



East Village

Magazine

January 2018

*Photograph by
Edwin D. Custer*

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Commentary *What's ahead for Flint and Michigan politics in 2018?*

By Paul Rozycki

After a year that gave us Donald Trump's tweet-of-the-day reality show, a revolving door at the White House, nuclear war threats against "the rocket man," daily celebrity dismissals for sexual harassment, pawned City Council laptops, and an 18-candidate recall election in Flint, it's certainly a risk to make up a list of what we ought to expect in 2018. But for better or worse, here are a few things to look forward to this year.

It's a big election year

We commonly think of the presidential election year as our biggest election. It certainly gets the most attention, but in Michigan we actually elect more state and local officials in the non-presidential years, like 2018. This year we'll be electing a governor, a U.S. senator, U.S. representatives, a secretary of state, an attorney general, state senators, state representatives as well as judges, county commissioners, some school boards, and many local officials.

The governor's race

For Republicans, the contest to replace Gov. Snyder seems to be between Attorney General Bill Schuette of Midland and Lt. Gov. Brian Calley of Dearborn. By most measures Schuette should be the odds-on favorite. He's built up strong name recognition with his very visible actions as attorney general, and he seems to have been running for governor since he was born.

Calley is challenging him with his proposal to create a part-time legislature in Michigan. But, having served as Gov. Snyder's lieutenant governor, Calley is tied to the governor and his declining popularity as a result of the Flint water crisis.

Bill Ballenger, in *The Ballenger Report*, sees the contest as a face-off between the Trump supporters, who back Schuette, and the Gov. Snyder supporters, who support Calley. Trump has endorsed Schuette, and Calley withdrew his support for Trump after the Access Hollywood tapes were released during the 2016 campaign.

Other Republicans seeking the gubernatorial nomination are: Patrick Colbeck of Canton, a state senator and former aerospace engineer and Jim Hines of Saginaw, an obstetrician and gynecologist

and president of the Christian Medical and Dental associations. Other Republicans who have filed include, Joseph DeRose of Williamston, Mark McFarlin of Pinconning, and Evan Space of Grand Rapids.

For the Democrats, there are also a number of candidates, but Gretchen Whitmer of Lansing, former minority leader of the state Senate, seems to be the clear front runner, though she's not without challengers.

She will face Bill Cobbs of Farmington Hills, a retired Xerox executive and Navy veteran; Abdul El-Sayed of Detroit, former director of the Detroit Department of Health and Wellness Promotion; and Shri Thanedar, an Ann Arbor business executive. Other Democrats in the race include Justin D. Giroux of Wayland and Kentiel D. White of Detroit.

Predictions about who is most likely to win either the nomination or the governorship are at best very premature. In a time of anti-establishment voting, it's worth remembering that a year before the 2016 election it appeared that Jeb Bush was the likely Republican nominee for president, and Hillary Clinton appeared to be on her way to becoming the first female president of the U.S.

The U.S. Senate

Debbie Stabenow, first elected in 2000, is running for her fourth term as U.S. senator. She will certainly face serious opposition from the Republicans and a number of possible candidates have stepped forward, though Stabenow does have solid ties with some traditional Republican groups, such as the Farm Bureau—an unusual area of support for a Democrat.

Republicans Bob Carr, past congressional candidate; John James, president of the James Group International; Sandy Pensler, investment fund founder; and former Michigan Supreme Court Justice Bob Young are running for the nomination to challenge Stabenow.

The U.S. House

There will be at least three new faces in Michigan's U.S. House of Representative's

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Photograph by Edwin D. Custer

Photo of the Month: Farmers' Market

“What kids need ... what kids deserve” Educare Flint a model for education reform

By Harold C. Ford

A broad coalition of public and private organizations — led by the Flint-based Charles Stewart Mott Foundation — publicly launched a dazzling new state-of-the-art school that will provide early childhood education for 220 Flint children from birth to age five. Educare Flint opened its doors to students on Dec. 4, less than a year after construction began on the almost 36,000-square-foot school.

“The facility, combined with the Cummings Great Expectations facility, will serve as centers for learning in our community,” said C.S. Mott Foundation President Ridgway White at the public launch on Dec. 11.

White added, “Our hope is that the children and that the child care providers from licensed daycare centers to home providers, grandparents, families ... will participate in teaching and learning opportunities provided here and at Cummings so that the benefits of these facilities will spread beyond the four walls and into the entire community.”

The Educare Flint project seems to touch all the bases suggested by modern education reformers including: modernistic brick and mortar features; wraparound services for families and children; instruction and care informed by research and delivered by a highly qualified staff; and community partnerships.

Brick and mortar features:

- Heated sidewalks provide a snowmelt system that more safely enables the exit and entry of parents and children.
- ThermaWrap Insulation provides more cost-effective climate control within the building.
- Large windows throughout the facility bathe the interior in natural light while providing a generous view of the outside world.
- Specially-designed bathrooms in every classroom allow Educare Flint staff the opportunity to monitor their children.
- Each classroom wing is equipped with a washer, dryer, and dishwasher.
- Security is enhanced by strategically located offices for administration and security personnel, security cameras, locked

doors leading to both classroom wings, and fenced playgrounds.

- Outdoor space includes age-designated playgrounds, trike and running paths, water features, specially designed reading spaces, and canopied areas to provide protection from inclement weather.
- Public spaces include a large multi-purpose room, adult learning rooms, a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math) room, basketball courts, and a walking trail.

“Design matters, the quality of the building matters, not just in terms of its obvious design around the interests and needs of the kids it will serve,” said U.S. Rep. Dan Kildee, “but because it sends such a powerful message of the commitment that our community collectively has to these precious young lives.”

Wraparound services:

Michigan Lt. Gov. Brian Calley told the approximately 200 persons assembled at the public launch that health care services, nutritional services, daycare services, different funding sources, and different application processes are now blended into “a place where people could go in the front door and

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Photo by Harold C. Ford

Educare building

... Educare

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the government would just work out all the details in bringing those funding streams together so that it's a seamless process ..."

Instruction and care:

- Full-day and full-year services are offered.
- Special needs students are serviced in an inclusive setting.
- Small class sizes and low child-teacher-ratios allow teachers more opportunity to provide individualized instruction.
- Children stay with the same teachers for several years to foster strong relationships.
- Continuous data collection and analysis informs classroom instruction.
- Professional development of Educare Flint staff is continuous.
- Master teachers serve as curriculum coaches for classroom teachers.

"I know how important it is for young children to start off with the very best educational opportunities," state Sen. Jim Ananich said to those gathered at the public launch. During a tour of the facility, he described "the pure joy that it brought to my heart to see these kids that were loved, to see these kids that were cared for ..." Ananich is a former teacher, husband of a current teacher, and parent of a young child in Flint.



Photo by Harold C. Ford

Educare parent Breyanna Chism

Community partnerships:

- Parents and families were elevated by most speakers at the public launch as key partners in determining the success of the project. Cynthia Jackson, senior vice-president of Chicago-based Educare Learning Network, informed those gathered that, "We are doing some cutting-edge work to define authentic and effective parent engagement ... to authentically partner with families."
- Public partners include the State of Michigan; the Genesee Intermediate School

District (GISD), which will operate the facility; Flint Community Schools; and the University of Michigan-Flint.

- Private partners include the C.S. Mott Foundation, the Community Foundation of Greater Flint, and The Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation.
- Nine partners helped with construction and financing of the building including: Uptown Reinvestment Corporation, Flint Community Schools, Consortium Group, DW Lurvey Construction, Flint Kids Learn, IFF, Local Initiatives Support Corporation, PNC Bank, and RDG Planning & Design.
- The building is owned by Flint Kids Learn, a supporting organization of the Community Foundation of Greater Flint.

Educare Flint is the largest of 23 facilities in the coast-to-coast Educare Learning Network, according to Jackson. "When I drove up today I went, 'Wow! It is humongous! It is truly phenomenal,'" Jackson said.

C.S. Mott Foundation provided \$11 million in grants to support the construction. According to a press statement, Educare Flint was "launched in the wake of the Flint water crisis as part of an urgent effort to increase access to early childhood education ..." Mott has pledged \$100 million to help amend the adverse effects of Flint's water crisis upon its population, especially children.

According to Jackson, Educare facilities typically take four to five years to develop. She noted that the Educare Flint project coalesced in less than two years.

Jackson described herself as the kind of person the Educare Network sends in to make sure that the local community has everything ready it needs to be successful.

"I must say that my visit here ... blew me away to the point where I just stood up and gave them (the Educare Flint partners) a standing ovation," Jackson said.

A local, state, national model?

"As we continue to build on these collaborations," GISD superintendent Lisa Hagel said, "using Educare Flint as a model, children across our entire community will benefit for years to come."

Calley, who launched his bid for the Republican nomination for governor in November, touted Educare Flint as a model that will be copied all over Michigan. "As I look forward to where education goes from here and how we get kids ready, this is it," he said.

Informed by a more national perspective, Jackson said Flint is "a model for the nation of how, when a community makes smart, early childhood investments, it can deliver on the

great American promise of equal opportunity and ensure that every child can grow up healthy, happy, and ready to compete in school."

That "great American promise" of education as a gateway to success has ebbed in recent decades. In his 2008 book *The Global Achievement Gap*, author Tony Wagner noted:



Photo by Harold C. Ford

Educare students and staff

- The high school graduation rate in the U.S. (about 70 percent) is now well behind that of countries such as Denmark (96 percent), Japan (93 percent), Poland (92 percent), and Italy (79 percent).
- Only about a third of U.S. high school students graduate "ready for college."
- The U.S. now ranks tenth among industrial nations in the rate of college completion by 25- to 44-year-olds.

In their 2008 book *The Race Between Education and Technology*, Claudia Goldin and Lawrence F. Katz, economists at Harvard, noted two distinct periods in the economic history of the U.S. in the last century:

- An increase in the high school graduation rate from 9 percent in 1910 to 77 percent in 1970 helped flatten the class structure as the U.S. became the wealthiest nation on the planet.
- The nation's graduation rate flatlined at about 75 percent while inequality began rising sharply in the 1970s and 1980s. And poverty increased, especially among the nation's urban poor.

Goldin and Katz reasoned that increasing the educational success rate of children in poverty is essential to the nation's future success. Flint's higher-than-average poverty rate is accompanied by its children's abysmal scores on standardized tests.

Flint needs new models for success and Educare Flint may prove to be one of those models. Many education reformers (this author included) believe that the models for shaking this American nation from its educational doldrums begs a quadrupedal solution

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Re-opened Capitol Theater draws rave reviews, praise for city's "momentum"

By Jan Worth-Nelson

On a chilly, windy Thursday night, downtown Flint celebrated as a cherished 90-year-old landmark, the Capitol Theater, once almost given up for dead, lit up into a brilliant new life. Hundreds of bundled-up Flint folks, savoring nostalgia and curiosity, poured into the theater for an official opening ceremony and a chance to see the results of a \$37 million, 18-month top-to-bottom restoration.

Many were there for the first time, many for the first time in decades.

From both officials on the stage and regular people wandering from the balcony to the basement after the formal program, superlatives flew.

"I truly think that we are among the most fortunate cities, because how many even bigger cities have a movie house like this that has been restored? I love it so much," said Elizabeth Perkins-Harbin, a Flint native and daughter of a Sitdown Striker.

Her husband, Don, also Flint born and bred, said, "It takes me back to the days when things were booming, of prosperity, that nostalgia of the great old theaters — just a fantastic job of restoring it, just fantastic."



Photo by Jan Worth-Nelson

The stars are back at Capitol Theater

"My favorite part is they kept the stars — it was what I remember most — it was so mystical," said Edythe Peake of Flint, who grew up in Civic Park. "And now it's mystical again," she said.

Her husband, Walt Peake, added seeing the theater come back to life triggered many happy memories. "When we were kids we'd come down here, our folks would drop us off, and we'd stay downtown the whole day," he said.

"Who says that good things aren't hap-



Photo by Jan Worth-Nelson

Capitol Theater restored marquee lights up

pening in Flint?" Mayor Karen Weaver exulted from the stage, where she and four other leaders of the renovation effort delivered celebratory brief remarks before the 1,600-seat venue opened up for tours. Relating that she used to feel sad when she went by the theater, which had been unused for decades, she said, "To see this transformation — we should be proud."

"Momentum" was a recurring theme of the opening ceremony remarks — all the speakers praising the results of partnership for the project between the primary partners — the nonprofit Uptown Reinvestment Corporation (URC), and the Whiting Auditorium/Flint Cultural Center, which will manage the venue. Other partners and funders in various relationships to the project include the C.S. Mott Foundation, the Hagerman Foundation, the Community Foundation of Greater Flint, the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, the State of Michigan and the City of Flint.

"Flint is worth the investment and we are open for business," Weaver said.

"If you walk downtown you can really feel the momentum," Tim Herman, president of the URC, stated. In the last 10 years alone, he noted, \$100 million has been invested in downtown by "pioneers who have done great for downtown": Ghassan Saab, Phil Shultz, Troy Farah, and Gary Hurand — investors of URC in the "private" side of the private-public arrangement.

Affectionately referring to the 90-year-old structure as "this old gal," Herman said,

"The importance of the Capitol restoration extends far beyond this building itself. This theater is a symbol of the resurgence of downtown and is part of the epicenter that is humming with commercial, residential and public space."

In addition to the theater, Herman noted the restored building includes 25,000 square feet of attached business space and created 82 jobs. He predicted the theater will play a major role in continuing to make downtown Flint, "a place where people want to work, live, and definitely, play."

Phil Hagerman, CEO of Flint-based Diplomat Pharmacy, which employs 1,500 at its Grand Blanc headquarters, said the Capitol brought back many memories. "When I was in this theater the first time, I was less than 10 years old ... in my teens I sat in the balcony if I was lucky enough to get a date, which wasn't that often," he joked.

Like Herman, Hagerman said the Capitol reopening represents more than just one

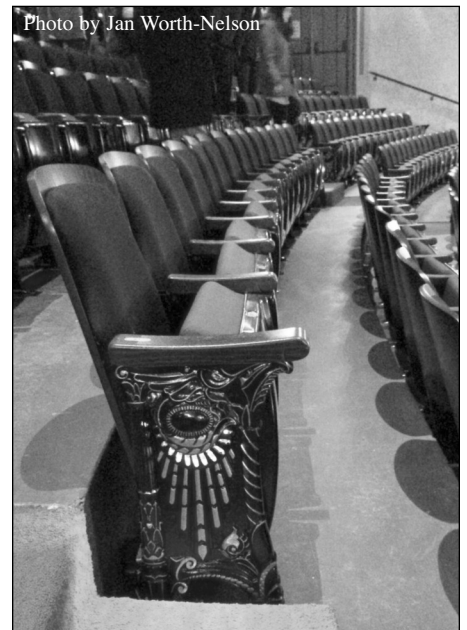


Photo by Jan Worth-Nelson

New seats at Capitol Theater balcony

building. "To see the momentum come back has been unbelievable. As a businessman, I'm so excited about what this will bring back." Hagerman and his wife Jocelyn start-

(Continued on Page 8.)

Citywide youth basketball league launches this month

By Harold Ford

A boost for basketball in Flint is arriving in 2018, with the launch of a new citywide youth basketball league starting Jan. 6. For some, the announcement sets off hopes for a return of Flint's faded reputation as a formidable basketball town. But for those involved in the planning, what matters most is providing positive, healthy activities for Flint youth in a safe environment.

According to a press release from Kristin Moore, the Flint ReCAST Program "is designed to promote resilience in the Flint community by supporting youth and families, mitigating the impact of trauma, reducing behavioral health disparities, and increasing the opportunities and training for Flint youth through strong community engagement strategies. The target popula-

As documented in the June 2017 issue of *East Village Magazine*, the glory days for Flint public high school sports are clearly in the rearview mirror. From 1930 to 1995, Flint's four public high schools produced athletic teams that captured 47 state championships. In the 22 years since 1995, the tally is zero.

Many area sports aficionados point to the loss of critical feeder programs as a primary reason for the diminishment of championship caliber athletic teams. Flint Community Schools' Athletic Director, Jamie Foster, told *EVM*, the championship teams "were all products of the community school programs (remember the Flintstones) when they were coming up through school — elementary, junior high, and high school." Flint's nationally renowned after-school programs, created in the mid-1900s, largely disappeared by the end of the century.

"There's a direct correlation," according to McLavish, between the loss of feeder programs and the recent dearth of state championships for Flint schools. "It all starts with fundamentals, and you learn fundamentals when you're at a very, very young age," he said. "You can't wait and start playing basketball at the eighth and ninth grade levels ... and think you're going to compete at a statewide or national level."

McLavish starred on the hardwood for Flint Northwestern, graduating in 2002. He went on to play basketball at the University of South Alabama.



Photo by Harold C. Ford

Mayor Weaver announcing new league

"The league is the first of its kind in over 15 years," Mayor Karen Weaver said at a Dec. 19 press conference announcing the launch. "It's been long overdue," she added.

Funds for the program are an outgrowth of the Flint water crisis — coming from a five-year, \$4.8 million grant provided by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and Center for Mental Health Services for the Flint Resiliency in Communities After Stress and Trauma (ReCAST) program.

tion addressed by this project includes youth and their families impacted by various sources of distress, including the Flint Water Emergency."

Sean Croudy, director of community recreation for the city of Flint, said the league will target youth from ages eight (third grade) to 17. Participants will be divided into four divisions: third and fourth graders; fifth graders; sixth graders; and 13- to 17-year-olds. There is no fee charged for participation.

Games for the three younger divisions will take place at the Eagle's Nest (formerly Selby School), 5101 Cloverlawn Dr. Games for the oldest division will be played at Cathedral of Faith (formerly Gundry School), 6301 Dupont St. Games are played on Saturdays.

"I actually remember growing up and playing in this gym when it was Gundry Elementary," Chris McLavish, founder and director of Chris McLavish Basketball (CMB), said. McLavish will assist Croudy in the operation of the league. "It's a phenomenal opportunity for these kids to be able to come together ... and build lifetime friendships and relationships," he said.

Feeder program:



Photo by Harold C. Ford

Sean Croudy describing league plans



Photo by Harold C. Ford

Ready for league: (l-r) Chris Martin, Lauren Martin, Xakera Garland, & Kerry Garland

Broader goals:

Program organizers are interested in more than rebuilding the city's basketball cred. "The overall goal was to offer Flint youth some activities to participate in that are positive, and to be in a safe environment, and to have some fun," Croudy said. "They'll learn more than basketball: healthy

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... Capitol

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ed the Hagerman Foundation in 2014 and located it in the restored Dryden Building just around the corner from the Capitol.



Photo by Jan Worth-Nelson

Restored ceiling fixture

“This is kind of a ‘pinch me’ moment,” Mott Foundation President Ridgway White said, “to see this many people in this great Capitol Theater.” Noting he had been involved for 16 of the 17 years of the renovation project’s history, he said, “Our city struggled recently, and this project is part of that recovery and rising — part of investing in our city’s future, part of investing in people — the great people that make this city. That’s what this institution is about.”

The Whiting, at the heart of the city’s Cultural Center, will manage operations and programming. Whiting Executive Director Jarret Haynes, who emceed the opening celebration, said, now that the restoration is complete, the joys of live performance will again be available downtown. “We’re returning this to you, the community,” he said. “This is your home.”

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Pipes replaced so far in Flint:

6,200+

Source: Dec. 12 press conference by Mayor Karen Weaver

Lead-tainted service lines at 5,565 homes have been replaced so far in Phase 4 of the city’s FAST Start program, which aimed to replace pipes at 6,000 homes in 2017. That brings the total of residential pipe replacements above the goal for 2017 to more than 6,200, with numbers changing every day.

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

... Educare

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involving government, nonprofits, higher education, and business and industry. Educare Flint is such a model.

The challenge for Flint schools moving forward will be to summon additional resources, assemble additional partnerships, and replicate some semblance of the Educare model for other Flint children. Flint superintendent Bilal Tawaab agreed. “I think the key as we move forward is making sure that all of our kids are receiving this quality of instruction,” he said.

The definition of “all of our kids” may prove problematic. Tawaab told *EVM* in March that only one of three school-age children in the city, about 5,000, attend Flint’s public schools. Some 5,000 others attend charter and private schools while about 5,000 others opt for Schools of Choice and attend other public schools.



Photo by Harold C. Ford

Lead teacher Kelly Skutt with Harmon

What kids need and deserve:

Kildee found reason for optimism. “When you see people who don’t always agree on everything set those differences aside and put our energies from the federal government, the state government, local government, public and private, putting all the differences aside and saying, ‘Look, the highest priority for all of us is the future of these kids’” he said. “That’s a pretty powerful statement ... a powerful statement about the kind of community we are.”

“This is what my child deserves, a wonderful building like this with great staff members,” Breyanna Chism, an Educare Flint parent and staff member, said. “Every child in Flint should be able to experience something like this.”

Flint mayor Karen Weaver, still buoyant from the recent reopening of Flint’s Capitol Theater, agreed: “This is not only what kids need, this is what kids deserve.”

Parents interested in enrolling their

... League

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living; friendly competition; building friendships with kids across the city; and friendships with kids outside the city.”

The program has no geographic restrictions for participation. League organizers encouraged youth throughout Genesee County and beyond to join. The league is also open to girls and expects to expand to include additional sports. “We have a bigger vision — not just to focus on basketball, but other sports as well,” McLavish said.



Photo by Harold C. Ford

Pastor Chris Martin

Chris Martin, Cathedral of Faith pastor, envisions the project as one important piece of an emerging renaissance in the city of Flint.

“This is one of the major pieces,” Martin said. “Your city is only as strong as the neighborhoods and once we continue to revitalize the neighborhoods, no matter how commercially strong downtown becomes, our neighborhoods have to be strong.”

“You will see Flint come back with the start of initiatives like this,” Martin predicted.

Interested participants and volunteers can contact Sean Croudy at 810-449-6380 or Chris McLavish at 810-553-8079.

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

children in Educare Flint should call (810) 591-KIDS.

Editor’s Note: EVM staff writer Harold C. Ford is retired from a 44-year career in public education that included: one year as a substitute teacher in Flint; 30 years as a classroom teacher in Beecher; 10 years as director of the Beecher Scholarship Incentive Program funded by the Ruth Mott Foundation; and three years as supervisor of Beecher’s Ninth Grade Academy. He can be reached at hcford1185@gmail.com.

Flint sixth graders hold health in their hands

By Harold C. Ford

More than 200 sixth graders from six Flint Community Schools shared results of their “community action projects” with peers, parents, press, and others in December at Flint’s Riverfront Banquet Center. The students had been studying Type 2 diabetes in their science classes as part of a new project-based curriculum titled “Health in Our Hands: What Controls My Health?”

“These kids have been ... figuring out diabetes, how it occurs, why it occurs in children their age and in their family members, and how to fix it in themselves and in their community,” project manager Renee Bayer said.

“They’re not being told what to do but they’re actually figuring things out. That’s the new way of teaching science,” Bayer said.

The program, a research project led by the CREATE for STEM Institute at Michigan State University, has many partners: the Flint Community Schools, the University of Michigan School of Public Health, Community-based Organization Partners of Flint, the Sloan Museum, the Flint Public Library, Concord Consortium in Massachusetts and multiple partners in Detroit. Funding comes from the National Institutes of Health through their Science Education Partnership Awards (SEPA).

“Through their studies, students discovered how genetic risk factors, such as poor diet, or lack of exercise, put them at risk for disease,” reported Bayer, an administrator at CREATE for STEM Institute at Michigan State University (MSU).

The starting point for the project was a virtual introduction to Monique, a pre-teen African American girl who actually suffers from Type 2 diabetes. “They read her story and were able to follow her daily life, what she goes through, what it’s doing to her, and how it affects the family,” Ella Greene-Moton, community activities manager for the project, said.

“They were able to identify with the things she (Monique) was dealing with day-to-day,” Moton said. “Why is this happening? How is this happening? Can it be controlled? What does healthy eating have to do with that? Do people die from this?”

“Students conducted an action research project to improve their school or neigh-

borhood to help prevent or reduce diabetes,” Bayer said.

“Each class chose a different inquiry question to research and used a variety of data collection methods to draw conclusions and develop suggestions for community health improvement, often collaborating with researchers to conduct cutting-edge research.”

Freeman Elementary:

Kathy Savoie’s science class at Freeman Elementary collaborated with Rick Sadler, professor of public health at MSU, to answer the question, “How does my neighborhood affect my exercise and walking habits?”

“Our claim was kids didn’t feel safe anymore to walk to school, to play in the neighborhoods like we used to,” Savoie said.

“We backed that up with data; we gave surveys to the kids. It showed in our data that ... 85 percent of the kids said they would like to walk more. The data showed that kids wanted to feel safe in their neighborhoods and would walk more if they felt safe,” Savoie said.

Savoie said additional data generated by her students showed “that only 5 percent of the kids were walking to school, and only 16 percent of the places they were visiting (was) by foot.” Nearly 56 percent of the Freeman students said they avoided walking because of “stranger danger.”

The Freeman students involved in the project wore GPS devices for 24-hour periods at a time to gather data. The devices reported where they went, their mode of transportation, and distances.

Family interviews conducted by her students revealed previous generations “walked everywhere; the neighbors knew everyone,” reported Savoie. “The families said this is what we would like to see to improve our neighborhoods.”

“The kids drew their ideal neighborhood,” said Savoie, “and suggested things like neighborhood watch groups, parent groups, kids walking together in walking groups ... community gardens, clean parks, and clean neighborhoods.”

Other projects:

Approximately 340 students — nearly all of Flint’s sixth graders — were involved in the project. Some of the other

projects:

- Potter: The classes of Tom Lafferty and Karen Christian “investigated how marketing strategies can encourage healthier eating and less food waste in school.”

- Eisenhower: Darlene McClendon’s class “examined how raising awareness to the consequences of unhealthy foods affects students’ eating habits.”

- Durant-Turri-Mott: David Sutton’s classes “measured processed and unprocessed food in their diets.”

- Doyle-Ryder: Robyn Seelye’s class “studied reasons for food waste in the cafeteria.”

- Holmes: Annette Sparks’ class “investigated the effect of exercise on student well-being.”

Final presentations:

“At the final presentations, students presented their results to their peers and to judges from university and community groups,” Bayer reported. “Judges commented about how knowledgeable, enthusiastic, and well-prepared the students were.”

One of the judges, Sharon Saddler, a community volunteer, was impressed with how the project extended learning beyond the classroom walls and into the homes and community. “I truly believe that the education process is not just from 8:00 in the morning to 3:00 in the afternoon,” she said. “I think a very important part of education begins at 3:00 in the afternoon and goes to 8:00 the next morning.”

“So what we do with our children outside of school, how we involve the parents and the community in the education of our children is essential,” Saddler said. “That’s where essential learning comes from.” Saddler is a product of Flint schools and a University of Michigan graduate.

Editor’s Note: EVM Staff writer Harold C. Ford is retired from a 44-year career in public education that included: one year as a substitute teacher in Flint; 30 years as a classroom teacher in Beecher; 10 years as director of the Beecher Scholarship Incentive Program funded by the Ruth Mott Foundation; and three years as supervisor of Beecher’s Ninth Grade Academy. He can be reached at hcford1185@gmail.com.

THIS MONTH IN THE VILLAGE

“This Month” highlights a selection of interesting events available to our readers – beginning after our publication date of Jan. 4. It is not an exhaustive list, rather a sampling of opportunities in the city. To submit events for our February issue, email your event to Managing Editor Meghan Christian at meghan.christian22@gmail.com by Jan. 23.

Michigan Glass Artists Exhibition

Jan. 2 - 5
9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Greater Flint Arts Council,
816 S. Saginaw St.
810-238 -2787
Admission: Free

See an array of glass works such as mosaics, cast and blown glass, and more.

Sierra Club Presents: “My Journey to Reduced Carbon Use”

Jan. 10
7:30 - 9 p.m.
Mott Community College;
Prah Center, 1401 E. Court Street
810-230-0704, Robert Simpson for details
Admission: Free

Listen to Mike Buza discuss various options for solar panels, pros and cons, installation costs, efficiency, and ways to accomplish improvements. Mike has no affiliation with any solar company so the information will be unbiased. Carbon use reduction outside the home will be briefly discussed.

African American Film Series: “I Am Not Your Negro”

Jan. 11
5:30 - 10 p.m.
Flint Institute of Arts,
1120 E. Kearsley St.
810-422-5358
Admission: Minimum donation of \$2

An evening with live entertainment, food, and a film followed by a panel discussion. The film is based on “Remember This House” by James Baldwin, which documents race in America through the lens of the assassinations of Martin Luther King Jr., Medgar Evers, and Malcolm X.

Every Child Ready to Read Super Saturday Storytime

Jan. 13
1 - 2 p.m.
Flint Public Library,
1026 E. Kearsley St.
Admission: Free

For younger audiences, enjoy story time at the Flint Public Library.

An Evening with LaKisha Jones feat. Flint Symphony Orchestra

Jan. 13
8 p.m.
The Whiting,
1241 E. Kearsley St.
810-237-7333
Admission: \$20 - 50

See Flint native and “American Idol” finalist LaKisha perform some original scores and covers of current hits with the Flint Symphony Orchestra.

MLK Day of Service 2018

Jan. 15
9 a.m. - Noon
Dort Federal Credit Union Event Center,
3501 Lapeer Rd.

Volunteer with United Way of Genesee County to pack 40,000 meals that will go to local families as a part of the MLK Day of Service. For more information on the event and on how to register, go to http://www.geneseeserves.org/_landing/mlk

Community Gala

Jan. 20
6 - 9:30 p.m.
Flint Institute of Arts,
1120 E. Kearsley St.
Admission: FIA Members - \$40 - 55
Non-Members - \$60 - 75

Beginning with a lecture and followed with a gallery opening, dinner, and live music, this event is a part of a diversity initiative. Doors open at 5:45 p.m. and the event is cocktail attire. For more information, call 810-422-5358.

Flint Symphony Orchestra Concert

Jan. 20
7:30 - 9 p.m.
The Whiting,
1241 E. Kearsley St.
810-237-7333
Admission: \$10 - 60

A night of classical music featuring guest Ray Chen.

Baloonacy

Jan. 26, 7 p.m.
Jan. 27, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.
Jan. 28, 2 p.m.
Elgood Theater, (Flint Youth Theater)
1025 E. Kearsley St.
810-237-7333
Admission: \$8 - 10

A great show for children ages 3 and up, this fun play explores the power of friendship and acceptance through some puppetry and physical comedy.

The Fantasticks

Jan. 26, 7:30 p.m.
Jan. 27, 7:30 p.m.
Jan. 28, 2 p.m.
UM-Flint Theater,
303 E. Kearsley St.
Admission: \$8 - 15

Presented by the UM-Flint Department of Theatre and Dance, this funny and romantic musical tells the story of a boy and a girl in love, and their families that try to keep them apart.

Erik Van Heyningan

Jan. 28
3:30 p.m.
Saint Paul’s Episcopal Church
810-569-1545
Admission: \$10

Opera singer Erik Van Heyningan from the Michigan Opera Theater performs.

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COLLEGE CULTURAL NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

 ccnaflint@sbcglobal.net

Members meet Thurs., Jan. 18, 2018

7-9 pm in MCC's RTC Auditorium

Neighborhood Watch meets Thurs.,

Feb. 15, 7-9 pm, MCC's RTC Auditorium



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 Artistic Director G. Donald Kaye Presents

*****FINAL SEASON*****

<p>ERIK VAN HEYNINGAN Bass Baritone</p> <p><i>"A Byrd Competitor"</i> World Opera Stages, Michigan Opera Theater</p> <p>MATTHEW LARSON Piano</p>	 
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Sunday, Jan. 28, 2018

3:30 PM

South Saginaw at Third Street

\$10 Friends of Music, \$5 Students

(810) 569 - 1545

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... Politics

(Continued from Page 3.)

delegation this year. Republican David Trott (11th District) and Democrats Sander Levin (9th District) and John Conyers (13th District) have decided not to run (or in Conyers' case, resigned from Congress following sexual harassment charges). While new candidates will be chosen, the current party balance of nine Republicans and five Democrats is unlikely to change.

The state Legislature

Michigan's term limits, six years in the House and eight in the Senate, guarantee a regular turnover in the state legislature. This year, 24 of the 110 members of the state House will be forced out, and 26 of the 38 state Senate members will be leaving.

In Genesee County that should lead to several competitive races.

Republican State Senator Dave Robertson, (14th District, southern Genesee, northern Oakland counties) is term limited and there should be a strong contest in that traditionally Republican district.

In the state House, Democrat Pam Faris (48th District, northern and eastern Genesee County) is term limited, and one can expect a competitive race to succeed her in the district.

Democrat Phil Phelps is also ending his term (49th District, southwest Flint city, Flint Township, Mt. Morris Township) and the contest for his seat is already heating up, in what should be one of the major contests to watch in the county. Both former Flint Mayor Dayne Walling, and John Cherry, vice chair of the Flint Charter Commission, have indicated that they intend to run for the seat. Others are likely to join the fray in the traditionally Democratic district.

What proposals will be on the ballot?

Like many election years we should see several proposals on the ballot in 2018.

Perhaps the most significant is the proposal put forward by the Voters Not Politicians Committee, which would amend the state constitution to create a non-partisan commission to draw non-gerrymandered election districts that wouldn't favor one party over another. Though it will probably face court challenges, it could be the most significant ballot issue. (Past issues of EVM have discussed gerrymandering and the proposal in detail.)

Gubernatorial candidate Brian Calley is promoting another ballot proposal that would create a part-time legislature, limiting their time in session to 90 days a year and cutting their pay to approximately half of what the average teacher

makes. In addition to pushing the part-time legislature, he hopes it will give some traction to his gubernatorial campaign. Whether either the ballot proposal or Lt. Gov. Calley make it to the November ballot remains to be seen.

It's also likely that at least one proposal to legalize recreational marijuana will be voted on this year as well. The proposal would allow the state to regulate and tax the marijuana business.

In addition, there are several other potential ballot issues. One would support a "prevailing wage," or union-based wages, for those doing work for the state. Another would protect the Great Lakes from an Enbridge Pipeline failure. A third would guarantee workers the right to paid sick leave, and a fourth proposal would increase the minimum wage in Michigan to \$12/ hour by 2020. Most of these still need to get the required signatures to make it to the ballot and that is often a major challenge.

Can the Flint City Council and mayor finally get along?

On the local scene, it will be worth watching to see how well the new city council can work with each other and the mayor. With five new members elected last November it has the potential to be a very different council. Though there have been more than a few flare-ups between some council members, there does seem to be a desire to actually work together to deal with the water crisis and the city's many other problems in a rational manner. We'll also see how the new charter is put in place and carried out.

Will we see the beginning of the end of the "water crisis"?

As the tests for Flint's water come back with more promising results, and as more pipes are replaced, will we begin to see the water crisis receding? More importantly, how long will it take to rebuild the trust that has been broken by the many officials and many levels of government over the last three-plus years? Will Mayor Weaver and the city council be able to begin the process of restoring trust as the water crisis enters its fourth year?

If 2017 is any guide, 2018 will look very different in December than it does in January.

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

Unclassified ads

For Rent. Studio apartment and two-bedroom apartment. Clean, partially furnished, all bills paid except electricity. Walking distance to UM-F & MCC. Call 810-235-0021. Leave message.

Village Life

How new life in Flint made a doggie dream come true

By Meghan Christian

This is about a dream of puppy love coming true, right on the east side of Flint.

About a year into our relationship, my boyfriend, Chad, and I started talking about getting a dog. We would sit on the futon in our cramped, one-bedroom apartment and dream about what kind of dog we would get and the adventures we would go on together. But since our lease wasn't going to be up for another six months, all we had were those conversations about our dream dog.

Then one day in the midst of apartment hunting, Chad came home from work with a lead on a three-bedroom house on the east side of Flint with a fenced-in backyard: the perfect yard for a dog. Not only was the house close to work, but it seemed to be the next logical step for us. Part of me worried it was going to be too good to be true, that the other shoe was going to drop and we weren't going to be able to have everything we wanted.

After our first walk through and conver-

sation with the landlord, all those worries evaporated. We just knew that this home would be a great fit for us, as long as he was okay with us adopting a dog. With his approval, we could finally start making our dream become a reality.

A month later, we seriously started the search for the next addition to our little family. We scoured adoption websites and we went to the Humane Society of Genesee County at least once a week for a month. Every time, we walked in with the hope that we would meet our dog, but every time, we would leave empty handed and disappointed.

All that changed at a Humane Society adoption event Dec. 2.

We pulled into the parking lot at 9:45 a.m., 15 minutes before the event was supposed to start. We were surprised the parking lot was mostly full. We had been watching the website for a few weeks and we knew we were there for the same reason as most of the others: three Labrador retriever/husky puppies were finally old enough to be adopted. We had to be some of the first people in or there was no way we would even get the chance to take one home.

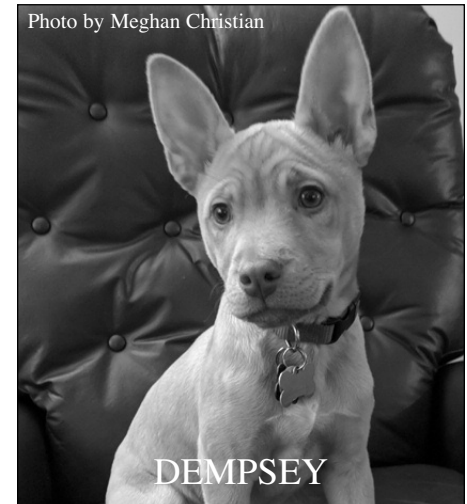
Five minutes before the event, we watched as a Humane Society volunteer unlocked the front door and we did not wait. We nearly sprinted inside and right back to the dog area like we worked there — we knew it so well from our past visits.

We looked into each cage, remembering some faces and seeing some new. The cacophony of dogs barking echoed off the walls as we checked each cage to try to find those puppies. In front of us, a mother and daughter were doing the same thing. I hoped they were the only other ones in front of us.

Then we turned the last corner and saw three little puppies in the first cage, all cowering a little as the big dogs barked around them. Two were reddish-brown; one was blond. As soon as I saw the blond puppy, I knew it was the one we needed to take home. Maybe it was because it was different from the others that caught my eye, but there was just something about it that said, "Take me home!"

A volunteer came by and asked the four of us now gathered in front of the puppies if we were interested. We all said yes and the volunteer opened the gate. "Go ahead and grab which one you want," she said, swinging the gate open and stepping out of the way. The daughter stepped in and grabbed one of the brown puppies. My heart quit pounding. Chad reached down and picked up the blond puppy and we were taken to a small office space where we could play with the animals and see if we wanted to take them home.

In the next 30 minutes, that blond puppy stole my heart. It was a girl. As soon as I got to hold her and she cuddled in my arms instead of trying to play, I knew I was in trouble. She went back and forth between Chad and me, taking turns in our laps and then occasionally playing with her sister. We were enthralled. When the volunteer came back in to ask if we wanted applications, none of us hesitated to say yes.



It has been about a month now since we brought home our puppy. We named her Dempsey, after an American soccer player. In her first days with us, our dream of having a traveling companion already came true. She has gone to family holiday parties, on walks with new dogs, and has made friends wherever she went.

But owning a puppy isn't always a dream. It's a lot of responsibility and we have had to adjust nearly every aspect of our lives — from little things like making sure controllers are out of her reach to big things like making sure we can afford to take her to the vet when she needs it. It is knowing that after-work drinks with co-workers or staying late at a party are no longer options since we have to be home to take her outside.

But while it has taken some sacrifice and adjustment, the reward is well worth it. Now when I come home from a long City Council meeting, I am greeted by the sounds of little paws on hardwood floors and a wagging tail. When my anxiety and depression make me feel worthless, she will climb in my lap, give me a kiss, and remind me in her own way that I am loved.

One month down and Chad and I are still excited to see how our dream dog continues to make our reality a little brighter.

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

JANUARY

By Grayce Scholt

Janus, a two-faced Roman coin looked backward, forward signifying a doorway from there to here, like the passing from one place to another or one day to the next or week or month or year; and yet this ancient coin evolved into our word signifying the passing through a doorway of days, weeks, months that we called January 2017 only to recognize our backward glance of hatreds, grudges, malice, blood, vials of blood that Janus, once a simple doorway, would've abhorred since it celebrated the hope that love might be waiting for us there.

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