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**ERIE READER**

Feb. 28 - Mar. 13/Vol. 8, No. 5/ErieReader.com

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**Managing Editor:**

Nick Warren

**Copy Editor:**

Matt Swanseger

**Contributing Editors:**

Ben Spегgen

Jim Wertz

**Contributors:**

Maitham Basha-Agha

Mary Birdsong

Charles Brown

Jonathan Burdick

Tracy Geibel

Lisa Gensheimer

Angie Jeffery

Miriam Lamey

Tommy Link

Aaron Mook

Dan Schank

Tommy Shannon

Ryan Smith

Jen Sorenson

Ti Sumner

Cara Suppa

Bryan Toy

**Cover Design**

Nick Warren

**Photographers:**

Maitham Basha-Agha

Ryan Smith

**Publisher's Assistant:**

Emily Hanisek

**Intern:**

Roman Sabella

1001 State St. Suite 1315  
Erie, Pa., 16501  
contact@eriereader.com

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

### The best part of waking up

For many of us, basic function is not on automatic drip — it requires a little more effort upfront. Tablespoons are measured and rounded, filters or beakers are loaded, water is boiled, and behold — life is poured forth. That first cup of coffee is our proverbial crossing over, whether we serve as our own medium or call upon a barista to necromance us. It could be safely argued that coffee is the one reason the zombie apocalypse hasn't already happened.

If you're merely looking to reawaken your brain and reanimate your flesh, you could roam a few blocks in any direction and likely stumble across a ration of this life-giving elixir. But if you're seeking something more, an *experience* to embrace as you reclaim your consciousness, you may need to plot a more calculated course. Previously steeped in the no-frills tradition of the blue collar lifestyle, coffee has emerged as an artform. After a few false starts at the turn of the century, cozy coffee shops and small roasters have been frothing up new-found support around town.

Resident coffee-addict (and judge in the recent Erie's Best Coffee competition) Nick Warren traces the beverage's evolutionary road map through the foam, from the ancient Arabian Peninsula to American diner to today's specialty brew studios. Writer Cara Suppa, who has seen a number of posh coffee shops come and go, sees staying power in Ember+Forge, which has perked the attention of downtown Erie since opening this past December. This is thanks in no small part to Ember+Forge proprietor Hannah Kirby, whose planning, dedication and foresight have already helped make her new business a local destination.

Others could afford to take cues from her decisive leadership, especially as we cross over into politics. Divides between party lines are bitterer than a pot left on the burner for too long, and in trying times where direction is needed more than ever, our policymakers need to wake up. Some argue that Pennsylvania's congress, a sufferer of chronic gridlock due to excessive gerrymandering, is beyond a shot of espresso — Jim Wertz is among those who hope that the redrawing of congressional districts will be the bucket of ice water that shocks our state out of limbo.

Meanwhile, on a national level, the shock value of mass shootings seem to diminish, a disturbing trend noted by guest writer Morgan Williams, who experienced the scare of an active shooter firsthand on the grounds of McDowell High School. That's about as close to home as it gets. Since the Sandy Hook tragedy in 2012, at least 239 more school shootings have transpired, including the recent massacre in Parkland, Florida. How much stronger a stimulant do lawmakers need to reconsider our gun policies?

As Erie City Councilwoman Liz Allen writes, it takes work to become a friendlier neighborhood. It starts with communicating with and listening to one another — and maybe (probably) a cup of coffee.

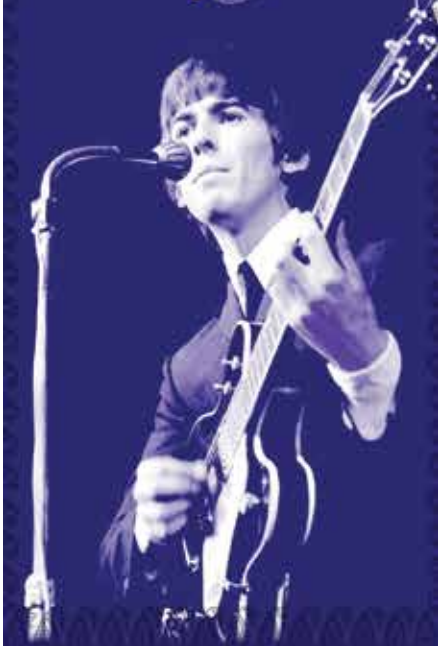
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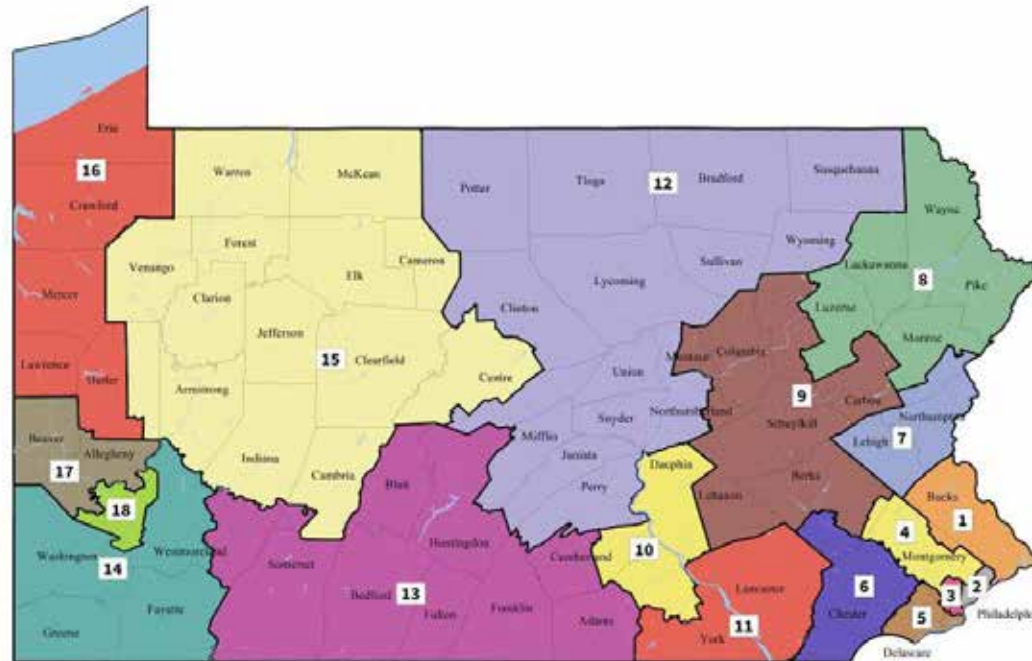


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**NEWS & VIEWS**

**Erie At Large: Habemus Mapam**

Unfolding Pennsylvania's new congressional maps, the 2018 midterm elections and beyond



**Erie County, previously split into Congressional Districts 3 and 5 and overseen by representatives Mike Kelly and Glenn Thompson, will now be known as PA District 16 under Kelly's supervision.**

extent possible and it should not “divide any county, city, incorporated town, borough, township, or ward, except where necessary to ensure equality of population.”

The intent of that clause was to rejoin counties, like Erie County, which had been divided in the creation of the 2011 electoral map. Democrats were effectively

By: **Jim Wertz**

For the uninitiated, Pennsylvania is a political mess. There are many problems — structural, financial, and partisan — that contribute to the Commonwealth’s collective political loathing and serial gridlock. But chief among the elements of its despair was a gerrymandered electoral map that included two partisan congressional districts infamously described as having the shape of Goofy kicking Donald Duck with the connecting tissue of Goofy’s toe and the duck’s tail wide enough to be comprised of a single restaurant in King of Prussia, just north of Philadelphia.

The League of Women Voters sued the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in Commonwealth Court on behalf of 18 Democratic voters last June, arguing that the 2011 Pennsylvania congressional map represented a partisan gerrymander that discriminated against Democrats based on their political viewpoints.

Different from racial gerrymandering, in which voting districts are drawn to disenfranchise voters of a particular race or ethnicity, partisan gerrymandering occurs when the party that controls the legislature

draws a map “to entrench that party in power and prevent voters affiliated with the minority party from electing candidates of their choice,” as defined in the petition filed by the League of Women Voters last year.

Some studies have called Pennsylvania the most gerrymandered state in the country. In some parts of the state this meant that a single county might have as many as four congressional representatives in order to carve out Republican strongholds. Pennsylvania’s congressional delegation is currently comprised of 13 Republicans and five Democrats even though Democrats have a 25 percent advantage based on total registered voters and most national elections are near even splits.

The Pennsylvania Supreme Court agreed with the League of Women Voters that the 2011 Congressional map gave Pennsylvania Republicans a distinct and partisan advantage. In an opinion delivered January 22 the court gave the General Assembly and Governor Wolf until February 15 to redraw the Commonwealth’s congressional districts.

The court ordered that the new map should follow county borders to the

neutralized by separating counties like Erie, which historically had been Republican-leaning in Congressional elections, and by distributing the Democratic base across multiple congressional districts.

The Cook Partisan Voting Index (PVI) measures the extent to which voters lean toward one party and signifies the likelihood of a candidate from a particular party having electoral success. Republican Congressmen Glenn Thompson (PA-5), who consulted with Republicans in the General Assembly on the 2011 redistricting, and Mike Kelly (PA-3) enjoyed greater than 10 percent advantages over Democratic challengers. In PA-5, which includes the eastern half of Erie County, there was less than a three percent chance of a Democratic victory using the 2011 map. In PA-3, which includes the city of Erie and western Erie County, chances for Democratic success slipped to just 1.85 percent.

The state Supreme Court rejected maps put forth by the Republican-led General Assembly, Pennsylvania Democrats, and the Governor’s office in favor of its map which splits fewer municipalities and makes more compact congressional districts than

the challenged map or any of the remedial maps submitted by the aforementioned political units. The map established by the Court essentially puts the electoral map for congressional races in concert with the near split vote that is common in Pennsylvania during national election cycles.

Moreover, the new map makes Erie County whole again — much to the delight of Erie County Democrats and Republicans who viewed the 2011 map as a challenge to the interests of the northern tier by way of consolidating power in Butler County and central Pennsylvania. Prior to Mike Kelly's win in the 2010 midterm election, Erie County had not been represented in Congress by an Erie resident since former Governor Tom Ridge first represented what was then the 21st Congressional District in 1983.

In addition to all of Erie County, the newly drawn 16th Congressional District includes all of Crawford, Mercer, and Lawrence counties, as well as the western half of Butler County.

While PA-16 is likely to remain Republican in 2018, Democrats are given better odds than they have had in many years. The new map gives Democratic challengers just over an 8 percent chance of victory. That's good news for Chris Rieger, the young lawyer from Cranberry who intends to take on Mike Kelly in November's general election. Rieger has endeared himself to Erie Democrats and could have a future in electoral politics despite his uphill battle for fundraising dollars and the Republican "lean" in western Pennsylvania.

Several Erie County Democrats are reportedly considering running for Pennsylvania's 16th Congressional District. State Representative Ryan

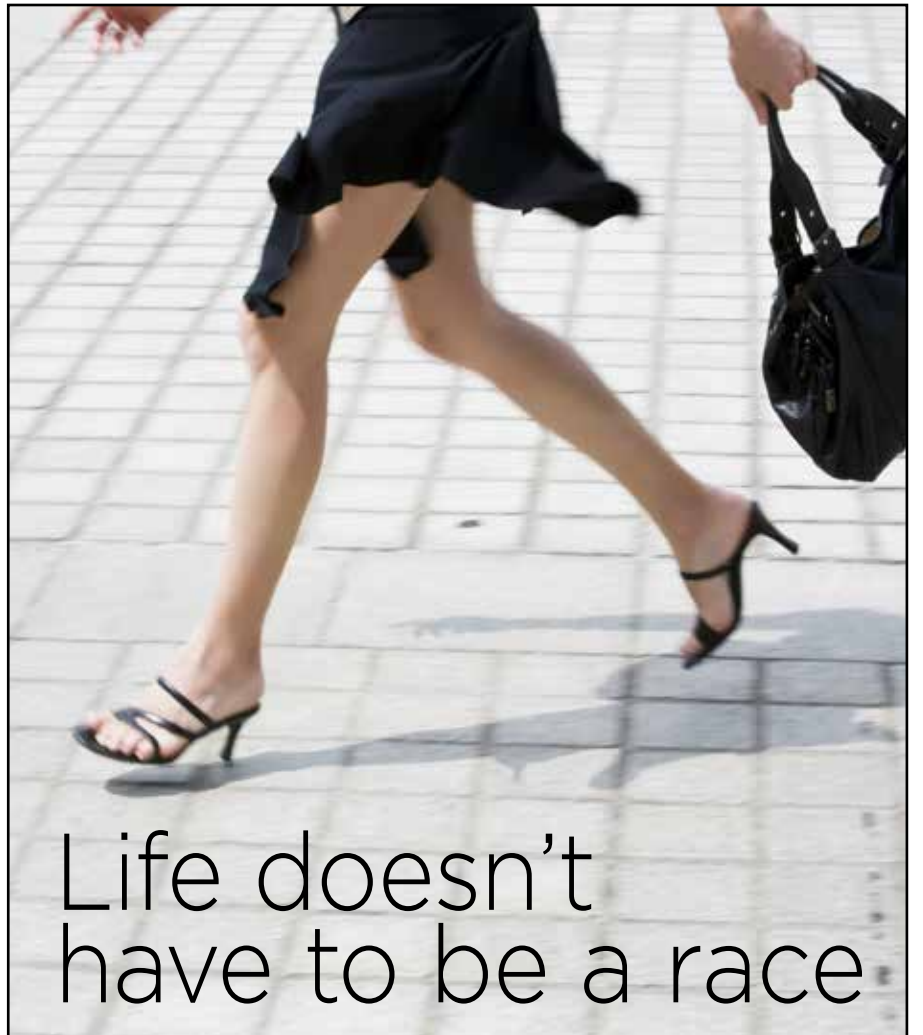
Bizzarro and attorney Ron DiNicola top the list of suspected local candidates. Both can raise funds and DiNicola captured 49 percent of the vote against former Congressman Phil English in 1996, but neither has made public moves toward the May primary.

Nevertheless, this probably isn't the year for Erie County Democrats — or Democrats in general — to take this seat. While many are hoping for a change in Congress akin to the success Republicans had in 2010, that level of success seems unlikely given the fact that national political candidates continue to seek President Trump's company and support despite waning popularity in the polls and mounting evidence of misconduct by members of the President's campaign team in 2016. Moreover, Rep. Kelly, who was an early supporter of the President, has suffered little for his transgressions and that's not likely to change anytime soon. In short, PA-16 probably stays red despite the efforts and enthusiasm of and for Chris Rieger and company.

That said, congressional candidates rooted in Erie County have an opportunity to set themselves up for the long-game. Both Democrats and Republicans in Erie County should be courting a candidate with the charisma and the cash to touch Butler on their way to Washington. Because even though 2018 may not prove to be the sea-change race everyone wants, 2020 might not disappoint.

That's momentum Erie county can use the next time congressional districts are redrawn...in 2021.

*Jim Wertz can be reached at [jWertz@ErieReader.com](mailto:jWertz@ErieReader.com), and you can follow him on Twitter [@jim\\_wertz](https://twitter.com/jim_wertz).*



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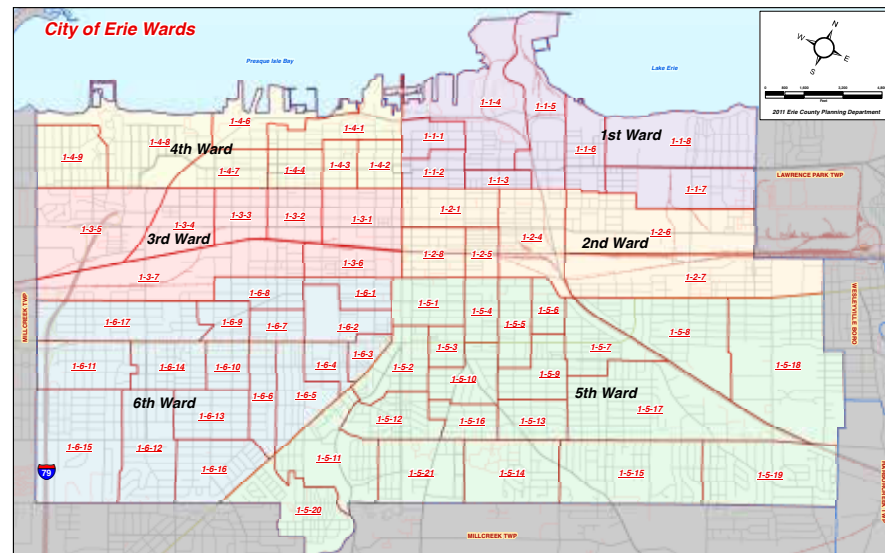
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## NEWS & VIEWS

# A Sense of Placement

We need to make our marks outside our comfort zones



By: Liz Allen

**E**ighteen years ago, after I had been widowed and remarried, my new husband and I were ready to buy a beautiful brick home in south Erie, until my parents intervened.

“Lizzie, I’m afraid you’ll be homesick,” sighed my mom.

“I wish you would stay in the Fourth Ward,” my dad chimed in.

My mom’s notion that I might be “homesick” if I ventured 2.6 miles south of my childhood home on Erie’s west side made me smile.

But her observation also reminded me of something that I hold dear about Erie: Our sense of place can be very specific, tight and telling — and sometimes confining. Collectively, we have a hard time adapting to change.

When my first husband and I moved back to Erie in 1984 after living four states away in the Midwest, it only seemed natural that my young family would settle four blocks north of the house where I grew up. We joined the same parish where my siblings and I had made our First Communion and Confirmations. My boys rode their bikes to the nearby drugstore where I once bought Popsicles and Mallo Cups for a nickel, and my husband got his hair cut at the same barbershop that my dad and my brothers patronized.

Of course, some things had changed since my parents moved to Lincoln Avenue in 1956. The butcher shop had become a convenience store, but that was OK, because we could buy lottery tickets there. A bicycle shop had re-

placed the ice cream parlor, and the bank branch, in a former supermarket, had changed hands several times. Still, the neighborhood character remained intact.

I understood what my mom meant when she suggested that I might be “homesick” if I uprooted myself from such a familiar setting. I would miss being so close to Mom and Dad that we could pop in for dinner or a game of pinocle, and my boys had grown close to their grandparents without actually living under the same roof.

I was a bit more puzzled, though, when my father said he hoped I wouldn’t abandon the Fourth Ward. I didn’t know the contours of Erie’s political boundaries back then.

But it strikes me now that my dad’s identification of neighborhood with ward is part of Erie’s story. Our world began on the blocks where we knew our neighbors and the proprietors of the corner store and the bakery. Our horizons expanded when we attended Catholic school in the late ‘50s and early ‘60s, where a family like mine, with six kids, was average-size. Big families had eight or nine children — and some as many as a dozen or more.

We had so many siblings that we always had playmates at home, and because my friends and I all had younger brothers, we always had enough players for sandlot baseball, even though I was a lousy athlete.

Those deep connections still pay off, as I learned recently.

Shortly after I was elected to Erie City Council, I sought out women who had

**One map that’s been consistent for some time is the City of Erie and its six different wards. Regular voters will recognize them when it’s time to elect District Judges, and for many residents, there’s a longstanding sense of identity associated with these neighborhoods.**

held public office or who had worked in politics. They advised me to get fired up about issues I’m most passionate about, and to listen to the critics but not to let them overwhelm me.

But I still yearned for a mentor with experience in both journalism and politics — someone who would understand my need to ferret out all the facts and research the history of issues before weighing in or voting.

As I drove to church a couple of Saturdays ago at St. Paul Catholic Church in Little Italy, I was fretting about the odd intersection of journalism and politics in my life.

Halfway through Mass, I had an insight. Jerry Martin, the guy sitting in back of me, was from my home parish, St. Andrew’s, which is now partnered with St. Paul’s.

I remembered that Jerry’s grandfather, Joseph C. Martin, had worked as a reporter and an editor in between stints as an Erie City Councilman and mayor. J.C. Martin Golf Course is named after him, but his legacy goes deeper than that.

When I got home, I grabbed my copy of *Erie, Pennsylvania Mayors, 150 Years of Political History*, by William P. Garvey, to read about Martin in Chapter 13, “Erie’s interim mayors.”

Councilman Martin was elected mayor or by his colleagues after Mayor Sherman Hickey Jr. died in office.

He served for 16 months as mayor but “chose not to run for a four-year term and instead returned to the newspaper business, his first love, in 1950,” according to Garvey’s book.

After Martin died at age 87 in February 1986, the Erie Daily Times eulogized him as “Erie’s man for all seasons.”

The editorial said that “getting the former mayor to say anything derogatory about any of his onetime opponents was like pulling teeth, difficult work. Martin preferred to laugh about the past controversies and tell about the good side of his foes.”

Martin himself had reflected on his

time in office in a first-person story in the Erie Dispatch on Jan. 4, 1950. He described the “fire of the political world (as) a business which is rougher and tougher, believe me, than anything else I’ve ever tried.”

Those words, from a seasoned newspaperman, was a reminder that serving in public office was difficult decades before social media unleashed and amplified criticism and controversy.

Jerry Martin shared some memories of his grandfather with me. “He was just an all-around guy. He thought outside the box,” said Jerry. In addition to serving on City Council and as mayor, Joseph C. Martin was the first administrator of the Erie Port Commission (now the Erie-Western Pennsylvania Port Authority). “A lot of the port work was done with his thought and vision,” said Jerry. “He was always proud of that big 900-ton crane used to ship locomotives out of GE. A crane that could pick up a locomotive!”

Joseph C. Martin brought two big golf tournaments to Erie: the U.S. Women’s Open and the Public Links Tournament, events that “helped the whole area, that put Erie on the map,” Jerry said. He also championed building a golf course at Glenwood for the “everyday guy who can’t afford to play at Kahkwa.”

His grandfather was also a regional thinker, serving as a consultant to Summit Township as it began to grow. “His know-how, his helping, his ability to know the right way to do things, the right way to deal with people, will be missed by everyone in Summit Township,” Rita Haaf, a Summit Township supervisor, said after Martin died.

I wondered if Joseph C. Martin, like his grandchildren, had been a member

of St. Andrew’s parish. No. “He was a first-warder, St. Pat’s,” said Jerry. “We have a picture in our house of his family, right at the foot of Holland and Bayfront, on the southeast corner, a big red brick building.”

After learning about the late Joseph C. Martin, I’m reminded again about how important it is to step out of our comfort zones if we want Erie to make progress.

So it wasn’t just my dad who tied “ward” and “neighborhood” together.

I’ve also thought about another line in the Erie Daily Times editorial after Martin’s death. “We were always impressed with the fact that this Irish-American politician had taken the trouble to learn some Polish. As you can imagine, in those political days back in the 1930s, it went over great on Erie’s east side.”

As a journalist serving on City Council, I cherish the fact that I got to cover Erie’s stories as they unfolded. But after learning about the late Joseph C. Martin, I’m reminded again about how important it is to step out of our comfort zones if we want Erie to make progress.

I would welcome the chance to learn some words of welcome from Erie’s recent immigrants and new Americans.

*LIZ ALLEN still lives only four blocks from her childhood home, but recently ventured to the Polish Falcons Nest 123 to sub as a bowler. She desperately needs to learn how to hit more pins after marking with a strike or a spare.*

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## Echoes of Parkland

The reality of gun violence in schools and the need for change



While class is in session, the hallways of McDowell High school are still as students are about to file in on their way to their next period.

NICK WARREN

By: Morgan Williams

When I was in my freshman year of high school, we had a hard lockdown. Many of my friends who were in other classes at the time thought it was a drill. The people in my classroom and I knew otherwise. It was fourth block, the last block of the day. I was in history class, my favorite class, on the second floor. My friend raised his hand to ask if he could go to the restroom,

signed out, and took a pass. Moments later, he came back into the classroom. I remember a classmate laughing, asking why he came back so soon. Not laughing, he replied, "There's a kid with a gun out there." Everyone in the classroom was now listening. Some kids chuckled, thinking our peer was joking. Nothing like that could possibly happen at McDowell. It could happen at other schools, but definitely not ours. Other children, like myself, froze. Regardless of

our different reactions at his comment, a morbid sense of unity washed over us as an announcement went over the PA system a few seconds later, announcing to us that there was an active shooter, and we were all to go into a hard lockdown immediately.

When I was thirteen, a year before going into high school, a man named Adam Lanza killed his mother and went into an elementary school in Connecticut and killed 26 children and teachers before

killing himself. I was shocked to my core. The name "Columbine" floated around in my head. It was an event we learned about as a tragedy in American history, but was now suddenly a reality years later. I remember going home and watching the news, but having to turn it off before my brother, who is three-and-a-half years my junior, came home from elementary school. My parents didn't want him to see the news. They were afraid that it would frighten him. When he came home, I looked at him and had to go into a different room because I remember imagining in that moment what it would be like to hear that it had been Chestnut Hill Elementary in Erie, Pennsylvania instead of Sandy Hook Elementary in a small town in Connecticut.

In 2018, at least 239 school shootings after Sandy Hook, the Parkland shooting occurred on February 14th. This time, I was not shocked to my core. This time, I did not turn off the news to hide my broth-

er from the horror. This time, he found out on his own. This time, instead of tip-toeing around it at home, we didn't talk about it at all. We have become so desensitized to the latest school shooting that, if the survivors of the Parkland shooting had not mobilized in the way they did, I would likely have forgotten the name "Parkland" and its significance altogether by now. But they did mobilize. Not only do I still know the name of the town this shooting took place in, but I also know the names of Cameron Kasky, David Hogg, Sarah Chadwick, Jaclyn Corin, Delaney Tarr, and Emma González. They are students, survivors, and activists from Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. In the days to follow the shooting, they—along with their other classmates—were ridiculed for mourning "wrongly," for taking to social media to let their stories and opinions be heard, and some were even ridiculed for taking pictures and videos in the school while the shooting was occurring and in the time that followed. The last part is one that sparked a lot of discussion the next day at my school. A lot of peo-

### TOMMY IN TOON — BY TOMMY LINK





ple wondered why on earth would these students record such a thing. Part of me is very glad they did, though. If they had to live through that, we all should too.

The day after, my friend texted me and asked what my thoughts were on the shooting. Thoughts swirled in my mind, ones of gun reform, our poor mental healthcare system, the culture of violence we live in, and many more. Through all that, though, one thing weighed the heaviest. It was my mom's voice. The sound of her voice on that day years ago, on the second floor of my high school, when my back was pressed against a bookshelf, and I held my phone to my ear as my hand trembled. I had called my mom after the hard lockdown was announced, and just as we practiced every year for as long as I remem-

ber, we turned off the lights, closed the door, and huddled in the corner furthest from the door. I had just told her that my teacher was telling me to get off the phone, because the shooter might hear my voice or see the light coming from my phone and my teacher was right, but all I wanted in that moment was to hear my mom's voice. I listened to my mom cry and scream into the phone at me as I kept telling her goodbye. "Do not hang up on me, Morgan. You're not allowed to hang up this phone. You stay on the phone, do you hear me?" I said goodbye to my mom, and hung up the phone, not knowing whether or not it would be the last words she would hear come out of my mouth.

The student who caused the lockdown ended up only having an airsoft gun with the

tip painted black to imitate a real gun. The lockdown made news and was spoken of for months after. Some kids shrugged it off, but for others that wasn't such an easy thing to do. I know friends who have nightmares and anxiety attacks about it, even years later. I will never forget the sound of my mom's voice that day. She picked me up from school and I can still remember what it felt like to feel her hands shake on my head as she held me to her chest. I know that my family and I are lucky, because when I said goodbye to my mom that day in freshman year, it wasn't the last thing she heard me say. I know that this is not the case for every family out there. I know that 17 families in Parkland, Florida are mourning right now because even after Sandy Hook, not enough has been

done to prevent mass shootings. This angers people, as it should. People across the country are frustrated because they don't know what to do.

Listen to these kids. Listen to Cameron, David, Sarah, Jaclyn, Delaney, and Emma. Listen to all their classmates, teachers, and faculty. Listen to my classmates who, after the shooting, said they didn't want to go the basketball game last week because it would be an ideal location for a shooting. Listen to the survivors and families of victims of the Sandy Hook and Columbine shootings, and all other school shootings that have occurred. Listen to my mom, a parent who got a call from her kid saying there was a shooter in her school. No student, teacher, or faculty member deserves to feel unsafe due to the threat

of gun violence that is present in schools all across the nation. And to any and all politicians who don't proactively work to make schools a safer place because it puts more money in their pocket, just know that children grow up to become adults who are capable of voting you out of office, and we will. We matter, we have a voice, and we will be the change.

*Morgan is currently a senior at McDowell High School. She helped to spearhead McDowell's participation in the National School Walk-Out on Wednesday, Mar. 14, for 17 minutes starting at 10 a.m. The peaceful demonstration will be also be taking place at most schools in the Erie area and throughout the entire United States. #nationalschoolwalkout*

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## Erie's Roasted Boom

How specialty coffee could quickly become your new craft beer



Raw coffee beans, called "greens," are separated from the enveloping coffee cherry and roasted to varying degrees for a wide spectrum of flavor profiles. Pictured here is Bolivia Bio Arabica, a medium roast from Edinboro's Happy Mug, with a smooth mouthfeel and notes of cocoa and salted nuts.

NICK WARREN

By Nick Warren

“It’s growing and it’s changing and it’s evolving right before our eyes,” Max Marcoline said of the local coffee community. The Erie native, and Director of Sales and Marketing for the Millcreek Coffee Company happily confessed “I’ve been working with coffee for 20 years, and I literally learn something new every day.”

There’s a new scene brewing, and it can be compared to: apples, beer, wine, and even guitar strings. This time though, coffee is its own thing.

The drink itself has been around for centuries. Though legendary accounts also point to much earlier usages of the plant by Ethiopia, cultures on the Arabian Peninsula, primarily Yemen, are credited with developing coffee in its modern form, hence the popular plant species known as *Arabica* that accounts for more than two thirds of the world’s coffee consumption. This spread throughout the Middle East and Africa, eventually becoming popular in America and Europe.

That history and a dime would get you a cup of joe in the early 20th century. It

was a ubiquitous feature in diners (strangely known as “diners” outside of Erie), and workplaces everywhere. Coffee was just *what you drank* in the morning, the plant’s abundance of caffeine providing a much-needed energy boost, whether you were blue collar or white collar.

Then, Starbucks happened. The Seattle-based company reinvented coffee as a luxury item that people were willing to pay more for, in exchange for a better product and experience.

All of this paved the way for the “third wave” of coffee. For these smaller-scale coffee producers, coffee isn’t just a drink, it’s an art.

These new purveyors take pride in the artisanal quality of their process. They look at sourcing beans with a mind for fair-trade and workers rights. They develop their own roasting methods, and they revel in the bouquet of flavors presented in a deceptively simple cup of *black* coffee.

This overall movement is far from new in many larger US cities, and Erie is certainly no stranger to progressive, independent coffee shops — just

ask anyone who remembers going to places like Cup-a-cino’s (In fact, that very same storefront, now the Mediterranean cafe Alkeme, has some fantastic coffee creations of their own).

The trend has been on a slow simmer, and just like a coffee roast, the heat is gradually rising.

“For specialty roasters like us, and others like us, we’ve noticed our business is growing because people are becoming more intrinsically discriminating when it comes to what they want,” Marcoline reasoned.

“This in turn leads to smaller coffee operations picking up the business subsequently. They’re the next logical step, when drinkers think ‘okay, now I’m going to be really particular about what I like,’ or really open-minded, depending on how you look at it.” The customers gain a level of ownership and pride in their personal preferences. Larger companies, by nature, are mostly limited to a handful of different blends, while some specialty roasters will have dozens of varieties to choose from.

One simple thing that busi-

nesses like Starbucks started doing was simply telling customers where their coffee came from. Even your casual enthusiast will give a nod of acknowledgment to blends from Columbia, Kenya, Guatemala, or Sumatra.

Matt Shay, founder of Happy Mug Coffee, underscored the importance of the source, known as the “origin,” explaining that “basically every origin has unique characteristics that aren’t going to be found in other origins. Like in a beer, you have all these kind of different hops, and people kind of understand that, but they might not understand that a blend of this origin and that origin will taste a certain way.” Of course, not all coffee from a given country is created equal. Shay was quick to note that “every country that grows coffee tends to grow a certain set of varieties. If you think of coffee beans as apples, for example, there are all kinds of apples — McIntosh, Granny Smith, et cetera — very different. So in any country, they have certain varieties that do well.” He added that “they also have different processing techniques which affect the final taste.”

Marcoline echoed a similar statement positing that “say you had a Sumatran coffee you were a fan of. Well, Sumatra, for example makes a great many different kinds of coffee and not all of them are your favorite coffee, nor are you aware of all of these different coffees that Sumatra makes.” No country has a

monolithic taste. Couple that with the fact batches vary from year to year, even from that same plantation and, as Marcoline exclaimed “you’ve got these really deep, interesting circumstances that so many people partake of and many of them don’t know anything about it.”

For those that seek a 100 percent locally-made loop, the unfortunate fact is that by design, coffee needs to be imported. Marcoline explained that coffee “can’t be grown locally, so it has to be produced locally in other ways, because it has to come countries along the Equator,” also noting that there is a small amount of coffee being grown in southern California. At this point, though that product is still far from the level of its South American or African competitors.

Shay boasted that “we’re able to showcase origins of coffee that you don’t often hear about.” Citing the appearances of rarer varieties Shay notes that they feature selections “from Burundi, Africa, from Malawi, Africa, from Bolivia, these places that people don’t even think about when it comes to coffee.”

Though the origin is an extremely important piece of a coffee’s flavor profile, it’s just the beginning. “The growers, the actual people that farm the land, these are often family operations — and keep in mind that we’re almost exclusively talking about third world countries here — for them, coffee has to be picked by hand so it takes a large labor force,” Marcoline explained. To get a better grasp at the work involved simply by getting the beans, he broke down the numbers, weighing that “in general the number it takes to create a pound of roasted beans is about



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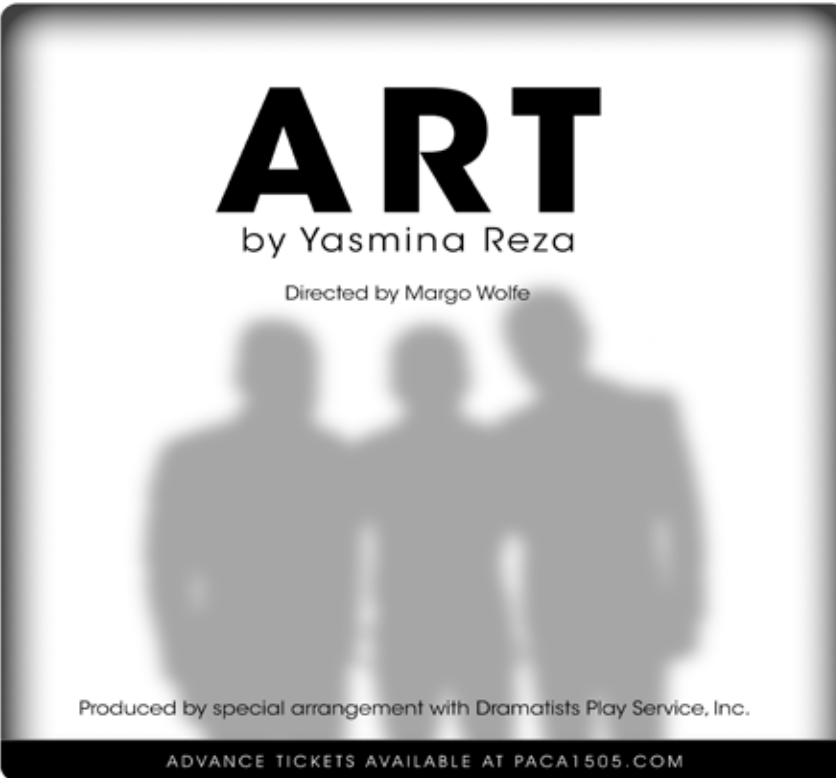



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4,000 coffee beans. So keep in mind that each coffee cherry is picked by hand and has two coffee beans in it. That's what's interesting, the massive scope that it takes to create this thing that we in this country just completely take for granted."

From there, it's about getting the fruit of the cherries off of the coffee beans. Then the beans have to be dried before they can be bagged and shipped out, where they can keep for a much longer time, years in fact.

At this stage in the game, these dried beans are known as "greens." One look, and it's easy to tell why. This is before the roasting process, where they look more like shelled pistachio nuts rather than the shiny brown beans that most people picture when they think of coffee.

As greens age, they can lose some of the subtleties that distinguish themselves from other beans. A Sumatran bean, for example, may lose some of those unique characteristics that originally made you a fan. After they're roasted, however, it still tastes like, well ... coffee. It's by roasting these older, underwhelming beans for mass consumption that large-scale coffee produc-

ers make their money.

The new breed of specialty roaster isn't looking for those kind of beans. Like a discerning chef, they know that the best ingredients get them the best results.

Michael Reed, co-owner of Meadville's Tarot Bean Roasting Company shared an analogy that I, as a musician, immediately identified with. One day a customer struck up a conversation with him in the store. The customer compared coffee beans to guitar strings, and the metaphor stuck with him. We were both able to identify our preferences without hesitation (he likes the company Ernie Ball while I prefer D'Addario). For various reasons, the ever-so-slight differences are evident to us, whether it's their tactile feeling or their audible results. To a layman, they're all basically thin wires with a cylinder attached, but like with any passion, the tools of the trade definitely matter.

It's during the actual roasting process that each batch of beans acquires their particular taste palette. Essentially the cooking of the beans, heat is applied to greens at a steadily increasing temperature for about 15 minutes, depending on the machinery. Less time

and lower temperatures yield a lighter roast, while a darker one gets more heat for a longer span. From this simple window, roasters can dramatically vary what you end up tasting.

When roasted skillfully, lighter coffees often offer drinkers a delicately complex taste that some find more rewarding. A darker roast, however tends to be slightly bolder and more consistent, which accounts for its overall popularity.

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**When roasted skillfully, lighter coffees often offer drinkers a delicately complex taste that some find more rewarding. A darker roast, however tends to be slightly bolder and more consistent, which accounts for its overall popularity.**

---

Nick Attalla, Vice President of Erie's Premium Coffee offered his personal opinion, saying that "I like a nice full-bodied cup of coffee, but then again there are light roasts that are sweet mellow, and smooth. Everybody has

their own taste."

The most recent Erie's Best Coffee event showed that Attalla and his associates may be on to something. Winning awards for the Best Flavored Coffee, Judges Choice and the People's Choice, Premium Coffee was named Erie's Best Coffee. "The community has welcomed us with open arms," Nick Attalla expressed. "They've been so nice. I like to just bring a good cup of coffee to the community that's not seven dollars a cup, you know?" he said with a laugh.

Finding the perfect roast is elusive and captivating. Reed reasoned that "we do small batch roasting and the whole idea behind small batch roasting is more control. We can finely tune what our roasts are, where we're at, much like craft beer or wine, there's tasting notes, there are things that are hidden that different roasts bring out."

Having previously tried his hand at winemaking, Reed concluded that "I like coffee roasting more, because I like instant gratification, with wine and beer you've got to wait and then taste it and then go back and try again, saying 'well we've got a couple months to wait' whereas with coffee you can taste it, and if

it's not quite there you can tinker with it, you can start it over, and 20 minutes later you're ready to go."

The comparisons to craft beer keep coming, a movement which from its start drew comparisons to wine tasting. It's no shock that there are a few people in town seeking to bring all of those imbibable interests together, like Gisele Littrell, who will soon be opening up the Tippy Bean in the Independence Hill district. "It's been a long time dream. I'm just passionate about coffee and alcohol, so I'm combining those two passions together under one roof," she said, chuckling. She described an "all day coffee shop with wine and beer, which will be open late nights, with music, poetry readings and more." Littrell, owner of French Maids LLC, says they're "also planning a delivery service and a charcuterie, sourced all from local roasters. There's so many great roasters now locally."

*If it's before 5 p.m., Nick Warren is probably drinking coffee at this very moment, black as midnight on a moonless night. He can be reached at [nick@eriereader.com](mailto:nick@eriereader.com)*



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# Grounds for Approval

Something new percolating downtown at Ember+Forge



NICK WARREN

**Ember + Forge proprietor Hannah Kirby has been enjoying early success with her new coffee shop, thanks to a focused business plan and strong community interaction and support.**

get dressed up and visit Erie's coffee spots. Hey, we weren't old enough for bars yet, but Sarah had her Plymouth Sundance, and for five Edinboro gals with big-city dreams, Erie was as sophisticated as it was going to get until we split for college.

There was Aromas, in what is now Casablanca Grill on Eighth. There was ultra-posh 1000 French, which served espresso drinks in those huge, round mugs the size of your face. And then there was our absolute favorite coffee shop, Poe's, in close proximity to Forward Hall, in what is now the Independence Hill neighborhood on Peach. Seventeen years ago we guzzled cappuccinos and peppermint mochas and vanilla lattes, and we felt

damn chic while doing it.

Now that I'm a freelance writer, grad student and parent, my perception of the glamorousness of drinking coffee has been taken down a notch since those halcyon days, but as a full-fledged inhabitant of the City of Erie, my appreciation for a locally owned coffee shop, with locally sourced beans — and some female bad-assery at the helm — has risen exponentially.

Enter Ember + Forge, the brainchild willed into existence by owner Hannah Kirby, whose appreciation for coffee shops led her from a career in engineering to owning and operating the downtown area's only independently run, dedicated java joint, which officially opened its doors in late December 2017. "[It] always inspired me, seeing people coming together over coffee," she explained.

Coffeehouses, as they were known, were popular in the Middle East in the early 1500s; Europeans, clearly

By: Cara Suppa

I have a dorky confession to make upfront: When my high school girlfriends and I were juniors and

seniors, we didn't go out and party on the weekends. We weren't getting drunk, smoking things and making questionable choices while doing so. Weather permitting, we would

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impressed by both the concept and the beverage which gives the concept its name, took about 100 years to get around to copying the Persians, Egyptians and Turks, and facsimiles popped up all over the continent, beginning in Venice and spreading eastward. From the first, they were meeting places and social levelers, where men (and only occasionally women) could mingle regardless of social class or status, and trade information, political views and business propositions, or conversely, could just relax over a hot percolated beverage.

This rich history behind coffee shops, which has long brewed in the backdrop of Western culture, with coffeehouses of old often serving as silent witnesses to the men and women who stoked the dissent that toppled monarchical rule, is clearly not lost on Kirby, who told me she "...wanted to create a space for people to connect and share ideas over locally roasted coffee." Kirby hopes that the shop will "anchor our downtown" and "support the growth and investment of other companies." As it happens, Ember+Forge might not lead the Revolution so much as the Renaissance.

Clearly there is a strong local theme permeating all aspects of the coffee shop, starting with the manner in which Kirby and her team renovated

the space, located at 401 State Street, and the way she has honored the building's former life in its present incarnation. According to the shop's website, "The building's history as a chandlery, a place where candles were made and sold forms the 'ember' in the shop's name, while 'forge' is a nod to the city's history in manufacturing."

A quality engineer at the LORD Corporation who for seven years performed tasks ranging from audits to working on the manufacturing floor, Kirby credits her background in engineering for training her in critical thinking, planning, efficiency and foresight, four qualities that would serve her well anywhere, but which give her an edge in both a city and a business which is prone to quick, flashy fireworks, followed by an even quicker fade-out (after all, none of those aforementioned coffee shops were still around when I moved into the City of Erie in 2012). And the downtown area, which is lively and vibrant, bolstered by great restaurant and bar locations and huge, thriving, well-populated business like Erie Insurance and UPMC Hamot, as well as foot traffic from Gannon students, by no means provides a shoo-in for small enterprises seeking to capitalize on the location.

Yet Kirby explained, "There are chal-

lenges to being in a downtown environment, but they are significantly outweighed by the benefits of being able to fully engage with our community and support development of our downtown in a big way."

Daunting as the process of opening a new business can be, Kirby has a dedicated team behind her, including her husband Sam and the support of the ATHENA Circle of Trust, a self-described "cohort of emerging female leaders who empower each other to develop executive and leadership skills and advocate for one another as leaders in the Erie community." She has also devised an admirable business plan for her shop, which includes a simple but high-quality menu with locally roasted coffee served up via single-brew methods (as well as cold brew, espresso beverages and loose-leaf teas), plus plenty of community interaction, whether it's through social media outreach or hosting events in the shop's bright, modern space.

"Social media has been a great tool — especially when it came to building momentum before the official opening," Kirby told me. Indeed, fans of the shop voted in Ember+Forge as a nominee for the Reader's Best of Erie awards, under Best Local Coffee Shop — two months before Kirby even opened her doors.

If the present is any indication, the future of Ember+Forge is on the up-and-up, particularly as support from the community — and beyond — continues to roll in. Just last week, Kirby received recognition and acclaim for her work as a young, female entrepreneur contributing to the Erie community and its downtown area on American Public Media's *Marketplace*. In her remarks there, one statement was particularly telling in terms of Kirby's vision for the shop: "And what would make this dream absolutely set in stone would be that two people come in and talk about an idea, and come up with a plan inside these walls and then execute it outside of them, [and] that really helps our city grow."

Kirby and Co. plan to keep things fresh with an ever-changing line-up of events, including live music, a Yoga+Coffee series and participation in the next Gallery Night. When it comes to celebrating everything local, Kirby not only practices what she preaches, she plans, prioritizes and perfects — and keeps Erie's tradition of coffee shops alive, well, and wonderful for the next generation of java junkies, revolutionaries and wannabe sophisticates.

*Cara Suppa can be reached at csuppa@eriereader.com*

## Slam Dunk Donuts

Close competition for coffee's favorite companion



NICK WARREN

**You can't judge a donut by its cover — the glaze is just one component of what makes these three specimens delicious. Pictured from left to right are the Jack Frost, Mighty Fine, and H&K entries.**

By: Matt Swanseger

A mug of piping hot coffee and the glazed donut — the two were made for each other. While the glazed ring has been at the center of many engagements, the glazed twist's sleeker design is better suited to consummate

the marriage. Luckily for us, Erie boasts three locally-owned shops that have presided over dozens upon dozens of such unions throughout the decades. As such, they know a good thing when they see it — the question now was would we know a good

thing when we taste it?

The Erie Reader recently conducted a blind taste test at its State Street offices to determine the answer. Choosing our favorite iteration of the glazed twist was like choosing between supermodel doctor, supermodel lawyer, or supermodel entertainer (do you like your taste buds to be taken care of, argued for and persuaded, or made to feel good and sing along?), but the results were tabulated nonetheless.

The winner was:

Jack Frost Donuts, 2119 Buffalo Rd.

Perhaps the least heralded of Erie's donut triumvirate, the Jack Frost glazed twist won us

over with its soft, pillowy texture, subtle vanilla flavor, and all-enveloping honey-based glaze. The recipe survived three generations of the Frost family until being passed on to new ownership in Darlene Cohen, who has been gradually expanding distribution in her three years at the helm. Her clientele just so happens to include Ember + Forge, coffee and the glazed twist's new dream home (also check out the "donotti" — a donut-shaped reworking of biscotti).

The runners-up (barely) were: H & K DO Nut Shop, 3712 W. Lake Rd.

The H & K glazed twist also

pleased our palates with a somewhat chewier, breadier dough and coarser grain sugar glaze. The west side is well-represented with this Millcreek staple.

Mighty Fine Donuts, 2612 Parade St.

Most of us had never questioned Mighty Fine's dominance because it's never given us a reason to — it's always open and always delicious. Mighty Fine's famed glazed twist dissolves on the tongue almost like cotton candy.

Coffee offers plenty of perks on its own, but the fact that we get to eat donuts with them is the epitome of harmony.





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SATURDAY, MARCH 10  
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# Metropolitan Skies

The city is teeming with avian life



Like a bird on a wire: falcons such as peregrines and merlins (shown here) will travel and seek out prey in both rural environments and urban ones – sometimes nesting there as well.

environments can offer great food resources. Train corridors make good open hunting grounds for rodents and small birds, the bay for fish. Those pigeons downtown make a splendid buffet for bird-eating raptors like peregrines that haunt the downtown area along with the bayfront. One of their favorite perches in the city is the Renaissance Building where feathers and feet can be found on the window ledges.

How they made it to the window ledges of downtowns everywhere is a story in itself.

All peregrine falcons living east of the Mississippi River are the descendants of a re-population effort after the insecticide DDT decimated the population. Like the bald eagle and other birds of prey, falcon numbers plummeted and, in fact, the eastern population of the bird was considered extirpated, or extinct. The greatest success in re-establishing the endangered bird came in the form of introducing young birds to the tops of city buildings where fewer predators existed. Their traditional cliff-top aeries posed too many risks for young

MARY BIRDSONG

By: Mary Birdsong

The next time you're downtown near the bayfront, look up at the smokestack remaining from the old Penelec substation situated by the Maritime Museum and the Blasco Library. If you see a small dark blob rising up from the rim or perched on the catwalk, what you are probably looking at is a peregrine falcon.

While many are familiar with conspicuous birds that are a daily sight such as American robins, blue jays, black-capped chickadees, house sparrows, mourning doves and more, the impression remains that to see the unusual or "exotic" birds, one has to go somewhere else, out in the country or into the woods. The way some news stories about unknown birds are reported — as rare out-of-place wild creatures coming into human space for a little while — continues to perpetrate the notion of them as oddities, kinks in the usual division between nature and us. The fact that peregrines have been around for nearly a decade now proves this is not true. As

avian life goes, Erie is a paradise.

Besides the peregrines, other birds of prey live here year-round. Many merlins (a type of small falcon) now make their home in Erie and are breeding here as well. The first nest with two fledglings was confirmed in 2014. Bald eagles, too, are seen regularly over the bay and have been recorded near 12th and Pittsburgh, in the air over the Peach Street Wegmans, and flying over city neighborhoods. Screech and barred owls are regular residents wherever a good stand of evergreens support them.

Erie also sees an enormous variety of birds passing through on migration. Because of Erie's location on what's called the Eastern Flyway — an aerial superhighway birds use to migrate north and south — hundreds of thousands if not millions of birds can pass through here in the spring and fall each year. Many stop at Presque Isle State Park, but many others land in backyards, in parks and on the bayfront. Right now, waterfowl are already beginning their northern trip. On any given day, in open water on the

bay you might find the likes of surf scoters, goldeneye, greater and lesser scaup, canvasbacks, redheads, buffleheads, three types of mergansers, two types of grebes, and common loons.

But why do birds like cities? Urban



MARY BIRDSONG



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS / LINDA TANNER

birds without adults around for protection. As the population grew, the urban-based peregrine became the norm, though traditional cliff-side aeries are being used again as well.

In nearby cities, peregrines choose the ledges under bridges, too. The first bird to establish territory in Erie was reared on a noisy bridge in Cleveland, so when it chose inside the 160-foot tall dry dock building at Don Jon Shipbuilding and Repair for a nesting site, the place probably felt like home to him despite the high decibels of that industrial setting.

Soon, if you keep your eyes to the sky, you might actually see two peregrines flying above the bayfront as

courtship begins. The pair uses the smokestack as a launching platform for the dramatic aerial displays they perform before nesting. The breathtaking ritual includes flying closely together with numerous dips, rolls, twists, turns, and sharp dives.

And in April, they'll start scouting inside the Don Jon building for a place to make their nesting site, which is not woven sticks and branches as we imagine for most birds. In natural settings and in nest boxes on city building, the "nest" is just a depression in gravel substrate.

What the Erie peregrines use or how they design their site is not known, as the spaces they have used over the

**The male surf scoter is identified by its black plumage and striking facial features, including its uniquely shaped bill and white markings. The duck breeds near northern freshwater lakes, such as Lake Erie.**

past years have never been examined due to their height of ledges they choose.

Sometime in June, new peregrines may be ready to test their wings. If you want to see them or any other interesting birds, all you have to do is look up.

*Mary Birdsong can be reached at [mbirdsong@eriereader.com](mailto:mbirdsong@eriereader.com)*

## Urban Threats

While birds have adapted to city life in many ways, they still face risks living around humans. One of the biggest risks is reflective glass windows. Large panes that mirror the sky or nearby trees fool birds into thinking they can fly "there." Instead they hit hard glass.

Thankfully, Erie does not have many tall glass-filled buildings, but even larger windows in smaller buildings and homes can be deadly. Many homeowners think it's just a bird or two a year, but according to the American Bird Conservancy, up to a billion birds die in collisions with glass each year in the United States.

Another threat is the presence of cats (whether owned or feral) in the natural environment where they are considered a non-native invasive species, though many groups such as Alley Cat Allies disagree with that label. The evidence works against the pro-cat arguments. Research and tracking over the past two decade have led scientists to learn that cats have contributed to the extinction of 33 bird species world wide. In the United States alone, outdoor cats kill approximately 2.4 billion birds every year according to "The State of the Birds" report conducted by the U.S. Department of Interior in 2014.

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# SUNDAY WITH GEORGE

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## Arts & Drafts Turns 10

THURSDAY, MAR. 1



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Beer and art do not always associate with one another, but the two are more alike than you might think. For example, both beer and art often require a closer, more in-depth examination of their finer points for the greatest possible appreciation. Beer and art may also be something of an acquired taste, something for which a liking — or loving — is not instantaneous, but rather a gradual warming up to, often associated with the individual's maturation. Finally, one might have to try all different kinds of both until they find one that catches their interest — and that's okay.

Luckily for the Erie community, the Brewerrie at Union Station's Arts and Drafts festival comes around twice a year, giving established enthusiasts a double dose of what they love, and

neophytes plenty of time to ready their tastes, with the knowledge that they won't have to wait a full 365 days until their next opportunity to take in all that the event has to offer.

And what Arts and Drafts has to offer to the public is substantial, with each weekend getting better and better. This first edition of the bi-annual celebration for 2018 is especially meaningful, as it marks a full decade since artist Drew Kauffman headed the inaugural Arts and Drafts. Ten years later, the Brewerrie will be bursting at the seams for three days, with live performances by 14 local acts, including ethereal songbird Brooke Surgener, Rust Belt blues rock duo Bootjack, and Erie mainstay Matt "Broke" Boland. Complementing those luscious sounds will be over 70 local artists, whose work across multiple medias will provide a feast for the eyes (that can be purchased and taken home!). — Cara Suppa

Thursday 6:30 to 10:45 p.m., Friday 6:30 p.m. to midnight, Saturday 5:45 p.m. to midnight // 123 W. 14th Street // \$3 after 9 p.m. Friday and Saturday // brewerie.com

## 'Audible Paintings' with Tyler Smilo's Album Release at Scotty's

FRIDAY, MAR. 2



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

"Organic" is the word Tyler Smilo chooses to describe his music for those who may not have heard it yet, and it's a word that pairs well with most of what he has to say about his upcoming LP. The local singer-songwriter is set to release his third full-length, *The Painter*, on March 2nd, and coinciding with it is a record release show at Scotty's Martini Lounge. For those who may need more than one word to comprehend Smilo's abilities: a trail of raw, unfiltered, and above all, honest, folk music lines the artist's past projects.

"I'm a painter by trade; there is art

that I've made, but these canvases are blank and that's how they'll stay," sings Smilo in one of *The Painter's* standout tracks. Smilo has decided to refer to these songs as "audible paintings."

"I believe my intended delivery is coming through more and more these days," says Smilo. "Everything I write is very open and natural for me. It's like I'm painting a self portrait through sounds. I like making music that provokes [thought] in the listener. I enjoy mind-numbing music, but it's just not what I make." In Smilo's words, it's easy to see where the album's title came from, and in the music itself, it's easy to hear the origin of words like "organic" and "honest."

The Painter follows Smilo's 2015 album, *Dust in the Grave*. A humble speaker when asked about his music, Smilo simply seems glad he's able to play at all.

"I just want to thank people for listening," Smilo says. "I'm glad it moves people. [I'm] truly blessed." — Aaron Mook

9:30 p.m. to 2:30 a.m. // 301 German St. // 21+

## MUSIC

### Me and the Boy, Daytona Beach 2000

Mar. 2 — 6 to 9 p.m.  
Father-and-son acoustic duo Me and the Boy open for Erie pop-punk trio Daytona Beach 2000, whose sound recalls acts like Green Day and Good Charlotte. *Sherlock's, 508 State St. facebook.com.*

### The Letter Black

Mar. 2 — 6 p.m. to midnight  
Do some headbanging down at Basement Transmissions with Pittsburgh metalheads The Letter Black and opens Ashes of A Generation and Raven's Law. *Basement Transmissions, 145 W. 11th St. facebook.com.*

### Tyler Smilo

Mar. 2 — 9:30 p.m. to 12:30 a.m.  
*Scotty's Martini Lounge, 301 German St., facebook.com.*

### Chromadrive

Mar. 2 — 10 p.m.  
With their roots firmly planted in jazz and grunge rock, Chromadrive brings their flavor of

jazz fusion to Kings Rook Club. *Kings Rook Club, 1921 Peach St. facebook.com.*

### Regional Chorus Festival Concert

Mar. 3 — 2 p.m.  
*McDowell Intermediate High School, 3320 Caughey Rd. pmea.net.*

### Leeanna Golembiewski

Mar. 3 — 6 to 10 p.m.  
Enjoy a night of friends and fun at the Bourbon Barrel while you check out the local flavor of Erie musician Leanna Golembeski. *Bourbon Barrel, 1213 State St. bourbonbarrelerie.com.*

### 2nd Annual MB3 CD Release Party

Mar. 3 — 6 p.m.  
Head down to McCoy's Barrelhouse for a free show that delivers a night of Erie original blues bands complete with available CDs, shirts, mugs and more. *McCoy's Barrelhouse, 1013 State St., facebook.com/mccoysbarrelhouse*

### Young Culture

Mar. 3 — 7 to 11 p.m.  
Don't feel blue; Young Culture is bringing their

upbeat pop-punk stylings to Basement Transmissions.

The Albany-based band Young Culture is still fresh off the release of their ironically titled EP, *Blue*, considering its upbeat rhythms and catchy hooks. Joining them are the equally upbeat band The Plot Twist, Erie droney reverb-rockers The Standby, and Erie groove-masters Sounds Like a Plan. — Tommy Shannon *Basement Transmissions, 145 W. 11th St. facebook.com.*

### Erie Chamber Orchestra Concert

Mar. 3 — 7:30 to 10 p.m.  
All the way from upstate New York, the concertmaster of the Buffalo Philharmonic will join the Erie Chamber Orchestra for a performance on Saturday, Mar. 3.

Dennis Kim will perform Jukka Tiensuu's violin concerto "Hou."

Samuel Barber's "Adagio for Strings" and Antonin Dvorak's "String Serenade" will also be part of this strings-only program.

At 6:30 p.m., music director Bradley Thachuk will address the audience through a pre-concert talk.

The concert kicks off an hour later. — Tracy Geibel *First Presbyterian Church of The Covenant, 250 W. 7th St. facebook.com.*

### Kookie Kuterz, Bootjack and Matt Texter

Mar. 3 — 9:30 p.m. to 1:30 a.m.  
Coming straight (no chaser) to us from the region's — hell, one of the whole U.S. of A.'s — finest country-punkabilly bands, Kookie Kuterz (Whiskey Daredevils bassist Sugar Wildman's side project) will be rockin' Scotty's Martini Lounge.

They'll be joined there by the Erie area's own Bootjack duo, making for a whole lotta Rust Belt-y good timey tunes. — Ryan Smith *Scotty's Martini Lounge, 301 German St. facebook.com.*

### Jasmine Cain

Mar. 3 — 10 p.m. to midnight  
Check out one of Nashville's hottest alternative rock acts, Jasmine Cain. A lover of motorcycle culture, she's sure to rock out at Sherlock's. *Sherlock's, 508 State St. facebook.com.*

### Intrepid Travelers

Mar. 3 — 10:30 p.m. to 2:30 a.m.  
Buffalo natives Intrepid Travelers are known for their improvisational show structures and eclectic sound which blends everything from jazz-funk and rock to classical and electronic. Priding themselves on focused, collective expression, their showcases combine cerebral musicianship with heartfelt songwriting. Check out Intrepid Travelers at Kings Rook Club as they return for part of their winter tour with a two-set show. The doors open at 8 p.m. and the show is free. — Roman Sabella *Kings Rook Club, 1921 Peach St. facebook.com.*

### Rankin & Schell

Mar. 4 — 1 to 4 p.m.  
*Arundel Cellars & Brewing Co., 11727 E. Main Rd. North East, PA 16428 arundelcellars.com.*

### Alec Chien

Mar. 9 — noon to 1 p.m.  
*WQLN Studios, 8425 Peach St. wqln.org.*

### Super Band

Mar. 9 — 8 p.m. to midnight  
Cosmically gathered costumed Super Band plays everything from dance music to country and current to

oldies at the Bourbon Barrel. *Bourbon Barrel, 1213 State St. bourbonbarrelerie.com.*

### Colin John

Mar. 9 — 9 p.m. to midnight  
*Scotty's Martini Lounge, 301 German St. facebook.com.*

### Space Junk and Cold Lazarus

Mar. 9 — 10 p.m. to 2 a.m.  
"Bending the fabric of space-time through live electronic dance music." That's what Buffalo-based EDM/progressive jam band Space Junk says is its main calling in life. And anyone who's seen them (possibly opening for some huge acts) know they really do answer that intergalactic call well. They'll be picking up the line for a headlining gig at the King's Rook, joined by Jamestown's own reggae-infused intellifunksters Cold Lazarus. It's gonna get waaaay out there in there that night. — Ryan Smith *Kings Rook Club, 1921 Peach St. facebook.com.*

### The Celtic Hooligans

Mar. 10 — 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.  
*Molly Brannigans Irish Pub, 506 State St. thecel-*

## Best Picture It: One Night in Hollywood

SUNDAY, MAR. 4



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

If you've been paying attention to Oscar season, chances are you already have your top picks lined up. This year, see if they prove accurate in style at the Film Society of Northwest Pennsylvania's *One Night in Hollywood*. The region's premiere screening party for the Academy Awards is now in its sixth year, and they're ready to roll out the red carpet once again for the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences' 90th annual ceremony.

Encouraging attendees to dress their best, the evening always makes for a

healthy balance of elegance and fun. The event is a fundraiser for the Film Society, and helps to keep community events like the new series, *Film Grain: Dinner and a Movie* going. Guests will be treated to appetizers, as well as dinner, with wine from 6 Mile Cellars and beer from Lavery Brewing Co. on hand. The night will be hosted by YourErie / JET 24 / FOX 66's David Belmondo, and will feature games, chinese auctions and more.

Though chances are the top honors will go to either *The Shape of Water* or *Three Billboards Outside of Ebbing, Missouri*, one thing's for sure (even more than Gary Oldman's and Frances McDormand's wins), this will be a night to remember. — Nick Warren

7:30 p.m. // Sheraton Bayfront Hotel, 55 W Bay Rd. // \$60 Single or \$100 Pair, VIP available // [oscars2018.brownpapertickets.com](http://oscars2018.brownpapertickets.com)

## Contemplate Genius in *Lapin Agile* with All An Act Players

FRIDAY, MAR. 9



NICK WARREN

When he's not portraying iconic silver screen roles such as the sadistic dentist in *Little Shop of Horrors*, or composing Tony-nominated scores for Broadway musicals or penning novels and essays, Steve Martin dips his toes into the playwriting pool. Okay, he is actually a fully submerged creative genius, and it is actually the nature of said ability — creative genius — that Martin examines in his 1993 play *Picasso at the Lapin Agile*.

The marvelous players at the All An Act Theater are bringing this work to the Erie community, portraying such ingenious heavy hitters as Albert Einstein and Pablo Picasso, as they meet in France in 1904 and debate the merits of art, science, and talent, all while interacting with the less-famous but equally fascinating characters who populate the bar, the Lapin Agile.

Directed by veteran theater maven J.D. Mizkowski and starring some of the area's eminent stage talent, including Adele Crotty Gross and David W. Mitchell, *Picasso at the Lapin Agile* promises to give audiences an extraordinary night of comedy, insight and creative genius. — Cara Suppa

7:30 p.m. (see website for full schedule) // 652 W. 17th St. // \$12 Adults; \$10 Seniors and Students (cash-only at the door) // [allanact.net/up-next](http://allanact.net/up-next)

[tichooligans.com](http://tichooligans.com).

### War Of Ages and The Code

Mar. 10 — 6 to 11 p.m.  
Basement Transmissions, 145 W. 11th St. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

### The Brilliance of Beethoven

Mar. 10 — 8 to 10 p.m.  
The Erie Philharmonic will continue its Symphonic Series Saturday, Mar. 10 with "The Brilliance of Beethoven," a concert featuring Beethoven's Concerto No. 4 and the Choral Fantasy.

Popular Erie Philharmonic pianist and Juilliard School of Music alum Alec Chien will be play a part in both.

Between the Beethoven pieces, the Erie Philharmonic Chorus and Allegheny College Choirs will join together to perform Leonard Bernstein's Chichester Psalms.

Chien will be featured Friday, Mar. 9 at WQLN Radio on "Live from Studio Q" in an hour-long session starting at noon that will include music, interviews and stories, presented by the Erie Philharmonic and WQLN. It's hosted by Brian Hannah. — Tracy Geibel

Warner Theatre, 811 State St. [eriephil.org](http://eriephil.org).

### Dysmorphia

Mar. 10 — 10 p.m. to 3 a.m.  
Head down to Scotty's for "Your Ladies Night." A night full of musical variety, female solidarity and fun. (21+)

Scotty's Martini Lounge, 301 German St. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

### Charlie Wheeler Band

Mar. 10 — 10 p.m. to 3 a.m.  
Kick it at Kings Rook Club with groove aficionados the Charlie Wheeler Band as they deliver their brand of hard-driving blues-rock.  
Kings Rook Club, 1921 Peach St. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

### Chillbilly's

Mar. 11 — 1 to 4 p.m.  
Arundel Cellars & Brewing Co., 11727 E. Main Rd. North East, PA 16428 [arundelcellars.com](http://arundelcellars.com).

### Sweet Ascent and ANSON

Mar. 11 — 7 to 11 p.m.  
Alternative rockers Sweet Ascent and Anson are coming to Basement Transmissions for one of the last stops on the "Take It or Leave It Tour".

Sweet Ascent's latest album and the tour's namesake, *Take It or Leave It*, contains hints of pop-rock, pop-punk, post-hardcore, and everything in between, giving fans of almost any genre something to love. When it comes to sticking to one style, Sweet Ascent can take it or leave it.

Opening acts on the bill are Meadville pop-punk/emo band Archway and Ohio indie rockers XXL Hours. — Tommy Shannon  
Basement Transmissions, 145 W. 11th St. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

## DANCE

### Chromatic Dance Day Workshop: Jazz & Musical Theater

Mar. 4 — 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.  
PACA, 1505 State St. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

## FOOD & DRINK

### Lenten Fish Dinners

Mar. 2, 9 — 5 to 7 p.m.  
St. Luke Café, 421 E. 38th St. [stlukeerie.org](http://stlukeerie.org).

### Chicken Wing Cook Off & Yuengling Party

Mar. 3 — noon to 6 p.m.  
Peek'n Peak Resort, 1405 Olde Rd. [pkpkn.com](http://pkpkn.com).

### Pancake Breakfast

Mar. 4 — 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
Msgr. Gannon Auditorium, 606 Raspberry St. [saintandrewerie.com](http://saintandrewerie.com).

### Mac n' Cheese 3

Mar. 4 — 1 to 4 p.m.  
408 Bar & Grille, Cali's West Catering, and Pineapple Eddie's may have been last year's top finishers, but when it comes to Mac n' Cheese 3, it's anyone's game. The third installment of the Erie Philharmonic's now-annual competition — which raises funds for the Phil while filling event-goers up with all the best mac n' cheese Erie has to offer — is moving to a bigger venue, allowing us all more room to mac. And as always, a panel of local celebrity judges (including the Read-

er's own Nick Warren) will determine whose is the best of the best. — Ryan Smith  
Zem Zem Shrine Club, 2525 W. 38th St. [eriephil.org](http://eriephil.org).

### Beast and Brews

Mar. 8 — 5 to 8 p.m.  
Free admission and celebrity guest bartending come to the Brewerrie at Union Station with all funds raised going directly to the Barber Beast on the Bay.  
The Brewerrie at Union Station, 123 W. 14th St. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

### Luminary's Birthday Bash Part 1

Mar. 9 — 4 p.m. to 10 p.m.  
Join Luminary Distilling as they celebrate their one year anniversary, accompanied with the Que Abides Food Truck's barbecue, \$2 off select bottles, and a basket giveaway.  
Luminary Distilling, 8270 Peach St. Ste. 300, [luminarydistilling.com](http://luminarydistilling.com)

### 2018 Home Wine Making Seminar

Mar. 10 — 8:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
Luther Memorial Church, 225 W. 10th St. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

### 9th Annual Dinner Dance

Mar. 10 — 5:30 to 11 p.m.  
Ambassador Center, 7794 Peach St. [blendspiritsranch.org](http://blendspiritsranch.org).

### Environment Erie Murder Mystery Dinner

Mar. 10 — 6:30 to 9:30 p.m.

Join Environment Erie at the Brewerrie for an evening of murder, hors d'oeuvres and drinks complete with a gift auction to support their sustainability programs.  
The Brewerrie at Union Station, 123 W. 14th St. [environmenterie.org](http://environmenterie.org).

## MOVIES

### Aircraft Carrier

Ongoing — 11 a.m. & 2 p.m. & 5 p.m.  
Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. [biggreenscreen.com](http://biggreenscreen.com).

### Prehistoric Planet

Ongoing — noon & 3 p.m.  
Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. [biggreenscreen.com](http://biggreenscreen.com).

### Flight of the Butterflies

Ongoing — 1 p.m. & 4 p.m.  
Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. [biggreenscreen.com](http://biggreenscreen.com).

### An Inconvenient Sequel: Truth to Power

Mar. 1 — 7 to 9:30 p.m.  
In this sequel to the 2006 film *An Inconvenient Truth*, Gore's global efforts to persuade government leaders to invest in renewable energy is explored in depth.  
Blasco Memorial Library, 160 E. Front St. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

### The Blues Brothers (1980)

Mar. 2 — 8 to 11 p.m.  
Erie Movie House, 3424 W. Lake Rd. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

### Get Out

Mar. 7 — 5:30 p.m.  
The Film Society of Northwestern Pennsylvania presents a showing of *Get Out* along with a dinner and Q&A with Dr. Rhonda Matthews at the Bourbon Barrel.  
Bourbon Barrel, 1213 State St. [filmsocietynwpa.org](http://filmsocietynwpa.org).

### Atomic Blonde

Mar. 14 — 5:30 p.m.  
Bourbon Barrel, 1213 State St. [filmsocietynwpa.org](http://filmsocietynwpa.org).

## VISUAL ARTS

### Why Can't I Touch It?

Ongoing through Mar. 2  
Bruce Gallery in Doucette Hall, 215 Meadville St. [brucegallery.info](http://brucegallery.info).

### Rough Trade: Clay Bodies and Queer Visions

Ongoing through Mar. 4  
Doane Hall of Art at Allegheny College, 520 N. Main St. Meadville, PA 16335 [allegheny.edu](http://allegheny.edu).

### Patricia S. Yahn Juried Student Art Show

Ongoing through Mar. 16  
Mercyhurst University Cummings Gallery, 501 E. 38th St. [miac.mercyhurst.edu](http://miac.mercyhurst.edu).

### Kids As Curators 2018

Ongoing through Mar. 18  
Erie Art Museum, 411 State St. [erieartmuseum.org](http://erieartmuseum.org).

### Daniel Burke: Callings

Ongoing through Apr. 8  
Erie Art Museum, 411 State St. [erieartmuseum.org](http://erieartmuseum.org).

## The Classic Sunday in the Park with George at Erie Playhouse

FRIDAY, MAR. 9 — SUNDAY, MAR. 25



The classic musical *Sunday in the Park With George* uses the life and work of painter George Seurat as its framework. Among his most famous paintings is "A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte," which showcases masterful execution of the pointillist technique.

In an effort to better celebrate "the uniqueness of the Erie theater/art scene," the Erie Playhouse has announced a collaborative project with PACA, All An Act Theater and the Erie Art Museum to present three very special productions centered around the creation of visual art. Followed by Yasmina Reza's *Art* at PACA and Steve Mar-

tin's *Picasso*

*At the Lapin Agile* at All An Act, the first of these is set to be an iteration of the musical classic *Sunday in the Park with George*, directed by Richard Davis at the Erie Playhouse.

The production, which the Playhouse calls "a masterpiece" and "one of the most acclaimed musicals of our time,"

is about the life and work of painter George Seurat. But according to Davis, it really is about so much more than that.

"It really is a non-conventional theater piece," says Davis. "At its very most basic, it is a story about how artists try to find a balance between their art and their personal life. It just happens to be set against this framework of George Seurat's life."

Though Davis doesn't have much of a history with the production, he says it's always been one of his favorites and a dream to work on.

"I love the story and I loved the conflict between George and Dot in the beginning, and how it takes four generations and George's great-grandson to settle that," says Davis.

*Sunday in the Park with George* opened on Broadway in 1984, going on to be nominated for an astonishing 10 Tony Awards. This production is the definition of standing the test of time, as after 30 years, it still seems to capture the same universal emotions among audiences. Davis has some ideas as to why.

"In general, people have difficulty making connections and maintaining relationships," says Davis. "[Composer Stephen] Sondheim is such an innovator, so ahead of his time that we are just catching up to his music now. And I suppose it's always fun to create a painting live on stage." — Aaron Mook

*Erie Playhouse, 13 W. 10th St. // Dates, showtimes, and prices available online at [erieplayhouse.org](http://erieplayhouse.org)*

### Urban Chatter: Textile Art by Sharon Kerry-Harlan

Ongoing through Apr. 29  
Erie Art Museum, 411 State St. [erieartmuseum.org](http://erieartmuseum.org).

### Gary Spinosa: Divine Instinct

Ongoing through Jan. 6, 2019  
Erie Art Museum, 411 State St. [erieartmuseum.org](http://erieartmuseum.org).

### James McMurray: Faces and Paces

Ongoing through June 10, 2019  
Erie Art Museum, 411 State St. [erieartmuseum.org](http://erieartmuseum.org).

### Arts & Drafts Festival

Mar. 1, 2, 3 — 6:30 p.m.  
The Brewerrie at Union Station, 123 W. 14th St. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

### East Ave. Art Event with Hey Beast's Jeff Brunner

Mar. 3 — 10 a.m. to noon  
Join Pittsburgh artist Jeff Brunner as he leads this all ages community art event across from the McBride Viaduct.  
Erie CPR: Connect + Respect, 1201 E. Ave. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

### Gallery Night

Mar. 9 — 7 to 10 p.m.  
Various Locations, [erieartmuseum.org](http://erieartmuseum.org).

### Second Sundays

Mar. 11 — 2 to 4 p.m.  
Erie Art Museum, 411 State St. [erieartmuseum.org](http://erieartmuseum.org).

### Patricia S. Yahn Student Art Show

Mar 12 through Apr. 27 (Reception Mar. 16 — 6 to 7:30 p.m.)  
John M. Lilley Library at Penn State Behrend, 4951 Behrend College Dr. [sites.psu.edu](http://sites.psu.edu).

## THEATER

### A Chorus Line

Mar. 1 — 7:30 p.m.  
Broadway's most beloved meta-musical is trying out for the Warner Theatre, and if history is any judge, it should make the cut with Erie audiences. The play, which follows the stories of 17 dancers auditioning for a Broadway musical, was winner of the 1976 Pulitzer Prize for Drama and nine Tony Awards, including Best Musical, Best Book (written by James Kirkwood Jr. and Nicholas Dante), and Best Score (Marvin Hamlisch). So you think you can (make it to this) dance? — Matt Swanseger  
Warner Theatre, 811 State St. [achoruslineontour.com](http://achoruslineontour.com).

### Mr. Burn, A Post-Electric Play

Mar. 2, 3, 9, 10 — 8 p.m.  
Dramashop, 1001 State St. Suite 210, [dramashop.org](http://dramashop.org).

### Sunday in the Park with George

Mar. 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 21, 22, 23, 24 — 7:30 p.m. & Mar. 18, 25 — 2 p.m.  
Erie Playhouse, 13 W. 10th St. [erieplayhouse.org](http://erieplayhouse.org).

### Underneath the Lintel: An Impressive Presentation of Lovely Evidences

Mar. 9, 10, 16, 17 — 7:30 p.m. & Mar. 11, 18 — 2:30 p.m.  
PACA, 1505 State St. [paca1505.com](http://paca1505.com).

### Picasso at the Lapin Agile

Mar. 9, 10, 16, 17, 23, 24 — 7:30 to 10 p.m. & Mar. 11, 18, 25 — 3 to 5:30 p.m.

All An Act Theatre, 652 W. 17th St. [allanact.net](http://allanact.net).

### Flanagan's Wake

Mar. 10, 17, 24 — 5:30 p.m. & Mar. 11, 18, 25 — 2:30 p.m. & Mar. 13, 14, 27 — noon & Mar. 16 — 7 p.m.

One of the longest-running comedy shows in Chicago theater history is coming to Erie for the first time complete with Irish songs.  
Station Dinner Theatre, 4940 Peach St. [canturburyfeast.com](http://canturburyfeast.com).

## SPORTS

### Erie BayHawks vs. Greensboro Swarm

Feb. 28 — 7 p.m.  
Erie Insurance Arena, 809 French St. [erie.league.nba.com](http://erie.league.nba.com).

### Experience Curling

Feb. 28 — 8:30 p.m.  
French Creek Curling Club, 800 Thurston Rd. Meadville, PA 16335 [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

### Erie Otters vs. Owen Sound Attack

Mar. 1 — 7 p.m.  
Erie Insurance Arena, 809 French St. [ottershockey.com](http://ottershockey.com).

### Erie Sport & Travel Expo

Mar. 2 — noon to 8 p.m. & Mar. 3 — 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. & Mar. 4 — 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
Bayfront Convention Center, 1 Sassafras Pier [eriepromotions.com](http://eriepromotions.com).

### Erie BayHawks vs. Lakeland Magic

Mar. 2 — 7 p.m.  
Erie Insurance Arena, 809 French St. [erie.league.nba.com](http://erie.league.nba.com).

### Epic Volleyball

Mar. 3, 4, 10, 11 — 8 a.m.  
Family First Sports Park, 8155 Oliver Rd. [ovr.org](http://ovr.org).

### Erie Otters vs. Peterborough Petes

Mar. 3 — 7 p.m.  
Erie Insurance Arena, 809 French St. [ottershockey.com](http://ottershockey.com).

### 6th Annual Erie Scratch Classic

Mar. 3 — 9:30 p.m. & Mar. 4 — 10 a.m.  
Rolling Meadow Lanes, 3304 Zuck Rd. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

### Erie Otters vs. Flint Firebirds

Mar. 7 — 7 p.m.  
Erie Insurance Arena, 809 French St. [ottershockey.com](http://ottershockey.com).

### 2018 PA State Pool Tournament

Mar. 9 — 3 p.m. & Mar. 10, 11 — 9 a.m.  
Hosted annually by Warner Coin Machine, 2,000 VNEA-sanctioned players are expected to play on more than 180 tables at the Bayfront Convention Center.  
Bayfront Convention Center, 1 Sassafras Pier [warnercoin.com](http://warnercoin.com).

### Erie BayHawks vs. Maine Red Claws

Mar. 9 — 7 p.m.  
Erie Insurance Arena, 809 French St. [erie.league.nba.com](http://erie.league.nba.com).

### Erie Otters vs. Windsor Spitfires

Mar. 10 — 7 p.m.  
Erie Insurance Arena, 809 French St. [ottershockey.com](http://ottershockey.com).

### Erie BayHawks vs. Westchester Knicks

Mar. 13 — 7 p.m.  
Erie Insurance Arena, 809 French St. [erie.league.nba.com](http://erie.league.nba.com).

## COMMUNITY

### Great Lakes Shipwreck Exhibition

Ongoing through Apr. 13  
Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. [trecpi.org](http://trecpi.org).

### Seneca Allegany Casino Trip

Feb. 28 — 8:30 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.  
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. [lifeworkserie.org](http://lifeworkserie.org).

### Tiny Trees Yoga

Feb. 28 — 10 to 10:35 a.m.  
Lake Erie Arboretum at Frontier Park, 1501 W. 6th St. [leaferie.org](http://leaferie.org).

### DiscoverE

Feb. 28 & Mar. 14 — 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.  
Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. [trecpi.org](http://trecpi.org).

### Cyberbullying

Feb. 28 — 12:30 to 1:30 p.m.  
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. [lifeworkserie.org](http://lifeworkserie.org).

### Nerd Night

Feb. 28 — 5 to 11 p.m.  
LARPers, cosplayers and gamers rejoice as Bourbon Barrel puts on their first Nerd Night of the year complete with local vendors, artists, food, drinks and more.  
Bourbon Barrel, 1213 State St. [bourbonbarrelerie.com](http://bourbonbarrelerie.com).

### People as Commodities: The Global Impact of Human Trafficking in

### Kenya and Beyond

Feb. 28 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.  
Join the Jefferson Educational Society as they explore the critical crisis surrounding human trafficking in Kenya and beyond, which will illustrate this global issue.  
Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. [jeserie.org](http://jeserie.org).

### Family Storytime

Mar. 1, 8 — 10 to 10:45 a.m.  
Lincoln Community Center Library, 1255 Manchester Rd. [erielibrary.org](http://erielibrary.org).

### Five Wishes Advance Directive Planning

Mar. 1 — 12:30 to 1:30 p.m.  
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. [lifeworkserie.org](http://lifeworkserie.org).

### American Short Stories

Mar. 1, 8 — 4 to 6 p.m.  
Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. [jeserie.org](http://jeserie.org).

### Beginner Improv

Mar. 1, 8 — 6 to 7 p.m.  
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. [lifeworkserie.org](http://lifeworkserie.org).

### Shawn Wayans

Mar. 1 — 7 p.m. & Mar. 2, 3 — 6:45 & 9:30 p.m.  
Jr's Last Laugh, 1402 State St. [jrslastlaugh.com](http://jrslastlaugh.com).

### Life in the Fast Lane: Net Neutrality and the Fight for Access to an Open Internet

Mar. 1 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.  
As many are aware, net neutrality has been in the news recently, and the Jefferson Education Society wants you to know that it may be at the center of "one of the defining political battles of the 21st century." If you've ever wanted a fuller understanding of net

## CALENDAR

### Local Heavy Hitters Return and Reunite at BT

SATURDAY, MAR. 10



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Christian heavy metal band War of Ages remain one of the Erie underground scene's most resounding success stories, with eight albums and an international fan base.

raised them, even after relocating. The December 2017 release of *Alpha* marks the eighth studio album for the band.

Mixing up the genres for this show, Pittsburgh ska-punk rockers The Code will be reuniting for a night. In

Christian metal band War of Ages is returning to their hometown, when they make Basement Transmissions the final stop on their "Alpha Tour".

Arguably the most successful band to break out of the Erie underground music scene, War of Ages has maintained a highly active touring schedule, and fostered a strong international fan base, but always makes sure to come back and pay respects to the scene that

the band's heyday, they toured alongside notable punk acts like Rise Against, Against Me, and Anti-Flag.

Other acts on the bill include Ohio-based metalcore and War of Ages' tour mates Convictions, Detroit punk rockers Break Anchor, and talented local metalheads Amavasya. — Tommy Shannon

6 p.m. // 145 W. 11th St. // \$15 Advance, \$20 Doors

neutrality or why the motion to remove it is so controversial, there's never been a better time or place to learn than on at the society's upcoming lecture, "Life in the Fast Lane," hosted by speaker James Wertz, Ph.D. (Director of the Honors program at Edinboro University.) — Aaron Mook  
Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. [jeserie.org](http://jeserie.org).

#### Adult Yoga Classes

Mar. 1 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Lake Erie Arboretum at Frontier Park, 1501 W. 6th St. [leaferie.org](http://leaferie.org).

#### 2232 Men's Conference

Mar. 3 — 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.  
Our Lady of Peace Church, 2401 W. 38th St. [2232men.com](http://2232men.com).

#### Kitchen Gardens Made Easy

Mar. 3 — 9:30 a.m. to noon  
Wayside Presbyterian Church, 1208 Asbury Rd. [wayside-erie.org](http://wayside-erie.org).

#### Cabin Fever Reliever: Local Vendor Fair

Mar. 3 — 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
Collegiate Academy, 2825 State St. [eriesd.org](http://eriesd.org).

#### Master Builders

Mar. 3 — 2 to 3 p.m.  
Lincoln Community Center Library, 1255 Manchester Rd. [erielibrary.org](http://erielibrary.org).

#### Community Call to Peace

Mar. 4 — 4 to 9:30 p.m.  
Oasis Pub, 3122 W. Lake Rd. [matverie.org](http://matverie.org).

#### One Night in Hollywood

Mar. 4 — 7:30 p.m.  
Sheraton Erie Bayfront Hotel, 55 W. Bay Rd. [filmsocietynwpa.org](http://filmsocietynwpa.org).

#### Family Storytime

Mar. 5, 12 — 10 to 10:45 a.m.  
Edinboro Branch Library, 413 Plum St. [erielibrary.org](http://erielibrary.org).

#### Microsoft Excel Essentials

Mar. 5, 12 — 1 to 2:30 p.m.  
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. [lifeworkserie.org](http://lifeworkserie.org).

#### Presque Isle History Series

Mar. 5 — 6 to 7 p.m.  
Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. [treppi.org](http://treppi.org).

#### US-Saudi Alliance: What Does the Future Hold for These Strange Bedfellows

Mar. 5 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Edinboro University's Dr. Baher Ghosheh speaks on the US-Saudi relationship throughout time and what the Trump presidency may mean for its future.  
Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. [jeserie.org](http://jeserie.org).

#### Ombudsman Program

Mar. 6 — 12:30 p.m.

LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. [lifeworkserie.org](http://lifeworkserie.org).

#### Basic Home Repair Tips

Mar. 6 — 1 to 2 p.m.  
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. [lifeworkserie.org](http://lifeworkserie.org).

#### Great Books

Mar. 6 — 4 to 5:30 p.m.  
Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. [jeserie.org](http://jeserie.org).

#### Examining Cancer Cells through the Lens of a Developing Organ

Mar. 6 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.  
Dr. Justin Lathia, of the Lerner Research Institute at the Cleveland Clinic, will discuss the relationship between tumor cells and their adjacent cells in this lecture speech.  
Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. [jeserie.org](http://jeserie.org).

#### Erie Torch Club Presents: Erie's Humbling Weather

Mar. 7 — 6 to 9 p.m.  
Erie Torch Club welcomes Jet 24 meteorologist Tom Atkins, to speak about his early work experiences, tornado chasing and love of lake effect snow.  
Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. [jeserie.org](http://jeserie.org).

#### Gardening Workshops

Mar. 7, 14 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.  
Lake Erie Arboretum at Frontier Park, 1501 W. 6th St. [leaferie.org](http://leaferie.org).

# Kings Rook

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+ ELECTRIC LOVE MACHINE [DOWNSTAIRS]

\* SATURDAY, MARCH 24  
**ERIC BREWER & FRIENDS**  
+ GRATEFUL DEAD TRIBUTE  
+ DJ NECCO [DOWNSTAIRS]

\* FRIDAY, MARCH 30  
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# A Broad Palette of Talent on Display for Gallery Night

FRIDAY, MAR. 9



Gallery Night attendees view an exhibit at the Erie Art Museum on Friday, December 1, 2017.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Erie's cultural milieu will celebrate another milestone as the Erie Art Museum's Gallery Night program enters its 11th season. If you're passionate about art but your budget is not quite feeling the Louvre or jonesin' for the Smithsonian, you could not draw up a more perfect evening — free viewings, complimentary refreshments, and 16 participating locations.

The Erie Art Museum (home base) will debut five new exhibits: *Urban Chatter: Textile Art* by Sharon Kerry-Harlan (quilts and textile collages inspired by jazz), *Divine Instinct* by Gary Spinosa (iconography and religious art), *Faces and Places* (paintings by retired Edinboro professor James McMurray), *Kids as Curators* (art and exhibits by local middle school students), and *First Class* (works by Erie Art Museum instructors and students).

**419 Artifacts:** Art, not cotton, is the

fabric of our lives. Check out *THREADS*, featuring work by Deborah Sementelli, as well as other fruits of the loom. — 419 State St.

**Artlore Studio:** Art inspired by myths, legends, folklore and fairy tales is the story of the night here. Thankfully, this is a fairy tale where you will not be eaten, but will have something to eat, thanks to Give A Crepe. La CrepeErie. — 3406 W. Lake Rd.

**Attic Rehab:** All the treasures of an attic without the mustiness — Jack Quigley's *Paint & Pattern* features his recent watercolors and textile work on the building's ground floor. Upstairs in the Erie ClaySpace studio, view ceramic works until your eyes glaze over. — 1501 State St.

**Blasco Library:** The Chateau de la Surrealism Gallery will be deceiving guests with open arms. Trip over (figuratively) the work of Andrew Newton, Kris Risto, Jessica Stadtmueller, Mercy Maclay, Jason Amatangelo, Eric Fargiorgio, Ken Johnson, Jennifer Christina, McKenzie Sprague, Corey Thompson, and Dylan Vanord. — 160 E. Front St.

**Ember+Forge:** Warm up to a cup of

joe and Corey Thompson's *Primary Winter*, paintings inspired by the colder months. — 401 State St.

**Erie Art Gallery:** Multiple mediums and multiple artists mingle for *Erie Works* at downtown's latest exhibit space. — 24 W. Eighth St.

**Schuster Gallery at Gannon University:** Eugene Rutkowski (1936-1973) was controversial in his day for his modernistic adaptations of ancient scripture. Appreciate his works in a new light at "Art of the Spirit." — 700 Peach St., First Floor

**Glass Growers Gallery:** Glasses more than half full with *The Stimulus of Perception* (photographs by Laura Gooley) and *Find A Way* (sculpture by Brian Paradini). — 10 E. Fifth St.

**1503 Gallery at PACA:** Experimentations in both sight (psychedelic art of Andrew Todd) and sound (a listening of the new onewayness release *RANDOM ORACLE*, a live performance by Battalion of Cloudships). — 1503 State St., 2nd Floor

**1505 Gallery at PACA:** Be moved by painter Janine Utegg's oil-on-canvas collection *For the Love of Farm Animals*, featuring scenes fertile with pastoral charm. — 1505 State St., Second Floor

**Lake Life:** Heather Michel has arranged driftwood and beach glass into beautiful designs reflecting the wonders of our Great Lakes. — 3739 W. Lake Rd.

**Office of Dr. Loeslein and Dr. Jamison:** A healthy variety of local artists display their works while bassist Tony Grey keeps the pulse. — 2220 W. Eighth St.

**Pointe Four Vintage Boutique:** Dare to Own a Life you Love with photographer Roxann Huduck's *The D.O.L.L. Experience*, "promoting self love and confidence through fashion and beauty." — 2508 Peach St.

**Preservation Erie:** Meet *Erie's New Americans: A Storefront Exhibition* will give viewers an opportunity to get to know Iraqi and Bosnian immigrants through their housewares, artifacts, and art. — 416 State St.

**Traditions Unlimited:** End your Easter egg hunt here with *Pysanky & Pray*, featuring beautifully decorated Ukrainian Easter eggs and other religious art by Patty Merski. — 1608 W. Eighth St.

**U Frame It:** Guest artists Tom Ferraro and Bryan Toy take on February in Matt Lebowitz's ongoing photo show "The Year In A Life: What I Saw and What I Thought." — 731 W. Eighth St.

**V Gallery:** The Burchfield Penney Art Center of Buffalo loans V Gallery Artists *Seen: Photographs of Artists in the 21st Century, a Project by David Moog*. — 3330 W. 26th St.

— Matt Swanseger

7 to 10 p.m. // multiple locations // [erieartmuseum.org/events-gallery-night](http://erieartmuseum.org/events-gallery-night)

## History of the City of Erie

Mar. 8 — 7 p.m.  
Erie Maennerchor Club, 1607 State St. [gcsoe.org](http://gcsoe.org).

## An Evening Honoring Steven McKenrick

Mar. 9 — 6 to 10 p.m.  
The Brewerrie will be offering two beers named after late Erie Firefighter Steven "Beeve" McKenrick for one night only, with profits going to the family in Steve's memory.  
*The Brewerrie at Union Station*, 123 W. 14th St. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

## Jamie Kennedy

Mar. 9, 10 — 6:45 & 9:30 p.m.  
Jamie Kennedy is experienced in making people laugh.  
The stand-up comedian and actor, who has performed around the country and starred in major network

shows, is now bringing his talent to Jr's Last Laugh Comedy Club. Kennedy stars as Dr. Callahan on NBC's *Heartbeat* and voices several characters in Comedy Central's *Legends of Chamberlain Heights*. But perhaps his most memorable role was in *Malibu's Most Wanted*. He played Brad Gluckman, a white rapper in Malibu, which was a role he first portrayed in *The Jamie Kennedy Experiment*. — Tracy Geibel  
*Jr's Last Laugh*, 1402 State St. [jrslastlaugh.com](http://jrslastlaugh.com).

## 41st Annual St. Patrick's Parade Day

Mar. 10 — 2 to 3:30 p.m.  
Join your fellow Irishmen and celebrate St. Patty's Day Erie-style for the 41st annual parade, kicking off

the holiday with family and friends in the downtown area.  
*St. Patrick Church*, 130 E. 4th St. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

## How to Meditate: It's Not What You Think

Mar. 10 — 10 a.m. to noon  
*Plasha Yoga*, 3330 W. 26th St. [plashayoga.com](http://plashayoga.com).

## Spring Fest

Mar. 10 — 11 a.m.  
Join Peak n Peek in their ski season wrap-up festival with events like Cardboard Box Derby and Ponds-kimming.  
*Peek'n Peak Resort*, 1405 Olde Rd. Clymer, NY 14724 [pknpk.com](http://pknpk.com).

## Board Game Event: Game On!

Mar. 10 — 2 to 4 p.m.  
*Lincoln Community Center Library*, 1255 Manchester Rd. [erielibrary.org](http://erielibrary.org).

## We Got Next Presents: Stan'em Comedy Extravaganza

Mar. 10 — 7 to 10 p.m.  
Local entertainment space Erie Movie House will be holding their first stand-up comedy showcase on March 10th, and they want you to join in on the fun.

"We are looking forward to bringing something new to our space and hopefully it will bring out some new people as well," says co-owner Nicole Boivin. Presented by the Pittsburgh-based comedy podcast *We Got Next*, the showcase will feature six comedians including show hosts Eric Weber, Trey McDonough and Christopher Scrivera among others. Doors for the showcase will open at 7 p.m. and the show will begin at 8 p.m. The show is

also BYOB-friendly for those with a 21+ ID. — Aaron Mook  
*Erie Movie House*, 3424 W. Lake Rd. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

## Exercise and Health Benefits with Chuck Bechtold

Mar. 12 — 10:30 a.m.  
*LifeWorks Erie*, 406 Peach St. [lifeworkserie.org](http://lifeworkserie.org).

## Tots in Nature Class: My One Little Cloud

Mar. 12, 15, 19, 22, 26, 29 — 9 to 10 a.m.  
*Asbury Woods Nature Center*, 4105 Asbury Rd. [asburywoods.org](http://asburywoods.org).

## Preschool Nature Discovery Class: Tall Tall Grass, Small Small Pond

Mar. 12, 15, 19, 22, 26, 29 — 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.  
*Asbury Woods Nature Center*, 4105 Asbury Rd. [asburywoods.org](http://asburywoods.org).

## STREAM Studio

Mar. 12 — 4:30 to 5:15 p.m.  
*Edinboro Branch Library*, 413 Plum St. [erielibrary.org](http://erielibrary.org).

## Erie SeaWolves Job Expo

Mar. 13 — 9 a.m. to noon  
*Erie Insurance Arena*, 809 French St. [erieevents.com](http://erieevents.com).

## Read to a Therapy Dog

Mar. 13 — 4:30 to 5:30 p.m.  
*Lincoln Community Center Library*, 1255 Manchester Rd. [erielibrary.org](http://erielibrary.org).

## Erie Talent Share

Mar. 13 — 6 to 8 p.m.  
*Blasco Memorial Library*, 160 E. Front St. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

## Read to a Therapy Dog

Mar. 14 — 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.  
*Edinboro Branch Library*, 413 Plum St. [erielibrary.org](http://erielibrary.org).

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## MOVIE REVIEWS

Back in Black!: *Black Panther* is a Superhero Film with Some Smart Ideas

★★★★

We are now well into Phase 3 of Marvel's Cinematic Universe and the company is finally letting directors put some unique ideas into their stories of costumed heroes punching bad guys. As a result, Ryan Coogler's (*Fruitvale Station*, *Creed*) *Black Panther* contains some very interesting themes and storylines that sadly give way to the standard superhero action spectacle that is all too common in these types of films.



WALT DISNEY STUDIOS

The film follows T'Challa (Chadwick Boseman), the newly crowned king of the super-advanced nation of Wakanda as well as its mysterious protector known only as the "Black Panther". However, when he is confronted by a challenger to the throne (Michael B. Jordan), T'Challa begins to question his country's ideals as well as the things his predecessors did in order to keep Wakanda hidden.

The film asks some very smart questions about isolationism in the face of global catastrophe as well as a nation's responsibilities for helping those less fortunate. Unfortunately, these interesting ideas are thrown aside in the third act for the typical "good guys punch the bad guys" finale. Despite the meandering action and the unnecessary runtime, *Black Panther* does have some top-notch performances (especially Jordan and Lupita Nyong'o) and stylish visuals to make it an entertaining superhero flick ... though not quite the "revolution" that the studio has been promising. — Forest Taylor

*Directed by: Ryan Coogler // Written by: Ryan Coogler and Joe Robert Cole // Starring: Chadwick Boseman, Michael B. Jordan, Lupita Nyong'o, Danai Gurira, Letitia Wright, Martin Freeman, Daniel Kaluuya, Winston Duke, Angela Bassett, Forest Whitaker and Andy Serkis // 135 minutes*

Freedom isn't Free: *50 Shades Freed* is a Low Point in a Whole Series of Low Points

★

Before I begin this review, I'd like to mention that it has been a tradition for my friend and I to go to these films, sit up in the back and riff them to ourselves (thank you Emily!). So I was already going into *50 Shades Freed* with a certain ironic detachment. That being said, I can still say without hyperbole that *50 Shades Freed* is a new low for what a major studio will release to theaters.



UNIVERSAL STUDIOS

The film picks up where the last one left off with the marriage of Anastasia Steele (Dakota Johnson) and Christian Grey (Jamie Dornan) and then follows them as they tour the world, act like entitled jerks to everyone and have lots and lots (and lots and lots) of sex. Eventually, because things are supposed to happen in movies, Anastasia gets stalked by a jealous ex-boss who may be hiding some dark secrets of his own.

*Freed* is by far the worst in the series but that's also to the film's advantage. It's so bad that it can almost be looked at with a certain camp sensibility. However, the most reprehensible thing about the series isn't the explicit sex; it's the way the heroes are celebrated for acting like uncaring cretins to everyone around them (Dornan is a particular stand-out with his glassy-eyed stares and complete lack of emotion). They come off as downright psychopathic! Christian does have a moment where he feels guilt for a possible injustice, but it's quickly swept away and everyone goes back to their privileged, narcissistic selves. People can complain about the pornographic sex all they want but for me, the real depravity of this series is its complete lack of humanity. — Forest Taylor

*Directed by: James Foley // Written by: Niall Leonard, based on the novel by E.L. James // Starring: Dakota Johnson, Jamie Dornan, Eric Johnson, Arielle Kebbel, Brant Daugherty, Fay Masterson, Max Martini, Eloise Mumford, Luke Grimes, Rita Ora and Marcia Gay Harden // 105 minutes*

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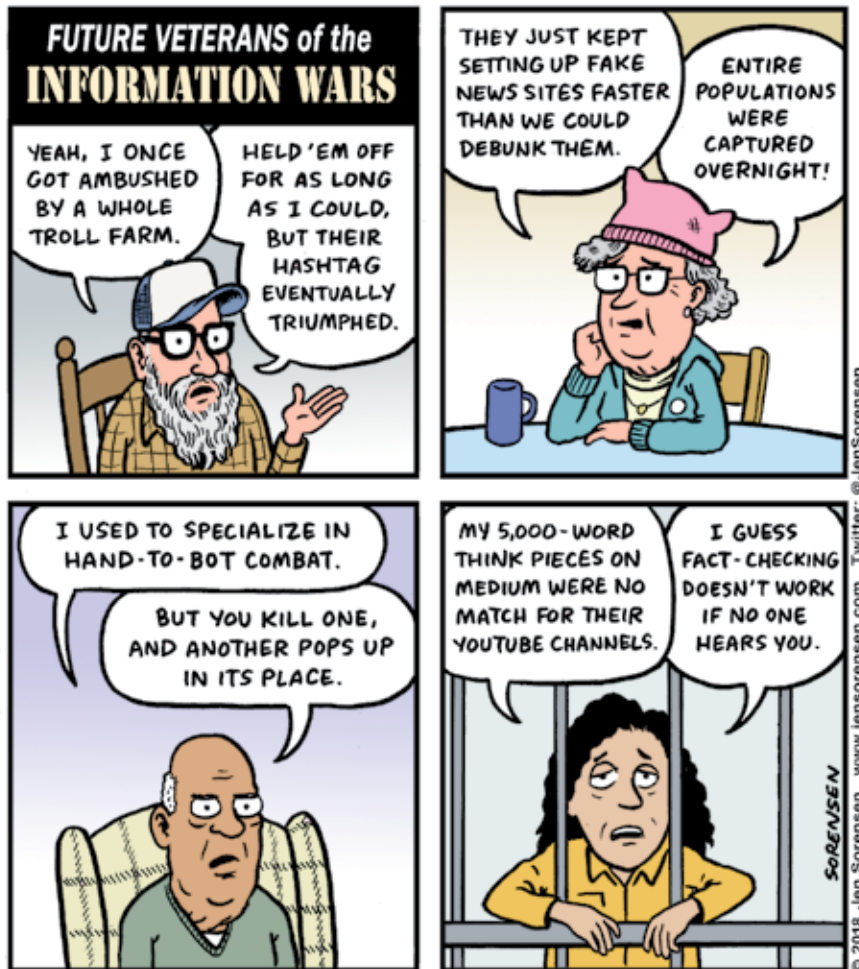
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CROSSWORD



Answers to last issue's puzzle

D	E	F		U	H	U	R	A		S	T	R	I	P	
A	L	I		S	A	R	A	S		I	H	O	P	E	
Y	E	L	L	O	W	B	R	I	C	K	R	O	A	D	
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F	A	T	H	E	R	K	N	O	W	S	B	E	S	T	
				R	O	N							T	E	
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B	E	G	U	N			S	O	R	R	Y		R	U	E
I	S	O	L	A			E	R	A	S	E		T	S	E

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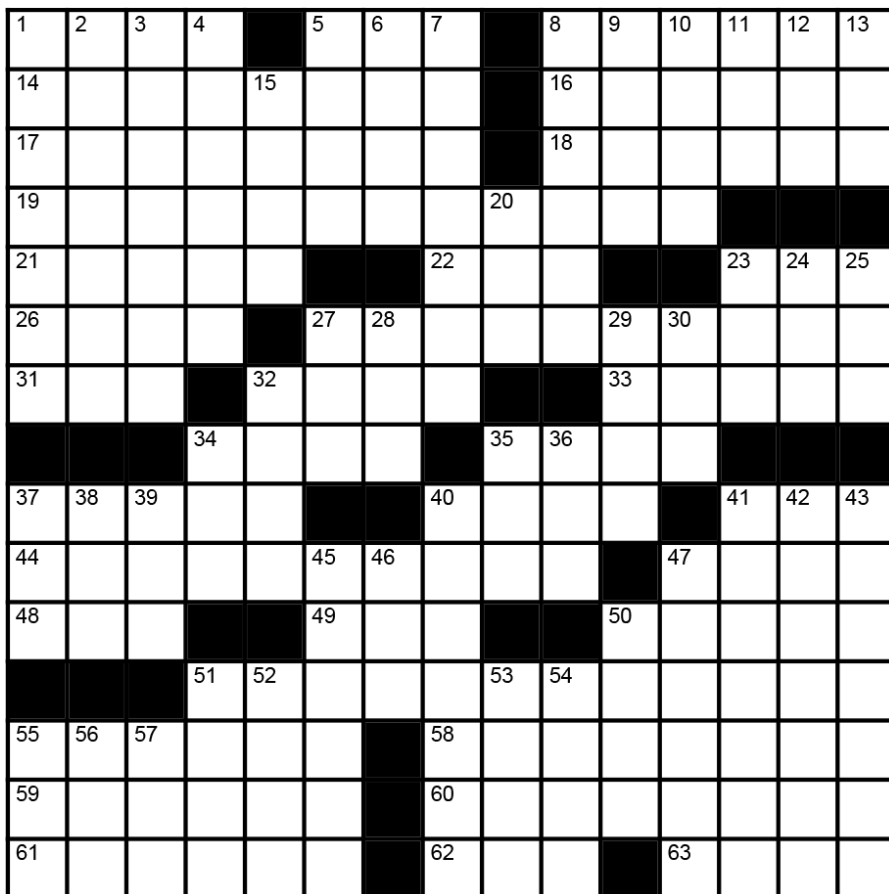
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## CROSSWORD



### Across

1. Irritated state
5. Recipe instruction
8. All thumbs
14. Car air freshener shape
16. Keep for oneself
17. "Allow me to assist"
18. Checked for fingerprints
19. Directive to Herman Melville to develop the title character of his final novel?
21. Start of a number of Keats titles
22. Safety device
23. Image in Tiananmen Square
26. Ring \_\_\_\_
27. "I Need a Girl" rapper's incantation?
31. The Beatles' \_\_\_\_ Pepper
32. Is sick
33. Summoned
34. "Where the Sidewalk Ends" poet Silverstein
35. "You can say that again!"
37. "Slumdog Millionaire" country
40. Popular tablet
41. Nordic airline
44. Bugs Bunny, when he's foiled his nemesis?
47. Man who might tip his cap

48. Took courses
49. Marx's "\_\_\_\_ Kapital"
50. Songstress Lena
51. Someone who jumps over the remnant of a downpour?
55. "The magic word"
58. Go back further than
59. Office machine
60. Connects with
61. Alternatives to 'Vettes
62. The Oilers, on NHL scoreboards
63. Hot times in Haiti

### Down

1. Beer hall turn-ons?
2. Words from a nervous postman?
3. Goofy to the max
4. Beliefs
5. \_\_\_\_ code
6. Shoulder muscle, for short
7. "Maybe yes, maybe no"
8. GI's mess work
9. Earsplitting
10. Golden State campus inits.
11. Box office purchase: Abbr.
12. #26 of 26
13. Jan. 1 till now
15. "And \_\_\_\_ the field the road runs by": Tennyson
20. Fourposter, e.g.
23. One White of rock's White Stripes
24. Pub pint
25. Outdated
27. Stop working for good
28. \_\_\_\_-equipped
29. Burned rubber
30. Skillet, e.g.
32. 1956 Gregory Peck role
34. Vicious of the Sex Pistols
35. Big galoot
36. Scratch, say
37. "... \_\_\_\_ woodchuck could chuck wood"
38. Bolt go-with
39. POTUS #34
40. "We should get going"
41. Butler, e.g.
42. Actress Bening of "American Beauty"
43. Sound systems
45. Milk dispensers
46. Unhappy
47. Dawn of Hollywood
50. Dirt movers
51. Modest poker holding
52. Played for a sap
53. It's an OK city
54. Part of a flower
55. %: Abbr.
56. Upshot?
57. Prefix with -dermis



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## MUSIC REVIEWS

### Ezra Furman

*Transangelic Exodus*  
Bella Union



**T**ransangelic Exodus is a complex fun-house filled with playful and oftentimes dangerous mysteries.



On its surface, it's an exciting record, almost every one of its 13 songs replete with immediately catchy hooks and a jaunty, welcoming blend of garage rock and experimental indie. Ezra Furman's fourth solo album, this is perhaps his most ambitious work yet, and — relatively — his darkest. There's still a light air to Furman's songwriting, but *Exodus* doesn't plant itself as firmly in the cartoonish intensity that his earlier albums were content to thrive in. The childlike timbre of high-toned instrumentation veils the pain and frustration teeming under the album's lyrics. There's a loose storyline that begins with the opening track and the mythology is expounded in tracks like "From a Beach House," and "Psalm 151." The album's title is quite literally the plot. A queer couple flees a hospital and goes on the run after one of them has undergone surgery to become an angel. To its benefit, the rest of the album doesn't follow the story arc as closely, nor does it go into the potentially cringe-worthy territory that rock operas often do. — Nick Warren

### American Pleasure Club

*A Whole F\*cking Lifetime of This*  
Run For Cover Records



**D**istancing himself from his past moniker, Teen Suicide, DIY figurehead Sam Ray claims to have grown up



"with privilege and publicly on social media," recognizing missteps in his words and attitudes as a young 20-something. Now, with a new name and prerogative following 2016's bombastic *It's The Big Joyous Celebration, Let's Stir the Honey-pot*, Ray dedicates all 36 minutes of *A Whole F\*cking Lifetime of This* to creating something concise, (mostly) cohesive and above all, stunning. Ray has always had a knack for melody, even if his most abstract experiments had a way of hiding it, and that shines through in this album's straightforward songwriting (despite shapeshifting between tracks). Take the album's first five songs; following a lo-fi introduction, we are treated to emo power-pop ("this is heaven & id die for it), an acoustic number ("all the lonely nights in your life") and a Frank Ocean-sampling electronic experiment ("lets move to the desert") all within the span of 14 minutes. Somewhere between a defining statement and a new beginning, *A Whole F\*cking Lifetime of This* reflects the aesthetic and heart of a new generation of songwriters. — Aaron Mook

### Rich Brian

*Amen*  
Empire Records



**B**orn from the same space as friend and featured guest Joji (formerly known as Youtube's callous and crude



Filthy Frank), *Amen* is a hip-hop debut that reflect Rich Brian's overnight growth and desire to be taken seriously. Initially arriving on the scene as Rich Chigga with novelty single "Dat \$tick," the young Indonesian rapper immediately recognized his own potential (and somewhat questionable moniker) and ditched the gags in favor of something much more tangible. *Amen* still has its growing pains, but it stands as solid as any hip-hop debut of the past year. Most of these growing pains are confined to one area, and that's lyrics. There's not much of anything to be said here, which is slightly disappointing considering Brian's unique background as a viral Indonesian-American artist. But most of the time, we're just content to hear his surprisingly slick flow over beats that would make Youtube's own "Lo-Fi Hip-Hop Radio" videos blush. From the appropriately brisk "Cold" to a standout collaboration with Joji and the Mac DeMarco-referencing single "Glow Like Dat," Rich Brian does anything but squander this first shot at a seriously impressive project. — Aaron Mook

### GoGo Penguin

*A Humdrum Star*  
Blue Note/Decca



**G**oGo Penguin's star is young, but it is hardly humdrum. These wildly inventive Brits have the appear-



ance of a traditional jazz trio (pianist Chris Illingsworth, bassist Nick Blacka, and drummer Rob Turner), but the sound they produce is of a more nebulous classification. On their fifth album, the group confidently fuses jazz aesthetics with the structures of electronic music. Illingsworth at times plays the role of a human sequencer, his spindly melodic lines interweaving with cascading chords and pulling the listener into each song's sonic web. These tapestries borrow from new age and ambient music (the opening wash of "Prayer," the laidback and mysterious melancholy of "A Hundred Moons"), U.K. jungle/drum n' bass (check out Turner's incredibly active drum work on "Raven" and "Transient State"), and trip hop (the nocturnal, minor key arpeggios of "Window"). Blacka is no less expressive an instrumentalist, as evidenced on "Strid," coaxing an impressive range of inflections out of his upright bass, from swampy slides to ethereal harmonics. Simultaneously soothing and moving, *Humdrum Star* is a worthy experiment in any atmosphere soundwaves travel. — Matt Swanseger

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- March 3 - Rick Magee and The Roadhouse Rockers
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