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"We can do better. This will not be the first time that our taxpayers will have asked for a revised plan by rejecting the first proposal. In these times, we need to invest in improving student achievement and reasonable building upgrades at each site as needed."

Liz Schweitzer
Former East Lansing Mayor

I strongly urge you to vote NO on the existing proposal and plan that cements our future students into an obsolete hardware technology. I urge you to support a better plan that can continually incorporate newer technologies as they are created. Vote NO to the existing proposal and plan! Let's not build a dinosaur in the classroom and then call that progress.
James Nord
Retired Professor of Educational Technology

Why ask the voters for 62 million, 55 million? I don't know, you pick the figure. The figure changes all the time too. No offense to anybody. But the reality is why would we go ask them to vote 60 million dollars to build 5 new elementary schools, in the process potentially kill one elementary school that seems to be working, when we could just take this one school at a time or a couple schools at a time? So, I'm asking my fellow board members to reject the money bully and make a reasoned, measured, prudent financial decision."

George Brookover
Former ELPS School Board Member
Statement made at September 26, 2011 School Board meeting when the bond was approved by a narrow 4-3 vote

**For more information, go to
supportabetterplan.org.**

PAID FOR WITH REGULATED FUNDS BY SUPPORT A BETTER PLAN

VOTE NO

ELPS BOND - FEB 28

I care deeply about our schools, but this current proposal is just wrong. The 53 million dollar proposal will tear down and rebuild 5 elementary schools - a logistical nightmare, increase the size of the middle school to 990, and close Red Cedar - leaving a whole side of town without a school within walking distance. For all these reasons and more, I will vote "No" on February 28th.

Sandra Seaton
Founding Member, East Lansing Education Foundation

"We have never before voted against an education bond issue, but on February 28, 2012 we will do so in the pending East Lansing bond referendum. As lifelong educators, we do so only because the facts in this situation compel that decision. The Board seeks voter approval for a \$53 million construction bond when actual housing values would support much less borrowing. Recent history shows that "borrowing on a bubble" is most unwise. Here, the proposal knowingly borrows money based upon inflated housing values, binds the community to thirty years of indebtedness, and limits the Board's future flexibility."

Robert and Amy McCormick, East Lansing

SUPPORT A BETTER PLAN

VOTE NO

ON FEBRUARY 28



Vaarwel, Meijer — for now

EDITOR



BERL SCHWARTZ

At a Paczki party Tuesday morning, state Rep. Joan Bauer, D-Lansing, asked me what she could do to help keep City Pulse in Meijer stores.

“Write a letter,” I told her.

Or e-mail Meijer.

Or call the store. Or go see a store manager. Elsewhere in this issue — the last one scheduled for delivery to Meijer — is a flier giving you the particulars on how to do any of those things.

Meijer reached out to me late Friday to suggest the magazine rack as at least a temporary solution, but that will accommodate just a fraction of the 3,000-plus papers readers pick up in Meijer each week. Moreover, it will be far less visible and accessible. Nor has anything been negotiated at this point, so until further notice, this remains the last issue of City Pulse at Meijer.

That’s because Meijer has decided to eliminate the red free publication racks — on which City Pulse pays for shelf space — from the lobbies of its 199 stores across five states, starting March 1.

“All free publication racks at all of our stores are managed by a third-party company,” Meijer’s VP for public affairs, Stacie Behler, wrote me in an email last week.

“Meijer has made a corporate decision to remove all of the racks in order to maintain a clean, consistent look in the front of our stores, which was not currently the case in most of our stores. Our decision is no reflection on City Pulse or any other specific publication and was not based upon labor issues.”

The last reference was to information City Pulse published last week from a very well placed source with connections at Meijer who said that it was “purely an issue of labor costs for them. Even though most publications are handled by a distributor, people pick them up, leave them around the store, throw them on the floor, etc. Each time an employee has to pick it up, throw it away or touch it, that adds to their costs.”

If that’s the reason, which Meijer denies, it doesn’t wash in this market: All the store directors told me they had “no problem” with free publications, as one put it.

Whatever the motivation, those racks

are going to be gone by next week. The issue is how do we get City Pulse back into Meijer stores, where a growing number of readers pick up their copies. We had over 1,000 papers picked up at the south Lansing location alone this past week.

City Pulse’s greatest growth has come from being in Meijer the last three years. And that means we are reaching not just more people but a far broader audience. Meijer serves all strata of society in Lansing. Yes, this is about circulation, which helps us sell advertising. But first and foremost it’s about serving the community with content that is local, carefully reported and often exclusive.

Moreover, City Pulse carries virtually all public notices for the cities of Lansing and East Lansing and most of those from Ingham County government. We’ll still carry them, but far fewer readers are going to see them as a result of Meijer’s decision.

What’s needed now is more feedback from you — again, look for the flier on how to help and also sign our online petition at www.lansingcitypulse.com.

Whatever happens, I want to thank everyone who is helping — readers and public officials alike — including Lansing City Clerk Chris Swope, Ingham County Treasurer Eric Schertzing and Drain Commissioner Pat Lindemann for their letters to Meijer and the Lansing City Council for the resolution it passed Monday asking Meijer to reconsider and urging other local governments to do the same.

Perhaps the biggest disappointment to me has been the unwillingness of the Michigan Press Association, of which City Pulse is a member, to help on this issue. Its board wouldn’t even assist me in trying to find out why Meijer was doing this, let alone take up my cause.

I understand many member newspapers, especially the dailies, benefit greatly from Meijer advertising and some might even see free papers like mine as competition, but come on, folks. If Meijer were threatening to throw out paid circulation papers, there would be editorials about the impingement on the free flow of information.

And that is an issue. Maybe not legally — Meijer appears to have every right to do this. But Meijer, through its free publication racks, has become an important hub of community information.

Let them know you want to keep it that way.

Volume 11, Issue 28

CityPULSE

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Berl Schwartz



7 p.m. Wednesdays

This Week

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Ingham County Treasurer Eric Schertzing



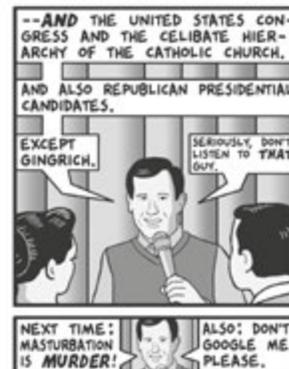
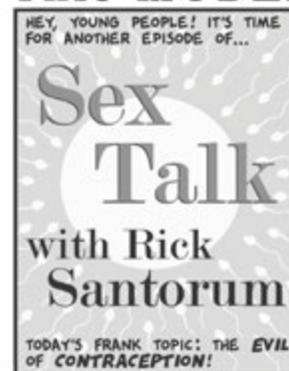
COVER ART



PUSHING THE ENVELOPE ASIDE by VINGE JOY

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



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

1.) Write a letter to the editor:

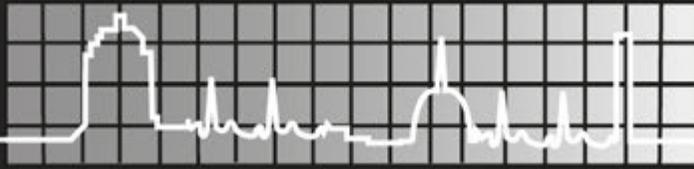
- E-mail: letters@lansingcitypulse.com
- Snail mail: City Pulse, 1905 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing, MI 48912
- Fax: (517) 371-5800

(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.)

2.) Write a guest column:

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

PULSE



news & opinion

Battle over the bond

East Lansing school plan divides a passionate community

The fight over the East Lansing School District's \$53 million bond proposal to rebuild five elementary schools and close a sixth, up for a public vote Feb. 28, goes beyond a schoolyard brawl.

"I don't think I've ever seen our community so divided," East Lansing School Board Trustee Donna Rich Kaplowitz said.

Supporters of the plan say the district needs to act on a grand scale now, before plunging property values erode its capacity to apply for bonds in order to replace or upgrade 40- and 50-year-old elementary school buildings. Opponents say the plan is too big and uses unrealistic enrollment projections that will ultimately result in empty seats or more closed schools.

To throw gasoline on the fire, supporters of Red Cedar School, slated for closing by 2016, are irate over the impending loss of a proudly multicultural school on the city's south edge, near MSU's international student community.

The proposed bonds would pay for a near tear-down and rebuild of Glencairn, Pinecrest, Whitehills, Marble and Donley elementary schools. It would also fund building a new MacDonald Middle School, with a sixth grade addition. The district's bond application calls for about 90 percent new space and 10 percent renovated space. The elementary schools would hold 300 to 350 students and the middle school would hold 990 students.

Two grassroots groups, Support a Better Plan and 50,000 Strong for Red Cedar School, have sprung up to oppose the bond proposal. The East Lansing City Council and neighboring MSU oppose the closing of Red Cedar. Other community leaders, including Ingham County Treasurer Eric Schertzing and State Sen. Gretchen Whitmer, are in favor of the bond issue.

To finance the new debt, the district's

7-mill school tax will be extended 12 years, to 2040. Without the bond issue, the millage would phase down to 2.64 mills in 2029.

"We are not coming out of the blue and asking for a new millage," Board President Rima Addiego said. "But that's what we would be doing if we wait a whole lot longer."

Time is running out on the plan because the district's bonding capacity is tied to the taxable value of city property. Based on January 2012 property tax projections from the district's financial adviser, Stauder & Barch, bonding capacity will slide from \$62 million this month to \$34.5 million in November 2012 to \$19.7 million by November 2013.

"This is a window in time that we on the board have known was coming for years," Addiego said.

MSU Economics Professor Michael Conlin, an outspoken critic of the school board's math, agreed that "a good chunk of money" should go into the schools, but not that much.

"We want an investment in the schools, but we want a more responsible investment," he said. "We can put another bond

of the city," Beard wrote on behalf of the Council.

East Lansing School Board Trustee Kaplowitz called it "a question of educational equity."

"The decision to close a school that is our most multi-cultural, our only minority-majority school, causes me concern," Kaplowitz said.

The Red Cedar closing also prompted rare rumblings from neighboring MSU. In a Sept. 6, 2011, letter to East Lansing School Superintendent David Chapin, Fred Poston, MSU's vice president for finance and operations, wrote that Red Cedar "deserves to remain open," in part, because it "embraces the value of global participation." Poston warned that if Red Cedar closes, MSU grad students may seek education for their children "outside the district" and the university might change plans to keep international student housing close to East Lansing.

Addiego said it was impossible, "financially and academically," for the district to hang on to six elementary schools, and the board found that Red Cedar least fit the formula of a "neighborhood school." She put the number of resident students

at Red Cedar, defined as "someone who could easily walk to that school," at about 40, out of about 260 students. The formula excludes about 70 students from MSU's Spartan Village because they are a mile and a half away and have to cross railroad tracks. The rest of Red Cedar students are English language learners from all over the district and "permeable boundary" students who are driven from other neighborhoods to take advantage of the Red Cedar staff's multicultural skills.

Like much of the debate over the bond proposal, the numbers depend on the frame of reference. Stretch the "resident student" distance to 1.5 miles, as opponents of Red Cedar closure prefer, and Red Cedar becomes the most walkable of the district's elementary schools.

Addiego said that closing Red Cedar and moving its principal, teachers and unique programs to Glencairn Elementary "as a cohort" would cause the least disruption to resident students in



Genna Musial/City Pulse

East Lansing residents will vote Tuesday on a contentious \$53 million bond proposal to rebuild five elementary and close a sixth. Red Cedar Elementary School is scheduled to close in 2016.

up in six months and build smaller."

Emotion over the closing of Red Cedar School has overshadowed the fiscal debate. In a letter to the school board delivered at a public hearing in September, East Lansing Councilman Kevin Beard wrote that the community is facing "a land use decision at the most basic level."

"Our fear is that this neighborhood will not be able to absorb the loss of Red Cedar Elementary ... without it significantly changing the character of this part

Eyesore of the week



Property: 1112 Bensch St., Lansing

Owner: Ingham County Land Bank Fast Track Authority

Assessed value: \$19,700

Owner says: Demolition in three to four months

Architecture critic Amanda Harrell-Seyburn says: It's easy to dismiss simple houses as not having a specific style, but the fact is, nearly all buildings fall into a stylistic category. Case in point: 1112 Bensch St. is a variation of American folk architecture known as "Gable-front" — note the gable facade parallel to the street. Being sited on a narrow lot is typical of this style that was prolific in the industrial northeast in the late 19th and early 20th century. This regional style is pure American architecture.

This 1-1/2-story gem is squeezed into a densely populated part of the Potter Walsh Neighborhood, showing off its boarded-up front window, peeling white paint and mostly absent front steps (one is still hanging on). A closer look at the rotting plywood front porch on Monday suggests the porch doubles as a garbage disposal — a few cooked hamburgers, hot dogs and baked beans sat exposed in a Styrofoam container. Either this was fresh or the raccoons couldn't finagle their way onto the porch.

A neighbor, who just wants it "gone," said the red tags from the city's Code Compliance office were removed recently. He said he'd tear it down himself if nothing changes soon, but it looks like he won't have to: The Ingham County Land Bank is scheduled to demolish the home in the next three to four months, said Eric Schertzing, Land Bank chairman and Ingham County treasurer. He added it's too soon to tell what will happen to the property after demolition.

— Andy Balaskovitz

"Eyesore of the Week" is our look at some of the seedier properties in Lansing. It rotates each week with Eye Candy of the Week. If you have a suggestion, please e-mail eye@lansingcitypulse.com or call at 999-5064.

See EL Bond, Page 6

EL Bond

from page 5

the district as a whole, especially because Spartan Village students are bused to Red Cedar anyway.

In a January statement, Conlin and six other MSU economics professors said the school board's calculations "significantly overestimate" cost savings from closing Red Cedar, but Conlin has a bigger concern. He thinks the bond proposal will build too big and predicted 600 empty seats in five years.

"We're a shrinking school district, and building capacity like this is financially irresponsible," Conlin said.

Conlin said it's a "political" process.

"No one wanted their local schools closed," he said.

In a January statement, the school board said the bond issue would take the school closing debate "off-the-table." But some opponents speculate that the district, having built a 990-student MacDonald Middle School, will later cite its capacity as a pretext to eliminate one or even two of the planned neighborhood schools.

Addiego said opponents are interpreting the data wrongly and predicted a reduction of capacity by 33 seats if the bond is passed. She added that opponents are "throwing everything they can against the wall, and this one stuck."

"It's a pity," Conlin said of the bond battle. "It's created so much animosity in our community. You could avoid a lot of it if it was handled better."

Kaplowitz said the community will regroup, no matter what the outcome Feb. 28.

"Everybody who's passionate about this is acting out of the belief that they are working for the children," she said. "I believe we will get past this."

— Lawrence Cosentino

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Budget 'challenge'

Is it time to reopen the defined benefits/defined contributions debate as pension and retiree health care costs add to deficit? The Bernero administration says yes.

Lansing's pension and retiree health care systems caused a \$2 million deficit in each of the past two fiscal years, and city officials say it's time to re-examine how those systems are funded.

The stock market decline four years ago, along with double-digit inflation in health care, means the city has had to dip into the General Fund to cover increased costs.

Randy Hannan, chief of staff for Mayor Virg Bernero, said while "time will tell" if the city's pension and retiree health care systems are unsustainable, "everything is on the table" when asked about reconfiguring those systems to look more like the private sector.

That could include moving the city from a defined benefits program to defined contributions, which it did along with the state under the Hollister administration, only to go back to defined benefits for most plans under former Mayor Tony Benavides. But union leaders are resistant to such a change, saying the systems are "solvent" over the long term.

A defined benefits pension plan establishes a set amount retirees are paid after employment, based on length of employment, age and salary. Defined contributions are more like a 401K, where employees contribute a set amount from paychecks that is then invested. The gist with defined benefit plans is that they're more reliable for employees yet more costly for employers.

"In light of the city's ongoing budget challenges, we have no choice but to consider a variety of cost-saving measures, including the possibility of moving back to a defined contribution retirement system, in order to reduce the city's long-term pen-

sion costs," Hannan wrote in a follow-up email. "However, any such changes must be negotiated through the collective bargaining process."

Benavides said in an interview last week that if he were in office today, he'd try to go back to defined contributions, citing the poor economy and the need to balance a budget. In the short-term, the administration needs to find solutions for balancing a fiscal year budget, projected at about \$7.5 million even with the help of a property tax increase.

"It definitely poses a significant challenge," interim Lansing Finance Director Angela Bennett said. "That's very significant when balancing our budget. It's an obligation the city has to pay with our resources."

While Bennett expects the amount Lansing pays into the pension and health care systems to level off as the stock market rebounds, the elephant in the room is the double-digit inflation of health care costs.

"When health care was first put in, it was a cheap benefit. We never perceived at that time it would cost what we see now," Bennett said. "We've seen pension be a very big challenge since 2008. That has come into play in balancing our budget — we have to be able to meet those obligations." And, she added, as health and pension costs increase, property tax revenues continue to decline.

"The possibility of moving back to a defined contribution system is under consideration, but we are not yet in a position to make a specific proposal to our bargaining units," Hannan added in his email.

Hannan said the city is yet to conduct a "detailed analysis" of potential savings for the city under defined contribution plans. "However, based on the experience of the State of Michigan and other public employers, we would anticipate substantial long-term savings from a switch to defined contributions."

The Employees' Retirement System defined benefit pension plan includes full-time city employees and 54A District Court personnel, but does not include elected officials or police officers and firefighters. As of Dec. 31, 2009, 861 retirees and ben-

eficiaries received benefits from the plan compared to 570 active members, according to the city's latest Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. Active members contributed between 1.7 percent and 7.25 percent of wages, based on separate union contracts.

The Police and Fire Retirement System includes 650 retirees and beneficiaries who received benefits as of Dec. 31, 2009, compared to 458 active members. Fire personnel contribute 7.58 percent of their salary to the plan, while police supervisors contribute 9.52 percent and non-supervisors 8 1/2 percent.

The defined contribution plan for elected officials includes eight individuals as of June 30 of last year. Other plans are the Voluntary Employees Beneficiary Association and also "other post employment benefits," or OPEB, plans for the ERS and police and fire.

During former Mayor David Hollister's administration in the 1990s, the city went to defined contributions, but reverted to defined benefits under Benavides in 2003 for most of its systems. Today, only elected officials are eligible for a defined contribution option. Defined contribution plans are far more prevalent in the private sector.

"The demand for resources posed by defined benefit systems is the reason that the city moved to a defined contribution system back then, as have many employers, including the State of Michigan," Bennett wrote in a follow-up email.

Benavides in an interview cited "savings to the city" for changing plans when he was in office, but couldn't recall how much the city has saved in that time. "We knew that the defined benefits plan was one that not only saved the city money, but also gave big benefits to the employees."

While he sticks with his decision of the time, Benavides said last week he would "definitely go for defined contributions" today. Why? "I would say the economy has a lot to do with it."

Benavides denied rumors that he switched back to defined benefits in exchange for a union endorsement in his 2003 mayoral race against Bernero. "We did it on merit and on consultation with the Finance Department," Benavides said.

More than 700 state municipalities are on defined benefits plans, according to the Municipal Employees' Retirement System, a Lansing-based nonprofit organization that offers retirement plans that municipalities can adopt. Its members include more than 750 municipalities — including Lansing — and more than 86,000 individuals as of June 2010.

Scott Dedic, chairman of the city's Employee Retirement System Board and also an international service representative for the UAW, said the system in place is "solvent."

"As far as I'm aware, we're meeting the required benchmarks," he said. "It's interesting to have everyone out blaming the

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Budget

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defined benefits plans as some type of dinosaur and no longer a viable source. It's solvent, doing well. It's managed professionally and realistically."

Brad St. Aubin, chairman of the city Police and Fire Retirement System Board, could not be reached for comment. However, St. Aubin told MLive.com in a September story about the \$2 million in retirement benefits paid out that the police and fire pension system is "solvent."

Dedic, who has served on the ERS board for 12 to 15 years, said: "The defined benefit plan basically puts you at a benefit level that is guaranteed and volatility is spread out through several years. In a down economy, you could retire out at the same as a good economy. You don't see the ebbs and flows as you would in a 401K or contribution plan." He called defined benefits the "security option."

One of his biggest concerns is "people reacting too quick to headlines. Going to defined contributions and not looking at what that's going to do for defined benefits plans. It's easy to say you'll save \$1 million by switching, but they don't see the impact on the actuaries as they exist, they're reacting to the economic situation."

Anthony Minghine, associate executive director and chief operating officer of the Michigan Municipal League, said there are arguments for both options.

"Defined benefit isn't inherently bad," he said. "If managed properly and funded properly, they can still be good systems."

In a defined benefits system, the volatility of stock market affects the city more than employees, Minghine said.

It's also difficult to switch between systems, Minghine said, due to state rules for doing so. "It should be much simpler for communities to make adjustments they want to make without great difficulty in terms of rules out there."

— Andy Balaskovitz

PUBLIC NOTICES

CITY OF LANSING NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

SLU-6-2011, 4312 S. ML King Jr. Blvd.
Special Land Use Permit - Church

The Lansing City Council will hold a public hearing on Monday, March 12, 2012, at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers, 10th Floor, Lansing City Hall, 124 W. Michigan Avenue, Lansing, Michigan, to consider SLU-6-2011. This is a request by The Redeemed Christian Church of God – Freedom Hall, to utilize a suite in the plaza at 4312 S. ML King for a church. Churches are permitted in the "F" Commercial district, which is the designation of the subject property, if a Special Land Use permit is approved by the Lansing City Council.

For more information about this case, phone City Council Offices on City business days, Monday through Friday, between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. at 483-4177. If you are interested in this matter, please attend the public hearing or send a representative. Written comments will be accepted between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. on City business days if received before 5 p.m., Monday, March 12, 2012, at the City Council Offices, Tenth Floor, City Hall, 124 West Michigan Avenue, Lansing, MI 48933 1696.

Chris Swope, Lansing City Clerk

CITY OF LANSING NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Z-1-2012
North of Cooley Law School (Lugnuts) Stadium
Rezoning from "H" Light Industrial District to "G-1" Business District

The Lansing City Council will hold a public hearing on Monday, March 12, 2012, at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers, 10th Floor, Lansing City Hall, 124 W. Michigan Ave., Lansing, MI, to consider Z-1-2012. Z-1-2012 is a request by Lansing Future LLC to rezone the property located between the Cooley Law School Stadium to the south, Shiawassee Street to the north, Cedar Street to the west and Larch Street to the east, legally described as:

LOTS 7 THROUGH 14, SUB OF LOTS 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5 OF BLOCK 244 ORIGINAL PLAT & A PARCEL OF LAND, IN THE NE 1/4 OF SECTION 16, T4N, R2W, CITY OF LANSING, INGHAM COUNTY, MI., BEING PART OF LOTS 2 & 3, BLOCK 244, ORIGINAL PLAT, ACCORDING TO THE RECORDED PLAT THEREOF AS RECORDED IN LIBER 2 OF PLATS, PAGES 36-38, INGHAM COUNTY RECORDS, DESCRIBED AS COMMENCING AT THE E 1/4 CORNER OF SECTION 16; THENCE N89°25'43"W ALONG THE E-W 1/4 LINE OF SAID SECTION 16 A DISTANCE OF 981.30 FEET; THENCE N00°37'58"E 889.50 FEET TO A POINT ON THE E LINE OF CEDAR ST & THE POINT OF BEGINNING; THENCE N00°37'58"E ALONG SAID E LINE 145.40 FEET; THENCE S89°35'07"E 428.68 FEET TO THE W LINE OF LARCH ST; THENCE S00°38'43"W ALONG SAID W LINE 147.05 FEET; THENCE N89°21'51"W 428.65 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING; SAID PARCEL CONTAINING (62,682 SQUARE FEET); SUBJECT TO ANY VACATED/NOT VACATED STREETS OR ALLEYS AND ALL EASEMENTS OR RESTRICTIONS, IF ANY

from "H" Light Industrial District to "G-1" Business District. The purpose of the rezoning is to permit a mixed use development (office, commercial, residential) on the above-described property.

For more information about this case, phone City Council Offices on City business days, Monday through Friday, between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. at 483-4177. If you are interested in this matter, please attend the public hearing or send a representative. Written comments will be accepted between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. on City business days if received before 5 p.m., Monday, March 12, 2012, at the City Council Offices, Tenth Floor, City Hall, 124 West Michigan Ave., Lansing, MI 48933 1696.

Chris Swope, Lansing City Clerk

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, March 14, 2012 at 7:00 p.m., in the 54-B District Court, Courtroom 2, 101 Linden Street, East Lansing.

A public hearing will be held for the purpose of reviewing the proposed 2012-2018 Capital Improvements Program.

Call (517) 319-6930, the Department of Planning and Community 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 McKenna
City Clerk

CITY OF LANSING NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Act-2-2012, Kewadin Grand River Casino Development

The Lansing City Council will hold a public hearing on Monday, March 12, 2012, at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers, 10th Floor, Lansing City Hall, 124 W. Michigan Ave., Lansing, MI, to consider Act-2-2012 which includes the following:

- Sell the current City Maintenance Garage parcel located at 312 North Cedar Street, Lansing, MI 48933, to Lansing Future, LLC.
- Sell the proposed Showcase Casino parcel, located to the northeast of the Lansing Center, to Lansing Future, LLC.
- Acquire by conveyance of the southern 10,166 square feet of the property located at the SW corner of N. Cedar and E. Shiawassee Streets, relocate of City Market Drive, and dedicate the relocated drive as public right of way.
- Develop an elevated parking ramp east of the Lansing Center building and south of the proposed Showcase Casino.
- Acquire by conveyance a right-of-way, approximately 90 feet in width, connecting N. Larch and N. Cedar Streets on the northern edge of Cooley Law School Stadium, and dedicate it as a public right of way.
- Acquire, dispose, or exchange any easements or air rights necessary to effectuate the transaction.

For more information about this case, phone City Council Offices on City business days, Monday through Friday, between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. at 483-4177. If you are interested in these matters, please attend the public hearing or send a representative. Written comments will be accepted between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. on City business days if received before 5 p.m., Monday, March 12, 2012, at the City Council Offices, Tenth Floor, City Hall, 124 West Michigan Ave., Lansing, MI 48933 1696.

Chris Swope, Lansing City Clerk

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS EAST LANSING HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Notice is hereby given of the following public hearings to be held by the East Lansing Historic District Commission on Thursday, March 8, 2012 at 7:00 p.m., in the 54-B District Court, Courtroom 2, 101 Linden Street, East Lansing:

1. A public hearing will be held for the purpose of considering a request to replace the roof over the front porch stoop at 130 Oakhill Avenue. The applicant proposes to remove the existing flat roof and replace it with a pitched roof.
2. A public hearing will be held for the purpose of considering a request to replace the siding at 432 Kensington Road. The applicant proposes to remove the existing aluminum siding and replace it with vinyl siding.
3. A public hearing will be held for the purpose of considering a request to remove and replace the clay tile roof at 810 West Grand River Avenue. The applicant proposes to change the existing clay tile roof to a synthetic tile roof, mimicking the style.

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

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

Marie McKenna
City Clerk

PUBLIC NOTICES

The Ingham County Housing Commission, on behalf of the Ingham County Land Bank is accepting proposals for the **Removal and Disposal of Hazardous Materials**, including but not limited to asbestos, mercury and various containerized material, at sites listed in the Bid Packet# NSP2 11-006-01, which can be obtained online at www.inghamlandbank.org or at the Ingham County Land Bank NSP2 office, located at 600 W. Maple Street, Lansing, Michigan 48906 between the hours of 8:00 am and 5:00 pm Monday through Friday. Bid Packets will be available after February 22, 2012. Proposals are due at the NSP2 offices before 11:00 am on March 7, 2012. The Bid Opening will be March 7, 2012 at 11:01 am. The Ingham County Land Bank is an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer. Women- and Minority-Owned Businesses are encouraged to apply.



The Ingham County Housing Commission, on behalf of the Ingham County Land Bank is accepting proposals for the **demolition and disposal** of various properties listed in Bid Packet# NSP2 11-006-02 available after February 22, 2012 online at www.inghamlandbank.org or at the Ingham County Land Bank NSP2 Office, 600 W. Maple Street, Lansing, Michigan 48906, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday through Friday. Proposals will be due at the NSP2 office before 11:30 am on March 7, 2012. The Bid Opening will be March 7, 2012 at 11:31 a.m. The Ingham County Land Bank is an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer. Women- and Minority-Owned Businesses are encouraged to apply.



B/12/074 USAR Equipment Bid as per the specifications provided by the City of Lansing.

The City of Lansing will accept sealed bids at the FINANCE DEPARTMENT, PURCHASING OFFICE, 8TH FLOOR CITY HALL, 124 W. MICHIGAN AVENUE, LANSING, MICHIGAN 48933 until 3:00 PM local time in effect on **MARCH 6, 2012**, at which time bids will be publicly opened and read.

Complete specifications and forms required to submit bids are available by calling Stephanie Robinson at (517) 483-4128, email: srobinso@lansingmi.gov or go to www.mitn.info

The City of Lansing encourages bids from all vendors including MBE/WBE vendors and Lansing-based businesses.

City of Lansing Notice of Public Hearing

The Lansing City Council will hold a public hearing on March 12, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, 10th Floor, Lansing City Hall, Lansing, MI, for the purpose stated below:

To afford an opportunity for all residents, taxpayers of the City of Lansing, other interested persons and ad valorem taxing units to appear and be heard on the approval of Brownfield Plan #55 – Ballpark North Brownfield Redevelopment Plan, pursuant to and in accordance with the provisions of the Brownfield Redevelopment Financing Act, Public Act 381 of 1996, as amended, for property commonly referred to as the City of Lansing Central Garage and adjoining properties to the north, in Lansing, Michigan, but more particularly described by parcel numbers:

33-01-01-16-276-002, 33-01-01-16-276-021, 33-01-01-16-276-031, 33-01-01-16-276-041, 33-01-01-16-276-191, 33-01-01-16-276-151, 33-01-01-16-276-161, 33-01-01-16-276-182, 33-01-01-16-276-050,

Approval of this Brownfield Plan will enable the Lansing Brownfield Redevelopment Authority to capture incremental tax increases which result from the redevelopment of the property to pay for costs associated therewith. Further information regarding this issue, including maps, plats, and a description of the brownfield plan will be available for public inspection and may be obtained from Karl Dorshimer – President and CEO, Economic Development Corporation of the City of Lansing, 401 N. Washington Square, Suite 100, Lansing, MI 48933, (517) 483-4140.

Chris Swope, Lansing City Clerk

CITY OF LANSING NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

SLU-1-2012
North of Cooley Law School (Lugnuts) Stadium
Special Land Use Permit – Parking Ramp

The Lansing City Council will hold a public hearing on Monday, March 12, 2012, at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers, 10th Floor, Lansing City Hall, 124 W. Michigan Ave., Lansing, MI, to consider SLU-1-2012. SLU-1-2012 is a request by Lansing Future LLC for a special land use permit to construct a parking ramp on the property located between the Cooley Law School Stadium to the south, Shiawassee Street to the north, Cedar Street to the west and Larch Street to the east, legally described as:

LOTS 7 THROUGH 14, SUB OF LOTS 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5 OF BLOCK 244 ORIGINAL PLAT & A PARCEL OF LAND, IN THE NE 1/4 OF SECTION 16, T4N, R2W, CITY OF LANSING, INGHAM COUNTY, MI., BEING PART OF LOTS 2 & 3, BLOCK 244, ORIGINAL PLAT, ACCORDING TO THE RECORDED PLAT THEREOF AS RECORDED IN LIBER 2 OF PLATS, PAGES 36-38, INGHAM COUNTY RECORDS, DESCRIBED AS COMMENCING AT THE E 1/4 CORNER OF SECTION 16; THENCE N89°25'43"W ALONG THE E-W 1/4 LINE OF SAID SECTION 16 A DISTANCE OF 981.30 FEET; THENCE N00°37'58"E 889.50 FEET TO A POINT ON THE E LINE OF CEDAR ST & THE POINT OF BEGINNING; THENCE N00°37'58"E ALONG SAID E LINE 145.40 FEET; THENCE S89°35'07" E 428.68 FEET TO THE W LINE OF LARCH ST; THENCE S00°38'43"W ALONG SAID W LINE 147.05 FEET; THENCE N89°21'51 "W 428.65 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING; SAID PARCEL CONTAINING (62,682 SQUARE FEET); SUBJECT TO ANY VACATED/NOT VACATED STREETS OR ALLEYS AND ALL EASEMENTS OR RESTRICTIONS, IF ANY

Parking ramps are permitted in the "G-1" Business District, if a Special Land Use permit is approved by the Lansing City Council.

For more information about this case, phone City Council Offices on City business days, Monday through Friday, between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. at 483-4177. If you are interested in this matter, please attend the public hearing or send a representative. Written comments will be accepted between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. on City business days if received before 5 p.m., Monday, March 12, 2012, at the City Council Offices, Tenth Floor, City Hall, 124 West Michigan Ave., Lansing, MI 48933 1696.

Chris Swope, Lansing City Clerk

Byrum takes big swing heading into clerk's race



KYLE MELINN

State Rep. Barb Byrum, D-Onondaga, formerly kicked off likely one of the more competitive local primary races this summer when she announced her candidacy for Ingham County clerk on Tuesday.

Standing in front of the Veterans Memorial Courthouse in downtown Lansing, Byrum took a few digs at the current officeholder, retiring Clerk Mike Bryant, who is backing Lansing Clerk Chris Swope as his successor in the Democratic primary.

During the event, Byrum promoted her experience as the ranking Democrat on the House Committee on Redistricting and Elections. She's also been a small business owner for 11 years, working with the public on a daily basis.

"As Ingham County clerk, I will continue to advocate for critical election reforms," Byrum said. "After all, we should be encouraging more people to vote — not silencing citizens' voices."

But Byrum made sure she hit on some upgrades, the first being that transactions for concealed weapon permits should be done in Lansing without needing a trip to Mason.

The term-limited state legislator from southern Ingham County also called the current Clerk's Office's website "clunky" and made it clear that every customer who goes to the Clerk's Office should be "treated with respect."

Asked if that meant customers are not being treated with respect at the Clerk's Office, Byrum said:

"I think customer service needs to be the focus. And owning a hardware store for 11 years, I've been on the sales floor. I've worked with customers, and we need to make sure that every single customer is treated fairly and nicely."

Asked again how the current clerk was doing on this front, Byrum replied:

"We need to make sure that every person that walks into the County Clerk's office has a positive experience."

Last May, when I first wrote of Byrum's interest in the post, she told me, "It's time to bring integrity back to the office," a reference to the suit brought against Bryant by former Clerk's Office employee Nicole Anderson. The allegation was that Bryant made her go through a polygraph test to determine if she had left a telephone message in which the caller claimed the clerk was having an inappropriate relationship with a staffer he had recently promoted.

The two parties settled in October for

\$80,000.

Told of Byrum's critiques today, Bryant said the Clerk's Office recently upgraded its gun permit processing system, but even if Byrum wanted to go back to the "antique, antiquated" system of processing gun permits, applicants would still need to drive to Mason anyway to get fingerprinted by the county sheriff.

"She doesn't know what she doesn't know," Bryant said.

As far as customer service, the clerk said that's an area that can always be improved. "It's always a focus of mine and it will be until the day I leave."

Bryant returned fire by noting that he, too, believes in many of the same

voter reforms
Byrum is pumping — more early voting, no-reason

absentee voting and the repeal of the new picture ID requirement at the polls — but she was serving in a body that could have done something about it.

"I've been banging the drum on no-reason AV (absentee voting) since I got here," he said. "She keeps touting herself as the leading Democrat on election reform — why hasn't she gotten anything passed? She was in the Legislature. If she wasn't able to do it there, I don't know how she's going to do it here."

To that, Byrum said if elected as clerk, she would make sure that all of her campaign workers know that if voters show up at the polls without an ID, they can still vote by signing an affidavit. She said she's received information that this hasn't always been the case in Lansing and Ingham County.

Bryant is leaving his post after 18 years, saying, "It's time for me to do something else" and "maybe it's time for a fresh set of eyes" in the Clerk's Office.

But he said he's supporting Swope as his replacement because "Chris has actually run an election and knows election law. He knows the responsibilities and duties of a clerk. While the duties of a city clerk and a county clerk are not the same, they're similar enough that his expertise will suit him well."

So the back-and-forth between the current clerk and the woman who wants to be clerk continues. For Bryant, he said the race isn't personal. He's supported Byrum in the past and Byrum has supported him.

But with these two prominent political figures getting ready for a high-profile race, these types of back-and-forth remarks may be only the beginning.

(Kyle Melinn is the editor of the MIRS Newsletter. He can be reached at melinn@lansingcitypulse.com.)

On the air

Hear Byrum on "City Pulse on the Air" at 7 tonight on 88.9 FM The Impact or on the podcast at www.lansingcitypulse.com



Bill Castanier/City Pulse

East Lansing resident Ellen Jones has used letters saved by her relatives to piece together her family history. "Finding those letters saved my sanity," she says. But such correspondence has become an endangered species in these days of e-mail, instant messaging, Skype and inexpensive long-distance phone service.

Stamped out?

Advances in technology may have sealed the fate of the art of letter writing

By **BILL CASTANIER**

During his weekly variety show in the 1950s and 1960s, TV crooner Perry Como would sing, "Letters/We get letters/we get stacks and stacks of letters." These days, the United States Postal Service wishes that were the case.

Modern letter writing likely peaked in the Como era before being done in by cheap phone service and later by e-mail, Facebook, Twitter, Skype and other forms of social media.

The sweet acronym SWAK (Sealed With A Kiss) died along with it. Today, letter writing is nearly a lost art, a sad sacrifice to technology.

Think about how our lives have been enriched by the letters of Mark Twain, Abraham Lincoln, the Apostle Paul, Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning, C.S. Lewis, Voltaire, Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg and scores of other famous letter writers telling us about what they did, what they thought, what they had for lunch and, in some cases, what they wanted us to do.

It is impossible to pinpoint when the first letter was written, but records from the 4th century show that the popularity of correspondence was already growing. In that time, letters were exchanged primarily between the literate, the very wealthy and the clergy. In ancient Constantinople, we find St. John Chrysostom writing the deaconess Olympia what today's social media would qualify as a tweet: "Pray say many kind words from me to all your blessed household ... most divinely favored lady."

You could say the decline of letter writing

began with the arrival of the telegraph in the 19th century. By 1945, half the homes in America had telephones; by the end of the 1960s, 90 percent of Americans had phone service. Long-distance calling, once costly, became increasingly affordable in the 1980s with the rise of service providers like Sprint and MCI. By the time the world witnessed the boom of the Internet and e-mail in the 1990s, the fate of letter writing was sealed in bytes, not sealing wax.

In a recent Wall Street Journal review of the new book, "Dear Jay, Love Dad," based mostly on the letters of famed Oklahoma football coach Bud Wilkinson, reviewer Gregg Easterbrook lamented, "Bud Wilkinson's many letters to Jay — he also wrote to his older son, Pat — reflect a seemingly simpler time, as well as a period when long-distance phone calls were pricey. The decline of the personal letter has not only taken the thrill out of opening the mailbox; it imperils the writing of history. What will future biographers have to work with — text messages, Facebook walls and credit-card receipts?"

Archivists from six historical and archival institutions in Michigan and numerous authors interviewed for this article repeated the same concern.

Kevin Boyle, National Book Award winner for "Arc of Justice," said in an e-mail message that the book he is working on relies on letters. (He declined to say what it was about.) "One of the reasons I frame the book as I do is because I have an incredible cache of letters from the central figure, beginning when he was 12 years old and ending the day he died," Boyle noted.

"There's nothing like the insight you can get from reading someone's letters to his parents, or his sister or the woman he loved, because in those letters life becomes complex and personal, sometimes painfully so. We're going to lose a large segment of our past."

As Boyle points out, not all letters are chirpy affirmations. Sometimes they are sent during their authors' darkest days. For example, look at what noted poet Theodore Roethke wrote to a friend after being dismissed by Michigan State College in 1935 for his heavy drinking, the result of

wasn't going to be filled with Xs and Os when it opened with the salutation, "Dear Boy." Kurowsky and Hemingway had corresponded for three months following his return to the States; her final letter contained this clincher: "I am still very fond of you, but it is more as a mother than a sweetheart."

Hemingway, in his own way, would exact vengeance in the 1929 semi-autobiographical novel, "A Farewell to Arms," in which he likely used Agnes as the prototype for nurse Catherine Barkley. It's not known if Hemingway answered the

"There's nothing like the insight you can get from reading someone's letters to his parents, or his sister or the woman he loved, because in those letters life becomes complex and personal, sometimes painfully so."

—Kevin Boyle

depression: "Hell, I don't care what happens to me, whether I go nuts or my entrails hang out, but I can't stand being mindless and barren as I've been."

Roethke won the Pulitzer Prize for his book "The Waking" in 1954 and the National Book Award in 1959 for "Words for the Wind."

Personal? Painful? How about Dear John letters?

One of history's most famous breakup letters was sent to Ernest Hemingway in 1919 by Agnes Kurowsky, the nurse who ministered to him after he was injured in Italy during World War I. Hemingway must have known the letter from "Aggie"

letter.

Interestingly, Hemingway had left directions that his letters not be published after his death. Making his letters public was always something he detested. In a letter to his sister Marcelline in 1918, he wrote that he had learned his letters from the front were being published in the Chicago Herald-Examiner and that he wanted it to stop.

Michael Federspiel, a Central Michigan University history professor and noted Hemingway scholar, sees Hemingway's letter writing as a training ground for his

Letters

from page 9

later fiction. Federspiel is the author of "Picturing Hemingway's Michigan," about Hemingway's 18 summers in northern Michigan.

He points out one letter, held in the Hemingway collection at the Clarke Historical Library at Central Michigan University, as a good example of what would become Hemingway's trademark style.

In the letter, Federspiel said the young Hemingway extolls the glories of northern Michigan to James Gamble, his friend who was still in Italy, adding that if things get boring, "they could visit the pleasure palaces in Charlevoix."

Federspiel said that with letter writing you don't always get to see both sides of the "conversation": "You walk away wanting to know what was written to him."

Letters Home

Some of the most important and gut-wrenching letters ever written were written in times of war.

For centuries, anxious spouses and family members have awaited news from the battlefield, and soldiers have kept up their spirits by reading letters from home. Soldiers often carried a letter from a lover into battle, tucked in their breast pockets for luck. Most wartime letters from the front tell of the tedious day-to-day activities: what a bunkmate is up to, complaints about bad food, mud, cold, heat or worries about finances.

Letter writing was at a fever pitch during the Civil War, and the Library of Michigan, the Capital Area District Library's Forest Parke Library and Archives and the State of Michigan Archives each have substantial collections of letters written during that time. Many of these letters are available online.

One cache of Civil War-era letters recently donated to the State Archives by the Ewing family contains 291 letters sent mostly between Matt Ewing and his wife, Nan. Matt Ewing served with the Army of the Potomac and was wounded during the war.

In addition to reminiscences about everyday happenings, soldiers like Matt Ewing would write candidly about leadership issues, battle tactics and troop movements. Oftentimes, Civil War letters would arrive four days after they were sent.

One letter in the State Archives collection is especially compelling. It was written to the mother of a dead soldier by his friend, a Sgt. L.J. Taylor: "It becomes my painful duty to inform you of the death of your brave and noble boy, Alphonso. He was my tent mate and chum in the camp and we were comrades (sic) in battle and in his death I have lost a brother dear and true."

He ends the letter by saying, "He was a noble comrade but our loss is his gain and there is one more bright jewel among the crowned and blest. (sic)"

Letter writers also express the toll of war. A letter held in the Forest Parke Library gives some inkling of that. In a letter home, Lansing World War I veteran Paris Thompson writes his mom telling her he will be home soon, but asks her "to not have any parties or anything when I get back for somebody might ask me about the army. Since I got all that gas in September I have a little trouble with my throat, but that has just about stopped."

World War II saw what was probably the greatest flurry of letter writing ever recorded. A few years ago, Susan Allen, daughter of a former Michigan Court of Appeals judge and Kalamazoo mayor Glen Allen Jr., decided to rescue her dad's letters from that era and donate them to the State of Michigan Archives. During World War II, her father was a judge advocate in the Third Army and a legal adviser to Gen. George S. Patton.

Susan Allen discovered the letters under a stairwell in the musty basement of her father's home in DeWitt. She moved the letters to her dad's summer home on Mackinac Island and didn't sort the material for nearly five years until former state archivist and local historian Geneva Wiskemann visited the island to help. State of Michigan archivist Mark Harvey laughed when he describes picking up the donation. "It's the only time we've recovered records by horse and buggy — not to mention ferry," he said.

Her son, Glenn Seven Allen, a Broadway singer, performed a World War II concert last summer at Mackinac's Grand Hotel that incorporated some of the love letters. Other letters were more disturbing: Allen Jr. describes the carnage that was found as his unit entered Germany. In one letter, he describes an open grave holding 72 political prisoners shot by the Schutzstaffel, or SS. In the same letter he considers how the Nazis could have taken over an entire population in what he calls "the organized minority

theory." He also recalls several conversations he had with comrades who believed this kind of fascism could've happened in America.

Lansing City Pulse publisher Berl Schwartz said his family saved a particularly poignant letter from his uncle, Leonard Marenberg, an Army lieutenant who was part of the first wave entering Germany at the end of World War II. The letter details what he called the "terrible conditions" they found in concentration camps.

You can feel the anger when Marenberg writes: "I can't find words to describe what I've seen — but I'll never forget what I've seen and other things to (sic) — the (sic) Russian and Poles won't either — and let the German people know how they feel about this type (sic) of inhuman behavior."

Today's soldiers don't write as many letters; they prefer more immediate forms of communication, such as Skype, instant messaging, e-mail, texts or Facebook. In the decades to come, it will be nearly impossible to assemble a record of those communications.

Cori Tymoszek, a Michigan State University student, has been using Skype to speak with her brother, who's stationed in Afghanistan. Although Tymoszek prefers letter writing, she said that seeing her brother in person on the computer screen was "almost a surreal experience."

She spoke with him once after he had just survived an explosion, and says that "to be able to see him alive in his little plywood shack was incredible."

Tymoszek said her generation is geared toward instant gratification and is losing interest in reading and writing. "It's a sad thing," she said.

Last year, Tymoszek, her boyfriend and several of her friends deactivated their Facebook accounts, primarily due to privacy issues and the amount of time Facebook can consume. "We were creeped out by it, and decided to eliminate the creepiness," Tymoszek said.

But that hasn't cut into her communication: She and her boyfriend recently exchanged letters, ranging from six to 10 pages each.

Letters can allow us inside a person's head, sometimes decades or centuries after the author is gone. East Lansing resident Ellen Jones can attest to this: She has hundreds of wartime letters from her



Courtesy Photo

Mary Louise Jones died when her daughter Ellen was 7. Her letters reveal everything from a sassy sense of humor to her opinion about owning a TV set in the early 1950s.

mother, Mary Louise Jones, and her father, Ralph, before and after they married. Ellen Jones also has scores of letters her mother sent to friends and sisters. What makes these letters so special is she was 7 when her mother died.

"The only way I know my mother is through these letters," Jones said, adding that after her mother died, she was "terrified I couldn't hear her voice," and began a quest for items attached to her mother. One day, while snooping in the attic of her family's Flint home, Jones discovered her mother's letters in an old steamer trunk.

It took her a year to read them. She tended to wait until she was alone in the house, sneaking into the attic and carefully reading a few letters before replacing them undisturbed in the trunk. She said there were no letters from her father to her mother and that those were likely destroyed by her father when he remarried.

At some points Jones said reading the letters made her feel like she was doing something wrong. Still, it was worth the guilt.

"Finding those letters saved my sanity," she said. "They allowed me to know my mother and know about their love. They were the most enriching letters I've ever read."

Later, as other members of her family discovered her role as unofficial family

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Letters

from page 10

historian, Ellen Jones would receive other letters from her mother that had been saved by relatives. "I learned my mother had a boundless sense of humor, that she was restless (in her role as a homemaker), that she loved reading and that she always considered Virginia her home."

She also learned that her mother had a biting, somewhat sarcastic humor. In one letter to her husband, Mary Louise Jones writes about her upcoming visit to his military base. "I leave Saturday at 3:10," she wrote, "arriving in Greensboro at 6:45, or thereabouts, depending on how many pig pens the train has to stop at."

In a 1951 letter to her sister, Mary Louise Jones describes the family kerfuffle over buying a TV set. Her husband wanted one; she didn't. "I don't want a television set," she wrote. "I don't have time to watch it — besides, it will ruin the look of my living room."

Aside from providing insights, letter writing has something else in common with social media: It's often snarky.

For example, correspondence sent by novelist Flannery O'Connor about her four-day visit to Lansing in 1958 to address the American Association of University Women contains the expected thank-you letter to her hosts. The appearance was considered important since it was the first time O'Connor had left Georgia to speak and the first time she presented a paper on the Southern grotesque writing style that would make her famous.

In a thank-you letter to her host, Mrs. Rumsey Haynes, O'Connor writes: "You must know how much I enjoyed being in Lansing and staying with you. My mother was delighted with the box of candy and the cookies you made."

But that was not the whole story. In other correspondence to friends O'Connor writes:

"I am to stay with one Mrs. Rumsey Haynes. She says her husband will help me up and down the stairs; but I am going to tell Rumsey to stand at the bottom as there is nothing more dangerous to the safety of those on crutches than a gentleman's assistance. She allows as there are many interesting young writers and intellectuals there that I will enjoy meeting. Anything I can't stand it's a young writer or intellectual."

These kinds of contrasting insights may be harder to find in the future, according to Peter Berg, archivist for the MSU Library's Special Collections. With the decline of letter writing, we will no longer have what Berg calls the "intimate glimpse into the letter writer's mind and feelings. Even the tone, the handwriting, and the length and frequency of the letters tell us something about the writer."

He said that the handwritten letter is one of things he will miss the most. "The hand writing is so interesting and aesthetically beautiful."

Portia Vescio, public service archivist of the MSU University Archives, says that she's also noticed a decline in the quality of our spoken language. "Losing letter writing is affecting our conversations. People used to speak much more eloquently and have better vocabularies."

It's a reflection of a society that is losing its memory in a non-stop flurry of fast-paced communications, Vescio said. "With everything at our fingertips, we don't remember anything."

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Arts & Culture

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Cast as an outcast

Edward O’Ryan spent years preparing for his role in the Irish black comedy ‘The Cripple of Inishmaan’

By JAMES SANFORD

It’s common to hear actors complaining that they don’t get as much work as they’d like. That’s not Edward O’Ryan’s problem, however.

In the past two years, the Michigan State University graduate student has appeared in — take a deep breath now — “The Gingerbread House” at Lansing Community College, “The Beaux’ Strategem,” “You Can’t Take It With You,” “Happy Holy Days” and “As You Like It” at MSU, “Good Boys and True” at the Renegade Theatre Festival and “The Drunken City,” “Alice in Wonderland” and “Blithe Spirit” at Summer Circle Theatre.

‘The Cripple of Inishmaan’

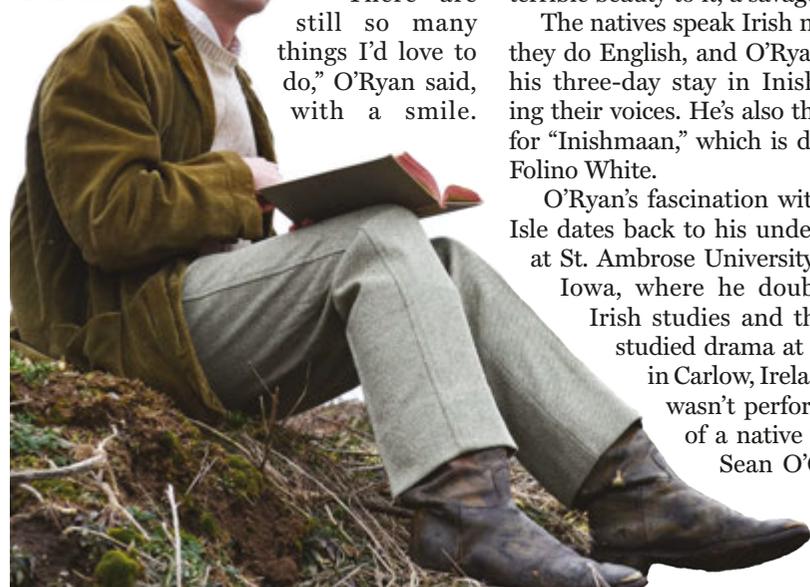
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In his spare time, he won a Pulsar Award for featured actor in a play for his performance as a suspected-thug-turned-unhappy-husband in Williamston Theatre’s “While We Were Bowling,” and he created the “Commedia Project” that served as the curtain-raiser for several shows at last year’s Summer Circle Theatre.

If this schedule has taken a toll on O’Ryan (who turns 27 next month), it doesn’t show.

“There are still so many things I’d love to do,” O’Ryan said, with a smile.

Courtesy Photo
Edward O’Ryan has the title role in “The Cripple of Inishmaan.”



“Every time I see an audition notice, I think, ‘Can I squeeze that in?’”

O’Ryan’s next part, playing the title character in Martin McDonagh’s offbeat comedy “The Cripple of Inishmaan,” is one he’s been waiting for ever since he read the play 10 years ago.

John Lepard, who directed O’Ryan in “You Can’t Take It With You” and “While We Were Bowling,” says he’s also looking forward to seeing O’Ryan at work.

“I have cast him in two shows, and he made very bold physical choices for both of them,” Lepard wrote in an e-mail.

Rob Roznowski, MSU’s head of acting and directing, worked with O’Ryan on “Good Boys and True,” “The Drunken City” and “Happy Holy Days,” and calls O’Ryan “one of the funniest people I know.”

Roznowski got an early look at “Cripple,” and he’s impressed.

“His generous good nature affects every performance and his warped view of the world is present in everything he does,” Roznowski said. “It is especially on display in ‘Cripple.’”

The MSU Theatre production opens Thursday.

“My character is on the outskirts of his own community — he’s named Billy, but everyone calls him Cripple Billy and no one takes him seriously,” O’Ryan said.

O’Ryan certainly did: Billy is his thesis role, and he prepared for it by making multiple trips to Ireland over the past five years, including traveling to the island of Inishmaan last year.

“It’s very small, maybe the size of (MSU’s) campus — no, smaller,” he said. “But it has a terrible beauty to it, a savage beauty.”

The natives speak Irish more often than they do English, and O’Ryan spent part of his three-day stay in Inishmaan recording their voices. He’s also the dialect coach for “Inishmaan,” which is directed by Ann Folino White.

O’Ryan’s fascination with the Emerald Isle dates back to his undergraduate days at St. Ambrose University in Davenport, Iowa, where he double-majored in Irish studies and theater. He also studied drama at Carlow College in Carlow, Ireland, although he wasn’t performing the work of a native playwright like Sean O’Casey or Brian Friel.

See O’Ryan, Page 14



Courtesy Photo

Andrea Miller got her kicks performing a cabaret dance to the tune of “But I Am a Good Girl” during last month’s “Total Burlesque” show at Spiral Dance Bar.

Welcome to Burlesque

Cher and Christina won’t be there, but there’s still a surplus of sexiness at Spiral’s ‘Total Burlesque’

By JON JAMES

Lansing’s sexy side comes out of hibernation at Spiral Dance Bar’s Total Burlesque, a variety evening hosted by local personalities Ace DeVille and Baby Gaga.

Acts at last month’s show ranged from classic cabaret to a comedic magic show to strip teases, and the event went on nearly until last call, concluding in a lively dance party.

The show featured De Ville, the master of ceremonies, doing a striptease and later an energetic dance performance; Michigan State University theater student Carolyn Rex sang and provided a choreographed interpretation of “Big Spender”; Magic to the Max conjured up a comedic magic show titled “A Test of Love”; Maria Morales

danced for a tied-up audience participant, who was eventually blindfolded and taken backstage; Baby Gaga showed off a sexy striptease and later performed one of her signature Lady Gaga tribute numbers; and Andrea Miller, another MSU theater student, did a traditional cabaret dance to “But I Am a Good Girl,” complete with high kicks and plenty of personality.

Baby Gaga, a.k.a. Erika C. Moul, says that she, her manager, Dan Young, and the management of Spiral co-conceived the event.

“We wanted to do something different,” she says, “(to take) something that was kind of dead and reinvent it.”

She says a burlesque show came to mind because it is a medium that by its nature evolves over time, presenting the opportunity for a recurring event that could offer a different performance every time.

See Burlesque, Page 14

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Confection connection

MSU Museum's annual Chocolate Party is one sweet fundraiser

By ALLISON M. BERRYMAN

Valentine's Day has gone, but the Michigan State University Museum's 23rd annual Chocolate Party Benefit gives candy lovers another excuse to indulge their yen for sweets. Proceeds go toward the preservation of the cultural and natural science

Chocolate Party Benefit

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collection of the MSU Museum and the upgrading of storage facilities.

The fundraiser is a professional culinary event that's open to the general public, offering attendees have the opportunity to sample creations from an array of Lansing area chefs.

About a dozen vendors will be on hand to provide samples of their creations, including Bake N Cakes, How Sweet It Is. Caruso's Candy Kitchen and the recently opened American Crepes in East Lansing, which will show off chocolate crepes.



Courtesy Photo

You can learn the secrets of working with chocolate — or just satisfy your sweet tooth — at Sunday's Michigan State University Museum's Chocolate Party Benefit.

The theme of this year's chocolate sculpture competition is "Cabinets and Curiosities," which ties in to a recently opened exhibit at the museum, said MSU Museum facility and event manager Mike Secord.

The exhibit looks at "explorers from around the world and the cultural oddities they might come back with during the 1700s and 1800s," Secord said.

The competition is open to the general public, but participants must apply beforehand at the museum's website. In past

years competitors have included culinary students, area chefs and local chocolate enthusiasts. The competition draws both individuals and teams of sculptors, Secord said.

A silent auction includes donated items from vendors and local businesses, ranging from \$10 to \$500.

The event also features two public demonstrations by chefs. "In the past, they've shown off different techniques, such as how to do chocolate strawberries, or how to make a homemade ganache," Secord said.

Burlesque

from page 12

Moul says another goal of Total Burlesque was to provide Lansing actors with an alternative to plays and musicals. "With an opportunity like burlesque," she says, "lots of people can do something different, try something new."

Moul sent out invitations to the MSU Theater Department to find students interested in auditioning for the project.

She says that most auditions were done via video, which allowed Moul to process a greater number of auditions, since busy students didn't have to be able to attend a specific audition night in order to be considered.

Moul says that Lansing residents can expect a monthly dose of burlesque, gener-

ally on a Wednesday evening.

Tonight's show, she says, will "continue the concept of burlesque, but amp up the sexiness," in a dinner-cabaret-style evening similar to the 2001 film "Moulin Rouge."

Baby Gaga and Magic to the Max are returning and Spiral general manager Daniel Young says an Adele impersonator is scheduled to appear.

"We'll have acts ranging from magicians to musicians to strippers," Young said.

O'Ryan

from page 12

"We worked on 'The Crucible' there," he said, referring to Arthur Miller's play about the Salem Witch Trials.

"I know, right? Ironic."

Still, the experience was quite enlightening.

"I'm not saying an expert on the cultural psyche, but I have done a lot of research on the struggles that have gone on there, and the people of Inishmaan are marginalized by their own culture."

The outside world got its first in-depth look at life on the Aran Islands in director Robert J. Flaherty's 1934 film "Man of Aran," a "docudrama" made before that term existed.

The filming of "Aran" is a major plot point in McDonagh's play: Billy, who is obsessed with the magic of moviemaking, is determined to somehow get a role in the production.

O'Ryan is also intrigued by film, which is one of the reasons he's moving to Los Angeles this summer. Before that, he'll star in a one-man show, Ronan Noone's "The Atheist," in May at MSU, playing amoral yellow-journalist Augustine Early.

It's a gig he landed after "Strategem" director Edward Daranyi — an assistant director at Stratford Shakespeare Festival — encouraged O'Ryan to write a grant to do the show; O'Ryan and Daranyi are collaborating on the project.

After months of perfecting his Welsh accent for "Strategem" and his Irish dialect for "Inishmaan," O'Ryan hoped "The Atheist" would be a change of pace.

"Maybe I'll get to use my own voice for that," he said. "I haven't had a chance to use my own voice since 'Gingerbread House.' No, wait — (Early) has got a Kansas accent."

O'Ryan sighed. "I'm screwed."

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THE SCREENING ROOM by JAMES SANFORD

Who gets the gold — and who gets the cold shoulder?

Sure things? For sure. Shocks? Distinctly possible. In other words, this year's Academy Awards should be business as usual.

Let's look at the major categories to see who'll get the gold and who will get the cold shoulder Sunday night.

Supporting actress

Will win: Octavia Spencer, "The Help"

Should win: Spencer

Other nominees: Berenice Bejo ("The Artist"), Jessica Chastain ("The Help"), Melissa McCarthy ("Bridesmaids") and Janet McTeer ("Albert Nobbs")

Analysis: Spencer's feisty, funny characterization is the most likely to take the prize: Minnie don't burn no chicken, but she's likely to burn the competition.

Supporting actor

Will win: Christopher Plummer, "Beginners"

Should win: Plummer

Other nominees: Kenneth Branagh ("My Week With Marilyn"), Jonah Hill ("Moneyball"), Nick Nolte ("Warrior"), Max von Sydow ("Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close")

Analysis: This is arguably the easiest category of the night. While a case could be made that any of his rivals are worthy, Plummer is a sure thing.

84th Academy Awards

Coverage begins at 7 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 26 on ABC oscar.go.com

Best actress

Will win: Meryl Streep, "The Iron Lady"

Should win:

Anyone except Glenn Close

Other nominees: Glenn Close ("Albert Nobbs"), Viola Davis ("The Help"), Rooney Mara ("The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo"), Michelle Williams ("My Week With Marilyn")

Analysis: Back in the fall, Williams was hailed for her striking portrayal of the voluptuous but vulnerable Marilyn Monroe, but then "Marilyn" came and went without making much noise. Then Streep's spot-on study of Margaret Thatcher was all the rage — it's likely she will win because she hasn't taken home a trophy in (gulp) nearly 30

years. But voters may sweep aside sympathy for Streep and instead honor Davis, the driving engine of "The Help."

Best actor

Will win: Jean Dujardin, "The Artist"

Should win: Michael Fassbender for "Shame" — but he's not even nominated

Other nominees: Demian Bichir ("A Better Life"), George Clooney ("The Descendants"), Gary Oldman ("Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy"), Brad Pitt ("Moneyball")

Analysis: Dujardin's vibrant clowning and grand emoting give him an extra edge over the other four, all of whom were mostly low-key and quietly compelling. As they say in Dujardin's home country, vive le difference. But the Academy's failure to recognize Fassbender's mesmerizing performance in "Shame" is, well, a real shame.

Best director

Will win: Michel Hazanavicius, "The Artist"

Should win: Hazanavicius

Other nominees: Alexander Payne ("The Descendants"), Martin Scorsese ("Hugo"), Woody Allen ("Midnight in Paris"), Terrence Malick ("The Tree of Life")

Analysis: Hazanavicius gave himself a tricky task by directing a mostly silent film and turning it into much more than a novelty. "The Artist" is a jewel of a movie.

Best picture

Will win: "The Artist"

Should win: "The Artist"

Other nominees: "The Descendants," "Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close," "The Help," "Hugo," "Midnight in Paris," "Moneyball," "The Tree of Life," "War Horse"

Analysis: "The Artist" is the first silent film to get a best picture nomination since 1928's "The Patriot." It will make a lot of noise with Oscar voters, thanks to its classy salute to historic Hollywood. ("Loud," by the way, is the weakest film to get a best picture nomination in years.)



THE CRIPPLE OF INISHMAAN

BY MARTIN MCDONAGH

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'Smokey Joe's' is definitely on fire

Riverwalk Theatre presents a rousing celebration of golden oldies

By PAUL WOZNIAK

You don't have to be a fool to fall in love with "Smokey Joe's Café: The Songs of Leiber & Stoller": You just need to know the songs.

Comprising songwriters Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller's classic hits from the 50s and 60s, "Café" celebrates the music of a rock 'n' roll generation that helped turn budding artists like Elvis Presley into cultural icons.

But the original voices are not essential to spark these songs, as the fantastically talented and diverse cast of Riverwalk Theatre proves. If anything, these remakes typically exceed their original counterparts, giving fresh life to timeless tunes

with flair.

Co-directors Hope Rollins and Diane Spicer could have avoided any elements of theatricality or drama in production. Without dialogue or any over-arching plot, Rollins and Spicer might just as well have turned this two-hour musical revue into an extended sing-along.

Instead, the performers take cues from the lyrics themselves to visually interpret the simple stories with clever choreography. For example: "Ruby Baby" chronicles Martin Kasprzak's rhetorical quest for his girl, while "Dance With Me" showcases Rebecca Lane comically and unsuccessfully propositioning every male suitor on stage for a waltz.

Additionally, a team of five choreog-

raphers (including Rollins) turns virtually every performer into synchronous dancing machines, deriving inspiration from classic doo wop/rhythm and blues acts, dancing fads and Presley himself.

The Smokey Joe's male quintet made up of Kasprzak, Zurich Dawson, Lucas Holliday, Quenton Pannell and Daniel Shafer ties the show together as avatars of R&B artists like The Coasters and The Drifters. Each exhibits a clear sense of harmony and rhythm through the entire harmonic scale while maintaining a balanced blend. Although Dawson dominates on lead vocals with charisma and humor, he is matched by Kasprzak and Holliday, who deliver impressive renditions of "Kansas City" and "Jailhouse Rock" respectfully.



Courtesy Photo

Gospel singers Zurich Dawson and AnnaMaria Horn valiantly try to save the boozy soul of the lovable lush D.W. Washburn (Quenton Pannell) in Riverwalk Theatre's "Smokey Joe's Café," a jukebox musical built around the 1950s and 1960s rock-n-roll and R&B songs of Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller.

"Café" maintains a fairly consistent level of energy, but the pinnacle of sweatiness arrives at the end of Act I. In "D.W. Washburn," Pannell plays the title lovable drunk who politely refuses assistance from the company-turned-church-congregation. But his complacency is no match for AnnaMaria Horn as the soaring soprano in "Saved," a full-blown gospel jam that's stirring enough to convert any non-believer.

John Dale Smith leads the orchestra from behind the piano with remarkable precision, courtesy of his top-notch musicians. As a result, you never notice if instrumentation or arrangements differ from the original recordings. The singers and orchestra remain in perfect time, regardless of periodic crackles from the inferior body microphones.

Thankfully the rest of the technical elements — from Tom Ferris' classy cabaret-style set design to Jack Hetherington's appropriately mood conscious lighting design — provide the perfect ambiance for this variety show.

Although "Café" contains a few less-polished numbers, the transition times between songs are stunningly short, rendering a show that flows as well as it sounds.

Understandably, local theater can't always attract the wide array of talent present in this production. But Rollins and Spicer did more than pull strong singers from varied locations; they combined creative energy with tenacious direction to deliver a first-rate show that provides everything it promises.

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Tuba in your face

Phil Sinder solos with the Lansing Symphony

By LAWRENCE COSENTINO

The next Lansing Symphony concert takes a stratagem from the playbook of Prussia's Frederick the Great: Move the artillery to the front.

Principal tuba Phil Sinder will be the soloist for a tuba concerto by American TV and film composer Bruce Broughton. The concerto, sandwiched between Aaron Copland's bucolic "Appalachian Spring" and Cesar Franck's lush Symphony in D Minor, is only about 10 minutes long, but it's a fine pretext to get up close and personal with a symphony mainstay.

Until now, Sinder has been largely content to soldier from the rear, and that suits him fine.

"I like the idea of being the foundation of the orchestra, helping to set the parameters of tempo and dynamic," he said. "Yet I know I have a supporting role that makes others around me feel comfortable and sound the best."

But Sinder relishes the chance to exhibit the tuba's nobility and nuance. "People think it's a lumbering instrument, unable to function with others," Sinder said. "I've devoted a lot of energy to dispel these myths, show the instrument is adaptable and agile."

As Frederick the Great put it, "Artillery adds dignity to what would otherwise be an ugly brawl."

Last month, Sinder premiered another concerto, a magisterial epic written for him by longtime Michigan State University jazz and classical pianist Ron Newman and performed by Sinder and the MSU Symphony.

The Newman concerto was a triumph for all concerned, but it still feels strange for Sinder to get in front of the orchestra.

"To be right up under the conductor's nose and have 50 string players in close proximity takes a while to get used to," Sinder said. "It affects how you breathe, how you attack, how you lock in expressive elements and intonation."

It's also an ear-opener for the front ranks. "It's fun for me to be within four feet of a viola or cello and have them experience the tuba at close range," he said.

Music featuring solo tuba only dates to the 1950s, with a concerto by English pastoralist Ralph Vaughan Williams in 1954 and a sonata by Paul Hindemith in 1955. Since then, dozens of composers have added to the meager repertoire, including film composer John Williams. Sinder played the Williams concerto 20 years ago with the

MSU Symphony.

Bruce Broughton, composer of Friday's concerto, is best known for his Oscar-nominated score for the 1985 Western "Silverado." Sinder said the tuba concerto "really flies by, especially the final movement, which is a whirlwind."

Growing up on Long Island, Sinder played the trumpet. In fifth grade, the tuba seat became vacant. He couldn't stop eyeing the instrument as it sat in the corner like a lonely, generously proportioned widow.

It's said that players come to resemble their instruments; Sinder agrees. "I like to support the underdog, in music or in a debate. And I liked the idea of being the only person playing an instrument, instead of four trumpets or 26 violins."

On Friday, Sinder will be even only-er than usual. Maestro Timothy Muffitt, who programmed the concert, wanted it that way. "Phil is an extraordinary artist," Muffitt said. "That was clear to me from day one. I

wanted to find some way to bring him out front and feature him."

The rest of Friday's concert will speak eloquently, and at length, for itself. In Muffitt's view, "Appalachian Spring" requires "distinct articulation and clarity of texture."

"You won't be hearing something Wagnerian in my approach to it," he said. "It was originally written for 13 instruments, primarily a piano-driven piece, and it sits in our brain that way."

In contrast to the simple gifts of Copland, the Franck D minor symphony will close the night with a grandly conceived, lush voyage that takes a while to heave into port.

Muffitt sees Franck not only as a master in his own right, but also a gateway drug to the heady French harmonies of Debussy and Ravel.

"He even pops a harp in there," Muffitt said. "That's what we think about with French music — this palette of colors they explore."

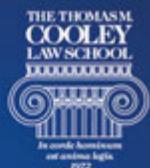


Courtesy Photo

Phil Sinder performs a tuba concerto by Bruce Broughton at Friday's Lansing Symphony Orchestra concert.



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In publishing, money makes the words go around

Blogs and newspaper columns can sometimes turn into profitable books — if they manage to survive

By BILL CASTANIER

The literary world is full of books that began as diaries, journals or caches of letters. “Marley & Me,” the best-selling memoir by former newspaper columnist John Grogan, comes immediately to mind. Grogan told me in a 2005 interview that it took him a couple of weeks to turn his weekly columns and journal entries about his dog Marley into a book. Not a bad gig — and one that turned into a literary franchise, which spawned a successful movie and dog food sponsorships.

In publishing, blogs and tweets are becoming the next big thing. Who can forget that cute “FU Penguin” by Matthew Gasteier, who turned a viral photo blog into a book? Then there’s “Rules for My Unborn Son” by Walker Lamond, which was remi-

niscent of John Steinbeck’s letters to his son about love.

And let’s not forget the phenoms like “Julie & Julia,” “Stuff White People Like,” Chelsea Handler and her vodka thing and the never-ending string of cookbook and recipe blogs that have proven profitable on bookshelves.

Turning blogs into books has launched a whole Internet industry of self-help blogs that give advice on how to turn a blog into a book.

Blogs, by their nature, are easy fodder for books. When I asked Michigan State University blogger Dennis Corsi if he and his fellow bloggers had ever considered turning their new “Loud and Queer” blog (www.allianceloudandqueer.wordpress.com) into a book in the future, he said, “I didn’t before — but I am thinking about it now.”

Corsi and four fellow bloggers have started the blog to stimulate what Corsi calls “important conversations” about issues relating to the LGBT community.

Corsi, a fifth-year senior from Shelby Township, said that Loud and Clear decided to take a different approach from typical gay blogs that focus on one person’s issues by recruiting a number of bloggers with different points of view.

“I dream that the blog starts discussions,” Corsi said. “We can post all we want, but if people don’t have discussions, it’s a failure.”

Corsi said that sort of dialogue is sorely needed on MSU’s campus. “People have

things to say and don’t know how to be heard. It’s easy to feel you don’t have a voice and that what you think doesn’t count.”

The blog launched earlier this month, and posts have covered a gamut of LGBT issues from a student point of view.



Courtesy Photo

Michigan State University senior Dennis Corsi is one of the bloggers behind the Loud and Queer blog, which launched earlier this month.

Corsi said the bloggers are not holding back or censoring themselves; in the future, he and his fellow bloggers feel it is necessary to take political stands on the actions being taken by Michigan’s legislature.

Corsi said the idea to blog grew out of regular e-mail alerts that were being sent out by a student organization known as the Alliance of Queer and Ally Students.

Topics have included a look at the Ellen

DeGeneres/J.C. Penney/Million Moms controversy, a post by an MSU alumna on bisexuality, an analysis of why “Trans People Don’t Pass,” a critical look at the “It Gets Better” campaign and a posting headlined “Labeling Sexuality: For Better of For Worse.”

MSU Journalism School Specialist Bonnie Bucqueroux, who has been following the internet closely since it began as a populous form of communication, said the Loud and Queer bloggers “have more than enough to keep them busy,” but cautions them to “see how they are doing after mid-terms.”

Bucqueroux said she has seen scores of student blogs come and go, and that 90

percent of first-time bloggers don’t last long. She added that it definitely helps that there are five bloggers posting content.

Bucqueroux is a serial blogger and often has several blogs going at one time. One of her most popular is on sustainable agriculture (www.sustainablefarmer.com). She has also had more than one and a half million downloads of her 500 videos on YouTube; one video on raising chickens in your backyard has over 30,000 views.

One recommendation she makes for the Loud and Clear bloggers is that “they do some investigative reporting on the issues.”

One practical problem caused by the many upstart blogs is keeping track of them for archival purposes.

Peter Berg, director of the MSU Special Collections, which holds one of the world’s most comprehensive collections of radical literature, recently said that his operation has started collecting digital communications and cited the recent Occupy movement as an example. He said Special Collections is making an effort to collect e-mails and digital flyers and blogs from that organization for future researchers.

One thing digital and paper communications have in common is that oftentimes their authors think “who would want this?” and dispose of the message.

A case in point: A MSU alumna recently donated her small collection of the MSU student publication *The Urinal* to the MSU Archives and Special Collections. *The Urinal*, a weekly gossip sheet in the 1950s and 1960s, was written by a group of fraternity and sorority men and women. It was cheaply mimeographed and was meant to be tossed out.

A potential best seller? Probably not, but in many ways *The Urinal* was a print precursor to Facebook; even though only a dozen or so of the weekly newsletters have ever turned up they provide an interesting look at the social life of MSU students, offering wry comments on everything from the draft to who was sleeping with whom.

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AMY ALKON
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Q: I'm an Occupy girl, age 45, into eco-shamanism and planetary consciousness stuff. I've mostly dated engineers with a playful side who initially seemed open to my interests but quickly became resentful of them. My boyfriend of two years is different — easygoing and willing to expand his horizons. He actually reads the articles I post on Facebook and discusses them with me. We laugh effortlessly and are very giving to each other, but I can't shake the feeling that I should look for somebody more my type (more artistically, politically, and spiritually inclined). I fantasize about meeting an artistic shamanic guy who is gorgeous and open and shares my sense of purpose, but the truth is, guys in my social milieu can be very competitive, neurotic, and immature. I guess my question is: If you can IMAGINE a better partner, does that mean you should break up?

—Restless

A: These guys you dated probably believed they were open-minded...until they were invited by their eco-shamanistic girlfriend to something like the "Embrace of the Earth" rite, in which participants spend the night in a grave they dig themselves. As refreshing as you may find it to "tap into the earth's restorative energies," their first thought probably went something like "Thanks, I'll take the night on the 800 thread count, slave-labor-made sheets. Could you turn on my electric blanket, please, before you go?"

If a guy thinks a girl's hot, he'll buy into whatever her trip is for as long as he can. My steak-loving boyfriend once dated a militant vegan. (He'd hit the Burger King drive-through on his way home.) Obviously, it's a problem if you go out with some engineer dude, tell him you're an "Occupy girl," and he says, "Wow, my company designs the water cannons the police use to spray you people." But, your current restlessness may stem from

the notion that it's a great big drum circle out there with a lot of chakra healer-boys and past-life counselors in it.

Having a lot of choice sounds great, but research by social psychologist Dr. Sheena Iyengar suggests that most people get overwhelmed when they have more than a handful of options. Essentially, when it seems the sky's the limit, we're prone to keep looking skyward. We end up not choosing at all, or we choose poorly and end up dissatisfied. A solution for this is "satisficing," a strategy from economist Herbert Simon of committing to the "good-enough" choice — instead of marching off on a never-ending search for spiritually evolved, Burning Man-certified perfection.

Sure, you can probably find your eco-shamanistic cloneboy — a guy who'll take the initiative in signing you both up for "soul retrieval training" when you worry that you forgot yours at Macy's in a past life. But then maybe he'll go all hateful on you on the way home about whether to save the whales or go to the movies. The longer your list of must-haves in a man, the more you shrink your pool of potential partners. Your own appeal is also a factor, and it's probably narrowed by things like not being 22 and your plumpitude, if any. Consider whether it's possible to have friends be your spiritual colleagues and have that be enough. You can wish for the gorgeous, artistic, shamanic perfect man — along with world peace and all the hemp bacon you can eat. But, maybe the realistic man is your sweet spiritual trainee who is fun and giving, dutifully rinses off his used foil, and smiles and pulls the Prius over when you tell him that your spirit animal needs to pee.

Q: I'm a 32-year-old woman who doesn't particularly like kids. I told my last boyfriend I didn't want kids, but three years in, he said he wanted a family and left. He said he thought I'd eventually change my mind. How do I keep this from happening again?

—Nobody's Mom

A: You can't just sit down on the first date and ask a man if his semen has a lifeplan. But, let a kid-wanting man get attached (even second date-attached) and he'll want to believe you'll eventually mommy up. So right on date one, you need to drop into conversation that you aren't a "kid person." Make sure a guy responds like he's gotten the bottom-line message: His sperm, your egg, they ain't gonna party. Now, some guys might not have fully considered the issue of kids, so you might weave the subject in on subsequent dates for reinforcement. If you're 22, a major compatibility issue is "Eeuw, you like Coldplay?" At 32, you really need to know up front if one of you is musing "I wonder what we'll name the twins" and the other's thinking "Whatever they called them at the pound is fine by me."

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To read more of Amy's advice and guidance, please visit our Web site at www.lansingcitypulse.com

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Jonesin' Crossword

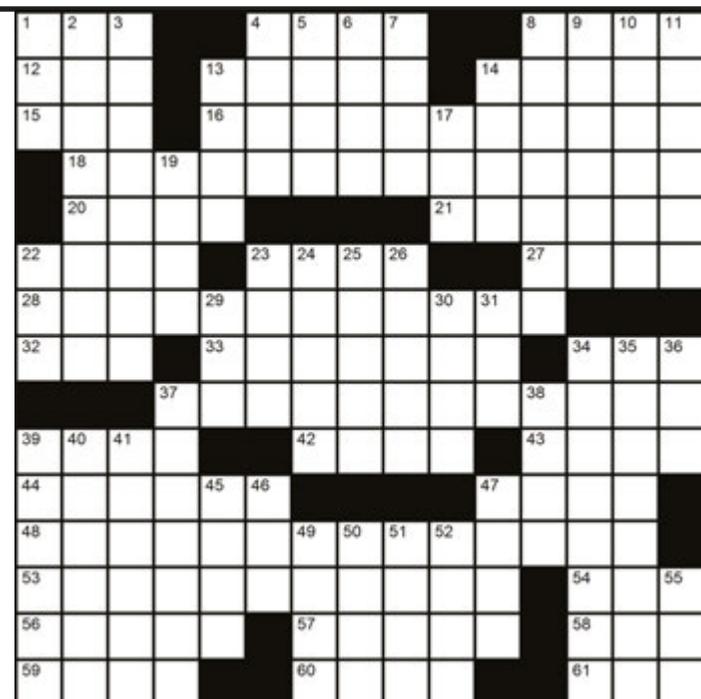
By Matt Jones

"Going Negative" — totally in denial.

By Matt Jones

Across

- 1 Stations in some labs
- 4 "Mama's Gun" singer Erykah
- 8 U.S. Surgeon General under Reagan
- 12 "Play something better!"
- 13 Prized cards, to collectors
- 14 Polite refusal
- 15 Tip collector
- 16 Spoiler in a familiar saying
- 18 "Oh 7, why'd you have to go and eat 9? And 6, did you help 7 out of fear? I'm shocked!"
- 20 Swamp beast
- 21 National chain of "bakery-cafes"
- 22 Caprice
- 23 Big cheese in Holland
- 27 Bodily sac
- 28 "I can see you on a cold day and you're like a cloud...I'm impressed..."
- 32 Twisted, like a smile
- 33 Falls on many honeymoon trips
- 34 Rum ___ Tugger (47-down character)
- 37 "Hmmm...I'm stumped as to how you landed a role on 'The Addams Family'..."
- 39 Without leaves
- 42 Those ladies, in Tijuana
- 43 Radio choices
- 44 GM service
- 47 Chaz's mother
- 48 "Oh yeah, like I'd ever see a guy with a ruffled shirt and heaving chest in real life..."
- 53 Ad line spoken while



- grabbing a box of cereal back
- 54 ___ Lingus (Irish airline)
- 56 Year, to Yvette
- 57 1970s model Cheryl
- 58 Wu-Tang Clan member
- 59 Suffix after Brooklyn
- 60 Lat. and Lith., once
- 61 Drops in a field

Down

- 1 Simple sammich
- 2 One of a pair of newscasters
- 3 Group of sisters
- 4 ___ mi (Vietnamese sandwich)
- 5 Vicinity
- 6 Red ink
- 7 Mil. branch at Lackland
- 8 It'll floor ya
- 9 Hawk relative
- 10 Canadian NHL team

- 11 Test in H.S.
- 13 Campus recruiting org. in Hinduism (in RUN AGAINST)
- 17 Quick swim
- 19 Grave marker
- 22 Dir. opposite ESE
- 23 Do some video production
- 24 Early info-sorting program
- 25 Mythical giant with 100 eyes
- 26 Ben Stiller's mom Anne ___
- 29 "Would You Like to Buy ___?" ("Sesame Street" song)
- 30 Greek war god
- 31 Body art, for short
- 34 It's swiped to check in
- 35 Command in some

- games of tag
- 36 "North by Northwest" film studio
- 37 Stinging herbs
- 38 Mayor of Los Angeles, 2001-2005
- 39 Meticulously-trimmed tree
- 40 Name
- 41 They're given in the "Wheel of Fortune" bonus round
- 45 "Ellen" actor ___ Gross
- 46 Czech play where the word "robot" came from
- 47 It left Broadway on Sept. 10, 2000
- 49 Has dinner
- 50 Diamondback stats
- 51 Host Ken of MTV's "Remote Control"
- 52 Russian fighter jets
- 55 Like some sugar

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OUT on the TOWN

Wednesday, February 22

CLASSES AND SEMINARS

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

Community Yoga. Power yoga class. 6:30-8 p.m. FREE. Just B Yoga, 106 Island Ave., Lansing. (517) 488-5260.

Drop-in figure drawing. Easels and drawing boards provided. 7:30-10 p.m. \$5, \$3 students. Kresge Art Museum, located at Physics and Auditorium roads, MSU Campus, East Lansing. (517) 337-1170.

Trinitarian Theology. On the history and development. 6-7 p.m. FREE. Pilgrim Congregational United Church of Christ, 125 S. Pennsylvania Ave., Lansing. (517) 484-7434.

Lolita Hernandez. Discuss "The Autopsy of an Engine and Other Stories from the Cadillac Plant." 7 p.m. FREE. UAW Local 602, 2510 W. Michigan Ave., Lansing.

Knee High Naturalist. Ages 2-5. 1-2 p.m. \$5. Fenner Nature Center, 2020 E. Mount Hope Ave., Lansing. (517) 483-4224.

EVENTS

Overeaters Anonymous. 7 p.m. FREE. Grand Ledge Baptist Church, 1120 W. Willow Hwy., Grand Ledge. (517) 256-6954.

Practice Your English. Speaking and listening to English in relaxing atmosphere. 7-8 p.m. FREE. East Lansing Public Library, 950 Abbot Road, East Lansing. (517) 351-2420.

Youth Service Corps. Youth grow food, develop leadership skills. Ages 11-17. 3:30-5:30 p.m. FREE. Hunter Park Community Garden House, 1400 block of E. Kalamazoo St., Lansing. (517) 999-3910.

Mid-Michigan Genealogical Society. The

See Out on the Town, Page 22

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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. If you need help, please call Jessica at (517) 999-5069. E-mail information to calendar@lansingcitypulse.com.

Feb. 23-25

Clowning around at Connxtions

Connxtions Comedy Club brings comedian Dave Dyer, who got his start in comedy when he was a theater student at Michigan State University in the mid-1990s, while he was aspiring to be a Broadway director. According to his website: "After realizing the incredible amount of sacrifice and butt-kissing such a ridiculous dream required, he chose to take the easy path of stand-up comedy." A resident of Grand Rapids, Dyer has contributed material to ABC's "Politically Incorrect" and "The Zany Report" on "The Bob and Tom Show." His humor touches on everything from raising kids and marriage to current events and such touchy topics as ear hair. The Friday and Saturday shows also feature Kate Brindle and Jeff Conolly. 8 p.m. Thursday, all seats \$8; 8. & 10:30 p.m. Friday, all seats \$12; 8. & 10:30 p.m. Saturday, all seats \$15. 2900 N. East St., Lansing. (517) 374-HAHA. www.connxtionscomedyclub.com.

Feb. 24

Hiking through history

On Friday, Fenner Conservancy and the Friends of Lansing Historic Cemeteries collaborate for a night hike and "Torch Light Cemetery Stroll." The hike begins along the Mason Esker, one of the longest glacial landforms in the U.S., where owls and other animals can be spotted. Participants walk through Mt. Hope Cemetery and discover the history of the land, as well as the people who helped shape Lansing. Explore the gravestones of some of Lansing's legendary families while looking for signs of deer, bats, owls and other critters. The hike concludes at Fenner Nature Center, where hikers can enjoy a campfire, hot chocolate, marshmallow roasting and more. 6-8 p.m. FREE members, \$5 non-members. 2020 E. Mt. Hope Ave., Lansing. (517) 483-4224. www.mynaturecenter.org.



Photo by Mary Cole Nyman

Feb. 24

Competing for Pride

Michigan Pride begins its fundraising season with the 3rd Annual Celebrity Bartender Tip-off. Spiral Dance Bar hosts the night, in which three bartenders compete for tips. You vote by tipping the bartender who impresses you the most. The line-up includes ePIFany founder and Wharton Center public relations manager Bob Hoffman, former Beggar's Banquet bartender Kate Venn and golfer-turned-drink-slinger Shawn Rogers. All tips are donated to Michigan Pride. 5:30-8 p.m. FREE to attend. Spiral Dance Bar, 1247 Center St., Lansing. (517) 371-3221. www.facebook.com/events/187836041318671/.

Feb. 25 & 26

Tend to orchids at MSU

Want to see spring early this year? The 29th Annual Orchid Show & Sale this weekend offers the chance to discover a wide selection of tropical flowers. The exhibit showcases hundreds of orchid plants from all over the world, including photography, art and flower arrangements for purchase. Educational talks and advice on how to care for orchids are also part of the program. The Greater Lansing Orchid Society promotes awareness, research and development of orchid culture, while preserving species. 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday; 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Sunday. FREE to attend. MSU Plant & Soil Science Conservatory, on the corner of Bogue St. and Wilson Road, MSU Campus, East Lansing. (517) 332-0004. www.greaterlansingorchidsociety.com.



Photo by Dot Potter Barnett

TURN IT DOWN

A SURVEY OF LANSING'S MUSICAL LANDSCAPE

BY RICH TUPICA

THE QUEERS AND ATARIS CO-HEADLINE MAC'S



Courtesy Photo

The Queers

Punk fans who dig the poppy-side of the spectrum may be in luck this Friday when pop-punk heavy hitters The Queers and The Ataris bring their tour to Mac's Bar. Opening the show is Far From Finished (from Boston) and locals Frank and Earnest. Since 1981, The Queers have been churning out genuine, catchy punk records. The New Hampshire-based band was founded by Joe King (aka Joe Queer), the only constant member. The lineup includes King (guitar/vocals), Dangerous Dave (bass/vocals) and Lurch Nobody (drums). The band broke up in 1984, but King reformed it in 1986; in 1990 the group released its debut album, "Grow Up." But The Queers didn't blow up until 1993, with the release of "Love Songs for the Retarded" on Lookout! Records. The Queers are known for Ramones-style

guitars and poppy vocals. Lyrically, the band sticks to topics like girls, drugs and booze. Aside from originals, the guys also knock out a handful of cover tunes, including takes on The Beach Boys, Skeeter Davis, Angry Samoans and Tommy James & the Shondells, to name a few.

The Ataris, best known for the 2003 release "So Long, Astoria" on Columbia Records, is an Indiana-based band. They've put out five albums since forming in 1995. A new studio LP, "The Graveyard of The Atlantic," has been in the works for a couple years and is due out sometime this year, via Paper + Plastick Records.

Friday, Feb. 24 @ Mac's Bar, 2700 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing, all ages. \$13 advance, \$15 door, 8 p.m.

DAVID FRANCEY AND CRAIG WERTH HUMOR THE FIDDLE



Courtesy Photo

David Francey

Carpenter-turned-songwriter David Francey left his construction career and began recording tunes back in 1999. Since then the Scottish-born Canadian has released nine albums and become an award-winning singer-songwriter in the folk world. The three-time Juno winner shares his songs and stories Friday at the Ten Pound Fiddle when he performs with multi-instrumentalist Craig Werth. In concert, Francey blends music with his wry humor, which should make him a perfect match for the Fiddle.

Friday, Feb. 24 @ Ten Pound Fiddle — Unitarian

Universalist Church, 855 Grove Street East Lansing, all ages. Box office 7 p.m.; doors 7:30 p.m.; show 8 p.m. Tickets: \$15 public; \$12.

EAST GRAND RECORD CO. HOSTS FREE IN-STORE

A fresh addition to the East Lansing vinyl community is East Grand Record Co. a record shop located in the heart of downtown. Aside from stocking stacks of wax — including rock, punk, soul, and pop — the store also hosts free live shows. Performing Saturday is a cast of locals, including: Billiards Music, Ghoulie, BerT and Cat Midway.

Saturday, Feb. 25 @ East Grand Record Co., 213 1/2 E. Grand River Ave., East Lansing, all ages. FREE, 9 p.m.

TADDY PORTER BRINGS VINTAGE-ROCKIN' TO THE LOFT

Serving up some straight rock 'n' roll is Taddy Porter, an Oklahoma-based band playing an all-ages show Sunday at The Loft. The band draws influences from a hodgepodge of classic rockers, as well as current bands like The Black Keys. Taddy Porter, which formed in 2007, says in its bio that it thrives on "raw emotion and power" — using a formula that includes Les Paul guitars, Marshall Amps and a fashion sense that mirrors the Allman Brothers. For those looking for riff rock, this could be the ticket. Warming up the stage are local rockers The Brodberg Band, Green Light Effect and Tripp 'N' Dixie.

Sunday, Feb. 26 @ The Loft, 414 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing, all ages, \$6 advance, \$8 at door, doors 7 p.m.

DAN CRARY GETS CRAZY VERSATILE AT PUMP HOUSE

Musical veteran Dan Crary has a range that runs from Mozart to Anglo-American fiddle tunes — not to mention his evocative original compositions that transcend genre labels.

A master of the guitar, Crary is a Kansas native with 50 years of performing and nine solo records under his belt. His recordings combine many American influences; on stage he weaves everything together with stories and observations. His ability to connect with crowds has landed him appearances all across the country, including spots



Courtesy Photo

Dan Crary

in Europe, Japan and the South Pacific. Visit www.dancrary.com.

Sunday, Feb. 26 @ Pump House, 368 Orchard St., East Lansing, all ages, 7 p.m. to 10 p.m.

MBC'S 'OPEN-MIC MONDAYS'

For those looking to blow off some artistic steam, perhaps Michigan Brewing Co.'s "Open-Mic Mondays" may be the spot. The Lansing pub hosts the free event every week and it's open to all. There's a sign-up list for performers: You can play solo, as a duo, with your own band or even sing some songs with a house band. Spoken-word acts are also welcome. The night has a couple other perks, such as half-off burgers (beef or turkey), free on-street parking after 6 p.m., a full dinner menu and many local microbrew beers and wines to choose from. Visit michiganbrewing.com.

Monday, Feb. 27 @ Michigan Brewing Co. - Lansing, 402 S. Washington Square, Lansing, 18 and over. FREE, weekly, 6:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m.

UPCOMING SHOW?

POST IT AT

WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/TURNITDOWN

LIVE AND LOCAL

To be listed in Live and Local, e-mail your information to liveandlocal@lansingcitypulse.com by Thursday of the week before publication.

	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Colonial Bar, 3425 S. MLK Jr. Blvd.			Hilton Country, 9 p.m.	Hilton Country, 9 p.m.
Brannigan Brothers, 210 S. Washington Square		Jammin' DJs, 9 p.m.	Jammin' DJs, 9 p.m.	Jammin' DJs, 9 p.m.
Crunchy's, 254 W. Grand River Ave.	Cloud Magic, 10 p.m.	Karaoke, 9 p.m.	Karaoke, 9 p.m.	Karaoke, 9 p.m.
Dublin Square, 327, Abbot Road	DJ Juan, 10 p.m.	Jedi Mind Trip & DJ Beats, 10 p.m.	Avon Bomb & DJ Donnie D, 10 p.m.	Jedi Mind Trip & DJ Beats, 10 p.m.
The Exchange, 314, E. Michigan Ave.	Shawn Hughes, 9 p.m.	Tryst Thursdays, 8:30 p.m.	12Bar Funk, 9 p.m.	The Circuit Tree, 9 p.m.
The Firm, 227 S. Washington Square		DnW Sound DJs, 9 p.m.	Various DJs, 9 p.m.	DJ Donnie D, 9 p.m.
Grand Café/Sir Pizza, 201 E. Grand River Ave.	Driver & Rider Show, 7 p.m.	Kathy Ford Band, 7 p.m.	Karaoke, 7 p.m.	
Green Door, 2005 E. Michigan Ave.	Gadget, 9:30 p.m.	The Hoopties, 9:30 p.m.	Global Village, 9:30 p.m.	Global Village, 9:30 p.m.
The Loft, 414 E. Michigan Ave.	Have you Heard, 7 p.m.	Gremlins & Rainbows, 9 p.m.	Funkton, 8 p.m.	T.O.K.I.N., 9 p.m.
Mac's Bar, 2700 E. Michigan Ave.	The Skeetones, 9 p.m.	The Queers & The Ataris, 6:30 p.m.	Ben Keeler, 9 p.m.	Black Mass, 9 p.m.
Moriarty's Pub, 802 E. Michigan Ave.	Open Mic with Rob Kladjia, 9 p.m.	The Burnside, 9:30 p.m.	Belfast Gin, 10 p.m.	Belfast Gin, 10 p.m.
Rick's American Cafe, 224 Abbott Road	Pitcher Madness, 10:30 p.m.			The Crutches, 10:30 p.m.
Rookies, 16460 S. US 27	Sea Cruisers, 7-10 p.m.	Water Pong DJ with Ryan, 9 p.m.	Karaoke with Bob, 9 p.m.	Karaoke with Bob, 9 p.m.
Rum Runners, 601 East Michigan Ave.		Dueling Pianos & DJ, 9 p.m.	Dueling Pianos & DJ, 7 p.m.	Dueling Pianos & DJ, 7 p.m.
Whiskey Barrel Saloon, 410 S. Clippert St.		Modern Day Drifters, 9 p.m.	Bullwhip, 9 p.m.	Bullwhip, 9 p.m.
Unicorn Tavern, 327 E. Grand River Ave.			Dr. Gun 9 p.m.	Dr. Gun, 9 p.m.

Sunday Open Jam with Bad Gravy, 9:30 p.m., Green Door; 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 Mic, 5 p.m., Ull'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.
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, 812 E. Michigan Ave.

Out on the town

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Legacy of the Base Line. 1-3 p.m. FREE. Plymouth Congregational Church, 2001 E. Grand River Ave., Lansing.

Baby Time. Books and songs. 10:30 a.m. FREE. Delta Township District Library, 5130 Davenport Drive, Lansing. (517) 321-4014 x3.

Colonial Village Neighborhood Meeting. The Association meets on the third Wednesday. 7-8:30 p.m. FREE. Grace United Methodist, 1900 Boston Blvd., Lansing. (517) 482-5750. cvnnews.com.

Mid-Michigan Genealogical Society. The Legacy of the Base Line and Meridian on the Cultural Landscape of Michigan. 1-3 p.m. FREE. Plymouth Congregational Church, 2001 E. Grand River Ave., Lansing.

MUSIC

Jazz Wednesdays. Live entertainment. 7-10 p.m. FREE. ENSO, 16800 Chandler Road, East Lansing. (517) 333-1656. www.enjoyenso.com.

Jazz Wednesdays. Featuring the Jeff Shoup Trio. 7-10 p.m. FREE. Gracies Place, 151 S. Putnam, Williamston. (517) 655-1100.

Don Middlebrook & Living Soul. 6-10 p.m. FREE. Reno's East, 1310 Abbott Road, East Lansing. (517) 388-3347.

LITERATURE AND POETRY

Out of this World Book Club. "The Rook," by Dan O'Malley. 7-8:30 p.m. FREE. East Lansing Public Library, 950 Abbot Road, East Lansing. (517) 351-2420.

Lansing Area Science Fiction Association Meeting. New location. Informal dinner and lively conversation every week. 7 p.m. FREE. Buddies Grill, 2040 Aurelius Road, #13, Holt. (517) 402-4481.

Thursday, February 23

CLASSES AND SEMINARS

Yoga XL. Learn to move with confidence. 7:15-8:15 p.m. \$8 suggested donation. Just B Yoga, 106 Island Ave., Lansing. (517) 488-5260.

Eating Disorders Anonymous Meeting. For those recovering. 7 p.m. FREE. CADL Mason Library, 145 W. Ash St., Mason. (517) 899-3515. www.cadl.org.

Meanings of Superheroes. Jeffrey Kripal presents on the influence religion has on contemporary popular culture. 7 p.m. FREE. International Center, 450 Administration Bldg., East Lansing. religiousstudies.msu.edu/news-and-events.

Mold, Moisture, and Your Home. Mold in the air can cause allergic reactions, irritated eyes, and asthma episodes. 7-8:30 p.m. FREE. Allen Neighborhood Center, 1619 E Kalamazoo St., Lansing. (517) 367-2468.

Astronomical Horizons. Professor Megan Donohue on "Through a Lens Darkly: Testing Dark Matter with the Hubble space Telescope." 7:30-9 p.m. FREE. Abrams Planetarium, 400 E. Grand River Ave., East Lansing. (517) 355-4676.

Seed Starting-Garden. Learn easy methods for giving your garden a head start. 6-7:30 p.m. FREE. Southside Community Center, 5825 Wise Road, Lansing. (517) 374-5700.

EVENTS

Morning Storytime. All ages welcome for stories, songs, rhymes. 10:30 a.m. FREE. Delta Township District Library, 5130 Davenport Drive, Lansing. (517) 321-4014.

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

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

Kindergarten Round Up. Tour the school & meet staff. 5:30-6:30 p.m. FREE. Immaculate Heart of

Mary - St. Casimir Catholic School, 3830 Rosemont Drive, Lansing. (517) 882-6631. www.ihmlansing.org.

Sierra Club Central Michigan Group. Clayton Daughenbaum will speak on the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance. 7 p.m. FREE. East Lansing Public Library, 950 Abbot Road, East Lansing. (517) 351-2420.

Kids Time: Ages 5-11. Help east side youth grow food, develop leadership skills. 4:30-5:30 p.m. FREE. Hunter Park Community GardenHouse, 1400 block of E. Kalamazoo St., Lansing. (517) 999-3910.

MSU Film Collective Series. Showing "The Band Wagon." 8 p.m. FREE. Wells Hall, MSU Campus, East Lansing. www.english.msu.edu/film.

New Library. Jack Helder will speak on plans for a new library in Williamston. 11:30 a.m. \$10 Chamber members, \$15. Brookshire Inn, 205 W. Church St., Williamston. (517) 655-1549.

Dave Dyer. Humor exploring everything from raising kids and marriage to current events. 7 p.m. \$8, \$4 students. Connxtions Comedy Club, 2900 N. East St., Lansing. (517) 374-HAHA.

MUSIC

Jazz Thursdays. Various artists featured each week. 6:30-9:30 p.m. FREE. Mumbai Cuisine, 340 Albert St., East Lansing. (517) 336-4150 .

m. \$8. Mac's Bar, 2700 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. (517) 484-6795. www.macsbars.com.

Those Willows. Album release and video preview concert. 7 p.m. \$5. (SCENE) MetroSpace, 110 Charles St., East Lansing. (517) 319-6832.

Don Middlebrook & Living Soul. 6-10 p.m. FREE. Reno's West, 5001 West Saginaw Hwy., Lansing. (517) 388-3347.

THEATER

"Dead Man's Shoes." In 1883, the notorious outlaw Injun Bill Picote escapes from prison, along with a hard-luck drunk named Froggy. 8 p.m. \$20. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam, Williamston. (517) 655-SHOW.

"Smokey Joe's Cafe." A musical showcase of 39 R&B, pop and rock songs written by Lieber and Stoller. 7 p.m. \$20, \$18 seniors & students. Riverwalk Theatre, 228 Museum Drive, Lansing. (517) 482-5700.

"The Cripple of Inishmaan." Black comedy about the offbeat personalities that inhabit the tiny West Irish island in 1934. 7:30 p.m. \$10. MSU Auditorium, 150 Auditorium Road, East Lansing. (800) WHARTON.

Auditions. Ages 9-18, can audition for 'The Little Prince.' 6:30-8:30 p.m. FREE. Hannah Community Center, 819 Abbot Road, East Lansing. (517) 333-2580 ext. 0.

Friday, February 24

CLASSES AND SEMINARS

Relics of the Big Bang. Emphasizes research currently underway at CERN. 8 p.m. \$3, \$2.50 students & seniors, \$2 kids. Abrams Planetarium, 400 E. Grand River Ave., East Lansing. (517) 355-4676.

CoDependency Support Group. Find strength and happiness. 3:30-5 p.m. FREE. Women's Center of Greater Lansing, 1710 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. (517) 372-9163.

Night Hikes. Explore astronomy, survival skills, nocturnal animal senses & storytelling. 6-8 p.m. FREE members, \$5. Fenner Nature Center, 2020 E. Mount Hope Ave., Lansing. (517) 483-4224.

Daily Work/Daily Lives. "The Work of Race: African American and African-Indian Farmers, Farm Laborers, and Indentured Servants in the Old Northwest." 2:15 p.m. FREE. MSU Museum Auditorium, MSU Campus, East Lansing.

EVENTS

Alcoholics Anonymous. Open meeting for family and friends with American Sign Language interpretation. 8 p.m. FREE. Alano Club East, 220 S. Howard St., Lansing. (517) 482-8957.

Music & Movement Storytime. Dance and sing

to music, and learn to play with instruments and more. 1 p.m. FREE. Delta Township District Library, 5130 Davenport Drive, Lansing. (517) 321-4014 ext. 3.

Art Aid and Silent Auction. Auction packages available for bidding and a raffle. 6:30-8:30 p.m. FREE. Ledge Craft Lane, 120 S. Bridge St., Grand Ledge. (517) 627-9843.

Storytime. Stories, rhymes, songs and a craft for ages 2-5. 10:30-11:15 a.m. FREE. East Lansing Public Library, 950 Abbot Road, East Lansing. (517) 351-2420.

Dave Dyer. 8 p.m. & 10:30 p.m. \$12. Connxtions Comedy Club, 2900 N. East St., Lansing. (517) 374-HAHA.

Mardi Gras Open House. Music by Rikki and Nicky, beverages, masks, beads and a free gift. 12:30-2:30 p.m. FREE. Grandhaven Manor Retirement Community, 3215 W. Mt. Hope Ave., Lansing. (517) 372-4499.

MUSIC

Faculty Recital. With MSU Professors of Jazz. 8 p.m. \$10, \$8 seniors, FREE students. MSU Music Building Auditorium, MSU Campus, East Lansing. www.music.msu.edu.

"Appalachian Spring." LSO Principal Tubist, Philip Sinder and Bruce Broughton, an Emmy-winning television and film composer. 8 p.m. \$15-45. Wharton Center, MSU Campus, East Lansing. (517) 487-5001.

Local Bands. Featuring Sabertooth Fiancee, Drinking Mercury more. 8 p.m. \$5. (SCENE) MetroSpace, 110 Charles St., East Lansing. (517) 319-6832.

THEATER

"Dead Man's Shoes." 8 p.m. \$25. (Please See Details Feb. 23)

Happendance. Concert of contemporary dance, original works & unique staging. 8 p.m. \$15, \$12 students & seniors. Hannah Community Center, 819 Abbot Road, East Lansing. (517) 333-3528.

"Smokey Joe's Cafe." 8 p.m. \$20, \$18 seniors & students. (Please See Details Feb. 23)

"The Cripple of Inishmaan." 8 p.m. \$10. (Please See Details Feb. 23)

Auditions. Ages 9-18, can audition for 'The Little Prince.' 6:30-8:30 p.m. FREE. Hannah Community Center, 819 Abbot Road, East Lansing. (517) 333-2580 ext. 0.

Saturday, February 25

CLASSES AND SEMINARS

Relics of the Big Bang. Emphasizes research currently underway at CERN. 8 p.m. \$3, \$2.50 students & seniors, \$2 kids. Abrams Planetarium, 400 E. Grand River Ave., East Lansing. (517) 355-4676.

Beginner Tai Chi. Can build strength and reduce stress. 8-9 a.m. \$8. Just B Yoga, 106 Island Ave., Lansing. (517) 488-5260.

Tai Chi in the Park. Meditation at 8:45 a.m. followed by Tai Chi. 9:30 a.m. FREE donations. Hunter

Park Community GardenHouse, 1400 block of E. Kalamazoo St., Lansing. Contact Bob Teachout (517) 272-9379.

Overeaters Anonymous. 9:30 a.m. FREE. Sparrow Professional Building, 1200 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. (517) 485-6003.

Connecting with Nature. Enjoy a campfire and learn about leap year. 7 p.m. \$7 per family. Harris Nature Center, 3998 Van Atta Road, Meridian Township. (517) 349-3866.

Green Cleaning. Learn to make safe cleaning solutions. 1:30-3 p.m. \$5 suggested donation. Michigan Energy Options, 405 Grove St., East Lansing. (517) 337-0422 ext. 1303.

Market Gardening: Sell at Markets. Learn what you need to get growing for market this summer. 12:30-2 p.m. \$5 suggested donation. Hunter Park Community GardenHouse, 1400 block of E. Kalamazoo St., Lansing. (517) 999-3910.

Elementary Math Circle. For grades 2-4, math discoveries and play reasoning games. 10-11:30 a.m. FREE. East Lansing Public Library, 950 Abbot Road, East Lansing. (517) 351-2420 .

Orchid Show & Sale. Exhibiting hundreds of exotic blooming orchid plants from around the world. 11 a.m.-5 p.m. FREE. MSU Plant and Soil Science Conservatory, On the corner of Bogue St. & Wilson Road on MSU campus. East Lansing. (517) 332-0004.

EVENTS

Salsa Dancing. DJ Adrian "Ace" Lopez hosts Lansing's weekly salsa event. Singles welcome. 9 p.m.-2 a.m. \$5. Gregory's Bar & Grille, 2510 N. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Lansing. (517) 323-7122.

Preschool Open House. Discuss the curriculum and tours the preschool. 8 a.m.-10:30 a.m. FREE. St. Thomas Aquinas Church, 955 Alton Road, East Lansing. (517) 332-0813.

Mitten Mavens Roller Derby. Junior team, the Cap City Wild Childs, in a double-header with the Mavens. 6 p.m. \$10. Summit Sport, 2650 East Grand River Ave., East Lansing. www.mittenmavens.net.

Radio Rescue. Bring old set and ask about repair and restoration. 10-4 p.m. \$6, \$4 seniors, \$2 6-17, under 5 FREE. Michigan Historical Museum, 702 W. Kalamazoo St., Lansing. (517) 241-6852.

Middle School Math Circle. Grades 5-8, can make math discoveries and play reasoning games. Noon-1:30 p.m. FREE. East Lansing Public Library, 950 Abbot Road, East Lansing. (517) 351-2420 .

Swing Dance. Starts with a lesson in swing dance followed by general dancing. 7 p.m. \$10. Central United Methodist Church, 215 N. Capitol Ave., Lansing. (517) 712-6674.

Dave Dyer. With Kate Brindle & Jeff Conolly. 8 p.m. & 10:30 p.m. \$15. Connxtions Comedy Club, 2900 N. East St., Lansing. (517) 374-HAHA.

Active Neighboring Café. On discouraging anti-

See Out on the Town, Page 24

ERASER-FREE SUDOKU

MEDIUM

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	8		9	5		3		
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TO PLAY

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

To avoid erasing, pencil in your possible answers in the scratchpad space beneath the short line in each vacant square. For solving tips, visit www.SundayCrosswords.com

Answers on page 25

GET READY FOR SPRING

FREE HERB WORKSHOPS
Saturday Feb. 25



Join us for 2 fun workshops presented by Dr. Norm Lownds, President of Michigan Herb Associates. "Herbs for the Kid in You" begins at 11 a.m. followed by "The Magic of Herbs" around 12:30 p.m.
1124 E. Mt. Hope, Lansing (517) 484-5327



For more information visit www.smithfloral.com or find us on facebook.



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A Leap Year Celebration

The International Chamber Soloists perform with violinist Dmitri Berlinsky and pianists Panayis Lyras, Deborah Moriarty, and Minsoo Sohn presenting

- Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 in G Major
- Concerto in D Minor for Three Keyboards
- Violin Concerto in A Minor



Wednesday, February 29, 7:30 p.m.

Music Building Auditorium, West Circle Drive

Michael Callahan will give a preview talk beginning at 6:45 p.m.

\$10 for adults, \$8 for seniors, and free for students

BACH to Basics is generously sponsored by Deborah Moriarty.

Tickets available at the door or online at music.msu.edu. Call (517) 353-5340.

Out on the town

from page 22

social and criminal behaviors. 10 a.m.-Noon, FREE. Allen Neighborhood Center, 1619 E Kalamazoo St., Lansing. (517) 999-3924.

All on Herbs. "Herbs for the Kid in You" at 11 a.m., followed by "The Magic of Herbs" around 12:30 p.m. 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m. FREE. Smith Floral and Greenhouses, 124 E Mount Hope Ave., Lansing. www.smithfloral.com.

MUSIC

Symphony Orchestra. From "The Love of Three Oranges." 8 p.m. \$10, \$8 seniors, FREE students. Wharton Center, MSU Campus, East Lansing. (517) 483-4220.

Red Cedar Festival. 11 bands from Michigan & about 800 musicians. 9 a.m.-6 p.m. FREE. Okemos High School, 2500 Jolly Road, Okemos. (517) 339-2798.

Concert with Dan Crary. Workshop on flatpicking guitar. Noon-3 p.m. Workshop \$40; Concert FREE. Elderly Instruments, 1100 N Washington Ave., Lansing. (517) 372-7880. www.elderly.com/events.

Gumbo & Jazz Mardi Gras. Authentic Louisiana food, special New Orleans act and Wess Anderson Quintet. 7 p.m.-Midnight. \$125. Okemos Conference Center, 2187 University Park Dr., Okemos. (225) 205-9216. desianderson@hotmail.com.

Matt Bliton & Friends. Jim Green, Linda Abar, Steve Springer, Rick Seguin and Matt Bliton on bass. 7:30 p.m. FREE. Gone Wired Cafe, 2021 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. (517) 853-0550.

THEATER

"Dead Man's Shoes." 3 & 8 p.m. \$22 matinee, \$25 evening. (Please See Details Feb. 23)

Happendance. 8 p.m. \$15, \$12 students & seniors. (Please See Details Feb. 24)

"Smokey Joe's Cafe." 8 p.m. \$20, \$18 seniors & students. (Please See Details Feb. 23)

"The Cripple of Inishmaan." 2 & 8 p.m. \$10. (Please See Details Feb. 23)

Auditions. Ages 9-18, can audition for "The Little Prince." 10 a.m.-Noon. FREE. Hannah Community Center, 819 Abbot Road, East Lansing. (517) 333-2580 ext. 0.

Sunday, February 26

CLASSES AND SEMINARS

Lansing Area Codependents Anonymous. Meets on the third floor. 2-3 p.m. FREE. CADL Downtown Lansing Library, 401 S. Capitol Ave., Lansing.

(517) 367-6300. www.cadl.org.

Overeaters Anonymous. 2 p.m. FREE. Everybody Reads Books and Stuff, 2019 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. (517) 485-8789.

Relics of the Big Bang. Emphasizes research currently underway at CERN. 4 p.m. \$3, \$2.50 students & seniors, \$2 kids. Abrams Planetarium, 400 E. Grand River Ave., East Lansing. (517) 355-4676.

Gardener's Roundtable. Discuss various garden topics, seed catalogs and garden books, and drink tea. 12:30-1:30 p.m. FREE. Hunter Park Community GardenHouse, 1400 block of E. Kalamazoo St., Lansing. (517) 999-3910.

EVENTS

Occupy Lansing Meeting. Followed by general assembly. 5 p.m. FREE. Gone Wired Cafe, 2021 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. (517) 853-0550.

Alcoholics Anonymous. Closed meeting for those who desire to stop drinking 9 a.m. FREE. Alano Club East, 220 S. Howard St., Lansing. (517) 482-8957.

Capital Area Singles Dance. Meet new friends. 6:30-10:30 p.m. \$8. Ramada, 7501 W. Saginaw Hwy., Lansing. (517) 819-0405.

Lego Creation Day. Ages 4 and up. 2-4 p.m. FREE. East Lansing Public Library, 950 Abbot Road, East Lansing. (517) 351-2420.

Orchid Show & Sale. 11 a.m.-4 p.m. FREE. (Please See Details Feb. 25)

Atheists and Humanists Dinner. Ex-pastor will discuss the Bible and details that don't line up. 5 p.m. FREE, \$9.65 buffet. Great Wall Buffet Restaurant, 4832 W. Saginaw Hwy., Lansing. (517) 914-2278.

MUSIC

Faculty Recital. Molly Fillmore, soprano, and Alan Nathan, piano. 7 p.m. \$10, \$8 seniors, FREE students. MSU Music Building Auditorium, MSU Campus, East Lansing. www.music.msu.edu.

La Batterie Drum Concert. Directed by Mike Daniels. 3 p.m. FREE. Dart Auditorium, Lansing Community College, 500 N. Capitol Ave., Lansing. jazzjamm.com.

Baldori & Migliazza. Rock n' roll piano legend with Arthur Migliazza. 7 p.m. FREE. Moriarty's Pub, 802 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. (517) 485-5287.

THEATER

"Dead Man's Shoes." 2 p.m. \$22 matinee, \$25 evening. (Please See Details Feb. 23)

"Smokey Joe's Cafe." 2 p.m. \$20, \$18 seniors & students. (Please See Details Feb. 23)

"The Cripple of Inishmaan." 2 & 8 p.m. \$10. (Please See Details Feb. 23)

Monday, February 27

CLASSES AND SEMINARS

Divorced, Separated, Widowed Conversation Group. For those who have gone through loss and are ready to move on with their lives. 7:30 p.m. FREE. St. David's Episcopal Church, 1519 Elmwood Road, Lansing. (517) 323-2272.

GriefShare Seminar. A DVD series, with small support group discussion. 6:30-8 p.m. FREE. Grace United Methodist, 1900 Boston Blvd., Lansing. (517) 490-3218.

Overeaters Anonymous. 7 p.m. FREE. St. David's Episcopal Church, 1519 Elmwood Road, Lansing. (989) 587-4609. www.stdavidslansing.org.

Timber Tots. Ages 3-4. Enjoy nature activities, games, walks, crafts, stories and songs. 9-10 a.m. \$35 for six weeks. Harris Nature Center, 3998 Van Atta Road, Meridian Township. (517) 349-3866.

Chronic Pain Support Group. Any level of chronic physical pain. 4-5:30 p.m. FREE. Women's Center of Greater Lansing, 1710 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. (517) 372-9163.

Homework Help. Drop-in help for grades K-8 by the MSU Student Michigan Education Association. 5-7 p.m. FREE. East Lansing Public Library, 950 Abbot Road, East Lansing. (517) 351-2420.

On Heart Disease. Educates women about heart disease. 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. FREE. Michigan State Medical Society Alliance, 120 W. Saginaw St., Lansing. www.goredforwomen.org.

EVENTS

Euchre. Play euchre and meet new people. 6-9 p.m. \$1.50. Delta Township Enrichment Center, 4538 Elizabeth Road, Lansing. (517) 484-5600.

Social Bridge. Play bridge and socialize. 1-4 p.m. \$1.50. Delta Township Enrichment Center, 4538 Elizabeth Road, Lansing. (517) 484-5600.

MUSIC

Open-Mic Mondays. Sign up to play solo, duo, with your band. Spoken-Word acts welcome. Drink specials. 6:30-10:30 p.m. FREE. Michigan Brewing Company, 402 S. Washington Square, Lansing. (517) 977-1349.

THEATER

Monday Morning Movie. Get your film fix at the library. 10:30 a.m. FREE. Delta Township District Library, 5130 Davenport Drive, Lansing. (517) 321-4014 ext.4.

LITERATURE AND POETRY

Speed Friending. For book lovers, a fun way to talk about books. 7 p.m. FREE. East Lansing Public Library, 950 Abbot Road, East Lansing. (517) 351-2420.

World View: Steve Curwood. Pulitzer Prize-winning author. 7:30 p.m. \$20. Wharton Center, MSU Campus, East Lansing. (517) 432-2000.

Community Book Club. Discuss "Remarkable Creatures," by Sean B. Carroll. 7:30 p.m. FREE. Schuler Books & Music, 2820 Towne Centre Blvd. Lansing. (517) 316-7495.

Tuesday, February 28

CLASSES AND SEMINARS

Schizophrenics Anonymous. 10 a.m. Room 215-F, Community Mental Health Building, 812 E. Jolly Road, Lansing. (517) 485-3775.

Yoga 40. For those in their 40s, 50s, 60s and beyond. 7:15 p.m. Suggested \$7. Just B Yoga, 106 Island Ave., Lansing. (517) 488-5260.

Take Off Pounds Sensibly. Anyone wanting to lose weight is welcome. 7 p.m. FREE to visit.. Eaton Rapids Medical Center, 1500 S. Main St., Eaton Rapids. Judy @ (517) 543-0786.

Schizophrenics Anonymous Self-help Support Group. 5:30 p.m. FREE. Sparrow Professional Building, 1200 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. (517) 485-3775.

Overeaters Anonymous. 7 p.m. FREE. Presbyterian Church of Okemos, 2258 Bennett Road,

Okemos. (517) 505-0068.

On the Way To Wellness. Barb Geske provides nutrition and wellness coaching in a positive, informative, and motivational format. 9:30 a.m. & 5:30 p.m. \$10. Presbyterian Church of Okemos, 2258 Bennett Road, Okemos. (517) 349-9536.

Emerging Entrepreneurs. Join the Grand River Connection at Lansing's first small business incubator. 6-8 p.m. FREE. NEO Center, 934 Clark St., Lansing. www.neocenter.org.

EVENTS

Game On. Play a variety of board and video games. 3-5 p.m. FREE. Delta Township District Library, 5130 Davenport Drive, Lansing. (517) 321-4014 x3.

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

Kids Time: Ages 5-11. Help east side youth grow food, develop leadership skills. 4:30-5:30 p.m. FREE. Hunter Park Community Garden House, 1400 block of E. Kalamazoo St., Lansing. (517) 999-3910.

Revitalizing Manufacturing in America. With economic demographer Kenneth Darga. 12:10 p.m. FREE. CADL Downtown Lansing Library, 401 S. Capitol Ave., Lansing. (517) 367-6300.

Storytime. Stories, rhymes, songs and a craft for ages 2-5. 10:30-11:15 a.m. & 6:30-7:15 p.m. FREE. East Lansing Public Library, 950 Abbot Road, East Lansing. (517) 351-2420.

MUSIC

Jazz Tuesdays. With Jeff Shoup Quartet, artists from the MSU Jazz Studies Department & the Mid-Michigan jazz community. 10 p.m.-1 a.m. FREE. Stober's Bar, 812 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing.

Haslett High School Men's Chorus. With music of Brahms, Haydn, Rutter and Paulus. 8 p.m. FREE. Plymouth Congregational Church, 2001 E. Grand River Ave., Lansing. bartle17@msu.edu.

THEATER

"The Cripple of Inishmaan." 7:30 p.m. \$10. (Please See Details Feb. 23)

Wednesday, February 29

CLASSES AND SEMINARS

Meditation. 7-9 p.m. FREE. (Please See Details Feb. 22)

Community Yoga. 6:30-8 p.m. FREE. (Please See Details Feb. 22)

Drop-in figure drawing. 7:30-10 p.m. \$5, \$3 students. (Please See Details Feb. 22)

"Nobody's Business." Film presented by Steven J. Gold of Department of Sociology and Kirsten Fergalich, Department of History. 7 p.m. FREE. MSU Library, 100 Main Library, MSU Campus, East Lansing. www.lib.msu.edu.

Prosperity Theology. What is Prosperity Theology and discussion. 6-7 p.m. FREE. Pilgrim Congregational United Church of Christ, 125 S. Pennsylvania Ave., Lansing. (517) 484-7434. www.PilgrimUCC.com.

Heart Healthy Cooking 101. Education, support, & encouragement to become healthy. 4-5 p.m. FREE. PGPA Pharmacy, 3544 Meridian Crossings Dr. Suite 120, Okemos. www.pgpharmacy.com.

Garden with Google Earth. Plan a garden quicker. 6-7:30 p.m. FREE. Neighborhood Empowerment Center, 600 W. Maple St., Lansing. (517) 580-8825.

Knee High Naturalist. Ages 2-5. 1-2 p.m. \$5. Fenner Nature Center, 2020 E. Mount Hope Ave., Lansing. (517) 483-4224. fofnc.org.

EVENTS

Overeaters Anonymous. 7 p.m. FREE. (Please See Details Feb. 22)

Practice Your English. 7-8 p.m. FREE. (Please See Details Feb. 22)

Youth Service Corps. 3:30-5:30 p.m. FREE. (Please See Details Feb. 22)

Closing February 26!!



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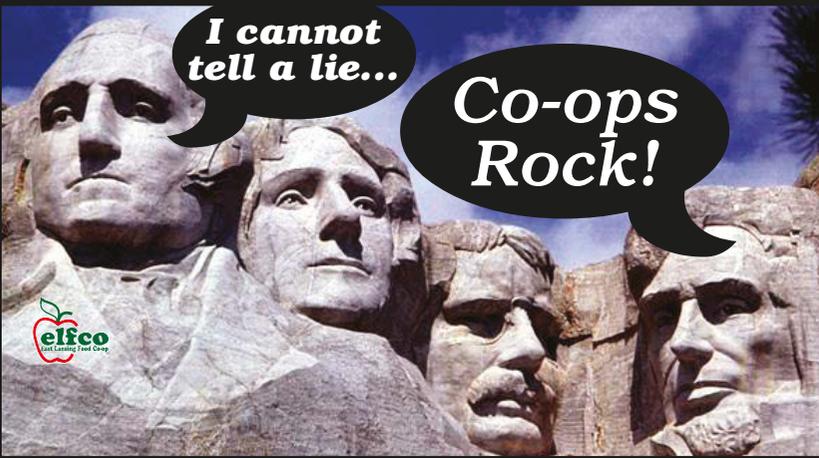
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Joe Torok/City Pulse

If you're looking for the best chicken strips in town, look no further than Chick'n & Fix'ns. Flavorful pieces of chicken tenderloin are served grilled or breaded.

Savory Southern cooking comes to south Lansing

Delicious Chick'n & Fix'ns is worth clucking about

By JOE TOROK

Along Cedar Street in south Lansing, you'll find fast food to your left, chain restaurants to your right and pizza joints up the wazoo.

Within that tangle of culinary banality, though, you'll also find Chick'n & Fix'ns, nestled in a building that formerly housed a Long John Silver's. The pirates are gone, but a little treasure got left behind.

A cafeteria-style restaurant that markets itself as fast-casual, Chick'n & Fix'ns isn't the kind of place the looks to wow diners with snazzy branding or festive décor; the owners leave it to the food to impress.

Open only a few months, Chick'n & Fix'ns is still working out the kinks, as the smiling and well-managed yet slightly stiff servers will attest.

What it may lack in polish is made up for in earnest friendliness, and if you've never been to Chick'n & Fix'ns (they will ask you), they're more than happy to give you the lowdown.

Here's the short of it: best chicken strips in town. And when I say chicken strips, I don't mean homogenized strips of deep fried breast meat or glorified Franken-nuggets. Chick'n & Fix'ns uses only chicken tenderloin — what they call the "filet mignon of the chicken."

The strips come grilled or breaded in two styles, and the breaded variety is what we tried. Two come with a side for \$5.99,

or as part of an entrée salad for \$6.99.

One style uses a dry breading. It's a touch peppery, not intrusive and lets the quality of the chicken shine. Plenty of dipping sauces are available, but the strips are done so well the sauces aren't really necessary.

The other style utilizes a Southern-style wet batter that gives it a tempura effect. Like the dry-batter strips, these, too, have a subtle but discernible flavor profile with a piney hint of rosemary.

Meals come with garlic cheese drop biscuits. Unlike the flakey variety served almost elsewhere else, these biscuits are soft as cake on

the inside with a bread-crust on the bottom. They are delicious accompaniments to most any dish at Chick'n & Fix'ns — but using them in the strawberry shortcake is a really bad idea.

The sides are all made in-house, and we went with the mac & cheese and garlic smashed potatoes. The mac & cheese will make kids smile, but probably won't do much for those beyond puberty.

On the other hand, if you want some seriously adult mashed potatoes, this is your place. These are some of the richest, most delicious potatoes you'll find in a meal under \$7.

Chick'n & Fix'ns

6333 S. Cedar St., Lansing
11 a.m.-9:30 p.m. Monday-Sunday
(517) 394-5970
TO, WiFi, P, OM, \$



Review

Chick'n

from page 26

Chick'n & Fix'ns roasts its own garlic and mashes it in with red-skin potatoes for a creamy, flavor-popping side dish that's hard to stop eating. The chicken gravy acts like a flavor buffer when mixed with the potatoes, tempering the mellow bite of the garlic. This may be more palatable for some diners, but I prefer these taters in all of their pungent glory.

The chicken pot pie (\$5.99) comes with both a side and a biscuit, which pushes the dish over the starch-limit threshold; it has another biscuit buried under a chicken-and-veggie-filled gravy, and the gravy itself has chunks of potatoes — it's like the sum total of all my grandmother's casseroles on one plate.

It was the chicken finger salad (\$6.99), though, that carried the evening. Along with the aforementioned chicken strips, the salad is worthy of praise in its own right. Mixed baby greens, a touch of bitterness with arugula and frisée, and some

fresh iceberg lettuce is mixed with sweet cherry tomatoes, rings of crisp red onion, a hard-boiled egg, and, get this, real bacon — not pebbles of soy-based bits masquerading as food, but actual bacon. I went with a serviceable bleu cheese dressing, but it didn't need to be anything special. This salad has plenty of flavor naked.

There's plenty more I'd go back for: the homemade soups, the barbecue chicken sandwich, or just a taste of some of the other homemade sides, like the baked beans, the sweet potato wedges or the green beans cooked with ham hocks and onion.

Don't let the overgrowth of corporate-themed signage fool you in south Lansing. There's a pleasant surprise hidden in plain sight for those who drop by Chick'n & Fix'ns.

Kiss Hershey's goodbye

After nearly 23 years, Hershey's Steak and Seafood in East Lansing has shut down. Calls to the restaurant earlier this week were not returned, but a brief recorded message on the answering service confirms that the eatery has "closed its doors for business."

foodfinder

Food Finder listings are rotated each week based on space. If you have an update for the listings, please e-mail food@lansingcitypulse.com.

CASUAL DINING

SUGAR SHACK — A cupcake connoisseur's paradise, Sugar Shack has nothing but sweets to make your mouth sing: enormous and slightly less than enormous cupcakes, brown-

ies, cookies, pies and more. 215 N. Clippert St., Lansing. Summer hours: 11 a.m.-10 p.m. Monday-Sunday; School year: 11 a.m.-1 a.m. Sunday-Thursday; 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday. (517) 316-2009. TO, D, OM, \$.

TED DEE'S SANDWICH SHOP — This downtown Lansing spot serves a variety of deli sandwiches and specialties, like the chicken cheese panini and Big T's Corned Beef reuben. It also offers soups, fresh salads and desserts. Every Friday

there is a pulled pork sandwich special. 119 S. Washington Square, Lansing. 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday; 11-2 Saturday closed Sunday. (517) 374-2784. www.ted-dees.com. TO, D (orders of \$20 or more), OM, WiFi, \$

Average price per person, not including drinks:

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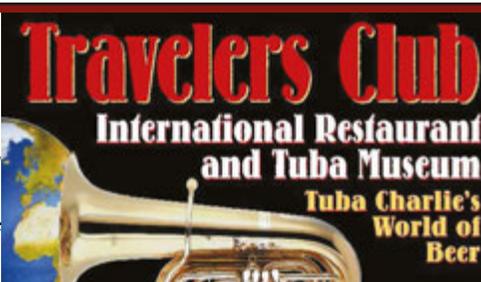


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February Special: Greece - start with a bowl of traditional Avgolemono soup and a side of Goat Cheese Salad, served with bread and garlic oil. Then the main course: lemon and garlic marinated free-range Lamb, charbroiled and plated with Rice Pilaf and Spanakopita spinach pie



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