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Quick Hits

Halloween: A night that brings neighbors together

By C. V. Samuel
Special to The Review

Every October, as the leaves change color and the evenings grow cooler, American neighborhoods feel a special kind of excitement.

Pumpkins appear on porches, children dress in colorful costumes, and families prepare bowls of candy.

As evening arrives, doorbells begin to ring, and cheerful young voices call out, “Trick or treat!”

For children, Halloween is a night of costumes, candy, laughter, and imagination. But for many families and communities, it has become more than that: a simple occasion that brings neighbors together.

For me, Halloween is not really about ghosts, witches, or frightening decorations. What I appreciate most is the spirit of community behind the celebration.

Growing up in India, I never heard the words “Halloween” or “Trick or treat.” After coming to America in 1971, this was one of the many new traditions I came to know and appreciate.

Even today, I enjoy watching children walk along the sidewalks with their parents, carrying their little bags and eagerly approaching each home. I enjoy seeing neighbors open their doors with smiles and kindness, and love hearing the laughter and innocent excitement of children filling the streets.

In our busy lives, we sometimes know very little about the people who live only a few houses away. Yet, on Halloween evening, doors open.

Neighbors greet one another. Parents walk together with their children. A piece of candy, a smile, or a simple “Happy Halloween!” creates a small moment of human connection.

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— HAMTRAMCK’S NEWSPAPER OF RECORD —

GET OUT AND VOTE

NOV 3

At Zussman Park, the Halloween spirit brought out the goblins

By Charles Sercombe
Halloween came a little early for youngsters this week.

On Wednesday, the police and recreation departments hosted a “Trunk or Treat” in front of city hall.

It’s a good excuse for kids to dress up in the spirit of the season. And yes, there were little spooks and goblins-a-plenty. In fact, a line formed about half-way around the park to wait their turns to go

from one vehicle to another to gather up the free goodies.

Within about 30 minutes, the trick-or-treaters had already made a good dent in the treat supplies.

It also helped that this fall’s balmy and sunny weather smiled on the day.

Hey, enjoy it while we can, eh?

Here are some photos of the event:



The moment many are waiting for: Election day

By Charles Sercombe

After a long election season, it’s time now for voters to head to the polls next Tuesday, Nov. 3.

A number of political observers are saying that this election could determine which direction this country will go for decades to come.

In other words, will this be the end of the MAGA, pro-Trump era, or will Trump supporters prevail?

Hamtramck voters will become a part of this likely historical election in just a few days.

For those registered to receive an absentee ballot, you should have gotten yours by now, since they went out on Sept. 29. At this point, it is advised that you drop off your absentee ballot in person, at city hall or in the city hall drop box, because it’s unlikely the post office will deliver your ballot on time to be included in the election tally.

Early in-person voting at city hall continues through Nov. 1, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. every day through Sunday.

If you are not registered to vote yet, and qualify to do so, you can sign up on election day and still cast a ballot then, too.

This election has already stirred controversy, with the conflicting messages from President Trump’s administration on whether armed federal agents will be monitoring voting precincts.

Federal law prohibits armed federal agents from entering polling locations, but the Trump administration has regularly been testing the various boundaries of federal law for the past two years.

ICE authorities say their agents won’t be at polling locations unless they are actively pursuing a suspect. But there are now various media outlets reporting that ICE will, indeed, be at polling locations throughout the country.

For many in Hamtramck, which has a large immigrant population, the presence of ICE agents could be intimidating, and scare off some from showing up to vote.

None of Hamtramck’s elected officials, who are all Muslim and also immigrants, have spoken out about this.

Also, and once again,

Continued on page 2



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**Sunday, November 1st
Mass 9:00 am
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Nov 2 – Commemoration of All Souls
Holy Mass 9 am. Remembrance
Service - Wypominki 7 pm

Nov 7 – Drive-thru Polish Dinner 3:30
– 5:30 pm. Menu: Stuffed Cabbage,
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The moment many are waiting for: Election day

Continued from front page

federal election monitors are being sent to Hamtramck, the Trump administration has announced. But federal monitors at Hamtramck elections are nothing new. They were here for the August primary, and they have been here on a number of previous elections.

City Clerk Sami Elhady says he has not received any instructions from county or state elections officials about possible federal interference.

Police Chief Hussein Farhat he does not expect federal interference, nor has he been contacted over the matter.

“As of today, the Hamtramck Police Department has not received any information indicating that federal authorities plan to deploy armed law enforcement officers or agents to polling locations in Hamtramck,” Farhat said.

“The department remains committed to protecting public safety, respecting the rights of voters, and ensuring that elections are conducted in accordance with applicable law. We will continue to work with the appropriate authorities as necessary to support a safe and orderly election.”

In Hamtramck, also included on the ballot are three candidates seeking a seat on the Hamtramck Public School Board of Education. They are all guaranteed to win since there are three seats up for grabs, and they are

the only three candidates.

Also, Hamtramck 31st District Court Judge Alexis Krot is running unopposed for another six-year term.

As for what President Trump will do if Democrats win a majority in Congress, as a number of political pundits and analysts predict, it has been reported that he will only accept the election results if he deems the election was “honest.”

Some political observers have raised alarms that it is likely Trump, a Republican, will intervene in the election results if Democrats take control of Congress and possib-

ly call for the nullification of the election results, or even invoke martial law.

Trump’s Department of Justice has already filed a lawsuit to block election results if the Alaska Democratic candidate running for Congress is elected.

The DOJ is claiming that, if the Democratic candidate wins, it’s because two Independent and Republican candidates on the ballot share the same last name, which the DOJ says will confuse Alaskan voters.

It’s been pointed out that the DOJ’s claim is flawed, since the Republican candidate is clearly marked on the ballot as

being the incumbent and a Republican.

But it underscores the concerns of many that the Trump administration will make a number of questionable accusations if the Democrats take control of congress.

Michigan’s election officials say they will challenge any attempt to overturn election results by the Trump administration.

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, who is being termed out at the end of this year, has said that “Michigan elections are safe and secure – any suggestion otherwise is designed to undermine our voters’ basic rights.”

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November 11, 2-5pm

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FREE PUBLIC TOUR

OF THE HAMTRAMCK HISTORICAL MUSEUM

The Hamtramck Historical Museum is now offering free public tours of the museum the last Saturday of EVERY month. No need to preregister.

Saturday, October 31, 2026

1:00pm to 2:00 p.m.





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hamtramckhistory.com

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Public Library**

2360 Caniff Ave

Events

Fri, Oct 30: **Halloween Treat Giveaway**

Wed, Nov 04: **PBS Kids Weather Hunters** 4pm
Get hands-on with weather science during this children’s program!

Thurs, Nov 05: **Nauseous** 6pm
Sit in on a set by rising star rapper Nauseous!

Also: **Healthcare Q&A** 6pm

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Review: Opinion Page

In Our Opinion

An election year that when every vote counts

As many have noted, next Tuesday's election, on Nov. 3, could have a profound impact on both our state and our entire national political environment.

It is thought that, in congress, there could be a seismic sea change in both bodies (Senate and House), with control being handed over to Democrats.

In Michigan, voters will be electing a new governor, secretary of state and attorney general.

Locally, here in Hamtramck, there are three seats on the school board open, with three candidates seeking to fill them. That obviously me-

ans all three candidates are shoo-ins.

Also heading to an easy victory is Hamtramck 31st District Court Judge Alexis Krot, who is running unopposed.

Uncontested races aside, politics on all levels have become increasingly divided.

Add in Hamtramck's own political intrigue involving allegations of ballot harvesting, and candidates and elective officials who may or may not actually live in the city, and you've got enough turmoil to turn off any would-be voter.

One can't help wondering: Why bother? Isn't it all just rigged and corrupt

anyway?

Our voting system may not be the most fool-proof method of running a democracy, but it's the only one we have. And whether or not you choose to believe it, every vote does count.

For proof of that, look no further than Hamtramck's own local elections, where winners and losers can be separated by a mere handful of votes.

The same is true for a number of presidential elections.

So, to be concise: YOUR VOTE COUNTS!

Be sure to vote this Tuesday, if you have not already done so.

Police department holds an awards ceremony for officers and others

By Charles Sercombe

Hamtramck's police department had a busy week recently.

Last Friday, the department hosted its first "Awards Ceremony," in which officers, reserves and civilian staffmembers were honored for "their dedication and commitment to duty," according to a press release.

The evening celebration also noted the "commendable police work and accomplishments from previous years, acknowledging those who go above and beyond normal expectations."

The department added: "The ceremony celebrated officers who have demonstrated exceptional performance in the line of duty. It expressed appreciation for hard work, encouraged continued commitment, helped residents see the positive contributions of the police, and strengthened public trust.

"By establishing a lasting tradition of recognition, the event will inspire future officers to strive for excellence. The ceremony also honored the families of officers, whose sacrifices support the department and should not go unrecognized."

During the ceremony, the department awarded fellow members for their "meritorious police work, years of service ribbons, special event ribbons, a departmental commendation, a life-saving award, two community service awards, and Chief's awards.

"Individual honors were also presented for Dispatcher of the Year, Civilian of the Year, Reserve of the Year, Officer of the Year, Detective of the Year, Special Assignment of the Year, and Supervisor of the Year."

The ceremony was part of a busy week for the department, which included busting a drug trafficking ring, an effort involving multiple search warrants in Detroit and Troy.

The department joined forces with the County of Macomb Enforcement Team (COMET) in a six-month investigation. The investigation resulted in multiple arrests, and the seizure of a substantial amount of controlled substances.

Included in the seizure were:

- 2,047 grams of fentanyl
- 513 grams of cocaine/crack cocaine
- 46 grams of scheduled prescription pills
- More than \$4,000 in currency, which is subject to forfeiture

"The Hamtramck Police Department remains committed to working with regional partners to disrupt drug trafficking operations that affect communities throughout Metro Detroit," the department said, in a press release.

Last week also included an investigation into an adult, riding a bicycle, who was struck by a vehicle last Friday at the intersection of Jos. Campau and Belmont.

That incident remains under investigation.

Odds & Ends

Mayoral update ... At the time The Review went to press on Thursday, there was no ruling released from the judge overseeing the residency issue involving mayoral hopeful Muthith Mahmood.

The judge's ruling is expected at any moment.

In the meantime, former mayor Adam Alharbi is still presenting himself as mayor, and even chaired the city council meeting on Tuesday, despite a judge saying that he is NOT the mayor.

Fireworks ... Ever since the state legalized the use of high-powered and aerial fireworks, albeit only during certain holidays, residents here have complained about fireworks going off year-round on any day or at all sorts of hours.

There is an increasing call for the state to bring back the ban.

Chances are slim that will ever happen, because you know what happens when a genie gets let out to the bottle, so to speak.

Hamtramck, you are not alone in being fed up over fireworks.

Recently, the Netherlands, that country where Amsterdam is located, decided to ban the use of fireworks over the same concerns and complaints Hamtramckans have.

So, maybe down the road a ban could return here.

All of this reminds us how last year's Fourth of July celebration got waaaay out of hand, with young men and teens going wild with fireworks in the parking lot of the strip mall located at Jos. Campau and Holbrook.

The city cannot afford to allow this out-of-control fireworks frenzy to happen again. So far, though, we've heard of no strategy for how to prevent another outbreak.

Black diamond stars recognized ... The Hamtramck Historical Museum will once again be the place to find out all you could want to know about the subject of black baseball in and around this town through its prominent decades of the 1920s, 30s, 40s and 50s.

Local baseball historian Gary Gillette, who founded the Friends of Historic Hamtramck Stadium and serves as its board chair, will present a lively discussion titled "Black Baseball in Detroit & Hamtramck, 1919-1959" on Saturday, Nov. 7 at 1 p.m. at the Historical Museum, 9525 Jos. Campau between Norwalk and Poland.

There is no charge for this program, so slide on into your new home for a piece of a Saturday afternoon, and catch this fall classic.

Help for those who help others ... A multi-faith and secular combined effort is setting out to make helping others easier for those who do it.

AARP (The American Association of Retired Persons) is partnering with two local Baptist churches (Corinthian Baptist and Russell Street Missionary Baptist) to provide resources, services and support to those who support others in turn.

The one-day event is being held at Corinthian Baptist, located at 1725 Caniff St., on Saturday, Nov. 14, from 10 a.m. until noon.

There will be experts in the field of caregiving on hand, and programs as well, to help teach about the resources available to assist with what can be challenging situations, each one different and unique.

They ask that you RSVP if you are planning to attend the event, either to aarpmi.org/nov14caregivers or to a scannable QR code from their ubiquitous flyers.

AARP isn't done there, though – they're giving away several pairs of tickets to the perennial Lions favorite home game on Thanksgiving at around noon. The game, this year, falls on Thursday, Nov. 26.

Enter separately for this contest at aarpmi.org/thxgivingtix, and best of luck to all who do.

Dig This!... This Halloween, try scaring up some history.

Come to observe some Wayne State University archaeologists this Saturday, Halloween day, Oct. 31 from 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Continued on page 5

Notice of Public Hearing – City of Hamtramck

Zoning Board of Appeals

NOTICE is hereby given that the City of Hamtramck Zoning Board of Appeals will meet in the 2nd Floor Council Chambers of Hamtramck City Hall (3401 Evaline Street, Hamtramck, MI 48212) on Tuesday, November 17th, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. for the purpose of holding a public hearing and considering the request pertaining to the following property:

- 9045 Vincent, Hamtramck, MI 48212, parcel number 41-005-99-0002-000

Applicant Amana Holdings is requesting a use variance of the property to operate a junk/scrap yard, subject to subject to \$155.185 and \$155.187 of the Hamtramck Code of Ordinances. Current property is zoned within the Industrial District per \$155.080.

Written comments may be submitted to the Assistant Community & Economic Development Manager via email at mmiszczyzak@hamtramck. Written comments will be accepted until 12:00 p.m. on November 17, 2026. The City of Hamtramck will provide necessary and reasonable auxiliary aids, and services for individuals with disabilities at the public hearing upon advance notice by writing or by calling the Clerk's Office at 313-800-5233 x821. Please contact the Clerk's office at least 10 days in advance.

The Hamtramck Review

Published every Friday

3020 Caniff, Hamtramck, MI 48212 • 313-874-2100
www.hamtramckreview.com • email news@thehamtramckreview.com

Publisher Lonnie Scott, Lonnie@BuriedLedeMedia.com, 734-489-1773
Editor-in-Chief - Sarah Leach, Sarah@BuriedLedeMedia.com

Editor: Charles Sercombe Office Manager: Jean Ingenthron
Sales Manager: Dave Sweet Copy Editor: Alan Madlane
Owned by: Michigan Independent Media Group Operated by: Buried Lede Media

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11/6

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Time: 10AM-1PM

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4. Pope Park - 10037 Joseph Campau Ave.

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CRIME LOG

By Charles Sercombe
This week's Crime Log covers Oct. 15-20.

Thursday, Oct. 15
• A sexual assault was reported in the 3400 block of Evaline.
• A hit-and-run accident was reported in the 2600 block of Florian.
• An assault was reported at Carpenter and Charest.
• A domestic assault was reported in the 3400 block of Evaline.
• A fight was reported in the 12000 block of Oklahoma.
• A disorderly person was reported at Jos. Campau and Dan.

Friday, Oct. 16
• Trespassing was reported in the 11400 block of Charest.
• Officers, responding to a call about an incident of fraud taking place at a business in the 11300 block of Conant, arrested a suspect.
• A disturbance was reported in the 8800 block of Jos. Campau.

Saturday, Oct. 17
• A suspect was arrested for fleeing officers during a vehicle chase.
• Disorderly persons were reported in the area of St. Aubin and Casmere.
• A hit-and-run accident was reported in the area of Jos. Campau and Holbrook.
• A complaint was made about an animal in the 2300 block of Goodson.

Sunday, Oct. 18
• A fight was reported in the 12000 block of Dyar.
• A vehicle was reported stolen in the 3300 block of Comstock.
• A complaint was made about fireworks in the 3200 block of Lehman.
• An assault was reported in the 12000 block of Dyar.

Monday, Oct. 19
• At about 3:30 a.m., a suspicious vehicle was reported in the 3200 block of Yemans
• At almost 4 a.m., a complaint was made about noise in the 3200 block of Yemans.
• A suspicious incident was reported on Sobieski.
• A suspect was arrested on Belmont for domestic assault.
• A theft was reported in the 2300 block of Carpenter.
• A hit-and-run accident was reported at Jos. Campau and Norwalk.

Tuesday, Oct. 20
• At almost midnight, a complaint was made about noise in the 2900 block of Caniff.
• Trespassing was reported on Caniff.
• A theft was reported on Conant.
• An incident of fraud was reported in the 12100 block of Conant.
• A theft was reported in the 11500 block of St. Aubin.
• Two male suspects were ticketed for being on railroad property in the area of Jos. Campau and Dan.

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Obituaries

LIVI
Frederick Livi, 82, died October 23, 2026.
Father of the late Kelly and dear brother of Carolyn (Joseph) Troszak, Daniel (Carol), and David. Fred is also survived by many nieces and nephews.
Visitation is Thursday, November 5, 2026, from 1 – 9 p.m. prayers TBD, at Jurkiewicz & Wilk Funeral Home, 2396 Caniff, Hamtramck MI 48212. Funeral Mass is Friday, November 6, 2026, lying in state at 10:30 a.m. with Mass starting at 11 a.m. at Our Lady Queen of Apostles Catholic Church, 3851 Prescott, Hamtramck MI 48212. Inurnment TBD, Mount Olivet Cemetery, 17100 Van Dyke, Detroit, MI 48234.

PUZDRAKIEWICZ
Tony Puzdrakiewicz, 80, died October 24, 2026.
Dear father of Susan Kobeski and grandfather of Raymond. Son of the late Marion and Irene, brother of Jane (Richard) Mine, Helen (Ed) Soldenski, and the late Richard (Theresa), Walter (Helen), and Joan. Tony is also survived by many nieces & nephews, great nieces and nephews, and is loved by many friends.
Private Services will be held by the family.

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GET OUT AND VOTE

NOV 3

Democrats rally Hamtramck supporters to ‘Vote like it matters’

By Charles Sercombe
Hamtramck and area Democratic Party supporters are fired up about Tuesday's election.

Last Sunday, roughly 200 or more Democrats gathered at the Gates of Columbus Hall on Conant for a rally, sponsored by the Michigan Bangladeshi American Democratic Caucus (MI-BADC).

The night featured appearances by a slew of Democratic candidates, including Lieutenant Governor Garlin Gilchrist, who is seeking to become the next secretary of state; Supreme Court Justice Noah Hood; Congress member Rashida Tlaib; and others running for various offices in the state.

Missing were the two top candidates: Jocelyn Benson, who is running for governor, and Abdul El-Sayed, who is in a close race with Republican candidate Mike Rogers to be the next U.S. Senator from Michigan.

They were busy campaigning elsewhere, but El-Sayed did hold a short Zoom meeting with the crowd, where he encouraged their support in his trademark engaging style.

The video hook-up for Benson's remarks failed due to a technical glitch.

Other notable no-shows were any Hamtramck elected officials, except for former city councilmember Muhith Mahmood – who may or may not turn out to be Hamtramck's mayor, depending on how a court rules on whether he is truly a resident of the city.

But that's another matter, for another time. Still, the evening's atmosphere



U.S. Rep. Rashida Tlaib poses with a supporter at last Sunday's Democratic rally held at Gates of Columbus Hall.

was electric.

"We got all the power we need in this room," said Donovan McKinney, who is seeking to be elected as congressional representative for the 13th district, which includes Hamtramck.

"This (election) is about freedom versus fascism," he added.

Eli Savit, who is seeking to become the state's next attorney general, underscored a concern of many about what they fear President Trump will do on election day.

"We need to protect elections as a team," he said.

State Sen. Mallory McMorrow gave the shortest pep talk of the night, and got the gathering to chant "I've got your back" several times.

She also acknowledged the threat that Trump poses in this election, calling him, derisively, "That orange man in the White House."

(Mallory dropped out of

the race for the Democratic nomination for the state's U.S. senator job that El-Sayed is seeking.)

Lt. Governor Gilchrist noted that the gathering of many Bengali residents represented an "amazing big tent" for the Democratic Party. He, too, warned of what many are fearing will be the Trump administration's attempt at "hijacking" this election, including even a declaration of martial law.

"Vote like it matters," Gilchrist said. "Even Trump knows it matters."

Congressional Rep. Tlaib, who is a frequent target of Trump, underscored the fears of many, saying "Our country is in much more danger than before."

"Go vote," was her message. "Take care of the

community you live in."

And, she pointed out that Republicans are making the Muslim faith an issue with voters, and a reason to vote against El-Sayed. Most of those attending the rally were of the Muslim faith, as are a majority of those who live in Hamtramck.

"Shame on them for using our faith to scare people in our state," Tlaib said. "It is not the time to be invisible. Islamophobia does not belong in Michigan."

Strangely, a significant portion of Hamtramck's Muslim voting population supported Trump in the 2024 presidential election, despite his well-known attacks on Muslims and his calling those from the Mideast "terrorists."



Many of those same voters are now solidly supporting El-Sayed, who is in turn supportive of progressive social issues that some in the Muslim community are opposed to, such as LGBTQ rights.

"I stand with the LGBTQ+ community in their struggle for equal rights and dignity. I'll always fight for an America where all of us can live and thrive as we are," El-Sayed said, in a social media post.



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Odds & Ends

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at 2459 Jos. Campau, as they dig through the remains of the day.

Dubbed "Public Archaeology Day," this open-to-the-public event is an ongoing excavation on the former site of the Dodge UAW Local 3 union hall, as well as the Kraft Hotel, which dated back into the 1800s.

These projects typically involve the Hamtramck Historical Museum, who routinely partners with the WSU Archaeology Department on their city digs.

Watch as the students and supervising faculty unearth Hamtramck history, one trowel-full at a time.

Parking is free on Denton and Alice Sts.

And at least, it won't rot your teeth...

Veterans Day ... Yes, the days are quickly flying by, now that it's fall and we've headed into the holiday season.

Before all that, Veterans Day is coming up on Nov. 11, as usual, and the good folks at PLAV Post 6

will once again host a ceremony.

There aren't too many veterans remaining in the city, at least as far as we know, and the gathering for the yearly ceremony gets smaller and smaller as the years go by.

But, so far, it still continues here in Hamtramck, so stop by the post this Nov. 11 for their 11 a.m. salute to veterans and active service folks past, present and future.

The public is also welcome to stop by the post, located at Evaline and McDougall, for an open house, which runs from 2 to 5 p.m.

Stop by and say hello, and enjoy some coffee and dessert (or maybe a drink or two) if you are so inclined.

"The purpose of the open house is to talk to our neighbors, get acquainted with our neighbors and tell them about our post, who we are, what we do and have done, etc.," said Post Commander Mark Widzinski.



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A Healthy Dose of Politics



Lonnie Scott

My wife and I spent Saturday night at a sock hop. Well, sort of. We were in Deckerville for the McKenzie Health System Autumn Benefit, which this year was billed as “A Dance with Death: A 1950s Sock Hop Gone Sour.” There were poodle skirts, leather jackets, a murder mystery, and plenty of people who looked considerably more comfortable in 1950s attire than I did. It was a lot of fun. But underneath the costumes and murder mystery was something considerably more serious. McKenzie is building a new hospital in Sandusky. Think about that for a minute. At a time when rural hospitals around the country are closing, cutting services, or wondering how they will survive the next decade, a small community in Michigan's Thumb is building one. That matters. It matters if you have a heart attack. It matters if your kid gets hurt playing football. It matters if there's an accident on a country road or a farmer gets injured miles from the nearest city. And it matters even if you are fortunate enough to rarely see the inside of a hospital, because hospitals are also employers, economic anchors, and one of the things that make it possible for people to live, work, raise families, and grow old in rural communities. You can't spend decades talking about saving rural America and then shrug when the hospital disappears. On our drive to the benefit Saturday, I saw something that has stuck with me. Along the road was a barn with a weather-beaten flag hanging from it that said: “DON'T BLAME ME. I VOTED FOR TRUMP.” Almost immediately afterward, we passed a gas station. The big illuminated sign out front said: Unleaded. \$5.19 a gallon. I wondered if whoever hung that flag still felt the same. Presidents usually get far too much credit when gas prices are low and far too much blame when they're high. Oil is traded on a global market, and there are a lot of things that determine what we pay at the pump. But today's prices didn't just happen. Before the war with Iran

See PORCH next page

Trump’s Port Huron rally draws thousands, protesters and far-right agitator Jake Lang

BY LIEZA KLEMM
The Yale Expositor

PORT HURON — Thousands from across the state gathered at the riverfront town of Port Huron on Sunday, Oct. 25, to see President Donald J. Trump. The rally, less than 10 days before Election Day, also drew in a fair number of demonstrators and counter-demonstrators, including far-right agitator and Jan. 6 rioter Jake Lang. Attendees lined up as early as 9 a.m. to get into McMorran Place, the event center where Trump took the stage. Physical barriers cordoned off Huron Avenue, one of the event center’s cross streets, limiting attendees to the sidewalk on the street’s west side. Demonstrators gathered on the corners of Huron Avenue and Grand River Avenue, and lined the sidewalk on Huron Avenue parallel to the event center. Kathleen Grantom, of Yale, heard about the planned demonstration through Blue Water Indivisible, a grassroots organization formed to protect constitutional rights and protections for citizens in the Blue Water region. The group is not affiliated with a particular political party, according to its website. Grantom said the number of demonstrators was encouraging to see, but expressed disappointment at the number of Michiganders in line to enter McMorran Place. “We didn’t realize there were going to be [this] many people here,” she said, “but it’s still so sad to see how many people are here just to hear him talk, knowing that he’s going to say the same things that he says every time.” On the parallel road, Michigan Street, demonstrators held signs that read “Democracy Dies While Trump Lies” and “Go To Hell Trump” across from counter-demonstrators, namely Jake Lang. Lang is known to attend rallies and campaign events, either in support of or against the candidate, and stir up a crowd. He was most recently at a campaign stop for U.S. Senate candidate Abdul El-Sayed in Hart, Michigan. Lang has a history of pushing Islamophobic



Thousands from across the state gathered at the riverfront town of Port Huron on Sunday, Oct. 25, to see President Donald J. Trump. [Lieza Klemm/Expositor staff]

rhetoric, including traveling to Dearborn in August, home to the largest Arab American population in the nation, where he spoke about his grievances to the city council. During the Port Huron rally, Lang held up a red sign in bold white lettering reading “Stop Muslim Takeover of Democrat Party” and on the flip side “Deport Terrorist Abdul El-Sayed” from the bed of a pickup truck, surrounded by a dozen supporters. There were moments when it seemed the shouting between the two groups would turn violent. Members of Jake Lang supporters and anti-Trump demonstrators crossed the bustling street, often impeding traffic. Yale’s Grantom said Lang’s appearance is something she expected. “He’s got to find ways to make money,” she said. “So this is how he gets engagement and viewers.” Andrew, who declined to share his last name, stood on the side of Lang’s supporters. He said he was there to attend the rally, but decided to stay by Lang’s truck. “I’m here to support Donald Trump and Mike Rogers and, of course, against Abdul,” he said. Andrew is from Harper Woods in Metro Detroit. He echoed Lang’s Islamophobic

attitude, specifically concerning Dearborn and the percentage of those who identify as Muslim in positions of power. According to Andrew, the religious affiliation of the city’s mayor, Abdullah Hammoud, is “the problem.” On the sidewalk opposite Lang supporters, Nicole Robinson held up a “Trump is a c-nt” sign. A Lapeer County resident, Robinson traveled with her aunt to participate in the demonstration. Like Yale’s Grantom, the number of demonstrators gave Robinson hope for a potential blue wave with the upcoming midterm elections. “I think it’s a sign people want something different,” she said. The rally, with all of its security and precautions, took a toll on the surrounding businesses. An employee at Senior Tequila Mexican Restaurant, located on the street law enforcement cordoned off, said they found out about the rally from social media, long before the city made them aware. Owners ordered extra food, liquor and added extra staff to the schedule. Throughout the day, however, the staff only saw a fraction of the normal crowd. “People think we’re closed,” the employee said. Concerned about clashes between demonstrators and attendees, the restaurant moved

its outdoor furniture inside. “We moved all of them because we were worried, like, what if they get in a fight and throw a chair or something,” the employee told The Expositor. While business was slow before and during the rally, employees suspected it would pick up once the event wrapped up. With the majority of employees there being Hispanic, there were concerns about potential conflicts with rally attendees. “The owners said if something happens and it gets rowdy, we’ll just shut our doors,” the employee said. The rally saw few physical confrontations between demonstrators and counter-demonstrators. Attendees wearing “Make America Great Again” baseball caps got in the face of demonstrators holding “Abdul for U.S. Senate” signs without any physical assaults. Attendees were cut off from entering McMorran Place around 2 p.m. when it reached capacity. As the afternoon continued on, attendees gradually left the event center, and the number of supporters waiting in line dwindled. The rally wrapped up around 5:45 p.m., and demonstrators lined the street of Trump’s exit route, shouting at the former president’s limo as he waved from the backseat.

El-Sayed rallies in Ottawa County, outlines progressive Senate vision

BY SARAH LEACH
Ottawa News Network

HOLLAND — Deep in Ottawa County, a traditional stronghold of West Michigan conservatism, an overflow crowd gathered Sunday, Oct. 26, to witness an unusual convergence of media, grassroots activism and high-stakes U.S. Senate politics. Local Latino community leaders Cynthia Martinez and Rebecca Padnos Altamirano organized a live town hall and podcast recording that brought physician, epidemiologist, and Democratic U.S. Senate candidate Dr. Abdul El-Sayed to a region rarely visited by progressive candidates. The atmosphere inside the venue reflected both the urgency of the moment and the unique stakes of El-Sayed’s candidacy. Refusing corporate political action committee money and advocating for systemic reforms — from Medicare for All to restructuring federal law enforcement — El-Sayed laid out a distinct political vision that links public health directly to the core survival of democratic institutions. The race for Michigan's



Democratic candidate for U.S. Senate Abdul El-Sayed speaks in Holland on Sunday, Oct. 26, 2026. A former Detroit health director, Rhodes Scholar and Wayne County health officer, El-Sayed has mounted a campaign that defies standard political playbooks. [Courtesy/Ottawa News Network] open Senate seat has become one of the nation's premier battlegrounds, featuring a sharp contrast in vision between El-Sayed and Republican nominee Mike Rogers, a former U.S. representative and FBI agent. On faith Drawing on personal reflections about his Muslim faith and his late grandmother, he argued that true spirituality is rooted in personal conscience and voluntary commitment, not state-enforced compliance. As El-Sayed explained, his tradition rejects coercion at its foundation. "There's actually a statement in the Quran itself that says there is no compulsion in religion. You can't tell somebody else to live their life according to a particular set of precepts because, at the end of the day, the point of the thing is about it being a relationship you have with God," he said.

He contrasted that individual relationship with the purpose of constitutional governance, noting: "Faith is about you and God, not everybody else. America — the Constitution — is about everybody else relative to each other." On restructuring ICE A central focus of the discussion was immigration enforcement. El-Sayed expanded on his long-held call to abolish Immigration and Customs Enforcement and replace it with a system modeled on civil constitutional principles. He carefully delineated border security — managed by U.S. Customs and Border Protection — from internal enforcement, arguing that ICE's contemporary practices resemble paramilitary overreach rather than constitutional law enforcement. "ICE is, in effect, an agency that has flipped the Constitution and immigration law," he said. "They take immigration law as the supreme law of the land, and they will enforce im-

See EL-SAYED, next page

Uncounted ballots name new Hamtramck mayor

BY CHARLES SERCOMBE
The Hamtramck Review

HAMTRAMCK, Mich. — Hamtramck has a new mayor, and he’s no stranger to voters.



Former city councilmember Muhith Mahmood is now in the mayor’s seat following the tabulation of 37 uncounted ballots from last year’s November election. The ballots were tabulated in a three-hour meeting by the Wayne County Board of Canvassers on Friday. The ballots in question were found a day after the November election by employees in the Hamtramck City Clerk’s office, and they were immediately taken to Wayne County election officials. But the Board of Canvassers declined to count those ballots, which set off an eight-month legal battle. Mahmood argued in favor of counting the ballots, while Mayor Adam Alharbi was opposed. This long saga is not over yet.

Alharbi and his attorney, Nabih Ayad, have vowed to challenge those 37 ballots. “This dance is not over,” Ayad told reporters after the new election results were announced. Mahmood won’t officially become mayor until the Board of Canvassers certifies the results Nov. 4, and he is sworn into office. So, in the meantime, “We don’t have a mayor,” said City Attorney Odey Meroueh. “I’ve already cut off access for Adam.” That means City Council Member Abu Musa is now acting mayor since he is next in line as mayor pro tem. Mahmood might be facing more legal challenges. Ayad said that the Attorney General’s office is considering whether to bring criminal charges against a person he declined to name. “You can probably guess who,” Ayad told the press. Mahmood told The Review that Ayad is likely referring to him. Alharbi insists that Mahmood is not a resident of the city, although he has struck out

so far in court to have Mahmood disqualified. Mahmood has denied the charge, saying that although his wife and family live in Troy, he lives in Hamtramck, in an apartment on Holbrook. As for being named the winner of the election, Mahmood said, simply, “I’m elated.” Alharbi conceded that the election result with the newly counted ballots was expected. “It’s not a surprise,” he said. The ballots came from a precinct that is populated by mostly immigrants from Bangladesh. Mahmood is also from Bangladesh. Alharbi insists that the 37 ballots are “not trusted” because of past accusations of ballot harvesting and manipulation of ballots. While there have been investigations into election fraud, none of the accusations have held up in court. Alharbi has fought against counting the ballots, claiming that since they were discovered a day after the November election, they should not be included in the final count because they lost their “chain of

custody.” But Mahmood prevailed after a number of court hearings and finally won his case. As it turned out, Mahmood toppled Alharbi by 12 votes, winning 2,089 votes compared to Alharbi’s 2,077 votes. Alharbi initially won the November election by 11 votes. After the new results were announced, a loud cheer rang out from Mahmood’s supporters who were packed in a meeting room where the ballots were counted. It took the county a painstaking three hours to get through the process in a room that turned hot and sweaty, and thick with tension in the air. The county repeatedly cautioned those in attendance to keep their emotions in check and be courteous to others while speaking. Mahmood stressed that his quest to have the 37 ballots counted was not about him becoming the mayor, but to uphold “voters’ rights.” He called for Alharbi to now “move forward.” — Read more at [thehamtramckreview.com](#).

Opinion: Too little, too late for John James



KYLE MELINN

It is less than two weeks before Election Day, but it is increasingly clear that John James will not be Michigan’s next governor. The national money dried up a couple of weeks ago. The DeVos-fueled political action committee is not making up the difference. The Michigan Republican Party, still trying to find its footing after the Kristina Karamo implosion, cannot bridge the gap either. Former President Donald Trump is not helping, leaving James spinning his wheels. The MIGOP pledged \$1 million in television and streaming advertisements over the next few days. But with Democrat Jocelyn Benson and her allies reserving \$5.28 million for the campaign’s final week, the party’s buy will barely register. The RealClearPolitics polling average showed James trailing by 7 percentage points

as of Oct. 20. Once Benson’s final ad blitz lands, the deficit could easily reach double digits. James is keeping a stiff upper lip. He talked about running a "grassroots campaign" at a recent stop. That might have snowballed into something formidable — had it started a year ago. It did not. Twelve months ago, the Republican gubernatorial field featured seven declared contenders, six of whom gave the grassroots circuit an earnest run. James? He was nowhere to be found on the campaign trail. He and his team calculated that he did not need to make the Lincoln Day dinner rounds. As for the three primary debates the state party staged as fundraisers? James never showed up. Why take the risk? That was the theory, at least. As it turned out, the strategy held up in the primary. James kept his head down, watching rival campaigns flame out or fade away from a lack of cash and organization. His camp figured that once he secured Trump’s endorsement — which he did — there was little point in putting 100,000 miles on a campaign vehicle. After all, there would be time for that later, right? James wrote in his April 7,

2025, announcement on X: "We’ll have the rallies and the balloons soon — but first, I want to share exactly why I’m doing this." The rallies did not come soon. In fact, James was barely seen on the trail until after businessman Perry Johnson launched his bid in January 2026. By then, a fatigued grassroots base had cycled through seven conservative alternatives before settling on Johnson, the only non-James candidate mounting an active campaign heading into the Aug. 4 primary. Irked that James seemed to take their support for granted rather than making time for them, many grassroots activists backed Johnson. Once James emerged as the nominee, little evidence suggested those activists rallied behind him with any real enthusiasm. The "rallies and balloons" promised in April fell flat. A muted media presence. No clear policy platform. No track record in state government to lean on. Beyond the familiar, smiling face from eight years ago, James offered little substantive material for voters to latch onto. In theory, that should not have doomed him. Backed by Trump and the DeVos family, James appeared to have all the

institutional firepower necessary to win. Except Trump rarely cuts checks to the statewide candidates he endorses. The former president raises enormous sums from individual donors. To monitor the volume of those solicitations, I subscribed to his email lists long ago. Since James announced his bid on April 7, 2025, the Trump fundraising apparatus has sent me 3,417 appeals for cash — an average of roughly six per day. The amount of television and digital ad money a Trump-aligned entity has contributed to James’ general election effort: zero. Trump has aided select congressional contenders. Mike Rogers’ U.S. Senate bid received \$25 million from Trump’s No Going Back PAC, according to tracking data from AdImpact. James never matched Benson’s national fundraising footprint. He exited the primary with \$1.45 million in cash on hand; Benson held nearly \$6 million. Benson’s operation has spent an average of \$1 million a week on television since August. James has spent \$2 million total. That money will not go far. As it turns out, neither will John James’ bid for governor.

El-Sayed

From previous page

migration law even to the detriment of the Constitution itself. In this country, the law of the land is the Constitution, and every other law gets enforced within the bounds of the Constitution." Illustrating the stark difference between due process and arbitrary detention, he offered a vivid comparison. "What is the difference between an arrest and a kidnapping? When you're under arrest, you are told you're under arrest, you know exactly who's arresting you, you are told why, and you are told how to challenge the circumstances of your arrest," he said. "Kidnapping is just somebody coming and picking you up off the street. Ask yourself whether ICE detention looks more like an arrest or kidnapping."

On the healthcare crisis

As a physician and epidemiologist who co-authored a definitive book on universal healthcare, El-Sayed offered a stark analysis of current federal policy directions. He warned that pending rollbacks to Medicaid coverage and Affordable Care Act subsidies will destabilize the entire medical economy, creating a catastrophic feedback loop for private insurance holders as well. "Our healthcare system is too often more focused on billing than healing," he said. "It shouldn't be this hard in the richest, most powerful country in the world to see a doctor, and it should not be this hard to pay your taxes and know that that money is going to be spent on you and your kids, rather than dropping bombs on somebody else and their kids."

Detailing the systemic consequences of safety-net reductions, he explained: "You're going to watch tens of thousands of people in every state get kicked off of Medicaid. When they get kicked off, they still need help. ... So what do they do? Show up to an emergency room with the worst manifestation of the illness. The cost gets pushed back onto people who pay premiums. ... It's what economists call a death spiral."

On political courage

Decrying political gamesmanship in Washington, he emphasized that too much of politics is dictated by people for whom it is not a matter of life and death. "Too much of politics is dictated by people for whom politics is not a matter of life and death. And right now, there are a lot of people who are struggling with the life-and-death issues of politics. I'm not going to the United States Senate to play the political game," he said. The general election is Nov. 3.

— Read more at [ottawanewsnetwork.org](#).

Porch

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began earlier this year, the national average for regular gasoline was about \$2.98 a gallon. Today it's well over \$4. The war and the disruption of oil moving through the Strait of Hormuz have played a major role in that increase. And unlike most debates about presidents and gas prices, there isn't much disagreement about the connection this time. The day after we were in Deckerville, President Trump was in Port Huron campaigning alongside Republican candidates Mike Rogers and John James. Gas prices came up. Trump called the higher prices a “short-term hit” and a “small price to pay” for the war with Iran. He acknowl-

edged knowing prices would rise when he made the decision to go to war. In other words, the \$5.19 sign we had passed the day before wasn't some abstract economic argument. It was one of the costs of a decision. Whether that decision was worth the cost is something voters can decide for themselves. But there is a cost. And I couldn't help thinking about that as we drove toward a fundraiser for a rural hospital. Because healthcare policy works the same way. Wars are choices. Budgets are choices. Cuts are choices. And elections are how we choose the people who make them. Republicans in Washington, including U.S. Rep. Lisa McClain, approved significant

cuts and changes to Medicaid last year. The Michigan Health & Hospital Association says those changes will cost the state's hospitals more than \$6 billion over 10 years. Rural hospitals are particularly vulnerable. They tend to serve older populations, more patients on Medicaid and Medicare, and communities where there simply aren't enough privately insured patients to make up the difference. So when Washington cuts healthcare spending, that's not just a number buried somewhere in a federal budget. Eventually that number arrives on Main Street. Sometimes political choices show up in six-foot-tall numbers on the sign outside a gas station. Other times they're harder to see.

They show up as a service that isn't offered anymore. A position that isn't filled. An ambulance that has to travel farther. A family that has to drive an hour for care. Or, in the worst cases, a hospital that closes its doors. We've already watched that happen in rural communities across Michigan and across the country. That's what makes what is happening in Sandusky so encouraging. While other communities are losing healthcare, this community is investing in it. McKenzie's new hospital represents something bigger than a construction project. It's a statement that rural communities are worth investing in. That people shouldn't have to move to a metropolitan area to have reasonable access to healthcare.

That the Thumb has a future. Saturday night, a hundred or so people weren't debating Medicaid reimbursement formulas or federal budget projections. They were eating dinner, bidding on auction items, solving a pretend murder and raising money for their hospital. That's what communities do. But there is a limit to what chicken dinners, silent auctions and generous donors can accomplish. With Election Day coming Nov. 3, that seems worth remembering. The choices we make at the ballot box aren't simply statements about which team we're on. They're choices about what happens next. What we invest in. What we cut. And what kind of communities we're going to have when all the campaigning is over.



FROM THE OFFICE OF
WAYNE COUNTY TREASURER ERIC R. SABREE



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Quick Hits

Cont. from front page

For older people, especially those who spend much of their time at home, hearing children at the door can bring a special kind of joy.

Their excitement and laughter can brighten an otherwise quiet evening.

Today, Halloween includes not only traditional door-to-door trick-or-treating but also school programs, church and community gatherings, trick-or-treat events, pumpkin festivals, and neighborhood celebrations. The customs may continue to change, but one beautiful part remains the same: people coming together.

Perhaps that is the real gift of Halloween. It

is not simply the candy we give or receive. It is the smiles we exchange, the children whose happiness we share, the neighbors we greet, and the memories families create together.

This Halloween, on Saturday, Oct. 31, when the doorbell rings and we hear those familiar words, “Trick or treat!,” may we remember that behind every open door is an opportunity to share a little kindness and joy.

In a world where people can so easily become separated from one another, even a simple smile and a warm welcome can remind us how blessed we are when neighbors still open their doors – and their hearts – to one another.

