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May 20 - 26, 2020

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COVID Kool-Aid

The Misinformation
Pandemic

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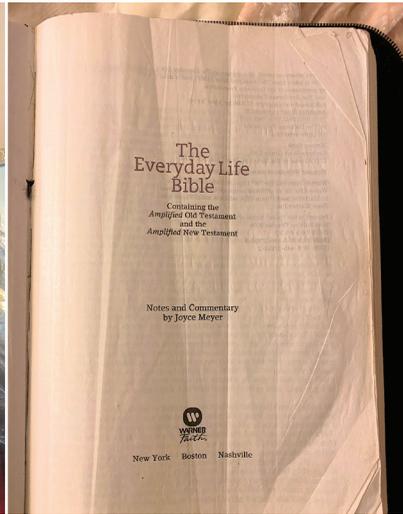
DATES:
Nominations Accepted:
 May 27-June 10
Voting: June 18 - July 1
Winners Announced: July 8

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Favorite Things

Edna Chichi Njoku Frenchwood and her Bible



Edna Chichi Njoku Frenchwood is a local singer, dancer, writer, actor and standup whose work has been featured in films such as "The Strangers Game" and printed in acclaimed books such as "Tear the Veil!" Vol. 1-1. In 2011, the entrepreneur also started her own film company, Chichimovies — and that's just some of what her assorted resume comprises. Of course, all of these accomplishments are connected to her favorite thing. Here's what she had to say:

My Favorite thing is my Bible. I got this one from my sister in 2007, during the Redeemed Christian Church of God's Annual convention in Dallas. I love to read it early in the morning and late at night. It's a personal investment that allows me to clear my head with knowledge gifted from above.

Growing up, we usually had bible reading every night. I grew up in Lagos, Nigeria, in the early '80s. My mother insisted on Bible readings. What I remember the most about those night prayers was the singing. We sang at least five songs in praise and worship. We never prayed until we worshiped.

I want to credit some of my singing skills, if not all, to that praise and worship time. I would usually sing soprano, alto and tenor. Looking back, I guess I'd actually attribute most of my successes to reading and studying the bible. It is quite clear the wisdom I've attained from studying has helped me enjoy all the talents that I love.

As for today, during this pandemic, I have been reading the book of Ecclesiastes. Chapter three reminds us that there is a time for everything. Which relates to this #stayhome time. It also helps us understand that a time will come when we can go out again and be more sociable with one another.

Through all of this, the bible gives me peace in the midst of chaos. It assures my spirit that we're all loved and there is a purpose for our existence — we just have to allow the spirit to lead and guide us through his word.

(This interview was edited and condensed by Rich Tupica. If you have a suggestion for Favorite Things, email rich@lansingcitypulse.com.)

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CityPULSE

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Who's Afraid of a Little Pandemic?

CONSERVATIVE PUNDITS HAVE BEEN FRAMING CORONAVIRUS IN TERMS OF NEEDLESS FEAR.

IT'S EXTREMELY IMPORTANT FOR PEOPLE OTHER THAN ME AND MY FAMILY TO GET BACK TO WORK AND NOT WORRY ABOUT PAINFUL, HIDEOUS DEATH BY SUFFOCATION AND ORGAN FAILURE.

THEN THERE ARE THE ANTI-MASK MACHO TYPES.

BAR
WE'VE RE-OPENED!

HAW HAW!
CORONAWUSS!

YES, IT SEEMS "FEAR" IS A NEW INSULT WORD FOR "TAKING EVIDENCE-BASED MEASURES TO AVOID KILLING YOURSELF AND OTHERS."

NOTHIN' QUITE LIKE SHOOTIN' PUMPKINS PACKED WITH EXPLOSIVES DURING A DROUGHT!

FREEDOM NOT FEAR!

IN FACT, YOU CAN USE IT TO JUSTIFY ANY STUPID BEHAVIOR.

THE ONLY THING WE HAVE TO FEAR ABOUT DRINKING TEQUILA BEHIND THE WHEEL IS FEAR ITSELF!

SCREEEE!

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Looking back at the Open Air Celebration

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Budget woes mean deep cuts for parks

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Barbecue in Williamston is still underway

PAGE 19



Illustration by Dennis Preston

Cover Art

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

EDITOR AND PUBLISHER • Berl Schwartz
publisher@lansingcitypulse.com • (517) 999-5061
ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR • Skyler Ashley
skyler@lansingcitypulse.com • (517) 999-5068
EVENTS EDITOR/OFFICE MANAGER • Suzi Smith
suzi@lansingcitypulse.com • (517) 999-6704
PRODUCTION • Abby Sumbler
production@lansingcitypulse.com
(517) 999-5066

STAFF WRITERS • Lawrence Cosentino
lawrence@lansingcitypulse.com • (517) 999-5065
Kyle Kaminski • kyle@lansingcitypulse.com
(517) 999-6710

SALES EXECUTIVE
Lee Purdy • lee@lansingcitypulse.com • (517) 999-5064
Mike Piasecki • mike@lansingcitypulse.com • (517) 999-6707

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

Delivery drivers: Garrett Clinard, Dave Fisher

Interns: Matthew Stine • stinem47@gmail.com

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THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

MORE CRISIS MANAGEMENT TIPS FROM DONALD TRUMP

1) STAY FOCUSED ON THE REAL PROBLEM!

WE MUST FIRST DO NO HARM-- TO MY RE-ELECTION CHANCES!

ALL THESE DEAD PEOPLE ARE REALLY MAKING ME LOOK BAD! NOT TO MENTION ALL THE UNEMPLOYED DEADBEATS!



2) NEVER ADMIT A MISTAKE!

THE DEATH TOLL MAY REACH 100,000 IN THE NEXT PERIOD OF TIME-- BUT IF NOT FOR MY TREMENDOUS LEADERSHIP, IT COULD HAVE BEEN ELEVENTY-MILLION! OR MORE!

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3) MAKE IT UP AS YOU GO!

I HEARD THAT RAT POISON KILLS THE VIRUS! AND IF THAT DOESN'T WORK, MAYBE PEOPLE SHOULD TRY CHUGGING DRANO! I BET THAT WOULD CLEAR IT RIGHT OUT!

I HAVE VERY GOOD GENETIC STUFF, YOU KNOW! MY UNCLE WAS A BRAIN GENIUS!



4) TELL PEOPLE WHATEVER YOU THINK THEY WANT TO HEAR!

WE'LL HAVE A VACCINE BY NEXT WEEK! BUT MAYBE WE WON'T EVEN NEED ONE! MANY PEOPLE ARE SAYING THE VIRUS DISAPPEARS WHEN EXPOSED TO THE MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND--LIKE A PATRIOTIC MIRACLE! THAT IS JUST WHAT I HEARD.



5) DECLARE THE PROBLEM SOLVED!

WE HAVE ALREADY DEFEATED THE VIRUS, EXCEPT FOR ALL THE LOSERS WHO KEEP GETTING SICK! IT'S TIME TO LIBERATE AMERICA FROM THE TYRANNY OF SOCIALISM DISTANCING OR WHATEVER IT'S CALLED-- AND EMBRACE THE POWER OF WISHFUL THINKING!

ER--DO YOU MEAN POSITIVE THINKING, SIR?



6) CHANGE THE SUBJECT.

OBAMAGATE!! IT'S THE WORST SCANDAL IN HISTORY! WHATEVER IT IS.

SOMEONE SHOULD FILL IN THE DETAILS ON THAT, I'M REALLY MORE OF A BIG-PICTURE GUY.

OBAMA-GAAATE!! I'LL GET RIGHT ON IT, SIR.



Tom Tomorrow © 2020

PULSE

NEWS & OPINION

Put a mask on it

OK folks, we've had it. Put on a damn mask or stay out of retail stores. It's simple. Assume you are an asymptomatic carrier of coronavirus. Every time you breathe, you are exhaling virus particles. The rest of us aren't interested in breathing the virus particles you are expelling. We're not asking you to wear a mask to protect yourself; we're asking you to do your part to protect everyone else. Don't be part of the problem. Put a mask on it. Although the lack of compliance is driven in large measure by the obstinance of those who think they are making a bold political statement by refusing to wear a mask, Governor Whitmer's decision to exempt mandatory face covering from the misdemeanor penalties for violating her stay-home executive orders certainly hasn't helped. Mixed messages from her office when the mask directive was launched led many to believe that wearing a mask is recommended but not required. We urge her to toughen up the order and make failure to wear a mask in enclosed public spaces a misdemeanor.

Safer shopping done right

We're happy to tout Van Atta's Greenhouse and Flower Shop for reopening the right way: The Haslett business requires 100% mask compliance or you are cordially invited to shop elsewhere. With effective social distancing protocols and thoughtfully designed, protective work spaces for their employees, it is about as safe a shopping experience as one could ask for under our present circumstances. Kudos to Van Atta's for setting the gold standard for all retail businesses operating during the pandemic.

Reopening Up North

We previously opined that Governor Whitmer should avoid reopening different parts of the state at different times. Given that the coronavirus has had considerably less impact on rural areas of northern Michigan, we cautiously support her plan to allow restaurants, bars and retail stores to partially reopen later this week in the Upper Peninsula and Traverse City areas, with the caveat that a new spike in coronavirus infections in these areas should bring a swift reinstatement of restrictions.

The CP Edit

Opinion

Permanent working from home

COVID is driving one of the most rapid technology revolutions in modern history, the near-instantaneous transition of millions of employees from working at the office to working from home via ZOOM and other virtual platforms. The change could come with a sharp edge as corporations find out they can save an enormous amount of money on rent, utilities and related office overhead by operating their businesses from the homes of their employees. We predict a backlash, though, as people yearn for human interaction and as the well-known downsides of remote work manifest themselves on a broad scale. It's much harder to create and sustain an effective, productive team in a virtual environment, and too many employees fail to set boundaries between their personal life and work life, giving new meaning to the term workaholic. For these reasons, we urge business owners to move forward cautiously in making work-from-home a permanent feature of their enterprises.

COVID liability

It's not surprising that some businesses are asking Congress for a legislative shield against potential legal liabilities they could face due to the COVID crisis. We oppose any measure that would broadly release employers from COVID-related liability because it preemptively eviscerates the right of injured employees to bring claims against their employer for failing to maintain a safe workplace. Businesses that take reasonable precautions to keep their employees safe should not be subject to civil liability if someone gets sick. Yet letting all companies off the hook with a blanket waiver relieves the bad actors from being held accountable for their negligence. Under federal law, employers have a fundamental legal duty to

provide a safe workplace for their employees. When they fail to do so, and the result is a wave of COVID-19 infections that could have been prevented, the doors should not be closed to employees pursuing legal claims. Adjudication of such claims should be guided by a close review of the actions taken by the employer to create and maintain a safe work environment.

Make Way for street cafès

Cities are inventing new ways to allow restaurants to operate safely by creating outdoor dining spaces on closed city streets. East Lansing leaders are moving forward in a serious way to adopt this strategy in their downtown. We urge Lansing officials to follow suit by closing portions of Washington Square, Turner Street in Old Town and South Washington in REO Town. Although we're sure the move will draw complaints from those who can't be bothered to walk a block or two to reach their final destination, we're more interested in supporting the safe reopening of downtown restaurants. Bring on the street cafès.

Ramping Down

Three cheers for LCC President Brent Knight, who on the eve of his retirement as one of the more memorable and impactful presidents in the college's history, decided to shelve a controversial plan to build a massive new parking ramp next to the former Oliver Towers building on Capitol Avenue. The COVID pandemic certainly hastened the demise of the ramp since LCC officials have no idea how many students will be showing up on campus this fall, presumably reducing the need for a massive expansion of parking facilities. Organized opposition from neighborhood leaders and a new agreement with the City of Lansing that provides additional parking options for the college sealed the deal and put the ramp project on ice. The decision also respects the intent of the city's master plan, which designates the targeted property as a "step down" zone that provides a transition from neighborhood scale structures to the dense development and steep verticals in the downtown core.

Send letters to the editor on this editorial or any other topic to letters@lansingcitypulse.com. Please limit them to 250 words.



What is safe enough?

Lansing man urges coworkers to mask up at Grand Ledge plant

Rick Luna doesn't feel safe at work during the coronavirus pandemic. And his maskless colleagues aren't making it any easier to find comfort.

Luna and his coworkers have plenty of space at ETM Enterprises — a 140,000 square-foot manufacturing plant in Grand Ledge. But keeping a six-foot distance can still be a challenge, and it doesn't help that company policies don't actually require staff to wear masks, he said.

"The other day, I came into work and walked from one half of the factory to the other to try to count how many people weren't wearing a mask," Luna said. "I stopped counting after 45."

Luna, 49, of Lansing, has worked at ETM for nine years. The manufacturing plant employs several dozen people from across Greater Lansing, most of whom spend their time crafting molded fiberglass for trucks, tractors, ambulances and other vehicles, Luna explained.

Under Gov. Gretchen Whitmer's executive orders, manufacturing is essential in Michigan. Companies like ETM are free to remain open but must enact precautions to keep their employees safe. Among them: Requiring masks for all staff that can't keep a six-foot distance.

Steve Mohnke, a manager at ETM, said his company has provided its workforce with face coverings for weeks. Whether they actually wear them, however, is up to them, he said. Because his employees can usually keep adequate distance, they're encouraged but not legally required to wear them, Mohnke said.

"We have way more than a six-foot separation between our employees," Mohnke explained. "We do require them for employees working closely together for lengthy periods of time."

Luna was among the few to wear a mask at ETM this week, he said. His wife — with a pacemaker and a heart condition — is vulnerable to the virus. And policies like those at ETM can pose an infection risk to not only his family, but the whole community, Luna argued.

"I don't think I can tell anyone what to do, but I think our customers and all the surrounding communities that our employees live in would like to know" conditions inside ETM, Luna added.

Even if ETM is technically following



Kyle Kaminski/City Pulse

the letter of the law, as Mohnke contended, Luna still has concerns about employees that refuse to take their own proactive precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Masks are designed to save lives. They just make sense, Luna argued.

Under the governor's orders, all businesses that remain open for in-person operations are required to provide face masks, among other protective equipment, to their employees. They're only required to be worn if staff can't always keep their space or routinely interact with others.

Luna has snapped several photos of his colleagues huddled closely together without masks. Mohnke said those types of gatherings don't happen often and aren't required as part of the job.

But while the building is large, close contact with coworkers is almost unavoidable, Luna said.

"My supervisor is just more concerned with getting parts done. He just kind of shrugs his shoulders," Luna said. "I've had conversations with our HR guy about it, and he seems reasonable, but then he comes into work without wearing a mask. I don't know what to do."

Whitmer's latest executive order tasks various state agencies already responsible for workplace health and safety standards with also monitoring compliance with face mask requirements. Businesses that fail to provide (and sometimes require) masks, under law, have also failed to provide a hazard-free workplace under the Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Act.

Violations for a "serious" OSHA violation could carry a civil penalty of up to \$7,000 for each violation, eventually

Rick Luna outside his workplace in Grand Ledge, where he worries about his safety because coworkers are not all wearing masks and keeping a six-foot distance.



Care Convenient Dentistry 604 Michigan Ave., East Lansing

Built in 1957, the flat-roofed brick structure at 604 Michigan Ave. in East Lansing, the home of Caring Convenient Dentistry, is a great example of mid-century modern design. At first glance, it is visually similar to the Merten Building, a mile down the road at 935 E. Grand River Ave. (featured as the Eye Candy on 2/19/2014). Both are one-story commercial buildings built of brick with large windows. Both feature flat roofs and wide overhangs. The Merten Building was designed by Lee and Kenneth Black in 1954. Whereas that one was influenced by Frank Lloyd Wright's Prairie style, the building at 604 Michigan Ave., built just three years later, seems to reflect some of the influence of Ludwig Mies Van der Rohe's Internationalist style. In 1957, the year that this building was constructed, Mies was in the midst of building Lafayette Park in Detroit, a complex of 186 residences near downtown. Mies' style was known for an emphasis on horizontality, and his work blended the outdoors with the inside. In fact, one of the notable aspects that sets this month's Eye Candy apart is the way the overhang allows the branches of the magnolia tree to spring forth from it.

— CARRIE SAMPSON

"Eye Candy of the Week" is our look at some of the nicer properties in Lansing. It rotates each with Eyesore of the Week. If you have a suggestion, please e-mail eye@lansingcitypulse.com or call Berl Schwartz at 999-5061.

leading to criminal charges for repeated and willful lawbreaking practices. It's unclear if mask-related violations qualify as "serious." The legal standard hasn't been tested.

For now, local authorities advise workers concerned about workplace safety to file a report with their local police department. Eaton County Prosecutor Doug LLOYD said complaints trigger an investigation, which usually begins with warnings and education before the pursuit of charges.

"Everybody reacts differently to this whole thing," Mohnke added. "Some people deal in fear and not in facts. We're just doing the best we can, operating in good faith and following the orders."

Ingham County Prosecutor Carol Siemon sent a cease-and-desist letter to a pair of Big John Steak & Onion restaurants in Lansing for failing to require masks. She also asked LLOYD to check in at a Big John location in Eaton County, where staff has since reportedly masked up.

"Obviously, we have these orders and until a judge says otherwise, it's our job to enforce them," Lloyd added. "We do use some discretion in that these are brand new laws. People need time to learn and adjust to them. I believe that's how police would handle this before filing any reports."

Luna hasn't filed any formal complaints with law enforcement. But with a dwindling cache of personal protective equipment back at home, he's not sure how much longer he plans to stay on the job if his coworkers and his management don't start taking the pandemic seriously, he said.

— KYLE KAMINSKI

It's raining

Lansing slashes reserves to keep the city afloat

Lansing's rainy-day reserve funds will hit an all-time low after the City Council voted to drain millions from the city's fund to balance its books and offset cash shortfalls tied to COVID-19.

The City Council passed the administration's budget plan with amendments Monday, the deadline for setting spending for the new fiscal year, which starts July 1. The new budget is \$136.5 million for operational expenses, compared to \$140.7 million this year.

The Council cut more than \$150,000 from a budget proposal already slashed by Mayor Andy Schor. But those reserves are still poised to drop by more than \$4.5 million to their lowest point on record — only about \$2 million.

A longstanding city policy aims to keep that figure closer to 12% of the city's annual operational expenses, which is almost \$16 million.

Before the virus arrived, Schor had already planned to dip into those financial reserves, edging the fund balance down to less than 5% of city expenses.

"We don't have a cushion anymore," Schor said last week. "If we have another pandemic, there will be much less of a cushion to cover these shortfalls. We still have plans to build that back up, but nobody was expecting the economy to completely shut down. This was unprecedented."

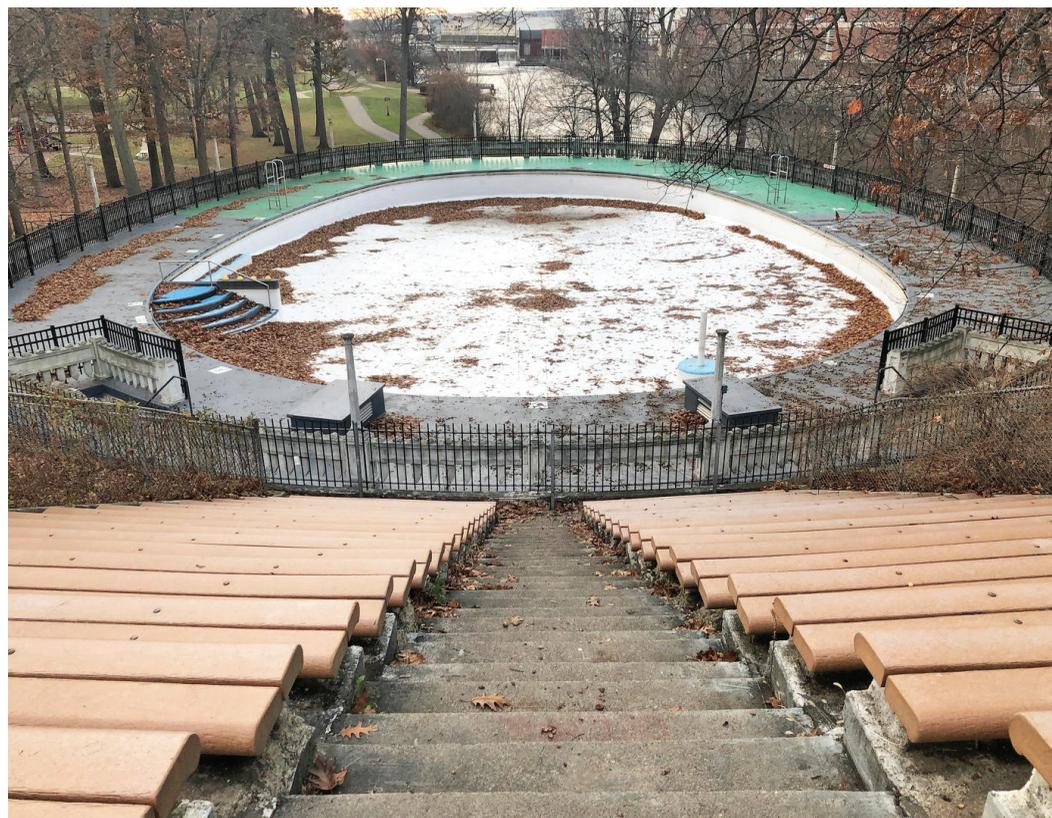
But unprecedented times call for unprecedented financial measures — especially during budget season. With income taxes declining by nearly \$8 million, among other financial consequences of the pandemic, city revenues are slated to decline by nearly \$12.5 million over the next year.

That's a projected decline of at least \$7.85 million in income tax receipts, \$3 million less in state revenue sharing and reductions in other breadwinning city services.

And those projections are "conservative," Schor said. Schor cut expenses by more than \$7 million. Council members found another \$166,000 to cut. But with nowhere else to turn, the city's reserve funds will still see a more than \$4 million blow.

Layoffs may be coming

During the pandemic, the city has tapped the brakes on all nonessential hiring, slashed budgets for temporary personnel and now plans to save about



Kyle Kaminski/City Pulse

Park programs will be cut and the city's two outdoor pools, including the one in Moores Park (left) will not open as Lansing struggles to stay solvent.

\$1.4 million by doubling the number of unfilled positions that will be left vacant across several departments compared to last year.

Council President Peter Spadafore said trimmed city positions do not include any employees at Lansing's Police, Fire and Public Service departments. He estimates it includes about 15 positions, most of which are administrative and clerical roles that have been vacant for years.

Another \$80,000 was slashed from staff training and travel across nearly all departments. The City Council also trimmed \$30,000 in temporary staff in the City Attorney's Office, among other departments.

Schor has also announced that groups of city employees have been offered voluntary furloughs. Volunteers retain medical benefits and collect unemployment. They'd return to work as early as July 31.

Eligible employees include those represented by the UAW and Teamsters 214, including many employees in the city's Public Services Department. Schor said union members, mayoral staff and all employees not represented by a labor union will be able to volunteer for a furlough.

It's unclear exactly how much cash the city will save, or whether any employees will sign up. Schor said mandatory layoffs and salary cuts are still on the table, should they become necessary. And while Schor hasn't cut

his own salary, he's still leaving open the possibility.

"If we ask employees to take pay cuts, I will certainly take them as well," Schor said. "It's all on the table. First we're trying to deal with reducing funding to different programs and finding efficiencies, but if there's ever a time where we have pay cuts, I'll absolutely do that as well."

Spadafore said the City Council is also prepared to vote on a resolution to cut its own paycheck.

Savings from cancellations, closures

With many recreational activities still considered nonessential in Michigan, Schor expects many parks and recreation programs to be on pause this summer, saving a few thousand dollars.

Canceling the city's Memorial Day and Fourth of July events and closing the city's two outdoor swimming pools, at Hunter and Moores parks, will save at least another \$55,000. And with the Lansing Entertainment and Public Facilities Authority closing the Lansing Center and canceling events, another \$200,000 was saved.

About \$200,000 was also saved by cutting funding to the Lansing Regional Sister Cities Commission, Common Ground and other subsidized agencies and events that won't be operating at full steam, if at all, during the pandemic as it persists into the summer.

BWL pitched in nearly \$2 million

Before the pandemic struck, the city still faced a revenue shortfall. It was partly tied to a return on equity from the Lansing Board of Water & Light that came in far lower than expected.

That annual payment has been a fixed percentage of BWL's annual revenues — most recently 6.1%, officials said. After negotiations, that payment is now a fixed, \$25 million, or about \$1.9 million more than last year's amount.

BWL Manager Dick Peffley said with more marijuana cultivation facilities coming online, revenues are expected to surge as companies eat up more electricity, leading to more cash for both BWL and the city, he explained. The new fixed rate is in effect for two years.

Red Cedar sale helps out

The sale of the Red Cedar Golf Course to developers for \$2.25 million will help cover this year's parks projects.

More than \$2.5 million will also be saved through various administrative and departmental changes, as well as newly renegotiated property and casualty insurance plans. At least \$462,000 can also be saved by funding a city contract with the Lansing Economic Area Partnership through dollars previously earmarked for eco-

How to bring back downtown East Lansing?

Picnic tables and blocks closed to traffic may be part of the answer

Since MSU sent its students home and its businesses went on lockdown, downtown East Lansing hasn't seen much excitement. But that could change if a plan in development comes to fruition.

Families decked out in face masks sitting at picnic tables strewn across a closed-down Albert Street. Couples enjoying the takeout first burger and beer they've had in months. The sound of human voices returning to the air downtown like the flowers coming back in springtime. City officials said that they are aiming to create an East Lansing that people can enjoy worry-free, and they want to do it soon.

A committee of the East Lansing Downtown Development Authority met on Zoom last week to discuss its idea for increased outdoor seating in downtown East Lansing. It was scheduled to meet with East Lansing City Council Tuesday night (May 19) to get feedback on an initial draft of the plan. Depending on advice from the Council, some local ordinances may have to change. (For updates on this developing story, visit www.lansingcitypulse.com.)

To stay safe in the era of COVID-19, the Public Policy and Market Development Committee hopes to add picnic tables spaced 12 feet apart and more space for curbside service, along with informational signage and hand-washing stations. That way, the public can enjoy local business while practicing safe social distancing.

"I would like for us to start having an idea of things that we can be doing to help our restaurant, bar and retail establishments as soon as the governor starts phasing things to open," said



Cole Tunningley/City Pulse

Nearly empty Albert Street in downtown East Lansing. Now, imagine picnic tables in the street so people can dine safely on food and beverages — including alcoholic ones — from downtown establishments. A committee is working on just such an idea.

Lynsey Little Clayton, an at-large committee member. If all goes according to plan, she also said, the downtown area will start to see some of these changes implemented by the end of May.

The committee's discussion mainly revolved around closing Albert Street so that pedestrians, bicyclists and customers can use the street freely for dining or just hanging out.

Committee members all agreed that Albert Street was the easiest place to start testing out the proposal. With its plethora of local businesses and large, open walkways, it seemed to them the ideal location for both having fun and safely social distancing.

Clayton brought up utilizing the Bailey Lot and Brookfield Plaza for outdoor seating in addition to Albert. She also mentioned the possibility of letting restaurants use nearby alleyways to offer curbside service.

Members agreed to contact the Ingham County Health Department and the Michigan Liquor License Commission to discuss the logistics of

the idea. They also said they need to figure out a budget.

The liquor issue in particular raised concerns. "I don't know if it's possible to just say that we're not going to enforce some things," said David Haywood, the planning and zoning administrator

Clayton said that discussions with the MLCC would emphasize that the plan is only short term and that the committee is willing to work on the details of the public drinking aspect of it.

Mike Krueger, member of the committee and general manager of Crunchy's bar, said that he imagines the proposed outdoor eating program would only last as long as Gov. Gretchen Whitmer's emergency order. "We don't know how long the restrictions on restaurants are going to last," he said.

Krueger noted that small businesses in downtown East Lansing need all the help they can get right now. "We should find a way to accommodate businesses during this timeframe," he said. "We should do whatever we can do to help them succeed in this messed-up envi-

ronment." By creating a safe environment on the street, Krueger said that he hopes the city can help get the local economy back on its feet.

Operations analyst Heather Pope said the Public Works Department is doing design work to figure out what this plan would look like in real life. She proposed putting helpful social distancing markings on the ground and maintaining a 12-foot lane for emergency vehicles.

Mayor Pro Tem Aaron Stephens said that downtown Cincinnati's recent changes were a big inspiration for the plans for downtown East Lansing.

Cincinnati.com reported that the city plans to close portions of 25 streets to allow restaurants an opportunity to increase the size of their outdoor seating areas after Gov. Mike DeWine announced that restaurants can open up their outdoor spaces.

The committee was undecided about where funding for this project should come from. Clayton suggested that the Parks and Recreation Department could fund a portion of the project. "As a committee, we are trying to make responsible decisions," she said. "But decisions that other people make are costing the DDA a lot of money, and I'm concerned."

Stephens, Pope and Krueger all recommended using DDA money to fund at least part of the project.

The committee decided to, at the very least, discuss its enthusiasm for the outdoor eating areas proposal with the DDA. "We plan to make sure the board is aware of our intentions," Krueger said,

Though the future of this proposal is unclear, Clayton acknowledged that coming up with a plan to help local businesses is a necessity.

"It's easier to tweak things if we have some plans in place already," she said. "We all realize that, at some point, these businesses are going to reopen."

— COLE TUNNINGLEY

Budget

from page 7

conomic development in the city.

City officials also found room for three new patrol officers funded through decreased overtime spending, Schor's proposal said. This year's budget affords the purchase of heart monitors for the emergency personnel, among other equipment.

The big borrow— if needed

And if all else fails, the city is prepared to borrow up to \$22 million to balance the budget, which it must do under state law.

Records show the city has collected only about \$24 million of \$37 million in anticipated income tax this year, which officials attributed to the extended tax filing deadline of July 31. It's unclear how much money will eventually arrive, but Schor is also prepared to borrow.

The City Council this month approved a tax anticipation note — a

safety-net strategy that allows the city to borrow up to \$21.8 million against future property taxes for the next three years — in order to cover short-term budget shortfalls.

The maneuver would allow the city to borrow and spend up to about 17% of the collected and estimated property taxes for the next three fiscal years.

City cash flow is expected to be at its lowest possible point over the next several weeks. Given the delayed revenue, various expenses could become due before the city has enough to cover them, officials explained.

Spadafore said the budget will likely require continued amendments as city officials continue to grapple with financial uncertainties tied to the coronavirus pandemic.

"I loathe to spend the fund balance, and it's important to avoid unnecessary borrowing, but the reality is that it's raining and we won't do it in budget cuts, we'll spend down our savings," he said last week. "That's why those reserves are there. This is different from any other budget."

— KYLE KAMINSKI

Whitmer is doing great in polls — but less great as time goes on

Here's some of my political memories from the runup to some significant elections. What do they have in common?

— 2002. A lot of Jennifer Granholm t-shirts. My apolitical mother was showing hers off at her Fourth of July party. Blew me away.

— 2008. The iconic Barack Obama "Hope" picture plastered, like, everywhere. The line leading into an Obama rally at a Michigan Avenue coffee shop was out the door and around the block.

— 2010. The April 15, 2009, Tea Party rally outside the Capitol. Thousands of people on the lawn, ringing loud cow bells. Is that a Gadsden flag someone is flying?

— 2016. Where did all of these Donald Trump lawn signs come from? Where are the Hillary Clinton signs?

— 2018. Gretchen Whitmer firing up the largest crowd I've ever seen on the Capitol lawn. It was at the January 2017 pink pussyhat rally.

The common denominator here is enthusiasm. The enthusiasm led to momentum. The momentum led to



KYLE MELINN

POLITICS

wins for Granholm in 2002, an Obama blow out in 2008. A huge Republican wave in 2010. A shocking Trump win in 2016 and a "pink wave" in 2018.

The book isn't closed on 2020, I'm sure, but here are three memories so far.

— Riding my bike down Michigan Avenue on April 15 and seeing drivers gleefully locked up in traffic from the state Capitol to Foster Avenue, a few blocks from the East Lansing city line. A cop at the Capitol told me it stretched all the way to Frandor.

— Looking down from the 3rd floor of the Capitol and watching about 150 people scream "LET US In" at the House chamber door.

— Standing in a cold rain last Thursday, watching a few hundred protesters yell at the Capitol about still being in the state lockdown. I ran home to dry off and grab some breakfast. An hour later, they were still there.

They call themselves patriots or pro-liberty. You can call them whatever you like. To me, it's dedication and its passion, two things that history shows a winning campaign needs to succeed in a purple state like Michigan.

These liberty patriots (to make up a

term) weren't all Donald Trump supporters. In fact, they were the most politically unsophisticated hodge-podge I've seen since the Tea Party. The spelling on their signs was off. One speaker thought Mike Bishop was still in office.

One speaker made a point last week (as thunder crackled over my head) that he wasn't a Republican or a Democrat, but "the enemy of my enemy is my friend."

In this case, Governor Whitmer's emergency orders that put a hold on life had gone on too long. Republicans want to stop her so he said he's with them.

If Justin Amash had been a serious Libertarian candidate from the get-go, maybe they would have rallied around him. He wasn't. The Trump United Bridge was parked on Allegan Street. There you go.

I understand the public's initial reaction to the pandemic was off the charts. Republicans and Democrats praised her swift, decisive action to shut down the state to control the spread of COVID-19.

Her slow re-engagement of the economy and the sniff of politics into the conversation has her numbers going in the other direction. Tuesday's Washington Post-Ipsos poll has Whitmer's coronavirus approval rating at an amazing 62%. It's a great number. Trump's is at 43%. Not good.

About a week ago, however, Whitmer's University of Minnesota-Ipsos approval number was at 72%. Also, her 62% was tied for 37th among the nation's 50 governors ... and only one had an approval rating below 50%. Every governor but the Georgia guy has a great number and by comparison, Whitmer's isn't all that special.

People are getting antsy. The New York Times reported last week that its heat map is showing that Michigan went from having 50% of its people staying at home during its peak compliance of the state-at-home order to 39% compliance last week, the largest drop off of any state in the country.

I understand the epidemiologists have Whitmer's ear on when and how to reopen the state. At some point, though, her political hat needs to come on, too. The mark of a good leader is getting people to follow.

What if more people ignore the governor's orders? Forget about vice president. How relevant will she be in helping Joe Biden win Michigan?

And could more Michiganders believe Whitmer only reopened the state because Trump put pressure on her?

I can think of a quite a few people who visited the Capitol recently who will be making that case.

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

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS EAST LANSING PLANNING COMMISSION

Notice is hereby given of the following public hearings to be held by the East Lansing Planning Commission on **Wednesday, June 10, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.**, in the 54-B District Court, Courtroom 2, 101 Linden Street, East Lansing.

1. A public hearing will be held to consider Ordinance 1483, an ordinance to rezone the property at 3400 West Road from OIP, Office Industrial Park District, to B-5, Community Retail Sales Business District, and Conditional M-1, Manufacturing District, and 3401 Coolidge Road from OIP, Office Industrial Park District, to B-5, Community Retail Sales Business District.
2. A public hearing will be held to consider a Site Plan application from 3400 West Road, LLC for the property at 3400 West Road to adjust the site boundaries reducing the overall area of the site. The subject property is in the OIP, Office Industrial Park District.

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

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

Note: This hearing is currently scheduled to occur as a regular public hearing at the meeting. If, at the time of this hearing meetings are still not permitted under an Executive Order of the Governor and an Executive Order permitting meetings electronically allows for an electronic meeting, this hearing will occur electronically and a notice of the means of participation in that hearing will be published in compliance with the Open Meetings Act and any relevant Executive Orders.

Jennifer Shuster
City Clerk

CP#20-120

CITY OF LANSING NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

SLU-3-2020, 610 N. Capitol Avenue Special Land Use Permit – Parking Deck

The Lansing City Council will hold a public hearing on Monday, June 8, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. at Lansing City Hall, 124 W. Michigan Avenue, Lansing, Michigan to consider SLU-3-2020. This is a request by Lansing Community College for a special land use permit to allow the construction of a new parking deck on the property at 610 N. Capitol Avenue. The new parking deck will replace the Gannon parking deck located on the N. Grand Avenue side of the Lansing Community College main campus, if a Special Land Use permit is approved by the Lansing City Council.

With Executive Order 2020-4, Governor Whitmer declared a statewide State of Emergency due to the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). To mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and to provide essential protections to vulnerable Michiganders and this State's health care system and other critical infrastructure, it is crucial that all Michiganders take steps to limit in-person contact, particularly in the context of large groups. Therefore, the public hearing will be conducted via audio/video conference.

The public hearing will be electronically in accordance with the Open Meetings Act in an effort to protect the health and safety of the public. Michigan Executive Order provides temporary authorization of remote participation in public meetings and hearings. Members of the public wishing to participate in the meeting may do so by logging into or calling into the meetings using the website <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88215573195> (Note: this option requires downloading Zoom software. If you have not already installed the software, this may take a few minutes) or by calling 646-876-9923 and entering Meeting ID: 882 1557 3195.

Persons with disabilities who need an accommodation to fully participate in these meetings should contact the City Council Office at 517-483-4177 (TDD (517) 483-4479) 24 hour notice may be needed for certain accommodations. An attempt will be made to grant all reasonable accommodation requests.

For more information, please call 517-483-4177. If you are interested in this matter, please attend the public hearing or send a representative. Written comments will be accepted between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. on City business days if received before 5 p.m., on the day of the Public Hearing at the City Clerk's Office, Ninth Floor, City Hall, 124 West Michigan Ave., Lansing, MI 48933 or email city.clerk@lansingmi.gov.

Chris Swope, Lansing City Clerk
www.lansingmi.gov/Clerk
www.facebook.com/LansingClerkSwope

CP#20-119

Chamber of Commerce pushes back against drainage project

Lansing taxpayers could see tax bills for \$35 million drain project this winter

The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce is asking Ingham County Drain Commissioner Pat Lindemann to tap the brakes on a \$34.8 million drain project on the east side of Lansing.

Plans quietly approved by the Lansing City Council this week call for tax-paying property owners in Lansing to shoulder about two-thirds of the cost of the reconstruction of the Montgomery Drain. Lansing's portion is estimated to cost up to \$41 million, including interest, over 30 years.

Chamber officials asked Lindemann — who has sole control over the cost and who must pay it — to temporarily halt or reduce the scope of his plans. More assessments to residents and businesses during a pandemic could be devastating, they said.

“It wasn't that we're against the project, it's just the uncertainty of what this type of financial impact would have on our local municipalities,” said chamber Vice President Steve Japinga. “It's really about hitting the pause button and making sure our communities are prepared for it.”

To fund the project, the city — as approved by the City Council — is expected to levy an additional 0.26 mills on property taxes for every city property beginning this winter. That equates to an estimated annual increase of about \$13 for a home with a taxable value of \$50,000.

However, owners of the 180 residential and commercial properties in the immediate area of the project would pay much more: \$377 annually for residences and \$11,831 for commercial, in addition to the city tax. Those bills, pending City Council approval, could

also arrive by winter.

Japinga said with the financial toll caused by the coronavirus, this year might not be the best time to hit local residents and businesses with additional costs they might not be able to afford.

“Anyway, we can lessen the blow, by reducing or pausing this project, is a benefit,” he said.

Despite the pandemic-generated economic crisis, Lindemann has voiced plans to press forward with his decades-long plans to reconstruct the drain, which runs from Frandor to the Red Cedar River, in order to cut water pollution. City officials don't have the authority to stop the project.

Under law, Lindemann decides the costs and how they'll be divided among local municipalities. Lansing just eats the bill. The mayor and the City Council only decide how it's eventually paid.

“I don't get to make that decision. The drain commissioner decides the project, and we have to pay for it,” Schor explained last week. “I would be supportive of waiting, but the drain commissioner says that now is the time.”

Lindemann said he's still exploring plans to piecemeal the upfront costs over the next several years, but city officials are preparing plans on how to cover the project entirely with new taxes.

And with \$7 million already slashed out of the budget, and reserve funds at their lowest point in history, the mayor can't reach much deeper into the city's pockets to cover the costs, he said. His only viable alternative is to bill property owners directly for the next 30 years.

“It's either going to be spread out among all the citizens of Lansing and everyone has to pay for it, or we're going to assess that specific area,” Schor said. “We're splitting it. Nobody wants to pay more. That would also be quite a bit of money if we just billed it to taxpayers in that area.”

Most bids for Lindemann's project haven't been received. The costs, he has repeatedly emphasized, are subject to change by the end of July. But Schor and the City Council had to figure out how to finance the project as part of the annual budget, which was passed Monday.

The largest single contributor will be the Red Cedar development itself, which is slated to pitch in at least \$2.75 million in local assessment costs. The rest of the project will be covered through additional property tax funding from every taxpaying property owner.

The City Council doesn't need to set the tax rolls until later this summer as costs are finalized.

Schor said his administration has encouraged Lindemann to pause his plans, especially considering the city would need to assess its residents during a public health crisis to pay for the early stages of the construction. Lindemann, however, has nearly total autonomy on the project.

“There are several options we can look at. We can hold up a little bit, but we also have some construction that needs to take place this summer. We're looking at ways to minimize the impact,” Lindemann said.

Lindemann also emphasized that interest rates on bonds that would cover the costs of the project are particularly low, which could reduce costs if he strikes quickly to borrow. Some construction, he noted, is also already ongoing and must be completed before the winter.

“We're going to do the project. That part is not going away, but I'm not at all opposed to borrowing this in pieces to lower those costs for the time being,” Lindemann added. “I have full sympathy for these municipalities, we just have to step forward and figure out our next move.”

While Lansing is expected to cover 64% of the project, the rest will be split up among Lansing Township, with 14%; the Michigan Department of Transportation, with 10%; East Lansing, with 7%; and the Ingham County Road Department, with 5%. Other municipalities, like East Lansing,

plan to spread the new costs across every property owner in the city.

The Montgomery Drain Project has been in the works since Lindemann first noticed the crumbling drainage infrastructure back in the '90s. The storm-water retrofit, which Lansing petitioned to have done in 2014, is designed to reduce up to 75,000 lbs. of pollution from the Red Cedar River annually by constructing a series of natural features within the drain system.

Nearly three miles of service paths will also serve as hiking and biking paths for the public.

Schor and Lansing City Council members recognized the need for the project, but questioned whether now is the best time to hit Lansing's already struggling residents with an assessment. Without wiggle room in the general fund, there aren't many options at their disposal, they said.

“We've got homeowners that are looking at an increased assessment, and maybe this is the one that is too far over the edge,” said Council President Peter Spadafore. “Some compassion and some consideration needs to be given to what these residents can afford to pay right now.”

City Councilwoman Patricia Spitzley said she would prefer to delay the project — and its assessments — until residents begin to financially recover from the ongoing pandemic. But it's clear the burden to taxpayers can't be offset by the general fund, she said. The cash isn't there.

“I think the 50/50 split, whenever that comes, might be the best way to go,” Spitzley added. “It's always hard to convince people that don't live near the project to pay for the project. I live on the south side. Justifying to the south side why they need to pay for these projects is always tough.”

Added Councilman Brandon Betz: “I personally believe these sorts of taxes should fall primarily on the piece of the community that is benefitting from the tax. The question is how we do this while also causing the least harm to the people who are the most vulnerable during this crisis.”

— KYLE KAMINSKI

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING FOR A RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING A POLICE COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE. EAST LANSING CITY COUNCIL

Pursuant to the Executive Order 2020-33 and 2020-75 from the Governor of the State of Michigan, notice is hereby given that a Special Meeting of the East Lansing City Council shall be held at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 26, 2020 to consider:

- A resolution establishing a Police Community Relations Review Committee

To speak during the public comment or public hearing portion of the meeting (audio only), please call (312) 626-6799; Enter meeting ID for May 19: 960 6874 1781. The toll-free number is 888-788-0099

If additional accommodations are required, please contact Nicole Bartell at nbartell@cityofeastlansing.com. Individuals may also email comments to City Council at council@cityofeastlansing.com prior to the meeting.

Jennifer Shuster, City Clerk
City of East Lansing
Ingham and Clinton Counties

CP#20-121

PUBLIC NOTICE Of Vehicle Auction Auction 5/29/20 @ 12pm

2010 Ford Focus- VIN 1FAHP3FN4AW193034	2005 Ford F150 1FTPX145X5FB70294
2012 Ford Fiesta- VIN 3FADP4BJXCM161425	1977 GS Sailboat MCZ382040789
1989 Ford F150- VIN 1FTDF15Y8KLB16293	2010 Hyundai Genesis KMHHT6KD6AU013533
2005 Chevy Trailblazer-VIN 1GNDS13SX52356909	2012 Kia Optima 5XXGR4A66CC001509

P.J.'s Towing, 1425 Rensen St., Lansing, MI 48910
NO PHONE CALLS

CP#20-125

The other pandemic

Misinformation thrives in the shadow of COVID-19



Left and below: 'Judgement Day' protesters at the Capitol last week demonstrated their fringe beliefs in signs.

By **LAWRENCE COSENTINO**

At Thursday's "Judgement Day" protest at the State Capitol, Rene Knight, 48, stood behind a cardboard set of prison bars reading "SET US FREE" in bright red.

Despite the chill and the rain, passersby stopped to chat about their struggles with unemployment and decry Gov. Gretchen Whitmer's stay-at-home orders.

Knight believes Dr. Anthony Fauci played a shadowy role in the the origin of the novel coronavirus. "I do believe Dr. Fauci is behind it. I believe he is part of the Deep State. I believe Hillary and the Clinton Foundation is behind it," Knight said.

Behold the results of a vast experiment only a truly malevolent scientist would devise, let alone do.

Shut half the country's population up in their homes, where they will spend their time staring at phones and computer screens for two months of anxious days and insomniac nights, surrounded by a dire yet invisible threat to their lives, whose existence can only be verified by information coming from those same screens.

To keep the petri dish in ferment, add a daily drip of mixed messages from the nation's leaders as to what people should or shouldn't do, what is really happening and how it happened.

For best results, do this experiment in a country with a well-established "paranoid style" of political culture, in which everything from the JFK

assassination and the fluoridation of water to the Moon landing and 9-11 are thrown into an angry stew of counter-narratives.

At Thursday's protest, Steve Smith, 27, proudly displayed a sign that read, "Vaccinate Deez Nuts!" as he stood under his umbrella.

"We aren't a cattle farm," Smith said. "You can't just string us up and inject us with whatever you want."

Smith suspects the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation of playing a role in the origins of the novel coronavirus, especially in a time of "global unrest."

"You have protesters in France and China, other countries. Also, all this pedophilia. Epstein, Anthony Weiner, that one girl from Smallville in the sex cult," he said. "The pedophilia is all coming out."

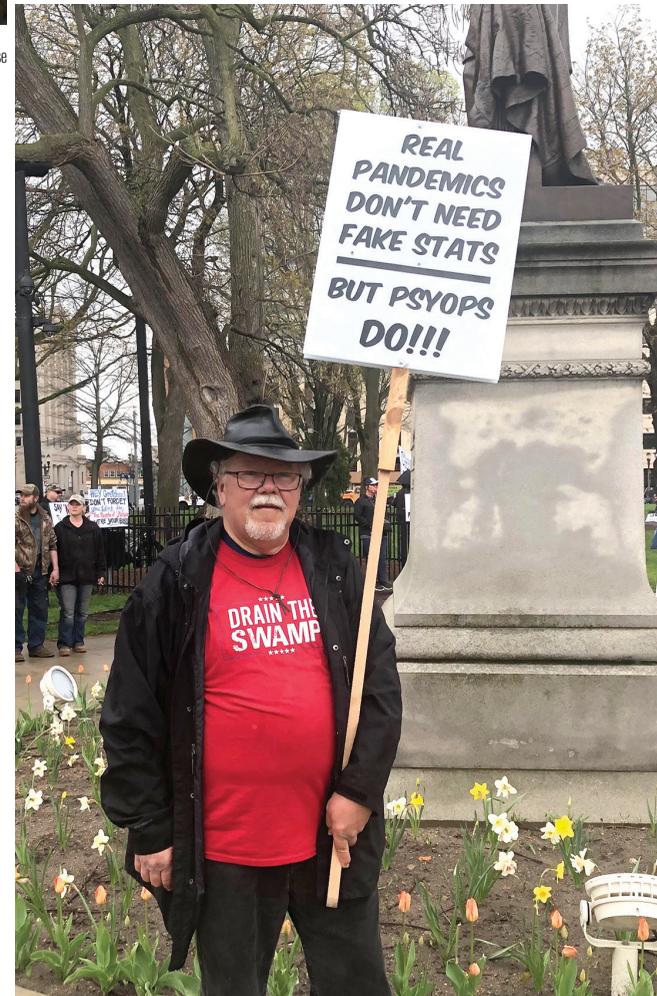
Bubonic rash

When communications specialists at MSU and other research institutions talk about COVID-19, they bend over backwards to remind you that they are not doctors or epidemiologists.

But who can resist the uncanny parallels between the COVID-19 outbreak and the "infodemic" that is tearing across the world in its wake?

Shawn Turner, a national security communications analyst for CNN and an MSU professor, didn't even try.

Skylar Ashley/City Pulse



Cole Turningley/City Pulse

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Pandemic

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“We literally watch misinformation spread like a virus across social media platforms,” Turner said.

Last week, Turner, a former director of intelligence for U.S. National Security, tracked the breathtakingly swift outbreak of “Plandemic,” a slick internet video crammed with discredited science and conspiracy theories about COVID-19.

In less than a day, tens of millions of viewers contracted a bubonic rash of plausibly packaged lies — that the COVID-19 virus was manufactured deliberately, with the involvement of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, to profit from an eventual vaccine; that the anti-malarial drug hydroxychloroquine can effectively treat COVID-19; and that masks “activate” the virus, among many other false claims.

The video was more than an idle internet diversion for many viewers.

“People watch the video and share the video, but it goes farther than that,” Turner said. “When we start to see calls



Turner

to the CDC, hospitals and other health care centers, asking whether it’s safe to wear a mask, that is the last step before people change their behavior. And if they stop wearing masks, based on what they see in that video, then that has implications for all of us.”

Misinformation is swirling into the public discourse on an unprecedented scale, filling a vacuum created by the lack of information about a new virus and the mixed messages coming from the nation’s leaders. For many people, “Plandemic” was more consistent, appealing and authoritative looking than the daily coronavirus briefings at the White House.

“Where there is a vacuum of information, people can grab on to whatever they can get,” media expert Shaheen Kanthawala said

Kanthawala, who got her Ph.D. from MSU, is an assistant professor of media at the University of Alabama. The coronavirus pandemic caught her in a new phase of research on the interplay between technology and health.

“We are putting all our opinions and thoughts on the internet and everyone else is consuming them,” Kanthawala said. “There’s no actual verification because it takes time for science to get to a point where we can have that con-



Kanthawala

firmed information. Until we get to that stage, everyone’s just kind of filling in the blanks themselves.”

Turner chooses his words carefully when it comes to politics, but as a retired Marine Corps officer, he has noticed that message discipline is not the Trump administration’s forte.

“The inconsistency of messaging coming out of the federal government has, in fact, slowed or impeded our ability to slow the spread of the virus,” Turner said. (He was referring to the COVID-19 virus this time.)

In times of crisis and uncertainty, Turner said, consistent and reliable information from scientific authorities like the Centers for Disease Control should command public attention “across the board.”

“Our senior government officials, our scientists and our elected leaders need to make sure that there is an objective truth with regard to what people should and should not do and make sure that that objective truth permeates around the country,” Turner said. “Unfortunately, what we’ve seen in this case is that at the very top, where reliable and useful information should be generated, we’ve seen rifts and disagreements and different motivations that have caused that information to be inconsistent.”

A week after “Plandemic” went viral, President Donald Trump casually mentioned that he was taking hydroxychloro-

quine, despite a warning last month by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration that the drug has “not been shown to be safe and effective” and may cause serious heart problems in COVID-19 patients.

A link to a lie

Dustin Carnahan is up to his neck in misinformation and fake news. He teaches a spring seminar on the subject at MSU and researches the subject year round.

“What’s concerning with this ‘Plandemic’ video is that it’s not just the fringes who are engaging with it and sharing it, it’s people we know,” Carnahan said.

It often starts with a casual post — a link to a lie with a noncommittal remark like “Hmm.” Before long, the person who made the post falls into the disinformation rabbit hole, pulling friends and family along.

“Often, you see it shared innocently: ‘Look at this! This is a pretty interesting take,’” Carnahan said. “The problem is that even if they’re not trying to, they’re advancing this narrative, and that’s terrifying. It’s a pattern we’ve seen before, but not with this kind of speed and not in this kind of context.”

Carnahan cited an April study by



Carnahan

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A sampler of COVID-19 myths

- **Drinking or injecting bleach or other disinfectants protects you from COVID-19**

“Drinking methanol, ethanol or bleach DOES NOT protect you against COVID-19 and can be extremely dangerous” — World Health Organization

- **There is a vaccine for COVID-19 now**

“False. There is no vaccine.” — Johns Hopkins Medicine

- **The COVID-19 virus was deliberately created or released by people**

“False. The new coronavirus most likely originated from a virus that is common in an animal such as a pig, a bat or bird underwent changes and passed to humans.” — Johns Hopkins Medicine

- **Ibuprofen products worsen the effects of COVID-19**

“At present there is no evidence of severe adverse events, acute health care utilization, long-term survival, or quality of life in patients with COVID-19, as a result of the use of NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs).” — World Health Organization

- **Microwaving mail, money or protective masks kills the COVID-19 virus**

Prolonged heat, not radiation, can kill the virus, but it takes so long for paper and cloth to get hot enough in the microwave that you’re more likely to burn through your money, literally. (Summary of information from multiple sources)

- **Adding peppers to food kills the COVID-19 virus**

“Hot peppers in your food, though very tasty, cannot prevent or cure COVID-19” — World Health Organization

- **Houseflies and mosquitoes spread COVID-19**

“There is no evidence to suggest that the COVID-19 virus is transmitted through houseflies or mosquitoes” — World Health Organization

- **Sunshine and hot weather protects you from COVID-19**

“You can catch COVID-19, no matter how sunny or hot the weather is” — World Health Organization

- **If you can hold your breath for 10 seconds or more without coughing, you don’t have COVID-19**

“Being able to hold your breath for 10 seconds or more without coughing or feeling discomfort DOES NOT mean you are free from COVID-19 or any other lung disease.” — World Health Organization

- **Hand dryers kill COVID-19**

“No.” — World Health Organization

- **5G mobile networks spread COVID-19**

“Viruses cannot travel on radio waves/mobile networks. COVID-19 is spreading in many countries that do not have 5G mobile networks.” — World Health Organization

- **Rinsing your nose with saline prevents infection from the new coronavirus**

“No.” — World Health Organization

- **Garlic kills COVID-19**

“Garlic is a healthy food that may have some antimicrobial properties, but there is no evidence from the current outbreak that eating garlic has protected people from the new coronavirus” — World Health Organization

- **COVID-19 only affects older people**

“People of all ages can be infected by the new coronavirus” — World Health Organization

- **Adults should drink human breast milk because it has antibodies that fight COVID-19**

“There is no proof that breast milk can cure COVID or give you antibodies” — New York pediatrician Dyan Hes, quoted on CBS News

“Not only will it not work, but you’re taking it away from the babies and perverts that really need it” — “Last Week Tonight” commentator John Oliver

- **African-Americans have a natural immunity to COVID-19**

“Diseases can make anyone sick regardless of their race or ethnicity” — U.S. Centers for Disease Control
“Absolute nonsense” — MSU Professor and CNN national security consultant Shawn Turner

Pandemic

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Democracy Now and UCLA finding that about one third of Americans think a vaccine that is being withheld from the public.

“Despite what I think is unprecedented efforts on the part of social media to do something about misinformation, there are things that can still fall through the cracks and generate huge amounts of attention in a brief time,” Carnahan said. “That’s what’s most disconcerting to me at the moment.”

He tells his students that blatant lies in the public arena are nothing new. He takes his class all the way back to the election of 1800, when allies of Thomas Jefferson claimed that his opponent, John Adams, was a closet British loyalist who would take the nation to war with France and even that he was a hermaphrodite.

But Carnahan said the current “infodemic” is different, even from more recent conspiracy theories asserting that 9-11 was an “inside job” or the moon landing was faked.

“You hear stuff like that and you roll your eyes and move on with your life,” Carnahan said. “But here, we’re talking about a situation in which misinformation can cost lives.”

Michael Stern, chairman of MSU’s Media and Information Department, agreed that while misinformation has always been around, there is something different about this moment.



Stern

“The fatigue of the stay at home order makes us all question what is safe, what is real,” Stern said. “Once an idea takes off, it spreads fast. Trust levels are low all around because we’ve never been in a situation like this.”

U.S. Rep. Elissa Slotkin framed the issue as a matter of national security in a virtual town hall.

“The disinformation machine is in overdrive with COVID-19,” Slotkin said. “In Mid-Michigan, we’ve seen some pretty concerted campaigns of distrust and division around the issue of the coronavirus.”

Misinformation on life-and-death health matters is harmful enough, but Slotkin said the infodemic also threatens “the peace between us.” She cited confrontations between angry store

customers and clerks enforcing mask rules, including two assaults on clerks and the fatal shooting of a security guard at a Flint Family Dollar.

Such incidents, Slotkin said, “represent the kind of mistrust and anger and even violence that malevolent actors are trying to spread.”

“A lot of people in my district watched this ‘Plandemic’ video,” Slotkin said.

Renée DiResta, a researcher at Stanford who investigates the spread of disinformation on the internet, told Slotkin at the town hall that “disinformation has never been only about fake news.”

“In fact, the most convincing disinformation is often grounded in emotion, whether it comes from foreign actors, elected officials politicizing the crisis, or Internet hucksters selling snake oil cures.”

Digital literacy and ‘deep fakes’

Nina Jankowicz, a “disinformation fellow” at the Wilson Center in Washington, told Slotkin at the town hall that the United States is “losing” the COVID-19 information war. She called for more government investment in digital literacy education and “common sense social media regulation.”

A key countermeasure to the spread of misinformation, in Michael Stern’s view, is “digital literacy.”

“Information literacy, digital literacy, is a commodity that’s strongly related to education and wealth,” Stern said. “How to use the web, how to seek out information, and who you’re connected to through Facebook or Instagram.”

Stern said that teaching people how to distinguish credible websites and “not see a meme and immediately assume that’s true” can help combat even the most attractively packaged misinformation. A recent study by MSU’s Quello Center found a strong connection between digital literacy and students’ SAT scores.

But the product is only going to get slicker. Carnahan predicted that in five to 10 years, the world will enter the era of “deep fakes,” when technology will



Slotkin

allow video fakers to program a speaker’s facial expressions, blinking patterns and speech inflections smoothly enough to fool most viewers.

“For now, the problem isn’t so much deep fakes as cheap fakes,” he said. He cited a slowed-down video of House Speaker Nancy Pelosi seeming to slur her speech that had right-wind commentators speculating that she was ill or drunk.

“You’re already seeing videos of Joe Biden exaggerating his pauses, slurring his speech and those types of things,” Carnahan said. “Those kinds of things could have a big impact now, even though deep fakes are five or 10 years away.”

Whether that will sharpen public skepticism in a constructive or destructive way is impossible to foretell. Stern thinks that teaching more people digital literacy can train them to home in on reliable information, even with the advent of “deep fakes,” but Carnahan isn’t so sure.

“The scary part is you’re going to have this skepticism toward anything and everything,” Carnahan said. “You have to wonder how we can operate in that kind of society.”

Baked-in trust

Will the current pandemic mark a historic turning point in the way information is consumed? Stern, a self-described “optimistic pessimist,” thinks it might be.

“I believe that when we look back on this, we’ll have a different way of viewing information, and, hopefully, a very different way of understanding the importance of science in our daily lives,” he said. “We’re going to start teaching our students about what is information in ways we never had to, or never thought of, before. I don’t think we’re going down a drain we can’t come back from.”

Stern said the change might only be evident in retrospect, perhaps years after the pandemic is over, but he’s already seeing signs of it.

“The ‘Plandemic’ video has been taken down,” he said. “I’ve seen a change in the last month or two of a more rapid response to misinformation.”

But the purveyors of misinformation are opening new fronts. At her town hall, Slotkin expressed mounting concern over a new wrinkle: text messages “that have reached Americans” giving false narratives about the origin of the coronavirus.

DiResta, the Stanford expert, told Slotkin she first saw the tactic when Ukrainian soldiers got text messages from Russian sources urging them to

abandon their positions because their country “doesn’t care about them.”

The tactic is hard to fight, DiResta said, because text messages have a “baked-in level of trust.” Last week, messages sowing panic over impending national lockdowns were shared and forwarded on private platforms like WhatsApp, “which are becoming more and more popular in the United States.”

“I’m sure you all had friends and family who were forwarding those messages to each other, and there’s no real way to verify the source, except from the back end, and most people don’t have that access,” DiResta said.

To curb the spread of such texts, and other forms of misinformation, DiResta borrowed a term from the public health field.

“The best thing for you to do if you see something that’s fishy, or makes you mad, is to practice informational distancing,” she said. “Put the device down, calm down a little bit, and then do some basic fact checking.”

Carnahan had similar advice.

“If something evokes a very strong emotional reaction, that’s the first red flag,” he said. “You should pause and say, ‘OK, this was meant to make me angry or anxious.’ Then the onus is on you to verify.”

The next step will be more difficult for a lot of people.

Carnahan tells his students that gentle yet firm engagement with friends and family members who spread disinformation is crucial.

“I have people very close to me who are very active pushing conspiracies,” Carnahan said. “You don’t have to call them an idiot. ‘I just want to help you out and let you know it’s not true.’ That can still have a positive effect even if you don’t change their mind.”

He, too, couldn’t resist borrowing another epidemiological term. “It may lead them to slow down and share things less readily — flatten the curve.”

Jankowicz gave the same advice at Slotkin’s town hall. She cited research showing that calling people out as liars or correcting them on a public platform only tends to harden their original opinion. Private “person to person” communication, buttered by respect for the other person’s engagement in the issue, is more likely to be effective.

“We’re not going to fact check our way out of the crisis of trust and truth we face,” Jankowicz said. “We have to bring humanity back into the equation.”

(Cole Tunningley contributed reporting to this story.)



DiResta



Jankowicz

ARTS & CULTURE

ART • BOOKS • FILM • MUSIC

Mercurial memories: MSU's mini-Woodstock, 50 years later

By **BILL CASTANIER**

Fifty years ago Sunday, May 24, 1970, more than 35,000 music fans crowded into a muddy field at Michigan State University's Old College Field. The spectacle was a mini-Woodstock — complete with rain, drugs and rock 'n' roll music.

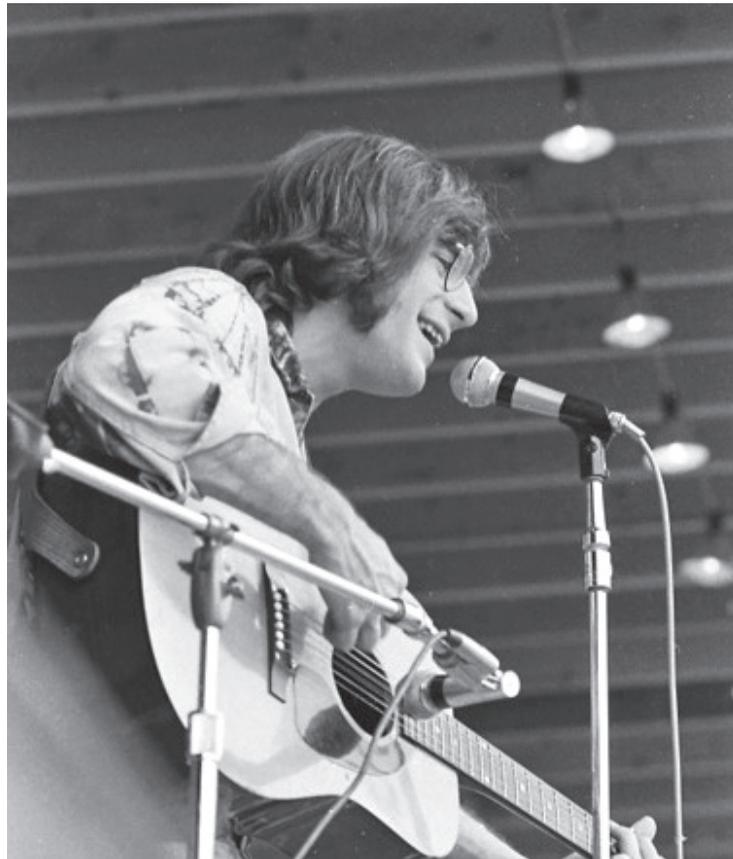
The Open Air Celebration, held just three weeks after the Kent State killings, provided a catharsis: a break from weeks of demonstrating and generally thinking about what the future would bring. Classes were ostensibly over, despite no formal action by the administration. Graduating senior men had the draft hanging over their heads. “Woodstock,” the documentary film based on the now legendary concert, was playing at a local theater.

Attendees paid — or at least most paid — \$5 to hear sets by Jefferson Airplane, John Sebastian, Rotary Connection, Mountain, Small Faces and Chicago. Problems with the sound equipment left a spotty experience, but it didn't seem to bother most of the beer-fueled attendees, who also indulged in wine, marijuana and acid.

The concert was the largest ever on campus. ASMSU, the student governing body, fronted the dough for the event. Entertainers were paid \$60,000, with other expenses, including portable toilets, security and stage and sound equipment rental, bringing the total cost to \$115,000.

Starting at daybreak, students began lining up carrying supplies, blankets and rain gear. Even the sodden ground and intermittent chilly rain throughout the day did not deter them. For many, the brownies and other drugs helped take the edge off the weather conditions. By the time Rotary Connection took over the stage at about 12:30 p.m., it didn't matter if it was windy, chilly and rainy.

Ray Walsh, now owner of Curious and Archives bookstores in East Lansing, covered the concert for the Michigan State News. Walsh, 20 at the time, reported the opening group, Rotary Connection, “were constantly plagued by amplifier problems.”



Courtesy Bob Every

John Sebastian performing onstage at the 1970 MSU Open Air Celebration.

John Sebastian, formerly of The Lovin' Spoonful, played songs “similar to his Woodstock performance,” Walsh wrote.

Walsh wrote that the set by Grace Slick and Jefferson Airplane “was probably the best amplified and loudest of any of the groups in the concert.” The group had the audience on their feet, playing its popular hits: “White Rabbit,” “Somebody to Love,” and “Saturday Afternoon.”

It was mostly downhill after that. The sound system made Chicago barely audible; however, shortly after Hare Krishna were shooed off the stage, the remaining audience got a rare listen to the hard-rocking Small Faces, featuring Rod Stewart.

Dick Rosemont, one of the founders of the Flat, Black & Circular record store in East Lansing, now living in New Mexico, remembers Small Faces being late and the crowd thinning with

many missing the dynamic Stewart.

He used a Kodak Instamatic to shoot four different color photographs showing a relaxed crowd that day.

Bob Every, director of the Greater Lansing Sports Hall of Fame and former coach of the Lansing Community College baseball team, was fortunate enough to wrangle his way closer to the stage and got some outstanding black and white photographs of John Sebastian and Grace Slick.

Every, then 20, said one of the things he remembers the most about the Open Air Concert was the rain.

“We got an awful amount of rain before the concert was to start. There was even doubt it would happen. Then, just like that, the rain stopped and the sun came out,” he said.

He recalls everyone having a good time with the smell of “hemp” in the air.

“As I look back on it all, it was one of those necessities every young person



Courtesy Dick Rosemont

The crowd at the 1970 MSU Open Air Celebration.

needs while growing up. It's a memory that's still somewhat vivid in your brain after so many years,” he said. “I guess it was my Woodstock, but in my own backyard.”

He said he visits the baseball, softball and soccer complex several times a year for events and coaching.

“Not once when I step through those gates, do I not think of that concert. Grace Slick was my chick, and the music of Jefferson Airplane still resonates in me today,” Every said.

Rosemont said even though it was raining most of the day, it was a fun event regardless. With darkness blurring the horizon, the crowd began thinning, going back to their dorms and apartments to party and listen to records. After all, there was no school tomorrow.

The Open Air Concert would remain the largest concert at MSU until 1994, when The Rolling Stones brought its show to Spartan Stadium.

Memories are mercurial. I was 22 when I attended the Open Air Celebration. When I started researching the concert, I recalled a whole different lineup order with Chicago kicking the concert off. But like Every, I remember that day every time I make the circle around the Sparty statue. My best friend and companion that day, Alice, has been listening to the angels for more than three decades. Be good, my friend.

Lansing rapper MikeyyAustin returns with ambitious new LP

By SKYLER ASHLEY

While the coronavirus has been calamitous for live music, it hasn't yet proven to be a death knell for Lansing musicians. In the face of cancellations, postponements and many other proverbial monkey wrenches, soulful hip-hop artist Michael Austin, who performs under the name MikeyyAustin, is returning with his most ambitious recording project yet, a full-length LP dubbed "Greenhouse."

Follow

MikeyyAustin

on Facebook at facebook.com/MikeyyAustin "Greenhouse" releases May 22 Available across streaming platforms such as Spotify and Apple Music

who performs under the name MikeyyAustin, is returning with his most ambitious recording project yet, a full-length LP dubbed

"Greenhouse."

"Greenhouse," which features his largest array of producers to date, is a major leap forward for Austin. While his previous singles and mixtapes have received their fair share of critical praise, "Greenhouse" will likely garner an even stronger reaction from hip-hop heads. It's a much more cohesive vision, both lyrically and sonically, that explores Austin's soul and jazz rap influences further than anything he's released before.

"The Midwest has a sound of its own. I think about Detroit's Jay Dilla and who he was able to work with, whether it was Common or Erykah Badu. All of these artists that come from this soulful era of hip-hop, like Questlove and The Roots, are my biggest influences. There was a time when that was all I was listening to," Austin said.

There's only three tracks that feature guest rappers — Jahshua Smith, Jay Pitts and Miles Young — the vast majority of the album relies on Austin's own strengths as a rapper and lyricist.

"After sitting on 'The Seed Song' for months, something kept telling me that I could hear Jahshua Smith on that one. I knew he would tell a story of ancestry and culture, and relate that to the idea of seeds and growth and development as an individual. I knew he would paint that picture," Austin said.

Austin also explained that his contemporaries Jay Pitts and Miles Young share his bouncy cadence and lyrical style, and were therefore natural fits for guest verses on "Greenhouse."

Austin got his start in music by playing a multitude of instruments

for different events and concerts at the Lansing Church of God and Christ during his early teenage years. He and his older brother even had their own rap group, Dem Austin Boys.

"As far as instruments go, the keys were my first real love. I was self-taught; learning a bunch of stuff and taking lessons. That's when the songwriting started," Austin explained.

Another formative experience for Austin was his time spent at the Epicenter of Worship, where he would hang out with other musically-inclined teenagers. As Austin grew out of spending time with local church youth groups, he continued to hone his skills in his own makeshift bedroom studio. His efforts eventually snowballed into his first mixtape as MikeyyAustin, 2016's "T I N T E D."

His debut tape received a warm reception. Its listening party, which Austin booked with All of the Above Hip Hop Academy at The Cadillac Club, drew an audience of nearly 100 guests.

"Guys like Ozay Moore and Sareem Poems were there. They really took me under their wing. That's where my musical journey as MikeyyAustin started," he said.

Another major element of MikeyyAustin's style that makes him stand out is his live backing band, The Soucial Club, which comprises drummer Deon Gladney II, bassist Tyler Jensen and keyboardist Austin Tipton.

"I do a lot of shows with DJs, but I'm most at home with the band. Our chemistry is unparalleled. The energy of being onstage with a band will always be unmatched," he said.

Austin said his original inspiration when he first started rapping was to create music that could sit alongside his favorite rappers and artists. With "Greenhouse," he believes he's finally accomplished that goal.

"The music I was trying to make back then, is the music I'm finally making now," Austin said. "I knew 'Midnight Stereo' wasn't a full representation of where I was as an artist. I made up in my mind that I wanted to do a full project that displays my growth and improvement as an artist."



Photo by Sidd Finch

"Greenhouse," by MikeyyAustin drops May 22.

STATE OF MICHIGAN
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COUNTY OF INGHAM
NOTICE OF HEARING
File # 19-1194-GA, 19-1195-CA

In the matter of Carolyn Condell.

TAKE NOTICE: A hearing will be held on 6/8/2020 at 1:30 p.m. at 313 W. Kalamazoo, Lansing MI 48933 before Judge Dunning for the following purpose: Contested Hearing for Guardian and Conservator.

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Walls with ties to redlining still stand across Michigan

By **BILL CASTANIER**

Walls have been built to separate us; to repel invading armies; to keep people in; to keep people out; to protect privacy; buffer expressway noise; and, sadly, to protect property values. In some modern cities, walls have been built to separate the races and the economically disadvantaged.

In Greater Lansing, a trip east on Lake Lansing Road provides a reminder of why certain walls were built. Driving east, you encounter the decorative brick grey wall near Whitehills School. It continues for about a mile and serves as a separation between Towar Gardens, a historically economically depressed

area, and Whitehills neighborhood to the south, which was developed in the late-'40s by George and Albert White as an upscale housing complex with faux southern colonial mini-mansions.

The Towar Gardens wall was built to provide a demarcation between the two communities and to block what Albert thought was a depressing vista across the street from Whitehills. Towar Gardens in the '40s and '50s was a mixed-use area with small farms, horse barns and raspberry fields spread among less magisterial housing options. Nearby, families boarded their horses at the small farms, and you could buy burros for \$50 each.

Albert White saw it a little differently. "Towar Gardens represents a slum area — everything I stand against, White wrote in a 1974 article. "I don't mean to belittle the people living there. There are some fine people in Towar Gardens."

In an effort to clean up the area, White went as far as to propose paying for the painting of homes in Towar Gardens that fronted Lake Lansing Road.

Detroit area author Gerald Van Dusen has written about another controversial wall in his new book, "Detroit's Birwood Wall." It was built in 1941 to separate white and black neighborhoods along Eight Mile Road in Detroit. The wall, which still stands today and serves as a reminder of the racial divide that confronted Detroit in the '40s and continues to this day. The book was selected by the Library of Michigan as a Notable Book for 2020.

The 189-page book delves deeply into



Van Dusen



DETROIT'S BIRWOOD WALL

Hatred & Healing in the West Eight Mile Community

GERALD VAN DUSEN | Foreword by Reverend Jim Wallis, PhD



the complex racial history of Detroit. It focuses primarily on the impact of the Great Migration era, when southern blacks moved in great numbers to northern cities to work in the auto and manufacturing plants.

According to Van Dusen, this migration placed great stress on the city's evolving housing market.

That stress might be best symbolized by the Birwood Wall. Van Dusen recalled discovering it while visiting a friend from their private high school who lived near the wall. In preparation for writing the book, he walked the half-mile stretch of wall and its surrounding neighborhood numerous times. The concrete wall is 1 foot thick and stands 5 feet tall.

The Birwood Wall has an interesting and troubling history. In the '30s, the federal Home Owners' Loan Corp., or HOLC, was established to provide emergency loans and began rating neighborhoods in 200 cities across the United States to measure loan risk. Risk was represented by colors ranging

from green for "best" to red for "hazardous." This system later became known as redlining and it became code for neighborhoods populated by minority and marginalized populations.

The wall resulted when a developer proposed building a new housing complex on the east side of Eight Mile Road. HOLC refused to underwrite the new development until the developer offered to build a wall separating the two communities, which still stands today in its entirety, some of it covered with decorative murals.

Van Dusen writes: "As a symbol, the wall embodies the many daily barriers that African Americans have had to overcome in order to survive."

Van Dusen explores other areas that created a separation in the city of Detroit including transportation, education and access to health care. Some of the problems that still exist today.

In researching his book, Van Dusen said he used a technique he learned in graduate school to look "left and right" and rely on serendipity. He did this while researching the Birwood Wall area.

On these trips, Van Dusen said he stopped and talked to neighbors. He recalled talking with a man out front of his home trimming bushes. He soon found himself inside talking with the man's septuagenarian mother, who had gone to school with Betty Sanders, the eventual wife of Malcolm X.

"I interviewed 60-70 residents and chose to include in the book authentic stories which were representative. I became a familiar fixture in the neighborhood and, as I would stop to chit-chat, I would gain their trust. I got invited to backyard barbeques and neighborhood parties like the annual Eight Mile Forever celebration," Van Dusen said.

"I met more people who didn't know about the history of the wall and who were either shocked, amused or outraged. The memories of that era are pretty visceral and I was moved by the continuing distrust of the police," he added.

This fall, he will continue with his research into the volatile racial relations in Detroit during the World War II era and publish a book on the bloody 1943 Sojourner Truth Housing Project riot. He also has begun research on STRESS, Stop the Robberies, Enjoy Safe Streets, a brutal police unit formed in response to crime in Detroit during the '70s.

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Jonesin' Crossword

By Matt Jones

"Off the Rack"—if you're playing Scrabble, they work.

By Matt Jones

Across

- 1 Garbage-carrying boat
- 5 Singer Dylan
- 8 Catcher Yogi
- 13 Two-door car
- 14 "Who Do You Think You ___?" (genealogy-based series)
- 15 "Late Night with Seth Meyers" writer Ruffin
- 16 Gets a bluegrass instrumentalist (off the J)?
- 19 Joined up on Zoom, e.g.
- 20 "What ___ I thinking?"
- 21 Spill the ___ (gossip)

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64						65				66				

- 22 3-D exam
- 23 "Ratatouille" rat and namesakes
- 25 Mrs. Garrett on "The Facts of Life"
- 29 Relics for mom's sister (off the Q)?
- 32 "Tour" grp.
- 33 "Addams Family" cousin
- 34 Debonair
- 35 They're pointed out on an airplane
- 37 Taj ___
- 39 Detached
- 41 Shar-pei shout
- 42 ___ Soundsystem
- 44 Warning at an all-bird nude beach (off the X)?
- 49 Winter transport
- 50 "Mansfield Park" novelist
- 51 "I Ching" concept
- 52 Be choosy
- 53 Contented sound
- 54 Ending with Wisconsin
- 55 Wine cocktail for someone who puts lines on the road (off the Z)?
- 61 By themselves
- 62 Playing card with a letter
- 63 Step in a game of hangman
- 64 Jacques Cousteau's realm
- 65 ___ boom bah
- 66 It might get you an answer
- 6 Heavenly sphere
- 7 Down at the final buzzer
- 8 ___ California (Mexican state)
- 9 Guitar-heavy alt-rock genre
- 10 MLB stat
- 11 In medias ___
- 12 Gallery stuff
- 13 "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon" character?
- 17 "Anything you want!"
- 18 Hornet home
- 24 Back muscle, for short
- 25 Bumper sticker symbol depicted in yellow on a blue background
- 26 One with a home in both Nome and Rome, perhaps
- 27 Neighbor of Ore.
- 28 Enzyme suffix
- 30 Got ready to take off
- 31 "black-" or "mixed-" follower, on TV
- 36 Bride's reply
- 37 Compilations on cassettes
- 38 Become visible
- 39 Happy moments
- 40 Zero, on the pitch
- 41 "Mm-hmm"
- 43 Subject at the beginning of Lizzo's "Truth Hurts"
- 45 Scruff of the neck
- 46 Hindu precepts
- 47 In the heavens
- 48 Attendees
- 52 "___ for takeout" (sign in some restaurants)
- 55 ___ Luis (Brazilian seaport)
- 56 "No Scrubs" R&B trio
- 57 Fish eggs
- 58 Get ___ groove
- 59 Geol. or chem.
- 60 You, to Caesar (found in GRATUITY)

Down

- 1 Recover from a pub crawl, say
- 2 Like innovative technology
- 3 Greek wedding exclamation
- 4 Chinese sculptor and activist Ai ___
- 5 Some band members

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Answers Page 22

SUDOKU

		6		4			2	5
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Intermediate

TO PLAY

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

Answers on page 22

Free Will Astrology

By Rob Brezсны

May 20-26, 2020

ARIES (March 21–April 19): "Excellence does not require perfection," wrote Aries author Henry James. Now I'm conveying this brilliant counsel to you—just in time for the season when it will make good sense to strive for shining excellence without getting bogged down in a debilitating quest for perfection. Have fun re-committing yourself to doing the best you can, Aries, even as you refuse to be tempted by the unprofitable lure of absolute purity and juvenile forms of idealism.

TAURUS (April 20–May 20): To generate an ounce of pure cocaine, you must collect 52 pounds of raw coca leaf and work hard to transform it. But please don't do that. Fate won't be on your side if you do. However, I will suggest that you consider undertaking a metaphorically comparable process—by gathering a sizable amount of raw material or basic stuff that will be necessary to produce the small treasure or precious resource that you require.

GEMINI (May 21–June 20): "The very least you can do in your life is to figure out what you hope for," writes author Barbara Kingsolver. "And the most you can do is live inside that hope. Not admire it from a distance but live right in it, under its roof." According to my analysis of the astrological omens, that is exactly the work you should be doing right now, Gemini. Everything good that can and should happen for you in the coming months depends on you defining what you hope for, and then doing whatever's necessary to live inside that hope.

CANCER (June 21–July 22): The periodic arrivals of "natural disruption" in our everyday routines has a divine purpose, writes Yoruba priest Awó Falokun Fatunmbi. It is "to shake consciousness loose from complacency and rigid thinking." To be vital, he says, our perception of truth must be constantly evolving, and never stagnant. "Truth is a way of looking at self and World," Fatunmbi declares. "It is a state of being rather than an act of knowing." Many Westerners find this hard to understand because they regard truth as a "fixed set of rules or dogma," or as a body of "objective facts." But here's the good news: Right now, you Cancerians are especially receptive to Fatunmbi's alternative understanding of truth—and likely to thrive by adopting it.

LEO (July 23–Aug. 22): Novelist and war correspondent Martha Gellhorn departed this life in 1998, but she articulated a message that's important for you to hear right now. She wrote, "People often say, with pride, 'I'm not interested in politics.' They might as well say, 'I'm not interested in my standard of living, my health, my job, my rights, my freedoms, my future or any future.'" Gellhorn added, "If we mean to keep control over our world and lives, we must be interested in politics." In my opinion, her advice is always applicable to all of us, but it's especially crucial for you to meditate on right now. You'll be wise to upgrade your interest and involvement in the big cultural and political developments that are impacting your personal destiny.

VIRGO (Aug. 23–Sept. 22): According to author and teacher Marianne Williamson, "Ego says, 'Once everything falls into place, I'll feel peace.' Spirit says, 'Find your peace, and then everything will fall into place.'" I think the coming weeks will be a favorable time for you to take Williamson's advice seriously, Virgo. How? By giving control of your life to Spirit as you find your peace. In saying this, I'm not implying that Ego is bad or wrong. In fact, I think Ego is a crucial asset for you, and I'm hoping that in recent months you have been lifting your Ego to a higher, finer state of confidence and competence than ever before. But right now I think you should authorize Spirit to run the show for a while. If you do, it will bless you with good surprises.

LIBRA (Sept. 23–Oct. 22): "Snatching the eternal out of the desperately fleeting is the great magic trick of human existence." Playwright Tennessee Williams said that, and now I'm conveying his insight to you—just in time for you to dramatically embody

it. According to my astrological analysis, you now have more power than usual to accomplish this magic trick: to create something permanent in the midst of the transitory; to make an indelible mark on a process that has previously been characterized by restless permutations; to initiate a bold move that you will forever remember and be remembered for.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23–Nov. 21): In the course of his 73 years on the planet, Scorpio author Paul Valéry (1871–1945) wrote more than 20 books. But between the ages of 25 and 45, he passed through a phase he called the "great silence." During that time, he quit writing and published nothing. Afterwards, he returned to his life's work and was nominated 12 times for a Nobel Prize. Although your own version of a great silence is less extreme than his, I'm happy to announce that you will emerge from it sooner than you imagine.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22–Dec. 21): I'm sad that my two favorite 19th-century poets were unfamiliar with each other's poetry. Walt Whitman was 11 years older than Emily Dickinson, but didn't know her work. Dickinson had heard of Whitman, but didn't read his stuff. Their styles were indeed very different: hers intimate, elliptical, psychologically acute; his expansive, gregarious, earthy. But they were alike in being the most innovative American poets of their time, and equally transgressive in their disregard for standard poetic forms. If there were such a thing as time travel, I'd send one of you Sagittarians back to set up a meeting between them. Acts of innovative blending and creative unifying will be your specialties in the coming weeks.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22–Jan. 19): The fictional character Sherlock Holmes (born January 6, and thus a Capricorn) is a brilliant logician and acute observer who has astonishing crime-solving skills. On the other hand, according to his friend Dr. Watson, he "knows next to nothing" about "contemporary literature, philosophy, and politics." So he's not a well-rounded person. He's smart in some ways, dumb in others. Most of us fit that description. We are both brilliant and ignorant; talented and inept; interesting and boring. According to my analysis of the astrological omens, the coming weeks will be an excellent time for you to hone and cultivate the less mature aspects of your own nature. I bet you'll reap rich rewards by doing so.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20–Feb. 18): "People become like what they love," observed theologian St. Catherine of Siena. That'll be an interesting truth for you to meditate on in the coming weeks. I suspect you will attract experiences that are clear reflections of the kind of love you have cultivated and expressed for quite some time. You'll be blessed in ways similar to the ways you have blessed. You'll be challenged to face questions about love that you have not been dealing with. And here's a promise for the future: You'll have the opportunity to refine and deepen your approach to love so as to transform yourself into more of the person you'd like to become.

PISCES (Feb. 19–March 20): "Humanity is a mystery," wrote author Fyodor Dostoevsky. "The mystery needs to be unraveled, and if you spend your whole life unraveling it, you haven't wasted your time. I am studying that mystery because I want to be a complete human being." I love this tender perspective on the preciousness of the Great Riddle we're all immersed in. It's especially useful and apropos for you to adopt right now, Pisces, because you are undergoing an unusually deep and intense communion with the mystery. As you marinate, you shouldn't measure your success and good fortune by how much new understanding you have attained, but rather by how much reverence and gratitude you feel and how stirring your questions are.

TURN IT DOWN!

LOCALS PICK LOCALS VOL. 8

BY RICH TUPICA

THE EIGHTH EDITION OF LANSING-MADE NUGGETS, PICKED BY FELLOW MID-MICHIGAN MUSIC MAKERS AND MAVENS.

This week's installment of "Locals Pick Locals" spans the pop universe without leaving Ingham County. Read on and listen along wherever you stream music.

Steve Butts (Local music buff, walking music encyclopedia)

Pick: El Smasho "Red Devil" — 1990s

The lack of contiguity in the Lansing music scene (because it's part of a college town) makes the many segments of our city's impressive backstory appear to be distinct and unrelated.

For example, the creation of the "Touch and Go" zine and label happened here. Local bands like The Meatmen, The Fix, The Crucifucks and The Dogs were all hatched here. The Clash played at Dooley's and Black Flag played at Ruskin's Reef. It's unbelievable. But it doesn't stop there.

As part of a larger secret history of rock 'n' roll in mid-Michigan, enter El Smasho. Part of "ELHC" (East Lansing Hardcore) sect, there was a brilliant self-awareness to El Smasho's aesthetic. From the eye-catching poster artwork and band merchandise created by singer Tom Deja to "The Smashes" security team wearing sunglasses and black hats while toting baseball bats to "protect the band" — their punk menace always had an undercurrent of humor beneath it.

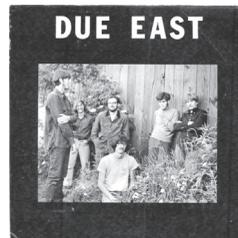
With "Red Devil" (released on its 2019 digital reissue), this should have been the song that brought El Smasho fame and fortune. Melodic, anthemic and wry, there is no reason this could not have been their ticket beyond local infamy.



John Olson aka Inzane Johnny (Musician, Wolf Eyes)

Pick: Due East "You Won't Catch Me Dreamin'" — 1971

Due East's "You Won't Catch Me Dreamin'" and its B-side, "Born To Reason," is early-'70s laidback folk rock with an uber-homemade feel. It's tough to pinpoint the origins here, but the appearance of Bob Baldori behind the controls ties this slow burner to the capital area. One of two Ozone Records releases, this 7-inch is the only one with a picture sleeve — giving it an almost LP feel. These amazing songs are the middle ground between Plain Brown Wrapper-style "complex rock" and the first stoned waves of Lansing's folk scene. Almost has a Glee Club tries out CSNY on a St. Johns field trip vibe inside the mellow grooves. Who is this six-piece outfit?



Jeffrey Gower (Vocalist/guitarist, The Stick Arounds)

Pick: Honest D & The Steel Reserve "Oklahoma City Guarantee" — 2006

In the late 1990s through the mid-2000s, Lansing, like many cities across the country, saw a surge in alt-country acts. While bands like The Jayhawks, Son Volt and Old 97's were enjoying some moder-

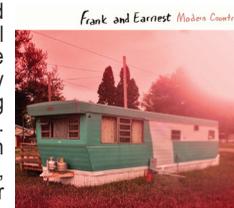


ate success on college radio, Lansing was rolling out some sweet local twang. Bands like Ingham County Regulars, Flatfoot and The Gentleman Callers were playing live shows regularly. Lansing even had its own longstanding college radio program honoring this style of country, "Torch & Twang." No band embodied the countryside of this movement like Honest D & the Steel Reserve. Featuring hot licks from a couple of Lansing's premier guitarists, and a stone-solid rhythm section, the band covered many of the greats. But it was its original songs that struck me as being vibrant, vital and among the best contributions to the twang scene. Jeremy Rapp and Derek Smith can be heard weaving their twin-guitar attack on songs like "Oklahoma City Guarantee." Lyrical tongue-twisting like the vocals on "Rachel Please" and "Cucumber Curry" were a Smith staple and one of the big reasons these songs resonated with people. Derek, Jeremy, Joe Bakitis and Danny Amori made an unforgettable band during a memorable time in the Lansing music scene.

Ariella Zanoni (Bassist/vocalist, Dasterds)

Pick: Frank and Earnest "New Traditions" — 2014

I first stumbled upon the local Lansing music scene in 2010 by the happy accident of having talented coworkers. Faster than you can say "Check, one, two ...," it was clear there was something magnetic about this patchwork collective and their homegrown approach to creating and sharing music. None, however, had quite the irreverent charm as the hard-rocking foursome Frank and Earnest. The GTG Records alum had



a plucky eight-year run from 2009-2017, during which they shared their pop-punk prowess with numerous contributions to local music compilations and splits and their own EP and full-length record. The aforementioned LP, "Modern Country," showcases the band's quick-steppin' drive and chunky, melodious hooks that have made it my essential summer sound since its release in 2014. The track "New Traditions" is a favorite of mine, and not just because it has the most vocally satisfying finale of "whoas!" to sing along to. To me, it stands out as an unintended rock anthem. It's a reminder to appreciate the path you've forged, even if you didn't end up where you thought you'd be. But keeping to true F&E fashion, don't take it too seriously.

CITY PULSE'S MITTEN MUSIC QUIZ

1. Vincent Damon Furnier is better known by this stage name.
2. The song "2+2=?" was a 1969 protest song by this Michigan mainstay.
3. This icon began her career in the '50s singing gospel at New Bethel Baptist Church in Detroit.
4. This "American Band" started out as the rhythm section of Terry Knight & the Pack.
5. This East Lansing band went Platinum following its 1996 "Villains" album.

Answers on page 22

Ingham County Animal Shelter

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Matzah is a beautiful and very shy pointer mix who wants nothing more than a quiet home and a lap to snuggle in. She needs a patient, loving family to make her feel secure and to help build up her confidence.

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Polo is a handsome fella who enjoys head rubs and attention. He doesn't like being at the shelter and needs a peaceful, quiet home where he can relax.

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Godiva - the sweet small torti with the giant purr! This beautiful lady loves to be brushed and cuddled and will put up with other cats as long as they leave her alone.

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Cornelius is very affectionate and a big time nuzzler. This handsome boy enjoys being brushed and will spend all of his time with you just hanging out together.

In memory of
Rodica's cats

FOOD & DRINK

DINING OUT IN GREATER LANSING

Williamston barbecue joint continues remodeling effort

By **DAWN PARKER**

Back in Adam Zynda's high school days, Red Cedar Grill, in Williamston, was a destination when an evening out, such as a dance, for example, called for a special dinner.

"I remember going there a couple of times," he recalled of the restaurant, an easy choice when you wanted to impress a friend or a date.

Zynda BBQ

Opening Soon
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Williamston
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facebook.com/zyndabbq

Back then, the 2003 Okemos High School graduate could not have imagined he would one day own the building at 150 E. Grand River Ave., let alone turn it into his own restaurant.

Zynda BBQ had hoped to be open by May, but construction delays largely caused by the coronavirus lockdown have pushed the hoped-for opening

date to the fall. Red Cedar Grill closed earlier this year after nearly 25 years.

Zynda is a co-owner with his sister, Nikki, also an Okemos grad.

Remodeling is "coming along," Adam Zynda said Monday.

"We're gutting the place, totally rebranding it," he continued. "There will be a lot of cool features inside."

Part of the delay is self-inflicted. "The plans just keep getting more elaborate," Adam Zynda said. "We keep making changes but we're still moving along. It's all good."

Another factor in the delay is adjusting the restaurant's interior setup for a post-coronavirus dining world, as well as providing a takeout window for the same reason.

The décor will have a Southwest barbecue theme, and there will be a 16-seat outside patio likely to be popular in good weather.



A basket of barbecue from the Zynda BBQ food truck.

Courtesy photo

The meat will be slow-smoked per Zynda's exacting requirements — over apple and cherrywood — and he also creates his own seasonings.

The barbecue dishes are only one portion of the menu. "We'll still have steak, steak and fish," Zynda said, as well as "a lot of interesting appetizers and cheeseburgers, so there's just an all-American aspect to it as well."

He described the menu as "really good food, solid food, dishes that people are familiar with. I would say it is a foodie place, but it is not the place you go to try a dish you have never tried before."

"I'm just trying to take dishes that people like and produce them in my own way."

The eclectic interior will also feature more than a few touches of Williamston history. None is more striking than an old railroad tie found during excavation for the restaurant's drain lines. According to miningartifacts.org, coal mining took place near Williamston until the early-'30s.

The tie will remain exposed but be protected under Plexiglas and lit up so that it may be admired from a distance.

Another distinctive touch is a large stone fireplace that will kick out electric heat to both sides of the dining room. The boulders used to build the fireplace range between 80 pounds and 120 pounds.

Much of the rest of what will adorn



Courtesy Photo

An old, uncovered railroad tie that will be used as a decorative piece at Zynda BBQ.

the walls is carefully curated World War II memorabilia.

The new venture isn't the Zyndas' first rodeo.

Adam Zynda has eight years of experience in the food industry, starting with a food trailer in Gaylord that specialized in "barbecue products and did a lot of catering."

After that venture dissolved, the siblings ran a food truck parked outside Tom's Party Store on Grand River in Meridian Township.

While the food truck is shut down, the business is still fulfilling catering orders. Adam Zynda said he hopes to relocate the truck to downtown Williamston as the weather improves.

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CITY PULSE'S MITTEN MUSIC QUIZ ANSWERS

From page 18

1. Alice Cooper
2. Bob Seger
3. Aretha Franklin
4. Grand Funk Railroad
5. Verve Pipe

B/20/101 Parking Lot Improvements as per the specifications provided by the City of Lansing. The City of Lansing will accept bids at the City of Lansing Purchasing Office, 124 W Michigan Ave, 8th Floor, MI. 48933 or electronically thru MITN until **2:00 PM** local time in effect on **June 4, 2020** at which time bids will be opened. **Complete specifications and forms required to submit bids are available by contacting Stephanie Robinson at (517) 483-4128, or stephanie.robinson@lansingmi.gov or go to www.mitn.info.** The City of Lansing encourages bids from all vendors including MBE/WBE vendors and Lansing-based businesses.

CP#20-122

SUDOKU SOLUTION

From Pg. 18

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CROSSWORD SOLUTION

From Pg. 18

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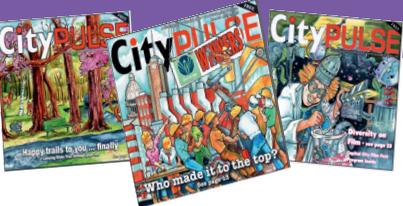


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