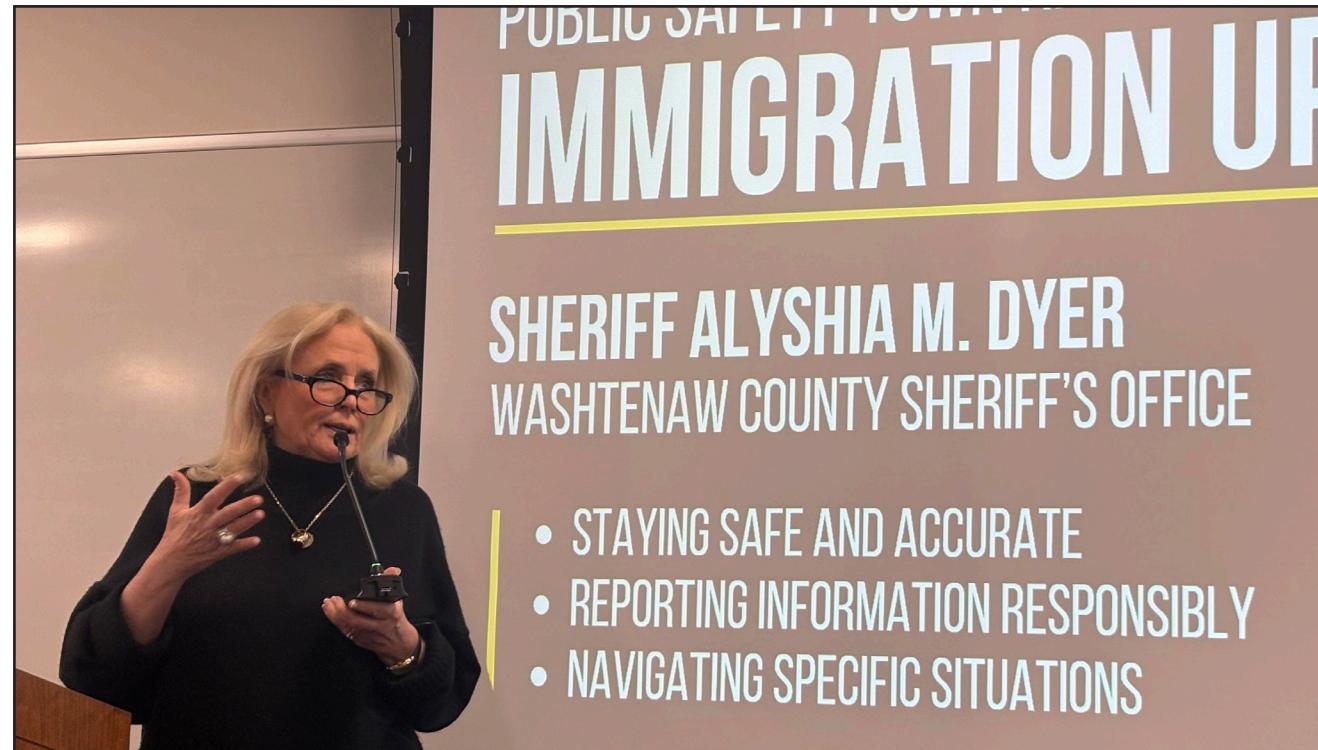




Washtenaw County town hall provides immigration enforcement resources



U.S. Rep. Debbie Dingell (D-Michigan) addresses a packed room during an immigration update town hall held by the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office on Feb. 5. *Lilly Kujawski / The Eastern Echo*

Lilly Kujawski
Managing Editor - News

If the packed room at a town hall last Thursday was any indication, there is growing fear over immigration enforcement in Washtenaw County.

That's what Washtenaw Board of Commissioners Chairperson Katie Scott said when she addressed the crowd of people, who filled nearly every seat in the room to hear an update about immigration from the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office Feb. 5.

"When a room fills like this one, it tells me that people are scared and angry," Scott said.

Laura Sanders, an advocate for the group Movement for Immigrant Rights

Action, told *The Eastern Echo* that the group receives weekly and sometimes daily reports of Immigration and Customs Enforcement activity in Washtenaw County.

With increased immigration enforcement crackdown occurring nationally, Washtenaw County elected officials and advocates joined together to provide updates, review rights and dispel misinformation.

"I really don't think people know how scared people are, how people are afraid to leave their homes, how people are not going to work, have given up their jobs, because they are afraid of what is going to happen," said U.S. Rep. Debbie Dingell during the town hall meeting. "You have to have

empathy and compassion."

Dingell, a Democrat representing Michigan's sixth congressional district, voted against the 2026 Homeland Security funding bill that prompted opposition from House and Senate Democrats before eventually passing into law.

During the town hall, Washtenaw County Sheriff Alyshia Dyer reaffirmed policy that her office does not investigate immigration status.

"We, as local law enforcement, want to keep everyone safe. We don't care about people's immigration status. We don't care if people have legal documentation or not," she said. "Whenever there is fear and panic, it makes our jobs harder. People are less

likely to trust us. They are less likely to report crimes. Victims are less likely to want to cooperate in the legal process."

"Washtenaw County policy prohibits employees from profiling individuals, saying that suspicion of undocumented immigration status is not a reason to take investigative action.

"Employees shall never ask about an individual's immigration status when performing their duties. Any activity regarding law enforcement shall be based upon reasonable suspicion or probable cause supported by clearly articulated facts and circumstances not relating to immigration status," county policy states.

In Ypsilanti, the City Council passed a "don't ask" ordinance regarding immigration status in 2017. A Jan. 28 Facebook post from Ypsilanti Mayor Nicole Brown reaffirmed that the city, including the police department, does not enforce or assist in civil immigration enforcement.

"Our local police and city staff do not ask about immigration status, do not enforce federal immigration law, and do not assist ICE with civil detentions," Brown said in the post. Brown attended the town hall, as did Ypsilanti Mayor Pro-Tem Steve Wilcoxen.

Dyer said her office recently had a conversation with ICE officials, during which they confirmed that they will not be going to local schools for immigration enforcement. Previously, reports of ICE activity at Ypsilanti Community High School spread panic across the community. Dyer said she confirmed with schools in Washtenaw that there have not been instances of immigration authorities attempting to enter schools or conduct enforcement at school bus stops.

"What happens is when they are

here and they are doing enforcement, if they make traffic stops, sometimes they happen to be near a school, and then we end up getting a lot of fear and panic because people are scared," she said. "There used to be a policy in place in federal government that protected sanctuary locations, churches, places of worship, schools; that policy has been reversed and while a lot of folks are still honoring it informally, the fact that it is not there is also contributing to a lot of stress, fear and panic."

At the town hall, lawyers and advocates shared information and rights guides with attendees. However, Sanders noted the limitations of legal advocacy amid an immigration crackdown that often violates individuals' rights.

"It is important to know your rights, but it is important to know that ICE does not care about your rights," said Sanders, who spoke briefly during the town hall. "It is just not balanced for us to only talk about what people's rights are when we don't talk about the fact that ICE is not validating, is not recognizing people's rights, not only undocumented immigrants' rights and other immigrants' rights, but also protesters' rights."

Dyer also mentioned limits to local efforts. The Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners recently passed a resolution barring immigration authorities from masking while carrying out official duties. However, the Sheriff's Office cannot legally enforce the ban unless it is written into state law, Dyer said.

For a full guide to federal immigration enforcement, local policy, immigrant rights and more, visit easternecho.com or scan the QR code.



Student Government election season takes off at Eastern Michigan University

Laura Meriweather
News Reporter

It's off to the races for the 2026 Eastern Michigan University Student Government election.

EMU students in good academic and judicial standing have two weeks to collect enough signatures to appear on the ballot before voting begins March 25, 2026. Senatorial candidates will need to collect 50 signatures, and presidential tickets will need to collect 300 by Feb. 16. Constitutional referenda will also need to be submitted to Election Commissioner Max Butler by that date.

EMU Student Government is allocated a budget by the university that can be used to fund student organizations and student services. Once elected, they have the power to represent the student body in discussions with the university administration. Jack Booth, the outgoing Student Government president, recently served on the search committee that selected incoming university President Brendan Kelly.

In recent years, Student Government elections at EMU have consistently been decided by less than 10 percent of the student body due to low voter turnout.

"This is a complicated time in history," Butler told *The Eastern Echo* in an email Feb. 4. "Many people feel they should be doing something but aren't sure how. I don't think you need a perfect plan from the outset to have a genuine desire to drive change."

Until Feb. 23, candidates are only allowed to campaign electronically and verbally, according to the current Student Government bylaws. Active campaigning is forbidden until then, meaning students cannot campaign with printed or written materials in the meantime.

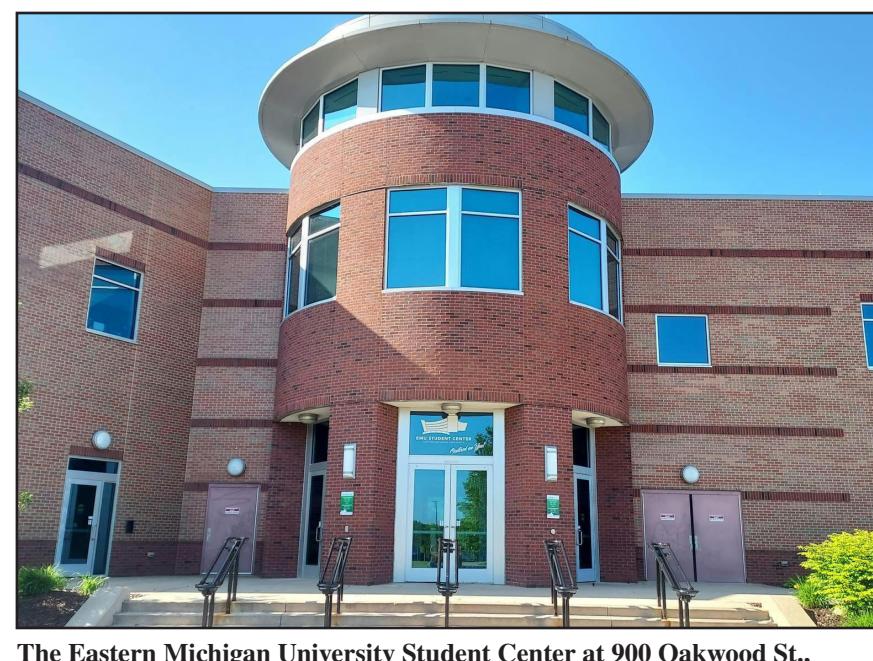
"Most of our senators are running for some position, and some of our executive board members will be as well," Butler said when asked about candidates who were currently running. Butler said the upcoming start of active campaigning will provide more details about candidates and their platforms.

Vice President Nina Freeman, who told *The Echo* last year that she intended to run for president, recently announced her candidacy on Instagram with Student Government Director of Student Services Eva Orlich as her running mate. In the comments of the announcement post, EMU College Democrats President Joe Garris said he endorsed the ticket. Booth told *The Echo* in December that Freeman would be receiving his endorsement as well.

Mirna Shehab and Yasrib Farook have also joined the race. Farook, who is running for the presidential position, currently serves as the EMU Student Government Speaker of the Senate.

"People often fear how they'll be perceived, and much doesn't get done because of it," Butler said. "Whether that is running for election or something completely irrelevant, I believe it's the willingness to be seen beginning that matters most."

Later this month on Feb. 19, a candidate meeting will be held in Room 352 of the Student Center, according to the election timeline. A



The Eastern Michigan University Student Center at 900 Oakwood St., Ypsilanti, houses the university's Student Government offices in room 342.

Israel Shriki / The Eastern Echo

candidate forum for presidential and vice presidential candidates will also be held in that room March 18, with a forum for write-in candidates the day after.

Additional information and guidelines regarding the Student Government election can be found on the organization's website and bylaws. Butler can be reached by email at dbutle42@emich.edu.

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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www.Easternecho.com

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.

HOW TO REACH US

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Winter 2026
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CORRECTIONS

On page 8 of the Feb. 3, 2026 edition of *The Eastern Echo*, the date for the Sexapalooza event was incorrectly listed. The event took place Jan. 28, 2026.

Where to find the newest volume of *Cellar Roots*, EMU's Fine Arts and Literary Magazine:



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:

- Student Center
- Roosevelt Hall
- Porter Building

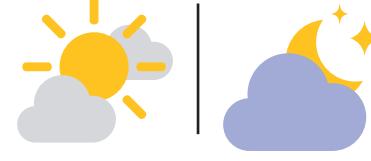
Where to find our links:

- Administration
- Urgent Care
- Dining
- Bus Stop
- Parking
- Housing
- Academic
- Eastern Echo

**WEATHER FORECAST**

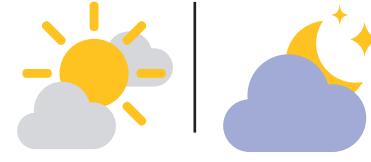
Tuesday, Feb. 10

High: 40 | Low: 22
Partly sunny / Mostly cloudy



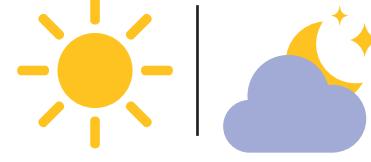
Wednesday, Feb. 11

High: 31 | Low: 15
Partly sunny / Mostly cloudy



Thursday, Feb. 12

High: 29 | Low: 14
Mostly sunny / Mostly cloudy



Friday, Feb. 13

High: 31 | Low: 16
Partly sunny / Partly cloudy



Saturday, Feb. 14

High: 32 | Low: N/A
Partly sunny / N/A



*Chance of precipitation



Source:
The National Weather Service

CALENDAR

**FEB
10**

RecWell Fest

All Day

Rec/IM Building

**FEB
11**

Boundaries Workshop

11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Marshall Building - 201

**FEB
12**

Annual Etiquette Dinner

5:30-7:30 p.m.

Student Center - 310AB

**FEB
13**

EMU hockey vs. Michigan Ann Arbor

Starts at 8:35 p.m.

Arctic Edge Ice Arena - Canton, Mich.

**FEB
14**

EMU men's basketball vs. WMU

Starts at 2 p.m.

George Gervin GameAbove Center

**FEB
15**

Ypsilanti Symphony Orchestra "Midwinter Melodies"

3:30 p.m.

Lincoln High School Performing Arts Center

**FEB
16**

Drop-In Volleyball

7-10 p.m.

Rec/IM Building - 3rd Floor Courts

**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:

- Student Center
- Roosevelt Hall
- Porter Building

Where to find our links:

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TikTok @theeasternecho



Facebook @ The Eastern Echo

Man killed by Washtenaw County deputies identified as veteran, 'loved by many'



Navy veteran John Andrew Jenuwine, 34, was shot and killed by Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office deputies Jan. 6. (Courtesy of Flood Law)

Lilly Kujawski
Managing Editor - News

The name of the unarmed driver who was shot and killed by police in Ypsilanti after a vehicle chase has been released.

John Andrew Jenuwine of St. Clair County was killed by Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office deputies in Ypsilanti on Jan. 6, 2026. His name was made public by Flood Law, a Michigan criminal defense and civil litigation

firm. Flood Law was retained to represent Jenuwine's family. Jenuwine died of multiple gunshot wounds, said Todd Flood, managing partner at Flood Law.

34-year-old Jenuwine was a veteran who served in the United States Navy for six years, Flood told *The Eastern Echo*.

"He was loved by many," Flood said. "In fact, he was growing his hair out because a loved one in his family was having to go through chemo and needed a wig. He was growing his locks to provide hair for his loved one."

Jenuwine grew up in Cottrellville Township and attended Marine City High School, graduating in 2009, an obituary published by Young Colonial Chapel Funeral Home said.

"This is a horrific time for our family as we continue to grieve the loss of our son. Watching him be killed has scarred us forever. No parent should ever have to bury their child, and no family should have to fight like we are just to get answers. We ask during this time that you respect our period of grieving," said a statement from Jenuwine's family provided by Flood Law.

Jenuwine was a motorcyclist and member of Hell's Our Home motorcycle club, the obituary said. He was an outdoorsman who enjoyed hunting and fishing, it said.

"Our Brother passed away, John 'Man of Many names' Jenuwine," said a tribute posted to Facebook by the motorcycle club. "This man would give you the shirt off his back if he knew you needed it. He was a true brother through thick and thin."

Before he died, Jenuwine worked as a technician in laser equipment, Flood said.

Jenuwine periodically spent time in Ypsilanti for work because he had clients in the area, Flood said. The vehicle he was driving was used for his work, Flood said.

The police chase and shooting took place in Ypsilanti in the early morning of Jan. 6, 2026, on Prospect Road near Towner Street. Police had responded after two 911 callers reported a white moving or construction-style van driving erratically in Ypsilanti Township, as heard in the 911 dispatch recording. In the recording, the second caller said his wife was threatened by the driver with what he believed to be a handgun.

Soon after the 911 calls, deputies responded and attempted to initiate a traffic stop, a Jan. 22 statement from the county sheriff's office said. The van did not stop, and a vehicle pursuit began. After initiating a crash with the vehicle, deputies verbally instructed the occupant to show his hands, the dash cam video shows.

"He's got a gun," is heard shouted by one of the deputies in the dash cam video.

The footage shows shots fired by deputies. The sheriff's office confirmed in its statement that multiple deputies discharged their firearms. One deputy is heard reporting in the video that shots had been fired. No gun was recovered from the vehicle.

"Upon further investigation, it can now be confirmed that there was not a firearm found in the vehicle," Washtenaw County Sheriff Alyshia Dyer said in a Jan. 13, 2026 statement.

Flood said experts working with the firm counted 27 shots fired, which was estimated by sound in the video. Ballistic reports from the guns fired have not yet been made available, he said.

Flood told *The Echo* that an independent autopsy conducted by the Oakland County forensic medical examiner's office showed that Jenuwine was hit seven times with non-fatal shots and died of blood loss.

Flood Law intends to file a wrongful death civil lawsuit at the appropriate time, an email statement from Flood said. An independent investigation of the incident is currently underway by Michigan State Police. The deputies involved were immediately placed on administrative leave following the incident, the sheriff's office said.

What's the Move?

Feb. 10 - 16

Allie Beecher
Copy Desk Chief

Looking for something to do off campus this week? *The Eastern Echo* has its readers covered with this list of upcoming Ypsilanti events.

Writer Open Mic Night with YpsiWrites — Feb. 12, 2026

Looking for a supportive place to share original written work? Try this free open mic night with YpsiWrites on Thursday, Feb. 12, at the Superior branch of the Ypsilanti District Library. From 6:30-8:30 p.m., writers are welcome to share their work no matter what stage it is in.

Everyone is welcome to read or just listen and support the writers. To reserve a spot, visit the YDL's website, and register at the link tinyurl.com/YW021226.

The Superior district of the YDL is at 1900 Harris Road.

"Doubt, A Parable" — Feb. 12-15 and 18-21, 2026

On Thursday, Feb. 12, PTD Productions will begin its performances of the play "Doubt, A Parable" by John Patrick Shanley. PTD's website explains that "Doubt" focuses on Sister Aloysius, a nun who runs a Bronx Catholic school in 1964, and how she grapples with the suspicion that their priest Father Flynn may be abusing boys at the school. The play won the 2005 Pulitzer Prize for Drama and the 2005 Tony Award for Best Play.

PTD will perform the play at the Riverside Arts Center Feb. 12-14 and 19-21 at 7:30 p.m. On Sunday, Feb. 15, and Wednesday, Feb. 18, there will be matinees at 2 p.m.

Tickets are available for purchase on the PTD website or at the box office. Ticket prices are \$20 for adults and \$15 for students, seniors and active military. For more information about ticket discounts, visit ptdproductions.com/tickets. The Riverside Arts Center is at 76 N. Huron St. in Ypsilanti.

Craft Supply Swap — Feb. 14, 2026

Those who would like to celebrate their love of crafting this Valentine's Day may be interested in attending the Ypsilanti District Library's first Craft Supply Swap on Saturday, Feb. 14. Participants may donate their gently used or extra craft supplies to the Second Floor Reference Desk at the Whittaker branch of the YDL from Feb. 1-11. Then, from 1-3 p.m. on Feb. 14, participants will gather in the Whittaker Community Room to browse and trade supplies.

Only clean and usable items will be accepted as donations. Empty containers, broken tools, small fabric or paper scraps, hazardous materials and dried-out supplies will not be accepted.

This event is free, and there is no need to register for it. The Whittaker branch of the YDL is at 5577 Whittaker Road.

For more information, visit the YDL's website.

Around the Kitchen Table with Peace House Ypsi — Feb. 15, 2026

Munch on brunch at Growing Hope's MarketPlace Hall on Sunday, Feb. 15. From 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Growing Hope will host its monthly free brunch event for the community. Options for omnivores, vegans and those who follow a gluten-free diet will be available.

Volunteers to help out with the event are always appreciated. Those who would like to bring a dish, cook or help clean up can learn more about ways to help by texting or calling Lisa Gizzati at 734-347-7784.

The brunch will take place at 16 S. Washington St. in Ypsilanti. For more information, visit the Around the Kitchen Table with Peace House Ypsi's Facebook page or visit YpsiReal.com.



Pictured Jan. 11, the West Cross Street house involved in a more than 30-hour crisis negotiation Jan. 4-5. The house sustained damage from police tactics used in response to a man who barricaded himself inside. *Lilly Kujawski / The Eastern Echo*

jurisdictions to look at the full scope of the operation," McLean said.

City Manager Andrew Hellenga expressed concern for the resolution, recommending that the Council go through the process of selecting a third-party investigator to take a closer look at the police's response Jan. 4-5.

"I think it would give Council, the department and the city a greater tool on how to improve on what our department was involved [in]," Hellenga said.

Councilor Desirae Simmons said that a lot of the facts that the third-party investigator would be assessing are already available to the Council.

"I just want to say too, that my goal is not about punishment, but about accountability," Simmons said.

"So that we know that learning has happened and that we know what to expect in the future."

Simmons also addressed the residents who have expressed their concern for Ruben and the wish for the charges against him to be dropped.

"That [choice] sits with the county prosecutor," Simmons said. "The question would be whether there is a role for this body to play in terms of that."

The City Council also debated whether a third-party investigator would be able to provide more expertise on the subject and analyze the situation from an unbiased perspective.

"The public wants a lot of answers, and we don't have them," Councilor

Amber Fellows said. "... If this is tabled [the resolution], I think it would be appropriate for Council to motion to support the plan to hire an outside investigator for this so that the public knows we are doing something."

Councilors spoke in favor of working with the county during the ongoing investigation into the incident. Ultimately, Ypsilanti City Council unanimously voted in favor of postponing the resolution until the March 3, 2026 meeting.

For more information on the Ypsilanti City Council meeting and how the Council came to this decision, the meeting in its entirety is available on the City of Ypsilanti's YouTube page.

Local for self-love Valentine's events Day

Gray Connor
Managing Editor - Operations

While Valentine's Day is often considered a holiday for couples, that doesn't mean those without a partner can't join in on the festivities.

To get into the spirit, and to celebrate self-love and friendship, here are five on-campus and local Valentine's Day events to attend solo or with friends.

Be Your Own Valentine

Hosted by Campus Life and Same Page, a new Eastern Michigan University initiative dedicated to helping students navigate relationships, Be Your Own Valentine offers a night of self-love-themed silent disco.

Students will wear individual headphones and choose among a selection of different songs. Attendees can also enjoy free mocktails.

The event will be held in the Student Center Ballroom on Tuesday, Feb. 10, from 7-10 p.m.

For those who would like to request accommodations, contact Campus Life via email at campuslife@emich.edu.

A Galentine's Crafting Social

Hosted by the Yours Truly Event Venue, A Galentine's Crafting Social welcomes Ypsilanti residents to a night of creative slow-crafting, as well as a menu of mocktails.

Customers will be provided with all the supplies needed to create 3D botanical displays, composed of



The Eastern Echo's mascot, Scoop, wishes everyone a happy Valentine's Day. Rylee Curley / The Eastern Echo

pressed flowers and floating frames. Customers will also be guided by a live demo and are encouraged to sip and socialize while they create.

The event will be held Wednesday, Feb. 11, beginning at 6 p.m. Yours Truly Event Venue is located in downtown Ypsilanti at 114 W. Michigan Ave. Tickets are \$28.52 per attendee.

For more information on the social, visit the event's page on Ypsi Real.

Galentine's Day at Maiz Mexican Cantina

Celebrate female friendships this season with a Galentine's Day event at Maiz. On Friday, Feb. 13, Maiz Mexican Cantina will be offering specials on food and drinks. Specials will be offered 4 p.m. until closing

time and will include Galentine's Day margaritas for \$9, amistad shots for \$5, mini tostadas for \$6 and churro fried ice cream for \$5.99.

Maiz is at 36 E. Cross St. in Ypsilanti. For more information, visit YpsiReal.com or the Maiz Mexican Cantina Facebook page.

Tap into Love

Celebrate all kinds of love at this open mic event. On Friday, Feb. 13, Ypsi Pride will host Tap into Love, an open mic night and love stories event at Tap Room in Ypsilanti. Those interested can submit their love stories to read aloud at the event at tinyurl.com/4r4dp5v6. Stories can also be submitted anonymously and read by one of the hosts.

The event will take place 7-10 p.m. at 201 W. Michigan Ave. A donation of \$10 is appreciated, but no one will be turned away for not contributing. For more information, visit the Ypsi Pride Facebook page or YpsiReal.com.

Soft Goth Galentine's

Pink and red hearts meet soft goth spooky with this off-campus cocktail event. Attendees can celebrate with friends and enjoy cute drink specials and other surprises at this goth Galentine's event Friday, Feb. 13.

Soft Goth Galentine's will take place 6-10:30 p.m. at the Ypsi Cocktail Club, located at 102 W. Michigan Ave. Find more information at YpsiReal.com.

COBO: Coming Out Being Out

COBO is a counseling service for LGBTQ+ students, as well as those questioning their identities, designed for discussions and topics regarding coming out, sexuality and gender identity.

For more information, students can email the group at counseling.services@emich.edu.

GYT: Get Yourself Tested

GYT offers weekly free screening tests for sexually transmitted infections. Students are not required to have insurance. Students can sign up to attend the screening every Thursday; however, hours are subject to change throughout the summer semester. The testing applies for most STIs, but it specializes in HIV screenings. Students can expect screenings to last approximately 35-40 minutes.

Students can sign up for a free screening on the EMU LGBTRC website.

LGBTRC director

For those interested in working for the LGBTRC, the official job posting for the vacant director position is set to soon release. The individual who holds this position serves as the full-time program coordinator for the LGBTRC.

"That's not just coordinating events; that's also coordinating with campus when it comes to queer accessibility and visibility," Sarah said. "The current project we're working on is managing how we show and how we represent gender-neutral bathrooms on campus. You're not only the coordinator for the programs that we do here that are queer-centered; you are also the go-to person when it comes to being queer on campus."

For more information on the EMU LGBTRC, the resources it offers and its hours of operation, visit its page on EMU's website. The group will also be tabling at Campus Life's upcoming Eagle-Con event, EMU's own version of Comic Con, Feb. 17, 2026, from 7-10 p.m.

The LGBTRC is open to students Monday through Thursday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The center is also open Friday by appointment only.

Opinion

The WellNest Watch

Sleep - the ultimate GPA booster



Ebrima Jobarteh
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.

What if I told you that "Burning the Midnight Candle" is a myth, and that the secret to achieving high grade point averages is right within your reach? College students are notorious for being night owls, constantly seeking resources to improve their grades. In the process, they accumulate stress, gain weight and lack focus in class. They overlook a crucial element — adequate quality sleep — because they view the contrary as the solution to their academic problems.

Sleep is one of the most natural health behaviors in humans. It is a reversible behavioral state marked by sustained withdrawal from, and reduced responsiveness to, the surrounding environment. On average, science has shown that adolescents and adults ought to have at least seven hours of sleep. Adequate sleep improves thought processing, enhances the body-mind relationship, and significantly promotes better heart health, systemic metabolism and blood flow. For college students, adequate quality sleep enables them to have a fresh start in the morning, think better in class, maintain a healthy weight and ultimately get better grades.

Negative health outcomes like diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancer and ultimately, a shortened lifespan ensue from poor and inadequate sleep. Sleep deprivation exposes one to greater health risks, which could affect their professional careers in the future. As public health professionals, we encourage this vibrant population to invest in sleep and protect their health.

Editor's note: Contributors to the WellNest Watch health column are Kegan Tulloch and Ebrima Jobarteh, graduate assistants in the Office of Health Promotions and Shafaat Ali Choyon and Nathaniel King, graduate hall directors in the Department of Residential Life. All four are master's degree candidates in the Public Health Program from the School of Public Health Promotion and Human Performance at Eastern Michigan University.



Subscribe to our newsletter!

Get Echo news in your inbox every week!



The Eastern Michigan University Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Resource Center is on the third floor of the Student Center in room 354. As of February 2026, the LGBTRC will soon open applications for a new director. Natalie Kyle / The Eastern Echo

received so many donations that now we're truly just giving away clothes."

While the closet offers clothing aimed at aiding the gender expression of students, its resources are available to anyone. The closet is available inside the LGBTRC, located on the third floor of the Student Center.

Support groups

Both the Transgender Affinity Group and Asexual and Aromantic Community Circle are support groups run by social work interns. These groups offer students the chance to build community and raise visibility for different identities across campus.

For more information on these groups and their meeting times, email the center at lgbtrc@emich.edu.

Bra and Binder Exchange Program

For students in need of a binder, the LGBTRC offers them gently used and donated for students to collect for free.

"We can either see if we do have your size in stock, and if we don't, we will take your size and order you one," Sarah said.

Students wishing to shop the selection can do so by emailing the center at lgbtrc@emich.edu or by stopping in during walk-in office hours.

Gender-Affirming Clothing Closet

An initiative that started four years ago, the LGBTRC Gender-Affirming Closet offers free clothing to students who come to EMU not necessarily having the closet that they want. Whether they would like to have clothing that better fits their gender expression or just expand what they have in their closet, students can come by and get what they need, Sarah said.

"Traditionally, it was a clothing swap," Sarah said. "However, we have



Instagram @easternechoofficial



TikTok @theeasternecho



Facebook @ The Eastern Echo

Eagle Watch | Feb. 2-8



Eastern Michigan University women's basketball player, No. 14 Sisi Eleko, wins the tipoff at the start of the game against Arkansas State on Feb. 7 at the George Gervin GameAbove Center. Bradan Copeland / The Eastern Echo

Ruby Brannon
Sports Editor

Women's basketball: Alphonsia "Sisi" Eleko

Sisi Eleko continues to be a dominant force for Eastern Michigan University women's basketball. The senior forward from Montreal recently recorded her Mid-American Conference-leading 12th double-double of the season in a tough matchup against the University of Massachusetts, posting 20 points and 10 rebounds. This impressive stat line ranks her fifth nationally for double-doubles. With seven 20-point games this season, Eleko is also rapidly approaching a significant career milestone of 1,000 total rebounds.

Men's basketball: Addison Patterson

Redshirt senior forward Addison Patterson has been the model of offensive consistency for the Eagles

this season. The Mississauga, Ontario native recently extended an impressive streak of 11 consecutive games with double-digit scoring, contributing 16 points and six rebounds in a narrow loss to the University of Akron. Patterson has now reached at least 10 points in 14 of his last 15 outings. His explosive athleticism was also on full display Tuesday, Feb. 3, featuring a highlight-reel dunk that garnered significant attention online.

Women's gymnastics: Kyrie Lowe

Junior Kyrie Lowe has been an undeniable standout, recently capturing the all-around title during the Eagles' dominant home victory over Wilberforce University. Her elite versatility was also on display at the Air Force Quad Meet, where she led the bars lineup with a 9.800 and finished fourth in the all-around. Lowe remains a crucial scoring leader

for EMU heading into the "Purple Meet" showdown Sunday, Feb. 8, against MAC rival Central Michigan University.

Women's track and field: Sophie Emin

Senior distance runner Sophie Emin is hitting her stride at the perfect time for the Eagles. The Easton, Pennsylvania native recently set a new personal best in the 800-meter run at the Mayo Invitational, clocking in at 2 minutes, 12.66 seconds. This performance marked her second consecutive week shaving time off her 800m mark. Emin has proved herself a consistent leader.

Men's track and field: Cason Doolittle

Junior multi-athlete Cason Doolittle continues to cement his legacy in the EMU record books. At the recent Jet's Pizza Invitational, the Findlay, Ohio native secured an event win in the

heptathlon high jump with a 1.86m clearance. He finished the men's heptathlon in fifth place. His relentless pace through day two earned him a score of 2,063 points, a mark that secured him a program top 10 spot. Doolittle's versatility and record-breaking potential make him a vital asset to the men's squad.

Women's tennis: Sabrina Tolstova

Despite a challenging week for the squad, freshman Sabrina Tolstova continues to be a standout for the EMU tennis team. The Odesa, Ukraine native was a key contributor in helping the Eagles tie a program record for their best start earlier this season. While recent matches against Michigan State University and Eastern Kentucky University proved difficult, Tolstova's consistent play in the No. 2 doubles position alongside Matilde Parreira remains a highlight for the Eagles as they navigate their competitive spring schedule.

Lacrosse: Tracy Grollman

Redshirt senior Tracy Grollman continues to anchor the EMU lacrosse attack. In the 2026 season opener against Marquette University, the Annapolis, Maryland native recorded four points, including one goal and three assists. Her three assists tied for the sixth-most in a single game in program history, marking the fourth time she has reached three assists in her career. Grollman remains a consistent offensive leader for the Eagles.

Swimming: Nina LaRosa

Nina LaRosa has been a dominant force for the Eagles in the pool lately. During a recent meet against Ball State, the Bay Village, Ohio native secured two of the team's three individual swim victories, taking first place in both the 100-yard breaststroke (1:02.61) and the 200-yard breaststroke (2:20.02).

Eagle Sports Tips & Tales:

Feb. 10-16

Ruby Brannon
Sports Editor

The upcoming week of Feb. 10-16, is set to be one of the most active stretches for Eastern Michigan University athletics, featuring critical conference showdowns, historic rivalries and a southern road swing for baseball's season opener.

Basketball: Rivalry week on the hardwood

The women's basketball team opens the week at home Tuesday, Feb. 10, against Ball State University. This matchup is a significant hurdle for the Eagles, who are currently looking to snap a nine-game losing streak against the Cardinals. While Ball State leads the all-time series 48-45, the Eagles have a competitive 21-23 record when playing in Ypsilanti.

Then, the team will travel to face the University of Toledo Saturday, Feb. 14. The Eagles enter this contest with confidence after winning their most recent meeting with the Rockets 76-71 in January 2026.

For men's basketball, the week is defined by a difficult road test and a classic home rivalry. On Wednesday, Feb. 11, the team heads to Kent State University, a venue where they have historically struggled with only nine wins in 43 attempts. The Eagles are currently on a three-game skid against the Golden Flashes.

Then, on Saturday, Feb. 14, they return to the George Gervin GameAbove Center to host Western Michigan University. While the Broncos have won the last two meetings, EMU holds a strong 36-25 historical home record against their in-state rivals.

Baseball and lacrosse: Home defense and road tests

Baseball travels to Arkansas for its season opener, starting with a three-game series against the University of Arkansas at Little Rock starting Friday, Feb. 13. This marks a rare meeting between the programs; they haven't faced off since 2010, and the all-time series is currently deadlocked at 1-1.

In women's lacrosse, the Eagles host a pair of home games at the Indoor Practice Facility. Wednesday, Feb. 11 features a match against Lindenwood University, followed by a Saturday morning battle against Xavier University. The Eagles are seeking their first-ever win against Xavier, having lost both previous encounters by just a single goal, including a 13-12 overtime heartbreaker in 2024.

Gymnastics: Pursuing perfection

The women's gymnastics team heads to Muncie, Indiana, on Sunday, Feb. 15, to face Ball State. The Eagles currently hold a two-meet winning streak against the Cardinals and maintain a winning all-time series lead of 16-12-1.

Track and field and women's tennis: Meets and road tests

Track and field athletes will split their forces between the Grand Valley State University Big Meet in Allendale, Michigan and the two-day Heartland Invitational in Indianapolis starting Feb. 13.

Meanwhile, women's tennis will face a double-city road trip, playing DePaul University in Chicago on Friday, Feb. 13, and Butler University in Indianapolis on Saturday, Feb. 14. EMU leads the series against Butler 3-2, though they are looking to reverse a two-match losing streak against them.

Women's swimming and diving: U-M battle ahead

Women's swimming and diving travels to Ann Arbor for the Michigan 1st Chance Meet Feb. 14-15. The Eagles will be fighting an uphill battle, as the program is 0-17 all-time against the University of Michigan.

Read the full article on easternecho.com.

Excellence in motion: New hires and national honors elevate EMU coaching ranks

Ruby Brannon
Sports Editor

Several leadership additions and recent honors point to continued development of Eastern Michigan University's athletics program. Two new assistant coaches for the EMU football program, additions to the EMU baseball staff and a national leadership honor awarded to women's basketball coach Shareese Ulis mark recent updates to university athletics.

Winning pedigree, new-wave talent: EMU football adds Erik Campbell and Zac Sias

On Feb. 2, Eastern Michigan University head football coach Chris Creighton announced the hiring of two new assistant coaches.

With over 37 years of coaching experience, 18 seasons spent in the Big Ten Conference, and two seasons in the Canadian Football League, Erik Campbell will infuse the EMU sidelines with years of expertise.

Campbell is no stranger to the biggest stage. During his twelve-year tenure at the University of Michigan from 1995 to 2007, he was a key architect of the 1997 national championship and set an NCAA record by coaching eight consecutive seasons with an 1,000-yard receiver.

Campbell's expertise is evident in the stars he has produced. The list includes Heisman Trophy winner Charles Woodson and NFL achievers Braylon Edwards, Amani Toomer, and Mario Manningham. Campbell himself was also a standout defensive back, competing in four bowl games, including the Rose Bowl and Fiesta Bowl.

Off the football field, Campbell is known for his significant humanitarian and community leadership. The Gary, Indiana chapter of the NAACP granted Campbell the Benjamin Hooks Award in 2010, recognizing his commitment to promoting equal opportunity. Campbell's dedication to humanitarian

works is further demonstrated in his relationship with the cancer center at U-M, where he organized initiatives that have raised over \$1 million.

While Campbell brings veteran wisdom, the addition of Zac Sias brings the energy of a rising coach who has successfully coached at multiple levels of the collegiate game. Sias last coached at the University of Kansas, where he spent two seasons as the assistant linebackers coach in 2024.

"Coach Sias came highly recommended and absolutely crushed his interview," Creighton said in a statement. "He is a great fit for our program on and off the field."

Sias, a dedicated scholar who also holds a master's degree in teaching from Mississippi Valley State University, was awarded Academic All-Southwestern Athletic Conference recognition in both his junior and senior years. Before Ypsilanti, Sias spent time at Arkansas State University, served a tenure at Mississippi Delta Community College, and in 2023 interned at the NFL Players Association Collegiate Bowl.

EMU baseball gains pro expertise: Seth Caddell and Tyler Kotila

Eastern Michigan baseball enters its 2026 season with the hiring of Seth Caddell as the new assistant coach and recruiting coordinator. Caddell brings extensive experience from the professional ranks, having played at the Triple-A and Double-A levels. He recently transitioned from a successful playing career to a prosperous coaching career within the Cleveland Guardians organization.

"[Caddell] has a unique ability to connect with people," interim head baseball coach Tyler Beerman said in a statement. "He's played and coached at the professional level, comes from winning programs, and knows how to communicate with players in a way that brings out their best."

Caddell's most recent tenure was served in Akron, Ohio, with the Double-A RubberDucks. There, Caddell focused on catchers as a development coach and was instrumental in the progression of several high-profile players. Under his guidance, four catchers earned Major League spring invites, including Cooper Ingle, Kody Huff, Cameron Bastard and Jacob Cozart. Caddell also aided in pitch and base running, the creation of scouting reports and personalized training plans.

"I am passionate about passing on the lessons, discipline, and values the game has given me to help shape the next generation on and off the field," Caddell said in a statement.

Beerman also hired Tyler Kotila as the team's director of recruiting and camp coordinator. Kotila brings with him an impressive resume in regard to modern baseball scouting. His addition to the staff is a move designed to elevate the Eagles' pipeline and the program's national profile. He joins the Eagles after a prolific stint as a national scouting coordinator for Perfect Game USA from 2022-26. During his tenure there, Kotila was at the forefront of the industry, leading the 2024 draft cycle and meticulously ranking prospects.

His ability to identify upcoming top talent was recognised by the Chicago White Sox, for whom he worked as an associate scout.

"What really stands out about Tyler is his relentless work ethic and his ability to connect with people," Beerman stated.

While Kotila was hired for his most obvious asset, his scouting eye, he also brings a background in organizational leadership. Under his leadership at Miami University in Ohio, he introduced a data-driven approach that allowed the team to refine their practices, game play and scouting so that they worked with complete and utter precision. It is this same analytical rigor that Kotila is expected to bring

into Ypsilanti baseball while filling his new role.

Established excellence: Shareese Ulis and the WBCA Next Generation Institute

While the department welcomes new coaching talent to the football and baseball programs, it also continues to celebrate the professional ascent of leaders like assistant women's basketball coach Shareese Ulis. Having served the Eagles for the past two seasons, Ulis was recently selected for the 2026 Women's Basketball Coaches Association Next Generation Institute. This prestigious program is specifically designed to prepare high-level assistant coaches for the CEO attributes required to lead their own programs in the modern era of collegiate athletics, said the WBCA Next Generation website.

Nominated by her peers and selected by the WBCA, Ulis represents the high standard of coaching already present in Ypsilanti.

"Shareese [Ulis] has been a sponge from day one and I know she will take full advantage of this opportunity to learn and continue to grow into the coach and professional she is striving to become," Women's Basketball Head Coach Sahar Nusseibeh said to Eastern Athletics. "We are thrilled for her and excited for this to assist in her career advancement."

Ulis will travel to the WBCA Convention in Phoenix this April, where she will engage with curriculum focused on program leadership and problem-solving in the ever-shifting landscape of higher education.

Editor's note: Sports Editor Ruby Brannon is a player on the Eastern Michigan University Women's Basketball team.

Art as advocacy through art and music promotes



Art piece by Willow Churchill-Torres on display at Art as Resistance. Gray Connor / The Eastern Echo

Gray Connor
Managing Editor - Operations

Visual art, musical performances and spoken word readings filled

the Riverside Arts Center North Gallery Jan. 31, 2026, as students and community members protested various current political conflicts at the community event Art as Resistance.

Art as Resistance was hosted

by Michigan Student Action, a community-based organization that works to assemble students from Eastern Michigan University and the University of Michigan for political advocacy events and efforts in the greater Washtenaw County area. Some of the current events the event protested included Immigration and Customs Enforcement activity in Washtenaw County, anti-LGBTQ+ legislation and the ongoing war in Gaza, which has killed more than 70,000 Palestinians since Oct. 7, 2023.

MSA offers students the chance to organize events about which they feel passionate.

"One thing that I really believe in is giving my students autonomy over what they want to do," said Christian Alvarado, who works as MSA Washtenaw's lead organizer. "This event is about bringing out resistance in everyday people through art, whether it be painting, poems [or] music. We have a mixture of different media going on that we really want to celebrate, and it's a hard time right now. People are feeling it, and people are very scared, so we want to be able to let people let out their feelings and also prepare them for what this year is going to be."

Art as Resistance

At the event, MSA Washtenaw also gave out whistle kits, made for individuals to warn others about local ICE presence. The group also collected signatures to get "Invest in MI Kids" on the ballot, which if passed, would add a 5% tax on millionaires. The money raised would be put towards K-12 education in the state of Michigan.

Daniela Walbridge, a senior studying vocal education at EMU, organized the event after being inspired by advocacy work being done in Minneapolis, where protesters have gathered in mass after two U.S. citizens were killed by ICE agents.

"For me, art and music are very conducive to political messaging, and also just connecting with others around stories that you may not personally relate to," Walbridge said. "It's a really good way to show emotion and to connect with others over those emotions."

The event included a variety of performances, including Rachel Mah and her cover of "Open Your Eyes" by Ashi Day, and a poetry selection by Zach Tabor.

The night concluded with Hannah Berberoglu and Thee Birdsongs performing a cover of "Gethsemane" from Jesus Christ Superstar, a musical that explores the biblical death and

resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Walbridge encourages other students who may want to get more involved to try coming to a MSA Washtenaw meeting.

"If you're someone who's feeling kind of lost right now, or feeling down, it really is nice to be with other people," said Walbridge. "If you want to get involved in a small way, if you want to get involved in a bigger way, that's amazing. [Either way,] come to our events because it's a good way to meet people who think in similar ways to you, and it's a good way to find some relief in the circumstances that we're living in."

About Michigan Student Action

MSA Washtenaw's next event chapter meeting will be held Thursday, Feb. 19, 2026, at 6 p.m. For those who wish to attend an MSA Washtenaw meeting, fill out the registration form in the group's Instagram bio to receive the meeting's location information. Attendees do not have to be students.

For more information on Michigan Student Action and its upcoming events and meeting dates in the Ypsilanti area, visit the group's Instagram at @msa-washtenaw.

Ziggy's to host Valentine's Day show for the broken hearted

Gray Connor
Managing Editor - Operations

Valentine's Day is a touchy subject for many. Whether a person has been recently dumped, is allergic to the cute heart-shaped chocolates or simply hates the color pink, there are a variety of reasons that an individual may hold some animosity towards the holiday.

On Feb. 13, Ziggy's is hosting a show where attendees can harness all that built up rage, and pour it out on the dance floor.

Said on Ziggy's Instagram post about the event, those in the market for a broken heart, or just harboring a hate for love, are encouraged to commiserate the holiday with the four bands that will be performing.

The Cult of SpaceSkull, one of the groups playing at Ziggy's Valentine's Day show, is Detroit's self-proclaimed

blood cult, adorning red masks and robes when on stage.

SpaceSkull's most recent release, "The SpaceSkull Christmas Special III, The Revenge of Satan Claus," came out in 2026 and features six songs across the EP.

"If you show up to Ziggy's on Feb. 13, don't expect music in the legal sense. For the price of a mediocre sandwich, you can watch us ruin a perfectly good Friday night," The Cult of SpaceSkull said in a written statement to *The Eastern Echo*. "It's gonna be a cloud of chaos, and we'll probably forget the words to our own songs. It's gonna be great."

ZZvava, SpaceSkull and Sonic Smut have performed Valentine's Day themed shows together as a trio across multiple shows. ZZvava said the shared performances are always a great time.

"We're a group of friends," said

ZZvava in a statement to *The Echo* when describing the band. ZZvava specializes in rock, punk and indie styles of music.

Sonic Smut is another group playing at the event. The band's most recent release, "Eye Bleach," released in 2025, features 10 songs. Alongside the new album, Sonic Smut also released a music video for the song "Death by Nostalgia," a single also featured on the album.

Joining the three bands is the Detroit Party Marching Band, a group of instrument wielding Detroit-based musicians.

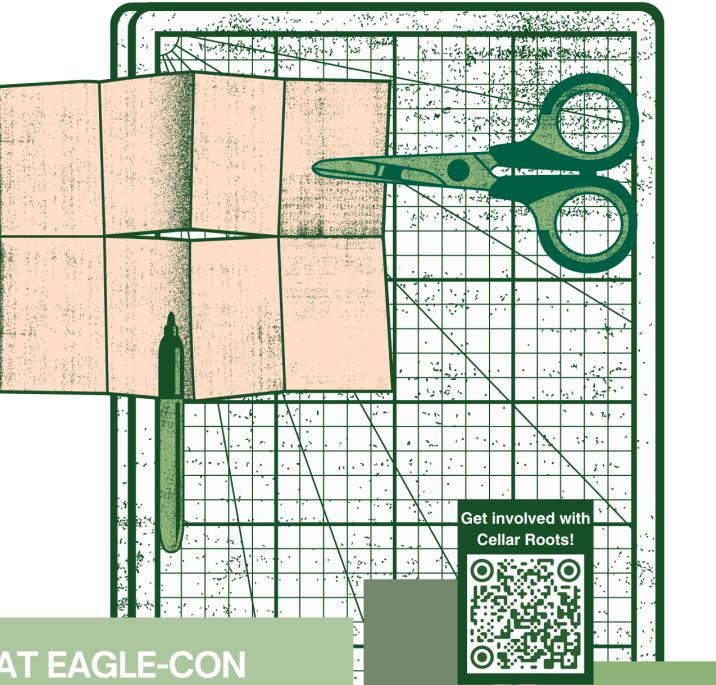
Doors for Ziggy's anti-love show open at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$10 each. All attendees must be 21 or over to enter.

For more information on Ziggy's upcoming events, visit its Instagram page, @ziggysypsi. Ziggy's is at 206 W. Michigan Ave., Ypsilanti.



Ziggy's hosts an anti-Valentine's Day themed show, featuring performances by SpaceSkull, Sonic Smut, ZZvava and Detroit Party Marching Band on Feb. 13. Image courtesy of Ziggy's

ZINE MAKING WITH CELLAR ROOTS & THE EASTERN ECHO



AT EAGLE-CON FEB. 17, 2026 7 P.M. - 10 P.M.

Student Center - Ballroom



Riverside Arts Center's Ypsi Fine Arts Club hosts Black Artist Exhibition

Gray Connor
Managing Editor - Operations

Riverside Arts Center's Ypsi Fine Arts Club is hosting its fourth annual "Black Artist Exhibition" in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Ronnie Peterson and Gloria Peterson.

The exhibition is in collaboration with the African American Cultural and Historical Museum of Washtenaw County. The museum works to preserve and showcase cultural and historical materials surrounding the life and work of African American residents in Washtenaw County. Founded in 1993, the African American Cultural and Historical Museum of Washtenaw County is free of charge to visitors.

The Black Artist Exhibition is also in collaboration with the Palm Leaf Club. Founded in 1904 by African American women, the non-profit started in the Brown Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church, before

growing out of the space.

This year's Black Artist Exhibition theme is Unity, however, there is no requirement for each piece to mirror the theme exactly.

All of the art pieces in the exhibit are original. The pieces vary from painting, drawing, printmaking, photography, fiber, sculpture, installation and mixed media.

The Black Artist Exhibition opened its doors to attendees Jan. 16. The exhibition will remain open to visitors until Feb. 28. The gallery itself is located at the Riverside Arts Center in the North Gallery, found at 76 N. Huron St., Ypsilanti.

After the Black Artist Exhibition, the Riverside Arts Center will be hosting its third annual YFAC exhibition in March. The deadline for artists to apply is Feb. 18, 2026. To be eligible for submission, artists must already be registered as members of the YFAC as well as having attended one meeting.

Membership is free and permanent after members have attended their first meeting.

To submit to the YFAC exhibition, and to see more information on eligibility, visit the application page.

Founded in May of 2023, the YFAC meets every first and third Wednesday of each month. All work must be original to be submitted, however, medium may vary.

For the African American Cultural and Historical Museum of Washtenaw County's hours of operation, visit its website. To schedule a tour at the museum, fill out the Google form provided on its website. The museum offers tailored tours depending on attendees' preferred topics.

To see Palm Leaf Club's upcoming events, visit its Facebook page.

For more information on the exhibit, visit the galleries' page on the Artwork Archive website.



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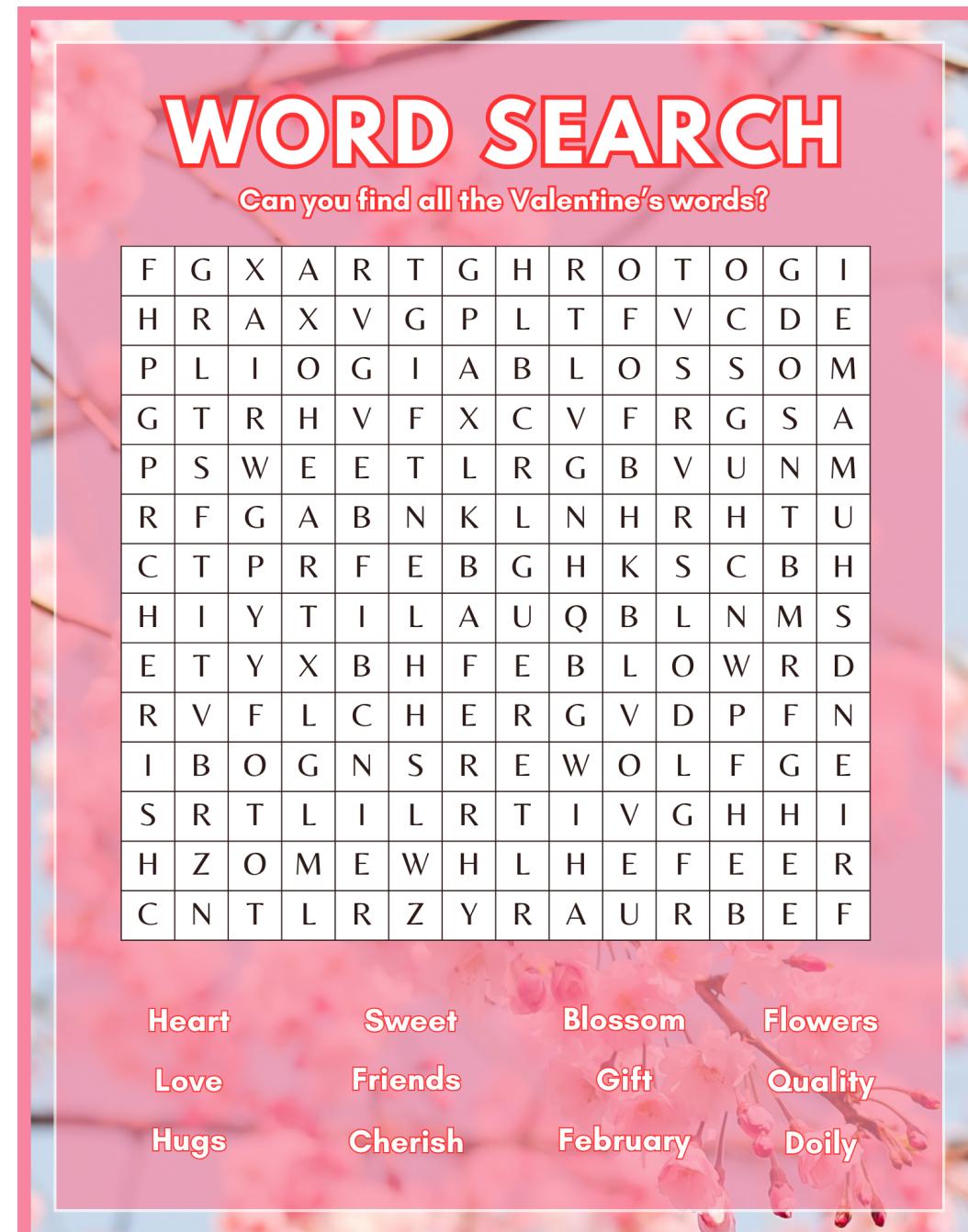


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Eastern Michigan University campus, last week at a glance



University of Michigan Dearborn's Students for Justice in Palestine simulate the Israel border at Tour Around Palestine at the Eastern Michigan University Student Center on Feb. 6. Lee Hammock / The Eastern Echo



Members of Wayne State's Students for Justice in Palestine tell an attendee about items of cultural significance in Palestine at Tour Around Palestine at the Eastern Michigan University Student Center on Feb. 6. Lee Hammock / The Eastern Echo



Students from University of Michigan Ann Arbor's Palestinian Heritage Club exhibit poetry from Palestinians at Tour Around Palestine at the Eastern Michigan University Student Center on Feb. 6. Lee Hammock / The Eastern Echo



A display of free resources provides students with important materials offered by the Eastern Michigan University Department of Public Safety at the Campus Parking Listening Session in Downing Hall on Feb. 4. Bea Dingman / The Eastern Echo



Community Engagement Officer Elliott (left) and Chief Matthew Lige inform students of new changes to parking at the Feb. 4 Campus Parking Listening Session in Downing Hall. Bea Dingman / The Eastern Echo



Eastern Michigan University women's basketball player, No. 23 Peyton Hill, dribbles the ball around Arkansas State players in the game Feb. 7 at the George Gervin GameAbove Center. Bradan Copeland / The Eastern Echo



Eastern Michigan University women's basketball player, No. 3 Brooklyn Thrash, shoots a three-point shot during the game against Arkansas State on Feb. 7, at the George Gervin GameAbove Center. Bradan Copeland / The Eastern Echo