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Magazine

December 2018



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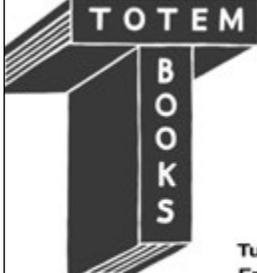
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Vol. LVI No. 12 December 2018

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Layout by Ted Nelson. Printing by Riegler Press Inc., 1282 N. Gale Rd., Davison, Mich. 48423.

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Commentary A “Blue Wave,” a “Pink Wave,” and a few mid-term surprises

By Paul Rozycki

Last month’s midterm election may have been the most intense and energetic in recent memory, and when it was all said and done the results revealed several new directions to our politics, highlighting the strong reaction to Donald Trump, and the divisions in today’s politics.

Midterm elections are usually rather low-key predictable affairs, where the party out of power gains a few seats in the Congress, and a modest change that follows.

From all indications this past election broke the mold on most of those assumptions.

First, the voter turnout broke records that go back for nearly a half century. Typically, about 40 percent of the voters turn out in midterms. This year many estimate that nearly 58 percent of potential voters turned out, a number that hasn’t been seen since the early 1960s. In Genesee County nearly 57 percent of the voters showed up at the polls.

The “blue wave”

That large turnout was expected to be good news for Democrats, and for the most part it was, as a “blue wave” of voters showed up, giving the party majority control of the U.S. House.

Two factors were key in both the turnout and the Democratic victory — Donald Trump and the #MeToo movement.

As the most polarizing president in recent history, Trump went on the campaign trail and boasted that the election was all about him, even though he wasn’t on the ballot. Even if he hadn’t said it, he was almost certainly right — it was about him. Democrats turned out in record numbers to register their distrust of Trump, and in turn Republicans increased their turnout to defend Trump against the Democrats.

Yet on election night, the expected “blue wave,” where Democrats would overwhelm the Republicans, didn’t seem

to be happening. Many reporters spoke of a “blue ripple”, where Democrats did modestly well, but not as well as expected earlier in the year. Yet as the recounts and final votes came in over the following days, there was a genuine “blue wave” that wasn’t quite so apparent on election night. Democrats took control of the U.S. House by winning more seats for their party than any time since the days of Watergate in the early 1970s.

The “pink wave”

But the ‘blue wave’ was only part of the story, and perhaps not the most important part. This past election also saw a “pink wave” where a record number of women voted, ran for office, and were elected. A quick look at the number of women elected this November highlights the point.

In the U.S. House, before the election there were 84 women members, after the election there were at least 102. There were enough newly elected women to give the Democrats control of the House all by themselves. In the Michigan U.S. House delegation, there were two women before the election and there were five after. (Only 9 women have ever represented Michigan in the U.S. House.) Before the election there were six women who were state governors, after the election there were nine. In the Michigan state Senate, there were four women before the November election, and there were 11 after. In the Michigan state House, there were 33 women before the election, and there were 42 elected in November.

Who won what?

In the end it was a very good night for Democrats both nationally and in Michigan.

On the national level Democrats gained at least 38 seats in the U.S. House, well more than the 23 needed, and well above the average for mid-term elections.

(Continued on Page 15.)

Cover: Season’s Greetings from Saginaw & First



Photo of the Month: Happy Crab Apples

MCC unveils plans for Woodside Church at CCNA meeting

By Luther Houle

Mott Community College (MCC) is transforming the former Woodside Church at 1509 E. Court St. into the Lenore Croudy Family Life Center. The \$10.5 million project will improve Mott’s Early Childhood Learning Center and the building will be the host of an assistance center for students struggling with food, housing, and security.



Curved entry way to landmark building
(Photo by Edwin D. Custer)

Dawn Hibbard, communications specialist at MCC, explained the plans at the Nov. 15 College Cultural Neighborhood Association (CCNA) meeting.

Roughly 40 community members met at Mott Technology Center, joined by guests and speakers, as they do every third Thursday of the month. Highlights from the meeting included the Neighborhood Watch report and an investigation into pollution in Gilkey Creek. Following this, Hibbard gave a presentation covering what new services and programs the new family life center will provide, as well as what kind of construction community members can expect to see over the next year.

Project to address barriers to college completion

Renamed as The Lenore Croudy Family Life Center, the changes to the Woodside building are meant to help students stay on track to graduate when life throws curveballs at them. “We have a lot of students who come forth with barriers to completion,” Hibbard said. “One

of those things that prevent them from completing ... is child care.”



Lenore Croudy
(With permission of Mott Community College)

Croudy died in January 2017. A 40-year educator with the Flint Community Schools, she had been an MCC trustee for 29 years, including 21 years as the board chair. She worked with six MCC presidents and presided over the board

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... MCC

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when the Aspen Institute named MCC one of the 10 best community colleges in the nation.

Mott has used a wing of Woodside for a child care center since 1980. With the purchase of the building, the daycare will expand from three-to-five-year-olds to zero-to-five-year-olds. The center is open to the public, but heavily subsidized for Mott students with potential for scholarships and financial aid to help them pay, Hibbard said.

She said a report from HopeLab on food and security among community college students found that 50 percent of Mott students were unable to afford food in the past year. Further data revealed 49 percent have struggled with housing and security, and 11 percent have faced homelessness.

The first floor of the building will feature the Mott Eats food pantry, DHHS services, and Ellen's Closet, a program that provides donated dress clothes to students for job interviews.

Construction and Renovation

The architectural firm Integrated Design Solutions has planned several landscaping and construction projects for the building, which will begin in March.

The driveways are being redesigned and the parking lot expanded to help traffic flow through the west end of the center, instead of through the residential east end. The preschooler playground is being moved closer to the center, and a new toddler playground is being built on the building's west side.

Both will have a newly planted tree-line and landscaping to protect the children from street noise. A new indoor play area is being built as well. The center will maintain some of the church features such as the bell tower and bells, and the sanctuary as well as the pipe organ will remain as they are for musical and presentation events.

The Woodside Church congregation, which recently purchased the Carriage Town Antiques/Hoffman's Deli building downtown for a reported \$330,000, is

keeping the stained glass windows and historical marker that had been outside the building.

Woodside Woods

Hibbard also brought up plans for the recently cleared woods bordering the church. Some neighbors have expressed concern about the new sight lines through the woods, and many more said they were saddened by the loss of one of the neighborhood's natural areas.

The college plans to reinstate a serpentine wood-chipped path through, with a focus on keeping the woods natural, safe, and usable by students and residents alike. Additionally, MCC landscapers are considering making a green barrier to control light pollution



for the surrounding neighbors.

"Campus safety people, over the years,

have found a lot of people doing not-such-legal things in those woods," Hibbard said. The changes are meant to keep the area safer for students and residents, she said.

Mike Herriman, chair of the CCNA's Neighborhood Watch Committee, also stepped up to report that the watch has not heard of any criminal activity in the woods since its clearing. Herriman says in the past, activity seemed to generate from the area as people used the trees to hide, watch homes, and keep stolen property.

Funding sources detailed

As announced in an April press release from the college, the Woodside project is being funded by a \$3 million grant from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, proceeds from the sale of \$3 million in voter-approved bonds and a \$100,000 grant from the McFarlan Charitable Corporation/McFarlan Villages.

The remaining balance of just over \$2 million, according to Hibbard, will be raised from additional grants and a "Lenore's Lifetime Friends Campaign."

EVM staff writer Luther Houle can be reached at lhoule@umflint.edu.

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Berston Field House: Community life thriving on North End's "hallowed ground"

By Teddy Robertson

At Berston Field House, the trees that shade the ball diamond refract a vibrant yellow against the gray October sky. From Memorial Day to Labor Day, fans from across Genesee County filled the bleachers and parking lot at 3300 Saginaw St., to cheer the Sunday Inner City Softball League games.

Today the action is indoors and Berston Field House hums with activity. Success of the August 2018 arts millage has enabled the arts organizations here to jump start expansion of their programs in this storied sports and recreation center.

Hallowed ground for North End Flint athletic and community life, the Berston building itself shares a historic tradition. Designed by the visionary city planning firm of John Nolen (1869-1937) in Cambridge, Mass., the Field House reflects the American architectural movement pioneered by Frederick Law Olmstead, creator of New York's Central Park. Nolen's firm designed extensive projects that incorporated nature and community life in plans for burgeoning cities in Wisconsin, Florida, and California.

Berston Field House opened in 1923 with an auditorium, gym, pool, community meeting rooms, a branch of the public library, and even a small clinic for those who couldn't afford medical help. Community facilities were woven into urban development, typical of Nolen's plans. The building walls are four feet thick in places; downstairs, Fire Department horses stamped their feet where the boxing ring stands today. The sturdy boiler system still cranks out heat.

How the North End grew

Around 1906, Flint banker, water commissioner, and philanthropist Neil J. Berston (1857-1916) eyed Flint's north end for real estate development. He bought a 60-acre farm just north of the Buick factories. Plotted into lots, the area became known as the Parkland addition. Berston acquired an additional tract of 120 acres and the land was plotted into subdivisions. Street names like Spencer,

Dewey, Jamieson, McClellan, and Leith honored the Berston and the Spencer and Dewey families, the farmland owners. Berston also gave land for North Flint Presbyterian Church (later Parkland Presbyterian). Mysteriously, Berston was shot to death on a Sunday in 1916; the murder remained unsolved. In 1920, sons Neil and Charles deeded property to the city, along with funds to build the Field House, named in honor of their father.



"Our Legacy, Our Hope"

In 1930, Berston Field House became the first community center in Flint to open its facilities and programs to black residents. Flint natives like Judge Thomas Yeotis and Flint Township Planning Commissioner Larry Ford recall the Field House in the 1940s as a magnet for youth who just wanted to play ball. In recent decades, Berston nurtured a roll call of Flint athletic talent — Olympians Chris Byrd, Andre Dirrell, and Claressa Shields in boxing, and the Flintstones Charlie Bell, Morris Peterson, and Mateen Cleaves in basketball. But with years of disinvestment in the North End, capped by the great recession following the 2008 mortgage crisis, Berston's doors closed.

County Commissioner Bryant (BB) Nolden recounts what happened after his election to Flint City Council in 2009, a time of deepening financial woe. "I saw the books," he says. "I knew the city didn't have the resources to operate community centers." Nolden began tending to the

property — cleaning the building, cutting the grass; he bought an old plow truck and cleared snow in winter. When he asked then-Mayor Dayne Walling if he could open Berston for a couple of hours each day, the Mayor handed him the keys. With the Field House open for several hours after school, kids could come in, shoot hoops, and then head home to eat. "At least for these hours I knew these kids were not getting into other stuff," Nolden says.

Nolden's years of volunteer labor paid off. In 2014, Field House supporters formed the non-profit Friends of Berston, choosing the motto "Our Legacy, Our Hope." The Ruth Mott Foundation awarded Berston a \$280,000 grant to build up staffing. And in 2015, also with the Ruth Mott Foundation, Berston was the host of the first North Flint Community Forum.

Today, Commissioner Bryant serves as full-time executive director of Berston Field House with a part-time staff of five and a cohort of thirty volunteers. Five tenants call Berston home: Creative Expressions Dance Studio, The Chosen Few Arts Council, YMCA Safe Places, the Berston Cycle Club, and the FWC Berston Boxing Club. A chess club also meets in the building.

Arts millage jump starts expansion

Housing two established arts organizations, Creative Expressions Dance Studio and the non-profit Chosen Few Arts Council, Berston was a natural partner in the arts millage proposal. A Flint institution for over three decades, Creative Expressions offers an array of dance classes for all ages, including participation in Flint's annual Tapology Festival. The Chosen Few Arts Council offers a wide variety of classes in music, pottery, drawing, poetry and photography — programming that seeks to fill the void left with the loss of the arts in public schools.

The August millage commitment enabled these arts programs to expand in time for school opening in

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... Berston

(Continued from Page 6.)

September. Creative Expressions Dance Studio has cut its annual student tuition of \$1,000 in half. The Chosen Few Arts Council has opened its arts classes free to youth in the YMCA Safe Places program, also at Berston. Plans for a kiln and ceramics equipment have advanced with hopes for readiness in summer 2019. Chosen Few adult classes like yoga relaxation, conducted by yoga and tai chi instructor Brenda Glasschild, are now free and participation is growing. Shows on the 2018-2019 Whiting/Capitol Theatre calendar have begun exchanges with Berston youth — kids attend performances and visit backstage and artists come to the Field House for workshops.

Valorie Horton, a potter with The Chosen Few Arts Council, stresses the acute need for arts programs for kids. “My family grew up at the Flint Institute of Arts,” Horton recalls. “When schools phased out arts programs, I realized how essential nonprofit arts organizations would be.” Together with her son, Omar Batson, Horton founded The Chosen Few Arts Council in 2006.

A full-service recreational campus

Today Field House users check in at the entrance with a Berston card. Youth can shoot hoops in gym, but they can also go downstairs to use the Berston Success Center, a quiet work space outfitted with 14 computers and several printers, thanks to the Hagerman Foundation. Seniors come twice weekly for Enhance Fitness, a nationwide YMCA program to improve strength and balance. Senior Line Dancing draws as many as 40 people.

With the Memo of Agreement with County Board of Commissioners still in progress and funds slated to start in January 2019, Friends of Berston Fieldhouse Board is drafting policies and finalizing Board membership, improving its webpage and getting out a bulletin of activities. The annual Berston budget will increase from \$265,000.00 to \$412,000.00; an additional bookkeeper has been hired and United Way serves as fiscal sponsor for millage funds. The goal of the Friends of Berston Board is

to become self-supporting over the 10-year millage period.

Friends of Berston fund development continues and has already raised approximately \$36,000. “Small donations are the life blood of small nonprofits like us,” Nolden says. “We’re at the cusp of an explosion with investment downtown. At some point we might do a capital campaign or an endowment.”

An easel in the director’s office shows an architectural plan for renovation and expansion of the Field House site. “I see Berston’s future as a full-service recreational campus,” Nolden explains. It’s a step at a time. A new playground was added in 2016 with funds from United Way of Genesee County. A soccer field is in the works with support from the US Soccer Foundation and a Safe Places to Play grant. Millage funds strengthen the arts component in this vision.

Three signs at the Berston Field House entrance tell the story. Over the doors hangs a tribute to Olympian boxer Claressa Shields. On the north side of the walkway stands the State of Michigan Historic site marker; on the south side, a fresh new sign announces ten different programs in athletics, arts, and recreation all under one roof. The Friends of Berston know well what the Field House means to the north side community, but their motto speaks for the well-being of the city of

Flint and Genesee County as a whole: “Our Legacy, Our Hope.”

EVM columnist *Teddy Robertson* can be reached at teddyrob@umflint.edu.

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Flint Council discord continues; Herb Winfrey re-elected president

By Meghan Christian

Tensions remained high at the Flint City Council (FCC) throughout November, a month highlighted by disagreements and accusations of racism and sexism from Fourth Ward Councilperson Kate Fields and Ninth Ward Councilperson Eva Worthing directed against First Ward Councilperson Eric Mays.

The tensions first came to a head when Fields and Worthing held a press conference the day after an investigative financial hearing chaired by Mays where, according to Fields and Worthing, Mays made it impossible for them to ask questions and Fields commented Mays was the most racist person she had ever met.

In response, Mays stated, "I am appalled people would go on TV and call me a racist."

Of the many residents in attendance at the Nov.12 FCC meeting, the dozen who spoke during the public speaking portion of the meeting nearly all touched on various aspects of this issue, including how council members should interact with one another, how they felt about Fields claiming that Mays is one of the most racist people she has ever met, and what they felt FCC should be doing.

"You should stop that," resident Audrey Mohammad said to Fields and Worthing in regards to what she said she saw as trying to turn members of FCC against Mays. "You go against everything that (Mays) tries to put into action... Just know that when you start making the racist comments, take a step back," she concluded.

"He is not a racist," resident Richard Jones stated in support of Mays.

Not all those who spoke supported Mays, however. Resident Quincy Murphy seemed to support Fields and Worthing, voicing that as a man he does not personally feel women should be talked to the way Mays talks to female members of council.

"I don't agree with how Eva Worthing and Kate Fields and Monica Galloway has been talked to," Murphy said. "They was elected just like everyone else was elected and just because you don't agree with them

doesn't mean you have to talk to them in a different tone of voice," Murphy said.

Residents Arthur Woodson and Gina Luster both suggested FCC consider taking diversity classes to try and breach the gaps between certain members. "We all have flaws, but it is how you address them," Luster said.

"Quit the bickering and learn to get along... I shouldn't have to address you, you should do your damn jobs," Dorothy Batchelder, 75, said.

FCC members also voiced their opinions on the issues they see facing the council.

"I'm hoping that we can get past our differences and work together. Yes, we do have some racial issues going on...but we also have personality clashes," Fifth Ward Councilperson Jerri Winfrey-Carter said. "I'm going to appeal to my colleagues: let's just stop and let's just come together and take care of the business of this city."

"Racism you can't hide," Second Ward Councilperson Maurice Davis said.

However, not all of his colleagues agree that racism on FCC is the issue.

"My concern isn't racism," Seventh Ward Councilperson Monica Galloway said. She added these kinds of issues shouldn't be brought up during official meetings. "I just don't think that this council is equipped to deal with that and it shouldn't have a place doing city business," she said.

"I don't believe that we have out of all of the nine councilpeople... I don't believe that any one of us are racist," Council President Herbert Winfrey said. "We have heard our constituents say that they don't want to hear us slamming each other..., but it is okay to disagree with one another."

Worthing and Fields both commented that residents should go back and review the videos of the meetings taped by Spectacle Productions and streamed via YouTube. "Watch the videos. Don't just believe what someone has told you," Worthing said.

In other business, Council elections

FCC also held its annual elections during November where the president and vice president are appointed, as well as the decisions on which chairs and committees are deemed necessary.

Sixth Ward Councilperson Herb Winfrey was re-elected council president by a vote of five in favor of Winfrey, three in favor of Fields, and one in favor of Mays. Those in support of Winfrey were Mays, Third Ward Councilperson Santino Guerra, Fifth Ward Councilperson Jerri Winfrey-Carter, Winfrey, and Seventh Ward Councilperson Monica Galloway. Those in favor of Fields were Fields, Eighth Ward Councilperson Allan Griggs, and Worthing. Second Ward Councilperson Maurice Davis was in support of Mays.

Galloway was reelected as council vice president by a vote of six in favor. Those who supported Galloway were Mays, Guerra, Fields, Winfrey-Carter, Winfrey, and Galloway. Davis supported Mays and both Griggs and Worthing supported Fields.

After elections, Council President Winfrey addressed his colleagues and stated his belief that the chairs of the committees they currently have - Rules, Finance, Legislative, Governmental Operations, and Special Affairs - should stay the same until they are all able to meet one-on-one and discuss the appointments.

Reflecting on the ongoing tensions surrounding the council, some members urged their colleagues to look beyond the discord and think of the residents they each represent. "When it comes to these elected positions that we have, I believe that we should serve the public better and we should be an example to those young folks out there and our communities," Council President Winfrey said.

Referring to the residents of Flint, Maurice Davis said "We owe them better than what we are giving them."

EVM Managing Editor Meghan Christian can be reached at meghan.christian22@gmail.com.

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Buckham Gallery's move from its upstairs era marks steps forward for an arts survivor

By Jeffery L. Carey Jr

As this year comes to an end and the world prepares for new beginnings, so does Flint's Buckham Gallery, the state's longest-running, artist-led, nonprofit gallery.



Buckham's notorious steep stairs (photo by Darlene Carey)

It's Flint's version of "a big city gallery," Buckham's director, Lynn

Penning, says, a downtown arts survivor "independent in its thinking with a unique point of view."

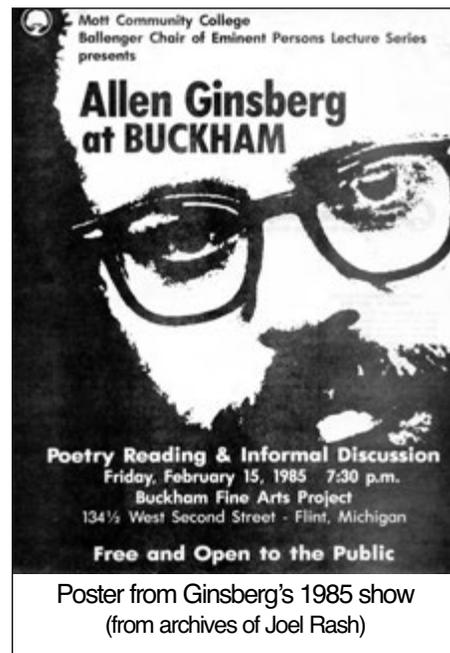
For over 34 years the gallery, located at 134 West Second Street in Flint, has been an important art venue, drawing artists and visitors from Flint, Genesee, Oakland, Wayne and Livingston counties. Buckham also has "an extremely excellent reputation in Ann Arbor and Detroit especially," according to artist and board member Michael Melet.

Now Buckham Gallery is moving to its newly-renovated location in the Perry Building just across the street from its old location. The move was initially planned for the end of the year, but at a recent meeting a decision was made to push the move date forward to January 1 so that the Perry Building, now under reconstruction, can have a cohesive opening in January that includes other new venues.

Neighbors to the new Buckham Gallery will include a men's store called The Total Man Fine Clothier & Grooming and an ELGA Credit Union office.

"Our first exhibit in the new space will be January 11, 2019," Penning said. "As of now, the plan is to host a closing party here on the same evening."

"My family and I had a women's retail fashion store, The Vogue, kitty-corner from the new Buckham Gallery building," Melet said, reminiscing about the history of the location. "I joined my father at The Vogue in 1960 when Walgreen Drug store



Poster from Ginsberg's 1985 show (from archives of Joel Rash)

was in that location." He described how the Walgreen's closed and Perry Drugs opened in the vacant space. Then "Perry Drugs closed and the building sat empty for I think about 30 years."

The iconic gallery, which opened in 1984, has long been a place in Flint where, according to Penning, "Flint and area residents can view a variety of contemporary art created by local artists as well as artists from throughout the state and nation."

In the early years, a cadre of colorful and influential local artists, many faculty and students of the Mott Community College art program, associated themselves with Buckham. A photo on the Buckham website taken in 1983 or 1984 identifies the founding members as Robin Bucalo, Sam Morello, John Bender, Syd Atkinson, Bob Caskey, Jan Hartranft, Ken Kinyon, Pat Mishina, Jim Anthony, Gary Gebhardt, and Tom Nuzum, though many others came and went over the years. Others included Guy Adamec, Joe



Founding members, back row l-r: Robin Bucalo, Sam Morello, John Bender, Syd Atkinson, Bob Caskey. 2nd row: Jan Hartranft, Ken Kinyon, Pat Mishina, Jim Anthony, Gary Gebhardt. bottom row on floor, Tom Nuzum. Last person unidentified (Photo from Buckham Gallery website: <https://www.buckhamgallery.org/our-history.html>)

... Buckham

(Continued from Page 10.)

Bommarito, John Dempsey, Doug Hoppa, John Kotarski, Chris Waters, Linda Woodruff, and the four principles of the powerhouse DAS Print group, Stephen Davidek, Jim Anthony, William Stolpin and Carole Brender. Of the four DAS Print group, only Brender is still alive.

Gary Gebhardt owned the building and MCC faculty member Doug Warner had a studio at the top of the stairs to The Torch. They all were frequent exhibitors and passionate supporters of contemporary art.

Penning described how Buckham Gallery survived Flint's downturn, continuing to show art over a long stretch of rough years. Like the city, Buckham struggled and overcame the challenges that seemed insurmountable at the time.

"People from this area relate to that type of fortitude," Penning said. "Surviving those difficult times, Buckham Gallery, like Flint, transforming, starting a new phase which reflects a new era."

There are art galleries and there are art galleries," Melet reflected. "Back in the early 80's Flint's most talented, most serious, most reputable artists saw a void. There was no place in this community where "serious" art could be shown. It was as simple as that."

Melet said the community of Flint at the time had no venue to expose the population to new, fresh, art from around the country and world. "Before Buckham, if you weren't fortunate enough to travel and see famous museums and art galleries, your exposure to the arts was nonexistent."

"When Buckham Gallery opened for the first time, the public saw new first class art and just as important, the local serious artist had a venue to show their art," Melet said.

The call for art was expanded also to reach out to the entire country's art communities. "Once a year for 34 plus years we have a 'call to entry,' inviting artists from everywhere to send slides of their work to be juried by artist members for future shows," Melet said.

In addition to visual arts, Buckham has been a showcase for local performers and writers throughout the years, hosting open

mic events, student shows from both Mott Community College and the University of Michigan – Flint, such as the Qua Literary Journal's launch parties.

According to Penning the gallery hosted Pulitzer Prize-winning Beat poet, philosopher Allen Ginsberg. The notable Ginsberg attended an art show in 1985 where he also did a memorable reading/singing to a packed house, sitting on the floor and strumming a harmonium.

Currently Buckham offers its First Friday Open Mic, which showcases performances by area artists and residents on the first Friday of each month. Hosted by Buckham Gallery and its artist-member Nic Custer, the doors open at 6:45 p.m with the open mic starting 7 p.m. Performers sign in at the door.



Penning with Jeff Carey in the new digs
(Photo by Darlene Carey)

Asked what prompted the move, Melet stated, "For 34-plus years we have been on the second floor of 134 W. Second St. at the top of many stairs. No elevator. No escalator. No handicapped accessibility. For a 'normal' person the stairs were difficult to climb." The old location does not have an elevator and due to building codes and a lack of finances an elevator was not an option.

"I remember I had my first show at Buckham in February or 2011," Melet said. "My mother, who was 99 years old and in pretty good health at the time, was not able to attend because of the stairs." Melet also described a conversation with someone during an Art Walk evening who said to him, "Michael tonight is the last time I will ever walk up these stairs."

With work on the new Buckham Gallery nearing its completion Penning said, "Every time I walk into the new gallery, I think, 'this is beautiful'. I feel a bit awe struck and eager to occupy the new space. The high ceiling, new flawless drywall, and the open floor plan make the space perfect for a gallery."

Penning also said that they were leaving the original diamond-patterned floor because it gives the refurbished contemporary space a vintage feel. She said they also were leaving some of the original crown molding to give the new venue a sense of history.

"I saw an old photo from the 1930's when workers were laying the bricks on Saginaw Street," she said. "The building Buckham is moving into, 600 S. Saginaw Street, was not the building in the photograph, so sometime in the late 30's or 40's, this building replaced a previous building from the 1800's."

The Last Exhibit runs from Dec. 14 to Jan. 5. The show will feature the work of Buckham's 40 current artist members, several of whom have been part of Buckham Gallery since its early years. The first exhibit in the new space, Jan. 11, will feature Buckham artist-member Michael Melet and guest artists Laura Stein, Rosemary Bostek, Terry Schupbach-Gordon, and Edward Tillery.

"Flint has regained its vitality," said Penning. "Artist-member Michael Melet and I stood outside of the original gallery, looking across the street at the new Buckham Gallery and the construction going on at 600 S. Saginaw.

"I said, 'I couldn't have imagined this version of Flint 15 years ago.' Michael agreed. I added, 'and, we can't possibly imagine what downtown Flint will look like in another 15 years.' We both agreed it will be fabulous."

EVM Staff Writer Jeffery L. Carey, Jr. can be reached at jlcareyjr@hotmail.com. EVM Editor Jan Worth-Nelson, who was present at the Buckham opening in 1984, contributed to this report. She can be reached at janworth1118@gmail.com.

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Leadership changes announced at C.S. Mott, Ruth Mott Foundations

By Jan Worth-Nelson

William S. White has retired from his post as chief executive officer of the C.S. Mott Foundation, and Raquel Thueme has been appointed to succeed Handy L. Lindsey as president of the Ruth Mott Foundation, according to recent announcements from two of the city's most influential benefactors.

Both foundations are outgrowths of shared family ties deeply rooted in Flint and legacies of the automotive industry in its prime — C.S. Mott being one of the city's auto pioneers, and Ruth Mott his fourth wife.

White, whose late wife, Claire, was the granddaughter of C.S. Mott, has been at the Foundation for nearly five decades. He announced the transition in a signed letter with many personal touches sent through email Nov. 13. White's son, Ridgway, who has been at the Foundation since 2002 and president since 2015, has been approved by the Mott board of trustees to be CEO as well, William White stated.

Quoting the Bible verse, "To everything there is a season," White wrote that while he is stepping back from the day-to-day operations of the Foundation, he will continue, without compensation, as chairman of the board. He said his son "brings vigor, energy, and insight to the challenges we face."

Ridgway White, 39, is the fourth head of the Mott Foundation, succeeding C.S. Mott himself; his son C.S. Harding Mott; and William White, Harding Mott's son-in-law. Ridgway White is C.S. Mott's great-grandson. The foundation started in 1926 with a \$320,000 endowment that has grown to \$3 billion and distributes grants to 60 countries and the U.S.

Thueme, 56, has been vice president of programs at the Ruth Mott Foundation since 2011 and has played a central role in developing the Foundation's north Flint focus. With nearly 30 years' experience in the non-profit sector, Thueme was selected by the board of trustees after a national search.

"Raquel has the spirit, integrity, and skills needed to maintain the momentum occurring in north Flint," said Ruth Mott

Foundation trustee Lawrence E. Moon. "She's a proven leader who has committed herself to listening to the people who live and work here."



Mott's leaders (from left) C.S. Mott, C.S. Harding Mott, William S. White, Ridgway White
(Images courtesy of the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation)

A product of the Detroit Public Schools and Cranbrook School on scholarship, Thueme went to get a bachelor's degree from Harvard University and a master's degree from the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor. The youngest of seven, Thueme was the only child in her family born in the U.S. after her family moved to Michigan from Mexico in 1961.

Her executive experience includes four years as president and CEO of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Metropolitan Detroit and seven years at Trinity Health in Novi. Prior to coming to the Ruth Mott Foundation, she spent four years in China while her husband was on an international assignment from General Motors.



Raquel Thueme
(Permission by Ruth Mott Foundation)

As president, in addition to commitments to north Flint, Thueme will oversee community programs delivered at Applewood, the estate of Charles Stewart Mott.

Ridgway White began his tenure at Mott as an intern in 2002 and was hired as a program assistant two years later. After working his way up the ranks, White's account described, he served as the

Foundation's vice president for special projects and chair of the management working group from 2011 until he became president in January 2015.

His father pointed out that Ridgway took the Mott Foundation reins as the Flint water crisis was unfolding, and that he immediately committed \$4 million to close a budget shortfall preventing the state and city from taking crucial first steps to bring safe drinking water back. In succeeding months, the

Mott Foundation committed up to \$100 million to the city's water recovery efforts.

"Based on his deep affection for the city of Flint, I'm sure C.S. would be pleased to see that supporting the community we call home is still one of the Foundation's top priorities," William White wrote. The Foundation has wide national and international reach as well, he pointed out, in particular supporting community schools and after-school programming. The 21st Century Community Learning Centers Initiative, he said, serves 1.7 million children nationwide.

(The history of the Mott Foundation's involvement with education — launching Flint in the 1930s and beyond as a much-recognized national center for community education and then affected by changes in the foundation's priorities in the 1960s, along with school district gerrymandering, are being freshly examined and discussed in several local reading groups based on the book *Demolition Means Progress* by Andrew Highsmith. The recent revival of the Community Schools program in the Flint Public Schools, funded by the Mott Foundation and managed by the Crim Fitness Foundation, looks somewhat like a re-commitment to that venerable 20th Century Flint model. In March 2017, the Mott Foundation issued a statement available here strongly disagreeing with some of Highsmith's contentions.)

Ridgway White's leadership tenure has been associated with many other local initiatives, particularly private/public part-

(Continued on Page 13.)

... Mott

(Continued from Page 12.)

nerships. Footprints of Mott influence can be seen in almost every corner of the city, including restoration of the Capitol Theatre; support for the recent expansion of the Flint Institute of Arts; contribution to the renovation of the Woodside Church/Lenore Croudy Family Life Center at Mott Community College; and a \$35 million contribution to construction of the Flint Cultural Center Academy.

For full disclosure, at present the C.S. Mott Foundation supports *East Village Magazine* to the tune of \$30,000/year, about a third of the publication's budget.

The Ruth Mott Foundation recently announced distribution of \$1.9 million in grants to north Flint projects, and is calling for proposals for another round of grants, the third of the year, with the total distributed in the city this year expected to total about \$5 million.

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



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< Installation shot of Vanessa German in MATRIX 174 / *i come to do a violence to the lie*, Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, 2016. Photo: Allen Phillips / Wadsworth Atheneum

> **Mbole-Yela peoples**
Democratic Republic of Congo
Mask, n.d.
Wood
11 3/4 inches
Collection of Dr. Robert Horn

THIS MONTH IN THE VILLAGE

“This Month” highlights a selection of events available to our readers – beginning after our publication date of Dec. 6. It is not an exhaustive list, rather a sampling of opportunities in the city. To submit events for our January issue, email your event to Managing Editor Meghan Christian at meghan.christian22@gmail.com by Dec. 26.

Christmas Box Program

Dec. 1 - 21
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.,
Closed from noon - 1 p.m. each day
Old Newsboys of Flint,
6255 Taylor Dr.
810-744-1840
onbflint.org
Admission: Free

Running through Dec. 21, this program is for children from newborns to high school age in need during the holiday season.

Happy Hanukkah

Dec. 2 - 10

Happy Hanukkah from the staff of East Village Magazine.

UM-Flint Ice Rink Open Skate

Every Wed., Fri., Sat., and Sun. until March 3
Wed: 6 - 9 p.m.
Fri: 5 - 8 p.m.
Sat and Sun: Noon - 4 p.m.
University Pavilion,
303 S. Saginaw St.
810-762-3441
Admission: Free, \$3 skate rental

Enjoy ice skating at the UM-Flint ice rink. Skate rental is available. No hockey pucks or equipment allowed.

Wellness at the Wheel

Mon - Sat.
Various times
The Ferris Wheel,
615 S. Saginaw St., 6th floor
Admission: \$12

Enjoy a variety of health and well-being classes offered at the Ferris Wheel.

Schedule:

Monday: 5:30 p.m. - Hatha Yoga
Tuesday: 7 a.m. - Rise and Shine Yoga
4:30 p.m. - Pound Yoga
5:30 p.m. - Hatha Yoga
Wednesday: 9:30 a.m. - Ashtanga Yoga
5:30 p.m. - Hatha Yoga
Thursday: 2 p.m. - Adaptive Yoga
5:30 p.m. - Yoga Basics
Friday: 5:30 p.m. - Mindful Movement Dance
Saturday: 8:15 a.m. - Hatha Yoga

Christmas at Crossroads Holiday Magic

Dec. 7 - 9, 14 - 16, 21 - 23,
and 26 - 30, 4 - 9 p.m.
Crossroads Village, 6140 Bray Rd.

Come see Crossroads Village done up with thousands of lights, see Santa, and more.

Open Mic at Buckham Gallery

Dec. 7
7 p.m.
Buckham Gallery,
134 ½ W. 2nd St.
810-239-6233
Admission: Free

Come embrace an opportunity to perform and to also hear other local artists and performers at Buckham Gallery's open mic night. Performers can sign in at the door.

December Art Walk

Dec. 14
6 p.m.
Various locations downtown
Admission: Free

Enjoy local art and entertainment during December's Art Walk.

Jeremy Combs Scholarship Show

Dec. 14
7 - 11 p.m.
Flint Local
432, 124 W. First St.
Admission: Donation at door

Attend the event which supports the scholarship in honor of Jeremy Combs at UM-Flint. Combs was one of the first to perform at the Local's new stage.

Flint Repertory Theatre presents “The Little Prince”

Dec. 14 - 23; Fri - Sun only
Fri: 7 p.m.
Sat: 2 and 7 p.m.
Sun: 2 p.m.
Bower Theatre, 1220 E. Kearsley St.
Admission: \$16 - 20

Enjoy a show based on the book by Antoine de Saint-Exupery. Recommended for all ages, follow the story of an aviator who meets the Little Prince while stranded in the desert.

Holiday Pops Concert

Dec. 15: 7 p.m.
Dec. 16: 3 p.m.
The Whiting,
1241 E. Kearsley St.
810-237-7333
Admission: \$6 - 35

Enjoy the annual holiday concert featuring the Flint Symphony Orchestra, the Flint Symphony Chorus, and other community singers to help you get in the holiday spirit.

Movies at the Capitol Theatre: “It’s a Wonderful Life”

Dec. 20
7:30 p.m.

The Capitol Theatre,
140 E. 2nd St.
Admission: \$5 adult, children free;
limit four children per one adult ticket.

Enjoy a screening of “It’s a Wonderful Life” at the Capitol Theatre.

Christmas Day

Dec. 25
All Day

Merry Christmas from the staff of East Village Magazine. We hope you enjoy a lovely holiday with your loved ones.

New Years’ Eve Gala at The Whiting

Dec. 31
8 p.m.
The Whiting,
1241 E. Kearsley St.
Admission: \$175

The gala held annually at The Whiting is one way to ring in the New Year in style.

... Surprises

(Continued from Page 3.)

Republicans could find some solace in gaining as many as two seats in the U.S. Senate. Yet that wasn't much of a surprise since, of the 33 seats up this year, 26 of them were Democrats, often from states that Trump carried in 2016.

In Michigan, both the "blue wave" and the "pink wave" were apparent as Democratic women won all the top slots, with Gretchen Whitmer winning the governorship, Debbie Stabenow keeping her U.S. Senate seat, Jocelyn Benson elected as secretary of state and Dana Nessel taking the attorney general's office. Two women also were elected to the Michigan Supreme Court, Democrat Megan Cavanagh and Republican Elizabeth Clement.

In the Michigan House, Republicans retained control but Democrats gained five seats, narrowing the Republican's majority to 58-52. Similarly, in the state Senate Democrats also gained five seats, leaving the Republicans with a 22-16 majority.

Three election night surprises

Though many things turned out pretty much as expected, there were at least three surprises in this year's results.

The Governor's race

It wasn't a surprise that Gretchen Whitmer won the governor's office over Bill Schuette. That has been predicted for some time. What was a surprise was her margin of victory, and the fact that she was never really behind once the fall campaign got underway. Early in the year there was much doubt among Democrats about Whitmer's electability. Many said she wasn't well enough known in the Detroit area, and there were attempts by Democratic power brokers to draft someone else to take on Schuette. Because he has been assumed to be running for governor for many years, Schuette seemed like a formidable candidate early in the year. He was well known and had his campaign in place early. In the end, Whitmer ran a pitch perfect campaign, with her "Fix the Damn Roads" slogan, and Schuette's campaign never got full steam after the primary in August.

Schuette never seemed to develop a clear message, and his attempts to tie Whitmer to the "Granholm decade" fell flat. His failure to get the endorsement of Gov. Snyder didn't help either.

The U.S. Senate race

In contrast to the governor's race, the U.S. Senate contest was expected to be an easy cakewalk for incumbent Senator Debbie Stabenow, running for her fourth term. Republican John James was little-known, and had never run for a state-wide office. Early in the year, the assumption was that he would be a 'sacrificial lamb' as Stabenow marched to an easy victory. He proved to be a very competitive candidate, coming within a few percentage points of her during the midst of the campaign. In the end Stabenow won by a decent margin, but James will most likely be heard from again.

The attorney general's race

The attorney general's race is one that worried most Democrats. Dana Nessel earned the nomination by defeating Patrick Miles, an African-American candidate at the party's endorsement convention in the spring, causing many to fear that unhappy black voters might hold back support for Nessel. Some thought that being the first openly gay state-wide candidate in Michigan would cost her votes. And unlike the campaign for the U.S. Senate where both candidates treated each other in a civil manner, the race for attorney general produced some of the nastiest ads of any campaign. During her career Dana Nessel was a criminal defense attorney, not an unusual career step for a lawyer. But the ads against her blamed her (or her firm) for defending pornographers, child molesters and other criminals. But that's what criminal defense lawyers do. Many of those inflammatory ads seemed likely to sink her campaign as well. In the end she prevailed. Her victory over Tom Leonard was close, but also surprising.

The proposals

All three statewide proposals passed easily. Proposal 1, which would legalize recreational marijuana won with 57 percent of the vote. Proposal 2, which will

create an independent commission to draw non-gerrymandered election districts, won with a two-thirds majority, as did Proposal 3 which will make it easier to register, vote a straight party ticket, and audit elections. All of these proposals will take some legislation to implement, and that will be a major job for the next legislature.

What wasn't on the ballot — the Lame Duck Session

There were two issues that were expected to be on the November ballot but were not. There were attempts to place a proposal on the ballot to increase the minimum wage, and a proposal to require employers to grant paid sick time to employees. However, instead of placing those issues before the voters, the legislature passed their own laws on those topics, blocking the ballot proposals. Those laws can be amended much more easily than a ballot proposal. The expectation is that the legislature will do just that, in what is called the 'lame duck' session, where the current legislature meets in the last weeks of the year, before the new lawmakers take their seats. In response to business lobbying, the expectation is that the lawmakers will water down the minimum wage and the sick time bills to limit their impact. It will be worth watching to see what develops on both issues.

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

Lead/galvanized tainted pipes replaced so far in Flint: 7,688+

Source: press release from Candice Mushatt, City of Flint public information officer dated 11/26/18

The total includes 1,460 homes completed this year, in Phase 5 of the project.

Crews from the five area contractors doing the replacements have identified copper service lines at a total of 7,576 homes, which did not need to be replaced. A total of 17,869 pipes have been excavated altogether as of 11/26.

The city aims to have all of Flint's lead-tainted service lines replaced by 2020.

Village Life

Of elusive joy, lamentations and “wanton love”

By Jan Worth-Nelson

Sometimes you have to fight for joy.

At a recent *East Village Magazine* party at my house, wine flowed and four kinds of pasta from Flour and Eggs, comfort food extraordinaire, disappeared in thick hunks from trays on the big table, two extra leaves put in for the occasion. I'd put up some colored lights and we toasted to neighborliness and the power of words. It was a happy night.

But as we jovially congratulated ourselves on what we think we've accomplished lately, one of our distributors paused, leaning in the doorway, and observed, “But it's gotten so political, more than it used to be.”

Emboldened by my second or third goblet of pinot noir, I retorted, “Yeah, and I can tell you why. I'm PISSED OFF!”

In the early days after November, 2016, I wrote a couple of bitter columns about the outcome, my “derangement” as we're calling it, on florid display. A few colleagues suggested this was not the best approach for a column—nor the best role for an editor, who is supposed to mediate divergent views, and moderate from a position of neutrality. Of course they were right.

I stopped writing, except for doggedly showing up from time to time to cover news stories with the familiar relief a familiar discipline I could do almost without thinking: who, what, where, when, why, and how. My colleagues, our beloved crew of *EVM* staff writers, stalwartly tried to do the same.

For six months, my gut hurt every day and my good doctor put me on a powerful pill that calmed my insides but made my tongue oddly lazy, my speech slurring at unexpected moments. It horrified me. I stopped taking that pill and got a tattoo, which helped.

As we pulled out of the Paris Climate Accord, the Iran Nuclear Agreement, as we caged children at the border, as mass shootings and floods and fires piled up, as the current administration went after its critics — military heroes, judges, and especially infuriating and personal for

me, the press — it has gradually become clear this is not going to stop.

Every day feels like a catastrophe in the making.

Every day, the urge toward lamentation comes in waves: so much is lost, so much being squandered, the earth in peril and the country engulfed in ugly division. The country, it seems to me, is in the midst of a near-primal struggle over who we are — values, like so many others, I had taken for granted. I thought we all agreed we wanted life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness for each other. I thought we all agreed we believed in a more perfect union, in the rule of law. I thought as a nation we shared compassion for the poor; I am nearly ancient and still so naïve.



So what's the big deal about joy, anyway? As the Christmas lights go up everywhere, the world seems to say to us, “You're supposed to be happy, damn it!”

I've never been one to bend to other people's imperatives. And the weight, the gravity, of what is at stake, presses down stronger than things that usually cheer me: a nuthatch flickering at the suet, stronger even, sometimes, than the winter moon rising over the orderly roofs of Maxine Street.

But I don't think one can survive without pleasure. To turn our backs on the opportunities for joy is to surrender to evil, to smallness, to fear, to the twisted need for revenge.

To turn toward pleasure is to show belief in human goodness: our capacity for delight that makes the fight worthwhile. What's the point of all that we are fighting for if we can't enjoy the fruits of the hard labor? I'm talking

about listening to challenging new music under the stained glass of St. Paul's on a lugubrious Sunday afternoon, or learning a new trick on the laptop, or coming across a great new novel, or seeing a film that triggers a deep conversation. Or the taste of a Honey Crisp apple at the bustling Farmers' Market. Or the giggle of Sarah's wanted baby brought into a crazy world. Or the look of snow dappling every branch of a venerable silver maple newly saved from the woodsman's saw by a bunch of neighbors who love trees, even the old ones, like honorable old friends.

These days are fat with what my husband calls “values clarification.” It's a sterile, hard phrase on my lips, but it's where we're at. What is that world we're making? What are we, after all, in the middle of? I wish I knew. Will our better angels prevail?

“One action is better than a thousand sighs.” That is what Rabbi Yisroel Weingarten of the Chabad House Lubavitch of Eastern Michigan said at a vigil for the eleven Pittsburgh dead at Temple Beth El in October. That vigil was a redeeming moment for me. I believed, in a moment we all needed belief, that good can conquer evil.

“What is the remedy for such senseless hatred? What can we possibly do to eradicate it?” the rabbi asked.

Here is his answer: “Hatred can be uprooted from its core by saturating our world with wanton love — pure, undiscriminating, uninhibited, unyielding love and acts of kindness. Today more than ever we need to stress love and unity, positivity and light ... even as we grieve and mourn, we must exponentially increase our acts of kindness and goodness.”

So this is where I end my message to you, and I'm talking to myself as well. Let us substitute our thousand sighs with countless acts of wanton love. Let us fight for joy. Happy Holidays.

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

LVI: 11 (668 issues, 6,772 pages)