VOLUME 24 • NUMBER 21

MICHIGAN BANNER
Mid-Michigan's Regional Newspaper

NOVEMBER 1 - 15, 2026



PICS OF THE WEEK
Saginaw welcomes delegation from Tokushima, Japan

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Michigan voters face major decisions Nov. 3



MICHIGAN VOTERS WILL ELECT A NEW GOVERNOR, A U.S. SENATOR AND LOCAL OFFICIALS TUESDAY, NOV. 3, WHILE DECIDING STATEWIDE AND COMMUNITY BALLOT PROPOSALS. (FILE PHOTO)

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — Michigan voters will head to the polls Tuesday, Nov. 3, to elect new leaders and decide ballot proposals that could shape communities across the state for years to come.

The 2026 midterm elections feature several major statewide contests, including the race for governor between Democrat Jocelyn Benson, Republican John James and other candidates seeking to succeed Gov. Gretchen Whitmer. Voters will also select a new U.S. senator, with Democrat Abdul El-Sayed and Republican Mike Rogers among the candidates competing for

Continues on pg 2, Nov. 3 Elections

FEATURED STORY

Visit The Michigan Banner's special election section inside this issue for more information about the candidates, races and proposals on the Nov. 3 ballot.

POLITICS, PG 16





Michigan teens can still make a difference this election

YOUTH BANNER, COVER



Civil rights leader Dolores Huerta dies at 96, leaving a lasting legacy

LATINO BANNER, COVER

From cover, Nov. 3 Elections

the seat being vacated by Sen. Gary Peters.

Closer to home, voters throughout the Great Lakes Bay Region and Flint will decide important local races. Saginaw residents will elect City Council members, while Flint voters will choose a mayor and representatives for all nine City Council wards. Bay City voters will also elect City Commission members in five wards.

Ballot proposals will give residents a voice in decisions involving government operations, property taxes, education and public services. Among them is a proposal to eliminate Saginaw's longstanding property tax revenue cap. Statewide, voters will consider whether to convene a constitutional convention and whether to establish additional restrictions and disclosure requirements involving political contributions and campaign communications.

To help readers better understand the candidates and issues, The Michigan Banner has prepared a special election section included in this edition. The section offers a closer look at major statewide and local races, candidate information, ballot proposals and the issues affecting Michigan communities.

The special section also includes practical voting information to help residents prepare for Election Day.

Polls will be open Tuesday from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Voters can confirm their polling locations, check their registration status and review sample ballots at Michigan.gov/Vote.

Look for The Michigan Banner's special election section inside this issue for more information about the candidates, races and proposals on the Nov. 3 ballot.



NOVEMBER 1, 1957

On November 1, 1957, the iconic Mackinac Bridge officially opened to traffic, connecting Michigan's Lower and Upper Peninsulas across the Straits of Mackinac.

The massive suspension bridge—affectionately known as "Big Mac"—replaced a fleet of slow ferries that previously transported cars and passengers between St. Ignace and Mackinaw City.

Designed by engineer David B. Steinman, the bridge spans approximately 5 miles (total project length including approaches is about 8 miles), making it one of the longest suspension bridges in the world.



MICHIGAN BANNER
301 E Genesee Ave, Suite 201
Saginaw, MI 48607
989.249.3882
info@michiganbanner.org

PUBLISHER
Michelle McCoy

VP OF SALES
Jerome Buckley

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING
Ashley N. Jackson

EDITOR EMERITUS
Rae Lynn Buckley

MISSION

The Michigan Banner, Latino Banner and Youth Banner operate and serve as a print and online media venue committed to educating, informing and enlightening our readership regarding events and news that directly and indirectly affect the communities regionally and globally. Furthermore, to serve as a catalyst and a link for cultivating young adults as entrepreneurial and business leaders for the future.

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MICHIGAN YOUTH BANNER
VOLUME 8 • NUMBER 21
Celebrating 8 YEARS

Too young to vote? Michigan teens can still make a difference this election

BY MB STAFF

Michigan voters will head to the polls Tuesday, Nov. 3, but thousands of teenagers will be watching from the sidelines because they are not yet old enough to cast a ballot.

That doesn't mean they have to sit out the election process.

Michigan offers several opportunities for young people to learn about elections, become involved in their communities and prepare for the day they can vote.



MICHIGAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN THE MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF STATE'S MI VOTE MATTERS INITIATIVE, WHICH SUPPORTS STUDENT CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND VOTER EDUCATION. (FILE PHOTO)

You can preregister at 16

Michigan residents who are U.S. citizens can preregister to vote when they turn 16, provided they meet the state's other eligibility requirements.

The law allows eligible 16- and 17-year-olds to complete the process online, by mail or in person. Teens may also be automatically preregistered when completing certain transactions at a Secretary of State branch office.

Their preregistration becomes an active voter registration when they turn 17½, but they must be at least 18 on or before Election Day to cast a ballot.

You can actually work at the polls

Many teenagers may be surprised to learn that Michigan allows residents as young as 16 to work as election inspectors, commonly called poll workers.

These paid workers help check in voters, distribute ballots and perform other duties necessary to conduct elections.

Students must meet eligibility requirements and complete training. Those interested can contact their local city or township clerk to learn about opportunities for future elections.

Learn what candidates and elected officials actually do

Local elections can affect decisions about schools, public parks, roads, recreation programs and other services teenagers use.

Students in Saginaw and surrounding communities can learn about candidates running for local and statewide offices, examine their positions and ask questions about issues affecting young people.

Following school board meetings, attending public forums and researching local ballot proposals are other ways to better understand how government decisions are made.

Start conversations about issues that matter

Teenagers do not need a voter registration card to participate in thoughtful conversations about their communities.

Students can discuss issues such as school safety, college affordability, employment opportunities, public transportation and youth programs with classmates, family members and community leaders.

They can also practice evaluating information by checking original sources, comparing news coverage and distinguishing facts from opinions.

Make your first vote count

For students who are already 18 or will turn 18 by Nov. 3, there is still time to register and participate in the election if they meet Michigan's eligibility requirements.

Eligible voters can register in person at their local city or township clerk's office through Election Day with proof of residency.

For younger teenagers, the 2026 election provides an opportunity to understand the voting process and begin preparing for future elections.

Students interested in preregistration or working at the polls can find information through the Michigan Secretary of State at Michigan.gov/Vote and Michigan.gov/PollWorkers.

Saginaw teen wins statewide voting sticker contest



SWAN VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL SOPHOMORE LENORE COIL OF SAGINAW CREATED THIS MICHIGAN LICENSE PLATE-INSPIRED "I VOTED" STICKER, ONE OF NINE WINNING DESIGNS SELECTED IN THE STATE'S 2026 CONTEST. (FILE PHOTO)

BY MB STAFF

THOMAS TOWNSHIP, Mich. — A Swan Valley High School sophomore is receiving statewide recognition after her artwork was selected as one of Michigan's winning designs in the 2026 "I Voted" sticker contest.

Lenore Coil of Saginaw created a license plate-inspired design featuring the words "I Voted" against a blue Michigan license plate. Her artwork was among 2,095 submissions received by the Michigan Department of State.

The contest invited Michigan residents of all ages to submit original artwork celebrating voting and civic participation. Nine winners were selected across three categories: elementary and middle school, high school, and the general public.

Coil was one of three winners in the high school category.

Her design features a blue license plate with white lettering, the words "Great Lakes" and orange registration-style tabs marking November 2026.

In an interview with WNEM-TV5, Coil explained that she originally wanted to incorporate a car into her artwork before deciding on the license plate concept.

The young artist said seeing people wearing her design has made the recognition especially meaningful. She recalled spotting a school board member wearing her sticker and realizing that her artwork was reaching people throughout the state.

The winning designs are available to election clerks for distribution during Michigan's Nov. 3 general election.

The contest, first introduced in 2024, gives students and other Michigan residents an opportunity to contribute creatively to the voting experience.

White Pine middle school yearbook earns national gold award

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW TOWNSHIP, Mich. — The yearbook staff and advisers at White Pine Middle School have earned national recognition for their work capturing student memories and celebrating school life.

Saginaw Township Community Schools announced Oct. 29 that the school's yearbook program received the National Program of Excellence Gold Award from Jostens, a company that produces yearbooks and school recognition products.

The national program recognizes middle and high school yearbook staffs that produce engaging, inclusive and well-managed publications.

Yearbook production requires students and advisers to combine photography, writing, graphic design, editing and organizational skills. From documenting school activities to arranging photographs and preparing pages for publication, the process brings together several forms of creative expression.

Jostens' Program of Excellence evaluates yearbook programs on their ability to create meaningful publications for students, build student interest and meet production deadlines.

Gold recognition is awarded to programs that meet the organization's standards across its evaluation categories.

The achievement places White Pine's yearbook program among schools recognized nationally for excellence in student publications.

For students interested in journalism, photography, marketing or graphic design, school yearbooks can provide valuable experience in storytelling, teamwork and meeting deadlines.

White Pine Middle School is part of Saginaw Township Community Schools and serves students at 505 N. Center Road.

Midland students to build canned-food sculptures to fight hunger



JEFFERSON MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS DISPLAY THEIR CANNED-FOOD SCULPTURE DURING A PREVIOUS CANSTRUCTION MIDLAND EVENT AT THE MIDLAND MALL. THE ANNUAL COMPETITION RETURNS NOV. 4-8, 2026, WITH APPROXIMATELY 10,000 CANS SUPPORTING LOCAL HUNGER-RELIEF EFFORTS. (PHOTO COURTESY OF MIDLAND COUNTY FOOD ASSISTANCE NETWORK)

BY MB STAFF

MIDLAND, Mich. — Students from seven Midland-area schools and groups will turn approximately 10,000 cans of food into elaborate sculptures during the seventh annual Canstruction Midland event, scheduled for Nov. 4-8 at the Midland Mall.

The annual competition combines creativity, engineering and community service while raising awareness about food insecurity.

This year's theme, "Building Our Community," challenges students to create designs representing what community means to them.

Participating groups include H.H. Dow High School, Midland High School, Windover High School, Midland homeschool students, Northeast Middle School, Jefferson Middle School and St. John's Lutheran School.

Students will use principles of science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics, commonly known as STEAM, to plan and construct their displays.

The process requires teamwork, problem-solving and careful planning to ensure that the large sculptures remain stable.

Teams will assemble their creations from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 4. Awards recognizing structural integrity, overall design and creative use of food labels will be presented at 2:30 p.m.

Community members can view the finished sculptures at the Midland Mall and vote for their favorites through $1 donations from the evening of Nov. 4 through Nov. 7.

The People's Choice Award will be announced at 12:30 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 8.

The event is organized by the Midland County Food Assistance Network and Midland Public Schools.

Once the competition concludes, the canned goods will be distributed through local food assistance programs, providing support to residents facing food insecurity.

Local grocery stores and community sponsors have helped supply the canned goods, with Hidden Harvest assisting in transporting the food.

The event gives students an opportunity to use classroom skills to address a community need while demonstrating that creativity and teamwork can make a meaningful difference.



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Flint middle school students build AI-powered robots to help younger learners



STUDENTS ASSEMBLE AN ABII EDUCATIONAL ROBOT AS PART OF A CLASSROOM-TO-CAREER ROBOTICS PROGRAM. CARMAN-AINSWORTH MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS ARE UNDERTAKING A SIMILAR PROJECT TO BUILD AI-POWERED TUTORS FOR YOUNGER STUDENTS. THE STUDENTS PICTURED ARE NOT FROM CARMAN-AINSWORTH. (PHOTO COURTESY OF VAN ROBOTICS)

BY MB STAFF

GENESEE COUNTY, Mich. — Middle school students in the Carman-Ainsworth school district are combining robotics, artificial intelligence and teamwork to help younger children succeed in the classroom.

Seventh- and eighth-grade students in a leadership class at Carman-Ainsworth Middle School are building artificial intelligence-powered robots that will eventually be used to support elementary students with their lessons.

The project is led by Jillian Dougherty, an English language arts and student leadership teacher who also teaches robotics.

Students are assembling four robots known as ABii, interactive educational devices designed to help children practice academic skills.

The robots are equipped with LED lights and movable parts and can connect to a wireless network to deliver educational lessons.

The technology is designed to support learning in reading, mathematics and social-emotional development. The robots can also provide interactive activities, including movement and dance breaks.

Students are working in four teams to assemble and program the devices. The hands-on process requires patience, communication and problem-solving as students learn how different mechanical and electronic components work together.

Eighth-grade students Kameron Johnson and Nairi Lewis are among those participating in the project.

In an interview with WNEM-TV5, Lewis described how students have learned to recognize mistakes and correct problems during the assembly process.

The project also has a personal connection for Lewis, whose younger brother attends Randels Elementary School, where the completed robots are expected to be delivered.

Dougherty said the class plans to build six additional robots next semester.

The first four robots are expected to be completed and delivered to Randels Elementary by the end of the current semester.

Beyond teaching technical skills, the project introduces students to practical applications of artificial intelligence and demonstrates how technology can be used to support their own community.



SAGINAW PROMISE SCHOLARSHIP

A Promise Made and Kept!

Helping families and students plan for and achieve their educational dreams. A scholarship for Students who live in, attend school, and graduate from a high school in the Saginaw Promise Zone. For 15 years the Saginaw Promise has Invested in Saginaw's Future, its Economy, and its students with a "place based" Scholarship!

$1,515,062 has been awarded to over 804 scholars!	**2026/27** academic year awards: $4,000
Available for **2 years**	Apply **Annually**

BACKGROUND

The Saginaw Promise is an economic initiative that is working to change a community, its economy and lives through information and a postsecondary education scholarship. **The Saginaw Promise scholarship is both a benefit for and incentive to retain and grow the population while assisting students to earn a program certificate or degree from a technical/trade school, college, or university,** which will provide an educated workforce to support local business and attract new businesses.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE

Students who live in, attend school and graduate from a high school in the Saginaw Promise Zone.

WHAT IS THE SAGINAW PROMISE ZONE?

The Saginaw Promise Zone is the geographic area that consists of the cities of Saginaw, Zilwaukee, Kochville and that area of Buena Vista designated to the Saginaw Public School District).

HOW MUCH IS THE SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

The scholarship award for the **2026/27 academic year is $4,000.** The scholarship is available for two years and must be applied for annually.

WHEN TO APPLY?

Senior year of high school

HOW TO APPLY?

Students must complete the online **Saginaw Community Foundation Scholarship Application** and **FAFSA** (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). Saginaw Promise scholars have up to six years to use their scholarship.

PLANNING A MOVE

Contact the Saginaw Promise office to confirm if you will still be in the Saginaw Promise Zone. **Important Note:** To be eligible for the Saginaw Promise Scholarship, a student must reside in, attend school and graduate from a high school within the Saginaw Promise Zone.

VISIT SAGINAWPROMISE.ORG FOR MORE DETAILED INFORMATION.

Saginaw Promise / 1 Tuscola St., Suite 200, Saginaw, MI 48607 / (989) 607-3428

VOLUME 14 • NUMBER 21

THE LATINO BANNER
Great Lakes Bay Regional Newspaper

CELEBRATING 14 YEARS ANNIVERSARY

LatinoBanner

LÍDER EN LA DIVERSIDAD

VAMOS ADELANTE

Civil rights leader Dolores Huerta dies at 96, leaving a lasting legacy

BY MB STAFF

BAKERSFIELD, Calif. — Dolores Huerta, the influential labor organizer who helped transform working conditions for American farmworkers and became a leading advocate for civil rights, women's equality and immigrant communities, died Wednesday, Oct. 28. She was 96.

Huerta died of cancer at her home in Bakersfield, surrounded by family, according to a family spokesperson.

For more than six decades, Huerta was a central figure in the movement to improve the lives of agricultural workers, many of whom were Mexican American and immigrants working in difficult conditions for low wages.

Born April 10, 1930, in Dawson, New Mexico, Huerta grew up in Stockton, California, where she witnessed the economic hardships faced by working families.

She began her professional career as a teacher but became increasingly concerned about students arriving at school hungry and lacking basic necessities.

Those experiences eventually led her into community organizing and labor advocacy.

In 1962, Huerta joined César Chávez in establishing the National Farm Workers Association, which later became the United Farm Workers.

Together with other organizers, she helped lead boycotts, strikes and negotiations that secured improvements in farmworkers' wages, health benefits and workplace protections.

Huerta played a significant role in the Delano grape strike and the nationwide grape boycott, which helped bring public attention to labor conditions in California's agricultural industry.



A COLORFUL DECORATED SKULL AND TRADITIONAL REMEMBRANCE ITEMS APPEAR IN THE SAGINAW ART MUSEUM & GARDENS' PROMOTIONAL IMAGE LABOR AND CIVIL RIGHTS LEADER DOLORES HUERTA, CO-FOUNDER OF THE ORGANIZATION THAT BECAME THE UNITED FARM WORKERS, IS PICTURED AT AN EVENT IN PHOENIX, ARIZONA ON MARCH 20, 2016. HUERTA DIED OCT. 28, 2026, AT AGE 96. (PHOTO: GAGE SKIDMORE)

She also helped create the phrase "Sí, se puede," meaning "Yes, it can be done," which became one of the most recognizable slogans in American labor and civil rights history.

Her activism extended beyond farmworkers' rights. She advocated for voter registration, immigration reform, women's rights and increased political participation among Hispanic communities.

Huerta received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2012, the nation's highest civilian honor.

Her long association with Chávez also became part of a painful public reckoning earlier this year. Huerta disclosed that Chávez had sexually abused her in the 1960s, ending decades of silence about experiences she said she had feared would undermine the farmworker movement.

Even into her 90s, Huerta remained involved in public demonstrations and community advocacy.

Her influence in Michigan

Huerta's legacy has particular significance for Hispanic and Latino organizations in Michigan.

In March 2025, she participated in an intergenerational conversation at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, discussing leadership, Latino history and civic engagement.

Members of Flint's Latinx Technology & Community Center also had opportunities to hear her speak and meet her during community activities.

The center has organized an annual luncheon recognizing the contributions of Huerta and other leaders in the labor and civil rights movements.

Following her death, the Flint organization published a tribute honoring her commitment to workers' rights, equality and community empowerment.

Huerta is survived by 13 children.

Her death marks the passing of a leader whose organizing efforts reshaped the American labor movement and whose influence continues through the organizations and communities she helped inspire.

Midland immigration forum to examine citizenship and detention

BY MB STAFF

MIDLAND, Mich. — A Midland church will host a public forum Nov. 15 examining immigration laws, the path to U.S. citizenship and the experiences of people held in immigration detention facilities.

United Church of Christ Midland will present the free, nonpartisan event from 3 to 5 p.m. at 4100 Chestnut Hill Drive.

The forum will feature Julie Keil, an associate professor of political science at Saginaw Valley State University, along with Cliff and Bonnie Demos, representatives of the nonprofit Immigrant Action Coalition.



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST MIDLAND, LOCATED AT 4100 CHESTNUT HILL DRIVE, WILL HOST A PUBLIC FORUM NOV. 15 EXAMINING IMMIGRATION LAWS, CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION DETENTION. (PHOTO COURTESY OF UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST MIDLAND)

Keil will discuss federal immigration laws and the process of becoming a United States citizen. The presentation is intended to provide participants with information about the legal framework governing immigration and naturalization.

Cliff and Bonnie Demos will address the experiences of people held at North Lake Detention Center in Baldwin, Michigan, and describe their organization's efforts to support detainees.

Immigration detention has become an increasingly prominent topic in national and local conversations about immigration enforcement, due process and the treatment of people awaiting decisions in immigration proceedings.

The forum will offer residents an opportunity to learn about these issues and ask questions directly of the presenters.

A question-and-answer session and group discussion will follow the presentations. Organizers also plan to share information about ways community members can support people in immigration detention.

The event is open to people of all backgrounds and religious affiliations. Organizers describe it as both nonpartisan and nondenominational.

The discussion will take place Sunday, Nov. 15, from 3 to 5 p.m. at United Church of Christ Midland, 4100 Chestnut Hill Drive. Admission is free.

Fourth annual Día de los Muertos gathering will take place at Fashion Square Mall

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW TOWNSHIP, Mich. — Fashion Square Mall will host its fourth annual Día de los Muertos celebration Sunday, Nov. 1, bringing a Mexican cultural tradition of remembrance to the Saginaw community.

Día de los Muertos, or Day of the Dead, is traditionally observed Nov. 1 and 2. The holiday honors family members and friends who have died, celebrating their lives through personal memories, cultural traditions and gatherings that connect generations.

Unlike Halloween, Día de los Muertos is centered on remembrance rather than fear. Families often create elaborate displays called ofrendas, featuring photographs, candles, flowers, favorite foods and personal belongings of deceased loved ones.

Marigolds, known in Mexico as cempasúchil, are among the holiday's most recognizable symbols. Their bright colors and fragrance traditionally represent a pathway welcoming the spirits of loved ones.

The Saginaw celebration marks its fourth year at Fashion Square Mall. WNEM-TV5 highlighted the upcoming gathering in an Oct. 28 report, describing it as an opportunity for residents to honor family members and friends who have died.

The annual gathering also provides an opportunity for residents who may be unfamiliar with the holiday to learn about its cultural significance.

Día de los Muertos has roots in Indigenous Mexican traditions that later blended with Catholic observances. Today, it is celebrated in communities throughout Mexico and the United States, including Michigan.

The event is scheduled for Sunday, Nov. 1, at Fashion Square Mall, 4787 Fashion Square Mall in Saginaw Township.



Saginaw Art Museum to host free Día de los Muertos celebration Nov. 7



A COLORFUL DECORATED SKULL AND TRADITIONAL REMEMBRANCE ITEMS APPEAR IN THE SAGINAW ART MUSEUM & GARDENS' PROMOTIONAL IMAGE FOR ITS DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS CELEBRATION, SCHEDULED FOR NOV. 7, 2026. (PHOTO COURTESY OF SAGINAW ART MUSEUM & GARDENS)

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — The Saginaw Art Museum & Gardens will welcome families and community members for a free Día de los Muertos celebration Saturday, Nov. 7, featuring art activities, traditional remembrance displays and cultural performances.

The event will take place from 1 to 4 p.m. at the museum, 1126 N. Michigan Ave.

Día de los Muertos, or Day of the Dead, is a Mexican tradition that honors the lives and memories of deceased loved ones. Although traditionally observed Nov. 1 and 2, community celebrations often take place throughout the surrounding weeks.

Visitors will have an opportunity to view ofrendas, decorative altars that often include photographs, flowers, candles and meaningful objects commemorating loved ones.

The museum is also inviting participants to contribute to a Community Altar, creating a shared space for remembrance.

Other activities include face painting, hands-on art projects and educational opportunities exploring the meaning and history of Día de los Muertos.

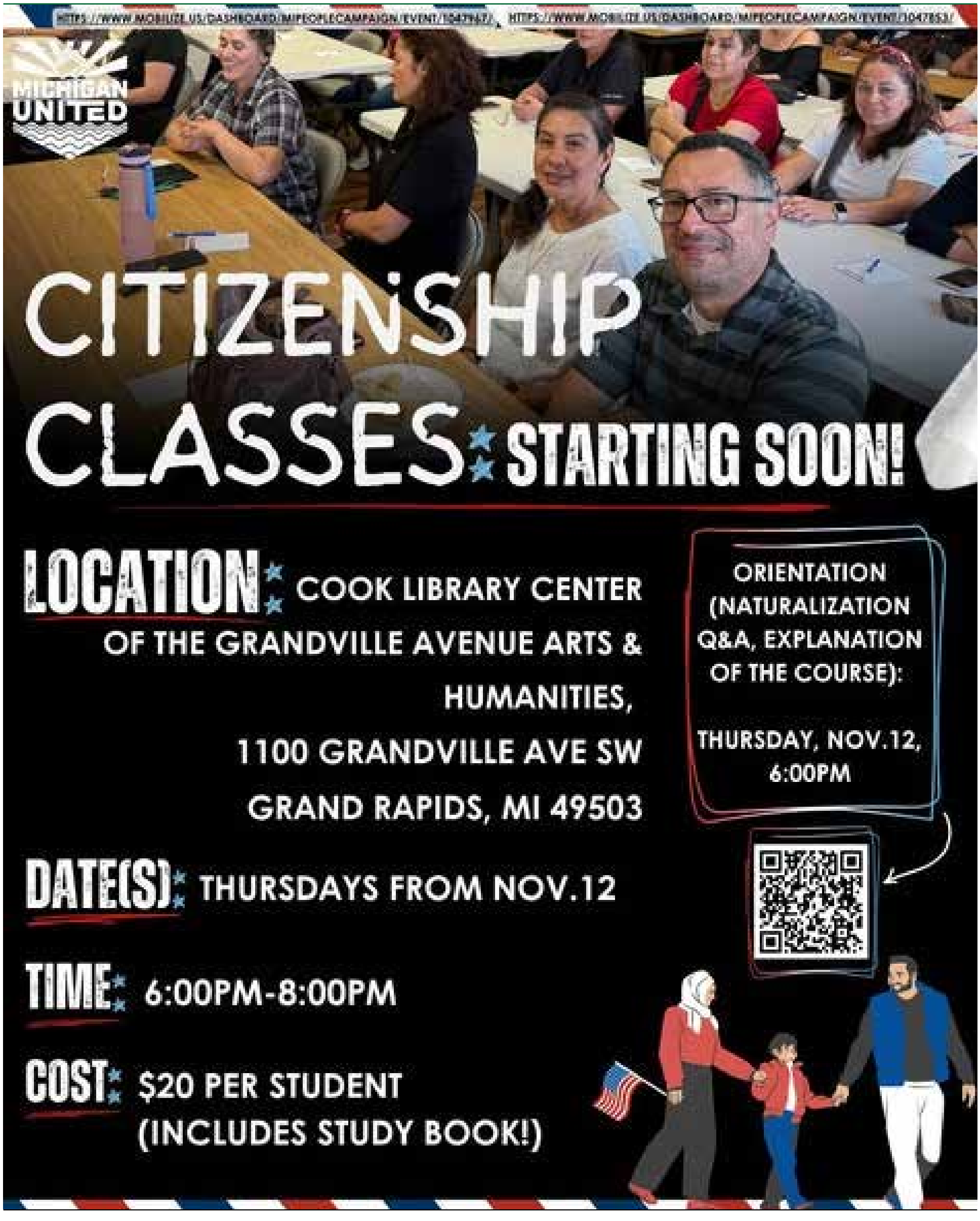
Presentations and performances are scheduled to begin at 2 p.m. Maria's Food Truck is also expected to be available during the celebration.

Community members interested in including photographs of deceased loved ones in the museum's digital ofrenda may submit them by email to museum staff no later than Nov. 6.

The ofrenda displays will remain available for viewing through Nov. 14.

The celebration is supported by Hemlock Semiconductor, Covenant HealthCare and Isabella Bank.

Admission and activities are free, and visitors may participate on a drop-in basis without advance registration.


MICHIGAN UNITED
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THURSDAY, NOV.12, 6:00PM

Flint to celebrate Día de los Muertos with art, music and remembrance

BY MB STAFF

FLINT, Mich. — The Latinx Technology & Community Center will bring its Día de los Muertos celebration to the Flint Institute of Arts on Friday, Nov. 6, offering an evening of cultural traditions, live music and family activities.

The free event will take place from 4 to 7 p.m. at the museum, 1120 E. Kearsley St.

Día de los Muertos, or Day of the Dead, is a Mexican cultural tradition observed primarily Nov. 1 and 2. The celebration honors deceased family members and friends through art, storytelling, music, food and remembrance.

The Flint event will feature hands-on art activities, demonstrations, traditional calavera face painting and live music presented through the museum's Music Around Town series.

Visitors will also have opportunities to experience traditional foods and learn about the customs associated with Día de los Muertos.



A PARTICIPANT DRESSED IN TRADITIONAL DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS ATTIRE STANDS BEFORE A COLORFUL COMMUNITY OFRENDA DURING A PREVIOUS CELEBRATION AT THE FLINT INSTITUTE OF ARTS IN 2024. THE LATINX TECHNOLOGY & COMMUNITY CENTER WILL RETURN TO THE MUSEUM FOR ITS 2026 EVENT NOV. 6. (PHOTO COURTESY OF THE LATINX TECHNOLOGY & COMMUNITY CENTER)

A central feature of the celebration will be the community ofrenda, a decorated altar created to honor loved ones who have died.

Ofrendas traditionally include photographs, candles, flowers and personal items representing the lives and memories of deceased family members and friends.

Guests are invited to bring a photograph or small keepsake to place on the community altar.

The tradition of Día de los Muertos has roots in Indigenous Mexican cultures and incorporates influences from Catholic observances honoring the dead. In 2008, UNESCO recognized Mexico's Indigenous festivities dedicated to the dead as part of humanity's intangible cultural heritage.

The Latinx Technology & Community Center has organized community celebrations to help preserve these traditions and introduce them to people of different backgrounds.

The event also provides an opportunity for younger generations to learn about their cultural heritage through art, music and family stories.

The celebration is presented in partnership with the Flint Institute of Arts, with sponsorship support from Consumers Energy.

Admission is free for all ages. Advance registration is encouraged.

Flint leader Aurora Sauceda reelected vice chair of state Latino commission

BY MB STAFF

FLINT, Mich. — Aurora Sauceda, a longtime advocate for Flint's Hispanic and Latino communities, has been reelected vice chair of the Hispanic/Latino Commission of Michigan.

The commission unanimously approved a second term for its executive committee officers during an Oct. 23 meeting, according to an announcement released by the commission and shared Oct. 31 by Cafecito Caliente.

Sauceda, who represents Genesee County, will continue serving alongside commission Chair Florensio Hernandez of Ingham County, Secretary Kaylee Moreno-Burke of Mecosta County and Treasurer Johnny Rodriguez of Ottawa County.

The Hispanic/Latino Commission of Michigan is a 15-member advisory body within the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity.

Its members are appointed by the governor, while commission leadership is elected from within the organization.

The commission advises state officials on policies and programs affecting Michigan's Hispanic and Latino residents. Its work includes education, economic development, employment opportunities and community engagement.

For Sauceda, the statewide leadership role builds on years of service to families in Flint and Genesee County.

She is president of Latinos United for Flint, a community organization that emerged in response to the Flint water crisis and has worked to connect Hispanic residents with health information, government resources and other assistance.

Sauceda previously served as public health navigator program manager for Michigan United.

She earned a bachelor's degree in secondary education from the University of Michigan-Flint.

Her involvement in community organizing has included efforts to address language barriers and improve access to services for Spanish-speaking residents.

The commission also includes Saginaw County representative Angel Gomez, providing another connection between the statewide advisory body and the Great Lakes Bay Region.



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The Michigan Banner

ELECTION 2026
SPECIAL SECTION

NOV. 3, 2026

SPECIAL ELECTION SECTION



YOUR VOTE MATTERS

A VOTER'S GUIDE TO MICHIGAN'S NOV. 3, 2026 MIDTERM ELECTIONS

A special election magazine from **The Michigan Banner.**

This section highlights key races, ballot proposals and voting information for readers in Saginaw, Flint, Bay City, Midland and across Michigan.

INSIDE

- Governor's race
- U.S. Senate: El-Sayed vs. Rogers
- Key local races in Flint and Bay City
- Saginaw City Council and 35th District race
- Saginaw Proposal 1
- How, where and when to vote
- Where to find your sample ballot

VOTER ESSENTIALS

What to know before you vote Nov. 3



Key dates, ID rules, polling locations and helpful tools for Michigan voters.

Michigan voters will head to the polls on Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2026, to choose candidates for governor, U.S. Senate and other offices, while also deciding statewide and local proposals. Readers should check their registration, review their sample ballot and make a voting plan before Election Day.

KEY INFORMATION

Election Day —
Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2026.
Polls are open 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Bring photo ID, or sign an affidavit if you do not have one.

Same-day registration is available at your clerk's office with proof of residency.

Vote absentee or use **early voting** if you prefer not to wait until Election Day.

FIND YOUR VOTING INFORMATION

Find your polling place
at Michigan.gov/Vote.

View your sample ballot
at the Michigan Voter Information Center.

Check your registration status
or update your information online.

Contact your city or township clerk
with questions.

KEY DATES

Early voting: Oct. 24–Nov. 1, 2026.

Last day to register online or by mail:
Oct. 19, 2026.

In-person registration at clerk's office:
Oct. 20 through Election Day.

STATEWIDE RACES AT A GLANCE

Michigan voters to decide state's top offices, policy and representation

The Nov. 3 election includes high-profile statewide races plus proposals and regional contests that will shape Michigan's future.



Every Michigan voter will see major statewide races for governor and lieutenant governor, secretary of state, attorney general, U.S. Senate, the Supreme Court, university boards and two statewide ballot proposals.

Many readers in the Great Lakes Bay Region and Flint area will also see the 8th Congressional District race, the 27th and 35th State Senate races, and local legislative contests on their ballots.

STATEWIDE CONTESTS ON THE BALLOT

- ☑ Governor and lieutenant governor
- ☑ Secretary of State
- ☑ Attorney General
- ☑ U.S. Senate
- ☑ U.S. House of Representatives
- ☑ State Senate
- ☑ State House of Representatives
- ☑ Michigan Supreme Court
- ☑ State Board of Education
- ☑ U-M Regents
- ☑ MSU Trustees
- ☑ Wayne State Governors
- ☑ Proposal 2026-1
- ☑ Proposal 2026-2

WHAT'S AT STAKE

Voters are choosing leaders who will shape taxes, schools, infrastructure, health care, public safety and representation in Lansing and Washington.

KEY DATES

Nov. 3 — Election Day, 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Michigan.gov/Vote — find your sample ballot and polling place.

GOVERNOR'S RACE

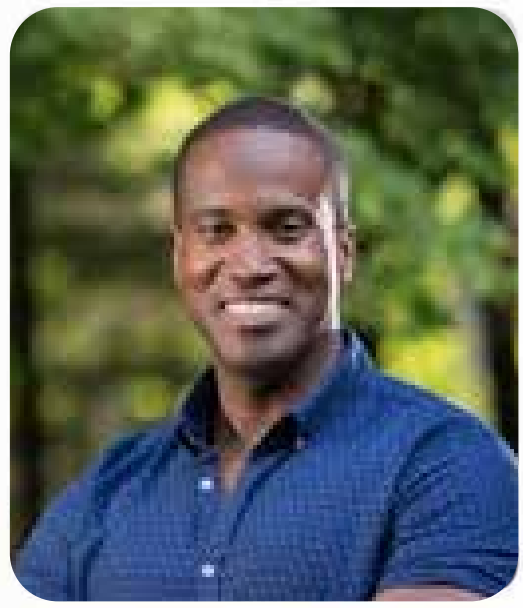
Benson, James face off for Michigan governor

Michigan voters will choose the state's next governor after Gretchen Whitmer's term-limited exit.



JOCELYN BENSON (D)
Michigan secretary of state

Running with **Winnie Brinks** for lieutenant governor



JOHN JAMES (R)
U.S. representative

Running with **Jay DeBoyer** for lieutenant governor

LANSING — The governor's race is one of Michigan's marquee contests in the Nov. 3 election and will shape state policy on the economy, education, infrastructure, public safety and abortion rights for the next four years.

Jocelyn Benson, the state's secretary of state, is running on her experience overseeing Michigan's elections and a broader message of protecting core rights and making long-term investments in people and communities. Benson says she will build on her work modernizing election administration, defend reproductive freedom and advance public investment in education, infrastructure and workforce development.

John James, a U.S. representative, is focusing on lowering taxes, spurring economic growth, strengtheniing public safety and increasing government accountability. James argues that a more affordable, pro-growth agenda will create jobs, support Michigan businesses and make state government more efficient and responsive to taxpayers.

Other tickets on the ballot include Anthony Hudson and Beau Parmenter (Libertarian), Donna Brandenburg and Robert Donald Cowper II (U.S. Taxpayers), and Douglas Campbell and Bobbie Clay (Green).

KEY ISSUES IN THE RACE

- Cost of living and inflation
- Jobs and economic growth
- Education and school funding
- Roads and infrastructure
- Public safety
- Reproductive rights and health care

REGIONAL & LOCAL BALLOT QUESTIONS

Regional proposals bring taxes, services and schools into focus

From Saginaw's tax-cap debate to Bay County's library renewal, local ballot questions could shape services close to home.

Voters across the region will decide several key local and regional ballot proposals this election, including measures in the City of Saginaw, Saginaw County, Saginaw ISD and Bay County. The proposals focus on how local governments and public systems are funded, from city operating taxes and 911 dispatch services to career education and library resources.

In the City of Saginaw, Proposal 1 would remove the city's hard $3,828,778 revenue cap on general operating property taxes. The proposal would not remove the millage limit, which remains reduced under the Headlee Amendment. Supporters say the cap is outdated and limits the city's ability to meet current needs, while opponents say it provides an important taxpayer protection.

Saginaw County voters will decide Proposal 26-4, which would renew the 911 Authority millage at up to 0.28 mill from 2028 through 2037. The millage helps fund 911 dispatch operations and equipment, supporting emergency communication services across the county.

Saginaw ISD is asking voters to renew and restore its area career and technical education (CTE) millage to 1 mill for 2028 through 2037. The millage supports career and technical education programs that give students hands-on training and skills for in-demand jobs.

In Bay County, voters will decide a Bay County Library System renewal at up to 1.7399 mills for 2026 through 2031. The millage would continue funding for library branches, collections, programs and other services across the county.



SAGINAW CITY HALL



911 DISPATCH OPERATIONS



BAY COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM

PROPOSALS AT A GLANCE

CITY OF SAGINAW – PROPOSAL 1
Remove the city's $3,828,778 revenue cap on general operating property taxes; does not remove the millage limit (still reduced under Headlee).

SAGINAW COUNTY – PROPOSAL 26-4
Renew the 911 Authority millage at up to 0.28 mill from 2028 through 2037 to fund dispatch operations and equipment.

SAGINAW ISD – CTE MILLAGE
Renew and restore the area career and technical education millage to 1 mill for 2028 through 2037.

BAY COUNTY – LIBRARY RENEWAL
Renew the Bay County Library System millage at up to 1.7399 mills for 2026 through 2031.

WHY THESE QUESTIONS MATTER

1. **TAX IMPACT**
Determines how local property taxes can be collected, including whether Saginaw removes its revenue cap (while the millage limit remains in place).

2. **LOCAL SERVICES**
Helps fund essential services such as 911 emergency dispatch, career and technical education for students, and library programs and resources.

3. **LONG-TERM PLANNING**
Provides stable, you-can-count-on funding for key regional and local services through 2031 or 2037, supporting service continuity and future needs.

SAGINAW PROPOSAL 1

Saginaw tax-cap vote asks whether to remove the city's 1979 revenue limit

City voters will decide whether to amend Section 45 of the charter and end the fixed revenue cap on general operating property taxes.

Proposal 1 would remove the city charter's hard revenue cap tied to $3,828,778, the amount collected in 1978-79.

The proposal would not remove the city's millage limit, which remains subject to state law and Headlee rollbacks.

Supporters say the cap is outdated, does not adjust for inflation and limits the city's ability to fund services or benefit from new development.

Opponents say the cap protects taxpayers and forces spending discipline.

This is another high-profile citywide question for Saginaw voters.

THE PROPOSAL AT A GLANCE

- Removes the fixed $3,828,778 revenue cap
- Does not eliminate the millage-rate limit
- Would change Section 45 of the city charter
- Could affect future budget flexibility

WHAT VOTERS SHOULD KNOW

- ☑ A yes vote removes the hard revenue cap
- ☑ A no vote keeps the current cap in place
- ☑ The question does not by itself raise a new millage rate
- ☑ Read your full sample ballot before voting

U.S. SENATE RACE

El-Sayed, Rogers make final case to Michigan voters

Abdul El-Sayed and Mike Rogers are competing for Michigan's open U.S. Senate seat in a race focused on the economy, health care and Washington's direction.





LANSING — Michigan voters will pick a new U.S. senator Nov. 3, in a closely watched race that could help shape the state's influence in Washington.

El-Sayed, a Democrat and former Wayne County health director, is running on health care affordability, labor and public investment. He has argued that Michigan needs a senator who will lower health costs, support working families and bring more federal resources to the state for jobs, infrastructure and community development.

Rogers, a Republican and former congressman, is emphasizing national security, manufacturing, border security and economic growth. He says his experience in Congress and as an FBI agent gives him the perspective to stand up for Michigan's workers, strengthen the state's manufacturing base and keep communities safe.

Both candidates are framing the race as a choice about Michigan's role in Washington.

Other candidates on the ballot include Lydia Christensen (Libertarian), Tim Long (U.S. Taxpayers), Douglas P. Marsh (Green), and Walter P. Kristy (Natural Law).

STATEWIDE BALLOT PROPOSALS

Two statewide proposals could reshape Michigan law

Voters will weigh a constitutional convention question and a campaign-finance measure on Nov. 3.



Michigan voters will decide two important statewide ballot proposals on Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2026. The proposals address the state constitution and campaign finance rules, and both could lead to significant changes in Michigan law.

Proposal 2026-1 asks whether Michigan should convene a constitutional convention in 2027 to draft a general revision of the state constitution. If voters approve, the state would hold a convention in 2027, where delegates would consider updates to the constitution in a wide range of areas. Any proposed changes from the convention would then go back to Michigan voters for a final approval or rejection.

Proposal 2026-2 is an initiated law that would prohibit campaign contributions from certain regulated electric and gas utilities and government contractors over $250,000 annually. It would also broaden disclosure rules for political communications, requiring more information about who is paying for political messages, including those on the internet, such as online ads and social media.

These proposals matter because they could affect how Michigan's laws are written and updated, and how money in politics is handled and disclosed in the state. They touch on the rules that shape state government, elections and public accountability.

Every Michigan voter will see both Proposal 2026-1 and Proposal 2026-2 on their Nov. 3 ballot, in the proposal section. Voters should review the full language and consider how each measure could impact the state's future.

WHAT A YES OR NO VOTE MEANS

PROPOSAL 2026-1

YES: Michigan would hold a constitutional convention in 2027 to draft potential changes to the state constitution, which would then go to voters for approval or rejection.

NO: Michigan would not hold a constitutional convention, and no convention would be called in 2027.

PROPOSAL 2026-2

YES: Would prohibit campaign constitutions from certain regulated electric and gas utilities and government contractors over $250,000 annually, and expand disclosure rules for political communications, including internet political communications.

NO: Would keep current law, allowing those contributions and maintaining the existing disclosure rules for political communications.

STATEWIDE PROPOSALS AT A GLANCE

Every voter sees them.
Both Proposal 2026-1 and Proposal 2026-2 will be on every Michigan ballot on Nov. 3.

They are in the proposal section.
You'll find them under the "Proposals" section of your ballot.

Read full language on your sample ballot.
Review the complete, official text before you vote.

Find your sample ballot at Michigan.gov/Vote.

LOCAL RACES

Key city races in Flint and Bay City to shape local leadership

Flint voters will choose a mayor and all nine City Council members, while Bay City voters will decide City Commission contests in wards 1 3, 5, 7 and 9. These races affect neighborhood development, public safety, housing and city services.

FLINT: MAYORAL RACE



SHELDON NEELEY
(incumbent)



TONYA BURNS

Flint's mayoral race will help determine the city's direction on finances, public safety, neighborhood investment and city services.

BAY CITY: COMMISSION RACES



Wards 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9 are on the ballot. Ward 3 is Kenzie Colton vs. Quenessa Miller; Ward 5 is Matt Sous vs. Mark T. Zanotti; Ward 7 is Thomas M. Fitzpatrick vs. Christopher Runberg. Ward 1 Laura Kubit and Ward 9 Jill Causley are unopposed.

Bay City does not have a separate mayoral race on the Nov. 3 ballot because the mayor is selected by the commission.

FLINT CITY COUNCIL

All nine wards are on the ballot; contested races include Ward 1 Debra Coleman vs. Arthur Woodson, Ward 2 Ladel Lewis vs. LaShawn Johnson, Ward 3 Leon El-Alamin vs. Paradise Williams, Ward 5 Joel Arnold vs. DeWaun Robinson, Ward 7 Darell Brown vs. Candice Mushatt, and Ward 8 Ezekiel Harris vs. Casey Lester. Wards 4, 6 and 9 each have one printed candidate.

BAY CITY COMMISSION

City commission races will shape development, budgeting and neighborhood priorities across the city.

U.S. HOUSE RACE & JUDICIAL ELECTIONS

One congressional race and several court contests deserve a close look

Michigan's 8th District and nonpartisan judicial races may shape representation and the law long after Election Day.

In Michigan's 8th Congressional District, voters will choose among Kristen McDonald Rivet (Democrat), Thomas J. Smith (Republican), C. Mia Pettus (Libertarian), Jim Casha (Green) and Kathy Goodwin (Working Class).

The race is drawing the most attention for the major-party contest between McDonald Rivet and Smith, who are offering different visions for how the district should be represented in Washington. The 8th District is a key seat for the Great Lakes Bay Region and mid-Michigan, including communities such as Saginaw, Bay City and Midland, making it an important race for residents across the region.

U.S. House races also help set federal spending priorities, influence local economic development opportunities, shape transportation investments — such as roads, bridges and transit — and affect the level of constituent services available to residents through a member's district office.

U.S. HOUSE 8TH DISTRICT — TOP CANDIDATES



KRISTEN MCDONALD RIVET (D)
Democrat



THOMAS J. SMITH (R)
Republican

THE 8TH DISTRICT RACE AT A GLANCE

The field: Kristen McDonald Rivet (D), Thomas J. Smith (R), C. Mia Pettus (L), Jim Casha (G) and Kathy Goodwin (WC).

The focus: A closely watched major-party contest between McDonald Rivet and Smith.

The district: A key seat for the Great Lakes Bay Region and mid-Michigan, including Saginaw, Bay City and Midland.



JUDICIAL RACES

Michigan voters will also choose state court judges

In addition to the congressional race, voters will decide several nonpartisan judicial contests that can have a lasting impact on the state's laws and how they are applied.

MICHIGAN SUPREME COURT

Voters will elect two justices to the Michigan Supreme Court. The candidates are:

- **Jody White**
- **Megan Kathleen Cavanagh**
- **Noah P. Hood**
- **Thomas W. Howe**
- **Casandra Morse-Bills**
- **Michael Warren**

COURT OF APPEALS – 4TH DISTRICT

Voters will also choose a judge for the Michigan Court of Appeals, 4th District. The candidates are:

- **Michael J. Kelly**
- **Allie Greenleaf Maldonado**
- **Michelle M. Rick**

WHY JUDICIAL RACES MATTER

They can influence how key issues like abortion are decided under Michigan law.

They affect criminal justice policies and how cases are handled across the state.

They also can shape voting rules, business disputes or education issues that impact Michigan communities.

SAGINAW

Saginaw City Council seats and 35th District race are on the ballot

Saginaw voters will choose the people who help set city priorities and represent the region in Lansing.

City of Saginaw voters will choose four council members for full four-year terms plus one council member for a partial term ending in 2028. The council helps set the budget, neighborhood priorities, public safety spending and redevelopment strategy.

Saginaw voters will also see regional contests including the 35th State Senate race, a key Bay and Saginaw area contest.



35TH DISTRICT RACE

CHEDRICK GREENE (D), JASON TUNNEY (R), LAURIE ATWOOD (U.S. TAXPAYERS)

Greene is a well-known Saginaw-area lawmaker, Tunney is the Republican nominee, and Atwood is the U.S. Taxpayers Party nominee.

KEY CONTEST TO WATCH

The Delta College Board of Trustees seat for Saginaw County features Arshen Baldwin and Bill Azelton.

City of Saginaw Council Race

FOUR-YEAR TERMS

INCUMBENTS


Brenda F. Moore


Priscilla Garcia


Michael D. Balls


Carly Rose


Tobias Young


Jeanette Barnett


Bob Johnson


Melvin Price Jr.


Charles Anthony Sledge


Rachel Weidinger

TWO-YEAR TERMS


Charles Allen


Maximilian Olivarez

COMMUNITY

Two Saginaw nonprofits receive $40,000 for neighborhood and youth programs



AN AERIAL VIEW OF DR. RUFUS BRADLEY SR. MEMORIAL PARK SHOWS ITS BASKETBALL COURTS, WALKING TRACK, PLAYGROUND AND RECREATIONAL SPACE IN SAGINAW. MISSION IN THE CITY RECEIVED A $20,000 CONSUMERS ENERGY FOUNDATION GRANT TO EXPAND FREE YOUTH RECREATION AND COMMUNITY EVENTS AT THE PARK. (PHOTO CREDIT: MISSION IN THE CITY)

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — Two Saginaw nonprofit organizations have received a combined $40,000 from the Consumers Energy Foundation to expand youth activities, improve neighborhoods and create opportunities for residents to become involved in community development.

Mission in the City and the Houghton-Jones Neighborhood Task Force Inc. each received $20,000 through the foundation's Community Impact Awards, announced Oct. 26.

Mission in the City will use its funding to expand free youth recreation, family activities and community events at Dr. Rufus Bradley Sr. Memorial Park.

The organization works to strengthen Saginaw neighborhoods by providing safe recreational spaces, developing community programs and encouraging residents to participate in neighborhood improvement efforts.

The park serves as a gathering place where children and families can participate in outdoor activities, community events and recreational programs.

The Houghton-Jones Neighborhood Task Force will use its $20,000 grant to involve young people and neighborhood residents in revitalizing vacant and underused properties.

The initiative will provide hands-on community service and workforce experiences while addressing neighborhood conditions.

Both grants are part of a broader investment by the Consumers Energy Foundation in organizations that provide essential services and create opportunities for Michigan residents.

The foundation announced $92,000 in grants to five organizations across Saginaw, Genesee, Shiawassee and Lapeer counties.

Statewide, 27 organizations received more than $450,000 through the Community Impact Awards program.

The funding supports projects involving neighborhood development, education, recreation, food assistance and other community needs.

Catherine Wilson, secretary and treasurer of the Consumers Energy Foundation, said the grants represent investments in the communities where people live and work.

The Community Impact Awards program replaces the foundation's former Prosperity Signature Award and focuses on improving quality of life through locally led initiatives.

For Saginaw, the two awards will support neighborhood improvement and opportunities for residents, particularly young people, to participate in building stronger communities.

COMMUNITY

New affordable starter homes bring ownership opportunities to Saginaw

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — Two newly constructed starter homes in Saginaw are expected to offer families a more affordable path to homeownership, with each property priced at just under $100,000.

U.S. Rep. Kristen McDonald Rivet joined community representatives Thursday, Oct. 29, to celebrate the new homes, located south of Old Town Saginaw.

The project is part of a broader effort to expand affordable housing opportunities and encourage neighborhood development in the city.

According to WNEM-TV5, the contractor responsible for the homes said the properties would be sold for less than $100,000 each.

The relatively low purchase prices could provide opportunities for individuals and families who have been unable to enter the housing market because of rising home prices and construction costs.

Michigan continues to face a significant housing shortage, particularly for working families and first-time homebuyers.

During the celebration, McDonald Rivet said Michigan was short approximately 97,000 housing units and emphasized the need for new approaches to housing development.

She also discussed efforts in Congress to make home construction more efficient through the use of preapproved housing plans.

Such plans can help simplify parts of the design and approval process, potentially reducing costs and construction delays.

One of those housing plans is being used for additional homes currently under construction in Saginaw. That project is expected to be completed in early 2027.

The development comes as communities across Michigan explore ways to increase housing availability and provide more options for residents seeking to purchase their first homes.

Affordable homeownership can also contribute to neighborhood stability by encouraging long-term residency, property investment and community involvement.

The Saginaw project demonstrates one approach to addressing the shortage by constructing homes at prices intended to be more accessible to local buyers.

Additional housing construction is expected to continue into 2027.

Hoyt Library seeks seed donations for new community gardening program

BY MB STAFF



HOYT LIBRARY, 505 JANES AVE. IN SAGINAW, WILL COLLECT VEGETABLE AND HERB SEED DONATIONS NOV. 9-14 FOR A NEW COMMUNITY SEED LIBRARY SCHEDULED TO LAUNCH IN MARCH 2027. (PHOTO COURTESY OF THE SAGINAW GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY)

SAGINAW, Mich. — Hoyt Library is inviting local gardeners to share seeds from their gardens as it prepares to launch a new community seed library in spring 2027.

The Public Libraries of Saginaw will collect seed donations Nov. 9-14 at Hoyt Library, 505 Janes Ave.

The collection will help establish a free seed-sharing program designed to make gardening more accessible to residents.

Scheduled to begin in March 2027, the seed library will provide vegetable and herb seeds that community members can use to start or expand home gardens.

Unlike traditional library collections, which allow patrons to borrow books and other materials, seed libraries distribute seeds for planting.

Similar programs in other communities encourage gardeners to grow vegetables, herbs and flowers while sharing gardening knowledge and, when possible, seeds from future harvests.

The concept helps reduce the cost of starting a garden and provides opportunities for residents who may have limited access to gardening supplies.

Community seed libraries can also support food security by making it easier for residents to grow fresh produce at home.

For experienced gardeners, the program offers an opportunity to contribute to a community resource while sharing knowledge with people who may be growing their first plants.

The library is asking residents to donate clearly labeled seeds during the collection period. Seeds can be dropped off at the Hoyt Library reference desk.

The planned seed library adds another community resource to Hoyt Library, which provides educational programs, research materials and public services to residents throughout Saginaw.

Residents interested in donating can bring seeds to Hoyt Library during regular operating hours Nov. 9-14.

The library is open from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Thursday and from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday and Saturday.

The seed-sharing program is expected to launch in March 2027.

AdoptionOptionInc.
Child Welfare Organization

Adoption Option Inc. Presents:



Date: Thursday, November 19, 2026

Sponsorship opportunities available!

Time: 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm

Location: The Great Hall
5121 Bay City Rd.
Midland, MI 48642

Contact: (989) 839-0534
JambalayaAndJazz@aoicw.org

Ticket Locations: Adoption Option
601 E. Wackerly Rd.
Midland, MI 48642
www.Adoptionoptioninc.org

Tickets: $75 per person
-or-
$140 for two!

Scan Here for Tickets or to become a sponsor!

-or-

Featuring Local Jazz Band: DJAM Trio
Special Guest: Vocalist Gezelle Meyers

Scan here to check out featured restaruants!!

Jambalaya and Jazz 2026 Honorary Chair
Gerri Reado



Scan here to check out a past Jambalaya and Jazz!

COMMUNITY

Mt. Pleasant Community Foundation awards more than $215,000 in grants



THE MT. PLEASANT AREA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION ANNOUNCED $215,695 IN NEW COMMUNITY GRANTS OCT. 30, 2026, SUPPORTING EDUCATION, HEALTH CARE, RECREATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES THROUGHOUT ISABELLA COUNTY. (FILE PHOTO)

BY MB STAFF

MOUNT PLEASANT, Mich. — The Mt. Pleasant Area Community Foundation has awarded $215,695 in grants to organizations working to improve education, health care, transportation, recreation and family services throughout Isabella County.

The foundation announced the awards Oct. 30, highlighting investments in programs that address community needs and expand opportunities for residents.

The grants support a range of nonprofit organizations, including groups that provide assistance to children, older adults, individuals with disabilities and families facing financial challenges.

Among the recipients, Central Michigan University received $18,000 for its America Counts and Reads program, which provides individualized reading and mathematics assistance to elementary students.

Chippewa River District Library received $10,000 to furnish a new story time room designed to create a welcoming space for children and families.

Community Cancer Services of Isabella County was awarded $10,000 to help cancer patients with medical mileage and travel expenses.

The Community Compassion Network received $2,500 to purchase diapers, formula, wipes, baby food and other necessities for families served by the William Ellis Brockman Infant Pantry.

Several grants will support youth recreation and educational opportunities.

Girls on the Run Great Lakes Bay received $5,000 to reintroduce its programming in Isabella County and expand participation at seven school locations.

The Central Michigan Robotics Association was awarded $8,315 to purchase and register a trailer for transporting robots and equipment to competitions and outreach activities.

The Mt. Pleasant Discovery Museum received funding for interactive educational exhibits, including $5,000 for its Dino Dig project and $1,500 for improvements associated with its PleasANT Park Forest Canopy project.

Other awards will assist local organizations with transportation, public safety and community infrastructure.

Mid-Michigan Industries received two grants totaling $11,644 to help individuals with disabilities overcome transportation and accessibility barriers.

Friends of the Broadway received $20,000 to restore year-round climate control at the Historic Broadway Theater.

The Isabella County Commission on Aging was awarded $4,000 to support personal emergency response systems for older residents.

Liz Conway, CEO and chief operating officer of the Mt. Pleasant Area Community Foundation, said the grants reflect the importance of investing in organizations that serve local residents.

The funding comes from several charitable funds managed by the foundation, including donor-established funds designated to support specific community needs.

The Mt. Pleasant Area Community Foundation works with donors and nonprofit organizations to address current needs while building long-term charitable resources for Isabella County.

Flint opens memorial park honoring historic Black neighborhood



FLINT CITY OFFICIALS AND COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES CELEBRATE THE OPENING OF THE ST. JOHN STREET NEIGHBORHOOD MEMORIAL PARK ON OCTOBER 29, 2026. (PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CITY OF FLINT)

BY MB STAFF

FLINT, Mich. — A new memorial park in Flint is preserving the history of a once-thriving neighborhood that was demolished more than 50 years ago to make way for highway construction and industrial development.

The city officially opened the St. John Street Neighborhood Memorial Park on Thursday, Oct. 29, creating a public space dedicated to remembering the families and businesses that once called the neighborhood home.

The park is located at 3400 W. Boulevard Drive, near the intersection of West Boulevard and Massachusetts Avenue.

Before its demolition in the early 1970s, the St. John Street neighborhood was home to a diverse community of Black residents and immigrant families.

The neighborhood included homes, businesses, churches and gathering places that helped create a strong sense of community.

Construction of Interstate 475 and industrial expansion displaced thousands of residents and eliminated much of the neighborhood's physical landscape.

For former residents, the new memorial park represents an opportunity to preserve memories and share the community's history with younger generations.

Jackie Foster Poplar, who grew up on St. John Street, attended the park opening and reflected on the importance of remembering the neighborhood.

Speaking with WNEM-TV5, Poplar said the project brings back memories of the place she once called home and demonstrates that its community spirit remains alive.

The park includes historical and interpretive markers documenting the neighborhood's past, along with a playground inspired by buildings that once stood in the area.

Other improvements include an expanded connection to the Flint River Trail and a pavilion designed to accommodate educational programs, community gatherings and special events.

The city approved a $1.2 million construction contract for the project earlier this year.

Funding included a $1 million Michigan Department of Natural Resources Spark Grant, along with city general fund and American Rescue Plan Act resources.

The groundbreaking ceremony took place in June, bringing together former residents, neighborhood descendants, community leaders and city officials.

Flint Mayor Sheldon Neeley has described the project as an investment in historical preservation, recreation and community education.

The completed park provides a place where visitors can learn about the neighborhood's history while participating in recreational activities and community events.

Its historical markers will help ensure that the stories of St. John Street residents remain part of Flint's history.

CITY OF SAGINAW

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT DIVISION

1315 S. WASHINGTON AVE. SAGINAW, MI 48601







APPLICATION PACKETS

—AVAILABLE ONLINE—

Scan the QR-Code with your smart device to visit

SAGINAW-MI.COM/CDBG

ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR THE FOLLOWING 2027-2028 GRANTS:

—ESG—

Emergency Solutions Grant

Apply by 4:00 PM
Friday, November 6, 2026

—HOME—

Home Investment Partnerships Program

Apply by 4:00 PM
Friday, November 6, 2026

—CDBG—

Community Development Block Grant Program

Apply by 4:00 PM
Monday, November 16, 2026

• • •

INTERESTED IN FUNDING FOR YOUR NON-PROFIT PROGRAM OR SERVICE?

(989) 759-1551
CDBG@saginaw-mi.com

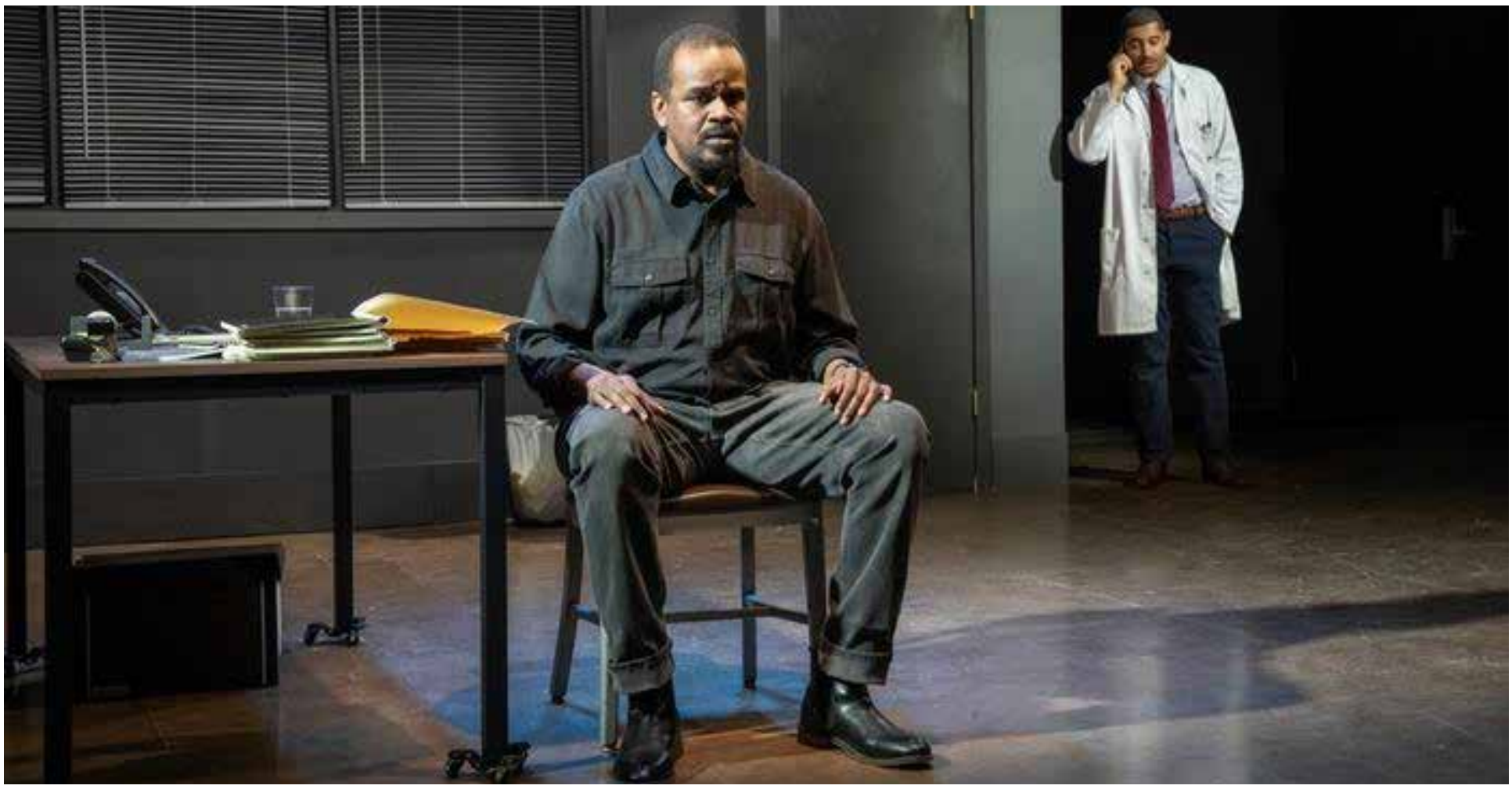
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COMMUNITY

Flint water crisis inspires national stage production and community discussions



ACTORS SHAWN RANDALL, LEFT, AND BRETT DIGGS APPEAR IN THE ORIGINAL 2024 PRODUCTION OF "THE POISONER" AT LA MAMA EXPERIMENTAL THEATRE CLUB IN NEW YORK. THE PLAY, INSPIRED BY THE FLINT WATER CRISIS, CONCLUDED ITS SEVEN-CITY NATIONAL TOUR IN DETROIT ON OCT. 31, 2026. (PHOTO BY RICHARD TERMINE, COURTESY OF BROADWAYWORLD)

BY MB STAFF

FLINT, Mich. — More than a decade after the Flint water crisis began, a national theatrical production is using storytelling to examine water contamination, government accountability and the experiences of communities fighting for clean water.

"The Poisoner," a fictional neo-noir thriller inspired by the 2014 Flint water crisis, concluded its seven-city national tour with performances Oct. 29-31 at Detroit's Marygrove Theatre.

The production follows a journalist who returns to his hometown and uncovers a water contamination cover-up involving powerful individuals and institutions.

Although the storyline is fictional, the play draws inspiration from the Flint water crisis and raises questions about public health, environmental protection and the responsibilities of government officials.

The production was written by playwright M.M. Haney and developed and directed by Lee Sunday Evans, a two-time Obie Award-winning director and choreographer.

The play originally premiered in 2024 at La MaMa Experimental Theatre Club in New York.

The 2026 tour included performances in Pennsylvania, Wisconsin and Michigan, with stops in Kalamazoo and Detroit.

Organizers partnered with Flint Rising, a community advocacy organization formed in response to the water crisis, to provide free tickets and transportation for Flint residents attending the Oct. 30 performance.

Two buses were arranged to transport residents from Flint to Detroit, allowing people directly affected by the crisis to experience the production.

The performance also included a community discussion featuring Flint Rising representatives Melissa Mays and Nayyirah Shariff, along with Sylvia Orduño of the People's Water Board Coalition.

The discussion provided an opportunity to examine the ongoing challenges surrounding water safety, infrastructure and environmental justice.

Mays, a longtime Flint water activist, told WNEM-TV5 that presenting the crisis through fictional theater offers residents a different way to engage with a difficult chapter in their community's history.

She also emphasized the role Flint residents played in uncovering the crisis and advocating for accountability.

The production's themes extend beyond Flint, highlighting concerns about water safety in communities such as Jackson, Mississippi, and Newark, New Jersey.

Organizers say the play is intended to encourage continued conversations about public health, government transparency and the importance of protecting access to safe drinking water.

Through theater and community engagement, "The Poisoner" connects the experiences of Flint residents with broader conversations about environmental justice and the responsibility to protect public health.

COMMUNITY

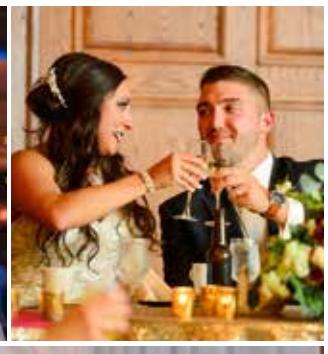
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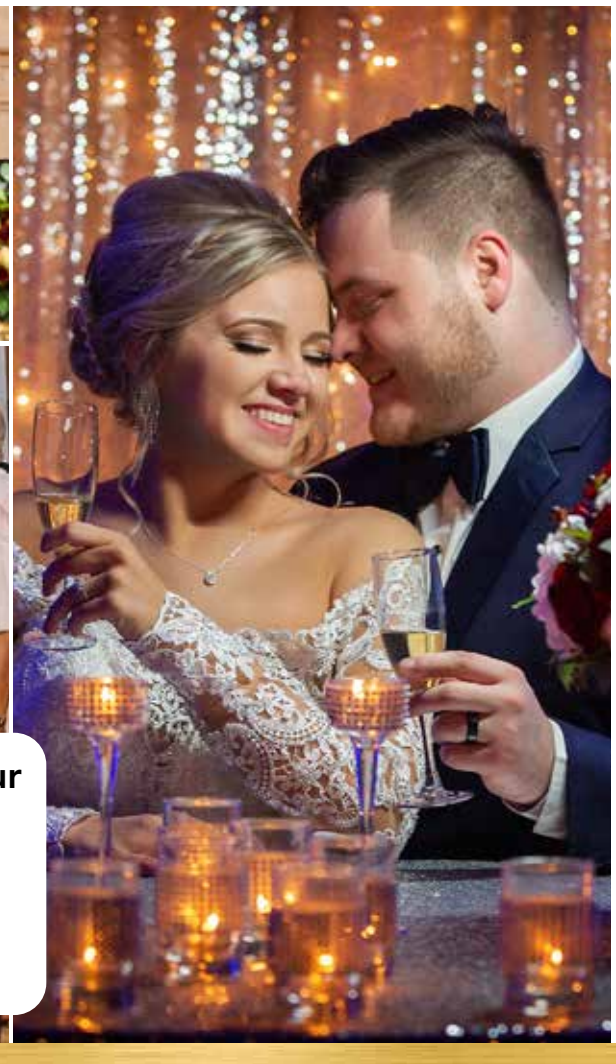








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HEALTH

Saginaw campaign aims to prevent infant deaths through safer sleep practices



A BWELL SAGINAW SAFE SLEEP CAMPAIGN BILLBOARD ILLUSTRATES THE DANGERS OF SHARING A SLEEPING SURFACE WITH AN INFANT. THE PUBLIC AWARENESS INITIATIVE ENCOURAGES CAREGIVERS TO PLACE BABIES ALONE, ON THEIR BACKS AND IN A CRIB FOR EVERY SLEEP. (IMAGE COURTESY OF BWELL SAGINAW)

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — A communitywide campaign to prevent sleep-related infant deaths is continuing in Saginaw County, with free workshops designed to help parents, grandparents and other caregivers create safer sleeping environments for babies.

BWell Saginaw is offering infant safe sleep education as part of its yearlong "ABCs of Safe Sleep" campaign, which encourages families to follow three essential practices: Babies should sleep alone, on their backs and in a crib for every sleep.

The campaign addresses a serious public health concern in Saginaw County. According to information from the Saginaw County Medical Examiner's Office, 11 infants younger than 1 died in 2024 from preventable unsafe sleep situations, compared with 10 in 2023.

Local health organizations have joined forces to increase awareness and help prevent similar tragedies.

The initiative includes Covenant HealthCare, CMU Medical Education Partners, the Saginaw County Health Department, Great Lakes Bay Health Centers and the Region 5 Perinatal Quality Collaborative.

Their educational messages have appeared on STARS buses, billboards, posters and banners throughout the community. The campaign was designed to deliver as many as 48 million public awareness impressions in and around the city of Saginaw.

Free workshops for families

The next workshop at the Saginaw YMCA is scheduled for Wednesday, Nov. 11, at noon.

The sessions are intended for expectant mothers and fathers, new parents, grandparents, babysitters and other family members who help care for infants.

Participants will learn how to create safe sleeping environments, understand common misconceptions about infant sleep and identify local resources available to families.

The workshops will also provide information about Rx Kids and the Maternal Infant Health Program's car seat resources.

Additional workshops are scheduled for Nov. 3 and Nov. 17 at the Houghton-Jones Neighborhood Association, 1708 Johnson St., beginning at 4 p.m.

Those sessions are free and do not require registration. Participants can receive a safe sleep starter kit containing a Pack 'n Play, fitted sheet, sleep sack and baby clothing, with one kit available per household per baby.

Health experts recommend that infants sleep on a firm, flat surface in a crib, bassinet or play yard without pillows, blankets, stuffed animals or other loose bedding.

The goal of the campaign is to ensure that everyone responsible for a baby's care understands the same safe sleep practices.

Families can learn more through BWell Saginaw and the Saginaw County Health Department.

HEALTH

Saginaw Fire Department urges residents to check smoke alarms as clocks change

BY MB STAFF



THE DEPARTMENT IS ENCOURAGING RESIDENTS TO TEST SMOKE ALARMS, CHECK CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS AND REVIEW HOUSEHOLD FIRE ESCAPE PLANS AS COLDER WEATHER ARRIVES. (FILE PHOTO)

SAGINAW, Mich. — The Saginaw Fire Department is reminding residents to check their smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors as daylight saving time ends, emphasizing that a few minutes of prevention could save lives.

In an Oct. 29 announcement, the department encouraged families to take advantage of the seasonal clock change to review important home safety precautions.

Daylight saving time ended at 2 a.m. Sunday, Nov. 1, when clocks moved back one hour.

Fire Chief Brandon Hausbeck said the combination of Halloween activities and the time change provides an opportunity to remind families about fire safety.

Working smoke alarms provide an early warning during a fire, giving residents valuable time to escape before smoke and flames spread throughout a home.

The department recommends testing every smoke alarm, replacing batteries when necessary and following the manufacturer's maintenance instructions.

Residents should also check carbon monoxide detectors, particularly as colder temperatures lead to increased use of furnaces and other heating equipment.

Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless gas produced by fuel-burning equipment. Malfunctioning appliances, improperly maintained heating systems and blocked ventilation can allow dangerous levels to accumulate indoors.

Because people cannot detect carbon monoxide by sight or smell, properly functioning detectors are an important part of household safety.

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Midland launches free men's group to address isolation and mental well-being



MEN'S TABLE GATHERING IS A FREE MONTHLY PROGRAM DESIGNED TO ENCOURAGE CONVERSATION, FRIENDSHIP AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING AMONG ADULT MEN. (FILE PHOTO)

BY MB STAFF

MIDLAND, Mich. — A new monthly gathering in Midland aims to help men build friendships, strengthen social connections and find a comfortable place to talk about life's challenges.

Family and Children's Services of Mid-Michigan is launching the Men's Table, a free discussion group for men ages 18 and older.

The first meeting is scheduled for 9 a.m. Tuesday, Nov. 3, at the organization's office, 1714 Eastman Ave.

The program was developed by Kenneth Mize, clinical services director at Family and Children's Services, as part of an effort to support men's health and wellness.

Unlike a traditional counseling session, the Men's Table is designed as an informal gathering where participants can enjoy coffee and conversation without pressure to discuss personal problems.

Topics may include work, relationships, parenting, family responsibilities, mental health or everyday experiences.

Mize told the Midland Daily News that making new friends and maintaining meaningful relationships can become increasingly difficult as men navigate careers, family obligations and other responsibilities.

The program is intended to create an environment where men feel comfortable sharing their experiences, listening to others and building connections.

Participants will not be required to speak or discuss sensitive subjects. Those who prefer to listen and enjoy the company of others are also welcome.

The group is open to all adult men, regardless of whether they are fathers.

Creating connections through conversation

Social isolation and loneliness can affect emotional well-being, particularly when individuals lack opportunities to develop meaningful relationships outside work or family.

Community gatherings such as the Men's Table can provide opportunities for participants to connect with others who may be experiencing similar challenges.

The organizers hope friendships developed during the monthly meetings will continue beyond the scheduled gatherings.

Boomerang Coffee Lounge is sponsoring coffee for the inaugural meeting.

The Men's Table will initially meet on the first Tuesday of each month. Organizers may consider additional gatherings or evening sessions in the future.

The program is free, and no registration, referral or previous involvement with Family and Children's Services is required.

The first gathering begins at 9 a.m. Nov. 3 at 1714 Eastman Ave. in Midland.

HEALTH

Flint awards $1 million in opioid settlement funding to 17 community organizations

BY MB STAFF

FLINT, Mich. — Seventeen Flint community organizations have been selected to receive a combined $1 million in opioid settlement funding to support programs addressing local needs and strengthening families and neighborhoods.

Mayor Sheldon Neeley announced the funding awards Friday, Oct. 23, during a news conference at Flint City Hall.

The city allocated $1 million in opioid settlement funds to the Greater Flint Health Coalition, which coordinated an application process allowing local organizations to seek financial support for community initiatives.

The selected organizations will receive individual awards ranging from $20,000 to $150,000.

The funding is intended to address community challenges associated with the opioid crisis while supporting programs that help individuals and families improve their overall well-being.

According to city officials, funded initiatives include youth services, financial stability programs and other community-based efforts designed to strengthen Flint neighborhoods.

Opioid settlement funding comes from legal agreements involving companies accused of contributing to the nation's opioid epidemic.

Across Michigan, communities are receiving settlement payments intended to help address the consequences of opioid misuse, including substance use disorders, overdose deaths and the long-term effects on families.

The Flint initiative reflects an effort to invest those resources in local organizations that understand the needs of the communities they serve.

Neeley said the grants provide an opportunity to support organizations already doing important work throughout the city.

The mayor also emphasized that the city's commitment will continue beyond the initial distribution of funds.

Ongoing support for local organizations

The Greater Flint Health Coalition will continue working with the city to support the organizations receiving awards throughout the year.

That partnership is intended to help funded initiatives achieve their goals and provide measurable benefits to Flint residents.

Community-based programs can play an important role in addressing the broader circumstances associated with substance use, including economic hardship, limited access to services and challenges facing children and families.

City officials said the funding supports organizations working in several areas of community development rather than focusing exclusively on substance use treatment.

The awards represent another step in Flint's efforts to use opioid settlement resources to support community health and recovery.

Residents seeking additional information about the initiative can contact the City of Flint's Division of Health Strategies and Advancement at 810-766-7346, ext. 2008.

Rising health care costs put growing financial pressure on older Americans

BY MB STAFF

WASHINGTON — Rising medical expenses, prescription drug costs and caregiving responsibilities are placing increasing financial pressure on older Americans, leaving many families facing difficult decisions about how to pay for health care.

As Medicare's annual open enrollment period continues, older adults are reviewing insurance options while weighing higher household expenses and changes to medical coverage.

For retirees living on fixed incomes, unexpected medical bills can quickly disrupt carefully planned household budgets.

Even individuals with Medicare coverage may face expenses for prescription medications, copayments, deductibles, dental care and services not fully covered by their insurance plans.

A recent Associated Press report highlighted how these growing costs are affecting older adults, including retirees who have had to withdraw money from savings to pay medical expenses.

The financial strain also extends to family members who provide unpaid care for aging parents, spouses and other relatives.

Family caregiving costs continue to rise

An AARP study released Oct. 28 found that family caregivers spend an average of $11,508 annually out of pocket to support loved ones.

That represents an increase of nearly 60% compared with 2021.

The study found that caregiving expenses consume an average of 31% of household income, creating an especially difficult burden for lower-income families.

Expenses can include housing, transportation, groceries, medications, medical equipment and other necessities.

Some caregivers also reduce working hours, take unpaid leave or use personal savings to meet family responsibilities.

The findings underscore the importance of financial planning and access to resources for both older adults and the relatives who care for them.

Medicare enrollment offers opportunity to review coverage

Medicare's annual open enrollment period runs from Oct. 15 through Dec. 7.

During this time, eligible beneficiaries can review their existing coverage and make changes to Medicare Advantage or prescription drug plans for 2027.

The changes generally take effect Jan. 1.

Health care experts encourage beneficiaries to compare plan premiums, deductibles, prescription drug coverage and provider networks before making decisions.

A plan that worked well in previous years may no longer provide the same coverage or financial benefits.

For Michigan residents, free and unbiased Medicare counseling is available through the state's MI Options program and State Health Insurance Assistance Program.

Trained counselors can help residents review coverage options, understand benefits and identify potential savings.

The statewide assistance number is 800-803-7174.

Beneficiaries may also compare plans at Medicare.gov or call 800-MEDICARE at 800-633-4227.

As medical and caregiving costs continue to rise, reviewing available resources and insurance options may help older adults and their families make more informed financial decisions.

EDUCATION

SVSU approves $32 million investment to expand student housing

BY MB STAFF



SAGINAW VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY'S BOARD OF CONTROL APPROVED SPENDING UP TO $32 MILLION TO ACQUIRE NEARBY STUDENT APARTMENTS AND OTHER PROPERTIES, EXPANDING ITS FUTURE CAMPUS HOUSING CAPACITY. (PHOTO CREDIT: SAGINAW VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY)

KOCHVILLE TOWNSHIP, Mich. — Saginaw Valley State University is preparing to significantly expand its student housing capacity after the university's Board of Control approved spending up to $32 million to acquire a neighboring apartment complex and additional property.

The decision, approved Monday, Oct. 26, will allow the university to purchase the eastern portion of Campus Village Apartments, located near the intersection of Pierce and Davis roads.

The acquired apartments will be renamed Cardinal Corners and incorporated into SVSU's campus housing system.

The property has space for 357 residents in single-bedroom, townhouse-style accommodations. The western portion of Campus Village Apartments is not included in the purchase and will remain privately owned.

University officials said the expansion is necessary because demand for campus housing has exceeded available accommodations in recent years.

"For the last couple of recruitment cycles, we've actually not had enough space to accommodate all of the students who want to live on campus," J.J. Boehm, SVSU's vice president for communications, told WNEM-TV5.

Student safety a major consideration

SVSU President George Grant Jr. said the investment is also intended to strengthen student safety.

Once the purchase is finalized, Cardinal Corners will fall under the jurisdiction of University Police, allowing the university to implement additional security measures consistent with other campus residential facilities.

The improvements are expected to include expanded security camera coverage and other safety enhancements.

University officials also said existing apartment leases will be honored during the transition to university-operated housing.

The purchase was scheduled to close Friday, Oct. 30, with the apartments expected to transition into SVSU's housing system over approximately two years.

More housing planned for 2027

The acquisition is part of a broader housing expansion at SVSU.

The university is also constructing additional apartments at Pine Grove that will provide accommodations for another 120 students. Those units are expected to be completed by August 2027.

Together, the purchase and new construction are expected to increase SVSU's residential capacity to approximately 3,000 students beginning in fall 2027.

The Board of Control also authorized the issuance of up to $32.3 million in bonds to finance the property acquisitions.

Separately, university leaders approved spending up to $300,000 to purchase property at 7780 Bay Road from the Gail A. Beattie Trust.

Once that acquisition is completed, SVSU will own all property along the east side of Bay Road between Pierce and Freeland roads.

The investments reflect the university's effort to accommodate growing demand for on-campus living while expanding its residential facilities and student services.

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Saginaw voters to decide future of career and technical education funding

BY MB STAFF


VOTERS WILL DECIDE NOV. 3 WHETHER TO RENEW AND RESTORE THE COUNTYWIDE CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION MILLAGE. (FILE PHOTO)

SAGINAW, Mich. — Voters across Saginaw County will decide Tuesday, Nov. 3, whether to continue funding career and technical education programs that have provided hands-on training opportunities to more than 6,000 high school students since 2018.

The Saginaw Intermediate School District is seeking approval to renew and restore its career and technical education millage for 10 years, from 2028 through 2037.

The proposal would renew the currently authorized rate of 0.9962 mill and restore 0.0038 mill lost through reductions required by the Michigan Constitution, bringing the total to 1 mill.

If approved and levied in 2028, the millage is expected to generate approximately $7.1 million in its first year.

The funding supports career training, instructional equipment, student transportation and other authorized educational expenses throughout Saginaw County.

Expanding career opportunities

Career and technical education, commonly called CTE, combines classroom instruction with practical experience in professional and technical fields.

Students can explore careers in health care, welding, advanced manufacturing, engineering, information technology, agriculture and skilled trades while still attending high school.

Some programs allow students to earn industry-recognized credentials, college credits and workplace experience that can help prepare them for employment or further education.

The Saginaw Career Complex, located on Weiss Street, serves approximately 1,000 students annually from participating school districts.

Since the original millage was approved in 2018, the number of programs offered at the complex has increased from seven to 21, while annual enrollment has grown from approximately 490 to 993 students.

According to Saginaw ISD, the millage has supported more than 6,000 students, reimbursed approximately $27 million in eligible tuition and transportation expenses to participating school districts, and provided more than $9 million for facilities, infrastructure and instructional equipment.

The funding has helped expand access to specialized programs that individual districts might otherwise struggle to provide independently.

A partnership built over decades

Career education has deep roots in Saginaw County.

Programs originally developed through Arthur Hill Technical School eventually expanded into the Career Opportunities Center, which opened in the 1970s and later became the Saginaw Career Complex.

Today, Saginaw Public Schools owns and operates the complex, employs its instructors and delivers educational programs.

Saginaw ISD administers the countywide career education millage and coordinates funding among participating districts.

The arrangement allows students from multiple school districts to access specialized training and helps reimburse eligible transportation and instructional expenses.

What the proposal means for taxpayers

One mill equals $1 for every $1,000 of taxable property value.

At the proposed full rate, property with a taxable value of $100,000 would be assessed $100 annually for the millage. That is 38 cents more than the currently authorized rate of 0.9962 mill, assuming the same taxable value.

Approval would continue the dedicated funding authorization through 2037. Rejection would leave the proposed renewal and restoration unapproved, with the existing authorization scheduled to expire before the requested new period begins.

Voters can review the official ballot language and additional information through Saginaw ISD at SaginawCountyCTE.com.

Polls will be open Tuesday, Nov. 3, from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

EDUCATION

Public schools' role in elections



BY CRAIG DOUGLAS

November 3, 2026. Election Day. What role do educators have in elections? It turns out that public schools play an important role in helping students understand elections and the democratic process. Often people are afraid that educators tell students which candidates to support or how to vote. Not true. Schools have a responsibility to teach young people about subjects such as “Civics” and “Social Studies,” where the importance of elections is taught.

Schools help students understand how government works, why voting matters, and how citizens can make a difference in their communities. Education is an important part of preparing students to become responsible citizens. One might argue that in recent years, schools have fallen short here in exchange for standardized test scores in math, reading, and language arts that are widely reported in the news.

On the campaign trail, can you name any candidate who said our schools need to do a better job raising the social studies test scores on the M-Step tests? (I can’t…)

Students should learn how elections work, how candidates are chosen, and how citizens vote for their leaders. They should also understand the differences between local, state, and national elections. Voters elect school board members, mayors, governors, and presidents at three levels of government. All of these leaders make decisions that affect our daily lives, including education, public safety, transportation, and taxes.

Students should also be taught that elections can be contested by ordering a “Recount” after the election has concluded. Let’s say a candidate believes something is wrong in the way the election was conducted or that the results were so close that a few ballots either way could result in a different outcome. That is where a recount occurs, a legal process to sort out any doubt about the election.

Public schools should also teach students how to think critically about political information. Today, people receive information from television, social media, websites, and other sources. Not all information is accurate or fair. Students need to learn how to recognize facts, check sources, and identify misleading information. These skills help young people make informed decisions rather than simply accepting everything they hear or read.

Public schools have an important responsibility in preparing the next generation of voters and community leaders. Their role is not to influence election results but to educate students about democracy, citizenship, and civic responsibility. When students understand the election process, learn to evaluate information, and respect different opinions, they are better prepared to participate in our democracy. Strong public schools help build informed citizens, and informed citizens help build a stronger country.

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November 12 | 5 – 7pm | Planetarium Rooms 114–122
November 19 | 4:30 – 6:30pm | Main Campus Rooms K113 and K115

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**Administration for Children and Families: Children's Learning and Development Benefits from High-Quality Early Care and Education: A Summary of Evidence*

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BUSINESS + FINANCE

Bay Plastics Machinery opens technology center to expand manufacturing



VISITORS WATCH A STRAND PELLETIZER DEMONSTRATION DURING BAY PLASTICS MACHINERY'S OCT. 21 GRAND OPENING IN BAY CITY. THE COMPANY'S NEW 8,000-SQUARE-FOOT TECHNOLOGY CENTER EXPANDS MANUFACTURING, REPAIRS, TESTING AND WORKFORCE TRAINING. (PHOTO COURTESY OF BAY PLASTICS MACHINERY)

BY MB STAFF

BAY CITY, Mich. — Bay Plastics Machinery has opened an 8,000-square-foot technology center at its Bay City headquarters, expanding its manufacturing operations and creating additional space for equipment testing, repairs and workforce training.

The company celebrated the expansion with an Oct. 21 grand opening attended by approximately 150 people, including business leaders and manufacturing industry representatives.

The new facility, located at 3515 N. Euclid Ave., provides room to manufacture and refurbish pelletizers and related equipment used in the plastics processing and recycling industries.

Pelletizers are industrial machines that cut processed plastic material into small, uniform pellets. Those pellets can then be used in the production of new plastic products.

The technology center includes a complete strand pelletizing line, allowing employees and visiting customers to observe the equipment in operation.

Company officials say the expansion responds to growing demand for manufacturing services, equipment maintenance and replacement parts.

Growing demand creates opportunities

Bay Plastics Machinery has experienced increased business activity over the past two years.

The company has expanded its mobile service operations, sending technicians to customers throughout the Midwest and Southeast to pick up equipment, complete repairs and return components to manufacturing plants.

The expansion provides additional room for those services while supporting the production of new equipment.

Jason Forgash, president and CEO of Bay Plastics Machinery, said the company is focused on helping domestic manufacturers and recycling businesses maintain reliable operations.

The business added approximately five employees over the past year, increasing its workforce to about 55. Two of the new employees joined its service department.

The facility also creates additional opportunities for employee training and professional development.

Preparing the next generation of workers

Workforce development was a major theme of the grand opening.

Matt Seaholm, president and CEO of the Plastics Industry Association, was among the speakers discussing partnerships between manufacturers and career and technical education programs.

Such partnerships can introduce students to modern manufacturing careers and help them develop skills needed in the industry.

The new center includes demonstration and training areas where employees and visitors can learn more about machinery operations and maintenance.

Bay Plastics Machinery's roots in local manufacturing extend back several generations. The company's history includes the tool-and-die business JETRO Inc., operated by Forgash's grandfather, Tony Forgash Sr., during the 1950s.

Forgash's father, Tony Forgash Jr., later became involved in developing the family's pelletizing technology. Bay Plastics Machinery was established in 1997.

The latest expansion continues that manufacturing tradition while positioning the company to serve a growing market for plastics processing equipment and repair services.

For Bay City, the investment represents continued activity in specialized manufacturing and the skilled trades.

Ukrainian couple prepares to open Odesa restaurant in Midland



OWNERS SERGEY AND CHRISTINA POKANEVYCH ARE TRANSFORMING THE FORMER ANTONIO'S BUILDING INTO A RESTAURANT FEATURING UKRAINIAN, EUROPEAN AND AMERICAN CUISINE. (PHOTO COURTESY OF ODESA BY CHEF SERGEY)

BY MB STAFF

MIDLAND, Mich. — A Ukrainian couple who established a bakery in Midland is preparing to open a full-service restaurant that will introduce more traditional Ukrainian dishes while offering familiar American and European favorites.

Sergey and Christina Pokanevych are transforming the former Antonio's Restaurant & Bar at 1716 W. Wackerly St. into Odesa by Chef Sergey, with an opening targeted for November.

The couple, who also operate Chef Sergey's Bakery on Ashman Circle, say the restaurant will reflect their Ukrainian heritage and their commitment to preparing food from scratch.

The bakery will continue operating after the restaurant opens.

The new restaurant is named for Odesa, the Ukrainian city where the couple was born and where generations of their family lived.

The Pokanevyches left Ukraine following Russia's full-scale invasion in 2022 and have since built a culinary business in the Midland community.

Bringing Ukrainian traditions to Midland

Odesa by Chef Sergey will feature Ukrainian favorites including borscht, Chicken Kyiv, handmade varenyky, pelmeni and holubtsi.

The menu will also offer steaks, smoked pork ribs, salmon, seafood, salads and sandwiches, providing options for customers unfamiliar with Eastern European cuisine.

Bread and croissants produced at Chef Sergey's Bakery will be incorporated into several lunch selections.

Vegetarian and plant-based dishes will also be available, along with a children's menu.

Chef Sergey brings more than 20 years of culinary experience, including restaurant ownership and management in Ukraine.

He plans to personally train the restaurant's kitchen staff in food preparation, presentation and consistency before opening.

The couple say their goal is to create a welcoming restaurant suitable for both special occasions and casual dining.

Extensive renovations underway

The Pokanevyches purchased the former Antonio's property in June and have spent several months renovating the building.

According to an Oct. 30 report in the Midland Daily News, much of the interior has been rebuilt, with custom furniture and other improvements designed specifically for the restaurant.

Odesa is expected to accommodate approximately 100 guests and include a full-service bar.

The couple anticipates an average customer check of approximately $20 to $30, depending on menu selections.

Planned operating hours are 11 a.m. to 9 p.m., with lunch and dinner service available initially. Breakfast service may be introduced several months after opening.

The owners intend to begin with a soft opening and announce the official opening date after completing staff training.

They have also reported strong interest from prospective employees.

Expanding a family business

The restaurant represents another step in the Pokanevyches' business development in Midland.

Chef Sergey's Bakery has introduced local customers to Ukrainian-inspired pastries, breads and other baked goods.

Sergey has also published a cookbook, At Home with Chef Sergey, featuring 80 recipes and instructional resources.

The book is expected to be available at the restaurant once it opens.

For the couple, the new venture combines their experience in the restaurant industry with an opportunity to share their heritage through food.

The official opening date has not yet been announced.

BUSINESS + FINANCE

Flint-based Financial Plus Credit Union announces proposed merger creating $2 billion institution

BY MB STAFF

FLINT, Mich. — Financial Plus Credit Union and Monroe Community Credit Union have announced plans to merge, a move that would create a Michigan financial institution with more than $2 billion in assets.

The proposed partnership, announced Tuesday, Oct. 27, remains subject to regulatory approval and a vote by Monroe Community Credit Union members.

If approved, the combined organization would operate under the Financial Plus Credit Union name.

Financial Plus is headquartered in Flint, while Monroe Community Credit Union is based in Monroe.

Together, the institutions serve approximately 115,000 members and hold more than $2 billion in combined assets.

The merger would expand the financial institution's geographic reach, banking products and digital services while maintaining a community-focused operating model, according to the credit unions.

Expanding financial services

Financial Plus currently serves more than 83,000 members and reports assets exceeding $1.7 billion.

Monroe Community Credit Union, established in 1953, serves approximately 32,000 members and has more than $410 million in assets.

The combined organization would operate a network of 20 branch locations.

Credit union officials say the partnership could provide members with broader access to financial services, increased lending capacity and additional investments in digital banking technology.

The organizations also expect to strengthen their ability to support business lending, financial education and community development initiatives.

Employees and branches to remain

Both credit unions have committed to retaining their employees and keeping all existing branch locations open.

Officials say member accounts, cards and current banking services will continue operating during the approval process.

Existing deposits will remain federally insured through the National Credit Union Administration, subject to applicable coverage limits.

Financial Plus President and CEO Brad Bergmooser said the proposed merger has personal significance because he grew up in Monroe.

Bergmooser said the partnership is intended to preserve the relationships and community identity that Monroe members value while providing access to additional financial products and resources.

Kristine Brenner, president and CEO of Monroe Community Credit Union, also emphasized the organizations' shared commitment to employees, members and community involvement.

Approval process still ahead

The proposed merger must receive regulatory approval and support from Monroe Community Credit Union members before it can move forward.

No final completion date has been announced.

The credit unions plan to provide additional information about the approval process and timeline in the coming months.

Both institutions say the merger is being pursued as a growth opportunity rather than because of financial problems.

Credit unions are member-owned, nonprofit financial cooperatives that provide banking services such as savings accounts, loans and checking accounts.

The proposed Financial Plus and Monroe Community partnership reflects continued consolidation within the financial services industry as institutions seek to expand technology, lending capacity and customer convenience.

For Flint, the proposal could further strengthen the statewide presence of a financial institution headquartered in the city.

Members can find additional information through Financial Plus Credit Union and Monroe Community Credit Union.

Midland Center for the Arts partners with Live Oak to open new café Nov. 14

BY MB STAFF

MIDLAND, Mich. — Midland Center for the Arts is partnering with local coffee company Live Oak to open a new café inside the cultural institution, creating an additional gathering place for visitors and community residents.

Center Live Oak is scheduled to open Saturday, Nov. 14, near the Midland Center for the Arts ticket office.

The café will operate as a regular coffee shop, welcoming customers whether they are attending a performance, visiting the museum or simply meeting friends for coffee.

Live Oak will manage the café's daily operations, while Midland Center for the Arts will provide the space.

The collaboration combines an established regional coffee business with one of Midland's major cultural destinations.

Creating a community gathering place

Matt Travis, president and CEO of Midland Center for the Arts, said the partnership is intended to encourage more people to visit the Center as part of their everyday routines.

Instead of limiting the building's activity to scheduled performances, classes and exhibitions, the café will offer visitors another reason to spend time at the facility.

Renee Deckrow, founder of Live Oak, said the partnership reflects the coffee company's focus on building community connections.

The café will feature Live Oak coffee, tea, pastries and other selected menu items.

Hours are planned for 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily, with extended service during certain performances and events.

Additional services for eventgoers

The partners are also exploring ways to incorporate the café into Midland Center programming.

Plans include advance mobile ordering for selected events, allowing patrons to order beverages before a performance and collect them during intermission.

Special offerings tied to performances or other Center activities may also be introduced.

The café will complement existing concessions rather than replace them.

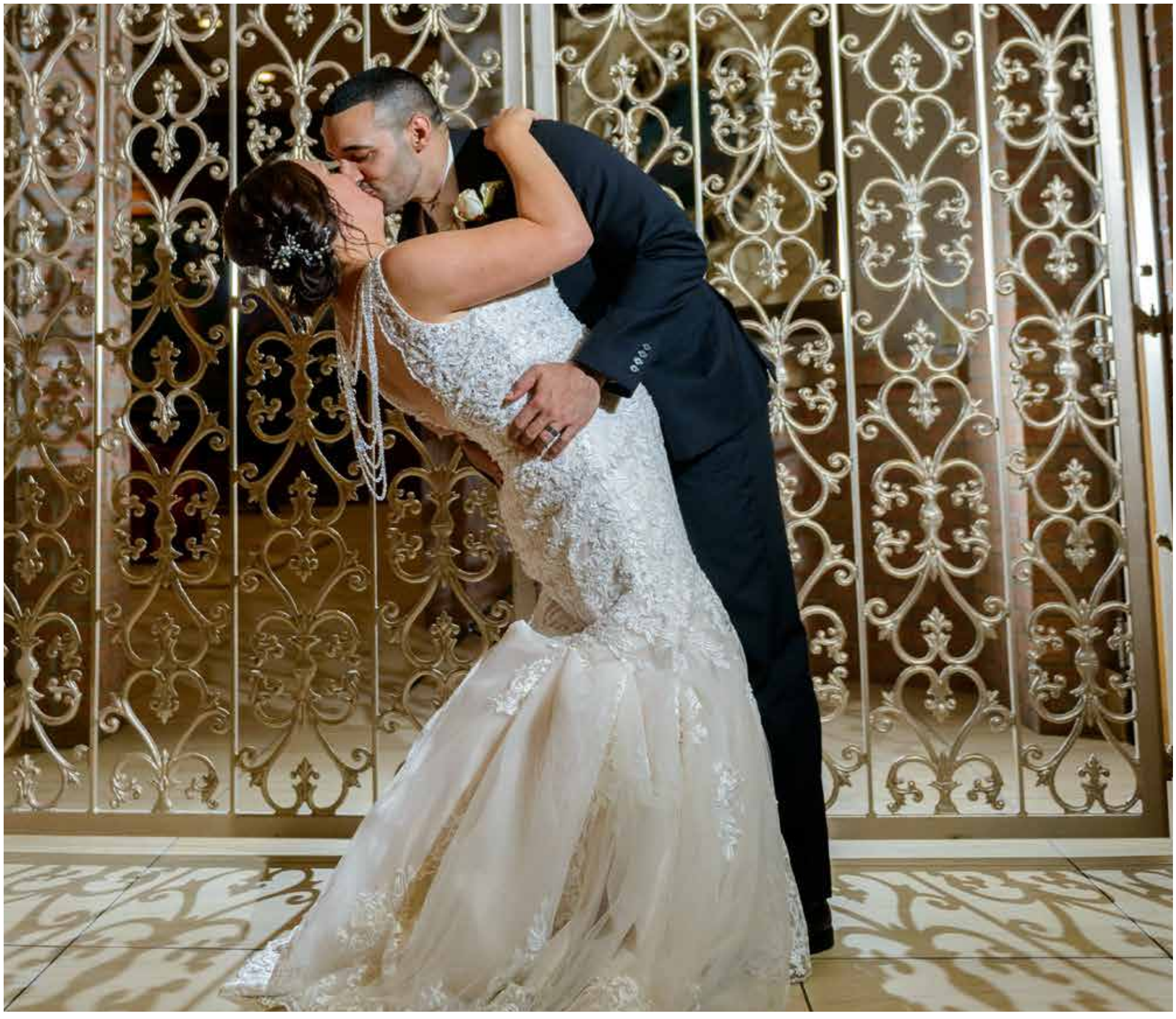
Supporting local business

The collaboration provides Live Oak with another opportunity to serve customers in Midland while introducing its products to audiences visiting from throughout the Great Lakes Bay Region.

For Midland Center for the Arts, the café supports a broader effort to make the facility an inviting destination beyond traditional ticketed events.

The partnership may also create opportunities for additional collaboration between local businesses and the arts community.

Center Live Oak is scheduled to open Nov. 14. Additional details about its menu and services are expected before opening day.



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FAITH IN FOCUS



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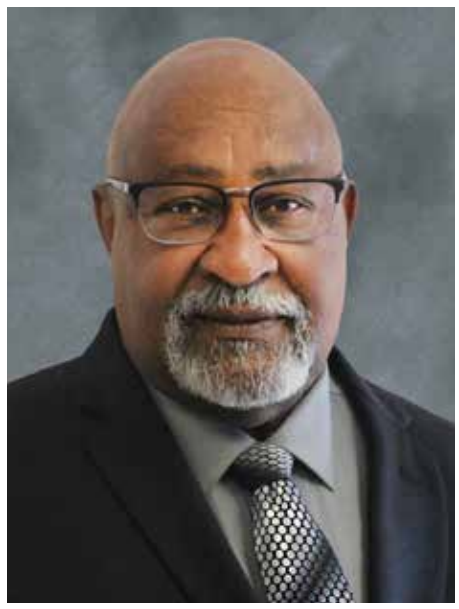
Ministry Without Walls expands vision with community-focused mission

BY PASTOR JOHN DUNN

Ministry Without Walls has recently returned to its location at 3783 Mannion Road with a renewed vision, shaped by recent global events and the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Seeking divine guidance, the organization has embraced a broader mission: to make the church an integral part of the community.

The new direction for Ministry Without Walls is centered around the theme of "Breaking Down Walls." This initiative aims to bridge gaps between spiritual life and community service, uniting church members, volunteers, and local professionals in a shared mission.

The organization's vision includes several key objectives:



PASTOR JOHN DUNN

- Creating a space where the spirit, soul, and body can achieve wholeness.
- Providing resources to those in need.
- Fostering collaboration between the church, volunteers, and community professionals.
- Ensuring a welcoming environment where love prevails and judgment is absent.
- Maintaining privacy and prioritizing safety.
- Emphasizing the importance of the whole person.

Ministry Without Walls will continue to offer various teachings and seminars on topics such as outreach, spiritual growth, mental health, healthy living, finding purpose, financial management, entrepreneurship, and more. These programs are designed to address diverse needs and support personal development.

Recognizing that the mission field is close to home, not far away, the organization is committed to a collaborative approach, knowing that achieving this vision will require the collective effort of many. Ministry Without Walls is dedicating its resources, talents, and connections to dismantle barriers and connect with the community more deeply.

Those interested in learning more or getting involved are encouraged to visit the church on Sundays at 11:00 AM. This offers an opportunity to meet Pastor John Dunn, ask questions, and experience the ministry's mission firsthand.

For more information, visit Ministry Without Walls at 3783 Mannion Road, Saginaw, MI 48603.

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SERMONETTE SERIES

Bandages on Bullet Wounds: Walking by Faith in a Fractured World



BY MINISTER
CAROLYN CARTER TOWNSEL

We are living in an era where the headlines read like an indictment of humanity. Job markets are evaporating, crime rates are fracturing our communities, and systemic corruption operates shamelessly in high places. Most devastatingly, the sacred bond of the family has ruptured—we watch in horror as the natural affection between parents and children dissolves into neglect and abuse. And yet, we are constantly told by the architects of our culture that everything is fine, that progress is being made, and that peace is just around the corner.

This profound disconnect between public narrative and raw reality is exactly what the Prophet Jeremiah confronted centuries ago. When the structures of his society were collapsing from moral decay and leadership failures, the authorities of his day did exactly what ours do now: they minimized the trauma.

As Jeremiah 6:14 vividly records:

"They dress the wound of my people as though it were not serious. 'Peace, peace,' they say, when there is no peace." The scripture exposes a timeless strategy of institutional gaslighting. Instead of performing the deep surgery required to fix a broken civilization, leaders apply a superficial bandage over a gaping wound, repeating empty slogans of safety to maintain control. They demand that we ignore the evidence of our own eyes and ears.

But as Christians, we are called to a completely different standard of reality. When the world collapses around us and the cultural narratives fail, we cannot anchor our hope in what we see. We must hold on tightly to the unchanging truth of God. Even when the headlines breed fear and the foundations shake, we must trust Him fiercely—remembering the timeless mandate of 2 Corinthians 5:7: "For we walk by faith, not by sight."

To walk by faith means choosing to believe God's resume over the world's report. Sight relies on the shifting sands of global economies, corrupt leadership, and societal stability. Faith fixes its eyes on the unshakeable nature of a sovereign God. And Walking by faith does not mean we deny the reality of the darkness around us; it means we refuse to let that darkness dictate our peace or direct our steps. It is a daily decision to anchor our confidence in His eternal promises rather than the temporary chaos of our immediate surroundings.

Beloved, when the world tells you to quiet your concerns and accept the superficial bandages of a failing system, look past the chaos. Do not let a false narrative silence your discernment, and do not let a broken world shatter your devotion. Anchor your soul in the promises of God, stand firm in the storm, and remember: a culture that lies about its wounds will never find its healing, but those who trust in the Lord will never be shaken.

Blessings to All,
Carolyn

CHURCH DIRECTORY



Faith Ministries Church

Rev. Dr. Anthony Revis
Prophetess Linda J. Kemp Revis
3420 E Ashman St.
Midland, MI 48642
989-837-7777
faithministrieschurch.org



Ministry Without Walls

Pastor, John Dunn
3783 Mannion Road
Saginaw, MI 48603



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Saginaw, MI 48601
989-753-1151
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Saginaw, MI 48603
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New Mt. Calvary Baptist Church

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989-754-0801



Holy Communion Gospel Center

Pastor Charlene Washington
1245 E. Genesee
Saginaw, MI 48607
989-752-3993



New Beginnings Ministries

Pastor Augustine Delgado
701 Hess Avenue
Saginaw, MI 48601
newlife3881@gmail.com



Saint Paul Baptist Church

Rev, Dr., Vincent D. McMillon
120 North 15 St.
Saginaw, MI. 48601
stpaul2@yahoo.com



Jacob's Ladder

Pastor Dennis Barlow
1926 Fairfield Street
Saginaw, MI 48602
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New Birth Missionary Baptist

Bishop Larry D. Camel
3121 Sheridan
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Victorious Believers Ministries Church

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624 S. Outer Dr.
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Bridgeport Community Church

Pastor Rob Ashmall
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PO Box 541
Bridgeport, MI 48722
989-777-1840



New Covenant Christian Center

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2395 S. Outer Drive
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989-752-8485



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Saginaw, MI 48607

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Short-term Holiday Fundraising Projects

BY MEL AND PEARL SHAW



FILE PHOTO

Don't be fooled into thinking that social media campaigns can take the place of in-person, real-human interactions. Volunteer fundraising is good for the volunteer, your organization, and those you are engaging with or on behalf of. This is especially true during the holidays. Year-end volunteer fundraising is about mutuality, caring, and being part of something bigger than us all.

The past few years have been increasingly difficult for many of us, including those who may appear to be financially and socially secure. Don't let appearances deceive you. Uncertainty, isolation, and the increasing feeling of polarization can take a toll on the best of us. Volunteering – including volunteer fundraising – is one way to reconnect with those we know and don't yet know. It is a way to increase the feeling of "mattering." Volunteer-led, year-end fundraising can also build confidence, fundraising muscle, involvement, and enthusiasm that carry into the coming year.

Holiday fundraising activities can focus on easing some of the seasonal stress. Activities could include – before the holidays – wrapping holiday gifts, processing and mailing out holiday cards for families or businesses, delivering live Christmas trees, baked goods sales, a holiday craft fair, or creating a small group who can perform Christmas carols at businesses, gatherings, nonprofits, parties, or other places. After Christmas, volunteers can offer – for a fee – to dispose of Christmas trees, holiday wrappings, and boxes. These small-fee fundraising activities add value to people trying to juggle a busy schedule. There are no rules, and you don't need a big fundraising goal. The idea is for people associated with your organization or institution to come together to make a difference, in person.

If you are a staff person or board member with a nonprofit, you can introduce the idea of small groups banding together to make a small difference for a short amount of time. You plant the seed, provide resources to the volunteers, and then step back and let them do their thing. This is not about saving the world – just lending a helping hand. Think of the people with trucks associated with your nonprofit – what if five or six got together to help with delivering Christmas trees or – after the holiday – taking them to the landfill or other appropriate place for disposal. What about bringing together 15 people to bake two cakes each and then get together at a set time so those who pre-ordered can pick up their cake. The idea is for people to identify a project they are good at, and to round up a few friends or family members to make the project happen.

These activities can help build a team of volunteers who have a positive experience with fundraising activities. These activities and volunteers can become part of your annual fundraising in the future. Importantly, this type of fundraising can provide a sense of belonging and community during what can be a challenging time of the year. Here's our bottom line: It is always the right time to engage volunteers in fundraising for your nonprofit.



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PICS OF THE WEEK

On October 23, the city of Saginaw welcomed a delegation from Tokushima, Japan, to celebrate 65 years of friendship between between the sister cities of Saginaw and Tokushima.









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