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June 30 - July 6, 2021

CityPULSE

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A newspaper for the rest of us

FREE

PRIDE | Issue 2021

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East Lansing

INGHAM COUNTY SMALL BUSINESS SUNRISE GRANT PROGRAM

Grants for Ingham County Small Businesses and Nonprofits

Apply June 28 through July 30, 2021
purelansing.com/sunrise

When can I apply?

The application will be open from 9 a.m. June 28 until 11:59 p.m. July 30, 2021.

Where do I apply?

You can apply and review program information at purelansing.com/sunrise

Application questions and additional program documentation is available at purelansing.com/sunrise

How are the grants funded?

The Ingham County Board of Commissioners allocated **\$11 million** of Ingham County's American Rescue Plan funds to create the Ingham County Small Business Sunrise Grant Program.

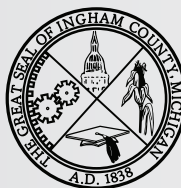
The Lansing Economic Area Partnership (LEAP) is administering the program on behalf of Ingham County.

How much money is available?

Standard grant amounts range from \$5,000 to \$25,000 based on employment levels for traditional retail/services, tourism and hospitality service providers, nonprofits, sole proprietors, new businesses opened during the pandemic and restaurants/eateries/taverns.

For incubators/entrepreneurial support agencies and childcare facilities, grant amounts are based on need and available funds.

The number of grants awarded will depend on the number of applications received.



Who should apply?

Eligible applicants include small businesses and nonprofits that meet the following criteria:

Have a physical location (including home-based) in Ingham County that generates revenue and employment (including self-employment/sole proprietors).

Have 1 to 100 workers on payroll (including full-time, part-time and owner-employees) working from the specific business location tied to application as of June 28, 2021, and have fewer than 250 across all locations worldwide with at least 50% of worldwide workforce for business employed in Michigan.

Have been directly and negatively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting economic crisis, including revenue loss.

Can demonstrate a need for working capital to support payroll, rent, mortgage payments, utility bills or other similar expenses currently and/or into the future to recover, sustain or grow operations.

Remained in compliance with all state and local governmental and public health orders related to COVID-19 since March 2020.

Is not involved in the growing, manufacturing, distribution or sale of cannabis products.

Other things to know

LEAP worked closely with Ingham County leadership and numerous community organizations to reduce bias in the review and selection process and prioritize areas of greatest need with intentional scoring criteria.

A minimum of 50% of grant funds will be distributed to underrepresented populations, including women, BIPOC, persons with disabilities, veterans and LGBTQ+ business owners, based on 50%+ ownership stake.

As best as possible, equitable geographic distribution by population and small business makeup of county, and business longevity will be considered.

Numerous technical assistance providers are available to help you apply.

These grants are NOT first come first served. Applications will be reviewed after the application window closes July 30 based on publicly available scoring criteria.

purelansing.com/sunrise

Happy PRIDE!

Intimate Toys
Bedroom Games
Massage Essentials
Romantic Gifts

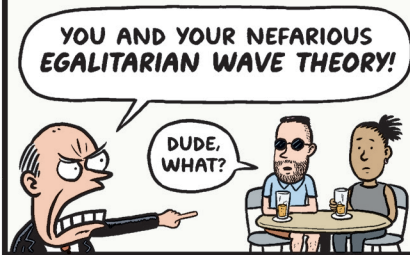
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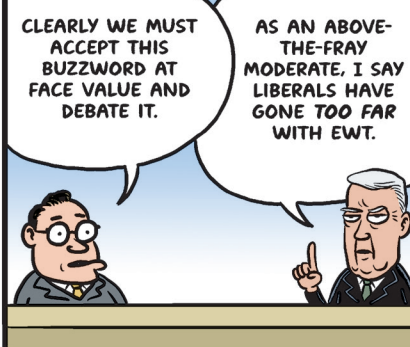


CREATE YOUR OWN AUTHORITARIAN NEWSPEAK!

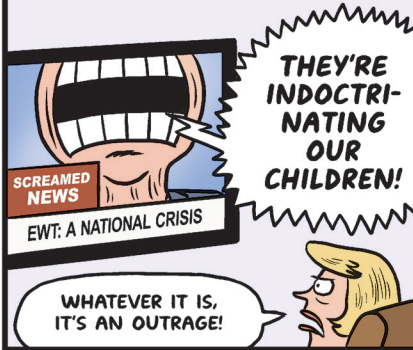
1. FIND AN ACADEMIC CONCEPT THAT VERY FEW PEOPLE EVEN KNOW ABOUT



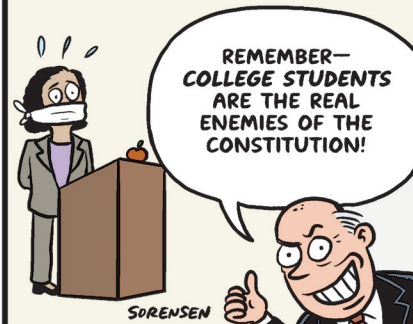
3. SIT BACK WHILE PUBLIC INTELLECTUALS TAKE THE BAIT



2. USE A VAST MEDIA ECOSYSTEM TO TURN CONCEPT INTO AN AMORPHOUS BOGEYMAN



4. CELEBRATE AS STATE GOVERNMENTS PASS BANS ON WHAT TEACHERS CAN SAY WHILE EVERYONE LOOKS THE OTHER WAY!



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CityPULSE

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The final installment of Lansing's LGBT history

PAGE 8

Lansing's mayoral debate recap

PAGE 10

D&D provides a safe place for queer exploration

PAGE 15**Cover Art**

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THIS MODERN WORLD

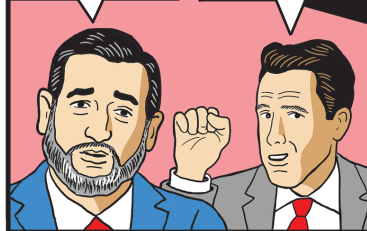
by TOM TOMORROW

REPUBLICAN SENATORS MAKE CONTACT WITH EXTRATERRESTRIALS.

THE ALIEN FLEET WILL ARRIVE ON EARTH IN TWO YEARS--AND THEY HAVE AGREED TO INSTALL **REPUBLICANS** IN POWER **PERMANENTLY!**

WHEN THEY ARE DONE ENSLAVING AND EATING EVERYONE ELSE!

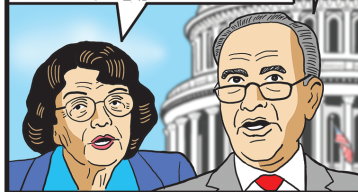
HA HA! I NEED TO FIND MY OLD "LIBERAL TEARS" **COFFEE MUG!**



DEMOCRATS TRY TO ADDRESS THE CRISIS.

WE **MUST** PASS THE "FOR THE PEOPLE WHO DON'T WANT TO BE EATEN BY SPACE ALIENS" ACT IMMEDIATELY AND **PROHIBIT** COLUSION BETWEEN REPUBLICAN LAWMAKERS AND HOSTILE ALIENS!

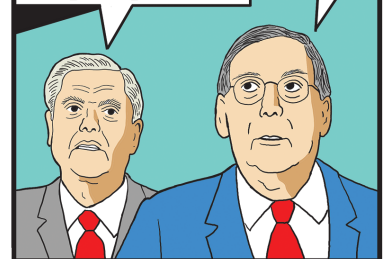
SURELY OUR FRIENDS ACROSS THE AISLE WHO ARE CONSPIRING WITH THE ALIENS WILL **AGREE!**



MCCONNELL FILIBUSTERS THE EFFORT. THIS IS A DEMOCRAT **POWER GRAB** THAT INFRINGES ON OUR **FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION!**

BESIDES, THE ALIENS TOLD **ME** THEY JUST WANT TO **SAVE US--FROM CRITICAL RACE THEORY!**

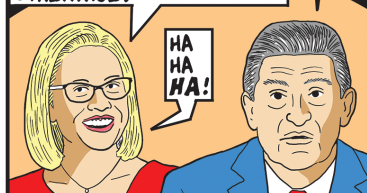
THEY'RE COMING TO **HELP!**



HUMANITY'S ONLY HOPE LIES WITH RECALCITRANT DEMOCRATIC SENATORS. ELIMINATING THE FILIBUSTER WILL DO **FAR** MORE DAMAGE TO DEMOCRACY THAN ALIENS WHO PLAN TO ENSLAVE AND EAT US!

PRESERVING THIS SACRED LEGISLATIVE TACTIC IS OUR **HIGHEST** PRIORITY! AND I CHUCKLE SANCTIMONIOUSLY AT **ANYONE** WHO BELIEVES OTHERWISE!

HA HA HA!



THE REPUBLICAN PROPAGANDA MACHINE KICKS INTO HIGH GEAR.

THE ALIENS DON'T POSE ANY **THREAT--** AT LEAST NOT TO **REAL AMERICANS!** IF THEY **DO** EAT ANYONE, IT'LL JUST BE **DEMOCRATS!** AND, YOU KNOW, FOREIGNERS AND STUFF.

ELITIST DEMOCRATS WILL TRY TO CREATE A SCANDAL OUT OF **ANYTHING** REPUBLICANS DO!



TWO YEARS LATER...

I GUESS THE IMPORTANT THING IS, THEY PRESERVED THE FILIBUSTER! IT'S TOO BAD MCCONNELL DUMPED IT FIRST CHANCE HE GOT.

AND ALSO THAT WE NOW LIVE IN A ONE-PARTY TOTALITARIAN STATE BACKED BY ALIENS WITH A TASTE FOR HUMAN FLESH!

YEAH, WHAT CAN YOU DO.



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PULSE

NEWS & OPINION

CP endorsements: Lansing primary election

Mayor

Leading a city as its mayor isn't for the faint of heart. It takes courage, resolve and a knack for bringing people together around a shared vision for the community's future. Sadly, our current mayor doesn't appear to embody any of these qualities. Virtually invisible during much of the pandemic, Mayor **Andy Schor**'s first term has been marked by a troubled, tone deaf relationship with Lansing's Black community and an egregious lack of honesty and transparency that breeds deep distrust of City Hall. That's why we think it's time for a change.

Either of Schor's top tier challengers would bring more to the office. **Kathie Dunbar**, a progressive City Councilwoman who also serves as executive director of a community nonprofit on the city's south side, has led the way on issues from human rights and safe, affordable housing to making Lansing a welcoming city for immigrants. No other candidate brings Dunbar's blend of municipal and grassroots experience, combined with an unwavering commitment to building a stronger and more inclusive community. She would be the first woman to hold the office in the city's history.

Dunbar's Council colleague, Patricia Spitzley, is also a highly qualified candidate and would be the first Black woman to serve as mayor. As deputy redevelopment manager and director of government relations for RACER Trust, she has plenty of business acumen and understands what it takes to drive economic development. We're concerned, though, that Spitzley leans toward the conservative side of the political spectrum and is too easily swayed from taking a stand on critical issues facing the city, as evidenced by her flip-flop on making Lansing a sanctuary city after catching heat from the Trump Administration.

We'll probably be falsely labeled by her supporters as racist for declining to endorse her, but we don't judge candidates by the color of their skin. That Spitzley initially stopped talking to City Pulse reporters when she disagreed with us is a bad omen for how she would handle media relations in the Mayor's Office. That she has tried to leverage questionable sexual harassment claims against Kathie Dunbar for political advantage and failed to publicly condemn her supporters for viciously comparing Dunbar to Larry Nassar seals the deal. It is deeply unfortunate that an otherwise strong and potentially historic candidate has resorted to such disingenuous tactics to advance her campaign.

Of the remaining mayoral candidates, we're impressed by Farhan Sheikh-Omar, a passionate young man with a clear understanding of the challenges facing Lansing and a deep commitment to



Dunbar



Willis



Spadafore



Revish

The CP Edit

Opinion

healing a city that's been deeply fractured by the stresses of the pandemic and the blinkered approach of the current administration. Had he filed to run for the City Council, we would strongly consider endorsing him for that position. Right now, he doesn't have the experience or seasoning to take on the complexities of managing Michigan's sixth largest city. We hope Sheikh-Omar will stay engaged in public service and run for Council in the next cycle.

Based on a strong track record that demonstrates her financial acumen, fearlessness in the face of criticism, commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, and compassion for the city's most vulnerable residents, **we endorse Kathie Dunbar for mayor.**

City Council at-large

Dunbar's mayoral bid, which precludes her from running for reelection to the Council seat she's held for 16 years, creates an opening in one of the two citywide positions up for grabs in this year's election. In a crowded field of contenders, one candidate stands above the rest. **Rachel Willis** is vice president of the Lansing School Board and works for the state's Department of Health and Human Services. It's no small task to lead a large, urban school district in a challenging economic environment. Her experience dealing with budgets, personnel and policy make her a compelling candidate for Council. **We endorse Rachel Willis for City Council at-large.**

The other citywide seat is held by Council President **Peter Spadafore**, whose day job is deputy executive director of a statewide nonprofit association. Based on his steady leadership during tumultuous times and his thoughtful approach to public policy, we think he's earned another term. **We endorse Peter Spadafore for City Council at-large.**

City Council Second Ward

Incumbent Councilman Jeremy Garza is seeking his second term representing the city's southeast quarter. He's done little to distinguish himself over the past four years, except for consistently voting with the body's conservative bloc, led by Carol Wood. As a union plumber, his principal interest seems to be serving as a spokesman for his compatriots in organized labor. To his credit, he's known for being responsive to his constituents when they have neighborhood issues or problems with city government. Nonetheless, we think the Second Ward deserves more than a benchwarmer who is beholden to special interests. Garza's primary challenger, **Oprah Revish**, is a passionate advocate for diversity, equity and inclusion who works at the nonprofit Salus Center, a resource center for the LGBTQIA community. Although we suggest she reconsider her unreasonable proposal to disband rather than reform the Lansing Police Department, **we endorse Oprah Revish for the Second Ward Council seat.**

Police/Fire/Roads Ballot Proposal

Lansing voters will also be asked to consider a ballot proposal to renew the city's dedicated millage for police, fire and road improvements. Failing to reauthorize the millage could lead to damaging cuts in public safety services and whittle down the already limited resources available to the city for urgently needed road repairs. **We urge a "yes" vote on the proposal.**

Whomever you choose to support in the city's Aug. 3 primary election, where a disappointingly small number of voters will decide the winners, your participation plays a major role in determining the quality of leadership in Lansing. Thanks in part to the great work of City Clerk Chris Swope, it's never been easier to cast your ballot by absentee ballot or in person at the polls. Your vote counts. Use it.

LETTERS to the editor

Annual vehicle registration is outdated

Other than providing a steady revenue stream for state government, are there any benefits to society in requiring Michigan motor vehicles to be re-registered every year? I can't think of any. So perhaps it's time to abandon this silly and archaic requirement.

I know an argument can be made that having a license plate on the back of each vehicle makes it easier for law enforcement to carry out their duties. But vehicles can be tracked by their VIN number as well. Or a one-time purchase of plates, barcodes or RFID tags (good for the life of the vehicle) could provide the same ease of identification. Stiffen up the legal penalties for not having current insurance or updating ownership information and then require vehicle owners to self-report compliance (preferably online), but only when changes are made. I suspect compliance would be as good, if not better as it is now.

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

Now you have two ways to sound off:

1.) Write a letter to the editor:

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

2.) Write a guest column:

Contact Berl Schwartz for more information: publisher@lansingcitypulse.com or (517) 999-5061. (Please include your name, address and telephone number so we can reach you. Keep letters to 250 words or fewer. City Pulse reserves the right to edit letters and columns.)

A simple slight increase in the income tax rate could make up for any lost revenue.

Think of the potential savings in both time and money. No more four hour waits inline, no more three-week waits for a 10-minute appointment. Police could concentrate on far more important work than running expired plates. Car sellers wouldn't have to spend half their day getting a vehicle registered for you. Let's put all that time and energy (and Secretary of State employees) to better use.

**Tom Hynes
Grand Ledge**

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF LANSING SYNOPSIS OF PROPOSED MINUTES

A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF LANSING WAS HELD ON TUESDAY, JUNE 8, 2021 AT 7:00 P.M. IN COMPLIANCE WITH MICHIGAN PUBLIC ACT 254, THIS MEETING WAS CONDUCTED VIA ZOOM PLATFORM.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Supervisor Hayes, Clerk Sanders, Treasurer McKenzie
Trustees: Harris, Brewer, Broughton, Ruiz

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Michael Gresens, Attorney
Scott Cunningham, Assessor
Scott Duimstra, Executive Director, CADL
Jeff Croff, CADL Board member
Thom Dumond
Tom Pohlman

ACTION TAKEN BY THE BOARD:

Meeting called to order by Supervisor Hayes.

Approved minutes of meeting held on May 25, 2021.

Agenda approved as amended.

Tabled discussion for the financial advisor and agreement for the next Board meeting on June 22.

Approved SP-21-02, Special Use Permit, NCI Waverly LLC, Expanse Storage, as presented.

Approved FDR-21-03, NCI Waverly LLC, Expanse Storage, with conditions as presented.

Approved moving into Executive Session to discuss pending litigation: NCG Inc. vs. Lansing Charter Township, Michigan Tax Tribunal Docket #20-003080; and attorney-client privileged communication.

Approved returning to Regular Session.

Approved claims as presented.

Meeting adjourned.

Diontrae Hayes, Supervisor
Maggie Sanders, Clerk

CP#21-153

State law may soon protect sexual orientation and gender

In 1999, a moderate Republican (like a real moderate) named Patricia "Pan" Godchaux from Oakland County first proposed a bill in Michigan to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation.

The bill also banned discrimination based on disability. That piece didn't

have a problem passing eventually since the Persons with Disabilities Civil Right Act from 1976 made this provision more of a housekeeping issue.

Banning discrimination on the gay community?

Well, we all know at least a piece of the long, tortured history on how socially conservative Republicans put the kibosh on this now long-overdue proposal year after year after year.

The end of the road is nearing, though.

Murmurs are beginning in Lansing on the Legislature moving to include the LGBT community into the Elliott Larsen Civil Rights Act with the pressure of a ballot proposal looming.

Fair and Equal Michigan claims it collected more than 483,000 signatures for its citizens initiative. If it's anywhere close to that number, the Legislature will have 40 days after a final board gives its OK to pass it. If it doesn't, it goes on the ballot, something both sides would rather avoid.

The Legislature would prefer not to agitate their supporters in big business who, by and large, support the measure. Ford, the new Chrysler car company, Michigan Blue Cross Blue Shield, Delta Dental, DTE and Consumers Energy, Dow, and Herman Miller, among a host of others, are all on board.

Also, their traditional stance is a political loser with the independents they need at the ballot box come 2022.

Polling from Crain's Detroit in 2019 showed nearly four in five voters oppose allowing a gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender person to be fired or denied housing for their sexual orientation.

If you're a socially rigid Republican, those aren't good numbers. These are the types of numbers that inspire otherwise unmotivated



POLITICS
KYLE MELINN

voters to turn out to vote in 2022 ... the type of voters Republicans would prefer stay home on Nov. 8, 2022.

Some Republicans are wishing they cut a deal with the pro-marijuana people back in 2018. Instead, voters said yes to recreational dope. The Legislature lost out on an opportunity to put any extra safeguards on it. Oh, and Democrats won big that year.

On the other hand, the LGBT community would prefer not to be used as a political prop for any election. The thought that any minority group's civil rights are subject to the will of a majority vote is unsettling.

Yet, this citizens' initiative process is what needed to happen to move the ball forward, so that's what was done.

There are signs something can be worked out. For one, former House Speaker Lee Chatfield isn't around anymore. Chatfield owed his political career to opposing equal rights for the gay population. He wasn't signing off on Elliott Larsen expansion under any circumstance.

This issue isn't as much of a priority for House Speaker Jason Wentworth. Also, slowly, Republicans — not real moderates like Godchaux, they don't exist in the Legislature anymore — are coming around on the issue.

Both Sens. Jim Stamas, R-Midland, and Wayne Schmidt, R- Traverse City, signed on to the Gay Pride Month resolution adopted in the Senate this year. For the first time, ever, the House adopted a Gay Pride Month resolution in 2021, as well.

While that's not supporting Elliott Larsen expansion, it's a step.

The Republicans will want some protections against discrimination toward people for exercising their religious beliefs. As long as that doesn't become a loophole to deny gay men, lesbians or the transgender folks a job or a house, one source said, "there's a path forward."

"I'm not asking for anything more than what everyone else has. And we can't accept anything less under the equal protection of the law," said Sen. Jeremy Moss, D-Southfield.

(Kyle Melinn of the Capitol news service MIRS is at melinnky@gmail.com.)

Lansing mayor answers call for police divestment — with 20 more cops

Federal grant funding triggers hiring spree at Lansing Police Department

With legislative enthusiasm for police divestment continuing to wane in Lansing, Mayor Andy Schor announced plans last week to invest more than \$2 million into staffing the Police Department over the next four years and to hire five more entry-level officers in the Capital City.

The move won't immediately increase the size of the local police force, only expand the number of existing vacancies from 15 to 20 — boosting overall staffing capacity from 206 to 211 officers. Schor hopes to have all of those slots filled by February, which he specifically billed as a way to help combat record-setting levels of homicides and gun violence from over the last 18 months.

“Nationally, we're trending away from defunding back to the funding of law enforcement. The mayor and City Council's approval is really exciting and hopefully gets us back on track,” said Interim Police Chief Ellery Sosebee, who took over for retiring Chief Daryl Green last week.

Only \$625,000 of the \$2.1 million needed for the five new hires will be covered by a federal grant, according to a resolution that the City Council approved, 5-2. Councilwoman and mayoral candidate Kathie Dunbar and Councilwoman Brian T. Jackson were the only two members of the Council to vote against the federal grant funding. Councilman Brandon Betz, once a vocal proponent of police divestment, was absent from the meeting.

An estimated \$1.43 million needed to keep the five new officers on payroll for at least four years will be covered by the city.

With at least 16 homicides tracked in the city so far this year, Lansing is on pace to surpass a 30-year high of 22 homicides recorded in 2020 — most of which reportedly involved illegal guns. Five more cops will serve as “an important step to strengthen enforcement and increase resources” that allows officers to better respond to 911 calls in the city and to “de-escalate” situations that can lead to violence, Schor said in a release after the Council approved the grant.

The new officers, who will be hired by early next year, will address gun violence by increasing nighttime and neighborhood patrols and by “dis-

How Lansing City Council voted on adding 5 new police officers

FOR:





Garza

Hussain

Spadafore

AGAINST:




Dunbar

Jackson

ABSENT:



Betz

A recent survey conducted by the city of Lansing shows that most residents are satisfied with the performance of the Lansing Police Department despite many perceiving its treatment of African Americans as racist.

See story at www.lansingcitypulse.com

banding illegal gatherings” that lead to violence.

Sosebee said the newly expanded staffing levels will also allow for more “positive community engagements” — like ice cream socials and pickup games of basketball with neighborhood kids.

“We are facing a tragic increase in gun violence, not only here in Lansing, but across the country,” Schor added. “One life lost is one too many. We have to focus on both prevention and enforcement. My administration has taken many steps toward prevention, but we need additional officers to increase enforcement and the ability to answer resident calls for service.”

In recent years, limited staffing levels have forced Lansing cops to take longer to respond to a rising number of emergency calls — forcing cops into “reactionary” mode, Schor has said. Overtime budgets are routinely exhausted in the first six months of the year. Community police officers have also been pulled away from neighborhoods for other, higher-priority 911 calls.

The FBI tracks an average of about 3.4 sworn officers per 1,000 residents nationwide. In the Midwest, that figure is about 2.2. Lansing's average rests at about 1.7 cops per 1,000 residents — limiting the on-duty force to sometimes only eight officers on any given shift, officials said.

“Due to staffing levels, our public safety efforts are too one-dimension-

al, focusing solely on call response,” explained City Council President Peter Spadafore, who supported adding the five positions. “Adding these new officers is part of a tiered approach to public safety that includes social workers, expanded resources available when calling 911 and investments in violence prevention programs like Advance Peace that will hopefully help shift our focus from law enforcement to a more preventative and holistic strategy.”

The federal grant was approved last June. Schor's administration, following federal advice, waited for more than a year to bring it to the City Council for approval last week — namely to give time for the loudest calls for police divestment to simmer down, according to city officials.

Leaders of the Lansing chapter of Black Lives Matter, however, are less than thrilled with the decision following more than a year of advocating for significant reductions to the police budget. Schor's latest city budget also ratcheted up annual police spending from \$46.5 to \$49.9 million.

Michael Lynn Jr., a coleader of Black Lives Matter, said the new hires will represent more political performance than silver bullet.

“The move is only designed to make people feel safe as opposed to actually being safe,” he said. “Those officers would need to be trained and learn the environment, which will take years. This isn't a fix at all for the issues we have here in Lansing, and the mayor

knows this.”

Lynn also questioned whether hiring more cops will actually work to reduce violent crime.

Recent research from Morgan Williams, an economist at NYU's Wagner Graduate School of Public Service, shows that adding a new police officer to a city prevents between 0.06 and 0.1 homicides annually. That means that the average city would need to hire 10 to 17 new cops to save one life each year, which would cost taxpayers annually \$1.3 million to \$2.2 million.

Sosebee and Schor didn't produce any evidence to show that hiring more cops in Lansing could actually help reduce crime rates. Sosebee also dodged the question in an interview this week.

“We're just over the moon excited about the fact that we have these new positions,” he added.

Schor also sent out a statement: “Additionally, I am working to provide or enhance programs that offer our youth better options than turning to crime and violence. Both prevention and enforcement are needed to stem the tide of gun violence that we've seen across the nation.”

Lynn later added: “The people of this city should be extremely cautious of anything coming out of City Hall until after the election, as all of it will be performative and intended to promote the mayor and those incumbents getting reelected — not the good and welfare of this city.”

Council Vice President Adam Hussain, who supported adding the five positions, pointed to other studies that show more police officers not only result in saved lives, but can also significantly reduce robberies, rapes and assaults. Additionally, the visibility of more cops on the street will serve as a natural deterrent, he said.

“Adding the additional five officers must be done in combination with a host of other efforts if we are to truly reduce violent crime and help our most vulnerable to ascend,” Hussain added. “We know that call load, issues with staffing and the woefully low number of officers we have at times in all sectors throughout the city have often resulted in our department being a one-dimensional, reactionary department — one that is at times reduced to responding to violent crime as opposed to preventing violent crime,” he said. “We can and must do better.”

— KYLE KAMINSKI

LGBT mainstream and queer radicalism since 2000

By TIM RETZLOFF

The minutiae of queer life rarely make it into the Lansing State Journal or other mainstream media. Small everyday details can best be found in sources generated by LGBTQ+ people themselves, and often signal subtle and meaningful changes in the making.

In the 1990s, the Lansing Association for Human Rights newsletter and a DIY zine called Queer Magnolias gave voice to Bill Beachler and Charlie Nash. Beachler died in 2016. Nash died last September. Each, in their way, presaged the dominant strands of LGBTQ+ Greater Lansing over the past 20 years.

Beachler edited the LAHR newsletter under the pseudonym D. Bill Haines for its first two decades, in part to shield his job with the state Department of Transportation. In 1996, Beachler began to write under his real name.

It didn't make the newspaper, but Beachler's coming out publicly, completely, and unapologetically helped signal of shift toward the mainstream.

Nash's vision of the world, reproduced by Xerox and distributed by hand or by mail to those who sent him postage stamps, reflected a challenge to the mainstream. He juxtaposed poetry with images of young men emaciated from AIDS, clippings that mocked consumerism, his medical bill. The very use of the word "queer" was in-your-face and, at the time, bold.

From 1991: "Queer Magnolia queer revolutions 'those queers are revolting' that's right queer revolutions queers on the left, queers on the right queer revolution that's right 'those queers are revolting' that's right queer magnolia queer revolutions queers on the left, queers on the right right on write on queer revolution queer magnolia left right on write left revolutions don't be left out."

An ongoing tug between fitting in and acting out, between mainstream and radical, shaped LGBTQ+ life and activism since the year 2000.

Core community institutions included the First Friday group, the Lansing Area AIDS Network, Sistrum, the LanSINGout Gay Men's Chorus, and the Great Lakes Pride Band. The Lesbian Connection remained a vital conduit of lesbian sisterhood.

Suits and the City, a monthly cocktail mixer for LGBTQ professionals, began in April 2004.

Gay-straight alliances were started at East Lansing, Haslett, Lansing Eastern, Lansing Everett, Mason, Okemos and

Greater Lansing's LGBTQ+ Past
This is the final installment of City Pulse's series to commemorate Pride Month.

Williamston high schools, as well as at Lansing Community College, with an annual drag show to boot.

At Michigan State, the LGBTQ Resource Center, soon to be the Gender and Sexuality Center, provided programming and safe space. Among new campus groups were Q-Cross, an LGBTQ Christian student organization, and the Queer People of Color Coalition, which was featured in the 2014 Spartan yearbook. MSU also began offering a new LGBTQ Studies minor.

LAHR continued to pursue change within the system. In 2000, LAHR and the Lansing Area AIDS Network proposed an LGBTQ community center but it never came to fruition. From her position as LAHR president, Penny Gardner pressed the community to address concerns of seniors and those with disabilities. Meanwhile, LAHR-PAC asserted clout through candidate surveys and endorsements.

Local LGBTQ people exerted influence when they ran for elected office themselves. Chris Swope won a seat on the Ingham County Board of Commissioners in 2000 and voters elected him Lansing city clerk in 2005. Other out candidates included Emily Dievendorf, Todd Heywood, Wyatt Lundman, Rory Neuner, Ken Ross, Ryan Sebolt and Peter Spadafore. Some lost, some won.

Transgender activist Melissa Sue Robinson ran for state representative in 2004 and state senator in 2006. She filed suit to challenge the legal requirement that her dead name be included on the ballot.

Elections yielded results. Current Lansing mayoral hopeful Kathie Dunbar was elected as an openly bi Council member in 2005. A year later, with Dunbar leading the push, Lansing finally enacted its non-discrimination ordinance.

Subsequently, activists took ordinance fights to surrounding jurisdictions and secured passage of protections in Delhi Township, Delta Township, and Meridian Township in 2013.

On March 21, 2014, Judge Bernard Friedman ruled that the state's same-sex marriage ban unconstitutional. The



Photo by Danielle Levitt

Members of Bash Back Lansing, 2009.

next day, Lansing residents Glenna DeJong and Marsha Caspar, together 27 years, became the first same-sex couple in Michigan to wed.

At the time of the decision, Dievendorf was serving as executive director of Equality Michigan, a statewide LGBTQ advocacy group that succeeded the Michigan Organization for Human Rights.

Over beverages at Blue Owl Coffee recently, Dievendorf shared her memories of the day, surprised that she recognized few of the couples seeking marriage licenses when she arrived at the Ingham County Court House.

"Most of the people who were there were older couples that I had never seen out and about in my own community," Dievendorf recalled. "These were people who spent their lives like any couple caring for each other quietly, humbly, raising families, except in this case hiding until that day."

LGBTQ+ commercial nightlife experienced a downward trajectory as Grindr and growing acceptance reduced the imperative for gay bars. After Club 505 closed in 2008, in came the Chrome Cat until it closed in 2013. Spiral was forced to close last year with COVID-19 and is up for sale.

In profound ways transgender life and activism rose to the forefront of this recent past.

MSU alum Rachel Crandall-Crocker founded Transgender Michigan after being fired for beginning to live as

a woman. The first Transgender Pride picnics of the late '90s and early 2000s were held in Potter Park and Marshall Park. Crandall-Crocker served as LAHR vice president and the hotline director before moving to Detroit in 2005.

A fight over a trans-inclusive policy rocked the Williamston schools in 2018.

Trans-masculine genderqueer Phiwa Langeni, in 2017, saw storefront rental space available and opened Salus Center at 624 E. Michigan Ave., not far from where Covello's and Trammpp's once stood. "When it comes down to it, folk want to be connected and most want that connection to be in diverse communities," Langeni wrote in an LSJ commentary.

A renewed vein of radicalism also emerged in the past 20 years that amped up defiance and harkened back to Charlie Nash and Gay Lib. These activists aimed to challenge to the perceived complacency of assimilation.

Residents of the Dein Haus co-op held Queerfest in 2007. NorthStar Center offered an alternate Queer Pride in June 2008 that organizers felt were more aligned with the spirit of Stonewall. A poster for the event touted "Tranarchy" and read, "Breaking down gender should be part of the revolution."

On Nov. 9, 2008, a group called Bash Back! Lansing disrupted the Sunday worship service at Mt. Hope Church, an evangelical megachurch on Creyts Road in Delta Township. "It's a pry-the-gay-out-of-you place," one demonstrator told Details magazine. "Gays should be there protesting every day."

And in 2019, participants in Lansing People's Pride celebrated in deliberate and marked contrast to the usual street festival. "What capitalism does is strip us of our identity and sell it back to us," Vivian Thompson said in an online City Pulse report.

Whether a mainstream, radical, or other approach to LGBTQ+ politics will hold sway remains to be seen.

(Historian Tim Retzloff teaches LGBTQ Studies at Michigan State University.)

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Nine takeaways from the Lansing mayoral debate

Five candidates outline platforms ahead of primary election

Five of the six mayoral candidates facing off in the August primary election engaged in a largely polite — but occasionally pointed — live, televised debate on Thursday (June 24). Residents can rewatch the debate in its entirety at fox47news.com/lansing2021.

Lansing Mayor Andy Schor outlined his reelection platform and defended himself from challengers and City Council members Kathie Dunbar and Patricia Spitzley along with local psychologist Melissa Huber and community activist Farhan Sheikh-Omar. The sixth candidate — Larry Hutchinson Jr. — was not allowed to attend the debate in accordance with legal advice.

Managing Editor Kyle Kaminski and MIRS News Editor Kyle Melinn helped formulate the questions alongside a panel of journalists at FOX 47 News. Here are nine takeaways:

The challengers want to drive change in the Capital City.

Each challenger has problems with Mayor Andy Schor's leadership in his first term. And each had an opportunity to name the single most pressing issue facing the city.

Huber said she wants to hire a city manager and bring "ethical change" to local politics. And more important



Skylar Ashley/City Pulse

The five candidates at the City Pulse and FOX 47 News mayoral debate. (From left) Farhan Sheikh-Omar, Kathie Dunbar, Patricia Spitzley, Melissa Huber and Andy Schor.

than actually winning, she wants to bring people together, she said.

Spitzley addressed several "challenges" with Schor's leadership, including rising rates of gun violence and a lack of transparency and accountability. She wants to work collaboratively with the community and make "tough" financial decisions.

Dunbar said Lansing needs a leader with "vision and purpose" — someone willing to enact bold initiatives to address complex challenges. The city operates under a strong mayor form of government, but Schor has not been

a strong mayor, she said. She wants to transform the "rudderless" direction at City Hall with compassion and empathy.

Sheikh-Omar, who took on Schor more directly than any of the others, said Lansing is "weaker and less prosperous" than it was before Schor took office in 2018. If elected, he wants to focus on public safety reforms to reduce rising rates of gun violence and ease tensions that have led to racial discrimination lawsuits against the city.

Schor spent most of his time touting accomplishments from the last four years, noting that there is still more work to be done over the next four years — including strengthening neighborhoods, creating more job opportunities and improving city infrastructure like local sidewalks and roads.

Three candidates support police divestment.

Only Huber, Dunbar and Sheikh-

Omar said they support reducing funding for the Police Department. Schor and Spitzley each support reforms — but not through police divestment.

Schor said he has been "progressive" with police reforms by prohibiting officers from stopping residents for secondary traffic infractions like a broken taillight and by hiring two social workers. He also voiced plans to hire five more cops this year — all things that take money, he explained.

"People expect officers when they call 911," Schor explained. "We need to have the resources."

Spitzley said she wants to "transform" public safety in Lansing by establishing new community programs and closing the lockup beneath City Hall, which she expects would save \$3 million annually. She also wants to hire more community police officers and expand the cold case unit.

Huber, Dunbar and Sheikh-Omar all think the Police Department budget is too large. Huber wants to "gradually and incrementally" reallocate some of those funds to unspecified programs and services that aim to prevent crimes before they begin and bolster response times.

Dunbar contends more police officers don't necessarily equate to safer neighborhoods — evidenced by the record-breaking 16 homicides tracked in Lansing so far this year. With a sense of urgency, she plans to reallocate portions of the police budget to other programs and services.

Sheikh-Omar said police officers don't ensure safety or prevent crime in Lansing, evidenced in part by at least 75 unsolved homicide cases assigned to a single city investigator. He stressed the importance of redirecting those resources to "community-led intervention" programs designed to pre-

See Debate, Page 11

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CITY OF LANSING SUMMARY OF ADOPTED ORDINANCE # 1288

Lansing City Council adopted an Ordinance of the City of Lansing, Michigan, to amend Chapter 1610 – Uniform Fire Code and Uniform Fire Code Standards.

Effective date: Upon publication

Notice: The full text of this Ordinance is available for review at the City Clerk's Office, 9th Floor, City Hall, Lansing, Michigan. A copy of the full text of this Ordinance may be obtained from the City Clerk's Office, 9th Floor, City Hall, Lansing, Michigan at a fee determined by City Council.

Chris Swope, Lansing City Clerk, MMC/MiPMC
www.lansingmi.gov/Clerk
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CP#21-155

Debate

from page 10

vent crime before it occurs, rather than respond after it happens.

Schor finally seems to understand the definition of “equity.”

Schor admitted that he was “not prepared” for a live encounter last year with members of the Lansing chapter of Black Lives Matter. After he botched the definition of “equity” and failed to adequately respond to several questions on that call, Black Lives Matter leaders called for Schor to resign.

This year, it appears Schor has learned the definition of equity — in that it means not just that everyone is equal under the law, but rather it signifies a leveling of the playing field and providing higher levels of resources to historically disenfranchised segments of the community.

He touted the city’s “Neighborhoods of Focus” program in which specific areas of the city are targeted for various beautification and engagement efforts. Most recently, that program was expanded to include areas surrounding Willow and Walnut streets and Comstock Park.

Huber wants to dismantle the Mayor’s Office altogether.

Huber appears to be the only mayoral candidate who supports a revision to the City Charter that would eliminate executive power from the Mayor’s Office, instead handing the reins to an unelected city manager who is appointed by and answers exclusively to the City Council.

With a city manager, “weak mayors” can still exist, but they’re effectively reduced to just another member of the legislative body. Like in East Lansing, they serve in a largely symbolic leadership role that wields mostly ceremonial

authorities. It’s not much more than a formal title or a sash.

Fundamentally shifting the structure of city government would eliminate the politics behind the Mayor’s Office and ensure a “professional” can run the city rather than whichever candidate is capable of raising the most money and rubbing the most political shoulders, Huber suggested.

“The electoral system is not working,” Huber said. “I’d have more faith in a professional.”

Sheikh-Omar challenges Schor on racial issues

As a self-identified “citizen activist,” Sheikh-Omar didn’t hold back any punches for the mayor. Throughout the debate, he repeatedly criticized Schor for being named in several racial discrimination lawsuits by current and former city employees. He also slammed Schor for a lack of transparency surrounding the in-custody death of Anthony Hulon beneath City Hall last year. Schor has been reluctant to discuss pending litigation and didn’t attempt to make any rebuttal.

Dunbar denies sexual harassment allegations.

Stemming from claims that date back more than a decade ago, local independent newspaper publisher Rina Risper has accused Dunbar of sexual harassment and repeatedly using the N-word — among other racially offensive tropes. Dunbar has denied those allegations.

During the debate she doubled down on those denials, noting Risper’s claims were simply “not true.”

Dunbar also said she herself was a “survivor” of some form of sexual aggression and questioned why Risper waited more than 15 years to publicly voice any of her allegations.

“She ran against me in 2009. This never came up,” Dunbar said, referring to the Council race 12 years ago. “I have

to wonder: Why?” Risper also attended the debate in person as one of Huber’s two guests and could be heard quietly muttering about Dunbar and City Pulse throughout most of the program.

Spitzley responds to Black Lives Matter criticism.

Leaders of the local Black Lives Matter chapter have been reluctant to support Spitzley’s campaign — recently criticizing her in public Facebook posts for failing to advance anything of substance as a City Councilwoman and for “playing politics with our children’s lives” in Lansing.

Spitzley said she welcomes the critique but disagreed with the premise. She chairs two Council committees and initiated a resolution declaring racism as a public health crisis among other legislative items — proof that she’s doing her job as a councilwoman.

“I think that as a leader, you have to be able to take criticism and then try to do better,” she said.

Schor has no regrets over his early COVID-19 vaccination.

Schor and 199 other city employees accepted an invitation in January to receive an early dose of the COVID-19 vaccine despite failing to meet any of the state eligibility criteria for the shot. At the time, about 50,000 other eligible residents were waiting in line for their turn for a vaccination.

Schor said that he made sure he was last in line for the shot — which was only offered by Sparrow Health Systems on a “use-it-or-lose-it” basis.

Schor expressed no remorse for skipping the queue, insisting that a shot in the arm — regardless of eligibility restrictions — was a shot well used. Plus, he didn’t want to set a bad example for his own employees while he was actively encouraging them to get vaccinated.

“When the offer came, I took it to

show them it’s the right thing to do,” Schor explained.

Candidates have big plans for next year’s city budget.

They were asked which specific portions of the city’s budget would be reduced or protected from future budget cuts under their mayoral administration in 2022.

Schor doesn’t want to cut any portion of the budget and wants to protect funding for the Department of Neighborhoods and Citizen Engagement.

Huber wants to keep a close eye on federal grant funding but didn’t identify any specific portions of the budget that deserve to be slashed. She also wants to shield parks and recreation funding.

Spitzley also didn’t outline any future budget cuts, but she sided with Schor on wanting to secure as much funding as possible for the Department of Neighborhoods and Citizen Engagement.

Dunbar and Sheikh-Omar want to slash Police Department funding. Dunbar would shield funding for the Department of Human Relations and Community Services. Sheikh-Omar said he would ensure adequate funding for the Fire Department and for repairing sidewalks and roads.

Spitzley hugged Mayor Andy Schor.

Spitzley was the first candidate to take the stage before the debate began and was the only challenger to embrace the mayor in a heartfelt hug before the program started. Huber shook Schor’s hand. Dunbar and Sheikh-Omar, instead, kept their distance from the mayor altogether.

Absentee ballots are due back at 8 p.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 3. The top two vote-getters from the primary will advance to the general election on Nov. 2.

— KYLE KAMINSKI

CITY OF LANSING
SUMMARY OF
ADOPTED ORDINANCE # 1287

Lansing City Council adopted an Ordinance of the City of Lansing, Michigan, to amend Chapter 688, Section 688.07 Animals, vehicles and bicycles on grassplots, to provide that the penalty for violation of this ordinance shall be a municipal civil infraction

Effective date: July 21, 2021

Notice: The full text of this Ordinance is available for review at the City Clerk’s Office, 9th Floor, City Hall, Lansing, Michigan. A copy of the full text of this Ordinance may be obtained from the City Clerk’s Office, 9th Floor, City Hall, Lansing, Michigan at a fee determined by City Council.

Chris Swope, Lansing City Clerk, MMC/MiPMC
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CP#21-154

CITY OF LANSING
SUMMARY OF
ADOPTED ORDINANCE # 1286

Lansing City Council adopted an Ordinance of the City of Lansing, Michigan, to amend Chapter 688, Section 688.05 Climbing or defacing a tree, to provide that the penalty for violation of this ordinance shall be a municipal civil infraction

Effective date: July 21, 2021

Notice: The full text of this Ordinance is available for review at the City Clerk’s Office, 9th Floor, City Hall, Lansing, Michigan. A copy of the full text of this Ordinance may be obtained from the City Clerk’s Office, 9th Floor, City Hall, Lansing, Michigan at a fee determined by City Council.

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Exploring queer identity through Dungeons & Dragons

By COLE TUNNINGLEY

Dungeons & Dragons, the most popular tabletop roleplaying game in existence, gives players a chance to create a fantastical identity and explore whole new worlds from the comfort of their kitchen tables. Under the guidance of a Dungeon Master, or DM, players can engage in battle, embark on quests or just mess around.

For some, D&D acts as a safe space where you can test out whole new identities. Rowan Giffel, a local D&D fanatic, appreciates how the roleplaying game allowed them to explore their queerness. It's no coincidence that they typically play D&D with an all-queer group of friends.

"When I started playing D&D, I had recently come out as nonbinary," said Giffel. "Playing a character that was no binary and having people use they/them pronouns was nice. Your characters also go through extreme experiences. Thinking about how those circumstances shape your character's identity can help you understand something about your own identity."

Most of Giffel's character's traits have been partially based off of their own personality. But recently, they created a character that has helped them step out of their comfort zone.

"My gayest character is a bard 'cowboi.' It's spelled B-O-I because they use they/them pronouns. Their name is Ram," explained Giffel. "They are very charismatic and flirt with everyone, which is very unlike me."

Creating this character was a fun way for them to explore a part of themselves that they usually keep hidden.

Because Giffel typically plays D&D with queer folks, they never had to worry about getting misgendered or facing transphobia. They set boundaries at the



Courtesy

Dungeons & Dragons figurines hand-painted by Curtin.

beginning of every campaign to make sure everyone feels safe.

Some of the groups they play with use what is called an "X-Card." If someone feels uncomfortable or triggered by a certain situation, all they have to do is say X-Card. Then, the group immediately stops what they're doing and calmly moves on to something else.

"It truly is a safe space for us," said Giffel.

One of Giffel's D&D buddies, Chase Curtin, agrees that campaigns should be a safe space in which queer people can explore their identities, engage with past trauma and experience wish fulfillment.

Curtin typically acts as a Dungeon Master. So he designs the maps, creates non player

characters and has control over the narrative. It brings him great pleasure to watch his friends have fun and discover more about themselves through D&D.

During one campaign, one of his players created a nonbinary character.

After playing for a while as that character, the person came to the realization that they themselves were nonbinary.

"When we started playing and referring to them with they/them pronouns, they got a lot of gender euphoria out of that," said Curtin. "Realizing that was a huge moment for them. D&D was a way for them to explore those feelings in a safe, controlled way."

As a Dungeon Master, Chase goes out of his way to make sure that players can explore difficult emotions in a healthy, productive manner. For example, one campaign featured villains modeled after a player's abusive parents. What could have been very triggering was instead a way to achieve catharsis.

"We had to really talk about what was going on with their parents in the game. They got to have a very cathartic moment of killing those villains," said Curtin. "But I had to stop the game and tell people that I was not personally misgendering this character. I had to tell them that, anytime I misgendered the player, I was speaking as their parents."

In that campaign, all but one of the players was transgender. So, Curtin took great pains to assure them all that the purposeful misgendering was a function of the story, something that



Courtesy

Chase Curtin, a seasoned Dungeon Master and D&D enthusiast.

was inspired by real trauma that this person had experienced at the hands of their parents.

"It could be triggering if I was misgendering their character for the entire arc," said Curtin. "I had to step out of the story and make sure everyone was aware of what was happening."

When playing with his LGBTQ friends, Curtin plays what he calls "a game of tug of war" with the official rules laid down in the D&D guidebooks. In typical gameplay, monsters only exist to be murdered. You're supposed to kill them, take their stuff and move on to the next town.

"Monsters are unwanted and unloved. Identifying with that and showing those monsters love is a huge thing for us," explained Curtin. "Playing with queer people, you're going to have parties that include two tieflings, a tortle, a warforged and a tabaxi."

Rather than play as monsters, a stereotypical D&D crew would look more like the cast of "Lord of the Rings." Humans, elves and dwarves who slaughter whole towns full of monsters.

That's just not how Curtin and his friends like to play.

"There's a lot there in terms of identifying with the monstrous," said Curtin. "Being told that you're monstrous your whole life and then being told that you're worth loving ... That's something that a lot of queer people can identify with."



Courtesy

Rowan Giffel plotting their next move during a D&D session.

New farm-to-table breakfast spot coming to Mason

By COLE TUNNINGLEY

Farm-to-table is a phrase that gets thrown around a lot in the restaurant industry. Some restaurants may guarantee farm fresh food but fail to follow through on that promise. Risen Breakfast and Bakery, opening in downtown Mason this fall, will source all of its ingredients from local farms in the area.

“A lot of restaurants use farm-to-table as a buzzword,” said Dan Kostecke, who is opening the restaurant with his wife, Rachel. “For us, it’s a reality. There will even be a special section on the menu promoting seasonal items from local farms.”

The Kosteckes own LFA Farmers Market. Through their work there, they have made connections with more than 100 farmers in the area. The couple also owns a farm of their own. So when they say farm-to-table, they really mean it.

“We started the farmers market to provide local farmers and artisans with an opportunity to sell their goods year-round,” said Kostecke. “They’ve been selling with use for a while so we have



Risen Restaurant and Bakery

402 S. Jefferson St., Mason
Hours TBA
Facebook.com/RisenBreakfastBakery

a pretty good relationship with them.”

Risen is going to serve classic breakfast items including hash brown dishes, pancakes and more. It will also serve brunch. Kostecke plans to acquire a liquor license so that they can serve classic brunch drinks like mimosas and bloody marys. Past brunch and breakfast time, the restaurant will stay open to sell bakery items and retail goods.

The restaurant is a long time coming for the Kosteckes.

“For many years, my wife and I thought it would be great to open a simple, little restaurant in downtown Mason,” said Kostecke. He received a degree in hospitality from Michigan State University. Both he and his wife have worked in restaurants and baker-



Courtesy

Dan and Rachel Kostecke.

ies before. Now, it’s their turn to run the show.

“When the location opened up, we took it as a sign to pull the trigger,” said Kostecke. “It’s such a primo spot. We love it.”

The Kosteckes have been working on perfecting their recipes, hiring consultants with more experience in the industry and experimenting in their home kitchen. Kostecke said that he loves all breakfast foods. He can’t decide which menu item he’s most excited to show to the public.

“I’m a little biased,” he said. “It all tastes good to me.”

Risen is going to be a true family business. The Kosteckes have three young

children who can frequently be seen running around at the LFA Farmers Market. Without a doubt, they’ll be a charming presence at Risen, too, once the restaurant opens up.

Kostecke hopes that they can build and grow the restaurant into something long-lasting that he can pass on to the kids one day.

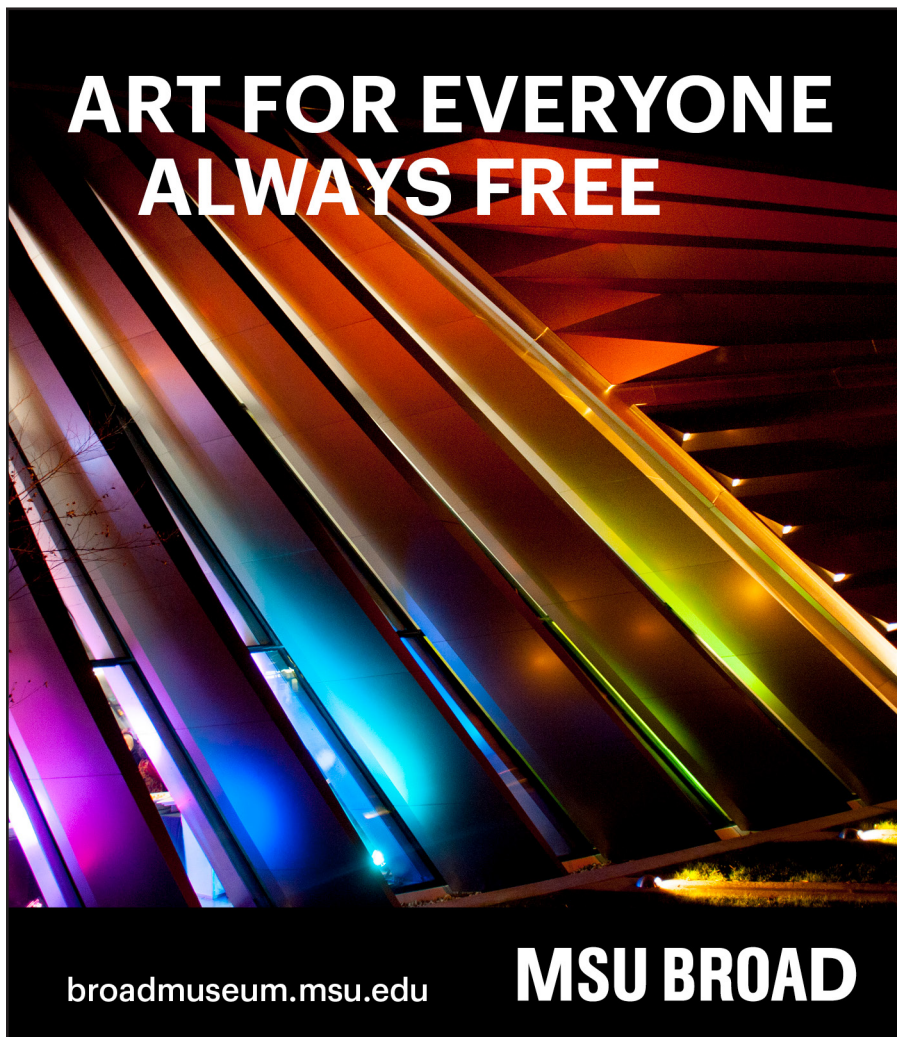
“You’re going to see our kids around for sure,” said Kostecke. “We’re going to raise them up in this environment. Hopefully, one day they can take charge and keep it going. It’s kind of our family enterprise.”

Most of all, Kostecke is excited for the public to experience Risen. The restaurant has already amassed over a thousand likes on Facebook. Hundreds of people have signed up for the Risen newsletter.

Mason residents seem to be looking forward to its opening day.

“When we made the announcement, it took off like wildfire,” said Kostecke. “We’re excited to be able to provide something that the community wants.

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Greater Lansing pot shops go all out for Pride Month

Botanical Co. and Skymint donate to support LGBTQ community

By KYLE KAMINSKI

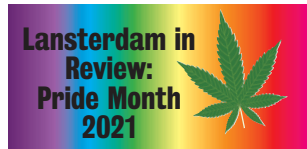
Companies and brands across the country usually make a conscious effort to honor the 1969 Stonewall Riots this month, often with flashy packaging and signage — maybe with a rainbow flag or two. In some cases, they go beyond symbolic wokeness and actually give back some of their revenues in honor of that crucial tipping point for the Gay Liberation Movement in the United States and to recognize the impact that LGBTQ people have made in American society.

And there aren't many sectors of the economy that are more progressive than the cannabis industry. During Pride Month, those true colors were (literally) on full display while pot shops across Greater Lansing rolled out some new specials to help celebrate the LGBTQ community.

Skymint and Pure Options rebranded with some new rainbow-themed logos. Bazonzo's launched promo-

tional discounts on a series of Pride-inspired products — including \$35 eighthers of Rainbow Driver and half-gram vape cartridges of Rainbow Gelato for only \$15 each.

Pride-themed vaporizer cartridges from Platinum Vapes are also included in the local lineup at dispensaries across Michigan. A portion of sales from those products go to the Michigan chapter of Equality, a nonprofit group dedicated to advocating for the LGBTQ rights and bringing their voices to institutions of power nationwide. Beyond the bright, colorful packaging, those super gay cartridges are jam-packed with distil-



Courtesy

Skymint staff members holding a pride flag.

late that tests in at 90% THC.

Good job Lansing: Every shop in the city seems to have sold out of those charitable cartridges. The Botanical Co., near the Capital City Region International Airport, has also pledged to donate a portion of the profits this month to The Trevor Project to help LGBTQ youth. Founded in 1998 by the creators of the short film "Trevor,"

that nonprofit has been billed as the leading national organization providing crisis intervention and suicide services to LGBTQ people under age 25.

High Profile in Ann Arbor (which was featured in a special "on the road" edition of this column last year) has also raised more than \$10,000 for the Trevor Project through Pride-themed pins.

Last year, Skymint also released four new dank strains for Pride Month, including Rozay No. 1. Through

a partnership with the Fair & Equal Michigan campaign, all of the proceeds from those select sales were sent straight to a ballot initiative to amend the state's Elliot-Larsen Civil Rights Act and better protect lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender discrimina-

See Pot, Page 18

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Happy Pride Month!

It's an honor to work with the LGBTQ community as the Ingham County Prosecutor – and to be rated “very positive” by the Lansing Association for Human Rights LAHR PAC.



Carol A. Siemon,
Prosecuting Attorney
Michael Cheltenham, Chief
Assistant Prosecutor

It takes no compromise to give people their rights. It takes no money to respect the individual. It takes no political deal to give people freedom. It takes no survey to remove repression.

- Harvey Milk



Councilmember
Kathie Dunbar

Paid for by: People for Kathie Dunbar 1414 E. Miller Rd., Lansing, MI 48911

Pot

from page 17

tion across the state.

Following some delays tied to the coronavirus, organizers plan to get the amendment on the 2022 ballot. And Skymint is once again donating up to \$10,000 to support the voter initiative.

Surprisingly, it's still possible to be fired for being gay under state law. So, Skymint is also keeping it light by donating \$2 for each selfie that customers post online using the #skymintpride hashtag. Of course, the Urban Outfitters of weed is also selling Pride shirts and tote bags too.

The company also tried to bring in acclaimed LGBTQ YouTube star and Michigan State University alumnus Tyler Oakley for National Pride Day, but the plans fell apart last week.

Finally: I'd be remiss not to mention the special rainbow-designed rolling trays released last month from my friends at Blazy Susan. They sent me a killer sample package this month that included some of the best cones I've ever smoked. Pick up a pack of pink papers for Pride too!

Kyle Kaminski is City Pulse' 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.

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Inclusion Awards 2021

Building community in a year of isolation

This year's City Pulse Inclusion Award winners have an impressive variety of superpowers. The negotiating skills of actor, union organizer, politician and Okemos native Jeffrey Omura helped strapped off-Broadway actors earn a living wage in New York City and beyond. Educators Alyona Troitsky and Erin Umpstead spearhead gay-straight alliances at two local schools, helping LGBTQIA+ students feel safe and seen and coaxing confused parents to understand their kids' life journeys, all while teaching full time. Oprah Revish weaves a tapestry of support, one student at a time, out of variegated threads of gender identity, race, sexual identity and abilities at MSU's LGBT Support Center and Lansing's Salus Center. Doak Bloss brings the empathy of an actor who immerses himself in a role to facilitate healing discussions of hot-button issues like immigration and abortion. Antoinette King-Short brings joy and music to people in the persona of DJ Fudgie, while she and

Meet our
2021 Inclusion Awards
winners in a special
video production at
www.lansingcitypulse.com

her wife have fostered 25 kids in need of love and support.

For all their diversity, this year's recipients share two rare attributes. They excel at bringing people together and they are passionate and tireless builders of safe spaces for the LGBTQIA+ community.

Unfortunately, our awardees could practice neither of these two skills in person in the past year, as a deadly pandemic ripped through the community, and the world. The pandemic was not only an unprecedented tragedy in itself; it laid bare long neglect-

ed inequalities and dysfunctional ways of relating to one another as human beings. Nevertheless, the healers and weavers soldiered on, via Zoom meetings, phone calls — any way they could — because their work is endless. Omura was a key player in the successful push to include \$16 billion in aid to the arts in the most recent federal coronavirus relief bill. Closer to home, Lansing's Salus Center, a haven for LGBTQIA+ folks in need of support and information, kept the lights on and had its first open house since the pandemic began. It's worth a few minutes to get to know these extraordinary people a little better, and listen to what they have to say about the work that still needs to be done, both within the LGBTQIA+ community and among those who would be allies, to make everyone in our community, our state and our nation feel safe, secure and welcome.

— **LAWRENCE COSENTINO**

Turn the page to read about this year's Inclusion Award honorees.

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Inclusion Honorees 2021



Alyona Troitsky

Alyona Troitsky, faculty adviser for Holt Middle School's Gay Straight Alliance, came to the United States in 1981, with the support of the Jewish Community Center in Southfield. She was 9 years old and had no idea what her new life would be like.

"I'd never had a banana before," she said. "Never had popcorn, pizza. Discovering all the flavors of America was a really big deal."

She was a precocious reader in Russian, but she didn't know a word of English. Going from the head of the class in Russian to Square One in English taught her a lesson in humility and compassion she applies when she teaches English to her own students.

"It's helped me be a much better teacher, because I'll never forget that feeling of frustration," she said.

While working in a restaurant at 16 years old, she observed a cook bullying one of the waiters about his sexuality. When she started teaching alternative education in 1999, she began to piece together many such incidents she'd seen over the course of her life, and to recognize the pattern of bullying and marginalization many of her students were going through.

She addressed those issues in her own classroom for years, but decided that a support group would be more effective.

"I had nothing but support," she said. "I was waiting for pushback, but all I heard from administration was that if you're having an issue with a parent, come and talk to us. It was very surprising, refreshing and wonderful."

It's a bonus for Alyona, 49, that her mom, Ekaterina Troitsky, is also involved in supporting the Gay-Straight Alliance.

"She goes to the meetings, brings treats and organizes games. When we go to Pride, she gives out free hugs. She's my non-judgmental hug mom. She has a thick Russian accent and the kids love her."

A few years ago, when the Gay-Straight Alliance at Holt High School got a float in the homecoming parade, faculty adviser Erin Umpstead asked Troitsky if she wanted to ride along.

As if she had to ask.

"Of course I want to ride on a float, wear rainbows and throw candy," Troitsky said. "Like, duh, have you met me?"

But it wasn't all rainbows and candy. Anyone who thinks growing cultural acceptance of the LGBTQ community is making groups like the Gay Straight Alliance obsolete isn't paying close enough attention. As the parade formed up, Troitsky overheard a group of kids saying "some very nasty things."

"They said 'You're all going to hell,' very nasty, very bullying," she said.

They backed off when Troitsky informed them she was a teacher, but it left her wondering: If they feel this comfortable, openly projecting this hostility, in a crowded place with parents and teachers around, what is happening to kids in the bathroom? In the locker room? When they're walking home from school?

"We need to be so much more proactive, making that kind of behavior not OK," Troitsky said. "It's at least as important as the curriculum, if not more so. If they're not safe, how are they going to learn anything?"



Jeffrey Omura

Once upon a time, Jeffrey Omura brooded and sighed as Romeo and Hamlet on outdoor stages in Lansing. Since then, the 2003 Okemos High School graduate has made a multiple impact on real life in the Big Apple. He's built a career in New York as a TV and theater actor, notched historic breakthroughs on behalf of off-Broadway actors and crew as a union organizer, and just completed a run for New York's City Council.

There have been slings and arrows along the way. In Tuesday's primary election, Omura, 36, received just over 10 percent of the vote to represent District 6, comprising Manhattan's Upper West Side, finishing fourth in a field of six.

Nevertheless, Omura finds that theater and politics are a natural fit and expects to carry on with both.

"You need an extraordinary amount of empathy as an actor," he said. "Nobody thinks they're a villain. You have to understand where people come from, and that kind of empathy is a huge asset for anyone who wants to represent people in any kind of elected office."

Omura was active in theater at Okemos High and at Lansing's Riverwalk and BoarsHead theaters. He cut his Shakespearean teeth in the shoestring-budget, boldly creative Sunsets with Shakespeare company.

He ended up making his New York debut in "Romeo and Juliet" at Shakespeare in the Park and later played Horatio in "Hamlet" at New York's Public Theatre.

The political bug caught Omura when he was young. At 16, he testified before the Michigan State Legislature on behalf of an anti-bullying bill.

"As a gay kid, growing up, I was heavily bullied in middle school, and I was able to bring that experience to help represent all the kids who couldn't be there," he said. "During this City Council campaign I realized how big a deal that was."

In 2016, when Omura was doing "Hamlet," off-Broadway actors were still making the dismal wage of \$593 a week, or \$400 after taxes, and even less after agents took their cut — not enough to survive in New York. Omura helped organize a multi-platform, grassroots movement, Fair Wage OnStage, that attracted the support of heavy hitters like Cher and Hillary Clinton and gave the Actors' Equity union enough leverage to negotiate record-breaking wage increases of 30% to 80%.

Outrageous fortune struck on a vast scale in 2020, when the theater world plummeted from a record-breaking box office in 2019 to the total devastation of 2020.

Again, Omura dug in and started organizing, lobbying Congress for financial help for the arts on behalf of the #BeAnArtsHero campaign.

The group's relentless focus on economic impact and jobs generated by the arts resonated with senators from both parties, resulting in a \$16 billion aid package.

As New York reopens, Omura is looking forward to more acting ("I still have bills to pay") and more activism.

"I have met so many people and learned so much about the needs of this community," he said. "I'm committed to helping out my neighborhood and this city, and I will continue to look for opportunities to do so."



Oprah Revish

Helping young people find a secure place in the world at MSU's LGBT Resource Center and the Salus Center in Lansing, Oprah Revish draws on memories of herself as a "quiet child, a sensitive little girl."

"I remember feeling there wasn't a place for me, so I created a place for me inside of my own head — elaborate fantasies and worlds and all that, while I was reading," she said.

These days, Revish, 34, is into reality, not fantasy.

"I decided I needed to create a space for young folks who can't find themselves in the mainstream reality," she said.

Born in Shreveport, Louisiana, and raised in southern California, Revish studied creative writing at the University of Arizona and pursued graduate studies in higher education at the University of Kansas and University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

She enjoyed working with Living Learning Communities serving LGBTQ students — residential communities where like-minded students live together and often go to the same classes.

Looking for a way to more directly serve the LGBTQ community, she joined MSU's LGBT Resource Center. The climate was a bit of a shock after California and Arizona.

"I drove into Michigan during a snowstorm on Dec. 29, 2017, and started working here in January," she said. Revish sees her work as twofold.

"On one hand, you're trying to convince folks who have always had the privileges and the power to live fully and openly — cisgender and straight folks — that other people exist, and that their existence matters," she said.

At the same time, she helps provide "language and space" for young people, many of whom are venturing into uncharted waters.

"For the first time in their lives, they have freedom from their guardians or parents, and you're uplifting them and affirming who they are."

Revish knows fantasy from reality, and isn't counting on changing people's minds. Getting out of the way suffices for her.

"It's OK if folks are like, 'I don't understand it, but I'm not going to be in your way.' I'll take that if nothing else."

Revish isn't shy about telling people who fancy themselves allies of the LGBTQ community to step up their game. It's common for students to tell Revish their parents are coming to campus, so they have to change the way they dress or put their hair down.

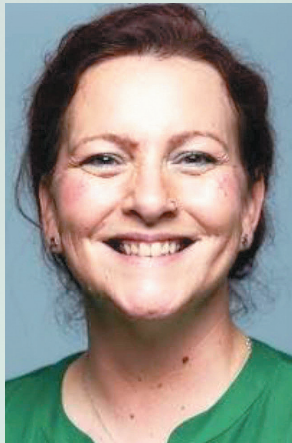
"It is heartbreaking," she said.

She cited a bill pending in the Michigan Legislature that would force young people to play on sports teams that align with their birth-assigned sex.

"Folks that are like, 'trans people are cool' or 'I love Laverne Cox' — I want those folks to talk to their senators, talk with the governor, to push a little further," she said.

Revish is also a mainstay of Lansing's Salus Center, a gathering place and information hub for LGBTQIA+ community. Last weekend, the Salus Center held a joyous open house after a difficult year.

"Lansing is the capital city, so it's very important something like this exists, and it's visible to anyone who's ready to explore their sexuality and their gender identity, or they are in un-affirming homes," she said.



Erin Umpstead

Coming from a military family and a conservative religious background, Erin Umpstead would appear to be an unlikely faculty adviser for Holt High School's Straight-Gay Alliance.

Being an "Air Force brat" (her father served for 29 years) meant moving around a lot. After a rich social and academic experience in a high school in Cheyenne, Wyoming, she got a reality check while spending an isolated last semester of her senior year in Fremont High in Michigan.

"It was hard to make new friends for only a semester, and I wasn't included in anything at all," she recalled. "I remember feeling so sad that most of the students weren't paying attention to me. That had a huge impact on me wanting to make sure students are included, have friends and find groups they fit into."

She didn't make it past a crowded field of applicants for MSU's College of Education. After getting her English degree, she worked as a substitute teacher and waited tables at the late, lamented Travelers Club Restaurant and International Tuba Museum.

The gently Bohemian world of the Travelers Club, where Easter was celebrated by a visit from a belly dance troupe, opened her eyes to other forms of diversity.

She awoke of the possibility of becoming an LGBTQ ally in college, but made up for lost time fast. Soon after she started teaching at Holt High School as a long-term sub, she caught some snatches of conversation in a busy hallway about the Gay-Straight Alliance that piqued her interest. She immediately sought out the faculty adviser and found that she was ready to step down.

"It was a signal from the universe," she said.

She still didn't have a contract as a teacher, so she formed an alliance with an older first-year teacher to mentor the group.

By the time Umpstead was hired full time at the school, three years later, the group had grown from a handful of students to 25 or so.

There was pushback. A mother asked that her student to be removed from Umpstead's class because she led the Gay-Straight Alliance.

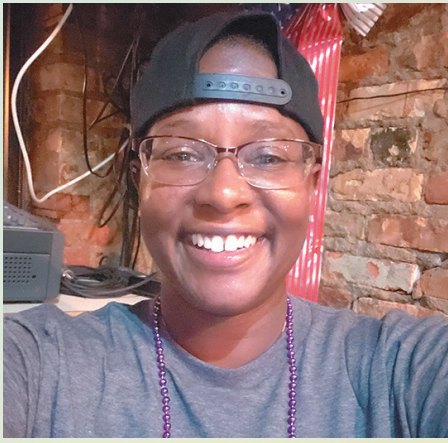
"The woman had never met me or seen me, and she was assuming all of these horrible things about me," she said.

But the group blossomed and began to meet for various activities outside the classroom. As members graduated, they came back to share their experiences in the larger world, building an emotional and social bond that now spans 14 years.

"These humans are out in the world, doing amazing things," she said. "One of them is taking the credit union world by storm, and another is taking human resources and community resources and putting them together to include LGBTQ students."

For her part, Umpstead, 49, has found the GSA to be a vehicle for lifelong learning.

"One way the work has changed is that there's been a virtual explosion in non-binary, non-gender-conforming, more fluidity and exploration," she said. "My students give me an inordinate amount of grace as I learn these new terms, new ways of understanding the world. I'm not done growing and it's so, so interesting."



Antoinette King-Short

Antoinette King-Short, 42, has evolved from the organizational and political side of the fight for equality to a direct, personal approach, fostering 25 children with her wife, Harper Creek Elementary School principal Shalen King-Short.

"It's hard to be young and not sure what your sexual orientation is, if you're still going to be loved the same," King-Short said. "It wasn't very easy to grow up a lesbian Black kid in Flint. I just try to make sure this generation knows we've opened so many doors and you don't have to be dim your light."

One thing that hasn't changed over the years is King-Short's love of music and fun, expressed most vividly by her alter ego, entertainer DJ Fudgie.

"I love making people laugh," she said. "If you're not having fun, you're not doing it right."

King-Short was a volunteer and, later, a leader in the Michigan Pride organization in the 2000s, a crucial time when the fight for marriage equality was gathering steam but the outcome was still doubtful.

"It was a call to action," she said. "At the time, my wife and I didn't have any kids. We were a young couple."

They ended up becoming the second same-sex couple in Michigan to be married.

King-Short grew up singing, dancing and listening to all kinds of music, from her grandmother's Motown records to rapper Tupac and King of Pop Michael Jackson to country star Billy Ray Cyrus (one of her mom's favorites).

She applied her encyclopedic musical knowledge and boundless energy to a 2010 DJ competition at the Chrome Cat, the LGBT-friendly Old Town club that closed in 2013, and took second place. The first place winner wasn't able to accept the prize, a residency at the club.

"I took her place and that's where it began," she said. "It started out as a hobby and blossomed out as a business."

DJ Fudgie has brought life to church dances for LGBTQIA+ kids, school proms and other charity work along with the paying gigs.

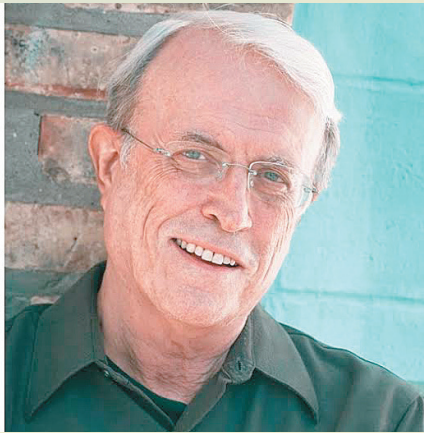
With time, King-Short moved away from organizational activity to a more personal approach. As a teacher and a principal, her wife, Shalen King-Short, saw a lot of students struggling at home, deprived of emotional, academic or even nutritional support.

After a heavy discussion or two, the couple decided to open their home to foster kids who needed help. They've fostered 25 so far.

"We've had a few teenagers who were LGBTQ, kids with a variety of places on the spectrum," she said. "We feel blessed to move toward things like that. That's where we need to focus, as a community and as a state."

At this stage in her life, she finds the love in a child's face more fulfilling than organizing rallies and jostling for bandwidth, attention and funding.

"When we were younger, it was about the party, about Pride, all those things," she said. "But when you see the actual needs, it completely changed. I'm not saying Michigan Pride isn't doing what they need to do. I just felt like we could take a step back and try to help in other ways as well."



Doak Bloss

Around 2016, actor Doak Bloss, co-founder of the Lansing Area Aids Network, was crippled with an anxiety he never had before.

For years, Bloss worked on health equity issues for the Ingham County Health Department and quickly became its social justice coordinator. But when the Flint Water Crisis came to a boil, he "hit a wall."

"I found myself in a bind, between the state people, the organizers and local health people, the conflict between what you can and cannot say, given what was happening to people," he said.

A leave of absence became retirement. About two years ago, he suffered severe health problems brought on largely by drinking.

"In a way, vodka kept me alive because I could sidestep things that were deeply troubling to me, but it also hurt my body a lot," he said.

Bloss grew up in Crystal, about an hour's drive north of Lansing. He describes his youth as "quietly suicidal." He first came out as gay to his college roommate, who also turned out to be gay. He dabbled "unseriously" in everything from sociology to Italian cinema at MSU, and ended up with a "very flakey English degree."

The shrill anti-gay rhetoric of Anita Bryant drove him to write a letter to the Lansing State Journal.

"Everybody back home saw it," he said. "They split down the middle. I had supporters and I had people who thought I was going to hell."

Bloss and his partner at the time split up in the mid-1980s, when the AIDS epidemic was reaching its height.

"I was looking around for something meaningful to do," he said. He co-founded the Lansing Area AIDS Network, but he calls himself an "outlier in many kinds of things."

He was glad to latch onto the gay bar scene, but also agitated against misogyny in the gay male community.

"There was a lot of woman hating, often with a sense of humor, but it was pretty blatant," he said.

He met the love of his life, pianist Gerardo Ascheri, 27 years ago this fall. They married within a week of the 2015 Supreme Court decision legalizing gay marriage.

Now sober, he spent much of the pandemic year writing two new plays.

The first, "Vodka," is about a person who "dreams about drinking" and runs into a surprise daughter from a "sexual event" from 18 years ago. The other is about "a turn of the century elderly transgender woman who was a courtesan to royalty."

"It's fun," he said. "Trans life is new to me."

He has also plunged back into social justice work with a variety of local and national partners. He's been part of an informal facilitators' group since 2007, bringing together people with opposite views on tough issues like immigration and abortion.

"As an actor, my two objectives, when I'm in a conversation with somebody, is, 'I want to understand you.' Simple as that. The other thing is, 'I want to be understood.' If you can go into those difficult conversations with that kind of motivation, amazing things can happen. That's my mission at age 67."

All profiles were written by Lawrence Cosentino.

Original Michigan Pride members reflect on early rally days

By SKYLER ASHLEY

In 2021, few bystanders will bat an eye at an LGBTQ pride parade, and cantankerous right-wing protesters often find themselves drowned out by a rainbow sea of bodies. While there's work required toward LGBTQ acceptance forevermore, events like pride rallies, marches and parades become more normalized as each year passes. But this acceptance didn't come from nowhere — it took decades of hard work and statewide networking and organizing efforts.

Michigan's first annually recurring LGBTQ pride march and rally was organized by Craig Covey and the Michigan Organization for Human Rights, or MOHR, in 1985. The event was originally in Detroit until moving to Lansing, thanks to work from organizers like Bob Egan, in 1989. Eventually, as it grew larger in scope, management of the pride rally shifted from MOHR to its current organization Michigan Pride, a group that was founded solely to manage and organize the rally on a yearly basis. Michigan Pride cosponsored the 1994 rally with MOHR, and since 1995 it has solely put together the event annually.

Chuck Marquadt, a founding member of Michigan Pride, first began attending and volunteering with LGBTQ pride rallies and marches dating back to 1988, when he was 17. He remembers when outright hostili-



Skyler Ashley/City Pulse

A June LGBTQ pride demonstration makes it way through Lansing's westside neighborhood.

ty toward the LGBTQ community was commonplace.

"At that time, we were still being thrown in jail just for having sex. We were being harassed by the police. If you went to the gay bars in downtown Lansing, police were not your friends," Marquadt said. "It was something you had to worry about."

MOHR, which eventually splintered



Marquadt

apart and became Equality Michigan, had a very wide scope of activism, as it tackled several social justice issues on top of organizing the big LGBTQ pride march. An idea was formed to create a new group in order to have better control over an annual event that was starting to regularly attract more than 10,000 attendees.

"We decided that the rally should be its own entity. Every year with MOHR we would have to go back and fundraise again. Any income from the parade went back into its operating revenue," Stephanie McLean, another founding member of Michigan Pride, said.

"A core group of us decided that the pride march needed its own organization that did nothing but that. Organized all year, fundraised, all that good stuff. We made a proposal to MOHR and they agreed," Marquadt



McLean

said. "From then on, it's been Michigan Pride to this day."

In the early-'90s, Marquadt, McLean and many other volunteers with Michigan Pride, including fellow founding member Val Osowski, helped spread the word the old-fashioned way: word of mouth. The Michigan Pride crew would drive up and down the state hitting up different city and town's known gay bars to let the locals know about the giant LGBTQ rally planned to go off at the Capitol.

"We were working on a shoestring budget to do this massive thing. Normally, we'd get between 8,000 and 12,000 people per year. It was a group effort all the way through, there were no divas," Marquadt said. "It was these incredible women and men who put their heart and souls into making it happen."

"We'd go to all the bars and dance on tabletops and sell T-shirts. It was very scrappy," McLean said.

Osowski, an old friend of McLean's, got involved during this transitional period through her friendship with Egan, who was an instrumental part in moving the pride rally from Detroit to Lansing. She would travel around Southeast Michigan, meeting new people and networking to drum up attendance and help further expand the rally.

"I got a lot of satisfaction and fulfillment from working on it. At the time, there was an increasing politicization of gay and lesbian rights, and it gave me a great way to be active and contribute to the movement," Osowski said.

For the Michigan Pride volunteers, one of the most impactful aspects of organizing the pride rally was witnessing Michigan's LGBTQ community converge at the Capitol from all different corners and regions of the state, whether they were traveling from

See Rally, Page 23

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Rally

from page 22

Metro Detroit or an obscure small town where an LGBTQ person dare not out themselves publicly.

“There’s really nothing like it. It was such a powerful thing to stand on the platform at the Capitol, see the march kick off and then come down Michigan Avenue. All of the joy and pride gave me goosebumps. I can vividly remember that,” Owoski said.

A key difference between the early days of Michigan Pride and today was that the event couldn’t really be described as a parade. These days, pride events are recognized for having colorful floats, performers and an overall high level of showmanship. Marquadt



Owoski

describes the original Michigan Pride festivities as strictly being a march or a rally, a reflection of the more intense social environment facing the LGBTQ community at the time.

“They would come to Lansing for this event, and for many of them it was the only place where they could be in public and be out. Then they would go back to their small town and back into the closet,” Marquadt. “Pride marches at that time were so much more meaningful to me back then. We had no representation and we were actively being discriminated against in horrible ways.”

With the intense levels of prejudice the LGBTQ community faced, pride rallies immediately became an isolated sanctuary where one could finally find the joy of being themselves uninhibited by the fear of being outed, losing their livelihood thanks to workplace discrimination or being excommunicated from their family.

“While we were unified by tragedy, our lives were not tragedies. We lived wonderful lives that had this overlay.

We were fighting this crap,” Marquadt said.”These events were joyful and once a year we’d have this amazing experience.”

Though Marquadt, McLean and Osowski and several other original Michigan Pride volunteers, organizers and attendees have moved on to different states and careers, for them it remains powerful and reaffirming

to see an event they helped build still going decades later.

“I think it’s a testament to the gay rights and lesbian activism, not only here but across the country,” Osowski said. “It all feeds into itself. The momentum, growth and evolution — both of the movement and people’s perspective on it — has grown over the years. We still have a long way to go.”



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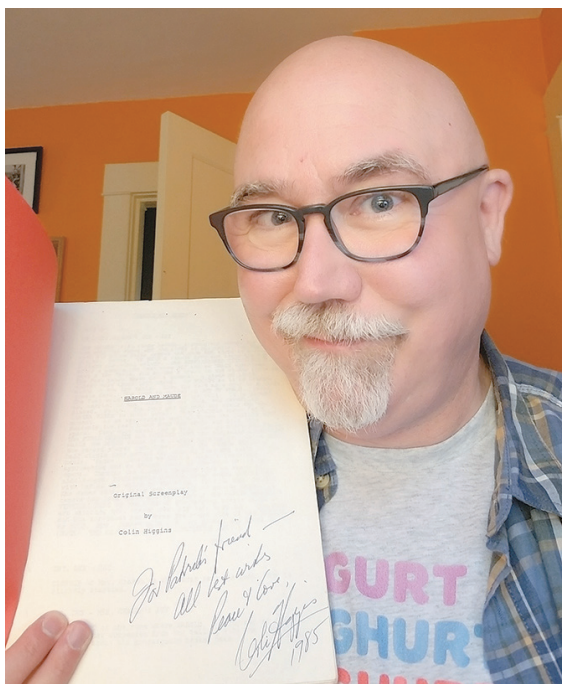
Tim Retzloff and his signed 'Harold and Maude' script

Tim Retzloff is an historian who teaches LGBTQ studies at Michigan State University as an adjunct assistant professor. His favorite thing is none other than a signed copy of the script to his favorite film, the 1971 classic dark comedy "Harold and Maude."

This object of mine that I cherish is a copy of the script for "Harold and Maude" that is autographed by its screenwriter, Colin Higgins. The script was a gift from one of my dearest and longest friends, Patrick Jones. We are both from Flint, and part of our bonding and friendship was seeing "Harold and Maude" in Ann Arbor. By that point, I had discovered the film; I had fallen in love with the film and who knows how many times I have seen it. I first saw it in 1982 — it was showing every weekend at the State Theater in Ann Arbor.

It's a cult film, and I became enamored with it. I had to share it with all kinds of people. I took all kinds of different friends to go see it. I even took my mother. It's such a funny film. The Harold character is in such pain with his mother that he's performing fake suicide attempts to get her goat and, of course, she's beyond reacting. He has a pattern of flirting with death; he takes a Porsche and converts it into a hearse. Then he meets a 79-year-old woman and falls in love with her. She teaches him how to live.

The script itself was given to me by Patrick. It is signed, "For Patrick's friend, blank. All best wishes. Peace & Love — Colin Higgins, 1985." I think what happened is — and this was before the Internet when people still had to write letters and such — he found an address for Higgins and



wrote to him and said, "I'm interested in getting a copy of the 'Harold and Maude' script for my friend." But his letter didn't give Higgins my name! Patrick would have had to mail it back in order to have Higgins include my name. But there's a quirkiness to it. Maybe Patrick got it for another friend — after all it is signed "fill in the blank." But we bonded over the film, so it was clearly meant for me. It's kind of funny that when he wrote Higgins he never mentioned my name.

Of course, Higgins died three years after this of HIV/AIDS. By that point in my life, I was out in Flint. It has an added element of this really meaningful queer artist that we lost in that epidemic.

I'm an historian and an archivist; to be honest I keep the script in a file drawer. I have not pulled it out in quite a while. As an historian, you want to keep things preserved. I think if I kept it on display there might be a risk of harm coming to it. I would be very sad if that ever happened.

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

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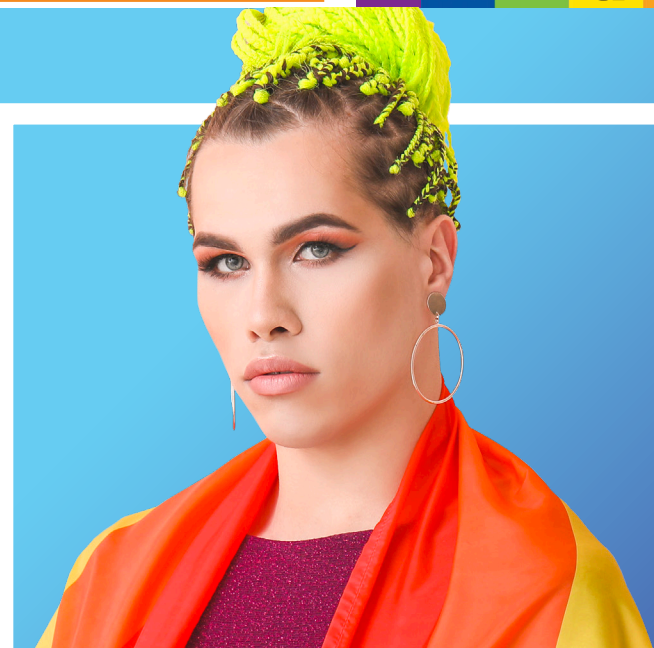
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New book chronicles the gay marriage legal battle

By **BILL CASTANIER**

In 2001, after much hand-wringing, The New York Times began accepting engagement and wedding announcements for gay marriages. The very first one arrived when the paper ran Daniel Andrew Gross and Steven Goldstein's wedding announcement. Just one year earlier, it had declined to run a similar announcement.

In 2015, the United States Supreme Court's ruling in *Obergefell v. Hodges* struck down all state bans on gay marriage. It is a combination of momentous legal decisions like *Obergefell v. Hodges* and minor cultural actions like those taken by The New York Times that Sasha Issenberg writes about in his treatise of a book, "The Engagement," a 900-plus page history of the fight for gay marriage in the U.S.

The first domino in the quest for legalizing gay marriage fell in May 1993, when the Hawaii Supreme Court legalized gay marriage statewide in the landmark *Baehr v. Miike* lawsuit.

Issenberg devotes several chapters in his book to that legal case, which would take years of wrangling before the decision could be enforced — including use of state constitutional amendments that banned gay marriage. Numerous states, including California and Michigan, chose the route to ban gay marriage by using a constitutional amendment voted on by the public.

Although Issenberg is almost encyclopedic in his descriptions of the legal ladders that gay rights groups had to climb, his book has the makings of a legal thriller when he begins to review the behind-the-scenes actions to legalize gay marriage. There are secret strategy sessions on both sides, with massive amounts of money spent both for and against the cause. He estimates that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints spent at

least \$20 million to pass California's Proposal 8, which banned gay marriage statewide in 2008. Michigan's own ban on same sex marriage passed in 2004 with broad financial support from various denominations. Six Catholic dioceses and the Archdiocese of Detroit spent \$1 million in favor of the ban. In total, 31 states passed ballot issues opposing gay marriage.

When the state bans on same sex unions and the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act wound their way through the legal quagmire of the lower courts, a Michigan lawsuit, which started as an adoption case between a same sex couple, emerged as one of the cases that would be argued in front of the U.S. Supreme Court. According to Issenberg, then Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuette, who was considering a run for governor, wanted nothing to do with it, and Michigan was represented by a former solicitor general who had little knowledge of the issue. On the other hand, the gay rights faction had a deep bench when it came to legal expertise.

Issenberg writes about one legal runoff between attorneys to be chosen to argue the case for Michigan. At a meeting in Ann Arbor, gay marriage proponents could not agree on either of the attorneys, so the role fell to Mary Bonauto, who had deep experience in winning gay marriage cases across the country. A number of rights organizations like the American Civil Liberties Union wanted control of the case. It was believed the



Issenberg

case would be good for organizing, prestige and fundraising.

In his book, Issenberg makes the case that the conservative religious right may have inadvertently affected the outcome. For the longest time, the religious right had made the case that marriage was a sacred institution for couples. Gay rights advocates agreed, and that is why they were seeking it for themselves.

Another Michigan tie-in is David Sobelsohn, a former staffer for the Judicial Committee in the Michigan House of Representatives who moved to Washington, where he became an important strategist for gay marriage. "Very early on he was prescient. He believed the decision would soon favor gay marriage. Others in the movement thought it was too early to litigate the issue and that it should wait for increased public acceptance of gay marriage," Issenberg said.

"Sobelsohn was incredibly farsight-

ed in anticipating what conservatives would do, and how the LGBTQ community could galvanize gay rights activists," Issenberg said.

The author also writes about why many gay rights groups were afraid to sue over the marriage issue. "They were worried about precedents and backlash," he said.

Another important Michigan connection is the role of the heirs to the Kalamazoo Stryker Corp., who supported OutGiving, a national networking effort of the Gill Foundation to tap the gay community for election spending and lobbying. The Gill Foundation was founded by Tim Gill, creator of the software layout company Quark, which he sold for \$500 million in 1999. Estimates of his philanthropic giving to gay issues top \$500 million.

"Gay marriage was a perfect quarter-century civil rights issue," Issenberg said.

"Everyone is welcome here. Peace, love and belonging. Happy Pride!"

-Dana Watson
(She/Her/Ella)



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Jonesin' Crossword

By Matt Jones

"There's Norway"--you might get a Peace Prize when you're done.

by Matt Jones

Across

1 Home planet of TV's ALF

7 Sex ed subj.

10 Tests for college credit, briefly

13 Constellation whose name means "eagle"

14 "The Andy Griffith Show" kid

15 "High School Musical" star Efron

16 Keeps going and going

17 Quite skilled

19 Tavern gambling game, in some states

21 One more than zwei

22 It may get tacked on

23 Features erroneously added to male cows in some cartoons

25 Streaming device maker

29 More encrusted

32 JFK flier, once

33 Smokey Robinson song that was covered by The Jackson 5

36 Veterans will mention it's not their first

37 Offensive or defensive player

38 Mature, legally

42 Taco Bell taco variety with a unique shell

45 Ozone depleter, for short

48 Strengthen

49 Subway map dot

50 Reason for excommunication

52 "___ appetit!"

54 Nastase of tennis

55 Started to stall, like a bad Internet connection

62 Chicano rock band with the apt debut album "How Will the Wolf Survive?"

64 ___ Creed (church recitation)

65 Singer Kamoze with the 1994 hit "Here Comes the Hotstepper"

66 Venti, e.g.

67 "Dollface" actress

Povitsky

68 Part of MS-DOS (abbr.)

69 Night before

70 Create a new draft of

Down

1 Sports announcer Albert

2 Prefix for lateral

3 Ilisa ___ ("Casablanca" character)

4 ___-en-scene (stage setting)

5 Icy

6 Ex-ballplayer who wrote "Juiced"

7 Get a glimpse of

8 Gauzy, like a light dress

9 "No Sudden Move" actor Benicio ___ Toro

10 Sky blue hues

11 Indianapolis five

12 Flaky metamorphic rock that sometimes gets laughs in high school geology

14 Plastic ___ Band

18 Like the length and width of most crossword grids

20 Description for some conditioners

24 "Cats rule, dogs ___" ("Homeward Bound" line)

25 1980s D.C. monogram

26 "Well, well, well!"

27 Floored, as a boxer

28 Well-trodden

30 1977 Burton role in "Roots"

31 Not certain

34 Pillages

35 Crafts that are also called UAPs (as of 2021 news)

39 Do something

40 Marshmallow residue

41 Prescience of a sort

43 They Might Be Giants title character who "proudly stands at the rainbow's end"

44 Reverend known for confusing initial letters

45 Restaurant chain with a green and red logo

46 Arson, e.g.

47 Tense situation

51 Fish sometimes wrapped in rice

53 Staticky output

56 Move like lava

57 Cat-loving poet's initials

58 "Great White North" sketch show

59 City north of Utah Lake

60 Wallet stuffers

61 "OK, now where ___ we?"

63 Sugary suffix

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		
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45	46	47		48							49		
50				51					52		53		
54							55	56	57			58	59
62					63								
65					66						67		
68					69						70		

SUDOKU

Intermediate

TO PLAY

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

Answers on page 28

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

Free Will Astrology

By Rob Breznsky

June 30 - July 6, 2021

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Columnist Linda Weltner says that there's a dual purpose to cleaning your home, rearranging the furniture, adding new art to the walls, and doting on your potted plants. Taking good care of your environment is a primary way of taking good care of yourself. She writes, "The home upon which we have lavished so much attention is the embodiment of our own self love." I invite you to make that your inspirational meditation for the next two weeks.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): "For peace of mind, I will lie about any thing at any time," said author Amy Hempel. Hmmmm. I'm the opposite. To cultivate peace of mind, I try to speak and live the truth as much as I can. Lying makes me nervous. It also seems to make me dumber. It forces me to keep close track of my fibs so I can be sure to stick to my same deceitful story when the subject comes up later. What about you, Taurus? For your peace of mind, do you prefer to rely on dishonesty or honesty? I'm hoping that for the next four weeks, you will favor the latter. Cultivating judicious candor will heal you and boost your intelligence.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): In her essay about education, "Don't Overthink It," philosopher Agnes Callard reminds us, "No matter how much we increase our investment at the front end—perfecting our minds with thinking classes, long ruminations, novel-reading, and moral algebra—we cannot spare ourselves the agony of learning by doing." That will be a key theme for you in the next four weeks, dear Gemini. You will need to make abundant use of empiricism: pursuing knowledge through direct experience, using your powers of observation and a willingness to experiment.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche said that when our rational minds are working at their best, they inspire us to cultivate our most interesting and enlivening passions. They also de-emphasize and suppress any energy-draining passions that might have a hold on us. I'm hoping you will take full advantage of this in the coming weeks, Cancerian. You will generate good fortune and sweet breakthroughs as you highlight desires that uplift you and downgrade desires that diminish you.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Leo author Wendell Berry suggests, "It may be that when we no longer know what to do, we have come to our real work, and when we no longer know which way to go, we have begun our real journey." Although there's wisdom in that formulation, I don't think it's true a majority of the time. Far more often we are fed by the strong, clear intuitions that emerge from our secret depths—from the sacred gut feelings that give us accurate guidance about what to do and where to go. But I do suspect that right now may be one of those phases when Berry's notion is true for you, Leo. What do you think?

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): In 1750, more than 250 years after Columbus first visited the New World, Native Americans were still a majority of the continent's population. But between 1776 and now, the United States government stole 1.5 billion acres of land from its original owners—25 times the size of the United Kingdom. Here's another sad fact: Between 1778 and 1871, America's federal administrations signed over 500 treaties with indigenous tribes—and broke every one of them. The possibility that these sins will eventually be remedied is very small. I bring them up only to serve as possible metaphors for your personal life. Is there anything you have unfairly gained from others? Is there anything others have unfairly gained from you? The next six months will be prime time to seek atonement and correction.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Libran Zen teacher Thich Nhat Hanh advises you and me and everyone else to "seek the spiritual in every ordinary thing that you do every day." You have to work at it a bit, he says; you must have it as your firm intention. But it's not really hard to do. "Sweeping the floor; watering the vegetables, and washing the dishes become holy and sacred if mindfulness is there," he

adds. I think you Libras will have a special knack for this fun activity in the coming weeks. (Thich Nhat Hanh wrote a series of "Mindfulness Essentials" books that includes "How to Eat", "How to Walk", "How to Relax", and "How to Connect". I invite you to come up with your own such instructions.)

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): My unexpected interpretation of the current astrological omens suggests that you will be wise to go naked as much as possible in the coming weeks. Being skyclad, as the pagans say, will be healing for you. You will awaken dormant feelings that will help you see the world with enhanced understanding. The love that you experience for yourself will soften one of your hard edges, and increase your appreciation for all the magic that your life is blessed with. One important caveat: Of course, don't impose your nakedness on anyone who doesn't want to witness it.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): If you analyzed the best-selling songs as measured by "Billboard" magazine, you'd think we were in the midst of a dangerous decline in population. The vast majority of those popular tunes feature lyrics with reproductive themes. It's as if there's some abject fear that humans aren't going to make enough babies, and need to be constantly cajoled and incited to engage in love-making. But I don't think you Sagittarians, whatever your sexual preference, will need any of that nagging in the coming days. Your Eros Quotient should be higher than it has been in a while.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Pulitzer Prize-winning author Donna Tartt, born under the sign of Capricorn, writes, "Beauty is rarely soft or consolatory. Quite the contrary. Genuine beauty is always quite alarming." In my view, that's an unwarranted generalization. It may sometimes be true, but is often not. Genuine beauty may also be elegant, lyrical, inspiring, healing, and ennobling. Having said that, I will speculate that the beauty you encounter in the near future may indeed be disruptive or jolting, but mostly because it has the potential to remind you of what you're missing—and motivate you to go after what you've been missing.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): On July 21, 1969, Aquarian astronaut Buzz Aldrin was the second human to walk on the moon. It happened during a spectacular astrological aspect, when transiting Jupiter and Uranus in Libra were trine to Aldrin's natal Sun in Aquarius. But after this heroic event, following his return to earth, he found it hard to get his bearings again. He took a job as a car salesman, but had no talent for it. In six months, he didn't sell a single car. Later, however, he found satisfaction as an advocate for space exploration, and he developed technology to make future trips to Mars more efficient. I hope that if you are now involved in any activity that resembles Aldrin's stint as a car salesman—that is, a task you're not skilled at and don't like—you will spend the coming weeks making plans to escape to more engaging pursuits.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Astronomers say the Big Bang birthed the universe 13.8 billion years ago. But a star 190 light years away from Earth contradicts that theory. Its age seems to be 14.5 billion years, older than the universe itself. Its scientific name is HD 140283, but it's informally referred to as Methuselah, named after the Biblical character who lived till age 969. Sometimes, like now, you remind me of that star. You seem to be an impossibly old soul—like you've been around so many thousands of lifetimes that, you, too, predate the Big Bang. But guess what: It's time to take a break from that aspect of your destiny. In the next two weeks, you have cosmic permission to explore the mysteries of playful innocence. Be young and blithe and curious. Treasure your inner child.

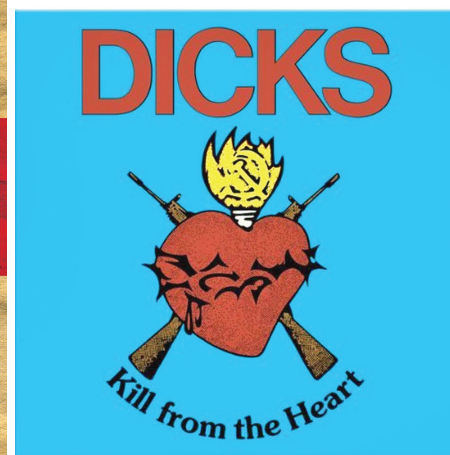
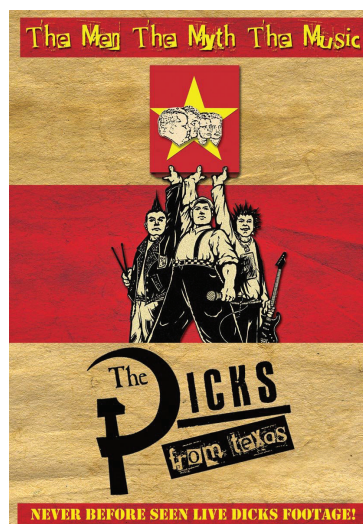
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TURN IT DOWN!

Loud dispatches from Lansing's music scene

BY RICH TUPICA

A LOOK BACK AT THE DICKS VOCALIST GARY FLOYD



The Dicks was a trailblazing punk band thanks to classics like “Dicks Hate the Police” and “Rich Daddy,” sung by Gary Floyd, one of the first openly gay hardcore punk vocalists.

(Courtesy photos)

Texas punk legend was among the first hardcore bands with openly gay singer

On Halloween 2016, The Dicks played its final show at Grizzly Hall in Austin, Texas—the city that birthed the trailblazing hardcore punk band. This last hurrah came 36 years after the raucous band's formation in 1980—the onset of the Reagan era.

Through it all, singer Gary Floyd, the band's openly gay singer, wasn't afraid to loudly ruffle conservative feathers with Marxist lyrics and now-classic punk tracks like “Dicks Hate the Police,” an anti-cop anthem famously covered by Mudhoney.

During its earliest years, The Dicks was a fixture at Raul's, an Austin dive bar that attracted local freaks, scenesters, punks and artists. At the band's genesis, Floyd was a 26-year-old transplant from Palestine, Texas. Growing up in the 1960s, during the Vietnam War, he was a conscientious objector. As the years rolled on, he never stopped vocally questioning the system.

As the '70s wound down, Floyd became enamored with punk rock, then a new genre. He created a fake band called “The Dicks” and would draw up faux flyers promoting non-existent shows and post them across Austin. It was a fictional band, with phony gigs, that would soon be real after he threw together a makeshift band of likeminded friends, including Buxf Parrott (bass), Pat Deason

(drums) and Glen Taylor (guitar). The outcome? Fast, loud and gritty tunes that infused classic punk with blasts of hardcore, blues and some free-form ranting.

The outfit officially debuted a couple weeks of after its first rehearsal at the 1980 “Punk Rock Prom” at Armadillo World Headquarters, a large-capacity Austin venue. Of course, with the flashy showman Floyd at the helm, The Dicks immediately turned heads.

“Right off the bat, we were going to be different than your regular punk band,” Floyd told KQED, an NPR affiliate, in 2016. “We also said we were communists, we were drag queens ... we were twisting some heads, for sure.”

By 1983, The Dicks became a San Francisco band after Floyd relocated to California. That same year, “Kill from the Heart,” the band's blistering debut full-length LP released via SST Records — also home to Black Flag, the Minutemen, Sonic Youth, the Meat Puppets, Hüsker Dü, and a roster of other now-iconic outfits. Though, there is no doubt that Floyd put the most thought into his on-stage looks. Think Divine meets Iggy Pop.

“I figured my reputation would be safe no matter what I did,” Floyd also told KQED reporter Kevin L. Jones. “It was always fun. I was always pretty adventurous with coming up with ways to look shocking, and shoving liver in my panties

to throw on people, though I'd use vegan liver now.”

By 1986, the first era of The Dicks ended, though the group went through some starts and stops. Floyd also performed with other acts, like Sister Double Happiness and Black Kali Ma. Then, from 2004 the band reunited for more gigs.

In July 2020, during the band's 40th anniversary, the COVID-19 pandemic fizzled a reunion show set for Austin. To date, no future show has been announced. Still, even with no further shows, The Dicks has no doubt carved out its groundbreaking place in punk rock history.

“I think things needed to be said and this was a time of punk rock [when] people were easily shocked and I took advantage of that, I loved that,” Floyd recalled to reporter Luiz Mazetto of CVLT Nation in July 2020, during the final months of the Trump presidency. “We did some things that were pretty cool. The songs were sort of in your face. And the politics were left, very left, obviously. I've always been happy that we did all that. I think we did it and stopped at the right time. I still do political stuff and I still do some of those songs, when we play live. But I don't feel the world stopped because we broke up. We still did it afterwards. Like once every year or two, we would do a show. Everything happens in

the right time, I guess. Except for Trump (laughs).”

For those looking to catch up on the history of the band, “The Dicks from Texas,” a feature-length documentary, was released in 2016. The film, directed and produced by Cindy Marabito, features interviews with high-profile fans like Henry Rollins, Ian MacKaye, Mike Watt, Texas Terri, and David Yow, among others.

For more information on the film, visit facebook.com/dicksfromtexas or stream it today on Vimeo.

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OUT ON THE TOWN

Events must be entered through the calendar at 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, June 30

Allen Farmers Market - Open 2:30-7 p.m. May-September at 2100 E Michigan Ave. Lansing. 517-999-3911.

ArtPath 2021 - through August 31. 6 a.m.-10 p.m. Lansing Art Gallery & Education Center, 119 N Washington Sq, Ste 101, Lansing. 517-374-6400. lansingartgallery.org.

LAFCU Listen & Learn Space & Science Reading Event - 7 p.m. 106 N. Marketplace, Lansing. lafcu.com

Live Music with Mike Eyia - 5-10 p.m. UrbanBeat, 1213 Turner St. Old Town, Lansing. urbanbeatevents.com.

Mid-Michigan Art Guild 12x12 Show - 10 a.m.-7 p.m. through June 30. Framer's Edge, 1856 W. Grand River Ave, Okemos.

Paint Night & Candle Making -6:30-9 p.m. Ralya House Beeswax Essentials, 1867 Lake Lansing Rd., Haslett. 517-220-0058. paintyourpoison.com.

Wednesday Workdays at CCBS - 9 a.m.-12 p.m. Capital City Bird Sanctuary, 6001 Delta River Dr. Lansing. michiganaudubon.org.

Patriotic Summer Luminaries - Craft kits available starting Wednesday, 1-7 p.m. Eaton Rapids Area District Library, 220 S. Main, Eaton Rapids. eradi.org.

Summer Reading Program at GLADL - Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St. gladl.org.

Thursday, July 1

Bath Farmers Market - 3-7 p.m. James Couzens Memorial Park, 13753 Main St, Bath. shopbfm.org.

Dimondale Farmers' Market - 3-7 p.m. 136 N Bridge St, Dimondale. 517-230-0520. villageofdimondale.org.

Find the Mason Bulldog - Mason Area Chamber of Commerce. Info at: business.masonchamber.org.

Reach Virtual Meet-up: Zoom meeting. 4-5 p.m. Reach Studio Art Center, 1804 S Washington Ave, Lansing. reachstudioart.org.

South Lansing Farmers Market - 3-7 p.m. 800 W. Barnes Ave, Lansing. 517-374-5700.

Weekly Hiring Fair - 12-4 p.m. Community Mental Health of Clinton-Eaton-Ingham Counties (CMHA-CEI), 812 E Jolly Road, Lansing. ceicmh.org

Where to spend your Fourth of July weekend

By COLE TUNNINGLEY

St. John's Fireworks

The Rotary Club of St. John's is once again hosting a fireworks show at St. John's City Park. The evening will kick off with a performance from local favorites Stone Creek Revival. The band plans to keep on playing right up until the fireworks start.

St. John's Michigan City Park
801 W. Park St., St. John's
Sunday, July 4, 7 to 11 p.m.
(989) 227-2296

City of Lansing Fourth of July Parade

In keeping with tradition, Lansing is holding a Fourth of July parade that kicks off at the Capitol Loop and winds through downtown. COVID-19 safety guidelines must be followed for the duration of the parade.

Capitol Loop
100 N. Capitol Ave. , Lansing
Saturday, July 3, 11 a.m.
(517) 483-4000

City of Lansing Fourth of July Fireworks

The City of Lansing is once again hosting its annual fireworks show. Unfortunately, this year, there will be no concert beforehand. The city recommends setting up camp at Riverfront Park, Marshall Park or Durant Park for the best view of the show.

Best viewing areas: Marshall Park, Durant Park, Riverfront Park
Sunday, July 4,
Approximately 10:10 p.m.
(517) 483-4000

Fourth of July Family Fireworks

The First Baptist Church in DeWitt is holding a special family fireworks event this Fourth of July. Bring out the kiddos for a spectacular fireworks show, free hot dogs and chips. Make sure to bring your own blankets or lawn chairs!

First Baptist Church
11068 S. DeWitt Road, DeWitt
Sunday, July 4, 7 p.m.
(517) 669-3851

Mason's Independence Day Parade

Come celebrate the Fourth this weekend in Mason, Ingham county's own Hometown, USA.

Expect a jolly procession of floats, but be sure to remember that candy throwing is prohibited this year.

Ingham County Courthouse Lawn
315 S. Jefferson St., Mason
Sunday, July 4
Staging beings at 6 p.m.,
step-off at 7:30 p.m.
(517) 676-1046

Freedom Weekend at The Fledge

Power in Passion, a local nonprofit, is hosting an alternative event in which community members can learn about the real meaning of the Fourth of July. The event will feature a conversation about how to achieve freedom for all Americans. It is a hybrid event, meaning you may attend in person or online.

1300 Eureka St., Lansing
July 3 to July 5
Begins July 3 at 3 p.m.
and ends July 5 at 8 p.m.
(517) 230-7679

No free-for-all on fireworks in Greater Lansing

Local ordinances dictate specific times for fireworks

With the Fourth of July holiday approaching, city officials in Lansing and East Lansing are reminding local residents that fireworks can only be shot off during specific times this weekend.

In both cities, fireworks can be discharged on private property from 11 a.m. to 11:45 p.m. from June 29 to July 4. The Lansing and East Lansing police departments have struggled to actually enforce those city ordinances in the past, but violations in both cities can result in a \$1,000 fine.

Residents are also reminded that it's illegal to discharge fireworks while intoxicated.

Following several years of a statewide prohibition on shells and mortars, the Fireworks Safety Act of 2011 allowed residents to purchase high-powered fireworks in the state of Michigan. Citing problems with enforcing local ordinances that dictate when fireworks can be used, State Reps. Sarah Anthony and Kara Hope reintroduced legislation this year to repeal that state law amid efforts to reduce injuries and disturbances caused by the excessive noise. That repeal bill has since been referred to the Committee on Regulatory Reform, where it has sat without a hearing since May under the direction of its Republican chairman and State Rep. Roger Hauck.

Williamston Summer Concert Series - Betty B & the Ropewalkers - Swing, Jazz and early R&B 7-9 p.m. McCormick Park, 200 N. Putnam, Williamston. 517-490-2813.

Friday, July 2

Chemistry Craze - 4 p.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Dr, Lansing. 517-

485-8116. impression5.org.

Science of Art - 4 p.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Dr, Lansing. 517-485-8116. impression5.org.

TGIF Weekly Friday Dance - 7 p.m.-midnight. Hawk Hollow Golf Banquet Center,

See Out on the Town, Page 30

SUDOKU SOLUTION

From Pg. 25

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

CROSSWORD SOLUTION

From Pg. 25

M	E	L	M	A	C		S	T	D		A	P	S
A	Q	U	I	L	A		O	P	I	E		Z	A
R	U	N	S	O	N		N	O	S	L	O	U	C
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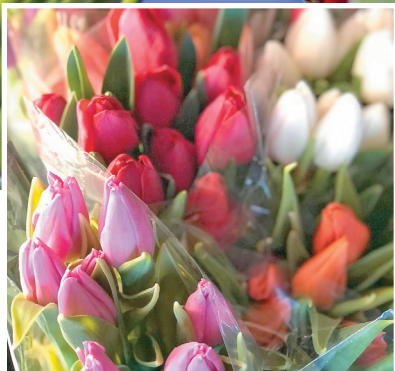
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Out on the town

from page 29

15101 Chandler Rd., Bath. 734-604-5095.
tgifdance.com.

Video Game Science - 4 p.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Dr, Lansing. 517-485-8116. impression5.org.

Woven Wonders - 4 p.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Dr, Lansing. 517-485-8116. impression5.org.

Saturday, July 3

Summer Reading Program at GLADL
- Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St. gladl.org.

Sunday, July 4

4th of July Mason Car Show - 9 a.m. Mason Square, Mason. business.masonchamber.org

East Lansing Farmers Market - 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Valley Court Park, 280 Valley Court, East Lansing. cityofeastlansing.com.

Independence Day Parade in Mason - 8 p.m. Ingham County Courthouse lawn.

Monday, July 5

Advanced Video Game Science - 9 a.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Dr, Lansing. 517-485-8116. impression5.org.

Amusement Park Science - 9 a.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Dr,

See Out on the Town, Page 32



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FAST FORWARD



UPCOMING EVENTS AND HAPPENINGS COMING TO LANSING

By SKYLER ASHLEY



Lansing Black Pride Liberation Fest

Saturday, July 3, 6 p.m.
Willow Tree Family Center
114 N. Pine St., Lansing
Facebook.com/WillowTreeFamily

Lansing Black Pride Liberation Fest is an all-inclusive celebration of Black and LGBTQ culture. The party marks the anniversary of the final day of the Stonewall Riots and will include food, music and free books for the first 30 families in attendance.

Independence Day Parade and Fireworks

Parade Saturday, July 3, 11 a.m.

Fireworks Sunday, July 4, 10 p.m.

Michigan State Capitol

100 N. Capitol Ave., Lansing

Parks.ingham.org/parks/hawk_island.php

Come to the Capitol loop to celebrate the Fourth of July with an awesome parade! Fireworks will be lit Sunday at approximately 10:10 p.m. The best viewing options include Adado Riverfront Park, Durant Park and Marshall Park.



Fourth of July Meat and Seafood Roadshow

Friday, July 2, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Capital City Market

600 E. Michigan Ave. Ste. 100, Lansing

Facebook.com/CapitalCityMKT

July is grilling season. Light up your grill and break it in by getting down to the Capital City Market for a special 4th of July roadshow, featuring great selections of high-quality meat and seafood.



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Out on the town

from page 30

Lansing. 517-485-8116. impression5.org.

Comedy Night - starting at 9 p.m. Crunchy's, 254 W Grand River Ave, East Lansing. crunchyseastlansing.com.

Refuge Recovery Lansing (Virtual) - 6-7 p.m. The Fledge, 1300 Eureka St., Lansing. refugerecovery.org

Space Explorers - 9 a.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Dr, Lansing. 517-485-8116. impression5.org.

What's in the Box? - 8 a.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Dr, Lansing. 517-485-8116. impression5.org.

Tuesday, July 6

Board Game Meet Up - for ages 18 & up. Everyone welcome! 6:30-10 p.m. Spare Time Bowling Alley, 3101 E. Grand River, Lansing.

Paleo Joe - 2-3 p.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. 517-627-7014.

In-Person Picnic Playdate: for kids of all ages. 11-11:30 a.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E Jefferson St. gladl.org

Instagram Live Conversation - The Gibbs Sisters. 5:30-6:30 p.m. MSU Museum, 409 W. Circle Dr., East Lansing. 517-355-2370.

Zoo Days - July 6 & 7, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Potter Park Zoo, 1301 S Pennsylvania Ave, Lansing. 517-483-4222. potterparkzoo.org.



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FOOD & DRINK

DINING OUT IN GREATER LANSING

Lettuce salad

By **ARI LeVAUX**

The summer solstice is in the rear-view mirror. Even though the hottest days are before us, the longest days are past. If you haven't planted your tomatoes or melons yet, you might not bother. The plants will grow like steroid abusers, but there isn't time for the fruit to ripen. Or maybe you'll get one small melon. Trust me, I've been there.

But there is a silver lining to the inevitable cooling. This is the beginning of the fall gardening season. It's your last chance to sow quick-growing, heat-tolerant plants like peas, beans and cucumbers, and time to start sowing your cold-loving crops like lettuce, spinach, beets, broccoli, mustard, cabbage, collards, carrots, kale and radishes, which can live well into winter. So if you're willing to cover your greens with blankets and even build cold frames around them, you can coax a four-season harvest out of most planting zones. For more details on four season farming, consult the books of Eliot Coleman, of Four Season Farm in Maine, who eats local salad all year long and has written several books, including "Four Season Harvest." And if you think you want to give it a shot, by all means plant now and read later!

For newbie gardeners, who may not want to try the winter gardening thing, a fall garden is a final shot at redemption. If your corn isn't going to be knee high by the Fourth of July, or your tomatoes will still be green when the frost hits, or if you haven't even gotten around to digging up your garden, or you're otherwise behind the ball, you might be ready to try again this fall. Starting now, I think I mentioned?

For experienced gardeners, planting the fall garden is a second spring's worth of work, with all of the excitement that goes with it. Yes, it's another garden chore to add to the weeding, watering and harvesting of summer. But this is also the beginning of a whole new, cold weather garden that could be babied long after the winter solstice, and into the lengthening days.

It's cause for celebration.

The reason to wait until summer solstice has passed before planting winter greens is that the pre-solstice lengthening days can cause many leafy plants to bolt, which is something like when a human hits puberty. Changes happen. Irreversible changes, not all of them good. Changes in size, shape and flavor. The plant essentially becomes a

long, central flowering stalk, and the leaves get pointy and develop extra-bitter flavor. Now that the solstice has passed, you can sow your fall greens, either by direct seed or by planting little starts,

without risk of them bolting.

Every seven years, the summer solstice falls on Father's Day, and both days make me think of lettuce. Solstice, of course, because it divides the spring and fall seasons of lettuce, and Father's Day because my dad used to make the most amazing lettuce salad. We would go into a meditative state as he prepared it, patting down each leaf with a paper towel. He'd store leftover washed leaves wrapped in paper towels too. He'd serve his salad in these beautiful wooden bowls. It was super garlicky and everybody loved it. It's perfect as a salad and also quite handy as a condiment of sorts. If you happen to be chewing a glorious morsel of food, perhaps fatty, perhaps meaty, a bite of marinated onions, lettuce and tomato can, and usually does, add to the experience.

Dad's Salad

This is the salad I grew up eating, and the ultimate side salad.

Serves 2-4, depending on one's salad intake

1 head romaine lettuce, washed and chopped

1/2 a medium onion, minced

1 clove of garlic, minced or pressed

1 teaspoon salt

2 tomatoes, sliced for salad

Olives and feta to taste

For the dressing

1/4 cup cider vinegar

1/4 cup balsamic vinegar

3/4 cup olive oil

Toss the chopped lettuce, tomatoes and onions with the garlic and salt. Let sit for 20 minutes.

FLASH
in the pan



Ari LeVAUX

A special salad prepared by Ari LeVaux. Read below for the recipe.

Mix the dressing vigorously and dress, tossing as lightly as possible. Garnish with olives and feta.

(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.)

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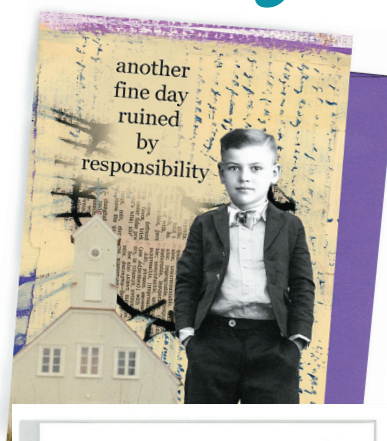
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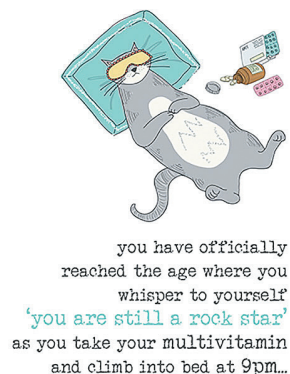
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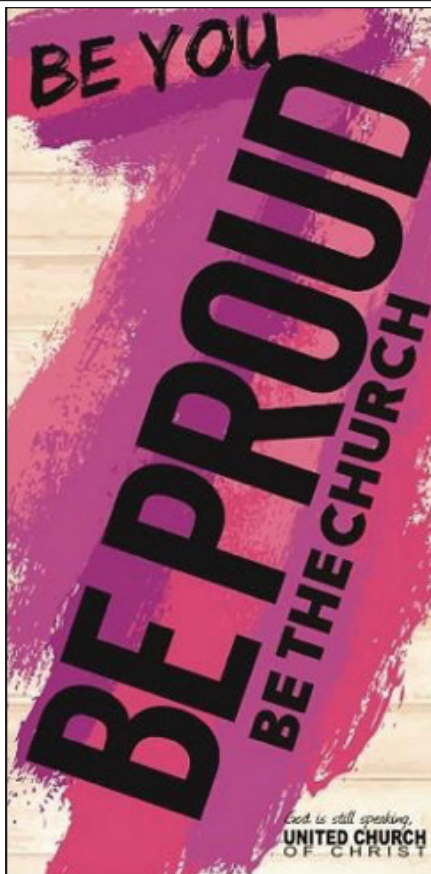
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/Hybrid/
Effect: Relaxed, Euphoric, Creative

Heir to the GSC throne is Sunset Sherbet, also known as Sherbet, an indica-leaning hybrid with intoxicatingly potent effects. Stress, tension, and sour moods melt away with the carefree mindset and physical relaxation that comes with this rich hybrid.

22% THC	ALL SOZO STRAINS	\$30	NET WT.	SAVE
Hybrid			1/8 OUNCE	

Available for medicinal and adult use. Cannot be combined with any other offers or discounts. Offer valid 6/28/21-7/4/21, while supplies last.

Pure Options – GMO
/Indica/
Effect: Relaxing, Analgesic, Anti-Anxiety

Garlic Mushroom and Onions inherits its pungent aroma from its Chemdog parent, which was crossed with the classic GSC. Most come to love the smell because of the incredibly positive full-body and mental relaxation it provides. Expect Pure comfort.

22% THC		\$40	NET WT.	SAVE
Hybrid			1/8 OUNCE	

Available for medicinal and adult use. Cannot be combined with any other offers or discounts. Offer valid 6/28/21-7/4/21, while supplies last.

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