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The Erie Reader is the local voice for news, arts, and culture, and is Erie's only independent, alternative newspaper. Founded in 2010, the Reader has quickly become the region's award-winning source for arts coverage, a strong cultural compass, and a dynamic resource for news and opinion. With a dedication to long-form journalism and a commitment to provoking thoughtful discussion, the Reader tells the stories of the people and places making and shaping Erie, while highlighting the events and issues influencing life in northwestern Pennsylvania. The Erie Reader is published every other week and distributed at over 250 high foot-traffic locations in Pennsylvania from North East to Girard to Edinboro. In addition to appearing in print, Erie Reader adds new content daily at ErieReader.com as well social media sites. All rights reserved. All content © Flagship Multimedia, Inc, 1001 State St., Suite 901, Erie, Pa, 16501. No part of this publication may be reproduced without permission. The opinions of our columnists and contributors are their own and do not always reflect that of the editorial board or organization. Direct sales inquiries to 814.314.9364. For editorial inquiries, email contact@ErieReader.com.



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From The Editors

Curbing cabin fever to the extreme

Where does adrenaline come from? Physiologists might point to the adrenal glands directly above the kidneys or the neurons of the sympathetic nervous system, which governs the body's "fight-or-flight" response. The majority of us, however, would point to a wildly diverse range of external stimuli — the things that drive us, excite us, or perhaps even flat-out scare us. These things are not found within an anatomy textbook, but within the binding of experience. The things that quicken our pulse are often not merely cheap thrills; they are markers of our identity. When adrenaline is heightened, so is our sense of self.

Since most of us don't come across marauding bears or man-eating sharks during our daily routines (maybe former classmates or coworkers we're dead-set on avoiding — which may be worse), many of us rely on sport for an epinephrine boost. Whether you're a participant or a spectator, sports may not only captivate individuals, but also enthrall entire nations. The Winter Olympics currently transpiring in Pyeongchang are the perfect distillation of this phenomenon — athletes competing against not only their own fears and expectations, but those of their countries. It's an adrenal avalanche; awareness elevated to its peak.

Life is much more meaningful when there is something at stake. 'Tis better to have lugged and lost than to have never lugged at all. Or in lieu of luge, whatever pursuit applies to you. In Erie, Pa., far north of Pyeongchang and certainly north of many of the world's kidney-holders, several locals accelerate their heart rates with methods outside the mainstream.

Some go to such extremes as to affix runners to the side of a boat and hurtle across ice at 100 miles per hour (see "Running Fast on Hard Water," wherein Mary Birdsong describes her first time iceboating on Presque Isle Bay). Others punch holes in that same ice with a fishing rod in hand, hoping to engage in interspecies tug-of-war (and capture it on camera — pro angler Dave Lefebvre and sidekick Terry Olsen share the success of their one-of-a-kind fishing program in "Erie Extreme"). Then there are those who would prefer to stay indoors — that's okay, sometimes all you need to get your blood flowing is two rackets, a projectile, and a nimble opponent standing across the table (Matt Swanseger traces the history of ping-pong from Victorian England to the Erie Table Tennis Club in "Spin Is In").

Outside of the realm of sports and recreation, the quest for truth is a spark for some. Wendell Potter, a big pharma defector and founder of non-profit journalism startup Tarbell.org, is a prime example. City Council President Sonya Arrington is compelled to end racial profiling in our justice system — Dan Schank collects the latest findings on police body cameras. Racial conflict is far from a new development, of course — Jonathan Burdick delves into the complicated history of slavery in Pennsylvania.

Freedom can be an elusive concept, but don't let it elude you. Free yourselves from your afghan cocoons and get out there. Is it too extreme to say that hibernation is overrated?

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Shifting Focus

Body cameras and community policing emerge as priorities for Erie in 2018



SKYWAVE RD KICK

By: Dan Schank

As City Council President in Erie, Sonya Arrington hears a lot about racial profiling. Stories of drivers pulled over because they “match a description,” and cars that are searched because an officer claimed to smell weed. Although she is quick to clarify that not all of our police officers abuse their authority, Arrington has called for more oversight because “police can’t police themselves.”

This concern initially led her to suggest a citizen’s review board to investigate allegations of police misconduct in Erie. But after some conversations with our new mayor, she now believes that mandatory body cameras may be a better way to ensure trust between the community and law enforcement. This technology can be costly, so Schember has tasked his newly-appointed grant writer Abigail Skinner to seek out funding. Skinner informed me via email that “body cameras are a priority of the administration” and that grant opportunities are already being explored. According to Arrington, “it’s a win-win for both the citizens and the police because the camera is going to speak for itself.”

Newly appointed Chief of Police Dan Spizarny is more guarded in his optimism: “I believe that body cameras will be good provided that the ex-

Police body cameras are being explored as an option to put an end to racial profiling and hold law enforcers accountable for their actions. Some studies suggest, however, that the cameras had minimal impact on enforcement methods.

pectations are reasonable. We have to understand that there are limitations to what the cameras will see and how clearly they will see it.” Spizarny notes that “live body cam filming is not the same as watching a television show” and that environmental factors like weather, lighting, and movement will affect the quality of the evidence they produce.

There are ethical concerns as well. When recently asked why a body camera should have an “off” button in the first place, Spizarny had to jokingly remind a constituent that his officers occasionally use the bathroom. More substantive questions have emerged about the public’s right to see recorded footage and how our state’s decade-old Right to Know Act (which guarantees access to public records) should be adjusted in response to the technology. Finally, the social value of body cameras is still far from clear. The Washington D.C. Metropolitan Police Department recently concluded a two-year study involving approximately 2,200 officers which “found that body-worn cameras had no statistically significant effects” on

policing.

Still, the decision reflects a shift toward greater transparency in law enforcement and local government. When I spoke to Arrington in late January, she found Mayor Schember's willingness to attend monthly City Council meetings — where community policing endeavors are increasingly a priority — especially encouraging. The council is working closely with the mayor to expand programming in our community centers, allowing a rotating list of police officers to "volunteer, help the kids with their homework, and interact in a positive way," according to Arrington. The Police Athletic League has also recently expanded as a part of this effort. Arrington centralizes the importance of relationships between officers and the communities they serve as our city cultivates these changes.

Regarding community policing, a pilot program designed to strengthen police/community relations has just been put forth by the Department of Justice. "We're trying to develop more programs within the department

to have more citizen contacts," says Spizarny. "We're trying to encourage our officers to get out of the car more, to speak with more people in non-enforcement situations."

"We're trying to develop more programs within the department to have more citizen contacts. We're trying to encourage our officers to get out of the car more, to speak with more people in non-enforcement situations."

Obviously body cameras and community policing won't alleviate all of the tensions in our community. Body cameras are a new tool for police departments and ensuring that they are implemented ethically and effectively may prove challenging. But dialogues are under way, and Arrington is feeling positive: "I see change. I see hope in the inner city, and the whole city, really."

Dan Schank can be reached at dschank@eriereader.com

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Solutions Journalism

A conversation with Wendell Potter, founder of Tarbell.org



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

By: Jim Wertz

Questions of motivation and transparency loom large in politics as they do in life, but it seems to take on ever more importance during an era in which black-and-white media and the delegitimization of institutions have become the norm rather than the exception.

“I want people to understand how their thoughts are being manipulated in ways that they just never take into consideration,” says Wendell Potter, who spoke before a crowd of nearly 100 people at the Jefferson Educational Society on January 29.

Potter is the driving force behind Tarbell.org, a non-profit journalism start-up that is reader-funded and ad-free. That combination is a point Potter would rather you not miss because, as he sees it, the public has long-held mistrust of the government with little understanding of the corrosive corporate forces that shape the national political agenda.

Potter and Co. are inspired by the legacy of Ida Tarbell, the turn-of-the-20th-century Erie County-born muckraker whose 19-story series on the history of the Standard Oil Company continues to inform and — as Potter reminds us — inspire investigative journalism in the 21st Century. We sat down after his Jefferson Society presentation to talk Ida Tarbell, transparency, and power in politics.

Jim Wertz: I’m interested in this idea of the legacy and the ghost of Ida Tar-

bell coming through in the work of Tarbell.org. How do you see that legacy manifesting itself in what you’re doing with the organization?

Wendell Potter: Our approach will be similar to what hers was in looking at the corporate monopoly that was the Standard Oil Company. That was one of our overriding reasons for doing what we’re doing and then realizing that because the work she did was so impactful, it’d make a lot of sense to name what we’re doing after her. I think by using her name, we’ll be reminded of the approach she took and the way that she wrote the stories, the research that she did, the credibility that she had. As I said, when you look at them today they may look fairly dry, but they were very well-received and very well-read during her era, and made a very huge impact, and she said — it was in Doris Kearns Goodwin’s book — that she hoped that Americans would rise up and demand a difference, demand change. We want to do that as well too, and we may go a bit further than what they did at McClure’s or what any news organization does. We want to expose the problems, but we also have a focus on “solutions journalism.” We don’t want to leave readers in despair and to think these problems are intractable. They’re not. It can be solved and it can be addressed. We want to do stories, investigate solutions as well as problems, and also help people learn how they can get involved and why that’s important. I think that a lot of peo-

Wendell Potter, former head of corporate communications for pharmaceutical behemoths like Humana and Cigna, experienced a “crisis of conscience” after visiting a pop-up medical clinic in Appalachia. The scene shined an ugly spotlight on the staggering disparities between rich and poor, affecting him so greatly that he left his job in big pharma to establish Tarbell.org and crusade for justice.

ple are cynical, frustrated and cynical, in thinking the system is rigged, and [wondering] why [they should] even bother to vote. But we want to help people understand the value of citizen engagement. And that if we are ever to have change in any area, whether you’re talking about health-care or the environment or money and politics broadly, it requires people paying attention and getting involved.

JW: You talk about wanting to rescue the readers from despair, but I also think about journalists, particularly in this era, who seem to be under a constant state of attack, especially investigative journalists.

WP: I was part of that machine on the other side. I know how it works. I hope that we can help people understand that machine and what the odds are that truth can actually get through. I want people to understand how their thoughts are being manipulated in ways that they just never take into consideration.

JW: When you talk about investigating corporate culture and corporate influence, right out of the gate you have two significant subjects: one from your background in healthcare and the other from the media industry. Where do you see the greatest corporate threat to democracy?

WP: I think it has become one behemoth, or a behemoth with many different elements. It’s not good either that we have a president and other politicians who try to delegitimize the media and who have taken the term “fake news” and used it in a way that it wasn’t used in initially. It was, as you know, an expression to try and describe “information,” if you call it that, or misinformation on the Internet that was not truthful by definition and then it was just co-opted and taken as a term, and it’s used and a lot of people believe it. There is

reason to do that, because if you can delegitimize the media, it’s a good thing for corporations. And I think even investigative journalism plays a role in some of the problems we have now. Most of the investigative journalism has been focused on government and politicians and I think that even contributes to people’s concern or distrust of government and then you have a relentless campaign that people aren’t even aware of that corporations and trade associations and U.S. Chamber of Commerce and others have been carrying on for a long time to get people to distrust their government — to be opposed to even appropriate regulation — that works to corporate benefit.

JW: There seem to be a number of non-profit news entities in the last decade or so, that have sprung up to try to address many of the concerns that you just articulated, so how is Tarbell.org different?

WP: Well first of all, we don’t see ourselves as competitors to ProPublica or the Center of Public Integrity. Our sole focus is going to be looking at the true power in this country. It’s not the politicians. I think there is this misunderstanding that the president and members of Congress hold power — they don’t. It is the corporate leaders and the leaders of big trade associations like the American Medical Association, Hospital Association, and Dental Association that can write big checks to influence elections and public policy. So, we’re looking through a lens that I think is a bit different and a target that’s a bit different. You can’t write these stories or present this information without involving politicians and government, but it’s gonna be with a different focus. We want to also investigate solutions, and that’s going to be as important to us as investigating those who are financing the corruption and exposing them and also having people understand how they are affected by this.

Jim Wertz can be reached at jWertz@ErieReader.com and you can follow him on Twitter @jim_wertz. Also, read Tarbell.org’s first investigative series on the political influence of big pharma at Tarbell.org.

Slavery and Abolition in Erie County

Complicated past echoed in complicated present



IVAI/DAZIL

By: Jonathan Burdick

William Penn was a slaveholder. This might come as a surprise to many Pennsylvanians. How could William Penn — Quaker, pacifist, proponent of peace, founder of Pennsylvania, that guy with the funny hat we learned about in elementary school — not only condone, but participate in the institution of slavery?

Many Quakers *had* been at the forefront of the abolition movement. After all, it was Pennsylvania Quakers in 1688 who drafted the first public document in the colonies protesting slavery and arguing for universal human rights.

William Penn just wasn't one of those Quakers.

At his estate in Pennsbury, he enslaved as many as a dozen black men and women. Some historical accounts have portrayed him as a man who treated those who he enslaved as family — the gentle slaveholder trope. This historical interpretation relies on dismissing that such a slaveholder still considered humans to be property, exploited their labor, and participated in a system fueled by fear and violence.

Revered historical figures — whether

William Penn or George Washington or Thomas Jefferson — are often absolved as merely “men of their time,” that they were only participating in what was culturally acceptable. It is true that historians avoid judging people of the past by modern standards — but even in the 17th century, most slaveholders (and certainly Penn) were well aware of abolitionist ideologies — not to mention that enslaved and free black men, women, and children knew the evils of the chattel slave system.

Historian Stephen E. Ambrose, in writing about Jefferson, noted that he “knew slavery was wrong and that he was wrong in profiting from the institution, but apparently could see no way to relinquish it in his lifetime.”

Whether Penn had similar internal struggles or not is unknown. He died in 1718 and it was not until 1758 that the Pennsylvania Quakers officially made a statement condemning slavery, inspired by persistent anti-slavery Quakers such as John Woolman.

Slavery continued in Pennsylvania for almost another century. Many school children are taught that Pennsylvania was one of the first states to abolish slavery — which is true. What

is often omitted though is that it wasn't done through immediate absolute abolition. In 1780, state lawmakers passed the Gradual Abolition Act. Instead of abolishing slavery outright, it only required Pennsylvania slaveholders to register their human property each year to prevent interstate smuggling. It also made it so that anyone born in Pennsylvania was free — except for those born to enslaved mothers. They would be freed at the age of 28. Perhaps most tragically, those born before the act passed were to remain enslaved for life.

In 1790 there were 3,737 people enslaved in the state. By 1820, the number had reduced to 211. By 1840, 64 people remained enslaved. It wasn't until 1847 that the Pennsylvania legislature finally passed an act for absolute abolition — 14 years before the start of the Civil War.

These figures included slaves in Erie County. In a collection of posthumously published writings by Erie resident Isaac Moorhead, he described French Street during his early 19th century childhood. He noted a two-story log store owned by Thomas Wilson, a powerhouse politician who had been the city Burgess, town clerk, county treasurer, county commissioner, clerk of the court, justice of the peace, and a two-term U.S. Representative.

“He owned four slaves,” Moorhead added. “One (old Kitty) is alive to-day (1874) in the county almshouse.”

Wilson died in 1824. It's unclear if Kitty — still living in 1874, according to Moorhead — had been freed at age 28 or was born before the 1880 law passed.

Much of Erie County's early black population was either enslaved or had been. Boe Bladen, one of Erie's earliest non-native settlers, purchased his freedom in Maryland and moved just outside of Erie in 1796. He built a log cabin and farm that remained in his

[top left] Much progress has been made since the days of slavery, but many African-Americans continue to struggle to shed the chains of inequality. [bottom right] Pennsylvania legislators did not pass full abolition into law until 1847, just 14 years before the start of the Civil War. Pennsylvania Representative Thaddeus Stevens (bottom) passionately supported the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery nationwide in 1865.

family for a century. Another early family — Thomas and Catherine Moorhead — moved to the Harborcreek area around 1801 and brought with them their slaves, a woman named Phoebe and her son Caesar Augustus. According to John Miller's 1909 history of the county, Caesar became “a notable character” known by many and upon being freed, he married and settled down on a nearby four-acre farm. Hamilton Waters — grandfather of Harry T. Burleigh — moved to Erie with his wife Lucinda in 1838 after being freed in Maryland and was very active in the community.

There were, indeed, pockets of support for the black community from white citizens. Yet, even non-slaveholding whites in Erie regularly demonstrated their racism. Jean E. Snyder wrote in her biography of Harry T. Burleigh how during the mid-1800s “jeering and rock-throwing incidents ... made daily life uncomfortable for Erie's



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black citizens ... [so] African Americans found their primary support in one another rather than in benevolent white citizens.”

Like Thomas Wilson, many other prominent Erie families were slaveholders. In 1825, P.S.V. Hamot — the namesake of Erie’s UPMC Hamot hospital — put out a notice concerning a runaway 19-year-old slave with “the spirit of Cain” and “very bad character.” Revolutionary War veteran and judge Joseph Cochran owned a slave. Another judge, John Grubb, purchased a 25-year-old slave named Jack — although Grubb’s later involvement in the local Anti-Slavery Society have led some to suggest that he did so to free him.

Anti-slavery societies were scattered all throughout Erie County and most had dozens of members. Abolitionist John Brown had a tannery and farm in neighboring Crawford County in 1825. Well-known area residents such as Hamilton Waters, Albert Vosburgh, Daniel Dobbins, William Himrod, John Dickson, Josiah Kellogg, Hamlin Russell,

Parson Rice, Frank Henry, and others were active in these societies as well as with the Underground Railroad. At the same time, anti-slavery societies in Erie County were almost immediately met with anti-abolition societies.

Even after absolute abolition in 1847, Erie and slavery remained intertwined — this time, with the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. The law made it so that if an enslaved person escaped to a free state such as Pennsylvania, officials and citizens were required to cooperate with their capture and return. Once a person suspected or accused of being a runaway was arrested, they had no right to a trial by jury, essentially delivering to the accuser, regardless of the accusation’s accuracy.

The Fugitive Slave Act was met with resistance by many lawmakers, yet lamentably, it was an Erie congressman who aided its passing — James Thompson, a former Erie judge who’d been elected as a U.S. Representative. Speaker of the House Howell Cobb — a future founder of the Confeder-

acy — met with Thompson behind closed doors, requesting that he take the floor in favor of the Fugitive Slave Act. Thompson agreed. He referred to the act as a “great plan which had been devised for the pacification of the country.” He ended his remarks with a motion to close debate and move to an immediate vote.

This took many lawmakers by surprise. Pennsylvania Representative Thaddeus Stevens, then still a political novice, was furious. He requested that Thompson withdraw his motion as he wished to reply. Thompson refused. A request to shelve the bill until a later date was also voted down. As a result, the Fugitive Slave Act passed with a vote of 109-75. Ten Pennsylvania representatives voted against it and six, including Thompson, voted in favor. Soon after, President Millard Fillmore signed it into law.

Even after this, James Thompson’s career continued to flourish. He served on the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania from 1857 to 1872. Thaddeus Stevens, on the other hand, etched himself

into the history books as an influential Radical Republican. He was also the representative who closed the debate on the passage of the Thirteenth Amendment in 1865, which officially abolished slavery in the United States.

Today, there are still institutionalized echoes of Erie County’s complicated history with slavery and racism. The 20th century saw destructive redlining policies. Resources have never been distributed equitably. Neighborhoods have been ignored by the local and county governments. In recent months, Erie made national news when it was ranked by USA Today as the single worst city for black Americans based on “disparities in each city between black and white residents.”

While the Erie region clearly has a long way to go in terms of its racial disparities, perhaps the first step is reckoning with its complicated past.

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



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FEATURE

Running Fast on Hard Water

Icy dream comes true on Presque Isle Bay



MARY BIRDSONG

Iceboats, which come in several variations, all share the design element of a ski-like runner attached to each side of the cockpit. Many Erie Yacht Club members, such as Chris Wolford, relish the chance to "sail fast."

to design a small, portable iceboat that would be affordable and able to be built by the average person. They opened their hobby shop to those willing to try. The winning design was the Blue Streak 60, but in test runs, difficulties were discovered and revised plans were drawn. Many years and modifications later, the DN is now the most abundant class of iceboats around the world, with many sailors building their crafts themselves.

Dale's stingray, sometimes called a Double DN, was a 1950s attempt to turn a DN into a two-seater and made it possible for me to ride along. Our first go at it fell flat when light southeast winds didn't provide enough oomph to get us moving. After numerous attempts with Alec pushing in hope of catching a breeze and me steering, we eventually gave up and headed to shore.

Once there I quizzed other boaters about their enthusiasm for the sport. Chris Wolford, who has been ice sailing for 45 years, said, "We sail in the summer but Erie winters are long. This gives us the chance to sail all year." He also added with a grin, "It also gives us the chance to sail fast."

And speed is one of the major draws of iceboating. The low friction of ice along with the combination of sailing physics and design mean that even in light wind, a well-tuned boat can sail at 8 to 10 times the wind speed. So, for example, a 10 mph wind can translate into an 80 mph sailing velocity.

The possibility of high speeds, proximity to the hard surface, and the chance of finding unexpected weak spots in the ice, can make this sport dangerous. General rules of safety include

By: Mary Birdsong

Imagine yourself 12 years old, standing on what was then called the Public Dock, the west wind whipping fast across your cold cheeks. Out on the frozen bay is a small, skeletal sailboat suspended no more than eight inches above the ice. The sailor looks tiny in the craft, one hand tugging at the rope controlling the sail, the other holding a tiller in front of him. The boat moves swiftly — and what seems like silently from your distance — in the sharp winter gusts. With one particularly forceful burst of wind, a runner on one side of the boat lifts up and your heart catches in your throat. Will he crash? No, he just sets back down and then comes about to head in the other direction.

Your heartbeat delightfully quickened, you want to march right out there and say to that sailor, "Teach me how to sail. I must do this." Thus began my long-unfulfilled quest to take to the bay on an iceboat, about 45 years ago.

That ambition was finally realized early last month when I met Alec Dale, the skipper of a

stingray-style craft, on the shore at the Erie Yacht Club where iceboats muster. There, I learned about the different classes of boats — or "yachts" as they are sometimes called — as I walked among those secured on small saw horses right on the bay.

There are Arrows, Skeeters, Nites, DNs and Sweet Sixteens, each with their own features. Some are for solo sailing while others hold two people. Some are modified versions of original designs. The one thing they all have in common is that the steering runner that is the "rudder" is in the front of the boat, unlike the rear placement in a conventional "soft water" sailboat. Two other runners on each side of the cockpit are fixed onto ends of a springboard that runs perpendicular to the body of the boat. Only the runners touch the ice when sailing.

The smallest of them is the DN, which has an interesting history. Prior to the early 20th century, most ice yachts were larger, held more people and were stern-driven. They were expensive and available only to the wealthy. In 1937, the Detroit News (hence, DN) invited iceboat enthusiasts



MARY BIRDSONG

Iceboats are whisked into motion when the sails catch the wind, propelling the vessel over the ice on its runners — often at highway speeds.

never going out alone, wearing a helmet and flotation device, knowing the right-of-way rules and being prepared with both the knowledge and equipment to remove yourself from the chilly water if you happen to fall through.

Most boaters carry specialty ice picks for getting a better grip when and if they find themselves in the water.

So why the heck does anyone do this? “It’s fun, plain and simple,” said John Orlando, past commodore of the

EYC and an ice-boater for 20 years. “It’s an absolute rush to be out there.”

Yes. Yes it is. And, in fact, it’s just as thrilling as I imagined it to be. For our second attempt, there was a west wind of 10-15 mph and the sun

was even shining. We had no trouble catching a breeze and before I knew it, we were hurtling across the bay towards Presque Isle at a good clip, the loud clatter of runners rattling in our helmets and ice chips hammering our faces. I was grinning. It sounded and felt like an old wooden roller coaster that jangles your body and nerves. It was not the silent, smooth ride I imagined so many years ago. It was, perhaps, better.

After a few trips across the ice, with Dale demonstrating some steering and turning techniques, he gave me the tiller, while he worked the sail. I fretted a little as we approached my first tack ma-

neuver, but I pulled it off and did a few more.

Other faster boats whizzed by us under cloudless blue skies. Bumps of ice and patches of snow knocked us around, and the fresh, cold air cleared any winter cobwebs from my brain. Every turn provided a new thrill and put a brighter gleam in the eyes of this now-12-years-old-again kid. We only got up to 35 mph, approximately, but I already wanted more.

One thing I learned when joining this jovial group of daredevils on the banks of the bay was that you don’t need to be a member of the EYC to use the iceboat area. There may be one more DN pushing off from there next year: mine.

When she is not seeking thrills or enjoying nature, Mary Birdsong can be reached at mbirdsong@eriereader.com

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Erie Extreme

Local fishing program approaches angling from all angles



By: Matt Swanseger

The shortest distance between two points is a straight line — but when that line is attached to a reel, the experience is often anything but straightforward.

Reality is apt to take the jig and jerk that straight line in any direction. Few people are more aware of this truth than Erie native Dave Lefebre, a veteran pro angler who currently tours with both the Major League Fishing and BassMaster Elite Series. Weather changes. Conditions change. The fish you were after may boycott your party completely; at the same time unexpected guests may show up in droves. “Maybe one out of four times it actually works like you want it to.”

Lefebre had it up to his gills with the unrealistic portrayals of fishing propagated by traditional outdoors programs, several of which he has partaken in. You know the scene — a sunshine-dappled lake, crystalline waters smooth as glass, trophy fish clustering around the production crew’s boat as giddily as

a *Today Show* crowd. The angler savant proceeds to pluck specimen after specimen out of the depths, a spectacle of shimmering scales and shimmying tails. They’re not frightened for their lives; they’re just excited to be on TV (“Hi, mom!”)

Lefebre, who had always wanted to host a show of his own, resolved to tackle this matter himself. “I wanted to show what was really happening, but didn’t want a full-fledged reality show or a full-fledged fishing show. I’ve never really liked either of those. My goal was to get everyone *but* those guys to watch, to entertain *everyone*, even old ladies.”

Unfortunately for those old ladies (and the rest of us), the networks weren’t as eager to stir things up. Conservative network execs don’t want to sort through the swirling sediment of reality; most prefer the predictable clarity of a climate-controlled aquarium. The solution of, course, was to keep it local. Lefebre cold-called Lilly Broadcasting and spoke with Terry Olsen, a senior business and marketing consultant. Olsen,

himself an avid fisherman, took the bait. It was an upstream battle, but Lefebre’s vision had finally spawned.

Erie Extreme, now in its second season, follows Lefebre and Olsen (who serves as cameraman) through the *entirety* of a day fishing, for better or for worse. “We capture every moment of the whole shoot. The camera is on all the time,” explains Lefebre. Backup cameras, batteries, and memory cards are always on hand because “we don’t want to miss anything that happens.” Because the footage is always rolling, it’s easy to forget the cameras are even there. “It’s like if *Seinfeld* went fishing,” says Olsen. “You start watching it and get sucked in.”

What’s the hook? According to both Lefebre and Olsen, it’s northwestern Pennsylvania. The show does well capturing both the culture (in segments such as “Hometown Faces”) and astonishing ecological diversity of the region. Says Lefebre: “Within 50 miles of here ... there are currents, creeks, rivers, man-made reservoirs/dams, marshes, natural lakes, and gla-

[left] Professional angler Dave Lefebre (left) and cameraman Terry Olsen (right) have caught many specimens — and the attention of audiences as far north as Toronto — with their *Erie Extreme* program, a hybrid between a reality show and a fishing show that doesn’t necessarily pander to either audience. [bottom] Lefebre is quick to praise the ecological diversity of his native Northwestern Pennsylvania. “Nothing holds a candle to it.”

cial lakes. Just a huge variety ... diversity is something that as we go along people will notice. Truthfully, our backyard is as good as it gets. I’ve fished the so-called number one places in the country. I’ll get the shakes beforehand, but then I get there and am like ‘this is it?’ It might be good, but nothing holds a candle to here.”

Both that variety and the devious challenges viewers concoct for the intrepid fishermen have kept the creative rudders spinning. Olsen explains: “It’s something like *Mission Impossible* — ‘your mission, if you choose to accept it...’ [The challenges are] never something straightforward. There’s a catch, a twist of absurdity that makes it interesting — like catching fish hanging off of a crane 115 feet in the air or pulling up to the marina with Amish horses.” Lefebre says it all boils down to “having fun” and featuring the area in a

positive light. From a personal standpoint, it makes for a great excuse for him to spend more time at home around his family. The “gypsy” lifestyle of touring nine months a year can be wearing.

“A national show would’ve defeated the purpose,” says Lefebre.

Despite its hometown flavor, the show has trawled in audiences from as far north as Toronto (Buffalo’s FOX station, which reaches into Ontario) and as far south as Pittsburgh (the CW) on network TV. Meanwhile, the YouTube channel dangles the lure of NWPFA to audiences worldwide — that is, if they’re not already in on the secret. “During steelhead season, you’ll see license plates from all over the country,” says Olsen.

Beyond that, the most reliable item in their *Erie Extreme*’s tackle box might be its personality and sense of humor. As Lefebre puts it: “We’re still idiots; we just have better equipment.”

Watch *Erie Extreme* on WICU-TV 12 Saturdays at 7 p.m. or visit their YouTube channel for past episodes, outtakes, and extras. Submit your most devious challenge ideas to Nathan Wheeler at wcreate@wcreate.com and SEO (nate@wcreate.com)

Throw Matt Swanseger a line at mswanseger@eriereader.com



Spin Is In

Raising a racket at the Erie Table Tennis Club



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Table tennis, once a parlor game of inexact dimensions, has evolved into an Olympic sport with very specific guidelines — a table 9 feet long, 5 feet wide, and 30 inches tall, a net measuring 6 inches tall, and a ball weighing 2.7 grams (less than an ounce).

on and designed proper equipment worth the proper investment of the bourgeoisie. The most notable of these was British manufacturer J. Jacques & Son Ltd., who trademarked the name “ping-pong” in 1901.

Ping-pong’s popularity spread rapidly in the early 20th century, both throughout Europe and Great Britain’s colonies in Indochina, eventually gripping Southeast Asia at large. Japan would come to dominate international competition after Horoi Sotoh showed up to the 1952 world championships with a revolutionary foam rubber paddle (which radically altered the physics of the game). China overtook Japan by the mid-’60s and very rarely relinquished its top spot until 1988, when table tennis was approved as an Olympic sport. Currently, China, Japan, Chinese Taipei (which includes Taiwan), Hong Kong, and Korea Republic are all ranked top 10 worldwide in both men’s and women’s competition, showing that Southeast Asia is still very much holding serve.

While table tennis is far from America’s game (neither U.S. men nor women are ranked in the top 20), it is very much a microcosm of American diversity. That is immediately evident the moment I walk into the McDowell Intermediate

High School gymnasium on a random weeknight in late January. The Erie Table Tennis Club has assembled here since 1990 (before that, the Glenwood YMCA), meeting on Thursday and Saturday evenings. The club has over 100 members, ranging from teenagers to senior citizens, with nationalities spanning the globe. Players come from China, India, Myanmar, the Ukraine, Russia, Pakistan, Korea, El Salvador, and North America (as in for real— the Seneca Tribe has a representative). Some are naturalized U.S. citizens, while others are foreign contractors for local companies who speak virtually no English at all.

No matter where they’re from, the one language players must know is spin. “If you cannot read the spin, you miss instantly. If you don’t give [your opponent] spin, they can rally,” explains Erie Table Tennis tournament director and founding member Sam Steiner.

The modern ping-pong racket, or bat, has three components — the blade and the rubber pads affixed to either side (largely responsible for generating the spin). By developing and perfecting topspin (a downward curve applied by brushing the ball from above) and backspin (an upward curve applied by grazing the ball from below), one can manipulate an opponent’s eyes and encourage the moment’s hesitation so crucial to victory.

Compared to a ping-pong ball, the Earth rotates much more predictably— counterclockwise on its axis, at a tilt of

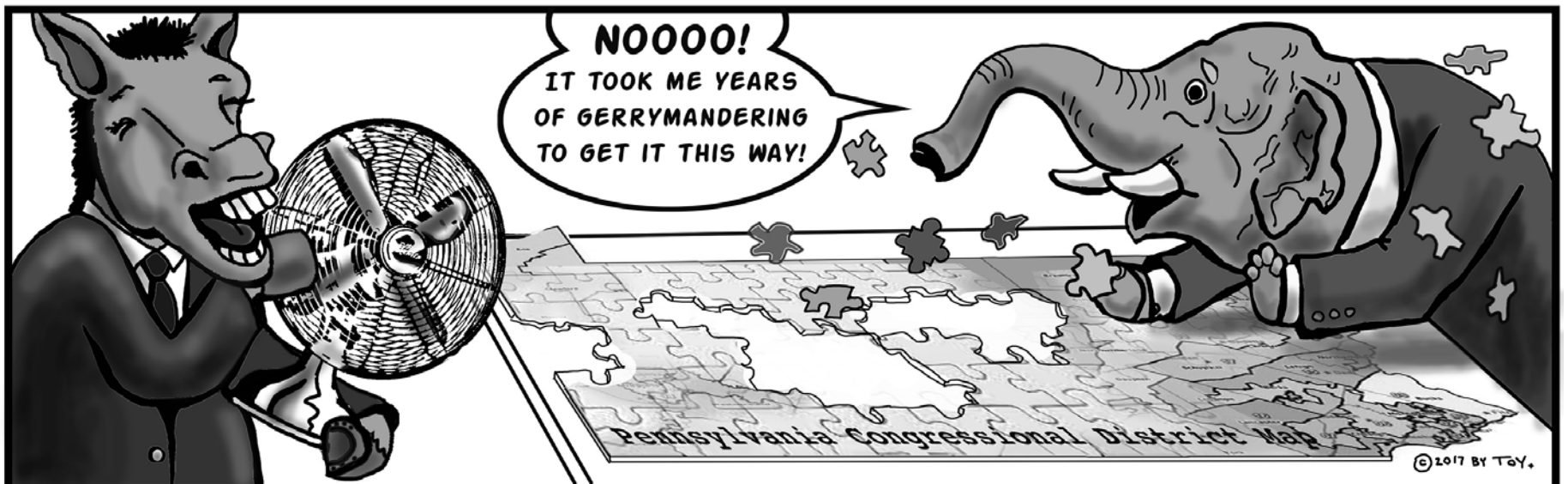
By: Matt Swanseger

If the words “whif whaf” and “flim flam” do not seem synonymous with “nonsense,” then you’re probably too young to have attended an upper-middle class Victorian dinner party. Despite their stuffy reputation, it turns out the English of that era were a lot sillier than we give them credit for. Sometime in the 1880s, in opulent dining rooms unknown, a global phenomenon was born — on the very same tables that Cornish hens and fancy cakes were served. Yes, table tennis, now an Olympic sport, originated with a few (re-

putedly) severe people goofing off after supper.

The game, which is today governed by the International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF), comes with an extensive set of rules and regulations —the 2018 ITTF handbook (available online as a PDF) weighs in at a hefty 207 pages. But back in the days when it was still called “gossamer,” “whif whaf,” or “flim flam,” it only mattered that the contestants could functionally mimic lawn tennis with common household items (e.g., the net = books from the study, the rackets = cigar box lids, the ball = a champagne cork). That is, until companies caught

Just Toyin’ Witcha - By B. Toy



FEATURE

about 23.5 degrees, 365.25 times a year. Twice during this cycle, the Erie Table Tennis Club hosts its ITTF-sanctioned tournaments, which regularly draw over 100 competitors, many of whom travel in from out of town (in some cases

"It's a universal game. Everyone knows the rules. As long as you can count in your language, you can play."

abroad). Once everyone is assembled within the confines of the MIHS gym, however, there is plenty of room for the unexpected. For instance, the men's finals of last year's Millcreek Open pitted a 15-year-old against a 44-year-old.

Age is just a number; a player's rating is everything. This number grows or shrinks at a pace commensurate with a match's predicted outcome. For example, if a player wins or loses to an opponent with an identical or nearly-identical rating (thus similarly skilled), the change is incremental (plus or minus 8 points).

However, when the disparity is greater, ratings can rise or fall by as many as 50 points. Although that is rare, one has to assume the world's top-ranked players (with ratings of 16,000-plus) did not ascend to such heights without pulling off an upset or two along the way.

The majority of local players, though, have more in common with their Victorian predecessors than their Olympian contemporaries. They're here to socialize and work off a little steam after dinner, all throughout the inclement seasons that do not include summer. And in the cases where words do not land within the bounds of comprehension, they let their rackets do the talking.

Says Steiner: "It's a universal game. Everyone knows the rules. As long as you can count in your language, you can play."

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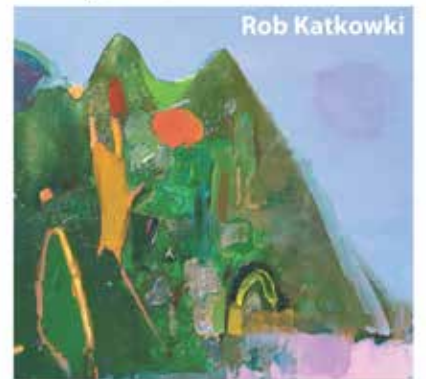


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Boogie for Free with The LEC and The Wildeyes at Kings Rook Club



STEVE LEITZINGER

SATURDAY, FEB. 17TH

Some bills just click, and longtime Erie staples The LEC performing once again at the Kings Rook Club with The Wildeyes is one of those bills. A unique hybrid of funk, hip-hop and prog rock, The LEC released their latest album, *Whole Again*, at the end of 2016, followed by music videos for the album's title track and "Feelin' Outta Control ft. C.Brown." Just two weeks ago, they released another video for "My Music ft. C.Brown." Any of these singles would serve the uninitiated well as an introduction into the strange and wonderful world of The LEC, but those unfamiliar are likely to have just as much fun at this free show. "[For] an LEC show, we always

try to bring a high level of energy," explains The LEC vocalist Jonny Evans. "Not all of our music is upbeat, though. We like to touch on some slower styles as well and accentuate the incredible voice of our vocalist/guitar player Dan Head. I think we provide a little something for everybody. I'm really excited for this upcoming show because we will be playing a lot of songs for the first time. We are currently working on a new project, but there is no name for it yet and no release date." Evans also commented on the band's longstanding relationship with the King's Rook Club. "The Rook is our home base!" says Evans. "The people who frequent the Rook always show us a ton of

love and it's just a fun environment to play in. The sound is always right and the lighting is top-notch. I know going into a Rook show that it's always going to be a fun time."

Joining The LEC are The Wildeyes, a pop-rock outfit that combines crunchy, garage rock guitars with irresistible pop melodies. (Side note: The Wildeyes just recently graced this very publication's cover). Boasting a sound that's slightly more grounded but just as groovy, the band arrives fresh off their brand new EP, *Tell Me What You Know*, released at the end of 2017.

"I love these guys," says Evans about The Wildeyes. "I think they are one of the best up-and-coming bands in Erie and have a big opportunity to make a huge splash, both in Erie and outside of Erie. Their sound is tight, their melodies are catchy, and their performance is captivating."

As always, there will be no admittance into the show after 2 a.m. The Kings Rook Bus Stop Bistro will be open from 9 p.m. to 2:30 a.m. for all of your fourth meal needs, including takeout. — Aaron Mook

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

FRIDAY, FEB. 16

Two bands from Michigan, Tranquility and Formerly Bodies, are bringing their distinct styles of emo to the backroom stage of Basement Transmissions, now known as "BT Lounge."

Tranquility's debut album *Sonic Propensity* is a joyride through seven tracks of easy-listening and emotional indie rock, filled with catchy melodies and intensely personal yet relatable lyrics. Fans of Turnover will undoubtedly enjoy this album front to back.

In only three songs, Formerly Bodies, the moniker carried by singer-songwriter Hannah Weir, creates one of the most calming and dreamy releases you've heard in a long time on her *Throwback* EP. "Comfy Cozy Song" could have been a 90's soft rock ballad if it weren't released two decades late, and the remaining tracks are equally cathartic in their own right.

Opening acts for the night are punk rockers Shin Guard from Pittsburgh and Wasted Info from Erie. — Tommy Shannon

7 p.m. // Basement Transmissions, 145 W. 11th St // \$10 Advance, \$12 Doors

MUSIC

Fossil Youth, Rarity and Unturned

Feb. 14 — 7 to 11 p.m.
Loud and sad — that's the theme for Basement Transmissions' Valentine's Day show, with a slew of emo/pop punk hybrid bands storming the stage. Fossil Youth, making their third trip to Erie County from Oklahoma, are headlining a tour featuring Rarity from Canada and Unturned from Minnesota. Opening bands include local favorites Mallory Run, Youngstown's FlipSwitch, and The Smile Case from Ontario. — Tommy Shannon
Basement Transmissions, 145 W. 11th St. facebook.com.

Lonely Hearts Club Vinyl Night

Feb. 14 — 9 p.m. to midnight
Jekyll & Hyde's, 8 E. 10th St. facebook.com.

Dan Baney Country Unplugged

Feb. 16 — 5 to 7 p.m.
The frontman of Erie powerhouse Refuge will regale happy hour casino audiences with a dose of acoustic country.
Presque Isle Downs, 8199 Perry Hwy. presqueisledowns.com.

Alley Goats and The Hangover Band

Feb. 16 — 6 p.m. to 2 a.m.
Out of the ashes of HAMMERD comes the Hangover Band, with a blistering catalog filled with hard rock hits to entertain fans.
Sherlocks, 508 State St. facebook.com.

Radio Age

Feb. 16 — 6 to 10 p.m.
The classic rock five-piece sets their dial to hits from the '80s and more, at the recently-opened Big Bar (formerly Sluggers).
Big Bar, 14 E. 10th St.

facebook.com.

Dueling Pianos

Feb. 16 — 7 p.m.
Bourbon Barrel, 1213 State St. facebook.com.

Tranquility and Formerly Bodies

Feb. 16 — 7 to 11 p.m.
Basement Transmissions, 145 W. 11th St. facebook.com.

Chris Higbee

Feb. 16, 17 — 9 p.m.
The Dawson, PA songwriter, guitarist and fiddle player with an impressive following brings his band to the casino stage for back-to-back performances.
Presque Isle Downs, 8199 Perry Hwy. presqueisledowns.com.

Goose

Feb. 16 — 10 p.m. to 2 a.m.
A blend of funk, jam, and folk, the Wilton, Conn. quintet will have their impressive musicality on display as they near the end of a 24-date tour.

Kings Rook Club, 1921 Peach St. facebook.com.

Cosmic Rhythm

Feb. 17 — 1 to 4 p.m.
Arundel Cellars & Brewing Co., 11727 E. Main Rd. facebook.com.

Claire Stuczynski

Feb. 17 — 5 to 7 p.m.
With her crystal clear voice and arsenal of folk pop originals and covers, the singer-songwriter breaks out her acoustic for happy hour.
Presque Isle Downs, 8199 Perry Hwy. presqueisledowns.com.

In Cahoots

Feb. 17 — 6 to 9 p.m.
Arundel Cellars & Brewing Co., 11727 E. Main Rd. facebook.com.

The Weirido Show

Feb. 17 — 9 p.m. to midnight
It's going to be an Erie night at Darcy's downstairs stage (known as "The Local"), with five bands raising that slightly

horror-tinged punk banner high. The Great Trochanters will make their debut, and be joined by the fast and furious trio Mala Sangre. Check out the Stormalong Scoundrels, a literal band of pirates that dress and sing the part, as well as the riotously dissentious women of Dysmorphia and the ska-punk bite of the Filthy Casuals. Dubbed "The Weirido Show," the evening promises highlight a varied breadth of local punk rock, with energy and eccentricity abounding. — Nick Warren
Darcy's Pub & Grub, 3746 W. 12th St. facebook.com.

OCDC (AC/DC tribute) and Last Call

Feb. 17 — 9 p.m. to 2 a.m.
Sherlocks, 508 State St. facebook.com.

Dirty Leaf

Feb. 17 — 9:30 p.m. to 1:30 a.m.
The Meadville-based five-piece intertwines originals

with covers, creating a wide family tree of rock invention.
Scotty's Martini Lounge, 301 German St. facebook.com.

The LEC and The Wildeyes

Feb. 17 — 10 p.m. to 2 a.m.
Kings Rook Club, 1921 Peach St. facebook.com.

Acoustic Ear Candy

Feb. 18 — 1 to 4 p.m.
Arundel Cellars & Brewing Co., 11727 E. Main Rd. facebook.com.

Joe Luckey Recital Series

Feb. 20 — 7:30 to 9 p.m.
Cathedral of St. Paul, 134 W. 7th St. facebook.com.

Cdot Honcho

Feb. 21 — 6 to 11 p.m.
A recent series of hip-hop shows at Basement Transmissions continues as The Entertainment Collective presents viral up-and-comer Cdot Honcho alongside special guests D.C., I Am Dynasty, CSPRTHEGIANT, Zeek

A Helping Hand for Independence Hill



NICK WARREN

(between 24th and 26th streets on Peach). Shops around the area include Grasshopper, the newly opened Steele's Trading Post, Chicory Hill Herbs, Inter-glasstic Studios, the Hippie and the Hound, French Maids LLC, Gypsy Jewelry Box, and more. Earlier this year, the shopping district received a grant from the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority to help revitalize the area. The effects of the burglaries hit both businesses hard, and the community is rallying to support repair efforts. Thanks to organizers — friends unaffiliated with the shops — a benefit is scheduled titled "Help the Hill," with proceeds going towards security camera installation. The King's Rook Club will open up on Sunday, complete with food, free pool, auctions, and more. — Nick Warren

SUNDAY, FEB. 25

Late on Sunday night on Feb. 4, thieves (who are as-of-yet unidentified) burglarized two independently owned small businesses. Pointe Four Vintage Boutique (voted Best Antique or Vintage Shop this year) and Fat Lenny's Ice Cream and Candy Store had their windows broken, and their cash registers raided. These two businesses are located along a thriving section of town known as Independence Hill

ies hit both businesses hard, and the community is rallying to support repair efforts. Thanks to organizers — friends unaffiliated with the shops — a benefit is scheduled titled "Help the Hill," with proceeds going towards security camera installation. The King's Rook Club will open up on Sunday, complete with food, free pool, auctions, and more. — Nick Warren

5 p.m. to 9 p.m. // Kings Rook Club, 1921 Peach St. // \$10 donation // 21+ // facebook.com/kingsrookclub

An Upbeat Delivery: Samurai Pizza Cats



JENNA PETRONE

rock energy and excitement (not to mention a little distortion) with the literally upbeat nature of the genre, filled with tongue-in-cheek lyrics and catchy, anthemic horn lines. The band's newest single, "Paris" features a funky groove and

SATURDAY, FEB. 24

What does a Long Island ska band have in common with an early '90s anime farce? A name at least. What's that name? Why, Samurai Pizza Cats, of course. Perfect for fans of Big D and the Kids Table, Mustard Plug, or Spiritual Rez, this nine-piece band is sure to get the crowd skanking. A relatively pure synthesis of third wave ska ideals, Samurai Pizza Cats blend punk

bold, brassy, almost Motown-esque backups. The vocals are immediately far grittier than any other previous release (paging all Streetlight Manifesto fans), and the track features a hypnotic, jazz-inspired saxophone solo. If "Paris" is any indication, the Pizza Cats are turning a new page, evolving beyond third wave cliches and finding their own recipe. — Nick Warren

10 p.m. // Kings Rook Club, 1921 Peach St. // facebook.com/kingsrookclub

Diamond, and Ducky. Cdot Honcho is perhaps best known for his recent singles "Anti" and "So Long," the music videos for which are nearing a total of 3.5 million views on Youtube. Tickets and information regarding future productions can be found by following The Entertainment Collective on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. — Aaron Mook *Basement Transmissions*, 145 W. 11th St. facebook.com.

Deven Shah and Noah Bongiovanni

Feb. 23 — noon to 1 p.m.
WQLN Studios, 8425 Peach St. wqln.org.

Matt Gavula

Feb. 23 — 5 to 7 p.m.
Experience Erie's own "Piano Man," Matt Gavula, as he covers some of the greats for your happy hour enjoyment. *Presque Isle Downs*, 8199 Perry Hwy. presqueisledowns.com.

The Groove

Feb. 23 — 6 to 10 p.m.
Let this nine-piece band take you to some place funky while you enjoy covers of Bruno Mars, Michael Jackson, and more. *Big Bar*, 14 E. 10th St. facebook.com.

TomKat Black and TK Blues Co.

Feb. 23 — 6 p.m. to 2 a.m.
Sherlocks, 508 State St. facebook.com.

Bootlegger's Bible Club

Feb. 23 — 7 to 10 p.m.

The local Americana trio builds on the combined talents of bassist Matt Boland, guitarist Matt Texter, and violinist Louis Nicolita, to powerful results. *Room 33*, 1033 State St. facebook.com.

Small Town Revolution

Feb. 23 — 9 p.m.
A revolution is coming to Presque Isle Downs Casino. Well, the band Small Town Revolution is coming, anyways. There's no revolution needed to revise the already sweet combination of gambling and adult beverages. Formed in 2011, the Erie-based Small Town Revolution often performs a mix of today's popular country hits and yesterday's favorites. They cover artists like Garth Brooks, Tim McGraw, Craig Morgan, Miranda Lambert, Luke Bryan, Thomas Rhett, Sam Hunt and Lady Antebellum. Small Town Revolution has opened for nationally-known performers, including Frankie Ballard, Chris Cagle, Sawyer Brown and James Otto. — Tracy Geibel *Presque Isle Downs*, 8199 Perry Hwy. presqueisledowns.com.

Haewa and Dirty Leaf

Feb. 23 — 10 p.m. to 2 a.m.
Haewa, with their unique style of fusion rock, joins the stage alongside Northwestern Pa. rock and roll collaborative Dirty Leaf at the Kings Rook Club. *Kings Rook Club*, 1921 Peach St. facebook.com.

Ron Yarman

Feb. 24 — 5 to 7 p.m.
Singer-songwriter Ron Yarman delivers his own brand of sincere pop rock alongside his smooth voice at the casino. *Presque Isle Downs*, 8199 Perry Hwy. presqueisledowns.com.

Geek Army

Feb. 24 — 9 p.m.
Enjoy one of Erie's favorite best-dressed cover bands as they play anything and everything for the happy hour casino crowd. *Presque Isle Downs*, 8199 Perry Hwy. presqueisledowns.com.

Kriadiaz

Feb. 24 — 9 p.m. to 2 a.m.
Okay, so if you dig metal of the shred-heavy, out-of-the-mud variety unleashed by bands like Pantera, you'll probably wanna be sure to pop your head(banger) into Sherlock's on Saturday, Feb. 24. That's where Cleveland's Kriadiaz — a mega-heavy band led by much-loved metal monster Mushroomhead's Dave Felton — will be delivering a big dose of it. Sherlock's is well-known for some truly great metal shows. And these guys have developed a helluva fan base around the region, and they're definitely known for never skimping on the heavy — real-deal heavy — stuff. — Ryan Smith *Sherlocks*, 508 State St. facebook.com.

Lords of the Highway, Broke

Boland and Paul Anthony Project

Feb. 24 — 9:30 p.m. to 2 a.m.
An NYC singer/songwriter and his musical outfit, one of Erie's best-known music-makers and his band, and a group of Cleveland's most celebrated psycho-surf-punk-rockabilly dudes. Sounds like the makings of a totally not-bad Saturday night, right there. New York's Paul Anthony Project, Erie's own Broke Boland Band, and Cleveland's Lords of the Highway share the evening's performance bill. — Ryan Smith *Scotty's Martini Lounge*, 301 German St. facebook.com.

Samurai Pizza Cats

Feb. 24 — 10 p.m. to 2 a.m.
Kings Rook Club, 1921 Peach St. facebook.com.

Acoustic Confusion with Bob and Liz

Feb. 25 — 1 to 4 p.m.
Arundel Cellars & Brewing Co., 11727 E. Main Rd. facebook.com.

Latewaves and West Means Home

Feb. 25 — 7 to 11 p.m.
Boasting compatibility and variety, Basement Transmissions will be hosting latewaves, West Means Home and Hope for the Hollow among others on February 25th. While both headliners build their sound upon a rock and roll core, latewaves flirt with pop-punk in a style similar to The Menzingers or Make Do and Mend while West Means Home introduces a southern, indie-rock edge not unlike

Microwave or All Get Out. With more artists to be announced, this show is already stacking up to be one of the season's best. — Aaron Mook *Basement Transmissions*, 145 W. 11th St. facebook.com.

DANCE

Valentine's Dinner and Dance

Feb. 14 — 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. lifeworkserie.org.

Step Afrika

Feb. 20 — 8 p.m.
Stepping, a highly percussive form of dance, employs the body as rhythm instrument. See and hear from one of the genre's best teams as Step Afrika invites you to feel their beat. *Gannon University Hammermill Center*, 620 Peach St. gannon.edu.

SoMar Dance Works Performance

Feb. 23, 24 — 7:30 p.m.
Erie Art Museum, 411 State St. erieartmuseum.org.

FOOD & DRINK

Hoppy Valentine's Day: Chocolate and Beer Pairing

Feb. 14 — 6 to 8 p.m.
Erie Brewing Co., 6008 Knowledge Parkway. eriebrewingco.com.

Pints & Pins

Feb. 15 — 6 to 8 p.m.
Hooch And Blotto's, 8071 Peach



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LECOM Dental Offices are looking for patients to help our dental students pass their licensure exams. LECOM will offer **free dental X-rays** and screenings on **Friday, February 23 from 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM**. Screenings will identify patients who meet the following criteria

- are 18 years of age or older
- have most of their back teeth
- have valid ID
- must be available **April 6, 7, and 8**

Please note, those who need emergency care will not qualify.

Friday, February 23, 7:00 am-7:00 pm

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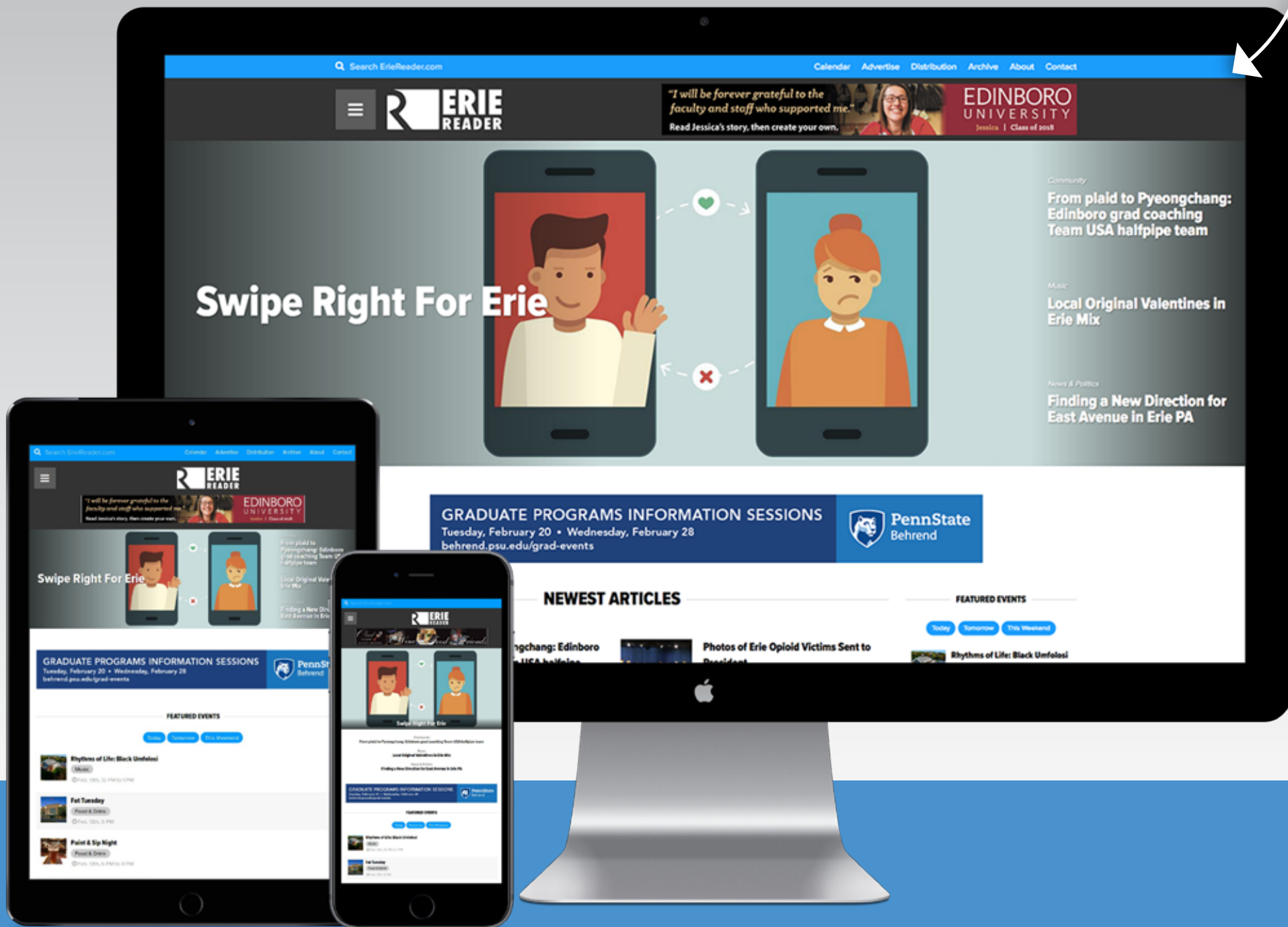
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www.eriereader.com



Art Imitating Art, at EAM's Ecstatic Ekphrasis



PAUL MEROTTA

...nition to life, previewing scenes from their upcoming March productions.

Audience members can expect to see selections from the Erie Playhouse's *Sunday in the Park with George*, a musical about the painter Georges Seurat; PACA's *Art*, a comedy by Yasmina Reza; and

TUESDAY, FEB. 20

It happens so often we hardly even recognize its occurrence anymore: Art, in all its varieties, inspires the creative process in another artist and spurs them to respond to the stimulus in their own way. Tracy Chevalier took one painting by Dutch master Vermeer and turned it into an entire novel; Ron Chernow's masterful biography of Alexander Hamilton gave Lin-Manuel Miranda the spark he needed to pen a Broadway musical phenomenon.

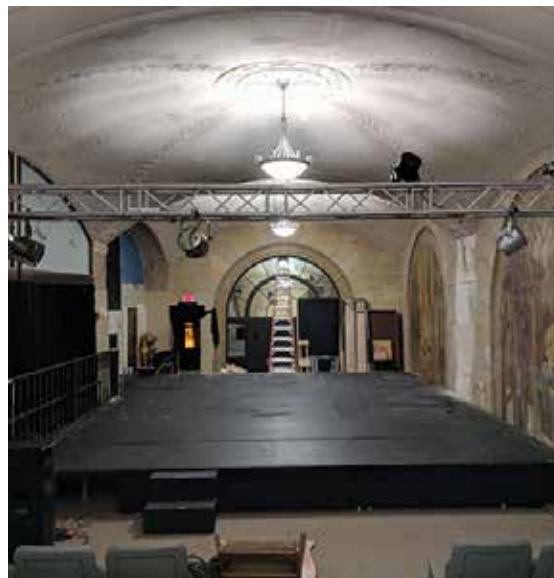
Local audiences will have the opportunity to witness some of theater's finest "artistic responses" right downtown, at the Erie Art Museum's "Ecstatic Ekphrasis: Theater About Art" evening. The Greek word "ekphrasis" is defined by Merriam-Webster as "a literary description of or commentary on a visual work of art," and three local theater companies will bring that defi-

Picasso at the Lapin Agile, a Steve Martin-penned play mounted by the All An Act Theater. After these performances, attendees will be treated to a discussion panel presided over by Kelly Armor, the Museum Education Director, and featuring local directors Mark Tanenbaum, David Mitchell, Richard Davis, and Kate Neubert-Lechner, as well as Susan Barnett, the museum curator.

Does every artist owe something to the artists who came before? Are the acts of creation, innovation and discovery — artistic and otherwise — as different as they might seem on the surface? Ecstatic Ekphrasis addresses questions like these, and may just inspire you in surprising ways. — Cara Suppa

7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. // Erie Art Museum, 20 E. Fifth St. // erieartmuseum.org/performances-2 // Free

Enter a Pop Culture Rabbit Hole with *Mr. Burns, A Post-Electric Play* at Dramashop



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

vors find solace in recalling the details of a particular *Simpsons* episode (the Season Five episode "Cape Feare") — one that eventually becomes a staple of live entertainment for a new society, and nearly a century later, the basis for post-modern myth.

As Dramashop describes the show as "a paean to live theater and the resilience of Bart Simpson through the ages. *Mr. Burns* is an animated exploration of how the pop culture of one era might evolve into the mythology of another."

Mr. Burns is the winner of

the 2015 Whiting Award and was nominated for a 2014 Drama League Award for Outstanding Production of a Broadway or Off-Broadway Play. The opening weekend of this particular production will be featured as a part of Fringe Fest Erie 2018. In line with Dramashop productions of the past, *Mr. Burns* is a truly unique meditation on pop culture that audiences will not want to miss. — Aaron Mook

Fridays & Saturdays through Mar. 10, all shows 8 p.m. to 11 p.m. // 1001 State St., Ste. 210 // \$5 Opening Weekend

FRIDAY, FEB. 23

The *Simpsons* is a pop-culture juggernaut that's spanned three decades of airtime and three decades of viewers. The show has offered critical commentary on the American nuclear family, predicted the future time and again, and gifted us some of the most memorable punchlines in television history. Now, it plays a central role in Anne Washburn's award-winning dystopian dramedy, *Mr. Burns, A Post-Electric Play*.

In a future dark age following the downfall of society, a group of survi-

St.eriebrewingco.com.

Sad Singles Awareness Day

Feb. 15 — 7 to 9 p.m.
Calamari's Squid Row, 1317 State St. facebook.com.

Wine & Chocolate Weekend 2018

Feb. 16 — noon to 5 p.m. & Feb. 17, 18 — 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Various Locations, la-keeriewinecountry.org.

All About Tea

Feb. 17 — 10 to 11 a.m.
Edinboro Branch Library, 413 W. Plum. erielibrary.org.

Great Lakes Beer Tour

Feb. 17 — noon to 11 p.m.
Peek'n Peak Resort, 1405 Olde Rd. pknpk.com.

11th Annual Brewer's Cup Home Brew Fest

Feb. 17 — 5 to 8 p.m.

Ah, beer these days: So many homebrews, so few opportunities to break into peoples' houses to demand some be shared That's why (well, not really) there's the annual Brewers Cup at the

Brewerie at Union Station. The Cup has become famous locally for playing host each year to dozens of amateur beer-makers and their wide varieties of concoctions — some of which have gone on to be offered outside of those first home (and Cup) batches. The only way to find out how this year's Cup stacks up? Show up. — Ryan Smith
The Brewerie at Union Station, 123 W. 14th St. brewerie.com.

Coors Light & Miller Lite Party

Feb. 18 — 6 to 10 p.m.
Peek'n Peak Resort, 1405 Olde Rd. pknpk.com.

Meatless Meals

Feb. 20 — 6 to 8 p.m.
Whole Foods Cooperative, 1341 W. 26th St. vegancheers.com.

Mind, Body, Beer

Feb. 20 — 7:30 to 9 p.m.
Erie Ale Works, 416 W. 12th St. eriealeworks.com.

Legislative Luncheon

Feb. 23 — noon to 2:30 p.m.
The Sight Center of Northwest Pennsylvania, 2545 W. 26th St. facebook.com.

All About Tea

Feb. 24 — 10 to 11 a.m.
Iroquois Avenue Branch Library, 4212 Iroquois Ave. erielibrary.org.

Wine On The Lake 2018

Feb. 24 — noon to 9 p.m.
Vino enthusiasts who are starting to wilt like grape leaves under the snow as they wait it out until North East Winefest in September have a plum reason to rejoice: Wine on the Lake is back, and it's here to take the edge off (like that third glass of Merlot; no judging). As always, the area's exemplary local wineries will take center stage so that attendees can sniff, swirl and sip their way from one end of the Bayfront Convention Center to the other, while getting in a little shopping with 30-plus vendors on hand. — Cara Suppa
Bayfront Convention Center, 1 Sassafras Pier wineonthelake.com.

Recipe for Murder

Feb. 24 — 6 to 9 p.m.
Sleuths, bring your magnifying glass and your appetite as the Erie Maennerchor Club hosts the In All

Seriousness comedy troupe and their presentation of *Recipe for Murder*. While enjoying the Maennerchor Club kitchen's delicious sit-down dinner, guests will have the opportunity to gather clues and solve the murder of a cooking show personality who got a big helping of death. Dinner is included in the ticket price, while alcohol beverages are available via a cash bar. To purchase tickets call Renée at 814.452.4731, ext. 225. — Cara Suppa
Erie Maennerchor Club, 1607 State St. eriemannerchorclub.com.

Sam Adams Party

Feb. 24 — 6 to 10 p.m.
Peek'n Peak Resort, 1405 Olde Rd. pknpk.com.

Erie's Best Coffee

Feb. 25 — 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
We have a hunch the only thing keeping people going in this town during the iron days of February is coffee — lots and lots of hot, steaming, caffeinated coffee. Come get your fix (and then some) at the St. Martin's Center Erie's Best Coffee contest, hosted inside the Bel-Aire Clarion. This

"perk'y event is not only a venue for tasting — a judges panel will sample throughout the afternoon, and a winner will emerge. Even better, there will be plenty for the entire family to enjoy, including sweet treats, live music and raffles. — Cara Suppa
Bel-Aire Clarion Hotel & Conference Center, 2800 W. 8th St. stmartincenter.org.

MOVIES

Aircraft Carrier

Ongoing — 11 a.m. & 2 p.m. & 5 p.m.
Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. biggreenscreen.com.

Prehistoric Planet

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

Flight of the Butterflies

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

Blade Runner 2049

Feb. 14 — 5:30 p.m.

CALENDAR

The acclaimed 2017 sequel to the 1982 classic finds Harrison Ford reprising his role as Rick Deckard, retired bounty hunter (a.k.a. "blade runner"). *Bourbon Barrel*, 1213 State St. filmsocietynwpa.org.

Indiscreet (1931)

Feb. 15 — 8 to 10 p.m.
Erie Movie House, 3424 W. Lake Rd. facebook.com.

Hell Comes to Frogtown (1988)

Feb. 16 — 8 to 11 p.m.
If Valentine's Day leaves an overly saccharine taste in your mouth, wash it away at the Erie Movie House with the cult classic '80s film *Hell Comes to Frogtown*. In a post-apocalyptic world where the nuclear fallout has created and given rise to a race of amphibious overlords, human survivors capable of repopulating the earth are rare, but one man, Sam Hell, is here to save the day (in every way he can). As always, arcade games, board games, pinball, and air hockey are free before the start of the movie. The Movie House is BYOB for 21 and over with ID, while concessions are available for purchase. *Hell Comes to Frogtown* is rated R. — Cara Suppa
Erie Movie House, 3424 W. Lake Rd. facebook.com.

The Gruffalo's Child

Feb. 17, 18, 24, 25 — 11 a.m. & 2 p.m.
Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. biggreenscreen.com.

The Met: Live in HD - Tosca

Feb. 17 — 12:55 p.m.
Mary D'Angelo Performing Arts Center, 501 E. 38th St. miac.mercyhurst.edu.

NT Live: Follies

Feb. 18 — 12:55 p.m.
Mary D'Angelo Performing Arts Center, 501 E. 38th St. miac.mercyhurst.edu.

Lady Bird

Feb. 21 — 5:30 p.m.
Nominated for five Academy Awards, including Best Picture, this coming-of-age tale set in the early 2000s is written and directed by Greta Gerwig (*Frances Ha*).
Bourbon Barrel, 1213 State St. filmsocietynwpa.org.

Dante's Inferno (1911)

Feb. 22 — 8 to 9 p.m.
Erie Movie House, 3424 W. Lake Rd. facebook.com.

The Met: Live in HD - La Boheme

Feb. 24 — 12:30 p.m.
Mary D'Angelo Performing Arts Center, 501 E. 38th St. miac.mercyhurst.edu.

Going in Style

Feb. 25 — 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.
Blasco Library puts on another free show for the public, with this month's feature, 2017's *Going In Style*, a heist comedy featuring Morgan Freeman, Michael Caine, and Alan Arkin.
Blasco Memorial Library, 160 E. Front St. erielibrary.org.

VISUAL ARTS

Fran Noonan: Quiet Ardor

Ongoing through Feb. 27
Glass Growers Gallery, 10 E. 5th St. glassgrowersgallery.com.

Why Can't I Touch It?

Ongoing through Mar. 2
Bruce Gallery in Doucette Hall, 215 Meadville St. brucegallery.info.

Rough Trade: Clay Bodies and Queer Visions

Ongoing through Mar. 4
Doane Hall of Art at Allegheny College, 520 N. Main St. allegheny.edu.

Kids As Curators 2018

Ongoing through Mar. 18
Erie Art Museum, 411 State St. erieartmuseum.org.

Daniel Burke: Callings

Ongoing through Apr. 8
Erie Art Museum, 411 State St. erieartmuseum.org.

Gary Spinosa: Divine Instinct

Ongoing through Jan. 6, 2019
Erie Art Museum, 411 State St. erieartmuseum.org.

James McMurray: Faces and Paces

Ongoing through June 10, 2019
Erie Art Museum, 411 State St. erieartmuseum.org.

Urban Chatter: Textile Art by Sharon Kerry-Harlan

Feb. 16 through Apr. 29
Erie Art Museum, 411 State St. erieartmuseum.org.

Patricia S. Yahn Juried Student Art Show

Feb. 19 through Mar. 16 (Reception Feb. 22 — 4 to 6 p.m.)
Mercyhurst University Cummings Gallery, 501 E. 38th St. miac.mercyhurst.edu.

THEATER

Deathtrap

Feb. 15, 16, 17, 21, 22, 23, 24 — 7:30 p.m. & Feb. 18, 25 — 2 p.m.
Erie Playhouse, 13 W. 10th St. erieplayhouse.org.

Placebo

Feb. 15, 16, 17 — 8 p.m. & Feb. 17, 18 — 2 p.m.
Audience members should check their expectations at the door as they enter Gannon's Schuster Theater for their production of Melissa Gibson's *Placebo*, a contemporary, thought-provoking play that examines the work and private life of a scientist named Louise. As a lab administrator for a placebo-controlled study that is exploring the effects of a female arousal pill, Louise begins to see other ways the deception of expectation has permeated her life. Interested attendees have four opportunities to catch this production, directed by Fr. Shawn Clerkin and Melanie Vadzemnieks. — Cara Suppa
Schuster Theatre, 620 Sassafras St. gannon.edu.

Murder on the Nile

Feb. 16, 17, 23, 24 — 7:30 to 10 p.m. & Feb. 18, 25 — 3 to 5:30 p.m.
All An Act Theatre, 652 W. 17th St. allanact.net.

The Butler Did It

Feb. 17, 24 — 5:30 p.m. & Feb. 18 — 2:30 p.m. & Feb. 23 — 7 p.m.
Station Dinner Theatre, 4940 Peach St. canterburyfeast.com.

Ecstatic Ekphrasis: Theater about Art

Feb. 20 — 7 p.m.
Erie Art Museum, 411 State St. erieartmuseum.org.

Adam Trent

Feb. 21 — 7:30 p.m.
You won't believe your eyes when you see this magic show. A magician comparable to the impressive David Copperfield, Adam Trent of The Illusionists will bring a record-breaking Broadway experience to Erie. In a review, the New York Theatre Guide wrote, "Your eyes will deceive you, your heartbeat will race, and your mind will be blown." Described as an "entertainment extravaganza of magic, comedy and music," this show is appropriate for all ages. — Tracy Geibel
Warner Theatre, 811 State St. adamtrent.com.

Minimal Phenomena, Nursery Rhymes & Nightmares

Feb. 22 — 8 p.m.
Schuster Theatre, 620 Sassafras St. gannon.edu.

Love and Information

Feb. 22, 23, 24 — 8 p.m. & Feb. 25 — 2:30 p.m.
Allegheny College, 520 N. Main St. allegheny.edu.

Mr. Burn, A Post-Electric Play

Feb. 23, 24 & Mar. 2, 3, 9, 10 — 8 p.m.
Dramashop, 1001 State St. Suite 210, dramashop.org.

Shopkins Live

Feb. 24 — 4 p.m.
Shopkins Live! immerses audiences in the world of North America's number one toy for the first time, debuting their custom music and vividly colorful costumes.
Warner Theatre, 811 State St. shopkinslive.com.

Cirque D'Or

Feb. 25 — 3 p.m.
Complete with over 30 performers from around the world, Cirque D'Or integrates circus styles from all around the world for a perfect event for the family.
Warner Theatre, 811 State St. erieevents.com.

SPORTS

Erie Otters vs. London Knights

Feb. 17 — 7 p.m.
Erie Insurance Arena, 809 French St. ottershockey.com.

Epic Volleyball

Feb. 18, 25 — 8 a.m.
Family First Sports Park, 8155 Oliver Rd. ovr.org.

Erie Otters vs. Guelph Storm

Feb. 18 — 5 p.m.
Erie Insurance Arena, 809 French St. ottershockey.com.

Erie Otters vs. Saginaw Spirit

Feb. 23 — 7 p.m.
Erie Insurance Arena, 809 French St. ottershockey.com.

Western PA Hardwater Series Championship

Feb. 24, 25

Inaugurated in 2016, the PA Hardwater Championship Tournament is Western Pa.'s only ice fishing tournament, offering both professionals and amateurs a chance at off-season fishing.
Presque Isle State Park, 1 Peninsula Dr. wpahardwater.com.

Erie BayHawks vs. Canton Charge

Feb. 24 — 7 p.m.
Erie Insurance Arena, 809 French St. erieleague.nba.com.

PA Nordic Championship

Feb. 25 — 8 a.m.
Wilderness Lodge, 13488 Weeks Valley Rd. pacsa.org.

Erie BayHawks vs. Greensboro Swarm

Feb. 28 — 7 p.m.
Erie Insurance Arena, 809 French St. erieleague.nba.com.

COMMUNITY

National Salute to Veterans Week

Ongoing through Feb. 16
Erie VA Medical Center, 135 E. 38th St. erie.va.gov.

Great Lakes Shipwreck Exhibition

Ongoing through Apr. 13
Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. trepci.org.

Tiny Trees Yoga

Feb. 14, 21, 28 — 10 to 10:35 a.m.
Lake Erie Arboretum at Frontier Park, 1501 W. 6th St. leaferie.org.

DiscoverE

Feb. 14 — 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.
Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. trepci.org.

Read to a Therapy Dog

Feb. 14, 21 — 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.
Edinboro Branch Library, 413 Plum St. erielibrary.org.

Remarkable Women: Bette Davis

Feb. 14 — 4 to 5:30 p.m.
Lead by Corrine Egan, this presentation examines the iconic actress (known for films such as *All About Eve* and *What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?*).
Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. jeserie.org.

The Stars are Ours

Feb. 14 — 7 p.m.
Edinboro University Planetarium, 230 Scotland Rd. edinboro.edu.

Tots in Nature Class: My Many Colored Day

Feb. 15, 19 — 9 to 10 a.m.
Asbury Woods Nature Center, 4105 Asbury Rd. asburywoods.org.

Family Storytime

Feb. 15 — 10 to 10:45 a.m.
Lincoln Community Center Library, 1255 Manchester Rd. erielibrary.org.

Preschool Nature Discovery Class - All the Colors of the Rainbows

Feb. 15, 19, 22 — 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.
Asbury Woods Nature Center, 4105 Asbury Rd. asburywoods.org.

American Short Stories

Feb. 15, 22 — 4 to 6 p.m.
Jefferson Educational Society,

3207 State St. jeserie.org.

Yogi & Me Class

Feb. 15 — 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.
Tumble 84, 4504 W. Ridge Rd. apluseventsforkids.com.

Beginner Improv

Feb. 15, 22 & Mar. 1 — 6 to 7 p.m.
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. lifeworkserie.org.

John Caparulo

Feb. 15 — 7 p.m. & Feb. 16, 17 — 6:45 & 9:30 p.m.
The "under-dressed everyman" panelist from the *Chelsea Lately* show, comedian John Caparulo brings his frenetic, irritated observations to four shows over the weekend.
Jr's Last Laugh, 1402 State St. jrslastlaugh.com.

The Church is Dead; Long Live the Church: What Does the Future Hold for Its Role and Place in Our Culture and Our City

Feb. 15 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.
Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. jeserie.org.

Adult Yoga Classes

Feb. 15, 22 & Mar. 1 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.
Lake Erie Arboretum at Frontier Park, 1501 W. 6th St. leaferie.org.

Give Kids a Smile Day

Feb. 16 — 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Fortis Institute, 5757 W. 26th St. adafoundation.org.

Library Speaker Series

Feb. 17, 24 — 10 a.m.
McCord Memorial Library, 32 W. Main St. mccordlibrary.org.

Little Leaves

Feb. 17 — 10 to 10:45 a.m.
Lake Erie Arboretum at Frontier Park, 1501 W. 6th St. leaferie.org.

Cabin Fever

Feb. 17 — 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Rotary Pavilion in Presque Isle State Park, 1 Peninsula Dr. trepci.org.

The Imagination Expotarium

Feb. 17, 18 — 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
The Bayfront Convention Center's Imagination Expotarium aims to bring dreams to life. Described as "Erie's Premier Kids Event," each of four available sessions features eight interactive worlds, including Fable Forest, Discovery Island, Bowana Jungle, Sportlandia, Campfire Canyon, Princess Palace, Treasure Island and Safety City. Only 500 tickets are sold per session. Children's admission includes a travel sack stuffed with goodies, an event fun guide, access to the eight islands and one adult admission. Children under 3 who enter for free and extra adults won't receive the travel sacks. — Tracy Geibel
Bayfront Convention Center, 1 Sassafras Pier eriepromotions.com.

Mindfulness and Snowshoeing

Feb. 17 — 1 to 3 p.m.
Asbury Woods Nature Center, 4105 Asbury Rd. asburywoods.org.

L'Arche Erie's 2nd Annual Outdoor Adventures Raffle

Feb. 17 — 1 to 5 p.m.
Zem Zem Shrine Club, 2525 W. 38th St. larcheerie.org.



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behrend.psu.edu/grad-events



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Master Builders

Feb. 17 — 2 to 3 p.m.
Edinboro Branch Library, 413 Plum St. erielibrary.org.

Family Nights at the Nature Center: Animal Tales

Feb. 17 — 4 to 6:30 p.m.
Asbury Woods Nature Center, 4105 Asbury Rd. asburywoods.org.

Emma's Footprints Winter Gala

Feb. 17 — 5:30 to 11:30 p.m.
Ambassador Center, 7794 Peach St. emmasfootprints.com.

Democrat Party Petition Signing Evening Social

Feb. 17 — 6:30 to 9:30 p.m.
Ambassador Center, 7794 Peach St. facebook.com.

Microsoft Excel Essentials

Feb. 19, 26 — 1 to 2:30 p.m.
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. lifeworkserie.org.

Four Season Color Analysis for Women

Feb. 19 — 2 to 3 p.m.
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. lifeworkserie.org.

Join the Movement for Democracy in Erie

Feb. 19 — 6:30 to 9:30 p.m.
Rally with members of Erie County United, MarchOnHarrisburg, and HealthCare4ALLPA as they arrange their barnstorming tour of 20 Pennsylvanian cities to end corruption.
Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Erie, 7180 New Perry Hwy. facebook.com.

Time to Act: The Case for Heritage Tourism and Rebuilding Erie's Three Historic Forts

Feb. 19 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.
Author Michael Fuhrman discusses the findings of his essay on heritage tourism, looking at cities like Pittsburgh and Chattanooga and how their examples may be applied to Erie.
Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. jeserie.org.

Business Startup Mentorship with

Brian Slawin

Feb. 20, 27 — 2 to 3 p.m.
Blasco Memorial Library, 160 E. Front St. erielibrary.org.

Great Books

Feb. 20, 27 — 4 to 5:30 p.m.
Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. jeserie.org.

Penn State Behrend Graduate Programs Information Session

Feb. 20, 28 — 6 p.m.
Burke Center at Penn State Behrend, 5101 Jordan Rd. behrend.psu.edu.

Knockout Homelessness

Feb. 20 — 6 to 9 p.m.
The Erie City Mission invites you ringside for a 1-2 punch of entertainment (celebrity boxing, headlined by an Erie boxing legend and Erie's mayor) and charity (helping area homeless).
Bayfront Convention Center, 1 Sassafras Pier eriecitymission.org.

Gentle Yoga & Meditation - Level 2

Feb. 20 — 6 to 7:30 p.m.
Edinboro Branch Library, 413 W. Plum. erielibrary.org.

February Work Day for Operation Christmas Child

Feb. 21 — 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Grace Church, 7300 Grubb Rd. samaritanspurse.org.

Creative Aerobics

Feb. 21 — 1 p.m.
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. lifeworkserie.org.

What is Cancer? with Rebecca Miller Wise

Feb. 21 — 6 p.m.
Millcreek Municipal Building, 3608 W. 26th St. lifeworkserie.org.

Presque Isle State Park After Dark

Feb. 21 — 6 to 8 p.m.
Lighthouse Parking Lot in Presque Isle State Park, 1 Peninsula Dr. trempi.org.

Gardening Workshops

Feb. 21, 28 & Mar. 7, 14 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.
Lake Erie Arboretum at Frontier

Park, 1501 W. 6th St. leaferie.org.

Finance Speaker Series: Mark Luschini

Feb. 21 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.
This latest installment of the Finance Speaker Series at Penn State Behrend features CNBC contributor Mark Luschini and his outlook on 2018's economic developments.
Penn State Behrend, 4701 College Dr. behrend.psu.edu.

Citizens to Be Heard

Feb. 21 — 7:30 to 10:30 p.m.
Erie CPR: Connect + Respect, advocates of thoughtful urban design, urge you to help push Erie City Council towards a public hearing to save the McBride Viaduct.
Erie City Council, 626 State St. facebook.com.

Five Wishes Advance Directive Planning

Feb. 22 — 12:30 to 1:30 p.m.
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. lifeworkserie.org.

ScienceGo

Feb. 22 — 6 to 7 p.m.
Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. trempi.org.

Grover Cleveland Elementary MultiCultural Night

Feb. 22 — 6 to 8 p.m.
Grover Cleveland Elementary, 1540 W. 38th St. gcptsa.org.

Ian Bagg

Feb. 22 — 7 p.m. & Feb. 23, 24 — 6:45 & 9:30 p.m.
A master of crowdwork and delightful indecency, Ian Bagg will be doing a five show run at JR's Last Laugh. Growing up in British Columbia, he started his comedy career in 1994, and soon after, appeared on *Late Night with Conan O'Brien*. He made it to the top 5 of the 2015 season of *Last Comic Standing*. His rapid-fire delivery packs dozens of jokes and jabs in during the time it would take an average comic to do one. His routine sometimes sounds like he's having a schizophrenic conversation with himself, occasionally

drawing an audience member or two in for a word. The irreverent, ridiculous things that comes to his mind are sold even better all through his deep Canadian accent. — Nick Warren
Jr's Last Laugh, 1402 State St. jrslastlaugh.com.

Silent Peace Walk

Feb. 22 — 7 to 7:30 p.m.
Mercyhurst University, 501 E. 38th St. eriebenedictines.org.

1968: The Far Side of the Moon & the Birth of the Culture Wars

Feb. 22 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.
An exploration of what historians consider to be the "hinge" year of the 1960s, examining key social, political, and cultural events and their impacts.
Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. jeserie.org.

The Sight Center's Margaritaville Party

Feb. 22 — 7 p.m. to midnight
Bayfront Convention Center, 1 Sassafras Pier eriepromotions.com.

Speaker Series: Charlie Miller & Chris Valasek

Feb. 22 — 7:30 to 8:30 p.m.
Two of America's most skilled hackers explore the ever-evolving landscape of cybersecurity, including ways it has been exploited and ways it can be improved.
Penn State Behrend, 4701 College Dr. behrend.psu.edu.

Our Way Home Gala

Feb. 23 — 6 p.m.
Ambassador Banquet & Conference Center, 7794 Peach St. euma-erie.org.

Evening Fireside Talk: North American Beaver

Feb. 23 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.
Rotary Pavilion in Presque Isle State Park, 1 Peninsula Dr. trempi.org.

Bar Stool Open

Feb. 24 — 10 a.m.
Golf clubs and day-drinking: what a perfect combination. One of Erie's best-known winter

sports is back and celebrating its 20th year. So break out the fine china for another year of fundraising for people with cerebral palsy via the organization Meca (which, despite the common misconception, is not an acronym, nor a portmanteau). Beginning at 10 a.m., the Barstool Open is an elaborate bar crawl where teams of four putt on specially made courses, each at a different downtown bar. Each team has a uniform, and while a majority of those uniforms consist of a custom printed t-shirt, some get much more elaborate. That can pay off, since there are prizes for the best-dressed team, as well as the team with the best score, and the highest pledge raisers. — Nick Warren
Various Locations, mecaerie.org.

Cross Country Ski Clinics

Feb. 24 — 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Asbury Woods Nature Center, 4105 Asbury Rd. asburywoods.org.

Snowshoe Shuffle Race

Feb. 24 — 1 to 3:30 p.m.
Brown's Farm, 5774 Sterretania Rd. asburywoods.org.

Snowshoe Clinics

Feb. 24 — 1:30 to 3 p.m.
Asbury Woods Nature Center, 4105 Asbury Rd. asburywoods.org.

Misery Bay Ice Fishing

Feb. 24 — 3 to 5 p.m.
Perry Monument Parking Lot in Presque Isle State Park, 1 Peninsula Dr. trempi.org.

Erie High School Lady Royals Casino Night

Feb. 24 — 4 to 8 p.m.
Belle Valley Fire Hall, 1514 Norcross Rd. facebook.com.

Tammy Pescatelli

Feb. 24 — 7:30 p.m.
The Academy Theatre, 274 Chestnut St. theacademytheatre.org.

DiscoverE: Fish and Turtles

Feb. 25 — 11 a.m. to noon
Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. trempi.org.

Family Storytime

Feb. 26 — 10 to 10:45 a.m.
Edinboro Branch Library, 413 Plum St. erielibrary.org.

Facts about Heart Disease in Women with Gina Klofft, American Heart Association

Feb. 26 — 10:30 a.m.
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. lifeworkserie.org.

Presque Isle History Series

Feb. 26 — 6 to 7 p.m.
Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. trempi.org.

Part II: The First 100 Years: An Economic History of Erie

Feb. 26 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.
Enjoy a guided exploration into the early economic development of Erie with Dr. Judith Lynch at the Jefferson Educational Society.
Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. jeserie.org.

Seneca Allegany Casino Trip

Feb. 28 — 8:30 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. lifeworkserie.org.

Veteran Health Fair

Feb. 27 — 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Erie VA Medical Center, 135 E. 38th St. erie.va.gov.

Ombudsman Program in Erie County

Feb. 27 — 12:30 to 1:30 p.m.
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. lifeworkserie.org.

DiscoverE

Feb. 28 — 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.
Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. trempi.org.

Cyberbullying

Feb. 28 — 12:30 to 1:30 p.m.
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. lifeworkserie.org.

People as Commodities: The Global Impact of Human Trafficking in Kenya and Beyond

Feb. 28 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.
Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. jeserie.org.



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MUSIC

Write Into It

Dark folk artist Abadon Faluz reflects on his favorite composition, "Conversations I Don't Care For"



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

By: Charles Brown

Put one foot in front of the other/Find your way back home and rest/ I'll spare you dark humiliation/I think you'll agree what's best

Charles Brown: Hello, sir. It's a pleasure to finally interview you and discuss your composition "Conversations I Don't Care For!" Is this song based on true events? Encounters with certain people?

Abadon Faluz: It is a subject true to its word, yes. It is about an old man dying. His perspective of the days leading up to his death. Family members come and take objects and talk about inheritance like he is not there, already gone. It is about human interaction. It is about human suffering mentally as we die, and the selfishness of some.

CB: It comes off very anti-social. Is that a personality trait of yours helped write your song?

AF: The song isn't really anti-social. It's more about being upset and disappointment. I am told I am very enigmatic. I think anti-social is a common term used in error when describing me. I talk people to death, no pun intended, if I find they have a common ground with me. But I have a way of slipping away for a time, which then brings the anti-social label to light.

CB: Sonically, there is a very light-hearted, almost joyful, feel to this song. Would you say that there's joy in sparing others of your thoughts and residing in

seclusion?

AF: I am known for my nefarious writing style and art. So my thoughts, although genuine with love and admiration for some, tend to shift to the suffering of the human psyche. I love the human mind and where it can go, if you just let it. I find it joyful that my work disturbs people. Wakes them up, I think.

CB: This track is very human and different from the ones in your catalog. What made you want to stray away from the usual sound that you create?

AF: I remember a family member dying as a child and [other] family members doing this very type of thing. He laid there and could hear the conversation taking place when others thought he could not. I always wanted to write something about it. Twenty-five years later, here we are.

CB: Last question. Is tea and honey really a preference of yours?

AF: No. I like decaf coffee, French press, with light cream. No sugar.

"Conversations I Don't Care For" can be found on Abadon Faluz's ReverbNation page at reverbnation.com/abadonfaluz8

You can also watch the music video for "Conversations I Don't Care For" on YouTube, shot and edited by Sanz Studios.

Charles Brown can be reached at charlesbrowncj@gmail.com

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MOVIE REVIEWS

Once Upon a Time in the West: *Hostiles* is Standard Wild West Fare

★★★

The Western is a movie genre that is as old as the movies themselves, and throughout the decades ingenious filmmakers have found clever ways to twist the expectations of the genre. Scott Cooper's (*Out of the Furnace*, *Black Mass*) new film *Hostiles* plays at being a new take on Old West tropes, but the story is as standard as they come.



The film stars Christian Bale as a battle-hardened and bigoted Army captain who is tasked with escorting an old Cheyenne chief (Wes Studi) and his family back to his homeland in Montana. Along the way, their group meets a woman (Rosamund Pike) who has just lost her entire family to a Comanche attack and they help her back to civilization.

Hostiles tries hard to be a revisionist Western but while earlier examples of the sub-genre like *The Wild Bunch*, *Unforgiven* and *The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford* all had interesting and revolutionary things to say about the Wild West and our relation to it, *Hostiles* has little to say beyond the cliché that "the American frontier was dangerous" — a theme that doesn't warrant the film's plodding 133 minute runtime. So if you're in the mood for a competently acted and directed Western with all the expected story progressions, then *Hostiles* would be a fine choice. If you're expecting something any deeper than that however, expect to be disappointed. — Forest Taylor

Written and directed by : Scott Cooper (based on the manuscript of Donald E. Stewart) // Starring: Christian Bale, Rosamund Pike, Wes Studi, Ben Foster, Jesse Plemons, Adam Beach, Rory Cochrane, Q'orianka Kilcher, Jonathan Majors and Timothee Chalamet // 133 minutes

What is it Good for?: *12 Strong* Provides Absolutely Nothing New

★★★



I'm sure the recently declassified story of the CIA agents and soldiers who became the first response to the Taliban in Afghanistan following the 9/11 attacks is an incredibly intriguing one. *12 Strong*, the movie ostensibly based on the incident however, settles for every bland cliché and predictable story development in the war-movie playbook.

As we follow this team of heroes into the heart of Afghanistan, the director hits us with every tired trope and plot point. We have the inexperienced captain (Chris Hemsworth) who desperately wants to prove himself, the gruff, battle-hardened soldier who befriends a cute little kid, the locals who at first refuse to fight only to heroically ride into battle at the last minute, and of course a few scenes of the families looking concerned back home. It's all so by-the-numbers that it becomes boring, but the worst parts are the scenes of atrocities committed against nameless Afghan civilians that serve no purpose than to show us that the Taliban are bad guys and to strengthen the morale of the American soldiers.

The action is well-done I suppose, but by the end it goes on for such a mind-numbingly long time that it starts to feel like *Rambo III* rather than a supposedly true story. In the end, I just had a headache. War movies have moved beyond this kind of simplistic storytelling and *12 Strong* is nothing we haven't seen a thousand times before. — Forest Taylor

Directed by: Nicolai Fuglsig // Written by: Ted Tally and Peter Craig (based on the book *Horse Soldiers* by Doug Stanton) // Starring: Chris Hemsworth, Michael Shannon, Michael Pena, Navid Negahban, Trevante Rhodes, Geoff Stults and Thad Luckinbill // 130 minutes

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* SATURDAY, MARCH 24
ERIC BREWER & FRIENDS
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* FRIDAY, MARCH 30
TROPIDELIC
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- SAT 03/03 INTREPID TRAVELERS
- FRI 03/09 SPACE JUNK + COLD LAZARUS
- SAT 03/10 CHARLIE WHEELER

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SUNDAY MARCH

4

7:30 PM

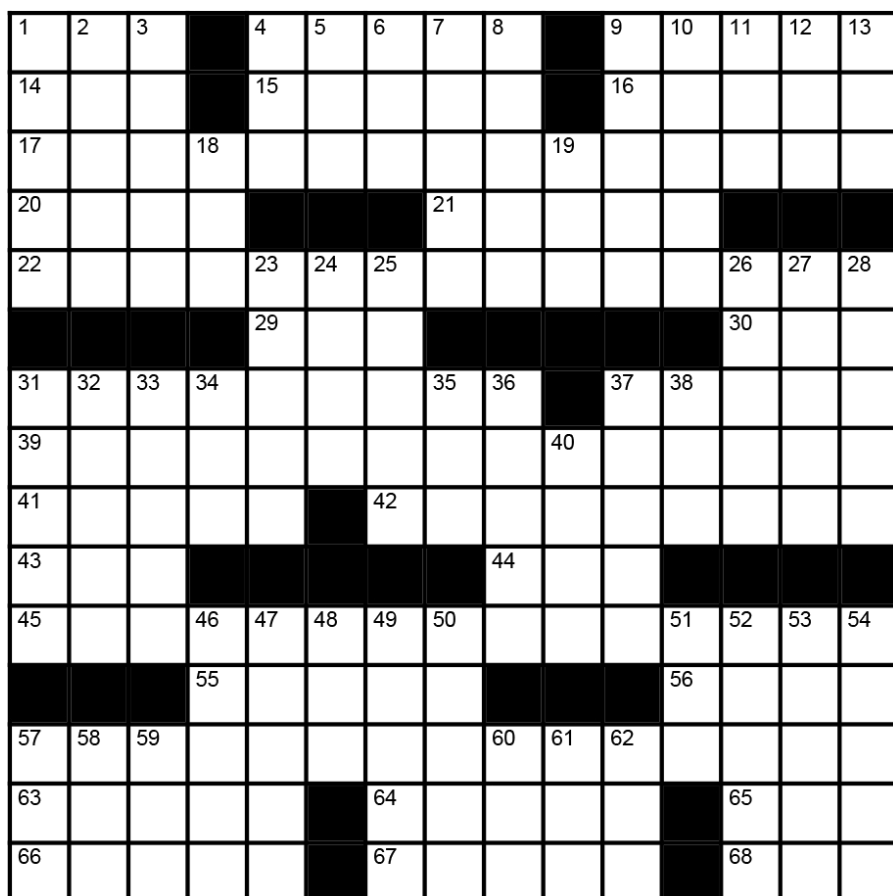
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CROSSWORD PUZZLE



Across

1. "___ Comedy Jam"
4. Kirk's partner in a groundbreaking 1968 interracial kiss
9. Unit of bacon
14. "Moonlight" Oscar winner Mahershala
15. Singers Bareilles and Evanston
16. "Fingers crossed!"
17. It's followed in a classic movie in 6, 5, 4 ...
20. Prime draft classification
21. Boise's home
22. Classic TV sitcom in 6, 5, 4 ...
29. "Apollo 13" director Howard
30. Thrice, in prescriptions
31. "Let's Talk About Sex" group
37. "I have ___ to pick with you!"
39. Golden Globe-winning actress for "black-ish" in 6, 5, 4 ...
41. Picture puzzle
42. This clue has four
43. Ortiz of "Ugly Betty"
44. Subj. for the foreign-born
45. Former U.S. territory with the motto "The Land Divided, the World United" in 6, 5, 4 ...
55. Snoozers

Down

1. Words before reckoning or rest
2. Justice Kagan
3. ___ mignon
4. Grp. that brought Colbert to Baghdad
5. Hem and ___
6. City community, informally
7. ___ to go
8. "Like me"
9. Some turban wearers
10. Pulsate painfully
11. Pal of Piglet and Pooh
12. Beer variety, familiarly
13. ___ Xing (street sign)
18. "Well, ___-di-dah!"
19. Cornfield call
23. White-tailed eagles
24. Need for tug-of-war
25. Miniskirts reveal them
26. Online application

intended to make a task easier

27. Taste or touch
28. Lock of hair
31. Gym bag attachment
32. Gladiator fight site
33. Jacob's father-in-law, in the Bible
34. Fort Worth campus, for short
35. Thickness
36. Poet Ginsberg
37. ___ get-out (to the utmost degree)
38. "Putting the phone down for a sec," in texts
40. Visitor to Rick's Café Américain
46. "Forever Your Girl" singer, 1989
47. 2016 Disney film set in Polynesia
48. Suffix with custom or diet
49. Stop
50. "With respect to ..."
51. ___ Buddhist
52. For all to see
53. Hub
54. Lauder of cosmetics
57. Org. with a Most Wanted list
58. Hi-___ monitor
59. "Where did ___ wrong?"
60. La-la preceder
61. Spots for getting stitches, in brief
62. It may be seeded




SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17
Vs. LONDON KNIGHTS



Game time: 7:00 PM

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 18
Vs. GUELPH STORM



Game time: 5:00 PM



FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 23
Vs. SAGINAW SPIRIT



Game time: 7:00 PM

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Answers to last issue's puzzle





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Friday, February 23 • 4pm-10pm
11 Winners every hour!

Tuesday, February 27 • 1pm-8pm
11 Winners every 30 minutes!

How to enter:

- One free entry each promotional day listed above.
- One bonus entry for every 20 points you earn that day.



Players can only win once per day.

- Earn 10x Entries for every 20 tier points earned on Monday, February 26 for drawing on Tuesday, February 27.

11th Anniversary Celebration on Wednesday, February 28

- 1,100 T-Shirts will be given away beginning at 10am.
- 11am - Free Smith hot dog, chips, and a Coca-Cola to the first 1,100 players at the INCafe.
- 1pm - Free cupcake to the first 1,100 players.



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5:00pm - 6:00pm
Tuesday - Thursday

Choose One from each Course

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- House Salad
- Caesar Salad
- French Onion Soup
- Minestrone Soup

SECOND COURSE

- 10oz Sirloin w/ Mashed Potatoes & Asparagus
- Salmon w/ Mashed Potatoes & Asparagus
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- Spaghetti & Meatballs
- Chicken Alfredo

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- February 15 - Katie & Friends
- February 22 - The Acoustic-Jukebox

FRIDAYS AND SATURDAYS • 5PM-7PM

- February 16 - Dan Baney
Country Unplugged
- February 17 - Claire Stuczynski
- February 23 - Matt Gavula
- February 24 - Ron Yarman

FRIDAYS AND SATURDAYS • 9PM

- February 16 & 17 - Chris Higbee
- February 23 - Small Town Revolution
- February 24 - Geek Army

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