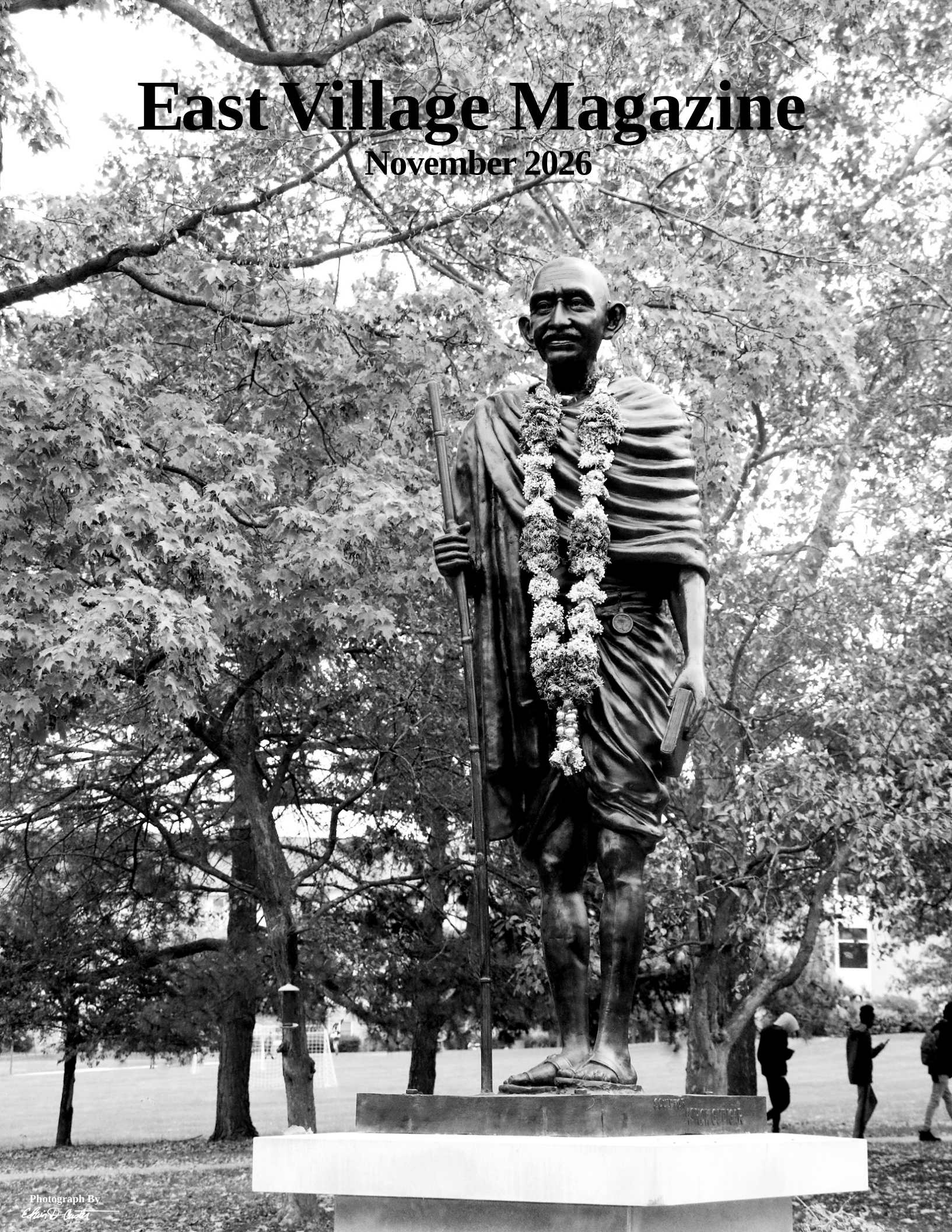
East Village Magazine

November 2026



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Issue No. 755 November 2026

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Commentary

10 things to be thankful for this Thanksgiving

By Paul Rozycki

It may seem oddly appropriate that this particular Election Day rests between Halloween and Thanksgiving. With all the scary ghosts and goblins of Halloween, one hopes to find something to be thankful for in the weeks before Thanksgiving.
After this election season's political commercials, it's hard to say what was scarier: the ghosts and goblins or the TV ads accusing opponents of being communists, socialists, terrorists, corrupt, liars, anti-American, or worse. With a record amount of money spent on ads in Michigan alone, there seemed to be inescapable political discourse, with little else to break the pattern. My wife said she will be glad to see the old routine ads for half-price mattresses, miracle drugs, and McDonald's burgers back on TV.

Well, Halloween is done and so are the political ads. Thanksgiving lies ahead and whoever emerged victorious in the Nov. 3 election (results weren't available before press time), we have much to be thankful for. Here are 10 possibilities.

1. The election is over and the ads are gone. This is being written before the election, but depending on your partisan leanings, there may or may not be much to be thankful for in the results of the election. While many of the political ads were negative personal attacks, it's also true that some candidates did honestly address the issues. They deserve credit for that. Perhaps the most refreshing of the positive local ads was Matt Schlinker's ad featuring his granddaughter, Vivian, as he ran against incumbent Republican David Martin in the 68th State House District in eastern Genesee County.
2. As the nation celebrated its 250th birthday, East Village Magazine enjoyed its 50th birthday this year, no small accomplishment when the print news media industry is facing challenges to survive. The November issue will be the 755th, and with any luck and our new editor, we look forward to many more. Crossroads Village, one of Genesee County's premier parks, also celebrated its 50th birthday with a variety of events and activities.
3. The Mott Foundation is celebrating its 100th birthday this year with its continuing commitment to Flint and Genesee County with support for schools, the Flint Cultural Center, parks, downtown development, and many other causes in the area. When I first came to Flint in 1969, there were three major forces that played key roles in Genesee County: General Motors (GM), the United Auto Workers (UAW), and the Mott Foundation. Today much has changed and both GM and the UAW have a smaller impact than in the past, but the Mott Foundation (and the Ruth

(Continued on Page 7)

Cover: Mahatma Gandhi statue in Willson Park by sculptor Ashok Gudigar.
"You must be the change you wish to see in the world."
(*Photo by Edwin D. Custer)*



Photo of the Month: A cornice view of the Northbank Center in downtown Flint.
(Photo by Edwin D. Custer)

Arts & Culture

Candy, costumes, and chaos: Why Halloween means so much to College Cultural Neighborhood

By Jan Worth

Flint's legendary "trick-or-treat central" in the College Cultural Neighborhood is known for a yearly influx of kids and families. Hordes of miniature witches, Supermen, robots, and ghosts, along with their cooperating grownups, swarm the streets within a four- or five-block perimeter every Halloween.

It's a scene.

Maybe because it's (historically at least) considered one of the city's more affluent neighborhoods, for decades the neighborhood south of Court Street and bounded roughly by Woodlawn Park Boulevard and just west of Dort Highway has been a Halloween destination for thousands of kids in search of goodies one or two pieces at a time.

The tradition has evolved into a good-hearted informal gift to Flint kids based on a spirit of fun and handfuls of chocolate going back for decades. It's such accepted practice that newcomers to the neighborhood are likely to hear a neighbor warn, "By the way, get ready for Halloween – it's a thing we do."

It calls for preparation – and an investment, sometimes of $100 or more.

They know from past years that the streets will be virtually impassable except for SUVs clamoring for spots, disgorging their small charges with their bags and backpacks one house at a time.

All the residents we talked with agree that even with the one-night inconvenience and cost, they embrace the madness and enjoy the tradition.

Ann Delana Anderson on Maxine Street looks all year for good buys on Halloween candy. She'll be ready with her hundreds of pieces on Saturday night when, if it's like last year, anywhere from 500-800 trick-or-treaters will come up her walk.

"We have fun with it. The kids and parents have always been appreciative and entertaining," said Larry Anderson, her husband.

Next door, Russ Dotson also is ready: He lays in a 25-pound bag of candy for $99, and usually goes through it.

"It's a blast," Dotson said.

"I'm a big fan," said Connor Coyne, who has lived on Maxine with his wife and two daughters for several decades. He says his two daughters also are enthusiastic participants.

"I like it for a lot of reasons," Coyne said. "It's one of those times of year when grown-ups can enjoy kid things without embarrassment: dressing up, playing make believe, acting up with friends, scheming for sweet treats."

(Continued on Page 5)

Candy, costumes...

(Continued from Page 4)

"It's also fun to feel like my neighborhood is the center of the action in the county. The sun is still up when trick-or-treating starts but it's completely dark when we wrap up. It seems like a fitting send off to the warmer time of the year."

A tradition with long roots

Some residents make a night of it for adults, too, with grandparents or friends from other neighborhoods joining in to see the kids' costumes and help pass out candy.

Coyne describes a cherished ritual: "I get out to Luigi's before the roads are thronged with kids and bring back two of the biggest pizzas they make. My parents hand out candy while my wife and I go trick-or-treating with the kids. Sometimes their friends join us. Sometimes our friends join us, or family from out-of-state. They may or may not be wearing costumes as well. When we get back, I help hand out the last of the candy."

No one seems to remember when exactly College Cultural became the 'it' place on Halloween, but it goes back at least for 32 years, when Michele Talarico and her husband moved to Maxine and have been there for it. Every year they have invited friends and/or family for dinner (usually Italian and a glass or two of wine) and her guests help hand out candy.

Her husband, who has Alzheimer's and now lives in a facility, sadly wasn't at the door this year. "It (wasn't) the same without him," she says. Because he always loved all the kids, she honored him by carrying on the way he would have. She bought lots of candy by the bag and gave pretzels or Doritos to the little kids who usually start the night early before dark with their parents.

Dominique Brown, who grew up in the neighborhood, remembers crowds of trick-or-treaters cheerfully crowding the streets back as far as 2003. She was among those kids. Now she lives on Maxine, where she bought a house to be close to her parents and passes out treats to a new generation of children.

"I grew up on Blanchard and I worked hard and bought the house on Maxine to live close to my parents. Steven [Barber] and I dressed up as aliens last year and decorated the house to match," Brown said. "I don't like to make it very scary because I want to make sure the little kids aren't haunted. We buy lots of candy to hand out and then walk the neighborhood ourselves to see the decorations. We always end the night at my parents' house with chili or pizza and a Halloween movie … or hockey if there's a Montreal Canadiens game. Halloween is my favorite holiday and has turned into a tradition of mine, spreading joy with neighbors."



Costumes, candy … and a little chaos

Maybe the Maxine Street queen of the Halloween hullaballoo is Sue Bailey, whose elaborately decorated house at the corner of Maxine and Court gets 1,500 trick-or-treaters per year.

She says adults — friends of hers — come to help give out candy and hang out on her sheltered deck, where she offers a supply of Jello shots for adults. She says the grownups are often pleasantly surprised: "Ah, yeah, I'll take a Jello shot," they'll say. She gave out about 100 jello vodka shots last year.

"I used to decorate when my kids were little and that's gotta be 30 years," Bailey said. "There have always been big crowds — you can't get even get down the street. It's been like that for years. There are kids from all ages, adults collecting for babies … if they're out trick-or-treating, I'm going to give them a piece of candy."

She spent about $300 just on candy, plus additions from every scary meme imaginable on her small corner. Several years ago she put up tents for the first time and this year there was a tunnel trick or treaters had to go through to get to the candy. She added a giant scarecrow and many tombstones this year too.

Taylor Franklin on Woodside Drive says she typically gets "hundreds" of trick-or-treaters.

"I like to get several variety bags of 200+ pieces of candy," Franklin said. "I usually start shopping in the weeks leading up to Halloween. I love the smiles, the costumes, and seeing kids I know."

Franklin even dresses up her dog and two cats to give visitors an extra smile.

Although the bulk of traffic in College Cultural is typically concentrated on a few blocks south of Court Street, Franklin hopes that trick-or-treaters and families eventually venture out more, both because neighbors on other streets participate and don't get as many visitors and spreading out over more streets would potentially improve hazardous vehicle traffic.

"I look forward to it, mostly, but I do wish for improvements," she says. "I'd like to see more trick-or-treaters about the entire neighborhood, not just a couple streets. Big house does not necessarily mean big candy, and many neighbors (on other streets, like on the north side of Court) prepare, but miss out. I'd also like to see less vehicle traffic."

Embracing the madness

Like others interviewed, Franklin offers candy to everybody, including the grownups.

(Continued on Page 9)

Local News

Consumers Energy grant will boost capacity for Flint tutoring center

By Patrick Hayes

Esha Wooten-Brown's path to starting her own tutoring center actually started when she was a student in a Flint classroom herself, and an influential teacher approached a difficult subject creatively and built her confidence.

"I didn't really like math in school, it is a really hard subject because it changes every grade and becomes new," Wooten-Brown said. "But in 12th grade, I had a teacher, Jeff Bean. And he was teaching us, and I was like, 'Oh my gosh, this is the first time I understand. Like, I can get math!' And then when I finally went off to college, I had to break it down for myself and wished I had someone that broke this down for me (in a more understandable way)."

Wooten-Brown was born and raised in Flint and graduated from Flint Southwestern. She joined the military and lived outside the area for seven years, before coming back to her hometown last year and launching Inside Acceleration Tutoring Center. A big part of her inspiration is similar to what she encountered in Bean's class. Sometimes students aren't necessarily struggling with a subject, they're struggling with how it is explained. Simply changing up that strategy of how to convey information can lead to new confidence and success. Everyone learns concepts in different ways, so teaching every student in the exact same way isn't always effective.

"I had a high schooler this year, and she didn't understand the 'alligator mouth' way that a lot of schools teach greater than and less than," Wooten-Brown said. "A lot of kids don't understand what that means, so they'll just sit there and nod (rather than ask for help)."

Math often requires continually building on core concepts and adding complexity as students get older. But if there is confusion about one of the underlying processes, then it makes it easier to be stuck when the harder concepts come along. Simply explaining the symbols in a different way – as arrows that pointed left for less and right for more – was a simple fix for a student that unlocked her confidence and helped her see other processes more clearly.

In the year that Inside Acceleration has been open, they've served around 150 students, providing help for students in 1st-12th grades in math, reading, and writing/ELA. They do work on homework with students in other subject areas, but those three are the main priorities. There's a link to schedule a free assessment on the center's website, which allows staff to see where a student is at and what their needs are.

"When we're able to break things down for kids, because now they know what a diphthong is and they know all these different English rules and things like that, now they're able to decode big multisyllabic words and they say, 'Oh my gosh, I can read now,'" Wooten-Brown said. "It's just about being able to be that person for the kids that I wish I had more of in school, because I've always loved school. It wasn't that I hated school, it was just that I struggled and I needed that help, and everyone seemed to teach the same way – you guys are teaching this, I just heard this, and it's still not clicking. So I just like to have it click for the kids and see their faces light up and they feel smart."

Inside Acceleration's staff, which includes people with backgrounds in education and education environments, sees about 25 students per day for sessions, with a goal of increasing that to 60 students daily. A recent $25,000 grant from the Consumers Energy Foundation will allow them to build more capacity.

They were one of five organizations and the only one in Genesee County to receive funding from a round of Community Impact Awards the foundation recently granted. The Community Impact Awards support programs that create healthier, more vibrant and sustainable communities. Funding will help programs continue and expand their work, reach

(Continued on Page 9)



Commentary ...

(Continued from Page 3)

Mott Foundation) continues as a major factor in the life of Flint and Genesee County, perhaps more than ever.

4. In our East Village/Court Street area, we are seeing the revival of Pierce Park. Once a golf course, it lay fallow for a number of years until Mike Keeler and the Pierce Park Nature Preserve volunteers began a major project to bring the park back to life as a natural area, entertainment site, and possible athletic venue. For the last two summers, Jazz on Wheels hosted weekly concerts in the park and every drive by the park seems to show new activity and development. It has received $815,700 from a federal grant and with $324,000 from the Pierce Park Nature Preserve, and with other sources, will have about $1.4 million to restore and develop the area.

   Similarly, the new Flint State Park that will run from Chevy Commons through Riverbank Park in downtown and will include Mott Recreation Area, Vietnam Veterans Park, and Happy Hollow Nature Area. It should be another step in the right direction for Flint.
5. The abandoned Flint Central High School is being demolished and plans are in the works to construct a new high school on the same site. With up to $100 million in funding from the Mott Foundation, and about $36 million from the state of Michigan, this could be a major step in revitalizing the Flint Community Schools district that has faced major challenges in recent years. They hope to have the new high school open for the 2028-2029 school year.
6. The Greater Flint Arts Council, the Crim Fitness Foundation, Back to the Bricks, and similar organizations have grown and continue to provide a long list of growing and rewarding activities such as monthly Art Walks, running events, car shows, and other entertainment for the area. It seems that they all are regularly adding new events and activities for Flint residents and to attract visitors.
7. While we may feel frustrated dodging all the orange barrels and cones as we drive home, at least some of "the damn roads are getting fixed" and we should have a smoother ride once the barrels and cones are gone.
8. The nurses' strike at Henry Ford Genesys Hospital ended with a contract finally being reached after 411 days with a 13 % pay increase and seniority protections for returning nurses. It was one of the longest hospital strikes in recent U.S. history. It's refreshing to know that strikers aren't sitting out on Robert T. Longway Boulevard in miserable weather for another winter.
9. On the international political scene, there are signs that the trend of electing far right rulers may be shifting in places like Brazil, Serbia, Hungary, Sweden, and (perhaps) Israel.
10. Finally, Michigan can be thankful for the near perfect fall weather that we have had that let us enjoy the changing color of the leaves on the trees, trick-or-treating, and political campaigning as other parts of the country faced flooding and storms that did much damage.

This list obviously includes just a few things we can be thankful for this November. We welcome readers adding their own thoughts for what they're thankful for and looking ahead to in the new year. ●



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This Month in the Village

Below is a selection of events available to our readers, beginning after our November publication date. To submit events for our December issue, email information about your event to eastvillagemagazineflint@gmail.com by December 1.

Flint Zine Club
Thursday, Nov. 19 | 4:30 - 6:30 p.m.
Join the organizers of Flint Zine Fest for an informal gathering of zine creators and enthusiasts. Work on your own zines using provided materials or bring your own, share projects and browse zines collected by other participants. All experience levels are welcome, and attendees can drop in at any time.
Gloria Coles Flint Public Library
1026 E. Kearsley St., Flint

Alligator Hotel Monthly Improv
Friday, Nov. 20 | 6:30 - 8 p.m.
Join Alligator Hotel, Buckham Alley Theatre's resident improv comedy troupe, for an evening of fast-paced, unscripted comedy. Performers use audience suggestions to create original scenes, characters and games on the spot. Every show is different, making this a fun night out for improv fans and newcomers alike. Tickets are $15 and available in advance or at the door.
Greater Flint Arts Council
816 Saginaw St., Flint

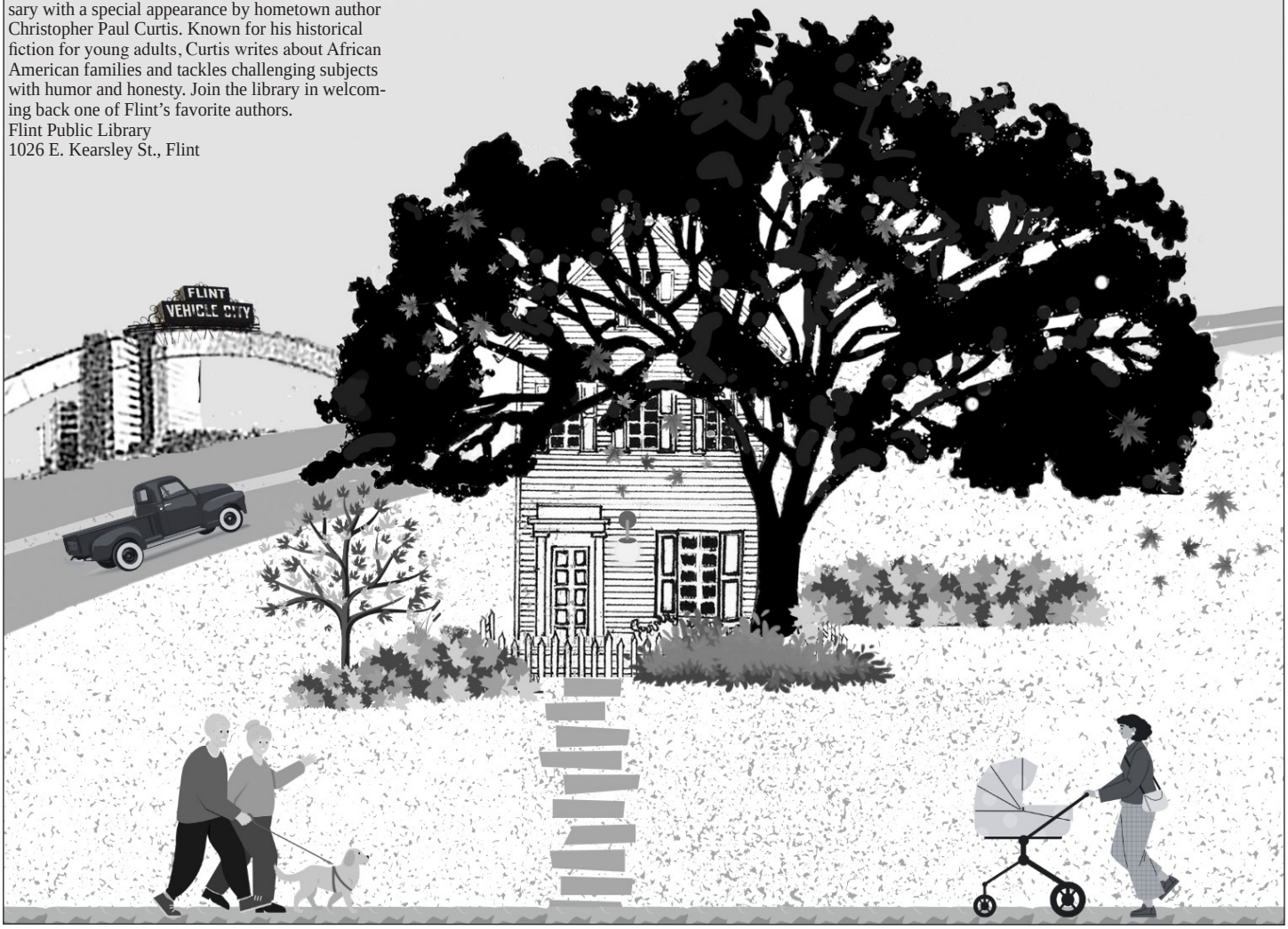
175th Celebration Event: Christopher Paul Curtis
Saturday, Nov. 21 | 2 - 3 p.m.
Celebrate the Flint Public Library's 175th anniversary with a special appearance by hometown author Christopher Paul Curtis. Known for his historical fiction for young adults, Curtis writes about African American families and tackles challenging subjects with humor and honesty. Join the library in welcoming back one of Flint's favorite authors.
Flint Public Library
1026 E. Kearsley St., Flint

Left It In The River with Jamie MacDonald
Sunday, Nov. 22 | 7 p.m.
Chart-topping singer-songwriter Jamie MacDonald brings her Left It In The River Tour to Flint, with special guest Joe L Barnes. Audiences can hear favorites including "Desperate," "Left It In The River" and "My Family." VIP ticket options include opportunities to meet MacDonald, take photos and participate in a pre-show question-and-answer session.
Capitol Theatre
140 E. Second St., Flint

70th Annual Mott Park Turkey Trot
Thursday, Nov. 26 | 9 a.m.
Celebrate Thanksgiving with Michigan's oldest Thanksgiving Day race. The 70th annual Mott Park Turkey Trot welcomes participants for a fun run or walk, with all proceeds benefiting Whaley Children's Center and helping fund annual birthday celebrations for children in foster care. A limited number of event T-shirts will be available on race day while supplies last.
Mott Park Recreation Area
2701 Nolen Drive, Flint

Flint Roller Derby 19th Season Finale
Saturday, Nov. 21 | 8 p.m.
Don't miss your chance to see some of the finest skaters in the state battle it out for one evening only at Rollhaven Skating Center. Doors open at 7:30 p.m., with the first whistle at 8 p.m. sharp. Join us after the game at Kew's Korner for even more fun! Tickets are $15 in advance or $18 at the door. Kids under 12 get in free with a paid adult admission. Tickets available at: https://tinyurl.com/flintrollerderbytickets
Rollhaven Skating Center
5315 S. Saginaw St., Flint

Flint Handmade 19th Annual Holiday Craft Market
Saturday, Nov. 28 | 10 a.m.
Celebrate Small Business Saturday with Flint Handmade's 19th annual Holiday Craft Market. More than 20 local artisans will offer unique, handmade items, including jewelry, candles, bath and body products, knit and crocheted goods, home decor and more. Enjoy live music by Erik McIntyre and Friend while shopping for one-of-a-kind gifts. Admission is free.
Flint Farmers' Market
300 E. First St., Flint



Candy, costumes...

(Continued from Page 5)

"When adults decline candy, I tend to push it onto them anyway. They deserve treats too."

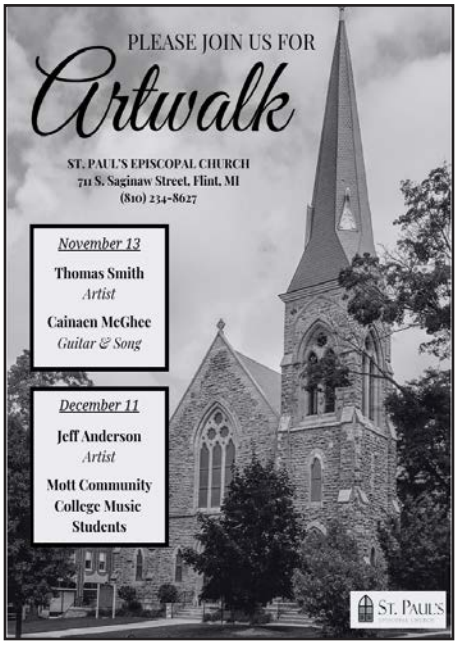
"I don't turn anyone away; I'd rather err on the side of welcoming," Coyne said. "That said, I only give each kid one or two pieces, because I don't want to run out too quickly."

He estimates he spends about $100 annually, enough to cover "hundreds and hundreds" of kids. But no matter how much he buys, he says, it seems like he always runs out while the sidewalks still are full of hopeful kids.

When they run out of candy, Ann Anderson and others on the street one by one shut off their lights. When Franklin goes through her stash, "I shout, 'I'm out!' Then, I shut my door and turn my porch light off."

If there still are lots of kids in line, it can be a bit nerve-wracking. Sometimes they'll see that the people next door bought more and have some left, so the lines rush to that door like a curving centipede.

As Coyne describes it, "When it's gone, we lock the door, turn out the lights, and hunker down like we're hiding from zombies in Night of the Living Dead." ●



Consumers...

(Continued from Page 6)

more individuals and families, and create more opportunities for access to supportive services.

Wooten-Brown said it will allow them to pay more tutors and buy needed supplies for students, like tablets, that assist in their learning. But she's also happy that it will provide scholarship money to offset costs for families who need the extra help.

"I'm very, very excited about that grant, and proud that we were the only ones in Genesee County that received it," Wooten-Brown said. "It will allow us to open up our scholarship. We have a scholarship fund that we never get to open because we haven't had the extra grants or donations for it. Students will receive three months free tutoring, and they'll be our underserved low-income students, and that'll be 14 students. So we have a few students that we already serve that will receive it, and then we have a lot of students that have been waiting to get in. Their parents call all the time, and they really need their child in, they just can't afford it. So I'm very excited to send the emails pretty soon that they have been accepted, they have the scholarship, and they can get their three months of free tutoring."

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Inside Acceleration also sends out free monthly books to Genesee County kids as part of its 'Pages of Possibility' program. People interested in receiving them can sign up online. People can also donate to their programs online.

The center also runs a monthly Chess Club on the first Saturday of each month at their facility, located at 3098 N. Center Road in Flint. Part of the tutoring center's overall goals through Chess Club and other initiatives, in addition to support in school subjects, is to make students more confident communicators who are unafraid to speak up when they don't understand something.

"At first, they're very shy," Wooten-Brown said. "We build their confidence. They're too afraid to admit that they don't know something. Once they have that confidence, they start to say, 'I do not know this. Can you help me?' And it's like, 'Oh my gosh, you actually asked for help instead of being quiet and scared.' Or when they actually get something, sometimes we'll go out in the middle of the learning floor, and we'll announce it to all the kids, and we'll make everyone clap for them, sometimes it's just really high fives and hugs. It makes us feel really good that we're actually making a difference. A lot of our younger kids, they'll bring their NWEA scores back to us like, 'Look, my score went up so much!' We've helped kids who came here worried they were going to be held back a grade but come here and get to the next grade. We even had a teacher ask for flyers because of how much we turned one of their students around. We're always so proud and so happy for them." ●

This article was originally published by Flint. Daily.

East Village Magazine

East Village Magazine 50th Anniversary Fundraiser

For 50 years, East Village Magazine photographer Edwin Custer has provided eye-catching and historically significant black and white photos of Flint life, scenery, and architecture for the magazine's cover.

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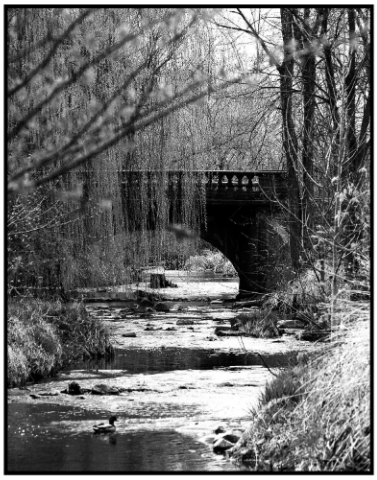
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We will mail prints on Nov. 30, Dec. 7, and Dec. 14, and then as-received through the remainder of our 50th anniversary year (concluding in June 2027).

#1 MSU "overflow parking" mural
June 2014



#2 Bridge over Gilkey Creek
May 2015



#3 Train at Crossroads Village
June 2015



#4 Dining out on Saginaw St.
August 2015



#5 The Crim Race
September 2015



#6 A winter stroll on Calumet
December 2015



#7 Empty Bowls Food Bank fundraiser
June 2017



#8 Busy day at the Flint Farmers' Market
August 2018



#9 Crossroads Village Carousel
August 2021



#10 Fourth of July on Kearsley
July 2024



#11 Summer at Riverbank Park
September 2025



#12 Historic Industrial Savings Bank
January 2026



East Village Magazine 50th Anniversary Fundraiser

Enclosed is my donation of $80 or more. Please send me a signed copy of the circled print(s) to the address indicated below. Thank you.

#1: MSU "overflow parking" mural
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#3: Train at Crossroads Village
#4: Dining Out on Saginaw St.
#5: The Crim Race
#6: A Winter Stroll on Calumet
#7: Empty Bowls Food Bank fundraiser
#8: Busy day at the Flint Farmers' Market
#9: Crossroads Village Carousel
#10: Fourth of July on Kearsley
#11: Summer at Riverbank Park
#12: Historic Industrial Savings Bank

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Opinion

A very serious political analysis of campaign signs with pictures

By Patrick Hayes

The conventional wisdom for designing a strong campaign yard sign goes something like this: if you're lucky, people passing by your signs have maybe 1-2 seconds (and probably less) to look at them. So, since ballots are names only, making the name the most prominent thing people see makes sense.

But based on the number of photos, design choices, and sadly A.I. slop (seriously … putting an A.I. Flint water tower or A.I. Flint arches, both of which I saw on signs this election season, is … not my favorite choice people made), the conventional wisdom might be more unconventional than I think. There's probably a case to be made that it could help voters recognize a person in public at events or be more likely to talk to them if they're a familiar face. Or maybe everything is just "personal brand" these days.

I don't really know the precise moment that candidates putting pictures on their yard signs started, but the frequency seems to have picked up this year. Which got me thinking: does it actually work?

So here's my attempt at some real detailed data reporting and analysis. I'll show my work so people can fact check me if I miscategorized anyone. I included primary candidates as well to increase our sample size.

City Council and Mayor: eight with photos, 12 without

- Candidates with pictures on their yard signs: Debra Coleman, LaShawn Johnson, Paradise Williams, Beverly Biggs, DeWaun Robinson, Wantwaz Davis, Darell Brown, Micaiah Owens.
- Candidates with no pictures on their yard signs: Arthur Woodson, Ladel Lewis, PhD, Leon El-Alamin, Ramie Yelle, Judy Priestley, Joel Arnold, Jeron Dotson, Dakota Starr, Gregory Ahejew, Candace Mushatt, Sheldon Neeley, Roshanda Womack.

Education Boards (Mott Community College and Flint Board of Education): two with photos, nine without

- Candidates with pictures on their yard signs: Andrew Watchorn, Joyce Ellis-McNeal, PhD.
- Candidates with no pictures on their yard signs: Quentin Groce, Santino Guerra, Andy Everman, Steven Bentley, Elizabeth Warren, Lynn Hukee, Dominique McGlown, Laura MacIntyre, Terae King Jr.

Flint Statewide Seats (Michigan House and Senate): two with photos, two without

- Candidates with pictures on their yard signs: Bill Bain, Michael Clack.
- Candidates with no pictures on their yard signs: John Cherry, Cynthia Neeley, Larry Hutchinson.

That gives us 12 total candidates who used photos on their signs and 23 who did not. With the November 3 unofficial results now available along with last August's primary results, here are the winning percentages.

- Pictures on signs: 9-5 record/.642 winning percentage
- No pictures on signs: 14-15/.483 winning percentage

So, there you have it, a very scientific data analysis showing that if you would like to win a local election you should definitely put your picture on a sign. ●



Political signs outside of Flint City Hall during the 2026 General Election.
(Photo by Patrick Hayes)