City Pulse Holiday Gift Guide 2023

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November 22-28, 2023

CityPULSE

A newspaper for the rest of us
Locally owned

THE TURKEYS OF LANSING

See Page 18

A report on what's up at City Pulse as the holiday season begins

Dear readers:

Last August, I wrote that changes are afoot at City Pulse to help it transition successfully into a digital world. Today, I want to update you on our progress.

Before I do, though, let me call your attention to the envelope self-addressed to City Pulse in this week's issue. We hope you will support us — or continue to. You can also give by credit card at www.lansingcitypulse.com/donate. If you look on Page 18, you'll find a QR code that takes you there.

Now, regarding our digital future.

First, I want to assure you that City Pulse in print is not going away any time soon. In fact, just last week we added several distribution locations, including for the first time in Eagle Township (at the Mobil and Speedway stations), and we are always eager to hear suggestions on others.

But print journalism is facing significant challenges everywhere, and Lansing is no exception. The Lansing State Journal continues to see declines in subscriptions. More than a year ago, City Pulse's once-a-week print circulation surpassed the Journal's average weekday print circulation. Since then, City Pulse has outgrown even the Journal's Sunday circulation.

I wish I could say that being bigger than the Lansing State Journal is reason to celebrate. But, unfortunately, when it comes to print, this is more a case of a race to the bottom. The Journal is just getting there faster (which, speaking as a journalist for 55 years and not a competitor, saddens me). Maintaining City Pulse's post-pandemic circulation is an increasingly expensive challenge, thanks to the costs of gas, newsprint and labor. Still, we have over 300 locations in Greater Lansing and, as I said, are looking for more. But the goal in adding locations is to stay even — to make sure we are meeting print-reader demand and giving our print advertisers a good bang for their buck — while we continue to grow online revenue and readership.

To that end, City Pulse applied for a Transformation Tech grant from Google last summer, and I am pleased to report that we were awarded $20,000 in October to help us take an important first step. The grant was specifically to develop a way to increase digital revenue. Our proposal was to focus on reader revenue. As a result, we signed on with BlueLena, a national company that specializes in helping publications do just that through digital campaigns.

We settled on reader revenue as a goal because we want City Pulse to remain true to itself: We have always endeavored to put readers first. Asking for more support from readers will help keep their needs and desires uppermost in our minds.

We will remain free, as I promised in August, when we began our 23rd year. No paywall. No subscription fee.

But, with the help of BlueLena, we will step up our game when it comes to asking for your support. BlueLena brings marketing expertise and technological know-how that we simply could not afford without the Google grant. The results will be black and white: If the bottom line improves significantly in reader contributions, the grant will have been well spent. We will be able to continue and expand our coverage of news, arts and events in print and online.

At the same time, City Pulse is learning how to better serve advertisers in the digital marketplace. (We're seeking an even bigger grant to help with that.) Our goal is to touch both ends of the rainbow: more support from both readers and digital advertisers, while keeping our print product strong for the many people who prefer it.

I hope you'll avail yourself of the envelope in today's paper to send us a check. Or go online to https://www.lansingcitypulse.com/donate/. There, you can make a single donation in any amount or set up a recurring one.

Thanks very much to all of you have been helping for years. And a happy holiday season to all.

CityPULSE
VOL. 23
ISSUE 15
(517) 371-5600 • Fax: (517) 999-6061 • 1905 E. Michigan Ave. • Lansing, MI 48912 • www.lansingcitypulse.com

PAGE 10

Community gathers for 39th annual Silver Bells in the City

PAGE 27

How to get farm-fresh meat delivered for free

PAGE 29

Shake up your Thanksgiving pumpkin pie

Cover photo by Berl Schwartz

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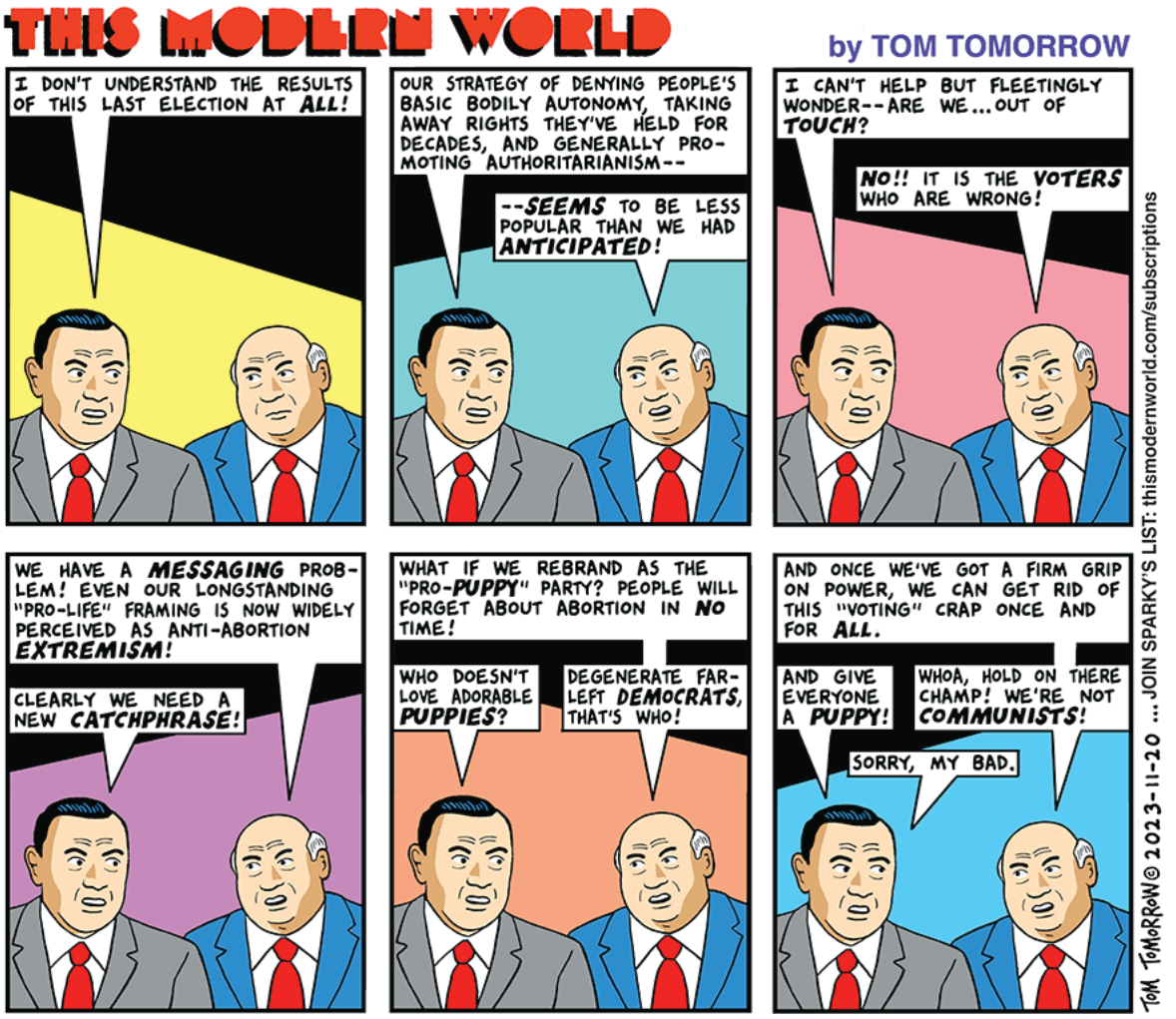
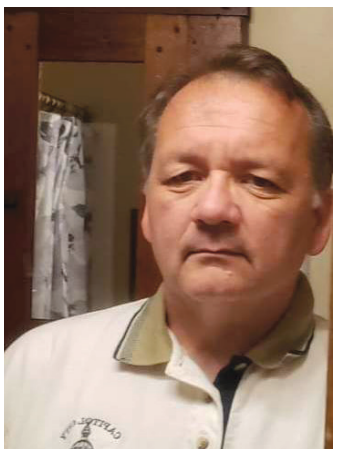


PULSE NEWS & OPINION

Lansing's charter revision process a hot topic as first few candidates file

On Friday, Julie Vandenboom became the first candidate to file for the Lansing City Charter Commission election.

"I'm not an attorney. I don't feel like I'm a politician. I'm not even an extrovert," Vandenboom said. "For me, with the number of people I've heard who feel unrepresented or underrepresented in this city, it just feels like this is my chance to make sure that voices that typically might not be included in this type of process are considered. I want Lansing to be a place for everyone, not just a place for special interests."



Jesse Lasorda

Julie Vandenboom

Jody Washington

A 15-year employee of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Vandenboom serves as a program reengineering specialist by day.

"I get involved anytime we're trying to do things differently," she explained. "So, this was something that seemed like a good fit to me — an opportunity where I could use my analytical skills and my experience to be of service to the community."

The charter has been changed through individual ballot questions in 1993, 1994, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015 and last year. But since Lansing's charter was established in 1978, voters have had the opportunity to initiate a general revision every 12 years, but they've never done so. Most recently, in 2011, 65% of voters rejected it.

Council member Adam Hussain didn't think it had much of a chance this time around, either.

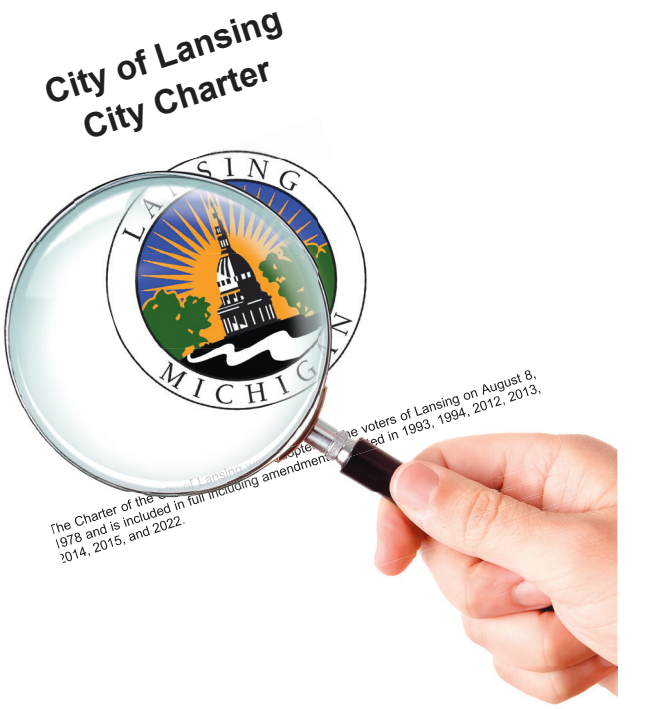
"Frankly," Hussain predicted in October, "I don't anticipate it will pass, only because it doesn't seem like enough people know enough about it. And I think that's a shame."

The final margin was just 449 votes, with 51.6%, or 7,211 ballots, favoring a charter revision. With the floodgates opened, City Clerk Chris Swope set the candidate filing deadline for 4 p.m. Jan. 23, 2024, and the election date for May 7.

After filing, Vandenboom remained the only candidate in the race through the weekend. On Monday, former City Councilmember Jody Washington, who ran unsuccessfully for an at-large seat on Nov. 7, and Nick Zande, a regular speaker at City Council meetings, officially joined her in seeking one of nine seats on the commission. Once elected, members will have three years or three attempts to get a proposed charter submitted and approved by Gov. Gretchen Whitmer before it returns to the people, who will have the final say at the ballot box.

"They'll have public hearings, they'll have expertise on their side and, essentially, they'll open up the charter for a full review," Hussain explained. "What they bring back to the city might be nothing, it might include some very minor amendments, or we could potentially be looking at something all the way up to a complete change in the structure of our city government."

Jesse Lasorda, a 2nd Ward resident and "regular voter," had never voted yes on a charter revision question prior to this year. A Lansing native and resident for a combined 28 years, he said it wasn't until his most recent return, seven years ago, when he noticed the "disorganization" within City Hall, an increasingly alarming number of blighted properties, especially on Lansing's south side, and a "lack of services that have dwindled over a period of time."



"I just didn't feel like the officials that we elected are listening to what we're trying to tell them," Lasorda said. "We have a mayor and a City Council that are just absolutely polar opposites of each other, and it is completely dysfunctional — an epic failure."

For this reason, Lasorda thinks the commissioners should discuss a potential pivot away from Lansing's current strong mayor structure of city government in favor of the city-manager system employed by East Lansing and many other cities in Michigan.

In a strong-mayor system, the mayor is elected as chief executive and serves separate from the City Council, appoints department heads and a few other posts, subject to Council approval, and maintains veto powers. And in a city-manager system, the Council selects a member to serve as mayor. The mayor would then lead the Council, which hires a city manager and delegates responsibility to that person for operating the city.

Efforts to restructure the City Council by reducing the number of at-large seats — or potentially eliminating them entirely — and to increase the number of wards, are also in play. Vandenboom, Washington and Zande have all advocated for some form of this approach.

"I've seen estimates that it costs up to like $50,000 to run a successful at-large campaign, and I think that keeps a lot of people out of the race that might otherwise be interested in running. If those were all ward seats, that's a much more accessible and affordable process," Vandenboom said.

Lasorda agrees. He thinks that the current system leaves too much ground for the four ward representatives to cover effectively.

"If my representative, Jeremy Garza, only has half of his current area to represent, then I think you are going to get a much better bang for your buck as a taxpayer," he explained.

Lasorda said he was intrigued by the possibility of abolishing the four at-large seats altogether in favor of eight

See revision, Page 6

Revision

from page 5

or nine wards. In a comment on the Lansing Politics Facebook group on Sunday, Hussain floated the possibility of the latter.

"What about nine wards? We've seen business halt due to 4-4 gridlocks over things such as leadership... By increasing the number of wards and reducing the number of citizens in each ward, accountability increases. Those that aren't serving will be conspicuous and be voted out, and the amount of money one needs to run a successful campaign plummets, allowing more to run and be successful," Hussain wrote.

Some other issues that could find their way onto the commission's radar include setting term limits for elected officials, exploring the opportunity to initiate ranked choice voting and establishing residency requirements for police officers and other city employees. (A 1999 state law prohibits residency requirements.)

"There's too many people, as far as I'm concerned, that are making decisions in Lansing that don't live here or don't have a piece of the rock and they're making decisions for people that do," Lasorda said.

Mayor Andy Schor didn't aggressively campaign against opening the charter, but he was notably opposed to the idea, citing first and foremost the high cost. Schor's communications director, Scott Bean, said that the office is developing a budget amendment to accommodate the process. The City Council will be tasked with setting pay for the commissioners.

"The special election alone in May will be over $100,000. We are trying to work out the rest now," Bean said, adding that the elected commissioners "will get paid, hire staff and contractors, legal expenses, so we don't have an exact figure yet. We continue to estimate the initial costs will be at least $500,000."

Hussain addressed this angle during the most recent City Council meeting.

"Frankly, we didn't bat an eye when we put hundreds of thousands of dollars of lights up on a parking ramp. We're struggling with the potential of $400,000 to $500,000 to have a convention to deeply engage the citizens of this city, to determine whether the most important document in this city is appropriate and lays out a framework for a government that is actually operating in the best interests of the citizens," Hussain said.

Lasorda, who voted for Schor in 2017 but not in 2021, labeled Schor's financial reasoning "a scare tactic."

"With that said," he added, "is this all Andy Schor's fault? Absolutely not. This is something that has been going on and festering for decades. We can't play the blame game, but, at the end of the day, we also can't continue the way that we are going right now."

– TYLER SCHNEIDER

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS
EAST LANSING HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Notice is hereby given of the following public hearing**s** to be held by the East Lansing Historic District Commission on **Thursday, December 14, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.**, at the East Lansing Hannah Community Center, 819 Abbot Road, East Lansing, Michigan 48823:

1. A public hearing will be held to consider a Certificate of Appropriateness application from Spartan Housing Cooperative, Inc. to replace 26 windows on the Hedrick House Co-op building located at 140 Collingwood Avenue.
2. A public hearing will be held to consider a request from Tony Koenig on behalf of LMRG Singh Investors, Inc. for a Notice to Proceed to repave and expand an existing driveway at 621 Charles Street.
3. A public hearing will be held to consider a request from Helen Miller for a Notice to Proceed with replacement of roofs of the existing house and garage at 946 E. Michigan Avenue, which were damaged by a falling tree.
4. A public hearing will be held to consider a Certificate of Appropriateness application from Thomas Hamlin on behalf of Marilyn Henige to install a new front entrance door on the house at 514 Park Lane.
5. A public hearing will be held to consider a Certificate of Appropriateness application from Thomas Hamlin on behalf of Marilyn Henige to install a new front entrance door on the house at 519 Park Lane.
6. A public hearing will be held to consider a Certificate of Appropriateness application from Shawn Elliott to replace a damaged garage at 952 Michigan Avenue.

A staff report (Agenda Item Report) for each public hearing will be published on the City's website the Friday before the meeting. To locate staff reports, please visit the City's public meeting portal at https://cityofeastlansing.civicweb.net/Portal/ and select the meeting date. Written comments may be sent prior to the public hearing to coelhistoricdistricts@cityofeastlansing.com, or by mail to: East Lansing Historic District Commission, 410 Abbot Road, East Lansing, Michigan, 48823.

For more information on any agenda items listed above, please contact:

Landon Bartley, Principal Planner
517.319.6930 or lbartley@cityofeastlansing.com
https://cityofeastlansing.civicweb.net/Portal/

Materials related to the requests are available to review at the Department of Planning, Building, and Development, East Lansing City Hall, 410 Abbot Road, East Lansing, MI, 48823 between the hours of 8:00 am and 5:00 pm, or online at www.cityofeastlansing.com/currentapplications.

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

This notice is posted in compliance with PA 267 of 1976 as amended (Open Meetings Act) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and published in compliance with the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, 2006 P.A. 110.

Marie E. Wicks
Interim City Clerk

Dated: November 21, 2023
East Lansing, MI 48823

CP#23-PN308

SPONSORED CONTENT

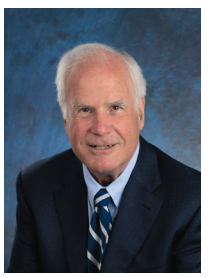
REWIND

NEWS HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE LAST 7 DAYS

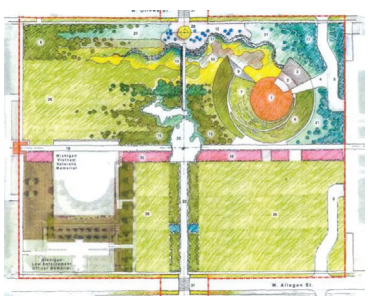
BY TYLER SCHNEIDER

UAW workers at two of Lansing's three auto plants voted against a contract with General Motors last week. UAW Local 1753, representing 200 workers at GM's Lansing Redistribution Center, approved the contract with 66% in favor. UAW Local 602, representing 2,300 workers at the Lansing Delta Township plant, rejected the terms with 61% voting against. UAW Local 652, at Lansing Grand River Assembly, also opposed the deal with 58% rejecting the terms. Despite these holdouts, the UAW announced Monday that members at General Motors Co., Ford Motor Co. and Stellantis had ratified a record four-and-a-half-year agreement for its 146,000 members. A total of 64% of UAW workers across all three companies voted in favor of the agreement, which would boost wage increases 23% to 25%, while starting wages and top wages would see increases of about 70% and 33%, respectively.

The search for Michigan State University's next president has been narrowed down to one finalist in University of North Carolina Chancellor Kevin Guskiewicz, The State News reported. The other finalist was University of Texas at San Antonio President Taylor Eighmy, but MSU officials confirmed last week that he had dropped out. Guskiewicz, an award-winning neuroscientist and concussion researcher, has been his university's chancellor since 2019. He joined the UNC faculty in 1995 and became chair of the Exercise and Sports Diet Department in 2005. On Thursday, he said he was considering the opportunity. MSU Trustee Dennis Denno, chair of the presidential search committee, said in October that a president would be announced by Thanksgiving.

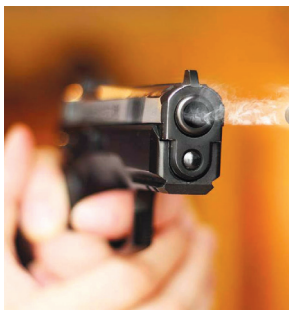


The East Lansing City Council voted unanimously to appoint George Brookover as the city's new mayor. The decision came after newly elected Council members Kerry Ebersole Singh, Mark Meadows and Erik Altmann took their seats alongside Brookover and Dana Watson. Ebersole Singh was then elected mayor pro tem, 3-2, with Brookover and Watson voting for Watson. Brookover's father, Wilbur Brookover, served as mayor of East Lansing from 1971 to 1975.



The Michigan State Capitol Commission revealed conceptual plans for a proposal to build a new park on Capitol grounds. The project, known as Park Michigan, would transform a current parking area east of the Hall of Justice into a green space with monuments, gardens, gathering spaces and performance venues. The plan would include a "We the People Plaza," a 360-degree viewing center where visitors would be able to experience new views of the Capitol Building and the Michigan Library and Historical Center. The park will also be connected to the Capitol by way of the Frank J. Kelley Walkway, and to the Lansing River Trail via a non-motorized path. The commission plans to pursue the project through a public-private partnership. Once work is completed, the commission would be responsible for maintaining the park.

The Lansing Police Department has been awarded $900,000 in law enforcement grant funding. The largest sum, $314,987, will go toward victim assistance support, followed by $239,039 for vehicle theft prevention, $190,863 for traffic and speed control and $158,406 for firearm safety.



A 35-year-old woman was shot to death near the 2800 block of Averill Drive in Lansing on Saturday afternoon. Police arrived at the scene around 6 p.m., where first responders pronounced Shamika Parker dead. LPD Captain Eric Pratl said the department does not believe the shooting was a random act. LPD has confirmed an investigation, but no arrests had been announced as of Tuesday afternoon.

Two men were pronounced dead at the scene of a shooting at Waverly Park apartments in Lansing Monday evening. LPD arrived just after 5 p.m., where they found a 22-year-old and a 30-year-old dead from gunshot wounds.

A single gunshot at Birch Tree Apartments in Lansing put residents out in the cold at around 11:30 p.m. Thursday after the shot damaged a water pipe, WILX reported. The shot damaged the pipe, causing a major leak and water damage throughout the building. LPD said the third floor suffered the greatest damages, but all residents of the building have been cleared out for safety reasons. It's unclear when those residents may be able to return to their homes.

PUBLIC Art OF THE WEEK

The state Christmas tree

"I think I shall never see. A poem as pretty as a tree." This simple line by poet Joyce Kilmer referred to a living tree, but it can apply to this year's State of Michigan Christmas tree. This past Friday evening, Silver Bells culminated with the lighting the 60-foot spruce from Onaway, in the northeastern corner of the Lower Peninsula.

The event goes back to 1986. The second year was Michigan's Sesquicentennial, and Gov. Jim Blanchard declared he wanted a tree at the Capitol taller than the tree at Rockefeller Center in New York. It towered 75 feet.

The erecting of Christmas trees in public squares across the country has been a long tradition in this country, but the history of the Christmas tree can be traced to the early 1400s to medieval Germany, when trees hung with fruit and snacks for children.

The tradition of the Christmas tree as ephemeral public art began in the U.S. as early as the mid-1800s. Benjamin Harrison was the first president to have a Christmas tree in the White House, in 1899. President Calvin Coolidge lit the first outdoor tree on the Capitol Mall in 1923.

At some point, the erection of a Christmas tree was seen as a Christian tradition, but in more recent years it is considered a secular celebration. This year, the tree lighting got an exclamation point when the Detroit Lions logo appeared in the sky like a modern-day bat signal.

— BILL CASTANIER

Public Art of the Week is a new feature that rotates with Eyesore of the Week. If you have an idea for either, please email eye@lansingcitypulse.com or call (517) 999-6704.

Historically liberal state Legislature has numbers to back up reputation

KYLE MELINN

POLITICS

Opinion

In their dash to repeal as many Rick Snyder-era policies as possible, the 2023 Democratic-controlled Michigan Legislature has earned the most liberal voting record in at least the last 20 years, and there are plenty of numbers to prove it.

Since 2003, I've compiled an annual "most conservative/most liberal" ranking for the Michigan House and Senate based on select roll-call voters covering a wide range of topics.

As many as 50 votes on abortion restrictions, corporate incentives, gun possession, tax policy changes, etc., are thrown into the soup.

The bell-curve chart born from this project is predictable. Around five members in each chamber stand out for making seemingly odd-ball votes for philosophical reasons.

For example, one bill would allow law enforcement to share the contact information of sexual assault victims with support service programs. Seems like common sense to do, right? In the eyes of a small-government conservative, however, this is expanding the power of government.

From these few members, the bell curve rises until a majority of a caucus falls in the 75% range. For Republicans, a majority of their members vote conservative 75% of the time. For Democrats, a majority vote liberal 75% of the time.

Each caucus has a few philosophical outliers. Once in a while, the most conservative Democrat has even a more conservative voting record than the most liberal Republican.

For the last 19 years, the bell curve has looked consistent. The average liberal voting record for every Democratic House member for the last 19 years has been 75.95%.

This year, however, the average House Democrat voted the liberal position 94.5% of the time on the 49 bills we tracked. Nearly every time.

This is 10 percentage points higher than the previous high mark of 84.37% from 2007, coincidentally the year after Democrats won the majority after another lengthy drought.

The lowest liberal ranking among Democrats was that of Rep. Karen Whitsett, D-Detroit, at 86%. Outside of Whitsett, no other Democrat had a score lower than 92%.

With a Democratic Senate and Gretchen Whitmer in the governor's chair, the House went on overdrive. They rolled back years of old Republican policy wins, like a teacher evaluation system that punished teachers whose students didn't improve year after year.

We shared the results with former Inside Michigan Politics Editor Bill Ballenger, who did similar rankings as far back as the mid-1980s. He called this year's results "unprecedented" and "outstanding."

I have less than half of the experience Ballenger does in Michigan politics, but I agree with him. With the slimmest majority the Democrats could have, they pushed through progressive gun restrictions, civil rights expansions and higher penalties on hate crimes with the same 56 votes and often unanimous Republican opposition.

Democrats who serve in liberal havens like Ann Arbor were casting the same votes as Democrats who live in political swing areas like Downriver, Marquette or Traverse City.

This would seem to be a dream scenario for Republicans come 2024, who can frame Democrats in competitive seats like Rep. Jenn Hill or Rep. Betsy Coffia as ult-lib activists.

The problem with that approach is that recent polling shows a majority of voters support many of the "liberal" votes these lawmakers made, or, at the very least, the subject can be framed in a way that it receives majority support.

Progress Michigan's polling released Monday found 79% support for the new universal free breakfast and lunch program for K-12 students. Another 85% support "the decision to stop taxing Michiganders' pension," which isn't exactly accurate, but good enough for a campaign ad.

For now, anyway, what Democrats will have the hardest time justifying is their vote to allow the state to site solar and wind farms.

But 59% claim they support requiring utilities to draw from 100% clean energy sources by 2040, so maybe that vote will age well in time?

Either way, this House is undeniably more liberal than at any time in the past 20 years. Whether it matches the public's sentiment, we'll find out in about a year.

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

ARTS & CULTURE ART • BOOKS • FILM • MUSIC

Simply Silver Bells

Community comes together to celebrate love for Lansing and each other

By CHELSEA LAKE ROBERTS

If giant red balls descending on downtown Lansing heralds the start of the holiday season, then Silver Bells in the City is the event that rings it in with an extra loud "ding-dong!"

"Silver Bells in the City is a beloved Lansing tradition that spans generations of families and friends. This is my 13th year directing this event, and it is humbling to see tens of thousands of people from mid-Michigan and beyond come together as a community to celebrate the magic of the holidays," said Mindy Biladeau, vice president of sales and service for the Lansing Entertainment & Public Facilities Authority.

According to Biladeau, Silver Bells is coordinated by a committee of partners, sponsors and volunteers under the direction of LEPFA.

Roxanne Frith for City Pulse

A booming fireworks show over the Capitol marked the end of the 39th annual Silver Bells in the City celebration.

"We work together for several months to bring Silver Bells in the City to life. The committee consists of about 25 people, we have more than 60 sponsors, and we work closely with all city departments; the Michigan Department of Technology, Management & Budget; the Michigan State Capitol Facilities Office; the Michigan State Police; FOX 47; and the Lansing Public Media Center, just to name a few."

This year's attendees were treated to milder temperatures and fewer crowds than years past. As promised, the parade stepped off at 6 p.m., and the finale fireworks display concluded at about 8:30 p.m. Everything went off without a hitch.

Although the 39th year of the festival didn't see dramatic programming changes, the parade continued to draw first-time attendees as vendors, participants and spectators. Brandon McKaney said this was his first time attending the festival in nearly 10 years.

"It's my daughter's first Silver Bells," he said. McKaney's wife laughed and joked with myself and photographer Roxanne Frith as her husband posed with his friend Allen Moralles for a photo. Moralles said he was looking forward to seeing his alma mater's marching band and would be cheering on the Waverly Warriors. His reason for coming downtown?

"Honestly, I was just bored at home," he said.

As Frith and I meandered our way down Washington Square, we caught sight of two young people wearing lighted flair and decided to investigate. Alyx and Silver were there with High Caliber Karting and Entertainment, waiting for the parade to start.

"This is High Caliber's first year in the parade. I'll be driving one of our mini karts, and Silver will be handing out goody bags," Alyx said. The pair posed on the corner of Allegan and Lenawee streets, near the official beginning of the parade route.

As we ventured past the barricades,

See Silver Bells, Page 11

Roxanne Frith for City Pulse

High Caliber Karting and Entertainment staff members Alyx and Silver prepare to participate in Silver Bells' Electric Light Parade.

Silver Bells

from page 10

we saw the Portland High School Marching Band tuning up; the Michigan State University Rodeo Club, who tipped their hats as they sauntered past; and a man in a giant fox costume dancing his heart out near the Hager Fox Heating & Air Conditioning float.

According to Elaine Wilson, it took a few days just to decorate the lighted rig for 1-800-PIT-CLEAN. Located off Lake Lansing Road, the business provides commercial cleaning for car washes, restaurants and more. I got distracted by the five-month-old puppy that accompanied the group, but we eventually started talking, and the Wilsons corralled their band of kids in for a group picture. "This is our second year in the parade," said Sal Wilson, the business' president.

Next we headed north, toward the Silver Bells Village. This was the first time Kellee and Leo VanValkenburg had attended Silver Bells, and we caught up with them as they sold their Cereal City Candles.

"Everything is uniquely scented," said Kellee VanValkenburg, "and we work really hard to offer something different for our customers."

Her husband chimed in, "This is our first year here, and it's biggest event we've done. We have high hopes that we'll be successful."

The couple said their top-selling scent was Breakfast in Battle Creek.

See Silver Bells, Page 12

Roxanne Frith for City Pulse

A couple of well-dressed foxes marched with Hager Fox Heating & Air Conditioning in the Electric Light Parade, while the Grinch rode in the company's sleigh float.

Roxanne Frith for City Pulse

Members of the Waverly High School Marching Band and the League of Michigan Bicyclists donned holiday lights to brighten up the Electric Light Parade.

Roxanne Frith for City Pulse

Elaine and Sal Wilson of 1-800-PIT-Clean wrangled their kids for a group photo in front of the business' parade float, which Elaine Wilson said took a few days just to decorate.

Silver Bells

from page 11

Other vendors included local food trucks Taqueria Monarca and Hangry Bear and infused cocktail company Mitten Mixers.

Every year, Silver Bells creates a commemorative ornament that's available for purchase at the Village and online. This year's ornament was designed and handcrafted by Tiffany Marie of La Fille Gallery and featured a large treble clef made of sparkling Swarovski crystal.

Indeed, this year's event did sparkle, with thousands of lights on vehicles ranging from CATA buses to bicycles. As the League of Michigan

See Silver Bells, Page 13

Roxanne Frith for City Pulse

Husband-and-wife duo Leo and Kellee VanValkenburg sold their Cereal City Candles at the Silver Bells Village. It was the couple's first time at the event.

Roxanne Frith for City Pulse

Melissa Hall (left) of General Motors and Ron Eddington of Jack Cooper, the company that hauled GM's vehicles for the event, in front of a parade float lined with sparkly new GM cars.

Roxanne Frith for City Pulse

Parade attendees watched attentively as brilliantly lit floats and marchers drifted past.

Silver Bells

from page 12

Bicyclists rode through the streets, popping wheelies and sporting colorful helmets, the parade announcer read from his remarks, "This year, there's a new law in Michigan that you cannot hold a phone while driving." The bicyclists' message included information about sharing the road and their commitment to improving bicycling in Michigan.

Also represented were General Motors' Lansing Delta Township and Lansing Grand River assembly plants. Melissa Hall of GM posed with Ron Eddington of Jack Cooper, the company that hauled GM's vehicles. But perhaps the most popular vehicle in the Electric Light Parade was that of the Petoskey Steel Drum Band. Remarked the announcer, "Just. Wow. This is awesome."

Watching over the parade was a small group perched high up on the balcony of the Capitol. And as the floats came to an end, the crowd counted down to the tree lighting and was dazzled by a brilliant display of orange and yellow. The crowd sang along with Grace West, who won second place on season 23 of NBC's "The Voice." A Michigan native, West led thousands in a rendition of "Last Christmas" while the crowd sang along and danced together.

Then, everyone fell silent as the lighted drone show took to the sky

See Silver Bells, Page 15

Roxanne Frith for City Pulse

Michigan native Grace West, who won second place on season 23 of NBC's "The Voice," led thousands in a rendition of "Last Christmas," by Wham!

John F. Kennedy's inextricable link to James Bond

By BILL CASTANIER

Anyone in their 70s or above knows exactly where they were on Nov. 22, 1963, when they learned that Lee Harvey Oswald had assassinated President John F. Kennedy. Most of us alive today were in school at the time and first heard about the shooting from a teacher.

For the next few days, the entire nation — even us teenagers — was immersed in a cloud of activity, constantly watching television and talking on the phone. For some reason, I also remember what I was reading: "From Russia with Love," a James Bond thriller by British author Ian Fleming.

For me and hundreds of thousands of other readers, mostly male, Kennedy and the dashing Bond were linked through the books.

When Kennedy took office in 1961, he was already a Bond fan and made no secret about it. That year, Life magazine published a list of Kennedy's top 10 favorite books. "From Russia with Love" was on the list.

He had been reading Bond since his convalescence from back surgery in 1957.

The books perfectly fit the image Kennedy, a master of spin, wanted to project — the cool, suave, masculine, 'shaken, not stirred' man. After all, he had already made friends with the likes of the Rat Pack and writer Norman Mailer. Through Bond and all his heroism, Kennedy was allegorically fighting the Cold War against the Russians.

He even liked the gadgetry of Bond. Hopefully he didn't sign off on the exploding cigar the CIA used to try to kill Fidel Castro.

Although he never spoke publicly about it, Kennedy likely embraced the dripping sensuality of the Bond girls, with names like Pussy Galore, Holly Goodhead and Xenia Onatopp, all over-the-top double entendres. I know 13-year-old Catholic boys like me did.

For some reason, it was okay for Catholic boys to read the salacious Bond thrillers. The books got a pass from the parents and the nuns, but not the movies, which were banned by the Catholic Legion of Decency's weekly film rating list that teenagers consulted with their parents before being allowed to go to a movie.

Later, when we turned 16 and could drive ourselves to the movies, we would make up stories about the movie we were seeing while sneaking off to watch a Bond film.

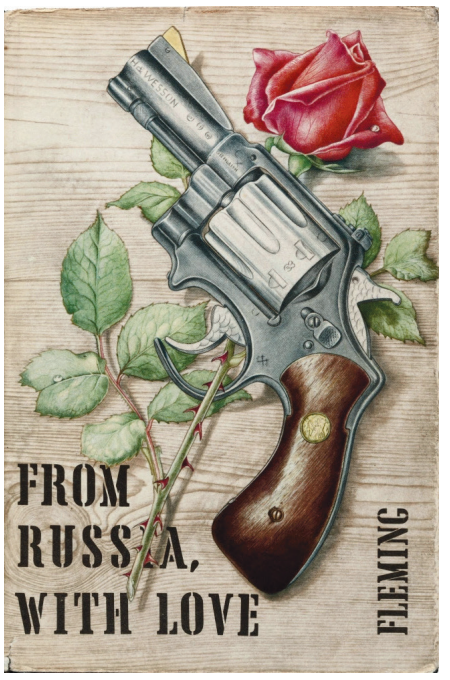
Books and movies were formulaic: the suave 007 with a license to kill; beautiful, available women, some of whom were portrayed as smart, tough characters; an evil villain and his awful henchmen; fast cars, like the iconic Aston Martin; extraordinarily beautiful locales; and glorious signature music, like Shirley Bassey's "Goldfinger" and John Barry's "Mr. Kiss Kiss Bang Bang."

The 1966 song "Secret Agent Man," by Johnny Rivers, although having nothing to do with Bond, seemed to fit his aura.

When the news that Kennedy was dead was broadcast across TV and radio, we were startled back to reality. We sat in the classroom watching TV coverage until we were dismissed early and went home, where we continued to watch TV nonstop for several days. It was surreal, and for those of us who read Bond, it went off script. The bad guys won, and the real world wasn't fun anymore.

Even more surreal was the trip my high school football team made to East Lansing the Saturday after the assassination to watch Michigan State University play the University of Illinois in the Big Ten championship.

See Kennedy, Page 15



Courtesy photo

The late President John F. Kennedy listed the James Bond novel "From Russia, with Love," by British author Ian Fleming, as one of his top 10 books of all time in a 1961 article by Time magazine.

Silver Bells

from page 13

over the Capitol. We made our way east down Michigan Avenue, parting the crowds of upturned faces who were completely captivated by the swiftly moving lights in the sky.

While Frith and I continued down Michigan Avenue past Grand Avenue, we turned around and were treated to a wide view of the fireworks display booming high over the Capitol. As we walked on to catch our ride from the parking lot of the Capital City Market, we stopped a group of millennials dressed in Christmas pajamas, who were obviously just heading out to a party or a bar crawl. As our night was ending, theirs was just beginning. They turned around and gave us a picture-perfect smile for the camera.

Roxanne Frith for City Pulse

The 36th official state Christmas tree, a 60-foot spruce harvested in Onaway. It's the first state Christmas tree from Presque Isle County.

Roxanne Frith for City Pulse

Firefly's drone light show returned for its third year, illuminating the sky over the Capitol and dazzling audiences once again.

Roxanne Frith for City Pulse

A group dressed in Christmas pajamas prepares to head out to a post-Silver Bells party or bar crawl.

Kennedy

from page 14

As we traveled to East Lansing, we stopped at a donut shop in Perry and learned the game had been canceled. For some reason I don't recall, we motored on to the stadium anyway. There was a crowd milling around, and, like us, they were in a daze.

For some reason, then-MSU President John Hannah refused to cancel the game until right before it was scheduled to begin. It took a phone call from then-Gov. Romney to change his mind. The game was rescheduled for Thanksgiving Day (Nov. 28), and MSU lost against a team led by the legendary linebacker Dick Butkus. I still have a program from the canceled game showing the date as Nov. 23, 1963. It has a drawing of a Native American (presumably the University of Illinois' former mascot, Chief Illiniwek) sitting across from a Pilgrim at a table adorned with a football-shaped Thanksgiving turkey.

Courtesy of Bill Castanier

A flyer for Michigan State University's Nov. 23, 1963, Big Ten championship football game against the University of Illinois. The game was rescheduled to Thanksgiving Day (Nov. 28) after Kennedy's assassination on Nov. 22.

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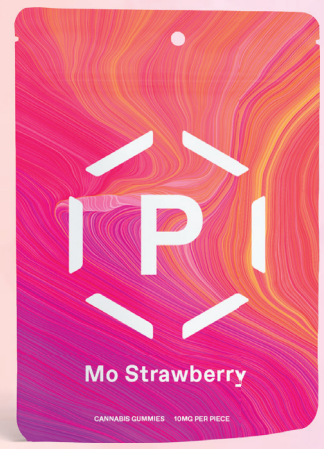

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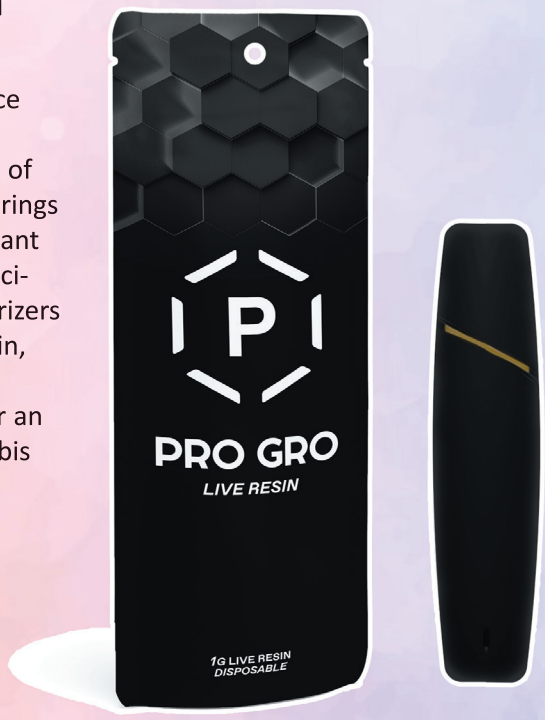

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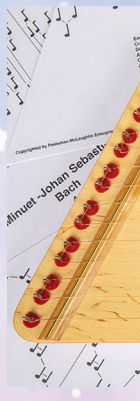

Gift Guide 2023

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Big, brave, beautiful birds

Wild turkeys come home to roost in Lansing

Lawrence Cosentino/City Pulse

A wild turkey hustles across the Lansing River Trail near Aurelius Road and Mt. Hope Avenue, where turkeys are a common sight. The bristly tuft of hair, or "beard," on the bird's chest doesn't mean it's a hipster, but it's probably a male, and at least a few years old.

By LAWRENCE COSENTINO

Be careful where you answer the call of nature. Nature might call back — with a vengeance.

Not long ago, I was biking the winding stretch of the Lansing River Trail that links the Potter Park Zoo with Kalamazoo Street and MSU to the east. There aren't many amenities in this wooded stretch, but it wasn't hard to find a secluded clearing, well off the path, lean my bike on a tree and take an urgently needed rest stop.

What I didn't know is that this part of the River Trail, adjoining 200-acre Crego Park, is part of an informal chain of wild and semi-wild spaces on the eastern edge of Lansing that make a perfect habitat for one of North America's most beautiful and biggest game birds, the wild turkey (Meleagris gallopavo).

Suddenly, an enormous, angry, boulder-sized mass launched itself off the ground, barely two feet in front of me. The blurry blob gave a harsh squawk of alarm and jetted into the high branches of a nearby tree, where it settled down almost immediately and made itself comfortable.

Turkeys nest on the ground, but they often roost in trees, especially at night.

"They make a lot of noise," state Department of Natural Resources upland game specialist Adam Bump said. "There's a lot of crashing and banging, a lot of arguments up there, who's going to get the best spot to roost. It's pretty fun to watch them fly up and down."

It's fun if you know what to expect, but a sudden turkey encounter can send your heart jumping out of your chest.

When they're pissed off — or, in this case, pissed on — they're very fast flyers. Their top speed has been clocked at 55 miles per hour.

Encounters with wild turkeys have grown more and more frequent in recent years, according to Lansing parks director Brett Kaschinske.

"We have not done a study, but I can say we have a large number of turkeys in our parks," Kaschinske declared.

A combination of open, grassy areas and wooded cover make a huge swath of eastern Lansing turkey-friendly. An extensive archipelago of habitat stretches northward from 100-acre Hawk Island Park through 87-acre Scott Woods, 134-acre Fenner Nature Center, 200-acre Crego Park, 98-acre Potter Park and several more nice strutting stretches, including Mt. Hope and Evergreen cemeteries and Groesbeck Golf Course.

"This area provides a lot of cover and roosting places," Kaschinske said. "There is a very healthy population of wild turkeys."

At the Fenner Nature Center, program manager Sam Ansaldi frequently sees them make their rounds through the forest and browse the open areas for tasty bugs.

"You see the chicks come out in spring, and you see quite a bit of them in breeding season," Ansaldi said.

"They can really haul. When they fly into a tree to roost, there's a lot of power there."

Tell me about it.

The robust Lansing contingent of turkeys is part of a dramatic 20th century conservation success story.

Wild turkeys were abundant in Michigan in colonial times, with a population estimated at close to 100,000, but they all but disappeared from the state by the early 1900s, due to overhunting and habitat loss from indiscriminate logging, according to a 2019 report by Bindu Bhakta of MSU Extension in Oakland County. Between 1919 and 1983, a growing alliance of conservation groups working to expand turkey habitat in the state brought in turkeys from Pennsylvania, Iowa and Missouri. They started with only 50 imported turkeys, but now it's

See Turkeys, Page 19

Turkeys

from page 18

estimated that more than 200,000 wild turkeys live in Michigan. (Just don't call them "Michiganders.") The DNR estimates that about 6 million wild turkeys live in the United States.

There are interesting consequences to the increase in turkey numbers, as some Lansing residents are discovering when they suddenly see birds the size of velociraptors raiding their feeders.

"You see them become more adaptable, more comfortable in suburban and urban settings," Bump said. "You get those nice, tree-lined lots, good habitats with bird feeders and that kind of thing, and you get turkeys all the time. It's a cool thing for people to see, but they can also start causing some trouble, which makes them less welcome in some circumstances."

When Bump was a DNR field officer in the Midland area several years ago, he was called upon to handle some bad turkey behavior.

"It starts out great, because people want to see turkeys, especially in the spring, when they're doing their breeding displays," Bump said. "They're pretty amazing to watch, as long as they stay in their place."

But every spring, males compete with other males for territory and get "riled up," Bump said.

"The hormones are kicking in, and they become aggressive sometimes, especially in the spring, and lose their fear of people," Bump explained.

Turkeys haven't been known to cause significant damage or injury, but they can be intimidating.

"You just feel uncomfortable," Bump said.

He's dealt with cases of turkeys chasing kids at bus stops and worse.

"There were turkeys that would act aggressive and block access to a convenience store," Bump said. "People were walking up, and they were acting like they might peck them. There were turkeys that would block access to drive-through banks and jump on cars."

The fighting spirit that moves a turkey to guard a bank ATM from a vehicle the size of a rhinoceros is the same virtue Benjamin Franklin invoked in a famous letter to his daughter. Contrary to popular myth, Franklin didn't suggest the turkey be made the national bird, but he did lament that the bald eagle, which he considered to be a scrounger and a coward, was on the crest of the Society of the Cincinnati. Franklin's favorite bird had mettle as well as wattle.

Berl Schwartz/City Pulse

A flock of wild turkeys make their way toward Cesar Chavez Avenue on Cleveland Street on Lansing's north side. Nearby Groesbeck Golf Course is a popular habitat.

"The Truth is, the Turkey is in Comparison a much more respectable Bird, and withal a true original Native of America," Franklin wrote. "He is besides, though a little vain & silly, a Bird of Courage, and would not hesitate to attack a Grenadier of the British Guards who should presume to invade his Farm Yard with a red Coat on."

Bump said his office is getting an increasing number of inquiries in recent years about turkeys in backyards. In most cases, he tells people to admire them from a respectable distance, especially in spring, and get rid of possible food sources such as bird feeders. And take it from someone with heart-stopping experience: be careful where you take your al fresco rest stops.

The other way to experience the state's abundant turkey population is to get into the forest with a shotgun, a bow and arrow or a crossbow. Michigan has spring and fall hunting seasons for wild turkeys. The fall season ended Nov. 14.

Turkey hunting has become a popular pastime since it was reinstated in 1965. According to the DNR's most recent hunting survey, from 2021, about 82,384 hunters in Michigan harvested about 34,426 turkeys in the spring, and about 13,000 hunters harvested 3,400 turkeys in the fall.

While some hunters set out in early November to bag a Thanksgiving dinner, nature isn't a grocery store. There's no guarantee you'll get a turkey at all, let alone a bird the size your family dinner requires. Statewide, 42

See Turkeys, Page 20

CITY OF GRAND LEDGE
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Grand Ledge Planning Commission will hold a public hearing during its regular meeting at 7:00 p.m., on Thursday, 07 December 2023, to consider and receive public input on a proposed ordinance to amend the Zoning District Map Referred to in Grand Ledge City Code §46-94, Zoning District Map, to rezone the property at 4063 E. Saginaw Highway (Parcel #: 400-011-300-055-00) and the adjoining vacant parcel to its north and east (Parcel #: 400-011-300-060-00) from "B-1" Highway Service to "R-HD" Multiple Family Residential. The purpose of the rezoning is to permit an 85-unit, senior, assisted living facility on the combined parcels. The proposed ordinance is available for review on the City's website at www.cityofgrandledge.com and at the City Clerk's office, 310 Greenwood St., Grand Ledge, Michigan, between 8:00 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

The meeting will be held in the Council Chambers, City Hall, 310 Greenwood St., Grand Ledge MI 48837, in compliance with the Open Meetings Act, as amended, and will also be livestreamed via Zoom for informational purposes only. The online stream can be accessed at https://www.zoom.us with the Meeting ID: 838 9436 6471, or by calling +1 646 876 9923 or +1 646 931 3860 or +1 301 715 8592 or +1 305 224 1968 or +1 309 205 3325 or +1 312 626 6799 or +1 689 278 1000 or +1 719 359 4580 or +1 253 205 0468 or +1 253 215 8782 or +1 346 248 7799 or +1 360 209 5623 or +1 386 347 5053 or +1 408 638 0968 or +1 507 473 4847 or +1 564 217 2000 or +1 669 444 9171 or +1 669 900 6833 with Meeting ID: 838 9463 6471.

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

Gregory Newman, City Clerk

CP#23-307

Turkeys

from page 19

percent of hunters harvested a turkey in 2021.

The spring hunt is far more popular. In spring, it's easier to tell males from females and get them to respond to calls. That's also the festive time of year when the fleshy, rubbery necks of males (called snoods) turn all-American red, white and blue. Spring hunting in Michigan is restricted to "bearded turkeys," or turkeys that have a horsetail-like plume of dark feathers dangling from their chests, 98 percent of which are male. Bump explained that because one male can mate with multiple females, harvesting males doesn't have an adverse impact on the population. Both male and female turkeys can be hunted in the fall.

Only don't try it in Lansing. A city ordinance prohibits "discharge of guns or bow and arrow" in the city, according to Kaschinske.

Across the state, volunteers have worked for decades to make hundreds of tracts of land turkey-friendly, carefully husbanding tracts with a combination of open grasslands and woodlands stocked with oak and other nut-bearing trees.

"They're fairly big birds, so they need decent sized trees to roost in at night," Bump said.

Oak trees and other nut-bearing species also help feed the birds over the winter.

Turkeys use open areas for courtship display and for brood rearing. Open grasslands have the highest density of insects.

"They're fixated on insects," Bump said. "They're spending most of their life finding as much bugs as they can because they need the protein to feed their young."

When turkeys get older, they move into brushy cover where they can take cover from predators and find summer sources of food such as blackberries.

The DNR has helped create four clusters of "turkey tracts" in western Michigan, in Allegan, Barry, Flat River and Holly.

Bump said turkey tracts are meant to "highlight work our biologists were already doing, and making an easily accessible, easy to understand place to go turkey hunting, especially for first time turkey hunters, or people looking for a new area."

Each turkey tract has a designated parking area and a kiosk with maps that help hunters find the best hunting spots.

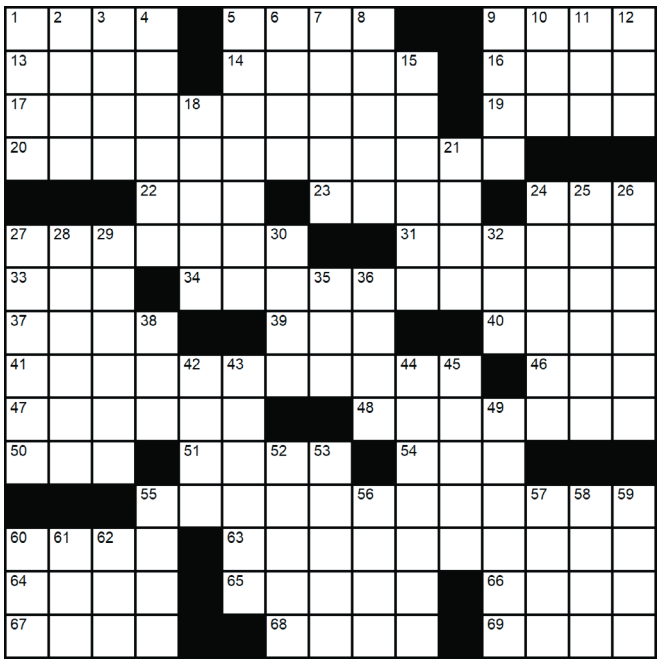
Among the conservation groups working with the DNR to maintain, protect and enlarge turkey habitat are the state chapters of the National Wildlife Foundation, the National Wild Turkey Federation, Pheasants Forever, the Ruffed Grouse Society and Michigan United Conservation Clubs.

Bump said turkeys are now seen in every county in Michigan, even in the Upper Peninsula, where deep snow makes foraging challenging for ground birds.

"We have them farther north than before, probably because some human food sources make it easier for them to make it through the winter," he said. "Wild turkeys are a great example of the kind of success we can have when we get a lot of partners and do a lot of good work for wildlife."

Jonesin' Crossword

By Matt Jones



"Bar Numb" -- I must've heard it differently.
by Matt Jones

ACROSS
1. Self-descriptive shortening followed by a period
5. Pack firmly
9. Study late
13. Indie pop duo Tegan and ___
14. Word flashed on "The Circle" when news comes through
16. Baltic Sea capital
17. It may be adjusted by using a different head
19. Tippy-top
20. Game show for graveyard enthusiasts?
22. Cyndi Lauper hit "___ Bop"
23. Buckwheat noodles
24. Lionel Messi's home, for short
27. Having an outside pier
31. Shellfish that's shucked
33. Actress Thurman of "Red, White & Royal Blue"
34. Water container fastened to a mountaineer's belt?
37. A smattering
39. "Do the Right Thing" pizzeria owner
40. Artist Mondrian
41. Hair styler used while waiting to move on the freeway?
46. Wolf Blitzer's channel
47. Actress Robbie
48. Flockhart of "Ally McBeal"
50. Prefix with center
51. "Rendezvous With ___" (Arthur C. Clarke novel)
54. "Anchorman" first name
55. "Don't agree to that! You're being cheated"?
60. Grill residue
63. Damaging substances
64. Banjoist Fleck
65. "Give it ___!"
66. "Scott Pilgrim vs. the World" star Michael
67. Shortening for a really tall NBA star
68. Bitter bar brews
69. Turkey ___ (November race)

DOWN
1. Pt. of PGA
2. "Who Let the Dogs Out?" group ___ Men
3. "Sleepy Hollow" antagonist ___ Bones
4. Least refined
5. North Carolina resident
6. ___ Romeo (Italian sports car)
7. Certain sandwiches
8. Prefix with "plasm" or "type"
9. ___ Rangoon
10. Tear (apart)
11. Questionnaire question
12. Highest limit
15. Trifling amount, in British slang
18. Belief system
21. It may be held in a deli
24. Lofty stories
25. Give in
26. ___ Green (Scottish eloping destination)
27. "Is it ___, or ..."
28. Sullen subgenre for Kid Cudi
29. Japanese soy sauce variety
30. DVD player insert
32. Longtime NASCAR sponsor
35. ___ salad (side dish in some Hawaiian restaurants)
36. Alliance of countries
38. Queue after D
42. It may be made from logs or pillows
43. Lake that's the source of the Mississippi River
44. Woodchuck cousins
45. Shapeless masses
49. Do a grand jury's job
52. "Kia ora" language
53. Madison Ave. figure
55. Turkey's neighbor
56. "Major" constellation
57. "Worst ... episode ... ___"
58. Chocolate bar full of bubbles
59. Pre-law exam
60. "Young Sheldon" network
61. Rueful laugh
62. Carte lead-in

Answers on page 30

SUDOKU

Intermediate

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

Fun By The Numbers

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

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

Free Will Astrology

By Rob Brezsny

November 22-28, 2023

ARIES (March 21–April 19): As a child, I loved to go to a meadow and whirl around in spirals until I got so dizzy that I fell. As I lay on the ground, the earth, sky and sun reeled madly, and I was no longer just a pinpoint of awareness lodged inside my body but an ecstatically undulating swirl in the kaleidoscopic web of life. Now, years later, I've discovered many of us love spinning. Scientists postulate humans have a desire for the intoxicating vertigo it brings. I would never recommend you do what I did as a kid — it could be dangerous for some of you. But if it's safe and the spirit moves you, do it! Or at least imagine yourself doing it. Do you know about the Sufi Whirling Dervishes who use spinning as a meditation? Read here: tinyurl.com/JoyOfWhirling and tinyurl.com/SufiSpinning.

TAURUS (April 20–May 20): Your power creature in the coming weeks will not be an eagle, wolf, bear or salmon. I don't advise you to dream of being a wild horse, tiger or crocodile. Instead, I invite you to cultivate a deep bond with the mushroom family. Why? Now is a favorable time to be like the mushrooms that keep the earth fresh. In wooded areas, they eat away dead trees and leaves, preventing larger and larger heaps of compost from piling up. They keep the soil healthy and make nutrients available for growing things. Be like those mushrooms, Taurus. Steadily and relentlessly rid your world of the defunct and decaying parts, thereby stimulating fertility.

GEMINI (May 21–June 20): Gemini novelist Geraldine McCaughrean wrote, "Maybe courage is like memory — a muscle that needs exercise to get strong. So, I decided that maybe if I started in a small way, I could gradually work my way up to being brave." That is an excellent prescription for you: the slow, incremental approach to becoming bolder and pluckier. For best results, begin practicing on mild risks and mellow adventures. Week by week, month by month, increase the audacious beauty of your schemes and the intensity of your spunk and fortitude. By mid-2024, you will be ready to launch a daring project.

CANCER (June 21–July 22): Cancerian neurologist and author Oliver Sacks worked with people who had unusual neurological issues. His surprising conclusion: "Defects, disorders and diseases can play a paradoxical role by bringing out latent powers, developments and evolutions that might never be seen in their absence." In not all cases, but more often than seemed reasonable, he found that disorders could be regarded as creative —"for if they destroy particular paths, particular ways of doing things, they may force unexpected growth." Your assignment is to meditate on how the events of your life might exemplify the principle Sacks marvels at: apparent limitations leading to breakthroughs and bonanzas.

LEO (July 23–Aug. 22): I am falling in love with how deeply you are falling in love with new ways of seeing and understanding yourself. My heart sings as I listen to your heart singing in response to new attractions. Keep it up, Leo! You are having an excellent influence on me. My dormant potentials and drowsy passions are stirring as I behold you waking up and coaxing out your dormant potentials and drowsy passions. Thank you, dear!

VIRGO (Aug. 23–Sept. 22): Virgo journalist Sydney J. Harris offered advice I suggest you meditate on. He wrote, "Regret for the things we did can be tempered by time; it is regret for the things we did not do that is inconsolable." I bring this to your attention because now is a favorable time to act on things you have not yet done but should do. If you put definitive plans in motion soon, you will ensure that regret won't come calling in five years. (PS: Amazingly, it's also an excellent time to dissolve the regret you feel for an iffy move you made in the past.)

LIBRA (Sept. 23–Oct. 22): In contrast to false stereotypes, medieval Europeans were not dirty and unhygienic. They made soap and loved to bathe. Another bogus myth says the people of the Middle Ages believed the Earth was flat. But the truth was that most educated folks knew it was round. And it's questionable to refer to this historical period as backward since it brought innovations like mechanical timekeepers, moveable type, accurate maps, the heavy plow and illuminated manuscripts. In this spirit, and in accordance with astrological omens, I invite you to strip away misconceptions and celebrate actual facts in your own sphere. Be a scrupulous revealer, a conscientious and meticulous truth-teller.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23–Nov. 21): Scorpio poet John Berryman said, "To grow, we must travel in the direction of our fears." Yikes! I personally wouldn't want to do that kind of growth all the time. I prefer traveling cheerfully in the direction of my hopes and dreams. But then I'm not a Scorpio. Maybe Berryman's strategy for fulfilling one's best destiny is a Scorpio superpower. What do you think? One thing I know for sure is that the coming weeks will be an excellent time to reevaluate and reinvent your relationship with your fears. I suggest you approach the subject with a beginner's mind. Empty yourself of all your previous ideas and be open to healing new revelations.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22–Dec. 21): Sagittarian poet Nina Cassian said, "I promise to make you so alive that the fall of dust on furniture will deafen you." I think she meant she would fully awaken the senses of her readers. She would boost our capacity for enchantment and entice us to feel interesting emotions we had never experienced. As we communed with her beautiful self-expression, we might even reconfigure our understanding of who we are and what life is about. I am pleased to tell you, Sagittarius, that even if you're not a writer, you now have an enhanced ability to perform these same services — both for yourself and others.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22–Jan. 19): "Sometimes I get lonesome for a storm," says Capricorn singer-songwriter Joan Baez. "A full-blown storm where everything changes." That approach has worked well for her. At age 82, she has released 30 albums and is a member of the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. She has recorded songs in eight languages and has been honored by Amnesty International for her work on behalf of human rights. If you're feeling resilient — which I think you are — I recommend that you, too, get lonesome for a storm. Your life could use some rearrangement. If you're not feeling wildly bold and strong, maybe ask the gods for a mild squall.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20–Feb. 18): Science educator Neil deGrasse Tyson tells us that water molecules we drink have "passed through the kidneys of Socrates, Genghis Khan and Joan of Arc." The same prodigious truth applies to the air we breathe. It has "passed through the lungs of Napoleon, Beethoven and Abraham Lincoln." Tyson would have also been accurate if he said we have shared water and air that has been inside the bodies of virtually every creature that has ever lived. I bring these facts to your attention, Aquarius, in the hope of inspiring you to deepen your sense of connectedness to other beings. Now is an excellent time to intensify your feelings of kinship with the web of life. Here's the practical value of doing that: You will attract more help and support into your life.

PISCES (Feb. 19–March 20): I am saying a prayer for you. I pray to the fates that you will not accept lazy or careless efforts from others. You won't allow their politeness to be a cover-up for manipulativeness. I also pray that you will cultivate high expectations for yourself. You won't be an obsessive perfectionist, but you'll be devoted to excellence. All your actions will be infused with high integrity. You will conscientiously attend to every detail with the faith that you are planting seeds that will bloom beautifully in the future.

OUT on the TOWN

Events & Happenings in Lansing This Week

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

Wednesday, Nov. 22

"A Course of Love" Book Study, Facilitated by Lucille Olson & Bill Dietrich - 7 p.m. Zoom ID: 177 417 886. Passcode: 601744. unitylansing.org.

Allen Farmers Market - 3-6:30 p.m. 1629 E. Kalamazoo St., Lansing. 517-999-3911. allenneighborhoodcenter.org/market.

CharLit Adult Book Club - A monthly adult book club. 6:30 p.m. Charlotte Community Library, 226 S. Bostwick St., Charlotte. 517-543-8859. charlottelibrary.org.

"Fitness Over 50" Senior Exercise Group - The Meridian Township Parks and Recreation Stretch and Flex Exercise group exercises at Central Park Pavilion. 9-10 a.m. 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos. meridian50plus.com.

Global Village Turkey Eve Bash - 8:30 p.m. The Green Door Bar & Grill, 2005 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. 517-325-9897. greendoorlive.com.

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

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

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

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

Thursday, Nov. 23

Free Community Thanksgiving Meal - Menu includes turkey, mashed potatoes, gravy, sweet potatoes, cranberry sauce, stuffing, green bean casserole and pie! Noon-2 p.m. Cristo Rey Community Center, 1717 N. High St., Lansing. 517-372-4700. cristoreycommunity.org.

Friday, Nov. 24

Black n' Blue Tournament - Annual celebration showcasing our region's competitive roller derby skaters. Six elite WFTDA coaches will provide clinics throughout the weekend. 9 a.m. Ingham County Fairgrounds, 700 E. Ash St., Mason. facebook.com/EastLansingRollerDerby.

"Fitness Over 50" Senior Exercise Group - The Meridian Township Parks and Recreation Stretch and Flex Exercise group exercises at Central Park Pavilion. 9-10 a.m. 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos. meridian50plus.com.

GRINCHMAS 3 - More than 40 vendors selling locally made products. Bring the kids from 2-6 p.m. and get photos taken with the Grinch. 8 a.m.-8 p.m. Lansing Mall, former T.J. Maxx store, 5330 W. Saginaw Hwy., Lansing. 517-920-8286. facebook.com/chaosevents20.

The Insiders: A Tribute to Tom Petty - 8 p.m. The Green Door Bar & Grill, 2005 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. 517-325-9897. greendoorlive.com.

"Murder for Two: Holiday Edition" - 2 and 8 p.m. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam St., Williamston. 517-655-7469. williamstontheatre.org.

Saturday, Nov. 25

Black n' Blue Tournament - Annual celebration showcasing our region's competitive roller derby skaters. Six elite WFTDA coaches will provide clinics throughout the weekend. 9 a.m. Ingham County Fairgrounds, 700 E. Ash St., Mason. facebook.com/EastLansingRollerDerby.

The Black Santa Experience - 10 a.m.-8 p.m. The Venue by Eleven 11 Events, 5660 W. Saginaw Hwy., Lansing. 973-444-9982. theblacksantaexperiencetm.com.

Divination Roundtable - Learn a new divination method, get a reading and compare notes with others in your field. All readings free, all systems of divination welcome. 5 p.m. Keys to Manifestation, 809 Center St., Suite 7, Lansing. 517-974-5540. manifestlansing.com.

GRINCHMAS 3 - More than 40 vendors selling locally made products. Bring the kids from 2-6 p.m. and get photos taken with the Grinch. 10 a.m.-8 p.m. Lansing Mall, former T.J. Maxx store, 5330 W. Saginaw Hwy., Lansing. 517-920-8286. facebook.com/chaosevents20.

The Insiders: A Tribute to Tom Petty - 8 p.m. The Green Door Bar & Grill, 2005 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. 517-325-9897. greendoorlive.com.

Live Music with The Band Medusa at LBC - 7 p.m. Lansing Brewing Co., 518 E. Shiawassee St., Lansing. 517-371-2600. lansingbrewingcompany.com.

"Mixed Media Medley," by Bobbie Margolis - 9 a.m.-7 p.m. CADL – Okemos Library, 4321 Okemos Road, Okemos. Call 517-347-2021 beforehand to ensure gallery space is open. facebook.com/MidMichiganArtGuild.

"Murder for Two: Holiday Edition" - 2 and 8 p.m. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam St., Williamston. 517-655-7469. williamstontheatre.org.

Piper Avenue at Horrocks Beer Garden - 5 p.m. 7420 W. Saginaw Hwy., Lansing. 517-323-3782. Shophorrocks.com.

Powerlight Band - 7 p.m. UrbanBeat, 1213 Turner St., Lansing. 517-331-8440. urbanbeatevents.com.

Sunday, Nov. 26

Black n' Blue Tournament - Annual celebration showcasing our region's competitive roller derby skaters. Six elite WFTDA coaches will provide clinics throughout the weekend. 1 p.m. tryout game for Team Michigan. 10 a.m. Ingham County Fairgrounds, 700 E. Ash St., Mason. facebook.com/EastLansingRollerDerby.

GLAD Drum Circle - All ages and experience levels welcome. 2-4 p.m. Keys to Manifestation, 809 Center St., Suite 7, Lansing. 517-803-2392. facebook.com/GreaterLansingAreaDrummers.

GRINCHMAS 3 - More than 40 vendors selling locally made products. Bring the kids from 1-5 p.m. and get photos taken with the Grinch. 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Lansing Mall, former T.J. Maxx store, 5330 W. Saginaw Hwy., Lansing. 517-920-8286. facebook.com/chaosevents20.

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

The Black Santa Experience

Saturday, Nov. 25
10 a.m.-8 p.m.
The Venue by Eleven 11 Events
5660 W. Saginaw Hwy., Lansing

The Black Santa Experience, a holiday event founded in 2022 to celebrate Lansing's Black community and give children an opportunity to meet a racially inclusive Santa Claus, returns 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Saturday (Nov. 25) at The Venue by Eleven 11 events in the Lansing Mall. More than 25 local Black-owned businesses are expected to attend, offering the opportunity to discover unique and diverse products and services while supporting entrepreneurs from the community.

"Representation matters, and the Black Santa Experience is all about creating a magical holiday atmosphere where we celebrate our culture," said founder Karla Wagner. "All are welcome! We were blown away by the response last year, and we are thrilled to bring it back to Lansing for another unforgettable event."

Socialight Society, a local Black-owned bookstore, will host an hourly story time for children from noon to 5 p.m. at its Socialight Society Storytime Stage. Kids can also enjoy face painting, crafts and photos with Santa, played by George Smithers, a graduate of the Charles W. Howard Santa Claus School in Midland.

For adults, the new Comfort Zone Cigar Lounge & Bistro will have a lounge space where guests can "unwind, savor and discover a taste of the extraordinary while supporting a great cause."

The first 150 attendees will receive a free swag bag. To learn more, or to pre-register for photos with Santa, visit theblacksantaexperiencetm.com.

"Mixed Media Medley," by Bobbie Margolis - Noon-6 p.m. CADL – Okemos Library, 4321 Okemos Road, Okemos. Call 517-347-2021 beforehand to ensure gallery space is open. facebook.com/MidMichiganArtGuild.

"Murder for Two: Holiday Edition" - 2 p.m. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam St., Williamston. 517-655-7469. williamstontheatre.org.

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

Sunday Brunch - Visit lookingglassbrewingcompany.com for menu. Noon-5 p.m. Looking Glass Brewing Co., 115 N. Bridge St., Dewitt. 517-668-6004.

"What Are You Thankful For?" Discussion, facilitated by Danielle McMahon - 9:30 a.m. Unity Spiritual Center of Lansing, 2395 Washington Road, Lansing. 269-762-3189. unitylansing.org.

Monday, Nov. 27

Ballet II for kids - Ages 9-13. 4 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.

Beginning Ukulele for the Family (six-week class) - Taught by Michigan's ukulele ambassador, Ben Hassenger. Registration req. 6 p.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. 517-627-7014. gladl.org.

Book Arts: Memoir Writing and Basic Codex Book Construction - Dawn Burns, creative writer, and Alice Brinkman, textile artist, will team up to guide memoir writing and basic codex book construction. 6 p.m. REACH Studio Art Center, 1804 S. Washington Ave., Lansing. reachstudioart.org.

Burger Night - Choice of hamburger, cheeseburger or olive burger, plus fries. Dine in or take out. $8. 5-7 p.m. Columbus Hall, 5300 N. Grand River Ave., Lansing. 517-321-2209.

Downtown Development Authority meeting - 6 p.m. Laingsburg City Hall, 114 S. Woodhull Road, Laingsburg.

Department of Public Works meeting - 5:30 p.m. Laingsburg City Hall, 114 S. Woodhull Road, Laingsburg.

"Fitness Over 50" Senior Exercise Group - The Meridian Township Parks and Recreation Stretch and Flex Exercise group exercises at Central Park Pavilion. 9-10 a.m. 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos. meridian50plus.com.

Improv Acting Class - 8:30 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.

Jazz Dance Class - 7 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.

Jump Into Reading - Join Ms. Erin for stories, songs, activities and therapy dogs. Ages 0-5 with caregivers. 11 a.m. Eaton Rapids Area District Library, 220 S. Main St., Eaton Rapids. 517-663-0950. eradl.org.

"Letting Go," by David Hawkins: Book Study with Lucille Olson - 1:30 p.m. Zoom ID: 177 417 886. Passcode: 601744. unitylansing.org.

See Events, Page 26

Events

from page 25

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

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

Poetry Workshop w/ Masaki Takahashi, Lansing Poet Laureate - Share a poem at our open mic, with the option to get a live critique from Takahashi. Registration req. 7 p.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. 517-627-7014. gladl.org.

Ruhala Broadway Ensemble - Learn to excel equally in singing, acting and dance. 5:30 p.m. 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.

Tuesday, Nov. 28

Acting 101 Class - 7 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.

Acting Ensemble Class - 8 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.

Brewer's Pairing Dinner at Lansing Brewing Co. - Tickets include five courses paired with five different LBC brews. 21+. 518 E. Shiawassee St., Lansing. 517-371-2600. lansingbrewingcompany.com.

"Hairspray" - 7:30 p.m. Wharton Center Cobb Great Hall, 750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing. 517-432-2000. whartoncenter.com.

Intro to Acting/Improv for Kids - Ages 5-12. 4 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.

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

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

Level I Dance Class - Introduction to theater dance using ballet, tap and jazz. Ages 5-8. 4:45 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.

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

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

One More Chapter Book Club - Chat, eat snacks and have book-related fun. Grades 2-4. Registration req. 6 p.m. Charlotte Community Library, 226 S. Bostwick St., Charlotte. 517-543-8859. charlottelibrary.org.

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

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

Trivia at Lansing Shuffle with DJ Trivia - 7:30-9 p.m. 325 Riverfront Drive, Lansing. 517-940-4619. lansingshuffle.com.

Wednesday, Nov. 29

27th Annual Delhi Community Tree Lighting - Carols, tree lighting, hot chocolate and visits with Santa. 6:30 p.m. Veterans Memorial Gardens, 2074 Aurelius Road, Holt. delhitownshipmi.gov.

"A Course of Love" Book Study, Facilitated by Lucille Olson & Bill Dietrich - 7 p.m. Zoom ID: 177 417 886. Passcode: 601744. unitylansing.org.

Acting & Glee Music Class for Kids - Ages 5-12. 4:30 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.

Allen Farmers Market - 3-6:30 p.m. 1629 E. Kalamazoo St., Lansing. 517-999-3911. allenneighborhoodcenter.org/market.

The Dangling Participles Duo at the Graduate Rock Bar - 8 p.m. 133 Evergreen Ave., East Lansing. 517-348-0900. facebook.com/graduaterockbar.

Eating for Balanced Blood Sugar: Joint Health and Mobility - Listen, learn and participate with AL!VE's registered dietitian and exercise physiologist. Small treat of Power Granola will be provided. 3 p.m. Charlotte Community Library, 226 S. Bostwick St., Charlotte. 517-543-8859. charlottelibrary.org.

See Events, Page 27

David Winkelstern 3D art exhibition

Through Dec. 31
10 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesday-Friday and two hours before showtimes
Riverwalk Theatre
228 Museum Drive, Lansing

Local artist and longtime City Pulse theater writer David Winkelstern has a new exhibition on view in the Riverwalk Theatre's lobby through the end of December. He offers an eclectic range of 3D artwork, which "you really have to see to appreciate," he said.

"I've always been attracted to doing things that have dimension to them. So, a lot of times, I'll take items and glue them to a canvas, and then I'll do a poly splattering over them, with layers and layers and layers of latex and that kind of thing," he said. "I have a huge collage of rockstars with LPs on it, mic stands that are splattered and stuff like that."

The pieces are all for sale, with half of the proceeds going directly to the theater. Winkelstern has reduced the prices to help drive sales.

"I don't want to carry it home!" he said. "I'm also hoping the theater will make something off of it, too."

One of the pieces looks like an American flag, soiled by blood and bullet holes. Winkelstern said pieces like this appeal differently to different audiences.

"Some people see it as the violence in our country — gun violence, that kind of thing. But other people see it as the sacrifices that our soldiers have made. I respect both attitudes," he said. "Everything I do, the more you look at it, the more you'll find something. There are layers to find. There's nothing conclusive about it."

Winkelstern began experimenting with visual art as a teenager. He earned an O-Level qualification in art while studying abroad in England during high school. He went on to teach English and writing in the Lansing School District and at Lansing Community College before his retirement. He has also done art-related contract work and created murals around East Lansing after graduating from Michigan State University in the 1970s.

This is the second time Winkelstern has exhibited art at Riverwalk.

"I was originally scheduled to appear just after COVID hit, so I didn't get back in the queue until this November," he said. "I hope people come see it. It's a real variety, what's hanging up there. There's quite a range of things."

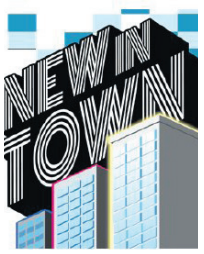
The lobby is open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Friday as well as two hours prior to shows the theater hosts, such as "Christmas Belles," which runs Dec. 7 through 10 and 14 through 17.

Heffron Farms has the meats

Free meat delivery service launches just in time for holidays

By TYLER SCHNEIDER

Heffron Farms is just under 50 miles away from Lansing, but its new meat delivery service is set on closing that distance.



Heffron Farms free meat delivery service
Call 616-794-2527 for pricing and to place an order
heffronfarms.com

On Tuesday (Nov. 21), the farm made its weekly pilgrimage out to Lansing to deliver an ungodly amount of Thanksgiving turkeys. During standard weeks, the deliveries come in on Saturdays.

Owner Denny Heffron, whose family has owned the Belding-based farm for 102 years, launched the service earlier this month.

"We had people driving out from Lansing to our Grand Rapids locations, and we decided, 'Hey, why don't we take it to them?' We wanted to bring naturally raised stuff — different than what you buy in the grocery store — directly to the consumer. We decided it would be free, with no strings attached," he said.

Heffron Farms is the first local, independent farm to offer this kind of service in Greater Lansing. Yelloh, formerly Schwan's Home Delivery, also delivers here, but it's a national chain. Everything else is mail-order — and certainly not local.

In addition to the fresh and frozen turkeys of various weights, shapes and sizes that are currently on tap, Heffron Farms also delivers beef, pork, chicken, duck and lamb, with more options available by request.

"If somebody wants a special cut or wants it done a certain way, we can do it," Heffron said. "We can do anything anybody wants."

The farm's roots go all the way back to the Civil War. Heffron's family emigrated from Ireland in the mid-1800s. His great-great-grandfather arrived and enlisted in the Union Army so his five sons wouldn't have to.

"He died during the war. Not from battle, but from a disease," Heffron explained. "He was buried in a military cemetery in Bowling Green, Kentucky. In 1864, the family bought a new farm wagon, and two of his sons took two teams of horses and went down to retrieve his body so it could be buried here."

The journey took 21 days. "We actually still have that wagon," Heffron said.

One of those sons went on to purchase the land that would become the 4,000-acre Heffron Farms farmstead, where Heffron still lives today. From those humble origins arose a popular regional producer that always keeps 1,200 head of cattle on hand and now ships meats as far as San Juan, Puerto Rico.

"We ship all over, including to Florida and California, to people that lived here before and bought meat but have moved," Heffron said.

Why go to such lengths when there's more than enough demand within the Mitten?

"The customers love it, first of all, and that's how you keep customers. The customers we deal with are wonderful people, what I call the cream of the crop of the consumer," Heffron said.

Heffron Farms operates four markets in Michigan: two in Grand Rapids, one in Belding and another in Wyoming. Interested parties can call 616-794-2527 with any orders, questions or requests.

Courtesy of Heffron Farms

Courtesy of Heffron Farms

In addition to the fresh and frozen turkeys that are available for Thanksgiving, Heffron Farms also delivers beef, pork, chicken, duck and lamb, with more options available by request.

Events

from page 26

"Fitness Over 50" Senior Exercise Group - The Meridian Township Parks and Recreation Stretch and Flex Exercise group exercises at Central Park Pavilion. 9-10 a.m. 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos. meridian50plus.com.

"Hairspray" - 7:30 p.m. Wharton Center Cobb Great Hall, 750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing. 517-432-2000. whartoncenter.com.

"Home Alone" Trivia at LBC - Call us at 517-371-2600 to reserve a spot for your team. 7-10 p.m. Lansing Brewing Co., 518 E. Shiawassee St., Lansing. lansingbrewingcompany.com.

Improv Acting Class - 8:30 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.

Jazz Dance Class - 7 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.

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

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

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

Overbooked Book Club - "Romantic Comedy," by Curtis Sittenfeld. Intended for adults. 5 p.m. Eaton Rapids Area District Library, 220 S. Main St., Eaton Rapids. 517-663-0950. eradl.org.

Power of Influence: The Intersection of Arts and Sports for Social Change - Alumni, sports leaders, artists and faculty discuss the potential of art and sport to become catalysts for social change. Registration encouraged. 6 p.m. Broad Art Museum, 547 E. Circle Drive, East Lansing. 517-884-4800. broadmuseum.msu.edu.

Tap II Class - 6 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.

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

Thursday, Nov. 30

5-Course Seafood Dinner Pairing - 5 flight-glass pours of select craft beers that have been paired with chef Moyer's 5-course seafood menu. Tickets req. 7:30-9 p.m. Looking Glass Brewing Co, 115 N. Bridge St., DeWitt. 517-668-6004. lookingglassbrewingcompany.com.

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

Acting 101 Class - 7 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.

Acting Ensemble Class - 8 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.

Eloquents Toastmasters Weekly Meeting - Safe and positive environment to practice public speaking and leadership skills. 6:30 p.m. Okemos Presbyterian Church, 2258 Bennett Road, Okemos. eloquents.toastmastersclubs.org.

"Hairspray" - 7:30 p.m. Wharton Center Cobb Great Hall, 750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing. 517-432-2000. whartoncenter.com.

Jazz/Hip Hop II class - Ages 9-13. 4 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.

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

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

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

Links & Drinks with Lakuna Links Permanent Jewelry at LBC - Sip on a cocktail and choose from a variety of bracelets, necklaces and rings to have linked for the perfect custom fit. 4-8 p.m. Lansing Brewing Co., 518 E. Shiawassee St., Lansing. 517-371-2600. lansingbrewingcompany.com.

Black 'n' Blue tournament

Nov. 24-26
9 a.m. Friday-Saturday
10 a.m. Sunday
Ingham County Fairgrounds
700 E. Ash St., Mason

Roller derby fans, athletes and interested spectators can look forward to the 11th annual Black 'n' Blue roller derby tournament, running Friday (Nov. 24) through Sunday (Nov. 26) at the Ingham County Fairgrounds in Mason. The tournament showcases skaters from local women's, all-gender and junior teams, who will compete in a series of matches throughout the weekend, culminating in a championship game 4 p.m. Sunday.

Additionally, six Women's Flat Track Derby Association coaches will host four-hour clinics throughout the weekend, and Team Michigan Roller Derby will host a tryout game for its 2024 team 1 p.m. Sunday. There will also be a disco afterparty 9:15 p.m. Saturday.

Tickets are $15 per day or $30 for all three days. Children 8 and under receive free admission. Presale tickets are available at ticketstripe.com/blacknblue2023spectators. Attendees should bring a chair.

To view the full weekend schedule, visit facebook.com/EastLansingRollerDerby.

Actors reunite for WT holiday show

BY TESSA PANETH-POLLAK

While warming up for their first rehearsal, Andrea Wollenberg and Mark Schenfisch could be seen leaning into a side hug at the piano.

The two star in the musical-comedy whodunit "Murder for Two: Holiday Edition," which opens Friday (Nov. 24) at the Williamston Theatre after a few preview performances last weekend. The show is back by popular demand after its hugely successful run in 2017, now with a holiday twist.

"It's a reunion," Schenfisch said. "I'm going to be working with someone who I know and trust and love already."

Wollenberg echoed his sentiment about trust.

"We're able to sense what the other person needs, and we're able to be really clear about what we need to get the work done," she said.

The murder happens during the show's opening number, when great American novelist Arthur Whitney falls victim to a shot in the dark at his own surprise party, now set on Christmas Eve.

"It's the same mystery, it's the same characters, but it has a Santa suit on," Wollenberg said.

Every guest at the party becomes a suspect. Wollenberg plays all 10 of them, and Schenfisch plays Marcus Moscowicz, the earnest detective determined to interview each one.

"The show requires a very specific skill set," said Emily Sutton-Smith, the theater's executive director and co-founder. Both performers have to be able to act, play piano, sing in a variety of styles and make audiences laugh. Additionally, Wollenberg said, they have to be "mercurially able to change on a dime."

"We're going up and down stairs, sitting, standing and running. And singing. Even though I'm very physically fit, it takes a lot out of my body," she said.

When Moscowicz arrives at the scene before a more senior detective assigned to the case, his ambition and commitment to the rules come into immediate conflict. No sooner does he sing a song about rules being the key to success ("Protocol Says") than he steps in to impersonate his superior.

"He has an attention to detail that eventually gets overwhelmed by the antics of the suspects," Schenfisch said. But by the end of the show, "There's a certain relaxedness, and he's more willing to go with the flow and accept what's put in front of him and deal with that the best way he can, rather than try to control everything."

Audiences can expect to meet a more grown-up Moscowicz this time around, with "more detective intensity" and "drive," Schenfisch continued. Returning director Rob Roznowski has given both performers permission to focus on the "reality" of their characters and trust the comedy will come through.

"Traditionally, the character is played a little campier than Scooby Doo," Schenfisch said. But Moscowicz also has "a bit of a tragic backstory," which Schenfisch leans into.

Wollenberg emphasized on Williamston Theatre's "Backstage Chat" podcast that "real is funny." She works to sharpen the specificity of each character through close attention to body mechanics.

"Every muscle in my body is telling the story of whoever I'm telling," she said. "I need to be really specific about how my shoulders are either internally rotated or externally rotated, if my chest is sticking out, if my vocal cords or my larynx are dropping or raising."

Though the show is a lighthearted comedy overall, there is "a serious through line" in the way that Moscowicz opens his heart to take the next step on his journey toward love and professional success, Sutton-Smith said. He starts out as a detective without a partner. But the murder does get solved. And the storyline ends on a note of partnership.

The companionship between the two actors is on virtuosic display at the show's end, when the two perform a rollicking four-hand piano duet, "Finale Ultimo (A Friend Like You)," Wollenberg's favorite part of the show.

"The story's over, everything's wrapped up. And now it's just a chance for Mark and I to have a shit-ton of fun on the piano," she said.

Sutton-Smith said the partnership between the two actors, so essential to the show, could be seen as a metaphor for all the partnerships necessary to make theater happen. She thinks this note of interdependency will strike a chord with post-pandemic audiences still learning to be together in person again.

Moscowicz "becomes more willing to rely on another human being and work with another human being," she said. "And that's really important. We need each other. It's OK to need each other."

"Murder for Two: Holiday Edition"

Nov. 24-Dec. 23
8 p.m. Thursday-Saturday; Dec. 20
2 p.m. Saturday-Sunday; Nov. 24, Dec. 13 and 20
Williamston Theatre
122 S. Putnam St., Williamston
williamstontheatre.org

FOOD & DRINK

DINING OUT IN GREATER LANSING

Pie time for a wintry treat

Courtesy of Ari LeVaux

Making an Oreo crust is an easy and delicious way to spice up your Thanksgiving pumpkin pie.

By ARI LEVAUX

Chocolate and pumpkin pie make a special combination. And since I love pumpkin pie but am weary of making pie crust, messing around with Oreo-crusted pumpkin pie is one of my favorite Thanksgiving pastimes.

There's an elegance to a crust that you can make with ingredients from a convenience store. And while premade Oreo crusts are commonly available, I prefer making mine the old-fashioned way: from scratch, with whole Oreo cookies fresh from the package.

The white stuff — aka stuf — melts when heated, which helps oil the pan. It also permeates the crust, helping hold everything together once it cools.

The most common way to make an Oreo crust is to atomize some Oreos in a blender and use the powder to form a crust that looks a lot like the kind you buy premade from a grocery store. The primary advantage to doing it at home is that you can make more than you need for the base of the pie and use the excess on top. This results in a sort of pie-sized meta-Oreo, where the chocolate powder on the top and bottom fuse together to form large cookies, and the pie filling in the middle plays the part of a thick, orange layer of stuf.

A more interesting alternative is to employ whole Oreos that are pulled in half. This results in a pie that appears to be covered in chocolate coins. Again, the stuf oils the pan, preventing the crust from sticking.

And for lazy crust makers like myself, one of the best parts of making an Oreo-crusted pumpkin pie is that it doesn't require a rolling pin or cover your kitchen with flour.

Oreo-crusted pumpkin pie

If you have your own filling recipe, feel free to use that one instead of mine. Just remember, when you make a pumpkin pie with an Oreo crust, you should reduce the sweetness of the filling since the cookies have so much sugar.

Makes 1 pie

1 package Oreos — about 36 cookies
15-ounce can of pumpkin (or 2 cups baked winter squash flesh)
2 eggs
1/2 cup sugar
12-ounce can of evaporated milk
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon pie spices
1 teaspoon grated ginger
2 teaspoons vanilla extract

Whole cookie crust

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees.

Oil or butter a pie pan. Pull apart the Oreos, one at a time, and use the stuf to stick the cookies to the inside of the pan, including the rim and bottom. Put six to eight cookies in a blender and pulverize them to fill in the gaps between the round cookies. Put the unfilled crust in the oven for five minutes, then remove.

Combine the remaining ingredients — the pie filling — and beat until thoroughly smooth. Pour the filling into the crust. Bake for 15 minutes at 425 degrees, then reduce the heat to 350 degrees and bake another 30 minutes. Pull apart four more Oreos. At this point, the pie should be firm enough to lay some half-cookies on top for decoration. Bake another 15 minutes. Remove from the oven. Allow to cool for 30 minutes, then run a knife or spatula around the edge to make sure it doesn't stick. Cool for another 90 minutes before serving.

Crumble crust

Preheat the oven to 425.

Reserve six Oreos for garnish or emergencies and blend the rest in a blender until smooth. Pour half of the resulting Oreo dust into a pie pan and put it in the hot oven for five minutes. Remove the pan and carefully push the crumbled Oreo into the bottom and up the edges, as evenly as you can. Use the back of the spoon to press and burnish it.

Crack two eggs into a bowl without breaking the yolks. Carefully spoon out a tablespoon of egg white and dump it into the Oreo pie crust. Use your fingers or a brush to gently spread the egg white all over the crust and put it back in the oven for seven minutes.

Mix the remaining pie filling and pour it into your crust. Sprinkle the remaining Oreo dust on top. You can go with a token amount for color or layer it as thick on top as it is on the bottom. A thick top crust results in a pie that looks like a hockey puck on the outside, while the inside hides a bright, creamy pumpkin filling.

Cover the pie with foil and bake for 15 minutes. Lower the oven to 350 degrees and remove the foil. Bake for another 45 minutes. Remove the pie and allow it to cool for two hours.

Waiting for it to cool might just be the hardest part of making this pie. But the crust, at least, is easy.

BAD's new grapes taste great

By CHELSEA LAKE ROBERTS

A gluten-free gal on the hunt for a "girl dinner" can't do much better than Mason's BAD Brewing Co. The brewpub is just a leisurely 20-minute drive down Cedar Street (watch out for deer), and the gentle entrance into downtown Mason never fails to charm. A trip to BAD isn't like stepping back in time — more like stepping to the side of it, just for a few hours.

I would describe the vibe of this establishment as quirky, creative and consistently tasty. It recently hosted a coat drive and ancient-Greece-themed wine release party, to which I say: no notes. You are flawless.

I have since been anxious to try BAD's new wines, so over the weekend, I took my seat at the bar for a burger and tots with a glass of the Sparkling Blackberry Honey vino. The stemless glasses were an important touch. They made my drinking experience feel relaxed amid my fellow patrons, who palmed ceramic mugs from the Mug Club.

At first sip, the blackberry wine was effervescent. The bartender described it as "kind of a sour, farmhouse-ale flavor," but I wouldn't say it was too sour. Just a hint of honey rounded out any tartness. It had the sparkle of an ice-cold champagne, and the color wowed with a red-orange autumnal hue, like what you might imagine brewing atop a witch's stove in October.

The wine had aromas of perfectly sun-ripened blackberries, picked at the start of September. Not overly complex, it tasted natural — even unadorned — but the sparkle gave it an edge. I wouldn't call this fruit-flavored wine "fruity." It tasted like what you'd want from a mead: fermented without being syrupy. It was easily sipped, and as the moderate middle child of BAD's new trio of white, fruit and red wines, I found that it went right down and paired nicely with my meal.

If I'd had a designated driver, I may have deigned to try all three options. But at 12% ABV — and with the aforementioned deer lurking in the berm — I decided to cap it at one, with the intention to return to try both the Sparkling Riesling and the Red Blend.

As for the rest of my meal, BAD's lightweight gluten-free burger bun tasted like it could have been made from rice flour. Most importantly, it didn't crumble. The flattened beef patty with a choice of cheese was accented by pungent red onion and tasted buttery, not greasy. It was a perfect bar burger, served with enough crispy tots to make me think about a box before deciding to push through. With friendly staff and regulars, a fun menu and creative community contributions, BAD Brewing continues to serve up one great evening after another, now with a promising new lineup of libations.

Chelsea Roberts for City Pulse

The view from the bar at Mason's BAD Brewing Co.

THE DISH

Sparkling Blackberry Honey wine
$5/6 ounces or $8/9 ounces
BAD Burger with GF bun
$11.50
Side of tater tots
$2
BAD Brewing Co.
440 S. Jefferson St., Mason
Kitchen hours:
4-8 p.m. Monday
3-8 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday
Noon-9 p.m. Friday
1-9 p.m. Saturday
Noon-6 p.m. Sunday
517-676-7664
badbrewing.com

CROSSWORD SOLUTION
From Pg. 24

A	B	B	R		T	A	M	P		C	R	A	M
S	A	R	A		A	L	E	R	T		R	I	G	A
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N	A	M	E	T	H	A	T	T	O	M	B			
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J	E	T	T	I	E	D			O	Y	S	T	E	R
U	M	A		C	L	I	M	B	B	O	T	T	L	E
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SUDOKU SOLUTION
From Pg. 24

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

A festive app to satisfy guests

From METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

Thanksgiving is a food lover's paradise. Though the turkey and side dishes are the crowning achievements, hungry guests will need something to tide them over until the pièce de résistance is ready.

Charcuterie boards and tasting menus continue to be popular appetizer options that are tasty yet not too filling. In addition to a platter of fruit slices, figs, aged cheeses and crostini, you can treat guests to Mini Cheese Ball Bites, which offer various textures and flavors in bite-sized morsels. Enjoy this recipe, courtesy of "Spectacular Spreads: 50 Amazing Food Spreads for Any Occasion," by Meagan Brown.

Mini Cheese Ball Bites

Makes 12

8 ounces light cream cheese, softened
1 cup sharp cheddar cheese, shredded
3 tablespoons pimentos, drained and chopped
1 teaspoon garlic powder
1 teaspoon paprika
1 pinch kosher salt
1 pinch freshly ground black pepper
1/2 cup crushed pecans
1/4 cup chopped chives
12 pretzel sticks

In a large bowl, stir together the cream cheese, cheddar, pimentos, garlic powder, paprika, salt and pepper until well combined. Cover and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.

Place the crushed pecans and chives in a small bowl. Set aside.

Roll the cheese mixture into 12 balls, about 1 inch in diameter. Evenly coat each ball with the pecan-chive mixture. Press a pretzel stick into the top of each cheese ball just before serving. Serve at room temperature or chilled.

THE PULSIFIEDS

Two burial plots are available for sale at Deepdale Memorial Park. The current retail price is $6,998, but they are being sold for $5,998. To purchase or for more information, please call 517-490-2903.