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Jan. 2 - Jan. 15 // Vol. 9, No. 1 // ErieReader

## Easing Into the New Year

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## Playing the Council Grinch

Liz Allen's first year in office



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## From the Editors

### The force of habit

In hatha yoga, the Salamba Sirsasana, or supported headstand, is often referred to as the “king of asanas” because of the premiums it places on the subject's upper body strength and balance — which have presumably been built up through practice of the other *asanas*, or postures. Executed properly, the crown of the head will be lightly grazing the floor, with the forearms providing a base. Do it improperly and there will be at least a *minor* kink in your neck — if you do not topple over first.

In life as in yoga, it's not easy pulling a 180. To flip things on their head — literally or figuratively — takes rigorous devotion and discipline, but the payoff of an unfamiliar perspective can be significant. Of course, sometimes it requires others looking at things same way. Take it from City Councilwoman Liz Allen, who brought with her to office a journalist's discerning eye for inconsistency and mistruth. Her no-nonsense approach would seem just the antidote for Erie's latest budget crisis, but as she's learned, it's no simple task shaking up an establishment. Political organisms, like individuals, are creatures of habit.

That is not to say that some old habits aren't worth keeping around. One of our time-honored traditions at the Reader is our annual “Best of Erie” awards, a celebration of the most superlative people, places, and businesses the Gem City has to offer. Within our list of 2018 winners, you'll find both trusted and beloved institutions that we can't imagine life without, as well as newcomers who feel like they should've been here all along. In this case, democracy worked exactly how it was supposed to. Nearly 350,000 votes were cast across 111 categories — figures that indicate readers were not merely posturing, but truly cared about their opinions being heard. There were many hotly contested races that went down to the wire — a testament to the quality of the nominees and the pride they take in being assets to the community.

Like Albert Ruger (the Prussian immigrant, Civil War veteran, and cartographer who produced a bird's-eye-view map of our city in 1870), we are proud to offer you a panoramic view of the premier places to go, people to see, and things to do in Erie, Pa. — not only in this issue, but throughout the year. With apologies to all the resolution-makers out there, we don't resolve to change our ways anytime soon.

## Playing the Council Grinch

First year in office proves challenging



Erie City Councilwoman Liz Allen has had difficulty disguising her frustrations with some of the inveterate practices of city government during her first year in office. Here, at the final City Council meeting of 2018, she objected to the unusual procedure by which outgoing councilman Bob Merski was replaced, which allowed standing members to cast all six of their available votes for Curtis Jones Jr.

By: Liz Allen

Who knew that rummaging through a junk drawer would open up a cache of memories about the high and low points of 2018, including my first year on Erie City Council?

I was searching for instructions for an old snow blower when I ran across a *Grinch* parody I wrote a long time ago.

I like filing things and being organized, so finding the snow-blower manual where I stashed it years ago made me happy. My discovery also reminded me about how tickled we were when my husband won a new Ariens snow blower from the Erie SeaWolves on Labor Day. I had promised a nun friend that I would give her the old snow blower; now I could make sure she knows how to operate it, too.

But I had forgotten that I had saved the *Grinch* spoof that I wrote for a Christmas door-decorating contest at the Erie Times-News in 2000. That year, despite excellent job evaluations, I got ensnared in some inter-office politics and my journalism job was unexpectedly switched from lifestyle editor to administrative editor.

I could either grouse about my new assignment, which included a pay cut,

or embrace it. I opted for the latter, and decided that I'd approach my new role with humor, too. Hence the *Grinch* parody, in which I poked fun at my task of preparing the newsroom budget.

*The Administrative Grinch hated Christmas! The whole Christmas season!*

*Now please don't ask why. No one knows quite the reason.*

*It could be her head wasn't screwed on just right.*

*It could be, perhaps, that her shoes were too tight.*

*But I think that the most likely reason of all*

*May have been that her spreadsheets were two sizes too small.*

Eighteen years after I wrote those lines, I found myself engrossed in spreadsheets again, alarmed that the City of Erie faced an \$11 million deficit but determined to whittle as much as I could from Mayor Joe Schember's spending plan.

*The budget was due, said the head of all Who-ville.*

*There were numbers to crunch,*

*So she had to get busy.*

*How high was that bill?*

*How much was that lunch?*

*All through the week*

*She played with Excel.*

*But the more she did tweak  
It just didn't jell.*

In the words of Yogi Berra, it was like déjà vu all over again.

I did my homework on the city budget. I read the 91-page preliminary budget and the accompanying 90-page budget workbook. I highlighted startling facts about salaries, overtime, PILOT (payment in lieu of taxes) programs and non-profit assessments.

*The payroll was growing.*

*The overtime, too!*

*Red ink was flowing.*

*Boo hoo, boo hoo!*

Earlier in the year, using data from the city finance office, I had created my own spreadsheet to show that the Golf Fund had lost at least \$280,000 in the last five years. Now I've been told that maybe the city will look at golf operations in 2019, too late for savings in the upcoming budget.

I questioned why all 78 city managers, including the 45 percent who don't live in the City of Erie, would get across-the-board 3 percent pay raises in 2019, without any type of performance review. In response, I've been scolded by department heads, who claim that a pay freeze would be akin to a pay cut, because they have to pay more for health insurance.

I pointed out that in 2005, the state's Early Intervention Program recommended that the city enact a 5 percent amusement tax, but that City Council ended up passing a 3 percent tax instead. Mayor Schember's original preliminary budget proposed raising the tax to 5 percent, generating \$160,000 in additional annual revenue. Some city residents told me they favored such an increase over other types of tax and fee hikes, because at least it would spread some of the tax burden to suburban residents.

But after protests from Casey Wells, executive director of the Erie Convention Center Authority, the mayor dropped the amusement tax increase. Never mind that according to my rough calculations, the city lost about \$2 million in the last 13 years by enacting a lower amusement tax than had been recommended.

*She envied the Whos*

*Whose doors were all decorated.*

*They worked on the news.*

*She sat and she calculated.*

I've traded my full-time news career for a part-time job on Erie City Council. But I still hoped that one of the principles that journalists fight for, the need for transparency and sunshine in government actions, would also be followed by my council colleagues.

My hopes were quickly dashed.

When council votes on agenda items, the practice is to be silent when voting "yes" and only to speak when voting "no."

At my first council meeting last Jan. 3, I declared that I would vote "yes" and "no" out loud — until a council member claimed that I had agreed to the silent "yes" votes when we approved our rules of procedure at that meeting.

I've looked through the four-inch-thick binder containing the city's codified ordinances and administrative code. I can find no such rule. I also think that the silent "yes" vote is an affront



to citizens with physical handicaps. We should be casting our votes aloud, for those who are visually impaired. We should also be recording our votes by using the electronic tote board, activated by a button at our seats, for who are hearing-impaired.

But after I lost the first skirmish about voting, several people warned me to pick my battles. This one wasn't worth antagonizing my colleagues, I decided.

*How much will the cars cost?*

*The postage, the rent?*

*Will cell phones get lost?*

*Can we cut one more cent?*

*With just hours to spare*

*She stared at the keyboard.*

*What more could she pare?*

*What more could she hoard?*

During our study sessions on the proposed 2019 budget, council members tried to cut expenses and increase revenues in many ways. For example, Councilmen Jim Winarski and Cas Kwitowski pointed out that when the city gives away free compost, landscape contractors take advantage of the giveaways and haul away compost to resell. Can we charge for compost, they asked?

So the finance department gave us a sheet showing that Millcreek Township charges \$25 per yard for its leaf compost, leading me to believe that we might do the same in 2019.

Then the City of Erie's recycling calendar for 2019 came in the mail. Yes, we are still giving away free compost. Perhaps it wouldn't generate much revenue, but it's discouraging that any suggestions for small savings seem to go nowhere.

That's because government bureaucracy is not suited to make changes — even when the need for change is urgent and apparent.

I grew up in a business in which we had to produce a new product — a printed newspaper — at least once every 24 hours, and more often when news broke late. We called the updated edition a "makeover." Today, thanks to digital tools, journalists perform makeovers by the minute. I guess I get impatient when others approach change in a plodding fashion.

Journalists are also trained to ask hard questions, until they (we) get all of the facts. But when I've quizzed a city official at a caucus session or a council meeting, I've been told that I am "insulting" them.

But you can't lay out a roadmap for

the future if you don't question past practices and scrutinize current procedures, and I don't intend to stop asking questions in the public interest.

At that first council meeting, I suggested that in light of the historic snowfalls that buried our city in December, we should look at best practices for snow removal and for on-street parking.

But after praising the efforts of public works employees and listening to some complaints from citizens about problems experienced during last winter's storms, we never revisited the topic.

I have also pushed to make sure that the city's independent authorities and boards would more accurately reflect the demographics of our community. Appointees to these volunteer positions should also enhance the skill sets of the boards and authorities.

We've made some progress there. City Councilwoman Kathy Schaaf has advertised on the city's website for volunteers for authority and board openings.

But for the most part, appointing someone to an authority is still viewed as one of the perks of being on City Council. Appointments are doled out by council members in a convoluted system, based on whose "turn" it is to name an appointee.

For example, I am the liaison to the Erie Sewer Authority, but in less than a year in which I've served in that role, three council members have appointed three new Sewer Authority members — all white males — without seeking applications from the public.

Similarly, Councilman Kwitowski is the liaison to the Erie Regional Airport Authority but Councilman Winarski just appointed a new member to the airport board — Richard Wagner, who already serves on the Erie Water Authority. We had 51 people who expressed interest in serving on City Council, to fill out the term that became vacant when Councilman Bob Merski was elected to the state House of Representatives. Surely some of those council applicants would be interested in serving on a board or authority.

*The deadline was ticking,*

*The pressure was building.*

*And what happened then?*

*Well, in Who-ville they say*

*That the Grinch's small spreadsheets*

*Grew three sizes that day!*

*And the minute her heart didn't feel quite so tight,*

*She whizzed with her budget through*

*the afternoon light.*

*And she brought back the toys! And the food for the feast!*

*And she — herself — carved the roast beef!*

*She still had one question.*

*Did it really make sense?*

*To consider the roast beef*

*A capital expense?*

After my first year on City Council, I've learned that I won't be graded on whether I know the definition of a capital expense in the city budget.

There's also no extra credit for going above and beyond the assigned work, because politics in Erie isn't academic. But it is old school — based too often on who you know and how things have always been done.

If I had to do a performance review, I'd give myself a B-plus for effort and a C-minus for accomplishments, because I haven't shepherded any ordinances through from proposal to passage.

But I am not discouraged.

Two weeks ago, I spoke to the Jefferson Civic Leadership Academy about the history of Erie City Council and one question from a member of the group lingers: How will I measure success as an Erie City Council member when my term ends, in 2021?

I bumbled a bit in my reply to Kurt B. Crays, executive director of the Erie United Methodist Alliance and one of 25 young professionals in the JES class. Truthfully, I hadn't mapped out a four-year plan when I was sworn into office last Jan. 2.

His question made me realize that making change in government is more akin to a marathon than a sprint.

On Dec. 19, at the final City Council

meeting of 2018, I complained about the unorthodox procedure in which we appointed former City Councilman Curtis Jones Jr. to fill Merski's seat the previous night. Jones, who previously served three terms on council, is qualified, smart and collaborative. I merely objected to the process, not to him.

Council had narrowed the list of council hopefuls from the original 51 to 20; two of the finalists bowed out and we interviewed 18 candidates. We would then cast ballots for six candidates, then four, then two, then one.

But at the last minute, before we marked our first votes, we were informed that on the first ballot, we could cast all six of our votes for one candidate.

At the end of the Council meeting the next evening, I recounted one of the inspiring moments for my decision to run for City Council — the Women's March in Washington, D.C., on Jan. 21, 2017, in which millions of us chanted, "This is what democracy looks like!"

Stuffing the ballot box to appoint a new City Council member is not what democracy looks like, I said.

Then I pulled out my pink pussy hat and announced that I will be running for president in 2020 — president of City Council, that is.

And about my emails? I've saved them all.

*Liz Allen hopes that her second year in City Council will be less stressful than her first, when she suffered a heart attack four months after taking the oath of office. She can be reached at lizerie@aol.com or lallen@erie.pa.us.*

### Did you know?

Between 1912 and 1913, the City of Erie operated under a Select Council and a Common Council, according to information provided by the City Clerk's office.

In 1914, the city changed to a commission form of government, under which council members also served in various jobs in the administration.

On Feb. 6, 1934, the Court of Common Pleas appointed Nellie Munger to finish the term of her husband, H.L. Munger, after he died on Jan. 4. Another woman would not serve on council until Joyce Savocchio in 1982.

On Nov. 3, 1959, Erie voters adopt-

ed the Mayor-Council Plan A of the Optional Third Class City Law form of government, which provided the election of a mayor and a seven-member council. The new government went into effect on Jan. 1, 1962.

According to the clerk's records, Theodore Eichorn was the first of eight councilmen to die in office, during the 1932-33 session (the record does not list the exact date of his death). Edward J. Allen was appointed to succeed Eichorn. If I am reading my family tree correctly, Allen was my great-great uncle. — Liz Allen



# Mapping Our Past: A Bird's Eye View of Pennsylvania

The panoramic story of cartographer Thaddeus Mortimer



[top left] Albert Ruger, a Prussian immigrant and Civil War veteran, painstakingly composed this bird's-eye-view map of Erie in 1870 with the help of a small team of trusted assistants and surveyors. [bottom right] Ruger's most famous pupil, Thaddeus Mortimer Fowler, would go on to produce over 400 panoramic maps of towns in over 20 states and Canada, including this overview of North East from 1896.

By: Jonathan Burdick

Erieites must have noticed Albert Ruger during his weeks spent in Erie, Pennsylvania in 1870. He, along with a few trusted and skilled assistants, spent day after day navigating their way up and down each of Erie's many streets, painstakingly jotting down detailed notes and making sketches of every building, every park, and every neighborhood.

Ruger, a 40-year-old Prussian immigrant and Civil War veteran, had already made a name for himself in the world of panoramic mapping. These perspective maps, which surged in popularity throughout the Victorian Era, were more artistically-styled and commercially-driven than ordinary maps. Cities and towns lobbied for the attention of panoramic mapmakers, as leaders viewed them as helpful tools in attracting new residents and industries.

By the time Ruger was surveying Erie, he was already well-known for the quality of his work. He had spent the war refining his skills by mapping various Union camps and now, five years after the war's end, he was operating his profitable mapping business out of Madison, Wisconsin.

It was there that Ruger printed the first professionally-made bird's-eye view map of Erie — a panorama that provided a detailed aerial view of the city as it was in those years after the Civil War.

Around this same time, a younger man named Thaddeus Mortimer Fowler was entering the world of panoramic mapping. Fowler had spent the previous two years in Ruger's employment. He began by selling copies of Ruger's panoramas, but before long, he was assisting him with his surveying and sketches — which very likely included work on the Erie map.

Like Ruger, Fowler was a Civil War veteran. He had been born in Lowell, Massachusetts on December 21, 1842 and at the age of 15, he ran away from home. His journeys eventually brought him to Buffalo, New York and when the war between the states erupted, he tried enlisting to fight for the Union, despite only being 17. He was rejected numerous times, but finally, his enlistment was processed a half-year before his 18th birthday and he joined the 21st New York Volunteer Infantry.

During the Second Battle of Bull Run in 1863, Fowler's leg was badly injured. He allegedly refused an amputation, which saved his leg, but left him with

a permanent limp. He soon received an honorable discharge and began traveling through Union camps taking tintype photographs of soldiers.

He then spent a few years working with his uncle on lithographs, followed by the two years with Ruger, before starting his own panoramic map company. Over the course of the next few years, Fowler surveyed and sketched

towns and cities throughout Wisconsin, Indiana, and Michigan along with two Quaker brothers named Howard and Oakley Bailey.

Over the next few decades, Fowler relocated numerous times and he continued mapping towns along the way. He met and married a woman named Elizabeth Anna Dann, with whom he would have five children, and in 1885, they settled the family down in Morrisville, Pennsylvania.

He then directed his efforts at making panoramic maps of cities and towns across Pennsylvania, Ohio, and West Virginia. He'd be gone from his family in Morrisville for long stretches, usually traveling to a region and completing numerous panoramas before heading home.

His mapmaking continued into the 20th century when a dual-tragedy struck his family. On August 14, 1910, his wife died, months shy of her 60th birthday. Then two weeks later, his 23-year-old son Clarence ended his own life by drinking carbolic acid.







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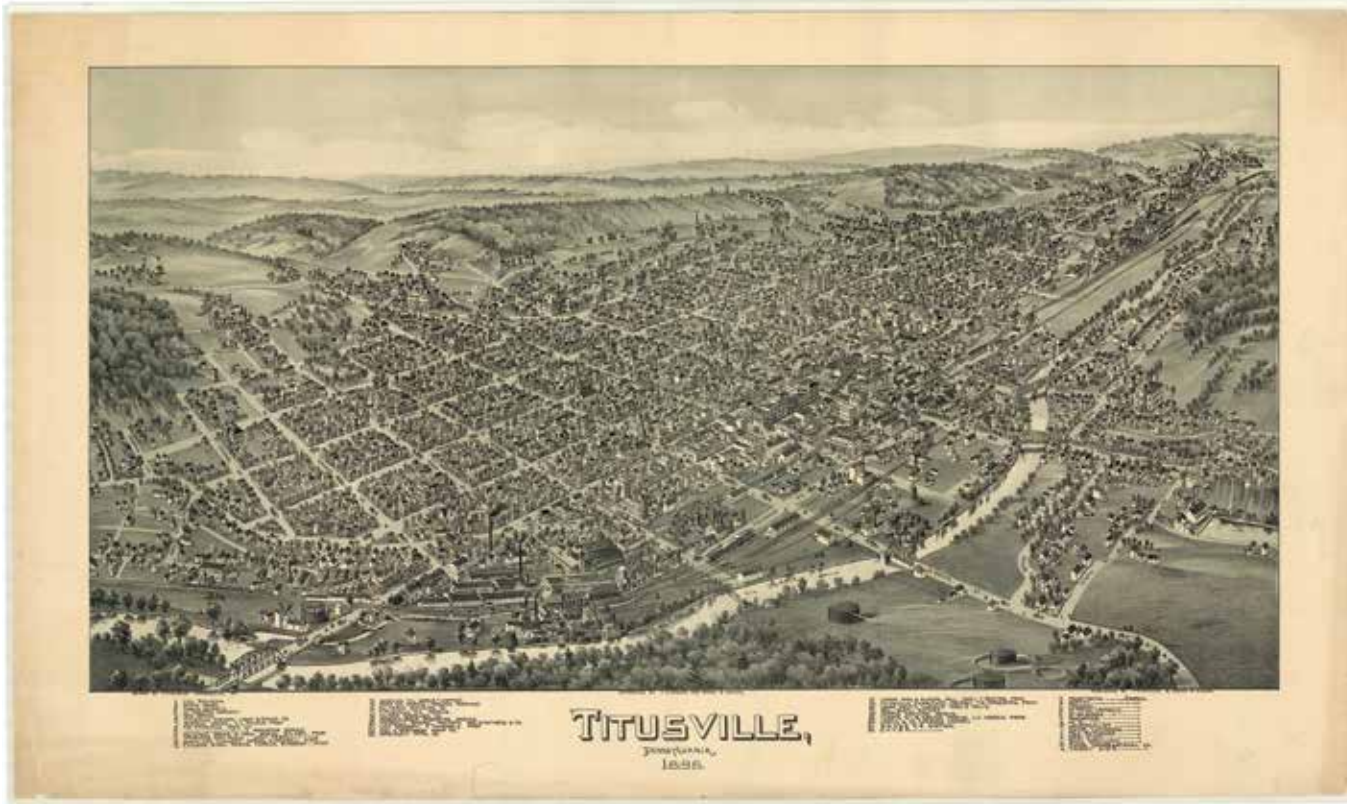
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Thanks to its rich oil fortunes, the Titusville of 1896 was a boom town, as depicted by this sprawling Fowler panorama.

“Despondency over the death of his mother and his inability to secure work is thought to have resulted in the act,” his obituary read.

The frequency of his mapmaking declined after this, but he continued working for another 12 years.

According to the Penn State University Library, which has a collection of Fowler’s panoramas, Fowler produced “more Pennsylvania panoramas than any other artist of the time.” He spent over 50 years drawing maps that included over 400 panoramas, over half of which were in Pennsylvania and included over 20 states and Canada.

John W. Reps, whose many books examine urban planning in the United States, called Fowler the “most prolific of all American city viewmakers.” He

described Fowler’s style as “sparse” and “mechanical,” but exceptionally accurate and detailed. Fowler, Reps wrote, was focused on creating “clear and accurate portrait[s] of the towns” with “minimal artistic frills.”

While he never authored a map of Erie himself, he mapped numerous locations throughout Northwest Pennsylvania, mostly between 1895 and 1897. These included Cambridge Springs (then Cambridgeboro), North East, Union City, Corry, Oil City, Titusville, Franklin, Clarion, Warren, Tidioute, Grove City, and Pittsburgh.

“Fowler gained commissions for city plans by interesting citizens and civic groups in the idea of a panoramic map of their community,” John R. Herbert and Patrick E. Dempsey wrote in an

essay on his maps. “After one town had agreed to having a map made, he would seek to involve neighboring communities. By noting that he had already secured an agreement for a view from one town in the area, he would play on the pride, community spirit, and sense of competition of adjacent communities.”

Throughout his travels, he likely thought he had seen it all — that is until 1918, when America was involved in the First World War. That year Fowler, then in his mid-70s, was in Allentown, Pennsylvania, surveying the city for his latest panorama with his old-time collaborator Oakley Bailey. Hebert and Dempsey described what happened next.

“Airplanes and a [zeppelin] circling the

city were included in the trademark of the aero view to give the impression that some of the information was derived from aerial reconnaissance, which, of course, was not true,” the authors wrote. “Some Allentown citizens noticed the view with the planes on the manuscript map. In the excitement engendered by World War I, Fowler was accused of being a German spy and was jailed. Members of his immediate family drove from Morrisville to identify their father, who suffered injury only to his pride in the incident.”

Whatever incidents may have happened along the way, as an older man, Reps described how Fowler expressed only his “unadulterated joy” in working on his panoramic maps — and he continued to do so until his final days.

In 1922, he traveled to Middletown, New York to work on another panorama. While crossing the road as he surveyed the town, he slipped on the ice. His body never recovered. A few days later, he died. He was 79 years old.

Today, Fowler’s legacy lives on through his many panoramic maps, most of which are still displayed in museums, businesses, and city halls across Pennsylvania today, capturing those cities and towns as they once were, frozen in time.

You can see more of Fowler’s panoramas on the Pennsylvania State Archives ([phmc.pa.gov](http://phmc.pa.gov)) and Library of Congress ([loc.gov](http://loc.gov)) websites.

*Jonathan Burdick runs the historical blog Rust & Dirt. Follow them on Twitter @RustDirt, and on Instagram @RustandDirt.*



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## Easing Into The New Year

Stress-proof yourself and stretch your resolutions further



By: Matt Swanseger

**A** new year is upon us — which traditionally implies that it's time to thoughtfully assess our shortcomings and categorically fail to address them. Statistics show that nine out of 10 New Year's Resolutions never come to fruition. If you've ever experienced a frustrating lack of other Olympians and/or Asgardians to sip elixirs and compare six-packs and/or thigh gaps with, those numbers are disheartening. "Why, though?" as you fan yourself with a fistful of retirement money, accrued from months of prudent financial planning. Are they just not trying hard enough?

Just the opposite, actually. Many mortals grope blindly or lustily toward lofty goals and visions without first calibrating themselves for success. Although it may sound counter-intuitive, the undoing of most Resolutionists is trying *too* hard or being *too* ambitious. According to the American Psychological Association, it is through incremental adjustments to lifestyle that we affect real change. For example, if you haven't set foot in a gym since the Clinton administration, chances are you won't be starring in a *Rocky*-style workout montage, eye of the tiger or no. The likelier outcome is dry heaving and contemplating an early retirement from the ring. Ideally, resolutions will not

be major stressors and you will not get too ahead of yourself. Therefore, before you attempt *anything*, it is crucial to step back, relax, and dial into the right frame of mind. In Western society, this is largely a foreign concept — we are conditioned to the notion of unabating "go" time. When we look to Eastern customs and traditions, however, we see the value placed on "slow" time. Millennia before the advent of modern neurology, Eastern philosophers and thinkers expressed this abstractly in terms of energy flow, but today's science can measure our mental state with electroencephalography. There are at least four (and as many as six) types of brainwaves, rang-

**Yoga and meditation are two of the more proven methods of inducing the transcendental state wherein deep insights and original thoughts flow more effortlessly. This is due to the prevalence of the same theta brainwaves present in daydreaming and REM (dream) sleep.**

ing from the low frequency, high amplitude delta waves of dreamless sleep to the much squigglier beta waves of active consciousness.

In between are the spacier squiggles of theta waves (passive rest) and the sawtoothed squiggles of alpha waves (active rest). Of these, theta waves hold the most potential and interest. They predominate in states of deep meditation, daydreaming, and the REM (rapid eye movement) stage of sleep. Here the subconscious is allowed to take over and we see what we're really made of — fears, hopes, transcendent thoughts and ideas. Focus turns inward, away from the externalities that we so obsess over, and creative and personal breakthroughs are well within reach. Wouldn't it be kind of nice to go there more often? Even if the real you is kind of messed up, wouldn't confronting the root causes of your problems be more efficient than giving them the big run-around?

There is great merit in taking a break from the outside world, an assertion corroborated by the growing popularity of yoga, massage therapy, and alternative medicine practices originating in the East that have made their way West, a territory that includes Erie. In this issue, we will position ourselves for an elementary understanding of the ancient art of yoga. Later this month, we will explore massage therapy and some more exotic procedures people undergo to refine their energy.

### Yoga bears fruit

Believe it or not, there's much more to yoga than Namastes, bodily contortion, and kale smoothies. Such is the case with a practice that is at least 5,000 years old. Historians divide its development into four phases:

1)Pre-Classical: Way back when (5,000 to 8,000 years ago) Brahman priests of the Indus River Valley compile their songs, mantras, and rituals into a series of Sanskrit texts called the Vedas. In a later series of texts called the Upanishads, the word "yoga" is first used. Around 500 BCE, a fellow named Vyasa established many of the core tenets of yoga, including that of sacrificing the ego through knowledge, action, and wisdom.

2)Classical: Maharishi Patanjali is the main man here with the compiling of the Yoga Sutras, his eight-limbed system for achieving enlightenment. This is the foundation of Raja, or Classical yoga.

3)Post-classical: A few centuries later, yoga masters began exploring the connection between the physical body and enlightenment. Tantra yoga outlines the techniques to facilitate a free-flowing interchange between mind and body. What many Westerners think of as yoga today, Hatha yoga, was defined in this era.

4)Modern: Yoga finds its way west in the 19th and 20th centuries. Key figures include Swami Vivekananda (author of 200 books, founder of nine ashrams and numerous yoga centers around the world), T. Krishnamacharya (founder of the first Hatha school in India and major influencer), and Indra Devi (opened a yoga studio in Hollywood in 1947, nudging it toward the American mainstream).

Today, there are so many yoga genres and subgenres

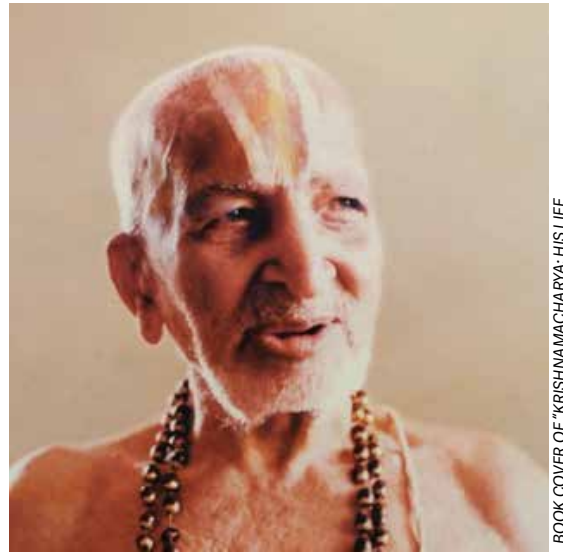




KONDIAH RAJA



ALOKPRASAD



BOOK COVER OF "KRISHNAMACHARYA: HIS LIFE AND TEACHINGS" BY A.G. MOHAN

**[left] In this 1950 painting, Hindu deity Krishna reveals his universal form to Arjuna, the central character of the Hindu epic Mahabharata, which contains the Bhagavad Gita wherein four paths to spirituality, or yogas, are outlined. [center] Maharishi Patanjali, who is said to have lived between sometime between the 3rd and 5th century, is credited with assembling the Yoga Sutras, an eight-limbed system for achieving enlightenment. [right] T. Krishnamacharya, founder of the first Hatha school in India and major influencer, practiced the yogic arts past his hundredth birthday. He is known as the "father of modern yoga."**

that you'd be blown sideways trying to sort through them all (if you weren't perfectly centered). In terms of choosing the type of yoga that is right for you, area yogi Michael Plasha recommends out-

lining your intentions first: "If someone is already exercising — running, swimming, biking, or what have you — they would be well-served by a gentle or restorative yoga class. If someone is not exercising at all, they may want to shop around for a class that is more active, more strength-bearing and focused on flexibility and postures." An example of this might be the hot yoga offered at studios such as yogaErie, wherein the temperature in the room is jacked up to 90 degrees and the pace is generally quicker.

Plasha emphasizes that yoga — as most think of it, which is more or less restricted to the *asana*, or postures, and *pranayama*, or breath control — is only one piece of the "wellness

puzzle" along with diet and exercise. A study by Columbia University monitored the most vigorous form of yoga and concluded it was only the equivalent of moderate walking, so it does not replace cardio. He explains that "it is important to integrate mind, body, and spirit. If we only focus on physical, we may reduce stress we're holding in the body, but if we are not focusing on mind, it's all temporary. My approach in practice is to address the mental as well as physical. Sickness of soul, not nourishing spiritual self, that can also create disease in our life."

One way to tend to the mental and spiritual condition is meditation, a practice closer to the true essence of yoga

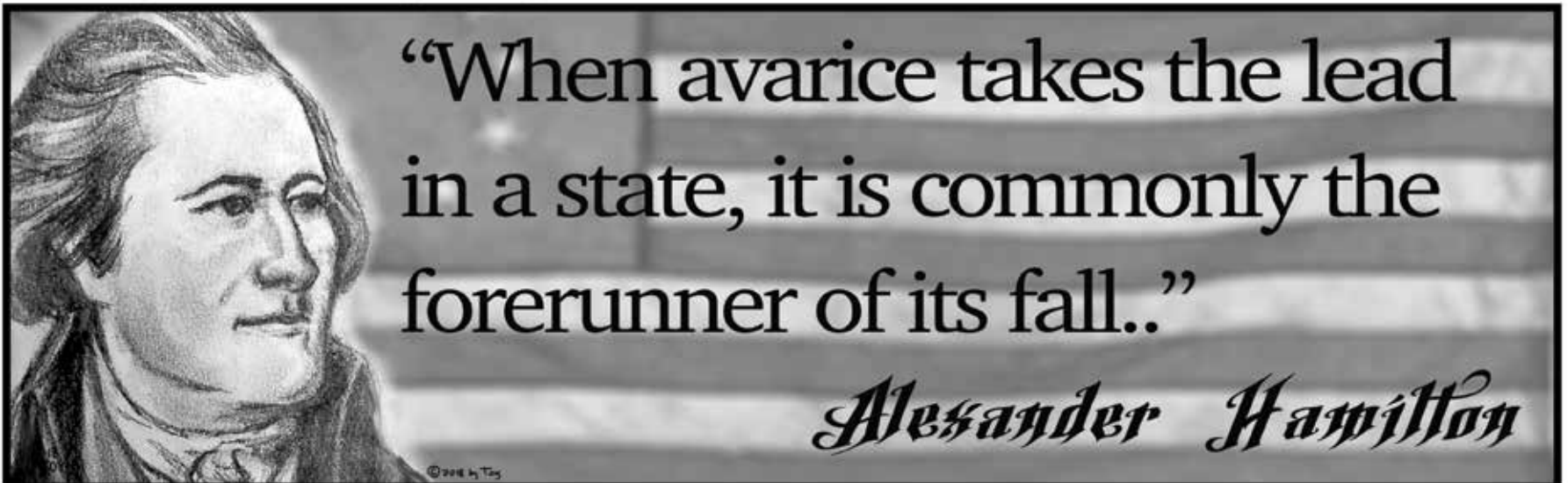
teaching that you can implement seven days a week at no cost. According to Plasha, how one prepares to meditate is as important or more important than the meditation itself. "Create a place that will draw you to it ... it doesn't have to be fancy; it could be just a chair or cushion to sit on, a little table with a vase of flowers or a candle or a picture of something inspiring," Plasha says, giving the personal example of a spare closet he converted into a "meditation cave." He also stresses that methodology can vary greatly from person to person, depending on their temperament. For example, a very active or energetic individual may need to run for three to five miles before they sit to meditate and may only

be able to sit for five minutes, tops. "Choose a method that you can dive deep into. Otherwise it's going to just stay on the surface."

With studies indicating that yoga can reduce lower back pain, risk factors for many diseases (75 to 80 percent of all diseases are either directly or indirectly related to stress), and migraine intensity and improve sleep, breathing, and balance, flexibility, and strength, it's not a stretch to think it might help you limber up for the twists and turns of the year(s) ahead.

*There may be at least ten sun salutations ahead of you, but Matt Swanseger promises your e-mail is next in his queue at [mswanseger@eriereader.com](mailto:mswanseger@eriereader.com)*

Just Toyin' Witcha - By B. Toy





# LIVE NEWS 7 DAYS A WEEK

## WEEKEND MORNING NEWS

SAT - SUN | 8AM - 9AM

## sunrise

MON - FRI | 5AM - 7AM

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FINAL WEEKEND!

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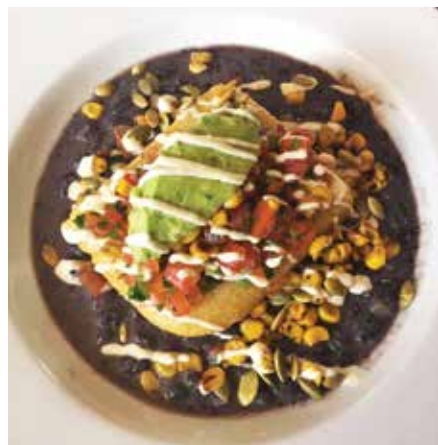
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Kickstart Your Health in the New Year with VeganCheers



Your Health” has you covered. Lisa Rose of VeganCheers (a common guest at the Whole Foods Co-op) is presenting a 21-day challenge for anyone who wants to lose weight or learn how to maintain a healthier diet. Happiness can also be found in what we eat. Food has the power to boost energy and mood, and this is just one example of what you can learn in this series. The series is made up of five classes that take place every Thursday in Erie or every Monday in Fairview throughout January. From learning how to power your plate to appetite control, “Food for Life: Nutrition and Cooking Classes with Lisa Rose of VeganCheers” can help you smile more and feel better about what you put on your plate. — Kalli Oberlander

THURSDAY, JAN. 3

Everyone’s been there — it’s the start of a new year, and every person you run into wants to be happier and healthier. The problem that carries over is that it’s often hard to stay motivated, especially without the extra help. Thankfully, if getting happier and healthier is the way you want to start off 2019, “Kickstart

Thursdays 6 to 8 p.m., Mondays 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. // Thursdays: Studio Z Erie, 716 Shenley Dr.; Mondays: 1st Choice Auto, 7222 W. Ridge Rd., Fairview, PA // \$158.70 // More info at [vegancheers.com](http://vegancheers.com)

Celebrate Depravity with Human Delusion and Friends at Basement Transmissions



Formerly known as Primal Scream Therapy, Erie melodic metalheads Human Delusion celebrate the release of their debut full-length *Depravity* at Basement Transmissions.

SATURDAY, JAN. 5TH

Let’s get one thing straight about that headline — if the concept of celebrating depravity strikes fear into the hearts of showgoers everywhere, fear no longer, as *Depravity* is the debut full-length from local quick-riffers Human Delusion (formerly Primal Scream Therapy). The band fully intend on bringing their unparalleled penchant for theatrical metal to Basement Transmissions to lionize the album’s release, but of course, they’ll have to get by with a little help from their friends.

Joining Human Delusion on stage this coming weekend are peers The Impurity, SLAP (Sounds Like a Plan), Crimson Shrine, Shattered Utopia, and the impeccably named Gelatin Skeleton. Doors open at 5:45 p.m. and music is set to begin promptly at 6, when new-school

hardcore harbingers Shattered Utopia intend on inspiring the night’s very first mosh pit. As the show progresses, so will the genres accounted for; SLAP is set to deliver the prog-rock infused groove-metal largely featured on their EP *On the Cob*, while Crimson Shrine, the deathcore giants behind the *Blood Offering* EP, will be performing their very first show on the BT stage.

Metal acts from near (814-core Gelatin Skeleton) and far (Buffalo, New York’s The Impurity) will be also be in attendance, all in the name of pushing brand new tunes and supporting the first studio LP from local favorites Human Delusion. It’s hard to go wrong with a show this stacked, so purchase your tickets while they’re still available and don’t miss out on one of 2019’s first bangers at Basement Transmissions. — Aaron Mook

5:45 to 11 p.m. // 145 W. 11th St. // \$10 Pre-sale, \$12 Doors // [facebook.com/basement.transmissions](http://facebook.com/basement.transmissions)

Foxes Rome Over to PACA



FRIDAY, JAN. 4

Rome Hero Foxes are headlining a fall-rock gig at PACA, with Marquee Grand, The Grievance Club, and Red Creek as their understudies.

Traveling from Katy, Texas, Rome Hero Foxes is on tour in support of their second full-length album, *18 Summers*, released in July. The band’s sophomore effort finds them sporting surf rock and indie pop influences, a far cry from the mellowed-out acoustic stylings of their *I/O* and *Horoscope* EPs from 2017, and 2016’s post-hardcore inspired full-length *For When You’re Falling Backwards*. Rome Hero Foxes are seeming-

ly not a band to write the same album twice.

Next on the bill is Marquee Grand. It’s a surprise that this alt-rock three-piece from Buffalo isn’t a big hit yet, with their singles “Not Finished Yet” and “Another Toke” seemingly made for the radio. But don’t be surprised if they make their way there soon.

Grievance Club have made the short drive to Erie from Cleveland numerous times in the past, and are coming back again to showcase their latest EP, *Hive*. The EP highlights the band’s ability to seamlessly combine elements of emo and pop punk, with upbeat, yet emotional songwriting.

Opening the show are Red Creek, a newly formed band from right here in Erie, with influences ranging from hard rock, punk rock, grunge, and indie. — Tommy Shannon

7:30 p.m. // 1505 State St. // \$9 advance, \$11 doors // 18+ , BYOB with ID // [facebook.com/paca1505](http://facebook.com/paca1505)

Take a Trip With Akron’s Acid Cats



SATURDAY, JAN. 5

“Musical hotbed” may not be the first thing that comes to everyone’s minds when you mention Akron, Ohio — but maybe it should be.

After all, it’s the geographic situation from whence such greats as blues rockers the Black Keys, synth-punk gurus Devo, and outlaw country-man David Allan Coe (just to name a few) came. Beyond that, its general area has brought us some of the best and brightest in the region’s booming live jam scene — including Cleveland’s Broccoli Samurai, the jam-funk powerhouse that recently announced it’s no longer touring.

That can’t stop/won’t stop its mem-

bers from doing what they do, though, and, thus, side projects abound. Which brings us to Acid Cats, a self-described “original acidic jazz rock” quintet that features musicians with serious chops, including Broccoli drummer Cameron Bickley and guitarist Michael Vincent.

They’ll be shaking off the happenings of 2018 and making their rounds around the region with a stop through the King’s Rook Club on Jan. 5, so anyone looking to start 2019 with some good ‘ol (but oh-so-fresh) musical madness should mark it down. — Ryan Smith

10 p.m. to 2 a.m. // 1921 Peach St. // 21+ // [facebook.com/kingsrookclub](http://facebook.com/kingsrookclub)



'Night Visitors' Uplift at St. Luke's Church through MIAC



RAMPICTURE.COM

SUNDAY, JAN. 6

The story of the Three Wise Men is a well-known part of the Nativity story, but in 1951 composer and librettist Gian Carlo Menotti imagined a subplot involving these three kings, inspired by both his own childhood in Italy and the Hieronymus Bosch painting *The Adoration of the Magi*, from the 15th or 16th century.

The result was a one-act English-language opera, *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, which follows what transpires when a disabled young boy, who can only walk with a crutch, and his worried mother come face-to-face with three of history's most famous royals. They happen to be making the last leg of their journey toward Bethlehem to pay homage to the baby Jesus.

*Amahl and the Night Visitors* widens the scope and the humanity of the Nativ-

ity story, bringing into the fold new characters in whom we might see versions of ourselves: tale-bearing children, for example, or parents worried about money and their child's future. Yet again, the Mercyhurst Institute of Arts and Culture is instrumental in bringing a rare artistic creation to life on the stage in Erie, this time at the nearby St. Luke's church.

Audiences will delight in the precocious and inquisitive Amahl, who first sees the star that leads the Wise Men to Bethlehem, and who proceeds to show great spirit, even in the presence of such daunting and richly dressed figures. When his mother attempts to steal from the Magi, it is Amahl's fierce protectiveness of her, in the face of the wretchedness of his circumstances, which moves the kings to show compassion. Amahl then makes the journey to Bethlehem and is among the first to welcome God's only living son to earth.

Come and be moved by this retelling and expansion of a classic Bible story, which reveals to us the possibilities of our worth, even in the presence of the divine. — Cara Suppa

4 p.m. // 421 E. 38th St. // Free and open to public // [miac.mercyhurst.edu](http://miac.mercyhurst.edu)

TV and Film Star Ron Pearson 'Juggles' Sets at Jr.'s



THURSDAY, JAN. 10

If you ever turned on the now-defunct UPN in the late '90s (was anything ever so '90s as UPN?) you may remember a show called *Malcolm & Eddie*, with Malcolm-Jamal Warner and Eddie Griffin. Halfway through the show's run, the show introduced a character by the name of Doug Ricketts, a bartender, played by none other than Ron Pearson.

This was Pearson's big break, his entry into higher-profile entertainment, including such programming as *Norm*, *The Drew Carey Show*, *That 70s Show* and *The George Lopez Show*. Like so many actors, Pearson started off as a stand-up comedian working the club scene, so it seems fitting that after great successes in TV and film, his career has come full circle, with his latest nationwide tour bringing him to Jr.'s Last

Laugh for a three-night, five-show engagement.

Pearson, as it turns out, is a man of many talents — in addition to comedy, he is a world-record juggler. He showed off his incredible juggling skills to the kids in his January 2018 TEDx-inspired set about "How to Experience Recess Every Day" and he is bringing them to the stage here in Erie, a kind of metaphor for the balance and precision timing necessary to maintain a Hollywood career, as well as the silliness and fun that is necessary to maintain a happy life.

A born-again Christian, Pearson's act is not only delightfully entertaining, he keeps it clean, so audiences don't have to worry about cringing at dirty jokes with their 80-year-old grandma sitting right next to them.

The dust has hopefully settled from the whirlwind holiday season, so grab some friends and head to Jr.'s for a show that will make your head spin and your sides ache. — Cara Suppa

Thursday: 7 p.m.; Friday/Saturday: 6:45 p.m. and 9:30 p.m. // 1402 State St. // Thursday: \$15; Friday/Saturday: \$20 // [jrslastlaugh.com](http://jrslastlaugh.com)

MUSIC

**Dave VanAmburg and Friends**

Jan. 2, 4, 9, 11 — 6 to 9 p.m. *Bel-Aire Clarion*, 2800 W. 8th St. [belaireclarion.com](http://belaireclarion.com).

**Open Mic**

Jan. 2 — 10 p.m. *Scotty's Martini Lounge*, 301 German St. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

**MVP**

Jan. 3, 10 — 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. *Dickey's BBQ Pit*, 3716 Liberty St. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

**The Groove**

Jan. 4 — 6 to 10 p.m. *BIGBAR*, 14 E. 10th St. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

**Open Mic Night**

Jan. 4, 11, 18 — 7 to 11 p.m. *Tipsy Bean*, 2425 Peach St. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

**Rome Hero Foxes w Special Guests**

Jan. 4 — 7:30 p.m. *PACA*, 1505 State St. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

**Crush**

Jan. 4 — 9 p.m. to midnight

*Bourbon Barrel*, 1213 State St. [bourbonbarrelerie.com](http://bourbonbarrelerie.com).

**Jeff Fetterman Band, Division Street**

Jan. 4 — 10 p.m. *Scotty's Martini Lounge*, 301 German St. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

**Haewa + Stereo Nest**

Jan. 4 — 10 p.m. *Kings Rook Club*, 1921 Peach St. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

**Human Delusions Album Release**

Jan. 5 — 5:45 p.m. *Basement Transmissions*, 145 W. 11th St. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

**Cruisin**

Jan. 5 — 6 to 10 p.m. *BIGBAR*, 14 E. 10th St. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

**Heather Pierson Acoustic Trio**

Jan. 5 — 7 p.m. *Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Erie*, 7180 Perry Hwy. [heatherpierson.com](http://heatherpierson.com).

**Deep Fried & Dipped in Honey**

Jan. 5, 6 — 9:30 p.m. to 1 a.m. *Scotty's Martini Lounge*, 301 German St. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

**Acid Cats**

Jan. 5 — 10 p.m. *Kings Rook Club*, 1921 Peach St. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

**Rankin & Schell**

Jan. 6 — 1 to 4 p.m. *Arundel Cellars & Brewing Co.*, 11727 E. Main Rd. North East, PA 16428 [arundelcellars.com](http://arundelcellars.com).

**"Dead" of Winter**

Jan. 6 — 6 p.m. *Scotty's Martini Lounge*, 301 German St. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

**Piqued, Red Creek, Wasted Info, It Kicks**

Jan. 6 — 6 p.m. *Basement Transmissions*, 145 W. 11th St. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

**Open Mic Night**

Jan. 8 — 6 to 8 p.m. *Blasco Memorial Library*, 160 E. Front St. [erielibrary.org](http://erielibrary.org).

**Rick Magee and the Roadhouse Rockers**

Jan. 11 — 6 to 10 p.m. *BIGBAR*, 14 E. 10th St. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

**TK Blues Co.**

Jan. 11 — 10 p.m. *Kings Rook Club*, 1921 Peach St. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

**New Wave Nation**

Jan. 12 — 6 to 10 p.m. *BIGBAR*, 14 E. 10th St. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

**Doug Phillips Trio**

Jan. 12 — 7 p.m. *Room 33*, 1033 State St. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

**Singer Songwriter Night**

Jan. 12 — 9 p.m. *Scotty's Martini Lounge*, 301 German St. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

**Northern Accents**

Jan. 12 — 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. *Mound Grove Golf Course*, 10760 Donation Rd., Waterford, PA 16441 [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

**Trohoske's Art Groupies**

Jan. 12 — 10 p.m. *Kings Rook Club*, 1921 Peach St. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

**Alley Goats**

Jan. 13 — 1 to 4 p.m. *Arundel Cellars & Brewing Co.*, 11727 E. Main Rd. North East, PA 16428 [arundelcellars.com](http://arundelcellars.com).

**Showtune Singers Night**

Jan. 15 — 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. *Dickey's BBQ Pit*, 3716 Liberty St. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

**Young Culture w**

**Real Fake Doors**

Jan. 15 — 7:30 p.m. *PACA*, 1505 State St. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

**Principal's Recital**

Jan. 15 — 7:30 p.m. *Cathedral of St. Paul*, 134 W. 7th St. [eriephil.org](http://eriephil.org).

**Music at Noon: Beo String Quartet**

Jan. 16 — noon to 2:30 p.m. *Reed Union Building at Penn State Behrend*, 4701 College Dr. [behrend.psu.edu](http://behrend.psu.edu).

**Matty B & 57 Pickup**

Jan. 16 — 6 to 9 p.m. *Bel-Aire Clarion*, 2800 W. 8th St. [belaireclarion.com](http://belaireclarion.com).

DANCE

**Erie Chapter USA Dance**

Jan. 5 — 6:30 to 10 p.m. *St. John's Lutheran Parish Center*, 2216 Peach St. [usadance.org](http://usadance.org).

FOOD & DRINK

**Free Slider Friday**

Jan. 4, 11 — 5 p.m. *Bourbon Barrel*, 1213 State

*St. bourbonbarrelerie.com*.

**Pressure Cooking**

Jan. 5 — 10 a.m. *Whole Foods Co-Op*, 1341 W. 26th St. [wferie.coop](http://wferie.coop).

**Bloody Mary Sunday Funday**

Jan. 6 — 11 a.m. *Luminary Distilling*, 8270 Peach St. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

**Erie ClaySpace Cocktails and Clay**

Jan. 8, 11 — 6 to 8:30 p.m. *Erie ClaySpace*, 1505 State St. [erieclayspace.com](http://erieclayspace.com).

**Happier Hour Soup and Open Studio Explore Art Mediums**

Jan. 8 — 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. *AWE*, 915 State St. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

**Mind, Body, Beer**

Jan. 8 — 7:30 p.m. *Erie Ale Works*, 416 W. 12th St. [eriealeworks.com](http://eriealeworks.com).

**Orthodoxy on Tap**

Jan. 12 — 2 p.m. *Voodoo Brewery Erie*, 101 Boston Store Pl. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

**Wine Bingo**

Jan. 13 — noon *Presque Isle Wine Cellars*,



Globetrotters Rub Shoulders With Erie



THURSDAY, JAN. 10

Erie is kicking 2019 into high gear with the crowd-favorite Harlem Globetrotters, returning with more mind-bending tricks, antics, and fun-loving humor. On January 10, Erie Insurance Arena will welcome the team to do what they have always done best (ever since the 1920s) — jaw-dropping, knee-slapping entertainment.

This time around, the basketball collective has another trick up their sleeves as they will begin the evening with a pre-game show called “Magic Pass.” This 30-minute segment allows the community to share the court with the players learning new and old moves, taking shots, snapping pictures and grabbing autographs. The presentation provides

The Harlem Globetrotters seek to continue their dominance over the hapless Washington Generals at the Erie Insurance Arena on Jan. 10.

a glimpse into the world of the Globetrotters and a chance to have a personal experience with the Harlem stars themselves (it is required to have both a game ticket and Magic Pass prior to entry). Prior to approaching the court, make sure your footwear is soft and rubber-soled to preserve the maintenance of the floor so the star-studded floaters can show off skills that will have you in awe and anticipating their next arrival.

Never mind where the year has gone. Let’s all take a look forward to what’s ahead. The Globetrotters will definitely do whatever they can to make sure your 2019 is moving in the right direction. Whether you can match them on the court or not, the key is to have a ball (see what I did there?) and leave the arena with something to show and tell. — Charles Brown

7 p.m. (Magic Pass at 5:30 p.m.)  
// \$19 - 75, Magic Pass \$22 // Erie Insurance Arena, 809 French St. // harlemglobetrotters.com

9440 W. Main St., North East, PA 16428 piwine.com.

**Small Batch Kimchi Workshop**

Jan. 14 — 6 to 8 p.m.  
Jekyll & Hyde’s, 8 E. 10th St. frenchstreetfarms.com.

MOVIES

**The Mask (1961)**

Jan. 4 — 8 p.m.  
Erie Movie House, 3424 W. Lake Rd. facebook.com.

**Mission: Impossible - Fallout (2018)**

Jan. 9 — 6 p.m.  
Bourbon Barrel, 1213 State St. filmsocietynwpa.org.

**Cast a Dark Shadow (1955)**

Jan. 10 — 8 p.m.  
Erie Movie House, 3424 W. Lake Rd. facebook.com.

**Lady Frankenstein (1971)**

Jan. 11 — 8 p.m.  
Erie Movie House, 3424 W. Lake Rd. facebook.com.

**BlacKkKlansman (2018)**

Jan. 16 — 6 p.m.  
Bourbon Barrel, 1213 State St. filmsocietynwpa.org.

**Backyard Wilderness**

Ongoing — 10 a.m., 1 p.m., & 4 p.m.  
Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. biggreenscreen.com.

**Amazon Adventure**

Ongoing — 11 a.m. & 2 p.m.  
Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. biggreenscreen.com.

**Earthflight**

Ongoing — noon & 3 p.m.  
Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. biggreenscreen.com.

VISUAL ARTS

**Language of Flowers Art Series**

Jan. 4 — 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.  
AWE, 915 State St. Ste. LL1 facebook.com.

**Gary Spinoso: Divine Instinct**

Ongoing through Jan. 6  
Erie Art Museum, 20 E. 5th St. erieartmuseum.org.

**Jamie Borowicz & Amy Hahn**

Ongoing through Jan. 8

Glass Growers Gallery, 10 E. 5th St. glassgrowersgallery.com.

**Ceramics on the Wheel**

Jan. 9 — 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.  
Erie ClaySpace, 1505 State St. erieclayspace.com.

**Four-Week Hand-Building Classes**

Jan. 10 — 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.  
Erie ClaySpace, 1505 State St. erieclayspace.com.

**Happier Hour: 7 Steps to a More Enriched Life**

Jan. 10 — 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.  
AWE, 915 State St. Ste. LL1 facebook.com.

**Hands On: Stieglitz Photographs Pt. 1**

Jan. 11 — 6 to 7 p.m.  
Erie Art Museum, 20 E. 5th St. erieartmuseum.org.

**Fran Noonan**

Opening Jan. 12  
Glass Growers Gallery, 10 E. 5th St. glassgrowersgallery.com.

**Inkle Band Workshop**

Jan. 12 — 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
The Studio at St. Mary’s: Space to Create, 310 E. 10th St. erieartsandculture.org.

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Art Groupies Furnish Gallery of Music



SATURDAY, JAN. 12

Stephen Trohoske is well-known throughout the Erie area for his skillful bass playing, captivating audiences for decades. But this local musical ambassador is not afraid to share the stage with other wonderful people and acts. On January 12, Trohoske's Art Groupies (TAG) will be painting a vivid picture with sound at the one and only Kings Rook Club.

What's special about this hip collective is that the door is always revolving, allowing other players and vocalists to be a part of this unique band. Concrete members such as the world-renowned Tony Grey, Eric Brewer, Elly Vahey, and others will relentlessly set the stage ablaze performing improvisations and timeless covers. Since Mr. Trohoske welcomes others to play along with

the "groupies," there's no telling who he might bring on board this time around. In other words, you should expect some surprises — such as vocalist Brittany Morton (of The Groove) taking the stage for a few songs.

Coming off of the innocent high of his latest album *Soundtrack of a Daydreamer*, which was well-received by the Erie community, Trohoske still finds time to let the limelight shine upon his team of brilliant musicians while maintaining his creative hub, Artlore Studio, with his wife Lena Logvina. Regardless of musical preference, TAG has something to offer each and every music lover, from reggae-funk to old-school jazz to post-punk cuts. You won't know whether to take a shot or have yourself a cocktail with the range of sound being so vast and beautifully random. If there's one thing this gathering of rhythmic geniuses knows, it's how to blend genres into a soul-nurturing concoction every time they hit the stage. This performance will take your ears on an odyssey far beyond this world while inviting others on board for the next trip. You don't want to miss this sonic vacation. — Charles Brown

10 p.m. // 1921 Peach St. // 21+ // [facebook.com/kingsrookclub](https://facebook.com/kingsrookclub)

Rock Out with YOUNG CULTURE at PACA



TUESDAY, JAN. 15

Young Culture (often shout-stylized in all caps as YOUNG CULTURE) returns to Erie in the New Year, just in time to showcase their new album (*This Is*) *Heaven*, set to be released through Equal Vision Records on January 18. Despite band members being as young as 20 years old, their music showcases a deep sense of maturity that's unique and appealing to both loyal fans of the Albany pop-punk/emo quartet and newcomers alike. Prepare to check out some original music that Erie is lucky enough to hear before the album is released to the public at the Performing Arts Collective Alliance (PACA).

Pop-punk/emo quartet **YOUNG CULTURE** headlines a Tuesday date at PACA, under the production of Aorta Music and Management Erie.

Joining Young Culture is native Erie band Real Fake Doors, an alternative group that plays an exciting variety from '90s classics to their own original songs. Additional musical guests include Fernway (an indie rock/

alternative band native to Buffalo), and local singer-songwriter Lyle Sallade (of the Wild Eyes).

Expect to see and be able to purchase merchandise from the brand Melancholy, which promotes self-love and personal growth, as well as embracing mental illness.

Let your hair down, rock out to bands both new and familiar, and embrace who you are with Young Culture at PACA. — Kalli Oberlander

Doors at 7:30 p.m. // 1505 State St., 2nd floor // \$10 Pre-sale, \$12 Door // All Ages, BYOB w/ID 21+ // [brownpapertickets.com/event/3918639](https://brownpapertickets.com/event/3918639)

Jan. 13 — 2 to 4 p.m.  
Erie Art Museum, 20 E. 5th St. [erieartmuseum.org](https://erieartmuseum.org).

**Richard P. Sadlier Retrospective**  
Opening Jan. 14  
Cummings Art Gallery at Mercyhurst Univ., 501 E. 38th St. [miac.mercyhurst.edu](https://miac.mercyhurst.edu).

**Healing HeARTS**  
Ongoing through Feb. 17  
Erie Art Museum, 20 E. 5th St. [erieartmuseum.org](https://erieartmuseum.org).

**Donna Nicholas: The Space Between**  
Ongoing through Mar. 10  
Erie Art Museum, 20 E. 5th St. [erieartmuseum.org](https://erieartmuseum.org).

**Tyanna Buie: Recollections**  
Ongoing through Apr. 1  
Erie Art Museum, 20 E. 5th St. [erieartmuseum.org](https://erieartmuseum.org).

**James McMurray: Faces and Paces**  
Ongoing through June 10  
Erie Art Museum, 20 E. 5th St. [erieartmuseum.org](https://erieartmuseum.org).

THEATER

**Matilda**  
Jan. 4, 5 — 7:30 p.m.  
& Jan. 6 — 2 p.m.

Erie Playhouse, 13 W. 10th St. [erieplayhouse.org](https://erieplayhouse.org).

**Amahl and the Night Visitors**  
Jan. 6 — 4 p.m.  
St. Luke's Church, 421 E. 38th St. [miac.mercyhurst.edu](https://miac.mercyhurst.edu).

COMEDY

**The Best Comedy Show of 2019 (So Far)**  
Jan. 4 — 7 to 10 p.m.  
Basement Transmissions, 145 W. 11th St. [facebook.com](https://facebook.com).

**Ron Pearson**  
Jan. 10 — 7 p.m. & Jan. 11, 12 — 6:45 or 9:30 p.m.  
Jr's Last Laugh, 1402 State St. [jrslastlaugh.com](https://jrslastlaugh.com).

SPORTS

**Erie BayHawks vs. Windy City Bulls**  
Jan. 4 — 7 p.m.  
Erie Insurance Arena, 809 French St. [league.nba.com](https://league.nba.com).

**Erie Warhawks Battle on the Bay**  
Jan. 5, 6  
Bayfront Convention Center, 1 Sassafras Pier [eriesports-](https://eriesports-)

[commission.com](https://commission.com).  
**Erie Otters vs. Sarnia Sting**  
Jan. 6 — 4 p.m.  
Erie Insurance Arena, 809 French St. [ottershockey.com](https://ottershockey.com).

**Cosmic Tubing**  
Jan. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 11, 12 — 5 p.m.  
Peek 'n Peak Resort, 1405 Old Rd., Clymer, NY 14724 [pknpk.com](https://pknpk.com).

**Harlem Globetrotters**  
Jan. 10 — 7 p.m.  
Erie Insurance Arena, 809 French St. [harlem-globetrotters.com](https://harlem-globetrotters.com).

**Erie Otters vs. Oshawa Generals**  
Jan. 12 — 7 p.m.  
Erie Insurance Arena, 809 French St. [ottershockey.com](https://ottershockey.com).

**Champion Cheer Central Cheerleading Competition**  
Jan. 13 — 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.  
Bayfront Convention Center, 1 Sassafras Pier [championcheercentral.com](https://championcheercentral.com).

COMMUNITY

**Kickstart Your Health (Studio Z)**  
Jan. 3 — 6 to 8 p.m.  
Five-class program

Thursdays through Jan. 31  
Studio Z, 716 Shenley Dr. [vegancheers.com](https://vegancheers.com).

**Make Your Own Dreamcatcher**  
Jan. 3 — 8 p.m.  
Kings Rook Club, 1921 Peach St. [facebook.com](https://facebook.com).

**Community Singing & Musical Meditation Workshop**  
Jan. 4 — 7 p.m.  
Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Erie, 7180 Perry Hwy. [heatherpierson.com](https://heatherpierson.com).

**Reiki I & II Certification**  
Jan. 5 — 9 a.m.  
Basement Transmissions, 145 W. 11th St. [facebook.com](https://facebook.com).

**Yoga With Kelly**  
Jan. 6 — 4:30 p.m.  
Tippy Bean, 2425 Peach St. [facebook.com](https://facebook.com).

**Kickstart Your Health (Fairview Parks & Rec)**  
Jan. 7 — 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.  
Five-class program  
Mondays through Feb. 4  
1st Choice Auto, 7222 W. Ridge Rd., Fairview, PA 16415 [vegancheers.com](https://vegancheers.com).

**PI History Series: What's Behind the Name**

Jan. 7 — 6 p.m.  
Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. [trepci.org](https://trepci.org).

**Symphonic Singers Open Rehearsal**  
Jan. 7 — 7 to 9 p.m.  
Wayside Presbyterian Church, 1208 Asbury Rd. 814-774-8425

**Read to a Therapy Dog**  
Jan. 8 — 4:30 to 5:30 p.m.  
Lincoln Community Center Library, 1255 Manchester Rd. [erielibrary.org](https://erielibrary.org).

**DiscoverE: Turtles**  
Jan. 9 — 10:30 a.m.  
Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. [trepci.org](https://trepci.org).

**Mafia & The Mob Trivia League**  
Jan. 9, 16 — 6 p.m.  
Room 33, 1033 State St. [facebook.com](https://facebook.com).

**January Fiction Book Club**  
Jan. 10 — 5:30 p.m.  
Presque Isle Wine Cellars, 9440 W. Main St., North East, PA 16428 [piwine.com](https://piwine.com).

**Regional GSA**  
Jan. 10 — 6 to 8 p.m.  
Blasco Memorial Library, 160 E. Front St. [erielibrary.org](https://erielibrary.org).

**Story Shenanigans:**

**Musical Games**  
Jan. 12 — 10 to 11 a.m.  
Blasco Memorial Library, 160 E. Front St. [erielibrary.org](https://erielibrary.org).

**Intro to Dungeons & Dragons**  
Jan. 12 — 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
Blasco Memorial Library, 160 E. Front St. [erielibrary.org](https://erielibrary.org).

**Using Jade to Create Wheels to Wellness**  
Jan. 12 — 1:30 to 3 p.m.  
Glenwood YMCA, 3727 Cherry St. [ymcaerie.org](https://ymcaerie.org).

**Tech Toolbox**  
Jan. 14 — 4:30 to 5:30 p.m.  
Lincoln Community Center Library, 1255 Manchester Rd. [erielibrary.org](https://erielibrary.org).

**Natural Wonders of PI (Past to Present)**  
Jan. 15 — 9 a.m.  
Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. [trepci.org](https://trepci.org).

**Presque Isle After Dark**  
Jan. 15 — 6 p.m.  
Thompson Circle at PI State Park, 1 Peninsula Dr. [trepci.org](https://trepci.org).

**DIY Shrink Plastic Pins**  
Jan. 15 — 6 to 7 p.m.  
Blasco Memorial Library, 160 E. Front St. [erielibrary.org](https://erielibrary.org).





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Photo Left: Mary Eger, Age 11

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JESSICA HUNTER

## The 2018 Best of Erie Winners

Your favorite people, places, and things

**C**ongratulations to all 111 Best of Erie winners. This year, we saw a record number of ballots, clocking in at just under 350,000 total votes among all categories. Some races were incredibly close, decided by surprisingly slim margins. Because of this, we wanted to highlight the top three finalists once again, with runners-up in each category listed in alphabetical order. In the end we were left with *your* favorites. These we selected from *your* nominations, and calculated from *your* votes. As the name implies, it is the best of Erie, a list filled with familiar faces and newcomers to the list. It's all the best in business, culture, food, and of course the remarkable individuals that make our community special. It's our lifeblood, the bars, the bands, the organizations we love and want to tell you about. To everyone who voted and all the people who helped spread the word to others, thank you.

### GOODS AND SERVICES

#### Best Local Business

**Winner: Waldameer & Water World**  
Runners up: Erie Insurance, Kraus Department Store

#### Best Car Dealership

**Winner: Bianchi Honda**  
Runners up: Hallman Chevrolet, Humes Chrysler Jeep Dodge & Ram

#### Best Used/Vintage Clothing

#### Winner: The Sassy Peacock

Runners up: Plato's Closet, The Salvation Army Family Store

#### Best Jewelry Store

**Winner: Dahlkemper's Jewelry Connection**

Runners up: Breakiron Jewelers, Sacred Piercing

#### Best Furniture Store

**Winner: John V. Schultz**

Runners up: Arthur F. Schultz, Furniture

**Brittany Stowe, voted Erie's best bartender, pours libations at the ever-popular Plymouth Tavern, winner of the "Best Neighborhood Bar" and "Best College Bar" categories.**

#### Row

#### Best Smoke/Vapor Shop

**Winner: Smoker Friendly**

Runners up: Hippie and the Hound Vapor Store and Lounge, Vapor Cabana

#### Best Place to Get a Six Pack

**Winner: U Pick Six**

Runners up: 1000 Beers, Wegmans

#### Best Health Food Store

**Winner: Whole Foods Co-op**

Runners up: The Juice Jar, Zero Gravity

#### Best Tattoo Parlor

**Winner: Ink Assassins**

Runners up: Mid-Town Tattoo, Wayward Tattoo Studio

#### Best Local Graphic Designer

**Winner: Ellen Chipoletti**

Runners up: Amanda Daniels, Alice DeGeorge

#### Best Place to Get Pierced

**Winner: Sacred Piercing**

Runners up: Erie Eclect-Ink, Ink

#### Assassins

#### Best Place to Adopt a Pet

**Winner: The ANNA Shelter**

Runners up: Because You Care, Inc, Humane Society of Northwest Pennsylvania

#### Best Bank

**Winner: Erie Federal Credit Union**

Runners up: Northwest Bank, Widget Financial

#### Best Spa

**Winner: Coventina Day Spa**

Runners up: Ambridge Rose Spa & Salon, Panache Salon and Spa

#### Best Beauty Salon

**Winner: Panache Salon and Spa**

Runners up: Ambridge Rose Spa & Salon, Moxi Hair Salon

#### Best Barbershop

**Winner: Russo's Barbershop**

Runners up: Colony Barber Shop, Uncle's Barber Shop





JESSICA HUNTER

[top left] PopLuck popcorn has proven a blockbuster hit since its debut, quantified by its win in the prestigious "Best New Business" category. [bottom right] Since making its first inroads into the Erie market in 1993, Rochester, N.Y.-based Wegmans has established a quality reputation for both its products ("Best Sushi") and its workplace environment ("Best Place To Work").

**Best Bike Shop**

**Winner: John Adams Cycling & Fitness**  
Runners up: A. R. Adams Cycle, Competitive Gear

**Best Web Developer**

**Winner: Epic Web Studios**  
Runners up: Snowberry Media, weCreate Website Design & Marketing

**Best Locally Made Product**

**Winner: Smith's Hot Dogs**  
Runners up: Erie Apparel, PopLuck Popcorn

**Best New Business (Within Last Two Years)**

**Winner: PopLuck Popcorn**  
Runners up: Ember + Forge, Room 33

**Best Dog Groomer**

**Winner: Mud Puppies Self Serve Dog Wash**  
Runners up: Paws 'n Claws, Peninsula Pups Doggie Daycare

**Best Consignment Shop**

**Winner: The Sassy Peacock**  
Runners up: Claudine's Consignment, Milestones Children's Consignment

**Best Thrift Store**

**Winner: The Salvation Army Family Store**  
Runners up: Goodwill, The Thrifty Shopper

**Best Graphic Design Agency**

**Winner: Presque Isle Printing Services**

Runners up: ErieMultimedia, Tungsten Creative Group

**Best Antique Shop**

**Winner: Oregon Antiques**  
Runners up: The Curiosity Shoppe, The

Green Eyed Lady

**Best Independent Book Store**

**Winner: Books Galore**  
Runners up: Pressed, Werner Books

**Best Law Firm**

**Winner: Vendetti & Vendetti Law Firm**  
Runners up: Knox McLaughlin Gornall & Sennett, P.C., MacDonald, Illig, Jones, & Britton LLP

**Best Real Estate Agency**

**Winner: Marsha Marsh**  
Runners up: Agresti Real Estate, Keller Williams

**Best Real Estate Agent**

**Winner: Levi A. Marsh**  
Runners up: Nanci Lorei, Amanda Serafini

**Best Bed and Breakfast**

**Winner: Spencer House Bed & Breakfast**  
Runners up: George Carroll House Bed and Breakfast, Grape Arbor Bed and Breakfast

**CULTURE & NIGHTLIFE**

**Best Local Festival**

**Winner: Roar On The Shore**  
Runners up: 8 Great Tuesdays, Celebrate Erie

**Best Art Event**

**Winner: Gallery Nights**  
Runners up: Arts & Drafts Festival, Erie Art Museum Spring Show

**Best Museum**

**Winner: Erie Art Museum**  
Runners up: Erie Maritime Museum, ExpERIENCE Children's Museum

**Best Performing Arts Space**

**Winner: Warner Theatre**  
Runners up: Erie Playhouse, PACA

**Best Local Band**

**Winner: The Groove**  
Runners up: Eric Brewer & Friends, First to Eleven

**Best Local Fine Artist**

**Winner: Corey Thompson**  
Runners up: Evan Everhart, Tom Ferraro

**Best Art Gallery**

**Winner: Erie Art Museum**  
Runners up: Erie Art Gallery, Glass Growers Gallery

**Best Music Venue**

**Winner: Warner Theatre**  
Runners up: Basement Transmissions, Coconut Joe's



JESSICA HUNTER



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**BEST OF ERIE**



JESSICA HUNTER

**Best Local Photographer**

**Winner: Sarah Peach**  
 Runners up: Paul Gibbins, Matt Mead

**Best Up-and-Coming Band/Musician (Last Two Years)**

**Winner: Black Moon Mistress**  
 Runners up: Cult Classics, The Filthy Casuals

**Best Local Singer**

**Winner: Zack Orr**  
 Runners up: Mckenzie Sprague, Brooke Surgener

**Best Local Musician**

**Winner: Eric Brewer**  
 Runners up: Matt Boland, Zack Orr

**Best MC**

**Winner: Charles Brown**  
 Runners up: Jonny Evans, Tony Facchiano

**Best Neighborhood Bar**

**Winner: Plymouth Tavern**  
 Runners up: Jekyll & Hyde's, Lavery Brewing Company

**Best Night Club**

**Winner: Coconut Joe's**  
 Runners up: Bourbon Barrel, Kings Rook Club

**Best New Bar or Club (Within Last Two Years)**

**Winner: Room 33**  
 Runners up: Big Bar, The Skunk and Goat Tavern

**Best College Bar**

**Winner: Plymouth Tavern**  
 Runners up: Coconut Joe's, Cornerstone Bar & Grill

**Best Sports Bar**

**Winner: Odis 12**  
 Runners up: Coach's Sports Bar & Grill, Oasis Pub

Boasting a swanky atmosphere and finely crafted cocktails, Room 33 Speakeasy took home our "Best New Bar or Club" award.

**Best Lounge**

**Winner: Cloud 9 Wine Bar**  
 Runners up: Room 33, Scotty's Martini Lounge

**Best Local Cover Band**

**Winner: The Geek Army**  
 Runners up: Abbey Road, The Groove

**Best Happy Hour**

**Winner: U Pick 6 Taphouse**  
 Runners up: Cloud 9 Wine Bar, Coconut Joe's

**Best Dance School**

**Winner: Long's School of Dance**  
 Runners up: Little Dance Studio, Marguerite's Academy of Dance

**Best DJ**





[top left] Pictured from left to right are "Best Singer" Zachary Orr, "Best MC" Charles Brown, and "Best Musician" Eric Brewer. [bottom right] North East's Skunk & Goat Tavern was awarded this year's "Best New Restaurant" honors.

Brewery Erie

**Best Place to Get Ice Cream**

**Winner: Sara's Restaurant**  
Runners up: Creamland, Whippy Dip

**Best Local Brewery**

**Winner: Voodoo Brewery Erie**  
Runners up: Erie Brewing Company, Lavery Brewing Company

**Best Locally Made Beer**

**Winner: Voodoo Love Child (Voodoo)**  
Runners up: Dulachan (Lavery Brewing Company), Railbender (Erie Brewing Company)

**Best Place to Get Vegan or Vegetarian Food**

**Winner: Whole Foods Co-op**  
Runners up: The Juice Jar, Like My Thai

**Best Barbecue**

**Winner: Federal Hill Smokehouse**  
Runners up: Dickeys Barbecue Pit, Three B Saloon

**Best Burger**

**Winner: Five Guys**  
Runners up: Max & Erma's, Odis 12 Sports Bar & Grille

**Winner: Dj Bill Page**

Runners up: Dj Johnny B, Dj Roach

**Best Irish Pub**

**Winner: Molly Brannigan's Irish Pub**  
Runners up: Lavery Brewing Company, McGarrey's Oakwood Cafe

**FOOD & DRINK**

**Best Restaurant**

**Winner: Pineapple Eddie Southern Bistro**  
Runners up: Federal Hill Smokehouse, Nunzi's Restaurant

**Best Sandwich Shop**

**Winner: Teresa's Italian Deli**  
Runners up: Lucky Louie's Beer and Wieners, Picasso's

**Best New Restaurant (Within Last Two Years)**

**Winner: The Skunk and Goat Tavern**  
Runners up: Room 33, Sneaky Pete's

**Best Seafood**

**Winner: Joe Roots Grill**  
Runners up: Pineapple Eddie Southern Bistro, Smugglers' Wharf

**Best Romantic Restaurant**

**Winner: Mi Scuzi**  
Runners up: Cloud 9 Wine Bar, Colao's Ristorante

**Best Chef**

**Winner: Jean Paul (Pineapple Eddie Southern Bistro)**  
Runners up: Bertrand Artigues (Cloud 9 Wine Bar), Dan Kern (Noosa/1201 Kitchen)

**Best Bar Food**

**Winner: Odis 12 Sports Bar & Grille**

Runners up: Plymouth Tavern, U Pick 6 Tap House

**Best Local Coffee Shop**

**Winner: Ember + Forge**  
Runners up: Brew Ha Ha at the Colony, Mugs & Muggles

**Best Food Truck**

**Winner: The Que Abides**  
Runners up: The Big Cheese Food Truck, Voodoo Brewery Foodoo Truck

**Best Breakfast**

**Winner: The Breakfast Place**  
Runners up: Flip Cafe, The Original Breakfast Place

**Best Patio**

**Winner: Calamari's Squid Row**  
Runners up: Bayfront Grille, Plymouth Tavern

**Best Brunch**

**Winner: Peek'n Peak**  
Runners up: Cloud 9 Wine Bar, Voodoo



JESSICA HUNTER

NICK WARREN



## BEST OF ERIE

### Best Pizza

**Winner: John's Wildwood Pizza**

Runners up: Stevo's Pizza, Virgil's Plate

### Best Wings

**Winner: Odis 12 Sports Bar & Grille**

Runners up: One Way Inn, The Park Tavern

### Best Sushi

**Winner: Wegmans**

Runners up: Chopstix Asian Restaurant, Samurai Kitchen + Sushi

### Best Asian Restaurant

**Winner: Chopstix Asian Restaurant**

Runners up: Golden Wok, Like My Thai

### Best Italian Restaurant

**Winner: Serafini's Restaurant**

Runners up: Mi Scuzi, Nunzi's Restaurant

### Best Mexican Restaurant

**Winner: El Canelo**

Runners up: Moe's Southwest Grill, Torero's

### Best Mediterranean or Middle Eastern Restaurant

**Winner: Casablanca Grill**

Runners up: Alkeme, Petra Restaurant

### Best Late-Nite Menu

**Winner: Dominick's Diner-Eatery**

Runners up: Panos Restaurant, Plymouth Tavern

### Best Dessert

**Winner: Romolo Chocolates**

Runners up: Give A Crepe, La CrepErie, Pineapple Eddie Southern Bistro



JESSICA HUNTER

### Best Indian Food

**Winner: Tandoori Hut Indian Cuisine**

Runners up: Curry Point LLC, Darjeeling Kitchen

### Best Thai Restaurant

**Winner: Like My Thai**

Runners up: Kao Thai, Thai Eatery

### Best Donut Shop

**Winner: Mighty Fine Donuts**

Runners up: H & K Donut Shop, Jack Frost Donut Shop

### Best Chocolates or Candy

**Winner: Romolo Chocolates**

Runners up: Pulakos Chocolates, Stefanelli's Candies

### Best Bakery

**Winner: Art's Bakery**

Runners up: Icing On the Lake, Ye Ole Sweet Shoppe

### Best Deli

**Winner: Teresa's Italian Deli**

Runners up: Tickle's Deli, Urbaniak Brothers Quality Meat

### Best Winery

[top right] Thanks to its tremendous efforts helping the area's stray, neglected, or abused animals, the Humane Society of Northwest Pennsylvania was voted "Best Non-Profit or Charity." [bottom left] A look at the Presque Isle Lighthouse, a landmark of Presque Isle State Park, winner of "Best Tourist Attraction" and "Best Place for a First Date."

**Winner: Mazza Vineyards**

Runners up: Arundel Cellars & Brewing Co, Heritage Wine Cellars

### Best Distillery

**Winner: Luminary Distilling**

Runners up: Cart/Horse Distilling, Five & 20 Spirits & Brewing

## PEOPLE & PLACES

### Best Radio Station

**Winner: HAPPI 927**

Runners up: 90.5 WERG, Star 104

### Best Radio Personality (or Radio Team)

**Winner: Jessica and Murphy in the Morning**

Runners up: Sammy Stone, Craig Warvel

### Best TV Personality

**Winner: Sean Lafferty**

Runners up: Lou Baxter, Amanda Post

### Best Yoga Studio

**Winner: yogaErie**

Runners up: LECOM, YMCA

### Best Poet

**Winner: Marisa Moks-Unger**

Runners up: Michael Bennett, Monica Igras



JESSICA HUNTER



## BEST OF ERIE



JESSICA HUNTER

### Best Filmmaker

**Winner: Mike Gallagher**

Runners up: John Lyons, Jack Rys

### Best Place to Work

**Winner: Wegmans**

Runners up: Erie Insurance, UPMC Hamot

### Best Tourist Attraction

**Winner: Presque Isle State Park**

Runners up: Brig Niagara, Waldameer & Water World

### Best Local Actor

**Winner: Brendan Daugherty**

Runners up: Michael Haas, Will Steadman

### Best Local Actress

**Winner: Emily Olszewski**

Runners up: Adele Crotty, Kelly Rodland

### Best Non-Profit or Charity

**Winner: Humane Society of Northwest Pennsylvania**

Runners up: Emma's Footprints, Orphan Angels Cat Sanctuary and Adoption Center

### Best Bartender

**Winner: Brittany Stowe (Plymouth Tavern)**

Runners up: Meghann Legler (Haggerty's), Jim Wise (Coconut Joe's)

### Best University

**Winner: Penn State Behrend**

Runners up: Edinboro University, Gannon University

### Best Fitness Club

**Winner: Planet Fitness**

Runners up: LECOM Medical Fitness & Wellness Center, YMCA

The cream always rises to the top — our voters elevated Ember + Forge to the "Best Local Coffee Shop" crown. Of course, coffee is a perfect companion to sponge candy from Romolo's, Erie's favorite chocolatier.

### Best Athletic Competition

**Winner: Barber Beast on the Bay**

Highmark QUAD Games, The Color Run

### Best Bowling Alley

**Winner: Greengarden Lanes**

Runners up: Eastway Lanes, Rolling Meadow Lanes

### Best Team to Root for

**Winner: Erie Otters**

Runners up: Eerie Roller Girls, Erie Seawolves

### Best Golf Course

**Winner: Whispering Woods Golf Club**

Runners up: Beechwood Golf Club, Peek n' Peak

### Best Local Entrepreneur(s)

**Winner: R.J. Messenger (Iron Empire)**

Runners up: Autumn and Ryan Atzert (Federal Hill Smokehouse), Hannah Kirby (Ember + Forge)

### Best Place for a First Date

**Winner: Presque Isle State Park**

Runners up: Cloud 9 Wine Bar, Tinseltown

### Best Lawyer

**Winner: James "Chetty" Vendetti**

Runners up: Erin Connelly, Rebeka Seelinger

### Best Tattoo Artist

**Winner: "Gentle" Josh Makowski**

Runners up: Jennifer Christina, Corey Thompson

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**Colette (2018)**  
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Biography/Drama/History  
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**Suspiria (2018)**  
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Sponsored by: Snowdog Studio



**First Man (2018)**  
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**A Star is Born (2018)**  
Feb 20  
Drama/Music/Romance

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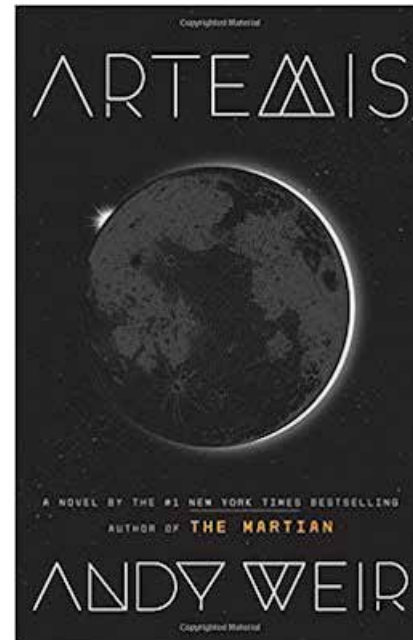
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BOOK REVIEW

Pardon the Technicalities

Andy Weir's *Artemis* solid sci-fi that often gets hung up on the details



DEL REY PUBLISHING

By: Richard Perhacs

Andy Weir rocked the publishing world with *The Martian*, a self-published project turned blockbuster that was picked up by Random House, sold over five million copies, and made into a Ridley Scott hit starring Matt Damon. Weir's follow-up novel, *Artemis*, was a best-seller before it went on sale. Good thing, too, as we'll see. Computer programmer Weir seems to be a genuine eccentric, living in a rented two room apartment despite his financial success. Afraid of flying, he never visited the Hungarian set of Scott's movie adaptation of *The Martian*.

Weir sets *Artemis* in Earth's first permanent lunar colony where his protagonist, Jasmine "Jazz" Bishara, a 26-year-old Saudi woman with little formal education, nonetheless pauses in her narrative every few pages to explain the science behind the mind-boggling technology. Somehow, she intuitively knows things that would have taken the rest of us several college degrees to figure out. The daughter of a working stiff welder, Jazz's life is hardscrabble in a pressure suit as she battles poverty, scratching out a living as a low-level smuggler until she stumbles into an opportunity to make real money by engaging in industrial sabotage on a lunar scale. Things unravel when the silent part-

ners of the oxygen generating facility she's been paid to trash turn out to be — stay with me — Brazilian mafia dons. Their lack of amusement at Jazz's money-making scheme leads to what could have been an exciting climax, were it not for the endless lapses in the action to explain things like variations in the melting point of ore smelter walls.

*Artemis* is full of complex technical information that often gets in the way of a good tale that only needed enough science to give it credibility. In *The Martian*, Weir's prose flowed reasonably well, despite the technical data woven into its folds. But *Artemis* has a far more complex plot with many more characters to accommodate it, and may have taxed Weir's ability to hold his audience. It's also populated with characters who all speak with the same glib, smart aleck voice we hear non-stop from Jazz. The first person point of view allows a reader to get inside the head of the protagonist, and, in skilled hands, it can reveal vulnerability and self-doubt in the most hard-boiled character, or sensitivity in the cruelest villain. But Weir never lets Jazz drop her guard, and makes monochrome what could have been a more interesting, complex character.

*Artemis* also fails to capitalize on opportunities to paint a vivid portrait of a world that the few humans who've seen it first-hand have described as hauntingly beautiful. I didn't expect to hear a poetic description of the lunar surface from Neil Armstrong, but, from an artist, I do expect something more than Jazz's dismissal of the moonscape as "gray, dusty terrain."

So, you're thinking only two stars for *Artemis*? Not quite. Despite its issues, *Artemis* is a clever tale, and the heavy dose of science, while distracting, was interesting. I suspect sci-fi fans will love it, and that counts. As much science as fiction, it's worthy of two and a half stars.

Random House; 305 pages; \$16.00 (soft cover) // Richard Perhacs practices law in Erie and holds a Master of Fine Arts in Popular Fiction. He can be reached with comments and suggestions for reviews at richardperhacs@gmail.com.



**Power Behind the Throne: *The Favourite* is a Different Kind of Period Piece**



The films of Yorgos Lanthimos (*Dogtooth*, *The Lobster*) are some of the strangest in recent memory. A part of the so-called "Greek Weird Wave," Lanthimos uses the absurdity of his stories to make deeper social statements. His newest film, *The Favourite* is both his highest-budget and most easily accessible film, but it is by no means any less sardonic. In fact, thanks to some clever writing and three brilliant performances, I think it may be his best film yet.



FOX SEARCHLIGHT PICTURES

Set during the War of Spanish Succession in the early 18th century, the film concerns the friendship between Queen Anne (an incredible Olivia Colman) and Lady Sarah (Rachel Weisz). Sarah serves as the queen's confidant during parliamentary meetings, offering her advice but also pushing her own political agendas. However, this relationship is thrown into turmoil when Sarah's commoner cousin Abigail (Emma Stone) comes to the palace looking for employment but with some hidden agendas of her own. The resulting rivalry for the queen's affections will leave all three women damaged in more ways than one.

The film relies completely on the performances of its three leading ladies and Colman, Weisz, and Stone are more than up to the task. Colman is clearly having a blast with her demented but tragic role. Meanwhile, Weisz's Sarah seems harsh and brutal to the queen but there's obviously genuine love there. Stone's Abigail has no problem being a subservient sycophant if it means getting what she wants. The film's anachronistic scenes and dialogue prove that this film is after something beyond a simple period piece. Is Lanthimos using this tale to satirize the modern political landscape? Whether he is or not, *The Favourite* makes for an entertaining watch. — Forest Taylor

*Directed by: Yorgos Lanthimos // Written by: Deborah Davis and Tony McNamara // Starring: Olivia Colman, Emma Stone, Rachel Weisz, Nicholas Hoult, Joe Alwyn, Mark Gatiss, and James Smith // 119 minutes // Rated R*

**More Than Meets the Eye?: *Bumblebee* is the Best Transformers Movie ... but is it Good?**



I have never liked Michael Bay's brutally long assaults on the senses known as the *Transformers* series. I find them crass, vulgar and offensive; jingoistic, misogynistic and just generally misanthropic, they represent all of the worst qualities of their auteur. With that out of the way,



PARAMOUNT PICTURES

Travis Knight's (*Kubo and the Two Strings*) prequel *Bumblebee* could be the course correction we were all waiting for. I'm happy to report that it is by far the best *Transformers* film to date, but does that make it a good film or merely the least terrible film?

Set in 1987, the film's titular hero lands on planet Earth and has to find a new base of operations after the Autobots suffered a defeat at the hands of the Decepticons on their home planet of Cybertron. He soon finds himself in the care of teenager Charlie Watson (Hailee Steinfeld) and the two quickly become friends. However, a pair of Decepticons, as well as the U.S. military (led by a delightfully over-the-top John Cena) are on Bumblebee's trail and the two friends soon find themselves on the run.

Thankfully, the film loses all of the racist caricatures and incomprehensible action of Bay's films and instead tells a surprisingly sweet coming-of-age tale in the style of *E.T.* or *The Iron Giant* with a protagonist who's actually likable and relatable (a first for this series). It relies a little too heavily on nostalgia-baiting (does every scene need an '80s pop culture reference?), but it works for the most part. *Bumblebee* won't blow you away. It's a simplistic, corny action/adventure story. Perfect for 10-year-olds ... in other words, exactly what we need in a *Transformers* movie! — Forest Taylor

*Directed by: Travis Knight // Written by: Christina Hodson // Starring: Hailee Steinfeld, John Cena, Jorge Lendeborg Jr., John Ortiz, Jason Drucker, Pamela Adlon, Stephen Schneider and the voices of Dylan O'Brian, Angela Bassett, Justin Theroux and Peter Cullen // 114 minutes // Rated PG-13*

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## MUSIC REVIEWS

### Earl Sweatshirt

*Some Rap Songs*  
Columbia Records



It's been three years since we last heard from Thebe Kgositsile, better known as Earl Sweatshirt.



Following news of his father's death last year, it seemed the once Odd Future prodigy might need more time to grieve before returning to the public eye. But in the last weeks of 2018, Earl delivered *Some Rap Songs*, a complex masterwork with a title that is both hilariously understated and wildly fitting. The best word for *Some Rap Songs* very well may be "kaleidoscopic." After 2015's brief, cohesive *I Don't Like Shit, I Don't Go Outside*, its successor prefers to toss listeners from sound collage to sound collage like an old, beat-down funhouse. While this MF Doom-esque approach takes time to fully resonate, it is also a natural step in Earl's evolution, and the rapper sounds comfortable making himself at home. From its melodic takes ("Shattered Dreams," "The Mint") to its most deeply unsettling moments ("Red Water," "Peanut"), Earl finds deliberate ways to incorporate his family's legacy and his own personal downfalls into 2018's finest 26 minutes of levity. — Aaron Mook

### Ex:Re

*Ex:Re*  
Glassnote Records



Ex:Re's debut arrived as a surprise late this past November. In fact, it may have flown completely under the



radar if it weren't for the name attached to the moniker; the first proper solo release from Daughter frontwoman Elena Tonra, Ex:Re's self-titled LP takes a step back from the band's cinematic soundscapes and lush post-rock to craft something darker, more focused, and intensely personal. Although this unique set of songs took years to write, they were recorded relatively quickly, and that sense of urgency carries throughout the album. Laying down her electric guitar, many of Ex:Re's compositions are centered around melancholic acoustic arrangements (opener "Where The Time Went" and standout "New York"), and, occasionally, a buzzing synth or two (single "Romance"). But the one thing Tonra retains is her knack for unforgettable songwriting. On sparse highlight "The Dazzler," she drunkenly longs to spend the rest of her life in hotel rooms, constantly being provided for and never having to leave on someone else's volition. In terms of relatability, you'd be hard-pressed to find a more endearing wordsmith. — Aaron Mook

### Reel Big Fish

*Life Sucks ... Let's Dance*  
Rock Ridge Music



Even at the apex of third wave ska's popularity in the 1990s, Reel Big Fish barely seemed convincing. Forever feeling like a parody of then-modern ska bands rather than something real, they did hit all the marks, and for better or worse, defined the movement in many people's eyes. They're bright, bold, and brash, combining sarcastic fun with incredibly tight, coordinated, turn-of-a-dime musicianship — a gifted class clown deeply burdened by ADHD. If you happen to remember cuts off their 1996 album *Turn the Radio Off* like "Beer," "Everything Sucks," and "Sell Out," you'll know just what to expect. For the sextet's ninth studio album in 23 years, it seems like the band is still doing exactly what they want, and that energy turned out to be authentic after all. At first listen, the album drops more eye-rollingly acerbic uptempo ska punk, forgettable and barely forgivable. Starting with "Ska Show" (a simple song we desperately needed in the late '90s), the flipside of the record redeems itself by slightly shifting down in tempo for track after track of warm, funny, sincere songs like "I'd Rather Get It Wrong." — Nick Warren



### Bruce Springsteen

*Springsteen on Broadway*  
Columbia Records



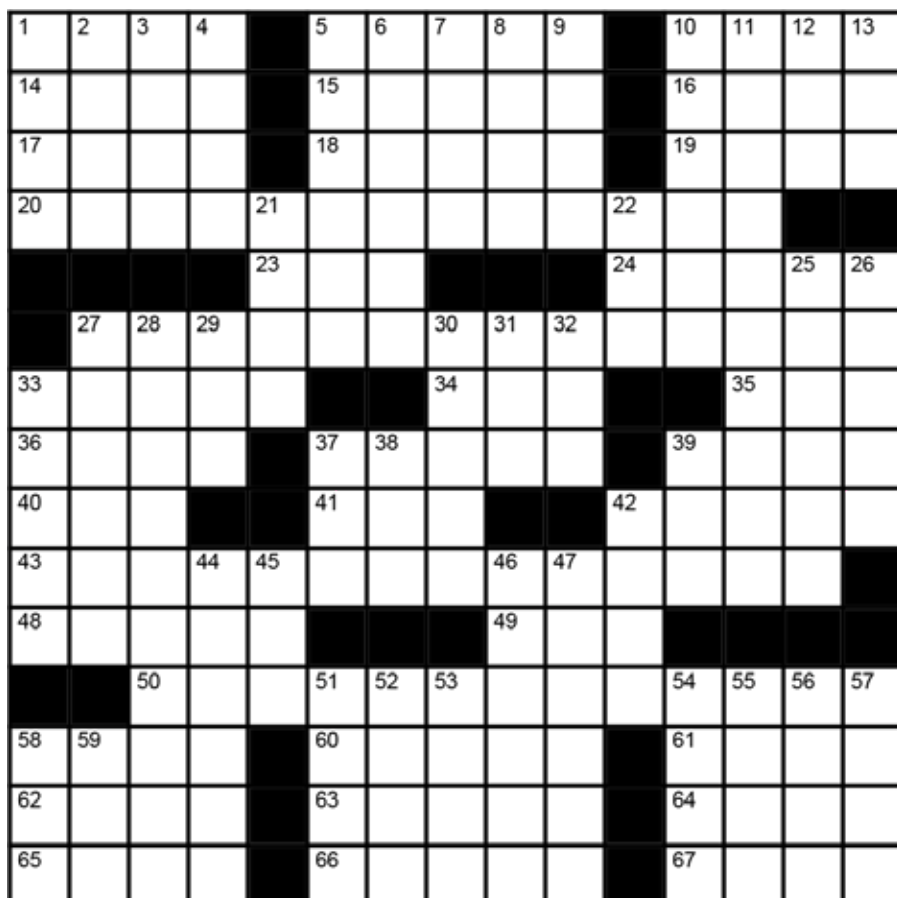
"I've never held an honest job in my entire life, I've never done any hard labor, I've never worked nine-to-five, I've never worked five days a week until right now," Bruce Springsteen admits to thunderous laughter and applause. "And I don't like it," he jokes. "I've never seen the inside of a factory and yet it's all I've ever written about," he goes on to say. The opening lays everything out on the table, a supremely self-aware performance from one of the most iconic figures in American music. From October of 2017 to December of 2018, Springsteen held a residence at Broadway's Walter Kerr Theatre, consisting of five shows a week. This doubly-extended run culminated in a beautifully recorded Netflix special and a 30-track, double disc soundtrack to go along with it. There is no other artist like Bruce Springsteen. Having consistently produced a catalog worthy of praise since the early 1970s, "The Boss" plays stripped-down cuts filled with moving moments, insights, and humor. Through extended songs with multiple introductions ("Promised Land" has three), it's like a *VH1 Storytellers*, but the best it could ever be. — Nick Warren



## TOMMY IN TOON — BY TOMMY LINK







**Across**

- 1. Movie in which Brad Pitt plays Achilles
- 5. New York Times pieces since 1970
- 10. Mario \_\_\_\_ (Nintendo racing series)
- 14. Fontana di Trevi locale
- 15. Hamilton, to Burr
- 16. Falsetto-voiced Muppet
- 17. A bit cracked
- 18. "Same with me"
- 19. "Anything \_\_\_\_?"
- 20. "Sorry about that -- I need some practice kicking a football?"
- 23. In history
- 24. Celebrated Bombay-born conductor
- 27. "Got any other Salamandridae family members in your pet shop"?
- 33. Almost an eternity
- 34. "Happy Days" diner
- 35. \_\_\_\_-com
- 36. Prefix meaning "half"
- 37. Person in the headlines ... or a two-word clue to this puzzle's theme
- 39. Olivia \_\_\_\_ of "The Wonder Years"
- 40. Uber app abbr.
- 41. QB's try: Abbr.
- 42. U.S. military vets
- 43. State motto for those who want to eat what they

- want, when they want?
- 48. Superman, notably
- 49. PlayStation competitor
- 50. Like an eagle who lets a rainbow fish slip from its talons?
- 58. R.E.M.'s "The \_\_\_\_ Love"
- 60. String bean's opposite
- 61. Some early computers
- 62. Sheep's coat
- 63. \_\_\_\_-de-lis
- 64. Sound on Old MacDonald's farm
- 65. Handmade products website
- 66. Some subs
- 67. General \_\_\_\_ chicken

**Down**

- 1. Mouth, slangily
- 2. Red, as a Spanish wine
- 3. Vizquel with 11 Gold Gloves
- 4. Ending with brick or stock
- 5. Popsicle choice
- 6. It may be drawn
- 7. Cole Porter's "Well, Did You \_\_\_\_?"
- 8. Title for Helen Mirren
- 9. Freudian mistake
- 10. One of the Wayans brothers
- 11. Hot
- 12. Hotel capacity: Abbr.
- 13. Bathwater tester
- 21. Honey Bunches of \_\_\_\_
- 22. Conversation fillers
- 25. Small-time
- 26. Greek for "vapor"
- 27. Crop-destroying beetle
- 28. Some camcorder recordings
- 29. Singer DiFranco
- 30. Pan-frying instruction
- 31. Wand material in the Harry Potter books
- 32. Verizon FiOS, e.g., for short
- 33. Time and \_\_\_\_
- 37. Roofing material
- 38. Postal abbr. for a rural address
- 39. 511, to Caesar
- 42. Make some changes to
- 44. How one person might resemble another
- 45. To's opposite
- 46. Says "My bad!"
- 47. Hardships
- 51. Fizzling sound
- 52. Wan
- 53. Thingamajig
- 54. \_\_\_\_ gear
- 55. Geishas' sashes
- 56. "Let me think ... yeah, that's stupid"
- 57. Judgmental sounds
- 58. Fall behind
- 59. "Let's \_\_\_\_ and say we did"



**Answers to last puzzle**





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