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ERIE READER

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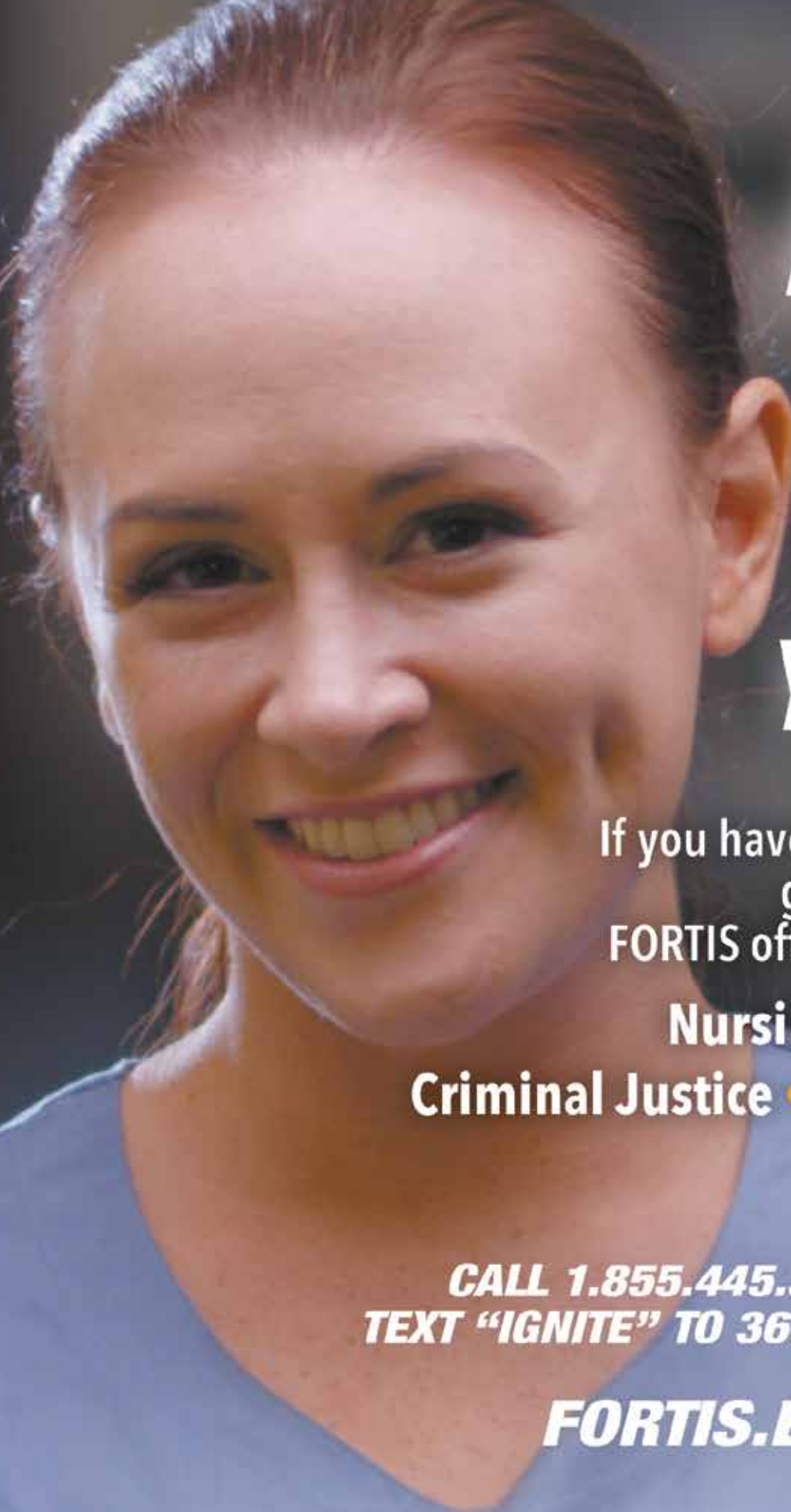
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The Erie Reader is the local voice for news, arts, and culture, and is Erie's only independent, alternative newspaper. Founded in 2010, the Reader has quickly become the region's award-winning source for arts coverage, a strong cultural compass, and a dynamic resource for news and opinion. With a dedication to long-form journalism and a commitment to provoking thoughtful discussion, the Reader tells the stories of the people and places making and shaping Erie, while highlighting the events and issues influencing life in northwestern Pennsylvania. The Erie Reader is published every other week and distributed at over 250 high foot-traffic locations in Pennsylvania from North East to Girard to Edinboro. In addition to appearing in print, Erie Reader adds new content daily at ErieReader.com as well social media sites. All rights reserved. All content © Flagship Multimedia, Inc, 1001 State St., Suite 901, Erie, Pa, 16501. No part of this publication may be reproduced without permission. The opinions of our columnists and contributors are their own and do not always reflect that of the editorial board or organization. Direct inquiries to 814.314.9364 or contact@ErieReader.com.

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53-12 record after the first
two weeks of grid picks,
but he did miss an eye-
popping 107-90 bout.**From the Editors**

For a country that celebrates our love of independence, we have an unusual way of showing it.

From Daniel Ellsberg to Edward Snowden, we often vilify individuals with the singular courage to risk everything when a truth is too important to silence. We invite corporations and billionaires — like Rupert Murdoch and his ilk — to own our entertainment, news, and elections. Essentially, the truth is for sale.

It would be nice if all of the biased information we receive came with the same "Sponsored Content" label that pops up on Google searches. Instead, it's up to us to maintain a healthy skepticism and independence of mind, especially when weighing the evidence regarding a subject as contentious as fracking.

This is the fourth time the *Reader* has featured an exploration of fracking on our cover. For this issue, we collaborated with *Public Herald*, a fully independent team of investigative journalists who "believe in the vital role the Free Press plays in a democracy and society to protect truth, transparency and accountability." *Public Herald*, "in the largest release of fracking records in Pennsylvania history," reveals that the Pa. Department of Environmental Protection has "cooked" data about water contamination from fracking.

If it weren't for independent journalism,

how likely would we be to learn this? Who would hold our regulators accountable? Whose truth would we be forced to swallow, contamination and all?

Recently, 21st Century Fox, now helmed by Murdoch's son James, acquired *National Geographic*. The Murdoch empire already controls an enormous share of the media, including *FOX News*. Intriguingly, Murdoch (along with Dick Cheney) also holds a major stake in Genie Oil and Gas, Inc., under which American Shale Oil falls: a company already at fault for leaky extraction wells in Colorado. Imagine what this could mean for *NatGeo's* scientific coverage.

Here in Erie County, we've largely dodged the fracking bullet. But as Jim Wertz points out in "Erie at Large," "As corporate attention shifts from the Marcellus Shale to the Utica Shale, and as fracking practices for the Utica Shale are refined, there will be greater interest toward drilling in our watersheds."

Moving forward, it will be critical to give our independent news sources the attention and support they need to carry out the crucial mission of journalistic integrity.

We hold this truth to be self-evident.

Just a Thought.

"You have some pretty big shoes to fill."

By: **Katie Chriest**

I heard that one a few times when people found out I was taking over the role of Managing Editor at the *Reader*.

So what does this idiom imply? 1) The person who used to do your job did it really well. (Absolutely true, in this case.) 2) You're probably not capable of doing it as well. (Possibly true.) 3) Congratulations, but please try to be just like that other person. (Impossible.)

Outwardly, I might manage a response like, "Actually, I have my own shoes." But on the inside? The DJ cues up the "You're Gonna Blow It" blues, cranks it to full volume, and hits "repeat."

This is debilitating stuff. Because obviously, we can't be anything other than what we are. Still, many of us spend our lives trying. And the more energy we drain this way, the less we're devoting to actually cultivating what we have to offer.

We tend to do this to our fair city, too.

We talk a lot about how much better Erie would be if we just did this like Buffalo, or that like Pittsburgh. In other words, how great Erie would be if only Erie wasn't Erie.

Truly, we all have growing to do, and some urgent issues to resolve. And comparison can be healthy, both personally and in communities. If — and that's a big if — it's used as a tool to inspire positive emulation and change, instead of paralyzing self-loathing and resentment.

Still, whether self or city, dwelling too much on what we lack hijacks our ability to progress. We'll always fail at trying to be something we're not. The real danger is that we might also fail at being what we are.

While we're tackling many of the major issues Erie faces, let's also hold space for what makes this particular community — with all of its wonders and WTFs — worth calling home.

Forget filling shoes. Let's go barefoot.

Considering the City

Diminish Blight by Repopulating Erie

By: Civitas Members Lisa Austin and Stephen Sonnenberg

As most readers know, the planning firm CZB is working on a comprehensive plan for the city of Erie. One of the biggest concerns CZB has outlined is the issue of blighted properties and diminishing real estate values.

Though Erie was built to accommodate 140,000 people, today, fewer than 100,000 live in the city. But, thousands of people work in Erie. Every weekday morning, Erie's highways and arterial streets are clogged with suburbanites rushing to jobs in the city. This is partly due to the fact that the city of Erie has no residency requirement; many of the city's police, fire-fighters, school teachers, and office workers live in Millcreek, Summit, Harborcreek, and beyond. Concerns about safety, schools, and taxes drove many people out of the city. Sadly, it is a worsening spiral: as more residents leave, taxes go up, crime increases, schools suffer, and more residents leave.

To reverse this exodus, we could reconsider the residency requirement for city workers. But, rather than a mandate, perhaps we can find ways to attract new homeowners.

Employer-assisted housing programs

Employer-assisted housing programs provide loans, or gifts, to employees who choose to live in neighborhoods next to their place of work.

The University of Chicago offers employees a forgivable loan of up to \$10,000 for home purchase in selected neighborhoods through their Employer-Assisted Housing Program (EAHP). The University of Chicago says that the EAHP "strengthens its connections to surrounding neighborhoods, retains valuable employees, and helps staff optimize their work-life balance." This program creates "a more stable workforce" with "improved morale, less turnover" that results in financial savings for the university. Employees also gain "extra time — formerly spent in traffic."

According to The Greater Minnesota Housing Fund handbook on employer-assisted housing programs, employ-



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ers find that these programs stabilize neighborhoods surrounding their firm's property, reduce absenteeism, "tardiness, and stress as commuting times decrease," and increase productivity in the workplace.

Imagine if a percentage of the thousands who commute to Erie could be lured to downtown living. If employers including Gannon University, UMPC Hamot, Erie Insurance, the YMCA, the Soldiers' and Sailors' Home, and the Dr. Gertrude A. Barber National Institute would create employer-assisted housing programs, Erie could be transformed.

City-assisted homesteading

Erie could create a local group inspired by NYC's Urban Homesteading Assistance Board (UHAB) to empower residents to use "their sweat equity" to rehab a vacant, blighted or tax-foreclosed property. To gain control of these buildings, the city could increase code-enforcement fines on non-owner-occupied blighted properties; and then make them available — for low or no cost — to those with the interest, and commitment, to renovate — and

live in — these buildings.

The strength of NYC's UHAB is based on principles including self-help and cost-effective sustainability. Erie community leaders could serve on a board to form and oversee a new urban homesteading project in our downtown.

Church leaders could nominate homesteading candidates, and parishioners could collectively assist in renovating blighted homes. Ethnically-focused private clubs could also locate and support new homeowners.

We should embrace the energy and drive of our refugee and immigrant communities. The Multicultural Community Resource Center, International Institute, and the Urban Erie Community Development Corporation could collectively work to help these New Americans to embrace Erie homeownership, updating Erie's long tradition of ethnic neighborhoods.

Labor unions, craftspeople, and artists could be involved in citywide preservation of historic properties. During the summers, students could apprentice with artisans working in their neighborhoods and learn skills in wood, masonry, tile, paint, plasterwork, electrical work, plumbing, and construction.

Left: one of many vacant and disintegrating downtown Erie homes. Right: a home currently on the market, just waiting for the right investor/resident.

While the news from CZB is grim (too much housing and too few residents), a recent study by Wise Preservation Firm noted that Erie — especially the city — is very rich in diverse and significant residential properties.

Before we agree to spend money on demolition, let's try working creatively (and aggressively) to attract new homeowners. In his 1998 book, *The Wealth of Cities*, John Norquist, former Mayor of Milwaukee, wrote that today, "people are seeking a sense of belonging, of community," and that "part of what they are looking for can be found in real neighborhoods, in real cities." Norquist noted, "the design of the old cities has been where the market has been going for the last 20 years."

Pittsburgh native Erin Wincek is a great example of "where the market is going." Wincek recently moved from a suburb in Erie County to a home in the West Bayfront. She says after hearing so much negative feedback about "crime, bad schools, a declining popula-

Desperate Times Call for Creative Measures

Addressing Erie's housing crisis strategically through smart development tax incentives

By: Ben Speggen

tion and high property taxes" in the city that she "struggled" with her decision; but Wincek "wanted to invest in the city," and she did.

Wincek doesn't expect to "make a ton of money" reselling her home. She is making "a different kind of investment" by raising her children in a diverse place "with sidewalks." Wincek says, "my children walk home safely from school" and "my dog is showered with love from the neighborhood kids." She is able to "walk, bike or take a bus to work." Wincek is happy that she has "found a neighborhood of all types of people with all types of stories ... kids out playing

Imagine if a percentage of the thousands who commute to Erie could be lured to downtown living. If employers including Gannon University, UMPC Hamot, Erie Insurance, the YMCA, the Soldiers' and Sailors' Home, and the Dr. Gertrude A. Barber National Institute would create employer-assisted housing programs, Erie could be transformed.

all the time, neighbors who know each other, and beautiful old homes."

Like many others living downtown, Wincek is investing in the city so that she can be "a part of the change."

Erie is a "real city" filled with "real neighborhoods" brimming with human potential — and with space for more.

Let's not tear Erie down. Let's build it up.

Civitas members can be reached at their website www.civitaserie.com, via Facebook at [CivitasErie](https://www.facebook.com/CivitasErie), by emailing Lisa@civitaserie.com, or by scheduling a Friday morning meeting at the Civitas office in the Masonic Building, 32 W. Eighth St., Erie, Pa.

When it comes to affordable housing development, Erie should take note of Jersey City.

Tanvi Misra, in the recent *CityLab* article "Jersey City's Innovative New Affordable Housing Plan Might Actually Work," details how the city plans to unfurl mixed-income development throughout its neighborhoods with a four-tier incentive-based expansion of Mayor Steven Fulop's 2013 Payment In Lieu Of Taxes (PILOT) policy.

In short, Fulop's administration restructured tax abatement based on geography and income levels to more evenly distribute the opportunity for — and enticements of — development in areas not coveted by developers. Previously, contractors in Jersey City "created a culture of artificial competition with parts of the city" without "foresight for future development in those parts of the city where it is needed most," read the press release from Fulop's office issued two years ago.

That is, the lack of smart, forward-thinking policy concentrated market-rate development to attractive, already-developed areas that continued to boom, vastly tipping the scales even more pronouncedly in favor of the already-haves.

What's refreshing is the sense of urgency and self-awareness in that release: "Real estate development is crucial to building a city; however, unfettered development does not guarantee the City of Jersey City will succeed in realizing its full potential."

What's more is its prudence: "To excel, the City must adopt a thoughtful, reasoned, comprehensive development strategy, then properly and efficiently manage the resulting development."

Fast-forward two years. The plan is garnering national attention.

"What makes the Jersey City plan innovative ... is that it varies the level of the tax incentives for development based on the market characteristics of the neighborhood," Alan Berube, senior fellow and deputy director of

the Brookings Institution's Metropolitan Policy Program told *CityLab*. "Too often cities fail to use these incentives strategically, or they spread them around like peanut butter."

Without breaking down the financial nuances to a decimal point, the four-tier plan provides incentives based on the needs and degrees specific to a particular zone. Simply put, the greater the need, and the more investment addresses present challenges, the greater the tax break, which in turn encourages more equitable growth opportunities throughout the city.

Despite boasting more than twice

The greater the need, and the more investment addresses present challenges, the greater the tax break, which in turn encourages more equitable growth opportunities throughout the city.

the residents of Erie in its urban core, Jersey City is an apt comparison, which also saw its population, job market, and investment shrink in the 1960s and '70s. And like many U.S. cities, both Jersey City and Erie witnessed the redistribution of population in the wake of those challenges. Jersey City saw residents flock to walkable, downtown waterfront neighborhoods, whereas Erie suffered sprawl as residents migrated to suburbs — and development followed.

Currently in Erie, PILOT programs benefit nonprofits, which voluntarily participate in the program. But in the 1970s, Erie implemented LERTA: Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance. Initially, LERTA only applied to low- and moderate-income neighborhoods in hopes of reinvigorating mixed-use development in the city. Three decades later, Erie City

Council, with encouragement from then-Mayor Rick Filippi, broadened the LERTA parameters to re-ignite further development.

As tax abatement, LERTA, which operates under a sunset ordinance and was last updated in 2012, currently offers 50 percent tax reduction for development over a 10-year period. LERTA will be up for review in 2022.

But it operates more like Berube's peanut butter than Fulop's progressive tiered approach. And with the City of Erie's first-ever Comprehensive Plan underway, we cannot afford to wait seven years to tweak or (hopefully) overhaul incentives for developers, as we face our housing crisis now.

First, Charles Buki and his CZB team (who've been hired by the city for the Comprehensive Plan) have inventoried the city and created a zoned grid. We now know where we need to focus efforts based on current housing and development.

Second, LERTA — or a new initiative — should prioritize the zones most in need by establishing clear criteria to drive incentive-based development.

Third, we need to build for all, not for some.

Need proof? Just look at the Jersey City and Steven Fulop model.

Mixed-use market-rate development in underdeveloped areas boosts tax revenue — even with abatement — because *new* development is better than *no* development, as it strengthens the tax base. Sometimes it takes a carrot, not a stick — or worse, nothing — to affect change.

Why not encourage more development with smart, strategic planning in Erie? After all, it attracts diverse residents who'll reshape, redefine, and repopulate those neighborhoods. \$170,000 townhouses and condos overlooking an urban scrap yard with the artificial aroma of beef-ncheddars wafting about don't.

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

Erie at Large

Cruel Truths and Comfortable Delusions

By: Jim Wertz

The public conversation about fracking in Erie County is a quiet one. That's right. There is a public conversation about fracking. It's just that it's usually limited to people who read first editions of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, and folks who believe in the immediate negative impact of the practice on their livelihood, like the vintners and fruit farmers in North East Township who opposed the fracking plans of Lake Erie Energy Partners in 2011.

There are several reasons for

It's against the law for oil and gas companies to frack under our Great Lakes, but there's no prohibition on the practice near the streams, creeks, and rivers that feed them.

the community's complacency. First, most of Erie County sits on the Utica Shale formation rather than the highly coveted Marcellus Shale that underlies much of western and central Pennsylvania. Second, there are a few – very few – regulations that make hydraulic fracturing more complicated near the Great Lakes. And third, when we see Lake Erie from the bayfront, bluffs, or Presque Isle, we take for granted that Erie's supply of fresh water is indissoluble and infinite. It is not.

It's against the law for oil and gas companies to frack under our Great Lakes, but there's no prohibition on the practice near the streams, creeks, and rivers that feed them. And here's the problem: If the head-

waters that drain into Lake Erie are contaminated by the toxic chemicals used in the fracking process, our access to public drinking water, irrigation systems, and the ecosystems tied to freshwater fishing and tourism, is gone.

It's also against the law for oil and gas companies to extract water from the Great Lakes for use in fracking operations. So as a loophole, companies in northern Michigan have drilled more than 500 fracking wells and withdrawn more than 15 billion liters of water from watersheds in Kalkaska County, which has been called "the center of fracking in the Great Lakes basin" by the Council of Canadians, a non-governmental watchdog organization with chapters across Canada. Runoff, spills, and contaminated water in this region returns to the Great Lakes.

There are nine watersheds in Erie County: four that drain into Lake Erie and five that drain into the Allegheny River. Watersheds are areas of land from which all water drains into a common source. Of the four watersheds that feed Lake Erie, two – the Lake Erie Watershed and the Elk Creek Watershed – drain directly into the lake. The Conneaut Creek Watershed and the Ashtabula River Watershed drain into Lake Erie by way of the lakefront watersheds mentioned above. The five watersheds that drain into the Allegheny River are the source of public water throughout western Pennsylvania as well as parts of Ohio.

Currently, water from Lake Erie serves the Erie Water Works – which includes Lawrence Park, Wesleyville, and parts of Harborcreek Township, Millcreek, and McKean Borough – as well as the water

authorities of Millcreek, Fairview, and Summit townships.

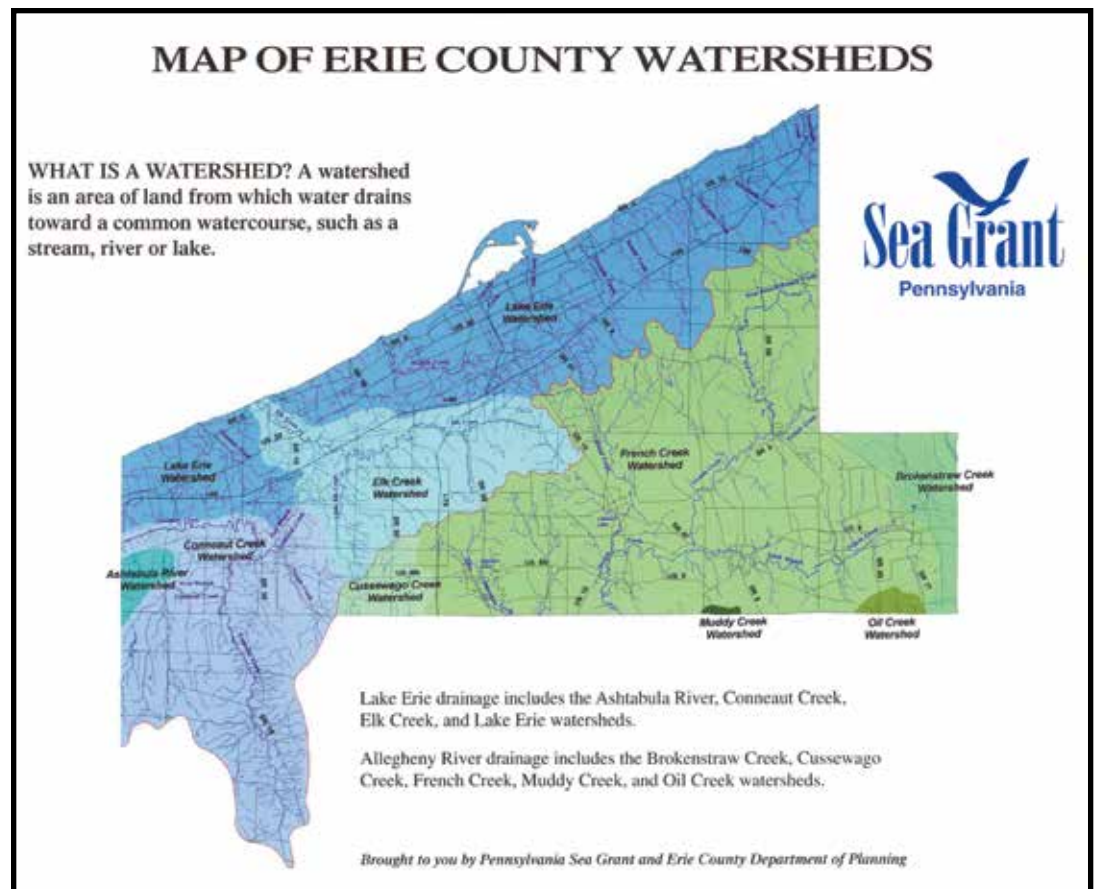
Environment America reports that between Dec. 2007 and Aug. 2014, the Pa. Department of Environmental Protection determined there were 243 confirmed cases of contaminated drinking water across the Commonwealth. When you read the summary of the *Public Herald* investigation of Pa. DEP in the pages

Lake Erie Watershed. Tom Fuhrman, who chaired the Environment Committee, wrote in a guest op-ed for the *Erie Reader* that "County Executive Kathy Dahlkemper immediately embraced the idea and had the courage and vision to say so publicly."

Eighteen municipalities across Pennsylvania have passed local ordinances to limit or regulate fracking ac-

The realities are stark and the choices are clear. As corporate attention shifts from the Marcellus Shale to the Utica Shale, and as fracking practices for the Utica Shale are refined, there will be greater interest toward drilling in our watersheds.

We can address the cruel truth of fracking and proactively regulate the activities that impact our natural re-



that follow, you'll quickly realize that cases of water contamination confirmed by the DEP are grossly underrepresented.

It's data like this and concerns about the potability of local water sources that led local environmentalists on the Destination Erie Environment Committee to recommend that a prohibition on fracking be instituted in Erie County's

activities in their domain. Erie County should do the same.

The environmentalist and essayist Edward Abbey advised, "better a cruel truth than a comfortable delusion." If we take away anything from the *Public Herald* investigation, it's that comfortable delusions have become the standard operating procedure for regulators across Pennsylvania.

sources. Or, we can wait for an energy corporation from Texas or Oklahoma to bring us potable water when we can no longer supply our own.

Jim Wertz drinks public water and would like to keep it that way. He can be reached at jWertz@ErieReader.com, and you can follow him on Twitter @jim_wertz.

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News of the Weird

Drones, Dentistry, and Rattlesnake Selfies

By Chuck Shepherd

A Paper Drone

The Federal Aviation Administration recently granted (likely for the first time ever) an application to fly a paper airplane. Prominent drone advocate Peter Sachs had applied to conduct commercial aerial photography with his "aircraft" (a Tailor Toys model with a tiny propeller and maximum range of 180 feet), and the agency, concerned with air traffic safety, accommodated by treating the request (unironically?) under the rules for manned flights (that, among other restrictions, Sachs must not exceed 100 mph and must engage a licensed airplane pilot to fly it). "With this grant," said the "victorious" Sachs, "the FAA has abandoned all logic and sensibility." [Forbes.com, 8-27-2015; Popular Science, 8-31-2015]

Questionable Judgments

Because temperatures were in the high 90s the last weekend in August, tourists visiting the historical Auschwitz concentration camp in Poland were greeted by the outdoor sprinkler system dousing them near the gates. It was intended as relief, said operators, to keep guests from fainting, but, as one Israeli vis-

itor said, "It was a punch to the gut" -- too reminiscent of Auschwitz's gas chamber. (Jewish prisoners had been marched calmly to their deaths under the pretense that they were only being taken for showers.) [Ynet News (Tel Aviv), 8-31-2015]

DIY dentistry seemed off-limits -- until amateur orthodontia got a boost from a 2012 YouTube video in which Shalom DeSota, now 17, praised rubber bands for teeth-straightening. DeSota's family lacked dental insurance at the time, so she would-be actress experimented by looping rubber bands around two front teeth she wanted to draw together. Many painful days later, she succeeded. The American Association of Orthodontists expressed alarm in August at the video's recent popularity. So much could go wrong -- infection, gum-tearing, detachment between tooth and gums -- that DeSota, the organization said, had simply been lucky. [Today.com, 8-17-2015]

New World Order

Digital World: (1) The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction announced in July that it would be experimenting with online physed courses for high schoolers. Students would watch videos on certain activities, then en-

gage in them, and later self-report their (as the agency calls it) "mastery." (2) British police warned in August of a brand-new sex crime based on the iPhone app AirDrop. The app sends text or photos instantly to nearby AirDrop users (who choose to receive from "contacts" or from "everyone"). Thus, perverts can "flash" strangers by posting nude pictures of themselves to reach AirDrop users set carelessly (or purposely!) to "everyone." [Charlotte Observer, 7-21-2015] [BBC News, 8-13-2015]

Seems Like the Season of Email Muddles

All Sherri Smith wanted was copies of background emails about her son (who has a disability) in the files of the Goodrich, Michigan, school system, but the superintendent informed her in June that the Freedom of Information request would cost her \$77,780 (4,500 hours of searching -- taking two years to complete). (Michigan's FOI law was somewhat liberalized on July 1, and Smith said she may refile.) (2) After a McKinney, Texas, police officer was filmed pointing his gun at unarmed black teenagers at a pool party in June, the online Gawker Media filed a Public Information Act request for the officer's records and any emails about his conduct. The city estimated that request's cost at \$79,229 (hiring a programmer, for 2,231 hours' searching -- plus "computer time"). Gawker said it would

appeal. [WNEM-TV (Saginaw, Mich.), 7-1-2015] [Gawker.com, 6-29-2015]

Government Inaction

The streets of Jackson, Mississippi, apparently have potholes that rival the worst in the country, but without adequate budget to fix them, according to Mayor Tony Yarber. His remedy, offered earnestly to constituents in August: prayer. "I believe we can pray potholes away." (Yarber, elected in 2014, was pastor of the Relevant Empowerment Church.) [Times-Picayune, 8-21-2015]

Names in the News

Charged with choking and punching his fiancée: Mr. Daniel Gentleman, 28 (Prescott, Arizona, May). Charged with killing her husband and burying his body in a manure pile on their farm: Ms. Charlene Mess, 48 (Attica, New York, April). Charged with sexual assault: Mr. Huckleberry Finn (Keene, New Hampshire, July). And prominent in the news (confusingly so) when the Food and Drug Administration approved the so-called "female Viagra" drug Addyi in August: FDA spokesperson Dr. Janet Woodcock. [Prescott Daily Courier, 5-19-2015] [Associated Press via KCCI-TV (Des Moines, Iowa), 4-21-2015] [Union Leader (Manchester), 7-29-2015] [New York Times, 8-19-2015]

Least Competent People

"Selfies" continue to take their devastating toll on Americans. On Aug. 30 in Orient, Maine, driver Jordan Toner, 29, attempting to lean into a seven-person selfie among his passengers, crashed into a tree, causing numerous injuries. On Aug. 24, Alex Gomez, 36, of Lake Elsinore, California, tried to take one after draping an angry 4-foot-long rattlesnake around his neck. The predictable bite was damaging but not fatal. On Sept. 1 in Houston, a 19-year-old man taking selfies while clumsily fondling his handgun is no longer with us. [WCSH-TV (Portland, Maine), 8-30-2015] [KCBS-TV (Los Angeles), 8-25-2015] [KPRC-TV (Houston), 9-2-2015]

Recurring Themes

In June, News of the Weird mentioned a drug dealer in Marseille, France, who was distributing loyalty cards to his best customers (fill 10 squares, get a discount). In August, a small-time cannabis dealer in the central France town of Villeurbanne pushed the envelope further by taping 1-gram samples to hand-lettered leaflets (offering home delivery for 100-euro orders, along with his first name and phone number). The man was of course arrested, with the local police superintendent musing about the man's "very special" business model. [The Local (Paris), 8-28-2015]



Cooked!

How Pennsylvania Regulators Kept Water Contamination from Fracking "Off the Books."

An exclusive whistleblower report by Public Herald

By: Joshua B. Pribanic, *Public Herald* Print Exclusive for *Erie Reader*, Sept. 16, 2015

"Journalism is printing what someone else does not want printed. Everything else is public relations." ~ George Orwell

I can tell you that listening to the squeaky wheels of a scanner poring through public records feels about the same as watching paint dry. It was the worst job we had at *Public Herald*. And, nearly every Monday over the course of twenty-four months or so, that boring repetition tried to answer one simple question in our newsroom: "How much water contamination has there been in Pennsylvania from fracking?"

As an investigative journalist, you never know when a whistleblower will arrive, and it's most often when you least expect it.

Around month twenty-eight of this investigation, sitting down to scan the last remaining complaint files, a paper with everything blacked out except one paragraph was left on my file review desk by a veteran Pa. Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) employee. It read "DEP retention policy." In a paragraph about "Complaints," the document revealed that the Department should only hold complaint records for five years after resolution – "then shred."

these files, and for years DEP refused to do so. Citizen reports are the eyes and ears on the ground, and range from water problems or violations observed at a well pad, to any number of concerns about fracking.

Complaint Form #279494: Date Received: 5/9/2011. "Well Water has an oil/gassy smell. Started last week. Several gas pads nearby started fracking... Complainant stated her water smelled like a 'mechanics shop' which was very descriptive of the odor." Charleston Twp., Tioga County

At *Public Herald* we know that without all of these records, fracking's darker story of water contamination can only be marginally understood.

So, in 2011, we sent our first email request for an informal file review to DEP's Northcentral Regional Office in Williamsport for complaints. At that time, *Public Herald* was in production for the fracking documentary *Triple Divide* (2013), which featured our initial

investigations of water contamination related to oil and gas operations. The request never produced a single document.

Then in 2012, *Public Herald's* Melissa Troutman learned that complaints were being held as "confidential." When she asked why, an attorney from DEP's Southwest Regional Office told her that Deputy Secretary Scott Perry didn't want the complaints to "cause alarm."

Complaint Form #285711: Date Received: 12/16/2011. "Complainant lives in Wyalusing, Pa. Her well water turned purple on Thanksgiving Day. It ran Easter-Egg purple for about five minutes, then faded to normal, and then the well went dry. She is not comfortable with drinking her water/using it for cooking now and certainly will not have her children drink it." Wyalusing Twp. Bradford County

But later in 2012, DEP was hit hard for transparency failures after los-

ing an open records lawsuit with the *Scranton Times-Tribune* that requested all the "determination letters" the Department had on file. And, knowing that determination letters were part of a complaint record, however small, it meant that the door Scott Perry slammed shut was now partially open, and *Public Herald* walked in.

Nothing at DEP file reviews came easy. Using persistence, threatening a lawsuit, and at one point holding a verbal standoff with one of the office's regional directors, *Public Herald* had to use every trick in the book to get these records off the shelves.

"Your demands don't give up at all," DEP Clerical Supervisor Ashleigh Scarbrough told us during a 2014 review. "It's like you want to come in now until the end of eternity every Monday, and we just can't keep up with it." At this time the office was trying to reduce the number of files provided to *Public Herald* to eight townships per visit from previously providing whole counties per visit.

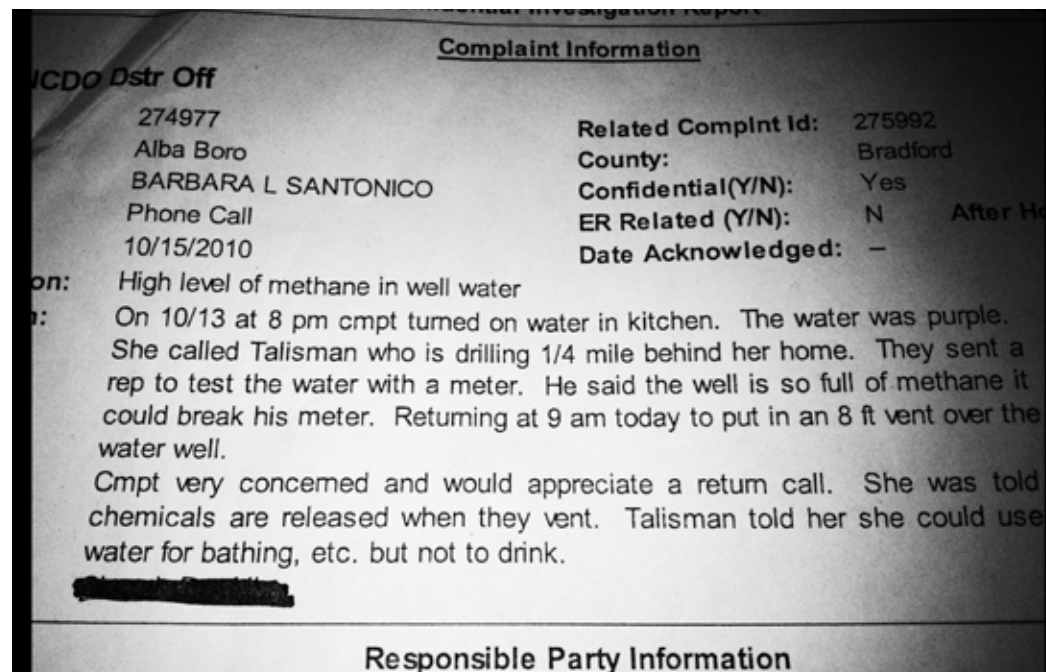
Since Scarbrough wouldn't budge, we had to turn the cameras on. This

What Are Complaints?

Even though fracking for shale gas in the Commonwealth dates back to 2004, the Pennsylvania story of water contamination has never been completely told. And it couldn't be.

Early on, the DEP made sure that citizen complaint records, the "911 calls" that alert DEP to potential water pollution, were withheld from public view. Right-to-Know requests submitted by the likes of Earthworks, *Public Herald*, and more were all being denied using exemptions in the Right To Know Law.

Since complaint records come from citizens, DEP has a responsibility to leverage "privacy" concerns. But simple redactions of personal information were all that was needed to release



Left: A complaint form document provided during a DEP file review. Opposite, from top: Carolyn Knapp at her daughter's home, Christine Pepper, in Leroy Township, Bradford County, Pennsylvania talking to *Public Herald* about their complaint investigation with DEP; Joshua Pribanic and Scott Smith, chief scientist with Water Defense, with Beverly Akey inside her home in Delmar Township, Tioga County, Pennsylvania scanning complaint records; Charles Stock tells *Public Herald* about his water problems at his farm in Delmar Township, Tioga County, and how he'd rather let the industry handle it.

caused the Director of DEP to be called down.

"You're kind of on the cutting edge of asking for things," said DEP Regional Director Marcus Kohl. "It makes it more difficult for us to be prepared for that ..." he explained as to why com-

Basically, what all this means is that DEP's current total for water contamination cases related to fracking, which they say is now 260, is false; it's understated; it's cooked.

plaint records would take longer to produce, since the agency had never had to redact the files for public use. To Mr. Kohl's credit, a negotiation was reached that day that cut out at least an extra six months of file reviews in the North Central office of Williamsport, Pa.

Complaint Form #279494: Date Resolved: 6/3/2011. "I received notice from our laboratory of the preliminary results for the VOC sample. Preliminary results were as follows: benzene was 30ppb, toluene was 63ppb, and total xylenes was 55ppb. I cautioned the complainant to not drink the water or use it for cooking." Charleston Twp., Tioga County

When finally leaving Williamsport that day, we expected our problems were going to be a thing of the past. Little did we know that our next stop in Pittsburgh would end up being worse. DEP's Southwest Regional Office was the most unorganized and understaffed of the three DEP regional offices. After our first file review in Pittsburgh, I had to send the Southwest DEP staff a tutorial about how to compile a complete citizen complaint file:

Jeff, due to the handling of our review on 01/14/15 I have strong concerns about public records

and transparency in your office. I'm extremely disappointed about the incomplete oil and gas records provided to *Public Herald*. Complaint files presented [should be] in relation to water, general pollution, or the like, and found in a complaint folder that's labeled by county; with individual complaint numbers found in folders for each township. An example of what these records would look like is attached here. It took myself alone only one hour and fifteen minutes to scan and file into a hard drive all of the [incomplete] records provided for this review. I, therefore, wasted the time and resources of three members on our file team who were in attendance. I'm outlining these concerns in detail [below] in order to help prevent another review of incomplete records.

Over two years later, our file team would finally have the complaint records for 17 of 40 shale gas counties from two regional

offices. To this day, 31 months later, we're still on DEP's monthly file review calendar to collect the remaining complaint records for 23 counties.

Out of those 17 counties, our newsroom zoomed in on 200 complaint investigations from five key townships and found that the Department "grossly mishandled" a significant percentage of its water contamination cases between 2009 and 2012. We ended up referring to these mishandled cases as "cooked" — a term we felt best described the systemic failure we discovered within the Department.

Cooked cases were initially reported by *Public Herald* in the documentary *Triple Divide*, where DEP turned a blind eye to baseline testing. During the 2011 Atgas blowout investigation in Bradford County, Chesapeake Energy was allowed to dismiss their own pre-drill water test results to avoid liability for contaminating a water supply. This simple act by DEP ended up changing the background water quality data for the area, creating an artificial history of drinking water quality that could be used to dismiss other complaint cases.

In the recent report published at *Public Herald*, we uncovered a total of nine ways that officials at the DEP kept drinking water con- **[Cont. on Page 37]**



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Left: A few of the specialty oils and seasonings available to sample in Lavender Rabbit's tasting room. Opposite top: Rabbits display many of the shop's gourmet-inspired gifts. Opposite bottom: Owner Susan Marshall pauses in front of The Lavender Rabbit's tasting room, bathed in afternoon sunlight.

The Lavender Rabbit

Despite its name, this shop will bring out your inner tortoise.

By: Katie Christ

It's one of those days when the clouds can't decide what to do with themselves. Float harmlessly in a sea of otherwise blueness? Flex their muscles and dump buckets of rain? Regardless, I put outdoor work aside to run some errands, which eventually lead me to The Lavender Rabbit, a gourmet gift store in Erie's Village West.

Immediately, I'm greeted by Gracie, the beautiful blonde Cocker Spaniel with lashes a supermodel would kill for. The Lavender Rabbit's owner, Susan Marshall, follows closely behind. Marshall opened the store in Nov. 2013, with the goal of bringing high-quality olive oils, balsamic vinegars, and other flavorful, minimally-processed gourmet accoutrements to Erie.

The three of us wander through displays of Turkish glass plates, decorative candles, gift cards, and teas, to the tasting room, where

we settle at a bistro table. Intermittent sun flirts with the windows behind us. It's like sitting in someone's sunroom, but they've kindly set out myriad jars and bottles of deliciousness to explore.

I feel myself unwinding, some. Our conversation meanders through territories of wellness, simplicity, and slowing down that could as easily be about life in general as they are about food. We discuss the ways industrial agriculture and the modern food system have rushed us headlong toward quantity while sacrificing quality. How far-reaching negative impacts have been in terms of taste, environmental impact, and nutritional value. How we've lost our connection to eating well as a source of deep, alimentative pleasure. Marshall hopes to help inspire Erieites to embrace the manifold rewards of creating quality meals.

"Healthy food can be so simple and taste really, really good," she says. "And infused oils and bal-

samic vinegars make cooking a gourmet meal so easy, you don't even need to have fresh herbs on hand."

I sample a basil-infused olive oil, and feel like I'm grazing in my herb garden. And by "sample," I mean, essentially, that I do a shot of it. "You don't have to taste *all* of this, obviously," Marshall says, as she hands me a little cup of golden goodness. Oh, but I do, obviously. "How wonderful to be in a place where you can unabashedly do shots of olive oil," I remark, polishing off the last of the basil-infused nectar, and secretly plotting a re-pour.

The Lavender Rabbit offers oils from California, Greece, Spain, Italy, and Peru. Two hemispheres equal two harvest schedules. "So the turnover is amazing," she adds. "Nothing gets old."

The olive oils are either organic certified or organic practice, meaning that — although uncertified — they're produced in alignment with organic standards. We

talk for a spell about how "organic" labeling is redundant in many countries, particularly among older growers still using the same chemical-free, sustainable practices as their forebears. And quite often, requiring foods produced by traditional farms to be USDA certified organic leads more to creating bureaucratic hurdles than to improving the food, itself.

Marshall sources her olive oils from small private groves, so there's "less processing, less storage — and more quality."

"When you have only a small grove," she explains, "you care about every olive."

She carries aged balsamic vinegars only from Modena, Italy: the traditional heart of balsamics, where there even exists a Consortium for Protection of Balsamic Vinegar of Modena.

It's fitting that these balsamics are from Italy, where the Slow Food Movement began in the 1980s, with the "initial aim to defend regional traditions, good food, gastronomic pleasure and a slow pace of life."

Slow Food's genesis arose out of "a demonstration on the intended site of a McDonald's at the Spanish Steps in Rome." Since then, Slow Food has evolved into an international movement whose manifesto promotes food that is comprehensively good, clean, and fair: from soil to senses, and producer to plate. It's a way to trace our food back to its literal roots, and to recognize that every eating choice we make is a political, social, and spiritual act.

Marshall and I lament how typical modern food has become something to prepare hurriedly and consume excessively, as if more of a bad thing might amount to a good thing. But food — done well — has the power to nourish our bodies *and* souls. And though quality food may initially cost

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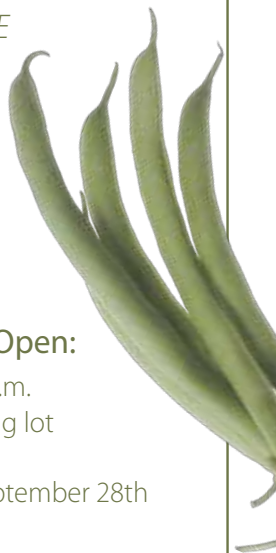
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more, it pays off in the long run.

"This is simple, good food that tastes great," she explains. "You don't need as much quantity if you have the quality."

Well, you don't *need* as much. But want is another story. I wonder how long I can sit in The Lavender Rabbit's tasting room while Marshall brings me samples before she realizes that our interview is over, and now I'm just snacking. Slowly. But still.

I'm ready to surrender, and then Marshall offers me Jalapeño Whiskey Mustard. Then Peach Bourbon Jam, which she suggests would be a great glaze on a fruit tart.

Or on my finger, I think. Skip the middleman.

This fall, Marshall will take The Lav-

ender Rabbit on the road as a festival vendor, including at the Mt. Pleasant Harvest Fest in Edinboro during the first two weekends in October. I'm assuming Gracie will assist.

Eventually, Marshall, Gracie, and I make our way toward the door. I realize I've just conducted an interview in this morning's gardening clothes, fully unkempt from my hair to my ratty old sandals. I apologize to Marshall for showing up in come-as-you-are disarray. She laughs.

"You don't ever have to worry about that here," she says reassuringly. "This is just that kind of place."

Katie Chriest can be contacted at katie@ErieReader.com.

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BARB WEGNER



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The Road to Dismaland

An Edinboro Art Professor Enters the World of Banksy

The email read **“HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL: THE ARTIST BANKSY WANTS TO GET A HOLD OF YOU. IS THIS A DIRECT EMAIL CONTACT FOR DIETRICH WEGNER?”** Like most savvy technophiles of his age, Dietrich Wegner deleted the email believing it was spam. Then came another one. Deleted. And another one. Deleted. He received three to four emails each week for three weeks.

“I’m an artist and I have Banksy posts on my Pinterest account, so it wouldn’t be hard for spam software to know that I like Banksy,” thought Wegner, an associate professor in the art department at Edinboro University.

Finally, he embraced the barrage of email and responded. A few emails later he was talking to Banksy, the elusive artist whose work has been described as radical and revolutionary, and regarded as cultural criticism that’s defining a period of illicit public art.

Banksy had seen Wegner’s work at the Robert Berman Gallery in Santa Monica, Calif. One of Wegner’s pieces from that show, a mushroom cloud playhouse, had been featured in Los Angeles Weekly. It caught Banksy’s attention and he wanted to include it in his next project, an immersive art

experience called Dismaland, set in Weston-super-Mare, a seaside town that suffered an economic downturn beginning in the 1970s as a result of inexpensive airfare that took Brits to other destinations across continental Europe.

Dismaland is branded as a “bemusement park,” a “family theme park unsuitable for children.” It features

massive sculptures in the form of amusement park rides, circus tents, and giant fountains with water shooting from armored police assault vehicles.

One of the main attractions at Dismaland is a fairy castle, “Cinderella’s Castle,” in which visitors are struck by strobe lights that emulate the flashbulbs of paparazzi. As your eyes adjust, you realize you’re among the paparazzi and the subject of their attention – and yours – is the fatal crash of Cinderella’s coach, evocative of the death of Princess Diana.

Banksy’s been planning the show for five years. The site became available six

months ago, and Banksy started recruiting talent like Wegner. Banksy has 10 original works at Dismaland and 58 other artists contributed work, some original to Dismaland, some, like Wegner’s, from their portfolio of previous shows.

Wegner’s shown his work in galleries around the world, from New York, Chicago, and L.A. to Toronto, the Netherlands, and Vienna, Austria, among others. Wegner says this kind of show, one that’s surrounded by such hype, is incredibly rare. In 2013 his work appeared at the Leopold Museum in Vienna alongside Monet and Van Gogh, to give you a sense of the company kept

Above left: Dietrich Wegner (pictured) gets friendly, sort of, with one of the works at Dismaland. Above right: Shamu jumps out of a toilet bowl. Naturally. Below: Wegner’s mushroom cloud playhouse (left) and logo-covered infant (right) were chosen by Banksy for Dismaland. Opposite top and bottom: two iconic boyhood images are bared and bottomed-up, respectively.



BARB WEGNER



BARB WEGNER



BARB WEGNER

by Wegner and his work. “These people are the benchmarks of art history and I was so psyched to be a part of that – it had these huge people, perhaps larger figures than Banksy will ever be – but it got zero hype,” he recalls. “So it was weird to go from that – this pristine environment with no hype – to this show on a filthy beachfront site, with sand blowing through the gallery and lots of attention.”

The two pieces Wegner contributed to Dismaland were works he’s displayed before. Banksy chose the aforementioned mushroom cloud playhouse – a 20-foot-by-9-foot-by-9-foot mushroom cloud complete with treehouse rope ladder that leads through an opening into the billowing cloudtop – and an infant in the fetal position tattooed with corporate brands including Lego, Best

Buy, and Ohio State University, where Wegner earned his Master of Fine Arts in 2003.

But Banksy’s perspective gave Wegner’s work new life. The mushroom cloud was configured differently than it had been before and the baby was placed in new context.

“I’ve always been experimental with my work, so I like that it was reimagined,” says Wegner. “Banksy hung the baby upside down in a vending machine where it spins in a circle, and as it spins the light hits different parts of the baby as it moves, so every second you have a new experience with the piece.”

Wegner’s contributions are heavily featured in Dismaland promotions, which might seem a bit ill-suited given the anti-corporate, anti-promotional character of the show. But Wegner had a different view of Dismaland when he visited the site this summer.

“We went to Weston-super-Mare directly from Disneyland. What was ironic,” he says, “is that almost everybody is having a huge amount of fun at Dismaland and so few people were having fun at Disneyland because of the lines, the crowds, and the fact that it doesn’t really stand for anything except ‘forget your life and let’s spend money.’ Banksy’s critique of Disneyland is a metaphor for our own little fairy tale.”

Jim Wertz can be reached at jWertz@ErieReader.com, and you can follow him on Twitter @jim_wertz.



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Breaking Benjamin & 10 Years

Sept. 16 — 8 p.m.
Erie Insurance Arena, 809 French St. erieevents.com.

Pine Valley Rhythm Jumpers

Sept. 17 — 1 to 5 p.m.
Albion Area Fair, Academy Street Albion, PA 16401 albionfair.com.

Downtown Brown

Sept. 17 — 5:30 to 11:30 p.m.
Basement Transmissions, 145 West 11th St. basementtransmissions.com.

Rankin & Schell

Sept. 17 — 6 to 9 p.m.
Sprague Farm & Brew Works, 22043 US Hwy 6 & 19 sleepingchainsaw.com.

Faculty Recital Series: Erin Yanacek,

Nathan Hess

Sept. 17 — 8 p.m.
Walker Recital Hall, 501 E. 38th St. mercyhurst.edu.

The Hobbs Sisters

Sept. 18 — 3 to 5 p.m.
Albion Area Fair, Academy Street Albion, PA 16401 albionfair.com.

GGU Show - Danny Greene

Sept. 18 — 5 to 10 p.m.
Basement Transmissions, 145 West 11th St. basementtransmissions.com.

Scarlet Ledbetter

Sept. 18 — 6 to 9 p.m.
Edinboro Lake Resort, 12690 Edinboro Rd. edinborolakeresort.com.

The Highlife

Sept. 18 — 6 to 9 p.m.
Sprague Farm & Brew Works, 22043 US Hwy 6 & 19 sleepingchainsaw.com.

Stephen Trohoske's Art Groupies +

The Remnants

Sept. 18 — 9 p.m.
Kings Rook Club, 1921 Peach St. facebook.com/kingsrookclub.

Chris Higbee

Sept. 18, 19 — 9 p.m.
Presque Isle Downs & Casino, 8199 Perry Hwy presqueisledowns.com.

Erie Ale House Acoustics

Sept. 18 — 9 p.m. to midnight
Erie Ale House, 1033 State St. facebook.com/ErieAleHouse.

Hodge Podge

Sept. 18 — 10 p.m.
Sherlocks, 508 State St. facebook.com/sherlocksparkplace.

The Box

Sept. 19 — 5 to 10 p.m.
Basement Transmissions, 145 West 11th St. basementtransmissions.com.

Tyler Smilo

Sept. 19 — 6 to 9 p.m.
Edinboro Lake Resort, 12690 Edinboro Rd. edinborolakeresort.com.

Max Schang

Sept. 19 — 6 to 9 p.m.
Sprague Farm & Brew Works, 22043 US Hwy 6 & 19 sleepingchainsaw.com.

Season Opener

Sept. 19 — 7:30 p.m.
Cathedral Prep Auditorium, 250 West 10th St. gannon.edu.

WhiteChapel Jack + Potwhole + Ryan A Roth

Sept. 19 — 9 p.m.
Kings Rook Club, 1921 Peach St. facebook.com/kingsrookclub.

French Kiss

Sept. 19 — 10 p.m.
Sherlocks, 508 State St. facebook.com/sherlocksparkplace.

Big Dog Acoustics

Sept. 24 — 6 to 9 p.m.
Sprague Farm & Brew Works, 22043 US Hwy 6 & 19 sleepingchainsaw.com.

Jazz Poetry with Philip Terman and The Catro Band

Sept. 24 — 8 to 11 p.m.
PACA, 1505 State St. paca1505.com.

O'Neiders

Sept. 25 — 5 to 8 p.m.
Arundel Cellars, 11727 East Main Rd. arundelcellars.com.

Cafe Acoustic Showcase

Sept. 25 — 5:30 to 10:30 p.m.
Basement Transmissions, 145 West 11th St. basementtransmissions.com.

Matt "Broke" Boland

Sept. 25 — 6 to 9 p.m.
Edinboro Lake Resort, 12690 Edinboro Rd. edinborolakeresort.com.

Shady Side

Sept. 25 — 6 to 9 p.m.
Sprague Farm & Brew Works, 22043 US Hwy 6 & 19 sleepingchainsaw.com.

Daybreak Radio + Kev Rowe

Sept. 25 — 9 p.m.
Kings Rook Club, 1921 Peach St. facebook.com/kingsrookclub.

Small Town Revolution

Sept. 25 — 9 p.m.
Presque Isle Downs & Casino, 8199 Perry Hwy. presqueisledowns.com.

FS Hold

Sept. 26 — 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.
Basement Transmissions, 145 West 11th St. basementtransmissions.com.

The Unknown String Band

Sept. 26 — 6 to 9 p.m.
Edinboro Lake Resort,

Thursday, Sept. 17

Bobby J's Birthday Bash



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

When you own a music venue and arts center, it just makes sense to celebrate your birthday with a good ol' rock show. And if you're Bob Jensen, plenty of people will want to be on hand for the festivities.

Basement Transmissions will host a stellar lineup of roaring rock bands Thursday, Sept. 17, as Downtown Brown, Jivân, Dysmorphia, the Filthy Casuals, and Primal Scream Therapy all team up to put on a hell of a show for the *Erie Reader* 40 Under 40 member. Make sure to head on out to Basement Transmissions to congratulate Bob and enjoy some killer music at the same time. — Alex Bieler

6 p.m. // 145 W. 11th St. // basementtransmissions.com

Thursday, Sept. 17

Poet Katie Ford Kicks off Behrend's Creative Writers Reading Series



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

When one is the site of so much pain, one must pray to be abandoned. When abandonment is that much more — beauty and terror before every witness and suddenly you are not there.

That's how Katie Ford closes her poem "Colosseum," also the title of her 2008 book. It's a steady, brilliant piece of poetry, taking turns at times strange and quietly horrific. The beauty and danger of her work continue in *Blood Lyrics*, her third collection, published in 2014 — a book the *Kenyon Review* said "speak[s] with startling intimacy about the world and the body, that microcosm of all experience."

Ford will read from *Blood Lyrics* as

the first artist in the 2015-16 Creative Writers Reading Series, produced by Penn State Behrend's B.F.A. in Creative Writing degree program. The event is free and open to the public.

Colosseum was named *Publishers Weekly's* "Best Book of the Year" for 2008, and the *Virginia Quarterly Review* named it a "Top 10 Poetry Book of 2008." Ford's poetry has appeared in the *New Yorker* and the *Paris Review*, and has earned her the Lannan Literary Fellowship and the Levis Reading Prize. And you get to see her for free. — Sara Toth

6 p.m. (preceded by a 5:30 p.m. reception) // Larry and Kathryn Smith Chapel, Penn State Behrend, 4701 College Dr. // 898.6108 // behrend.psu.edu/readings

Thursday, Sept. 17

The Cambridge American Stage Tour brings Shakespeare to Gannon's Schuster Theatre

The British are coming. No, for real, a troupe of Cambridge University actors is set to descend upon Gannon University's Schuster Theatre for a one-night-only production of Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*.

The Cambridge American Stage Tour (CAST), established in 2000 under the patronage of Dame Judi Dench, has

been making stops at Gannon for years (much to the delight of GU's theatre communications department — trust me, as an alum. It was an annual highlight). CAST's aim is to bring Shakespeare to as wide an audience as possible in the eastern colonies, or, ah, the



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

United States.

And why wouldn't you want to see *The Taming of the Shrew*? It's a tale of romance and revenge, of a flirtatious young woman who can't get married until her older sister — the titular shrew — is successfully wooed herself. (Some questionable schemes ensue, because toying with women's hearts and calling them shrews is hilarious.)

So here's your homework: since this is literally a teenage romantic comedy for the ages, go watch *10 Things I Hate About You* (Heath Ledger! Joseph Gordon-Levitt! Late '90s nostalgia!) and then go see *The Taming of the Shrew*.

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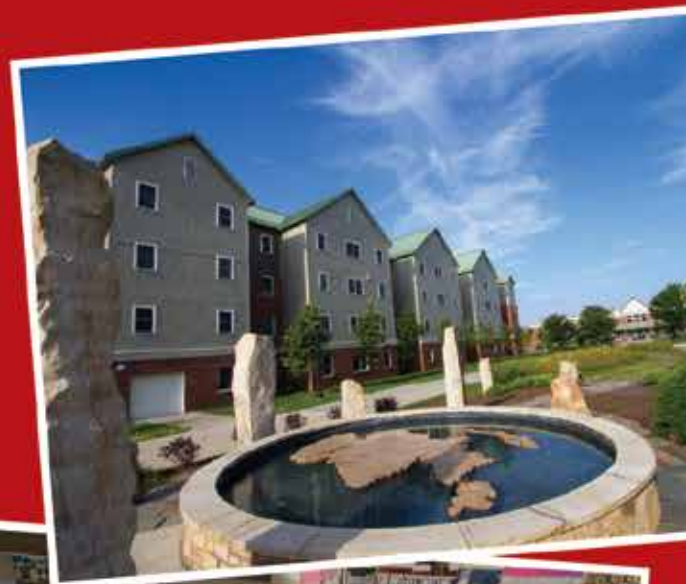
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CALENDAR

— Sara Toth

8 p.m. // Schuster Theatre, Gannon University, 620 Sassafras St. // 871.7493 // castcambridge.org // \$8

Friday, Sept. 18

Stephen Trohoske's Art Groupies and The Remnants at King's Rook Club



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

You never see the same show twice with Stephen Trohoske's Art Groupies. The local composer and bassist has put together an impressive rotating cast for his musical collective, assembling a crack team of local experts into a super group. Together, they tackle a litany of bands that impacted Trohoske during his youth. Trohoske's Art Groupies will team up

yet again at the Kings Rook Club Friday, Sept. 18. The crew consists of Angie Meyers, Elly Vahey, Eric Brewer, Abby Barrett, Stix Thompson, and Trohoske. The Art Groupies will be joined by local rockabilly outfit The Remnants, adding even more power to this highly talented Saturday lineup. — Alex Bieler

9 p.m. // 1901 Peach St. // facebook.com/kingsrookclub

Saturday, Sept. 19

"Music for Miracles" at the Sloppy Duck



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Music and gathering really can help move all kinds of good things along, and that power will be at play when four area bands take the stage — and invite you out to party — to benefit the Children's Miracle Network from 4 to 11 p.m.

The Music for Miracles benefit, happening at the Sloppy Duck on the West Bayfront Parkway, will feature performances by HiWay Starr, Moonshine, Sunday Sound, and Small Town Revolution, making for a rockin' evening in support of a good cause.

This benefit for kids with terminal illnesses is a 21-plus affair, so leave your own at home and come out to play to help make some wishes come true. — Ryan Smith

4 to 11 p.m. // Sloppy Duck, 726 W. Bayfront Parkway

Saturday, Sept. 19

WhiteChapel Jack, Potwhole, and Ryan A. Roth at Kings Rook Club

The Kings Rook Club will play host to some musical mayhem when WhiteChapel Jack, Potwhole, and Ryan A. Roth head to the Peach Street venue for a rowdy night.

WhiteChapel Jack, also known as looping maestro Michael Edgerly, headlines a trio of talented acts, ready to show off his musical chops under his new moniker. Local gypsy-tonk troupe Potwhole supplies a rootsy kick to the night, adding another dimension to Ed-



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

gerly's "live DJ" skill set. To top it all off, singer/songwriter/full-blown entertainer Ryan A. Roth brings some extra passion to a night full of sonic bliss. — Alex Bieler

9 p.m. // 1901 Peach St. // facebook.com/kingsrookclub

North East Arts Council to Unveil Mindful Mural

Drive through Downtown North East and you are bound to notice that the town takes its appearance seriously. Much of the added bling that perks up the small-town ambience is homegrown.

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The North East Arts Council will proudly unveil the Mindful Mural on Thursday, Sept. 24 at 5:30 p.m. A reception will follow in the North East Cultural Center building, Arts Council second floor. — Bryan Toy

5:30 p.m. // 25 Vine St., North East // northeastarts.org

Thursday, Sept. 24

Vinyl Palooza 2.0: A Mind-Blowing Retro Fundraising Party



PIXRAY

Early Connections tried a different kind of fundraiser last year: Vinyl Palooza! Not your average celebrity bartender event where attendees basically just drink for charity, this get-together includes myriad fun activities centered around our love of music and

all things vinyl.

You can promote your favorite band by participating in "Pay to Play" where the DJs at Erie ExperienceVinyl will spin new and old records with selected songs for a donation. Donate more than the last person and your song moves up in the rotation. There will also be guest DJs, auction items, signature drinks, and music-inspired artwork. An auction of rare vinyl will take place, during which it is rumored that a mint Beatles album will appear. Get your team of four together for Rock'n Roll Trivia. Teams are encouraged to dress like their favorite band. Who doesn't want to go to a party looking like the Clash, the Cure, or Twisted Sister? Individuals can also dress accordingly to win prizes. Time to bust out your Madonna cones and fingerless lace gloves, perhaps?

Last year, more than \$4,000 was raised for Erie's Future Fund, administered by Early Connections, which provides scholarships to low-income families so that their children can attend quality early childhood education programs throughout Erie County. Early Connections' mission hasn't changed in over 125 years: to meet the needs of children and their families. A majority of the families served live in some de-

gree of poverty and face multiple challenges within their lives. Children at Early Connections are being given the opportunity to develop intellectual, social, and emotional skills that will help them succeed in school and life. Now that's a record worth replaying. — Bryan Toy

5 p.m. to midnight // 1013 State St. // facebook.com/erie.experiencevinyl

Daybreak Radio and Kev Rowe at Kings Rook Club



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Fans of Americana will be quite pleased by the Kings Rook Club this month when local rockers Daybreak Radio and Jamestown, N.Y. singer/songwriter Kev Rowe show off their takes on the genre Friday, Sept. 25.

The Friday show will allow fans to

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- Bay County Beechwood Golf Club
- Bruce's Pub & Grub
- Chestnut St. Pub
- Chico's Travelers Inn
- Choo-Choo's Coach's
- Dowling's Tavern
- Eduardo's
- Girard Cafe
- Hunter Jacks
- Kelly Downs
- Last Shot
- Lefty's Tavern
- Lombardo's
- Odis 12
- Penny's Pub
- Pittsburgh Inn
- Rack N Roll
- Rocco's Sandbar
- South East Turners
- That Place
- Treehouse Tavern
- The Cab
- The Last Shot
- Ugly Tuna
- 21 Hampton

EAST

- Alibi Bar
- Bootleggers
- Chipper's
- Clancy's
- Czartoryski By the Bay
- Dan's Rt 7 Boardwalk
- Fiddle Inn
- Irish Cousins
- Jammin' Vine
- JJ's Pub
- Lakeview Tavern
- Marty's
- Nunzi's
- Park Tavern
- Pete's Pub
- Red Fox Inn
- Scooters on Parade
- Speed'EEZ
- T.J.'s Traffic Jam
- The Cornerstone
- The Turnaround
- TK's Tavern

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- Fox & Hound
- Hooch & Blotto's
- Quaker Steak & Lube
- Primanti Brothers

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- American Legion Peach
- American Legion Post #571
- American Legion E 3rd Street
- Cascade Club
- CYS
- East Erie Moose
- Falcons 19th
- Fairview Legion
- Fulton Club
- Holy Trinity
- Knights of St. John
- Lawrence Park AC Club
- Millcreek Legion
- Moniuszko Club
- Moose Club Albion
- Northeast Athletic Club
- Nuova Aurora
- Polish Falcons E 3rd
- Polish Foresters
- Polish Sharp Shooters
- Pulaski Club
- Sacred Heart
- Siebenburger Club
- Sportsmen A.C.
- St. Boniface Ushers Club
- St. Joes (Northeast)
- St. Mary's Club
- Star Club

CLUBS

- Sunflower Club
- Wesleyville Athletic Club
- Zukor Club
- VFW west 26th
- VFW #740 Edinboro

SOUTH

- Country Tavern
- Crossroads Dinor
- Doc Holliday's
- Edinboro Hotel
- Edinboro Lanes
- Empty Keg
- Fat Willies
- French Quarters
- Lakeside Tavern
- McKean Tavern
- Pour House
- Waterford Hotel

DOWNTOWN

- Arena Sports Bar
- Calamari's
- Plymouth
- Scully's
- Sluggers
- 3B's Saloon

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CALENDAR

dig some Americana-inspired tunes in two ways. Daybreak Radio will dish out some no frills rock 'n' roll, pumping out jam after rip-roaring jam. Rowe, who is also the guitarist for Erie favorite Big Leg Emma, will present the softer side of Americana, delivering some absolutely lovely compositions to round out the night. Check out both acts for free with a Kings Rook Club membership (and go get a membership if you don't have one). — Alex Bieler

9 p.m. // 1901 Peach St. // facebook.com/kingsrookclub

Friday Sept. 25

Wine Country Harvest Festival Kicks Off



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

It's time to sip and celebrate the bounty of the largest grape-growing region in the East at the 34th annual North East Wine Country Harvest Festival.

The festival — featuring some of the region's greatest winemakers and their wares — runs all weekend long between Friday, Sept. 25 and Sunday, Sept. 27.

Along with a spotlight on numerous local wineries, there will be live musical entertainment, vendors, artisans, juried crafters, and more happening at three locations in North East.

In short, and as always, the weekend promises to be a sweet (or, dry) treat for the senses.

For more information, including complete schedules and passes for certain events, contact the North East Chamber. — Ryan Smith

Friday, Sept. 25 to Sunday, Sept. 27
// Gravel Pit Park, Heard Park, and Gibson Park, North East // 725.4262, lakeeriewinecountry.org

Friday, Sept. 25

Sean Patrick and the Newgrass Revolution End "Surrounded by Pines" among the Vines

By the time they take the stage in North East on Friday, Sept. 25, Erie roots/rock/bluegrass renegades Sean Patrick and the Newgrass Revolution will have had a busy, and well-traveled, few weeks.

The band's "Surrounded by Pines" 2015

fall tour started early this month with a show in nearby Waterford, and ends with this weekend's headlining gig at the North East Wine Country Harvest Festival. In the 20 days spanning those shows, though, the four-man band has been all over the place: West Virginia, Virginia, D.C., North Carolina, Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, and several other points in between.

Good times, too, as evidenced by Newgrass fans' and the band's own social media posts, which, of late, include lots of shots — all aptly-headed #seansitsonstuff — of Patrick, well, sitting atop all kinds of things (an anchor, a tank, other stuff) along the highways and byways of their musical journey.

Welcome home, then, fellas — come sit back and play awhile. — Ryan Smith

3 p.m. // North East Wine Country Harvest Festival // Gravel Pit Park, North East // facebook.com/newgrassrevolution

Friday, Sept. 25

Gallery Night: Take a Nap, Hit the Shows

You may need extra stamina for this Gallery Night. Seventeen venues will hold perhaps the widest array of



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

styles, media, and opportunities ever.

In one night, you'll be able to immerse yourself in the dark world of the Holocaust (Gannon's Nash Library), study objects made of turned wood (Life-Works Erie), try your hand at a potter's wheel (ClaySpace) or enjoy tattoo art (Urraro Gallery Artists' Collective).

New at the Erie Art Museum is Karen Ernst's furniture in *Land, Sea, and Sky: Details from Nature*. Be sure to pop next door for *Art Among Friends: Inspired by Beach, Brush, & Needle* at Glass Growers.

Group shows on the agenda include the Presque Isle Artists Association 26th Annual Show at the First Niagara Bank's Conference Center and the Northwestern Pennsylvania Artists Association's Biennial in Under the

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Artwork above by veteran artists and BLOOM Collaborative director Lee Steadman as appearing at the 2015 Celebrate Erie Chalk Walks.



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WEEK ONE

WEEK TWO



The Importance of Erie, Pa. in Understanding the Changing Dialects of America's Language

Monday, Oct. 26 at 7:30 p.m.
Eric Raimy, Ph. D.



US Foreign Policy & Our Role in the World – a panel discussion moderated by C-SPAN's Steve Scully

Monday, Nov. 2 at 7:30 p.m.
Dr. Nile Gardiner & Dr. Aaron David Miller



Mission Mars – Forwarding our Dreams into Reality

Tuesday, Oct. 27 at 7:30 p.m.
Bas Lansdorp



An Evening with Author, Columnist, & Television Commentator: Cokie Roberts

Tuesday, Nov. 3 at 7:30 p.m.
Cokie Roberts



Growing Human Tissues: Can We Print Organs Instead of Transplanting Them?

Wednesday, Oct. 28 at 11:30 a.m. Luncheon
Anthony Atala, M.D.



Reading the Declaration of Independence in Defense of Equality

Wednesday, Nov. 4 at 7:30 p.m.
Danielle Allen



Gigacities: How Broadband is Reshaping the World

Friday, October 30 at 7:30 p.m.
Darrell West, Ph. D.



The Future of Osteopathic Medicine and Osteopathy: A Global Perspective

Friday, Nov. 6 at 7:30 p.m.
Norman Gevitz, Ph. D.



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Clock at the Boston Store.

Fine craft jewelry and more will be found at Ralph Miller and Lighthouse Jewelers, and while you're heading west, stop in at Kada Gallery for recent paintings by Lee Steadman. Back downtown, D'Hopkins Denniston Gallery will present new works by Herman Weber.

One new venue, Radius Gallery in the Renaissance Centre, will feature *Muses*, recent work by Ian Thiry. Tucked away at the Secret Squirrel is photography by Joshua Arlington and clay sculptures by LisaMarie Adams. And the unlikely venue of the Crime Victim Center will host works created for the Mid-Day Dance Break, all based on the theme of empowerment.

One of the evening's highlights is an exhibit at PACA by the underground street artist known as Reizen. Filled with satire and political commentary, Reizen's work can be seen throughout Erie. Will the artist be on hand for a meet-and-greet?

Take a nap, plan ahead, and stick to your schedule if you want to see it all. — Mary Birdsong

7 to 10 p.m. // Free Admission // Various locations // erieartmuseum.org/events/gallerynight

Saturday, Sept. 26

Broccoli Samurai and Eric Brewer and Friends at Kings Rook Club



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

You know a band is fun when they cover music from *Mario Kart*, and you know that the group is something to reckon with when a YouTube video of the band covering said music has over 1 million views.

Cleveland jamtronica band Broccoli

Samurai was a blast even before its viral hit – I mean, check out that band name – but now they've got a legion of video game fans to catch on to the groovetastic train they've been conducting since 2010. Make sure you check the band out when it swings through the Kings Rook Club, with the always amazing Eric Brewer and Friends opening the evening. – Alex Bieler

9 p.m. // 1901 Peach St. // facebook.com/kingsrookclub

Sunday, Sept. 27

Redefining the Sunday Night Blues: Tedeschi Trucks Band plays Erie Sept. 27

There's no shortage of shredders cluttering the airwaves with rock 'n roll excess for the sake of excess. Even more common are wannabe Guitar Heroes who've studied their idols so meticulously, they sound exactly like them.

Incredibly, since his early tours with the Allman Brothers Band (where I first got to see him in 1999), Derek Trucks has always sounded like Derek Trucks, with an immediately identifiable sinewy tone. More incredibly,



JOSH SANSERI

he's found in Susan Tedeschi a fellow six-string slinger with a signature, straight-from-the-soul voice to accompany him onstage and in life. Most incredibly, though, the Tedeschi Trucks Band rolls their *Wheels of Soul* tour into Erie's Warner Theater on Sunday, Sept. 27, at 7:30 p.m. — Katie Chriest

7:30 p.m. // Warner Theatre, 811 State St. // 452.4857 // tedeschitrucksband.com

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SAT 9/19
WHITECHAPLE JACK + POTWHOLE + RYAN ROTH [FREE]

FRI 9/25
DAYBREAK RADIO + KEV ROWE [FREE]

SAT 9/26
BROCCOLI SAMURAI + BREWER+ STAGECOACH ROBBERY

FRI 10/2
FUNKTIONAL FLOW [FREE]

SAT 10/3
YOSEMIGHT [FREE]

FRI 10/9
TYLER SMILO + MAX GARCIA CONOVER [FREE]

SAT 10/10
SPIRITUAL REZ + WSG: JOOSE

FRI 10/16
THE MIGHTY SEA + BROOKE SURGNER + MATT CRAYS [FREE]

FRI 10/17
CHICKSTOCK 3 CLAIRE STUCZYNSKI + CHARITY NUSE

HEATHER DEVORE [FREE]

12690 Edinboro Rd.
edinborolakeresort.com.

Rankin & Schell

Sept. 26 — 6 to 9 p.m.
Sprague Farm & Brew Works, 22043 US Hwy. 6 & 19 sleepingchainsaw.com.

Beats at the Brix featuring the Strangers

Sept. 26 — 7 to 9 p.m.
21 Brix Winery, 6654 W Main Rd. Portland, NY 21brix.com.

Spielberg Scores

Sept. 26 — 8 p.m.
Warner Theatre, 811 State St. eriephil.org.

Broccoli Samurai + Eric Brewer & Friends + Stagecoach Robbery

Sept. 26 — 9 p.m.
Kings Rook Club, 1921 Peach St. facebook.com/kingsrookclub.

Geek Army

Sept. 26 — 9 p.m.
Presque Isle Downs & Casino, 8199 Perry Hwy. presqueisledowns.com.

Tedeschi Trucks Band

Sept. 27 — 7:30 p.m.
Warner Theatre, 811 State St. erieevents.com.

Leif Vollebekk

Sept. 29 — 7:30 p.m.
Erie Art Museum, 411 State St. erieartmuseum.org.

The Black Dahlia Murder, Harms Way, Cruel Hand with Special Guests

Sept. 30 — 6 p.m.
Basement Transmissions, 145 West 11th St. basementtransmissions.com.

DANCE

LifeWorks Erie Doo Wop Dance

Sept. 18 — 6 to 9 p.m.
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. lifeworkserie.org.

Square Dancing with Nancy Schuller

Sept. 21 & 28 — 1 to 3 p.m.
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. lifeworkserie.org.

Waltzing Through Life: Ballroom Dance

Sept. 22 & 29 — 2 to 4 p.m.
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. lifeworkserie.org.

FOOD & DRINK

North East Wine Country Harvest Festival

Sept. 25-27
North East, 10300 West Main Rd. nechamber.org.

Oktoberfest

Sept. 26 — 6 to 11 p.m.
The Brewerrie, 123 W. 14th St. brewerrie.com.

Brews Cruise

Sept. 27 — 5 to 7 p.m. (Boarding at 4:45)
The Brewerrie, 123 W. 14th St. brewerrie.com.

FILM

Tiny Giants

Sept. 16 through Feb. 26 — 11 a.m., 1 p.m. & 3 p.m.
Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Drive. trecpi.org.

Deepsea Challenge

Sept. 16 through Dec. 31 — noon & 4 p.m.
Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Drive. trecpi.org.

Living in the Age of Airplanes

Sept. 16 through Oct. 30 — 2 & 5 p.m.
Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Drive. trecpi.org.

The Hunchback of Notre Dame (1923)

Sept. 18 — 8 p.m.
Erie Movie House, 3424 Westlake Road. facebook.com/ErieMovieHouse.

Ninja: Prophecy of Death (2011)

Sept. 25 — 8 p.m.
Erie Movie House, 3424 Westlake Road. facebook.com/ErieMovieHouse.

Things to Come (1936)

Sept. 26 — 8 p.m.
Erie Movie House, 3424 Westlake Road. facebook.com/ErieMovieHouse.

VISUAL ARTS

8 Hour Projects: Place

Ongoing through Sept. 20
Allegheny College Art Gallery, 520 N. Main St. allegheny.edu.

Art Faculty Show with Guest Alumnus Thomas Gamble

Ongoing through Sept. 27
Cummings Gallery, 501 E. 38th St. mercyhurst.edu.

Biennial Under the Clock Exhibit

Ongoing through Oct. 2
NPAA, 10 East 5th St. npaaonline.org.

Art Among Friends

Ongoing through Oct. 3 — (Opening Reception Sept. 25, 7-10 p.m.)
Glass Growers Gallery, 10 East 5th St. glassgrowersgallery.com.

Shooting the Sh*t

Sept. 16 — 7 p.m.
Bruce Gallery, Doucette Hall 215 Meadville St. brucegallery.info.

Minyao

Sept. 16 to Nov. 15
Erie Art Museum, 411 State St. erieartmuseum.org.

The Visionary Paintings of William Thomas Thompson

Sept. 24 through Oct. 31
Bruce Gallery, Doucette Hall 215 Meadville St. brucegallery.info.

REIZEN Gallery Night Opening

Sept. 25 — 7 p.m.
PACA, 1505 State St. paca1505.com.

Gallery Night

Sept. 25 — 7 to 10 p.m.
The Kada Gallery, 2632 West 8th St. kadagallery.com.

Faculty & Alumni Exhibition

Sept. 29 through Oct. 27 (Opening Reception & Artists' Lectures: Sept. 29 — 7 to 9 p.m.)
Allegheny College Art Gallery, 520 N. Main

St. allegheny.edu.

THEATRE

Disney's The Little Mermaid

Ongoing through Sept. 27
Erie Playhouse, 13 W. 10th St. erieplayhouse.org.

Angels in America, Part Two

Sept. 18 & 19 — 7 p.m.
Dramashop, Renaissance Centre, 2nd Floor 1001 State St. dramashop.org.

A Canterbury Feast

Sept. 18 & 25 — 7 p.m. & Sept. 19 & 26 — 5:30 p.m.
The Station Dinner Theatre, 4940 Peach St. canterburyfeast.com.

Tomas Kubinek - "Certified Lunatic & Master of the Impossible"

Sept. 19 — 7:30 p.m.
Mary D'Angelo Performing Arts Center, 501 E. 38th St. mercyhurst.edu.

Don't Blame it on the Movies

Sept. 22 & 23 — noon
The Station Dinner Theatre, 4940 Peach St. canterburyfeast.com.

COMMUNITY

Albion Area Fair

Ongoing through Sept. 19
Albion Area Fair, Academy St. Albion albionfair.com.

Holocaust Exhibit

Ongoing through Oct. 28 daily — 8 to 4:30 p.m.
Gannon University, 619 Sassafras St. gannon.edu.

Living Well, Living Long Expo and Flue Kickoff

Sept. 16 — 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Erie Shriners Club, 2525 W. 38th St. lifeworkserie.org.

Goodell Gardens Farmers Market

Sept. 16, 23 & 30 — 3 to 6 p.m.
Goodell Gardens, 221 Waterford St. goodellgardens.org.

Steps to Prevent Shingles

Sept. 16 — 6 to 7:30 p.m.

Millcreek Municipal Building, 3608 W. 26th St. lifeworkserie.org.

The History of Wine in Pa. and Erie County

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

Dog Show

Sept. 16, 17 & 18 — 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Bayfront Convention Center, 1 Sassafras Pier erieevents.com.

Exploring Erie By Foot

Sept. 17 — 8:20 to 10 a.m.
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. lifeworkserie.org.

Stellar Evolution of Low and High Mass Stars

Sept. 17 — 9:30 a.m.
Diebold Center for Performing Arts, 217 Meadville St. events.edinboro.edu.

Vibrant Life Series

Sept. 17 — 12:30 to 2 p.m.
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. lifeworkserie.org.

New Horizons Music Project of LifeWorks Erie

Sept. 17 — 4 to 6 p.m.
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. lifeworkserie.org.

Erie Arts & Culture Grant Workshop

Sept. 17 — 5 p.m.
Out of the Grey Coffeehouse, 6990 W. Lake Rd. erieartsandculture.org.

Katie Ford, Creative Writers Reading Series

Sept. 17 — 6 to 7 p.m.
Penn State Behrend, Larry and Kathryn Smith Chapel psbehrend.psu.edu.

Music That Changed America

Sept. 17 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.
Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. jeserie.org.

Exploring Erie By Foot

Sept. 18 — 8:30 to 10:30 a.m.

LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. lifeworkserie.org.

Live Bee Tour and Pollinator Garden Visit

Sept. 18 — 1 to 2:30 p.m.
Asbury Woods Nature Center, 4105 Asbury Rd. lifeworkserie.org.

Painting with Dawn Ziegler

Sept. 18 & 25 — 6 p.m.
North East Arts Council, 25 Vine St. northeastarts.org.

International Coastal Cleanup at Presque Isle and Erie Bluffs State Park

Sept. 19 — 9 a.m. to noon
Presque Isle State Park, 301 Peninsula Dr. events.dcnr.pa.gov.

Bridge Lessons

Sept. 19 — 10 a.m. to noon
Erie Bridge Association, 1221 Grant Ave. (814) 833-1706

Swell Symposium

Sept. 19 — noon to 5 p.m.
Bayfront Convention Center, 1 Sassafras Pier erieevents.com.

National Astronomy Day Activities

Sept. 19 — noon to 4 p.m.
Penn State Behrend, 21 Witkowski psbehrend.psu.edu.

Erie Irish Festival

Sept. 19-29
St. Patrick's Church, 130 East 4th St. erieirishfestival.com.

Presque Isle Bicycle Time Trial - Fall

Sept. 20 — 8 to 11 a.m.
Presque Isle State Park, 301 Peninsula Dr. events.dcnr.pa.gov.

Erie Arts & Culture Grant Workshop

Sept. 21 — 5 p.m.
Eclectic Etcetera Coffeehouse, 118 Erie St. edinboro erieartsandculture.org.

Understanding

CALENDAR

Mental Health and Mental Illness with Mandy Fauble, PhD, LCSW

Sept. 21 — 6:30 to 8 p.m.
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. lifeworkserie.org.

5th annual Edinboro Potterfest

Sept. 21-26
Edinboro University, 219 Meadville St. potterfest.cs.edinboro.edu.

Wise Words for Wellness with Rebecca Wise, PharmD, LECOM School of Pharmacy

Sept. 22 & 29 — 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. lifeworkserie.org.

Mandarin and More with Shouping Li

Sept. 22 & 29 — 1 to 3 p.m.
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. lifeworkserie.org.

As Erie's Public Schools Go, So Goes Erie: The State of Erie School District

Sept. 23, 24 & 25 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.
Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. jeserie.org.

The Bass Federation Mid-Atlantic Divisional

Sept. 23 — 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Bel-Aire Clarion Hotel, 2800 W. 8th St. eriesportscommission.com.

Exploring Erie By Foot

Sept. 23 — 8:20 to 9:30 a.m.
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. lifeworkserie.org.

Birds, Birders, and Birding with Bonnie Ginader

Sept. 23 — 9:30 to 10:30 a.m.
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. lifeworkserie.org.

Cordis to Perform in Music at Noon: The Logan Series

Sept. 23 — noon to 1 p.m.
Penn State Behrend, McGarvey Commons psbehrend.psu.edu.

Pressing and Bottling: Fuhrman's Cider Mill Tour

Sept. 23 — 1 to 2:30 p.m.
Fuhrman's Cider Mill, 8720 Peach St. lifeworkserie.org.

An Epidemic of Hopelessness: The Symptomatic Nature of Crime and Violence in Erie

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

Exploring Erie By Foot

Sept. 24 — 8:20 to 9:45 a.m.
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. lifeworkserie.org.

Under the Bed of Heaven:

Eschatology and Christian Sexual Ethics

Sept. 24 — 9:30 a.m.
Diebold Center for Performing Arts, 217 Meadville St. events.edinboro.edu.

Aqua Lab and Green Tour

Sept. 24 — 1 to 2:30 p.m.
Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. lifeworkserie.org.

Clare Porac to Speak about Left-Handedness in Psychology Colloquium Series

Sept. 24 — 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.
Penn State Behrend, 180 Burke psbehrend.psu.edu.

Panel Discussion: 'The Consecrated Life'

Sept. 24 — 7 p.m.
Walker Recital Hall, 501 E. 38th St. mercyhurst.edu.

Pa. Supreme Court Candidates' Forum

Sept. 24 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.
Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. jeserie.org.

Solar Gardens: Community-Based Approaches

Sept. 25 — 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. (Luncheon)
Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. jeserie.org.

Connect: Grassroots Efforts to Reshape Our Community

Sept. 25 to January 10
Erie Art Museum, 411 State St. erieartmuseum.org.

Insane Inflatable 5K

Sept. 26 — 8:45 a.m. to noon
Lake Erie Speedway, 10700 Delmas Dr. insaneinflatable5k.com.

Bicycle Tour of Presque Isle

Sept. 26 — 9 a.m. to noon
Cookhouse Pavilion, 301 Peninsula Dr. events.dcnr.pa.gov.

Apple Festival

Sept. 26 — 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
YMCA Camp Sherwin, 8600 West Lake Rd. ymcaerie.org/camp.

Honey Harvest Festival

Sept. 26 — 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Asbury Woods Nature Center, 4105 Asbury Rd. asburywoods.org.

Harvest Season Carriage Rides Through the Vineyards

Sept. 26 — 2 to 4:30 p.m.
Liberty Vineyards & Winery, 2861 Rte. 20 Sheridan, NY libertywinery.com.

Homecoming Art Performance

Sept. 24 — 7 p.m.
Mary D'Angelo Performing Arts Center, 501 E. 38th St. mercyhurst.edu.

American Girl Gala

Sept. 27 — 1 to 4 p.m.
Bel-Aire Clarion Hotel, 2800 W. 8th St. americangirlgala.com.

Take Steps for Crohn's & Colitis

Sept. 27 — 3 to 6 p.m.
Presque Isle State Park, 301 Peninsula Dr. events.dcnr.pa.gov.

WWE Live Returns

Sept. 27 — 5 p.m.
Erie Insurance Arena, 809 French St. erieevents.com.

Vibrant Life Series

Sept. 28 — 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. lifeworkserie.org.

Nimitz, Halsey, & Spruance: Winning the U.S. Pacific Campaign in WWII

Sept. 28 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.
Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. jeserie.org.

Storytime at the Maritime

Sept. 29 — 10 to 11 a.m.
Erie Maritime Museum, 150 East Front St. flagshipniagara.org.

Life in the Liberal Arts: Adventures of a Wayward English Major

Sept. 29 — 6 p.m.
Multipurpose Room, Frank G. Pogue Student Center, 219 Meadville St. events.edinboro.edu.

Moonlight Kayak Tour

Sept. 29 — 6 to 9:30 p.m.
Presque Isle State Park, 301 Peninsula Dr. events.dcnr.pa.gov.

The Brookings Metropolitan Council Visits Erie to Discuss the Importance of Advanced Industries

Sept. 29 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.
Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. jeserie.org.

African Conservation Experience

Sept. 30 — 6 p.m.
Woman's Club of Erie, 259 W. 6th St. eriewomansclub.com.

National Theater of the Deaf

Sept. 30 — 7:30 p.m.
Louis C. Cole Auditorium, 205 Meadville St. events.edinboro.edu.

Chanting Night

Sept. 30 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.
The Bhakta School of Transformation, 1421 W. 41st St. bhaktaschool.org.

Mind, Body, Beer - Yoga

Sept. 30 — 7 p.m.
Erie Ale Works, 416 W. 12th St. facebook.com/ErieAleWorks.

LifeWorks Erie Open House

Sept. 30 — 4 to 6 p.m.
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. lifeworkserie.org.

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All Dogs

Kicking Every Day
Salinas

★★★★★

All Dogs balance dark moments with sunny pop melodies on the band's debut album.



Even as she sings about self-defeating tendencies and anxiety, frontwoman Maryn Jones absolutely dominates the microphone, demanding your attention with a tremendous, all-out performance amid some rousing hooks and fuzzy sonic goodness. At one moment, she's dealing out searing lines on the brilliant pop-rock "That Kind of Girl," the next, she's cooing on the gentle "Your Mistakes." Throughout the album, it's hard not to be captivated by the intimacy of it all, an invitation into the mind of Jones (that just so happens to come with an awesome, fuzzed-out '90s pop-rock soundtrack). Even with the doubt, there's a sense of fight — not surprising on an album entitled *Kicking Every Day*. From the sonic kick to the teeth of "That Kind of Girl" to the heart-wrenching slow burn of standout track "Skin," you'll be fighting along with Jones and All Dogs all the way. — Alex Bieler

Foals

What Went Down
Warner Bros.

★★★★★

Tightly packed with ten fuzz-stomp rock-funk tracks fit for both intimate clubs and



throngs of festivalgoers thousands deep, *What Went Down* builds on the U.K. quintet's already solid canon of trance-inducing math-rock and haze-thick guitar hooks. Still anthemically artful, *What Went Down* is cleaner, simpler at times than its three predecessors. Leaving the ever-intricate and hypnotic riffs more exposed results in an awesome rawness not as pronounced on 2013's *Holy Fire*. On "Mountain At My Gates," frontman Yannis Philippakis shifts from baritone croons to a near-pitch-breaking scream without ever losing control, churning out lines like "I'll drive my car without the brakes" atop delightfully driving interplay between drummer Jack Bevan and bassist Walter Gervers. If you don't listen to album closer "A Knife in the Ocean," an intense swelling of dense churning layers beneath Philippaki's soaring vocals and slowburn melody, you're missing out on one of the greatest songs — and bands — of the year. — Ben Speggen

The Arcs

Yours, Dreamily
Nonesuch

★★★★★

While The Arcs may be a new adventure for Dan Auerbach, the band's



debut album continues the trajectory that his hit duo The Black Keys had been taking over its last few albums. *Yours, Dreamily* finds Auerbach digging deeper into his beloved old school sounds, channeling a retro R&B, Motown vibe for his new act. The Black Keys thrived on gritty, dirty blues rock in the earlier years; but the band began to shift toward cleaner and smoother sounds, making the pristine production quality and lighter fare of The Arcs seem appropriate. There are some lively moments on *Yours, Dreamily*, but the album title captures the vibe quite well, as Auerbach and his team of top-notch performers craft a hazy trip into past decades. That dreamlike quality tends to stretch thin over the album's 14 songs, but Auerbach still manages to draw from the old to put out a perfectly enjoyable set of new tracks. — Alex Bieler

FIDLAR

Too
Mom + Pop Music

★★★★★

It's appropriate that FIDLAR is an acronym that stands for something not safe



for work, because the L.A. garage punk outfit isn't for the faint of heart. *Too*, the band's second album, is a fiery adventure in hard-hitting rock 'n' roll that's sloppy on purpose. The foursome behind FIDLAR — Zac Carper, Brandon Schwartzel, Elvis Kuehn, and Max Kuehn — don't care if you want your music composed nicely; in fact, they'd probably come to your house, trash the place, and throw an impromptu party just to show you what their version of a good time looks like. On *Too*, FIDLAR's burst of energy makes for a good ol' time, a messy blend that would be right at home in a dingy basement packed with drunken kids who would rather thrash than care about future mortgages and co-pays. Not surprisingly, there's a lack of direction on *Too*, but the results are a blast if you like your rock nice and messy. — Alex Bieler

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COUNTRY FAIR



A Conversation with Derek Trucks

The guitar great opens up about the Allmans, Colbert, and life on the road with wife Susan Tedeschi.



Left: Derek Trucks and Susan Tedeschi exhibit the chemistry that keeps their music and their marriage in tune. Opposite: The full Tedeschi Trucks Band will fill the Warner stage when they roll their "Wheels of Soul" tour into Erie.

By: Jim Wertz

Derek Trucks has been hailed a prodigy and a virtuoso, and is ranked 16 among the greatest guitar players of all time by *Rolling Stone*. Last year marked the end of a 15-year run with the Allman Brothers Band, the stalwart jam band he joined at age 20. The ABB runs deep in Trucks's DNA. His uncle, Butch Trucks, is an original member of the band and one-half of its trademark drum duo, and founding Allman brother, Duane Allman, who died in a motorcycle accident in 1971, is frequently cited as one of Derek's earliest slide guitar influences.

But the ABB is only one chapter in Derek Trucks's ever growing biography. Now 36, he won a Grammy Award for Best Contemporary Blues Album in 2010 with his own band, The Derek Trucks Band. They toured from 1994 to 2010, when he formed Tedeschi Trucks Band with his wife, Susan Tedeschi – an accomplished blues guitarist and vocalist with five Grammy nominations of her own.

The Derek Trucks Band played the Docksider in 2000 and Celebrate Erie in 2003, and he took the Warner Theatre stage with the ABB in 2005 and 2006. On Sept. 27 he's back at the Warner with the Tedeschi Trucks Band, hot off two nights at New York City's historic Beacon Theatre. I caught up with Trucks in Virginia as he and Tedeschi Trucks Band prepared for the Lock'n' Music Festival, where they hosted an all-star lineup paying tribute to Joe Cocker with a live performance of Cocker's seminal album *Mad Dogs & Englishmen*. We talked collaborations, Allman Brothers, and what it's like to live life on the road with family and friends. Enjoy!

Jim Wertz: This *Mad Dogs & Englishmen* show sounds like a really cool set.

Derek Trucks: Yeah it's gonna be fun, man. It's a pretty vast collection of musicians that are going to be onstage, but so far it's off to a good start.

JW: I saw you and Susan on Stephen Colbert's premiere doing Sly and the Family Stone with the house band and other guests. How'd that work out for you?

DT: That was a blast. It was great to get the call and to get to hang out with Buddy Guy for the day. That's never a bad way to go.

JW: Absolutely! I couldn't help but notice that you kept an eye on Colbert as he stepped up to sing next to Susan. Did I detect a little jealousy there?

DT: (Laughs) No. I was actually waiting for my cue.

JW: I figured as much, but there was a cutaway off your right side where you leaned back behind Buddy Guy and the way the shot was set up it looked like you were keeping an eye on Colbert.

DT: I've got to watch for that. When we were doing rehearsals for it, the whole band was on stage and there were microphones for Jeb Bush, Colbert, and George Clooney. They were supposed to come out and sing that last verse and right when the verse is done me and Buddy were supposed to start trading. Every time we did it in rehearsal it was different because the people kept changing, and when we did it for the show it was different still. I was trying to be a hawk-eye and make sure I didn't leave Buddy Guy out in the

cold. It's bound to be a little messy, but we got the spirit of it.

JW: Let's talk about some of these collaborations and specifically the one you have now with your wife. I saw you at the Fox Theatre in Atlanta on New Year's Eve in 2006. Susan's band opened up, you guys were the headliner, and there were a lot of collaborations that night between the two bands. You could tell there was this symmetry that was being nurtured and you guys were putting some things together.

DT: You know, that specific tour was certainly the seed of this band. In a lot of ways we were just personally and musically testing the waters. We had always talked about doing something, but that was when we first got serious about giving it a shot. Then a few years go by and the windows start to open up a little bit. When I was done with the Clapton tour, and then when we put this band together, I was really thinking about stepping away from the Allman Brothers and my solo band at the same time, so it felt like the right time to shift gears.

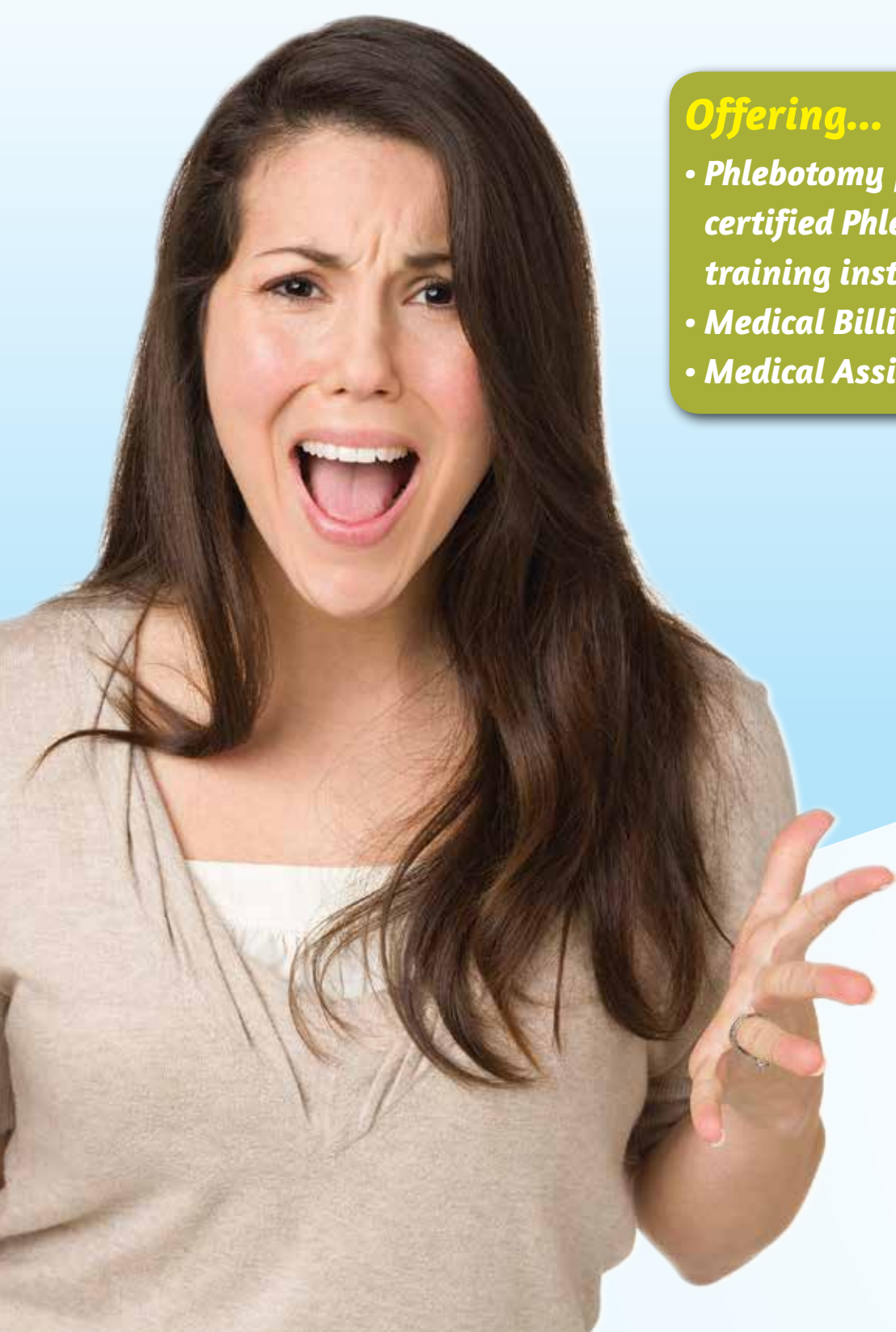
I was certainly ready for it. With the Allmans thing, as always with that group, it takes a lot of twists and turns and you look back and you've been there five years or eight years longer than you've planned. You know, family loyalty and I do love the music and all of that, but this thing, when it did come together, I was glad we had waited. She had more time with her own band to mature musically, and me too, and I think when it finally did come together the timing was spot on.

JW: Do you think it helped too that you guys were a little more entrenched as a married couple by that time? If you guys went out together in a new band at the beginning of your relationship, that might have been a little bit difficult as well.

DT: Absolutely. That was a big part of it, making sure we were personally ready for it. So that's probably why we waited in the first place. You want to make sure that when you're touring and in each other's space every second

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of every day that you know how to function. We waited and after ten years of being together we had a pretty good rapport. We felt pretty comfortable jumping in.

JW: You've been doing this a long time and you've built a lot of bridges along the way. Do you think about the many paths you've crossed and the amazing talent you've been able to put together, explicitly for Tedeschi Trucks, but also for a lot of the other projects you touch?

DT: Yeah, you know, we realize how incredibly fortunate we are to have played with a lot of the musicians we have, some for a short time but some for a decade or more. Really with almost everybody we played with, we're still in touch with them like family members. It's still very much a part of the circle. There are different times in your life when you play with different people, but there are certain people you've played with for a long time or really connected with and that never goes away. Those connections are still there. We take that very seriously. Music and family are kind of one and the same for us. So when you're in the trenches with somebody for a long time, those are bonds that are always with you.

JW: I imagine that family spirit is kind of in your DNA having grown out of the culture of the Allman Brothers and having that be part of your family dynamic from way back.

DT: I think about it a lot. I feel lucky that I was one part removed. My dad was on the edges of the Allmans at the Fillmore. He was at a lot of the magical moments from that band, but it wasn't so direct that the negativity of the music industry got on us. It was all the beauty and none of the other stuff. I'd hear the stories, but it didn't really affect me.

My family was extremely close and we did everything together. It was lower middle class, working class, all the way, but the stories of those festivals, and the music, and the way that band was in the beginning was a big part of the myth that I grew up around. I feel like I got the best part of it in a lot of ways. Sometimes the children of rock stars from that era didn't have that rosy experience. I feel lucky I wasn't too close to the fire in the beginning. By the time I was there, it was kind of a different generation. I feel like we've been able to learn a lot from those bumps in the



MARK SELIGER

road and the mistakes that first generation made when they didn't have the foresight. When the party was going on then, it was all very much an experiment. When you look back, you realize you have to balance these things a little bit better.

JW: You guys will be at the Beacon Theatre just before you come to Erie. Here, you'll be playing the Warner Theatre, which is our city's Beacon Theatre, an historic venue. There's not a great comparison between these theatres and the big festival venues you play. Is there one environment where you feel more at home?

DT: Each one is different, but it's definitely a different mentality when you're playing a festival like this thing we're doing in Virginia. We're learning a whole new set of music for the *Mad Dogs* night, then we do our show the next day. When you're in front of that many people after bands are playing all day, you have to think about the music you're playing a little differently. Some of the subtleties get pushed out of the way a little bit. You have to hit people a little more directly, which is fun sometimes. It's fun to get up and do that. At the end of the day though, there's something about places like the Beacon and the Warner Theatre where you feel like everybody that's coming to the

show is there with you and you really can take your time, and you can be a little bit more experimental. You want the show to start on fire and to end that way, but you don't have to worry if there's a bump in the road, that we're going to lose everybody. You can find your way a bit more naturally. I really do like when we get in the rhythm of doing those kinds of tours, of being in the theatres with some real history. It's a different vibe every night. There's certainly something about a place like the Beacon Theatre. I wasn't around for the Fillmore, so this is the closest I'm going to get to the stories I hear about. The years I did the Beacon with the Allman Brothers, they certainly created their own tradition in that place.

JW: For the uninitiated, what do we have to look forward to when the Tedeschi Trucks Band takes the Warner stage on Sept. 27?

DT: The tour changes by the week. We try to fill in the set. But I can honestly say that there aren't many other bands like this on the road and touring right now. It's an incredible collection of talent on the stage. It's humbling for Susan and me. We look across the stage sometimes and you have those moments like, "Holy Shit! This is a really good band!" It's kind of a running joke, but it's not really a joke, that sometimes

after a show Susan will say, "Hey, guys. Thanks for letting me be in your band." We say that to each other sometimes because we really do appreciate the level of musicianship and how much heart and energy everybody puts into it. That part is pretty much guaranteed. When there's music that's based at any level on improvisation you can't really predict what's going to happen from night to night, or even what level of show. But the thing with this band is that if it's a good night, there's still critiquing going on after the show. If it's a night that we feel should've been a lot better, there's a lot of critiquing going on after the show. But everybody leaves it on the stage. You take the work seriously. You don't take yourself seriously. That's something that this band shares, that mentality. You don't waste nights on stage.

JW: Derek, thanks so much for your time. We look forward to seeing you in a few weeks.

DT: Thank you.

There's more Derek Trucks interview at ErieReader.com. Jim Wertz is currently searching the interwebs for A/V of the Mad Dogs & Englishmen set, but you can break his focus at jWertz@ErieReader.com, and you can follow him on Twitter @jim_wertz.

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[Cont. from Page 11] tamination across Pennsylvania, like the Atgas blowout case, “off the books.”

In Delmar Township, Tioga County, we found a single inspector cooked nine of 27 cases, a likely 33% increase in the total number of polluted water supplies. Some of these cases were cooked when the inspector ignored clean pre-drill test results to rule that oil and gas operations were not responsible for water damage. Or, the inspector would use a contaminated post-drill test provided by industry as if it was a pre-drill test.

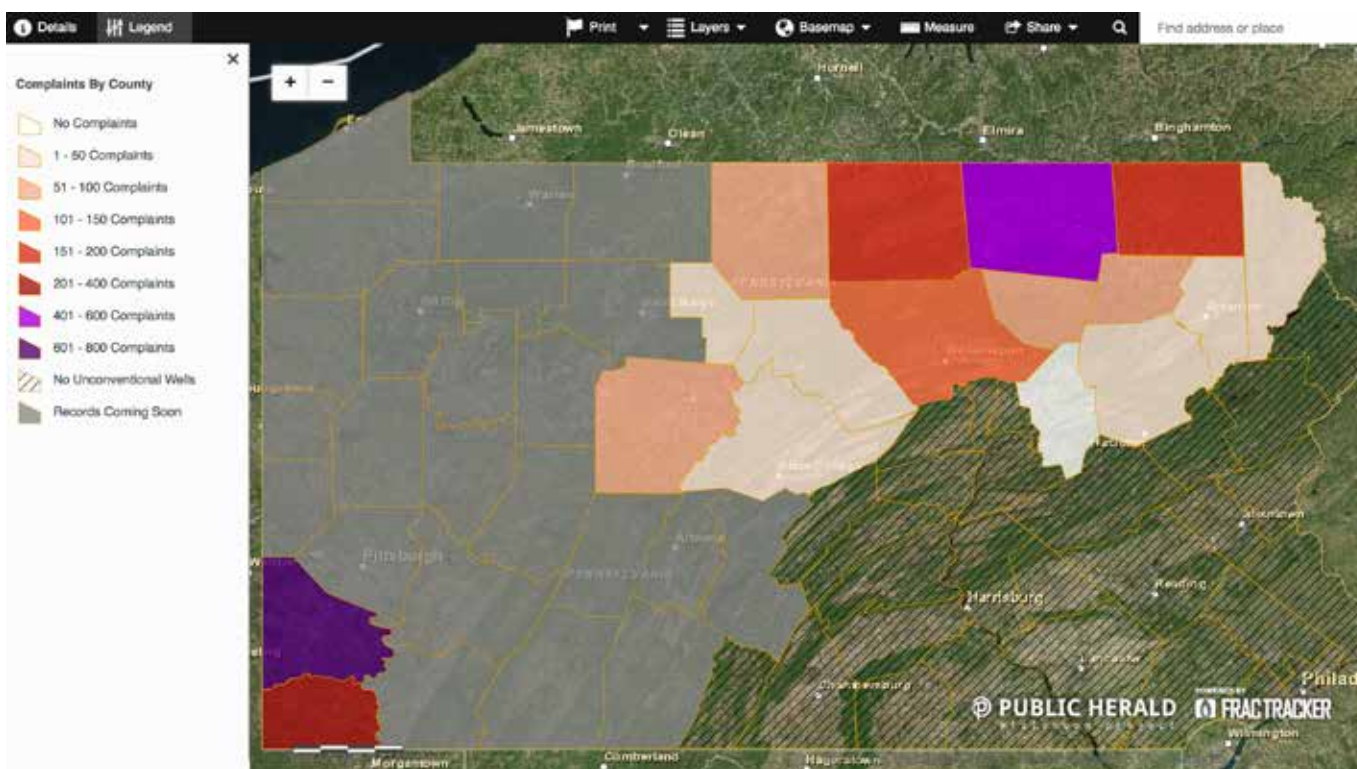
Complaint Form #275365: Date Received: 10/7/2010. “Complainant stated that family members keep getting sick. A neighbor had experienced problems with their water supply (Complaint #274235) ... the nearest well is the Stock 144.” Delmar Twp., Tioga County

In other instances, DEP would test a water supply for over a year until one test had a result closer to the pre-drill. At that time, a non-impact determination letter would be sent, and no further testing would be performed, even after months of prior test results showing contamination. (All nine ways can be read in detail at publicherald.org with examples.)

Basically, what all this means is that DEP’s current total for water contamination cases related to fracking, which they say is now 260, is false; it’s understated; it’s cooked.

Getting complaint files out of DEP offices and digitized for public use online was worth the struggle in many ways. *Public Herald* has now released the largest dataset of water contamination cases related to fracking in the Commonwealth: a total of 2,309 records of DEP complaint investigations in an online, open-source project called #fileroom (PublicFiles.org). And that means, the public now has a much clearer picture of what’s happening to drinking water supplies across the shale fields.

On the #fileroom website, maps are searchable by county and township and all files can be viewed, printed, and shared. Residents can click their county or township and search their home address to find water contamination complaints nearby; or scientists, health professionals, and journalists can see where clusters of problems are hap-



pening.

How A Cooked Complaint Gets Uncooked

To believe that a complaint can’t be cooked is to accept that DEP’s decisions are infallible. But, the question *Public Herald* had to deal with after seeing so many problems was, “Has DEP ever changed their determination about a complaint?”

In analyzing dozens of cooked water contamination determinations made by DEP, we are only aware of one instance where DEP changed its determination to hold an oil and gas company responsible for pollution after the Department previously let the company off the hook. In this rare case, DEP was pushed to reevaluate its decision by an attorney who used the Department’s own investigations to point out an obvious incongruity.

[insert pic of water tests]

In Westmoreland County, WPX, a Delaware limited liability company drilling and fracking in Pennsylvania, had a leaking waste impoundment that documented complaints show contaminated nearby residential drinking water supplies. DEP tested the water of neighboring homes after the initial complaint was made on Sept. 4, 2012, and later determined two water wells were contaminated by WPX’s operations. DEP concluded pre-drill and post-

drill test results showed an increase in chlorides, manganese, total dissolved solids, and other constituents.

But nearly a year later, after a third resident filed a formal complaint about bad water, DEP sent them a letter stating their investigation was “inconclusive,” even though the water had

A map of complaint investigations conducted by the Department of Environmental Protection showing records from 17 of 40 shale gas counties, obtained by Public Herald, and mapped by Fracktracker for #fileroom at publicfiles.org.

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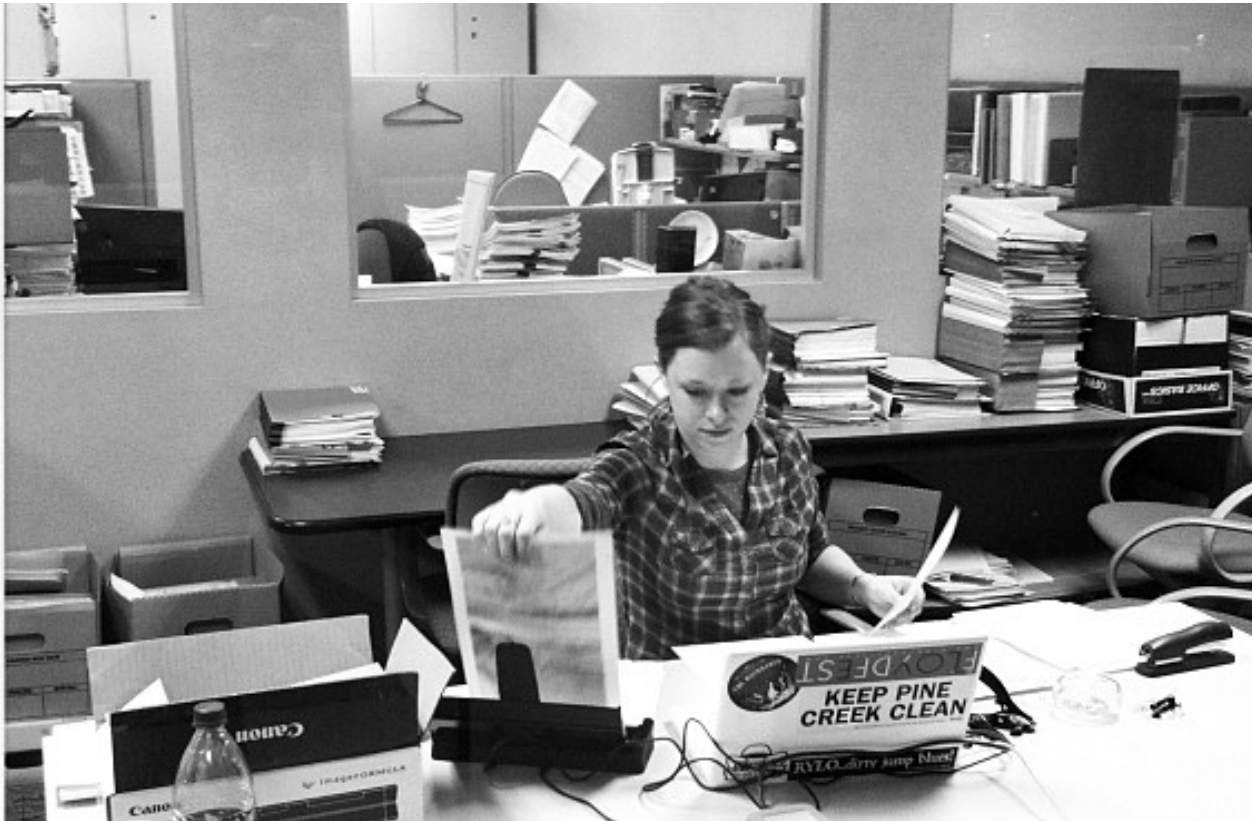
Community Advocate with Mountain Watershed Association, stepped in with a letter “requesting that the Department reexamine the existing data and issue a positive determination letter with all possible haste,” citing a comparison between the third resident’s water and that of the neighbors:

... the water test results of the ___s and their next door neighbors the ___s ... demonstrates that the two neighbors suffered the exact same impacts from the leaking impoundment of the Kalp #1-9H site in Donegal Township. Despite that connection, the ___s received a positive determination, whereas the ___s did not ... and examination of the ___s test results shows, as the chart below reflects, that their water exhibited increases in the exact same contaminants ...

elevated contaminants of the same oil and gas-related pollutants found in the previous two neighboring water wells.

That’s when Nick Kennedy, Esq., a

After Kennedy’s request, DEP retested the third resident’s water and about one month later, even though the final test was less contaminated than the first, DEP changed their decision. On



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Aug. 9, 2014 they issued a positive determination letter, this time concluding that the third resident's water supply was also damaged by oil and gas operations.

"Through further investigation and sample collection, the Department has determined that nearby oil and gas operations are responsible for these impacts to your water supply," state DEP in its letter. The conclusion was made by comparing pre-drill and post-drill tests on the water supply, a conclusion the DEP failed to make the first time despite having the same evidence.

The Whistleblower

I looked again, and then again at that paper dropped on my desk. I still couldn't believe it. "Then shred" was next to one tiny paragraph on the page marked "disposal code number 3" for "special handling" – it meant that in five years, the evidence behind stories documented in *Triple Divide* and at *Public Herald* could have otherwise been shredded, eliminated from public record. It also meant that the records our team has been scanning and meticulously cataloguing the past two years would have likely been shredded in just a few more years and never seen again.

Initially, we figured these records would be kept on microfiche or a digital PDF and that shredding them would

only ensure space within the records office. But, after careful questioning with an employee who's been with the agency for decades, the staff person revealed that only those records which could be considered "useful" would be kept on record at all, turned into microfilm; and "useful" meant only those listed in DEP's 260 positive determinations. What shocked us even more is that, according to this whistleblower, there is no review committee in place to sift through the "non-impact" records before they are shredded.

I put the paper down and heard a deafening sound – the echo of all the families I met fighting for a chance at the truth in dozens of cases where DEP failed to do the right thing. I thought about all the ways DEP had lied to them, and to me, over the past two years about complaint records and more, and about this new question of retention — of what is left behind to tell the whole story.

I turned to my scanner, loaded the whistleblower document, pressed the button, checked the room to make sure no one was watching, and listened to the same boring wheel squeak its way through one more page and thought, "Best job I ever had."

Melissa Troutman, Public Herald Executive Director, contributed to this report and personally wrote "How a

Melissa Troutman, Executive Director of Public Herald, scanning documents in Williamsport, PA at one of the first DEP file reviews in early 2012.

Cooked Complaint Gets Uncooked"

File Team members from #fileroom who scanned/organized/published complaint records: John Nicholson, Aziz Lalani, Ducky, Casey R. Pegg, Zora Acephala, Kyle Pattison, Amanda Gillooly, Joshua B. Pribanic, Melissa Troutman



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This is the third installment of Public Herald's Complaint Investigation as part of the INVISIBLE HAND series. To read the full report, visit <http://PublicHerald.org/invisible-hand/>.

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Geeked Out

Metal Gear Solid 5



Phantom Pain was released on Sept. 1. It will be the final installment in the Metal Gear Saga.

linear, with specific plot points hitting on beat like a film. Phantom Pain is structured more loosely in favor of an open world where players pick and choose what mission to take on and when; which makes sense, when taken into perspective with my previous complaint of a silent protagonist. If Snake can wander to and fro, it makes forced linear exposition more awkward, as who knows in what order the player did what mission.

Those two issues aside, Metal Gear games have always been mechanically dense, which is another way of saying very “gamey.” The transition to an open world and allowing players to dive deep into the game’s rich systems is creating one of the most enjoyable experiences I’ve had in a game. I have a horse, who has the codename of D-Horse. I can have him crap in the middle of a road where a supply convoy is planned to come through, which will result in the truck spinning out. This allows me to incapacitate the driver, and guard and steal the cargo all undetected. It’s pret-

By: John Lindvay

Phantom Pain was released on Sept. 1, 2015. It is the eleventh release in the series franchise which had its start all the way back on the Nintendo Entertainment System in 1987. Hideo Kojima, the game’s creator, has also stated that this is the final installment of the Metal Gear Saga.

The series is a touchstone of my gaming history and seeing it come to a close is interesting in many ways. First, it is incredible to see a franchise that has stretched across decades and console families. More impressive still is that all the games are actually tied together canonically, if not necessarily chronologically. And finally, Metal Gear Solid 5 is the most different game in the series from the established format of previous modern Metal Gears, starting with Metal Gear Solid on the original PlayStation. There is a certain bittersweetness to it all. Let me explain why.

First off, if you are unfamiliar with Metal Gear as a game franchise, don’t worry — I don’t blame you. If you’ve been consuming games like me your whole life you will understand what makes Metal Gear games so magical.

But if you are normal human being who plays games to enjoy them, it is understandable how you might have passed over this series. Metal Gear games are pretty obtuse, but it is this very obtuseness that makes them so attractive.

The best way to define a Metal Gear game is by its own tag line: “Tactical Espionage Action.” The game is about being stealthy. It’s about playing Snake, sneaking into a base with a tranquilizer gun and your fists, and destroying giant robots with nuclear capabilities to save the world. It’s also created by a Hideo Kojima, a genius Japanese game developer. He mixes large political and philosophical issues — like nuclear proliferation, private militaries, and nation secrets — with his own interpretation of western machismo of things like Tom Clancy spy novels. The stories are dense, nebulous, and exposition-heavy. I still remember the start of Metal Gear Solid 2, there was a good 15 minutes of dialogue introducing all this information that would make your mind melt; but as a fan of the series you’d gobble it up knowing it was all going to be connected to something later. The stories are messy with double and triple spy

agents who flip flop back and forth, various nuclear threats in each game, and humans with crazy superpowers, set in an alternate timeline of our own real geo-political history. Add on top of that, a layer of goofy gamer culture and silly gags. In many ways it’s a hot mess, but it is enthralling when you start trying to put it all together.

Part of what I loved about these games is that they were strong linear narrative games. You got your objectives through conversation over a “codec” which allowed you to talk to your commander and other specialists who would advise Snake on what to do next. There were mountains of dialogue to listen to and hear more about the characters. Snake himself was an encapsulating character, given his history as a specialist and his goal to stop any and all Metal Gear. So it has been disappointing to me that in this latest game, Venom Snake is largely silent. Most of those conversations you were forced to have in the previous games are now relegated to optional “audio logs” that you can listen to as you romp around the game world.

The other large departure is the game’s structure. Previous titles were

The game is about being stealthy. It’s about playing Snake, sneaking into a base with a tranquilizer gun and your fists, and destroying giant robots with nuclear capabilities to save the world.

ty amazing. And the game is full of moments like this, where players engage with the game’s systems and these incredible player stories emerge. So on one hand this is a great experience, but on the other hand it is missing so many things that make a Metal Gear game a Metal Gear game.

Critically, the game is earning high marks across multiple publications. It makes sense, but knowing this is the last game in the saga makes it a little bittersweet for me.

ER SPORTS

JRL notched an impressive 53-12 record after the first two weeks of grid picks, but he did miss an eye-popping 107-90 bout.

By: James R. Lecorchick

I HAVE BEEN making "grid picks" for more than 40 years, and I have never run into anything like the Meadville-DuBois game that grabbed national attention on nearly every level on Friday, Sept. 11. If someone would've told me that DuBois scored 90 points, I would've been extremely happy, because in my Sept. 2 picks, I had the Beavers winning 42-40. However, Meadville rolled to an amazing 107-90 victory, and I ended up with one of the most unbelievable incorrect picks in my selection history. For the record, I did have the Bulldogs-Beavers match rated as the second-best game of the weekend to keep an eye on. There were numerous staggering statistics on the night. One that caught my eye was the fact *just 30 points were tallied in the fourth period after an incredible 60 markers were put up on the extremely busy scoreboard that amazing evening in DuBois.

I'm sure the two teams were totally exhausted by the final stanza.

For the record:

Week 1

High Schools: 17-3; Colleges: 12-2

Week 2

High Schools: 15-7; Colleges: 9-0

Season: Overall: 53-12

Week 3

Sharpsville 22 REYNOLDS 14
 FARRELL 34 West Middlesex 24
 CAMBRIDGE SPRINGS 44 Youngsville 12
 Cochranon 18 MAPLEWOOD 16
 IROQUOIS 22 Eisenhower 12
 Union City 12 SAEGERTOWN 8
 Hickory 33 CORRY 26
 Greenville 32 WARREN 20
 Slippery Rock 28 GROVE CITY 14

Sharon 38 TITUSVILLE 18
 FAIRVIEW 26 Seneca 20
 Northwestern 24 MERCYHURST PREP 16
 CONNEAUT 42 DuBois 24
 Oil City 24 FRANKLIN 22
 WILMINGTON 26 East Liverpool 24
 Central Tech 48 Strong Vincent 22
 General McLane 45 EAST 14

TOP 3 GAMES

1. Meadville 77 BRADFORD 20 – Everyone in the country wants to see the Bulldogs now.
2. Harbor Creek 22 NORTH EAST 20 – Nothing like a rivalry!
1. McDOWELL 24 Cathedral Prep 21 – Speaking of rivalries, the Trojans will be tough to beat if they cut down on turnovers.

COLLEGES

Gannon 31 KUTZTOWN 27
 BLOOMSBURG 28 Mercyhurst 27
 EAST STROUDSBURG 21 Edinboro 20
 Clemson 31 LOUISVILLE 24
 Georgia Tech 38 NOTRE DAME 28
 PENN STATE 24 Rutgers 21
 DUKE 27 Northwestern 24
 KENTUCKY 21 Florida 20
 IOWA 20 Pittsburgh 17
 UCLA 34 Brigham Young 28

PROS

STEELERS 27 49ers 17
 Titans 28 BROWNS 13
 BILLS 31 Patriots 28
WEEK 4
 Cambridge Springs 22 EISENHOWER 14
 COCHRANTON 42 Saegertown 12
 Iroquois 38 UNION CITY 14
 Maplewood 28 YOUNGSRVILLE 12
 SHARON 34 Corry 24
 HICKORY 35 Warren 16

SLIPPERY ROCK 34 Titusville 16
 Mercyhurst Prep 22 GIRARD 18
 NORTHWESTERN 26 North East 20
 McDOWELL 44 East 14
 Reynolds 26 FRANKLIN 20
 Cathedral Prep 48 DuBOIS 28
 Olean 30 BRADFORD 20
 GENERAL McLANE 38 Oil City 22
 Conneaut 46 STRONG VINCENT 14

TOP 3 GAMES

3. SENECA 18 Fort LeBoeuf 14 – Big game for two evenly-matched teams.
2. HARBOR CREEK 22 Fairview 21 – Good game that could be decided in final seconds.
3. MEADVILLE 55 Central Tech 52 – This could be the game of the year, and if you like the forward pass: STAY HOME!

COLLEGES

GANNON 34 Clarion 24
 MERCYHURST 34 IUP 24
 California 27 EDINBORO 17
 ARIZONA 28 UCLA 24
 OREGON 38 Utah 27
 MICHIGAN 24 Brigham Young 23
 Georgia Tech 28 DUKE 27
 Tennessee 30 FLORIDA 24
 NOTRE DAME 31 UMASS 17
 PENN STATE 28 San Diego State 13
PROS
 BROWNS 21 Raiders 20
 STEELERS 30 RAMS 21
 Bills 24 DOLPHINS 17

James R. LeCorchick can be contacted at JRLSportsReport@gmail.com, and you can follow him on Twitter @JRLSports.

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We need over 1000 people to set the world record for largest stein hoisting which will be held at 4:30PM

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