



Locally owned

March 3 - 9, 2021

**FREE**

# CityPULSE

[www.lansingcitypulse.com](http://www.lansingcitypulse.com)

A newspaper for the rest of us

**Down but not out:  
The arts in Lansing, one year later** See page 13

## YOUR PERSONAL (INJURY) ATTORNEYS

When it comes to Auto Accident and Personal Injury cases, you worry about getting better. We take care of everything else. Call Abood Law. 517.332.5900

### ABOOD

LAW FIRM 1956



# BE AN ABSOLUTE ORIGINAL

A beautifully framed  
photo makes a  
wonderful gift

Unique  
jewelry finds



**Absolute  
GALLERY**  
AND CUSTOM FRAMING

307 E. Cesar E. Chavez Ave  
Lansing  
(517) 482-8845  
[www.absolutegallery.net](http://www.absolutegallery.net)



@AbsoluteGallery

We carry Michigan's Own  
**STORMY<sup>®</sup>  
KROMER**



Many styles to  
choose from!



Hand crafted  
gifts and  
gift sets







# UNIQUE BOUTIQUE

**FINE ANTIQUES & COOL STUFF**

16235 S. OLD US27 HWY • LANSING, MI  
517-703-3376

CLOSED MONDAYS • TUE - FRI: 11 AM- 3 PM •  
SAT & SUN: 12 PM- 6 PM

 @UNIQUEBOUTIQUELANSING 



**3,000 SQ. FT.  
OF FINE  
ANTIQUES**

**HIGH END ITEMS  
AT AFFORDABLE  
PRICES**

**UNIQUE  
ACCESSORIES &  
GIFT IDEAS**

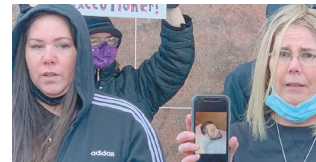




# CityPULSE

**VOL. 20  
ISSUE 30**

(517) 371-5600 • Fax: (517) 999-6061 • 1905 E. Michigan Ave. • Lansing, MI 48912 • www.lansingcitypulse.com



No answers for Anthony Hulan's family 1 year after his death

**PAGE 9**



Lansing theater loses a bright light

**PAGE 19**



New in Town: Oriental Market gets an upgrade

**PAGE 26**



**Cover Art**

Photo by Lawrence Cosentino

**ADVERTISING INQUIRIES:** (517) 999-5061  
or email [citypulse@lansingcitypulse.com](mailto:citypulse@lansingcitypulse.com)  
**CLASSIFIEDS:** (517) 999-6704

**EDITOR AND PUBLISHER** • Berl Schwartz  
[publisher@lansingcitypulse.com](mailto:publisher@lansingcitypulse.com) • (517) 999-5061

**MANAGING EDITOR** • Kyle Kaminski  
[kyle@lansingcitypulse.com](mailto:kyle@lansingcitypulse.com) • (517) 999-6710

**ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR** • Skyler Ashley  
[skyler@lansingcitypulse.com](mailto:skyler@lansingcitypulse.com) • (517) 999-5068

**EVENTS EDITOR/OFFICE MANAGER** • Suzi Smith  
[suzi@lansingcitypulse.com](mailto:suzi@lansingcitypulse.com) • (517) 999-6704

**PRODUCTION** • Abby Sumbler  
[production@lansingcitypulse.com](mailto:production@lansingcitypulse.com)  
(517) 999-5066

**MARKETING/DIGITAL DIRECTOR** • Aimee West  
[aimee@lansingcitypulse.com](mailto:aimee@lansingcitypulse.com) • (517) 999-6708

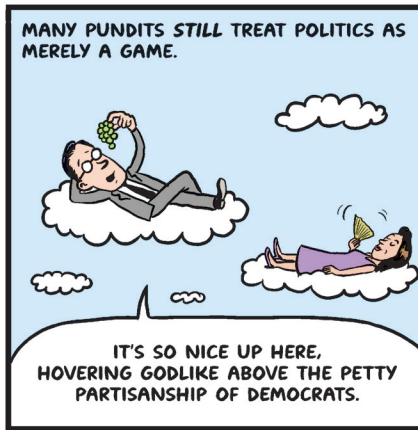
**STAFF WRITER** • Lawrence Cosentino  
[lawrence@lansingcitypulse.com](mailto:lawrence@lansingcitypulse.com) • (517) 999-5065

**SALES EXECUTIVE**  
Lee Purdy • [lee@lansingcitypulse.com](mailto:lee@lansingcitypulse.com) • (517) 999-5064

**SALES ASSISTANT**  
Earlisha Scott • [earlisha@lansingcitypulse.com](mailto:earlisha@lansingcitypulse.com)

**Contributors:** Andy Balaskovitz, Justin Bilicki, Sean Bradley, Capital News Service, Bill Castanier, Ryan Claytor, Mary C. Cusack, Tom Helma, Gabrielle Lawrence Johnson, Terry Link, Kyle Melinn, Mark Nixon, Dawn Parker, Dennis Preston, Carrie Sampson, Nevin Speerbrecker, Rich Tupica, Ute Von Der Heyden, David Winkelstern, Paul Wozniak

**Delivery drivers:** Dave Fisher, Gavin Smith, Jack Sovia



© 2021 Jen Sorensen - Be a subscriber! [jensorensen.com/subscribe](mailto:jensorensen.com/subscribe)

## CITY PULSE

on the

# AIR

**NOW AT 10:00 A.M.  
SUNDAYS** on

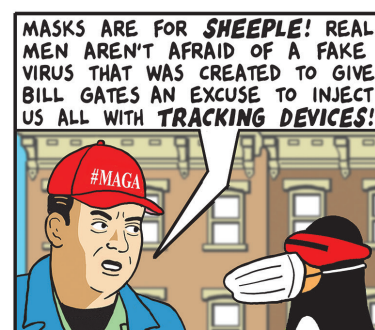
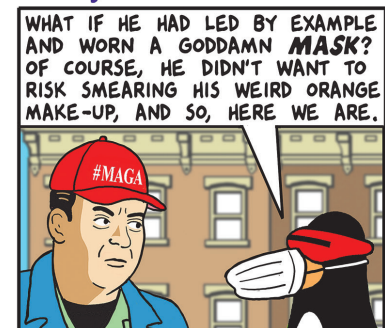
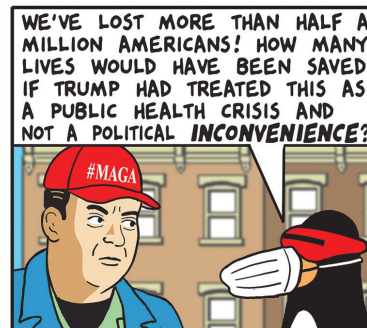
WDBM

## IMPACT

88.9FM

## THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



Tom Tomorrow © 2021...www.thismodernworld.com...twitter: @tomtomorrow



PULSE

NEWS & OPINION

Vaxscrimination?

A recent report by Bridge magazine highlights statewide data that shows white Michigan residents are twice as likely as Black residents to have received a COVID-19 vaccination. While making up 14% of the state's population and 22% of the disease's fatalities, only 4% of Michigan's Black population has been vaccinated to date, compared to 8% of the white population. This apparent disparity in vaccination rates is disappointing, especially given Gov. Gretchen Whitmer's stated commitment to addressing the inequitable impact of the pandemic on people of color. We say it is an "apparent" disparity because the state has inexplicably failed to collect race data for 40% of administered vaccines. This creates a cavernous information gap that makes it difficult if not impossible to accurately assess the situation. Clearly, collecting this data is essential to illuminating — and eliminating — any equity issues in vaccine distribution. Some of the disparity in vaccination rates is also likely due to hesitancy among Black citizens to get the vaccine. Their understandable resistance is yet another stinging legacy of the institutional racism that allowed Black servicemen to be used as human guinea pigs for the U.S. military's nefarious medical experiments, which began in the 1930s and continued for some 40 years. The reported vaccination rates also likely reflect existing inequities in access to health care and transportation. We urge state health authorities to begin collecting comprehensive data on the race of vaccine recipients. We also encourage people of color to help end the pandemic by getting the safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine when the opportunity arises.



Dunbar hits a home run

At-Large City Councilwoman Kathie Dunbar knocked one out of the park last week when she single-handedly salvaged Mayor Andy Schor's leaky contract renewal with the Lansing Lugnuts. Schor's proposal extended the Lugnuts' contract with the city by four years, but it would have cost taxpayers millions by leaving money on the table that should have been secured for city coffers as

The CP Edit

Opinion



Dunbar

part of the deal. That's when Councilwoman Dunbar stepped up to the plate and renegotiated the contract. It was an unusual move, because Council members aren't really supposed to get involved in contract negotiations, but in this case we're glad Dunbar took a swing at saving taxpayers a couple million bucks.

Siemon sidesteps state law — again



Siemon

Another day, another first-degree murder plea deal offered by Ingham County Prosecuting Attorney Carol Siemon, this time to a man accused of killing two brothers in cold blood in Lansing two years ago. We believe Siemon's continued willingness to plead out first-degree murder cases is inconsistent with state law and the constitutional oath she took to uphold the law. Siemon is not the Legislature. She is not the governor. Her discretion as a prosecutor has, and we think she's crossing the line. The last time Siemon offered a similar plea to an accused murderer, it was rejected in "good conscience" by Circuit Court Judge Rosemarie Aquilina. One could argue that Siemon's reelection last November was tacit approval of her approach to the state's mandatory life without parole law, but we're not convinced that's the case. We again encourage Siemon to reconsider her position on plea bargains in first-degree murder cases. While she is entitled to her opinion, she should work to change the law rather than circumventing it.

Justice for Anthony Hulon



Hulon

Next month will mark one year since Haslett resident Anthony Hulon lost his life in the Lansing city jail after being restrained and asphyxiated by a group of detention officers, who held Hulon down on the cell floor until he stopped breathing. Despite the Police Department's misleading public statement that claimed Hulon died due to "medical complications," the county medical examiner ruled his death was a homicide. That's not necessarily the same thing as murder, but it could be if the detention officers are charged with a crime. The matter has already been investigated by the Michigan State Police, which referred it to Attorney General Dana Nessel for a decision on whether criminal charges should be brought against the involved detention officers. While the city employees who took his life are already back to work and free to live their lives, Anthony Hulon will never have that chance again, and his family is still waiting for justice. We again urge Attorney General Nessel to make a long overdue charging decision in this case.

Put FOIA reforms on the ballot

Stymied by the Michigan Legislature's refusal to amend the state Freedom of Information Act so it applies to both the Governor's Office and lawmakers themselves, an effort is now underway to put the issue on the statewide ballot for Michigan voters to decide. Both the governor and Legislature are exempt from releasing public documents that any other government agency would be required to disclose under FOIA. This is one reason Michigan ranked dead last in the Center for Public Integrity's 2015 nationwide survey of government transparency. Progress Michigan, a public interest advocacy organization, believes it is time to force the issue by collecting signatures and putting FOIA amendments on the ballot. We agree. The ballot initiative campaign is expected to launch during Sunshine Week, which is March 14-21. If you have the opportunity to sign the petition, we encourage you to do so.

Send letters to the editor to [letters@lansingcitypulse.com](mailto:letters@lansingcitypulse.com).  
Please limit them to 250 words



**HATHAWAY DRAIN DRAINAGE DISTRICT  
NOTICE OF INTENT TO RELEASE EASEMENT**

The Ingham County Drain Commissioner determines that a portion of a drain easement granted to the Hathaway Drain Drainage District is no longer necessary for drainage purposes and proposes to convey that portion of the easement no longer necessary for drainage purposes to the fee owner pursuant to Act No. 40 of the Public Acts of 1956, as amended. The easement more particularly designated and described is over and across the following lands situated in Meridian Township, County of Ingham, State of Michigan, described as follows:

**Parcel #33-02-02-23-151-001**

A parcel of land in the Northwest 1/4 and Southwest 1/4 of Section 23, T4N, R1W, Meridian Township, Ingham County, Michigan; the surveyed boundary of said parcel being described as BEGINNING at the West 1/4 Corner of Section 23, T4N, R1W, Michigan Meridian; thence N00°04'18"E along the West section line, 593.98 feet; thence N89°51'33"E, 1325.98 feet; thence S00°02'33"E along the East line of the West 1/2 of the Northwest 1/4 of Section 23, 593.98 feet to the East-West 1/4 line; thence N89°51'33"E along said East-West 1/4 line, 33.00 feet; thence S00°15'17"E, 100.01 feet; thence S89°51'33"W, 691.97 feet; thence S00°19'35"E, 279.62 feet; thence S89°35'16"W, 668.07 feet; thence N00°19'35"W, along the West section line, 382.79 feet to the point of beginning; said parcel contains 25.52 acres.

The excess easement to be released and conveyed to the fee owner is described as:

That portion of the Easement dated December 26, 1907 and recorded with the Ingham County Register of Deeds at Liber 68 Page 387 located on and within the above-described Parcel #33-02-02-23-151-001 ("Original Easement"); EXCEPT for those portions of the Original Easement contained within the "Drain Easement for Hathaway Drain" that was executed on November 5, 2019 and recorded as Document #2019-038207 with the Ingham County Register of Deeds (as corrected by the Affidavit of Scrivener's Error dated December 14, 2020 and recorded as Document #2020-045382 with the Ingham County Register of Deeds); and the "Drain Easement for Hathaway Drain" that was executed on or about February 17, 2021.

Any taxpayer who wishes to protest this partial release of easement may appear at the Office of the Ingham County Drain Commissioner, 707 Buhl Avenue, Mason, Michigan 48854, on **April 5, 2021, between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.**, for that purpose. After said date and time the excess easement may be released back to the landowner.

This Notice and action is made pursuant to Act No. 40, Public Acts of Michigan 1956, as amended. See MCL 280.6.

Dated: February 25, 2021 Patrick E. Lindemann  
Ingham County Drain Commissioner

**CP#21-042**

**CITY OF EAST LANSING, MICHIGAN**

**NOTICE OF ADOPTION  
RESOLUTION EXTENDING STATE OF EMERGENCY PROCLAMATION AND ORDER  
REQUIRING FACE COVERINGS IN CITY DDA  
POLICY RESOLUTION NO. 2021-2**

**Date: February 23, 2021**

WHEREAS, the City adopted Ordinance No. 1488, which authorizes the Mayor to declare or proclaim a City State of Emergency and to subsequently promulgate orders rules and regulations to protect life and property or to bring the emergency situation under control; and

WHEREAS, in response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and increased cases and hospitalizations in Ingham County, the Mayor properly proclaimed and declared a continuing City State of Emergency on November 6, 2020 ("Proclamation"); and

WHEREAS, in an effort to protect life and bring the emergency under control, the Mayor ordered on November 6, 2020, that all persons on the public sidewalks and streets in the City DDA District must wear face coverings over their mouths and noses, subject to certain exceptions ("Order"); and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 10-34e of the Ordinance, the City Council concurred within and consented to the Proclamation and Order and resolved on November 10, 2020, that the Proclamation and Order would extend through December 31, 2020; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 10-34e of the Ordinance, the City Council consented to the Proclamation and Order and resolved on December 15, 2020, that the Proclamation and Order would extend through January 31, 2021, at 11:59 p.m.; and

WHEREAS, in Policy Resolution No. 2021-1, the City Council extended the terms of the Proclamation of Continuing State of Emergency dated November 6, 2020, and the Order Requiring Face Coverings in the City DDA District dated November 6, 2020, through February 28, 2021, at 11:59 p.m.; and

WHEREAS, because COVID-19 continues to threaten the health and lives of those in the City, the City Council wishes to further extend the Proclamation and Order.

NOW THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of East Lansing hereby extends the terms of the Proclamation of Continuing State of Emergency dated November 6, 2020, and the Order Requiring Face Coverings in the City DDA District dated November 6, 2020, through May 16, 2021, at 11:59 p.m.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this City Council may terminate the Proclamation and Order sooner or may further extend the Proclamation and Order by resolution as circumstances warrant.

Jennifer Shuster  
City Clerk

**CP#21-043**

# Progressive leader carving his group a place in MDP

Sharon Liano voted for Joe Biden for president last fall. In 2016, he voted Hillary Clinton. Both picks

**OPINION**

were for the same reason.

Neither were Donald Trump. Period.

He's not a Biden fan. His recent Democratic Party activism is due to Bernie Sanders and his progressive agenda. The Green New Deal. Raising the minimum wage to \$15 an hour, at the very least. Universal, single-payer health care. Canceling student debt.

This is where he wants to go. The way he sees it, the "establishment" is — maybe subconsciously — getting in the way.

The Ypsilanti resident and 1996 Eastern Michigan University graduate leads a splinter Michigan Democratic Party caucus called MI Solidarity that's beginning to make a name for itself within progressive circles.

At last month's MDP convention, MI Solidarity's slate won 31 of the available 172 seats on the party's governing State Central Committee, a number that's growing.

Liano's smart, progressive rhetoric, knack for organizational skills and his meticulous rule readings has helped him create a following that's agitated the traditional party powerbrokers.

Like the Tea Party of 2010, the energy of the major political party is not in the center, but on the far wing. The new energy from the Democratic Party is coming from the ideological far left. The youth. Minority groups. They want change and they want it now.

They want a voice in the process. They want some foothold into the power structure. Liano's MI Solidarity is giving it to them.

The traditional Democratic groups — the labor unions, the education caucus — are run through a top-down decision-making process that Liano sees as the antithesis of a democratic process.

The "unity" slate from the MDP's establishment is a self-perpetuating entity in which leadership roles are determined by various factors, none of which stem from a popular vote, he said.

MI Solidary, holds independent, internal primary elections for its slate positions. Consensus is reached by the



KYLE MELINN

POLITICS

members as a whole, not a dictate from on high, he said.

As far as Liano is concerned, the more members in the Michigan Democratic Party, the better. The current number of 10,000 people is sad when you consider Michigan is a state of 10 million people. Why can't the party thrive to recruit even 1% of that number?

Liano assisted in swelling MDP ranks to 20,000 in 2018 after the convention nomination of now-Attorney General Dana Nessel. Why can't keeping these new activists be the goal?

"And the reason for that is very clearly (the) way that a lot of people treat progressive and treat new people and treat young people," Liano said.

Which is: It's not your turn. That's the reaction Liano got from one activist when he won a coveted spot as a Democratic National Convention delegate.

She told him she had been stuffing envelopes, making calls and knocking doors longer than he had. It was "her turn" for that type of post. The fact she didn't run for the job emphasizes the problem with a MDP establishment that he doesn't believe fully grasps that they are in an establishment.

Blinded with a "BlueNoMatterWho" mentality, Democrats aren't embracing the energy of their party enough, he said. They need to be advancing criminal justice reform, immigration reform, LGBTQ+ rights as the foundation of its existence. Now.

Otherwise, what's the point of having the party in the first place?

However, some fellow progressives feel his inflexibility turns toxic when he bends in those instances in which its self-beneficial. Some find him insulting.

They question why he locked arms with such figures as former field organizer Kyle Jurek, who was video-graphed last year saying "cities burn" if Trump were to win, among other troubling rants.

To that he says: "Very often when we reach out, we get a hostile reaction from some of these people. We keep getting this pushback about how we're uncooperative and how we're trying to tear the party down — I mean, it's just fantasy. It's pure fantasy on the part of the establishment."

*(Kyle Melinn of the Capitol News Service MIRS is at melinnky@gmail.com.)*



# REWIND

## NEWS HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE LAST 7 DAYS



By KYLE KAMINSKI



### Lansing Catholic High School posts racist photo

The school also suspended an employee who handles social media after posting the 1979 photo on Facebook showing students giving the Nazi salute. One of the people pictured was also clearly wearing a Ku Klux Klan hood. School officials called sharing it a “lapse of judgment.”

### Lawmaker targets deed discrimination

State Rep. Sarah Anthony reintroduced a bill to prohibit deed restrictions on the basis of race, sex, religion and other protected classes. The legislation also outlines and clarifies the process for homeowners who desire to remove this “offensive and discriminatory” language from property deeds.

### Geddert dies by suicide after charges

John Geddert, a former Olympics gymnastics coach and former owner of Twistars gym in Dimondale, killed himself hours after he was charged with human trafficking, racketeering and sexual assault — including allegations tied to convicted abuser and pedophile Larry Nassar. Geddert's body was found at a highway rest stop in Clinton County, authorities reported.



Geddert

### Lansing opens ice rink

Residents can bring their own ice skates and slide around on artificial ice in front of Lansing City Hall. Mayor Andy Schor skated with reporters Saturday for Lansing Winterfest while also ignoring questions from City Pulse about more pertinent city business.

### Granholm confirmed as energy head

By a vote of 64 to 34, The U.S. Senate confirmed former Gov. Jennifer Granholm as secretary of the Energy Department. Gov. Gretchen Whitmer labeled her a “visionary leader” known for her “passionate, decades-long advocacy for clean energy.” Granholm maintains the female Michigan presence in the presidential cabinet, following Betsy DeVos, who was Donald J. Trump's education secretary.



Granholm

### East Lansing launches phone survey

The two-week survey is designed to gauge public sentiment on police-community relations will continue over the next two weeks. Feedback will help steer decisions on policy, training and allocation of resources to the Police Department.



### Local residents named to state boards

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer appointed Shana Lewis to the Michigan Workforce Development Board and Algeria Wilson to the state's Mental Health Diversion Council. Lewis, of Lansing, is an executive director at Trinity Health, and Wilson, of East Lansing, is a director at the Michigan chapter of the National Association of Social Workers.



Lewis

### State allows rec-only pot shops

Regulators reeled back restrictions requiring retailers, processors and growers who cultivate and sell recreational cannabis to also be licensed for medical marijuana. The move, which cuts red tape, is aimed at expanding entrepreneurial access to the industry.



### Community art exhibit opens

At least 19 businesses across East Lansing are featuring artwork from local elementary school students through April 16 as part of the Downtown Development Authority's latest promotional project. The exhibit will also move to the M.A.C. Avenue parking garage from April 19 to June 4.

### March is Reading Month

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer proclaimed it to promote the importance of reading. And since you're reading this, you're off to a good start.



### Lansing man takes plea deal

Zarcharey Diederichs, 31, pleaded guilty to second-degree murder in the death of two men, despite objections from the men's family, reports the Lansing State Journal. Diederichs was offered a plea deal to second-degree charges after he was accused of killing two stepbrothers inside a restaurant on Pleasant Grove Road in August. Some have criticized Ingham

County Prosecutor Carol Siemon's decision to offer anything less than first-degree charges.

## SORE Revisited



Before



After

### 865 Hagadorn Road, East Lansing

This column typically features a combination of key two elements: shame and hope. Shame for property owners who all too often refuse to clean up their blighted land and hope for a brighter aesthetic future in Greater Lansing. This week, it's all about giving credit where credit is due.

The last time this property was featured in City Pulse in late 2017, it was a complete mess. A decaying brick shack appeared to be abandoned on site, complete with shattered glass-block windows on all sides, shrubs poking through its roof and a fading layer of ugly, off-green paint.

The chipped-up paint on the water tower behind the shack wasn't doing the land any favors.

The boarded-up facility was a remnant of when Meridian Township handled its own sewer authority. It was later annexed by the city of East Lansing and largely left to rot. But as promised by city officials more than two years ago, that decaying building has since been demolished.

“It's not an attractive building,” Director of Public Works Scott House explained before the project was sent out for bids over the summer and finished more than a year ago this week.

In its place? Pure green space. And a fresh coat of paint — including the city seal — on the water tank behind it. Together, the improvements made an obvious eyesore tolerable. It's hard to label a municipal water tank as eye candy, but this is about as close as it's ever going to get.

The bold green color is also much more fitting for its location near Michigan State University.

East Lansing might've missed an opportunity to incorporate some public artwork into its otherwise culturally sterile city, but this is still leagues better than what used to be on the site.

— KYLE KAMINSKI

“Eyesore of the Week” is our occasional look at some of the seedier properties across Greater Lansing. It rotates with Eye Candy of the Week and Eye for Design. Have a suggestion? Email [eye@lansingcitypulse.com](mailto:eye@lansingcitypulse.com) or call it in at 517-999-6715.



# Exclusive: Bernero faces sexual harassment allegations

Bernero apologizes after women speak out against three-term mayor

Two former Lansing-area women have accused Virg Bernero of sexual harassment and unwanted touching as the former Lansing mayor contemplates running for a fourth term.

One woman was an employee for House Democrats when she said Bernero, who was then mayor, approached her on Washington Square in downtown Lansing in 2010 and groped her in front of her intern. Another said Bernero made unwanted sexual phone calls to her in 2004 while he was a state senator.

Both women told their stories on the condition of anonymity for fear of retaliation. They also have contemporary witnesses who independently verified their stories. To further shield their identities, City Pulse agreed to refer to them in this story only as “Woman A” and “Woman B.”

Bernero said in a text message this morning that he did not recall the specific incidents.

“But I am deeply sorry for any pain I have caused these women and to my wife and family,” Bernero wrote. “The behavior described is unacceptable and wrong. I am responsible for personal mistakes that I made in my marriage and after counseling and painstaking reflection and work I am blessed to still be together with a woman and wife of my dreams, Teri Bernero.”

He also said that he “cannot undo” the past, only “learn from it and confront it with honesty.”

“I don’t believe that we should be defined by our past mistakes,” Bernero added.

Woman A alleges that she and an intern from her office were near the Traverse City Pie Co. location at Allegan Street and Washington Square trying to decide on lunch. They had originally ventured that way to indulge in \$1 Jimmy John’s sand-



Bernero

wiches, but the line was far too long.

While she does not recall the exact date, she suspects it was during the spring or summer and does know that the meeting occurred shortly after Bernero announced his run for governor. That announcement was made Feb. 28, 2010. She was 31 years old.

The two were deliberating their choices for a quick lunch when she said she saw Bernero and a group of men outside the former Tavern on the Square.

She had met Bernero once before, while working for a local bookstore. She was staffing a booth at a book fair at Eastern High School when Bernero approached her and sat at the booth with “his usual friendly but a little bit flirty self.” The conversation was pleasant. He asked her to send along his resume, which she did.

Woman A did not see or hear from Bernero again until the chance meeting downtown in 2010.

“One thing, I think, that a lot of people have noticed is Virg is really good with remembering faces or people, and he recognized me,” she said. “He came over and was like, ‘Hey, haven’t we met?’, and was chatting with me and I told him, ‘Yes. We met at this book fair.’”

The woman was wearing her state ID tag, which was attached to a front-facing belt loop by a retractable lanyard. She said Bernero reached out to grab the ID to look at it — running his hand up her thigh in the process and making both her and her intern feel uncomfortable, she said.

“It was hanging right on the front area of my thigh. And he put his whole hand flat on my leg. So it was kind of encompassing the front of my leg. And he then pulled his fingers together, rubbing it across my skin until he grabbed the badge, then he pulled the badge away,” she said, clarifying that she was wearing pants and there was no skin-to-skin contact between them.

“Then he went to put it back by setting it on my leg and then flattening his fingers out across the thigh until he had his hand flat on my leg again before pulling away. I mean it was that moment I didn’t really know what to do

about it,” Woman A told City Pulse in an interview this week.

Woman A’s intern — now an assistant county prosecutor — said he was just as shocked by the mayor’s behavior as Woman A. Both of them separately retold the story to City Pulse, characterizing Bernero’s contact as a “grobe.”

“I was stunned,” Woman A’s intern told City Pulse. “And I remember that part clearly that it happened because it was a stunning thing. It was the complete disregard for any thought about whether or not that was OK on his behalf. He was just like, ‘Whatever, this is what I do.’”

In 2004, Woman B was an anchor at a Lansing television station. Bernero was a state senator.

She said she had just completed a high-profile event for the television station during which she had worn capri pants. She was at home when her phone rang. On the other end was Bernero, calling from the floor of the legislature and complimenting Woman B’s legs, she told City Pulse.

“He was calling from the floor of the legislature and identified himself as such saying, ‘I’m calling you from the floor, from my desk on the floor,’” she said. “And he brought up the capris that I wore, and he used this as a launch into talking about my legs and how he thought I had great legs. And I didn’t really know what to say to that. This wasn’t the call I expected to get from him.”

Woman B doesn’t recall the specific language used by Bernero in that call, but said the conversation was about how Bernero wanted to “see more” of her “great” and “fabulous” legs.

She also characterized the conversation as sexual and unwanted. And it wasn’t the only call. Woman B also alleged there were “at least three” that she could recall — all sexual in nature.

“They were flirtatious/sexual in nature,” she said. “There was the sense that he wanted to call me and he thought he was being cute or flirtatious. I vaguely remember them. I don’t remember exactly what they would be about. He would have complimented me on my legs. Again, this sort of seemed to be like a running thing with him.”

Woman B also said Bernero called to complaint about his wife, Teri, a Lansing School District school principal. The comments revolved around the idea that she was a “killjoy” and “She’s not fun,” something like that,” said

Woman B, who also discussed those phone calls afterward with her friends and a colleague in the newsroom.

One witness confirmed to City Pulse that she was informed about Bernero’s calls to her friend, Woman B. She also said Bernero’s behavior ultimately put him on an internal list of men that women in the newsroom would always warn new reporters to be wary of when doing interviews.

Woman B’s former spouse also recalled his ex-wife being made uncomfortable by the calls.

Bernero, 56, served three terms as mayor, one partial term as state senator, one term as a state representative and many years on the Ingham County Commission. In 2010, he was the Democratic candidate for governor against Rick Snyder. Bernero announced four years ago that he was not going to seek a fourth term as Lansing mayor, saying he needed to instead focus more of his attention on his family, including his wife and his then 91-year-old father.

But Bernero is back in the headlines and angling for reelection. While he has not formally filed or announced his bid for office, he has sent emails attacking Mayor Andy Schor and his administration, as well as fundraising letters with “Bernero for Mayor 2021” on the envelope.

Both Woman A and Woman B told City Pulse they were coming forward with their stories now specifically because Bernero is considering running for mayor against Schor this year.

“Oh my God, I really don’t want him in that position. He really does not need to have any power,” said Woman A. Woman B — the former news anchor — concurred with Woman A’s sentiment.

“I think he used his position in some way to gain, to act on these impulses,” added Woman B. “He clearly had some interest in me, and he was going to make it known by use of his position and power. And that’s really problematic when he’s talking about running for office again. I know that he does, and I know that there were other victims. Especially after some of the things we have seen, the #MeToo Movement, how do I stand by and go, ‘I know he does this and I know he tries to use power and while I was made uncomfortable and it wasn’t criminal, and I was kind of able to get away from him, some women are going to be able to get away from him.’”

— TODD HEYWOOD

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
PROBATE COURT  
COUNTY OF INGHAM  
NOTICE TO CREDITORS  
Decedent's Estate  
File No. 20-909-DE

Estate of Vern James Simons, Jr.  
Date of birth: 02/17/1954.  
TO ALL CREDITORS:  
NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The  
decedent, Vern James Simons,  
Jr., died 08/02/2020. Creditors  
of the decedent are notified that  
all claims against the estate  
will be forever barred unless  
presented to James L. Simons,  
personal representative, or to  
both the probate court at Ingham  
County Probate Court, 313 W.  
Kalamazoo, Lansing, MI 48933  
and the personal representative  
within 4 months after the date of  
publication of this notice.

Date: 2/25/21  
Kimberly L. Savage P68267  
1483 Haslett Rd.  
Haslett, MI 48840  
517-515-0500

James L. Simons  
982 Cliffdale Dr.  
Haslett, MI 48840  
517-881-1547

CP#21-045



# One year later: Schor administration stays silent on jailhouse homicide

## AG's office expected to wrap up Anthony Hulon investigation by March 31

Nearly one year has passed since Anthony Hulon was choked to death by four police officers beneath Lansing City Hall. And 10 floors up, Mayor Andy Schor is still keeping quiet amid a lawsuit and possible criminal charges against his police officers.

Video footage released by attorneys late last year shows Hulon, 54, of Lansing, being escorted by four Lansing Police Department officers into a small cell at the city's lockup below City Hall at about 1:04 a.m. April 11, 2020. After a brief struggle with officers, Hulon was pronounced dead about an hour later.

Over the last several months, family and friends of Hulon — as well as local news outlets — said they have only been stonewalled by Schor's administration in their search for details about the incident. Schor and Police Chief Daryl Green have refused to release videos, reports or sit down for interviews on the topic.

Medical reports list Hulon's cause of death as a homicide — specifically by asphyxiation. Video footage shows four officers taking turns pinning Hulon to the ground inside his cell as he repeatedly shouts his last words: "I can't breathe."

But Schor's administration is staying silent as the case remains under review by Attorney General Dana Nessel's office, which could decide whether the cops — who have since returned to work — will face criminal charges for Hulon's death.

A spokeswoman for Nessel's office told City Pulse this week that a criminal investigation into the incident, which has spanned at least the last four months, is expected to wrap up this month — with "something" expected by March 31.

In the meantime, all four officers involved are still working in the lockup. And while unrest continues to build over unanswered questions, Schor and his administration are erring on the side of legal caution rather than transparency.

"You know we can't comment on active litigation," a city spokeswoman said, referring City Pulse to a statement released last year after the lawsuit was filed.

A protest formed at the Lansing Police Department on Friday afternoon, organized in part by the Metro Lansing Poor People's Campaign and Hulon's sister, Heather Hulon, who broke into tears while demanding justice be served.

"It shouldn't have happened. He came



Kyle Kaminski/City Pulse

Two of Anthony Hulon's sisters, among other family members and friends, joined a demonstration at the Lansing Police Department on Friday. One showed an image of Hulon's bruised face after his violent death beneath Lansing City Hall last April.

in here on a Friday, and he should've been able to walk out on a Monday," Heather Hulon said. "They need to be held accountable. They need to be fired. They need to have charges brought against them. If there are no consequences for their crimes, they'll continue to do them."

Several people brought megaphones and signs to the rally with phrases like "Justice 4 Anthony" and "LPD murdered Anthony Hulon," as well as a boombox that blasted songs like "Fuck the Police" for a few hours on Friday afternoon.

"Something needs to change. People need to wake up. We need to fight, and we need to fight together to get the laws changed," Heather Hulon said. "We can't get answers. I should be grieving for my brother. I shouldn't be playing detective."

Green initially said the police officers involved were placed on a paid leave during an internal investigation. The city, however, maintains no record of an internal probe. Instead, officials passed the case to the Michigan State Police for Nessel's office to decide whether the officers will face charges. Those police officers are back on the job.

Department policies call for cops to remain on leave until the review for potential criminal charges is complete. It's unclear why they were put back on duty before that external investigation finished. Schor and Green won't answer questions.

Those policies also encourage transparency, including a public release of information. The city only notified the public that Hulon died from ambiguous "medical complications" in a press release last year. It also failed to mention

that officers were involved in Hulon's death at all, much less as the direct cause of it.

The Police Department also crossed its own internal policies by failing to release the names of the deceased or the officers involved. Those details — as well as videos and police reports — were only made available through Hulon's attorneys.

"They will be held accountable for the murder in their jail last year," said Tobias Webb, a representative of

the Poor People's Campaign, on Friday afternoon. "We have the whole street filled up with cars, just trying to build accountability and to demand justice. There is just no trust with the police in Lansing anymore."

A longstanding records request for emails between city officials about Hulon's death was filed last year by City Pulse and was ignored by the City Attorney's Office until this week. The response is also heavily redacted, in part because the emails included information shielded under claims of attorney-client privilege.

In response to a notification about Hulon's death, diversity consultant Teresa Bingman wrote back to Green, pledging her support to the Police Department.

"No weapon formed against you shall prosper," she responded to Green's email.

The administrative silence surrounding Hulon's death continued at a closed session of the City Council last month.

Afterward, Councilman Brian Jackson publicly addressed the controversy:

"I just want to let you know that we all hear you on the Council. We see you. We hear you. We're following very closely, and we hope that you get answers and that justice is served, however that may be," Jackson announced. "I hope justice is served. And never give up looking for the answers that you're looking for"

A 30-page complaint filed last year in the Western District of Michigan alleges that the officers involved not only wrongfully killed Hulon, but "conspired to distort and conceal the actual facts and circumstances regarding his death." It also alleges that cops failed to give ad-

equately and timely lifesaving measures in jail.

Video footage also shows that the four officers involved had repeatedly ignored automated defibrillator alerts designed to notify them to give rescue breaths after several failed attempts at CPR. Green won't speak publicly about those policies.

Instead, a mayoral spokeswoman responded to questions with a dated statement from Schor and Green that states "Mayor Schor has no further comment." It also expressed Schor's willingness to close the lockup "as soon as there is a feasible option." Those plans haven't publicly evolved at all over the last several months.

The fatal risk of prolonged restraint, however, is something cops have been alerted to nationwide — particularly following George Floyd's killing in Minneapolis last year, two months after Hulon was killed. Like Hulon, Floyd's death certificate also listed "positional asphyxia" as the cause of his death.

Schor posted to Facebook before the circumstances of Hulon's death were made public, then expressing support for Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey's decision to fire the officers involved and to formally charge them criminally for Floyd's death.

"May justice be served for the family, friends and community," Schor wrote.

Green also told City Pulse more than a month after Hulon's death that he didn't think George Floyd would have died in Lansing. Local officers would know better, he explained — entirely failing to mention that Hulon died a similar death in April.

Many local activists, including Councilman Brandon Betz, former Mayor Virg Bernero and several others tied to the Black Lives Matter movement have since billed the lack of transparency in Schor's administration — among other leadership issues — as reason enough for the mayor to immediately resign.

"It has been months, almost a year, of digging, playing detective and trying to find these answers for ourselves with no help from the city at all," Heather Hulon said. "We are on our own. His life mattered to us, his family and his friends who loved him. These police officers need to be held accountable for what they've done."

Court records show the wrongful death litigation filed against the city is in mediation with no public hearings scheduled in the near future. Check back with [lansingcitypulse.com](http://lansingcitypulse.com) for continued coverage as the situation develops.

— KYLE KAMINSKI



# Lansing bus drivers cry foul amid union contract dispute at CATA

Hundreds of bus drivers and mechanics at the Capital Area Transportation Authority are still working without a formal union contract this week while negotiations persist more than a year after their last collective bargaining agreement expired.

And while union leaders say they have reached an impasse over policies on overtime wages and paid time off, CATA executives contend changes from the last contract are necessary to prevent “excessive” six-figure salaries for bus drivers and to fix decades of financial mistakes.

“It’s an unsustainable model that we cannot do. The era of the side deal is over,” said CATA CEO Brad Funkhouser, who was appointed in 2018 to replace Sandy Dragoo after 32 years. “If I was making \$120,000 on a \$56,000 salary and that got pulled back, I’d be upset about it too.”

CATA, which is funded in part by a recently reauthorized public tax, has faced criticism in recent years after the public transit authority was found to have paid 39 of its employees salaries in excess of \$100,000 between 2016 and 2019 — most of which was in the form of overtime for bus drivers. Reports also showed that CATA’s legal expenses, which tallied nearly \$500,000 in 2016, were routinely higher than other public transit authorities.

Funkhouser said he was hired largely to clean up CATA’s financial house — including through some major adjustments to a union contract with Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1039, which encompasses about 260 local bus drivers and mechanics employed by CATA this year.

In 2020, only one bus driver made more than \$100,000, he said. Delinquent payroll taxes have been paid. Legal bills are down. A new union contract is among the final pieces of his puzzle.

“The overlap was the last contract, which I had to carry for three years. We now have an opportunity to right-size this, fix this and make this work for the public,” Funkhouser explained. “The contract is expired. Some of the things in that past contract will not be offered in the next contract. That’s just something that the union is going to have to either accept or not accept.”

Negotiations on a new contract began as the last agreement expired on Nov. 30, 2019. For the last 15 months, both sides have gone back and forth through more than 100 different proposals that span more than 1,000

pages. And this week, bus drivers feel they’ve reached a stalemate.

“This is union busting — plain and simple,” said long-time bus driver and Union President Steve Soliz. “Some of the only items we want here are things that have been in our contracts for years, decades even. Now, they’ve decided they don’t want to honor them. We just want to come back to the table and to be able to negotiate through these items. They won’t budge.”

After the last contract expired, stop-gap “bridge” agreements have kept the existing collective bargaining agreement in place. In June, CATA petitioned for a state-sanctioned factfinder to sort out the stickier points as negotiations continued. His recommendations were filed this month.

When both sides return to the bargaining table within the next two weeks, CATA and the union can choose to accept or reject those recommendations. But after 60 days, CATA can legally start making contractual changes regardless of whether it reaches a consensus with the union.

And a strike isn’t a legal possibility for public transit employees, Soliz explained.

“At that point, they can sort of force our hands into something we don’t want to do. It could all start to get really messy really quickly, and that’s also something we don’t want,” Soliz added. “That’s why I think it’s important the public can understand what’s going on here. It’s not right.”

Funkhouser said he has no plans to “flip a switch” and make contractual changes without the consent of its workforce. He also maintained, however, that several of the union’s current demands are unreasonable and won’t be allowed to be put in place while he remains CEO.

“I will tell you this: We don’t require the union to agree to these. We have a legal process of moving forward and implementing some of these. This is what the public has wanted. This is what the board requires of me and I expect us to move forward on this,” Funkhouser added.

Both sides pointed toward lingering discord over policies on overtime rates and paid time off.

Here are a few of the issues:

- CATA proposed a 3% wage increase for 2021, 2022 and 2023 — billed as the largest increase offered since 2007. Executives also proposed a signing bonus of \$1,500 and \$750 for full- and part-time employees. The union



Courtesy

The Capital Area Transportation Authority serves Lansing, East Lansing, and the townships of Delhi, Lansing and Meridian.

- is pushing for a 4% increase for 2019, 2020 and 2022, as well as bonuses of \$2,500 and \$1,250 for full- and part-time staff. The factfinder agreed with CATA’s proposed wage increases and a “compromise bonus” of \$2,000 and \$1,000 for full- and part-time staff. The union rejected the latest concept.

- Drivers are paid an overtime rate of 150% for anything longer than an eight-hour workday, as well as for the sixth day of their work week. They make double time for any hours worked on the seventh day. After some drivers were found to have worked fewer than 40 hours a week yet still collect overtime for working six or seven days in a week, CATA proposed shifting this system to just pay overtime in excess of a 40-hour workweek. The union is opposed to changes in their long-standing overtime provisions.

- Bus drivers and mechanics have the discretion to utilize their paid time off separately from leave granted under the Family and Medical Leave Act. CATA instead wants staff to use banked vacation days before taking leave under the FMLA, in part to “earn back the public’s trust which has been lost by excessive amounts of overtime.” The union wants to retain the existing language, arguing it would be unfair for staff to return from a medical emergency without vacation time. The factfinder agreed with the union.

- Drivers and mechanics earn attendance bonuses — up to \$500 — if they don’t miss more than two scheduled shifts during any given month or for displaying perfect attendance over the year. CATA wants to exclude employees who miss two regularly shifts in one month from that bonus and limit the policy to only include absences that have been previously approved by

management. The union pushed back against the advanced notice requirement and also proposed that employee sick time be allowed to be used in hourly increments. The factfinder sided entirely with CATA on this issue.

- Currently, drivers are assigned to a particular bus and remain on that same bus throughout the day. CATA wants to remove that requirement to ease “operational challenges” and reduce wait times for drivers waiting for their same bus to return — which can extend a 30-minute lunch break into an unproductive, hour-long wait. The union contends switching buses can create “safety concerns” because different buses steer and brake differently, forcing drivers to re-familiarize themselves with a new bus. The factfinder found no evidence of safety concerns, again entirely siding with CATA.

- Vacation days are accrued by drivers based on a percentage of wages, including overtime and vacation pay during any given year. CATA wants to shift policies so that vacation time is accrued only on a standard 40-hour work week. The factfinder found there was no basis for this change, siding with the union on leaving the policy intact.

- CATA also wants to eliminate retiree benefits altogether for employees hired after Dec. 1, 2019. The union was OK with this, just as long as the transit company contributes to a healthcare savings plan for staff. CATA rejected this concept amid a desire to edge down unfunded pension and benefit obligations, which are more than \$40 million and climbing. The factfinder suggested changing the retroactive date to the date of the new contract — a proposal that both CATA and the union have rejected in their subsequent responses.

The union proposed doubling dental and orthodontia coverage to \$2,000 and \$2,500, respectively, and removing the dependent age restriction of 19. CATA opposed the move on the basis that it would only lead to increased costs. The factfinder sided with CATA.

CATA also wants to add a “zipper clause” to the contract, which Funkhouser said would essentially wipe the slate clean between CATA and the union on all other past agreements, except for those clearly outlined in the next collective bargaining agreement. Both the union and the factfinder found this language to be unnecessary.

— KYLE KAMINSKI



# Updated epidemic orders inch Michigan closer to normalcy

## MDHHS expands restaurant capacity, allows for larger gatherings

State officials reeled back epidemic restrictions this week to allow for larger household gatherings and expanded capacity limits at bars, restaurants and other larger private venues.

Beginning Friday, bars and restaurants can shift from 25% capacity to 50% capacity, up to 100 people. Tables of up to six people still must be 6 feet apart. The 10 p.m. curfew will be 11 pm. Indoor residential gatherings will also be upped this week to allow for up to 15 people from three households, while outdoor residential gatherings can include a new, expanded cap of 50 people.

Indoor non-residential gatherings will be permitted up to 25 people, potentially allowing public meetings — like the Lansing City Council — and other small indoor gatherings to resume. Outdoor gatherings will be upped to 300 people, also allowing larger outdoor events to resume.

Additionally, indoor entertainment venues will be capped at 50% capacity, up to 300 people. Outdoor entertainment venues will be able to host up to 1,000 patrons. Exercise facilities and casinos will be able to operate at 30% capacity with social distancing restrictions. Retail will be allowed to open at 50% capacity. Stadiums will also be able to host crowds of up to 750 people.

The new orders also included expanded visitation opportunities at residential care facilities, which have now had their staff and residents nearly all vaccinated over the last few months.

The order continues to pause other venues and activities where participants have close physical contact and are not consistently masked, like water parks, through at least April 19. As before, employees who can work from home are encouraged to continue to do so during that time.

The rollback corresponds with improving pandemic trends, but it appears to contradict at least some advice from national experts wary that new variants of the virus could result in more outbreaks despite increases in vaccination efforts, according to reports in The Detroit News.

**In related news...**

Robert Gordon, the director of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services who abruptly resigned in January, was paid more than \$150,000 as part of a deal with Gov. Gretchen Whitmer that he keep quiet about the circumstances that led to his departure, according to reports in The Detroit News. Asked at a press conference if it was “hush money,” Whitmer said, “I really bristle at that characterization.”

Former Deputy Director Sarah Esty also reportedly reached a separation deal with the state.

Fewer babies appear to have been born during the COVID-19 pandemic in Greater Lansing, reports the Lansing State Journal. Reports show 343 fewer babies — an 8% drop — were born at Sparrow Hospital in 2020 compared to 2019. McLaren also reportedly tracked a 5% decline.

Whitmer announced a three-month extension for liquor licensees to renew their 2021 licenses, extending the annual deadline from April 30 to July 30. License holders are still encouraged to renew their licenses soon (and online) to avoid any potential mailing delays.

East Lansing extended requirements that face masks be worn in all outdoor public spaces across most of the downtown area through at least May 16. Violations can result in \$25 fines.

Meanwhile, Michigan State University plans to ease some restrictions on campus while COVID-19 cases continue to decline following students’ return to campus. An enhanced social distancing directive is set to be lifted as soon as Sunday.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration granted emergency use authorization of the single-dose Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine this week, bolstering confidence among state officials that 70% of residents will be vaccinated as soon as possible at a rate of 50,000 shots every day.

Whitmer announced the expansion of the Classroom Heroes grant program last week to include \$2.5 million in grant funding for the Great Start Readiness Program and Head Start. Included in the funding are individual grants up to \$500 for adult and special education classroom teachers.

— KYLE KAMINSKI

CORONAVIRUS IN MICHIGAN

BY THE NUMBERS...

WEEK 50

| Michigan      |         |        |           | Eaton County  |       |        |        |
|---------------|---------|--------|-----------|---------------|-------|--------|--------|
|               | CASES   | DEATHS | VACC.     |               | CASES | DEATHS | VACC.  |
| 2/23/21       | 582,719 | 15,396 | 1,942,759 | 2/23/21       | 5,621 | 148    | 23,138 |
| 3/2/21        | 590,217 | 15,558 | 2,269,495 | 3/2/21        | 5,703 | 151    | 27,575 |
| Weekly Change | ↑1.3%   | ↑1.1%  | ↑16.8%    | Weekly Change | ↑1.5% | ↑2%    | ↑19.2% |

| Greater Lansing |        |        |         | Clinton Co.   |       |        |        |
|-----------------|--------|--------|---------|---------------|-------|--------|--------|
|                 | CASES  | DEATHS | VACC.   |               | CASES | DEATHS | VACC.  |
| 2/23/21         | 25,375 | 486    | 96,489  | 2/23/21       | 4,397 | 66     | 14,427 |
| 3/2/21          | 25,726 | 492    | 112,442 | 3/2/21        | 4,436 | 66     | 16,506 |
| Weekly Change   | ↑1.4%  | ↑1.2%  | ↑16.5%  | Weekly Change | ↑0.9% | ↑0%    | ↑14.4% |

| Ingham County |        |        |        |
|---------------|--------|--------|--------|
|               | CASES  | DEATHS | VACC.  |
| 2/23/21       | 15,357 | 272    | 58,924 |
| 3/2/21        | 15,587 | 275    | 68,361 |
| Weekly Change | ↑1.5%  | ↑1.1%  | ↑16%   |

The “Vaccines” category refers to the total number of doses administered to patients that reported living within each jurisdiction, according to state data. Patients require two doses.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

East Lansing Planning Commission

NOTICE OF ELECTRONIC MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARINGS

March 24, 2021 at 7:00 pm

THE MEETING WILL ONLY BE HELD ELECTRONICALLY

FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Planning Commission of the City of East Lansing will hold a meeting and two public hearings on Wednesday, March 24, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. This meeting will only be held electronically pursuant to the Open Meetings Act and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) Epidemic Orders. The purpose of the public hearing is to consider a request for site plan and special use permit approval from Pi Beta Phi FHC Michigan Gamma LLC for the property at 343 Harrison Road to move the existing dumpster approximately nine feet closer to Huntington Road. Since there is no special use permit of record for the sorority, the applicant is also seeking a special use permit to be allowed modifications to the site. The subject property is zoned RM-32, City Center Multi Family Residential District. The purpose of the second public hearing is to consider a request for site plan and special use permit approval from MJW Investment, LLC, for the property at 128 Collingwood Drive to establish a Class B multiple family residence (fraternity). The subject property is zoned RM-32, City Center Multi Family Residential District.

The Planning Commission may also consider any business to come before it as permitted by law.

Pursuant to the Open Meetings Act, Act 267 of 1976, and the MDHHS Epidemic Order, the City also gives notice of the following:

1. Reason for Electronic Meeting.

The Planning Commission is holding the meeting by electronic means only because of the gathering restrictions, capacity limits, and social distancing requirements set forth in the MDHHS Epidemic Orders.

2. Procedures.

The public may participate in the meeting and may make public comment electronically by video or telephone conference using the following information:

URL: <https://us02web.zoom.us/join/87312294362?occurrence=1616626800000>

Webinar ID: 873 1229 4362

Call in Number: 312-626-6799

Toll Free Call in Number: 888 788 0099

3. Contact Information.

For those people who desire to contact members of the Planning Commission to provide input or ask questions on the business that will come before the public body at the meeting, please contact David Haywood, 410 Abbot Road, East Lansing, MI 48823, (517) 319-6861, TDD 1-800-649-3777 or [dhaywood@cityofeastlansing.com](mailto:dhaywood@cityofeastlansing.com), prior to the start of the meeting.

4. Persons with Disabilities.

Persons with disabilities may participate in the meeting through the methods set forth in paragraph 2. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services in order to attend electronically should notify Rebecca Urdiales, 410 Abbot Road, East Lansing, MI 48823, (517) 319-6922, TDD 1-800-649-3777 or [rurdial@cityofeastlansing.com](mailto:rurdial@cityofeastlansing.com), within a reasonable time in advance of the meeting.

Jennifer Shuster

City Clerk

CP#21-044



# ARTS & CULTURE

## ART • BOOKS • FILM • MUSIC

## New wellness center provides safe space for LGBTQ and minority communities

By SKYLER ASHLEY

A brand new center that combines services such as therapy, massage and hair care, and is a safe, welcoming space that caters to the needs of people of color and members of the LGBTQ community, has just set up shop in Lansing.

Wild Ferns Wellness Center, which opened Monday, is the vision of partners Parker Curtis and Rahjah Evans. The pair wanted to combine the expertise they've gained over the years from their different career paths to create a unique community center and services hub.

Curtis, who identifies as transgender and uses they/them pronouns, has worked as a licensed professional counselor for the past six years. Curtis began their therapy career working as an intern at Connally Counseling in Ann Arbor, which is an LGBTQ-focused therapy center. Curtis spent much of their time at Connally working with transgender clients. They returned to Lansing and began working in private practice and at Alliance Psychological Associates in East Lansing.

Curtis noticed that Lansing lacked the wide range of resources Ann Arbor has, in terms of easily accessible therapy and other social and health services for the LGBTQ community.

"I started thinking what a wonderful thing it would be for our community. This idea just kept building in me that we could be doing more," Curtis said. "Not just, mental health therapy, but things like holistic wellness and being



Curtis



Evans



2029 Covington Ct., Lansing  
For more information call,  
(517) 798-6745  
or visit [wildfernswellness.com](http://wildfernswellness.com)

able to offer other services in a safe environment."

Curtis notes that Lansing obviously does have places where anybody can receive therapy and get massages, but what makes Wild Fern Wellness Center different is the extra level of care that is put into ensuring LGBTQ and other marginalized clients feel safe. Curtis and Evans want a place where their clients feel safe from having to deal with culturally insensitive transgressions.

"It's a matter of social accessibility. 'Do you feel safe? Do you feel welcome? Do you know that when you go in, people are going to use your right name and pronouns? Do you know that when you go in, that you won't suffer micro transgressions because of the color of your skin?' Those are the barriers we are trying to get over," Curtis said.

Evans has a background in financial services, running her own business known as Abloom Billing and Credentialing, and handles the administrative side of Wild Ferns Wellness Center.

"My goal is to let people know that it's safe here. I want this to be a place where somebody can be their whole self. They won't have to choose a certain identity to fit in," Evans said.

Services offered by Wild Ferns Wellness Center include Transformative Therapy, Curtis' therapy practice, Roots Hair Lounge, a salon run by Rizza Marie Benton, and massage therapy by Alisha



Courtesy

Roots Hair Lounge will offer cosmetology services inside the Wild Ferns Wellness Center.

Meyers. Electrolysis hair-removal by Mel Mirkin and Suzy Grace is expected to be in operation in the next few weeks.

Curtis said the massage services offered by Meyers are catered toward clients who have experienced trauma and may have otherwise been too nervous to seek out any form of massage therapy. Wild Ferns Wellness Center hopes to address this by creating the most trusting and accepting environment possible. Clients will have a lot of options to customize their service to the precise way that makes them comfortable.

"We understand how important it is to be trauma-informed in all of our areas. With massage therapy, we recognize that the community we're centering on has higher rates of experiencing trauma," Curtis said. "They may feel uncomfortable receiving something like massage therapy. Being a trauma-informed massage therapist means being nonjudgmental and understanding and meeting the client where they're at."

Rizza Marie Benton, who began working with clients at Roots Hair Lounge this week, shares the mutual passion of Curtis and Evans and was

highly excited to have their business open up in the same space as Wild Ferns Wellness Center.

"I want to deliver beautiful results, and I have a place to do it at that also reaffirms the things I care about," Benton said. "It's going to be a way to spread love and care, when a lot of people need that right now. I think the space we've created is beautiful and I hope feel comfortable and welcome in it."

Though Wild Ferns Wellness Center will focus primarily on being a safe space for people of color and members of the LGBTQ community, Curtis and Evans stress that is not an exclusionary space. Anybody is welcome to seek Wild Fern's services, regardless of ethnicity or gender identity. Wild Ferns Wellness Center is also developing an application process for scholarships catered toward those who need financial assistance.

"Centered does not mean exclusionary. We need and want allies here. We want to change up the local culture a little bit," Curtis said. "We won't be able to survive without our allies and advocates. I don't want people to think, 'I can't go there; it's not for me.' No, we



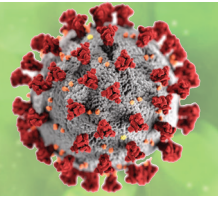
New classes start  
now through April.



You belong here  
lcc.edu/youbelong

LANSING COMMUNITY COLLEGE IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION/EMPLOYER.

# COVID & The Arts One Year Later



Lawrence Cosentino/City Pulse



Lawrence Cosentino/City Pulse

(Above) The Lansing Art Gallery's social-distance-friendly ArtPath responded to ongoing events in real time by adding a portrait of George Floyd in summer 2020 by Isiah Lattimore.

(Left) Artist Isiah Lattimore's pandemic-themed mural under the I-496 overpass on Lansing's River Trail depicts St. Cecilia, the patron saint of music, "tired" but "not dead."

# Trauma and transformation

## Lansing's arts scene endures a year like no other

By LAWRENCE COSENTINO

Since the coronavirus pandemic hit Lansing a year ago, hundreds of passersby along the River Trail have stopped to look a 30-foot-long woman in a surgical mask, lying flat on the ground on an embankment under the I-496 overpass.

The prone woman is St. Cecilia, the patron saint of music. Artist Isiah Lattimore painted her when the arts world, and just about everything else, shut down a year ago.

Her mute figure speaks of empty concert halls, bare stages, deserted galleries and isolated creators yearning to connect with an audience.

"It's kind of melancholy," Lattimore said. "She's not dead, but she's tired and going through a lot."

She is also adapting. The mural is part of Lansing Art Gallery's ArtPath, an open-air exhibit of 30 artworks dispersed along the River Trail — the perfect way for a shuttered gallery to place fine art before a socially distancing public.

It has been a surreal year for the arts in Lansing, but there is reason for hope. Bigger

players like the Wharton Center and the Lansing Symphony are hanging in there, shepherding cash reserves, transmitting beeps of life via online concerts and other events. The Broad Art Museum is open and the Lansing Art Gallery is gearing up for another ArtPath.

Smaller venues like the Robin Theatre, local galleries and theater companies are in hibernation, but hearts are beating under the ice. Musicians are staying connected with their fans via live streams and virtual concerts.

Lattimore painted St. Cecilia as a toppled statue, based on a sculpture by early 17th-century sculptor Stefano Maderno. But the fall triggers a transformation. She is changing from black and white to color, bathed in luminous spheres and graffiti-like curlicues. Her left eye, as big as a football, glows with life force. When she rises again, it will be grand.

### Striking the set

In mid-April 2020, about a month into the coronavirus lockdown, Chad Badgero took an

armful of tools into a dark church and started tearing things apart.

Down went a wall, a sink, a bathtub, another wall. Piece by piece, he dismantled the Jersey City apartment he and the crew of Peppermint Creek Theatre Co. built a few weeks earlier in the basement of its home, Central United Methodist Church.

Usually, striking a set is a bittersweet party. This time, Peppermint Creek's artistic director was alone. He thought about the absent cast and crew — how they walked away from the set after a rehearsal one night in March, thinking they'd be back the next day.

The troupe was a week away from opening Martyna Majok's Pulitzer-winning "Cost of Living," a drama about the disabled and their caretakers, when the pandemic hit.

"I was alone with all these emotions," Badgero said. "Of not having been able to present that to a formal audience, and the hard decisions of having to tell our volunteer actors and designers, 'No, we can't do it.'"

Just before the pandemic shut everything down, bassist Rodney Whitaker barely made

See Art, Page 14





# COVID & The Arts One Year Later

## Art

from page 13

it to the West Coast on a redeye flight from a set of gigs in Australia.

Last week, the director of MSU Jazz Studies was shocked when he looked at a photo of himself from about a year ago. “I didn’t realize it then, but it looked like I was in despair,” he said. “For about 30 days, you kept hearing news about some jazz icon dying. I know a lot of people who lost their apartments and had to leave New York City or sell insurance or real estate. Most of the people I know in Detroit and Chicago are okay, but in New York the landlords had no mercy.”

Meghan Martin, director of the Greater Lansing Arts Council, has been in touch with members daily during the pandemic. She said she hasn’t seen any arts organizations go under yet, but the trauma of the past year will be hard to fully assess.



Martin

“Our sense of community has been shaken,” Meghan Martin said. “Anything that you’d normally do in person, whether it’s performing artists or going into a cultural institution, the impact on those areas is incredibly negative.”

Americans for the Arts estimates a \$1.8 trillion total financial loss to the arts and cultural sector of the United States from the COVID-19 pandemic — nearly 490 million fewer attendees to arts and cultural events. The total financial loss to Michigan arts and culture institutions is estimated at nearly \$20 billion. (Compare to \$338 billion in New York.) Out of 229 Michigan arts organizations surveyed, about 7 percent reported they were “not confident of survival.”

Wharton Center director Michael Brand has never seen anything like it

“It’s redefined our whole industry, which has never been redefined like this,” Brand said. “Even an act of God got redefined with all this. I have no idea who’s coming back, how strong, and even how ticket sales are going to be.”

Wharton’s two stages have been dark for a year, except for a few socially distanced MSU drama classes. Annual ticket revenues of \$10-12 million evaporated. Brand closed down the



Courtesy MSU

MSU Jazz Studies director and bassist Rodney Whitaker, seen here in a livestreamed concert from summer 2020, said pent-up demand will result in another “Roaring 20s” for the performing arts when the pandemic is over.

Wharton’s presenting division and some support staff, furloughing “six or seven” of Wharton’s 40 employees.

Last spring, Wharton’s 2019-2020 season was set for a grand finale, with Broadway blockbusters “Wicked” and “Dear Evan Hansen,” jazz great Branford Marsalis and the Royal Winnipeg Ballet — all canceled. Instead Wharton posted a \$560,000 loss for the season.

“It would have been a beautiful, joyful quarter, but it didn’t happen,” Brand said. Losses in 2020-2021, when Wharton’s two theaters sat completely dark, amounted to \$1.5 million. Reserve funds, which Brand described as “flush,” and the Wharton’s annual fund are keeping the operation afloat.

### Keep it, see you next year

There is nothing less socially distanced, this side of a mosh pit, than a blast of full-tilt Tchaikovsky. Crowding 80 musicians onto a stage was not an option for the Lansing Symphony Orchestra in 2020. One and a half seasons have all but vanished with the pandemic.

The symphony kept core staff employed with PPP money last spring. Musicians made ends meet by teaching, day jobs or unemployment. Director Courtney Millbrook said the next round of federal aid, which includes a \$15 billion package for performing arts organizations, will probably tide the organization over until fall. (Brand said the Wharton Center, too, will likely qualify for a “shuttered venue” grant.)

What floored Millbrook was the loyal support of small donors. Despite the offer of a refund, ticket holders have donated more than \$80,000 worth of ticket sales from canceled concerts.

“I’m amazed at how many people said, ‘Keep it, see you next year,’” Millbrook said. “It feeds your soul. People are sending what they can and valuing local arts.”

Michael Siracuse, director of Riverwalk Theatre, said “incredible” donor generosity has kept the theater ready for its “second act,” despite ongoing utility bills, roof repairs

and taxes and a \$60,000 sewer repair.

The theater has been dark since March 13, when “A Hotel on Marvin Gardens” closed after one day.

“It’s been a dark and lonely year, but we’re doing OK,” Siracuse said. He’s known for greeting patrons with a hug. “I haven’t had a hug in a long time.”

On March 12, 2020, the Robin Theatre in REO Town hosted a bimonthly hip-hop showcase with local rapper KamWood Hitz. The virus was on its way, and co-owner Dylan Rogers was nervous about letting performers share a microphone. He set up separate mics for each performer and noticed that one rapper wore rubber gloves.

He decided it would be the last show for a while. The Robin was heading for a busy spring, including two Ten Pound Fiddle folk concerts, comedy shows, a spoken word event with storyteller Metro Melik and a two-week run of a new Ixion Theatre play. All were scrapped.

“That was back when there were still shows to cancel and it felt bad to do it,” Rogers said. “Now we’re safely in the realm where you don’t have to cancel anything because nothing is on the calendar.”

After almost five years in operation, the Robin Theatre was just hitting its stride as a community hub and multi-genre showcase.

The theater’s co-owner, Jeana-Dee Allen, is married to Rogers. The couple lives upstairs from the Robin, so expenses are minimal. Allen is busy teaching at MSU’s College of Communication Arts and Rogers got a \$10,000 grant from the Lansing Area Economic Partnership to meet taxes and mortgage payments on the theater space.

“We are not going to lose the building. The theater did not fold,” Rogers said.

### Bowing in silence

It’s strange to see a musician take a bow in total silence.

MSU College of Music Dean James Forger is proud of the school’s inventive livestream concerts, but he ruefully wondered whether he should put cardboard cutouts in the audience, as some sports venues have done.

“There’s nothing like a live audience, because the audience is part of the performance,” Forger said. “That is why the performance exists, to communicate with the audience and get the feedback.”

But MSU’s jazz and classical musicians have been lucky. The Billman Music Pavilion, a state-of-the-art facility the college has dreamed of for



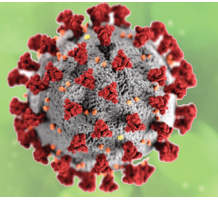
Lawrence Cosentino/City Pulse

The Lansing Symphony snuck two late-fall outdoor concerts featuring a handful of musicians into an otherwise virtual 2020 concert season.

See Art, Page 15



# COVID & The Arts One Year Later



(Above) MSU orchestra conductor Octavio Más-Arocas and ensemble stretch out for a socially distanced rehearsal at MSU's new music pavilion.



Courtesy MSU

(Above) MSU's choral program held a concert in the Kellogg Center parking structure in late spring of 2020.

## Art

from page 14

decades, was completed in fall 2020, just in time to set up socially distanced rehearsals.

"It could have been custom made for a pandemic, especially the HVAC refreshing the air four times an hour," Forger said.

A year ago, the college bought \$65,000 of microphones to conduct virtual lessons with better fidelity. One doctoral student was taking lessons in his car in March because he couldn't sing in his apartment.

"That's just not sustainable," Forger said.

With the gradual return of in-person rehearsals in February, the invoices on Forger's desk tell a happier story.

"I never thought I would order 1800 puppy pads to collect all the saliva from my brass students on the floor," he said.

Most music lessons are still done on line, but major ensembles, including the wind symphony, jazz septets and octets and concert band, are rehearsing live again.

"We've learned a lot about aerosols, how much space you need, what instruments can be doing a lesson in studios and what instruments need a very large space," Forger said. "I don't know what we would have done with our small ensembles if we didn't have such large spaces."

"It's so great to get back in person, playing with people," bassist and composer Jordyn Davis said. Davis and other senior students are mentoring freshmen, some of whom are still living at home in other states, to help them navigate a bizarrely remote first year at MSU.

"When everything first happened, the first couple of months were very, very disheartening, scary and sad," Davis said. After year of wrangling with the technical demands of virtual recitals, the prospect of in-person rehearsals and, in time, performances, keeps Davis and her fellow students hopeful in 2021. "We're ready to play," she declared.



Forger

### 'A little bit slow'

Small arts organizations don't have the cash reserves of a Wharton Center, but they have the advantage of flexibility and low overhead. Casa de Rosado, the warm, grass-roots community gallery and gathering space run by Theresa Rosado at her spacious home on Mt. Hope Avenue, has hosted dozens of wide-ranging exhibits, from velvet art to nude photography in its first three years. Closed to the public in 2020, the gallery served as a hospice space for Rosado's father-in-law.

"Grandpa Joe appreciated having a rather fancy place to watch his last Tiger games and spend time with his family," Rosado said.

But Rosado made sure the gallery stayed plugged into the community. At the height of lockdown, she teamed with the Latinx advocacy group Voces de la Comunidad and turned the gallery into a distribution site for food and sanitary supplies for community members in need. Dia de Los Muertos, a yearly highlight at Casa de Rosado, went online, with videos of ofrendas from community members posted on the gallery's Facebook page. She looks forward to hosting outdoor events this summer.

Moving art into the open air in projects like ArtPath along the River Trail was a big part of 2020's big pivot for Lansing Art Gallery director Bab Whitney and her staff.

"For the first time in my lifetime, it's beneficial to us that we don't have a significant amount of earned revenue related to ticket sales," Whitney said. The gallery is gradually reopening, with visits by appointment and plans for indoor-outdoor exhibits in the spring.

At MSU's Broad Art Museum, the pandemic hit just when a new director, Monica Ramirez-Montagut, was ready to move to East Lansing. Caught between two coronavirus hotspots, she was stuck in her former home in New Orleans for months.

The shutdown was doubly frustrating for Ramirez-Montagut because it thwarted her primary goal of bringing a broader audience to the museum. The museum reopened in late fall, with social distancing and mask guidelines, but drew only about half as many visitors as it could safely handle.

New exhibits, including a massive exhibit on car culture that blends local history and art in a



Lawrence Cosentino/City Pulse

Broad Art Museum curator Steven Bridges examines sculptures made from auto parts. "Interstates of Mind," an exhibit linking local history, automotive history and art, was held over through August 2021 to give people a chance to see it in person.

way that is new to the Broad, have been extended through August, in the hope that more people will feel comfortable visiting.

"In the creative world, we're constantly trying out new ideas," Ramirez-Montagut said. "But everything is a little bit slow right now and you have to adjust to that pace, shape your mentality with reality."

### Virtual virtues

Singer-songwriter Jen Sygit is among dozens of musicians who have stayed in touch with their fans on line through the pandemic year.

"The more important thing is reminding people you're there and giving them a little bit of love for a minute," Sygit said. "I always feel better after. I hope they do."

The livestreams range from high-tech to down-home. On Monday live streams, singer-songwriter May Erlewine lights a candle, flashes a beatific smile and personally greets everyone who logs on: "Hi Dad, Hi Terry, Hi Lisa, Hi Kelly, Hi Jenny, Hi Todd, Hi Mom. Good to see you, Alexis. We made it another week."

Jazz organist Jim Alfredson pushed his tech knowledge, keyboard skills and basement full of equipment to the limit and beyond.

See Art, Page 16





# COVID & The Arts One Year Later

Singer-songwriter May Erlewine keeps the folk music flame lit with a weekly livestream.



Courtesy photo

## Art

from page 15

“It’s been the only thing keeping me playing,” Alfredson said.

For 11 bleak weeks, “Live From Jimmy’s Basement” beamed livestreamed solo jazz to a pandemic-numbed populace until Alfredson’s band mates, guitarist Larry Barris and drummer Randy Marsh, could rejoin him in the basement in June. Tuesday night jazz at Moriarty’s managed to stay alive on line through most of the year, also from Alfredson’s basement studio.

“I’m just thankful that when all the gigs went away, I had the knowledge and the gear,” Alfredson said.

Alfredson is no longer taking unemployment this year, relying on his wife’s income as a Realtor and his own piano tuning, instrument repair and engineering gigs.

“I haven’t heard from too many musicians that are really hurting right now,” he said. “It seems like the federal response has been helpful.”

With the coming of warmer weather, a dot or two has popped up on his schedule, including a March festival in Florida, and he’s ready to get out of the basement.

“So many people are doing streaming that the revenue has fallen off rather precipitously,” he said.

After several months of concerts from artist’s homes, with varying levels of quality, the novelty is beginning to wear off. Some venues are restoring a bit of professionalism to virtual concerts by hosting artists in empty theaters and streaming the music. Sygit is doing a concert at St. Cecilia’s in Grand Rapids in April.

“It’s a step up from playing in your living room to getting back on a live stage with an audience,” Sygit said.

As president of a tech-savvy P.R. firm, Terry Terry is in a sweet spot to exploit the advantages of virtual shows. Terry, the Old Town impresario behind JazzFest and BluesFest, expects both festivals to go on, in person and online, in 2021, the former in August and the latter in September.

In 2020, Terry combined JazzFest and BluesFest into a one-week “hybrid” event combining limited, socially distanced live concerts and livestreamed music from around the world.

On Feb. 14, more than 150 people attended the virtual “Burning Desires” poetry event livestreamed from Terry’s intimate UrbanBeat performance venue in Old Town — more people than have ever been to an event there in person. Virtual “tables” of two, four, six or eight were set up, where visitors could chat and even share videos or images with each other.

“People who hadn’t seen each other in 20 years got to have face to face conversations,” Terry said. “Things have changed. When we bring JazzFest and BluesFest back live, safely, that’s going to be part of the deal from now on.”



Courtesy Robin Theatre

The Robin Theatre is dark but still alive and ready to reopen when it’s safe, says co-owner Dylan Rogers.

## Roaring Twenties

On New Year’s Day 2021, Dylan Rogers’ pandemic grieving period was suddenly over. “Something clicked, and I’m not the only person who feels that way,” he said. “I just felt it was going to get better.”

Between writing grant proposals to keep the Robin Theatre ready for reopening, Rogers has been keeping busy building shelves. He plans to park a used bookstall in the theater when the weather warms, to keep the theater connected with the community.

Rodney Whitaker has been getting back into the studio, making new albums and teaching from home, with recent forays into the Billman Pavilion to lead the jazz ensembles in person. (He stands behind a Plexiglas shield, like the pope.)

Touring can be a grind. Alfredson and Badgero cherished an unstructured 2020 with their spouses and kids.

“Some of us got healthier, eating at home,” Whitaker said. “Everybody I know is practicing and ready to go. A lot of writing has taken place. Musicians are ready to go out and play.”

“The biggest thing I learned in 2020 is to take care of myself,” Jordyn Davis said. “Typically, we have 12-hour days, going and going and going, and it can be hard to carve out time to take care of your body, your mind and your spirit. Once the gigs come back, I think I’ll have a more balanced life.”

After months in hibernation, a yearning for the old life is surging. Badgero felt it as early as late October, when Peppermint Creek hosted a drive-in film, “Hear Our Cry.”

“I thought I was fine, loving the slower pace,” he said. “When we opened that show — even though it was a drive-in — I was overwhelmed. I realized there was a gaping hole in my life. Even though we were all in our own cars, it felt so good to be gathered with other people in the same place.”

Mood swings are the dominant recreation in a pandemic year. A year ago, Badgero and other panicky theater directors huddled for a Zoom call to compare survival strategies. The call evolved into a monthly check-in, with as few as three or as many as eight leaders participating.

“I’m an eternal optimist, almost disgustingly,” Badgero said. “Other people are saying that this is going to be the death of theater, people are going to watch Netflix the rest of their lives and we’re going to close.”

The unknowns are daunting for an organization that plans months ahead, but for now, the Wharton Center plans to open in the fall. However, Michael Brand has no interest in repeating the bumpy startups of pro- and college-sports seasons.

“It’s not a socially distanced industry,” he said. “If it’s that dangerous, performers aren’t going to go in there and breathe all that air and sing for 90 minutes. Safety nets are not established yet.”

He said rules will have to be worked out requiring distancing and masks and called for mandatory vaccinations for casts and crews.

“All I’m thinking about is, what else do I have to cancel, before the doors open and people come back?” Brand said. “There’s nothing we can do about it. If we’re not open in September, the thing moves. That’s all there is to it.”

Whitaker, a keen student of music history, is taking a longer view. When the pandemic breaks, he expects pent-up creativity to unleash a second version of the Roaring 20s. “The Harlem Renaissance came out of that time, and it was just after a pandemic,” he said. “There will be a lot of new clubs opening, new organizations. I think it will be a good time for us.”

Lansing Symphony maestro Timothy Muffitt agrees.

“The pent-up demand has the potential to be off the charts,” Muffitt said. “The response we got to our first digital concert, the emotional response from some of our patrons, was overwhelming — the way they felt after hearing their musicians playing for them, even if it was recorded on another day.”

The past year suggests that human emotions are subject to inexorable, almost Newtonian physics of pressure and release, and that’s good news for the arts.

“Speaking for myself, I can’t wait to go to an art museum,” Muffitt said. “I can’t wait to go to a restaurant. I can’t wait to do anything.”



# Author David Stowe turns to loons for life lessons on romance

By **BILL CASTANIER**

A less than tidy divorce sometimes finds truth in the life of loons in David Stowe's new book, "Learning from Loons."

The story of "Learning from Loons" is mostly told from a man's point of view, and preceding each chapter is a stand-alone essay on the life of loons excerpted from a fictional book-within-a-book authored by the protagonist, a mildly successful author named Elliot.

Also cleverly interspersed throughout the chapters is Elliot's new work-in-progress, a book on a modern-day Christian brewing movement led by mega churches.

Stowe, a Michigan State University professor in religious studies and English, is known for his nonfiction works exploring religion and pop culture, including a book on Christian rock 'n' roll, "No Sympathy for the Devil: Christian Pop Music and the Transformation of American Evangelicalism."

After writing several musical themed nonfiction books, Stowe said he was ready to write a novel.

"I needed a break from academic scholarship," he said.

Stowe, who had written some fiction when he was younger, said, "I always wanted to get back to it."

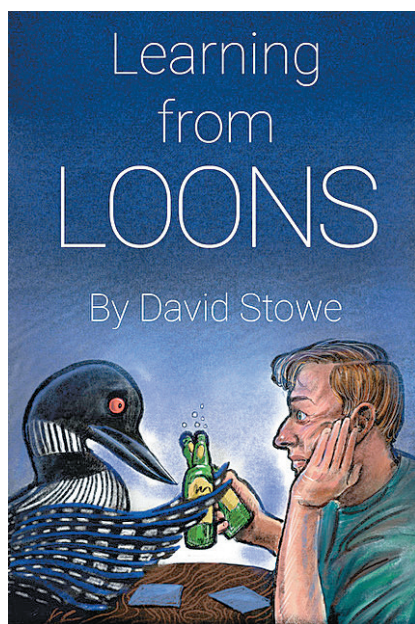
Now about those loons. Who knew they were the sages of the universe and marriage counselors all rolled into one?

"I've always been fascinated by loons. They are beautiful and classy; have a kind of dignity and a reputation for pairing off for life. Then, they have this unique yodeling call that's wild and crazy," Stowe said.

"From the very beginning I thought of rolling the two themes — loons and divorce — together. Loons symbolize domestic family life and are devoted parents, so I thought I would tie in a couple that is trying to find a way to survive," he said.

Stowe said he decided to tie in a Christian brewing movement from his experiences writing about Christian rock. "I knew quite a bit about that scene. One of the secrets of the success of the mega churches is people find a sense of togetherness with the many interest groups that are available," he said.

As Elliot and Cathy go through a trial separation and make an attempt at reconciliation, Elliot diverts and



Stowe

look at the life of William Billings, an 18th century musician who is considered America's first choral composer.

"Not much is known about his life, but it is known he was friends with Paul Revere and Samuel Adams," Stowe said.

## 2021 Michigan Author Award

Readers, here is your opportunity to recommend an author for the 2021 Michigan Author Award, which is sponsored annually by the Library of Michigan and the Michigan Center

finds a girlfriend, which really muddies the waters.

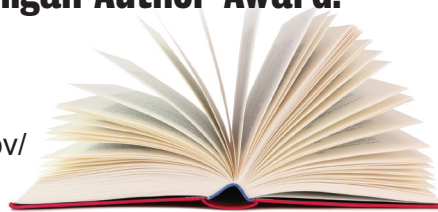
Stowe said making the transition to fiction created some significant problems for him

"Once I has a first draft, I realized how much work it needed. There were endless revisions, and every change you make affects the narrative. You can find yourself changing literally every sentence," he said.

Stowe already has his eye on his next book project, a historical fiction

## Nominate your favorite Michigan author for the 2021 Michigan Author Award!

The deadline to submit a nomination is May 31.  
Learn more at [michigan.gov/libraryofmichigan](http://michigan.gov/libraryofmichigan).



## Curious Book Shop



307 E. Grand River, E. Lansing  
332-0112 We validate parking  
Mon.-Sat. 10-7pm, Sun. 12-5 pm  
[curiousbooks.com](http://curiousbooks.com)

The snow is falling....  
and books are calling!

## Archives Book Shop

519 W. Grand River, E. Lansing  
332-8444 Free Parking  
Mon.-Sat. 11-6 pm, Sun. 12-5 pm  
[thearchivesbookshop@gmail.com](mailto:thearchivesbookshop@gmail.com)



for the Book. The deadline for submission is May 31.

The award recognizes a body of literary work from an author from Michigan or who has substantial ties to Michigan. The work can cover any literary format such as poetry, fiction, nonfiction or drama. The award recognizes a living author whose publishing career spans more than five years. Complete rules and nomination forms are at [michigan.gov/libraryofmichigan](http://michigan.gov/libraryofmichigan). Previous winners have included romance writer Beverley Jenkins, children's author and illustrator David Small and poet and novelist Laura Kasischke.

## SCHULER BOOKS

Meridian Mall · Okemos

### VIRTUAL EVENTS

Author Talks · Storytimes  
Attend an event without leaving home!

Chicken Little and the Big Bad Wolf

### STORYTIME WITH SAM WEDELICH

March 3 · 11am

Grown-ups! Grab your littles and settle in to hear author and cartoonist, Sam Wedelich share her newest *Chicken Little* story. Watch LIVE on Facebook.

March Is Reading Month Storytime:

### THE PAPER BAG PRINCESS

March 6 · 11am

Let's celebrate the 40th anniversary of Robert Munsch and Michael Martchenko's princess of empowerment, *The Paper Bag Princess*! Watch us on Facebook LIVE for a story, song and activity to kick-off March is Reading Month!

### POETRY NIGHT

with Holly Wren Spaulding, Alison Swan, Keith Taylor  
March 10 · 7pm

Join us virtually for a night of poetry and a reunion of sorts with Holly Wren Spaulding, Alison Swan, Keith Taylor. Watch us LIVE on Facebook.

REGISTER FOR VIRTUAL EVENTS ON OUR WEBSITE OR FACEBOOK PAGE:

[Facebook.com/SchulerBooks](https://Facebook.com/SchulerBooks)  
[SchulerBooks.com/Event](https://SchulerBooks.com/Event)



# Favorite Things

## Danielle Gyger and her petrified Betty Crocker cupcake

*Before the coronavirus shutdown, Danielle Gyger was well known to frequenters of Mac's Bar, thanks to her bartending gig. Now, she's working with High Water Farms, one of downtown Lansing's urban farms. But when she returns home, she gets to hangout with her favorite thing, a Betty Crocker cupcake she's kept for more than eight years.*

I made some cupcakes for a work function back in 2013. I had one left, and I like doing weird science experiments, and I wondered, 'How long will this last until it grows mold?' It never did. It just shrunk a little bit, and now it's a petrified cupcake. I love it. It's on my bookshelf, and it is one of my all-time favorite things.

It's a chocolate cupcake with vanilla icing — just a run-of-the-mill Betty Crocker cupcake. I looked online and learned that there's a ton of preservatives in it. It's kind of a gross reminder of how many preservatives are in processed foods. This is the only food I've ever done something like this with. After a month went by, I realized no mold was going to grow on it. I thought it would be funny to put it on my shelf as kind of a weird little knick-knack.

I'm not a baker; I'm more a cook. I bought the Betty Crocker cupcakes because I needed to bring something, and I'm not good at baking, so I bought something that would be much easier than making a dish from



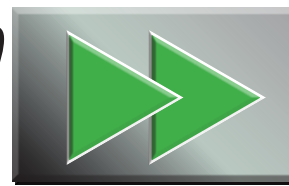
scratch. I'm assuming if you made a cupcake from scratch, it wouldn't hold up as well as this weird processed Betty Crocker one.

When people come over to my house for the first time, they notice that it's displayed pretty proudly. Most people think it's cool, but some people have been like, 'Wow that's really weird.' My old roommate Lizzie would refer to it as my weird cupcake. I actually have a little museum shelf where I have a dead rabbit in formaldehyde, as well as an old bug — saying this out loud I feel like a weirdo — I also have my retainer from middle school. It's a shelf of petrified oddities.

My favorite cupcake to actually eat is a red velvet cupcake with cream cheese frosting. My aunt makes me them for my birthday, every year since I was little. They are delicious.

*Interview edited and condensed by Skyler Ashley. If you have a suggestion for Favorite Things, please email Skyler@lansingcitypulse.com*

## FAST FORWARD



UPCOMING EVENTS AND HAPPENINGS COMING TO LANSING

By SKYLER ASHLEY



### Michigan Beekeepers Association Spring Conference 2021

Wednesday, March 3, 6 p.m. – Saturday, March 6, 5 p.m.

Register online at: [michiganbees.org/spring-conference](https://michiganbees.org/spring-conference)

The Michigan Beekeepers Association and Michigan State University Extension are hosting the MBA Spring Conference virtually, today through Saturday. Beekeepers and people who otherwise love and are fascinated by bees can tune in to learn more about beekeeping, honey bees, hive products, drone use and bee-related arts and culture.

#### Postmarked Lansing: The Michigan Capitol in Postcards

Thursday, March 4, 3 p.m.

RSVP: [capitoltourguides@legislature.mi.gov](mailto:capitoltourguides@legislature.mi.gov)

Historians have long considered postcards as valuable records of culture, communication and architecture. "Postcard Wally" Jung and the Capitol Education Team will present a special look at the intertwined histories of postcards and Michigan's historic and ever-changing Capitol building.



#### Live Q&A at the MSU Horse Farm

Friday, March 5, 11:30 a.m.

Register online at: [facebook.com/SouthCampusAnimalFarms](https://facebook.com/SouthCampusAnimalFarms)

Join the team at Michigan State University's South Campus Animal Farms for a live virtual Q&A session at MSU's Horse Teaching and Research Center. Attendees will be able to ask questions and learn more about MSU's amazing horses.

#### Virtual Death Café

Saturday, March 6, 10 a.m.

Register online at: [facebook.com/DeathCafeLansing](https://facebook.com/DeathCafeLansing)

Death Café is an organized group talk that discusses death with "no agenda, guiding questions or themes." Attendees



are invited to prepare their own tea and coffee, eat cake and discuss their thoughts on death. All are welcome are to attend.

#### Visit with Elizabeth Cady Stanton

Monday, March 8, 6:30 p.m.

Register online at: [facebook.com/lansingcommunitylibrary](https://facebook.com/lansingcommunitylibrary)

Elizabeth Cady Stanton fought for equal rights for Women for more than 50 years. When she died in 1902, she left behind a long legacy of crusading for gender equality and myriad writings that inspired feminists more than a century later. Laura Keyes will act as Elizabeth Cady Stanton for this inspiring presentation.



# Tommy Gomez: An Everyman unlike anyone else

By DAVID WINKELSTERN

Thomas “Tommy” Gomez was a family man, actor, director, teacher, mentor, musician, carpenter, Shakespeare devotee and more. Those who knew him remember his friendship and kindness.

On Feb. 16, after a snowstorm, Gomez, 55, died of a massive heart attack helping another parent whose car was stuck in a drift. It was the type of kindness Gomez was known for.

Katie Doyle was properties manager, among other responsibilities, at BoarsHead Theatre. She met Gomez when he was an intern and master carpenter for a 1984 touring production of “Letters From Bernice.”

“Sometimes you have in your life a very extraordinary friend. This man, Tommy Gomez, he’s that very extraordinary friend. I am a better actor, and more importantly, a better person because of Tommy,” Doyle said. “I’m overwhelmed by the fact that I received a wonderful gift in knowing him.”

Melissa Kaplan, Lansing Community College’s academic outreach coordinator, first knew Gomez while promoting BoarsHead in 1982. She said his e-mails were always focused, funny and full of exclamation points.

“That’s what he was like in person, he entered the room like an exclamation point,” Kaplan said. “He burst with energy, ideas and intellect. He was so very kind and fun.”

As a youth, Gomez was a farmhand in Olivet and Charlotte. In third grade, the second-generation Mexican immigrant worked on an onion farm in Eaton Rapids. He also was a training jockey at Jackson Harness Raceway. After joining the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act program that put Gomez



Courtesy

Tommy Gomez in a 2019 Santa Cruz Shakespeare production of “A Winter’s Tale.”

in schools to teach kids acting, his life changed.

The Olivet High School graduate went on to travel the country to direct and act in Shakespeare plays. Gomez co-founded the American Shakespeare Collective and taught at LCC, MSU and the University of Michigan — making friends along the way.

Gomez performed at the Old Globe Theatre, the American Conservatory Theatre, Berkley Repertory Theatre, California and San Francisco Shakespeare festivals, Purple Rose Theatre and more. He studied under the respected Shakespearean actor Douglas Campbell, of Canada’s Stratford Festival.

Locally, Gomez is remembered for roles like Selznick in BoarsHead’s “Moonlight and Magnolias,” Iago in “Othello” at LCC, Christopher Sly in a Turner Festival production of “The Taming of the Shrew” and directing his LCC students in “Dining Room.”

Gomez was the 2006 Tanne Award Recipient for his artistic “passion and commitment” and for “outstanding achievement.” It recognized Gomez’s work as a drama instructor for incarcerated youth in Michigan, Alabama and California. Before the W.J. Maxey Boys Training School in Whitmore Lake closed in 2015, Gomez taught there.

He also performed multiple characters in a one-man show at local elementary schools.

Mark Colson, who teaches at LCC and has an impressive national acting resume, bonded with Gomez 40 years ago on LCC Summer Festival Stages. “Tommy remained devoted to classical theater,” Colson said. “For the rest of his life, he never waived from his creative path.”

“I have discovered since his passing that I relied on Tommy’s spirit and light as a constant in my life,” Colson said. “My life is darker without him.”

John Lepard, Williamston Theatre’s executive director, knew Gomez when they both went to LCC’s first theater class. “We were roommates for a while in the ’80s in an apartment on South Washington in Lansing,” Lepard said.

A favorite memory was when he and Gomez had to come up quickly with names for an improv show. Gomez chose the cleverest name. “His was Emiliano Zapata Miguel Hidalgo, and I think mine was Doug,” Lepard said. “He will be missed.”

Doak Bloss, an area director, actor and playwright since 1980, is another of Gomez’s long-time friends from LCC. “He took a lead in a play I wrote,” Bloss said. About a year later in 1991, the pair

starred in an outdoor LCC production of “Our Town.”

“He was always looking for the truth of a text, never presuming or imposing it,” Bloss said. “That’s my kind of actor.”

Gomez quit teaching at LCC in ’92 to be a full time MSU theater student. After graduating in ’94 — and getting his Actor’s Equity Association card — he and wife, Christina Traister, moved to California. After they returned in 2006 to Charlotte to raise a family, Gomez built their Victorian style house.

Janet Colson said they were an incredibly honest, supportive and respectful wonder couple. “They were better than the movies because they were real,” Colson said.

The actress and playwright, who was last seen in Riverwalk’s “Boy Gets Girl,” remembers when her family lived in Los Angeles and Gomez stopped by after an acting gig. During the visit, the Colsons’ daughter suddenly stopped breathing.

“Tommy, without missing a beat, scooped her up and helped us with infant CPR while we waited for the paramedics,” Colson said. From then on, Colson said she could “trust Tommy with my life.”

In 2014, on the first Experimental Theatre Stage at Lansing’s Renegade Festival, Colson collaborated with Gomez, who added conga playing. “He was a terrific musician, as well as an actor,” she said. Gomez was a founding member of “Fade to Black” and a player in “The Disciples of Funk.”

Gomez and Traister were together for 29 years, and their 25th wedding anniversary is May 3. “I’ve never met a better person in my life,” Traister said. “He was truly my partner in all things.”

Traister, an associate professor of acting and stage combat at the University of Michigan, has her own theatrical history. She taught at MSU, is one of two female Fight Masters and is the president of the Society of American Fight Directors.

Traister has acted in over 50 plays across the country. She was Desdemona to Gomez’s Othello in a TASC production.

“Tommy used to jokingly refer to me as the family stage manager,” Traister said. “I will spend the rest of my life pouring my energy into our four children, so that they will grow into individuals who will affect positive change in the world just like he did.”

*Erin Buitendorp contributed research for this article.*



Courtesy

Tommy Gomez beams with energy and flashes a smile while playing congas.

**You can support the Gomez family by donating to their GoFundMe:**  
[gofundme.com/f/thomas-gomez-family/donate](https://gofundme.com/f/thomas-gomez-family/donate)



# Colossal southside pot shop launches recreational sales

Edgewood Wellness plans smoking lounge — and a weed museum

By KYLE KAMINSKI

Edgewood Wellness bills itself as the biggest marijuana dispensary east of the Mississippi River. And at about 19,000 square feet, it might be just the second largest pot shop on Earth. Planet 13, a store in Las Vegas, still holds the “world’s largest” title — at least for now.

Inside a former gymnasium tucked off Edgewood Boulevard near Celebration Cinema, much of Edgewood Wellness remains under renovation as its owners chart plans for an expansive new sales

floor, an upstairs smoking lounge and a stoner “museum” of sorts featuring local artists.

Expect that news to be unveiled this year. In the meantime, however, big plans haven’t stalled big progress. The southside shop became the latest dispensary in Lansing last month to be licensed for both medical and recreational sales. And the product lineup is out of this world.

**Fellō Cannabis — Doc’s OG**

**Price — \$40/3.5g**

**THC content — 18.9%**

Fellō Cannabis — pronounced “fel-low” — is a medical and adult-use cultivator based in southwest Michigan. Its website touts a state-of-the-art indoor facility that grows “vibrant and clean”



**Lansterdam in Review:**

**Edgewood Wellness**

134 E. Edgewood Blvd.

Lansing

Open 7 days 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

517-580-7078

edgewoodcannabis.com/

cannabis dedicated to “treating both people and plants with kindness and respect.”

This stuff easily earned itself a spot among my top five favorite strains. I love a good OG.

A cross between Face Off OG and Rare Dankness #1, the genetics behind Doc’s OG point to an indica. But with the initial energetic kick I had from this citrusy hybrid, I’m skeptical.

I made my way through most of a joint before a strong cerebral rush from

the first few hits slowly crept its way into a sort of mental spaciness that permeated its way across the rest of my body, sending me off into a giggly and slap-happy daze for most of the morning and afternoon.

This strain gets extra points for somehow destroying my tolerance barrier with only two joints, providing a long-lasting high that ultimately sent me to bed before 10 p.m. Saturday night.

**Harbor Farmz — Stardawg**

**(Live Resin Cartridge)**

**Price — \$35/0.5g**

**THC content — 83.24%**

Move over Stiizy. I’ve found a new all-time favorite brand for vaporizer cartridges: Harbor Farmz. This Kalamazoo company has been churning out some of the best concentrates in Michigan since 2017. Its lineup of live resin cartridges are no exception to their high standards.

Most local pot shops keep a large array of distillate-based vaporizer cartridges. Live resin isn’t nearly as common, in part because it’s more expensive and difficult to produce. Distillate uses trim, the cheapest and least potent part of the plant, sometimes with added terpene blends. Live resin is produced by freezing flower immediately after harvest to retain more of the character, flavors and aromatic profiles of the original strain. As a result, resin is also much more potent.

The best part about this cartridge was that it actually tasted like Stardawg — including that funky, sour and earthy punch that I’ve grown to love. Other reviews describe this strain as a mix of morning breath, a truck stop, roadkill skunk and chemicals. Oddly enough, I can totally get it.

Maybe it’s an acquired taste. Either way, just a few low-voltage tokes of this stuff tastes much more like hits straight from a dab rig than a handheld vape pen. And with the entourage effect of the terpenes, the effects were much — much — more potent than a standard distillate blend.

P.S. Harbor Farmz also makes killer concentrates. I recommend the GMO x GG4 cured sugar.

*Kyle Kaminski is City Pulse’s managing editor and a cannabis enthusiast who has been smoking marijuana just about every day for the last decade. Almost weekly, Kaminski samples some of the best cannabis products available in Greater Lansing, gets real high and writes about them.*

**PURE OPTIONS™**  
PREMIUM CANNABIS

**EXPANDED**

**Store Hours**

**LANSING LOCATIONS**  
Monday - Sunday 9am - 9:45pm

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <b>Pure Options<br/>Lansing South</b><br>5815 S Pennsylvania Ave.<br>Lansing, MI 48911 | <b>Pure Options<br/>Lansing North</b><br>2905 N East St.<br>Lansing, MI 48906 | <b>Pure Options<br/>Lansing East</b><br>1900 E Kalamazoo St.<br>Lansing, MI 48912 |
|--|---|---|

ORDER ONLINE AT **PureOptions.com**    ✉ info@pureoptions.com    f @pureoptions    @pureoptionscannabis



Jonesin' Crossword

By Matt Jones

"All Over the Place"--it's another themeless mess of words!  
by Matt Jones

Across

- 1 Online request to "pay your respects" when your playable character dies
- 12 Internet acronym with origins on Usenet
- 15 Lead singer on the "Pinkerton" album
- 16 Hawaiian delicacy
- 17 One way to get up from the ground floor
- 18 Extreme degree, for short
- 19 Actor Hawke
- 20 B'way purchase
- 21 Washington Irving's Bones
- 22 Scott of "30 Rock" and "Big Hero 6"
- 25 Location of a theater, in clichéd ads
- 27 Soviet WWII force
- 29 Bandleader for Leno
- 30 Really silly
- 31 H.S. units
- 32 "Time to head out"
- 33 Japanese naval architect of WWII, Baron Yuzuru
- 38 Shaker, OH
- 40 "Funky Cold Medina" rapper
- 41 It involves pinning and throwing
- 45 Like some chances
- 46 Begins with, in a screenplay
- 47 Bearded "South Park" puppet

|    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 |    | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 16 |    |    |
| 17 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 18 |    |    |
| 19 |    |    |    |    |    |    | 20 |    |    |    | 21 |    |    |    |
|    |    | 22 |    |    | 23 | 24 |    | 25 |    | 26 |    |    |    |    |
| 27 | 28 |    |    |    |    |    |    | 29 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 30 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 31 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 32 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 33 |    | 34 | 35 | 36 | 37 |
|    |    |    |    | 38 |    | 39 |    | 40 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 41 | 42 | 43 | 44 |    |    |    |    | 45 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 46 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 47 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 48 |    |    |    |    | 49 |    | 50 |    |    | 51 |    |    | 52 | 53 |
| 54 |    |    |    | 55 |    |    |    | 56 | 57 |    |    |    |    |    |
| 58 |    |    |    | 59 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 60 |    |    |    | 61 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |

- 48 Fitzgerald of jazz
- 49 Cobra's warning
- 51 Pandemic-era romantic meetup
- 54 \_\_\_ Harbour (Miami Beach resort area)
- 55 Instant ramen brand name, originally (before ditching the middle letter)
- 58 Prefix with scope
- 59 Statistician with a speciality
- 60 Wanna-\_\_\_ (copycats)
- 61 Opportunity to get a computer program early
- June 2020 Supreme Court ruling
- 6 Pres. from Missouri
- 7 Friendly prefix?
- 8 Short
- 9 Pop poolside painter
- 10 Event to test out an act, perhaps
- 11 High rock pile
- 12 Former Fugees member Hill
- 13 "Check this out!"
- 14 Chemical indicator
- 21 Item with underwire
- 23 "Ehhh, really?"
- 24 Actor Sheridan of "X-Men: Apocalypse"
- 26 "Essential" product of wormwood
- 27 "Too-Ra-Loo-Ra-Loo-\_\_\_" (Irish classic)
- 28 Canine suffix for Bern or Peking
- 34 Get ready to ride again
- 35 Carrier to Leonardo da Vinci
- Airport
- 36 Pantheon figure
- 37 High card
- 39 Site of intense magnetic activity
- 40 "\_\_\_ Goes to the Mayor"
- 41 Briggs who hosts "The Last Drive-in"
- 42 Watching just one more episode, maybe
- 43 Some potluck deserts
- 44 \_\_\_ bind
- 50 Buckwheat bowlful
- 52 Jamie Lee's "Freaky Friday" character
- 53 Direction from Madrid to Barcelona
- 55 Non-profit that started NPR in 1970
- 56 GRF's vice president
- 57 2021 U.K. award for "Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom" actor Toby Jones

©2020 Jonesin' Crosswords (jonesincrosswords@gmail.com)

Answers on page 23

Free Will Astrology

By Rob Brezсны

March 3-9, 2021

**ARIES (March 21-April 19):** In late April of 1969, Cambridgeshire, UK hosted the first-ever Thriplov Daffodil Weekend: a flower show highlighting 80 varieties of narcissus. In the intervening years, climate change has raised the average temperature 3.24 degrees Fahrenheit. So the flowers have been blooming progressively earlier each year, which has necessitated moving the festival back. The last pre-Covid show in 2019 was on March 23-24, a month earlier than the original. Let's use this as a metaphor for shifting conditions in your world. I invite you to take an inventory of how your environment has been changing, and what you could do to ensure you're adapting to new conditions.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20):** Author Leo Buscaglia told us that among ancient Egyptians, two specific questions were key in evaluating whether a human life was well-lived. They were "Did you bring joy?" and "Did you find joy?" In accordance with your current astrological potentials, I'm inviting you to meditate on those queries. And if you discover there's anything lacking in the joy you bring and the joy you find, now is a very favorable time to make corrections.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 20):** At age 11, the future first President of the United States George Washington became the "owner" of ten slaves. A few years later he "bought" 15 more. By the time he was president, 123 men, women, and children were struggling in miserable bondage under his control. Finally, in his will, he authorized them to be freed after he and his wife died. Magnanimous? Hell, no. He should have freed those people decades earlier—or better yet, never "owned" them in the first place. Another Founding Father, Benjamin Franklin not only freed his slaves but became an abolitionist. By my count, at least 11 of the other Founding Fathers never owned slaves. Now here's the lesson I'd like us to apply to your life right now: Don't procrastinate in doing the right thing. Do it now.

**CANCER (June 21-July 22):** During World War II, the Japanese island of Okunoshima housed a factory that manufactured poison gas for use in chemical warfare against China. These days it is a tourist attraction famous for its thousands of feral but friendly bunnies. I'd love to see you initiate a comparable transmutation in the coming months, dear Cancerian: changing bad news into good news, twisted darkness into interesting light, soullessness into soulfulness. Now is a good time to ramp up your efforts.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22):** "Scars speak for you," writes author Gena Showalter. "They say you're strong, and you've survived something that might have killed others." In that spirit, dear Leo, and in accordance with astrological omens, I invite you to authorize your scars to express interesting truths about you in the coming weeks. Allow them to demonstrate how resilient you've been, and how well you've mastered the lessons that your past suffering has made available. Give your scars permission to be wildly eloquent about the transformations you've been so courageous in achieving.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22):** According to novelist Doris Lessing, "Everybody in the world is thinking: I wish there was just one other person I could really talk to, who could really understand me, who'd be kind to me." She implied that hardly anyone ever gets such an experience—or that it's so rare as to be always tugging on our minds, forever a source of unquenched longing. But I'm more optimistic than Lessing. In my view, the treasured exchange she describes is not so impossible. And I think it will especially possible for you in the coming weeks. I suspect you're entering a grace period of being listened to, understood, and treated kindly. Here's the catch: For best results, you should be forthright in seeking it out.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22):** "How much has to be explored and discarded before reaching the naked flesh of feeling," wrote composer Claude

Debussy. In the coming weeks, I hope you'll regard his words as an incitement to do everything you can to reach the naked flesh of your feelings. Your ideas are fine. Your rational mind is a blessing. But for the foreseeable future, what you need most is to deepen your relationship with your emotions. Study them, please. Encourage them to express themselves. Respect their messages as gifts, even if you don't necessarily act upon them.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21):** You may never wander out alone into a dark forest or camp all night on a remote beach or encounter a mountain lion as you climb to a glacier near the peak of a rugged mountain. But there will always be a primeval wilderness within you—uncivilized lands and untamed creatures and elemental forces that are beyond your rational understanding. That's mostly a good thing! To be healthy and wise, you need to be in regular contact with raw nature, even if it's just the kind that's inside you. The only time it may be a hindrance is if you try to deny its existence, whereupon it may turn unruly and inimical. So don't deny it! Especially now. (PS: To help carry out this assignment, try to remember the dreams you have at night. Keep a recorder or notebook and pen near your bed.)

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21):** "What damages a person most," wrote philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, "is to work, think, and feel without inner necessity, without any deep personal desire, without pleasure—as a mere automaton of duty." Once a year, I think every one of us, including me, should meditate on that quote. Once a year, we should evaluate whether we are living according to our soul's code; whether we're following the path with heart; whether we're doing what we came to earth to accomplish. In my astrological opinion, the next two weeks will be your special time to engage in this exploration.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19):** What are your edges, Capricorn? What aspects of your identity straddle two different categories? Which of your beliefs embrace seemingly opposed positions? In your relations with other people, what are the taboo subjects? Where are the boundaries that you can sometimes cross and other times can't cross? I hope you'll meditate on these questions in the coming weeks. In my astrological opinion, you're primed to explore edges, deepen your relationship with your edges, and use your edges for healing and education and cultivating intimacy with your allies. As author Ali Smith says, "Edges are magic; there's a kind of forbidden magic on the borders of things, always a ceremony of crossing over, even if we ignore it or are unaware of it."

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18):** According to intermedia artist Sidney Pink, "The idea of divine inspiration and an aha moment is largely a fantasy." What the hell is he talking about? That's fake news, in my view. In the course of my creative career, I've been blessed with thousands of divine inspirations and aha moments. But I do acknowledge that my breakthroughs have been made possible by "hard work and unwavering dedication," which Sidney Pink extols. Now here's the climax of your oracle: You Aquarians are in a phase when you should be doing the hard work and unwavering dedication that will pave the way for divine inspirations and aha moments later this year.

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20):** For you Pisceans, March is Love Yourself Bigger and Better and Bolder Month. To prepare you for this festival, I'm providing two inspirational quotes. 1. "If you aren't good at loving yourself, you will have a difficult time loving anyone, since you'll resent the time and energy you give another person that you aren't even giving to yourself." —Barbara De Angelis 2. "Loving yourself does not mean being self-absorbed or narcissistic, or disregarding others. Rather it means welcoming yourself as the most honored guest in your own heart, a guest worthy of respect, a lovable companion." —Margo Anand

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

SUDOKU

Advanced

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

TO PLAY

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

Answers on page 23



# TURN IT DOWN!

**Loud dispatches from Lansing's music scene**

BY RICH TUPICA

## A LOOK BACK AT BERMUDA MOHAWK PRODUCTIONS



Bermuda Mohawk Productions' co-founder Cale Sauter (center) and BMP artist Craig Horky (left) also perform together in Cavalcade.



BMP's vinyl and CD release of the "Sonic Euthanasia" LP (2019) by Cavalcade.



BMP's logo (courtesy images)

## BMP was a staple in the Lansing DIY scene

For a sizable chunk of the 2000s, the Bermuda Mohawk Productions (BMP) logo was pasted on countless flyers across Lansing and on releases by dozens of local artists. Over the past few years, its workload and output has slowed, but the label still pops up occasionally. Co-founder Cale Sauter chatted with City Pulse about the history of BMP, and why its DIY ethos was necessary back in the imprint's heyday.

### Digging back, how many BMP releases were pressed up?

To date, there are 73 BMP releases. It's a pretty diverse catalogue, but when I was doing the most national and international releases, the label sort of naturally leaned toward a lot of mid-tempo hardcore, post-hardcore, and punk releases. That's likely due to the type of bands playing a lot of the all-ages shows back then as well as us typically having a presence at The Fest, an annual music festival No Idea Records throws down in Gainesville, Florida.

### How and why did BMP get started?

It was initially just something I made up to put on my first band's only release, but it gradually became something much more comprehen-

sive in the early-to-mid 2000s. In 1998, I moved to the area to attend Michigan State University and was disappointed with the inability to see shows or easily get involved with the local music scene if you were under 21. I started doing house shows, and working with others to get all-ages shows, and 18-and-over shows, at some legitimate local venues, as well.

### Eventually, it branched out into a full-service label. How did that happen?

One of my housemates was Ryan "Gyuri" Tarrant, who some may know from playing bass with StarFarm. At the time, Ryan was studying audio engineering and had a home studio set up. That's where the "Productions" came from. After doing shows and recording bands, we realized many bands needed more help with art and graphics as well as manufacturing and releasing the records. The internet didn't offer quite the direct channel to potential listeners as it does now.

Around then, my friend [Lansing artist] Craig Horky was moving back to Michigan after going to art school in Pittsburgh, so we teamed up to work on some releases, shows and posters. The idea was to work with

bands that otherwise couldn't really gain any traction in town due to the lull in the DIY/punk community and stricter regulations on venues that served alcohol at the time. As things grew, the recording phased out of the equation, but I continued releasing records and booking Bermuda Mohawk shows. Both efforts eventually became so busy that [concert promoter] Scott Bell came on board and started handling a great deal of the show responsibilities.

### Back when BMP first started, what local bands were taking off around then?

When BMP started, I believe the first official release was by the Cartridge Family (tCF). I remember playing and booking shows with tCF, The Casionauts, Red Swan, Fun Ender, Hell or Highwater, Gaytar and many others. My thing was: If we accomplish nothing else, I wanted to create a platform where the next generation of Michigan musicians could play, develop and grow without the discouragement that was seeming to bottleneck things a bit when I first got active up here.

### Over the past few years, BMP has slowed down a lot. What's the future of BMP going forward?

Things have slowed down since the days of two-to-three BMP shows per week and eight or so releases per year. That's partially due to life and to other people carrying on the mission locally. BMP and GTG Records have always had a great relationship, so it's amazing watching Tommy Plural and his crew keeping the musical landscape in this area safe and active for the underserved outsiders and weirdos. There's a long list of inspiring individuals and bands, outside of that, getting together DIY shows (pre-pandemic) and releases here as well these days, so Lansing is in great hands. I pitch in however I can, when I can. This has included involvement with StoopFest, booking and promoting a show here and there, and the occasional vinyl release.

### Today, you and Craig Horky both still play in Cavalcade. What's the band been up to during COVID?

After 2019's "Sonic Euthanasia" LP, Cavalcade has been back in the lab concocting a double LP for the next big release. The band has also been recording some odds and ends that will come out in the meantime on compilations and a B-sides mixtape eventually. Some Cavalcade videos are on the horizon, as well.



# OUT ON THE TOWN

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

## Wednesday, March 3

**Allen Farmers Market** - 1629 E. Kalamazoo! 3-6:30 p.m. 517-999-3911.

**Biomedical Engineering Virtual Seminar Series** - Join us for our weekly series featuring biomedical researchers from institutions across the country via Zoom. 11 a.m. [events.msu.edu](http://events.msu.edu)

**Future Present Exhibition** - MSU's Science Gallery Detroit debuts exhibition in E. Broad Art Lab, 565 E. Grand River Ave., East Lansing, through April 11th. Info and reservations: [detroit.sciencegallery.com](http://detroit.sciencegallery.com).

**Michigan Young Birders Network Virtual Meeting** - 7 p.m. via Zoom. 7-8 p.m. Michigan Audubon. For link, go to [michiganaudubon.org](http://michiganaudubon.org).

**Muslim Journeys: I Was Their American Dream** by Malaka Gharib. This event will feature a short presentation. 7-9 p.m. [libguides.lib.msu.edu](http://libguides.lib.msu.edu)

**Threads of Wisdom: Self and Sustainability** - Join us on Zoom for a double Threads of Wisdom discussion. 6:30-7:30 p.m. [weaversoftheweb.org](http://weaversoftheweb.org).

## Thursday, March 4

**Homeless No More Annual Event** - 10th annual event is being hosted virtually this year, free to attend, and sponsorships are still available. 7-7:30 p.m. [HolyCrossServices.org](http://HolyCrossServices.org).

**Refuge Recovery Lansing (Virtual)** - 6-7 p.m. [facebook.com/refugerecoverylansing](http://facebook.com/refugerecoverylansing)

**Virtual Refugee Foster Care Information Session** - serves children who flee from war, violence or persecution in dozens of countries. 5:30-7:30 p.m. For info or to register, email [RFCinfo@samaritas.org](mailto:RFCinfo@samaritas.org)

## Friday, March 5

**Refuge Recovery Lansing (Virtual)** - 7:30- 8:30 p.m. [facebook.com/refugerecoverylansing](http://facebook.com/refugerecoverylansing)

**Virtual Preschool Family Storytime** - 11-11:30 a.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, Go to [gladl.org](http://gladl.org) for link.

| SUDOKU SOLUTION |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
|-----------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| From Pg. 21     |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| 7               | 5 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 8 | 9 | 4 |  |
| 9               | 4 | 2 | 8 | 7 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 6 |  |
| 6               | 1 | 8 | 5 | 9 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 7 |  |
| 3               | 7 | 6 | 4 | 5 | 9 | 1 | 2 | 8 |  |
| 4               | 8 | 1 | 6 | 3 | 2 | 7 | 5 | 9 |  |
| 2               | 9 | 5 | 7 | 1 | 8 | 6 | 4 | 3 |  |
| 1               | 3 | 4 | 2 | 8 | 7 | 9 | 6 | 5 |  |
| 8               | 2 | 9 | 3 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 7 | 1 |  |
| 5               | 6 | 7 | 9 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 8 | 2 |  |

## Saturday, March 6

**Hunter Park GardenHouse Neighbor Spotlight:** Root of the Vine Urban Garden. 10-11:30 a.m. Hunter Park, 1400 E Kalamazoo St, Lansing. [allenneighborhoodcenter.org/gardenhouse](http://allenneighborhoodcenter.org/gardenhouse)

**Markers of Time | Mark Chatterley | Exhibition** - Meet the artist Sat. March 6 11am-3pm; exhibit March 6-30. Lansing Art Gallery & Education Center, 119 N Washington Sq, Ste 101, Lansing. [lansingartgallery.org](http://lansingartgallery.org).

**Refuge Recovery Lansing (Virtual)** - 10:30-11:30 a.m. [facebook.com/refugerecoverylansing](http://facebook.com/refugerecoverylansing)

## Monday, March 8

**Jump Into Reading** - Join Ms. Anna on our Facebook or YouTube channel for story time

| CROSSWORD SOLUTION |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |       |
|--------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-------|
| From Pg. 21        |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |       |
| F                  | S | I | N | T | H | E | C | H | A | T |   | L O L |
| R                  | I | V | E | R | S | C | U | O | M | O |   | A H I |
| E                  | L | E | V | A | T | O | R | C | A | R |   | U L T |
| E                  | T | H | A | N |   |   | T | K | T |   | B | R O M |
|                    |   | A | D | S | I | T |   | N | E | A | R | Y O U |
| R                  | E | D | A | R | M | Y |   | E | U | B | A | N K S |
| A                  | S | I | N | I | N | E |   | Y | R | S |   |       |
| L                  | E | T | S | G | O |   |   | H | I | R | A | G A   |
|                    |   |   |   | H | T | S |   | T | O | N | E | L O C |
| J                  | U | J | I | T | S | U |   | O | U | T | S | I D E |
| O                  | P | E | N | S | O | N |   | M | R | H | A | T     |
| E                  | L | L | A |   | S | S |   |   |   | E | D | A T E |
| B                  | A | L |   | C | U | P | O | N | O | O | D | L E S |
| O                  | T | O |   | P | R | O | B | A | B | I | L | I S T |
| B                  | E | S |   | B | E | T | A | R | E | L | E | A S E |

read aloud and activity. 11-11:30 a.m. Eaton Rapids Area District Library. [eradl.org](http://eradl.org)

**Refuge Recovery Lansing (Virtual)** - 6-7 p.m. [facebook.com/refugerecoverylansing](http://facebook.com/refugerecoverylansing)

## Tuesday, March 9

**Mi Bird-Friendly Communities Lunch & Learn:** How To Be a Purple Martin Landlord. 12 p.m. Michigan Audubon, 2310 Science Pkwy, #200, Okemos. [michiganaudubon.org](http://michiganaudubon.org)

**ThePoetryRoom X AOTA Presents Sky's The Limit** - Virtual. 7:30 p.m. The Robin Theatre, 1105 S Washington Ave, Lansing. [therobintheatre.com](http://therobintheatre.com).

**Tri County Response to Mental Health Crises Virtual Presentation** - 3-4:30 p.m. Virtual - Zoom. [namilansing.org](http://namilansing.org).

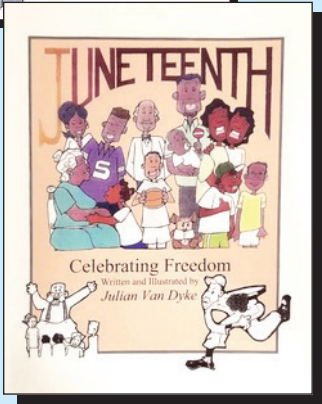
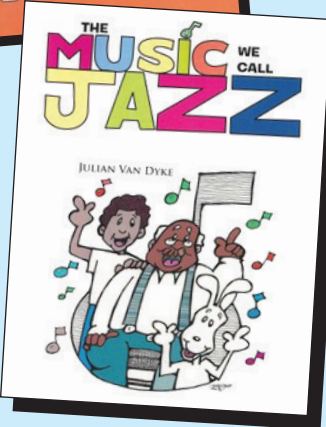
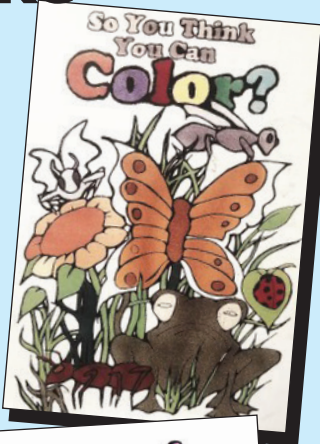
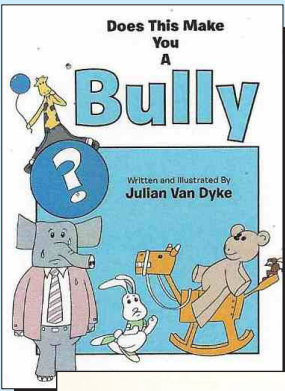
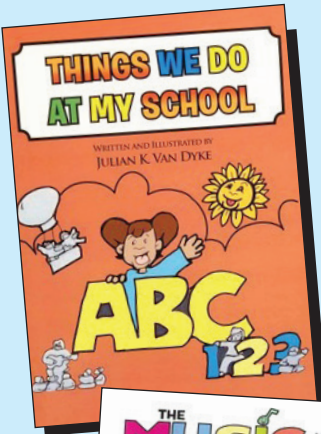
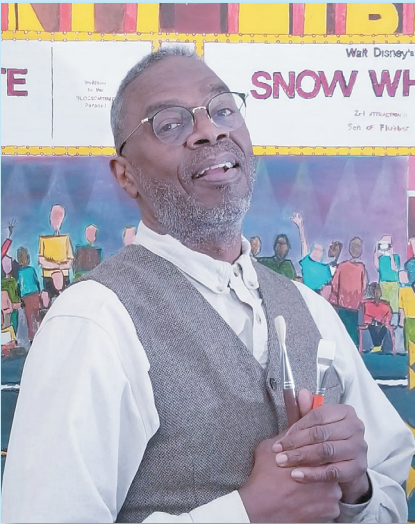
# Coming in April

## A book signing with Julian Van Dyke

Julian Van Dyke has authored several books and a fun coloring book for all ages.

His signing will be at Meridian Mall.

Details will be available soon at [vandykeart.com](http://vandykeart.com)







# KING CRAB

**Cajun Seafood Restaurant & Bar**  
**3218 S. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.**  
**517-220-2169 • 517-580-3761**

## NEW LUNCH SPECIALS!

**Monday - Saturday**  
**11AM-3PM**

### SEAFOOD BOIL

includes one corn, one potato, one egg,  
 1/2 lb. of sausage & can of soda

- Shrimp - 1/2 lb. (head off) ... \$9.99**
- Snow Crab Leg - 1/2 lb. .... \$12.99**
- Crawfish - 1 lb..... \$10.99**
- Black Mussels - 1 lb..... \$9.99**
- Green Mussels - 1 lb. .... \$11.99**

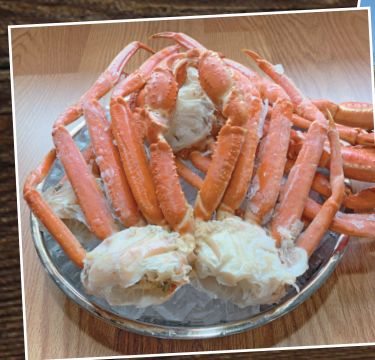


### FRIED SEAFOOD BASKET OR PO BOY

includes your choice of: French Fries, Cajun Fries  
 or Sweet Potato Fries & a can of soda

- Fried Chicken Tender Basket (2 tenders).... \$7.99**
- Fried Fish Basket (2 filets) ..... \$7.99**
- Fried Shrimp Basket (6 shrimp)..... \$8.99**
- Fried Oyster Basket (6 oysters) ..... \$8.99**

All discounts & promotions not valid with lunch special.



## New seafood joint brings Louisiana flavor to Lansing

By **COLE TUNNINGLEY**

Just in time for indoor dining's return, King Crab Cajun Seafood opened its doors on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. The restaurant serves a wide variety of fried and boiled seafood available in single-serve and family portions.

"Our main dish is the boiled seafood dinner," said owner Eko Dananjaya. "We have many different types of seafood including crawfish, lobsters, crabs. It's Louisiana, Cajun-style food."

About eight months ago, Dananjaya began perfecting his craft, learning to

### Other locations:

- 934 N West Ave, Jackson, MI • 517-768-2222
- 5837 W Saginaw Hwy, Lansing • 517-886-9999
- 4190 E Court St, Burton, MI • 810-265-7028
- 720 Brown Rd, Auburn Hills, MI • Coming Soon!
- OHIO
- 2216 Richland Mall, Mansfield, OH
- 419-528-3288
- 267 Boardman Canfield Rd, Boardman, OH
- 330-629-8003.
- INDIANA
- 4730 Grape Rd, Mishawaka, IN • Coming Soon!

craft the perfect meal. According to his first round of customers, he did a good job. So far, he's received positive reviews on Facebook and from customers who visited the restaurant in

person.

"The customers have only said kind words so far," Dananjaya said. "It's been booming. It's been busy."

Dananjaya is proud of the work he's doing. While he recommends the whole menu, he pointed out that the seafood boil is "amazing." With their order, customers get their choice of seafood, their choice of seasoning, corn and potatoes.

King Crab also serves a selection of the classic Louisiana sandwich, the Po'boy. Customers can pick between seafood as their sandwich meat or fried chicken tenders.

"We want to create a seafood experience that people never forget," Dananjaya said.

Dananjaya hopes that the people of Lansing give him and his restaurant a chance. Being the new restaurant on the block can be difficult. But with enough word-of-mouth buzz, he thinks that King Crab has the chance to flourish.

"I want people to try it out just so I can show them what we do," Dananjaya said. "I want to prove that we can do Cajun seafood better than any other place in the area. That's our main goal."



# FOOD & DRINK

## DINING OUT IN GREATER LANSING

### Rice age

By ARI LeVAUX

I have nothing but tough-love for those who claim they can't cook a pot of rice. Quit acting so helpless. Cook the rice. If you screw it up, consider what went wrong and adjust. Like you do when making a sandwich. Which is much easier to screw up than a pot of rice.

Not mushy, sticky or starchy, neither crunchy nor burnt, my rice is perfect. Sure, once in a while you faceplant. Heck, I can screw up a box of macaroni and cheese. But it's easier than baking bread, or making your own noodles from scratch. The variables in rice-making are manageable: heat, time and moisture. To these laws of the physical universe, the rice abides.

Nobody wants too many learning experiences along the way, but rice is a journey, not a single meal commitment. It's about learning where you want to go with your rice, and figuring out how to get there. Do you like it al dente? A little soggy? Take note of what you did each time and make adjustments. You'll quickly run out of variables to tweak, and learn what not to do, like stir the rice, which would be like stirring a cake while it's baking. It would kill the living, breathing structural integrity of a pot of rice. As you understand the finite universe of factors and tricks, your confidence will rise.

Too many cooks have never felt confidence in their rice. So they buy rice cookers, even though they only make rice once every six months, which is part of the problem. If you cook it every day, sure, buy a rice cooker. It will make perfect rice every time. But if you know your rice, you don't need to measure, or watch the clock. Just watch the rice, preferably in a heavy-bottomed pot. Eventually your observations will become understanding.

I prefer white rice, which is often starchy, like jasmine or sushi rice. If it makes the water milky I'll rinse it several times, dumping and replacing the cloudy water and stirring in between loads, and sometimes letting it soak for a minute, which reduces the cooking time, not that I keep track. I learned about rinsing, among other things, in sushi class, 35 years ago, and still do it.



I think it's this rinsing practice that got me away from measuring and timing, as the rice absorbs water during rinsing, which makes it impossible to keep track. So I simply wash the rice until it rinses clean, then cover it with about an inch of water, and cook it until it's perfect. That's not what we did in sushi class but whatever.

With a tight-fitting lid, place the pot on high. Don't stir it. When it boils, turn it down to low. Don't stir it. After about 15 minutes you can turn it off and forget about it. And don't forget to not stir it.

If the rice burns, perhaps because you forget to turn it off, then you must act quickly, as with any burn. If it's merely a pleasing shade of brown, turn off the heat, give it a splash of water, replace the lid and forget about it for a while. When you remember, it will be perfect. It's magic.

But if you smell actual blackened burned, dump and remove the rice as quickly as possible, transferring it into a different pot or a bowl. Don't scrape the bottom or move any burnt material to the new vessel. As long as the burned aroma has not impregnated the clean grains you'll be fine. If the rice is a bit crunchy add what looks like the right amount of water, the exact feel of which you can only learn from experience, by feeling the rice and adding what you think it needs. Just be nice to those grains of rice, and they'll be nice to you.

Most of the time, everything goes smoothly and I end up with perfect, no stress rice. Some will judge me, but my loosey goosey process includes a peak along the way. I'll even insert a knife if I suspect low water, and scrape the bottom, and perhaps taste a grain of rice from the top. If it's chewy that means you're close and can turn it off and let it sit until mealtime, slowly puffing up. If the rice on top is too crunchy and seems in danger of drying out, add a tablespoon or two of water and replace the lid.

I know that getting thrown off the



deep end isn't always the best teaching method for everyone, so I want to offer the stubbornly helpless this painfully specific recipe for baked rice. It comes from my mother-in-law. It's not only fool-proof, it's smart-aleck-proof, is most customizable, and most impressively breaks not one but two of my cardinal rules. She not only gets away with both infractions, but they probably even help make it the dish that it is.

She rinses not a single grain of rice, which is admittedly something of a rice-snob's practice. And she stirs it just before serving — which technically isn't an infraction, as stirring is only prohibited during the cooking process, but still. At the very least this recipe bends my rules, which you can do if you know them by heart.

#### Perfect Baked Rice

I once had a basketball coach who liked to remind us that, "Practice doesn't make perfect; perfect practice makes perfect." In that spirit, this recipe will get you accustomed to making good rice. And will make you totally intolerant of a single mushy grain of rice.

Each gloriously flavored and supple batch of this rice is so decadent you could binge on it plain like a tub of vanilla ice cream. I like to throw a handful of fast-cooking veggies and maybe some prepared proteins on top. It's very customizable. But try to keep it simple.

1 cup long grain white rice, such as jasmine

1  $\frac{3}{4}$  cups boiling water or chicken stock or veggie stock

$\frac{1}{4}$  pound onion, finely minced

2 tablespoons butter or oil

Preheat the oven to 350. Gently sauté the onions and butter in a bakeable vessel with a tight-fitting lid. Stir in the rice. Add the boiling water or stock.

Bake for 20 minutes with the lid on. Remove from the oven and let it rest for 15 minutes. Fluff before serving, if you wish.

Or perhaps, turn off the oven and let it rest there, where it can slowly develop a delicious golden bottom. Don't burn it, but let it get close. Why stop at breaking just two rules at once?

*Flash in the Pan* is food writer Ari LeVaux's weekly recipe column. It runs in about 100 newspapers nationwide, nourishing food sections large and small with complete protein for the belly brain.

Featured on: They own

**Fish. Burgers & Steak**  
*Fresh off the Grill!*

**BUY ANY DINNER**

**GET 2<sup>ND</sup> DINNER**

**50% OFF**

One per customer  
Expires 3/31/21

**2417 E. Kalamazoo**  
**Lansing, MI 48912**  
**(517) 993-5988**  
**www.eastsidefishfry.com**  
The only American owned & operated fish fry in Lansing



# Oriental Market rebrands as Fresh International Market

By COLE TUNNINGLEY

Oriental Market made a name for itself providing hard-to-find international food for East Lansing residents. The store recently rebranded as Fresh International Market in an effort to expand its selection and welcome a whole new customer base.

Recently, the store went through extensive renovations. Besides a cosmetic upgrade, Fresh International Market also added a food court, 7 A.M. Bakery and a juice bar. It also expanded its seafood, meat and produce department.

"We are offering Chinese street food such as BBQ lamb sticks, steam bun. The shapu shapu will also be available after the pandemic," said owner Bowen Kou. "Our Cantonese BBQ, duck and chicken are authentic and we make them daily."

Fresh International Market also partnered with the local sushi restaurant, Sansu, to sell to-go sushi rolls.

Rebranding was a practical move on Kou's part. He owns other Fresh International Market locations in Michigan, Indiana and Illinois. Changing the name from Oriental Mart to Fresh International Market is part of his effort to establish his brand across the Midwest.

The name change is also an indicator that the store is going in a new direction. Kou said that he plans to



## Fresh International Market

2800 E. Grand River Ave.  
East Lansing  
Open 7 days  
10 a.m. to 8 p.m.  
517-337-2519  
freshmarket.com

carry food from all around the world and focus less on Asian food.

So far, the renovations have been popular with customers. He said that he's noticed a steady stream of new, positive reviews on the store's Google webpage.

"We are working hard to gain more business in our community and so far we are happy with the result," said Kou. "We will keep improving our store and try to earn more business."

The COVID outbreak reduced the number of international students coming into East Lansing to study at Michigan State University. Kou admitted that — due to the decreased number of international students and the increase in the number of students taking classes online — the store has lost some customers. But he considers East Lansing home and wants to do his best to stay there.

"Since I went to Michigan State for college in 2009, I always con-



Courtesy

Oriental Mart underwent extensive renovations and is rebranded as Fresh International Market.

sider East Lansing to be my hometown," explained Kou. "It is crucial and means a lot to us to get members of the community to support locally owned businesses like us."

Kou is most excited to introduce his customers to the 7 A.M. Bakery, which offers traditional Taiwanese/Chinese pastries like green onion bread, buns with pork floss and

brown sugar cake.

To new customers, he has a bit of advice.

"You may see some vegetables, fruits, snacks and drinks you never saw before. Don't hesitate to ask our staff questions," he urged. "A lot of the time, our staff is able to make some recommendations, and you may end up falling in love with our products."

**BUY 1 ENTREE GET 1**  
**50% OFF**  
Equal or lesser value  
Valid Monday - Thursday. Cannot be combined with any other offer or discount. Exp. 6/30/2021

**LIVE ENTERTAINMENT EVERY FRIDAY & SATURDAY**

Dine In  
Delivery  
Drive Up  
Catering

**ONE NORTH**  
KITCHEN & BAR  
5001 W. Saginaw Hwy  
onenorthdining.com • 517-901-5001  
Hours: Daily 11am-10pm

**AMERICAN**  
REAL FOOD *Bistro*

**BUY 1 ENTREE GET 1**  
**50% OFF**  
Equal or lesser value  
Valid Monday-Thursday. Cannot be combined with any other offer or discount. Exp. 6/30/2021

Dine In  
Delivery  
Takeout  
Curbside Pickup  
Catering

**2328 Showtime Drive (Behind NCG Cinema)**  
**Theamerican-bistro.com**  
**517-708-8803**  
Hours: M-Th 11-8pm • Friday 11-9pm  
Saturday 9-9pm • Sunday 9-8pm

**Welcome Back to The Airport Tavern!**

*Lenten Special*  
**Fridays Only**

**Hand-Battered Deep Fried Cod with Fries & Cole Slaw**

**LUNCH \$10** **DINNER \$13**

**5000 Airport Tavern FOOD LIQUOR**

5000 N. Grand River  
**(517) 321-3852**





**\$5 OFF**  
ANY PURCHASE OF \$25 OR MORE  
Expires 3/11/2021

**\$10 OFF**  
ANY PURCHASE OF \$50 OR MORE  
Expires 3/11/2021

4832 W. Saginaw Hwy. • Lansing  
7 days a week 11am-9pm  
(517) 574-3020



**Fresh food  
Family fun!**

**PICK UP  
AVAILABLE!**  
Call  
**11AM-8PM**  
to place your  
order!

East Lansing • 3048 E Lake Lansing Rd • (517) 333-9212  
Monday - Saturday: 11am to 2am • Sunday: 12pm to 1am

Holt • 2040 Aurelius Rd #13 • (517) 699-3670  
Monday - Saturday: 11am to 2am • Sunday: 9am to 1am

Okemos • 1937 W Grand River Ave • (517) 347-0443  
Monday - Saturday: 11am to 2am • Sunday: 9am to 1am





**DINE IN OR TAKE OUT**  
**SERVING CORNED BEEF  
& CABBAGE**  
Wednesday, March 17  
Lunch & Dinner Specials  
Greek Specials • Soups & Salads  
**QUIET ATMOSPHERE & FRIENDLY STAFF**

4625 Willoughby Rd • Holt  
www.delhicaferestaurant.com  
517-694-8655  
T-F 11AM-7:30PM

**NOW OPEN  
FOR DINE IN**

**THURS-SAT  
11 TO 8**

**Meat**  
SOUTHERN B.B.Q. & CARNIVORE CUISINE  
580-4400 | MEATBBQ.COM  
1224 TURNER ST. OLD TOWN, LANSING

**Family  
Owned and  
Operated**

**We Look  
Forward  
To Your  
Visit!**

**El Oasis**  
Antojitos Mexicanos

**MICHIGAN AVENUE**  
2501 E Michigan Avenue  
Lansing, MI  
517-648-7693  
Delivery: 517-882-1777

**HASLETT**  
1620 Haslett Road  
Haslett, MI  
517-230-4385

**SOUTH SIDE**  
6100 S Cedar Street  
Lansing, MI  
517-882-2100  
Catering: 517-648-4749

voted  
#1  
Top of the Town  
2020

**HAPPY HOUR 7 DAYS A WEEK**  
Save 10% if you order online before 6pm!





3415 E Saginaw St • Lansing • (517) 580-3720  
Order online for pickup, curbside & delivery:  
caskandcompany.com

**Appetizers**

**WANT YOUR RESTAURANT LISTED? CALL 517-999-5064**



**Delhi Cafe Family Restaurant**  
4625 Willoughby Rd  
Holt  
(517) 694-8655

**COME JOIN THE FAMILY! COMFORT FOOD FROM GENERATIONS!** A great meeting place for family and friends. Relax with a glass of wine and try our daily lunch/dinner specials, soups, salads, Greek plates and more. Quiet atmosphere and friendly staff.



**American Bistro**  
2328 Showtime Dr  
Lansing  
(517) 708-8803  
theamerican-bistro.com

**DINE IN, DELIVERY, CURBSIDE AND CATERING** Local. Sustainable. Simply real food. Breakfast served all day! Diner classics in an relaxed, modern setting. Affordable fresh food made from scratch daily.



**Eastside Fish Fry**  
2417 E. Kalamazoo St.,  
Lansing  
(517) 993-5988  
eastsidefishfry.com

**GUY FIERI APPROVED!** We were featured on Food Net- work's Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives. Our fried home-style clas- sics and fresh seafood are some of the best in Lansing. We've got the classics: fried chicken buckets, chicken wings, exotic fare, like frog legs and alligator tails and fresh seafood. Desserts, too!



**One North Kitchen & Bar**  
5001 W. Saginaw Hwy.  
Lansing  
(517) 901-5001  
onenorthdining.com

**LET US BE YOUR PLACE FOR CELEBRATIONS** like birthdays and post-game victories. Now offering our unique, authentic dishes available for dine in, out- door dining, delivery and pickup. We've come "North" from Jackson to serve you!



**Taqueria El Chaparrito**  
4832 W. Saginaw Hwy.  
Lansing  
(517) 574-3020

**OUR NEW LOCATION IS OPEN FOR TAKEOUT!** We offer delicious and authentic Mexican food. We do catering and events. Birria tacos are our specialty. Be transported to a warm Mexican beach with our rich, fresh flavors!



**Meat Southern BBQ**  
1224 Turner Rd.  
Lansing  
(517) 580-4400  
meatbbq.com

**WE BELIEVE EVERYONE DESERVES GREAT BBQ.** Award winning BBQ. Ribs, French fry bar, chili, sides including BBQ pit baked beans, mac n' cheese. 18 rotating taps of craft, Michigan made beers. Craft cocktails. We cater, too!



**El Oasis**  
2501 E. Michigan Ave.  
Lansing  
(517) 882-1777  
eloasistruck.com

**TRY THE CROWN JEWEL OF LANSING'S FOOD TRUCKS.** Serving the Lansing community for 13 years, we extend an invitation to all those to give us a try to find out why we were voted the best food truck in Lansing's 2019 Top of The Town Contest.



**Buddies Holt**  
2040 Aurelius Rd, Ste 12  
Holt  
(517) 699-3670  
buddiesbars.com

**DISCOVER YOUR NEW FAVORITE SPOT!** Traditional classics and great drinks. Burgers, Mexican entrees, pizza and appetizers. Buddies Bowls you can't get anywhere else. Locally owned and operated for over 20 years.

SPONSORED CONTENT



## DIVORCE FAMILY LAW



**Divorce**  
**Custody • Visitation**  
**Child Support**  
**Alimony**  
**Property Distribution**  
**Domestic Partnership Agreements / Separation**

45 YEARS -  
**AGGRESSIVE LITIGATION**  
**EFFECTIVE MEDIATION**

**LAW OFFICES OF**  
**STUART R. SHAFER, P.C.**  
Former Assistant Prosecutor

487-6603

1223 Turner St., Ste 333, Lansing  
[www.stushafer.com](http://www.stushafer.com)



**BILLY WHITE ROOFING, LLC**  
**NOW HIRING!!**

We're currently looking to fill multiple positions:

- ♦Commercial Roof Sales & Estimating
- ♦Flat Roof Repair Technician ♦Residential Shingle Salesperson ♦Office Support Staff Member.

We offer: ♦Competitive Pay (based on experience) ♦Paid Vacation & 401K

If interested & are looking for an opportunity to further your career, please contact us at our Jackson Office @ 517-784-0463 or Email us at [billywhiteroofing@comcast.net](mailto:billywhiteroofing@comcast.net)





**As Seen On the Cover of CityPulse**

Illustrations • Murals • Graphic Design  
 Signs • Banners • T-Shirts • Logos

[nevin@nevingraphics.com](mailto:nevin@nevingraphics.com)

517-703-4655

 ArtByNevin
 Art\_By\_Nevin



14500 S. U.S. Hwy. 27, DeWitt, MI 48820

We are looking for **FULL TIME** low slope roof technicians for an opportunity to work with a growing company

**BENEFITS:**

- In house training • Health Insurance
- 401K with company match • Paid Holidays
- Paid vacations • Quarterly profit sharing
- Very competitive wages

**REQUIREMENTS:**

- Valid State ID
- Social Security Card • Ability to lift 50 pounds

**DESIRED SKILLS:**

- Ability to work with hand and power tools
- Enjoy working outdoors year round
- Customer focused • Results oriented and goal driven
- Accountable to yourself • Team player
- Positive attitude • Good customer service and communications skills
- Experience a plus - not required

Click on the about page and choose employment to submit an online resume or email us from the Contact page at [roofinginnovations.com](http://roofinginnovations.com) You can also call us at 517-482-2409 or stop in between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Monday through Thursday.

**DON'T FORGET • WE'VE GOT**

# THE PULSIFIEDS

FIND A HOUSE!

**BACKPAGE CLASSIFIEDS**  
**Rates start at \$24**  
**for 4 lines**

Find a Job!

*Advertise Your Service!*

Sell Your Stuff!

Submit your classified ad to Suzi Smith:  
 517-999-6704 or [suzi@lansingcitypulse.com](mailto:suzi@lansingcitypulse.com)

# CityPULSE

Contract rates available, all rates net. Classified ads also appear online at no extra charge. Deadline for classifieds is 5 p.m. Monday for the upcoming Wednesday's issue.

## HIRING

The community mental health movement in this country was founded on the belief that mental health services are best provided in the community in which the person receiving such service lives. In keeping with this philosophy, Community Mental Health provides a wide range of community-based services. Annually, the organization serves over 11,000 persons at 122 sites throughout the tri-county region.

In an effort to make the most of this community's resources, Community Mental Health recognizes the value of, and is committed to, hundreds of partnerships with a wide range of parties. These partnerships, carried out in the form of multiple party collaborative efforts and two-party agreements, are fundamental to the provision of comprehensive and seamless mental health care service delivery.

Today, with over 1,000 employees, Community Mental Health has become the 15th largest employer in the region, and through contracts with other providers, makes an investment of an additional 500 jobs in our community.



Our Service Areas include:

- Adult Mental Health Services
- Families Forward (Children's Services)
- Developmentally Disabled



**Community**  
 MENTAL HEALTH  
 CLINTON • EATON • INGHAM

Our Relief Security Officer positions are responsible for maintaining a safe and orderly atmosphere in the building, including screening individuals entering the building, discouraging physical violence of any kind and monitoring consumer and visitor activity.

**Requirements** include possession of High School Diploma or G.E.D., criminal background check (including fingerprinting), physical exam, and verification of an acceptable Michigan driving record.

**Salary/Hours:** \$13.67 per hour. Flexible schedule with 0-19 hours per week. Potential for additional hours as they are available. **Great for college students!**

Please see the following positions to apply:  
 Relief Security Guard

Please visit our website for all of our employment opportunities at:  
[www.ceicmh.org](http://www.ceicmh.org)

www.ceicmh.org

## FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

for the latest local news

# CityPULSE

Connect with us and share your comments on stories!



LansingCityPulse



lansingcitypulse



citypulse