectively. The house at 205 W. Saginaw was moved from Townsend Street in 1949 and was partially built by F.N. Arbaugh of downtown Lansing's Arbaugh Department Store.

Gretchen Cochran, president of the Downtown Neighborhood Association, believes more could have been saved from the landfill. Of all the "wonderful historic woodwork from these three big houses, it could fit inside a teeny closet."

Todd Strbik, director of Habitat for Humanity's ReStores in Lansing and Haslett, said the store has received trim, doors, a mantel and "a few odds and ends." The materials are up for sale to the public. Proceeds go toward Habitat for Humanity projects in the community.

Valerie Marvin, president of the Historical Society of Greater Lansing, said her group hopes to preserve at least one of three items of interest in the Arbaugh house: a leaded glass window, a light fixture above the stairs or the newel post at the bottom of the stairs.

For preservationists, ideally, the houses would have been saved. And while Cochran hoped more materials could be salvaged, she hopes the idea of doing so catches on.

"I do give LCC credit that even a tiny (amount) has gone to Habitat for Humanity," she said. "It's a tiny inch of a new beginning of a new way of thinking."

— Andy Balaskovitz



With the filing of an application to demolish this striking building, little time remains to enjoy it before it is razed.

The house was constructed in 1928 as a convent for St. Casimir's Catholic Church. Located in the Moore's Park Neighborhood of Lansing, the building sits immediately south of the church's main campus on Sparrow Avenue.

One imagines what positive influence the residents of this home must have provided as neighbors.

Constructed in the Colonial Revival style, the building features a dominant centered gable and exhibits the typical Georgian- and Adam-style influences found in high-style variants. The brick details are particularly remarkable, from the rusticated quoining at the corners to the authentic jack arches over the main-level windows. Round top windows in the attic dormers are echoed in the unusual front-porch roof.

While he said "we knew it could always happen" that the church would demolish the structure, "We were surprised" to see the church follow through.

In recent weeks, anyone interested has been allowed to salvage interior building materials — such as doors and crown molding — and fixtures for a donation to the church's food pantry. Luggar said the decision to demolish the building was made around Easter.

"I'm assured that what (Luggar) has planned is in the best interest of the community," said parishioner Natalie Molnar,

**Property:** St. Casimir Church convent, 808 W. Barnes Ave., Lansing

**Owner:** St. Casimir Church



Little good can be offered to support the imminent loss of an 85-year-old historic resource. However, it stands at the end of a row of homes sharing a similar setback. Were it located in the middle of this block, its removal would be more sorely felt as an obvious gap in the streetscape. Additionally, the church has made the building

available for salvage, thus reducing the landfill waste while prolonging its life in the transplanted features. The church has requested food bank donations from hopeful scavengers.

— Daniel E. Bollman, AIA

"Eye Candy of the Week" is our look at some of the nicer properties in Lansing. It rotates with Eyesore of the Week. If you have a suggestion, please e-mail [eye@lansingcitypulse.com](mailto:eye@lansingcitypulse.com) or call Andy Balaskovitz at 999-5064.

Roberta Albert, who lives across the street from the convent, moved onto the block with her family in 1957.

"It's a wonderful landmark for the community, but nobody was using it for anything," Albert said, adding that she was unaware of any plans for it. Albert, who is also a member of St. Casimir, recalled playing ping pong in the basement of the convent with nuns when she was about 15 years old.

"I hate to see it torn down. I'd like to see these things preserved," Albert said. "I'm sad to see it go."

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## Every last dime

**Laughable fee for FOIA policy request and why HB 4001 makes sense**

At the bottom of the letterhead for Brown City Community Schools, it claims “excellence in education,” a mindless maxim that hints at the disrespect it shows for the public.

The school district, located in the Thumb area of the state, in September refused to provide a copy of its open records policy to Rebecca Johnson unless she coughed up 30 cents for copying costs.

The district is battling with Johnson, a Michigan State University College of Law student who is part of an effort to compile a database of public school districts and their open records policies as they relate to the student press.

“They wanted to charge me \$42.50 for my first request for information on the district’s rules covering student press activities,” Johnson said. “Then I asked in a follow-up letter for the district’s open-records policy.”

While Brown City’s misguided disdain for anyone trying to find out how it runs

the district is extreme, it’s part of a culture in which any policy that helps taxpayers obtain the information they need to make informed choices — at the ballot box and elsewhere — is viewed with suspicion.

When it comes to transparency, Michigan is among the worst states in the nation, from the lack of information available online, to the obstinate and often-hostile reactions to public-records requests.

The media is making more of an effort to uncover the numbers behind a story. Even if many reporters aren’t all that well trained in investigative technique, it’s a start.

And if a transparency bill ever had a chance in the opaque arena of Michigan government, state Rep. Mike Shirkey’s House Bill 4001 is the one. There’s a good chance the Republican from Clarklake’s bill will get a vote in the House before the end of the year.

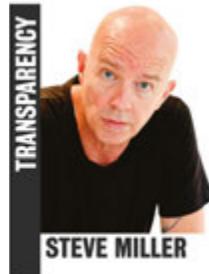
The measure addresses the unconscionable disregard many government bureaucrats have for the public.

Among other things, this treasure of a bill:

- Increases the now-meager \$500 fine for lying to the public about the existence of a record to \$5,000.

- Allows a requester to sue a public body for charging more than \$100 for search, examination, review and other clerical duties.

- Mandates that a public body that refuses to provide records within the speci-



TRANSPARENCY  
STEVE MILLER

See Miller, Page 7

**my 18 MY18-TV! 9 A.M. Every Sunday**

**THIS WEEK: State Legislature**

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**SEN. RICK JONES**  
R-GRAND LEDGE

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# Miller

from page 6

fied deadline reduce the cost of the records by 20 percent each day after the deadline. After five days, the records must be provided at no charge.

- Disallows a public body from charging a fee for copying records during an on-site examination of those records unless the requester used the public body's copying equipment.

“What we're doing here is standardizing some of these processes,” Shirkey told me. “We're also trying to make it clear that you can charge for obtaining records, but it has to be fair and defensible.”

The bill has served the public already by exposing some of the Neanderthal attitudes toward serving the public that are so common among public officials.

In a May hearing for Shirkey's bill, a police official representing the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police said police departments just didn't have time for all the public-records requests, and were sometimes forced to bring in contractors to download videotape from patrol cars.

“FOIA is a very difficult thing for us to handle,” the official said. “It eats up our resources as it is. The simple fact is that it costs money to supply these materials.”

He also complained that among the open-records requests their membership gets are “fishing expeditions from the media to see what's going on.”

This same organization claims on its 2012 tax return that its mission — the mission it asserts in obtaining its tax-free status — is “information dissemination.”

Shirkey says that delay tactics, overcharges and other methods of avoiding compliance with the law are limited to a few and the idea is not to make the job of

government more difficult.

“I have a sincere objective here to be fair to the government and not impose unnecessary burdens,” he said.

Back to Brown City schools. The superintendent who signed the letter charging 30 cents for a copy of the district's FOIA policy is Jerry Steigerwald, who is paid over \$100,000 a year, according to his contract. He makes over twice the median household income in Sanilac County, where the district is located. The least he could have done for an inquisitive college student is break off a quarter and a nickel to let her know that government in Michigan isn't a secret cabal bent on squeezing every dime out of the public.

Or maybe it is.

*This is part of a series of columns on government transparency by Steve Miller. This project is cosponsored by City Pulse and MLive.*

## CRIMINAL DEFENSE



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## PUBLIC NOTICES



Ingham County seeks bids from MDOT prequalified & experienced engineering firms for the purpose of entering into a contract to provide professional engineering services for the 2015 Bridge Preventative Maintenance Project. Bids due 12/20, 11AM. Info: <http://pu.ingham.org>, under Current Bids link, #7-14.

**B/14/051 CENTRAL SEWER INTERCEPTOR REHABILITATION** as per the specifications provided by the City of Lansing. The City of Lansing will accept sealed bids at the FINANCE DEPARTMENT, PURCHASING OFFICE, 8TH FLOOR CITY HALL, 124 W. MICHIGAN AVENUE, LANSING, MICHIGAN 48933 until 3:00 PM local time in effect on JAN. 23, 2014 at which time bids will be publicly opened and read. **Complete specifications and forms required to submit bids are available by calling Stephanie Robinson at (517) 483-4128, or for content and purpose of this bid contact Alec Malvetis (517) 483-4459 or [www.mitn.info](http://www.mitn.info)** The City of Lansing encourages bids from all vendors including MBE/WBE vendors and Lansing-based businesses.

### CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN NOTICE OF POSTING OF TOWNSHIP BOARD MINUTES

On December 5, 2013, the following minutes of the proceedings of the Meridian Township Board were sent for posting in the following locations:

Meridian Township Municipal Building, 5151 Marsh Road  
Meridian Township Service Center, 2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court  
Haslett Branch Library, 1590 Franklin Street  
Harris Nature Center, 3998 Van Atta Road  
Snell Towar Recreation Center, 6146 Porter Ave.  
and the Township Web Site [www.meridian.mi.us](http://www.meridian.mi.us).

**November 19, 2013 Regular Meeting**

ELIZABETH LEGOFF  
SUPERVISOR

BRETT DREYFUS  
TOWNSHIP CLERK

## PUBLIC NOTICES

**B/14/052 SANTIARY SEWER RIVER SIPHON REPLACEMENT** as per the specifications provided by the City of Lansing. The City of Lansing will accept sealed bids at the FINANCE DEPARTMENT, PURCHASING OFFICE, 8TH FLOOR CITY HALL, 124 W. MICHIGAN AVENUE, LANSING, MICHIGAN 48933 until 3:00 PM local time in effect on JAN. 23, 2014 at which time bids will be publicly opened and read. **Complete specifications and forms required to submit bids are available by calling Stephanie Robinson at (517) 483-4128, or for content and purpose of this bid contact Alec Malvetis (517) 483-4459 or [www.mitn.info](http://www.mitn.info)** The City of Lansing encourages bids from all vendors including MBE/WBE vendors and Lansing-based businesses.

The Ingham County Land Bank Fast Track Authority is accepting proposals for the **Removal and Disposal of Hazardous Materials**, of residential structures located at sites listed in the **Bid Packet# HM-12-2013**, which can be obtained at the Ingham County Land Bank office located at the Neighborhood Empowerment Center, 600 W Maple St, Lansing, MI 48906 or at the website: [www.inghamlandbank.org](http://www.inghamlandbank.org). Proposals will be due at the Land Bank office by 1pm on December 27, 2013. The Bid Opening will be December 27, 2013 at 1pm. The Ingham County Land Bank is an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer. Women- and Minority-Owned Businesses are encouraged to apply.



The Ingham County Land Bank Fast Track Authority is accepting proposals for the **Demolition/Deconstruction & Debris Removal**, of residential structures located at sites listed in the **Bid Packet# DEMO-12-2013**, which can be obtained at the Ingham County Land Bank office located at the Neighborhood Empowerment Center, 600 W Maple St, Lansing, MI 48906 or at the website: [www.inghamlandbank.org](http://www.inghamlandbank.org). Proposals will be due at the Land Bank office by 2pm on December 27, 2013. The Bid Opening will be December 27, 2013 at 2pm. The Ingham County Land Bank is an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer. Women- and Minority-Owned Businesses are encouraged to apply.



### NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING EAST LANSING CITY COUNCIL

Notice is hereby given of the following public hearing to be held by the East Lansing City Council on Tuesday, January 7, 2014 at 7:00 p.m., Council Chambers, 101 Linden Street, to consider **Ordinance No. 1320**; an Ordinance to amend Article III - Property Maintenance Code - of Chapter 6 - Building and Building Regulations - of the Code of the City of East Lansing by making further local changes to the International Property Maintenance Code, 2006 Edition, known as the Property Maintenance Code of the City of East Lansing, as Adopted at Section 6-171 and amended by Section 6-175 by amending Sections 303.1 and 303.2 to prohibit front and side yard pools and to conform the regulation of swimming pools to the Michigan Residential Code.

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 1-800-649-3777.

Marie E. Wicks  
City Clerk

### NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS EAST LANSING ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

**Notice is hereby given** of the following public hearings to be held by the East Lansing Zoning Board of Appeals on **Wednesday, January 8, 2014**, beginning at 7:00 p.m., in the 54 B District Court, Courtroom 1, 101 Linden Street, East Lansing:

1. A public hearing will be held to consider a variance request from Brian Hagan for the property located at 603 Evergreen Avenue, in the R-2, Medium Density Single-Family Residential District from the following requirement of Chapter 50 - Zoning Code of the City of East Lansing:
  - a. *Article VIII. Section 50-816(4), to permit an addition to the existing driveway that would be setback zero (0) feet from the side yard property line, less than the required three (3) feet off the south property line (side yard).*

The applicant is requesting the variance to add a 54 square foot addition to the existing driveway.

2. A public hearing will be held to consider a variance request from Vince and Nicole Nystrom for the property located at 627 Ardson Road, in the R-2, Medium Density Single-Family Residential District from the following requirements of Chapter 50 - Zoning Code of the City of East Lansing:
  - a. *Article III. Section 50-301. Table and lot requirements, to allow for a 14.2 foot rear yard building setback where 25 foot is required.*

The applicant is requesting the variance to allow construction of an addition to the west side of the dwelling.

**Call (517) 319-6930**, the Department of Planning, Building and Development, East Lansing City Hall, 410 Abbot Road, East Lansing, for additional information. All persons interested in these appeals will be given an opportunity to be heard.

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 Department of Planning, Building and Development, 410 Abbot Road, East Lansing, MI 48823. Phone: (517) 319-6930. TDD Number: 1-800-649-3777.

Marie E. Wicks  
City Clerk

# ARTS & CULTURE

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## Aesthetes in action

Lansing-area couple's lifelong love of art carried over to their kids, with interesting results

By ALLAN I. ROSS

Nearly every line of sight in the home of Jerry and Joan Mattson ends in a piece of art. Miniature statues of reclining nudes line a shelf; a bust of a young boy smiles proudly from the bay window; a cabinet filled with tiny figures hangs beside a portrait of a stern Russian-looking man.

"He's a Scot, actually. Everyone makes that mistake," Jerry Mattson says, studying the picture as if for the first time. "It's been Joan's family for years."

The man in the portrait is not a relative, nor was the painting made by one. The same can't be said for the other works. The bust is of one of their sons when he was a kid. The statues are works by their youngest daughter. Joan Mattson's mother stitched that chair pillow. Even the jazz CD sitting on the table — the cover art's by one of their offspring, the content is by another.



Jerry Mattson



Joan Mattson

"Our love of art really comes from love of what our families taught us," she said. "We both grew up in artistic homes, and we wanted the same for ours."

Last week, the Arts Council of Greater Lansing honored Joan and Jerry Mattson with the Applause Award, given annually to individuals who are seen as leaders in the Lansing-area arts scene.

"They're ambassadors of the arts in the community," said Chad Badgero, artistic director of Peppermint Creek Theatre Co., for which Joan Mattson sits on the advisory board. "If (only) our whole community was as passionate as them."

But to call Joan, 78, and Jerry, 77, passionate about art is like calling a bird passionate about the sky. The Mattsons don't just love it; they live in it.

"Before I even met him, I met his music," she said. "I was in medical school and all my friends and I were talking about was medical school. And then I heard his jazz collection."

He was stationed in Germany with the

7th Army Symphony as a clarinetist after graduating with a music degree from Oberlin College in Ohio. She was at Northwestern, but they had a mutual friend. He returned in 1962, met Joan, and they were married three months later.

"We weren't supposed to work," she said. "But here we are, 51 years later."

Classical music wafts in from the next room.

"I think it all worked out fine," he says.

They moved to East Lansing in 1970 after he got his Ph.D. in English literature from Ohio State University and she had conducted a residency there. He taught a freshman composition course at Michigan State University; she accepted a position at MSU Medical School for the first graduating class of human medicine. But it wasn't until she accepted a position at Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak that the world traveling would begin, and they introduced their five children into the world of art. When conferences led her to London, they schlepped the kids to London. When it led to Barcelona, they took them to Spain. Then Paris. And everywhere they went, they visited the museums, galleries and concert halls.

"All our kids had the opportunity to experience art," Jerry Mattson said. "We realized the effect it can have as far as expanding your horizons and letting you see the world the way somebody else sees it."

Eventually, all five Mattson children found careers in the art world. Eldest son John, 50, is a screenwriter living in Los Angeles (he wrote the script to the 1994 film "Milk Money" and worked on the first two "Free Willy" sequels). Katherine, 47, is a theater professional, freelancing these days in Oakland, Calif.; her C.V. includes work with Steppenwolf Theatre Co. in Chicago. Neil, 39, is a jazz guitarist and teacher living in Portland, Ore. Elizabeth, 37, is a line artist, ceramicist, screen printer and weaver who works on her great-grandmother's loom.



Courtesy photo

The Mattsons in an undated family photo from the early '90s (from left): John, Elizabeth, Katherine, Jeremy, Jerry, Joan and Neil. After being raised in a culturally rich household, all five children found careers in the arts.

And youngest son Jeremy, 34, is the executive chef at a high-end steakhouse and seafood restaurant in Orlando. He also dabbled in graffiti art and electronic music.

"I'm not sure that I was directly influenced to want to be a chef (by our travels), but exposure to lots of different foods and cultures definitely helped me excel in this field," Jeremy Mattson said. "And they made us keep journals. I would mostly draw in mine."

"I never thought of (our family) as being steeped in the arts," said Katherine Mattson. "If that's your family, you don't think about it that way. It seems normal. We were constantly surrounded by books, music, theater. That's how I assumed how everyone lived. And I'm grateful that I got to experience that."

Katherine Mattson's husband also works in theater. She said their two teenagers have also been surrounded by the museums, concerts and the performing arts their entire lives.

"If you don't get to experience art on a regular basis — if you don't have the experience of reading, listening to music, being challenged by performances — your world is going to feel very circumscribed," said Jerry Mattson. "If you do get to experience it, there are no limits. Our kids realized that and knew they could do whatever they wanted to do."

Although mid-Michigan isn't exactly a mecca for the arts like New York or San Francisco, Mattson said he's plenty happy

with the local arts scene.

"It's the perfect size for us," he said. "It's big enough to keep you constantly busy — we see three plays a week, sometimes — but small enough to actually get to know the individual artists."

"We might consider a move to Chicago if we start having a hard time being mobile, but right now we've got enough to do," she said. "And we like being immersed in it. We're not twiddling our thumbs."

### The Mattsons and the Arts (an abbreviated list)

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Friends of Theatre at Michigan State University  
East Lansing Historic Preservation  
Study Committee  
East Lansing Historical Society  
Historic District Commission in East Lansing  
East Lansing Educational Foundation

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MSU Choral Union

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Peppermint Creek Theatre Co.  
Riverwalk Theatre  
Stormfield Theatre  
Williamston Theatre

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Detroit Institute of Arts  
Eli & Edythe Broad Art Museum

# CURTAIN CALL

## Sweet 'Christmas' Riverwalk succeeds with iconic holiday musical

By MARY CUSACK

If Riverwalk Theatre's production of "Irving Berlin's White Christmas" was a dessert, audience members would sink into diabetic comas well before intermission.

Yes, it is that sweet, but that sweetness and innocence is a welcome treat in a world of Black Fridays and Cyber Mondays. The quality of this production transports the audience to a joyful world where a man doing a song and dance is not a euphemism, but a romantic overture.

The script is a simplified version of the classic 1954 film, in which two famous showmen

### "Irving Berlin's White Christmas"

Riverwalk Theatre  
7 p.m. Wednesday-  
Thursday, Dec. 11-12; 8 p.m.  
Friday\*- Saturday\*, Dec.  
13-14; 2 p.m.\* & 7 p.m.,  
Sunday, Dec. 15  
(\* = sold out performance)  
\$20/\$18 students, seniors  
and military/\$10 kids  
228 Museum Drive, Lansing  
(517) 482-5700,  
riverwalktheatre.com

Bob (Joe Quick) and Phil (Adam Woolsey) accompany the up-and-coming performing sisters, Betty (Racheal Raymer) and Judy (Rachel Dalton) to a Vermont inn at Christmastime.

Once there, the men discover that the financially failing inn is owned by their former WWII commanding officer, Gen. Henry Waverly (Doak Bloss). They scheme to save the inn and romance the women along the way. Much singing and dancing ensues.

The movie featured the quadruple star power of Bing Crosby (who played Bob), Danny Kaye (Phil), Rosemary Clooney (Betty) and Vera-Ellen (Judy). Riverwalk director Jane Falion succeeds in the daunting task of casting four solid leads to take over those iconic roles.

Woolsey and Raymer give standout performances. Raymer has the pipes for musical theater. Woolsey's Phil is such a harmless and charming boy-man that one can overlook his caddishness.

The production values match the talented cast. This is a refreshing and often rare balance, given that the quality of Riverwalk's musicals often skews one way. As early as the third number, "Let Yourself Go," it becomes obvious that the costumes are going to be amazing. And they just keep getting better throughout. Costume designer Kris Maier's pieces are creative and sumptuous, eye candy in the bright palette of holiday confections.

Choreographer Karyn Perry uses every inch of Riverwalk's space to stage tap ex-

travaganzas. The big numbers often feature a dozen or more dancers, but the choreography is clean and the dancers are placed strategically based on their strengths and abilities.

Frequent costume and scene changes can bog the pacing of a production, but not so here. Blackouts between scenes are brief, and Falion has choreographed the entrance and exit of ensemble players with maximum efficiency. The set is minimal, and scene changes are mostly indicated by props, which the cast members quickly sweep on and off stage as they come and go.

"White Christmas" is the feel-good experience one would expect. More so, it provides the decompression one needs when the stress of the holidays presses in. It's as simple as one of its songs: "Let Me Sing and I'm Happy."

## All in the family Williamston serves up big laughs

By PAUL WOZNIAK

Everything in Williamston Theatre's latest offering, "Over the River and Through the Woods," is vivid, authentic and hilariously familiar. And the more playwright Joe DiPietro's characters in resemble your own relatives, the more apt you are to laugh.

Andrew Faber plays Nick Cristiano, a single, 30-year-old Brooklynite on the verge of a difficult choice: Accepting a recent job promotion would take him to the next level of his professional career but far away from his two sets of Italian immigrant grandparents.

### "Over the River and Through the Woods"

Williamston Theatre  
Through Sunday, Dec. 29  
8 p.m. Thursdays-Saturdays;  
3 p.m. Saturdays; 2 p.m.  
Sundays  
\$20 Thursdays/\$25 Friday-  
Saturday evenings/\$22  
matinees (\$10 students; \$2  
discount for seniors/military)  
122 S. Putnam St.,  
Williamston  
(517) 655-SHOW,  
williamstontheatre.com

They get upset when he announces his plans and attempt to intervene, with comedic results. But the question of family versus career remains. The grandparents are hardworking, religiously devout people raised with traditional values and aspirations. While DiPietro's script provides a blueprint of the loving grandparent, it's the beautifully understated performances of Arthur J. Beer, Mary Bremer Beer, David Daoust and Gloria Viv-alda that bring these characters to life.

Whether guilt tripping Nick about food or recalling personal regrets, the performances of these four actors give the show its energy. Faber may only share a passing likeness to his fellow actors, but collectively the cast sells the illusion of their respective relationships.

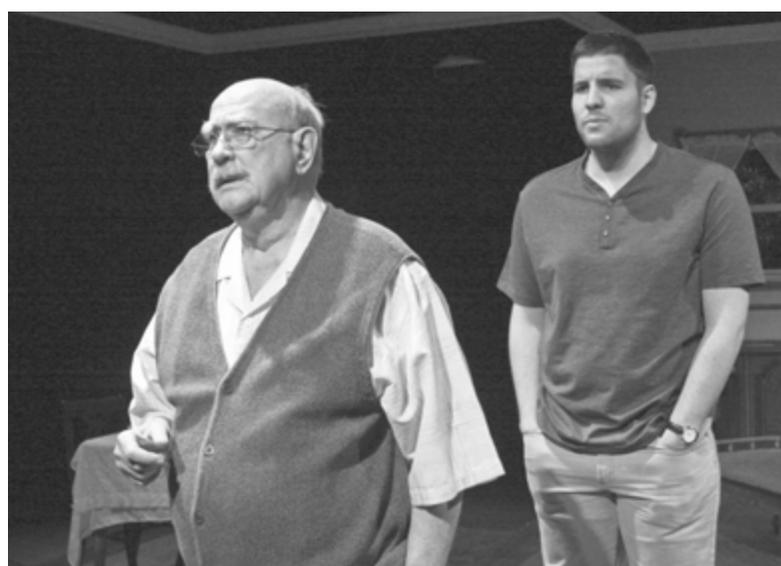


Photo by Chris Purchiss

Grandpa Nunzio (Arthur J. Beer, left) and Nick (Andrew Faber) have a chat about leaving in "Over the River and Through the Woods" at the Williamston Theatre.

Faber plays a steady straight man; the firm cheek for his grandparents to pinch. He also shares warm chemistry with Carolyn Conover as Caitlin O'Hara, a blind date set up by Nick's grandmother. Nick and his grandparents immediately fall in love with Caitlin, whom Conover plays as a witty, multi-dimensional girl-next-door who charms the audience.

By the end, charm gives way to sadness as DiPietro strains to avoid a predictable conclusion. It's a testament to both Caselli and his cast that the extended coda feels appropriate and relevant. Coda aside, "Over the River and Through the Woods" is a fantastic holiday offering, a riotous romp centered around and celebrating family.

## Not ready for the kiln "Ghost the Musical" falls short on chemistry

By ALLANI ROSS

In "Ghost the Musical," playing at the Wharton Center this week, the pottery wheel and "Unchained Melody" successfully make the leap from the 1990 film "Ghost" to the stage. So do a couple nifty visual effects.

What doesn't make it is the electrifying chemistry that made women swoon for supernatural beings two decades before sparkly vampires ruled the screens. Which would be fine, if the singers had some powerful

pipes or there were some show-stopping dance numbers to drive the show along; alas, "Ghost the Musical" simply inhabits the stage instead of full on haunting it.

There were some cool parts. The Subway Ghost spookily spits his spoken word "Focus" with a malevolent energy. The diary entry "With You" is a radio-ready hit love ballad that feels like a lost Alanis Morissette track (unsurprisingly, Glen Ballard, who co-wrote the music with the Eurythmics' Dave Stewart, won a Grammy for his work with Morissette). And the Hospital Ghost chorus provided just the right amount of levity and exposition.

The special effects, devised by illusionist extraordinaire Paul Kieve, elicited gasps from the audience opening night. You will believe a man can be sucked through a door. But meaningless movement, odd blocking and bland dance numbers featuring bankers in suits (couldn't they spring for, you know, costumes?) make the 2 1/2-hour show feel like limbo.

If you can make it to the end, though, it'll still choke you up. Damned if I know how. Maybe it's something about that combination of wet clay and Righteous Brothers.

### "Ghost the Musical"

The Wharton Center  
7:30 p.m. tonight & Thursday,  
Dec. 12; 8 p.m. Friday, Dec.  
13 & Saturday, Dec. 14; 2  
p.m. Saturday, Dec. 14; 1  
p.m. & 6:30 p.m. Sunday,  
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# THE SCREENING ROOM

by ALLAN I. ROSS

## The Roscrea redemption

Dench, Coogan anchor heartbreaking true story about a mother's love

By ALLAN I. ROSS

Where do you draw the line between soft and hard journalism in an age when Americans consider "The Daily Show" a bona fide news source even as "60 Minutes" offers an apology, but not a retraction, about its discredited eyewitness in Benghazi story? Knock the value of human interest pieces all you want, pal — you're

the one reading the Arts & Culture section. Are you not info-tained?

But that's no way to start a glowing review — let's ease into this one a little more gently, shall we?

The film "Philomena," starring Judi Dench and Steve Coogan, is warmly comedic, inspirational and. It pulses with powerful performances and compelling themes — the guilt of religion, the ferocity of a mother's love, the fear of being in the closet, the rap-ture of sex. It's a deceptively complex affair.

Yes, it's a human interest story, but one that comes loaded with double indictments. First, it exposes the hypocrisy of the Irish branch of the Roman Catholic Church in the 1950s, which is doggedly anti-premarital sex, yet provides no education — let alone protection — to these rural villagers, more or less setting up a rash of teenage pregnancies. Then, in an interesting parallel, the film also serves as powerful condemnation of a homophobic 1980s American political system and how its witch-hunt mentality drove many gay men into unsafe sexual practices, possibly spurring the AIDS epidemic.

And it was all blown open by a disgraced



Courtesy Photo

Academy Award-winner Judi Dench gives a powerful performance, equal parts comedic and dramatic, as the title character in "Philomena," the true story of an Irish mother hunting for the son she was forced to give up for adoption 50 years ago.

journalist and a plain-spoken Irish nurse who had a child out of wedlock in 1955. How's that for fluff?

"Philomena" stars Coogan as the BBC journalist/government adviser Martin Sixsmith who was sacked and publicly shamed following a leaked memo micro-scandal. The film begins as he's contemplating the next phase of his professional career and looking for a shot at redemption. When he happens across the story of 70-year-old Philomena Lee (Dench), who's searching for the beloved son taken from her 50 years ago by the nuns at the Sacred Heart Convent in Roscrea, Ireland, he picks up the story on little more than a hunch. But it leads to an astoundingly complex journey with universal implications.

To hear that the Roman Catholic Church

used poor, unwed mothers for slave labor in Ireland in the 1950s isn't all that shocking. To find out that they stripped the young mothers of their children to put them up for adoption isn't all that surprising. But to learn that the church actually sold the babies to Americans, kept the money, then staunchly stood between the mothers and children who longed to find each other — still stands, in fact, like an emotional pay-wall. It is one of the most despicable abuses of power one can imagine.

Directed by Stephen Frears ("The Queen") and co-written by Coogan, the film is as deliberately understated as its low-key name. What could easily have dissolved into a preachy, syrupy mess rises above any sense of entitlement and presents its characters as fully realized people. "Philomena" is heartbreakingly human and worthy of your most urgent interest.

It's based on Sixsmith's book, "The Lost Child of Philomena Lee," which focuses mainly on the life of the son she named Anthony, and only gets around to old Phil in the last 20 pages or so. Some of the really incredible parts were omitted, probably to keep from blowing the audience's minds. This, incredibly, leaves the possibility for a sequel — or "sidequel," in Variety-speak — wide open and merited.

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- Abraham Lincoln

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# HOME

## for the Holidays

— INSIDE —



**GOTTA HAVE IT**

**GOTTA GET IT HOLIDAY GIFTS**



- Preparation pointers: How to get your home ready for holiday guests
- Last-minute shopping for the holidays
- Safely deck the halls this holiday season
- Give your Christmas a country feel
- Set a beautiful holiday table
- Create a no-bake holiday dessert
- A turkey tailor-made for a holiday feast
- Holiday music for the next generation



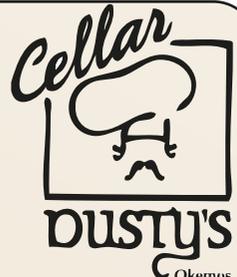
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## Preparation pointers: How to get your home ready for holiday guests

**F**amily gatherings are synonymous with the holiday season. Even those families with members spread around the world often manage to come together at least once at the end of the year.

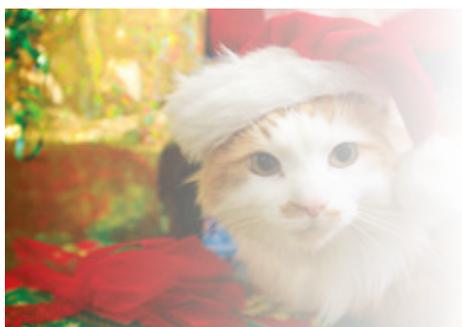
When families include members who don't live within driving distance of one another, those who aren't hosting the holiday festivities must plan an overnight stay. Lodging costs can be considerable during the holiday season because hotels quickly fill to capacity. Holiday hosts who want to go the extra mile can invite guests to forgo hotels and stay overnight at their homes, where guests can spend more time together and won't have to worry about finding lodging they can afford.

Though it's a nice gesture to host overnight guests during the holiday season, it requires a little work from those who must take time out of the hectic holiday schedule to prepare their homes.

Here are a few pointers for hosts who want to ensure everything is ready and accommodating for overnight guests.

### Take inventory of household linens

Depending on how many guests you'll be hosting, you may need to stock up on extra linens. If only one or two people will be staying overnight, you should be able to make due with what you have. However, if you'll be hosting a second family for the holidays, whether it's one night or a full week, then you will likely need to buy more linens, including bedding, pillows and blankets. Take inventory of what you have and make sure you have adequate bedding for each guest, as well as some extra bedding in case of emergency.



### Discuss pet allergies

Holiday hosts who have pets should discuss pet allergies with potential overnight guests well in advance of the season. If guests are allergic to your pets, then it might not be comfortable for them to stay overnight at your home. While most families would not want to shelter their pets on a holiday, doing so is an option but one that may not even be worth it. Pet hair and dander around the house might be enough to trigger an allergic attack even when the pet isn't in or around the home, so sheltering the pet may not be a solution after all. Discuss this issue with prospective guests well in advance of the season so they have time to find affordable lodging in the event that any of them do have a pet allergy.



### Stock up on toiletries

Toiletries are bound to run out if you're hosting guests for the holidays. Before they arrive, stock up on items like toilet and facial tissue, hand soap, bath soap, shampoo and conditioner, toothpaste and extra toothbrushes in case guests forgot to pack their own. These have no expiration date, so even if you end up buying more than you need you can always use them down the road when guests have long since returned home.

### Clear the house of clutter

Clutter can make a home seem even more crowded when guests are staying overnight. It can accumulate anywhere in the house, from bathrooms to a living room to the kitchen. When hosting guests for the holidays, you will need all the space you can get, so clear the house of as much clutter as possible. Put all toys away and clear the common areas of items like shoes and clothing that can make a space seem more cramped. In

addition, clear the dining room table of any items that aren't needed at mealtime and choose festive centerpieces that don't take up much space.

### Don't be caught off guard by a storm

If guests will be staying multiple nights, it's safe to assume everyone will want to get out of the house, either to enjoy local holiday celebrations or simply to avoid cabin fever. But the holiday season gets its share of inclement weather, including snowstorms. Hosts should not be caught off guard by a snowstorm; stocking up on items like a snow shovel, a snow blower and salt or a de-icing product for walkways and driveways before guests arrive. This will ensure everyone won't feel trapped inside the house should a storm arrive unexpectedly.

Remember, hosting guests for the holidays is no small task. But hosts who prepare in advance can ensure everyone makes the most of their time together.

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# Last-minute shopping for the holidays

Many people wait until the last minute for Christmas shopping, when there are still gifts and deals to be had

Picture yourself: It's Dec. 22 and you've just barely made it through half of your holiday shopping list. The panic may have set in that you just don't have enough time to do everything.

It's a common scenario around the holidays. Shoppers have the best intentions to get their gifts early, but because of work obligations or social events, the task gets pushed further into December. Others may be putting off holiday shopping simply because of the current state of the economy and affordability. Either way, now you're staring down the calendar experiencing sweaty palms. What do you do?

For those shoppers who consciously or subconsciously wait until the last possible minute to shop, there are ways to survive and surprise friends and family with great gifts.



card kiosks enabling you to shop for different gift cards all in one place.

### Food and beverages

While everyone is heading to the mall in droves, you can be stepping inside a gourmet food or spirits store. Splurge on fine cheeses or that trendy bottle of liquor that a gift recipient has mentioned.

### Magazine subscription

A magazine subscription is an easy fix as a last-minute gift. Purchase one copy of the magazine at the newsstand and wrap it up nicely. Put a note that a year's worth of this periodical is on the way. No one will suspect that the gift was a last-minute thought.

### Gas card

It may sound tacky, but a gas card from a brand-name station is a universally acceptable gift for anyone who drives regularly. With fluctuating gas prices, filling up the tank can be an expensive venture. Having a prepaid gift card can help.

Online retailers are also there to help last-minute shoppers. Many online retailers guarantee in-time-for-Christmas shipping even on gifts ordered as late as Dec. 23. However, overnight shipping charges will cost more. But it's all worth it to get the item in time.



### Gift cards

They may not have sentimental meaning behind them, but gift cards are fast and easy. Chances are you can run into a store and be out with a handful of gift cards in less than 15 minutes, depending on lines at the checkout counter. Also, many supermarkets, bookstores and other retailers offer gift

Waiting until the last minute for shopping can induce some anxiety. But knowing about easy gifts for procrastinators can take the stress out of this type of shopping.



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# Safely deck the halls this holiday season

*Keep the area around a fireplace clear to prevent fires*

Spending time around a warm fireplace is an indelible holiday image. The entire family hanging stockings from the mantle while a fire roars below can make for a cozy evening and set the scene for the season to come. While the warm glow of candles and a blazing fire are key components of holiday decor, some holiday decorations have potential to be dangerous if homeowners are not careful.

**Gathering around the fireplace is a holiday tradition for many families. But it is important to remember basic safety precautions when doing so.**

- Fireplaces can become quite hot no matter which type of fuel they burn. Draperies and other fabric should not be hung too close to fireplaces and stoves.

- The glass and screens that cover fireplaces should be used to prevent sparks and embers from entering a room.

- Keep children away from fireplaces while they are in use.

- Have fireplaces professionally cleaned each year and inspected by a certified chimney specialist. The U.S. Fire Administration said heating fires account for 36 percent of residential home fires each year. Cleaning the chimney can reduce accidental fires.

- Install stovepipe thermometers to help monitor flue temperatures so they don't reach dangerous levels.

- Use fire-resistant materials on walls around wood stoves.

- Do not leave fires unattended for long periods of time or allow them to burn overnight.

- Keep Christmas trees far away from fireplaces. Christmas trees can easily ignite, and the heat from the fire can dry them out over time.

**Candles used to decorate Christmas trees and the like were once common. However, candles can easily tip over and start a fire. Today there are safer alternatives to providing holiday illumination.**

- Flameless candles use a twinkling LED light to create the atmosphere of an actual candle. They can be purchased in different shapes and sizes.

- Extinguish all candles before going to bed.

- Make sure candles are out of the

reach of children and/or pets.

- Use electric lights on a Christmas tree instead of lit candles.

Christmas lights are tested for safety, but safety precautions are necessary when stringing lights.

- Do not overload circuits with too many lights strung together. Doing so is a fire hazard and can cause overheating.

- Use caution when putting lights outside. Purchase lights that



specifically mention outside use. Have a person help you string lights when you must climb a ladder. Spotters can prevent injuries.

- Shut off lights when you go to

bed. You will be saving energy and preventing fire risk.

- Keep dogs and cats away from Christmas lights. They can become tangled or chew on wires.



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## Give your Christmas a *country feel*



Christmas decorations can range from grandiose lighting displays to more subtle adornments. Some families may prefer traditional holiday décor, while others might like the look of modern trimmings.

Holiday decorations can also be used to create an atmosphere reminiscent of a certain type of locale, giving a home a holiday in the city vibe or a more rustic feel. For those who prefer a rustic look reminiscent of a country Christmas, consider the following tips.

- **Start with the tree.** The Christmas tree is the center of many a home's holiday decor. A real country Christmas should start with a fresh cut evergreen. Instead of traditional holiday lights, choose lights that look like candles while adorning the tree with wooden ornaments and strands of popcorn.

- **Forgo traditional wrapping paper.** Instead of store-bought paper, wrap presents in brown paper and put presents under the tree as early as possible. Instead of store-bought gift tags, create your own and attach a candy cane or another candy to the gift.

- **Think outside for decorations.** Items gathered from nature can give a home a rustic appeal during the holidays. Hang a homemade wreath on the front door and include pine ones and clippings from evergreen trees when adding decorative accents around the house. Tuck a few decorative woven baskets in



corners to further emphasize a rustic look.

- **Create homemade ornaments.** Homemade ornaments can also give a home a more rustic look come the holiday season. Spend an afternoon creating holiday crafts with the kids and use these instead of store-bought ornaments. For those who are especially gifted craftsmen, put your woodworking skills to the test to create decorative wooden stockings that, if not functional, can be replaced with more traditional stockings on Christmas Eve.

- **Don't forget the music.** Another way to create a country Christmas is to play country Christmas albums instead of classical or more traditional Christmas records. Many country music stars have recorded a Christmas song or album, so create a master playlist on your digital music player and play it throughout the season to set the holiday mood in your household.

# Set a beautiful holiday table

*Decorative table settings are ideal for seasonal entertaining*



Setting a beautiful holiday table can enhance the enjoyment of any special day. Decorative table settings are ideal for holiday entertaining. Whether you are hosting family for the holidays or just a few close friends, setting an elaborate table for your meals can enhance the ambiance. Dining at a beautifully arranged table can set the mood for a wonderful evening.

Depending on the overall theme of your holiday decorating, you can incorporate components of similar decorative items into the table settings or go off the beaten path with new ideas. Options abound when arranging a holiday table, but here are a few ideas to get started.

#### Place settings

Fine china imparts a feeling of elegance and makes the holiday meal even more special. If you do not have china or prefer something else, invest in dishes and glasses decorated with a holiday theme. These can be used annually for your special dinner.

Cloth napkins certainly are more elegant than paper napkins. Create napkin rings that double as place cards. Make small rings of threaded popcorn

or use mini wreaths to surround the napkins and tie on small tags with guests' names.

#### Centerpiece

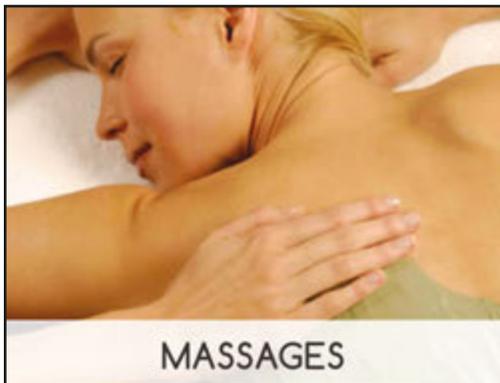
Don't be afraid to be elaborate with your holiday table centerpiece. You may prefer to use traditional elements, like a floral display of white roses mixed with red poinsettia stalks. You can also pull a piece of your holiday decor to serve as the centerpiece.

Do you have a hand-painted statue or ceramic item that you absolutely love? Show it off front and center. Tall vases filled with pinecones and berries also add elegance to the table. For a touch of whimsy, fill the vases with color-coordinated candies and wrap the vases with ribbon. The candy can be enjoyed later on.

A miniature Christmas tree adorned in tiny lights and ornaments also works well as a centerpiece.

#### Tablecloth

A plain-colored tablecloth contrasts well with the finery on the table itself. Simple shades tend to work best. Plus, they won't look out of place if you want to use the tablecloth another time of year.



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# Create a no-bake holiday dessert



## Holiday Trifle

- 1 vanilla pound cake loaf
- 1 container of strawberries
- 3 ripe kiwis
- 1 package instant vanilla pudding
- 1 small container frozen whipped topping
- Milk for preparing pudding
- Trifle bowl

1. Cut the pound cake into cubes and set aside. Prepare the pudding according to the directions on the box and allow to thicken.
2. Let the frozen whipped topping thaw.
3. Wash and slice the strawberries and kiwis.
4. Prepare the trifle by alternating layers of pound cake, fruit, pudding, and cream. Continue until you reach the top of the trifle and then top with the remaining whipped topping.
5. Put in the refrigerator to chill and set. Use a long spoon to serve the trifle in individual bowls when ready to eat.

Other trifle combinations can include peppermint candies and mint pudding or strawberries and bananas. For Chanukah, blueberries can be layered for a blue-and-white look. Red and green M&Ms also can be used. Gingerbread fans can create layers of crushed gingerbread cookies with the cake and pudding. Experiment with flavors as you see fit until you find combinations you love. Setting a beautiful holiday table can enhance the enjoyment of any special day.

The holiday season is a busy time of year dominated by shopping trips, visits with friends and family and late-night sessions of wrapping presents. With so many things on the agenda, here are a few shortcuts to save time.

Dessert is a key element of holiday celebrations. Cake or cookies are frequently the requisite hostess gifts. But revelers who do not want to bake have many options at their disposal, including recipes for no-bake desserts that look great and taste delicious.

Trifles are a popular no-bake holiday dessert. A trifle is made by alternating layers of different confections in a tall container. Many different flavors can be combined and ingredients can vary depending on personal preference. Often fruit, pudding, cake and cream are used to create the perfect treat. Kiwi fruit and strawberries can be chosen to give the dessert a red-and-green look, but any fruits or candies can be used depending on the theme.

Whip up a holiday trifle for your next holiday gift or gathering and your fellow celebrants will be hard-pressed to pass up this delicious dessert.

## A turkey tailor-made for a holiday feast



No holiday feast is complete without turkey. The main course at Christmas dinner tables, turkey is something many people look forward to.

Those about to cook their first turkey or even turkey-cooking veterans who want to stray from the predictable may want to consider the following recipe for herb-roasted turkey from Yolanda Banks' "Cooking for Your Man" (Broadway Books).

### Herb-Roasted Turkey

Serves 10

- 12 tablespoons (1 1/2 sticks) unsalted butter, softened
- 1/4 cup packed fresh flat-leaf parsley leaves, chopped, plus 4 whole sprigs
- 1 large sprig fresh rosemary, leaves chopped, plus 2 whole sprigs
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme, plus 4 whole sprigs
- 15 leaves fresh sage, chopped, plus 3 whole leaves
- 3/4 teaspoon kosher salt, plus more for the turkey
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, plus more for the turkey
- 1 15-pound turkey
- 1 lemon, quartered
- 8 shallots, peeled and halved
- 1 head garlic, cloves separated and peeled
- 4 cups low-sodium chicken broth or stock
- 2/3 cup dry white wine
- 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour

1. In a small bowl combine the butter, chopped parsley, chopped rosemary, chopped thyme, chopped sage, salt and pepper. Mix well.

2. Position a rack in the bottom third of the oven and preheat the oven to 450 F. Sprinkle the main cavity of the turkey with salt and pepper. Place the whole sprigs of parsley, rosemary and thyme and the sage leaves into the cavity. Add the lemon, 4 shallot halves and half of the garlic cloves.

3. Starting at the neck end, carefully slide a hand between the skin and the breast meat to loosen the skin. Spread 3 tablespoons of the herb butter over the breast meat under the skin. Tuck the wing tips under the skin, and tie the legs together to hold the shape. Season the turkey generously all over with salt and pepper.

4. Place the turkey on a wire rack set in a large roasting pan. Rub 4 tablespoons of the herb butter over the turkey. Roast about 30 minutes until golden brown and reduce the heat to 350 F. Baste the turkey with 1/2 cup of the broth. Cover only the breast area with a sheet of heavy-duty aluminum foil. Scatter the remaining shallots and garlic cloves in the pan around the turkey.

5. Continue to roast the turkey for about 1 1/2 hours, basting with 1/2 cup of broth every 30 minutes. Remove the foil from the turkey breast. Continue to roast the turkey, basting with pan juices every 20 minutes about 1 hour longer until it's golden brown. A thermometer inserted into the thickest part of the thigh should register 165 F. Transfer the turkey to a platter and brush with 1 tablespoon of the herb butter. Tent it loosely with foil and let it rest for 20 minutes before carving.

6. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the shallots and garlic from the roasting pan to a plate. Transfer the pan juices to a medium bowl; skim off and discard the fat. Set the pan over two burners on medium-high heat. Deglaze the pan with the wine and 1 cup of chicken broth, scraping up any browned bits. Bring the sauce to a boil, reduce the heat to medium and cook until it's reduced by half, about 4 minutes. Pour the sauce into a large measuring glass. Add the degreased pan juices, and broth, if necessary, to equal 3 cups of liquid.

7. Blend the flour into the remaining herb butter until combined. Pour the broth mixture into a medium saucepan and bring to a boil. Gradually whisk in the herb-butter mixture. Add any accumulated juices from the turkey platter and boil until the gravy thickens enough to coat a spoon, whisking occasionally, about 6 minutes. Add the remaining shallots and garlic to the gravy and simmer for 1 minute. Taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary. Serve the turkey with the gravy.

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## Holiday music for all generations

Christmas music evokes strong emotions that help many people recall fond memories of holidays spent with family and friends.

While certain holiday albums have become classics, younger artists have begun to embrace holiday music as well. "Duck the Halls: A Robertson Family Christmas," is a holiday music newcomer. The Robertson family, based out of Louisiana, star in the A&E reality show "Duck Dynasty." In addition to being prolific duck hunters, the Robertsons grew up singing in church, and members of the family will be showcasing those talents on this album.

"X Factor" winner Leona Lewis released a Motown-inspired Christmas album and R&B superstar Mary J. Blige has put her soulful spin on holiday classics with her first-ever Christmas album. "A Mary Christmas." Blige worked with acclaimed composer and arranger David Foster

Holiday enthusiasts can also choose from many holiday albums from seasons past. "American Idol" alum Scotty McCreery put some serious country twang into his "Christmas With Scotty McCreery" album.

"Christmas in the Sand" is Colbie Caillat's beach-themed Christmas album. "Cheers, It's Christmas," from country star Blake Shelton, features guest artists Miranda Lambert, Kelly Clarkson and Michael Buble.

"On This Winter's Night" is Lady Antebellum's holiday collection includes various versions of Christmas classics. And "Merry Christmas, Baby" is a holiday release from legendary singer Rod Stewart.



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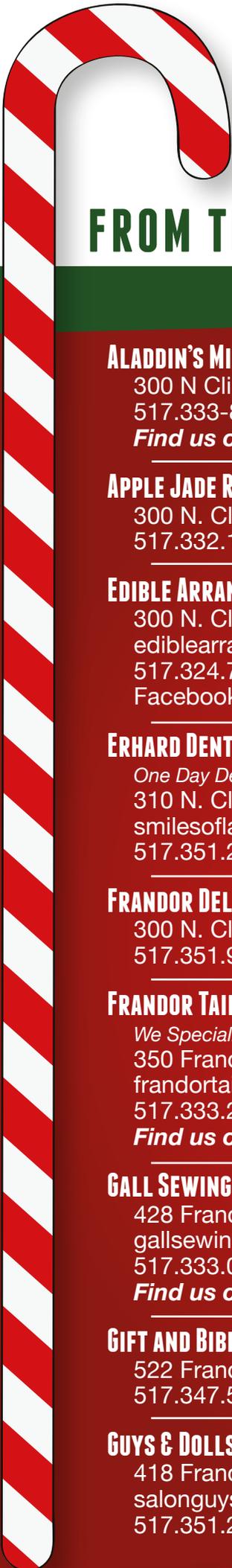
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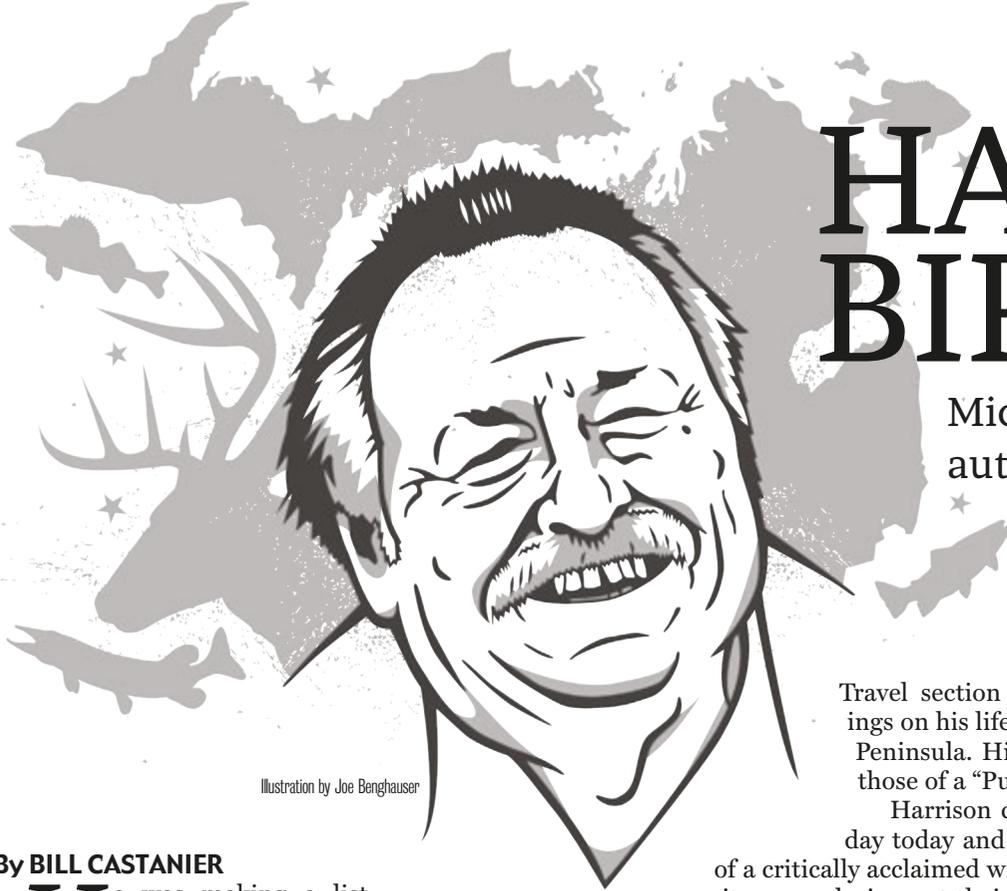
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# HAPPY BIRTHDAY, JIM

Michigan native Jim Harrison and friends on the author's ability to produce after all these years

Illustration by Joe Benghausen

By **BILL CASTANIER**

**H**e was making a list and checking it twice, stuffing everything into his Airstream for the big trip.

Santa Claus? No. Just Guy de la Valdene — author, photographer, fisherman and French count — packing for his annual visit to fellow author, fishing companion and long-time friend Jim Harrison.

On this trip, Valdene will be carrying a special package of head cheese recently arrived from New York from fellow Harrison pal and celebrity chef Mario Batali.

Head cheese is one of Harrison's personal delights. In one of his often absurd and over-the-top columns in *Esquire* in the '80s, Harrison touted the qualities and taste of head cheese. The recipe begins "one pig's head — boil for 24 hours."

For Harrison — raised for a time in Haslett and educated at Michigan State University — a New York head-cheese fetish belies a prolific and quite successful body of work that reflects Michigan roots, particularly the often untamed Upper Peninsula.

"I have a staggering amount of food stuffed into my Airstream," Valdene said, much of it fish and fowl.

They will wash it down with a couple of cases of fine wine he has packed, enough, he figures, for two or three nights.

Valdene is making the three-day trip from Tallahassee, Fla., to join Harrison and several other friends for Harrison's 76th birthday celebration today in Patagonia, Ariz. He talked with glee of being able to score a package of Batali's homemade head cheese.

"It's mouth watering," Valdene said.

Valdene sees Harrison's *Esquire* columns as one example of the author's tremendous breadth of literary styles.

Harrison has written across a notable number of genres and styles, ranging from magazines to poetry (13 volumes) to novels (19 books) to non-fiction books (three) to a children's book and screenplays. "Brown Dog," his second release this year, is a collection of five previous novellas and one new one that features Brown Dog, an Upper Peninsula outsider and his comic but often tender romantic adventures. He has another due out next year. Most recently, the Sunday New York Times

Travel section carried Harrison's musings on his life and travels in the Upper Peninsula. His loving descriptions are those of a "Pure Michigan" campaign.

Harrison celebrates his 76th birthday today and is closing in on 50 years of a critically acclaimed writing career. When other writers are closing out their careers, Harrison seems to be ramping his up. He's planning a spring trip to France where they adore his work. Harrison recently took time from his writing for a rare interview with City Pulse — surely he'd rather be hunting or fishing.

"I'm going to write six to eight hours today, depending if I decide to go hunting for quail and dove. I pluck the doves and cook them over a wood fire. They are easy to pluck," he said from Arizona.

Writing is part of Harrison's being.

"It's my life. I was once asked what I would do if I couldn't write. Nothing," he said.

"My dad said if you are good with a shovel, you'll never be out of work. Well I'm good with a pencil," Harrison said.

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**"When I was a little boy I would sleep in the woods with a blanket. It was the whole bedroll cowboy thing. The danger in my mind was civilization, not the woods."**

—JIM HARRISON

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## IN THE THICKET

Thrown into the limelight with his books and especially his screenplays like "Legends of the Fall" (based on one of his books), Harrison has always retreated to his small-town roots. After college at MSU and a sojourn to New York to teach, he returned to the Leelanau Peninsula with his spouse, Linda, to raise a family, often seeking further refuge in his cabin in Grand Marais. After cashing out in Michigan, he splits his time between Patagonia and Livingston, Mont.

Born in Grayling and raised in Reed City and Haslett (when it was still rural), Harrison has always sought the quiet of a back road or a hidden garden. He'll tell you bluntly that his favorite time spent at MSU was in the Beal Gardens.

Another of his best friends, Robert DeMott, a retired Ohio University professor who has regularly hunted and

fished with Harrison since meeting him at a Key West writing conference in 1996, says the author likes to describe himself as "in a little thicket" where "nobody could see him, but he could see out."

DeMott, who has edited the book "Conversations with Jim Harrison," said he came to think of Harrison as an older brother and emphasizes that the author thinks deeply about things.

"He's part of the long and hallowed tradition of Walden, Thoreau and American Transcendentalism.

"He sees culture and nature merging together. He's not asking readers to choose one or another," DeMott said.

And when it comes to comparing Harrison's works to other great writers, "Moby Dick" comes to mind for DeMott.

"Jim has the ability to find what's good and worthy about what most of us don't pay any attention to," he said.

Harrison, by any measure, is not slowing down. DeMott attributes at least part of that to Harrison "stripping away everything but necessities."

"He doesn't have to do anything but think and write," DeMott said.

Valdene takes it further: "He's addicted to writing.

"I know there's a word for it, but I can't remember it. ... If he's away from it for three or four days he's not happy."

## STILL PRODUCING

This year is no different for Harrison. Despite recovering from back surgery last fall, he was still able to bookend 2013 with two books. The beginning of the year saw the publication of "The River Swimmer," containing two novellas. One probes the life of an aging artist who moves back to Michigan and not only rediscovers his love affair with art, but he also rekindles a youthful love affair. The other, borrowing the book's title, follows a young man's coming-of-age story and is told in near myth-like, Gabriel-Garcia-Marquez magic realism. Exploring his inner self, the young man sets out to swim the Lake Michigan shoreline from northern Michigan to Chicago. In addition to big waves, he encounters several big romantic diversions.

"I don't know where those things come from. I just saw a physical image of him swimming. Swimming was one of those things that soothes you," Harrison said.

He said he was always taken by nature. "When I was a little boy I would sleep in the woods with a blanket. It was the whole bedroll cowboy thing. The danger in my

See Harrison, Page 24

# Harrison

from page 23

mind was civilization, not the woods.”

Harrison's second book this year was the eagerly awaited "Brown Dog."

Brown Dog is an atavistic, primal and often ribald character — an everyman who goes through life with no sense of pretension or a job. The character, first introduced in 1990 when he appeared in the collection, "The Woman Lit by Fireflies," is a metis (Chippewa-Cornish mix) with a big appetite for life. That includes food, his love life, generosity and loyalty.

"Brown Dog embodies that hunger for the physical world and a desire to eat as much as possible without guilt or shame — sex, liquor, food," DeMott said.

"He may be a bit of my alter ego," Harrison said, "but mostly he emerged and I was very taken by him."

Harrison said his Canadian publisher had been imploring him to consider a Brown Dog collection and, when he asked why, he said they told him, "We have more brown dogs up here."

"I attribute that to pulp cutting, alcohol and fishing," Harrison said.

## 'BRUSQUENESS IS UNDERRATED'

Although Harrison is seen as gruff, brusque and unapproachable, the exact

opposite is the case. There are legions of younger authors out there who he has helped. Traverse City author Doug Stanton is in that fold, along with East Lansing native and author Chris Dombrowski, who now lives in Montana.

Stanton, the founder of the National Writers Series in Traverse City and a New York Times best-selling author, often tells the story of first meeting Harrison and having a life-changing experience.

"He was the first author I met. You don't meet a lot of authors on Front Street in Traverse. It was an inspiration," he said.

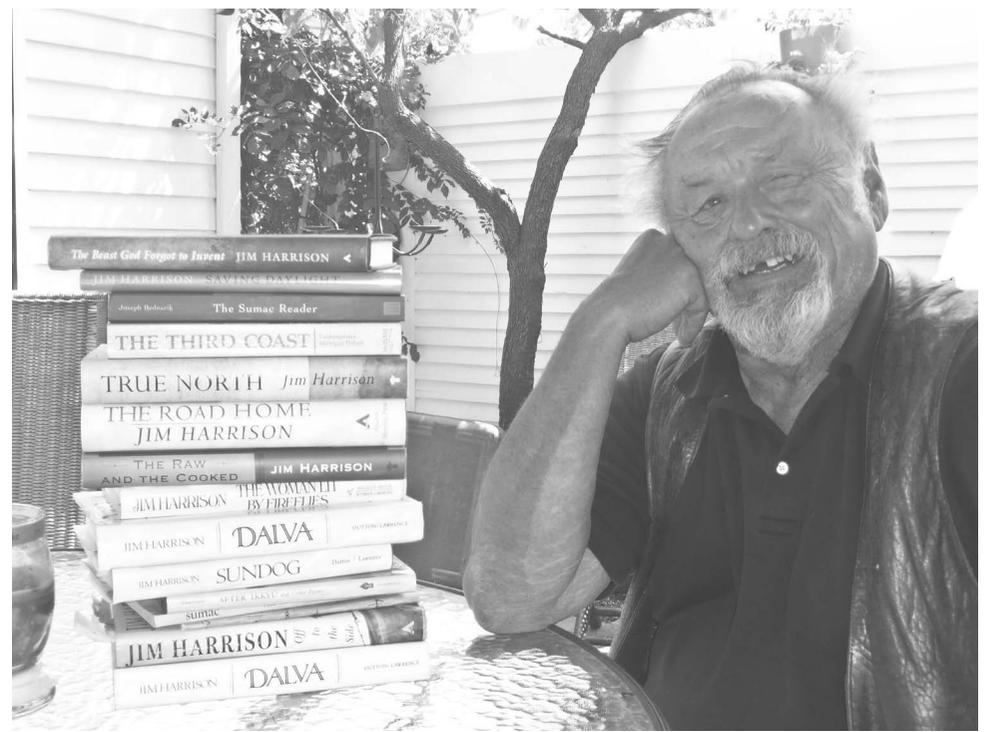
Later, at his wedding, Harrison gave him and his spouse, Anne (also a writer), a generous wedding gift, but more important, he included a sticky note with the name of his editor at Esquire.

Dombrowski — a poet, river guide, college instructor and one of the select few on "Jim's list" to receive Harrison's most recent poems — has taken the author float fishing on several Montana rivers. He looks to him for inspiration, notably Harrison's "incredible work ethic as well as his chiding."

He recalls how once Harrison sent him a message about taking the month of January off with the addendum, "But I'm 32 books ahead of you, so get trucking."

"He's been an incredible influence as well as being an incredible human being," Dombrowski said.

Dombrowski admires how Harrison



Bill Castanier/City Pulse

Author Jim Harrison at the Wild Goose Inn in East Lansing, 2008. Harrison turns 76 today.

"works with reckless abandon with no seeming sense of completion."

"His work is risky. It's got stains of life on it, not overly clean, careful or correct," he said.

He points to one piece of his early work, "A Good Day to Die," published in 1973, which dealt with PTSD and eco-terrorism way before the issues were in anyone's consciousness.

"I see him as a vast river fed by lots and lots of different disciplines," Dombrowski said. And, he said, "Brusqueness is underrated."

Stanton agrees that one of the hallmarks of Harrison's writing is he's not one-dimensional.

"Like all masters, he is able to be elegant and complex at the same time," Stanton said. "Most people his age have less to say. He has more and more."

The New York Times said in a recent review, "His mind always seems to be half-tuned to its own pirate Mexican reggae radio station." A conversation with Harrison can bounce seamlessly from 15th-century Chinese poets to fine wine and head cheese. And it all makes sense.

And more and more of that reggae-style thought is showing up in his collection of papers, which is held at Grand Valley State University. Collection archivist Nancy Richard said it's a "gold mine."

Lately, she's been impressed with correspondence between Harrison and his fans and new writers and the letters between himself and chef Batali.

"You can almost see in his letters that

he'll be working on using a phrase that later appears in his writing," Richard said. In addition, his correspondence with his administrative assistant Joyce and publishers is illuminating.

"It's the other half of the story," Richard said.

Bud Schulz, a videographer at the MSU College of Human Medicine, calls himself a member of Harrison's "over-the-belt gang." He can count Harrison as a friend about as long as anyone in the area, first meeting

the author in 1962. Of Harrison's writing, he most admires his poetry.

"He got me connected up to poetry the way no one else could," Schulz said.

He also likes how Harrison's writing always includes "someone making decisions — they're doing something," he said.

And when it comes to Brown Dog,

Schulz said "there is a little bit of Brown Dog in all of Harrison's books and in Jim and his hunting and angling pals."

"He is a voracious reader and with an IQ off the charts, he remembers everything he's ever read. Plus he has an imagination that never stops," Valdene said.

As proof, Harrison's next novel is already being edited, and he expects a collection of poetry in 2014.

Harrison said his publisher was upset about his next novel — tentatively titled "Seven Big Ones" and featuring a previous character, retired state police detective Sunderson — "because it's about evil."

"People in New York are removed from it."

**"Like all masters, he is able to be elegant and complex at the same time. Most people his age have less to say, he has more and more."**

— DOUG STANTON,  
FRIEND AND AUTHOR

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# OUT ON THE TOWN

Events must be entered through the calendar at [www.lansingcitypulse.com](http://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.

## Wednesday, December 11

### CLASSES AND SEMINARS

**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](http://gallery1212.com).

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

**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) 272-9840.

**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.

**The Gospel of Mary Discussion.** Mary controversies, Gnostics and biblical women. 6-7 p.m. FREE. Pilgrim Congregational United Church of Christ, 125 S. Pennsylvania Ave., Lansing. (517) 484-7434.

**Overeaters Anonymous.** 7 p.m. FREE. First Congregational United Church of Christ, 210 W. Saginaw Highway, Grand Ledge. (517) 256-6954.

### EVENTS

**Strategy Game Night.** Learn and share favorites. 5-7:30 p.m. FREE. Delta Township District Library, 5130 Davenport Drive, Lansing. (517) 321-4014 ext.4.

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

### THEATER

**"Ghost the Musical."** Part of the MSU Broadway at Wharton Center Series. 7:30 p.m. \$32-\$72, \$25 students. Wharton Center, MSU Campus, East Lansing. (517) 432-2000. [whartoncenter.com](http://whartoncenter.com).

**"White Christmas."** Based on Irving Berlin's holiday classic. 7 p.m. \$20, \$18 seniors. Riverwalk Theatre, 228 Museum Drive, Lansing. (517) 482-5700. [riverwalktheatre.com](http://riverwalktheatre.com).

## Thursday, December 12

### CLASSES AND SEMINARS

**Take Off Pounds Sensibly.** The group meets on Thursdays (except holidays). 5:15 p.m. \$5 monthly.

See Out on the Town, Page 27

## WEDNESDAY, DEC. 11 >> EAST LANSING 2030: COLLEGEVILLE RE-ENVISIONED

This is the second part of a series of monthly presentations from urban designers, architects and landscape architects that offer a future vision of East Lansing. This month's guest is Craig Borum, a professor of architecture at the University of Michigan. The guest presentations lead up to an exhibition next fall. FREE. 6:30 p.m. Broad Museum, 547 East Circle Drive, East Lansing. [broadmuseum.msu.edu](http://broadmuseum.msu.edu).

## THURSDAY, DEC. 12 >> HEALTH CARE KNOWLEDGE FAIR

This event provides information for anyone interested in a career in a healthcare. Attendees will meet Davenport University faculty, tour the campus and its new health labs. Participants will also be entered to win a \$500 scholarship, applicable to the winter 2014 semester. There will be free on-site transcript assessments, a waived application fee and free FAFSA assistance. Davenport was founded in 1866 and offers courses in business, health and technology. FREE. 4 p.m. Davenport University Lansing Campus, 200 S. Grand Ave., Lansing. [davenport.edu](http://davenport.edu)

## FRIDAY, DEC. 13-SUNDAY, DEC. 15 >> "A CHRISTMAS CAROL" BY MID-MICHIGAN FAMILY THEATRE



By now, you've probably seen every single way "A Christmas Carol" could possibly be incorporated into a storytelling medium. [Tvtropes.com](http://Tvtropes.com) says: "Every television series in the history of the world that lasts long enough to have an episode aired at Christmas will make use of this boilerplate episode." But maybe we do need a reminder that life is short and that we should be nice every chance we get — why not an adaptation that's faithful to the Dickensian language? \$7/\$5 children. Alfreda Schmidt Southside Community Center, 5815 Wise Road, Lansing. (517) 483-6686. 7 p.m. Friday, Dec. 13; 3 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 14; 3 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 15.



## FRIDAY, DEC. 13 >> "SOUNDS OF THE SEASON"

The Capital City Brass Band presents its annual holiday concert full of Christmas classics. The sounds of the evening are in British brass band style, which dates back to the early 1900s. Recently, the Capital City Brass Band took third place in the U.S. Open Brass Band Championships, an invitation-only competition, in Chicago. FREE, but donations accepted. 7 p.m. First Baptist Church, 201 S. Jackson St., Jackson.

## SATURDAY, DEC. 14 >> "THE GENRES: STILL LIFE, FEATURING JESSICA JACKSON HUTCHINS"

The Broad Art Museum's three-part series "The Genres" features contemporary artists offering a new look at three historic forms of art: Portraiture, still life and landscape. In this exhibit, Jessica Jackson Hutchins represents still life. Hutchins reworks the traditional still life by playing with the combination of found and made objects, size and other abstractions. Curator Alison Gass gives a talk followed by a reception. 6 p.m. FREE. Broad Art Museum, 547 East Circle Drive, East Lansing. [broadmuseum.msu.edu](http://broadmuseum.msu.edu).



## SATURDAY, DEC. 14 >> SECOND ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF TREES



In its second year, the Turner-Dodge House and Heritage Center hosts the Christmas tree event of the season. About 25 trees were all decorated by establishments and people throughout Old Town. All three floors of the Turner-Dodge will have Christmas trees to visit. The festive firs will brighten the historic house through Dec. 29. The festival began as a way to fundraise for projects focused on preserving history in Lansing. \$5/\$10 per family. Noon-8 p.m. Turner-Dodge House and Heritage Center, 100 E. North St., Lansing. (517) 483-4220, [lansingmi.gov/parks/tdodge](http://lansingmi.gov/parks/tdodge).

## SUNDAY, DEC. 15 >> LANSING THEATRE ORGANT

Lansing-native Scott Smith has spent 25 years as house organist at the Mole Hole in Marshall. Before that, Smith was instrumental in the move and redesign of the organ at the Grand Ledge Opera House. In celebration of his extensive organ history, he provides a live score for the Laurel and Hardy comedy "Big Business," which follows the pair as they embark on an adventure selling Christmas trees in southern California. 3 p.m. \$12 advance/\$15 door. Grand Ledge Opera House, 121 S. Bridge St., Grand Ledge. [lto-pops.org](http://lto-pops.org).

## SUNDAY, DEC. 15 >> LANSING THEATRE ORGANT

Ace DeVille hosts this holiday-themed event featuring burlesque and drag performers. There will be holiday drink specials, a hunky Santa photo booth and fun surprises. Throughout the evening, DJ Sammy, The Klaw Mark Kittens, Sadie Sparkles, Maria Mirelez and Cinna Moan entertain. 21 and up: \$5. 18 and up: \$10. 11 p.m. Spiral Dance Bar, 1247 Center St., Lansing.

# TURN IT DOWN

A SURVEY OF LANSING'S MUSICAL LANDSCAPE  
BY RICH TUPICA



SAT. DEC 14TH

## VERVE PIPE AT CHARLOTTE PERFORMING ARTS

**Saturday, Dec. 14 @ Charlotte Performing Arts Center, 378 State St, Charlotte. All ages, \$37, \$5 students, 7:30 p.m. (517) 541-5690, cpacpresents.com.**

Not many Lansing bands have scored international hits and sold millions of records. The Verve Pipe scored now classic alt-rock hits, including 1996's "The Freshman," a No. 5 Billboard hit single on RCA Records. The single "Photograph" also scored heavy airplay and hit #10 on the charts. The band, which formed in East Lansing in 1992, performs Saturday at the Charlotte Performing Arts Center. In recent years the band has switched gears and focused on recording children's albums. "A Family Album" was released in 2009 and "Are We There Yet?" dropped this year. Since 2003, Verve Pipe front man Brian Vander Ark (vocals/guitar) has also recorded a handful of solo albums, including the 2011 record, "Magazine."

### JASON ALARM REUNION



FRI. DEC 13TH

**Friday, Dec. 13 @ Mac's Bar, 2700 E. Michigan Ave. All ages, \$8, 8 p.m.**

Jason Alarm, a high-energy Grand Ledge pop-rock band, plays a reunion gig Friday at Mac's Bar. The band, led by vocalist/guitarist Matt Waterman, played its farewell gig two years ago. Since then Waterman, the band's chief songwriter, has concentrated on his current band, Decades. In its prime, Jason Alarm was known for its packed, fist-pumping shows at local venues. The band, which also includes Kirk Mason, Pat Hogan, David Birdsall, Alex Rosendall, and Dave Hendrickson, had a distinct sound, heavy on shredding guitars and synth-driven rock. Its debut EP "Engage" earned fans far beyond the Lansing area, allowing the band to tour the Midwest three times. Opening the show are Wayne Szalinski, Smashing Blumkins

### FRONTIER RUCKUS AT THE LOFT



FRI. DEC 13TH

**Friday, Dec. 13 @ The Loft, 414 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. All ages, \$14, \$12 adv., 7 p.m.**

Frontier Ruckus had a busy 2013. "It was the year of our double-album of 20 songs, 'Eternity of Dimming,'" said Matthew Milia, the band's songwriter. "It was a dense and indulgent work that I am incredibly proud of having made. We toured a good bit — went to Europe twice this year." The band returns Friday to The Loft. Vocalist Anna Burch will perform with the band for the first time in four years. Opening are The Crane Wives and Gifts or Creatures. So what's next for Frontier Ruckus? "We are currently in the midst of recording our fourth record," Milia said. "(It) directly opposes the context that 'Eternity of Dimming' established — shorter, hookier songs."

### DAVE HARDIN AT (SCENE) METROSPACE



FRI. DEC 13TH

**(SCENE) MetroSpace, 110 Charles St., East Lansing. All ages, \$5, 7:30 p.m.**

West Michigan roots-rocker Dave Hardin, the Grand Rapids-based songwriter, plays a mix of twangy country and bluegrass, with nods to the pioneers of rock 'n' roll. Hardin spent years in the Navy; in his off time he'd strum his guitar at bars, bus stations and street corners. After his military days he worked a 9-to-5 job and helped raise his family. In recent years he's focused heavily on playing shows, recording, and developing his storytelling songs. His 2012 album, "Miles of Nowhere," was released via Ride Records. Opening the (SCENE) show is LeRoy Harvey and the Grand River Band, a local Americana group.

### SNAP JOHNSON AT MAC'S BAR



THU. DEC 19TH

**Mac's Bar, 2700 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. All ages, \$8 adv., 9 p.m.**

Marcus Baldori, aka Snap Johnson, a local hip-hop producer, has a familiar name in the Lansing music scene — his father is "Boogie" Bob Baldori of The Woolies and director of the award-winning film, "Boogie Stomp." Marcus Baldori writes, mixes and masters all of his recordings. In 2010 he delved into music with the defunct rap group Na Style Jaa, a "history-based rap group" with lyrics about the Civil War and other notable moments in America's timeline. In 2013, he started the solo project, Snap Johnson, taking influence from hits songs by The Temptations and a variety of '90s acts. Opening the Mac's Bar show are Goat Machine, The Funk Munks, 5th Wall Concept.

**UPCOMING SHOW? CONTACT RICH TUPICA AT RICH@LANSINGCITYPULSE.COM >>> TO BE LISTED IN LIVE & LOCAL E-MAIL LIVEANDLOCAL@LANSINGCITYPULSE.COM**

## LIVE & LOCAL

	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
The Avenue Café, 2021 E. Michigan Ave.	Salsa Verde, 10 p.m.	DJ Cattle, 8 p.m.	Mark Lavengood, 8 p.m.	Marshall Music, 8 p.m.
Coach's Pub & Grill, 6201 Bishop Rd.	DJ Trivia, 8 p.m.	DJ Jimmy, 9 p.m.	Last Call, 9 p.m.	DJ Jimmy, 9 p.m.
Colonial Bar, 3425 S. MLK Blvd.		DJ, 9 p.m.	Velocity Shift, 9 p.m.	Velocity Shift, 9 p.m.
Connxtions Comedy Club, 2900 E. N. East St.		Tyrone Davis, 8 p.m.	Tyrone Davis, 8 p.m.	Tyrone Davis, 8 p.m.
Crunchy's, 254 W. Grand River Ave.	Dave Menzo, 10 p.m.	Karaoke, 9 p.m.	Karaoke, 9 p.m.	Karaoke, 9 p.m.
The Exchange, 314 E. Michigan Ave.	Stu Vosbeeg, 9 p.m.	Mike Skory Open Mic, 8 p.m.	Smooth Daddy, 9 p.m.	Smooth Daddy, 9 p.m.
Grand Café/Sir Pizza, 201 E. Grand River Ave.		Kathy Ford Band, 7:30 p.m.	Karaoke, 9 p.m.	Eye 96 Band, 8 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.			Frontier Ruckus, 7 p.m.	Saves the Day, 7 p.m.
Lou & Harry's Sports Bar, 16800 Chandler Rd.			Glamhammer, 10 p.m.	
Mac's Bar, 2700 E. Michigan Ave.		Way To Fall, 7 p.m.	Smashing Blumkins, 8 p.m.	Of Virtue, 5 p.m.
Moriarty's Pub, 802 E. Michigan Ave.	Open Mic, 10 p.m.		Zydecronch, 9:30 p.m.	Zydecronch, 9:30 p.m.
Tin Can West, 644 Migaldi Ln.	Water Pong, 9 p.m.	Off the Ledge, 9 p.m.		
Tin Can DeWitt, 13175 Schavey Rd.	DJ Floyds Trivia, 8 p.m.	Well Enough Alone, 8 p.m.		
Unicorn Tavern, 327 E. Grand River Ave.		Frog & the Beeftones, 8 p.m.	Late Addition, 8 p.m.	Late Addition, 8 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.	DJ, 9 p.m.	DJ, 9 p.m.	WITL Christmas Party, 9 p.m.	Matt Austin 9 p.m.

## PLAY IN A BAND? BOOK SHOWS? LIVE & LOCAL LISTS UPCOMING GIGS!

To get listed just email us at [liveandlocal@lansingcitypulse.com](mailto:liveandlocal@lansingcitypulse.com) or call (517) 999-6710

**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 25

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.

**Computer Training.** 11 a.m.-2 p.m. FREE. Faith United Methodist Church, 4301 S. Waverly Road, Lansing. (517) 393-3347.

**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.

**English Country Dance.** Room C20. No experience needed, all dances taught. 7-9:30 p.m. \$6, \$4 students, MSU students FREE. Snyder/Phillips Hall, MSU campus, East Lansing. (517) 321-3070. msu.edu.

**Family Education Day.** No ordinary onion. 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. FREE. Lansing City Market, 325 City Market Drive, Lansing. (517) 483-7460. lansingcitymarket.com.

## EVENTS

**Holiday Drop & Shop.** Ages 3 and up. Call to register. 5-7 p.m. FREE. Delta Township District Library, 5130 Davenport Drive, Lansing. (517) 321-4014 ext. 3. dtldl.org.

**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.

**Michigan Beer Show Podcast: Tap Takeover.** Tap Takeover with home brews, open to public. 8-9 p.m. FREE. Midtown Beer Company, 402 S. Washington Square, Lansing. (517) 977-1349.

**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,

See Out on the Town, Page 28

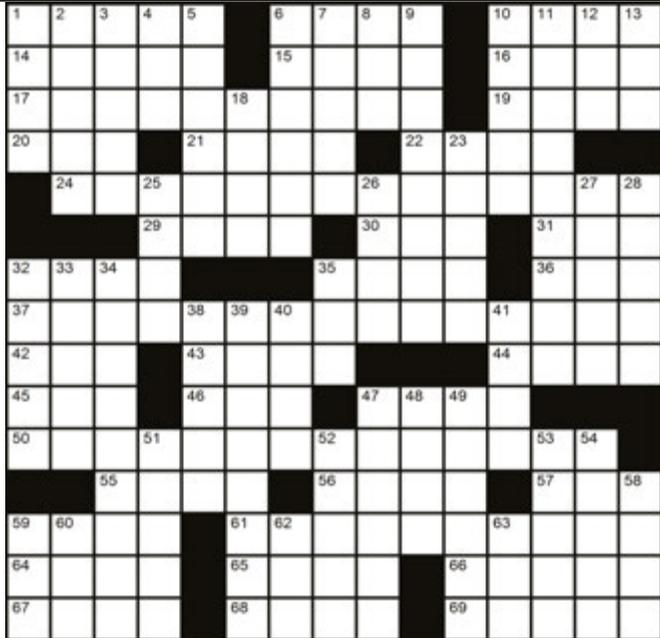
## Jonesin' Crossword

By Matt Jones

"Round Here"--a token of my gratitude.  
Matt Jones

### Across

- 1 Martial artist in "Lethal Weapon 4"
- 6 River that empties into the Caspian
- 10 Take quickly
- 14 Sweeping
- 15 Heat up in a hurry
- 16 Prefix that means "transcending"
- 17 Do a radio remembrance of a late Pantera founder?
- 19 Critters that may be "live"
- 20 Alternatives to Cokes
- 21 Portrayer of Ricky on "I Love Lucy"
- 22 "\_\_\_ Lang Syne"
- 24 Metal coating that's all the rage?
- 29 Another, in Argentina
- 30 Open a barrel
- 31 Electric fan setting
- 32 Altar area
- 35 Nicolas whom "Dog the Bounty Hunter" once posted bail for
- 36 Bilbao bear
- 37 Cater a party for Drew Brees?
- 42 Overly permissive
- 43 The Runnin' Rebels of the NCAA
- 44 Some, in Seville
- 45 Lob's trajectory
- 46 "\_\_\_ recall..."
- 47 Right in the atlas
- 50 Punch out the clown from "It"?
- 55 A restaurant may hold it for you



- 56 Inking
- 57 "Do Ya" rock group
- 59 "Burlesque" actress
- 61 Ubiquitous arcade game message, or a hint to this puzzle's theme
- 64 Means
- 65 Drama king?
- 66 Water park slide
- 67 Some stocking stuffers
- 68 \_\_\_ of thousands
- 69 Logical flaws
- Down**
- 1 Hook-shaped ski lift
- 2 "Love Story" novelist Segal
- 3 Trunk
- 4 Youngster
- 5 Statement of denial
- 6 World Heritage Site org.
- 7 His fame involved a lot of twists
- 8 Wanted poster letters
- 9 21, often
- 10 "New car" or "burning tire"
- 11 TV ad come-on
- 12 The Falcons, on scoreboards
- 13 Pump contents
- 18 Former Israeli PM Golda
- 23 Word with crust or hand
- 25 Open-\_\_\_ shoes
- 26 Coup d'\_\_\_
- 27 1900 Puccini premiere
- 28 Furry movie creatures
- 32 Insurance co. with a "spokesduck"
- 33 Oyster's offering
- 34 "American Pie," e.g.
- 35 Honda SUV
- 38 Visibly nervous
- 39 Pristine, to Brits
- 40 "That's \_\_\_!"
- 41 "\_\_\_ digress..."
- 47 "\_\_\_ Game" (2013 film)
- 48 Yesterday, in Cuba
- 49 1980s timepiece
- 51 "Who \_\_\_?"
- 52 Jewish month that sounds like a car
- 53 Asian economic hub
- 54 Best of the best
- 58 Binary digits
- 59 Where Alabama may be viewed, for short
- 60 Follower of boo, yoo or woo
- 62 Wedding column word
- 63 Stand-up comic Margaret

## GREATER LANSING BALLET COMPANY

Barbara Banasikowski Smith, Founding Artistic Director  
presents

# The Nutcracker Ballet

Saturday, December 14th ~ 7 pm

Sunday, December 15th ~ 2 pm

Pattengill Academy Auditorium

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Greater Lansing Ballet Co. Studio  
2225 East Grand River Ave.

More Information at

www.greaterlansingballet.com

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Cody is not only gorgeous but also very sharp witted, he will need an experienced owner.

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5206 W. Saginaw Hwy.  
517.323.6920  
**Charlotte**  
515 Lansing Road  
517.541.1700

# Out on the town

from page 27

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.

**Lansing Christian School Christmas Concert.** Kindergarten through third grade to perform. 6:30 p.m. Lansing Christian School, 3405 Belle Chase Way, Lansing. (517) 882-5779 ext. 119. lansingchristianschool.org.

**YPAAL Happy Hour.** Appetizers, drinks, networking and volunteering. 5:30-7 p.m. FREE. Tavern On the Square, 206 S. Washington Square, Lansing. (614) 266-0852. alz.org/mglc.

## MUSIC

**Live Music at P Squared.** Live music every Thursday.

8 p.m. FREE. P Squared Wine Bar, 107 S. Washington Square, Lansing. (517) 507-5074.

**Rally In The Alley: Open Mic.** 6:30 p.m. FREE. American Legion Post 48, 731 North Clinton St., Grand Ledge. (517) 627-1232.

## THEATER

**"Ghost the Musical."** Part of the MSU Broadway at Wharton Center Series. 7:30 p.m. \$32-\$72, \$25 students. Wharton Center, MSU Campus, East Lansing. (517) 432-2000. whartoncenter.com.

**"White Christmas."** Based on Irving Berlin's holiday classic. 7 p.m. \$20, \$18 seniors. Riverwalk Theatre, 228 Museum Drive, Lansing. (517) 482-5700.

## LITERATURE AND POETRY

**Jonathan Rand Book Signing.** "Michigan Chillers" and "American Chillers." 5 p.m. FREE. Barnes and

Noble, 5132 W. Saginaw Highway, Lansing. (517) 327-0437.

## Friday, December 13

### CLASSES AND SEMINARS

**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.

**Alcoholics Anonymous.** A closed women's meeting. 7:30 p.m. St. Michael's Episcopal Church, 6500 Amwood Drive, Lansing. (517) 882-9733.

### EVENTS

**One-on-One Business Counseling.** Call (517) 483-1921 to register. 12:30-4:30 p.m. FREE. Delta Township District Library, 5130 Davenport Drive, Lansing. (517) 321-4014 ext. 4. dtld.org.

**Karaoke.** At the Valencia Club. 8 p.m. FREE. Best Western Plus Lansing Hotel, 6820 South Cedar St., Lansing.

**Lansing Bike Party.** Bike ride with TGIF stop. 5:30 p.m. FREE. Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum, 547 E. Circle Drive, MSU Campus, East Lansing.

### MUSIC

**Velocity Shift Live.** Classic and modern rock. 9 p.m.-1:30 a.m. The Colonial Bar & Grille, 3425 S. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Lansing. (517) 882-6132.

**Grand River Radio Diner/WLNZ 89.7.** Featuring Matt Moore and Michael Steibel. Noon-1 p.m. FREE. Grand Cafe/Sir Pizza, 201 E. Grand River Ave., Lansing. (517) 483-1710. lcc.edu/radio.

**Mason Orchestras.** Mason Symphony and Philharmonic Holiday Concert. 7:30 p.m. FREE. Chippewa Middle School, 4000 N. Okemos Road, Okemos. masonorchestras.org.

**Rock & Roll Christmas Show.** Features Elvis and Johnny Cash tribute artists. 8 p.m. Adults \$20, children \$10. Leslie American Legion, 422 Woodworth St. Leslie. (517) 676-1721.

**Holiday Concert.** Holiday music by local ensembles. 7-9 p.m. FREE. Our Savior Lutheran Church, 7910 E. St. Joe Highway, Lansing.

**Dave Hardin Band and Grand River Band.** Eclectic selections and soul-stirring harmonies. 8 p.m. \$5. Scene MetroSpace, 110 Charles St., East Lansing. (517) 505-2809. scenemetrospace.blogspot.com.

## THEATER

**"Ghost the Musical."** Part of the MSU Broadway at Wharton Center Series. 8 p.m. \$32-\$72, \$25 students. Wharton Center, MSU Campus, East Lansing. (517) 432-2000. whartoncenter.com.

**"White Christmas."** Based on Irving Berlin's holiday classic. 8 p.m. \$20, \$18 seniors. Riverwalk Theatre, 228 Museum Drive, Lansing. (517) 482-5700.

**"A Christmas Carol."** Adaptation of Charles Dickens' classic. 3 p.m. \$7, \$5 12 and under. Alfreda Schmidt Southside Community Center, 5825 Wise Road, Lansing. (517) 483-6686. mmft.net.

## Saturday, December 14

### CLASSES AND SEMINARS

**Tai Chi in the Park.** Taught by Bob Teachout. 9 a.m. FREE. Hunter Park Community GardenHouse, 1400 block of E. Kalamazoo St., Lansing.

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

### EVENTS

**Jingle Belle Women's 5K Run/Walk for Women.** 10 a.m. \$30 through Dec. 12, \$35 through Dec. 14. Delta Township District Library, 5130 Davenport Drive, Lansing. (517) 321-4014 . dtld.org.

**Second Saturdays for Families: Walked This Way.** Discover prehistoric animals. 11 a.m.-3 p.m. \$2-\$6. Michigan Historical Museum, 702 W. Kalamazoo St., Lansing. (517) 373-3559. michigan.gov/museum.

**Sandy Hook Commemoration.** One-year anniversary of Sandy Hook. 11 a.m. FREE. Union Missionary Baptist Church, 500 S. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Lansing. (517) 337-3024. facebook.com/MomsDemandActionMI.

**Second Saturday Supper.** Baked chicken dinner. Takeout available. 5-6:15 p.m. \$8, \$4 kids. Mayflower Congregational Church, 2901 W. Mount Hope Ave., Lansing. (517) 484-3139. mayflowerchurch.com.

**Comic Crash Course.** Course for kids to learn how to draw comics. 9:30-11:30 a.m. FREE. Everybody Reads Books and Stuff, 2019 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. (517) 694-1394. becauseeverybodyreads.com.

**Drive-Thru Santa.** Visit Santa from the comfort of your own car. 5 p.m.-8 p.m. \$5 per car. Meridian Township Service Center, 2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court, East Lansing. (517) 853-4600. meridian.mi.us.

**Stuff The Bus.** Event to provide Christmas to 26 local children. 9 a.m.-8 p.m. Donations. Walmart, 3225 Towne Centre Blvd., Lansing. (248) 716-0539. lansingjaycees.org.

**Home for the Holidays.** LanSINGout Gay Men's Chorus Holiday Concert 2013. 7 p.m. \$10, \$20. First Presbyterian Church, 510 W. Ottawa St., Lansing. (517) 980-1444. lansingout.org.

## MUSIC

**Saves the Day Holiday Acoustic Tour.** Alternative rock concert. 7 p.m. \$15. The Loft, 414 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. flavorus.com.

**Velocity Shift Live.** Classic and modern rock. 9 p.m.-1:30 a.m. Colonial Bar and Grill, 3425 S.



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## ADVANCED

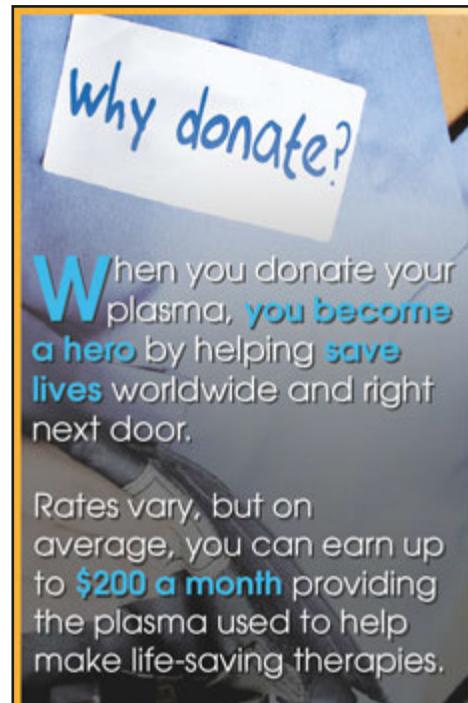
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**TO PLAY**

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

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

Answers on page 30



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**MUSIC STREET BREWING CO./CAPITAL CITY HOMEBREW SUPPLY/SOUL EMPOWERMENT**

Alan I. Ross/City Pulse  
 Cutline: Soul Empowerment owner Michael Whitcomb recently expanded his business. One of the services he offers is reiki, a Japanese technique for stress reduction.



**By ALLAN I. ROSS**

Roll out the barrel — Lansing's Eastside neighborhood is getting a brewpub next summer. **The Music Street Brewing Co.**, named for the prevalence of live band performances on Michigan Avenue, will take over the 400-square-foot space adjacent to **Capital City Homebrew Supply**,



which recently moved two blocks over to the fast developing 2000 block.

Proprietor Jordan Artuso said he plans to have 12 beers on tap, including his signature brew, a black IPA called Big Scary Monster.

Homebrew Supply owner Todd Branstner said he made the move in order to expand his business. He more than doubled his floor space to 1,300 square feet, allowing him to have a dedicated space for classes. He also plans to add a children's play area. "We're very family friendly," he said.

Branstner said there will be a grand reopening this Saturday, Dec. 14, featuring

refreshments from 4-7 p.m., and specials all weekend. "I'm very honored to be a part of this block, with **The Green Door** and **The Avenue Café** right across the street," he said. "This is an exciting place to be."

**Michigan Avenue Shuffle**

Back at Homebrew Supply's old digs, Michael Whitcomb's **Soul Empowerment** alternative/holistic health store has expanded. That space used to be the home of **Triple Goddess Bookstore**, but when Triple Goddess relocated this fall into a shared space with **Everybody Reads**, 2016 E. Michigan Ave., Soul Empowerment moved into that part of the building.

Whitcomb said Soul Empowerment offers psychic reading, reiki circles (at 8 p.m. Fridays), chakra and aura balancing, home cleansing and blessing, crystal healing and animal healing. He also leads Taro readings at 7 p.m. every Tuesday.

"This time of the year can be very stressful, and (the services we offer) can help get you more centered," Whitcomb said. "This area is a

great location for us because we're right near the Capitol. In our reiki circles, we sent a lot of good energy in that direction so that energy can spread. There are a lot of things in this world causing stress and fear. What we do here is help people release that stress in a positive way."

**Bye bye, miss American Crepes**

**American Crepes**, 986 Trowbridge Road in East Lansing, permanently closed on Monday. In a statement on its Facebook page, "Thank you for your support these past years ... we have enjoyed your company."

**Capital City Homebrew Supply**

2006 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Monday-Saturday; Noon to 4 p.m. Sunday (517) 374-1070, capitalcityhomebrewsupply.com

**Soul Empowerment**

1824 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing 11 a.m.-7 p.m. daily (616) 516-0194, facebook.com/soulempowerment

**Out on the town**

from page 28

Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Lansing. (517) 882-6132. colonialbarandgrille.com.

**MSUFCU Showcase Series: A Jazzy Little Christmas.** Celebrate with MSU Professors of Jazz. 8 p.m. \$20, \$18 seniors, \$10 students with ID. Fairchild Theatre, MSU Campus, East Lansing.

**Suzuki Strings Winter Concert.** Each group performs, then all play together. 5:30 p.m. FREE. MSU Community Music School, 4930 S. Hagadorn Road, East Lansing. (517) 355-7661. cms.msu.edu.

**All School Recital.** Students of all ages and ensembles perform. 3 p.m. FREE. MSU Community Music School, 4930 S. Hagadorn Road, East Lansing. (517) 355-7661. cms.msu.edu.

**The Verve Pipe.** Live performance. 7:30 p.m. \$37/\$5 students. Charlotte Performing Arts Center, 378 State St., Charlotte. (517) 541-5690. cpacpresents.com.

**Christmas Concert.** Holiday music from the choir, bells and others. 7-8 p.m. FREE. Pilgrim Congregational United Church of Christ, 125 S. Pennsylvania Ave., Lansing. (517) 484-7434. PilgrimUCC.com.

**THEATER**

**"Ghost the Musical."** Part of the MSU Broadway at Wharton Center Series. 2p.m. and 8 p.m. \$32-\$72, \$25 students. Wharton Center, MSU Campus, East Lansing. (517) 432-2000. whartoncenter.com.

**"White Christmas."** Based on Irving Berlin's holiday classic. 8 p.m. \$20, \$18 seniors. Riverwalk Theatre, 228 Museum Drive, Lansing. (517) 482-5700.

**"A Christmas Carol."** Adaptation of Charles Dickens' classic. 3 p.m. \$7, \$5 12 and under. Alfreda Schmidt Southside Community Center, 5825 Wise Road, Lansing.

(517) 483-6686. mmft.net.

**LITERATURE AND POETRY**

**Author Signing with Lori Nelson Spielman.** With her book "The Life List." 1 p.m. FREE. Barnes and Noble, 5132 W. Saginaw Highway, Lansing. (517) 327-0437.

**Open Mic Poetry Reading.** Held by the Lansing Poetry Club, all are welcome. 3 p.m. FREE. The Avenue Cafe, 2021 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. (517) 402-5229. sites.google.com/site/lansingpoetryclub.

**Sunday, December 15**

**CLASSES AND SEMINARS**

**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.

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

**Community Day.** Music, vendors, donations for Toys for Tots and more. Noon. \$2 or donation. 1200 Marquette St., Lansing. (517) 420-1873. thinklivemusic.com.

**Brunch with Santa.** Call for reservations. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Tavern 109, 115 E. Grand River Ave., Williamston. (517) 655-2100. tavern109.com.

See Out on the Town, Page 30

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## Free Will Astrology By Rob Breznsky

Dec 11-17

**ARIES** (March 21-April 19): Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected President of the United States four times, more often than any other president. We can conclude that he was one of the most popular American leaders ever. And yet he never won a majority of the votes cast by the citizens of his home county in New York. I foresee the possibility of a comparable development in your life. You may be more successful working on the big picture than you are in your immediate situation. It could be easier for you to maneuver when you're not dealing with familiar, up-close matters. What's outside your circle might be more attracted to your influence than what's nearer to home.

**TAURUS** (April 20-May 20): In 2009, actress Sandra Bullock starred in three films, two of which earned her major recognition. For her performance in *All About Steve*, she was given a Golden Raspberry Award for Worst Actress. Her work in *The Blind Side*, on the other hand, won her an Oscar for Best Actress. I'm thinking that you may experience a similar paradox in the coming days, Taurus. Some of your efforts might be denigrated, while others are praised. It may even be the case that you're criticized and applauded for the same damn thing. How to respond? Learn from Bullock's example. She gave gracious acceptance speeches at the award ceremonies for both the Golden Raspberry and the Oscar.

**GEMINI** (May 21-June 20): Almost 2,000 years ago, a Roman doctor named Scribonius Largus developed recipes for three different kinds of toothpaste. One contained the ashes of burned-up deer antler, aromatic resin from an evergreen shrub known as mastic, and a rare mineral called sal ammoniac. His second toothpaste was a mix of barley flour, vinegar, honey, and rock salt. Then there was the third: sun-dried radish blended with finely ground glass. Let's get a bit rowdy here and propose that these three toothpastes have metaphorical resemblances to the life choices in front of you right now. I'm going to suggest you go with the second option. At the very least, avoid the third.

**CANCER** (June 21-July 22): Are you feeling a bit pinched, parched, and prickly? Given the limitations you've had to wrestle with lately, I wouldn't be surprised if you were. Even though you have passed some of the sneaky tests and solved some of the itchy riddles you've been compelled to deal with, they have no doubt contributed to the pinched, parched prickliness. Now what can be done to help you recover your verve? I'm thinking that all you will have to do is respond smartly to the succulent temptations that life will bring your way in the coming weeks.

**LEO** (July 23-Aug. 22): Have you ever situated yourself between two big bonfires on a beach and basked in the primal power? Was there a special moment in your past when you found yourself sitting between two charismatic people you loved and admired, soaking up the life-giving radiance they exuded? Did you ever read a book that filled you with exaltation as you listened to music that thrilled your soul? These are the kinds of experiences I hope you seek out in the coming week. I'd love to see you get nourished stereophonically by rich sources of excitement.

**VIRGO** (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Mythically speaking, this would be a propitious time for you to make an offering to the sea goddess. In dreams or meditations or fantasies, I suggest you dive down into the depths, find the supreme feminine power in her natural habitat, and give her a special gift. Show her how smart you are in the way you express love, or tell her exactly how you will honor her wisdom in the future. If she is receptive, you may even ask her for a favor. Maybe she'll be willing to assist you in accessing the deep feelings that haven't been fully available to you. Or perhaps she will teach you how to make conscious the secrets you have been keeping from yourself.

**LIBRA** (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Don't linger in a doorway, Libra. Don't camp out in a threshold or get stuck in the middle of anything. I understand your caution, considering the fact that life is presenting you with such paradoxical clues. But if you remain ambivalent too much longer, you may obstruct the influx of more definitive information. The best way to generate the clarity and attract the help you need will be to make a decisive move -- either in or out, either forward or backward, either up or down.

**SCORPIO** (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): "It's a rare person who wants to hear what he doesn't want to hear," said TV talk show host Dick Cavett. I will love it if you make yourself one of those rare types in the coming week, Scorpio. Can you bring yourself to be receptive to truths that might be disruptive? Are you willing to send out an invitation to the world, asking to be shown revelations that contradict your fixed theories and foregone conclusions? If you do this hard work, I promise that you will be granted a brainstorm and a breakthrough. You might also be given a new reason to brag.

**SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): There are pregnant truths I could reveal to you right now that I've decided not to disclose. I don't think you're prepared to hear them yet. If I told you what they are, you wouldn't be receptive or able to register their full meaning; you might even misinterpret them. It is possible, however, that you could evolve rather quickly in the next two weeks. So let's see if I can nudge you in the direction of getting the experiences necessary to become ready. Meditate on what parts of you are immature or underdeveloped -- aspects that may one day be skilled and gracious, but are not yet. I bet that once you identify what needs ripening, you will expedite the ripening. And then you will become ready to welcome the pregnant truths.

**CAPRICORN** (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): "Finifugal" is a rarely used English adjective that I need to invoke in order to provide you with the proper horoscope. It refers to someone who avoids or dislikes endings -- like a child who doesn't want a bedtime story to conclude, or an adult who's in denial about how it's finally time to wrap up long-unfinished business. You can't afford to be finifugal in the coming days, Capricorn. This is the tail end of your cycle. It won't be healthy for you to shun climaxes and denouements. Neither will it be wise to merely tolerate them. Somehow, you've got to find a way to love and embrace them. (P.S. That's the best strategy for ensuring the slow-motion eruption of vibrant beginnings after your birthday.)

**AQUARIUS** (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): According to 20th-century British author John Cowper Powys, "A bookshop is a dynamite-shed, a drugstore of poisons, a bar of intoxicants, a den of opiates, an island of sirens." He didn't mean that literally, of course. He was referring to the fact that the words contained in books can inflame and enthrall the imagination. I think you will be wise to seek out that level of arousal in the coming weeks, Aquarius. Your thoughts need to be aired out and rearranged. Your feelings are crying out for strenuous exercise, including some pure, primal catharses. Do whatever it takes to make sure that happens.

**PISCES** (Feb. 19-March 20): "I am not fearless," says Mexican journalist and women's right advocate Lydia Cacho, "but I'm not overtaken by fear. Fear is quite an interesting animal. It's like a pet. If you mistreat it, it will bite, but if you understand it and accept it in your house, it might protect you." This is an excellent time to work on transforming your fright reflexes, Pisces. You have just the right kind of power over them: strong and crafty and dynamic, but not grandiose or cocky or delusional. You're ready to make your fears serve you, not drain you.

## Out on the town

from page 29

**Home for the Holidays.** LanSINGout Gay Men's Chorus celebrates 25 years. 3 p.m. \$10-\$20. First Presbyterian Church, 510 W. Ottawa St., Lansing. (517) 980-1444. lansingout.org.

### MUSIC

**New Horizons Band Fall Concert.** Guest conductor Henry Nelson. 3 p.m. FREE. MSU Community Music School, 4930 S. Hagadorn Road, East Lansing. (517) 355-7661. cms.msu.edu.

**A Barbershop Christmas.** The Capitol City Chordsmen and its quartets. 2 p.m. \$15. Charlotte Performing Arts Center, 378 State St. Charlotte. (517) 541-5690. facebook.com/events/218989068262152/.

### THEATER

**"Ghost the Musical."** Part of the MSU Broadway at Wharton Center Series. 1 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. \$32-\$72, \$25 students. Wharton Center, MSU Campus, East Lansing. (517) 432-2000. whartoncenter.com.

**"White Christmas."** Based on Irving Berlin's holiday classic. 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. \$20, \$18 Seniors. Riverwalk Theatre, 228 Museum Drive, Lansing. (517) 482-5700.

**"A Christmas Carol."** Adaptation of Charles Dickens' classic. 3 p.m. \$7, \$5 12 and under. Alfreda Schmidt Southside Community Center, 5825 Wise Road, Lansing. (517) 483-6686. mmft.net.

### LITERATURE AND POETRY

**Wally Miars Author Signing.** Author signs "Alone Together." 1 p.m. FREE. Barnes and Noble, 5132 W. Saginaw Highway, Lansing. (517) 327-0437. bn.com.

## Monday, December 16

### CLASSES AND SEMINARS

**Zumba Gold.** For seniors or beginners. With Rochele Cotter. 11 a.m.-Noon, \$8 drop-in rate, \$35 five-visit

## City Pulse Classifieds

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## SUDOKU SOLUTION

From Pg. 28

1	9	5	6	8	3	4	2	7
3	7	4	5	9	2	1	8	6
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## CROSSWORD SOLUTION

From Pg. 27

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	H	O	T	N	I	C	K	E	L	P	L	A	T	E
		O	T	R	O	T	A	P	L	O	W			
A	P	S	E	C	A	G	E	O	S	O				
F	E	E	D	Q	U	A	R	T	E	R	B	A	C	K
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A	R	C	A	S	I	E	A	S	T					
C	L	O	C	K	P	E	N	N	Y	W	I	S	E	
		M	A	Y	O	I	D	E	A	E	L	O		
C	H	E	R	I	N	S	E	R	T	C	O	I	N	
M	O	D	E	L	E	A	R	C	H	U	T	E		
T	O	Y	S	T	E	N	S	H	O	L	E	S		

# Out on the town

from page 30

2:30-4 p.m. FREE. Capital Area Michigan Works, 2110 S. Cedar St., Lansing.

**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.

**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.

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

**Speakeasies Toastmasters.** Become a better speaker. 12:05-1 p.m. FREE. Ingham County Human Services Building, 5303 S. Cedar St., Lansing. (616) 841-5176.

**Today's Special Program.** Chomping to protect those chompers. 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. FREE. Lansing City Market, 325 City Market Drive, Lansing. (517) 483-7460.

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

## EVENTS

**Tea & Talk.** Salon-style discussions. 8 p.m. FREE. Triple Goddess New Age Bookstore, 2019 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. (517) 883-3414. triplegoddessbookstore.net.

**Company & Conversation: You Eat What You Are.** Discussion. Light hors d'oeuvres provided. 5-7 p.m. FREE. Nonprofit Center at the Armory, 330 Marshall St., suite 300, Lansing. (517) 485-1202. fbcnich.org.

**Bible and Beer.** Discussion of Scripture's power in daily event. 6 p.m. Midtown Beer Co., 402 S. Washington Square, Lansing. (517) 482-0600. ccc Lansing.org.

## MUSIC

**DCS Annual Holiday Concert.** "Tis the Season." Donations accepted. 7:30 p.m. FREE. St. Jude Catholic Church, 801 N. Bridge St., DeWitt. (989) 640-9907.

## LITERATURE AND POETRY

**Tuesday Morning Book Club.** Discuss Beth Hoffman's "Saving CeeCee Honeycutt." 10:15-11:15 a.m. FREE. Delta Township District Library, 5130 Davenport Drive, Lansing. (517) 321-4014 ext. 4. dtld.org.

## Wednesday, December 18

### CLASSES AND SEMINARS

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

**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) 272-9840.

**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.

**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.

**A War on Christmas?** War on Christmas or another conspiracy theory? 6-7 p.m. FREE. Pilgrim Congregational United Church of Christ, 125 S. Pennsylvania Ave., Lansing. (517) 484-7434.

**Overeaters Anonymous.** 7 p.m. FREE. First Congregational United Church of Christ, 210 W. Saginaw Highway, Grand Ledge. (517) 256-6954. fcgl.org.

## EVENTS

**DTDL Book Club.** Discuss M.L. Stedman's "The Light Between Oceans." 6-7:30 p.m. FREE. Delta Township District Library, 5130 Davenport Drive, Lansing. (517) 321-4014 ext. 4. dtld.org.

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

## MUSIC

**Ukulele Workshop.** Anna Zang hosts the monthly Ukulele workshop. 6 p.m. FREE. Marshall Music, 3240 E. Saginaw St., Lansing. (517) 337-9700. marshallmusic.com.

**Marshall Students' Recital.** Students perform at the annual holiday recital. 7 p.m. FREE. Marshall Music, 3240 E. Saginaw St., Lansing. (517) 337-9700.

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old town

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For more information about Old Town Lansing – how to volunteer, join a committee and learn about all of our events for 2014 visit [iloveoldtown.org](http://iloveoldtown.org)