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# The Eastern Echo

Volume 143, Issue 13  
Serving EMU and Ypsilanti since 1881

Tuesday, April 14, 2026  
easternecho.com

## Public ICE arrest alarms community as Washtenaw County officials face federal lawsuit



On Friday, April 10, a man was detained by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement on Michigan Avenue near the Encuentro Latino Restaurant and Art of Africa Hair Braiding storefronts. AnnaBelle Favre / The Eastern Echo

AnnaBelle Favre,  
Laura Meriweather  
News Reporters

On Friday, April 10, a man was detained by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement on Michigan Avenue in Ypsilanti, prompting an immediate response from community members.

Beth Bashert, Ypsilanti Mayor from 2018 to 2020, witnessed the man's detention, which occurred near the Encuentro Latino Restaurant and Art of Africa Hair Braiding around 9 a.m. She and other activists had seen an ICE vehicle and followed it, leading them to the scene of the detention, where six ICE vehicles blocked off

the driver and stopped all traffic on Michigan Avenue.

"As soon as it started, people started blowing whistles and honking and shouting. We distracted as much as we could," Bashert told *The Eastern Echo*.

After the man was taken, his car, like many others in the same circumstances, was left open, unlocked, and with the keys inside, Bashert said. She and a few others secured the vehicle, identified the man, and took the car back to his home.

"The community did some things very successfully. One is that they caused the incident to last longer than it would without community attention. It usually takes about five minutes,

but this incident took them over 15 minutes," Bashert said. "That's all we can do: slow them down, make them treat people better and draw attention to it."

The incident occurred a day after the U.S. government filed a lawsuit against Washtenaw County. The lawsuit was filed over three immigration policies that the U.S. government believes to be in violation of the U.S. Constitution's Supremacy Clause and the preemptive authority of federal policies to be enforced over local policies as described in the Constitution. Washtenaw County Sheriff Alyshia Dyer and the sheriff's office, County Prosecutor Eli Savit and the prosecutor's office,

and the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners are named as defendants in the suit.

The lawsuit requests that the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan invalidate and block the implementation of a general order from the Sheriff's Office, a Prosecutor's Office policy, and a resolution by the Board of Commissioners, all of which relate to local immigration response protocols. The suit reasons that these policies interfere with law enforcement operations, endanger national security and increase danger to ICE officers and the public.

"Washtenaw County's policies aim to obstruct federal law enforcement and celebrate thwarting the constitutional obligation of the President of the United States to take care that federal immigration law be faithfully executed," the document said. None of the parties involved in the federal lawsuit was immediately available for comment.

Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office General Order 1.14 instructs employees not to investigate solely based on immigration status or to inquire about immigration status during law enforcement operations. It also prohibits the use of Sheriff's Office resources for federal immigration matters, and bars Sheriff's Office employees from detaining individuals on the sole justification of an immigration detainer, removal order or deportation order that has not been signed by a federal magistrate or judge. The order was issued Jan. 30, 2025.

The Prosecutor's Office Policy 2021-12, signed on Feb. 24, 2021, directs prosecutors to minimize collateral immigration consequences throughout the course of legal proceedings.

Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners Resolution 26-015 opposes the use of identity-concealing face coverings by ICE officers and bars them from entering and operating in county-owned properties without a warrant or court order. Additionally, it "directs all Washtenaw County agencies and employees to pursue continued community engagement and monitoring of federal immigration enforcement practices to ensure alignment with principles of transparency, accountability, and equity." The resolution was adopted Jan. 21, 2026.

Bashert and other community members have noticed that ICE has been in Ypsilanti much more frequently than they have in the past, she said. Bashert and her colleagues are not part of any named organization.

"I am just an activated citizen that cares very deeply that my neighbors are being harmed, and families are being torn apart," she said.

Everyone has rights, regardless of immigration status. For legal resources and information about personal rights, visit the Michigan Immigration Rights Center's website. For more information about ICE in the area, see the article, "What to know about immigration enforcement in Washtenaw County" on easternecho.com.

## Michigan governor expected to review Ypsilanti police funding ballot language

Lilly Kujawski  
Managing Editor - News

The Ypsilanti City Council approved a resolution Tuesday, April 7, to send certification of a petition for a divisive ballot initiative to the governor's office and Washtenaw County clerk for review.

If approved by voters, the ballot proposal would create a charter amendment that would require any increase to the city police budget that is higher than the previous year's expenditures to be voted on by constituents in the next citywide election. The proposal was initiated by the Ypsi Ballot Initiative Group, or YpsiBIG, and the petition for it was filed with the city clerk July 19, 2024.

"It is proposed that City Charter Section 5.04 be amended to provide for a limit in the City Council's provision to budget police expenditures above the previous year's budgeted expenditures unless such an increase be approved by a majority of voters in a regular city-wide election in a ballot question pertaining to no other issue," states the ballot language presented to petition-signers.

At its April 7 meeting, members of the Ypsilanti City Council moved the resolution forward, an action that serves an administrative function and does not pass political judgment on the content of the proposed ballot question. The

approved resolution directs Ypsilanti City Clerk Tracey Boudreau to forward a certificate of sufficiency for the filed petition to the Washtenaw County clerk for action and the governor for review in accordance with Michigan law. A certificate of sufficiency certifies that an initiatory petition was canvassed and approved for the required number of valid signatures of registered electors in Ypsilanti.

Previously, the resolution approving the certificate of sufficiency was tabled to allow time for council members to prepare an explanatory caption. An explanatory caption is a description to explain the proposal when it is submitted to the county and governor. It does not replace the original petition language, which is what would be presented to voters on a ballot. Council members voted and approved an amendment to omit an explanatory caption, which wasn't required to submit the ballot proposal to the governor's office. Councilors opted to submit only the original ballot language, with the option to include a caption later.

Council member Patrick McLean, Ward 2, has previously been critical of the proposed initiative. At the April 7 meeting, he expressed concern that the way the proposal is presented does not accurately reflect the actual impact to the city charter, which he said will change the entire budget process and

the respective roles of the mayor, city council, citizens and the city manager. Currently, the charter places budget approval power with the City Council.

"It is holding our budget hostage," McLean said.

McLean told *The Eastern Echo*, "There is no good reason to put anything before the voters that creates an inherent, internal contradiction within our city charter. This would make our city charter make no sense. And it would make our city almost unworkable."

He raised questions about the City Council's ability to complete its fiscal budget by the date Michigan law requires if completing a budget depended on the timeline of an election cycle.

"We would have to start, I believe, a 2029 budget while we're busy doing the 2026 budget," McLean said.

He said if the budget wasn't approved by the required date, it could trigger other actions, such as the appointment of an emergency manager, which he said could harm the city. City charter stipulates that a budget must be adopted by June 7 each year, and the mayor shall declare a fiscal emergency if a budget isn't adopted by then. McLean also raised concerns about how the proposed change could impact the police department and its officials.

"This is really in an effort to either throw us into fiscal chaos or eliminate



Members of the Ypsilanti City Council gather in council chambers for a regular meeting April 7. Lilly Kujawski / The Eastern Echo

the police department," McLean said.

Councilor Desiré Simmons, Ward 3, countered these concerns, describing some of the pushback as fearmongering and misinformation around the issue. Councilor Amber Fellows, Ward 3, shared similar views, telling *The Echo* that this initiative will not defund the police.

"It's just: every time we want to increase the budget, it has to be approved by the vote of the people," Fellows said. "It is really a matter of a compelling argument from future council governments, like, 'Hey, we need an increase.' And if the argument is compelling, then the voters might support that, but overall, it is just some

more democracy, and so I find it pretty abhorrent that people are advocating against it."

Fellows said the proposal brings decision-making to the hands of the public, and said the community should move towards addressing social issues as a collective.

"To get more into organizing social needs by collective decision-making, I think is the direction we should go towards, so that is going to look like shifting away from traditional government models, and putting more things on the ballot," Fellows said.

**SEE POLICE FUNDING, PAGE 4**

## The Eastern Echo

The Eastern Echo serves the Eastern Michigan University and Ypsilanti communities as an independent student-operated newspaper. Founded in 1881 as *The Normal News*, *The Eastern Echo* distributes weekly print editions on campus and throughout the surrounding Ypsilanti community during the fall and winter academic semesters. *The Eastern Echo* also publishes online year-round. Published content is subject to copyright and may not be reproduced without prior written consent of the newspaper.

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### THE ECHO MISSION

The Eastern Echo informs the Eastern Michigan University and Ypsilanti communities by highlighting newsworthy content in a fair, accurate and timely manner.

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Winter 2026  
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### CORRECTIONS

- In the April 7, 2026 edition of *The Eastern Echo*, the author of Poet Tree Town poem "What I Learned from Hating Everything He Ever Did," pictured in the photo on page 6 is Chance Tyer.
- Several corrections were made for the article "Eastern Michigan University Fraternity and Sorority Life gears up for Greek Week," printed in the April 7, 2026 edition of *The Echo*. See the article on easternecho.com for more information.
- In the April 7, 2026 edition of *The Echo*, a graph in the article titled "Voter Turnout in 2026 Student Government election highest on record since 2014" failed to include 21 write-in votes cast in the 2019 election. 1,201 people voted in that election. The 2025 enrollment data included referenced starting term enrollment when it should have used end-of-term enrollment. The final enrollment for the 2025 term was 12,188. Find the corrected graph online at easternecho.com.

# CALENDAR

## APR 14

### Lavender Graduation

3:30-4 p.m.  
Student Center Ballroom

## APR 15

### Co-Ed Soccer League Games Championship Night

9-11 p.m.  
Indoor Practice Facility — Fields 1 & 2

## APR 16

### Cycle and Sculpt

From 7-7:45 p.m.  
Rec/IM Building — Room 126

## APR 17

### The Essence of Asia

4-7 p.m.  
EMU Lake House — University Park

## APR 18

### EMU Theatre presents "Our Town"

2 p.m. and 7 p.m.  
Judy Sturgis Hill Building — Legacy Theatre

## APR 19

### Women's Tennis vs. Western Michigan University

1 p.m.  
The Chippewa Club

## APR 20

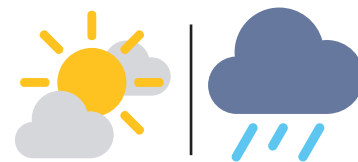
### Graduate Colloquium

7-9 p.m.  
Alexander Music Building — Room 110

### WEATHER FORECAST

Tuesday, April 14

High: 77 | Low: 62  
Partly sunny\* / Showers



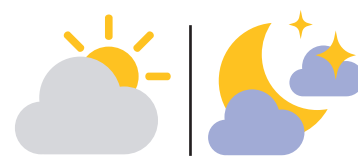
Wednesday, April 15

High: 74 | Low: 60  
Showers / Mostly cloudy\*



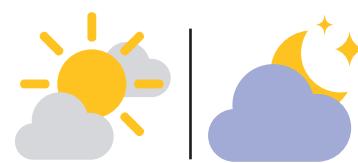
Thursday, April 16

High: 74 | Low: 52  
Mostly cloudy\* / Partly cloudy



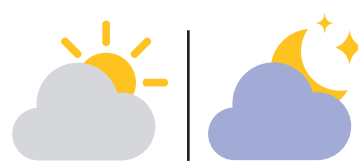
Friday, April 17

High: 77 | Low: 58  
Mostly sunny / Mostly cloudy\*



Saturday, April 18

High: 76 | Low: 43  
Mostly cloudy\* / Mostly cloudy\*



\*Chance of precipitation



Source:  
The National Weather Service

### Where to find The Echo:

- Off Campus:**
- Golden Egg, 2660 Washtenaw Ave.
  - Insomnia Cookies, 733 W. Cross St.
  - Lucky Garden, 1072 N. Huron River Drive

- On Campus:**
- Sherzer Hall
  - Student Center
  - Roosevelt Hall

### Where to find our links:



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Facebook @ The Eastern Echo

# War in Iran affects local economy, gas prices

**Lauren Holloway**  
News Reporter

Since the Iran war began in late February, closures of the Strait of Hormuz have contributed to increased oil prices globally, including in Washtenaw County.

20% of the world's oil runs through the Strait of Hormuz, a shipping corridor that connects the Persian Gulf to the Arabian Sea. As a result, Michigan, like other states across the United States, have seen an uptick in gas prices. The average gas price in Michigan is currently \$4.029; last year at this time it was \$3.140.

While people who drive are seeing the prices rise, those who ride the bus might not see any changes to their transportation expenses.

Jeff Pfeifer, the manager of public affairs and community engagement for the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority, or TheRide, said there are currently no plans to raise fares. TheRide services the Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti area with over 100 buses and other service vehicles. Fare price depends on the type of ticket. A single ride for one person is \$1.50, a day pass is \$3 and a 30-day pass is \$45. These prices are expected to remain the same. TheRide uses a competitive pricing model to get fuel, Pfeifer said. Every 10 days they send out a quote that allows them to get the best price at that moment and not be locked into one price, he said.

"By going out frequently we can kind of see what the price fluctuates to, sometimes it goes down, sometimes it goes up, but it allows us to get more of

a fresh and competitive model," Pfeifer said.

There's also some concern with grocery prices going up; however, the Ypsilanti Food Co-op is doing its best to keep costs stable. Food prices don't tend to go up like fuel prices until further down the road, said Corinne Sikorski, the general manager of the Co-op. The more immediate concern is a delivery fee: one of the Co-op's biggest distributors charges a higher fee when gas prices increase. Packaging material costs are also increasing because plastic containers are made with petroleum, Sikorski said. The prices at the Co-op are increasing slightly, but not drastically, and they're currently just absorbing the fuel charges.

For the long-term problems, the production costs might start increasing with time as the vendors have to pay more for gas, Sikorski said. The plan for that is to monitor the pattern and weigh out which items can handle a price bump and where they might need to lose a little margin to keep prices the same, Sikorski said. However, if labor goes up, prices will have to increase as well so the Co-op can pay the staff.

"We'll watch for a trend and then start trying to see if we need to raise prices across the board," Sikorski said.

Back in the 2008 Great Recession, when gas prices rose to \$3.31, which would be around \$5.11 today, the Co-op staff waited and eventually those prices went back down. They make sure they have the resources to wait it out by having reserves of money on hand, Sikorski said; they also try to be as efficient as possible, for example, not hiring any new staff when they're



**Gas prices at the BP station at 819 N. Huron St., Ypsilanti on April 12 have risen above \$4. Amid the ongoing war in Iran, closures of the Strait of Hormuz have contributed to rising gas prices.** *Laura Meriweather / The Eastern Echo*

trying to cover low margins.

Another effect of gas prices increasing is an increase in local customers. Sikorski said there seems to be an influx of customers who live in the area when fuel prices go up. People want to shop as close to home as possible to conserve gas or to be able to walk, Sikorski said.

"It's most cost effective to just go to one place, if you can, to get the majority of your groceries," Sikorski said.

Eastern Michigan University professor of economics Chris Elias said the future of gas prices depends on whether the Strait of Hormuz can open soon. Any further attacks on Iran's energy infrastructure, such as processing plants, pipelines or transportation tankers could lead to a further increase in gas prices, Elias said.

However, it's not just oil that travels through the strait. Much of the fertilizer that comes to the U.S. comes from the Persian Gulf. This time of year, many countries across the globe head into the growing season. If the farmers don't

have enough fertilizer, there could be food shortages later in the year, Elias said.

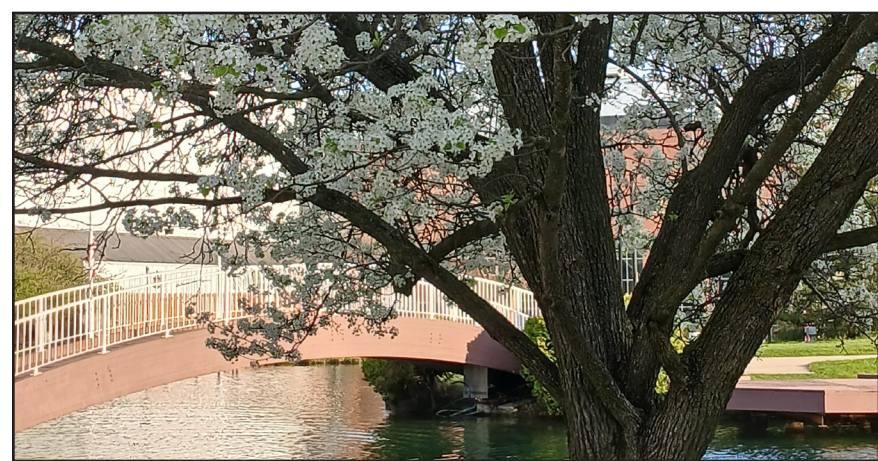
Looking toward the future, if the strait remains closed, the U.S. could be heading for a recession, Elias said.

"You know, if the price of oil spikes, 10, 20, 30 percent in the course of a few weeks, but then comes right back down to where it was previously, the impact might not be so bad, but if that price stays elevated for a significant amount of time, then you'll start to see significant impacts in the economy, which I would guess would spill over into unemployment," Elias said.

Unfortunately, there's not much for civilians to do at the moment but to wait, Elias said. However, one thing that everyone can do at this time is contact their elected officials and express their feelings about the Iran war, Elias said. He encouraged concerned residents who are feeling negative effects of the war to talk to their congressperson.

"We should hold our elected leaders accountable for that," Elias said.

# Celebrate Earth Day in Ypsilanti with local volunteer opportunities



**A tree blossoms during spring on Eastern Michigan University's campus in University Park on Earth Day 2025.** *Katherine Tatomir / The Eastern Echo*

**Katherine Tatomir**  
Newsletter Editor

The first official Earth Day celebration took place April 22, 1970, when roughly 20 million Americans participated in the largest civic demonstration in American history. 56 years later, climate activists and allies still gather to celebrate the Earth and advocate for its protection.

If you're looking for ways to celebrate Earth Day this year, look no further than the Ypsilanti area. Washtenaw County has both seasonal and year-round opportunities to participate in eco-friendly events.

## Superior Township Annual Roadside Cleanup

For the third year, the Superior Township Annual Roadside Cleanup will take place near Earth Day. This community event starts at Township Hall and ends with a free picnic-style lunch for volunteers at Old Town Hall. According to the event's host organization, Beautify Superior, the cleanups have removed over 7,000 pounds of trash from the streets of Superior Township.

This year's cleanup will be held Sunday, April 18, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Registered volunteers are asked to watch the weather and dress

appropriately. Materials provided by the event's organizers include reflective vests, trash bags, grabbers and refreshments throughout the cleanup.

Visit [BeautifySuperior.com](http://BeautifySuperior.com) to sign up as a volunteer or to learn more.

## Growing Hope and Farmer's Markets Volunteer Opportunities

Growing Hope is a nonprofit organization based in Ypsilanti dedicated to the development of school gardens and community education. Growing Hope has maintained the downtown Ypsilanti and Depot Town Farmers Markets since 2006 and 2013, respectively, bringing locally grown food to the community. When the COVID-19 pandemic struck Michigan, Growing Hope established a year-round online farmers market to expand its reach to community members who couldn't meet in person.

On Friday, Aug. 15, 2026, Growing Hope will host the Ypsi Food Festival, featuring food trucks, music and activities designed for families. Organizers are accepting volunteers for short shifts, each lasting around two hours. The Ypsi Food Festival runs from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., and duties for volunteers include overseeing activities, raffles and vendors.

For those looking for regular volunteer work, Growing Hope also organizes the Ypsilanti Farmer's Market that runs annually from May to October. Volunteer responsibilities are similar to those at the Ypsi Food Fest: setup, teardown and vendor assistance.

To learn more about Growing Hope and its work, visit Growing Hope's website.

## Washtenaw County Public Rain Gardens

The Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner's Office oversees 160 public rain gardens in Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti, as well as the surrounding townships. Public rain gardens help keep rivers and lakes clean by absorbing stormwater runoff, when melted snow and rain carry pollutants from trash and pavement.

To keep the rain gardens running effectively, stewards look after their gardens on a weekly basis. Stewards are community volunteers who adopt rain gardens and maintain them throughout the year, which includes weeding, pruning, and keeping the garden clear for water to pass through and be absorbed by the ground.

To learn more and adopt a rain garden, visit the Washtenaw County Water Resources website.

# An overview of laws and policies for EMU student employees

**Laura Meriweather**  
News Reporter

**Editor's note:** This story is for informational purposes only, and does not constitute legal advice in any way. For qualified legal services, consult with a licensed professional.

A campus tour guide, a resident advisor, and a peer mentor walk into a bar. There isn't a punchline in this hypothetical, but their drink money might be protected if they understood their rights in the workplace as student employees.

Students who work at Eastern Michigan University are bound by state and federal labor laws, but there are also university-specific policies that influence how their on-campus jobs play out.

## Discrimination

Michigan is an at-will employment state, meaning that employers and employees alike can terminate employment for any reason that is not protected by other legal provisions. The Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act of 1976 lays out discrimination protections for Michigan workers, and EMU's non-

discrimination notice affirms that the university does not discriminate based on "race, color, ethnic or national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, age, ancestry, disability, military status, veteran status or other non-merit reasons, in admissions, educational programs or activities and employment."

## Pay

At EMU, student employees may earn an hourly rate between the state minimum wage, which rose in January 2026 to \$13.73, and \$15 an hour, according to an FAQ page on

the University Advising and Career Development Center's website. Another answer on that page explains that students can generally work up to 29 hours per week, but international students are limited to 20 per week when school is in session. Minors are also subject to unique restrictions, based on the specific age in question, as laid out in an EMU human resources document from 2022. The Improved Workforce Opportunity Wage Act, another Michigan law, forbids pay inequalities based on sex.

**SEE LAWS AND POLICIES, PAGE 4**

# What's the Move?

April 14-21

**Allie Beecher**  
Copy Desk Chief

From live music performances to comedy shows, there is always something happening in Ypsilanti! Read on to get the scoop on what's going on this week.

## Nidia Góngora — April 16

She's a singer-songwriter from Timbiquí. She's influenced by her mother's love for traditional music and her father's love for music from all over the world. Her name is Nidia Góngora, and she will be performing at the Ypsilanti Freighthouse on Thursday, April 16, at 7:30 p.m.

Those interested in attending Góngora's performance, which will also feature marimba and percussion, should visit the University Musical Society's website to purchase tickets. This concert is pay-what-you-wish, but a minimum of \$5 is required to secure a ticket. The concert is expected to last 90 minutes with no intermission.

For more information, visit the UMS website. The Freighthouse is at 100 Market Place, Ypsilanti.

## Piano Bar Karaoke with Jesse Morgan — April 17

Looking for a chance to shine onstage in an informal environment? On Friday, April 17, the Water Tower Distilling Co. will host a piano bar karaoke evening with local musician and music therapist Jesse Morgan. An Instagram post from Water Tower Distilling Co. says the event is free and will begin at 7 p.m.

For more information, visit the Water Tower Distilling Co. website, Facebook or Instagram. Water Tower Distilling Co. is at 23 N. Washington St., Ypsilanti.

## Wyrd Byrd Comedy Show — April 18

Need a laugh? Try this comedy show at local Ypsilanti business Wyrd Byrd on Saturday, April 18. The event's feature on the Ypsilanti Area Events Facebook page states that this comedy show will take place at 8:30 p.m. and feature Blain Hill, Dan Turco, Alex Bradley, Ralph Mangino and Angie Verges. Admission is \$10 or pay-what-you-can.

To learn more about the event, visit the Ypsilanti Area Events Facebook page or YpsiReal.com.

Wyrd Byrd is at 9 S. Washington St., Ypsilanti.

## Joe Reilly and Friends Celebrate Earth Day — April 18 and 19

Celebrate the Earth with a performance by Joe Reilly, an Italian, Irish and Cherokee singer-songwriter, social worker and educator. On Saturday, April 18, and Sunday, April 19, Reilly will give a family-friendly performance at the Ypsilanti Freighthouse. Joining him will be Mark Stone and Lesley Anne Stone. After the performance, attendees are welcome to stay and take part in a seed ball-making activity led by local organization Growing Hope.

The event is free, but those interested in attending should register on the UMS website. Both performances will take place at 11 a.m.

The Freighthouse is at 100 Market Place, Ypsilanti.

## LEGO Letterpress — April 21

Curious about a new way to use LEGOs? Try this LEGO Letterpress event at the Whittaker branch of the Ypsilanti District Library! On Tuesday, April 21, from 6-7:15 p.m., participants will learn how to use LEGOs as part of a unique printmaking project. All supplies will be provided at the event.

The event is free with online registration. Those interested in attending should register on the YDL's website.

LEGO Letterpress will take place in the Whittaker Community Room, and the Whittaker branch of the YDL is at 5577 Whittaker Road, Ypsilanti. For more information, visit the YDL's website.



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# Candidacy deadline approaches for mayoral, City Council election



The Ypsilanti City Council meets in the Ypsilanti City Hall building at 1 South Huron St. Marie White / The Eastern Echo

Natalie Heckert  
Copy Editor

With the next general election

coming up Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2026, the city of Ypsilanti has put out an election notice for candidates who plan to run for City Council in all three wards and Mayor.

Current Mayor, Nicole Brown's term expires this November, along with Ward 1 Councilor Me'Chelle King, Ward 2 Councilor Patrick McLean and Ward 3 Councilor Desirae Simmons.

The deadline to become a candidate affiliated with a party is Tuesday, April 21, 2026 at 4 p.m. The deadline to withdraw is three days later, Friday, April 24, 2026 also at 4 p.m. However, if a candidate wishes to run without a party affiliation, or independent party, they have until Saturday, July 16, 2026 at 4 p.m. to file the required documents.

When it comes to requirements, those looking to run for one of the above positions must file an affidavit of identity with the City Clerk to be an eligible candidate.

On top of filing an affidavit

confirming identification, candidates must submit a nominating petition with the required amount of signatures from registered Ypsilanti voters. Those running for mayor must acquire at least 125 signatures but no more than 200. Those running for City Council must get at least 25 signatures from voters who reside in their respective ward, with no more than 50 signatures. Petition forms can be picked up at the City Clerk's office.

Once becoming a candidate, those running will have to file campaign finance materials with the appropriate filing official, then will have 10 calendar days to solidify their candidate committee and report that to the filing official.

For more information regarding candidate requirements, call the City Clerk at 734-483-1100 or visit the City Clerk's office in person between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. where a packet of information can be provided.

## Opinion

# The WellNest Watch

### Eating smart at EMU: How to balance convenience, cost and nutrition on campus



Ruby Wyles  
Contributor

**Editor's note:** In *The WellNest Watch*, master's degree candidates in the public health program at EMU's School of Health Promotion and Human Performance explore news, research and standard practices in the field of health and wellness.

College isn't cheap, and free time can feel like a finite resource. For many, arriving on campus marks the end of well-balanced, home-cooked meals, replaced by an enticing array of quick, convenient on-campus dining options. Unfortunately, not all food is created equally, and the cost of fast food extends beyond your bank account.

### Why eating well gets hard in college

It's no secret that processed, highly palatable foods sell better than unprocessed, whole foods. Without parents encouraging variety and, hopefully, regular consumption of fruits and vegetables, it can be easy to fall into less nutritious habits. The abundance of ultra-processed food accessible at all times, as well as the dietary choices of those around you, can easily make less nutritious options the default. Research links a varied, balanced diet with improved academic performance, greater energy and focus throughout the day, decreased stress and illness, and many more mental and physical health benefits. No matter your background, body size or activity level, a diverse, nutrient-rich diet will benefit you. Healthy eating doesn't have to be boring, taste bad or feel inconvenient; on-campus dining services have

options to help. Start by including a source of protein, carbohydrates and two different vegetables at lunch and dinner. Focus on adding color to your plate, limiting fried and ultra-processed foods.

### Save money with Swoop's Food Pantry

Eastern Michigan University proudly offers no-cost food and non-food items to all EMU students and staff. Head to Pierce Hall Room 100 with your Emich ID to get started.

As well as being stocked with groceries to cook with at home, Swoop's Pantry offers plenty of ready-to-eat snacks and convenient meal options. Sort breakfast or snacks for the week with a sleeve of bagels topped with peanut butter, or go for oatmeal or cereal and milk.

Whether you live in the dorms or elsewhere, Swoop's offers many meal options that take just minutes to prepare with only a microwave or hot water. Examples include a can of soup with bread and butter, a cup of mac and cheese with a side of canned vegetables, microwaved frozen pizza, or another ready-prepared frozen meal.

### Save time, save money: Shop ahead

Save serious cash with a little planning ahead; swap quick and costly trips to the market or vending machine by purchasing your favorite snacks in multipacks ahead of time, then bringing what you'd like with you in your bag. That little bit of effort can save you significant dollars in the long run and reward you with time to spend in places other than checkout lines. Eating smart isn't about perfection; it's about making small, intentional choices that support your health, budget and busy life, one meal at a time.

# After a busy EMU Student Government campaign, a moment to breathe and reflect

Laura Meriweather  
News Reporter

The 2026 executive race for Student Government was demanding and filled with mutual passion between two tickets sharing their own visions of how to best represent the Eastern Michigan University student body.

When Nina Freeman and Eva Orlich Rojas were announced as the president-elect and vice president-elect, they were surrounded by friends at an informal election night ice cream party.

"It was very exciting seeing the outcome," Orlich told *The Eastern Echo*. "But I think what was the most impactful for both of us was the process of the election: seeing all the support from our friends, and support from the people that we didn't even know, or we weren't even close to."

Freeman said that their friends pitched in throughout the campaign by handing out flyers, talking to potential voters and staying out past sundown to get the word out.

In the final days before voting opened, promotional materials across campus multiplied. By the time ballots were being cast, a single bulletin board in Pray-Harrold was covered in nearly a dozen flyers between the two tickets. 12 hours before voting closed, Freeman and Orlich received an official, last-minute endorsement from the EMU College Democrats.

"Eva and Nina really embody what us here at the College Democrats stand for," said Joe Garris, club president, in an announcement video on Instagram.

For challengers Yasrib Farook and Mirna Shehab, the results were a bittersweet ending to a hard-fought campaign that was ultimately swung by 136 voters.

"It was a very tough competition between us and them ... and I think we did great from our side," Farook said, later adding, "We had a lot of supporters from [the] Black community. We had a lot of supporters from [the] international community, and I'm very thankful to all the students who supported us throughout the election. Plus, we did our best."

Shehab echoed his sentiment that they had given it their all, and both candidates voiced their appreciation for the people who supported their campaign, especially Salma Ibrahim, their friend and fellow student who served as their campaign manager.

In post-election interviews, all four candidates also expressed their mutual appreciation for each other. Shehab said that Freeman and Orlich reached out to them after the election with words of



A crowded bulletin board in Eastern Michigan University's Pray-Harrold building on March 25, 2026, shows several Student Government campaign posters while voting in the annual election was underway. Laura Meriweather / The Eastern Echo

encouragement.

"I think both of us really admire the other two candidates," Orlich said. "They did a lot for that campaign; we could see it. And at the end of the day, we know each other, we work together ... We really wanted the best for them during the campaign, before and after."

Farook said that his hopes were focused on the good of his fellow students and that Freeman would be a good fit for president due to her experience in Student Government.

"I would love to see some good change," he said, explaining that it did not ultimately matter to him who was in office as long as important policies were being implemented.

"Other students, they think that Student Government doesn't matter in their life," Farook said. "But it actually does ... If you seek help from Student Government, I think everyone would love to help you out and navigate through your challenges."

Asked if they would seek reappointment to open Senate seats in the next year, Farook and Shehab both said they planned to step away from Student Government to focus on their academic and career goals.

Freeman, who will be the first female Student Government president in eight years, said she expects to be sworn in at the beginning of the summer. Both she and Orlich said their priority over break would be to continue building connections with departments and student organizations across campus.

Another connection that Freeman and Orlich were keen on building was with the newly-appointed EMU President Brendan Kelly, whom they plan to meet with more over the summer.

"He keeps asking us to throw our biggest hopes and dreams of what this campus could look like out there," Freeman said. "And it sounds like he's taking proactive steps to be like, okay, this is how we can make this happen."

Freeman said that Kelly was also actively meeting with students and trying to include those who hadn't had a chance to voice their thoughts. Orlich agreed, saying that she could "definitely see that he has a lot of passion for everything that can change [at] Eastern."

When asked how they planned to implement their campaign platform, including expanding food access and increasing winter accessibility, Freeman and Orlich said that they were already taking steps towards those goals in the current term. Freeman said that they would be doing a two-hour safety analysis walk with Kelly, Chief of Police Matthew Lige and the Disability Resource Center to identify potential infrastructure issues around campus.

Additionally, in their last meeting of the semester, the Student Senate voted to allocate \$12,000 in new funding to Swoop's Food Pantry. Orlich said that she and Freeman were in active communication with leadership at Swoop's to identify ways that Student Government could support them in the next year.

"We're very excited to see what we can bring to the community," Orlich said, adding that they were looking forward to implementing as many ideas from the community as possible. "We're very excited, also, to work with the president. It's a new administration from us, and it's a new administration from him, which makes it even more exciting."

Freeman agreed, saying that this will be a chance to include more students in decision-making.

Freeman said that the start of their administration coinciding with Kelly's would provide a unique opportunity to field a wide range of student voices "so that a small group of people is not influencing change that then is going to affect thousands of students for years and years to come."

## Police funding

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Before the proposal can appear on ballots, it must be reviewed by the governor, who will bring back adjustments that need to be made, said City Attorney Randolph Barker.

During the public comment portion of the April 7 meeting, some residents spoke in favor of the proposal and bringing the original language to a vote on a ballot. Many mentioned recent incidents, including the police response to a man who barricaded himself in his home and a fatal shooting by Washtenaw

County Sheriff's deputies, as reasons for their support.

In materials shared online, organizers at YpsiBIG argue that this initiative is necessary to rethink what safety means, and that oftentimes, residents aren't even aware when the police budget increases, stated an informational Google document from the group.

"Currently, the general public has no say in changes to the police budget. The budget has frequently been raised at the last moment by the approval of council, and while citizens can express public comment in either support or disapproval, it is ultimately not up to us," the document stated.

## Laws & policies

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

### Breaks

Michigan does not specifically require employers to provide breaks to their adult employees. According to the EMU Student Employment Policy document, "EMU allows employees a paid 15 minute break during each four hours worked and an unpaid 30 minute break/lunch for 6-8 hour shifts."

### Injury and sickness

Students worried about unpredictable factors while employed on campus may be relieved to know that Michigan's Workers' Disability Compensation Act has protected compensation rights

related to injuries on the job since 1969. In 2025, the Earned Sick Time Act (ESTA) shifted the Michigan landscape around sick leave. Michigan workers, including those employed on campus, accrue one hour of sick leave for every 30 hours they work. At workplaces with 11 or more employees, this bank of sick time may be capped at 72 hours per year.

### Epilogue

After discussing all of these topics in depth over drinks, the three student employees walked out of the bar together, empowered by their collective knowledge of their rights. They needed to take the night off from work, however, as EMU policy prohibits intoxication on the clock.



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# More than wins: Eastern Michigan's historic spring of scholar-athlete success

## Eagle Sports Tips & Tales:

April 14 - 21

**Darrell Justice**  
Sports Reporter

### Men's golf April 20: Muirfield Shootout

**Tale:** The Eagles will head to Dublin, Ohio, to be one of 14 teams participating in the Muirfield Shootout, an event hosted by Miami University.

**Tip:** This matchup sees Eastern Michigan University face multiple Mid-American Conference opponents, including their in-state rivals, the Central Michigan University Chippewas.

Fans can see the results on scoreboard.clippd.com.

### Baseball April 15, vs. University of Michigan

**Tale:** The Eastern Michigan baseball team will take on U-M at Ray Fisher Stadium in Ann Arbor.

**Tip:** Last season, the two teams split the season series. This season, the Eagles lost the first matchup against the Wolverines, and they have the chance to tie the series again, much like last season.

Fans can watch the game live on ESPN+.

### April 17-19, vs. Western Michigan University

**Tale:** Following the game against U-M, the Eagles will take on the Western Michigan Broncos in a three-game series at Oestrike Stadium from Friday, April 17, through Sunday, April 19.

**Tip:** The Eagles are currently on a two-game win streak against the Broncos, with both of those games being on the road in Kalamazoo.

Fans can access live stats on statbroadcast.com or watch the last game of the series live on ESPN+.

### Women's lacrosse April 18, vs. Robert Morris University

**Tale:** On April 18, the Eagles lacrosse team will be taking on Robert Morris in an at-home matchup at Scicluna Field in Ypsilanti.

**Tip:** Sophomore Emerson Henry was recently named MAC Offensive Player of the Week after securing seven total points to help the team beat Central Michigan.

Fans can watch the game live on ESPN+.

### Women's tennis April 19, vs. Western Michigan

**Tale:** The Eastern Michigan women's tennis team will take on its in-state rivals, the Western Michigan Broncos, at the Chippewa Club in Ypsilanti.

**Tip:** This matchup will be the last of the season for the Eagles as the MAC Tournament championship will take place April 25-26.

Fans can see live scoring on statbroadcast.com.

### Track and field April 16-18: Wake Forest Invitational, Hillsdale Gina Relays

**Tale:** The Eastern Michigan men's and women's track teams will be heading in different directions this weekend. Some will participate in the Wake Forest Invitational April 16-17, while the rest of the squad will head to compete at the Hillsdale Gina Relays April 16-18.

**Tip:** The Eagles track and field teams have seen 22 athletes named to the Academic All-MAC Honors. To qualify for the honors, an athlete needs to hold a minimum GPA of 3.2.

Fans can access the final results of the Hillsdale Gina Relays on mi.milesplit.com.

### Football April 17: Spring Game

**Tale:** On April 17, the Eastern Michigan football team will be returning to Rynearson Stadium in Ypsilanti for this year's Spring Game.

**Tip:** It was recently announced that veteran quarterback Noah Kim will be returning to lead the team. Kim was one of the top passers in the MAC last season, leading the conference in total passing yards.

of the team's competitions during the season.

The list of honorees highlights the academic diversity of EMU's athletes. On the men's side, students like Cason Doolittle and Nathan Gaspersic are excelling in aviation flight technology while maintaining GPAs of 3.93 and 3.91, respectively. On the women's side, Aleah Johnson leads the pack with a near-perfect 3.98 GPA in nursing.

This success is not localized to just one or two standouts; it is a program-wide culture. From construction management to clinical lab science, these 22 Eagles are proving that the discipline required to shave seconds off a personal best is the same discipline required to master complex degree programs.

### Hoops and high honors

The Eastern Michigan women's basketball program also added to the university's growing list of accolades. Seniors Sisi Eleko and Brooklyn Thrash were named to the Academic All-MAC Team on April 2. While both players had previously earned academic honors in the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference, this marked their first MAC academic recognition since joining the Eagles.

Eleko's 2025-26 season was nothing short of impressive. Not only did she maintain her academic standing as a psychology major, but she was also a force on the court, earning All-MAC Second Team honors. Eleko led the team in scoring (17.6 points per game) and rebounding (9.9 rebounds per game), finishing the season just eight points shy of 1,000 for her career. She also tied the program record for career double-doubles with 31.

Eleko's teammate Thrash proved to be the ultimate iron woman for the Eagles. Thrash, an exercise science major, was the only player to appear in every single game over the last two seasons. She saw significant statistical improvements across the board this year, including a 31-point increase in her season scoring total while simultaneously reducing her turnovers.

### Dominance in the water

The EMU swim and dive program demonstrated that they are just as competitive in the classroom as they are in the pool. On April 2, the MAC announced that 14 Eagles earned Academic All-MAC honors. This group included standouts like Emma Littrell and Lucy Noble, both of whom maintained perfect 4.0 GPAs.

The recognition did not stop at the conference level. Just five days later, four members of the team — Aisling Gutierrez, Nina LaRosa, Tristen Mina and Azra Umut — were named College Sports Communicators Academic All-District honorees. This national-level award requires a higher threshold, including a minimum 3.5 GPA and a top-eight finish at the conference championships.

The specific achievements of these four women are remarkable. LaRosa, for instance, balanced a 3.94 GPA

with a fourth-place finish in the 100-yard breaststroke finals. Gutierrez maintained a 3.92 GPA while taking eighth place in the 3-meter diving finals. These honors highlight a team that is consistently performing at the highest level of Division I athletics without sacrificing their professional futures.

### Breaking records and taking titles: Lacrosse and golf

While much of the spring news has focused on cumulative academic success, several Eagles have been recognized for extraordinary individual performances on the field.

In a historic moment for the EMU Lacrosse program, sophomore Emerson Henry was named the MAC Offensive Player of the Week on April 7. Henry's performance in the Eagles' victory over Central Michigan University was one for the history books. She recorded her first career "double hat trick" — tallying four goals and three assists — to lead EMU to its first-ever win over CMU in program history.

Henry's milestone 50th career goal also helped the team tie the program record for wins in a single season. She is the 10th player in program history to receive a weekly MAC honor, joining teammates like Maddy Porter, who has already secured four Goalkeeper of the Week awards this season.

On the golf course, junior Baiyok Sukterm continues to rewrite the EMU record books. On April 3, she was named the MAC Women's Golfer of the Week for the second time this season. Sukterm earned the award after a wire-to-wire victory at the Silicon Valley Showcase, where she shot a 3-over 210 to win her first NCAA Division I title.

Sukterm's win was part of a broader historic season for the women's golf team. The program has now earned eight MAC Golfer of the Week awards in 2025-26. Sukterm, along with sisters Janae Leovao and Jasmine Leovao, has helped the team secure three tournament titles this year.

### A legacy of the scholar-athlete

As these programs move into the postseason, the collective success of these athletes serves as a reminder of the university's points of pride. Whether it is the football team competing with the biggest names in the Big Ten and Big 12 for academic supremacy or the golf team shattering season records, the message is clear: Eastern Michigan is a place where students do not have to choose between being an elite athlete and an elite scholar.

For the students, faculty and fans reading *The Eastern Echo*, these awards represent more than just statistics. They represent the hundreds of hours spent in the GameAbove Golf Performance Center, the early morning laps in the pool, and the late nights in the library. As NFF Chairman Manning aptly stated, these honors provide a platform to "shine a light on their individual accomplishments" and the enduring value of the game in developing the leaders of tomorrow.



Eastern Michigan University football quarterback, No. 1, Noah Kim, looks to pass the ball to a teammate against Bowling Green State University on Nov. 8, 2025, at Rynearson Stadium. Bradan Copeland / The Eastern Echo

### Ruby Brannon

Sports Editor

As the 2026 spring semester draws to a close in Ypsilanti, the trophy cases at Eastern Michigan University are becoming increasingly crowded — not just with medals and championship rings, but with certificates of academic achievement that underscore a department-wide commitment to excellence. In a remarkable flurry of announcements throughout early April, over 50 EMU student-athletes across multiple sports were recognized for maintaining elite standards in both their academic and athletic pursuits.

### National leaders on the football field

The headline of the spring academic season belongs to the Eastern Michigan football program. On April 8, the National Football Foundation and College Football Hall of Fame announced the members of the 2026 National Football Foundation Hampshire Honor Society, and the Eagles emerged as a national powerhouse in scholar-athlete development.

Fourteen EMU football players were named to the prestigious society, a figure that ranked first among Mid-American Conference programs. To qualify for this elite group, student-athletes must be starters or significant contributors who have maintained

a cumulative GPA of 3.2 or higher throughout their entire college careers.

The depth of this achievement is staggering when viewed on a national scale. EMU is one of only six Football Bowl Subdivision programs in the entire country to see 14 or more players recognized this year. To put that in perspective, Eastern's 14 honorees tied with Fresno State University for the fifth-most nationally, trailing only Rutgers University with 21 honorees, Texas Tech University with 17, and Indiana University and Texas Christian University with 15 each.

NFF Chairman Archie Manning noted that despite the "era of transition" in college football, programs like Eastern Michigan continue to develop well-rounded leaders. The 14 honorees represent a diverse range of contributors who have balanced the physical demands of Division I football with consistent academic performance.

### A marathon of academic success in track and field

The academic momentum continued with the announcement of the Indoor Track and Field Academic All-MAC Team. The Eagles saw 22 student-athletes make the list — 12 from the women's team and 10 from the men's program.

The requirements for this honor are stringent: student-athletes must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.2 and participate in at least 50%



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# Eastern Michigan University Theatre brings new vision to play 'Our Town'



**AnnaBelle Favre**  
News Reporter

Eastern Michigan University Theatre will present a reimagined interpretation of "Our Town," offering a contemporary approach to the American theatre classic.

Written by Thornton Wilder, "Our Town" follows two small-town families from 1901-13, capturing the beauty and fragility of everyday life. EMU's production of the play is directed by Pirooz Aghssa, professor of theatre arts, who brings a fresh perspective to the well-known play. Traditionally narrated by the stage manager, Aghssa reimagines the story in a contemporary setting.

"I thought, 'What if we opened it up, and put it in a theatre classroom in 2026?' All the older characters in the play are going to be put in the time of the story and all the younger characters are in modern day," he said. "It's a combination of period and very contemporary, so you can open up something that the original doesn't have, and that's the diversity."

Playing the character of the stage manager, theatre student Gavin Miller

appreciates Aghssa's modern twist on the classic story: "Because 'Our Town' is such a classic story and it's so widely known, I think what's wonderful about our rendition is that our interpretation is very modern. We are throwing in a lot of modern themes and we are putting a lot of people on stage in these roles that we normally wouldn't see. My character, for example, is usually played by an older cis man, but I'm a young trans woman. We play around a lot with these identities in the story."

Miller's interpretation also shifts the tone of the character. Portraying the stage manager as a teacher within the classroom setting, she brings a sense of energy and warmth to the role.

"I try to put in a lot of bounce and happiness and joy in my stage manager, because in this interpretation she is a professor," Miller said. "I try to really put in a lot of joy and energy and buoyancy into the character, because I feel like some interpretations kind of lack that."

Aghssa noted that this production leans more into humor than the somber tone often associated with the play, offering audiences a fresh emotional experience.

Despite its small-town setting,

"Our Town" is known for exploring profound and universal themes. Jude Sears, who plays Mr. Webb, described the impact the play had on him: "When I first read 'Our Town,' it brought me to tears. I immediately fell in love with the characters. I loved the naturalistic voices of the characters and how true to life it is. It is a profound emotional experience seeing "Our Town," and every avid theatre goer should experience it at least once."

Raegan Woodiwiss, who plays Mrs. Gibbs, emphasized the show's broad appeal.

"I think that 'Our Town' is genuinely one of those shows that is for all audiences: young or old. It's a slice of life. It's very Brechtian. That means that it makes the audience reflect on their own life, and I think the show does that because it is so real," Woodiwiss said.

"Our Town" will be performed April 16-18, at 7 p.m., with matinee performances on April 18 and 19, at 2 p.m. Performances take place at EMU's Legacy Theatre. Tickets can be purchased at the EMU box office or on the EMU Theatre website. The show is suggested for ages 12 and older.

Eastern Michigan University students Wyatt Hicks (left), Gavin Miller (center), and Morgan Stillson will be performing as George, the stage manager, and Emily, respectively, in EMU Theatre's production of "Our Town" from April 16-19. Courtesy of EMU Theatre

# Ypsilanti's Book Love Bar builds community through reading, art, events

**Hannah Borders**  
Arts Reporter

Book Love Bar is a local indie bookshop building community in Ypsilanti through the joy of reading books.

Taking up the old location of Stone & Spoon gift shop, Book Love Bar is at 110 W. Michigan Ave. The business is closed Mondays and Tuesdays, open from noon to 6 p.m. Wednesdays, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, and 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sundays. The store also offers event spaces after hours until 11 p.m.

"Book Love Bar was something I've been wanting to do for probably a decade or more, and after the pandemic, I decided to give up working in the vet field and focus on making this happen," said Jessica Tharp, owner and operator of Book Love Bar.

While it is known best for its wide selection of books, including novels, graphic novels and manga, Book Love Bar also offers other products. It sells a variety of board games, puzzles, bookmarks, locally-made candles, journals and art pieces by local artists.

Book Love Bar is currently in the process of obtaining a liquor and coffee service license. While it is not able to offer alcohol or a full-service coffee bar yet, it currently has a small selection of free coffee and tea for customers.

After receiving a liquor and coffee service license, the plan for the business is to offer cocktails, mocktails and coffee drinks themed around different books, authors and poets, Tharp said.

"I love reading; I enjoy bars, but I enjoy, more so, dive bars. I was a bartender; I worked in restaurants for 12-13 years, and it's more about the small bar scene that has a lot of camaraderie, a lot of community," Tharp said.

Tharp is excited to combine that love of bars with her love of reading and bookstores.

"They've always been like a sanctuary place for me, bookstores, libraries," Tharp said. "Combining the two has always been a dream."

Book Love Bar hosts several book clubs as well as book- and writing-related events each month. The shop hosts Saturday's Song Circle, an event in which music lovers come together



Coffee and tea are offered to customers at no cost inside Book Love Bar, located in Ypsilanti at 110 W. Michigan Ave. Hannah Borders / The Eastern Echo

to share music. Song Circles are free to attend, but a donation of \$15 is recommended. This event takes place on the second Saturday of each month from 6-9 p.m.

Book Love Bar also hosts open mic poetry and prose nights on the first

Friday of each month from 7-9 p.m., which are free to attend.

Furthermore, the shop offers various writing workshops and book clubs. Some of the book clubs include fantasy book club, non-fiction book club, queer book club and sci-fi book club. Book

clubs cost \$5 to attend, but that \$5 can be applied as a coupon to any purchases made in the store the day of the book club, the Book Love Bar website said.

"It's all about community, really, I guess, when it comes down to the heart of it," Tharp said.

# Riverside Arts Center to feature Ypsilanti Community Schools student artwork

**Bilal Ahmed**  
General Assignment Reporter

This May, the Riverside Arts Center will host an exhibit featuring the work of students from Ypsilanti Community Schools.

RAC has hosted this exhibition, which is a partnership between the center and YCS, for the last four years, said Maggie Spencer, operations manager for RAC, in a written statement to *The Eastern Echo*.

Inclusion in the exhibition is open to all YCS schools, Spencer said.

"Art teachers select the artwork from student projects created throughout the school year, so the show is a wonderful reflection of what students have been making and learning across the district," Spencer said in the statement.

Spencer also noted that this

exhibition will include work from the Ypsilanti Future History Project, an ongoing collaboration between Ypsilanti artist Nick Azzaro and YCS arts and social studies classes.

"Students have been responding to prompts about Ypsilanti's past, present and future, creating visual 2D and 3D works," Spencer said in the statement. "It's a really special body of work."

The prompts tackle influential people, events and landmarks, such as Benjamin Neely and his pro-union initiatives, and Lyman Decatur Norris and his role in the Dred Scott v. Emerson (later Sanford) case, the project website states.

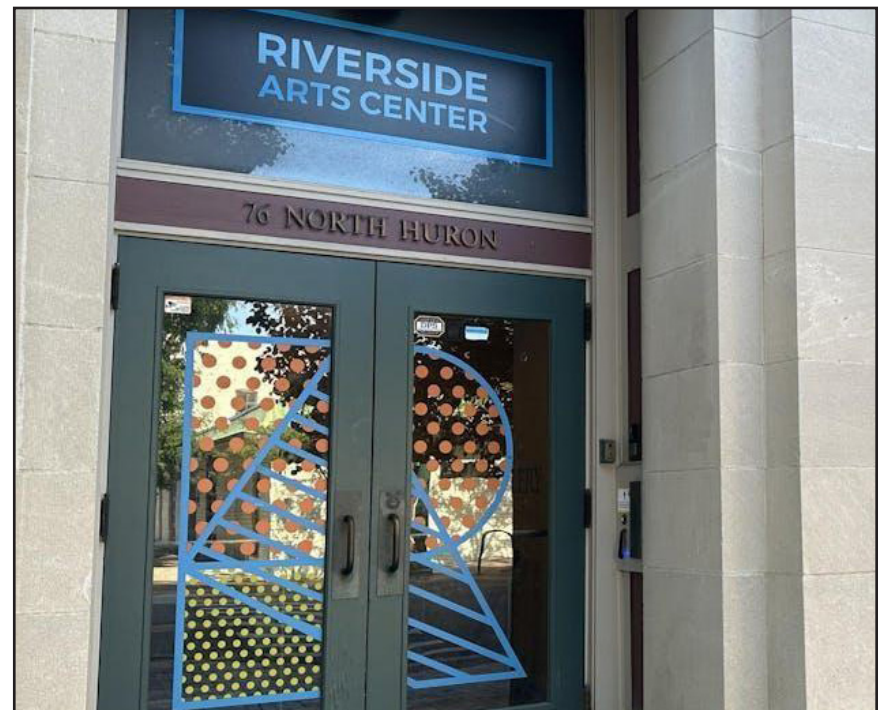
Stacey Schwartz, the head of the art department at Ypsilanti Community Schools, said in a statement to *The Eastern Echo* that teachers from each school will be submitting 20 pieces of student artwork to represent the school

for the RAC exhibition. One exception is teacher Jeff Trax, who teaches at two schools and will submit 20 works from each.

Schools featured include Erickson, Estabrook, Perry and Holmes elementary schools; Puentes Multilingual School; Ypsilanti Middle School; and Ypsilanti High School, as well as students from the online school program.

The opening reception for this annual exhibition will take place May 1, 2026, 5-7 p.m. at the Riverside Arts Center, located at 76 N. Huron St., Ypsilanti. The exhibition is open May 1-25. \$5 donations are encouraged to help fund RAC and the expansion of its programs.

For more information, contact RAC at [info@riversidearts.org](mailto:info@riversidearts.org), or call 734-480-2787.



Ypsilanti's Riverside Arts Center is located at 76 N. Huron St. Victoria Smith / The Eastern Echo

Blinding Shining Star! | Yiri



Tomodachi Life | FunkyLOaf



The Man Who Left It All Behind | Yiri



Word Search | Yiri

## WORD SEARCH

Can you find all the words, just before The Fire Rises?

F	L	A	R	E	I	O	F	G	O	A	T	H	L
X	D	G	H	I	M	M	K	B	L	A	Z	E	G
Z	S	M	O	K	E	A	M	O	B	R	O	M	D
F	H	J	K	L	A	S	B	H	A	H	B	E	E
L	A	I	C	X	X	H	H	Y	O	E	H	I	M
A	X	N	G	M	D	E	G	D	U	A	I	S	A
M	X	F	H	V	E	S	F	V	H	T	D	P	N
E	G	E	U	K	I	G	A	X	D	K	H	A	O
S	H	R	D	N	Q	U	S	V	F	M	M	R	D
S	I	N	X	H	L	C	A	V	Z	A	G	K	M
G	J	O	M	G	Z	I	T	X	X	G	F	K	D
I	N	C	I	N	E	R	A	T	E	M	D	C	Z
A	D	D	D	K	M	A	L	K	M	A	X	L	X
Z	B	I	B	U	R	N	F	L	A	V	A	O	X

Flames

Magma

Burn

Ashes

Heat

Spark

Smoke

Blaze

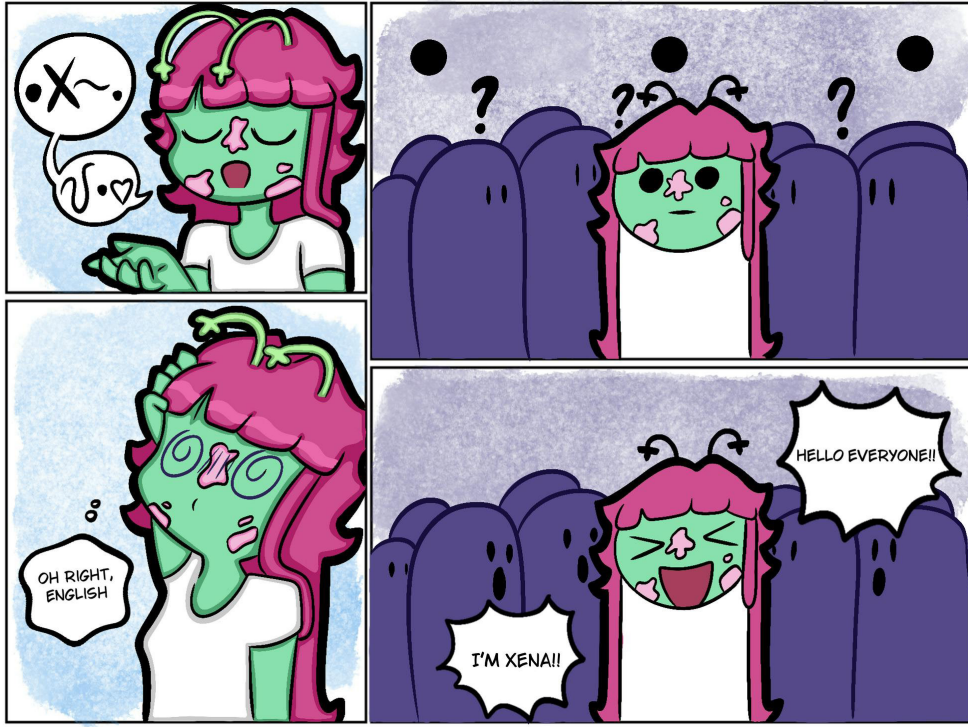
Flare

Lava

Inferno

Incinerate

Xena 1st Comic! | Lynn.ology



Scan to read more comics!

# Paddles, grooves and potions at Eastern Michigan University, last week, April 8-10



Phi Delta Theta surges in front of the competition at the Eagle Regatta on Thursday, April 9, but eventually falls to Tau Kappa Epsilon, which wins second overall in the event. Max Taylor / The Eastern Echo



Eastern Michigan University President Brendan Kelly and his wife, Tressa Kelly, visit EMU's Facility Dog, Tinker, during the Eagle Regatta boat race April 9 at the University Park pond. Max Taylor / The Eastern Echo



Elijah Boye dismounts from his ship after finishing first in heat five of the Eagle Regatta and sinks into the University Park pond on April 9. Max Taylor / The Eastern Echo



With the fastest finish time in the event, S.S. Trenbolone's crew claims victory at the 2026 Eagle Regatta on Thursday, April 9. Courtney Prielipp / The Eastern Echo



BobaLee Co. provides free bubble tea for students at Twilight Groove Night in the Student Center on Friday, April 10. Lee Hammock / The Eastern Echo



Students line up to check in for a Reel Bites showing of "Kiki's Delivery Service," hosted by the Japanese Student Association and Campus Life, at the Student Center Auditorium on April 8. Courtney Prielipp / The Eastern Echo



Bottled water made to resemble a drinking potion from character Kokiri in the Studio Ghibli film "Kiki's Delivery Service" sits on display in the Student Center on April 8. The potion was one of many fiction-inspired snack options served at Reel Bites. Courtney Prielipp / The Eastern Echo