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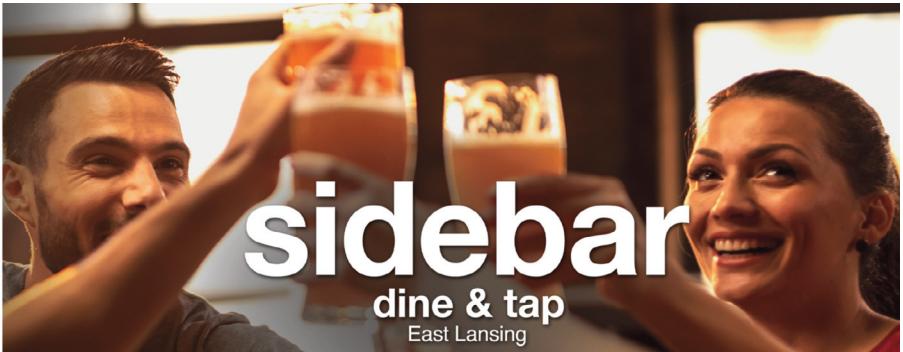
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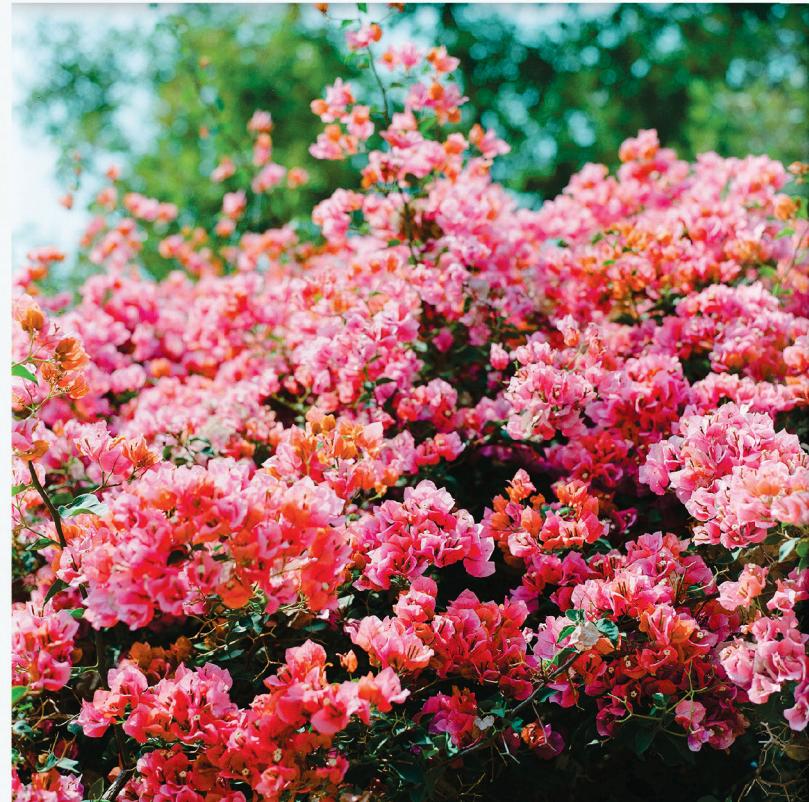
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A photograph of a winding asphalt road through a dense forest. The ground and trees are covered in a thick layer of snow. The road curves from the bottom left towards the center of the frame, disappearing into a misty area where more snow-covered trees stand tall. The overall atmosphere is serene and cold.

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road  
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# CityPULSE

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Leadership changes, live events mark this year's arts scene



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Looking back on Greater Lansing's 2022 theater season



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Vegans' secret tool for meaty, umami flavor

Cover art by Nevin Speerbrecker

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## THIS MODERN WORLD

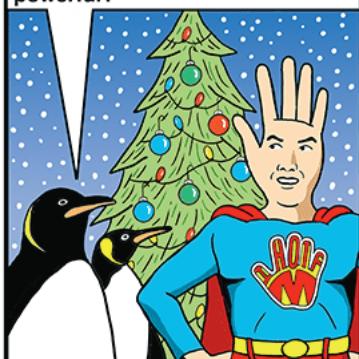
THEY WRITE THEMSELVES  
AN ACTUAL CARTOON WRITTEN  
BY THE A.I. CHATBOT "CHAT-GPT"

Prompt: write a holiday-themed Tom Tomorrow cartoon starring Sparky the Penguin, a superhero called Invisible Hand of the Free Market Man, and a mad scientist named Dr. Von Philbert.

The first panel shows Sparky the Penguin standing in front of a Christmas tree, holding a present and looking confused.



The penguins look skeptical and ask—“But how do we know the Invisible Hand will work for the common good, and not just for the rich and powerful?”



A group of penguins approach Sparky and tell him they are organizing a protest against capitalism.

“It’s a destructive and exploitative system that hurts the working class and benefits the wealthy elite.”



The final panel shows Dr. Von Philbert cackling maniacally and holding a remote control.

“Hahaha! The Invisible Hand is mine to command, and I will use him to rule the world and crush all opposition to capitalism! The holiday season is just a chance for the rich to get richer and the poor to suffer!”



by TOM TOMORROW

Suddenly, a superhero called Invisible Hand of the Free Market Man appears, flying through the air and holding a glowing ball of energy.

“Fear not, citizens! The Invisible Hand will save the day! I’m here to help you all by ensuring that the economy runs smoothly and efficiently.”



WOW, TOTALLY NAILED IT.  
MY WORK HERE IS DONE. HAPPY HOLIDAYS, EVERYONE!



TOM TOMORROW © 2022 ... JOIN SPARKY'S LIST: [thismodernworld.com/subscriptions](http://thismodernworld.com/subscriptions)

# PULSE

# NEWS & OPINION

## Lansing stories that made headlines in 2022



Shutterstock

**By TODD HEYWOOD**

Inflation. The “tripledemic.” A run on housing. Those are just a few of the national issues in 2022 that also affected Greater Lansing.

While COVID is not over, it's become endemic — like a cold or the flu.

Meanwhile, the economy continues to struggle from a labor shortage, supply chain issues, unionization movements in fast-food restaurants and the greatest inflation rate in four decades.

Three men were convicted and sentenced for plotting to kidnap Gov. Gretchen Whitmer. A U.S. House panel laid the main blame for the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection on former President Donald Trump. Voters, including former Trump backers, rejected election deniers in Michigan in statewide elections, returning Democrats Whitmer, Attorney General Dana Nessel and Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson to office and electing Democratic majorities — albeit slight — to both houses of the Legislature for the first time in almost 40 years.

The year that ends on Saturday also saw significant local news developments. Here is a look at some of them.

### President Stanley quits MSU

Samuel L. Stanley's troubled relationship with some trustees boiled over after he forced Sanjay Gupta, the popular dean of the Broad College of Business, to resign for failing to report sexual harassment as required by school policies. The board also swatted Stanley for certifying a report submitted to the Legislature about Title IX (sex discrimination) investigations and enforcement even though it had not been properly vetted.

Stanley struck back publicly in October by announcing his resignation in



Courtesy of MSU

a YouTube video, in which he declared he had lost confidence in the board. He accused members of micromanaging day-to-day operations. He noted that faculty and staff had also overwhelmingly rejected the board in resolutions of no confidence. Stanley had replaced former Gov. John Engler, who served a stormy year as interim president after Lou Anna Simon resigned in 2018 in the face of the Nassar scandal. The board named Provost Christina Woodruff as Stanley's interim replacement.



**Lansing Township keeps Groesbeck, struggles with debt**

Acting on a request by 122 Groesbeck residents whose neighborhood is entirely surrounded by Lansing, the city sought to annex them through a ballot referendum. But the courts sided with the township government's argument that in order for the issue to go on the ballot, the city has to surround the entire township, which it does not.

If annexation had been approved, 2,200 people would have become Lansing residents, costing the township up to 25% of its property tax income, a loss the township could ill afford.

The township made progress in 2022 in warding off bankruptcy when it was able to strike a deal that allows it to share in some tax income due to Ingham County. The township also approved a plan to likely get out of debt in the coming year. The plan hinges on settling with the successors to developer Mike Eyde, whom the government owes \$2.5 million in lease payments. The township's financial problems stem from investing in the expansion of Eastwood Towne Center.

### Lynn wins \$1 million suit against city

Community activist and former City of Lansing firefighter Michael Lynn Jr. won a federal discrimination case against the city in federal court in Kalamazoo on Oct. 8. In 2019, Lynn filed the lawsuit, alleging the city had retaliated against him for filing complaints about racism in the Fire Department. Michael Lynn still has a case pending in Ingham County Circuit Court challenging his termination for sharing the private cell phone number of former Chief of Police Daryl Green.

Faring less well were nine current and former city employees who sued in circuit court in 2020, alleging racial animus and hostility. In November, Judge Wanda Stokes rejected all of the cases, ruling they had failed “to provide sufficient facts.” She also ordered them to pay the city's legal costs.



### Sparrow goes blue and maize

University of Michigan Health acquired Sparrow Health System. The U of M system, which is considered one of the nation's best, will invest \$800 million into Sparrow for infrastructure and expanded care. “The partnership with University of Michigan Health provides Sparrow the opportunity to take a greater leadership

role in improving the health of the communities we serve,”

**Sparrow Hospital**

**M My Michigan Health**  
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN HEALTH

Sparrow President and CEO James F. Dover said in a press release.

See Year, Page 6

# Year

from page 5

## The elections

First Ward Lansing Councilmember Brandon Betz resigned in February after a year of controversy. His appointed replacement, gym owner Brian Daniels, sought to remain, but east-side voters replaced him in November with activist Ryan Kost by 55 votes.

In the August primary election, Emily Dievendorf scored an upset when she won the Democratic nomination for Lansing's newly redistricted state House seat. In November, she joined Democrats in sweeping the GOP in mid-Michigan to serve in the Legislature.

City voters approved a \$175 million public safety proposal for bonds

that will largely go toward a new facility on South Washington Avenue near Mt. Hope Avenue, the city's geographic center. The new facility will house 54-A District Court, the Lansing Police Department and lock-up and the Fire Department headquarters.

Grand Ledge was part of a movement that played out across the country in which far-righters tried to take over school boards. A trio of candidates was dubbed the "Kitty Litter Caucus" by local politicos for their repeated lies that the schools provided kitty litter boxes for youth who identified as cats. In Haslett, voters had a QAnon Moms for Liberty candidate on the ballot, as well as an anti-transgender candidate. All of the extremists lost.



## Prosecutor Carol Siemon retires

Ingham County Prosecutor Carol Siemon quit, effective Dec. 30. Her replacement, John J. Dewane, was tapped by the circuit court judges to replace her for the rest of her elective term, which runs through 2024. She cited personal reasons.

Local law enforcement officials, led by Ingham County Sheriff Scott Wrigglesworth and joined by Lansing Mayor Andy Schor, denounced Siemon's efforts to address racial disparities in the justice system by limiting the use of the firearm felony charge. She also refused to charge for possession of guns, drugs or other arms that were found in a



Carol Siemon

traffic stop.

Siemon also struck plea deals that critics called too lenient, including Circuit Judge Rosemary Aquilina, who was angered in open court to the point of demanding Siemon's resignation.

## FRI opens

In May, Michigan State University fired up the Facility for Rare Isotope Beams, a \$774 million building to research rare atoms.

The facility will be funded mostly by the U.S. Energy Department. Studies from the facility could result in new medical treatments as well as items like micro batteries. It will also provide a peek into the explosion known as the "Big Bang" that set the universe in motion.



## Rentals remain a crisis in Lansing

Despite years of reform in the city's Code Compliance office — and the highest number of premise inspectors in over a decade — the city continues to struggle with addressing substandard housing. A glaring, tragic result of this was the June fire death of 23-month-old Damian Shesshia, who lived with her mother in an unregistered rental property. Officials confirmed that the home, on Cavanaugh Road, had no fire alarms — something a rental inspection would have noted and required to be installed before greenlighting the home for rental.

Following the death, City Pulse identified a house just west of Old Town with electrical issues that was not registered as a rental, where the tenants said they paid \$1,200 a month plus utilities. They said the owner, Aibout Fady, failed to keep his word to deal with the electrical problems. Made aware of the situation by City Pulse, Brian McGrain, Lansing director of planning and economic development, acknowledged that the city had "fucked up" in regard to the registration renewals of Fady's rental properties. The home in question was subsequently red-tagged.

McGrain said the department was struggling to balance court hearings with identifying and inspecting out-of-compliance rental properties. He said that approximately 10% of the city's housing stock are rentals, many of them illegal.



## BWL ends coal usage

In November, the Lansing Board of Water & Light retired its last coal-burning power plant, Eckert Power Station, replaced by cleaner-burning natural gas plants.

"In 2012, BWL burned 1.2 million tons of coal. Today, 10 years later, BWL's coal consumption is zero," said BWL General Manager Dick Peffley. The fate of the massive plant on the Grand River — nicknamed Wynken, Blynken and Nod for its three prominent smokestacks — is unknown.

Meanwhile, also in 2022, BWL documents came to light that showed that coal ash deposits on the grounds of the Erickson Power Station in Delta Township had been leaking heavy metal contaminants into local drinking water wells. "Coal ash" is a term describing what is left after a power plant burns coal to heat water to generate electricity. BWL planned to clean up the holding ponds for coal ash this year, but environmental activists said the plan was "inadequate." They wanted groundwater testing to continue.



DeAnthony Thomas-Scott VanAtten

## Police shooting at Meijer causes uproar

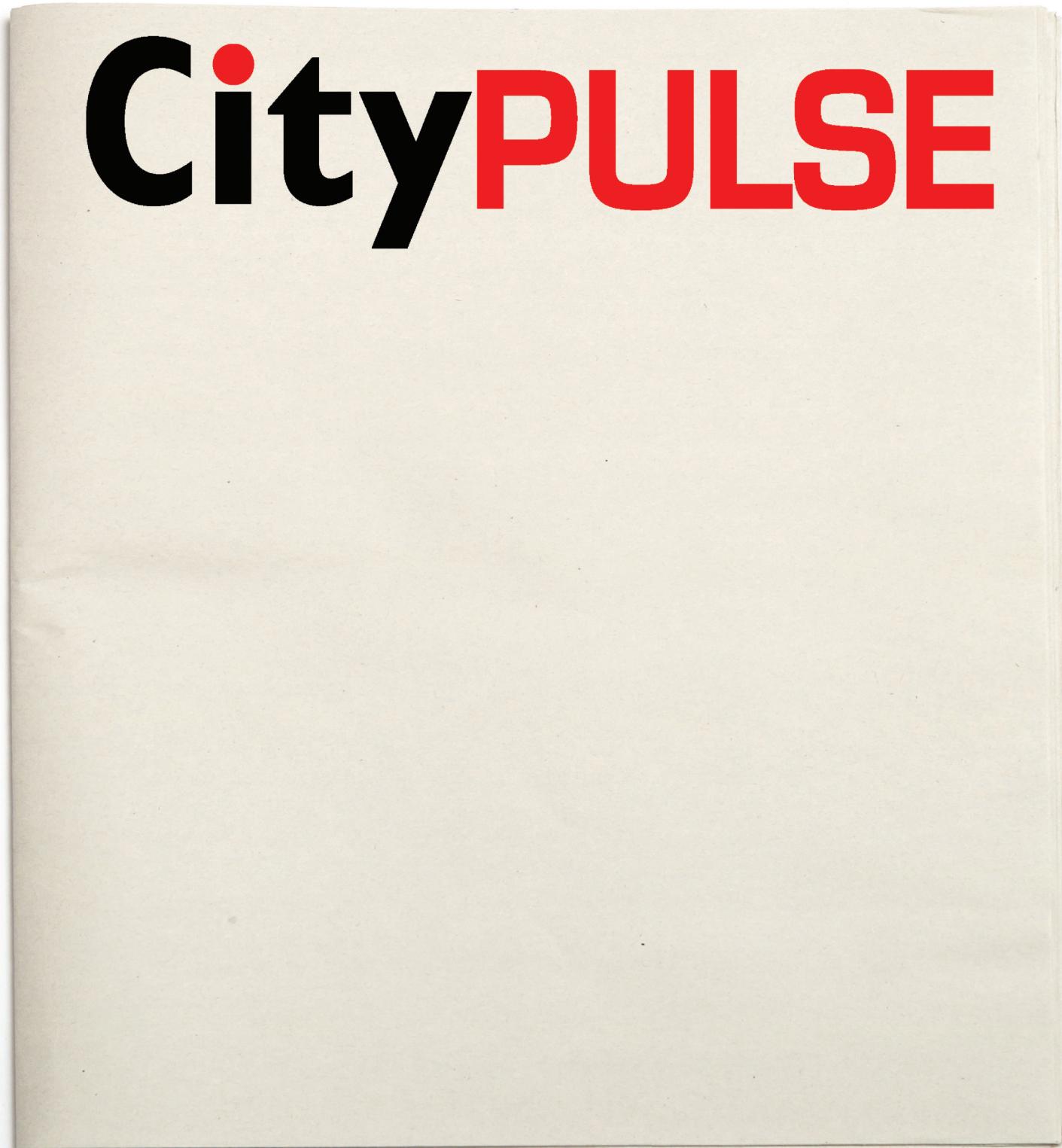
DeAnthony Thomas-Scott VanAtten was shot multiple times while running from East Lansing Police officers at the Lake Lansing Meijer. The officers were responding to a 911 call that a Black man with a gun had entered the store. Video from inside the store shows officers seeking VanAtten, who ran. Officers pursued, ultimately opening fire on him. Attorney General Dana Nessel's team reviewed the shooting and announced in August that the officers had committed no crimes. VanAtten was charged with a series of crimes stemming from the incident and his status as a parolee. Activists raised concerns about racial animus in the shooting. The City of East Lansing is considering a resolution seeking to have all criminal charges against VanAtten dismissed.



welcomes singers! Rehearsals begin Jan. 8, 2023, 2:30 to 4 p.m. at East Lansing University United Methodist Church, 1120 S. Harrison Rd. E.L. MI 48823. No auditions required. Bring a friend. \$45 participation and music fee.

Questions?

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**Joan Nelson  
joins City Pulse  
as a columnist  
beginning in  
January.**

The Eaton County Transportation Authority (EATRAN) will accept proposals from qualified consultants for: Transportation Needs Study and Service Plan, on or before 3:00pm on Friday, January 20, 2023. For further details, including the complete RFP, please visit EATRAN web page at <https://www.eatran.com>.

Contact: Bradley T. Funkhouser, AICP at [bfunkhouser@eatontrans.com](mailto:bfunkhouser@eatontrans.com)

CP#22-300



**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN, INGHAM COUNTY  
LEGAL AD NOTICE: Medical Marihuana Applications**

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
LEGAL NOTICE**

**Commercial Medical Marihuana Facility Permit Applications**

Notice is hereby given that the Director of Community Planning and Development of the Charter Township of Meridian will accept applications for commercial medical marijuana facility permits on Tuesday, January 10, 2023 from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00p.m. The application can be picked up in the Department of Community Planning and Development, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, Michigan 48864-1198, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Any questions or comments about the application or application process may be directed to Keith Chapman, Assistant Planner, Charter Township of Meridian, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, Michigan, 48864, or by email to [chapman@meridian.mi.us](mailto:chapman@meridian.mi.us).

**Deborah Guthrie  
Township Clerk**

CP#22-301

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**NOTICE OF INTENT  
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TO THE ELECTORS RESIDING WITHIN THE  
EAST LANSING-MERIDIAN WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY**

**PLEASE TAKE NOTICE** that the Board of Trustees of the East Lansing-Meridian Water and Sewer Authority (the "Authority") intends to issue bonds in an amount of not to exceed \$16,800,000 (the "Bonds"). The Bonds may be issued in one or more series.

The bonds shall be issued for the purpose of defraying the cost to design, purchase, acquire, install and construct improvements to the Authority's water system, including but not limited to improvements to the Authority's water plant and facilities including but not limited to a new water storage reservoir, the replacement of water mains and installation of new water mains and the acquisition of wells; as well as all work, and equipment necessary and incidental to these improvements and such other water treatment plant improvements and improvements to other water system facilities the Authority shall determine to make and to pay the costs of issuing the bonds and capitalized interest, if any.

The bonds of this issue shall mature within the maximum terms permitted by law with interest on the unpaid balance at a rate not to exceed the maximum rate permitted by law payable over not more than forty (40) years from the date of issuance of the Bonds. The bonds shall be issued pursuant to Act 94, Public Acts of Michigan, 1933, as amended.

**SOURCE OF PAYMENT**

The principal of and interest on the bonds shall be payable from the net revenues derived from the operation of the Water System.

**RIGHT OF REFERENDUM**

The bonds will be issued, without submitting such a question to a vote of the electors, unless within 45 days after the date of publication of this notice a petition requesting a referendum upon such question, signed by not less than 10% or 15,000 of the registered electors residing within the boundaries of the Authority, whichever is the lesser, shall have been filed with the undersigned Secretary. In the event that such a petition is filed, the bonds will not be issued unless and until the issuance thereof shall have been approved by the vote of a majority of the electors within the Authority qualified to vote and voting thereon at a general or special election.

This Notice is published pursuant to the requirements of Section 33 of Act 94 of the Public Acts of Michigan of 1933, as amended.

Charles Peterson, Board Secretary

CP#22-299

# The year's biggest political story? For Michigan, it was abortion rights

the state Constitution.

The ACLU's Shelli Weisberg helped rally the initial petition circulators. Nicole Wells Stallworth, the new executive director of Planned Parenthood's political arm, was at the table. The ballot committee Reproductive Freedom For All was born.

Collectively, they warned women of child-bearing age that a right they'd had since they were born wasn't going to be there. Unless they acted.

Sign this petition. Have your friends and families sign it. Share it with acquaintances.

They did. June 24 came. People angry with the Dobbs ruling had an outlet to do something.

Petition signature collection numbers exploded as the number of circulators doubled in a matter of two weeks.

By the time Reproductive Freedom For All filed its signatures with the secretary of state, it had 753,759 names, far beyond the roughly 450,000 needed to make the ballot. It was the most signatures collected for a ballot initiative in state history.

Once given the name Proposal 3, the campaign committee raised more than \$44 million to run an aggressive ad campaign. It successfully countered a message bankrolled by Right to Life and the Catholic Church that this proposal was among the country's most expansive ballot proposals.

Not only did Proposal 3 pass with 56.6% of the vote, it also passed in 26 counties, which is eight more counties than Gov. Gretchen Whitmer won. It received more votes than the governor or any other statewide elected official.

Planned Parenthood, the ACLU and Michigan Voices harnessed the energy in the voting public and used it to not only pass its reform, but help such political allies as Whitmer, Attorney General Dana Nessel, Democratic legislative candidates and Democrats up and down the ballot.

I'm not taking a position on the substance of their proposal.

What is undeniable is that Reproductive Freedom For All found THE issue of 2022. It ran the type of proactive, effective, impactful and high-energy legal and political campaign the aforementioned political consultants dream about.

It was, without a close second, the Michigan political story of 2022.

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



PODCAST  
KYLE MELINN

Opinion

Michigan clinics never stopped offering the ability to terminate most early pregnancies, despite a 90-year-old law that banned it unless the mother's life was at risk.

After Roe v. Wade was overturned, Michigan was the only state with this type of law on the books that didn't put it into effect.

This wasn't by chance.

A coalition of groups led by the ACLU of Michigan, Planned Parenthood of Michigan and Michigan Voices made sure of it. Not only for 2022, but every year after.

Their historic effort showed the foresight, organization and execution that changed lives and determined a lot of races in the Nov. 8 election.

It started in mid-2021, when Planned Parenthood officials, led by former CEO Lori Carpenter, learned — as much as they didn't want to — that former President Donald Trump's Supreme Court was poised to overturn Roe v. Wade. Abortion access nationwide would be gone.

Long before the unprecedented "leak" out of the U.S. Supreme Court that Roe was toast, Planned Parenthood's legal team crafted a legal motion arguing the 1931 law was unconstitutional.

Two months BEFORE the Dobbs ruling shifted abortion access back to the state, Planned Parenthood won its argument in court. The '31 law was suspended.

Meanwhile, ACLU Executive Director Lauren Khogali and Sommer Foster of Michigan Voices began working on a different track.

They, too, saw the inevitable overturning of Roe. Last January, they tapped the ACLU deputy legal director, Bonsitu Kitaba, to craft ballot proposal language enshrining reproductive freedom into

# Students left behind: the unfinished business of 2022

By DEDRIA HUMPHRIES BARKER

In its 2022 report to Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, the Michigan Parents' Council said public education should address students' diverse learning needs, including learning gaps and unfinished learning.

This makes perfect sense to me.

At Lansing Community College, I taught first-year composition, a college course required for the bachelor's degree. Reputedly, our course rivaled in rigor what the university offered. Yet, because we were the community college, our students' level of preparation was spotty.

Some students had a loose grasp of basic skills that should have been learned in elementary school, reviewed through middle school and practiced in high school. Punctuation, for instance. Commas, in particular. Every semester for 18 years, I had to teach commas, amid much bitching and moaning. From me.

Of the four priorities the Michigan Parents' Council reached through a consensus of conversations held in all 83 Michigan counties, three are for support of students and teachers, and one is for education.

The Council's educational priority aims at the disruption and interruption to learning caused by the COVID pandemic. Got to be. All students did not experience the pandemic and the emergency switch to distance learning the same.

In fact, details in the report go on to say, "Concerns about unfinished learning were reported more frequently in urban and rural districts." It also said that "student need access to before- and after-school programs, tutoring and extracurricular activities."

Which is to say, the concerns about unfinished learning were reported less frequently by suburban districts. This is because parents of the professional class and socioeconomic status, who live primarily in the suburbs, could complete their children's learning. So, they have other concerns, like mental health because of the Oxford High School shooting.

The learning gap resulting from the pandemic must be attended to. I said

that in June 2020, when the 2019-2020 school year was mercifully over. The following fall was a wonderful time for a do-over; to shore up learning and bring all students to a true grade. To recalibrate.

Yet, fall semester started on time and online and students got through it as best they could. The result? A deepening educational inequality. The news this year is an increase in third graders held back because their reading is not up to grade level. In 2020, today's third graders were first graders.

However, parents are saying, "Don't let our children go one more step forward in this quicksand. Please finish what was started in the 2019-2020 school year. Avoid turning a national crisis into students' personal failure. Avoid learning gaps from becoming another symptom of long COVID."

The refusal to correct the situation early created a dry socket.

"Dry socket" is a dental term describing a complication of tooth extraction. I found out I had one when my sister Paula said to me that there was something wrong in my mouth. It was bad breath caused by infection. The hole in my gum had healed wrong. It healed over the hole, as opposed to healing from the bottom up, allowing bacteria to grow.

And now we have an infection brewing in education, where instead of schooling children from the bottom up, we have become satisfied with quality schooling for those at the top.

And we have educators in the poor districts becoming accustomed to being less than. Getting less than.

The television sitcom "Abbott Elementary" expressed it perfectly. A fresh new teacher at Abbott Elementary can see everything her students need to learn and is campaigning for it. But a veteran teacher tires of hearing about that and says, "We're not getting anything." Why?

Because it is a poor public school.

Part of the governor's purpose in creating the Michigan Parents' Council was to get Michigan on the road to world-class education. Like it used to be. When Michigan was rich. And educated the Baby Boomers. Hell, my English professors at Wayne State University came from Ivy League universities. Now, Michigan can't attract enough teachers in K-12 grades.

Michigan is flush with money. Pump it into public education. Do what the Council said to do: continue learning that was discontinued. Who does just moving on serve? Not students. Or the state.

People worry that holding back a student from their friends will lower self-esteem. Perhaps temporarily. But the Michigan Parents' Council provided for that as well in bullet priority #1:

- Support students' growing mental health needs.

It is never bad to stop and learn. Students should understand the reasoning for stopping to learn. Uncomfortable, yes. But not cruel or unusual.

The fatal error is not learning to read or having your college professor pissed 'cause she doesn't know if you are writing "Let's eat, Grandma" or "Let's eat grandma."

In that missing comma is a world of difference. Especially for grandma.

Maybe the Council's priorities are what the governor felt all along. But because she suffered enormous push-back from parents who saw school as a babysitter and those who thought her leadership so wrong they needed to plot to kidnap and possibly kill her, she needed to be patient and strategize getting back in office, then get support for her position. And now she has.

Whitmer should sign the check for the Council's bridging-the-learning-gap recommendation now.

(*Dedria Humphries Barker, a Lansing resident, is the author of "Mother of Orphans: The True and Curious Story of Irish Alice, A Colored Man's Widow." Her column appears on the last Wednesday of each month.*)



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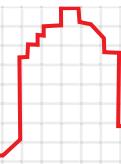
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# ARTS & CULTURE



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# Blossom with care

## Greater Lansing arts scene springs to life in 2022

By LAWRENCE COSENTINO

Hot and cold crosswinds of relief, celebration, hope and uncertainty swept the greater Lansing arts and culture scene in 2022.

Much of the hope sprang from the capital area's evergreen, grassroots network of interlocking creative souls — musicians, visual artists, poets, filmmakers and many others, all of whom seem to know each other. Lansing's winning combination of big-city talent and a small-town spirit of mutual support and affection burst into hundreds of events on the sidewalks, in the streets, in parks, bars and assorted venues large and small.

After two years of hiatus or hybrid virtual events, local institutions like the Ten Pound Fiddle, the Capital City Film Festival, the Lansing Symphony Orchestra and a pleiad (or so) of local theater companies returned to full schedules.

MSU's big culture guns, from the Wharton Center to the Broad Art Museum and the College of Music, ramped up to full wattage as well.

Serious progress on two new downtown performing arts venues added another layer of hope.

However, outside of outdoor festivals, 2022 didn't unleash the pent-up demand many artists hoped for. After the brutal shutdowns and financial angst of 2020 and 2021, arts and culture organizations were hoping for a boffo, "Ding-Dong, the Witch is Dead" set piece, but the stubborn virus danced to its own tune.

Arts venues across the country, Lansing included, reported that attendance was lower than pre-pandemic levels, not higher. A shell-shocked public, newly accustomed to soaking up culture at home, was harder to coax off the couch than expected.

At the Williamston Theatre, attendance dropped from a pre-pandemic level of 75% of capacity to around 40%.



Courtesy photos

June marked big changes at MSU's Wharton Center, where Eric Olmscheid took over as director, and the MSU Broad Art Museum, where Mónica Ramírez-Montagut left her post as director to lead New York's Parrish Art Museum.

"We honestly expected everyone to come back last year, and they didn't," theater director and co-founder Emily Sutton-Smith said.

Eric Olmscheid, who became the Wharton Center's fourth director in its 40-year history this year, caught the sort of post-pandemic zeitgeist in comments to City Pulse when he arrived at MSU in June.

"All of our operational expenses, our labor costs have all increased," he said. "We have to balance the equation, but it doesn't always add up."

Meanwhile, on spreadsheets, grant applications and drawing boards, Lansing's dream of a long-awaited performing arts center moved a few major squares forward on the financial chessboard.

Lansing has heard this song before, in strangled choruses going back 20 years, but this time it looks like it's really going to happen. In November, the \$17.5 million facility was approved for a \$5 million grant from the Michigan Economic Development Corp. Michigan Strategic Fund

Board. The city already had \$2 million in dedicated state funding and \$8 million in PEG (public, educational and government access fees) in the kitty and expects to attract up to \$5 million in private donations, so the financial picture looks secure.

The new facility, The Ovation, on the corner of West Lenawee Street and Washington Avenue, is designed to fill a mid-sized hole in the local arts and entertainment market, drawing national rock, country, hip-hop and comedy artists and other attractions that play in Detroit or Grand Rapids. It would house a

2,000-capacity concert venue, a smaller stage, the permanent home of the Lansing Public Media Center and, possibly, All of the Above Hip-Hop Academy and the Lansing Art Gallery. (The latter two organizations have not committed to the project.) Construction is set to begin in the spring, with at least a partial opening to the public in the fall of 2024.

And that's not the only major venue taking shape downtown. A former gay club on Washington Square is on its way to becoming Hall 224, a \$400,000 music venue capable of holding up to 900 standing attendees or 400 theater-style seats. The venue will host comedy, classic rock, R&B, bluegrass, country, folk, Latin, jazz and other live events and is scheduled to open in 2023.

The outlook for indoor culture and entertainment is far from certain, but 2022 showed that outdoor events are still a big draw. A plethora of festi-

See Blossom, Page 11



Photo by Melik Brown

Mac's Bar owner Chuck Mannino renovated the COVID-shuttered venue on Lansing's east side and plans to bring a mix of all-ages shows, "hardcore" music, local and regional bands and national acts, with food and games in the mix.

# LANSING SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA NAKAMATSU PLAYS BRAHMS

JANUARY 13TH

## Blossom

from page 10

vals, some familiar, others less so, filled the streets of Greater Lansing in summer 2022, from JazzFest and BluesFest in Old Town to the Cris-to Rey Fiesta, the Little Woodstock Music & Art Festival, downtown Lansing's pandemic-driven BLOCK: AID, East Lansing's Pumpstock roots music festival, 517 Juneteenth and a bigger-than-ever Dam Jam at the Brenke Fish Ladder.

Indoors, plucky, smaller venues around town, like the Robin Theatre in REO Town and UrbanBeat in Old Town, forged ahead with eclectic bouquets of live acts ranging from bluegrass to rock, jazz, comedy, spoken word and even chamber music. A longtime Lansing institution, Mac's Bar, joined them after a major renovation. Owner Chuck Man-nino plans to keep Mac's hardcore, dive bar vibe while bringing all-ages shows, local and regional bands, national acts and food and games into the mix.

After two years of pandemic adaptation to a drive-in format, the Capital City Film Festival came back in 2022 to celebrate its 10th anniversary with a 10-day, multi-venue event. Program director Jason Gabriel said this year's festival was a "ramp-up" year leading to a far more ambitious program in 2023.

The MSU Broad Art Museum also celebrated its 10th birthday with a winning run of popular exhibits, including a penetrating look at 20th-century icon Frida Kahlo and a museum-wide display of furniture, clothes, household objects and a multitude of other items designed by

the museum's architect, Zaha Hadid.

But just as it seemed to be hitting its stride, the Broad underwent another change at the top, the third in its 10-year history. Mónica Ramírez-Montagut, widely credited with making the museum more broadly appealing and community friendly, left the job in June to direct New York's Parrish Art Museum. Curator Steven Bridges took over as interim director, pledging to stay the course and hold to Ramírez-Montagut's inclusive vision.

Another leadership change took hold across town as the Lansing Art Gallery's longtime director, Barb Whitney, left the museum to work in fundraising and development at MSU. Michelle

Carlson, the gallery's education director since 2017, became director in October.

Carlson and Bridges have both declared education and outreach to be a top priority, and you'll hear similar declarations almost anywhere you go in the Lansing arts scene.

Eric Olmscheid, the Wharton Center's new leader, has plans similar to the year-long arts awards and workshop program involving 90 schools that he oversaw in Des Moines, Iowa.

Judith Stoddart, associate provost for University Arts and Collections, is leading a university-wide push to



Courtesy photo

Local theaters showcased a more diverse cross-section of the human experience in 2022. Actress Sarab Kamoo portrayed the lives of nine Iraqi women during the first and second Gulf wars in "Nine Parts of Desire" at Williamston Theatre in February.



Courtesy photo

The Lansing arts community suffered a major loss when Brandon Navin, founder of the Artist's Umbrella collective and a friend and supporter of scores of local artists, died this summer.

bring arts and cultural events outside the ivory towers of MSU.

"We have to be more intentional about inviting people in," Stoddart said in a July interview, "but also think about how we take the arts outside, present in other spaces, engage in formal and informal ways."

One of the Lansing Symphony Orchestra's biggest 2022 successes was an unorthodox, sellout series of chamber concerts at REO Town's Robin Theatre, featuring almost all local composers, many of whom attended.

Olmscheid sees new life peeping out all over the arts landscape.

"Organizations like the Wharton Center, all over the country, persevered," he said. "They figured out how to remain relevant during the pandemic shutdown, and

more important, they asked themselves, 'Who are we? What are we doing as we emerge into the next chapter?'

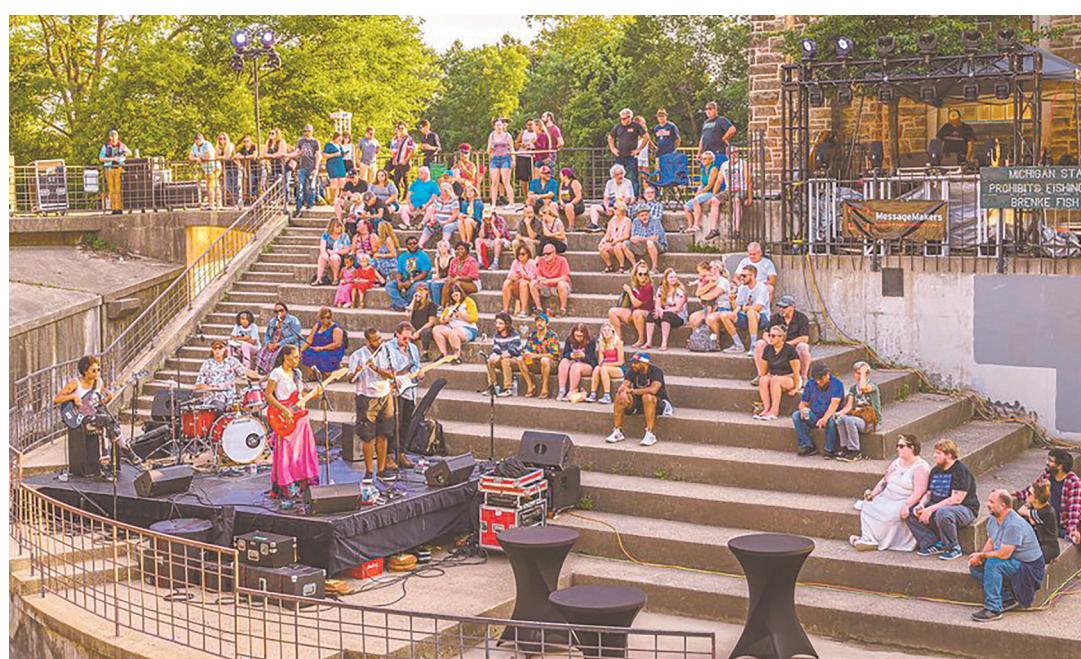
Some of the answers can be gleaned from the all-too-short life of Brandon Navin, founder and director of Lansing artist's collective the Artist's Umbrella, who died in June at age 50.

Devastated by the loss, the nonprofit's organizers and allies are determined to press on with Navin's vision of creating safe

spaces for artists to shine, especially artists who don't ordinarily get a platform. The Artist's Umbrella has helped to showcase scores of local artists working in everything from comedy to dance, spoken word, visual art and opera — anyone with a talent, a message, or both.

Public art, mostly in the form of murals, was more ubiquitous than ever in Greater Lansing this year. The results are mixed, but one magnificent mosaic, completed in 2022 after two years in the making, visually embodies Navin's community spirit. More than 1,000 people — artists and non-artists — made tiles for the Shiawassee Street Mosaic project, created by tile specialist and visual artist Alexandra Leonard and her assistant, artist Bob Rose. Leonard's swirling design is a perfect visual metaphor for the fusion of an inclusive, loving community and eye-popping, damn good art.

"You'd get to see someone's story on every tile," Rose told City Pulse two weeks ago. "After a while, you started to feel like the keeper and holder of their moment in time. It's the most emotionally deep, profound project you could imagine."



Courtesy photo

The festival season roared back in full force with old favorites like JazzFest and newer events like the Dam Jam music festival at the Brenke Fish Ladder.



## **Joan Nelson joins City Pulse as a columnist beginning in January.**

# Turning the page on 2022

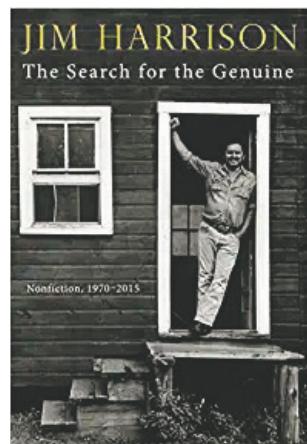
By BILL CASTANIER

This past year was a mighty good one for Lansing-area readers, writers and libraries. We saw the passage of two library millages; the opening of bookstores downtown, in REO Town and on the city's far east side; a number of local writers going on a publishing spree and the emergence of younger voices.

As a writer for City Pulse, I watched these trends, read the books and talked with library leaders as they confronted a national onslaught of censorship by conservative parent groups and politicians espousing family values.

I was also pleased to see a small effort to move away from author visits exclusively on Zoom when Capital Area District Libraries hosted Kai Harris, author of the debut book "What the Fireflies Knew," a beautiful coming-of-age story set in Lansing.

The COVID-19 lockdown put the kibosh on the hosting of in-person events, and they are yet to fully come back. Many readers are lamenting the loss of Michigan State University and East Lansing's One Book, One Community program, which brought sterling writers to town each year. Over nearly two decades, area readers have seen the likes of U.S. Rep. John Lewis, Dave Eggers and James McBride, though, to be fair, these events aren't free. On its website,



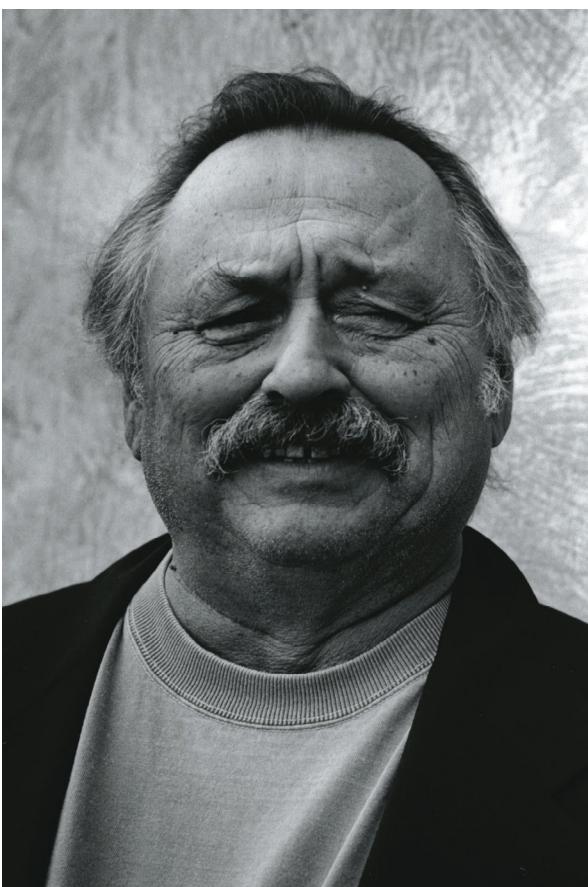
organizers say they are looking to resume in 2023.

I hope Lansing-area residents know how lucky they are to have four library systems within easy reach, both in-person and online. CADL, East Lansing Public Library, Delta Township District Library and MSU's libraries have all managed to resist censorship demands thus far. The millage votes for CADL and East Lansing passed overwhelmingly, and CADL will celebrate its 25th anniversary in 2023. The head librarians at these institutions are to be treasured. I was delighted to see CADL Executive Director Scott Duimstra mount a bike for an appearance in this year's Silver Bells in the City light parade.

On a personal note, I was able to connect with three of my longtime favorite authors, David

Maraniss, Mark Kurlansky and Kevin Boyle, who had new books out this year. Maraniss' biography of legendary athlete Jim Thorpe, "Path Lit by Lightning," is a tour de force. Kurlansky, an Ernest Hemingway look-alike, wrote "The Importance of Not Being Ernest" about how his life and Hemingway's often intersect. Kurlansky has previously written books with singular titles like "Cod," "Salt," "Salmon" and "Milk," which are worth reading. Boyle, who won a 2004 National Book Award for his novel "Arc of Justice," about Detroit's Ossian Sweet, a Black doctor who was accused of murder in a 1925 civil rights dispute, found his home in the book "The Shattering," about the tumultuous 1960s.

This year, I felt like I was channeling the late Jim Harrison, who grew up in Haslett and was a graduate of



Courtesy photo

"The Search for the Genuine," a collection of nonfiction essays from local author Jim Harrison, was published posthumously in 2022. The writer passed away in 2016.

MSU. His 2022 posthumous work, "The Search for the Genuine," a collection of his nonfiction magazine essays, shows the breadth of his writing. This book also made me return to my own archives to find my notes from the many interviews I had with him. One note I found took me back to 2008 when he, Richard Ford and Tom McGuane, all friends and MSU grads, shared the stage at the Pasant Theatre for a night. The note, in big letters, was taken from an emergen-

cy phone call Jim made to me before the event. In his throaty voice, he asked, "Bill, can you pick up a couple shooters for me? I get a little nervous at these things."

Indeed, I did, and I saved those shooters. After the event, I donated two of them to the Harrison Archives and kept one, which I still have. You can listen to that presentation online at MSU's G. Robert Vincent Voice Library, though it's unfortunate there's no video. You would have seen him pulling a small bottle from his pocket and pouring it into his water glass.

Lansing author Erin Bartels continued her writing spree with the publication of "The Girl Who Could Breathe Under Water," a realistic look at a young writer who confronts a tragedy in her past. Bartels is just at the start of what will surely be a long career, and her plotting and dialogue have gotten better with each book.

Finally, I would be remiss if I didn't mention the incredible book "Blood and Fire," by Brian Solomon. Many Lansing residents knew the book's subject as both "The Sheik" and Ed Farhat, but the author digs much deeper into the wrestler's life as a promoter and family man. It's a great story, even if you have no interest in the Golden Age of wrestling.

With all the great works published in 2022, I can't wait to see what new books this next year brings. I wish you good reading in 2023.

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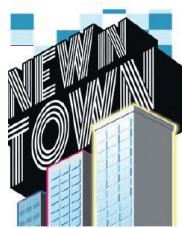
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# This year's new noshes

By LIZY FERGUSON

In a town like Lansing, the appearance of a new building or storefront with a "coming soon" or "now open" sign can be very exciting, filling one's mind with endless possibilities. Will it be a tapas restaurant or a weed dispensary? A gelato shop ... or a weed dispensary? This year saw the opening of a number of exciting eateries and, I'm sure, marijuana provisioning centers. We'll just go over the non-intoxicating kind of edibles here, though.

Serving up the most important meal of the day, **Square One Breakfast & Bakery** opened in Hannah Plaza in East Lansing, offering delicious, enormous cinnamon rolls, scratch-made corned beef hash, huevos rancheros and more. Technically, the restaurant opened in 2021, but I like it so much that I want to make sure you know about it. For coffee, the new kids on the block include **Hooked** on East Michigan Avenue



(which also has books and wine) and **Château Coffee Co.** off of Old Lansing Road.

In the way of the somewhat exotic, **Veg Head** opened its doors downtown, offering fully plant-based comfort food options. Just down the street, **Tatse**, an American-African restaurant, opened a storefront, relocating from its former home in the Allen Neighborhood Center incubator kitchen. Near Eastwood Towne Center, **Fuel'd** has a build-your-own stir fry setup that's guaranteed to leave you with leftovers and **Blend**, a superfood café offering smoothie bowls and various health tonics, has your lighter-lunch needs covered while out on West Saginaw Highway.

Also out that way is **The Americana Bistro** in the Lansing Mall, which has mouth-watering burgers and Sidewinder fries, a cut style that I don't think I've ever seen elsewhere. Other newcomers offering Midwest menu standards include **Joe's on Jolly** in Okemos, the swanky new sports bar with quality eats, and **Old Bag of Nails Pub** just off of East Michigan Avenue, which, according to reports, is filling the fish and chips hole

left by Claddagh.

Chicken restaurants proliferated, including **Grand Grillin** (salads and wraps), **Raising Cane's** (chain fried chicken tenders) and **Kimchi Box** (chain Korean fried chicken), all in East Lansing. Barbecue joints also popped up all over the place — just look at **Valley Wings** in Okemos, **Dickey's Barbecue Pit** next to Frandor Shopping Center, **Smoke N' Pig BBQ** next to the Lansing Mall and **Detroit Wing Co.** in south Lansing and East Lansing. I'm sure there's more, but these are just the ones I'm aware of.

Coming soon in the new year are **Pablo's** long-awaited eastside location and **Strange Matter's** Old Town digs and expanded service at its downtown loca-



Liz Ferguson/City Pulse

The Nashville tofu sandwich at Veg Head, which opened in downtown Lansing in October of this year.

tion. And who knows what other culinary pleasures await us? I, for one, can't wait to see what else 2023 has in store for the avid eaters of Lansing.

pushes creative boundaries. This fall, PCTC had three productions in seven locations and five cities, including performances of "All is Calm: The Christmas Truce of 1914" in three museum environments. Most outstanding, however, was the production of Stephen Sondheim's "Merrily We Roll Along," a scathing story of the excess of success. Performed in the barebones setting of the Lansing Media Center, the high-caliber cast and slick costumes were all that was needed to engage audiences in this tragic tale of friendships forged and lost.

Our collegiate theater programs are fortunate to have permanent homes, but sometimes those spaces can still be a challenge. Michigan State University's Department of Theatre always rises to that challenge, though. Consider "For the Love of (or, The Roller Derby Play)." Director Alexis Black recreated the experience of roller derby practices and matches in the tiny Arena Theatre, overcoming any space issues with fantastic casting, imaginative choreography and professional-level music, sound and lighting effects. MSU had an equally thrilling production in the spring with "Hit the Wall," a gut-wrenching retelling of the Stonewall Riots of 1969.

Overall, 2022 proved that the Greater Lansing theater scene could rebound from the past two years of restrictions and come out even stronger. For proof of this, we go all the way back to February and consider Lansing Community College's first production of 2022, "Cabaret." In a perverse way, it was a fitting choice. To have the 2022 theater season open with such a jaw-dropping production boded well for the rest of the year. Watching the miscreants of the Kit Kat Klub embrace life and libations as the restrictions of the rising Nazi party closed in on them echoed the harshest period of the pandemic. Still, Connor Kelly's portrayal of the Emcee, as he joyously embraced hedonism, seemed to signal that it was time for us all to break free, if only for a few glorious hours.

# Reviewing 2022's revues

By MARY CUSACK

The recovery of the Greater Lansing theater scene in 2022 is nothing short of miraculous. As the world adjusts to a new reality with COVID-19, so does the local theater community. It would be difficult to give a comprehensive review of the 2022 theater scene in this limited space, and few reviewers have the ability to see every production in the area, so what follows is one reviewer's reflections on the year.

Perhaps the most amazing aspect of this year is that all of the major theater companies in the Lansing area survived the restrictions of the pandemic and managed to offer some form of a 2022 season. Beyond just surviving, the pandemic experience drove the companies to innovate, push creative boundaries and strengthen relationships.

Starting with that last point, as Over the Ledge Theatre Co. began prepping for its season in May, it found that its home base, the Ledges Playhouse in Grand Ledge, could not be utilized due to facility conditions. We discovered how truly supportive the Greater Lansing theater community is when Riverwalk Theatre offered its black box space to Over the Ledge, which allowed the company to produce two summer shows.

Riverwalk programmed a full season for itself as well. One standout was "Fabulation, or the Re-Education of Undine," an ensemble piece directed by Rose Jangmi Cooper, featuring local artist Julian Van Dyke. As the nation navigates through its ongoing quagmire of oppression, discrimination and battles for equality, one way of building empathy across racial divides is through storytelling, and live theater has a unique power to create a shared experi-

ence. Productions like "Fabulation" are a meaningful way to start those hard conversations.

Taking that topic one step further, Williamston Theatre offered up "The Magnolia Ballet, Part 1," which tells the story of a gay, Black teenager growing up in Georgia, coming to terms with his identity as he synthesizes the experiences of his father and forefathers. Haunting and sometimes harrowing, the play featured an outstanding cast whose performances were chilling.

Despite not having a permanent facility, Ixion Theatre Ensemble has been fortunate to have space in the Lansing Mall for the past two years. The former American Eagle store wasn't the perfect venue for Ixion's production of "Incognito," as it needs renovations to be a true performance space. Still, anchored by local legends Doak Bloss and Gini Larson, the show was a thought-provoking success.

Speaking of theater facilities ... who needs them? Certainly not Peppermint Creek Theatre Co., which consistently



Photo by Kevin Fowler

Lansing Community College's jaw-dropping production of "Cabaret" in February set the tone for the rest of Greater Lansing's theater performances in 2022.



from

**CityPULSE**

# 2022 brings new highs for cannabis

By LUCAS HENKEL

This year has been an absolutely wild ride. Here are a few of the many highlights that 2022 has bestowed upon us in the cannabis community:

#### Dispensaries expand in Lansing

This year, stoners of Lansing saw a wave of new dispensaries enter the city as well as expansions to already established pot shops. **Herbana's** drive-through dispensary and jaw-droppingly low prices had folks from all over the city flocking to its circular building. **Bazonzo's** expanded and opened a second location towards the south side. **Pure Roots** entered the scene with a proper introduction from Lansing Mayor Andy Schor during its grand opening ceremony in September. **Ascend Wellness** descended upon Michigan Avenue with its budget-friendly ounces. And new signs for future **Pure Options** locations have appeared in three different spots throughout Lansing. Cannabis lovers can now shop in-store or online at one of the 28 licensed dispensaries in the area.

## Lansterdam in Review: 2022



#### Hash rosin cartridges: the future of vaping

Potheads all over the state of Michigan began ditching their distillate vape cartridges in 2022 for more potent options, like hash rosin cartridges. Hash rosin is a specific type of cannabis hash that bubbles when smoked and is produced with only ice and water. By removing solvents like butane during the extraction process, consumers can expect a potent and terpene-rich experience. Hash rosin is truly a top-tier product, but it has not always been accessible to the typical consumer due to how involved and laborious the process of creating it can be. This is why it's so mind-blowing that companies like Rochester Hills-based **Glorious Cannabis Co.** now offer multiple hash rosin cartridge options. Glorious



Courtesy of Glorious Cannabis Co.

Glorious Cannabis Co. recently released a line of bubble hash rosin carts, perfect for on-the-go stoners looking for a potent, terpene-rich experience.

Cannabis recently released bubble hash rosin cartridges that are inspired by its popular bubble hash-infused pre-rolled joints and tasty flavor lineup: Banana Kush, 24K Punch and 420 Peach. Each cartridge is made with solventless bubble hash rosin and is the perfect option for the on-the-go stoner. My personal favorite flavor from the current lineup is the 24K Punch, but my fingers and toes are crossed in hope that the company adds its Raspberry Kush and/or Blackberry Gelato in 2023.

#### 200-milligram edibles become recreational

In August, Michigan's Cannabis Regulatory Agency gave the green light to allow edible cannabis products to contain up to 200 milligrams of THC per package for adults 21 and older. Since then, Michigan's edible market has absolutely exploded with high-dosage gummies, baked goods and elixirs. In November alone, the CRA reported about \$22 million in sales in the infused edible category. A recent study by the Brightfield Group, a Chicago-based agency that studies comprehensive data on cannabis trends and sales, reported that the most popular flavors of edibles in Michigan are chocolate, mango, watermelon, lime and strawberry.

**Kyle Kaminski puff-puff-passes the torch**

Since the column's inception a little

over two years ago, Lansterdam has become a staple in the Lansing cannabis community. I remember picking up my first issue when I moved here in December 2021; I was absolutely giddy to see cannabis being discussed in such a public and accessible forum. Kyle Kaminski, the creator of the Lansterdam column and former City Pulse managing editor, wrote in a way that got me excited to learn more about the community that surrounded me. When I read about Kyle's departure from City Pulse this past August, I was worried it would mean my favorite column and the community attached to it would go up in smoke. Don't get me wrong, I'm super stoked for Kyle and all the work he's doing as the editor of The Gander. Its mission of upholding and protecting fact-based, credible journalism to create well-informed and engaged readers is amazing to me, and I wish Kyle nothing but success. I hope to pick up where he left off with Lansterdam and continue to cover this scene and all of its components.

As 2022 comes to a close, I would like to thank all of the folks in the cannabis community that make it happen, day in and day out. Michigan cannabis would not be the multi-million-dollar industry that it is today were it not for the tireless efforts of the folks that work in it. I'm very excited to see (and smoke) all that 2023 has to offer.

**As we close out 2022, All Star Mechanical would like to thank everyone for their support. We've built this business by being kind and competent. Anyone who has dealt with us knows that we genuinely care. With our hearts on our sleeves, we'll continue to loudly and proudly claim we are the best in Lansing residential HVAC and remind you that Black Lives Matter. Bodily autonomy matters. Human rights matter. Denying the dignity of one lessens the dignity of all. Silence is apathy, apathy is lethal. Happy New Year. May everyone be visible and cared for.**

**Jonesin' Crossword**

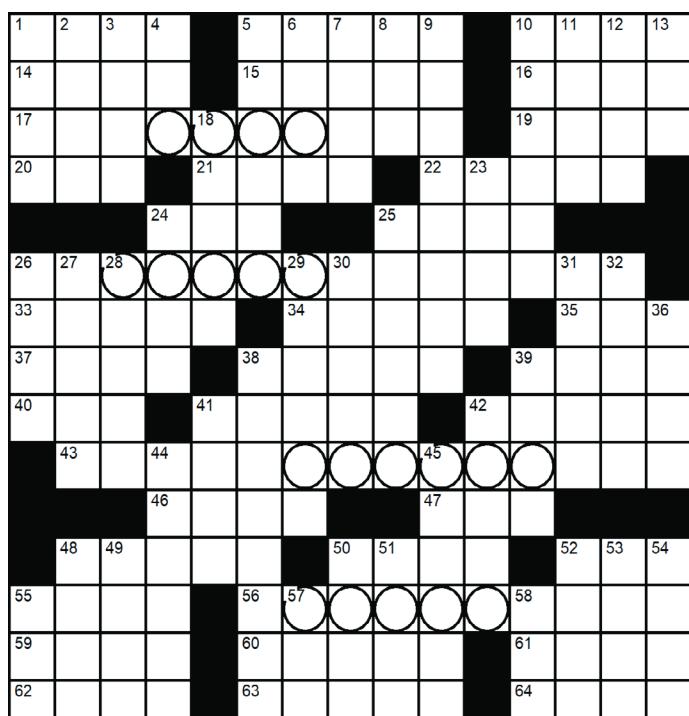
By Matt Jones

"Catch Me If You Can"  
-- you've fallen for my trap!

by Matt Jones  
© 2022 Matt Jones

## ACROSS

1. Singular
5. Clean a spill, maybe
10. Mixed-breed dog
14. Cowboy boot part
15. AKC working dog
16. Diva's time to shine
17. Heavy cannon turret used in the "Star Wars" universe
19. Robert who resumed the CEO role at Disney (replacing another Bob) in 2022
20. Santa Fe-to-Roswell dir.
21. Tofu bean, in the U.K.
22. \_\_\_ Tots
24. Blockbuster rental need
25. 12-point type
26. Native American ballerina who'll be on one of the five 2023 American Women Quarters
33. Orange-yellow pigment
34. "If \_\_\_ Street Could Talk" (2018 film)
35. Negative vote
37. Cawing bird
38. Steak option
39. "Hold \_\_\_ your butts!"
40. Family
41. Coin of Denmark
42. "24" agent Jack
43. Even considering consequences
46. Castle protection
47. Write-\_\_\_ (some votes)
48. Lead-in to "Go," "Shop," or "Save" in convenience store names
50. Grime
52. Tooth doc's deg.



55. Actor Epps

56. 2022 follow-up to "Knives Out"

59. "Gladiator" setting

60. Pale purple shade

61. "Go back" computer command

62. Forever and a day

63. "All in the Family" character

64. Clueless Overwatch player, say

## DOWN

1. Grounded jets, for short

2. Numbered musical piece

3. Fly fishing fly, e.g.

4. Scepter sphere

5. Jeppson's \_\_\_ Chicago-made liquor

6. Copacetic

7. Site of a tilted tower

8. Colorado native

9. It's a little bit ...

10. Cocktail created at Trader Vic's

11. Primal instinct

12. Crowdfunding level

13. 2022 movie starring Cate Blanchett

18. Trash can resident

23. Dull pain

24. Penthouse selling point

25. Uranus, e.g.

26. Faux

27. Bitter in taste

28. River that flows through Lake Geneva

29. \_\_\_ Elementary" (Quinta Brunson comedy)

30. "Once Upon a Time in the West" director Sergio

31. Sense of boredom

32. Greek goddess trio, with "the"

36. Wars of the Roses side

38. Shape with a hypotenuse, maybe

39. Rowing needs

41. BTS genre

42. Japanese box lunch

44. Graham cracker desserts

45. Actor Judd of "The Fabelmans"

48. Air pollutant

49. Lacking excitement

50. "The Persistence of Memory" surrealist

51. "What \_\_\_ stake?"

52. "The Flintstones" pet

53. Long-extinct bird

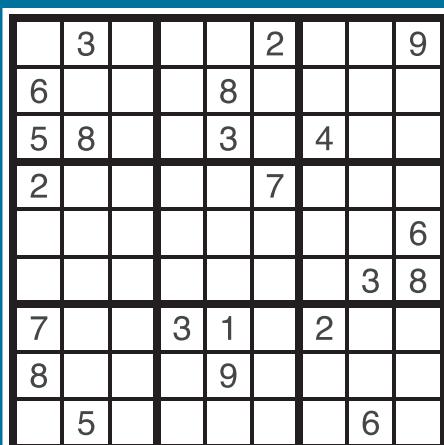
54. Holier-than-thou sort

55. "R.I.P." singer Rita

57. Jar topper

58. Cloistered one

Answers on page 18

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

**Free Will Astrology**

By Rob Brezsny

Dec. 28, 2022 - Jan. 3, 2023

**ARIES (March 21-April 19):** "My life was the best omelet you could make with a chainsaw," observed flamboyant author Thomas McGuane. That's a witty way to encapsulate his tumultuous destiny. There have been a few moments in 2022 when you might have been tempted to invoke a similar metaphor about your own evolving story. But the good news is that your most recent chainsaw-made omelet is finished and ready to eat. I think you'll find its taste is savory. And I believe it will nourish you for a long time. (Soon it will be time to start your next omelet, maybe without using the chainsaw this time!)

**Taurus (April 20-May 20):** After meticulous research of 2023's astrological omens, I have come to a radical conclusion: You should tell the people who care for you that you'd like to be called by new pet names. I think you need to intensify their ability and willingness to view you as a sublime creature worthy of adoration. I don't necessarily recommend you use old standbys like "cutie," "honey," "darling" or "angel." I'm more in favor of unique and charismatic versions, something like "Jubilee" or "Zestie" or "Fantasma" or "Yowie-Wowie." Have fun coming up with pet names that you are very fond of. The more, the better.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 20):** If I could choose some fun and useful projects for you to master in 2023, they would include the following: 1. Be in constant competition with yourself to outdo past accomplishments. But at the same time, be extra compassionate toward yourself. 2. Borrow and steal other people's good ideas and use them with even better results than they would use them. 3. Acquire an emerald or two, or wear jewelry that features emeralds. 4. Increase your awareness of and appreciation for birds. 5. Don't be attracted to folks who aren't good for you just because they are unusual or interesting. 6. Upgrade your flirting so it's even more nuanced and amusing, while at the same time making sure it never violates anyone's boundaries.

**CANCER (June 21-July 22):** When she was young, Carolyn Forché was a conventional poet focused on family and childhood. But she transformed. Relocating to El Salvador during its civil war, she began to write about political trauma. Next, she lived in Lebanon during its civil war. She witnessed firsthand the tribulations of military violence and the imprisonment of activists. Her creative work increasingly illuminated questions of social justice. At age 72, she is now a renowned human rights advocate. In bringing her to your attention, I don't mean to suggest that you engage in an equally dramatic self-reinvention. But in 2023, I do recommend drawing on her as an inspirational role model. You will have great potential to discover deeper aspects of your life's purpose — and enhance your understanding of how to offer your best gifts.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22):** Are the characters in Carlos Castaneda's books on shamanism fictional or real? It doesn't matter to me. I love the wisdom of his alleged teacher, Don Juan Matus. He said, "Look at every path closely and deliberately. Try it as many times as you think necessary. Then ask yourself, and yourself alone, one question. Does this path have a heart? If it does, the path is good; if it doesn't, it is of no use." Don Juan's advice is perfect for you in the coming nine months, Leo. I hope you will tape a copy of his words on your bathroom mirror and read it at least once a week.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22):** Teacher and author Byron Katie claims, "The voice within is what I'm married to. My lover is the place inside me where an honest yes and no come from." I happen to know that she has also been married for many years to a writer named Stephen Mitchell. So, she has no problem being wed to both Mitchell and her inner voice. In accordance with astrological omens, I invite you to propose marriage to your own inner voice. The coming year will be a fabulous time to deepen your relationship with this crucial source

of useful and sacred revelation

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22):** Libran philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche offered advice that is perfect for you in 2023. It's strenuous. It's demanding and daunting. If you take it to heart, you will have to perform little miracles you may not yet have the confidence to try. But I have faith in you, Libra. That's why I don't hesitate to provide you with Nietzsche's rant: "No one can build you the bridge on which you, and only you, must cross the river of life. There may be countless trails and bridges and demigods who would gladly carry you across, but only at the price of pawning and forgoing yourself. There is one path in the world that none can walk but you. Where does it lead? Don't ask, walk!"

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21):** How might you transform the effects of the limitations you've been dealing with? What could you do to make it work in your favor as 2023 unfolds? I encourage you to think about these questions with daring and audacity. The more moxie you summon, the greater your luck will be in making the magic happen. Here's another riddle to wrestle with: What surrender or sacrifice could you initiate that might lead, in unforeseen ways, to a plucky breakthrough? I have a sense that's what will transpire as you weave your way through the coming months in quest of surprising opportunities.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21):** Sagittarian singer Tina Turner confided, "My greatest beauty secret is being happy with myself." I hope you will experiment with that formula in 2023. I believe the coming months will potentially be a time when you will be happier with yourself than you have ever been before — more at peace with your unique destiny, more accepting of your unripe qualities, more in love with your depths and more committed to treating yourself with utmost care and respect. Therefore, if Tina Turner is accurate, 2023 will also be a year when your beauty will be ascendant.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19):** "I'm homesick all the time," writes author Sarah Addison Allen. "I just don't know where home is. There's this promise of happiness out there. I know it. I even feel it sometimes. But it's like chasing the moon. Just when I think I have it, it disappears into the horizon." If you have ever felt pangs like hers, Capricorn, I predict they will fade in 2023. That's because I expect you will clearly identify the feeling of home you want — and thereby make it possible to find and create the place, the land and the community where you will experience a resounding peace and stability.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18):** Storyteller Michael Meade tells us, "The ship is always off course. Anybody who sails knows that. Sailing is being off-course and correcting. That gives a sense of what life is about." I interpret Meade's words to mean that we are never in a perfect groove heading directly toward our goal. We are constantly deviating from the path we might wish we could follow with unfailing accuracy. That's not a bug in the system; it's a feature. And as long as we obsess over the idea that we're not where we should be, we are distracted from doing our real work. And the real work? The ceaseless corrections. I hope you will regard what I'm saying here as one of your core meditations in 2023, Aquarius.

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20):** A Chinese proverb tells us, "Great souls have wills. Feeble souls have wishes." I guess that's true in an abstract way. But in practical terms, most of us are a mix of both great and feeble. We have a modicum of willpower and a bundle of wishes. In 2023, though, you Pisceans could make dramatic moves to strengthen your willpower as you shed wimpy wishes. In my psychic vision of your destiny, I see you feeding metaphorical iron supplements to your resolve and determination.

# OUT on the TOWN

## Events & Happenings in Lansing This Week

### Wednesday, Dec. 28

**50 over Fitness** - The Meridian 50 Plus Stretch and Flex Exercise group exercises at Meridian Township Central Park Pavilion (Old Farmers Market) 9-10 a.m. 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos. 517-853-4600. meridian50plus.com.

**Amazing Artists** - \$75. 9 a.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Drive, Lansing. 517-485-8116. impression5.org.

**Beginning Balloon Animals with Mr. Greg** - Registration req. 11 a.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. 517-627-7014. gladl.org.

**Holiday Open House** - All three floors of the house will be decorated for the holidays. \$5, children 12 and under free. 1-7 p.m. Turner-Dodge House, 100 E. North St., Lansing. 517-483-4220.

**"Lighthouses of the Great Lakes"** - 6 a.m.-9 p.m. Public Art Gallery, Hannah Community Center, 9819 Abbot Road, East Lansing. 517-333-2580. cityofeastlansing.com/353/public-art-gallery.

**Live Music at the Monk - Vene Thomas and Bart Moore** - 7 p.m. EagleMonk Pub and Brewery, 4906 W. Mt. Hope Hwy., Lansing. 517-708-7350. eaglemunkbrewing.com.

**Meditation in the Thich Nhat Hanh tradition** - All are welcome to join our weekly practice! 7-9 p.m. Van Hanh Temple, 3015 S. MLK Jr Blvd., Lansing. iamc.info.

**Minecraft at Charlotte Community Library** - Play on the library's private server! Grades 3 and up. Laptops provided. Registration req. 4 p.m. 226 S. Bostwick St., Charlotte. 517-543-8859. charlottelibrary.org.

**William Hays Color Linocuts** - View four dozen multi-color linoleum block prints. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Saper Galleries and Custom Framing, 433 Albert Ave., East Lansing. 517-351-0815. sapergalleries.com.

### Thursday, Dec. 29

**Grace Rosen - A Merry, Unhinged Cabaret** - 7 p.m. UrbanBeat, 1213 Turner Road, Lansing. 517-331-8440. urbanbeatevents.com.

**Holiday Open House** - All three floors of the house will be decorated for the holidays. \$5, children 12 and under free. 1-7 p.m. Turner-Dodge House, 100 E. North St., Lansing. 517-483-4220.

**Ladies Silver Blades Skating Club** - Join other adult women for fun, exercise, friendship and skating practice. 9:30-11:20 a.m. Suburban Ice, 2810 Hannah Blvd., East Lansing. ladiessilverblades.org.

**Science of PokéMon** - \$75. 9 a.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Drive, Lansing. 517-485-8116. impression5.org.

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

Manifestation, 809 Center St., Suite 7, Lansing. 517-974-5540. manifestlansing.com.

**William Hays Color Linocuts** - View four dozen multi-color linoleum block prints. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Saper Galleries and Custom Framing, 433 Albert Ave., East Lansing. 517-351-0815. sapergalleries.com.

### Friday, Dec. 30

**50 over Fitness** - The Meridian 50 Plus Stretch and Flex Exercise group exercises at Meridian Township Central Park Pavilion (Old Farmers Market) 9-10 a.m. 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos. 517-853-4600. meridian50plus.com.

**Cool Chemistry** - \$75. 9 a.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Drive, Lansing. 517-485-8116. impression5.org.

**Darin Larner Jr. at The Peanut Barrel** - 8 p.m. 521 E. Grand River Ave., East Lansing. 517-351-0608. peanutbarrel.com.

**DJ John Beltran** - 8 p.m. UrbanBeat, 1213 Turner Road, Lansing. 517-331-8440. urbanbeatevents.com.

**New Year's Eve Eve** - 9 p.m. The Avenue, 2021 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. 517-999-7549. avenuecafelansing.com.

**Holiday Open House** - All three floors of the house will be decorated for the holidays. \$5, children 12 and under free. Noon-5 p.m. Turner-Dodge House, 100 E. North St., Lansing. 517-483-4220.

**SIMKEN HEIGHTS** - 8 p.m. Mac's Bar, 2700 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. 517-484-6795. macsbar.com.

**William Hays Color Linocuts** - View four dozen multi-color linoleum block prints. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Saper Galleries and Custom Framing, 433 Albert Ave., East Lansing. 517-351-0815. sapergalleries.com.

### Saturday, Dec. 31

**HELL IN A BUCKET** - 8 p.m. Mac's Bar, 2700 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. 517-484-6795. macsbar.com.

**Holiday Open House** - All three floors of the house will be decorated for the holidays. \$5, children 12 and under free. Noon-5 p.m. Turner-Dodge House, 100 E. North St., Lansing. 517-483-4220.

**New Year's Eve Contra and Square Dance** - Community potluck at 6:30. New dancer workshop at 7:30. All dances taught – no partner needed. Vax card and mask req. DeWitt Charter Township Community Center, 16101 Brook Road, Lansing. 517-337-0235. tenpoundfiddle.org.

**TGIF Dinner and Dance New Year's Eve Party** - 8 p.m.-1 a.m. Hawk Hollow Banquet Center, 15101 Chandler Road, Bath. 734-604-5095. tgifdance.com/calendar.

**William Hays Color Linocuts** - View four

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

### Lansing Holiday Light Show

Through Dec. 31

5-9 p.m.

**Cottonwood Campground, 5339 N. Aurelius Road, Lansing**

The Lansing Holiday Light Show, open from 5 to 9 p.m. today (Dec. 28) through Saturday, will cap off this year's holiday season with one final, festive light display. If you didn't get the chance to make it out to Potter Park Zoo's Wonderland of Lights or Frances Park's Holiday Nights of Lights, don't miss out on this opportunity to see holiday characters and themes brought to life through dazzling, twinkling illuminations.

The display is a half-mile drive-through, meaning you won't have to brave the cold to enjoy the festive atmosphere. Plus, you can tune your car's radio to hear holiday music synced to the flashing lights.

Tickets are \$25 per carload and can be purchased at [holidaylightshow.com/lansing](http://holidaylightshow.com/lansing).



dozen multi-color linoleum block prints. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Saper Galleries and Custom Framing, 433 Albert Ave., East Lansing. 517-351-0815. sapergalleries.com.

Township Central Park Pavilion (Old Farmers Market) 9-10 a.m. 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos. 517-853-4600. meridian50plus.com.

### Sunday, Jan. 1

**Addiction to Hope** - Ecumenical prayer service and civil discourse that moves ourselves and our communities from addiction to violence to hope for peace, adopting the 12-Step methodology of Alcoholics Anonymous. 1 p.m. St. Therese Catholic Church, 102 W. Randolph St., Lansing.

**Burning Bowl and White Stone Ceremony** - Releasing 2022 with a burning bowl ceremony and setting the tone for 2023 with a white stone meditation. 10:30 a.m. Unity Spiritual Center of Lansing, 2395 Washington Road, Lansing. 517-371-3010. unitylansing.org.

**Dixon's Violin** - Noon. Hilltop Yoga, 107 E. Cesar E. Chavez Ave., Lansing. 517-858-9511. hilltopyoga.com.

**Michigan 4-H Spectacular Youth Leadership Institute** - 10 a.m. Wells Hall, 619 Red Cedar Road, East Lansing. 517-546-3950. 906-439-5065.

### Monday, Jan. 2

**50 over Fitness** - The Meridian 50 Plus Stretch and Flex Exercise group exercises at Meridian

Fiber Circle at Charlotte Community Library - Social gathering for knitters, crocheters and stitchers of all ages and skill levels. 6 p.m. 226 S. Bostwick St., Charlotte. 517-543-8859. charlottelibrary.org.

**"Mirari, the Way of the Marys" with Lucille Olson** - 1:30 p.m. Zoom ID: 177 417 886. Password: 601744. unitylansing.org.

**William Hays Color Linocuts** - View four dozen multi-color linoleum block prints. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Saper Galleries and Custom Framing, 433 Albert Ave., East Lansing. 517-351-0815. sapergalleries.com.

### Tuesday, Jan. 3

**Preschool Family Storytime** - Stories and literacy-enhancing activities for ages 1-6. 11 a.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. 517-627-7014. gladl.org.

**Preteen Reads Book Club** - Grades 4-6. Registration req. 6 p.m. Charlotte Community Library, 226 S. Bostwick St., Charlotte. 517-543-8859. charlottelibrary.org.

**Toy Inventor** - \$75. 9 a.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Drive, Lansing. 517-485-8116. impression5.org.

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# Live & Local

# CityPULSE

## The Avenue

2021 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing

**Rodeo Boys, Grey Matter, Fat Angry**

**Hens, Foxgrave**

Fri., Dec. 30, 9 p.m.

**Space Dogg Collective & GTG**

**Records Party**

Sat., Dec. 31, 8 p.m.



## EagleMonk Pub and Brewery

4906 W. Mt. Hope Hwy., Lansing

**Vene Thomas and Bart Moore**

Wed., Dec. 28, 7 p.m.



## The Exchange

314 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing

**The Knock Offs**

Sat., Dec. 31, 9:30 p.m.



## The Green Door

2005 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing

**Mixed Flavors**

Fri., Dec. 30, 8:30 p.m.

**New Year's Eve Bash –  
Miranda and the M80s**

Sat., Dec. 31, 8:30 p.m.



## Mac's Bar

2700 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing

**Simken Heights**

Fri., Dec. 30, 8 p.m.

**Hell In A Bucket**

Sat., Dec. 31, 8 p.m.



## The Peanut Barrel

521 E. Grand River Ave., East Lansing

**Darin Larner Jr.**

Fri., Dec. 30, 8 p.m.



## UrbanBeat

1213 Turner Road, Lansing

**Grace Rosen – A Merry, Unhinged  
Cabaret**

Thurs., Dec. 29, 7 p.m.

**DJ John Beltran**

Fri., Dec. 30, 8 p.m.

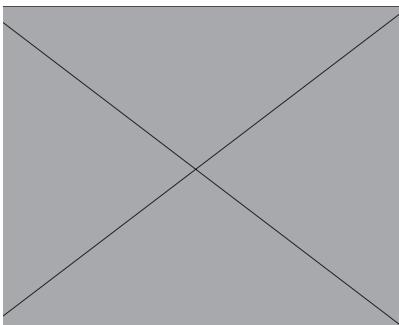


# TURN IT DOWN!

Loud dispatches from Lansing's music scene

BY RICH TUPICA

## STAGING A COMEBACK



Courtesy images

A sparkly new Mac's Bar (left) reopened in November after a lengthy renovation. Up the street, in downtown Lansing, The Ovation performing arts center is in the works for a potential late 2024 opening.

## New venues offered hope in 2022

Attempting to look back on Greater Lansing's 2022 and not bring up the previous year is impossible, at least when discussing the local music scene. Its sustainability has been under pressure for the last couple of years, for obvious reasons.

Of course, the pandemic shutdown shuttered venues across the country, and Lansing was no exception. The effects were so devastating that in early 2021, the Michigan Economic Development Corp.'s Michigan Stages Survival Grant Program allotted funds to more than 100 area venues to help ease the ongoing loss of ticket sales.

But it was too late for some. The Loft — a hub for local indie bands — was permanently closed. Was this closure going to be a trend? The future was uncertain, perhaps bleak. Down the street, Mac's Bar wasn't out of business, but it remained closed for building-gutting renovations. In short, for all of 2021 and most of 2022, Lansing was down to just a few venues that welcomed all sorts of left-of-center genres. That said: Here's a shout-out to The Avenue Café, UrbanBeat and The Green Door for weathering the storm and keeping the doors open as much as possible during the messiest days.

And while The Loft may have been a casualty, in November of this year, the fully made-over Mac's Bar finally reopened its doors. Despite speculation that live music was axed from the business plan, the room is indeed booking live-and-loud, local shows.

Beyond the return of Mac's, 2022 presented other glimmers of promise and growth: new spots for live music in Lansing! At 500 and 520 S. Washington Ave. in downtown Lansing, the city announced a \$5 million Michigan

Strategic Fund performance-based grant to build The Ovation performing arts center. After years of planning, this center, after its completion, will fill a hole in the mid-sized entertainment market, holding 1,400 seats or 2,000 standing concertgoers. The projected multi-million-dollar space will also serve as the permanent home for the Lansing Public Media Center and (possibly) the Lansing Art Gallery, All of the Above Hip-Hop Academy and apartments. A bonus: this would fill in a physical gap at Washington Avenue and Lenawee Street. So far, fall 2024 remains the target date for its opening.

Up the street, the newly renovated building at 224 S. Washington Square will soon be Hall 224, another new spot for live performances. The two-story, 12,000-square-foot venue (formerly Club Paradise) boasts a standing-room capacity of 900 and projects a spring 2023 grand opening.

As if that's not enough good news, yet another entertainment facility, The Junction, opened at 410 Clippert St. this year. Housed in the former Green Dot Stables, the 12,000-square-foot venue offers everything from twangy country shows to bumping hip-hop concerts. This spot features new, professional sound and light systems that are suitable for even big-name acts.

So far, there's also been some wrestling, go-go dancers and college nights with DJs, proving The Junction is open to hosting a wide range of events. This is a breath of fresh air, considering what our 2021 situation was. For the sake of local, working musicians and those who manage the stages, let's hope 2023 continues this promising upswing.



## Events

from page 16

**William Hays Color Linocuts** - View four dozen multi-color linoleum block prints. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Saper Galleries and Custom Framing, 433 Albert Ave., East Lansing. 517-351-0815. [sapergalleries.com](http://sapergalleries.com).

### Wednesday, Jan. 4

**50 over Fitness** - The Meridian 50 Plus Stretch and Flex Exercise group exercises at Meridian Township Central Park Pavilion (Old Farmers Market) 9-10 a.m. 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos. 517-853-4600. [meridian50plus.com](http://meridian50plus.com).

**Crack the Code** - \$75. 9 a.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Drive, Lansing. 517-485-8116. [impression5.org](http://impression5.org).

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

**Learn to Play Mountain Dulcimer** - Learn to play melodies on a dulcimer. Registration req. 6 p.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131

E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. 517-627-7014. [gladl.org](http://gladl.org).

**Meditation in the Thich Nhat Hanh tradition** - All are welcome to join our weekly practice! 7-9 p.m. Van Hanh Temple, 3015 S. MLK Jr Blvd., Lansing. [lamc.info](http://lamc.info).

**Snowy Movie Marathon at Charlotte Community Library** - Come warm up with some popcorn and hot chocolate! 5:30 p.m. 226 S. Bostwick St., Charlotte. 517-543-8859. [charlottelibrary.org](http://charlottelibrary.org).

**Weavers FIVE-YEAR Birthday Party** - Music, food and drink. Feel free to bring something to contribute, but mostly just bring yourselves! 6 p.m. Keys To Manifestation, 809 Center St. #7A, Lansing. 517-974-5540. [Manifestlansing.com](http://Manifestlansing.com).

**William Hays Color Linocuts** - View four dozen multi-color linoleum block prints. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Saper Galleries and Custom Framing, 433 Albert Ave., East Lansing. 517-351-0815. [sapergalleries.com](http://sapergalleries.com).

**Zaha Hadid Design: Untold** - 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Eli & Edythe Broad Art Museum, 547 E. Circle Drive, East Lansing. [broadmuseum.msu.edu](http://broadmuseum.msu.edu).

### CROSSWORD SOLUTION From Pg. 15

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### SUDOKU SOLUTION From Pg. 15

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## Bridal Show January 8, 2023

Noon - 4p.m.

Eagle Eye Banquet Center  
15550 Chandler Rd, East Lansing

present this  
coupon  
to receive:

\$1.00 off

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Regular  
Admission

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

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# FOOD & DRINK

# DINING OUT IN GREATER LANSING

# 2022's vittles in vogue

By LIZY FERGUSON

Looking back at a year of meals consumed, certain patterns emerge. Lansing has a tendency to receive trickle-down trends from the big city (Chicago, by way of Ann Arbor or Grand Rapids) on a lag, but that is to be expected and is, I think, a fair trade for our town's sense of community (i.e., not being able to go anywhere, ever, without seeing someone you know). Following are some non-exhaustive lists of where to find some of my favorite repeat delighters locally.

Charcuterie boards continued their illustrious reign on appetizer menus across the city, and rightly so — I don't think zhuzhed-up crackers and cheese will ever get old. Discover new cheeses, cured meats and their varying, perfectly paired accompaniments at Hooked, The People's Kitchen and

(newly reopened!) Tannin. I have made a budget-friendly meal out of splitting a board with a friend and adding a soup or salad.

For every powerful gust of wind in

A close-up photograph of a meal on a plate, featuring a slice of yellow cheese pizza and some other food items.

The most exciting trend I've noticed and plan to continue supporting with my dollars is the proliferation of Vietnamese restaurants. Pho, the delectable, beefy soup with a broth that just won't quit



VEG-N capitalized on the vegan barbecue trend this year, offering plant-based iterations of classic American favorites.



seems to have really hit its stride this year. Consistently offered over the years at Capital City BBQ (my personal favorite), Pho So 1 and Asia's Finest, there is a fresh iteration to try at the newly opened King Pho in Okemos.

So, what's in the forecast for 2023, you ask? It's looking cloudy with a chance of Korean corn dogs, which recently became available at Make it Sweet, in collaboration with Big Mom's House, as well as the newly opened Kimchi Box in East Lansing. Mozzarella cheese or regular old hot dogs (or a combination of both) are swathed in coatings from the classic cornbread to potatoes or ramen noodles and deep fried. Though it sounds like something designed with Instagram in mind, it would be pretentious of me not to sample it on those grounds. In fact, it's probably only fair that I try one of each. With extra Kewpie mayonnaise, please.

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## TASTY TIDBITS FOR NEW YEAR'S GATHERINGS

All content courtesy  
of Metro Creative  
Connection

# A perfect dish for a New Year's Day brunch

The late-night revelry of New Year's Eve has made New Year's Day brunch a go-to tradition for millions of people. Staying up until the calendar officially turns from one year to the next at the stroke of midnight can make it harder to get out of bed on the morning of Jan. 1, so there may be no better day to plan a brunch than the first day of the calendar year.

Many restaurants offer brunch specials on New Year's Day, but people need not leave home to ensure their first meal of the new year is delicious. This recipe for pan-fried eggs and mixed mushroom sauté on toasted sourdough slices, from "Sunday Brunch," by Betty Rosbottom, could be just the dish to begin a new year.



### Pan-fried eggs and mixed mushroom sauté on toasted sourdough slices

Serves 4

#### Mushroom sauté

1 1/4 ounces mixed dried mushrooms  
1 1/2 cups boiling water  
3 tablespoons olive oil  
8 ounces sliced brown mushrooms  
2 teaspoons minced garlic  
1 teaspoon dried, crushed rosemary (see tip)  
Kosher salt  
Freshly ground black pepper

#### Toast and eggs

4 1/2-inch-thick sourdough slices  
Olive oil  
2 tablespoons unsalted butter  
4 eggs  
Kosher salt  
Freshly ground black pepper  
Rosemary sprigs for garnish (optional)

1. For the mushroom sauté: Place the dried mushrooms in a medium-sized bowl and cover with boiling water. Let stand until softened, 20 minutes. Strain in a sieve with a double-thick lining of paper towels and reserve the soaking liquid. Coarsely chop the mushrooms.

2. Heat the olive oil in a medium, heavy frying pan set over medium heat. When hot, add the brown mushrooms and sauté, stirring often, for 6 minutes. Add the reserved mushrooms, garlic, rosemary and 1/2 teaspoon salt; stir for 1 minute. Add the mushroom liquid and cook, stirring, until it has evaporated, 4 to 7 minutes. Season with salt and several grinds of pepper. Remove the frying pan from the heat and cover with foil to keep warm. (The mushrooms can be prepared one day ahead; cool, cover and refrigerate. Reheat, stirring, over medium heat.)

3. For the toast and eggs: Brush both sides of the bread slices generously with olive oil. Set a 10- to 11-inch nonstick frying pan over medium-high heat and, when hot, add the bread and cook until lightly browned, about 2 minutes per side. Remove the toast and cover loosely with foil. When the pan is cool enough to handle, wipe it out with clean paper towels.

4. Add the butter to the frying pan and set it over medium heat. When the butter starts to foam, break an egg into a saucer, being careful to remove any shell fragments, and gently slide it into the frying pan. Repeat with the remaining eggs. Immediately reduce the heat to low and cook, basting the eggs with some of the butter in the pan frequently, until the

whites are firm and the yolks are still soft and runny, 3 minutes.

5. While the eggs are cooking, arrange a toasted bread slice on each of four plates. Mound the mushrooms evenly over the toast.

6. Remove each egg with a spatula and arrange on top of the mushrooms. Season with salt and pepper and, if desired, garnish each serving with a rosemary sprig. Serve immediately.

**Tip:** If you can't find dried, crushed rosemary, crush regular dried rosemary in an electric spice mill or place it in a self-sealing plastic bag and roll over it with a rolling pin.

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# Champagne takes center stage again

Sparkling wines are made by sealing the beverages before the fermentation process is complete, causing their hallmark effervescent bubbles. Sparkling wines are produced in various regions of the world, but "champagne" is unique to the Champagne region of northeast France, where vines were introduced by the Romans many centuries ago.



One of the most legendary and heralded brands of champagne was created by a French monk named Pérignon. Historians say Pérignon lived from 1638 to 1715 and was admitted in his lifetime to the abbey of Saint-Vanne. He acquired the honorary title of Dom while there and served as cellar master, creating what later would be known as the "vins de Pérignon."

Dom Pérignon champagne is still a prestigious brand today, joined by other leaders of the industry like Moët & Chandon, Veuve Clicquot, Nicolas Feuillatte and Pol Roger. French champagnes are part of elegant toasts, A-list events and five-star dining experiences. They may also be poured on New Year's Eve. All

champagne is sparkling wine, but not all sparkling wine is champagne.

Enjoying champagne on its own in the requisite stemmed glass is tradition, but champagne can also be mixed into any number of cocktails, from bellinis to mimosas. This blood orange champagne cocktail is a variation on the classic mimosa and doesn't necessarily need to be enjoyed at brunch. Serve it on New Year's Eve, or for any special occasion, courtesy of Martha Stewart.

#### Blood orange champagne cocktail

2 1/4 cups freshly squeezed or frozen blood orange juice  
2 750-milliliter bottles of champagne, chilled

Pour 3 tablespoons of juice into each champagne flute. Fill flutes with champagne and serve.

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# Take a dip into flavor

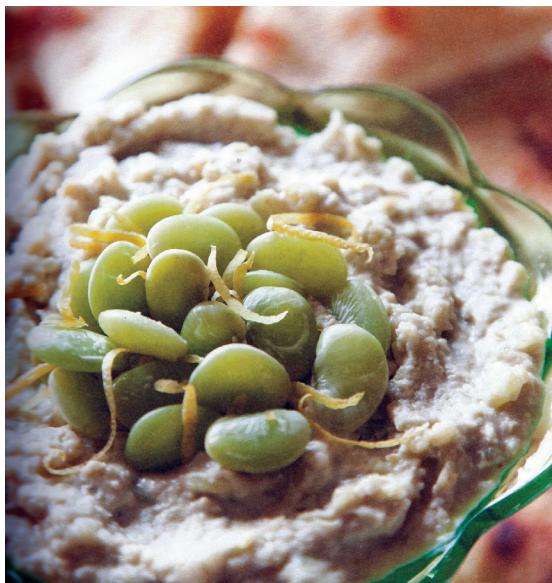
Charcuterie boards have become more popular in recent years. People often make entire meals out of the finger foods and snack-like items that are included in these offerings, which may include anything from sliced cheeses to olives, crackers, vegetables and cured meats. Fresh dips can also be included, and hummus is a favorite for its flavor and versatility.

Traditional hummus is made from chickpeas, also called garbanzo beans. However, many different beans and legumes can be used to make hummus, depending on the desired texture and flavor profile. This recipe for lima bean hummus from "Southern Appetizers," by Denise Gee, is one such variation on the traditional hummus recipe. It's fresh and light and can be served with toasted pita bread or naan.

## Lima bean hummus

Serves 8 to 10

- 1 16-ounce package frozen lima beans
- 1 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/4 cup tahini paste
- 2 to 3 garlic cloves
- 2 teaspoons lemon zest, plus more for garnish
- 2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon sea salt
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- Paprika for garnish (optional)



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# Wrap up this app at your holiday cocktail party

Cocktail parties feature prominently on social schedules each holiday season. Such get-togethers are convenient because the foods and beverages served are designed to be small and portable, which can save any holiday host time in the kitchen.

There may be plenty of prepared foods in the grocer's freezer that can be served for gatherings, but the taste of easy, homemade offerings can mingle with the time-savers when guests arrive. Bacon-wrapped, goat cheese-stuffed dates are an easily prepared appetizer that pairs sweet with savory. Even better, these morsels are delicious when served warm out of the oven or can be eaten at room temperature when late-arriving guests stroll in.

Wrap up cocktail party spreads with this recipe, courtesy of "Spectacular Spreads: 50 Amazing Food Spreads for Any Occasion," by Meagan Brown.



Courtesy photo

the sides together to close a bit.

Wrap each date with a half slice of bacon and secure with a toothpick. Arrange the bacon-wrapped dates on the prepared baking sheet.

Bake for 15 to 20 minutes, turning the dates halfway through so the bacon is evenly cooked. Transfer the bacon-wrapped dates to a serving platter and drizzle with the hot honey. Garnish with parsley. Serve warm or at room temperature.

## Appetizers

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# The great white miso



By ARI LEVAUX

Miso is best known for miso soup, and I've always enjoyed a good bowl. But there is more to this salty, fermented soybean paste than what's in the bowl that precedes your sushi order. Miso is as versatile as mayonnaise and comes in a spectrum of colors, each with different formulations and properties.

Darker shades of miso have more flavor, with red miso, which is fermented with barley, having the deepest flavor. This makes red miso the usual choice in miso soup. White miso, made from a combination of fermented soybeans and rice, is the mellowest on the spectrum. It is so mild and sweet that you can eat it straight off a spoon. I had never tried it until I needed some for a white miso-glazed baked salmon recipe.

The recipe is simple. Mix the juice

of a lemon with a quarter cup of white miso and spread the resulting slurry on the fish, then bake and sprinkle with sesame seeds. After that, I was hooked on the mild-but-rich flavor of white miso. And since I had most of a container of it left over after making the recipe, I began searching for ways to use it.

I found that adding white miso to complex dishes imparts a nice dose of umami without making it obvious what is behind it. It simply makes the foods taste better without making them taste like miso.

As I explored ways to use white miso, it seemed as though every innovation I came up with had already been discovered by vegans. When I added it to a batch of pho, I did not have high hopes. It seemed like such an incongruous combination, but I had the pho, and I had



Courtesy of Ari LeVaux

A trio of white miso dishes: fried tofu with ginger and garlic, miso butter-baked potatoes and mashed sweet potatoes with miso butter. On the round plate is a dollop of white miso.

the white miso, so why not? To my surprise, it greatly improved the pho, adding a rich foundation of umami without altering the characteristic aroma and flavor. I was equally shocked to Google "miso pho" and find a cluster of vegan pho recipes that take advantage of miso to compensate for the lack of meat.

Next, I added some white miso to a marinara sauce, assuming again that I was breaking new ground. The kids, who generally frown on any alteration to the basic, red spaghetti sauce, chose the white miso marinara in a side-by-side comparison. This rendition also exists online and is again a vegetarian favorite. Clearly, the meat-free community has caught on to the meaty qualities of miso and embraced it as a secret weapon. But that hasn't stopped me from adding miso to meat dishes.

To add miso to a soup or sauce, it is imperative to get out all the lumps, because not everyone enjoys it by the mouthful the way I do. Pour a small quantity of the soup or sauce into a little bowl and mix the miso in until it's totally smooth, then add the mixture back to the pot or pan and stir it in.

Adding white miso to a complex dish is a slick way to improve a recipe without altering its vibe. When adding it to simpler foods, I prefer mixing it with butter first. Simply mash together equal parts white miso and softened butter, and you've got a mild, cozy paste that's great on rice, mashed potatoes, roasted roots and other starchy foods. You can even slather it onto bread. Adding lemon, garlic and black pepper to miso butter creates a tangy, all-purpose sauce that I like on freshly cooked pasta, steamed vegetables, meat and mashed sweet potatoes.

If you don't like butter, you can substitute olive oil in this concoction. The

proportions of all the ingredients are flexible; it's all to taste. If a batch doesn't taste miso-y enough, add more. But to get you into the ballpark, here are some basic proportions. After that, a recipe for white miso tofu with ginger and garlic.

## White miso butter

Only the first two ingredients are mandatory. After that, it's up to you and the context to which you will apply this paste. For plain rice, I would stick to just miso and butter. For potatoes, I would skip the lemon juice but keep the garlic and black pepper. For meat, fish, vegetables and pasta, use the whole list.

1/4 cup white miso  
1/4 cup softened butter  
2 tablespoons lemon juice  
1 teaspoon pressed garlic  
1/4 teaspoon black pepper

## White miso tofu

1 pound tofu, cut into one-inch cubes, with excess water drained or wiped off

1/4 cup frying oil  
*For the marinade*  
1/3 cup white miso  
1 tablespoon lime juice  
3 tablespoons soy sauce  
2 tablespoons mirin or other rice wine (if you can't find it, don't sweat it)  
3 tablespoons brown sugar  
2 tablespoons honey  
1 tablespoon mashed ginger  
1 tablespoon mashed garlic

Mix the marinade ingredients in a medium-sized bowl. Add the tofu and marinate for up to two days. Pan-fry the tofu on medium heat until it turns a gentle brown on all sides.

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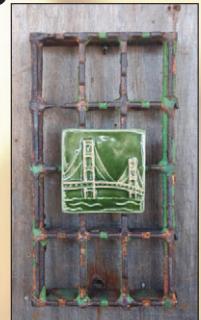
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