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May 22-28, 2013

## Pictures at an obsession

page 8

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at Carnegie Hall



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SATURDAY OCTOBER 5, 2013 8 PM MasterWorks 2 <b>Prokofiev Violin Concertos</b>	SATURDAY JANUARY 11, 2014 8 PM MasterWorks 4 <b>Tchaikovsky &amp; Beyond</b>	SATURDAY MARCH 29, 2014 8 PM MasterWorks 5 <b>Bernstein &amp; Friends</b>
SUNDAY OCTOBER 20, 2013 3 PM Chamber Series 1 <b>Winds &amp; Piano Potpourri</b>	SUNDAY JANUARY 26, 2014 3 PM Chamber Series 3 <b>Beyond the Beat</b>	SATURDAY APRIL 12, 2014 8 PM Pops 3 <b>Satisfaction – A Rolling Stones Tribute</b>
SATURDAY NOVEMBER 9, 2013 8 PM MasterWorks 3 <b>Beethoven &amp; Mozart</b>	TUESDAY FEBRUARY 11, 2014 7:30 PM Special Event – Chamber Music <b>Blakemore Trio</b>	WEDNESDAY APRIL 30, 2014 8 PM MasterWorks 6 <b>A Glorious End!</b>
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# Feedback

## What's next, another chain?

In all likelihood, Wanderer's teahouse is now closed for good. The story I heard is that the owner took a job in Texas and only stuck around for a week to try and sell the business — and make sure his employees still had a place to work. I was also told that the building owner is excited to get a higher-grossing chain business to replace Wanderer's. This is a pretty unappealing move by the owners of Wanderer's. They are letting their business drop like a sack of wet garbage.

Authenticity is what Wanderer's has that most chain businesses don't. Authenticity means being true to yourself, and most chain businesses will do or change anything about themselves to improve their profit margin. This definition puts authentic businesses at a strategic disadvantage, but it does not make them any less authentic. Wanderer's is only three years old, but it has more authenticity than most of the rest of Grand River combined.

Wanderer's website lists three corporate sponsors and 25 individual sponsors on their website. These people donated time, money, or materials to Wanderer's as it grew, and dropping the business shows great disrespect for these donors. Why not donate your business to your employees so it can continue to flourish? Bob's Red Mill did it.

Wanderer's is East Lansing's best "third place." The first two "places" are home and work, and a third place is a community hub of conversation and, traditionally, civic discussion. Wanderer's is one of the few places that quiet types like me and most of my friends will hang out. A large portion of the MSU student body is not served by crowded and visible bars, but by quiet and unassuming coffee shops, teahouses, and bookstores. Wanderer's is the last best space like this in East Lansing, and it will be sorely missed by many artists.

MSU and the East Lansing Arts Commission have been trying to bill East

Lansing as a "City of the Arts." Obviously, the biggest art event in East Lansing is ironic football tailgating. However, if East Lansing does become an art city, everyone wins. So maybe East Lansing, MSU, the Arts Commission, or the new Broad Art Museum should do something to prevent this popular café across the street from closing. It is a hotspot for artists and art events, and it is the realest place in the city. If it closes, we all lose.

Wanderer's may be closing, but at least the burrito chain next door has a touch-screen Coca-Cola machine.

— Anders Aamodt  
East Lansing

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

Now you have two ways to sound off:

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- Snail mail: City Pulse, 1905 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing, MI 48912
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### 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.)

## CORRECTIONS

Last week's story on Cristo Rey Community Center should have said the citizens group name is Coalition for Community Empowerment, not Coalition of Concerned Citizens.

Also, the story implied that Tonatzin Alfaro Maiz referred people to services at Cristo Rey in her capacity as an attorney in private practice. She does not have a private practice. She is an assistant attorney general. She made the referrals on a person to person, not attorney to client, basis.

## PUBLIC NOTICES



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# CityPULSE

**VOL. 12  
ISSUE 41**

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**PAGE 6**

Lansing Police Department to purchase three additional Automatic License Plate Readers for use this summer, raising privacy concerns



**PAGE 10**

Lansing Vaudeville ensemble embarks on weeklong, statewide tour for documentary



**PAGE 18**

Decoding the sometimes confusing terminology of organic food



KVITKO by VINCE JOY

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Lon Johnson, Michigan Democratic Party chairman

Dylan Rogers, Lansing Unionized Vaudeville Spectacle



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## PULSE

## NEWS &amp; OPINION

## Cold-case detective coming

**Mayor Bernero promises to veto City Council's decision to exclude a full-time cold-case investigator in next fiscal year's budget**

In his office Monday night shortly after the Lansing City Council adopted a budget for the next fiscal year, the first item Mayor Virg Bernero promised to veto was the Council's elimination of a new, full-time cold-case investigator.

In his March budget proposal, Bernero included a line item that set aside \$100,000 to create the new position. Bernero said his decision was based on a March report in

City Pulse that showed little organization in the Lansing Police Department's investigative unit when it comes to unsolved homicides. The original intent of the article was to publicize unsolved homicides in order to assist the Police Department. But when police officials said they did not have a list, the story shifted to why not.

"I'm convinced we need to pay more attention to those cold cases," Bernero told reporters Monday. "We can't allow cold cases to languish. Families deserve closure. We need to do more, we have the ability to do more. That's a priority.

"I'm going to veto that cut. I must have a

cold-case investigator."

The Council's budget vote was not unanimous Monday, when Council members Kathie Dunbar, Tina Houghton and Jessica Yorko voted against the package of changes to Bernero's budget that included the cold-case investigator.

Along with eliminating the investigator, the Council adopted a series of changes to Bernero's budget, including raising the return on equity payment from the Board of Water and Light to replace Bernero's proposed fee on streetlights and hydrants; eliminating part-time positions for Sister Cities and the Office of Faith-Based Initiatives; reducing the city's payment to help the struggling Tax Increment Financing Authority from \$1.4 million to \$1 million with the

difference being made up by the Economic Development Corp.'s revolving loan fund; and selling bonds for \$1.3 million to pay for road repairs rather than paying through the General Fund.

Bernero also promised to veto the EDC line item. He called the streets bonding "not necessary" and is opposed to the Council's decision to not budget for a new cabinet-level IT director.

Bernero has until the end of the day Thursday to file his veto line items with the City Clerk's Office. He said Monday night "stay tuned" for other potential vetoes. The Council can override the mayor's veto with six votes, but that's unlikely.

— Andy Balaskovitz

## Disclosing pay

**Two City Council members' non-disclosure of financial interests suggests a weak ethics ordinance**

Lansing City Council President Carol Wood earned at least \$4,700 as a consultant to political campaigns in 2012, yet she didn't have to report any information on it under the city's ethics ordinance.

Moreover, City Councilman Derrick Quinney did not report any outside income for 2010 and 2011 — a violation of that ordinance because he's worked full time for the Michigan AFL-CIO for over a decade.

Yet the city's Board of Ethics has not requested further information on Quinney's and Wood's statements of financial disclosure because no one has approached the board with a complaint. Still, that board reviews the annual statements required under ordinance to see if any further information is needed.

A review of City Council members' annual statements of financial disclosure from the past three years shows a policy that is weak on reporting requirements, particularly for part-time elected officials who have outside jobs. In the case of Wood, she is being paid directly by campaigns of elected officials. For 2012, Wood reported that she had no clients that year, even though her business was paid by the campaigns of Circuit Judge James Jamo and 68th House District Democratic candidate Griffin Rivers.

Lansing City Clerk Chris Swope said the 17-year-old ethics ordinance does not specifically require additional details about Council members' income and therefore he doesn't believe Wood is in violation. But while the ordinance doesn't require it, the official "statement of financial interests" document asks respondents to answer 12 follow-up questions in an attachment. Those questions include: "What are thing you actually do in

CITY COUNCIL INCOME DISCLOSURE A list of businesses, organizations or other entities City Council members claimed outside income from in 2010, 2011 and 2012	
<b>KATHIE DUNBAR</b> (2010-2012) <b>Title/employer:</b> Executive director, South Lansing Community Development Association, 1900 Boston Blvd., Lansing	<b>A'LYNNE ROBINSON</b> (2010-2011) <b>Title/employer:</b> Special assistant to the superintendent, Jackson Public Schools, 522 Wildwood, Jackson, 2012 - <b>Title/employer:</b> Employee/community director, March of Dimes Foundation, 2450 Delhi Commerce Drive, Holt
<b>TINA HOUGHTON</b> (2010-2012) <b>Title/employer:</b> Program advisor, Michigan State University	<b>JODY WASHINGTON</b> (elected in 2011) (2011-2012) <b>Title/employer:</b> Grievance specialist, state of Michigan Department of Corrections
<b>BRIAN JEFFRIES</b> (2010-2012) <b>Title/employer:</b> Attorney/general partner, Jeffries & Newton, 329 Student Services Building, Michigan State University	<b>CAROL WOOD</b> (2010-2012) <b>Title/ Employer:</b> Owner, CEW Consultant, 1018 W. Lapeer St., Lansing
<b>DERRICK QUINNEY</b> (2010-2011) <b>Title/employer:</b> "N/A", 2012 - <b>Title/employer:</b> Trainer, Michigan State AFL-CIO, 419 S. Washington Sq.	<b>JESSICA YORKO</b> (2010) <b>Title/employer:</b> (1) Program manager, Northwest Initiative, 1012 N. Walnut St., Lansing; (2) Owner, Sustainable Solutions, 815 Bancroft Court, Lansing, 2011-2012 - <b>Title/ Employer:</b> Environmental justice coordinator, Ingham County Health Department, 5303 S. Cedar St., Lansing

the business?" "Who are your clients and who receives your goods or services?" "How and where are your services performed?" "Does your business or employer contract with the City?"

When asked if he thinks the ordinance lacks teeth, Swope, whose office turns the disclosures over to the ethics board once filed, said: "It's tough because if there were a finding, I think it would become pretty public if there was a finding of wrongdoing or conflict. The public is really the judge of elected officials.

"It's clearly something that when there's a real problem I think there's the ability to do an investigation and bring things to light. But I guess I can see your point."

Interviews with three Board of Ethics members suggest that the board only looks into issues if a complaint is brought forward.

Since a formal complaint has not been filed against Wood, Swope said he will simply follow up with her and request the information. The Board of Ethics has "options," Swope said, if it finds any wrongdoing, which could include referring it to the City

Attorney's Office for potential criminal prosecution or by issuing reports.

Board member Douglas Meeks, an attorney in private practice who was appointed by the mayor in fall 2011, said the board would review an ethics complaint if it was filed. "We don't personally investigate it as a body. We only investigate once it was brought to us."

Meeks did not recall any issues with Quinney's or Wood's statements. "If something was missing, if we had knowledge of it, we would make a request, send it back to them and request it be completed appropriately then we would re-review it."

Board member Penny Gardner also could not recall any issues with those two statements. "It seems like we go through those things ad nauseum. If something was missing, the chair would send it back and table it until we got important documents. Whether those were received and recorded I can't be clear on."

Board member Keith Kris also was unaware of any issues with those members' documents.

The Rev. John Folkers, chairman of the

ethics board, declined to comment for this story and referred questions to Swope.

On May 8, 2012, the board reviewed 17 statements of disclosure during a 31-minute meeting that also included other agenda items, meeting minutes show. It apparently overlooked Quinney's "N/A" response to questions about outside employment and did not request more details about Wood's CEW Consultant business. Quinney reported "N/A" for the calendar years 2010 and 2011, but listed the AFL-CIO as his employer for 2012.

Wood did not provide details about her income from CEW Consultant in 2011, even though she provided some in 2010 and 2012. In her most recent disclosure, which is due annually by May 1, Wood said she had "none this year" when asked about clients in 2012, even though she made at least \$4,700 in income from Jamo and Rivers.

Swope said her lack of reporting is not a violation because even though the form asks for details, the ordinance does not require it.

All other Council members appear to be in compliance.

The reports do not require Council members to disclose how much income they make, but it does require disclosure of the source of any income over \$2,500 in the past calendar year if its from an "organization or entity." Wood claims her consulting business as a "business interest and supplemental employment," which includes owners of a business entity, and there is no income threshold with that. The form simply asks for the name, address and type of business. If there is one listed, the form asks Council members to complete an attached document

See Ethics, Page 6

"Eye candy of the Week," our weekly look at some of the nicer properties in Lansing, will return next week. If you have a suggestion, please e-mail eye@lansingcitypulse.com or call Andy Balaskovitz at 999-5064.

# Ethics

from page 5

that asks 12 more specific questions about the nature of the job.

City Council members are paid \$20,200 a year for the part-time job. The president receives an additional \$2,000 a year and the vice president an extra \$750.

The citizen's advisory ethics board only investigates complaints that are brought to it, even though it reviews the disclosure statements annually. Both Wood and Quinney were unaware of any issues, they said, because they were not notified of any wrongdoing.

"Nothing came back to me saying it was incomplete," Wood said recently. "They didn't tell me they were missing anything." Wood did not provide the details over the past few weeks when asked if she had them from 2011, saying she was preoccupied with the budget process.

At first, Quinney said Monday he thought he was in compliance and wasn't required to disclose the information based on "what I was instructed by the city clerk." Then he changed course, saying that the City Clerk's Office "did mention it. It was an error on my part that I didn't report it."

Quinney is the health and safety director for the Michigan AFL-CIO. Wood claims income from CEW Consultant, activities for which she describes as "consulting" when asked on a form, "What are the things you actually do in the business?" In 2010 and 2012, when the form asks, "Who are your clients and who receives your goods or services?" Wood says: "None this year."

But Wood had clients in the past calendar year. Campaign finance reports for 2012 show that Jamo and Rivers paid a combined \$4,700 to CEW Consultant. Rivers spent \$3,000 between January and June 2012, while Jamo spent \$1,700 between May and November 2012.

Swope said Tuesday that the Board of Ethics has asked him to follow up with Wood to "answer the (income) question on her most recent filing in a different manner. I have not had the opportunity to do that. I will be following up with her and asking her to provide an answer."

The "statement of financial interests" is required annually for all elected and appointed officers in the city and the Lansing Board of Water and Light. It also shows when Council members receive gifts of more than \$500, such as tickets to Common Ground and Lugnuts games. Appointed members to other city boards, commissions or agencies are not required to complete it. Once its filed with the Clerk's Office, "It is then the Board of Ethics' duty and responsibility to review the disclosed information for compliance with the ethics provisions of the Charter and ordinances," according to a letter attached to the document.

— Andy Balaskovitz

# Drive-by policing

**Lansing Police Department to purchase three additional Automatic License Plate Readers for use later this summer, raising privacy concerns**

Later this summer, the Lansing Police Department will roll out Automatic License Plate Readers that will be used to find stolen vehicles, but a Lansing City Council candidate and the American Civil Liberties Union have privacy issues with the technology.

"There are a lot of patterns people have," said Charles Hoffmeyer, a City Council candidate in the 2nd Ward. "Right now they don't have a way to track you, but with this technology, it's like the LPD will have a GPS on every citizen that drives a car."

Hoffmeyer works full time for the Michigan State Police, where he works in the IT department that handles license plate and Law Enforcement Information Network information.

In early July, with help from a recent grant obtained by the city, LPD will be using six ALPRs in the field.

ALPRs are high-speed cameras that are attached to police cruisers. These cameras are able to capture license plate information from multiple angles, including from opposing traffic as it passes the police and from plates to the right of the cruiser, according to Interim Police Chief Mike Yankowski. When the camera snaps a photo, the computer system checks the plates to see if the vehicle is registered as stolen, he said. If the plate registers to a stolen car, the computer notifies the officer. Yankowski said the photo snapped by the ALPR is also logged into the computer system where it is stored for one year with the location, date and time of the photograph. After one year, the data is purged from the system.

Hoffmeyer is concerned because the data stored by the cameras would essentially allow the LPD to track motorists throughout the city. In his full-time job for

the state police, Hoffmeyer helps distribute license plate and LEIN information, which Yankowski said would be used to double-check hits on the ALPRs.

"I think it's wonderful technology for finding stolen cars, but the part that makes me nervous right now is how every license plate is plugged into the system," he said. "One scan by itself doesn't mean much, but as more are installed, the LPD is going to have a pretty good picture of your movements around the city, and that makes me very uncomfortable."

Police cruisers are not just confined to the roads, Hoffmeyer said. They move through parking lots as well. His concern is that data could be collected on people's whereabouts at sensitive places like churches, health clinics and counseling offices.

In July 2012, the American Civil Liberties Union posted a statement on its website

**"The LPD is going to have a pretty good picture of your movements around the city, and that makes me very uncomfortable."**

— Charles Hoffmeyer, Michigan State Police information technology employee and City Council candidate

about the use of ALPRs. The organization has very similar concerns to that of Hoffmeyer.

"As license plate location data accumulates, the system ceases to

be simply a mechanism enabling efficient police work and becomes a warrantless tracking tool, enabling retroactive surveillance of millions of people," the statement says.

At its meeting Monday, the City Council unanimously approved a resolution that authorized a \$6,160 local match of a grant that would allow the LPD to purchase three more ALPRs in addition to the three they've been testing but not using in the field.

Yankowski said the ALPRs would primarily be used to track down stolen vehicles, but could be expanded later to include wanted or missing persons' plate numbers. He said all of the information captured by the ALPRs would be shared with the county, Michigan State University, East Lansing and Meridian Township police departments.

LPD Spokesman Robert Merritt said the department received 306 stolen vehicle reports in 2012.

Hoffmeyer also has concerns about offi-

cers' misusing the ALPR system. With the technology being new to the department, he questioned what policies would be in place to prevent abuse of the system.

Yankowski said policies are being developed, but that the ALPR policy would probably "mirror" the policies regarding use of the LEIN system.

"Anytime someone runs something through the computer, it gets documented, including who used it," he said. "There would be an audit trail as to who utilized the system at that point in time. If anyone violated those policies and procedures, they would be held accountable."

Council President Carol Wood said after receiving Hoffmeyer's letters and hearing more information from Yankowski addressing his concerns, she's confident the system will be used appropriately.

"I guess it's no different than anything else, whether we're talking about the cameras that were implemented in the city, or this technology, it's important to make sure it is used appropriately and there are enough safeguards in place," she said. "At this point, I felt confident with the answers that were given to us."

— Sam Inglot

# Niowave update

**Tunnel construction, pollution prevention and the tax abatement**

The latest chapter in Niowave Inc.'s strained relationship with its residential neighbors is over the construction going on inside the company's controversial pole barn.

For the past month there's been construction going on inside the structure that has left neighbors curious what exactly is going on there. The building permit attached to the building says the renovations are for "concrete testing tunnels."

"People wanted to know why these trucks are coming and going and moving a lot of dirt," said 4th Ward Councilwoman Jessica Yorko. "The trust between the neighborhood and the company is not very strong. I think that it's reasonable for those who live there to know more in-depth about the operation and the hazards or lack thereof related to the operations."

Niowave Chief Financial Officer Mark Sinila said the construction was to "expand testing capabilities." When asked if Niowave was constructing underground tunnels, he said the company was not. Efforts to reach Sinila to ask him why Niowave applied for a permit to build tunnels when it is not building tunnels were unsuccessful.

When asked how Niowave tests its particle accelerators, Sinila said it was proprietary information.

"They've been very secretive and not forthcoming with information," said Walnut Neighborhood resident Dale Schrader, who's been a vocal opponent of Niowave and the pole barn. "The construction is tearing up the roads

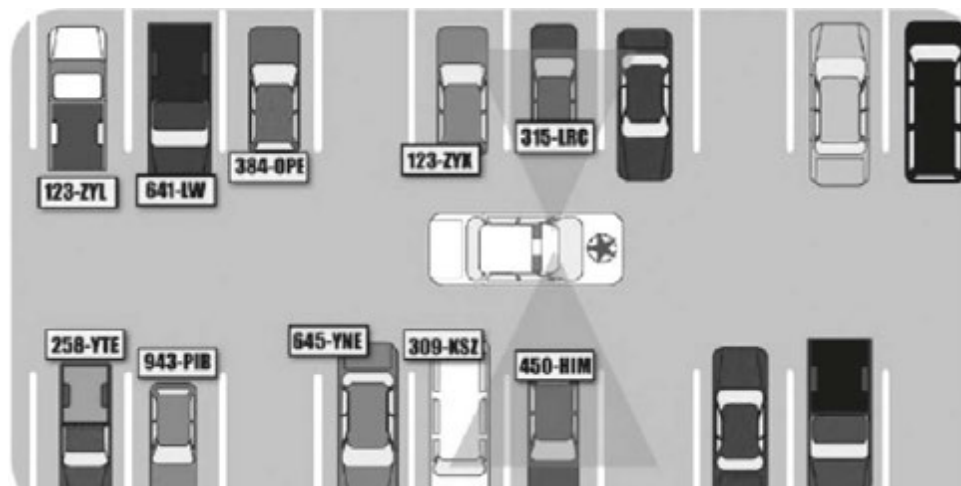


Illustration by L3 Mobile-Vision, the company that manufactures Automatic License Plate Readers.

See Niowave, Page 7

# Niowave

from page 6

and has caused parking problems. We don't know if it's going to continue or if it's just temporary. They need to communicate with us."

Bob Johnson, director of Planning and Neighborhood Development, said the building permit for the construction was approved in March.

He added that Niowave told the department the construction would be used for testing, but didn't go into specifics. The only thing that Johnson was worried about was if the construction was up to code, which it is, he said.

The construction is another example of the strained relationship between Niowave and the residents of the Walnut Neighborhood. Niowave sits in the heart of a residential neighborhood, so actions — including extensive construction — don't go unnoticed. Yorko believes better communication between the two parties, regardless of what's going on, would help end some of the drama that has ensued over the past year.

"I would encourage Niowave to be open with the neighbors," Yorko said. "There's a very damaged relationship there that I hope can one day be repaired."

In other Niowave news, Jim Wilson, director of the Ingham County Bureau of Environmental Health, met with Sinila last week to get Niowave registered in the county's Pollution Prevention Program.

The program requires businesses that handle toxic or hazardous materials to report that to the county. The information is supposed to be updated annually in case of an emergency, like a fire or explosion, so that first responders can have an idea of what precautions to take when arriving on the scene. The "status report" must include the name of the material, the storage location, hazards associated with the material and how much is on site. Until recently, Niowave was not involved in the program.

"They were not familiar with the program, which is not uncommon," Wilson said. "It's a new program, it's only about two years old."

Wilson said Niowave "probably" wouldn't have to file regularly with the program because the only hazardous material it uses with any frequency is anti-freeze, which Niowave uses as a coolant in its lab.

## The tax abatement

In a May 6 letter to the Lansing Economic Area Partnership and the Lansing City Council, Walnut Neighborhood Organization President Rina Risper said the group is not satisfied by the proposed changes to Niowave's pole barn, which has disrupted neighbors ever since it was erected in July.

In late April, with LEAP acting as a negotiator, Niowave agreed to paint the pole barn's siding and roof and do an overhaul of the parking lot and landscaping, but the neighborhood doesn't think it goes far enough.

"We appreciate the efforts put into this proposed solution; however, the consensus among WNO residents is that paint alone is

not a sufficient fix to the façade," Risper wrote. "In addition to concerns about the lifespan of an application of paint, this does not achieve the goal of making this large manufacturing facility blend into the neighborhood or the beautiful Walnut School building."

So where does that leave Niowave's request for a six-year, \$550,000 personal property tax exemption? The goal of the proposed changes was to get the neighborhood's stamp of approval before the Council granted the abatement.

Council President Carol Wood said she was scheduled for multiple meetings with Karl Dorshimer of LEAP to get a "briefing" of the negotiations with the neighbors and when to move forward with the abatement vote, but he's canceled every meeting.

She also said she's asked the city attorney about the enforceability of the "universal agreement" that would tie the completion of the façade and landscaping changes to the tax abatement. But she hasn't heard anything back.

With no word from Dorshimer or the city attorney, Wood said the timetable for Council voting on the tax abatement is uncertain.

— Sam Inglot

## Litos a leader

Consumers Mutual Insurance, Michigan's newest health insurer, is ambitious. Its mission is to be "recognized as Michigan's plan of choice for patient-centered care, disease management, lower costs, and greater access for individuals, families and the business community" by 2018.



WALT SORG

To accomplish its vision, the company has turned to someone who has been a key player in mid-Michigan healthcare, Dennis Litos.

Litos, who spent a decade running Ingham Regional Medical Center (now

McLaren Greater Lansing) is CEO of Consumers Mutual. It is a one-of-a-kind, member-owned insurer that will focus on providing lower-income families and small businesses with health insurance as part of the federal Affordable Healthcare Act.

The move from leading a large health-care system to running a small insurer is a logical next step for someone focused on better healthcare, according to anesthesiologist Ken Elmastian, a former medical chief of staff at Ingham.

"His real passion is making sure people get healthcare. He's one of those quality leaders who really puts patients first," Elmastian said. "His priority is doing what it takes to make sure everyone possible gets quality healthcare while keeping the system as efficient as possible."

Litos' roots are firmly embedded in Michigan. A native of Detroit, he holds degrees from Wayne State and Central Michigan universities, along with a master's degree in health care administration from Trinity University in San Antonio. He began his career as a credit manager at a Detroit-area hospital in 1977, moving to Clinton Memorial Hospital in St. Johns in 1982. He became chief operating officer of Lansing General Hospital in 1986 and became CEO of Ingham Regional Medical Center six years later.

At Ingham, he was in charge of a health-care system with several thousand employees. Consumers Mutual begins with about three-dozen employees.

"I think for him this will be a nice change," said Joan Bauer, who worked for Litos at Ingham before her election to the state House of Representatives in 2006. "He'll get a chance to be much more hands-on, to work more directly with his team."

In a decade at Ingham, Litos, 64, led an expansion that included the Women's and Child Center, Breslin Cancer Center and Ingham Regional Orthopedic Hospital. He set in motion the creation of the Chi Heart & Surgery Center, which was under construction when he departed in 2006 to

run Doctors Medical Center in Modesto, Calif., a 470-bed hospital at the cutting edge of neonatal intensive care and trauma care.

He had always planned to return to mid-Michigan.

"I missed my friends and family back here. After I finished my contract (at Doctors Medical Center), I decided I didn't want to do it on the hospital side anymore."

His plan was to consult with hospitals on implementation of the Affordable Care Act. But when he was introduced to Consumers Mutual, he saw an opportunity to have a more direct impact.

"We've had too many uninsured too long. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to do something different," he said.

Litos, long an advocate of focusing on wellness rather than simply responding to illness, sees a transformation beginning.

"Most insurance carriers are looking at rewarding providers for managing the individual's entire health as a coordinated process of care rather than paying per episode. A number of health system organizations are positioned to work with insurers such as us to look at population health management and share in the savings: Keeping patients out of the emergency room when possible, reducing readmissions to the hospitals."

The initial effort will be modest. Consumers Mutual expects to enroll 36,000 people in its first year, a tiny fraction of a market dominated by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan with nearly 70 percent of all policies. But the chance to bring more competition to the marketplace and, as a result, make healthcare more accessible in the state is enough to drive Litos to effectively start a new career.

His goal, he says, is simple: "To keep our population as healthy as possible."



Litos

## PUBLIC NOTICES

### NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING EAST LANSING PLANNING COMMISSION

**Notice is hereby given** of the following public hearing to be held by the East Lansing Planning Commission on **Wednesday, June 12, 2013 at 7:00 p.m.**, in the 54-B District Court, Courtroom 2, 101 Linden Street, East Lansing:

A public hearing will be held to consider an application from 1600 East Grand River, LLC, for Site Plan approval for the property at 1600 East Grand River Avenue. The applicant is proposing to convert the existing extended stay hotel to an apartment complex. The property is zoned RM-32, City Center Multiple Family Residential District.

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

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

Marie E. McKenna  
City Clerk

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# 'A particular genius'

Pianist Sergei Kvitko's road to Carnegie Hall

By LAWRENCE COSENTINO

**S**ergei Kvitko strangled his water bottle and looked at the clock. It was just before 7 p.m. on April 30, and he was due on stage at 7:30 for a grueling solo piano concert at Michigan State University's Cook Recital Hall.

That night, the hall was sold out and people were turned away. (A second concert, a week later, was added.) But Kvitko wasn't smiling. Before a concert, when no one is around, he often addresses the floor thus: **"Why the fuck do I do this to myself?"**

Racing the biological clock, Kvitko was marking his 45th birthday by training for a debut recital on Thursday at Carnegie Hall. He was hustling down his self-imposed "road to Carnegie" Midwest tour, with 14 stops in two months, with typical Kvitko overkill.

Kvitko isn't a career pianist, but when he plays, he leaves sweat — and occasionally blood — on the keyboard. His signature piece, the epic "Pictures at an Exhibition," is a hallucinogenic promenade in an imaginary gallery where visitors are sucked into the art on the walls. No Kvitko recital is perfect, but they are overpoweringly real, part artistry, part confession, part bullfight.

In 1996, Kvitko broke out of a strict Russian musical training to come to Michigan, where he blossomed as a pianist, composer, producer-engineer and video artist. This year, after 10 years of putting Lansing on the national classical music map with his magic upstairs tunnel recording studio, he returned to his first obsession.

Kvitko compared the draw of performing to live drama.

"I shouldn't say this, but on stage, you get to have the orgasm," he said. "When a recording is over, it's just, 'Are we done? Should we do it over?' OK, let's have lunch."

At 7:05, Kvitko was pacing the hallway, scanning the growing line, looking for a distraction. A random passerby asked him for directions to the bathroom. He obliged.

Two dancers from Chicago's Joffrey

Ballet were getting ready to go on stage to dance to his music, but the newly remodeled Cook Recital Hall stage was dangerously smooth. They needed a bottle of Coke to smear on their shoes for traction. Grate-

**"Maybe the world doesn't need another recording of 'Pictures at an Exhibition,' but I do. I do it different than anybody else. I don't say it's better or worse, but it's my version and I want it to be out there."**

Sergei Kvitko

ful for something to do, Kvitko took them to the soda machine.

At about 7:10, a compact figure broke from the crowd of ticket holders at the door and glided toward him.

"Here comes trouble," Kvitko said.

It was his teacher from over a decade ago, MSU piano legend Ralph Votapek, winner of the first Van Cliburn competition in 1962 and a tough man to please.

"He was never very generous with compliments," Kvitko said.

There was no hug or handshake. Votapek stopped several paces away. "I saw your car being towed outside," he said blandly. "License plate SERGEI 1, right?"

Kvitko smiled for an eighth of a second and twisted his bottle harder. Votapek turned without another word and headed back to the line.

Within minutes, Kvitko was tucked in a nearby closet-sized practice room. Muffled breakers of Bach could be heard surging toward the door. It was 7:15.

## 'FRIENDLY AND COMMUNICABLE'

In early spring of 1996, Kvitko was lighting a cigarette, pacing the parking lot behind the same recital hall, when Votapek caught up with him for the

from the stores, then cigarettes, then vodka, then sugar," he said.

The prestigious Gorky Conservatory, the third largest in Russia, provided top-notch training, but if Kvitko wanted to write his own music, or embellish a Mozart sonata with his own cadenza, it was just too bad. His hyperactive inner muse would have to wait for Lansing.

He practiced eight to 10 hours a day, plus coursework, while history raged

around him. "That's all I did," he said. "I remember watching Yeltsin on TV while practicing. I just played the piano through the whole thing."

Kvitko is precociously fluent in English, with a keen ear for humor. When he describes himself as "friendly and communicable," it's hard to tell whether he has missed a nuance or is making a joke.

But when he came to Michigan, he knew almost no English. With his scholarship and his American visa in the balance, he crammed for two months, replacing piano practice with grammar and vocabulary.

He raised his score on the MSU English test from 30 to 96 percent. "I'm amazed at how fast he learned English," Votapek said. "He's embraced this country. He didn't seem to be suffering from any homesickness."

Kvitko said he's "too busy" for nostalgia.

"Nobody cared about musicians in Russia," he said. "People don't have things to eat, things to wear, and here you are with

See Kvitko, Page 9



Lawrence Cosentino/City Pulse

Sergei Kvitko warms up for an April 30 solo concert at MSU's Cook Recital Hall, part of his "Road to Carnegie" tour.

# Kvitko

from page 8

your piano. Who cares? Here it seemed to be quite different."

Soon there was more reason to stay. After moving into his apartment in 1996, Kvitko fell in love with an acidly witty, soft-spoken next-door neighbor, James McClurken. They are still together.

"That was one of the main reasons I didn't want to go anywhere," Kvitko said. "We kind of hooked up right away, and I didn't want to leave because I was happy."

All Kvitko's story lacked was a castle, and that came along in 2007, when the couple moved into one of Lansing's biggest mansions, the Potter House. Kvitko converted the 2,000-square-foot third floor ballroom into a recording studio. McClurken, an ethnohistorian and expert on Native American tribes, helped him set up the business. At one airy end of the ballroom, Kvitko enthroned a 9-foot Steinway he named after Alexander the Great's horse, Bucephalus, although he doesn't go out of his way to tell people that. ("It sounds like syphilis.")

He and McClurken prefer to keep their private life private. (McClurken didn't want to be interviewed for this story, shunting the spotlight to his partner.) Suffice it to say, they have a domestic set-up that's unthinkable in Russia.

"It's pretty much impossible to be gay in Russia," Kvitko said. "It's not safe, even in Moscow and the big cities."

Kvitko worked hard as ever at MSU, earning a doctorate in piano. He recalled one of his graduation recital pieces the way a sergeant reminisces about a bridgehead. "There's a glissando in Liszt's 15th Hungarian Rhapsody," he said. "You play it with the side of your finger. It's a great effect, but I permanently damaged my finger. Bone damage. I still feel it. I looked down and there was a trail of blood running across the keys."

## 'NO DEAD COMPOSERS'

On a warm summer morning in 2010, Kvitko and mezzo-soprano Patricia Green dragged a load of sensitive equipment, including Green's vocal cords, to Lake Lansing.

"I couldn't believe anybody could talk, let alone sing, at 5 in the morning," Kvitko marveled.

Green, a champion of new music, credits Kvitko with "a particular genius."

"There's a depth, a force, a physical, emotional and soulful investment," Green said.

Green heads the vocal program at the University of Western Ontario. In 2002, while Green was on the MSU faculty, they performed together on a concert tour they facetiously called "No Dead Composers."

That morning, they searched for a spot to record a song by Canadian "acoustic ecologist" R. Murray Schafer, to be performed



Photo by Ricard Cohen

Kvitko brings a musician's ear to his work as an engineer and producer, earning him wide respect in the classical world. His studio is a converted ballroom in the third floor of his Lansing home.

in the outdoors, "at water," with birds and frogs and other natural sounds.

A disc of music for solo voice, written in the last 30 years by living composers, is not your typical classical CD, but "La Voix Nue" ("The Naked Voice") is the kind of quixotic project Kvitko relishes.

The first take on the lake with Green was interrupted by a dog; the second by a passing airplane. Kvitko patched a pristine take out of four.

In the studio, Kvitko is more of a collaborator than a technician, even with veterans like MSU's Walter Verdehr. The Verdehr Trio has commissioned and premiered over 200 new works from nearly every top living composer.

"They're creating a whole new body of work," Kvitko said with admiration. "They do it whether it's commercially successful or not."

**"Something inside said, 'Why not Carnegie Hall?' It's a bucket list thing. Next I'll go to Burning Man."**

## Sergei Kvitko

Verdehr has recorded with top engineers from Chicago, New York and Vienna. He said Kvitko is "right up there with them."

"We pick the takes we like based on a consensus between us and him," Verdehr said. "He's very valuable because we trust his judgment."

Kvitko admits CD sales are "abysmal," but that's not the point.

"There's that small niche of people that find them, and want them, and find them, and they're happy," he said.

"It's new, it's daring, it's not profitable," Green said. "That's the thing about art."

The CDs that do sell advertise his studio better than any business card. When Kvitko gets back from Carnegie Hall next week, he has dozens of projects and a solid month of studio time backed up and waiting.

For decades, Votapek went to WGN Studios in Chicago to record, until Kvitko produced his acclaimed disc of Gershwin music in 2006.

"After that, somehow I felt there was no reason to go out of Lansing," Votapek said.

New music isn't everything. Kvitko knows that local legends like Votapek, flutist Richard Sherman and cellist Suren Bagratuni lust after a chance to climb the highest summits of their instruments, no matter how many Heifetzes or Rostropoviches have gone before them. Bagratuni's two-disc set of unaccompanied Bach cello

suites is only one of many definitive recordings he's produced for others.

In the mid-'00s, Kvitko gradually realized that he was not immune to the mountain-climbing bug.

"Maybe the world doesn't need another recording of 'Pictures at an Exhibition,' but I do," he said. "I do it different than anybody else. I don't say it's better or worse, but it's my version and I want it to be out there."

To Kvitko's (professed) amazement, others felt the same way, some of them influ-

ential. Kvitko's "Pictures" CD was called "among the best ever made" by the American Record Guide, despite hundreds of predecessors, and named a Critics Choice pick for that year. What could top that?

"Something inside said, 'Why not Carnegie Hall?'" he shrugged. "It's a bucket list thing. Next I'll go to Burning Man."

## CLIMBING THE MOUNTAIN

The road to Carnegie got smoother when Kvitko discovered beta blockers, used by hundreds of performers to counteract stage fright since the mid-1970s.

"When I played on the stage, I was absolutely terrified to the point where I'm incapacitated," he said.

He learned to hide it over the years, but the drug gave him the final push to commit to Carnegie. To get there, he assembled reviews from magazines like Fanfare, Gramophone and the American Record Guide and called some "famous and powerful" friends in New York. One in particular was key, but Kvitko said he would prefer not to be named for fear of being besieged by favor seekers.

Kvitko said "buying the house" wasn't necessary and he only paid for "expenses" like posters.

To Patricia Green, that's not the point.

"He's presenting a concert and he's chosen one of the best concert halls in the world to do it," Green said. "He's climbing to the top of the mountain. They don't just let anybody play there."

Will Carnegie quell Kvitko's restlessness? Probably not. A brooding oil portrait of the pianist by Russian émigré artist Alina Poroshina, visible to anyone who comes to his studio, has his number. (Following the oscillating lighthouse of his ego, Kvitko left the picture on the floor, giving the impression that he's proud of the portrait, but never hung it up, which would be a bit much.)

In the portrait, Kvitko is hunched at the piano, oblivious to the cheerful daylight creeping from behind. Eyes closed, he touches the keyboard with his left hand and the score with his right, connecting the two like a neuron in a tuxedo.

Poroshina's other portrait of Kvitko, minus the tuxedo, delves even deeper.

"It's informal," Kvitko said, waving off further discussion. He's viewed from the back, nude, standing in a meadow. He looks to his left, his face knotted with determination and dread, clutching

a sheet in his right hand. He seems to be facing an unseen enemy and mustering the resolve to strangle it.

By mid-May, about 70 people — most likely friends and well-wishers from Lansing, along with curious Russian émigrés in New York — had paid to share Kvitko's big night at 268-seat Weill Recital Hall. He says it will be his last big solo recital.

"If only five people show up, I'll play just as well," Kvitko said. "Not just as well, but just as honestly."

# ARTS & CULTURE

ART • BOOKS • FILM • MUSIC • THEATER



Photo by Jordyn Timpson/City Pulse

The Lansing Unionized Vaudeville Spectacle at the East Lansing Art Festival last Sunday.

## QUITE THE 'SPECTACLE'

### Lansing Vaudeville band embarks on weeklong, statewide tour for documentary

By ALLAN I. ROSS

There are some natural complications that go along with being a 15-piece gypsy folk band, and being about 80 years out of time is only one of them. Stage size is obviously a key issue, as is the coordination of more than a dozen independent work and personal schedules.

"Not to mention transportation," said Dylan Rogers, leader of the ville Spec-

Lansing Unionized Vaudeville Spectacle, a local 15-piece New Orleans/Eastern European-

infused group that's two parts musical ensemble, one part carnival sideshow act. "Every show is a challenge."

But apparently, not enough of one to keep him from stretching the bounds of prudence even further. In two weeks, Rogers, 26, and his bandmates will embark on their first tour, a romp up the west side of the state through the Upper Peninsula that will consist of six shows in seven days.

"The farthest venue we've played so far has been Jackson, and that was a there-and-back deal," Rogers said. "This tour has taken about a year of planning."

It starts June 6 when the band departs from north Lansing breakfast joint Golden Harvest for Founder's Brewing Co. in Grand Rapids for a 9 p.m. show. The next day, it's off to Short's Brewing Co. in Bellaire for an 8 p.m. set. Day 3, the band crosses the Mackinac Bridge for a filming day in the U.P., which includes stops at the Oswald Bear Ranch in Newberry and Ore Dock Brewing Co. in Marquette. After that, LUVS plays the Keweenaw Brewing Co. in Houghton at 6 p.m., followed by the Calumet Theatre show the next evening at 7.

LUVS' stop there will be a return to vaudevillian form for the theater, which was built in 1900. In its heyday, luminaries including world-renowned actress Sarah Bernhardt and the March King himself, John Philip Sousa performed there.

"I saw (the band) on YouTube and thought they were a perfect fit for us," said Laura Miller, executive director of the Calumet Theatre. "There's a lot of excitement building around their show."

After that, the band heads south with a 7 p.m. performance June 11 at the Vista Theatre in Negaunee and wraps it up at the Erickson Center at 7 p.m. June 12 in Curtis. On June 13, LUVS crosses the bridge again and heads back to Lansing. In all, the band will cover more than 1,200 miles of Michigan highway and back roads. (See map, left.)

"There are actually a couple more places I was in touch with but we weren't able to work out a schedule," Rogers said. "We wanted to play, they wanted us, but because of our (schedule), we had to pick and choose. But that leaves room for another tour next year."

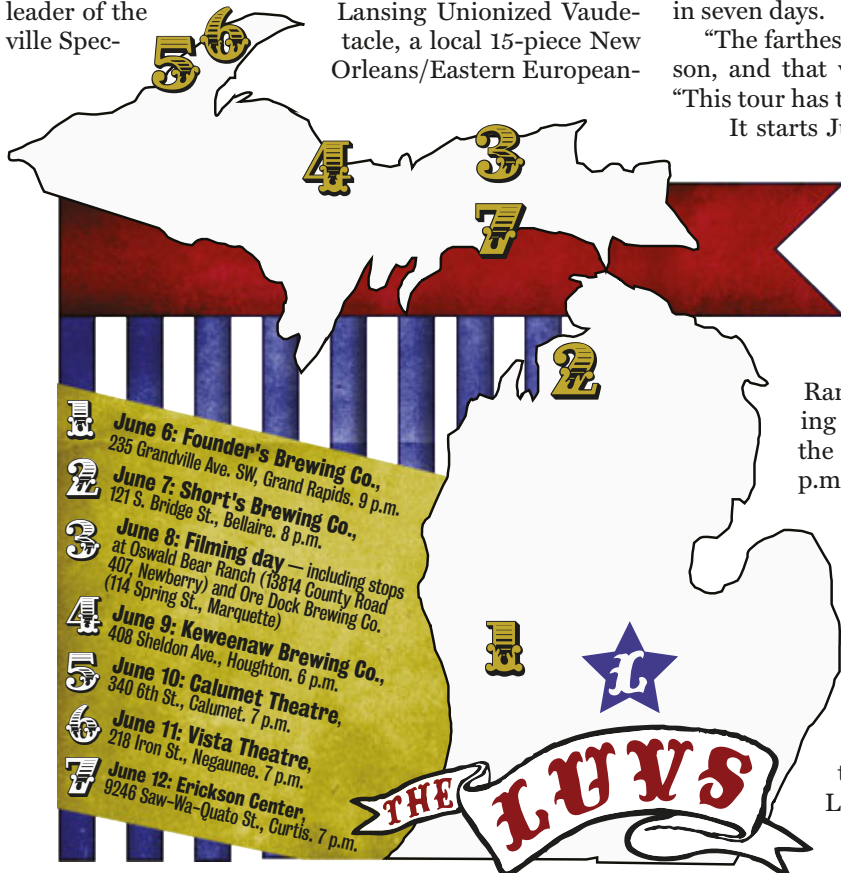
Over the last two years, Rogers grew LUVS from his one-man barker act on street corners around town to the full-blown quintet it is today. As the band grew, its look and sound began to co-opt that of a traveling vaudeville show, which included period clothing, a vintage-looking backdrop and — yep — a dancing Michigan costume. They also attracted a dedicated following, including student Ariel Vida.

"I caught the very end of their show at last year's East Lansing Art Festival, and I was instantly captivated by them," Vida said. "I liked their music, but I also really enjoyed their aesthetics, and as a filmmaker, they really intrigued me."

Vida, 22, recently graduated from Michigan State University's Residential College in the Arts and Humanities. Initially she wanted to shoot a music video for LUVS, but a pesky project — a feature length film she wrote, produced, directed and edited — was her priority. (That film, "Sleep, Wake, Forget" is in its final stages of post-production.)

"By the time I was able to (focus on LUVS), they had started planning this tour, and Dylan asked me if I might be interested in following them and shooting it as a documentary," Rogers said. "I was immediately on board. If

See LUVS, Page 11



# LUVS

from page 10

they hadn't asked me, I would have asked them."

Vida said the film will consist of concert footage, backstage activities and short skits and vignettes catered to each of the band members' personalities. She's not going into it with a storyline — or even a title — in mind, but she thinks both will probably emerge in the editing process.

Vida will shoot most of the action on a RED Scarlet digital camera, giving the LUVS doc a cinematic feel. RED cameras are a popular Hollywood camera, with recent high-profile films including "42" and "The Great Gatsby" (although neither of those was on a Scarlet). The grant doesn't cover the cost of electronics, but that's fine — Vida bought the \$30,000 set of camera equipment outright for her independent film. She said she thinks the movie should be completed by September and plans to submit it to film festivals throughout the state, and quite possibly some of the bigger national ones like South by Southwest. If nothing else, it has the unique factor going for it.

"There aren't a lot of documentaries coming out about vaudeville bands touring rustic areas," she deadpanned. "So I think we'll definitely stand out."

Rogers received a \$2,500 grant from the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs to shoot the film, which will cover production costs, marketing, festival entry fees and some of the band's traveling expenses. Which brings us back to the original dilemma: how does he plan on getting all those drums, horns, vibraphones, ukuleles, kazoos, band members and backup singers from Lansing to Calumet?

"We ended up getting the most extravagant 40-foot RV we could find," Rogers said. "We dipped into our funds and blew a ton of money we really shouldn't have, but fuck it — it's going to fit most of the band."

The vehicle is a 2007 Fleetwood Bounder, worth about \$180,000, that Rogers is renting for a week for \$1,500. It comes complete with a washer, dryer, four-burner stove and wood accents.

"It's the swankiest thing any of us have seen," Rogers said. "It's almost three times the price of the house I live in, and all these dirty gypsies are going to be living in it for a week."

Because it's a rental, LUVS won't be able to decorate the RV's exterior. In fact, the learning curve on how it handles on the open road will be a steep one.

"We're picking it up the night before we leave, and the (owner) doesn't know a bunch of vaudeville folks are going to tour the U.P.," Rogers sheepishly admitted. "I told him it's just my wife and I and maybe a couple friends. But I'm going to tell him when I drop it off — spotless — that there's this documentary coming out this fall that maybe he should watch."

## A decade of doodles

After 10 years, local artist's caricatures will no longer be at Biggby

BY SAM INGLOT

One of Dennis Preston's favorite places to conjure up grotesque and whimsical characters was the Biggby Coffee at 536 Elmwood Road in Lansing, just south of the Lansing Mall. The local illustrator, designer and caricaturist would draw on coffee napkins and leave them at the store, which could then be "purchased" by giving \$10 to the barista on duty. It was a tradition that had been going on throughout Lansing-area Biggby's for the past 10 years.

But earlier this month, Preston was surprised to find the Biggby at 1701 S. Waverly Road, Lansing, had removed all of his napkin doodles from their regular spot on the community bulletin board. The employees thought he had been informed about the decision. Since May 5, dozens more of Preston's drawings have been taken down from about six Biggby shops around the city.

Company founder and CEO Bob Fish said there are operating procedures for all of the Biggby locations. That includes what can be included in the decor.

"Biggby has never been a gallery for local art," Fish said. He said Preston's art wasn't taken down because a specific policy, but because of a conversation about decor enforcement that had trickled down from a franchisee meeting to management.

He said the removal of Preston's work at Lansing Biggby locations was a decision that was made by management. All of Biggby's 142 locations in the state and around the country are franchisee owned. There are about 25 of them in the Greater Lansing area.

Preston started drawing on napkins at Biggby as a tip for the baristas. Average nap-



Sam Inglot/City Pulse

No more napkins. From now on, Dennis Preston will be sticking to his sketchbook when it comes to doodling at Biggby. Although it's not one of his usual hangouts, here's Preston at the original Biggby in East Lansing on Grand River Avenue.

kin doodle completion time? About 30 minutes. When customers began swiping them, he started putting a disclaimer at the bottom with that \$10 tipping rule. He'd also leave his business card by the drawings, which drummed up some work for him.

"I thought of it as a win-win-win," Preston said. "If somebody wanted a napkin, they got that. The barista got the tip and I would get work."

A Lansing native and graduate of Eastern High School, Preston has been an instructor of "humorous illustration and cartoon workshops" at Lansing Community College since 1977. When he was in high school, he started to do freelance work designing T-shirts, album covers and logos for various organizations and people. He would also be hired to go to parties and — what else — draw caricatures.

For the Elmwood cafe's manager, Paul Anderson, the removal of the napkins is a loss to the franchise.

"They were part of the Biggby culture," he said. "I think they could've kept them. They were harmless; they brought attention to the store and helped us get tips every so often. But I think the company wanted to go in a different direction."

Soon after Preston realized his nap-

kins had disappeared, he reached out to Fish, but he wasn't the only one. Fish had been receiving angry Facebook messages from people demanding answers. For his part, Fish said he feels bad that Preston was caught off guard.

"If there's something that was inappropriate in this moment, it is that Dennis had to walk in and see his napkins were gone," Fish said. "No one knew what was going on. The baristas didn't know. No one understood the full thread of what was going on, and it just seemed rude."

But the rule is being upheld; the napkins really are gone forever. And how does Preston feel about that?

"I told Bob I'm just thankful that they've been up this long — this is your business, you guys run it the way you want to," Preston said. "I don't have any problem with that. I don't have any bad feeling toward Bob. I don't have bad feelings towards Biggby."

However, Preston doesn't have any thoughts about reviving the napkin doodle tradition at a new café anytime soon.

"I felt like it was an era that ended," Preston said. "It's like when someone's spouse dies. They don't run right out and get married again. I'm just gonna back away from it for awhile."



Courtesy Photos

What started out as tips for the Biggby baristas 10 years ago morphed into "part of the Biggby culture," as one store manager put it. Preston usually took about 30 minutes to whip up a napkin doodle.

## DECKER'S/ ARTIE'S FOOD / ATHENAS DINER / LEAF



Allan Ross/City Pulse

Last week, Jessica Decker (left) sold her six-year-old business, Decker's Coffee Co., to J.T. Dachtler.



## By ALLAN I. ROSS

After six years, Jessica Decker has handed over the keys to **Decker's Coffee Co.**, 220 S. Washington Square in downtown Lansing, to a new owner. J.T. Dachtler took over the reins at Decker's Saturday, but Decker is sticking around for a week to smooth the transition.

"I just turned 30, and I thought it was time for a new adventure," Decker said. "I'm going to take a month off, try to find a new job, then maybe start a new business again in a few years."

Decker opened her café in 2007 and gained a cult following with her funky lattes and local art-themed décor. Dachtler, 34, said he's committed to using all local produce in his dishes, and besides that he only has one small tweak to make.

"Jessica has a perfect system here, so everything inside will look the same," Dachtler said. "But I am planning on changing the name eventually. We've already got it picked out — **Cup of Dessert**. But I don't want to change too many things at once."

## Artie's Filling station

In other café news, Dale Schrader's award-winning work of restoration in Old Town, **Artie's Filling Station**, will get an expanded food menu this summer. Business owner John Miller can't add to the building for historical reasons, but will soon begin grilling outside for his customers to supplement his menu.

"I'd love to do it year round, but Old Town is so fair weather dependent," Miller said. "If it's too hot, or cold, or rainy, we just don't get that same foot traffic."

New items include smoked chicken salad sandwiches, wood-fired pizza, tacos and fresh baked goods.

## No more phoning it in

The building that housed **Jon's Country Burgers** (aka, "that restaurant where you placed your order by a phone that was installed in your booth") is becoming **Athenas Diner**, 3109 S Cedar St., Lansing. Owner Anton Prenaj said he's having problems with the city, but he hopes to be open within a month or two. For the last eight years, Prenaj has operated **Hannah's Coney Island** in Hannah Plaza, but he plans on selling it before Athenas is up and running.

"One restaurant is enough," Prenaj said. "I can't

imagine running two places at the same time."

He said that Athenas will serve Greek-American cuisine, specializing in chicken dinners, skilletts, spinach pie and baklava. The dining room will look similar to Jon's (minus the phones), but the kitchen will get a massive upgrade, including the probable addition of a broaster.

"I take a lot of pride in my cooking, and I like to give big portions," Prenaj said. "No one's going to leave hungry from Athenas."

## Carats out; carrots in

There are signs in the former location of **Promise Jewelers**, 1542 W. Grand River Ave., East Lansing, next to **Baryames Cleaners** in the triangle island bounded by Coolidge Road, Saginaw Street and Grand River Avenue. Apparently it will soon become **Leaf**, specializing in soups, salads and smoothies.

## Decker's Coffee Co.

220 Washington Square, Lansing  
7 a.m. – 6:30 p.m. Monday-Friday; 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. Saturday; 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. Sunday.  
(517) 913-1400

## Artie's Filling Station

127 W. Grand River Ave., Lansing  
7:30 a.m. – 3 p.m. Monday; 7:30 a.m. – 3 p.m. Tuesday-Friday; 8:30 a.m. – 3 p.m. Saturday; 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. Sunday  
(517) 797-5582

## Drawn that way

Lansing children's author keeps character grounded in real world

By BILL CASTANIER

If Ruth McNally Barshaw has her way, Ellie McDoodle will never see 13, play a video game or use a cell phone. And the Lansing author and illustrator will have her way, since she is the creator of the five-book young adult series "The Ellie McDoodle Diaries," about a 12-year-old who journalizes her life, accompanied by doodle drawings.

Barshaw, 53, has kept similar diaries to her protagonist since a teacher gave her a sketchbook when she was 15, and works in autobiographical aspects into her novels. The series has been compared to Jeff Kinney's "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" books; however, the Ellie books haven't quite reached the popularity of "Wimpy Kid" and are a little less edgy.

Barshaw, who was born in the Detroit suburb of Harper Woods, moved to East Lansing in 1977 to attend Michigan State University. She did illustrations for University Housing and Food Services, as well as a daily cartoon for the State News, called "College Is ...".

"I like to do commentary on people," she said.

After school, Barshaw started a family, which has grown to include four children and four grandchildren, but said she always wanted to write a children's picture book. In October 2004, she met children's author Tomie dePaola at a book signing in Rochester, Mich. He recommended Barshaw attend the 2005 meeting of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators in New York.

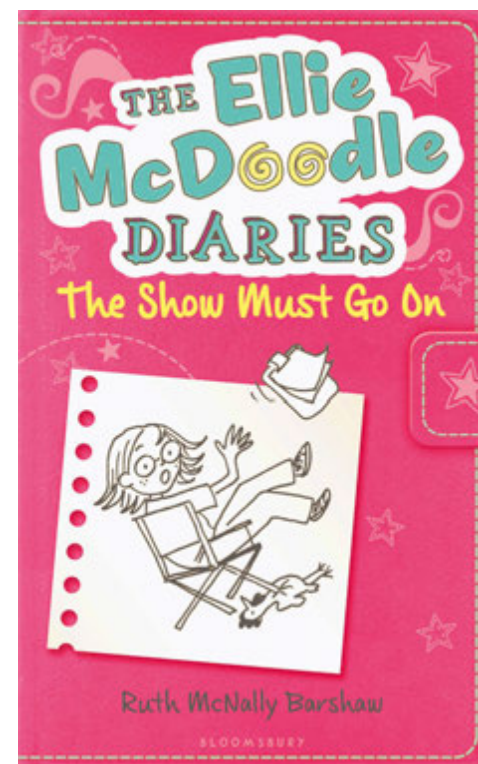
"I took a leap of faith and went," she said. "But no one discovered me while I was there." Dejected she came back home, but decided to put online her journal of sketches she did in New York.

"I had 180 pages of New York City sketches and prose, and it went viral," she said. She received "about 1,000 emails," including one from a powerhouse agent. In 2000, her first book, "Have Pen Will Travel," was published about Ellie on a camping trip. The essence for the story came from her childhood experiences camping with her family in northern Michigan.

As with Ellie, comics and journaling have always been a part of Barshaw's personality. Ellie is somewhat of an outsider and doesn't consider herself popular. Barshaw recalled that when she was feeling down in college, she would wander through the dormitory and count the number of "College Is ..." comics on doors.

"It always brought me back up," she said.

In addition to her author/illustrator duties, Barshaw also makes regular appearances in elementary schools around the state — but she says that she's "not a natu-



Courtesy Photo

Lansing author Ruth McNally Barshaw bases the exploits of her protagonist, Ellie McDoodle, on her real-life experiences.

ral performer."

"I'm shy," she said. "The first time I did a public appearance, I was almost speechless. I just shook."

After a few years, however, she was able to do a public appearance suffering from laryngitis without missing a beat. Barshaw says that her goal is to share stories that are inspirational.

"If there is a storm — and there are plenty in Ellie's life — I always look for a rainbow," she said.

Barshaw said her head is filled with story ideas; she said she's building toward sharing a very powerful, personal loss she suffered as a child.

"My dad died when I was 12," she said. "And I want to tell the story of his death." In every book, Ellie takes time to commune with nature, and Barshaw is careful to include aspects of healthy eating and exercise. Diversity is also important to Barshaw; in one book, one of Ellie's friends is revealed to be a Muslim, and recently, another friend is shown to have two dads. Her best friend Mo's older brother has Down syndrome.

Barshaw's newest book, "The Show Must Go On," follows Ellie and her classmates as they stage a 6th grade production of "The Wizard of Oz." Ellie is asked to be the stage director and her friend fails to get the role of Dorothy, leading to all kinds of drama, both on-stage and off. Barshaw has more than 400 sketchbook diaries on shelves at home. The author said she has taken some grief from some critics for neglecting technology in her books.

"One reviewer pointed out that not having cell phones was unrealistic," Barshaw said. "Maybe, but Ellie is not going to get a phone. I want these books to be timeless."

# THE SCREENING ROOM

by ALLAN I. ROSS

## Mississippi 'Mud'

### McConaughey sheds pride, not shirt, in powerful performance

After an electrifying breakthrough performance in 1996's "A Time to Kill" — followed by solid showings in "Contact" and "Amistad" — Matthew McConaughey mostly slumped it through the '00s. He went with brainless pap that focused on his Southern charm and chiseled torso that did nothing to challenge his acting chops — call in the Pecs Period, which lasted from "The Wedding Planner" to "Ghosts of Girlfriends Past."

But with his recent critical successes, "The Lincoln Lawyer," "Bernie" and "Magic Mike" (oops, there goes that shirt again), the 43-year-old has pulled a surprising Affleck-ian comeback — and he continues that winning streak in his latest outing, the twisty, hypnotizing "Mud."

But he's not even the star of the movie. That honor belongs to Tye Sheridan, who plays Ellis, a scrappy Arkansas river kid who throws haymakers at his romantic rivals and broods over his fighting parents. Ellis and his best friend, Neckbone (River Phoenix look-a-like Jacob Lofland), both 14, are a modern day Tom and Huck who happen upon a puzzling sight while exploring the islands and inlets along their stretch of the Mississippi: a cabin cruiser perched 20 feet up a tree. They lay claim to it, but when it proves to be inhabited by Mud (McConaughey), a tattooed, gun-toting stranger who's hiding out from society, the plot begins to slither intriguingly forward.

The thing is, every time you think you've got "Mud" figured out, it turns on you. The straightforward plot — help

Mud reunite with his girlfriend, Juniper (Reese Witherspoon) — becomes ancillary at best to the real mechanizations of the story. Additionally, what at first appear to be clichéd caricatures — the aloof dad, the vengeful assassin — turn out to be elementary sketch strokes of fully fleshed-out characters that carefully uncoil as the story progresses.

The film also hosts a bevy of strong supporting actors, including Sam Shepard as a mysterious neighbor and Michael Shannon as Neckbone's wildcard uncle. Every man in the film, however, seems to be defined by how much a woman has destroyed his life; for a while, "Mud" threatens to devolve into a He-Man Woman-Haters Club, where men are strong and womenfolk are venomous succubae. "Vile devilwomen!" you think.

Or are they? All three female leads — Witherspoon, Sarah Paulson (as Ellis' mother) and Bonnie Sturdivant (as Ellis' school crush) — are well crafted, but given little more to do than spur the men into action. The duplicitous Juniper is probably the best worst example of this; is she really hanging around town so she can make her escape with Mud, or is she just getting a kick out of toying with his emotions? But it's more complex than that — the men seem to crave the pain.

In each male-female relationship



Courtesy photo

(from left) Tye Sheridan, Matthew McConaughey and Jacob Lofland in "Mud," a frank look at the dynamics of poisonous relationships.

we're shown, the men expose their most vulnerable sides and show the women where best to sink their teeth. They then lie to themselves, and each other, about the source of the scar. Writer/director Jeff Nichols seems to be goading the characters into realizing the meaning of Pogo's maxim: We have met the enemy, and he is us.

As for McConaughey, his measured demeanor, his predatory gaze and his deliberate movements make him seem ready to strike at any moment. He's exciting to watch, and "Mud" is a showcase for his laconic acting style. And those famous abs? Well, let's just say that Mud

is blessed with a shirt he believes is imbued with magical properties that offers him better protection than his 9mm. He assures Ellis he will never take it off, so there's no possibility of — oh wait, there it went.

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## SCHULER BOOKS & MUSIC

### COMING SOON TALK & SIGNING with Mystery Author DEBORAH COONTS



Wednesday, May 22. 7 p.m.  
Okemos Location

### Local Mystery Author JAMES PECORA

One Way is a prequel to Pecora's thriller *Dead End* and reveals the circumstances that resulted in the true crime death of all 6 members of the Rawlings family. The narrative begins in the early 1920's and takes readers from the backwoods of Kentucky to the growing industrial city of Detroit.

Thursday, June 6. 7 p.m.  
Okemos Location

For more information, visit  
[www.schulerbooks.com](http://www.schulerbooks.com)

# OUT ON THE TOWN

Listings deadline is 5 p.m. the THURSDAY BEFORE publication. Paid classes will be listed in print at the cost of one enrollment (maximum \$20). Please submit them to the events calendar at [www.lansingcitypulse.com](http://www.lansingcitypulse.com). If you need help, please call Dana at (517) 999-5069. Email information to [calendar@lansingcitypulse.com](mailto:calendar@lansingcitypulse.com).

## Wednesday, May 22

### CLASSES AND SEMINARS

**Gardening 101.** Basics for new gardeners. 6-7 p.m. Foster Park Resource Center, Corner of Marcus Street & Foster Avenue, Lansing.

**Vinyasa Yoga.** Taught by Cathy Fitch. Drop ins welcome. 5:30-6:45 p.m. \$12 per class, \$60 six weeks. ACC Natural Healing and Wellness, 617 Ionia St., Lansing. (517) 708-8510.

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

**Iran: Persecution of the Bahai Faith.** Screening & discussion. 6-7 p.m. FREE. Pilgrim Congregational United Church of Christ, 125 S. Pennsylvania Ave., Lansing. (517) 484-7434.

**Old Everett Public Safety Meeting.** 7-9 p.m. McLaren-Greater Lansing Education Building, 401 W. Greenlawn Ave., Lansing. [oldeverett.org](http://oldeverett.org).

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

### EVENTS

**Taste of Art & Life.** Arts Council of Greater Lansing fundraiser. RSVP. 5-8 p.m. \$65, \$120 for two. 13777 Hamersley Drive, Bath. (517) 372-4636.

**Coalition for a Safer Lansing Fundraiser.** 7 p.m. Donations. The Avenue Cafe, 2021 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. **Practice Your English.** 7-8 p.m. FREE. East Lansing Public Library, 950 Abbot Road, East Lansing. (517) 351-2420.

**Watershed Wellness Center Farmers' Market.** 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Watershed Farmer's Market, 16280 National Parkway, Lansing. (517) 886-0440.

**Grande Paraders Square Dance Club.** Round dancing, 7 p.m. Modern-style square dancing, 7:30 p.m. \$4 members, \$5 guests. Holt 9th Grade Campus, 5780 Holt Road, Holt. (517) 694-0087.

**Allen Street Farmers Market.** 2:30-7 p.m. FREE. Allen Street Farmers Market, 1619 E. Kalamazoo St., Lansing. (517) 367-2468.

### MUSIC

**Sam Winternheimer Quartet.** 7-10 p.m. Midtown Beer Company, 402 S. Washington Square, Lansing.

**Deacon Earl.** 3-6 p.m. FREE. Allen Street Farmers Market, 1619 E. Kalamazoo St., Lansing. (517) 214-7778. [allenneighborhoodcenter.org](http://allenneighborhoodcenter.org).

## WED. MAY 22 >> EXHIBIT RECEPTION

A wine and cheese reception today celebrates the opening of the photo exhibit "It Takes a Village: From Ghondohar to Jerusalem," which opened Sunday at the MSU College of Law. The exhibit will have 37 photographs depicting Ethiopian Jews in their native Gondar and their resettlement in Israel, going from the traditional tribal lifestyle to a much more high-tech, modern, society. At 6 p.m., Lisabeth Lobenthal, director of Israel and Global philanthropy at the Jewish Agency for Israel, will discuss the photos. 5-7 p.m. FREE. Fourth floor Atrium, MSU College of Law, MSU Campus, East Lansing. [law.msu.edu](http://law.msu.edu).

## WED. MAY 22 >> ENDLESS IMAGERY PANEL DISCUSSION

In March, the Eli and Edythe Broad Museum opened the exhibit "Pattern: Follow the Rules." Today there will be a panel discussion in conjunction with that exhibit. The group will discuss the idea of "Endless Imagery." In a day and age when we constantly see — and share — images, the panel will examine the issues of repetition and excessive patterning, among other things. Panel members include Adam Brown, professor of art, art history and design; Robert Root-Bernstein, professor of physiology; Jonathan Hall, professor of mathematics; and Alison Gass, the museum's curator of contemporary art. 7 p.m. FREE. Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum, 547 E. Circle Drive, MSU Campus, East Lansing. (517) 884-3900. [broadmuseum.msu.edu](http://broadmuseum.msu.edu).

## THU. MAY 23 >> LOVE IS LOUDER PICTURE PARTY



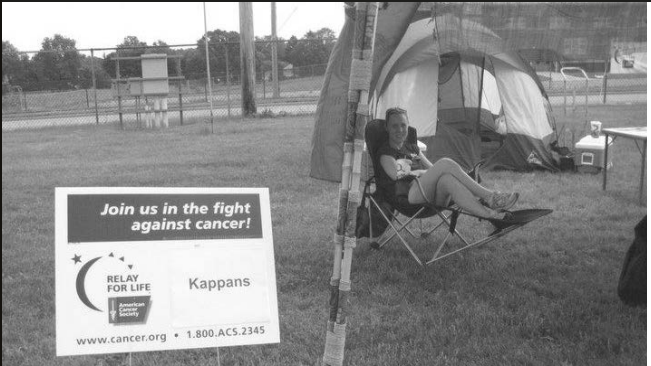
This week, Michigan author Hannah Harrington will discuss her literary contribution to the anti-bullying campaign, Love is Louder, with her novel "Speechless." The teen novel focuses on how harmful our words can be and how we, alone or with friends, can take action to make schools and communities better places. Love is Louder was started by The Jed Foundation, MTV and actress Brittany Snow as a movement to raise the volume around the message that love and support are louder than any internal or external voices that can bring us down. 6 p.m. FREE. Schuler Books & Music Lansing, 2820 Towne Centre Blvd., Lansing. (517) 316-7495. [schulerbooks.com](http://schulerbooks.com).

## THU. MAY 23 >> WILLIAMSTON CHAMBER LUNCHEON

"Living Between Two Worlds" is the topic for this month's Williamston Chamber of Commerce Luncheon. Speaker Earl Wolf, chairman of Williamston's Parks and Recreation Commission, has been living in Dubai, UAE and Al Ain, UAE, for five of the last six years, with his wife, Deborah. His presentation will give insight of American ex-pats in the Middle East while living and working there. This month's sponsor is Gallery Travel, which recently opened in downtown Williamston. RSVP required. 11:30 a.m. \$15, \$12 members and seniors. Brookshire Inn & Golf Club, 205 W. Church St., Williamston. (517) 655-1549.



## SAT. MAY 25 >> PANCAKE BREAKFAST



What's a better way to start off your weekend than with a big plate of pancakes? This Saturday, Lansing Community College's Phi Theta Kappa Mu Tau chapter will host an all-you-can-eat pancake breakfast at Applebee's. The proceeds from the fundraiser will be presented to the American Cancer Society at Relay for Life Lansing this June, which will be held at Lansing Catholic High School. This will be the fourth year in a row that the sorority participates. 8-10 a.m. \$10, \$5 children under 12. Applebee's Lansing, 5400 W. Saginaw Highway, Lansing.

## TUE. MAY 28 >> COMPANY AND CONVERSATION

On Tuesday, the Food Bank Council of Michigan will continue its series Company and Conversations. The second dialogue of the year is titled "The Food Death Toll" and will discuss how we are being impacted by an unhealthy food system and what policies support it. The dialogues were designed to "lay out canvas for fluid discussions that combine the topics of food and social justice, while incorporating an element of artistic expression." Light hors d'oeuvres will be provided. RSVP. 5-7 p.m. Food Bank Council of Michigan, 330 Marshall St., Lansing. (517) 485-1202. [fbcmich.org](http://fbcmich.org).

# TURN IT DOWN

A SURVEY OF LANSING'S MUSICAL LANDSCAPE  
BY RICH TUPICA

THU. MAY 30TH



## COUNTRY STAR AT WHISKEY BARREL

Whiskey Barrel Saloon, 410 S. Clippert, Lansing, 18+, tickets are \$6 to \$12.

Drake White, an EMI-signed singer/songwriter based in Nashville, plays the Whiskey Barrel Saloon on May 30. The Alabama native has a rootsy modern country sound, blended with southern gospel vibes. He often lyrically ad-libs during his live shows. According to his bio, White “is a God-fearing river rat/beach bum who loves the outdoors and expresses this love through his soulful lyrical exchanges that breeze through the listener’s ears.” White’s new single, “The Simple Life,” is available on iTunes. Opening is the Kari Lynch Band, a Grand Rapids-based country outfit. Over the last three years, the band has opened big shows for Miranda Lambert and Big and Rich.

### MIGHTY MEDICINE AT WATERFRONT



**Waterfront Bar & Grill, 325 City Market Drive, 6 p.m. to 10 p.m., FREE, all ages.**

Mighty Medicine plays a free show Thursday at the Waterfront Bar and Grill at the Lansing City Market. Guitarist Larry Neuhardt and vocalist DeShaun Snead play a laidback mixture of blues, soul, reggae, jazz and classic rock — fans of Tuck & Patti might want to check them out. Mighty Medicine has a varied song list of about 200 covers and a catalog of originals. Mighty Medicine first jammed in Neuhardt’s backyard six years ago. The two played a cover of The Doors’ “People are Strange” and hit it off immediately. Since then, the pair has kept busy as full-time musicians, keeping a full schedule around the state, in places such as Petoskey, Traverse City and Grand Rapids.

### FORD THEATRE REUNION AT MAC’S



**Mac’s Bar, 2700 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing, 18+, \$10, 9 p.m.**

Ford Theatre Reunion returns to Lansing Friday for a show at Mac’s Bar. The band plays “circus freak music,” making for an eclectic, vintage sound. The Lexington-based cabaret-punk band consists of Joe Harbison (banjo, guitar, vocals), Luke Harrington (bass), Alex Johns (clarinet, keyboards), Eric Myers (accordion, guitar) and drummer Will Chewning. The band’s Facebook bio says, “Let no one say the clarinet cannot be scary!” Fans of Tom Waits and Gogol Bordello may want to check out the show. Openers include The Webbs, a Detroit-based “bloodgrass” band and The Devil’s Cut, a Lansing-based roots-punk band. Since it formed in 2010, The Devil’s Cut have churned out “angry songs from the rustbelt” and “tunes of love loss and gain.”

### KING MEDIAN AT THE LOFT



**The Loft, 414 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing, all ages, \$8, \$5 advance, 8 p.m.**

Kalamazoo-based rockers King Median headline a night of indie rock at The Loft on Sunday. Opening the show are Totally Rad, The Distorted Waltz and Brother Gold. King Median started as a collaboration between Camden Krusec and writer/musician Colin Smith last year. During the following year, percussionist Brian Dalluge and multi-instrumentalist Ken Tsuchiya joined. It wasn’t until January that King Median became a cohesive unit. The band members, who are liberal art students at Kalamazoo College, say they started in the band in hopes of “creating something entirely new,” mixing space rock with indie pop. The band released its first EP, “Carousel,” on March 23. Fans of Grizzly Bear or Stone Roses might want to check them out.

### SYGIT’S OPEN MIC AT DAGWOOD’S



**Dagwood’s Tavern & Grill, 2803 E. Kalamazoo St., Lansing, 21 and over, 10 p.m. to 1 a.m.**

This long-running weekly event is hosted by local singer/songwriter Jen Sygit and open to seasoned musicians and rookies alike. Depending on the night, you could hear a mish-mash of folk, blues, bluegrass, swing, jazz or folk rock. The event runs from 10 p.m. to 1 a.m., with artists signing up for three songs, or about 15 minutes. People are required to bring their own instruments, but a four-channel sound system, two microphones and one acoustic guitar are supplied. As for the host, Sygit, is steadily busy playing solo shows across the state. Sygit is still collaborating as a duo with fellow local songwriter Sam Corbin as well as gigging with a number of other area groups, including The Lincoln County Process, Stella! and Eight to the Bar.

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.	Bob Baldori, 7:30 p.m.	Peter Nelson Jazz Quartet, 9 p.m.		
Bar 30, 2324 Showtime Drive	D.J. Skitzo, 10 p.m.	D.J. John Beltran, 10 p.m.	D.J. John Beltran, 10 p.m.	D.J. Skitzo, 10 p.m.
Colonial Bar, 3425 S. MLK Jr. Blvd.		Open Mic Night, 9 p.m.	The Eric Brodberg Band, 9 p.m.	The Eric Brodberg Band, 9 p.m.
Connxtions Comedy Club, 2900 N. East St.		John Bush, 8 p.m.	John Bush, 8 p.m. & 10:30 p.m.	John Bush, 8 p.m. & 10:30 p.m.
Crunchy’s, 254 W. Grand River Ave.	Fever Fever, 10 p.m.	Karaoke, 10 p.m.	Karaoke, 10 p.m.	Karaoke, 10 p.m.
The Exchange, 314 E. Michigan Ave.		Wine Night, 8:30 p.m.	Charger, 9:30 p.m.	
The Firm, 229 S. Washington Square		DnW Sound DJs, 9 p.m.	Various DJs, 9 p.m.	
Grand Café/Sir Pizza, 201 E. Grand River Ave.		Karaoke with Joanie Daniels, 7 p.m.		Roy & da Boys, 8 p.m.
Green Door, 2005 E. Michigan Ave.	D.J. Sammy, 9:30 p.m.	The Dewaynes, 9:30 p.m.	Avon Bomb, 9:30 p.m.	Soulxpress, 9:30 p.m.
The Loft, 414 E. Michigan Ave.			Fried Egg Nebula, 8 p.m.	The Devil’s Cut, 8 p.m.
Mac’s Bar, 2700 E. Michigan Ave.		Mr. Clit & The Pink Cigarettes, 9 p.m.	Ford Theatre Reunion, 9 p.m.	
Moriarty’s Pub, 802 E. Michigan Ave.	Open Mic Night, 10 p.m.	Kathleen & Bridge Street Band, 10 p.m.	Smooth Daddy, 10 p.m.	Smooth Daddy, 10 p.m.
Rookies, 16460 S. US 27	Sea Cruisers, 7-10 p.m.	Water Pong DJ, 9 p.m.	Karaoke Dance Party, 9 p.m.	Live Bands, 7:30 p.m.
Rum Runners, 601 East Michigan Ave.	Open Mic Night, 9 p.m.	Dueling Pianos & DJ, 9 p.m.	Dueling Pianos & DJ, 7 p.m.	Dueling Pianos & DJ, 7 p.m.
Uli’s Haus of Rock, 4519 S. MLK Jr. Blvd.		Endo, 9 p.m.		Camino Real Band, 8 p.m.
Unicorn Tavern, 327 E. Grand River Ave.		Frog & the Beeftones, 8:30 p.m.	Pat Valenka, 8:30 p.m.	Pat Valenka, 8:30 p.m.
Waterfront Bar & Grill, 325 City Market Drive	Suzi & The Love Brothers, 6 p.m.	Mighty Medicine, 6 p.m.	Friday Orchard, 6 p.m.	
Whiskey Barrel Saloon, 410 S. Clippert	D.J., 9 p.m.	D.J., 9 p.m.	D.J., 9 p.m.	D.J., 9 p.m.
Sunday	Karaoke, 9 p.m. Drag Queens Gone Wild, 11 p.m., Spiral Dance Bar; DJ Mike, 9:30 p.m., LeRoy’s Bar & Grill; Open Blues Jam, 7-11 p.m. Uli’s Haus of Rock.			
Monday	Steppin’ In It, 9:30 p.m., Green Door: Easy Babies funk trio, 10 p.m., The Exchange. Open-Mic Mondays, 6:30 p.m., Michigan Brewing Company-Lansing, Monday Funday, 9 p.m., The Firm.			
Tuesday	Tommy Foster & Guitar Bob, 9 p.m., The Exchange; Neon Tuesday, 9 p.m., Mac’s Bar. Jazz Tuesday Open Jam, 9 p.m., Stober’s Bar; Craig Hendershott, 6 p.m., Waterfront Bar & Grill.			

# Out on the town

from page 14

## LITERATURE AND POETRY

**A Look at Desegregation.** With Lansing author & educator Freya Rivers. 7 p.m. FREE. Schuler Books & Music Lansing, 2820 Towne Centre Blvd., Lansing. (517) 316-7495. schulerbooks.com.

**Talk & Signing with Deborah Coonts.** Author of the Lucky O'Toole Las Vegas Adventures. 7 p.m. Schuler Books & Music Okemos, 1982 Grand River Ave., Okemos. (517) 349-8840. schulerbooks.com.

**Michigan Notable Books Tour.** Poet Melba Joyce Boyd. 6:30-7:30 p.m. FREE. Delta Township District

Library, 5130 Davenport Drive, Lansing. (517) 321-4014.

**Out of this World Book Club.** "The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen," Alan Moore. 7-8:30 p.m. East Lansing Public Library, 950 Abbot Road, East Lansing. (517) 351-2420. elpl.org.

## Thursday, May 23

### CLASSES AND SEMINARS

**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.

**Water media.** All levels welcome, with Donna Randall. Pre-registration required. 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

\$50 for 4 weeks. Gallery 1212 Fine Art Studio, 1212 Turner St., Lansing. (517) 999-1212.

**Codependents Anonymous.** 7-8 p.m. FREE. Community Mental Health Building, 812 E. Jolly Road, Lansing. (517) 672-4072.

## EVENTS

**Community Cinema.** Screening "Love Free or Die." Reservation required. 7 p.m. FREE. MSU Communication Arts & Sciences Building, MSU Campus, East Lansing. wkar.org.

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

**Paws for Reading.** Read to therapy dogs. Register. 6-7:30 p.m. FREE. Delta Township District Library, 5130 Davenport Drive, Lansing. (517) 321-4014 ext. 3.

**Euchre.** 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.

**Salsa Dancing.** Lessons, 7 p.m. & 7:50 p.m. Open dancing, 8:30 p.m. 7 p.m. \$5. Art Alley, 1133 S. Washington Ave., Lansing. (517) 230-9018.

May 23.)

## Saturday, May 25

### CLASSES AND SEMINARS

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

**Juicing 101.** With David Johnson. 2 p.m. \$20 non-owner, \$15 Co-op owners. East Lansing Food Coop, 4962 Northwind Drive, East Lansing. (517) 337-1266.

## EVENTS

**Watershed Wellness Center Farmers' Market.** 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Watershed Farmer's Market, 16280 National Parkway, Lansing. (517) 886-0440.

## MUSIC

**Live Music at the Barn.** With John Davis. 11 a.m.-2 p.m. FREE. Lansing City Market, 325 City Market Drive, Lansing. (517) 483-7460.

**Positive Change Events: Free Expression Night.** 21 and up. 8 p.m.-1:30 a.m. Donations \$5 advance, \$6 door. Elks Lodge, 5334 S. MLK Jr. Blvd., Lansing. (517) 749-4878.

**CMS String Ensemble Recital.** 2 p.m. FREE. MSU Community Music School, 4930 S. Hagadorn Road, East Lansing. (517) 355-7661. cms.msu.edu.

## THEATER

**"10:53."** 3 p.m. & 8 p.m. \$22 & \$25. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam, Williamston. (Please see details May 23.)

## Sunday, May 26

### CLASSES AND SEMINARS

**Atheists & Humanists Dinner Meeting.** Writer Jonathan Stars. 5 p.m. FREE. Great Wall Buffet Restaurant, 4832 W. Saginaw Highway, Lansing. (517) 914-2278. atheists.meetup.com/453.

**Spiritual Talk, Pure Meditation & Silent Prayer.** One of Mata Yoganandaji's "Inspiring Talks." 7 p.m. FREE. Self Realization Meditation Healing Centre, 7187 Drumheller Road, Bath. (517) 641-6201.

**Juggling.** Learn how. 2-4 p.m. FREE. Orchard Street Pumphouse, 368 Orchard St., East Lansing. (517) 485-9190.

**Overeaters Anonymous.** 2-3:15 p.m. FREE. Sparrow Professional Building, 1200 E. Michigan Ave., Conference room F, 2nd floor, Lansing. (517) 332-0755.

**Alcoholics Anonymous.** With ASL interpretation. 9 a.m. FREE. Alano Club East, 220 S. Howard St., Lansing. (517) 482-8957.

**Codependents Anonymous.** Meets on the third floor. 2-3 p.m. FREE. CADL Downtown Lansing Library, 401 S. Capitol Ave., Lansing. (517) 672-4072.

## EVENTS

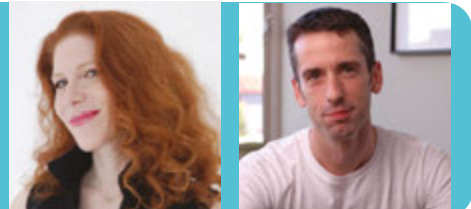
**Capital Area Singles Dance.** With door prizes. 6-

See Out on the Town, Page 17

Advice Goddess & Savage Love

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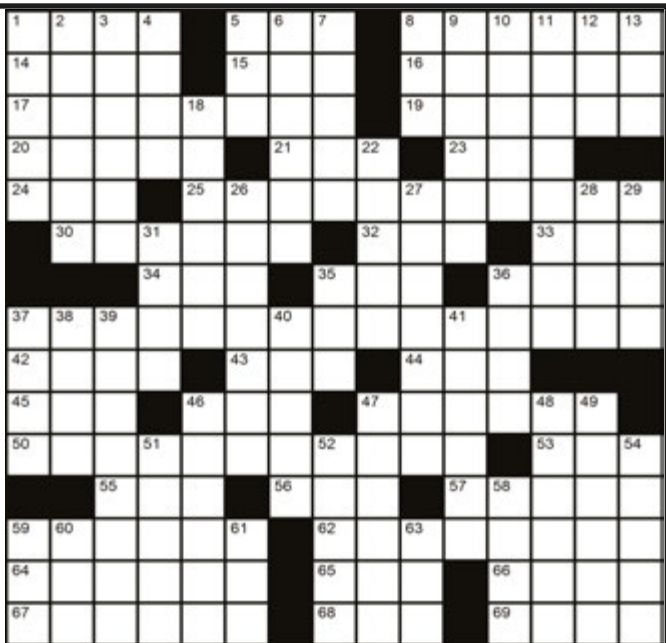
## Jonesin' Crossword

By Matt Jones

"That's the Thinga"-  
-gotta it?  
Matt Jones

### Across

- 1 Ozone layer destroyers
- 5 Rear admiral's rear
- 8 "Family Guy" town
- 14 Tissue additive
- 15 "Excusez-\_\_\_!"
- 16 Dethrone
- 17 Xbalanque, for instance?
- 19 Kind of sale or tax
- 20 Fragrant bouquet
- 21 Catty remark?
- 23 West end?
- 24 "Are we having fun \_\_\_?"
- 25 The Dalai Lama?
- 30 Outscore
- 32 Hall-of-Fame QB Dawson
- 33 "Dexter" network, for short
- 34 Port type
- 35 In the style of
- 36 Shoe brand \_\_\_ McAn
- 37 Talks that may ask "What's it like having a palace in Tatooine?"
- 42 Neutral hue
- 43 President pro \_\_\_
- 44 Reznor band, for short
- 45 Season in Bordeaux
- 46 "Whats" grunt
- 47 "Relax!"
- 50 Creature that fire-roasts its own pies?
- 53 "Was \_\_\_ das?"
- 55 "Like that'll ever happen!"
- 56 Fair \_\_\_ laws



- 57 "Affliction" star Nick
- 59 1975 "Thrilla" city
- 62 End of a deep sleep?
- 64 "\_\_\_ always money in the banana stand!" (George Bluth)
- 65 "Bravo!" relative
- 66 Yacht spot
- 67 Bank patrons
- 68 6-pt. scores
- 69 A portion

### Down

- 1 Beauty bar brand
- 2 Got redder
- 3 Clifftop howler
- 4 Fashion line?
- 5 "I love," to Caesar
- 6 Easy Listening or Classic Rock
- 7 They come in and out
- 8 "Huh?" from Jose

- 9 Sight \_\_\_
- 10 "Ad \_\_\_ per Aspera" (Kansas motto)
- 11 They, sometimes
- 12 Granola piece
- 13 Bell competitor, back in the day
- 18 Peace Nobel from Poland
- 22 2008 Pixar robot
- 26 Like those dressed as nuns
- 27 Instructional video title start
- 28 Self-help site
- 29 CD- \_\_\_
- 31 Clothing company founded in 1992
- 35 Cash source
- 36 Alec's sitcom co-star
- 37 Versatile army vehicle

- 38 Dramatic introduction?
- 39 USSR head known for his bushy eyebrows
- 40 '60s jacket style
- 41 Boys' Choir home
- 46 Composer Gustav
- 47 Eternal
- 48 "The Sopranos" consigliere
- 49 Admiration
- 51 Name on African maps (at least up to 1997)
- 52 Neckwear for a Mystery Machine passenger
- 54 \_\_\_ Haute, Ind.
- 58 "Clumsy me!"
- 59 Everest, K2, et al.
- 60 "A clue!"
- 61 Beast of burden
- 63 My, in Marseilles

## MUSIC

**Courthouse Concert Series.** Mason middle & high school jazz bands. 6 p.m. FREE. Ingham County Courthouse, 341 S. Jefferson, Mason. (517) 676-1046.

## THEATER

**"10:53."** World premiere. Look at a family in crisis. 8 p.m. \$15. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam St., Williamston. (517) 655-7469. williamstontheatre.com.

## Friday, May 24

### CLASSES AND SEMINARS

**Oil Painting.** All levels, with Patricia Singer. 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. \$50 for 4 weeks. Gallery 1212 Fine Art Studio, 1212 Turner St., Lansing. (517) 999-1212.

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

## EVENTS

**Singles TGIF.** Hors d'oeuvres, prizes & music. 8 p.m.-Midnight, \$12. Hawk Hollow Golf Course, 15101 Chandler Road, Bath. (517) 281-6272. singlestgif.com.

## MUSIC

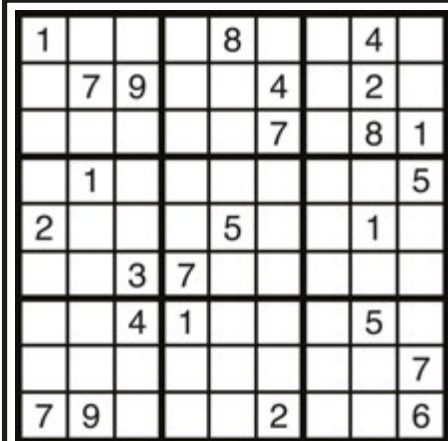
**Grand River Radio Diner.** With Now Know Quartet. Noon-1 p.m. FREE. Grand Cafe/Sir Pizza, 201 E. Grand River Ave., Lansing. (517) 483-1710.

**Velocity Shift.** 9 p.m.-1 a.m. FREE. Buddies Grill, 2040 Aurelius Road, #13, Holt. (517) 699-3670.

## THEATER

**"10:53."** 8 p.m. \$25. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam St., Williamston. (Please see details

## SUDOKU



## INTERMEDIATE

### 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 19

# Out on the town

from page 16

10 p.m. \$8. Fraternal Order of Eagles, 4700 N. Grand River Ave., Lansing. (517) 819-0405.

## THEATER

**“10:53.”** 2 p.m. \$22. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam St., Williamston. (Please see details May 23.)

## Monday, May 27

### CLASSES AND SEMINARS

**Divorced, Separated, Widowed Conversation Group.** 7:30 p.m. FREE. St. David’s Episcopal Church, 1519 Elmwood Road, Lansing. (517) 323-2272. **Overeaters Anonymous.** 7 p.m. FREE. St. David’s Episcopal Church, 1519 Elmwood Road, Lansing. (989) 587-4609.

## EVENTS

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

## Tuesday, May 28

### CLASSES AND SEMINARS

**Online Job Searching.** 6-8 p.m. FREE. Foster Community Center, 200 N. Foster Ave., Lansing. (517) 708-4392. iteclansing.org. **Tai Chi & Qigong.** Taught by Bruce Ching. Drop-ins welcome. 5:45-7 p.m. \$12 per class, \$60 for six weeks. ACC Natural Healing and Wellness, 617 Ionia St., Lansing. **Take Off Pounds Sensibly.** 7 p.m. FREE to visit. Eaton Rapids Medical Center, 1500 S. Main St., Eaton Rapids. (517) 543-0786. **Intro to Computers.** 2:30-4 p.m. FREE. Capital Area Michigan Works, 2110 S. Cedar St., Lansing. **Water media.** All levels welcome, with Donna Randall. Pre-registration required. 6-8:30 p.m. \$50 for four weeks. Gallery 1212 Fine Art Studio, 1212 Turner St., Lansing. (517) 999-1212. **Speakeasies Toastmasters.** 12:05-1 p.m. FREE. Ingham County Human Services Building. 5303 S. Cedar St., Lansing. (517) 887-1440. **Anger Management Group for Men.** Registration required. 3-5 p.m. \$5. Women’s Center of Greater Lansing, 1710 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. (517) 372-9163. **Codependents Anonymous.** 5:45-6:45 p.m. Everybody Reads Books and Stuff, 2019 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. (517) 346-9900.

## EVENTS

**MSU Creative Writing Center Group.** 7:30-9 p.m. East Lansing Public Library, 950 Abbot Road, East Lansing. (517) 351-2420. elpl.org.

**Tea & Talk.** 8 p.m. FREE. Triple Goddess New Age Bookstore, 1824 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. (517) 347-2112.

## MUSIC

**Jazz Tuesdays.** Hosted by Jeff Shoup Quartet. 10 p.m.-1 a.m. FREE. Stober’s Bar, 812 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. **Children & Youth Choir Program Auditions.** Ages 7-18. Call for appointment. 4-7 p.m. FREE. MSU Community Music School, 4930 S. Hagadorn Road, East Lansing. (517) 355-7661.

## Wednesday, May 29

### CLASSES AND SEMINARS

**ePathways Informational Session.** 10 a.m. Capital Area Michigan Works, 2110 S. Cedar St., Lansing. (517) 492-5500. epathways.org. **Drop-in Writer’s Workshop.** 6-9 p.m. East Lansing Public Library, 950 Abbot Road, East Lansing. (517) 351-2420. elpl.org. **Vinyasa Yoga.** Taught by Cathy Fitch. Drop ins welcome. 5:30-6:45 p.m. \$12 per class, \$60 six weeks. ACC Natural Healing and Wellness, 617 Ionia St., Lansing. (517) 708-8510. **Meditation.** For beginners and experienced. 7-9 p.m. FREE. Vietnamese Buddhist Temple, 3015 S. Washington Ave., Lansing. (517) 351-5866. **Overeaters Anonymous.** 7 p.m. FREE. First Congregational United Church of Christ, 210 W. Saginaw Highway, Grand Ledge. (517) 256-6954.

## EVENTS

**Practice Your English.** 7-8 p.m. FREE. East Lansing Public Library, 950 Abbot Road, East Lansing. (517) 351-2420. **Watershed Wellness Center Farmers’ Market.** 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Watershed Farmer’s Market, 16280 National Parkway, Lansing. (517) 886-0440. **Grande Paraders Square Dance Club.** Round dancing, 7 p.m. Modern-style square dancing, 7:30 p.m. \$4 members, \$5 guests. Holt 9th Grade Campus, 5780 Holt Road, Holt. (517) 694-0087. **Allen Street Farmers Market.** 2:30-7 p.m. FREE. Allen Street Farmers Market, 1619 E. Kalamazoo St., Lansing. (517) 367-2468.

## MUSIC

**Spring Concert Series.** Pianist Deborrah Wyndham. 6:30-7:30 p.m. FREE. Delta Township District Library, 5130 Davenport Drive, Lansing. (517) 321-4014 ext. 4. dtdl.org. **Ukulele Basics Workshop.** With Chris Zatzke. Instruments available. 6 p.m. FREE. Marshall Music, 3240 E. Saginaw St., Lansing. (517) 337-9700. **Sam Winterheimer Quartet.** 7-10 p.m. Midtown Beer Company, 402 S. Washington Square, Lansing.

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## Free Will Astrology

By Rob Brezsny

May 22-28

**ARIES** (March 21-April 19): "I'm still learning," said Michelangelo when he was 87 years old. For now, he's your patron saint. With his unflagging curiosity as your inspiration, maybe your hunger for new teachings will bloom. You will register the fact that you don't already know everything there is to know . . . you have not yet acquired all the skills you were born to master . . . you're still in the early stages of exploring whole swaths of experience that will be important to you as you become the person you want to be. Even if you're not enrolled in a formal school, it's time to take your education to the next level.

**TAURUS** (April 20-May 20): Nobel Prize-winning physicist Richard Feynman admitted that physicists can't really define "energy," let alone understand it. "We have no knowledge of what energy is," he said. "We do not have a picture that energy comes in little blobs of a definite amount." While it's unlikely that in the coming weeks you Tauruses will advance the scientific understanding of energy, you will almost certainly boost your natural grasp of what energy feels like both inside and outside of your body. You will develop a more intuitive knack for how it ebbs and flows. You will discover useful tips about how to make it work for you rather than against you. You're already a pretty smart animal, but soon you'll get even smarter.

**GEMINI** (May 21-June 20): Giant Sequoias are the biggest trees on the planet. Many are more than 300 feet tall and 30 feet wide. Their longevity is legendary, too. They can live for 2,000 years. And yet their seeds are tiny. If you had a bag of 91,000 seeds, it would weigh one pound. I suspect there's currently a resemblance between you and the Giant Sequoia, Gemini. You're close to acquiring a small kernel that has the potential to grow into a strong and enduring creation. Do you know what I'm talking about? Identify it. Start nurturing it.

**CANCER** (June 21-July 22): Don't take yourself too seriously. The more willing you are to make fun of your problems, the greater the likelihood is that you will actually solve them. If you're blithe and breezy and buoyant, you will be less of a magnet for suffering. To this end, say the following affirmations out loud. 1. "I'm willing to make the mistakes if someone else is willing to learn from them." 2. "I'm sorry, but I'm not apologizing any more." 3. "Suffering makes you deep. Travel makes you broad. I'd rather travel." 4. "My commitment is to truth, not consistency." 5. "The hell with enlightenment, I want to have a tantrum." 6. "I stopped fighting my inner demons. We're on the same side now."

**LEO** (July 23-Aug. 22): Would you buy a stuffed bunny or a baby blanket that was handcrafted by a prisoner on death row? Would you go to a cafe and eat a sandwich that was made by an employee who was screaming angrily at another employee while he made your food? Would you wear a shirt that was sewn by a ten-year-old Bangladeshi girl who works 12 hours every day with a machine that could cut off her fingers if she makes one wrong move? Questions like these will be good for you to ask yourself, Leo. It's important for you to evaluate the origins of all the things you welcome into your life — and to make sure they are in alignment with your highest values and supportive of your well-being.

**VIRGO** (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Having good posture tends to make you look alert and vigorous. More than that, it lowers stress levels in your tissues and facilitates the circulation of your bodily fluids. You can breathe better, too. In the coming weeks, I urge you to give yourself this blessing: the gift of good posture. I encourage you to bestow a host of other favors, too. Specialize in treating yourself with extra sweetness and compassion. Explore different ways to get excited, awaken your sense of wonder, and be in love with your life. If anyone calls you a self-involved narcissist, tell them you're just doing what your astrologer prescribed.

**LIBRA** (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): The German word *Fernweh* can be translated as "wanderlust." Its literal meaning is "farsickness," or "an ache for the distance." Another German word, *Wandertrieb*, may be rendered as "migratory instinct" or "passion to travel." I suspect urges like these may be welling up in you right now. You could use a break from your familiar pleasures and the comforts you've been taking for granted. Moreover, you would attract an unexpected healing into your life by rambling off into the unknown.

**SCORPIO** (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): We call it "longing," says poet Robert Haas, "because desire is full of endless distances." In other words, you and the object of your yearning may be worlds apart even though you are right next to each other. For that matter, there may be a vast expanse between you and a person you consider an intimate ally; your secret life and his or her secret life might be mysteries to each other. That's the bad news, Scorpio. The good news is that you're in a phase when you have extraordinary power to shrink the distances. Get closer! Call on your ingenuity and courage to do so.

**SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Are you ready to go deeper, Sagittarius? In fact, would you be willing to go deeper and deeper and deeper? I foresee the possibility that you might benefit from diving in over your head. I suspect that the fear you feel as you dare to descend will be an acceptable trade-off for the educational thrills you will experience once you're way down below. The darkness you encounter will be fertile, not evil. It will energize you, not deplete you. And if you're worried that such a foray might feel claustrophobic, hear my prediction: In the long run it will enhance your freedom.

**CAPRICORN** (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): In the course of his 91 years on the planet, artist Pablo Picasso lived in many different houses, some of them rentals. When inspired by the sudden eruption of creative urges, he had no inhibitions about drawing and doodling on the white walls of those temporary dwellings. On one occasion, his landlord got upset. He ordered Picasso to pay him a penalty fee so that he could have the sketches painted over. Given the fact that Picasso ultimately became the best-selling artist of all time, that landlord may have wished he'd left the squiggles intact. In every way you can imagine, Capricorn, don't be like that landlord in the coming week.

**AQUARIUS** (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): "I was often in love with something or someone," wrote Polish poet Czeslaw Milosz. "I would fall in love with a monkey made of rags. With a plywood squirrel. With a botanical atlas. With an oriole. With a ferret. With the forest one sees to the right when riding in a cart. With human beings whose names still move me." Your task, Aquarius, is to experiment with his approach to love. Make it a fun game: See how often you can feel adoration for unexpected characters and creatures. Be infatuated with curious objects . . . with snarky Internet memes . . . with fleeting phenomena like storms and swirling flocks of birds and candy spilled on the floor. Your mission is to supercharge your lust for life.

**PISCES** (Feb. 19-March 20): Scientists in Brazil discovered a huge new body of water 13,000 feet beneath the Amazon River. It's completely underground. Named the Hamza River, it moves quite slowly, and is technically more of an aquifer than a river. It's almost as long as the Amazon, and much wider. In accordance with the astrological omens, Pisces, I'm making the Hamza River your symbol of the week. Use it to inspire you as you uncover hidden resources. Meditate on the possibility that you have within you a secret reservoir of vitality that lies beneath your well-known sources. See if you can tap into deep feelings that are so deep you've been barely conscious of them.

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

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Laura Johnson/City Pulse

Organic Farmer Training Program students Tyler Troszak and Zach Wilbur work on irrigation and adding compost to peas at the Student Organic Farm.

## A tomato by any other name

### Decoding the sometimes confusing terminology of organic food

By LAURA JOHNSON

"Organic" has become a buzzword that seems to be everywhere these days. Essentially, organic refers to agriculture that's conducted without synthetic chemicals, but as with any trend, there are a flurry of issues, contradictions and confusions infused about what it really means.

Simply put, organic food means food grown without pesticides and other chemicals that are harmful not only to our health, but to the health of the land, farmers, plants and animals. "It's farming in a way that's using natural rhythms and forces," said Dan Fillius, assistant manager of Michigan State University's Student Organic Farm. "It originated from those who were looking to get away from chemical agriculture."

Chemical, industrial agriculture has spurred major social and environmental issues, like foodborne illnesses, degraded soils and water pollution, massive consumption of fossil fuels, obesity and diabetes, worker exploitation, small farm displacement and animal cruelty. So people are opting out through alternative food

systems — but for different reasons.

"If you're afraid of pesticides in your food, then you're going to be seeking out organic food," said Wynne Wright, a sociologist who researches agro-food systems at MSU. "If you're concerned about globalization and the (exploitation) that takes place on the other side of the world, you might be eating locally. If you're distraught over the way workers are treated then maybe fair trade. Those who are concerned about the environment might turn to very strict organic or biodynamic."

The problem is all these terms intermingle; they get confused and mean different things to different people. Officially, "organic" is a legal definition by the U.S. Department of Agriculture that defines what agricultural practices and inputs can and cannot be used. It holds the label "certified organic."

But some farmers, especially at the local scale, don't think the organic certification goes far enough, and some find it cost prohibitive or unnecessary. "From what I've seen there aren't a lot of people who are certified organic at farmers markets," Fillius said. "But most people are practicing organic but have chosen not to be certified because they're making just fine money, and they have relationships with their customers, and they can tell them directly how it's grown or have them check out their farms."

The organic certification, then, is really just a substitute for a direct relationship between producers and consumers,

See Organic, Page 19



# Organic

from page 18

which is almost unheard of in the industrial food system. "At a grocery store, you don't ask a lot of questions — you take it or leave it," Wright said. "We are passive in a capitalist marketplace. But the alternative food system encourages us to engage with each other. Agency is required on the part of both people."

The trick is, Fillius said, to ask a farmer or producer about their practices if you're shopping locally, and if that option isn't available, check the label. "If I'm at the store and I have no idea of knowing who grew the produce, then the organic certification is a verification of how it was grown," he said. "It's a replacement for an interaction you could have with a farmer."

So "organic" doesn't just refer to the USDA certifiable kind, at least not for the purposes of this column. Then there are other issues surrounding organic, like price, an elitist stereotype and the risk of falling into old patterns.

Bizarrely, organic food is more expensive than food produced with chemicals, although this is starting to shift, as it becomes more available and accessible. "Organic production practices don't externalize as many costs on society, such as pollution, when compared to some other practices," said Phil Howard, an MSU professor of community, food and agriculture. "Nor do they receive as many subsidies. They're typically more labor intensive and expensive as a result."

This can lead to snooty stereotypes and "us versus them" divisions. "There's lots of potential," Wright said. "What can be important is that opportunity to peel back the layers and think reflexively about the way we live our lives, how our food system is organized and what our food system is helping to reproduce."

"But there's also potential to fall into the same old traps that plague the traditional food system. We're still the same people, and the same people who invented the conventional food system are trying to reinvent the alternative food system."

But I think there's reason to hope in Lansing. Since moving here two years ago to research sustainability and agro-food systems as a geography graduate student at MSU, I've been constantly impressed by the food-related happenings I see and experience around me. Urban farms and community gardens, farmers markets in diverse neighborhoods accepting Bridge Cards, farm-to-table vendors, humane meat options and community supported agriculture.

Maybe it's because in hard times people come together and make things happen. There are challenges ahead, but we have strength and possibility, too. Things seem to be happening organically around here, in many senses of the word.

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- ★ **Fri., July 5 at Joe Louis Arena** ★
- ★ **Chicago One-Day Trips** ★
- ★ **July 27 or Nov. 2.....\$69pp** ★
- ★ **Greektown Casino (w/ \$20 credit)** ★
- ★ **July 14 or Aug. 18....\$25pp** ★
- ★ **Washington DC** ★
- ★ **June 20-24.....\$569pp** ★
- ★ **Gettysburg 150th Celebration** ★
- ★ **July 2-6.....\$790pp** ★
- ★ **New York City** ★
- ★ **July 18-23.....\$799pp** ★
- ★ **Mt. Rushmore & Badlands** ★
- ★ **August 11-18.....\$895pp** ★
- ★ **Amishlands-Pennsylvania** ★
- ★ **September 16-20...\$560pp** ★
- ★ **Maine & Kennebunkport** ★
- ★ **October 7-12.....\$569pp** ★
- ★ **Branson Christmas** ★
- ★ **December 1-7.....\$569pp** ★
- ★ **The Panhandle, Florida 2014** ★
- ★ **February 9-15.....\$729pp** ★
- ★ **Savannah w/ Paula Deen's** ★
- ★ **March 23-29.....\$779pp** ★

(517) 351-2015 or (800) 474-3840  
www.letsgettravel-tours.com



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A WINE BAR



**NEW WEEKLY SPECIALS**

**MONDAY HAPPY HOUR ALL DAY**  
\$1 Off All Glass Pours & Bottled Beers  
\$4 Mini Happy Hour Plates 3PM - 9PM

**TAKE A FLIGHT TUESDAY**  
\$15 Wine Flight & Mini Cheese Plate  
\$10 Sparkling Wine Flight

**WINE A BIT WEDNESDAY**  
50% Off Wine Bottles up to \$89  
25% Off Wine Bottles \$90 and up  
10% Off Captain's List Wines

**PERFECT PAIRS THURSDAY**  
Order the Weekly Featured Small Plates and Receive 25% Off a Glass of the Suggested Wine Pairing

**TASTING ROOM SATURDAY 12PM - 4PM**  
Sample 5 Wines for \$10  
Special Carryout Discounts on Bottles of Wine

**BUSINESS HOURS**  
Mon – Thu: 11 a.m. – 12 a.m.  
Friday: 11 a.m. – 1 a.m.  
Saturday: 12 p.m. – 1 a.m.

Find us on Facebook! 

www.p2winebar.com • 517.507.5074 • 107 S. Washington Square, Lansing  
Join Us Tuesday - Friday for Happy Hour from 3PM - 6PM  
Happy Hour prices are \$4/glass, \$11/carafe

## Need Resume Experience this Summer?



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### SUDOKU SOLUTION

From Pg. 16

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

### CROSSWORD SOLUTION

From Pg. 16

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



✱----- **June 1, 2013, 10:00 am - 3:00 pm** -----✱

Come down during Be a Tourist in Your Own Town for Old Town's own, Chalk of the Town! Roam the streets of Old Town and experience true art in the streets. Beginning at 10 a.m., artists will take to the streets creating masterpieces on their assigned piece of sidewalk, using only chalk. The creations will be completed by 2 p.m.

when the judging will commence. Visitors to this event will be allowed to vote for the People's Choice winner all day and winners will be announced at 3 p.m. Families are also welcome to participate in the kid's sidewalk art area. Make sure you 'like' Old Town Lansing on Facebook.

**Chalk artist registration ends Friday, May 24th at midnight.**  
For more information and to register to be an artist visit [chalkofthetown.org](http://chalkofthetown.org)

## Be a Tourist in Your Own Town

### Other Participating Business

Absolute Gallery  
Elderly Instruments  
Friedland Industries  
Girl Scouts-Heart of Michigan  
Great Lakes Artworks  
Michigan Institute for Contemporary Art  
Preuss Pets

## June Events

June 1st  
Chalk of the Town 10am-3pm  
Scrapfest Collection Day 10am

June 2nd  
Farmers Market 10am-3pm  
Gallery Walk 12pm-5p

June 21st  
Festival of the Moon 6pm-11pm  
Scrapfest Art Display and Auction

June 22  
Festival of the Sun 2pm-11pm  
Scrapfest Art Display and Auction



For a complete list of events and getting involved go to [iloveoldtown.org](http://iloveoldtown.org) and follow us @ILoveOldTown

