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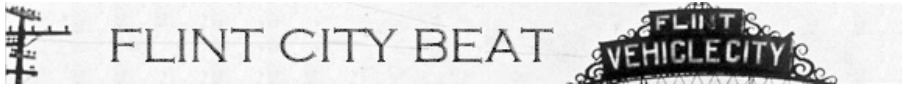
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### 'They expect to see a city that has surrendered'; Flint takes international spotlight as nation deals with recession

Posted by [Kristin Longley | The Flint Journal](#) September 06, 2009 12:00PM

Categories: [Flint - News](#), [MLive - Home Page - News](#), [MLive - News](#)



Flint: the poster child for the nationwide recession.

AP File Photo

FLINT -- Say cheese, Flint. Everyone's watching.

As the entire nation grapples with widespread economic downturn, the city of Flint has been thrust under a microscope, scrutinized by an international audience.

Some come to gawk at the city's misfortune, but many want to examine how this once-booming manufacturing hub is holding up under the weight of record home foreclosures, rampant blight and population losses.

Flint, for better or for worse, has become a poster child for the nationwide recession.

"Not a week goes by that I don't get a phone call," said Genesee County Treasurer Daniel Kildee. "We really are ground zero in this economic crisis that the whole world is facing. It makes our situation much more relevant."

Flint for decades has suffered through what some U.S. communities are just now experiencing, and the world is looking to Flint to tell its story of despair and in some cases light a path for the future.

While the city is no stranger to the media (being the birthplace of General Motors and frequent subject of one Michael Moore), the coverage has clearly become more frequent and widespread in recent months.

Within the past six months, dozens of journalists -- from small-time blogs to major networks -- have descended on Flint.

The city has landed everywhere from the Los Angeles Times to the front page of The New York Times and has even been featured on the Japanese national news, Kildee said.

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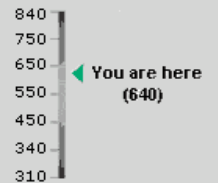
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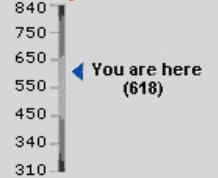
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A news database search shows Flint, Mich., has been referenced more than 500 times in the past year.

So what is the world learning?

The themes are often repetitive: "Hard times in Flint, Mich.," reads one headline. Another story is about efforts to stem "this city's endless decline."

In Forbes alone, Flint had the dubious honor of inclusion on Top Ten lists for fastest dying cities, longest roads to recovery and most miserable cities.

But there are positive stories, too. Flint expatriate Gordon Young recently penned a New York Times article on the revitalization of the Carriage Town neighborhood, complete with descriptions of historical architecture, spacious yards and scenic landscaping.

"In a city that is synonymous with faded American industrial and automotive power, Carriage Town's success is both unexpected and inspiring," Young writes.

The popularity of writing about Flint has also led to an abundance of stories accompanied by images that have plagued the city for years (boarded-up buildings, overgrown lots and scenes from Moore's 1989 film "Roger & Me").

Flint's prevalence was also evident at a recent Kid Rock concert in Detroit. News reports show the crowd went wild when the big screen showed the now-famous "God Help Us Save Flint" painted on The Rock at 12th Street.

Former Flint resident Suzanne McKeen, who transferred to England nine years ago with her British husband, occasionally sees Flint on BBC News -- always with scenes of the city's weakest neighborhoods or in the context of General Motors' bankruptcy.

"People often think that I moved to England to 'escape' Flint," McKeen said in an e-mail. "I explain that I had an ordinary middle class upbringing in Flint and the images/media they have seen is only one part of Flint."

The city isn't alone in the spotlight. One jaded Detroit journalist wrote a piece for Vice Magazine titled "Something, Something, Something, Detroit: Lazy Journalists Love Pictures of Abandoned Stuff."

But some residents, such as Doris Jones, don't mind the scrutiny. The Flint native said this is an opportunity to get motivated.

"I'm not mad at people for telling me how I look," Jones said of her hometown. "We should say, 'We look raggedy. Now let's clean up.'"

"It's an eye-opener for Flint to see how other people see us."

Flint Mayor Dayne Walling said the city is going through a "historic transformation" that creates a lot of interesting news stories. While he might disagree with a story here or there, at least people are talking about Flint, he said.

"When there's a story about vacant houses or empty land I want people to be thinking about what new developments can be put there," he said, extending an invite to anyone who wants to get to know Flint. "When people take the time to learn more about this community they'll see the great assets we have, and how much room there is for vision and innovation."

Kildee said many journalists come here with a story already mapped out, asking him to take them where they can best capture blight and abandonment.

"I take them on a tour of the weak neighborhoods but I show them the strong neighborhoods, too," he said. "Usually they're surprised. They expect to see a city that has surrendered."

Simon Veness, a travel writer based in Michigan and Florida, recently drove around Flint with wife Susan while researching a book on the I-75 corridor. He said he tried not to have any preconceived notions and ended up being pleasantly surprised.

"The city seems to be coming to grips with the current economic situation," he said. "There are definitely elements that remain down-at-heel but it's just like pretty much any big city."

Travel writer Craig Zabransky, who visited the city during the Buick Open, said others questioned why he wanted to come to Flint. His answer came when he wrote an article encouraging travel to Flint, saying the city's history and cultural center make it a worthwhile stop.

"When people ask me where I've been recently I'll always mention Flint because

it's a surprise pick," he said. "But it's not hard to find charm in Flint."

Some people in Flint are working to change some outsiders' perceptions.

Matt Bach, public relations director for the Flint Convention and Visitors Bureau, monitors the coverage of Flint and tries to correct generalizations or errors in news stories and blogs by contacting the authors.

Kildee said he appreciates the stories that show how Flint is working to overcome its years of struggle.

"It provides some reassurance to the audience," he said. "People take some comfort around the country in seeing what Flint has gone through and knowing it has a way out."

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**COMMENTS (70)**

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Posted by **fedupinflint** on [09/06/09 at 12:15PM](#)

LANDBANK, that's the ticket!

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Posted by **hoochmama2** on [09/06/09 at 1:01PM](#)

Flint and Genesee County are textbook examples on what will happen to your city if you let the unions and the Democratic Party ideology run your economy and government with their loud mouth puppeted candidates.

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Posted by **epictetus** on [09/06/09 at 1:36PM](#)

those of us still in flint, (by choice or circumstance, choice for me), need a support group to keep us motivated to work toward silencing the critics and doomsayers. flint can be a great small city to raise a family. some days, i get mad and want to leave, but then a part of me says stay and fight.

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Posted by **45guy** on [09/06/09 at 1:47PM](#)

I don't need a support group to keep me motivated. I just look at how our block looks like a beautiful island in a sea of blight. Everyone on the block works together to keep it looking good. If anyone at the journal wants to see it for themselves, I'm sure they have my email address on file with my screen name.

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Posted by **Guderian** on [09/06/09 at 2:27PM](#)

Hoochmama2 is right on the money. Obama is turning the WHOLE COUNTRY into a Genesee County and City of Flint.....and doing it on purpose by killing the private sector.

I have no idea what "seeing a city that surrendered" means in this article, but it is all media-speak baloney. Flint is what it is: A sewer.

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Posted by **fedball1** on [09/06/09 at 3:50PM](#)

Visiting Flint and Genesee County are like visiting Pompeii.

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Posted by **flintastic** on [09/06/09 at 3:53PM](#)

hoochmama2  
AMEN!!!!!!!!!!!!

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Posted by **flintmuisa** on [09/06/09 at 5:09PM](#)

For the naysayers out there - there is hope. Hope for a better city with aspirations of being taken seriously by the world media.

There are many good people here, many with strong work ethics (not all...) and boatloads of skilled workers. Perhaps more skilled workers per capita than any other city in America (granted, many are unemployed).

For those people who want to surrender the hope to make our city a better place...just move! Get Out of our town! We have no room here for the naysayers, the pessimists, etc.

We will never surrender in Flint, MI USA!

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Posted by **JOEYZUZU** on [09/06/09 at 5:32PM](#)

thats so funny....."just move" with what , peoples good looks.....And your wrong about no room.....there is plenty of room.....MOst of the people left in flint are stuck here and the rest of the people still have jobs.....It will take 10 years before this city even come close to being a city worth living in.....

Until someone figures out how to get jobs back, this city is doomed.....The crime will ruin the college town hopes...

Wake up and smell the coffee.....It is what it is.....theres not enough hope in the world to fix flint.....Jobs are the only way.....

But the dems and obama would rather worry about health care then getting everyone back to work.....

Everyone I know wouldnt mind paying for there own health care if they could fint a decent job.....Jobs are the only way to fix this world

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Posted by **45guy** on [09/06/09 at 5:53PM](#)

Jobs? With Granholm's business taxes? With the Obamunists claiming

all businesses are evil & wanting to tax them out of existence?

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Posted by **zakzak** on [09/06/09 at 6:08PM](#)

We have the nations attention only one thing to do. BRING BACK AUTO WORLD lol.

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Posted by **zakzak** on [09/06/09 at 6:11PM](#)

Flint has the nations attention only one thing to do. BRING BACK AUTO WORLD lol

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Posted by **runbum03** on [09/06/09 at 6:13PM](#)

Granhholm's "gift" to Michigan businesses will be the over \$2 Billion they will have to pay back to the federal government for advanced extended unemployment payments.

How will they do this?

Easy.

If they have a 2% return on investments, then just make an extra \$100,000,000,000 in sales.

What would be so hard about making an "extra" \$100 Billion Sales???

That's pocket change to the Liberals running Michigan.

The joke is on the Michigan workers because that \$2 Billion will just be deducted from wages in the long run.

How come nobody is laughing????

But that's Granny's gift to Michigan's businesses.

Thank you very much, Gov. Granholm. What other surprises shall you have for Michigan before you leave the State bankrupt and in debt???

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Posted by **ALEXDOUG** on [09/06/09 at 6:45PM](#)

it will end in a fire sale. flint will turn around when it reaches rock botton then assests will be sold off at prices that investors small and large will want to take a chance on. small business will start up again and so on and so on. i the mean time the blood letting will continue. jen can talk talk talk all she wants but her policies are not business friendly and everyone in the nation knows it.

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Posted by **bodrell** on [09/06/09 at 7:27PM](#)

"Matt Bach, public relations director for the Flint Convention and Visitors Bureau..."

What's funny is last I knew he lives in Grand Blanc. I say turn Buick City into a giant casino complex. That will generate tons of jobs (sure, mostly low-paying but it's better then unemployment) and will bring a ton of people to the area every week.

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Posted by **Neisey** on [09/06/09 at 8:08PM](#)

WTF PEOPLE??? The whole country, make that the world is writing mostly negative stuff about OUR city. This negative crap reflects directly upon OUR city and US, the people that reside here. Shame on all of the people that posted negative comments on here. Congrats to those that posted positive comments.

Kildee, you are a moron!!! I will NEVER vote for you again!! Your are feeding right into the medias disillusioned and distorted view of OUR city! MY city!! HOW DARE you take STRANGERS looking for a story to our deserted, abandoned neighborhoods. Why don't you show them pictures of how downtown looked five or ten years ago and give them a tour of how OUR downtown looks today? Take those STRANGERS to Carrage Town or the East Village neighborhood. I am so angry that you are so stupid and ballsy to have the nerve to actually tell the citizens of Flint, that elected YOU, that you are feeding into the negativity that has surrounded Flint for so long.

Where were all of the so called "interested" journalists and reporters 20 years ago when this down turn of Flint started? Are they only "interested" because the rest of the country is exactly where we were 20, 25 years ago? The only way this city is going to change or become a better place is if US, the people that live here, quit laying down and stand up, for OUR city, OUR families, and EACHOTHER!!!!

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Posted by **flintmiusa** on [09/06/09 at 8:10PM](#)

The City of Flint should mandate all employees LIVE in the City. All county employees should live in Genesee County. There are many who do not.

With respect to the jobs situation - there are many open job positions throughout the area every day. Sadly, most people are expecting \$15-16 per hour or more. Those days are gone. The days where Flint, MI had one of the highest median incomes inthe country are long gone.

The mindset must change. Jobs which are taken should be appreciated. The days where our fellow citizens can afford multiple cars along with ATVs, snowmobiles, bikes, cabins up north are history.

As I have pointed out before on another post, I support bringing GITMO prisoners to Standish, for example. I wish it were Flint, MI frankly. We must diversity the source of revenue to our area including "prison type" establishments, Heck, why NOT build GITMO site at the former Buick City site? Dont laugh. Problem is, everyone still has the GM mindset and expect a handout when tough times hit.

Those days are gone. Again, we must diversify and that includes a Federal prison. Think of all the revenue that would bring - I KNOW when the Lapeer Correctional facility was built it generated a ton of money for the locals in various ways.

With regards to the casino idea - if it will generate "x" dollars per year, if the Indian Mgmt people think it will work, why not? That would be an addtl revenue source for our community.

As for the college students downtown...kids will spend money for food, for fun, for good times, etc and I support further development downtown. The downtown area is slowly turning around. Thats a good sign.

As for the people who want to build and develop Buick City for other reasons, incl trucking module (?), if the analysis supports it all the way around and we can reach agreement on the contaminated soil issue - I support that too.

We have alot of area we could develop incl the former Delphi at Dort and Davison Rds. Pehaps our City and County leaders in conjunction with our US Senators should be pushing for US Military type contracts to build certain parts or for R&D on that property.

There are companies in Lapeer County who have thrived on US Military contracts for 20+ yrs. We should be pursuing aggressively those types of contracts. We have the property, the engineers, skilled workers and plenty of work force aged men and women to fill the ranks.

Look at Bishop Airport and what it has accomplished in recent years. Sure it appears to have leveled off; but there is alot of revenue coming into the city/county coffers.

We have major infrastructure already in place to do anything imaginable to generate revenue. Read that again..."major infrastructure already in place..."

There is hope for the city and community. But the mindset of GM era wages has to be set aside. It will never be like that again.

I for one say push for military type contracts, bring the "terrorists" to a Federal Prison setting here in Flint area.

This would generate alot of revenue. It can happen, we can make it happen. We have Congressional reps who have powerful seats on certain committees. Our citizens must support this idea though.

Surrender? Not here in Flint, MI. We are down...yes...but there is hope. There are so many possibilities to generate revenue, decent paying jobs, etc. That in itself would help us turn the corner.

We will never surrender here. Too many skilled workers, alot of educated people and many young people who aspire to make it happen.

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Posted by **bodrell** on [09/06/09 at 8:21PM](#)

flintmusa, I agree with every word you wrote.

Except that there are a lot of open jobs - I'm not looking for work (I'm employed) but from what I understand there are 100s, if not 1000s, of applicants for every job, even minimum wage ones. A friend manages a gas station, she says they get people in every day asking about work, in addition to those who apply online.

I know stable, well-qualified people who have been putting in resumes and applications for months without even getting so much as acknowledgement. I suspect there are a lot of people who are ready and willing to work for \$8/hr who just can't find a job.

Yes, diversity is the key here....high paid manufacturing jobs are GONE forever, this area needs to adapt and accept a different paradigm in order to improve.

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Posted by **grantblank** on [09/06/09 at 8:38PM](#)

It was because Flint and Lansing were in the same UAW region, and hidden contract language regarding downsizing employment numbers that let GM move operations out of Flint. Talk to some former officers off the record in UAW Region 1C and find out the truth. The second new Assembly plant in Lansing should have been in Flint but somebody dropped that football big time. Some Wall Street Journal archives would possibly confirm this.

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Posted by **mibluegrad** on [09/06/09 at 9:27PM](#)

Right wing morons like to point to Flint and Detroit as examples of how the Democratic party fails instead of how the National politics of the right have failed this country and hurt industrial areas first. The blight is coming to a neighborhood near you soon if it hasn't already.

So-called fair trade lacks fairness and costs America its industry and middle class jobs. Greed is the new rule of the day and if you aren't rich you will end up with a lack of good schools, bad health care and dwindling incomes. Its already happening under years of conservative national rule and policies.

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Posted by **flintmiusa** on [09/06/09 at 9:43PM](#)

mibleuegrad - in your opinion, do you think the Unions have hurt areas like Flint, Pontiac, Lansing by shipping these jobs overseas?

Think about it, the Dems voted Mr Clinton in and was it not him who agreed to NAFTA? That in turn, urged many companies to move out of MI to capitalize on lower paying jobs. And in the interim, higher paying jobs were lost locally because of plant closings. That is true.

Many of the plant closing occurred during the Bush administration - those closings are not the result of Mr Bush. GM execs and others pushed jobs overseas and across the border versus standing up to the Unions and fighting.

Please correct me if I'm wrong...but the job losses in Flint are not the result of locals wanting GM out of here. It is the result of GM execs. pushing to lower the cost per unit of its vehicles.

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Posted by **ghostlimb** on [09/06/09 at 10:24PM](#)

As a home town boy, Michael Moore has every right to seek a public stage to expose GM management's short-sightedness and the resulting impact on people's lives, "Pets or Meat" -- an apt slogan for the time, no less true today.

What city in America today is thriving as a result of the steady investment of the automotive business?... Flint and Detroit the two most shining examples. Car business money went to New York and everywhere but re-investment back in the city, with the exception of a few hospitals and struggling concert halls.

The car business hasn't built a shining example of a U.S. city anywhere. Cities based on car culture destroy human scale and drive out competing businesses so they becomes an entrenched, in-bred one dimensional, economically car-meth addicted culture. Mass transit doesn't stand a chance, everything makes way for road-building and more cars while the real money the companies make goes to investment banks everywhere but locally.

Strip malls replace neighborhoods, big box retailers homogenize any local color. So Flint is at the vanguard of cities struggling with what to do after car culture's left and extracted much of the capital.

Giving up the ghost of a thriving car-based economy would be a good start. Creating small-enterprise neighborhoods and business communities would begin to return the human scale and dignity to motivated optimists. Portland has been clawing it's way out of the aftermath of the airline industry and now boasts one of the best communities in the U.S.. Flint's capable of large-scale transformation too... once rid of the car ghosts of fortune's past.

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Posted by **flintmiusa** on [09/06/09 at 10:35PM](#)

ghostlimb - well stated.

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Posted by **Civilityboy** on [09/06/09 at 11:00PM](#)

Civility couldn't help but notice that Guderian's comment about Flint being a "sewer" was ignored by everyone. Is it because everyone knows the guy is a "lost cause?" He doesn't live in Flint and yet he continues to bash our city...time and time again! What a clown. People like him are an intergral part of the problem...and they should just move out of the state. Most of the positive comments above are from good citizens--people interested in improving Flint. Perhaps his sewer remark comes from the fact that Guderian's thoughts and ideas come from the gutter.

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Posted by **Billwinkle** on [09/06/09 at 11:01PM](#)

And when Michael Moore made his movie, we all laughed.

And when the City of Flint told GM to pound sand on tax breaks, we said "Yeh, right on!"

And GM continued to move out, I'm sure the movie helped. Turns out Moore did get to meet Roger Smith, by the way, he just lied about it the way he lied about Cuban hospitals.

And then HE moved out.

And if Moore does for the country what he did for Flint, we'll all be living in caves.

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Posted by **Civilityboy** on [09/06/09 at 11:01PM](#)

Civility couldn't help but notice that Guderian's comment about Flint being a "sewer" was ignored by everyone. Is it because everyone knows the guy is a "lost cause?" He doesn't live in Flint and yet he continues to bash our city...time and time again! What a clown. People like him are an intergral part of the problem...and they should just move out of the state. Most of the positive comments above are from good citizens--people interested in improving Flint. Perhaps his sewer remark comes from the fact that Guderian's thoughts and ideas come from the gutter.

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Posted by **flintmuisa** on [09/06/09 at 11:16PM](#)

billwinkle - many people did laugh when the movie came out. I did not.

When the City told GM to pound sand with respect to the tax breaks...the end was near.

I remember sitting in a Political Science class in Florida in early 80's (during a recession) and a professor emphatically stating that the end was near for industrial towns like Flint...all because of competition and the "cost per unit" to produce.

Many people knew then what some are coming to grips with now. That high labor costs would catch up at some point in time. It was statistically inevitable for alot of this to occur.

Coming from a GM family with connections to the higher levels of the Union, I used to hear all the stories. But never did I hear anything about flexibility, willing to change, adapt to the 21st Century, etc.

We must adjust now our way of life, our attitudes and be willing to sacrifice certain things for the betterment of the long term.

But we will never surrender!

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Posted by **kickerk** on [09/06/09 at 11:28PM](#)

I earned my Associate's degree from Mott and my Bachelor of Arts degree from U of M Flint. I did not spend over \$40,000 to make \$10 an hour in Flint. No wonder everyone is moving out of this area! The money spent toward my education was put directly into FLINT. Now, why can't I work IN Flint?? We have no way to support our economy. If we don't make any money, how can you spend it in the area where we live?! I don't want to move, but it seems that most people are left without a choice. I work for GM and yeah, I make more than \$10 an hour, but it is NOT worth it. That place is a hell hole & I'm pretty sure that I'll already suffer health problems in the future from inhaling asbestos and toxic fumes on a daily basis. I want OUT of there, but I can't find anything that will pay me enough to make my mortgage payment. There is no way I could sell my house right now anyway...therefore I am stuck. I am a college graduate who is wasting my degree. The more time it takes me to find a job, the harder it is going to be to get one. FLINT NEEDS JOBS. Plain and simple. That should be our focus. More businesses, more jobs, more money people can earn, MORE MONEY WILL BE SPENT IN THE CITY. Simple.

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Posted by **wereinroubl** on [09/06/09 at 11:34PM](#)

"Flint Mayor Dayne Walling said the city is going through a "historic transformation" that creates a lot of interesting news stories. While he might disagree with a story here or there, at least people are talking about Flint, he said."

Historic transformation? So did the Greek and Roman empires.

Pollyanna stories are good, but until this city brings in jobs, stops the bleeding of population, the exodus of its young people, Flint will continue to be the poster child of everything that is wrong with America and politicians. Is it fair? Of course not, but a bad reputation- one that was in part created by the media- is very hard to shake.

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Posted by **Civilityboy** on [09/07/09 at 12:22AM](#)

Civility witnesses real, serious concern from the last two postings. This isn't the Greek or Roman Empires, though. There is no military connection other than some small contracts from the government with Kettering University. EVERYONE knows that Flint needs jobs, jobs, and more jobs. The exodus of folks, young and old (and everyone in between), will continue unabated. Lousy reputations are tough to shake, but not impossible. One thing is for sure: even small increments of positive change locally get noticed...by the same media that bashed us previously.

As Mayor Dayne Walling stated, Flint is going through a historic transformation. It's just as easy to simply say Flint is going through great change...which is something that has been ongoing for some time now. Hell, the entire country is going through historic transformation! For that matter, every nation on earth is going through some sort of historic transformation.

For those of us still here, we're just gonna have to suck it up and work a little harder to right the ship. The mayor is not a "9 to 5" kinda guy and if we truly want to witness change, everyone will have to contribute. It's not that complicated, folks.

One of the first orders of business is to rid ourselves of the negativity that permeates our being. There are way too many people whose "sewer" remarks about Flint are given a free ride. That shouldn't happen. People like Guderian need to be singled out and overwhelmed by others who are willing to work to improve Flint.

It really doesn't take much, people. Attitudes can be changed and in fact, they must be changed. If you're not willing to improve or change

your attitude toward Flint, then you should be part of the aforementioned exodus out of the state. And don't stop there--go to another country and latch on to your dreams there!

California used to be the big draw. Do you want to go from bad to worse? Try Mexico...if you like drug lords and bodies found mutilated everywhere. Canada won't even let you pass through unless you have a valid passport. Try Europe...where Muslims from North Africa and the Middle East are changing Western culture and values.

The point is: Flint has much to offer its citizens. Jobs continue to be in short supply, right? The mayor has an open office every Wednesday morning, so run on down there and share your positive ideas on how to improve Flint and while you're at it, perhaps you can whisper in his ear about how to bring jobs here.

Importantly, quit sitting around bitching and complaining about how bad Flint is. Do something positive! And if you have to, drag yourself out of the "sewer" and take a gigantic chill-pill. We'll all be better for it!

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Posted by **Indscpurbnsm** on [09/07/09 at 2:17AM](#)

Neisey, you need to get off that high horse of yours. I'm not saying you aren't right about the hysterics that Kildee has been all too happy to engage with in the media. But you seriously need some context. Oh sure, downtown is radically different than it was just 10 years ago, but what of places writing about Flint? You know... London, New York, San Francisco, etc. Even stories from sister Rust Belt cities like Pittsburgh, Buffalo, and others leave what's happened in Flint a comparative nightmare. Have you ever walked down Broadway at 10pm on a Sunday? There's more life, vibrancy, energy, diversity, and urbanism in the four blocks north and south of Times Square than Flint can even hope to match most any day of the week, any time of the year.

Flint has some tremendous assets and events, but you can't expect most people, coming from the varied cities and backgrounds that they do, expect to draw out the thin, silky threads of real life and character that make cities such great places, even when they are recognized, from all the murk and dross and kipple that permeate this city. Look at the majority of posts responding to this article. If it bleeds, it leads. And Flint, despite all the bright little gems, still continues to bleed like an anemic stuck pig. For better or worse, I hope you understand that unless you're one of the twelve people I'm thinking of right now, Dan Kildee has done more for Flint than you have.

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Posted by **TCnorth** on [09/07/09 at 8:06AM](#)

How Flint looks or is represented in the media has nothing to do with big business coming to Flint. If those businesses could make a profit they would move there, plain and simple. They simply can't though. All of the old GM sites are extremely polluted and because GM is now bankrupt they are no longer responsible for the cleanup. Businesses don't want to assume the risk of the possible contamination of said sites. Another aspect of the situation is the work force. Michigan is a Union state, even if people say they would work for appropriate wages right now, there is no guarantee that they wouldn't unionize a few years down the road. If Michigan became a right to work state and the state govt. assumed the responsibility of the old contaminated Buick plants; than maybe...just maybe new industry would move into the region.

Some people will write and say that I am wrong, but if you do a little research and use some common sense you will realize that I am absolutely correct.

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Posted by **ivanjerkino** on [09/07/09 at 9:26AM](#)

flintmusa. Hope doesn't pay bill's nor does it put food on the table.

I hope food a job that pay's 18.00 a/hour. I hope to move out the arm pit of america. I hope to have a nice meal on the table. When you reach into you pocket, you can find hope. Feel for it and there nothing there. Just like the city of flint.

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Posted by **Civilityboy** on [09/07/09 at 9:42AM](#)

"IvanjerkinoF" has the perfect moniker. See what Civility means? Flint will be much better when he hits the road for his "hope". Find it somewhere else, Jerkoff, 'cause this place will smell a whole lot better without your negativity.

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Posted by **Grannyno** on [09/07/09 at 9:51AM](#)

Flint does need jobs but it badly needs to do something about the large number of undereducated, dysfunctional people that are a constant drain on the community's resources, Most of these people have neither the skills or work ethic to hold down a job.

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Posted by **torgohugo** on [09/07/09 at 10:24AM](#)

Why would Mlive use a stock photo of GM Headquarters in Detroit in an article about Flint?

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Posted by **chanze** on [09/07/09 at 10:45AM](#)

It certainly wasn't the undereducated and dysfunctional that drove the industry out of town! Actually, just the opposite. Flint doesn't hold the patent on ignorant folks either...they're everywhere. IMHO, Flint people are gracious and fun-loving...I just adore them! Frequently, I get to choose where to work, and I always choose Flint! Why? Because of all the cities I've experienced, the Flint people treat me the best. So put a spotlight on that!

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Posted by **JOEYZUZU** on [09/07/09 at 10:53AM](#)

Civilityboy ----its funny that you tell people to move out....Mayby thats because you have your pension and can sit back and eat steaks everynight...

ivanjerkinoF---- made a great point.... what about the beginners.....the new grads....

Hope dont get the family feed.....most people didnt move because they lost hope... they moved because they had to eat.....retard

until someone figures out how to get jobs back in flint, hoping is a waste of time.....

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Posted by **Mattbachcvb** on [09/07/09 at 11:21AM](#)

If any of you are passionate about Flint and find yourself supporting our community send me an email and I'll add you to the Flint supporters email group. My email is mbach@flint.travel.

Thanks - Matt Bach

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Posted by **wintermoon** on [09/07/09 at 11:31AM](#)

WOW! Many good replies to this article. Genesee County and Flint may be short on many things but not on ideas and opinions.

Some real deadbeat replies as well as thoughtful ones. I hope, honestly, that most of us fall somewhere in the middle: cautious hope/wishful thinking. One thing we all agree on is that there's plenty of room for improvement in Flint and it's county.

So....if you've got some free time, attend a council or county meeting (try not to yawn though). A little more time? Volunteer somewhere. Make a small contribution of time/labor in the area. If the people are the backbone of Flint/Genesee County, we need to show our strength to the world as well as our (sometimes blind) community leaders. Let them know we're still here and what direction we want things to go in.

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Posted by **3gunmack** on [09/07/09 at 11:42AM](#)

I actually moved TO Flint 5 years ago..."jobs"...that's what everyone thinks is the biggest problem here?...I would suggest that we've got bigger problems...since when do you have to live ten miles from work? ...can't you live here and drive to Troy? or wherever?...I know a lot of people with positive attitudes and good work ethics here...but I would suggest that we're outnumbered by the LOOTERS...there are more people in Flint with "entitlement" mentalities than without...from the unions to the welfare state..."gimme, gimme, gimme"...one look at the Statistical Abstract(they have it at the reference desk at the library) shows why Flint's in the tank...you always get more of what you subsidize...and we subsidize teen pregnancy, fatherless homes, drug addiction, failure, laziness, quitting school, etc. at a staggering rate...you wanna change the city, then I agree, you have to change your mindset...stop making excuses for your neighbors...make them uncomfortable about receiving food stamps and bridge cards as a permanent way of life...don't buy food stamps for pennies on the dollar so the person who sold them to you can use the money to buy booze or drugs...stop giving the bums a dollar every time you see them...your money would be better spent supporting a legitimate local business than being passed from him or her to their dealer...make people around you want to produce instead of take all the time...make criminals uncomfortable in your neighborhoods by standing up to them or finding someone who will...influence others to stop embracing a sloppy, unkempt and lazy culture-from their manner of dress to their grammar and speech...start doing it yourself and stop asking the government...cool?...got it?

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Posted by **flintcent69** on [09/07/09 at 11:48AM](#)

You are wrong Joeyzuzu and Civility is right. The negativity and stones being hurled at Flint are from cowards. Cowards who knew their options in Flint before the became " new grads" or "beginner". Yes times are tough but we will survive Why? because we have HOPE, Hope not only feed family's it moves mountains, step by step inch by inch it works. Joey wouldn't know a job if it bit them in the a@@. Why? Is it because { they moved because they had to eat....retard) you are hungry or you lost hope. Civility continue to drive a nail into coffins of the hopeless who bash of our beloved city, and one day their glass houses will come crashing down..... hope.

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Posted by **Neisey** on [09/07/09 at 11:49AM](#)

Indscpurbnsm, I'm sorry, do you know me? Do you know what I do for

Flint? Why are you trying to compare a small city like Flint with large cities like New York and San Francisco? If Flint is sucking too much of your blood, then leave. You probably don't live here, but like others, feel the need to post about a city you know nothing about.

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Posted by **chesscity** on [09/07/09 at 11:59AM](#)

I was excited about the many hidden gems of Flint when I moved here six years ago, but 3gunmack is right: the LOOTERS are taking over. Look at some formerly strong neighborhoods and who's moving into those used-to-be-proud houses as low-life renters. The young people who are third generation welfare kids are predators and will drive workers away. Productive people are sending their kids to charter schools, leaving the public schools as a repository for these predators. Two things must be done: make public employees live here as middle class examples and fix the schools. Fixing the schools is the biggie, because the personnel at the top never change, and it's not about the curriculum. So good luck with that.

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Posted by **Grannyno** on [09/07/09 at 12:01PM](#)

3gunmack, you have made my point my eloquently than I. I have volunteered in Flint for 50 years and worked for the Flint Board of Education for 33 years (and don't blame Flint teachers. GIGO) Start by attacking quality of life "crimes." Why are we putting up with "in your face" attitudes such as walking in the street, even in downtown, when the sidewalks are clear and available? Why not cross streets at intersections instead of mid-block. Why deliberately drive the wrong way on one way streets or in parking lots? Perhaps the DDA can start ticketing these folks as well as parkers. People need to respect the law and the rights of others.

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Posted by **geneseeman** on [09/07/09 at 12:03PM](#)

Stop the welfare. Find a job or leave. It's the only way we can fix this mess. It will make for a rough few years, but we need to fix this for future generations. Let's stop this madness. Why bother with the whole jobs thing? POS will take the easy way, WELFARE. How many more generatins are we going to destroy?

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Posted by **Mattbachcvb** on [09/07/09 at 12:08PM](#)

If you are a supporter of Flint and the Flint area then send me an email and I'll add you to a daily email report that I produce. My email is mbach@flint.travel. Go Flint!

Thanks - Matt Bach

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Posted by **wintermoon** on [09/07/09 at 12:18PM](#)

3gun, YIPPEE!! You and many of the others are spot on.

I don't live in Flint but I am in Genesee County and I realize (unlike some of our politicians and other residents) that we're all in this together.

So...not sure this is something to seriously discuss on a forum but I'd be interested in searching for ways/ideas/answers/promotions/publicity that would encourage the caring people of Flint to start expecting more

from all residents.

We can't expect government to do for us what we won't do ourselves. Anyone have any idea how to get the ball rolling on something like this or how to even contact each other (if we wanted to) without posting emails on a public forum? I'm not keen on that, thank you very much (spam spam spam is not my favorite thing to receive, either as dinner or email) LOL

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Posted by **wintermoon** on [09/07/09 at 12:21PM](#)

Ah, didnt' see your post until after I commented, Matt.

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Posted by **Southbeagle** on [09/07/09 at 12:37PM](#)

Welfare, crime, drug dealers and street walkers, what is not to like about Flint?

Every state needs a couple Ghettos, Flint and Detoilet fit the bill in Michigan.

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Posted by **charlie18** on [09/07/09 at 1:03PM](#)

3Gunn and TCNorth - Yep. You hit the nail right on the head.

I posted this on another article this morning:

*"The state ranked just 27th nationally in the 2008 Kauffman Index of Entrepreneurial Activity, lagging behind most western states and national leader Georgia in the survey's measure of adults creating businesses each month."*

The politicians in Michigan are looking to "hit the job Lotto"...finding one big supplier of thousands of jobs (aka Ford, Kellog, Dow), rather than many small suppliers of jobs (aka entrepreneurs and small businesses). There is no other explanation for Michigan's ranking 27th in Enrepreneurial Activity as the statement below shows.

*"...Michigan is working to encourage the creation of new industries to provide the middle-class jobs that made the state a mecca for generations of workers..."*

We are trying to compete with countries where people make \$10 per day to manufacture products. American companies are even using cheap labor from other countries for various services like first-level customer phone support, accounting services, etc.

But, maybe the worst example of outsourcing labor is when it is done right in front of our faces. Virtually every American Information Technology company or contract houses bring H1B Visa workers into America to take away good paying jobs. These workers from India, Pakistan, China, etc. take your job and cubicle.

Recently Microsoft and Nintendo begged congress to allow them to employ even more foreign visa workers in America. They even for the first time actually said they needed to do so in order to compete; not because there aren't enough skilled workers in America (their old argument).

This practice would be the equivalent of the Big 3 replacing all their line workers in factories in America with illegal immigrants. Can you imagine that? The big difference is that most IT jobs require 4 year college degrees and ongoing education and certifications. So, those people who went to school, got good grades, and got a good job are really screwed over....and thousands of dollars in debt.

So...both college educated and uneducated middle-class jobs are continuously being taken away from Americans. And Michigan is trying to fight it on a playing field that is heavily tilted against us. Good luck.

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Posted by **3gunmack** on [09/07/09 at 2:03PM](#)

genesee, "get job or leave"?...pretty harsh...and I'm sure that for some who HAVE to take welfare, it isn't the easy thing for them to do, but I think I know you didn't mean to include everyone...and Matt, doesn't everyone end up "supporting" Flint and the Flint area with their tax dollars? ;)...I support Flint only by supporting myself, being a good example and spending a lot of my money here...if I lost work and couldn't find it here, I'd move, too...unfortunately, though, there are at least 5 or 6 bartenders that that would render jobless, too ;)

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Posted by **yabanez33** on [09/07/09 at 2:38PM](#)

Flint is just a crappy town. GM gave Flint a chance. When GM left, for smart reasons, all the smart people left Flint also and that left all the stupid crack dealing, welfare people in Flint. That is why Flint is so nasty. Who would want to move to Flint? Or live in Flint? NUKE IT!

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Posted by **JOEYZUZU** on [09/07/09 at 5:51PM](#)

flintcent69-----FYI----joey (me) hired more then 400 hundred people in the last 15 years in this city, but i wouldnt know a job if it bit me.....right.....good one

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Posted by **Indscurbnsm** on [09/07/09 at 6:14PM](#)

No, I don't know you. You will note that I clearly stated that in relation to the twelve people (who have dramatically impacted the city of Flint) I was thinking of and do know what they do. My comments address what I do know about you after having read your post. It's not perfect, but it is the internet (all those exclamations and capitol letters suggest a lot... ;)). What's ironic is that you're doing the same thing. I can assure you that I know a great deal about this city. Not everything, of course, but what I do know, I'm passionate about and committed to. And yes, I do live in Flint. Right downtown, actually. Incredible, huh?

And I'm not just comparing Flint with just large cities (but don't forget that many of the people writing about Flint are coming from those cities, not just the ones that are convenient for you to compare to). If you want, you can include cities like Lansing, Ann Arbor, Berkley, Richmond, Grand Rapids, Knoxville, Salt Lake city, Fort Lauderdale, Rochester, Boise, Spokane, Bellevue, Tacoma, Tempe, Chattanooga, Oceanside, or any other city with less than 200,000 people! It doesn't matter! By-and-large, they can look at Flint and not get excited about some new restaurants downtown, the notion of us being a "college town," our newly renovated buildings, or anything else that Flint's doing. Why? Because those efforts don't register for them. They aren't what they're writing about. They pale in comparison to what these people already see, do, have or are planning to do in their own community. That said, I'm still willing to bet that Dan Kildee, has done a great deal more for this city than you have. I know he's been able to do more than I have. If that weren't the case, the journalists would be calling you, not him.

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Posted by **dcnotpc** on [09/07/09 at 9:54PM](#)



More doing, less talking, less whining and much much less expecting something for nothing.  
I especially hate the wanting something for nothing attitude from many in this community. Don't like to be negative, but we really need to have a more educated and motivated populace to thrive.

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Posted by **newlander** on [09/07/09 at 10:23PM](#)

Here we go again: every friggin' article on this state digresses into a pissing match between you people over politics. To educate a few clueless folks on here about NAFTA it was absolutely, positively set in motion by Reagan and Bush. THEN Clinton signed it into law in 1993. BOTH parties are responsible for it and anyone with half a brain cell and a decent memory knows that. We'll never get out of this until people can pull together and work towards common goals of better jobs, schools and communities. To say that "Granholm has wrecked Michigan" is just as short sighted as saying "Bush has wrecked America" Neither is true and everyone spins information for their own political mindset. Meantime...lots of people are hurting. Put your petty and punitive differences aside and start to come together Michiganders before it's too late.....

(here's an article on NAFTA TO BACK UP WHAT I WROTE ABOVE)

What is NAFTA?:

NAFTA is short for the North American Free Trade Agreement. NAFTA covers Canada, the U.S. and Mexico making it the world's largest free trade area in terms of GDP. As of January 1, 2008, all tariffs between the three countries have been eliminated. Between 1993-2007, trade tripled from \$297 billion to \$930 billion. (Source: USTR, U.S. - Mexican Officials Meet to Discuss NAFTA, January 11, 2008; NAFTA: Myth versus Fact, March 18, 2008)

When Was NAFTA Started?:

NAFTA was signed by U.S. President George H.W. Bush, Mexican President Salinas, and Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney in 1992. It was ratified by the legislatures of the three countries in 1993. The U.S. House approved it by 234 to 200 on November 17 and the Senate by 60 to 38 on November 20. It was signed into law by President Bill Clinton on December 8, 1993 and entered force January 1, 1994. Although it was started by President Bush, it was a priority of President Clinton's, and its passage is considered one of his first successes. (Source: History.com, NAFTA Signed into Law, December 8, 1993.)

How Was NAFTA Started?:

The impetus for NAFTA actually began with President Ronald Regan, who campaigned on a North American common market. In 1984, Congress passed the Trade and Tariff Act. This is important because it gave the President "fast-track" authority to negotiate free trade agreements, while while only allowing Congress the ability to approve or disapprove, not change negotiating points. Canadian Prime Minister Mulroney agrees with Reagan to begin negotiations for the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement, which was signed in 1988, went into effect in 1989 and is now suspended due to NAFTA. (Source: NaFina, NAFTA Timeline)

Meanwhile, Mexican President Salinas and President Bush began negotiations for a liberalized trade between the two countries. Prior to NAFTA, Mexican tariffs on U.S. imports were 250% higher than U.S. tariffs on Mexican imports. In 1991, Canada requests a trilateral agreement, which then led to NAFTA. In 1993, concerns about liberalization of labor and environmental regulations led to the adoption of two addendums to NAFTA. (Source: Infoplease.com, NAFTA)

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Posted by **Civilityboy** on [09/07/09 at 10:31PM](#)

Boy, oh boy...open this up to people like "Joeyzuzu" and we all gain absolutely nothing. What the heck kinda name is "zuzu?" It sounds like the noise a baby makes when he/she is sucking on a lollipop. Anyway, Mr. Joey-boy, Civility hasn't dined on steak in perhaps four months...he doesn't really care for red meat. That just goes to show folks that you know absolutely nothing about Civilityboy. Zippo. Please leave your

trash remarks at the curb, okay?

"Flintcent69", I salute you! Besides possessing uncommon common sense, your praise of Civility's logic is much appreciated. Unlike people like the zuzu guy, you are positive and truly care about Flint. The mayor is looking for positive people to move us forward...let's do what we can, even if in small increments, and Flint will eventually rebound. The haters need to hate on themselves and leave positive folks like us alone. Okey dokey?

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Posted by **ivanjerkinf** on [09/07/09 at 11:13PM](#)

can some one tell me where I can get a good coney?

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Posted by **JOEYZUZU** on [09/08/09 at 2:00AM](#)

LOL- angelo's franklin and davison..=)

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Posted by **civilityho** on [09/08/09 at 7:57AM](#)

I love how the Journal always talks about who's to blame for unemployment in Flint, and they never include THEMSELVES.

They got rid of at least 100 jobs that were fair paying -- replacing them with part-time workers (if at all) who don't even get benefits.

SO Journal, why don't YOU own up to your role in ruining Flint? You took our tax abatement money, then fled. YOU hired foreign workers to build that atrocity and now YOU will likely want someone to take it off your hands.

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Posted by **Hoochmama2** on [09/08/09 at 8:00AM](#)

LOL- angelo's franklin and davison..=)

Don't bother. IT is a dirty cockroach infested hole and grease pit that I wouldn't feed cattle and horses.

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Posted by **mattbachcvb** on [09/08/09 at 9:35AM](#)

ivanjerkinf,

I ate at Angelo's last week (had a coney) and it was good. I also recommend Tom Z's Coney Island (Flint Original Coney Island) on Court Street or Starlite Coney Island at Center and Davison roads. Both Tom Z's and Starlite have been remodeled in recent years and are very nice. Also, Capitol Coney Island at Bristol and Van Slyke is good too. I'm sure I'm forgetting some other good ones, but those are the main ones that come to mind. Hope that helps.

- Matt Bach

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Posted by **areaNewbie** on [09/08/09 at 9:42AM](#)

Ditto on 3gunmack's comments, have been here just a few months myself and the area does need more creators; way too many looters.

Note to the suburbs, get yourself into rehab, your drug dollars are helping to fuel your misery and that of others.

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Posted by **ivanjerkinof** on [09/08/09 at 10:41AM](#)

Hey thanks Mr.Matt Bach.

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Posted by **flintmiusa** on [09/08/09 at 2:23PM](#)

I do not comment for a few days and the blog goes wild!

First, stay away from Angelos - Capital or Starlight much better.

Matt Bach - you already hv me on twitter under this same name...

ivanjerkinof - you are right - "HOPE doesnt pay the bills or put food on the table..." but with hope, there is a glimmer of expectation.

Having been born and raised in Flint, MI, I'm not willing to give up. In fact, I'm trying to find a new place downtown to live (any loft condos available?). I sleep in Flint, I eat in Flint and do alot of business in Flint. My business is in Flint area.

Ivan...HOPE allowed me to start a business, work long hours and opened doors to increase revenue. Without HOPE Mr Ivan..., I would NOT have had a successful business.

With HOPE, I pay city taxes, state taxes, federal taxes, workmens comp and liability insurance...plus my employees, some of whom reside in the City of Flint, get paid each and every week. We are NOT a large business but with HOPE, we may expand.

It is difficult to have hope when there is no direction from within the family, drugs are prevalent, children are walking the streets at midnight (like last night) or later and the "norm" is to cause mischief within the community via B&Es, strong armed robberies, drug dealing, drive bys with an AK47, etc.

My HOPE is that we all get along, raise good families, remain proud of our city and contribute all around to the community.

The negativity which is so prevalent on here sometimes needs to be refocused on good things...

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Posted by **JOEYZUZU** on [09/09/09 at 12:07AM](#)

dont you mean determination and cash.....

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Posted by **flintmiusa** on [09/09/09 at 12:28AM](#)

joe - is that for me? If so, just clarify

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Posted by **flintmiusa** on [09/09/09 at 12:29AM](#)

joe - is that for me? If so, just clarify

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Posted by **flintmiosa** on [09/09/09 at 12:30AM](#)

joey - is that for me? If so, just clarify

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Welcome back, czabransky!

Comments: (you may use HTML tags for style)



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