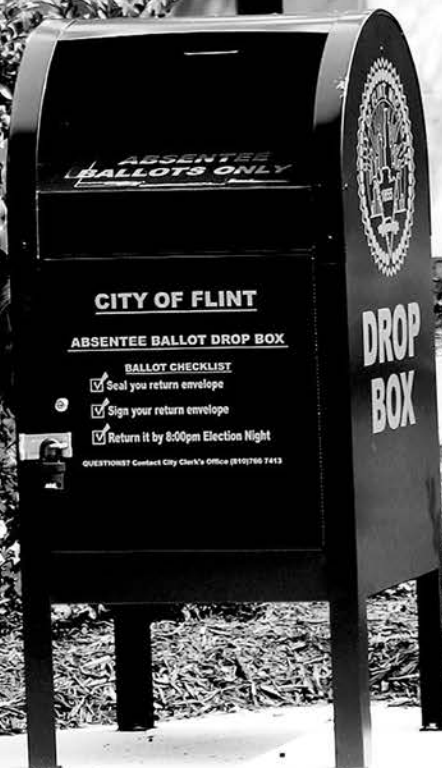


East Village

Magazine
October 2020



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Assistant Editor Tom Travis

Editor-at-Large Ted Nelson

Copy Editor Danielle Ward

Reporters Harold C. Ford

Madeleine Graham

Patsy Isenberg

Zach Neithercut

Coner Segren

Columnists Jan Worth-Nelson

Teddy Robertson

Paul Rozycki

Photographer Edwin D. Custer

Distribution Staff

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720 E. Second St.
Flint, Mich. 48503
(810) 233-7459

Website:
eastvillagemagazine.org

E-mail:
eastvillagemagazineflint@gmail.com

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Commentary *Beyond Trump or Biden – what’s on the rest of the ballot?*

By Paul Rozycki

Who’s your choice — Trump or Biden?

Sometimes it seems like the only thing on the ballot this year is Donald Trump vs. Joe Biden. It’s hard to turn on the TV without seeing an ad for either candidate. We’ve all felt the impact of the most divisive presidential contest in our lifetimes. With a month to go, it seems that this is the most important and critical presidential election in our lifetimes. The vacancy created by the passing of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg underscores the significance of this divisive election.

It looks like the turnout will be at record levels, and we may not have the results of the election until days later.

Some are saying that the post office is going to have problems with this election, and that mail-in/absentee ballots are going to cause all kinds of fraudulent voting. Others warn that Donald Trump may not leave the White House if he loses.

There is evidence that the Russians, and others, will be trying to influence the outcome of the 2020 presidential race.

Others fear that the presidential election will lead us to fascism, socialism, communism, or anarchy—or maybe all of those things.

How many of these things happen remains to be seen. But it’s going to be a contentious contest.

Beyond the presidential contest

And yet, for all the contention and conflict built into the presidential race, it’s easy to forget that there’s a lot more on the ballot this November. Beyond the presidential contest, we’ll be electing members of the U.S. House and Senate, the state House of Representatives, county officials, township officials, state Supreme Court, Circuit Court and District Court judges, school boards, university boards, and some city council members in Genesee County. On top of all that, there are two statewide pro-

posals, and a few local issues facing voters.

With that in mind, here’s a preview of those races beyond the presidential contest that we will be voting on in the weeks to come.

But, before leaving the presidential contest, it’s worth noting that, while Republican Donald Trump and Democrat Joe Biden have dominated the headlines, there are several minor parties running this year. The Libertarians, the U.S. Taxpayers Party, the Natural Law Party, and the Green Party will be on the Michigan ballot. While they have little chance of winning, the minor party candidates have sometimes played a role in deciding who does win. For example, in 2016, the Green Party candidate Jill Stein, received about 50,000 votes, while Hillary Clinton lost Michigan by a little over 10,000 votes.

The U.S. Senate race

Except for the state Supreme Court, the major statewide race is the contest between incumbent Democratic Sen. Gary Peters and Republican challenger John James. By almost every measure this is expected to be a close contest. Two years ago, James, who had been little known in Michigan, ran a strong campaign against Sen. Debbie Stabenow. Though he lost, he did better than expected, and many feel that Peters, as a first term senator is more vulnerable than Stabenow. This race is important, not only for Michigan, but will be a critical factor in determining whether the Democrats can gain the majority in the U.S. Senate. They may need to gain four seats, and if they lose Michigan it will be much more difficult.

The U.S. House race

Our county is part of the 5th Congressional District, which runs up the east coast of the state from Genesee to

(Continued on Page 12.)

Cover: Drop Box at City Hall — Remember to register and vote!



Photo of the Month: Low income housing

(Photo by Edwin D. Custer)

Education Beat *Flint Board to close Northwestern except for central kitchen*

By Harold C. Ford

“The big question: What to do with Northwestern?”

... Carrie Sekelsky, FCS executive director of finance, Sept. 9, 2020

“N-Dub” is the nickname proud graduates of Flint’s Northwestern High School often used to reference their alma mater. Wildcat pride has been obscured, however, by the financial dilemma the Northwestern campus has become for Flint Community Schools (FCS).

For more than a year, FCS leaders have wrestled with possible uses for the deteriorated facility. What to do with Northwestern’s 212,000 square feet has recently occupied more FCS board of education public meeting time than any other subject.

On Sept. 9, the FCS board quickly dispatched more than two dozen agenda items, usually with unanimous votes, in a meeting that lasted nearly 2.5 hours. However, more than 50 percent

of the board’s time (73 of 143 minutes) was spent on what to do with Northwestern, without resolution.

Five days later, at a special meeting called for the sole purpose of deciding Northwestern’s fate, the FCS board used the entirety of a 26-minute meeting as it decided to close the building except for that portion occupied by the district’s central kitchen.

Tradeoff: Northwestern closure for AC in elementary schools:

In the end, the FCS board was faced with a clear choice: either address needs at Northwestern at an estimated cost of \$4 million, or provide infrastructure upgrades to its elementary buildings, particularly heating and air conditioning.

At a June 9 FCS board meeting, Carrie Sekelsky, FCS executive director of finance, told the board that trying to make the Northwestern campus habitable for stu-

dents and staff “would be a severe cut on our general operating fund. There would be virtually nothing left in the budget for needed maintenance and upgrades at the other 12 buildings in the district.”

At that same meeting, Johnson Controls Inc. (JCI) painted a bleak picture of the infrastructure needs at Northwestern. Necessary repair work included: control valves; condensate piping; heat exchanger pumps; air handling units; classroom reheat coils; other heating and cooling coils; boilers; piping in tunnels; pneumatic controls; digital controls; and so on.

Herb Cavendish, JCI project team superintendent, warned board members of the possibility of a “catastrophic failure (meaning) the system will go completely down and the building would have to be closed.” Or worse.

It’s likely that Northwestern’s infrastructure has never had meaningful upgrades since the building’s opening in 1967.

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... Board

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“We should’ve never moved in that (Northwestern) building,” said Vera Perry, board trustee, on June 9 about the return of middle school students to the building last school year.

Nonetheless, the campus was reopened to FCS 7th and 8th graders for the 2019-20 school year during the administration of Derrick Lopez. Lopez was suspended from his position as FCS superintendent in April 2020 and dismissed two months later. He was replaced by Anita Steward, Flint’s current superintendent.

One of five reasons given for the dismissal of Lopez was “lack of plan while reopening the district’s Northwestern school building as a junior high school.”

“If we had known all this before, we would never have opened that building and used it,” observed Betty Ramsdell, FCS board secretary.

“We were not prepared to go to Northwestern,” reiterated Perry at the Sept. 9 meeting. “That’s why we’ve gotten dinged by OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) with two fines because we actually put children in a dangerous situation.”

At the meetings on Sept. 9 and Sept. 14, FCS board members moved assuredly toward using the district’s available funds for upgrades at its elementary buildings rather than Northwestern.

“The elementary schools have just got to be a major project for us,” argued Ramsdell, “... for those kids to come in and have good air to breathe, to be warm in the winter and cool in the summer. If we can give them a positive environment, that’s got to be our first priority.”

“A majority of our kids are in elementary buildings,” added Blake Strozier, board trustee. “Every child should have a comfortable learning environment.”

“I concur,” said Steward. “All of our elementary buildings need air.”

FCS enacted a balanced calendar beginning with the 2019-20 school year. Thus, Flint students start school earlier than most, in August, one of the hottest months of the year in Michigan, when high temper-

atures average 81.4 degrees Fahrenheit.

The eight FCS buildings newly targeted for heating and cooling upgrades include: Brownell; Eisenhower; Doyle/Ryder; Freeman; Holmes; Pierce; and Potter. Four buildings that already have implemented upgrades, or have plans for upgrades, include: Southwestern; Accelerated Learning Academy (formerly Scott); Neithercut; and Durant-Tuuri-Mott.

This plan of action received unanimous support from the FCS board on a 5-0 vote at its Sept. 16 meeting. JCI officials said implementation of the plan in the next four to six weeks would involve its engineering and equipment teams. “From there, we would start installs,” said Cavendish. Thus, infrastructure upgrade installations would likely begin in late fall or early winter.

Shifting priorities

In less than a year, a board that seemed opposed to closing Northwestern to the possibility of use by students is doing just that. “I would never, ever support closing Northwestern,” declared Carol McIntosh, board trustee, in Nov. 2019. “Avoiding the north side, avoiding Northwestern ... and running to Southwestern has not helped us.”

At that time, other board members seemed in solidarity with McIntosh’s sentiments:

- Diana Wright: “With my one vote, I will not vote to close another school.”
- Betty Ramsdell: “I can’t vote to close any schools, either.”
- Vera Perry: “I’m having a hard time with the closing of schools.”
- Casey Lester: “I wouldn’t vote to close any school before we closed the administration building.”

The considerable price tag for keeping the campus at G-2138 W. Carpenter Rd. open to students now seems too large to bear:

- “I can’t see putting any more money into Northwestern. ...” concluded Danielle Green, board trustee, on Sept. 14.
- We don’t have as much funding as is needed to fulfill (earlier plans), added Sekelsky.

Central kitchen stays at Northwestern

The central kitchen currently located in the Northwestern building will, for the time being, remain there.

“We’ve already put about a million dollars or more into that kitchen,” asserted Perry. “I am not going to be embarrassed anymore moving that kitchen.”

“It’s just not smart to move the kitchen,” declared McIntosh. “We should keep the kitchen where it’s at.”

With a background in civil engineering and architectural engineering, Strozier estimated that only about 15 percent of the Northwestern building is being used for the central kitchen.

“We’re kind of stuck with a lemon right now,” judged Strozier. “I think it was a bad location from the beginning. To move it would be seemingly unwise financially.”

“This is a complicated issue,” said Dan Mack, JCI account executive. He pointed out that Northwestern “is a very large building (and) the central kitchen takes up such a small area.” He noted that utilities (about \$200,000 annually) and maintenance costs are significant.

JCI’s Cavendish pointed out that gas and water lines into the building and the areas to be serviced for the central kitchen are at opposite ends. Those lines would need to be relocated.

Further, explained Cavendish, the majority of the building that would not be used would need to be “laid up,” or prepared for nonuse, particularly during the winter months. That would include inserting chemicals into the boilers and putting antifreeze into the plumbing so as to prevent bursting of pipes.

“To do it right is very expensive in terms of keeping the kitchen there and shutting down the rest of the building,” explained Dirk Tenhaaf, JCI engineer. “The building will need repairs if you continue to use it in any capacity.”

“I do know that trying to relocate is going to be quite expensive as well,” countered Bernard Gladney, SodexoMAGIC’S manager at the Northwestern kitchen. “Fiscally, it might not make sense.”

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

Flint voters still holding their breath with election season underway

By Tom Travis

Flint voters have been given some reassurance about safeguarding election processes in the weeks leading up to the presidential election by the 7th Circuit Court, where Judge Celeste Bell has granted the bulk of the relief sought by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and five Flint voters against



**7th Circuit Court Judge
Celeste Bell**
(Photo from County Court website)

Flint City Clerk Inez Brown.

In the end, after a series of motions and hearings over the summer, Judge Bell granted most of the requests sought by the ACLU, agreeing from the evidence presented there were problems in the handling of absentee applications, including delayed mailing and the closing of City Hall.

In her most recent ruling Sept. 14, Judge Bell addressed an issue raised about one word: clarifying how to interpret when an absentee ballot application is “received.” The City Clerk interpreted an application being “received” as only when it is “printed out.” Judge Bell ordered that once an application arrives in the email inbox at the City Clerk’s office, it is “received” and the clock starts ticking to get the ballot sent out. It was that interpretation by the Clerk’s office that led to 21- to 24-day delays in mailing the ballots.

Judge Bell granted most of the ACLU had requested in the original motion against Clerk Brown — all regarding the August primary. Then the ACLU filed an amended complaint concerning the upcoming Nov. 3 election.

But Bell told the ACLU attorneys

in her Sept. 14 ruling on the amended motion that the August primary election and the November general election are two separate events.

Agreeing with an attorney hired by City Clerk Brown, Christopher M. Trebilcock of the Clark Hill law firm in Detroit, Bell explained that while the August primary election is done and over with, ballots for the Nov. 3 election can’t be adjudicated on because “they don’t exist yet.”

The ballots for Nov. 3 hadn’t been printed nor distributed as of the date of that hearing, though they are scheduled to be mailed out beginning Sept. 24. Judge Bell stated, “I don’t see how trying to connect the August election to the November election can help anyone at this time.” But she suggested she would leave the door open for the ACLU to file a new law suit if needed based on what happens as the November processes proceed.

Brown’s lawyer said, “The City Clerk is being drawn into unnecessary litigation on unfounded fears that will need evidential support, so we ask the court to deny the motion to amend, and dismiss all

claims as ‘moot.’” Judge Bell did not dismiss anything; she only denied the amended complaint brought by the ACLU concerning what could happen in the weeks to come as the Nov. general election approaches.

Referring to the original ACLU motion, Judge Bell said, “We’ve dealt with the issues in the August election. I’m not saying they can’t occur.” But she left the door open for new motions to be filed if needed.

The wheels of democracy were slowed by closing City Hall; and other elements of the ACLU lawsuit

One issue that came into play in the ACLU complaints was that City Hall closed its doors on March 17 in an effort to lessen the spread of the deadly coronavirus. That action began to slow the wheels of democracy for Flint voters. With City Hall being closed, the City Clerk’s office on the 2nd floor was inaccessible to the public.

In its original motion, the ACLU claimed that the City Clerk’s office being

(Continued on Page 7.)



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... Election

(Continued from Page 6.)

closed to the public during an election season, discouraged voters from accessing absentee ballot applications and voting in person at the Clerk's office. This set the ACLU in motion to file a complaint in an effort to preserve voting rights. It wasn't until July 20 that the City Clerk's office announced that it would reopen, offering Monday through Friday hours and weekend hours.

Subsequently, Judge Bell heard arguments from the ACLU and City Attorney Angela Wheeler in late July in response to the complaint filed against

The printing of the ballots was delayed as the Court ruled whether or not attorney Chris Christensen's name could appear on the ballot.

Bell acknowledged that those issues caused delay to the City Clerk's meeting a statutory deadline of providing ballots during the 40 days prior to the election.

Bell continued, "Nonetheless, a substantial delay has occurred in providing absent voter applications and ballots that cannot be explained or excused by the unfortunate circumstances affecting the voters and the City Clerk."

Bell ordered that the voters of Flint are "in danger of irreparable harm through the loss of their constitutional absentee voting rights if the City Clerk fails to take immediate steps as required by this Order to comply with legal mandates regarding the issuance of absent voter ballots."

ACLU attorney Alec Gibbs stated in the July 21 hearing that "there may not have been nefarious actions but there has been systematic failures by the City Clerk's office." Gibbs added that "the time line presented establishes the City Clerk's office had no intention to comply.

"No other municipality in Genesee County has had this problem of getting absentee applications and ballots processed and issued," he said. "We have seen a pervasive pattern of non-compliance. The only thing left for the Flint residents is for this court to issue relief."

County elections official calls out City Clerk's errors

Following the Aug. 4 primary election, Genesee County Elections Supervisor Doreen Fulcher sent a letter to Inez Brown. In the letter, Fulcher listed at least 19 "deficiencies" and "failures" by the City Clerk's office in the primary election.

Brown never responded to that letter. However, she did speak at the next City Council meeting. City Council President Monica Galloway (7th Ward), by special order on the agenda, asked Brown to come before the council.

Council members asked Brown what help she needed for the Nov. 3

election. Brown responded by speaking to City Council for little over 30 minutes, explaining that in the next 45 days leading up to the Nov. 3 election what her staff would do.

Brown stated that election workers will have training and retraining sessions; additional election workers will be hired; Public Service Announcements (PSAs) will be produced and shared throughout the community on cable TV and YouTube; the Absentee Voter Counting Board (AVCB) will have additional training; and deputy clerks are available if a phone request is made to the Clerk's office to have a ballot picked up at someone's house. Also, Brown said she has invited Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson to visit Flint on a weekend yet to be decided.

In a follow-up phone call, after the initial publication of this story online, Genesee County Clerk John Gleason clarified that Fulcher composed the letter in her role as secretary



City Clerk Inez Brown speaking at press conference in August
(Photo by Tom Travis)

of the Board of Canvassers. The letter, he said, was not from him. While the letter was written on Gleason's County Clerk office letterhead, Gleason insisted that he knew nothing of the letter until after it was sent.



the City Clerk.

Bell ruled in favor of the ACLU, ordering the Flint City Clerk to comply with several terms, including the Clerk's office increasing open hours and days.

In addition, the judge ordered the City Clerk to present a daily report of absentee ballot applications to be presented to the Court.

Judge Bell offers poignant pandemic judgement in July 21 ruling

Bell stated in her July 21 ruling that the Court acknowledged there is "detrimental effect from the COVID-19 pandemic and the statewide shutdown" on the conduct of all governmental business.

Bell also acknowledged the Genesee County ballots were delayed due to candidate challenges.

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Democracy Beat

Council accepts \$475,000 grant to support City Clerk election processes; appointments made to three city boards

By Tom Travis

A \$475,625 grant for the Flint City Clerk's office to provide additional ballot drop boxes, additional staffing, strengthened election security, and processing of absentee ballots has been approved by the Flint City Council.

The grant, from the non-profit Center for Tech and Civic Life, (CTCL) comes on the heels of 7th Circuit Court Judge Celeste Bell ruling on complaints about voting and ballot processes from the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and five Flint voters against City Clerk Inez Brown.

Brown explained to the City Council in the Sept. 16 meeting that the money will be used to purchase eight additional ballot dropboxes, additional staffing to process the expected high number of absentee ballots in November's election, assist voters to be able to safely request absentee ballots, expand in-person voting opportunities, and expand the strategic voter education and outreach effort.

A press release from the City Clerk's office added the grant will provide cameras to monitor each location to ensure election security. "Additional funds are dedicated to increase staffing and pay for election inspectors, voter education, and outreach efforts, as well as additional election support," the release stated.

Brown said her office expects to hire an additional 250 workers for the November election. She said she normally has about 350 workers for elections, but due to the pandemic, many of the workers didn't show up for the August primary. Brown added election workers will be paid an additional \$100/day in hazard pay.

Brown indicated the additional workers hired will assist with the expected high number of absentee ballots in the general election. Brown said her office processed 9,300 absentee ballots in the primary election. She explained the number of primary election absentee ballots usually

triples at the general election, and she expects the number of absentee ballots to swell well to more than 20,000 in the November election.

A final report with documentation and the reasoning for any expenses is to be submitted to the granting organization by Jan. 31, 2021. Any unused amount from the \$475,625 by the Clerk's office would have to be returned to CTCL, Brown said.

Clerk provided a six-page grant plan

A source who requested anonymity shared with *EVM* the grant plan Brown drafted and that was submitted in the \$475,625 grant application. In the opening paragraphs, the City Clerk described dire financial needs for "cash-strapped" clerk offices across the country due to the high number of expected mail-in ballots.

In that document, Brown stated, "Michigan election officials typically conduct presidential elections with 25 - 30% of the voters casting ballots by mail and 70 - 75% casting them in-person on election day. It now appears that mail balloting may account for 65 - 70% of the turnout. This trend is breaking municipal election budgets beginning with the higher-than-expected mail turnout in the August primary that will continue through the November General Election."

The entire six-page grant plan can be viewed at the end of this story in its online version at eastvillagemagazine.org.

Council approves appointments to three boards

In other business, meeting for a total of 10 hours over two days, the Council approved eight out of nine appointments brought to them.

• Patrick D. Julian was approved for appointment to the Ethics and

Accountability Board. Julian is from the 5th Ward and was appointed by Councilperson Jerri Winfrey-Carter

• Florlisa Stebbins was approved for appointment to the Zoning Board of Appeals. Stebbins is from the 1st Ward and will serve a three-year term beginning Sept. 14, 2020.

• Marsha L. Wesley, a Flint resident, was approved to serve on the Flint Hospital Building Authority for a five-year term beginning Sept. 2020 to May 2025. Wesley is replacing Thomas S. James, whose term expired in May 2019.

• Gregory Viener, a resident of Byron, MI, was approved to serve on the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) Board of Directors as a banking professional. Viener's appointment is a six-year term beginning Sept. 2020, expiring September 2026.

The following were approved to serve on the Hurley Board of Hospital Managers appointments. Hurley is the City's only public hospital.

• Jessie L. Collins, a Flint resident, was reapproved to serve an additional five year term from Sept. 2020 to April 2025.

• Dr. Brian Nolan (M.D.), of Grand Blanc, was reapproved to serve an additional five year term from Sept. 2020 to April 2025.

• DeAndra Larkin, a Flint resident, was approved for appointment to serve for five years from Sept. 2020 to April 2025. Larkin replaces Dr. Susan Borrego, whose term expired April 30, 2020.

• Brenda Williams, a Flint resident, was approved for appointment to serve for five years from Sept. 2020 to April 2024. Williams replaces Carl Bekofske, whose term expired April 30, 2020.

• Dr. Samir Elian, was not approved. By the time the council got

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... Council

(Continued from Page 8.)

around to voting for Dr. Elian, the required number of medical professionals on the Hurley Board of Managers had already been met.

The public can participate and listen to bi-monthly City Council meetings

The City Council continues to meet twice a month at 5:30 p.m. second and fourth Mondays by video conference.

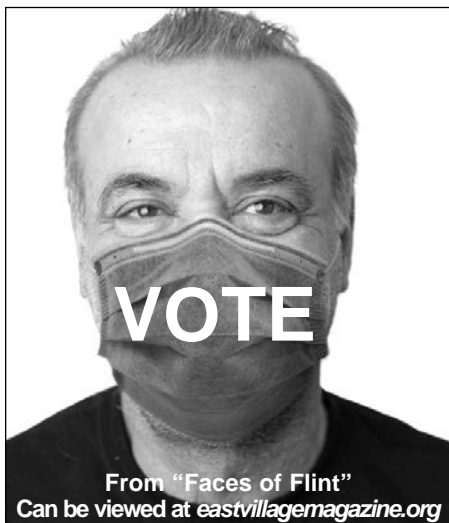
The public can participate in the council meeting by emailing comments to CouncilPublicComment@cityofflint.com no later than 10 minutes prior to the start of the meetings. The emailed comments will be read by the City Clerk staff.

The public and members of the press can listen to the meeting online by livestream at www.youtube.com/user/spectacteliv or through Start Meeting Solution by dialing 617-944-8177.

Those with disabilities may participate in the meeting by the above-mentioned means and by emailing a request for an accommodation to CouncilPublicComment@cityofflint.com with the subject line "Request for Accommodation."

Anyone with further questions about participating in the council meeting may call the City Clerk's office at 810-766-7418.

EVM Assistant Editor Tom Travis can be reached at tomntravis@gmail.com.



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Community leaders and clergy defend City Clerk and call on County Clerk to cease and desist

In response to Fulcher's letter from Gleason's office, Pastor Chris Martin and a group called Flint Unity Coalition of Pastors held a press conference Aug. 25 to defend Brown.

Pastor Chris Martin spoke for the group, which included City Council President Monica Galloway (7th Ward) and Councilperson Eric Mays (1st Ward). Martin stated, "There have been no misgivings or malfeasance in the City Clerk's office," Martin declared at the press conference. "John Gleason needs to cease and desist his bullying tactics against Ms. Inez Brown."

Asked what level of accountability the County Clerk's office has over the Flint City Clerk's office, Gleason replied, "None." The Genesee County website suggests there is some jurisdiction, but ultimately the City Clerk answers to the Flint City Council.

Resources for voters

Voters are reminded that informa-

tion about how to vote and absentee ballot application and tracking the process of how your application is handled can be seen at www.vote.org. Additional voter information can be seen at the Michigan Secretary of State's website, www.michigan.gov/sos. According to the Secretary of State's absentee voting page, voters can request an absentee ballot until 5 p.m. on the Friday before the election.

The Detroit News reported that a Michigan Judge said that city clerks must accept absentee ballots if they are post-marked by Nov. 2 and are received within 14 days after the election. This will change the final results of election night from being within hours to two weeks.

EVM assistant editor Tom Travis can be reached at tomntravis@gmail.com.

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Flint City Hall, Feb. 1969
Antoinette Curran (L) and Sandra Epps

Your Step-By-Step Guide to Voting in 2020

- Do not procrastinate
Use the MVIC website for information and access to everything you NEED to know—delay puts stress on you and stress on the system
- Visit the **MVIC** site to get registered : Michigan.gov/vote
(or check your registration even if you ‘know’ you are a voter)
 - You must have a MI-issued driver’s license or ID to use this site
 - After October 19th, you must register in person with your local clerk.
 - Get Voter Registration Card (within 2 weeks of registering)
- Get prepared by looking at your ballot at the **MVIC** website
 - You can also see your ballot, with candidate information, if provided, at the LWV’s online voter guide: VOTE411.org
 - Learn more at LWVFlintArea.org
- Apply for your Absentee Ballot (if you wish)
 - Apply at MVIC (online) or with local clerk (paper)
 - Allow minimum 1 week mail processing at every step
 - Track your AV ballot status at the MVIC website
 - When your **BALLOT** is marked ‘RECEIVED,’ then you know your signature has been verified and your ballot is in the queue to be counted
 - If your ballot is **NOT** marked ‘Received’ *prior* to Election Day (2 weeks from sending), contact your clerk to see if you need to spoil your ballot and cast a new one
 - IF you make a mistake, let your clerk know you want to **SPOIL** your ballot and get a new one (can be done through the Monday prior to Election Day)
- Polls are open from 7am to 8pm. Those in line by 8pm will be able to vote.
- If you have any problems, on Election Day, call **866-OUR-VOTE**, where people (and legal professionals) are ready to handle problems on Election Day!
- Feel **GOOD**, you helped secure Representative Democracy!
- Consider training to be an Election Inspector—it is a great public service!

MVIC Website



VOTE411.org

Election Info You Need

Questions? Contact the LWV of the Flint Area—LWVFlintArea.org—LWVFlintArea@gmail.com

THIS MONTH IN THE VILLAGE

"This Month" highlights a selection of events available to our readers — beginning after our publication date of Oct. 5. It is not an exhaustive list, rather a sampling of opportunities in the city, which, due to the pandemic, is currently very limited. To submit events for our November issue, email your event to pisenber@gmail.com by Oct. 20.

"Faces of Flint"

This video, created by a team entirely from Flint, stars 130 faces of people you may know. Flint musicians, a message by *East Village Magazine's* Ted Nelson, photography by former Flint resident Dan White and editing by Justin Brown was all made possible by *East Village Magazine*, The League of Women Voters and other donors. Watch on your TV or other device and share it with family and friends. Available on YouTube, or for easy viewing go to: eastvillagemagazine.org.

Flint Farmers' Market

Open Tues. and Thurs. 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., and Sat. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Safety measures have been put in place.

Flint Farmers' Market
300 East First St., Flint

For more info visit flintfarmersmarket.com.

Halloween Ghosts & Goodies 2020 Drive Thru

Beginning Oct. 3

5-9 p.m. Oct. 3-4, 9-11, 16-18, 23-25, and 28-31

Take a fun-filled drive through Crossroads Village and enjoy Halloween displays and receive a Ghosts & Goodies treat bag for each person in the vehicle.

Crossroads Village

6140 Bray Rd., Flint

For more info visit

geneseecountyparks.org/crossroads-village.

Tickets are \$20 per vehicle.

Flint Public Library Used Book Sale

Oct. 15

9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Thursday

There will be a variety of used books, DVDs, CDs, and audio books for sale. The event will be outside in the Farmers' Market Pavilion, but masks are required.

Proceeds are used for various programs that the library sponsors. Donations of books and other items are at Dr. Mukkamala's warehouse at 1111 James P. Cole on the first Saturday of the month from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Flint Farmers' Market Pavilion

300 East First St., Flint

For more info visit fpl.info or contact Karen

Wilkinson from Friends of the Flint Public Library

at kwilkins@kettering.edu.

Flint Institute of Arts

Reopened July 6.

Open Mon. through

Sat. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.,

and Sun. 1 to 5 p.m.

Safety measures have

been put in place.

Flint Institute of Arts

1120 E. Kearsley St., Flint

For info visit flintarts.org.

Music in the Heart of the City

Oct. 25

4 p.m. Sunday

This performance will tentatively feature

Flute - Townes Miller

Soprano- Brittnee Seimon,

Piano- Carl Angelo.

Patrons must be masked and enter through

the garden door off of Saginaw Street.

Seats are marked for social distancing.

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

711 Saginaw St., Flint

For more info and to make sure the concert is still

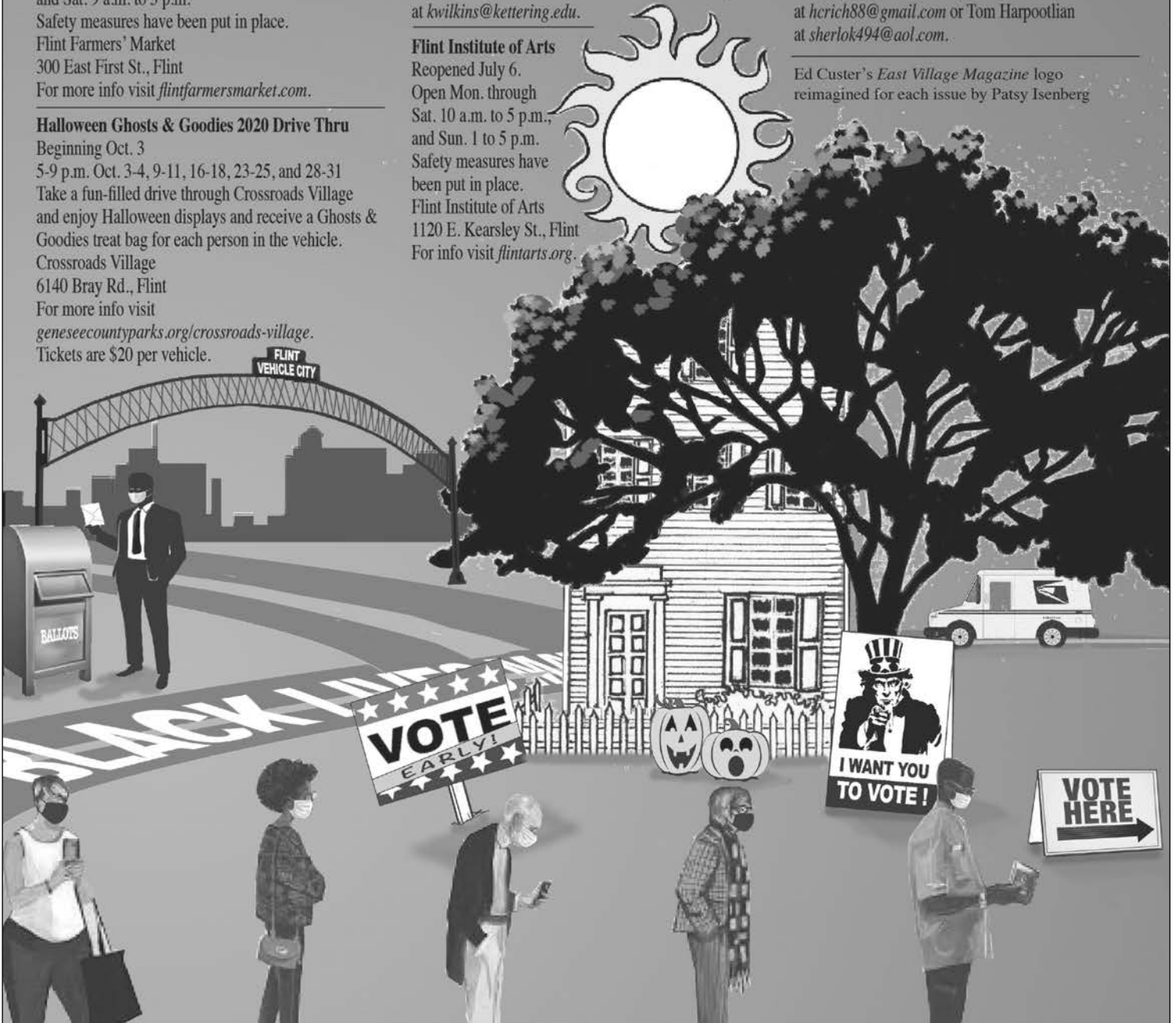
taking place contact: Holly Richardson

at hrrich88@gmail.com or Tom Harpootlian

at sherlok494@aol.com.

Ed Custer's *East Village Magazine* logo

reimagined for each issue by Patsy Isenberg



... Ballot

(Continued from Page 3.)

Iosco County. Incumbent Democrat Dan Kildee is in his fourth term, having served since 2013. While the district has been solidly Democratic, Donald Trump did well in several areas, and his Republican opponent, Tim Kelly, has been running a somewhat more visible campaign than most Republicans have in past years.

The State House of Representatives

There are four State House districts within Genesee County.

The 48th District

The major race to watch, and the most competitive, will be in the 48th District, where Democratic incumbent Sheryl Kennedy is facing Republican David Martin. The district covers the northern tier of townships in Genesee County, and while Kennedy and other Democrats have done well in past years, much of the district voted for Trump in 2016. Martin, who served on the County Board of Commissioners, is putting on a strong campaign, with significant funding from the Republican Party.

The 34th District

The 34th State House District covers much of the northern and central parts of the city of Flint, and is currently represented by Democrat Cynthia Neeley, the wife of Flint's mayor. She is opposed by Republican James Miraglia. The district is strongly Democratic, and Neeley has a strong advantage.

The 49th District

The 49th District covers Flint and Flushing townships, and the south central part of the city of Flint. It is currently represented by John Cherry Jr., the son of for-

mer Lt. Governor John Cherry and State Representative Pam Faris. Like most of Flint, the district is strongly Democratic and Cherry is favored over his Republican challenger Bryan Lutz.

The 50th District

The 50th District includes Burton and the Grand Blanc area, and is currently represented by Democrat Tim Sneller. His opponent is Republican Christina Fitchett-Hickson. The area has usually gone for the Democrats.



Political ad collage
(Photo by Paul Rozycki)

The 51st District

The 51st District, which covers most of southern Genesee County, is the only State House seat in the county where Republicans have won consistently. Incumbent Mike Mueller is facing a challenge from Democrat Brad May.

Genesee County contests

Voters will be electing a long list of county officials on Nov. 3 as well.

Incumbent Democratic Sheriff Chris Swanson will face Republican Stephen Sanford to be the top law enforcement officer in the county.

County Prosecutor David Leyton, a Democrat, is unopposed.

County Clerk/Register of Deeds, Democrat John Gleason, will face Republican Jesse Couch to earn the next full term.

Incumbent Democratic County Treasurer Deb Cherry faces a challenge from Republican Deborah Hass.

Democrat Drain Commissioner Jeff Wright is unopposed in November, as is County Surveyor Kim Carlson.

Of the nine members of the Genesee County Commission, four of them are within the city.

In the 1st District (Mount Morris Township and north Flint), Democratic incumbent Bryant Nolden is unopposed.

In the 2nd District (central and East Flint), Democrat Charles Winfrey is unopposed.

In the 3rd District (Burton, east Flint, part of Genesee Township), incumbent Democrat Ellen Ellenburg faces Republican Gary Goetzinger.

In the 4th District (southwest Flint and Flint Township) Democrat Domonique Clemons is unopposed.

Judicial contests

A number of judicial candidates are unopposed, but there are several contests of local interest.

Circuit Court

A major contest is for the open position on the 7th Circuit Court, where Chris Christenson and Herman Marable Jr. are facing off for a six-year term.

District Court

For the 67th District Court (2nd division), incumbent Jessica Hammon is being challenged by Dawn Weier.

For the 67th District Court (5th division), Torchio Feaster and Tabitha Marsh are competing for the open seat.

State Supreme Court

There are seven candidates compet-

(Continued on Page 13.)

... Ballot

(Continued from Page 12.)

ing for two positions on the Supreme Court.

School Boards

Most of the schools in the county are also electing members to their boards.

For the Flint Community Schools, a dozen candidates have filed to fill three positions for a six-year term. They are: Timothy Abdul-Matin, Mario DeSean Booker, Michael D. Doan, Joyce Ellis-McNeal, Antonio V. Forte II, Ariana Hawk, Jaron Houston, Laura Gillespie MacIntyre, Billie Mitchell, Anita M. Moore, Roemon M. Murphy, and Leondrew Wesley.

Mott Community College is also electing two new board members for six-year terms. The candidates are: Janet Couch, John Daly, Kris Johns, David Lossing, Michael J. Stikovich, Anoop K. Todd, and Rafael Christopher Turner.

Voters will also be choosing the governing boards of the University of Michigan, Michigan State University and Wayne State University, as well as the State Board of Education.

City and village elections

The cities of Linden, Davison, Montrose, Mount Morris and Swartz Creek will be electing mayors and city council members. The villages of Lennon, Otter Lake, Gaines, Goodrich and Otisville are also electing their officials.

Townships

All of the 17 townships in Genesee County will be electing supervisors, treasurers, clerks and trustees.

Ballot proposals

There are two statewide proposals on the ballot this November.

Proposal 20-1 would amend the state constitution to allow money from oil and gas drilling on state-owned lands to be used for creation and maintenance of state parks, nature areas, and other public recreation

facilities.

Proposal 20-2 would amend the state constitution to require a search warrant to access an individual's electronic data or electronic communications.

Locally, both Flushing and Linden schools have bond issue or millage proposals on the ballot.

Where to learn more

As long as this list has been, it doesn't include every election in Genesee County — there are simply too many contests to include in a single column. However, there are several places where you can find out more about your own local contests. The Genesee County Clerk's website, gc4me.com, will give a full list of everyone running in the county, along with contact information for the candidates. There are 41 pages of candidates. The League of Women Voters also gives voters a look at their own ballot, along with information about the candidates. Their site is Vote411.org. The Michigan Secretary of State's website (Michigan.gov/vote) will show a sample ballot and allow voters to check the status of absentee ballots.

This year, many if not most, voters will be voting absentee or by mail. With a list of candidates this long, that may actually be an advantage. Voters will have more time to review their ballots, and learn more about the candidates before they cast their votes.

If you are voting by mail, or with a drop box, vote early, and take the time to check your ballot and sign the envelope. It's a critical election. However you vote, be sure to vote!

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

Lead/galvanized tainted pipes replaced so far in Flint:

9,734

Because of the governor's order, no pipeline replacements were conducted in April or May, but work has resumed. Totals as of August 31 were 9,734 lead or galvanized pipes replaced, 26,106 pipes excavated.

A total of 16,372 pipes have been discovered to be copper service lines.

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College of Innovation and Technology launched at UM-Flint

By Coner Segren

Creation of a new academic unit called the College of Innovation and Technology (CIT) has been announced by the University of Michigan-Flint. The new college, approved last week by the University Board of Regents, is being made possible in part by a \$10 million grant from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation.

UM-Flint Chancellor Deba Dutta announced the news at a Zoom press conference, describing what it will mean for the university, the new college, and its students. “There are many engineering colleges in the state of Michigan. Freestanding Technology colleges, I think it’s one or two only,” Dutta said.

“Technology is applied engineering. So, if you look at engineering curriculums, these are typically math and science. In tech, you’re preparing students to be more applied, more hands-on. So, when you talk to people in industry, they will say it is not at all difficult to have a pool of engineers to draw on. But in the state of Michigan there aren’t too many technology colleges.”

All told, he noted, the Mott Foundation has contributed \$74 million dollars to UM-Flint over the last half-century. The \$10 million grant will cover the majority of the start-up and operating costs of the college, including personnel, equipment, and other administrative costs, and will not add to the overall budget for the university, according to UM-Flint spokesperson Jen Hogan.

Hogan also confirmed that taxpayer contributions will not increase due to the new unit and costs for the funding will be built into the university budget for the five-year duration of the startup of the CIT.

Ridgeway White, president and CEO of the Mott Foundation and great-grandson of C.S. Mott, held up his great-grandfather as an example of the innovation the new college is seeking to harness. White said, “I think C.S. Mott would applaud this grant.”

Recalling from C.S. Mott’s life, White added, “He once took an order for 500 automobile axles before he had built one and then said he sweated blood to get

the job done. The CIT is going to provide the kind of education and hands-on training that will produce the next generation of innovators, risk-takers and industry leaders that come from Flint.”

College of Innovation designed to create pathways to employment for graduates

The CIT is one part of a broader plan announced in January of this year called Project 2020. According to Dutta, that plan calls for significant investment in initiatives aimed at fostering student success, such as increasing the number of academic advisors, creating additional scholarships, and creating career pathways to ensure employment for graduates, according to a press release put out by UM-Flint.

The CIT will bring the total number of colleges to six. Each existing college will remain the same. The CIT will be an entirely new unit that will collaborate with the existing units, according to Hogan.

The CIT is currently selecting a dean for the college, who will then fill other positions as necessary ahead of the CIT’s expected launch in fall of 2021. The college also does not yet have its own building. As of now, the administrative office of the college and all classes will be housed in existing space and classrooms.

The CIT will also be complemented by the in-process expansion of the Murchie Science Building, which means greater resources for S.T.E.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) students, according to the campus’s homepage.

The CIT will offer four-year bachelor’s degrees for students looking to enter fields such as aerospace, automotive, manufacturing, and artificial intelligence, Dutta said.

“The technology-intensive future demands that we prepare our graduates to develop and apply technology in new ways that will benefit society,” Dutta said. “At the CIT, faculty will encourage students to pursue creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship as they earn their

technology degrees in new and emerging sectors of the economy.”

According to career outlooks for Michigan through 2028 described in a press release follow-up to the announcement, these fields are expected to grow substantially over the next decade. Local industry leaders and elected officials celebrated the move, saying it would help UM-Flint’s enrollment and the regional economy.

“General Motors has a special interest in the revitalization of Flint, the birthplace of our company. UM-Flint’s College of Innovation and Technology is a bold and compelling initiative. We look forward to working with their leadership to help shape programs that will produce highly skilled, technologically savvy, job-ready graduates to help boost regional competitiveness,” said Kimberly J. Brycz, senior vice president of Global Human Resources at General Motors.

Congressman Dan Kildee echoed these sentiments. “I commend UM-Flint for announcing its new College of Innovation and Technology. The CIT will offer Michigan students an affordable S.T.E.M. education, where they will receive the hands-on training and in-demand skills that they need to compete in the workforce,” Kildee said.

Kildee continued, “A S.T.E.M. education opens the door to good-paying science and technology jobs that are critical to building our local and national economic competitiveness. We must make sure that we have workers ready for these jobs in the global economy.”

Dutta said the university is preparing immediately for the launch of the CIT and that he is thankful for the support received from the community.

“UM-Flint is fortunate to be in an area that is fully invested in its vision and endorses the creation of the CIT,” Dutta said.

“Thanks to the ongoing generosity of partners such as the Mott Foundation, we are able to quickly move this concept to reality.”

EVM reporter Coner Segren can be reached at csegren@umich.edu

... Kitchen

(Continued from Page 16.)

ing. I have read her cookbooks, which I enjoyed. But still — I never, ever tried any of her recipes.

Ina Garten seemed like one of those people you can sit down with and have a cup of coffee or a brewski. She seemed like a normal person. The recipes she was making on her videos seemed almost elementary, yet they turned out beautiful and filled with flavor. She explains her recipes quickly, in less than five minutes, and shows you what she is doing.

Here I have to make a confession: I enjoy watching cooking shows, but I have never tried their recipes.

So if I was going to do one of these Barefoot Contessa recipes, I realized that I would have to change. I was going to have to go to the grocery store, which I despise. But I chose a couple of Ina's recipes, wrote down the ingredients and headed to Meijer.

I ended up buying things I had never bought in my life: beef broth, chicken stock, bullion cubes, capenelli noodles. And apparently virginity is very important when buying olive oil, so I got some of that EXTRA virgin oil, Italian sausage and a bottle of red wine — Ina puts that in a lot of her recipes.

Since reading in horror my lab blood report, I haven't been to a fast food restaurant and I've eaten out far less — mainly because my fridge is filled with leftovers of all the dishes I've been making.

Things I've learned from this culinary adventure of cooking in my own kitchen are: I'm a very picky and finicky eater, I love good and flavorful food; processed foods do not impress me (except Doritos and Reeses Peanut Butter Cups). Some recipes are labor intensive and I need to eat and rest before I start them — like lasagna. And others are so easy you hardly need to think about them (like lemon zest campanelli and pot roast).

My friend Bridgette, a graduate of culinary school, has helped me with tips like how to properly slice an onion and other vegetables, how to cook up tofu, and the difference between scallions and onions. She even offered her electric knife sharpener and got my knives kitchen-

ready. I am learning you use knives a lot when you cook from scratch at home.

My favorite dishes have been “one pot dinners” — the kind where you throw in noodles, vegetables, and other fixins, cook it and serve it up. Such good stuff.

When I finally went in to consult with my doctor about my elevated cholesterol levels, I was pleased to find she and I were on the same page. She sounded the alarm and let me know in no uncertain terms that my cholesterol was bad and needed to be dealt with. But she and I agreed — starting with lifestyle changes was the best way to begin tackling this matter.

I feel like I've aged 25 years during the pandemic. We all feel that way, probably. The fact is I'm just 7 months older since the pandemic began. But my body is sending me messages — you're not 25 anymore and your body needs more TLC than 25 years ago.

Cooking is turning out to be like playing the piano. I started playing the piano when I was 7. I took lessons for nearly 20 years straight. When I first started to learn piano, I learned by reading music, very carefully associating the musical notes written on the page to where my fingers needed to go on the keyboard.

Now, after playing the piano for over forty years, I can sit at the piano and look at a sheet of music and kind of shrug my shoulders and say, “Umph, that's a nice suggestion but I'm gonna play it this way” And then I just play the song how I want to, giving little regard to the music written on the page.

At this point I'm reading recipes very, very closely. I'm printing them off or keeping my laptop in the kitchen with me to read each step and measurement. Slowly, I see I am getting more and more comfortable, not looking so closely at the recipe and just winging it. I've messed up on some dishes doing this ... too salty, too much liquid.

But I haven't played every piano song perfectly during my life, either. Embrace the mistakes, gather what you've learned and move forward. Maybe these are the lessons learned in the pandemic.

EVM Assistant Editor Tom Travis can be reached at tomntravis@gmail.com.

Unclassified ads

• **Tools Needed:** We are mentoring a student enrolled in auto class at Mott. We are in need of tools. Please check grandpa's, dad's, or mom's toolbox for donation or sale of wrenches, pliers, screwdriver sockets compression gauges, etc; Thank you! IT TAKES A VILLAGE and there's none better than East Village. Call Jerry at 714-342-7531.

• **Studio Apartment for Rent:** Clean, partially furnished, upstairs. Walking distance to UM- Flint and Mott College. Call 810-625-3924 for appointment. Please leave a message.

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Donations to *East Village Magazine* are tax deductible. For easy giving, go to: eastvillagemagazine.org



VOTING IS
 **people power**

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Village Life

Kitchen anxiety turns to kitchen peace

By Tom Travis

Since I got divorced, my eating and cooking life have gone downhill. I have wallowed in my self-deprecation of being a terrible cook, my great lack of desire to cook and literally being afraid of the kitchen.

With the pandemic still shaping decisions in most of my life and the latest scolding from my doctor, I've realized it's time to face my fears. Forgetting my mask in my car every time I try to go to a restaurant, fidgeting with my mask as I try to shop for groceries, watching others not give a care how they wear their masks — escalates the pandemic anxiety.

I need peace. So off to the kitchen I go.

I've been blessed with good cooks all my life, beginning with my first 18 years with my mom. She was a homemaker, a stay-at-home mom. She's even said she wanted her "vocation" to be to raise a family. And she did just that ... we all turned out kind of okay.

As a kid, it seemed to me that my mom was a whiz in the kitchen. She may not take that accolade, but I suppose every little kid thinks his or her mom is the world's best chef. She always had a meal ready.

She made breakfast, lunch and dinner for me for 18 years and then some: French toast, pancakes, bacon, oatmeal, a cup of grape juice for breakfast; a tuna fish sandwich and carrot

sticks at lunch; and then dinner — pot roast, pork chops, hamburgers, spaghetti, you name it. All the "big" dishes folks have for dinner, my mom made them. Then came college food for a few years and then I married a great cook.

So for the vast majority of my life I've had excellent cooks preparing meals for me.

Even the thought of trying to cook for myself sent me into an anxiety attack. My culinary skills have amounted to making the occasional scrambled eggs, popcorn or toasting an English muffin. That has been about it!

But now change is on the horizon. I recently submitted to my yearly check-up with my doctor, and she ordered a complete blood test — one of those \$300 type blood tests ... yikes! The phlebotomist sucked out four vials of wine-colored blood and sent it off to Quest labs.

Then the results came back. I sat eating my morning oatmeal and honey

cholesterol levels.

My first thought was, well at least, right now, I'm eating oatmeal. That's good, right? Isn't that good?

My pandemic eating history flashed before my eyes. McDonald's, weekly White Horse strombolis and pizza (you know, they're half off on the weekends), Soggy Bottom's awesome chicken tenders made in beer batter, and did I mention bags of potato chips? This was my pandemic menu.

These little red spots on the lab app were screaming at me. The message was clear — adjust your eating habits or doom!

I immediately googled "If I have high cholesterol what should I eat?" or, "If I have high cholesterol what should I NOT be eating?" I can't remember, but I googled one of those statements. Dr. Google confirmed I was eating the wrong things.

I began to realize my eating habits were a roller coaster ranging from super healthy things like kale salad with grilled chicken to horrifically unhealthy indulgences like stromboli and mozzarella sticks.

Then in my scrolling through YouTube looking for what to do, I came across a lovely person. It wasn't Martha Stewart (whom I love). This new person was preparing beautiful dishes in a beautiful kitchen, and she had a lovely voice.

It was Ina Garten the famous "Barefoot Contessa." I'd never heard of her and was immediately drawn into her soft, happy, and jovial manner of preparing her scrumptious recipes.

As I've said I'm a fan of Martha Stewart but she always seems a bit elitist and dismissive (like me) when cook-

(Continued on Page 15.)



Tom's cooking collage from past month (from left to right clockwise): Stuffed peppers with rice and quinoa, lasagna, lemon zest capellini, and prep for pot roast.

(Photo by Tom Travis)

with a cup of coffee, reading the dire numbers of my blood tests from the lab app on my phone.

A lot of it was good news. Quest labs puts these little, nice, green colors beside the good stuff. But as I scrolled down, the green changed to red, red, red and more red. Red's not good by the way. All the red stuff was next to my