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The Year in Review Issue



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With the new year coming, I thought we'd try something new.

I'm not into gimmicks to try to earn your business. In over 15 years since starting this business, I've always felt that doing the best job, paying our staff a good wage, and having ethical business principles would be enough to sustain this venture. But alas, the competition has bought up a number of HVAC businesses that used to be locally owned. They are doing everything they can to buy up the market with gimmicks like a free air conditioner if you buy a furnace.

First, nothing is ever free, and the only reason it works for them is because they do the cheapest possible job with the least amount of materials, while paying less in wages to their staff and giving them as little training as possible. I know this because I used to work for them.

Add that to the fact that people are understandably concerned about the economy, so we all want our dollars to go farther. So I offer you this: I will consider your other quotes from other "reputable" companies for the replacement of your furnace or air conditioner. We are a small business, built on quality, and they are only about quantity. I know Lansing needs businesses that put the customers' needs as their number one priority. We have always slept well at night because we have the highest standards. But the bottom line is that if we need to price match, there are situations where I'd be willing to do that.

Of course, I'm not willing to sacrifice our standards to do this, so every situation will be taken individually. But you'll get 10X the finished product, you'll be doing business with a company that cares instead of just being treated like a number, and your support will be appreciated and rewarded. There used to be a day when companies' work ethics were comparable, but I don't think that's the case anymore, at least not in this industry. What we do at All Star Mechanical should be the standard because it's the least that every company should do, but when money is at the root of their business model, nobody wins.

Ben Franklin said it best "The bitterness of poor quality remains long after the sweetness of low price has been forgotten."

I don't know what their next gimmick will be, but moving forward I am happy to always try to help you get the most for your dollars whenever possible. At the end of every day, our goal is to do the best possible job, and that will never change. It's the only way I know how to do it.

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A WIN-WIN

For 20 years, City Pulse has donated hundreds of dollars a year to the Ingham County Animal Shelter thanks to pet adoption ads sponsored by our readers. Thank you!

Won't you join them in 2024? An ad is \$35, and \$6 goes to the shelter so it can do its important work in placing dogs and cats in permanent homes.



Please help City Pulse help the Ingham County Animal Shelter. Call Publisher Berl Schwartz at (517) 999-5061 or email him at publisher@lansingcitypulse.com You'll be helping City Pulse and the shelter at the same time.

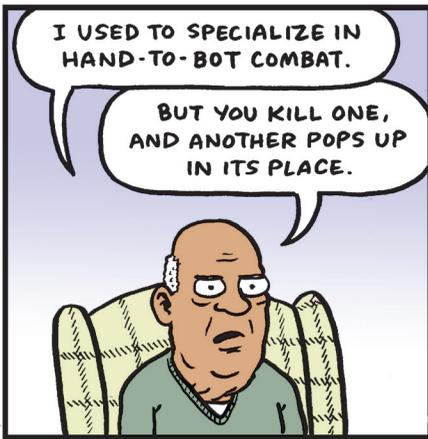
The next pet adoption ad appears on Jan. 17. Call by Jan. 11 to be included.



CityPULSE

**VOL. 23
ISSUE 20**

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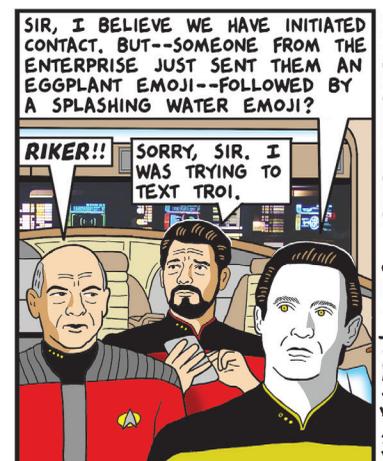
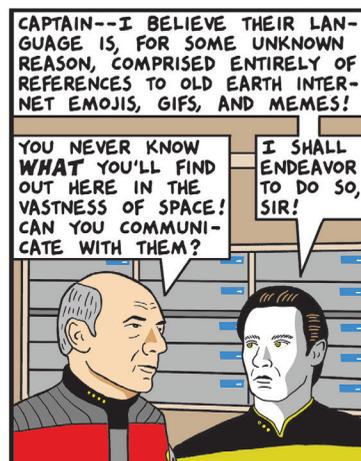
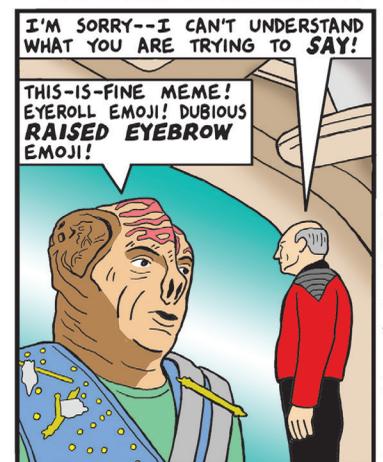
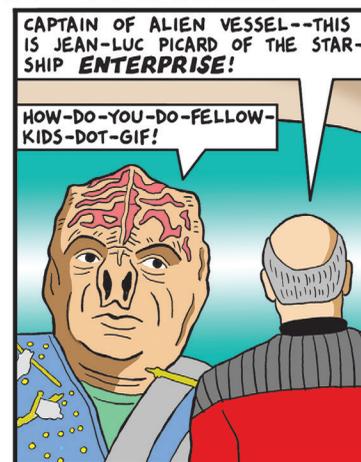
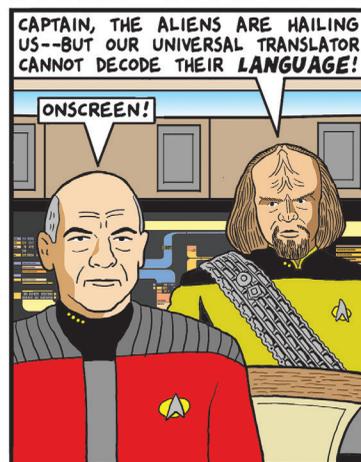
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THIS MODERN WORLD

BY TOM TOMORROW



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PULSE

NEWS & OPINION

2023 in Review

Cranes in the sky, but guns on the ground

Half full ... half empty: You decide.

In 2023, Lansing benefitted from political good fortune in the state Capitol. Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, an East Lansing Democrat, found herself with the first Democratic Legislature in 40 years. And Lansing found itself with newly elected Sen. Sarah Anthony, a native of our “sad little town,” in charge of the Appropriations Committee, and Angela Witmer of Delta Township as her counterpart in the House. They helped fashion a budget that was being orchestrated by the governor’s legislative liaison: former state Sen. Curtis Hertel Jr. of East Lansing, who shepherded it through both chambers quitting to run for Congress. The result was a record state budget with likewise record local funding that, among other notable gains, will transform Lansing’s skyline and allow Mayor Andy Schor to not only

finally move City Hall into much needed new digs but to renovate one of downtown’s prime historic sites as local government’s new home.

But at street level, gun violence made Lansing sad indeed. The community was shocked at the death of political worker Ted Lawson, shot on a Sunday afternoon in October as he canvassed doors on Lansing’s west side, allegedly by a 15-year-old youth who had asked Lawson for money. It was part of a national trend of youth violence. Just a few weeks later, a Lansing toddler killed himself with an unsecured weapon in an automobile. And they were followed in November by five more fatal shootings — a five-year record for the most in a single month in Lansing.

Local development and fatal shootings are among our choices for this year’s Top 10 stories. That still left

important developments, events and milestones by the wayside. They include the announcement by the Lansing Housing Commission that it intends to build affordable housing in downtown Lansing and CATA’s news that it hopes to construct a facility on the site of the old Center for the Arts that will include space for homeless services. The city cracked down on troubled Logan Square in south Lansing after a late-night shooting outside a club. The principal of East Lansing High School resigned amid an investigation into an apparently fake doctorate degree. And as the year wrapped up, Carol Wood ended a 24-year career on the Lansing City Council.

Journalism is purportedly the first draft of history. Here’s a local snapshot for 2023’s chapter.

— BERL SCHWARTZ

Top 10 stories of the year

1. MSU dominates the headlines

A resounding tragedy struck the area on Feb. 13, when Anthony Dwayne McRae, 43, of Lansing, shot and killed three students and injured five more in a mass shooting on the Michigan State University campus. Hours later, he took his own life.

Arielle Diamond Anderson, Brian Fraser and Alexandria Verner perished in the assault, while Guadalupe Huapilla-Perez, of Immokalee, Florida; two Chinese international students, John Hao, who was paralyzed from the chest down, and a second who has not been identified; Nate Statly, of Hartland; and Troy Forbush, an Okemos High School graduate, were all severely injured.

In the aftermath, classes at MSU were canceled for the remainder of the week, and they were relocated from the two buildings where the shootings took place for the remainder of the semester. On the day classes were set to resume, some students skipped classes to protest gun vio-

lence at the state Capitol.

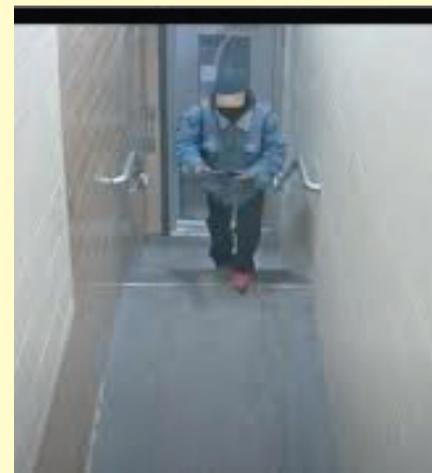
MSU returned to the top of the news cycle in the fall, when it fired head football coach Mel Tucker on Sept. 27 for alleged sexual misconduct stemming from 2022 phone call with sexual awareness advocate and speaker Brenda Tracy. Earlier, Tucker had arranged for Tracy to speak with the team, which developed into a working relationship. Tucker came to MSU in 2020, signing a 10-year, \$95 million contract that made him the second highest paid coach in college football.

On Nov. 25, MSU announced that Oregon State University coach Jonathan Smith, 44, will replace Tucker as the 26th head coach in program history on a seven-year, \$7.25-million-a-year deal.

More turmoil came in late October, when Trustee Brianna Scott sent a seven-page letter to her colleagues accusing Chairperson Rema Vassar of ethical violations. She called for them to join her in requesting that Gov. Gretchen Whitmer remove Vassar if she didn’t resign. Days later,



Anthony Dwayne McRae



McRae ascends a staircase at MSU

the MSU Faculty Senate voted 52-4 to call for Vassar’s removal. Vassar denied the claims outright and refused to resign. Vassar was elected as MSU’s first Black woman chair in January.

On Dec. 8, the Trustees hired Kevin Guskiewicz, the chancellor of the University of North Carolina, to become MSU’s 22nd president beginning March 4. Guskiewicz, 57, a

neuroscientist and leading concussion researcher, will become MSU’s sixth president in as many years. He had been at UNC since 1995 and its chancellor since 2019. The hire came 14 months after Samuel Stanley Jr resigned his presidency in controversy, and about four months after interim President Teresa Woodruff announced that she wouldn’t seek the permanent post.

2. More shocking shootings

Through November, Lansing had already matched its total fatal shootings count from 2022 and 2020 at 13. Five of those happened in November, the highest single-month tally in at least five years. In that same span, the city recorded 62 non-fatal shootings, passing last year's total by four, but still a notable improvement from 2021 and 2020, when there were 85. Fatal shootings in Lansing peaked at 23 in 2021.

The year began and ended with fatal officer-involved shootings, with two in just the first few days. On Jan. 2, the Bath Township police fatally shot a man at Dutch Hills mobile home park at 16400 Upton Road. On Jan. 5, Lansing police officers killed 35-year-old Nicolas Micko

near the 2000 block of Irene Court in southeast Lansing. The most recent happened on Dec. 1, when Stephen Luis Romero was shot and killed by Lansing Police in response to a domestic violence call on Massachusetts Avenue in north Lansing.

An alarming trend of youth shooters began Feb. 5, when 18-year-old Makhi Williams was found dead in his car following a shooting around Osband and Lenore avenues. Two teenagers, Keif Chatman, 17, and an unnamed 13-year-old were later charged with homicide. Last Friday (Dec. 22), an unnamed 17-year-old Lansing girl was killed in a Lansing Township shooting at a residence in the 1400 block of Ravenswood Drive.

Among the other fatal shootings were the October deaths of political figure Ted Lawson and a toddler who killed himself

with an unsecured firearm.

Lawson's case was perhaps the most shocking example of a rising trend of youth violence. On Oct. 8, Lawson, a 63-year-old Ingham County Democrats official, was out canvassing for Trini Lopez Pehlivanoglu, an at-large City Council candidate who was later elected, when he was approached in the 1100 block of North Jenison Avenue and allegedly shot in the back of the head by 15-year-old Lamar Kemp. He died just a few blocks away from his home. Kemp was arrested and awaits his legal fate at the Ingham County Jail. He was charged as an adult.



Theodore "Ted" Lawson



Tyler Schneider/City Pulse

The house on North Jenison Avenue in front of which Lawson was fatally shot.

On Oct. 24, as the community was still reeling, 2-year-old King Muhammad got ahold of a handgun and fatally shot himself inside a parked vehicle at the Sunoco gas station on Dunckel Road. The child's mother, Emma Huver, 26, was in the car at the time, but the weapon allegedly belonged to Avis Damone Coward, 44, who had exited the vehicle to go inside a gas station. Both were arrested on multiple charges.

3. Lansing sees new high-profile developments

In early August, Lansing announced a \$215 million, three-building proposal from the Gentilozzi family dubbed "New Vision Lansing." The project includes the Tower on Grand, a 25-story, 300-unit glass apartment and retail complex on Grand Avenue that would become Lansing's tallest building; the 10-story, 70-unit Capitol Tower, 110 W. Michigan Ave.; and a conversion of the historic former Michigan Court of Appeals building, 100 S. Washington Square, that would add 70 units. The state has budgeted \$40 million and another \$10 million in tax breaks for the project, which the developers want to finish near the end of 2024 or in 2025.

In September, after three years of work, the Red Cedar Development project, on the east of Michigan Avenue in Lansing, was completed. The privately funded, \$260 million, 36-acre mixed-used site featured two hotels, market-rate housing, student and senior-living apartments, restaurants and services that included Hooked, a physical therapy

practice, Toscana Kitchen and Wine Market and Old Bag of Nails Pub.

That same month, Mayor Andy Schor announced that the historic Masonic Temple, 217 S. Capitol Ave., would become Lansing's new City Hall, pending Council approval, thanks to \$40 million in state funding. Schor said he expected the project to cost around \$40 million and that the city would look to move its operations there by March 2025. Schor also said that he and Chicago developer Paul Beitler had resumed talks about turning the current City Hall into an upscale hotel.



The old Masonic Temple of Michigan Avenue, proposed site of Lansing's new City Hall.

4. Powerful summer storms

On Aug. 24, an EF-2 tornado touched down in eastern Ingham County and followed a path through Williamston and Webberville at maximum wind speeds of 125 miles per hour before crossing over into Livingston County.

It proved to be one of the most destructive storms in recent memory, with two Ingham County deaths: 84-year-old Vernita Payne, who died in her bedroom in Fabulous Acres when a tree fell on her house, and Robert Russell, 41, of Hartland Township, who was killed on Interstate 96 when his truck was lifted off the highway. The tornado also destroyed power lines, damaged properties and snapped trees throughout the region, leaving some without power for several days.

Another dangerous storm hit Lansing's east



Bert Schwartz/City Pulse

An example of damage in south Lansing from a late August tornado.

side on July 13, reaching wind speeds of 60 to 70 miles per hour, causing notable damage.

Air quality was another concern, with smoke from a chain of Canadian wildfires enveloping the areas in late June and early July.

5. Turnovers in East Lansing's City Hall

The City of East Lansing terminated longtime City Manager George Lahanas in January, tapping retired Lansing and East Lansing Fire Chief Randy Talifarro to serve in the interim. In August, City Council voted 4-1 to hire Robert Belleman as his permanent replacement. Between those two events, at least 10 upper-level city employees also departed.

In July, both Mayor Ron Bacon and Mayor Pro Tem Jesse Gregg announced they wouldn't run for reelection, while partial-term appointee Noel Garcia Jr. would be un-

successful in his own bid as East Lansing voters chose former Mayor Mark Meadows, former Councilmember Erik Altmann and newcomer Kerry Ebersole Singh, the wife of State Sen. Sam Singh, from a field of eight.

Less than a week after the election, the new Council was sworn in and unanimously chose incumbent George Brookover as mayor. Then on a split vote, the Council passed over incumbent member Dana Watson, who is Black, for mayor pro tem in favor of Ebersole Singh, who is white, causing some residents to accuse the Council of racism.

The city was most recently



Turmoil at East Lansing city Hall began in January with the dismissal of City Manager George Lahanas.

hit with an \$825,000 settlement following a long dispute with Country Mill Farms owner Stephen Tennes, who sued in 2017 after the city moved to ban him from its farmers market because he said he wouldn't host same-sex wedding ceremonies at his Charlotte farm.

6. Help for the homeless

Overwhelmed and at capacity, the City Rescue Mission of Lansing got approval from City Council in October to rezone two properties at 415 and 421 W. Kalamazoo St. for new shelters. The projects will double the mission's current capacity.

Also, the city committed \$800,000 in state funding to contract with the Detroit Rescue Mission Ministries for a warming and cooling center at Letts Community Center, which opened this month. Because of an inadequate fire-suppression system that prohibits beds, the center's focus was shifted from families with children to single adults.

8. Record-breaking state budget bolsters Lansing area



The historic Moores River Park will be restored, thanks to record state spending on Mid-Michigan.

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer's record-breaking \$82 billion state budget proved quite favorable to the Greater Lansing area.

In addition to \$800,000 for Lansing's new warming center, \$40 million for a new City Hall and another \$40 million for the Gentilozzi project, the state awarded \$9.4 million to the Capital Region International Airport, \$6.2 million toward restorations for Moores Park Pool, \$6 million to area organizations through the state's second annual Revitalization and Placemaking Program, another \$6 million for local prevention and treatment services, \$5 million for improvements to the Lansing Center, \$1.7 million for riverfront efforts, \$900,000 to maintain and expand three local trails and \$900,000 more for the Lansing Police Department. The state also appropriated \$2.5 million to turn the former Walter French school into mixed-income units and \$800,000 for city apartment renovations.

7. Local politicians jump into 2024 Senate race

Just five days into 2023, fourth-term Democrat Sen. Debbie Stabenow confirmed that she would not seek reelection after her current term ends on Jan. 3, 2025, opening the floodgates for others to announce their intent to run for her seat next year.

U.S. Rep. Elissa Slotkin, whose 7th District includes Ingham County, is the leading Democrat among five contenders for the nomination to replace Stabenow, including actor Hill Harper. On the GOP side, former U.S. Rep. Mike Rogers is considered the leading candidate in a field of nine Republicans that includes former U.S. Rep. Peter Meijer, who lost his seat after one term because he had voted to impeach former President Donald Trump.

Meanwhile, Former Democratic State Sen. Curtis Hertel Jr., of East Lansing, and former GOP State Sen. Tom Barrett, of Charlotte, are seeking their parties' nominations to replace Slotkin. Lansing Mayor Andy Schor briefly and Ingham County Clerk Barb Byrum and others explored running for the House seat but opted out.



Former state senators Curtis Hertel Jr. (right) and Tom Barrett announce candidacies for the U.S. House of Representatives.

9. Lansing School District looks to the future

The Lansing School District saw its first enrollment increase in three decades, highlighting a plethora of improvements taken up by the district under Superintendent Ben Shuldiner. Two came in August, when the district broke ground on the new Mt. Hope School and opened Lansing Technical High School for its inaugural semester. Funded by a \$130-million tax proposal approved by voters in 2022, the Mt. Hope facility is expected to be completed by 2027.

The district wasn't exempt from criticism, however. In October, over 60 of its former Black educators accused the district of forcing them out of their jobs.

10. Charter Revision Commission

For the first time since the City Charter took effect in 1978, Lansing residents voted on Nov. 8 to establish a charter review commission. The commission, which was approved by 51.6%, will consist of nine members to be chosen in a special election on May 7. From there, the group will have three years to propose revisions, which would be subject to approval by Gov. Gretchen Whitmer and voters before they could take effect. Some of the motivation appears to be coming from residents who want to switch the city from a strong mayor system to a city manager.

CORRECTION

Because of a reporting error, an item in last's weekend Rewind news summary misstated who is producing Sad Little Town t-shirts. They are being made and sold by a local

company, not by Downtown Lansing Inc. The company is donating some of the profits to Downtown Lansing Inc.

The merchandise is available at sadlittletown.com.



CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN, INGHAM COUNTY LEGAL
AD NOTICE: ORDINANCE 2023-05
RRC HOUSING ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN LEGAL NOTICE

Ordinance 2023-05 – Redevelopment Ready Communities Housing Ordinances Amendments

The Township Board at its regular meeting on November 9, 2023 approved for final adoption Ordinance 2023-05 to update standards for housing throughout the zoning ordinance to reach compliance for Redevelopment Ready Communities recertification.

A complete copy of the amendment may be examined at the Department of Community Planning and Development, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, Michigan 48864-1198 (517.853.4560) between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Deborah Guthrie
Township Clerk

CP#23-349

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STATE OF MICHIGAN PROBATE COURT, INGHAM COUNTY, NOTICE TO CREDITORS, Decedent's Estate, File No. 23-1519-WW - Estate of Brenda B. Ballard – Deceased, Date of Birth: 12-16-1938. TO ALL CREDITORS: NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, Brenda B. Ballard, who lived at 6010 Winterset Dr., Lansing, MI, died 12/08/2023. Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Heidi Wagemaker, named personal representative or proposed personal representative, or to both the probate court at 303 West Kalamazoo Ave., Lansing, and the named/proposed personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice, 12/27/2023. Heidi Wagemaker, 6010 Winterset Dr., Lansing, MI 48911.

CP#23-347

STATE OF MICHIGAN PROBATE COURT, INGHAM COUNTY, NOTICE TO CREDITORS, Decedent's Estate, Case 23-53-DE. The decedent, Mark Maynard Mulford, died 12/28/2022. Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Teresa J Mulford, personal representative, or to both the probate court at 313 W Kalamazoo St, Unit 1, Lansing MI 48933 and the personal representative, within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice. 12/27/2023 — Teresa J Mulford, Trustee for the Estate, 924 W Ottawa St, Lansing MI 48915.

CP#23-346

Except for money, bad realities invaded schools in 2023

By **DEDRIA HUMPHRIES BARKER**

Soon after 9/11, I attempted to engage my writing students in a discussion, but one student was not having it. She thought the World Trade Center attacks irrelevant.

“That happened in New York,” she said, tiredly.

What a luxury to think that Michigan was disconnected from U.S. events. In 2001, I thought that the world was already pushing in on students, but it seems to have invaded schools in the year 2023.

The meeting of schools/colleges with society troubles is unavoidable, but unlike at a street intersection where a traffic light, or stop or yield signs control traffic to avoid crashes, no such directional signals exist for public education.

Instead of giving schools safe passage, trouble crashes into their space. In 2023, while financial support was fi-

nally on the upswing, violence, politics, and low-test scores disrupted education at will.

I am a R&B music fan, partial to the Philly sound, especially the group the O’Jays, whose song, “Money, Money, Money” describes the year’s biggest positive public education news. State legislators took public education off a starvation budget and replaced it with an optimism-rich record high increase in the 2023-2024 appropriation.



Opinion

The budget contained raises for teachers, whose contribution to quality education relies on their willingness to materially contribute toward a better future. On average, the National Education Association says, a teacher uses upwards of \$750 of her own money to buy classroom materials.

So, it’s no surprise that in early 2023, Michigan’s retired certified teachers showed little interest in bridging the teacher shortage by returning to classrooms, but in October came a sweet-heart deal that allowed them to collect their pensions and get paid to teach.

It was the right remedy. For decades, teachers bore blame for trouble in schools, when what they needed was more, not less, support to deal with the social instability students and families brought into schools. With little or no support, the world took over.

Now we have a record budget, though it remains unclear what the

exact budget numbers are — media reports did not agree on a number, and Department of Education press releases blurred line-item allocations. However, whatever the amount is, thank you, again, Gov. Whitmer and the Legislature.

After being created in June, the Governor’s Parents Advisory Council had little time to complete an ambitious agenda, but its completed work supported the record public ed budget, including remedies for learning lost to the COVID pandemic, and mental health support in response to the Michigan State University and Oxford High School shootings.

Definitely, in February Michigan State University students suffered when an active shooter, who apparently had nothing to do with MSU, entered two buildings, killed three students, injured five others and terrorized the whole campus.

A Black woman student was among the dead.

Violence has long plagued Black urban high school students, sending their parents searching for safe educational settings. Do they exist anywhere anymore? The responsiveness to school mass shootings has a lot of Black people wishing that attacks on Black students had been met with more than spending educational dollars on metal detectors.

A friend of mine was the court-appointed attorney for a Black female high school student who, in 2018, stabbed her classmate to death in a Fitzgerald High School classroom in Warren.

In November, I saw my friend at a

Detroit art show. On the violence issue, he said, “These kids grow up in families where people don’t teach kids how to let things roll off their backs, or how to walk away. They react, react, react.”

His client was sentenced to 27 years in prison. When released, she will be 45, and overflowing with regrets, as was the Oxford (Oakland County, Michigan) High School shooter at his sentencing. He was 15 years old when he killed four classmates in December 2021, a crime his parents are accused of being complicit in when they bought him a gun. In early December, the son was sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole.

Blame political misinterpretation of the Second Amendment for that.

Politics in the form of book banning further disrupted public education. Scholastic Publishing CEO Peter Warwick said that “growing polarization in U.S. Society and politicized schools and school boards” factored into its October decision to segregate diverse books at their school book fairs. Regular people called it, “censorship!”

Scholastic backed down.

Though an undeniable part of education, computers flunked an important exam. In August, the state Department of Education rightly displayed tepid enthusiasm for state test scores showing considerable loss of learning during the pandemic, partly because some parents failed to send their students to school on computers in their own homes.

In a rare public move last fall, frustrated Lansing educators came in front of the Lansing People’s Assembly to protest school decisions which rely only on standardized test scores. That undermines student success, they said.

Dale Herder, Lansing Community College vice president emeritus, said the same idea like this: Students don’t care what teachers know until they know that teachers care.

We are headed in the wrong direction. Plunking a student down in front of a computer is not caring. It’s asking students to be less human. In contrast, the popular “Star Trek” character named Data, an android, for years has wrestled with his desire to be human.

Social problems will always spill over. I just wish they would stay out of our schools.

(Dedria Humphries Barker of Lansing is the author of “Mother of Orphans: The True and Curious Story of Irish Alice, A Colored Man’s Widow.” Her opinion column appears on the last Wednesday of each month.)



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Lansing Area AIDS Network
IN MEMORY & IN HOPE

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Eagle Township, Clinton County Board Special Meeting Synopsis

December 13, 2023 - Present: Supervisor Stroud, Clerk Briggs-Dudley, Trustee Strahle, Treasurer C. Hoppes and 11 citizens.

Meeting called to order at 6:00 pm. Board Actions:

- 1) Motion to proceed with interviewing three applicants in attendance and consider the application submitted by the fourth applicant who was unable to attend the meeting.
- 2) Appointed Michelle Hoppes as Eagle Township Trustee effective December 13, 2023.

Prepared by: Laurie Briggs-Dudley, Eagle Township Clerk
Approved by: Troy Stroud, Eagle Township Supervisor

A complete copy of the minutes is available by contacting Laurie Briggs-Dudley, Clerk. Next regular meeting of the Eagle Township Board is January 18, 2024, at 6 pm at Eagle Township Hall, 14318 Michigan St, Eagle, MI. See www.eagletownship.org for latest updates.

CP#23-345

The decedent, Linda Chadderdon, who lived on 241 McCormick Street, Williamston MI 48895, died on 12/10/2023. Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Allen Chadderdon, trustee at 4474 Comanche Dr, Okemos MI 48864, within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice. 12/20/2023 — Allen Chadderdon, Trustee for the Estate, 4474 Comanche Dr, Okemos MI 48864.

CP#23-343

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Want charges against Chatfield? They're likely not coming

Former Michigan House Speaker Lee Chatfield wasn't charged last week for bilking a half-million dollars from people who wanted to see the House Republicans keep a majority in the 2020 election.

The married couple that Chatfield hired to manage his secret accounts, which paid for his plane flights, hotel rooms and meals, were charged. The attorney general found Rob and Anne Minard were double billing receipts, skimming off the top and otherwise pocketing money they weren't entitled to keep.

Partisans are crossing their fingers. They're praying the Minards will cut some deal that implicates Chatfield, and that it's the former speaker taking a police mug shot.

They're likely to be disappointed.

Chatfield likely won't be charged with anything — not campaign finance-related and not for the sexual assault being alleged by his sister-in-law. I'll explain later why.

But first off, the obsession in today's political climate with cheering for the absolute reputational ruin of political figures, through criminal prosecution or impeachment, is unhealthy and dangerous.

Who is to blame for the comingling of legal transgressions and political hyperbole? It doesn't matter. Both sides do it.

This is what matters. The United States is a country built on laws. Using politics to blur our faith in the justice system becomes an excuse to use anything to blur our faith in the justice system.

Don't like that so-and-so is being charged? "Well, the system is rigged anyway."

Whether it's Donald Trump, Joe Biden, Bill Schuette or Dana Nessel, going after any public official with dubious evidence in order to pile on top of any unfortunate situation fuels mob anger.

"Lock 'em up?"

Cheering for the incarceration of political advisories is what happens in third-world dictatorships, not the greatest free country in the world.

Let's move back to Chatfield. The former speaker was accused by his sister-in-law, with whom he openly admits he had an affair, of sexual assault that dates back to when they were teenagers living in a Christian compound up North.

Her story was carried in numerous publications, but her credibility

was called into question when pages of her journal emerged that didn't mention Chatfield as being among the many other people in her life who she said caused her trauma. She also wrote about how she wanted to write a book, make a movie and become a millionaire but didn't know what the subject of her tome might be.

Chatfield, an ultra-conservative legislative leader, admitted to having the affair. That's first-rate hypocrisy. Moving this into a criminal case of "grooming" without more evidence or collaboration would be setting up a failing case, particularly with this diary hanging out there.

It's been two years. Nessel said she's not finished investigating. The team looking into this is different from those looking into any financial improprieties. But the longer we move away from the initial allegation, the odds of anything coming from this first claim get longer.

Next, state investigators raided the Minards' home this past February, after claims of financial impropriety arose in the course of the sexual assault investigation. They began looking into Chatfield's bank accounts more than year ago.

Authorities found enough information to criminally charge the Minards a combined 21 times. But they didn't charge Chatfield? What does that tell you?

Chatfield could shake down people for contributions like nothing this town has ever seen before or since. But the Minards always managed the funds these bucks went to. My sources tell me Rob Minard would brag to contributors that Chatfield had no idea what was going on with these accounts.

Everybody had their own lane in Chatfield's office. That included Chatfield, himself. Witnesses will attest to this.

Nessel didn't signal last week that more charges were coming out of this. Quite the contrary. She said the charges were the first step in "what I hope will lead to substantial accountability for those who violate our laws" and a "a massive culture shift away from the way Lansing currently operates in the dark."

This sounds like a call to legislators to start opening up 501(c)4s to public scrutiny, as if her job — in this case, anyway — may be done.

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



KYLE MELINN

Opinion

POLITICS

Lansing area's business landscape continued to bounce back in 2023

By TYLER SCHNEIDER

Greater Lansing continues to ebb and flow with the residual impacts of a pandemic that forced many businesses to close their doors. As the economy continues to recoup, several new businesses have stepped up to fill the gaps in 2023.



Some, like downtown's Lansing Shuffle and REO Town's Ellison Brewery and Event Space, which opened in January

and February, respectively, were highly anticipated. Elsewhere, several smaller, specialized businesses popped up to fill needs and wants that had been lacking in the community.

While we don't have room to discuss all the restaurants, retailers and services that opened in 2023, here are just a few of the notable additions made to Lansing's business landscape in the past year.

Spearheading the highly anticipated Red Cedar Development's grand opening this fall, Toscana Kitchen and Wine Market is an Italian eatery that features private rooms, an Italian-centered marketplace and a plethora of wines to try.

Head a few miles east, and one can indulge in a handful of new fast-casual and late-night eateries that opened in downtown East Lansing. These include Pita Way, a Michigan-based Mediterranean chain that also opened a storefront in DeWitt this year, and the student-owned hot dog restaurant University Weiner, which has already earned a rave review from professional hot dog eater Joey Chestnut. Fresh-baked cookie chain Crumbl Cookies also opened a location further down Grand River Avenue, across from Whole Foods.

There were several area firsts, too. In July, Noosh Afghan Cuisine became the only exclusively Afghan restaurant in Michigan when it opened at 603 N. Waverly Road in Lansing. In November,

downtown Lansing's Comfort Zone Cigar Lounge and Bistro became the first Black-owned cigar lounge in the region, offering a full-service food and drink menu and event calendar that sets it apart from the typical cigar shop.

A new women-owned flower shop, Sparrow Bloom, made its way into the Stadium District in late July. Tiny Bit of Wood, a one-woman woodworking school and shop, announced plans to move into a downtown storefront early next year.

Two waffle-based eateries were also established this year. Elsa's Chicken and Waffles opened in March at 3705 W. Jolly Road, serving all-day waffles and other breakfast items. Okemos' Yello Waffle opened in October and offers authentic Belgian-style waffles alongside special coffee concoctions.

A few dedicated coffee shops also celebrated grand openings. In February, downtown DeWitt added Tin Cup Cafe & Creamery to the mix. That same month, the Hob Nob took over the downtown Lansing space formerly occupied by House Biggby.

While restaurants seemed to dominate the new-business scene this year, a few retailers joined in on the fun as well. In May, Harbor Freight Tools opened a second Lansing location at 6250 S. Cedar Street. In September, a new board game haven, Hoplite Games, opened across from the Avenue Cafe on East Michigan Avenue. Last month, Best Furniture Outlet took over the Lansing Mall space formerly occupied by Macy's.

In what is perhaps the final grand opening before 2024 hits, a new arcade and laser-tag parlor, Zap Zone XL, opened Dec. 22 after delays pushed back its originally anticipated summer launch. The 125,000-square-foot space in the Lansing Mall, which was formerly the Younkers department store, is now a massive entertainment venue that also includes a restaurant, a go-cart track, 12 bowling lanes, miniature golf, a toy store and more.



Courtesy of Toscana Kitchen and Wine Market

With the completion of the Red Cedar Development, Toscana Kitchen and Wine Market opened this fall on East Michigan Avenue alongside the Hyatt House and AC by Marriott hotels.

ARTS & CULTURE

ART • BOOKS • FILM • MUSIC

Mad about the arts

Lansing-area arts scene makes you want to clone yourself



Chelsea Roberts for City Pulse



Lawrence Cosentino/City Pulse

Though its big news was the opening of the Center for Object Research and Engagement in November, the MSU Broad Art Museum offered provocative and absorbing exhibitions throughout the year, including “DIEGEST” (left), centering on the life and poetry of Ohio death-row prison inmate Keith Lamar, and “Resistance Training,” focusing on the intersection of arts, sports and civil rights.

By LAWRENCE COSENTINO

In the first week of November, I got an email from an angry Lansing culture lover.

“I need to clone myself,” the reader complained. “I can’t go to all of these things.”

Her frustration was well founded. That Friday (Nov. 10), the Michigan State University Broad Art Museum held a grand opening for a spectacular new gallery featuring hundreds of artworks from its historic collection, an event 10 years in the making. That same night, New York City jazz drummer Sylvia Cuenca capped a weeklong residency at MSU by joining its nationally acclaimed jazz ensembles for a big-band blowout. To top it all off, the Lansing Symphony Orchestra and three MSU choirs — more than 300 musicians in all — teamed up for a full-throated, overwhelming performance of Carl Orff’s “Carmina Burana” at the Wharton Center.

This was no freak convergence. From funky, grass-roots block parties to sunny summer festivals and hoity-toity gala events, the cultural scene in Greater Lansing provided a strong argument for new cloning technology all year.

One weekend in June, music lovers who didn’t want to miss anything good were caught in a real bind. In addition to East Lansing’s Summer Solstice Jazz Festival, with national star and local hero Michael Dease topping a bill that featured a panoply of top artists, the eclectic Fledge Fest crammed the weekend with a wild slate of hip-hop, punk, soul, spoken word and even belly dancing. That same weekend, Lansing’s Mighty Uke Day festival moved its plucky, populist energy from Old Town to East Lansing’s University United Methodist Church, cramming the venue with joyous jams, flash ukulele eruptions, workshops and other events.

While putting together this year-end arts recap, I swore to myself I wouldn’t invoke the current dustup over Detroit Free Press writer Nancy Kaffer calling Lansing a “sad little town,” but damn! If that’s sad, paint a big fat frown on my little clown face and I’ll

wear it all day.

Sometimes one event alone confronted the culture lover with a frustrating bounty of choices. In April, a resurgent Capital City Film Festival commandeered the vacant Sears building in the Frandor Shopping Center for an ambitious 10-day slate of films. The 30,000-square-foot space left room for plenty of bells and whistles, including a global art exhibition, poetry, Aztec dancers, musical events and appearances by many of the filmmakers.

Filling a defunct Sears store with cinema magic is a hallmark Lansing move. Throughout the year, there was hardly a building, park, café or oil change place in the area that wasn’t liable to burst out with art or music.

The dusty pillars holding up Interstate 496 as it soars over the Grand River and the River Trail became a gallery of colorful faces, courtesy of Lansing muralist Brian Whitfield. More than 2-and-a-half miles of the River Trail have become an ever-evolving gallery of public art, thanks to the Lansing Art Gallery’s annual ArtPath project.

In August, “Mother Tree,” a spectacular metal sculpture by St. Johns artist and “Metal Masters” TV show contestant Ivan Iler, was erected in a prime spot along Kalamazoo Street in Hunter Park.

Sometimes calling a venue a “damn barn” is not a putdown, beginning with the “damn” part. In a quick four years, the annual Dam Jam, held at the Brenke Fish Ladder, has become a paragon of informal, Lansing-style music ecstasy. This year’s event brought a more eclectic slate than ever, highlighted by an uplifting set from hip-hop master Ozay Moore.

For the “barn” part, the Mid-Michigan Bluegrass and Folk Jam series

combined performances by top musicians like Joel Mabus with homegrown picking sessions at the Woldumar Nature Center’s itchy hayloft all year.

Even the Broad Art Museum, arguably the most elite and academic of local arts institutions, completed a major pivot toward its populist roots with the November opening of the Center for Object Research and Engagement, or CORE. The new gallery is packed with 300 objects from the Broad’s permanent collection, including art inherited from its predecessor, the Kresge Art Museum.

The project satisfied a lingering public hunger to see the museum’s rich collection on permanent display, but the Broad did not neglect its primary mission to present new and sometimes unsettling ideas and experiences.

Among many provocative and absorbing exhib-



Courtesy of Richard Cohen

Karla Barber, Jacob McCormick and Bill Castanier, organizers of “By the Yard: Michigan in Panoramic Photographs,” worked together to corral 50 panoramic photographs into the Library of Michigan exhibition, many more than a century old.

its at the Broad this year was “DIGEST,” a probing wad of sculpture and audio-visual media centering on the life and poetry of Ohio death-row prison inmate Keith Lamar, who was both the subject and a co-creator of the exhibit. True to the Broad’s ongoing pivot toward closer community engagement, “Resistance Training,” which opened in September and runs through February, tosses a lot of balls in the air, from exhibits on groundbreaking moments in Spartans sports history to eye-popping sculptures made from discarded basketballs and metal bleachers.

There were opportunities to see plenty of art in a wild variety of themes and mediums at lesser-known galleries scattered throughout Greater Lansing, from Old Town’s MICA Gallery on Turner Street to the Art Williamston gallery’s year-old, fledgling space in the Williamston Middle School.

Libraries continued to serve as hubs for all kinds of quirky art and music events.

At the Library of Michigan downtown, a dedicated team of history fanatics and photo buffs won state-wide acclaim for “By the Yard,” an unusual exhibit of 50 panoramic photographs, many more than a century old, painstakingly culled from public and private collections all over Greater Lansing and beyond.

Capital Area District Libraries celebrated its 50th birthday with a series of cultural events, culminating in a swinging set by Detroit bassist Marion Hayden and her all-women jazz ensemble, Straight Ahead.

The jazz presence in Greater Lansing, home to MSU’s stellar Jazz Studies program and many home-grown talents, is gloriously disproportionate to the genre’s popularity (in other, less enlightened places, of course). Moriarty’s Pub on East Michigan Avenue celebrated an incredible nine years of weekly jazz nights on Tuesdays. The region has no less than three summer festivals dedicated to jazz, bookended by East Lansing’s Summer Solstice Jazz Festival in June and Old Town’s Michigan JazzFest in August. Saxophonist Phil Denny’s Smooth Jazz Fête, a destination event for smooth-jazz devotees across the land, voo-voo-voiced back to life in 2023 after a pandemic hiatus in 2020 and 2021 and a disastrous rainout in 2022.

A determined knot of smaller venues stayed active all year and kept visitors guessing what form of wonderment would come next. REO Town’s cozy arts and entertainment gem, the Robin Theatre, kept up a busy schedule of performances, ranging from “The Voice” finalist Joshua Davis to Roochie Toochee and the Ragtime Shepherd Kings, a raucous crew that deployed toy instruments alongside fiddle, mandolin and pedal-steel guitar.

A tiny sample of the eclectic artists who played at Old Town’s bustling UrbanBeat this year includes jazz singer Sunny Wilkinson, Ann Arbor’s Dave Sharp Worlds Quartet with guitarist Elden Kelly (who, sadly, departed Lansing for Memphis this year) and MSU’s phenomenal new saxophone professor, Walter Blanding.

MSU’s blue-chip College of Music exploded with a more diverse and inventive slate of artists and composers than ever. Mexican composer Gabriela



Berl Schwartz/City Pulse

Youth check out “Mother Tree,” by St. Johns artist Ivan Iler, a 40-foot-high metal sculpture that was installed at Hunter Park in August.

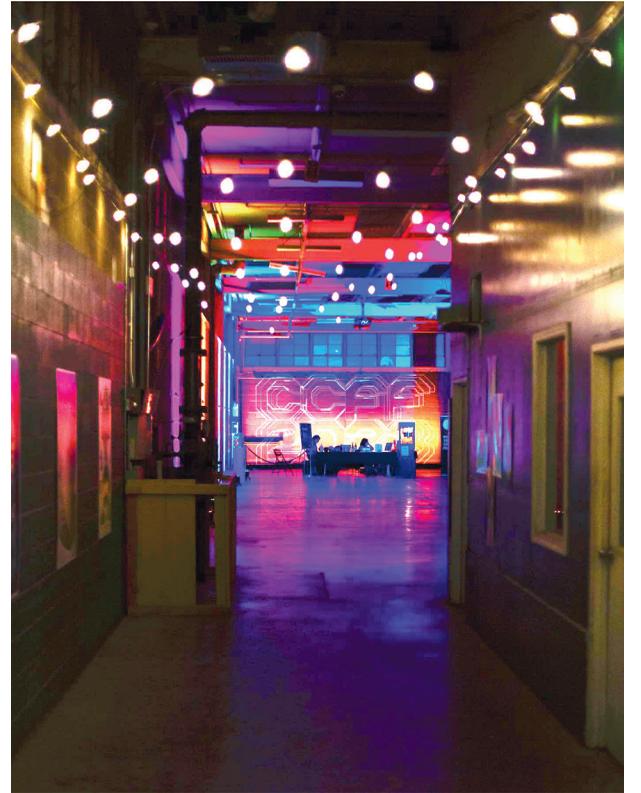
Ortiz visited the school for an ambitious residency in October that saw several ensembles perform her dynamic and vivid music, including a spectacular percussion concerto with MSU percussion Professor Gwendolyn Dease. Jazz Studies kept up its own vigorous round of events, including concerts led by half a dozen stellar guest artists in residence. Bruce Forman, a weathered guitarist with a dual background in jazz and “cowboy” music, was roped into service in February. Pianist Geoffrey Keezer did a stint with the jazz program in October.

The Lansing Symphony rolled into full juggernaut mode, as anyone whose hair was singed by “Carmina Burana” last month can attest. On June 2, virtuoso pianist Clayton Stephenson and the orchestra gave the world premiere of “The Fourth Pedal,” a grand finale for the orchestra’s departing composer in residence, Patrick Harlin.

The Wharton Center didn’t neglect the core classics. Cellist Alisa Weilerstein, among the world’s top classical musicians, dove headlong into Bach’s cello suites in January.

The year had more than its share of fond reunions and bittersweet farewells. Lady of the Lake, an all-female folk band formed in 1983 by Karrie Potter Richards, Pooh Stevenson and Wanda Degen, reunited for a 40th anniversary concert in April at University United Methodist Church, mixing Appalachian, Celtic and folk music on virtually every instrument a human being can pluck, bow or strum.

“Turning Heavenward,” a choral concert at St.



Courtesy of the Capital City Film Festival

In April, the Capital City Film Festival transformed the vacant Sears building in the Frandor Shopping Center into a sleek, modern theater and art gallery.

Paul’s Episcopal Church, bid a melancholy farewell to Stephen R. Lange, the church’s longtime organist, choir director and minister and director of the Lange Choral Ensemble, who died in January.

The Earl Nelson Singers, a Lansing institution for 60 years, ended its long and distinguished run at a Feb. 26 farewell concert at Friendship Baptist Church. Founded in the 1960s by MSU music student Earl Nelson, the group brought a rich heritage of Black spirituals to diverse mid-Michigan audiences and became the nucleus of a tight-knit musical community, but it was time for the group’s 87-year-old director, Verna Holley, and her 90-year-old husband to get some rest. For now, there’s no one to take their places, but the group’s members, many of whom had been participating for more than 50 years, haven’t ruled out a resurrection.

Grewal Hall at 224, a new mid-size music venue on South Washington Square in downtown Lansing, hosted its first shows in October after construction delays postponed its originally slated June opening.

To top it all off, the city of Lansing broke ground in June on a long-anticipated downtown performing arts center, meant primarily to capture national traveling acts with a performance hall that can seat 1,400 people.

By the time the hall is up and running in 2025, mere cloning might not be enough to catch all the music and art burgeoning in Lansing. Watch this space for tips on how to build a personal army of android replicas.



Berl Schwartz/City Pulse



Courtesy photo

Lansing Mayor Andy Schor speaks at the June groundbreaking ceremony for The Ovation, a large downtown performing arts center expected to open in 2025.

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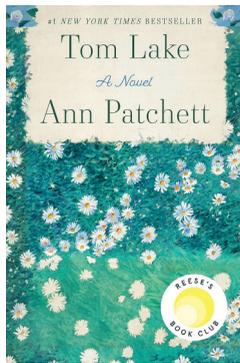



Tips on spending Santa's bookstore gift cards this season

By **BILL CASTANIER**

If you were one of the lucky ones who got a gift card from a local bookstore this holiday season, here are some ideas for books to spend it on.

OK, I was wrong. I wasn't gung-ho for Ann Patchett's newest book, "Tom Lake." Since it has now appeared on almost every list of best books of 2023 (The New York Times, NPR) I have been forced to reassess my take.



The book is clever. COVID isolation finds a family sheltering in place in Michigan's cherry country as they go about the day-to-day chores of harvesting the season's crop. Three daughters bug their mom about a summer she spent performing at a local summer playhouse and learning to make difficult choices.

They only know that their mother had a summer fling with an actor who would parlay his summer stock experience into becoming a major heart-throb movie star.

The daughters want to know more about that time in their mother's life, and over the harvest season, she fills them in. In pure Shakespearean style, the readers only learn about the good stuff as their mom relives this exciting period of her life when she was madly

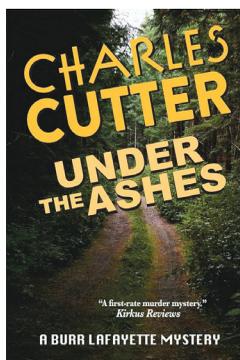
in love for the first time.

Without question, Patchett is a beautiful writer, but I have two objections. One is cosmetic: The book jacket is awful, and there were so many wonderful things that could have been done to tie in the beauty of northwestern Michigan. I get the use of daisies, and so will you, but cherry blossoms are cooler.

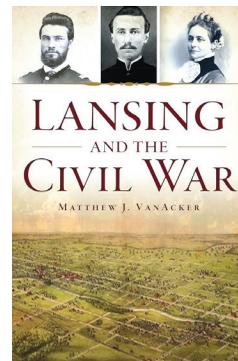
The second is that the book's final 10% tries to wrap up too many plot points in a bow like a Grisham thriller.

Other books I can suggest (and I've interviewed these authors) are the mysteries "Under the

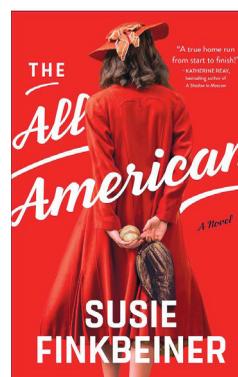
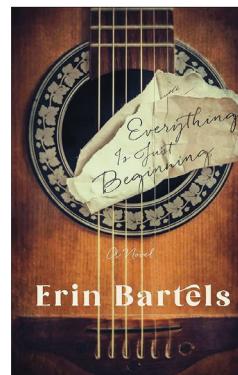
Ashes," by East Lansing author Charles Cutter, and "Ghosts of Lost Dreams," by Ron Erskine. Both authors are late in their careers and have used their life experiences — Cutter as a lawyer and a radio station executive, Erskine as a large-animal veterinarian — to write clever and engaging murder mysteries. Erskine's focus is Amish country in Pennsylvania, while Cutter draws us into the Leelanau area, this time with a murder that may have been the result of a false morel mushroom poisoning. Both will have you looking for the author's previous works.



Until Matthew J. VanAcker took on the task, no one had ever looked at Lansing's central role in the Civil War. His book "Lansing and the Civil War" isn't just for historians. Through its focus on average Lansing residents who fought for the North, VanAcker tells the engaging story of the 500 men who fought to save the Union.



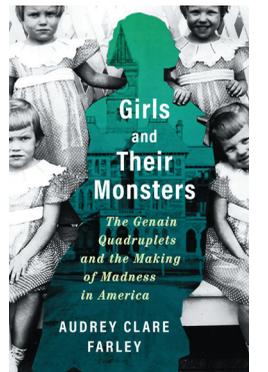
Lansing author Erin Bartels keeps getting better and better. Her newest book, "Everything is Just Beginning," follows a young couple as they break into the Detroit music industry. It's also a love story that may or may not happen, and you won't know until the end because success threatens to drive the couple apart. Bartels' love of music shines through as she explores her penchant for writing about "things you cannot change."



Susie Finkbeiner, a former Lansingite now living in Western Mich-

igan, takes readers on a young girl's journey to play professional baseball in her 2023 book, "The All American." You will feel like you're in the stands, cheering on the young athlete. Finkbeiner also peppers the book with how the "Red Scare" destroyed people's lives while exploring what many mistakenly believe was a simpler time.

Audrey Farley, who is becoming noted for her writing on how the medical world has dealt with complex societal norms, has written her newest book, "Girls and Their Monsters," about the Lansing Morlok quadruplets. Farley pulls back the curtains on the often terrible and challenging lives of these young girls in the mid-20th century, revealing secrets few Lansing residents knew, despite tons of media coverage in their lifetime. The book is a tough read, detailing some horrific secrets and questioning the complicity that everyone has with the worship of celebrities. Farley worked closely with the only living Morlok quadruplet, Sarah Morlok Cotton, forming a friendship that becomes obvious while reading the book.



These books should keep you busy until Bonnie Jo Campbell arrives in town to promote her new rural noir book, "The Waters," which is due out in January.

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Turbulence marks 2023 as the cannabis market keeps defining itself



Lawrence Cosentino/City Pulse

Rehbel Industries' Michael Doherty, who sold his business in June after it was placed under receivership earlier in the year.

By CHRIS SILVA

As we look forward to a new year of hilarious litigation hijinks, new corporate receiverships and an unrelenting race to the bottom on pricing, I thought it might be nice to recap some of the biggest pieces of news and trends to happen in 2023.

Since voters legalized medical marijuana in 2008, constant and contentious change has been annual. This year, we saw huge market corrections and trends that point to a quickly maturing and saturated legal cannabis market. We have an interesting vantage point in Lansing, which has a unique and rich cannabis tradition. In addition, our proximity to the wheels of power at state government make the hits that much better.

The rise of the receivership boys

Hubris. It's the only word I can politely use to describe a lot of folks who had their legal cannabis ventures taken away from them by investors. Who can forget the consummate hater of caregivers, Skymint? The Dimondale-based group of chads was infamous for spearheading a campaign to rein in caregiver rights under the guise of consumer safety. This year, its Canadian investors took control of the company in order to satisfy the millions in debt the Skymint group racked up. This month, operations at the company's mid-Michigan cultivation facility were officially wrapped up. Its creditor, Tropics LLC, will administer its remaining retail locations. Also in Lansing, Rehbel Indus-



Courtesy photo

Investors took control of Skymint, including this location at 3315 Coolidge Road in East Lansing.

tries continued in receivership after a fairly public and at times bizarre breakdown by Michael Doherty, its founding owner and operator who was jailed twice. The company at one time had two active cultivation facilities and two valid but not active retail licenses in the capital city.

All across the cannabis space, would-be ultra-rich guys will have to settle for being regular rich guys after their cannabis dreams were squashed out by the market, lack of experience and inability, and investors who are demanding the returns promised on their Looney Tunes-esque business plans that permeated the early days of legal cannabis. The year saw numerous operators drop out and sell their facilities for pennies on the dollar or have them taken away by investors who have grown tired of cash burns.

Litigation life

There is a saying among cannabis operators in Michigan: "Nothing means anything until a few judges say so." The year saw the pace, and stakes, of litigation as a business tool continue to rise. Testing giant Viridis Laboratories has spent the last couple of years locked in an almost constant battle with the state Cannabis Regulatory Agency over dubious testing methods and lab transparency. This year was also rocky for retailers in the Upper Peninsula as the war for the pocketbooks of Wisconsin and Minnesota customers bloodied the western UP with red tape and billable hours, while litigation powerhouse Lume and other big-money downstate actors tried to eek into a lucrative market after being outperformed on licensing by locals Firestation and Rise UP in the strategic western UP city of Menominee. With more competition

and shrinking margins, lawsuits and bullying municipalities were hot tactics in 2023.

Return of hash

This year was, in my opinion, the beginning of the resurgence of hash and other solventless products in the legal cannabis market. Solventless productions, such as hash, are made without the use of hydrocarbons or other chemical solvents like butane. Instead, water and friction are used in an ever-evolving process of extraction that delivers what many heady connoisseurs consider a superior dabbing option. The first few years of legal cannabis saw a lack of top-shelf solventless offerings, and those that were available were ridiculously expensive. As cultivators' capacities have increased and consumers' palates have matured, 2023 saw many new offerings



to the solventless segments and drastic improvements from operators already in the space. Local producers like Franklin Fields, powerhouse Element and one of my new favorites, Ice Kream Hash Co. here in Lansing, offered some of my favorite solventless products on the market this year. NLG, a multiple-time Cannabis Cup-winning extraction company operated by former caregivers, also brought some of its products into the legal market. On the west side of the state, caregiver legend The Wave introduced products into the legal market. His products are sought after in the traditional market, and his entrance into legal dope, like NLG's, has been widely anticipated. Hopefully, as the market matures, the demand for this level of quality will allow more legacy and small operators into the segment.

The year was just as turbulent as any year in Michigan cannabis. The proverbial winners and losers of the market are being determined, and new consumer tastes are being delivered. We're at a true pivot point. Hopefully our tradition of patient and consumer activism around this area will shape an industry that values and elevates the small and virtuous operators. It's my hope that informed, knowledgeable consumers and patients will help turn the tide in the coming years as market maturity plays out.

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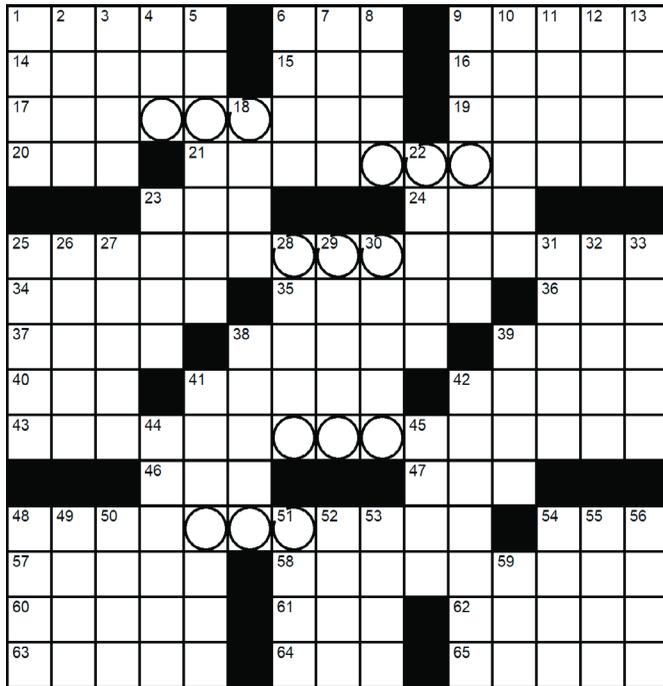
Jonesin' Crossword

By Matt Jones

"A Whole 'Nother Level" -- that's the spirit.
by Matt Jones
© 2023 Matt Jones

ACROSS

- 1. Hair-covering garment
- 6. Tennis shot
- 9. Room-reading readings, so to speak
- 14. Vinegar-heavy marinade
- 15. Umbrage
- 16. Empathetic comment
- 17. Drink that necessitates a sleeve
- 19. "The Color Purple" protagonist played in 2023 by Fantasia Barrino
- 20. Stubborn animal
- 21. Went astray
- 23. Goal
- 24. Singer Reed
- 25. Judicious attribute
- 34. Egg-shaped
- 35. Actress Chabert of Hallmark's "Crossword Mysteries" series
- 36. Preschool activity
- 37. Singer Simone
- 38. Shopping conveniences
- 39. Southern cornbread
- 40. Ending for graph or favor
- 41. Indie rock band Yo La
- 42. "Grey's Anatomy" actress Pompeo
- 43. Startles, maybe
- 46. Slithery sea creature
- 47. Posts pics on social media, perhaps
- 48. Lacking cordiality
- 54. Hot tub locale
- 57. Monopoly purchase
- 58. What all the theme answers are



- ... or aren't? (Sorry/not sorry for the confusion!)
- 60. "The Thin Blue Line" director Morris
- 61. King, in Cannes
- 62. Bring down a notch
- 63. Hair entanglement
- 64. "Rocky III" costar
- 65. Fallon Sherrock's pro sport

DOWN

- 1. Chuckling sound
- 2. Altar agreements
- 3. Notates hurriedly
- 4. "The Golden Bachelor" network
- 5. Got down on the floor?
- 6. Elevate
- 7. Double Stuf cookie
- 8. Feud
- 9. Win
- 10. Post-winter river thaw
- 11. ___ Cynwyd, Penn.

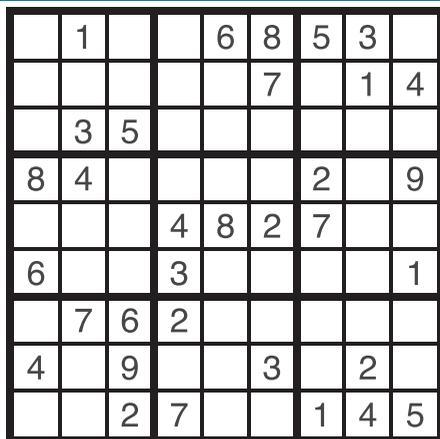
- 12. "Spamalot" creator lde
- 13. Look for
- 18. Constantly-wants-to-belong anxiety, for short
- 22. Swatted insects
- 23. Tuva's continent
- 25. Fast-food chain with carhops on skates
- 26. "Don't Cry For Me, Argentina" musical
- 27. Ninesome
- 28. Custard desserts
- 29. FX series whose fifth season features Jon Hamm
- 30. Words before Congress or kindness
- 31. "___ Holmes" (2020 Netflix mystery film)
- 32. More grounded
- 33. Make purchases
- 38. "Forget You" singer Green
- 39. Ed Sheeran's debut album
- 41. Farmer's place, in a kids' song
- 42. Brainy-sounding "Batman" villain
- 44. Bleep out
- 45. Finance-related, for short
- 48. "___ All That" (1999 comedy)
- 49. Undecided
- 50. Glow
- 51. IRS document
- 52. 1973 Orson Welles docudrama "___ Fake"
- 53. "___ Makes You Happy" (Sheryl Crow song)
- 54. Yelp rating unit
- 55. Annoying animal
- 56. Greek god of war
- 59. Org. of Kings and Warriors

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Answers on page 16

SUDOKU

Beginner



Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Here's How It Works:
Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

Free Will Astrology

By Rob Brezсны Dec. 27, 2023 - Jan. 2, 2024

ARIES (March 21-April 19): The plan I will propose in this horoscope is for temporary use. I'm not recommending you stick to it for all of 2024 — just for the next 15 to 18 days. If you do, I believe it will set you up for beautiful success in the coming months. Here's my idea: Embark on a free-form extravaganza of playing and having fun. Just for now, set aside your ambition. Don't worry about improving yourself and producing results. Simply enjoy a phase of suspending inhibitions, creatively messing around, having nothing to prove and being motivated by the quest for joy.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Climate change is impacting rainbows. Rising temperatures and dryer conditions mean that some parts of the world will get fewer rainbows, and other areas will get more. Canada and Siberia will benefit, while the Mediterranean will be less well-endowed with sky-borne arcs of color that come from sunlit rain. But I predict that no matter where you live, the rainbow will be a potent and regular symbol for you Bulls in 2024 — more than ever before. That means you will have increased reasons to entertain hope and more power to find beauty. On occasion, there may even be very good luck at the metaphorical rainbow's end. If you're an LGBTQIA2S+ Taurus, be on high alert for breakthroughs in your ability to get the appreciation you deserve.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): As one of your inspirational stories for 2024, I offer this tale from singer-songwriter Tom Waits: "Once upon a time, there was a crooked tree and a straight tree. They grew next to each other. Every day, the straight tree would look at the crooked tree and say, 'You're crooked. You've always been crooked, and you'll continue to be crooked. But look at me! I'm tall, and I'm straight.' Then one day, lumberjacks came to the forest and looked around. The manager in charge said, 'Cut all the straight trees.' And that crooked tree is still there to this day, growing strong and growing strange." (PS: Here's more from Gemini writer Ralph Waldo Emerson: "Be true to your own act, and congratulate yourself if you have done something strange and extravagant.")

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Japanese artist Hokusai (1760-1849) developed a fascination for his country's iconic Mount Fuji. In his 70s, he produced a series of woodblock prints titled "Thirty-Six Views of Mount Fuji." Later, he added three books of prints collectively called "One Hundred Views of Mount Fuji." Some art historians say his obsession stemmed from the legend that the mountain was home to the secret of immortality. The coming year will be a fine time for you Cancerians to celebrate and concentrate on your own Mount Fuji-like passion. Sometime soon, identify what it is and start making plans to commune with it intensely.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): If you will ever in your life go viral — that is, create or do something that suddenly becomes widely known and influential — I bet it will be in 2024. Even if you don't produce TikTok videos seen by 10 million people, you are at least likely to become more visible in your local community or field of endeavor. Of course, I would prefer that your fame and clout spread because of the good deeds you do, not the weird deeds. So, I urge you to cultivate high integrity and a wildly generous spirit in the coming months. Be a role model who inspires and uplifts.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): I expect 2024 to be a free-spirited, wide-ranging, big-vision type of year for you, dear Virgo. I predict you will feel an abundance of urges to travel, roam and explore. You will be more excited than anxious about the prospect of leaving your comfort zone, and you will have a special fondness for getting your mind expanded by interesting encounters. That doesn't mean you will avoid all awkwardness and confusion. Some of that stuff will happen, though it will usually evolve into educational adventures. And the extra good news is that wandering out

in nature will provide even more inspiration and healing than usual. Treasure this quote from conservationist Rachel Carson: "Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure: the migration of the birds, the ebb and flow of the tides, the folded bud ready for the spring."

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): I am pleased to inform you that a visit to hell will not be on your itinerary in 2024. You may be invited to take a few excursions into the realm that depth psychologists call the underworld, but that's a good thing. There you will be able to hunt for treasures that have been hidden and uncover secrets that will illuminate your epic, months-long quest for wholeness. It may sometimes be dark and shadowy down there below, but almost always dark and shadowy in ways that will lead you to healing. (I will reiterate what I implied above: The underworld is NOT hell.)

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): I hope that working hard on togetherness will be a fun project for you in the coming months. To do it well, you must outgrow some habitual ways of doing friendship and intimacy. You will have to be imaginative and ingenious. Are you willing to believe that you do not yet know all there is to know about being a fantastic ally and partner? Are you ready to approach the arts of collaboration and cooperation as if enhancing your skills is the most important thing you can do? For the sake of your best selfish goals, be a brilliant teammate in 2024.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Each of us is a complex, kaleidoscopic work of art, whether or not we consciously approach our destiny in that spirit. Every day, we use our creative imagination to craft new elements of the masterpiece known as the story of our life. Leos come by this fun project naturally, but you Sagittarians also have great potential to embrace it with glee and panache. I trust you will be especially keen on enjoying this sacred work in 2024. Today and the coming weeks will be an excellent time to ramp up the scintillating drama.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): "I am against sex education in schools because sex is more fun when it's dirty and sinful." So said Capricorn author Florence King. I reject and rebel against that perverse declaration — and encourage you to disavow it, too, in 2024. In my astrological opinion, the coming months will be a favorable time to learn everything about sex and eros that you don't already know. I hope you will dive deep as you gather a rich array of teachings about how to enjoy the art of making love more than ever before.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Singer-songwriter Tori Amos says she's sure she was burned for being a witch in a previous lifetime. I suspect most of us had past incarnations in which we were punished simply for being our beautiful selves. I bring this up, Aquarius, because I think 2024 will be a favorable time to get some healing from any ancient hurt like that. You will have a series of experiences that could help you recover from the illusion that being faithful to your truth is somehow wrong. Life will conspire with you to help you reclaim more of the full audacity to be your gorgeous, genuine self.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): I believe 2024 will be one of the best years ever for your education. Your willingness and eagerness to learn will be at a peak. Your knack for attracting inspirational teachers will be excellent. It's likely you will be exceptionally curious and open to good influences. My advice is to be alert for lessons not just from obvious sources of wisdom and revelation, but also from unexpected founts. Don't be too sure you know where revelations and illumination might come from.

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

OUT on the TOWN

Events & Happenings in Lansing This Week

Events must be entered through the calendar at lansingcitypulse.com. Deadline is 4 p.m. Wednesday for the upcoming Wednesday edition. Charges may apply for paid events to appear in print. If you need assistance, please call Nicole at (517) 999-5066.

Wednesday, Dec. 27

Art Adventure - Day camp for ages 5-11. Discover how much science and art have in common through art projects and colorful chemistry experiments. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Drive, Lansing. 517-485-8116. impression5.org.

Holiday Open House - All three floors of the house will be decorated for the holidays. 1-7 p.m. Turner-Dodge House, 100 E. North St., Lansing. 517-483-4220. facebook.com/turnerdodgehouse.

Karaoke with The BIG Man Genesis - 9 p.m. Lansing Shuffle, 325 Riverfront Drive, Lansing. 517-940-4619. lansingshuffle.com.

Mid-Michigan Art Guild FALL MEMBER ART SHOW - 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Neighborhood Empowerment Center, 600 W. Maple St., Lansing. midmichiganartguild.org.

Mindfulness Meditation in the Thich Nhat Hanh tradition - All are welcome to join our weekly practice! 7-9 p.m. Van Hanh Temple, 3015 S. MLK Jr. Blvd., Lansing. facebook.com/LansingAreaMindfulnessCommunity.

Mixed Media Medley," by Bobbie Margolis - 9 a.m.-8 p.m. CADL - Okemos Library, 4321 Okemos Road, Okemos. Call 517-347-2021 beforehand to ensure gallery space is open. facebook.com/MidMichiganArtGuild.

Weaving the Web: Air - Join us online or in person for discussions, rituals, meditations and more! 6 p.m. Keys to Manifestation, 809 Center St., Suite 7, Lansing. 517-657-5800. weaversoftheweb.org.

Thursday, Dec. 28

Game Night with Hoplite Games - 7 p.m. Lansing Shuffle, 325 Riverfront Drive, Lansing. 517-940-4619. lansingshuffle.com.

Holiday Open House - All three floors of the house will be decorated for the holidays. 1-7 p.m. Turner-Dodge House, 100 E. North St., Lansing. 517-483-4220. facebook.com/turnerdodgehouse.

Karaoke Thursday - 8 p.m.-midnight. The Green Door Bar & Grill, 2005 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. 517-325-9897. greendoorlive.com.

Ladies Silver Blades Skating Club - Join other adult women for fun, exercise, friendship and skating practice. 9:30-11:30 a.m. East Lansing Ice Cube, 2810 Hannah Blvd., East Lansing. ladiessilverblades.org.

Laingsburg Farmers Market - 5-8 p.m. First Congregational Church of Laingsburg, 401 E. Grand River Road, Laingsburg. 517-295-8128. laingsburg-business.org/farmers-market-1.

Mid-Michigan Art Guild FALL MEMBER ART SHOW - 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Neighborhood Empowerment Center, 600 W. Maple St., Lansing. midmichiganartguild.org.

"Mixed Media Medley," by Bobbie Margolis - 9 a.m.-8 p.m. CADL - Okemos Library, 4321 Okemos Road, Okemos. Call 517-347-2021 beforehand to ensure gallery space is open. facebook.com/MidMichiganArtGuild.

Slimy Science - Day camp for ages 5-11. Explore the chemistry of slime, goop and other non-Newtonian fluids! 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Drive, Lansing. 517-485-8116. impression5.org.

Stitch 'n Bitch - Come hang out with some fellow stitching witches! 5-8 p.m. Keys to Manifestation, 809

Center St., Suite 7, Lansing. 517-974-5540. manifest-lansing.com.

Teens Magic Workshop with Mr. Jeff - Students will learn several easy-to-master tricks commonly used by many of today's top professional magicians. Registration req. 11 a.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. 517-627-7014. gladl.org.

Take Off Pounds Sensibly - Weight-loss support group. Weigh-in 5:30 p.m., meeting 6-7 p.m. Haslett Middle School, 1535 Franklin St., Haslett. 800-932-8677. facebook.com/HaslettTops.

Friday, Dec. 29

Craft Club - Make folded-paper icicles! Grades 4-12. Registration req. 4 p.m. Charlotte Community Library, 226 S. Bostwick St., Charlotte. 517-543-8859. charlottelibrary.org.

Frog & the Beeftones - 8:30 p.m. The Green Door Bar & Grill, 2005 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. 517-325-9897. greendoorlive.com.

Holiday Open House - All three floors of the house will be decorated for the holidays. Noon-5 p.m. Turner-Dodge House, 100 E. North St., Lansing. 517-483-4220. facebook.com/turnerdodgehouse.

Matthew Shannon at the Peanut Barrel - 8 p.m. 521 E. Grand River Ave., East Lansing. 517-351-0608. peanutbarrel.com.

Mid-Michigan Art Guild FALL MEMBER ART SHOW - 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Neighborhood Empowerment Center, 600 W. Maple St., Lansing. midmichiganartguild.org.

Mission to Space - Day camp for ages 5-11. Put on your astronaut gear and find out what it takes to leave Earth and explore space! 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Drive, Lansing. 517-485-8116. impression5.org.

"Mixed Media Medley," by Bobbie Margolis - 9 a.m.-8 p.m. CADL - Okemos Library, 4321 Okemos Road, Okemos. Call 517-347-2021 beforehand to ensure gallery space is open. facebook.com/MidMichiganArtGuild.

Time2Play - This beloved Lansing band has been entertaining audiences with its diverse blend of rock, pop, blues and country tunes since 2009. 7 p.m. UrbanBeat, 1213 Turner St., Lansing. 517-331-8440. urbanbeatevents.com.

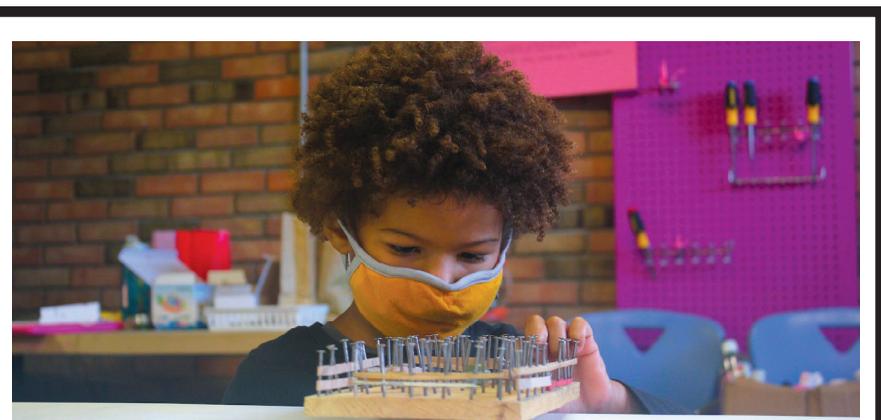
Saturday, Dec. 30

Gina Garner Band - 8:30 p.m. The Green Door Bar & Grill, 2005 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. 517-325-9897. greendoorlive.com.

Holiday Open House - All three floors of the house will be decorated for the holidays. Noon-5 p.m. Turner-Dodge House, 100 E. North St., Lansing. 517-483-4220. facebook.com/turnerdodgehouse.

New Year's Eve-Eve Rock 'n' Roll Rally - Featuring Sean Anthony Sullivan, J.H. Patton and the Good Companions, and Something with James. 8 p.m. Mac's Bar, 2700 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. 517-484-6795. macsbar.com.

Toastmasters Quarterly Meeting - Advanced club that helps members grow in speaking, presentation and leadership skills. Members get extensive evaluations to help them grow professionally. 9:45 a.m. MSUFUCU, 104 S. Washington Square, Lansing. cdas.toastmost.org.



Winter day camps

Dec. 27-29 and Jan. 2-5

9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Impression 5 Science Center
200 Museum Drive, Lansing

For those with kids ages 5 to 11 who are looking for some winter break entertainment, Impression 5 Science Center is hosting day camps Wednesday through Friday (Dec. 27 through 29) and Tuesday (Jan. 2) through Jan. 5.

Children can learn about a variety of scientific topics through hands-on experiments, crafts and challenges. Themes include Art Adventure on Dec. 27, Slimy Science on Dec. 28, Mission to Space on Dec. 29, Nature Investigators on Jan. 2, Toy Designer on Jan. 3, Kitchen Chemistry on Jan. 4 and Marvelous Machines on Jan. 5.

Registration is \$75 per day for members and \$95 per day for non-members at impression5.org/winter-labs or by calling 517-485-8116, extension 132. To inquire about scholarships, email reservations@impression5.org. The camps run from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., but before- and after-care are available.

Sunday, Dec. 31

Future Funk & Sonic Souls New Year's Eve - Welcome 2024 in style with some of Colorado's and Michigan's up-and-coming electronic talent! 8:30 p.m. Lansing Shuffle, 325 Riverfront Drive, Lansing. 517-940-4619. lansingshuffle.com.

JUGGLERS AND WOULD-BE JUGGLERS - Jugglers meet at the Orchard Street Pump House at 2 p.m. Sundays. 368 Orchard St., East Lansing. mikemarhanka@gmail.com.

Magic with Jeff the Magician - 11 a.m. Lansing Shuffle, 325 Riverfront Drive, Lansing. 517-940-4619. lansingshuffle.com.

Miranda & the M-80s New Year's Eve Bash - 8:30 p.m. The Green Door Bar & Grill, 2005 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. 517-325-9897. greendoorlive.com.

New Year's Eve Contra and Square Dance - 6:30 p.m. potluck, 7:30 p.m. dance lesson, 8 p.m.-12:15 a.m. dance party. Delta Township Community Center, 16101 Brook Road, Lansing. 517-614-5858. tenpoundfiddle.org.

New Year's Eve Masquerade Party - Enjoy live music, cocktails, champagne Jell-O shots and a special new beer release. No cover or ticket required. 21+. 8 p.m.-1 a.m. Lansing Brewing Co., 518 E. Shiawassee St., Lansing. 517-371-2600. lansingbrewingcompany.com.

New Year's Eve Party - 2-4 p.m. Disney trivia, 5-7 p.m. karaoke, 9 p.m.-12:30 a.m. concert with JP &

the Energy. Free, open to all ages. High Caliber Karting, 1982 W. Grand River Ave., Suite 800, Okemos. highcaliberkarting.com/nye-fun.

Planning for the New Year, facilitated by Danielle McMahon - 9:30 a.m. Unity Spiritual Center of Lansing, 2395 Washington Road, Lansing. 269-762-3189. unitylansing.org.

Red Cedar Quaker Friends Worship - 10:30 a.m. 1400 Turner St., Lansing. redcedarfriends.org/join-us-for-worship.

Monday, Jan. 1

New Year's Day Prayer Service for Peace - All faiths are most welcome. 1 p.m. Red Cedar Friends Meeting House, 1400 Turner St., Lansing. 517-331-5765. paxchristimi.org.

River Walk Trash Cleanup - Pick up the trash on the Lansing River Trail and around our building. We'll walk for about 30 minutes. 11 a.m. Keys to Manifestation, 809 Center St., Suite 7, Lansing. 517-974-5540. manifestlansing.com.

Tuesday, Jan. 2

LAGE Game Night East - 6:30-11 p.m. The Junction, 410 S. Clippert St., Lansing. meetup.com/lansing/events.

2023 marked a bittersweet year for Greater Lansing theater

By **MARY CUSACK**

Father Time is about to spank the first cries out of Baby New Year 2024, which means it's time to celebrate some highlights of the 2023 theater scene in Greater Lansing.

Lansing-area theater companies never cease to amaze with their creativity and innovation. Williamston Theatre saved its latest holiday musical, "Murder for Two: Holiday Edition," from near disaster when lead actress Andrea Wollenberg became ill and lost her voice. After canceling three shows, the brilliant minds behind the theater's executive director, Emily Sutton-Smith, did the vocal performances, while Wollenberg walked the part and played piano. This arrangement was only needed for two

days, and I'm a little bummed that Wollenberg was back in top form by the time I saw the show because it would have been fascinating to watch the Sutton-Smith/Wollenberg synthesis.



Opinion

I missed another innovative show that my fellow reviewer Chelsea Lake Roberts enjoyed, Lansing Community College's Climate Change Theatre Action festival performances. The six short plays were accompanied by student poetry and informational booths about climate change. While it's easy to become pessimistic about the future, collective actions like this give us hope that the next generation is passionate about positive change.

I realize it's not all about me, but since I'm the one writing this wrap-up, back to me and my 2023 theater experiences. As mentioned in my

review of Peppermint Creek Theatre Co.'s production of "The Prom," I didn't go to my own prom. I have a feeling that it wouldn't have been as memorable as the musical was. The story was hilarious, timely and tender, and the cast was magnificent. Lizabeth Desmet was sweetly vulnerable as Emma Nolan, a lesbian who just wanted to dance at prom with the woman she loved, and Amanda DeKatch was dazzling as diva Dee Dee Allen, who used the controversy of the prom to try to save her career.

This year will be remembered as a standout for Peppermint Creek for another reason: after couch-surfing for 20 seasons, it finally found a permanent home at the new Stage One Performing Arts Center in Syc-

See Theater, Page 17



Courtesy of Williamston Theatre

Williamston Theatre Executive Director Emily Sutton-Smith (left) fills in on vocals for "Murder for Two: Holiday Edition" actress Andrea Wollenberg (right), who lost her voice due to illness but still performed the blocking on stage.

Events

from page 15

LAGE Game Night West - 6:30-11 p.m. Frank's Press Box, 7216 W. Saginaw Hwy., Lansing. [meetup.com/lansing/events](https://www.meetup.com/lansing/events).

Mid-Michigan Art Guild FALL MEMBER ART SHOW - 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Neighborhood Empowerment Center, 600 W. Maple St., Lansing. [midmichiganartguild.org](https://www.midmichiganartguild.org).

Nature Investigators - Day camp for ages 5-11. Discover how animals adapt to their surroundings in cold weather with hands-on experimentation. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Drive, Lansing. 517-485-8116. [impression5.org](https://www.impression5.org).

Preschool Family Storytime - Join us for stories and literacy-enhancing activities, including songs and rhymes. Ages 1-6. 11 a.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. 517-627-7014. [gladl.org](https://www.gladl.org).

StressBusters: Positive Mental Health for Kids - 3 p.m. session for ages 3-6 and caregivers, 4 p.m. sessions for ages 7-10 and 11-14. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. 517-346-8094. [gladl.org](https://www.gladl.org).

Trivia at Lansing Shuffle with DJ Trivia - 7:30-9 p.m. 325 Riverfront Drive, Lansing. 517-940-4619. [lansingshuffle.com](https://www.lansingshuffle.com).

Yoga with Maja McKeever, Slow Flow for Better Mobility - 6 p.m. Unity Spiritual Center of Lan-

sing, 2395 Washington Road, Lansing. 269-762-3189. [unitylansing.org](https://www.unitylansing.org).

Wednesday, Jan. 3

Balloon Animals Workshop with Mr. Greg - Learn types of balloons to use and how to inflate and twist them to make a fun creation! Ages 4-8. Registration req. 11 a.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. 517-346-8094. [gladl.org](https://www.gladl.org).

"Fitness Over 50" Senior Exercise Group - The Meridian Township Parks and Recreation Stretch and Flex Exercise group exercises at the Meridian Mall Food Court. 9-10 a.m. 1982 W. Grand River Ave., Okemos. [meridian50plus.com](https://www.meridian50plus.com).

Karaoke with The BIG Man Genesis - 9 p.m. Lansing Shuffle, 325 Riverfront Drive, Lansing. 517-940-4619. [lansingshuffle.com](https://www.lansingshuffle.com).

LBCA Meeting - 7:30 a.m. Pine Hills Golf Course, 6603 Woodbury Road, Laingsburg.

Lego Palooza - Each child will get a tray of LEGO bricks, and the challenge is to build a fantastic creation! 2 p.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. 517-346-8094. [gladl.org](https://www.gladl.org).

See Events, Page 17

THE PULSIFIEDS

Accident Fund Insurance Company of America in Lansing, MI seeks a Lead Software Engineer responsible for designing, developing, configuring, testing and documenting applications, integrations, tools, systems and components based on project or change request specifications and procedures using knowledge of and ability to code in JavaScript (including user interfaces), Java, .Net, and other web-related technologies as well as other object-oriented development languages. Teleworking permitted within a reasonable commuting distance of the Lansing, MI office location. Send resume to Tamie Nolan, 200 North Grand Avenue, Lansing, MI 48933 or via email at tamie.nolan@emergentholdingsinc.com and reference job title and location.

CITY OF GRAND LEDGE NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Grand Ledge City Council will hold a public hearing during its regular meeting at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, 08 January 2024, to consider and receive public input on a proposed ordinance amending the Zoning District Map referred to in City Code Chapter 46 – Zoning, Article IV – Zoning Districts and Map, Section 46-94 – Zoning District Map, to rezone the property located at 4063 E. Saginaw Hwy. (Parcel #400-011-300-055-00) and the adjoining vacant parcel to its north and east (Parcel #400-011-300-060-00) from "B-1" Highway Service to "R-HD" Multiple Family Residential. The proposed ordinance is available for review on the City's website at www.cityofgrandledge.com and at the City Clerk's office, 310 Greenwood St., Grand Ledge, Michigan, between 8:00 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

The meeting will be held in the Council Chambers, City Hall, 310 Greenwood St., Grand Ledge MI 48837, in compliance with the Open Meetings Act, as amended, and will also be livestreamed via Zoom for informational purposes only. The online stream can be accessed at <https://www.zoom.us> with the Meeting ID: 879 0258 8532, or by calling +1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC), +1 305 224 1968 US, +1 309 205 3325 US, +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago), +1 646 876 9923 US (New York), +1 646 931 3860 US, +1 253 205 0468 US, +1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma), +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston), +1 360 209 5623 US, +1 386 347 5053 US, +1 408 638 0968 US (San Jose), +1 507 473 4847 US, +1 564 217 2000 US, +1 669 444 9171 US, +1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose), +1 689 278 1000 US, +1 719 359 4580 US, with Meeting ID: 879 0258 8532.

The City Council invites anyone interested to attend in person and offer comments at the public hearing. Written comments can be mailed or delivered to Elected or Appointed Officials at 310 Greenwood St., Grand Ledge, MI 48837, placed in the drop box in front of City Hall, or emailed to cityhall@cityofgrandledge.com. All written comments will be considered if received by 5:00 p.m. the day of the hearing. Please call (517) 627-2149 or email cityhall@cityofgrandledge.com for further information or to request accommodations for disabilities.

Gregory Newman, City Clerk

CP#23-328

CROSSWORD SOLUTION From Pg. 14

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A	S	S	G	O	T	O	F	F	T	R	A	C	K	
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SUDOKU SOLUTION From Pg. 14

7	1	4	9	6	8	5	3	2
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Say goodbye to 2023 and hello to 2024 with New Year's Eve festivities

By **NICOLE NOECHEL**

Greater Lansing will come alive Sunday evening (Dec. 31) with events for all ages and interests to help ring in the new year. This year seemed to fly by, but there's still time for one more night of debauchery or family-friendly fun to send 2023 off with a bang. I wasn't able to list every event here, so make sure to check out the Out on the Town section beginning on page 15 for more.

The Ten Pound Fiddle's biweekly Contra and Square Dance will move from its usual location at Central United Methodist Church to the Delta Township Community Center for a New Year's Eve celebration, featuring a potluck at 6:30 p.m., a quick dance lesson at 7:30 p.m. and the main event, a square dance party that will wrap up shortly after the clock strikes midnight, with a break for desserts around 9:45 p.m. Potluck attendees should bring a dish to share, along with a labeled serving utensil and a place setting.

The Meridian Mall's High Caliber Karting and Entertainment has a full day of free events planned for New Year's Eve. The fun begins with Disney trivia at 2 p.m., where children



Photo by Jake Mulka

Indie-rock band Joe Hertler & the Rainbow Seekers, which released its newest album, "Pursuit of Wonder," in August, will play Grewal Hall at 224 Sunday evening, with openers Of Good Nature and Earth Radio.

can enjoy mocktails named after Disney characters. Kids can dress up as their favorite character to earn a prize. At 5 p.m., karaoke begins, followed by a concert with cover band JP & the Energy at 9 p.m. and a balloon drop at midnight. High Caliber's other ac-

tivities will be available at the usual prices as well.

Lansing Brewing Co. is hosting a masquerade party beginning at 8 p.m., featuring live music, champagne Jell-O shots, a special beer release and a balloon drop at midnight. Guests

are encouraged to dress in their "finest masquerade-themed attire, with masks that reflect the mystery of the night." The event is free but is restricted to those 21 and older.

Okemos farm-to-table pop-up restaurant Red Haven will treat guests to a seven-course dinner based on the seven deadly sins — greed, wrath, sloth, envy, pride, lust and gluttony — beginning at 8 p.m. Dishes range from wagyu beef and caviar to champagne-braised escargot, plus desserts, of course. Tickets are \$145 and can be purchased by clicking the event link at etredhaven.com.

Finally, fresh off a new album, indie-rock band Joe Hertler & the Rainbow Seekers will play Grewal Hall at 224, with opening performances by North Carolina-based band Of Good Nature and Michigan-based progressive R&B group Earth Radio. If you haven't gotten to check out Lansing's newest music venue, it offers great sound, an alluring atmosphere and plenty of space to dance your heart out. The show begins at 8 p.m., and tickets are available at hall224.com, including a VIP package that offers a private bar and bathrooms and a champagne toast at midnight.

Theater

from page 16

amore Creek Church's Eastwood campus. Ixion Theatre Ensemble will launch its first production at the venue in March 2024. Stage One is poised to become the perfect location in Lansing for dinner-and-a-show date nights.

My not-so-guiliest pleasure of the season was Riverwalk Theatre's production of "The Rocky Horror Show." I love drag in all forms, falling hard the first time I saw Tim Curry's Dr. Frank-N-Furter in the film version. Interactive screenings of the film are fun, but seeing an interactive live performance is a whole new level of debauched entertainment. Riverwalk innovated by presenting two casts so that it could accommodate evening and midnight shows. This also gave many more local actors what I suspect is, among performers, the opportunity of a lifetime to be in this campiest-of-all-camp production. Special kudos go out to the Phantoms, who served as background characters, set changers, singers and dancers and performed in ev-

ery show. They worked their hot patooties off.

For all the joy celebrated in 2023, it was a bittersweet year in that we lost two key members of the Lansing theater community. Former City Pulse reviewer Tom Helma passed away in November. He was a passionate supporter of the arts, and our group of reviewers and Pulsars judges met regularly for many years to discuss and debate the good, the bad and the bold in terms of theater productions. Helma always appreciated productions that highlighted civil rights and racial equity, as well as those that reflected deeply on the human condition, as he did in his own social media musings.

The theater community was devastated to learn of local legend Ken Beachler's passing in June. Beachler was a driving force for the arts in Lansing, his imprint too big to summarize here, but take a moment to revisit his obituary to be inspired by how much of a positive impact one person can make on a community. As befits a legend, Beachler passed with a glass of wine while listening to classical music.

Events

from page 16

Mindfulness Meditation in the Thich Nhat Hanh tradition - All are welcome to join our weekly practice! 7-9 p.m. Van Hanh Temple, 3015 S. MLK Jr. Blvd., Lansing. [facebook.com/LansingAreaMindfulnessCommunity](https://www.facebook.com/LansingAreaMindfulnessCommunity).

Toy Designer - Day camp for ages 5-11. Explore the design process as you sketch, describe and create prototypes for toys of your invention. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Drive, Lansing. 517-485-8116. impression5.org.

Thursday, Jan. 4

"A Course in Miracles," Facilitated by Lisa Schmidt - 7 p.m. Zoom ID: 177 417 886. Passcode: 601744. unitylansing.org.

Game Night with Hoplite Games - 7 p.m. Lansing Shuffle, 325 Riverfront Drive, Lansing. 517-940-4619. lansingshuffle.com.

Karaoke Thursday - 8 p.m.-midnight. The Green Door Bar & Grill, 2005 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. 517-325-9897. greendoorlive.com.

Kitchen Chemistry - Day camp for ages 5-11. Explore how to turn simple kitchen supplies into tasty chemistry concoctions! 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Drive, Lansing. 517-485-8116. impression5.org.

Ladies Silver Blades Skating Club - Join other adult women for fun, exercise, friendship and skating practice. 9:30-11:30 a.m. East Lansing Ice Cube, 2810 Hannah Blvd., East Lansing. ladiessilverblades.org.

Learn to Play Mountain Dulcimer - View a brief demonstration and learn several songs. Ages 8+. Registration req. 6 p.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. 517-346-

8094. gladl.org.

Roller Derby Basic Skills Boot Camp Virtual Orientation - Meeting link available at fb.me/e/9B2IT1MXE. Ten-week program with twice-weekly practices begins Jan. 21. 7 p.m. lansingrollerderby.com.

Stitch 'n Bitch - Come hang out with some fellow stitching witches! 5-8 p.m. Keys to Manifestation, 809 Center St., Suite 7, Lansing. 517-974-5540. manifest-lansing.com.

Take Off Pounds Sensibly - Weight-loss support group. Weigh-in 5:30 p.m., meeting 6-7 p.m. Haslett Middle School, 1535 Franklin St., Haslett. 800-932-8677. [facebook.com/HaslettTops](https://www.facebook.com/HaslettTops).

Yoga with Maja McKeever, Slow Flow for Better Mobility - 6 p.m. Unity Spiritual Center of Lansing, 2395 Washington Road, Lansing. 269-762-3189. unitylansing.org.

Friday, Jan. 5

Euchre with the Kiwanis Club and Unity - Potluck at 6:30 p.m., Euchre at 7. Unity Spiritual Center of Lansing, 2395 Washington Road, Lansing. 269-762-3189. unitylansing.org.

"Fitness Over 50" Senior Exercise Group - The Meridian Township Parks and Recreation Stretch and Flex Exercise group exercises at the Meridian Mall Food Court. 9-10 a.m. 1982 W. Grand River Ave., Okemos. meridian50plus.com.

Marvelous Machines - Day camp for ages 5-11. Deconstruct and create simple machines to solve problems and complete challenges. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Drive, Lansing. 517-485-8116. impression5.org.

Z Collective plays Motown Hits - Z Collective is a band of experienced Lansing musicians who share a love for the Motown sound and R&B. 7:30 p.m. UrbanBeat, 1213 Turner St., Lansing. 517-331-8440. urbanbeatevents.com.

FOOD & DRINK

DINING OUT IN GREATER LANSING

Five standout dishes from 2023's new arrivals

By **NICOLE NOECHEL**

This year, Greater Lansing welcomed a host of new eateries, many of which quickly solidified themselves as staples in the hearts and bellies of area residents. City Pulse food reviewers were eager to try the new options and sampled plenty of dishes, but the following five stood out as the cream of the crop.

Laab wings
\$14
Kin Thai
325 Riverfront Drive, Lansing

The opening of Lansing Shuffle in January brought five new restaurant options to downtown Lansing, offering a range of cuisines, including Nepali, vegan Italian, elevated American, Southeast Asian and Caribbean barbecue. The food is so good that four different City Pulse reviewers had to praise it. Lizy Ferguson made it out to the food hall shortly after it opened and chowed down on the Laab Wings from Kin Thai. She wrote that the “perfectly golden-fried but not at all greasy” wings, made from umami-rich chopped meat salad, left her “entranced and craving more.”



Chicken Alfredo
\$16.50
4 Tha Soul Restaurant
5920 S. Cedar St., Lansing

Husband-and-wife team Dartagka and Domonika Tipton opened 4 Tha Soul Restaurant in February and have been serving up seriously scrumptious soul food to residents of the south side and beyond ever since. He Ate columnist Bryan Beverly gave his “best bite” nod to the Grilled Chicken Alfredo Pasta and Giant Stuffed Potato Alfredo with Grilled Chicken, and his counterpart, Gabrielle Lawrence, said the standard Chicken Alfredo was one of the best iterations she and her husband have ever had, describing it as “absolutely decadent, creamy, well seasoned and just spicy enough.”

Gorditas al pastor
\$14
Pablo's Eastside
2010 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing

Old Town stalwart Pablo's expanded to a second location on East Michigan Avenue in March, partially due to the fact that the first location was too small to fit a bar area and customers were looking for liquor. Beverly and Lawrence visited the new restaurant in May and were thrilled with the al pastor, or marinated pork with pineapple. Lawrence, who ordered the



Lizy Ferguson for City Pulse

The laab wings at Kin Thai, located within Lansing Shuffle, are perfectly golden-fried and served with lime wedges to enhance the umami-rich seasoning.

gorditas al pastor, said the meat was “insanely flavorful and tender, with just a hint of sweetness that paired perfectly with the fat, chewy tortilla.” Beverly noted that the flautas al pastor were “crunchy and delectable” and promised to make a return visit to order them again.

Nashville Hot Yardbird sandwich
\$15
Ellison Brewery and Event Space
1314 S. Washington Ave., Lansing

Ellison Brewery + Spirits opened its second location in early 2023, transforming the last-remaining REO Motor Car Co. building in town into a large dining and bar area with an event space on the second floor. The brewery offers appetizers, wings, piz-

zas and even breakfast items, which the She Ate/He Ate reviewers gave rave reviews, but they both agreed the hot chicken sandwich is a must-order. Lawrence enjoyed the hot honey drizzle on the sandwich, which was “perfectly spicy and sweet,” and said the chicken was “juicy and not overbreaded.” Beverly savored the house-made pickles and slaw but mentioned that the handheld could use just a bit more hot sauce.

Maple Boy (w/ biscuit upcharge)
\$9.50
Bangos
331 S. Washington Square, Lansing

Strange Matter Coffee reopened its downtown location in September after a nearly two-year renovation, now including a brick-and-mortar space for former food truck and breakfast haven Bangos. Ferguson sampled the Maple Boy sandwich on a biscuit, which was loaded with egg, sausage, cheddar cheese and maple syrup. She loved the biscuit, which was “golden brown and savory all on its own” and “soaked halfway through with real maple syrup.” She lauded the diversity of flavor profiles the sandwich provided and wrapped up the review by stating that Bangos had joined her list of top Lansing food spots due to its “thoughtfulness, care and just the right amount of flair.”

Elevate the classic bread and soup combo to new heights

By **ARI LEVAUX**

Sourdough stew resembles a classic, simple meal: a bowl of soup and a piece of bread. Except in this case, the bread acts like a bone and sneaks into the stock pot. When you try this rich, chunky, slightly tart stew, you'll be glad it did.

To make sourdough-bone broth, the bone and bread are treated equally, browning under the same broiler before being locked together in a vat of boiling water. The sourdough flavor

impregnates the broth and everything in it while filling the air with the yeasty aroma of a microbrewery.

The bread proves almost as durable as the bone, slowly breaking down but never leaving. Pieces of bread remain in the broth like the egg drops in a bowl of egg drop soup. We could blend it all into a puree, but then we'd lose the delicate features of this comforting bowl of bone-and-bread broth.

For the tart sourdough flavor to assert itself, the bread you use must be a top-shelf loaf or baguette, not some

off-the-rack clone from the back of the supermarket that was baked by some out-of-state company. Find the business that's baking the best sourdough close to home and use its bread. My favorite is a local multi-grain sourdough, which imparts a porridge-like quality to the soup.

Use red-meat bones, like beef or lamb, preferably with chunks of meat and gristle attached. Deer bones work great, too. Depending on your tastes, you'll probably want to skim the fat. I find butter to be the most appropriate and “comfy” fat in a bowl of bread soup.

See Flash, Page 19



Courtesy of Ari LeVaux

In sourdough stew, the bread acts like a bone and sneaks into the stock pot, impregnating the broth and everything in it with yeasty flavor and a slight tartness.

Flash

from page 18

Sourdough-bone stew

Use whatever cooking setup you would use to make bone broth. I use an electric pressure cooker, aka the Instant Pot, but you can make this in a slow cooker or on the stovetop. Your active time is about the same either way, but the slower methods take longer and burn more energy, while the Instant Pot is like going into hyperspace. Time speeds up inside the pressure chamber, allowing the food to travel great distances in short periods of time.

Makes four large servings

- 1 marrow bone, preferably an end piece with bits of meat and gristle
- 1 pound meat, the more gristle and connective tissue the better, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1 loaf of the best sourdough you can find, sliced
- 2 tablespoons cider vinegar
- 1 onion, cut in half
- 2 large carrots, cut in half

- 4 stalks celery, cut in half
- 1 large potato, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1 sprig fresh thyme or 1 teaspoon dried
- 1 cup wine (white wine with white sourdough, red with dark sourdough)

Brown the meat and bones under the broiler, turning often. For the last few minutes of browning, add the bread, either in whole slices or chunks. Turn the slices quickly so they don't burn.

When the meat, bones and bread have browned all around, transfer the meat and bones to your cooking vessel and add enough water to cover everything by 2 inches. Crumble the toasted bread into the water as finely as possible. Add the cider vinegar and cook for an hour in the pressure cooker; about four hours on the stove, covered and on medium heat; or about 8 hours in the slow cooker.

Add the carrot, celery, onion, potato, thyme and wine. Cook for another half-hour in the pressure cooker, two hours on the stove or four hours in the slow cooker. Remove the carrot, celery and onion. Save the carrot for later.

Depending on how fatty the bones are, at this point you might want to allow the soup to cool for a spell, perhaps overnight, so you can skim the fat. You could do this after the first or second cooking.

Finally, slowly cook the soup down until the broth is mostly gone, stirring often and occasionally scraping off the starchy accumulation that tends to build up on the bottom. When it's more chunky than brothy, it's basically ready. About 20 minutes before serving, remove the bone, slice the soft carrots and return them to the soup. Season with whatever else strikes your fancy. Sometimes I even add soy sauce and pho seasoning cubes. If the soup tastes too lean, I add butter.

Appetizers

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TOP 5

DINING GUIDE

THE BEST RESTAURANTS IN GREATER LANSING AS DECIDED BY CITY PULSE READERS

TOP 5 BREAKFAST SPOTS

Based on your votes in City Pulse's 2023 Top of the Town contest. Bon appétit!

- 1. Art's Pub**
Mellow hangout serving a wide menu of pub grub, including plenty of breakfast options
809 E. Kalamazoo St., Lansing
517-977-1033
artspublansing.com
7 a.m.-11 p.m. daily (kitchen closes at 9 p.m.)
- 2. Fidlers on the Grand Restaurant**
Laid-back restaurant with hearty comfort-food classics for breakfast and lunch
4805 N. Grand River Ave., Lansing
517-580-7202
- 3. Good Truckin' Diner**
Diner fare served in down-to-earth digs with patio picnic tables
1107 S. Washington Ave., Lansing
517-253-7961
facebook.com/goodtruckin
7 a.m.-3 p.m. daily
- 4. The People's Kitchen**
Creative comfort food and craft cocktails, plus weekend brunch
2722 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing
517-507-5730
eatpeoples.com
9 a.m.-9 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday
9 a.m.-10 p.m. Friday-Saturday
9 a.m.-3 p.m., 5-8 p.m. Sunday
- 5. Sophia's House of Pancakes**
Cheery diner offering a diverse breakfast menu, plus Greek fare, steaks and traditional American eats
1010 Charlevoix Drive, Grand Ledge
517-627-3222
sophiashouseofpancakesgl.com
7 a.m.-3 p.m. daily

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