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ERIE READER

**2013 BY
THE NUMBERS**

**THE YEAR
IN MUSIC**

**WHAT REBECCA
STYN SEES
FOR 2014**

**WHAT YOU
WANT IN 2014**

**THE A-Z OF
FASHION FOR 2014**

**TECH WINNERS AND
LOSERS OF 2013**

**NEW YEAR'S EVE AT
THE ERIE ART MUSEUM**

**BEN FRAZIER'S
BIRTHDAY BASH**

**BRAD FORD'S OF RAG-DOLLS
AND ROCKET-SHIPS REVIEWED**

**TWO WEEKS-WORTH
OF ERIE EVENTS**

**2013
YEAR IN
REVIEW**



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MUSIC
8:00

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From the Editors

It's easy to be nostalgic this time of the year. And we like reminiscing, as looking back at our not-too-distant past to see how far we've come in just twelve months serves two purposes.

First, we get the chance to evaluate what went wrong, calculate our mistakes, and try our best to resolve them in our present in hopes of making a better future. Second, we get a chance to relish in the good times, the occasions that will become memories and stories we tell again and again, because they, if even only for a moment, held our attention long enough because they captivated us, entertained us, and engaged us.

In our year-end issue, you'll find 2013 reviewed, told by the numbers, and assessed — warts and all. So it's fitting that we take a moment, too, to look back on the year that was for the Reader in our third volume.

Many faces graced the Erie Reader covers in 2013. We started the year with comedian Lewis Black. He wasn't the only national celebrity to appear on the cover, as just a few issues later, filmmaker John Waters — who was recently on the cover of Baltimore's alt-weekly for their "Best of Baltimore" issue — appeared in Erie for his "This Filthy World" tour, which came to Edinboro University.

Early in the year, we followed Rep. Ryan Bizzarro and Sen. Sean Wiley to Harrisburg as part of Erie's youth movement in state politics. We also featured Erie's former embattled mayor Rick Filippi, as well as jazz sensation-bassist Tony Grey. And we introduced you to the inau-

gural class of Erie's 40 Under 40 and featured five power players on the cover.

Beyond people, we focused on Erie institutions, covering Erie's cultivated chocolate scene with a look at Pulakos, Romolos, and Stefanelli's. We told the often overlooked story of Erie Insurance Company and its positive effect on the city and neighborhood it calls home. We found ourselves talking TV in the newspaper when we looked at both CATV and I Am TV, and we wrote of the Erie Philharmonic as it celebrated its 100th year.

But that wasn't the only celebration Erie saw this year. The Perry 200 marched on with the Perry 200 Parade as summer began, and the Tall Ships docked in Erie as summer drew to a close. But before the estival breeze blew out of Erie, we stopped to enjoy summer music festivals with both the Gathering at Chaffee's and the Blues and Jazz Festival.

The music didn't stop there. We championed the hip-hop revival in Erie and continued to cover Erie's local music scene from clubs to bars to beaches to street blocks, including one hell of a party at the Watson-Curtze Mansion.

We also found that Erie has culture that we thought should be celebrated. From contemporary theater troupe Dramashop to the Scalized stairwell at the Erie Art Museum to the Eerie Horror Film Festival, there's no dearth of people laboring to ensure Erie's a cool, happening place for both those living here and those seeking to visit for the first or twenty-seventh time.

And if you live here, you know how big of a role

sports play in the Gem City. Jerry Uht Park is the place to be in the summer to catch the Sea-Wolves in action, and just as the Erie Insurance Arena saw a major facelift in renovations, the Otters are playing the best hockey of their Erie tenure with rising stars like Connor McDavid leading the way.

But living in Erie isn't all fun and games, sunshine, and concerts. We face real challenges, and amongst those are environmental concerns, like the peril Lake Erie is facing and the future of fracking in Pennsylvania. Yet people are finding ways to be at peace with the Earth in which they plant their roots, and we saw how folks in Erie are living off the land.

Yet, Erie still has much to learn. Which is why we decided to make the Global Summit a perennial cover, as some of the great minds in the world — including the likes of Howard Dean, Ian Morris, and native son Harry Markopolos — gathered in Erie for a week to discuss everything from politics to the advancement of civilizations to the takedown of Bernie Madoff.

These are just a fraction of the stories that we told this year, but we're happy to be able to look back at them to say, for Erie, 2013 was, amidst the trials and tribulations of a struggling economy, squabbles over development and vision, and at times an arresting apathy for progress, a good year. We're glad we were able to be part of that storytelling process, and we're looking forward to continuing to bring you stories about the issues that matter to our city, our county, our region, and beyond come 2014.

Street Corner Soapbox

By the Numbers: 2013 Edition

By: Jay Stevens

Number of Erie union workers GE announced it was laying off in 2013 : **950**

Number of non-union workers GE is hiring for its Fort Worth, Texas, plant to replace the Erie workers : **875**

The possible rise in the Erie county unemployment rate in percentage points as a result of the layoffs, according to Penn State Erie, The Behrend College professor of economics, Jim Kurre : **0.6**

Based on an Erie worker wage of \$36/hour and a Fort Worth wage of \$26/hour, approximate amount in wages GE is saving by moving production to Texas, in millions : \$24.65

Based on an Erie worker wage of \$36/hour and a Fort Worth wage of \$26/hour, approximate amount in wages GE is saving by moving production to Texas, in millions : **\$24.65**

Amount, in millions, that CEO Jeffrey Immelt received in his compensation package in 2012 : **\$25.8**

Reported 2012 profits for GE Transportation, in millions : **\$1,000**

Age of former South Africa President Nelson Mandela when he died Dec. 5 : **95**

Mandela's age when he was sentenced in 1962 to life imprisonment for conspiring to overthrow South Africa's apartheid government : **44**

Mandela's age when he was released in 1990 : **72**

Age of former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher when she died April 8 : **87**

Year that Thatcher called Mandela "that grubby little terrorist," and said his political party, the ANC, is "a typical terrorist organization... Anyone who thinks it is going to run the government in South Africa is living in cloud-cuckoo land" : **1987**

Year that the United States voted to impose sanctions on South Africa's apartheid government : **1986**

Number of U.S. House Representatives who voted to override President Ronald Reagan's veto of

the South Africa sanctions bill : **313**

Number of U.S. Senators voted to override Reagan's veto : **78**

Year that Mandela was elected president of South Africa : **1994**

Year that Nelson Mandela was removed from the U.S. terrorist watch list : **2008**

Number of Americans, in millions, who had health care policies canceled because they were not compliant with new regulations set by the Affordable Care Act, according to Health Policy and Strategy Consultants as broadcasted on Fox News : **4.2**

The number of Americans that signed up for insurance through Health.gov, the federal government's insurance exchange portal, in the month of October : **27,000**

The number of Americans who signed up for health insurance through Healthcare.gov on the first three days of December : **56,000**

The total number of Americans who enrolled in ACA plans in October and November 2013 by Healthcare.gov and other means, according to federal government data, in millions : **1.2**

Year that Thatcher called Mandela "that grubby little terrorist," and said his political party, the ANC, is "a typical terrorist organization... Anyone who thinks it is going to run the government in South Africa is living in cloud-cuckoo land" : 1987

The amount of dollars, in millions, the federal government has paid as of the end of October to develop Healthcare.gov, according to Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius : **319**

Number of Oregon residents who have signed up for ACA compliant health policies through their state's online health portal, Cover Oregon, as of December 1 : **0**

Amount of dollars, in millions, Oregon paid to the tech giant Oracle to develop the website : **40**

Number of Americans, in millions, who could have their health care policies canceled if the ACA were repealed, according to Erika Eichelberger of *Mother Jones*, noting that plans that adhere to the law's new insurance regulations

would likely be canceled : **137**

Percentage of Pennsylvanians that approve of Gov. Tom Corbett's job performance, according to a November Public Policy Polling poll : **24**

Gov. Corbett's rank, by approval rating, of the 50 state governors : **50**

Number of states that contribute a lower percentage of state money to schools than Pennsylvania : 9

Amount, in millions, that Gov. Corbett's proposed education budget for the 2013-14 school year is less than the 2010 funding for Pennsylvania schools : **\$800**

Number of states that contribute a lower percentage of state money to schools than Pennsylvania : **9**

Payroll, in millions, of the 2013 World-Series-winning Boston Red Sox, who won 97 regular-season games : **\$140.65**

Rank of the 2013 Boston Red Sox of MLB teams in terms of payroll : **5**

Cost, in millions, per 2013 regular-season win : **\$1.45**

Payroll, in millions, of the 2012 Boston Red Sox, who won 69 regular-season games : **\$173.19**

Rank of the 2012 Boston Red Sox of MLB teams in terms of payroll : **3**

Cost, in millions, per 2012 regular-season win : **\$2.51**

Number of batters struck out by the 2013 Detroit Tigers rotation of Doug Fister, Anibal Sanchez, Max Scherzer, Justin Verlander, and Rick Porcello : **960**

Number of batters struck out by the 1998 Atlanta Braves rotation of Greg Maddux, Tom Glavine, John Smoltz, Denny Neagle, and Kevin Millwood, often considered the best rotation of all time : **862**

Total number of batters struck out by the entire 2013 Detroit Tiger pitching staff : **1,428**

All-time rank of the 2013 Detroit pitching staff for most number of batters struck out : **1**

Number of blows to the head a professional football player will receive in a season, according to the Sports Concussion Institute : **900 to 1,500**

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News of the Weird

By: Chuck Shepherd

YELLOW AND BROWN VALUES

A Swedish TV show, "Biss och Kajs," found itself in the spotlight in November — in Russia, where government-run television apparently used it to send a political message to Ukraine by highlighting the program's theme of teaching children about bodily functions. The episode Russia chose featured three bulkily-costumed actors sitting around talking — with one dressed in yellow, one in brown, and the other unmistakably as a large, nude human posterior. ("Biss och Kajs" is highly regarded in Sweden; "biss" and "kajs" refer, respectively to the yellow and brown functions.) Ukraine (against Russia's wishes) is considering a trade agreement with the European Union, and, the Russian station director said, pointedly, "There you have European values in all their glory." [BBC News, 12-3-2013]

COMPELLING EXPLANATIONS

The Bank of England, arguing before the U.K.'s Parliamentary Commission on Banking Standards in October, warned against limiting the bonuses that bankers have come to expect from their lucrative deals — because that might encroach on their "human rights." The Bank suggested it is a human rights violation even to ask senior executives to demonstrate that they tried hard to comply with banking laws (because it is the government's job to prove violations). [Huffington Post U.K., 10-8-2013]

SLICK TALKERS

A young woman, accosted by a robber on Washington, D.C.'s Capitol Hill in October, told the man she was a low-paid intern — but an intern for the National Security Agency, and that within minutes of robbing her, the man would be tracked down by ubiquitous NSA surveillance. She said, later (reported the Washington Examiner), the man just "looked at me and ran away (empty-handed)." (2) A 29-year-old cafeteria worker at Sullivan East High School in Blountville, Tenn., swore to police on the scene in October that she was not the one who took money from a co-worker's purse, and she voluntarily stripped to near-nakedness to demonstrate her innocence. "See? I don't have it," she said. Moments later, an officer found the missing \$27 stuffed in the woman's shoe. [Washington Examiner, 10-15-2013] [Associated Press via Times Free Press (Chattanooga), 10-19-2013]

Katarzyna Dryden-Chouen and her husband Klive, busted in a London police raid last year with a marijuana grow operation that had netted an estimated (equivalent) of \$450,000, insisted to a jury in October that their massive haul was not for sale but for "personal" use — in that they wor-

ship the Hindu god Shiva, and truly believed that the world would end soon and that they needed a sizable offering to burn. (Actually, the jury bought it. "Distribution" charges were dismissed, but the couple still faces jail for their cultivation activity.) [The Citizen (Gloucester, England, 10-23-2013) [Daily Mail, 11-11-2013]

IRONIES

The Seattle City Council voted in October to seize a waterfront parking lot by eminent domain from the 103-year-old owner after negotiations to buy the property on the open market broke down. The state is funding a six-year tunnel-digging project in the area, and the city has decided it needs the property for not-yet-specified uses — except that in one part of the property, the city said it plans to operate a parking lot. [KCPQ-TV (Seattle), 10-22-2013]

KARMA

Larry Poulos was stopped on an Arlington, Tex., street in September, bleeding from a head wound and complaining that he had just been robbed by two men. A friend of Poulos later corroborated that, but police also learned that the money Poulos had been carrying was the proceeds of his having robbed a credit union earlier that evening. He was treated for his wounds and then arrested. (2) At least 44 health workers were struck with a suspected norovirus in September at a Creative Health Care Management convention in Huron, Ohio. (Noroviruses are sometimes called the "Norwalk" virus, named after one notable outbreak in 1968 in Norwalk, Ohio, about 12 miles from Huron.) [Dallas Morning News, 9-5-2013] [Sandusky Register, 9-18-2013]

"Masculine" Values: Breakaway former officials of the Boy Scouts of America met in Nashville, Tenn., in September to establish a Scouts-type organization that can freely discourage homosexuality, with one leader promising Fox News that the result would be "a more masculine" program. Another prominent attendee, also quoted in the Fox News dispatch, described his sorrow at the BSA's embrace of gay boys. Since this issue broke, he said, "I've cried a river." [Fox News, 9-8-2013]

In November, Sweden's National Housing Board, in charge of building codes, ordered the country's famous Ice Hotel in Jukkasjarvi (built anew annually out of fresh ice blocks) to install fire alarms. "We were a little surprised when we found out," said a spokeswoman (who acknowledged that the hotel's mattresses and pillows could catch fire). [The Local (Stockholm), 11-14-2013]

TNOT MY FAULT

Conscience-Cleansing: Greg Gulbransen of Oyster Bay, N.Y., announced in September that he was about to sue the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration for dragging its feet in implementing the Gulbransen-inspired 2007 federal legislation that he said would save lives, especially those of toddlers. The unimplemented law would force car manufacturers to install rear-facing cameras as standard equipment, a cause Gulbransen embraced after accidentally, fatally, backing over his own toddler in the family's BMW SUV. [OpposingViews.com, 9-25-2013]

The Way I See It

The Way I Hope to See It in 2014

By: Rebecca Styn

Someone recently posed a question to me: If I had the opportunity to have dinner with any five people — living or deceased — who would they be?

I've been posed this question in the past, and immediately, a handful of historical notables — Abraham Lincoln, John F. Kennedy, even Hitler (nobody said you had to like the person) — came to mind. But the more I thought about it, the more I realized that those I wanted to spend time with say ten years ago, are not the same people I want to spend time with today. At this point in my life, I have begun to realize that I no longer desire to spend time with people just because of *what* they are — president or evil Nazi ruler — and rather, because of *who* they are — kind and generous and so on.

Throughout the course of 2013, my column touched upon several notables that at first glance I'm sure many would jump at the opportunity to have dinner with if for no other reason than sheer curiosity of their very being.

There was the illustrious Edward Snowden, who's still out there making headlines [he reportedly told Brazil recently he'd help probe NSA spying if he was granted asylum there], Suessian Sen. Ted Cruz and his fiffer-feffer-fef filibuster fiasco, and our President and Commander-in-Chief, Barack Obama and his, well, not-so-smooth rollout of Obamacare.

Our own Gov. Tom Corbett was mentioned several times throughout the year on the issues of liquor privatization (still hasn't happened), sequestration, and his quest for what seems to be the highly unattainable second term. Jimmy Hoffa also made my radar when, for the third time in the last decade, FBI agents came up literally empty handed in the search for his remains, all the while utilizing federal dollars for his search; and there was Martin Luther King, Jr., and the 50th anniversary of his iconic "I have a dream" speech — highlighting the movement (or stagnancy) of our political system today.

But as I looked back at last year's columns and topics — whether you, Reader readers, loved, hated, agreed, or disagreed with them — there's truly one person in all 25 columns that I can honestly say, would make my personal cut: Jorge Mario Bergoglio, better known now as Pope Francis.

From his first moments as pontiff, he let it be known to the world, he was cut from different [papal] cloth. He chose the name Francis to honor St. Francis of Assisi's humble life and ministry to the poor. Since that moment he has been true to his name.

He lives simply — in a guesthouse rather than the palace, and he carries his own bags. He sneaks out at night in plainclothes to help the homeless. He has begun to set a new tone for Catholicism — although he hasn't officially changed any doctrine. He's directed bishops to shift their focus from issues such as abortion, contraception, and gay marriage to advocating

for and helping the poor. He has been photographed washing the feet of prisoners, something Jesus (but no previous Pope) had done. He has been in his post in less than a year and yet he has inspired even some of the most disgruntled Christians and impassioned atheists I know.

We live in a culture that has largely accepted greed and bad behavior as the norm — as showcased through our love of reality TV (I'm looking at you Kardashians and Honey Boo Boo Child).

We live in a culture that has largely accepted greed and bad behavior as the norm — as showcased through our love of reality TV (I'm looking at you Kardashians and Honey Boo Boo Child). We feast on the scandals du jour (and sadly often laugh at others' misfortunes).

But these individuals clearly don't challenge us to be our best selves, to show compassion to others. Pope Francis does. No matter your beliefs or creed, we can all see something inside of him that we wish we could be.

At least I know I do. He is simple and kind —

possessing the innocence and tenderness of a child, alongside the knowledge and wisdom of someone who's seen and experienced a lot. His low-key nature is unlike most in such a position of power. Through this, he is serving as an example of that which we should all be striving to achieve: just being innately good.

While in his brief time in the spotlight he has already greatly affected the world, but I suspect that if the spotlight wasn't on him, he'd still be doing the same things. Unlike most, the spotlight isn't changing him; instead, it's changing us; and that's what matters. Hopefully, that will be something we all learn from in the coming year.

So, there is one of my five. I'd like to tell you

the rest, but we'll have to save that for another time.

I wish you all a very happy, healthy, and wonderful new year. I will see you all in 2014.

Love? Hate? Agree? Disagree? I want to hear from you. Email me at rStyn@ErieReader.com and follow me on Twitter @rStyn. To follow this story or comment, scan the QR code or visit <http://erirad.com/ke600>



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Outside Voices:

By: Matthew Flowers

What Changes Do You Want to See in Erie in 2014?

Erie can be beautiful at times, whether the winter has transformed the city into a sweeping snow globe or the summer has bathed our humid streets in warmth, there is something to take away from it all. We have sunsets that make you pine for just one more glimpse of stunning color, we have a state park with sandy shores and lush forests that breathe life into our city each summer, and a music scene strong enough to keep us listening close every night

of the week. And we have bars, more than a dozen public beaches, concert venues, stadiums, museums, and a strong art scene, and every other element a thriving city needs.

Yet somehow, Erie doesn't always appear to be flourishing. Some aspects of our past year were devastating, notably GE Transportation's layoffs, Millcreek Township School District's finances falling into a funk, countless instances of gun violence, and Mayor Joe Sinnott's pride in announcing that Bret Michaels would be playing CelebrateErie this summer.

All this isn't to say our city is falling apart; it's only to point out some examples of what our home could benefit from, either changing or reformulating. Consider it a New Year's resolution for our stomping grounds, the place where we live our lives and our families reside. There is nothing wrong with talking out the city's flaws, brainstorming for the coming year, taking in a new perspective, or charting a new direction; because if we don't do a little weeding, how can our city fully flourish?

I hear people planting the seed all the time: "You know what 'they' should do here?" or "you know what this city needs?" But just like a garden planted in shade that will never bloom, a lot of these ideas go unheard, never seeing the light of day.

So in this issue, we're looking outside to fix what's within by cranking up the volume on your solutions and allowing those Outside Voices to ring in the New Year.



Dennis Michalski: [I want] a new Mayor, but 2014 isn't an election year. I'd like to see our Mayor be a little more focused on what is bothering the city right now instead of being laid back; he needs to take a more active role, a leading role. He always seems to be laying back, and when something comes up, he kind of comes on later. He should be at the forefront of some of the activities and some of the changes that are going on in the city.



Ted Wisinski: Culturally speaking, in the coming year in Erie, I'd really like to see a lot of the efforts go towards independent, nonprofit organizations coming together, getting a lot more community involvement out of everybody, and consolidating the general efforts. I know a lot of people do a lot for fundraising around town, and that's a highlight of - specifically - the downtown scene. I've seen a lot of that during the holiday time and I'd like to see more of that.



Nimarjit Singh: I see there is a lot of good culture here; there are a lot of good breweries here, and wineries, and I think Erie should capitalize on that. Erie is one of those towns where you can be drinking in public [on the streets and sidewalks]. That can get a lot of tourists into the area, which would be good economically for Erie... You got a great town, but it would be good having people come in from outside the area to try out the good beer and good wine.

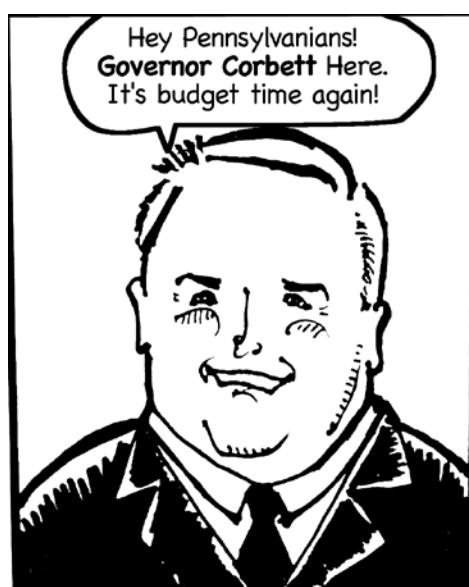


Hannah Ross: I've lived here my entire life, and unfortunately a lot of the times I've gone out to eat, it's been at a chain restaurant. But as I've gotten older I've expanded and gone to more local places, and I always have a more enjoyable experience there. Big businesses focus more on profit, whereas local businesses foster a sense of community and focus on the person. Therefore, in 2014, I want Erie to focus more on local businesses than big businesses.

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JUST TOYIN' WITCHA By: B. Toy





Contributed Photo

Brad Ford's *Of Rag-dolls and Rocket-ships* is currently on display at Urraro Gallery.

Big Art from a Big Guy

By: Pen Ealain

Go out to an art happening in Erie – a play, a concert, a gallery opening – and you will see him. He’s big – as in NFL lineman big. So big he has his own satellites. Two little girls constantly orbiting him, his daughters and their boundless energy bring silliness and a unique youthful spark to events that in any other city are usually reserved for adults. Since the girls have been coming to art openings and theater events, other showgoers with little ones often feel free now to bring their kids to snooty wine and cheese receptions. It’s wacky, winsome even, to have four or five giggling moppets zipping around your legs while you are involved in a pretentious discussion about James Joyce with a college professor and listening to a jazz trio.

When you see Brad Ford’s paintings you understand just how impish he is. His demeanor is usually pretty serious, but the paintings currently hanging on the walls of the Urraro Gallery could have only been done by the owner of a playful and goofy soul, and it’s not surprising to find out that Brad once self-published a cartoon titled *Scatterbrained Rabbit in La-La Land*.

Everywhere you look around the gallery, the colors are bold and bright. There are paintings of robots with patchwork hearts, black tentacles spinning and oozing around in a sea of purple, and dolls with button eyes – all abiding underneath a flaming Styrofoam eye of Mordor that hangs up amongst the support beams in the ceiling. And while the mobile was almost too high up for me to notice it, I’m betting Brad has bumped his head on it a few times.

The paintings I would hang on my wall would appeal to any lover of well-drafted comic book or tattoo drawing. They are the ones that use Brad’s animation and cartooning experience to inform the line work and the subject matter. There is a cartoony rocket ship that would be a huge hit in any child’s room. There is a tangle

of pinchers, metallic bodies, telescoping arms, and contorted faces called “Robot Orgy” that is anything but kinky; it’s just really fun... and kind of silly.

The only painting that offended my design sensibilities was one of the larger pieces on the wall (which is saying something since most of the work is at least three feet to a side). This painting, titled *Star Splattered Banner*, features a huge eagle silhouetted against a drizzled background of latex house paint. It looks like Jackson Pollock was held hostage by some Austrian noblemen and forced to paint for them. But there is, apparently, no accounting for taste, since someone has already purchased the work (presumably an expressionistic fan of Emperor Franz Josef).

These paintings have 21st century postmod-

ernism written all over them – specifically the Kitsch Movement. Kitsch is all about embracing everything that is possible in art. That means that a painting done in a cartoon style does not have to be an ironic statement “about cartoons,” or a rebellion against commercial culture – it can just be what it is. The boundaries between what is “high art” and “low art” are broken, and Kitsch painting can be whatever the artist wants it to be and whatever the viewer wants it to be.

And in this case, that means painting can be fun.

Brad obviously is painting simply for the joy of creating. Rarely taking his work too seriously, he used thick cotton duck drop cloths as canvas and lets anyone, including his little girls, who wandered into his studio slap some

oil paint onto his backgrounds. The results are truly spontaneous and gestural. They could only be successful if engineered by an artist with a trained eye and a practiced hand.

But Brad is used to working large. He created many sets for the Roadhouse Theater in its heyday and a couple of years ago ran the “Sling Paint” event at CelebrateErie where anyone could have a go at just slapping paint around for the fun of it. And an anything-goes, experimental, fun attitude towards art is what makes 21st century painting in America innovative.

Unlike the stuffy and serious fine artists that inhabited the second half of the twentieth century, Brad has given himself permission to make mistakes and look for breakthroughs as he works. He obviously has fun making art, and as a result, we get to have fun looking at it.

But as fun as this is, as big as Brad is, and as big of a show as *Of Rag-dolls and Rocket-ships* is, it won’t occupy a large amount of time. So if you’re a fan of gestural painting, tattoo design, cartoons and comics, or bright and radiant color, get to Urraro Gallery at 135 W. 14th St. before the exhibit comes down Jan. 4 to see art that is wacky and winsome – even when there aren’t two little girls running your legs as they orbit a big force in the Erie Art scene.

Urraro Gallery is open Tuesdays through Fridays from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Mondays and Saturdays from noon to 5 p.m.

Pen Ealain can be contacted PenEalain@ErieReader.com. To follow this story or comment, scan the QR code or visit <http://eridr.com/7b1zu>



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Contributed Photo

The two-year-long celebration that was the Perry 200 Commemoration began in 2012 and continued through 2013 with a parade, fireworks, and many more War of 1812-based events.

2013: The Year In Review

By: Jay Stevens

What can you say about 2013? It was one of those odd little in-between years jammed between big, splashy years. It was the year of bureaucratic messes – like Healthcare.gov – layoffs amidst a slowly recovering economy, mergers, renovations, and local elections, which no one seems to participate in anymore.

But even if there’s no new President or another Olympic Games or mass protests in the street, important, strange, and watershed events happened that’ll shape Erie for years to come. Here are our

favorites:

Perry 200. Last year was the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Lake Erie, so the Jefferson Educational Society got together dozens of organizations and people to underwrite a two-year-long commemoration for Oliver Hazard Perry’s thrilling victory over a British fleet. While the outcome of the war was dubious – we ended up with Detroit, and Canada with free health care – the celebration was anything but.

Choral groups, musicals, fishing competitions, history classes, a memorial service, Fourth of July fireworks, and, of course, a big honking parade. While we’re not sure that it was really “an occasion for the city to reinvent itself,” as Perry 200 chair William Garvey said in these pages (seems to us investments in infrastructure, education, and jobs would do a helluva lot more than parades to remake the city,) it sure was fun.

Destination Erie. Destination Erie is a plan. That’s right, a *plan*. But not just any ordinary plan, it’s a *multi-million dollar* plan funded by a federal grant and steered by the Erie Regional Chamber to map out a long-term growth strategy for the region.

What could possibly go wrong? Well, for starters, in October, Wallace, Roberts & Todd – the lead consultant for the project – was summarily dismissed for a lack of “passion,” according to then-steering-committee-member Barry Grossman. Not long after, Grossman himself quit the project.

All of this followed an August letter to the steering committee from Erie Mayor Joe Sinnott, who wrote that the plan process “do[es] not currently serve the community for which this project was designed to benefit.” Given that this shake-up feels like the mutant offspring of a good old-fashioned area power struggle

over the dollars and direction of the city’s future development, we can’t help but admire the mayor’s cryptic comment.

GE layoffs. The writing was on the wall. GE had built a union-free assembly plant in Texas, and GE Transportation last year abruptly moved its headquarters from Erie to Chicago.

In April, the company announced it was going to cut 950 jobs in Erie and move the work to Texas. After summer-long negotiations with the union representing plant workers, GE finally came up with a proposal the union couldn’t accept, and talks fell apart.

The first round of cuts came down in November just in time for the holiday season, one 30-year veteran of the plant handed himself at his workstation after receiving his pink slip, and GE saved itself \$10 an hour for every job moved to Texas.

Tall Ships Erie. “Erie was born in a historic and

singular summer,” I wrote back in September on the anniversary of the Battle of Lake Erie, “one in which our city built a fleet of wooden ships and sent it off into danger.”

To mark that event, Erie hosted a five-day tallship festival at the Maritime Museum and Bayfront Convention Center, and nine ships – highlighted by the steel-hulled, three-masted Sorlandet – paraded into the bay and docked to receive visitors. It was a raging success: the event raised nearly a half-million dollars for the Niagara League and the Flagship Niagara.

The worst thing you could say about the festival was that some of the lines to see the ships were staggeringly long, with waits of over an hour for a 15-minute tour of a ship – but even that was a mark of the festival’s success, as more than 80,000 came to the Erie’s Bayfront to attend, nearly a third more than expected.

The Millcreek School District. Millcreek’s year started with an \$8.8-million deficit in its school district budget and the mysterious resignation of Superintendent Michael Golde, and it only got worse. The district had already spent \$1.9 million more than it had, and was still struggling with the 2012 revelation that Golde had improperly moved \$5 million from a capital funds project to the general fund without informing the school board.

Then in July, the State Auditor General’s audit of the district found “serious management and

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In 2013, the Erie Philharmonic celebrated its 100th year.

fiscal problems,” and the report was passed on to the State Attorney General’s office for possible investigation. One of the revelations of that audit was that the district allowed Otters players to attend McDowell High School tuition-free in exchange for tickets and business perks. Meanwhile, new superintendent Bill Hall closed Ridgefield and Vernondale elementary schools and is planning on selling one of them to make up for the more than half-a-million-dollar shortfall in the district an October audit discovered.

In short, it’s a big tangled mess that keeps on giving. Bill Hall’s leadership and the election of two new school board members – Donna Reese and John Pitzer – offer some hope to the beleaguered township, but it says a lot that Erie residents who stuck it out through their own school budget crisis are now relieved they hadn’t fled to Millcreek.

Local elections. The year also brought us interesting county elections. The key word this year is “turnover.” It was the year of the challenger, as two county council seats and the County Executive’s Office changed hands in contested primary elections.

The big race was, of course, for county executive as former U.S. House Representative Kathy Dahlkemper ousted incumbent Barry Grossman in the May primary. Many of us wondered why Dahlkemper needed to challenge her fellow Democrat Grossman when, by most accounts, he had been doing a fine job, but we admit that having two good candidates on the ballot is far too rare.

In the county council, Andre Horton became that body’s first African-American representative after defeating 20-year incumbent Joe Giles in the primary, but his biggest challenge was Edinboro University of Pennsylvania art professor Lisa Austin, who finished a paltry 10 votes behind Horton in May, and came in a close third

as a write-in candidate in the General Election.

But perhaps our favorite county council result was the victory of 31-year-old Montana-born army vet Jay Breneman, who offers something Erie government sees too infrequently: youth, ambition, and ability.

In any case, Erie has apparently tired of seeing politicians turn elected offices into lifetime appointments: not only did several incumbents get kicked to the curb, but county voters overwhelmingly approved of term limits for county council and county executive, 85 to 15 percent. That result also identified the worst election prediction in the books; Michael Federici, Mercyhurst Professor of Political Science, in an October *Erie Times-News* report predicted term limits would fail. “There’s a general prejudice against term limits,” explained the professor. Oops.

Honorable mentions. We say “good riddance” to the McBride Viaduct, praise the Tulio Arena renovations blossoming into the Erie Insurance Arena, congratulate the Erie Philharmonic on its 100th anniversary, watch with increasing disquiet the Bayfront hotel wars, and cackle with pleasure as Gov. Tom Corbett’s approval ratings flush down the toilet.

But perhaps best of all, we eagerly count the hours until we can go down to Lavery’s and quaff our next Liopard Oir– the brewery’s Great American Beerfest gold-medal saison. Lavery’s opened its pub and won the medal in 2013, and we all can thank Erie’s fortune for both.

Jay Stevens can be contacted at Jay@ErieReader.com, and you can follow him on Twitter @Snevets_Yaj. To follow this story or comment, scan the QR code or visit <http://eridr.com/inm71>



TECH WATCH

Winners and Losers of 2013

By: Dakota Hoffman, Epic WebStudios

Our definition of a technological breakthrough is fairly simple: an advancement that gives people powerful new ways to use technology. And 2013 had plenty of breakthroughs, from new apps to improved operating systems to literal groundbreaking technology.

But while new technologies emerge and current trends continue to keep pace, other developments throughout the year can fail to impress – and that’s something even tech monoliths aren’t exempt from, since anyone in the tech world knows that progress is more often measured in seconds and minutes rather than months and years. Taking a year off, or even having a slightly slower, austere year, can, simply put, render a company obsolete, or at the very least, threaten its likelihood of survival in the coming year.

With that said, let’s take a look at some of 2013’s technology winners and losers:

Winners

Vine – Almost out of nowhere, micro-video platform Vine swept onto the social scene, allowing users to film six-second clips of, well, absolutely anything – and this was novel and niche. Parent platform Twitter re-launched Vine

gin hosting video services on its platform as well. Many thought the photography giant would use its considerable fan clout to make Vine a thing of the past, but when the dust settled, however, Vine still stood strong and Instagram videos now really just annoy users – perhaps because Instagram videos far exceed the six-seconds Vine allots its users. Regardless – on survival alone, Vine earns kudos.

Windows – Making a comeback in a big way from last year’s list is 2012 Tech Watch Loser Microsoft Windows. In 2012, the brand suffered from deflating sales and lack of growth when it came to its handheld devices. However, Microsoft execs didn’t give up, instead buckling down and revamping the company’s advertising and production of new devices. At the end of 2013, more phones, tablets, and an updated computer OS grace the Windows lineup, saying loud and clear that Windows is *not* down, nor is it out.

Velocity Network & KINBER – Making summer headlines across western Pennsylvania, the KINBER initiative continued to expand, adding Erie to its list of fiber-optic-connected cities, and local Erie company Velocity Network partnered with KINBER to bring the technology to Erie. The KINBER network could streamline



Robby Mueller

Because of its lack of innovative products and design, Apple finds itself on this year's tech "losers" list.

experience crippling performance issues; meanwhile, their biggest innovation, Google Glass, has all but disappeared from the news. Even while Glass was making headlines, it was often about privacy and safety concerns. In my opinion, it seems the company failed to measure up to its own reputation in 2013.

Apple – Another big company that failed to impress me this year. While both Apple and Google did show positive annual stock returns, I look to both companies each year for *innovation* and consistent wow-factor. Delivering a gold or green iPhone simply doesn't do it for me. Mac OS and iOS7 did receive some hefty improvements, but Apple's shining accomplishments in 2013 were simply new colors and smaller sizes for preexisting products. Apple is slipping into a regular release pattern that will stagnate if something doesn't give soon. It's time to shake it up.

2014 Forecast

If 2013 taught us anything, it's that the tech industry is getting even more cutthroat. This year saw more bickering between Samsung and Apple than ever before, and it will only get worse

(go ahead and Google how Samsung paid Apple's court settlement in dumptrucks of pennies).

What I would really like to see happen is Microsoft achieving even greater success with its line of Windows phones. The devices are out of the major spotlights right now, allowing the company to progress by leaps and bounds when it comes to branding and product quality.

Furthermore, there will be a greater push for remote control. Society has proven repeatedly it prioritizes convenience, and next year, I bet we'll see even more devices and common processes controlled by smartwatches or apps on tablets and smartphones.

Dakota Hoffman can be contacted at Epic@ErieReader.com, and you can follow him on Twitter @DakotaScottErie. To follow this story or comment, scan the QR code or go to <http://erirdr.com/c85ps>



If 2013 taught us anything, it's that the tech industry is getting even more cutthroat.

in January and saw 403-percent growth in daily users over the first three quarters of the year for their troubles.

The app, which is a platform to cram as much creativity or humor into a short time as possible, provides viewers a window into what others were doing right then – and that quickly became the next big thing in 2013. Things did start to look rocky for Vine, though, when their largest competitor, Instagram, announced it would be-

efficiency and productivity for public media organizations, hospitals, and more once it's seen to fruition, putting Erie on the map for health, education, and media industries.

Losers

Google – It feels strange to put Google on the loser list, but looking back, I was kind of disappointed in the company this year. Their first flagship phone, the Nexus 4, continues to ex-



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If We Were You...

WEDNESDAY 12.25

It's Christmas!

It's Christmas, so that means just about everything is closed for business today. But if you're not Christian, or just don't celebrate Christmas, don't fret — you can always head to the movies. Or the crooked i. I hear they are having some sort of gift exchange. Whatever you do, Happy Holidays!

THURSDAY 12.26

Victorian Holidays at the Watson-Curtze Mansion

An event to delight all age groups! For their 32nd consecutive year, the Erie County Historical Society is pleased to present Victorian Holidays: A multifaceted celebration of the holiday season featuring the historic Watson-Curtze Mansion's 12 rooms, all beautifully decorated. Victorian teas, musical entertainment, and more! Cost is: \$5, seniors \$4, kids under 12, \$3.

When: 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Where: Watson Curtze Mansion, 356 W. Sixth St.

Contact: 454.1813

FRIDAY 12.27

Merry Gimp-Mas

Forget the season of giving, it's time for the season of thrashing. Head down to Basement Transmissions to celebrate Merry Gimp-Mas with a lineup of seven different hard-rocking bands, including splendid Americans Harvey Pekar from Cleveland and Erie's own Box of Lamb.

When: 5:30 to 11:30 p.m.

Where: 1501 State St.

Contact: basementtrans@gmail.com

Oz the Great & Powerful at TREC

Starring James Franco, Michelle Williams, Rachel Weisz, and Mila Kunis, *Oz the Great and Powerful* tells the story of Oscar (James Franco), a small-time circus magician, who is swept away from Kansas while in a hot air balloon. He then finds himself in the lush and fantastic Land of Oz where he is depended upon to save Oz from the wicked witches who threaten the land and its inhabitants. Tickets just \$5.

When: 7 p.m.

Where: 301 Peninsula Drive

Contact: 838.4123

Bernie Worrell Orchestra w/ Phil-Da-Bass

It's not every day that a Rock and Roll Hall of Famer comes to The Flagship City, so you better take advantage when Bernie Worrell stops by the crooked i this fine Friday. The Parliament-Funkadelic keyboardist is bringing his orchestra to the State Street establishment for a little post-Christmas treat, giving our city a chance to see the funk icon in action.

When: 10 p.m. to 2 a.m.

Where: 1013 State St.

Contact: facebook.com/thecrookedierie

SATURDAY 12.28

Looney Tunes Cartoons at TREC

Let the Tom Ridge Environmental Center's Big Green Screen take you back to your childhood with classic Warner Bros. Looney Tunes Cartoons, rated this year as TV Guide's third Greatest Cartoon of All Time. Sit back and watch the antics of Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck, Porky Pig, and Wile E. Coyote as they evoke memories of simpler times. Tickets just \$5.

When: 3 p.m. or 7 p.m.

Where: 301 Peninsula Drive

Contact: 838.4123

Lionize w/ With Signs Following

Given that Lionize was the first band to play both Bonnaroo Music Festival and Vans Warped Tour in the same year, there's a reason you should, well, lionize the Washington, D.C. quartet. Lionize will bring their signature dark reggae-infused rock to the crooked i with Erie quintet With Signs Following, and all signs point to it being a great show.

When: 10 p.m. to 2 a.m.

Where: 1013 State St.

Contact: facebook.com/thecrookedierie

SUNDAY 12.29

Disney's Mary Poppins

It's a "roof-raising, toe-tapping, high-flying extravaganza." Join the cast and crew of the Erie Playhouse for an irresistible story and unforgettable songs from one of the most popular Disney films ever. It's sure to be a "Supercalifragilistic-expialidocious" time for new and old theatre goers alike!

When: 2 p.m.

Where: Erie Playhouse, 13 W. 10th St.

Contact: 454.2852

MONDAY 12.30

Reno Bighorns at Erie BayHawks

Christmas is finally over, and New Years Eve is looming. Assuming you've already purchased your tickets to tomorrow's can't miss NYE extravaganza at the Erie Art Museum, it's time to relax and recharge. We propose a trip downtown with the kids to the beautiful Erie Insurance Arena for a little hoops action. We know the BayHawks are currently the cellar-dwellers of the D-League, which is all the more reason to give them some support. Tipoff is at 7 p.m.

When: 7 p.m.

Where: Erie Insurance Arena

Contact: nba.com/dleague/erie

TUESDAY 12.31

New Year's Erie 2014 at the Erie Art Museum

There'll be music: Cat's A Bear, Falling Hollywood, and NatasK. There'll be food: hors

d'oeuvres from Make It Fabulous Catering. There'll be drinks: Goose Island beer and more and a champagne toast at midnight. There'll be a VIP lounge in the Customs House. But most of all, there'll be fun and merriment. So join us as we say goodbye to 2013 and hello to 2014.

When: 7:30 p.m.

Where: 20 E. Fifth St.

Contact: NewYearsErie.com

WEDNESDAY 1.01

New Year's Resolution Walk Series at TREC

Resolutions for the New Year are always made with good intentions, but how many of us really follow through? Stick to your 2014 resolution by joining a park naturalist in the TREC Walk Series every Wednesday until March 26 for a three mile hike through Presque Isle, with a different route each week. There's no fee or registration required, so throw on your boots and get outdoors. If you're not too hung over, that is.

When: 6:30 to 8 p.m.

Where: 301 Peninsula Drive

Contact: 833.7424

THURSDAY 1.02

Erie Art Museum presents Lisa Austin & Lori Korsmo Exhibit

If you haven't seen it yet, now's your chance. These concurrent, related exhibitions feature a large selection Korsmo's unique drawings and petite relief sculptures, complemented by Austin's work that combines aspects of her early site-specific installations and her more recent social sculpture work.

When: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Where: Erie Art Museum, 20 E. Fifth St.

Contact: 459.5477

Open Mic Night

Don't stay in the corner, head out in the spotlight and lose your musical inhibitions. It's open mic night at the Brewery at Union Station, so fulfill your New Year's resolution to finally get up on stage and wield your instrument of choice in front of a patient and loving crowd. Don't play anything? Then head down and watch as newbies join some vets for the first open mic of the year.

When: 7 p.m.

Where: 123 W. 14 St.

Contact: 454.2200

FRIDAY 1.03

Erie Otters vs. Owen Sound Attack

After dominating the first half of the regular season, Connor McDavid and the rest of the Erie Otters teammates kick off 2014 at Erie Insurance Arena against Midwest Division foe Owen Sound in the first of back-to-back games. Cheer on the Otters as they continue

attempt to disarm the Attack and battle their way to the playoffs.

When: 7 p.m.

Where: 809 French St.

Contact: ottershockey.com

SATURDAY 1.04

365 Days: A Year in Happy Valley

After the media that had invaded State College packed up and left in the summer of 2012, one film crew stayed and continued to chronicle the impact of life in Happy Valley. The resulting documentary explores issues of conformity as part of human nature, the quest for justice, the role of the media in shaping public perception, and the collateral damage of a rush to judgment. This groundbreaking film features rare interviews with key figures in the drama. This is currently the only showing scheduled in the Erie area. Cost: \$12 per person.

When: 7 to 9 p.m.

Where: TREC, 301 Peninsula Drive

Contact: 833.7424

SUNDAY 1.05

Reused, Reclaimed & Repurposed

It's the last day to see how several local artists reclaimed and repurposed found objects to create new works. Artists include: John Bavaro, Ron Bayuzick, Amara Geffen, Brian Pardini, Suzanne Proulx, Deborah Sementelli, Fran Schanz, and Jessie & Ricardo.

When: 2 to 5 p.m.

Where: Cummings Gallery, Mercyhurst

University, 501 E. 38th St.

Contact: 824.2092

Royal/Revise w/ guests

No need to relax this Sunday, because today is a day to be hardcore. Clarion metalcore quartet Royal/Revise is headlining a septet of bands ready to close out the weekend on a thunderous note, giving you plenty of reason to kick off those comfy slippers and travel downtown for some glorious metal.

When: 5:30 to 10:30 p.m.

Where: 1501 State St.

Contact: basementtrans@gmail.com

TUESDAY 1.07

Dinosaur Exhibit

Dinosaurs are cool — no bones about it. Which is why, all poorly crafted puns aside, you should check out this exhibit at the Tom Ridge Environmental Center. Thanks to Mercyhurst University's Scott McKenzie, the "World of Dinosaur" exhibit is entertaining, engaging, and educational. And like the dinosaurs, this exhibit won't last forever, so head to TREC now before it's gone.

When: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Where: 301 Peninsula Drive

Contact: 833.7424



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Fri. Dec. 27 **I-90s**

Sat. Dec. 28 **Black Widow**

Tue. Dec. 31 **New Year's Eve with Jake's Blues and Six Years After**

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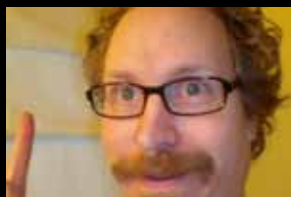
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To-do List

By: Alex Bieler



Contributed Photo

New Year's Eve 2014 at the Erie Art Museum

Around this time last year, I wrote that Erie holds a special place in the hearts of us folks at the Erie Reader, so we wanted to throw a special New Year's Eve party to celebrate not only the end of the year, but also our loyal fans. Well, the party was an absolute blast, and we still get the same warm fuzzies about The Flagship City that we did 525,600 minutes ago (or 525,949 minutes for the non-Rent fans out there), so we're bringing the party back to downtown Erie.

That's right, this Dec. 31, the Erie Reader cordially invites you to New Year's Eve 2014 at the Erie Art Museum.

Revellers ring in the New Year at last year's New Year's Eve party at the Erie Art Museum.

of excitement, and I'm just glad to be a part of it, performing for everyone there."

Like some Erieites, Brad was unable to attend last year – although we'll give him a pass, as he was in the Czech Republic in Prague proposing to his wife. But this year, he'll be there. And so should you, given this great lineup.

"I want to be able to entertain and give a little something to all sides of the equation. You may not know every track I'm going to put down, but it's going to be funky, it's going to have a good beat," NatasK says excitedly over the phone. "People go out on New Year's Eve with more expectations. They're looking for more of a show

"People go out on New Year's Eve with more expectations. They're looking for more of a show and they're looking for something worthwhile, where they'll remember it for the rest of the year."

It's the least we could do for this wonderful city and our loyal supporters. Of course, while last year's festivities were awfully fun, we at the Reader won't just solely recreate the same night and stamp 2014 on it. Oh no, we plan on making the latest edition of NYE at EAM even bigger and better, as jazz legends Cat's A Bear kick things off when the music starts at 8 p.m., local alt-rockers Falling Hollywood will take the stage after to keep the party rolling, and DJ extraordinaire NatasK will hit the turntables and mic at 11 and keep the dance floor shaking through the New Year, complete with a memorable midnight countdown.

"Everyone always has big ideas about what New Year's is going to be," Falling Hollywood drummer Brad Triana says. "There's always a lot

and they're looking for something worthwhile, where they'll remember it for the rest of the year."

We at the Erie Reader like to think that having Falling Hollywood, NatasK, and Cat's A Bear all performing in a venue as cool as the Erie Art Museum would be fairly memorable. Still, NYE at EAM has even more treats in store for guests. A purchase of a single ticket ensures that the buyer will receive two beer tickets, delicious hors d'oeuvres from Make It Fabulous Catering, party favors, and complimentary champagne for the traditional midnight toast. Upgrade to a VIP ticket and you'll have access to the Customs House VIP Lounge, which features an open bar and additional delightful dishes.

This past year could have meant different



Ben Frazier knows how to rock a 'stache. And a birthday.

to be located in the mall, is giving Erie, however, as the proceeds of every Birthday Bash have gone to a different charity, a tradition that started four years ago after a friend and coworker of his tragically died along with her girlfriend in a house fire, leaving their children in need of help. Soon after, Ben decided to use his birthday to give to others.

"I guess it was to offset the ridiculousness of me throwing a birthday party for myself, so I thought that I should do something for these kids," Frazier, who used to book shows at the old Continental Ballroom, said of the decision to turn his then 40th birthday into a fundraiser.

This year, funds raised at the event will be donated to

the Muscular Dystrophy Association's summer camp at Camp Kon-O-Kwee Spencer in honor of Jack Ambruster, who passed away earlier this year at the age of 16. Ambruster served as an MDA junior goodwill ambassador, spreading cheer and helping others afflicted with muscular dystrophy not only in our region, but all of Pennsylvania. Now it's Frazier and the music scene's turn to give back.

"All of the bands are really generous in donating their time," Frazier said. "Everybody's really cool about playing. There are no egos involved; they all know it's for charity and to have a good time."

In the season of giving, you can do your part and, potentially, eat some of Frazier's cake too. For \$5 at the door, you too can celebrate both Frazier and Ambruster, two very special members of the Erie scene.

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 visit <http://erivdr.com/d31hu>



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things to different people, but after Dec. 31, it'll be all over – and a time to start anew. NYE at EAM kicks off when the museum doors open at 7:30 p.m., with the music starting at 8 p.m. It's all on one big night just for you, and we're looking forward to celebrating the start of another 365 days in The Flagship City.

Ben Frazier's 4th Annual Birthday Bash

Some people see birthdays as an exercise in getting, whether it be material goods or adoration. Ben Frazier, however, likes to take his special day and use it as a chance to give back to the Erie scene.

For the fourth year in a row, Frazier will celebrate his birthday at the crooked i during the 4th Annual Birthday Bash, a fun-filled affair that features five bands of his choosing, with local rockers The Couchriders, Smoke & Mirrors, Mala Sangre, With Signs Following, and rapper C. Brown filling up a talented lineup for the Sunday, Dec. 29 show.

The music isn't the only thing that Frazier, known by some as Record Den Ben for his time spent working at the old record store that used

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Albums of the Year



2013 Erie Reader Editor's Picks

Ben Speggen: Arctic Monkeys — *AM*



Good albums feature at least a couple of songs you can play on repeat without tiring of them along with a handful of other tunes that you won't skip over but may lose track of later, once the record sits on a shelf and collects some dust. Great albums, on the other hand, capture a feeling — each composition working together as a collective unit to express a particular mood and leave you with the feeling that you just experienced something special. The Arctic Monkey's fifth effort is one of those albums, and that feeling is one of heartache peppered with desert-noir rock that was left on the backburner to stew. Steamy slow burners, like "Do I Wanna Know?" pack just as much heat as fuzz-laden guitar boilers like "R U Mine?" Best of all, the Monkeys are evolving and *AM* captures that growth without losing that base of raw English-pub rock that got them noticed in the first place.

Brian Graham: The National — *Trouble Will Find Me*



In May of this year, two weeks before the release of *Trouble Will Find Me*, my soon-to-be fiancée and current wife surprised me with tickets to see The National perform at MOMA PS1 in Brooklyn. And by perform, I mean playing their brooding *High Violet* churning "Sorrow" in a geodesic dome for six hours straight. It was more performance art than concert, and we watched them play flawlessly for an hour before we got restless and left. But instead of getting restless, the band went into a meditative state and played with focused energy and confidence for six hours with no breaks. Less than a month later The National was playing to over 15,000 adoring fans at Brooklyn's Barclay Center in support of *Trouble Will Find Me*.

Trouble Will Find Me is a lush, beautiful album, with the Dessner brothers weaving delicate guitar melodies around the Devendorf brothers' driving rhythms and Berninger's thoughtful, melancholy, voice. There's always a touch of sadness in his lyrics, but the more you listen, the more you pick up on subtleties, puns, and dry humor. In the song "Demons," he admits that he is "secretly in love with everyone he grew up with;" in "Pink Rabbits" he claims to be the "television version of a person with a broken heart" and in "I Should Live in Salt" he is requesting to be mummified — as far as I can tell.

If you're interested and have a free afternoon and early evening, you can watch the entire six hour performance of "Sorrow" on YouTube, but I recommend checking out the 55 minutes of aural bliss that is *Trouble Will Find Me*. Berninger has stepped up as a voice for post 9/11 New York, and he has one of the best bands in the world backing him. There's no stopping The National at this point.

Adam Welsh : Arcade Fire — *Reflektor*



For me, no album in 2013 delivered more than this one. Indie darlings turned festival-headlining art rock gods Arcade Fire reach new heights with their fourth and, in my opinion, best album. That's saying something, considering my undying love for this band and their first three incredible offerings. But with the addition of new producer and LCD Soundsystem mastermind James Murphy, Arcade Fire didn't simply hit a new high with *Reflektor*, they actually seem to have reached a new starting point from which to launch themselves into the next chapter of their lives and their music. The truth is, they raised their bar so high with 2010's Grammy winning *The Suburbs*, it would've been easy for them to rest on their laurels and mail something in this time around. The opposite happened. They brought in Murphy and in secret crafted one of the most ambitious, epic albums of the year. The beautiful evolution of Arcade Fire continues on *Reflektor*, don't miss out.

Rebecca Styn: Daft Punk — *Random Access Memories*



This past summer we were up all night to get lucky — enough so that by fall, all of us were ready to crash and burn (and maybe give that song a rest). But if you haven't heard the rest of the album, you're missing out. While one may never think to describe digital as vast and varied (as much is often repetitive), many of the songs rollercoaster through tempo — and include a bygone-era influence of '70s blues-based rock and soul. "Lose Yourself to Dance" takes you on a virtual soul train as it crashes into today's digital music scene. And Julian Casablancas came on "Instant Crush" makes it clear that Daft Punk is probably better at writing Strokes songs than, well, The Strokes currently are. While some of the songs are a little long, most of them offer something unique to the listener — a message, a catchy tune, or even a memory to decades past.

Top Local Albums Of 2013

It's one thing to get up on a stage, whip out an instrument, and perform for a crowd of strangers and friends alike. But it's something else entirely to actually make a good album. There's songwriting, setting a track list, producing, mixing, editing — all before the record hits shelves. Then there's that: getting it out there and getting it into the hands of listeners who can play, pause, and repeat every note to critique the sound second by second.

Of the local albums we reviewed in 2013, there are three that stand out for their music, their production, their listenability, and their overall attention to detail. Put simply: These albums rock, both when played live on stage and when blasted through your car's factory stereo system.

Eric Brewer and Friends - *Seeing Sideways*



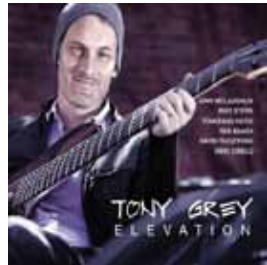
“Filled with 60 minutes of Phish-y, Dave Matthews-y tracks that bounce and buckle and slink and slide, *Seeing Sideways* strikes a solid balance between the eponymous frontman and the rest of the band.” — Cory Vaillancourt

Falling Hollywood - *Heavy Weather*



“The vocals – from even-tighter harmonies of guitarists Matt Flowers and Nick Taylor to stronger distinctions between the two when separated – draw listeners in to darker, more mature lyrics (“Blood Against The Wall” and “Breaking Bread”), while the fuller soundscape populated with thicker guitar work, Bill Frackowiak’s delightfully busy bass lines (“Mexican Wine”), and the churning engine of Brad Triana’s drumming (“Vicious Fishes”) result in a more refined Avett-Brothers-meet-Frank-Turner-and-drink-with-the-Black-Keys-and-Arctic-Monkeys rawk.” — Ben Spегgen

Tony Grey - *Elevation*



“Intense and intentional yet light and lighthearted, the album closes with a unique cover of the cool Disney classic and Miles Davis favorite ‘Some Day My Prince Will Come.’ For a really mellow, thoughtful high, give *Elevation* a spin.” - Cory Vaillancourt

Want us to review your band's album? Email us at contact@ErieReader.com, or drop a copy in the mail addressed to Erie Reader, 32 W. Eighth St., Suite 302, Erie, Pa. 16501. To follow this story or comment, click on the QR code, or go to <http://eridr.com/9su6f>



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One of the most talked about events in music this year involved Billy Ray Cyrus' kid grinding on Alan Thicke's kid.

The Year in Music

By: Alex Bieler

After 11 months of waiting, it's finally the most wonderful time of the year for some music fans: list season. That's right, it's time for music fans to scan official rankings from Pitchfork, Stereogum, and even the Erie Reader to see what made various lists and, of course, what didn't. There's good reason why people love lists; a quality collection of ranked bands can incur both bouts of joy and wrath, reaffirming personal tastes in some cases while giving readers reason to complain in others. Still, whether a collection of 50 or so musical acts leaves you shaking your head or clicking away, it's a sign that yet again, we've witnessed another year fly by, 365 days of new music to experience. From My Bloody Valentine releasing their first album in 22 years after some fans thought it would never come to Beyonce pulling a Radiohead and dropping an album without anyone knowing about it, 2013 was a year heavily influenced by the hordes on the Internet.

Baauer's "Harlem Shake" managed to spend five weeks on the Billboard Hot 100 chart thanks to a YouTube meme that lasted much longer than it should have. The streaming video site helped usher along another hit, in which a pair of Norwegian brothers never really explained exactly what the fox does says, or why we should care. And as hard as these sports arena-destined musical fads tried, however, the year belonged to the queen of the Internet crowd: Miley Cyrus. The former child star just couldn't be stopped

in 2013, blasting away expectations like, well, a wrecking ball, performing with terrifying teddy bears and a lip-synching animated kitten that cried diamonds, which looked like something out of rich tween's fever dream. Then, of course, there was the great Robin Thicke twerking incident. It was a moment that, like many other huge pop cultural moments this year, dominated online headlines. Whether you loved, loathed, or were just flat out confused by the Cyrus show, you always

heard about it if you ever dared to check Facebook, Twitter, or any other social platforms. Thousands had to chime in on the hot mess, feeding into exactly what the Cyrus camp craved: attention. Like Lady Gaga, Cyrus is another pop starlet willing to do seemingly outrageous things to get people to talk about her. Hell, even Australia's premier badass/lech Nick Cave name checked Hannah Montana in the killer Bad Seeds song "Higgs Boson Blues."

Still, 2013 had some highlights amid the high-profile distractions. The ever-divisive Kanye West put out *Yeezus*, a fixture among the top

2013 had some highlights amid the high-profile distractions.

of most publication's year-end lists, although the self-described "god" wasn't the only rapper to wow listeners, as Danny Brown, Run The Jewels, and Chance the Rapper highlighted an excellent class of underground hip-hop albums. There was an interesting discussion between bands and their fans about what was appropriate when it came to taking photos and videos during shows, whether the practice of having a glowing rectangle out for much of a show is too distracting or if paying customers should be allowed to document performances as much as they want.

Also, you might have heard that Arcade Fire recently released an album.

All in all, 2013 was another year full of exciting new bands (Haim), consistently solid favorites (Yo La Tengo), and some disappointments (Yuck). This current 12-month span may not have had as many highlight albums as 2012 had (Frank Ocean, Kendrick Lamar, and alt-J), but there were some excellent offerings nonetheless, such as the aforementioned Nick Cave and the Bad Seed's *Push the Sky Away*, which showed a sweeter and slower side to the veteran's at times animalistic oeuvre.

Other highlights included the Frank Turner's personal new album *Tape Deck Heart* and Laura Marling's gorgeous *Once I Was an Eagle*, a modern album that would be quite at home in the '60s.

Yet none of these would end up on my short list, no matter how good they are. That's part of why people love lists: they force you to pick and choose everything before presenting in easily digestible doses.

That being said, here are my top albums of 2013. Enjoy.

Bieler's Top Albums of 2013

Bill Callahan

Dream River

Drag City

After years of singing songs of yearning and loneliness, Bill Callahan shows a more content side of himself on *Dream River*. Of course, it wouldn't be a Callahan record without his trademark solitude, as starts the album with the line "drinking while the sleeping strangers unknowingly keep me company in the hotel bar" on "The Sing." Still, Callahan shows his serene side on the



peaceful "Small Plane," four beautiful minutes of Callahan contemplating how lucky he is to have a trusting partner while he's piloting his aircraft, intoning "sometimes you sleep while I take us home/ That's when I know we really have a home" in his trademark baritone. It's a simple moment, but one that sticks with you for a while. As usual, Callahan's words are the stars of this production, each line resonating with listeners as his deep, steady vocals add heft to every syllable the veteran enunciates, making for a wonderful trip down *Dream River*.

Mikal Cronin

MCII

Merge

Before 2013, Mikal Cronin was mostly known for his work with fellow garage-rocker Ty Segall, but on *MCII*, the 28-year old has stepped into the spotlight. From the opening piano notes of



excellent opener "Weight," Cronin is in full control, deftly combining insanely catchy pop tunes with bouts of guitar-based aggression. Given his

pedigree, it would have been understandable if Cronin went heavy on the fuzz for *MCII*'s 10 tracks. Instead, we get 37 minutes of beautifully arranged power pop songs, from the rip-roaring "Change" to the tender "Don't Let Me Go." *MCII*'s most impressive moment may be "Piano Mantra," a quiet, introspective number that has Cronin baring his soul before exploding into a wave of distorted guitar, drums, strings, and Cronin's vulnerable vocals all teaming up for a moment of musical catharsis. Cronin may sing, "I've been starting over for a long time" on "Weight," but on *MCII*, he's ended up with a real winner.

The National

Trouble Will Find Me

4AD

Although it came out back in May, *Trouble Will Find Me* sounds like it was meant for snowy night. There's a sort of cold detachment in Matt Berninger's deadpan baritone, offering up depressing lines of dread, as if he's unwilling to go



out and face the wintry conditions, as beautiful as the backdrop may seem. Still, there's a warmth amid the cold on *Trouble Will Find Me*, as evidenced in Berninger's impassioned pleas on "Sea of Love" or "I Need My Girl." And like your typical snowy night, the surroundings are gorgeous, as other 80 percent of The National provides a stunning score for Berninger's worries, with the Dessner brothers' layered guitars and the Devendorf's propulsive rhythm section sounding even better after each listen. *Trouble Will Find Me* may not be the most upbeat album, but who cares when melancholy sounds this good.

Neko Case

The Worse Things Get, the Harder I Fight, the Harder I Fight, the More I Love You

Anti-

While some people break down when the going gets tough, Neko Case is a fighter until the end. After naming her latest album *The Worse Things Get, the Harder I Fight, the Harder I Fight, the More I Love You*, Case's determination to stay strong shouldn't come as a surprise, but after battling a period of depression following the loss of some family and friends, the fiery Canadian took her pain and turned it into some of her most autobiographical work to date. On *The Worse Things Get* we experience Case at her most combative ("Man") and her most tender (the gorgeous "Calling Cards"). Given how wonderful a voice Case has, it's appropriate that the emotional epicenter of *The Harder Things Get* is "Nearly Midnight, Ho-

nolulu," a heartbreaking a capella tale of a mother berating her child, never knowing her vitriol would be documented in song. Case continues to



fight the good fight, and on *The Worse Things Get*, she comes out a winner.

Vampire Weekend

Modern Vampires of the City

XL

The maturation of Vampire Weekend has been a wonderful thing to witness. Back when the band dropped its eponymous debut in 2006, the members sounded like cheeky Ivy Leaguers – very talented, cheeky Ivy Leaguers, mind you – with frontman Ezra Koenig playing the part of the young songwriter who knew he manipulate the English language at ease. On *Modern Vampires of the City*, however, Vampire Weekend has aged gracefully. When Koenig name checks both Croesus and Modest Mouse on the same song, it



doesn't feel as though he's trying to show off his cultural literacy; instead, it's fuel to help drive the song. Even more, the songs on *Modern Vampires of the City* sound effortless, the results of a band that's confident in its ability to pump out intelligent, and lovely, tracks like "Step" and "Don't Lie." According to Koenig, *Modern Vampires of the City* is the end of a trilogy, a wonderful cap on their musical coming-of-age story.

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 visit <http://eridr.com/3z7ap>





Leslie McAllister

Street Fashionista

Madame Juju's 2014 Style Prediction from Ascots to Zappos

By: Leslie McAllister

Looking back, in 2013 we discussed the importance of tailoring and wearing garments that fit and flatter. We looked at the sophistication of pencil skirts, taper-legged jeans for men, and cocktail dresses for ladies. With that being said, we have learned that fashion is temperamental and fickle. It's skinny jeans one day and wide-legged the next.

Well, that's how I see 2014: It's going in the opposite direction. If it was short, it's long. If it was minimal, it's garish. If it was innocent, it's dangerous. It's all about taking chances – ones that really embrace the free-ness in our spirits.

And to capture that change, let me offer up the need-to-know A to Z so that you'll be dressed to a T.

A is for Ascot. My dad wore one once and we giggled, but I must admit he looked dapper and dignified. Swap out your boring traditional tie and adorn your neck with a silk ascot.

B is for Bell Bottoms. That swing and sway – flattering for your figure and a refreshing escape

from the yoga pants and leggings we hold dear after the holidays. Pair them with a loose blouse and platform clogs, snap that selfie of your outfit and tag it #madamejuju (check out Novella Royale's selection!).

C is for Crystal Bullet Necklaces. That dazzle and

delight. There is something about the duality here. The positive life-force of the crystal and the negative darkness of the bullet casing – it's circular.

D is for Draping. Gorgeous flowing kimonos, boho dresses, and gauzy blouses — we want to feel the wind blow through our clothes.

E for Erte A French artist of the '20s who used fashion as his medium and was inspired by glitz and glamour. Metallic embroidery on kimono dresses, adorned in beaded skullcaps. Women were goddesses and the clothes they wore were an extension of their personalities – the original bohemian siren.

F is for Fisherman's Cap More specifically the Greek Fisherman's Cap, embroidered black wool. You will look adorable; the androgynous look works for everyone. Trust me.

G is for Gypset. The sophisticated boho style that smells like Jade Jagger. It is defined as an unconventional, bohemian approach to life. Characterized by a fashionable exoticism and down-to-Earth ease. Check out the book *Gypset Style*.

H is for Hoffman. Mara that is, the coolest new designer on the runways. Her boldly colored caftans are enviable, her evil eye shawl brings tears to my eyes, and her swimsuits are swimming around in my dreams. Her Instagram is super cool, too (@marahoffman), which leads me to...

I is for Instagram. A great way to follow your favorite fashionistas, and the new way to meet friends, share photos, and promote yourself.

J is for Juicing. I am getting really serious about amping up the fruits and veggies. I want to feel like a super hero every morning, so hello, kale! And, I want to fit into that crocheted bikini I have hiding in my closet.

K is for Kindness, Karma, and Kaftans. Be pretty and nice and it will come back to you twice! Bright, bold, brilliant colored prints and soft fabrics that hang loosely to the ground; handkerchief hems, asymmetrical styles and deep-v necklines.

L is for Lingerie. No cotton panty boy shorts here. I am talking silk and lace cheeky peeks. Beautiful crocheted bralets and super strappy bras.

M is for Marant. Ms. Isabel Marant, a French designer, makes me swoon with the way she puts things together. Lace-up leather pants with baggy sweatshirts and sequin leggings with slouchy, fringe booties. She has it going on – big time!

N is for Nautical. I can't get enough of stripes – navy blue and white – Turk's head bracelets and anchors, adorable anchor necklaces, and jewelry. They are 2014's mustache.

O is for Ornate. Think: brocade fabrics, metallic garments, sequins, baby, sequins! French Rococo gone rogue.

P is for Purple. The color of 2014. A color for one seeking spiritual fulfillment, great for meditation. It is said that those who surround themselves with the color purple have peace of mind.

Q is for Quilted leather. It's not for me and I've never been a fan, but I think it is on the rise. Coco really knew what she was doing with that famed little quilted leather bag she designed. Moto jackets, boots, bags, quilted leather is everywhere.

R is for Rose. Like Weleda's Wild Rose body wash that I slather myself in, and Nature's Gate's Persimmon Rose and Geranium shampoo and

conditioner that makes me squeal and leaves me smelling like a rose garden blooming out of the rich mossy floor of the Red Woods. I smell like a fairy with a rose cap on swimming in sandalwood.

S is for Striesand. Barbara is the epitome of woman – long, gorgeous nails, perfect hands, flowing red caplet dresses, shimmering in sequins. Frank Sinatra once said, "Beautiful women have beautiful hands." Go get that manicure and douse your hands in shea butter. I love Zum

K is for kindness, karma, and kaftans. Be pretty and nice and it will come back to you twice! Bright, bold, brilliant colored prints and soft fabrics that hang loosely to the ground; handkerchief hems, asymmetrical styles and deep-v necklines.

Body's Sandalwood – citrus (you can buy it at the Whole Foods Co-op).

T is for Tall boots. As earlier stated, fashion is a fickle thing. We filled our carts with sweet little ankle booties in 2013. Now, it's to the knee or beyond. Tall boots, baby. They look great with leather pants or hiding under your caftans a la Stevie Nicks.

U is for Uniform. Everyone needs one, so what is yours? Mine consists of liquid leggings, booties, a big tee, an asymmetrical wrap cardigan and crystal jewelry. Sometimes a hat – it's like my invisibility cloak.

V is for elvet. Mainly, velvet boots.

W is for Witches. They are gorgeous, powerful, beautiful women who harness the energy to visualize their dreams to fruition. So sit down with your black tourmaline and imagine yourself happy, healthy, and surrounded by those you love. They wear their hair long with loose waves. Adorning each finger in a ring of interest with their wide-brimmed hat on, creating a look of intrigue.

X is for Xtra Large. T-shirts loose and billowy. I love them with leggings, bell-bottoms, or wide-legged jeans. Think of Mary Kate and Ashley; they do this look with the greatest and chicest of ease.

Y is for Y-shaped necklaces, also known as lariats. What pleases and entices me most about this look is how flattering it is for all necklines. It frames the neck and pulls the eye down to your best assets! I have been a long time promoter of this look – be it with rosaries, snake necklaces, or statement pieces; this jewelry shape wins and it makes you like more interesting because it isn't the old standby.

Z is for Zappos. Because, after all, isn't it forever and always all about the shoes?

Find me out on the town and challenge yourself to get noticed by the Erie Reader! Leslie McAllister can be contacted at LMcAllister@ErieReader.com, and you can follow her on Twitter and Instagram @ShopJuju. To follow this story or comment, scan the QR code or visit <http://erivdr.com/z77kl>



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ERIE'S EATS

American Fusion

AVANTI'S If you've only eaten breakfast at Avanti's, you are in for a big surprise. Every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday night, this daytime diner changes over to a fine dining establishment. Check back often since the menu changes weekly. BYOB

1662 W. 8th St. // 456.3096

SUMMER HOUSE CAFE With an ever-changing menu and lots of fresh baked goodies, this local favorite serves breakfast and lunch daily and stays open for dinner Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. BYOB

2605 Washington Ave. // 452.2500

1201 KITCHEN Featuring Latin/Asian-inspired food, this hip downtown spot is full of great art, and the marble bar is a perfect place to try their fresh sushi. With a menu that changes every four to six weeks, be sure to check in often.

1201 State St. // 464.8989

American

PLYMOUTH TAVERN An Erie institution with great food and drink specials every night of the week.

1109 State St. // 453.6454

PUFFERBELLY Set in a decommissioned firehouse, the Pufferbelly is full of artifacts from Erie's fire fighting past.

414 French St. // 454.1557

CALAMARI'S Extra-long bar, with a large outdoor patio for those warm summer nights.

1317 State St. // 459.4276

Barbecue

THREE-B SALOON Beer, Bacon & Barbecue—the name says it all. Featuring slow-cooked brisket, ribs, and other down-home favorites. If you behave yourself, you may get a free slice of bacon with your beer.

732 W. 4th St. // 451.0007

Breakfast

SUMMER HOUSE CAFE Open from 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. each day of the week, the Summer House Cafe serves up some of Erie's more unique breakfast and lunch options. Their breakfast burrito is a must-try, but be sure to check in for fresh daily specials.

2605 Washington Ave. // 452.2500

IO'S BROOKLYN BAGELS A walk through the door says it all. Well, at least it's speaking to your nose. Inhale deeply and breathe in those aromas. Fresh bagels and coffee. What's not to love about that combination? A

little piece of Brooklyn right here in Erie.

833 W. 38th St. // 520.6246

PEGGY'S RESTAURANT A landmark in the Liberty Plaza for a few decades now, Peggy's serves up quick, affordable meals and plenty of room for conversation. You can sit at the long counter that spans nearly the entire restaurant, grab a booth up front, or get a table in the back.

3512 Liberty St. // 866.3216

THE BREAKFAST PLACE Low prices and big portions—just the way Erie likes it! The Cajun eggs are a must-try.

2340 E. 38th St. // 825.2727

PANOS Open late night with an attentive wait staff who will never let your coffee mug go empty. Try the famous Greek omelet.

1504 W. 38th St. // 866.0517

SEAWALK CAFE Tucked away on historic North Park Row, you'll find one of downtown's popular breakfast and lunch places.

26 N. Park Row // 455.0002

GEORGE'S With retro decor trimmed in red and black, George's is known just as much for looking like a retro diner as it is for the friendly safe and great grub. They're famous for their mashed potatoes, but don't get stuck on only that. Try the soups and sandwiches on for size too.

2614 Glenwood Park Avenue // 455.0860

DOMINICK'S Famous among Erie's late-night bar patrons who swear by this place as a sure-fire hangover cure.

123 E. 12th St. // 456.6891

HYATT'S - Serving up breakfast and lunch standards for years and is a staple in the West Erie Plaza.

928 W. Erie Plaza // 456.0102

FLIP CAFE Tired of the chain restaurant dishing out breakfast by the numbers? Then try this sweet little spot tucked away in Edinboro. Flip Cafe serves breakfast and lunch from morning 'til afternoon, so stop in and try any one of the favorites, including "Flip Bread." You won't pay much and you'll go home happy thinking about coming back again.

103 Meadville St. Edinboro // 734.3400

Brewpub

BREWERY Erie's only brew-on-premise pub and eatery, the Brewery is on a mission to, "Revitalize Downtown Erie One Pint at a Time."

123 W. 14th St. // 454.2200

Caribbean

PINEAPPLE EDDIE Southern regional cuisine served up with a bit of caribbean

flair. Featuring savory dishes like Creole shrimp and andouille sausage over grits, seared catfish served with rice and beans and fresh sauteed vegetables, and grilled Angus Rib Eye steak. Deserts include grilled pound cake served w/fresh glazed pineapple, ice cream and rum sauce, and luscious lime layer cake. BYOB.

1402 W. 10th St. // 454.0700

Chinese

GOLDEN WOK Quality ingredients, affordable prices, and consistent service make this Chinese restaurant stand out among the rest.

3202 Pitt. Ave. // 836.9657

Delicatessens

TERESA'S ITALIAN DELI

Teresa's Deli has been a staple in Erie for over 60 years, and it's no secret why. Now in its third generation, the Theresa's staff still makes the food fresh every day, following the same scratch recipes used since 1949.

3201 Greengarden Blvd. // 864.5322 and 810 E. 38th St. // 459.1145

PICASSO'S With signature panini-style sandwiches like the Lee Roslyn (Twinkie, ham, and cheese) and the DaVinci (sausage, ravioli, and provolone), Picasso's is a must-try. Great vegetarian options available.

2060 Interchange Rd. (Outside Millcreek Mall) 866.1183

TICKLE'S DELI - This popular deli features good prices and big, tasty sandwiches including the famous "Big Freddy." Call ahead if you can because this downtown hotspot gets busy at lunchtime.

17 W. 4th St. // 455.5718

GERRY'S 8TH STREET DELI

From the world-class deli to the homemade soups, Gerry's offers everything you'd expect from a deli. But with sandwich names like "Cluckmeister," "Chive Turkey," "Tongue Fu," and "Bread of Times" just to name a few, you're going to want to keep going back to check out all of these one-of-a-kind sandwiches. Deli hours run Monday through Saturday 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

2620 W. 8th St. // 836.8702

French

BERTRAND'S BISTROT A menu featuring local meats and vegetables and organic and Kosher ingredients when possible. The crepes and award-winning wine selection are more than enough to encourage a trip to France via downtown Erie.

18 N. Park Row // 871.6477

Gastropubs

JECKYL & HYDES - Just like the title characters—wait, character—this gastropub seems bent on being two things at once—and that's a good thing. While the seating area is small, which makes for a cozy experience, the tastes are big and bold.

8 E. 10th St. // 456.0072

Indian

RAJ MAHAL - Offering a wide variety of Indian cuisine, both vegetarian and carnivore friendly, with an ever-popular lunch buffet. BYOB

5618 Peach St. // 838.1055

Irish

MOLLY BRANNIGANS - Got a hankering for bangers and mash? Have no idea what the heck bangers and mash is? Head to this authentic Irish gastropub where you can get your fill of Irish fare and Irish drinks. From Jameson to Guinness, from Shepherd's Pie to Purcell's Fish and Chips, Molly Brannigans brings the Irish pub to downtown Erie.

506 State St. // 453.7800

MCGARREY'S OAKWOOD CAFE Known for the award-winning Reuben, McGarrey's believes in big portions of comfort food served up hot and fresh. Although Irish in name, McGarrey's also dishes out American and Italian cuisine so that you're bound to find something satisfying.

1624 W. 38th St. // 866.0552

Italian

ALTO CUCINA Chef Pat Rodgers mixes the old-world with the exotic. Beautiful décor, with an outdoor deck for the summer months.

3531 W. Lake Road // 835.3900

COLAO'S Authentic Italian, fresh seafood, and a cozy, intimate setting.

2826 Plum St. // 866.9621

MI SCUZI Southern Italian cuisine with fresh, homemade pasta.

2641 Myrtle St. // 454.4533

AMICI RISTORANTE With dinner hours from 5 to 9 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays and a takeout menu available Monday through Saturday, Amici Ristorante dishes out fresh food at affordable prices. From wings to pizza to fresh perch sandwiches and more, the menu has something for everyone. Call ahead one hour for takeout since food is prepared fresh per order.

1518 Walnut St. // 455.0041

Japanese

SUSHI AND ASIAN CUISINE Fresh sushi and sashimi

steal the spotlight of this show but their supporting cast shouldn't go unnoticed. The Kim Chi is a great place to start and any of the noodle choices make for good choices to continue on. With veggie-friendly options and a staff happy to serve you, Sushi and Asian Cuisine is a must.

1014 State St. // 455.0596

AOYAMA Think it's hard to find a daily sushi bar in Erie? Find your way to Aoyama for the hibachi experience combined with an extensive sashimi and sushi menu. You'll have the choice between hibachi-style seating and the traditional sit-down dining experience, so your mood can do the choosing for you. Reservations are highly suggested.

970 Millcreek Mall // 868.7999

HIBACHI From flinging shrimp to slinging steak, Hibachi combines dinner with the show without service charges or ticket fees. If you're fine with sitting beside your date instead of across from him or her, opt for this straight-off the grill without time-to-chill dinner experience.

3000 W. 12th St. // 838.2495

Mediterranean

PETRA Open since 2004, Petra serves as Erie's window to the Eastern Mediterranean. The folks at Petra want you to have "a unique culinary experience." And with Mediterranean-inspired items on the menu you're unlikely to find anywhere else, this is a one of a kind dining experience.

3602 W. Lake Road // 838.7197

Mexican

EL TORO LOCO With a full bar and the best margaritas in town, there is something for everyone. Enjoy a little taste of Mexico right here in downtown Erie.

333 State St. // 454.5626

LATINO'S With fresh ingredients and a commitment to serving up the authentic Mexican-cuisine experience, Latinos is the place to go for more than just the average Tex-Mex experience. The place isn't flashy, but with food this good, it doesn't have to be.

1315 Parade St. // 452.1966

EL CANELO With three locations to serve the greater-Erie area, you're never more than a 15 minute drive from all the chips and salsa you can handle served up with sizzling fajitas, hand-wrapped enchiladas and burritos, and a whole lot more. Don't be fooled by the imitators. 2709

W. 12th St. // 835.2290 and 4236 Peach St. // 860.8187 and 4459 Buffalo Rd. // 898.1531

MOE'S With friendly staff

serving up fresh, made-to-order southwest fare, Moe's is a great place for quality, on-the-go Mexican food.

2052 Edinboro Rd. (Outside Millcreek Mall) 868.2121

Middle Eastern

CASABLANCA From traditional to modern recipes, from strictly vegetarian meals to meals centered around a choice selection of fresh meat, Casablanca Grille looks to provide something for everyone looking for a good Moroccan meal—and the diversity's a good thing too since when it comes to Middle East Mediterranean cuisine, Casablanca is it. Reservations are recommended.

2174 W. 8th St. // 452.4544

PALM MARKET AND DELI

This authentic Arabic market and eatery offers delicious, freshly prepared food and baked goods for a very reasonable price. The market offers a wide variety of exotic food and merchandise.

2702 Parade St.

Pizza

PAPA JOE'S With specialty pizzas ranging from "Vegan Demise" to "Chicken Gorgonzola" and subs that go by the names of "Enchanted Eggplant" and "Chuck Norris," Papa Joe's brings more to the table than any commercial pizza joint. And to boot, they serve up a mean falafel sandwich—something that's a must.

3826 W. Ridge Rd. // 835.3360

VALERIO'S More than just Pizza, Wings, and Subs! Local Italian Restaurant & Pizzeria that has been serving Erie County for over 17 years. Offering a variety of Homemade Italian Dinners, Seafood, Daily Lunch Specials, and Catering Services. Check out our menus online at www.valeriospizzeria.com. With 3 convenient locations to serve you, we'll have you singing...Manga Italiano!

2179 W. 32nd St. // 833-2979

and 1803 E. 38th St. 825-2693

and 724 Powell 833-8884 // Catering Office// 866-3193

to pair with the endless flow of over 20 microbrews on tap. And with helpful servers who know their beer, this is a great place to come to try the beers you've never had but have always wanted to.

333 State St. // 520.5419

SIX PACK HOUSE OF BEER

With an ever-changing lineup of brews on tap and cooler wall of six-packs to go, Six Pack also serves up some cheap eats to boot.

847 Pitt. Ave. // 454.1989

U PICK 6 BEER STORE Off the downtown beaten path, U Pick 6 takes pride in its revolving draft beer lineup. With some quick eats and sandwiches sliced up right in front of you, U Pick 6 draws you in for the beer and keeps you for the conversation.

7520 Peach St. // 866.2337

Steakhouse

SENSORY 3 Next time you're at Presque Isle Downs & Casino, take a break from the table games and check out this bar and grille. If you're cashing in your chips for fine dining, we bet on being satisfied by a fine steak since Sensory 3 serves up some of the best cuts in the area.

8199 Perry Hwy // 866.8359

COLONY PUB & GRILLE - Multiple fireplaces and three intimate dining rooms make the Colony a popular spot for a romantic dinner.

2670 W. 8 St. // 838.2162

RICARDO'S Opened in 1943 by two brothers, Ricardo's serves up some of Erie's finest steaks. Chef Peter West and Cathy Merksi run one of Erie's choice restaurants that's known for its hand-cut, grain-fed western beef and delicious, mouth-watering ribs cooked outside year-round. Hearty Italian fare with casual feel of fine dining make Ricardo's a must.

2112 E. Lake Rd // 455.4947

VICTOR'S -Located inside the Bel-Aire hotel, Victor's offers fine steak and seafood with drink specials every night of the week.

2800 W. 8 St. // 833.1116

Thai

KHAO THAI The only full-time Thai restaurant in Erie. Luckily, it's fantastic! Try the drunken noodles for a spicy delight. Vegetarian friendly. BYOB

36 N. Park Row // 454.4069

Vegetarian

WHOLE FOODS CAFE Offering a wide variety of vegetarian staples, including wraps, sandwiches, soups, pizza, and seasonal specialties.

3842 Liberty St. // 864.8702

1341 W. 26th St. // 456-0282

Wings

BUFFALO WILD WINGS

Fourteen original sauces and loads of televisions make BW/W a great place to meet friends for the big game. Full bar menu available.

Interchange Road (Across from Milcreek Mall) 868.9464

ODIS 12 Award-winning wings and affordable sit-down dining. Odis 12 features over 100 different flavors, including the crowd-favorite "ugly cousin."

664 W. 26th St. // 452.6347

GREENGARDEN TAVERN Classic corner bar atmosphere, great prices, excellent wings. Honey-hot barbecue and cranch are standouts. Go Browns!

1543 W. 8th St. // 454.3367

PARK TAVERN - Known for its wings, the Park Tavern boasts a family-friendly smoke-free environment. Try some Herbies or crispy Cajuns. Buffalo Cajun is also recommended.

4205 E. Lake Road // 899.8661

Sweet Treats

MIGHTY FINE DONUTS If you love donuts and are looking for something off the well-worn path to Dunkin' Donuts and Krispy Kreme, this local gem is your destination spot. Heralded by locals as the best donuts ever

2612 Parade St. // 455.6408

ROMOLO CHOCOLATES Tony Stefanelli apprenticed with his family in the chocolate business for nearly 20 years. Where'd that get him? He's one of only 26 master confectioners and he's right here in Erie. So for hand-made pieces of chocolate, be sure to stop by Romolo's—then boast to your out-of-town friends about having a master confectioner in your city.

1525 W. 8th St. // 452.1933

PULAKOS George P. Pulakos opened his first chocolate shop at 926 State St. in 1903. Over a hundred years later, the fourth-generation-run chocolate shop is still one of Erie's favorite places for a wide selection of all things chocolate—and other delicious snacks too.

2530 Parade St.

DONUT CONNECTION - Just off the corner of Peach and Liberty streets sits a family-owned donut shop that's celebrating its Golden Anniversary this year. With the "best coffee" in town and a wide selection of delicious hand-cut donuts, this is a great place for a for a sweet treat.

3842 Liberty St. // 864.8702

12 NEWS



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IN HD

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KARA COLEMAN

MARK SOLIDAY

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