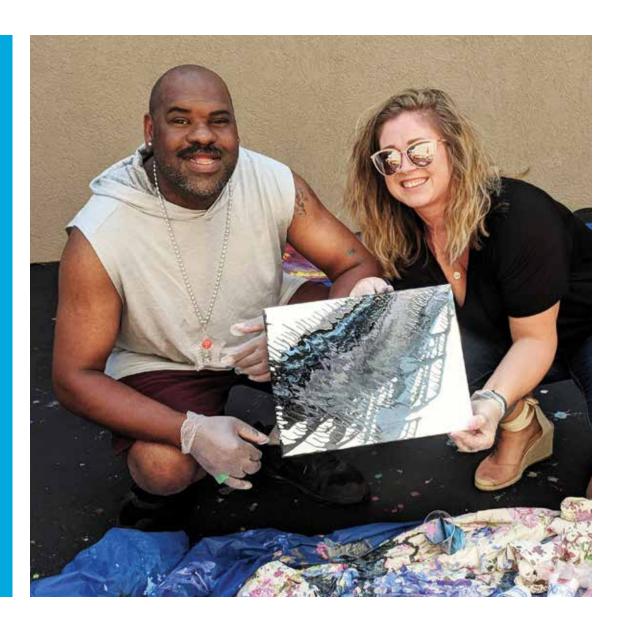
The only local voice for news, arts, and culture ERIE GIVES DAY THE ERIE COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE ERIE READER **WEST BAYWALKS:** August 2021 // Vol. 11 No. 8 // ErieReade A PANDEMIC PIVOT **BECOMES TRADITION GROWTH** THE WRIGHT STUFF OPPORTUNITIES FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT AT THE COMMUNITY GARDENS HAGEN HISTORY CENTER 19 VAC FEED BODY AND SOUL 814 DAY | KELLAR'S | THADDEUS STEVENS | BETTY BUCKLEY | PACA FREE





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From the Editors

Getting organized

y the time this issue's run is over, school will officially be back in session. And in the lead-up to that annual milestone, there will inevitably be chaos — a scramble to pack in as many late summer plans and projects before the footballs start to fly and the leaves start to turn.

For the frazzled and discombobulated among us, this time of year serves to remind us of the importance of prioritization. Of all our organization methods — and we have some elaborate ones (e.g. color-coding Tupperware containers by moon phase, timing plant waterings by the number of affixed googly eyes) — organization by priority is perhaps our most fundamental. Civilization itself was organized to better serve our priorities - food, water, shelter, security, socialization, and if all else went according to plan, fulfilling a sense of greater purpose.

The basic subunit of civilization, of course, is community. And a community's priorities can be read by what causes it chooses to organize around. Erie Gives Day, which has been observed on the second Tuesday of August for a decade, has proven a good barometer of that over the years, providing a telling cross-section of what we care most about. For some of us, it goes back to our health and well-being. For others, it's the environment we share and the other living things we share it with. Still others organize around reorganizing society in such a manner that it is fair and equitable to all.

Elemental to socioeconomic equity is access to a quality education. The freshly instituted Erie County Community College of Pa. (EC3PA) is currently locked into its own late-summer scramble, getting its facilities, faculty, and infrastructure ready in time to welcome its first students on Wednesday, Sept. 1 (incidentally the date when the next edition of the Erie Reader will drop). Nick Warren speaks to newly appointed EC3PA president Dr. Christopher Gray about this process, and how supporting the community college model helps buttress our future.

Although certainly high profile, EC3PA is just one of 426 nonprofits that can be donated to on Erie Gives Day, taking place Aug. 10 from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. That's a lot of priorities to sort through. Thankfully, the Erie Community Foundation — now under the direction of Karen Bilowith following the retirement of Mike Batchelor (see Ben Speggen's interview) — offers handy search and filter functionalities on its Erie Gives website (eriegives.org). And if you still need to be steered in a particular direction, the Erie Reader staff is here to help throughout these pages, with write-ups and in-depth articles on several worthy causes.

Even if you lost your Trapper Keeper back in the '90s, here's hoping we continue to find ways to get our priorities straight. Community, though — that's something we can all organize around.

Growth Opportunities

Community gardens feed body and soul



By: Liz Allen

here's an apple tree-free Garden of *Edin* flourishing in Edinboro, a winter-hardy fig orchard thriving in Little Italy, and Syrian eggplants sprouting near German Street.

Those are some of the delights I discovered at several community gardens and farms in the Erie area.

At Garden of Edin, a banner bears this quote from Robin Wall Kimmerer, an environmental author and biologist: "A garden is a nursery for nurturing connection, the soil for cultivation of practical reverence."

It's an apt quote for Garden of Edin, which is sponsored by First United Presbyterian Church in Edinboro, supported by grants from the Lake Erie Presbytery's Congregational Life Committee, bolstered by donations from the church's various organizations and local individuals, and nurtured by all ages, including preschoolers, scouting troops, teens in placement at Hermitage House Youth Services, university students, and senior citizens.

Elsewhere in Erie, community gardens are also fostering growth beyond the bounty of fruits and vegetables. At gardens organized by the Sisters of St. Joseph Neighborhood Network (SS-JNN), teens are learning about nature and healthy eating as they develop job skills. At three fledgling farms overseen by the Erie Field Office of the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, New Americans are discovering how to adapt farming skills from their native countries to agriculture here. Eventually, they may choose to make farming their full-time profession, helping to stem the loss of family farms.

"Edin" is pronounced like the Biblical

paradise, but the puckish name also plays off its location in Edinboro, at Route 6N, next to the church. "The name came from the young mind of an 18-year-old daughter of the Garden Leadership Team," said Heather Zimmerman, a botanist with specialties in crops and soil science who is the garden's volunteer manager.

In exchange for a \$10 fee, each gardener gets one four-by-eight-foot bed, with another one-by-six-foot bed bordering the fencing for plants that climb up trellises. Each bed reflects the gardener's personality, Zimmerman said. Some plots are tidy; others are not. There's red romaine lettuce and green Swiss chard, cherry tomatoes and regular tomatoes, bush beans and beets, cabbages and carrots, broccoli and borage (a good pollinator), sunflowers, and herbs.

Googly-eyed decorative frogs peek out of one bed, while others display colorful "scare tape," either metallic strips sold at garden-supply stores or versions fashioned from old pom-poms, to frighten away crows

Begun with 20 plots in 2015, the garden has doubled to 40 beds. There's also a ramp and some raised beds to accommodate those who use wheelchairs or have trouble crouching down. You don't have to be a member of First United Presbyterian to join; the garden is open to all, but beds are quickly snapped up during sign-ups in February.

Produce from four "tithe beds" — one tended by Edinboro Presbyterian, two by Edinboro United Methodist Church, and another by Our Lady of the Lake Catholic Church — is donated weekly to the Edinboro Food Pantry at Edinboro University of Pennsylvania. Each individual gardener is welcome to donate but that's not a requirement, because

[top left] Teens gain from their first job experience by working for the Sisters of St. Joseph Neighborhood Network. Their duties include selling vegetables, fruit and flowers grown at the SSJNN's urban farm at the weekly Little Italy Farmers Market. [bottom right] The International Flavors community garden in the 300 block of West 18th Street has lots of fruits and vegetables, as well as vibrant splashes of color from flowers, according to Gretchen Gallagher Durney, neighborhood manager for the SSJNN.

some gardeners rely on their bounty to ease food insecurity. So far this year, the garden has given 78 pounds of produce for the food bank, with big harvests yet to come. And there are still fall plantings to be made, Zimmerman said.

She is a strong advocate for the squarefoot gardening method developed in the 1980s by the late Mel Bartholomew, who outlined precise measurements to make the most of gardening beds. But the variety of plants grown is the individual gardener's choice (illegal or invasive plants are not allowed).

Gardeners start some plants from seeds (and some free seeds are provided), but others must be transplanted as seedlings because of our region's short growing season.

After a farmer donated 10 acres of property to the church, the field lay barren for years because it lacked good soil. The Garden of Edin solved that problem by supplying the soil, a combination of peat moss, compost and perlite. Art, the church's good-natured handyman, pumps water from the church well to

plastic barrels, which also collect rain water. The garden also has tools and watering cans. And gardeners also rest easy because the fencing keeps pesky deer away.

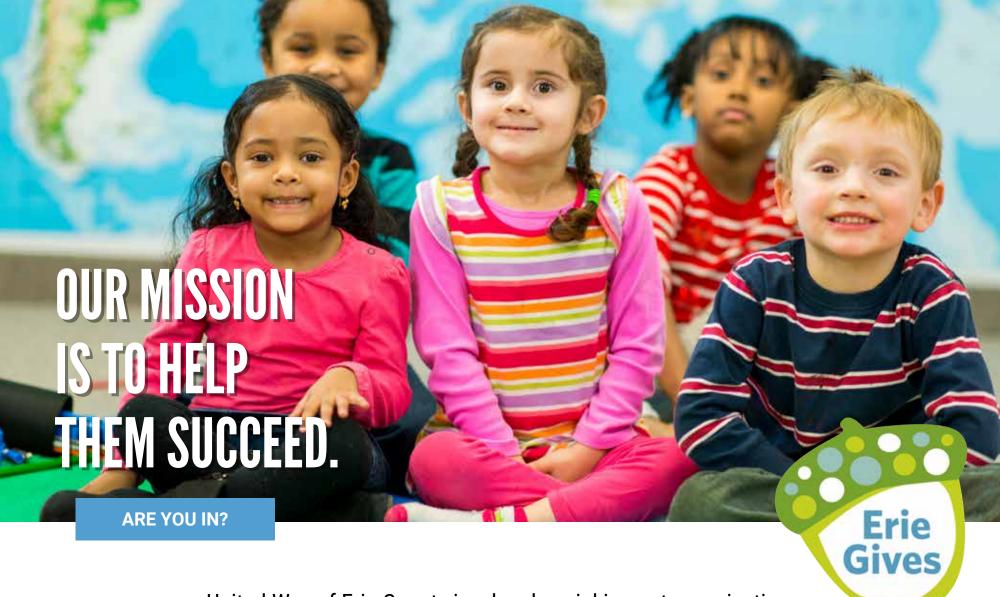
Zimmerman stresses the benefits of "community" at community gardens. "When you garden in your backyard, it's just you, a solitary activity," she said. "In a community garden, you can be up here in the quiet of the morning or in the evening. You're meeting people, asking questions. If you are a veteran (gardener), you can offer advice. Friendships are made. Deep discussions are had up here — some sad, some joyful."

That eagerness to share tips was evident when Debbie Bright and Susan Egli, volunteers from the Albion Area Community Garden, at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, dropped by to learn more about Garden of Edin's success in keeping participants active and engaged. Rules on deadlines for planting gardens, composting waste, maintaining beds with weekly visits and regular weeding, and preparing beds for winter help to keep the operation running smoothly.

Garden of Edin members benefit from Zimmerman's experience as an educator at Asbury Woods Nature Center and later at Goodell Gardens. Originally from Bethlehem, Pa., Zimmerman, now retired, and her husband Brian, an Edinboro geology professor, came to Edinboro after their graduate studies. She acknowledges that there's always room for growth for a dedicated gardener. "This



LIZ ALLEN



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year I'm growing lima beans for the first time," she said, then added with a laugh, "I hate lima beans!"

Nurturing new skills is also key to other community garden programs.

The SSJNN has eight gardens on Erie's west and east sides, including its urban farm, which recently received zoning approval to build a greenhouse in the 400 block of West 19th Street, where a blighted house once stood. The Namaste Garden on Sassafras Street is tended by members of the Bhutanese and Nepalese community, while the International Flavors Garden in the 300 block of West 18th Street, which uses beds similar to those at the Garden of Edin. attracts a melting pot of neighborhood gardeners.

A new fig tree orchard, in a lot to the east of St. Paul Catholic Church at West 16th and Wallace streets, was started in response to requests from longtime residents of Little Italy, including Mike De-Dad and Ron DiVecchio, said Gretchen Gallagher Durney, neighborhood manager for the SSJNN. The figs are ripening and should be ready soon for sale at the SSJNN Little Italy Farmers Market, 331 W. 18th St., she said.

The SSJNN employs 10 teens, ages 14 to 16, who work at the urban farm and do maintenance, such as composting, in the areas around the community gardens (gardeners themselves are responsible for their own beds).

Teens learn first-job basics, including how to interview and where to apply for a work permit, according to Durney. At the Farmers Market, which runs on Mondays from 3 to 6 p.m. from late June through September, they hone their customer service skills as they greet shoppers and sell vegetables, fruits, and flowers from the farm. "A lot come out of their shells," said Durney. Produce is also sold to local restaurants, such as Give a

The teens also are introduced to healthy new foods, including herbs such as sorrel and stevia, and they have fun, such as developing a friendly competition to see how much fire their taste buds can endure from hot peppers.

Durney learns new things on the job as well. For instance, she was surprised when a Congolese family harvested sweet potato vines from their garden, to be sautéed and eaten; nothing goes to waste.

An added benefit of urban community gardening programs is that they return vacant lots to productive use, although not every empty lot is a candidate for gardening. The SSJNN has transformed vacant property on West 19th Street into Three Sisters Park, but it's not suitable for edible gardening, because it was the site of a boiler plant at one time.

The SSJNN also has community gardens on Erie's east side, complementing the work being done by the Erie Field Office of the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants at the International Institute, under the umbrella name Flagship Farms.

There's a community garden across from the International Institute, near East 26th and Ash streets, but the program also has three small commercial farms near East 22nd and German streets. The former refugee farmers are growing such items as okra, tomatoes, mint, parsley, cucumbers, peppers, corn, squash and Syrian eggplant, used in popular ethnic dishes. The farmers sell their goods at four farmers markets, including the Little Italy Farmers Market, and also use the produce to feed their families. This is the second year of the program, which provides a stipend to the farm-

Botanist Heather Zimmerman, volunteer manager at the Garden of Edin, shows how the fencing around the garden plots serves a double purpose. It protects plants from deer and also works as a trellis.

ers. Funding comes from a variety of grants, according to Dylana Grasinger, executive director of the International Institute.

The three farms serve as a living laboratory, as the farmers learn to adapt their agricultural knowledge from their former countries to this region and also are mentored in how to run a small business. Eventually, they may want to invest in their own farms, helping to revive farming in places where land has fallen out of such use, Grasinger said.

Hamid Mobin, who was born in Iran and came to Erie six years ago, is program coordinator for Flagship Farms. He and Sarah Young, a VISTA volunteer, support the farmers by handling paperwork, working on communication and other tasks.

French Street Farms, owned and operated by Carrie Sachse, is a nearby neighbor, and Grasinger envisions a time when Flagship Farms might become part of a farming district in the City of Erie.

Mobin enjoys seeing how the former refugees grow in confidence and pride as they work their farms. "They used to do the same thing back in their countries (of origin). When they see the same results in the USA, that makes them happy."

Liz Allen followed tips shared by Heather Zimmerman during an Erie County Library Zoom program to plant two successful square-foot gardens this summer. You can reach her at lizallenerie@gmail.com.

Did vou know?

Garden of Edin, in the 4200 block of Route 6N in Edinboro, is open on Sundays from noon to sunset and Monday through Saturday from sunrise to sunset. The beds are tended by individual gardeners, but many are happy to share what they learn with visitors.

The Little Italy Farmers Market, 331 W. 18th Street, is open on Mondays from 3 to 6 p.m. It accepts SNAP, WIC and FMNP Senior Vouchers to encourage shoppers to eat healthy, local food. Vendors include Flagship Farms, a program of the Erie Field Office of the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants at the International Institute.



The Wright Stuff

Frank Lloyd Wright's San Francisco office just one highlight of Hagen History Center's \$11 million expansion



By: Matt Swanseger

ho designed the roof over your head? Chances are, you have no idea — unless, of course, it was Frank Lloyd Wright.

Despite the integral role architecture plays in our day-to-day lives, Wright is the only architect most of us can recognize by name. But if you only know one, it might as well be the American Institute of Architects' "Greatest American Architect of All Time." Wright conceived some of the world's most iconic structures over a prolific and highly influential career that spanned seven decades, and his philosophies helped shape a distinctly American style of modern architecture emphasizing harmony and connectedness — both human to human and human to nature.

In his lifetime, Wright drafted 1,114 architectural works for the civic, commercial, and residential spheres — 532 of them were ever constructed. Several lie to the north near Buffalo — the Darwin D. Martin House (1905) and Graycliff (1926) being the two most famous. Several others can

be found to the south near Pittsburgh — most notably the masterpiece Fallingwater (1939) and the later Kentuck Knob (1956). Erie, however, had long remained disconnected from Wright's legacy — until now.

Traveling from one bay area to another via Pittsburgh and Buffalo, Wright's San Francisco Field Office has been faithfully curated and reassembled by Jeff Kidder (Kidder Architects) and Mike Jefferys (Kidder Jefferys Construction LLC) within a specially designed and newly constructed installation at Erie's Hagen History Center (HHC). Donated through HHC eponym and chief benefactor Thomas B. Hagen, the installation is just one part of an \$11 million expansion that debuted in tandem with HHC's grand reopening last month.

The office originally sat on the second floor of a four-story building at 319 Grant St. in San Francisco, just outside the city's Chinatown. Wright worked out of this office with associate and protégé Aaron Green from 1951 until his passing in 1959, principal-

ly using it as a base of operations for nearby projects in Northern California — for most others, Wright worked out of his two home studios, Taliesin (on his maternal family's property in Wisconsin) and Taliesin West (his Scottsdale, Ariz. winter home). Green acted as Wright's West Coast liaison while also utilizing the office for his own independent practice.

The Grant Street office carried on as a working architectural firm and the headquarters of the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation all the way up until 1988, at which time it was dismantled and sold off to a collector. For a short while, the office was on display behind glass in the Heinz Architectural Center at the Carnegie Museum Art in Pittsburgh, but it spent the better part of 30 years packed into 27 separate crates. Of course, being boxed in is not very Wright-like, so Hagen purchased the 27 crates from Jim Sandoro, owner of the Buffalo Transportation Pierce Arrow Museum with the intent of having the office put back together.

And put back together it was, in

Frank Lloyd Wright's San Francisco field office, used as a base of operations for the famous architect's projects in Northern California from 1951-59 and as Wright protégé Aaron Green's main office, has been carefully reconstructed in a special wing of the Hagen History Center's new Exhibit Building. Here we see the reception desk with views into the drafting room, demonstrative of Wright's embrace of the open concept.

stunningly accurate detail, the culmination of five years' work from acquisition to completion. While there are a few elements to remind you that you're in an exhibit (for instance, Wright did not have a bust of himself in the entryway of his own office), visitors will otherwise experience the space as it was during its heyday bookshelves stocked with period-appropriate references and drafting tables spread with project blueprints in the drafting room, furniture and decor that were either originally part of the office or true to Wright's tastes (especially his love of Japanese art), and even the view outside the windows. Use of angled geometries, internotched redwood plywood (a native Californian building material), partial walls and ceilings (in particular cantilevered, or projecting, features), the incorporation of natural light, and varying ceiling heights to distinguish public and private spaces (they're higher in the reception and drafting areas and lower in Wright's cozy personal office) all speak to Wright's ide-

Basically, nothing here was done without purpose and intention, and walking through it will leave visitors more conscientious of their relationship with the environment around them. Kidder tried to hold himself true to the same standards when recreating the space, consulting often with architect Jan Novie, president and principal of Aaron Green Associates, who spent plenty of time in the original office. Kidder hopes the reconstruction can reignite our drive to think critically and outwardly in this often solipsistic digital age. An ardent preservationist, Kidder is adamant about not losing the soul of architec-

George Deutsch, executive director

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of HHC, elaborates that at the core of all this — not just the Wright exhibit or architecture, but the museum and its mission as a whole — is the urge to connect. Whether it's a tourist that wouldn't have stopped by otherwise, the inner city student of modest means finding their life's passion, or the longtime resident that knows little of their area's fascinating history, it's about making connections. Before even setting foot in the Wright office, visitors will have the opportunity to:

- Spot ships in the Battle of Lake Erie using an interactive touch-
- · Dote upon the beautifully restored antique vehicles sitting in the middle of the new two-story, 600 square-foot Exhibit Building — Wright's 1930 Cord L-29 Cabriolet (on loan from the Cord Duesenberg Automobile Museum in Auburn, Ind.) and a Crosley Hotshot identical to one he would've driven.
- Appreciate history through pop culture — on display is the same 17-foot model of Wright's Butterfly Bridge seen in the movie Die Hard.

And that's without even mentioning the other buildings on the HHC Campus — the Watson-Curtze Mansion continues to provide a compelling snapshot of Victorian era life in Erie, and the Wood-Morrison House

In recreating Frank Lloyd Wright's private office space, Erie architect and exhibit curator Jeff Kidder consulted closely with Jan Novie, who worked under Wright associate Aaron Green at the San Francisco location until it was closed and dismantled in 1988. Of note is the wraparound Japanese screen, illustrative of Wright's love of Asian art.

promises to fascinate with stories of the forgotten Erie Extension Canal and Mad Anthony Wayne's curious double burial (among so much more). And if you do get hooked — Deutsch hopes you do — the Kings-Martens Archive Building is an excellent resource for researchers looking to delve deeper into the connections between past and present found in Erie County history.

Perhaps it's not necessarily important to know who built the roof over your head, but there is merit in being curious enough to ask.

Visit the Hagen History Center Tuesday through Thursday or Saturday through Sunday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., or Friday 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Tours are \$10 for individuals, with discounts available for groups, students, and senior citizens. Find them on the web at eriehistory.org, and consider supporting them on Erie Gives Day on Tuesday, Aug. 10

Matt Swanseger's home office is depressingly bereft of cantilevers. He can be reached by gently streaming moonbeams or by email at mswanseger@eriereader.com

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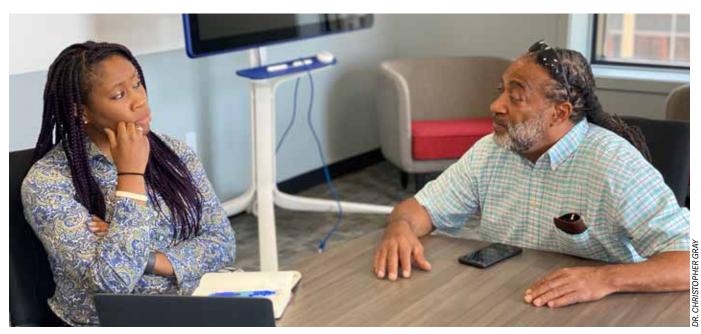


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Erie County Community College Preps for Class

Talking to President Dr. Christopher Gray on free tuition and "how to college"



By: Nick Warren

t long last, the Erie County Community College (EC3PA) is set to begin classes on Wednesday. Sept.1. Less than a month ago, the EC3PA named its first president. Dr. Christopher Gray. In addition to working with community colleges for over 20 years, Dr. Gray is a community college graduate himself. Most recently, he held the position of vice president of academic affairs and workforce development at McHenry County College (MCC) in Crystal Lake, Ill. As the 15th community college in Pennsylvania readies for opening day, there's much left to be done.

Nick Warren: Can you tell me just a little bit about the news that tuition is free?

Dr. Christopher Gray: We're excited that through the generosity of donors, we are able to actually cover the tuition portion of any student fees. There are some fees with books, and because of the generosity of donors, even for those students who are experiencing economic hardship, we're going to set up a separate waiver system. For students who are experiencing economic hardship, let's try to find additional funds to cover even their books and fees. It's a finite pot of money that has been given to us with the sole purpose of encouraging folks to go explore some post-secondary credentials.

NW: Have you seen people applying already?

CG: We have indeed. We've actually far exceeded our projections in terms of applications because we've not really rolled out fully live with a marketing plan yet. With pent-up demand, once word started getting out, people have been in the process of applying. We're working kinks out of the system we're realizing that some students are having challenges with the technology. And so we're going to be all throughout the county here shortly at different library sites to help people register. We'll have staff on the ground to help them kind of walk through that process and start learning how to use the information technology. So those will be critical skills that they'll need to be successful in their learning.

NW: How have things been with the faculty and creating this entire system from the ground up?

CG: Fun, rewarding, challenging, and crazy. Not always in that order. It's been exhausting. We only have six staff in place and at this point — we've hired a number of full-time and adjunct faculty — our faculty have been jumping in helping us create this while they're getting ready for the classes. It's been a little chaotic; we've got a lot on the list that we'll need to accomplish. But the core things are in place, and we will be there on September 1 to serve students to help them start to explore. We will continue to grow and mature as an organization. We're hoping to hire a couple more people this weekend. We're in

need of some bodies on the ground as we start to do this. Our major processes are in place. But there's a lot of other things that we need to figure out and work through the details and then have staff there to serve students.

It's been exciting. Lots of my colleagues from across the nation are checking in to see how it's going. This is a very unique opportunity. I've only been aware of just a handful of community colleges starting during my entire career. So it is a very rare occurrence, and a great opportunity for Northwest Pennsylvania.

NW: What kind of experience can you draw on from your past career?

CG: What we're actually drawing on is: How do we serve students better? The system of education was set up for a certain type of person. Somebody who probably came from an upper-middle-income household. Then, about 50 years ago, community colleges started to pop up, and we challenged that system a little bit. We started doing workforce development, training the technical skills, the in-demand, high-paying jobs and started training for those. But one thing they didn't do as well as I had hoped for is to change the system to recognize that we're dealing with students who are often first-generation students. They don't have familial support, and they don't have financial support. We often say that sometimes our students don't know "how to college."

So we find that students that aren't

Elise Michaux (left) and Andre Horton exchange ideas at the Erie County Community College of PA (EC3PA) headquarters, located on the corner of 12th and State in the former Northwest Savings Bank building. With classes slated to begin on Wednesday, Sept. 1, EC3PA president Dr. Christopher Gray is taking an all-hands-ondeck approach to establishing credibility and driving registration.

successful; oftentimes, it's not a cognitive issue. It's a fact that they're caring for a loved one, and they don't have the time to study or they're experiencing financial hardship. Maybe somebody in the family gets laid off, so they need to go pick up another shift and take on extra work.

We're here to work hand-in-hand with you, to walk you through that process. We're going to sit down with you to try to figure out what your wants and desires are, and figure out what credits you can bring in that you may have had elsewhere. Then we're going to put you on a path to be successful.

One of the things I'm always proud of: Community college students tend to outperform other students, in terms of grade point average by their junior year, compared to almost every state university. So that means we're doing our part in getting their skills up, so that juniors are actually getting a better grade point average than someone who started at that state university.

NW: You spoke about students' challenges. Have you faced challenges from the community?

CG: Not really at all. I really think people just don't understand what the community college model is. They think we're just duplicating anything universities or NPRC do, they're not catching the fact that there's actually a lot more to us. We do technical training, we do workforce development, all of it.

NW: Is there anything you'd like incoming students to know or people that are thinking about applying or signing up?

CG: I think the number one thing is don't let the process of "how to college" be intimidating. If you've got any amount of interest, go online, start poking around, pick up the phone and call us. If somebody just wants to walk through it, hit us at one of our library sites. We're going to have classes everywhere throughout the county. So if you don't want to drive

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NEWS & VIEWS

to Erie, that's fine.

That's a unique feature about community colleges, we're not going to build a Taj Mahal campus that looks like the other universities. I'm putting all of my time and energy towards helping students succeed. That's what makes us different.

You'll even see that some of the staunchest opponents of the community college are now coming around and saying, well, hey, wait a second. Okay. It's here, let's give it a chance. I think I would try to allay their fears by sharing that yes, you can study the arts, and you can study philosophy and the social sciences. But we also do training in basic nursing. We do training in automotive, welding, computer programming, artifi-

cial intelligence, robotics, CNC machining, we're all over the place. We really are a critical pipeline to get students into the workforce.

We're not using any new tax dollars. We're not using any property taxes to fund that college. We've got important work to do. You can hold us accountable by how many jobs we put into the economy, and how strong the economy is. We can't do well unless all of Erie does well. And so we are truly the community's college in that sense.

This interview has been edited for length and clarity. For more information on the Erie County Community College, go to eccepa.org. Nick Warren can be reached at nick@eriereader.com





YOUR GIFT CAN MAKE A GREATER IMPACT ON ERIE GIVES!

Give to your favorite nonprofit(s) on Erie Gives and a portion of the prorated match will be added to your gift!

> Tuesday, August 10 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. www.ErieGives.org

Make a difference with an online gift, a check, a stock gift or even your IRA minimum distribution.

Call us at 814-454-0843 with any questions.

Erie Gives is a project of The Erie Community Foundation with support from our generous sponsors.

Text REMIND to 814-580-5846 to receive updates and reminder about Erie Gives.

Karen Bilowith in Her Own Words

A conversation with the new Erie Community Foundation president



By: Ben Speggen

Thile she grew up in Vermont just outside of Burlington along Lake Champlain, Karen Bilowith's path so far has led her through Massachusetts, Colorado, Washington, D.C., Upstate New York, and, most recently, Idaho. The 54-year-old's next stop: Erie, Pennsylvania.

On Oct. 1, Bilowith will take over the helm at the Erie Community Foundation. As she closes out her chapter with the Idaho Community Foundation, where she's served as president and CEO since 2016, and gets ready to begin the next leg of her 20-plus years working with nonprofits and in philanthropy, I caught up with her on Zoom to talk about her vision for community foundations in the 21st century, what she sees as the greatest challenges, what she'll miss most about Idaho, and what she's looking forward to in Erie.

Ben Speggen: In six words, who is Karen Bilowith? **Karen Bilowith:** I am a collaborator, a learner, community-minded, place-based, outdoorsy, a dog-lover.

BS: For an outdoorsy person, who's community-minded and a learner and a dog-lover, what drew you to work at foundations?

KB: The connection happened pretty early in my career. I went to graduate school for public policy and administration and got connected into the nonprofit community and really saw nonprofit organizations as a way to partner with government and private sector organizations on community building projects. But also, sometimes, the role is to make up gaps or make changes when there are failures in our market economy. What I love about community philanthropy and community foundations is that we really sit in a sweet

Karen Bilowith will take the helm of the Erie Community Foundation starting on Oct. 1, following the retirement of longtime ECF president Mike Batchelor. She has spent over 20 years working with nonprofits and philanthropic causes, most recently with the Idaho Community Foundation in Boise.

spot between donors and community needs, and it's our job to be the matchmaker — to help people really make an impact in communities.

What drew me to the Erie Community Foundation and to the Erie community is that there is true partnership happening now, and evolving and growing, to really move Erie forward in a way that's very strategic and planned. And that doesn't always happen in communities. This is a really special time in Erie, and the Erie Community Foundation has the history, the credibility of the position to really be a big partner in that change.

BS: What did that specifically look like to you? What was the "a-ha" moment where you said, "I see this, and I want to be a part of it?"

KB: When I first met with the search committee, both the questions that they asked me and the way that they answered some of the questions that I asked them showed me that they really understood the important role of philanthropy. And also, we're taking pretty bold, or making bold moves, to be a real partner in the community.

Since I am currently in the same role, in a different place, I can understand that there's a difference between the talk and the walk. I felt immediately that the board and the staff that I met with understood that as well.

But really, I think the "a-ha" was when I visited Erie for my interview, one of the things I did was a tour with the Erie Downtown Development Corporation to see some of the projects that were happening. I was able to go to the ribbon cutting at the new downtown market-place. I could just feel the sense of community but also community pride.

BS: You're on the first floor and you have until the fourth to answer somebody who asks: "What do foundations do?"

KB: Foundations — and in particular community foundations — have a lot of flexibility in terms of you can be just a straight grant maker, meaning you're helping great programs; or, you can be more of an impact philanthropist, thinking about the big changes that we want to see in our community and how can we help that. So, the Erie community is looking at all the tools in our toolbox that we can use. And it's more than just these grants that we can give, or scholarships; we can also make investments in big projects and be a partner to help spur those forward. One of the other things that was exciting to me about your community foundation is that they are willing to think about all of those different tools and how they use their assets for the benefit of the community and not just think about the role of a traditional foundation where you have your endowment and you spend a little bit of that every year for grants.

BS: Looking at the EDDC, I can't help but think that it is in the most impoverished ZIP code not just in Erie, but in the state of Pennsylvania — the 16501 ZIP code. What do you see as the role of community foundations in addressing poverty in their communities?

KB: There are a couple roles that we can play. One is with direct investment. Philanthropic dollars can often fill gaps in funding equations. A good example of that is if you're trying to build affordable housing, or to do something to revitalize the housing in a downtown area, there is a gap between all of the layers of investment that you can get through traditional sources and what the developers are going to need, and a lot of times philanthropy can fill that gap.

But the other role that I think is really important is ensuring that the people, the residents in Erie, are benefiting from the economic growth. That is really at the grassroots level, like getting out and talking in communities and understanding by asking: 'What is it that you in this community need in order to benefit from this growth — Is it housing? Is it education? Is it jobs?" — and really helping to support those organizations in the community that are focused on that.

BS: It's also an exciting time in the area with the launch of the Erie County Community College. What do you see as the connection between foundations and education at the community college level?

KB: It's really just figuring out within that framework, what investments make the most sense, and the Erie Community Foundation has already made a big commitment to the community college in terms of infrastructure and also has a program that they're currently raising money for to support scholarships. So, let's find a way that people from the community can benefit from the community college.

When I was working in Schenectady and Albany in New York, we had some programs where we tried to connect the nonprofit organizations that are working with struggling families to community college programs, so that there was a way that people could go and receive education while they're potentially receiving services. In this example, there was an early child-care program at the community college, so connecting that program to the nonprofit organizations that are providing early childhood services in the community was really important. It helped the families, but it also helped build a pipeline of people to work in those child-care centers.

BS: This is such a critical moment for communities nationwide, as they're working to address racial equity and diversity inclusion. What do you see the role of foundations being in the conversation — something that we've been having nationwide, and is happening at the community level?

KB: I believe that foundations not only need to be a part of the conversation but can also potentially be a facilitator — a convener — of the space where people can come together. We do have such diverse and broad

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networks of people that we engage deeply in communities. That's where we have both a platform to share information, but also can play that role as a convener.

The other reason I think it's critically important is we can't achieve our mission — every community foundation has a similar mission — which is community improvement, betterment. You can't do that without thinking about what it is in your community that keeps people from succeeding. Then you're talking about equity. What are the challenges in our community that are barriers? In my opinion, you cannot separate that conversation from philanthropy.

BS: You have 20 years of experience in philanthropic and nonprofit leadership, what's an early lesson that was most important to you, that you learned early in your career that continues to help shape your vision on philanthropy and nonprofits today?

KB: When I was working at the National AIDS Fund in Washington, D.C., there were actually a couple of really good lessons that have carried through my career. The one I think that has been most relevant was what we did there was work with a network of community partners across the country that were at the local level raising and distributing money to support HIV and AIDS programs. We were able to attract national dollars and get those out into local communities and also do a lot of best practice sharing.

One of the things that I learned was that it was so important, as we worked with each of these individual communities, to listen to the community — really go and listen and understand the community before figuring out what the solution was. You hear that a lot: state agencies coming into local communities and telling them what to do, or the national agencies doing the same. That listening and learning and facilitating conversation around how can we address, how can we identify what the issues are, and then how can we address those is really critical. It's what we do as community foundations. That has just really shaped the way that I lead and have worked within foundations since

BS: What do you see being one of the greatest challenges that foundations face today?

KB: A real challenge is the tension between giving now and saving for later. And with foundations, that's a real thing. Do you build your endowment, or do you spend it? And even individuals, some of the really big tech billionaires are thinking, "we want to spend all

With COVID-19, that was a question that came up over and over again with foundations — do we make some big commitments out of our endowment because we have this pandemic that's never happened before? And at the same time, we want to be ready for the next big thing. That shift that we've seen, and we did this here in Idaho, foundations were immediately much more flexible than they maybe ever have been in terms of being able to get money out the door

quickly to grantee organizations — to say "we trust you to use this for what you need."

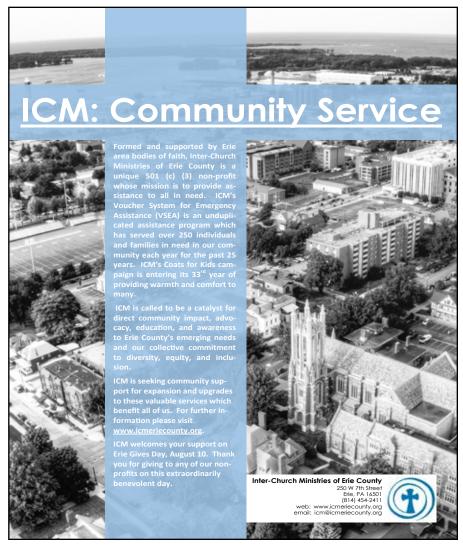
So, in philanthropy, there is actually a structured movement called trust-based philanthropy. That idea is what's behind that. I don't know if foundations will go back to being as regimented as they were.

BS: Whenever somebody from the media calls and says, "I want to talk to you about foundations, what you do, your vision, your philosophy," all this kind of stuff, what's the one question you wish that they would actually know to ask you that you'd be able to talk about, that you think needs more oxygen in conversation around foundations?

KB: Especially for community foundations, there is less interest in hearing the stories about the donors than there is about the money going out. To me, that's always important, too. That's what keeps us going. A lot of times those stories aren't about billionaires, they're just about people who were teachers their whole life and left an amazing gift to a community foundation. So, I wish people would ask about that

This Q&A has been edited for length and clarity. Check out the full interview at eriereader.com

Ben Speggen can be contacted at bspeggen@ eriereader.com, and you can follow him on Twitter @BenSpeggen.







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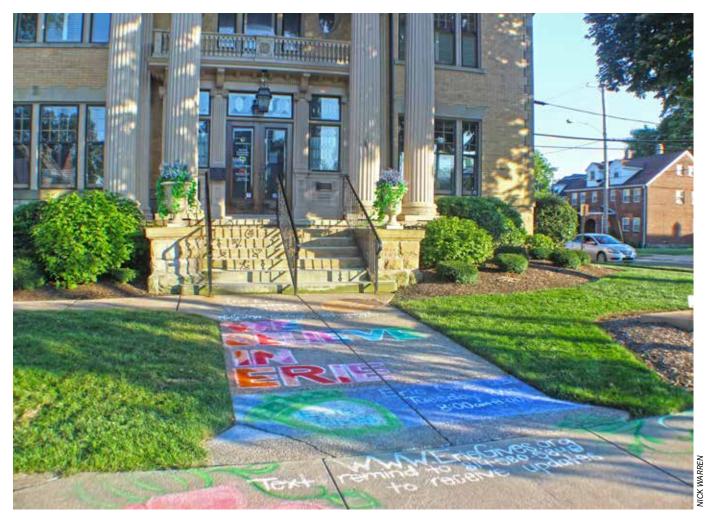
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You Gotta Give! The Erie Reader Gives 2021

We asked the office, and here's who we're donating to for Erie Gives Day



In 2021, Erie Gives Day becomes Erie Gives Decade, as the beloved charity event marks its 11th year in action. Since its inception in 2011, Erie Gives Day has provided an allotment of matching funds, so that when you donate within that specific period of time, your contribution goes even further to help local nonprofits.

For half a decade now as well, we've had our own little tradition here at the Erie Reader. We don't mind putting our money where our mouth is. Since 2017, we've asked members of our staff to tell us who they're giving to and why.

Some of these are organizations we share a deep connection with, and some are relatively new to us, but all of them are worthy of your consideration and your money.

We hope this serves as a simple jumping off point to raise awareness of the event overall. While we're happy to contribute to these given causes, there are literally hundreds of worthwhile nonprofits to choose from this Tuesday, Aug. 10.

Erie Women's Fund

Who's giving: Adam Welsh, Editor-in-Chief

Who they are: Started in 2007 by 12 women looking to make an impact in our community, the Erie Women's Fund (EWF), a donor advised fund of the Erie Community Foundation, now boasts over 200 members who have given over \$700,000 to local nonprofits that empower women and families. EWF educates and inspires its members to positively impact the lives of Erie County women through philanthropy and community engagement.

Why I'm giving: EWF provides financial grants, hosts enriching educational forums and engages members through informational meetings and social gatherings. Last year alone they gave \$100,000 to Multicultural Health Evaluation Delivery System, Inc. to open a new facility in the JFK Center, \$20,000 to the emergency COVID-19 Rapid Response Fund to aid local nonprofits, and \$20,000 to the YMCA Meals for Kids program among other things. All told the EWF

gave over \$157,000 to Erie women and families in 2020.

Friends of the Erie County Library

Who's giving: Brian Graham, Editorin-Chief

Who they are: A nonprofit, all-volunteer organization dedicated to the advancement of Erie County Public Library classes, programs, and services.

Why I'm giving: The past year and a half have been challenging times for everyone, with the effects of the pandemic turning our lives upside down in myriad ways. For those of us lucky enough to stay healthy, there was the question of how to fill the time, and this was especially true for those of us at home with small children. The winter months were a particular struggle, with outdoor activities limited by weather and indoor activities outside the home off limits. Thankfully, the Erie County Public Library System was there to help. Although the branches were closed to the public for a good portion of the winter, they offered curbside pickup for the duSidewalk chalk art by Helen Tullio outside the Erie Community Foundation headquarters at 459 W. Sixth St. colorfully advertises the eleventh iteration of Erie Gives Day, which will take place on Tuesday, Aug. 10 from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Donations can be made to any one or more of 426 nonprofits in our community during that time frame at eriegives.org

ration. With a robust and easy to use online catalog, we found some good lists of children's books to check out and placed an order every week or so. Usually within 24 hours the library staff would gather the books and send an email notifying us that they were ready. We would then set up a time for pickup and head to the library where a cart would be out front with our books, puzzles, and art projects for the little ones. With a friendly and knowledgeable staff and an amazing selection of books and other media, the Erie County Public Library system is a community treasure and should not be taken for granted. I intend to support them with a donation this Erie Gives Day.

All Aboard Erie

Who's giving: Liz Allen, writer

Who they are: Local group pushing for a high-speed rail connection in Erie.

Why I'm giving: I am always happy to support the Sisters of St. Joseph Neighborhood Network and Emmaus Ministries, because of the good work that the women religious do in Erie to help those in need.

I also give to Preservation Erie, where I'm on the board, and to the Friends of the Erie County Library, because I love all of the services that the volunteers at the Friends provide to readers.

I added All Aboard Erie to my donation list because of the visible role that this organization and the new director, Michael Fuhrman, will have in spurring support to improve existing Amtrak service and in advocating for high-speed rail. At a July 27 press conference, Brian Pitzer, longtime head of All Aboard Erie, announced that Fuhrman has been named executive director of the organization and that in his new position, Fuhrman will also lead the Lakeshore Rail Alliance, which strive to improve rail service on the corridor from Chicago to New York City, which includes Erie.

Fuhrman gave an impressive, impassioned speech on the need to step up

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Erie Family Center strengthens families and promotes the well-being of children through prevention, intervention and education.

Parents as Teachers

A strong evidence-based, home-visiting model that provides parent education and support to families, especially those in challenging shautions. PAT certified professional parent educators bring the program to families with an emphasis on parent-child interaction, development centered parenting, and family well-being.

Incredible Years

Promote emotional and social competence and to prevent, reduce, and treat aggression and emotional problems in young children ages 0-12 years old. By treating these behaviors, it reduces the chance of developing

Motherhood Initiatives

Motherhood Support initiative provides a safe and supportive group for women to more fully understand their importance as a mother in the lives of their children. With the help of a qualified group facilitate, where receive assistance to improve family management and parenting skills in a 12-week workshop.

Fostering Families

The Fostering Families program is designed specifically for families involved in the Office of Children and Youth with children currently placed in Foster (Kinship care. The Fostering Families program works to provide a cohesive network of supports for both Office of Children and Youth involved parents and Foster (Firship care)

Fatherhood Initiatives

Helping fathers overcome challenges to be a responsible father to their children. Fatherhood initiatives offers a range of services for fathers that are designed and decidated to support, council, educate, advocate, and challenge fathers to become a strong, positive force within their families in a 12-seek workshop.

Guardianship

A legally appointed guardian given the legal authority to care for the incapacitated person's personal and, or property interests, the duty to act i that person's best interests, as well as providing support, case management and attending meetings as needed.



Everyone needs help sometimes ar that is an integral part of the Diaper Depot program from the Erie Family Center.

The Erie Family Center launched the Diaper Depot diaper program on January 27, 2020. Since then, we have distributed more than 250,000 diapers and serving over 350 families per month.

The Diaper Depot in Erie County is currently distributing an average of 50 diapers per month per child.

Receiving FREE DIAPERS is open to anyone, no income or location qualifications, that needs help in the county by registering online a principal productor over.





Learn more at ErieFamilyCenter.org

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meals on wheels erie



Last year we delivered 35,000 nutritious meals to homebound seniors and shopped for groceries over 1000 times annually. For those who are home bound (countywide and at any age), we bring our services and our smiles direct to your door.

Fighting hunger and food insecurity is our mission and we have been dedicated to it for the last 50 years!



Please support our mission by giving to Meals on Wheels Erie as one of the recipients of your generosity this Erie Gives Day.



Erie Gives Day

August 10th 2021

DONATE TO PACA ONLINE AT ErieGives.org

Performing Arts Collective Alliance

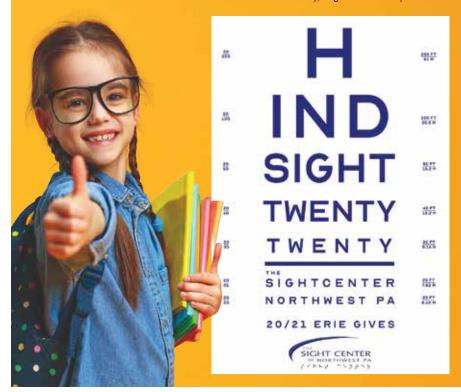
1505 State Street, Erie, PA · paca1505.org

We're putting 2020 in the rearview mirror!

The pandemic presented unprecedented challenges for all of us, but especially for those who have low vision or who are blind. Having faced the adversities of the past year and now putting 2020 into hindsight...the Sight Center is stronger and more focused on our mission to prevent blindness and promote independence for those with vision loss and for those who are blind than ever.

Please help us keep HOPE IN SIGHT with your donation through Erie Gives!

DONATE AT ERIEGIVES.ORG between 8 AM and 8 PM on Tuesday, August 10. Thank you!



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Our clients include men, women and children, toddlers through senior citizens, spanning all ethnicities, genders, nationalities, races, religions, and socioeconomic classes. We believe that all victims deserve support in times of trauma, so we never charge clients for our services.

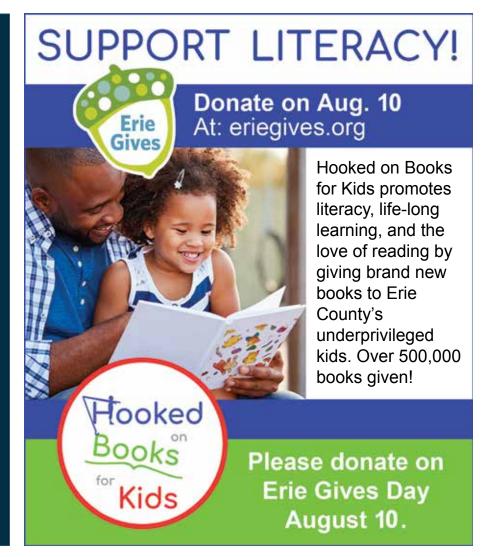
Of course, costs keep rising. Our counseling and advocacy may be free, but the price of providing victim support is very real. Without your help, we cannot continue to serve the people of the Erie County by providing free, professional, confidential counseling and accompaniment for **all** victims.

You are truly helping us reduce the impact of crime.

On behalf of the staff, administration, and Board of Directors of Crime Victim Center, we thank you for your support to CVC on Erie Gives Day 2021.



www.eriegives.com



THERE ARE A LOT OF SCARY PLACES IN THIS WORLD. HOME SHOULDN'T BE ONE OF THEM.



Children who witness domestic violence are three times more likely to repeat the cycle of violence in adulthood. With one click, you can make a real difference in their lives.

Your Erie Gives donation to SafeNet will help provide life-changing services for these young victims. So they can reclaim their childhood—and feel safe at home again.





Please remember SafeNet on August 10.

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FEATURE

rail transportation to address climate change. He and other rail advocates from New York State and Ohio also talked about the need to make existing passenger service more convenient and frequent. I would hop on the train with my husband instead of making long drives to see family in New York City and college friends in Wisconsin. That's why I'm on board for All Aboard Erie.

Erie County Community College of PA

Who's giving: Dan Schank, Contribu-

Who they are: The latest and most affordable resource for higher education in town. After years of activism, the Erie County Community College is finally set to offer associate's degrees and technical skills certificate programs customized to our economy.

Why I'm giving: Higher education is unreasonably expensive. And unfortunately we live in an economy where advanced degrees are increasingly crucial to long-term prosperity. In a community struggling with endemic poverty, we can't expect everyone to gamble on a degree that will require decades of expensive student loan payments. Accordingly, community colleges offer the most accessible path to secure, rewarding labor. And the genuinely grassroots effort that helped establish ours is worth supporting.

Asbury Woods

Who's giving: Erin Phillips, Contribu-

Who they are: The history of Asbury Woods begins with Otto Behrend (one of the founders of Hammermill Paper), who acquired the land of Asbury Woods as a country estate in 1920. He kept much of the land as farmland, raising cattle and planting fruit orchards, while reforesting much of the rest with trees that are largely still standing today. When Otto Behrend died, he left the land and everything on it to the Millcreek School District to use for educational and recreational purposes. Over time, the Browns Farm and Von Buseck properties were added to create a massive conservation area spanning 205 acres of Millcreek Township. Today Asbury Woods serves more than 13,000 school children and sees more than 100,000 visitors each year while offering environmental education programs, outdoor recreation, summer nature camps, adult learning opportunities and more.

Why I'm giving: Since my first daugh-

ter (who is now nine) was little, we have loved and taken advantage of the multitude of quality programs that Asbury Woods offers: starting off with Tots in Nature and now with more mature programs like Tree and Mushroom Identification Hikes and Compass Courses. During the pandemic, when most familiar and fun family events were canceled, Asbury Woods was still there for us and gave us the comfort of familiar woods for hiking and a safe place to go and have an adventure, during a time when nothing felt safe or familiar. And now that things are moving back to normal, but without the option of having a vaccine for children, Asbury Woods is still there for us by providing safe, outdoor activities for my preschooler by way of enriching "Summer Sprouts" classes and educational hikes for my older daughter and I to take together to learn about our local environment. I am so grateful that Asbury Woods has been there for us through it all!

Bonus: Consider donating to the nature conservation/environmental education program that you utilize the most like Presque Isle Partnership, Goodell Gardens and Homestead or LEAF

Erie Latino Leadership Association

Who's giving: Nick Warren, Managing

Who they are: The Erie Latino Leadership Association is a place where members of our Latinx community can come together to raise awareness about their heritage and build connections to strengthen their future. They're responsible for putting together events like the Hispanic Festival, and building a scholarship fund for students.

Why I'm giving: A lot of people don't even realize that I'm Latinx. With a last name like Warren (taken from my Mom's side), most wouldn't think about it. I am. I'm mixed race, being half-Mexican, and it's wonderfully obvious when you see me. This is my identity, it's the skin I live in, and I'm proud of it. I want organizations like this to continue to operate and flourish in Erie. Representation matters. If there's a kid out there who hasn't connected with their own racial identity, I want that to happen sooner than later, and prop up groups that make it hap-

Performing Artists Collective Alliance

Who: Matt Swanseger, Copy Editor

Who they are: Housed in the historic Meyer building in Downtown Erie, PACA brings together creators of all kinds, giving them a space to cultivate their respective crafts and (if desired) share their gifts with the community. And of course, the second floor is renowned for putting on some of the most provocative theatrical performances in

Why I'm giving: As it stands, PACA has a lot to offer — over the years, I've been there to catch plays, spin clay (Erie Clay-Space), and namaste (PACA Movement Center). But beyond recreation and entertainment, I've also had the privilege of meeting local entrepreneurs whose dreams PACA has helped incubate. If you ever get the chance to tour the building, it's evident how much more the facility could *still be*. The more room we give artists to create, the more life that gets breathed into the city — public masking orders or no.

Erie Humane Society

Who's giving: Jessica Hunter,

Publishing and New Media Coordinator

Who they are: In 1892, the Erie Humane Society was incorporated as a private, non-profit, charitable organization of the Commonwealth of Pa. The initial mission was to investigate crimes of animal, child, and elder abuse. Operating under "no-kill" standards, the Erie Humane Society works to rescue, rehabilitate and rehome all pets in need. The services they provide include shelter, feeding, veterinary care, spaying and neutering, vaccinations, grooming, temperament testing, kennel maintenance, cruelty prevention and more.

Why I'm giving: At the end of 2020 our family was looking to expand and welcome a new pet to love and care for, and I knew we wanted to adopt. I was scrolling through a few shelters' social media accounts and came across a photo of a gray tabby on Erie Humane Society's page. I was smitten with the kitten! I called the shelter and was able to speak with someone immediately to set up an appointment to meet her. Once I saw her sweet face the paperwork for the adoption was already in process and I was able to take her home to meet the rest of the family. Her name is Binx and we're so happy to offer the abandoned kitten a home full of love.

Bonus: Erie has a lot of people ensuring the best care for our local animals. Check out Erie Animal Network. The Anna Shelter, Orphan Angels Cat Sanctuary and Adoption Center, and Because You Care for other opportunities to donate.



There are many ways to give hope and joy.

Each donation truly makes a difference to those we serve.



VICTORY & RIDE

Join us for the annual Victory Ride Motorcycle Event and BBQ on August 21 at Shades Beach Park. Games, Auction, Raffles, Delicious Food, Music & More!

Tickets at ehcaora





Your Erie Gives Day donation to EHCA Foundation on August 10 will help to assist individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

eriegives.org

A Helping Hand Makes **All the Difference**

Community Resources for Independence (CRI) is dedicated to the belief that people with disabilities have the right to live with dignity We believe that dignity comes with the ability to live independently.

CRI has been supporting the elderly and the disabled since 1990.

We offer in-home personal care and supports, enabling you or your loved one to remain at home with care. We provide caring, skilled, and screened caregivers who are scheduled and trained to meet your needs.

Please Remember CRI on Erie Gives Day





See more of us at www.CRInet.org Home Office: 3410 West 12th Street, Erie PA 16505





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August 30, 2021 · 11 AM Registration **Lawrence Park Golf Club**

Followed by a Post-Play Patio Party \$180 per golfer (or \$50 for just the patio party) Sponsorship spots are still available!

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West BayWalks

A pandemic pivot becomes tradition



By: Erin Phillips

y family and I have always enjoyed meandering walks through our West Bayfront neighborhood: admiring the old houses around us, enjoying the view from the bluffs, finding something new to notice every day. When the pandemic hit, the only thing we could do to get out of the house was to take walks, so it felt natural and normal to keep exploring our neighborhood. Meanwhile, the neighborhood organization Our West Bayfront, who is responsible for a number of community events in the area north of West 12th Street and west of Sassafras to the Bayfront Parkway, had to shift models to adjust to the pandemic and they, too, turned to walking. Anna Frantz, director of Our West Bayfront explains, "West BayWalks began last year as a COVID-19 alternative to West BayFit, a weekly summer recreation series we were running with Gannon University and the Department of Health. One of our volunteers, Kaitlyn Falk, came up with

the idea of offering the weekly themed walks to get people moving and connected even when we couldn't all gather together at the park. The walks are also a great way to encourage people to learn new things about the West Bayfront neighborhoods, or see the area from a different perspective. The reason they are back again this year is because people enjoyed them so much."

These walks are mapped out with details on specific landmarks, each relating to a theme and written by either a West Bayfront resident or an expert on the theme. In 2020 these varied from Liz Allen's Soul Stroll, a route winding between places of worship in the neighborhood; historian Johnny Johnson's African American History route, sharing the stories of New Jerusalem and beyond; and a Mural Walk curated by Erie Arts and Culture's Patrick Fisher.

The walks this year are still self-guided and are released one at a time, each Wednesday through Aug. 15 during the West BayFit events at Bayview Park (West Second and Cherry streets). You can stop down to the park to pick up a map of the route with a description of the points of interest, or check online each week as they're released. All routes start from Bayview Park. This year the themes range from the memoirs of a self-proclaimed Bay-Rat, an in depth look at the landscape, a highlight of the small businesses of the West Bayfront, a fun scavenger hunt, a children's walk, and a lesson in historic architecture styles, using "off the beaten path" historic homes as examples. There is truly something for everyone and always something new to learn.

For example, I'd always heard the term "Bay-Rat" used here and there, but I never really understood what exactly it meant. Professor David Frew of the Jefferson Educational Society is a proud former Bay-Rat and has written extensively on the subject. He describes his childhood growing up mid-century on the 900 block of West Fourth Street and what it meant to be a Bay-Rat: "The kids were just gone all day. We were out of the house

[top left] Some of the dedicated staff and volunteers of Our West **Bayfront at Bayview Park during** one of the West BayFit events happening every Wednesday this summer through mid-August. Activities have included: West BayWalks, sports activities, hula hooping, COVID vaccines, Yoga, Farmer's Markets, etc. [bottom right] One of the examples from the "Home Again OWB" which highlights homes "off the beaten path" to help walk-takers learn how to "read" building elements and try to determine the architectural style. Pictured here on 10th and Cherry is a great example of Greek Revival architecture.

right after breakfast, foraging for whatever we ate during the day, and home by the time the streetlights turned on. We were always down in the water: swimming, or climbing sandpiles when sand and gravel people were down on the docks." He describes his childhood as a simpler time, while also pointing out major environmental changes that have massively improved life on the bay. "Back then, there were coal piles with tons of toxic runoff, huge smokestacks, and

we were swimming in that water every day. It's surprising that any of us are still alive!" Included in his walk are remnants of the Bay-Rat days like Bay-Rat Stadium, "the neighborhood softball field, which was located on the north side of Third Street and Raspberry. Several legendary local athletes played here." Frew also included some places of older historic significance that laid the groundwork for the character of the neighborhood when he was a child, like James Modica's Basement Speakeasy on West Ninth Street, whose heyday was during Prohibition but was an epicenter for neighborhood clashes through the years.

It is interesting that Frew notes the changing environmental landscape of the West Bayfront, as the BayWalk that was released right after his was "The Landscape Around Us" which was coordinated by Andrew Sipple, an Ameri-Corps VISTA with the Feeding Minds STEM Program, a local outreach initiative that focuses on bringing quality STEM





education to city youth, along with Dr. Steven Ropski from Gannon University. The route of this walk calls attention to the connections between the natural landscape and the built environment of our city. In as many walks as I have taken in the city, I had never realized, as this walk points out, the connection between the planning of the cityscape and the function of the landscape: "Between West Fourth and West Third streets, you will notice that there is a grassy strip between the street and the sidewalk on one side of the street, but on the other side, the entire area is covered in concrete. The grassy patch helps to capture and filter stormwater, while the area that is entirely concrete directs dirty water toward the bay through the storm drains." Sipple and Ropski also explained the many ways the landscape has changed throughout history, even at a point in time when Presque Isle didn't exist as a peninsula. While most historic walks tend to focus on the buildings around us, this Bay-Walk takes participants back to an era when there were no buildings at all, describing the true history of the land and how it's changed over time.

And what cityscape would be complete without a smattering of local small businesses? The West Bayfront is home to many fledgling and veteran small businesses alike and the "Only in the OWB" BayWalk brings attention to many of them. Included are restaurants like the long established Three B Saloon and Virgil's Plate, as well as newer spots like Loco Taco, in addition to home decor veterans like Pam Prinzi's custom window treatments and U Frame It, which has been in business since 1975 and occupies a beautifully restored vintage storefront. Owner Phyllis Mashvna reflects on their location in the West Bayfront: "It's a really great little corner. It's a busy corner here on Eighth and Liberty. My parents started the business in 1975 and I'm really glad they picked this spot." Some of the businesses listed on the "Only in the OWB" map are offering limited-time discounts to those patrons taking the BayWalk, so be sure to check out the map for more information while supporting our local small businesses.

The upcoming weeks will feature a fun scavenger hunt, with clues leading you on the walk based on your own knowledge of West Bayfront Landmarks, as well as a Children's Walk produced by Jake Johnson of the Department of Health that incorporates pages from the Dr. Seuss book, Oh, the Places You'll Go! at different points throughout the walk.

[top left] U Frame It co-owners **Matt Lebowitz and Phyllis** Mashyna (left) stand alongside longtime employee Linda **Trohoske. Their West Bayfront** custom framing shop is among those marked as a "point of interest" on the "Only in the OWB" BayWalk, featuring the small businesses of the neighborhood. [bottom right] A point of interest on the "Landscape Around Us" West Baywalk: the old cottonwood trees that line the bluff at Bayview Park near Front Street.

The series this summer will wrap up on Aug. 15 with the walk "Home Again in OWB" which was researched and mapped out by volunteers from Preservation Erie, including myself, historian Melinda Meyer, and architect Dave Brennan. This walk focuses on guiding participants in identifying the different architectural styles of historic homes. Throughout the walk (which focuses on homes outside of the well-known architectural thoroughfare of Millionaire's Row), the group identifies different details that can then teach you to "read" a building to determine its architectural style. Meyer came up with this idea in walks she's led in the past and thought the idea would translate well to an architectural walk around the West Bayfront: "All buildings offer clues that can help you to determine their architectural style, as well as when and why they were built: details like rooflines, windows, doors, porch columns, building materials, and any other special features. You can find excellent examples of homes built in the Italianate, Greek Revival, Queen Anne, and Tudor styles, among others." We tried to pull together a grouping of homes that you may not have noticed before, that are off of main streets, or are rental units, but that still stand as a great representative of a certain historic architectural style.

Most people would probably love nothing more than to put the past year and a half behind them and never think about it again. But in examining that time more closely, we can come away with a number of traditions and behaviors that can and should live on: spending more time outdoors, getting to know our landscape, supporting our local small businesses, and appreciating the beautiful old architecture of our town are good takeaways and the BayWalks of 2021 celebrate them. Frantz and Our West Bayfront certainly hope these walks stick around for good:

"This program is completely dependent on the efforts of volunteers and our partnership with Gannon and Erie County Department of Health to put this together, so we would love to hear from anyone who has an idea for a great walk in the neighborhood and is interested in helping to map one out! Or if you are interested in helping with the logistics of getting the walks organized each week, we'd love to have you sign up as a volunteer to help with that

For more information, to access the BayWalk maps that have already been published, or to sign up to volunteer, visit: ourwestbayfront.org or head down to Bayview Park on Wednesday evenings from 6 to 8 p.m. and pick up a map while enjoying all the (now) in person events of West BayFit. And please remember Our West Bayfront during Erie Gives Day on Aug. 10.

Erin Phillips runs the Instagram @olderieonfoot, an in-depth look at local architecture "by foot, stroller, papoose, bike, and occasionally minivan."





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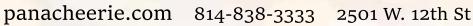


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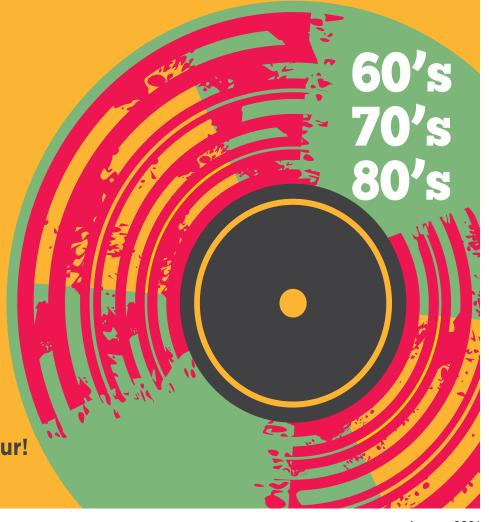


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'New Americans in Erie County' Report Quantifies **Impact of Immigrant Population**

Foreign-born residents made significant economic contributions in 2019



By: Matt Swanseger

Throughout the centuries, the makeup of Erie County has been shaped by waves of immigration, from the mass influx of Europeans in the latter half of the 1800s into the 1900s to more recent arrivals from the Middle East and South Asia, many of them refugees in search of a more peaceful and prosperous life.

Although many of them do find it here, assimilation into the professional workforce and integration into the general community can both be difficult, as xenophobic and nationalist sentiments have always existed and will likely always continue to exist to some degree. Nonetheless, the history of Erie County — and the United States of America — could not be said to be fully written without the contributions of immigrants.

Thanks to the recently released economic report "New Americans in Erie County," it's self-evident that the foreign-born figure significantly into the present as well. The report was awarded to Erie through the city's participation in New American Economy (NAE) and Welcoming America's Gateways for Growth Challenge, in collaboration with the Erie Regional Chamber and Growth Partnership and the Mayor's New American Council. Its publication came in tandem with Mayor Joe Schember's declaration of June as Immigrant Heritage Month and World Refugee

Awareness Month in the City of Erie.

Leveraging the research and technical resources of NAE, "New Americans in Erie County" quantifies the current economic impacts of Erie's immigrant population as a means of encouraging inclusivity and promoting continued opportunity. Here are some of the takeawavs.

Demographics

As of 2019, there were 11,200 immigrants residing in Erie County, which accounted for 4.1 percent of the population. This number includes both naturalized U.S. citizens and non-citizens. irrespective of legal status.

In the City of Erie, 6,300 identified as foreign-born (6.5 percent of the city population).

Of Erie County's immigrant population, 5,100 were naturalized U.S. citizens (45.4 percent), 1,800 were likely eligible (16.2 percent), and 4,300 (38.5 percent) were not yet eligible to naturalize

Of Erie County's immigrant population, the top 5 nationalities were: Bhutanese (8.7 percent), Indian (7.3 percent), Mexican (7.2 percent), Chinese (7.1 percent), and Nepali (5.3 percent).

About 3,000 of the immigrants living in Erie County during 2019 were refugees, with 32.4 percent of them arriving from Bhutan.

Of the immigrants in Erie County, 17.9 percent have resided in the United States for less than 5 years. That's fairly consistent with the number of immigrants with limited English language proficiency (1,800 or 16.6 percent).

Spanish (14.6 percent), Nepali (10.8 percent), and Arabic (7.4 percent) were the top three languages spoken in Erie County immigrant households in 2019.

Employment

Approximately 74.4 percent of the Erie County immigrant population was of working age (between 16 and 64 years old) in 2019 — foreign-born residents were 17.7 percent more likely to be of working age than their U.S.-born coun-

Altogether, immigrants comprise 4.8 percent of Erie County's working-age population and 4.0 percent of its employed population. They made up 8.2 percent of Erie County workers employed in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) fields.

The top five industries by percentage of foreign-born workers in Erie County in 2019 were: professional services (6.8 percent), manufacturing (6.3), hospitality (5.0), healthcare & social assistance (3.1), and education (2.9).

About 9.5 percent of Erie County's foreign-born residents owned their own business in 2019 (compared to 7.7 percent of U.S.-born residents). Across the county, 4.9 percent of business owners are immigrants.

Immigrants aided in the preservation or creation of 500 manufacturing jobs in Erie County in 2019, according to New American Economy estimates.

Economic Impact

Erie County's New Americans held \$192.3 million in spending power in 2019 (3.5 percent of spending power in the county). In the City of Erie, their spending power was \$88.3 million

Tax contributions from Erie County's immigrant population totaled \$42.7 million federally and \$26.4 million toward state and local. In the City of Erie, those numbers were \$14.5 million and \$12.4 million, respectively.

Immigrants contributed \$463.5 million to Erie County's GDP in 2019 (3.7 percent of the total).

The foreign-born contributed \$25.1 million toward Social Security and \$6.4 million to Medicare in 2019.

Erie County's foreign-born were more likely to live at or below 150% of the federal poverty threshold (the maximum

income a household can earn and still be eligible for welfare benefits) — 41.0 percent of immigrant households compared to 25.2 percent of U.S.-born.

Education

Of primary school (K-12) students in Erie County during the 2019-20 school year, 6.5 percent were the children of immigrants and 2.8 percent were born abroad.

Proportionally to their population, Erie County immigrants 25 and older were somewhat more likely to hold a bachelor's degree than U.S.-born residents (29.8 percent vs. 27.7 percent) in

Proportionally to their population, Erie County immigrants 25 and older were much more likely to hold an advanced degree than U.S.-born residents (16.1 percent vs. 9.8 percent).

Erie County colleges and universities were attended by 593 temporary residents during the Fall 2019 semester. Of those, 83 international students graduated with STEM degrees.

Housing

In Erie County in 2019, 52.8 percent of immigrant households were renters and 47.2 percent were homeowners.

The cumulative property value of Erie County immigrant households was \$342.0 million in 2019.

Over the course of 2019, 57.2 percent of Erie County's immigrant households dwelt in houses, 40.2 percent lived in apartments, and 2.6 percent made their home in other types of housing.

Countywide, immigrant households had the same rate of access to broadband internet (83.2 percent) as their U.S.-born counterparts

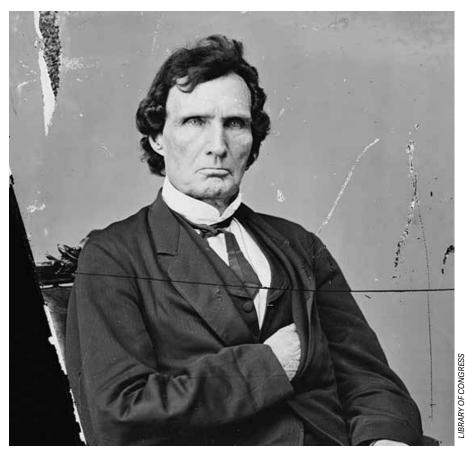
Overall, the report stands as confirmation that our recently christened "Certified Welcoming Place" has plenty of incentive to continue to welcome those from afar.

Concludes Christina Pope, senior network director of Welcoming America. "The City of Erie continues to be an example for how communities can effectively harness the talent of immigrants to create greater prosperity for all resi-

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Thad to the Bone

The unflinching radicalism of Thaddeus Stevens



By: Jonathan Burdick

hen U.S. Representative Thaddeus Stevens of Pennsylvania died in 1868, he was the third person to lay in state at the Capitol Building's Rotunda in Washington, D.C. It was an honor shared before him only by Henry Clay and Abraham Lincoln. At his Lancaster funeral, the Senate chaplain gave a eulogy asking God to give "Pennsylvania, another statesman ... and the world, another man like Thaddeus Stevens." The Great Commoner, as he was known, was a deeply admired politician, viewed by his supporters as a fearless champion of the people, and thousands came to pay their respects.

Of course, not all shared these sentiments. He was equally despised. The very mention of his name was enough to increase a political foe's blood pressure. Even in his adopted state of Pennsylvania, many felt little sorrow over his death. One Erie newspaper editorialized that the "dead Stevens is the best representative of the dead carcass of Radicalism."

Stevens was an abolitionist and a leader of the fiercely antislavery Rad-

ical Republicans, and became one of the most powerful people in Congress during the Civil War. He was a politician ahead of his time on many issues: advocating for free and universal education, supporting women's suffrage, and calling for equal rights for Native Americans, Chinese immigrants, and religious minorities. He led with empathy, but his opponents often described him as stern, arrogant, and even downright cruel.

He was born on a farm in Vermont in 1792, the second of four boys. Like his older brother, he was born with a club foot which gave him a permanent limp. After his youngest brother's birth, their abusive and alcoholic father abandoned the family, leaving their mother working the farm and as a maid to make ends meet. She was determined to help her children escape poverty and paid to enroll Thaddeus in grammar school where he was a dedicated student, but an outcast and made fun of by his peers.

His hard work paid off though and he was accepted to Dartmouth. Once there, he again had trouble finding his place. His roommate described him as "inordinately ambitious," but also "bitU.S. Representative Thaddeus Stevens of Pennsylvania, a fervent abolitionist and promoter of progressive ideals that were at least a century ahead of his time, was equally loved and despised. Described as both a "champion of the people" and a "fanatic," he left a lasting impression upon his death in 1868.

terly envious" of his more privileged classmates. He couldn't afford his books, let alone the extravagances of his wealthy peers, and despite his intellect and excellent marks, he was rejected from the honors fraternity. This embarrassed and angered him, but as an early indicator of his oratory skills, he was selected as the commencement speaker in 1814.

He then moved to York. Pa. where he taught and studied law. After passing the bar, he opened a law office in Gettysburg and by 1817, he'd made a name for himself as "a skillful, brilliant, and successful trial lawyer" with a "moral fearlessness." His reputed biting wit and an unwillingness to suffer fools made him in demand and of his first ten cases to reach Pennsylvania's Supreme Court, Stevens won an extraordinary nine. One would haunt him for the rest of his life though: an 1821 case resulting in a woman who had escaped slavery being returned to her enslaver. His regret and guilt almost certainly influenced his impassioned turn toward abolitionism. Stevens began using his own money to buy freedom for the enslaved and defending freedpeople in court without charge.

In 1842, he relocated to Lancaster where he hired as his housekeeper Lydia Hamilton Smith, a recently separated biracial mother of two and savvy businesswoman. The two became active with the Underground Railroad, even hiding those on the run in his home. Smith would remain with Stevens for the rest of his life and while their exact private relationship is unknown, early biographers of Stevens note that neighbors viewed her as his common-law wife, even helping him raise his two adopted nephews. Stevens never denied it.

His success as a lawyer also brought him significant wealth. He owned his home, made local investments with the help of Smith, and was able to purchase his mother a farm. He rode horses, swam, and enjoyed some friendly gambling. "Stevens lost and won with the same apparent indifference," an 1873 newspaper reported, describing his "consummate coolness" and how he "never lost his temper."

While dabbling in local and state politics, he recognized that the most permanent solution to end slavery as an institution would be to work within the system. In 1848, he then ran for and won a seat as a Whig in the U.S. House of Representatives. He didn't waste any time making his intentions known. The nation was already splintering and his first floor speech surprised many with its ferocity. Stevens targeted Southern congressmen for their conspiracy to break up the Union and criticized weak Northern moderates as "traitors of liberty," calling them "tame and servile" for consistent Southern concessions.

"[Congressmen] were accustomed to pleas for peace and to honeyed speeches about the Union," wrote James Albert Woodburn in his 1913 biography. "Stevens showed them another tone."

Many Whigs were gradualists, favoring containing slavery over immediate abolition, but Stevens called for "universal freedom" and "the final extinction of slavery." He attacked the expansion of slavery as a disease that would "render the whole body leprous and loathsome" while criticizing confinement as a "cancer" that would "eat out the vitals." As for doughfaces — Northerners who voted with the South — they were "soulless" and "tools of the slave-driver."

In Bruce Levine's 2021 biography of Stevens, he notes how "southern congressmen gathered around his desk scowling, sneering, and cursing at him," with some observers fearing for his life. He describes Stevens as undisturbed during such confrontations, not raising his voice, but "dropping sentences as though each one weighed a ton" and keeping his hands clasped in front of him with a "calm and deliberate" manner. Levine writes that his attitude combined "substantive aggressiveness and formal impassivity" and was "exasperating to his adversaries."

As Stevens anticipated, his speech deeply upset many Northern colleagues and infuriated Southern law-

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makers. They called him "desperate," "reckless," and trying to "frighten the grandmothers and children of Pennsylvania." One Pennsylvania colleague demanded he apologize for "attempt[ing] to excite one section of the union against the other."

Southern politicians cited the "happy slave" who would voluntarily return to enslavement if freed. Stevens scoffed. "Well, if this be so, let us give all a chance to enjoy this blessing," he quipped. "Let the slaves who choose, go free; and the free, who choose, become slaves. If these gentlemen believe there is a word of truth in what they preach, the slaveholder need be under no apprehension."

For those who defended slavery with Christianity, he saved his harshest criticism, saying they belonged in a new inner circle of Dante's Inferno alongside Lucifer and Judas. He openly derided "absurd and blasphemous" Southern clergy as "reverand parasites" for praising slavery as benevolent and divine. When called a "fanatic" in response, he responded that there could be *no* compromise when it came to human rights.

There was a compromise. Known as the Compromise of 1850, it passed that September. Stevens was enraged. The inclusion of the Fugitive Slave Act, which passed after a floor showdown between Stevens and fellow Pennsylvanian James Thompson of Erie, particularly angered him. This law required Northern states and citizens to cooperate with the capture and return of enslaved people on the run or be subjected to fines and imprisonment.

Thompson had previously met in secret with Speaker of the House Howell Cobb, a Georgia enslaver and future Confederate leader, who asked that he take the floor in support of the Fugitive Slave Act. Thompson could then motion to close debate and move it to a vote "without discussion, consideration, or amendment."

When Thompson did as planned, Stevens requested he withdraw the motion so that he could reply. While the exact conversation was not recorded, there was some back and forth between Stevens, Thompson, and Speaker Cobb and when Stevens sensed he was running out of options, he moved to postpone the bill instead. This motion was defeated and the bill passed.

Around 50 lawmakers, including Whigs, intentionally chose not to vote. After its passage, Stevens "gravely rose" and mocked these vote-dodgers, saying that Speaker Cobb could send a messenger to let them know they could come back in. His remarks were met with laughter.

Stevens attempted to rally support for a repeal, but when Whig leadership balked, he was disgusted and left the party and politics outright. He returned to law, but in 1855, he joined the newly-formed antislavery Republican Party. At a Lancaster rally the following year, he referred to Democratic Party presidential candidate (and fellow Lancaster resident) James Buchanan, as being "dead of lockjaw" and a "bloated mass of political putridity."

Buchanan was elected and unable to rise to the moment. Violence was spreading throughout the states from Bleeding Kansas to Harpers Ferry to even the Senate floor with the brutal, near-fatal caning of abolitionist Senator Charles Sumner. Stevens decided to run again and won easily.

When Abraham Lincoln won the presidency in 1860, Stevens declared that voters made their choice. It was inexcusable to expect Northerners to agree to more concessions and compromises. Before Lincoln was even inaugurated, South Carolina declared secession, specifically citing the North's refusal to enforce the Fugitive Slave Act and an increased "hostility on the part of the non-slaveholding States to the Institution of Slavery." Buchanan did not act. More states followed.

Only a few months after the South Carolina militia bombarded Fort Sumter, starting the war, Stevens assumed the chairmanship of the Ways and Means Committee, the equivalent to the modern majority leader, and throughout the war, he kept intense pressure on Lincoln and fellow lawmakers. As the war neared its end. he helped shepherd the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments through Congress, abolishing slavery nationally and expanding citizenship and voting rights.

When the Confederate-sympathizing Vice President Andrew Johnson assumed the presidency following Lincoln's assassination, Stevens was his greatest adversary. He demanded that Congress revolutionize and break up Southern institutions or "all of our blood and treasure have been spent in vain" and further rallied colleagues to overturn Johnson's vetoes of Radical Reconstruction policies.

Even in the North, Stevens faced pushback. The editor of one Erie newspaper called Stevens a "strange Radical god," a "hardened old infidel," and someone who "was and always has been a dangerous politician." They argued that Radical Republicans were the "worst enemies that the negro had" because they "cannot compete with the white race." The paper falsely claimed that white people's brains were ten times larger and that the freed slaves were dying because when "thrown out on the world, without the guidance of a master, they are as children." The paper predicted that "the [Black] race will in time become extinct ... [now] that they are deprived of the protection of the white man" and personally attacked Stevens for living "in open adultery with a mulatto woman ... [who] manages his households ... speaks of Mr. Stevens and herself as 'we,' and enjoys the rights of a lawful wife." Stevens rarely seemed to register such personal attacks, even from Northerners and seldom responded.

By 1867, the Radical Republicans were beginning to lose influence and power. Stevens meanwhile became increasingly sick. He even had trouble speaking during Johnson's impeachment. When Johnson was acquitted, he was increasingly despondent, especially as violence increased in the Southern states to restore white rule.

"My life has been a failure," the sick Stevens told one lawmaker. To a reporter, he said that his only regret was that he "lived so long and so uselessly." On the evening of Aug. 11, 1868, with Smith, a nephew, two preachers, and some friends at his side, Thaddeus Stevens died.

"Let the future statesmen of America learn that it is never safe to do wrong," fellow Pennsylvania Congressman John Martin Broomall eulogized on the House floor. "Retributive justice is sometimes slow, but it is always sure. The memory of Thaddeus Stevens needs no monument."

Thaddeus Stevens had not accomplished all of his goals, but he had not failed. As his casket sat in the Capitol Rotunda at the base of Lincoln's statue, thousands of mourners ensured that the legacy of Pennsylvania's most radical and unflinching representative would be remembered.

Jonathan Burdick runs the historical blog Rust & Dirt. He can be reached at jburdick@eriereader.com



BirthRoot Doulas Expanding Access to Care

Supporting expectant mothers through every phase



By: Amy VanScoter

oulas may seem like the latest wellness trend for expectant mothers, but for many women, having a trained professional who provides support before, during, and after childbirth — is a return to the past — and a potentially lifesaving move.

Maternal mortality in the United States is at an all-time high, with Black women being disproportionately affected, regardless of age or education level. The Center for Disease Control data shows American Indian/Alaska Native and Black women are two to three times more likely to die from a pregnancy-related cause than white women — with 60 percent of these deaths classified as preventable.

Enter the doula, an advocate who could possibly bridge that gap by providing educational, emotional, and physical support before, during, and after pregnancy in capacities that midwives and doctors cannot. Doulas do not replace medical professionals or a mother's initial support person but serve as non-medical support in partnership with a birthing person, maternity care provider, and other resources. In the Erie community, BirthRoot is a growing group of doulas providing their clients with a professionally trained, representational, accessible woman who is not only familiar with maternal wellness but also knowledgeable about navigating Erie's system of maternity care.

"Our moms have our phone numbers; we talk and Zoom often to discuss their pregnancy progress and expectations, said Tica Nickson, director of prevention at Emma's Footprints/BirthRoot Community Doula Alliance. "Also as community-based doulas, we are further involved with our moms because we work to connect our clients to resources that bridge real life gaps for our moms. BirthRoot develops connections and partnerships with other professionals and community organizations so that when our moms need assistance beyond their pregnancy, we can link them." One of those partnerships is with a group called Erie City Moms. Their volunteers have found ways to edify new BirthRoot moms with prepared meals and drive-thru baby showers. UPMC Hamot has also secured a grant that is currently being used in training some BirthRoot Doulas to become certified lactation counselors. "Doulas build relationships with their mommas so they feel empowered in all stages of their maternity. We help to elevate the engagement of the relationships necessary to ensure positive birth outcomes — relationships including those with their midwives or doctors," said Nickson.

Collaboration within the community by the community is a return to a model that was effective centuries ago. The incorporation of a doula adds a skilled, compassionate companion to help women comprehend their pregnant body and advocate effectively for

Davona Pacley, a 2019 honoree of Erie's 40 Under 40, practices as a postpartum doula with Flow Freely, an Erie-based alternative and holistic health service. A doula is a skilled, compassionate companion that helps women comprehend their pregnant body and advocate effectively for themselves and their baby.

themselves and their baby. A doula will meet to discuss options and birth preferences to help a woman effectively communicate them to their provider before labor. Currently our local hospitals permit mothers to have a doula as a second support person. "I think moms and their families see worth in having another helper in that space to make sure all moms' needs are met. I often joke that doulas 'doula' dads and grandmas through their loved one's birth," said Nickson. "Having someone who is comfortable and experienced in the laboring process can be priceless to those families. I also think doctors and facilities are truly trying to improve birth outcomes in all women but especially Black women and recognize the benefits for the mother in having the constant, calming presence of a trained doula in the room. I have one patient and I am there specifically to ensure the physical and emotional comfort of my momma," said Nickson.

During delivery, Nickson explains that the care a woman receives with a doula is constant. Nurses and providers come and go as they have many patients, but the difference in having a doula is they tend to the emotional and physical needs of one mother, one birth at a time. "Our practice at Birth-Root (and probably with most doulas) is to block off one two-week span before a woman's estimated due date and one two-week span after the date and we won't take another birth in that time frame," said Nickson. It's also common practice to have a backup doula in case it is necessary. The client will get to know them as well. After delivery, doulas stay with moms typically two to three hours postpartum, especially if they have decided to breastfeed. Doulas generally do two to three home visits postpartum and those can be in person or virtual. The role of a community-based doula postpartum varies greatly from mother to mother.

Currently there are no federal regulations for doulas. If you are looking for a doula, Nickson suggests finding someone who has been through a reputable training program and also participates in continuing education. "I think a valid question when you are interviewing doulas is to ask how they have kept their practice current. Doula certification, though not required, provides, I think, an extra level of professionalism that will be recognizable by medical professionals," Nickson said. "It's important to pick someone who is professional but also comfortable. If you're not comfortable with them before you go into labor, chances are you won't be comfortable with them when you're in labor. I truly believe that some of us are just built for it and that will come through no matter how much or how little training someone has, so do your homework but also trust your instincts."

In the past, because of the lack of access and coverage by health insurance, doulas seemed to be a luxury only for those that could afford the outof-pocket expense. Private insurance reimbursing members for doula care is relatively new and still requires upfront payment by the family, and Medicaid insurances do not cover doulas. There is funding available that allows doula care and support for Black moms and babies through BirthRoot thanks to a recent grant from the Erie Community Foundation. "BirthRoot is working to realign with our cultural heritage in providing funded doulas for women that probably wouldn't have access otherwise. Our goal is to continuously provide some equitable competencies in spaces where Black women and other BIPOC are underrepresented but disproportionately affected. The pandemic has heightened everyone's awareness of the issues but these issues are not new," Nickson said. Women interested in learning more can call 814-449-6200. BirthRoot is being grown and funded by Emma's Footprints.

Amy VanScoter is a certified yoga instructor at SchoolHouse Yoga in Erie with a passion for wellness, and a marketing and communications professional. She can be reached at avanscoter@gmail.com.



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Siblings Kyle (pictured) and Rocket were born with bilateral twisted leg syndrome, a condition in which the leg muscles are contracted making it difficult to walk. Dragging the affected limbs can lead to ulcerated leg tissue. Although highly treatable and reversible, it is seen by some as a reason for euthanasia. Because You

Care's foster home saw otherwise and quickly learned how to perform the necessary daily physical therapy for the kittens until their legs were fully functional. Picture these kittens scampering around, and you'll see the kind



two sizes too big, just like sweet little Irene's, who was diagnosed with an enlarged heart and severe dental disease. A happy ending to her story seemed unlikely for this blind, deaf 14-year-old Chihuahua until she was rescued by Because You Care. There, she received the necessary dental care,

including multiple extractions, and received treatment for her enlarged heart. The cost of this care alone was nearly \$1,000. Irene now lives with her forever family, who can't imagine life without her. Will you please make happy endings like this possible?

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Kellar's Packs Comics, Magicians in August Lineup

Stop by for a spell and enjoy the action



Kellar's — a Modern Magic sure to astound and mesmerand Comedy Club at 1402 ize audiences with feats of State St. (just a block away from where the Real Wizard of Oz's Gem City childhood home once stood) — beckons us in

ize audiences with feats of magic, and kill them ... with laughs.

Here's a quick run-down of who's appearing (and reapfor an August lineup that's pearing) at Kellar's this month: Appearing (and disappearing) at Kellar's — A Modern Magic and Comedy Club this month will be (top row) John Hinton and Greg Hahn, with (bottom row) Eric Jones and Vicki Barbolak closing out August.

John Hinton, Aug. 6-7:

As seen on the CW's hit show Penn & Teller: Fool Us and on YouTube clips with hits in the millions, magician/storyteller/ redhead John Hinton uses his unique style (and some modern tech) to transport audiences mere inches away from the mysteries in his act. There's magic to behold, stories to be heard, and joy to be had.

Friday and Saturday, 7 p.m. // \$30 Greg Hahn, Aug. 13-14:

To say Greg Hahn is absurdly energetic is to pay the man a compliment: His hyperactive approach to stand-up comedy has landed him plenty of spots on the national hit Bob and Tom Radio Show, as well as gigs on Late Night with Conan O'Brien, Comedy Central, CBS, ABC, FOX, MTV and CMT. If high energy, expert crowd work, physical humor, and one-line zingers are your kind of thing, then Hahn could be your kind of comedian.

Friday 7 p.m., Saturday 6:30 or 9 p.m.//\$30

Eric Jones, Aug. 20-21:

Eric Jones' insane sleight-ofhand skills and spellbinding illusions have placed him in good company: He's been showcased on Comedy Central, at the world-famous Magic Castle in Hollywood, and in New York City's legendary Monday Night Magic series, not to mention on Penn & Teller: Fool Us, America's Got Talent, and on TV programs in nearly 20 different countries. Anyone who can appreciate the magical power of manual dexterity should not sleep on this one. Friday and Saturday, 7 p.m. // \$30

Vicki Barbolak, Aug. 27-28:

"I think you just came up with your own sitcom. You're wonderful. I love you"

That's what America's Got Talent judge Howie Mandel said about Vicki Barbolak.

"I think you're the best comedian we've had on this show."

That's what Mandel's buddy, Simon Cowell, said about her.

A fan favorite and top 10 finalist on Season 13 of AGT, Barbolak has also been featured on AGT's "Champions" series, as well as the Britain's Got Talent "Cham-

Safe to say, she's funny alright. Friday and Saturday, 6:30 or 9 p.m.

Now, folks, these are all 21-plus shows, so leave the little imps at home. For more information about this month's talent lineup, tickets, and everything else happening at Kellar's, visit kellarsmagic.com. — Ryan Smith



Crime Victim Center of Erie County will host a "Roaring Twenties" fundraising gala in lieu of Moonlight on the Bay, benefiting child victims of sexual assault and abuse as well as prevention education programing, to help stop these horrible crimes.

Join us for an exciting step back in time as we transform the Erie Zoo into a 1920s speakeasy, complete with charitable casino style games, flappers, music, dancing and of course amazing local food.

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EVENTS

Buckle Up! The 'Voice of Broadway' is Coming to Erie

Legendary actress/singer Betty Buckley headlines at MIAC



SATURDAY, AUG. 7

Mercyhurst University brings the critically acclaimed actress/singer Betty Buckley to stage at the Mary D'Angelo Performing Arts Center. Buckley will headline the Mercyhurst Institute for Arts and Culture's annual 501 Summer Soirée on Saturday, Aug. 7. With a career spanning theater, film, television and even concert halls around the world, Buckley has made her mark in the arts.

Her appearances on stage garnered her the title of the "Voice of Broadway" by New York Magazine. Buckley won a Tony Award for her performance as Grizabella, the Glamour Cat, in the original Broadway production of Cats. Her second Tony Award nomination for Best Actress in a Musical came from her performance as Hesione in Triumph of Love. She went on to play Norma Desmond in Sunset Boulevard in both London and New York, receiving an Olivier Award nomination for Best Actress in a Musical.

In addition to shining on stage, Buckley brought her talent to the screen by appearing in a variety of films and TV shows. Buckley debuted in the original movie version of *Carrie* in 1976, where she played Carrie's gym teacher, Miss Collins. More recently, Buckley ap-

Critically acclaimed actress and singer Betty Buckley will serve as the final act of the Mercyhurst Institute for Arts and Culture's summer season, her performance coinciding with the annual 501 Summer Soiree on Aug. 7.

peared in the 2017 M. Night Shyamalan film *Split* alongside James McAvoy. She was nominated for a Saturn Award for her work in the film as McAvoy's psychologist. Buckley starred in the hit series *Eight is Enough* as Abby Bradford and recently co-starred in the third season of AMC's *Preacher*. She has also guest starred in shows ranging from the NBC series *Chicago Med* to HBO's Oz.

Buckley was inducted into the Theatre Hall of Fame in 2012 and is the 2017 recipient of the Julie Harris Awards from the Actor's Fund for Artistic Achievement. And these are only a handful of her career achievements.

— Morgan Ashlee Grenz

7:30 p.m. // Mary D'Angelo Performing Arts Center // \$35 for adults, \$30 for seniors, \$25 for non-Mercyhurst students and youth 12 and younger // Those who are fully vaccinated are encouraged but not required to wear a mask. Seating has been reduced to 50% // For tickets and more information go to miac.mercyhurst.edu

32 | Erie Reader | ErieReader.com August 2021

814 Day Celebrates Erie

Single-day city-wide event offers a thoroughly packed lineup



By: Nick Warren

Cometimes the numbers just line up Oright. From Erie, all the way to State College and south past Altoona into Bedford, there's one thing that unites us beyond our shared Commonwealth. The three little digits at the beginning of our phone numbers tie us together as we represent the 814. What better time to celebrate this area then, than Saturday, Aug. 14, or by our American date formatting, 8/14?

In lieu of Celebrate Erie, which was canceled because of the pandemic for the second year in a row, the City of Erie, in partnership with Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield and AHN St. Vincent, has created 814 Day.

There will be four major components to 814 Day: The 814 Summer Bucket List, the LegendErie Scavenger Hunt, a family movie night, and a multi-venue music festival.

Aaron Loncki, one of the event's main organizers, explained that with the bucket list "families can go out and use our hashtag #814bucketlist, take a picture during one of the 81.4 things to do in Erie, and each time they submit one, they are entered to win one of three prize packs." The contest began on June 1, and runs until Aug. 14. It's available at 814day.com and was made in conjunction with Macaroni Kid.

The LegendErie Scavenger Hunt began on July 15, and "follows the ghost of Ebenezer Crosby, who was a shipbuilder in 1812 for Daniel Dobbins," described Loncki. "The scavenger hunt is a cool way to learn a little bit about your hidden history, but also get out and about while you do it. It's interactive. It's a way that you can go with your friends with your family, to all 12 stops. There's a trivia question at each stop as well." Those that complete all 12 stops will be entered to win the grand prize of \$1,000, which will be announced during the event. The 814Day Family Movie Night will take

The 814 Summer Bucket List, produced by the City of Erie in collaboration with Macaroni Kid, invites families to submit pictures of themselves partaking in one of 81.4 things to do in Erie this summer using the hashtag #814bucketlist at 814day. com — each submission is rewarded with a chance to win one of three prize packs.

place in two locations simultaneously. Frontier Park will feature Disney Pixar's Up at 9 p.m., while McClelland Park will feature Illumination Entertainment's Sing, also at 9 p.m. "Family Movie Night is a great opportunity for parents, grandparents, family friends to get out for a family-friendly evening," expressed Loncki.

Lastly, the 814 Day Music Festival features a lineup of 25 local bands performing at five different parks throughout the city. Guests can go downtown to Perry Square and Griswold Park, down along the west bayfront to Bayview Park, to Rodger Young Park along Buffalo Road, or to Washington Park on the city's west side. Bands will play from 3 to 9 p.m. at each location. Erie Apparel has even made specially designed shirts to honor the event, which you can order at erieapparel.co.

Loncki said that "hearing the word get out, and hearing people get excited about going to live music again and participating in something this summer that they actually want to do, that's really awesome for all of us. And I think the team wanted to fill that gap because we didn't have live music last summer."

Marquette Savings Bank Stage at Bayview Park

3 p.m.-3:30 p.m. Claire Stuczynski 3:45 p.m.-4:30 p.m. The Acoustic Jukebox

5p.m.-6 p.m. The Collective 6:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m. Buttermilk Falls

8 p.m.-9 p.m. Smilo and the Ghost

National Fuel Stage at Perry Square

3 p.m.-3:30 p.m. Brooke Surgener 3:45 p.m.-4:30 p.m. Cats a Bear 5 p.m.-6p.m. Six Year Stretch 6:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m. The Division **Street Machine**

8 p.m.-9 p.m. The Breeze Band

PNC Bank Stage at Griswold Park

3 p.m.-3:30 p.m. **Erika Kuhn** 3:45 p.m.-4:30 p.m. The Band Hamilton

5 p.m.-6 p.m. Ladders 6:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m. Mallory Run 8 p.m.-9 p.m. First to Eleven

Hamot Health Foundation Stage at Rodger Young Park

3 p.m.-3:30 p.m. Doc Proto 3:45 p.m.-4:30 p.m. **Bass/Drum/Bass** 5 p.m.-6 p.m. Rodger Montgomery **Blues Band**

6:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m. Eric Brewer and

8 p.m.-9 p.m. Cee Brown Experience

Northwest Bank Stage at **Washington Park**

3 p.m.-3:30 p.m. Jesse James Weston 3:45 p.m.-4:30 p.m. Ron Yarosz Power **Organ Trio**

5 p.m.-6 p.m. Paper Matches 6:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m. Lights + Letters 8 p.m.-9 p.m. **Mambo**

For more information and a complete listing of goings on, go to 814day.com.

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Saturday, September 4
Saturday, September 4

Division Street
Touch of Grey
Open Mic w/ 50 Miles to Empty
Jay Bird & Haley Bee
Fred Oakman (4pm)
Rodger Montgomery (6:30)
Brunch w/ Wildwood Express
Closed
John & Jeff
Salmon Frank (4:30)
Another Round

All shows start at 6:30pm unless otherwise noted.





Complete listing of events can be found on the Venango General Store website or by visiting French Creek Music Series available on FCMS.ROCKS

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EVENTS

PACA Showcases 14 More Ways to Screw Up Your College Interview

The sophomore edition of the Ian McWethy play returns



FRIDAY, AUG. 6

Are you ready for a great night out? Looking for a good laugh? For the first two weekends in August, the Performing Artists Collective Alliance (PACA) will proudly present 14 More Ways To Screw Up Your College Interview by Ian McWethy for your comedic pleasure.

"The author had written two scripts, and he said, use whatever ones you want," explained actor and director Jeff Rodland. "I used the basic beginning and ending scenes from the first one. This time, I'm using the basic scenes that make that a different story."

When two college recruiters are tasked to find one more student to fill

The Performing Artists Collective Alliance (PACA) will present four performances of 14 More Ways to Screw Up Your College Interview by Ian McWethy in early August.

the spot in next year's class, they find themselves revisiting the Wait List only to encounter an array of eccentric characters who promptly demonstrate what not to do during your college interview. This sequel to 13 Ways to Screw Up Your College Interview is a fun comedic play that surrounds the absurdity of the dreaded college application. — Katelyn Kruszewski

Fridays and Saturdays, Aug. 6 - 14 at 8 p.m. // PACA, 1505 State St., second floor // \$10 // for tickets and more information, go to paca1505.org



Fix Your Gaze on The Yellow Wallpaper

All An Act adapts Charlotte Perkins Gilman's commentary on women's mental health



JULY 23 — SEPT. 19

t is difficult to imagine how a piece of literature published in 1892 describing the systemic oppression of women, and the ongoing deliberate ignorance of women's mental health, could feel relevant in 2021.

And yet, here we are.

All An Act theater, a gem in Erie's Little Italy neighborhood, is bringing an adaptation of Charlotte Perkins Gilman's short story The Yellow Wallpaper to the stage — and the screen, at least initially.

Starring Adele Crotty, a 15-year veteran of the Erie theater scene, a regular at A3, and the Erie Reader's Best of Erie winner for Best Actress in both 2019 and 2020 (she also happened to adapt the piece for these performances), as well as Marie Glaser and Roland Robbinson, the play is directed by J.D. Mizikowski.

Said Crotty, "Gilman was a revolutionary when it came to women's rights and women's health. She fought against the 'Rest Cure'...because it was something she herself was subject-

ed to. And that is still so relevant today, men being in control of women's health."

The Yellow Wallpaper tells the story of a young woman, a new mother, who is suffering a "temporary nervous depression," and ordered to rest cure staying abed for weeks at a time — by her husband. Confined both physically and mentally, her mental state completely misunderstood, she becomes obsessed with the yellow wallpaper: its color, its smell, its patterns, and eventually the woman she believes is

Adele Crotty stars in All An Act Theatre's production of The Yellow Wallpaper, a stage adaptation of the Charlotte Perkins Gilman short story peering into the precarious treatment of women's mental health.

trapped behind it.

The play has already begun its run in a digital format initially and throughout August; the show will switch to live, in-theater performances in September.

That format has had a surprising and insightful impact on its principle: "It's been fascinating to get the opportunity to watch something I've created with the people whose opinions I greatly respect," Crotty said, "and to get an authentic reaction in real time."

She continued, "It truly has been one of the most rewarding and unique experiences in my life, as a writer and as an actor."

Count on Crotty's adaptation of The Yellow Wallpaper to be a rewarding and unique experience for its audience as well, and an opportunity to reflect on how far women's rights have come in our society as well as how far we have yet to go. — Cara J. Suppa

Fridays & Saturdays at 7:30 p.m., Sundays at 3 p.m. // Digital format only until September // \$6 per viewer // For more info and to buy tickets: allanact.net/ now-playing



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Real Horror Show

Censor works better as a character study than horror

or time immemorial, self-proclaimed guardians of morality have sought to censor works of art, often in the name of protecting the children while real-life horrors were conveniently ignored. No other time best emphasized this dichotomy than the "Video Nasties" panic of 1980s Britain. Horror movies were heavily censored or banned completely for the "benefit of the youth" while socio-political and economic upheaval wreaked havoc on the country. Prano Bailev-Bond takes us back to those days with her directorial debut Censor. The film does a wonderful job of showing us that the desire for censorship often tells us more about the people do-

ing the censoring than works they wish to ban.

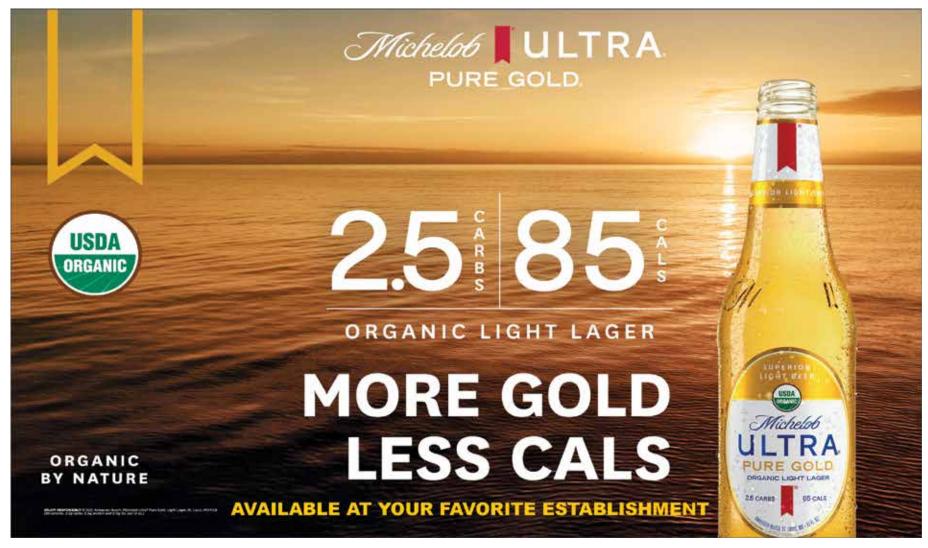
Following Enid (Niamh Algar), a woman who takes pride in her job removing the blood and gore from recent horror films, but who herself has repressed a real horror from her childhood. However, these repressed memories suddenly come flooding back when she notices that an actress in one of the films bears a striking resemblance to her sister who disappeared years ago. Enid investigates this horror film which she thinks may be the clue to her sister's whereabouts. Or is it all in her head?

Although marketed as a horror movie, the film works much better as a character study. In fact, the dramat-

ic scenes are so good that the horror elements almost threaten to cheapen the film. That said, there is much for horror fans to love as well with its contrasting colors straight out of an Argento film and its unsettling, surreal atmosphere. The mixture of horror and drama all leads us to an absolutely chilling climax. — Forest Taylor

Censor is available on Amazon Prime, Apple TV+, Google Play, Vudu, and YouTube. Directed by: Prano Bailey-Bond // Written by: Prano Bailey-Bond and Anthony Fletcher // Starring: Niamh Algar, Michael Smiley, Nicholas Burns, Vincent Franklin, Sophia La Porta, Adrian Schiller, Clare Holman, Andrew Havill, and Felicity Montagu // 84 minutes // Unrated ('R' equivalent)





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For the latter, please continue to the Edinboro University page and click on "Buzz, Generated."



MOVIES

A Knight's Tale

The Green Knight is a fable like no other





Arthurian legends are nothing new in the world of film adaptation. Since the beginning of the medium, the adventures of Arthur Pendragon and his Knights of the Round Table have been presented on screen countless times. However, David Lowery's (Ain't Them Bodies Saints, A Ghost Story) The Green Knight is one of the few adaptations that tries to delve into the mysticism and mythology behind these heroic tales. Not since John Boorman's Excalibur has there been such a strange, visually stunning and emotionally compelling take on the Arthurian legend.

Arthur's nephew Gawain (Dev Patel) longs to become one of the Knights of the Round Table and his desires may be fulfilled one Christmas evening when a giant, emerald-skinned knight challenges him to a game. Any blow he can land, the knight will return in kind. After Gawain beheads him, the still-living knight promises to give him the same blow in a year's time. Now Gawain must travel deep into the wilderness to find a way

to challenge the knight with his life still intact

Lowery keeps his story well within the realm of myth and legend with helpful foxes, headless maidens and even a band of pale, hairless giants. The slow, dreamlike pace and lush, gorgeous cinematography only add to the surrealism of this quest. However, things take a turn in the end when myth and reality come crashing together in a brilliant, near wordless climax that recontextualizes everything we have just seen. The incredible denouement takes *The Green Knight* from a fascinating fable into one of the best films of the year. — Forest Taylor

Written and directed by: David Lowery, based on the Chivalric Romance "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight" by Anonymous // Starring: Dev Patel, Alicia Vikander, Joel Edgerton, Sarita Choudhury, Sean Harris, Kate Dickie, Barry Keoghan, Erin Kellyman, Megan Tiernan, and Ralph Ineson // 125 minutes // Rated 'R' // A24

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The Next Shift: The Fall of Industry and the Rise of Health Care in Rust Belt America

A deep-dive into deindustrialization in Pittsburgh

n the wake of the 2016 election, as national reporters parachuted into Western Pa. to explain the Trump phenomenon, cliches about the "Rust Belt" abounded. For a week or so, our abandoned factories and struggling small businesses took center stage in the media. Some of this reporting was at least partially accurate - our region has certainly been ravaged by manufacturing decline, for example — but a lot of it was dangerously superficial as well.

One important factor that's often edited out of this discourse is the decisive role of healthcare in our local economy. In 2020, the largest non-government employer in Erie County wasn't Erie Insurance; it was UPMC. Over 23 percent of our workforce in Erie County is devoted to healthcare and social assistance, a rate nearly 7 percent higher than the manufacturing sector. What if someone were to account for our economy more honestly, examining the ways that service labor and healthcare have supplemented (or even replaced) our traditional manufacturing base?

University of Chicago labor historian Gabriel Winant traveled about two hours south to tell this very story. The Next Shift:

The Fall of Industry and the Rise of Health Care in Rust Belt America is a deep-dive into Pittsburgh's evolving economy since the 1950s. Winant begins with an unsentimental assessment of the steel factories that led to mid-century prosperity and ends by raising crucial questions about the relationship between healthcare, industry, and labor rights in the present.

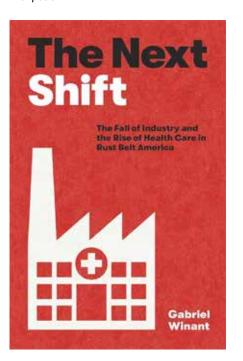
Structurally, the book balances engrossing firsthand accounts from workers with occasionally dense economic data. You'll learn what it was like to witness life-threatening injuries on the floor of a mid-century steel mill, and you'll emerge with a nuanced sense of the relationship between union power, deindustrialization, medical innovation, and health care access over a seven-decade period.

Unlike many accounts of seemingly-macho factory labor, Winant doesn't limit his analysis to the experiences of men. Instead, there's a chapter devoted to the "working class home," in which a factory worker's wife details how difficult it was to keep kids quiet while her husband slept after his night shift. More broadly, the book explores how difficult, dangerous factory work often led to psychological trauma, alcoholism, and domestic abuse in the home. Later, Winant connects the poor health of these workers to their impact on the healthcare system as they aged. The same people inhaling toxic dust in steel mills in the '60s were often frequent hospital visitors by the '90s, creating employment opportunities for their treatment while increasing the cost of Medicare.

The Next Shift is also careful to acknowledge the experiences of African Americans, who were forced into the most dangerous (and least lucrative) positions on the factory floor during the industrial heyday — and laid off from those positions at disproportionate rates. As factories began closing in the '70s and '80s, African American women began working as care workers, in low-paid positions lacking benefits or long-term security. Winant demonstrates the structural nature of discrimination very effectively, pairing his data with firsthand testimonials about the insecurity and exhaustion that came along with this labor.

The Next Shift isn't exactly a beach read. But it's a rewarding one for anyone interested in local labor history - and unsatisfied with shallow assessments of the "Rust Belt." — Dan Schank

Harvard University Press // 265 pages //





BOOK REVIEWS / VIDEO GAMES

When We Were Young

New release from Richard Roper proves the power of true friendship

As teens, Theo and Joel were inseparable, sharing secrets and long afternoons in their small English village. One afternoon, they vow to one day complete the Thames Path, a 184-mile trek that would take them along the River Thames from the start in their town all the way to London. But then, a fateful night at 16 years old leaves Theo and Joel reeling, destroying their friendship.

More than a decade later, Joel is a successful television writer with more than one dark secret and Theo is nursing a broken heart while living in his parents' back shed. They haven't talked since they were 16, but when Joel shows up on Theo's 30th birthday suggesting they finally do the Thames Path, Theo

has some tough decisions to make.

With curiosity getting the better of him, Theo joins Joel on the trek, wanting to know why his old friend has suddenly reappeared out of the blue. What follows is a heartwarming, funny, and tragic story of lost time, the power of friendship, and how the years can slowly disappear and bring you right back to where you started.

There's something so vivid about Roper's writing that it feels less like reading and more like watching the story unfold right before your eyes. Each character—from Theo and Joel to Theo's younger sister and Joel's actress girlfriend—is so well-written that it is easy to imagine them off the page and in real life.

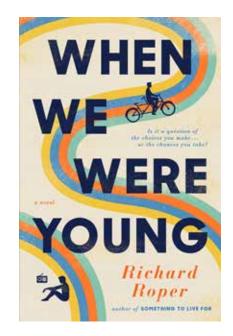
Joel and Theo both have their share of

flaws, which only seems to make them more charming as time goes on, with each revealing who they were and who they have become as time passes. Both carry their own unique quirks and idiosyncrasies that make them leap off the page, allowing readers to fully immerse themselves in the lost friendship.

Often hilarious and at times heart-breaking, When We Were Young is a fantastic new book that will leave many of us wishing we could turn back time on the friendships we may have neglected over the years and start over again with those we enjoy most.

— Ally Kutz

G.P. Putnam's Sons // 352 pages // Fiction, Coming-of-age



Beast Inspection

Beasts of Maravilla Island teems with imagination, but lean on experience



Pokédex full and feeling empty inside? If you're on the hunt for more fantastic beasts and want to know where to find them, charter yourself a boat to Maravilla Island, the site of Erie-based video game publisher Whitethorn Studios' latest release, aptly titled Beasts of Maravilla Island. Developed by Los Angeles-based indie developer Banana Bird Studios, the game follows in the wake of several recent entries to the burgeoning "photo safari" genre, most notably Nintendo's Pokémon Snap.

Players take control of budding wildlife photographer Marina Montez, who is on a mission to carry on her grandfather's legacy as an awestruck documenter of the natural world. At the heart of that legacy was his expedition to the uncharted Maravilla Island, home to an incredible breadth of hitherto undiscov-

ered species. You'd have to see it to believe it — the problem is no one else had ever seen it, so his peers thought him a bit of a loon. So as Marina, you're doin' it for the 'Gramps — obsessively snapping photos of every living thing on the island to prove once and for all he wasn't off his 'noculars. But more than that, because you've inherited his spirit of curiosity and sense of wonder, and it just so happens the name of this island *is* wonder (in Spanish).

Armed with little more than your trusty camera, your grandfather's journal, and an open mind, you'll set off to survey Maravilla Island's three distinct ecological zones, each with its own checklist of unique flora and fauna to photodocument before moving onward. Each zone has a featured creature with a set of characteristic behaviors to capture,

In the Whitethorn Studios video game release Beasts of Maravilla Island, players control wildlife photographer Marina Montez, on a mission to capture the whimsical organisms on the uncharted isle to uphold the legacy of her late grandfather.

which advance the plot and the path forward. The Banana Bird team was given access to several Natural History Museum of Los Angeles collections to help conceptualize the game's habitats and organisms, and it's clear they did their homework. The beast designs thoughtfully fuse elements of the extant, extinct, and mythical — at the same time vaguely familiar but also mystifyingly strange — lending a magicality to the visual experience.

The gameplay experience, however, is a bit less enchanting. The main culprit, ironically, is the camera — not Marina's (which never runs out of memory or batteries), but the "eye in the sky" that follows her - well, kind of. It tends to wander at the same time you are wandering, to the point you'll often be wondering where in the Wonder Island you actually are. In third-person mode, you'll be regularly pulling the gameplay camera out of bushes and behind trees as if it were an ornery pup in the beginning stages of leash training. For that reason, it's less frustrating to stay in first-person mode as much as you can, which will also make identifying new species effortless (the heads-up display literally tells you

when you're looking at something you've not looked at before).

Speaking of which, the vast majority are about as passive about being observed as you can possibly be without being dead - in most cases, you can waltz right up and snap a photo of them ("I'M SORRY, DOES THIS BOTH-ER YOU?!") without much of a reaction whatsoever. In a way, it's a return to Eden — when everything was cool and everything coexisted and no one cared whether they were on candid camera. In another way, it's like being a tourist in a museum rather than in a living environment. The gameplay prospers most when you get a chance to actually play a role within the ecosystem, helping the featured creatures accomplish their goals - e.g. whistling at binkeys (monkey-birds) to seduce them into shaking their tailfeathers to attract a mate, or parading pollinators to ripen glow-inthe-dark fruit to drop into an underground river for rave-ready otterdiles (otter-crocodiles).

All in all, Beasts of Maravilla Island stands as a pleasant and imaginative diversion — after all, stress-free is Whitethorn's philosophy. You just have to wonder if it couldn't have been something more. — Matt Swanseger

Beasts of Maravilla Island is available for download on Nintendo Switch and Steam (coming soon to Xbox One and PS4) for \$9.99 // Rated 'E' for everyone

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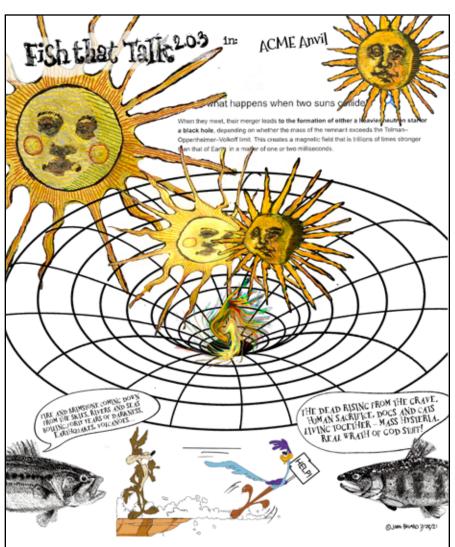
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Our Monthly Podcast Picks

Streaming goodness for your cerebrum

Wicked Words

Hosted by: Kate Winkler Dawson // exactlyrightmedia.com

ate Winkler Daw-Ason brings every true crime book lover's dream to life in Tenfold More Wicked Presents: Wicked Words. A combination of interview and indepth discussion, the new spin on Winkler Dawson's main pod-



cast Tenfold More Wicked brings listeners directly to authors and journalists working closely with some of the most famous and gruesome cases.

An investigative journalist and writer herself, Winkler Dawson's guests include authors, journalists, and those closely involved with infamous true crime cases. Guests have included Dr. Katherine Ramsland, a forensic psychologist who spent years interviewing Dennis Radner AKA the BTK Killer; Vanity Fair reporter and NYT bestselling author Bryan Burrough, who went to school with a young man who would one day become a serial killer; and journalist Karen K. Ho, who covered the case of Jennifer Pan, a former classmate who ordered a hit on her own parents.

Each episode looks at facts about these cases that may not have previously been available — one excellent instance is in the FBI files that became available post-publication of Sarah Weinman's book on Sally Horner in the episode "The Real Lolita" — and dives deeper into these stories, allowing a closer look into understanding what really happened. Completely engrossing and filled with facts and new information, Wicked Words is the perfect pick for true crime and book lovers alike, who want to know more about the most interesting and intriguing cases of our time. — Ally Kutz

Good Christian Fun

Hosted by: Kevin T. Porter and Caroline Ely // headgum.com

his is a weird one. There are times when narrowcasting leads to a concept so specific that it's hard to resist. Good Christian Fun is one of those times, which takes an often-hilarious look at Christian pop culture that's



equally sincere and tongue-in-cheek. Premiering in 2017, the show was an eagerly anticipated follow-up to co-host Kevin T. Porter's mega-hit Gilmore Guys. Roughly the first half of the podcast's overall run stuck closer to the given format: Talk about a specific piece of Christian pop culture. Thanks to the hosts' ages and interests - not to mention the worldwide boom of modern Contemporary Christian Music — subjects tended to stick with topics primarily in the 1990s and early 2000s. As a former Christian who spent so much of my high school years voluntarily in church, this hit hard. Hearing people talk about Five Iron Frenzy, VeggieTales, or DC Talk? Sign me the hell up. Hosts Kevin and Caroline snag guests like Paul F. Tompkins and Gaby Dunn, along with the occasional first-person perspective with folks like Kirk Franklin and even Amy Grant herself. If you only listen to one episode, check out "McGee and Me! (with Travis McElroy)," in one of the best single episodes in all of podcasting. In later episodes, guest testimonies (or, "guestimonies") became the focus of the conversation, with smaller subject matter (think songs instead of albums or bands). While Kevin and Caroline are modern day believers, they're not trying to convert you. - Nick Warren

Clear + Vivid

Hosted by: Alan Alda

ffective communication involves sequencing numerous skills - among them, the ability to speak, to listen, to observe, and to empathize. In our increasingly connected world, it can sometimes appear that these skills (besides speaking) are



lacking and that seemingly irreparable communication breakdowns are our divided society's norm, especially when it comes to science.

Enter Alan Alda.

Communication and science have long been passions of the legendary Alda. After all, Stony Brook University in New York is home to the Alan Alda Center of Communicating Science, which is dedicated to the literal science of communication. Alda has a deep and genuine curiosity about nearly everything though as his podcast, launched as Clear + Vivid in 2018, makes pretty, well... clear.

While some episodes feature fellow actors, including recent episodes with Helen Mirren and Paul Rudd, Alda speaks with people from all walks of life with an overarching theme of how we communicate and interact. Podcast episodes have included conversations with directors, musicians, writers, journalists, aerospace engineers, wildlife scientists, molecular biologists, immunologists, forensic anthropologists, archaeologists, ecologists, psychologists, astronomers, neurosurgeons, mathematicians, and more.

As a lifelong fan of Alan Alda, going back to my days as a kid watching reruns of M*A*S*H with my old man, there's something particularly comforting in taking a long walk while listening to Alda lead educational, funny, empathetic, and often profound conversations. — Jonathan Burdick



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ALBUM REVIEWS

Billie Eilish

Happier Than Ever Interscope Records



t's been just two years since Billie Eilish's debut, the uniquely untamed When We All Fall Asleep, Where Do We Go?, but



a lot has happened in that time. Global pandemic aside, Billie Eilish became an adult, and while the tongue-in-cheek idiosyncrasies of her teenage self are still firmly present, she's spent a lot of time self-reflecting on her body, fame, and the pressures of being a public figure. This all lends itself to the deceivingly subdued Happier Than Ever, a challenging sophomore effort that strikes a balance between sarcasm and self-awareness. combining the vintage tones of her idols (Amy Winehouse, Frank Sinatra) with the futuristic pop landscape she continues to shape. At 16 tracks, the album could lose a couple of repetitive moments ("Everybody Dies," "Male Fantasy"), but otherwise, Happier Than Ever is the kind of album that rewards repeat listeners. While the songs move at a mid-tempo pace, a run like "Billie Bossa Nova," "my future," and "Oxytocin" finds the singer-songwriter never attempting the same style twice. from the titular Latin groove of the first to the primal, Nine Inch Nails-esque electronica of the last. While lacking the immediacy of her debut, the growth on an album like Happier Than Ever is self-evident; all it requires of listeners is a fair shake. — Aaron Mook

Vince Staples Vince Staples

Vince Staples Motown Records



At 22 minutes, Vince Staples is the best kind of album, and not specifically because of its brevity. Rather,



the self-titled record's songs are so effective, so efficient, that after 10 songs averaging two minutes apiece, you have no choice but to simply play the record to hear more. From the double-album grandiosity of Summertime '06 to the bombastic maximalism of Big Fish Theory, Vince Staples finds the rapper once again tweaking his formula, this time offering conversational lyrics over light, skittering beats courtesy of producer and friend Kenny Beats. This constant reinvention of himself as an artist puts Staples in a larger conversation not only for one of the year's best albums, but one of the best rappers of a generation. Staples' lyrics feel as informed as ever, dark and uniquely funny, but as songs, they come across as laid-back and intimate. "Don't get murdered," Staples starts on "THE SHINING," a perfect distillation of the record at the end of a wild opening four tracks. There's something sinister bubbling underneath the beats heard and stories told here, but never to the point of discomfort. Like his peer Earl Sweatshirt, Vince Staples tells stories meant to captivate his audience; it feels as though they were recorded for your ears only. — Aaron Mook

High Seer

An Unmastered Life/Loops Vol. 1 Self-released



eremy Yamma is driven to create. A gifted artist and printmaker with a virtuoso eye for detail, he's also a talented



multi-instrumentalist. Like his fine art, Yamma's music is able to blend technical craftsmanship with a feeling of the surreal that leaves you with something hauntingly twisted yet ineffably familiar. Categorically speaking, both volumes of An Unmastered Life/Loops are filled to the brim with short instrumental works (made via a series of repeated loops, as the title implies). Vol. 1 contains 31 individual cuts ranging from "Woodpecker" at just under one minute to "light crack as positive form," the 11-minute take that serves as the album's final act. Both editions of An Unmastered Life cover a span of time from 2015 to 2017, with the former being made up of the first two years. There are several times where Yamma's tracks feel illustratively cinematic (check out "slide rumination on ruination"). There are moments seemingly born out of celebration, like the penultimate "middle finger fuckers," that provide some favorite moments, drums growing in intensity as the album closes. Whether or not the album's sequence was defined by tone or by chronology, it works. Though this is essentially an album of snippets, it flows together extremely well. - Nick Warren

High Seer

An Unmastered Life/Loops Vol. 2 Self-released

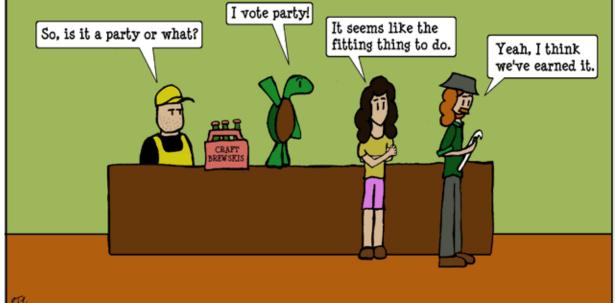


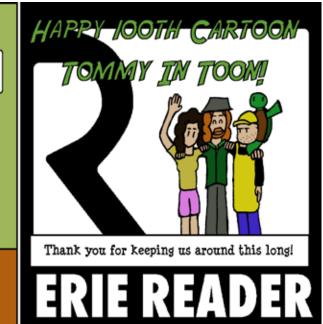
Released barely one month after An Unmastered Life/Loops Vol. 1, the second edition of Jeremy Yamma's instru-

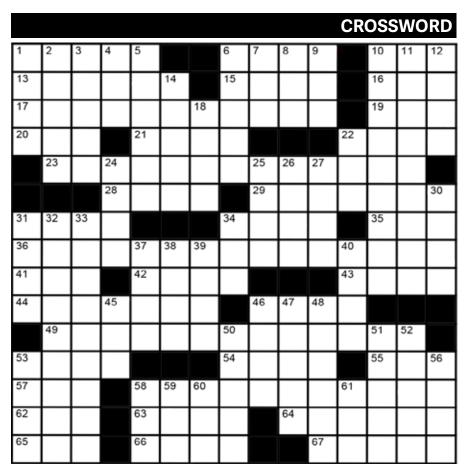


mental loops moves the listener into a new zone. Recorded primarily in 2017, Vol. 2 was made amidst Yamma's time with the groups Haunted Creatures and Zonk. This work, however, sees him playing all the instruments you hear. "I've always had the notion that I really want people to hear what I do," Yamma explains in his bandcamp.com page. "But the unfinished and unmastered nature of the work made me self-conscious and kept it in limbo." As the name of the release suggests, these tracks are by all accounts, "lo-fi." The result isn't sloppy or half-hearted, but intimate. Smoke your medicine and give these tracks a warm listen. At times they feel like the diegetic background score to the best late-night conversation you've had in years. The grooves of "strike to light," the exploratory bass of "two three w/ solo," they're bursting with passion. The angular melodies and counterpoints are perfect for fans of Don Caballero and similarly minded early math rock outfits. The ephemeral nature of loops is often an unfortunate one, often relegated to the dustbin; here though, it's lucky that the sketches have become the finished product. - Nick Warren

TOMMY IN TOON — BY TOMMY LINK







Across

- 1. Ababa, Ethiopia 6. "The disease of kings" 10. Crosswalk user, briefly 13. Nutritious breakfast cereal
- 15. Mrs. Krabappel on "The Simpsons"
- 16. Cheer for Real Madrid
- 17. 1939, to cinephiles? 19. Part of w.p.m.: Abbr.
- 20. The bus stops here: Abbr.
- 21. Carson's predecessor on "The Tonight Show"
- 22. Vichyssoise vegetable
- 23. Two short of six dozen tailors? 28. "Slow Churned" ice
- cream brand
- 29. They're found among the reeds
- 31. Latin 101 word
- surgeon 34.
- 35. 2019 FIFA Women's
- World Cup champs 36. Advice on how to solve
- 17-, 23-, 49- and 58-Across
- 41. Objective
- 42. Fizzless, as a Coke
- Reader (quarterly magazine) 44. Stay-at-home workers?
- 46. Newswoman Paula
- 49. Makes casual comments like "Hey youse, I like
- dat sand castle"?

- 53. The stuff of legends
- 54. E pluribus
- 55. Quick turnaround? 57. "____ been thinking ..."
- 58. Music shop that only sells works by singer-songwriter Scaggs?
- 62. Part of w.p.m.
- 63. Kaffiyeh wearer
- 64. December birthstone 65. Places where people
- wear masks, for short 66. Like child's play
- 67. Superbright colors

Down

- 1. Schumer and Poehler 2. Airs from pairs
- 3. Silas of the Continental Congress
- 4. Leb. neighbor
- 5. Like a mansard roof
- 6. Architect Frank
- 7. Dedicatory lines
- 8. Game with a spinoff called DOS
- 9. Looney Tunes devil, for
- 10. '80s work wear with
- shoulder pads
- 11. Primogeniture benefi-
- 12. Classroom fixture 14. "... assuming there's even one"
- 18. lnk
- 22. Aloha State souvenir

- 24. HBO comedy series with the tagline "This land is her land"
- 25. Needing a massage
- 26. Vowel-shaped beam 27. Émile who wrote "J'accuse"
- 30. Compos mentis
- 31. Red-haired biblical twin
- 32. Reviews hastily
- 33. Ones with coy smiles
- 34. Province west of Que.
- 37._ __-Cuban (music genre)
- 38. Campbell who sang "By the Time I Get to Phoenix" 39. Three o'clock, so to
- speak 40. Hobbes's favorite food
- in "Calvin and Hobbes"
- 45. Suffix with winter
- 46. Greek philosopher of paradox fame
- 47. Like hives
- 48. Confines
- 50. One of a hitched pair 51. Kaley of "The Big Bang
- Theory"
- 52. "Great blue" bird
- 53. Start to suction? 56. Urges
- 58. Main squeeze, in mod-
- ern lingo
- 59. Lyricist Gershwin 60. Laughing matter?
- 61. Numero di colori on the Italian flag









Answers to last puzzle

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