

ERIE READER

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A Sticky Situation

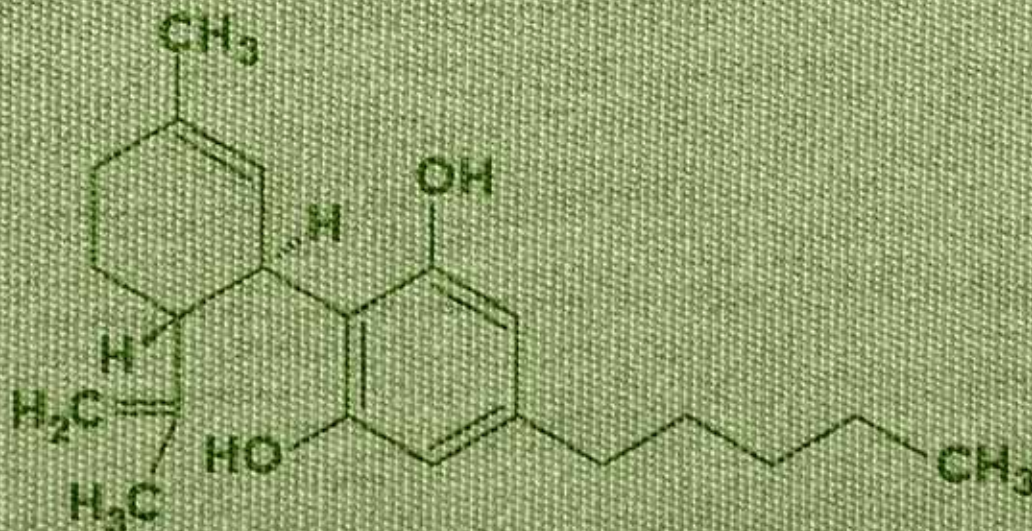
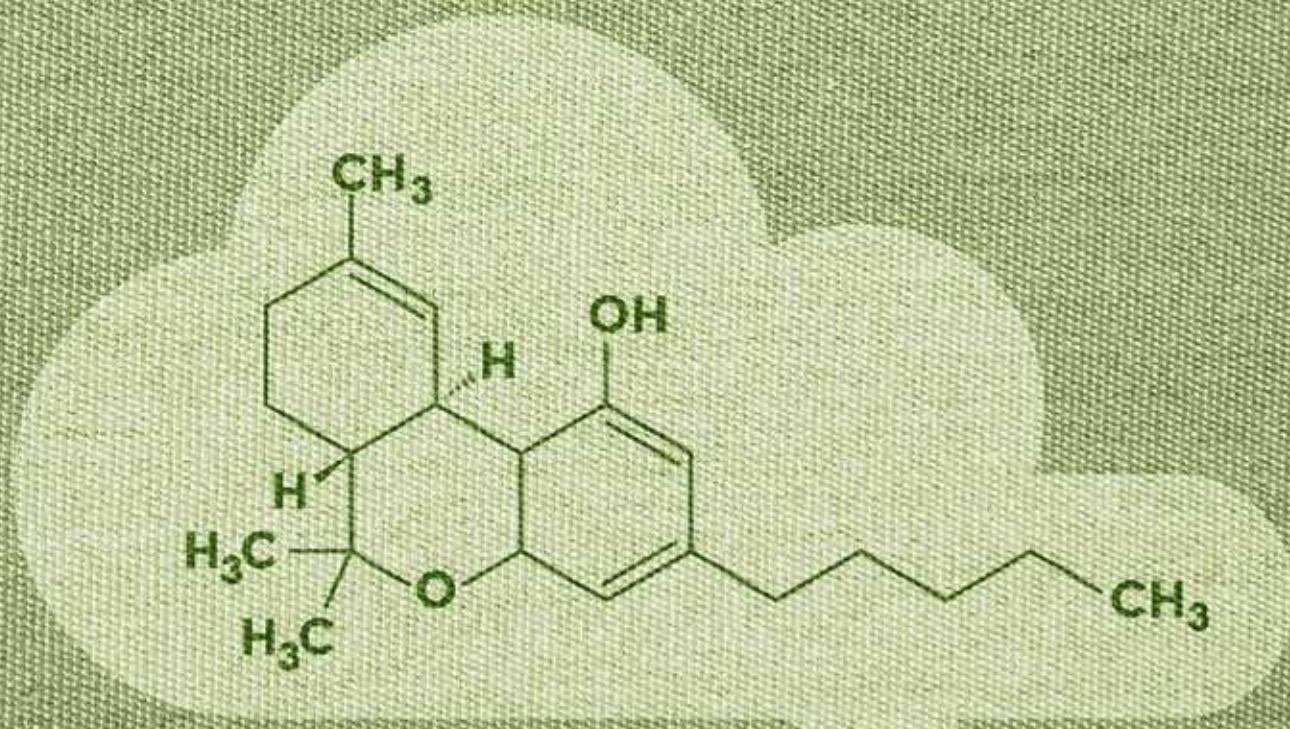
The evolving legality of cannabis in PA

A Growing Process

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CONTENTS

April 10, 2019

Erie Coke Plant Community Impact Update – 5

On April 16, join scientists and community leaders to learn how ongoing violations are affecting us all

A Sticky Situation – 6



CASCADE CREATIVES

The evolving legality of cannabis in PA

Is The Grass Greener? – 9

A brief recap of recent marijuana trends

Dispensary marks first year in Erie – 10

With Jill Chiccarino Beck of RISE Erie

A Growing Process – 11

Calypso first to cultivate medical cannabis in Erie County

Celestial Spaces – 12

Interglasstic Studios celebrates their 10 year anniversary

Beer Bellies, Kitties, and Valentines – 13

Queer comic artist Ed Luce to speak at Penn State Behrend's Gender Conference

Spotlight on Erie – 15

Well lay down smokin' honey, have yourself a ball

Movie Reviews – 28

Zachery Levi and Matthew McConaughey are heroes and zeros

Music Reviews – 30

Billie Elish, La Dispute, PUP, and Priests

Crossword Puzzle – 31

This week's latest stumper from David Levinson Wilk

From the Editors

Turning over a new leaf

Timing is everything in journalistic practice, so we won't play coy with you — 4/20 falls within this issue span. Those digits, of course, are synonymous with cannabis culture, thanks to a group of Californian high school students who called themselves "the Waldos." The five Waldos, all athletes, regularly scheduled rendezvous in front of the Louis Pasteur statue at San Rafael High School at 4:20 p.m., after practice had ended. Their mission? To locate an abandoned cannabis crop a U.S. Coast Guard member had supposedly planted in nearby Point Reyes Forest. A couple of the Waldos also happened to have connections to the Grateful Dead (a father who managed their real estate, a brother who was friends with bassist Phil Lesh), a certain highly influential San Francisco jam band who often wrote and performed their music under the influence of cannabis. Nearly twenty years later in 1990, *High Times* reporter Steven Bloom encountered the term at a Dead concert and with his subsequent write-up, the whole world caught a whiff of the previously clandestine 420.

Of course, the '90s were also the decade when the idea of marijuana as medicine re-entered the mainstream with California's Proposition 215, or the Compassionate Use Act of 1996. Those suffering from grave and life-threatening chronic illnesses such as cancer and AIDS found that marijuana helped allay both the symptoms of their diseases and the serious side-effects of their treatments. As Ben Spегgen recaps in this issue's "A Sticky Situation" feature, this was a direct affront to federal drug laws, which unambiguously declared marijuana illegal. In the ensuing decades, many more states have followed suit and instituted medical marijuana programs, including Pennsylvania in 2016.

Our state is fairly new to this, and everyone involved — patients, caretakers, growers, distributors, and law enforcement — is familiarizing themselves with the rules and the impacts. Rebecca Styn speaks with Laura Guncheon of Erie Management Group, LLC about Calypso Enterprises, Erie County's first cannabis processing facility. Liz Allen zooms in even further, focusing on the exchange between distributor and patient (and the real benefits they've seen) in an interview with RISE Dispensary, as well as the enforcement trends since a decriminalization ordinance passed in the City of Erie last year. Public discourse is something we should never be afraid to light up — Lt. Gov. John Fetterman, who recently embarked on a 67-county tour of Pennsylvania to hear citizens' thoughts on legalizing recreational marijuana, definitely agrees.

Coincidentally, Easter falls on the day after 4/20 this year, and has been inviting us to refresh and renew our minds, bodies, and spirits for the past few millennia (Eostre, an ancient pagan tribute to the goddess of spring, predates Christianity — but also celebrated rebirth). The Reader encourages you to reconnect with friends, family, and the community, which remains fertile with opportunities and events to bond around. Things are starting to look a lot greener — and more hopeful in the Gem City.

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Erie Coke Plant Community Impact Update

On April 16, join scientists and community leaders to learn how ongoing violations are affecting us all



NICK WARREN

By: **Katie Chriest**

If you've found it challenging to keep up with recent news about Erie Coke Corporation, you're not alone.

March 31 brought news of a chemical spill inside the plant, followed by a Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) administrative order filed on April 1.

According to the DEP, a tank that had been repaired on March 19 failed again on March 31, "causing a large volume of wastewater to be released onto the ground and into surrounding struc-

tures at the facility." This wastewater "contains, among other regulated substances, benzene and naphthalene, ammonia, and cyanide."

The DEP order details additional violations in conjunction with this chemical spill, adding to 53 infractions identified in a DEP administrative order from Feb. 4. Erie Coke has appealed the earlier order.

Then on April 3, Erie City Council unanimously supported a resolution proposed by Councilwoman Kathy Schaaf to send a formal letter to the DEP. Mayor Schember said "I totally agree," adding that Erie Coke either

Events involving the Erie Coke Corporation, including a recent chemical spill, have drawn the ire of both nearby residents and community leaders. On April 16, activist groups HECA and GASP will update the public on the latest on this issue.

needs to operate in compliance or be shut down. "And I will send a letter to that effect to Gov. Wolf," he added.

Council's powerful letter to DEP emphasizes that "Erie's economic and social equity aspirations don't equate with news of repeated industrial violations, daily sooty airborne stains wafting over our waterfront and neighborhoods, and foul odors that cause residents to retreat into their homes and offices."

Increased political pressure is obviously essential. But as more details emerge, an informed and active Erie community remains the most critical element in ensuring our city's health is protected to the fullest extent of the law.

So on Tuesday, April 16, from 6:30 to 8 p.m., Hold Erie Coke Accountable (HECA) is partnering with the Group Against Smog and Pollution (GASP) to "update the public on Erie Coke's ongoing violations and the high stakes impact for Erie's quality of life and prosperity," according to a press release.

This "Erie Coke Plant Community Impact Update" will be held at the East Middle School Auditorium, 1001 Atkins St., and is free and open to the public.

According to HECA, a panel of environmental scientists will address Erie Coke's operation and impact on air quality, water quality, and soil con-

tamination. Panelists will also discuss the recent closing of Erie Coke's sister plant in Tonawanda, N.Y., and insights regarding ongoing enforcement actions by our DEP.

Principal presenters will be Mike Campbell, Ph.D., a science and biology professor at Mercyhurst University who researches water quality issues, and Michelle Homan, Ph.D. of Gannon University, an environmental science and engineering researcher who tackles air quality concerns—both core members of HECA. Representing GASP will be Executive Director Rachel Filippini and Staff Attorney Ned Mulcahy, who will review regulatory affairs specific to coke facilities and their impacts relative to a healthy population, environment, and economy.

Economic impacts of coke facilities ought to be compelling even to those who don't consider themselves environmentalists, as we seek to improve Erie's economy and appeal to investors. In communities surrounding other coke facilities, the choice between a jobs-providing corporation and clean air is often painted in black and white, as I wrote in "Clearing the Air" nearly two years ago. But demanding that a corporation like Erie Coke operate in accordance with existing laws and regulations is simply holding it to the same standards we all must honor in a just and civil community.

It's the kind of community we deserve, and the kind we have a right to demand.

Katie Chriest can be reached at Katie@eriereader.com.

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A Sticky Situation

The evolving legality of cannabis in PA



EPIC STOCK

By: Ben Spegen

The Devil's Lettuce. Mary Jane, herb, ganga, chronic, stinkweed, hay, skunk, broccoli, pot, weed, reefer, dope.

Marijuana has gone — and still goes — by many names. One that's becoming more commonplace: Medicine.

And seemingly following not too far behind: Legal.

For a great overview and deeper dive into the history of the plant in the U.S. and the stigma of how American culture is evolving on the topic of marijuana, revisit Matt Swanseger's April 12, 2017 feature for the Erie Reader, "Blunt Terms." In it, Swanseger reviews the country's interesting past and evolving future with the plant of many names, quoting Brookings Institution Senior Fellow John Hudak, author of *Marijuana: A Short History*, "Over the course of the nation's history, the plant has gone from a required crop to an accepted medical treatment to a government-regulated pharmaceutical to an illegal drug to a somewhat legal medicinal option to a locally legal and regulated substance."

Along the way, Swanseger refreshes our memories of the impact of the Spanish-American War of 1898 and the subsequent Mexican Revolution (the ill-conceived caricatures of "less motivated, less industrious, and less stable

morally and emotionally" pot-peddling Latin Americans), as well as the 1937 now-cult-classic *Reefer Madness* (noting that exaggerations in the film rate as "laughable"), President Nixon's War on Drugs (and how marijuana-related arrests soared above 700,000 under the Clinton administration), and more, outlining the *how* and *why* of, well, how and why we got here.

Two years later, questions remain, chiefly: *What* is legal, and *where*? And *when* will things change again?

A quick answer to the *what* and the *where* is: *Nothing* is legal at the federal level. Conversely, on the state level, it varies between the 50 and the District of Columbia.

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures as of March 2019, 10 states and D.C. have passed laws to offer adult and medical use regulated programs, putting them under the "legalized" umbrella of organizations such as DISA Global Solutions, which provides workplace safety and compliance services. That includes: Alaska, California, Colorado, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Oregon, Nevada, Washington, Washington, D.C., and Vermont.

"Legalized" can be tricky, though. Some states have cut through the bureaucratic red tape to set up recreational shops with varying degrees of ease and success. Others, like D.C., have struggled.

While it's legal to own, consume, grow, or gift marijuana in the nation's capital, a buyer-seller commercialization isn't yet legal due to restrictions hinged to the legalization bill. So "gifting" isn't uncommon — meaning that when someone purchases, say, a piece of art, a T-shirt, or virtually anything else, they may receive a "gift" of a legal amount of marijuana.

Arizona, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Florida, Hawaii, Louisiana, Maryland, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, Oklahoma, Utah, and West Virginia all feature a comprehensive medical marijuana program.

Of those 23, eight states — Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio, and Rhode Island — have decriminalized the drug in varying capacities. Other states, such as Pennsylvania, don't yet have full, statewide decriminalization legislation, but have approved decriminalization measures at the local levels in certain cities (more on that ahead).

Thirteen states feature CBD/Low THC programs: Alabama, Georgia, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, Tennessee, Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming, while just four states — Idaho, Kansas, Nebraska, and South Dakota — feature no public marijuana access program.

Blazing the trail, California voters passed Proposition 215, which allowed marijuana to be used medically in 1996. That triggered the Institute of Medicine to issue the 1999 report "Marijuana and Medicine: Assessing the Science Base," with the study's authors describing its need because "the medical use of marijuana is surrounded by a cloud of social, political, and religious controversy, which obscures the facts that should be considered in the debate."

According to the 20-year-old report, "Scientific data indicates the potential therapeutic value of cannabinoid drugs, primarily THC, for pain relief, control of nausea and vomiting, and appetite stimulation," while noting, however, that "smoked marijuana is a crude THC delivery system that also delivers harmful substances.

"The psychological effects of cannabinoids, such as anxiety reduction, sedation, and euphoria can influence their potential therapeutic value," the report continued noting. "Those effects are potentially undesirable for certain patients and situations and beneficial for others. In addition, psychological effects can complicate the interpretation of other aspects of the drug's effect."

While states then saw and continue to see potential, the federal government has not adjusted its classification of marijuana under the Controlled Substances Act as a Schedule I substance, a branding used for substances not accepted for medical use and considered to have a greater potential and risk for dependency.

In 2009, the Obama administration issued a memo recommending that people distributing marijuana for medical purposes not be prosecuted. Four years later in August 2013, Obama-era Deputy Attorney General James Cole issued a memorandum updating the Justice Department's marijuana law enforcement efforts. While acknowledging that marijuana remained illegal and that federal prosecutors would continue to "aggressively enforce this statute," the memo reaffirmed deference to states: "the federal government has traditionally relied on state and local authorizes to address marijuana activity through enforcement of their own narcotics laws. This guidance continues that policy."

What was new was that states, such as Colorado and Washington, were then on the forefront of crossing the medical threshold to the legal consumption realm with the authorization of production, distribution, and possession of marijuana. In short: As long as the states could handle what lies ahead — by imposing an "appropriately strict regulatory system" — the federal government would defer "its right to challenge their legalization laws at this time."

But that federal yield got stopped at a red light in 2018. Former Attorney General Jeff Sessions gave federal prosecutors the green to decide "how to prioritize enforcement of federal marijuana laws" with his January Marijuana Enforcement Memorandum that rescinded the Cole Memorandum. In a change of course, U.S. attorneys could

now “weigh all relevant considerations, including federal law enforcement priorities set by the Attorney General, the seriousness of the crime, the deterrent effect of criminal prosecution, and the cumulative impact of particular crimes on the community.”

But still, states are writing and carrying out their own respective laws, learning from each other along the way.

In Pennsylvania, marijuana is medically legal but its recreational use remains illegal.

But the march to making medical marijuana legal in Pennsylvania began back in November 2016 when Gov. Tom Wolf signed Act 16, providing access to marijuana in its medicinal form. Less than two years later on Feb. 15, 2018, medical marijuana became available to patients and caregivers through dispensaries, with more than 40 now operational statewide. For a look into how the industry is evolving in the Greater Erie region, check out Rebecca Styn's Erie Reader feature “A Growing Process.”

Three months later, the Pennsylvania Health Department issued revised regulations recommended by the Medical Marijuana Advisory Board, opening up access to medical cannabis flowers while also expanding qualifying conditions, including the use as a substitute therapy for opioid addiction.

Several cities — including Erie — have decriminalized marijuana possession, but offenders found with small amounts of marijuana (30 grams, or 1 ounce) still face punitive measures. But rather than a misdemeanor charge, those found possessing an ounce or less are charged a fine of \$25 and those caught imbibing in public or possessing marijuana paraphernalia face a \$100 fine. For first-time offenders, the offense does not go on a permanent record and they would not face jail time.

For a deeper dive into that — and how things have evolved since Erie City Council approved the measure on Jan. 17, 2018 — take a look at Liz Allen's Erie Reader feature “Is The Grass Greener?” which also covers Lieutenant Governor John Fetterman's statewide, 67-county listening tour to hear how Pennsylvanians feel about legalizing marijuana.

While previously more common to associate the letters T-H-C with marijuana, the trio C-B-D is gaining ground. CBD, or cannabidiol, is similar to THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) in that it is one of more than a hundred cannabinoids

(chemical compounds that act on cannabinoid receptors in cells that alter neurotransmitter release in the brain) found in the cannabis plant (that is: marijuana). It is different in that unlike THC, it does not produce psychoactive effects. That is: CBD won't get you high; THC will.

Also, CBD is found in hemp — also a cannabis plant, like marijuana; but unlike marijuana, hemp lacks enough THC to intoxicate a consumer. This means: CBD procured from hemp is virtually THC-free; CBD from marijuana, however, could contain enough THC to get a consumer somewhat, or entirely, stoned. Because of the total number of chemical components in the plants — more than 400 — it's tough to isolate CBD without a few friends hitching a ride in the processing process.

Unlike THC, CBD has been built into a marketing machine unto itself outside of smoking, vaping, and eating.

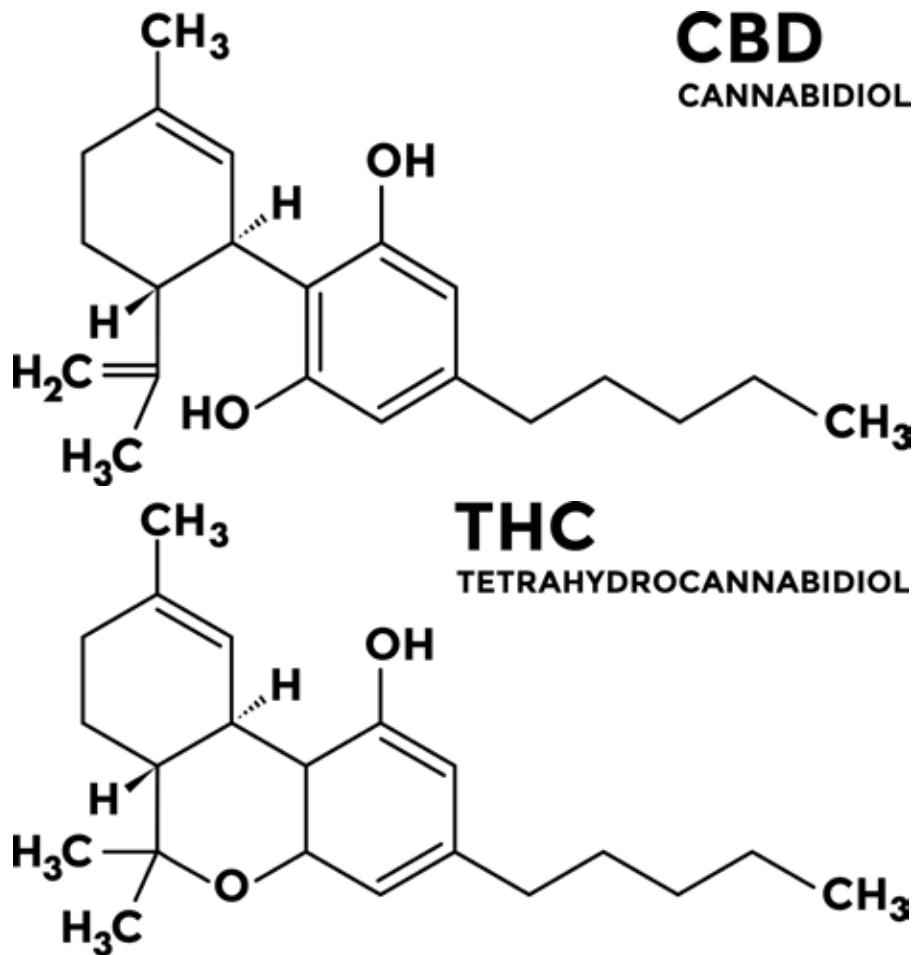
“CBD [is] a compound found popping up in everything from food to beauty products,” quipped CBS News' Gayle King on an April 4 segment titled “CBD Safety.” King went on to note that it's medically being used to treat anxiety, pain, and epilepsy, among other things, adding that the Food and Drug Administration is now looking into the unregulated market.

While the federal government previously had a hands-off approach, as noted earlier, CBD falls under the FDA's umbrella because “it is the active ingredient in an approved prescription drug to treat two rare seizure disorders,” writes Associated Press's Paul Elias. “The agency says CBD can't be added to food or sold as a dietary supplement because officials haven't determined if it's safe or effective for other conditions.”

Which gets back to the sticky area of marijuana: If states have cleared recreational use as legal, CBD can be consumed recreationally, as well as medically. If a state only approves of medical use, CBD can only be used medically. This also explains the states with “CBD/Low THC programs.”

But false medical claims surrounding CBD have stirred the slumbering beast of federal government.

“FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb told Congress last week that enforcement is being limited to sellers who make false health claims,” Elias reports. “He says the agency recently sent warning letters to three companies touting CBD as a treatment for cancer,



Alzheimer's disease, fibromyalgia, and drug addiction.”

The FDA expects to hold a public meeting in May to obtain more information. Until then, the long arm of government is potentially reaching into the CBD-infused latte and wielding a giant eraser for companies touting unproven miracle work of the cannabis-derived chemical.

States — as cautioned by then Dep. Sec. Cole — were being proactive in attempting to regulate CBD usage and the marketing thereof. In California, health officials issued warnings to retailers in the summer of 2018, noting that edible products containing CBD are illegal until regulators have the chance to establish and set guidelines and the San Francisco Health Department warned nearly 2,000 businesses throughout 2018.

While states were working to put the safety of people as priority No. 1, retailers prioritized bottom-lines, betting that consumers would, well, continue consuming based on the trends of the trendy.

What lies ahead? The future, one could make the pun, is cloudy.

Certainly, there'll be more research, both on marijuana's effects as a recreational and medical drug.

CBD (cannabidiol), one of more than 100 cannabinoids derived from the cannabis plant, has recently found itself infused into a vast array of products — everything from beverages to cosmetics. Unlike THC (tetrahydrocannabinol), it doesn't produce a high, although it is said to induce calming effects on the user.

A push to obtain CBD from hemp rather than marijuana so that CBD soaps and cocktails can continue to be a thing? Possibly, but certainly more regulations will follow, whether it's hemp or marijuana-based — from the top down, with states most likely taking their cues from the federal government.

More states moving towards legalizing marijuana? Trends suggest so.

For Pennsylvania — if Erie's a test-bed — the needle seems pointed much more towards legalization. A clear majority of those who attended Fetterman's listening session at the Jefferson Educational Society endorsed legalization.

And where there's a will, there's often a way.

Ben Speggen can be contacted at bSpeggen@ErieReader.com, and you can follow him on Twitter @BenSpeggen.

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Is The Grass Greener?

A brief recap of recent marijuana trends



[left] CBD oil has become a ubiquitous sight in area health stores and around the country. [bottom] Deputy Chief Michael A. Nolan notes that the Erie Police are not “on some crusade to stomp out marijuana use,” explaining that enforcement is a matter of priorities.

By: **Liz Allen**

In the past year, the city of Erie decriminalized possessing or smoking small amounts of marijuana, the first medical marijuana dispensary opened within the city limits, and Pennsylvania Lt. Gov. John Fetterman brought his listening tour to Erie to hear what local residents have to say about legalizing recreational marijuana.

But it remains to be seen if or when the first two developments will influence the third.

State Rep. Robert Merski, D-2nd Dist., who was elected to the state House of Representatives in November, championed decriminalization of marijuana when he served on Erie City Council. Council unanimously approved his proposal on Jan. 17, 2018.

“Much like prohibition in the early 1930s, there are many people using marijuana even though it is illegal. Additionally, enforcement of marijuana laws disproportionately impacts people in minority communities and people in poverty,” Merski said. “Many people are in jail for non-violent crimes involving marijuana possession. This is why I led council to decriminalize marijuana from a misdemeanor to a summary offense,” Merski said.

The change meant that offenders possessing 30 grams or less of marijuana would

receive a summons, akin to a traffic ticket, and assessed a fine, instead of facing criminal charges.

But it may be a while before data is generated and evaluated to measure the impact of the city’s ordinance on the criminal justice system.

Deputy Chief Michael A. Nolan, of the criminal investigation division for the Erie Bureau of Police, said that in 2017, “pre-ordinance,” there were 140 offenders arrested for marijuana possession as a “level-one charge,” according to statistics reported under the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s Uniform Crime Reporting program. A “level-one charge” is where the marijuana crime was determined to be the most serious offense.

The number of marijuana arrests where marijuana was the level-one charge dropped to 106 for 2018, he said.

Someone can still be criminally charged, as opposed to being

cited by summons, for marijuana possession if the person possesses more than a “small amount” of marijuana. As defined in the city ordinance approved on Jan. 17, 2018, a “small amount” is 30 grams or less of marijuana or eight grams or less of hashish. In other words, it can still be a misdemeanor to possess marijuana.

But the bureau does not currently have an effective way to track lower-level offenses because the current record management system is on “life support,” said Nolan. The bureau can’t currently monitor whether someone charged with driving under the influence as a lead charge might also have received a secondary charge of marijuana possession, or whether a marijuana charge might be knocked down to a summary offense when the person arrested appears before a district justice.

Recreational marijuana use is still illegal, but Erie police “are not on some crusade to stomp out marijuana use,” Nolan said. It’s a question of priorities. “One thing we can all agree on. You do not want your police department resources spent on

(arrests for) recreational marijuana use when we have much more important issues we’re working on,” he said. Erie police concentrate on the drug crimes tied to violence, he said.

The city’s new ordinance hasn’t led to people feeling like they are “entitled” to smoke marijuana out in the open, he said. But police have become more proactive in having a presence around schools, before and after classes begin, to discourage kids from smoking marijuana close to school grounds and to cut down on truancy.

Nolan worked in the bureau’s narcotics unit for 15 years before being named to the command staff under Erie Police Chief Dan Spizarny. Nolan has seen trends come and go with illegal drugs. When he began working in narcotics, “crack cocaine was king in Erie,” he said. Then by about mid-2005, it became heroin, with all of its deadly consequences. Now meth has made a resurgence.

Meanwhile, Fetterman has visited 29 out of 67 counties so far on his listening tour about whether Pennsylvania should legalize recreational marijuana.

Fetterman visited the Jefferson Educational Society in Erie on Feb. 16. His next visit in this region will be from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on April 13, in Forest County, at the Tionesta Volunteer Fire Department, 107 Bridge St.

Merski thinks legalization is worth exploring. “We have the infrastructure in place through the Wine & Spirit shops to sell marijuana in a highly regulated manner,” Merski said. “I believe this would cut down on crimes involving black market drug activity and provide much-needed revenue for the state from something people are already doing anyway.”

Merski is hardly alone in that opinion. According to the Franklin & Marshall College Poll released in March, 59 percent of state voters support legalizing marijuana. That’s up from 22 percent of registered voters who supported legalization when the F&M Poll first asked the question in 2006.

Liz Allen had a few college friends who liked to get high but her only guilty pleasure has always been chocolate. You can reach her at lizallenerie@gmail.com.



LIZ ALLEN

Add your voice

Pennsylvania Lt. Gov. John Fetterman continues to tour the state to gather opinions on whether recreational marijuana should be legalized in Pennsylvania. If you did not have the chance to meet with him when Fetterman visited Erie on Feb. 16, you can offer your opinion by visiting <https://www.governor.pa.gov/recreational-marijuana-feedback/>

Did you know?

Does it seem like we are being inundated with ads for products that contain cannabis oil, promising all kinds of miraculous results?

That’s because the federal Farm Bill approved in December removed hemp from the federal controlled substances list and products made with CBD (cannabidiol), extracted from marijuana plants, are now being sold in various forms as a natural remedy to treat pain and improve health. According to Billy Penn, an online news service, more than a dozen hemp-related products were on display at the Pennsylvania Farm Show in January, including raw honey containing a hemp protein.

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NEWS & VIEWS

Dispensary marks first year in Erie



NICK WARREN

On April 16, 2018, RISE Erie, the first local medical marijuana dispensary, held a ribbon-cutting at its office, 2108 W. Eighth St., in preparation for its opening two days later.

We asked Jill Chiccarino Beck, director of community engagement for RISE Erie, to reflect on the first year of operation.

Q. How you size up RISE Erie's impact at the one-year mark?

A. We are thrilled to be part of the Erie community and have been volunteering with organizations like Community Shelter Services throughout the past year. Giving back to the community is very important to us and seeing our patients have success with MMJ (medical marijuana) has been amazing.

Q. How is it helping people who benefit from your products?

A. Some are having fewer seizures, others no longer need to use a cane or walker. We are seeing cancer patients who have an increased appetite and less nausea after chemo. It's different for everyone.

Q. What are the demographics of your clients?

A. We have patients who range in age from four years old to 100 (yes!) years old, from all walks of life.

Q. And is "client" the right word to use to describe customers?

A. We use the term patients, but customer is acceptable, too.

Q. Are there any trends in who is using your products?

A. The 21 approved medical conditions are not trendy, so I'd say no to that. But PTSD is one of the more prevalent conditions we are seeing; cancer and chronic pain as well.

Q. Are there people who are surprised to learn that medical marijuana is a solution for their medical condition?

A. Some are surprised to hear that

RISE Erie, the area's first medical marijuana dispensary, has enjoyed a successful first year. Patients from young as four to as old as 100 have experienced improvement in a host of qualifying medical conditions under Pennsylvania state law.

autism is being treated in PA — with success! Others suffering from, say, endometriosis have been approved under the chronic pain diagnosis. Chronic pain encompasses a multitude of medical conditions.

Q. What lies ahead in terms of expansion — of services, of the number of certified doctors, of products?

A. We are always welcoming certifying physicians into the program, Erie County currently has about 26 doctors able to certify patients for MMJ. The Pennsylvania Department of Health is currently considering adding anxiety and Tourette's Syndrome to the list of medical conditions.

And RISE Erie is looking forward to carrying product from the Erie-based cultivator Calypso this summer.

As the Phase II licensees get up and running, we will see more cultivators and dispensaries come on board. RISE, which operates in Erie, Steelton, Carlisle and York, will be expanding to New Castle, Mechanicsburg, Latrobe and Chads Ford locations. — Liz Allen

Learn more

In Pennsylvania, to buy medical marijuana products for a serious medical condition you must register online, have proof of residency, pay \$50 for a medical marijuana identification card and also be certified by a participating doctor.

To learn more about how to register, visit <https://www.pa.gov/guides/pennsylvania-medical-marijuana-program/>.

A Growing Process

Calypso first to cultivate medical cannabis in Erie County



Erie businessman Samuel "Pat" Black III is no stranger to the alternative solutions entrepreneurial ecosystem, having founded biodiesel production company Hero BX before being approved for Erie County's first medical marijuana grower/processor permit, under the name Calypso Enterprises, LLC.

Department, Barber National Institute, Greater Erie Alliance for Equality, Multicultural Community Resource Center, and job fairs at the local community centers, among others.

"Anybody can grow good weed," Guncheon jokingly adds. "What sets Calypso apart from its competitors is not only the quality of the product but the commitment to the community. Corporate social responsibility — the whole foods mentality — allows customers to know that the company is patient-focused, not profit focused."

In addition, once fully operational, Calypso will donate 10 percent of net profits to established charitable organizations and events. The group aims to launch the venture in June. At this time, construction is being completed and the backbone of their operations is being created.

Guncheon cautions, however, "This is a highly regulated environment, as it's still federally illegal. There are a number of gray areas surrounding the industry itself — and interviews, photos and the like will be nearly impossible. We have to dance around things that other industries don't have to worry about. We can't put up pictures of our products on mainstream media and promote any images of the facility — and although we are not considered pharmaceutical, we fall under the same advertising regulations of the pharmaceutical industry."

There are also a number of outside challenges in the industry as a whole. "Most of what we need is still being created. Essentially, the industry has evolved from basement growers to a highly regulated, commercialized industry." This frustration has led the team to create most of what they have done on their own. "We went to Colorado and designed a fully engineered process for Erie. When you look to the experts, other than 'scratch the surface' guidance, most are still figuring it out. It also has a long way to go to be on par

By: **Rebecca Styn**

The medical marijuana industry is budding (pun intended). Since 1996 it has been legalized in 33 states, with California serving as the earliest adopter via the passage of the Compassionate Use Act on November 5 of that year (legalizing medical marijuana).

Governor Wolf signed off on legalization for Pennsylvania on April 6, 2016, and on February 15, 2018 medical marijuana became available for patients at dispensaries across the commonwealth. Fast forward only a few months later — in August 2018, Calypso Enterprises LLC became the first applicant from Erie County to receive a grower/processor permit from the State.

Led by Erie businessman Samuel "Pat" Black III, Calypso encompasses cultivation through final product packaging under one roof (seven acres situated between East Lake Road and East 10th Street). The group will serve as a wholesaler and companies like Rise Erie will be the retailer.

Black is no stranger to the alternative solutions entrepreneurial ecosystem. He also founded and leads Hero BX, the largest biodiesel production facility east of the Mississippi and one of the top twelve in the nation. At full operation, Hero will own four production facilities throughout the United States that boast a capacity of close to 100 million gallons annually.

I sat down with Laura Guncheon, vice president of project management at Erie Management Group, LLC to talk about the industry. She was originally brought on board to oversee this proj-

ect and has been intimately involved in Calypso's application, growth, and expansion since 2016.

"Calypso was designed as part of an effort to not only provide an imperative healthcare solution but in the spirit of Black's entrepreneurial mindset, to create jobs for the community," explains Guncheon. "It will take upwards of 70 people at full production capacity to make this all happen while providing competitive, family-sustaining wages to our employees."

Calypso also maintains an "Erie-first" mentality, looking first to the Erie community for employees, vendors, goods, and services before sourcing elsewhere.

"We source from Erie first — whether it's vendors, suppliers, service providers, or employees — we work to find resources from our community," says Guncheon. And to date, they have been very successful. "Every company and laborer at the construction site is Erie-based, our subcontractors, the majority of vendors, and 99 percent of our management team."

That other one percent is a member of the team that has medical marijuana industry experience elsewhere in the commonwealth — with a competitor. "This is essential, because it's a brand new industry, most employees will bring transferable but not specific cannabis skills and it's beneficial to have part of the team with some direct experience."

They also are actively working to raise awareness and identify diverse candidates in the community. Although the list is not exhaustive, some of the companies they have worked with to date include: Erie County Veterans Affairs

with what is expected in a commercialized manufacturing process."

But she loves the work. "It's a really cool industry and the snowball effect is real. It moves at what we call dog year speed — it is rapidly changing every single day. This is a great place to be as we continue to create proprietary technology that we can replicate in the future as we grow and expand."

As for what Calypso wants to be when they grow up? "We hope to become a multi-state operation. Under the umbrella of EMG, we have also seen the biodiesel growth which has become successful in the flagship location and expanded. We want to do the same with Calypso. And in a way that we don't lose sight of the important values — one that empowers employees and doesn't highlight profit over people."

While there is always opposition when it comes to a polarizing issue such as this, the benefits speak for themselves. Medical marijuana has been shown to ease the pain of multiple sclerosis, and nerve pain in general. In an area where few other options exist, and those that do are highly sedating, patients claim that medical marijuana allows them to resume their daily activities without feeling completely out of it. It has been used in the treatment of Parkinson's disease, fibromyalgia, endometriosis, and most other chronic pain conditions. Recent research has also indicated great promise in its use for PTSD in veterans who are returning from combat zones. Attitudes have also fundamentally shifted. In 2018, nearly 66 percent of Americans supported legalization.

And as the industry grows, Guncheon is looking forward to the ever-changing landscape. "We know what we said we would do — and we said we would get where we need to be. This is no different than starting any other organization, but we get to create our own roadmap."

Rebecca Styn is the Executive Director of the Idea Fund Erie, a nonprofit organization that supports entrepreneurial development and is the proprietor of Room 33 Speakeasy. She is also completing her Ph.D. in Leadership and Organizational Learning from Gannon University. Follow her on twitter at @rstyn

NEWS & VIEWS

Celestial Spaces

Interglasstic Studios celebrates their 10 year anniversary



Matt Ebach works the counter at Interglasstic Studios, a glass arts shop on the Hill also known for its inventory of cannabis accessories and CBD-derived products.

Bay Green Relief, products in their shop. This includes yummy CBD soaps, CBD lotions, isolates, and delicious teas. My current favorites are the Misery Bay

Relief chamomile peppermint tea and orange patchouli handmade soap.

Although the industry of cannabis has been secretive and off-limits from the perception of the general public, Interglasstic Studio generates business and boosts Erie's economy, just like any other store on the Hill. They respond to the market and put their customers' needs first. Staszewski even went toe-to-toe with me personally when I talked to him about not carrying any femme-appealing pipes. Wouldn't you know, the next week he called me to let me know they now had purple and pink pipes in stock as well as some gorgeous crystalized Bismuth pipes made by Bash Glass in their featured display case.

Cacchione and Staszewski not only care about their customers they also truly care about the community that they are in. Interglasstic Studios is always looking for ways to give back to Erie in unconventional ways that maybe other shops cannot. Whether it's displaying artwork for local artists, hosting local musicians or DJs, bringing coffee and donations to the UE strikers, having conversations about de-stigmatizing marijuana, or understanding and accepting the medical benefits of marijuana, they are always looking out.

So, although the cannabis industry has had years of verboten stigma associated with it, perhaps it's time to question our "inside the box" thinking and look for guidance from those who have been on board with this concept for a decade.

Interglasstic Studios is located at 2402 Peach St. and is open from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and from noon to 6 p.m. on Sunday.

By: Alayna Gallagher

With April 20th fast approaching and the recent visit from Lieutenant Governor Fetterman fresh in everyone's mind, marijuana is all the buzz around Erie. Since Representative Merski's legislation decriminalizing marijuana passed City Council in January of 2018, Erie's acceptance of marijuana has broadened. Looking at how the economies in cities such as Denver have boomed with the legalization of marijuana, you can bet it's only a matter of time before the local self-proclaimed economic experts start weighing on how this industry will save Erie. There are, however, folks who have been on the marijuana industry train long before decriminalization laws and medical marijuana prescriptions.

Interglasstic Studios is Erie's oldest head shop, located at 2402 Peach Street on Federal Hill. Owner Zach Cacchione is celebrating 10 years of business this year after what some would call a journey of "trials and tribulations" working in a "taboo" market. After a break-in/robbery and a move to the end of the block, shop manager Jared Staszewski reinforces that he is confident about the future of the studio. Shop dogs Rufio and Huckleberry declined to comment but wagged tails in agreement. As soon as one goes past the bright blue storefront, guests are greeted by hundreds of colorful glass pieces.

Additionally, Interglasstic Studios carries a variety of other items for one's CBD and marijuana needs, including vape pens and cartridges, to Smokebuddies, and rolling papers, CBD isolate, and water bong. Cacchione even recently started carrying my personal favorite locally-owned brand, Misery

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Beer Bellies, Kitties, and Valentines

Queer comic artist Ed Luce to speak at Penn State Behrend's Gender Conference



Ed Luce, the artist behind the *Wuvable Oaf* comic series will appear at Penn State Behrend's Annual Gender Conference on April 18.

very grassroots project. Can you give us a quick timeline of the comic's journey from self-publishing to Fantagraphics?

Ed Luce: In 2006, I was asked to contribute a few drawings to a paper doll themed art exhibition at The Trunk Space, a Phoenix-based art venue. One of the designs I came up with was this big, ugly, scary-looking guy, covered in hair and baring pink teeth. Someone you'd probably cross the street to avoid. But all his tab-on outfits and accessories were cute and cuddly ... like footsie pajamas, a sweatsuit covered in black kittens, a Smiths shirt, a *Chipmunk Punk* record. These

revealed the brute's softer side, so it seemed natural to title the drawing "The Wuvable Oaf." And so the original character was born. A few friends asked me who this guy was, where did he come from? I'd just moved to San Francisco and was starting to get back into comics again, so a sequential narrative seemed the best format to tell his backstory.

I'd been into comics on and off since I was a kid, but never attempted to draw something this complex. Having an undergraduate degree in illustration, I had the skill set, in theory. So it was just a matter of hunkering down and figuring out what type of story I wanted to tell. Ultimately, a sort of meandering, strange romantic comedy formed. The learning curve was steep at first but after several months of hard work, I was able to release back-to-back issues (*Wuvable Oaf* #0 and #1), followed up by some aggressive touring from San Diego up to Seattle.

In addition to those longer format, sequentially-numbered books, I started to release batches of shorter handmade mini-comics and zines. Most were printed on an 11" x 17" inkjet printer on my desktop. I was always trying to debut new titles at every upcoming show, which really drove my production schedule and allowed me to save more money — which I put back into travel. I was also

doing a lot of merchandising with the character, printing runs of t-shirts and posters, releasing 7" vinyl singles (based on the band in the book, with music by members of bands Limp Wrist and Needles), among many other novelties. After a handful of years really pounding the convention scene, a few publishers took interest and asked me to submit pitches for a collected edition. I'd been a fan of Fantagraphics since I was 15, so when they stepped up to the plate, it was an easy decision to go with them.

ER: Over the decade-plus since your comic began, have you seen any changes regarding the visibility, quality, or nature of LGBTQIA+ comics? How has the field changed since you got started?

EL: When I started out in 2008, there had already been decades of amazing lesbian and gay comic work coming out from Alison Bechdel, Howard Cruse, Trina Robbins, Jennifer Camper, and Roberta Gregory. I consider myself to be part of the latter generation of cartoonists who have been heavily influenced by the fearlessness with which they told their stories. At that time, the genre definitely seemed to be booming, along with the broader popularity of the comics medium in general.

But there weren't as many comics about transgender, non-binary, gender queer, asexual, or bisexual characters and experiences. Thankfully, in the last five or so years, there's been an explosion of younger creators exploring this territory. Representation has never been better for all of these groups ... it feels like there's something out there for everyone. And if there isn't, someone comes along quickly and forges a new path.

And I think there's no better antidote to this currently toxic political environment. When someone reads a very personal queer story, they get to laugh, love and cry along with the creator. It makes it much more difficult to dehumanize them. We start to see the things we have in common...that we're not all that different where it counts. Comics can win hearts and minds, particularly those of young people, so they're a vital tool in combating both homophobia and transphobia.

Also, special shout-out to Maia Kobabe's upcoming new graphic novel *Gender Queer: A Memoir*. I think this book is going to make quite a splash in

the LGBTQIA community ... and well beyond.

ER: *Wuvable Oaf* is, among other things, a celebration of body hair and love handles. How do you see the project in conjunction with the various body-positivity movements that are currently emerging?

EL: For a long time I was always asked to be on the queer comics panels at conventions. Almost to the exclusion of all other topics. But over the last five years, I've been invited to take part in body image/positivity panels with increasing frequency. I think people see the Oaf's physique, how he bucks long-standing stereotypes about queer male bodies, and they immediately understand how celebratory the imagery is. It's meant to be in-your-face and unapologetic ... and folks gravitate toward his sexiness and confidence, regardless of their gender identity or sexuality. If they happen to look like him, they feel empowered. And if they're attracted to him, they can wear a shirt with his likeness and flag their interest to others.

ER: As a graduate of SUNY Fredonia, to what degree do you see your work as influenced by Western New York?

EL: I definitely absorbed a lot of the blue collar, rural vibes of Western New York during my time there. A lot of men in these areas look like the Oaf. They're a little more on the rough-hewn side of things, in looks and attitude. And un-self-consciously so. I kind of became a student of ultra-masculine forms of gender performance and you can see that in the way I shape and adorn my characters' bodies.

Sure, it's sexy ... but it can also be kind of scary, even threatening. That's why the cats are so important in the comic ... they're my way of undercutting the hyper-masculine aspects of the main characters. I really enjoy playing the kitties off the Oaf in particular, showing just how eager to please them he is, putting him in awkward situations where we find out who's really in charge and getting some laughs in the process.

A Conversation with Queer Comic Artist Ed Luce will be held on April 18 at Penn State Behrend's Reed Union Building (Room 114), starting at 12:05 p.m.

Dan Schank can be reached at dschank@eriereader.com

THURSDAY, APR. 18

By: Dan Schank

For the past decade, artist Ed Luce's comic series *Wuvable Oaf* has explored San Francisco's art scene — and the heavy-set, hirsute gay men that populate it — with great affection. Though he may resemble a bouncer at a dive bar, the giant, goateed "Oaf" at the center of the story is a sweetie at heart. The comic is ostensibly about his conflicted search for love, but it's also an excuse for Luce to catalog his many obsessions — kittens, donuts, body hair, and '80s new wave records, to name a few.

Wuvable Oaf began as a decidedly grassroots labor-of-love, but in 2015 its first five years were anthologized by Fantagraphics Books. Soon after, the compilation was praised as one of the year's best comics by *Slate*, *Vulture*, and *Mental Floss*. A follow-up anthology, 2016's *Wuvable Oaf: Blood and Metal*, won the 2017 Lambda Literary Award for Best LGBT Graphic Novel.

We chatted with Luce in anticipation of his upcoming talk on April 18 at Penn State Behrend's annual Gender Conference, which is free and open to the public.

Erie Reader: *Wuvable Oaf* began as a

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Join Jay Mohr in His Triumphant Return to Jr.'s Last Laugh



Jay Mohr, a prolific author, comedian, and radio host, visits Jr.'s Last Laugh for a three-night stand.

Mohr Sports. Mohr also hosts a podcast titled *Mohr Stories*, originally a part of Kevin Smith's Smodcast Network and now a part of Mohr's own Fake Mustache Studios. But it all comes back to stand-up, where Mohr often delivers an array of dazzling, spot-on

celebrity impressions, which notably include Eddie Vedder, Bruce Springsteen, Droopy Dog, Tracy Morgan, and Al Pacino amongst others. Comedy fans are quick to note that Mohr never delivers the same show twice, a trait that likely contributed to him being named one of Comedy Central's Top 100 Greatest Stand-Up Comics of All-Time. A recognizable, audience-friendly professional with a resume that runs the gamut, Jay Mohr's return to Jr.'s Last Laugh is bound to be one of the best comedy performances of the season. — Aaron Mook

7 p.m. (Thursday), 6:45 p.m. & 9:30 p.m. (Friday & Saturday) // 1402 State Street // \$25 (Thursday), \$30 (Friday & Saturday) // jrslastlaugh.com

THURSDAY, APR. 11 - 13

Jay Mohr is no stranger to Erie. A local favorite, the comedian has been performing stand-up for over 30 years. Fans have witnessed his career blossom, from a coveted position at *Saturday Night Live* in the early '90s to a supporting role in 1996's *Jerry Maguire* and a starting role in 1997's *Picture Perfect*. The performer has guest starred in over 50 television series, best noted for his roles as Professor Rick Payne on *Ghost Whisperer*, the titular Gary Brooks on *Gary Unmarried*, and most recently, a spot on *Law and Order: Criminal Intent*.

Mohr is also a storied author and radio host, having contributed frequently to *The Jim Rome Show* before eventually transitioning to his own series, *Jay*

LGBTQ+ Activist Ryan Cassata at E3 Youth Summit



DAVID YERBY

subsequent support now from both his parents and his brothers — has seemingly given Cassata the hope necessary to continue the fight for trans people to be accepted as what they are: people, as worthy and as deserving of the same rights as cisgendered humans.

That Cassata can relay this message of hope, visibility, and equality through music makes him a perfect ambassador for young people, and this extraordinary 25-year-old will be coming to Strong Vincent Middle School as part of E3 Youth Summit, presented by the Greater Erie Alliance for Equality (GEAE). Geared specifically toward young people ages 12 through 21, as well as their families, this three-hour show will feature original song and speech, both of which are aimed to empower LGBTQ+ youth and wipe out the ignorance and hate which has permeated our cultural landscape for too long, and which claims too many young lives each year.

Despite Cassata's impressive resume — he has additionally been recognized by *Rolling Stone* and the *New York Times* — this show is free, and interested parties need only register via the website below in order to attend. — Cara Suppa

FRIDAY, APR. 12

Ryan Cassata was only 14 when he came out to his father as trans. In an interview with *Billboard*, Cassata recounted how he was sitting at a diner, and when he revealed his truth, he had to actually explain what "trans" meant. Although his dad seemed accepting at first, after a few weeks his attitude shifted for the worse, and the two entered into a years-long cooling of their relationship, speaking few words to one another, and those strained and painful for both.

As often happens where there is love and respect, however, Cassata and his father were able to reconnect, and that renewal of their relationship — and the

6 p.m. to 9 p.m. // 1330 West 8th Street // Free (registration required) // greatereriealliance.com

MUSIC

Dave VanAmburg & Friends

Apr. 10, 12, 24 — 6 to 9 p.m.
Bel-Aire Clarion, 2800 W. 8th St. belaireclarion.com.

Scott Meier

Apr. 10 — 8 p.m.
Walker Recital Hall, 501 E. 38th St. miac.mercyhurst.edu.

Rhythms of Life: Honeysuckle

Apr. 11 — noon
Reed Union Building at Penn St. Behrend, 4701 College Dr. behrend.psu.edu.

MVP

Apr. 11, 18 — 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.
Dickey's BBQ Pit, 3716 Liberty St. facebook.com.

Live from Studio Q: The Erie Philharmonic

Apr. 12 — noon to 1 p.m.
WQLN Studios, 8425 Peach St. eriephil.org.

Monica Lewis Acoustic

Apr. 12 — 6 to 9 p.m.
Mound Grove Golf Course, 10760 Donation Rd., Waterford, PA 16441 moundgrove.com.

The Groove

Apr. 12 — 6 to 10 p.m.
BIGBAR, 14 E. 10th St. bigbar.net.

Carnage Across America Tour feat. The Browning

Apr. 12 — 6 to 11 p.m.
Electronic metal band from Kansas City hits Erie on way up north during Carnage Across America tour.
Basement Transmissions, 145 W. 11th St. facebook.com.

Bluzification w Rodger Montgomery

Apr. 12 — 7 to 10 p.m.
Meadville blues band is back in Erie for speakeasy show titled "Bluzification."
Room 33, 1033 State St. facebook.com.

Tom Johnson

Apr. 12 — 7 to 10 p.m.
The Cork 1794, 900 W. Erie Plaza Dr. cork1794.com.

Open Mic

Apr. 12, 19 — 7 to 11 p.m.
Topsy Bean, 2425 Peach St. tipsybean.cafe.

Dynohunter + Cold Lazarus

Apr. 12 — 9 p.m.

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

Penny Racer, The Trotts, Diesel Houdini

Apr. 12 — 10 p.m.
Scotty's Martini Lounge, 301 German St. facebook.com.

JB Hobgood

Apr. 13 — 2 to 4 p.m.
Featuring Bob Seaman on bass and vocals with Jerry Bartone on keyboards, JB Hobgood plays a blend of classic rock, blues, jazz, and more.
Artlore Studio, 3406 W. Lake Rd. facebook.com.

New Wave Nation

Apr. 13 — 6 to 10 p.m.
BIGBAR, 14 E. 10th St. bigbar.net.

Kelsea Ballerini

Apr. 13 — 7 p.m.
Erie Insurance Arena, 809 French St. erieinsurancearena.com.

Sharon Liu

Apr. 13 — 7 to 11 p.m.
The Cork 1794, 900 W. Erie Plaza Dr. cork1794.com.

Brahms Requiem

Apr. 13 — 8 p.m.

Warner Theatre, 811 State St. eriephil.org.

SIRSY, Six Year Stretch

Apr. 13 — 8 to 11 p.m.
Upstate New York pop-rock duo take Erie stage with local alternative band comprised of three brothers known as Six Year Stretch.
Bourbon Barrel, 1213 State St. facebook.com.

Single Barrel

Apr. 13 — 8 p.m. to midnight
Mound Grove Golf Course, 10760 Donation Rd., Waterford, PA 16441 moundgrove.com.

Sophistafunk '90s Hip-Hop Tribute

Apr. 13 — 9 p.m.
Syracuse funk and hip-hop group pay tribute to '90s hip-hop with sets of group originals and classic '90s tracks.
Kings Rook Club, 1921 Peach St. facebook.com.

Inco Flido, It Kicks, Dave from City Escape Artist

Apr. 13 — 9 p.m. to 1 a.m.
Scotty's Martini Lounge, 301 German St. facebook.com.

Roof Top Project

Apr. 14 — 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
The Cork 1794, 900 W. Erie Plaza Dr. cork1794.com.

Hultman Jazz Trio

Apr. 14 — 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
The Skunk & Goat Tavern, 17 W. Main St., North East, PA 16428 skunkandgoattavern.com.

The High Life

Apr. 14 — 1 to 4 p.m.
Arundel Cellars & Brewing, 11727 E. Main St., North East, PA 16428 arundelcellars.com.

Behrend Choirs Spring Concert

Apr. 14 — 4 p.m.
Reed Union Building at Penn St. Behrend, 4701 College Dr. behrend.psu.edu.

The Drifters, Cornell Gunter's Coasters, & The Platters

Apr. 14 — 4 p.m.
Warner Theatre, 811 State St. eriewarnertheatre.com.

Rose Gold, Forest Green, Charmer, with Red Creek

Apr. 14 — 7:30 to 11 p.m.
Witness a spread of indie music genres as created by colorful bands from Oklahoma, Michigan and Erie.

The Ballet Haus, 1020 Holland St. facebook.com.

Showtune Singers Night

Apr. 16 — 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.
Dickey's BBQ Pit, 3716 Liberty St. facebook.com.

Behrend Concert Band

Apr. 16 — 8 p.m.
Reed Union Building at Penn St. Behrend, 4701 College Dr. behrend.psu.edu.

Matty B & 57 Pickup

Apr. 17 — 6 to 9 p.m.
Bel-Aire Clarion, 2800 W. 8th St. belaireclarion.com.

Open Mic w Chris Ehrich

Apr. 17 — 10 p.m.
Scotty's Martini Lounge, 301 German St. facebook.com.

The High Life

Apr. 18 — 6 to 9 p.m.
The Skunk & Goat Tavern, 17 W. Main St., North East, PA 16428 skunkandgoattavern.com.

Bootleggers Bible Club

Apr. 19 — 6 to 9 p.m.
Bel-Aire Clarion, 2800 W. 8th St. belaireclarion.com.

Jessie & Katie

Apr. 19 — 6 to 9 p.m.
Mound Grove Golf Course,

Focus on Self Care During Erie's 4th Wellness Night



BENSTUDIOPRO

FRIDAY, APR. 12

We are more concerned than ever with what we put into our bodies, onto our bodies, and how we take care of ourselves. And we can all use a reset before the summer hits, right? To help with all things #selfcare and learn a wealth of information about holistic health, be sure to participate in Erie's 4th Wellness Night — think Gallery Night but with a focus on wellness — on April 12 from 6 to 9 p.m. where local establishments will show

how they can take care of you.

Take a deep breath and feel a little more relaxed at Aki's Salt Room — 2616 8th Street — by taking a free 10-minute mini-salt room session to experience the healing benefits of natural Himalayan salt. Next, head over to Chicory Hill Herbs at 2516½ Peach Street to learn about the benefits of gemstones and receive a mini massage and Reiki session.

Spend some time at Erie Oriental Medicine at 2131 East 8th St. Suite A, where Jeffrey Kinnear and team will be discussing the benefits of Eastern therapies including super-yoga breathing exercises and electro-meridian image testing. Generally, Erie Oriental Medicine offers traditional acupuncture, Chinese herbalism, cupping, Gua Sha, and other healing therapies. Come and bring all your questions.

Want to stretch out? Never been to yoga before? Yoga By Bridget at 4117 West Ridge Road will be providing introductions to the practice and her studio. Naturally, beginners are welcome.

If you really need to chill out, stop by Lake Effect Cryotherapy at 3545 West 12th Street. Cryotherapy is an alternative health treatment that harnesses the power of

freezing temperatures to awaken the body's own natural healing mechanisms; some experience pain relief, rejuvenation, and restoration.

Other experiences include Energy Healing at The Village of Healing and Wellness, 2558 West 8th Street, healthy treats and snacks at The Juice Jar in West Erie Plaza, and demonstrations and information at the Pro-Active Family Chiropractic Center at 3823 West 12th Street Suite A.

Swedish, Shiatsu, and Thai massage will be on offer at Serenity by Sylvie, a wellness facility where Sylvie provides medical massage therapy services, and Gwen Kerr, homeopathy practitioner and Reiki master is offering services like cupping, moxa, hot stones, lymphatic drainage, and Reiki.

For full details, head over to the event Facebook page, and prepare to learn better ways to take care of your mind, body, soul, (and appetite!) from a wide range of Erie-based holistic professionals. Namaste. — Miriam Lamey

6 p.m. to 9 p.m. // various locations // eriewellnessnetwork.com

10760 Donation Rd., Waterford, PA 16441 moundgrove.com.

The Mixx

Apr. 19 — 6 to 10 p.m.
BIGBAR, 14 E. 10th St. bigbar.net.

Nicholas Nasibyan

Apr. 19 — 7 to 10 p.m.
The Cork 1794, 900 W. Erie Plaza Dr. cork1794.com.

The Cat's Meow

Apr. 19 — 10 p.m.
Kings Rook Club, 1921 Peach St. facebook.com.

This American Song, Fred Oakman & The Flood

Apr. 19 — 10 p.m.
Scotty's Martini Lounge, 301 German St. facebook.com.

Kids' Ukulele Workshop

Apr. 20 — 1 to 3 p.m.
World of Music, 1355 W. 26th St. worldofmusicerie.com.

NEAR Smoke Signals 2019

Apr. 20 — 5:30 to 11 p.m.
Focusing on independent and underground music and art, N.E.A.R (New Era Artists Revolution) hosts show packed with local talent.
Basement Transmissions, 145 W. 11th St. facebook.com.

Whiskey Road

Apr. 20 — 6 to 10 p.m.
BIGBAR, 14 E. 10th St. bigbar.net.

April Coffee House

Apr. 20 — 7 to 9 p.m.
The Little Church on the Hill, 10410 High St., Albion, PA 16401 sites.google.com.

Northern Accents

Apr. 20 — 9 p.m. to 1 a.m.
Mound Grove Golf Course, 10760 Donation Rd., Waterford,

PA 16441 facebook.com.

Mike Sopko & Joe Tomino, Ish, Ice Cream Socialists

Apr. 20 — 10 p.m.
Scotty's Martini Lounge, 301 German St. facebook.com.

Eric Brewer & Friends: Grateful Dead Tribute

Apr. 20 — 10 p.m.
Kings Rook Club, 1921 Peach St. facebook.com.

Strawberry Girls

Apr. 21 — 7:30 to 11 p.m.
The Ballet Haus, 1020 Holland St. facebook.com.

Ukulele Workshop

Apr. 23 — 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.
Dickey's BBQ Pit, 3716 Liberty St. facebook.com.

Jazz Ensemble Spring Concert

Apr. 23 — 8 p.m.
Reed Union Building at Penn St. Behrend, 4701 College Dr. behrend.psu.edu.

DANCE

BOUNCE! A Multi-genre Electronic Music Journey

Apr. 13
Resolution Night Club, 26 N. Park Row resolutionnightclub.com.

FOOD & DRINK

Food Truck Basics

Apr. 11 — noon to 1 p.m.
Blasco Memorial Library, 160 E. Front St. events.erieliibrary.org.

Breakfast for Dinner

Apr. 11 — 6 p.m.

Whole Foods Co-Op, 1341 W. 26th St. wferie.coop.

Wine & Cheese Weekend

Apr. 12, 13, 14
Various locations la-keerie.winecountry.org.

Fish & Pierogi Dinner

Apr. 12 — 4 to 7 p.m.
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel School, 1531 E. Grandview Blvd. 814-825-7313

Zero Waste Picnic

Apr. 13 — 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Asbury Woods Nature Center, 4105 Asbury Rd. registrationdesk.asburywoods.org.

Pancake Breakfast

Apr. 14 — 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Asbury Barn, 4106 Asbury Rd. 814-504-6971

Yoga and Cocktails w Kelly

Apr. 14 — 4:30 p.m.
Tippy Bean, 2425 Peach St. tippybean.cafe.

Herb Garden Planting Workshop

Apr. 15 — 6 p.m.
Erie Ale Works, 416 W. 12th St. eriealeworks.com.

Healthy Dog Treats

Apr. 18 — 5:30 p.m.
Whole Foods Co-Op, 1341 W. 26th St. wferie.coop.

Alkeme Children's Tea

Apr. 20 — 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Alkeme, 18 N. Park Row alkemecafe.com.

Easter Brunch

Apr. 21 — 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
After family brunch, enjoy a cash bar while the kids fill their Easter baskets during complimentary egg hunt.

Bolero, 16 W. 10th St. facebook.com.

Mind, Body, Beer

Apr. 23 — 7:30 p.m.
Erie Ale Works, 416 W. 12th St. eriealeworks.com.

MOVIES

If Beale Street Could Talk

Apr. 10 — 6 p.m.
Based on the 1974 American novel, this Academy Award-nominated film for best supporting actress, best screenplay, and best score premieres at Bourbon Barrel.
Bourbon Barrel, 1213 State St. filmsocietynwpa.org.

Gridshock

Apr. 11 — 5 p.m.
Yehi Ballroom at Gannon Univ., 109 University Sq. facebook.com.

Hunchback of the Morgue (1973)

Apr. 12 — 8 p.m.
Erie Movie House, 3424 W. Lake Rd. facebook.com.

Cold War

Apr. 17 — 6 p.m.
Bourbon Barrel, 1213 State St. filmsocietynwpa.org.

Street Scene (1931)

Apr. 18 — 8 p.m.
Erie Movie House, 3424 W. Lake Rd. facebook.com.

Street Trash (1987)

Apr. 20 — 8 p.m.
Erie Movie House, 3424 W. Lake Rd. facebook.com.

Volcanoes: The Fires of Creation

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

Amazon Adventure

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

Backyard Wilderness

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

VISUAL ARTS

Discover Your Inner Artist: Drawing Spring Flowers

Apr. 11 — 7 to 9 p.m.
Inner-City Neighborhood Art House, 201 E. 10th St. neighborhoodarthouse.org.

Jane Davis: Recent Paintings

Opening Apr. 12; ongoing through May 14 thereafter
Glass Growers Gallery, 10 E. 5th St. glassgrowersgallery.com.

Hands-On: Stieglitz Photographs

Apr. 12 — 6 to 7 p.m.
Historical American photographer Alfred Stieglitz has work on display across the country in San Francisco, LA, NYC, and Erie, which is home to more than 30 pieces. Erie Art Museum is giving art lovers a chance to view and touch these at one-night event.
Erie Art Museum, 20 E. 5th St. erieartmuseum.org.

Spring Landscape Acrylic

Apr. 12 — 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.
Asbury Woods Nature Center, 4105 Asbury Rd. registrationdesk.asburywoods.org.

Diane Grguras & Ryan Burke

Opening Apr. 13, ongoing through May 15 thereafter
Artists' reception Apr. 21 from 6 to 9 p.m.
Glass Growers Gallery, 10 E. 5th St. glassgrowersgallery.com.

All Day Art Sale

Apr. 13 — 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Erie Art Museum, 20 E. 5th St. erieartmuseum.org.

Advanced Studio Popup

Apr. 16, 17
Opening reception Apr. 16 from 7 to 9 p.m.
Allegheny Art Gallery, 520 N. Main St. Meadville, PA 16335 sites.allegheny.edu.

Spring Canvas Classes

Apr. 17, 19, 24 — 6 to 8 p.m.
Claytopia, 924 W. Plaza Dr. claytopiaerie.com.

Animals Are Artists

Apr. 19, 20 — 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
View and purchase art made by Erie's favorite furry friends and critters at this 2-day event.
Erie Zoo, 423 W. 38th St. eriezoo.org.

Erie Lore at Artlore

Apr. 19 — 7 to 10 p.m.
This will be the first in a series of show to celebrate Erie's history, city, people, and culture via locally made visual art.
Artlore Studio, 3406 W. Lake Rd. facebook.com.

Natural Impressions Student Art Competition

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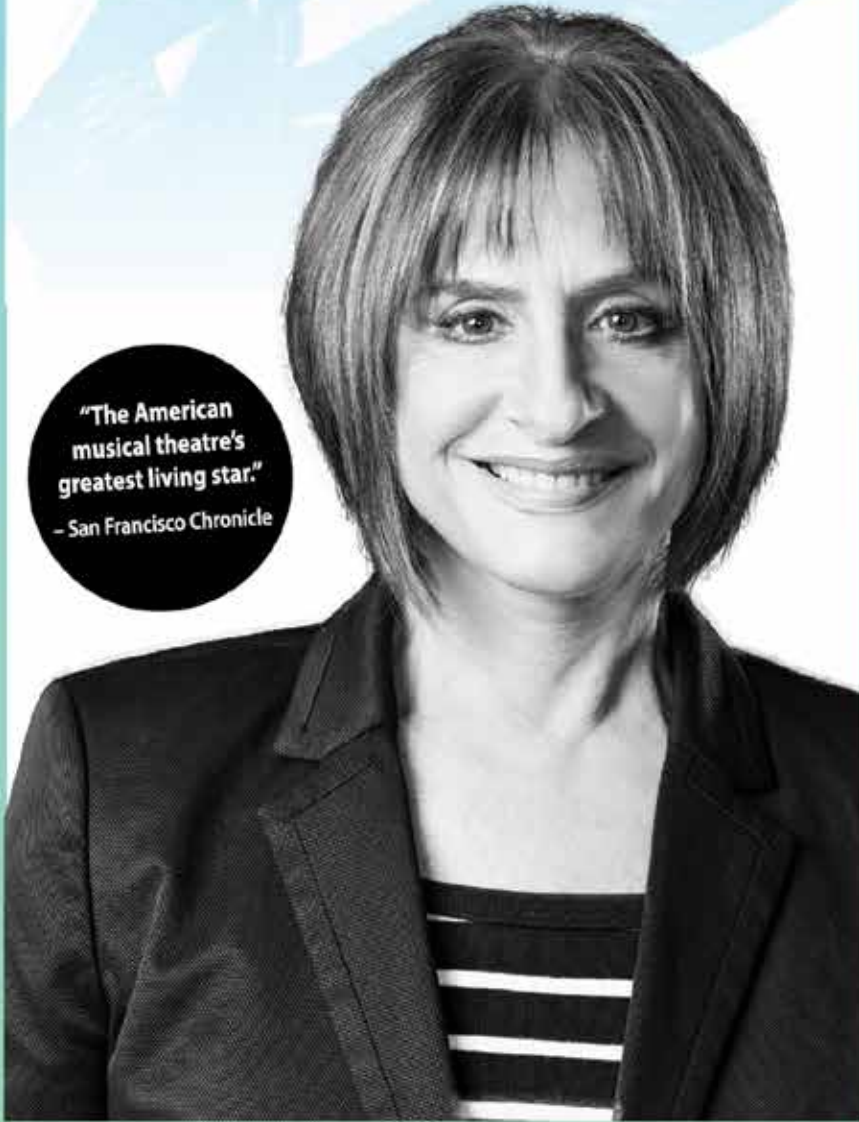
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miac.mercyhurst.edu or 824-3000

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Adults \$28.95 • Kids (6-12) \$13.99

5 & Under Eat Free with a paid Adult Buffet

Complimentary Kids Easter Egg Hunts* at 12:30pm and 2pm

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FREE Public Performances Saturday, April 13

10:00 am • 12:00 pm • 2:00 pm



Erie Playhouse | 13 West 10th Street

SEAT RESERVATIONS RECOMMENDED.
Call the box office at (814)454-2852 ext. 0 to reserve your seats for one of the performances.

* as part of our "Parent and Me" program, we will offer a fun follow-up activity after the show for those who register with the box office!

Kelsea Ballerini at Erie Insurance Arena

Country star *Unapologetically* tours



SARAH BARLOW

Country star Kelsea Ballerini has experienced her share of ups and downs over the past few years, fueling her recent album *Unapologetically* and the ensuing tour, which stops by Erie Insurance Arena on April 13.

ics she could cover since the release of *The First Time*, which gave her three No. 1 hits on the “Billboard” magazine Country Airplay chart — “Love Me Like You Mean It,” “Dibs” and “Peter Pan,” while a fourth single, “Yeah Boy,” went top 3 at Country Airplay.

But while Ballerini’s career was getting off to a terrific start, things weren’t going as well on a personal level for the now-25-year-old native of Knoxville, Tennessee. As the hits were coming, Ballerini was seeing things go sour with a boyfriend. The difficult breakup that resulted provides the starting point for the *Unapologetically* album, with “Miss Me More” striking a particularly insightful moment as Ballerini laments the notion that she lost her identity and sense of independence while caught up in the rush of love.

“I forgot I had dreams/For got I had wings/For got who I was/ Before I ever kissed you,” Ballerini sings.

“I think the best thing you can do after a breakup is just realize what you learned from it and realize the positives,” Ballerini said. “You realize what you do want to be like and what you

don’t want to be like and all that stuff. And I think that was a really crucial relationship for me of learning that stuff.”

As the album moves into its fifth song, things shift from loss into the second chapter of the story — life. Over the course of the songs “Machine Heart,” “In Between,” “High School” and “End of the World,” listeners hear Ballerini rediscovering her sense of self, her confidence and rebuilding her life.

The final four songs on *Unapologetically*, introduce that next chapter — new love.

In spring 2016, Ballerini traveled to Australia to co-host an awards show with Aussie country artist Morgan Evans. Sparks flew and the two have been together since. The title song pretty much tells the story of love re-entering Ballerini’s life and her finding herself willing to go all in on with her new beau and ready to take their journey together, wherever it may lead.

That’s exactly what Ballerini has done in real life, as she and Evans married in December 2017 in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico. Life sounds pretty magical for the couple so far.

“Everyone has been asking me like ‘So what’s different? What’s different?’ I’m like ‘Nothing, that’s why we got married. I didn’t want anything to be different,’” Ballerini said, offering her thoughts on her marriage. “I think that’s the best part. That’s the comfort.”

Musically, *Unapologetically* finds Ballerini largely sticking to the template of *The First Time* to create a warm, mainly mid-tempo and ballad-oriented soundtrack to her stories.

While several songs are rooted in country, *Unapologetically* also has a pop dimension. “Machine Heart,” “End of the World” and “I Hate Love Songs” are among the songs that lean pop and even incorporate synthetic tones and rhythms into the mix.

Now Ballerini hopes to help fans get to further know the music, messages and the woman behind *Unapologetically* as she tours with Brett Young. She plans to feature a good bit of *Unapologetically*, which has produced a #1 Country Airplay single in “Legends” and has a new single, “Miss Me More,” in the top 20 and climbing, while conveying the story of her second album in her set.

“My album is a story, from top to bottom. Yeah, it’s a chronological story and I really want to keep telling people that,” she said. “Especially with this (*Unapologetically*) record, I just invested so much heart in it. And for me, it was just really important to play my album and to see it connect because it’s so close to my heart.”

Kelsea Ballerini will perform at Erie Insurance Arena on Saturday, April 13 at 8 p.m. For tickets, visit erieinsurancearena.com

By: Alan Sculley

Going into her second album, country rising star Kelsea Ballerini didn’t know how the project would take shape.

Coming off a successful debut album, *The First Time*, she had been writing and co-writing (teaming up with such A-list collaborators as Ross Copperman, Shane McAnally, Ashley Gorley and Hillary Lindsey) for some time. The main thing she knew was she wanted a thematic thread for the album. Fortunately, that connecting idea was already there. She just had to find it and develop it in the music she was accumulating.

“I mean, I never stopped writing from the first record,” Ballerini said in a recent phone

interview. “I just kept on writing, and all of a sudden it was time to make the second record and I had over 200 songs and I had no idea of what to do with them. I guess I’m old school because I love listening to actual full albums. And I think as the music industry continues to change continues to be more singles oriented, I wanted to think of a way that people would still want to listen to the whole thing. I just figured I had already written all of these songs about my personal life and growth and breakup and falling in love and all of that, and I figured if I made it the story that it was and put it in order, maybe people would listen to the whole record. That’s how you get to know someone.”

She had no shortage of top-

Opening Apr. 20; ongoing through May 27
Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. events.dcnr.pa.gov.

Peep Show

Apr. 20 — noon to 2 p.m.
Aptly named competition challenges amateur and professional artists to create art out of one of the season’s most popular treats.
Erie Art Museum, 20 E. 5th St. erieartmuseum.org.

Hands All Around Erie Quilt Guild
Apr. 22 — 5:30 p.m.

Wayside Presbyterian Church, 1208 Asbury Rd. facebook.com.

Pendant Making

Apr. 23 — 5 to 6 p.m.
Edinboro Branch Library, 413 W. Plum St., Edinboro, PA 16412 events.erieilibrary.org.

Senior Projects

Apr. 23 — 7 to 9 p.m.
Time listed for opening reception; ongoing through May 3 thereafter.
Allegheny Art Gallery, 520 N. Main St. Meadville, PA 16335 sites.allegheny.edu.

2019 Senior Art Thesis Exhibition

Ongoing through May 3
Cummings Art Gallery at Mercyhurst, 501 E. 38th St. miac.mercyhurst.edu.

James McMurray: Faces and Paces

Ongoing through June 10
Erie Art Museum, 20 E. 5th St. erieartmuseum.org.

Bill Brady

Ongoing through Aug. 2019
Erie Art Museum, 20 E. 5th St. erieartmuseum.org.

Brian Pardini

Ongoing through Aug. 2019
Erie Art Museum, 20 E. 5th St. erieartmuseum.org.

THEATER

Four Old Broads

Apr. 10 — noon & Apr. 13 — 5:30 p.m.
Station Dinner Theatre, 4940 Peach St. canterburyfeast.com.

Heathers the Musical

Apr. 11, 12, 13 — 7:30 p.m.
Studio Theatre at Penn St. Behrend, 4701 College Dr. behrend.psu.edu.

Shrek the Musical

Apr. 12, 13, 20 — 7:30 p.m. & Apr. 14, 20 — 2 p.m.
The Academy The-

atre, 275 Chestnut St., Meadville, PA 16335

The Flick

Apr. 12, 13 — 8 p.m. & Apr. 14 — 2 p.m.
Dramashop, 1001 State St. Ste. 210 dramashop.org.

Pretend

Apr. 13 — 10 a.m., noon, or 2 p.m.
Erie Playhouse, 13 W. 10th St. erieplayhouse.org.

The Met Live: The Walküre

Apr. 13 — noon
Walker Recital Hall, 501 E. 38th St. miac.mercyhurst.edu.

Rock of Ages

Apr. 17 — 7:30 p.m.
Warner Theatre, 811 State St. nacentertainment.com.

COMEDY

Jay Mohr

Apr. 11 — 7 p.m. & Apr. 12, 13 — 6:45 or 9:30 p.m.
Jr’s Last Laugh, 1402 State St. jrslastlaugh.com.

TransContinental Variety Show

Apr. 13 — 7:30 to 11 p.m.
Husband-and-wife, singer-comedian pair Liss Victory and Krish Mohan mix media

Pick'n and Grinnin'



Banjo player Gregg Welty of the Gregg Welty Bluegrass Quartet headlines "Pick'n at the Peak" on Saturday, April 13.

FACEBOOK.COM/GREGGWELTYBANJO

SATURDAY, APR. 13

Are you ready for this year's festival season? If you want to give that feeling a jumpstart, Peek'n Peak has something in store for you. With just a day-long lineup and an indoor setting, "Pick'n

at the Peak" hopes to be the perfect warm-up for summer events. With 17 different slots from noon to night, there will be plenty of clinics, short seminars, and of course, musical acts, to keep you busy and entertained. Local singer-songwriter Tyler Smilo will start off the day's schedule, with the Gregg Welty Bluegrass Quartet headlining the evening. The North Carolina-born banjo player has been a mainstay of the Western New York music

scene and is a former member of Big Leg Emma. In 2018, he released *Community*, a 14-track album that utilized over 50 artists in its recording.

This day-long festival comes at a time that might be familiar to some, in the weeks of early spring that used to be home to the Riverside Music Festival (much like the stage show of the *Medieval Feast*, the Peak has taken up the mantle for the historic Inn after its untimely demise). It's also organized by the same person, musician Justin Moyer. With more than ten years of organizing experience, he had his inspirations, and a few new ones, explaining that "my goal was to have something that was more than just a music fest. I wanted to pattern it after some amazing events that are already taking place throughout the nation, like the LAUNCH Festival in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. They combine musical performances with workshops, demonstrations, one-on-one mentorship, panel discussions, seminars and

the opportunity for musicians to showcase in front of industry professionals." Drawing in local businesses like Key Note Guitar, GH Plugs, along with national amplifier names like Hughes & Kettner and Orange, Moyer put together the inviting mix of entertainment and education. There are already plans to expand the festival next year, as Moyer's original proposal called for a multi-day event. Heather McBrier, corporate events manager for Scott Enterprises, is excited to get the ball rolling this year and beyond. "The idea is that we would want to see it grow every year. We do want it to become awesome," McBrier admitted. For a place usually known for winter events, the Peak, in McBrier's words "is really trying to bring unique and fun events during the off-season, so be on the lookout." — Nick Warren

Noon // Peek'n Peak Main Lodge, 1405 Old Rd, Clymer, NY // \$10, overnight packages available // pknpk.com

and genres for a unique visual and musical show. *PACA, 1505 State St. 2nd Fl., transconerie.bpt.me.*

Bob Zany
Apr. 18 — 7 p.m. & Apr. 19, 20 — 6:45 or 9:30 p.m.
National comedian comes to Erie for show benefiting local animal shelter. *Jr's Last Laugh, 1402 State St. jrslastlaugh.com.*

The Backroom Misfits
Apr. 19 — 8 p.m.
Basement Transmissions, 145 W. 11th St. facebook.com.

SPORTS

Erie Tip Off Classic
Apr. 12, 13, 14
Various locations ohio-basketball.com.

NSCRO 7S Conference Championship
Apr. 13
ERIEBANK Sports Park, 8155 Oliver Rd. facebook.com.

First Day of Trout
Apr. 13 — 8 a.m.
Presque Isle State Park, 1 Peninsula Dr. events.dcnr.pa.gov.

NPC Great Lakes Championships & Dave Chaffee Arms Classic
Apr. 13 — 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Presque Isle Downs & Casino, 8199 Perry Hwy. garyudit.com.

PA State Bowling Open Championships
Apr. 13, 14

Rolling Meadow Lanes, 3304 Zuck Rd. bowlpa.com.

Erie SeaWolves vs. Binghamton Rumble Ponies
Apr. 18, 19 — 6 p.m. & Apr. 20 — 1:30 p.m.
UPMC Park, 110 E.10th St. milb.com.

Erie SeaWolves vs. Bowie Baysox
Apr. 22, 23 — 6 p.m. & Apr. 24 — noon
UPMC Park, 110 E.10th St. milb.com.

COMMUNITY

Hatha Yoga
Apr. 10, 17 — 11 a.m. to noon
Edinboro Branch Library, 413 W. Plum St., Edinboro, PA 16412 events.erieilibrary.org.

WWI: The Great War's Connection to Erie
Apr. 10 — 5 to 6:30 p.m.
Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. jeserie.org.

Read to a Therapy Dog
Apr. 10, 18 — 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. & Apr. 22 — 5 to 6 p.m. & Apr. 23 — 4:30 to 5:30 p.m.
Multiple library locations events.erieilibrary.org.

Stay and Play
Apr. 11, 12 — 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.
Lincoln Community Center Library, 1255 Manchester Rd. events.erieilibrary.org.

Gentle Yoga & Meditation: Level 2
Apr. 11, 18 — 10:30 a.m. to noon & Apr. 22 — 6 to 7:30 p.m.

Multiple library locations events.erieilibrary.org.

Impact 2019: Women in the Workplace
Apr. 11 — 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Executive Vice President of the Barber National Institute, educator, and local business woman Maureen Barber-Carey lectures on her professional and personal journey and how a vision can impact everything from business to life. *Manufacturer & Business Association, 2171 W. 38th St. facebook.com.*

Pennwriters Group
Apr. 11 — 1 to 4 p.m.
Erie County Public Library invites local authors to bring their work for peer assistance, and share tips and tricks of the trade. *Millcreek Branch Library, 2088 Interchange Rd. Ste. 280 events.erieilibrary.org.*

LEGO Club
Apr. 11, 18, 25 — 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.
McCord Memorial Library, 32 W. Main St., North East, PA 16428 mccordlibrary.org.

Photography for Beginners: Editing Basics
Apr. 11 — 6 to 7 p.m.
Blasco Memorial Library, 160 E. Front St. events.erieilibrary.org.

Find Your Mom Tribe
Apr. 11 — 6 to 8 p.m.
Looking for friends with similar interests and hobbies who also have kids? Meet other moms

like you, and enjoy giveaways and refreshments at this speed-dating for friends event! *Elusive Fox Boutique, 30 W. 8th St. theelusivefoxboutique.com.*

'80s Trivia
Apr. 11 — 6:30 p.m.
Voodoo Brewery Erie, 101 Boston Store Pl. facebook.com.

VETx Series: State and Federal Services for Veterans
Apr. 11 — 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.
Blasco Memorial Library, 160 E. Front St. events.erieilibrary.org.

Rediscover Erie History
Apr. 11 — 7 p.m.
Erie County Historical Society curator discusses the process for preserving Erie's historical homes and artifacts. *Watson-Curtze Mansion, 356 W. 6th St. facebook.com.*

How to be a Locavore
Apr. 11 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.
Asbury Woods Nature Center, 4105 Asbury Rd. registrationdesk.asburywoods.org.

America in 1968
Apr. 11 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.
The Corry Higher Education Council, 221 N. Center St., Corry, PA 16407 jeserie.org.

E3 2019 Youth LGBTQIA Summit
Apr. 12, 13
Strong Vincent Middle School, 1330 W. 8th St. greatereriealliance.com.

Victim's Rights Conference
Apr. 12 — 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The 6th annual conference will tackle topics related to trauma, underserved populations, community, and innovative therapy techniques. Tickets include breakfast and lunch. *Sheraton Erie Bayfront Hotel, 55 W. Bay Dr. facebook.com.*

Fairytale Friday
Apr. 12 — 10 to 11 a.m.
Blasco Memorial Library, 160 E. Front St. events.erieilibrary.org.

Emerging Issues in Catholic Bioethics
Apr. 12 — 10 a.m. to noon
Butterfield Hall at Edinboro Univ., 310 Scotland Rd., Edinboro, PA 16444 facebook.com.

Inspirational Lecture w Alex Kovarovic
Apr. 12 — 5 to 9 p.m.
Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. jeserie.org.

Wellness Night
Apr. 12 — 6 to 9 p.m.
Various Locations eriewellnessnetwork.com.

Edinboro Spring Open House
Apr. 13 — 8:30 a.m. to noon
Edinboro University, 219 Meadville St., Edinboro, PA 16444 edinboro.edu.

Hotel Conneaut Psychic Fair
Apr. 13 — 10 a.m.
With the purchase of a ticket, access is opened to a day of different lectures, vendors and healers all focused on the more spiritual side of life.

Hotel Conneaut, 12241 Lake St., Conneaut Lake, PA 16316 facebook.com.

Easter Egg Hunt
Apr. 13 — 10 a.m. to noon
New Apostolic Church, 6005 Perry Hwy. nac-usa.org.

Writing & Self-Publishing
Apr. 13 — 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Lincoln Community Center Library, 1255 Manchester Rd. events.erieilibrary.org.

Blasco Book Drive
Apr. 13 — 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Blasco Memorial Library, 160 E. Front St. events.erieilibrary.org.

Gem City Flea Market
Apr. 13 — 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Basement Transmissions, 145 W. 11th St. blackeaglegoods.com.

Saturdays at the Scallywag
Apr. 13, 20 — noon to 3 p.m.
Grab your pirate garb and swing down to The Cove for shanties, treasures, games, and meal specials. *The Cove, 2 State St. facebook.com.*

Rainforest Wonders
Apr. 13 — 2 to 3 p.m.
Erie Zoo, 423 W. 38th St. eriezoo.org.

Choosing Poems
Apr. 13 — 2 to 3 p.m. & Apr. 15 — 7 to 8 p.m.
Multiple library locations events.erieilibrary.org.

Pokemon League
Apr. 13 — 2 to 4 p.m.
Blasco Memorial Library, 160 E.

Messiah Lutheran Church has an opening for
Director of Music Ministry

This is a part-time position requiring approximately 20 hours per week. Our church has two Sunday morning worship services: traditional at 8:30 and contemporary at 11:00.

Some of the responsibilities of our Director of Music Ministry include preparing for and leading the congregation in music at both Sunday services and at a few occasional services throughout the year, scheduling and preparing Cantors, providing instrumental music such as preludes and offertory pieces, and rehearsing and directing the choir. A full job description is available upon request. For questions, please contact **Ethelynne Cunningham** at 725-4252 or **Anna Mae Van Dyne** at 899-5778. We thank you in advance for your consideration!

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Schedule Highlights

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Erie Phil Closes Symphonic Series with Epic Arrangements of Classic Pieces



Johannes Brahms' epic *Requiem* serves as the centerpiece of the Erie Philharmonic's 2018-19 Symphonic Series finale.

The piece consists of seven movements, making it Brahms' longest composition. Altogether, a typical performance runs just over an hour.

Preceding the grand finale will be an arrangement of Beethoven's String Quartet Opus 95 by composer Gustav Mahler. This interpretation will engage the entirety of the Philharmonic's string section — including double basses — adding density to the well-known chamber music.

This will be followed by the overture to Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*. This opera buffa (comic opera) was composed in 1786 and premiered in Vienna on May 1 of that year. Since then, the work has become a pillar of operatic works and is consistently in the top ten of most performed operas each year. — Hannah McDonald

8 p.m. // Warner Theatre, 811 State St. // Tickets begin at \$23 // eriephil.org

SATURDAY, APR. 13

Music by Beethoven, Mozart, and Brahms, three classical composers, will close out Erie Philharmonic's symphonic series for the 2018-19 season.

Johannes Brahms' famous *Requiem* will be sung by the Erie Philharmonic Chorus and soloists of the Pittsburgh Opera. Baritone Benjamin Taylor will be leading the male part of the historic piece, side by side with soprano Ashley Fabian. With a focus on carefully selected pieces of Christian scripture, Brahms' piece was designed to lessen terror and bring hope to listeners. The soloists' parts float over sweeping orchestral and choral movements.

Platters, Coasters, and Drifters at the Warner



SUNDAY, APR. 14

For one night only, The Drifters, Cornell Gunter's Coasters, and The Platters will perform their classic hits at the Warner Theatre. These three Rock and Roll Hall-of-Famers have rocked the Las Vegas Strip for over nine years, declaring their act "the longest running music show in Las Vegas history."

The Drifters are a soul vocal group that was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1988. Originally they were created as a backing group for Clyde McPhatter with Billy Ward and his Dominoes in 1953. This American doo-wop and R&B/soul group sang the hit songs "Under the Boardwalk" and "Save the Last Dance for Me."

Cornell Gunter's Coasters is a unique vocal group that performs rock 'n' roll songs with R&B and doo-wop undertones. Inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1987, the Coasters are

R&B/rock 'n' roll vocal group The Coasters logged massive crossover hits with "Yakety Yak" and "Charlie Brown" in the late 1950s, establishing a foundation for their 1987 induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

best known for their singles "Yakety Yak" and "Charlie Brown." Songwriter and producer Jerry Leiber said in a 1992 interview, "Our songs ... were R&B hits that white kids were attracted to, and people bought it, and it became rock 'n' roll."

The Platters' original five-member group was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1990 and was known as one of the most popular black groups of their time. They became one of the first African-American groups to be accepted as a major chart group and sang hit songs, "Only You" and "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes." By combining the genres of pre-rock and pop, they became one of the most successful vocal groups around the world.

With a combined 94 charted records and 45 Top 10 hits, these rock 'n' roll and R&B sensations will doo-wop through Erie for the performance of a lifetime. — Symone Crockett

4 p.m. to 7 p.m. // Warner Theatre, 811 State St. // \$44-\$62 // eriewarnertheatre.com

Front St. events. erielibrary.org.

Easter Egg Hunt on the Hill

Apr. 13 — 3 to 4 p.m.
The Little Church on the Hill, 10410 High St., Albion, PA 16401 sites.google.com.

Doggy Egg Hunt on the Hill

Apr. 13 — 4 to 4:30 p.m.
The Little Church on the Hill, 10410 High St., Albion, PA 16401 sites.google.com.

Grown-Up Glow Egg Hunt on the Hill

Apr. 13 — 7 to 8 p.m.
The Little Church on the Hill, 10410 High St., Albion, PA 16401 sites.google.com.

Poetry Reading

Apr. 13 — 5 to 7 p.m.
Ember + Forge, 401 State St. facebook.com.

Master Builders: Block Party

Apr. 13 — 10 a.m. to noon & Apr. 15 — 4:30 to 6 p.m.
Multiple library locations erielibrary.org.

Cinderella Project Prom Dress Giveaway

Apr. 14 — 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Bourbon Barrel, 1213 State

St. bourbonbarrelerie.com.

Second Sundays: Make Your Own Playdough

Apr. 14 — 2 to 4 p.m.
Bring your family to the monthly hands-on art-making event. This month's project is a timeless favorite.

Erie Art Museum, 20 E. 5th St. erieartmuseum.org.

Gerrymandering 101

Apr. 15 — 3 to 4:30 p.m. or 6 to 7:30 p.m.
Blasco Memorial Library, 160 E. Front St. events.erielibrary.org.

What Is Jr. Jeopardy?

Apr. 15 — 4:30 to 5:30 p.m.
Millcreek Branch Library, 2088 Interchange Rd. Ste. 280 events.erielibrary.org.

Alzheimer's Association Community Forum

Apr. 15 — 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.
Blasco Memorial Library, 160 E. Front St. events.erielibrary.org.

Throwback Game Night

Apr. 15, 22 — 6 p.m.
Tippy Bean, 2425 Peach St. tippybean.cafe.

Teen Reading Lounge

Apr. 15 — 6 to 7:30 p.m.
Blasco Memorial Library, 160 E. Front St. events.erielibrary.org.

Census Application Assistance

Apr. 16 — 4 to 7 p.m.
Edinboro Branch Library, 413 W. Plum St., Edinboro, PA 16412 events.erielibrary.org.

Game Night

Apr. 16 — 5:30 to 7 p.m.
Blasco Memorial Library, 160 E. Front St. events.erielibrary.org.

Erie Coke Plant: Environmental Impact Update Panel

Apr. 16 — 6:30 p.m.
East Middle School, 1001 Atkins St. campaign.r20.constantcontact.com.

Align Your Vibration

Apr. 16 — 6:30 p.m.
Whole Foods Co-Op, 1341 W. 26th St. wfcferie.coop.

Healing with Light Therapy

Apr. 16 — 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.
Edinboro Branch Library, 413 W. Plum St., Edinboro, PA 16412 events.erielibrary.org.

Gardening to Attract Pollinators

Apr. 16 — 6:30 to 8 p.m.
Asbury Woods Nature Center, 4105 Asbury Rd. registrationdesk.asburywoods.org.

Saving Our Synthetic Seas

Apr. 16 — 7 p.m.
Walker Recital Hall at Mercyhurst Univ., 501 E. 38th St. mercyhurst.edu.

Theology Pub & Cafe

Apr. 16, 23 — 7 p.m.
Tippy Bean, 2425 Peach St. tippybean.cafe.

How To Be Happy

Apr. 16 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.
Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. jeserie.org.

Work Day for Operation Christmas Child

Apr. 17 — 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Grace Church, 7300 Grubb Rd., McKean, PA 16426 samaritanspurse.org/occ.

Beach Glass Jewelry

Apr. 17 — 2 to 4 p.m.
Lincoln Community Center Library, 1255 Manchester Rd. events.erielibrary.org.

6th Annual Celebration of Scholarship

Apr. 17 — 3 to 6 p.m.

Van Houten Dining Hall at Edinboro Univ., 345 Scotland Rd., Edinboro, PA 16444 edinboro.edu.

Urban Ag Toolkit Work

Apr. 17 — 5 to 6:30 p.m.
The Oasis Market, 914 State St. facebook.com.

What is Geeky Jr. Jeopardy?

Apr. 17 — 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.
Blasco Memorial Library, 160 E. Front St. events.erielibrary.org.

Networking for Professionals

Apr. 17 — 6 to 7 p.m.
Blasco Memorial Library, 160 E. Front St. events.erielibrary.org.

McDowell Job & Career Fair

Apr. 17 — 6 to 8 p.m.
McDowell High School (South Gym), 3580 W. 38th St. mtsd.org.

Tarana Burake, Founder of #MeToo

Apr. 17 — 7:30 p.m.
Reed Union Building at Penn St. Behrend, 4701 College Dr. behrend.psu.edu.

Haunted History Tours

Apr. 17, 24 — 7:30 p.m. & Apr. 19 — 7 or 9:30 p.m.

After Halloween tour successes, this multi-day event returns to take you into the dark — and often overlooked — history of our city.
The Brewerie at Union Station, 123 W. 14th St. brewerie.com.

Military Veterans Expo

Apr. 18 — 1 to 3 p.m.
Mercyhurst Athletic Center, 501 E. 38th St. senatorlaughlin.com.

Pa. Redistricting Reform Commission Public Meeting

Apr. 18 — 4 to 7 p.m.
Blasco Memorial Library, 160 E. Front St. bit.ly/2un8sim.

Spinechillers: The Witching Hour

Apr. 18 — 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.
Blasco Memorial Library, 160 E. Front St. events.erielibrary.org.

Smith Creative Writing Series: Deb Olin Unferth

Apr. 18 — 6 p.m.
Smith Chapel at Penn St. Behrend, 4701 College Dr. behrend.psu.edu.

Sustainable Cleaning

Apr. 18 — 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.
Asbury Woods Nature Center,

Don't Stop Believin' in the Radness of *Rock of Ages*



JEREMY DANIEL

show in history, with multiple productions worldwide and two tours.

One tour, naturally, traverses the U.S., and lucky for Erie — this infectiously head-bangeriffic show is stopping in the 814 for a one-night-only engagement at the Warner Theatre.

Set in Hollywood at the height of the "sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll" lifestyle, the musical takes place in none other than a Sunset Strip club, where dreams can come true — or get shattered, depending on your luck.

With hits like "Here I Go Again," "I Want to Know What Love Is" and "Don't Stop Believin'," *Rock of Ages* is a raucous good time, though it may not be suitable for children under the age of 14. — Cara Suppa

7:30 p.m. // Warner Theatre, 811 State Street // \$34-\$64 (see website for full ticketing options) // nacentertainment.com

WEDNESDAY, APR. 17

The 1980s were a time of excess — especially in the hair department — unlike any other, and nothing captured the wild ride that was the 20th century's penultimate decade like the rock music that blasted out of everyone's sweet stereos.

The creators of *Rock of Ages* know this. And it's no surprise that the hit jukebox musical, which debuted in Los Angeles in 2005, transitioned Off-Broadway in 2008, and premiered on Broadway in 2009 is the 29th longest running

Paper Boats, Floods, and American Songs



NICK WARREN

Tiny Paper Boats, shown here performing at the most recent Arts and Drafts on March 9, will join Fred Oakman & The Flood and This American Song at Scotty's Martini Lounge on April 19.

FRIDAY, APR. 19

You'd be hard-pressed to find a single day of the week in Erie when there isn't a quality arts event happening somewhere. You especially don't have to look very far most weekends.

While Scotty's Martini Lounge might be best-known for its potent cocktail menu and cigar offerings, it has become one of the most popular venues in the area, thanks to its eclectic, ever-changing schedule chock full of rock, punk, metal, indie, and more.

Enter This American Song, Fred Oakman and the Flood, and Tiny Paper Boats.

This American Song is one of Erie's fa-

vorites, a rock'n'roll sextet with a brassy swerve, who recently played for WQLN's Sounds Around Town Series. Fred Oakman and the Flood will be venturing up north from Meadville, bringing their indie folk vibe to the stage; and Tiny Paper Boats, another sextet, who cites "low lights and dark nights" as the influences for their "lo-fi indie-pop," rounds out the evening. Though TAS and TPB share three of the same members — Jesse Guerrein, Larry Wheaton, and John Johnston — the sound is markedly distinct.

A good cocktail is an art form. So is a good song. Thanks to this venue and this trio of acts, if anyone asks what you're doing that Friday night, you can tell them, "Pretty much going to the Louvre." — Cara Suppa

10 p.m. to 1 a.m. // 301 German St. // facebook.com/ScottysMartini

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4105 Asbury Rd. registrationdesk.asburywoods.org.

Imagining an Erie that 'Cares For' the Lives of Black Boys & Young Men
Apr. 18 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. jeserie.org.

Easter Eggstravaganza

Apr. 19 — 10 a.m. to noon
Erie Maritime Museum, 150 E. Front St. Ste. 100
flagshipniagara.org.

Good Friday Pilgrimage for Peace

Apr. 19 — 11 a.m.
St. Peter's Cathedral, 230 W. 10th St. eriebenedictines.org.

Art Talk: Art that Shocked the World (Replay)

Apr. 19 — 6 to 7 p.m.
Erie Art Museum, 20 E. 5th St. erieartmuseum.org.

An Insta-Worthy Nature Walk

Apr. 19 — 6:30 to 8 p.m.
Asbury Woods Nature Center, 4105 Asbury Rd. registrationdesk.asburywoods.org.

Presque Isle's 63rd Spring Clean-up

Apr. 20 — 8 a.m.
Presque Isle State Park, 1 Peninsula Dr. events.dcnr.pa.gov.

Spring Clean-up at Asbury Woods

Apr. 20 — 9 to 11 a.m.
Asbury Woods Nature Center,

4105 Asbury Rd. registrationdesk.asburywoods.org.

Spring Egg-Venture Egg Hunt

Apr. 20 — 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Erie Zoo, 423 W. 38th St. eriezoo.org.

Shredding for Shriners

Apr. 20 — 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Shriners Hospital Erie, 1645 W. 8th St. ShrinersErie.org

Game Day

Apr. 20 — noon to 2 p.m.
Iroquois Branch Library, 4212 Iroquois Ave. events.eriellibrary.org.

Earth Friendly Crafts

Apr. 20 — 2 p.m.
Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. events.dcnr.pa.gov.

Vinyl Cutter Open Lab

Apr. 20 — 2 to 3 p.m.
Blasco Memorial Library, 160 E. Front St. events.eriellibrary.org.

Earth Day Partner Yoga

Apr. 22 — 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.
Glenwood YMCA, 3727 Cherry St. ymcaerie.org.

Apollo Remembered

Apr. 22 — 6 or 7:30 p.m.
Cooper Science Center, 230 Scotland Rd., Edinboro, PA 16444 edinboro.edu.

Starting Right with Composting

Apr. 22 — 6 to 7:30 p.m.
Asbury Woods Nature Center,

4105 Asbury Rd. registrationdesk.asburywoods.org.

DNA and Genealogy

Apr. 22 — 6 to 7:30 p.m.
Blasco Memorial Library, 160 E. Front St. events.eriellibrary.org.

Genealogy Puzzles

Apr. 23 — 10 a.m. to noon
Lincoln Community Center Library, 1255 Manchester Rd. events.eriellibrary.org.

Basic Backyard Gardening

Apr. 23 — 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Millcreek Branch Library, 2088 Interchange Rd. Ste. 280 events.eriellibrary.org.

Slime Series:

Magnetic Slime

Apr. 23 — 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.
Blasco Memorial Library, 160 E. Front St. events.eriellibrary.org.

Plastic Free Living

Apr. 23 — 6 p.m.
Whole Foods Co-Op, 1341 W. 26th St. wfcerie.coop.

Ending the School to Prison Pipeline

Apr. 23 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.
Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. jeserie.org.

Craft Corner

Apr. 24 — 1 to 3 p.m.
Iroquois Branch Library, 4212 Iroquois Ave. events.eriellibrary.org.

Yoga by the Bay

Apr. 24 — 5:15 to 6:15 p.m.
Blasco Memorial Library, 160 E.

Front St. events.eriellibrary.org.

Preservation Erie Awards

Apr. 24 — 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.
Recognizing the organizations and individuals that help preserve the city, the annual awards will feature keynote speaker Monica Rhodes, associate director for HOPE Crew for the National Trust for Historic Preservation.
Jr.'s Last Laugh, 1402 State St. preservationerie.org.

Protecting Yourself From Identity Theft

Apr. 24 — 6 to 7 p.m.
Blasco Memorial Library, 160 E. Front St. events.eriellibrary.org.

The Memory of Place: Sin, Pictures, and Progress

Apr. 24 — 7 p.m.
Walker Recital Hall at Mercyhurst Univ., 501 E. 38th St. eriebenedictines.org.

A Brief History of the British Empire: The Downton Abbey Years

Apr. 24 — 7 p.m.
Alex Theatre at Mercyhurst NE, 16 W. Division St., North East, PA 16428 mercyhurst.edu.

Top 5 Tips for Gardening Success


Apr. 24 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.
Lake Erie Arboretum at Frontier Park, 1501 W. 6th St. leaferie.org.

BLASCO BRANCH

POLITICS AND POLICY


Gerrymandering 101

Monday, April 15th • 3:00-4:30PM & 6:00-7:30PM
Blasco Library Community Classroom 101



Learn about the history of redrawing districts in Pennsylvania, and the current reform efforts with a presentation from Draw the Lines PA. After a brief lecture, participants will use the concepts they learned to draw their own district maps of Pennsylvania. Attendees are encouraged to bring their own laptop. An afternoon and an evening session are being offered.

This program is free and open to the public and no registration is necessary.



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CALENDAR

'Smoke Signals' Calls For Attention



DAVID DESIN

"Smoke Signals," a mixed-genre, multi-act concert event organized by JC Nickles, will pack Basement Transmissions on 4/20. Among the acts will be alternative rock group Aria and the Voiceless.

SATURDAY, APR. 20

Singer-songwriter and promoter JC Nickles has long been an advocate of cultivating a variety of talent to expose the true sounds of Erie. With a plethora of shows under his belt, his mission to throw together mixed-genre concerts has shown no indicators of slowing down anytime soon.

On April 20, a day with "high" hopes, Nickles returns with his "Smoke Sig-

nals" event at Basement Transmissions. If you're not so sure about what the musical landscape is around the city of Erie, this is one show that provides the soundtrack with both well-seasoned and novice musicians. Though JC will take the stage himself, playing the host is more of the agenda here — to cater to both tuned and curious ears with local artistry.

Veteran performers such as YB, Doc'

Proto, and Mala Sangre will carry on the tradition while buzz-worthy newcomers Aria and the Voiceless, Lil Eggo, and Jordy the Traveler take off with the baton. Local YouTuber Faith Ann will bring female hip-hop to the forefront while the rock/rap emcee Mad Clock wastes no time telling riveting stories. "Smoke Signals" stands firm by being a clear mediator between the well-known and the rookies, delivering a monumental moment of musical diversity. From start to finish, guests can expect an evening of performances showcasing their differences by sharing the same passion. Stop on in at BT and bear witness to what's going on in your own backyard. — Charles Brown

5:30 p.m. to 11 p.m. // 145 W 11th St. // \$5 // [facebook.com/NEARentertainment](https://www.facebook.com/NEARentertainment)

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Brewer's Army of the Dead Heads for the Rook



NICK WARREN

Late Grateful Dead bandleader Jerry Garcia is not the most immediate analog for local musician Eric Brewer's style of guitar playing, but audiences will hear the influence at Brewer's 4/20 Grateful Dead tribute show at the King's Rook Club.

of Erie's Best Musician, will be leading his merry band of musicians for another highly anticipated tribute to the Grateful Dead. Brewer explained that "the response was fantastic last time and we were lucky enough to land the 4/20 date which we feel will create an even more heightened atmosphere to pay tribute to one of our favorite bands."

Known for his warm, often subdued playing technique, Garcia seems to be a less obvious influence on Brewer, especially compared to some other nights, when he's been known to mimic the likes of fellow redheads Trey Anastasio or Duane Allman. "Playing Jerry's style is very tough without just rote copying. I'm more interested in combining his signature style with a little of my own and using that concept as a vehicle for achieving improvisational transcendence ... or something like that," Brewer laughed. Brewer will be joined by his regular bandmates Ralph Reitingner, Charlie Meyer, and Steve Barone, with special guests like Joe Cieslak and Ron Yarosz joining throughout the night in the venue's Downstairs Concert Complex. — Nick Warren

SATURDAY, APR. 20

The Grateful Dead mean a lot of different things for a lot of different people. It's been more than 23 years since band-leader Jerry Garcia's death, and there are huge swaths of people who still listen to his music on a daily basis. Some of these people will be on stage one day this April at the King's Rook Club, and even more will be in the audience. What day in April, you ask? Well, 4/20, of course. Eric Brewer, four-time winner

10 p.m. to 2 a.m. // King's Rook Club, 1921 Peach St. // \$7 for current members, \$12 for non-current members // 21+ // [facebook.com/kingsrookclub](https://www.facebook.com/kingsrookclub)

An Easter Getaway with Strawberry Girls



SUNDAY, APR. 21

Erie's newest all-ages music venue, The Ballet Haus, is quickly gaining traction in Erie's growing music scene.

In its short lifespan thus far, the venue has been able to attract a considerable amount of showgoers through their doors, a feat which Elvis Maryshine of Aorta Music and Management attri-

Strawberry Girls, an instrumental math rock trio featuring Zac Garren on guitar, headline Aorta Music and Management's Easter Sunday show at The Ballet Haus.

butes to her agency's work ethic, among other things.

"Our approach to promoting is very much a lot of face-to-face interaction with our patrons," Maryshine says. "My staff and I go around the city, hand out flyers everywhere we go, and we encourage local bands to do the same."

Maryshine also credits the venue's success to working towards building a sense of community around the music scene.

"You want to make the environment welcoming and amicable. We have developed regulars that come to every single show no matter if they've heard of the bands or not ... we genuinely care about making the community and scene better and we show it."

One of the next shows at The Ballet Haus is headlined by California-based three-piece instrumental math rock

band Strawberry Girls, when they roll into Erie on Easter Sunday.

Strawberry Girls was formed in 2011 by guitarist Zac Garren, shortly before leaving his former band, Dance Gavin Dance. The band has released three self-recorded albums through Tragic Hero Records, and are currently working on material for a fourth album to be released this year.

Second on the bill is Elbow Room, making the short drive over from Cleveland. Elbow Room's blend of emo, pop-punk, and alternative rock have landed them a spot at Penultimate Records, who released their debut album, *Constant Mistake*, last October.

Opening the show are none other than special guests ... Special Guests. This Edinboro quintet fuses elements of funk, blues, and psychedelic rock to create their particular flavor of rock 'n' roll. — Tommy Shannon

7:30 p.m. // 1020 Holland St. // \$15 advance, \$17 doors // All Ages // BYOB with ID 21+ // easterexcuse.brownpapertickets.com

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MOVIE REVIEWS

Super Mania!: *Shazam!* is a Burst of Fun and Adventure

★★★★★

I have a particular philosophy with film titles. It is my belief that whenever a movie's title ends with an exclamation point, I am certain that the movie is going to be a fun ride from beginning to end. I am happy to report that the newest DC superhero film, *Shazam!* carries on that tradition by being an absolute blast! In fact, the film has so much fun with its ridiculous premise, that it reminds us why this subgenre has had such a mass generational appeal in the first place.



WARNER BROS.

This is the story of young Billy Batson (Asher Angel), an orphan teenager adjusting to his new foster family. While Billy deals with problems that many young people find themselves faced with, he suddenly gets whisked away to a fantastical realm where he is told that he has been chosen to carry on the legacy of ancient wizards called forth by a magic word. As Billy indulges in his newfound superpowers, he soon realizes that an evil force is after both him and his family.

The film has a ton of fun playing up the tropes of superhero films while also being a pretty exciting superhero film in its own right. That is where the appeal of *Shazam!* comes from; giving us a magical world and a villainous threat (played by a sinister Mark Strong) that is believable and menacing while still holding onto that sense of fun and adventure on which superhero films have always relied. In this age when superhero films are split between grim seriousness (mostly DC) and smirking irony (generally Marvel) *Shazam!* rides the perfect line between action and comedy. — Forest Taylor

Directed by: David F. Sandberg // Written by: Henry Gayden and Darren Lemke // and stars Zachary Levi, Asher Angel, Jack Dylan Grazer, Mark Strong, Grace Fulton, Faither Herman, Ian Chen, Jovan Armand, Cooper Andrews, Marta Milans and Djimon Hounsou // 132 minutes // Rated PG-13

"The Bums Lost": *The Beach Bum* is Nonsense Presented as Genius

★★

Harmony Korine has made an entire career out of filming people on the fringes of society. From the grimy and bizarre poverty-porn of *Gummo* to the neon-colored explosion of hedonism in *Spring Breakers*, he clearly loves wallowing in freaks, weirdos, and depravity. However, I've never found any point to his stories beyond some kind of ironic detachment and a complete disdain for anything beyond that. I find it tedious, but his new film *The Beach Bum* (his most mainstream yet) intrigued me because it seemed to be going for something beyond Korine's usual signatures. Instead, I found nothing but freaks, weirdos, depravity and an ironic detachment from any kind of point.



NEON

The film follows the life of Moondog (Matthew McConaughey, clearly having a blast), a poet living an aimless, hedonistic life in Key West who suddenly finds himself cut off from his fortune when his wife (Isla Fisher) dies in a car accident. Moondog must now finish his long-overdue novel to get back his wife's money, but first goes on a series of misadventures with the various colorful characters he encounters while traveling through the seedier sides of Florida.

The film is structured in Korine's typical stream-of-consciousness style, less a plot than a collection of episodes. This wears thin after a short while and McConaughey's character, at first charming, gets wearisome fast. The film almost unintentionally comes off as an indictment of Korine's entire career as we get pointless vignettes of people doing despicable things while various characters sing praises to the titular beach bum's "genius" which never seems to present itself to the audience. If Korine intended this as a joke, then it is not nearly clever enough to carry an entire film. — Forest Taylor

Written and directed by: Harmony Korine // Starring: Matthew McConaughey, Snoop Dogg, Isla Fisher, Stefania LaVie Owen, Zac Efron, Martin Lawrence, Jonah Hill and Jimmy Buffett // 95 minutes // Rated R


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JUST TOYIN' WITCHA — BY B. TOY



MUSIC REVIEWS

Billie Eilish

When We All Fall Asleep, Where Do We Go?
Interscope Records



At 17, Billie Eilish has the biggest album in the world right now, a fact that's both impressive and, to a point, increasingly common. An immediate disciple of the likes of Lorde and Tyler, the Creator, Eilish splits her full-length debut between smoky slow-burning ballads and ASMR-level voice experiments over minimalistic, Yeezus-esque beats. Taken as a whole, the latter always tend to shine through, with singles like "bury a friend" and "bad guy" showcasing the performer's knack for diversity and bass-heavy, distorted hooks. The flamboyantly titled *When We All Fall Asleep, Where Do We Go?* earns its reputation as a highly anticipated and eclectic album, without a doubt, but it is not without its growing pains. While the gorgeous pre-release track "when the party's over" floats along on a pleasant whisper, the immaturity of a song like "wish you were gay" follows in the unfortunate footsteps of Katy Perry's "Ur So Gay," proving that the young prodigy still has plenty of time to grow both as an artist and an individual. — Aaron Mook



La Dispute

Panorama
Epitaph Records



It's been four years since third-wave post-hard-core poets La Dispute released *Rooms of the House*, a streamlined concept record and magnum opus that detailed the band's growth in their ability to show restraint and diversify their songwriting. At their peak, they were able to set emotionally charged stories to aggressive guitar tones, and craft Radiohead-inspired sonnets in the same turn. La Dispute's fourth album, *Panorama*, is finally here, and while it's a perfectly listenable entry in the band's relatively solid discography, it's also a bit of a regression next to the experimental songwriting of *Rooms of the House*. Grief continues to be a looming force in frontman Jordan Dreyer's life, with "FULTON STREET I" immediately referencing finding a body, looking at funeral dresses, and putting flowers by the side of the street. But to Dreyer's credit, the band does make a bold move by experimenting with the sounds their instruments are capable of making, allowing the singer to mute himself for the first time on the ethereal highlight "FOOTSTEPS ON THE POND." — Aaron Mook



PUP

Morbid Stuff
Rise



There's always something so wonderfully refreshing when a new punk rock record comes out and it's as satisfying as *Morbid Stuff*. It doesn't happen often, and when it does, it's rightfully a cause to rejoice (sidenote: if your definition of punk is so mind-numbingly narrow as to be more gatekeeping than inclusive, then congratulations! You're not punk rock anymore! You can keep listening to classic rock and other vapid trash). This is the third full-length album from the Toronto, Ontario trio, and while their 2013 self-titled record brought them the attention they deserved, this album cements their catalog with a wonderful high mark of consistency. If you like anthemic, uptempo singalongs, this is the album for you. If The Hotelier is a bit too whiny, or the Menzingers are bit too dad-rock for you, then perhaps PUP is just what you need. *Morbid Stuff* is an album built from depression, but it doesn't sound like it — and that concealing trick is one of its most successful traits, an oxymoronically energetic suite filled with ennui. — Nick Warren



Priests

Seduction of Kansas
Sister Polygon

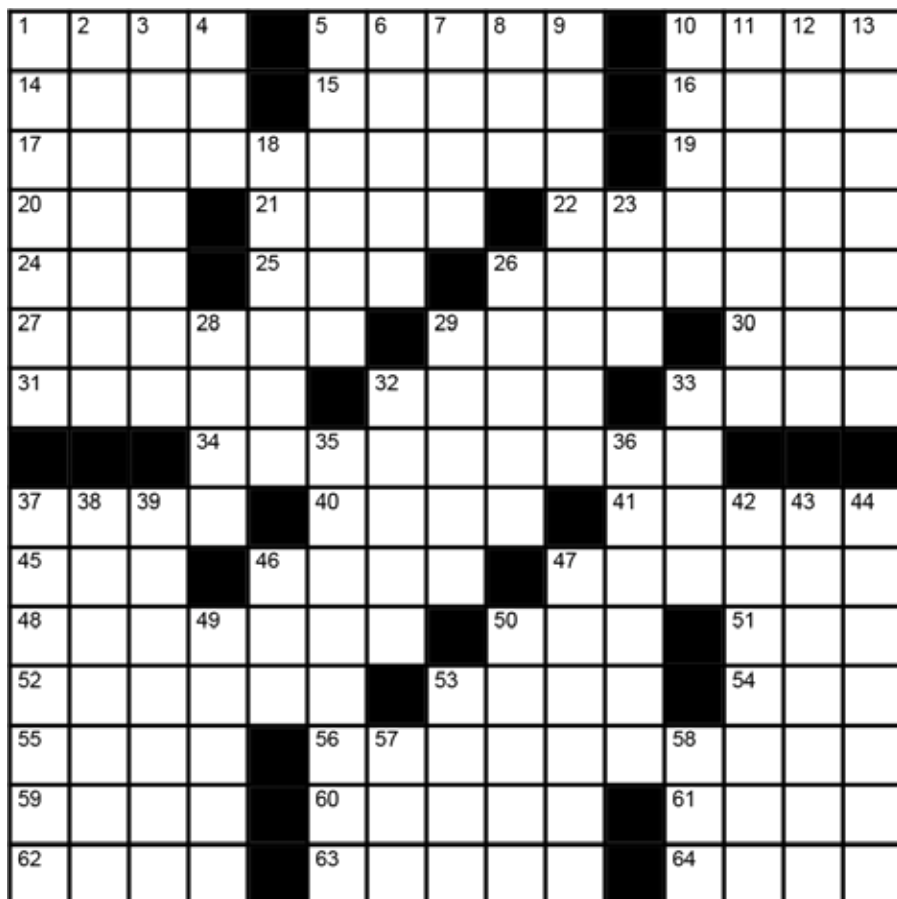


There's a term out there that roughly means something like "sucker" or an "easy target," someone who is unaware of any behind the scenes agreements, this "mark" thinks what is happening is real. And even from the first notes of this record, boy, am I ever a mark for *The Seduction of Kansas*. If you are the kind of person who liked Le Tigre more than Bikini Kill, pick up this record *right now*. You won't be disappointed. If you loved Priests' 2017 watershed album *Nothing Feels Natural*, then things might be a little different. The raw, trebly, post-punk aggression and danger of that record has morphed into something new and ... well, danceable. The metaphor of Kathleen Hanna's oeuvre certainly holds up in those respects, with *Kansas* relying much more heavily on synths and programmed drum sounds, serving up a post-electroclash offering. While it wears its politics and pretensions on its sleeve — in an almost welcoming, albeit mildly cringe-worthy way — this classic sophomore effort is more easily digestible than its predecessor. — Nick Warren



TOMMY IN TOON — BY TOMMY LINK





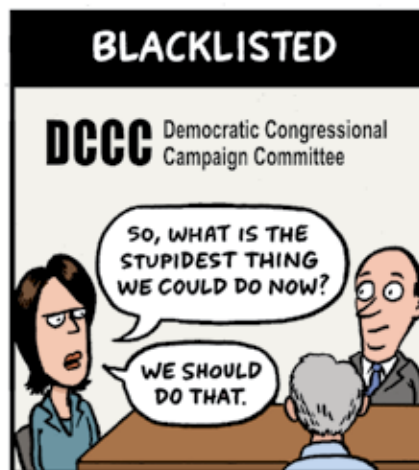
Across

- 1. Easter staples
- 5. Unbroken mount
- 10. Roe source
- 14. Rescue mission, briefly
- 15. Sound
- 16. Health plan prefix
- 17. Sushi menu item named after Hamlet's friend?
- 19. ___ mater
- 20. Roman 1,002
- 21. Get wind of
- 22. Sweet 'un
- 24. They go from town to town: Abbr.
- 25. Magic, on a sports ticker
- 26. "Hey, spin for me!"?
- 27. "___ Rides Again" (1939 western)
- 29. Takes evening courses?
- 30. Shape of a plunging neckline
- 31. Singles network logo with a partly outlined Star of David
- 32. Ascend
- 33. What "Talk to the hand!" is an example of
- 34. Something thrown by Sean Lennon's mom?
- 37. "___ on Fire" (2012 Alicia Keys hit)
- 40. "Time ___ the essence"

Down

- 1. 1993 hit with the lyric "Keep playin' that song all night"
- 2. Like pariahs
- 3. ___ Mayer, Yahoo! CEO beginning in 2012
- 4. Subj. for Bill Nye
- 5. Establishment that makes a lot of dough?
- 6. Like most of Maine
- 7. Dumpster emanation
- 8. It's nothing, really

- 9. First sketch of an episode of "Saturday Night Live," typically
- 10. Intelligent
- 11. Extremely, informally
- 12. Thinks highly of
- 13. Feinstein and Wiest
- 18. Dance: Prefix
- 23. Vienna's land: Abbr.
- 26. ___ Islam, singer formerly known as Cat Stevens
- 28. "Gotta run," in a text
- 29. Nurse
- 32. Former TV partner of Barbara, Joy and Elisabeth
- 33. Word with coffee or gift
- 35. About 2.2 pounds
- 36. Cellist Pablo
- 37. Judy Garland, e.g.
- 38. Hematite, e.g.
- 39. Puts back on, as weight
- 42. It's pitched by a pitcher
- 43. Bad-mouth
- 44. "Indeed so"
- 46. Spanish body part whose name in English is also a palindrome
- 47. Parent's emphatic words after "Because"
- 49. "Otherwise ..."
- 50. Tattoo artist
- 53. "High Voltage" band
- 57. ___ hunch
- 58. PreCheck org.



Answers to last puzzle



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