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SEPTEMBER 4, 2026 | VOLUME 17 | ISSUE 19

YOUR PURCHASE BENEFITS THE VENDORS.
PLEASE BUY ONLY FROM BADGED VENDORS.

Proposed solutions to some U-M students mental health crisis: No letter grades? **page 6**



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VENDOR:
**MIKE
JONES**
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GROUND COVER

NEWS AND SOLUTIONS FROM THE GROUND UP | WASHTENAW COUNTY, MICH.



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@groundcovernews, include vendor name and vendor #

GROUNDCOVER NEWS

PROVIDING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR SELF-DETERMINED INDIVIDUALS IMPACTED BY POVERTY,
PRODUCING A STREET NEWSPAPER THAT GIVES A PLATFORM TO UNDERREPRESENTED VOICES IN WASHTENAW COUNTY,
PROMOTING AN ACTION TO BUILD A JUST, CARING AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETY.

Groundcover News, a 501(c)(3) organization, was founded in April 2010 as a means to empower low-income persons to make the transitions from homeless to housed, and from jobless to employed.

Vendors purchase each copy of our regular editions of Groundcover News at our office for 50 cents. This money goes towards production costs. Vendors work selling the paper on the street for \$2, keeping all income and tips from each sale. Vendors are the main contributors to the paper, and are compensated to write and report.

Street papers like Groundcover News exist in cities all over the United States, as well as in more than 40 other countries, in an effort to raise awareness of the plight of homeless people and combat the increase in poverty. Our paper is a proud member of the International Network of Street Papers.

International Network of Street Papers

Crazy Wisdom Bookstore
Art Gallery presents



September Artist of the Month
Jack Edelstein
“NonDualistic:
The Truth of Polar Opposites”

All art sale proceeds go to GCN!

Free and open to the public!

Exhibit
September 1-30, 2026

Opening Reception
September 12, 2026
5:30-7:00 PM

For more information visit
www.crazywisdombookstore.com/events

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www.groundcovernews.org

WAYS TO SUPPORT

1. **Buy the paper, read the paper.**
2. **Get the word out** — We rely on grassroots marketing. Talk to people about Groundcover and share us with your network.
3. **Volunteer** — You'll learn a lot about our vendors, the newspaper and your community. Interested in volunteering regularly? Fill out the form on our website.
4. **Advertise** your company, organization, event or resource — see rates below.
5. **Follow us on Facebook and Instagram** — promote our posts and share your favorite articles and vendor interactions.
6. **Donate items** — A seasonally appropriate list of items most needed at our office and on the street is available on our website. Drop off anytime we're open.

GROUNDCOVER NEWS ADVERTISING RATES for one month				PACKAGE PRICING
Size	Black/White	Color	Dimensions (W x H in inches)	Three Months/Six Issues: 15% off
1/8	\$110.00	\$150.00	5 X 3 or 2.5 X 6.5	Six Months/Twelve Issues: 25% off
1/6	\$145.00	\$200.00	5 X 4	Full Year/Twenty-six Issues: 35% off
1/4	\$200.00	\$265.00	5 X 6.25	Only run for two weeks/one issue: 40% off
1/2	\$375.00	\$500.00	5 X 13 or 10.25 X 6.5	Additional 20% discount for money saving coupons
full page	\$650.00	\$900.00	10.25 X 13	

MEET YOUR VENDOR



Mike Jones, Groundcover vendor No. 113

In one sentence, who are you?
I am healthy, wealthy and wise.

Where do you usually sell Groundcover?
The YMCA and Ypsi Food Co-op.

Where are you from?
I was born at U-M Hospital and was raised in downtown Ann Arbor.

What is one place in Ann Arbor that feels like your own personal sanctuary? Liberty and 4th.

What's your life motto? Mean nobody harm and be nobody's fool!

What advice would you give to your younger self?
Listen more than you talk.

Books or movies?
"As a Man Thinketh" by James Allen.

If there was a theme song for your life, what would it be?
"The Lord Knows" by 2 Pac.

If you could travel anywhere, where would you go? Africa.

What is your favorite thing about yourself? I am loving, caring and kind.

Would you make a good world leader?
Yes — because I am dedicated to seeing good prevail.

What is the best day of the year, in your opinion?
Juneteenth! June 19. A celebration of freedom from American slavery.

Who's your favorite superhero?
Superman — because Clark Kent was a news reporter!

A music empire development

I met Mike Jones while walking through Ypsi one morning while he was selling Groundcover News. Interviewing Mike helped to highlight my thought process in regards to music development. I have a personal interest in music development and we talked about Mike's music, showcasing his personal journey.

As we were walking through the Ypsilanti streets, we got into the development behind the music. I asked Mike about the name of his music group. Mike responded "Yeah, Getcha Mind Right Crew, and that was inspired by the Wu-Tang Clan. How different acts came together to form one group. You know, people who gather in different parts of our neighborhood, making music for people to enjoy."

I find personal inspiration in the arts and it is often the case that many people in the homeless community have strong creative talents. I have often contemplated how to give more relevance to those facets of our society through art groups and creative outlets that would release them from creative stagnation so they can use their abilities to challenge themselves. In other words, how to build a creative empire on the ability of the people. Which leads us to the question: what opportunity are we creating for those interested in music development while facing socioeconomic hardship?

Mike and I broke through some barriers with regards to socioeconomic issues like homelessness and the impact music can have



HANNAH SNOW
Groundcover contributor

on them. I asked Mike about his experience with homelessness. "Yes, I was homeless while working two jobs and struggling to pay my child support," he said.

I commented on how a person can be making moves to do the right thing, be working a job and still come into hard times. We need to understand these real life struggles behind homelessness. We know faces, but we don't know their stories.

According to Mike, the widespread socioeconomic issues that affect so many people now are becoming more and more common, to the point of it being difficult for many people to keep their mouth above the water. This does not mean we should not continue to strive to teach people how to use their skills to swim. A better-taught fish will move easier through the water.

I could see the use of music in a growth-centered setting being more beneficial than not for the esteem of a community that starts with an individualistic basis. What can YOU build with your creative ability right where you're at, just like he did? I inquired if there was a time he thought of music as a tool to use

for personal betterment. "Yes, absolutely I have. In my youth, my uncle always said, 'Music will teach you.' Ultimately, the arts are the foundation for creating a better place."

Mike went on to talk about how music is a form of therapy for him. I have contemplated starting a music artist development group, free to anyone passionate about music and fostering a desire to do something with it.

Don't despise the land of small beginnings. In the case of Getcha Mind Right Crew, it started with a meeting with an artist in a session that promoted a feeling of therapeutic involvement. The inspiration grew from there. I believe we can see great results when we are believed in as creative individuals.

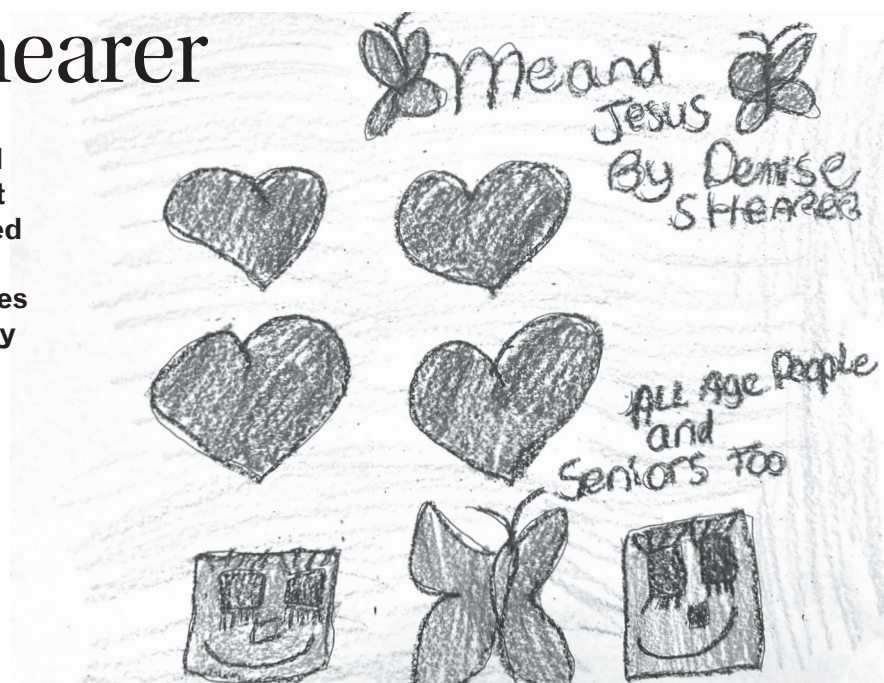
I also see the potential of a greater development for Ann Arbor's small artists who want to grow into their "it's time now" era. That's something I aspire to see happening for my community and those involved in it. Involvement therapy instead of escape therapy. A beautiful concept.

A last piece of advice from Mike for individuals like me who are just starting out: "Take steps and move towards it every day."

What about you? Would you benefit from joining a music development group? Potentially, you could be a foundational stone to a self-made music empire of independent and flourishing artists.

Denise Shearer

Groundcover's next special edition magazine "Respect Your Elders" will be released September 25, highlighting issues, resources and stories about our senior community members!



Healing in progress: restoration of Woodlawn Cemetery

The Woodlawn Cemetery in Washtenaw County is the only documented Black cemetery in the area. From 1946-1965 this was the only place that people of color could be buried with dignity.

Rev. Garther Roberson Sr. purchased the land in 1946 and the cemetery was established. He was pastor of Second Baptist Church in Ypsilanti and created it largely because Black residents had very limited burial options. They took people that had nowhere else to be buried and no funds. When Rev. Roberson died in 1955, the property reportedly passed to his wife Estella Roberson and Mrs. Booker Rhonene. They declared bankruptcy soon after inheriting the property. With no money for maintenance, the cemetery fell into disrepair. The last burial is believed to have been around 1965, and the cemetery was subsequently treated as abandoned. It was officially declared abandoned by 1981.

Dr. Debby Mitchell Covington, President and Chair of the African American Cultural and Historical Museum, assisted by Bill Rudock and Laura Schroeder, are doing the research to identify the names of the deceased. Dr. Tiffany Fryer, Assistant Professor at the University of Michigan and cofounder of the Center for Community Archaeology Heritage, and Kat Slocum, an archeologist, are among the leadership engaged in the restoration project, which will let people know about the people buried in the cemetery.

The geophysics company Terracon has been a tremendous support; the company completed several comprehensive geophysical surveys of the site.

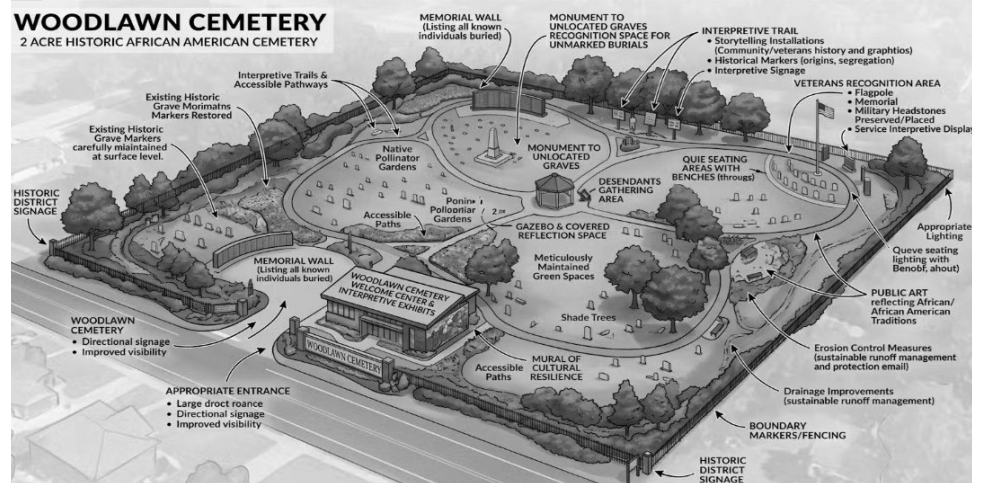


FELICIA WILBERT
Groundcover vendor No. 234

This enabled the team to locate the graves. Other key partners in this project are the descendants of those buried at Woodlawn, along with community volunteers. The purpose is to remember and reclaim the sacred space and tell the stories of those who are laid there to rest.

Extensive hours of research into deed records, archival research, vital records, County Clerk records — with help from descendants and local churches — assist the volunteers who are interested in learning more than the deceased's name and the date of birth and date of death. There are teams doing biographies on each one of these individuals. Over 300 volunteers participate, many of them on the site, scanning clips of newspaper obituaries and records. A human detection dog located some burial sites. They are also able to use the system LiDAR, which is a "light detection arranging system." It is utilized on an unmanned aerial vehicle that scans the ground making an indication of what is below.

It is estimated Woodlawn Cemetery is the final resting place for 150 Black Ypsilanti community members. This expanded genealogical research identifies these community members and



connects us to them, including honored veterans.

Connecting families and making reparations by restoring every burial site can take some time. This could be one step in the right direction, ensuring the descendants can memorialize and secure lasting legal protection of the site.

Pictured above is a creative landscape of peace, beauty and reference for the new Woodlawn Cemetery. This restoration can be engaging for the youth and future generations in the understanding of Woodlawn Cemetery history.

terry history.

The historical preservation work is focused on securing local historic district designation for Woodlawn Cemetery, and ultimately a placement on the national register of historic places. That work is already in progress.

Do you have a relative buried at Woodlawn Cemetery? If so, please contact project coordinators at historicpreservation@washtenaw.org to assist with adding them to the list. Woodlawn Cemetery is located at 7800 S. Huron River Drive, Ypsilanti.

Federal court dismisses DOJ's lawsuit vs. Washtenaw

TABATHA REYNOLDS
Board of Commissioners Constituent Outreach Coordinator

Washtenaw County welcomes the August 21, 2026 decision by the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan granting the County Defendants' motion to dismiss the federal government's lawsuit challenging the County's policies related to the immigrant community.

In an 86-page opinion, U.S. District Court Judge F. Kay Behm rejected the federal government's effort to invalidate policies adopted by the Washtenaw County Board, the Washtenaw County Prosecuting Attorney's Office and the Washtenaw County Sheriff's

Office. Today's order dismisses the case in its entirety.

The Court reaffirmed a fundamental principle of our constitutional system: while the federal government has broad authority over immigration, it cannot require local governments to use their personnel, facilities and resources to carry out federal immigration enforcement.

The Court concluded that the federal government's complaint failed to establish that Washtenaw County had done anything more than exercise its constitutional authority under the Tenth Amendment. "The dismissal affirms what we have said from the beginning: Washtenaw County has both the right and responsibility to make thoughtful

decisions about how we use our local resources to keep our community safe," said Board of Commissioners Chair Katie Scott. "We can respect federal law without being compelled to do the federal government's job. I'm proud that we stood by our values and by our community, and we will continue working to make sure everyone who calls Washtenaw County home feels safe accessing County services and engaging with local government."

Throughout this litigation, Washtenaw County has maintained that federal immigration enforcement is fundamentally a federal responsibility and that local governments cannot be compelled to devote local resources to carrying out federal priorities. The

Court's ruling confirms that principle.

"We are grateful for the Court's careful and thorough consideration of these important constitutional questions," said Corporation Counsel Michelle Billard. "This ruling provides important clarity not only for Washtenaw County, but for local governments seeking to serve their communities while respecting roles of federal, state, and local government."

Washtenaw County remains committed to public safety, rule of law, responsible stewardship of taxpayer resources, and ensuring that County services remain accessible to all members of our community.

community EVENTS

DAYTIME WARMING CENTER COMMUNITY MEETING

Saturday, September 5, West Park, 215 Chapin Street, Ann Arbor. 2 p.m. Are you homeless or housing-insecure and want to collaborate with others on surviving and thriving this winter? We would love to talk with you at our upcoming Community Meeting. There will be free food and carpooling from Mercy House (Peggy's).

RUMBLE OF THE BUMBLE

Saturday, September 5, Depot Town Ypsilanti, 2-10 p.m. Street festival highlighting environmental issues and the plight of pollinators, featuring live outdoor wrestling matches (8-10 p.m.), a puppet parade (2 p.m.), dancers, acrobats and other street performers, games, vendor booths, interactive art installations, art for sale, a kids area with activities. At the Freight-house, live music TBA and a story-time. Food for sale. rumbleofthebumble.org

STREET ART ENCOUNTER

Friday, September 11, Main Street area, Ann Arbor. 12 p.m. until sundown. Watch as sidewalks and street spaces come alive with live street art, interactive installations, and creative expression from talented local and regional artists. Free and open to all!

THE ANISHINAABEK AND NIIBI: IMPORTANCE OF WATER TO MICHIGAN'S FIRST PEOPLE

Saturday, September 12, Furstenberg Nature Area, 2626 Fuller. Ann Arbor. 1-2 p.m. Local Anishinaabek educator Eric Hemenway leads a short hike and discusses how water has been an integral part of the history and culture of its people. Dress for weather and walking.

"NONDUALISTIC: THE TRUTH OF POLAR OPPOSITES" OPENING RECEPTION

Saturday, September 12, 5:30-7 p.m. Crazy Wisdom Bookstore Art Gallery, 114 S Main St. Ann Arbor. Join Crazy Wisdom's September artist of the month, Jack Edelstein, and Groundcover News for an evening of art. Jack's graphic designs are devoted entirely to the ancient symbol of yin and yang — also known as the Taijitu or the Cosmic Dyad — the emblem of complementary polarity. He explores the profound truth that opposites are

not enemies but partners in a higher harmony. Free and open to the public. All proceeds benefit Groundcover News.

STREET STORIES: INSPIRATION FOR RECOVERING

Saturday, September 12, 6-7:30 p.m. Ann Arbor District Library Pittsfield branch, 2359 Oak Valley Dr, Ann Arbor. Local documentary by Christina Morales Hemenway. Free screening for organizations wanting to help get people from the streets into long term recovery, as well as participants in the film and general public. There are only 100 seats available. Feel free to bring people, just make sure they reserve their seats, too. RSVP at www.dancingstarproductions.com

AGUANKÓ: UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY

Saturday, September 12, Ypsi Freighthouse, 100 Market Pl. Ypsilanti. Doors 7 p.m., Show 7:30 p.m. Local Afro-Cuban jazz ensemble led by composer-percussionist Alberto Nacif. Dance floor and seating both available. Tickets \$5 in advance at ums.org | season/2026-2027-season

MONARCH MIGRATION FESTIVAL

Sunday, September 13, 1831 Traver St. Ann Arbor 1-4 p.m. All invited to watch or participate in the release of tagged monarch butterflies. Also, games and other activities to learn about their life cycle and the center's role as a way station for migrating monarchs. \$6 in advance or at the door.

KEEPING THE PROMISE: A FREE PRESS IN THE AGE OF DISTRUST

Tuesday, September 15, Wallace House Gardens, 620 Oxford Road. Ann Arbor, 5 p.m. Christopher Baxter, founder of the Pennsylvania nonprofit newsroom Spotlight PA, discusses how local news lost its way and the future of a free press and future society are inextricably linked. Preregistration requested at wallacehouse.umich.edu

FOOD TRUCK RALLY

Friday, September 16, Ann Arbor Farmers Market, 315 Detroit St, 5-8 p.m. Over 12 Southeast Michigan vendors bringing you food from across the globe; community groups, free entry and live music.

A2ZERO GREEN FAIR

Friday, September 18, Main Street,

downtown Ann Arbor, 5-8 p.m. Attend Ann Arbor's annual street fair celebrating sustainability, community, and climate action! Visit our five theme areas to explore how you can be part of a cleaner, greener and more resilient future in Ann Arbor and Washtenaw County. Free and open to all!

NAVIGATING FROM CRISIS TO RECOVERY

Monday, September 21, AADL Pittsfield branch. 6:30-7:45 p.m. Presentation by members of the NAMI advocacy committee about how it's possible to move from crisis to stability and recovery in a time of instability in mental health funding and services.

A2 JAZZ FEST

Saturday, September 26, Rabbit Hole, 210 S. 1st St. Ann Arbor. 5:30 p.m. Noah Hogan Quartet. 7 p.m. Tariq Gardner & Evening Star. 8 p.m. Sean Dobbins Organ Trio. Sunday, September 27, Ravens Club, 207 S. Main St. Ann Arbor. 6 p.m. Elvin Sharp Quartet. 7:30 p.m. Alex Hoberty Quintet. 9 p.m. Junk Jazz. All events free. See back page.

YPSITASTY GRUB CRAWL

Tuesday, September 29, 4-8 p.m. Depot Town, Downtown Ypsilanti. A chance for food lovers to enjoy the best food, beverages and unique shops that Ypsilanti has to offer. \$25 adults, \$15 students, \$10 kids. Tickets can be purchased online at a2chamber.org/events. Presented by the A2Y Chamber of Commerce.

BREAD AND PUPPET: THE UPSIDE DOWN WORLD CIRCUS

Wednesday, September 30, 7 p.m. Riverside Park, 2 E. Cross St. Ypsilanti. The one and only Bread & Puppet Circus is back to confront our upside-down situation! With stilt dancers, paper maché beasts of all sizes and a riotous brass band, The Upside Down World Circus is an urgent spectacle of protest and celebration. After each show Bread & Puppet will serve its famous sourdough rye bread with aioli, and "Cheap Art" — books, posters, postcards, pamphlets and banners from the Bread & Puppet Press — will be for sale.

Submit an event to be featured in the next edition:

submissions@groundcovernews.com

What's Happening at the Ann Arbor District Library

Open 10am-8pm Daily

Visit any of our five locations across town to browse books, magazines, newspapers, and more. Check out movies, CDs, art prints, musical instruments, or even home tools—you name it! Enjoy fast and free WiFi, study and meeting rooms, and plenty of comfortable spaces to relax or hang out.

Preschool Storytimes & Playgroups

Join our storytellers on weekdays for fun songs, stories, puppets, and movement! Visit aadl.org/storytimes to view a list of upcoming in-person storytimes and playgroups. You can also stream and download our recorded storytimes online at AADL.TV.

Michigan Activity Pass

With a valid card from any Michigan public library, you can print a pass to participating organizations, including museums and state parks, through the Michigan Activity Pass website. Unlock complimentary or reduced-price admission, and other exclusive offers!

FEATURED EVENT



A2CAF: Small + Indie Press • Saturday, October 3 • Downtown

Venture into the world of small press comics publishing this fall! Meet comic artists, get your favorite comics signed, and learn about the art of creating comics outside of a traditional publisher. Learn more at aadl.org/a2cafsip!

Proposed solution to some U-M students' mental health crises: no letter grades?

WILL SHAKESPEARE
Groundcover vendor No. 258

On August 11, 2026, ABC News reported that the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor announced that, starting in the fall of 2027, the university will begin changes in its grading policy for some freshmen, eliminating letter grades for about half of its incoming class. Why? The mental health crisis of students at the freshmen level has made it difficult for some students to succeed, even when they take advantage of university resources.

A YouTube video did a re-broadcast of the ABC News presentation. It carried the headline, "University of Michigan announces grading change amid 'mental health crisis.'" YouTube's introductory statements include the following: "Thousands of freshmen students at the University of Michigan will not see letter grades in their report card next fall."

The Wall Street Journal did a detailed story about Michigan's new grade policy. NPR and a host of major news media have covered the new policy, social media like Facebook and Reddit have discussed the proposed policy in depth, and have solicited comments from users of the platforms. There have been staggering numbers of comments already. Thousands more are coming in this ongoing story.

The statement on the YouTube platform continued, "The school recently announced it is starting a 'grade converting' pilot program in 2027 for all incoming first year students in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts [LSA] for their first semester, where students will only receive Pass (P) or No Credit (NC) grades instead of A through F letter grades." On August 13, FOX News Channel 2 arrived at the Ann Arbor campus to broadcast the news and interview some of the students. FOX 2 reporter Lauren Edwards showed a glimpse of some student reactions, which primarily indicated that many don't understand why it's happening.

Some of our customers may ask, "Why did this Groundcover News article include many nationwide media beyond the confines of the state of Michigan?" This writer believes that the University of Michigan story is a nationwide news headline because young people's mental health and what schools are doing about providing solutions are paramount societal concerns. Furthermore, the University of Michigan is one of the pre-eminent universities in the world. It was ranked

among the top college campuses globally. U.S. News and World Report has consistently ranked U-M as one of the top three public universities in America. It is ranked among the top 25 national universities for undergraduate study. Time Magazine has consistently ranked U-M as one of the top 15 universities in the world, mentioned alongside prestigious universities such as Oxford, Cambridge, MIT, Harvard, Stanford, U-C Berkeley, Princeton, Yale and UCLA.

Michigan Daily information digest

The Michigan Daily newspaper of August 19, 2026, carried a headline which stated, "LSA announces pilot program making first-semester grades pass/fail, beginning 2027." This newspaper's communication with the College of LSA administration has shed light on the key reasons for the new pass/no pass grade policy. The newspaper said that LSA wrote that "the change was implemented in order to help incoming students better acclimate to the academic demands of campus. The program will be automatically adopted for every first-year student."

Specifically, it is the goal of LSA to help students succeed, survive and thrive in their new environment. The acclimation strategy will "allow students to guide personally meaningful academic journeys — core elements of a liberal arts and science education." The statement continued, "For example, they can explore a subject that may not come easily to them or take a course in a new field without the fear that a low grade may have long-term consequences." The University of Michigan expects about 8000 freshmen in the Fall of 2027. Approximately half of them will be enrolled in the College of LSA and therefore involved in the pass/no pass grade policy.

It is also important to consider this observation from the Michigan Daily: "While LSA students will still receive grades and instructor feedback in every course as they always have, final grades will not be recorded on their external transcripts and will not be reflected on their GPAs ... LSA students' official transcripts will state that all grades in the first semester are automatically designated as P/NP." For those people receiving scholarships their letter grades will be available to them and their scholarship providers as part of the internal record, but only internally.



Incoming Dean of the College of Literature, Science and the Arts Rosario Ceballo (left) started on August 15, 2026. Ceballo will be implementing the pass/fail grading policy enacted under outgoing Dean Anne Curzan (right).



The Michigan Daily article provided a better understanding of the proposed new grade policy for the 2027 U-M incoming freshman class. The clarity of the article is a valuable addition to the headline news that had spread like wildfire. Unlike previous headlines from broadcast, print and social media reports, the Michigan Daily coverage by Caleb Obico on August 19 was highly factual and not sensational.

During the composition of this story, we wanted to learn more about the magnitude of college students' mental health crisis as documented by higher education organizations such as the National Educational Association (NEA). NEAToday Magazine, in a report titled, "The Mental Health Crisis on College Campuses," reported that "Rates of anxiety, depression and suicidal ideation on college campuses have never been higher. Meanwhile, faculty and staff are overwhelmed." The NEA report continued: "In 2019 — and this was before Covid-19 — 90 percent of counseling center directors reported an increase in students seeking services." The report also noted that the demand for counseling and psychological services "has led to burnout among counselors, and turnover is rapidly increasing ..."

This information is based on the annual survey of counseling center directors. There is also the observation that while the campus administration may say that counseling help is available, many students tell NEA researchers that they couldn't get in for appointments.

At the University of Michigan, there are resources to support students' and educators' mental health. The resource center is called Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS). The Dean of Students Office has the following resources: 1) information on student

support and students' mental health programs; 2) faculty and staff roles in students' mental health crisis; and 3) information for parents and families about their adult children receiving help and the many forms of University assistance.

Let us not forget the impact of the COVID-19 global pandemic on K-12 schools and college campuses. Many schools were closed and students and their teachers were engaged in online digital education. There were plenty of setbacks for millions of students. The pandemic officially ended about three years ago. However, the impacts on some students' academic preparation and college readiness are obvious, especially in poorer urban school districts across the nation.

Also, let us keep in mind that today's youth in middle and high schools are overstressed. The demands on their time to excel in the classrooms, sports and extracurricular activities are excessive. Both K-12 students and college freshmen can be at their best when they experience a reasonable balance between rigorous academic study and leisure time.

Finally, the University of Michigan has indicated that one of the key reasons for this new Pass/No Pass grade policy at the Ann Arbor campus for the 2027 freshman class is to help students acclimate to their new learning environment. It is a competitive environment. Sometimes, it may not be a welcoming environment. For some students, it may not be a friendly nor supportive environment.

It is important to understand that students recruited to the campus come from high schools in different communities, including urban, suburban and rural environments. The public and private school systems are not always

New student guide to the City of Ann Arbor

BARAK HOWELL

Groundcover contributor



For hiking/walking trails: The Arboretum

1610 Washington Heights, Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Reason Why? With 123 acres of diverse landscapes, this park is perfect for recreational use in any season.

For ultra training: Border to Border Trail System

1352 Lake Shore Dr, Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Reason Why? A 55-mile non-motorized paved pathway ideal for distance excursions into the great outdoors.

For a bicycle co-op: Common Cycle

416 W Huron St, Suite 11, Ann Arbor, MI 48103

Reason Why? A community-driven cycling ecosystem offering mechanic workshops, courses, replacements and repair pop-ups.

For a wall to climb: Planet Rock

82 Aprill Dr, Ann Arbor, MI 48103

Reason Why? Whether you are a veteran boulderer or a top ropes newbie, this indoor gym has been a local adventurer's haven since 1994.

For A New School Backpack: Bivouac

336 S State St, Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Reason Why? With a loft full of a variety of daily travel supplies, this retailer originally started in 1970 as an army surplus by Ed Davidson.

For a rain jacket to stay dry: Fjällräven

213 S Main St, Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Reason Why? From Örnsköldsvik, Sweden to the urban campus of U-M, this outdoor retailer is known for quality water resistant waxed-canvas outdoor clothing and equipment.

For a neighborhood watering hole: The Hidden King

210 S Main St, Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Reason Why? For tasty craft cocktails and more (including non-alcoholic drinks) in a welcoming atmosphere, this cafe/bar is perfect for newcomers and regulars alike.

For a consignment farmers market: Argus Farm Stop*

325 W Liberty St, Ann Arbor, MI 48103 and 1226 Packard St, Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Reason Why? For local foodievores, this stop offers a plethora of local producers' and farmers' products and an enduring pause.



For a vegan hub: Detroit Street Filling Station

300 Detroit St, Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Reason Why? Detroit Street, and their north campus location The Lunch Room, are driven to provide the healthiest, plant-based options since their launch in August 2017.

For classy street eats: Frita Batidos

117 W Washington St, Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Reason why? Offering Cuban-inspired burgers and shakes in a brightly lit eatery and driven by in-house crafted tenets of the Slow Food Movement.

For the best tacos: Chela's Restaurant and Taqueria

693 S Maple Rd, Ann Arbor, MI 48103

Reason Why? With street-style tacos, loaded burritos and flavorful horchata, Chela's is bound to spice up any occasion.

For tasty barbeque: Ricewood

245 N Maple Rd, Ann Arbor, MI 48103 and 1928 Packard St, Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Reason Why? Boasting three ingredients (Salt, Pepper and Time), the barbeque joint lures in a hungry crowd for smoked brisket and pulled pork delights.

For a bean roastery: Hyperion Coffee

111 W Liberty St, Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Reason Why? These coffee aficionados know how to roast a green bean to

perfection and serve up a delicious brew for your study sessions. Check out their original Ypsi cafe too!



For delicious ice cream: Blank Slate Creamery

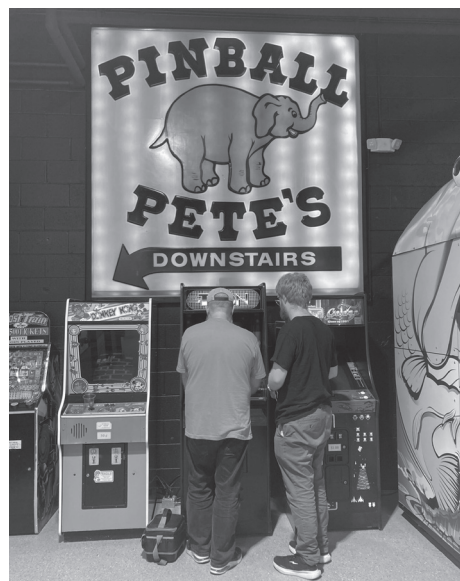
300 W Liberty St, Ann Arbor, MI 48103

Reason Why? Touting a garden fresh lineup of flavors, this chalk-styled shop provides delectable frozen treats sourced from all-natural ingredients.

For a cocoa treat: Mindo Chocolate Makers Shop*

206 N 4th Ave, Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Reason Why? Sourced in the foothills of Ecuador direct to your taste buds, Mindo's hand-crafted bean-to-bar chocolate is sure to please your savory sweet tooth desires.



For arcade game thrills: Pinball Pete's

500 E Liberty St, Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Reason Why? Come for the Skee Ball and stay for the Halo Fireteam Raven attractions at this newly renovated arcade's downtown location.

For rare vinyl records: Underground Sounds

120 E Washington St, Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Reason Why? Record stores are still fun at this local vinyl hub featuring an independent curated collection of fine music.

For a source of comic books and board games: Vault of Midnight

219 S Main St, Ann Arbor, MI 48104

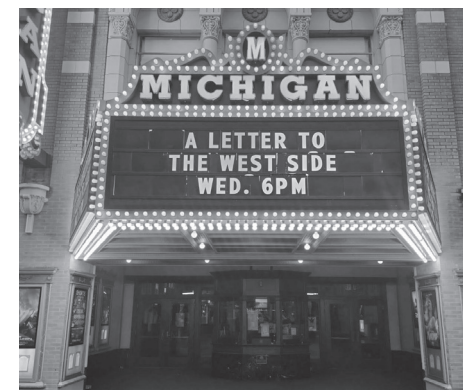
Reason Why? Graphic novel and board game enthusiasts are sure to find a home here in Ann Arbor's arts and cultural geeky entertainment environment.



For a local bookstore: Literati*

124 E Washington St, Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Reason Why? 2019's winner of Publisher Weekly's Bookstore Of The Year prize, this premiere independent bookselling institution is a must-peruse for any book worm.



For a movie palace: Marquee Arts*

The Michigan Theater 603 E Liberty St, Ann Arbor, MI 48104 and The State Theater 233 S State St, Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Reason Why? As a Michigan-based nonprofit committed to movies and performances, and preservation, the Michigan and State Theaters offer art-house programming for a variety of audiences.

For a live concert venue: The Ark

316 S Main St, Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Reason Why? Another nonprofit organizational staple in the community, The Ark features top live folk, roots, ethnic music and more.

**You are likely to meet a Groundcover News vendor outside these businesses!*



Left and right: **Yard signs across urban Washtenaw County display opposition to the U-M Los Alamos Data Center planned for Ypsilanti Township.** Center: **August 11, 2026, the University of Michigan announced selection of a 144-acre site along Textile Road, near Bridge and Rawsonville Roads, in Ypsilanti Township as the preferred location for their data center.**

Update on proposed data centers

MIKE JONES

Groundcover vendor No. 113

Two years ago no one was talking about or had even heard about data centers. Now, it's the talk of the town in many American states, cities and townships.

Data centers are dedicated computing facilities housing infrastructure to store vast amounts of data — primarily for Artificial Intelligence applications and cloud storage — and are being built all over America. Southeast Michigan is now in the cross-hairs and the people of the affected local communities continue to oppose these data centers and the big tech companies behind them.

Proposed data centers in Michigan are heavily concentrated in Southeast Michigan, particularly around the Ann Arbor area in Saline, Ypsilanti, York Township and Van Buren Township.

The \$1.25 billion high-performance computing and AI research facility planned by the University of Michigan and Los Alamos National Laboratory in Ypsilanti Township was first announced in December 2024.

U-M maintains that the facility is a high-performance scientific research tool intended for medicine, climate science and energy innovation rather than a commercial data storage center.

The development of the Saline AI data center in Saline Township was officially announced on October 30 and 31, 2025, as a multi-billion dollar project backed by tech companies OpenAI and Oracle.

The United States has thousands of data centers, with recent estimates from late 2025 and early 2026 placing the number around 5,400 facilities, according to power solutions provider C&C Wave-Tech. This represents roughly 38-45% of global capacity, leading the world by a large margin. This massive infrastructure supports the nation's

tech sector, with a significant portion concentrated in states like Virginia, Texas and California, and continues to expand rapidly due to AI demand.

Projects often face pushback from residents concerned about energy use, increased utility costs and environmental impact — specifically air and water damage — often leading to data center moratoriums in these communities.

At least two projects have been officially withdrawn by local pushback in Michigan, while over 50 communities across the state have enacted temporary moratoriums to block new applications, preemptively stalling futures projects. Tuesday, September 1, the City of Ypsilanti held a public hearing for an ordinance to impose an emergency moratorium on issuance of new zoning permits for data centers in the City of Ypsilanti for 60 days although there were no current requests for data center permits.

Across multiple townships, rather than leading to outright cancellations, this local opposition has heavily delayed projects or forced developers to alter their plans.

Stalled and withdrawn projects

Ypsilanti Township — stalled: In July, the Board of Trustees passed resolutions formally pushing back against a \$1.25-billion high-performance computing data center project tied to the University of Michigan.

Ypsilanti Township Supervisor Brenda Stumbo and township attorney Doug Winters expressed frustration at being blindsided by the University's final decision, stating that the community formally opposes the project due to transparency and infrastructure concerns.

Doug Winters stated that the

university wouldn't place such a facility in Ann Arbor, and chose Ypsilanti Township because it features lower generational wealth and a higher percentage of Black and Brown residents.

The Ypsilanti Community Utilities Authority approved a 12-month moratorium blocking new water and sewer approvals for data centers to study capacity and environmental risks.

Saline and Augusta Townships — stalled: The massive \$7 billion "Star-gate" data center project in Saline Township (initiated by Related Digital as part of Oracle and OpenAI) faced intense backlash over a wastewater treatment plant permit application. The permit would allow treated facility water to discharge into the Saline River, raising local concerns about concentrated chemical pollutants, wetland destruction and massive energy demands.

Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel and environmental groups filed legal briefs in August 2026 urging the court to overturn DTE Energy's fast-tracked 1.4-gigawatt energy contracts with this project. (That is enough energy to power one million houses.) Meanwhile, construction and local administrative steps are moving forward, as reported by Planet Detroit.

Howell Township — withdrawn: Developers withdrew a proposed \$1 billion data center application following intense resident outcry and a local moratorium.

Washington Township — withdrawn: A planned data center project was completely withdrawn by developers after local residents mobilized in opposition.

Roughly 1,500 square miles of the state of Michigan are temporarily off-limits to new data center construction.

Take action

The next major scheduled community meeting regarding the proposed University of Michigan and Los Alamos National Laboratory research computing and data center is a community town hall hosted by U-M on Wednesday, September 9 at the Ann Arbor Marriott Ypsilanti at Eagle Crest (1275 S. Huron St. Ypsilanti) from 5-7 p.m. [Note: town hall registration is full, but interested attendees can watch at umich.edu/watch/]

The next regular Saline Township Board Meeting is scheduled for September 9 at 7 p.m. at the Saline Township Hall (5731 Braun Rd, Saline). The township board routinely discusses project updates, monitoring and administrative items regarding the planned data center development. Other actions to take include:

- Read multiple resources including news, poetry, reports and public commentary about the Ypsi Township project: linktr.ee/stopthedata
- Follow @stopthedata on Instagram to see upcoming Ypsi Township events
- Read project updates from Saline at salinetownship.org/data-center-update
- Contact your local and state politicians

Note: For more information on proposed data centers go to the Groundcover News website and read digital issues June 13 2025, volume 16, issue 13, "Ypsilanti residents are organizing to Stop the Data Center," written by Lindsay Calka, Groundcover News publisher; and January 23, 2026, volume 17, issue 3 "Southeast Michiganders fight AI data centers" written by Mike Jones.

Climate crisis as social crisis

BASTIAN PÜTTER
bodo

The climate crisis is a social crisis. Globally, the impact hits people living in poverty much harder and further exacerbates social inequality. It's the same for cities in Germany, and specifically for cities in the Ruhr region, such as Bochum and Dortmund.

People on a low income are more likely to live in poorly insulated, non-air-conditioned housing in densely populated areas. People who rely on public infrastructure are forced to remain in urban heat islands. The two maps from the Ruhr Regional Association illustrate the uneven cooling across the urban area. On summer nights, the temperature difference between the densely built-up city center and the rural surroundings can reach up to 10 degrees Celsius.

These so-called tropical nights are not only exhausting but also pose a real health risk. The World Health Organization, the Red Cross and Climate Research Institute describe them as "silent killers". Heatwaves, which used to be isolated events, are now expected every second to fifth summer; they last longer and result in higher peak temperatures. As a result, the number of days with health warnings for extreme heat has increased by 450 percent in Western Europe since the 1990s, and the number of heat-related deaths has doubled.

Researchers estimate 6,300 heat-related deaths in Germany in 2024, the warmest year since weather records began, while the Robert Koch Institute estimates around 2,500 deaths for the slightly cooler 2025. This is roughly equivalent to the annual number of all road traffic fatalities in Germany.

Mitigation and adaptation

The answer to the ever-growing threat is both simple and complicated. The massive social and economic consequences of the climate crisis (Germany faces costs of 500 billion euros, or 580 billion USD, by 2050 even in a moderate case of temperature rise) can only be limited by a drastic reduction in CO2 emissions.

Germany's progress so far in the energy, heating and transport transition is mixed. While more than half of its electricity now comes from renewable sources, the heating and transport sectors lag significantly behind. The reactionary response in Germany and the US, for example, is now jeopardizing what has been achieved so far.

Nevertheless, climate research has been able to revise downwards the previous worst-case scenario for temperature rise. However, the 1.5-degree target set out in the 2015 Paris Agreement to limit global warming compared to pre-industrial levels is now considered to have been missed. Because the consequences of rising temperatures are already widely visible, given the failure so far to curb this rise, a second area has become increasingly important in recent years.

As an emissions policy alone can no longer mitigate the acute risks posed by heat, drought and flooding, adaptation to its unavoidable consequences, i.e. resilience, preparedness and disaster management, is becoming increasingly important. As early as 2022, the Expert Council on Climate Issues urged the German Parliament in its report to adopt a "paradigm shift" towards a dual strategy of mitigation and adaptation.

Across Europe, politicians are developing heat-health action plans. These set out what measures can be taken before and during periods of dangerously high temperatures. In the long term, however, the so-called urban heat island effect must be reduced in order to protect against more dangerous heatwaves, for example by expanding cooling green and water spaces.

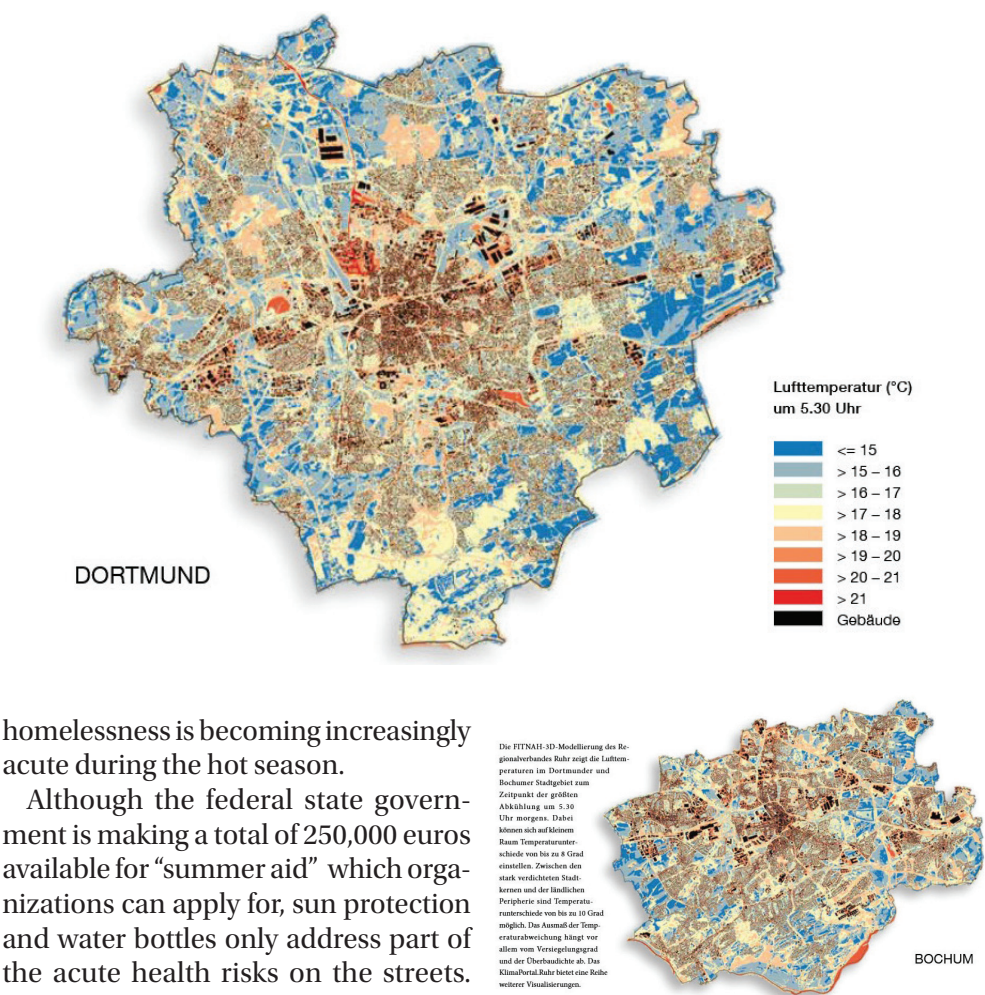
Light and shade

The city of Bochum recently boasted securing one of the top places in the German Environmental Aid's Heat Check. However, the organization also notes a loss of 9,500 trees in Bochum since 2018 (Dortmund: 15,000) and an increase in surface sealing.

With its "sponge city" concept, however, Bochum is regarded as one of the pioneers of climate-adapted urban development. Rainwater is no longer quickly channelled into the sewer system, but is instead stored on site, allowed to seep away, evaporate or be discharged at a later time.

Dortmund was one of the first cities in North Rhine-Westphalia to develop a dynamic heat action plan. Through public information and awareness-raising, as well as temporary measures in public spaces and long-term adaptation measures, this plan aims to maintain the usability of the city center in particular during the climate crisis.

People experiencing homelessness, whose main living areas are often the city center heat islands, are at least marginally taken into account in the plans. Nevertheless, the strain on support services for those experiencing



homelessness is becoming increasingly acute during the hot season.

Although the federal state government is making a total of 250,000 euros available for "summer aid" which organizations can apply for, sun protection and water bottles only address part of the acute health risks on the streets. Above all, there is a lack of infrastructure and places offering protection from the heat. Day centers are often too small and have hardly any air conditioning.

The City of Dortmund's "Cool Places" map highlights the social dimension of the crisis. Many of the places listed are neither intended for nor accessible to people experiencing homelessness. Access to public toilets has been privatised under the "Nice Toilet" scheme. The map also highlights shaded benches in the city's hottest, entirely paved areas and lists the underground stations — but people experiencing homelessness are repeatedly penalised for alleged "fare evasion" simply because they are there.

The city of Bochum has published an eight-page "heat action plan" for those experiencing homelessness, which almost exclusively lists existing

homelessness support services. The only additions are that the Provost Church of St. Peter and Paul will stay open longer, pavilions are to be erected outside amenities where possible, and water bottles may be refilled at senior citizens' centers. That's not much.

Even though municipalities are actively addressing the need for climate adaptation, they have so far failed to take sufficient account of the fact that the impacts of climate change are distributed in a socially unjust manner. As essential as the efforts to protect all city residents from the consequences of the climate crisis are, they will not succeed without progress in the fight for decarbonization. *Translated from German via Translators Without Borders. Courtesy of bodo / INSP.ngo*

PORTER'S PLACE & DUNBAR TOWER GRAND OPENING

OCTOBER 11, 2026 • 4:30-6:30

121 CATHRINE ST, ANN ARBOR

BUILDING TOURS • FREE FOOD TRUCKS
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COMMUNITY REMARKS START AT 5:00PM

The New Revolution

Content warning: suicide, death, profanity, righteous anger.

Some facts have been masked to protect confidentiality (and some names have been changed to protect the innocent).

Imagine you or someone you know gets mugged on the street. You were out late, had to go to the C-store to get a snack. Someone gets your attention while someone else hits you in the back of the head. You wake up in an ambulance without your wallet. There's something else wrong but you can't pin it down. After the emergency room stitched you up, you went home — brain foggy, struggling to remember things, struggling to find things. You have a closed head injury and your life is about to change for the worse.

You begin struggling with time. You are late for appointments, for work, and you can't tell the difference between 10 minutes and an hour. This goes on for some time because you also now lack the ability to determine something is wrong and you need help. Bills pile up, your performance at work declines. An eviction notice shows up on your door. Your job lets you go. You drink a little too much one night and get arrested for drunk driving. Your car is impounded and you have no money to get it out. Because your social skills are also in decline due to the injury, you have no one to turn to for help. So you do what hundreds of thousands in our country do — you get some tarps and set up a bed behind an abandoned warehouse.

Your day now consists of finding food and avoiding getting mugged again. You go to day shelters and sleep outside at night. The life you lived before your TBI (traumatic brain injury) is but a distant dream — one that you wake up from from time to time. When you do, you realize you have become “them.” They are the homeless.

You're shabby, you start drinking more to block out the pain in your head and the pain in your life. You see yourself in the mirror and think “what the hell happened to me.” The more you try to “pull yourself up by your bootstraps” the more you realize your ability to do so is severely compromised because of the brain injury. It wasn't your fault. You didn't choose to get mugged. The hospital didn't catch the TBI. Shit happens. But now you got MAGAs and NIMBYs calling you a loser and a freeloader. Because “you could work if you wanted to, you're just choosing to be lazy and drink.”

Now you come to Ypsilanti because you heard Ypsi is open to helping the homeless get back to self-sufficiency



JIM CLARK
Groundcover vendor No. 139

— which is what the activist community is trying to do — make the homeless go away by solving their problems, not sending them down the road to Alligator Alley. You meet people who genuinely care, but you also meet raging right-wingers who insist that “it is the duty of the government to protect its citizens” means more police. But you are a citizen as well, so how is the government protecting you? In a perfect world, protecting you would mean helping you find housing and support services. The “taxpayers” believe they are somehow entitled to more protection from the government than its most vulnerable citizens. You are a refugee in your own country because your government failed to protect you.

Instead what do they do? They evict you from your campsite behind the warehouse because “the property owner doesn't want litter (your things) and an eyesore (talking about you).”

If this isn't your worst nightmare, the next part is ...

So what do you do? You've burned your bridges, you have no faculties left to “get a job,” and now your own government has turned against you. What do you do? You hang yourself. In back of an abandoned warehouse, in the muddy swampy MDOT right-of-way. It might have been easier to get drunk and pass out on the tracks and wait for Amtrak, but you got the job done. Grisly? Macabre? Triggering? Well it happened. Your worst nightmare was someone else's reality yesterday.

Zoom out.

A cold war is a state of political hostility and tension between nations, waged through economic pressure, propaganda, espionage and proxy wars rather than direct military combat.

The class war is a cold war. The power elite is the 1% of 8 billion people on the planet. This is about 80,000,000 rich people, who own nearly all the wealth. Of them, the ultra-rich number 4,000. This small oligarchy rules the planet. They are actively trying to kill the lower tiers on the hierarchy of wealth. To them it is a moral obligation. But even

more so, to them it is something going on outside the limousine window. They believe the poor are the problem, and they have control of the goods and services across the globe. In some sense, we live at their mercy. They pay-wall us from food and medicine, they raised the cost of living so high that an income of \$55k isn't enough anymore. They have created a system that can predictably kill people without anybody sitting in a room deciding to kill them. They control what we have access to, they control what we buy, they control what we think. And we let them do it because they steered us toward becoming weak, stupid and oblivious — by design.

If you've ever been homeless, you know how hard it is to get back on the horse. To be ruined, to be truly penniless, means no money in the bank, no paycheck coming soon, no car, no phone, no change for the bus, maybe a change of clothes, maybe some hygiene supplies, maybe the Kodak pictures that were your grandmother's — if you have a backpack. And it might get stolen along with the last of your memories.

To get the things you need takes days and weeks when you need it in hours and minutes. You may have a housing voucher, but it may get eliminated because we can't have freeloaders. You may get a Bridge card, but you have to work 20 hours/week to qualify. If you could work 20 hours with a TBI it would be a miracle. But you don't need a TBI to be ineffective, you just need to be homeless for a week. No sleep, poor food, no rest, no safety, no clear plan for the next year, month, week, day... you don't even know where you're sleeping tonight. Get a job. Yeah, that will fix it. Right.

Landlords raise rents high enough to cause the bottom to drop out on many people's lives. Rent goes up, wages don't, so you can't pay your rent and you get evicted, get a misdemeanor for sleeping in public (unless you're in Tennessee where it is now a felony to sleep outside). Food and gas go up but not wages — medicine becomes more and more inaccessible. Tuition goes up ... Come on, how many more dots do you need? We are in a class war, a cold war, being waged by the power

elite. They are getting bolder.

How do people die in a cold war? They starve. They become desperate and make mistakes. They turn to drugs because being numbed makes starving and dying easier. They die of pneumonia in prison or something caused by black mold. They get hit by trains and cars. They fall off bridges. They get beaten and left for dead. But the most popular and preferred way the rich kill the poor is by creating all the elements necessary to drive someone into severe depression where they do the job themselves.

Shawn Hardman was driven to suicide because the government failed to protect him. This makes him a casualty of war.

In war, you have an enemy and you want them dead. Who were Hardman's enemies? Who cut him off from life support? Who kept him from housing? Who kept him from working? Who kept him from getting help from the state? The landlords, the business owners, the property owners, the right wing and even the local government.

We are in a cold war. In a hot war, you kill the enemy with guns and bombs. In a cold war you kill the enemy with neglect, ghosting and othering. Hardman was a casualty of war. And in war when you are attacked, you counter-attack.

Hanlon's razor is an adage or rule of thumb that states, “Never attribute to malice that which is adequately explained by incompetence.”

People know the homeless are there but choose to wear blinders. Knowing there is a problem but not caring is complacency. Knowing there is a problem and letting it remain because you like the outcome is malice. Knowing homelessness kills people and allowing it is cold-blooded murder. There are monsters out there who starve the homeless the same way white settlers starved the aboriginals of this area. They pulled up the wild rice so the “brown skinned savages” would have nothing to eat. They pushed them out of their homes and took all their food. Doesn't that sound familiar?

The New Revolution is on ...

Whose side are you on?

Ypsilanti Bell Kramer encampment sweep update:

On August 6, “Notice To Vacate” signs were posted at the camp with a September 1 deadline. Just after 7 a.m. on Tuesday, September 2, five cop cars and 10 officers from the Ypsilanti Police Department, escorted by PATH team, woke all campers and served them each trespasses. YPD reiterated the imminent threat of forced eviction, but did not give a specific date.

Where I slept last night

JAY COOPER
Groundcover contributor

Last night in Ypsi, I slept in a bed, in a room, in a house, and I feel survivor guilt. I don't deserve to be in a house any more than anyone else. Everyone deserves to be housed. It's a grave injustice that people aren't housed. It's horrifically unfair, and all because useless landlords want to sit back and collect rent. If there were any justice in the world, landlords would have their properties seized and given to the public, but there is no justice.

The room I was sleeping in before this one was unsafe. I brushed aside red flags because it had walls. I knew it was a risk. I voiced the risks, but I moved in anyway to get out of a tent. I tried writing this article in that room but I couldn't.

I had moved the tent to a more isolated place, because it had been robbed, and drug dealers came knocking on my flap at night. Even after moving, drunk and high people were getting more and more comfortable coming out to my tent, and every night I fell asleep holding a weapon. I tried writing this article in that tent, but I couldn't.

Before the tent I slept on the Frog Island tridge. I felt the vibration of every footstep and bike tire. I felt like

the spiders all around me: even with my eyes closed I had acute awareness of things creeping along the web. There also, drug dealers would disrupt my miserable attempts to sleep to see if I wanted a sample.

Before the tridge I was in a townhome in Ann Arbor, caretaker for three years to a drunk bully. I was breaking my back for less and less money, working shorter and fewer shifts as my boss layered abuse atop abuse. Before, in the same townhome, I was caretaker for eight years to an elder.

Before that, in LA, I slept on a West Hollywood rooftop and bus benches, a 4chan nazi's floor in Koreatown, a sycophantic comedian's couch in East Hollywood, I got scorched on Venice Beach in Santa Monica, and with a voucher I slept in a roach motel in South Central.

On my way to LA, I slept in a Seattle hostel, where I lost a half-written novel.

In Vancouver I slept in an East Van basement too short to stand up in, a sex worker gave me a cookie once as I was crying myself to sleep on Hastings Street, and before that I slept in a West End high-rise apartment.

Before Vancouver I slept in Ann Arbor, in the basement of the same townhome I was evicted from last

year, and in punk houses, before gentrification ran them out.

Before that I was in Traverse City, on a futon, a basement couch, in a brutalist concrete youth shelter cell, in a foster home bunk-bed, in lovers' beds, on heated sidewalks, in cars, on countless floors. I learned to be a good houseguest while people marvelled at their own generosity, before they threw me back into the street. Blaming the kid sleeping on the floor is easier than dealing with real family problems.

Before, in Interlochen I slept on a mattress in the basement. I escaped at

seventeen.

Before, in Ypsi I slept in a bunk-bed in a duplex. Before that another bunk-bed, another duplex.

Before that I slept in a bunk-bed,
and originally in a crib in an Ann
Arbor townhome.

I don't know what's next, I wish there would stop being a next, I wish this country wasn't a shithole that abandons people to the street so landlords can keep draining people of all their resources, and using those resources to buy ever-more property to exploit, but that's where I slept last night.

Bethlehem United Church of Christ

whoever you are, and wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here

423 S. Fourth Avenue, Ann Arbor, MI 48104 734-665-6149

Bethlehem-ucc.org facebook.com/bethlehemuccA2

Bethlehem Church is home of the Groundcover office



AUGUST 2026 EVENTS AT BETHLEHEM

Please visit the church website at:

www.bethlehem-ucc.org for the most up-to-date calendar and event information.



Sunday Worship Time

**10:00 am In-person
and via Live Stream**

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Household Size	1	2	3	4	5	6
Income Limit 80% AMI	\$74,800	\$85,450	\$96,150	\$106,800	\$115,350	\$123,900

Homeowners and renters can apply!

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washtenaw.org/weatherization

Unpacking and Understanding the 2025 Washtenaw County Opportunity Index

MAX KORVUN
U-M student contributor

As Ann Arbor continues to grow and evolve, it can be easy to see the city in all its prosperity. We see new developments rising downtown and busy bus routes carrying thousands of people to work and school every day. However, looking deeper into our neighborhoods reveals a more complex story. To help tell this story, the Washtenaw County Office of Community and Economic Development launched the 2025 Opportunity Index. This data-driven tool is designed to measure exactly how much "opportunity" residents have based on where they live.

By analyzing 107 different census tracts across the county, the Opportunity Index scores areas based on five key categories, including Health, Job Access, Economic Well-Being, Education/Training and Community Stability. These categories are built from 19 different indicators, ranging from health insurance coverage to third-grade reading proficiency. The central goal of this is to foster equity across our entire community, by identifying where resources are most needed.

When we look at the data, clear distinctions begin to emerge. Most areas outside of Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti, such as the Manchester area, are categorized as having "high" or "very high" access to

opportunity. In contrast, the areas with the least access are heavily concentrated on the eastern edge of the county, specifically within the City of Ypsilanti and Ypsilanti Township.

For example, Washtenaw County as a whole has a health insurance coverage rate of roughly 95.5%, which upon first glance is significantly higher than the Michigan average of 92.8%, as well as the national average of 88%. Meanwhile though, there are specific tracts in Ypsilanti and Superior Township where this rate drops below 90%.

This disparity is even more striking when compared to national trends. Nationally, the supplemental child poverty rate was estimated at 13.4% in 2024. In Washtenaw County the rate is around 11%, and while our overall economic health is strong, the Opportunity Index can help pinpoint the specific blocks where families are struggling most with "severe housing cost burden" or low job access. Education also shows a widening gap, specifically within test scores. Although recent Michigan data shows that while many test scores are recovering, third-grade reading proficiency has continued to drop, with a 29.6% gap in proficiency between economically disadvantaged students and their peers.

Fortunately, seeing these gaps in the data is the first step toward closing them. We are already

seeing local developments that aim to address these specific "opportunity" markers. For instance, the new affordable housing project at 350 S. Fifth and the corresponding Fourth Ave. Streetscape and Transit Project (which began construction in May 2026) are direct investments into "Job Access" and "Economic Well-Being" for downtown residents. Furthermore, the City of Ann Arbor has put in place a new Department of Economic Development in 2025 specifically to ensure that the city offers "attainable housing, high-quality jobs, and excellent public services" for everyone, not just those in highest-scoring sections.

Ultimately, the 2025 Opportunity Index serves as a reminder that a person's zip code should not determine their future. Using this data to direct and proportion funds like the Community Development Block Grant, the county can work to ensure that "Very High Opportunity" isn't just a label for a few neighborhoods, but a reality for all.

Already, allocations for projects in Ypsilanti Township have been made, and hopefully this index can assist in further equitable proportioning of this funding. For the foreseeable future, monitoring these numbers will be essential for anyone who wants to see Washtenaw County become a truly equitable home for every resident.

➡ **PASS FAIL** from page 6

the same. Although "Separate But Equal" doctrine ended in the May 17, 1954 Linda Brown Supreme Court decision, some educators have argued that the nation's school districts still experience "De Facto" (Not De Jure) separate and unequal educational environments. Beyond the help offered by the University's CAPS, the offices and centers for academic advising need some reforms. There is no justification for offering some freshmen course schedules with the hardest classes which overwhelm them, and lead to withdrawal by brilliant students. I personally am familiar with a couple of promising students who dropped out, one of whom has not been seen recently.

Perhaps the next evaluation of university policy should examine community service/engagement hour requirements in collaboration with the U-M Ginsburg Center for Community Service and Learning.

As I have explicated in previous paragraphs, the University of Michigan's new pass/no pass policy for freshmen in 2027 is an important nation-wide headline. When the news first broke on August 11, most of the students had not arrived on campus. It was welcome news that I was able to meet a student group from the University of Michigan's Community Scholars Program (U-M CSP) when they volunteered at the Mercy House Community Breakfast Program on Saturday, August 29. Ideally, we would like to talk to a larger cross-section of student groups in order to elicit their perspectives and fully understand their opinions on the pass/no pass grade policy. I talked to about seven volunteers from U-M CSP; leaders Rhina and Patrick were joined by five freshmen. They said that they just arrived on campus and had heard about the new pass/no pass grade policy.

Some of them expressed strong opinions, and some of them said that they were not sure. Team Leader, Ms. Rhina, a brilliant student who graduated from the same East Lansing High School where Google co-founder and U-M alumnus Larry Page, studied, said she was not sure if such a new policy is necessary. Other students want to learn some more details about the policy before they could express support. The bottom-line is that there is a need for the University to have more formal and informal conversations with all the stakeholders — students, faculty/staff, parents/families and local opinion leaders.

At this juncture, the Ann Arbor campus of the University of Michigan should take baby steps during the implementation process. Don Schon of MIT's Sloan School of Business has recommended that public and business programs should consider a policy of "reflection on action" during program design, implementation and evaluation. That is a good admonition.

Best wishes!

fed-up ministries SCHEDULE

Wednesdays in Ann Arbor:

Free showers 10 a.m.-12 p.m.: First Baptist Church, Ann Arbor, 517 E Washington St.
Free lunch 12-1 p.m.: Liberty Plaza, Ann Arbor 310 S. Division Street, 48104

Wednesdays in Ypsi:

Free showers and laundry, 3-5 p.m.: First Presbyterian Church, Ypsilanti, 300 N Washington St. 48197
Free Dinner 5-6 p.m.: First Presbyterian Church, Ypsilanti, 300 N Washington St. 48197
LiftUp Worship 6-7 p.m.: First Presbyterian Church, Ypsilanti, 300 N Washington St. 48197

Thursdays:

Free lunch 2:30-4 p.m.: Peace Neighborhood HUB Center, 1515 S. Harris Rd., Ypsilanti 48198

Second Saturday of the Month:

Free lunch, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.: Pullover Prevention Mutual Aid Fair. Rotating location, usually Ypsilanti.



Democracy at work

Richard Wolff is a Yale Ph.D. and a Marxist economist. Many of his former classmates are high level bourgeoisie, the original word for capitalist. Search his "Democracy at Work" (a regular podcast on YouTube) for a great education from the perspective of the working class. If you do that you may not need to finish this article.

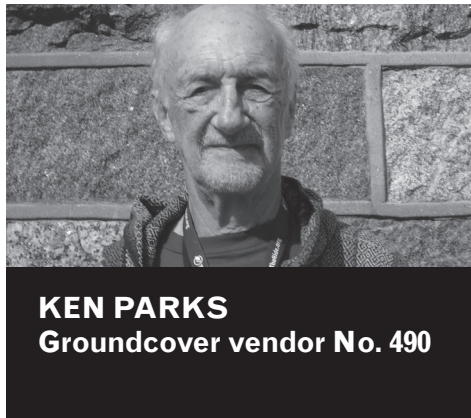
"Global Capitalism" is a joint podcast with Left Forum. It's on YouTube, where they have some 500,000 followers. The last one I listened to was about WORLD WAR III, which talks about Ukraine increasing its drone and missile attacks on Russia.

The war on Russia got serious as the Soviet Union emerged in 1917 with roots in World War I and the competition between the British and Russian Empires of the 19th century. "The Charge of the Light Brigade" is a famous poem by Lord Tennyson, written in 1854 in the context of the Crimean War. The British cavalry charged the Russian cannons and were slaughtered.

Of course, many of us know about Crimea because of the current war in Ukraine. This war began in 2014 as the U.S. regime change strategy brought an ultra-nationalist Ukrainian regime to power. The Ukrainian military, especially fascist combat units, began operations in the Don Bas areas that had large Russian-speaking populations. The United Nations documented the numbers of civilian deaths in this stage of the war. The local plebiscites who voted to be part of Russia impelled the Ukrainians to intensify the war in Don Bas.

The expansion of NATO into Ukraine was at the heart of the Russian invasion in 2022.

Imagine if Canada had joined the



KEN PARKS
Groundcover vendor No. 490

Warsaw Pact during the Cold War; the U.S. would have considered Canada a national security threat.

Trump is not the first to look at Canada as a U.S. province: the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 saw U.S. troops in Canada. In 1813 the Kentucky militia was active in Michigan as the War of 1812 continued. They chased indigenous warriors into Canada where Tecumseh was killed in the Battle of the Thames. As the Americans retreated, they burned Thamesville to the ground. It was rebuilt on the south side of the river, still on Delaware Nation territory. The Canadians built a monument to Tecumseh in honor of his bravery, which slowed down the American efforts to conquer Canada.

The military machine is at the service of the investor class — always in search of resources and cheap labor. Land is a precious resource.

Russia still has much land and many resources which Western investors have always coveted. After World War I, British and American troops, the Polar Bear regiment, were sent to the new Soviet Union to fight in the raging civil war on the side of the White Russians against the Red Russians. You got a glimpse of that war if you've ever

watched the epic movie "Dr. Zhivago." There is a cemetery north of Detroit with a Polar Bear section for veterans of that war.

After World War II, the United States recruited General Reinhardt Gehlen, who was Hitler's chief of Intelligence on the Eastern Front, into their Cold War and NATO strategy. Russia wanted a unified neutral Germany; the U.S. said no, our occupied zone is going to be a leading member of NATO. General Gehlen had the paperwork on all the collaborators (who supported the Nazi occupation) on the eastern front. There were many in the Ukraine, which still has a German community, mainly Mennonites, that dates back to Catherine the Great when Crimea became part of the Russian empire in the late 18th century. As Empress of Russia she offered amnesty from military service to anyone who farmed in the Ukraine. Significant numbers of German speaking Mennonites flocked to the Ukraine. Shalom Community Church of Ann Arbor, a Mennonite Brethren congregation, has a relationship to the German-speaking Mennonites who are still in Ukraine.

General Gehlen surrendered to American military intelligence, saying, "We know who the real enemy is."

The Soviet Union did collapse by 1990 and the USA celebrated its sole superpower status by planning regime change in a list of countries, from Iraq to Cuba. Iraq was first because Saddam Hussein thought he could use their petrodollars to be the major military power in the Middle East. The United States has helped Israel to be the main military force, even assisting them with nuclear weapons, just as they did apartheid South Africa.

As a result of the 1991 war, Saddam

Hussein was forced to keep sending Iraq's petrodollars to Wall Street, which was once again making huge profits in Latin America. The genocidal wars in Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Honduras are part of this historical saga. Of course there were the coups in Chile, Argentina and Brazil to keep investors happy. The term "banana republic" has a long history.

Democracy at Work is doing the job of giving us a better understanding than the imperialist narrative of mainstream media. The Russians have said for some time if drone and missile attacks continue escalating, they will bomb the production plants in Europe (setting off World War III). The U.S. is pressuring Europe to militarize and send bigger and badder drones and missiles to Ukraine.

We know in our lived experience that democracy is not welcome in the workplace. Bosses can be tyrants who stop at no cost to block unions or keep them servile. The struggle for democracy will continue for the next 250 years in the American revolution experiment.

Now is the time to face reality and live a fully engaged life. Our true nature will manifest as we engage in all levels of struggle. Impermanence is the rule for all appearances, especially every experience in your life. I have found the best teachings on a natural life from Buddhist teachers. Buddhist and Marxist dialectics point at the mystery called "unity of opposites" in Marxism, and the Clear Light of the Void in Buddhism. Grant your blessings that we experience reality seamlessly with an ego not attached to itself.

Groundcover Vendor Code

While Groundcover is a non-profit, and paper vendors are self-employed contractors, we still have expectations of how vendors should conduct themselves while selling and representing the paper.

The following is our **Vendor Code of Conduct**, which every vendor reads and signs before receiving a badge and papers. We request that if you discover a vendor violating any tenets of the Code, please contact us and provide as many details as possible. Our paper and our vendors should be positively impacting our County.

- Groundcover will be distributed for a voluntary donation. I agree not

to ask for more than the cover price or solicit donations by any other means.

- When selling Groundcover, I will always have the current biweekly issue of Groundcover available for customer purchase.

- I agree not to sell additional goods or products when selling the paper or to panhandle, including panhandling with only one paper or selling an issue more than 4 weeks old.

- I will wear and display my badge when selling papers and refrain from wearing it or other Groundcover gear when engaged in other activities.

- I will only purchase the paper from Groundcover Staff and will not sell to or buy papers from other Groundcover vendors, especially

vendors who have been suspended or terminated.

- I agree to treat all customers, staff, and other vendors respectfully. I will not "hard sell," threaten, harass or pressure customers, staff, or other vendors verbally or physically.

- I will not sell Groundcover under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

- I understand that I am not a legal employee of Groundcover but a contracted worker responsible for my own well-being and income.

- I understand that my badge is property of Groundcover and will not deface it. I will present my badge when purchasing the papers.

- I agree to stay off private property when selling Groundcover.

- I understand to refrain from

selling on public buses, federal property or stores unless there is permission from the owner.

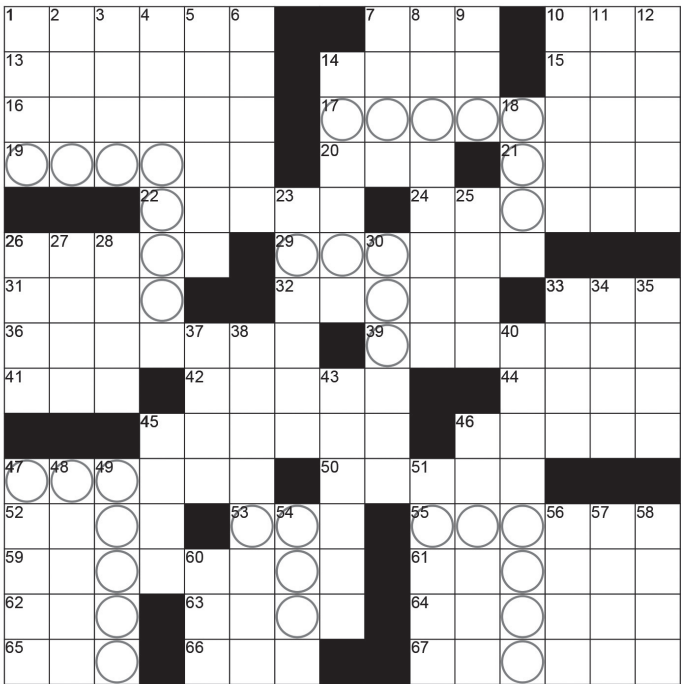
- I agree to stay at least one block away from another vendor in downtown areas. I will also abide by the Vendor Corner Policy.

- I understand that Groundcover strives to be a paper that covers topics of homelessness and poverty while providing sources of income for the homeless. I will try to help in this effort and spread the word.

If you would like to report a violation of the Vendor Code or leave positive review of a Vendor experience please email contact@groundcovernews.com or fill out the contact form on our website.

STAR TURN

Tracy Bennett and Victor Fleming



ACROSS

1. Records of city councils and the like
7. Spot for a mani-pedi
10. Traditional frying pan
13. Comb-over alternative
14. Victor's cry
15. ___ Records (record label for Sony Music Entertainment)
16. Surfing, in a way
17. Awnings, but not a container of veggies
19. Where Marie Curie was born
20. John and Yoko's Plastic ___ Band
21. It touches a corner of New Mexico
22. "Old ___ the Beau" (punny title of a classic fiddler's tune)
24. Aircraft company based in Wichita
26. Dance hit, sometimes
29. Civil liberties
31. Astonishes
32. Big name in fast trains
33. Off-road ride, briefly
36. They've got mail
39. Buick sedan until 2005
41. Calypso kin
42. Jung's inner self
44. Go cold turkey, say
45. Does perfectly on a test
46. Lincolns, but not Hardings
47. Stag topper
50. Maternal supporter during and after labor
52. ___ of faith
53. Act the couch potato
55. Quaint Shakespearean address
59. Body of peers
61. Pungent Italian cheese
62. Certain 33-Across
63. Local educ. support group
64. Overcharges big time
65. Yaslin Bey's former stage name ___ Def
66. Brick, e.g.
67. Make certain

DOWN

1. Sitting on
2. Prohibited action
3. ___ set (what { } means in math)
4. Beekeeper
5. Eurythmics singer-songwriter Annie
6. Edible part of a pomegranate
7. Graceful lake bird
8. 48-card game
9. "That's ___-brainer"
10. Court orders
11. "Midnight zone" milieu
12. Buckwheat porridge
14. Like Rosie the Riveter or Wonder Woman
18. Cat or kisser
23. Citizens of Rasht and Shiraz
25. LAX stats
26. Megan Thee Stallion performances
27. "Return of the Jedi" creature
28. "Wild Horse ___" (Zane Grey book)
30. Frozen treat
33. Lie against
34. Modest combo
35. Site of the Ann Arbor Skate park, informally
37. What some may carry for self-defense
38. Deprive of strength
40. The Water Bearer, astrologically
43. Winged biters
45. Iams alternative
46. "Fun Home" memoirist Bechdel
47. Adele's "30," for one
48. "Awesomesauce!"
49. Scale weights
51. Accepted practice
54. "Criminy!"
56. Saucy brand
57. Antiquing aid
58. Cheat, in slang
60. WEMU is one its member stations
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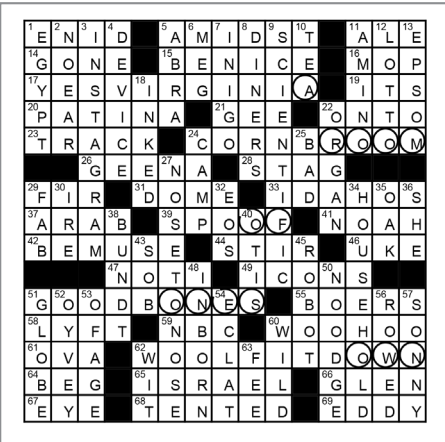


Sudoku ★★★★★ 4puz.com

7	3	8	4					1
6			1	8				
1			7			9		
	1	5		6				
3				4				7
				9		4	1	
		4			8			9
				7	3			8
8					4	7	6	5

Fill in the squares so that each row, column, and 3-by-3 box contain the numbers 1 through 9.

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS August 21, 2026 edition



4	6	1	5	7	8	2	3	9
3	7	9	1	2	4	5	8	6
5	8	2	9	6	3	1	7	4
8	3	4	6	5	9	7	2	1
1	9	5	2	8	7	6	4	3
6	2	7	4	3	1	8	9	5
2	4	8	3	1	5	9	6	7
9	1	6	7	4	2	3	5	8
7	5	3	8	9	6	4	1	2

Why am I treated this way?



Why am I treated this way?
I tried to get you to understand my plague
You no longer say Hi
You just look the other way
Why am I treated this way?
U seen my struggles but you refuse to see
I've talked and talked about it til I am blue in the face!
You just get amused and grin
Like it's just another Day
Well I refuse to give up!
It's people like U who have dilemma and made come true
So will it be easier for you for me to fade away?
Remember you be hit in the face with this illness or plague
Then U will know how it feels to be mistreated
So let's pray for Higher Understanding at least for today!

Second Eve



Is my rib not but a bridge?
Heart to loins
Henceforth I will summon thee, Eve
Day in, and throughout the day
Conjuring
Mine alchemical triumph
Her second coming
My magnum opus

Living Room



Like Rosa Parks i'm in my seat
I've been robbed, almost killed
But never beat!
My Living Room's alive
Highs like ecstasy
In my blood i will thrive
MLK I have a dream!
Peace, love and joy
Is what i preach
But things can get dangerous in my V.I.P.
Taste on my lip... bittersweet victory

Bicycle Ride

JASON CHURCH
Groundcover contributor

One time we rode our bicycle, this is what it was like.
We peddled real fast down the road, only seeing black and flashes of white.
Then wham we flew fast.
A slam from a car crash.
Then we were flying real fast through the air.
Wings we wish we had a pair.
Thankfully we had our helmet on, because our brains did not get dragged along.
So be careful, and look up, when you are riding your bicycle.

Language



If you didn't understand the spoken word could you still follow the law?
If everyone understood one spoken word, would inherent nature choose to follow the law?
Do you need to know language to understand the law?
If there is one law, then you understand universal language in every tongue.
And so obviously, there is one common law in every country no matter the interpretation of the individual or the ability to communicate with another.
You may not withhold the meaning of the law, or any words and symbols common for survival.

Boxers

KELLI LEE MITCHELL

Grandmama never wore makeup. Her face never needed any, but that's not why. Her tan stays golden like the steam of dew just recognizing sunlight for its very first time. Promise to visit the sun every day hereafter. Busted lips say only tough girls sing. Daddy's the best boxer. Says, "Haves to be, or else they'll shine my shoes." Smiles with his last, "dance with your feet, smile with dem teeth. Wit in a bottle, they look left and we em push full throttle."

Sunday sauce

BEN FOSTER
Groundcover contributor

This is the basic marinara sauce that I use for a few different open hours meals at Hospitality House in Ypsi. There are no amounts for the ingredients below because I don't know what they should be. I could make them up but they might be wrong and then I'll be in big trouble. What I will say about amounts is: if you're going to make sauce you should make a lot of it. If you're not going to use it all at once, just freeze it or give it to a friend. Either way it can be a time-consuming affair so you might as well make it worth your while.

I usually use equal parts carrots and onion, but you can and should play around with this ratio and see what you like. It's pretty hard to screw it up (although I have done it more than a few times). Just don't burn anything during the first stage and you will make a simple and tasty sauce. I believe in you.

Onions
Carrots
Salt
Olive Oil
Garlic, minced
Tomato paste
Whole canned tomatoes
Optional: Basil, oregano, cracked pepper

Grate onions and carrots on a box grater. Give the carrot gratings a good chop with a knife, to break things down ahead of time so the cooking process has less work to do. Add carrots and onions to a large pot over low heat. Add some salt to help them release their moisture. Stir (I won't keep saying stir, just do it when it seems like you should). After things have sweated for a few minutes, add some olive oil. Get a very minor saute going. You want slow cooking without

burning, feel free to add more olive oil at any point to achieve the level of moisture this requires. Cook for as long as you can. This could be 30 minutes or it could be 3 hours. Ideally you want a jammy paste thing bubbling away. Don't be afraid of olive oil.

While your onion and carrot jam is being brought into this world, open up your cans of tomatoes.

I used to pass my tomatoes through a food mill or colander to remove seeds and tougher parts of the tomato. This is a pain and I usually don't do it unless I'm feeling self-conscious about the potential silkiness of the sauce or some other dumb reason. The non-psychological benefits are marginal. Instead you can just break down the tomatoes with your hands in a big bowl and set aside.

Once things are caramelized sufficiently or you've lost your patience, add garlic and stir into the jam and cook for another few minutes till the garlic is fragrant, then add tomato paste. Again add some olive oil if things are too dry. Add the broken down tomatoes and stir to combine everything. Hopefully you've been stirring even though I haven't been telling you to.

Let cook at a simmer for as long as possible. I generally aim for 2 to 3 hours, stirring every so often. Feel free to also add oregano, basil and other spices at some point.

If you have an immersion blender, blend to a smooth consistency. If you don't, just say "I like a chunkier sauce" while explaining yourself. Add salt to taste. Use immediately or refrigerate/freeze. Reheats well.



SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27
RABBIT HOLE & RAVEN'S CLUB

JAZZ IMPROV WORKSHOP, THE LOFT 2PM

SEPTEMBER 26, RABBIT HOLE

NOAH HOGAN
QUARTET

OUTDOOR STAGE, 5:30PM

TARIQ GARDNER
& EVENING STAR

OUTDOOR STAGE, 7 PM

ZEKKEREYA EL-MAGHARBEL
TRIO

INDOOR STAGE, 7 PM

SEAN DOBBINS
ORGAN TRIO

INDOOR STAGE, 8 PM

SEPTEMBER 27, RAVENS CLUB

ELVIN SHARP
QUARTET

6PM

ALEX HOBERTY
QUINTET

7:30PM

JUNK JAZZ
9PM

ALL EVENTS
FREE



Nominate an elder for
Groundcover's "60 over 60" feature!

deadline: Wednesday, Sept. 9
tinyurl.com/60over60

Honoring elders in Washtenaw County who have made, and continue to make, this community great. Nominee must be age 60 or older, and must have some significant connection to Washtenaw County (live, work, retired here).

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