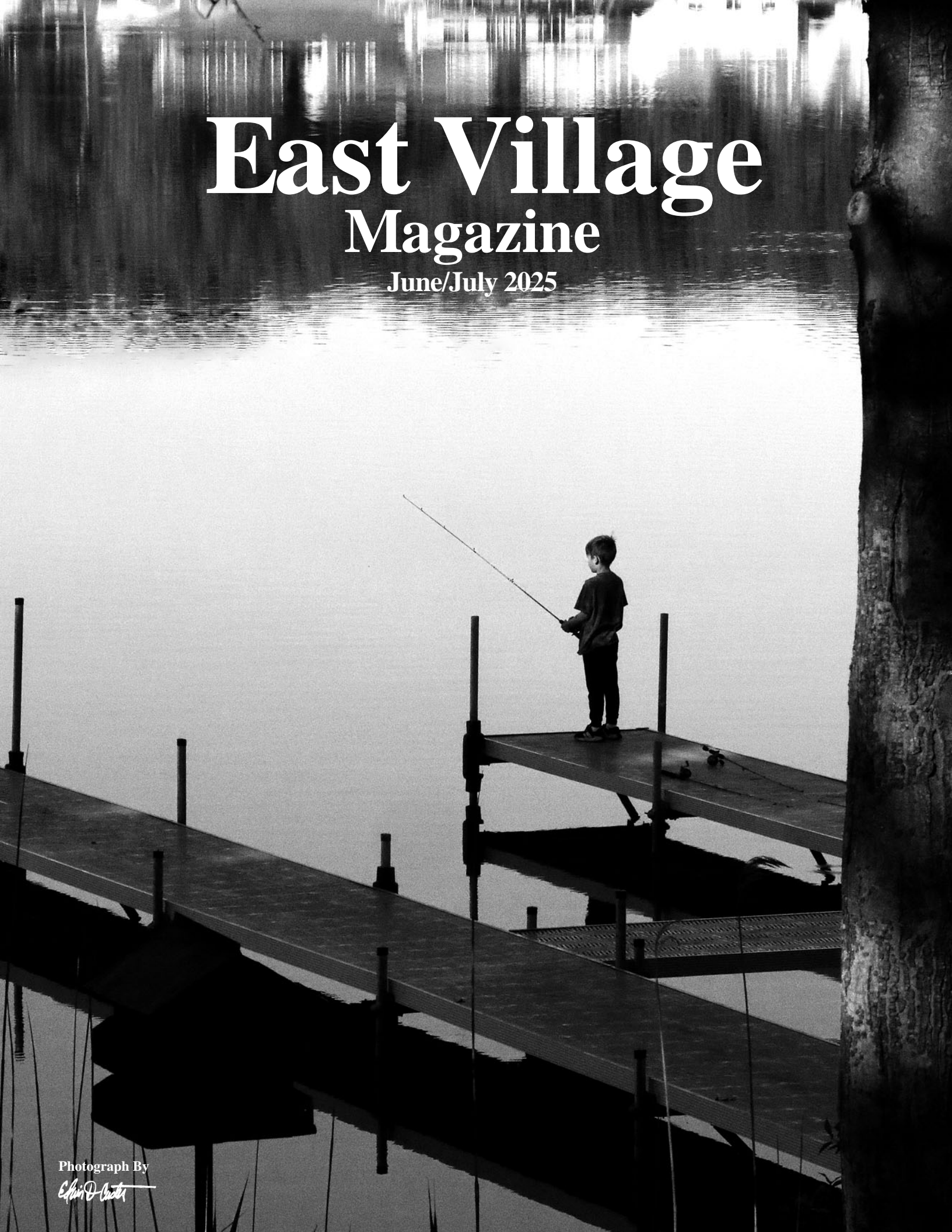


East Village Magazine

June/July 2025



Photograph By

Elaine D. Carter



Workers' Compensation & Social Security Disability

ROBERT J. MACDONALD
FLINT ATTORNEY

Fighting for Disabled Workers

810.234.2204 • disabledworker.net



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



**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

Weichert
REALTORS

Grant Hamady



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



East Village
Magazine



Books
Vinyl
Cafe

Mon - Thu: 9 am - 6 pm
Fri: 9 am - 7 pm
Sat: 10 am - 7 pm

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



**FREE Home
Warranty**

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

RYAN EASHOO



www.RyanEashoo.com

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. 739 June/July 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
Daniel Vela
Nathan Waters
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.

Commentary

With the nation in turmoil, there are things to feel good about in our neighborhood

By Paul Rozycki

With all of the chaos and conflict over tariffs, deportations, federal firings, political assassinations – and even the local tumult in the Flint City Council – it's easy to forget that there are some very positive things happening in our own neighborhood.

As we wonder what the future will bring for the national, state and local governing bodies, there are multiple Flint organizations taking actions that could brighten our future, such as the McFarlan Home and Villages, Greater Flint Arts Council, and Pierce Park Nature Preserve.

As each of these organizations are currently putting strategic plans together, they all are determined to make the neighborhood and the city a better place.

The McFarlan Home and Villages

A few weeks ago one of Flint's often overlooked assets celebrated its 100th anniversary in a ribbon-cutting ceremony with presentations from Flint Mayor Sheldon Neeley, representatives for Governor Gretchen Whitmer, and the Mott Foundation, among others.

The McFarlan Home and the McFarlan Villages have been providing housing and care for Flint's seniors since their start in 1925, when the McFarlan Home for Women on Kearsley Street was founded by Mary McFarlan Whalley in her will.

Over the last century the McFarlan Home expanded greatly to include the McFarlan Villages on Court Street. Court Street Village East and West were acquired in 2011, adding hundreds of units to the senior living facility, and in 2013 the organization was re-structured as McFarlan Charitable Corporation with the creation of McFarlan Kearsley Residence, LLC and McFarlan Investments, LLC. More recently, there have been a host of facility renovations and modernization efforts from 2020 onward.

The recent renovation and expansion of the McFarlan Villages on Court Street has allowed McFarlan to offer a wide variety of services to both those who live there and to the greater community. This may be the only project of its kind in the state to offer a medical center in the complex available to both residents and nonresidents. Similarly, an impressively upgraded kitchen will offer meals to both those in the complex and those in the neighborhood.

Kathryn Boles, President of the McFarlan Charitable Corporation, said the goal is to offer residents the opportunity to "age in place" as they transition from McFarlan Village to the McFarlan Home. The organization would like to make available a range of options for seniors from aid to those living at home to assisted living and all-inclusive care to those living in their facilities. As they develop their strategic plan and

(Continued on Page 6)



Photo of the Month: Guests browse during the 58th Annual Flint Art Fair, held June 14 and 15, 2025. (Photo by Edwin D. Custer)

Education Beat

Another step forward for Central-Whittier rebuild

By Harold C. Ford

“We did not want to move forward without the community being involved.”
– Kevelin Jones, Superintendent, Flint Community Schools, June 7, 2025

On June 7, 2025, some three dozen residents, assembled for a meeting of Flint Neighborhoods United (FNU), were updated about progress toward rehabilitating and reopening the Central High School-Whittier Middle School property shuttered by Flint Community Schools (FCS) in 2009.

FCS Superintendent Kevelin Jones began the meeting by touting the recent success of other rehab projects – particularly the Brownell-Holmes campus upgrade on Flint’s northwest side. He mentioned its centerpiece, The Cube, a multi-faceted, community gathering place and resource center expected to open in September 2025. The Cube, a 5,000 square-foot structure, is the school district’s first new building in some 50 years.

According to Jones, an important step toward an upgraded Central-Whittier campus, piloted during the Brownell-Holmes project, includes citizen participation in a “co-designing” process.

“You are an important part of this work as well,” Jones told participants.

“They listened to us,” agreed Jeanette Edwards, president of the Brownell-Holmes Neighborhood Association, who was at the June 7 meeting. “They listen to you.”

“We have talked to the staff. We have talked to the board of education. Now it’s time to talk to you,” Jones said. “We want to hear from you.”

Jones continued, “We are embarking on a schematic design for a new high school right here on this property.” His statement drew applause from attendees who were able to gaze out of the meeting room windows at the badly deteriorated

Central-Whittier campus immediately south of the Gloria Coles Flint Public Library.

While deadlines and funding details have been sparse, the code-sign-rebuild process seems to anticipate funding support from the Flint-based C. S. Mott Foundation, the Michigan Department of Education, and others.

At its Jan. 22, 2025 meeting, the Flint Board of Education voted unanimously to approve a contract with Plante Moran Realpoint, a Detroit-based consulting firm that advises FCS officials on real estate matters, to begin preliminary work toward reopening the campus.

“A city high school”

June 7 meeting participants eventually broke into smaller groups to envision and plan, or codesign, a

(Continued on Page 5)

Ed Beat ...

(Continued from Page 4)

rebirth of the Central-Whittier property.

They were aided by two representatives from the Flint Center for Educational Excellence that has assisted the Brownell-Holmes project: Ja'Nel Jamerson, CEO, and Keiona Mosley, chief strategy officer.

The Center describes itself as “a place-based education reform initiative that works with schools, families, and the community-at-large to build an educational ecosystem that ensures Flint kids thrive in any path they choose.”

“We have a process that we want to take our community through,” said Jamerson, himself a Flint-area resident.

“Our role is to return back to you what we think we heard you say,” said Mosley, a former FCS assistant superintendent. She said the goal was to plan “a city high school [that] doesn’t have boundaries.”

“Encouraged”

“I’m encouraged by the fact that the process seems to have some principles of codesign where they really do listen to the community,” judged Nic Custer, vice president of the Central Park Neighborhood Association and East Village Magazine’s (EVM) business manager. “I’m optimistic.”

Still, Custer cautioned, “what happens after hours ... what happens on the weekends?” He added that the

buildings have not been secure and there was a fire at Whittier just that week.

As in prior discussions surrounding the property, he also expressed neighborhood concerns about the “logistics” of moving pedestrian and vehicular traffic to and from the campus five days a week. Earlier in the meeting, a representative of Stantec, an engineering firm advising FCS about redevelopment of the property, said his company was well aware of the community’s desire for “efficient traffic and routing.”

“What I want to preserve is the quality of life for the homeowners that have lived here for generations,” Custer added.

While this reporter’s takeaway was that residents are cautiously optimistic, it should be noted that this latest initiative to rehab the Central-Whittier property is but the most recent of several that have otherwise proved fruitless for over a decade. Previously, there was a proposal by Powers Catholic High School to acquire the site (2013-2014); architectural renderings by THA Architects Engineers for construction of “new facilities” (2016); a proposed mixed-use redevelopment plan by the Georgia-based Harvard Group (2021); and the Flint Education Continuum, a several hundred-million dollar plan to provide FCS with all new or rehabilitated school buildings (first reported by EVM in 2021). ●



Flint Central High School in June 2023. (Photo by Harold C. Ford)

PLEASE JOIN US FOR

Artwalk

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

July 11
Janet Goldstein
(Mixed Media)
Artist
Laurence MacDonald
Piano

ST. PAUL'S

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

Unclassified Ad

Apartment for Lease

Spacious one-bedroom, East Village apartment on Avon St. near Kearsley St. Central air conditioning, hardwood floors, smokeless fireplace. Comes with furnishings for living room, kitchen and bedroom. Private washer and dryer, off street fenced parking. In the center of it all on cul-de-sac Avon St. Walk or bike four blocks or less to UM-Flint and MCC campuses, Cultural Center, Public library, downtown, Farmers Market, Mott horticultural gardens, four parks and easy freeway access. A great space for a responsible and mature tenant. No pets. References and credit check requested. On site management. \$845 a month plus utilities. E-mail: edcvster@gmail.com or write: Apartment Box 11, 720 E. Second St., Flint MI 48503.

Commentary ...

(Continued from Page 3)

consider the potential sources of funds, she said, they will consider the options of either remodeling or expanding.

As they are completing their strategic plan, one of the major considerations is the potential use for the large property the organization owns to the south of the McFarlan Villages. While plans are to be determined, there is the possibility of expanding housing to meet the increased demand for senior housing in the community. But, as is true for many projects these days, much will depend on the availability of funding from both national and local sources.

Greater Flint Arts Council

The Greater Flint Arts Council (GFAC) has been the key force behind the monthly Art Walk, Tunes at Noon, Flint Jazz Festival, Music on the Bricks and a long list of other activities that support the arts in the area. For some years GFAC has been doing its work from the main floor of its building on 826 S. Saginaw St. which has also served as the center of the organization's monthly Art Walk with its gallery shows and entertainment.

In 1995, the building was scheduled for demolition after a fire. With support from the community the Greater Flint Arts Council was able to purchase it from Peerless Furniture Company in 1996 and raise funds to restore and make it usable as an art gallery. By 1998, GFAC was able to move in and use the first floor. In recent years they have repaired the roof and exterior walls of the classic building.

Now, the organization is seeking to raise further funds to utilize the whole building for arts activities in the community. In its published outline of their goals, GFAC noted it hopes to raise \$2,985,300

for proposed renovations. So far, state and local organizations and a number of foundations have pledged over \$2.8 million and the organization is now seeking about \$160,000 from the general public.

The current plan outlined in the GFAC fundraising booklet is to redo the ground floor galleries and radio studio, create classrooms and offices on the second floor, create a performing arts stage on the third floor, and upgrade the basement as well as the parking lot behind the building. Other plans are to replace the elevator, upgrade building security and the water main.



The GFAC Building. (Photo by Paul Rozycki)

One more outwardly visible goal is to refurbish and maintain the iconic Vernors Mural on the side of the building. The classic mural, showing gnomes making Vernors Ginger Ale in the huge castle, was a critical element in the community's support for saving the building after the fire in 1995.

Pierce Park

Once an active golf course, 68-acre Pierce Park became overgrown until a neighborhood group began the process of reviving it as a nature preserve and place for community activities following the pandemic. They formed the Pierce Park Nature Preserve, a 501c3 non-profit, with the intent of turning it into a nature preserve and possible outdoor recreation area for those living in the neighborhood. In 2024, they were awarded a federal grant of \$815,700 by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to support their

work, as reported in Flint Beat.

Some of that change has already taken place. Mike Keeler, president of the Pierce Park Nature Preserve, said he and volunteers have planted some 300 trees in the open areas of the old golf course and along Dort Highway and the railroad tracks and plan for more in the future. They are developing over three miles of walking trails and have also planted a pollinator meadow that is designed to attract butterflies. (Several volunteers said they have already seen monarchs in the meadows.) In the future, Keeler said, they expect to develop over 16 acres of wetlands and possibly create a sports field in the park. Volunteers have also spent many hours clearing out invasive plant species along Gilkey Creek.

This summer Pierce Park has become the venue for the Friday night "Jazz on Wheels" concerts that were once held at the old Farmer's Market.

A few additional positive signs

Finally, while chaos and conflict seems to be the name of the game for many levels of government today, there are at least a few other positive signs to give us hope.

While the Flint City Council has spent much of the last year deadlocked over almost every issue, they finally did pass a budget for next year. It was a bit late, but at least it got done.

The large and generally peaceful "No Kings" protests in June give one hope that there is still respect for the rule of law and a desire to return to a civil government that has been the American tradition for most of our history.

Let's hope the energy and drive that we see in McFarlan Home and Villages, the Greater Flint Arts Council, and Pierce Park Nature Preserve can be a positive example for those far beyond Flint. ●

Personal Essay

The last light on: the end of 24-hour diners in Flint

By Daniel Vela

In Flint, sitting at the counter or sliding into the booth of a 24-hour diner after a late shift or a crazy night out with friends and enjoying a breakfast spread, a couple coneys, or a burger could almost be considered a local tradition.

For decades Flint had places like this on every side of town. They served just what the people needed, 24-hours a day, to power a town filled with blue-collar workers and their families. These diners were a place where you could bring the family for pancakes after church, take a first date, or meet up with friends to talk on nights you couldn't sleep. They were places where the doors were open to everyone, all the time.

The crowds of patrons could be as rowdy as they were hungry some nights. And the rebel spirit of the sit-down strikers was alive and well in these places as the sense of "breakfast time" and "dinner time" was muddled by shift changes at the plant. What mattered was what you craved here and now, and to hell with the norms of society.

Some preferred the breakfast special from Atlas over on Coruna Road. Some liked the coffee at Sunrise on Fenton. Or maybe your kids liked to see the "Big Girl" statue at Colonial. It seemed like everyone had their favorite, but for all their differences they all had a familiar charm and a menu filled with comfort foods.

At one time the Vehicle City provided auto factories with three constant shifts, so a few Flint restaurants staying open every minute of every day made sense. It was profitable. You had Ambassador and Tom Z's, Starlite, Wallis, and of course the icon of them all (in

this writer's humble opinion): Angelo's Coney Island on the corner of Franklin and Davison.

There was no lack of hot coffee being poured at any given moment back then, but as the factories closed or left, so did the need for all-night breakfast. And, slowly, many of those diners would sling their last coneys and close for good.



Aldo's at 2:28 a.m. (Photo by Daniel Vela)

Except for one small restaurant on the edge of town: Aldo's Coney Island, the only diner within Flint city limits where you can still dine in, 24-hours a day.

I visited Aldo's on a Tuesday night around 2:30 in the morning. O-P-E-N the sign blinked, one single letter at a time, literally spelling it out for me. I walked into an empty, quiet place that's much bigger than it would appear from the outside. It's filled with wooden

booths with red seats. The word "kindness" clings to a far wall, a single framed school photo of a kid hangs on another along with a couple small TVs.

I'm greeted by a waitress, the words "positive energy" cut from vinyl sticking to the wall behind her. Aldo's has a few cars that come and go from the drive thru line, but walk-in customers at this hour are few. Jennifer, the waitress, and Fred, the cook, seem to be running the show here tonight.

Jennifer (full name Jennifer Slough) is a long-time Flint resident, who may have already been a waitress of yours if you ever ate at another all-night Flint favorite, the now defunct Kountry Kettle on Dort Highway. She has been at Aldo's for 10 years and says she likes the fact that the owners will always give people a chance. "Sometimes too many chances maybe," she says with a grin. But their motto is "everyone's got to eat."

Slough isn't the only Aldo's employee to hold these sentiments. Tera Robuck, from the day shift, told me that "no one gets fired, we just get time off." It seems the owners of this last bastion of the 24-hour welcome are the type of people that believe in second chances.

I should pause here to acknowledge that you may have never heard of Aldo's until now.

It's a nondescript spot, a "you'll pass it even if you're looking for it" kind of place. It's less flashy than some of the other diners across the city, but on Flint's eastside, on Davison Road between Center and Averill, stands this little brick building that just don't quit.

(Continued on Page 9)

THIS MONTH IN THE VILLAGE

Below is a selection of events available to our readers, beginning after our June/July publication date. To submit events for our August issue, email information about your event to eastvillagemagazineflint@gmail.com by July 25.

Flint City Bike Tours

Sunday, July 6 | 11 am

Flint City Bike Tours is back with its 2025 line up. July's first tour option is "Vehicle Cities of the Dead" – a historic cemeteries bike tour – but for those more snack-inclined the tour company is also hosting a South Flint and East Flint food and beverage tour on July 12 and 29, respectively. Tickets range from around \$10-\$15 plus tax. More information at flintcitybiketours.com.
Queens' Provisions
421 Garland St., Flint

Levitt AMP Flint Music Series: Coral Moons

Tuesday, July 8 | 6:30 - 8:30 pm

Communities First Inc. is coordinating bands from across the country (and around the world) for this eclectic concert series on Tuesdays throughout the summer. The Coral Moons hail from Boston with an indie-pop flare on July 8, and The Claudettes will be visiting from Chicago with their "Blues/R&B with punk spirit" on July 22.
Totem Books (back lawn)
620 W. Court St., Flint

Patio Night at the FIA

Friday, July 11 | 5 - 8 pm

Friday nights in July and August, the FIA and FIM's Music Around Town series will host Patio Nights on the Palette Cafe patio. The event is free, and drinks and food are available for purchase. Arrive early for a seat on the patio, or bring a chair or blanket and kick back on the FIA lawn. Music plays from 6-7:30 pm each week, and musical genres vary. The museum will stay open late for guests to explore the galleries and exhibitions until 8 pm.

Flint Institute of Arts
1120 E Kearsley St., Flint

Alley Fest 2025

Saturday, July 12 | 2 - 10 pm

This free, much-loved annual festival from nonprofit Friends of the Alley features live performances by a variety of musical acts throughout the day, dozens of vendors, and food trucks to complement downtown's local alley-adjacent businesses' offerings. More information, including band listing, available at fotaflint.com.
Buckham Alley
Downtown Flint

Flint City Bucks v. Lansing City Football

Saturday, July 12 | 7 pm

Cheer on Flint's semi-pro soccer team as they take on Lansing City. There will also be a special live jersey auction for Hurley Foundation immediately following the match. More information and tickets available at flintcitybucks.com.

Atwood Stadium
701 University Ave., Flint

Mid-East Festival at Our Lady of Lebanon

Friday, July 18 to Sunday, July 20

Join us for fresh Mediterranean cuisine, a beverage tent, belly dancers, live music, fireworks Friday and Saturday night, and the new addition of the Back To The Bricks car show on Sunday!

Our Lady of Lebanon
4133 Calkins Rd., Flint

Really Cool Comic Con

Saturday, July 19 & Sunday, July 20

Michigan's largest summer Comic Con is back! Featuring hundreds of vendors and artists, cosplay contests, panels and activities throughout the weekend. Saturday runs 9 am - 6 pm and Sunday runs 10 am - 5 pm. Admission is free for children age 10 and under, and parking is free for everyone all weekend.
Dort Federal Event Center
3501 Lapeer Rd., Flint

Flint Pride Festival

Saturday, July 19 | 2 - 8 pm

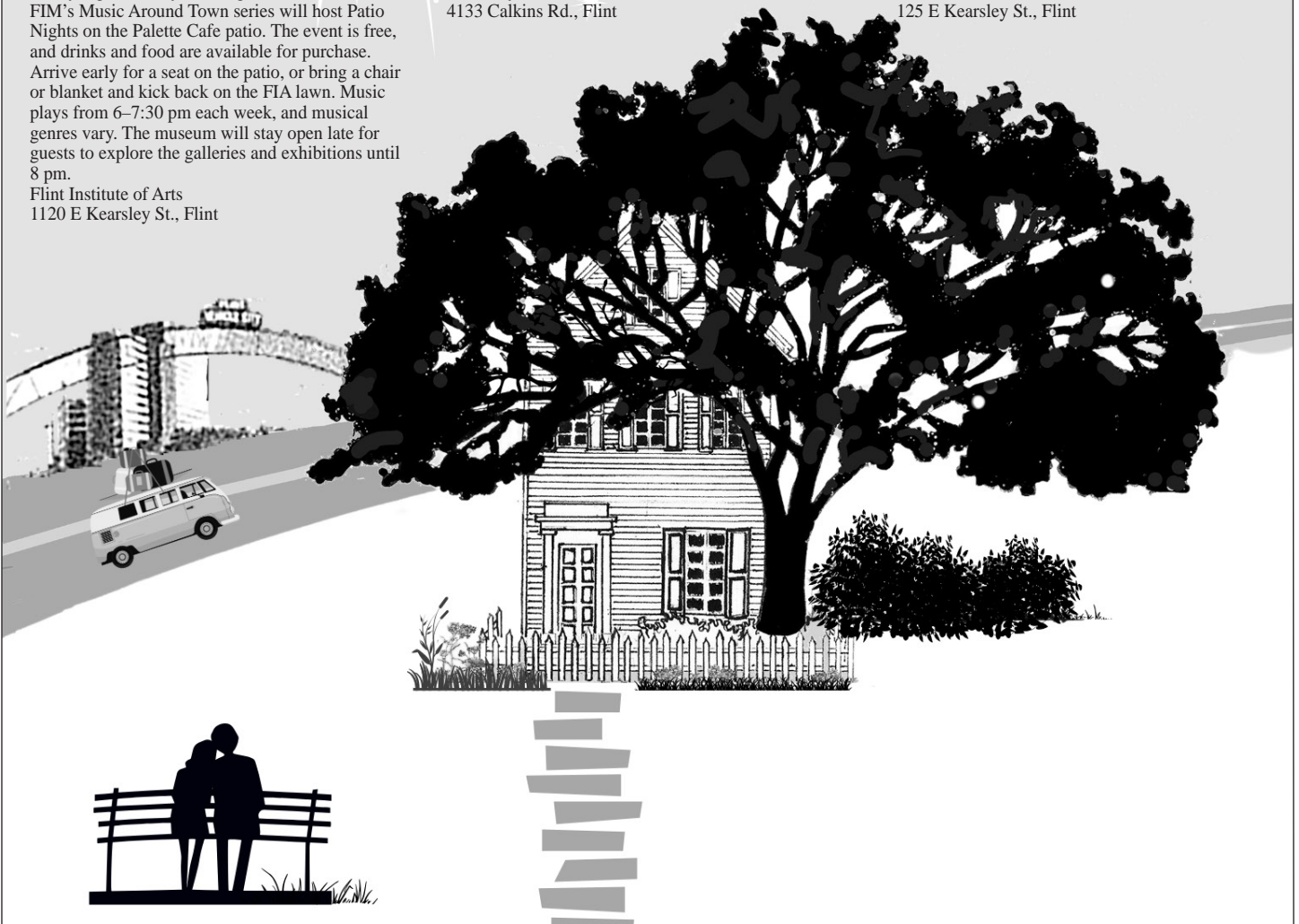
Celebrate the 15th annual Flint Pride Festival in downtown Flint! While Riverbank Park undergoes construction, organizers are bringing the celebration to new spaces, including the UM Pavilion, Flat Lot, Brush Alley, and Brush Park. Expect music, performances, vendors, food, and community as we come together to celebrate our resilience.
Downtown Flint

Gus Macker 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament

Friday, July 25 to Sunday, July 27

This highly-anticipated tournament is back on Flint's Flat Lot this year. Team registration remains open as of print date.

Flat Lot
125 E Kearsley St., Flint



Essay ...

(Continued from Page 7)

It's a place you can grab a quick burger on the way home just as easily as you can walk in, sit down, order a cup of coffee, and be left alone to type away at 2 a.m. on a Tuesday... And to the best of my research, it's the last 24-hour dine-in coney island in the City of Flint.

When I pitched this essay, I'd asked myself, "Is there still a place in this city for late night workers, artists, and the night owls?" The answer was Aldo's.

The thing about 24-hour spots is that you may not care if they exist until you need one. (You know that dreaded "break up talk" you need to have but every time you go to their place to have it, not much talking gets done? A cup of coffee and a public location might help initiate that conversation.)

“The thing about 24-hour spots is that you may not care if they exist until you need one.”

There's value to a place that lets an unhoused man come in, charge his phone, and take a little while longer to eat his meal on a cold, rainy night; a place that provides a seat when, in those final days of winter boredom, someone is just looking for a little human interaction and another person to

“In those moments, it seems Aldo's is serving up something more than just food to its patrons.”

bitch about this weather with; or a place that provides respite on those nights you just got too much on your mind and the only comfort you can find is in the form of crispy hashbrowns, bacon, and a warm cup of coffee.

In those moments, it seems Aldo's is serving up something more than just food to its patrons. And maybe we don't realize what all a community loses as the last of our 24-hour public spaces close.

Flint resident, author, and coney island aficionado Connor Coyne said he did not know about Aldo's when I asked him how he felt to learn it was Flint's last all-night hang out spot.

But when asked about what we lose when these places close, he said:

Change is inevitable, and neither good nor bad in and of itself. What is important is how we choose what change to embrace and take actions to preserve what needs preserving. In the case of 24-hour coney islands, I think they contribute several goods to our community. With so many divisions by class, race, culture, and outlook, I think any healthy place has a 'town square' where anyone is welcome.

Coyne said that the closest thing Flint has to a literal town square is downtown's Flat Lot, but he noted that he prefers parks, trails, and the city's coney islands, instead. Coyne added, "Non-digital space, where you can clasp someone by the hand, look into actual eyes, hear real voices and laughter a few feet away is important. Our coney islands provide both these things, and I would be sad to lose them."

I would be too, I know, but it's a part of our local culture – diner hours and locations fluctuating with all the other collateral changes that accompany a large drop in former population, loss of manufacturing work, and the rise of food delivery apps.

But there is one 24-hour coney island left in Flint city limits.

I can't promise Aldo's will become your new favorite spot if you decide to visit, but I can promise that the next time you're up well past your bedtime – or your friend just got off a very-delayed flight to visit you for the first time in ages, or you're simply craving a coney at 4 a.m. – there is still one diner in Flint with its light on for you.

And remember to tip your waitress. ●

INTERESTED IN ADVERTISING IN EAST VILLAGE MAGAZINE?

We have print and online advertisement options available starting July 2025!
For more information and rates, please reach out to our business manager, Nic Custer.

eastvillmag@gmail.com

CELEBRATE WITH US!

Show your support for East Village Magazine's upcoming **50th anniversary** with new merchandise including hats, t-shirts, hoodies, tote bags, mugs, buttons and more!



Visit: <https://east-village-magazine.printify.me/>



Seeking Writers

East Village Magazine is searching for community journalists! Ideal candidates are curious, engaged Flint residents who want to help keep their neighbors informed of the local news that affects them most. EVM writers receive free training, story writing and editing support, and payment for each published story. (We also have pretty great snacks at our monthly writers meetings.) If you're interested in getting involved, please email us at eastvillagemagazineflint@gmail.com with the subject line "Community Journalist."



HALL OF HEROES

DISCOVER YOUR SUPER POWERS!

SLOAN
MUSEUM OF
DISCOVERY



May 24 - Sept. 7, 2025

MORE INFORMATION AT:
SloanLongway.org/Heroes

COLLEGE CULTURAL NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

*Sign up to get
notices of meetings at*

ccnaflint@gmail.com



FLINTREGISTRY.ORG

STAY COUNTED
STAY CONNECTED
STAY SUPPORTED

The Flint Registry was created by people from Flint for those affected by the water crisis. By sharing our story with the world, we're leading the way on lead education and creating positive change locally and nationally. The Flint Registry supports over 22,000 members with referrals and resources, making a real impact by bringing more to our community.



Watch your mailbox for your follow-up survey invite.



FLINTREGISTRY
Counted. Connected. Supported.

200 EAST FIRST STREET
FLINT, MI 48502
810.600.9147

Village Life

How to get happier: grape jelly and a couple of orioles

By Jan Worth-Nelson

The day the orioles showed up in the backyard all other news, it seemed to me, was bad.

I really don't have to list all the stuff that's bringing us down, right? We all get hit with it every day. I'm declining this time to "write what you know." NO, NO, NO.

Instead, I'm turning away from the phone, the TV, the laptop, the pill bottle, and my own repetitive catastrophizing, to look out the window.

Why?

Because, dear friends: **THERE ARE BIRDS.**

They do not seem to be Republican or Democrat. They do not seem to be Protestant or Catholic or Jewish or Muslim.

They don't care anything about your position on the Fourteenth Amendment or whether you show up for the protests at the little triangle at Miller Road and Ballenger Highway. (I care, but that's another story. Thank you sweet Unitarians.)

If you are an oriole, all you care about is grape jelly. That is oriole communion.

In all my years on Maxine Street, I've lured all kinds of fowl to my backyard – nuthatches, cardinals, mourning doves, chickadees, finches (red and gold), blue jays, robins, woodpeckers, rose-breasted grosbeaks, tufted titmice – but never orioles.

My friends Teddy and Dennis, on the other hand, get orioles by the dozen every year. I've sat on their Mott Park porch many, many times sipping Dennis's dangerously generous mar-

garitas and repeatedly breaking the Tenth Commandment – that one about coveting.

I covet Teddy and Dennis's orioles, and the more margaritas I drink the more elaborately melancholy I get that they don't come to my house.

So, the first week of May, as Dennis suggested, I tried again.

I loaded up a Home Depot oriole feeder with the requisite grape jelly. I also poked orange halves onto the provided skewer. (Orioles like fresh fruit, too.) It was a day something particularly awful had happened in the world. I honestly can't even keep track of what.



Orioles in Mott Park. (Photo by Dennis Brown)

So I figured, if there's a day I need those flashes of feathery orange, this is it.

On my feeder-supply run I learned I'm not the only one who loves orioles.

If you go to the Meijer jelly section, you can see evidence: empty or nearly empty shelves where grape jelly should be. (Not the same for strawberry or orange marmalade.) Perhaps we were all buying grape jelly that day, obsessively hoping for a glimpse of bird beauty.

Here's the initial news: On the first day, within a half hour after I hung my feeder, it happened! First a yellowish

female, and then the gorgeous male himself. I caught it from the kitchen window.

"ORIOLES!" I hollered. "They're here!"

My exuberant shout woke up Ted, who had been hypnotized by bad news in the other room.

"YAY!" Ted yelled back.

Dopamine flooded me. It was almost as wonderful as seeing the solar eclipse: unambivalently joyful! I texted Dennis and Teddy: "I got them!" I said. I didn't get a photo on my iPhone before they flew off, being notoriously quick and shy.

And here's the follow-up news: They fluttered around for a few minutes, maybe an hour or two and then... nothing. That May afternoon was the only time I ever saw them in my backyard.

I've kept loading up the glass cups with jelly all summer, skewering orange halves. The

jelly is gobbled up by red finches, who I'm told often are responsible for chasing off other birds. Cardinals and the occasional woodpeckers munch on the oranges. Those are some pretty sweet birds too, after all.

So, I had my oriole moment. I'm sad they haven't stayed around, but that's life, isn't it? You take your kicks where you can get them, and I had one oriole day. If I want to gorge on seeing them, I just go to Mott Park and demand a drink on Teddy and Dennis's porch. ●

Issue No. 739