

# WHITE PINE PRESS

*We hew to the line; let the chips fall where they may.*

## Pines Population Prepares For Eviction



Photo credit Anna Wildman

**Anna Wildman** Staff Writer The fate of those who live in the Pines encampment in the Commons area is an issue that has raised concern for many who live in Traverse City. It was recently announced that the Traverse City police department is planning to remove the unhoused people who are living in the encampment through the enforcement of an existing anti-camping ordinance that classifies overnight camping in a park as a civil infraction. This means that violators will be fined for camping in a public space, and can even be committed to jail for refusing to pay.

Such laws are allowed on a national level under the precedent of *Grants Pass v. Oregon*, a Supreme Court case that was decided in June. The case establishes that anti-camping ordinances do not violate the “cruel and unusual punishment” clause of the eighth amendment, meaning that similar ordinances and laws against camping on public property can continue to be created and enforced by local governments. On Nov. 24, activists, community members, and residents of the Pines came together to discuss the evacuation and ways the community can help the unhoused people.

The event was held in Veterans Memorial Park, and included hot food and all kinds of donated resources for residents of the Pines to take. A group discussion, led by local activists Nico Grey and Cam Brown, took place to summarize the goals of the community and gather a consensus from the Pines residents.

An anonymous resident of the Pines expressed his experience living in the encampment. “I’ve been here going on two and a half years ... but honestly, this community right here is probably the closest thing to a family that I have.” While

there are issues within the forest, many who live there prefer it to other places they have available, even Safe Harbor. Residents have developed a sense of community with each other, and have a sense of autonomy living in their own space with all their belongings that they would lose at a shelter.

Scott Wilson, a 42-year-old man who lives in the Pines encampment, expressed his thoughts about the situation in an interview. He explained that even if the police have good intentions, dissolving the Pines could have detrimental effects on some of its residents.

“As far as I can tell, they’re best plan is just to scatter everyone ... It’s like yeah, if you scatter people you’re just gonna be finding bodies in tents months after because no one’s gonna be around to know where to find them and check on them. I don’t know, that doesn’t seem like caring to me,” Wilson said.

Regardless of criminal activity, the Pines receives a lot of attention from police, social workers, volunteers, and even employees from the Goodwill Inn. Likely many of the people in the Pines who receive care will be hard to find once the forest is evacuated, which could put them in danger of not getting access to the help they need.

While crime is an issue within the encampment, there are residents who have a friendly relationship with the police that survey the area. When asked about the behavior of police officers, Wilson expressed that “there’s at least one awesome one who really cares, and I think [the other officers] could learn a lot from her.”

Activists for the local homeless population have both short and long term goals when it comes to the housing crisis. “What

I think we can do realistically is like, just prevent existence from being made illegal,” expressed event co-organizer Cam Brown. Speakers encouraged concerned citizens to contact local officials about the conflict through emailing or protesting at commission meetings. “The city just wants to sweep it under the rug, they wanna look good, and I think that’s why we gotta start going to these commission meetings and put pressure under their ass,” said Brown.

The lack of affordable housing in Traverse City is a concern of local activists too, and they aim to address the root causes of the issue. Nico Grey described more long-term goals, like “community owned housing, putting the power in the people’s hands [so that] it’s the people in the housing owning the housing. [Also] restrictions on short term rentals, that’s something we should really be fighting for.”

Both Grey and Brown encouraged participation from the unhoused people who are affected by the conflict, and placed emphasis on keeping Pines residents informed on the situation. “We wanna do ‘know your rights’ training for people. I started reaching out to ACLU to start getting little pamphlets we can hand out to folks in the Pines,” says Grey.

While the issue is ongoing, activists are doing everything they can to prevent the evacuation of the Pines and propose a better solution to both police and city commissioners. In the long term, according to Brown, activists want to encourage the idea that “housing is a human right, and that people get ownership of their housing.”



# Students Advocate Change in a Walk for Health and Housing

**Minnie Bardenhagen** Staff Writer The ninth annual “Walk for Health and Housing,” a walk around downtown Traverse City that raises awareness on the city’s homeless population and the resources they have available headed in part by NMC, occurred on Nov. 20, and dozens of students were seen showing their support by attending and carrying posters with messages such as “open your eyes, open your heart. Homelessness is real, let’s do our part.”

Twenty-nine-year-old NMC student Noelle Wilde convinced some of the students to attend, and described the attitudes surrounding the homeless in the neighborhood around the Boardman River.

“I actually live in this neighborhood, the Boardman neighborhood, and I posted about this in my neighborhood’s Facebook group because a lot of people on that group are vocal about how much they don’t want the homeless in our neighborhood and they don’t want Safe Harbor to stay open [all] year,” she explained, “So, I’m trying to get them to change their minds ... so I invited my entire neighborhood, actually.”

While Wilde admitted she wasn’t sure if her neighbors actually came to the event, she felt hopeful about the turnout.

“I came last year, I think there’s even more numbers this year than last year,” she said, highlighting the importance of education of the subject of homelessness, “I think everyone should have to take some sort of education in social work or social studies, because education is the ending stuff like this.”

“Students are the future and the next generation,” Wilde said. “The more awareness and education that’s spread about things like this ... you know students are the next voting population, so they’re the ones who are actually going to help make changes.”

NMC professor Lisa Blackford, who teaches social work and psychology courses, was also in attendance with her dog, and she gave insight into how the event has evolved and the importance of students to the homeless issue in the community.

“This is our ninth year ... When we started it was a conversation between a couple of us faculty like, ‘let’s do something different,’” she explained. “So, that morphed into this walk, cause we reached out to the people in the community and it seemed like a really important topic.”

“I think our first year we may have had like 15 students come with us, and every year it just keeps getting bigger and bigger,” Blackford described. “And I think something that’s just really near and dear to heart is [that] so many years have gone by now that I’m seeing previous students, my social work students that are now working at the agencies that we’ve visited ... and they’re still working towards ending homelessness.”

“I think it’s extremely important that the community sees that,” she continued, “because with students we have new ideas ... and looking at things in a new perspective with new technology, new education ... and I think that just rallies the community around too. I see people from all ages that are coming on this walk now that are not students, but they’re here for the importance of it.”

The event, which lasted about two hours, led the sizable crowd of people throughout the downtown area, from places like a public parking area where city police officer Krista Fryczynski spoke, to Central United Methodist Church where the leader of the event Ryan Hannon stopped to speak, to F&M park where Ashley Halladay-Schmandt from the Northwest Michigan Coalition to End Homelessness delivered remarks.

Outside of the Traverse City Government Center, mayor Amy Shamroe spoke about solving the issue of homelessness at the government level and the impact citizens have on that effort.

“Your voices out here matter when we’re having these conversations,” she said. “Showing up at city commission meetings matter, showing up at county commission meetings matter, and emailing matters ... and just talking about it to people, about the reality of the situation.”

All of the stops during the walk, including Central United Methodist Church, Goodwill, Safe Harbor, and Jubilee House all provide opportunities to get involved in helping the community with the issue of homelessness. Their websites contain volunteer information.



Photo credit: Minnie Bardenhagen

NORTHWESTERN MICHIGAN COLLEGE

## WHITE PINE PRESS

**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF** Emma Marion

**COPY EDITOR** Emily Fitzgerald  
**STAFF WRITERS** Minnie Bardenhagen  
 Madison Findlay  
 Emily Fitzgerald  
 William Pappas  
 Eli Stallman  
 Megan Thoreson  
 Anna Wildman

**PAGE DESIGNER** Ayden Blackmer  
 Tuklor Williams  
**PHOTOGRAPHY** Jacob Dodson

**DELIVERY** Devon Bruner

**FACULTY ADVISER** Jacob Wheeler  
**DESIGN ADVISER** Kathy Schwartz

The *White Pine Press* welcomes comments, suggestions, ideas for news stories and calendar items.

**NEWSROOM** 231.995.1173  
**DISTRIBUTION**  
**ADVERTISING**  
**EMAIL** whitepinepress@gmail.com

Printed by Stafford Media Solutions and distributed free.

Printed on 100% recycled paper



# Where Does Local Cheese Come From?

Local Business Highlight: Boss Mouse Cheese



Photo credit: Madison Findlay

**Madison Findlay**  
Staff Writer

As the temperatures outside drops, nothing sounds better than enjoying a warm bowl of tomato cheddar soup accompanied by a crispy grilled cheese sandwich. But where exactly does the star of that cozy fall meal, cheese, come from?

Sue Kurta, founder of Boss Mouse Cheese, has been in the business of artisan cheese making for more than a decade. After taking a wine and cheese class in her home state of New York, she found a passion for caseiculture. The more she learned about the craft, the more she loved it. Her journey to where she is now was influenced greatly by taking beginner and intermediate cheese making classes in Vermont.

After moving to Kingsley in 2010, what started as a hobby, unexpectedly turned into a Grand Traverse County establishment. It became evident that the demand for her hand-crafted products far outweighed her original intent of only selling cheeses at farmers markets on Saturdays. Kurta quit her job and immersed herself fully in the expansion of her business. She spent the next year working towards getting her Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development license as well as improving her cheese plant on their historic farm in Kingsley.

Kurta also offers two cheese-making classes available to the public which include fresh mozzarella making and the production of a two pound wheel of aged cheese. She also teaches for the MSU dairy division.

Now, Boss Mouse Cheese provides 12 types of aged cow's milk artisan cheeses and sub cheeses, including cheddar, Montasio, and their best seller: Swiss. Their products can be found wholesale from their website and select local retailers like Oryana, and featured in the dishes of many restaurants in Traverse City, notably Sugar 2 Salt, The Cooks' House, and Farm Club.

Kurta shared that "The first culprit of bad tasting cheese is the milk," as animals' diets will affect the color and flavor of the finished product. Though they have done cheeses with goat's milk and sheep's milk in the past, they currently only sell products made with cow's milk. The milk used is sourced from De Vor Dairy Farm and

Creamery, located in Kalkaska.

Kurta says all of their cheeses have natural rinds. In other words, they have no wax, plastic, or cloth covering; rather, they are aged in open air in order to "breathe" and take on the flavor of that specific place. Part of Boss Mouse Cheese's plant is their cheese cave, a humid 55 degrees Fahrenheit room with racks for the cheese wheels to age on.

Boss Mouse Cheese takes classic cheeses and experiments with combining different flavors such as ramp, dried flower, and maple chipotle to varying amounts of success. For example, their special garlic dill Montasio (which is typically plain in its native country of Italy). Kurta has also experimented with "Cheed," a non-commercial cannabis cheese hybrid.

So how exactly is their cheese made? According to Kurta, the first step is simply warming the milk in a large cheese vat. Then, bacteria is added. Bacteria is added for a number of reasons, the first being that Michigan is one of the 13 states that does not allow use of raw milk. Kurta also explains that to get specific flavors of cheese one must use specific types of bacteria to "invite it to ferment in that flavor."

The cheese cultures, or bacteria, are dried in milk powder. It cultures for around an hour and starts "eating" the lactose. A coagulant is added; in this case, rennet. This causes the mixture to solidify. The curd is then cut into cubes, heated, and stirred to cook, with cheeses requiring varying amounts of heat. The curd is separated from the whey, or water portion of milk. The curd is then pressed overnight to two days depending on the type of cheese being made.

At this point the cheese has no flavor. It can be aged anywhere from two months to a year, again, depending on what product is being made. When testing for readiness, a core sample is taken with a trier. By the end of the aging process some cheeses are so covered in mold they look like rocks, with some even having cheese mites. The mold is then brushed off or rinsed off in a sink. After drying overnight the cheese is ready to be cut and packaged for sale.

Kurta's advice: "If you're true to your own heart, deeply authentic, and believe in what you're doing, you can't go wrong. Keep hustling."



1217 E FRONT ST  
231.929.2999

1294 W SOUTH AIRPORT RD  
231.935.9355

JIMMYJOHNS.COM



Student Accounts

- Free Checking Account with ATM / Debit Card
- Quick & Easy Mobile App
- Education Scholarships
- 30,000+ No-Fee CO-OP ATMs
- and More!



tbacu.com | 231.946.7090

Insured by NCUA



# Climate Policy and The Importance of Public Value: Exclusive Interview With John Pournoor



(LEFT) STAFF WRITER ELI STALLMAN INTERVIEWS (RIGHT) JOHN POURNOOR

Photo credit: Tuklor Williams

**Eli Stallman**  
Staff Writer

On Nov. 14 the *White Pine Press* conducted an exclusive interview with John Pournoor on climate policy prior to his International Affairs Forum (IAF) speech at the Dennis Museum. Pournoor has extensive experience in government affairs and is the founder and CEO of Government Analytica.

As climate change is widely understood by scientists to be a result of human activity, climate policy has been an increasingly discussed topic over the past decades. Many are concerned about the United States' progress towards using clean energy, as well as the trade-offs necessary to nurture that progress.

"I help organizations make government proposals. Those [lawmakers] who were receiving these proposals had a higher likelihood of accepting them if there was some evidence — especially data driven, analytical evidence," Pournoor explained, "Over the last two decades, access to data that can prove that type of value has become increasingly more abundant. What my business does is basically works with those who want to create government proposals and tries to quantify the public value of those proposals to win the hearts and minds of policy makers."

Pournoor stressed that good proposals and arguments are rooted in what he calls public value.

"I would say there are probably four or five different aspects of public value that are inspirational to policy makers. One, if you can make the government more efficient ... Two, if you can create economic activity in the community that would create more jobs, raise people's wages and quality of life ... if it brings innovation, something new and interesting that was not there before ... they would be supportive of that. If it has a positive societal impact, they would be supportive

of that."

Although the public value of clean energy is high, and the glaring negative impacts of climate change increase, Pournoor explained that climate policy is a highly complex issue with no simple solution. He stresses that the transition to clean energy has societal impacts on many different fronts that require in-depth thought.

While many progressive climate policy politicians focus on how the energy transition will create new jobs, Pournoor is more cautious, "If you're moving to producing more electric cars, your plants that do not produce electric cars are going to be decommissioned. What do you do with those workers? This is a really important topic, and we can't just focus on more electric cars without focusing on what the societal impact is going to be."

Instead, Pournoor believes that transitioning to clean energy may require smaller incremental steps over a large period of time, "The energy transition we're talking about is so expensive and costly, that it has to be amortized over a large number of years ... Sometimes the big ask is too much for any one entity, government or otherwise, to be able to take on."

With the general scientific consensus being that climate change is a pressing and urgent issue, many are worried that there is no time for small investments and incremental steps to be made. According to a 2017 Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) report, 70% of all emissions since 1988 have been created by just 100 companies, with many of them being some of the richest in the world, such as oil companies ExxonMobil and Shell. For some, it's hard to believe that a swift transition to renewable energy is just too difficult for the richest companies in the world.

Pournoor suggests that in order to begin making the cost of

clean energy more manageable, investments need to be made in the scientific field toward renewable energy.

"I would say in the renewable energy space, we need a lot more R&D and investigation to see how we can make higher efficiency batteries, a less expensive way of sequestering carbon, for instance ... We're just at the infancy of many of those technologies ... How do you create green technologies that are less costly, and more effective? I think there's a technical solution to that that has to be invested in."

While everyone perceives public value differently, Pournoor encourages leaning into a public value perspective rather than an ideological perspective when advocating for issues.

"Nobody will be against doing things that have greater good for the community, for society as a whole. So I think talking about the public value of it, rather than the ideology or principle or perspective, to me, is a more palatable way to have a conversation about it."

He stressed that when trying to converse about issues with people who have a different perspective, it is necessary to meet them where they are. Approaching the conversation of climate policy from a public value perspective assists in that process and prevents them from feeling alienated.

"Every year, a new layer of evidence emerges ... It's a dynamic process. And so we need to constantly evangelize the cost, whatever the cost may be, and make sure that layer of knowledge that was just discovered is shared in a very practical, non-condescending way to those who may be on the opposite side of the spectrum from where we stand. We have to describe the impact of what is happening in a way that people see value in it. And so that requires us, in a very emotionally intelligent way, to try to understand those who may not see a value in this, and try to meet them where they are."

# Does Traverse City Make a Difference in the Fight for Clean Energy?

**Minnie Bardenhagen-**  
Staff Writer

The surface of our planet is approximately 197 million square miles, and on it is a population of about 8.2 billion people. Within that space, according to a recent report by Climate Trace, the cities with the most emissions are Tokyo, New York, Houston, and Seoul. New York, the largest city in the United States in terms of population, has over 8 million people and about 300 square miles of land.

Contrastingly, Traverse City has about 8 square miles of land, with a population of a little under 16,000 people according to the 2023 US Census. The city has made several efforts to reduce its carbon footprint over the years, including a 2016 resolution to switch all municipal operations to clean energy sources by 2020, which it succeeded in doing. However, in the worldwide fight to combat climate change and change to cleaner energy, how much do Traverse City's efforts help? What is gained by focusing efforts on this area?

To explore these questions, I spoke to a member of SEEDS and a member of Traverse City Light and Power (TCL&P). Sarna Salzman, executive director of SEEDS Ecology and Education Centers, told the *White Pine Press* what she believes to be the case with smaller communities.

"I think everyone is relevant," she said. Everyone "uses an oversized quantity of planetary resources."

"Every community on the planet is just a very small dot on the planet. "You need a lot of dots to add up to planetary change."

Traverse City Light & Power's Sustainability and Climate Initiative Analyst, Colin Hites, explained how the actions of the individual in any area are just as important as the bigger players.

"Decarbonization and climate change are such massive and

important problems, it is easy to feel paralyzed by their size and to, falsely, believe that you as an individual or a small community don't have the ability to affect change," he said. "Communities, neighborhoods, and individuals have a vital responsibility in the fight as well."

"When you break down the total emissions profile of the country, this becomes abundantly clear. Forty-two percent of the United States' total emissions come from our homes and vehicles," Hites said, citing a statistic from *Electrify: An Optimist's Playbook for Our Clean Energy Future* by Saul Griffith, "The cars we drive, how we heat and cool our homes, heat our water, wash and dry our clothes, and cook our food account for nearly half of the country's emissions! These are all things that we can directly control as individuals and impact as community members."

Hites made clear that regardless of the size of Traverse, the city plays a critical role in the large-scale effort to decarbonize.

"Traverse City has the potential to have an outsized impact on climate action by way of climate leadership," he described, "Communities all around the country rely on one another to prove the viability of innovative, effective, and equitable decarbonization efforts. By being willing to be early designers and adopters of new and creative solutions, we can continue to lead the way towards decarbonization for other communities like us throughout the country."

TCL&P is working on numerous projects regarding clean energy, including their climate action plan and their newly unveiled My Clean Choice program.

We are continuing working towards decarbonizing the utility operations while protecting grid resiliency as outlined in our Climate Action Plan. Renewable energy sources make up roughly 40% of the utility's energy mix currently, with daily work going into reaching our stated goal of 100% renewable

by 2040," Hites explained, "My Clean Choice includes things like our rebate programs, on-bill financing, education and outreach efforts, renewable energy portfolio, net billing program, and our EV charging network."

He explained how their rebate programs have modernized to reward decarbonization efforts, "Customers now are eligible for a wide range of electrification incentives... We feel that by incentivizing decarbonization efforts, we can play a role in helping the community make their homes and businesses healthier, safer, and more comfortable while lowering their carbon footprint."

SEEDS has also taken clean energy steps, such as installing more solar energy.

"SEEDS has done a lot in education and action planning around energy efficiency and renewable energy, especially with facilities management over the years," Salzman shared.

As for NMC students, Hites provided several ways that TCL&P can help students take initiative.

"If there are any student groups or individuals who may have ideas for ways in which TCLP can better aid the community in their decarbonization efforts, we would love to hear from [them]," he said, "if there are any NMC students or student groups who would be interested in an ongoing collaborative sustainability effort, we would be more than happy to play a part in supporting that initiative ... I think there could be significant community benefit to an electrification advocacy program within NMC where students provide general information, raise awareness, and share success stories throughout the community."

SEEDS offers many ways for NMC students to get involved, such as volunteering, jobs, donating and more, all of which are described on their website. On occasion, they also offer apprenticeships and internships.



## EARN YOUR FERRIS DEGREE IN TRAVERSE CITY

Earn your degree faster and more affordably through our special partnership with Northwestern Michigan College (NMC). This partnership offers a unique combination of NMC and Ferris courses in Traverse City and/or online, making Ferris accessible for students like you.

With full access to the Traverse City Hub, you'll have all the support services you need to earn your Ferris degree locally and achieve your career goals.

**APPLY NOW AND MOVE FERRIS FORWARD**

► [FERRIS.EDU/TRAVERSECITY](https://ferris.edu/traversecity)

## FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

TRAVERSE CITY

Ferris State University is an equal opportunity institution. For information on the University's Policy on Non-Discrimination, visit [Ferris.edu/Non-Discrimination](https://ferris.edu/Non-Discrimination). 20241007





# Bridging the Gap: A Peek Into The New Grand Traverse Mental Health Crisis and Access Center

**Emily Fitzgerald**  
Staff Writer

Northern Lakes Community Health, partnered with Munson, officially opens the Grand Traverse Mental Health Crisis and Access Center on Jan. 5, 2025, to help fill the void of mental health resources in Traverse City. Like so many other cities and towns in the country, Traverse City desperately needs more mental health resources. The emergency room and the urgent care facilities often see mental health patients because they don't know where else to go or they cannot get into a psychiatrist or other mental health provider for an extended period of time.

The city is missing a bridge between medical providers and mental health providers to ensure proper care for those in need of mental health care. While some believe that medical practitioners can provide proper care for mental health patients, this is not always true. Mental health care is a specialty and not easily treated like a sore throat or an ear infection. For many in Traverse City, there is a lack of accessibility to mental health care, and the community suffers as a result.

Michael Corby, the director of the Grand Traverse Mental Health Crisis and Access Center explains the center as a place where "If you're in crisis, if you don't know that you're in crisis or you just don't know where to start, this is a good place to come and get started." He explains that whether you are in an obvious or nuanced state of mental health distress, you are welcome to come in and talk to someone. Individuals who are in need of help with substance use disorders are also welcome to come in and speak with a staff member to get resources to help with their specific needs.

A typical trip through the facility would start with the security desk. Munson will have security onsite 24 hours a day and seven days a week to check bags for contraband and possible weapons. Next, there is a secure door that one must pass through to get to the reception area to be checked in. There will be a waiting room for patients to wait until a peer support specialist is available to take them to an assessment room. Family and friends are more than welcome to sit in the waiting room for the clients to be discharged.

Some individuals may only need to speak with this first point of contact to get back to a healthy mindset. If more help is needed, a clinician will come in to do a suicide screening, a risk assessment, and then create a plan. This may involve the center needing time to reach out to

other resources for more assistance for the client.

This may also mean that the client just needs to be in a safe, quiet environment to calm their mind. In these instances, the center offers living room areas where someone can take the time needed to reach out to other resources or simply just be there to ease their distress when it is deemed that a safe unlocked environment will be appropriate. Initially, these rooms will be available for clients for approximately 10 hours, with the center aiming to have them available 24/7 in the future. Once the hours expand, these rooms will be available for approximately 23 hours at a time for clients. If clients need more time they will not be kicked out, but rather reassessed to see if a different approach is more appropriate.

The center plans on offering services such as crisis phone screening, face-to-face crisis intervention, referrals to outpatient therapy/other resources, and peer support services. Access to showers will be available if a client needs to get cleaned up before the next step in their treatment, and a clothing closet for those in need will be accessible as well. The center is also aiming to have community resources on site for group meetings and to be available with further resources for the clients. There will also be an access room for emergency service personnel (first aid responders and police) if it is needed for transporting clients safely while also ensuring minimal disruption to others at the center.

While the center is not intended to be a drop-in center, clients can be referred to those types of facilities. Corby also showed me a room called the sensory room, which would be available for anyone who is getting upset or escalated. It's a room where they can be monitored, but have the alone time they need to de-escalate. There is also a nursing station just outside this room to help monitor everyone in the group area as well as that room.

Staff for the center will consist of Bachelor's and Master's level clinicians and peer support specialists. Once the psychiatric urgent care is available, there will be doctors and nursing staff available as well to the clients.

The hours of operation will be from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Sunday through Thursday, with hours expected to expand starting July 1, 2025 where they will then be open for the community 24/7. Services are also set to expand with psychiatric urgent care, adding a nine-bed adult crisis center unit in summer 2025, with a pediatric six-bed unit added later in fall.

"Our goal with the center is to alleviate the burden on the ED, because you know they get swamped with mental health right now, and to alleviate the pressure on the legal system," said Corby.

With the nearest mental health residential centers to Traverse City being Oscoda and Gaylord, this type of facility is desperately needed and will be a great asset to the community. Corby further states with the anticipation of this center, "This is not going to solve the mental health crisis in the area, but we're hoping it will help and we're hoping this will be a way to make better connections to and more connections to community partners."

## Unplanned Pregnancy?

PREGNANCY CONFIRMATION & RESOURCES

At Thrive Medical Clinic, You Can:

- ▶ Confirm Your Pregnancy with an Ultrasound
- ▶ Know How Far Along You Are
- ▶ Gain Knowledge & Support

**Thrive**  
MEDICAL CLINIC

NO COST  
NO PRESSURE  
NO JUDGMENT





# From T-Shirts to Gaetz: How the President Elect Sees Women

**Minnie Bardenhagen** On Oct. 25th, the *White Pine Press* team attended a rally in Traverse City for Donald Trump's presidential campaign. The event, which started three hours late and lasted until about midnight, featured a plethora of MAGA fashion, from shirts that read, "Jesus is my savior, and Trump is my president" to pictures of him pumping his fist in the air after the assassination attempt on him earlier this year in Pennsylvania.

Outside the rally, was a man with a pile of T-shirts with Vice President Kamala Harris's face on them that read "Say no to the hoe," and the man was shouting, "Get your Joe and the hoe have got to go T-shirts!"

The derogatory term is an alternative way to say another highly problematic term, "whore." At its core, it is an offensive way to refer to someone who engages in prostitution or has multiple sexual partners.

During his campaign, Trump made and promoted several vulgar online comments attacking Harris sexually, such as when he reposted a video where a parody singer said Harris had "spent her whole life down on her knees," while a picture of Willie Brown, former San Francisco mayor and romantic partner of Harris, is shown on the screen.

Trump also reposted an image of Harris and his former opponent in the 2016 election, Hillary Clinton, that contained the caption, "Funny how blowjobs impacted both their careers differently." The posts tried to push a narrative that Harris had worked her way up politically by providing other politicians sexual favors.

Now, and as of Nov. 6 when the Associated Press called the pivotal swing state of Pennsylvania, Donald J. Trump is the president elect of the United States.

Since the victory, Trump has wasted no time appointing his presidential cabinet. Though no longer the nominee for attorney general, it's hard to get past the significance of Matt Gaetz as pick. Gaetz, who has been investigated by both the Department of Justice and the House Ethics Committee during his time as a Florida Congressman, was Trump's first choice to be the head of the Department of Justice.

Gaetz had been investigated for sex trafficking involving an underage girl by the DOJ, and while he has denied the allegations, a lawyer for two of the women involved claimed one of his clients witnessed Gaetz with the 17-year-old girl. *The New York Times* also obtained a document

that detailed all of the payments Gaetz had made to different women so that they would have sex with him.

Despite his withdrawal from attorney general consideration, there is a tone the new Trump administration has already begun to set with the initial pick. Here we have Gaetz, a man who used his power and money to sexually exploit women, and allegedly, a minor. Rather than considering that a hard line that shouldn't be crossed, the Trump Team decided he should be granted more power.

Trump, who has been investigated by the DOJ, has criticized the department for being too politicized, and has accused the Biden Administration of using the DOJ to go after their political opponents. Gaetz as a pick was a clear message from Trump that he will continue to erase accountability for people in power, specifically the people in power who don't defy him, even if people use their power to treat women like objects, or sexual services.

Let's not forget that Trump has been found liable for sexual abuse. In May of 2023, Trump was found guilty of sexually abusing Jean E. Carroll in 1996, a columnist known for her work on *Elle Magazine*. It was also ruled that Trump had defamed her, as he mocked her and claimed her allegations were false.

There is an important assumption to consider, and that is the assumption that the way Trump and his allies see women in their own lives, and women running directly against them politically, like Kamala Harris, reflects the way that they see women in general.

Rather than confronting these allegations, and how the actions of those such as Trump and Gaetz contribute to the wider problem of sexual exploitation and abuse, Trump and his team have claimed the system is out to get him, and out to get people who also argue against the validity of the justice system like Matt Gaetz. The voices of the women involved, and the voices of women who have been victims in similar situations, have been nothing but an inconvenience to the political careers of Trump and his allies who have taken every measure to brush any accusations under the rug, framing them as the product of a corrupt media and justice system.

After an election so central to the question of reproductive healthcare and the rights of women to have bodily autonomy, Americans now prepare for an administration that, for many women, comes with the discomfort of not knowing what will happen next.



Photos by, Jacob Dodson





Photos by, Jacob Dodson

## Local Band Earth Radio Shatters The Senses at Milliken Auditorium

**Jacob Dodson** Photographer On Nov. 7, the band Earth Radio (their name alluding to them being the “voice of the Earth”) appeared at Milliken Auditorium for a psychedelic show, along with openers Sosohifi, and visual projection artist Super Nuclear.

The band, hailing from Grand Rapids, is composed of bassist and vocalist Justin Avdek, the quasi-angelic frontwoman Hannah Laine, Dutcher Snedeker on keys and synth, and percussionist David Ward.

The show was beautiful and loud. Hannah, armed with her pedal voice created layers of tonality and resonance that reverberated throughout the room without being overbearing (though it helps that the sound engineer, Maria X, did a great job with the audio mixing as well). In line with the name Earth Radio, the sounds were organic, calming, and resonant; sounds had the quality of Tibetan singing bowls, natural movement, and Jimmy Hendrix. At one point, Hannah used her pedal to stack multiple layers of her tongue clicking in her mouth, and managed to create a sound nearly identical to water flowing over rocks. It was truly something to behold, both audibly and visually.

A projectionist, seated in the sound booth above, mixed

bowls full of dyed water and oil, and projected them across the walls. In the middle of the show, one could actually see the ripples of water from him blowing on the surface with a straw. Of course, the projection of this was many feet across, like real waves.

“We formed in 2017, and it was kinda a combination that I knew Justin from other groups, and he brought in Hannah and our first drummer, Mario, and we cut a record in a week,” Snedeker explained, “it was basically like ‘oh, you’re Hannah, I met you at that wedding,’ and then we wrote a bunch of music.”

Midway through the interview, someone called out to him “Dutcher, somebody wants something from you!” It seemed like everyone wanted something from him.

An element of uncertainty loomed over the show, as it was their second-to-last show with Avdek.

“We’re figuring it out. We’re always a flexible group, so there’s people we’re thinking of,” Snedeker commented.

Snedeker is indeed a popular man. Right after this question, a woman approached him and thanked him profusely, before confessing that she had driven up from Saginaw just to see them. Earth Radio seems to strike a chord in people, and

honestly, I haven’t seen a more unique show.

On the topic of touring, Snedeker’s piece of advice is this: “It’s important to have personal space during a tour, and be able to do your own thing.”

Their newest album, “If Earth Could Speak,” was created and recorded on a trip to Vermont, based around the question in the title: if Earth could speak, what would it say? The album was written and tracked in seven days and has been released publicly since April in physical and Bandcamp formats, and was uploaded to streaming services in July. The last show of their tour will be at Bell’s Brewery, opening for Dopapod on Dec. 27, at 8pm. This will also be their final show with Avdek, who formed the band, and who is now moving on to other projects, a bittersweet departure, with lots of love and kindness between the members.

As Snedeker mentioned, this is not the end of the band. Earth Radio plans to continue playing shows, and bringing their transformative and healing music to the masses. As Dutcher stated at the show, “We’ve always been a very transformative band.” It’s not a goodbye from Earth Radio, but more of a “see you soon.”

