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ERIE READER

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2023 Can't Miss Dishes

Craveable Erie-area dishes
you'll want to order up

Julius Fuses Tradition and Creativity

Julio Reyes makes flavors sing in
restored Maennerchor building

Rising to the Occasion

New and longtime bakeries thrive

the FOOD ISSUE



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From the Editors

Food for thought, and memory

The pleasure of having is in sharing. This sentiment is forged onto a vintage cast iron trivet hanging in this writer's kitchen — distilling that which makes meal-time so special. According to research recently published by Oxford University, the more often people eat with others, the more likely they are to feel happy and satisfied with their lives. Multiple pediatric studies have shown that children who eat regular family meals together benefit in a multitude of areas, including improved parent-child relationships, fewer behavioral problems, and increased literacy.

Food can also evoke a profound psychological response and food-based memories that center on family, heritage, and feeling loved can burrow into our subconscious and make a home there. "Food memories involve very basic, nonverbal areas of the brain that can bypass your conscious awareness," reports psychology professor Susan Whitbourne. "This is why you can have strong emotional reactions when you eat a food that arouses those deep unconscious memories. The memory goes beyond the food itself to the associations you have to that long-ago memory, whether with a place or a person."

Think of your mom's chicken noodle soup as a kid home sick from school, popcorn and Cherry Coke at the movies on a first date, hot cocoa and marshmallows after playing outside in the snow, a greasy spoon dinor breakfast with friends after a long night out, a ripe home-grown August tomato sliced and salted for the dinner table, a funnel cake at Waldameer after getting woozy on the Tilt-a-Whirl, or an orange-vanilla twist on the beach. These feelings go beyond the nutritional value of the food and evoke memories of place, time, nostalgia, comfort, and love.

This issue marks the fourth installment of our annual "Food" issue, the first of those issues being printed on the very same day that the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 to be a global pandemic back in March of 2020, and just a few days before restaurants shut down nationwide, and all sharing of meals outside of our individual households ceased for the foreseeable future.

And while curbside pickup, carryout, and Door-Dashing will always be a thing, we are so happy to have been able to research and document this year's "Can't Miss Dishes" with one another, and in the company of friends, family, colleagues, and loved ones. This year we've brought you 10 suggestions from our staff (and some sourced from social media) of the most unique and craveable dishes available throughout the Gem City, perhaps one or two that might end up becoming the stuff of intense food memories someday.

Whatever you might be eating, whether home-cooked from a heritage recipe or ordered from a local menu, we at the Reader hope that you are able to find the pleasure that comes with sharing.

Rising to the Occasion

Longtime and new bakeries thrive in Erie

By: Liz Allen

I can still taste some of the bygone treats baked into my Erie DNA — warm pepperoni bread from the original Arnone’s on West 17th and Cherry streets; a slice of white sandwich bread from Frontier Cake Shop at 1650 W. Eighth St.; a sweet roll from Paramount Pastries at 715 W. 29th St. Other friends recall with delight the whipped-cream cake from Colonial Bakery at 3717 Pine Ave., and the danish from an actual Danish bakery on West Eighth and Cascade streets (Lucas Pastries, I think).

Judy Stanek, my new friend from the Glenwood YMCA pool, savors the memory of her Lady Baltimore wedding cake from Desser Bakery on East 14th Street, 60 years after she and her husband John were married.

Names of beloved Erie bakeries literally run the gamut from A to Z, starting with Art’s Bakery (which opened in 1950 and is still going strong while ownership is changing) and ending with Zehe’s, which at one time had seven stores, including one just north of the Boston Store. Even into the early ‘90s, Erie boasted many homegrown bakeries on main streets and at corner stores.

Some were named for their locales, such as Hess Avenue and Washington Place, or after the owners, including Haft’s at 915 East Ave., Kuneman’s at 1028 Cherry St., and, of course, Sontheimer’s, which started at West 31st and Cherry streets before moving to its current location at 3720 Sterrettania Road.

The Sontheimers also owned Paramount on West 29th Street and Mary Ella’s Pastries, East 30th and French. The late Art Detisch Jr. did his apprenticeship at Sontheimer’s, later becoming a partner with Harry Shea at Frontier Cake Shop before opening his own bakery on West Lake Road. When Detisch walked away from the baking business after 30 years to run for Millcreek Supervisor, he joked to the Erie Daily Times that he had grown tired of standing on his feet all day.

As Detisch asserted, being a professional baker requires long hours of physical labor — one reason the bakeries from my youth are gone. Although cookie-cutter chains dominate so much commerce today, local bakeries are still thriving in Erie. Some have been run by the same families for decades. Others have been started by entrepreneurs, catering to those partial to gluten-free and vegan baked goods. Some bakeries are part of full-service restaurants; others have foregone storefronts and sell their goodies at local cafes. Whatever the business model, Erie bakeries of today offer the same warm atmosphere as the old ones, making customers feel like family.

I didn’t make it to International Bakery, founded in 1924 and known for its Italian cookies, for this story, but Erie’s New Americans, following the path of earlier immigrants, are establishing mom-and-pop food enterprises around the city.

Niken Astari Carpenter, New American liaison for



(Clockwise from top left) Longtime customer Ron Sivillo (left) chats with Chris Misevski, owner of Bill’s Bakery; Thelma Blanks-Howard shows off a sweet potato pie to customer Sylvester Quinn at Thelma’s Tasty Temptations in the lobby of the Blasco Library; Abigail Penrod, a “purrista” at the Purrista Cat Café, shows off the delectable baked goods made by three women bakers; Basam Zahra, 20, works with his brother Rakan, 23, at Rakan Market Bakery.

the City of Erie, said many of the new food stores, restaurants, and delis sell homemade desserts including basboosa, kunafa, and baklava. Rakan Market Bakery opened about a year and a half ago in the former Pio’s Pizza at 815 East Ave. They sell salads, appetizers, sandwiches, platters, and groceries, but their specialty is three types of baklava.

Owners Basam Zahra, 20, and his brother Rakan, 23, came to Erie seven years ago from Syria and learned to make baklava from their dad, Nizar, who worked as a baker in Saudi Arabia for 20 years. The family celebrated their naturalization as American citizens on Jan. 20. Like long-time Erie bakers, the Zahra brothers put in long hours — daily from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Despite that schedule, Basam said he still finds time to work out at Erie Fitness NOW. He stays in shape,

he joked, because “I’m not a sweets type of guy.” Still, if he had a preference for their baklava, he likes the ones with pistachios.

On the other side of town, at Bill’s Bakery, 1825 W. 26th St., the selection of Italian bakery items is small but reliably delicious. Bill’s also sells Polish sweet breads, nut rolls, and poppy seed rolls at Easter time. I was surprised to learn that the proprietor isn’t Italian and that no one named Bill works there.

Chris Misevski, who owns the bakery with his wife Eva, came to this country from Macedonia with his parents Kosta and Marie at age 3. His father worked at Majestic Bakery for five years but was “let go” and ended up buying Bill’s Bakery from the original owners, the Gentile family, who had named the bakery after their son Bill.



*Dana Suppa, McKinley Elementary School Principal
with McKinley Captain Students*

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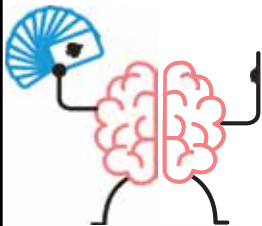
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NEWS & VIEWS

Chris helped his parents while he attended Twin-Tech (now Erie High). After graduation, he tried out as a kicker for the Baltimore Colts, the Pittsburgh Steelers, and the Cleveland Browns and later played semi-pro for the Erie Express, but the bakery became his full-time occupation.

Longtime patrons like Ron Sivillo appreciate that Bill's Bakery still makes bread the old-fashioned way. Chris and Eva begin rolling the dough out by hand at 10 p.m., then bake it in the original brick ovens without proofing the dough. That's what creates the "spaccare" effect, so the hard crust splits in the middle and the inside is soft. They're then ready to open from 6 a.m. to 1 p.m., Tuesday through Sunday.

Each independent bakery in Erie makes "favorite things that stand out," said retiring Art's Bakery owner Gordon Evans. Those are items you won't find at a chain supermarket. Baking is both a science and an art and it's not a coincidence that the logo for Art's is an artist's palette.

Chris knows his customers, so he was surprised when he got a call on Christmas Eve from a guy asking if the bakery still made bread and rolls. "I'm Bill," the caller said. It was the original owner's son. "My hair stood up on end," Chris recalled. "God brought him here for me to see who carries the name of Bill." Chris never heard from him again.

Gordon Evans certainly knows the namesake for his bakery — Art's at 4380 W. Ridge Road. His dad, Art, started the bakery in 1950 and now Gordon, 65, is ready to retire — almost. He's sold the business to a young couple and he is helping them out for a time as they continue to offer Art's traditional favorites from cookies to pepperoni balls, as well as limpa, a sweet Swedish rye bread that brings in customers from all over.

One joy of owning a bakery has been getting to know the customers, whom he has regarded "as extended family over the generations," he said. "Every time they walk through the door it brings a smile to my face," he said. He also thinks about the "hundreds of employees" he's met through the years. "It's been wonderful."

Each independent bakery in Erie makes "favorite things that stand out," he said. Those are items you won't find at a chain supermarket. Baking is both a science and an art, Evans said, and it's not a coincidence that the logo for Art's is an artist's palette. "It's subtle. I designed the logo on the back of a napkin

one day," he said, with a laugh.

A love of baking is often passed down through the generations. Thelma Blanks-Howard operates Thelma's Tasty Temptations at Blasco Library and Café 7-10 at 7 W. 10th St. with her daughter, Mabel Howard. The eateries are offering new brownie specialties and sweet potato pie, which Thelma's mother taught her to make. But if you want to bake like mom or grandma, be sure to write down the ingredients and the directions while you watch them, she advised. "Otherwise, you won't have it."

Both of the Howards' businesses are cozy and comfortable. So is the Purrista Cat Café, 30 W. Eighth, where owner Dena Rupp sells treats from three local businesses: Herb and Honey Bakery, owned by Jessica Schultz; Sundae Vegan Desserts, owned by Samantha Randall; and Crumb Cakes Bakery and Catering, owned by Kelly Chaney. Schultz also sells baked goods on Fridays and Saturdays at Urbaniak Brothers, 310 E. 24th St. — in a spot where Art's Bakery used to have an outlet.

Each of the women baking for Purrista has a specialty, Rupp said. For Herb and Honey, it's items like croissants and puff pastries with bee pollen. "Her stuff is truly magnificent and it's art," said Rupp. Randall, a huge animal lover, uses organic ingredients and sells vegan and gluten-free desserts, while Chaney specialties include "fun, unique cat-themed cookies and cupcakes, along with three-layer cakes and macarons. "Her decorating skills are so much fun, you don't want to eat it," joked Rupp.

At Bill's Bakery, Chris Misevski is thinking about hanging up his apron. "Forty-four years is a long time to be in one place," he admits. Gordon Evans of Art's Bakery is looking forward to spending more time with his children and grandkids, but also doing more volunteer work with a school in Paraguay. "That's a real passion of mine," he said. But do seasoned bakers really fade away? Maybe not. Evans has been asked to start a baking school for the kids in Paraguay.

Liz Allen fondly remembers the former Upper Crust Bakery, at West Sixth and Cascade streets, now Virgil's Plate, where she and her two sons stopped every day after school. You can reach her at lizerie@aol.com

Learn more

For more fun facts about the history of Erie bakeries, check out Bobby Sulecki's website, eriepoloniahistory.com, and Debbi Lyon's list of "Top 35 Bakeries in 1965," from her Old Time Erie blog, oldtimeerie.blogspot.com. On Debbi's list, I especially like the way the "B" bakeries roll off the tongue: Baker's Bakery, Balkan Bakery, Bill's Bakery, and Boll's Bakery.

Speaking of "B" bakeries, the impetus for this story began with a conversation with a friend at the Hagen History Center last year. She would like to nudge an entrepreneur to open a boutique bakery at the Flagship Food Hall featuring long-lost Erie bakery recipes, like the elephant ears and cream horns she and her husband used to enjoy on their neighborhood eating adventures in Erie. Any takers?

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NEWS & VIEWS

Considering the City

Building a Bayfront Highway

By: Lisa Austin, Janice Cole, Roland Slade, and Adam Trott

PennDOT's (i.e., the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation's) vision for the Bayfront is for a "Number One Level of Service" — a roadway where no vehicle ever has to stop. While ideal for an interstate, this vision is illogical for Erie's urban waterfront. Instead, a Presque Isle-like Bayfront Boulevard would catalyze sustainable economic development, protect the environment, and transform the Bayfront into a vibrant, walkable destination, attracting and retaining the residents needed to revitalize the city.

Bigger roads make traffic worse (induced demand)

Writing in *Wired* magazine, Adam Mann explained that "building bigger roads actually makes traffic worse" through a process of induced demand. Mann cites a study by Matthew Turner (University of Toronto) and Gilles Duranton (University of Pennsylvania) which documents the one-to-one increase in traffic that follows an increase in capacity. When a city increases its roadways by 10 percent, driving increases by 10 percent.

Today, much of the Bayfront remains undeveloped, yet traffic is jammed up regularly because of induced demand. PennDOT's data reveals that 80 percent of Bayfront traffic is using the roadway as a bypass. Their plan to "improve" the Bayfront has been framed as necessary in order to alleviate present and future congestion that will follow future development. But, when PennDOT finishes increasing the Bayfront's capacity, at least twice as many drivers will choose to use it — creating even more congestion and doubling noise, air, and water pollution. How is this going to help Erie?

Self-destruction

In a 2021 New York Times story, Norman Garrick, a University of Connecticut professor who "studies how transportation projects have reshaped American cities," was quoted saying that by constructing highways over the last half century to "accommodate cars and commuters" many cities "basically destroyed themselves." Today,



PennDOT's Bayfront "Parkway" images and narrative are misleading. To prepare readers, this image depicts the reality of PennDOT's massive, two-lane roundabout at Holland Street that will erase a portion of the library's parking lot and demolish the existing Holland Street sidewalk. PennDOT will eliminate the existing north-south crossing at Holland and will prohibit pedestrians at street level. Non-drivers will be forced to a yet-to-be constructed overpass that will double the distance from east side neighborhoods. Absent from all PennDOT's pictures are the huge highway signs that will be necessary to guide twice as many Bayfront drivers taking a shortcut through the city. This digital collage and AI drawing was created by Jordan Lander in collaboration with Lisa Austin.

cities around the world are removing their highways and reconnecting the urban grid to restore a "sense of place."

PennDOT's Bayfront plans

At an Erie County Planning Commission meeting, a PennDOT staffer described plans for "highway style" ramps, exits, an underpass at State Street, and two large, double-lane roundabouts at Sassafra and Holland streets. He confirmed that the existing sidewalk on Holland will be removed to create another vehicle lane and that pedestrians will be prohibited from crossing the Bayfront at Holland. With the removal of the sidewalk, those residents walking or biking from the east side will be forced to use a (yet-to-be constructed) overpass.

The new pedestrian bridge will create

a longer, less-direct route (concluding a multi-story switch-back ramp) that will likely double crossing time. Few of the residents who use the Holland sidewalk are aware of PennDOT's plans to block pedestrians from this well-used route. Those who drive to the library will be frustrated to learn that the Holland roundabout will absorb up to half of the current library parking lot.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

The current PennDOT Bayfront plan (typical of the kind of infrastructure planning in the Robert Moses era of 60 years ago) shouldn't be happening today. The 1969 National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) was designed to ensure that governmental agencies examine the impact of all federally-funded

ed projects on the air, water, soil, and the quality of life through an environmental assessment (EA).

Big difference: EA vs. CE

An EA is a lengthy process that features a public hearing where all parties speak *under oath* to prevent the kind of misleading narrative that PennDOT has orchestrated. A categorical exclusion (CE) is an “excused absence” for non-controversial infrastructure projects that pose little risk to the environment (such as bridge maintenance or road repair) allowing these projects to skip the EA.

PennDOT avoids an EA and public hearing

PennDOT applied to the Federal Highway Association (FHWA) and was granted a categorical exclusion. This was wrong. Massive projects like PennDOT’s should receive a full environmental assessment. In their CE application paperwork, PennDOT claimed that their Bayfront expansion project will have minimal environmental impact and that their plan faced “no substantial controversy.” Both claims are false, but the FHWA granted PennDOT a CE.

Federal civil rights lawsuit

In 2020, Earthjustice filed a lawsuit challenging the Bayfront project because “PennDOT’s pre-selected project design prioritizes cross-city commuters over the health, safety, and bayfront access of downtown residents.” On behalf of both the NAACP and PennFuture, Earthjustice explained that PennDOT’s project “further segments historically marginalized and environmental justice communities.” The Earthjustice lawsuit opposed PennDOT’s circumvention of the required EA.

Lawsuit decision

On Dec. 30, 2022, two years after the lawsuit was filed, Judge Susan Paradise Baxter ruled in favor of PennDOT and the FHWA supporting their claim that skipping the EA was justified because PennDOT’s project wasn’t controversial and will not significantly impact the environment. Neither claim is true.

Environmental impact

The judge’s ruling asserts that the documentation from PennDOT/FHWA proves that there are “no adverse impacts to . . . threatened or endangered

species . . . “ However, PennDOT’s own document, a “Field Scoping View” dated Feb. 2, 2018 cited a list of threatened / special concern on page 3: the PA-DCNR listed the yellow *Bidens laevis*, a member of the daisy family; the PA Fish and Boat Commission listed 16 fish including lake sturgeon; and the PA Game Commission listed three birds that may be impacted — the American coot, marsh wren, and the peregrine falcon — a bird theoretically protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

The same PennDOT document admits that environmental impacts could be triggered by design changes anticipated in 2018. Increased roadway surfaces will require additional salt during winter months. The roadway run-off will increase. Any waterfront roadway project that doubles traffic

Hall hearing on Sept. 24, 2020, (organized by Council members Allen, Brennan, and Schaaf) more than two-thirds of the 144 citizens’ oral and written responses were opposed to PennDOT’s plan. Allen noted, many “younger people — including downtown business owners” let council know that they “don’t think it’s a good plan.” Many called for an environmental assessment.

In her ruling the judge does not acknowledge the many publications, along with numerous residents who spoke at City Hall. A Bayfront Coalition letter from June 10, 2020 signed by 14 local agencies and 17 individual community leaders outlines environmental threats and urges a full environmental assessment. In her decision, Judge Paradise Baxter never acknowledges the

The current PennDOT Bayfront plan shouldn’t be happening today. The 1969 National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) was designed to ensure that governmental agencies examine the impact of all federally-funded projects on the air, water, soil, and the quality of life through an environmental assessment (EA).

volume will significantly impact the environment. It is illogical to claim otherwise (as PennDOT does).

Ruling mislabels “controversy” as “opposition”

Judge Paradise Baxter states that there was no project criticism besides those of the plaintiffs — NAACP and PennFuture. However, significant controversy regarding PennDOT’s plan existed prior to the FHWA’s granting of a CE (June 15, 2020) and before the lawsuit in December of that year. For instance, in January 2019, the Erie Times-News published Michael Fuhrman’s op-ed “PennDOT is Trying to Solve the Wrong Problem.” In August 2019, the Erie Times-News published Lisa Austin’s “What Kind of City Do We Want?” and in October 2019, *Strong Towns* published an audio interview with Adam Trott and Roland Slade regarding the community’s concerns surrounding PennDOT’s Bayfront plan.

Former Erie City Council President Liz Allen reported that at a virtual City

Bayfront Coalition letter and instead relies on the FHWA and PennDOT’s claims of “no substantial controversy” as a statement of accepted fact which dismisses the fundamental basis for the complaint by Earthjustice. She arrived at the decision without an on-the-record, legally-binding public hearing, thus shielding PennDOT and the FHWA from accountability for their misleading characterizations.

PennDOT’s words

To begin her decision, Judge Paradise Baxter uses PennDOT’s own narrative to justify the project. This is both prejudicial and misleading because PennDOT was permitted to change their narrative after controversy arose. This allowed PennDOT to falsely claim that pedestrian and bicycle needs were their first priority despite their design showing non-vehicular traffic to be a distant, secondary consideration.

Context

Encouraged by President Eisenhow-

er’s 1956 Federal-Aid Highway Act, traffic engineers built highways around and through U.S. cities. The location of these massive structures within cities has divided neighborhoods and harmed residents. These kinds of infrastructure projects contributed to disinvestment in low-income, minority neighborhoods, one of a set of government-mandated initiatives known today as “redlining.”

Though late to this kind of infrastructure redlining, Erie is catching up. After I-90 was completed in the rural areas south of the city in 1956, a vision of an Erie “beltway” was conceived. In 1979, some westside neighborhoods were divided as I-79 was constructed to connect Erie to Pittsburgh. In 1989, the Bayfront rail-tracks were replaced by the Bayfront Highway, Route 4043. The Bayfront Highway’s name was changed to the Bayfront Parkway in 1995, though there is nothing park-like about the Bayfront Parkway.

In 2005 a new four-lane arterial highway was constructed from I-90 to the Bayfront. This new roadway — Route 290 / Bayfront Connector — gashed through struggling Eastside neighborhoods near the city’s long-neglected McBride Viaduct (East Avenue Bridge).

City Hall and PennDOT pursued and obtained a categorical exclusion to expedite the process of demolishing the viaduct. By doing so they avoided a public hearing and minimized public participation as they made plans to tear down the critical pedestrian and bike artery.

After PennDOT constructs the new Bayfront underpass and roundabouts, the arterial highway loop around and through the city, proposed back in 1963 by French planner Maurice Rotival, will finally be completed.

Erie will suffer for generations.

Lisa Austin is a social sculptor and Erie County planning commissioner. Janice Cole is a community advocate and a senior group member of the Booker T. Washington Center. Roland Slade is a community advocate, small business owner, and video collage artist. Adam Trott is principal at AJT Architect and former president of the American Institute of Architects Pennsylvania.

More information on CIVITAS can be found at lisaaustinpa.com/mission-and-history, Lisa Austin can be reached at lisa@lisaaustinpa.com and Connect Urban Erie can be reached at connectplusesrespect@gmail.com

Never a Long Life Better Spent

Historian, author, and philanthropist Laura G. Sanford made indelible mark on Erie

By: Jonathan Burdick

In November 1819, within a house on the corner of Sixth and French streets in Erie, Pennsylvania, Laura Goodwin Sanford was born. She was the second daughter of Giles and Laura Sanford, a respected and financially prosperous family in Erie.

Her father had moved to Erie from New London, Connecticut in 1810. He soon established himself as a trustworthy local merchant along with business partner Rufus S. Reed. Giles was described by those who knew him as having a “sunny spirit” and “sound constitution,” a “gentleman of culture and taste” who wasn’t religious (at least at this point in his life) but “derived unfailing pleasure from nature and everyday life.” He was not formally educated, but was an avid reader and was admired by those in Erie for his intelligence, integrity, and, as he began to experience financial success, his philanthropic nature.

During the War of 1812, the two merchants provided many of the supplies to build the fleet commanded by Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry. After the war, he and Reed secured numerous government contracts, supplying soldiers in Chicago, Green Bay, and other westward areas with provisions, among them: pork, beans, flour, salt, vinegar, whiskey, candles, and soap.

In 1816, he married Laura Goodwin of Litchfield, Connecticut, an outwardly happy yet shy and self-conscious young woman who struggled with numerous health issues. Back in Connecticut, she had been previously engaged to a preacher who had abruptly decided to become a missionary in India. The disapproval of her father, who was opposed to missionary work as well as Christianity itself, along with a lack of confidence in her own potential abilities as a missionary led her to call off the engagement.

“[S]he felt herself deficient,” her daughter Laura would later write. “An ambition to succeed in all she might undertake, a desire to attempt nothing that she could not carry out creditably ... [had] too much influence in her decisions.” Goodwin’s former fiancé took responsibility, later in life writing that he had made a mistake by not doing more to inspire confidence in the “tender and beloved” Laura.

In September 1817, her first child with Giles, Lavinia Stanley Sanford, was born. Their daughter Laura was born two years later and then William in 1822 and Myron in 1824. That summer, when the Revolutionary War hero Marquis de Lafayette’s tour through the United States brought him to Erie, the young sisters dropped flower petals as part of the welcoming parade and afterwards they dined with him at the house of the prominent Erie resident Judah Colt (whose great-grandson, Judah Colt Spencer, Lavinia would eventually marry).

During these years, the Sanford family continued to grow in esteem and wealth. Giles helped found the Erie Academy and, after embracing his wife’s Christianity, the Erie City Bible Society. He had a great interest in local agriculture and horticulture as well.

JAKUB KRECHOWICZ



A renaissance woman of sorts, Laura G. Sanford threw herself into many creative and civic projects including embroidery, painting, drawing, and writing. She was the first female writer for the Erie Gazette newspaper and went on frequent mission trips to hospitals in Europe.

The elder Laura helped organize churches where there previously had not been any. In 1822, Giles was appointed by the state with two others to survey Presque Isle Bay. The Sanfords also purchased numerous properties around the city.

Meanwhile, Lavinia, young Laura, and Myron attended Erie Academy. William was mostly homebound and cared for primarily by his mother. As the children entered adulthood, Lavinia married Judah Colt Spencer (“a man of system, decision, and energy” with an “unusual combination of suavity ... [and] firmness”) and they started a family. Myron (“the most inflexible integrity” and a “courteous man”) made a name for himself in Erie’s finance world as a banker before marrying as well.

As for Laura, she seemed interested in *everything* — that is, except for marriage. Thanks to her privileged upbringing, she was able to spend her days at her French Street home sewing and embroidering, writing and drawing, playing chess, and painting landscapes and portraits. The Erie Daily Times noted her “rare artistic and literary gifts.” According to *Notable Women of Pennsylvania* by Emily Sprankle Heron, she was also a skilled pianist and would often entertain others with her ability at family events. She also wrote for the Erie Gazette newspaper, the first woman in the city to do so.

Laura was described as having a “big heart,” someone whose empathy for others seemed endless. She dabbled in missionary work in Italy and Spain, most-

ly in Madrid, where she spent her days speaking with and reading to patients in hospitals, while becoming fluent in Spanish herself.

In 1852, her brother William died. Her mother died two years later. Over the following years, Laura began working on what would become *The History of Erie County, Pennsylvania, From Its First Settlement*, an influential and impressively detailed comprehensive history of Erie County. She compiled firsthand accounts, manuscripts, letters, and files from locals, including her own father, who had lived through Erie’s early decades. It was published in 1862.

“If in every State we had those who were unprejudiced and truth-loving to examine and test the supposed history of their respective localities, truth would be vindicated, much that is interesting rescued from oblivion, and a correct and minute history of our country secured,” Laura wrote in the preface, explaining her purpose for writing the book.

The Erie Gazette noted the book’s “careful preparation.” The Crawford Democrat called it “a work of great value” and that Sanford “deserve[d] the thanks of the whole country” for the work. It received considerable attention outside of Pennsylvania. Following the publication of a revised and updated version, one historical journal described Sanford as a “distinguished” writer and added, “It is without exception one of the most meritorious local histories which has even been issued from the Pennsylvania press and the citizens of Erie county have abundant reason to



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be thankful to Miss Sanford for her excellent work.”

In 1866, Laura's father Giles died. Around this time, Laura's philanthropic nature was apparent throughout Erie. In 1871, she was essential in galvanizing the creation of the Home for the Friendless (now known as the Sarah A. Reed Children's Center), a place for orphaned children as well as the elderly, along with Sarah Reed, Calista Gara, and William Arbuckle. Laura was credited with organizing 40 women in support of its creation, initially having “no money, no building, no furniture, only faith and a determination to make this thing a success.”

Both Lavinia and Myron died within two months of one another in 1866. Laura, along with Myron's widow — Susan Lawrence Sanford of Philadelphia — continued their family's philanthropy, gifting a plot of land on the east side of Seventh and French streets for a public library to be built. According to *Erie History - The Women's Story* by Sabina Shields Freeman and Margaret L. Tenpas, while the city ultimately didn't raise enough money during this particular campaign, it jump started the movement for a public library in the city. When one was finally opened in 1899, she donated \$2,000 (to put that in perspective, the average wage-earning adult male made slightly over \$10 per week at that time). She and her sister-in-law would also be the largest private donors for the creation of a new library for the public schools.

After devastating flooding in 1893, she utilized one of her properties at 609 French St. to gather donations of children's clothing, a tradition that she kept up in subsequent years, keeping the property as a location for those who may be in need of essentials. In 1895, she gifted lots on both the east and west sides where six families in need could cultivate the land to

HISTORY OF ERIE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, VOLUME I (1889)



Laura G. Sanford's father, Giles Sanford, was an early pioneering settler of Erie, coming to the county in 1810. He was a successful merchant who was well known for his intelligence and philanthropic nature.

grow potatoes. She donated meals to families each Christmas and financially supported the local YMCA and YWCA. To those who desired, she taught piano, chess, and her other skills.

By 1904, now a “quaint little old lady,” she was becoming increasingly sickly. She died in 1907.

“Miss Laura Sanford made an imprint on Erie that will long be remembered as the record of one of the noblest women in the history of the city,” the Erie Daily Times published following her death. “Of the many good deeds performed by her, only a few will ever be known in this world. She was idolized by all who knew her.”

In 1931, the Business and Professional Women's Club of Erie sifted through 120 nominations to select 12 of the “greatest women” in Erie history for National Women's Week. These were women who, the club felt, were the most prominent in the “civic growth and progress” of the city during their lives. Laura Goodwin Sanford was among the 12 selected along with names such as Sarah Reed and Dr. Adella B. Woods.

“Erie is indebted to Miss Laura G. Sanford for the first authentic history of the county,” the induction noted, adding that other histories had been written since, but all relied on and even borrowed from her meticulous research with none being “more authentic, or more complete” than hers.

“[I]t can be said truthfully that never was a long life better spent, never were 88 years devoted more unselfishly, more generously to the service of others,” the Erie Daily Times wrote of her. “Erie is better for her having lived.”

Beginning this month, an exhibit dedicated to Laura G. Sanford will be on display at the Hagen History Center located at 356 W. Sixth St.

Jonathan Burdick runs the public history project Rust & Dirt. He can be reached at jburdick@eriereader.com



Laura G. Sanford wrote and published *The History of Erie County, Pennsylvania, From Its First Settlement in 1862*. It was the first comprehensive history of Erie and included first-hand accounts and publications from early settlers.

CONTRIBUTED BY THE ERIE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



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Our Yummiest Can't Miss Dishes of 2023

Craveable Erie-area dishes you'll want to order up

By: Erie Reader Staff

What do you feel like eating tonight? Making the perpetual, often unpleasant decision about dinner is a very real part of the human condition. So our staff here at the Reader — along with some helpful suggestions from our social media followers — have got your back. Below you'll find an eclectic array of dishes from all around Erie to get your taste buds tingling (some happen to be from Best of Erie 2022 winners, so you know they've been fully vetted and assuredly great). We've got you covered from appetizer to dessert, and there's something for everyone — including vegan and gluten-free options. From straight-up American dishes like Bro Man's Sammiches' award-winning Sooner Burger to world cuisine from Nepal, Vietnam, and the Dominican Republic, you're sure to find a solution to that nagging dinner issue in the list below.

So, let's dig in!

(Listed alphabetically by location)

What: Sooner Burger

Where: Bro Man's Sammiches

Vibe: Up-to-your-elbows sloppy goodness

On the menu as: Burgers

Price: \$13

© JESSICA HUNTER PHOTOS



Winner of Best Burger in 2022's Best of Erie Awards, the Sooner is a work of sloppy, cheesy, saucy art. Double patties of "hand smashed burger" made from Angus reserve brisket short rib, topped with an overflowing amount of savory caramelized onions, two cheeses, and a sweet roasted red pepper garlic aioli — this burger will have you rolling up your sleeves and embracing the mess. Make sure you grab some napkins (and maybe a nap afterwards, too).

8228 Peach St. // (814) 480-9119 // bromanssammiches.com

What: Black Forest Sando

Where: Dee's Delicatessen

Vibe: Reliably Resplendent

On the menu as: Specialty Sandwiches

Price: \$6.75

It's simple, it's the first thing you see on the menu, and it's perfect. Dee's Black Forest is turkey, roast

NICK WARREN



beef, Swiss cheese, lettuce, and honey mustard housed between a sliced cheddar roll. It's the ideal workingman's lunch item, hearty and refreshing without being heavy, and the texture combinations are truly on point. The sandwich also serves as the perfect entry point for first-time Dee's visitors, with the deli's menu being a robust one. You'll want to tick everything off the menu one by one (though if you're like me you won't forget your first love).

3049 Glenwood Park Ave. // (814) 456-5115

What: The Brian Special

Where: Dina's Authentic Dominican Kitchen

Vibe: Healthy, flavorful, fully-customizable

On the menu as: A la Carte

Price: \$13

© JESSICA HUNTER PHOTOS



Pieced together from an incredible menu of authentic, flavorful, slow-stewed offerings — we're calling this "The Brian Special," as it is the favorite go-to lunch of our editor-in-chief. Mixed rice and beans with caramelized sweet plantains and a sliced, ripe avocado; it's vegan, gluten-free, and a complete protein lunch that won't leave you feeling weighed down and full of regret.

22 N. Park Row // (814) 413-7777 // dinasdr.com

What: E-Dogg's Bistro Beer Mussels

Where: Erie Ale Works

Vibe: Your hoppy place

On the Menu as: Beer Mussels

Price: Market Price

ADAM WELSH



Q: What's better than a big bunch of buttery mussels, nestled in a deep bowl of broth, served up with an abundance of crusty Majestic Baking Company bread? A: All those things plus some of the best beer in Erie — specifically Nexus of the Universe, "a tropical fruit plume complete with the slight twinge of bitter on the back-end." It's slurpable, craveable, and limited (which somehow makes it even more desirable). Combining the culinary talents of local food truck savant E-Dogg's Bistro and the brew-working witchcraft of the dudes at Erie Ale Works, it's a match that can't be beat. Only available on Fridays and only while supplies last — don't walk, run to 12th and Chestnut.

416 W. 12th St. // (814) 314-9089 // eriedoggs.com

What: Birria Tacos

Where: El Amigo

Vibe: Crispy and dippy

On the Menu as: El Amigo's Popular — Birria Taco Meal

Price: \$13

Our social-media followers had a lot of great things to say about the food at El Amigo, but the Birria Ta-

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cos stood out from the crowd. Crispy fried corn tortillas surround slow cooked brisket topped with the requisite onions and fresh cilantro. But it's the accoutrement dipping sauce that really launches these tacos over the top. Served alongside a massive, Technicolor margarita: you'll definitely want to give this meal a like.
333 State St. // (814) 454-4600 // elamigogrill.com

What: Avocado Toast
Where: Gem City Dinor
Vibe: Millennial brunch masterpiece
On the Menu as: Classics
Price: \$9.99



Millennials have gotten some flack for enjoying (and blowing their budgets on) this relatively recent culinary creation, but one bite of Gem City's interpretation of avocado toast will have even the staunchest boomer coming back for more. Ripe avocado meets garlicky pesto with fresh tomato on a thick slice of Majestic Baking Company sourdough bread, a dippy egg running down through it all, mingling with the smashed potatoes on the side. Well, put us on TikTok and call us cringe — we're absolutely here for it.
3545 W. 12th St. // (814) 920-4230 // facebook.com/gemcitydinor

What: Smith's Hot Dog Pinwheels
Where: Majestic Baking Company
Vibe: A picnic in a bite
On the Menu as: Pinwheels
Price: Two for \$6



Why bother dragging around buns, hot dogs, sauerkraut, and condiments for your next picnic, just

stop at Majestic for their Smith's pinwheels — it's the whole package. Combine two Erie culinary traditions into one — Smith's Hot Dogs and Majestic bread — and what you've got is a winner. With their Erie sourdough base, sliced up Smith's dogs tucked in, and sauerkraut, mustard, and cheese and you've got a full-fledged picnic in your hand. A specialty pinwheel that's on rotation, make sure to check their monthly menu for these (and their other sweet and savory offerings). It's Majestic!
1501 Walnut St. // (814) 315-4020 // majesticbaking.co

What: Jhol Chicken Momo
Where: Namaste Indian Nepali Kitchen
Vibe: Perfectly pinched purses of paradise
On the Menu as: Momo/Dumpling
Price: \$13.99



The recent proliferation of Nepali restaurants in Erie speaks to the booming population of immigrants making their mark on the local food scene. If you're new to Nepali cuisine, the momo at Namaste are a great place to start. A cram-jammed dumpling, filled with savory vegetables and your choice of juicy protein (or go vegetarian, the customizable options abound), browned then steamed to perfection, and smothered in a sweet curry chutney sauce: these artfully pinched dumplings are as pretty as they are devourable. Order them along with some garlic stuffed naan (Indian flatbread) and you've got yourself a meal!
5901 W. Ridge Rd. // (814) 315-6847 // namasteoferiepa.com

What: Pho Ga
Where: Saigon Nights
Vibe: Slurpable and satisfying
On the Menu as: Pho Vietnamese Noodle Soup
Price: \$18.65

The Erie Reader's resident pho fan Jonathan Burdick describes the national dish of Vietnam as "a mouth-watering eruption of flavors and sensations," and we tend to agree. This is a dish that is very traditional to Vietnamese cuisine, and one that has been able to transition to the American palate with ease. What's not to love? A rich and flavorful broth with extraordinary clarity, slurpable white rice noodles, tender (in this case) chicken, aromatics like scallions, onions, and cilantro, along with fresh bean sprouts, basil,



lime, and jalapeno. It's well-balanced, it's craveable, it's unique, it's fresh. Simply put: it's a can't-miss dish.
2430 W. 8th St. // (814) 449-6013 // saigonnightserie.com

And for dessert...
What: Tiramisu
Where: Romolo Chocolates Cocoa Cafe
Vibe: A fluffy cloud of confection perfection
On the Menu as: Cafe desserts
Price: \$4.39 / slice



There is no more perfectly balanced dessert than a well-made square of Tiramisu and the folks at Romolos make the best in Erie — which doesn't come as a surprise, as Romolo Chocolates took home two Best of Erie awards in 2022. Astonishingly light layers combine imported ladyfinger cakes soaked in a mixture of Kahlua and espresso, whipped mascarpone Marsala cream, and shaved Romolo dark chocolate. It's unbelievable how pillowy it is — light enough to eat after a big bowl of pasta, or you know what? Go ahead and have some for breakfast with a strong cup of coffee. We won't judge. Only available on Fridays (after they soak those sponges overnight to get the perfect flavor and texture), this Tiramisu will have you going back every week for more.
1525 W. 8th St. // (814) 452-1933 // romolochocolates.com

Urban Farming in Erie: Grow Your Own Way

Where our food comes from and why growth is important

By: **Spencer Cadden**

There is a gnarly sweet potato sitting half submerged in water inside a flower vase on my desk. Last week I was let in on a secret while scrolling through social media. I encountered a video where I learned that with almost no money I could transform one sweet potato into dozens. I checked my pantry and there, destined for the trash heap, sat a single, sad sweet potato. I gathered my supplies: a vase and some toothpicks, and submerged two-thirds of the potato into the water. I set it on the sunny side of my desk and waited — a potato baron in the making.

As the video foretold, tendrils sprouted — but now I realize my error. The ground outside is still frozen, and I have no pot for transplanting. What will become of the sumptuous, brown sugar covered, marshmallow-topped casseroles, the crispy air-fried treasures dusted in paprika? I am left with a waterlogged reminder of my failure.

Why should a sweet potato be able to elicit this range of emotion? What is it about the act of trying to grow something that has caused me both hope and anxiety? This all begs a truly fundamental question; why is growing your own food so challenging, rewarding, and important?

I grew up believing grocery stores were the sole source of food. No one I knew had a garden and apart from a neighbor with a cherry tomato plant and old raspberry bush, I believed that food production was magic. Something done by farmers in some far-off place. Though I know far more now than I did as a child, I have never actually grown anything, and it seems to me I ought to better understand why we feel the urge to grow things and why people find it so important before I try it in earnest.

There are a number of books written on the subject. Entire issues of local papers (for example, the one you are reading now) are dedicated to food and drink, and debates rage over the merits of the food industry, organic food production, and our relationship to the environment. To learn more about local agriculture, I took the time to seek out a few experienced farmers doing their best to make farming work for the community.

Stephanie Ciner, owner and principal farmer at Wild Field Urban Farm offered some wise words on the importance of growing one's own food, "Humans and their plants cannot survive without each other. Growing is an act of tapping back into the people and places you came from." Ciner's urban farm is located on East Seventh Street between Reed and Ash. I generally expect to find farms scattered throughout the rural county, but here's Ciner farming right in the middle of Erie's lower east side. She is quick to mention that she is not alone in her endeavors and benefits greatly from the farming community that was in place before her.

Stephanie told me of all the great people she has connected with since she began her farm. Among them, the Sisters of St. Joseph and the Little Italy Farmers Market, sharing its virtue as an inner-city farmer's market that takes special effort to provide high quality food to low-income neighborhoods. Ciner also shared stories of seed exchanges with elderly neighbors who have lived in her community for years, and more importantly she shared an infectious passion for all things that grow in the ground, the process of growing, and how little it takes to get started. The journey of Wild Field Urban Farm is inspiring and informative.

Ciner's farm began as a cost-saving measure rather than an expensive undertaking. She wanted high quality food but found grocery stores too costly so she looked to the dirt. Looking back, she is horrified by the mistakes she made in those early days, but the lessons remain invaluable. Despite rocky soil, old seeds, and almost no knowledge, plants will grow with time and attention.

That truth exists throughout Erie's community of planters. Mike Shannon, CEO of The Bodhi Garden Initiative feels that you plant seeds wherever you go in life. Bodhi Gardens represents another type of food production and it started with a simple goal for a senior class project: to help veterans grow their own food. And the Bodhi Initiative keeps growing. A recipient of a \$250,000 grant through Erie's American Rescue Plan Funds, the initiative is making strides to combat

WILD FIELD URBAN FARM



Wild Field Urban Farm on East Seventh Street is a fecund oasis of flowers and vegetables in the city. Proprietor Stephanie Ciner feels that humans and plants have a symbiotic relationship, relying on each other to thrive.

food insecurity and engage in therapy through horticulture. Shannon shared his vision for large scale food production in the middle of Downtown Erie.

Implementing an advanced aquaponic growing system and using space in the downtown EMTA building, the initiative's goal is to provide thousands of pounds of food to the Erie community year-round. While these things might bring value to Downtown Erie, it is Shannon's emphasis on the tangible human benefits to food production that speaks volumes.

The Bodhi Garden Initiative started with one aquaponic grow tower at UPMC Safe Harbor's crisis residential unit. After getting to know some of Safe Harbor's clients, Shannon reminisced about one of the people he met who thanked him for the opportunity to grow something. Here was one person experiencing untold hardship whose pain was alleviated, if only for a moment, through the act of planting and growing. Shannon shared the sentiment that watching something grow through your love and nourishment has a fundamental power to affect change in people's lives.

What started as a small project now aims to feed hundreds of people and provide therapeutic opportunities to Erie's disaffected communities. Places like Wild Field Urban Farm, The Bodhi

Garden Initiative, and people like Shannon and Ciner are joined by legions of small gardeners and farmers who know the power of growing something. This community is vast but accessible. Whether you patronize a farmer's market, help your child grow a sunflower, or operate legitimate farms in the City of Erie, food production is a fundamental and worthwhile human experience.

My small foray into this world turned up a number of friendly faces eager to share, engage, and help. Ciner rightly pointed out that growing something starts with finding a person, talking to them, and sharing in their enthusiasm. Her welcome advice is well-received. As I contemplate my sweet potato, I'm no longer left puzzling over why I became so attached. A humble sweet potato is more than it seems; it is a living reminder of the power of growing and the community that it represents. The intentional act of food production expands our networks, can teach our children, and help us to grow and heal. So, as spring fast approaches, I encourage you to grow something to eat, no matter how small, because even a single potato has power.

Spencer Cadden is a full-time bureaucrat, father, and perennial student. He can be reached at spencer@caddenclassic.com

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eriecountygov.org/hrc

Julius Fuses Tradition and Creativity

Julio Reyes makes flavors sing in restored Maennerchor building

By: Erin Phillips

Julius, a fine dining restaurant serving global cuisine with a Mexican twist, residing in a 134-year-old, 30,000-square-foot building comprising a full city block, wasn't even supposed to happen. After owners Julio and Lilia Reyes retired and closed their successful and well-loved Mexican restaurant Latino's after 22 years of service on Parade Street, the opportunity to purchase the former Maennerchor Club building at 1607 State St. presented itself and Reyes didn't want to pass it up. After a long-storied legal back-and-forth, Reyes took ownership of the building in 2018 and Julius was born a few years later.

While reluctant to get back into the restaurant business after retirement (Reyes was initially interested in purchasing the Maennerchor building simply as a real estate investment), after doing a lot of cleaning, replacing the massive roof, and restoring all the woodwork in the historic building (as well as transferring his liquor license from Latino's to expedite a stalled legal issue) he was pushed back into the fine dining business. And it has been serendipitous and successful, continuing on the legacy of the Reyes family's cuisine as well as the legacy of a building that has contributed to Erie's built history for well over a century.

Reyes' story starts in Mexico City, where he was born and raised. He worked in software development there and made many connections in multiple cities worldwide and in the United States. When he and his wife (who have been married for 40 years) decided to leave Mexico, they were welcomed — and Julio hired — by a tech company in California. His sister was employed by Plastek at the time when Julio and Lilia came to Erie to visit her. They realized that Erie could benefit from their investment and settled down into a life outside of the tech industry.

One of their first big ventures was to start a tortilla factory in Little Italy. Reyes comments, "True Mexican cuisine is the best cuisine in the world in terms of the quality, flavor, and nutritional value. We opened the tortilla factory to make corn tortillas with nixtamal (corn soaked in lime water and then ground to make masa), which

didn't really exist in Erie at the time." Latino's came along shortly after they closed the factory and quickly became a staple on Parade Street at a time when no one else saw the potential in the neighborhood.

Fast forward 25 years or so, and now the Reyes family finds themselves back in the restaurant business in a revived and restored space, bringing potential back to the immense building that had fallen into disrepair. For Julio, honoring the history and intention of the Maennerchor building is very important to him, "I don't want to change this building. It's not just for the economic benefit of not changing it — you simply cannot build this patina. You cannot build the historical value, you cannot build the memories back. That has a value."

The building called the Maennerchor Club was built in 1889, but the people behind the construction were the original Maennerchor Men's Singing Society that began in 1871. Singing Societies or choral groups were popular forms of entertainment in the late 19th century and they appeared in nearly every town with a population over 1,000. According to *Music of the Gilded Age* by Ogasapian and Orr, singing societies represented "some of the strongest elements of Victorian culture: the strong sense of duty, community participation, broad religious sentiment, rising nationalism, and enthusiasm for the new romantic music styles."

The Erie Maennerchor group originally met and performed in Boyer's Hall, which was a concert hall on the third floor of the former Epps Furniture Building (which is currently FEED Media Arts at 1307 State St.) According to the Erie Maennerchor Centennial published in 1971 (a scanned copy generously provided by the Hagen History Center for this article): "The Great Depression, which hit Germany following the Napoleonic Wars marked a great period of immigration from Germany to the United States ... About 1848, a great many of these people settled in and about the city of Erie, attracted by the diversified industries of the growing city. It was only natural that, becoming settled and having had experience and training in chorus work, they were interested in organizing societies



Served on Sundays from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., the brunch offerings at Julius are 100 percent Mexican cuisine and served as a five course meal, not a buffet.

and choruses of their own in this country."

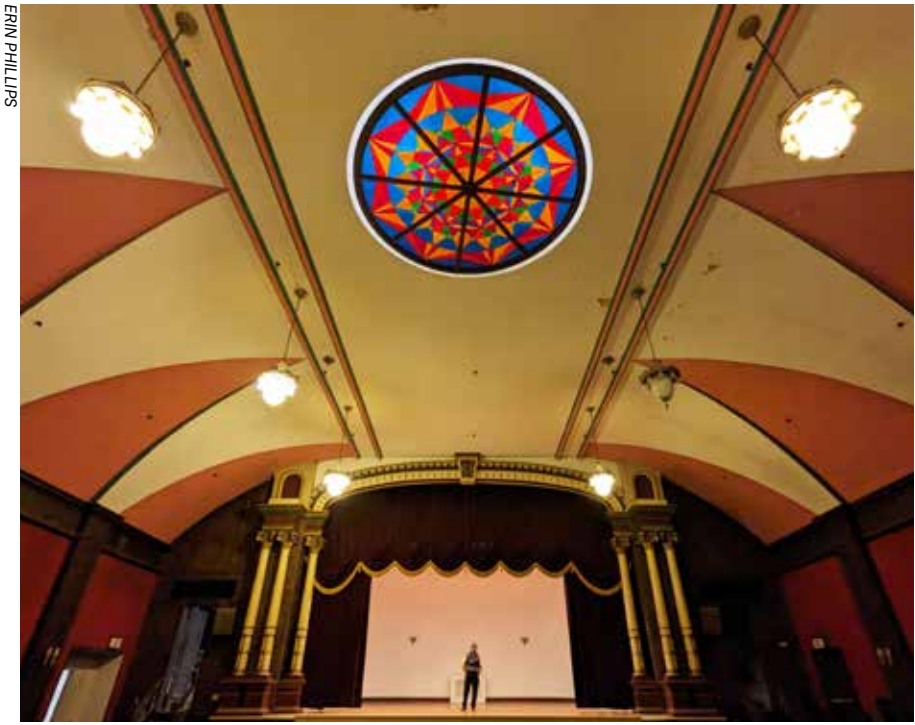
The group that would become the Erie Maennerchor (which translates from the German as "men's chorus") grew from a German lodge called the Harugari which eventually became the Harugari Maennerchor. It was this group that, in 1889, pooled its resources (along with a \$10,000 loan from Erie beer magnates Jackson and Fred Koehler), purchased the land on the block between 16th and 17th and State streets, and began construction of the current Erie Maennerchor building. While the building was expanded upon over the years to extend to its current footprint, the ballroom, stage, original bar, and dining room remain essentially the same as they did back in 1889. At some point in the history of the Erie Maennerchor, the singing society that established the group dissolved and the Maennerchor became more of a social group, as they remain to this day (although no longer in this building).

As Reyes provides a tour, he is quick to point out the beauty of the woodwork and craftsmanship that was, at the time of purchase, hiding under years of grease and dirt. There are German words painted on the back of the dark wood bar originally reading: "Damen sind nicht erlaubt" which translates to "Women are not allowed." Upon tak-

ing ownership of the building, Reyes quickly replaced the "not allowed" portion with a (removable) sign that says "willkommen," altering the meaning to welcome women at the bar. A larger hand painted message on the exterior of the bar reads "Gemütlichkeit," offering what any good bar should: comfort.

It is the German heritage of the building that Reyes says inspired the menu at Julius. The menu offers fusion cuisine. For example, a German wienerschnitzel (a breaded veal cutlet) is served alongside freshly made Mexican salsa, and Italian-style spaghetti is served with a spicy cilantro alfredo sauce. The chef who collaborated with Reyes to create such interesting recipes is Nate Jones, who cut his teeth in some of Erie's best loved fine dining restaurants including the Bel Aire, the Colony, and most recently, La Bella. Reyes feels thrilled to have Jones's talents on board and was surprised to learn of a connection that, to him, felt serendipitous.

Reyes tells the story, "One day I was working in the kitchen with him (Jones) making sopes, which are like corn patties, because I wanted him to learn what it was all about. I noticed he was kind of emotional, and I said 'What's going on with you?' He said, 'You remind me of my grandma cooking in the kitchen when I was a little



Owner Julio Reyes stands on stage in the breathtaking upstairs ballroom of the former Maennerchor building to demonstrate the perfect acoustics in the room. This space is available to rent for special events.

kid.' I didn't understand. How is that possible? This is Mexican food. And he told me that he is half Mexican, which

I didn't know. His heritage is actually German and Mexican. I think it was destiny: this is a German club serving

food with a Mexican twist and our chef is German and Mexican."

Regardless of the heritage inspiring the dishes, they always include the freshest ingredients, everything is made from scratch (even down to the salad dressings), the deep fryers are covered and never used, and the food always includes an original and authentically Mexican sauce that gives it the flavor and feel that Reyes feels connected to. Some dishes are strictly Mexican, according to Reyes, "We have small plates based on street food in Mexico like bombas, sopas, and tostadas — and those are 100 percent Mexican."

The restaurant and bar of Julius makes up just a small portion of the 30,000 square feet of the building and Reyes uses these spaces — like the expansive, acoustically perfect ballroom upstairs or the vintage duck pin bowling alley in the basement — to rent out for individual events or parties. There are also other rooms on the first floor available to rent for business meetings, baby showers, conferences, etc. with catering provided in house. Reyes is taking it bit by bit and not trying to do

too much at once. After all, he was supposed to be retired.

Whether or not it was Reyes' intention, he's back in the restaurant business and the people of Erie are grateful to enjoy the vision of his food in this new venue. According to Reyes, none of his success would have been possible without the dedication and sharp financial mind of his wife, "Whatever we have is thanks to my wife, Lilia. I only know how to work, she knows about everything else."

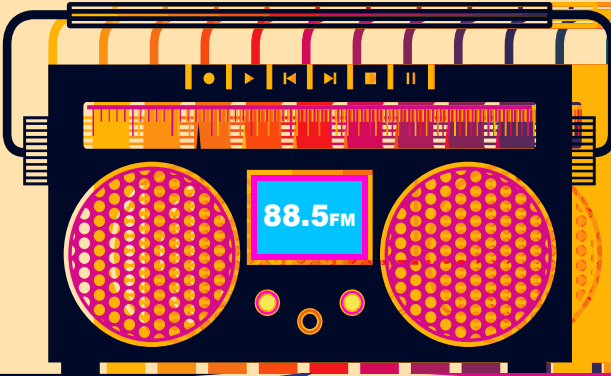
Julius is currently open for dinner Thursdays through Saturdays from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. In addition, they offer Sunday brunch from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. This brunch features 100 percent Mexican cuisine and is not a buffet, but a five course meal that will leave anyone impressed (and with a very full tummy). Reservations can be made online at juliuserie.square.site or by calling (814) 315-9311.

Erin Phillips, who loves Mexican food almost as much as antique woodwork, can be reached at erin@eriereader.com

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Brownstone Transcends Time, But Not Space, at PACA

Full spectrum of human emotion on display in multigenerational play

CONTINUING THURSDAY, MAR. 9

Coming to the Performing Artists Collective Alliance's (PACA) stage in March is Catherine Butterfield's *Brownstone*, a work centering on the second story of a New York City brownstone apartment and the lives of those within it.

Spanning more than 80 years and encompassing the lives of three pairs of people living in the apartment across different times — one set in the 1930s, another in the 1970s, and a final pair in the early 2000s — the play focuses on these characters' uniquely New York experiences within the walls of the brownstone.

"From the perspectives of both a thespian and a marketer in the arts and cultural sector, I can tell you that *Brownstone* will be one of the Erie theater scene's most memorable plays this year," said Jade Mitchell, one of *Brownstone*'s stars. "Everything has aligned so well, and every facet of this production is a draw — the plot of the play, the cast, the theater (historical PACA), the costumes (provided by local vintage shops), and the director, JR Fabin," she continues.

While the only thing in common each set of characters has with each other is the building in which they reside, all of them evoke themes of love, loss, and the full spectrum of human emotion.

The trio of pairs include Davia (Jade Mitchell) and Stephen (Justin Karns), two star-crossed lovers of the 1930s, longing to move to Paris; Maureen (Rebecca Ropelewski) and Deena (Julya

DAVE SCHROEDER



Actors Justin Karns (left) and Jade Mitchell play the characters Steven and Davia in the current PACA production *Brownstone* directed by JR Fabin. Steven and Davia represent one of three sets of characters spanning the decades, but all residing in the same brownstone building in New York City.

Polaski), two aspiring young actresses in the 1970s trying to get their big break; and Jessica (Aimee Wokutch) and Jason (Michael Haas), a corporate power couple of the 2000s.

"I love that this is written by a female playwright. Her attention to detail and ability to weave those details in a compelling way is impeccable," said Mitchell. "JR Fabin has taken [Catherine Butterfield's] vision, melded it with his own expertise ... and created something truly special."

Although *Brownstone* has a relatively small cast, there are multiple levels of experience shared among them, varying from classically trained actors to self-taught actors, with some new to the PACA stage. "How lucky we are in Erie to have such accessible theaters with a wonderful blending of backgrounds and talents," said Mitchell. — Ally Kutz

Weekends through Saturday, Mar. 18 // PACA, 1505 State St. // \$15 // For tickets and more information: paca1505.org

A Truth To Be Told: *The Diary Of Anne Frank* Comes To Playhouse

Important history brought to light and life on the mainstage

PREMIERES FRIDAY, MAR. 17

In a world where history is being challenged, atrocities are being falsified as hoaxes, political divide is at the forefront, and social tension is high, *The Diary Of Anne Frank* is something to be revered. This work of nonfiction written by a 16-year-old girl in hiding, portraying the cruelty a Jewish family experienced during the Holocaust, was originally published in 1947 and first adapted for the stage not long after, in 1955.

Patrick Thiem, a 33-year veteran in the Erie theater scene, plays Anne Frank's father Otto Frank. "Otto is a dad just trying to do the best for his family, and I think any father can relate to that." He continues, "Mr. Frank has the responsibility to be a calming presence among his family, in the face of horrible conditions." Thiem has two daughters of his own, and can relate to the pressure to be that shining beacon in their lives.

While most of what he sees in this world is good and light, he says that this role is important to him and necessary in today's culture of pointing fingers and blame, "It is a reminder of how important it is for us all to be more understanding and loving towards each other. At our core, we can all relate to the Frank family, as history teaches us what can happen once we stop showing love to those we deem different." He also added, "History can also teach us how easy it is for people to follow an ideology blindly, and to forget their core beliefs because someone in pow-

PUBLIC DOMAIN



The story of Anne Frank, a work of nonfiction written by a 16-year-old Jewish girl during the Holocaust, is coming to the LECOM stage at the Erie Playhouse. The play stands as a stark reminder of what can happen when we give up our humanity for the sake of an ideology.

er is telling you to."

When asked how important portraying this character and story to the Erie community is, Mr. Thiem responded, "This is a work of nonfiction that should be constantly played to remind us of the possible evils there are in the world and how easily it could happen again. I want the community to realize that this could be anyone's family." — Jordan Coon

Fridays and Saturdays through Apr. 1 at 7:30 p.m., Sunday Mar. 26 and Apr. 2 at 2 p.m. // Erie Playhouse, 13 W. 10th St. // All ages // Tickets and info: erieplayhouse.org



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A Century of Culture in Erie

The Erie Art Museum's 100th annual Spring Show

OPENING FRIDAY, MAR. 17

The Erie Art Museum is celebrating their 100th annual Nicole & Harry Martin Spring Show. While this may be the 100th anniversary of the show, the museum is also enjoying its 125th year of bringing the arts to the community. In 1898 the Erie Art Museum was founded as the Erie Art Club, which started in the public library and has grown over the years to become a landmark in Downtown Erie. When you look back 100 years ago, it's possible that the first Spring Show opened when Harry T. Burleigh was composing music, the cotton swab was just being invented, and the first issue of *Time Magazine* was being published.

The juror for this monumental show is Gaetane Verna, executive director of the Wexner Center for the Arts and also an art historian and arts administrator. Laura Domencic, executive director of the Erie Art Museum, spoke on Verna's choices. "In many cases she chose a couple works by each artist, so you can get a little more sense of their practice by seeing more than one piece."

The Spring Show will feature 65 pieces from artists who reside within a 250 mile radius of Erie, showcasing the diverse mediums and styles making up the art of our region and its surrounding areas. In honor of its 100th year, the museum has decided to display a few works from previous Spring Shows and titled that exhibit "Selections from the Century: Spring Show Acquisitions 1924-2023." These pieces were either donated or purchased specifically to be in the museum's collection. This is a way to showcase the Spring Show's rich history and to revisit some of the museum's works. Domencic states, "The life of each piece has a really interesting path, whether it changed hands, or the different meanings that get attached

to it as time goes by. I think it's interesting to see pieces after several years — they have additional meanings depending on the context of who else is working in that genre, with that kind of material." This artistic time capsule will remind visitors of the importance of having a resource like the museum in our community, celebrating and preserving regional art for future generations to enjoy.

With the museum looking back at the last 100 years, the question now is what could be in store for the next 100 years? Domencic says that the museum is "expanding our educational programs and the different ways for people to engage with the collection. One of the big initiatives right now is developing some programming that is really sensitive to populations that might not feel as welcome as others do here. We want to make it as open and welcoming as possible, whether it is people new to the community or new Americans, or people who just don't think the museum is for them." This is all part of a mission to try to invite the entire community to enjoy the resources at the Erie Art Museum.

The Spring Show opening kicks off with a preview event for top donors from 5 to 6 p.m., then the public will be invited in for the centennial event from 6 to 9 p.m., with the announcement of awards at 7 p.m. The 100th Annual Nicole & Harry Martin Spring Show runs from Friday, Mar. 17 through Aug. 11. If you miss the opening night, you can still catch this wonderful collection of new and classic works during some of the museum's other scheduled events such as Second Sunday on Mar. 12, the UPMC sponsored Free Day on Mar. 23, or at the end of the month on Mar. 31 for Gallery Night.

— Larry Wheaton
6 p.m. to 9 p.m. // Erie Art Museum, 20 E. 5th St. // Free // erieartmuseum.org



Running concurrently with the 100th Annual Spring Show (which opens on Mar. 17), "Selections from the Century: Spring Show Acquisitions 1924-2023" is a retrospective of art shown in the Spring Show since 1924. It contains the work of many revered local artists from the past 100 years.

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EVENTS

Catch *Peter and the Starcatcher*

A Footlights Theatre student production at All An Act

PREMIERING FRIDAY, MAR. 24

Though they may not have planned it, the timing of the Footlights Theatre production of *Peter and the Starcatcher* is impeccable. That's because in late April, Disney+ is releasing its full-length feature film *Peter Pan and Wendy*. So before you settle in with your family for a movie night, consider catching *Peter and the Starcatcher* — the origin story of the Peter Pan universe — which runs subsequent weekends beginning March 24 until April 2.

The play, which is based on a 2004 novel of essentially the same name, follows the story of starcatcher-in-training Molly Aster and an orphan known only as Boy, who will — through a series of adventures involving Captain Black Stache (before he was Hook) and Smee — become Peter Pan.

"This has honestly been a great rehearsal process so far. This group of students has met the material head on and handled it all easily," said KC McCloskey, director and co-owner of Footlights Theatre Performing Arts Center, and the director of this play. "*Peter and the Starcatcher* is such a fun show. It was a perfect fit for us because it allowed for a good-sized cast and provided lots of opportunities for students to play multiple roles and stretch their acting muscles."

The importance of getting children involved in community theater cannot be understated. McCloskey emphasizes, "I would hope ... with this show the students are coming away from it with a stronger sense of self, are more self-confident, and know that they are capable of rising to any challenge."

Who knows? *Peter and the Starcatcher* might be one child's origin story: their start on the stage and the jumping off point which ignites a lifelong interest and love of theater. — Cara Suppa

Fridays and Saturdays from Mar. 24 through Apr. 1 at 7:30 p.m., Sundays through Apr. 2nd at 3 p.m. // All An Act Theatre, 652 W. 17th St. // \$5 - \$18 // For more info: allanact.net or footlightspac.com

The young cast members of *Peter and the Starcatcher* are definitely not ready to grow up. Footlights Theatre Performing Arts Center has teamed up with All An Act Theatre to bring this inspiring *Peter Pan* origin story to life.

Copper Carriage's Annual Spring Market

Time-worn treasures and more worth leaving your burrow for

SATURDAY, MAR. 25

Catering to the Erie community one market at a time, local vintage and antique home decor boutique Copper Carriage is holding their annual Spring Market. Copper Carriage is a carefully curated store filled with unique home goods and decor ranging from smaller items like antique medicine bottles to larger furniture pieces such as desks and sofas. Any and all treasures purchased from Copper Carriage have a long history and unique story. One of the store's primary missions is to repurpose old items by giving them a new life while also maintaining their antique charm.

In an effort to give back to the local community while simultaneously promoting their shop in a creative way, the Hunt family began the tradition of their open-air markets. Stephanie Hunt comments, "The people of this community and the makers, sellers, and artisans are who we do these markets for at the end of the day."

Erie winters can be long, but the Spring Market is truly something to get you out of your burrow. On the day of the market, Chestnut Street gets a whole new look — blocked off by the vintage Copper Carriage van, the street is open for local vendors to line up with a variety of goods and services to offer. Hunt reflects, "Erie is a prime spot for so many creative minds and we like bringing those people together." There is nothing better than drinking coffee, enjoying a local food truck, listening to live music, shopping, and supporting the fellow Erie community all at once.

Expect to find a wide array of vendors at the Spring Market including The Copper Twig, Woodlake Design, Honey Doll Studios, Twig & Berry, Misery Bay, Charmain's Custom Creations, Querida Design, All-American Maker, Eileen Green Farm, Catnip Gardener, and Love in Pennsylvania with refreshments provided by Atacolypse Food Truck, Luminary Distillery, Erie Ale Works, and the ILP Snack Shack. — Sarah Beck

10 a.m. to 4 p.m. // Copper Carriage, 1909 Chestnut St. // Free // For more info: coppercarriage.com

Charmain Wismar, owner of Charmain's Custom Creations, is a regular vendor at the Copper Carriage markets and will be setting up and selling her wares on 19th and Chestnut streets for the 2023 Spring Market.

EVENTS

Violinist Midori to Debut with the Erie Philharmonic

Program to showcase beauty of old Vienna

SATURDAY, MAR. 25

The Erie Philharmonic will be transporting concert-goers to the ballrooms of Vienna as Grammy award-winning violinist Midori marks her Erie debut with a selection of classical dance music by composers of the Romantic Era. The pieces set to be performed include the Emperor Waltzes by Richard Strauss, Robert Schumann's Violin Concerto, and Johannes Brahms's Third Symphony, with a special performance by the Erie Philharmonic Junior Orchestra taking place before the concert.

"In our March concert, we begin with the charm and opulence of old Vienna—the Vienna of lavish balls and the height of a dance craze that swept through Europe with a force that is still felt today," states the Erie Philharmonic. "Strauss's Emperor Waltzes teem with invention and melodies that linger in the ear long after the glow of the party has faded away. We then welcome the incomparable Midori to make her Erie Philharmonic debut performing Schumann's Violin Concerto. We round out this concert with Brahms' Third Symphony, a work that fully realizes the composer's command of classical style coupled with sumptuous Romantic harmony."

Strauss is known as the "Waltz King," as

he composed over 500 waltzes and popularized the style in Vienna. The Emperor Waltzes, also known as "Kaiser-Walzer Op. 437," first premiered on Oct. 21, 1889 in Berlin and were composed in honor of Franz Joseph I, the Emperor of Austria who was visiting German Emperor Wilhelm II, as a show of friendship between the two empires.

The Violin Concerto in D Minor by Schumann, composed three years before his death, was written at a difficult time during his life. As the Philharmonic explains, "A work composed for Joseph Joachim, the same violinist who premiered Brahms's great Violin Concerto, Schumann's concerto was written as the composer was suffering from delusions that Schubert and Mendelssohn were dictating the notes to him." Joachim kept the manuscript hidden, believing it should not be played or performed. It remained hidden in the Prussian State Library from the world until German violinist Georg Kulenkampff performed it with the Berlin Philharmonic on Nov. 26, 1937.

Brahms wrote his Third Symphony over the summer of 1883, premiering it the same year on December 2 with the Vienna Orchestra. Writing the composition in the German city of Wiesbaden on the Rhine, he is believed to have been

ERIE PHILHARMONIC



Join the Erie Philharmonic as they bring the timeless works of the Romantic Era to the Warner Theatre stage. The evening will include the symphonies and waltzes of Brahms and Strauss and Schumann's Violin Concerto in D Minor, featuring world-renowned soloist Midori.

inspired by his early years of spending time with Robert Schumann, Clara Schumann, and violinist Joseph Joachim.

Midori has performed with world-renowned orchestras such as the Vienna Philharmonic, the Mahler Chamber Orchestra, the London, Chicago, and San Francisco Symphony orchestras, and has collaborated with musicians Leonard Bernstein and Yo-Yo Ma. Serving as the Dorothy Ricard Starting Chair at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadel-

phia, she founded the nonprofit Midori & Friends, which brings tuition-free music education and performance programs to students in New York City. Midori also serves as a United Nations Messenger of Peace and was awarded the Brahms Prize by the Schleswig-Holstein Brahms Society in 2022. She made her professional debut with the New York Philharmonic at the age of 11 in 1982.

— Thomas Taylor
8 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. // Warner Theatre, 811 State St. // \$12 - \$56 // For more info: eriephil.org

An Evening of Instrumental Storytelling

Master trumpeter and composer Chris Botti comes to Mercyhurst University

TUESDAY, MAR. 28

For over two decades, Chris Botti has amassed a spectacular variety of honors — including multiple gold and platinum albums — to become the largest selling instrumental artist in the United States. And soon, he will bring his award-winning sounds to the Mary D'Angelo Performing Arts Center via the Mercyhurst Institute for Arts and Culture.

There's nothing quite like a Chris Botti concert. He's the complete package: a dazzling trumpeter, at home in style from jazz to pop to rock, a brilliant bandleader who lets his players shine, and a born showman whose joy at being onstage is infectious.

Some of the world's biggest musical stars have been eager to share his stage. His mesmerizing performances with an array of legends such as Sting, Barbra Streisand, Tony Bennett, Yo-Yo Ma, Frank Sinatra, Paul Simon, and An-

drea Bocelli have cemented his place as one of the most inspiring forces of the contemporary music scene. Whether he's performing with illustrious symphonies or at renowned venues around the globe, his crystalline and poetic sound transcends musical boundaries.

Impressions, Botti's 2012 Grammy-winning release, is the latest in a stellar parade of albums including *When I Fall in Love* (2004), *To Love Again: The Duets* (2005), *Italia* (2007), and the CD/DVD *Chris Botti in Boston* (2009) which has firmly established him as a clarion voice in the American contemporary music scene.

With *Impressions* and the albums that preceded it, Botti has established himself as one of the important, innovative figures of the contemporary music world.

Brett Johnson Ph.d., director of Mercyhurst Theatre Program said, "A highly skilled musician and consummate en-

CONTRIBUTED



Chris Botti – the top-selling instrumental artist in the United States – brings his trumpeting talent and showmanship to the Mary D'Angelo Performing Arts Center Stage in March.

tertainer, Chris Botti could easily command the stage for an entire evening, but he generously showcases the superb musicians and vocalists who join him onstage. Audiences can expect

Botti to pull out all the stops for an unforgettable evening." — Michael Hull
7:30 p.m. // Mary D'Angelo Performing Arts Center, 501 E. 38th St. // \$25 - \$50 // Tickets and information: miac.mercyhurst.edu/events



Hagen History Center Speaker Series at the Jefferson

FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT'S SAN FRANCISCO OFFICE AND THE STORY OF ITS REMARKABLE TRAVELS

MARCH 15TH, 2023
7:00 PM - 8:30 PM

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PROFESSOR EMERITUS,
STANFORD UNIVERSITY

Location: Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St.

Renowned Wright expert, Dr. Paul Turner, will describe the 30-year journey of the Frank Lloyd Wright's San Francisco field office from its origin to the Carnegie Museum of Art in Pittsburgh; storage in warehouses; the Buffalo Transportation Pierce-Arrow Museum; and finally to Erie's Hagen History Center.

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Underground Musicians Collaborating, Creating New Sounds, and Breaking Ground

Multifaceted groups Crew Life and Thot Savors to perform at Kings Rook Club

By: Amy VanScoter

Weekends in Erie are full of bars and venues where you can enjoy the sounds of rock, alternative, pop, country, and various local bands. However, there has been a void for some locals since the closing of former hot spots such as the Crooked I, Sherlock's, the Beer Mug, and Bobby's Place. Erie's underground hip-hop scene and more experimental and genre-bending musicians have been slightly harder to find. If you're not "in the know" or able to find their creations online, you may be missing out. Enter the Kings Rook Club, which is one local venue opening the doors to many of these musicians, providing a place locally to showcase their talents.

Crew Life is one of these groups, composed of four multifaceted musicians and creatives: Dominic "Dommy" Ferrare, Kelvin "K. Sanz" Sanchez, Jeff "Just Jeff" Pohl, and Deverick "Thraxx Godd" Ohmer. Established in 2014, the name of this hip-hop group is described by one of the artists as being something that you love doing creatively with your friends/crew. The goal of the creation of the company Crew Life Productions is that all creatives can come together as one, and everyone thrives as a whole. You can see this expressed in their music as the group has two collaborative albums (with a third on the way) as well as many side and solo projects from each of the artists involved in the group. Crew Life Productions also creates photos and videos (and won the 2022 Erie Reader Best of Erie category for Best Production Company), as does group member Sanchez with Sanz Studio Productions.

"In 2014, Dommy Ferrare started Crew Life when he was a teenager. We did a lot of music and shows together but it was never an official thing. We did Crooked I a lot, the original Basement Transmissions on State Street, Park Place/Sherlock's, Sullivan's, Beer Mug, Bobby's Place — we became cool (friends) through music and were performing all these places together," recounts Sanchez. "It felt like it put a drought on our kind of live music for a little bit when these places closed. And I think people started getting tired of the limited options available, so we kinda started seeing things in a different way, venturing out, having shows in a more grassroots way. In the summer we would start having shows in front of shops," Sanchez said.

The closure of many venues in the wake of COVID has shifted the way many musicians are thinking about their art and how to expose others to their music. "The big shift for me personally was kind of like when you're on the internet you have access to any place, and if you're not getting the love you feel you should be getting there, you can expand your reach to other places. I get videos sometimes from people I've never met in my life — they find me on social media after they stumble across me on Spotify — and they will be singing their favorite song and I don't even know these people and that's cool, man. It makes you kind of feel like somebody else has the same thoughts as you," Sanchez said. His latest solo project, *Taino Tears*, was released in January 2023. Not originally from Erie, Sanchez relocated

CONTRIBUTED



A collective of creative musicians has come together to become Thot Savors. (From left to right) Avery "James Myles" Mooney, Sean Harris, Bryan "B. Gilly" Gildone, Elias "Elias, if only" Kerr, and Richard "Eugene" Bowser (front).

here in 2010 and feels this gives him a broader perspective and has widely influenced his sound. "Someone who doesn't really leave their hometown has a harder time grasping the bigger perspective on things. I've lived in Boston, Florida, and California, and the influences I draw from are a little bit more than just here."

Sanchez recently served as a co-host for Erie Arts and Culture's February Creative Crowd events and likens Crew Life to a creative collective. "It's like being in a creative cloud of people when we work together because we are definitely bringing our own vibes and perspectives and feelings on things, but when we're working together in that moment, our energies are matched and on the same frequencies. The chemistry is really good. Creating the sound and projects are really smooth. As creatives we all have our own what-ifs: what if I try this or try that, and if you have the right creatives around you who say 'Yeah let's do that, let's try this.' It's fun to have a lot of fluidity in the creative process. It never feels like a stagnant session," said Sanchez.

The premise of a creative collective also informs the local hip-hop group Thot Savors, who are, according to one artist, "attempting the impossible." Member Eli "Elias, if only" Kerr added, "I love posse cuts when three or four rappers try to get the hardest shit out they can over a really interesting, eclectic beat and I think that's

where Thot Savors' real identity is," said Kerr, who you may also remember was also one of the local entrepreneurs involved in Proof Kitchen. "Thot Savors isn't meant to be taken too seriously, it's more this fun expression. I find that when I'm working on my solo 'Elias, if only' music, I'm having to talk about the world and my family and my own personal plight. But when I'm with the guys on Thot Savors I can relax and flex a bit and talk about funny shit and so, it's really just getting back to why we do this — it's fun," Kerr said.

Thot Savors has released two albums and two singles. In addition to Kerr, the group includes artists Sean Harris, Avery "James Myles" Mooney, Richard "Eugene" Bowser, and Bryan "B. Gilly" Gildone. Gildone, like several of the other artists, has also performed with Crew Life and on other musicians' albums. Members of Thot Savors have also created several solo projects, including Gildone, whose music reaches across several genres including hip-hop, R&B, EDM, house, and country. His most recent solo project, *Blood and Guts*, was released in November 2022. His upcoming project, a country album with Elias, if only, is expected this month.

"I don't want to make one kind of music. I play a little guitar, mandolin, I tap around on the keys. I feel like the music is within me and I try to let it out in as many different ways as possible. I don't want there to be bound-

aries to my art. It's not about pursuing recognition or fame, it's just what I need to get out. It's really just self-expressive, not trying to win popularity contests, it's a statement and if you like it you like it, but we definitely hope it catches people's ears," Gildone said.

"I want to get to the point where I'm genreless and my music is 100 percent Elias," said Kerr. "We all listen to so much different music and we want to get to the point where we are making music that inspires us. I'm working with Ian Maciak now on some drum tracks — one of the best musical minds I know personally — and I'm looking forward to getting to the point where we can literally make anything happen at the drop of a dime. That's what I'm most excited about," said Kerr.

"We all have our own work that we take mastery over, but in Thot Savors we all have our certain set of skills we bring to the table and it all works. Just like gumbo, there's a lot of different ingredients, but when you put them all together it's soulful. That's what's so cool about working with these dudes, is there is no ownership, we all have our additions and we all push each other to try new things outside of what we would've. There are a lot of aspects of our solo music that goes into the collective, but the collective doesn't sound like our solo music which is really dope," said Gildone.

Gumbo Sound, another piece of the collective puzzle, is a genreless and abstract concept, a series of concerts that showcase regional hip-hop talent that was created by Thot Savors member Kerr. "We've had artists from Cleve, Pitts, Buffalo," said Gildone. "Thot Savors is a conglomeration of artists who have built a working relationship. We're also all friends, coming together and trying to make masterpieces to the best of our ability. It's really like a group project, we have some of us that are producers, as well as rappers, vocalists, instrumentalists, but we all sit in and we all direct it. It's really a group experience which is what's dope about it. It's a lot of talent and a lot of knowledge of music coming together," said Gildone.

Those collaborative efforts and group projects have led the members of Thot Savors to create some truly unique sounds and experimental music that seems to defy genres and labels. No stranger to the music scene himself, Kerr has been performing since approximately 2013, though he says he just wanted to be involved by "being a genuine fan and appreciator" in those days. "It took me a long time to develop my own style and sound, and it wasn't until 2016 that I started to really make headway with my own sound," said Kerr. He credits being involved with Crew Life and working on a genre-bending album of rock, hip-hop, R&B, and electronic music called *The Dean* with artist Najee as helping to cultivate his sound. Kerr's most recent solo project, *...Nights.Between...* was released in January 2023.

"Since 2018 I've been putting a lot of the groundwork into the production side of things to make sure I can translate ideas fluidly through my computer, through instruments, and through editing to make sure things are big and swimming. I was pretty silent during that time but I was always working on music silently and honing that craft, learning how to mix vocals and drums and learning how to compose and arrange songs," said Kerr. "I always knew the artists who are now in Thot Savors made music, but I had never collaborated with

CONTRIBUTED



Keeping Erie's underground hip-hop and experimental music scenes alive amidst the closure of many local venues, Crew Life has found new life at the King's Rook Club. (From left to right) Kelvin "K-Sanz" Sanchez, Dommy Ferrare, Jeff "Just Jeff" Pohl, and Deverick "Thraxx Godd" Ohmer.

them. So I really tried to cultivate and orchestrate a community around my production and their ideas. Then with me knowing Crew Life from a while ago, I kind of bridged the gap between everybody and really tried to create a community around it."

"We all love the art form, we all love the art of songwriting, performing and the anthropology or the ethnography of music and where things come from and trying to pull through these different mediums is what makes us an eclectic group. The ideas we are willing to go for and the trust we've made," said Kerr. "Unless there is a common space where we do this stuff all the time, we're never going to get back to that place where Erie was for hip-hop like it was in 2013 when people like Jon Box and Iggy (Imig) were here all the time making things happen," said Kerr.

Both groups believe cultivating the collective community is important. "Events and shows like this help to make the community a little stronger and bigger by supporting each other," said Gildone. He noted that the third and fourth Gumbo Sound events are coming up in

the late spring and early summer.

Sanchez believes the diversity in both the groups and solo artist's sounds is what makes the show a complete experience for everyone. "If you try to sound like anybody else, you're gonna get lost in the sound. Just sound like yourself. What I try to translate into what I create is one of my favorite things to do which is driving around in the summertime with the windows down, vibed out, warm breeze, listening to good music. So, I'm definitely going to imprint that into my music because it's an extension of myself and I try to keep my mentality positive and my music positive. The show is going to be like a house party that your boy who had the crazy CD book back in the day would throw, that kind of house party," said Sanchez.

Crew Life, Thot Savors, and Guests will perform at the Kings Rook Club, 1921 Peach St., on Friday, March 10. Doors open at 8pm and there is a \$5 cover charge. For more information on events at the King's Rook Club visit tickets.eriereader.com

Amy VanScoter can be reached at avanscoter@gmail.com

Tayjer Discusses *Bad Habitz*

Erie rap artist gets real on five-track EP

By: Charles Brown

inevitably, many people develop bad habits throughout their lifetime to help cope or to simply feel something different than our reality. One may fall into smoking cigarettes as a way to get through the day, while another may bite their fingernails to battle anxiety. At the end of the day, poor choices are all around us and, mostly, in us.

Erie rap artist Tayjer, who is known for spitting at an intriguing speed while dropping gems for his fans, has chosen not to stray away from discussing such topics on his latest EP *Bad Habitz*. The lyricist takes his listeners on a ride that doesn't prepare them for which way the road is going to turn. The EP covers a wide range of emotions with a bigger message in mind. "The title *Bad Habitz* actually came to me during one of those self-reflecting times when you realize you have a lot of them," Tayjer explains. "We all have a handful of things we could stop doing for the better. It's something we can all relate to. So, I went with the title that could make people relate to my EP before they even know what's on it."

As a listener, you may not be aware how particular artists can be about their beat selections. With production from CabbageHeadBeatz and Bino Beatitup, Tayjer made it a point to have everything come together sonically for all five tracks. "I was very careful about finding the exact beats that spoke to me," claims the artist. "It

was important to me that each beat was able to move a person's mood and emotions, and that I write lyrics and concepts to match."

Guest artists such as Dommy Doo, William Weyes, K Sanz, and others assisted in realizing the full picture. "I wanted to make sure that I got all of the people who were supportive of my music from day one. There were

"The title *Bad Habitz* actually came to me during one of those self-reflecting times when you realize you have a lot of them. We all have a handful of things we could stop doing for the better. It's something we can all relate to. So, I went with the title that could make people relate to my EP before they even know what's on it." ~ Erie rap artist Tayjer

actually a few more people I really wanted on this project, like you, Walkman, and Thraxx, but for one reason or another, it didn't fall into place," Tayjer states. "I am looking forward to working with them on my next projects, though."

The project still gives you enough to enjoy as Tayjer flows unapologetically without being too philosophical or preachy. *Bad Habitz* is fun, vibey, and a smart effort all the way through. "I'd say the message of this project



is that you can be going through bad times in life, but you're not alone," Tayjer says. "You can turn your problems into a beautiful thing everyone can relate to."

Bad Habitz can be found on all digital streaming platforms.

Charles Brown can be found on Facebook and Twitter @ CEEBrown814, and online at ceebrown.com



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Gem City Style: March 2023

A Q&A with some of our featured Can't Miss Dishes creators

By: Jessica Hunter

This month, I caught up with some of the chefs and creators behind a few of the items that were featured in our "Can't Miss Dishes." I asked each of them: If you could invite any person to dinner, who would it be? What would be on the menu? What would you talk about? Their answers run the gamut from family to celebrities to historic figures, and give you a glimpse into the inspiration behind the food.

Bro Man's Sammiches Birria & Burgers (Stephen Stanbro Sr.)

If I had to choose just one it would have to be my Gram! We would definitely have tea — she loved her tea and I'd love to serve her a tasting menu of all of my favorite dishes that I've created since she's been gone.

We would talk about family and life in general. She was always my rock and one of my biggest inspirations. I'd like her to know that I did my best with all the knowledge she shared with me and that I still wake up every day living a life that she would be proud of.

Dina's Authentic Dominican Kitchen (Dinanyili Csir)

If I were to invite any person to dinner, it would be my brothers who I haven't seen for almost two years. I'm very close to them and I deeply miss them. On the menu would be goat stew because that's what my mom makes for us when we are all together. And we would talk and fight about everything!

"I always found that a mixed crowd would make for the most interesting [dinner] conversations so my ideal guests would be an eclectic mix from industries such as art, fashion, finance, tech, sports, and politics." ~ Noodlelove's Christopher Potter

Majestic Bakery (Will Baldauf, Cam Spaeder, and Max Wieczorek)

Will: I'd love to spend a quiet evening sipping cheap beers and eating egg salad sandwiches with Paul Newman. Just cracking jokes and talking salad dressing.

Cam: I would like to have a beautiful pot of split pea soup with the late, great Big Pun and discuss the teachings of Baba Ram Dass.

Max: I'd have dinner with Joe Root. We'd eat steamed rutabaga and talk about birds.

Noodlelove (Christopher Potter, featured in 2022's Can't Miss Dishes)

We used to host these dinner parties in New York with a couple of friends of mine and they were always incredible. We were each tasked with inviting a few people that made for an interesting night/conversation. The guests would always have to rotate even though they would always ask to be invited again.

With that, I always found that a mixed crowd would



Reporting on their ideal dinner guests, menu, and conversation are (clockwise from top left) Stephen Stanbro Sr. of Bro Man's Sammiches, Nga Rastatter of Saigon Nights, Dinanyili Csir of Dina's Authentic Dominican Kitchen, Christopher Potter of Noodlelove, and (from left) Max Wieczorek, Cam Spaeder, and Will Baldauf of Majestic Baking Company.

make for the most interesting conversations so my ideal guests would be an eclectic mix from industries such as art, fashion, finance, tech, sports, and politics. There are so many that I could go on forever but I would cap it at 10 to keep it intimate: Bill Clinton, Kevin Hart, Kieth Richards, Tupac, Ellen DeGeneres, Tom Ford, Elon Musk, Muhammad Ali, Robert Downey Jr. and ME!

Without a doubt, I would have the world's best restaurant Noma cater the meal since this is the last year anyone will be able to experience a meal there.

Saigon Nights (Nga Rastatter)

I would like to invite my parents and my family who are in Vietnam. I have not seen them for a long time. I would love for them to come here to be proud of their daughter and try our delicious food at Saigon Nights. I would talk about how happy I am to be able to share with Erie, the Vietnamese tradition of pho and gath-

ering together of family and friends over a good meal.

I would serve Pho Vietnam, widely known as Vietnamese noodle soup, which is a highlight of Vietnamese cuisine. Pho is also considered one of the most popular street foods in almost all big cities of Vietnam. Despite looking simple, pho has a fascinating complexity of textures and flavors. Normally, Pho Vietnam is made of rice soft noodles called "banh pho," some slices of meat, traditional herbs, and is served with consomme, which is made by simmering the bones of chicken, pork, or beef. Vietnamese people love eating pho for breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

Pho is the essence of Vietnamese traditional cuisine. It not only contributes to the abundance of Vietnamese cuisine but helps many Vietnamese people make money. Pho is also the pride of the Vietnamese people. The Vietnamese have introduced pho to global friends and brought pho into the world.

Jessica Hunter can be found at jessicahunterphotos.com



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PODCASTS / BOOKS

Podcast Picks: Food Wine & Good Ol' Times

Food history makes modern connections in new local podcast

Hosted by: Courtney Baran

If you enjoy local history, it's likely you already know the name Courtney Baran. While she isn't an Erie native, she's brought her perspective and impressive skills to the local history scene since moving here with her husband six years ago. She was the digital collection librarian for the Erie County Public Library for over three years, where she organized the weeklong HistErie Week in May 2022 that included over 30 programs and events. She is the founder of Courtney Baran Historical Consulting, a business specializing in historical research, education, documentation, and digitization, along with history-related project planning. Then, as of this past summer, she was hired by the Erie County Historical Society's Hagen History Center as their digital archives technician (her new Fire-side Chats have been an exciting recent addition to their programming).

Now, she's putting her master's degree in public history to good use once again as the creator and host of *Food Wine & Good Ol' Times*. Her first episode dropped just before the Super Bowl



aired, so perhaps it was natural that the topics of discussion were football and chicken wings — and the history behind their intersection. It also serves as an introductory episode, with Baran providing autobiographical anecdotes including her love of food history and her own personal journey from being indifferent to football to becoming a dedicated fan.

Upcoming episodes will include a Q&A with a local history author as well as histories of the Erie Pontiacs, the Finger Lakes wine region, historic hunting records in Pennsylvania, and holiday lights. — Jonathan Burdick

ICYMI Book Review: *I Miss You When I Blink*

Mary Laura Philpott's 2019 release worth a longer look

Usually, this spot is reserved for newer releases, but it is hard to pass up the opportunity to recommend this wonderful set of essays by Mary Laura Philpott. Published in 2019, this collection was a precursor to 2022's *Bomb Shelter* (which the Reader reviewed this past August).

Anyone who considers themselves to be a Type A personality will likely understand and strongly identify with the lens through which Philpott sees the world, organizing things into tidy and attainable lists and goals. Much like *Bomb Shelter*, her work in *I Miss You When I Blink* hits close to home for many who understand the anxiety and worry that comes with trying to fit everything neatly into an itinerary.

Very much a planner and perfectionist (traits of many Type A-ers), Philpott thought that if she was always right, she'd always be happy, and that by creating the perfect to-do list, she'd achieve the contentment and success she was searching for. However, after ticking all the boxes — from a spouse,



to children, to a home in a residential neighborhood — she instead felt anxious and stuck, wondering why she felt so wrong after doing everything right. Should she continue on in the same



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way, or walk away and completely reinvent herself? As it turns out, the answer wasn't — and isn't — so simple.

Instead of choosing either extreme, she decides that making changes in her life is the best course, and comes to terms with the fact that failure is a risk of some of those changes, but amazing results are just as likely. Identity crises aren't once-in-a-lifetime things, and in offering up her own experiences to show that personal re-inventions are both normal and necessary, she gives "Type A" personalities a nudge to know that they are able to make these changes, too.

Philpott just gets it. She doesn't tread lightly around the bad, and talks in detail about the anxiety and unknowns

that come along with making changes in your life. She gives excellent anecdotes that will hit home for a lot of folks, taking on the conflicting pressures brought on by modern adulthood. She understands what it is like being that person constantly searching for the right thing to do to get the most out of their life. And she understands what it feels like when you *don't* succeed.

I Miss You When I Blink, while billed as a memoir of essays, is also a guide for those of us who may feel a bit lost, a bit confused, a bit anxious; it is a perfect example that there's no way out but through it, and Philpott is there with us every step of the way. —Ally Kutz

Atria Books // 288 pages // Essays

Book Review: *A Sliver of Darkness*

Horror and thrill on full display in C.J. Tudor's latest

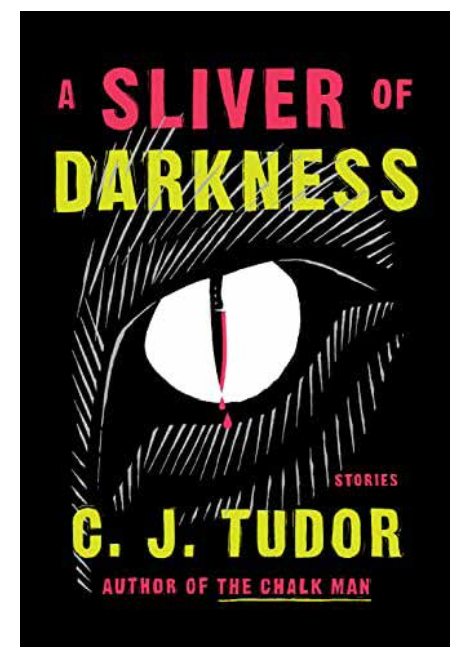
Who says the horror genre needs to be confined to only one time of year? In the newest from C.J. Tudor, horror and thrill are on full display, spread out across 11 exceptionally mysterious and hair-raising stories.

A Sliver of Darkness showcases the horror author's mind at its best, broadening the reader's view of the macabre as they weave through worlds crafted from fantasy and fiction as well as those a bit too familiar for comfort. Each story has such vivid imagery and realistic descriptions that you may find yourself looking over your shoulder before the story is through.

Each story brings something unique to the collection, with a number standing out thanks to their especially creepy plots or the characters that make the story come alive.

In "End of the Liner," a cruise ship becomes a haven for people during a disaster, but the people are never allowed to leave. In "The Block," an eerie, abandoned apartment building draws the intrigue of a group of teenagers, who find there is something more sinister lurking within its walls. In "Runaway Blues," two jazz club enthusiasts befriend a jazz singer, only to find that something more wicked may be taking place between him and his muse.

In "Gloria," a cold-hearted killer from one of Tudor's previous novels *The Hiding Place* makes a reemergence,



befriending a strange girl at a service station. In "Final Course," a group of old friends attend a dinner party, in the middle of a world descended into complete darkness. And in "The Copy Shop," a business makes reproductions of just about anything, but are the copies as good as the originals?

Tudor has been hailed as a master storyteller of horror, and this collection is further proof that it is a well-earned title. Showcasing her talents in the genre, these thrilling tales will leave you wanting more, but maybe while leaving the light on. — Ally Kutz

Ballantine Books // 239 pages // Horror, Short Fiction



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What a Rush!

Cocaine Bear isn't as wild as its title suggests



Every now and then, Hollywood attempts to mimic the insane style of horror B-movies and, despite some noble effort, never quite accomplishes its goal. A film like *Snakes on a Plane* never seems to reach the energy and creativity of, say, Joe Dante's *Piranha*. Likewise, the new film *Cocaine Bear* feels like it should be a blast from start to finish, but it doesn't really live up to its ridiculous title. Despite some impressive special effects and setpieces as well as some surprisingly decent performances, I just can't help but wonder what Roger Corman or the wacky folks at Troma could do with this golden idea.

Set in 1985 and based on a (kind of) true story, a large amount of cocaine gets lost in a Georgia national park after a drug smuggling attempt goes horribly wrong. Needing to recover his product, a feared crime lord (Ray Liotta in his final performance) sends a duo of criminals into the woods to retrieve it. However, a 500-pound black bear has found it first and now an assortment of visitors must



deal with the drug-fueled apex predator.

With a plot that could never be taken seriously, the film rests solely on a single gag: what if a bear was on cocaine? That said, director Elizabeth Banks gives us an unexpected amount of character development and some genuinely likable

characters before getting to the gory bits. But it is still not quite enough to carry the film for its short runtime. A film called *Cocaine Bear* feels like it should be pure mayhem from beginning to end, but it instead starts with a bang and settles into a whimper. — Forest Taylor

Directed by Elizabeth Banks // Written by Jimmy Warden // Starring Keri Russell, O'Shea Jackson Jr., Alden Ehrenreich, Christian Convery, Brooklynn Prince, Jesse Tyler Ferguson, Aaron Holliday, Isiah Whitlock Jr., J.B. Moore, Leo Hanna, Ayoola Smart, Margo Martindale, and Ray Liotta // 95 minutes // Rated R // Universal Pictures

Fear of the Dark

Skinamarink could be either terrifying or frustrating



Independent horror films have always been at the forefront of new and fascinating cinematic languages. It doesn't seem like it in retrospect, but films like *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* and *The Blair Witch Project* presented their stories in a daring, almost experimental manner which helped make the terror even more impactful. This is doubly true for Kyle Edward Ball's unexpected hit *Skinamarink*, which came to Shudder after a limited theatrical run. The film looks and sounds unlike any other film ever made and that can either make the story unbearably disturbing (as it was for this writer) or leave audiences annoyed or bored.

After their father goes missing, two children find themselves trapped in the house when a mysterious entity causes all windows and doors to disappear. With a television playing an endless stream of cartoons as their only companion, these children must endure the torments of an unseen force from which they can't escape.

Very light on plot with minimal

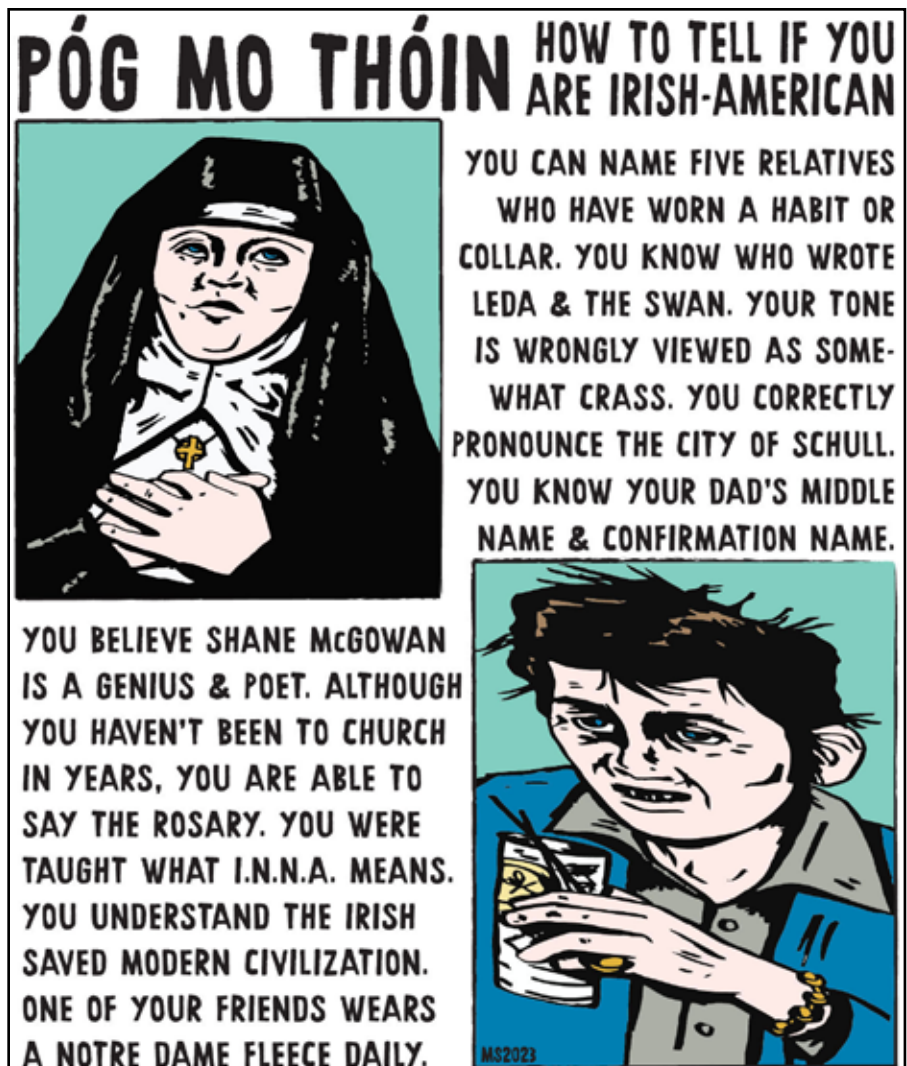


whispered dialogue (subtitles are needed throughout), the film is less concerned with story and more with mood and atmosphere. This could create an unending sense of dread or be a source of irritation depending on the audience's own experiences.

There is a definite theme of abuse and neglect running through the film that may be too much for some viewers. A film like this serves as a kind of cinematic Rorschach test. I can't begrudge anyone who has no patience for it, but if you can relate to the pure

terror of being a child and waking up to go to the bathroom at 3 a.m., this one might be for you. — Forest Taylor

Written and directed by Kyle Edward Ball // Starring: Lucas Paul, Dali Rose Tetreault, Rosa Paul, and Jaime Hill // 100 minutes // Shudder // Not Rated



ALBUM REVIEWS

This American Song
Connect the Dots
Presque Isle Records
★★★★★

This American Song’s EP *Connect the Dots* is a stunning showcase of the band’s immense talent and infectious energy. With the idiosyncratic delivery of frontman Jeff Phillips, the band weaves together a seamless blend of indie rock that’s absolutely refreshing. With a lineup consisting of new members Michael Milk on bass, Dave Tamulonis on keyboard, and Brent Knight on drums, the band is on the exact right track, while the continuous brassy sound provided by trumpeter Jesse Guerrein and trombonist Larry Wheaton add a layer of texture and depth that has become the band’s calling card. In addition to the lyrics — which feel like the most evocative ones in the band’s history — one thing that sets *Connect the Dots* apart is John Johnston’s incendiary lead playing. His guitar work is both technically impressive and emotionally resonant, providing a powerful counterpoint to the band’s lyrics. Overall, this EP is a triumph for the band, a perfect follow-up to their 2020 full-length *People of the Stars*, and a must-listen for anyone who wants to get on board with one of the low-key greatest bands in Erie’s history. This *and* they just released a full-length live album *Exile on State Street*, complete with a pitch-perfect Stones cover send-up, recorded live at PACA. — Nick Warren



Paramore
This is Why
Atlantic Records
★★★★★

It’s been six years since *After Laughter* — the album that twisted Paramore’s signature brand of pop-punk into colorful ’80s art rock — and after two experimental solo albums from frontwoman Hayley Williams, no one could be sure what to expect from the band’s sixth studio album, *This is Why*. If the lead single and title track were to be believed, the record was likely to continue down a similar path, and yet, after years of a global pandemic, hearing “This is why I don’t leave the house” shouted by the band members in tandem had a darker feel to it. If *After Laughter* is Paramore’s sunny pop record, *This is Why* would be the album bridging the band’s transformation in sound. The best example of this is the second single “The News,” an angry and ever-green song built on jagged guitars with one of the album’s most aggressively catchy choruses. Elsewhere, album closer “Thick Skull” is influenced by the notable space-rock band Thick Skull, but it’s not all dark and stormy. The album’s standout track, “Big Man, Little Dignity,” flirts with the atmosphere of classic Fleetwood Mac, highlighting Williams’ gorgeous vocals. While these moments are spaced across the record, leaving room for the subdued songwriting of her solo work, *This is Why* is likely to reward patient listeners as Paramore’s best work yet. — Aaron Mook



Rebecca Black
Let Her Burn
Self-released
★★★★★

If all you know of Rebecca Black is her 2011 cringe-anthem “Friday,” then you’re in for a doozy. After collaborations with avant garde electropop artists like Dorian Electra, umru, bbno\$, and scores of her own singles, Black has finally emerged with her first full-length album. Honestly, this album comes as a wonderful surprise. It’s been interesting to see Black’s name turn up here and there, as she attempts to move beyond her viral past, essentially reinventing herself as a credible hyperpop artist in her own right. The pop sound is still present, but there’s a newfound maturity in her vocals and lyrics that sets this record apart. The production on *Let Her Burn* is top-notch, with pulsing beats and atmospheric synths that add to the depth of the tracks. The album is delightfully reminiscent of Charli XCX, albeit more so the light introspection of *How I’m Feeling Now* than the party-girl glitz of *Crash*. Black’s lyrics are sharp and relatable, and her vocals are stronger than ever before. She manages to strike a nice balance between vulnerability and strength, creating a sound that is uniquely her own. So don’t listen to Pitchfork — with standout tracks like “Destroy Me,” “Sick to my Stomach,” and “Look At You,” *Let Her Burn* is top-notch from start to finish. — Nick Warren



Lil Yachty
Let’s Start Here
Concrete Records
★★★★★

On the aptly titled *Let’s Start Here*, former Soundcloud rap star Lil Yachty sets out to prove he is more than a questionable hip-hop trend. As he explained at the album’s premiere, he no longer wishes to be equated with the widely maligned “mumble-rap” genre; instead, he wants to show music fans from all walks of life that he has a larger vision. There’s certainly no mistaking that after a single listen of his new record, it is a step towards something new for the artist that falls just short of great. After opening track “The Black Seminole,” one of the first comparisons made by listeners was to current psychedelic indie-rock act Tame Impala; fortunately, *Let’s Start Here* is more than Yachty simply singing over karaoke tracks. With co-writers like Alex G and Mac DeMarco at his side (“Failure,” “Drive Me Crazy!”), Yachty taps into something inspired not only by Pink Floyd, but by classic jazz and funk acts as well. In fact, rapping aside (which may be the only point of contention here), *Let’s Start Here* would fit in nicely somewhere between Tyler, the Creator’s last three records. Yachty’s interest in singing with extensive vocal effects is not always the most fitting choice, but considering his intentions, it’s hard not to admire the artist’s ambition here. — Aaron Mook



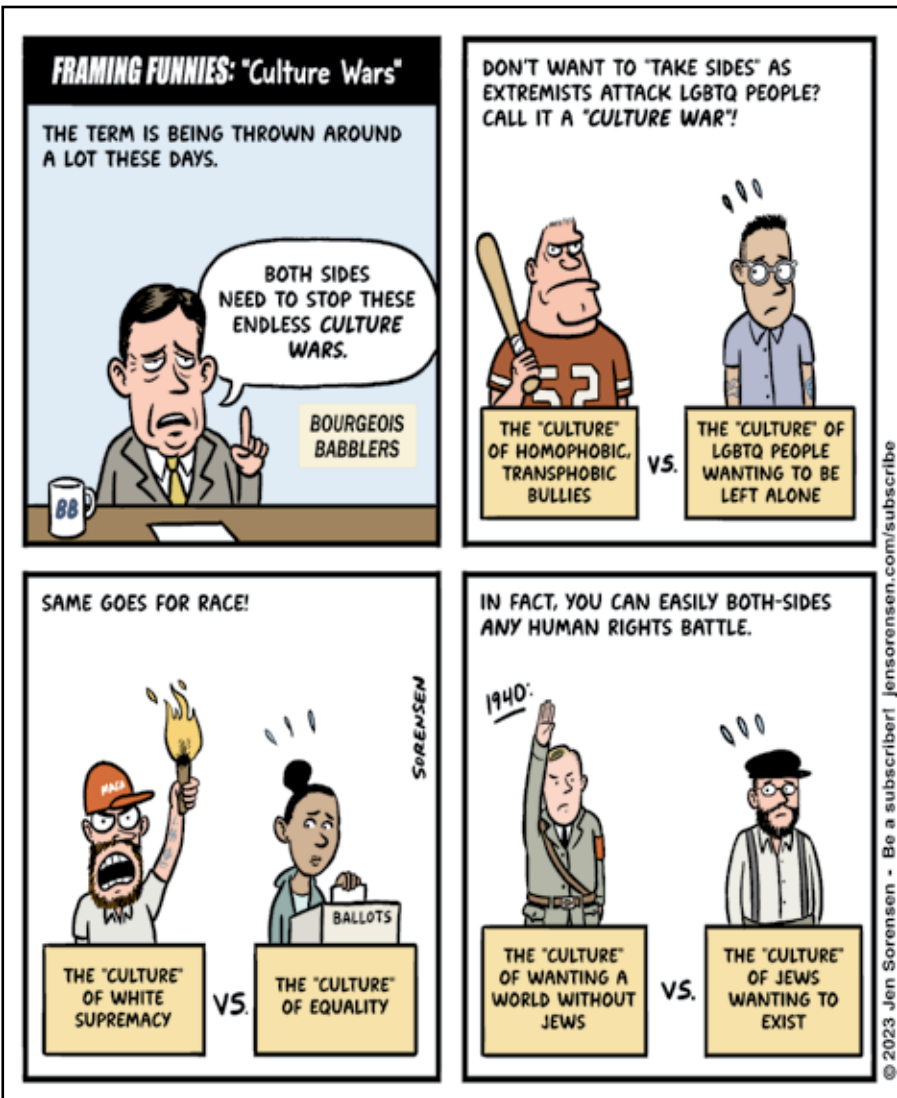
TOMMY IN TOON — BY TOMMY LINK



CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
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48								49						
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56						57	58				59			
60						61					62			
63						64					65			

- Across**
1. Marvel hero who can control weather
6. "No ____ luck!"
10. Went too fast
14. Kind of feed
15. It contains 12 territories in Risk
16. "Must've been something ____"
17. Blushing scatterbrain?
19. "____ Agnus Dei" (Mass phrase)
20. Part of NCAA: Abbr.
21. Rower's blade
22. Partner of dangerous
23. Ainer of "Tiny Desk" concerts
24. Data-transmission measure
26. Event in which a guide might use terms like "la classe économique" and "le cockpit"?
31. Finnish tech giant
32. Freak out
33. Pedicure targets
34. Pollo ____ (grilled chicken dish)
36. Singer Del Rey
40. Fuzzy-skinned fruits
42. Tax cheat's worry
43. Reason why Godzilla got booed while playing hoops?
48. Ones who discriminate against seniors
49. LAPD rank
50. Bearded bully in
- Down**
1. Singer Bareilles
2. When many ballots are cast: Abbr.
3. Casino calculation
4. "Knives Out" writer/director Johnson
5. "Little ol' me?"
6. About 30% of Africa
7. App customer
8. Espionage org.
9. Possessed
10. Organization whose first seal, created in 1892, depicted a giant sequoia
11. Game with a maximum score of 3,333,360
12. "And so on and so forth"
13. Clinton press secretary Myers
18. Lure (in)
22. Longfellow's "The Bell
- Across**
23. "Don't share this" doc
24. Country star Paisley
25. "____ one objects ..."
26. Explosive stuff, for short
27. Win on "Hollywood Squares"
28. Luau strings
29. Goes in 100%
30. "No bid from me"
34. Mad as ____ hen
35. Lancelot and Mix-a-Lot, for two
37. Oral health org.
38. It means nothing
39. 2021 World Series champs: Abbr.
41. "Wishing won't make ____"
42. "The purpose of ____ is washing the dust of daily life off our souls": Picasso
43. Comic legend Jackie "Moms" ____
44. Crazy Horse, e.g.
45. Kind of network
46. Kutcher of "Dude, Where's My Car?"
47. Dr. Frankenstein's aide
51. Aware of
52. Balkan native
53. Atkins diet no-no
54. Turturro of "The Sopranos"
55. Pre-calc class
57. One may be feral
58. The "E" of E.U.: Abbr.
59. "Who ____ to judge?"



Answers to last puzzle

S	C	O	P	E	S		J	I	M	D	A	V	I	S
T	H	R	A	L	L		A	Q	U	A	T	O	N	E
U	L	T	I	M	O		R	U	N	L	O	W	O	N
B	O	O	G	I	E	W	O	O	G	I	E			
S	E	N	O	R		A	M	T				I	B	M
					W	A	L	K	I	E	T	A	L	K
J	L	O				O	E	R		H	B	O	N	O
D	O	N	I	M	U	S			S	O	S	U	E	M
A	S	H	A	R	P		M	I	R				W	E
T	E	E	N	I	E	W	E	E	N	I	E			
E	R	R					I	T	T		S	M	O	G
						H	I	P	P	I	E	D	I	P
C	R	A	B	T	R	E				O	N	L	I	V
P	A	R	A	M	O	U	R			S	T	O	N	E
O	M	A	R	E	P	P	S			T	O	Y	E	R



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- Customize your tickets with your logo or sponsor logos
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- Promo codes
- Schedule multiple ticket types and prices
early bird, kids, day-of
- Customizable registration questions and waivers
- Full tech support

100%
FREE
for event
creators

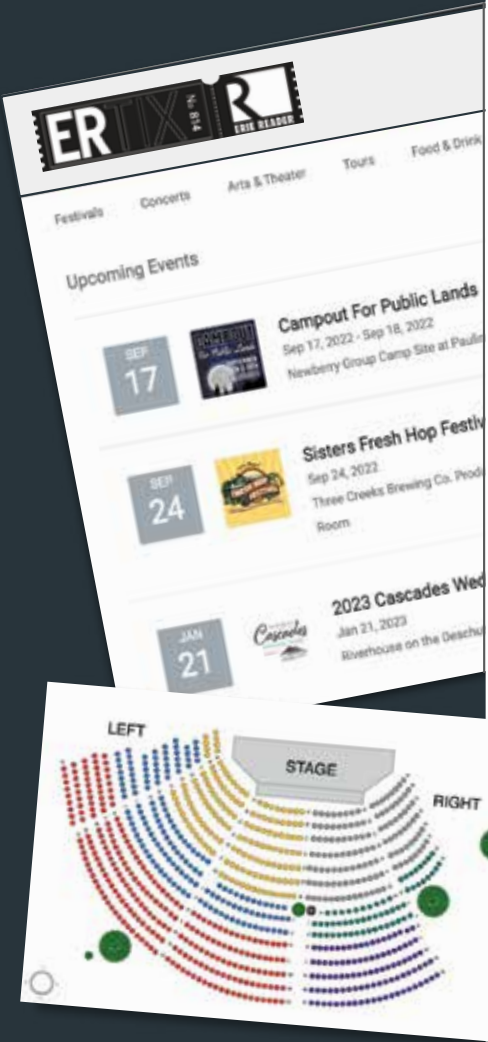
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