

ERIE READER

21ST ANNUAL

ERIE ART MUSEUM BRINGS IN TOP TALENT ONCE AGAIN

BLUES AND JAZZ FESTIVAL



**AUG. 3rd &
4th**
Frontier Park

2013

COREY COOK
STARGAZING WITH UPFRONT
ERIE COUNTY EXECUTIVE CAMPAIGN FINANCES
EDWARD SNOWDEN
VELOCITY NETWORK AND THE FUTURE OF FIBER OPTICS IN ERIE
BEER ON THE BAY
FUNKTAPUSS
DISCOVERING DISCOVER PRESQUE ISLE DAYS
Q&A WITH LA'S THE PRIDE OF ERIE PA
"THE BAD HAIRCUT:" "BRILLIANT, TIMELY, AND NECESSARY"

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ERIE ART MUSEUM

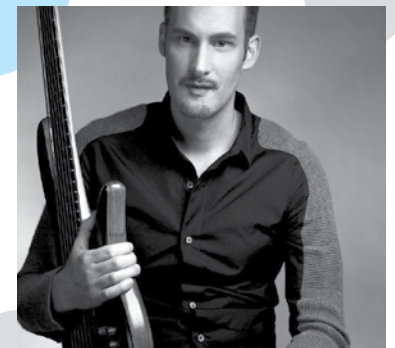
BLUES AND JAZZ FESTIVAL

AUG. 3rd & 4th

Frontier Park

2013

TONY GREY TRIO
Sunday, August 4 at 6 p.m.



JEREMY PELT QUINTET
Sunday, August 4 at 8 p.m.



Erie Art Museum 21st Annual Blues & Jazz Festival
Free Event at Frontier Park • Entire lineup at erieartmuseum.org

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Corey Cook

From the Editors

You probably heard it – the overwhelming rumbles and roars. And you probably saw it – the throngs of motorcycles lined up and down State Street, processing from the Casino to downtown to Presque Isle, all in participation of the 2013 Roar on the Shore.

While the final numbers aren't yet confirmed, the seventh annual bike rally was expected to bring 100,000 bikers to the Gem City and trigger a \$20 million boon to an Erie economy that needs all the help it can get. Whether you enjoy the revving of the engines and the weekend of downtown congestion, the Manufacturer & Business Association event not only raises money for the Boys & Girls Club of Erie, it also benefits the city's struggling economy by drawing in visitors, growing our tourist industry, and each year exposing more people to the beauty we have here on the lake, potentially inviting more people to Erie each year.

But you may have seen and heard something else.

If you YouTube "Roar on the Shore," several videos pop up in the search results, mostly of riders casually cruising through Erie. But there's one that contains the word "accident" – and it's gone viral.

By now, you've likely already seen it, the video, shot several stories up from what appears to be the Avalon Hotel, which captures a rider col-

liding with two pedestrians after taking off in a line of motorcycles at the corner of 10th and State streets around midnight Saturday, July 20. While an investigation is still pending, those struck by the motorcycle, according to WICU/WSEE's Lisa Adams reportedly "got up, walked around, and refused hospital treatment." GoErie.com reported that one pedestrian suffered a leg injury in the accident.

Those friendlier videos, the ones of riders not colliding with people, have a decent number of views – the highest topping out near one-thousand – but the 14-second "accident" clip had 74,993 views as of 6 p.m. Monday, a twenty-thousand-view increase from earlier that day around noon. Local mainstream media outlets all had the video, posted by user TheDJK97, front and center on their websites Monday, and people both near and far continually took to commenting.

Some commenters blame the pedestrians for standing too close to the pack of riders who were clearly departing. Others blame the rider for being reckless in a tightly packed crowd of people. Regardless of where the blame falls – remember, an investigation is still pending as of Monday evening – people are talking, and when they're talking about Roar on the Shore *and* Erie, this is what's being talked about. This is the image now being associated with the event *and* with Erie.

But "accident" is an accurate and appropriate word. It seems clear from the video that the rider didn't intentionally hit the two people in the street, although Erie Police, as of Monday night were still trying to identify the driver, who, as reported on GoErie.com, fled the scene after the accident.

Approximately 100,000 people – just 1,779 more than the number of views the clip had as of 11 p.m. – visited our city and this remains one of only several accidents reported and the only filmed accident gone viral. This was an "accident," something that unfortunately happened that wasn't anticipated, and over which we had little control, and right now, it's coloring the entire three-day event and the year's worth of planning aimed at helping our city.

But you may have heard something else, something over which we did have control: Jackyl and a less than tasteful song the band choose to play to the gathered crowd of thousands of people Friday night.

The song starts out like the quintessential '80s metal/rock song, with the lyrics: "See the bird on the barstool, she's waiting on a jerk. If yes she likes the way he looks she'll put his ass to work. And you know she's been all around the block. Tried a doctor, lawyer, even tried a jock."


But then comes the line: "But she loves my cock," which then continues with the rest of the band joining in for a round of "Loves my cock. Loves my cock. Loves my cock," which serves as the song's refrain. And that's not even the worst line in

the song.

While accidents will happen – it's likely that next year we'll see an increase in police and traffic safety – inviting Jackyl, offering them our mainstage, and letting them scream "cock" with no artistic purpose or reason in sheer misogynistic fashion *is* controllable.

There should be vetting – some sort of research done on bands and their catalogues – not to ban songs or censor artists, but to specifically know what messages will ring throughout downtown, casting an image of "this is Erie; welcome to our city." Maybe worse, there *was* research and this was accepted as something okay, something acceptable to bill as *hey, welcome to Erie – listen to this!*

Roar on the Shore isn't billed specifically as a family-friendly event, so if kids were present and heard the song, well, that's at the parents' discretion, but it *is* billed as an *Erie*-specific event, one designed to "serve as a major fundraising event in the Erie region... to experience the best of the Great Lakes region."

When we welcome in bands like Jackyl at the same time we're welcoming thousands upon thousands of people to our city, we're telling them that this *is* our city – from the shores of Presque Isle to the grape fields in North East to the bands performing on the stages we construct downtown. So the question remains: Is this how we want to be seen, and *is* this the image we want to bill as "Erie," amidst the growth and development we're so desperately trying to achieve? 

By: Cory Vaillancourt

No, not everything is about you, Dave Matthews Band fans, so return to your barn-dancing and bad tattoo-acquiring.

But what would you say if I told you that satellites – in my eyes, like a diamond in the sky – were zooming through the clear Erie summer atmosphere, right above your head, all the time? What, you didn't know?

I think you did know. You've just never thought about it because you've been both under the table and dreaming.

So, know ye this: Zooming 400 miles above your head at almost 17,000 miles per hour, right this second, are approximately 3,000 hunks of metal ranging in size from that of a garbage bag to that of a garbage truck.

And the big stinkin' daddy of them all is the International Space Station. Which is significantly larger than a garbage truck.

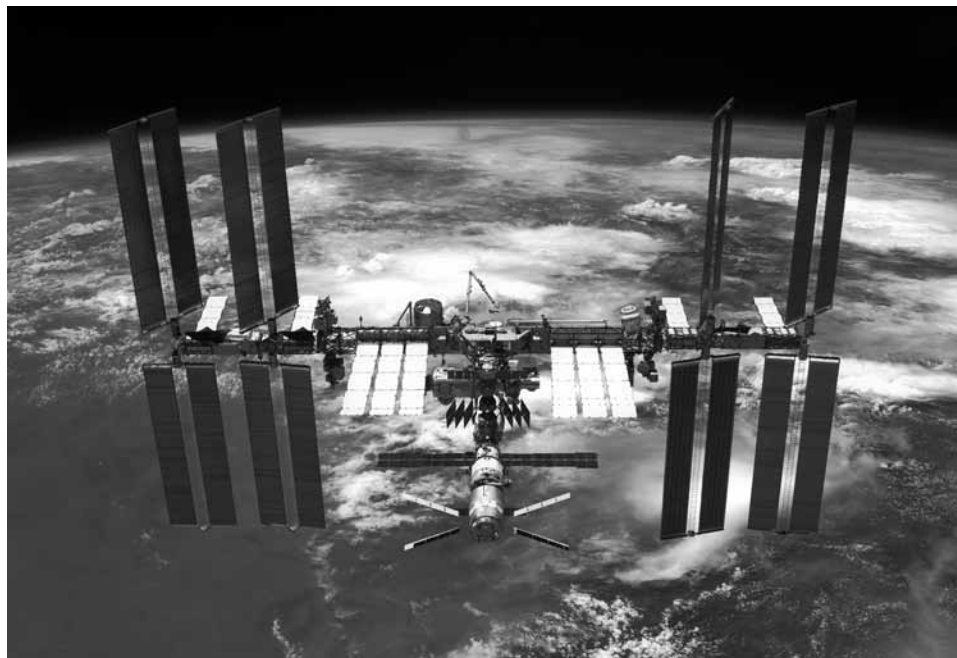
Launched in sections and assembled beginning in 1998, the ISS is the size of almost 400 garbage trucks, which is a terrible analogy, considering that the ISS is considered the supreme technical achievement in the history of humanity despite the fact that we're still all quite obviously just proud monkeys. No disrespect to you, garbage truck, O noble hauler of refuse, regret, and bad decisions. You make everything new again. Everything.

Anyway, the ISS a habitable artificial satellite. It's logged more than 1.5 billion miles, contains almost 14,000 cubic feet of living space, and has hosted more than 200 human visitors – all while operating in one of the most extreme climates in existence. The temperature in space has been described as "not very warm" [citation needed], and brain-cooking radiation blasts forth from all corners of the cosmos, all the time.

Furthermore, as long as artificial satellites have existed they've had a tendency to outlive their usefulness and return to Earth as a burning exemplar of humanity's hubris. Even worse, sometimes they stray from their orbits and crash into each other, leading me to fear they'd crash... into me – like that Dave Matthews song "Crash into Me," except with less whining.

The North American Aerospace Defense Command estimates that between manslaughter-hungry satellites and stabby fragments thereof, there are about 8,000 objects greater than 10 centimeters in size, orbiting our earth, just waiting to fall out of the clear blue and jab you in the eye or some other awful place on your body. The head of the European Space Agency's Orbital Debris Office, Heiner Klinkrad (which is totally *not* a made-up name) recently told livescience.com "The annual risk of a single person to be severely injured by a re-entering piece of space debris is about 1 in 100,000,000,000."

Those odds are still too high for me, because if there's a 1-in-whatever-brazilians chance something crazy like that could happen, chances are it will. To you. Or me. And I don't know about you, but if it's gonna go down like that, I want to be stabbed in the front, not in the back; I want to



Believe it or not, the International Space Station is visible with the naked eye

look that jabber square in the eyes like a big eyed fish and *feel* that spiky satellite splinter strike. So ain't no durned International Space Station gonna sneak up behind me; in fact, I keep track of *all* of those ever-looming chunks of space murder, and you should, too. One killed a cow once.

Luckily, The National Aeronautics and Space Administration has a website to protect me. And you. And your cows. If you go to spacetrack.org, nasa.gov/sightings and poke around a bit, they'll tell you exactly where it is at any given moment; even better, if you enter your country, state, and city into the 'Location Lookup' section, it will tell you exactly how and when to see it.

That's right – *you can see the International Space Station with your naked eye*. And it's remarkably easy. Even if you're tripping billies like a drunken soldier and just happen to be looking in the general direction thereof, there's no way you'll miss

Zooming 400 miles above your head at almost 17,000 miles per hour, right this second, are approximately 3,000 hunks of metal ranging in size from that of a garbage bag to that of a garbage truck.

this thing. It is distinctly different from all other heavenly bodies you may come upon.

It does not blink or flash like an aircraft; it is slightly orangish in hue, because it employs no external lighting and is illuminated only by the

reflection of the sun over the horizon. Accordingly, it moves at a speed befitting its status as a divine messenger, tracing an arc all the way across the sky and hastily heralding the impending arrival of Helios' solar-steed-drawn flaming chariot.

As you can probably imagine, I myself have seen this awe-inspiring spectacle times too numerous to recount, most recently, yesterday. It came at me from almost due north, and for a few terrifying moments that hunk of impending cosmic spike jabberly seemed headed right at me – until it harmlessly and silently passed directly over my head.

The entire encounter seemed like hours; in reality, it was but minutes. And I'm happy to report that I didn't get jabbed. But I was ready. And so should you be.

Over the next two weeks, there are several sighting opportunities available, primarily in the early morning hours. So if you're just waking up (or still awake) between 3 and 5 in the morning and have a decent, darkened view of the northern horizon – look up at the sky. Into the Bible-black firmament. Ponder humanity's ultimate role in the universe. Ponder your own role as one of the ants marching through existence. Then hide your cows. Then ponder the space between, and remember that you're so damn lucky just to be alive and it won't be long until the gravedigger is digging a ditch, and when finally we lie in our graves and say goodbye, grace is gone.

Or maybe that's just...too much. ☞

Cory Vaillancourt is a brilliant writer/complete hack and can be complimented/beckled at cvaillancourt@ErieReader.com. Find him on Twitter @VLNCRT. To follow this story or comment, scan the QR code or go to <http://erindr.com/xxxx>



By: Chuck Shepherd

Priorities

At a June hearing, a Philadelphia judge became so exasperated at defendant Robert Williams' seeming cluelessness about his need to keep his probation appointments that she ordered him to take "etiquette" classes before returning to court. Williams, a rap singer and budding music mogul still under court supervision on gun and drug charges from 2008, cavalierly defended his inability to find time for his probation officer by explaining that he was a busy man, working with seven "artists," with a demanding travel schedule, and uninhibitedly using social media (creating posts that, allegedly, led to threats against the probation officer). (Williams, of course, was accompanied to court by a several-man entourage.) [Philadelphia Inquirer, 6-30-2013]

Ironies

An atheist "church" in Lake Charles, La., run by lapsed Pentecostal Jerry DeWitt, conducts periodic services with many of the trappings expected by the pious -- except for the need to believe in a supreme being. Such "churches" (reported The New York Times and Washington Post in coincidental stories the same day in June) can help soothe the "biological" needs for survival and avoidance of loneliness by congregational rituals (such as celebrating a sabbath) and in helping find meaning "in something other than (oneself)." For example, atheist Sigfried Gold praised a "rigorous prayer routine" (beseeching a "vivid goddess he created") in overcoming his weight problem. [New York Times, 6-24-2013; Washington Post, 6-24-2013]

The business website Quartz reported in June that a popular consumer item in North Korea's perhaps-improving economy is the refrigerator, made in China and increasingly available as a reward to stellar performers among civil servants and other elites. The appliances, however, cannot reliably store food because the country's electric grid is so frequently offline and are mostly just status symbols. One item Quartz says often gets displayed in the refrigerator: books. [Qz.com, 6-18-2013]

Robert Dugan, 47, a full-time patrolman for the Delaware County (Pa.) Park Police, was charged in June with illegally impersonating a police officer. According to authorities in Brookhaven, Pa., Dugan had accosted a woman double-parked outside her home to pressure her into moving the car, but she refused. Dugan allegedly claimed he was an Upland Borough police officer with authority to write parking citations and make arrests, which he did not actually have.

The Litigious Society

Shower rooms in health clubs are slippery enough, but Marc Moskowitz, 66, cited the one at the Bally Total Fitness gym on E. 55th St. in New York City as especially dangerous, according to his recent lawsuit to recover expenses for a broken shoulder suffered in a fall. Moskowitz claimed that so much gay male sex was occurring in the shower and locker-room area (unsupervised by Bally) that he had probably slipped on semen. [New York Daily News, 6-19-2013]

Compelling Explanations

Lame: (1) Rodger Kelly was arrested in St. George, Utah, in June for rape of a female neighbor, but he told police that he committed the act only to "save" her, since he had discovered her "cold" and unconscious. He had violated her body only "to try and get her temperature up," according to the police report. (2) The low-price air carrier GoAir of New Delhi announced in June that in the future it would hire only females for the cabin crew -- because they weigh less than men (and expects eventually to save the equivalent of \$4 million annually in fuel based on average weights). [Salt Lake Tribune, 6-10-2013] [The Times of India, 6-28-2013]

In May, former schoolteacher Kathleen Cawthorne, 33, of Rustburg, Va., successfully negotiated a reduction in her 11-year sentence for having sex with an underage student. Cawthorne's punishment was set at only four months in prison when she presented the judge with a clinical diagnosis of "hypersexuality," supposedly showing that she had little ability to control her desire to seduce the boy. [New York Daily News, 5-24-2013]

Perspective

Floridians Standing Their Ground: In May, a jury in Tampa decided that Ralph Wald, 70, was not guilty of murdering a 32-year-old man he had shot in the back three times. He said he had caught the man having sex with his wife (successfully claiming that he thought the man was a dangerous intruder in his home). However, Marissa Alexander, 34, of Jacksonville, was sentenced last year to 20 years in prison for "aggravated assault" for merely firing a warning shot during an altercation with her estranged husband. The man, Rico Gray, is a serial domestic abuser and admitted that he was threatening Alexander that night and that she never actually pointed her gun directly at him. However, the judge denied Alexander use of the "stand your ground" defense because she had declined to simply walk away from Gray. [Tampa Bay Times, 5-30-2013] [Miami Herald, 5-28-2012]

Fetishes on Parade

According to Chicago police, Gerardo Perez, 50, broke away while on a tour in May of the Chicago Animal Care and Control Facility because he had been struck with a sexual attraction. He was discovered minutes later on his hands and knees beside a pit bull, "appearing to have just had sex with the animal," according to a report on WMAQ-TV

Street Corner SOAPBOX

The Numbers Are In

By: Jay Stevens

The numbers are in from the recent May election. The Democratic candidates for the Erie County Executive primary election spent nearly a quarter of a million dollars in campaign funds. Well, more precisely, they spent just over \$215,000. Despite losing the primary, incumbent Barry Grossman outspent his challenger (and victor), Kathy Dahlkemper, \$119,000 to \$95,000.

"I find these campaigns -- in terms of money spent," said Grossman in an interview with the Erie Times-News, "obscene."

But is that true? Given the factors in the May election, I'd say no.

For starters, municipal primaries are always

television ads, events, yard signs, T-shirts, bumper stickers, magnets, and just about any other kind of media you can think of. It also requires a network of volunteers knocking on doors and handing out literature, and calling voters on the telephone.

The county executive candidates have a bigger obstacle, too: Erie County is big. It comprises more than 280,000 people spread out across more than 1,500 square miles. The city of Erie itself has a wide array of voter demographics; the difference between far-flung communities in the county is even greater. Not only does this mean Grossman and Dahlkemper needed to send more mailers, they had to tailor messaging and media outreach to different groups of voters.

Naturally, all of this requires money.

But campaign money isn't the evil most make it out to be.

"Money doesn't necessarily cause a candidate to win," wrote Stephen Dubner on the Freakonomics blog, "but rather, that the kind of candidate who's attractive to voters also ends up attracting

a lot of money.

"So winning an election and raising money *do* go together, just as rain and umbrellas go together."

To most of us, \$215,000 is a lot of money. But for a very competitive countywide election in an off-year and, thus, happening within a virtual media blackout, it's actually chump change. And given the importance of local government, the millions of dollars to allocate from the city and county budgets, and the effect these offices have on our everyday lives -- on crime, emergency response, on streets and traffic, on our businesses, jobs, and schools -- the money spent on the recent county executive race seems small.

The county executive candidates have a bigger obstacle, too: Erie County is big. It comprises more than 280,000 people spread out across more than 1,500 square miles.

sparsely attended. It's easy to blame voter indifference, but other conditions are responsible for the low turnout. Lack of news coverage of the local candidates and issues is the prime culprit. A candidate in a secondary race -- like, say, for Erie County Council -- is assured of only one 15-second spot on local television during the entire election cycle. Even the marquee races -- like this year's county executive election -- come up short in the competition against murder, home invasion, and weather, the usual fare of our local television news. Local newspaper coverage is only marginally better.

It's then left to the candidates to tell voters they exist, to tell them what they believe, and to tell them what their goals for local government are. The candidates even have to tell voters when and where the election is. This isn't easy. A voter has to see a candidate's name a number of times before they even recognize it on the ballot. And more impressions are needed before a voter understands and remembers a candidate's platform.

This work requires mailers, newspaper and

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THE WAY I SEE IT

The ripple effect of Snowden.

By: Rebecca Styn

Edward Snowden. The name alone evokes extreme reactions from all corners of the world.

The American technical contractor for the United States National Security Agency (NSA) and a former employee of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) leaked details of several top-secret U.S. and British government mass surveillance programs to the press.

Now he's on the lam. Except we all know where he is. At the time I write these words, he's living in the transit zone of Moscow's Sheremetyevo International Airport. This reminds me a bit of

There's now a lack of confidence in the ability of the United States to do anything secretly or discreetly. Which, in turn will further sully our relations with other countries around the world.

the movie "The Terminal" with Tom Hanks. Except Hanks' character was this lovable guy who dances a delicate balance between comedy and sadness, enriching the lives around him through his simplicity and attitude and giving his counterparts a softer look at the world around them.

And Snowden, well, isn't that guy.

It is the classic scenario. One kid in the class takes advantage of the system, breaks or ignores the rules, and everyone else suffers for it. Sometimes I find these types of situations refreshing, but because our bilateral relations with many foreign nations are already rocky, I question the value of Snowden's decisions.

He must have thought it was the right one,

though. As a result of his efforts, he gave up his cushy \$120K-a-year salary and home in Hawaii to seek asylum in...Russia – a country that ranks as the third-most depressed and suicidal in the world. And while I'm one for using moral judgment on issues,

he seems to believe the one he made trumps that of our entire political and court systems and tens of thousands of his coworkers. And the damage is potentially so great that NSA has taken one of its most respected senior operations officers off mission tasks to lead the damage assessment effort.

And then there are the obvious operational effects of informing our enemies of American intelligence procedures, tactics and techniques. But this goes beyond the "what" and into the "how," which makes the information he has twice as dangerous. Although Snowden has promised not to reveal this data, there are already national reports of counterterrorism targets changing their communications patterns. And, honestly, I would lose respect for Russia if they haven't at least tried to harvest this treasure trove of information.

Moreover, there's now a lack of confidence in the ability of the United States to do anything secretly or discreetly. Which, in turn will further sully our relations with other countries around the world.

House Intelligence Committee Chair Mike Rogers said it best about Snowden: "He may as well just go to North Korea and Iran to round out the 'Government Oppression Tour.'" And if Snowden's efforts were truly based on what he deemed to be the "greater good," he should face the music. Running from problems never made them go away, or does it?

I guess that depends on what his motivation truly is. And only time will tell.

Love? Hate? Agree? Disagree? I want to hear from you. Contact me at rStyn@ErieReader.com, and follow me on Twitter @rStyn. To follow this story or comment, scan the QR code or go to <http://erindr.com/quera>



TECH WATCH

More on Erie's Fiber Optic Upgrade

By: Dakota Hoffman, Epic WebStudios

When it comes to bringing technical solutions to local areas, it makes sense to enlist the aid of a local business. That's what happened when Velocity Network was chosen as a partner for the Keystone Initiative for Network Based Education and Research (KINBER), helping to bring advanced networking technology to Erie.

Velocity is a last mile provider – the best way to describe what that means is to think of KINBER, a "middle-mile provider," as a giant tree. That tree spreads across Pennsylvania to major cities and hubs connecting one location to another's network. Velocity then spreads the connection from KINBER along smaller branches to Erie sites – the "last mile" of connectivity. Velocity has created branches connecting WQLN and Penn State Erie, The Behrend College to the network.

"That's a big part of what we do," said Velocity Director of Business Development, Matt Wiertel, in an interview with the company's executives. "We connect those pieces."

I had the opportunity to sit down with Wiertel and Velocity Network CEO Joel Deuterma to discuss Velocity's involvement in greater detail and learn more about this fantastic technology coming to Erie.

Velocity boasts 300 miles of fiber optic cable placing its range at a greater distance than other locally-based competitors. And while Velocity is a locally owned and headquartered small business, there is no profit in the KINBER network at this time, so larger companies such as Verizon wouldn't touch it.

The unique local perspective of Velocity creates a deeper understanding of local needs and puts KINBER where it needs to be. The company is also working on setting up an access point on Edinboro University of Pennsylvania's campus as well.

Wiertel and Deuterma also highlighted how

the KINBER network could streamline efficiency and productivity for public media organizations and hospitals. If one media organization specialized in radio production and another in the production of high-quality video projects, the fiber optic network would allow the two organizations to interface with one another and exchange work.

I've been in Erie for a couple years now, and I've become familiar with what's called the "brain drain effect," a large-scale emigration of citizens with skills or expertise to other areas. With the introduction of the KINBER network, organizations are hopeful this could slow the effect, increase Erie's industry expertise, and start keeping our Behrend – along with the Gannon, Mercyhurst, and Edinboro – graduates here. Because by facilitating growth within our hospitals, schools, and various industries, we create value in the city of Erie that can be communicated to our graduates.

After all, Erie is the fourth largest city in Penn-

The unique local perspective of Velocity creates a deeper understanding of local needs and puts KINBER where it needs to be.

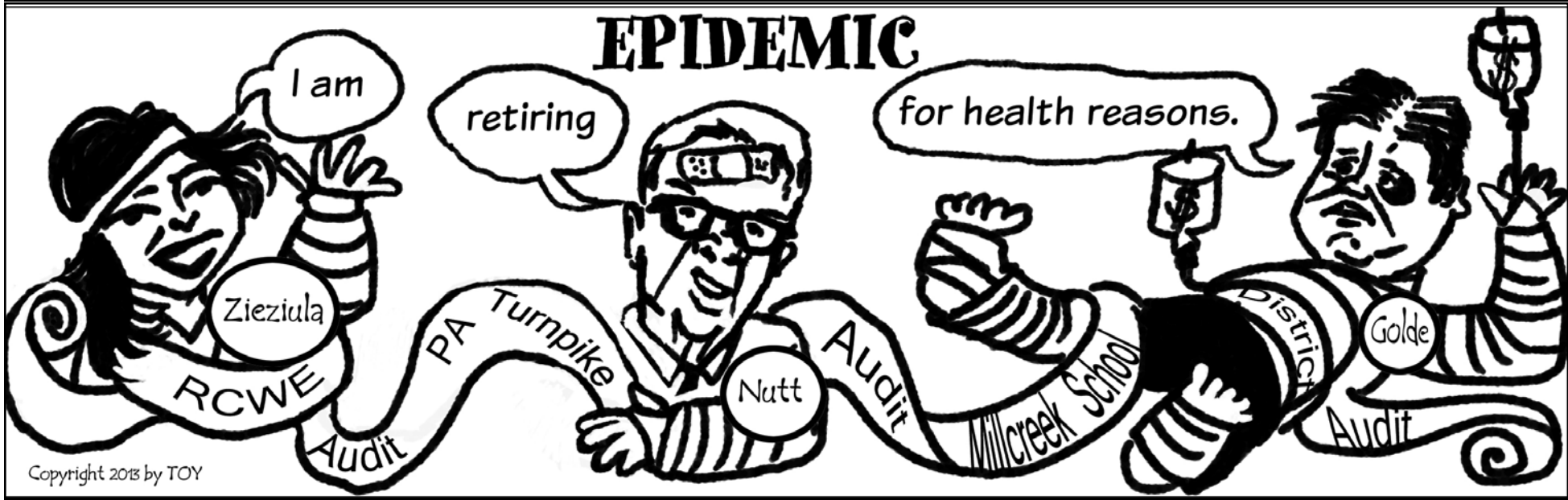
sylvania. While this may not seem big, consider for a moment, how many areas our size have five colleges – one a medical school – and hospitals as advanced as we do?

We may not be the biggest city, but our industries are at the forefront of their capabilities. If anything, Velocity is a testament that Erie has enormous potential to grow, and we have the local tech businesses willing to do their part to see it happen. With the implementation of KINBER we can be sure that Erie never loses its edge.

Dakota Hoffman can be contacted at Epic@ErieReader.com. To follow this story or comment, scan the QR code or go to <http://erindr.com/rqodt>



JUST TOYIN' WITCHA By: B. Toy



“The Bad Haircut” Reviewed

Brilliant, Timely, and Necessary – a must-see for Erie

By: Ben Speggen

A man walks onto the stage and sits down in a chair. He connects a long cable streaming from a television situated at the top of the set to a laptop. We see what he sees: a picture of an adorable cat – the audience *awwws*; a provocative image of two people embracing – the audience *ohh-hhhs*; he continues searching – the audience learns in, waiting to see what comes next.

But something is wrong. These fleeting images, culled from simple searches, fail to satisfy beyond a mere moment – *that’s a cute cat, but it’s not his, or our, cat; that couple is feeling something, but we’re not them, we’re not there, we’re not present.*

Brilliant, timely, and necessary, “The Bad Haircut” demands us to think and deserves our attention.

The young man unplugs the laptop and the TV screen goes black, and with hunched shoulders and a furrowed brow spins his chair, turns to the audience, and confirms our concern: “Something is wrong, something’s... happened.

“All we can do is try to understand,” laments Justin Moyar, star of Richard

Boler’s new, original comedy “The Bad Haircut: A Disconnected Comedy,” now on stage at the Renaissance Theatre.

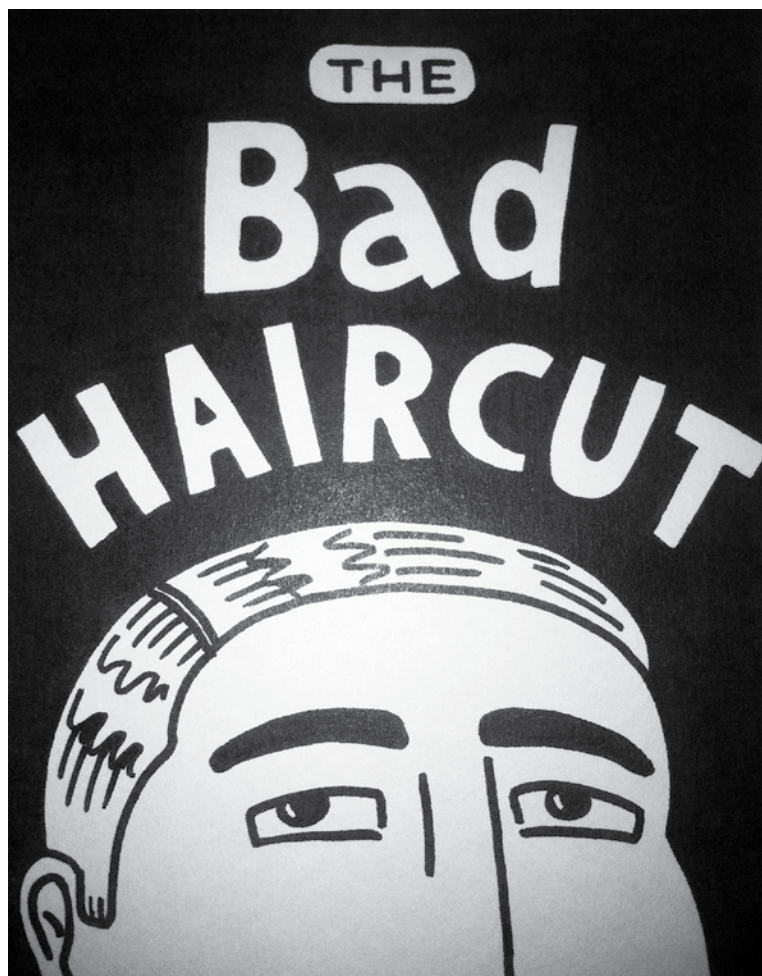
From there, the play moves quickly in the form of – as the title suggests – disconnected sketches, set into motion with the versatile Leslie Ford (who also directs the show) playing a Russian barber who gives the narrator his fated bad haircut, which sets him off on a journey to find himself by heading west.

An intellect’s delight, “Haircut” is a thinking man’s play, grappling with the notion of humanity’s disconnectedness through religion, philosophy, psychology, medicine, materialism, and spiritualism while using comedy as the vehicle to drive through the myriad challenges and issues we face in contemporary culture, keeping the production ground in a disturbingly poignant humor.

The entire cast – six actors taking on multiple roles – breathe life into Boler’s cuttishly written archetypal characters as people populating everyday life. From an overly obsessed craft beer trendster – a wonderful interpretation by Scott Frisina – who’s playing fantasy football to a trio of women out on a girls’ night glued to their smart phones – the troupe transcends stereotypes to reveal a very human aspect of all of the characters, resulting in a touching element all too often missing from sketch comedy.

Two particularly strong scenes reveal Boler and crew’s ability to use humor in unnerving situations rooted in disconnection to examine Boler’s notion of inertia and “stuckedness.”

First, John Stockhausen – playing an HR worker too self-engrossed to realize an employee has no idea what he actually *does* at work – struggles to




Only one weekend (July 24 to 26) remains to see this outstanding original play.

make reservations at a bed and breakfast while stuck in the loop of a voice-mail tree. Connected to a recorded automated response, who’s played on stage by Karen Schelinski, Stockhausen’s HR rep just “wants to talk to somebody.” With the selection of “make a reservation” not being an option, the computer system ushers him along in the process, and Stockhausen

continually shouts, overly enunciating “something else,” each time hanging on the audiences’ laughter. But Schelinski’s endearing recording tries her best to help him, unable to empathize with his frustration, which then transitions into a beautifully haunting song sung by Schelinski.

Second, Camille Jones enters Y-mart – a store featuring just one of every-

thing ever needed and wanted but doesn’t actually sell any of its products – looking for someone simply to pay attention to her, since she feels severed from the world around her. Moyar’s protagonist, now an employee there, connects with her, finding solace in knowing he’s not alone in his feelings of disconnectedness. Jones delivers a powerful monologue, perhaps the show’s best – a diatribe fueled by barbed one-liners railing against what America’s become and is becoming – leading to one of the most genuine connections between two characters in the play.

Brilliant, timely, and necessary, “The Bad Haircut” demands us to think and deserves our attention. Those already tuned in to Boler’s observation that “something is wrong” will revel in that feeling of connectedness through shared disconnection. For those not tuned in, this may just be the necessary alarm in the form of cultural commentary via comedic theater that challenges us to think about the world and the people around us. And if it’s not a wakeup call, it’s still one hell of an enjoyable and thoughtful ride. 

Three performances of “The Bad Haircut: A Disconnected Comedy” remain: July 24 to 26. Friday and Saturday performances are at 7:30 p.m. and the Sunday matinee is at 2:30 p.m. All performance are at the Renaissance Theatre, 1001 State St.

Ben Speggen can be contacted at bSpeggen@ErieReader.com, and you can follow him on Twitter @ERBenSpeggen. To follow this story or comment, scan the QR code or go to <http://eridr.com/r2kss>



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The 21st Annual Blues and Jazz Festival

Erie Art Museum Brings in Top Talent Once Again



Eight-piece Brooklyn, N.Y.-based Red Baraat headlined the Blues and Jazz Festival's Sunday lineup last year

By: Cory Vaillancourt

She lazes all winter. She smells the peppery smoke from chimneys unseen, while weathering wave after wave of arctic air. She listens to the hushed roar of heavy snowfall, and eagerly eyes the seemingly perpetual deck of noctilucence.

You see, she – that vivacious vital vibrating vivid vixen we call Erie – she knows all too well the fleeting nature of our short summer sabbatical from the savagery of the salty season. But she has a sixth sense for summer, so when she smells the sickly sour-sweet stink of grass in the air, and hears the faint opening strains of jangly quarter notes dancing over the water, she adorns herself with naught but a wet warm blanket of tropical temperatures, and ventures forth to stare at the

edge of the unending azure sky.

Because when the big grey finally segues to the big blue, she doesn't waste a minute of it.

She loves the Downtown Partnership's Block Party series because she cherishes the historic charm of State Street. She dances there, as the big blue begets a padparadscha pink.

She loves the Erie Port Authority's 8 Great Tuesdays because she adores the cozy beauty of the Bayfront. She sits there, pondering the protective peninsular paw.

She loves the UPMC Sunset Music Series because she treasures the sandy beaches of Presque Isle State Park. She wades there, in the shimmering shine of the setting sun.

And she loves the Erie Art Museum's Blues and Jazz Festival in Frontier Park because she loves outdoor music above everything else.

Well, almost everything else.

"Erie loves this festival because it's free," says

John Vanco, executive director of the Erie Art Museum, laughing. "And it's BYOB. Those are two big things, but I think they love it too because it's always fresh, there's always somebody they've never heard of before, and it's in a beautiful setting."

Erie Art Museum Director of Marketing and Public Relations Carolyn Eller has a slightly different – although no less valid – take on Erie's affinity for the fest.

"It's a great community event. People of all ages can look forward to it," she says. "It's an opportunity to be outside at the largest blues and jazz festival in the region."

Eller and Vanco make a pretty good team; he brings more than 20 years of taking Erie's musical temperature and prescribing the proper musical elixirs, and Eller – an Erie native and 2013 Erie Reader 40-under-40 alum – brings the perspective of someone who grew up attending

the festival.

"I remember going to it as a little kid and just being amazed at how huge it was," she says, like that wide-eyed child she must have been. "I never dreamed I'd one day be helping to produce it."

Perhaps it's stories like Eller's that solidify the legacy of the Blues and Jazz Festival – a festival much of Erie grew up attending.

"It is family-oriented," Vanco reminds us, citing the availability of children's activities all day long. "We could make a lot of money, and God, I hope we never get forced into it, but if we sold beer on site, we could make a lot more money. We've been offered some very tempting sponsorships by beer companies, but it changes the nature of the event."

It may be stunning to some that Vanco and the EAM would willingly turn down the opportunity to earn more money, but in a town where alcohol is often the main attraction of every event,



8 GREAT TUESDAYS

TUESDAY, JULY 30, 2013
****SPECIAL 6 PM START****

HEADLINER: Jake's Blues
OPENING ACT: Nikki Hill

TUESDAY, AUGUST 6, 2013
[6:30PM]

HEADLINER: Thumpdaddy
OPENING ACT: Stiletto



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it's refreshing to attend something that keeps the focus where it belongs – on families listening to live music. "I think one of the reasons people love the festival is because it is the way it is," he said.

And so it shall be; the fest needs no fixing because it's not broken, but any finely-tuned machine needs periodic tweaks. No, you still can't camp out overnight unless you want to end up sleeping in the greybar hotel; nor can you cook out, lest ye accidentally unbind Prometheus; nor can you bring your pet llama del Rey. But you can bring your own beer, chairs, cooler, food, friends, tent (if you set it up after 9 a.m. and tear it down each night), or wagon, and you can look forward to a very welcome addition to lineup of vendors – hometown fave Frankie and May.

"Part of our motto is 'Good for you, good for your community,' and we feel that the Blues and Jazz Fest is a great opportunity for people in the community – in addition to hearing all the great music – to enjoy something that differs from traditional fare," says Anthony Perino, general manager of Frankie and May.

Another hometown fave, Chef Marc Berarducci, – still basking in the glow of becoming a best-selling cookbook author – will do all the cooking, as if Erie needed yet another reason to love this fest.

And again this year, the Blues and Jazz fest will be as green as ever; vendors like Frankie and May must utilize recyclable or compostable utensils, and must not use foil or single-use condiment packaging. Recycling bins will be set up throughout the park, and a monitored bicycle corral leaves festivalgoers no excuse to pollute either the air, or the earth.

But pollute some cretins will, so the Erie Art

Museum is always looking for volunteers to keep the park clean during the event. Likewise, this year, the bucket brigades will be out in full force, encouraging the purchase of buttons, which help defray the cost of the fun they manufacture each year. The suggested donation is just a fin, but feel free to drop a sawbuck or a Jackson.

"It's not a fundraiser," Eller says of the fest. "We depend on corporate sponsorships to pay for the acts, and we really don't net anything." But this year, in an interesting twist on the usual procedure, teams of up to 15 bucket brigaders can sign up to compete against other teams, with the victors receiving what Eller calls "a sweet, sweet prize."

Erie loves sweet, sweet prizes. She also loves free festal fun, featuring five fine performances every two hours from noon until 8 p.m. two days in a row. And she also loves that moment – that inevitable moment – during one of the performances, probably near the end of the fest, when you can literally hear summer split open and melt, and see the season turn the corner to assess the looming glance of the big laze.

The Erie Art Museum Blues and Jazz Festival takes place from noon to 10 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 3 and Sunday, Aug. 4 in Frontier Park. For a complete rundown on this year's lineup, be sure to check out our guide to the festival on the next page. To volunteer for the cleanup crew or to sign up for the bucket brigade, contact Karen@erieartmuseum.org or call 459.5477. For more information on the festival itself, visit www.erieartmuseum.org/performances/bj_fest/. Follow Cory Vaillancourt on Twitter @VLNCR.

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The Erie Reader Guide to the 2013 Blues and Jazz Festival

By: Cory Vaillancourt

Many of those who were lucky enough to attend last year's Erie Art Museum Blues and Jazz Festival privately worried that Erie Art Museum Executive Director John Vanco had finally set the bar too high with his willful wizardry; headliners Super Chikan, Oliver Mtukudzi, Lee Konitz, and Red Baraat managed to blow the roof off a joint that ain't even got no roof.

I'm happy to report that such quiet fears are wholly unfounded; Vanco's once again invoked an effulgent ensemble of talent, and summoned them to appear in that magical corner of Frontier Park. I sat with him recently, where he gave me a preview of the exquisite enchantments he's conjured up for us in this, the 21st year of the Erie Art Museum Blues and Jazz Festival.

Saturday, August 4, 2013

Noon - Susan Goodman

"I don't remember when I started doing a family act for the opening act, but it was a long time ago," said Vanco. "I did children's acts for quite a few years - you know, performers who are on 'Sesame Street' and the like, and the only one who was really musically valid was Susan.

So after all these years we get to bring her back, and I'm happy she's still doing it." What award-winning children's entertainer Susan Goodman is doing is using her saxophone to make music with a message - raising awareness about social justice and bullying. Sort of like a real-life grown-up Lisa Simpson.

2 p.m. - Ron Yarosz and the Vehicle

Ron's got an interesting quandary - as a blues harmonica virtuoso, he carries around one of the lightest instruments in existence, but as a Hammond B3 player, he's got to lug around a 550-plus pound vintage block of wood and wire. Luckily for us, he manages both with skill and grace, backed by local well-knowns Eric Brewer, Ralph Reiting, and Ron Sutton. "They're really excellent," Vanco said. "I think everybody locally knows them. They've done extremely well in terms of getting out into the rest of the world and performing, they've done well at the blues competitions, and they were a big favorite at the Pittsburgh Blues Festival last year."

4 p.m. - The Breeze Band

This versatile, funky local ensemble comprised of veterans Barry King, Maurice Troop, Kenny Hollis, Kevin Sapper, and Rahman Hooks did such a good job opposite DJ



Blues and Jazz Fest packs Frontier Park for two days of live music.

Born at last month's pARTy on the Patio that Vanco apparently decided to give them a spot in another choice EAM gig. "I've known them all in different bands for years and years," he said. "They're great players and have an extensive repertoire. It's good, danceable music."

6 p.m. Corey Harris & the Rasta Blues Experience

"Corey was here years ago," Vanco said. "I did an exhibition of resonator instru-

ments, and I had a whole series of performers who played resonator guitars, and he was one of them. It was the probably the late '90s." Since that visit, Harris has risen to relative stardom in the blues world as the standard-bearer of the acoustic blues revival of the late '90s alongside performers like Keb Mo' and Taj Mahal. In 2003, he appeared in Martin Scorsese's "Feel Like Going Home," where he revisited the connection between American blues and the African folk music from which it is derived by visiting Mali and performing with [Cont. on 21]

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If We Were You...

WEDNESDAY 7.24

FILM at the Erie Art Museum "To the Wonder"

With an all-star cast including Ben Affleck, Olga Kurylenko, Rachel McAdams, and Javier Bardem, this Terrence Malick-directed film is an exploration of love in its many forms. Show up early to chat with fellow movie buffs, eat good food, and enjoy a drink in the beautiful Erie Art Museum.

When: 6 p.m.
Where: 10 E. Fifth St.
Contact: Facebook.com/FILMErieArtMuseum

THURSDAY 7.25

Erie Downtown Partnership Block Party

This week, The I-90's and Geek City hits Park Place and The Boardwalk for the Block Party! Get all the food, beverage, and entertainment you can fit into your Thursday night and help benefit Therapy Dogs United. July is nearing an

end, folks, so enjoy the Block Party while summer is still here.

When: 6 to 10:30 p.m.
Where: 28 North Park Row
Contact: 455.3743

"Leading Ladies"

If you haven't seen this Erie Playhouse production yet, we suggest you plan on it - Struggling Shakespearean actors Leo Clark and Jack Gable fight to survive on the Moose Lodge circuit in 1950s Pennsylvania. How far they will go to make it big?

When: 7:30 p.m.
Where: 13 W. 10th St.
Contact: 454.2852

FRIDAY 7.26

Discover Presque Isle 2013

Friday is the opening day for this year's Discover Presque Isle, a celebration of the crown jewel of the Gem City, Presque Isle State Park. Crafts, volleyball, sand sculpture contests, bonfire, live entertainment, and plenty of food can all be expected; for even more information, be sure to

read Matthew Flowers' piece in this issue.

When: Starts at 7 a.m., continues through the weekend
Where: Presque Isle State Park
Contact: 838.5138

SATURDAY 7.27

TREC Garden Tour

If you're looking for something a little more calming than Beer on the Bay, take a free walk through the garden at Tom Ridge Environmental Center. Garden Coordinator Jen Salem will be there to tell you about the best way to grow a healthy garden. Meet at the TREC welcome desk.

When: 10 to 11:30 a.m.
Where: 301 Peninsula Drive
Contact: 833.7424

Cocomama at the Romolo Chocolates Summer Music Series

Local confectioner Romolo Chocolates has plenty of cocoa on its premises, but on this Saturday, the Summer Music Series is about to get a big shipment of Coco. International all-female act Cocomama will bring their Afro-Cuban, Jazz, and South American-styled tunes to the sweet Saturday series, a treat for fans of world music.

When: 6 to 9 p.m.
Where: 1525 W. Eighth St.
Contact: 452.1933, romolochocolates.com

The Irving Klaws w/ The Couchriders and Planet Claire

When it comes to fun Saturday night activities, we like to suggest going out and having fun with friends, perhaps seeing a cool show like garage-rock band The Irving Klaws at the crooked i. Of course, you could always just hang out in your garage with gardening tools and that rusty can of leftover paint that you always forget about. We'll kindly stick with garage rock instead.

When: 10 p.m. to 2 a.m.
Where: 1013 State St.
Contact: facebook.com/thecrookedierie

SUNDAY 7.28

Third Annual Afternoon for Equality Fundraiser

According to their website, the greater Erie Alliance for Equality is a non-profit organization whose mission is "supporting the region's LGBT community and its straight allies through education, open dialogue and public visibility." So, if you are or know an L, a G, a B, a T, or an ally thereof - which should be pretty much everybody - you'll want to get your tickets to this event, (held in the stunning La Rue Dix just off State) to support this worthy cause.

When: 4 to 7 p.m.
Where: 21 W. 10th St.
Contact: geaeinfo@gmail.com or 866.229.1974

TUESDAY 7.30

Jake's Blues at 8 Great Tuesdays

This particular Tuesday marks the halfway point, since it's Tuesday No. 4 out of 8. And it's being headlined by locals Jake's Blues, a rock, blues powerhouse in The Gem City. Expected to release a new album soon, the band just may be testing out some new material, as well as churning out past favorites and searing covers of blues legends. Oh, and this event features Erie's favorite F-word - that's right, FREE - since admission to this event won't set you back at all.

When: 6 to 10 p.m.
Where: Liberty Park, 726 W. Bayfront Pkwy
Contact: 455.7557

WEDNESDAY 7.31

Molly Gene One Whoaman Band

While some bands feel the need to pack enough people on stage to fill a venue to capacity with just its percussion section (we're looking at you, The Polyphonic Spree), others manage to rock with just a single person. The Molly Gene One Whoaman Band is coming to the crooked i with enough soul and grit to pack the State Street establishment even without robed backup vocalists.

When: 10 p.m. to 2 a.m.
Where: 1013 State St.
Contact: facebook.com/thecrookedierie

THURSDAY 8.01

Erie Downtown Partnership Block Party

This free outdoor event at the Plymouth Tavern not only features the musical talent of Stiletto and New Wave Nation, but the event will benefit the Autism Society of Northwestern Pennsylvania as well, so it's a party with a purpose!

When: 6 to 10:30 p.m.
Where: 1109 State St.
Contact: 453.6454

FRIDAY 8.02

Coconut Joe's Happy Hour with Small Town Revolution

Enjoy the sound of Small Town Revolution, a popular local band, while you drink. The sounds of their guitars, bass, and vocals lend one a better appreciation for Erie culture. Happy hour sees no cover charge until 10 p.m.

When: 4 p.m.
Where: 28 North Park Row
Contact: 814.455.4705

Ode to Fran the Art Man

All of Erie loves Fran the Art Man Schanz - so much, in fact, that a certain subset thereof has endeavored to construct a lyrical stanza comprised of a strophe, an antistrophe, and an epode. Okay,



Thu. July 25

**Summer Block Party
with I-90s and Geek Army**

Fri. July 26

Geek Army

Sat. July 27

Drunk in Memphis

Fri. Aug. 2

Saving Abel

Sat. Aug. 3

**Waiting for Never:
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maybe they didn't literally create a classical greek ode, but they did create a figurative ode to him at PACA - an art show, which is much more fitting for Fran than an ornately crafted epic poem.

When: 7 p.m.
Where: 1505 State Street
Contact: paca1505.com/Movies

Movies at the Arboretum

Steal away from your laptop, tablet, smart phone, and television by escaping into the sublime natural beauty of Frontier Park - for a movie! Yes, it's kind of a contradiction, but who cares? The Lorax, that's who. He looks mean enough to rip your face off and wipe his fuzzy little feet with it, but in reality he just want to hug trees, and after screening this 2012 animated feature, you probably will too.

When: Dusk
Where: The Arboretum at Frontier Park
Contact: Leaferie.org

Saving Abel

We can probably conclude by now that the guys from Saving Abel are fans of The Flagship City. The Biblically-named hard rock band from Corinth, Miss. is returning to Sherlock's, ready to give Erie another taste of Southern post-

grunge for fans of old and any newcomers to their musical craft.

When: 9 p.m. to 2 a.m.
Where: 508 State St.
Contact: 453.7760

SATURDAY 8.03

The Tony Lelo Project

Not all projects are that fun. Take re-tiling the bathroom for example. Well, instead of the ol' grout and pout, try something much more exciting in your life by heading out to Sandbar Draft House to see The Tony Lelo Project dole out plenty of smooth original R&B tunes, as well as some choice covers.

When: 8 p.m.
Where: 2835 W. Eighth St.
Contact: 464.8880, sandbarerie.com

Waiting for Never

After a decade, Waiting for Never is still going strong, so Sherlock's is ready to throw them an anniversary party. Traditionally, we should be getting the local band a tin or aluminum gift

for their 10th year together, but instead, we'll be treated with a blast of hardcore metal through-out the night.

When: 9 p.m. to 2 a.m.
Where: 508 State St.
Contact: 453.7760

Eerie Roller Girls Double Header!

So we've been absolutely ga-ga over the Eerie Roller Girls all season long - we love our home team; we love their home rink, the Presque Isle Skating and Events Center (formerly Evan's Skateland); we love the sport of roller derby, and we especially love the players and their silly names. If you haven't yet had the pleasure of seeing Meredeath Loosewheel, Sally Jesse Rough-as-Hell, and the Naughty Professor in action, this evening's doubleheader should do the trick.

When: doors at 6:30, bouts at 7 and 8:30 p.m.
Where: 3162 West Lake Road
Contact: EerieRollerGirls.com

SUNDAY 8.04

Lagoons by Pontoon

The lagoons of Presque Isle State Park are teem-

ing with life and beauty, and this hour-long family friendly "interpretive boat tour" will get you up close and personal with both! Sign up at the Pontoon Pavillion at 10 a.m. for the 11 a.m., 1 or 2 p.m. launches, and experience a side of nature most people never see.

When: Varies
Where: Peninsula Dr.
Contact: trecpi.org

TUESDAY 8.06

Thumpdaddy at 8 Great Tuesdays

Call him the Sultan of Slap, the General of the Groove, the Bastion of Bass -- Thumpdaddy is bringing his bottom-note-heavy R&B, soul, and funk to the Bayfront. So head down to get down -- and while you're there, swing by the Erie Reader tent to grab our August 7 issue a day early, so that you can tell your friends you got "tomorrow's news today."

When: 6 to 10 p.m.
Where: Liberty Park, 726 W. Bayfront Pkwy
Contact: 455.7557

ARRR YOU READY FOR FUN?



AA AFFILIATE OF THE DETROIT TIGERS



vs. Bowie Baysox
(Baltimore Orioles)
July 25-28



vs. Trenton Thunder
(New York Yankees)
August 6-8

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Fri, July 26

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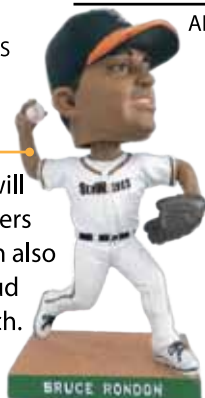
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ZUCK'S TURKEY FARM

AUGUST 3 // SATURDAY @ 10:00

TUE: Songwriter Showcase & Vinyl Night
SUN: Open Mic & Jam

To-do List

By: Alex Bieler

Beer on the Bay

Imagine walking into a local beer-shilling establishment to pick up your preferred fermented adult beverage when you notice something on the shelf. It could be a shiny bottle or a vibrantly colored can that catches your eye, leading you to a whole new brew, a brand new taste you've never had. As tempting as that bacon-and-maple-donut-infused ale in the bright pink bottle may be, you still walk on by and snag your go-to six pack, not wanting to have to purchase a product you've yet to taste.

Still, that exciting, unknown brew could be something wonderful. If only there was an event where you could go and try different drinks from a wide variety of breweries.

Well, you're in luck, because Beer on the Bay is right around the corner – if you live right around

“We were very lucky to have the support of the local and regional breweries and distributors to come and support the event so that beer fest-goers would have a great time and a great selection of beers.”

the corner from the Burger King Amphitheater at Liberty Park. The local beer fest will host dozens of brewers and representatives from across the nation – and even a couple from Europe – Saturday, July 27, including local guys Lavery Brewing Company as well as California's Sierra Nevada Brewing Co., all to help people grow their appreciation of one of the oldest and most beloved beverages in the world.

“That was the whole idea: To get people to try beers that they normally wouldn't on their own,” says Becky Niemeyer, sales manager at Erie Brewing Company, the local brewery that started Beer on the Bay six years ago. “We were very lucky to have the support of the local and regional breweries and distributors to come and support the event so that beer fest-goers would have a great time and a great selection of beers.”

Beer on the Bay is comprised of two different tasting sessions – one from noon to 3 p.m. and another from 4 to 7 p.m. – for hop heads and lager lovers to sample some suds. As the event has been growing under the watch of Erie Brewing Company and the Erie Regional Chamber and Growth Partnership, an organization that joined in halfway through Beer on the Bay's run to help with promotion, the VIP section has been

expanded, with a hookah bar, brewery meet-and-greets, a quartet of food purveyors, and Presque Isle Ice Cream providing sweet treats.

Of course, with the beer being plentiful, it's always a good idea to have a ride, so designated driver passes can be purchased for \$20, giving these fine citizens access to the VIP lounge for their good deeds.

“Nobody leaves there not having a good time,” Chamber Vice President Claudia Thornburg says. “It's not really stressful – you're on the water. The venue there is exceptional.”

For a complete list of participating breweries, check out eripa.com/beer-on-the-bay. Regular tickets cost \$30 and VIP \$45 before the event and \$5 more at the door for a day in the suds and sun that can help you expand your craft beer mind.

Funktapuss

Move over, mythical animal combinations, there's a new creature concoction on its way to Erie.

Okay, maybe Funktapuss isn't so much a combination of two animals like a griffin and more of just a fun portmanteau, but the five guys in this New England band do have funk ingrained in their brains.

“The saxophone player, the drummer, and I have been playing together for 16 years,” bassist Brian “Beek” Vanderbeek says. “We started in high school. Our original band in high school was called Purple Monkey Dishwasher.”

Eventually, Beek and company switched from primates to mollusks, adding members to form Funktapuss four years ago. Fast forward to today and the quintet will bring their sweaty, smooth funk to the crooked i Thursday, July 25, ready to give the State Street crowd a healthy serving of their exciting show.

“[We're] balls to the wall,” Beek says. “We aim to blow the roof off of every place we play. We're very high-energy. A lot of it is improvised.”

The day after playing at the crooked i, Funktapuss will head west to The Gathering at Chaffee's, which you may have read about in fellow writer Matthew Flowers' fine cover story in our last issue. According to Beek, the band will play some new, funky material for both nights in addition to past favorites.

“We're in the midst of writing our second album,” Beek says. “It's coming along slowly but surely. We're doing a lot of new writing techniques. We're trying to branch out and do different stuff, maybe add a little more technology.”

Now armed with new songs and old, Funktapuss is ready to wow Northwest Pennsylvania, a five-headed funk monster raring to make your night fun.

Alex Bieler can be contacted at aBieler@ErieReader.com, and you can follow him on Twitter @Catch20Q. To follow this story or comment, scan the QR code or go to <http://er-irdr.com/2o0lz>



Discovering Discover Presque Isle

A cascade of colorful art, summery music, and support for our state park hits the PI shores July 26 to 28

By: **Matthew Flowers**

Music. Art. Music. Art. Music. Art. The recreational waves of Erie summers are rolling in without calm water in sight. Hold on to your swimming trunks, as this weekend will be no exception since another surge is headed straight for the peninsula.

Discover Presque Isle hits the shore July 26, 27, and 28, bringing with it a cascade of colorful art, summery music, and support for our state park.

It's safe to say most Erieites have taken a drive around the peninsula, taken a dip in the lake, or devoured a couple of hot dogs at Sara's, but there is so much more to be discovered. "It's a three-day event that shows all the various ways that you can enjoy Presque Isle," says Steve McDermott, executive director of Presque Isle Partnership.

Over the years Steve has helped add to the list of ways locals and tourists can enjoy this waterfront park, with these lakeside events including classics like kayaking and pontoon boat rides which he calls "Presque Isle's best kept secret."

"If you go on a pontoon boat tour or kayak in the Lagoons, in ten minutes you'll feel like you're not even at Presque Isle and you're at a completely different park," Steve adds. When admiring the park from the placid waters of the lagoons, the view looks foreign; you could be looking at the lush greenery of a Louisiana swamp or be gazing at the flat waters of a Florida marsh, teeming with life – substitute the alligators for common map turtles – but what you're really looking at one of the many hidden facets our city's state park has to offer.

If you're not up to getting wet but still feel like working up a sweat, this year's first Three Mile Isle lets runners navigate through some unexplored grounds between Beach 10 and 11, the 4th Annual Presque Isle Beach Brawl tests the strength of wrestlers and non-wrestler's alike, and you can catch some sunrays during the volleyball tournament.

But Discover Presque Isle is also about kicking back and enjoying the sights and sounds. Beach 8 is hosting the Sand Sculpting competition, live music from singer/songwriter Matt Thomson, Fire and Ice, local favorite The Sam Hyman



Contributed Photo

Thousands of locals and visitors will take to Presque Isle for a weekend to enjoy all that Erie's landmark gem has to offer.

Band, and Pittsburgh alt-rockers JD Eicher & the Goodnights, and to set the mood, a big ol' bonfire will be lit Saturday around 8:45 p.m.

"It's the only time out of 365 days of the year that you're going to see a bonfire that big at Presque Isle," Steve says.

Along with providing a plethora of activities, all of Discover Presque Isle's proceeds get funneled back into the park to keep the peninsula shipshape while also being able to add new attractions. Judging by past years – when the weather is right – the whole weekend event can take in about \$90,000.

In 2005, this money helped build the one-of-kind playground in the Waterworks area.

"You won't find another playground like that around here anywhere," Steve says with confidence. However, this unique design is not only a great place for kids to play, but it also serves a purpose. "We chose that [playground] because it requires kids to really have to work hard to play there. The whole point of it was to fight child-

hood obesity." Shipped from Germany, the playground is built like a barge, made to take a beating from Erie's harsh winters and a lot of hard

playing children.

Beyond the playground, proceeds were also used to build the new Turtle Observation Deck in the lagoons. The viewing stations don't cost a penny but the sights are worth every one of them.

The newest blueprint on the drawing board is a creative play place for children, that Steve says will "connect young kids with nature," and at the same time, "be very educational, fun, and challenge kids' creativity."

This year, the fundraising buttons will sport a new design – a little frog donning 18th century garb to commemorate the Perry 200. There is also a mystery button, one that could earn you a cool \$1,000 if it has the winner number.

The peninsula is one of Erie's most valuable assets and events like this remind us of this precious location. Discover Presque Isle adds more to the map each year, and its funds help make this city's very own State Park a place to be proud of.

Matthew Flowers can be contacted at MFlowers@ErieReader.com, and you can follow him on Twitter @MFlowersER. To follow this story or comment, scan the QR code or go to <http://eridr.com/id7xp>



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MUSIC REVIEWS

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Jay Z

Magna Carta...Holy Grail
Roc Nation

★★★



Jay Z's conflicted. He's found ultimate success and retired once already. But he's still young-ish, and still creatively minded. How to handle that conflict? Release an album that goes platinum before it hits shelves – and explore that conflict on said album. "I'm never satisfied, can't knock my hustle," he raps on "Picasso Baby." "I wanna Rothko, no I wanna brothel. No, I wanna a wife that f--- me like a prostitute." Jay Z continues to navigate such conflict, but he seems to lose interest before the song finishes and seems breathless – both bored and tired. Album opener "Holy Grail," strikes an even more unnerving chord, with Jay Z namedropping Kurt Cobain, welcoming Justin Timberlake to croon an adapted "And we're all just entertainers. And we're stupid, and contagious." Jay Z is an entertainer, his music – the beats, the wordplay, the execution – all contagious. But while he's not stupid, he's bored and tired – and it shows in this mediocre album.

- Ben Speggen

Editors

The Weight of Your Love
PIAS

★★



The music a person chooses to listen to can often reflect their mood. Doom and gloom can call for a sad tune and joyous songs can perfectly accompany a bright disposition. If one were

to guess how you felt when listening to "The Weight of Your Love," it would likely be bored. The latest album by Birmingham, England band Editors continues their downward trend of recycling old British '80s acts without really putting their own stamp on it. Shades of dark Depeche Mode synths, some U2 balladry, and the unavoidable Joy Division connection given singer Tom Smith's deep croon permeate the album, but it all amounts to a group of songs that, while not necessarily bad, never grab your attention, aside from the occasional clichéd lyric., making for an album that's just rather boring. - Alex Bieler

Pet Shop Boys

Electric
x2

★★★★★



After 28 years with Parlophone, British electro-pop legends Pet Shop Boys moved on to their own label, releasing latest album "Electric" on x2. Despite having been able to retire comfortably due to past successes, Neil Tennant and Chris Lowe still sound fresh after 30 years. Unlike last year's more subdued "Elysium," "Electric" is very much a dance record, an exciting blast of synths, beats, and samples over the course of nine songs. Opener "Axis" is more of a straight up '80s-driven club track whereas "Love is a Bourgeois Construct" starts off with a gorgeous string section before shifting into lyrically-focused track with very British sensibilities, no surprise for fans of Pet Shop Boys. "Electric" isn't the most groundbreaking of albums, but Tennant and Lowe show that even after 30 years in the business, they're still big players in the electronic music game. - Alex Bieler

Hebronicx

Unreal
ATP

★★★★★



Another year means it's time for another oddly named project for Daniel Blumberg. The London musician is no stranger to setting aside new bands for even newer ones, but his departure from Yuck after just one excellent album still managed to raise some eyebrows among listeners and critics. Like his work with Yuck, Blumberg's new project Hebronicx packs debut album "Unreal" with plenty of catchy guitar hooks, but now he replaces the punchy, fuzzed-out guitar rock of before with a slow, sprawling six-pack of songs, much like if Blumberg took the reverb out of excellent "Yuck" closer "Rubber" and replaced it occasionally with a string section. There's plenty to like on "Unreal," although a lot of it gets lost in Blumberg's sonic landscapes, often topping seven minutes in length. "Unreal" could have used some editing, but the album still contains plenty of bright spots. - Alex Bieler

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Street Fashionista

Lindsay Vendetti

By: Leslie McAllister

It's a magical thing. It's an extraordinary power. It's often discounted just how influential and just how awe-inspiring these talented musicians can be to a fellow young one.

Attending a Taylor Swift concert recently with my favorite girls (Olivia and Marni), I was truly star-struck. Like mouth agape, tears rolling down my cheeks, mind blown, proud to be a girl all rolled up into a heart-shaped-balloon-covered-in-sparkling-red-sequins kind of feeling.

Yeah, it was that deep.

Tiny Miss Swift was a sensation, a lady, a muse, a teacher. Above all, a standup, strong, positive role model for 57,000 women, girls, men, and boys. And what did I take away beside the fact that her performance was stellar? Her costume changes. No words.

Here's what I love about pop culture – everything she will wear on this tour will be huge

I love Erie because it's real. The people are real, the mood is real, and the air smells like home.

for fall fashion. Color: RED; Texture: Sequins; Theme: Parisian Carnival; Vibe: Parisian '40s glamour, lady-like softness, goddess-inspired diaphanous gowns.

Just heavenly. Just perfect. Transcendent and superb.

The best part about pop-diva style is anything goes. It is all about you. What makes Taylor is that her style is genuine. Oh sure, performers have stylists (dream job), but much of what they wear comes from their inner fashionista.

So here's what you are going to do to tap into your inner pop diva – be you. Yup. Just you...and maybe some sequins.

Who? Lindsay Vendetti

Where? Stairwell at the Erie Art Museum

Why Lindsay? A local pop diva in her own right, Lindsay has been awarded best female vocalist at the Rock Erie Music Awards. She continues to sing around Erie with such acts as Stiletto (she was one of the original singers) and other fun projects on the rise. Beyond that, the girl loves fashion. Her signature platinum blonde streak and bouffant hair make her immediately recognizable, and her ever-changing styles and trends define her inner pop priestess.

What We Want to Know

Describe your style: I would say my style is a little bit of a lot of things. Comfort to start. I love

being comfortable, but I would say soul with a little bit of edge and a lot of girl. I could go on, but in all honestly I'm constantly changing daily. Sometimes I want to wear a dress with bows and lace and sometimes I want to wear a studded jacket with 5-inch hooker heels. To answer the question, I'd say my style is a smorgasbord of me.

If you were a dress, what kind of dress would you be? Color? Style? Vintage? Party dress? Garden dress? Hmm, this is a really hard one, but if I had to pick a dress to represent me it would be a '60s Go-Go dress, really short with flared sleeves with black and white polka dots.

Last indulgent purchase? There's *way* too many of these a week. I just got my hair done, which went along with purchasing hair products. Today I bought two bathing suits and two cover-ups – all of which I already have, but it's a new season, right? I have to restock this closet, ugh, it should be illegal the amount of money I spend on clothes, shoes, hair, makeup, etc. But hey, these are true loves of mine so why not?

How would you describe your closet? A mess! I can't find anything, and once a month I attempt to fold and hang everything; this lasts about 2 to 3 days. Then it's back to crazy town and I have no idea where anything is.

Fashion inspiration: Where does it come from? Celebrity? Art? Landscape? Architecture? I honestly don't know how to answer this question. Music really inspires my wardrobe. A lot of times I'll put on Spotify while I'm getting ready and whatever I'm listening to I tend to dress like. For instance, Patsy Cline will come on and I'll throw on a button-up dress with a collar, high-waisted belt, and some cute flats. Pink will be playing and I'll put on leggings, a tank, a cut-off shirt, big earrings, and studded flats or platform heels. This one happens more often because I'm a raging pop-star lover. Then Bruno Mars will come on and I just won't put any clothes on at all...whoops did I say that out loud?

You just moved back from LA; what was the style vibe out there? What trends have not yet reached the East coast? LA has been very into the floral prints for about two years, bralets, and combat boots with shorts and skirts. I'm just now noticing it here too; Pac Sun at the mall is all LA all day long. The thing that was really awesome about LA was that people just dressed how they wanted. You would go into a ridiculously nice restaurant and see girls completely head to toe decked out in glamour – then you'd see some girls in jeans, a T-shirt, and sneakers. That really allowed everyone to embrace *their* own style. I felt more comfortable wearing whatever I wanted, wherever I wanted there as opposed to Erie. Here, I feel people put dress codes on different places.

Why do you love Erie? Oh I don't think you want me to give you all the reasons; we would be here for days. I'll give you my shortest answer: I love Erie because it's real. The people are real, the mood is real, and the air smells like home. There is something about this town that somewhere



Leslie McAllister

all the time. The number-one thing I love about Erie is that my family lives here and nothing in the world is better than being close to the ones you love the most and the ones who love you the most.

Any fun summer gigs planned? I took a little break from singing when I moved home just to regroup and get myself settled in. Now I am finally getting into some things and thank God because I have been itching to get back on stage. I will be sitting in with Stiletto on August 1 for the Block Party. I started singing with them before I left for LA, and I love them all dearly, along with the band, so I'm really excited for a reunion gig. Also keep your ears open for an acoustic act I'm putting together with my fellow musician and ridiculously talented Eric Brewer. Some good things are in the works, and I can't wait to get back out and start singing for my amazing city.

Find me out on the town and challenge yourself to get noticed by the Erie Reader!

along the way, without me even knowing it, I fell madly in love with. I didn't even realize this until I took myself 3,000 miles away. I love the beauty of the sunsets, the summer night breezes, the beaches, the lake, the gorgeous fall leaves and the first snowfall. I love driving only 15 minutes max to get *anywhere* and I love seeing familiar faces

Leslie McAllister can be contacted at LMcAllister@ErieReader.com, and you can follow her on Twitter @ShopJufus. To follow this story or comment, scan the QR code or go to <http://eridr.com/kru5x>



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JULY 31 | KILL LIST (2012)

Nearly a year after a botched job, a hitman takes a new assignment with the promise of a big payoff for three killings. What starts off as an easy task soon unravels, sending the killer into the heart of darkness. 95 minutes, Rated R.
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Q & A with The Pride of Erie PA

Los Angeles Band Finds Inspiration in Erie

By: Matthew Flowers

I'm staring at a row of acoustic guitars in my room, waiting until the writer's block resides – daydreaming of a tour that will someday lead my band, Falling Hollywood, out West - when I receive a message from Contributing Editor Cory Vaillancourt about a pop-rock band from Hollywood called “The Pride of Erie PA.”

My first thought – what the hell is with their name?

My second thought – how is Erie, Pa. on anybody's radar? Train frontman Patrick Monahan is from Erie; a couple miles away Trent Reznor grew up in Mercer, Pa. but then I found it – the Peppermint Lounge house band, The Fabulous Epics (later known as Orange Colored Sky) who inspired the 1996 film “That Thing You Do.”

My third thought – let's interview The Pride of Erie PA and find out their story.

After all, it only seems natural for two bands from polar opposite ends of the country, sharing each other's respective geographic location in their names, to get to know one another, right?

A lot of people get what the name is... The people from Erie – most of them – are like, ‘That's awesome; we're from Erie.’ But then there have been a couple people that are like, ‘What?! You haven't even been here, how can you call yourself “The Pride of Erie PA?”’

Matthew Flowers: Your band's name is The Pride of Erie PA. Where and how did you come up with that?

Bill McShane: Basically there is the movie called “That Thing You Do” that came out a while back that is set in the '60s. It's about this young high-school rock 'n' roll band that ends up having a hit song and becomes a No. 1 band. The band is called “The Wonders,” and they are from Erie, Pa. There are a couple parts in the movie where they're like, “Back off, man; I'm from the Erie, Pa...” I kind of like that idea, kind of like the Beatles – they came from Liverpool, and they made Liverpool famous. So this band in the movie kind of makes Erie, Pa. famous.

The reason we picked that, referenced it, and came up with the name is really just as simple as we were trying to come up with a name and at one point I was like, ‘if there is anything we can think of that would be a reference to “That

Thing you Do” that would be really cool,’ because I love that movie and I love that vibe and it really fits my feeling about what we are trying to do with the band and so then that name just kind of popped into my head.

“The Pride of Erie PA” I thought sounded funny because obviously we're not from Erie, Pa., and it's just kind of an inside thing, you know? If you've seen the movie you would probably put two and two together that that's what we're doing.

I like weird band names like that, that sound like it's a sentence. You'd think there would be something coming later but nope, that's the whole band name.

The funny thing is you just name your band, you don't think twice about it really. Then a lot of kids online are like, ‘You guys aren't even from Erie, Pa. How can you say that you're the pride of Erie, Pa.?’ and we're just sort of laughing. It's just a band name!

MF: What kind of comments are you getting from Erieites?

BM: A lot of people get what the name is... The people from Erie – most of them – are like, ‘That's awesome; we're from Erie.’ But then there have been a couple people that are like, ‘What?! You haven't even been here, how can you call yourself “The Pride of Erie PA?”’

Most of them think it's cool.

MF: Have you ever been to Erie?

BM: I've been to Pittsburgh. That's the closest city to it right?

MF: It's one of the closest “big” cities.

BM: I feel like I have been there because I used to be in a band that toured the whole country. We didn't play there, but I feel like we were there before.

MF: What band were you playing in?

BM: I was in a band called “Ultimate Fakebook.” Pretty much all the guys in the band are from other bands. [Drummer Tony Thaxton was swinging sticks for Motion City Soundtrack. Guitarist Patrick Carrie played in Limbeck, once signed to Dog House Records. Funny man on bass, Mike Phirman is part of the television show “The Nerdist” on BBC America, and works with Chris Hardwick on the comedy music project Hard n' Phirm.]

MF: Is the content of your songs serious or comedic?

BM: It's kind of just sounds about girls, you know. [Laughs] Like typical pop songs. People that like bands like Weezer or Fountains of Wayne or The Beatles and Ramones kind of flavor I think would dig it. It's just kind of like short songs, sing-a-long melodies.

MF: Are The Beatles, Ramones, Weezer, and Fountains of Wayne the bands who inspired you?

BM: Yeah... and I was coming from loving '80s music and also heavy metal [laughs] when I was a kid – that's how it started. But I liked pop bands. One of the bands I really got into that inspired me was a band called Guided by Voices. They're probably my favorite band of all time.



Contributed Photo

The Pride of Erie PA on a California beach.

MF: I'd say all you guys are seasoned musicians. But your EP's name is “Let's Start a Band.” It connotes a group of greener musicians and lends itself to the idea of inexperience. How does this work with your song writing and your sound?

BM: The reason I like the title “Let's Start a Band” is it's just kind of reflective of our philosophy, which is we're doing this for fun. A band, to me, is something you do with your friends, first and foremost.

It's just like, “Hey, let's start a band.” It's not about anything else except for that desire to make music and have fun making music. And that's kind of back to the band name referencing “That Thing You Do” – the great part of that movie is just how innocent and new that band is and it just so happens they get big.

Everybody that I know starts playing music because it's fun. So that [album name] is just to give the vibe that we're going for, it's very light-hearted. We all love pop music – great sing-a-long type songs and shit. It give you that feeling that I kind of miss, it's just about bands, opposed to a scene, or trying to be huge. It's about having fun in a band.

MF: How long have you guys been playing together?

BM: We've never played a show, actually. It started as a side project. We wanted to get together and just make some music.

We want to play some shows but everybody has other stuff they do so this is just kind of a side thing. We're not planning on touring or anything. We're probably gonna play in LA.

MF: What are the chances of you guys coming to Erie, Pa. and playing a show?

BM: I'd say the chances are pretty slim at the moment just because we don't have any kind of touring plans. But I will say if we ever do a tour that is outside of California, we will absolutely play Erie, Pa. [Laughs] We have to.

MF: I'm in a band called Falling Hollywood and I'm from Erie, Pa., and you're in a band from Hollywood called The Pride of Erie PA.

BM: That is kind of funny – it's perfect.

MF: Cross county gig swap?

BM: Totally.

MF: Seeing as you've never been to Erie, Pa. what do you think this city looks like?

BM: Really, I just sort of think about the movie. It's not a super small town but it's not a well-known mega-city by any means, so I kind of imagine it as a mid-size city, like Pittsburgh.

MF: Did you know we have a beach here in Erie?

BM: I didn't really realize that until some people started commenting on our video because some people thought we had filmed it at the beach in Erie and then they realized it was Malibu. [Laughs]

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You Ought to Know:

Corey Cook

By Ryan Smith

For Corey Cook, drum stools have always served as driver's seats. He sat down at the first one, he said, to get away from having to use his voice.

At 14 years old, "I hated singing. I couldn't sing for a lick," Cook, now 29, said with a quiet laugh during a recent interview.

So, early-teen Cook told his parents – who'd required that their children be involved in their church's music program – that he wanted to play drums instead. They said sure – and, from the moment he first picked up those sticks at Shiloh Baptist Church, "it was an automatic love," he said.

And ever since, "I've been known as a drummer," said Cook, a crisp-dressed, mannerly, well-spoken man who seems reserved, but not shy; he carries an air of quiet confidence, looks me directly in the eyes as he politely answers my questions.

For over half of his life now, music has "really been my voice," he said. "That's really where the joy comes in: Having that voice, and being able to communicate it through music."

In many ways – maybe in every way – the born-and-raised, lifelong resident of Erie's lower east

side said, that joy and the drive to it, realized, encouraged, and labored for early on, "was what kept me grounded. Music was that thing that kept me out of trouble. ...It really kept me out of a lot of trouble."

The kinds of real trouble, Cook said, that many kids in those same city neighborhoods continue to be exposed to today: Drugs, violent crime, and other problems.

A couple of days after interviewing Cook, I came across a local news brief reporting that Erie City police had recovered a stolen car and made an arrest after a man allegedly had his car and cash stolen at gunpoint at an east side intersection. The report said the robbery had happened the same day, some blocks away and about an hour before my late-morning meeting with Cook. The arrested suspect, according to police, was a 16-year-old Erie boy.

Cook said he had friends who got into trouble similar to that when he was growing up. Some, he said, were selling drugs in high school – others, in middle school. There was a period, Cook said, when he found himself starting to head down the same path.

But, ultimately, the music beat out any other distractions. Over the last 15 years, Cook said, it's afforded him a host of once-in-a-lifetime opportunities, putting him behind kits throughout Erie and beyond, in much larger metropolises like Detroit, New York, and Philadelphia. Along the way, he's met and collaborated with many other artists, honing his crisp, virtuoso drumming style (and putting considerable work into piano, among other instruments) while also getting a real-time education in what modern music – as an ever-evolving, ever-more-tech-driven industry – is all about.

And now, at the inner-city Erie schools he attended, Cook's taking the musical experience that's always been a vehicle for him and turning it into a pilot, directing itself toward providing kids growing up in the same neighborhoods he's always called home opportunities to learn all about music – and to see, and show, just where their talents (once realized, encouraged and worked for) could take them.

Cook's new, comprehensive LifethruMusic program is launching this fall with 25 initial student participants from Erie School District's East High and Wayne Elementary schools, all between grades 4 and 12. An outreach program of the local faith-based nonprofit Life in Fulfilled Excellence (LIFE) Inc., the program has a stated mission of facilitating "mentorship and networking opportunities that seek to nurture and inspire the talents of young musicians ... [providing] a platform for young musicians, composers, and artists to develop and enhance their musical abilities."

"We really want to enlighten some of the kids in this area," Cook said, and let those who have the talent and want to put in the work know that "music, right now, has the potential to be a career for you."

All of the kids participating in the pilot program have been identified as disadvantaged youth, according to Cook and LIFE Inc. (which is run by Cook's sister, Erica Willis). Some are low-income students who aren't yet proficient in different areas of study, or who receive free or reduced meals at school. Some are kids who are in the foster care system; others have parents who are incarcerated or struggling with alcohol or drug problems.



Amidst real problems, Corey Cook is making real solutions.

lessons in modern music production and other music-related career opportunities. Being taught by Cook along with his brother, the Rev. Darrell Cook of Christ Community Church as well as other local participating musicians, the LifethruMusic coursework has been developed to cover everything from instruments, music-reading, chord structure and voice training to CD, video and live-performance conceptualization, production and even marketing, according to Cook.

In short, he said, it will provide a host of learning opportunities and experiences that the majority of the kids involved wouldn't likely have otherwise.

The long-range goal, according to LIFE Inc., is "to empower economically disadvantaged youth to break the cycle of poverty and become self-sufficient citizens of the Erie community."

Growing up, Cook said, "I experienced all the same sorts of things that kids growing up here experience today," and, in his experience, having "time in a positive environment" can mean a whole world of difference.

"The types of support I had from my parents (and) the impact my parents had on me was huge," said Cook. And, along with his parents' support and urgings to become and stay involved after seeing that early spark, "the church has been the biggest influence in my life as far music goes."

In implementing LifethruMusic (which has come at an initial cost of about \$35,000 in public grant and community-raised funds), Cook said he's continued collaborating with church leaders and, now, with school and community officials. "I've talked to different community leaders throughout the city," he said, and support

for what wants to do through LifethruMusic is showing itself.

"I feel this program has the potential to reach many youth in a positive and meaningful way," state Rep. Pat Harkins, whose 1st District represents Erie, stated in an official letter of support issued in May for LifethruMusic. "With our culture's current interest in performance and music, reaching young people in this way can be very effective, adding tremendously to their discipline, confidence and self-esteem. [LifethruMusic] has the potential to impact participants in very positive ways, often when traditional classroom endeavors have not."

"I was raised in music," said Cook, and he's seen, first-hand and time and time again, the power to unite that's within it.

Music "is the language of humanity," said Cook. "It bridges the gaps between a lot of differences."

One of the profile pictures on Cook's Facebook page is an image of him, walking away from a backdrop of Erie city buildings and looking off into the horizon. On the image stands a quote: "Where you are does not determine where you are going."

"I'm right in the middle of everything," Cook said, and "I know good things can come out of the lower east side of Erie."

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Contributed Photo

After 21 years, still Erie's favorite free festival.

[Cont. from 11] local musicians. Accordingly, Harris's stateside performances span the gaps between roots, rock, and reggae. No disrespect to Kenny Neal or anyone else on the bill this year, but Corey Harris is my personal can't-miss pick of the day for Saturday, and not just because both of us share the same first name; also, be sure not to miss his "Meet the Artist" session at 3:30 p.m. in the gazebo near the west side of Frontier Park.

8 p.m. – Kenny Neal

This year's blues headliner is from a famed Louisiana musical family, which says a lot. Like the Nevilles and the Cheniers, the Neals serve as both emissaries from and ambassadors to the swampy sounds of South Louisiana, and Grammy-nominated multi-instrumentalist Kenny Neal – son of vocalist/songwriter/harmonica player Rafal Neal and sibling to eight additional musicians – is sure to serve a heapin' helpin' thereof. "He's a great blues player, and way underappreciated," said Vanco. "He's been doing it a long, long time; he plays everything, does anything, and when I mention him to a lot of people, they say 'I don't know who that is.' So we'll change that."

Sunday, August 5, 2013

Noon – Parade Street Dixieland Jazz Band

Earlybirds – meaning anyone in Erie who actually shows up to anything on time – will get classic jazz instead of a worm on Sunday. "They haven't played at the festival before, and I do tend to put more traditional stuff in this opening act," Vanco said. As a fitting segue from the swampy sounds of Saturday, the PSDJB's website promises that their New Orleans-style treatment of American standards will get "your hands a-clappin' and your feet a-tappin'," which is a pretty bold statement that they probably wouldn't make if they weren't intent on delivering.

2 p.m. – Lydia Marks

"She's local – intermittently – and she's never played the festival before either," said Vanco.

Erie native Lydia Marks is exactly what you hear in your mind when you imagine a classy, classic female jazz vocalist – her sonorous-yet-cheery voice beckons with clarity, composure, sparkle, and sass as she saunters through the standards of the Great American Songbook.

4 p.m. – Cat's a Bear

If you're from Erie, you know that this ensemble is really more of a supergroup than anything else. "This is a band that's been playing for, I don't know, a couple of decades," Vanco said. Known for their originality, their proficiency, and their 80-plus years of collective professional musicianship, Cat's a Bear's dynamic and vigorous approach to contemporary jazz – led by Berklee College of Music alum Frank Singer – makes them an always-welcome presence in the Gem City.

6 p.m. – Tony Grey Trio

It's awful hard to call him this guy a "bass player," if you ask me. I prefer "soundscape." You see, Tony Grey is 10 feet tall, has 15 fingers, and plays the hell of out a 19-string bass (don't quote me on those numbers) all the while engineering lush audio landscapes that will leave you wondering where the hell you are. Again, no disrespect to Jeremy Pelt or anyone else on this wonderful bill, but Tony Grey is my personal can't-miss pick of the day for Sunday. Of Grey's style, Vanco said that Grey is "very much in that Berklee fusion continuum; it's contemporary, and it's got his twist to it." That's right, it's back-to-back Berklees!

8 p.m. – Jeremy Pelt Quintet

Make that back-to-back-to-back Berklees! If names like Duke Ellington Big Band, Mingus Big Band, Roy Hargrove Big Band, The Village Vanguard Orchestra, the Lewis Nash Septet, and the Cannonball Adderley Legacy Band mean anything to you, then this is your night; if those names don't mean anything to you, well, they will after trumpeter, producer, and music educator Jeremy Pelt completes the Berklee

trifecta by closing the festival with his quintet. "He's tearing it up these days," said Vanco. "Lots of great press. Playing with lots of ensembles. It's mainstream stuff and will be well received."

For audio and video of this year's artists as well as exclusive interviews with Corey Harris, Kenny Neal, Tony Grey, and Jeremy Pelt, be sure to visit www.ErieReader.com. Follow Cory Vaillancourt on Twitter @VLNCRT. To follow this story or comment, scan the QR code or go to <http://eridr.com/9rjcp>



Sudoku

Fill in the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9.

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DIFFICULTY: ★★☆☆☆

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS

- 1 Post
- 5 Eyelashes
- 10 Rom. Furies
- 11 Astringent
- 12 Farewell (2 words)
- 13 Unassuming
- 15 E. Indian tanning tree
- 16 Scheme
- 18 Modernist
- 19 Civil War commander
- 20 With joy
- 21 Bluish-white metal
- 22 Ant
- 24 Hundred (pref.)
- 25 Rear
- 26 Council for Econ. Advisors (abbr.)
- 27 Soap plant
- 30 Wine vessel
- 34 Dear (Ital.)
- 35 Song (Ger.)
- 36 Federal

- Aviation Admin. (abbr.)
- 37 Russ. community farm
- 38 Unadulterated
- 39 Fever (pref.)
- 40 Heavenly
- 42 Roam
- 44 Heath evergreen
- 45 "Fra Diavolo" composer
- 46 Silk substitute
- 47 Ogle

DOWN

- 1 Swed. sculptor
- 2 Venezuelan copper center
- 3 John, Gaelic
- 4 Shin (2 words)
- 5 Stick used in hurling
- 6 Sacred image
- 7 Went first

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

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- 8 Peaceful
- 9 Off
- 10 Jap. news agency
- 12 Oceanic tunicate
- 14 S.A. toucan
- 17 Recline
- 20 Small flute
- 21 Ardor
- 23 Prayer beads
- 24 Principal
- 26 Axis deer
- 27 Top
- 28 First
- 29 Planetarium
- 30 Circuit (abbr.)
- 31 Once (2 words)
- 32 Pole in Gaelic games
- 33 Male noble
- 35 Rom. poet
- 38 _____ Rivera, CA
- 39 Gooseberry
- 41 Nothing
- 43 Herb of grace

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