

ERIE READER

INVASIVE SPECIES

WHAT THEY ARE, WHY THEY MATTER,
AND WHAT WE CAN DO TO STOP THEM

10TH ANNUAL EDINBORO ART AND MUSIC FESTIVAL

ENDING THE CLIMATE CHANGE DEBATE

DEFUNDING THE ARTS

DEMOCRATIC GUBERNATORIAL
PRIMARY

CAN NO ONE STOP
THE COR-BOTT?!

THE RETURN OF *GODZILLA*

THE MIGHTY SEA AND
TYLER SMILCO DUAL ALBUM RELEASE

TROIKA RUSSIAN FESTIVAL

A LITTLE PRINCESS

BIKE AROUND THE BAY

MUSIC, *ER SPORTS*, AND TWO-WEEKS WORTH OF ERIE EVENTS

FREE





ERIE'S 24th ANNUAL WILD RIB COOK OFF & MUSIC FESTIVAL

Wednesday, May 28th - Saturday, May 31st

ENTERTAINMENT SCHEDULE

WEDNESDAY, MAY 28th

Big Kid Zone

TEST YOUR SKILLS ON THE MECHANICAL BULL!
5pm-10pm

Ride-A-Ribba-Ramma

LOCATED IN THE RIB KIDS FUN ZONE
5pm-9pm

Abbey Road

4:30-6:30pm



PA Lottery Day

THE BUCKET LIST

7-10pm

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THURSDAY, MAY 29th

Pfeiffer Burleigh Drum Team
Main Dining Tent: The Music of
Matt Kramer
11am-1pm

Big Kid Zone

TEST YOUR SKILLS ON THE MECHANICAL BULL!
5pm-10pm

Ride-A-Ribba-Ramma

LOCATED IN THE RIB KIDS FUN ZONE
5pm-9pm

The Jeff Fetterman Band
4:30-6:30pm

"Ladies Night"

FIRST EVER PRIVATE PARTY IN THE VIP TENT FOR THE LADIES BY RESERVATION. TICKET REQUIRED.

Jackson Station

7-10pm



FRIDAY, MAY 30th

Big Kid Zone

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5pm-10pm

Ride-A-Ribba-Ramma

LOCATED IN THE RIB KIDS FUN ZONE
5pm-9pm

the RiffRiders

4:30-7:30pm

Blue BIKE NIGHT

"Best Ribs" Judging
5:30pm

Rick and the Roadhouse Rockers
8-11pm

SATURDAY, MAY 31st



11am-2pm

Ride-A-Ribba-Ramma

LOCATED IN THE RIB KIDS FUN ZONE
5pm-9pm

THE ROGER MONTGOMERY BLUES BAND
2:30-4:30pm

Taylor Made
5-7pm

Family Day

Awards Presentation
2014 WINNERS ANNOUNCED
7:15pm

French Kiss
8-11pm

GREAT SPECIALS ON ALL LABATT PRODUCTS!





CONTENT

May 14, 2014

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From the Editors

You've heard about them before: zebra mussels, Asian carp, sea lampreys. The mussels that made their way to Lake Erie in ballast water in cargo ships, the fish you've seen leaping out of the water as fisherman swing at them with baseball bats, and the snake-like-looking fish with circular rows of teeth that attaches itself to a host to leech off of it for sustenance.

They're invasive species threatening the Great Lakes watershed by crowding, overpopulating, and destroying native species through predatory behavior or by consuming the food sources once reserved for the fish that have always called the lakes their home. That is, they're disrupting the balance of local ecology to the point of domination or detriment.

But what about the red-ear slider? Or the gypsy moth? Or garlic mustard?

These, too, are invasive species, and they're here — along with others — and they're all changing our ecosystem and damaging our economy — perhaps most dangerously — without us really knowing or caring.

Mary Birdsong offers a primer to invasive species in this issue, and it's a compelling read not just because of the information she provides but because it's the wake up call we all need since invasive species aren't often what come to mind when we think of threats and dangers we face.

It's that sort of carelessness that's gotten us here in the first place, and that in and of itself deserves our attention. Without thought — most likely because we can't see it happening *immediately* — we either introduce a non-native species into our environment (red-ear sliders make great pets until kids no longer want the responsibility that comes with tending to them so they're loosed upon the world at large without much afterthought), or they slip by our guard without much notice at all (those zebra mussels weren't exactly holding signs that read: America or bust!). Instead, it's often when it's too late that we notice, when we've let things get out of hand and go too

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far to be able to reel it back in from the brink.

Which sounds a whole lot like the discussion over global warming, or climate change.

It's easy, though, to argue against *global warming* simply because of semantics. The world — at least after several rounds of Polar Vortices in Erie — didn't seem to be getting warmer as 2013 drew to a close and 2014 brought much of the same record-breaking freezing temperature.

So it goes: Global warming isn't real since it's been cold, and it fails to pose any major threat to us.

Global Warming Deniers - 1, Earth - 0.

But it's not as easy to argue against *climate change*, because we all know the climate is changing, and in ways far from what would seem natural. It's hard to ignore the White House's findings in its National Climate Assessment, or the Department of Defense's designation of climate change as a *national security risk*.

The debate over climate change is over. It's both ignorant and foolish to continue debating science while we set our sights on being reactive rather than proactive when it comes to protecting the space we inhabit.

Jay Stevens revisits this topic and titles his Street Corner Soapbox column "Time to Move On," and we couldn't agree more: It is time to move on, to face the crisis and try to save what we still can of the Earth, because we are, at this point, approaching the brink and the point of no return.

After all, someone claiming that global warming or climate change doesn't exist looks just as silly as someone who buys a pet turtle and then thinks releasing it in a stream is the best solution to not waiting a pet any more. Both are careless and exhibit a blatant disregard for the world that we can't afford to tolerate.

Street Corner Soapbox

Time to Move On

By: Jay Stevens

The White House recently released its National Climate Assessment, its report on the impact of climate change on the U.S. and the expected outcome if climate change goes unchecked. It's grim.

And you know what? It's time to move on. It's time to recognize that there's no "debate" on climate change, only misinformation. The real opposition to climate change policy isn't legitimate, science-based doubt – it's greed, complacency, and ignorance. It's time to leave the naysayers behind and to do something to save us all from our own foolishness.

The White House assessment confirmed a lot of what we already knew: climate change isn't a theory or speculative future event – it's here, it's now. We see it all around us.

On Lake Erie, for example, climate change leads to bigger, worse toxic algae blooms. Climate change increases the frequency and likelihood of extreme weather events – including the recent prevalence of sudden, harsh spring storms in the region, which cause agricultural runoff into the lake, providing the phosphates – the food – that the algae thrives on. Climate change also causes the lake water to warm

quicker and hotter, providing the optimal temperature for the algae.

Climate change also changes the environment around us. Warmer temperatures in winter lead to changing ecosystem conditions. Spring comes earlier, summer leaves later, extending growing and feeding seasons and opening the ecosystem to a wider variety of insects and plants, and animals never seen in an environment before become commonplace, and native species vanish. Imagine, say, a Lake Erie with zebra mussels, but no yellow perch or walleye.

That same extension of warmer seasons contributes to wildfires in the West. Mountain snowpack melts a week or two earlier than usual, giving the grasses extra time to bake in the summer sun, creating ideal conditions for severe, hot and fast-moving fires that kill firefighters – like, say, last summer's Yarnell blaze in Arizona, which took the lives of 19.

Climate change can also make seasonal temperatures *colder*. That's because it disrupts air-stream currents, knocking weather systems askew. Climate change creates the conditions, say, for midwinter polar air currents to break loose from the ice caps and lock regions in prolonged and unusual cold spells. Climate change also increases lake effect snow; the lakes freeze later, or with less coverage or not at all, allowing the air currents to warm over the water, scoop some up, and dump it on us as the front hits dry land.

And then there are the heat waves. Like, say, Europe's 2003 heat wave, which lasted two months and whose temperatures spiked to 105 F. It was the hottest summer in over 500 years of records, and some 70,000 lost their lives to the heat. Not every year will see record temperatures, but, like with storms, the frequency at which extreme heat will occur is increasing.

All of these things happen *now*, and they have real and negative effects on our lives. Besides the obvious – the storm damage, the victims of sub-zero temperatures or prolonged heat waves – there are a myriad of other effects. Climate change increases pollen count and ozone levels and worsens respiratory illnesses. Climate changes causes variability in rainfall and causes drought. Other places will see floods – and the increase of mosquitoes and mosquito-borne illnesses like the West Nile virus. Like invasive species following warmer ecosystems, disease, too, increases its geographic range.

And by most models, we're just beginning to see the effects of climate change in action. As the climate warms, predict many scientists, there'll be a kind of domino effect of unleashed carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. As the climate warms, more forests will burn, releasing more carbon. As the climate warms, arctic permafrost will melt, releasing methane – another greenhouse gas – into the atmosphere. Where it stops – if it stops – no one knows. No one knows what our fate – the fate of the human species – will be. What's certain is that bad things will happen. We must stop burning fossil fuel.

So. How does the political right in the U.S. react to the national climate change assessment?

"I do not believe that human activity is causing these dramatic changes to our climate the way these scientists are portraying it," said Florida Republican Sen. Marco Rubio. The conservative think tank, the Cato Institute, tells us to focus on the positives of climate change. Like, say, how humans will probably develop heat resistance because of it. An all-star Fox News panel that included George F. Will and Charles Krauthammer concluded all of science is wrong.

Which explains why the only significant action taken against climate change during the Obama presidency was a recent tweak to EPA rules, allowing that agency to regulate the emission of greenhouse gasses from coal plants. That rule change was challenged all the way to the Supreme Court, too. Everything else has been blocked by Republicans like Senator James Inhofe, the minority chair of the Environment and Public Works committee, who wrote a book claiming climate change is a hoax because the

The real opposition to climate change policy isn't legitimate, science-based doubt – it's greed, complacency, and ignorance.

Bible refutes it, that it's "laughable."

The only thing laughable about climate change today are fools like Senator Inhofe and those who stock Fox News panels, is the pervasive doubt in the face of overwhelming scientific evidence, are the media reports that "balance" climate change with conspiracy theory, and the inaction on the issue despite an overwhelming majority of Americans who think that climate change is real, happening, and needs to be addressed.

A less-heralded report mentioning climate change was released this spring by the Department of Defense. That's the Quadrennial Defense Review, a report on vulnerabilities in national security. Among them was climate change. "Climate change poses another significant challenge for the United States and the world at large," read the report. "As greenhouse gas emissions increase, sea levels are rising, average global temperatures are increasing, and severe weather patterns are accelerating."

If the Pentagon sees climate change as a national security risk, we should, too.

Jay Stevens can be contacted at Jay@ErieReader.com, and you can follow him on Twitter @Snevets_Yaj. To follow this story or comment, scan the QR code or visit <http://erirdr.com/6ihiu>



News of the Weird

By: Chuck Shepherd

LEAD STORY — PRICE OF FRIENDSHIP

"Whoever said, 'Money can't buy you friends' clearly hasn't been on the Internet recently," wrote The New York Times in April, pointing to various social media support services that create online superstars by augmenting one's Facebook "friends," Twitter "followers" and Instagram "likes." The reporter described how, by paying a company \$5, for example, he immediately acquired 4,000 "friends," and had he splurged for \$3,700, could have had a million on his Instagram photo account. Such services have been around for two years, but earlier, cruder versions (sometimes, just unmonitored email addresses) are now sophisticated "bots" — groups of computer code created on algorithm farms in India and elsewhere — that "behave" on social media with original messaging (often "drivel," wrote the Times) as if they were real people. [New York Times, 4-21-2014]

THE ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT

We All Scream: (1) In April, Haagen-Dazs announced it will introduce two new ice creams (thankfully, only in Japan): carrot orange (with bits of pulp and peel) and tomato cherry (made from tomato paste). (2) A South Wales ice cream maker ("Lick Me I'm Delicious") announced in April that it has perfected an ice cream containing about 25mg of Viagra per scoop (though it is not yet generally available). [Los Angeles Times, 4-21-2014] [Daily Mail (London), 4-11-2014]

Marketing Challenges: (1) In January, London's Daily Telegraph found three British companies in competition to sell deodorant supposedly made especially for women's breasts. According to one, Fresh Body, "We're replacing 'swoobs' — dreaded boob sweat — with smiles." (2) Owner Christian Ingber recently opened a sandwich shop in Gothenburg, Sweden, named "A F***ing Awesome Sandwich." An American expatriate told Stockholm's The Local news service that Swedes think English "curse words" are "cute and charming." [Daily Telegraph, 1-10-2014] [The Local (Stockholm), 4-2-2014]

SCIENCE FAIR

Medical Marvels: (1) China's Chengdu Commercial Daily reported in March that Liu Yougang, 23, finally had surgery to remove that whistle he had swallowed when he was 9. He had been experiencing worsened breathing — and had been making "shrill whistle sounds" nightly after falling asleep. (2) London's Daily Star featured Sarah Beal, 43, of Arley, Warwickshire, England, in a March story demonstrating her skin condition in which writing words on her

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The Way I See It

The Future of Performing Arts at McDowell

By: Rebecca Styn

Recently, the Millcreek Township School Board announced a decision to essentially cut the McDowell Center of Performing Arts program from McDowell High School.

And by *recently* and *essentially*, I mean teachers were told this past Friday, May 9 that the school board is planning to eliminate the curriculum as it stands and rather offer a supplemental after school program. Back in 2003, the School Board had thought the arts were vitally important and recognized the need to enhance the arts in education so they developed the CPA. And since then, the program has grown exponentially. Currently the Center serves the needs of over 1,000 students annually.

The CPA is the most comprehensive and fully integrated high school department of its kind in Northwestern Pennsylvania. The programs within contribute to the academic lives of a large portion of McDowell students.

We all see the financial difficulties in education and almost always when there's trouble, the arts programs are the first to go

The CPA has several areas of curriculum within their department. Areas ranging from instrumental ensembles and jazz band, to several choirs and vocal ensembles. They also have an award-winning marching band, are renowned for their theatrical productions, encompass instrumental and vocal groups, and showcase several award-winning musicians, singers, dancers, and actors. They also boast two annual full-scale musicals, and a dinner theater production. Essentially they offer something for everyone's talent who has an interest in theater either on stage, in the orchestra pit, or behind the scenes. In addition, the Center holds classes during the school day – such as technology design, writing, acting, etc.

This decision is in part due to the ongoing financial saga that the school district continues to experience. While they are making efforts to move past their history of cash management issues, lack of budget control, and inconsistent financial practices – for a \$90 million operation – they still continue to suffer the effects of what's been built by the previous board and superintendent.

What preempted this movement though, was that Michael Malthaner, the CPA's director will

be retiring at the end of the school year. And as such, they have chosen to not replace him.

"We need to demonstrate support for the CPA program and to encourage the school board and administrators to keep the program intact," says Julie Weyand, whose son Luke is active in the school's performing arts program. "My son will be a senior next year and he just found out that he was accepted into the University of Michigan's summer musical theatre camps – one of only 40 students in the entire country chosen. I attribute his involvement in the CPA as one of the main catalysts that got him to where he is today."

We all see the financial difficulties in education and almost always when there's trouble, the arts programs are the first to go. But do these individuals involved in these decisions ever look at the success of the young men and women that have come through programs such as these? Studies have shown, time and time again, that educational performance through the arts not only enriches the learning experience in students but also helps to improve performance overall in school.

The arts provide more than a performance-based experience, they teach us some of the most vital skills and traits that help make us suc-

cessful in life. Skills and traits like leadership, confidence, perseverance, focus, the ability to take constructive criticism, dedication, and accountability.

And these are just a few – but they are integral to success in life. Presidents throughout history, CEOs, and industry leaders from non-arts based organizations such as Microsoft, Xerox, GE, and many others, have all expressed the need for education in the arts.

Not only is this a program that shouldn't be cut – it should be better funded. The school board should look at the results of this program and instead of taking the easy way out; they need to find a creative way to keep this program alive. There's an opportunity to create a model of excellence here that doesn't thrive in many educational institutions. It's time for us to demand all students have access to quality arts education, not just the lucky few – or worse yet, none at all.

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://erirdr.com/h6ve3>



skin makes it puff up for about an hour before it recedes. It is referred to by doctors as the "Etch A Sketch condition" (formally, dermatographia), and despite occasional pain, she described it as "cool" and a "party trick." [Chengdu Commercial Daily via Global Times (Beijing), 3-6-2014] [Daily Star, 3-6-2014]

The Job of the Researcher: Cornell University graduate student Michael Smith, disappointed at the paucity of research on the pain of honeybee stings, decided to evaluate the stings himself (but in line with the Helsinki Declaration of 1975 on safe self-experimentation). Smith's protocols required five stings a day on various body locations for 38 days – at least three on each of 25 body areas. The worst, according to his pain index, were the nostril (9.0) and the upper lip (8.7). [National Geographic blogs, 4-3-2014]

North Carolina's Wake Forest Institute for Regenerative Medicine is already well known to News of the Weird readers for creating functional organs in the lab (most notably, perhaps, growing a human bladder and a rabbit's penis). In an April article in the Lancet, the program announced that it had implanted artificial vaginas in four women in the U.S. A functioning vagina, the director told BBC News, "is a very important thing." [BBC News, 4-10-2014]

LEADING ECONOMIC INDICATORS

While Medicare continues to be among the most costly federal services, and U.S. doctors continue to drop out of the program because of paltry fees for some procedures, other specialists are rewarded with such outsized compensation that almost 4,000 physicians were paid \$1 million or more for 2012 and about 350 of those totaled nearly \$1.5 billion, according to Medicare records released in April 2014. Ophthalmologist Salomon Melgen of West Palm Beach, Fla., took in more than \$20 million and treated 645 Medicare patients with a total of 37,000 injectable doses of Lucentis (a much more expensive drug than the popularly regarded equivalent, Avastin), according to Business Insider. (In fact, taxpayers could have saved more than \$11 million with Avastin on Melgen's billings alone, according to an April Washington Post analysis.) [Washington Post, 4-9-2014; Business Insider, 4-9-2014]

Visitors to the New York City office of Clear Channel radio station group chairman Bob Pittman are greeted exotically as they step off the elevator by a "tunnel" of "fine mist." However, a spokeswoman told a New York Post reporter in March that it "isn't for cooling or humidifying," but to impress advertisers, in that Clear Channel knows how to project the advertiser's logo against the mist. (Clear Channel, the Post reported, is \$21 billion in debt and has laid off "thousands" of employees.) [New York Post, 3-19-2014]

INTELLIGENT DESIGN

In a springtime rite in Narcisse, Manitoba, tens of thousands of red-sided garter snakes slithered out of pits in March so that writhing males could hook up with "pheromone-spewing" females. London's Daily Mail called it the largest gathering of snakes on the planet – with balls of males wrapped around females.

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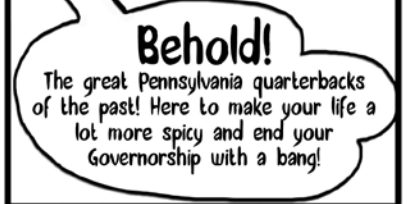
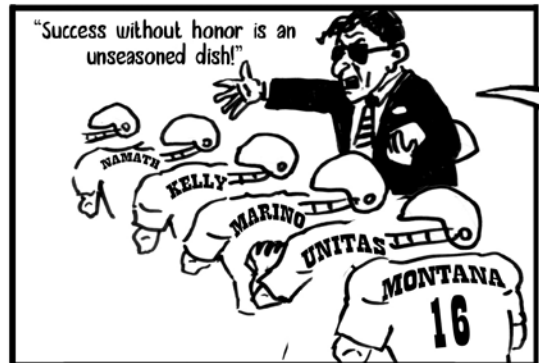
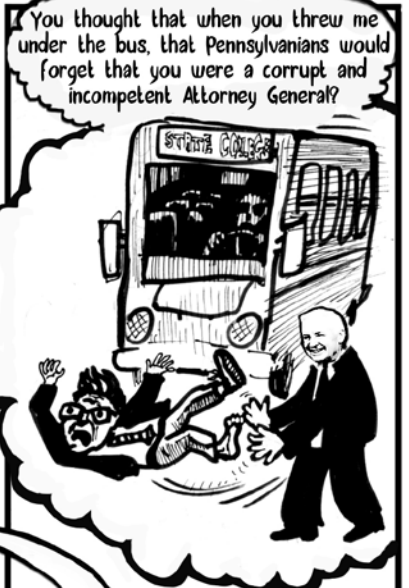
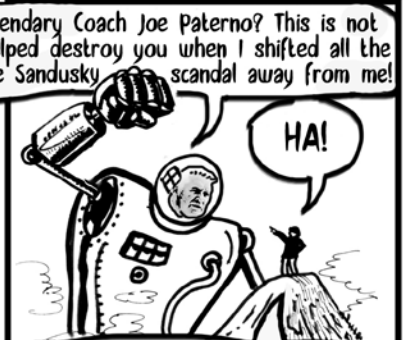
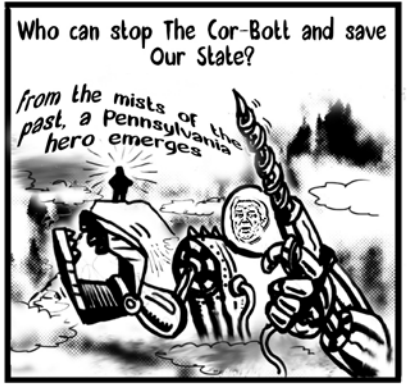
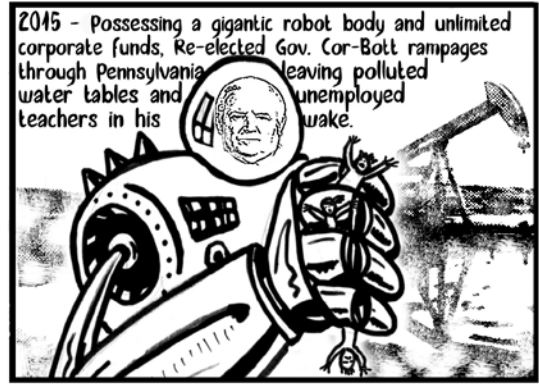
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Erica Willis: Executive Director
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Upfront

'Ello, Guvnah!

By: Cory Vaillancourt

Erie's most irregular regular column returns!
 Three and a third years ago, I accepted my very first assignment from the *Erie Reader* – to attend and report on newly-elected Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Corbett's inaugural ball. It was strange times and savage doings down there in Harrisburg, and it was a memorable trip for me in ways both story-related and not, but the takeaway was simple – the spectacle of feasting during a famine (a feast I enthusiastically immersed myself in) did not exactly set a reassuring tone for the fledgling Corbett administration.

Fast-forward forty full moons to today. Corbett's getting less respect in "rural" Erie than a yellow traffic light, his popularity ratings are lower than the temperature on Presque Isle in January, and he stands a very real chance of becoming the first Pennsylvania governor to lose a re-election bid since, well, ever.

Accordingly, a number of Democrats smelled the chum bobbing adrift in the drink and began menacingly circling the man some have called "the worst governor in America." More than 20 of these big fish – including new Erie County Executive Kathy Dahlkemper – were either in the shiver, rumored to be in the shiver, or asked to join the shiver.

A shiver is a term for a pack of sharks, by the way.

Today, the grind, the gam, the pod, the shiver – whatever you want to call it – stands at four. Pennsylvania Treasurer Rob McCord, former Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection Kathleen McGinty, Congresswoman Allyson Schwartz, and former Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Revenue Thomas W. Wolf continue to circle the bloated bleeding back-mossed manatee that is our governor.

What's that you say? You've never heard of any of these folks? That's because none of them hail from 'round these parts; McCord and Schwartz live in Montgomery County, and McGinty lives in Chester County – both of which are about as

far from Erie as you can get, diagonally across the plat of the Commonwealth. Wolf is from York County, just south of Harrisburg.

Of course, these candidates all have ambassadors locally – the carnival barkers who have helped these comparative strangers ingratiate themselves with the who's who of Erie's political circus. These candidates have met ringmasters and clowns alike, while attempting to avoid the ankle-deep piles of elephant dung lying just behind the mangy, aged, threadbare red velvet big-top curtains that define the boundaries of all our life's sideshows.

And Erie is one of the most important sideshows in the commonwealth right now. There be many democrats in this here county, and in a statewide democratic primary, few other counties matter as much as Erie matters.

So, who's pulling that musty curtain aside to offer McCord, McGinty, Schwartz, and Wolf a peek at the freaks and geeks?

After repeated contacts, Schwartz and McGinty didn't respond to requests for comments, which is fine, as they are shaping up to be irrelevant. Or, perhaps that's why they're irrelevant; regardless, the two frontrunners responded, so, if you're the type to like something only because your friends like that thing, well, have I got some things for you to like.

In an email, Rob McCord's spokesman Cameron L. Kline listed McCord's local muscle, including Erie Mayor Joseph Sinnott, Erie County Democratic Chairman Bill Cole, State Rep. Ryan Bizzarro, State Rep. Flo Fabrizio, State Senator Sean Wiley, and Erie City Councilman Bob Merski.

"Erie is one of Pennsylvania's most important cities and we've been fortunate to have earned the support of a tremendous group of leaders in the region," Kline went on to say. "As treasurer, Rob has worked closely with elected officials from Erie to protect seniors and fight for working families. In the primary we expect Erie to be a critical piece of the puzzle and we're going to work hard to win every single vote we can."

Not to be outdone, Tom Wolf told me by phone that he'd received formal announcements from Erie City Council President Mel Witherspoon,

County Councilman Kyle Foust, and local attorney Art Martinucci. He also said that he's received contributions from State Representative Pat Harkins and former State Representative John Hornaman, and he counts Erieite and Deputy Secretary for Administration at the Pennsylvania Department of Revenue Barry Drew as well as well-known local attorney and former State Senator Bill Sesler among his allies.

"I'm there [in Erie] a lot, and I think it's really important," Wolf said of Erie's role in the May 20 primary. "I remember making one speech to a group of accountants at the convention center, and I basically accused them of hiding the fact that Erie is the Riviera of Pennsylvania. Erie is important to Pennsylvania, not the least of which is the Great Lakes port. I understand the importance of Erie and would love to have Erie's support this time around."

But will he get it? McCord seems to have a lot of local support – especially among younger members of our community – and Wolf has outspent all other candidates by a very, very wide margin, placing both candidates in perfect position to jump through that flaming hoop at the center of our three-ring extravaganza and land the perfect Triple Lindy with a triumphant "Tadahhhhh!" at the end.

Now, if you're not one to merely do what your friends do, and you don't care too much about who brings the biggest billfold, consider this – McCord is an elected official who's already won a statewide campaign, and Wolf was an appointed member of former Gov. Ed Rendell's cabinet, giving McCord an intangible edge in name recognition.

Either way, just don't forget – which flaming hoop-jumping circus shark actually gets the chance to plunge their teeth into that lumbering sea cow is up to you, so don't forget to vote this coming Tuesday, May 20!

Cory Vaillancourt is a brilliant writer/complete hack. Compliment/heckle him at cvaillancourt@ErieReader.com. To follow this story or comment, scan the QR code or visit <http://eridr.com/jogazb>



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Phil Sellers



Fraser Cairns

A few of the invasive interlopers that threaten the area ecosystem — Clockwise from left: the garlic mustard plant, a 66-pound Asian bighead carp, a red-eared slider turtle.



wodleywonderworks

Invasive Species

Intercepting Interlopers

By: Mary Birdsong

Sneaking in by foot, fin, or feather is one way they get here. They also hide in foreign conveyances like great lake cargo vessels, or are innocently invited in by us when greenhouses sell imported plants and we take them home. Most of the time we don't see them, or understand their danger.

Until it is too late.

These interlopers are non-native animals, plants, and microorganisms that have been finding their way into places they are not welcome for as long as humans have traveled. This is nothing new. The black rat is believed to be the first animal to have been inadvertently distributed by humans, having reached Europe in the first century A.D. from tropical Asia via trading vessels.

The land and waters of Erie County are just as vulnerable as anywhere, perhaps even more so with a port that is open to world trade.

These interlopers don't come with the intention to harm, just to live their lives. Some find — with no natural predators in this new territory — the ideal conditions to flourish. When that happens, they become what we call *invasive species*, a plant or animal that inhabits to the point of domination or detriment to the local ecology.

Zebra mussels may be the most well-known invasive species in our area. Believed to be stowaways in ballast water of cargo ships from Eurasia, the mussels were first discovered in Lake St. Clair in 1988. Their close cousins, **quagga mussels**, arrived a year later. Both quickly made themselves right at home in Lake Erie.

At first, their filtering capacity seemed like a good thing, as water clarity increased from

about six inches to sometimes more than three feet. Not bad for a lake that had seen its share of nasty pollution. It was soon realized, however, that with ideal growing conditions and no natural predators, the mussels were swiftly clogging water intake pipes, damaging water equipment, altering water quality and decreasing food sources for native species.

The clarity has been found to be problematic,

too. More sunlight reaching below the surface has encouraged harmful algae growth leading to large toxic blooms in Lake Erie over the past few years. The economic impact of these two small mussel species in Pennsylvania is in the billions of dollars in damage and repairs.

Mussels are just the tip of the non-native iceberg, however.

Also in Lake Erie are **round goby**, a small, robust fish that thrives in degraded water conditions. Also from Eurasia, the goby's presence in the Great Lakes is both boon and burden. The gobies compete with native fish for food and habitat but they also feast on the invasive mussels, keeping the mollusks in check but not eradicating them. On the upside as well, the once-threatened Lake Erie watersnake is now making a comeback, as it finds gobies a tasty addition to its diet, and native fish, such as smallmouth and largemouth bass and walleye, are starting to prey on it. In fact, bait manufacturers are adding "Great Lakes Goby" lures to their lines.

Some species, like the **sea lamprey**, may be

native to part of a region but are naturally contained within certain watersheds. That is, until we open the floodgates.

Sea lampreys — jawless parasitic fish that attach to a host for hematophagous feeding — found their way into Lake Erie in 1921 through the Welland Canal that connects to Lake Ontario. Now the non-native species is playing a role in the diminishing steelhead trout, lake whitefish, burbot, and lake trout populations since the snake-like-looking fish often latches onto such native species, puncturing their skin with its suction-cup-like mouth filled with sharp teeth to feed off their bodily fluids.

And sometimes with invasive species, it's like a domino effect. With no natural apex predator — lake trout in this case — other species go unchecked. Facing less threat from lake trout, **alewife** — a herring and another invasive species — rose sharply, altering the pre-lamprey ecosystem. And the sea lamprey — with no natural predator in the Great Lakes — can freely and aggressively roam, preying on hosts that lack



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a natural defense against it and continuing to throw the natural order of the ecosystem out of balance.

Land animals, such as the **Norway rat** and **house mouse**, traveled to the New World from the Old World along with immigrants. Both can be found in Erie and Crawford counties. **Red-eared sliders**, a type of turtle found in the pet trade, are released, illegally, across the country by pet owners no longer willing to care for the rapidly growing reptiles. The slider is an aggressive competitor for food, basking sites where turtles sit in the sun, and breeding habitat, posing a significant threat to many native turtle species, including the red-bellied turtle that is listed as threatened in Pennsylvania. Mark Lethaby, a herpetologist with the Natural History Museum at the Tom Ridge Environmental Center says that there is a resident population of red-eared sliders at Presque Isle State Park. "We don't know if they are reproducing there, though," he says.

Humans also aided the passage of **European starlings**, **English house sparrows**, and **mute swans** into the country. The sparrows and starlings were introduced, in part, by the American Acclimatization Society, a group dedicated to bringing to the U.S. every bird mentioned in the writing of William Shakespeare. Mute swans were introduced in North America in the 1800s as ornaments for the ponds in parks and zoo, and on the estates of wealthy homeowners.

Most non-indigenous insects usually sneak in without us knowing. The **European gypsy moth** is an exception. In the 1860s, E. Leopold Trouvelot, with dollar signs in his eyes, imported the moths from France hoping to produce a more disease-resistant silkworm and establish a U.S.-based silk industry. Some escaped, of course, and quickly set about populating the northeastern part of the U.S., leaving in their wake completely defoliated swaths of forest. In just more than a century, they have reached as far as Wisconsin to the west and Virginia to the South. Millions of dollars have been spent on efforts to control the moth's spread. No specific study has calculated the economic impact of the gypsy moth alone, but a 2011 study titled "Economic Impacts of Non-Native Forest Insects in the Continental United States," published in the online journal *PLoS ONE*, says that insects that feed on foliage, like the gypsy moth, cause \$868 million in annual damages across the United States.

All of these animals have upset the balance of the foodweb and ecosystems of our local area, but if you were going to award a prize for the most successful invasion, it would have to go to the plant world. The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources has cataloged 110 herbs, flowering plants, grasses, shrubs, and trees that have invaded the commonwealth and have the potential to make nuisances of themselves. Some already have.

Oriental bittersweet and **Japanese honeysuckle**, fast growing, voracious vines, have smothered acres of native trees and shrubs, particularly at Presque Isle State Park.

Another invader, **garlic mustard**, is a small but prolific plant that quickly spreads across the forest floor, displacing native plant life. Its success is aided by white-tailed deer, which consume the native plants they are adapted to eat, leaving only the garlic mustard behind.

It is a particularly troublesome plant and provides a good example of how even small changes in an ecosystem can radically alter the landscape. Garlic mustard looks enough like toothwort, the preferred host plant of the West Virginia white, a native butterfly that will lay its eggs on the plant. The garlic mustard is toxic to the caterpillars of this species, however, so when they hatch and begin eating, they die. Further, garlic mustard contains chemicals that affect mycorrhizal fungi associated with native trees, resulting in suppression of native tree seedling growth.

The results affect not only the threatened West Virginia white butterfly and native trees, but also the songbirds that come to our area every spring. Migrating songbirds time their migration to coincide with the caterpillar hatch, as larvae are their preferred food source. With fewer caterpillars available, it takes longer for birds, like warblers, to fatten up for the next leg of the journey, or they continue on with not enough fat stores, putting them at risk of death during the arduous migration.

Matt Pluta, Program Manager for Environment Erie and coordinator of the Weed Warrior project at Presque Isle, says that it's important to remove as much garlic mustard as possible, especially before it goes to seed. "The Weed Warrior volunteers have been doing an exceptional job of removing garlic mustard over the past three years, but we still have a long way to go. It's very prolific."

Common Reed (or **phragmite**) is even more badly behaved. This tall, plumed grass has overwhelmed many ponds and wetlands at Presque Isle, crowding out all native plants and making it impossible for waterfowl, shorebirds, and other water-related animals to feed or utilize the water the way they typically would. They spread by underground rhizomes and seeds making their advance every growing season a challenge to park officials hoping to slow its growth or eliminate it along with other invaders, like **Japanese knotweed**, **shrub honeysuckle**, and **purple loosestrife**, which are gaining "footholds" in every corner of the park.

According to Holly Best, Assistant Park Manager, it is Great Lakes Restoration Initiative grants that have improved their ability to battle invasive plants more effectively. "This funding has provided us with supplies, equipment, and personnel to do a lot of work toward removing invasive vegetation on the park. This will be a continual battle to maintain what we have done, as well as continue to treat additional areas. We hope to receive funding in the future to support this program for many years."

Unfortunately, more invaders are knocking on our door.

The **emerald ash borer** and the **Asian longhorn beetle**, both insects native to Asia have been reported nearby. They are believed to have arrived in the U.S. in wooden crates or packing materials. Both threaten a variety of native trees and have spurred the campaign to discourage people from transporting firewood out of home territories. According to a study done by the Forest Service of the US Department of Agriculture, Erie County is at risk of receiving the longhorn beetle via wood waste from the New York City area that is transported to the Lakeview landfill in Summit Township.

The **hemlock woolly adelgid**, also a native to Asia and related to aphids, was introduced via



USFWS Headquarters



Dendroica cerulea

Above, from left: The Asian longhorn beetle and the common reed are wreaking havoc on native biodiversity.

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plants imported to the United States for the nursery trade in the early 1950s. Last year, it was reported as close as Cook Forest State Park near Clarion. These insects can decimate a hemlock tree within just four years after infestation. Thankfully, recent reports suggest that our very cold winter may have killed them off in some regions, giving foresters and biologists time to plan more defensive strategies.

The biggest potential invader to the Great Lakes looming on the near horizon, however, is one that could have a significant and quite noticeable effect in the waters of Lake Erie.

The **Asian carp**, the umbrella term for a group of large fish that comprises the **bighead, silver,** and **black carp** species, were originally introduced into the U.S. in the 1970s as weed and algae controllers in aquaculture and wastewater treatment plants. They have since migrated through the Mississippi River system and into the Missouri and Illinois rivers. The carp are now threatening to enter the Great Lakes through the artificial Chicago Area Waterway System (CAWS) that links the Illinois River with Lake Michigan.

As with any other aquatic invader, these carp threaten to crowd out native fish and occupy their breeding habitat, and compete with native fish for food. They can grow to more than 100 pounds and five feet in length. If successful, they have the potential to ruin the \$7 billion Great Lakes fishing industry and disrupt the region's \$16 billion recreational boating industry. The silver carp poses the most danger to humans because these easily startled fish can jump eight to ten feet into the air; causing human injuries, including cuts, black eyes, bruises, and concussions.

Three bighead carp have already been found in Lake Erie; two in Ottawa County, Ohio and one in Ontario, Canada. Fortunately for now, these are believed to be isolated incidents and there is no evidence of a breeding population.

Interested stakeholders in both the U.S. and Canada are working diligently to prevent this invasion. Last year, the Obama administration released an upgrade to their control strategy framework for Asian carp control, including

new physical and chemical control tools, strengthening the electric barrier system in the CAWS, and constructing a new project to completely separate the Great Lakes from the Mississippi basin near Fort Wayne, Ind.

Fishing and conservation groups such as the S.O.N.S. of Lake Erie are watching carefully. Jerry Skrypzak, President of S.O.N.S., says, "the carp can cause more problems than we already have with invasive species. If the Lake Erie hatchery crashes, we could lose the entire fishing industry. If the carp are allowed to enter the Great Lakes and successfully breed, we really don't have any idea what will happen in the long run. It could be a disaster."

What is clear is that with increasing global trade, the Asian carp are not the last invasive species with which we will do battle. But this moment — before the carp have successfully invaded — is our first chance to prevent an aggressive species from entering our ecosystem rather than deal with the consequences. Prevention, despite its high price tag, is far more economical and less damaging to the environment than cleaning up afterwards like we are still doing today with the gypsy moth.

The Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study Report submitted to Congress earlier this year by the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers suggests that developing infrastructure to keep Asian carp out of the Great Lakes could take decades and cost \$15 billion or more. And we've already spent approximately \$26 billion trying to rid ourselves of the gypsy moth and other non-native foliage-eating insects in just the past three decades.

This undertaking to stop the carp also suggests that we are learning to be more careful of what we deliberately bring into our water and onto to our land, or being more mindful when first discovering a non-native species in our midst. That's a start.

While we wait for federal and state authorities to execute a plan to address the potential Asian carp invasion, what can the average citizen do? It often seems like nothing we, as individuals,

do can make a difference.

But that would be wrong.

If you are a boater, you can make sure your ballast is empty before moving your boat from one watershed to another, preventing, perhaps, the introduction of zebra mussels to a new watercourse.

If you are a gardener, you can educate yourself about the non-native plants you may have growing in your landscape and replace them with native plants that are designed to support native wildlife and thrive in local conditions, to boot.

And if you camp, leave local firewood at home and source your campfire wood from the area where you are staying, which prevents the spread of wood-borne insects to new areas.

It never seems like enough, but small efforts, practiced by many can make a difference. If you have no interest in protecting native species or habitat, or if taking a few extra steps seems like just too much trouble, remember that, according to the last study done in 2003 by the Erie Chamber and Growth Partnership, Erie's sport fishing industry generated \$9.5 million annually for the county, and produced 219 fishing-related jobs.

If Asian carp move in, all of our pocketbooks may be a little emptier.

Mary Birdsong can be contacted at mBirdsong@ErieReader.com, and you can follow her on Twitter @ [Mary_Birdsong](https://twitter.com/Mary_Birdsong). To follow this story or comment, scan the QR code or visit <http://eridr.com/d7u97>



thurs 5.15

Stratospherius w/ Eric Brewer & Friends

While people typically envision a rock star wielding a guitar or a bass, Joe Deninson of Stratospherius has a different stringed instrument at his disposal. The electric violinist will be putting on a show at Sherlock's with local jam stars Eric Brewer & Friends for a mix of stringed goodness on State Street.

8 to 11 p.m. // 1505 State St. // pacal505.com

Rocky LaPorte at Jr's Last Laugh

After winning some local comedy competitions Rocky went on to win The Johnnie Walker National Comedy Competition beating out over 1,100 contestants in 10 cities! He then went on to do numerous television shows like Cheers, Pat Sajak, Comic Strip Live, a CBS pilot titled "The Rocky Laporte Show," and had his very own half hour special on Comedy Central. He's got a clean, blue-collar style of comedy that helps make him a favorite in the comedy clubs. He's opened for the likes of Louie Anderson, Garry Shandling, Drew Carey, Tim Allen, Hootie and the Blowfish, and The Righteous Brothers just to name a few. Come check him out.

7 p.m. // 1402 State St. // 461.0911

fri 5.16

Special Guest w/ Chrome Moses

The King's Rook will host a pair of special guests for a Friday night shindig, with rock 'n' roll being represented by Erie and Pittsburgh in Western Pennsylvania-tinged affair. Erie's own Special Guest will team up with the blues-infused rock grooves of The Steel City's Chrome Moses with the goal of guitar-filled time in mind.

9 p.m. // 1921 Peach St. // facebook.com/kingsrookclub

Catholic Charities Ball

Take in the spectacular view and atmosphere at the Bayfront Convention Center while enjoying great food, drinks, and music by The Chosen Few Band as well as a dance competition featuring local celebrities (including one of our own – Managing Editor Ben Speggen). Come and be a "Beacon of Hope" to help raise money for people of all faiths in need. Save the date and invite friends for an evening you won't forget!

6:30 // 1 Sassafras Pier // 824.1258

sat 5.17

Rustbelt Record Swap

Whether you're looking to catch some live tunes or take some great music back home, the Rustbelt Record Swap is for you. Thousands of records will be available to comb through at the King's Rook while local favorites This American Song, East Clintwood and the New Morning Sunrise, and London Underground treat your

The Mighty Sea and Tyler Smilo Dual Album Release

The word 'first' can hold a special place in our memories. First kiss, first concert, first anniversary... all moments in time that remain in a special place in our brains for future recollections. Three local acts will be celebrating some special firsts of their own at The King's Rook Club Saturday, May 24, hoping to make the night as memorable for you as it will be for the musicians involved.

For solo singer/songwriter Tyler Smilo and The Mighty Sea duo of Seann Clark and Abby Barrett, the night will mark the release of a pair of debut albums in Smilo's *Blood Into Sound* and The Mighty Sea's eponymous record, both of which are reviewed in this very issue. The heartfelt Smilo and the emotive Mighty Sea won't be alone in the first festivities, as rock 'n' roll band Daybreak Radio, which Smilo also fronts, will play its first full live show to close out the night.

"I thought it would be a great idea if we all just joined forces," says Daybreak Radio's bassist Ryan Bartosek over the phone. "Tyler and The Mighty Sea have their own draws, we would have our own draw, and if you put it all together, it would just increase the interest and make it more of an event."

The combination of artists certainly makes sense, given the connections between the bands. In addition to Smilo's Daybreak Radio ties, the solo folk artist also displays his rock side with Barrett in the Blue Pike Award-winning Potwhole. Now, all of the artists will team together for some exciting beginnings, even after one of them thought he might be near the end of his time on stage.

"I was asked to play for the last Shotgun Jubilee show and I did that, and I had it in my mindset that it might be the last time I would play bass in any serious capacity," Bartosek says. "Tyler ended up seeing me in that show and asked me to be in his band. There was no way I could say no."

After mulling over the word 'last,' Bartosek is now joining Smilo, The Mighty Sea, and the rest of his Daybreak Radio compatriots in the launch of night full of 'firsts,' and you can join them for a special show full of memories. — Alex Bieler

9 p.m. Saturday, May 24 // 1921 Peach St. // facebook.com/kingsrookclub



Contributed Photo

ears to some sweet sounds not confined to compact discs and turntables.

7 p.m. // 1921 Peach St. // facebook.com/kingsrookclub

The Rustbelt Connection presents The 58's, Hubbs, NATASK, Keith Concept, Shad Ali, Holla House, Flannel Gang

To commemorate the release of their debut mixtape, TRC is bringing back Pittsburgh's The 58's this Saturday night. No stranger to Erie stages, The 58's will be dropping some new goods (see Iggy Imig's album review on page 16) as well as some classics from their extensive catalog. Starting off the night will be hip-hop from all over the region with Erie's Flannel Gang and HollaHouse, Keith Concept from Buffalo, and the debut of Pittsburgh's Shad Ali and Hubbs. And all night long the 814basscrew's NATASK

will be manning the turntables with some classic hip-hop to trap to some of his own tracks! Admission is only \$7.

9 p.m. // PACA, 1505 State St. // facebook.com/2189crew

Trash to Treasure Sale at Penn State Behrend

We have all heard the old adage: what is one person's trash is another's treasure, and Penn State Behrend recognizes this by hosting their Trash to Treasure indoor yard sale at Erie Hall. This is your chance to clean out your unwanted — but still useful — items while also benefiting bargain-hunters and the environment by keeping these items out of the waste cycle. Admission is \$5 a person for the early bird until 9 a.m. After 9 admission is free.

7:30 to noon // 4701 Behrend College Drive // psbehrend.psu.edu

sun 5.18

Erie Seawolves vs. Akron RubberDucks

Kids Crew Sunday! Kids Crew members receive free admission to each Sunday game in 2014 compliments of Camp Judson! PLUS, the first 500 fans in attendance will receive a Wendy's Scratch & Win card upon entering the stadium. Every card is a winner. After the game, families can play catch on the field (bring your ball and glove!)

1:35 p.m. // 110 E. 10th St. // 456.1300

mon 5.19

Mysteries of the Great Lakes at TREC

The Tom Ridge Environmental Center's 4-story-high, 45-foot-wide Big Green Screen doesn't disappoint, bringing you into the film and making it feel as though you are part of the action. Don't miss *Mysteries of the Great Lakes*, a film that explores the world's largest concentration of freshwater, including our own Lake Erie. Also showing are *Mysteries of the Unseen World* and *Titans of the Ice Age*.

2 and 5 p.m. // 301 Peninsula Dr. // trecpi.org

tues 5.20

Dress for Success Erie's Purse and Pearl Luncheon

Let's face it: when we look good, we feel good, and when we feel good, we tend to have more confidence. This is what Dress for Success Erie is all about, specializing in suiting women for the workplace and empowering almost 4,000 women since 2008 to chase their goals in style. The 7th Annual Purse and Pearl Luncheon at the Bayfront Convention Center features keynote speaker Tamara L. McMillan, CEO at McMillan Enterprise, vendor shopping at 9:30 a.m. and luncheon basket raffles. Grab your tickets at the site below.

Noon to 1:30 p.m. // 1 Sassafras Pier // dressforsuccess.org

wed 5.21

Yep! Membership Drive @ Erie Brewing Company

Now is the time to get involved with Young Erie Professionals and this is the event to get you started. Finger food will be provided and Erie Brewing Company has a great drink special. For \$5, receive your own tasting glass (to take home of course!) to sample the 5-6 beers on tap. Finish tasting and take a tour to see how craft beer is made from start to finish: from the grain and hops to the bottling and boxing. The event is open and free to all.

5:30 // 12123 Veshecco Drive // yeperie.org

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The Russian Orthodox Church of the Nativity Presents

TROIKA RUSSIAN FESTIVAL

109 German Street, Erie PA 16507

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Saturday, May 24 - Noon to 5 PM
Sunday, May 25 - Noon to 10 PM

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- Children's Area

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RAIN or SHINE

www.troikafestival.com

Troika Russian Festival

Sean Connery may not be around, but for the fifth year, the people at the Church of the Nativity will help the community get a visit from Russia, with love. The Troika Russian Festival will settle down for three days starting May 23 to help give the area a taste of the Eurasian nation's culture.

To help celebrate the popular festival, local musician Stephen Trohoske has helped create a marriage of European and American artists in a new twist for the event. A list of local performers that includes Trohoske, bassist extraordinaire Tony Grey, vocalist Elly Vahey, Erie Philharmonic violinist Louis Nicolai, and numerous others will perform a variety of Russian tunes in English, ranging from pop standards from the '60s, '70s, '80s to Russian new wave. The Barynya Dancers, centered in New York City and hailing from all over Eastern Europe, will return to Troika as well to help provide even more punch – or 'kick,' in this instance – to the event.

"It's a small neighborhood festival that seems to have so much heart," Trohoske says. "I talked to a lot of people that tell me it feels like the kickoff to summer. They know that they can stop down for the vodka bar, the chicken Kiev, the people, the music, the sounds, seeing the sun hit off the Russian church and illuminate... it feels special."

Instead of purchasing a plane ticket and rushing over half the globe, make the leisurely trek to the north end of German Street for a trip to Troika and learn for yourself, just why people love the Russian Fest. — Alex Bieler

4 to 10 p.m. Friday May 23, 12 to 6 p.m. Saturday, May 24, and 12 to 10 p.m. Sunday May 25 // 109 German St. // facebook.com/TroikaFestival



Contributed Photo

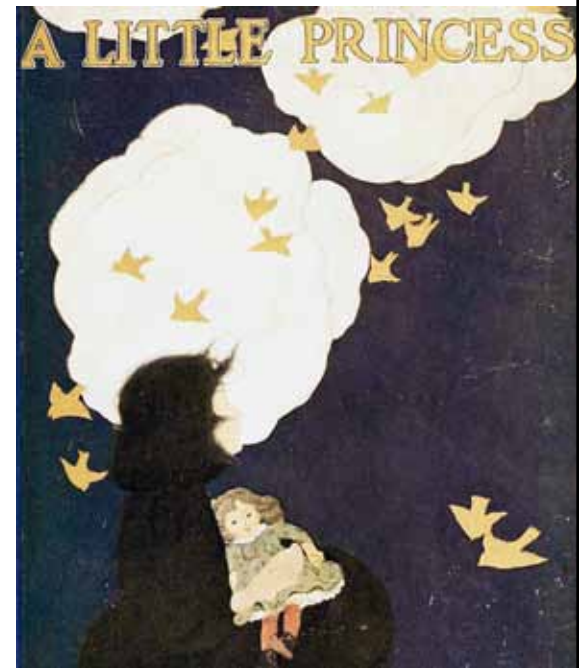
A Little Princess

There is a lot of young talent in the Erie acting scene, but with *A Little Princess*, the Erie Playhouse will be skewing younger than your typical college presentation.

The actors may not be out of high school yet, but the cast of *A Little Princess*, a story of a little girl who perseveres at a London boarding school despite a cruel headmistress and family misfortune, will help show that you don't always need years of experience to display a sense of creativity and imagination. Get ready to be sucked into Frances Hodgson Burnett's tale of Sarah Crewe, all thanks to some adorable children.

In the future, you may see some of these names again, but for now, appreciate a younger generation's ability to bring *A Little Princess* to life on the big stage. — Alex Bieler

7 p.m. May 16-17, 2 p.m. May 17-18 // 13 W. 10th St. // erieplayhouse.org



1st Edition Cover

thurs 5.22

Sea of Teeth

Take a bite out of some meaty servings of post-hardcore when Sea of Teeth take the stage at Sherlock's. The local rockers serve up a set that sounds like the lovechild of Mclusky and Touche Amore for one deliciously aggressive musical dish.

10 p.m. // 508 State St. // 453.7760

PACA presents *Stain*

In *Stain*, what doesn't kill you leaves a mark. And the locally-produced play — written by Tony Glazer and directed by Mark Tanenbaum — will leave its mark with six performances, starting tonight, at PACA Performing Arts Center & Theater. Described as a darkly comic piece, *Stain* looks at the complexities of family by following 15-year-old Thomas through his

quickly-crumbling life — and the secrets his family tries to keep at bay. And be aware: The work contains mature language and situations. Tickets are \$10.

7 p.m. // 1505 State St. // paca1505.com

fri 5.23

Gallery Night and ARTafterDARK at Erie Art Museum

Spend your Friday night exploring some of the very best of the Gem City's very-vibrant art scene as the Erie Art Museum, along with a bunch of local, independent galleries, open their doors after-hours for all of our enjoyment. Each space offers its own exhibitions, entertainment, refreshments, and vibes, and you can end the evening with a very-cool, interactive art party at the museum. Get out and see what's up!

7 p.m. // 20 E. Fifth St. // erieartmuseum.org

Bike Night

Downtown Erie comes to life this Friday with the excitement of live outdoor music, large crowds, great food and, of course, loud pipes. Come discover the night life in Downtown Erie. And don't forget, on-street parking is for bikes only.

6 p.m. // Downtown State Street // 455.3743

sat 5.24

Honey Spine

There's no nasty side to Jekyll & Hyde's this Saturday when Honey Spine visits the local gastropub. While the Fredonia, N.Y. Americana trio treats your ears to some sweet songs, you can feast on some tasty grub and refreshing brews, and take a peek at the establishment's recent renovations all on the same

night.

8 p.m. // 8 E. 10th St. // 456.0072

sun 5.25

Glow Run 5k

The United Service Corps is excited to announce the first of its kind for Erie, PA - the Glow Run 5k. Fun for runners and walkers alike, the Glow Run is a visually and physically exhilarating event as the 3.1 mile race takes participants through the heart of the Penn State Behrend campus. Starting at sunset, runners don all manner of glow and neon paraphernalia as they complete the course and maneuver through mile marker glow stations like a neon forest, black light tunnel and a laser light chute. For the finale, celebrate at the post-race party with a live DJ and laser light show.

7:45 p.m. // Penn State Behrend // unitedservicecorps.com/glowrun

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Race to the Coffin Comedy at PACA

The Performing Artists Collective Alliance hosts a Race to the Coffin Comedy of stand-up comedians whose goals are to make Erie laugh. The event is BYOB with I.D., so grab some buddies and beers and head to PACA for a night of comedic fun. Cover charge is just \$5.

8 p.m. // 1505 State St. // paca1505.com

mon 5.26

Memorial Day Buck Day: Erie SeaWolves vs. Altoona Curve

The American traditions of Memorial Day and baseball meet for one big Buck Day this Monday afternoon. Stop by Jerry Uht Park

for discounted treats as the Erie SeaWolves take on a talented Altoona Curve team full of Pittsburgh Pirates prospects on this American holiday.

1:35 p.m. // 110 E. 10th St. // 456.1300

tues 5.27

Presque Isle Downs & Casino - Live Thoroughbred Horse Racing

Check out the live horse-racing action during the 100-day meet that will run Sundays through Thursdays until Sept. 25, with special live racing cards on the Preakness and Belmont Saturdays of May 17 and June 7. Come bet on your favorite pony rain or shine - basking in the warm weather trackside or in the upstairs clubhouse.

5:25 post time // 8199 Perry Hwy // casinoinerie.com



US Army Corp of Engineers

Bike Around the Bay

This May, Environment Erie is giving you a chance to help preserve not only a very special body of land, but also your own body.

Bike Around the Bay offers Erieites a chance to take part in one of three available bike tours of beautiful Presque Isle, with options of 10-, 30-, or 50-mile routes for your choosing. Proceeds from Bike Around the Bay will help fund seminars and workshops to help educate people on the environmental benefits of composting, recycling, managing wastewater, and rain gardens, as well as helping to protect Erie's natural landmarks. Take the cardio workout into consideration, and Bike Around the Bay - as it can help both your body and your mind.

All three tours start and end at the Pilot House and are accompanied by a picnic lunch, part of a wholesome package that starts with a workout and ends with an environmental education for others. — Alex Bieler

Saturday, May 17 // 1 Holland St. // environmenterie.org



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DIY vinyl record art

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MUSIC REVIEWS

Tyler Smilo

Blood Into Sound

Independent

★★★★



While some bands look to layer their music as much as possible, sometimes it's best to strip everything away until there is just one person and one instrument to see just how strong the structure of a song is. On *Blood Into Sound*, Tyler Smilo's debut solo album, it's the embrace of the basics that shows off the power behind his creations. The local singer/songwriter fills his debut album with 10 heartfelt songs, playing not with a wink and a nod, but with an earnestness that allows his lyrics to hit listeners straight in the gut. With a voice like if a more serious Tom DeLonge went on a Mountain Goats bender, Smilo's lyrics take center stage, backed by his trusty guitar, a simple combination that allows little touches, like the "oohs" on "My Weight," to sound hauntingly good. Smilo doesn't over think things on *Blood Into Sound*, and the heart of the songs shine through because of it. – Alex Bieler

Damon Albarn

Everyday Robots

Parlophone

★★★★



After spending years fronting bands like Britpop legends Blur and the experimental cartoon quartet Gorillaz, Damon Albarn has pulled away the curtain for his first solo album. The cover art for *Everyday Robots* is rather appropriate, with Albarn sitting by himself in front of a dull grey tableau, a quiet and lonely display for a quiet and lonely album. It doesn't take long before the feeling of isolation in the modern age sets in, as Albarn starts the album off singing "We are everyday robots on our phones/ in the process of getting home/ looking like standing stones/ out there on our own" over simple percussion and strings. From there, the melancholy perseveres, save for Albarn's playful ode to a young elephant on "Mr. Tembo," a bright spot in a sea of aural glumness. *Everyday Robots* can get a bit heavy on the melancholy, but with songs as lovely as "Photographs (You Are Taking Now)," Albarn's solo debut is a quiet success. – Alex Bieler

The 58's

The Blizzard of 93

The 58's

★★★★



Formed in the Mon Valley, The 58's are born and bred Pittsburgh hip-hop. Comprised of six of the Steel City's most skilled mcs, seven if you include DJ Tom Dug, who can spit rhymes harder than most mcs, The 58's have continually been labeled a Pittsburgh Wu Tang, and after some heavy listening, it's clear to see that that comparison isn't too far off. At the core of The 58's is Mayo and B.White; debuting in 2010 as the Mon Valley Miracles, they have been steadily building up their catalog. Their sixth full-length release, *The Blizzard of 93*, hones in on their trademark sound of classic east coast heavy hip-hop. With a good chunk of the production being done by fellow yinzers, ID LABS and Big Chubb and JBG featuring from some of Pittsburgh's most notable mcs, these tracks bleed black and yellow. – Iggy Imig

The Mighty Sea

The Mighty Sea

Independent

★★★★



Raw yet haunting, The Mighty Sea pairs Basket Eddy's Seann Clark with Potwhole's Abby Barrett like an evening summer storm coupled with a cool after-breeze, celebrating both the intense and the mellow results of minimal instrumentation. The duo's self-titled debut album balances Clark's thunderous percussive acoustic guitar style (the man knows how to make one instrument sound fuller than most) and raspy howls (think: Ray LaMontagne and solo Dave Matthews) with Barrett's flowing viola and wispy harmonies (think: simply beautiful). The two fluidly roll from darker, brooding song ("Sailor's Song") to lighter, poppier fare ("The Mighty Sea") throughout the album with ease, but one consistent remains: these tracks run long. Only one song comes in under four minutes while four of the eleven total tracks pass the seven-minute mark. Such length does demand listeners to settle in for a longer listening experience, but the showcase of talent here is worth the time. – Ben Spегgen



One of this year's returning performers, celebrated North Carolina picker Jim Avett (and that's right, folks, he is the world-famous Avett Brothers' daddy), performs with Justine Parker and other members of Tiger Maple String Band during the 2012 Downtown Edinboro Art and Music Festival.

music, open workshops, and a whole lot more – is happening all over the place, all the time, making for happenings galore within the happening at-large.

The fest kicks off with its traditional opening jam by organizers/hosts/pickers Fred Parker and Friends, and following headliner performance by longtime area jam mainstays Donna the Buffalo (considered by many to be masters, and among the first in the herd, of the modern roots-rock-groove revolution) Thursday night at Culbertson Hills.

And, from there, for a good few days, it just sorta doesn't stop.

Along with local favorites like Eric Brewer & Friends, Potwhole, Claire Stuczynski, and Tiger Maple String Band, and regional and national acts like Blue Sky Mission Club, Big Daddy Zydeco, Jim Avett, and Driftwood, there are dozens of bands and performers – and lots of worthwhile music, arts, and crafts workshop presenters, too – doing their things at different venues and locales, indoors and out, in and all around downtown Edinboro.

And it's all free. That's right – free. A real good time that, beside whatever you may wanna spend once you're there, doesn't have to cost you a dime.

It's really close by, and genuinely family-friendly, too, so, if other, unrelated plans for your weekend aren't already pre-set in motion, there's really no reason not to go check it out.

Those who make the Downtown Edinboro Art and Music Festival happen every year – a dozens-strong, all-volunteer core of folks from all throughout the Edinboro community (business-people, artists, musicians, townies, students, and others) certainly agree most heartily. Recently, as they worked to bring all the festival's finishing touches together, I took some time to talk all about it with Fred Parker, local musician (he leads the festival's host band, Tiger Maple), gallery owner, and one of the festival's chief organizers.

Here's some of what he had to say: **Ryan Smith:** Hey, Fred. So, we should start off by talking a little about 2014 being the Downtown Art and Music Festival's 10th year. Does it

Downtown Edinboro Art and Music Festival

Kicking off Erie Summers for a Decade

By Ryan Smith

Every year, upon the third weekend of May, raining or shining or whatever, summer's always dropped in – all informal-like, in a free-and-easy, three-day stretch – and art and music, rooted and rich and colorful and cool, abound in nearby Edinboro. And this weekend, lucky for you and lucky for me, is no different.

Like it always has, the Downtown Edinboro Art and Music Festival – a good one, to be sure, deep-steeped and well-simmered in the fine, long-storied lines of Appalachian music and folk traditions – will, for its 10th year, happily usher in the summer music season in and around our getting-greener region.

Now, I've been here and there for most of the Downtown Edinboro Art and Music fests over the course of that decade – sunny Edinboro's where I call home, you know. And one of the coolest things, I've found, is that no matter where you go (and it's a pretty good-and-sizable gathering, one that may attract some thousands over that three-day stretch), it feels small and intimate, unhurried and always-of-the-heart.

That could be, at least partly, because it's the kind of festival where everything – tons of live

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Ryan Smith

Erie resident Renee Semrau jams out with her baby daughter, Gwendolyn, in some open space at the Downtown Edinboro Art and Music Festival in 2012.

feel like you all have been at this for a full decade now?

Fred Parker: Not really – well, sometime it does, and sometimes it doesn't! It's definitely a milestone. It shows we have some momentum, and some sustainability. [But overall], it doesn't feel like it's been 10 years.

RS: Tell people who may not be too familiar a little about what the Edinboro Downtown Music Festival is all about.

FP: For me, it's like the kick-off for whole festival season in the area as we know it. It's the first one that really gets that ball rolling.

RS: Agreed, man. So, has it gotten easier to work out the logistics of presenting the festival as an all-free, all-inclusive event each year, or do you always face the same sets of challenges from an organizational perspective?

FP: It does get a little bit easier. We wouldn't begin to be able to do this without the help of our many, many volunteers [about 50-plus in total]. It's a lot of people making a lot of things happen.

RS: Well, you're all doing some fine work, Fred. That said, tell me about the philosophy behind the Downtown Art and Music Festival. What's it about, and why do you think so many people find supporting it, as a free-and-open event year after year, to be so worthwhile?

FP: The original intent of the whole festival was to create something free and open to the whole population – whoever that might be. Everyone is welcome.

We're giving something to the community that people desperately need in their lives – music, and art. [Both are] such critical things we need to have in our lives.

RS: Very true. So, then, tell those who've never been before just a bit about what they may ex-

pect to encounter – besides lots of great music and great art – at the festival.

FP: You're gonna run into a lotta good people, all there for the same reason – to celebrate music, art and hangin' out with each other.

The whole thing's just about having a good time, and generating a feeling of community. That can enrich our town, our society ... I dunno, maybe even our world.

Well put, man. And there you have it, folks.

Steeped in Appalachian-roots traditions and celebrating a decade of ushering in the summer festival season by welcoming great performers, artists, and an array of workshops – all free and open – right into Erie's own backyard, the Edinboro Art and Music Festival is Thursday, May 15 through Sunday, May 18 on multiple stages and various venues, both indoor and out, in the beautiful 'Boro.

For the full lineup, directions to performance/exhibit venues and other locales in and about town, and plenty of other details about this year's festival, visit edinboroartandmusic.com.

And we'll see you somewhere there.

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/llkust>



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Contributed Photos

The Heman Janes House, an architectural treasure and "Erie's best example of the Italian Villa Style," was demolished on April 12 to make room for senior housing.

Considering the City

Heman Janes House (1857–2014)

By: CIVITAS members Lisa Austin and Stephen Sonnenberg

Preservation Erie's Melinda Myers says that of the thousands of buildings in Erie, "we have only three clusters" of National Register listed districts. But, because we don't have any preservation ordinances or a demolition review board, no building is protected. City Hall must issue a demolition permit to any property owner willing to pay the fee.

Do you know someone who inherited a diamond ring? If they decide to toss their heirloom off Dobbin's Landing, it does no harm. But throwing away buildings does harm Erie. Preservation Erie's Dr. Chris Magoc says that in a way, historic homes, churches, schools, stores and factories "belong to all of us." These buildings are part of the public realm; it is our duty to protect them.

On April 12, the Heman Janes house at 125 W. 21st St. was torn down. Mr. Heman Janes (1817-1905) made a fortune in oil, wood, and in buying and selling land from Virginia to Ontario. A Prohibitionist, Janes challenged the selling of alcohol; angry liquor vendors briefly barricaded him at his 21st street home. Decades later, along with William Reed, H.J. Curtze and others, Mr. Janes served as a corporator of the Erie Cemetery (no liquor is sold on the premises).

A part of the West 21st Street Historic District, the Janes House was featured in the "Erie Style" handbook and was praised for its "rounded window openings and doorways, low-pitched rooflines supported by ornate bracketing" and unusual octagonal tower. Architect Jeff Kidder called the Janes house "Erie's best example of the Italian Villa style."

The Village at Luther Square (VALS) tore down the Janes House even though it was habitable –

a half-dozen residents had to be evicted before the demolition. Mark Gusek, VALS's CEO, said the interior was "chopped up very, very bad" and "beyond repair." Gusek wanted land to build homes for the elderly – a worthy goal. But, was it necessary to destroy this Civil-war era building to provide senior housing?

When the permit was granted, alarmed preservationists asked Gusek about the Heman Janes. Gusek (and the firm he hired) led the

preservationists to believe only an unimportant rear addition would be demolished. After the Janes House was torn down, Gusek announced that the property has "a bright future" with new construction that will "blend in with" the historic district. Magoc said he would call the demolition "criminal," but for the fact that it is not against the law. Magoc hopes the Janes may "serve as a martyred victim" to motivate the cre-

A century ago, when something wonderful was torn down, something more wonderful was built in its place. Sadly, whatever is constructed over the graveyard of the Janes will not be wonderful at all.

ation of preservation laws in Erie.

At the end of WWII, Winston Churchill urged the reconstruction of the bombed House of Commons saying, "We shape our buildings, and afterwards our buildings shape us." Our buildings physically express a sense of who we are and what we value. A century ago, when something wonderful was torn down, something

more wonderful was built in its place. Sadly, whatever is constructed over the graveyard of the Janes will not be wonderful at all.

According to Jeff Kidder, while Erie travelers tour historic properties around the world, many "forget what is in their own front yard." Thanks to Preservation Erie, Erie County will have a complete inventory of historic properties by 2015. In addition, Preservation Erie has called for a demolition review period; City Councilman Dave Brennan is writing legislation. Meanwhile, \$1.2 million may be spent tearing down the McBride Viaduct. Roosevelt School still sits vacant, and Chuck Scalise recently announced that H.A.N.D.S. has "no plans" for the Villa Chapel. These two gems are enduring a slow "demolition-by-neglect."

If you want to help, please consider joining Preservation Erie www.PreservationErie.org

Civitas members can be reached at their website www.civitaserie.com, via Facebook at CivitasErie, by emailing Lisa@civitaserie.com, or by scheduling a Friday morning meeting at the Civitas office in the Masonic Building, 32 W. Eighth Street.

To follow this story or comment, scan the QR code or visit <http://erirdr.com/isv6x>



The original 1954 *Godzilla* faces an artillery battalion while grasping a doomed jet. Despite being played by a man in a rubber suit, many consider the first *Godzilla* to be the best.

This is what excites me as well, because the last and only other American *Godzilla* movie was a complete travesty.

Roland Emmerich directed the 1998 version of *Godzilla*, which has been the bane of fans the world around. Cory explains, “The single major hang-up of the 1998 *Godzilla* film was artistic license, or lack thereof.”

Think about it – the film was made by Americans for Americans to release in our summer blockbuster months with virtually no respect to the expansive catalogue that came before it. Sure, it packed theaters, but true *Godzilla* fans were left wanting more. Awful

Toho Co. Ltd



Geeked Out: Go Go Godzilla!

By: John Lindvay

Men in rubber suits or CGI – I don’t care, I love me some *Godzilla*. Even as I type out the word, I hear the iconic screech echoing in my head. So yes – in case you were wondering or hadn’t figured it out yet – I am stoked for *Godzilla* to finally return to the theaters this month in what is shaping up to be something well worth geeking out about!

First, it’s been over 15 years since the last *Godzilla* movie. In the big lizard’s absence, we’ve had a few noteworthy flicks to hold us over. JJ Abrams’ *Super 8*, Matt Reeves’ *Cloverfield*, and my personal favorite: Del Toro’s *Pacific Rim*. But I’ve been itching for a real kaiju fix, and director Gareth Edwards, who directs the latest *Godzilla* flick, is the perfect man for the job.

Edwards’ previous film, *Monsters*, was an awesome take on an alternate reality in which large monsters exist and roam large swaths of the Earth, and hoping to quarantine and contain these extraterrestrial monsters, human society developed alongside this new phenomenon. Like great zombie fiction, this film helps capture the imagination of what life would be like if monsters truly roamed the earth.

Edwards shot *Monsters* on a shoestring budget and I loved what he was able to do with it, so now with summer blockbuster bucks and the rights to *Godzilla* proper, I am fist pumping and hollering. So this is finally the time to celebrate the legacy of grown men donning rubber suits to engage in monster fisticuffs!

But first, let’s reflect on what makes *Godzilla* so awesome – besides the men in suits part, which is, well, geeky awesome.

“In the original film from 1954, *Godzilla*’s origin is explained as being the unintentional result of nuclear radiation from the atomic bombs

that were dropped in Japan by the United States during WWII,” says Cory Carr, host and editor of Erie-based SlaughterFilm.com.

The atomic bomb was the event that has long-standing effects on Japanese culture, and *Godzilla*, throughout the years, has been a tool to communicate some of the societal issues of the time.

“Sure, it’s just guys in rubber suits, but there are some heavy ideas behind these films,” Cory adds.

One of the awesome things to notice in Edwards’ *Godzilla* is the return to true form with *Godzilla* fighting other monsters. “These battles are a long standing tradition that goes back to 1955 when *Godzilla* fought Anguirus in *Godzilla Raids Again*, which was the first film *Godzilla* battles anything other than tall buildings and the Japanese military,” Cory says.

For one, fighting other monsters is way more entertaining to watch, and secondly, it helps further social commentary.

“More often than not, the monsters *Godzilla* battles are representations of a fear that was prevalent at the time it was created,” Cory says.

Take for example 1971’s *Godzilla Vs The Smog Monster*, *Godzilla* fights – you guessed it – a monster made from pollution.

Another reason why seeing *Godzilla* go toe-toe with a massive kaiju is exciting is that this will be the first time an American film allows our hero *Godzilla* to do what he does best.

“From the looks of it, this film draws inspiration from and pays homage to the longstanding cannon of Japanese *Godzilla* films, while also offering something creative and new,” Cory adds.

writing, a pregnant *Godzilla*, and terrible dialogue led to that inevitable train wreck with the laughable tagline “Size Does Matter.” It’s hard to believe that the older men in rubber suits with plastic toys could make a better film, but because of superior storytelling and engaging and thoughtful themes, they did.

In that Matthew Broderick-starred interpretation, the big guy seemed to be made more to look like a T-Rex pilfered straight from *Jurassic Park*, than the hulking lizard beast he was originally. Cory agrees, “Emmerich played it safe, and as a result *Godzilla ‘98* is an easily forgettable imposter of the Japanese *Godzilla* films, which there are nearly 30 of, by the way.”

Edwards’ take on the mythical beast looks to be an American version of *Godzilla* that is the return to the silver screen such folklore deserves. With the advancements of computer graphics in filmmaking, I’ve been begging for a new and worthy successor to my favorite post-nuclear allegory, and finally, it looks like it’s arrived. No offense, Tolkien Geeks, but Smaug ain’t got nothing on *Godzilla*!

So grab some friends, put on your favorite *Godzilla* film (I recommend *Godzilla Final Wars*) in honor of the mighty giant finally returning to theaters around the world May 16.

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://eridr.com/vt1fr>



Outside Voices

Spring is Here, So Now What?

By: Jessica Courter

There is nothing quite like sunshine and a nice, warm breeze to lift one's spirits after the grueling, record-breaking winter we all just endured. We can stop dressing in multiple layers to ward off the negative-double-digit-degree-wind-chill and can replace this garb with T-shirts, shorts, and sandals. We are no longer stepping outside to feet of snow and inches of ice but are instead greeted with green grass and blooming trees – a sure sign that our favorite summertime events are on the way. More than that, spring in Erie is just plain beautiful, and it is weather like this that really reminds us why we love our city so much, so we took to the streets to ask:

What is your favorite thing to do in Erie when spring arrives?

Donna Treesh

"[My husband and I] like to go and look at the wineries and drive down along the vineyard roads and things like that. I am a med student, so I like to do anything that gets me off of my behind, and anything we can do to be in the sun."



Mike Connolly

"[I like to] go down by the lake, go to Presque Isle, and just hang out and sit outside with my guitar. I walk around and kind of people watch. I hike around, too—I like the outdoors."



Rick Rayford

"I just moved here two months ago so really I just want to get to know the area. I like to do things like go around and talk to people...I just mainly want to meet people and socialize and get to know Erie. It seems to be a very nice area."



Danielle Barney

"When the weather gets nice, my favorite thing to do is rollerblade on the peninsula. There are so many people exercising on the trails and tons of families enjoying the natural beauty. The peninsula is beautiful all year long but it becomes alive again in the spring."



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ER Sports

By: James R. LeCorchick



HOW THINGS HAVE CHANGED — Commissioner Pete Rozelle points to the hand-written draft board in 1970. Not exactly the same as the modern technology that was on display in this year's draft.

TO ME, ONE of the most incredible phenomena in the extremely long time I've been following sports is the evolution of the NFL draft, a show that has now become one of the most anticipated events in sports. As a matter of fact, it seems there is more excitement for the draft than there is for the Super Bowl.

Believe it or not, when I was growing up, very few people really "followed the draft," me being in the vast minority. For the record, I have been keeping a close eye on this event for 60 years. I used to have to wait until the day following this affair to get the results as the dozen teams participated in approximately 32 rounds every year. There was very little information available as *Street and Smith* magazine was about the only source available. And I spent hours and hours scouring the magazine, looking up facts on every player selected.

As a matter of fact, and this is a fact, many of the teams used *Street and Smith* as a scouting tool in the later drafts to pick a player. This led to some strange happenings, including a couple of years where teams picked players that had died before the draft, as most teams had just one or two — at the most — scouts in the organization.

To show how far the draft has come as a major happening in America — I swear if missing Flight 370 was discovered Thursday, the media would not have reported on it until Monday — just look at Erie gridder **Mike McCoy**, a product of Cathedral Prep and the University of Notre Dame.

McCoy had a great senior season (1969) with the Fighting Irish, being named Lineman of the Year by the Associated Press and ending sixth in the Heisman Trophy balloting, which culminated with him being named as the second overall pick in the 1970 draft. That is correct, the *second overall* pick in the draft.

He was sandwiched between the first pick **Terry Bradshaw** by the Steelers and the Cleveland Browns third selection, **Mike Phipps**, a quarterback from Purdue. Just to show bad moves by the Browns is not a new happening, they traded **Paul Warfield** for the right to draft Phipps.

Warfield, of course, is in the Hall of Fame for his great career with the Dolphins, and it cost

Phipps — a nice-enough guy — \$25 to get into the Hall of Fame the last time he was there.

I talked to McCoy about this "big day" a couple of years ago and I was astonished by what he told me.

"I was in class at Notre Dame," the gentle giant (6-5, 290) explained, "and when I got back to the dorm someone gave me a phone number to call.

"I called the number, told them who I was and they told me I was now a Green Bay Packer."

He said there was absolutely no fanfare and no national media whatsoever.

My, my how times have changed. Could you imagine if this was the second pick overall in the recent draft?

Everyone in America would know the story that he went to St. Mark's Seminary for ninth-grade, before moving on to Prep and ND. And then some!

As I pondered the draft, I couldn't help but think of the Cleveland Browns and how hard it is being a Browns fan. I know they actually won some NFL Championship titles in my lifetime — the last being in 1964, my senior year of high school — but after some serious brooding, I have come to the conclusion the Browns have to be the most jinxed franchise in all of sports since that last crown 50 years ago.

All Browns fans know about the insane pass Brian Sipe threw in the end zone against the Raiders, The Drive, and The Fumble. As well as numerous happenings that fall under the category of "just bad luck."

However, there are two extreme misfortunes that jump out at me that are borderline incredible.

Ernie Davis, one of the all-time classy athletes and the first African-American to win the Heisman Trophy (1961), was selected first overall in the 1962 draft by the Washington Redskins. However, the Skins opted to trade the powerful

Davis, and the lucky team to get him was Cleveland — for Hall of Famer Bobby Mitchell, no less.

To make a long story short, in one of the saddest sports stories of all-time, Davis was struck down with leukemia and never played a down for the Browns. He was a clone of the great **Jimmy Brown** and the possibility of having these two stars in the same backfield had Browns' fans in a state of near ecstasy.

But the Syracuse star never played a down in the NFL. What were the odds of that happening?

And my next bad memory of the poor luck the Browns have had over the last 50 years concerns another Syracuse standout, the great Jimmy Brown himself. And this definitely could only happen to the Browns.

Brown, more than arguably the greatest running back in the history of the NFL retired in the prime of his career, calling it quits at the age of 29 to pursue his acting career. Only in Cleveland!

When he retired, the powerful (6-2, 232) runner left as the NFL record holder for both single-season (1,863 in 1963) and career rushing (12,312 yards), as well as the all-time leader in rushing touchdowns (106), total touchdowns (126), and all-purpose yards (15,549). And keep in mind, he played several seasons when there were just 12 or 14 regular seasons games.

Also, in 2002 *The Sporting News* named him the greatest football player of all time, and he also was a four-time MVP as well as a first team All-Pro pick eight of the nine seasons he played.

And add this to the mix: Brown retired when he was just a year shy of being 30; a couple of seasons ago the Browns drafted QB Branden Weeden when he was 28.

As we have said many, many times, "Only the Browns!"

NFL DRAFT -- MY GRADES
BUFFALO BILLS — I thought they got a sensational pick with Clemson wide-receiver **Sammy Watkins**, the player I wanted the Browns to take. Considered the best wide-out in the draft, he really could be great. They also picked up a couple of huge offensive tackles and much-needed linebackers. The reason the Bills didn't get an A is the high-price they had to pay to Cleveland for right to move up in the draft to select Watkins — B+

CLEVELAND BROWNS — There was a lot of excitement in Cleveland, at least for 24 hours when the **Josh Gordon** story broke to cast a shadow on the draft. However, I was impressed with the organization that stuck to its plan and filled a lot of needs. I didn't like **Johnny Manziel** at four (I wanted Watkins and that was before I heard the Gordon story), but he could be a good deal for the 22nd overall pick. The deal with Buffalo, however, made this a great draft for the Brownies. — A-

PITTSBURGH STEELERS — The Steel City crew looked for speed and got it on both sides of the ball with **Ryan Shazier** (linebacker) and the incredibly quick **Dri Archer**. The Steelers were also able to address several positions of need. This was a beyond solid affair for Pittsburgh — B+

James R. LeCorchick can be contacted at JRLSportsReport@gmail.com, and you can follow him on Twitter @JRLSports. To follow this story or comment, scan the QR code or visit <http://erirdr.com/truoj>



Sudoku

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

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

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DIFFICULTY: ★★☆☆☆

Answer to Sudoku

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

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS	38 Ten decibels	ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE
1 Noun-forming (suf.)	39 Fetish	UNCAS HBO LIE
5 Cry	41 State (Ger.)	GEODE ELM UNS
8 Languish	43 Storage place	LIMAN DEEA IAIN
12 "Arabian Nights" dervish	46 Onionlike plant	INBRED ASTUTE
13 Harem room	48 Cuban dance	CACTUS
14 Swami	50 Jewelry setting	CBS ADA MACAW
15 Anta	51 Poetic contraction	ARIA ABE RAGA
17 Adjective-forming (suf.)	52 City in Judah	BOCCA EYE BAC
18 Cheer	53 Eng. statesman	EGERAN
19 Afr. gazelle	54 Electric reluctance unit	LEVANT STAPLE
21 Agent (abbr.)	55 Love of Able	ALA EAN ELIOT
22 Irish church		WBN AAR NANA
23 Misplaced		NAE UCA TEKEL
25 Card-reader's card	DOWN	
28 Lead telluride	1 Small goby	river
31 Heb. measure	2 Norse mythical hero	7 Saltwort
32 Federal Aviation Admin. (abbr.)	3 Victory site of Nelson	8 For your information (abbr.)
33 Letters sound	4 To be announced (abbr.)	9 Site
34 Two-footed	5 Yuccalike plant	10 Amalekite king
36 Ionian island	6 Polish border	11 Young female pig
37 Track		16 Sort comedy sketch
		20 Used to express negation
		22 Chosen nation
		24 Palmetto
		25 Afr. cotton garment
		26 Male friend (Fr.)
		27 Temporary relief
		28 Mulberry of India
		29 Child
		30 Woman: obs.
		32 Hesitate
		35 Hades
		36 Greek letter
		38 Confusion
		39 Gr. leather flask
		40 Bauble
		42 Rhine tributary
		43 Palm liquor
		44 Cleopatra's attendant
		45 ApPOINT
		47 Jap. game of forfeits
		49 Grandfather of Saul

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
12				13				14			
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53								54			55

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Rick has made a career caring for the people, both in politics and in his legal practice. When you have an important legal problem, put Rick's experience to work for you.

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