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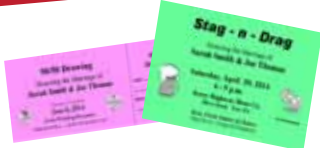
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News & Notes

- 4 Street Corner Soapbox**
The continuing collapse of Chris Christie
- 5 The Way I See It**
Erie's water woes
- 7 A Young Duck's Fancy**
Presque Isle's Wood Duck Migration
- 19 Outside Voices**
What sort of businesses would you like to see in the now-vacant locations in downtown Erie?
- 21 Tech Watch**
The rebirth - or slow death - of Twitter
- 22 ER Sports**
Local sports with James R. LeCorchick

From the Editors

On Wednesday, March 26, we woke up to some good news: Local universities are working together to help cement Erie's image as a true "college town," and we will finally be getting a community college. Well, sort of.

For a long time, when Erie dressed for work in the morning and took a long look at itself before heading out to face the workday, it recognized the collar of its shirt was blue and the lines tracking across its face were from long, hard years of manufacturing. But that image is changing. The production goliaths of yesteryear have vanished, withered, or re-located, but centers of knowledge, of training, of education have sprouted, blossomed, and thrived. Now those local institutions are planning to work together for the betterment of Erie, to attract more students, to retain degree-holders, to cement a new image that Erie will see when it looks in the mirror: One with a cap and tassel.

But this wasn't the led story that Wednesday. It wasn't frontpage news and it wasn't what led the top-of-the-hour report. What led was the announcement of The Porreco College of Edinboro University — "The Community's College."

You know the story: There was the battle to establish a community college, a push from then-County Executive Barry Grossman. But there was resistance, a push back from County Council, school boards, and the community. And the discussion went silent.

The story is, though, that northwestern Pennsylvania is one of the largest areas in the country unserved by a community college. For those looking for training, for certifications, for affordable post-high school education, all things a community college would offer, there simply wasn't an option.

Now, we have an option, one provided by an already established institution. So while Erie isn't getting a community college by definition, it is getting a college for the community that will serve the functions typically offered by a community college.

Education can lead to opportunities and opportunities can lead to progress and progress can lead to a stronger region. This all is good news.

But on that Wednesday, we also woke up to some bad news: Local venue, the crooked i — a place that supported local artists, drew in national acts, and improved the overall well-being of the state of live music in Erie — was shuttering its doors for good.

Culture

- 6 Geeked Out**
Edinboro Game Expo
- 9 Beer Geek Heaven**
WQLN & The Brewerie bring over 30 world-class brewers to Union Station
- 10 Five & 20 Spirits**
The rise of craft whiskey in Erie
- 11 Considering the City**
Fighting to Save the Villa Chapel
- 12 If We Were You**
Here's what we would do
- 16 Music Reviews**
- 17 The i Shuts**
The crooked i goes out with a bang, not a whimper

What the crooked i meant to the Erie music scene can't be overstated. It was a place that supported every genre, giving local musicians a space to improve and hone their skills, and exposed Erie residents to touring acts they could before only see in Buffalo, Cleveland, or Pittsburgh.

In just four years, the crooked i reshaped how Erie's cultural vibe was heard, experienced, and felt and it made the city a cooler place to live in or visit. And like many good things, it took its final bow and went off into the night at the height of its success.

The clear question lingering now is: Where do we go from here?

Venues have closed before, just as new ones have sprouted up. But there was something recognizably different about the crooked i. "It makes Erie feel, well, like a big city — one with a real culture scene," someone said during the final show.

Whether you believe it or not, that statement is telling: Erie isn't seen as a "big city" (read: culturally progressive — or at the very least, culturally dynamic and diverse).

There's a simple argument against this: We have a great museum and gallery spaces throughout the city, and there are other venues offering live music. We have amazing restaurants, talented artists, and a population energetic about the creative welfare of our city.

But could we have more outlets? What did the crooked i give us that we've lost? How could Erie be better, have more places to channel that energy as not be seen as a cultural desert?

At the same time the city focuses on re-shaping its image — the transition from manufacturing to *other*, to *new*, to *different* — our cultural well-being is in need of examination. Jobs and opportunities will attract people to Erie, and can resolve that brain-gain, brain-drain issue. But people only spend a quarter of their time working. The rest, well, that's to be determined by a city's cultural landscape.

To retain people, to grow the gain, Erie needs to offer more than just places to work — it needs a stronger source of cultural enrichment, a wider exposure to the arts, a clear and convincing means of improving quality of life. Now — as we stand of the precipice of our future, we need to realize that cultural investment is just as important as economic and educational investment, because if the stigma of "there's nothing to do in Erie" continues, those moving to Erie for an education will likely move again once they've finished that certificate, that degree — they'll move to somewhere where they perceive there is actually something to do.

Street Corner Soapbox

The Continuing Collapse of Chris Christie

By: Jay Stevens

It's never good to peak too early in a presidential race. Being the frontrunner means having a big target attached to you. It means enduring weeks or months of negative rhetoric, attack ads, and flung mud.

Ask Hillary Clinton. Ask Mario Cuomo, Rudy Giuliani, and Ted Kennedy. Ask Al Gore, who's still accused of saying he "invented the Internet" – although he said no such thing. Ask Howard Dean, who still has to joke about "the scream" – that brief moment of unrestrained emotion on an Iowa stage that helped sink his 2004 bid for the Democratic nomination. Your opponents will find anything, any unguarded moment or slipup, any ambiguous sound bite and just beat it to death.

And there's the special case of New Jersey governor Chris Christie.

You know the guy: the sharp-tongued, erm, husky Republican governor who made his name breaking up New Jersey political cronyism and ran for his state's highest office on a platform of cutting government spending – taking specific aim at the pensions of public employees, of schoolteachers. Which he later did, partly through a town-hall campaign famous for confrontations with teachers and other everyday people – slinging names like "jerk" or "idiot" or "thugs" at them and becoming a YouTube sensation for it.

He's also famous for his praise of President Barack Obama and the 2012 White House reaction to Hurricane Sandy – a storm that ravaged the Jersey shoreline, doing nearly \$40 billion in damage and killing 37 in that state alone. Christie told reporters the president's reaction had been "outstanding" and working with him was "wonderful." Republicans slammed him for it – those remarks came a month before Obama's re-election bid, and were seen as treasonous. But when a reporter asked him about it, Christie said, "this shows you how broken our political system is. Because I say something nice about someone who does their job well, somehow that takes away my endorsement of Mitt Romney?"

And Christie became the belle of the mainstream press. Here's a guy who isn't a *partisan hack*! Here's a guy who *isn't afraid to get his knuckles bloody*! Here's a guy who *gets things done*! And, lo, he became the pundit favorite, the guy who'd barrel through Washington, smash gridlock, and mock the ideologists. He was the long sought-after *centrist*.

But now his candidacy is done, thanks to "Bridgegate."

You know the story: In September 2013, there was a massive four-day traffic jam in Fort Lee, N.J., as two of the three toll lanes onto the George Washington Bridge into Manhattan were inexplicably closed. A week later, an article appeared in *The Wall Street Journal* suggesting "that the closures could be retribution for [Fort Lee mayor] Sokolich's decision not to endorse



Mr. Christie in his re-election bid in November." And in January of this year, that was confirmed when a local paper acquired emails from Christie's office: his top aides had indeed ordered the closures to "punish" Sokolich.

The news went viral. And Christie went from frontrunner to *also-ran* in the space of about three paragraphs of newsprint.

Only Christie doesn't know it yet.

The first thing Christie did was deny he knew anything about the closures. Next came his friends, who were thrown to the wolves: Bill Baroni and David Wildstein, the Port Authority administrators who closed the lanes for Christie's office, resigned in December. Christie's deputy chief of staff, Bridget Kelly, who ordered the closures, was fired in January.

And then came the "whitewash," as *The New York Times* described the recent result of an investigation by lawyers hired by Christie at taxpayer expense. "To no one's surprise," went the *Times* editorial, "Mr. Christie's lawyers have found his hands to be clean." Worse still, the investigators blamed the scandal on Kelly's emotional state and recent romantic life – language which Kelly's lawyers called "venomous, gratuitous, and inappropriate sexist remarks."

Christie, meanwhile, is plowing on. He went to CPAC, to woo conservative activists. He met with wealthy Republican donors in Florida. He flew out to Las Vegas to speak to the Republican Jewish Coalition.

Here's a guy who *won't back down from a fight*!

Now Christie's combative streak only underscores how serious this scandal is and how un-

**The George Washington Bridge:
The epicenter of "Bridgegate."**

fit Christie is to hold any office – let alone the presidency.

For starters, a traffic jam resonates. We've all been stuck in traffic. None of us likes it. And here's a guy who *caused a four-day snarl*! Emergency vehicles were ensnared. School busses were ensnared. *Somebody could have died!*

At best, Christie's telling the truth. He didn't know anything. But it's still an indictment of his leadership. *His people are petty, retributive thugs!* And they operated in a political world where they thought it was okay to be petty, retributive thugs. Where maybe being petty and thuggish was valued, not seen as character flaws. Here's a guy that *wants these kind of people working for him!* Here's a guy who's *a bully!*

The problem with hiring a bare-knuckle bruiser for the job is that he'll engage in a lot of bare-knuckle bruising. And the problem with hiring a bully is that he'll bully. And when you put a bullying, bare-knuckle bruiser like that in public office, the people who suffer for it are the ordinary schlubs he apparently doesn't give a rat's ass about: the public.

And that's us.

Jay Stevens can be contacted at Jay@ErieReader.com, and you can follow him on Twitter @ [Snevets_Yaj](https://twitter.com/Snevets_Yaj). To follow this story or comment, scan the QR code or visit <http://erirdr.com/6811e>



News of the Weird

By: Chuck Shepherd

Sentimental Journey

Kevin Walters, 21, staged an emotional, though unsuccessful, one-man, chained-to-the-door protest in March to prevent the closing of a commercial rest stop along the Jane Addams Memorial Tollway near Des Plaines, Ill. Ultimately, the Des Plaines Oasis, housing shops and fast-food restaurants, will be demolished as part of a highway-widening project. Walters told WBBM Radio that his poignant attachment to the oasis was because his parents had told him it was where he was conceived as they returned home from a 1992 Phil Collins concert. [WBBM, 3-14-2014]

Cultural Diversity

In tribe-controlled areas of India, children who disrespect their families by marrying outside their castes are still, occasionally, put to death despite strong national laws. However, enlightenment is advancing, and Mr. Sidhnath Sharma recently filed a lawsuit instead against his caste-straying son for "destroying the family tradition" and "lowering his father's prestige." Sharma, a lawyer in Patna, India, is demanding that the son pay a monthly royalty of the equivalent of \$163 for the son's now-unauthorized use of the father's name. [The Hindu, 1-25-2014]

Fighter jets from France were forced in February to accompany the hijacked Ethiopian Airlines plane commandeered by the co-pilot, who had diverted the plane to Geneva in order to apply for asylum. The Swiss air force would normally have taken over the mission in its own air space, but the incident occurred at 4:30 a.m., and Swiss air force pilots were likely still asleep, as they work only "regular office hours," beginning at 8 a.m. (French military officials said they are accustomed to covering for Switzerland.) [The Local (Paris), 2-18-2014]

Sweden's foul-smelling canned herring (surstromming) inexplicably raises passions among some traditionalists — which is why it was big news in February when a man found a bulging tin whose contents had been fermenting for about 25 years and reckoned he needed help to "disarm" it, lest it "explode" and damage his cabin. Ruben Madsen of Sweden's Surstromming Academy agreed to attend the can-opening and assured the man that spewing, not explosion, was the likely outcome. [The Local (Oslo), 2-10-2014]

In 2010, News of the Weird reported on the Lenthusatically obese Donna Simpson, who ate meals in front of her webcam so that "chub chasers" could watch her (pay-per-view) growing larger before their eyes. Now comes a South Korean, Ms. Park Seo-yeon, 34, not at all overweight, also on pay-per-view, breaking bread with friend-challenged people desperate to avoid eating

alone, however forced the circumstances. Reuters reported that Park's "gastronomic voyeurism" earns her, some months, the equivalent of more than \$9,000 for her series of two-to-three-hour meals, featuring real-time chatting. [Reuters via Yahoo News, 1-26-2014]

Latest Religious Messages

Pastor Allen Parker conducts services in the nude, for the nude, according to a February report on WWBT-TV (Richmond, Va.). Parker's White Tail Chapel is located on a similarly named nudist resort in Ivor, Va., and even in winter, when disrobing visitors are scarce, the chapel is open for congregants. (In summertime, when naked people abound, the chapel's services are often standing-room-only.) Baring the body to Christ is hardly unusual, Parker reminded, since that's the way we all come into the world. [WWBT-TV, 2-20-2014]

Questionable Judgments

After a Feb. 11 explosion at a natural gas well in Greene County, Pa., killed one worker, burned for four days and caused massive traffic jams and other inconveniences, the public relations response of well-owner Chevron was merely to give away vouchers for pizza and soda at local hangout Bobtown Pizza. Environmentalists were outraged at Chevron's "let them eat cake/pizza" attitude, but CBS News found quite a few locals who supported Chevron's response. (For one thing, Bobtown's pizza is apparently highly regarded.) [CBS News, 3-7-2014]

Injudicious: (1) James Degorski, 41, serving life in prison for a cold-blooded mass murder during a botched restaurant robbery in Palatine, Ill., in 1993, was awarded \$451,000 by a jury recently after a prison guard punched him in the face, necessitating complex surgery. Said a parent of one of Degorski's victims, "If broken bones are worth a half-million, how much are (the seven victims') lives worth?" (2) Former star soccer goalie Bruno Fernandes de Souza, 28, serving 22 years in prison in Brazil for the murder of his girlfriend and feeding of part of her body to his dogs, was granted work-release in March by prison officials — with the "work" assignment being to play soccer for a Brazilian pro team that, upon learning of the rehabilitation law, signed him to a contract and urged his release. [ABC News via WHAS-TV (Louisville), 3-10-2014] [Daily Mail (London), 3-12-2014]

The Cutting Edge

Among the filings published in November by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office was Google's 2012 application covering a throat tattoo — actually a mobile skin "microphone" with lie-detecting capability, presumably to encourage truthfulness from people as they speak. The application explains how to couple an electronic skin tattoo to a mobile device, using "flexible substrate." (2) Among the "secrets" revealed recently on a BBC television special on South America's beauty-queen obsession was one by Ms. Wi May Nava, first runner-up for Miss Venezuela 2013. Nava had a patch of plastic mesh sewn onto her tongue to create so much pain when she ate that she was forced to stick to liquids. [The Register, 11-8-2013] [Gawker, 2-6-14]

The Way I See It

Erie's Water Woes: The Ongoing Erie Water Works and Millcreek Township Water Authority Dispute

By: Rebecca Styn

The amount of money that continues to get washed away due to the ongoing dispute between the Erie Water Works and the Millcreek Township Water Authority is a little like their previous rate issue — it just keeps getting higher.

Litigation between the two entities began back in April 2010 because the Millcreek authority claimed that the Erie Water Works was charging unfairly for bulk water purchases. However, at that time, all three of the Millcreek Township Supervisors urged the Water Authority not to initiate the litigation because the township was negotiating with Erie Water Works in the hope of striking a deal for the Erie utility's lease of the Millcreek water system.

At that time, George Riedesel was the executive director of the Millcreek Water Authority and went on record stating that: "The issue predates the lease talks and needs to be resolved. You can't ignore it by simply executing the lease and ignoring the overcharge that's

the total operating loss of the Millcreek Water Authority since 2010 and through 2013 was at \$1.5 million, a much greater loss than originally estimated. According to the Millcreek Water Authority's 2013 annual operating summary, the group currently serves 7,269 customers. This ends up being a loss of about \$50 a year per customer. By the end of 2014, that operating loss is estimated by Millcreek to be a total of \$2.3 million, more than twice what was originally anticipated.

As for those payments being withheld? If the Millcreek Water Authority is ultimately successful in this litigation, they will not have to payback these withheld payments. To date, they have withheld just over \$1 million. So if successful, the overall loss would drop from \$2.3 million to \$1.3 million.

Yet, the legal fees are staggering. The Millcreek Water Authority has spent just shy of \$1 million on this litigation to date. Erie Water Works has also spent a large sum — currently \$800,000.

It is an example of the classic "prisoners dilemma" (an example of why two parties might not cooperate, even if it appears that it is in their best interests to do so). Both groups would be much better off if they struck a com-

promised deal, but currently each is walking a fine line, especially Millcreek Authority because not only are they paying the litigation, but they're already operating at a loss.

If Millcreek loses the lawsuit, they would be out a couple million dollars, and if Erie loses the case, they would be out close to two million. Obviously both parties are holding firm, because although it may not make sense to fight this battle, looking at the amount to date, whoever wins this litigation will be much better off in the long run.

Not only will Millcreek recoup the litigation expenses to date, but they would also save a significant amount of money in water purchases per year. On the flip side, Erie Water Works would actually increase their revenue by the same amount that Millcreek is looking to save.

Unfortunately, these solutions don't happen without the expense to the ratepayers.

Love? Hate? Agree? Disagree? I want to hear from you. Email me at rStyn@ErieReader.com, and follow me on Twitter @rStyn. To follow this story or comment, scan the QR code or visit <http://erirder.com/7vzp9>



The Millcreek Water Authority has spent just shy of \$1 million on this litigation to date. Erie Water Works has also spent a large sum — currently \$800,000.

occurred."

In August of that year, the Water Authority put the Water Works on notice — they would be seeking mediation. And at that same time, the organization started withholding payments from Erie Water Works because of what those in charge perceived to be as unfair rates.

And the lawsuit (along with the withholding) continues today — with no end in sight.

Important to note, however, is that during that time, Riedesel retired his post and David Sterrett became the new executive director — and had the misfortune of walking into the fine mess that Riedesel helped to create.

In a recent open letter to the public, Millcreek Township Supervisor Richard Figaski challenged the current litigation issue.

He estimates (based off the actual budgets)

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GEEKED OUT

Edinboro Game Expo

By: John Lindvay

Gamers, unite – locally! Why this rally cry? Because Edinboro University's student-run Game Developers Club is hosting its first ever Edinboro Game Expo, and this is our chance to help support local game development. Finally, there's an event in the Erie area where developers and game enthusiasts can check out what the local scene has been brewing.

Most gamer geeks out there might know of gaming expos like E3, PAX, IndieCade, or GDC, and as one of the gamer geeks, I normally have to travel all around the country to attend these, as I'm always in search of the next big indie game. But thanks to David Dampier, president of the Edinboro Game Design Club, that excitement and celebration is being brought to our area.

These types of events are important for many reasons. First, for the aspiring developers it is always important to show off your game to the public and get that precious feedback from players, and second, it helps raise awareness in our area about game development and advocacy for indie games. Many of you play games, I'm sure of it, but how many of you know that some of those games you play on your phone or console were made by small teams in cities just like our own? Take for example one of my favorite games of last year, *Legend of Dungeon*, was made by a lovely couple living in Oneonta, N.Y. Oneonta has a population of roughly one-tenth that of Erie.

So let's talk about some of the games that are already confirmed to be showing there. *Justice and the Void* is an Edinboro University senior class project and is a game about a supernatural empowered investigative reporter who's out for justice. Penn State Erie, The Behrend College also has a title showing off at the expo. Shane Shafferman is showing his game, *Colorful Life*, a four-player cooperative puzzle game where players need to work together to escape a maze.

EGX's organizer David Dampier is showing his game, *Battle At Picnic Park*, a first-person shooter — think *Call of Duty* — where players defend a picnic armed with a hot dog gun. David describes it as a sample game to demonstrate development using a tool called Unity.

A quick aside: Unity is a robust developing environment that – in just the last few years – has become the defacto tool used by all aspiring developers, from rookies to veterans alike. Unity was designed to be so accessible that literally anyone can make a game with it in a short amount of time. Don't be mistaken to think that it's just for students and newbies; Unity was used by the massive game developer Blizzard, as they made that *World of Warcraft* game, and their newest and highly addictive game, *Hearthstone*. Unity has helped level the playing field and enables anyone who is willing to get into the game development industry.

Erie and Edinboro could do a lot to foster the game development industry here, with all the schools, low living costs, and accessibility to the nearby larger cities. So help support the individuals who are living in our community and are trying to create something new and exciting.

EGX is not only hosting games for us to play but has also assembled an amazing group of bands to play through the event. For its inaugural event, David has lined up Spethz, GNOSiS, With Signs Following, and Special Guest. They will also be hosting a cosplay contest, where attendees are welcome to dress in costume after their favorite video game/comic book/anime character. There will also be game tournaments with a \$5 entrance fee. Games to be played for this event are *Super Smash Bros. Brawl* and *Super Street Fighter 4 Arcade Edition*.

This April 12 be sure to head down to Edinboro Off Campus Recreation Center at 5 p.m. and plop down your \$3 admission and support community members who are trying to create new and engaging experiences for us to play.

John Lindvay can be contacted at jlindvay@ErieReader.com, and you can follow him on Twitter @FightStrife. To follow this story or comment, scan the QR code or visit <http://erirdr.com/1c2sd>



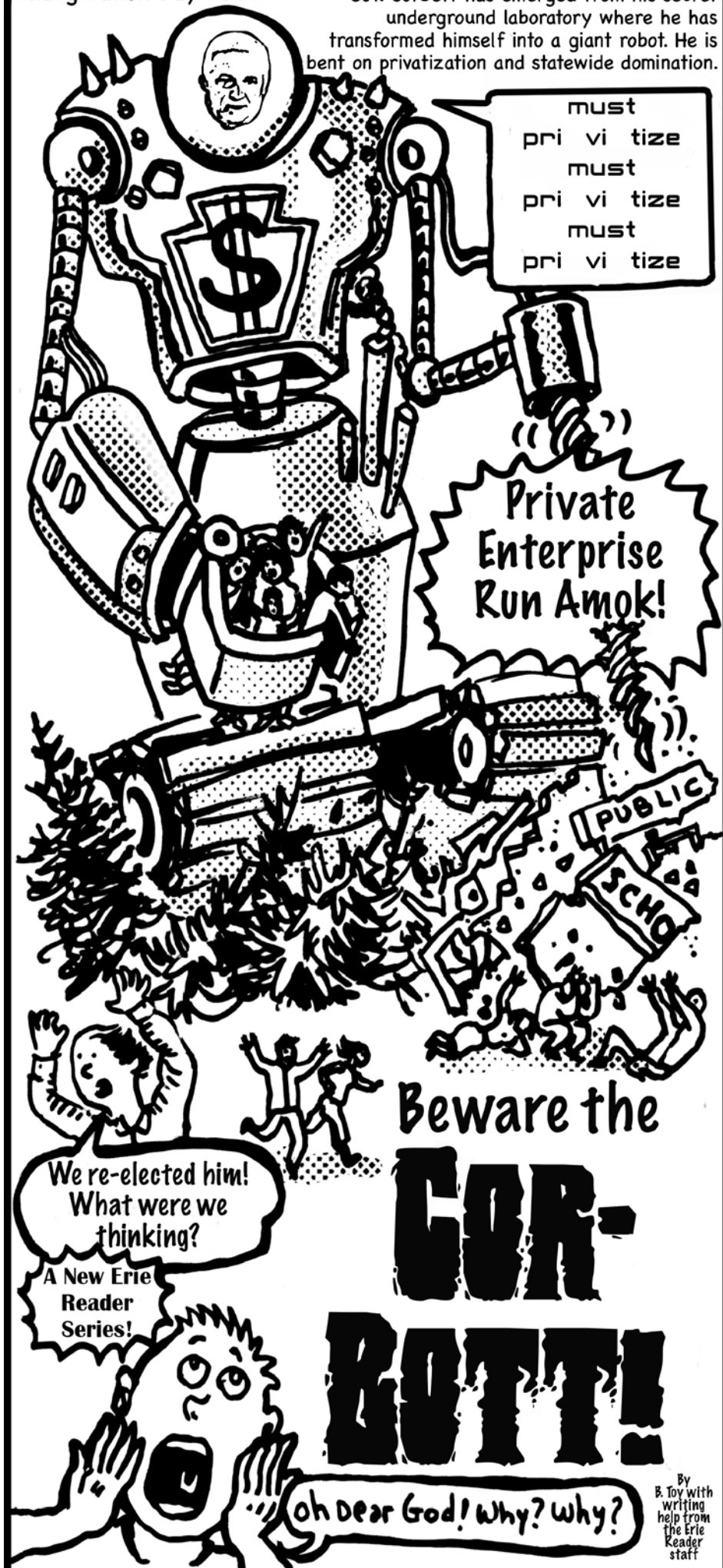
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JUST TOYIN' WITCHA

By: B. Toy

Inauguration Day 2015:

Gov. Corbett has emerged from his secret underground laboratory where he has transformed himself into a giant robot. He is bent on privatization and statewide domination.



By B. Toy with writing help from the Erie Reader staff



Sam Shull

Wood ducks begin their northern migration in March, and many will find their soul mates out on Presque Isle.

rest, repeat every now and then their caresses, and at length, having sealed the conjugal compact, fly off to the woods to search for a large woodpecker's hole."

Oh, my. Unlike many waterfowl, wood ducks do not nest on the ground, so the woodpecker hole Audubon mentions is one of the several choices for a nest site. Any hollow cavity, natural or created by other animals, is chosen, sometimes up to 200 feet above the ground. At Presque Isle and other human-managed natural areas, wood duck boxes are erected in wetlands, the birds' preferred habitat, to compensate for what nature may not provide.

The height serves the ducks well, as many typical predators cannot reach the nest. It does, however, create a challenging rite of passage for young wood ducks.

By late March or April at Presque Isle, the 10-12 eggs produced by a wood duck pair will have hatched into ducklings no bigger than four inches tip to tail with small wing stubs projecting awkwardly away from their bodies.

The day after they hatch, the female wood duck flies out of the nest, and starts calling. With little hesitation, each duckling climbs to the lip of the opening in the tree and courageously leaps, free falling to the ground. They belly flop into cold water or bounce on a (hopefully) soft forest floor. If their nest is 200 feet above the ground, that would be like a human infant jumping from a sixty-story building.

Remarkably, they are rarely harmed, and after a couple of good shakes, they waddle behind their mother to water, hop in, and start feeding themselves.

If you are at Presque Isle in the coming months, be sure to visit sites along the lagoons to look for male wood ducks displaying for the ladies or for small fuzzy projectiles falling from the sky.

Which is way better than prom.

Mary Birdsong can be contacted at mBirdsong@ErieReader.com, and you can follow her on Twitter @Mary_Birdsong. To follow this story or comment, scan the QR code or visit <http://erirdr.com/om911>



A Young Duck's Fancy

Exploring Presque Isle's Wood Duck Migration

By: Mary Birdsong

"In the spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love," wrote Tennyson. Maybe it's the imminent warmth or increasing daylight, but whatever the cause, hormones do start racing this time of year and soon males are pulling out all the stops in the hopes of finding agreeable females, hoping for a dance with them.

Prom? Nope. Birds. Courting males, of any species, are known for their outrageous, sometimes comic, courtship behavior, and birds are no exception to this rule.

March begins the great northern migration when birds leave their wintering ground in the south and return to the north to find their perfect mate and produce the next generation. Presque Isle State Park and the surrounding area will host these travelers, whether they are coming here to stay or moving on towards their summer homes farther north. Either way, the waters and woods in this area hold the promise of watching male birds vie for the attention of females. One of the most interesting and mind-bogglingly beautiful of these birds is the wood duck (their scientific name *Aix sponsa* means, roughly, "duck in bridal clothing"). Luckily for us, wood ducks come to Presque Isle for its many quiet lagoons and stay to nest, giving us a front-row seat to the life cycle of these amazing creatures.

The male wood duck's plumage is striking, with iridescent chestnut, blue, tan, and black areas set off by brilliant white borders. His eyes are red and his bill is orange white and black. He has a green and white crest that jauntily sweeps back. Though designed to catch a female's eye, those brilliant feathers at one time put wood ducks

at risk. According to Jerry McWilliams, senior author, *Birds of Pennsylvania*, by the early twentieth century their numbers were in steep decline thanks to the clear-cutting of mature forests, market hunters, and the feather trade. Conservation efforts eventually restored their numbers and the population is now healthy, though they are still legally hunted and are sought after by fishermen who prize the yellow flank feathers for fly tying.

When looking to fill their dance cards, several male wood ducks will surround a prospective female, puffing out their chests, raising those crests and throwing back their heads with a hearty snap. Once a male has captured the attention of a potential mate, things heat up:

John James Audubon suggested in 1840 that we: "observe that fine drake, how gracefully he raises his head and curves his neck! As he bows before the object of his love, he raises for a moment his silken crest. His throat is swelled, and from it there issues a guttural sound, which to his beloved is as sweet as the song of the wood thrush to its gentle mate. The female, as if not unwilling to manifest the desire to please which she really feels, swims close by his side, now and then caresses him by touching his feathers with her bill, and shows displeasure toward any other of her sex that may come near. Soon the happy pair separate from the

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The Brewer's Chris Sirianni (left) and WQLN's Tom New are partnering up again to bring the Erie Micro Brew Festival to The Union Station Saturday, April 12.

brewery, founded in 1758 – made my favorite Christmas Beer this year, a warming spicy concoction they titled “Winter Welcome.” Rouge, on the other hand, is legendary for being among the first breweries to make truly “big” beers. Their Dead Guy Ale is a thick, malty blast of taste-bud-crushing flavor. I am hoping they bring some of their more off-the-wall beers for us to try, like the chocolate/peanut butter/banana ale or the pale ale flavored with juniper.

This event stands apart from other nearby beer festivals because of all the brewers that are there. It's not just volunteers and employees pouring. Organizers Sirianni and New put a lot of effort into making the participants happy so they will show up year after year. With few exceptions, the person filling your glass will be someone directly involved in crafting the beer you are drinking.

This means that you get to meet and talk to Andrew Maxwell from the Rivertowne Pourhouse. Ask him how he managed to make a pineapple beer that is so impossibly yummy. John Najeway from Thirsty Dog can tell you the stories behind each of the pooches pictured on his labels. You can talk to Erie Beer Society President Jeff McCullor and homebrewer Steve Anthony who are bringing samples from their new venture – The Erie Ale Works. (I can't tell you how excited I am about this new microbrewery coming to Erie this year. I'm all a-tingle!) And of course you can join the unruly army of admirers crowding around Sprague Farm's table offering up loud toasts – Prost!

Just like the patrons, the brewers and owners of these small businesses come for the camaraderie. They love to hang out with us – people who also have a passion for good beer – but this event also lets them let down their hair and enjoy the company of their fellow brewers. After most beer festivals, vans are packed, kegs hoisted, tables folded, and people head home. Here, brewers stay late for dinner provided by the Brewer. They laugh and joke try each other's creations long after the doors have closed and we lucky customers have all gone home.

Owners Brian and Minnie Sprague of Sprague Farm and Brew Works are flying home early from the national Craft Brewers Conference in Denver just so they can pour beers at Erie's Micro Brew Festival. Sprague Farm won the fan favorite brewery vote two years ago, and when asked what makes their corner of the room so popular with the attendees, Minnie says, “Oh, we're just wonderful people.” Then she smiles and secretly

Brad Triana

Beer Geek Heaven

WQLN & The Brewerie Bring Over 30 World-class Brewers to Union Station

By: Bryan Toy

A couple of Thursdays ago, I was at the Plymouth with some friends for import night. Import night is awesome because a beer lover such as myself can have the chance to inexpensively try some brews he's never had before. Since much of a beer geek's life revolves around the pursuit of delicious beer and enjoying the company of friends around such beer, I was a very happy drinker that particular Thursday.

As friends are apt to do, someone bought me a beer. The evening had just gotten even better – or so I thought. Glancing down at the label, I noticed the signature green and red of the corporate identity. I cringed inwardly (one does not cringe outwardly when one's friend buys him a beer: Very bad manners, that). Speculating that perhaps this particular swill was not as bad as I remembered it to be, I took a pull off the bottle. “See?” my inner voice said, “It's pretty good. You used to love this stuff in college. Nope. Not bad at all...”

My inner voice is an idiot. Who was I kidding? It was awful. As soon as that particular skunky funk hit my nostrils, I was transported back to a world where the aroma of stale pools of mass-produced corporate beer permeated the frat house every Saturday morning. I smiled at

my friend, thanked him, sneaked off to the other room, and left the bottle on the bar. I was just not that thirsty. There is a saying among beer geeks: “Life's too short to drink crappy beer.” Luckily, none of us have to! Because this is the golden age of beer. Glorious sweet ambers and strong coffee stouts are being brewed all over the world by a new generation of brewers who take their craft very, very seriously. And we craft brew fans can all take advantage of the fact that it's the start of the beer festival season.

WQLN kicks it off right every year by assembling thirty-plus of the finest brewers anywhere for two sessions of micro-brewed awesomeness. And they are back this year with the eighth annual Erie Micro Brew Festival at the Brewer. Tickets are thirty-three bucks in advance and an extra five dollars at the door for

the chance to taste more than a hundred individual beers – and not a PBR or Miller Lite in the bunch. I do not recommend that you wait to buy: According to organizer Tom New from WQLN, the second session always sells out and tickets for the first session this year are going fast.

But which session to go to? The afternoon session runs from 1 until 4 p.m. It is usually less crowded than the evening session, but even a sell-out does not mean long lines for tasting: people love to chat up the brewers, but are courteous and don't hold up the line. Queues move pretty fast, so your glass won't be empty for long. Host Chris Sirianni expanded the tasting rooms a couple years ago into all four rooms of The Concourse and Brewer. Now there is plenty of elbowroom for hoisting your frothy beverage. The evening session

runs from 5 until 8 p.m.

You will find slightly different crowds at each session. The early group tends to be more connoisseur-heavy, with the conversation revolving around the subject of beer, food, wine, cigars, art, and literature. The late crowd also talks about their love of beer, but they are more likely to discuss what bands are playing out later; either way, the beer is delicious and the people are friendly. If you have trouble meeting new people at social events, I guarantee you will not have that difficulty here. If you never know what to say to strangers, just ask them what they think about the contents of their glass. No one is a stranger at the Micro Brew Fest.

Sirianni says that if you want to try every single hard-to-find specialty beer, go to the first session. Occasionally, there is a run on a particularly awesome selection and the keg empties quickly. But don't despair. With the current total at 39 brewers, there will be plenty of new suds to try.

Kalamazoo, Mich.-based Bells Brewery, for instance, will be pouring a rare and expensive golden rye called “Smitten.” The brewers from Rust Belt in Youngstown, Ohio are making a return after a two-year absence. Gordon Biersch, a well-known brewery in California, will debut a selection of tasty ales and lagers from its new brewpub in Buffalo (How can he go wrong with a name like “Biersch?”). Last year international heavy-hitters Rouge and Samuel Smith's brought more than a dozen beers each. Samuel Smith's – Yorkshire, England's oldest

mutter, “actually, we pay them.”

Sprague Farm is only one of the many representatives of Crawford County that will be there. With three other microbreweries to its name, Crawford County may make more craft beer per capita than anywhere else in America. Home brewers in Crawford County actually outnumber those in Erie. Many of both groups will bring samples of their wares.

If you are one to shun drink made by “amateurs,” don’t be. Remember, 90 percent of the professional brewers here began as home brewers. The best lager I drank last year was a dry pilsner one of members of H.A.Z.A.R.D. home brewers brought. With so many beers to try, it’s rare to go back for seconds on anything, but I managed to refill my glass three times with this ambrosia.

The other spectacular taste discovery last year was the crowd favorite, VooDoo Brewing Company’s Cowbell Imperial Oatmeal Milk Stout. This small-batch nectar of the Gods was crowned the finest malt-forward beer of the festival by the judges from the Erie Better Beer Bureau (check out their reviews at eriebetterbeer.com). If VooDoo does not bring another keg of this sweet brew this year, I shall be very put out. I got a beer fever, and the only prescription is – More Cowbell!

Let’s not forget the other reason that this beer festival is special: All the profits go to support WQLN – Erie’s amazing public broadcasting company. We may take it for granted, but there are very few cities the size of Erie that have a cultural resource like this. With *The World Cafe*, *The TED Radio Hour*, and *Downton Abbey*, we in Northwest Pennsylvania get the same information and entertainment as the big cities.

WQLN keeps us connected to the wider world and keeps us engaged in the country’s conversation. This fundraiser makes more money for WQLN than an entire week’s pledge drive. When you buy a ticket, you support an important regional nonprofit and get to drink great beer with great people.

And that – just like all of the great craft brew that soon fill The Brewerie – is worth raising a glass to. Skoll!

The Erie Micro Brew Festival will be held at The Brewerie at Union Station, located at 123 W. 14th St. Saturday, April 12. The afternoon session runs 1 to 4 p.m., and the evening session runs 5 to 8 p.m. Tickets are \$33 in advance and are available at WQLN.org or for cash at the Brewerie and Beer and Pop Discount Warehouse.

Bryan Toy can be contacted at bToy@ErieReader.com.

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Rebecca Styn



Rebecca Styn

Five & 20 Spirits

The Rise of Craft Whiskey in Erie

By: Rebecca Styn

In Westfield, N.Y., nestled off Route 20, down a gravel-laden road, sits a simple, yet contemporary facility known as Five & 20 Spirits. The owners aren’t new to the industry; in fact, it is a name you probably know well. They are the Mazza’s – a family that boasts a successful wine operation that dates back nearly 40 years. The new building showcases floor to ceiling glass windows, offering the outsider an ant’s eye-view of the towering oak barrels that reside on other side of the glass.

In addition to the oak barrels, inside the glass-framed wall is a 105-gallon copper-pot still, which was originally imported by German artisan Christian Carl – used for distilling spirits. In the back is a tasting room, which overlooks the 80-acre farmland that will eventually be surrounded with crops of various agricultural products that will be used in the distilling (and eventual brewing) operations.

While the brewing part has yet to come to fruition (it’s on the horizon), the Mazza’s have already tapped into another form of fine spirits – whiskey.

The term itself comes from the Gaelic uisge, a shortened version of *uisge beatha* meaning “water of life.” Whiskey – this water of life – was originally used as a medicine for both internal anesthetic use and as an external antibiotic (sound reasoning I still use from time to time).

But expanding from wine to whiskey is a big leap. And that’s just the beginning of the worlds of beverages the Mazzas are exploring.

“We’ve been in the wine business a little over 40 years now,” says Mario Mazza, one of the owners of Five & 20 Spirits. “I came back into the wine industry about eight years ago. At that point, we started distilling on a very, very small scale back in our Mayville location.”

At that point, production was more of an ancillary thing and the Mazza’s didn’t see it as a core function. But that would soon change.

“As time went on, we started to see an opportunity and growth in the craft spirits market,” explains the son of Robert and Kathleen and brother to Vanessa Mazza, whom all take ownership in the family business. “We started mainly doing contract work for

some of our clients, but nearly three years ago, we started creating some of our own products and doing trial batching with whiskeys. We realized very quickly we needed to expand. We envisioned a place where we would have the land to grow the grains on site and a grain-to-glass operation and have a bit of space to grow.”

As for what a grain-to-glass operation is? “It means that farming & production is planned in such a way that the agricultural products that we use to craft our beverages – that will end up in your glass – don’t have to travel very far.”

And it doesn’t end there.

“We currently have a licensing application to add a brewing operation, which is slated for sometime this summer. We are also looking to craft gin and hopefully other products. This will allow us to bring wine, beer, and spirits all under one roof – thereby making us a unique operation and probably one of only a half dozen or so in the entire United States that has all three in one facility.”

In addition, every phase of their operation is meant to emphasize sustainable efforts. “We’re building a treatment facility, which uses our spent grain to provide a nutrient source to grow microbes and invertebrates, which actually grow fish so

that we can grow 25 thousand pounds of fish a year – arctic char or trout – in essence taking our byproduct and creating another valuable product.”

Currently, rye and corn whiskeys are the only two available for sale in the tasting room of the facility (aside from a number of their award-winning wines). I had an opportunity try both – and both offered a completely different taste.

The rye whiskey is aged in smaller barrels and is smoother than most other rye whiskeys. It boasts a spicy grain character alongside a hint of caramel and vanilla.

The corn whiskey, on the other hand, is basically moonshine, as it isn’t aged. It is made with a double pot-distilled corn mash. It has a dry, clean finish but offers a sweet and grainy flavor. Both products are 90 proof.

The new location also houses the new Mazza Chautauqua Cellars, which features Premium New York Wines, Table Wines, Sparkling Wines, Fortified Wines and even Ice Wine of Vidal Blanc. And that brewery Mario mentioned earlier – Five & 20 Brewing – is just over the horizon.

This year, Five & 20 Spirits will be on hand at the Erie MicroBrew Festival, held Saturday, April 12 at The Brewerie at Union Station. Eventgoers will have the chance to sample these two whis-

keys, alongside hopefully, another new product: beer schnapps.

“Our beer schnapps is bottled, but the labels aren’t done yet. We are hoping to be able to get some mockups on there so we can offer it,” Mario says. “It’s a product we think the event goers will love.”

Oh, and one other thing.

For those who wonder about the different spellings – that *whiskey* versus *whisky* debate – the superfluous “e” is anything but. Though both are pronounced the same, each spelling denotes a different product. The Scotch and Canadians produce *whisky*, while the Irish and Americans produce *whiskey*. Come Saturday, April 12, Erie imbibers will have the chance to sample and see the future of craft distillery – *whiskey* in particular – in Erie, right along side the art of the craft brew. And no matter the spelling, whiskey is just as much an adventure as it is a drink, as Mark Twain once said: “Too much of anything is bad, but too much of good whiskey is barely enough.”

Rebecca Styn can be contacted at rStyn@ErieReader.com, and you can follow her on Twitter @rStyn.

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The historic Villa Chapel occupies a city block between Eighth and Ninth streets and Liberty and Plum streets and is not protected from demolition.

older homes) move to the new homes. The vacancy of older homes encourages neglect, fosters demolition, and further reduces urban land values, in turn creating more pressure to raise taxes on the remaining city taxpayers. In the long run, demolitions are a bad idea for Erie. Demolitions replace history with parking lots or uninspired new construction. Preservation projects are “green” because they don’t discard the “embodied energy” of the glass, wood, stone, metal, brick, and masonry of the historic building. Preservation projects keep skilled

Year after year Erie neglects, and then bulldozes, its historic buildings. Most of them, built prior to 1950, were made of good materials, feature fine workmanship, and offer a respect for the urban grid.

workers employed at living-wage jobs. Vital, thriving communities embrace a mix of old and new architecture, sometimes encouraging homesteaders to “buy” buildings through “sweat equity.”

Would you intervene if you saw a dog chained outside in the cold? Do you wince when you notice that another building has been torn down?

Eighty years ago, the people of Erie came together to create the Villa Chapel. The 19th century artist William Morris famously said: “Old buildings do not belong to us only;” he believed they “have belonged to our forefathers, and they will belong to our descendants.” A city leader commented that Erie is: “the kind of place that tears down the Villa Chapel for a parking lot.” What kind of place is Erie? As conservationist John C. Sawhill explained: “A society is defined not only by what it creates but, by what it refuses to destroy.”

Civitas members can be reached at their website www.CivitasErie.com, via Facebook at CivitasErie.com, by emailing lisa@civitaserie.com, or by attending their tenth anniversary celebration on April 12 from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. at the LEAF building in Frontier Park, near West Sixth Street. Preservation minded readers may hear more about the chapel from SVC members 1 p.m., Easter Sunday, April 20 at the corner of Ninth and Liberty; and, attend the Preservation Erie Greater Erie Awards fundraiser on May 1 at the Masonic Ballroom.

To follow this story or comment, scan the QR code or visit <http://eridr.com/k1as>



Lisa Austin

Considering the City

Fighting to Save the Villa Chapel

By Civitas members Lisa Austin, Stephen Sonnenberg, and Laurel Swartz

Have you ever seen a dog chained outside in the winter? Erie has ordinances against such cruelty; those concerned can call Animal Enforcement at 868.6924.

Unfortunately, Erie has no laws protecting buildings. Though experts praise the Villa Chapel’s ornate woodwork and stained glass, the modestly-sized chapel, built in 1925, is unheated, leaking, and is being slowly “demolished by neglect.”

The chapel is a key component of a former ecclesiastical compound that fills a city block between Eighth and Ninth streets and Liberty and Plum streets. The historic Sisters of Saint Joseph convent, school, garden, shrine, and chapel are listed on the National Register of Historic places, but this honor is not legal protection for any building in Erie. Property owners can pick up a demolition permit in the morning and bulldoze in the afternoon. Erie could use a City Planner, Demolition Review Board, Historic District ordinances, and a suburban no-growth boundary.

Realizing the chapel’s vulnerability, Preservation Pennsylvania placed it on its Endangered Properties List. But this failed to spur the owners to fix the roof. In 2005, volunteers, including members of Civitas, formed the Save the Villa Chapel (SVC) committee. Hoping to partner with the Erie County Historical Society, the SVC approached then-director, Dr. David Frew, who explained the Society could not focus on preservation. Undaunted, additional volunteers helped establish the 501c3 – the Erie

Center for Design and Preservation – in 2007. Renamed Preservation Erie, the group is compiling an inventory of historic properties that was last updated in the 1970s. Preservation Erie adopted the SVC and serves as its fiscal agent.

The SVC wants to work with the owners of the chapel: Pennrose Properties (80 percent), Sisters of Saint Joseph (10 percent), and the Housing and Neighborhood Development Service – HANDS (10 percent). The SVC raised \$25,000, created a website,

funded roof repairs, and paid for a re-use study with four architects and two-dozen stakeholders. The best proposal features a child-care center on the ground floor to generate income and a multi-use space in the former chapel space.

Before continuing to fundraise, the SVC requested a legal agreement. While Pennrose offered to sell the chapel for a dollar in 2006, HANDS & the SSJ didn’t agree. Finally, in Spring 2013, the SSJ agreed, with conditions, to transfer ownership of the chapel

to Preservation Erie. But at the 11th hour, HANDS reportedly asked the SSJ to delay signing the agreement to give HANDS time to investigate repurposing the chapel themselves.

Fast-forward ten months. On Feb. 15, a realty transfer notice indicated that a new corporation had purchased the chapel. It is not clear what this means for the future, but the chapel clearly isn’t doing any better in the present – it was a tough winter and the roof is leaking again.

Year after year Erie neglects, and then bulldozes, its historic buildings. Most of them, built prior to 1950, were made of good materials, feature fine workmanship, and offer a respect for the urban grid. Architectural details include ornamented entrances and windows, uniform setbacks, and trees-defined streets. Today’s construction is rarely as well-designed or built.

What is driving these demolitions? One reason is land values. There is a big supply of land with lower tax rates outside of the city. To support development, water-mains and utility lines are extended. Owners of open land sell their property to developers. The developers build homes, churches, stores, and industrial parks.

But, our regional population is not growing to fill these new spaces. Instead, folks already living in Erie (in

wed 4.02

FILM presents *Ain't Them Bodies Saints*

This week's film of choice at the Erie Art museum is a romantic drama starring Casey Affleck, Rooney Mara and Ben Foster. First debuting at the 2013 Sundance Film Festival where it won the Cinematography Award in the U.S. Dramatic Category, *Ain't Them Bodies Saints* tells the story of an escaped outlaw and his journey across Texas to reunite with his wife and daughter. Tickets are just \$5.

7 p.m. // 411 State St. // facebook.com/FILMErieArtMuseum

Penn State Behrend Speaker Series presents Laura Ling

Award-winning journalist Laura Ling, host of the E! Network's "E! Investigates," will talk of her "Journey of Hope" in the Reed Union Building as part of Penn State Behrend's Speaker Series. Ling has covered important issues such as Internet censorship in China, slave labor in the Amazon and Mexico's drug war and was even detained for 140 days in 2009 by North Korean soldiers while covering women trafficking. Admission is free and open to the public.

7:30 p.m. // 4701 College Dr. // 898.6171

thurs 4.03

Open Mic Night

We aren't fooling when we say that you amateur musicians out there can have your chance to shine. Head to the Brewerier for Open Mic to deal out some tunes or just check out some other local players strut their musical stuff for a crowd partaking in some pints of craft brews.

7 p.m. // 123 W. 14 St. // brewerier.com

fri 4.04

Bobby Borgia: Lights, Camera, Magic!

Do you believe in magic? Once again, master magician Bobby Borgia returns to the Erie Playhouse stage in an all-new interactive, live magic show where the magic happens to you! Sleight of hand and close up magic combined with a live video feed and state of the art interactive illusions will allow the magic happen to everyone in the audience.

7:30 p.m. // 13 W. 10th St. // 454.2852

April Fools Acoustic Night

Basement Transmissions fans can settle in for a quiet night away with April Fools Acoustic Night. Ethan Oliva of Barlow and Optimistic Apocalypse headline a list of local artists ready to start the weekend off with a few good strums, although given that it's "April Fools"



Continued Photo

The Ahn Trio

While some musical groups can feel like family after bonding through performances and practices, The Ahn Trio already has that connection down pat. South Korean-born sisters Angella, Lucia, and Maria Ahn have been playing together as a classical piano trio since their days attending The Julliard School. Now, they're bringing the family business to the Walker Recital Hall at Mercyhurst University.

The Ahn sisters provide a modern take on chamber music, performing compositions by everyone from French composer Maurice Ravel to English rocker David Bowie with Angella on violin and the twins Lucia and Maria on piano and cello, respectively. Since they were featured in a cover story on Asian-American "Whiz Kids" in a 1987 issue of *TIME Magazine*, The Ahn Trio's ability to blend classical music with more contemporary art forms has led to the sisters being featured in *Vogue* and *GQ* magazines, as well as being named in *People Magazine's* 50 Most Beautiful People in 2003.

Now the Mercyhurst Institute for Arts & Culture is bringing The Ahn Trio in to help play some beautiful music for our listening pleasure. Whether you're a fan of the classics or crave something more modern, these sisters are ready to put on an Ahn-believable show. — Alex Bieler

7 p.m. Thursday, April 3 // 501 E. 38 St. // miac.mercyhurst.edu

night, you never know what you can truly expect.

5:30 to 11:30 p.m. // 1501 State St. // basementtransmissions.com

sat 4.05

Live from the Met - *La Bohème* by Puccini

The Metropolitan Opera Live in HD Presents: Puccini's moving story of young love is the most performed opera in Met history. It's Christmas Eve in Paris, and a young poet

meets the love of his life. Their time together is a poignant picture of poverty and illness, shared by friends. The entrancing set captures the charm and vigor of 19th-century Paris. It's a story of romance, friendship and a struggle for survival in the city of lights. Live from the Met is shown at Mercyhurst Institute for Arts and Culture.

12:55 p.m. // 501 E. 38th St. // 824.3000

Jon Box B-Day Bash

With how much Jon Box has given the Erie music community, it's time to throw the man a proper birthday party. The Jon Box B-

Day Bash will bring together talented singer/songwriters like Erie's own Amber Alley and MCs like Pittsburgh's Crystal Seth together at PACA. Refreshments and d'oeuvres will be available as part of a \$5 cover, a small price to pay to celebrate Box.

7 to 11 p.m. // 1505 State St. // pacai505.com

Darkest Destiny

Wanna see one of Erie's newest hardcore/metal bands play out for the very first time? Then head over to Basement Transmissions for Darkest Destiny's premier show. The all-ages event also features performances from Lowlife (formerly Melrose), Armory Infirmary, and All My Friends Are Dead. Tickets are \$8 pre-sale, and \$10 at the door.

6 p.m. // 1501 State St. // facebook.com/BasementTransmissions

sun 4.06

PACA Artisan Fair

It's no secret that Erie is loaded with talented artists and musicians. This is your chance to check some of them out and help our local economy and benefit the Autism Society of Northwest PA, all in one. Featuring work from 25 local artists and performances by 5 local musical acts, admission for the fair is only a \$1 donation at the Performing Artists Collective Alliance.

12 p.m. - 4 p.m. // 1505 State St. // pacai505.com

On Screen/In Person Series presents *United in Anger: A History of Act-Up*

This film presented by Mercyhurst is a documentary of the AIDS activist movement. From the combined dedication and efforts of a variety of men and women from different cultures and classes to shocking archival footage and inspiring interviews, the film will explore the creation of AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP) and the preparation and implementation of several major actions. Stick around after the film for a Q&A with the filmmaker.

2 p.m. // 501 East 38th St. // miac.mercyhurst.edu

mon 4.07

Annual Take Back the Night March and Community Rally

Join the annual "Take Back the Night March and Community Rally." This event is free and open to the public as men and women of all ages come together as allies in order to take a stand against violence in our community. More than 200 participants are expected to proceed in solidarity with statistics and speakers along the way before concluding the march inside Gannon University's Yehl Ballroom where survivors and others are invited to speak out and break the silence by sharing their stories.

7 to 8:30 p.m. // Perry Square // Allison021@gannon.edu

Music for H.O.P.E

Music can provide many different feelings for people, but on Friday, April 4, the artists performing at PACA will be playing for H.O.P.E.

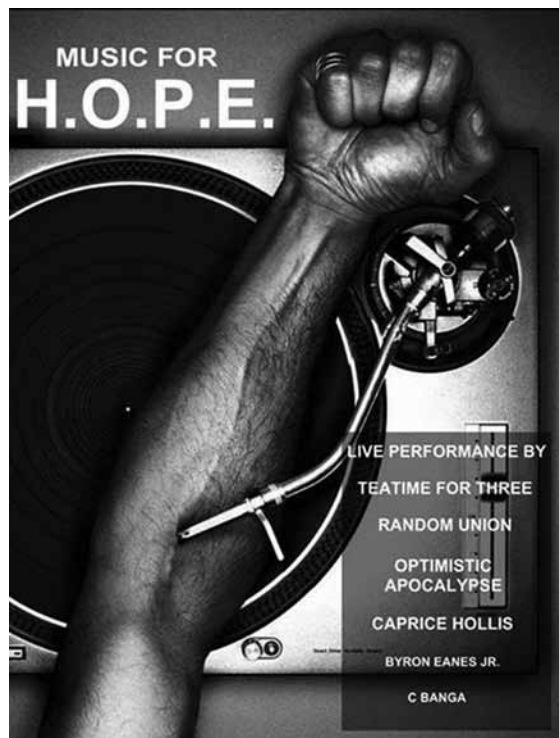
Music for H.O.P.E. will bring six different acts together at the State Street venue to help raise awareness for Heroin Overdose Prevention in Erie, a Facebook page started in January of this year to help educate people about the dangers of heroin and provide an outlet for others to share their stories about the drug so that those suffering from addiction can see that they're not alone.

"Maybe someone will seek help instead of keeping it to themselves," says The Box's Jon Box, who has helped put the event together. "It's an addiction, it's a disease. Sometimes you feel like there's no hope and that's it, that's the end game... there are people that can help you and people that care."

The independent music community certainly cares, so six bands, including rockers Teatime for Three and hip-hop duo Random Union, will help promote H.O.P.E. the best way they know how – through music. In addition to the entertainers, a special speaker and former heroin addict will be providing a first-person perspective of just how horrible drug addiction can be.

With heroin overdoses making frequent appearances in headlines this year, take some time to help spread the word with the independent music community by joining the over 6,000 people who have started following H.O.P.E. in the past few months and check out Music for H.O.P.E. at PACA. — Alex Bieler

5 p.m. Friday, April 4 // 1505 State St. // paca1505.com



tues 4.08

Planetarium Night

A total lunar eclipse is upon us! Before getting your mind blown by the actual eclipse on April 15, you can learn all about that amazing celestial phenomena — what, where, when, why and how — at a special program at Edinboro University's planetarium. It's family-friendly, and admission is free, but reservations are required, so make sure you call ahead to get a place in that space.

7 to 10 p.m. // EUP Cooper Science Center planetarium, 230 Scotland Road // 732.2493

wed 4.09

FILM presents *Enemy*

Head to the Erie Art Museum tonight for Canadian film "Enemy" starring Jake Gyllenhaal in a dual role, Mélanie Laurent and Isabella Rossellini. Adam (Gyllenhaal) is a history professor who sees his exact look-alike in a movie and sets out to search for answers. Sit back, sip some wine and watch the mind-bend unfold. Tickets are just \$5.

7 p.m. // 411 State St. // facebook.com/FILMErieArtMuseum

thurs 4.10

Fudd w/ GNOSiS

If you need to get out of the house for some

pre-weekend fun, It's time for a funky rock-fusion experience at Sherlock's. Erie Alt-funk rockers Fudd and Edinboro jam-dance group GNOSiS will team up for a night of genre-bending musical madness to get people dancing on a Thursday night.

10 p.m. to 2 a.m. // 508 State St. // 453.7760

Edinboro Film Series presents *Goldfinger*

Based on the novel by Ian Fleming, 1964's "Goldfinger" is the third film of the James Bond series and stars Sean Connery as Bond who, while investigating gold smuggling, unearths a plot by gold tycoon Auric Goldfinger to attack the U.S. Bullion Depository at Fort Knox. A financial success, this film is the first of the Bond films to win an Academy Award. Tickets are just \$5.

8:30 p.m. // 217 Meadville St., Edinboro // events.edinboro.edu

fri 4.11

Keynote Speakers' Series presents: Bryon Stevenson

Hear — and listen — to the words of a man whose advocacy is credited with helping transform how the U.S. justice system deals with violent young offenders when Bryon Stevenson, founder and executive director of the Equal Justice Initiative, joins the 'Keynote Speakers' series at Allegheny College in Mead-



GET IN THE GAME WITH VME CORPORATE GAMES

VME Corporate Games will take place on Saturday, June 21st, on the Villa Maria Elementary School campus. Teams of 10 will compete in a series of games (think dodgeball, corn hole, relay race, etc.) and try to win a year's worth of bragging rights as the winner of the Games!

The cost is \$50 / person, \$500 / team and includes t-shirts and lunch.

For more information or to find registration forms, check out vmecorporategames.org or call 838.5451 x223

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Armerie 1913

If imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, then several Erie artists will be providing a massive tribute for Armerie 1913. Fifty of the Erie area's best artists will have their work on display at the Bayfront Gallery to help honor the 1913 International Exhibition of Modern Art, where works by famous creators such as Pablo Picasso, Henri Rousseau, and Henri Matisse were shown in a three-city demonstration which started in New York City's 69th Regiment Armory.

Even more, each of the 50 regional artists adopted an artist from the original show, so while one submittal could be inspired by Marcel Duchamp's conceptual pieces, another could provide homage to George Braque's work in Cubism. More than 100 years after the original Armory show, the art it displayed is still having a profound effect. Armerie 1913 dips back into history to appreciate the exhibitions impact while providing a new twist — or 50 — along the way. — Alex Bieler

11 a.m. to 5 p.m. April 12, 13, 18, 19, 20, 25, 26, and 27 // 17 W. Dobbins Landing // 455.6632



Pablo Picasso



Andrea Gibson - By Maria De Neja

ville. A Harvard graduate, Stevenson has won national acclaim for his work challenging bias against the poor and people of color in the criminal justice system. There is no cost to attend.

7 p.m. // Allegheny College Ford Chapel // 332.3100

sat 4.12

Erie Maritime Museum Little Mates Easter Egg Hunt

Ahoy, Little Mates! Hop on down to the Erie Maritime Museum for the Little Mates Easter Egg Hunt. Decorate your own Easter bag, create an Easter Bunny craft, take a tour of the museum and ship & visit with the Easter Bunny himself. Reservations required by Friday, April 4.

11 a.m. to 2 p.m. // 150 E. Front St. // 452.2744 ext 222

Pale Green Stars w/ Potwhole

Get a bit of color in your cheeks with Pale Green Stars at PACA. The Syracuse N.Y.-based alt-country trio will make the trip to Erie to team up with local gypsy tonk troupe Potwhole to create a night full of furious strumming. They may be Pale Green, but these guys can put on a healthy showing.

9 p.m. to midnight // 1505 State St. // pac1505.com

Edinboro Game Expo 2014

Games, music, and happiness, oh my! The Edinboro Game Expo is coming to the Edinboro University off-campus rec center, combining your love of fun games and rocking music for just a \$3 cover. Enter tournaments for *Super*

Smash Brothers: Brawl and *Ultimate Marvel vs. Capcom* and watch electronic alt-rockers Spethz and dance fusion band GNOSiS all in one place of nerdy glory.

5 to 11 p.m. // 219 Meadville St. // 732.1605

sun 4.13

Langer Film Series presents *Mademoiselle C*

If you are a lover of fashion, you won't want to miss this film documenting leader of modern fashion Carine Roitfeld and the launch of her new magazine "CR Fashion Book." Over-flowing with fashion-world glamour, director Fabien Constant goes behind closed doors to show rare glimpses into both the professional and personal life of this revered fashionista. Tickets are just \$6.

2 p.m. // 501 East 38th St. // miac.mercyhurst.edu

Empty Bowls Hunger Awareness Dinner

This year's Empty Bowls Dinner vendors include: Bertrand's Bistro, The Brewerier, Joe Root's Grill, Molly Brannigans, Pufferbelly, U Pick 6 Public House, and Whole Foods Co-op, all donating delicious soup for \$5 (\$15 dollars for a handcrafted bowl) so grab some friends and head down to Mercyhurst's Egan Dining Hall to enjoy a simple meal. Get your tickets at the Second Harvest Food Bank or contact John Herrmann below. All proceeds benefit the

Ladyfest

Since the turn of the century, Ladyfest, a music festival celebrating feminist ideals and women artists, has made stops in cities such as San Francisco, London, Amsterdam, Toronto, Madrid, Los Angeles, and Berlin, just to name a few. Now, the event will make its Erie debut Saturday, April 12 as part of Penn State Erie, The Behrend College's annual Gender Conference.

Ladyfest serves as a reprieve from misogynistic songs like YoundDro's "FDB" and from the Miley Cyruses of the world to show that women can rock. The free one-day event features award-winning poet and activist Andrea Gibson and a prime pack of leading musical artists from the area, including Blue Pike Award winner Brooke Surgener and the Ladies of Acoustic Grammar.

With all of the instances of unrealistic expectations being placed on young girls through marketing and modeling shoots out there, let's celebrate the women that are making a positive impact for all of the young girls and boys of today, so go channel your inner Riot Grrrl down at the Reed Union Building on the Behrend campus when Ladyfest adds Erie to its long list of destinations. — Alex Bieler

11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Saturday, April 12 // 4701 Behrend College Drive // 217.1471

Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest Pennsylvania.

4:30 to 7 p.m. // 501 East 38th St. // jherrm98@lakers.mercyhurst.edu

\$1 each.

6:35 p.m. // 110 E. 10th St. // 456.1300

mon 4.14

SeaWolves Buck Night

Don't miss the Howlers' home-opener series against the Bowie BaySox, which starts Thursday, April 10, but if you head to Jerry Uht Park this Monday, you can celebrate the first Buck Night of the season. Enjoy Smith's hot dogs, Pepsi soft drinks, popcorn, and domestic draft beer — all for just

tues 4.15

Swan Lake

Considered one of the greatest classical ballets of all time, *Swan Lake* comes to Erie. Tchaikovsky's sublime score and captivating storyline make this a not-to-be-missed show, and thanks to the Mercyhurst Institute for Arts and Culture and The Moscow Festival Ballet, you won't have to go far to catch it in Erie.

7:30 p.m. // 501 E. 38th St. // 824.3000

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MUSIC REVIEWS

Cloud Nothings
Here and Nowhere Else
 Carpark



★★★★★

2012 was a big year for Dylan Baldi and Cloud Nothings. The band's breakthrough album *Attack on Memory* showed a wonderfully raucous side of a band previously known for fun pop tracks, and people took notice. Most importantly, however, Baldi himself began to believe in his abilities. "I've just slowly become more confident as a songwriter and comfortable making a song that sounds like something that I would like," Baldi said for a 2013 Erie Reader interview, and that newfound confidence certainly comes across in *Here and Nowhere Else*, Cloud Nothings' latest studio album. While the album lacks the primal desperation that fueled *Attack on Memory*, *Here and Nowhere Else* makes up for it with a heavy-hitting torrent of guitar, deeply resonating bass, and a maelstrom of drum slaps. By the time the album standout "I'm Not Part of Me" finishes the half-hour set in rousing fashion, you'll be more than happy that Baldi's here to stay. — Alex Bieler

The Hold Steady
Teeth Dreams
 Razor & Tie



★★★★★

Teeth Dreams, The Hold Steady's sixth album, finds frontman Craig Finn actually singing. While it's pretty much expected that vocalists, you know, sing on albums, fans of the bar-rock band know that Finn typically adopts a more speak-singing style, rapidly spitting out lines involving the usual topics of hipster losers, ideology, and redemption over Bruce Springsteen-inspired guitar hooks. Finn doesn't always ditch his trademark lyric poetry – see: "On With the Business" – but the proud Minnesotan does test his pipes on a fair number of tracks, such as the vulnerable "Almost Everything." The Hold Steady also shows off more of a bar-rock swagger with the addition of second guitarist Steve Selvidge, helping to make final track "Oaks" burn brightly across its nine glorious, slow-burning minutes. The band's latest album doesn't stray too far from the anthemic slacker gospel it made its name on, but you can certainly sink your teeth into *Teeth Dreams* and come away sated. — Alex Bieler

Ghost The Ill Figure
American Born Black
 Ill Noyz Records



★★★★★

Ghost the Ill Figure's debut album, *Golden Age Memoir*, introduced us to a young MC who spit rhymes about growing up in Erie and had a love for hip-hop's Golden Era of the late '80s to early '90s. On his follow-up, we find Ghost a much more focused and mature mic commander. *American Born Black* is an oral dissertation on the state of being born black in America. Set over a fully self-produced barrage of classic '90s hip-hop sounds, *American Born Black* takes you back to a time in hip-hop when the genre was filled with political messages from groups like Public Enemy, X Clan, and Paris. Ghost draws a line in the sand and shows you exactly where he stands, with topics ranging from Trayvon Martin and police brutality to calling for the boycott of Black Entertainment Television and to lynch the N-word. If you are in search of hip-hop that makes you think, look no further. Head over to ill-noyz.bandcamp.com/album/american-born-black and download this free release. — Iggy Imig

greyscale
greyscale w/ ghosts
 Independent



★★★★★

A concept record exploring the relationship between environment, history, and design, *greyscale: w/ ghosts* is an ethereal, scenic soundscape that acts as the canvas for the painting of the vanishing of the Union Iron Works building – framed by the blending of both organic and electronic sounds. The four tracks here play less like songs and serve more as chapters to a story with repeated themes weaved throughout. "I" begins with distorted, low-tone synths, laying the foundation for the haunting mood captured through the "w/ ghosts" that appeared spray-painted on the windows of that building. "I" gives way to "II" and the emergence of an acoustic guitar is soothing, yet still provocative and nicely juxtaposed against the fuzzed-out electric guitar revealed in "IV." With thick layering of complex sounds, *greyscale* never obscures the melody, and while *greyscale w/ ghosts* is more than a mere musical experience, the EP works just as well without having to know the backstory. — Ben Spегgen



Ryan Smith

The i Shuts

The crooked i Goes Out with a Bang, not a Whimper

By: Ryan Smith

A fair bit of freakiness. A whole lotta booze. A bunch of totally crazy devils onstage, throwing down a jubilant fury, stirring everybody up into a sweaty, knockabout frenzy. That's just the way the crooked i opened some years back. And, man oh man, is it ever just the way it closed.

"I love all of you," Marty Schwab, smiling deep, said as he introduced The Goddamn Gallows (the first, and, four years later, final band to headline the i's fine stage) to his last packed-to-

the-gills Gem City crowd, already well beyond amped up by fiery opening performances from Potwhole and The DredNeks.

"Thank you so much," Schwab said to every-

one, most sincerely, before the start of the Gallows' set. "This scene" – the one that Schwab's venue has done so much to root and to boost, to highlight and to support – "was here before me,"

The Goddamn Gallows brought their Detroit-based folk-stomp-rock back to the crooked i for the venue's final show Sunday, March 31.

he said, and "it'll continue on" even after the i, as it were, closes itself.

In the meantime – in those last couple of hours – there sure was no stopping it.

Now, going in to this last show, and after having heard the recently-announced news of the i's planned closing, I'd honestly more than half-expected there to be some palpable sense of sadness – or at least of glumness, you know, of ho-humness – in the air there that Sunday night.

But I didn't feel that. What I did feel was this: a whole big mess of people (from the feet on the floor, longtime i supporters to first-time showgoers; to the ones who make it happen, Schwab to his barkeeps to his people at the door; to the

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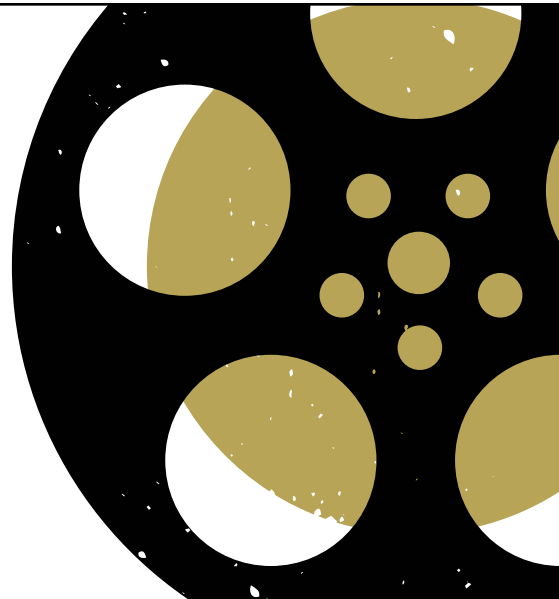
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APR 16: Nymphomaniac: Vol I

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Drama | Not Rated | 117 minutes

APR 23: Nymphomaniac: Vol II

Charlotte Gainsbourg, Stellan Skarsgard, Shia LeBeouf,
Jamie Bell, Willem Dafoe, Stacy Martin
Drama | Not Rated | 123 minutes



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Outside Voices

By: Jessica Courter

We are well aware that Erie is full of cool places and awesome things to do, and we strive to tell you of said places to check out and things to do in our regular *If We Were You*. Lately, however, we are seeing some of Erie's downtown businesses sadly coming to an end and we are dealing with a lot of "lasts." With sad eyes, we watched the crooked i's finale weekend, as local bands alongside nationally touring acts took to the stage at 1013 State St. for the final time. And the crooked i isn't alone; other businesses have shuttered their doors and posted up the "Closed" sign for good, too. With the closing and selling of local club, bars, and venues, the downtown Erie landscape is changing; so we took to the streets to ask the question:

What sort of businesses would you like to see in these now-vacant locations in downtown Erie?

Jinkou Peng

"I think I would prefer a bookstore because I am very interested in reading...I am a student at Gannon and usually go to the Gannon bookstore, which is more expensive than other bookstores."



Brianna Peyton

"I feel like we don't have a lot of sit-down type restaurants. I know there is a lot of fast food like McDonald's, but I feel like we need more little cafes or do something more with an art place. I know there's the art museum, but we can sort of build on that."



Daniel Miaczynski

"Some more night clubs wouldn't be bad as long as they're maintained—what I mean by maintained is that they are well-managed—and as long as we don't let it get away from its original purpose of going to have a good time."



Tina Zappa

"I would want to see more cultural businesses coming into Erie, like stuff that has to do more with art or just places where people can hang out but don't have to drink or isn't open really late at night. Just more places open during the day."



Jessica Courter can be reached at jCourter@eriereader.com. To follow this story or comment, scan the QR code or visit <http://erirdr.com/kqze6>



Ryan Smith

Crooked i owner Marty Schwab gave a thank-you to all who were in attendance for the final show at 1013 State St. before introducing the evening's headliner: The Goddamn Gallows.

need, because he and his venue – like always – had spoken for themselves, with no need for prompting. When I was able to catch him for a second, we just shared a quick handshake and a hug.

"Thank you, man," I said. "Seriously, thank you, for everything you've done. And happy travels to you."

"Thank you for being a part of it," he replied, just like he'd told everyone there that night.

And that, like everything Schwab's done with his time and talents and energy here in Erie, was more than good enough for me.

Stepping outside into the night, I caught short bits of peoples' end-of-the-night conversations. A few words, asked from some girl to some guy a ways behind me, poked up above the rest:

"What're you gonna do now?" she asked.

The answer to that – for the future, for the scene, for the city – is as open as the question itself.

Ryan Smith can be contacted at rSmith@ErieReader.com, and you can follow him on Twitter @RyanSmithPlens. To follow this story or comment, scan the QR code or visit <http://erirdr.com/byfnu>



band itself, pouring it out onstage) all fully embracing the chance to really live in and experience that last night, not wasting valuable time, at least right then, anyway, on feeling sad, on being all down, because something that's been good – so good – is, it seems, going away.

Hell, with the gutterbilly champion Gallows providing a booze-soaked, profanity-laden hell-ride of a soundtrack (something, to these ears, like Motorhead meets Man Man meets Merle Haggard) as the i's swansong, I don't think anyone could've been down, or at least not for long, even if they'd planned on it.

There was furious, fun energy all through the atmosphere there, and plenty of it to spare. There was stomp-stomp dancin' and monstrous moshing, and beer (and more) flying all through the air. There was, in short, a real, good time had by all.

It went on that way, like it always had before, until the lights came on, until last call, until the last song was fired out and it was finally, and actually, all over and done.

And when it that happened, Schwab said just a few more words, and just as sincerely as the ones before: "What time is it?" he asked. "It's 2:06?"

Well, then, "get the f--- out," he said, still smiling deep.

That's the spirit, right there.

The thought to catch Schwab, then, for a last few words on the record had crossed my mind, but I quickly thought better of that. No

Erie's Eats

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AVANTI'S If you've only eaten breakfast at Avanti's, you are in for a big surprise. Every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday night, this daytime diner changes over to a fine dining establishment. Check back often since the menu changes weekly. BYOB
1662 W. 8th St. // 456.3096

1201 KITCHEN Featuring Latin/Asian-inspired food, this hip downtown spot is full of great art, and the marble bar is a perfect place to try their fresh sushi. With a menu that changes every four to six weeks, be sure to check in often.
1201 State St. // 464.8989

American

FRANCO'S CAFE Soups, salads, sandwiches — that's the essence of Franco's Cafe, where you can enjoy a fresh array of salad-bar items, three homemade soups every day, and fresh-made sandwiches on toast or made panini style. Eat in or take out — you can't go wrong either way for your downtown lunch.
1001 State St. // 455.8008

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1109 State St. // 453.6454

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732 W. 4th St. // 451.0007

Breakfast

SUMMER HOUSE CAFE Open from 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. each day of the week, the Summer House Cafe serves up some of Erie's more unique breakfast and

lunch options. Their breakfast burrito is a must-try, but be sure to check in for fresh daily specials.

2605 Washington Ave. // 452.2500

JO'S BROOKLYN BAGELS A walk through the door says it all. Well, at least it's speaking to your noise. Inhale deeply and breathe in those aromas. Fresh bagels and coffee. What's not to love about that combination? A little piece of Brooklyn right here in Erie.
833 W. 38th St. // 520.6246

PEGGY'S RESTAURANT A landmark in the Liberty Plaza for a few decades now, Peggy's serves up quick, affordable meals and plenty of room for conversation. You can sit at the long counter that spans nearly the entire restaurant, grab a booth up front, or get a table in the back.
3512 Liberty St. // 866.3216

THE BREAKFAST PLACE Low prices and big portions—just the way Erie likes it! The Cajun eggs are a must-try.
2340 E. 38th St. // 825.2727

PANOS Open late night with an attentive wait staff who will never let your coffee mug go empty. Try the famous Greek omelet.
1504 W. 38th St. // 866.0517

SIDEWALK CAFE Tucked away on historic North Park Row, you'll find one of downtown's popular breakfast and lunch places.
26 N. Park Row // 455.0002

GEORGE'S With retro decor trimmed in red and black, George's is known just as much for looking like a retro diner as it is for the friendly safe and great grub. They're famous for their mashed potatoes, but don't get stuck on only that. Try the soups and sandwiches on for size too.
2614 Glenwood Park Avenue // 455.0860

DOMINICK'S Famous among Erie's late-night bar patrons who swear by this place as a sure-fire hang-over cure.
123 E. 12th St. // 456.6891

HYATT'S - Serving up breakfast and lunch standards for years and is a staple in the West Erie Plaza.
928 W. Erie Plaza // 456.0102

Zodiac Diner - Proudly serving Erie since 2006, the Zodiac Diner promises that you'll never walk away with hunger pangs or an empty wallet. From breakfast to lunch to dinner to catering, Zodiac is serving up fresh, homemade dishes in a vintage, throw-back atmosphere. While the menu staples will never let you down, give the specials a try for something new.

2516 State St. // 580.9627

Brewpub

BREWERIE Erie's only brew-on-premise pub and eatery, the Brewererie is on a mission to, "Revitalize Downtown Erie One Pint at a Time."
123 W. 14th St. // 454.2200

Caribbean

PINEAPPLE EDDIE Southern regional cuisine served up with a bit of caribbean flair. Featuring savory dishes like Creole shrimp and andouille sausage over grits, seared catfish served with rice and beans and fresh sauteed vegetables, and grilled Angus Rib Eye steak. Deserts include grilled pound cake served w/fresh glazed pineapple, ice cream and rum sauce, and luscious lime layer cake. BYOB.
1402 W. 10th St. // 454.0700

Chinese

GOLDEN WOK Quality ingredients, affordable prices, and consistent service make this Chinese restaurant stand out among the rest.
3202 Pitt. Ave. // 836.9657

Delicatessens

TERESA'S ITALIAN DELI Teresa's Deli has been a staple in Erie for over 60 years, and it's no secret why. Now in its third generation, the Teresa's staff still makes the food fresh every day, following the same scratch recipes used since 1949.
3201 Greengarden Blvd. // 864.5322 and 810 E. 38th St. // 459.1145

PICASSO'S With signature panini-style sandwiches like the Lee Roslyn (Twinkie, ham, and cheese) and the DaVinci (sausage, ravioli, and provolone), Picasso's is a must-try. Great vegetarian options available.
2060 Interchange Rd. (Outside Millcreek Mall) 866.1183

TICKLE'S DELI - This popular deli features good prices and big, tasty sandwiches including the famous "Big Freddy." Call ahead if you can because this downtown hotspot gets busy at lunchtime.
17 W. 4th St. // 455.5718

GERRY'S 8TH STREET DELI From the world-class deli to the homemade soups, Gerry's offers everything you'd expect from a deli. But with sandwich names like "Cluckmeister," "Chive Turkey," "Tongue Fu," and "Breast of Times" just to name a few, you're going to want to keep going back to check out all of these one-of-a-kind sandwiches. Deli hours run Monday through Saturday 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

2620 W. 8th St. // 836.8702

French

BERTRAND'S BISTRO A menu featuring local meats and vegetables and organic and Kosher ingredients when possible. The crepes and award-winning wine selection are more than enough to encourage a trip to France via downtown Erie.
18 N. Park Row // 871.6477

Gastropubs

JECKYL & HYDES - Just like the title characters—wait, character—this gastropub seems bent on being two things at once—and that's a good thing. While the seating area is small, which makes for a cozy experience, the tastes are big and bold.
8 E. 10th St. // 456.0072

Indian

RAJ MAHAL - Offering a wide variety of Indian cuisine, both vegetarian and carnivore friendly, with an ever-popular lunch buffet. BYOB
5618 Peach St. // 838.1055

Irish

MOLLY BRANNIGANS - Got a hankering for bangers and mash? Have no idea what the heck bangers and mash is? Head to this authentic Irish gastropub where you can get your fill of Irish-fare and Irish drinks. From Jameson to Guinness, from Shepherd's Pie to Purcell's Fish and Chips, Molly Brannigans brings the Irish pub to downtown Erie.
970 Millcreek Mall // 868.7999

3000 W. 12th St. // 838.2495

506 State St. // 453.7800

MCGARREY'S OAKWOOD CAFE Known for the award-winning Reuben, McGarrey's believes in big portions of comfort food served up hot and fresh. Although Irish in name, McGarrey's also dishes out American and Italian cuisine so that you're bound to find something satisfying.
1624 W. 38th wSt. // 866.0552

Italian

ALTO CUCINA Chef Pat Rodgers mixes the old-world with the exotic. Beautiful décor, with an outdoor deck for the summer months.
3531 W. Lake Road // 835.3900

COLAO'S Authentic Italian, fresh seafood, and a cozy, intimate setting.
2826 Plum St. // 866.9621

MI SCUZI Southern Italian cuisine with fresh, homemade pasta.
2641 Myrtle St. // 454.4533

AMICI RISTORANTE With dinner hours from 5 to 9 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays and a takeout menu available Monday through Saturday, Amici Ristorante dishes

out fresh food at affordable prices. From wings to pizza to fresh perch sandwiches and more, the menu has something for everyone. Call ahead one hour for takeout since food is prepared fresh per order.
1518 Walnut St. // 455.0041

Japanese

SUSHI AND ASIAN CUISINE Fresh sushi and sashimi steal the spotlight of this show but their supporting cast shouldn't go unnoticed. The Kim Chi is a great place to start and any of the noodle choices make for good choices to continue on. With veggie-friendly options and a staff happy to serve you, Sushi and Asian Cuisine is a must.
1014 State St. // 455.0596

AOYAMA Think it's hard to find a daily sushi bar in Erie? Find your way to Aoyama for the hibachi experience combined with an extensive sashimi and sushi menu. You'll have the choice between hibachi-style seating and the traditional sit-down dining experience, so your mood can do the choosing for you. Reservations are highly suggested.
2174 W. 8th St. // 452.4544

HIBACHI From flinging shrimp to slinging steak, Hibachi combines dinner with the show without service charges or ticket fees. If you're fine with sitting beside your date instead of across from him or her, opt for this straight-off the grill without time-to-chill dinner experience.
3000 W. 12th St. // 838.2495

Mediterranean

PAPA JOE'S With specialty pizzas ranging from "Vegan Demise" to "Chicken Gorgonzola" and subs that go by the names of "Enchanted Eggplant" and "Chuck Norris," Papa Joe's brings more to the table than any commercial pizza joint. And to boot, they serve up a mean falafel sandwich—something that's a must.
3826 W. Ridge Rd. // 835.3360

VALERIO'S More than just Pizza, Wings, and Subs! Local Italian Restaurant & Pizzeria that has been serving Erie County for over 17 years. Offering a variety of Homemade Italian Dinners, Seafood, Daily Lunch Specials, and Catering Services. Check out our menus online at www.valeriospizzeria.com. With 3 convenient locations to serve you, we'll have you singing...Manga Italiano!
2179 W. 32nd St. // 833-2979 and 1803 E. 38th St. 825-2693 and 724 Powell 833-8884 // Catering Office // 866-3193

PENINSULA PIZZERIA Fresh, quality ingredients and friendly staff make this new pizzeria a popular choice for pizza, subs, and salads. Try the Oliver Perry's Hazard if you're feeling adventurous.
36 N. Park Row // 454.4069

WHOLE FOODS CAFE Offering a wide variety of vegetar-

ian staples, including wraps, sandwiches, soups, pizza, and seasonal specialties.

4115 W. Ridge Rd. // 838.8400

Suds and Grub

U PICK 6 TAP HOUSE Great beer meets great food at the corner of Fourth and State streets. From gourmet flatbreads to pizza muffins, there's plenty of great grub to pair with the endless flow of over 20 microbrews on tap. And with helpful servers who know their beer, this is a great place to come to try the beers you've never had but have always wanted to.
333 State St. // 520.5419

SIX PACK HOUSE OF BEER With an ever-changing lineup of brews on tap and cooler wall of six-packs to go, Six Pack also serves up some cheap eats to boot.
847 Pitt. Ave. // 454.1989

U PICK 6 BEER STORE Off the downtown beaten path, U Pick 6 takes pride in its revolving draft beer lineup. With some quick eats and sandwiches sliced up right in front of you, U Pick 6 draws you in for the beer and keeps you for the conversation.
7520 Peach St. // 866.2337

Middle Eastern

CASABLANCA From traditional to modern recipes, from strictly vegetarian meals to meals centered around a choice selection of fresh meat, Casablanca Grille looks to provide something for everyone looking for a good Moroccan meal—and the diversity's a good thing too since when it comes to Middle East Mediterranean cuisine, Casablanca is it. Reservations are recommended.
2174 W. 8th St. // 452.4544

PALM MARKET AND DELI

This authentic Arabic market and eatery offers delicious, freshly prepared food and baked goods for a very reasonable price. The market offers a wide variety of exotic food and merchandise.
2702 Parade St.

Pizza

PAPA JOE'S With specialty pizzas ranging from "Vegan Demise" to "Chicken Gorgonzola" and subs that go by the names of "Enchanted Eggplant" and "Chuck Norris," Papa Joe's brings more to the table than any commercial pizza joint. And to boot, they serve up a mean falafel sandwich—something that's a must.
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7520 Peach St. // 866.2337

Steakhouse

SENSORY 3 Next time you're at Presque Isle Downs & Casino, take a break from the table games and check out this bar and grille. If you're cashing in your chips for fine dining, we bet on being satisfied by a fine steak since Sensory 3 serves up some of the best cuts in the area.
8199 Perry Hwy // 866.8359

COLONY PUB & GRILLE - Multiple fireplaces and three intimate dining rooms make the Colony a popular spot for a romantic dinner.
2670 W. 8 St. // 838.2162

RICARDO'S Opened in 1943 by two brothers, Ricardo's serves up some of Erie's finest steaks. Chef Peter West and Cathy Merksi run one of Erie's choice restaurants that's known for its hand-cut, grain-fed western beef and delicious, mouth-watering ribs cooked outside year-round. Hearty Italian fare with casual feel of fine dining make Ricardo's a must.
2112 E. Lake Rd // 455.4947

VICTOR'S -Located inside the Bel-Aire hotel, Victor's offers fine steak and seafood with drink specials every night of the week.
2800 W. 8 St. // 833.1116

Thai

KHAO THAI The only full-time Thai restaurant in Erie. Luckily, it's fantastic! Try the drunken noodles for a spicy delight. Vegetarian friendly. BYOB
36 N. Park Row // 454.4069

Vegetarian

WHOLE FOODS CAFE Offering a wide variety of vegetar-

ian staples, including wraps, sandwiches, soups, pizza, and seasonal specialties.

1341 W. 26th St. // 456-0282

Wings

BUFFALO WILD WINGS

Fourteen original sauces and loads of televisions make BWW a great place to meet friends for the big game. Full bar menu available.

Interchange Road (Across from Millcreek Mall) 868.9464

ODIS 12 Award-winning wings and affordable sit-down dining. Odis 12 features over 100 different flavors, including the crowd-favorite "ugly cousin."
664 W. 26th St. // 452.6347

GREENGARDEN TAVERN Classic corner bar atmosphere, great prices, excellent wings. Honey-hot barbecue and cranch are standouts. Go Browns!
1543 W. 8th St. // 454.3367

PARK TAVERN - Known for its wings, the Park Tavern boasts a family-friendly smoke-free environment. Try some Herbies or crispy Cajuns. Buffalo Cajun is also recommended.
4205 E. Lake Road // 899.8661

Sweet Treats

MIGHTY FINE DONUTS If you love donuts and are looking for something off the well-worn path to Dunkin' Donuts and Krispy Kreme, this local gem is your destination spot. Heralded by locals as the best donuts ever
2612 Parade St. // 455.6408

ROMOLO CHOCOLATES Tony Stefanelli apprenticed with his family in the chocolate business for nearly 20 years. Where'd that get him? He's one of only 26 master confectioners and he's right here in Erie. So for handmade pieces of chocolate, be sure to stop by Romolo's—then boast to your out-of-town friends about having a master confectioner in your city.
1525 W. 8th St. // 452.1933

PULAKOS George P. Pula-kos opened his first chocolate shop at 926 State St. in 1903. Over a hundred years later, the fourth-generation-run chocolate shop is still one of Erie's favorite places for a wide selection of all things chocolate—and other delicious snacks too.
2530 Parade St.

DONUT CONNECTION - Just off the corner of Peach and Liberty streets sits a family-owned donut shop that's celebrating its Golden Anniversary this year. With the "best coffee" in town and a wide selection of delicious hand-cut donuts, this is a great place for a for a sweet treat.
3842 Liberty St. // 864.8702

Tech Watch

The Rebirth – or Slow Death – of Twitter

By: Angela Kelly, Epic WebStudios

It seems as though social media platforms are doing a little – okay, a lot – of spring-cleaning in the last month. After Facebook announced changes to its design a year ago and finally began implementing them earlier in March, Twitter hinted that its users will also see changes – some may be quite drastic for core users who have grown accustomed to Twitter's design and foundation. It's easy to say that this is not going to be a redesign of their layout, but rather an overhaul of their infrastructure.

Speculation began after Vivian Schiller, head of news at Twitter, spoke to a group at the Newspaper Association of America mediaXchange 2014 event in Denver. Schiller was quoted by BuzzFeed's Ben Smith as saying both hashtags and @-replies were 'arcane'.

Earlier this year, Twitter CEO Dick Costolo addressed in an earnings call that, "By bringing the content of Twitter forward and pushing the scaffolding of the language of Twitter to the background, we can increase high-quality interactions and make it more likely that new or casual users will find this service as indispensable as our existing core users do. And we took initial steps in that direction with the introduction of media forward timelines and in-line social actions in October, and we're already starting to see early signs that those initiatives are working well."

Just like other social media platforms, this is not the first time Twitter has made upgrades to make the users experience more enjoyable. When Twitter was just getting acclimated to the social media scene back on March 19, 2006 (Happy belated eighth birthday, Twitter!), the retweet was a user-generated feature. Users would add the RT shorthand to a tweet to share with their followers. This was archaic and even confusing for users that were just starting out. Twitter phased this out and made the retweet more user friendly – also saving users characters for their tweet.

Costolo also shared with investors that these suggested changes are, in fact, to help new or casual users adapt to the platform quickly. "So it is absolutely the case that it is very much about making it easier for people who first come to the platform to get it more quickly [...] It's not just get it in the first weeks and months on Twitter, it's get it in the first moments, the first day on Twitter. So that is absolutely, absolutely a focus area for us." Costolo wants to lower the learning curve in order to help new Twitter users by making it easier to interact with other users right from day one.

There are, however, other ideas that suggest removing these once essential building blocks from Twitter are because other platforms – Instagram and Facebook – have bastardized the use of hashtags. Twitter has always been a forward-thinking social media platform, creating trends instead of following them, and Twitter users (over 240 million users as of December 2013) are one in the same. Rather than stepping back and letting other platforms ruin the ever-so-popular hashtag, Twitter needs to take the opportunity and once again become the authority on hashtags. They need to continue evolving the hashtag and show the world how it's actually done.

If Twitter ultimately decides to remove the features that make Twitter distinctively "Twitter," then they run the risk of losing their core users not because their users are afraid of change – they embrace it – but because Twitter will become stale, less trendy, and more like the platforms that already exist. Doing so may push Twitter into an early grave like MySpace.

So if you're going to kill the hashtag and @-replies, might as well grab a shovel for the rest of the bird, Mr. Costolo.



Angela Kelly can be contacted at Epic@ErieReader.com. To follow this story or comment, scan the QR code or visit <http://eridr.com/78six>

OBITUARY

i, the crooked, Deceased, November 23, 2009 - March 31, 2014



Lifelong State Street resident the crooked i unexpectedly passed away early Monday, March 31, 2014. Well known to and much loved by bluegrassers, bluesmen, deadheads, DJs, folkies, goths, hip-hoppers, hipsters, metalheads, punks, rockers, punk rockers, and people with ears, the crooked i will be remembered across the region as a gracious host to those distinct and diverse tribes who often gathered in both literal and metaphorical harmony to partake of such basic human needs as fellowship, entertainment, and alcohol in a spirit of peace and camaraderie not often found amongst the i's noisier neighbors.

The crooked i enjoyed absinthe, art, bicycles, Elvis, flashing lights, live music, Lazy Cttakes, PBR, and tattoos. Of note, the bathrooms were also known as a kind of media center where one could go to learn all sorts of interesting things, including who, exactly, was a "dumpster ass meatball."

Left to mourn this untimely passing are: authenticity, artistic integrity, originality, sincerity, and talent. The crooked i left no heirs.

Sudoku

Fill in the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9.

			6	2				
9		7		8				
	6	3	2	9				4
2			9	8				
6	8						1	
	7							2
								7
4			7	6	9			
1		4						

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CROSSWORD PUZZLE

- ACROSS**
- 1 Jackfruit
 - 5 Ten (pref.)
 - 8 Dayak people
 - 12 Original sinner
 - 13 Devon river
 - 14 Wings
 - 15 Air
 - 17 Byron poem
 - 18 Compass direction
 - 19 Chin. duck eggs
 - 21 Wool cluster
 - 22 Loose woman
 - 23 Fermented honey drink
 - 25 Chateaubriand heroine
 - 28 Golf club
 - 31 Polish rum cake
 - 32 Women's Army Corps (abbr.)
 - 33 Munich's river
 - 34 Annona
 - 36 Pers. carpet
 - 37 Close
 - 38 Guest house
 - 39 Trend
 - 41 Former Turk. president
 - 43 Pother
 - 46 Amalekite king
 - 48 Riot
 - 50 Wool (Lat.)
 - 51 Exploit
 - 52 Aoudad
 - 53 High (pref.)
 - 54 Three (pref.)
 - 55 Concur
- DOWN**
- 1 Green
 - 2 Arabian Sea gulf
 - 3 Window lead
 - 4 Soul or spirit (Fr.)
 - 5 Cotton fabric
 - 6 Exodus (abbr.)
 - 7 Of pottery
 - 8 Adjective-forming (suf.)
 - 9 Flatter
 - 10 Rhine tributary
 - 11 Wagon tongue
 - 16 Samoan port
 - 20 Beak
 - 22 Sound loudly
 - 24 Foreign in origin
 - 25 Absolute (abbr.)
 - 26 Truth: Chin.
 - 27 Substantial
 - 28 Siesta
 - 29 Canadian (abbr.)
 - 30 Crab-eating macaque
 - 32 Effete (2 words)
 - 35 Monkey
 - 36 Neglect
 - 38 Bury
 - 39 FDA's dog
 - 40 Bedouin headband cord
 - 42 River into the Humber
 - 43 Air (pref.)
 - 44 Smear on
 - 45 Migratory worker
 - 47 Lively (Fr.)
 - 49 King in India

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

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

Answer to Sudoku

5	8	7	6	4	2	1	9	3		
2	6	4	1	9	3	7	8	5		
9	1	3	8	5	7	6	2	4		
4	7	9	2	3	1	8	5	6		
8	3	6	5	7	9	2	4	1		
1	2	5	4	8	6	3	7	9		
6	9	8	7	1	5	4	3	2		
3	4	2	9	6	8	5	1	7		
7	5	1	3	2	4	9	6	8		

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12				13			14			
15				16			17			
18				19			20		21	
			22			23		24		
25	26	27			28			29	30	
31				32			33			
34				35			36			
		37				38				
39	40			41		42		43	44	45
46			47			48		49		
50						51		52		
53						54		55		

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A Sign of the Times

THANK GOODNESS Corry is, once again, a safe place to live as **Erie County Judge Stephanie Domitrovich** ruled in favor of two Corry High School students.

To be perfectly honest with you, I'm not entirely sure what the youngsters were charged with, but the ever-popular "free speech" subject was invoked. Thank goodness Judge Domitrovich seemed to have a grasp of this terrifying situation. There's no telling what this could've led to.

Let me try and set the stage for you – at least I will try. And I promise to not embellish the evening of this frightening event.

It all began at a Northwestern High School at **Corry High School** football game when a trio of Corry students walked around the track – and in front of the NW cheering section – carrying a pair of signs reading: "Corry Beavers" and "#32 sucks." While this wasn't the classiest thing to do – especially the "#32 sucks" sign – it doesn't strike me as a crime, of any kind.

However, the three were arrested and one was charged with disorderly conduct (he pleaded not guilty), and the other two were charged for carrying a sign that constituted "fighting words," thus not protected by the First Amendment.

The Corry School District did not dole out any discipline, but the Erie County Court system decided to prosecute the two that entered not guilty pleas. Again, I'm not sure what the charges were, but I'm guessing a disorderly conduct was a possibility. A guilty verdict would have meant a fine of \$50 plus court costs.

For the record, #32 of the Wildcats was **Brandon Reiser**, one of the top running backs in the state. While this was kind of a tacky sign, I have to believe a player as tough as Reiser could not have cared less. As a matter of fact, he was probably in the locker room and didn't see it.

And if he did see this "horrible" sign it may have motivated him even more, and that would not have been too good for the Beavers, as Reiser was already running roughshod over the home team.

After all this, I have a question. As an example, what if the entire Corry cheering section (possibly 400 students or more) was screaming, "Northwestern sucks!", does this mean the Corry jail would've been overflowing with teenagers after the entire cheering section was arrested for disorderly conduct?

I guess my point, after all this, is, "This was really stupid and total waste of time and money."

By the way, has anyone ever gone to a McDowell-Cathedral Prep football or basketball game? There would still be people in prison.

I have to admit: sometimes adults just embarrass me.

A Busy Off-season

I HAVE BEEN watching sports for a long time in this area, and I don't remember so much off-season activity between football and basketball, especially in the coaching department.

Harbor Creek finally named a football coach and the district has named long-time McDowell assistant **Ned**



GU STAR Adam Blazek works against a West Chester University defender in recent NCAA Regional game held at East Stroudsburg University.

Bailey. He has been associated with the Trojans program for 29 years, many as a highly-successful freshman coach.

Bailey may hire former McDowell head coach **Joe Sanford** as an assistant – Sanford's presence giving the Huskies some former head-coaching experience on this staff – and this would be a good thing.

According to some reports, Bailey edged out Mercyhurst Prep coach **Matt Morgan** for the HC job, Morgan then resigning for MP shortly after Bailey was the Huskies new boss.

Morgan, who did a sensational job with the Lakers, is a finalist for the opening at Iroquois. Morgan took over a program at the Hurst that had just completed two 0-10 seasons and won nearly 80 percent of his games, including the school's only District 10

title on the gridiron.

But this means Mercyhurst Prep is also looking for a new football mentor and time is of the essence at this stage, with most programs already having their kids in the weight rooms for more than three months. However, the Lakers can't be blamed as Morgan did resign a bit late, MPS taking applications until April 11.

So the Hurst grid program will be getting a very late start by the time a headman is named. It would behoove MPS to get moving and get some new faces involved.

If the Laker administration takes too much time, there is a slight possibility they may have to cancel for a year – or longer.

And then to keep things swirling in the high school coaching ranks, the McDowell girls' basketball job was opened up, and the Fort LeBoeuf girls' cage slot became available when **Beth Crider** recently resigned.

I don't know why Crider called it quits with the Bison, but the former



Val Majewski was named the PSAC West Player of the Year, and Stan Swank was named Coach of the Year.

Edinboro Lady Scots, Boro star **Val Majewski** (a general McLane grad) and Coach **Stan Swank** received some prestigious post-season hardware. Majewski, who transferred from Division I University of Buffalo, and the veteran Swank deserved everything they received.

Majewski was named the PSAC West Player of the Year and swank was honored as Coach of the Year.

The Gannon University team was an outstanding squad and the Scots beat them four times. This says it all. As a matter of fact, the Boro was the only team to top GU as the Lady Knights finished with just those four losses.

Gannon men's player **Adam Blazek** was selected first team All-American by the National Association of Basketball Coaches NCAA Division II All-American first team. The GU junior was one of 16 student-athletes honored.

Blazek, a Cathedral Prep grad, averaged 15.6 points, 3.8 rebounds, 3.1 assists and 2.1 steals. He also led the conference in free-throw shooting percentage. The junior guard was also the first Knight to earn PSAC West Player of the Year honors.

A three-year starter, Blazek has already scored 1,100 points, ranking him 22nd on the all-time scoring chart.

Record Season for 'Boro Grapplers

WHAT A SEASON for the Edinboro Wrestling program as the Fighting Scots finished fifth in the country and coach Tim Flynn was named the Division I Coach of the year.

This was the Boro's best finish ever, the Scots ending 6th in 2009 and 1997. Also, the Scots had three All-Americans, Mitchell Port finished third and A.J. Schopp and Dave Habat ended in fourth spot.

The Boro grapplers also won their first Eastern Wrestling League championship since 2010.

MLB Predictions

IT'S HARD to believe baseball season is here already, but I am ready to give a couple early predictions for our two local teams – the **Pirates** and **Indians**.

I believe the Buccos are a legitimate contender, and I am finally impressed with their front office. It appears they finally have a plan and are going to stick to it. I think they will be a play-off team, one that could contend for a berth in the World Series.

James R is looking for at least 95 wins.

Meanwhile, it seems the Indians will be hurting offensively, and there will be too much pressure on the pitching staff, a staff that isn't as good as it was last season. They are in the right division to try and sneak into the playoffs, but I don't see it happening.

James R thinks the Tribe will scramble to break even, but think 80 wins with be their ceiling.

And one final question: What were the Tigers thinking when they gave Miguel Cabrera this insane extension?

Good luck, Roz.

GOOD LUCK to **Roz Fornari**, who resigned as Penn State Behend women's basketball coach after 21 seasons, compiling an overall record of 347-214. She is a four-time Allegheny Mountain Conference Coach of the Year.

Fornari's PSB squads had 19 winning seasons in her 21 years there.

And to top it off, I haven't dealt with a nicer, more accommodating coach than Fornari.

Good luck, Roz. You were a great asset to the basketball community.

James R. LeCorchick can be contacted at JRLSportsReport@ErieReader.com, and you can follow him on Twitter @IRL-Sports. To follow this story or comment, scan the QR code or visit <http://erivdr.com/lpf7j>



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