

237 things you love

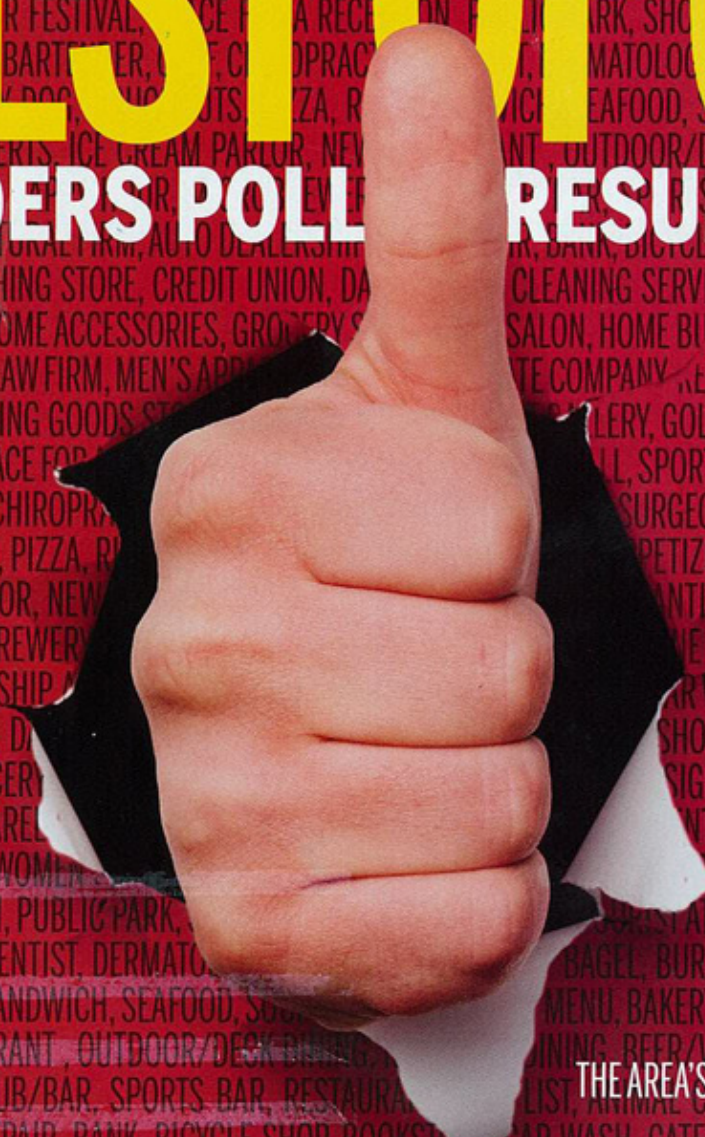
CELEBRATING CITY LIFE

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GRAND RAPIDS

BEST OF GR

READERS POLL RESULTS



THE IMMIGRATION BATTLE » PG 50

THE AREA'S PREMIER DINING LISTINGS » PG 58

TWO PLATE: TRE CUGINI



BY JOCELYN BURKETT

BEST OF GRAND RAPIDS READERS POLL

GR GETS ITS VOTE ON!

EXCITEMENT BUILDS TO A FEVER PITCH
AS RECORD AMOUNT OF VOTES ARE COUNTED
AND NEW WINNERS REPLACE OLD!

The months from June to September at Grand Rapids Magazine are heightened in activity with the onslaught of ballots for the Best of Grand Rapids Readers Poll. This year, the ballot counter is certain everyone was on steroids as the magazine received a record amount of completed tallies.

Some votes were humorous; others were conservative. Many were chock full of time-honored local and national chain businesses; many were more unconventional and fresh. We always are surprised by the duality of your preferences, but we heartily enjoy seeing the diversity in your choices.

Not only do we celebrate your willingness to holler for your favorites, we applaud you for tak-

ing the time to be brilliant and innovative as well as cautious and universal. This was a big year with new winners in several categories. Take a look and tell us what you think. Your comments and suggestions are welcome on our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/grmag) and our Twitter page (www.twitter.com/grmagazine).

If you don't find your personal favorites on the list, there's plenty of time to design your strategy for next year. The balloting will begin again in June 2011.

Cheers and congratulations to all the winners and other favorites!



"Coffee, the finest organic suspension ever devised."
— "Star Trek Voyager"

"Biggby, the finest coffeehouse in Grand Rapids."
— Grand Rapids Magazine Readers

(Pictured: Barrista Drew Steele)



a la carte

BAGEL

The Best: Panera Bread
Other favorites: Bagel Beanery
Big Apple Bagels

BURGER

The Best: Cottage Bar
Other favorites: Red Robin
Choo Choo Grill

BURRITO

The Best: Beltline Bar
Other favorites: Little Mexico
Downtown Trini's

CHICKEN WINGS

The Best: Buffalo Wild Wings
Other favorites: Wing Heaven
Sandmann's

CONEY DOG

The Best: Yesterdog
Other favorites: Ritz Coney Island
Dog Pit

DOUGHNUTS

The Best: Marge's Donut Den
Other favorites: Krispy Kreme
Van's Pastry

PIZZA

The Best: Vitale's
Other favorites: Peppino's
Uccello's

RIBS

The Best: Sandmann's
Other favorites: Sam's Joint
Famous Dave's

SANDWICH

The Best: Schnitz Deli
Other favorites: Panera Bread
Marie Catrib's

SEAFOOD

The Best: Leo's
Other favorites: Charley's Crab
Bonefish Grill

SOUP

The Best: Panera Bread
Other favorites: Zoup!
Bite

STEAK

The Best: Louis Benton
Other favorites: Chop House
Brann's

cuisine

APPETIZER MENU

The Best: San Chez
Other favorites: Republic
Bistro Bella Vita

BAKERY

The Best: Wealthy Street Bakery
Other favorites: Arnie's
Van's Pastry

Via Design: One of the talented designers remarked that her dream project is to redesign the Brady House — an ambitious, lofty and entirely necessary undertaking. (Pictured: Valerie Schmieder and Brian Barkwell, principals)



Eastown Antiques (facing page): Old is new again, but precious never left the building with the most amazing antique treasures in Grand Rapids.

SPORTS BAR

The Best: Uccello's
Other favorites: The Score
 Peppino's

RESTAURANT WINE LIST

The Best: Bar Divani
Other favorites: Red's on the River
 1913 Room

shopping & services

ANIMAL HOSPITAL

The Best: Cascade Hospital for Animals
Other favorites: South Kent Veterinary
 Hospital
 Family Friends Veterinary Hospital



Visbeen Associates: They don't call these exquisitely superior domiciles "dream" homes for nothing! (Pictured: President Wayne Visbeen)

ANTIQUÉ SHOP

The Best: Eastown Antiques
Other favorites: City Antiques
 Blue Door

ARCHITECTURAL FIRM

The Best: Visbeen Associates
Other favorites: Integrated Architecture
 J. Visser Design

AUTO DEALERSHIP

The Best: Fox Motor Group
Other favorites: Todd Wenzel
 Betten Imports

AUTO REPAIR

The Best: Community Auto Repair
Other favorites: Fox Motors
 Veenstra's Garage

BANK

The Best: Macatawa Bank
Other favorites: Fifth Third Bank
 Chase

BICYCLE SHOP

The Best: Village Bike Shop
Other favorites: Ada Bike Shop
 Freewheeler Bike Shop

BOOKSTORE

The Best: Schuler Books & Music
Other favorites: Barnes & Noble
 Literary Life

CAR WASH

The Best: Southland Auto Wash
Other favorites: Cascade Car Wash
 Waterworks

CATERING COMPANY

The Best: Applause
Other favorites: Panache
 Gilmore Collection

CHILDREN'S CLOTHING STORE

The Best: Snapdragon
Other favorites: Justice for Girls
 The Children's Place

CREDIT UNION

The Best: Lake Michigan CU
Other favorites: Option One
 Kent County CU

DAY SPA

The Best: Design 1
Other favorites: Tanaz
 Vasaio Life Spa

DRY CLEANING

The Best: Sheldon Cleaners
Other favorites: Afendoulis
 Master Cleaners

FLORIST/FLOWER SHOP

The Best: Eastern Floral
Other favorites: Kennedy's Flowers & Gifts
 Modern Day Floral

FURNITURE STORE

The Best: Northwestern Home Furnishings
Other favorites: Klingman's
 Israels

GARDEN CENTER

The Best: Fruitbasket Flowerland
Other favorites: Romance Gardens
 Koetsier's

GIFTS/HOME ACCESSORIES

The Best: Wealthy at Charles
Other favorites: Right at Home
 Kennedy's Flowers & Gifts



Glenn Forgie/Red's on the River: We're thinking Chef Glenn is the reason for so many "Swarm" badges in the city of Rockford on Foursquare.

GROCERY STORE

The Best: Meijer
Other favorites: D&W
 Forest Hills Foods

HAIR SALON

The Best: Design 1
Other favorites: Coiffeteria
 Panopoulos Salons

HOME BUILDER

The Best: Scott Christopher Homes
Other favorites: Colonial Builders
 BDR

INTERIOR DESIGN FIRM

The Best: Via Design
Other favorites: Tom Krupansky
 Kathryn Chaplow

JEWELRY STORE

The Best: Preusser Jewelers
Other favorites: Herkner Jewelers
 DeVries Jewelers

LANDSCAPING COMPANY

The Best: Stout Creek
Other favorites: Terra Verde
 Kappes

LAW FIRM

The Best: Kuiper-Orlebeke
Other favorites: Varnum
 Miller Johnson

MEN'S APPAREL STORE

The Best: A.K. Rikk's
Other favorites: Jos. A. Banks
 Fitzgerald's