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Magazine

October 2017

FLINT JOURNAL

*Photograph by
Edwin D. Custer*

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Commentary The Mayoral Recall: Why your ballot will be different

By Paul Rozycki

For the fourth time in as many mayors, Flint's mayor is facing a recall election. However, unlike the recall of Woodrow Stanley in 2002, the near-recall of Don Williamson (before resignation) in 2009, and the attempted recall of Dayne Walling in 2010, this November's recall election will be different — and may surprise voters.

The official reason given for the recall of Mayor Weaver is the dispute over Flint's trash pickup contract, where Weaver supported Rizzo Environmental Services, and most of the city council supported Republic Waste Services. Republic ultimately was awarded the contract.

Change in the recall law

In the past, recall elections were two-stage affairs. Voters would vote yes or no on whether or not to recall an official and then, if the official was recalled, an election would be scheduled to fill the seat, perhaps some months later.

Changes in Michigan's recall law in 2012 now make recalls a one-step process. On November's ballot there won't be a yes or no vote on recalling Mayor Weaver. There will simply be a list of candidates, including Mayor Karen Weaver, and whoever gets the most votes will serve out the remainder of her term. At the moment, there are 18 candidates to be listed on the ballot. (See special election section in this issue). If Weaver wins she would, of course, continue to serve her full term, until 2019. If anyone other than Mayor Weaver were elected, the winner would take office as soon as the votes were certified, most likely within a week or so.

Currently, 19 states allow recall of state officials and at least 29 states allow the voters to remove local officials, at least in some limited circumstances. Michigan allows recall of all state and local officials except judges, and we have had some form of recall since 1908. We've had a long tradition of using the recall very frequently, particularly against local officials. At times it seemed that one could rarely go through three weeks of local headlines without reading of some attempt to recall a local township, city or village official in Genesee County. All too often it became a local sport, where a losing candidate would initiate recall proceedings shortly after the election, often for trivial reasons.

Why the law changed

This gave Michigan one of the highest number of recall attempts in the nation. Though many were not successful, it meant that local officials were frequently tied up in recall elections for much of their time in office. Michigan's recalls surpassed other states by a good margin. A report by the Citizens Research Council indicated that between 2000 and 2011, 457 state and local officials faced recalls in the state. For that time period, the average number of recalls in Michigan was 38 per year. California's average was a distant second with only 18. In 2011, by one calculation, nearly a third of Michigan's 148

lawmakers faced the threat of recall campaign, though only one actually went before the voters. Another report indicated that nearly 700 petitions for recall were filed in Wayne, Oakland and Macomb counties between 2005 and 2010, though most didn't get to the ballot stage. Since the passage of the law in 2012 the number of recalls has dropped dramatically.

The changes in the recall law also came shortly after the Right to Work legislation was passed, during the lame duck session of 2012, causing some to suggest that the lawmakers were acting to prevent their own removal over the controversial measure.

For those reasons, Michigan changed its recall law, making it more difficult to remove local officials. The new law reduced the time to collect signatures from 90 to 60 days, required the reasons for the recall to be "factual," and prohibited recalls in the first or last six months of an officeholder's term, or first or last year, if the term is longer than 2 years. Officials can only face one recall election during their term.

A "winner take all" election?

As complex and confusing as all this can be, the new law adds several unusual elements to this November's recall election in Flint. Since there is only one election, whoever gets the most votes will be elected (or retained) as mayor of Flint for the rest of Weaver's term.

With 18 candidates competing, the math could produce some surprising results, since the winner doesn't need a majority of the vote, just the most votes ... and that could be as little as six percent of the total. On one hand it might appear that just about anyone has a shot at winning. However, since Mayor Weaver is probably the best known name of the list, and since her opposition will be split up among 17 candidates, her chances to come in first would seem pretty good.

However, it may not be that simple. Of Mayor Weaver's many opponents, probably her major competition is Scott Kincaid, who has been on the city council for 32 years and ran for mayor once before — against Woodrow Stanley. But, given recent political history, predictions might be risky and it's also conceivable that any of the other candidates could break through and surprise everyone. With 18 candidates anything is possible. As has been true for most of Flint's mayoral elections over the last 30 years, the voting is likely to break down along racial lines.

Other issues

As if this weren't complicated enough, the new city charter takes effect at the beginning of next year, and will change several basic aspects of how the city is governed. However, the Receivership Transition Advisory Board (RTAB) is still in place and might limit, delay or modify some elements of the new charter. How that plays out remains to be seen.

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Cover: Former Flint Journal building, now occupied by MSU College of Human Medicine

“Where are the journalists?”

Part One: Threats to local news persist as Flint Journal dwindles

By Harold C. Ford

“Congress shall make no law ... abridging the freedom...of the press.” First Amendment, United States Constitution

“Journalism is the only profession explicitly protected by the U.S. Constitution, because journalists are supposed to be the check and balance on government. We’re supposed to be holding those in power accountable. We’re not supposed to be their megaphone. That’s what the corporate media have become.” Amy Goodman, Democracy Now!

America’s Fourth Estate is in trouble. Our nation’s journalistic “check and balance on government” is endangered. In particular, the existence of print journalism in our democracy is being undermined by economic forces unleashed by the proliferation of various forms of electronic media and resultant loss of revenue.

This three-part series aims to explore, analyze and lament how these forces are playing out in our own community – specifically in a close look at changes in the Flint Journal, now dwindled to a local staff of fewer than 10 people, and subsumed by M-Live Media Group and Advance Publications, its corporate owner. We contend that as the whole of journalism struggles, its troubles triggered by the rise of the Internet, the parallel collapse of the “print” business model has hit local journalism hardest, and that could be said to have a devastating and even insidious effect on participatory democracy. This is why we think it matters.

“What we are witnessing is the unraveling of an informed democracy.” Neil deGrasse Tyson, on MSNBC, Sept. 20.

Fourth Estate Under Siege

According to a June 2017 report by Pew Research Center, overall newspaper circulation is down to its lowest levels in more than 50 years. Total weekday circulation declined to 35 million, while Sunday circulation hit 38 million, the lowest totals since 1945. Over the past year alone, weekday print circulation decreased 10 percent while Sunday circulation decreased nine percent.

The report found that the total estimated newspaper industry advertising revenue for 2016 was \$18 billion, a decrease of 10 percent from 2015.

Pew Research Center found that “According to data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ Occupational Employment Statistics (OES), in 2015 (the last year available) 41,400 people worked as reporters or editors in the newspaper industry, down four percent from 2014 and 37 percent from 2004.”

Jonathon Taplin, author of a new book titled “Move Fast and Break Things: How

Facebook, Google, and Amazon Cornered Culture and Undermined Democracy,” recently told National Public Radio’s Here and Now program: “They (Facebook, Google, Amazon) totally, not only dominate the tech world, they dominate politics (and are) destructive to the news business. Revenues in newspapers since Google arrived have dropped by 75 percent. There are 50 percent fewer people working in journalism today than there were ten years ago.”

Reconfiguration

The impact of modern technology is shaking journalism to its core. The shakedown is evident at all levels — local, national, and worldwide. The resultant reconfiguration of the industry is, thus far, unsatisfying to millions of customers including Jan Worth-Nelson, editor of this publication, East Village Magazine.

Worth-Nelson — a journalism major out of Kent State who interned at the Daily Gate City newspaper in Keokuk, Iowa, and worked as a newspaper reporter in Southern California for five years — lost her temper in 2015 and cancelled her 25-year subscription to the Flint

two are crime reporters, one is a court reporter who helps cover crime, and one is a sports reporter. The hard copy is printed in Walker (Kent County, near Grand Rapids) and Bay City.” Circulation had slipped from the “glory days” print run of about 100,000 for the Sunday edition to about 50,000 for the weekday edition in 2012. (Recent data in the Flint Journal show current circulation at about 30,000).

Flint Journal staff from that era note that the daily paper often had more than 70 pages and the Sunday edition came close to 100, not including ad supplements, which in those days were plentiful. That was routinely more pages than the Detroit News or Free Press, one former staffer recalled.

“I still crave the role of the Fourth Estate,” Worth-Nelson wrote, “and I worry that it’s slipping away.” She’s not alone.

Where are the journalists?

“Where are the journalists?” Jiquanda Johnson queried in a recent interview with *EVM*. Johnson is a Flint-area native with more than 16 years of multifaceted experience in journalism, including print, television, and digital media. Dissatisfied with its direction, she left MLive/The Flint Journal in March of this year. She is founder and publisher of Flint Beat, a local online publication.

“I felt like they were falling short with community journalism,” said Johnson, a Beecher High School graduate with deep roots in Flint. “The art of investigative journalism in general has been lost.”

The loss of investigative journalism is due, in part, to the new metrics that measure the production of a writer. Those metrics are now dominated by the electronic dog that wags the print tail.

The Flint Journal once occupied all floors of its building on First Street in downtown Flint. It was designed by Albert Kahn in 1924. It is now being used by the Michigan State University College of Human Medicine, a reminder of the once bustling operation remaining over the main entrance. What is left of a Flint Journal staff, fewer than 10 people, now works out of a storefront in the Rowe Building on Saginaw Street.

“In 2009, Advance Publications (owner of Booth Newspapers and MLive Media Group/The Flint Journal since 1976) launched a multi-year reorganization of its newspapers and their affiliate websites, beginning with its Michigan properties,” according to Wikipedia. “Advance in most cases created regional ‘media groups’ to oversee the websites and print publications, along with affiliate ‘central services’ companies to print and deliver the newspapers and provide support services.”

Advance — the 8th largest news organization in the nation, headquartered in Staten



Empty Flint Journal rack at Olympic Diner

Journal. She said she grew weary of the “cutbacks, compromises and consolidations.” In a November 2015 column she wrote, “I finally cancelled when the paper shrunk to four days a week, lost most of its reporters, shut down its local presses, and moved out of its venerable 150-year-old building.”

The diminishment of The Flint Journal was painfully obvious to Worth-Nelson, as reported in her 2015 column: “The reporting staff has been sliced from about 50 in the old days to a core group of about 10; of those,

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... Journalists

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Island, New York City — reorganized its news companies with a “digital-first” approach to publication. The moves in the first decade of the 2000s were usually accompanied by layoffs. The Flint Journal, and its sister publications, The Saginaw News and The Bay City Times, laid off 35 percent of its staff.

Many journalists with decades of experience and deep roots in the community are now on the sidelines, retired after accepting buyouts from Advance. Some, including 25-year Journal veteran Gene Mierzejewski, are wary of the loss of experienced journalists.



Gene Mierzejewski

Mierzejewski, 66, was the last Flint Journal editorial employee to take an offered buyout, departing in 2008.

“Unfortunately, you’ve got young people with very limited experience putting out the paper; you don’t get

the coverage,” he told *EVM*. “There’s no sense of history. With the big buyout in 2007, they basically lobotomized the paper; they cut out the institutional memory which was so helpful when I started.”

Twenty-year Journal veteran Ed Bradley agreed with Mierzejewski. “I can’t say that there’s a lot else that’s better about journalism than it was 20 years ago because there’s been a lot lost in terms of institutional knowledge by media outlets,” he said.

The continuum of revenue loss — layoffs — print-to-digital is hardly unique to Advance Media, Booth Newspapers, and MLive/The Flint Journal. The impact of the digital age upon journalism is being felt everywhere.

Kevin Elliott wrote about the demise of The Oakland Press in a November 2016 blog article titled “Rise and Fall of a Newspaper”:

“Once considered the dominant paper of Oakland County in sales, circulation and news coverage, The Oakland Press has witnessed a steady decline with daily circulation plummeting to slightly more than 23,000 ... The classified want ad section, which in its heyday ran 40 pages or considerably more, is now down to just several pages ... Once employing more than 100 people in its newsroom, today The Oakland Press has less than 20 editors, reporters and multimedia journalists listed on its editorial staff. Those that remain must find ways to do more, while new hires must focus on ways to increase digital content, which includes finding and promoting news that will bring traffic to its website and mobile platforms.”

New metrics for journalists:

According to Wikipedia, since the 2009 reconfiguration and employee buyouts, staff-produced content at MLive/The Flint Journal is now published first to a website; content is then harvested from the website for publication in the printed newspapers. And days of home delivery of the print edition for Advance-owned newspapers in Michigan have been reduced to three or four.

Johnson told *EVM* that the worth of reporters is now measured by electronic “views.” “Views” are the number of visits to an online story; each time a visitor clicks on a reporter’s story, that reporter is credited with a “view.” “Views” include videos, multimedia slide shows, and photo galleries in addition to stories. 10 visits to 10 pictures, for

example, is worth 10 “views.”

Thus, many journalists have had to become multimedia specialists in order to meet goals. They march to their assignments often armed with, not just notepads and pens, but with recorders, cameras, and gadgets of all sorts. The workday routine for many modern-day journalists now includes research, writing the story, supplementing it with photos and sometimes video. Further, they often serve as their own copy editor and are responsible for making sure their work gets online.

“It’s absurd,” Johnson said. “It’s not impactful, it’s not empowering, it’s not to educate; it’s just so we can meet our goals each month.”

Johnson recalled that her goals at MLive/The Flint Journal were two and a half stories each day, 25 comments per week, a minimum of four videos each month, and a number of photo galleries.

“I was responsible for 199,000 page views per month when I left,” she said. “That means I needed my stories (including photos and videos) viewed (nearly) 200,000 times within a month.”

“I’m a newsgirl; I could care less about numbers,” she said. “I’m focused on quality.”

Johnson said she was told by management, “You’re doing this for the team. If you make these goals you get a bonus.” Rather, Johnson opted to take the “base rate” of compensation and focus on producing meaningful journalism.

More work, less pay:

The compensation for Johnson’s work was affected by the changes engineered by Advance Publications at MLive/The Flint Journal in 2009. She concluded her first stint at MLive/The Flint Journal, 2004-2009, with an annual salary exceeding \$40,000. When she returned in 2014-2017 with five more years of experience as a professional journalist, she was paid \$19 an hour.

“I made more money and I did less work when I was there starting in 2004,” said Johnson. “So pay decreased and (now) we’re responsible for more.”

The greater Flint area is populated with dozens of former Journal employees who accepted the company’s buyout offers in the early-2000s. The strategy was obvious: dump higher salaries in response to declining revenue. Mierzejewski represents the opinions of many ex-staffers who found the buyouts to be generous. “I’m so grateful to Advance newspapers,” he said. “They were caught in a bind like everybody else.”

The “bind” was a precipitous decline in ad revenue and concomitant loss of readership. “Back in the day newspapers were such a cash cow,” Mierzejewski said. “They made unbelievable profits. If a newspaper didn’t have a 20 percent profit margin for the year, the management was in trouble,” he said. “There were cases of publishers getting fired because they were only making 15 percent profit a year.”

“Ads were created and produced in-house by the newspaper,” said Ron Krueger, a 35-year employee at the Journal, now retired. “That’s profitable,” he said. “It was

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... Journalists

(Continued from Page 5.)

just pure gold," added Mierzejewski. But then the Internet arrived.

Business model is broken:

According to Bradley, "The traditional business model for journalism in this country is broken and newspapers have not been able to come up with an alternative.

"Gathering news costs money, not just in the salaries of the people who are gathering it, but in terms of research, and travel to sites, and whatnot," he said. "And when the newspapers don't have the revenue to cover the costs, then the product inevitably suffers."

"The bleeding started with Craigslist (online advertising)," according to Mierzejewski. "Once Craigslist got off the ground in the late-1990s, that really took a bite out of things."

Kevin Elliot saw the same thing happen-



Photo by Jan Worth-Nelson

The current store-front office on Saginaw Street.

ing in Oakland County. "As websites like Craigslist started taking classified advertisers from traditional newspapers, the Oakland Press and others entering the digital fray began giving away online content for free."

"A lot of newspaper revenue in the print era was derived from classified ads," confirmed Bradley. "Those have gravitated to other sources."

Other forces affecting journalism Television:

Newspapers seemingly survived an earlier electronic revolution — the advent of television in the mid-1900s — largely intact. "They (newspapers) had an audience, they had a product, and they were able to make a great deal of money from it despite the (arrival) of television," recalled Mierzejewski. "They weren't really hurt by it because it was a different product from what television provided," he said. "Television gave you the headlines; if you really wanted the news you had to read the newspaper."

Nonetheless, television may have helped create generations of nonreaders and screen-gazers, according to Mierzejewski. "Reading was deemphasized across the culture," he surmised. "Fewer books were being sold. Readership started declining probably before the '90s. Maybe having a

TV in the living room or the family room from birth affected that."

"The internet is something that killed off the newspapers but they were in trouble before that," recollected Mierzejewski. "Any demographic survey began to show that by the early 90s, young people were not reading the newspaper," he said. "They didn't have the internet but they just plain did not pick up a paper. I saw that in my own household. My children didn't read the paper; it just didn't interest them."

"Management all over the country was concerned over that," Mierzejewski remembered. "We went through several stages where the emphasis was, 'These stories are too long; people don't have the time to read these stories, so we've got to have no stories over 20 (column) inches and preferably 10 inches.'"

"They (management) made a great deal about 'story count' which was how many stories appeared on a page," Mierzejewski recalled. "They wanted to get as many stories as possible, nice and short on a page; and so that was all geared to people with not enough time or attention span." All of this should sound very familiar to a younger journalist like Jiquanda Johnson.

The economy

"The economy was suffering," said Krueger. "General Motors started to cut the labor force here in the late '70s and '80s. It doesn't seem like that really hurt us until the '90s."

According to Krueger, Flint Journal employees were not so concerned at the time. "You can't see into the future; you don't know how far de-industrialization is going to go," he recalled. "It just continued. I really think it wasn't until the housing bubble that we started to see our 'news hole' shrink. ('News hole' is the space between the ads for stories.) The advertising started to shrink. Circulation was shrinking the whole time."

Ed Bradley agreed. "The recession and the national economy in general had a very negative effect on the journalism industry as a whole."

Mierzejewski said, "We used to joke in the newsroom that every time the paper told readers about changes to improve news coverage, it meant the news hole was going to get smaller again."

"The business model is broken," Bradley bluntly stated. "That's one of the inherent problems newspapers have ... American journalism is still trying to solve that, trying to find the magic formula. It's very difficult."

Part Two coming Nov. 1. The November and December installments of this three-part series will focus on the quality of journalism, a look at the history and corporate structure of Advance Publications MLive/The Flint Journal, and speculation about the future of journalism.

EVM staff writer Harold Ford can be reached at hcford1185@gmail.com.

Editor's Note: Multiple overtures were made by EVM to solicit the views of current staff and

management at MLive/The Flint Journal. Gary Ridley, news leader of MLive/The Flint Journal at the Flint office, forwarded our requests to Clark Hughes, interim regional manager of the Flint Journal, Saginaw News and the Bay City Times; he forwarded our requests to John Hiner, MLive vice president of content. On Sept. 26, we received this response from Hiner: "Thanks for your interest in the changes at The Flint Journal over the years. After reviewing the questions, I think it's best to let our journalism speak for itself."

... Recall

(Continued from Page 3.)

In addition, Flint voters will also be electing members of the city council in all nine wards, and will be voting on a proposal to reduce the Flint School Board to seven members, from the current nine.

It's a significant time for Flint citizens to get informed and show up at the voting booth.

EVM political columnist Paul Rozycki can be reached at paul.rozycki@mcc.edu.

Pipes replaced so far in Flint:

4,282

Source: Sept. 26 press release from Kristin Moore, public relations director, City of Flint

Lead-tainted service lines at 3,383 homes have been replaced so far in Phase 4 of the city's FAST Start program, which aims to replace pipes at 6,000 homes in 2017. That brings the total of residential pipe replacements so far to 4,282, with numbers changing every day.

The city aims to have all of Flint's lead-tainted service lines — nearly 20,000 — replaced by 2020.

Volunteer Distributors Wanted

The East Village Magazine is looking for volunteer distributors in some of the residential blocks bounded by E. Court, Franklin, Tuscola and Meade streets. Spend less than one hour a month getting exercise and insuring your neighbors get the magazine. Contact ecuster@sbcglobal.net or write to 720 E. Second St. Flint, MI 48503.

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Meet the Candidates: Council and Mayor Races 2017

In one of the most complicated local election cycles in recent Flint history, an East Village Magazine team attempted to assemble a bit of information for our readers about all of the candidates whose names will appear on the Nov. 7 ballot.

The mayoral election is happening because of a recall effort against Mayor Karen Weaver launched by activist Arthur Woodson, who is himself running for mayor. Weaver's name will appear on the ballot, along with 17 others. In a protocol based on a new recall law passed by the state in 2012, if Weaver wins the most votes, she will have survived the recall. If not, the person drawing the highest votes will be Flint's new mayor – and will take office as soon as the election is certified, according to the Michigan Secretary of State's office. (See Paul Rozycki's column on p. 3 for further explanation.)

All nine city council seats also are up for grabs. One incumbent, Vicki Van Buren, was ousted by one vote in the Aug. 5 primary; seven of the others are facing challengers. A court decided that Ninth Ward Councilman Scott Kincaid will not be on the council ballot, since a court decided that he could not run for two offices at once. A frequent opponent of the mayor, Kincaid chose to run for mayor.

Our reporting team – Meghan Christian, Dylan Doherty, Patsy Isenberg, and Jan Worth-Nelson – connected with 22 candidates by press time. Several more who missed our deadline – Council President Kerry Nelson, Third Ward; Councilman Herbert Winfrey, Sixth Ward; Councilwoman Jackie Poplar, Second Ward, and Mayoral candidate Chris Del Morone, will be represented at eastvillagemagazine.org. Others we did not hear from were Maurice Davis, Ward 2; Michael Doan, Ward 4; Alan Griggs, Ward 8 in the city council race and in the Mayor's race, Ray Hall, Ronald D. Higginson, Brent Jaworski, Ellery Johnson, Al Walmsley and Angela Ward did not respond to our requests for information. We encountered a number of apparently inactive email accounts and disconnected phone numbers listed on the County Clerk filings.

We posed four questions to each group. EVM editors have lightly edited for clarity and readability. Grammatical and word choices are as the candidates wrote them or spoke them to our reporters.

This is an election that could change the face of Flint city government as the city continues its recoveries and developments. It's an important time to read up on the candidates and cast your ballot Nov. 7.

Flint city council candidates – 2017

Candidates we did not successfully connect with were Maurice Davis, Ward 2; Michael Doan, Ward 4; L. Allan Griggs, Ward 8. Late submissions by Jackie Poplar, Ward 2; Kerry Nelson, Ward 3; and Herbert Winfrey, Ward 6 will be available online at eastvillagemagazine.org.



Anita L. Brown
Ward 1

1. What are your two most important qualifications for this job?

“Nearly Twenty years experience in the Office of Ombudsman, also a life long Community Activist. I have seen this city and community at its best, as well as its worse. I know that working together as a whole we can create a New Flint.”

2. Why are you running?

“To serve the residents of this community, also improve the lives of all constituents of the city of Flint by applying my experience and knowledge, regarding policy and procedures as well as legislative process.”

3. What three issues are most important to you citywide or in your ward, and why?

“Affordable water that's free and clear of all contaminates short and long term. The physical and mental health of our children and seniors. In addition to economic and job development that will address our poverty.”

4. How will you contribute to the effectiveness and productivity of the city council?

“I want to be a council person that works with others on the council in a matter that will help projects move from concept to reality.”



Eric Mays
Ward 1

1. What are your two most important qualifications for this job?

“A passion for the City of Flint and its people and a firm knowledge of how City Government should work.”

2. Why are you running?

“I feel that I have more to do for the 1st Ward residents.”

3. What three issues are most important to you city-wide or in your ward, and why?

“Safe and affordable water because it is a human right. Public safety, because we need more police for our residents' calls. Jobs for Flint Residents to strengthen our tax base and provide a better quality of life.”

4. How will you contribute to the effectiveness and productivity of the city council?

“I would like to be City Council President for 2017/2018 to show how the Council can be productive and effective.”



Santino J. Guerra
Ward 3

1. What are your two most important qualifications for this job?

“Driven – We pay the same taxes, drive on the same roads, and have grown up in the same communities. We need someone driven to fight for the people. Experienced – I may be young but I've served as a United States Senate Page in Washington D.C., worked on several campaigns, and ready to fight tooth and nail for the people.”

2. Why are you running?

“I'm running because I want to make sure that the city of Flint is going in the right direction. I want to see us go forward and get along. I want the people to have a voice, and it's time to be heard.”

3. What three issues are most important to you city-wide or in your ward, and why?

“The Water Crisis – Because every person has the right to safe drinking water that is also affordable. Blight– abandoned homes and blight are huge safety hazards and eyesores to the community. Public safety–residents and anyone passing through should feel safe and protected.

4. How will you contribute to the effectiveness and productivity of the city council?

“I will be bringing a new face with new ideas. I am willing to work with anyone to do what's best for our city. Together we can start taking that step in the right direction.”



**Kate Fields
Ward 4**

1. What are your two most important qualifications for this job?

“Knowledge of how Government works and Experience. I have both a Bachelor’s and a Master’s degree in Public Administration (UM-Flint and UM-Ann Arbor). I teach government and non-profit classes (12 years) at UM-Flint in the Master’s of Public Administration Program. I have about 20 years of experience in writing and administrating government and foundation grants and grant programs (Federal, State, Local and Private). I’ve served on City Council now for almost two years and have gained a wealth of knowledge of practical issues of government administration and operations.”

2. Why are you running?

“The job I took on is definitely not finished. The more I learn the more I find out how poorly run our City is and I am committed to providing the best City services and quality of life that we can. We’re in the middle of an extremely important issue (will affect generations) of Water Source Choice and I don’t believe that Mayor Weaver or Governor Snyder are leading us in the right direction.”

3. What three issues are most important to you city-wide or in your ward , and why?

“There are so many important issues for Flint but if I have to limit the response to three I would say:

1. Clean, AFFORDABLE Water.
2. Economic Development and the provision of jobs for residents.
3. Public Safety and adequate, RESPONSIVE city services.”

4. How will you contribute to the effectiveness and productivity of the city council?

“I have already demonstrated my value by being the Council Leader who is doing research and uncovering government documents that have documented behind-the-scenes (lack of transparency) negotiations between the State and Mayor Weaver. Also by uncovering cronyism and corruption in attempts to give Rizzo Environmental a garbage contract.

I wrote new City Council rules to attempt to bring professionalism to City Council meetings.

I respond to all Citizen complaints and Concerns as best I can (the Mayor’s Administration is responsible for carrying out the actual work).

I am attempting to re-write 250 Ordinances that the Emergency Financial Manager re-wrote (which are Dictatorial and undemocratic) and doing all I can to rid us of the Receivership Transition Board. We need to return to full Home Rule where we can hold ELECTED officials responsible.”



**Wantwaz Davis
Ward 5**

1. What are your two most important qualifications for this job?

“First is my experience in government—in budgetary processes, submission of legislation.

Number two is my commitment, passion, transparency and accountability to create change that is effective and beneficial to the residents of the city of Flint, Michigan.”

2. Why are you running?

“Because my mission has not been completed. There is no relief for the crippling low-to-moderate, poverty-stricken people in my city. When relief comes in, from the tax base to crime prevention to good education, then my job will be completed, but thus far, it has not been completed.”

3. What three issues are most important to you city-wide or in your ward , and why?

“Quality water, affordable water, and creation of jobs. These are my three because they are more compelling than has ever been known in the city of Flint, and the city is in dire need and under stress. We have to find a way to create jobs, create a strong tax base, and jobs. Jobs kill many birds with one stone. Jobs are the epitome of a path to sound, concrete, effective public safety.”

4. How will you contribute to the effectiveness and productivity of the city council?

“By remaining transparent, accountable and responsible, with the residents’ demanding needs as the focal point of my decision-making.”



**Jerri Winfrey-Carter
Ward 5**

1. What are your two most important qualifications for this job?

“My two most important qualifications for the job of 5th Ward City Council is my deep-seated devotion to my birthplace, and my love and compassion for the resilient people who call the city of Flint their home.”

2. Why are you running?

“I am running because I love my community and I have the desire to serve the people of Flint. While it is my mission to serve, I feel that I can bring a wealth of experience, a wide breadth of knowledge, and a great degree of passion, patience, and people skills to the table.”

3. What three issues are most important to you city-wide or in your ward , and why?

“The three issues of most importance to me and the people of my ward and the city of Flint in general are:

- 1.) The creation of jobs through economic development in our city, including attracting additional manufacturing firms; and the development and implementation of a small business development plan.
- 2.) The elimination and control of blight, and the demolition of abandoned, dilapidated housing structures in the 5th Ward.
- 3.) The restoration of clean, safe, healthy tap water running through the faucets of every home in the city. Each of the above is equally important.”

4. How will you contribute to the effectiveness and productivity of the city council?

“First, I will assume the office without the arrogant belief that I am a knight in shining armor coming to save City Council from itself. I will try with everything within my being to lead by example. I will have a listening ear and unabridged tolerance and respect for the opinions and decisions of my colleagues. I will take office with a strong desire to create a collegial relationship with my fellow council members, and a strong desire to reestablish civility in a public body that seemingly forgets whom it is representing more often than not.”



Chia Morgan
Ward 6

1. What are your two most important qualifications for this job?

“My two most qualifications for this job: passion to see Flint thrive and a working knowledge of how City government should work as an individual who has studied Public Administration.”

2. Why are you running?

“Because I love Flint and I am interested in being a part of the solution, I am in love with this town and not only do I love this town, I made a choice to remain here to serve this city in various capacities. I love the people of Flint and when you think of public offices this is the one that actually allows me to bring fresh perspectives, advocate for the people and have direct interaction to listen and take action on the needs of the community.”

3. What three issues are most important to you city-wide or in your ward, and why?

“All of the issues facing the City of Flint are dear to my heart but the concerns that stick out the most are: selection of a long-term water source because it is a major component of recovering from the devastating effects of the water crisis, working with public officials to identify ways and seek funds to keep our neighborhoods safe and blight reduction; in addition to the eye sores that they create, blighted properties create safety hazards and decrease property values.”

4. How will you contribute to the effectiveness and productivity of the city council?

“There are a number of added dimensions that I am able to add to the council; desire and ability to work with everyone, level headed, forward thinker that understands that the residents deserve quality services, safe community and a reasonable voice for the people.”



Monica Galloway
Ward 7

1. What are your two most important qualifications for this job?

“My dedication and commitment to serving the needs of my constituency during my tenure on the city council during the Flint water crisis was unwavering. My ability to learn and understand governmental finances to present a balanced budget.”

2. Why are you running?

“I am running to serve the residents and help to enact policies/legislation and continue adopting a budget that helps to improve the lives of all residents of the City of Flint and is balanced to ensure we live within our revenue parameters.”

3. What three issues are most important to you city-wide or in your ward, and why?

“Clean / lead free and affordable water. When this is achieved it will help to ensure the short and long-term mental and physical health of our children. Creating a financially sustainable healthy tree landscape that includes a preservation, planting, and maintenance.”

4. How will you contribute to the effectiveness and productivity of the city council?

“I will continue to communicate the needs of my constituency to the administration and council in a professional and respectful manner. I am committed to constructively working with elected officials duly chosen by the people.”



Heather Kale
Ward 7

1. What are your two most important qualifications for this job?

“I am a quick and independent thinker that can adapt to varying situations based on my education and common sense. I am keenly aware of resources within the Flint community so I can contribute to the connectivity and progress.”

2. Why are you running?

“It started out with me being frustrated by current leadership across the board. Local, State and Nationally.... it morphed into a desire for change and the need for fostering ideas and relationships within our community. In addition, my passion and commitment to Flint is unwavering. Passion along with the desire to learn, listen and help whenever possible are characteristics that would benefit City Council. I want to be a part of a solution to move our city forward.”

3. What three issues are most important to you city-wide or in your ward, and why?

“1) The Water Crisis, recovery and properly educating/informing residents of the progress should be at the top of everyone's focus areas. 2) We have limited resources and it's important that we work with the City Administration, State and Federal Elected Officials to identify opportunities to build the resources back up. Our residents need to feel safe and that is difficult when the money allocated for public safety is constrained by a limited tax base. We need to be creative and collaborative to come up with solutions. 3) Blight is overtaking Flint. We have a population of about 100,000 with an infrastructure that was built to support over double that. How can we possibly keep up? We need to identify leaders in the City, Wards and Precincts that can help inform our Blight Elimination Office and perhaps take it step further and pick up a rake or help mow a lawn. The new website flintpropertyportal.com is a start in the right direction. A great tool that needs to be utilized to its fullest capability.”

4. How will you contribute to the effectiveness and productivity of the city council?

“Being well-informed and well-prepared is important. There needs to be professional development around leadership, cultural competency, emotional intelligence, conflict resolution and most of all TRUST. We can't be productive if we don't understand the basics.”



Joyce Ellis-McNeal
Ward 8

1. What are your two most important qualifications for this job?

“I am a registered elector in the City of Flint and have been a resident and registered voter for 18 years, with expertise and experience with Flint Water Crisis, promoting community resilience, and the Flint Master Plan. Furthermore, I work with several organizations and the community. Masters in Public Administration, BS-Business Administration/Organization Management, and Government Policies. As a certified Citizen Planner, I am more than qualified to provide the skills in the enactment of ordinances and resolutions. I have excellent collaboration and communication skills that are necessary for bridging the gaps between residents and government.”

2. Why are you running?

“I strongly feel it is time to take the fate of our city into our own hands and begin to move things forward for the benefits of its residents. This city is very near and dear to me; so much that when my deceased son’s immune system was compromised from the consumption of poison water, many people left Flint. However, I remained to fight for all of our citizens and their rights to clean water.”

3. What three issues are most important to you city-wide or in your ward , and why?

“1. Employment: to address and work with new business and old business, as well as, non-profit organizations in making employment available for the young men in this city with felony records from not being able to pay child support, due to the inability to find jobs.

2. Rental properties and blight: Ward 8 must be a part of the revitalization and sustainability process. We must ensure that property values increase, not decrease due to blight.

3. The City of Flint Water source and ensuring that citizens’ rights to clean water and reasonable rates are provided.”

4. How will you contribute to the effectiveness and productivity of the city council?

“I take the public oath now to be a representative of the City of Flint and Ward 8 by conducting myself with decorum, by acting respectfully with constituents, my fellow council members, and all public and private servants. I will adhere to the duties of office as outlined in the Charter.”



Eva Worthing
Ward 9

1. What are your two most important qualifications for this job?

“I have the determination and passion to ensure that my community is always taken care of. I also have integrity and would proudly represent my constituents by always doing what is right.”

2. Why are you running?

“My main focus has always been to help others. This is why I went into teaching and why I am now running for council. When I moved to Flint 2.5 years ago, my daughter was a newborn. I had heard of residents who were complaining about the water so I decided not to use it. My daughter could have been severely affected by the lead and bacteria in the water. This was unacceptable to me. We need a change in leadership in the city of Flint.”

3. What three issues are most important to you city-wide or in your ward , and why?

“The number one issue for the city of Flint is still safe drinking water, unfortunately. I plan to develop urban-farming programs to benefit expectant mothers and children that will reduce lead levels and its effects. The next issue that I would focus on is the safety of our citizens. My goal is to increase police presence by working with the budget and applying for grants. Lastly, I will support established businesses and bring new businesses to the 9th Ward.”

4. How will you contribute to the effectiveness and productivity of the city council?

“All city business should be conducted in a professional and organized manner with a unified goal of doing what is best for the entire city. I will answer to my constituents by listening and responding to emails and phone calls. Monthly coffee hours, ward meetings, and social media are all ways that I plan on keeping my constituents informed. I truly have the best interest of my city in mind!”

Flint mayoral candidates – 2017

Missing from this list are Chris Del Morone, Ray Hall, Ronald Higerson, Brent Allan Jaworski, Ellery Johnson, Al Wamsley, and Angela Ward, with whom we did not successfully connect before press time. Late arriving responses will appear online at eastvillagemagazine.org.



David Davenport

1. What are your two most important qualifications for this job?

“My two most important qualifications are that, first of all, I was on the Flint Board of Education for six years, so I do have experience. I fought for the children and I will fight for the citizens just as hard. Another one of my qualifications would be knowing how the school system works.”

2. What three issues are most important to you and why?

“The main issue right now is the water. That’s the most important issue to me right now. You have seniors that are losing their homes because of water that they cannot drink. You have people, still babies, that are consuming this water, bathing in this water, and this is just not fair for the citizens of this city and their children.

The second most important issue would be the crime. The crime is still ridiculous. Nothing has changed. People are still scared in the neighborhoods that they live in or the homes that they own. The police response time is sickening.

The third most important issue would be economic development. No one wants to bring businesses to the city of Flint because of the crime and because of the water.”

3. What will be your approach to working with the city council?

“My approach would be to sit down, listen to what they have to say, have the facts in front of us (not just myself), make sure the city council gets a copy of all the facts and numbers, and we would make a decision that is what’s best for the city, not what’s best for one council member not what’s best for the mayor.”

4. What do you see as your role in transitioning to the new city charter?

“For me, to transition to what is going on in the city charter once the citizens vote for it, I will accept it.”



Woody Etherly

1. What are your two most important qualifications for this job?

“I served the city of Flint as mayor pro tem and I served the city of Flint as a city councilman.”

2. What three issues are most important to you and why?

“First, to stop the drive-by shootings and the killings in the city of Flint so that we can be able to attract business to the city of Flint. Second, to replace the lead pipes inside people’s houses because nobody is addressing that issue about the lead pipes inside the people’s houses that are contaminated because of what we have been pushing through them. Number three is to make sure that we fight for a lower water price because I think we are being overcharged for water in the city of Flint.”

3. What will be your approach to working with the city council?

“I believe that the city council and the mayor can work together because all of our goals are to serve the people of the city of Flint. I would include them in the process understanding the difference between their role and my role. My role is to propose, theirs is to dispose and I respect their jobs that they’ve been elected to do.”

4. What do you see as your role in transitioning to the new city charter?

“To enforce it. It’s very simple: to enforce the will of the people. The people have voted and they have adopted the charter, so my job is to make sure that I follow the charter and enforce that.”



Anderson L. Fernanders

1. What are your two most important qualifications for this job?

“One, I have a legal background. We know that both the current and the previous charter say the duties of mayor are to make sure that the laws are maintained equitably throughout the community. The next one is guiding the city through being financially savvy and a steward of money to a place where the city can become a viable place not only for business but for the men, women, and children who live here.”

2. What three issues are most important to you and why?

“One is to lower the cost of living here in Flint and improve the quality of life. A better quality of life would bring up the morale here in the city. A lower cost of living will increase men, women, and children’s ability to be consumers and have funds to enjoy living here in the city of Flint.”

3. What will be your approach to working with the City Council?

“I am in the process of learning who is trying to become councilors so I can get a feel for who they are as a man or woman.”

4. What do you see as your role in transitioning to the new city charter?

“What I did was look at both charters. I saw that they are mostly the same; it’s just little tweaks here and there. One thing is that I will be able to have less of a staff than I would have under the old charter. It’s just restructuring stuff that is already there. We have a standards clause within the old one but now the standards clause would be called the accountability clause, and the way it’s struc-



Scott Kincaid

1. What are your two most important qualifications for this job?

“First of all, the most important qualification is my 32 years experience on city council and knowing and understanding how government really works and being able to work with the city council in being able to move Flint forward. The second most important qualification is knowing and understanding the city of Flint’s budget: knowing how various departments are funded and being able to provide funding so we improve services to the residents in the city of Flint.”

2. What three issues are most important to you and why?

“Number one, water. We are still in a crisis with water and the long term water supply is still a real major concern for residents in the city of Flint along with how the water pipes are being replaced, the lead and galvanized pipes. The second most important thing is public safety and making sure that our police department does a better job at responding to 911 calls. The third priority is making sure the city of Flint’s budget is balanced and that we never end up with an emergency manager again.”

3. What will be your approach to working with the city council?

“My approach in working with the city council will be to make sure that the council people are informed and involved in making decisions on whatever the issues are. I will spend time with the council and attend council meetings.”

4. What do you see as your role in transitioning to the new city charter?

“In order for us to be able to implement some items in the new charter we have to go to the treasurer’s office and the governor’s office to have some of those directives implemented by the emergency manager removed. I will implement the new charter and not resist it.”



Sean MacIntyre

1. What are your two most important qualifications for this job?

“Honesty and integrity – any time a person begins a job (or a project) with those two attributes front and center, their chance of success is multiplied. Also, I believe that I have the smallest ego of any candidate in the race, and yes, the irony of making a statement like that is not lost on me.”

2. What three issues are most important to you and why?

“Corruption, crime, and water – the underlying cause of those three issues, AND EVERY OTHER ISSUE FACING FLINT, is poverty. When people are desperate, they focus solely on their own survival, and those issues flourish.”

3. What will be your approach to working with the city council?

“A leader is as successful as the people they are leading. That said, the Mayor is one cog of many, and ABSOLUTELY needs to have a working relationship with the Council. Everyone remembers group projects from school, right? Well government IS the ultimate group project. When everyone is putting the success of the group first, then it works. If any team member begins chasing their own self-interests, then it doesn’t work. That doesn’t mean disagreements won’t happen. . . then the Mayor, City Council, and department heads need to come together in good faith to work out those issues for the BENEFIT OF THE WHOLE city; not their own self-interests, and not the interests of any one, particular outside entity.”

4. What do you see as your role in transitioning to the new city charter?

“My role is to make the charter as understandable, relatable, and transparent as possible. Honestly though, it’s pages upon pages of verbose legalese. That’s a big ‘ask’ for a community that was recently deemed, “the poorest city in the country”. Two-thirds of our population live below the poverty line, my family included. Most of us deal with a combination of safety, food, and housing insecurity so it’s difficult to take the time to decipher and understand all of the ramifications of the charter, but our democracy depends on an informed populace.”



David W. Meier

1. What are your two most important qualifications for this job?

"I have lived and worked in Genesee County for the past 63 years with about half of that time in Flint. I have been a Flint resident for the last 7 years and retired from General Motors in 2006. I have faithfully and loyally served my country in Vietnam and every war that America has been in since then. I am a CIA soldier and advisor. President Nixon awarded me the Medal of Honor in 1973 for my actions in An Loc, Vietnam May 24 1969. I have also attained the rank of brigadier general."

2. What three issues are most important to you and why?

"Obviously the water issue and pipe replacement is a major problem and we need to get it fixed for the health of our community and especially the children. We need to address corruption in the administration and weed out the bad seeds in the police department. All over the country bad cops are getting away with shooting people and beating citizens. We need to make sure that doesn't happen in Flint. I have first hand experience with this because it has happened to me.

3. What will be your approach to working with the city council?

"I don't personally know any of the council members except from the media so I am starting with a clean slate. I am easy going and usually get along well with people but I have also been a warrior all of my life and I know how to stand my ground."

4. What do you see as your role in transitioning to the new city charter?

"I wasn't involved with the new charter but with a lot of prayer and cooperation I am excited to begin implementing it."



Anthony Palladeno, Jr.

1. What are your two most important qualifications for this job?

"I'm a lifelong invested resident/activist. Fully aware of Flint's assets and hardships. Also have seen the needs of administration inside of city government."

2. What three issues are most important to you and why?

"Bring the residents back into decision making. Job creation; police and housing safety. To become a self sufficient city; Fresh, Clean, Affordable water from our own plant."

3. What will be your approach to working with the city council?

"City council must be a part of the mayor and visa-versa. Must move as a unit, able to agree and disagree on all levels."

4. What do you see as your role in transitioning to the new city charter?"

"My role will be to advocate, adjust and move forward the city charter. In fairness, question charter and accountability. Full awareness to the people, so we can understand our future."



Don Pfeiffer

1. What are your two most important qualifications for this job?

"At this time in Flint's history, I am the most qualified to meet the city's needs. As a builder and a business owner, I know what it takes to fix the water crisis. This is the biggest infrastructure project in the nation; and it requires someone who has brought in big projects on time and on budget. Blight reduction, street lighting replacement, and contract negotiations are also important issues that apply directly to this experience."

2. What three issues are most important to you and why?

"After the water is safe, crime reduction is the next priority. People will not live and work where they do not feel safe. We have a plan to add police to our streets. Once crime is reduced, water fixed, and blight eliminated, we can develop an economic plan. We have plenty of land resources, a vibrant college community, and are still a central location for manufacturing and transportation."

3. What will be your approach to working with the city council?

"The city councilpersons are elected officials with an equal role in city government. We will place solid plans for budget spending and negotiate civilly with the Legislative Branch of Flint. There must be a mutual respect. I will set that tone with the confidence it will be returned."

4. What do you see as your role in transitioning to the new city charter?

Starting January 1st, we start leadership under the new charter. There are some overdue changes that needed to take place. We are thankful to the volunteers of the Charter Review Commission, without these individuals the revision would not have taken place. The Mayor's role is simple, communicate with the constituents and be honest. This is an exciting time to show how true transparency and accountability can make for a better Flint.



Jeffery L. Shelley

1. What are your two most important qualifications for this job?

"While I have many more qualifications that would make be a great mayor, my two top qualifications are: the ability to listen to the residents, as great leaders do; and the ability to implement ideas. As a business man, I've worked with numerous people and learned how to negotiate, compromise, delegate, and implement plans. I went to Indiana Tech and studied Business Management. "

2. What three issues are most important to you and why?

"There are more than three issues that are equally important.

- a. Crime/Public Safety
- b. Economic Development
- c. Resolution of the Water Crisis, including replacing the main lines; the service lines; where water sources (primary and secondary) come from; and health concerns of the residents who have been exposed to the lead and toxins. Please go to my website for more information on these three issues:

<https://shelleyforflint.com/>, or my FaceBook:

<https://www.facebook.com/ShelleyforFlint/>"

3. What will be your approach to working with the city council?

"I will be instituting an open door policy. We will abide by the open meeting policies as described in the Charter City of Flint. I am going to work with the council, as sometimes the executives will have good ideas and sometimes the legislation has good ideas. Together we can make these great ideas. On the flip side, sometimes ideas on either side may not be so good. There needs to be checks and balances. The two sides need to work together to make Flint Great Again."

4. What do you see as your role in transitioning to the new city charter?

"I am excited about it as there has not been a new city charter in 43 years. My role is to make certain the rules and ordinances of the charter are adhered to and obeyed."



Karen Weaver

1. What are your two most important qualifications for this job?

"My two most important qualifications for this job are leadership and integrity. Without leadership and vision, there is nothing to follow, and without integrity, there is no trust."

2. What three issues are most important to you and why?

- 1. First and foremost, access to clean, safe, affordable water. Water is a basic right, a moral right, a civil right, and a human right.
- 2. Public safety, which includes fire and police protection. Residents deserve to feel they are safe in and out of their homes.
- 3. Economic development, which equals job creation."

3. What will be your approach to working with the city council?

"My approach to working with the city council includes open communication, dialogue and transparency. Without these components, there is no movement toward positive resolve of issues."

4. What do you see as your role in transitioning to the new city charter?

"I see my role in transitioning to the new city charter as to advocate for the implementation of it, as well as to follow what has been put in place by the people."



Arthur Woodson

1. What are your two most important qualifications for this job?

"I have been fighting since Day One and working with all governmental agencies for the water and health of the people of Flint. I am able to bring together a team of experienced people and I know how to delegate duties, in the interest of solving issues and problems."

2. What three issues are most important to you and why?

"The water and health crisis, public health crisis, and redoing the master plan. It's not safe here until we can drink directly from the tap. We have had bacteria, carcinogens, TTHMs for many months. You don't see the effects of a lot of those different things until later in life. On the master plan, we need to change the green zones to allow for more development."

3. What will be your approach to working with the city council?

"First off, respecting them, respecting their job. These are two different bodies: the executive and the legislative. You have to have a working relationship and respect between the two, to build a foundation of working together. I also would bring in a city administrator with municipality skills."

4. What do you see as your role in transitioning to the new city charter?

"The charter is already there — they just added some teeth, and I approve of that. What's new about it is, the city attorney is working for the city of Flint, not the mayor — so that the city attorney doesn't have to worry about telling the mayor the truth. The ombudsman's office will be restored and will have more teeth, and residents will have a way to file complaints. Finally, the water department will have more teeth where they can't borrow off the water funds. These are good changes."

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PAID FOR BY THE EXOUSIA TO ELECT MONICA GALLOWAY
1008 Whitingham Dr. Flint, MI 48503 email: galloway4justice@gmail.com



As your councilperson, I have spent the last four years consistently fighting for the interest of the residents I serve with professionalism and integrity. The last three years have been focused on helping this community navigate through the current water crisis, by approving resolutions and appointments set forth by the Administration to move the Fast Start Program forward. I have partnered with the Brennan Center and Court Street Commons to have water delivered to our seniors, while I actively pursued governmental training through the Michigan Municipal League, a non-profit foundation dedicated to supporting local government leadership and development. I have prepared myself to lead through the incorporation of the governmental tools which I have acquired through the Michigan Municipal League, Mott Community College, the Michigan Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials and a positive utilization of partnerships I have built with other City, County State, Federal political leaders and community activists. Flint is facing challenging times and tough decisions have to be made. I have shown the political will to make those decisions in the face of adversity and microscopic scrutiny. My experience gained through the water crisis has uniquely prepared me to continue serving as the 7th Ward Councilperson.



107 W. Kearsley St.
Downtown Flint
Open Monday-Saturday
Facebook.com/consolidatedbarbershop

THIS MONTH IN THE VILLAGE

"This Month" highlights a selection of interesting events available to our readers — beginning after our publication date of October 5. It is not an exhaustive list, rather a sampling of opportunities in the city.

"In My Backyard"

Oct. 7, 8, 14, 15, 21, 22, 28, 29

Noon
Longway Planetarium
1310 E. Kearsley St.
810-237-3400

Admission: \$4 - \$6

Designed for younger audiences, watch Nickelodeon's Fred Penner explore the stars and other scientific topics.

Skies over Michigan

Oct. 6 - 12, 15 - 26

3 p.m.
Longway Planetarium,
1310 E. Kearsley St.,
810-237-3400

Admission: \$4 - \$6

Learn about Michigan's night sky, including topics like the North Star, Earth's rotation, and more.

Adventures with Clifford the Big Red Dog

Every day in October
Mon - Sat: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Sun: Noon - 5 p.m.

Sloan Museum
1221 E. Kearsley St.
810-237-3450

Admission: \$6 - \$9

Have fun doing a multitude of activities and see 40 years of artwork and stories from the author and creator of "Clifford, the Big Red Dog."

The Ooky Spooky Light Show

Oct. 6 - 9, 11 - 13, 15 - 31

4 p.m.
Longway Planetarium, 1310 E.
Kearsley St., 237 - 3400

Admission: \$4 - \$6

See Halloween classics come to life with fun graphics and lights. A great event for the whole family.

Flint Youth Film Festival Free

Filmmaking Workshops

Oct. 12, 19, and 26

4:30 p.m.

Flint Public Library
1026 E. Kearsley St.
810-730-1590

Admission: Free

Workshops intended for the middle school and high school students interested in submitting their own films to the July 2018 Flint Youth Film Festival.

Queen Light Show: "From Mercury with Love"

Oct. 6, 7, 12, 13, 19 - 21, 26 - 28

8 p.m.
Longway Planetarium
1221 E. Kearsley St.
810-237-3400

Admission: \$4 - \$6

A dazzling light show featuring 10 of Queen's greatest hits.

"A Wrinkle in Time"

Oct. 7, 14, and 21

2 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Oct. 8, 15, and 22

2 p.m.

Oct. 12 and 19

10 a.m. and 12:15 p.m.

Oct. 13 and 20

10 a.m., 12:15 p.m., and 7 p.m.

Flint Cultural Center

Admission: \$14 - \$18

See a performance of the classic novel by Madeline L'Engle.

Bone Appetit Breakfast

Oct. 11

8:30 - 10 a.m.

Sloan Museum
1221 E. Kearsley St.
810-237-3427

Admission: \$11 - \$16

Bring your little ones out for breakfast, time in the Clifford exhibit, and story time with a special guest. Advance registration is required. RSVP online or by calling 237 - 3427.

Mid East Luncheon

Oct. 12

11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Our Lady of Lebanon Church
4133 Calkins Rd.
810-733-1259

Enjoy Middle Eastern food and baked goods.

Joe Cunningham Shares

Oct. 12

Noon - 1:30 p.m.

Greater Flint Art Council
816 S. Saginaw

810-238-2787 Admission: Free

Internationally acclaimed quilter and Flint native, Joe Cunningham will be sharing the story of his career as an artist and quilting.

Workshop with Joe Cunningham

Oct. 14

10 a.m. - Noon

Greater Flint Art Council
816 S. Saginaw

810-238-2787

Admission: \$25

An easy, fun all sewing class. International quilter Joe Cunningham will be there to guide step-by-step. Contact GFAC to register and for the supply list.

"A Cultural Reflection"

Oct. 14

1 p.m.

McCree Theatre
5005 Cloverlawn Dr.
810-787-2200

Admission: Free

A video presentation of "Slave Kingdoms" and "Hidden Colors 3." There will also be a spoken word performance and the opportunity for audience input.

Joe Cunningham and Friends

Oct. 14

7 - 10 p.m.

Greater Flint Art Council
816 S. Saginaw
810-238-2787

Admission: \$10

Enjoy music from the Potrero Hillbillies.

Brenda Portman

Oct. 15

3:30 p.m.

St. Paul's Episcopal Church
810-569-1545

Admission: \$10

Enjoy an original concert program from award winning concert artist Brenda Portman.

"Kinky Boots"

Oct. 17 - 19

8 p.m.

The Whiting
1241 E. Kearsley St.
810-237-7333

Admission: \$38 - \$68

Broadway's high-heeled hit with songs by Cyndi Lauper.

Storybook Ball

Oct. 21

5 p.m.

Sloan Museum
1221 E. Kearsley St.
810-237-3427

Admission: \$5

Have a fun evening with your favorite storybook characters. RSVP online or by calling.

Rev. Right Time and the Ist Cuzins of Funk

Oct. 22

9 p.m.

The Wooden Keg
1940 W. Hemphill Rd.
810-239-1831

Admission: Free

M-Pact

Oct. 25

7:30 p.m.

The Whiting
1241 E. Kearsley St.
810-237-7333

Admission: \$35

An LA-based sextet who use the "original instrument - the voice."

Trunk or Treat

Oct. 28

5 - 8 p.m.

Sacred Elements
5353 Fenton Rd.
810-422-9125

Admission: \$1 suggested donation

There will be prizes, treats, and a costume contest for the kids.

Halloween Hootenanny

Oct. 28

5 - 7 p.m.

Longway Planetarium
1310 E. Kearsley St.
810-237-3427

Admission: \$6 - \$8

A night of treats and prizes. Ticket cost includes admission to the 6 p.m. Ooky Spooky Light Show. RSVP online at longway.org or by calling 810-237-3427.



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DELIVERED TO YOUR FRONT DOOR

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For more information or to build your Veggie Box, visit flintfresh.com.

AVAILABLE SIZES

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- LARGE FARMERS CHOICE BOX \$30.00**
- SMALL A LA CARTE BOX \$15.00**
- LARGE A LA CARTE BOX \$30.00**



FLINTFRESH.COM

Village Life

Wilbur the Flint Strong dog, tangled vines and a city's fate

By Jan Worth-Nelson

In a conference room at City Hall recently after a typically chaotic council meeting, Councilman Herb Winfrey said something that stuck in my brain. He said, "A city is what it accepts."

I'm still thinking about that. It's a sunny Wednesday, late September, and the heat has finally broken. I'm in my upstairs office, the

GIOVANNI CASSINI'S FINAL PROBE*

(Sept. 15, 2017)

By Grayce Scholt

**When Cassini crashed today
it made grown men and women
in their labs on Planet Earth
weep. For twenty years
they'd watched its twists
and turns in that trajectory,
traced Saturn's curves,
explored, recorded rings and moons
and light and dark
and learned what man
had never known before.**

**But then that final dive
into the black of
atmospheric groove between
great Saturn's rings
turned probe to dust.**

**Did Giovanni know
or was he left with only dreams
of what mankind in our lifetime
would know?**

**I like to think
that somehow in the cosmic dust
disintegrating in its lack of light, that
man so long ago
knows he was right.**

**Giovanni Ciassini, 17th century astronomer, made the first in-depth study of the rings of Saturn and its moons, thus revolutionizing the course of future planetary exploration which may lead to habitats for life.*

Grayce Scholt is a retired English professor from Mott Community College who wrote art reviews for the Flint Journal and has authored several poetry collections and memoirs. This is the title poem from her new collection East of Everywhere, drawn in part from work published in East Village Magazine. The book is available from Friesen Press, www.friensenpress.com and Amazon.

window to my left open to blessed fresh air for the first time in a week.

But even though the temperature has mercifully hit the 70s, it doesn't matter to the dog next door, the extremely high-strung Wilbur. Wilbur goes crazy when a leaf falls. He is barking frenetically right now, and I'm tempted to yell through the screen, CALM DOWN ALREADY!

That said, as I've noted before, I kind of like Wilbur. He's got passion; he defends his territory; he's predictable. Wilbur's excitable ways are part of the neighborhood: we accept him as he is. In his way, he's Flint Strong.

I actually know why he's barking. Kenny, Andy, and Ted are trying to get an invasive vine out of the lilac bushes along the fence between my house and Wilbur's. This is very disturbing to Wilbur.

And up in my office, I'm trying to interview Arthur Woodson, architect of the mayoral recall and himself a candidate for mayor. Woodson agreed to come over to answer questions for our election special edition, a willingness I really appreciate. I like Arthur and every time I talk to him I find out ten or twenty things East Village Magazine should be writing about. Kenny's buzz saw is going full bore and Wilbur's still barking. In the middle of it, Ted yells up, "Jan, Jan, how far down should they cut? Only the top or all the way down?" Arthur is talking about how we have failed veterans in America, and I have to pause and say, "I don't know, I don't know — just get those vines out of there!" Andy yells, "If you just top it off you won't get all the vines." They're all debating it just below my window and finally I holler down, "Just cut them all down to the bottom, damn it. They'll grow back." I'm trying not to make a metaphor out of this. Wilbur is still barking. The buzz saw starts up again.

Nonetheless, Arthur continues answering my questions and we're having a terrific conversation about the city council, about respect, about municipal balance of power, about working together. About America. Arthur's passion is direct, informed and propelled by a hopeful bitterness — I say that because he's outraged about many things, but he believes in activism. He believes that if people pay attention and get informed and speak up, it will make a difference.

I'm not endorsing Arthur here, but what I'm getting at is these days it seems clearer than ever that the only real control any of us have is local: I mean in our back yards over our fences and lilac bushes and in our streets and at city council and school boards, and on barstools at Cork or Totem, and in pews at Grace Emanuel and Temple Beth El and Joy Tabernacle — all the places we find each other and share our lives.

So, this month's issue is full of information about what it means to go local — to be in community. Harold Ford's piece — first of three — about the Flint Journal/M-Live, examines the cost to communities of the decline of local journalism. It's a significant piece of work

about a significant shift in community life. I urge you to read it and to consider what you can do to support local journalism — the lifeblood of participatory democracy.

Also for this issue, a team from EVM fanned out to interview all 35 of the candidates: 18 for mayor, 17 for city council. We used phones, email, even an intermediary at Totem Books who held one candidates' answers until our reporter picked them up. We posed the candidates in front of city hall and met at The Torch to compare notes and compile our data. We got emails from the candidates late at night and phone calls early in the morning. It was hyper-local and ambitious and fun. We captured 22 for the hard copy; others who didn't make our print deadline will be up online soon.

This election matters if you care about this city. Why not read up on these candidates and their ideas? Why not venture to a city council meeting or your neighborhood association? Why not get involved? And most of all, WHY NOT VOTE? The residents of this city can and should do better than the pathetic 7.4 percent turnout for the Aug. 5 election. That's shameful. That means 93 percent of the voting population chose not to exercise their power.



Photo by Jan Worth-Nelson

Wilbur

That bring me back to Herb Winfrey. What will this city accept Nov. 7? What are we accepting from our public servants and our mayor? What kind of city will we be?

Finally Arthur and I wrap up our conversation, I shake his hand and take a picture of him against my yellow wall, a tall man towering next to my pile of yoga mats. After he takes off in his truck, I go down to pay Andy and Kenny and we lean against Kenny's truck and talk about politics. They are both scratching their heads about why this city is seemingly one soap opera after another. To me, leaning over the backs of pickup trucks talking about local politics with my neighbors is a little bit of heaven. And for now, no barking. Wilbur the Flint Strong dog, like a good citizen, has had his say.

EVM Editor Jan Worth-Nelson can be reached at janworth1118@gmail.com.

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