

East Village Magazine

February 2025



Photograph By

Edwin D. Lester



Workers' Compensation & Social Security Disability

ROBERT J. MACDONALD
FLINT ATTORNEY

Fighting for Disabled Workers

810.234.2204 • disabledworker.net



Books
Vinyl
Cafe

Tu-Th: 11am-7pm
Fr-Sa: 10am-6pm
Su-Mo: Closed

Ph.: 810-407-6402
620 W. Court St. Downtown Flint

CONSOLIDATED
BARBER SHOP

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

Weichert Grant Hamady
REALTORS

Mark Fisher
Your College Cultural Realtor

Buying or Selling?
I'm here to help!

810-285-8624
markfishersells.com

4265 E. Court Street, Burton MI 48509

RE/MAX RE/MAX EDGE

f G+ t v i

FREE Home Warranty

Flint's Resident Realtor
The Name Trusted in More Neighborhoods
(810) 234-1234

RYAN EASHOO

www.RyanEashoo.com

Steady Eddy's cafe

Healthy Home Cooking!

810-235-1968
Flint Farmers' Market

CREPES. COFFEE. SEASONAL MENU. DIETARY FRIENDLY.

FLINT CREPE COMPANY
555 S SAGINAW ST FLINT MI 48502

CHECK OUT THE FULL MENU @ FLINTCREPE.COM

East Village Magazine

Our 50th Anniversary!
Thank you for all your support!!!

Vern's
Collision & Glass
Collision Restoration Specialists

Don't Settle For Counterfeit Parts,
Insist on OEM Quality Parts

810-232-6751
Family Owned & Operated
Mike, Trudy, Jerin & Aaron Herriman
2409 Davison Road
Flint, MI 48506

Please see our website and Facebook page

East Village Magazine

www.eastvillagemagazine.org
for many more stories from Flint!



Issue No. 735 February 2025

Founder Gary P. Custer
Managing Editor Kate Stockrahm
Business Manager Nicholas Custer
Contributing Writer Jan Worth-Nelson
Reporters Canisha Bell
Christina Collie
Harold C. Ford
Columnist Paul Rozycki
Photographer Edwin D. Custer

Distribution Staff

Director: Edwin D. Custer. **Staff:** Connor & Ruby Coyne, Casey Custer, Nicholas Custer, Marabeth Foreman, Nick & Jeni Godlesky, Charlie, Linda, Patrick, Terrance, Christan & Jillianne Goldsberry, Stephen & Carol Larzelere Kellermann, Jo Larzelere, Mary LeRoy Striler, James, Lillian & Livia Londrigan, Ron & Mary Meeker, Robert & Nancy Meszko, Ted Nelson, Dave & Becky Pettengill, Julian Rodriguez, Paul Rozycki, Mike Spleet, Kim, Ronan & Jude Streby, Holly West, and Karen Wilkinson.

Board of Trustees

- Edwin D. Custer •
- Robert MacDonald • Paul Rozycki •
- Jan Worth-Nelson •

720 E. Second St.
Flint, Mich. 48503

Website:
eastvillagemagazine.org

E-mail:
eastvillagemagazineflint@gmail.com

Layout by Kate Stockrahm. Printing by PrintComm Inc., 3040 S. Dye Rd., Flint, MI 48507.

East Village Magazine is a program of the Village Information Center Inc., a nonprofit corporation. We welcome material from readers, but all submissions become the property of the publication and if published will be edited to conform to the editorial style and policies of the publication. All inquiries about the publication should be mailed to *East Village Magazine*, Village Information Center, 720 E. Second St., Flint, Mich. 48503. Distribution is the first Thursday of each month. Display advertising rates are \$34 a column-inch plus any other costs. Unclassified ads are \$2.50 a printed line or part of a printed line. Rates subject to change without notice. The deadline for advertising is at least 14 days before each publication date.

© 2025 East Village Magazine

Commentary

2025: What will the year bring in politics?

By Paul Rozycki

During President Trump's first weeks in office, we've seen more than 1,600 pardons; dozens of executive orders on everything from oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to withdrawing from the World Health Organization; tariffs on Canada, Mexico, and China; the firing or dismissal of scores of federal employees; pausing (and unpausing) of federal grants; and suggestions that the U.S. should take over Greenland, the Panama Canal, and make Canada its 51st state. So, it's risky to try to predict what the next 10 months of 2025 will bring.

In fact, it feels risky to predict what the next 10 days or 10 minutes will bring.

But with that caution in mind, here are a few things in politics that we might pay attention to in the upcoming year.

Trump and Michigan

While many Trump administration policies will have an impact on Michigan, one key question for the state is whether Trump will continue to try to impose a 25 percent tariff on goods from Canada and Mexico.

The impact of tariffs on Michigan's auto industry and the rest of the state could be dramatic.

In a recent Detroit Free Press column headlined "Trump's

tariffs on Canada will wreck Mich. economy," Andrea Bitely pointed out that more than \$700 billion worth of material was shipped back and forth between Michigan and Canada last year.

About 25 percent of the oil that we use for gasoline and similar products comes from Canada, and auto plants in Detroit and Windsor are shipping large quantities of parts and supplies across the border regularly. A 25 percent tariff imposes a significant price increase on automobiles and anything that is connected to gasoline or transportation, which is much of the rest of the Michigan economy.

One other concern is Trump's move to deport undocumented residents, which raises worries among residents who were born in other countries. Michigan farmers may find it difficult to find workers to harvest their crops this summer, as both California and Texas are already fearing a shortage of migrant labor.

In Dearborn, with its large middle-eastern population, many are concerned that they may face deportation threats for themselves or their families, particularly in light of Trump's anti-Muslim comments made in his first term. Despite the president's noted stance on revoking birthright citizenship, Dearborn voters surprised many last year by supporting him in the election.

(Continued on Page 7)

Cover: Detail of Louis Comfort Tiffany's stained glass window at St. Paul's Episcopal Church. The window was dedicated on Easter Sunday, April 4, 1926. Tiffany was an artist of the nouveau and aesthetic art movements whose works — which also include lamps, jewelry, and more — continue to be of great value to collectors. (Photo by Edwin D. Custer)



Photo of the Month: A cold day of ice fishing on Byram Lake. (Photo by Edwin D. Custer)

Education Beat

Flint Community Schools moves to upgrade, reopen Flint Central campus

By Harold C. Ford

Flint Community Schools (FCS) is taking preliminary steps toward an upgrade and reopening of its Flint Central High School campus, which was shuttered by the district in 2009.

With a unanimous 7-0 vote at its Jan. 22, 2025 meeting, the Flint Board of Education (FBOE) approved a contract with Plante Moran Realpoint (PMR) to begin preliminary work at a cost of \$120,000, or \$15,000 monthly over an eight-month period. PMR is a subsidiary of Plante Moran, a Detroit-based firm that has provided FCS consulting services for several years including advice about real estate matters.

A 20-page agreement between FCS and PMR entitled “Proposal for Schematic Design Oversight for Flint Community School District’s New Middle/High School Campus,” indicated the projected budget for the project

“is currently \$125 million” and PMR’s estimated overall fee will be \$3.125 million.

Two major phases, funding details

The proposal provided sparse information about deadlines for steps leading to the reopening of the campus or an overall funding plan. However, it did note two major phases for the project.

The first phase, “Programming and Oversight,” includes capital planning and creation of a schematic design that lays out an architect’s work plan and design facilitation.

A more detailed second phase, “Owner Representation Services,” includes seven major components: project planning, project procurement, project monitoring and reporting, design, construction, activation assistance, and project close-out.

While specifics about overall funding of the projected \$125 million rebuild were sparse, a few details in the “Schematic Design” document and commentary by FCS officials at the Jan. 22 meeting – namely by Superintendent Kevelin Jones and FBOE Vice President Laura MacIntyre – pointed to three sources of financing.

According to Jones, FCS itself will provide \$70,000 of the initial PMR fee from the financially-challenged district’s “cash reserves.”

“We did not want the [Mott] Foundation to shoulder the brunt of the work,” he said.

The agreement and further commentary by FCS officials suggests that the Mott Foundation will provide the remaining \$50,000 of the initial PMR fee and potentially more.

MacIntyre referenced “\$50,000 from a foundation” and added, “I am

(Continued on Page 5)

Education Beat ...

(Continued from Page 4)

now looking enthusiastically to the Mott Foundation to partner with us.”

Additionally, several references were made by FCS officials about “12(d)” funding, including a comment from Jones noting “we turned in our 12(d) application.”

Both 12(d) and 12(d)2 grants are provided by Michigan’s Department of Education for “infrastructure needs” to “eligible schools” that, among other criteria, have a “minimum percentage ... of pupils in membership who were determined to be economically disadvantaged [and] are experiencing declining enrollment.”

“I’m very enthusiastic about this project ... as it’s developed into this iteration,” said MacIntyre. “I am very excited ... to see us trying to rectify some of the wrongs of the past.”

While MacIntyre did not explain what those “wrongs” were, she did note that she had been “such a large critic” of the Mott Foundation before. “I feel this is truly a partnership,” she added.

“The best of our schools ... and the worst”

Prior to the FBOE’s unanimous vote of approval, nine members of the community commented on the proposal.

Many expressed concerns about preservation of the Central’s classic architecture, an expectant greater flow of traffic in the surrounding Central Park Neighborhood, and participation of residents in the planning process. Nonetheless, there seemed unanimous support for doing something with the property that has been abandoned for 15 years at 601 Crapo Street.

“As a resident and third-generation resident of the neighborhood, I have seen the best of our schools ... and the worst when [buildings] were

hastily left abandoned, unsecured, and eventually left to be scrapped and rotted over the past decade and a half,” said Nicholas Custer, a Central Park resident and EVM’s business manager.

While giving the upgrade and reopening his tentative support, Custer admonished that “iterations of this board ... have seen the value of the cultural center but have not looked across the street at the value of the preexisting neighborhood.”

Other Flint residents expressed similar sentiment, with multiple commenters also pointing to the arts and culture offerings adjacent to the vacant campus, which include the Flint Institute of Music, multiple museums, Mott Community College, and the city’s recently remodeled library.



Samantha Farah speaks at a FBOE meeting on Jan. 22, 2025. (Photo by Harold C. Ford)

“[Central HS] is right next door to one of the best collections of cultural institutions in the nation and our community college – meaning that the opportunities for a great education are really limitless,” said Flint resident and Central Park property owner Derek Dohrman.

Other speakers expressed how important the decision was for Flint children and families.

“This is the next step ... to tell the world, truly, that Flint Community Schools is here to stay, that there’s a future, that we’re not just going to be absorbed into a larger entity,” said Chad Schlosser, a Mott Park resident who ran for a FBOE position in the November 2024 election but lost out to Trustee Linda Boose. “We’re not just going to tell our kids to go find some other school, find some suburban school, or charter school.”

A long and winding road

The status of the abandoned Flint Central campus has been an object of speculation by FCS officials, the public, and others for more than a decade. Here is a timeline of some major events following its 2009 closure:

- **2013-2014:** Before the Central-Whittier campus was finally closed and the buildings boarded up, Powers Catholic High School expressed an interest in acquiring the property. The proposal was flatly rejected by FCS. Subsequently, Powers relocated to a renovated Michigan School for the Deaf building at 1505 W. Court St.
- **2016:** The FBOE released renderings by Flint-based THA Architects Engineers for construction of “new facilities” at the Flint Central campus for an estimated cost of \$78.5 million. EVM reported that, “Residents of the nearby Central Park neighborhood expressed concerns about traffic and acts of vandalism that might accompany a new school at the site.”
- **March 2017:** In an interview with then-FCS Superintendent Bilal Tawaab, EVM reported that “2020 is the target date for the opening of a new, consolidated Flint high school at the location of the now-abandoned Flint Central High School campus ... East Village residents in the neighborhoods surrounding the old Flint Central campus have ... begun to express their concerns at community meetings about vehicular and student traffic, demolition of the old high school and middle school buildings and environmental safeguards, and funding for the project...”
- **February 2021:** A mixed-use redevelopment plan for the Central property was introduced from

(Continued on Page 6)

Education Beat ...

(Continued from Page 5)

Georgia-based Harvard Group. EVM later reported that the plan “never got past the discussion phase.” In the same month, then-FCS Superintendent Anita Steward was admonished by some board members about her interactions with the Harvard Group over the long-abandoned campus.

- April 2021:** EVM was first to report on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) involving 17 parties working on a “several hundred-million-dollar plan to rescue Flint Community Schools.” The plan included the construction of four new elementary schools and a new high school alongside the renovation of two other buildings. The plan was titled “Flint Education Continuum” (FEC) and was to be largely funded by the Mott Foundation. The MOU made clear that “all buildings would be operated by FCS and located within the City of Flint.” Following the MOU’s publication, some FBOE members suspected Steward of negotiating with the Mott Foundation without the participation of board members. Steward flatly denied the accusation and said that, “some members of the FBOE did not participate in the discussions when given the opportunity.”
- June 2021:** Mott Foundation CEO Ridgway White appealed to the FBOE for positive consideration of the massive FEC plan for building all new schools in Flint. “That proposal has us committing to up to \$200 million for Flint Community Schools,” he said.



Flint Central High School (Photo by Tom Travis)

- July 2021:** In an exclusive interview with EVM, Steward said that, “Mr. White stated to me, ‘Anita, no strings attached, none. I just want to be able to do something for the school district. So, let’s sit down and have a conversation.’ And the

conversations have involved board members. Board members have been invited to participate in these conversations. Some of them have elected not to attend the meetings.”

- October 2021:** EVM reported that “the Flint Board of Education voted 6-0 to invite Mott Foundation CEO Ridgway White to visit and talk about the future of the long-abandoned Flint Central High School-Whittier Middle School campus.”
- February 2023:** While news of the campus had largely disappeared from public view for 15 months, EVM reported that the FBOE had “voted unanimously to explore the possibility of reopening talks with the Flint-based Mott Foundation about the construction of new school building(s).”
- March 2023:** FCS reveals a “Superintendent’s Proposed 6 Month

Focus” document that briefly mentions “Mott Foundation and Partner support for possible new schools [and] moves in our own direction with the Central property by demolishing it.”

- January 2025:** The FBOE voted unanimously to pay for the services of PMR, a consulting firm, as a preliminary step for developing a plan to rebuild and reoccupy the Flint Central campus. Regardless of the winding road to the Jan. 22 vote, the audience present for it seemed overall supportive – and even hopeful – for the proposal’s outcome. During her comments, Flint resident Samantha Farah added

her voice to the echo of approval for the FBOE’s decision to renovate and reopen the long-vacant high school.

She said she was excited about the direction and the opportunity the district had to invest “in a cultural institution that has sat vacant and dormant for far too long,” calling the campus “centrally located” and “a cultural heartbeat of our city in many, many ways.” ●



Fourth generation luxury painting & wall covering

Serving your neighbors in Flint & Genesee County for 40+ years.

How can we enrich & beautify your world?

<https://heddypaintpaper.net>
(810) 577-5591

Commentary ...

(Continued from Page 3)

The U.S. Senate

Speaking of surprise, Michigan Senator Gary Peters announced that he won't be running for another term next year and that will open up another Senate seat just two years after Democrat Debbie Stabenow chose not to run.

Elissa Slotkin won the seat for the Democrats in a very close contest last year. Without an incumbent running, it's likely that the contest to replace Peters will also be a close one.

Among the possible candidates are former U.S. Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg, Lieutenant Governor Garlin Gilchrist (both Democrats), and Republican John James.

The governor's race

As Governor Gretchen Whitmer enters the last two years of her term, we can expect the race for governor to heat up. Three candidates have already formally announced that they are running, and more are likely to join.

For the Democrats, Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson has announced her candidacy, as has Republican Senate leader Aric Nesbitt and Detroit Mayor Mike Duggan, who is running as an independent. We are likely to see others enter the race including Genesee County Sheriff Chris Swanson, and perhaps Lt. Gov. Gilchrist and Buttigieg should they choose not to run for Senator Peters' open seat.

One concern for Democrats in this race is the impact of Duggan, who was elected to his relatively popular mayorship as a Democrat and could draw support from traditional Democratic voters in Detroit and elsewhere.

With Republicans holding a majority in the state House, the

next two years may prove more challenging for Gov. Whitmer, too, as she works to complete her second term.

The Flint City Council

After nearly 900 votes, the Flint City Council is still unable to fill the 3rd Ward seat left vacant after Councilman Quincy Murphy's death in September 2024. The Council has also not managed to select its president during those votes, either.

Mayor Sheldon Neeley has appointed Linda Boose and LaShawn Johnson as "ambassadors" for the ward, but the council has still been divided 4-4 on filling the seat and appointing a president. On the positive side, a special election has been scheduled for the 3rd Ward vacancy. That primary will be on May 6 and the general election will be August 5. According to the Flint City Clerk's office, candidates for the position are: Beverly Biggs-Leavy, A.C. Dumas, LaShawn Johnson, and Richard Jones.

On a less positive note, the Flint Ethics and Accountability Board has said that it will request that pay for current council members be withheld until they appoint someone to serve as 3rd Ward councilperson interimly, as they are in violation of Flint's City Charter by not having done so already. The general hope is that once there is a full Council again the group will be able to select a new council president.

The Flint Community Schools Board of Education

The Flint Board of Education (FBOE) is moving past previous divisions and conflicts and has given Superintendent Kevelin Jones a five year contract, unanimously elected its officers, and resolved contract issues with the faculty union.

It has also announced that there are plans to redevelop the decaying Flint Central High School, which you can read more about on page four of this issue.

Though the details of any future plans are unclear at the moment, the FBOE is working with the Mott Foundation and local lawmakers, and there has been much community support for the idea of revitalizing the historic campus.

The Mott Community College Board of Trustees

With two new members on the Mott Community College Board of Trustees, many hope the body will move beyond its divisions of the past year. They will need to decide on selecting a new college president or continuing a contract with the current interim president, Shaunda Richardson-Snell, who proved a contentious nominee for the role last year.

The trustees will also be responding to criticism from the Higher Learning Commission over a conflict of interest charge involving Trustee Janet Couch's daughter and the real estate sale of a house to the interim college president, which might have jeopardized accreditation.

If you thought the first Trump administration was a wild ride, it looks like the first year of his second term will be wilder yet – and that's before we add in Flint's local politics! Hang on folks, it could be a bumpy 2025. ●

COLLEGE CULTURAL NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

*Sign up to get
notices of meetings at*

ccnaflint@gmail.com

THIS MONTH IN THE VILLAGE

Below is a selection of events available to our readers, beginning after our February publication date. To submit events for our March issue, email information about your event to eastvillagemagazineflint@gmail.com by February 26.

Sloan Museum of Discovery Historical Book Club

Thursday, Feb. 13 | 6-7:30 p.m.
This book club meets the second Thursday of each month. February's book is "The Rebellious Life of Mrs. Rosa Parks" by Jeanne Theoharis.
Attendance is free.
Sloan Museum of Discovery
1221 E. Kearsley St, Flint

Flint Artwalk

Friday, Feb. 14 | 6-9 p.m.
Walk around downtown Flint and visit the many merchants, galleries, restaurants and other venues displaying art by area artists and showcasing the talents of local musicians.

Kiss Kiss... Bang Bang: The Love-Hate Cabaret

Friday, Feb. 14 | 7-11 p.m.
Sweet on the surface, deadly underneath, the Love-Hate Cabaret is an explosive Valentine's Day event where passion meets peril, and love dances hand-in-hand with chaos. Expect incredible drag artists and performances filled with electrifying energy.
Tickets are \$10-20 on Eventbrite.
Arrowhead Vets Club
402 W. Water St, Flint

Cozy Book Sale

Saturday, Feb. 15 | 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Friends of the Flint Public Library welcomes the community to a book sale featuring merchandise that "that will spark your imagination and fill your heart with joy."
Gloria Coles Flint Public Library
1026 E Kearsley St, Flint

Poets & Writers Night

Saturday, Feb. 22 | 5-7 p.m.
Totem Books' Poets & Writers Night is an open mic style event where you can share your beautiful poetry and prose! It's totally free to attend and you don't have to register ahead of time to perform.
Totem Books
620 W. Court St, Flint

Passages Storytelling: Pet Peeves

Saturday, Feb. 22 | 6-9 p.m.
Passages is a live storytelling event, open to all, where people share true stories in front of a live audience, with no notes and no props. It must be your story, and limited to five minutes. This month's theme is "Pet Peeves." Doors open at 6:00, stories begin at 6:30.
Admission is free, but seating is limited.
Queens' Provisions
421 Garland St, Flint

Baroque to 21st Century Classical Transcriptions

Sunday, Feb. 23 | 4 p.m.
Musical trio Rubato, made up of Dr. Mary Procopio on flute, Dirk Neiuwenhuis on saxophone and Pat Cronley on piano will perform lively music in the historic, beautiful environs of St. Paul's Episcopal Church.
Tickets are \$12 at the door, \$5 for students, and MCC and UM-Flint students are free with school ID.
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
711 S. Saginaw St, Flint

Poké Bowl Pop-Up at Cafe Rhema

Friday, Feb. 28 | 6-8 p.m.
Cafe Rhema is hosting Flint-favorite The Poké Bowl for kitchen takeover event. The Poké Bowl team will be serving their signature rice bowls filled with cooked proteins or fresh sushi and fresh vegetables, while Cafe Rhema will serve specialty dessert and pastry items alongside bubble tea and coffee.
Cafe Rhema
432 S. Saginaw St, Flint

Jazz with Jimmy

Saturday, March 1, 2025 | 2 p.m.
St. Paul's Episcopal Church presents "Jazz with Jimmy," a performance by trumpeter and singer Jimmy Leach. Leach will play and sing the great jazz standards of the 20th century. Don't let the headline fool you, his set list includes jazz, rock, Latin, and many pop composers – something for everyone! Tickets are \$12 at the door, \$5 for students, and MCC and UM-Flint students are free with school ID.
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
711 S. Saginaw St, Flint

"Made in Michigan" Concert

Sunday, March 2 | 4 p.m.
This performance by 35-member New Century Chorale choir features the music of Michigan composers and songs about Michigan. It also includes a special performance with the Carolyn Mawby Chorale. Tickets are \$15 at the door. The concert will also be live-streamed. Visit newcenturychorale.square.site for more information or purchase access to the stream.
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
711 S. Saginaw St, Flint

Longway Planetarium Book & Stars Book Club

Thursday, March 6 | 5:30 - 6:30 pm
This book club meets the first Thursday of the month and concludes with a star talk in the dome.
March's book is "Light in the Darkness: Black Holes, the Universe and Us" by Heino Falcke.
Longway Planetarium
1310 E. Kearsley St, Flint



Flint City Bucks add Ugandan trio to 2025 roster

By EVM Staff

The Flint City Bucks continue to build an impressive roster in the offseason.

The Flint-based USL League Two soccer team announced the signing of a trio of Ugandan players in late January, pending league and federation approval.

All three players — Dominic Ayella, Joseph Ogwang, and Elvis Mwanje — developed with KCCA FC (Kampala) of the first-division Ugandan Premier League.

Ayella joins the Bucks off his freshman year at Lindsey Wilson College in Kentucky.

In his first season stateside, the 20-year-old striker from Gulu, Uganda tallied 17 goals and two assists to lead the college to the NAIA National Championship Round of 16. He scored once for every 75 minutes, with four goals coming in the postseason.



Joseph Ogwang in action.

Ayella was named to the NAIA All-American second team.

At KCCA, he was promoted from the academy in 2020, made his senior debut in 2022, and made a name for himself with three goals in the 2023-24 season.

Ayella also played for soccer powerhouse Kibuli Secondary School, guiding his team to its first championship at the 2022 Federation of East Africa Secondary School Association (FEASSA) Games in Arusha, Tanzania. The top scorer in the tournament with five goals, he was named Most Valuable Player (MVP).

Defender Ogwang joins the Bucks following his freshman year at Oregon State University.

Primarily a center back, Ogwang started seven matches in his first season with Oregon — earning West Coast Conference freshman team honors. Prior to his U.S. debut, the versatile defender from Lira, Uganda, signed a senior contract with KCCA in January 2024 after graduating from the club's academy. In July 2022, he played with KCCA U-20 side that won the Cambiasso and Rainbow International U-20 tournament in Dar es

Salaam, Tanzania.

Ogwang also captained his side at Kibuli Secondary School in 2023. The previous year, he was part of Kibuli Secondary's FEASSA Games championship effort.

Another product of KCCA, midfielder Mwanje, recently announced

his commitment to join longtime teammate Ayella stateside at Lindsey Wilson College. Mwanje made his senior debut in the 2020 Uganda Cup, and he helped claim the Cambiasso tournament in Tanzania with the U-20s in 2022. He also featured prominently in the FUFA Juniors League during the 2019-20 season.

Mwanje has also played for his hometown Masaka Secondary School and secured a loan move to United Arab Emirates second-division side Elite Falcons in 2021. He has played youth international soccer at the U-17 level, helping Uganda win the 2020 CECAFA Championship in Rwanda. ●

PLEASE JOIN US FOR

Artwalk

ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
711 S. Saginaw Street, Flint, MI
(810) 234-8627

February 14
Eric Jones
Artist
Rafael McDaniel-Walker
Musician

ST. PAUL'S

East Village

Magazine

Dominic Hayes
French horn
American Composers:
Works for Horn

Sponsored by
Prosecutor David
and Therese Leyton

MAR
21
7pm

Faculty Concert
Series 2024-25
Reserve free tickets at
thefim.org/facultyconcert4

FIM Flint School of
Performing Arts

Parks & Rec in Flint and Beyond: Kelly Lake Park

By Christina Collie

This article is the third in a series East Village Magazine is producing about parks and recreational areas to explore in Flint and surrounding areas.

*Kelly Lake Park
4345 Lapeer Rd
Burton, MI 48509
Hours: Dawn - Dusk*

In my opinion, Kelly Lake Park is a true gem. Nestled in the middle of a residential subdivision and flanked by the sights and sounds of I-69, if you're going too fast, you'll drive right past the park sign and dirt road entrance. It's that well hidden.

Despite being smaller than the other two parks highlighted in this series, Kelly Lake Park has the most diversity in offerings.

For example, in addition to a pretty sweet sledding hill, there are three trail options: a short, paved trail that takes about 10 minutes to walk one way and runs next to Genesee Christian Elementary School before dead-ending at Genesee Road; and two other dirt paths that

are tucked away and make you feel like you've discovered a secret world within the park.

Although the park's website mentions a boat launch and beach, I've never seen a boat on the lake, and there's usually a large population of geese hogging the beach. But, I have yet to visit when there wasn't at least one person fishing either from the bridge or pier, or while sitting beside the lake.

You have to take the bridge to the other side of the lake from the parking lot, where you have a choice between the two rustic paths. The one to the right is shorter, and will spit you out near the paved path I mentioned first; the one to the left will lead you around what I think of as the "cattail swamp", and you will definitely want to be wearing old shoes or boots for that path because it's almost guaranteed that you'll be walking through mud/water at some point. (But that's really part of the fun because it makes it feel like you're a true explorer.)

The path to the right is about 12 minutes to walk, and the one on the left takes about 45 minutes and

will lead you across the sled hill before you end up at the dirt road that brings you into the park. There's not a clear trail the whole way, you just need to keep the wetlands area of Kelly Lake on your left as you're walking.

According to the "2024 City of Burton Five Year Parks and Recreation Plan," walking paths are the main draw for people to visit public parks the majority of the year, but the great sledding hill is why I chose to write about Kelly Lake this month.

Improvements listed in the plan that the city would like to make include lighting, restrooms, cameras, and ADA upgrades to beach access. While I've read reviews on resources like Yelp, where the writer complains about the park being right next to the freeway, for me that is one of the things that makes it special. The fact that the city chose to do so much for the local community as well as wildlife, especially with such a small area, makes me appreciate it all the more.

Happy exploring! ●



The view from Kelly Lake Park's fishing pier. (Photo by Christina Collie)

Village Life ...

(Continued from Page 12)

my grownup tears flowed.

The second side, less well preserved, touched my heart even more. The song is “Jesus Took Away My Burden and Left Me With a Song.” Thanks to the 21st Century, I found both the lyrics for this redemptive old hymn as well as a YouTube rendition of it by two evangelists who could have been right out of my childhood at Calvary Evangelical United Brethren Church in Canton, Ohio, 1956.

I have to tell you, I’m a heathen by lifelong adult practice, but that song rang right into just about every fiber of my body. I don’t think one ever sheds the effect of beautiful music absorbed from the womb onward. There is comfort in familiar songs that transcends a lot of the world’s malarkey. I measured my heart rate on my iPhone: 10 points below my resting average. The body, the body and its

ancient ways of knowing. I swear, it’s almost spooky.


I have listened to that song many times now. Each time I do, I once again see my parents before I was born, still in love, leaning close in, faces almost touching over that mic, still unwarped by the schisms and wear and tear to come.

“I have to tell you, I’m a heathen by lifelong adult practice, but that song rang right into just about every fiber of my body.”

I’m so grateful to Tom Spademan for opening up my parents’ voices to me again. And I’m grateful to them for planting into my deepest heart the music that comforts me even now beyond all reason.

As for that impossibly wonderful trade: a burden for a song. Well, that’s a pretty good deal if you ask me. So, a toast. Here’s to songs instead of burdens. ●

SPONSORED BY
NARTEL FAMILY FOUNDATION



A RADICAL INTERACTIVE EXHIBIT

Experience a live action snowboard race, design and play your own video game, star in your own 360-degree freeze-motion video! Immerse yourself in the power of mathematics in action in sports, nature, robotics, music, dancing, movie-making and much more! Forty interactive exhibits for a limited time only inside Sloan Museum's FUN Gallery exhibition hall!
Ideal for ages 8+; fun for the whole family!

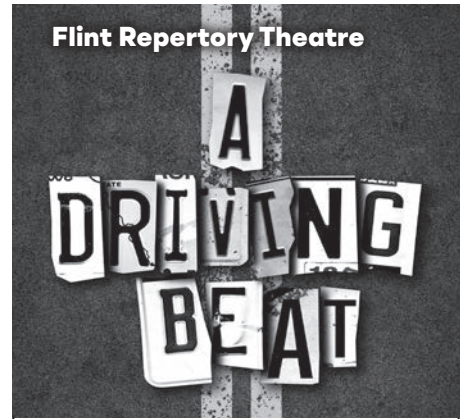
*General Admission to Sloan Museum is free for Genesee County residents. To receive these benefits, individuals must show a valid ID for proof of residency.
*2theXtreme entry FREE for members of Sloan and Longway.

PRESENTED BY
Evergreen Exhibitions

2 THE XTREME!

ADMISSION \$5 add-on charge after General Admission*

SLOAN MUSEUM OF DISCOVERY February 1-May 11, 2025
TICKETS: SloanLongway.org/Xtreme
1221 E. Kearsley St. Flint, MI 48503



A Driving Beat

By Jordan Ramirez Puckett

March 14 - 30, 2025

FIM Elgood Theatre
\$35 / \$25 for Genesee County Residents
thefim.org/villagebeat



Mateo, a 14-year-old boy with brown skin, and Diane, his white adoptive mother, take a road trip from their home in Ohio to his birthplace in San Diego. Throughout the journey, they are forced to reconcile their differing identities and what it means to be a family. Developed during Flint Rep's 2023 New Works Festival.

FIM Flint Repertory Theatre



ELGIN ROOT MUSIC
MICHAEL ROOT MUSIC
EVAN JAMES MUSIC

Wed., Mar. 19
at 7pm



Free to attend
Registration is required

thefim.org/eastvillagecountry

FIM Capitol Theatre



Village Life

A toast to songs instead of burdens

By Jan Worth-Nelson

This Village Life column originally appeared in the April 2015 issue of East Village Magazine as “Rediscovered recording brings back parents’ lost music.” It is reprinted and updated from Jan Worth-Nelson’s book, “That’s My Moon Over Court Street: Dispatches from a Life in Flint,” which was recently restocked at Totem Books and the Flint Institute of Arts.

In my utopia, there would be live music on every street corner. In my ideal world, we’d all sing in harmony once or twice a day. In my dreams, my fingers would remember how to play the mazurkas and sonatas I once memorized for piano recitals. And in my perfect life I’d be magically transformed into a player who could improvise, both hands rolling over the 88s to make cool chords of my own design.

The result of all this would be, in my nonscientific imagining, that our brains would flood us with endorphins, and we would love each other more. We’d be happy and relaxed at the end of the day, with music in our heads crowding out confusion, anger, grief and the fear of death.

Good luck with that last one, eh?

I’ve been led into this wistful rumination by a - series of life events that reminded me of the music that’s in my blood and bones - powerful reminders of how music activates parts of our minds overwhelmed by words, how it soothes us with its patterns and melodies. Here’s the story of one of those events.

Going through an old box from the attic recently I found something

I thought had been long lost. In a tattered brown paper jacket was a thick black record. In blue ink handwriting, it said it was my parents, “Rev. & Mrs. E. Knight Worth,” singing two hymns, recorded June 10, 1941.

That summer before the world changed.

The summer before Pearl Harbor, the summer E.B. White wrote an essay called “Once More to the Lake,” one of my favorite pieces of writing - a poignant and prescient essay in which he went back to a childhood haunt with his son and found there a reminder of his own mortality in a world so lovely it almost hurt to see it again.

That’s how I feel about this record.

I remembered the old disc - we had listened to it from time to time as



children on some now forgotten turntable. My dad liked mechanical things and would have had the best he could afford on his meager ministerial pay. I seem to recall we thought the record was quaint and vaguely embarrassing - our not always harmonious parents singing sweetly together before we were born, my father gently stroking a

guitar with simple chords. The record was scratchy even then, something from far away, like outer space.

Both my parents have been dead for more than 20 years. I never thought I’d hear them again. I cradled the old record in my hands and wondered how I could unlock their voices. There’s a dusty turntable in an upstairs closet, but it doesn’t work.

I posted a message on Facebook and to my surprise several neighbors offered interest and help. Eventually I handed off the precious find to Tom Spademan, a philosophy professor at Mott Community College who’s also a musician and a lover of music of all kinds. He was fascinated by my old record and thought he could transfer its sounds to a CD. A week later, our marvelous neighbor brought it back, with a remarkable CD in a flat plastic case. I immediately put it on.

Through all the scratches, I heard my parents’ voices again for the first time in two decades. From 74 years ago, their harmony came through so innocently, so purely: a moment of their pleasure in performing, a treat perhaps for them, to hear themselves, a little moment of secret pride.

The first song is “Follow Me,” a frankly clear invocation and invitation into the Christian life. This was the essence of the world I grew up in, and in spite of all my quarrels with the dogma of my forefathers and foremothers, the fact of the moment of this recording, its meaning to me as a captured fragment from my parents when they were young - ah, I confess,

(Continued on Page 11)