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**ERIE READER**

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# ERIE ART MUSEUM'S *Blues & Jazz* festival

## A Roaring Success?


A deeper look at the economic impact of Roar on the Shore

By: Jim Wertz

## How Erie is Buying into the Solar Revolution

By: Katie Christ





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Brian Graham &amp; Adam Welsh

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Ben Spегgen

**Contributing Editor:**

Jim Wertz

**Arts & Culture Editor:**

Alex Bieler

**Contributors:**

Lisa Austin, Civitas  
Mary Birdsong  
Katie Christ  
Rick Filippi  
Frank Garland  
Mike Iverson  
James R. LeCorchick  
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William G. Sesler  
Chris Sexauer  
Tommy Shannon  
Ryan Smith  
Jay Stevens  
Rebecca Styn  
Sara Toth  
Bryan Toy  
Jim Wertz

**Cover Design:**

Liz Venuto

**Photographers:**Ryan Smith  
Brad Triana**Designers:**Mark Kosobucki  
Liz Venuto**Interns:**Lauren Griffith  
Emily Hanisek  
Candice Martone  
Nicolas Miller

1001 State St. Suite 901  
Erie, Pa., 16501  
contact@eriereader.com

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From the outside, Roar on the Shore looks like a hulking success. Throngs of motorcyclists riding through Erie City streets, winding around Presque Isle, rolling throughout the County for more than half a week's worth of festivities. From staying in hotels in Erie to eating food in Erie to buying merch and memorabilia in Erie, all signs point to a five-day stretch during which the Erie economy now gets an annual booster shot.

But from the inside, what looks like — upon first glance — an economic boon for Erie and Erie businesses may not be the prescription for growth its label boasts. Because although this all happens in Erie, it may not be of Erie.

Yes, hotels are packed — some of which charge increased rates as much as a third higher than average to bikers and non-bikers alike because of the occasion. And yes, there's entertainment — from stunt bike demonstrations to hair-metal-meets-hip-hop-meets-hairier-metal. And yes, consumption is king: people eat, people drink, people buy stuff.

And thus, the people — the sellers, the buyers, the riders, the spectators, the visitors, the locals — *should* all be merry.

So when the last bike roars out of town as the sun sets on the Sunday evening, those of us left behind watching the exhaust fumes of the biker brigadoon vanish wave the victory flag and unfurl the banner declaring our success, celebrating the clear symbols that Erie *does* do something right: Erie hosts the largest motorcycle rally in this region, and it's growing.

Want proof of that growth? Look no further than 2014 when the Manufacturer & Builders Association tacked on an additional

day, folding Wednesday into the festival to accommodate growth.

Think the M&BA lacks vision? M&BA President Ralph Pontillo told *Erie Times-News'* Ron Leonardi in a piece that appeared in Sunday, July 19's edition that he envisions the festival becoming a week-long affair.

Question whether City Officials and the community support it? The Mayor — who's been heavily criticized lately because of his preference to keep a low-profile in the wake of rampant gun violence but still leads the ceremonial parade into the City — noted that "so many people come into the community" adding that "after they come here the first time, we see they tend to come back, not only for this event but for other things."

President of VisitErie John Oliver credited the diversity of visitors, saying that he thinks "that's why it has such a good economic impact because it's spread out over all levels."

Is this too good to be true? Should we — even those who don't ride, those who hate the increased volume in both sound and space the fest brings to our streets, those who deliberately avoid downtown because of the scene created rather than become part of it — embrace Erie's ROTS because of cheerleaders congregating around it chanting economic development over and over again?

No.

At least not yet.

Although the M&BA is clearly onto something — the festival's numbers swell each year and bikers *do* return to Erie — what can't be denied is that ROTS doesn't yet benefit all Erie businesses, especially the small locally-owned ones.

What's more, it actually *harms* some.

Look no further than Jim Wertz's feature in this cur-

rent issue, in which he talks to several local small-business owners about their experience of competing against vendors who line State Street who aren't from Erie, about how the official wine for the festival isn't local, how tattoo artists and silkscreeners brought in specifically for the festival aren't Erie entrepreneurs.

What's missing most from Roar on the Shore is Erie.

If we're hanging our success of the return of bikers past and the arrival of first-time visitors because word of mouth, marketing, or social media spread to them, shouldn't we deliberately work to ensure they remember and talk about a great pad thai, a great falafel salad, and locally-made sub they had instead of a grease-soaked stick of mozzarella? Shouldn't they be able to show off tattoos done by local award-winning artists right here in Erie? Shouldn't local T-shirt companies make the products that will be walking billboards once they leave the city, enticing others to visit next year?

Yes.

At least moving forward.

Because as the chapter closes on this year's ROTS, next year's is already being written; after all, 2016 will mark the 10th anniversary of the festival, and given the occasion and the recent success, expectations will be high. It's clear that the City and (a large portion of) the community embrace the festival, revs and all.

If we're going to herald Roar on the Shore as a true source of economic development and a strong injection of dollars into our local economy, those planning the festival need to embrace, highlight, feature, and include local businesses to increase their health and wellness — not those simply *in* Erie for a week looking to make a quick buck.



## Erie at Large

As we wage our war on guns in Erie, we need smart, effective solutions.



**With the increase of gun-related violence and crimes in Erie, the City and County are looking for a solution.**

**By: Jim Wertz**

Gun violence is a national problem. Erie's just a bit late to the game. Now that it's reached, what some might refer to as "epidemic proportions," city leaders are searching for solutions.

Recently the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority (ECGRA) – a stalwart community partner, to be sure – announced that it planned to conduct a study to determine the validity of working with law enforcement and providing pilot funding for a gun buyback program. The authority administers grants to local businesses as well as governmental and nongovernmental agencies with funds from gaming revenues at Presque Isle Downs and Casino. ECGRA is purposeful in its intent and it should play a role in cultivating and curating resources as part of the community's broader strategy to address gun violence. But it should not expend valuable resources on evaluating the merits of a gun buyback.

Nationally, gun buyback programs – even as part of more comprehensive interventions – are generally considered ineffective.

If collecting guns is the measure of success, gun buybacks work. If collecting guns from criminals and reducing violence is the objective, there's little empirical validation.

A 1998 study by the National Institute of Justice concluded, "gun buyback programs without geographic limitations on the eligibility of those providing guns for money fails to reduce gun violence in cities." This assessment is

the result of a phenomenon in which non-criminals become the primary participants in such programs. Middle-class, law-abiding citizens trade in old or rarely used guns for money, which is sometimes used to buy new guns.

This was the case in 1994 when the City of Erie conducted a gun buyback program that spent \$30,000 to net 649 handguns. Some program participants, according to the *Erie Times-News*, admitted they would use the money received to buy a new weapon.

A 1992 study of gun buybacks in Seattle found that women and people over age 65 were more likely than men or those ages 18 to 21 to participate in the program. A crucial finding in the Seattle study was that citizens who didn't own guns were more likely than gun owners to believe that the program, which collected more than 1,700 guns, would reduce the number of guns on Seattle streets and decrease crimes connected with handguns. By the way, the 1,700 guns collected represented less than 1 percent of guns known to be in Seattle households.

Massive gun buybacks in St. Louis at the pinnacle of an outbreak of gun violence in the early 1990s, which brought in nearly 10,000 guns in a four-year period, resulted in zero impact on violent crime during the same period.

Why do we look so far in the past for answers to a current problem, you may be asking? Because funding for the kind of research referenced above and that which sheds light on the relationship between gun ownership, gun regulations, and gun violence has been markedly reduced and in some

cases eliminated from federal budgets during the past 20 years as a result of lobbying efforts by the NRA and gun manufacturers in this country.

While there is little empirical evidence of crime reduction, gun buyback programs have enjoyed a great deal of anecdotal success. Gun buybacks are great public-relations events. Members of the law-abiding community see people trading guns for cash and feel like progress is being made; people who worried that their homes might be robbed for their guns attain some level of personal comfort; and, in communities like Los Angeles and St. Louis, where conflict between the police and the community is historically the norm, gun buybacks provide an opportunity to establish a modicum of rapport between those who enforce the law and those attempting to violate it.

The 2003 small-arms survey conducted by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime estimated that there were 88 firearms for every 100 people in the United States. Gun advocates who claim that access to guns keeps communities safe have lost traction. Seventy-six percent of homicides in the Americas are the result of gun violence. In Europe, only 21 percent of homicides are by the gun.

In the United States today, violent gun crime is most likely to take place in communities marked by concentrated poverty, hypersegregation, family disruption – from divorce, parental absenteeism, death or imprisonment – and high gun density. It's a recipe for persistent violence that is all too familiar to the parts of Erie from which gun violence emanates.

Many cities that attempted gun buyback programs in the 1990s eventually turned toward more comprehensive strategies that included addressing the plaguing conditions mentioned above.

In Boston, Operation Ceasefire incorporated three elements – an emphasis on gun trafficking, an interagency response to gang violence, and a communications campaign aimed at reaching people who were not the target of law enforcement – in an attempt to curb youth gun violence, in particular. Oper-

ation Ceasefire yielded a 63 percent decrease in youth homicides, a 32 percent decrease in shots-fired calls to police, and a 25 percent decline in gun assaults regardless of age.

In Pittsburgh, a gun bounty program allowed anonymous callers to be given a unique ID number when they called police to report an illegal gun possession. If the police retrieved an illegal firearm as the result of an anonymous call, a \$100 bounty was registered under the callers ID number for pickup at a later date and time.

And in St. Louis a firearm suppression program (FSP) that included traced serial numbers of confiscated firearms, regular reviews of sheriff's records to track "straw purchases" – buying a gun for someone who is prohibited by law from possessing one or for someone who does not want his or her name associated with the transaction – and the implementation of "consent searches," in which parents gave police consent to search their children's belongings with no threat of prosecution to the parents and interventions offered to the juveniles if illegal weapons were found, as means to decrease juvenile crime.

Each of these communities, and dozens of others, abandoned gun buyback programs in favor of more targeted strategies to address rampant gun violence. Erie can relish in the fact that it's taken a decade and a half for us to experience the problems that larger cities faced in the 1980s and 1990s, but it can't afford to wait another decade or two to find a successful resolution to such violence, and it can't afford to put cash in the hands of law-abiding citizens while teenagers shoot each other with illegally trafficked handguns. Gun buyback programs were a public relations solution to a very concrete problem and, as we now know, gun buybacks were little more than political theater.

Active policing and civic leadership that does not waiver when faced with the emotional whims of a fearful community are only the starting points of progressive change to end gun violence. Otherwise, Erie will continue to live by the gun, each gun, for more than just a few dollars a shot.

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



## Street Corner Soapbox

If it's the end of the world, maybe we should feel fine.

The end of the world. How's it going to come? By ice? By fire?

Have you noticed how many movies, books, and games revolve around post-apocalyptic themes? *Fury Road* just came out, as did the latest Terminator movie. *Fallout 4* is due in November. *Station 11* was shortlisted for the latest National Book Award. And Suzanne Collins' Hunger Games trilogy has sold more than 65 million books; the first three Hunger Games films grossed more than \$3 billion, worldwide.

Wait! Let's not forget that the zombie genre is a sub-genre of post-apocalyptic themes. *I am Legend*, *World War Z*, and the *Walking Dead* – which is based on a comic. And the games, *Dead Island*, *DayZ*, *Dead Rising*, *State of Decay*, *Left 4 Dead*, *Resident Evil*, and the kids' game, *Plants vs. Zombies*.

And the book, *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*, of course.

What gives? Why are people obsessed with the apocalypse and what comes after?

It wouldn't be the first time we were obsessed with a kind of story. In the 1950s, alien invasion was all the rage. *The Day the Earth Stood Still*. *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*. *War of the Worlds*. And a few memorable *Twilight Zone* episodes. Those movies and stories are generally said to be spawned by our fear of Soviet Russia and the threat of Communism. *The Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, for example, featured aliens that would replace people with emotionless doppelgangers while they slept – the infamous “pod people” – an obvious allegory for the altering effects of a creeping, invasive ideology.

So what are we afraid of?

Maybe it's that we're constantly inundated with huge Earth-shattering scenarios. Climate change, for one. We've been living under dire warnings that our emission of greenhouse gases will eventually destroy us – or, at least, fundamentally change the way we live and alter the Earth we live on. “Climate change is accelerating species loss,” reports Sarah Zielinski in *Smithsonian Magazine*, “and by the end of the century, as many as one in six species could be at risk of extinction.” Australian microbiologist David Fenner went further and said humans will be extinct in 100 years, because the Earth will be uninhabitable.

And there are movies for that. *The Day After Tomorrow* is about global cooling. *Water World* depicted a planet after the polar ice caps melted.

And what about natural disaster? The Earth has been slammed by a series of disasters recently. Hurricane Katrina, the 2004 tsunami in Southeast Asia, the 2010 Haitian earthquake, the 2011 earthquake and tsunami in Japan, the 2011 tornado that destroyed Joplin, Missouri. *The New Yorker's* Kathryn Sculz recently warned of an impending disaster in the Pacific Northwest in her piece “The Really Big One,” where the Cascadia subduction zone – a fault line off the west coast – is overdue and heading for a massive quake. The resulting shock and tidal wave, if the quake hits 9 on the Richter scale, is estimated by officials to kill as many as 13,000.

*San Andreas* is about an earthquake. *The Impossible* about the 2004 tsunami.

Disease is popular in our imagination. Sure, we freaked out about the recent Ebola scare – and it's still active in Africa – but what about SARS, a virus that killed more than 700 in Asia? And the bird flu's always one season away from wiping out a sizable chunk of the population. The 1918 flu, after all, killed as many as 40 million, worldwide. And with the amount of antibiotics we slather on ourselves and our cattle, it seems only a matter of time before pathogens mutate to resist our medicines, sending us back to the days when death by disease was common.

The television series, *The Last Man on Earth*. The novels, *Enclave*, *Station 11*. The comic, *Y: The Last Man*. The game, *Deus Ex*. You could argue zombie movies and film fall under this category, too. So add all of those here.

What about old-fashioned nuclear annihilation? That used to be all the rage during the Cold War, but it's settled down now. Or has it? Vox's Max Fisher in “How World War III became possible,” wrote that we may be closer to nuclear war than we ever have been before, with a tangle of treaties and alliances and a desperate Putin-led Russia playing games of high-stake chicken with the U.S. in Ukraine and the Baltic republics.

And even if nuclear annihilation isn't as much a concern as, say, climate change, it's still popular in fiction. The new *Fallout* game. *The Hunger Games*.

The cartoon, *Adventure Time*.

And I didn't even mention meteorites (*Armageddon*), alien invasion (*Aliens*), or robots (the *Terminator* movies).

But, again, why focus on the negative? Why obsess over the end of the Earth? (That's the premise of *Tomorrowland*, ironically.) After all – and I paraphrase stand-up comic Steven Wright here – in our plan for the human species to last forever, so far, so good.

For one, it's a neat literary device to strip away all human establishments: authority, tradition, social groups. And what's left is what you think human beings really are. In the *Mad Max* movies, humans are chaotic, violent, thrill-seeking renegades. In the *Walking Dead*, we're reluctant allies, too often at each others' throats. Civilization mitigated conflict. Without it, we fight. Writing a post-apocalyptic book lets you say something about the state of humanity.

For another, a post-apocalyptic landscape is a kind of frontier. If you, like Fredrick Jackson Turner, thought American exceptionalism was born out of our struggles on the frontier, you know we have no more frontier to train our wit on, to sharpen us and focus us (Unless you count space). Post-apocalyptic settings allow us to imagine ourselves in a kind of frontier.

Or maybe it's an intellectual practice. Maybe we do feel on the cusp of some monumental and cataclysmic change. Maybe these stories let us figure out how we'll do on a post-apocalyptic landscape. Hoard shotgun shells, people!

But one thing that most post-apocalyptic stories share in common is an idea I reject: once civilization is down, people will go at each other. We will fight. What order there is will be maintained by violence. And yet...is that how it will really go down? It seems most disasters are marked by how much people set aside their differences and work together for rescue and rebuilding.

Is it really so odd to think that disaster isn't sure to bring about fear and hate? Am I just an optimist?

Maybe I am. I guess we'll know for sure after our new robot overlords take control, the asteroid strikes the planet, and the Russians launch their ICBMs.

Jay Stevens can be contacted at [Jay@ErieReader.com](mailto:Jay@ErieReader.com), and you can follow him on Twitter @Sneveys\_Yaj.

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# News of the Weird

By: Chuck Shepherd

## Outsourcing

Among the protesters at New York City's Gay Pride Parade on the Sunday after the Supreme Court's historic gay-marriage decision was a group of men outfitted in Jewish prayer garments and representing the Jewish Political Action Committee, carrying signs reading, for example, "Judaism prohibits homosexuality." However, the men were very likely not Jewish, but in fact Mexican laborers hired for the day. A representative of the committee told The New York Times that the men were "supplemental" — necessary because the committee's rabbis would not permit their students (who normally staff such protests) to be exposed to the sights of same-sex exuberance typical for the parade. [New York Times, 6-28-2015]

## Government in Action

WOOD-TV of Grand Rapids, Michigan, seemingly uncovered an antiquity — if not a potential vulnerability — in the Grand Rapids public school system in June when it reported that the heating and cooling systems at 19 schools are controlled using a Commodore Amiga computer (released in the 1980s, about the same time as Windows 2.0), operating on an early Internet modem. It had been installed by a comput-

er-savvy student and, according to the maintenance supervisor, still works fine. Fortunately, the supervisor said, the student still lives in the area and is available if problems arise. [WOOD-TV, 6-11-2015]

**Recurring Theme:** Government officials who insist on such "bells and whistles" as redesigning their department's logo are often ridiculed for wasting taxpayer money (yet design consultants continue to sell the illusion that a new logo can give a bureaucracy a refreshing rebirth). In May, Tennessee officials unveiled a new state logo (which cost only \$46,000 — not counting the expense of changing signs, cards, stationery, etc.), which consists of the letters "TN" in white inside a red box with a blue trim underneath. (A Watchdog.org critic suggested a contest to design a superior one, but open only to kids age 12 and under, with the prize a \$50 Amazon.com gift certificate.) [WSMV-TV (Nashville), 5-22-2015]

## Compelling Explanations

Adultery is illegal in Japan — except, as a Tokyo District Court judge ruled in a "psychological distress" lawsuit filed by the jilted wife, when it is done by a company to retain a good customer. A night club hostess who had carried on with the married man proved that she

did so only as "makura eigyo," or "pillow sales tactic." Said the judge, "As long as the intercourse is for business, it does not harm the marital relationship at all." (The ruling, from 2014, was first publicized this year.) [Japan Times, 6-10-2015]

## New World Order

In 1993, the owner of the iconic 5Pointz building in New York City began allowing graffiti artists to use the walls for their masterpieces, but by 2013 had grown weary of the building's look and had the walls whitewashed. In June 2015, nine of the artists filed a federal lawsuit demanding that the owner compensate them, substantially, for destroying their creations — and they stand a good chance of collecting (under the Visual Artists Rights Act) if they prove their particular works are of "recognized stature" and not merely art of an "ephemeral nature." At its height, 5Pointz attracted more than 350 artists' works from around the world. [New York Daily News, 6-12-2015]

## Animal World

A June entry in Wired.com's "Absurd Creature of the Week" series warned of the Beaded Lacewing that preys on termites by first immobilizing them with a "vapor-phase toxicant" released from its anus. The silent-but-deadly gas is reportedly powerful enough to disable six ordinary termites for up to three hours (plenty of time for a sumptuous meal of termite) and weaken several

more that might get caught in the backdraft. Wired.com also learned of the related species *Chrysoperla comanche*, whose anal weaponry is in solid form, wielded by "master contortionists" who lift their abdomens in order to directly contact their victims' head. [Wired.com, 6-24-2015]

**Suspicion Confirmed:** In June 2015 research, scientists from Britain's University of Exeter and Queen Mary University of London warned that owners of "domestic" cats seem not, on average, to appreciate what vicious killers their pets are and urge, for instance, that they be kept indoors more often lest they decimate the neighborhood's bird and small-mammal populations. Estimates of the yearly death toll generated by housecats are "in the magnitude of millions" in the United Kingdom and "billions" in the United States. [Ecology and Evolution, 6-19-2015]

The "parasitic ways" of the cuckoo bird were remarked upon "as far back as Aristotle," wrote a Wall Street Journal book reviewer in May, but some biologists may not have believed the behavior because it was so cold-blooded. The bird, according to Nick Davies' book "Cuckoo: Cheating by Nature," lays its eggs in other species' nests to trick those birds into incubating the cuckoos, who then hatch and kick the eggs of their host out of the nest. The mother cuckoo, it is said, times her mating schedule so that her eggs mature just before

the victims' eggs would. Hence, according to Davies, she is "nature's most notorious cheat." [Wall Street Journal, 5-30-2015]

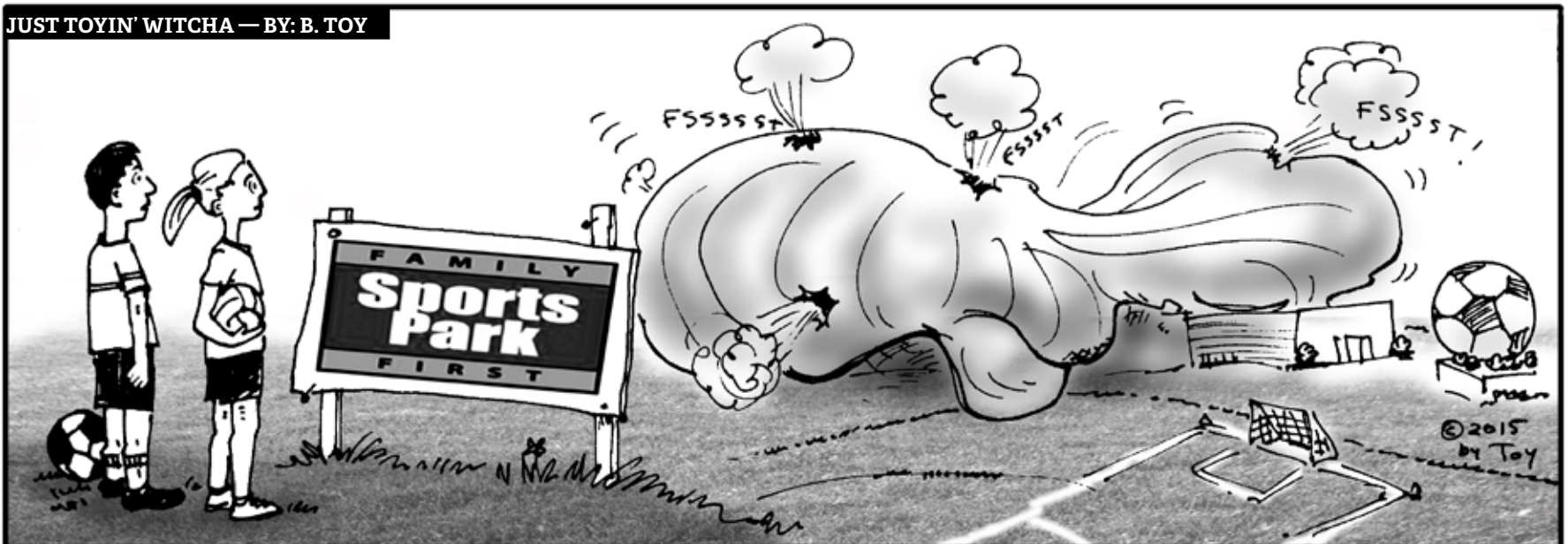
## Perspective

To cover various general expenses (such as helping the indigent), the average hospital mark-up for patient care in the United States is about 3.4 times costs (according to a Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health report in June), but 50 of the nation's 5,000 hospitals charge more than 10 times the cost, with the North Okaloosa Medical Center near Pensacola, Florida, billing at 12.6 times costs. According to the co-author, professor Gerard Anderson, the 50 "are marking up the prices because no one is telling them they can't." (Forty-nine of the 50 are for-profit hospitals, and 20 are in Florida.) [Washington Post, 6-8-2015]

## People With Issues

Former British Navy sailor Alan Reynolds, 55, of Porthleven, England, was convicted in April of a burglary in which he stole items from the home of a colleague to pursue his fetish for waterproof clothing — to enrich his fantasy, he told a judge, of imagining himself a prisoner of war. Photos and videos taken from his home show him in bright yellow waterproof trousers and green waterproof poncho, removing layers of clothing from underneath and "smelling" them. [Western Morning News (Plymouth), 4-9-2015]

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## A Roaring Success?

Roar on the Shore boasts economic development for the City of Erie, but local small-business owners feel a pinch rather than a boost from the bike festival.



The five-day event brings in a reported more than 100,000 bikers, but according to some Erie business owners, not much of the money spent is injected into the local economy. (Opposite) Mike Augustine of Like My Thai restaurant makes the most of a slow business day.

By: Jim Wertz

Standing on State Street 200 yards from the main stage at the Saturday night climax of Roar on the Shore was somewhat like I've always imagined purgatory. It was packed with a mix of people, some of whom are hard-worn by life, others just lived hard, all intermingling with a middle class that likes being close to the fringe without relishing in the consequences of bad decisions made during long days and late nights.

From the vantage point at North Park Row onlookers could gaze over the sea of people facing North toward a stage they couldn't fully see to hear a band mostly long forgotten. Their sightline, obscured by the elevated VIP area at the back of the ten-foot-high-chain-link-fenced-off beer garden to which concert goers could purchase entry for \$10 each night, left them focused on the video screens at Fifth and State streets framed by the backs of the rich and a distant American flag – the backdrop to the stage – as if to say, “This is what

America looks like.”

The Manufacturer's and Business Association, which organizes the four-day motorcycle festival, has contended since the festival's inception in 2007 that the estimated 100,000 or more bikers and enthusiasts who attend – local people and visitors – collectively inject around \$20 million into the regional economy.

Based on a small *Erie Reader* survey of out-of-town bikers, each biker spends approximately \$75 per day in Erie. That's \$29 higher than the U.S. General Services Administration's per diem rate for Erie, Pa., which is an estimation of how much a traveler would need to spend on meals and incidentals in this area. It's also equal to any vacation in which you live out of a hotel room and are forced to purchase all meals out about town. On top of the \$75 per day in living expenses, bikers we spoke to paid between \$200 and \$250 per night for hotel accommodations.

Where the \$20 million injection comes from is hard to tell. It's a multiplier effect that any industry would relish.

Money is clearly being spent, but its impact is more difficult to discern.

Some tourist dollars are spent directly with the Manufacturer's Association and its partners who put on charity rides to raise funds for the designated nonprofit each year. This year's proceeds will go to the Erie Homes for Children and Adults' “Project First Step,” which helps low-income expectant mothers and families by offering training and support that limits the risk of disabilities, substance abuse, domestic violence, and homelessness, among other issues. The rest of that purported \$20 million is spent throughout the region at hotels and eateries and downtown with vendors who purchased space in Perry Square.

There are essentially two types of vendors in Perry Square, transactional vendors that exchange money for goods and services, and informational vendors – mostly motorcycle centric – whose booths are there to provide information about everything from pin-striping your motorcycle to retaining a rider-friendly lawyer. Vendors pay be-

tween \$450 and \$1550 for booth space ranging from 10'x10' to 60'x20'.

The majority of vendors in Perry Square are not local vendors. Seivers Concessions, based in Grove City, Pa., has a monopoly on food at Roar on the Shore. No other food vending is available at the event. Additionally, the screen-printing, tattoo artists, and even the official wine of Roar on the Shore – Webb Winery from Hermitage, Pa. – are not local.

There were a few local clothing and novelty vendors for whom ROTS is an easy couple of days with relatively low overhead. “This is a good festival for me,” says Michael Anderson, who sells tie-dye T-shirts and other clothing items at a price point mostly under \$25. “The crowd here doesn't spend a lot of money. They're here for the bike stuff, and that's what they spend money on. But since we're in Erie and I don't have hotel and food costs like I would if we were out of town, I do very well.”

Walt Ponatowski agrees. He's from North East and travels to festivals around the country to sell hemp-woven rugs, shirts, and other novelties. “The show here is awesome,” he says. “But sales-wise, I go to little flea markets where I pay \$50 for the space and do three times the business. For the caliber of show it really is, I expect to do better. Don't get me wrong, I make money, but there's a disconnect between the caliber of show and the caliber of people we see through here.”

And for many of the restaurants and bars between French and Peach streets from 12th Street to Third streets, the success of ROTS doesn't necessarily translate into a winning weekend. Mike Augustine, co-owner and chef at Like My Thai located at 827 State St. in the heart of the Roar, says that limited access to his restaurant prevents regular customers from coming in for lunch and dinner.

“I'm down \$2,000 on the week because my customers can't get to me,” Augus-

BRIAN GRAHAM





JIM WERTZ

tine says. "The bikers are cool, but they don't eat places they don't recognize." Other bar and restaurant owners on State Street told us that despite the volume of people in town, they are lucky to break even on the week. Augustine attempted to make up some lost revenue by selling chicken on a stick on the sidewalk outside of his restaurant.

We heard similar stories last year as well. Tickle's Deli owner Sue Wyant lamented the loss of business that begins as soon as the streets are blocked for preparations including the installation of the main stage.

"We're small business," Wyant said last year. "Small businesses can't afford this kind of disruption." This year Wyant planned for weekend traffic. She printed fliers with sandwich specials, purchased extra bread and meat, and brought in extra staff, but she saw no return. "I stayed open late on Friday and Saturday. On Saturday, I had two deliveries and three walk-ins. Who's making out on this? Now, I need to cut down this week to make up for the weekend."

Street closures begin the Monday prior to the event's kickoff and remain in effect until cleanup concludes at the start of the following week. For businesses between Third and Fifth streets, stage construction has always been a reality during festival season. It's a huge presence that costs local businesses in that area big bucks. But at least during Celebrate Erie, the area around the stage remains open allowing concertgoers to move in and out of the performance area to buy beer, eat and socialize. ROTs changed that equation by erecting a chain-link fence around the crowd nearest to the stage

and charging admission to the fenced in area.

State Street remains closed all the way to Third Street for backstage access even though closing State Street only to Fourth Street would provide approximately the same backstage space used at other events in previous years.

This year, those businesses on lower State Street were further constricted because event organizers moved the stage a half-block south on State Street, just past the museum steps, presumably to prevent people from taking in iconic rock acts like Jackyl, April Wine, and Dokken from heights reserved only for VIPs. At Celebrate Erie, the museum steps serve as the VIP space, while front stage belongs to the people. Moving the stage south on State Street completely cut off Scully's Pub and The U-Pick 6 Tap House from the foot traffic so common at these, eh-hem, public events.

Walking North from 12th Street, observing the bikers parked in four lanes across State Street down to Perry Square, and doing the drunken two-step with some motorcycle momma and her old lady, it's clear that Roar on the Shore is a draw and we've never disputed that. But as the event gets bigger, it's also becoming less inclusive to the community it claims to be serving.

"We want the City to do well," Augustine says, "but not at the expense of the people who have to live here and make it happen every day."

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

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## Erie buys into the Solar Revolution

John Purvis is on a mission to help homeowners embrace solar energy.



BRAD TRIANA

By: Katie Christ

The morning finally arrives. A Saturday, mid-September. We've hoped for sun and summer temperatures. Instead, autumnal winds blow threatening clouds across a gunmetal gray sky.

Not the most ideal day to start a solar revolution on our rooftop.

A little dejected, we pour coffee and mope into the living room. Moments later, a decisive knock awakens us beyond any coffee's capability. In walks John Purvis, president of Solar Revolution LLC, a local solar company that designs and installs solar in Pennsylvania and New York. With the same enthusiasm that sold us on solar, Purvis arrives early to meet his contracted electrician and hook up our system for good.

Once everything is connected, we circle around our electric meter. Purvis flips the switch, officially converting us to solar power. Ninety seconds later — though appliances and lights are still consuming electricity in our house, and clouds fill the sky — our meter starts spinning *backward*.

We're giddy. And though he's

seen it hundreds of times by now, so is Purvis. His excitement is contagious and powerful. He's a modern-day Helios for the masses, hellbent on turning us all toward the sun.

Purvis is not your typical bearded-and-Birkenstocked environmentalist. Nor does he fit the starched, stuffed shirt image of the president of a thriving business. He's tall and tattooed, broad and bald-headed, with thick black glasses and heavy black boots. "I've knocked on doors and had people ask 'where's Mr. Purvis?'" he laughs. "People first see me as a big, burly, biker-looking dude. Then I start talking, and they realize I do know what I'm talking about. They see, 'oh, he is an environmentalist. One older woman I installed for said, 'John, I gotta tell you: you kind of look like a crazy barbarian.' But it's just that old saying: don't judge a book by its cover."

Admittedly, I also had a different picture in mind before Purvis arrived — early and ebullient — for our initial free solar consult. Environmentalism too often manifests as dull earnestness tinged with resigned austerity. It's all a little

too well-behaved. Bland. And elitist. No wonder many people are reluctant to get on board. Where's the egalitarianism? Where's the empowerment? Where's the excitement?

Now, it's impossible to imagine anyone *but* Purvis as the one to lead this aptly named Solar Revolution. I ask how he chose that name. "Here I am with my big personality," he replies. "And I always wanted to be a revolutionary leader. So it just fits. Were gonna change the way we power everything."

Purvis graduated from high school in 1991, and says the re-emergence of environmentalism in that era helped to turn his mind toward solar. "We started having recycling bins in school, there was talk about Styrofoam, and the ozone layer," he says. "Maybe that's where the seed got planted."

After high school, Purvis served in the Army for about a decade. There, he began to turn toward the sun. "They were using a ton of solar in the military by the time I got out in 2000," he recalls. "It was clearly an upcoming technology. The Department of Defense has

John Purvis has been in the solar business for seven years, bringing his Solar Revolution to Erie.

huge solar arrays on military bases all over the world. Huge contracts. And when the government is taking advantage of something, you know it works.

"So it caught my attention," he continues. "And anytime I started to think about foreign dependency, wars on terror, gas prices ... solar was always in the back of my mind. It's something that is good. That doesn't hurt anyone.

"I can feel good about doing this," Purvis reasons. "It's all plusses. The only negative I ever thought of was: am I going to be able to eat?"

He needn't have worried. This June, Solar Revolution celebrated seven years in business. They employ student interns from local universities, and are now working with school districts and municipalities interested in large-scale projects.

"I knew this was going to be a thing of the future and I rolled the dice," he declares. "People asked if I was crazy: *in Pennsylvania?!?!'*" But today, according to the National Renewable Energy Laboratory's Open PV (Photovoltaic) Project, Pa. ranks 7th in the nation by number of PV systems installed, and has more solar panels than Florida.

In *Ecowatch*, writer Anastasia Pantisios discusses the top twenty U.S. cities using solar at the end of 2014. As expected, Pantisios points out, sunny cities rank highly. "But," she clarifies, "demonstrating that solar's potential is not limited to the sunny south, Indianapolis—which averages 187 sunny days annually compared to Los Angeles' 292—came in at number four, Denver at number eight, and New York City at number nine. Newark and Boston also cracked the top 20."

Erie, incidentally, averages around 160 sunny days per year. But as it turns out, that's largely irrelevant.

"It's UV radiation that makes it

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work,” explains Purvis. “It’s daylight. In Arizona or California, they need a panel or two less [to generate the same amount of power]. Here, we need a panel or two more.

“Look at where we are on longitude, around 42 degrees,” he continues. “Germany is north of us, and they’re leading the world in solar. It’s not about where you are. Solar panels can work anywhere there’s daylight. Anything that runs on electricity can run on solar, equal to or cheaper than electricity.”

Purvis always knew the real hurdle to converting people to solar would be educational. But he is the consummate educator: brilliant, eloquent, and passionate about sharing his ever-expanding knowledge. He has mastered his subject, and teaches with the persuasive patience of a man on a mission.

“I chose solar for its own sake,” he says. “I knew it was going to be a thing. I’m a purpose-driven person. I decided: *I’m going to try to offer this and make this work.* I took a gamble, and I’m glad I did.”

Keeping himself educated is a job, in itself. He gets up at 4 a.m. just to research what sorts of advances have transpired in the world of solar while the sun was down. “Everything’s developing so quickly,” he says. “A lot of the work is just staying on top of everything.”

To that end, Solar Revolution’s next big move will be to employ someone in the realm of IT and public relations. Someone, Purvis insists, who also can get on the roof and then be able to explain to customers the solar process.

But for now, he mostly handles the highly educational and persistently political Facebook posts on the Solar Revolution page. He ends many posts with “Term limits for Congress!!!”

“I am an American,” he states. “I fought for my freedoms. I will not be silent [about political matters].

“The government is owned by rich wealthy corporations in America, by big interests and lobbyists. Oil has huge lobbyists; the environment doesn’t. Doing what’s right doesn’t. And it’s going to be that way until we move money out of politics and common sense in.”

A recent essay published in *The Progressive* by Wisconsin Rep. Chris Taylor, about attending his second American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) conference, certainly corroborates Purvis’ point.

“Though the renewable energy sector



BRAD TRIANA

is growing,” writes Taylor, “is popular with the public and is generating new jobs — and the solar industry now employs 140,000 more people than our nation’s coal mines — conference attendees focused on hindering this sector, especially solar.

“Legislators from Utah and Oklahoma bragged about slowing the development of solar energy in their states,” Taylor continues. “Oklahoma Sen. A.J. Griffin passed a bill to tax individuals using distributed generation from solar panels or wind turbines to ‘protect our most vulnerable utilities.’ ALEC wants to tax people who use small scale solar or wind or who drive electric cars. According to ALEC, property owners should have a right to kill a person on their property, but not use solar or wind energies on their property without paying a tax.”

So how likely are our local legislators to get behind solar? Not very, according to numbers published on Oil Change International, “a research, communication, and advocacy organization focused on exposing the true costs of fossil fuels.” Using data provided by *OpenSecrets.org*, Oil Change International reveals non-renewables’ claims on our legislators’ hearts, minds, and votes. Since 1999, Sen. Pat Toomey (R-PA) has received “dirty energy money” contributions of \$953,504. Sen. Bob

Casey (D-PA) has received \$296,550, and Rep. Mike Kelly (R-PA) has received \$267,600.

Though these numbers speak volumes, I nevertheless ask Purvis why solar hasn’t taken off. “It *has!*” he exclaims. “We’re just getting off a bad governor curse. Other states around us are doing huge things. New York has incentive and loan programs, and a state tax credit. Still, last year was [Solar Revolution’s] busiest year ever, even without a state rebate.”

Meanwhile, the federal tax credit of 30 percent back on solar installation cost will expire in December 2016, “unless this Congress gets its act together,” adds Purvis.

Regardless of incentives, however, he emphasizes that “solar is a resource that’s easier to install and cheaper every day. And it’s *there*. Every home or business has a roof, or a parking lot. Architectural solar is also getting really big: panels on pergolas, parking ramps, even at amusement parks.

“Now, there are a ton of panel manufacturers. But I buy American. I use time-tested American companies that have been around, that have good warranties. I’m not going to try out something brand new on my customers.” Instead, Solar Revolution installs a 25-year warranty system that’s paid off in ten years or less. “It is an investment,”

Purvis grants. But one with about a 205 percent return, and prices dropping rapidly.

“Some naysayers say to me, ‘solar is subsidized,’” Purvis says. “But *everything* is subsidized!” Especially fossil fuels. PennFuture’s recent “PA Fossil Fuel Subsidy Report” states that each Pennsylvania taxpayer paid \$794 in subsidies to the fossil fuel industry, in fiscal year 2012-2013. “If solar had equal subsidies to natural gas in Pa., Purvis points out, “Everyone in Pa. with a roof could have solar.”

In “Revolution,” John Lennon sang: *You say you got a real solution / Well you know / We’d all love to see the plan.*

Clearly, John Purvis is the man with that plan. And you know it’s gonna be ... all light.

“Back in 2008,” Purvis recalls, “I had a politician who obviously didn’t believe in solar asking me, ‘What kind of guarantees can you make about solar?’

“I told him, ‘I can guarantee that the sun is going to come up every day.’”

*For more information, to see photos of solar installations, or to schedule a free solar consultation, call Solar Revolution LLC at (814) 602-5896, or visit <http://solarrevolutionerie.com>.*

*Katie Chriest can be contacted at [kChriest@ErieReader.com](mailto:kChriest@ErieReader.com)*



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Met with both criticism and praise, President Barack Obama used his executive authority to expand his immigration program.

WHITE HOUSE

## President Obama on Immigration Reform

Is he right or wrong?

By: William G. Sesler

Welcoming strangers from foreign lands into our land has always been and probably always will be a sensitive matter on which the American people will disagree. The problem was addressed initially in the second book of the Bible, Exodus, where it was written in Chapter 22, verse 21: "You shall not wrong a stranger or oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt."

It is obvious that the need for comprehensive immigration reform has been acute, but to date, Congress has seen fit to do nothing and the legality of the executive order, issued by President Barack Obama last November 21 in an effort to start reform, has been stonewalled by federal courts thus far, despite the fact that the majority of the American public are in favor of taking action.

In one of the latest CBS News/New York Times Poll taken from April 30 to May 3 this year addressed to 1,027 adults nationwide, the question was asked:

"Which comes closest to your view about illegal immigrants who are living in the U.S.? They should be allowed to stay legally, but not be allowed to apply for citizenship. OR, They should be required to leave the U.S." Results were as follows: Stay, Apply for Citizenship = 57 percent; Stay, not apply for citizenship = 11 percent; Be required to leave = 29 percent; Unsure/ No Answer = 3 percent.

President Obama, in the face of failure of Congress to take action, used his executive authority to expand his program and permit certain undocumented immigrants who came to this country as children to remain here without the threat of deportation. Most of the plan was supposed to go into effect on Feb. 18, 2015, but 26 states filed a challenge before Judge Andrew Hanen of the federal district court in Brownsville, Texas, a noted critic of the President's immigration policies. Judge Hanen issued an injunction stopping the program before it started, and two judges of the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals panel (who are similarly hostile

to Obama) declined to lift the injunction – although the third judge hearing the matter wrote a spirited dissent.

The Circuit Court will hear oral arguments on July 10. The appeal to be heard in July will focus on the merits of the case. The Obama administration will argue that the president acted within the law and the states do not have the power to enforce immigration law. More delays, if not the outright defeat of Obama's initiative are likely to follow, although the matter may quite likely end up in the Supreme Court and be an issue in the 2016 Presidential election. The legal wrangling to date suggests that the President and his aides may have underestimated the legal and political challenges to offering protections to more than 4 million illegal immigrants without a congressional vote.

In a statement, Ken Paxton, the attorney general of Texas, said the President had tried to impose "a drastic change in immigration policy" without the consent of Congress. The appeals court decision is "a victory for those committed to preserving the rule of law in America," Paxton said. "We will continue to fight the brazen lawlessness that has become a trademark of the Obama administration."

In response to this purple prose, a White House spokeswoman, said, "Today, two judges of the Fifth Circuit chose to misrepresent the facts and the law." She said, "The president's actions were designed to bring greater accountability to our broken immigration system, grow the economy and keep our communities safe. They are squarely within the bounds of his authority, and they are the right thing to do for the country."

This writer has difficulty understanding why there has not been the beginning of a truce—or at least a re-configuration—in the politics of immigration. Several of the potential Republican candidates, most notably Jeb Bush, have expressed pro-immigration views. Even self-identified Tea Party Republicans respond three to two in favor of a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants. Every other group—Republicans in general, independents, and especially Democrats—is largely pro-immigrant and repeated

polls support this view.

As I spend more time studying the issue, I am reasonably certain that opposition to immigrants is based primarily on faulty economic logic, not race. Americans are generous people, and they generally support immigration – even when immigrants are different from us. People in the middle and upper-middle classes don't mind poorly-educated, low-skilled immigrants in the county, nor do we mind highly-educated professionals coming in – unless, that is, they are in the same profession as ourselves. Those of us advocating an immigration overhaul are basically calling for official recognition of the present status quo through offering legal status to some, if not all, of the roughly 11.2 million undocumented workers who aren't going away. The idea of attempting deportation at this level would create an enormous economic fallout, constitute a humanitarian tragedy, and require billions of dollars of taxpayers' money. So much for the 29 percent in the poll mentioned above who say immigrants should be required to leave.

The basic opposition is based on the erroneous notion that there is only so much work to be done and that no one can get a job without taking one from someone else. It's an understandable assumption. Adam Davidson, writing in the *New York Times Magazine* on March 24, 2015, hit the nail on the head when he said, "It might seem intuitive that when there is an increase in the supply of workers, the ones who were here already will make less money or lose their jobs. Immigrants don't just increase the supply of labor, though; they simultaneously increase demand for it, using the wages they earn to rent apartments, eat food, get haircuts, buy cell phones. That means there are more jobs building apartments, selling food, giving haircuts and dispatching the trucks that move those phones. Immigrants increase the size of the overall population, which means they increase the size of the economy. Logically, if immigrants were 'stealing' jobs, so would every young person leaving school and entering the job market; countries should become poorer as they get larger. In reality, of course, the opposite happens."

Remember the Old Testament admonition, "You shall not wrong a stranger or oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt."

# Blues and Jazz Fest 2015

Here's the down and dirty on the acts taking the stage at Frontier Park



Red Baraat (pictured left) performed to a packed Frontier Park in 2012. This year's lineup will be looking to bring the same intensity to the Erie Art Museum's Blues and Jazz Festival. Alex Bieler, Bob Protzman, and Ryan Smith give you the skinny and many reasons to catch each performance.

hometown R&B/soul virtuosos the Breeze Band take the stage at Frontier Park at 2 p.m. Saturday.

**On Radars Because:** Featuring five well-known local musicians, all with well-honed chops, the Breeze Band is among Erie's musical favorites, regularly playing shows at various locales and events (including a stop this summer at the Erie Art Museum's Mid-day Art Break).

**You Should Attend Because:** With influences ranging from Chaka Khan and Aretha Franklin to Jimi Hendrix and Stevie Ray Vaughn, the Breeze Band has a whole lot of versatility, and the abilities to match up to the task of covering a wide range of classics across several genres. Whatever sound hits you, at one point or another, the Breeze Band will make you want to move and groove. – Ryan Smith

4 p.m. // Travis "Moonchild" Haddix



**The Skinny:** Tennessee-bred, Cleveland-based blues guitarist Travis "Moonchild" Haddix will grace the Blues and Jazz Festival stage Saturday afternoon, bringing decades of experience to electrify the Frontier Park crowd starting at 4 p.m.

**On Radars Because:** Ever since Haddix ditched the piano for guitar at age 8 after seeing B.B. King perform, the axe man has been on a path to wow fans with his electric, horn-driven style of blues. The veteran musician has recorded more than 20 albums

## BLUES — SATURDAY, AUGUST 1

Noon // M4 and the Rock School



**The Skinny:** On a day that will feature several old-school artists, young up-and-comers M4 and the Rock School will kick off Blues and Jazz Festival with a performance starting at noon on Saturday.

**On Radars Because:** The Rock School at World of Music has been a hotbed for young artists since the program started in 2009. More than 50 acts have had a chance to develop under the tutelage of local rocker and program founder Ryan Krysiak, including Saturday's opening act M4. The teenage quintet recently won the Tri-C High School Rock Off in Cleveland, an event sponsored by The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame

and Museum, and now they'll be looking to get the Blues and Jazz Festival off to a good start.

**You Should Attend Because:** You get a chance to catch some of the brightest young talent in Erie. It's also helps that it's easy to support the Rock School's acts when they can legitimately rock out so early in their lives. The Rock School is giving young Erieites a chance to shine on stage and create their own sound, so this is a great chance to check out just what the future of Erie sounds like right at the beginning of Blues and Jazz Fest. – Alex Bieler

2 p.m. // The Breeze Band



**The Skinny:** Second-up in the day's lengthy lineup,



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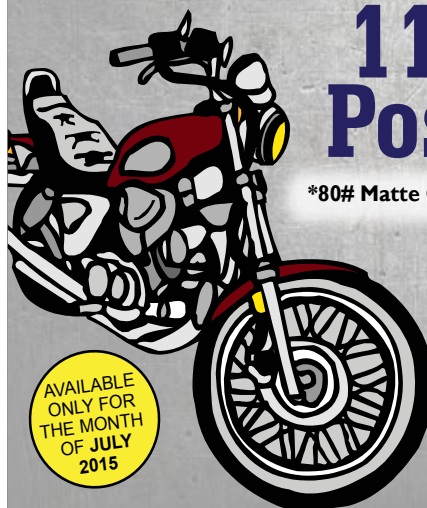
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and DVDs over his career, even creating his own label Wann-Sonn Records in 1989 to further showcase his craft.

**You Should Attend Because:** Moonchild knows how to fire up a crowd. Haddix has made a career out of electrifying crowds with his music, touring across the United States and Europe. His releases have earned high praise from *Living Blues* and *Big City Blues*, and he hasn't started slowing down yet, releasing a new album called *Love Coupons* just last year. Now you can see the music veteran display his award-winning blues sound for yourself at Frontier Park. – Alex Bieler

### 6 p.m. // Grady Champion



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

**The Skinny:** Celebrated Mississippi-based blues man Grady Champion takes one of the top spots at the 23rd annual Blues and Jazz Festival, performing onstage at Frontier Park at 6 p.m. Saturday.

**On Radars Because:** Singer/harp player/guitarist/songwriter Champion has been around the musical block, playing his take on American blues for audiences across the country for the better part of the past couple of decades. Signed with the legendary Mississippi-based blues label Malaco Records, Champion released his first full-length album, *Bootleg Whiskey*, in 2014, and has been nominated for several industry awards over the years.

**You Should Attend Because:** In his style and approach to the craft, Champion's been compared by critics to legends and revolutionaries like Sonny Boy Williamson, Junior Wells, and Howlin' Wolf. When it comes to the blues, that's some good company to be keeping. "I play what I feel," Champion states in his press bio. And, he adds, "I think blues has a bright future. ...You just gotta be able to hang in the game."

Right on, Champion – see you there. – Ryan Smith

### 8 p.m. // Rev. John Wilkins

**The Skinny:** The Rev. John Wilkins will bring a lifetime of blues lessons to the Blues and Jazz Festival



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

stage as the 8 p.m. Saturday headliner, showcasing his take on the sounds of North Mississippi Hill Country and Memphis on his trusty guitar.

**On Radars Because:** Wilkins has got blues in his blood. John's father was The Rev. Robert Wilkins, who released a series of songs in the '30s. One of those songs was "Prodigal Son," a track that was covered by a little ol' band called The Rolling Stones. The younger Wilkins followed in his father's footsteps, not only because of his ability to enchant with some gospel-fueled blues, but also because he became a pastor in the '80s.

**You Should Attend Because:** A tremendous musical performance can feel like a religious experience, and Wilkins has both the tunes and the worship down pat. Touring with his band, Wilkins will put on a show that will please both gospel lovers and blues fans, capping off the Blues portion of Blues and Jazz Fest with a performance that will have you feeling like you're right in the heart of hill country as Wilkins lets his guitar strings speak for themselves. – Alex Bieler

## JAZZ — SUNDAY, AUGUST 2

### Noon // The Four Grads



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

**The Skinny:** Guitarist/vocalist Carl Hultman has been a local country music fixture for many years, leading several different bands with partner Barb Schwartz.

But wait a minute. Turns out Hultman isn't just a good ol' country boy.

**On Radars Because** "For many years I dreamed of forming a vocal-instrumental band modeled after the Four Freshmen (a very popular jazz vocal group in the 1950s-60s)," said Hultman. "I was especially taken with their complex and beautiful arrangements."

The 72-year-old Hultman, a retired Gannon FEATU chemistry professor of 44 years, is an arranger, plus he luckily came upon some exact transcriptions of Freshmen charts.

"Barb and I could cover the vocals and guitar and percussion parts, but I needed bass and horn players who could also sing," explained Hultman.

It took awhile, but he got his men: tenor saxophonist Stan Bialomizy, in his 70s and generally regarded as the dean of Erie jazz, and Bob Seamon, bassist and high falsetto vocalist.

About three years ago, The Four Grads were born, and they'll be performing for their biggest audience ever at noon Sunday kicking off jazz day at Frontier Park.

**You Should Attend Because:** Four Freshmen fans should anticipate hearing many of the group's hits — "It's a Blue World," "Poinciana," "Day By Day," et al.

Not a Freshman fan? Don't fret. The Four Grads also do Manhattan Transfer, Beach Boys, Chordettes, and even The Beatles. Oh, and don't be surprised if you get at least a taste of country. – Bob Protzman

### 2 p.m. // The Monk's Brew



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

**The Skinny:** Thousands of young men and women play in jazz ensembles in numerous U.S. colleges and universities, but few become jazz musicians, or it appears, jazz fans.

Well, there's an exception in Erie — four 22-year-olds who call themselves The Monk's Brew. The Monk in the quartet's name refers, of course, to pianist/composer Thelonious Monk.

Members of The Monk's Brew met in music studies at Mercyhurst University. They were drawn to one another and began jamming together outside of regular jazz ensemble class.

**On Radars Because:** Before long, Dillon Shideman-tle, trumpet/vocals; Bobby Lucas, piano; Alex McLaughlin, bass, and Michael Hibbler II, drums, were a band ready to begin a serious, difficult journey.

"We are doing our best to make it as musicians and



want to make music our career,” said McLaughlin. “We are very serious about our band and our music.”

They are scuffling for gigs (what jazz musicians aren't in Erie, especially in summertime?), but enjoyed a recent high spot when they played at JazzErie's Jazz and Blues Walk. “We played at Gigliotti's for two hours straight because we were digging it,” said McLaughlin.

Now The Monk's Brew will play for a really big audience at 2 p.m. Sunday for the Erie Art Museum's Blues and Jazz Festival.

**You Should Attend Because:** They'll be ready, according to McLaughlin. They won't lack for material with a mix of originals by band members, some Miles Davis, Charles Mingus, of course Monk, and other bebop and mainstream jazz artists, a little rock, and more.

Said McLaughlin, “We're nervous but excited.” – Bob Protzman

#### 4 p.m. – One World Tribe



**The Skinny:** Following the day's first two performances, One World Tribe takes the stage at Frontier Park at 4 p.m. Sunday.

**On Radars Because:** Based in Pittsburgh but featuring a lineup of colossal musicians from around the world (Erie included), One World Tribe has, over the past couple of decades, developed into a truly multicultural, multi-musical collective of artists with real, and really diverse, chops. And One World Tribe has been no stranger to Erie stages over the years, having played tons of memorable, colorful, cool-as-can-be shows in and around the Gem City.

**You Should Attend Because:** More than 20-plus years and running, OWT's music has been compared to the elemental sounds of groups and performers like Earth, Wind & Fire, War, and Santana – an earthy, funky, and worldly groove, a musical feast providing plenty of food for thought (and, of course, dancin').

So if that's your kind of thing (and whose is it not?), be sure to check out what's happening smack-dab in the middle of Day Two at this year's Blues and Jazz Festival. – Ryan Smith

#### 6 p.m. // United Trumpet Summit with Dr. Eddie Henderson, Russell Gunn, & Rayce Biggs



**The Skinny:** One brash, talented jazz trumpeter can turn a concert hall upside down. Dizzy Gillespie did it for decades. Diz's protégé Arturo Sandoval sometimes plays so powerfully these days that he nearly outdoes his mentor.

So what do you think three trumpets — especially in unison – might sound like? You can find out beginning at 6 p.m. Sunday when the United Trumpet Summit takes the stage at Frontier Park.

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## The NBSBB doesn't play just one Mingus tune. They've done an entire album of nine songs titled *Fight Song: A Tribute to Charles Mingus*, and are considering doing the same with several other major jazz artists.

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The group is led by Dr. Eddie Henderson. Yes, he is a retired physician who once had Thelonious Monk as a patient and earned the nickname of Dr. Funk. The prodigious fusionist Russell Gunn and the up-and-coming Jayce Biggs fill out the front line.

United Trumpet Summit has been around for years, but the players have changed – Randy Brecker, Jeremy Pelt, Dave Douglas, Leon Jordan Jr., and others have moved through the band.

Henderson has a solid background that includes stints with pianist Herbie Hancock (1970-73), drummer Art Blakey, and organist Charles Earland.

**On Radars Because:** The group plays for a number

of special occasions, none more important or prestigious than the 25th Annual Clifford Brown Jazz Festival, named for the brilliant trumpeter/composer who died tragically at 25 in a car crash on the Pennsylvania Turnpike.

**You Should Attend Because:** What can we expect stylistically from United Trumpet Summit? Well, Henderson favors Miles Davis's early electric fusion, but he's best known for his acoustic hard bop playing. Now THAT is quite an exciting combination! – Bob Protzman

#### 8 p.m. – No BS! Brass Band



**The Skinny:** Most of us have enjoyed a brass band in a parade or struttin' and wailin' and moanin' in a New Orleans funeral procession. But playing music by jazz great Charles Mingus? Not likely... it's the incredibly eclectic No BS! Brass Band.

**On Radars Because:** This unique ensemble, scheduled for the 8 p.m. Sunday headliner spot at the Erie Art Museum Blues and Jazz Festival at Frontier Park, claims perhaps the most varied playlist of any band out there.

Based in Richmond, Va., the NBSBB has played anywhere they've been asked — from sweaty clubs to the Kennedy and Lincoln centers to National Public Radio and, of course, festivals like ours.

Formed in 2006, the band's members were carefully chosen by founders Reggie Pace (he's the Mingus fan) and Lance Koehler based on their skills and what someone called a “definable unique persona.” Also, each player is conservatory trained.

The first group had 11 members, although the number seems to change by one or two players from time to time. Latest published roster includes four trombones, four trumpets, tuba, drums, and, surprise, saxophone.

**You Should Attend Because:** The NBSBB doesn't play just one Mingus tune. They've done an entire album of nine songs titled *Fight Song: A Tribute to Charles Mingus*, and are considering doing the same with several other major jazz artists.

But their repertoire offers something for just about everyone with elements of music by James Brown, Michael Jackson, Led Zeppelin, and genres and styles including jazz, funk, R&B, klezmer, calypso, and possibly more.

If you don't find the sound of tuba unbearable, you'll probably enjoy the heck out of the dynamic No BS! Brass Band. – Bob Protzman



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Wednesday, July 22

**Erie Art Museum's Mid-day Art Break Features Erie Phil's Brass Quintet**

As good as we all thought we were at instruments like the tuba and the trombone, let's face it – the Erie Phil is a lot better than us at the classics. Getting down to brass essentials, The Erie Phil brass quintet will perform at noon Wednesday, July 22 at the Erie Art Museum's Mid-day Art Break, and will bring with them an enormous level of talent and a few shiny instruments.

This free event takes place on the museum's Fifth Street patio. With just a few performances left for the summer, this Mid-day Art Break is a great one to drop by and enjoy. – Lauren Griffith

Noon // Erie Art Museum, 10 E. Fifth St. // [erieartmuseum.org](http://erieartmuseum.org)

Wednesday, July 22

**The Midnight Swim Tells a Spooky Story about Another Great Lake**

Don't go into *The Midnight Swim* expecting a horror movie.

It has some of the ingredients – a mysterious death, a potentially haunted lake, *Blair Witch*-style camera tricks – but it works much better as a character study. The story concerns three sisters who return to their childhood home, where their hippie-ish mother has died in a drowning accident under mysterious circumstances.

At times, I was tempted to forget the horror trappings entirely. Is the lake



CANDY FACTORY FILMS

haunted? Are the sisters descending into madness? I found myself less interested in these questions than I was in the aftermath of their mother's death. The sense of grief is strongest when it feels intimate, rather than supernatural.

*Midnight's* most impressive feature is the chemistry among the three main characters. They laugh, fight, mourn, and reminisce like real sisters, effectively conveying what goes unspoken among families. The film screens at the Erie Art Museum Wednesday, July 22, and director Sarah Adina Smith will drop by (via Skype) for a Q & A after. Perhaps we'll learn how she encouraged such strong performances. Or maybe we'll just swap haunted lake stories. – Dan Schank

Film at 7pm, Q & A with filmmaker Sarah Adina Smith to follow // Erie Art Museum, 20 E. Fifth St. // [erieartmuseum.org/events/film.html](http://erieartmuseum.org/events/film.html)

Thursday, July 23

**Warped Tour Veterans Like Moths to Flames Headline a Night of Heavy Metal at BT**



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Bearded Baby Productions is hosting a night of nothing but heavy metal at Basement Transmissions, Thursday, July 23.

Warped Tour veterans from Columbus, Ohio, Like Moths to Flames, are headlining the event. The band has been at the forefront of the metalcore scene since their debut in 2010, and is now working on its fourth studio album, after releasing the single "Bury Your Pain" in April.

If there's an unwritten law that shows at Basement Transmissions must feature a local band or artist, this show

would be the rare exception to that rule. Every band on the bill is from out of state. The Plot in You (Finlay, Ohio), Bermuda (Ventura County, Calif.), Myka Relocate (Houston), Yüth Forever (Chicago), The Funeral Portrait (Atlanta), and The Prestige (Montreal), are all coming to show Erie what metal is like in their neck of the woods. – Tom Shannon

5:30 p.m., Thursday, July 23 // Basement Transmissions, 145 W. 11th St. // Pre-sale Tickets \$15, \$18 @door // <https://www.facebook.com/events/828288730583588/>

Thursday, July 23

**Eriestock, Urraro Gallery Artist Collective: Out of the Instruments and onto the Walls**

Local musicians, bands and the Erie music scene, past and present, get their due at Eriestock, a show at the newly reconfigured Urraro Gallery Artist Collective. Artwork tied to the music scene, whether it be gig posters, logo designs, and more will pay tribute to that rich history.

The multimedia show features two-dimensional screen-printing, photography, drawing, and digital works. Some pieces were created in collaboration with local bands specifically for the show.

The Collective is operated by a group of artists who wish to support emerging and underground artists in all media. Appropriately, the evening will also include an open mic to give new musical talent a chance to introduce them-

MUSIC

**Erie Philharmonic at the Mid-day Art Break**

July 22 — 12 p.m.  
Erie Art Museum, 20 E. Fifth St. [erieartmuseum.org](http://erieartmuseum.org).

**Colony House Band**

July 23 — 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.  
Colony Pub & Grille, 2670 W. Eighth St. [jazzzerie.com](http://jazzzerie.com).

**Erie Downtown Block Party featuring Ruby Port and The Man's Room Band**

July 23 — 6 to 10:30 p.m.  
Brewerie, 123 W. 14th St., [eriedowntown.com](http://eriedowntown.com).

**Like Moths to**

**Flames, The Plot in You, and Bermuda**

July 23 — 5:30 p.m.  
Basement Transmissions, 145 W. 11 St. [facebook.com/beardedbabyproductions/events](http://facebook.com/beardedbabyproductions/events).

**Remnants**

July 23 — 10 p.m.  
Sherlock's, 508 State St. [facebook.com/sherlocksparkplace](http://facebook.com/sherlocksparkplace).

**Lee Cobb**

July 23 — 7 p.m.  
Penn State Behrend, 4701 College Drive., [behrend.psu.edu](http://behrend.psu.edu).

**Bobby V**

July 24 — 6 to 9 p.m.  
Arundel Cellars, 11727 E. Main Road, [lakeeriewinecountry.org](http://lakeeriewinecountry.org).

**Boyd Baker**

July 24 — 5 to 7 p.m.  
Presque Isle Downs Casino, 8199 Perry Hwy., [presqueisledowns.com](http://presqueisledowns.com).

**BT's Punk Floor Show 2**

July 24 — 6 p.m.  
Basement Transmission, 145 W. 11 St. [facebook.com/basement.transmissions](http://facebook.com/basement.transmissions).

**Geek Army**

July 24 — 9 p.m.  
Presque Isle Downs Casino, 8199 Perry Hwy., [presqueisledowns.com](http://presqueisledowns.com).

**Hit N' Run**

July 24 — 8 p.m.  
Kings Rook Club, 1921 Peach St. [facebook.com/kingsrookclub](http://facebook.com/kingsrookclub).

**Kris Mathers**

July 24 — 9 p.m.  
Ugly Tuna Tavern, 1010 Peninsula Dr., [uglytunatavern.com](http://uglytunatavern.com).

**Mushroomhead**

July 24 — 8 p.m.  
Sherlock's, 508 State St. [facebook.com/sherlocksparkplace](http://facebook.com/sherlocksparkplace).

**Rankin & Schell**

July 24 — 6 to 9 p.m.  
Sprague Farm & Brew Works, 22113 US HWY 6 & 19, [sleepingchainsaw.com](http://sleepingchainsaw.com).

**Adam Gould**

July 25 — 9 p.m.  
Kings Rook Club, 1921 Peach St. [facebook.com/kingsrookclub](http://facebook.com/kingsrookclub).

**Chris Mathers**

July 25 — 5 to 7 p.m.  
Presque Isle Downs Casino, 8199 Perry Hwy., [presqueisledowns.com](http://presqueisledowns.com).

**French Kiss**

July 25 — 9 p.m.  
Presque Isle Downs Casino, 8199 Perry Hwy., [presqueisledowns.com](http://presqueisledowns.com).

**Jim Tobin**

July 25 — 6 to 9 p.m.  
Sprague Farm & Brew Works, 22113 US HWY 6 & 19, [sleepingchainsaw.com](http://sleepingchainsaw.com).

**Kiss This!**

July 25 — 9 p.m.  
Sherlock's, 508 State St. [facebook.com/sherlocksparkplace](http://facebook.com/sherlocksparkplace).

**Romolo Summer Music Series featuring Ali Ryerson**

July 25 — 6 to 9 p.m.

July 25 — 6 to 9 p.m.  
Romolo Chocolates, 1525 W. Eighth St., [romolochocolates.com](http://romolochocolates.com).

**m4**

July 26 — 4 p.m.  
Presque Isle Downs Casino, 8199 Perry Hwy., [presqueisledowns.com](http://presqueisledowns.com).

**War of Ages**

July 26 — 5:30 p.m.  
Basement Transmissions, 145 W. 11 St. [facebook.com/basement.transmissions/events](http://facebook.com/basement.transmissions/events).

**Dwayne Dopsie and the Zydeco Hellraisers w/ Sean Patrick and the Newgrass Revolution at 8 Great Tuesdays**

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**SEAWOLVES.com**



*Burger King Amphitheatre, Liberty Park, porterie.org.*

**The Breeze Band at the Mid-day Art Break**

July 29 — 12 p.m.  
Erie Art Museum,  
20 E. Fifth St.  
erieartmuseum.org.

**Colony House Band**

July 30 — 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.  
Colony Pub & Grille,  
2670 W. Eighth St.  
jazzerie.com.

**Jesse James Weston**

July 30 — 6 to 9 p.m.  
Sprague Farm & Brew Works, 22113 US HWY 6 & 19, sleepingchainsaw.com.

**Erie Downtown Block Party featuring Geek Army**

July 30 — 6 to 10:30 p.m.  
Park Place, 508 State St.  
eriedowntown.com.

**Sue Bergren**

July 30 — 7 p.m.  
Penn State Behrend,  
4701 College Drive.  
behrend.psu.edu.

**The Breeze Band**

July 31 — 9 p.m.  
Presque Isle Downs Casino, 8199 Perry Hwy.  
presqueisledowns.com.

**Charlie Wheeler Trio**

July 31 — 9 p.m.  
Kings Rook Club, 1921 Peach St. facebook.com/kingsrookclub.

**I-90s**

July 31 — 9 p.m.  
Sherlock's, 508 State St. facebook.com/sherlocksparkplace.

**Mid-life Crisis Unplugged**

July 31 — 5 to 7 p.m.  
Presque Isle Downs Casino, 8199 Perry Hwy.  
presqueisledowns.com.

**Rankin & Schell**

July 31 — 9 p.m.  
Ugly Tuna Tavern,  
1010 Peninsula Drive.

uglytunatavern.com.  
South 79

July 31 — 6 to 9 p.m.  
Arundel Cellars,  
11727 E. Main Road.  
lakeeriewinecountry.org.

**Blues & Jazz Festival**

Aug. 1 & 2 — 12-10 p.m.  
Frontier Park 1501 West Sixth St.  
erieartmuseum.org.

**Ruby Port Band**

Aug. 1 — 5 to 9 p.m.  
Penn Shore Vineyards,  
10225 East Lake Road.  
lakeeriewinecountry.org.

**The Shameless Hex**

Aug. 1 — 9 p.m.  
Kings Rook Club, 1921 Peach St. facebook.com/kingsrookclub.

**Gem City Concert Band**

Aug. 2 — 3:30 to 5 p.m.  
Corry City Park,  
gemcitybands.org.

**Gem City Jazz Ensemble**

Aug. 4 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.  
New Hope Church,  
5440 Washington Ave.,  
gemcitybands.org.

**Los Straightjackets and Daybreak Radio at 8 Great Tuesdays**

Aug. 4 — 6:30 p.m.  
Burger King Amphitheatre, Liberty Park, porterie.org.

**Lake Erie Sound Trio**

Aug. 4 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.  
Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St., jeserie.org.

**BT Mid Week Punk Night**

Aug. 5 — 5:30 p.m.  
Basement Transmission,  
145 W. 11 St. facebook.com/gimpguyunderground/events.

**FILM**

**The Midnight Swim**

July 22 — 7 p.m.  
Erie Art Museum,  
20 E. Fifth St.  
erieartmuseum.org.

**Blood, Sweat, and Beer**

July 24 — 7 p.m.

Erie Ale Works, 416 W. 12th St., eriealeworks.com.

**Erie Horror Fest Fundraiser: Omega Man/Last Man on Earth**

July 25 — 4 p.m. and 9 p.m.  
Erie Movie House  
3424 Westlake Road.  
facebook.com/ErieMovieHouse/events.

**Web**

July 29 — 7 p.m.  
Erie Art Museum,  
20 E. Fifth St.  
erieartmuseum.org.

**Despicable Me 2**

July 31 — 8:30 p.m.  
Frontier Park, 1501 W. Sixth St., leaferie.org.

**Airplanes**

Ongoing to Sept. 7 — 11 a.m. and 3 p.m.  
Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Drive #1 trecpi.org.

**James Cameron's Deepsea Challenge**

Ongoing to Sept. 7 — 12 p.m. and 4 p.m.  
Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Drive #1 trecpi.org.

**Mysteries of the Great Lakes**

Ongoing to Sept. 7 — 1 p.m.  
Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Drive #1 trecpi.org.

**Rocky Mountain Express**

Ongoing to Sept. 7 — 2 p.m. & 5 p.m.  
Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Drive #1 trecpi.org.

**VISUAL ARTS**

**Eriestock: A Celebration of Local Music**

July 23 — 7 to 10 p.m.  
Urraro Gallery, 135 W. 14 St., facebook.com/urrarogallery.com.

**Spaces**

July 24 — 8 to 11 p.m.  
Radius Gallery Suite 907, Renaissance Building,  
1001 State Street.

selves to the crowd.

Eriestock will be on exhibit for about three weeks after the opening, with viewings by appointment only. Call Michelle Betancourt at 419.508.4053 to arrange a viewing or for more information about the opening. — Mary Birdsong

7 to 10 p.m. // 134 W 14th St. // BYOB with proper ID

**Thursday, July 23**

**Brewerie Block Party with Ruby Port and Man's Room Band**

The Brewerie is already a great place to stop for a drink during the summer, but the local establishment will have some extra outdoor space to work with when it hosts its Block Party Thursday, July 27.

In fact, you don't even have to walk through to the Trackside beer garden (although we certainly suggest that you do), as West 14th Street will be the scene when The Brewerie provides an electric setting with music from Ruby Port and Man's Room Band, plus plenty of cold brews. With proceeds benefiting The Epilepsy Project, you can even feel even better about having a good time at the Block Party. — Alex Bieler

6 p.m. // 123 W. 14th St. // eriedowntown.com

**Thursday, July 23**

**WALL-E Visits Porreco College's Movies Under the Stars**

Drive-in movie theatres are one of the fun, family-oriented events that are always on a summer calendar. It doesn't get much better than watching a flick under the stars, does it?

This is where Porreco College's Movies Under the Stars Series comes in this summer. WALL-E opens the series on July 23, showing at 9 p.m. WALL-E is set largely in outer space, and there is no better way to watch it than laying on your back staring at the stars. Heck, you might even be able to see WALL-E and the lovely robot EVE, who ends up helping WALL-E clean up planet Earth far in the future, if you look close enough.

Admission and parking are free, so all you have to do is pack enough lawn chairs and blankets for the family, and a little bit of bug spray. After all, it doesn't get much better than watching a flick under the stars, does it? —Lauren Griffith

9 p.m. // 2951 W. 38th St. // 836.1955, edinboro.edu/porreco-college

**Friday, July 24**

**Punk Floor Show Series Returns with Second Installment**

Basement Transmissions is abandoning the stage to relive the up-close-and-personal, in-your-face, no-b.s. experience of the old BT with their Punk Floor Show series, currently on its second installment on July 24.

The lineup includes locals Frame and Mantle, Till the End, and My Secret Weapon, Genetically Enhanced Super Humans (GESH) from Meadville, and touring bands Bear Girl and Iselia, coming up from North Carolina and Georgia, respectively.

In true BT fashion, a wide array of styles will be prevalent at the show, ranging from '80s punk stylings by GESH, post-rock indie from Frame and Mantle and Bear Girl, and a set of post-rock/screamo hybrid tunes by Iselia.

In gaining a larger venue and hosting more popular bands to bigger crowds since their move last year, part of what made the old Basement Transmissions great was lost (no disrespect). Fifteen people at a show made the place feel packed, and now looking at 15 people from the stage at a smaller show doesn't feel quite the same. It's good to see that the BT crew hasn't forgotten its roots, and is bringing some shows back down to earth. — Tom Shannon

\$5 6 p.m. // Friday, July 24 // 145 W. 11th St. // facebook.com/basement.transmissions

**Friday, July 24**

**Gallery Night: An Artful Summer Evening**

July's Gallery Night might be the best one yet. If the weather's warm, you can enjoy strolls in the summer air as you travel from one venue to the next. And if you time it right, you can enjoy the sunset over the bay.

The Bayfront Gallery, open only in the summer months, offers the added bonus of being in the right place to watch one of Erie's treasured views. The sunset will be rivaled however, by the mini-retrospective of early and current works by local legend, V.J. Kaiser just inside the door.

Also on tap this night at the Erie Art Museum is *Art of the Comic Book*; InnovationErie: Design Competition 2015; *Storm* by Ian Brill; and *Stories We Tell...* by Kristin Cliffell. Clayspace will be on hand with pottery demonstrations and sales.

At Glass Growers Gallery, *Three Voices in Pastel* features the works of Pittsburgh artists Gail Beem, Karen Ferrick and Diane Grguras who celebrate the region's landscape in their paintings, as

## CALENDAR

well as the ceramic works of Julia Weber entitled *Efforescent*.

Recent works in ceramics by Mark Nowak are in the spotlight at Allen Stoneware Gallery, and the works of Lena Logvina and Linda Daugherty will be at Lighthouse Jewelers in the same neighborhood. Logvina creates mosaics inspired by nature, folklore, and life; Daugherty's paintings focus on landscapes and flowers.

A must-visit is the Secret Squirrel, an arts cooperative and incubator at 3205 French St. Who could skip a place called the Secret Squirrel? It's currently showing *It's a Spring Thing* and *Summer Daze*, featuring a variety of Erie area artists and media.

Most venues service light refreshments to accompany the art, and artists will be in attendance at many venues. Visit three or more locations to have a chance to win a gift certificate to any of the participating galleries.

— Mary Birdsong

Hint: Sunset on July 24 is at 8:48 pm.

7 to 10 p.m. // Free Admission // Various locations // [erieartmuseum.org/events/gallerynight](http://erieartmuseum.org/events/gallerynight)

### Friday, July 24

#### Mushroomhead Headlines at Sherlock's

After playing at Basement Transmissions in January, Cleveland Nü-Metal nonet Mushroomhead is coming back to Erie July 24, this time taking the stage at Sherlock's.

Mushroomhead has had a long his-

tory with Erie and Sherlock's, having played the bar often as an up-and-coming band in the early '90s, and returning now after achieving international success shows a great humility among the band's members — a group that is experienced but not jaded.

The group packed BT nearly to the brim their last time in Erie, and they'll have no problem doing the same this time around at Sherlock's, so be sure to get there early to grab some drinks and get a good view of the action. — Tom Shannon

8 p.m. Friday, July 24 // 508 State St. // [facebook.com/sherlocksparkplace](http://facebook.com/sherlocksparkplace)

### Friday, July 24

#### Gather at the Gathering at Chaffee's

The Gathering at Chaffee's is one local music festival that tons of folks from around here wait, with happy anticipation (and with good reason), all year long for.

And this year's time for Gathering is coming on Friday, July 24 and Saturday, July 25.

Keeping it small-ish, but continuing to spread out a little to keep including more and bigger regional and national acts, the 2015 Gathering lineup (like last year's) is a veritable who's-who of both well-established favorites and up-and-coming jam and rock masters, including The Heavy Pets, Consider the Source, Spiritual Rez, Big Something, Conehead Buddha, and the Hornitz, just to name just a few.

Chaffee's is one worth checking out for sure, a place where you can get good and comfortable right off the bat, and, after that, get set for plenty of awesome tunes and positive vibes. — Ryan Smith

8296 Mill St., Girard // [thegathering-gatchaffees.com](http://thegathering-gatchaffees.com).

### Friday, July 24

#### Discover Presque Isle



is more your thing, Beach Eight will host a quartet of local acts, with M4, The O'Needers, Eric Brewer & Friends, and East Ave. all performing by a giant bonfire from 3 to 10 p.m. on Saturday.

Want something a bit more physical? All three days have some exciting events, including the 17th Annual NASH 97.9 Dig Off on Friday, a Sand Sculpture Competition and Beach Brawl on Saturday, and the Smith's Hot Dog Volleyball Challenge on Sunday.

There are plenty of sights and activities during Discover Presque Isle, which is already a fantastic destination in its own right. For a full list of activities and locations for the three-day festival, head to [discoverpi.com](http://discoverpi.com) and make it a priority to visit one of Erie's greatest treasures. — Alex Bieler

Presque Isle // [discoverpi.com](http://discoverpi.com)

### Saturday, July 25

#### Romolos Summer Music Series Welcomes Flutist Ali Ryerson

"Yay!! I made it into the critics poll in *DownBeat Magazine* again," flutist Ali Ryerson practically shouted on her Facebook page.

You notice she said "again," indicating this is nothing new, but still obviously exciting for someone also named Jazz Flutist of the Year by the Jazz Journalists Association.

Some locals may remember that Ryerson made a surprise appearance in Erie in 2009 when JazzErie signed up Har-

#### Beach Glass Jewelry Making

July 26 — 2 to 4 p.m.

Courtyard Winery, 10021 West Main Road, [lakeeriewinecountry.org](http://lakeeriewinecountry.org).

#### Erie Open Figure Sessions

Thursday evenings — 6:30 to 9 p.m.

1505 Artworks, 1505 State St., [erieofs.com](http://erieofs.com).

#### Erie Open Figure Session

July 26 — 5 to 9 p.m.

1505 Artworks, 1505 State St., [erieofs.com](http://erieofs.com).

#### Minyao: Chinese Folk Pottery, Imperial Porcelains, and Brother Thomas

Daily July 17 through November 15, 2015

Erie Art Museum, 20 E. Fifth St. [erieartmuseum.org](http://erieartmuseum.org).

#### Pastel in Three Voices

July 3 through Aug.

4 — all day

Glass Growers Gallery, 10 E. 5th St., [glassgrowersgallery.com](http://glassgrowersgallery.com).

#### Efforescent

July 3 through Aug.

4 — all day

Glass Growers Gallery, 10 E. 5th St., [glassgrowersgallery.com](http://glassgrowersgallery.com).

#### Holocaust Exhibit

June 22 through October

28 daily — 8 to 4:30 p.m.,

Gannon, 619 Sassafras St. [erieartsandculture.org](http://erieartsandculture.org).

#### Selected Works from the Mercyhurst University Permanent Art Collection

Ongoing through

Aug. 14 — All Day

Cummings Art Gallery, 501 E. 38th St. [mercyhurst.edu](http://mercyhurst.edu).

#### Higherglyphics: Annex Stairwell Project, Annex Stairwell

Ongoing — All Day

Erie Art Museum, 20 E. Fifth St. [erieartmuseum.org](http://erieartmuseum.org).

#### Ian Brill: Storm, McCain Family Gallery

Ongoing — All Day

Erie Art Museum, 20 E. Fifth St. [erieartmuseum.org](http://erieartmuseum.org).

#### Kristen Cliffl, Ronald E. Holstein Gallery

Ongoing through

Aug. 22 — All Day

Erie Art Museum, 20 E. Fifth St. [erieartmuseum.org](http://erieartmuseum.org).

### DANCE

#### Mid-Day Dance Breaks

July 23, 30 — 12 to 1 p.m.

Perry Square, State St. and Rt. 5 [jenniferdennehy.org](http://jenniferdennehy.org)

#### Children's Beginner Division Summer Camp

Aug. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 — 12 p.m.

Lake Erie Ballet 701 Holland St. [lakeerieballet.org](http://lakeerieballet.org)

#### National Night Out

Aug. 4 — 5 to 9 p.m.

Gridley Park Station, Liberty St. [jenniferdennehy.org](http://jenniferdennehy.org)

### FOOD AND DRINK

#### Corn and Pig Roast

July 18 — 5 to 9 p.m.

Burch Farms Winery, 9210 Sidehill Road, [lakeeriewinecountry.org](http://lakeeriewinecountry.org).

#### Vine Dining Dinner

July 18 — 7 p.m.

21 Brix Winery, 6654 West Main Road, [lakeeriewinecountry.org](http://lakeeriewinecountry.org).

#### Beer on the Bay

July 25 — 12 noon to

3p.m., or 4p.m. to 7p.m.

Liberty Park, Lawrence Pier, [eriepa.com](http://eriepa.com).

### THEATER

#### The Station Dinner Theatre Presents Celebrate America!

July 22, 25, 26; Aug. 1, 4, 5 — Fri @ 7 p.m. Sat @ 5:30 p.m. Sun @ 2:30 p.m.

Tue & Wed @ 12 p.m.

The Station Dinner Theatre 4940 Peach St. [canterburyfeast.com](http://canterburyfeast.com).

#### Erie Playhouse Presents Elvis Has Left the Building

July 22, 23, 24, 25, 26 — 7:30 p.m. (2 p.m. on 26th)

Erie Playhouse 13 West 10 St. [erieplayhouse.org](http://erieplayhouse.org).

#### PACA Presents Love Letters

July 22, 23, 24, 25 — 8 p.m.

Performing Arts Collective Alliance 1505 State Street, [paca1505.ning.com](http://paca1505.ning.com).

#### Meadville Council on the Arts Presents Next to Normal

July 24, 25 — 7:30 p.m.

and July 26 — 2 p.m.

Gardner Theatre, 910 Market St., Meadville. [artsmeadville.org](http://artsmeadville.org)

#### Erie Playhouse Presents All the King's Women

July 27 — 7:30 p.m.

Erie Playhouse 13 West 10 St. [erieplayhouse.org](http://erieplayhouse.org).

#### Dramashop Presents "Gertrude, Queen of Denmark"

July 30, 31; Aug. 1 — 8 p.m.

Dramashop Renaissance Centre, 2nd Floor 1001 State St. [dramashop.org](http://dramashop.org).



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## CALENDAR



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Romolo's emphasis on it in its pre-publicity, it seems likely that Ryerson and band will play a number of tunes from it.

It's definitely something to look forward to. – Bob Protzman

6 p.m. // 1525 W. Eighth St // [romolochocolates.com](http://romolochocolates.com)

### Saturday, July 25

#### Beer on the Bay

Sometimes people celebrate a special occasion with a nice, cold beer. At Beer on the Bay, Erie can celebrate the joys of a nice, cold beer with some of the best breweries from Northwest Pennsylvania and beyond.

The annual event will once again be held at Liberty Park, with two separate sessions allowing craft beer fans to try everything from 21st Amendment Brewing Company to Woodchuck Hard Cider, all while a part of the proceeds go to benefit the A.N.N.A. Shelter. In addition to the over three dozen different breweries represented at Beer on the Bay, several vendors will also be selling their wares. And of course, in order to help you drink responsibly, free shuttle service from EMTA will run through the day and Erie Yellow Cab will be on-site. – Alex Bieler

risburg-based pianist Steve Rudolph to play the nonprofit's 10th anniversary brunch at The Brewerie.

When Ryerson returns to Erie to take center stage, her sidemen will be Mike Demicco, guitar; Chuck Lamb, keyboards; Karl Latham, drums; Kip Reed, bass.

Showing her versatility and skill outside of playing, she helps design flutes. And as a musician? In 2013, she released *Game Changer*, featuring the Ali Ryerson Jazz Flute Big Band, with guest soloist Hubert Laws on flute. The acclaimed album was one of nearly two-dozen discs she has released on major labels, not to mention a dozen or so albums of well-known artists she appeared on.

The album prior to the big band effort was 2011's *Con Brio!* And judging by

Noon to 3 p.m. and 4 to 7 p.m. // Liberty Park // [eriepa.com/beer-on-the-bay](http://eriepa.com/beer-on-the-bay)

### Sunday, July 26

#### War of Ages Return to Erie for Eclectic Show at BT



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Erie natives and Christian metal face-melters War of Ages are coming back home once again for a mixed-genre show at Basement Transmissions Sunday, July 26.

Although War of Ages is no longer based in Erie, they continue to show their hometown love again and again by returning to the city, which they've been doing since the days of Forward Hall and aren't showing any signs of stopping.

Rounding out the metal end of the bill are Erie's Saevitia and Amavasya. Adding the diversity to the night's sonic presence are Archway, an emotive punk band from Meadville, and Frank-

lin pop-punk outfit The Plot Twist. Presale tickets are available online and through band members, so don't miss this opportunity to see some of the area's greatest acts. – Tom Shannon

6 p.m. Sunday, July 26 // 145 W. 11th St. // [brownpapertickets.com/event/1892839](http://brownpapertickets.com/event/1892839) // \$8 presale, \$10 day of show

### Tuesday, July 28

#### Dwayne Dopsie and the Zydeco Hellraisers and Newgrass Revolution part of 8 Great Tuesdays



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Interestingly, Dwayne Dopsie and the Zydeco Hellraisers are ranked No. 29 on LouisianaTravel.com's "Top 100 Rea-

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Erie, PA 16509  
Pastor: Reverend Charles McClung  
[www.NewHopeChurchErie.com](http://www.NewHopeChurchErie.com)



sons to Visit Louisiana.” And they’re one of this year’s 8 Great reasons to head to Liberty Park’s Burger King Amphitheater on a Tuesday evening.

Add local favorites Sean Patrick and The Newgrass Revolution into the mix, and you’ve got two good (er, Great) reasons to check out July 28’s installment of the free, weekly summer music series.

Together, the bands will make the third week of Port Erie’s 2015 concert series one to remember, adding to a sizable list that draws in thousands each week a couple of months out of every year. — Ryan Smith

6:30 p.m. // Burger King Amphitheater at Liberty Park // [porter.org](http://porter.org)

**Wednesday, July 29**

**Web Explores the Potentials and Perils of a More Connected World**

Is there anything in our lives more transformative, liberating, or frustrating than the Internet? You can use it to order a pair of shoes, plan a vacation, check a baseball score, or bicker with your relatives about Obamacare.

Michael Kleiman’s 2013 documentary *Web* takes a bird’s eye view of the challenges we face in an increasingly connected and digitized world. To access the impact of the Internet, he turns to a variety of experts, including Wikipedia co-founder Jimmy Wells, Meetup CEO Scott Heiferman, Foursquare’s Dennis Crowley, and public policy expert Anne-Marie Slaughter.

The documentary also sets off for Peru, where people in small towns, like Antuyo and Palestina, are introduced to the Internet for the first time. Many of the computers are provided by an organization called One Laptop Per Child, which brings digital access to children in many of the poorest parts of the world. Is web access a human right? And if so, what impact does this right have on an individual’s cultural identity?

When *Web* screens at the Erie Art Museum on July 29, filmmaker Michael Kleiman will be on hand (via Skype) to address some of these questions with us. — Dan Schank

Film at 7 p.m., Q & A with filmmaker Michael Kleiman to follow // Erie Art Museum, 20 E. Fifth St. // [erieartmuseum.org/events/film.html](http://erieartmuseum.org/events/film.html)

**Wednesday, July 29**

**The Breeze Band Blows in for Mid-Day Art Break**

Catching some classic soul, R & B, and blues, being played live and outside by one of Erie’s most versatile musical

outfits: Sounds like a really good way to spend a mid-week lunch hour.

That’s what being served up on Wednesday, July 29, when the Erie Art Museum presents the Breeze Band as part of EAM’s ongoing Mid-Day Art Break series.

The five-piece band specializes in variety, and in getting people up to dance, so be ready to hear a lot of classics — and, maybe, move your feet — between noon and 1 p.m.

The free music series also offers free gallery tours, making another good reason to take a Mid-Day Art Break this week.

And there are plenty of others, too, with four more performances from other awesome local artists set each Wednesday between Aug. 5 and Aug. 26.

So grab your lunch bag — or visit the museum’s Wave Café — and get ready to kick back and take a breath of fresh, music-and-art-filled air. — Ryan Smith

Noon to 1 p.m. // outside 20 E. Fifth St. // [erieartmuseum.org](http://erieartmuseum.org)

**Thursday, July 30**

**Interstellar Beneath the Stars at Porreco College**



Porreco College adds another level of immersion to Christopher Nolan’s *Interstellar* with their Movies Under the Stars series. *Interstellar*, a 2014 film, is a sci-fi odyssey. Fans of Kubrick’s 2001: A Space Odyssey will recognize the ultimately cyclical, mind-bending metanarrative that aims to challenge and excite its viewers.

*Interstellar*’s Earth is dystopian and on its way out, and Matthew McConaughey discovers himself as the unexpected hero charged with abandoning his family to lead a team into the depths of space in hopes of discovering a new planet for Earth’s remaining population to inhabit.

Driven by an emotionally gripping plotline and fueled by mind-bending theoretical physics (what actually goes on inside of a black hole?), Nolan’s *Interstellar* is worth the watch, and thanks to Porreco College’s Movies



Erie community and nonprofit events, brought to you by Country Fair

**Summer Walking Program**

July 22, 23 — 8:20-9:30 a.m.  
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. [lifeworkserie.org](http://lifeworkserie.org)

**Mindfulness, Movement & Meditation**

July 22, 29 — 12:30-1 p.m.  
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. [lifeworkserie.org](http://lifeworkserie.org)

**Doo Wop Dance**

July 24 — 6-9 p.m.  
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. [lifeworkserie.org](http://lifeworkserie.org)

**Painting Party with Angela**

July 24 — 6 to 8 p.m.  
Camp Sherwin, 8600 West Lake Road., [ymcaerie.org/sherwin](http://ymcaerie.org/sherwin)

**Flagship Trolley Wine Tour**

July 25—1 p.m.  
leaves from the Millcreek Mall, 5800 Peach St., [flagshiptrolley.com](http://flagshiptrolley.com)

**Frolf**

July 26—2 p.m.  
Meet at Eighth St. and Seminole Drive, [leaferie.org](http://leaferie.org)

**The Vibrant Life Series**

July 27 — 10:30-11:30 a.m.  
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. [lifeworkserie.org](http://lifeworkserie.org)

**Academy Class of 1975 Reunion**

July 31— 7:00 p.m.  
Calamari’s, 1317 State Street

**Street Soiree**

Aug. 1 — 6 to 10 p.m.  
ExpERIEence Children’s Museum, 420 French St., [eriechildrensmuseum.org](http://eriechildrensmuseum.org)

**Opia: An Art Show to Reduce Preventable Blindness**

Aug 2.—6 p.m.  
PACA, 1505 State St., [paca1505.ning.com](http://paca1505.ning.com)

**Wings of Hope**

Aug. 2 — 1 p.m.  
Porreco Center, 2951 W. 38th St., [edinboro.edu/porreco-college](http://edinboro.edu/porreco-college)

**Summer Choir Camp**

Aug. 3-7 — 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
Episcopal Cathedral of St. Paul, 134 W. Seventh St.

**Goodell Gardens Farmers Market**

Wednesdays through Sept. — 3 to 6 p.m.  
Goodell Gardens, 221 Waterford St. [goodellgardens.org](http://goodellgardens.org)

**Lagoon by Pontoon**

Ongoing to Sept. 7 — 11 a.m., 1 p.m., and 2 p.m.  
Pontoon station, 301 Peninsula Drive, [trepci.org](http://trepci.org)

**Evening Lagoon by Pontoon**

Wednesdays and Fridays to Sept. 4 — 7 and 8:30 p.m.  
Pontoon station, 301 Peninsula Drive, [trepci.org](http://trepci.org)

**Children’s Art Classes**

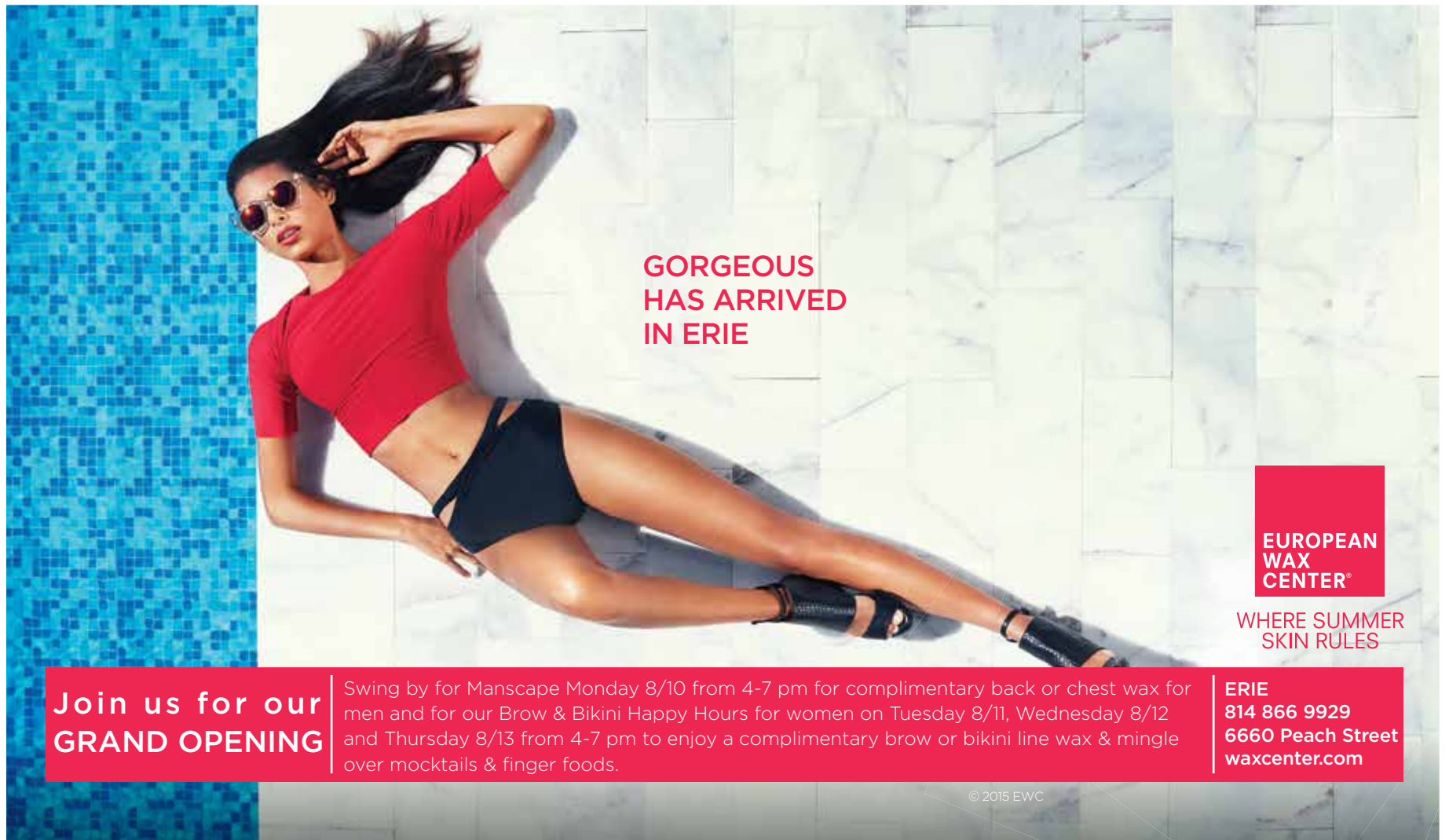
Wednesdays and Thursdays in July — 10:30 a.m.  
Lake Erie Arboretum, 1501 W. Sixth St.

**Arts in the Arboretum**

Thursdays in July — 7 p.m.  
Lake Erie Arboretum, 1501 W. Sixth St.,







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## CALENDAR

Under the Stars series, you can check it out for free on Thursday July 30. – Nicolas Miller

9 p.m. // 2951 W. 38th St. // 836.1955, edinboro.edu/porreco-college

### Thursday, July 30

#### Park Place Hosts Geek Army for a Rockin' Block Party

Sherlock's/Park Place has been host to many rockin' bands over the years, and the venue shows no sign of stopping when Geek Army steps on scene for a downtown block party July 30. With nerdy costumes and music that fills venues to capacity, Geek Army is an Erie favorite, and this outdoor, on the streets performance is a great chance to, well, join the Army.

So get to Park Place early, grab a couple of drinks, and hang out to hear Geek Army on what is going to be one of their biggest gigs of the summer. This block party installment benefits Therapy Dogs United, and that is a cause worth rockin' out to. – Lauren Griffith

6:30 p.m. // Park Place, 18 North Park Row // 453.7760

### Friday, July 31

#### WQLN Sounds Around Town Presents Tyler Smilo



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Tyler Smilo may not originally be from the Erie area, but he's certainly found himself a home in The Flagship City. The talented performer has endeared himself to the region with his heartfelt music, both solo and with bands like Potwhole and

Daybreak Radio, which is a big reason why WQLN will host Smilo during its Sounds Around Town Series Friday, July 31.

With a pair of excellent albums to his name – both of which earned four stars from this writer – Smilo has become a prominent songwriter in the region, so make sure to head to WQLN's pond-side pavilion and check out one of Erie's terrific talents for free. – Alex Bieler

7 p.m. // 8425 Peach St. // wqln.org

### Tuesday, Aug. 4

#### 8 Great Tuesdays Presents Los Straightjackets, Daybreak Radio

A bunch of wrestling-masked men – who just so happen to put out the salty-sweet sounds of some of the best surf-rock around – are coming to the shores of Lake Erie when Aug. 4's installment of 8 Great Tuesdays presents Los Straightjackets.

Boldly billing themselves as the "world's leading practitioners of the guitar instrumental," the five-piece band has been tearing up stages since 1988, and their 8 Great appearance



MAS PHOTO

should stay true to their form.

Erie's own Daybreak Radio will open the show, putting some straight-up rock 'n' roll into the mix, and making for one more good reason to head out to the Burger King Amphitheater at Liberty Park.

And, oh yeah – it's free, too.– Ryan Smith

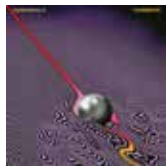
6:30 p.m. // Burger King Amphitheater at Liberty Park // porterie.org



**Tame Impala**  
*Currents*  
 Interscope

★★★★★

On *Currents*, it's not so much that Kevin Parker abandoned his guitars as much as he traded them in for more synths. The Australian musician behind Tame Impala finds himself in a sonic haze on his latest album, which is exactly where he wants to be. You won't find a thumper like "Elephant" on *Currents*, as Parker sticks to a sound that's much closer to "Feels Like We Only Go Backwards," except with a little bit of soul mixed in with the John Lennon-esque easy psychedelia. *Currents* starts with the groovy "Let it Happen," a highlight in an album full of catchy synthpop tunes. Not all of the experiments work, namely the spoken word portion of "Past Life," which ends up sticking out like a sore thumb amid the song's hazy soundscape. Still, Parker's shift to a more synth-driven sound on *Currents* makes for a fun ride overall. — Alex Bieler



**Jason Isbell**  
*Something More Than Free*  
 Southeastern

★★★★★

Jason Isbell knows that you don't need to be loud to grab someone's attention. You won't find the squalling guitars of songs like "Decoration Day" from his time with Drive-by Truckers on *Something More Than Free*, his latest album. Instead, Isbell uses the quiet spaces to his advantage, adding extra heft to his words on "Flagship," as his voice lightly echoes over a gently-strummed guitar. Like his 2013 release *Southeastern*, Isbell channels a quiet devastation, singing tales of plain folks trying to make life a little bit better. Isbell adds a special weight to his words, giving each song a sincerity that fits the lovely arrangements. When Isbell finally does add some electric grit, songs like "Palmetto Rose" and "24 Frames" provide an extra punch to help balance out the intimate moments. Whether he's channeling country-tinged ballads or heartland rock, *Something More Than Free* is a success. — Alex Bieler



**Chrome Moses**  
*Tamaraine*  
 Independent

★★★★★

If you're looking for some brawny rock 'n' roll in Western Pennsylvania, Chrome Moses might be the band for you. The Pittsburgh-based trio has won over fans with their muscular tunes, a trend that continues on new release *Tamaraine*. The four-song EP was recorded on two-inch tape, a smart choice for a band that embraces such an old-school rock sound. From the opening seconds of the first track "Horse Faced Lynn," Chrome Moses makes its presence known, delivering a sinister four-minute blast of guitar, bass, and drums. Second track "Can't You Hear Me Coming?" can't be ignored as the slide guitar commands your attention before boiling down into a bluesy rock jam that would please early White Stripes fans. The sweet "Butterfly" is a jarring change of pace amid the muscle, a solid song that's a victim of the EP's short format, but Chrome Moses returns to the brawn on the squalling "No Enemies" to close out a welcome dose of old-school rock. — Alex Bieler



**Wilco**  
*Star Wars*  
 dBPM Records

★★★★★

Surprise! Wilco's release of *Star Wars* Thursday, July 17 caught everyone off-guard. And don't take the option to download the album for free as a warning; this album delivers much more than a straight to Crackle release. Opening track "EKG" sets the tone with loud, garagey dissonance. From there, the album assumes a collage of sounds in an apparent effort to decode the opening chaos. Catchy hooks, psychedelic builds, and mellow tones all suspend the diverse vocal performance put on by Jeff Tweedy and company. Lyrically, the album does not disappoint. Moments of clarity intermingle with those moments of poetic ambiguity that we've grown to attribute to Wilco, culminating in the album's final moments where we "realize we're magnetized." Timing in at only 33 minutes, the sheer scope of the album keeps it from feeling short. *Star Wars* certainly has something to offer everybody, and old fans of Wilco will not be disappointed. — Nicolas Miller



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## Geeked Out

Gamers mourn the loss of Nintendo and gaming titan Satoru Iwata.



Nintendo CEO Satoru Iwata left a lasting impact on both his company and the game industry as a whole.

which allowed the company to design interesting mechanics with well-known franchises, like *Mario* and *Pokemon*. It was through this novelty that Nintendo saved its seat at the table when it comes to console manufacturers.

It is interesting to add that it was just a few months ago that Nintendo did make a partnership with a popular mobile gaming company to license IP like *Mario* and *Pokemon* for mobile phone games. Soon, there will be Mario games on your iPhone, and Iwata was part of that decision, much to the joy of many gamers.

It would be hard to think of a world where Mario wasn't *the most recognized video game mascot around the world*, because Iwata was key in ensuring Nintendo's strength.

With the news of his death, an out-pour across social media and websites shared the triumphs of Iwata and celebrated his legacy. Video gaming is still a young industry, and many of the iconic figures who have shaped the childhood of myriad gamers haven't yet been laid to rest, so it was comforting to see the industry and fans alike rally to celebrate Iwata's legacy.

John Lindvay can be contacted at [jlindvay@ErieReader.com](mailto:jlindvay@ErieReader.com), and you can follow him on Twitter @Fightstrife.

Sponsored by: Epic WebStudios

By: John Lindvay

Satoru Iwata died July 11. Iwata was the CEO of Nintendo, and was also responsible for many of the beloved franchises, including *Earthbound* and the *Kirby* games. With his passing, video game fans and the industry are paying their respects to a man key in guiding Nintendo from its rough patch during the GameCube years to the wild success of the Wii.

It's hard not to love and respect a man who at Game Developers Conference 2005 said, "On my business card, I am a corporate president. In my mind, I am a game developer. But in my heart, I am a gamer," during his keynote speech.

Nintendo has a special place in the hearts of many fans of video games around the world thanks to staple franchises like *Mario* and *Zelda*. Iwata started with the company back in 2000, but before that, he started at HAL Laboratory. He was instrumental in production of games like *Balloon Fight* for the Nintendo Entertainment System, *Earthbound* for Super Nintendo, and for helping bring *Kirby* into the Nintendo cast of characters.

*Earthbound* is a cult favorite when it comes to games that I grew up with. In-

was a role-playing game for the Super Nintendo that featured a kid named Ness and his friends who were tasked with defeating alien invaders (it was where the phrase "Say fuzzy pickles" was coined!). Aside from *Earthbound*, Iwata was also instrumental in Ninten-

It would be hard to think of a world where Mario wasn't *the most recognized video game mascot around the world*, because Iwata was key in ensuring Nintendo's strength.

do's development of *Super Smash Bros.*, which is a Nintendo fighting game featuring playable characters that range the entirety of Nintendo's cast.

The efforts of Iwata have help shaped the games industry to its current position. He was responsible for Nintendo changing its model of competing, after failing with the GameCube, against other industry leaders like Sony and Microsoft. Instead, he followed the Blue Ocean Strategy for business of creating an uncontested space in a market. In-

stead of going after technological leaps in hardware, like PlayStation and Xbox, Nintendo pivoted and leaned on unique controllers, motion, and familiar franchises to differentiate from its competitors.

Using the blue ocean strategy led Nintendo to what it is today, as Nintendo games exist on Nintendo hardware. The reason why it works is because Iwata pushed for novel devices like the Wiimote and touch screen on the DS,



## Who's Driving the Bus?

The conversation over representation on the EMTA board rolls on.



NIAGARA

By: Rebecca Styn

In the ongoing battle over the representation of the EMTA board, what has gotten lost in the shuffle is the service that the EMTA provides to the community. The main argument started by County Council is that the individuals that make up the board no longer best represent the community it serves, because many of them reside in the city – and the services the EMTA provides needs to expand beyond the city core.

I am not arguing for or against this notion, as there are valid points to be made (and in full disclosure I am a member of the Authority); what is missing, though, throughout all this discussion is that even with the current makeup, the EMTA not only serves those out-

lying areas; it continues to foster relationships with townships to continue to expand these services as well.

Currently, the organization operates a network of 32 fixed routes and downtown trolley shuttle routes. They also offer a complementary paratransit service, known as the LIFT – which the EMTA took over when the private operator went bankrupt. The basic adult fare for fixed routes is \$1.25, and those age 65 and older ride free.

I discussed these numbers and more with executive director Mike Tann and asked him to tell me in his own words what he believes the present and future of the EMTA should look like.

He noted that while 70 percent of the EMTA ridership comes from the city area and the other 30 percent comes from the urbanized area, this is a typical public transportation model. “This

is not going to change unless you systematically take away service from the city,” he said, “but then you’re no longer meeting that model – which we need to ensure.”

As for providing services in outlying areas?

“We currently run more than 60 trips a day up to Robison Road in Summit Township, and this doesn’t include the 22 trips daily to Presque Isle Downs. One of our routes extends as far out as Caughey Road and services The Porreco College 58 times a day; and 28 times a day another route goes to the Fortis Institute.”

Adding to that, EMTA buses “run to North East seven times a day, 21 times a day to Penn State Behrend, and 25 times a day out to Harborcreek.”

There are also hundreds of other daily trips into these areas via other routes, as well as daily service to Edinboro. “We also have a Welfare to Work transportation program running three shifts a day to Lake City,” Tann added.

But even with all this, the executive director notes that room for improvement of the EMTA exists.

“We currently do not serve the needs of individuals living in Corry – and they are the second largest city in Erie County,” he noted. “At one time, everyone lived in the city center and walked to school and work; I know this because I lived there. However, Corry has changed and much of the services have moved to outlying areas and therefore there is now a need for public mass transportation. The question then becomes how do we service it?”

What many neglect to realize is that at the end of the day, the EMTA still

needs to operate like a business.

“We are running a labor-intensive, 300 employee business, and we charge a fare that is nowhere near the cost to operate,” Tann says. “And if we go from Erie to Corry and don’t pick up anybody in between, that’s all miles – miles with no revenue.”

Additionally, 25 percent of the EMTA funding comes from the ridership. “We are going to be held accountable for the number of people that ride our buses. If the group puts services out there with no riders, they are then wasting taxpayer dollars – city, county and state.”

So while there is a need to service Corry, it needs to make business sense.

Facilitation of the needs in other counties not only falls on the EMTA, County, and City, but falls partially on the local municipality as well. “These conversations continue to happen between the organization and the representatives of the municipalities – and while we continually need to grow and adapt, the way to get there is a well-educated, well-trained, and well-connected board.”

No matter where they reside.

Lastly, and something to note in particular, a typical transportation model, such as ours, is designed to serve an urban population. And while Erie may not be on the same scale as New York, Chicago, or D.C., one of the intents of a mass transit system is to attract more citizens to live in the core of their city. So while we do need to continually increase services to outlying areas, shouldn’t we be simultaneously finding ways to drive citizens back to the city – thereby helping to drive population in – not out.

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## Los Angeles Angels Draft Gannon University Standout

Aaron Cox looks to make his major league debut with the help of mentor Mike Trout.



GANNON EDGE

**By: Frank Garland**

When it comes to choosing a baseball mentor, it's hard to imagine doing any better than reigning American League Most Valuable Player Mike Trout.

That's who former Gannon University standout Aaron Cox considers one of his most influential role models. And now that Cox is playing professionally in the same organization as Trout – considered by some to be the best player in the game today – he hopes to join him in a Los Angeles Angels uniform in the not too distant future.

The 6-foot-4, 205-pound Cox has a ways to go before he reaches the big leagues, but he started his climb last month after the Angels selected him in the 19th round of the Major League Baseball first-year player draft.

The Dorchester, N.J., native, who signed shortly after the draft and was assigned to the Orem (Utah) Owlz of the short-season Class A Pioneer League,

met Trout while he was a middle school student and Trout was a freshman at Millville High School. The two became closer as the years went by, as Trout began dating Cox's older sister, Jessica.

Cox hopes to rise through the minor league ranks just like Trout, whom the Angels selected in the first round of the 2009 draft and became a fixture in their outfield by the middle of the 2011 season.

"Obviously I'm very happy I went to the Angels – they've been my favorite team for a few years," he said. "If I had to pick anyone, it would have been the Angels. It's definitely cool being on the same team as (Trout). Hopefully I'll make it to his level one day."

Cox said he's lucky to have such a close friend who's traveled the same road – albeit at a much faster speed – a few years ahead of him. He knows he's fortunate to be able to lean on Trout if he encounters any problems on his way up the minor league ladder.

"It's nice having him go through these

things because I can ask him questions," he said. "He made every stop, but he went through very quickly."

Having Trout as a mentor was a bonus for Cox, said Roy Hallenbeck, who coached both players at Millville High School. The two players overlapped one year at Millville – Cox was a freshman during Trout's final season there – and they did not spend a lot of time together on the field that year. But as Cox's high school career unfolded, and Trout was making his way through the Angels system, the two would see each other during the offseasons because of Trout's relationship with Cox's sister.

"I'm sure they talked a lot about what Mike was going through," Hallenbeck said. "It's hard to think some of that stuff did not rub off on (Cox)."

Cox's mother, Pam, said Trout has offered "big encouragement to Aaron every step of the way. It's been a big influence on Aaron from the respect that he sees Mike's determination and his drive has helped get him to where he is today.

**Just like his mentor Mike Trout was drafted in 2009, the Angeles drafted Aaron Cox, who's now fighting for a roster spot.**

And I think that Aaron knew that if he did the same, he could succeed and do what he wants to do in his life.

"He looks up to (Trout) so much. Any questions he has, Mike has always been willing to answer. He's been such a big help along the way. I can't say enough about the kid on and off the field."

Pam Cox said that she and her husband, Joe, could see that their older son – younger son Kyle played at Gannon this past season and is slated to return as a sophomore next year – had the potential to play professional baseball but it became a realistic goal this season at Gannon. When it came time for the draft, they discussed the possibility of Aaron forgoing his final season at Gannon and signing a professional contract.

"This has been his lifelong dream," Pam Cox said of her son, a criminal justice major at Gannon who turns 21 in



early August. "He can always go back to school for another year at any point in his life."

Pam Cox said scouts had indicated Aaron might be selected around the 15th round, but when that didn't happen, "my heart sunk because I didn't know how (Aaron) felt." But then came the 19th round "and he went to the Angels, of all places," Pam Cox said. "It just completed the whole package."

Trout even called to congratulate Cox after the Angels chose him.

Although Cox played several positions at Gannon, he was drafted as a right-handed pitcher and that's how the Angels plan to use him going forward. He's already appeared in three games in relief for the Owlz and figures to work out of the bullpen for the rest of the season.

Neither Cox nor his coach at Gannon, Nate Cocolin, was surprised to hear his name called at the MLB draft. "There were scouts at every one of our games he was pitching," Cocolin said of Cox, who was the fourth Gannon player selected in the MLB amateur draft and the

first since 1982. "It was not a question of whether he would be drafted, but what round he'd get drafted."

Cocolin said getting selected in the 19th round, it made sense for Cox to sign – even though it would mean losing Gannon's best player.

"You get that opportunity, you have to take it," he said. "It's something he definitely should have done. I was excited for him to get that opportunity. That's everyone's dream who ever played baseball – to play professionally."

Cocolin said he talked to dozens of scouts this season alone and they asked him questions about Cox's character, his work ethic and his velocity on the mound. "They were not going to take my word on his baseball ability – it was more of they saw what they saw," he said. "But what they would take my word on was the off-field stuff – things like how hard he works."

What scouts saw on the field was plenty impressive. Cocolin said Cox displayed a fiercely competitive nature, plus his fastball registered between 91 and 93 mph the whole season. He also

showed a quality slider – all of which helped him compile a 5-5 record with a 3.74 earned run average and 81 strikeouts in 65 innings. He set a Gannon single-season mark for strikeouts with 89 as a sophomore.

"And another thing they liked was that he would throw his off-speed pitch in any count for a strike," Cocolin said. "With professional hitters, you can't get behind (in the count) and throw a fastball over the plate, or they'll kill it."

Cox has already gotten a taste of what professional hitters can do, having appeared in eight games through July 11, surrendering nine hits in 11 2/3 innings while striking out seven and walking five. He pitched three hitless innings in his last two appearances combined, lowering his earned-run average to 3.86.

Cox said he knows the professional game will be much different from the one he played at Gannon. "It's a job," he said. "This year it's a 75-game schedule but as you go up, it's well into the hundreds. It's a marathon. It's important to stay healthy and work hard. To set goals and get to the next level. And once you

get there, to get to the next level. I'm going to learn things along the way and hopefully get to where I want to be."

John Slusarz, the Orem Owlz pitching coach, said his first impressions of Cox have been positive ones. "He's a really good kid with a really good work ethic," he said. "And he definitely has a live arm – he hit 95 (mph) and was averaging 92 or 93. His ball has some sink."

"The big thing for him and almost every other guy coming into professional baseball is commanding that fastball. Guys think they have command, but what they really have is control. They can throw strikes. But command, to me, is to put it where you want to. And make adjustments. That's what (Class) A ball is for everyone over the next two years."

Command, Slusarz said, is what will separate the true prospects from the rest. "They all have good arms – they're all big guys who look the part," he said. "But who's going to be able to throw the fastball where they want to over the next two years? If (Cox) can put it where he wants to at 93-95, he's going to get a lot of guys out."

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## ER Sports

The Good, The Bad, The Ugly – weighing in on more than 40 years of interviews.



Jim LeCorchick of the *Erie Reader* poses with former world boxing champion Carmen Basilio, circa 1980

**DIGGER PHELPS** – Interviewed him while cruising Lake Erie on a boat, and the ND basketball coach was fun. I had no problem getting him to talk about himself.

**BOB DIBIASIO** – Whatever the Cleveland Indians are paying their Vice-President it isn't enough. His passion for the Indians is amazing, and in the 35 years I have been dealing with him, he has never turned a chance to talk to baseball fans in Erie.

**STEVE BLASS / LANNY FRATTARE** – I can say the same thing about this duo that I said about DiBiasio, except they are talking, "Bucco Baseball."

I was always welcome in the booth with them when I went to Pirate games. Blass is hysterical.

**MIKE BREY** – I called the current Notre Dame coach a week after he accepted his position with the Fighting Irish, and he gladly came on my radio show. He was excellent.

**FLOYD PATTERSON** – The former heavyweight champion was in Erie for an exhibition and was staying at the Downtown Holiday Inn. I called and asked if we could talk and he told me to meet him in the dining room. He was almost a bit on the shy side, but we chatted for nearly two hours and he was a great. There's no doubt he is a true gentleman.

**JOHNNY LATTNER** – I was doing a show from Art Arkelian's Sports Banquet and the Heisman Trophy winner from Notre Dame agreed to come on for an interview. You never know what you're going to get in this situation, but what I got was one of the classiest people I ever interviewed. He thanked me 10 times for having him on the radio.

**DWIGHT WHITE** – He showed up unannounced one night at my studio and threw quite a scare into me. This Steelers great filled the doorway to the studio as he announced, "I'm Dwight White from the Pittsburgh Steelers, and I heard what you said about the team." I was on the verge of passing out when I saw my good friend Fred Rush laughing hysterically behind

him. White was one of my favorite interviews ever.

**BERNIE CARBO** – There was a time when I thought the former Major League Baseball player would be on my all-time ugly team, but he won me over. He, also, was in Erie for the Sports Banquet and made a total fool of himself, but he took the opportunity to apologize to the local sports' fans during a phone interview I had with him. He called in from the Pirates' clubhouse and was definitely sincere.

**"CLASSIE" FREDDIE BLASSIE** – The man who coined the term "Pencil Neck Geek" was one of my favorites, the pro wrestler was pure entertainment whenever he called in. And he called in at least a dozen times.

#### THE BAD

*[Editor's Note: Let the record show these aren't necessarily "bad" people; they just were bad interviews. Of course some of them did almost make the Ugly list – again, reserved for total jerks.]*

**BOB FELLER** – Wow! Being an Indians fan, it's hard to put this Hall of Famer first, but what an attitude he had.

He called in earlier than agreed to and then demanded to be put on the air immediately. I told him, "Thanks, but no thanks. I am going to just let you go." He finally calmed down and went on with the interview as scheduled.

It's really hard to put into words how impressed he was with his importance.

**JAY BILAS** – He's very good as a college basketball analysis, but as a phone interview in Erie, the ex-Duke player he was a total dud. He was paid very well to be a speaker for Mercyhurst University but didn't seem to be too happy that he had to take some time to help promote the event. He kind of personified the image of an "Arrogant Dukie."

**DAVID WOLF** – It's a long story how the former editor of *Life Magazine* ended up in my studio, but I was thrilled when I found out who he was. He wrote one the best sports books of all time, *Foul*, a story of Connie Hawkins. He was a great writer, but when I put him on the air I found out he was a horrible talker.

**JACK LAMBERT** – I heard from this Steelers Hall of Famer's teammates that he was a "bad" drunk. I spoke at

a banquet he was also speaking at, and let me say: That was the best scouting report I ever heard.

What a Neanderthal.

**REX CALDWELL** – This one-time PGA tourney winner – he acted as if he was a 20-time winner on the tour – was one of the most obnoxious athletes I have ever been around. I was forced to ride in the same car with him when the Greater Erie Charity Golf Classic was held at Lake Shore Country Club. It seemed as if the trip from Lake Shore to downtown Erie would never end.

**FRANCO HARRIS** – As a favor, I picked Harris up at the Erie Airport and gave him a ride to Union City (that is correct) for a football camp being put on by his good friend and former Penn State teammate Charles Pittman. He was disgusted from the beginning and wasn't afraid to show it. I told Charles to get someone else to drive him back.

#### THE UGLY

*[Editor's note: Both of these meetings took place in the visitors' locker room at old Municipal Stadium in Cleveland.]*

**RICK BURLESON** – They called this Red Sox shortstop "The Rooster" and I hated this rooster from the time I met him. I'm embarrassed (not really) to admit how happy I was when he suffered a career-ending injury. What a jerk!

**PETE VUCKOVICH** – By far, this Cy Young Award winner is heads and shoulders above all, the most arrogant athlete I ever ran into – and I didn't even want to talk to him.

I was working at a radio station when I told my friend Butch Nemenz, the station manager, that I was going to the Blue Jays-Indians game the following day, and he badgered me into looking up his buddy "Vukie."

I never liked going into locker rooms, but I let him talk me into looking up his former teammate at Clarion University. I introduced myself to him, and it was all downhill from there. Let me just say more than half the words are deemed unprintable in a newspaper. And this is before he ever did anything. I can honestly say, "He makes me sick and flat out nauseous." The best description is total moron!

*James R. LeCorchick can be contacted at [JRLSportsReport@gmail.com](mailto:JRLSportsReport@gmail.com), and you can follow him on Twitter @JRLSports.*

By: James R. LeCorchick

I was talking to some friends the other night and they started questioning who I have met and/or interviewed in my more than 40 years of covering sports, and it got me to thinking – actually thinking it would be a good subject for an *Erie Reader* article; I hope you agree with me.

I thought I would name the column The Good, The Bad (some not too bad), and The Ugly. Let me explain: you have to have been a real jerk to make The Ugly category.

#### THE GOOD

**CARMEN BASILIO** – A winner of world championships in two different weight divisions, Basilio was one of my all-time favorites – by far.

He was in Erie representing Genesee Beer, and I jumped at the chance to have him in the studio when offered. He stayed for two hours and was incredibly entertaining.

**JERRY FAUST** – Two days after he was named the head football coach at the University of Notre Dame, I called him and he agreed to come on the show. There was a mix-up the evening he was supposed to call in, but he called the show the very next day on his own. As a matter of fact, he called from a pay phone from a country club in Michigan, where he was being honored by an ND group, and stayed on the air for 15 minutes with me. I have never forgotten that.



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