

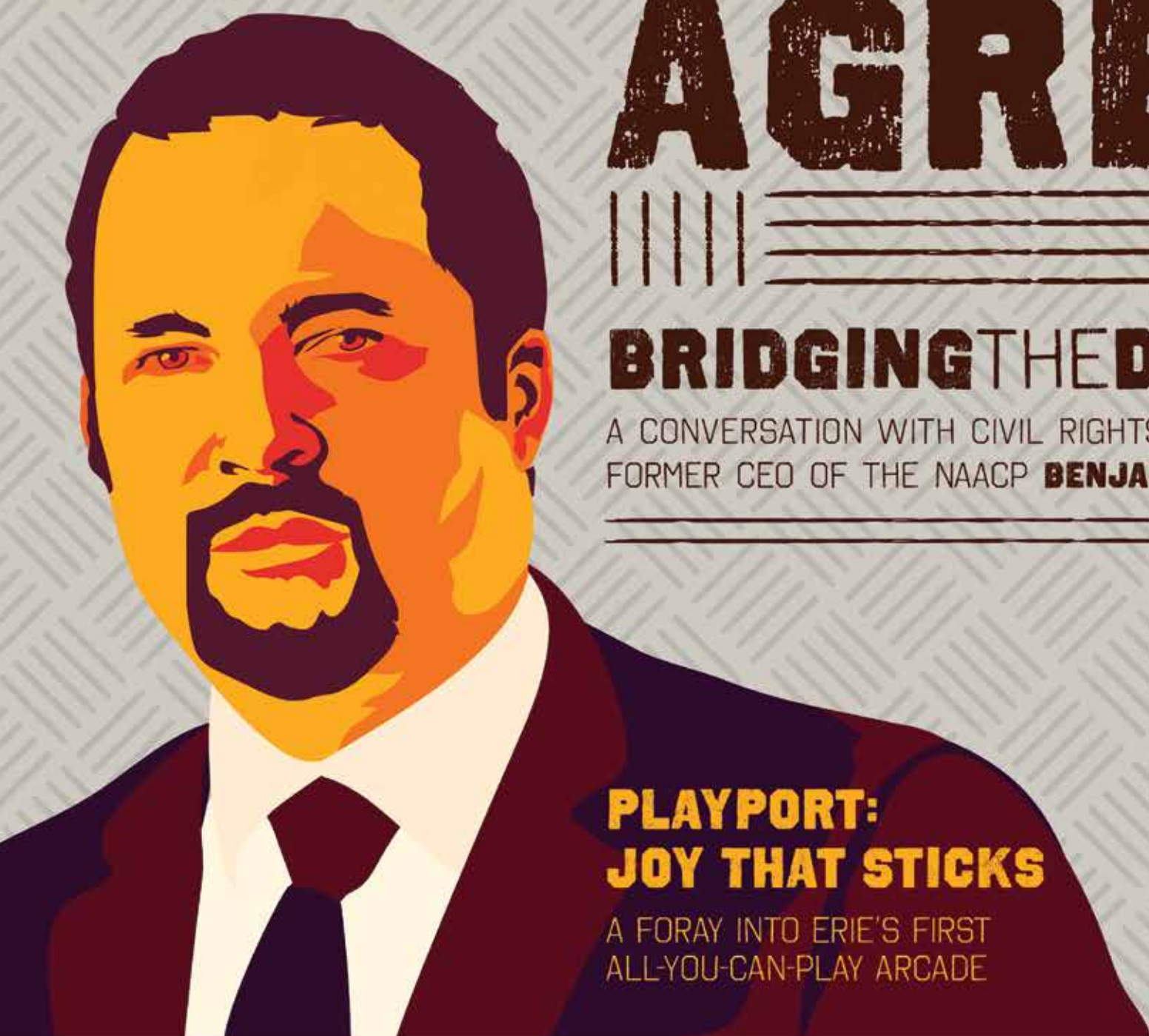
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**ERIE READER**

Mar. 2-Mar. 15/Vol. 6, No. 5/ ErieReader.com

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 ON.”




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**From the Editors****Different ways of being human**

*We have held the peculiar notion that a person or society that is a little different from us, whoever we are, is somehow strange or bizarre, to be distrusted or loathed. Think of the negative connotations of words like alien or outlandish. And yet the monuments and cultures of each of our civilizations merely represent different ways of being human. An extraterrestrial visitor, looking at the differences among human beings and their societies, would find those differences trivial compared to the similarities. – Carl Sagan, Cosmos*

In a presidential election year, what separates us gets far more airtime than what connects us. The neighbors you chatted amicably with over the drone of lawnmowers put out a yard sign supporting the candidate you loathe, and suddenly they're the enemy. You're tempted to un-friend folks with opposing allegiances right and left on Facebook. You're inclined – perhaps just a tiny little bit – to rear-end the car in front of you festooned in the other party's snarky stickers.

Every four years, we redraw these familiar dividing lines. And begin to harbor the belief that we are right and they are wrong and *how could they be so stupid?*

And things have been getting worse.

A 2014 Pew Research Center report titled "Political Polarization in the American Public: How Increasing Ideological Uniformity and Partisan Antipathy Affect Politics, Compromise, and Everyday Life," explored how "Partisan animosity has increased substantially over the [last two decades]. In each party, the share with a highly negative view of the opposing party has more than doubled since 1994. Most of these intense partisans believe the opposing party's policies 'are so misguided that they threaten the nation's well-being.'"

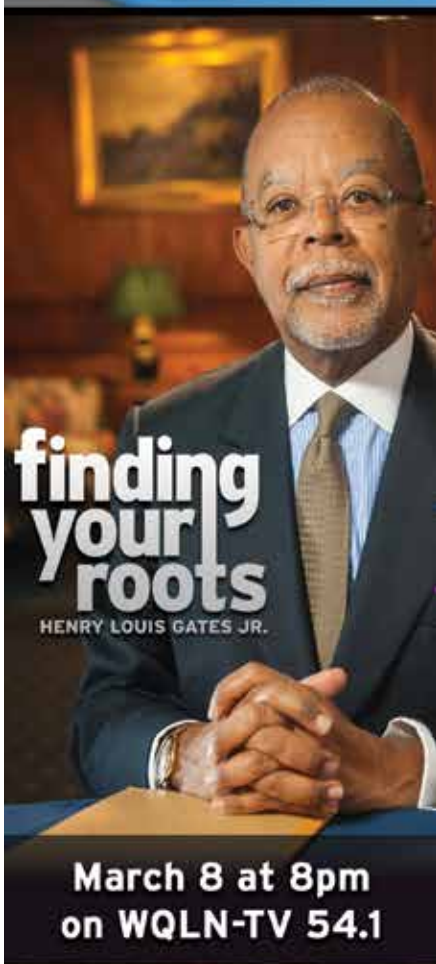
The report also suggested that "there is a tendency on the left and the right to associate primarily with like-minded people, to the point of actively avoiding those who disagree. Not surprisingly, this tendency is also tightly entwined with the growing level of partisan antipathy. In both political parties, those with strongly negative views of the other side are more likely to be those who seek out compatible viewpoints."

Locally, from arguments about the EMTA to UnifiedErie to how to solve Pennsylvania's enduring budget crisis, divides deepen as sides clamber to carve out their own identifying beliefs in opposition to the other's.

But as civil rights leader and former CEO of the NAACP Benjamin Jealous told the *Reader's* Dan Schank, "It's easy to figure out what you disagree on, but it takes more energy to actually figure out what you passionately agree about."

Ultimately, we all have only so much energy and attention to spend in this fleeting life. And if we're spending all on how we differ, we'll have nothing left to spend on the awareness of our myriad similarities.

Nevertheless, Sagan's cosmic perspective is our road back to richness. "Every one of us is, in the cosmic perspective, precious," he writes. "If a human disagrees with you, let him live. In a hundred billion galaxies, you will not find another."



**NEWS & OPINION**

**Erie At Large**

**The educational costs of children in poverty**



WOODLEY WONDERWORKS

**By: Jim Wertz**

**I**n the wake of Gov. Wolf's 2016 address to outline next year's budget initiatives, Erie School District Superintendent Jay Badams announced that the Erie School District will end its fiscal year with an estimated \$3 million deficit, due largely to the fact that the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is now around 250 days without a budget in the current fiscal year.

Without restoration of education funding from the state, Badams estimates that the Erie School District will need to shed nearly \$9 million from next year's budget, and that's only if the Governor's education initiatives are even half funded. If the legislature continues to operate only on oppositional terms and next year's budget is also grossly or wholly unfunded, the reality for Erie's city schools will be much worse.

That's because cutting after-school programs and closing schools with relatively small populations is only going to compound the greatest issue facing Erie at large and its public schools: The rate of children living in poverty in the City of Erie and attending public elementary schools here has grown at alarming rates over the last decade. And it's not getting better ... for anyone, anywhere in the city.

According to the Pa. Department of Education, the average number of public school students living in poverty in 2006 was nearly 80 percent districtwide. By 2014 that average had increased by more than 6 percent. Given the impact of the great recession on

the local economy, more children living in poverty during that period may not come as a surprise.

What is surprising, however, is how that districtwide increase is impacting individual elementary schools across the city. Four schools in 2006 had child poverty rates of less than 70 percent: Grover Cleveland Elementary (61.2), Harding Elementary (62.8), JoAnna Connell Elementary (66.8), and Jefferson Elementary (69.4).

By 2014 those same schools saw radical increases in childhood poverty. The poverty rate at Jefferson Elementary increased 18.9 percent and now nears 90 percent school-wide; the poverty rate at Grover Cleveland increased 17.6 percent and now nears 80 percent school-wide. JoAnna Connell and Harding Elementary Schools have child poverty rates of 74.4 percent, the lowest in the Erie School District. Perry Elementary saw an increase in childhood poverty of 14.1 percent, the third largest increase in the City leaving Perry with an overall poverty rate greater than 88 percent.

Part of the increase can be credited to the redistribution of poverty from the three schools that the district closed during this period for financial reasons: Burton Elementary, which had the highest poverty rate in the district in 2006 (94.4); Irving Elementary (87.2); and Glenwood Elementary (77.4).

The only school that experienced a decline in child poverty was Pfeiffer-Burleigh Elementary on East 11th Street, where the poverty rate dropped 4.4 percent between 2006 and 2014. Nevertheless, the rate of poverty in that school still nears 90 percent (89.7).

Today, eight of the City's 11 public elementary schools have child poverty rates greater than 88 percent. In 2006, there were four.

Couple this with the fact that neighborhoods surrounding Emerson-Gridley Elementary, which has a child poverty rate of 90.8 percent, and those near Jefferson Elementary, which has a child poverty rate of 88.3 percent, also have the highest concentrations of children under five living in poverty in the city. These schools will soon serve those populations.

As the Erie School District struggles to figure out how to keep its doors open, its lights on, and its teachers paid, it must also confront the economic realities of providing meals, specialized services, and after-school programs that keep the City's most vulnerable populations coming back to the classroom each day. Some of these services are partially grant funded, and that helps. But many of the programs are funded in part or fully by the state, and the ongoing budget crisis that threatens

According to the Pa. Department of Education, the average number of public school students living in poverty in 2006 was nearly 80 percent districtwide. By 2014 that average had increased by more than 6 percent.

school districts across Pa. will crush the finite opportunities offered to Erie's children if it's not soon resolved.

Diminished services for children in poverty in Erie and everywhere borders on institutional child abuse and the State Legislature should be held responsible.

The mantra in Harrisburg is that "we all want to fund education, but we have no way to pay for it." But without substantial changes to education funding and the model that distributes those funds, we'll all pay for the costs of inequitable education and its lack of funding.

It will be the most expensive mistake the Commonwealth has ever made.

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

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## Just a Thought

The upside of riding downtown



**Left: Still life with tomato at a rural Serbian bus stop. This gem was a parting gift from a family whose small backyard garden boasted everything from plums to pumpkins, with a barnyard of pigs, goats, and chickens, to boot.**

in this beautiful, complicated country.

Outside our windows, families ate languidly at picnic tables with chickens scrambling about; an occasional goat or two grazing on the small parcel surrounding the house. And everywhere, gardens spilled over with August's harvest of tomatoes, known in Serbian as *paradajz*, pronounced – fittingly, given their succulence – like “paradise.”

What I learned during my trip to Serbia could fill a book. But one of the most practical takeaways is how much I love using public transportation. It occurred to me that many

of my fondest travel memories – the scenes that play themselves out year after year on the movie screen in my mind – are from trains, and boats, and buses.

What a joy it is to let the mind wander as someone else takes the wheel. To stare out a window at scenes unfamiliar; to watch as riders enter and exit, imagining the purpose of their travel and what their lives are like beyond the brief span of time you'll share with them. All of you are headed the same way, but with such fascinatingly diverse stories.

And so, since returning to Erie, I now take the bus regularly, and am intrigued by similar encounters with other lives. People make life happen in such vastly different ways. And if you're always driving the same route alone in a metal box with wheels, it's harder to remember that your way is not the only way.

We hear a lot about how fossil fuels are doing us in, and how we ought to adopt alternatives like public transportation.

Locally, we hear a lot lately about the debate over how to proceed once the EMTA's charter expires in September.

What receives less press is how pleasurable it can be to “ride the E.” How relaxing it is to sit back and watch the world go by as your mind sorts through the day's stimuli. How – at least on my countless rides – drivers are unfailingly helpful. How fellow riders are kind and courteous, almost never exiting the bus without a “thank you” for the driver. How buses are on time, comfortable, and cleaner than many personal cars.

---

**What a joy it is to let the mind wander as someone else takes the wheel. To stare out a window at scenes unfamiliar; to watch as riders enter and exit, imagining the purpose of their travel and what their lives are like beyond the brief span of time you'll share with them.**

---

And how much money you can save if you're able to do without a vehicle, which you no longer have to maintain, register, inspect, park, insure, and fill with fossil fuel.

Buses have long been symbolic, from Rosa Parks to the Montgomery Bus Boycott to *The Graduate*.

And in some ways, the EMTA is becoming another symbol of the political stagnation Erie has come to know so well.

But let's not allow that single story to hijack our entire perception. Because the EMTA – like this region it serves – is so much more than a problem to be solved.

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

## Harrisburg Happenings

Only unity can save us from the ominous storm cloud of inaction hanging over this Commonwealth.

**By: Senator Sean Wiley**

**T***his is not a threat. This is not political posturing. This is simply what the math tells us will happen if this crisis is not resolved.*  
– Gov. Tom Wolf, in his 2016-2017 Budget Address

By Constitution, the beginning of each February brings a look at the Commonwealth budget for the upcoming fiscal year and this year was no different. On the ninth day during a joint session of the General Assembly, Gov. Tom Wolf shared with the Senate and the House his priorities for fiscal year 2016-2017 and delivered a very clear message: This Commonwealth is at a true crossroads where the crisis is not about politics, but rather about math.

There was little detail regarding the Governor's proposed plan, as is traditional, and he spoke at the 30,000-foot level about the issues facing our Capitol. He chastised the General Assembly for a failure to address the most pressing issue of the agreed-upon structural deficit: an ominous storm cloud hanging over this Commonwealth, threatening our citizens with the gale force winds of inaction.

The Governor likened the consequences of the failure to act to a pain that will be felt by every citizen in Pennsylvania, where the “consequences will be real ... they will be immediate ... they will be severe.” Wolf foreshadowed massive property tax increases, enormous layoffs of teachers and educational staff, and cuts to programs and services that will bear down upon our most vulnerable with a crushing weight – one that will result in unfathomable losses.

As the term “agreed-upon” implies, there is consensus on the existence of the structural deficit and a bolstering of the data by independent sources like Standard & Poor's. But that is as far as that consensus may go. “How we got here” remains a

## The Cold Realities of a Warming World

How climate change is threatening wildlife habitat – and its related industries – throughout Pennsylvania.



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**Left: The brook trout, our state fish, depends on the cooling shade provided by our state tree, the eastern hemlock. Both are predicted to largely disappear from Pa. by the turn of the century.**

By: Ed Zygunt

Many Pennsylvanians remain blissfully unaware that every decade for the past 40 years has been warmer than the previous decade. And 2015 was the hottest year since recorded weather history began.

So it's no coincidence that almost every day we witness vivid news reports about destructive and costly hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, forest fires, and droughts here in the U.S. and around the globe.

While humans may have the ability to adapt to the adverse effects of a warming climate, many wildlife species don't have that luxury. Climate change is quickly altering critical habitats for native wildlife species that have survived for millennia.

The latest report from the National Wildlife Federation entitled "Big Climate Challenges Facing Small Mammals" documents how a warming world is harming even the smallest critters all across America.

For example, the snowshoe hare is uniquely adapted to survive by altering the color of its fur coat from brown to white as summer sun gives way to winter snows. Unfortunately for the hare, this biannual wardrobe change is linked to the amount of daylight, not snowfall. So as the number of days with snow cover decreases, their vulnerability to predation increases.

The snowshoe hare is listed as a "Species of Special Concern" in Pa. Due to their declining numbers, the state Game Commission reduced the daily bag limit for hares in recent years. If these population trends continue,

wildlife biologists fear the snowshoe hare's range will retreat north out of Pennsylvania.

But the snowshoe hare is not the only species in trouble. Our state bird, the ruffed grouse; our state fish, the brook trout; and our state tree, the eastern hemlock, are predicted to largely disappear from Pa. by the turn of the century.

Brook trout are so closely dependent on the cooling shade provided by streamside hemlock trees that at one time they were called Hemlock Trout. Sadly, an invasive insect known as the wooly adelgid is slowly but surely killing our majestic hemlocks.

In the past, cold winters kept the adelgid confined to the southern U.S. Today this destructive pest has spread all the way to New England. As the hemlocks disappear, so do our priceless cold water streams.

If you hunt ruffed grouse, you're painfully aware of their declining numbers as well. A recent report by the Northeast Upland Game Bird Technical Committee warns the future is indeed grim for our state bird. While the loss of early successional forest habitat is a significant factor, a changing climate will eventually eliminate their preferred tree species from the Keystone State. On top of that, warmer winters frequently bring rain instead of snow, thereby reducing fledgling survival.

A warming world will also impact Lake Erie's outstanding fishery and the economic benefits it provides to the Great Lakes region in terms of revenue from lodging, restaurants, and charter fishing operations.

Studies conducted by Ohio State University's Aquatic Ecology Lab found that very warm winters cause failed year-classes of walleyes and perch the following spring, while long cold winters support good year-classes. Already, the Great Lakes region is experiencing shorter winters and fewer days below freezing.

And the future does not look better. Climate scientists forecast Erie could have the climate of Alabama by the year 2100, so that tremendous fishery resource may only be a dim memory within one human lifetime.

Even though many environmental factors can impact fish and wildlife populations, scientific evidence points to climate change becoming the proverbial straw that breaks the camel's back.

All these abnormal changes to wildlife habitat are occurring with just a 1 degree globally averaged temperature increase over the last century. Imagine what future generations will face if the temperature rises 7 to 9 degrees, as climate scientists forecast.

President Obama's Clean Power Plan, which unfortunately was recently stayed by the U.S. Supreme Court, is focused on reducing greenhouse gas pollution from all the major emitters. But as he wisely leads our country toward a clean energy future, too many of our elected officials are working just as hard to make sure we stay wedded to the fossil fuel industry.

Like you, I want future generations to have the same fishing, hunting, and many other outdoor opportunities that we enjoyed in our lifetime. But that won't happen unless we elect leaders who represent the will of the people instead of bowing to the fossil fuel industry.

*Ed Zygunt is a member of the National Wildlife Federation and has hunted and fished in Pennsylvania for the past half century. He resides in Susquehanna County.*

pawn of partisan politics, and "How we fix it" is an exercise in divergence at best. So that two billion dollar storm cloud swirling above the Commonwealth grows larger each day.

No one party has a lock on good ideas, and the Governor himself indicated he can accept that he won't "get his way on everything." I wholeheartedly believe that my colleagues hold the esteem of this Commonwealth as dearly as I do, and that we can find a solution. We *must* find a solution.

It is easy and somewhat colloquial to say that the General Assembly must "put politics aside" in addressing that resolution. But as we all know, actions have a much louder voice than simple verbiage. Also,

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No one party has a lock on good ideas, and the Governor himself indicated he can accept that he won't "get his way on everything." I wholeheartedly believe that my colleagues hold the esteem of this Commonwealth as dearly as I do, and that we can find a solution.

---

in wading through the inescapable partisan rhetoric, Democrats and Republicans are saying the same thing: Each Pennsylvanian deserves all of the best that this Commonwealth has to offer. Again, the departure is found in how to move forward.

This storm cloud of inaction is not painted an ebony hue only by a Republican brush, nor a strikingly dark purple only by a Democratic marker; rather it is colored, dyed, and highlighted by a collective hand. Only in harmony and unity will that cloud pass, preventing a tornado of destruction from touching down.

*Senator Sean D. Wiley can be contacted at [SenatorWiley@pasenate.com](mailto:SenatorWiley@pasenate.com), and you can follow him on Twitter @SenatorWiley.*





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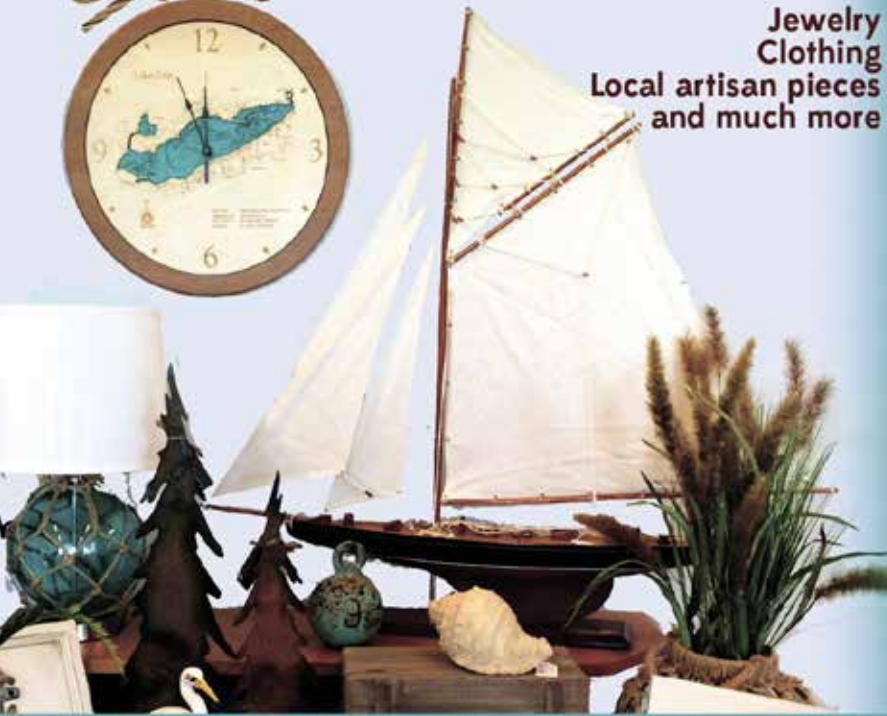
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## News of the Weird

Now available on Amazon.com: Buddhist monks.

By: Chuck Shepherd

### Cat Culture

Longtime National Symphony cellist David Teie announced in November that his crowdfunding project was hugely successful, freeing him to produce an album of music meaningful to cats. (Cats, for example, relax in response to the earliest sound of their mother's purring, which Teie clocked at 23 harp notes a second.) Teie's work, according to an October Washington Post feature, includes examining waveforms of real-time purrs and creating an organ sound to mimic the opening and closing of a cat's vocal chords. His Kickstarter pitch raised so much money that he might also try creating music for bored zoo elephants or stressed-out whales. In tests, cats responded well to Teie's music, according to a 2015 journal article (but with less curiosity at the Washington cat cafe Crumbs & Whiskers). [Washington Post, 10-18-2015, 11-29-2015]

### Leading Economic Indicators

Amazon.com has riled up Buddhist temples in Japan, according to a January Associated Press dispatch, by offering traveling monks rentable online to conduct funerals and other rituals. The monk would go to a home, grave or funeral home, at fees and upgrades ranging from the equivalent of \$300 to about \$8,500. (Many of Japan's 75,000 Buddhist temples are struggling financially and destined to close. Complained a spokesman for the Japan Buddhist Association, what Amazon is facilitating "is allowed in no other country in the world.") [Associated Press, 1-30-2016]

In February, Gawker.com introduced the semi-serious Lube Crude Index as a poignant indicator of how far the price of oil has fallen. Comparing the world price of a standard 42-gallon barrel of crude (about \$31) with that of a 55-gallon barrel of Passion Natural Water-Based Lubricant (retailing as, when packaged in smaller quantities, a sexual aid) shows that "sex lube" is more valuable than crude oil by a factor of 28 — a barrel's worth of the lube recently priced at \$1,175 versus crude's barrel-adjusted \$41. As recently as June 2014, the Lube Crude Index was near 1. (Gawker reported that only two actual barrels of Passion Natural could be found and that the price would likely rise further if one of them were sold.) [Gawker.com, 2-3-2016]

### Unclear on the Concept

Angel Rivera, 49, was arrested in December in Orlando, Florida, on allegations that he punched a child in the face because the boy was not getting dressed for church fast enough. (The boy was wearing an ankle brace, which slowed him down.) (2) Ryan Dailley, 28, was arrested in Las Cruces, New Mexico, in February on several charges after, police said, he beat his mother by pounding her with a Bible. His explanation, police said, was that when he asked her who her soul belonged to, she repeatedly declined to answer. [WKMG-TV (Orlando), 12-21-2015] [Las Cruces Sun-News, 2-9-2016]

### Who Knew?

The much-maligned pigeon was recently found by researchers to be as skilled as humans at distinguishing between slides of benign versus malignant human breast tissue. Writing in

the journal PLOS ONE, specialists from the University of Iowa and University of California, Davis lauded the birds' processing of color, contrast, brightness and image compression, marveling that pigeons see more wavelengths of light than humans, even though their brains are one-thousandth the size. (Birds are already known to distinguish "hostile" humans in celebrated dive-pecking incidents.) [CNN, 11-20-2015]

### Police Report

A near-certain robbery of the PNC Bank in Zebulon, North Carolina, on Jan. 28 was prevented, with employees treated to an almost-slapstick scene in which the bank manager kept the suspect outside by winning a tug-of-war for control of the front door. The manager had grabbed the door after noticing an armed, masked man approaching from the parking lot just after the bank opened. (The frustrated perp fled empty-handed, but was at large.) [WTVD-TV (Raleigh, N.C.), 1-29-2016]

Awkward Moments Ahead in Lockup: (1) Joel Sloan, 51, was booked into jail for DUI by a sheriff's deputy in Birmingham, Alabama, in February. Sloan was dressed head-to-toe as a clown. (No explanation was offered.) (2) Vaughn Tucker, 23, was booked into jail in Tulsa, Oklahoma, in February on drug charges. He was wearing a T-shirt with large lettering on the front: "I Would Cuddle You So Hard." [AL.com (Birmingham), 2-7-2016] [The Smoking Gun, 2-8-2016]

Didn't Think It Through: The robbers of the electronics store Compucell in Springfield, Massachusetts,

in December came up empty, but are still at large. A man with a gun jumped the counter and demanded that the employee give him money from the locked cash register. The gunman moved to the back door to let in his accomplice, but that merely allowed the employee and two customers to run out the front door, and the accomplice fled, too, sensing that, with no one to unlock the register, the "robbery" was going nowhere. [The Republican (Springfield), 2-16-2016]

### Perspective

American hunters are so trophy-kill-obsessed that, in the decade ending in 2014 (according to Humane Society figures), they averaged nine imported carcasses a day among the "Big Five" African species (lions, elephants, leopards, rhinos and African buffalo) — most of which require special U.S. and foreign permits, with "conservation" conditions. Some countries endanger their own dwindling herds just to sell the lucrative permits, and South Africa even offers 150 captive lions a year to make trophy kills easier. (Total hunting imports of all animal trophies averaged 345 a day, mostly from Canada and Mexico.) [National Geographic, 2-6-2016]

### The Litigious Society (Foreign)

Chandan Kumar Singh told BBC News in February that his recent lawsuit against the Hindu god Ram was provoked by Ram's mistreatment of his wife in spiritual lore. Said Singh, "(W)e cannot talk about respecting women in modern day India when we know that one of our most revered gods did [Cont. on page 12]



Just Toyin' Witcha — By Bryan Toy



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**NEWS & OPINION**

not treat his own wife with respect." Singh thus wants a court to tell the god to acknowledge he was wrong. (2) After news reports of a male Siberian tiger being playful with a male goat (ordinarily, a tiger's meal) in a Russian safari park, lawyer Alexei Krestyanov pressured the local prosecutor in February to embargo further announcements, claiming that such coverage harmed children by provoking "interest in non-traditional sexual relations." [BBC News, 2-8-2016] [The Guardian (London), 2-5-2016]

**People With Issues**

Police in Austin, Texas, said in February they had received several complaints (KEYE-TV reported "dozens") from women about a man who approaches them in public genially, but then turns aggressive and tries to stomp their feet (in one case, telling the woman it was "normal" behavior for him). (The suspect apparently has only little in common with the Arkansas recidivist who holds the record for multiple appearances in News of the Weird — who merely fondles and sucks women's toes, although without their consent and sometimes after forcefully grabbing the foot.) [KEYE-TV (Austin), 2-5-2016]

**The Classic Middle Name (All-New!)**

Arrested recently and awaiting trial for murder: Jerald Wayne Boozer-Brown Jr., Macomb Township, Michigan (February); Matthew

Wayne Long, Hico, Texas (January); Joseph Wayne Goswick, Graham, North Carolina (January); John Wayne Strawser Jr., Belington, West Virginia (September); Jesse Wayne Gunderson, Wayne, Michigan (September); Curtis Wayne Wright, Bonita Springs, Florida (September); John Wayne Noonkester, Cottonwood, California (July). Indicted for murder: Derrick Wayne Gamble, Belton, Texas (December). Convicted of murder: Carl Wayne Wiley, Del Rio, Texas (February). Shot themselves to death while suspected by police of murder: Ricky Wayne Cook, Melbourne, Florida (February); Lloyd Wayne Franklin, Davidson County, North Carolina (October).

**A News of the Weird Classic (September 2011)**

FUBAR: Retired U.S. Army Sergeant Major Rob Dickerson finally received his Purple Heart this summer (2011), four years after he was seriously wounded in a rocket attack in Iraq and two years after he began a back-and-forth paperwork battle with the Army to "prove" he was injured. Recently, the Army had apologized and mailed him the award, but it arrived C.O.D., leaving Dickerson to pay the \$21 fee. (The Army subsequently reimbursed Dickerson, but Dickerson said he hasn't been able to cash the check, in that it was somehow made out to "Roy Dirksen.") [KELO-TV (Sioux Falls, S.D.), 8-4-2011]



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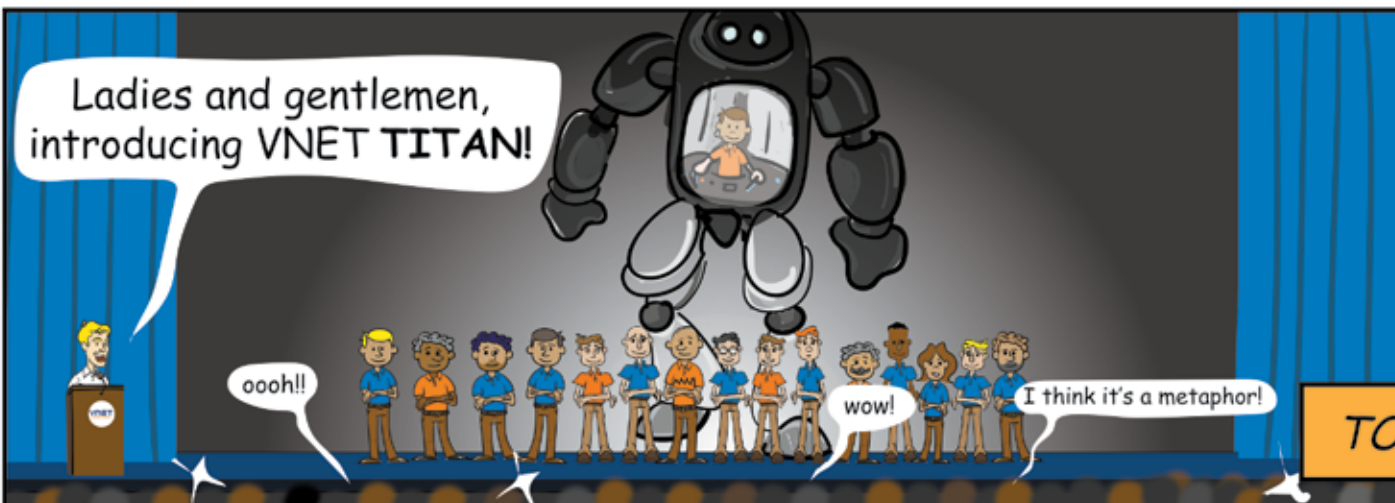
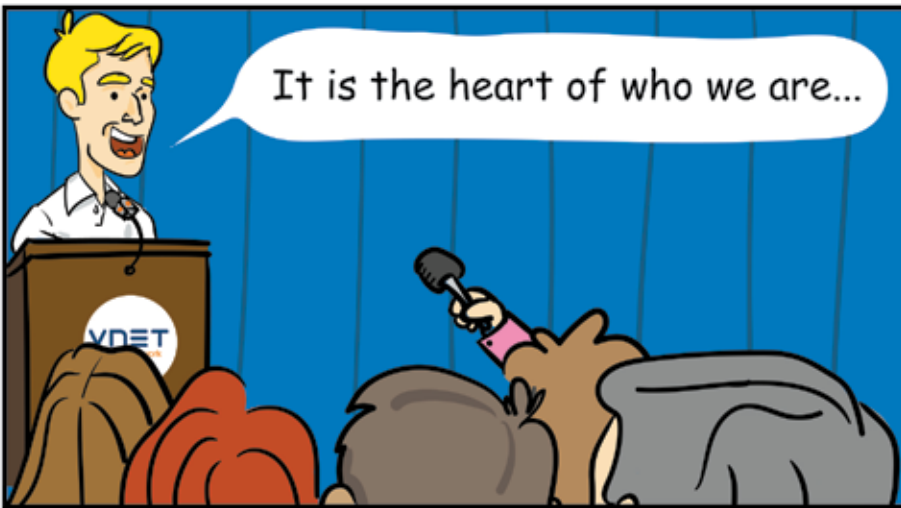
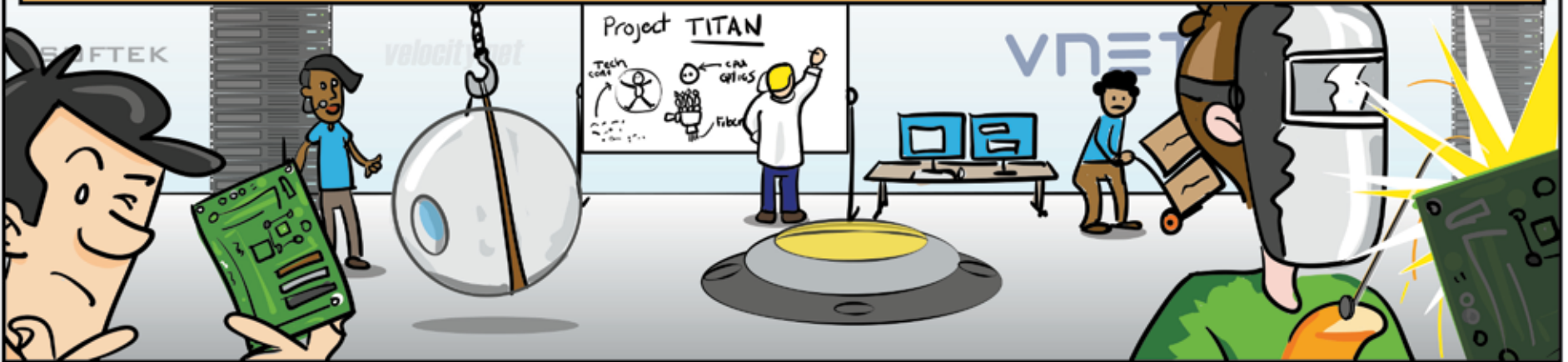
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## Playport: Joy That Sticks

A foray into Erie's first all-you-can-play arcade



BRAD TRIANA

By: Matt Swanseger

It's Friday afternoon and I'm staring into the eye of a dinosaur. It stands 5-foot-8, weighs at about 260 pounds, and exhibits a distinctive set of markings. It glares back at me unflinchingly with a sharp Fujitsu MB14241 monochrome display, but never do I feel threatened. While this particular individual might have bled my ancestors for a pint of lunch money in its day, it otherwise plays nicely.

"Now wait a second, Mr. Fundamentalist – dinosaurs and people never lived together!"

Au contraire, mon frère – the fossil record (© 1978) indicates we at one time not only coexisted, but flourished as contemporaries.

Taito's *Space Invaders* ushered

in what has become known as "The Golden Age" of video arcade games. The cultural afterimage of pixelated aliens streaming down the screen ad infinitum is burned into our collective consciousness. At first, their movements are slow and deliberate, but as the difficulty ramps up, their speed and numbers increase. Apparently humankind poured all of its resources into just one laser cannon (our militaries are woefully underfunded in this virtual reality), and it's up to you and you alone to defend the fate of Mother Earth. How delightfully overwhelming.

There is something so pure, so visceral about that experience, and all arcade titles thereafter sought to replicate it. These games push our reptilian hot buttons as we push theirs –

something in our primal core is reawakened and reengaged. Our reflexes are tested to the maximum as we fight against the chaos onscreen, but there is no risk of incurring actual physical harm (unless you punch something in frustration – people do silly things when their prefrontal cortex is suppressed).

That is why just as many (if not more) adults flock to Playport in Millcreek Township as children. The place is buzzing with both when I arrive, a testament to the arcade's timeless appeal. A week earlier (the first of February), co-owners Brad and Michelle Nuce had effectively doubled the facility's square footage, from around 5,000 to 9,000. Playport now occupies the entirety of a building that once accommodated Port Erie Boatworks and

**Above and opposite: A pretty comprehensive selection of arcade genres is represented at Playport. The fleet of game cabinets currently numbers in excess of 100, so many that owner Brad Nuce has the luxury of swapping them in and out, both to "keep things fresh" and to provide relief should one malfunction.**

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Many children are enthralled with the idea of becoming a paleontologist, but few are smitten with the notion of turning over every rock to find what they're looking for. Brad scours auctions, basements, garage sales, and even barns in search of new machines to put on exhibit in his interactive museum. It's rare that a specimen is perfectly preserved, awaiting him in some



BRAD TRIANA

manger bathed in heavenly light – it is an investment of time and energy to restore each to working order.

“It’s quirky,” his wife says with a chuckle.

**Assets You Could Bounce A Quarter Off Of**

The business began – like most do – as a passion. Upon settling in Erie after a stint in the U.S. Marine Corps, Brad started collecting used arcade cabinets simply because he liked them. He had no plans of repurposing them for profit. Instead, he and his wife instituted another business, Brad’s Bounce-A-Lot Play Land at the All Seasons indoor flea market. When that folded, they continued to rent out their inflatable play fortresses to parties and festivals around town. That enterprise was (and still is) successful. However, Erie winters aren’t exactly a picnic, so that revenue stream freezes until summer’s warmth restores its flow.

It wasn’t until Brad learned how to repair and refurbish old machines that opening an arcade (i.e. an indoor,

weatherproof business) became a viable prospect; those skills were the proverbial mosquito trapped in amber that brought his Jurassic Park to life in December 2014. Because he could now acquire cabinets at more manageable costs, his fleet could grow larger and more diverse. It currently numbers in excess of 100, so many that he has the luxury of swapping them in and out, both to “keep things fresh” and to provide relief should one malfunction (the pinball units are notorious for it).

A pretty comprehensive selection of arcade genres is represented – classics (*Pac-Man*, *Donkey Kong*), point-and-shoot (*Time Crisis*, *House of the Dead*), hack-n-slash (*Gauntlet: Dark Legacy*), run-n-gun (*Contra*), fighters (*Street Fighter*, *Mortal Kombat*), racers (*Datona Motion Deluxe*, *Road Burners*), and music (*Pump It Up*, a *Dance Dance Revolution* alternative). Playport also boasts rarities such as the six-player version of *X-Men* (only 200 such machines survive) and *HyperBowl*, a track-ball-controlled bowling game formerly

an exclusive to Jillian’s Entertainment locations (most of which have since vanished). Additionally, Brad is more than willing to “put the feelers out” for anything a customer feels he lacks (per

---

Traditionally, after all your lives are extinguished, you’re left scrambling through pockets for quarters and/or tokens as the onscreen counter ticks down to zero. Not so at Playport – just 10 dollars (plus tax) buys your immortality.

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the special request whiteboard).

My posse hasn’t rolled six deep since fire drills at Grover Cleveland Elementary, so I regrettably cannot try *X-Men*, but I do deep-six a few bowling balls in the *HyperBowl* gutters before return-

ing to some familiar favorites. The common denominator among nearly all of them is merciless difficulty – blink and you might miss something (i.e. die). My mortality rate is embarrassingly high. Without a doubt, these machines gutted more piggies than Smith’s Provisions in their heyday.

Traditionally, after all your lives are extinguished, you’re left scrambling through pockets for quarters and/or tokens as the onscreen counter ticks down to zero. (Hope you indexed and cross-referenced those cargo pants, cowboy, because the pressure’s on!) You either defy its finality or accept it and walk away, a broken man or woman. Not so at Playport – just 10 dollars (plus tax) buys your immortality. Monday through Friday, it’s play for as long as you want. On the weekend, it’s capped at three hours.

Hardcore gamers might decry such leniency, saying it detracts from the white-knuckle tension of arcade gameplay and rewards amateur sloppiness. But the Nuc- **[Cont. on page 38]**



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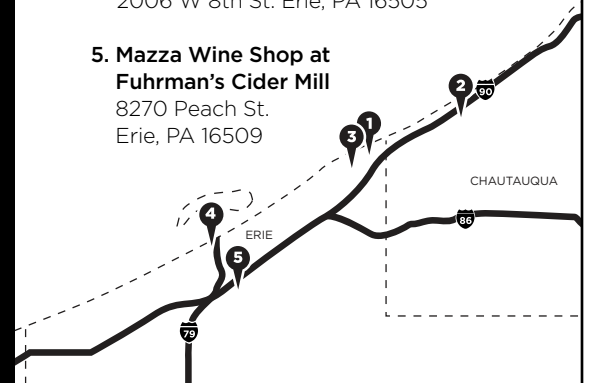


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## Bridging the Divide

A conversation with civil rights leader and former CEO of the NAACP Benjamin Jealous



**Benjamin Jealous stepped down as CEO of the NAACP in 2013 and is now a senior partner at Kapor Capital, an Oakland-based firm that provides start-up funding to entrepreneurs from underrepresented backgrounds. He also serves as the Board Chairman of the Southern Elections Fund, which works to diversify political leadership and increase voting rights in our southern states.**

dia platform known for anonymous, hateful rhetoric. And he explained how Sen. Bernie Sanders won his endorsement by being well-equipped to avoid what Martin Luther King, Jr. once referred to as the “giant triplets – racism, militarism, and greed.”

Prior to the lecture, I had the opportunity to chat with Jealous about the “tough, awkward, open conversations” he believes are necessary to address issues of race. Our conversation has been edited for length and clarity:

**Dan Schank:** Policing reforms are in the news a lot lately. Are there approaches to building less discriminatory police forces that strike you as particularly effective?

**Benjamin Jealous:** We need to elevate our standards for the use of force – and the use of force training – to be on par with the most effective in the world. In the United Kingdom, where most police officers do not carry guns, officers are trained every six months on when to employ which type of force. In the United States, where virtually all police officers do carry guns, the most common standard for officers is that they are trained about when to employ different types of force for one day at the Academy. And as a result, many tragedies occur every year that could have easily been avoided if officers had better training.

I spent my summers growing up in a community that was defined by black law enforcement officers. And I remember when my best friend’s father, who was a California highway patrolman, shot somebody. He shot him for reasons that were justified; it was a bank robbery. He shot the man in the leg intentionally, trying to avoid vital organs.

And I remember how it wrecked him. And how it triggered all sorts of memories from Vietnam. So we don’t just do a disservice to civilians when we improperly or inadequately train po-

lice officers to employ force. We do a disservice to the officers. If a man can be that impacted when they shoot a civilian and it’s justified, imagine how it impacts them when they discover it was unjustified.

At the same time, we need to make better use of personality testing. Psychologists can, with a significant degree of accuracy, predict which individuals are most likely to engage in unnecessary violence. We need to weed those individuals out of our police forces.

There is a professor at UCLA [Social Psychologist Phillip Atiba Goff] who has done a lot of subject tests with

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**We need to elevate our standards for the use of force – and the use of force training – to be on par with the most effective in the world. ... many tragedies occur every year that could have easily been avoided if officers had better training.**

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By: Dan Schank

**W**hat can we learn about racial profiling from the assassination of President William McKinley?

During civic leader Benjamin Jealous’ recent appearance at Penn State Behrend, he answered this unusual question.

In 1901, Eastern European anarchists had just issued a warning to leaders of the Western world that they would soon take violent action. Understandably, this put McKinley’s security team on high alert. But during the President’s trip to the Pan American Exposition in Buffalo, his protectors were on the lookout for a particular type of adversary. According to Jealous, “he was tall, he was swarthy, and he had exotic facial hair.”

McKinley’s team was proven half right. The assassin was, indeed, an an-

archist of Eastern European heritage. But he was also short, blonde, and clean-shaven. And standing a few feet away from the murderer was a tall, swarthy man with “exotic facial hair” who diverted much needed attention away from the killer. The blonde man easily passed through the security checkpoint while holding a revolver wrapped in gauze and later shot McKinley.

Accordingly, Jealous concluded that “if you focus on race instead of behavior, people can die – even the President of the United States.”

Profiling (and its often deadly consequences) wasn’t the only theme of the lecture. During the Q and A, Jealous explained how he handled a bigoted question during an interview that led to his Rhodes Scholarship. He earned enthusiastic applause when he suggested that Penn State should ban the on-campus use of Yik Yak, a social me-

bias, there are other factors that need to be taken into consideration. And this explains, in part, why young black men frequently report being abused by black officers.

**DS:** Could you talk a bit about how to approach community policing and the drug trade?

**BJ:** When it comes to the War on Drugs, we have to decide what we're concerned about, independent of race and class. In other words, if we're concerned about open air drug markets, then we should be targeting raves, bars, and fraternity houses – and not just street corners in poor neighborhoods, be they tenements or trailer parks.

Our police chiefs should be advocates for untethering the number of arrests they make from the support they receive from the government because it has led to all sorts of perverse incentives to treat addicts like serious criminals.

**DS:** You mean through things like quotas, right?

**BJ:** Yes. In order to get a federal subsidy for things like the War on Drugs,

you have to prove two things: present need and ongoing progress. And both of those are measured in arrests.

So you take police who should be focused on kingpins or distributors, and instead they're focused on the lowest person on the totem pole. Because there are not big numbers of kingpins or distributors; but there are big numbers of addicts.

And it also leads to underperformance in solving rapes and homicides, because you're dealing with such a high number of addicts that you end up pulled from solving more serious crimes.

**DS:** You've built allies in the past with people one might not expect, such as Newt Gingrich on issues of criminal justice reform. What do you think is important to highlight when dealing with people who don't always share your beliefs?

**BJ:** The challenge is to find what you agree on. It's *easy* to figure out what you disagree on, but it takes more energy to actually figure out what you passionately agree about. I have been

blessed in my career to work in single-issue coalitions – which cut out a lot of the noise. And they're magnets for people who share single beliefs, regardless of what others they behold.

For instance, when I was spokes-

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**Our police chiefs should be advocates for untethering the number of arrests they make from the support they receive from the government because it has led to all sorts of perverse incentives to treat addicts like serious criminals.**

---

person for the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty, we worked with [Conservative Televangelist] Pat Robertson on clemency cases. And it opened my eyes to the broad range of allies that exist on any individual

cause.

With the NAACP, many people see us as a multi-issue organization, but I worked our agenda as if we were the hub of several single-issue efforts. Therefore, the question is not "did you support our agenda?" but "Can you agree with us on this particular issue?"

As a result, we made real progress – we helped abolish the death penalty in six states in six years. We played a critical role in passing marriage equality in four states ... we played a role in pushing through more than 50 criminal justice reform bills in Texas – and, in all of those, we were working with unlikely bedfellows.

One of the things I learned from my family is to listen to everyone. And to respect everyone's fundamental humanity. If you connect that to a political goal – and if you take that approach with purpose – you can earn people's trust and loyalty and encourage them to take courageous action.

*Dan Schank can be contacted at [dschank@eriereader.com](mailto:dschank@eriereader.com).*



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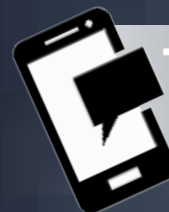
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Erie, PA

# Spotlight on Erie

March 2 — 15, 2016

**Thursday, March 3**

## Arts & Drafts' Cultural Coalescence Returns to the Brewerrie at Union Station



It's time for the 17th rendition of what's become a very cool biannual Erie tradition: the Arts & Drafts Fest at the Brewerrie.

Featuring the fine works of more than 50 (that's right – 50!) artists from around the region, performances by more than a baker's dozen of well-known local bands and musicians, and, of course, a wide menu of tasty beverages available for responsible enjoyment, the Brewerrie will be one happening place between Thursday, March 3

Arts & Drafts features the fine works of more than 50 (that's right – 50!) artists from around the region.

and Saturday, March 5.

Along with a whole lot of cool, locally-made art, and tasty, locally-made drafts, headlining musical performances by The Mighty Sea on Thursday, Tyler Smilo on Friday, and Sean Patrick and the Newgrass Revolution on Saturday are just an off-the-top sampling of what the event has to offer.

"Arts & Drafts is the epitome of the Erie art and music scene," festival music coordinator Justin Tapper has told the *Reader*. "We don't take commission from the artists and try to give it all back to them. It's what Erie's scene is all about – getting together to support one

another to help people grow and get their names out there."

Whether you're in it for the arts or the drafts, that's something to raise a glass to.

The spring Arts & Drafts exhibits are open from noon to midnight each day, with live music starting at 7 p.m. Entrance is free Thursday and up until 9 p.m. Friday and Saturday, and after that it's just a \$3 donation for all kinds of treats for the senses.

For a full lineup of the artists and musicians participating and being featured, visit [brewerrie.com](http://brewerrie.com). – Ryan Smith

Noon to midnight // 123 W. 14th St. // [brewerrie.com](http://brewerrie.com)

**Friday, March 4**

## Ernie Krivda Brings Refreshing Jazz Fluency to the Anchor In



The accommodations at the Anchor In may be snug, but nothing volumizes like open chord voicings and a breathy tenor sax (I'd insert a Kenny G mane-whisk here, but he plays soprano in an instrumental pop – NOT jazz – application. Sneer, sneer. Scoff, scoff).

If you find yourself gasping for air in a sea of C-F-G monotony, step downstairs and enjoy the oxygen-rich environs of a live jazz setting, free of charge. (After all, who charges for air?) Cleveland saxman Ernie Krivda has music running through his veins (father Lou) and plenty of lung capacity to feed it. With 30 albums spanning over five decades, he has more than acclimated himself to the jazz scene's greatest heights. After graduating from the Cleveland Institute of Music, he began his ascension through the Northeastern Ohio club circuit and became the

understudy of legendary alto saxophonist Cannonball Adderley, earning gigs with some of the biggest names in the jazz pantheon. He has toured with Quincy Jones and performed with Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, Groove

Like all the best players, Krivda speaks through his instrument with great fluency, laced with the nuance and idiosyncrasy you'd expect from someone who was born into the language.

Holmes, and Dizzy Gillespie.

Like all the best players, he speaks through his instrument with great fluency, laced with the nuance and idiosyncrasy you'd expect from someone who was born into the language. From stuttering staccatos to quivering vibratos to loping legatos, he can shift dialects seamlessly between musical passages. His music with his own quartet recalls classic Blue Note records of the late 1950s and 1960s, incorporating the Latin and soul elements of the hard bop subgenre that dominated the era – accessible without being utterly predictable.

This edition of the Friday Night Jazz Series (with resident guitarist Frank Singer) will focus on standards in lieu of originals, but by no means does that imply a stale experience. The beauty of jazz is that each soloist can color the same picture with an entirely different palette (and no, Kenny G apologists, not in *Duotones*).

Hope that helps you breathe easier, Erie. – Matt Swanseger

6-9 p.m. // Anchor In // 3122 West Lake Rd. // 833.1212 for reservations // no cover

**Friday, March 4**

## Wellington International Ukelele Orchestra Will Combine Tight Musicianship with a Loose Mood at MIAC

Raindrops trickle down the eaves of your island shanty in unison with the teardrops streaking down your



face. Before the cruise ship sank, your wife left you for the onboard Elvis impersonator. In the swim to shore, your kids got picked off by marauding tiger sharks. You're in a place worse than bad; you've hit rock bottom. You dip your cocktail umbrella in the dregs of your strawberry daiquiri (a choice beverage for introspection), scribble some lyrics on your bar napkin, and reach for your ... ukulele?

Not that a ukulele *can't* be an exten-

Wellington's repertoire runs the gamut from South Pacific standards to pop hits of the 21st Century – and it's surprising how well each fits their format.

sion of your soul during your hour of deepest despair, but it is not an instrument we typically associate with poignancy. Thankfully, the Wellington International Ukelele Orchestra doesn't pretend to take itself too seriously despite the serious talent of its constituents. The New Zealand collective is comprised of up to 12 members (co-founder Bret McKenzie, of *Flight of the Conchords* fame, is often involved elsewhere), with Daniel Yeabsley strumming the double-bass while the others pluck away at any combination of ukulele (soprano, concert, tenor, and/or baritone).

Wellington's repertoire runs the gamut from South Pacific standards to pop hits of the 21st Century – and it's surprising how well each fits their format.

Tunes like The Smiths' (inherently jangly) "This Charming Man" and Toto's (guiltily pleasurable) "Africa" are naturals, but (strangely) so is Justin Timberlake's "Cry Me A River," which takes a folksy turn in its reincarnated form. The musicianship is tight but the mood is kept very loose, with comedy and tomfoolery interspersed throughout.

Don't be startled if you see a grown man in a gorilla suit bang a gong (any more than you normally would). And don't be startled if you temporarily forget yourself in the fun and sun – even if you have some serious soul-searching to do otherwise. – Matt Swanseger

7:30 p.m. // Mary D'Angelo Performing Arts Center at Mercyhurst University // 501 E. 38th St. // [miac.mercyhurst.edu/events/the-wellington-international-ukulele-orchestra](http://miac.mercyhurst.edu/events/the-wellington-international-ukulele-orchestra)

**Friday, March 4**

**Chickstock IV Celebrates Women Who Rock at the Kings Rook Club**

Singer/songwriters Claire Stuczynski, Optimistic Apocalypse, and the bad-ass punk-rock ladies in Britches don't bite on that whole "you're really good for a girl" thing: They just are re-



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

ally good.

They're some of the Erie area women who rock – not always gently, not always slowly, but always truly. And rock

Chickstock has become an annual event that puts the spotlight on stalwart and talented female musicians from around the region.

they will on Friday, March 4, when the Kings Rook Club presents Chickstock IV.

It's become an annual event that puts the spotlight on stalwart and talented female musicians from around the region, with past years' lineups also featuring Stuczynski and other artists including Brooke Surgener and Whitney Wright.

Mind you, it's not like any of the women on Chickstock's past or current lineups really need too much help making themselves heard: They all have talents and voices that ring out loud and clear.

If you've not heard them for yourself, now's the time to check them out. – Ryan Smith

10 p.m. // 1912 Peach St. // [facebook.com/kingsrookclub](http://facebook.com/kingsrookclub)

**Friday, March 4**

**Matty B Presents a Theatrical Concert Featuring Music from the 50s at PACA**

With all that old-school rockabilly pouring out of him, we know damn well that Matt Boland can really pull off playing the great stuff of the 1950s.

That music – a considerable part of his own sonic roots – suits him well, and sounds good on him. And on Friday, March 4 and Saturday, March 5 at

PACA, he's putting it on in true form with his all-new theatrical/musical review, *Matty B Presents A Night at the 50s*.



It's "a step back in time, bringing you the authentic feel of walking into a late 1950s concert to see Elvis Presley, Johnny Cash, Buddy Holly, and Eddie Cochran," says Boland.

Almost a decade ago, Boland brought Buddy Holly back to life in an ac-

**MUSIC**

**Star Trek: The Ultimate Voyage**

Mar. 2 — 7:30 to 10 p.m.  
Warner Theatre, 811 State St. [erieevents.com](http://erieevents.com).

**Open Mic-Hangout**

Mar. 3 — 6 p.m.  
Basement Transmissions, 145 W. 11th St. [facebook.com/basement.transmissions](http://facebook.com/basement.transmissions).

**Tanya Bannister**

Mar. 4 — noon  
WQLN Studios, 8435 Peach St. [eriephil.org](http://eriephil.org).

**The Avenue Collective Launch Party**

Mar. 4 — 6 p.m.  
Basement Transmissions, 145 W. 11th St. [facebook.com/basement.transmissions](http://facebook.com/basement.transmissions).

**Friday Night Jazz**

Mar. 4, 11 — 6 to 9 p.m.  
Oasis Pub, 3122 West Lake Rd. [jazzerie.com](http://jazzerie.com).

**The Wellington International Ukulele Orchestra**

Mar. 4 — 7:30 p.m.  
Mary D'Angelo Performing Arts Center, 501 E. 38th St. [mercyhurst.edu](http://mercyhurst.edu).

**Cruisin'**

Mar. 4 — 8 p.m.  
Presque Isle Downs & Casino, 8199 Perry Hwy. [presqueisledowns.com](http://presqueisledowns.com).

**Wynonna & the Big Noise**

Mar. 4 — 8 to 11 p.m.  
Struther's Library Theatre, 302 W. 3rd Ave. [strutherslibrarytheatre.com](http://strutherslibrarytheatre.com).

**Chickstock**

Mar. 4 — 10 p.m.  
Kings Rook Club, 1921 Peach St. [facebook.com/kingsrookclub](http://facebook.com/kingsrookclub).

**Mallory Run EP Release Show**

Mar. 5 — 5 p.m.  
Basement Transmissions, 145 W. 11th St. [facebook.com/](http://facebook.com/)

[events/731926060241418](http://events/731926060241418).

**Saturday Night Latin, Blues & More**

Mar. 5, 12 — 6 to 9 p.m.  
Oasis Pub, 3122 West Lake Rd. [jazzerie.com](http://jazzerie.com).

**Refuge**

Mar. 5 — 8 p.m.  
Presque Isle Downs & Casino, 8199 Perry Hwy. [presqueisledowns.com](http://presqueisledowns.com).

**An Evening in Paris**

Mar. 5 — 8 to 10 p.m.  
Warner Theatre, 811 State St. [eriephil.org](http://eriephil.org).

**Smilo and the Ghost & Jake Johns**

Mar. 5 — 10 p.m.  
Kings Rook Club, 1921 Peach St. [facebook.com/kingsrookclub](http://facebook.com/kingsrookclub).

**Sunday Fireside Music Series**

Mar. 6, 13 — 1 to 4 p.m.  
Arundel Cellars, 11727 E. Main Rd. [arundelcellars.com](http://arundelcellars.com).

**Visiting Artists**

**Series: Tartan, Baroque & Klezmer, featuring FleytMuzik**

Mar. 7 — 8 p.m. &  
Mar. 8 — 2 p.m.  
Walker Recital Hall, 501 E. 38th St. [mercyhurst.edu](http://mercyhurst.edu).

**Tomoreaux**

Mar. 9 — 6 p.m.  
Basement Transmissions, 145 W. 11th St. [facebook.com/basement.transmissions](http://facebook.com/basement.transmissions).

**Avi Avital**

Mar. 10 — 7:30 p.m.  
Walker Recital Hall, 501 E. 38th St. [mercyhurst.edu](http://mercyhurst.edu).

**i.MPossible Concert**

Mar. 11 — 7 to 9 p.m.  
Blasco Memorial Library, 160 E. Front St. [erielibrary.org](http://erielibrary.org).

**Chris Higbee**

Mar. 11, 12 — 8 p.m.  
Presque Isle Downs & Casino, 8199 Perry Hwy. [presqueisledowns.com](http://presqueisledowns.com).

**Funktional Flow**

Mar. 11 — 10 p.m.

Kings Rook Club, 1921 Peach St. [facebook.com/kingsrookclub](http://facebook.com/kingsrookclub).

**Madama Butterfly**

Mar. 12 — 7:30 p.m.  
Cathedral Prep Auditorium, 250 W. 10th St. [gannon.edu](http://gannon.edu).

**Uptowne Buddha**

Mar. 12 — 10 p.m.  
Kings Rook Club, 1921 Peach St. [facebook.com/kingsrookclub](http://facebook.com/kingsrookclub).

**Rani Arbo and Daisy Mayhem "American Spiritual"**

Mar. 16 — 7:30 p.m.  
Louis C. Cole Auditorium, 205 Meadville St. [edinboro.edu](http://edinboro.edu).

**DANCE**

**Blended Spirits Ranch 7th Annual Dinner Dance**

Mar. 12 — 5:30 to 11 p.m.  
Ambassador Hotel and Conference Center, 7794 Peach St. [blendedspiritsranch.org](http://blendedspiritsranch.org).

**St. Patrick's**

**Day Dance**

Mar. 14 — 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. [lifeworkserie.org](http://lifeworkserie.org).

**FOOD & DRINK**

**An Evening in Paris**

Mar. 2 — 6 to 9 p.m.  
Cloud 9, 25 E. 10th St. [eriephil.org](http://eriephil.org).

**Arts & Drafts Fest**

Mar. 3, 4, 5 — noon to midnight  
The Brewerier at Union Station, 123 W. 14th St. [brewerie.com](http://brewerie.com).

**Pine Junction Tap Takeover**

Mar. 6 — 4 p.m.  
Pine Junction, 9757 Bailey Hill Rd. [facebook.com/Voodoo-Brewery-305706522795288](http://facebook.com/Voodoo-Brewery-305706522795288).

**Learning to Make Pierogi with Rochelle Krowinski**

Mar. 10 — 1 to 2:30 p.m.  
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. [lifeworkserie.org](http://lifeworkserie.org).

## CALENDAR

claimed, six-show sellout theatrical concert performance at Erie's former Roadhouse Theatre.

"People have been asking me to do Buddy Holly ever since," he says, "so I decided to put on a show like you are stepping into a time-warp and literally watching a rock-and-roll review in the 50s."

For three shows – each all-ages, and BYOB for those 21-plus – PACA will become a vehicle to rock's past, with Boland and his bandmates at the wheel.

Listen up, cats: Be there, or be square.  
– Ryan Smith

March 4, 7 p.m.; March 5, 5 and 8 p.m. // 1505 State St. // [facebook.com/paca1505](https://facebook.com/paca1505)

### Saturday, March 5

#### Mallory Run's EP Release Show Brings a Lineup of Local Favorites to Basement Transmissions

Mallory Run plays a style that can sometimes be hard to define. Some may call them Emo with a dash of Punk, or vice versa, some might still call them Pop Punk from their pre-hiatus days in 2013, while the band describes themselves as "slow mosh." But what isn't hard to define is Mallory



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Run's status for the past several months as one of the most hyped bands in the Erie scene. And on March 5, the band is finally releasing their self-titled EP at Basement Transmissions.

The five song EP features two singles, "Simple Times" and "Bedrot," which carry a significantly more somber texture than their former straightforward Pop Punk style, weeding out The Wonder Years' influence and replacing it with the likes of Citizen and Balance & Composure.

Filling out the bill are Logan's Star Pupil, a Pittsburgh-based band who recently finished a weekend mini-tour with Mallory Run, Frame and Mantle, GNOSiS, and VWLS (pronounced Vowels), all from Erie. – Tommy Shannon

5 p.m. // 145 W. 11th St. // \$10 advance, \$12 day of show // [facebook.com/events/731926060241418/](https://facebook.com/events/731926060241418/)

#### Eating Well, Eating Local Series

Mar. 11 — 12:30 to 2 p.m.  
*LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. [lifeworkserie.org](https://lifeworkserie.org)*

#### FILM

##### Robots Movie

Ongoing through March 31 — 11 a.m. & 1 p.m. & 3 p.m.  
*Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. [trecpi.org](https://trecpi.org)*

##### D-Day: Normandy 1944 Movie

Ongoing through March 31 — noon & 4 p.m.  
*Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. [trecpi.org](https://trecpi.org)*

##### Tiny Giants

Ongoing through March 31 — 2 p.m. & 5 p.m.  
*Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. [trecpi.org](https://trecpi.org)*

##### Sicario (2015)

Mar. 2 — 7 p.m.  
*Erie Art Museum, 411 State St. [erieartmuseum.org](https://erieartmuseum.org)*

##### Imagine Dragons: Smoke & Mirrors Concert

Mar. 2 — 7:30 p.m.  
*Cinemark Tinseltown, 1910 Rotunda Dr. [cinemark.com](https://cinemark.com)*

##### Ex Machina

Mar. 3 — 8:30 p.m.  
*Edinboro University, 405 Scotland Rd. [facebook.com/edinborofilmseries](https://facebook.com/edinborofilmseries)*

##### Bees in Paradise (1944)

Mar. 4 — 8 p.m.  
*Erie Movie House, 3424 West Lake Rd. [facebook.com/ErieMovieHouse](https://facebook.com/ErieMovieHouse)*

##### MET Opera - Manon Lescaut (Puccini)

Mar. 5 — 12:55 p.m.  
*Mary D'Angelo Performing Arts Center, 501 E. 38th St. [mercyhurst.edu](https://mercyhurst.edu)*

##### Met Opera: Manon Lescaut

Mar. 5 — 12:55 p.m. & Mar. 9 — 6:30 p.m.  
*Cinemark Tinseltown, 1910 Rotunda Dr. [cinemark.com](https://cinemark.com)*

##### The Shining (1980)

Mar. 5 — 8 p.m.  
*Erie Movie House, 3424 West Lake Rd. [facebook.com/ErieMovieHouse](https://facebook.com/ErieMovieHouse)*

##### Room

Mar. 6 — 2 p.m.  
*Taylor Little Theatre, 501 E. 38th St. [mercyhurst.edu](https://mercyhurst.edu)*

##### To Kill a Mockingbird

Mar. 9 — 2 & 7 p.m.  
*Cinemark Tinseltown, 1910 Rotunda Dr. [cinemark.com](https://cinemark.com)*

##### Cartel Land (2015) with Criminal Justice Panel

Mar. 9 — 7 p.m.  
*Erie Art Museum, 411 State St. [erieartmuseum.org](https://erieartmuseum.org)*

##### They Came From Beyond Space (1967)

Mar. 10 — 8 p.m.  
*Erie Movie House, 3424 West Lake Rd. [facebook.com/ErieMovieHouse](https://facebook.com/ErieMovieHouse)*

##### In the Heart of the Sea

Mar. 13 — 2 p.m.

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**Thursday, March 10**

**Avi Avital's Between Worlds Program Will Span the Genres at MIAC**



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Avi Avital is on a mission to revitalize the mandolin's legacy. And it seems to be working – the Israeli-born mandolinist has performed across the globe, from Carnegie Hall to the Berlin

Philharmonic.

The Grammy-nominated musician has been lauded by the *New York Times*, but you don't have to take their word for it: Give his NPR Tiny Desk Concert a try. Or, even better, go see him at the Mercyhurst Institute for Arts and Culture on March 10 to experience Avital's ability to move gracefully through ba-

See Avital at MIAC to experience his ability to move gracefully through baroque and classical music, and on to jazz and traditional Jewish folk music.

roque and classical music, and on to jazz and traditional Jewish folk music.

The Mercyhurst performance will see Avital joined by accordion and percussion for his *Between Worlds* program – a cross-cultural concert featuring his transcriptions of Bach, Bartók, and other composers, with a healthy dose of traditional Eastern European melodies mixed in. Check it out and see why this humble writer finds the mandolin to be the sexiest of the stringed instru-

ments. You can thank me later. – Sara Toth

7:30 p.m. // Walker Recital Hall, Mercyhurst University, 501 East 38th St. // Tickets \$5 - \$20

**Friday, March 11**

**The Modern Fantasy of Social Spaces ... and a Sneak Peek at Gallery Night**



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

It is clear in many of Dan Schank's artworks that the built world we inhabit is a place of relentless publicity, whether the source is consumerism, religion, or politics. Schank's mixed media works at the Erie Art Museum's Holstein Gallery explore the worlds of real

and virtual social spaces, and underline the common thread of marketing in all. The press release for the show states "he's curious about the ways that evangelical bombast, conspiratorial posturing, and advertising campaigns overlap visually."

Schank touches on "UFO speculation, conspiracy theories, religious extremism, and online mysticism as applied to

Dan Schank's mixed media works explore the worlds of real and virtual social spaces, and underline the common thread of marketing in all.

everyday spaces" in an effort to "draw connections between the cult-like avowals of underground prophecy and the appetites that propel mainstream markets."

Expect highly detailed works filled with the iconography of commerce and social media, fantasy and aliens, all coalescing in a busy visual vocabu-

Taylor Little Theatre, 501 E. 38th St. [mercyhurst.edu](http://mercyhurst.edu).

**The Good, The Bad, and the Ugly**

Mar. 13, 16 — 2 & 7 p.m.  
Cinemark Tinseltown, 1910 Rotunda Dr. [cinemark.com](http://cinemark.com).

**Kingdom of Heaven (2005)**

Mar. 16 — 7 p.m.  
Erie Art Museum, 411 State St. [erieartmuseum.org](http://erieartmuseum.org).

**VISUAL ARTS**

**Juried Student Art Show**

Ongoing Mar. 13 — 9 a.m. (Reception Feb. 18 — 7 to 9 p.m.)  
Cummings Art Gallery, 501 E. 38th St. [mercyhurst.edu](http://mercyhurst.edu).

**Kids as Curators**

Ongoing through March 13  
Erie Art Museum, 411 State St. [erieartmuseum.org](http://erieartmuseum.org).

**The Fluidity of Gender**

Ongoing through March 13  
Allegheny College, 520 N. Main St. [sites.allegheny.edu](http://sites.allegheny.edu).

**Assembled Visions**

Ongoing through Mar. 26  
Erie Art Museum, 411 State St. [erieartmuseum.org](http://erieartmuseum.org).

**Henry Katzwinkel**

Ongoing through May 1  
Erie Art Museum, 411 State St. [erieartmuseum.org](http://erieartmuseum.org).

**Plenty**

Ongoing through May 7  
Erie Art Museum, 411 State St. [erieartmuseum.org](http://erieartmuseum.org).

**Art of the Comic Book**

Ongoing through May. 22  
Erie Art Museum, 411 State St. [erieartmuseum.org](http://erieartmuseum.org).

**Dark Garden**

Ongoing through Jan 8, 2017  
Erie Art Museum, 411 State St. [erieartmuseum.org](http://erieartmuseum.org).

**Joel Quiggle**

Mar. 4 through Apr. 5  
Glass Growers Gallery, 10 E. 5th St. [glassgrowersgallery.com](http://glassgrowersgallery.com).

**Tracelynn Smith Exhibition**

Mar. 5 through 12 — 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.  
Bates Gallery, 215 Glasgow Rd. [events.edinboro.edu](http://events.edinboro.edu).

**Art Auction**

Mar. 11, 12  
NPAA, 1505 State St. [npaaonline.org](http://npaaonline.org).

**Erie Peeps Show**

Mar. 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 — 4 to 7 p.m. & Mar. 12, 13, 19, 20 — 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.  
Villa Maria Campus - Medaille Room, 2549 West 8th St. [eriepeepsshow.wordpress.com](http://eriepeepsshow.wordpress.com).

**Gallery Night**

Mar. 11 — 7 to 10 p.m.  
Various Locations, [erieartmuseum.org](http://erieartmuseum.org).

**First Class**

Mar. 11 through 20 (Opening Receptions Mar. 11 — 7 to 10 p.m.)  
Erie Art Museum, 411 State St. [erieartmuseum.org](http://erieartmuseum.org).

**Obsessed With Your Death**

Mar. 11 — 7 to 11 p.m.  
Radius CoWork Gallery, 1001 State St. [facebook.com/events/836891416438105](http://facebook.com/events/836891416438105).

**Museum Day Live**

Mar. 12 — 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Erie Art Museum, 411 State St. [erieartmuseum.org](http://erieartmuseum.org).

**Drawing and Painting Club Exhibition**

Mar. 12 through 19 — 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.  
Bates Gallery, 215 Glasgow Rd. [events.edinboro.edu](http://events.edinboro.edu).

**Second Sundays**

Mar. 13 — 2 to 4 p.m.  
Erie Art Museum, 411 State St. [erieartmuseum.org](http://erieartmuseum.org).

**Annual Gmitter**

**Scholarship Exhibition**

Mar. 14 through Apr. 1 (Reception Mar. 16 — 5 to 7 p.m.)  
Bruce Gallery, 219 Meadville St. [brucegallery.info](http://brucegallery.info).

**THEATRE**

**A Night at the 50s**

Mar. 4 — 7 p.m. & Mar. 5 — 5 & 8 p.m.  
PACA, 1505 State St. [facebook.com/paca1505](http://facebook.com/paca1505).

**Catch Me If You Can**

Mar. 4 — 7 p.m. & Mar. 5 — 5:30 p.m.  
Station Dinner Theatre, 4940 Peach St. [canterburyfeast.com](http://canterburyfeast.com).

**Peter and the Starcatcher**

Mar. 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 16, 17, 18, 19 — 7:30 p.m. & Mar. 13, 20 — 2 p.m.  
Erie Playhouse, 13 W. 10 St. [erieplayhouse.org](http://erieplayhouse.org).

**Agatha Christie's**

**Black Coffee**

Mar. 4, 5 — 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. & Mar. 6 — 3 to 5 p.m.  
All an Act Theatre, 652 W. 17th St. [allanact.net](http://allanact.net).

**A Bright New Boise**

March 4, 5, 11, 12 — 8 p.m.  
2nd Fl. Renaissance Centre, 1001 State St. [dramashop.org](http://dramashop.org).

**Annie**

Mar. 8 — 7 p.m.  
Warner Theatre, 811 State St. [erieevents.com](http://erieevents.com).

**Drinking Habits**

Mar. 16, 22, 23 & Apr. 5, 6 — noon & Mar. 19 & Apr. 2, 9 — 5:30 p.m. & Mar. 20 & Apr. 3 — 2:30 p.m.  
Station Dinner Theatre, 4940 Peach St. [canterburyfeast.com](http://canterburyfeast.com).

**COMMUNITY/VARIETY**

**Great Lakes Shipwreck Exhibition Featuring Lake Erie's Maritime Heritage**

lary that mirrors the insistent stimuli assaulting us daily. Stay tuned for a review of the show in an upcoming issue of the *Reader*.

Schank's opening is part of the March 11 Gallery Night, which this time offers six venues besides the Erie Art Museum. Discover treasures and explore contemporary art, from hand knit clothing designs at Something Wonderful, to installation art at Radius Co-Work Gallery. Works by the members of the Northwest Pa. Artists' Association (NPAA) are at PACA in a preview to the March 12 fundraising auction that benefits both NPAA and PACA, and the new ArtLore Studio should be worth a stop if you want to try something fresh. Also noteworthy, the EAM will be presenting a members-only lecture by artist Linda Huey at 6:15 p.m., prior to the beginning of Gallery Night at 7 p.m.

Go get your art, Erie! – Mary Birdsong

7 to 10 p.m. // Erie Art Museum // 411 State St. // 459.5477 // [erieartmuseum.org](http://erieartmuseum.org)

**Sunday, March 13**

**The 4th Annual Community Call for Peace Unites Artists at The Oasis**

Eleven different musical artists are uniting for peace. Working with Mothers Against Teen Violence (MATV), these performers share a personal drive to change things for the better. Even though the musical genres may vary wildly, the group as a whole will coalesce in a unified message: Let's stop the violence.

In 2010, Steve Arrington II was shot and killed outside of an Erie convenience store. This tragic event was a mournful day for the entire community, and an indescribable loss for his mother, Sonya. Incredibly, she was able to transform that pain into a positive force. Later that year, she founded MATV. The group works directly with at-risk youth when they need it the most. One of the flagship offerings of MATV is their Leadership Em-

powerment Accountability Diversity, or LEAD program. They meet at the Booker T. Washington Center and help youth ages 10-18 through mentorship and counseling.

**Even though the musical genres may vary wildly, the group as a whole will coalesce in a unified message: Let's stop the violence.**

Sonya Arrington, who now serves on City Council, will say a few words at the start of the event to raise awareness about MATV and its programs. LEAD mentor Tony Atkins will provide the sound as the bands take the stage all evening, and LEC's Johnny Evans will be the master of ceremonies.

The event kicks off shortly after 4

p.m. with alt-rocker JC Nickles, followed by hip-hop artist Doc Proto. Take note, as 11-year-old rap prodigy Yung Skola will then hit the stage. On the other side of the coin, seasoned veteran Rodger Montgomery will teach the crowd a thing or two about the blues. Matty B, in one-man-band form, will continue with retro favorites and Americana originals. Violist Abby Barrett will show her prowess, followed by the powerful indie-soul acoustics of Jess Royer. Acclaimed area emcee C. Brown will perform a thoughtful, energetic set, with the wonderful acoustic songstress Heather Devore afterward. Carlos Ramirez will bring his hip-hop with a message to the mix, as the LEC closes out the night.

The event is open to those under 18 (with a parent) only until 8 p.m., though festivities run until 9 p.m. Join this coalition for a noble cause, and enjoy yourself while you're at it. – Nick Warren

4 - 9 p.m. // Oasis Pub, 3122 W. Lake Rd. // \$6

Ongoing through Apr. 25 — 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.  
*Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. [events.dcnr.pa.gov](http://events.dcnr.pa.gov)*

**Women in Business Panel Discussion**

Mar. 2 — 6 to 8 p.m.  
*Frank G. Pogue Student Center, 405 Scotland Rd. [events.edinboro.edu](http://events.edinboro.edu)*

**Hunks**

Mar. 2 — 7 p.m.  
*Jr.'s Last Laugh, 402 State St. [jrslastlaugh.net](http://jrslastlaugh.net)*

**Barber Center Call for Entries for Art Show**

Mar. 3, 4 — 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. & Mar. 5 — 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
*Barber National Institute, 100 Barber Place. [barberinstitute.org](http://barberinstitute.org)*

**Kevin Farley**

Mar. 3 — 7 p.m. & Mar. 4, 5 — 6:40 & 9:30 p.m.  
*Jr.'s Last Laugh, 402 State St. [jrslastlaugh.net](http://jrslastlaugh.net)*

**Lou Tullio: A Real Erie Guy - Behind the Scenes**

Mar. 3 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.  
*Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. [jeserie.org](http://jeserie.org)*

**Play Safe Be Safe Fire Prevention Workshop**

Mar. 4 — 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.  
*LECOM Bayfront Campus, 1858 W. Grandview Blvd. [facebook.com/SafeKidsErie](http://facebook.com/SafeKidsErie)*

**Technology Classes with Gannon OT Students**

Mar. 4 — 10 to 11:30 a.m.  
*LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. [lifeworkserie.org](http://lifeworkserie.org)*

**Erie Sport & Travel Show**

Mar. 4 — noon to 8 p.m.  
*Bayfront Convention Center, 1 Sassafra Pier [eriepromotions.com](http://eriepromotions.com)*

**Life of a Trapper**

Mar. 4 — 6 to 7:30 p.m.  
*Shelter 2 by the Waterworks Area, 301 Peninsula Dr. [events.dcnr.pa.gov](http://events.dcnr.pa.gov)*

**Signs of Spring Canvas Class**

Mar. 4 — 6 to 8 p.m.  
*Claytopia, 2503 W. 15th St. [claytopiaerie.com](http://claytopiaerie.com)*

**Make Free Play**

Mar. 4, 11 — 6 to 7:30 p.m.  
*Box of Light Studios, 419 State St. [boxoflight.org](http://boxoflight.org)*

**Project Grant Check Presentation at Erie Bayhawks Game**

Mar. 4 — 7 p.m.  
(Presentation between 3rd and 4th Quarter)  
*Erie Insurance Arena, 809 French St. [erieartsandculture.org](http://erieartsandculture.org)*

**Erie BayHawks vs. Rio Grande V.**

Mar. 4 — 7 to 10 p.m.  
*Erie Insurance Arena, 809 French St. [erieevents.com](http://erieevents.com)*

**Gatsby at The Maennerchor**

Mar. 4 — 8 to 11:55 p.m.  
*Erie Maennerchor Club, 1607 State St. [facebook.com/events/1563767587272478](http://facebook.com/events/1563767587272478)*

**NCBA Hardwater Series**

Mar. 5 — 5 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
*Presque Isle State Park, 301 Peninsula Dr. [eriesportscommission.com](http://eriesportscommission.com)*

**Iroquois High School Gently Used Book Sale**

Mar. 5 — 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
*Iroquois High School, 4301 Main St. [ihs.iroquoissd.org](http://ihs.iroquoissd.org)*

**Affordable Dentures and Implants**

**Grand Opening**

Mar. 5 — 10 a.m.  
*Affordable Dentures and Implants, 7200 Peach St. [affordabledentures.com](http://affordabledentures.com)*

**Pet CPR and First Aid**

Mar. 5 — 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.  
*Asbury Woods Nature Center, 4105 Asbury Rd. [asburywoods.org](http://asburywoods.org)*

**Think & Wonder**

Mar. 5 — 1:30 to 4 p.m.  
*Blasco Memorial Library, 160 E. Front St. [erielibrary.org](http://erielibrary.org)*

**Lake Erie Shipwrecks and Maritime Tales**

Mar. 5 — 3 to 4:30 p.m.  
*Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. [events.dcnr.pa.gov](http://events.dcnr.pa.gov)*

**Erie BayHawks vs. Westchester**

Mar. 5 — 7 to 10 p.m.  
*Erie Insurance Arena, 809 French St. [erieevents.com](http://erieevents.com)*

**2016 PA Nordic Championships**

Mar. 6 — 9 a.m. to noon  
*Wilderness Lodge, 13448 Weeks Valley Rd. [paccsa.org](http://paccsa.org)*

**March Against Crime 5K Run/Walk**

Mar. 6 — 9 a.m. to noon  
*Rotary Pavilion, 301 Peninsula Dr. [cvcerie.org](http://cvcerie.org)*

**Bunny Days at the Museum**

Mar. 6, 13 — 10 a.m. to noon  
*Experience Children's Museum, 420 French St. [eriechildrensmuseum.org](http://eriechildrensmuseum.org)*

**Erie Otters vs. Niagara**

Mar. 6 — 5 to 7:30 p.m.  
*Erie Insurance Arena, 809 French St. [erieevents.com](http://erieevents.com)*

**Annual Spring Craft Show and Bake Sale**

Mar. 7 — 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
*Koimisis Tis Theotokou Church, 4376 W. Lake Rd. [erieorthodox.org](http://erieorthodox.org)*

**Great Books: Happiness and Discontent**

Mar. 8 — 1 to 2:30 p.m.  
*Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. [jeserie.org](http://jeserie.org)*

**Teen Tech Week Robot Time**

Mar. 8 — 2 to 4 p.m.  
*Blasco Memorial Library, 160 E. Front St. [erielibrary.org](http://erielibrary.org)*

**Great Books:**

**Counterparts**

Mar. 8 — 4 to 5:30 p.m.  
*Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. [jeserie.org](http://jeserie.org)*

**Healthy Eating**

Mar. 9 — 9 to 11 a.m.  
*LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. [lifeworkserie.org](http://lifeworkserie.org)*

**University Spotlight Series**

Mar. 9 — 12:30 to 2 p.m.  
*LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. [lifeworkserie.org](http://lifeworkserie.org)*

**Conscientious Objection in Health Care**

Mar. 9 — 4:30 p.m.  
*Zurn 114, 501 E. 38th St. [mercyhurst.edu](http://mercyhurst.edu)*

**NAMI of Erie County Family-to-Family Class**

Mar. 9 — 6 to 8:30 p.m.  
*Gannon University, 109 University Square. [namierie.org](http://namierie.org)*

**Erie Otters vs. Flint**

Mar. 9 — 7 to 9:30 p.m.  
*Erie Insurance Arena, 809 French St. [erieevents.com](http://erieevents.com)*

**Vibrant Life Series**

Mar. 10 — 9 to 10:30 a.m.

Join **WERNER BOOKS** for a **Book Lovers Bus Trip** to Buffalo NY Sat. April 9, 2016 7:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.

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March 4-5, 10-13, 16-20, 2016

Mainstage

[erieplayhouse.org](http://erieplayhouse.org) OR 814.454.2852 To get the best seats - Call NOW!

ERIE COUNTY **PUBLIC LIBRARY**

**FAMILY EVENTS**  
Free Admission

Sat. March 5 - 1:30 to 4pm  
Blasco Library & WQLN present  
**Think & Wonder**  
A Celebration of **Dr. Seuss's Birthday**

Meet n' Greet with the Cat! Screenings of the Cat in the Hat Knows a Lot about That! Story time & more

Fri. March 11 - 7 to 9pm  
Blasco Library & present a concert by **i.M Possible** chicago based teen band

All events held at the Blasco Library  
More info at [erielibrary.org/events](http://erielibrary.org/events)

PACA'S 2016 THEATRICAL SEASON

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**March 11, 12 & 13**

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Mercyhurst Institute for Arts & Culture  
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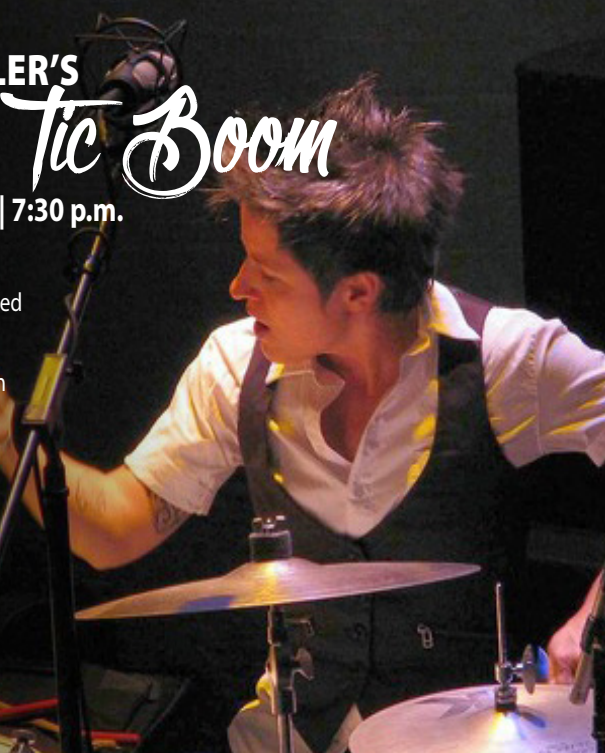
**Thursday, April 7 | 7:30 p.m.  
Walker Recital Hall**

Brazilian rhythms meet swampy bluegrass  
in a rootsy musical romp at home alongside  
blues and jazz, folk and indie rock

**ALLISON MILLER'S**  
*Boom Tic Boom*

**Thursday, April 28 | 7:30 p.m.  
Walker Recital Hall**

Contemporary jazz propelled  
by angular rhythms and  
nimble melodic twists from  
a rising star drummer and  
sparkling supporting cast



**TICKETS:**  
[miac.mercyhurst.edu](http://miac.mercyhurst.edu)  
814-824-3000



**FILM at the Erie Art Museum Considers the Brutality of the Border with Sicario and Cartel Land**



LIONSGATE FILMS

The Erie Art Museum's film series takes a socially conscious turn this winter, with two features exploring criminal justice, Mexican drug cartels, and border politics. The more interesting of the pair is Matthew Heineman's disturbing 2015 documentary *Cartel Land*, which offers an intimate look at the violence animating both sides of our southern border. Its most illuminating segments

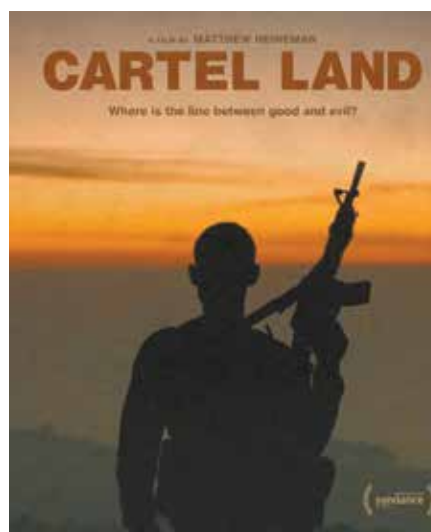
profile the morally ambiguous work of José Manuel Mireles, leader of the Autodefensas – a vigilante group created in the Mexican state of Michoacán to combat the brutal Knights Templar drug cartel.

*Cartel Land* offers a warts-and-all

The Erie Art Museum's film series takes a socially conscious turn this winter, with two features exploring criminal justice, Mexican drug cartels, and border politics.

profile of Mireles, who emerges as heroic, brutal, and manipulative all at once. Better still is the film's unflinching glimpse of the social disarray in southwestern Mexico, where cartel violence infiltrates everything from families to police departments to the Autodefensas themselves.

Mireles' story is contrasted with that of Tim "Nailer" Foley, leader of an American vigilante force called Arizona Border Recon. Foley, whose organization is considered a hate group by the South-



OUR TIME PROJECTS

ern Poverty Law Center, is treated with somewhat disturbing sympathy as he patrols the southernmost reaches of Arizona in search of undocumented immigrants. He's a fascinating character, but the stakes of his pursuits seem inconsequential when compared to Mireles, giving the otherwise-fascinating film a slightly uneven quality.

Denis Villeneuve's 2015 feature *Sicario*

takes a fictitious look at similar issues, through an Oscar-friendly lens that might call to mind *Zero Dark Thirty*. It offers great performances – Benicio Del Toro is compelling as a secretive CIA ally, and Emily Blunt makes the best of a miscast role as an FBI officer. The inspired cinematography comes from Roger Deakins, who gave the southwest a similar, noir-ish vibe in *No Country for Old Men*.

*Sicario* is full of gritty realism, but its formulaic narrative left me underwhelmed. As the plot develops, Del Toro emerges as a highbrow Charles Bronson and Blunt is reduced to a cliché emblem of feminine innocence. Villeneuve works overtime to convince you he's being morally ambiguous, but the film ends up feeling like an apology for brutal state power instead.

Despite their flaws, both features can help us to cultivate an informed, movie-loving community. – Dan Schank

*Sicario* screens on Wednesday, March 2 // *Cartel Land* screens on Wednesday, March 9 // 7 p.m. for both screenings, with *Criminal Justice Panel* to follow *Cartel Land* // Erie Art Museum, 411 State St. // [erieartmuseum.org/events/film.html](http://erieartmuseum.org/events/film.html)

LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. [lifeworkserie.org](http://lifeworkserie.org).

**Outside the Window: Spiders**

Mar. 10 — 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. [events.dcnr.pa.gov](http://events.dcnr.pa.gov).

**Religion and Environmental Ethics**

Mar. 10 — 6 p.m.  
Zurn 114, 501 E. 38th St. [mercyhurst.edu](http://mercyhurst.edu)

**NAMI of Erie County Peer-to-Peer Class**

Mar. 10 — 6 to 8:30 p.m.  
Gannon University, 109 University Square. [namierie.org](http://namierie.org).

**Presque Isle After Dark: Long Pond Trail**

Mar. 10 — 6:30 to 8 p.m.  
East Pier Parking Lot, 301 Peninsula Dr. [events.dcnr.pa.gov](http://events.dcnr.pa.gov).

**Genealogy Class: Finding Your German and Other Roots**

Mar. 10 — 7 p.m.  
Erie Maennerchor Club, 1607 State St. [gcsoe.org](http://gcsoe.org).

**John Heffron**

Mar. 10 — 7 p.m. & Mar. 11, 12 — 6:40 & 9:30 p.m.

Jr.'s Last Laugh, 402 State St. [jrslastlaugh.net](http://jrslastlaugh.net).

**NWBA Intercollegiate Division National Championships**

Mar. 10, 11, 12 — 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.  
McComb Fieldhouse, 219 Meadville St. [eriesportscommission.com](http://eriesportscommission.com).

**2016 Joe McCallion House Select**

Mar. 11, 12, 13  
Erie Insurance Arena, 809 French St. [eriesportscommission.com](http://eriesportscommission.com).

**PA State Pool Tournament**

Mar. 11, 12, 14  
Bayfront Convention Center, 1 Sassafraz Pier [erieevents.com](http://erieevents.com).

**Enjoying a Bountiful Harvest**

Mar. 11 — 12:30 p.m.  
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. [lifeworkserie.org](http://lifeworkserie.org).

**Water Marbling Social Night**

Mar. 11 — 5:30 to 8 p.m.  
Box of Light Studios, 419 State St. [boxoflight.org](http://boxoflight.org).

**Spring Fest**

Mar. 12 — 9 a.m.  
Peek'n Peak Resort, 1405 Olde Rd. [pknpk.com](http://pknpk.com).

**Erie Bluffs State Park: Timber Trail**

Mar. 12 — 9 to 11 a.m.  
Erie Bluffs Main Parking Lot, 11199 W. Lake Rd. [events.dcnr.pa.gov](http://events.dcnr.pa.gov).

**Beach Glass Drilling Shamrock Style**

Mar. 12 — 9 a.m. to noon  
Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. [events.dcnr.pa.gov](http://events.dcnr.pa.gov).

**Safety City**

Mar. 12 — 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
Experience Children's Museum, 420 French St. [eriechildrensmuseum.org](http://eriechildrensmuseum.org).

**Volunteer Open House**

Mar. 12 — 1 to 3 p.m.  
St. John the Baptist School, 509 E. 26th St. [ssjnn.org](http://ssjnn.org).

**2016 St. Patrick's Day Parade**

Mar. 12 — 2 p.m.

Downtown Erie, facebook.com/St-Patrick-Day-Parade-in-Erie-PA-298089100320686/?ref=hl.

**Glow Zumbathon**

Mar. 12 — 2 to 4 p.m.  
Elevate Church, 975 Millcreek Sq. [unitedservicecorps.org](http://unitedservicecorps.org).

**Guns & Hoses**

Mar. 12 — 3 to 5 p.m.  
Erie Insurance Arena, 809 French St. [erieevents.com](http://erieevents.com).

**Erie Otters vs. Guelph**

Mar. 12 — 7 to 9:30 p.m.  
Erie Insurance Arena, 809 French St. [erieevents.com](http://erieevents.com).

**Girls World Expo**

Mar. 13 — 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
Zem Zem Banquet & Conference Center, 2525 W. 38th St. [girlsworldexpo.com](http://girlsworldexpo.com).

**Trail Cam Program**

Mar. 13 — 2 to 3:30 p.m.  
Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. [events.dcnr.pa.gov](http://events.dcnr.pa.gov).

**Polka Party**

Mar. 13 — 3 to 6 p.m.  
Corry Central Labor Club,

30-32 W. Main St. facebook.com/Corry-Central-Labor-Club-149142241822476.

**Mothers Against Teen Violence Community Call to Peace Fundraiser**

Mar. 13 — 4 to 9 p.m.  
Oasis Pub, 3122 W. Lake Rd. [facebook.com/events/459189290937246](http://facebook.com/events/459189290937246).

**WWE**

Mar. 13 — 7 to 9:30 p.m.  
Erie Insurance Arena, 809 French St. [erieevents.com](http://erieevents.com).

**Women as Victims and Defendants**

Mar. 14 — 6 p.m.  
Compton Hall, 201 E. Normal St. [events.edinboro.edu](http://events.edinboro.edu).

**Lucky Symbols in Nature**

Mar. 14 — 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.  
Asbury Woods Nature Center, 4105 Asbury Rd. [asburywoods.org](http://asburywoods.org).

**"The Magic and Beauty of Mathematics"**

Mar. 14 — 7 p.m.  
Louis C. Cole Auditorium, 205 Meadville St.

[edinboro.edu](http://edinboro.edu).

**The Compassionate Friends of Erie PA**

Mar. 15 — 6 to 8 p.m.  
Wheezie's Kove, 4887 Buffalo Rd.

**Planetarium Show: "Spring Up"**

Mar. 15 — 7 to 9 p.m.  
Cooper Science Center, 230 Scotland Rd. [edinboro.edu](http://edinboro.edu).

**Ask an Expert Series**

Mar. 16 — 6 to 7 p.m.  
Millcreek Municipal Building, 3608 W. 26th St. [lifeworkserie.org](http://lifeworkserie.org).

**Erie BayHawks vs. Iowa**

Mar. 16 — 7 to 9:30 p.m.  
Erie Insurance Arena, 809 French St. [erieevents.com](http://erieevents.com).

**LifeWorks Erie Members Night Out to Erie BayHawks**

Mar. 16 — 7 p.m. to midnight  
Erie Insurance Arena, 809 French St. [lifeworkserie.org](http://lifeworkserie.org).



**Author Margot Mifflin Explores the History of Women's Tattoos during the 2016 Penn State Behrend Gender Conference**

Each year, Penn State Behrend's annual Gender Conference allows students, faculty, regional scholars, and noteworthy guests to cultivate important dialogues about sexuality, identity, and discrimination. This year's presentations will examine an impressive array of issues, ranging from school dress code standards to women's education in Pakistan.

The conference's 2016 Keynote Speaker is Margot Mifflin, an author and journalist whose research takes a historical look women's tattoos, most famously in her 1997 book *Bodies of Subversion: A Secret History of Women and Tattoo*.

Mifflin's scholarship reveals the many meanings that tattoos have held for women throughout history. Presently, the practice is often liberating "because it allows them to customize and personalize their look in an age of quickly commodified trends," she explained in an email. But it can also serve as a source of judgment as well. Take, for example, the term "tramp stamp" – which Mifflin claims is used as "a judgment on women based on placement

that has no parallel for men, who are never judged by the placement of their tattoos."

Mifflin's historical perspective offers many insightful surprises. She reveals how tattooing helped so-called "flapper girls" break free from Victorian confines in the 1920s. It became associated with counterculture during the 1970s, and by the 80s and 90s it helped women define "their own individual body ideal, and satisfy a heightened need to assert self-control over the body."

On Thursday March 24, in Penn State Behrend's Reed Hall, Mifflin will examine this increasingly popular marker of self expression to reveal "how it reflects gendered interests, anxieties or status."

There are plenty of other events throughout the day leading up to her lecture – as well as on the following Friday – structured loosely around the theme of "Outlaws." Better still, the conference concludes Friday evening with Ladyfest 2016 – a gathering of female-focused local bands. Once your head is full of interesting ideas, you can retreat to the dance floor with plenty of confident, talented women. – Dan Schank

*Mifflin speaks at 7:30 p.m. in Reed 117, March 24 // Other events throughout Thursday, March 24 and Friday, March 25 // Penn State Erie, The Behrend College // 4701 Behrend College Dr.*

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**Kanye West**

The Life of Pablo  
GOOD Music/Def Jam



"Name one genius that ain't crazy," Kanye West argues in the fifth track of his new album. Love him or hate him, Kanye knows what he's doing. From the bizarrely drab Madison Square Garden fashion show, to the Tidal-only release, the anticipation leading up this new album has been unequal to anything in recent memory. Throw in a viral backstage SNL rant, and a few regrettable Twitter meltdowns, and you have all the ingredients of a modern celebrity disaster. But then the album comes out and ... it's great. Every song on *The Life of Pablo* is worth examining, from the minimalist gospel earworm of "Ultralight Beam" to the deep-cut mashup of "Fade." We find a self-aware, older Kanye sounding less like the Yeezy we knew than ever, while propping up a dizzying cast. Guests include Chance the Rapper and Young Thug adding key verses, along with Kirk Franklin and Rihanna belting out hooks. The tonal shift halfway through the album transitions beautifully with early singles like "Real Friends" and "No More Parties in LA." *TLOP* is an intoxicating blend of musical mood swings. – Nick Warren



**The Frights**

You Are Going to Hate This  
Dangerbird



From the first few notes of *You Are Going to Hate This*, you know that the title's not going to be true. The first song sounds like a fuzzed-out mashup of the Misfits' "Hybrid Moments" and *Grease's* "We Go Together." All of this with the frantic urgency of a basement show pile-on. The album was produced by FIDLAR's (newly sober) Zac Carper, and it shows. It has that Southern California party vibe drenched through and through. Their sophomore release finds itself much tighter and singable than the unchanging springy surf-punk of their self-titled debut. A toy piano occasionally plinks along, or a ukulele strums to underscore a playful tone against the jumpy rock and roll of the band. The San Diego three-piece have a knack for simple, catchy melodies. The songwriting would be right at home amidst late 50s pop hits. They're able to blend cheesiness and fun in a believable way, like the Hives or the Black Lips did. The Frights are touring in support of the band SWMRS, who just released a pretty decent album as well. – Nick Warren



**Animal Collective**

Painting With  
Domino Recording Company



If 2009's *Merriweather Post Pavilion* was the apex of the band's impressive bell curve, we're finding Animal Collective on the slight downward slope. That's not to say that *Painting With* isn't worth hearing, it is. The album is easy to listen to, and warrants multiple playbacks, it just leaves the listener a little out of breath. The deep-searching hallucinogenic voyages have been traded in for manic musical inhalants. The band's signature sound is still just as innovative, but it winds up feeling, well, goofy. The worldbeat explorations of *Centipede Hz* are cranked up even further. The phasers and flangers are working overtime. Every track sounds like a bouncing army of electric didgeridoos. I just imagine Avey Tare listening back to songs like earlier efforts and shouting "No! Faster!" Animal Collective always had a sense of humor. They're a unique band, and always will be. Their fan base lives in a perplexing twilight zone between hippie and hipster. The band is clearly having a lot of fun, and wants the listener to do the same. That's not a bad thing. – Nick Warren



**Snarky Puppy**

Family Dinner, Vol. 2  
Ground Up/Ropeadope



Sometimes I just want to shake jazz musicians and ask them "WHY are there vocals on this?" I asked that a couple of times while listening to this album. There is no disputing the musical prowess of Snarky Puppy. The band's instrumental synergy is nothing short of perfect. This album is the second installment of their *Family Dinner* series. You hear the song performed live in a New Orleans session to a small crowd. Several singers sit in with the band to perform a single-serving tune. The album has a companion DVD where they pursue the *VH1 Storytellers* vibe to full effect. You can put a face and story to the voice, to build a relationship with the singer. This album is essentially a soundtrack, with Snarky Puppy serving as the backing band. But as a record proper, it feels out of context. It leaves the listener wishing you had the instrumental tracks. As moving as it is to watch David Crosby perform a song, it doesn't translate on the record. Nevertheless, the videos are available online, so watch them to see the real magic. – Nick Warren



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## Dealing a Helping Hand

How the MCRC and Presque Isle Downs & Casino guide refugees toward playing their cards right.



BRIANNA LYLE

By: Brianna Lyle

What does it mean to be understood? It means congruency among people. It means that although others may not agree with what you say, they will, at the very least, get the general idea of what you're conveying. It's a privilege often overlooked by anyone living in the country of their native tongue.

This idea came to fruition after I spent just a couple of hours with a group of refugees learning to become card dealers via a program offered at Presque Isle Downs & Casino. The roughly five-week program is designed to teach participants the ins-and-outs of card dealing and is open to the general public.

Shortly after the casino started table games in 2010, however, the Multicultural Community Resource Center (MCRC) imagined career opportunities for refugees. The MCRC began its relationship with the casino in hopes that refugees would later be employed there, as well as in other casinos throughout western Pennsylvania.

The class is about halfway through when I show up at the Presque Isle Downs & Casino administration building on a snowy February Tuesday. One class runs from 4 to 8 p.m. and another from 8 p.m. to midnight, once weekly. Many of the participants are ready to take their final test – an audition in front of panelists consisting of other table game managers from the casino – to determine whether or not they are

ready to become full-time casino card dealers.

The noise level has been at a low hum with the occasional blackjack shout-out until I ask Sarbajit Chhetri, 29, “If you could tell an American anything about being a refugee, what would you say?”

The room halts in silence.

Truly. In my recording, the background buzz subsides almost immediately other than a few translating murmurs. The quietness stiffens. There's a lump in my throat.

“We want to be listened to,” Chhetri says simply.

And this program allows refugee voices to be heard, literally. Better yet, it allows them to be heard in a profession where the English language and mathematics collide in front of an audience, forcing nasty stereotypes about refugees into silence.

This program has graduated roughly 150 MCRC clients and is proving that refugees are willing to work just as hard, if not harder, than Americans to reach success. (Currently, most refugees in the program do not yet have American citizenship. Refugees enter the U.S. with an I-94 card that allows them to work. After one year, they can apply for their green card, and after five years, they can apply for their citizenship.)

In fact, since the program's beginning, none of the MCRC graduates have been criticized for tardiness or missing work, explains Paul Jericho, Associate



BRIANNA LYLE

Director of Programs at MCRC and card dealer of 15 years at Presque Isle Downs & Casino. He commends his employer for working closely with refugees. “They have a diverse workforce,” he concludes.

Jericho says he's a dealer because it's “the easiest job I have ever had,” which I hear several times throughout the night. “I like people and 99-plus percent of the customers are fun and easy to deal with. All of my day jobs have been working in the social service field and your work is never done,” he says. “When I finish at the casino, my job is done.”

This is a bit of an understatement on his part. Jericho is one of the most hardworking people I think I've ever met and I've only known him through three short emails, two phone calls, and one half-hour visit. His calmness

is uncanny, especially considering his schedule. He met with me at 6:30 p.m. to chat a bit before his 8 p.m. to 4 a.m. card-dealing shift next door at the casino. The next day he'll be at MCRC at 8 a.m., where right now he's mostly helping refugees file their taxes.

The idea to start the dealing program came shortly after the casino introduced table games in 2010. The casino itself started the program (which is still open to the public). Knowing it was a good career opportunity for refugees – they don't need perfect English, it's lucrative enough to support a family, and you can take the skill pretty much anywhere – MCRC was able to get several people into the initial training program at the casino. But to Jericho's dismay, only six of the 16 refugees passed the class.

“I knew that many of the individuals



were sent home prematurely and they had the ability to be good dealers,” says Jericho. He asked the casino if MCRC could fund a class knowing that the participants who were sent home early were quite capable of becoming card dealers with some extra help from MCRC.

The casino agreed and allowed MCRC to fund two training programs, paid for via the Targeted Assistance Program (TAG), a component of the Office of Refugee Resettlement, a governmental office that helps refugees obtain employment. (While MCRC funded two of the casino programs, Presque Isle Downs & Casino has funded the rest of them.)

At the same time, MCRC began to provide a pre-class where they could screen individuals for their English-speaking and math abilities before sending them to the training program at the casino; Jericho himself created the pre-class, allotting for any costs in his MCRC budget/work plan.

In 2010, MCRC placed 21 individuals into the training program after participating in its pre-class.

All 21 passed their audition.

The 15-or-so-person class I attend is almost entirely made up of Bhutanese refugees who fled to Nepal in the early 90s. How and why people become refugees is, of course, complicated, and a thorough investigation is beyond the scope of this article. But essentially, in the early 90s in Bhutan, the Bhutanese government put forth a strict set of “rules” about how to dress and behave in formal settings called the “Driglam Namzha.” It also regulated cultural assets such as Bhutanese art and archi-

ecture.

Several different ethnic minorities of Bhutan (many of Nepali decent) disliked this set of strict rules and revolted against the Bhutanese government, which in time had them kicked out of Bhutan into Nepal, where the majority of the refugee camps are located. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), there are currently 96,000 refugees living in seven refugee camps in Nepal. This means that nearly one-sixth of Bhutan’s population is in exile, one of the world’s highest populations of refugees.

Let’s take a moment to talk about these seven refugee camps. Throughout my interviewing, many people kept explaining the seven camps as if they were all different from one another. The camps are sort of like neighborhoods. One neighborhood might be “better” than another or have different recourses than another, for example. In the early 90s, many of the camps were laden with disease (measles, scurvy, malaria). But now, Nepal’s refugee camps are actually becoming smaller because of third-country resettlement – such as in the United States – which helps lower disease by reducing the concentration of people living in small areas.

Tulasha Acharya, 22, from Nepal, came to the U.S. when she was 17. She attended Strong Vincent High School where she often felt nervous and alone but found a group of friends, mostly Nepali, to hang out with. She still thinks of the camps sometimes. “There were lots of problems,” she says about working as a young girl building hous-

es after school so her family could afford basic necessities. “I don’t have the words to describe,” she says, half-defeated. She never wishes to return, she adds.

There are also people like Bishnu Timsina, 21, from Nepal (although his parents are from Bhutan) who moved to Washington state when he was 15 before moving to Erie a few years after. He says the school days in the camps are long, 7:30 a.m. until 4 p.m., with many of the children working after they get home, like Acharya.

Chhetri moved to Erie from New Hampshire with 10 family members in 2010. He is now married to another Bhutanese woman with a baby boy. He started attending the class for the same reasons Jericho began dealing 15 years ago: It’s easier than more labor intensive jobs and he’s able to meet new people. But any job is good, he settles.

One unusual coincidence about this program is that all of these Bhutanese refugees were in the camps in Nepal, but they never met each other until they moved to Erie and enrolled in the casino training class.

“When we come here for the first time, we don’t see anyone from our country. You are alone,” Timsina explains. “We are so surprised at first when we see people from our country here. We’ve never seen each other before.”

Jericho explains to me that Hispanic people and refugees are the only populations that continue to grow in numbers in Erie. They come here and stimulate the economy, he says, by doing everything from purchasing car insurance to renting apartments.

And, while we’re talking about the economy, Jericho wants to point out that it’s a myth that refugees don’t pay taxes like everyone else – a fact he’s sure of this tax season when he has stacks of papers on his desk at MCRC.

In fact, refugees don’t come to America for free at all. They arrive often burdened with heavy debt from their International Organization for Migration (IOM) loan for things like their plane ticket to get to the U.S.

It’s safe to say that Jericho is proud

of the program, and he should be. He shares with me a success story about one of the first six MCRC people the casino hired. This man is now a dual-rate swing shift dealer (read: he’s really good at his job). His wife later joined the casino training program and is now a full-time dealer during day shifts. Jericho says that he was able to see them purchase a home, buy two cars, support their children, and sometimes even financially help their parents. “This individual is sometimes my supervisor when I deal,” Jericho notes.

It can be uncomfortable to repeat questions or to ask others to repeat

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**“The single most important thing that individuals can do for refugees is to accept them and understand that every refugee has lost something. Support can go so far in making them feel welcomed.”**

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things. It’s frustrating when we don’t understand something right away. And it takes more time to be patient, to shut up, and to just listen to people.

But it’s worth it. It’s worth your time to hear what people can accomplish if you give them the opportunities to be successful.

“The single most important thing that individuals can do for refugees is to accept them and understand that every refugee has lost something,” Jericho says. “Support can go so far in making them feel welcomed.”

I’m back in the class, after Chhetri finally broke the silence.

Timsina giggles a little, “Come talk to us and we’ll explain to you how it was before; we really struggled hard.”

He has a child-like smile now, as it’s clear we understand each other. “You just want people to listen to you, right?” I ask, facing the class, all still silent.

Everyone nods his or her head.

There it is. That human, atavistic need we all have: to just be understood.

*Brianna Lyle can be contacted at [blyle@ErieReader.com](mailto:blyle@ErieReader.com).*



BRIANNA LYLE

**Left and Opposite: This card dealing class is almost entirely made up of Bhutanese refugees who fled to Nepal in the early 90s. The MCRC began its relationship with Presque Isle Downs & Casino in hopes that refugees would later be employed there, as well as in other casinos throughout western Pennsylvania.**

## Beef. It's Not What's for Dinner.

Embracing a plant-based diet has never been easier in Erie.



By: **Ti Sumner**

Labels can be as cumbersome as a parka at Presque Isle in August. With sweat beads steadily pouring down your back, you finally fling the thing to the weeds, bury it among the sleeping mosquitos, and pedal to the monument feeling lighter and free. Flinging the label is exactly what The Vegetarian Resource Group, a nonprofit organization dedicated to educating the public on food-related health issues, decided to do in 2011 when they hired Harris Interactive to conduct a national survey on plant-based diets. Rather than asking straight Yes or No questions about veganism and vegetarianism, the survey used such terms as “never,” “more than half my meals,” and “one meal per week” in relation to animal- and plant-based meal consumption. The results showed that one-third of the country may be eating vegetarian – or plant-based – meals 50 percent of the time. Another 5 percent eat plant-based meals full-time, with half of that group also ditching dairy and eggs.

So what's the deal? Just how did kale manage to become the new black on the dinner plate?

“I think part of it is the Internet,” said Heather McIntosh, assistant baker at the Erie Whole Foods Co-op – voted a *Reader Top Vegetarian Place* to eat in

Erie. “Just because someone wants to go vegan doesn't mean they have to give up a chocolate chip cookie. These days, we can get a dairy- and egg-free recipe from the Internet and it's good,” she added.

Google Trends data shows that the Internet is exactly the place people are turning to learn about plant-based diets. Since 2011, vegetarian- and vegan-themed searches have spiked. The timing of this spike may not be a random occurrence. In 2011, Oprah Winfrey openly endorsed Meatless Mondays; and in 2013, Beyoncé and Jay Z raved about their 22-day vegan diet during which Beyoncé lost eight pounds. In the past year, the 7-Eleven chain switched to Hampton Creek's vegan Just Mayo after it beat a popular national brand in a taste test and Liam Hemsworth stated in a *Marie Claire* interview that “since adopting a vegan diet, I've never felt better; mentally or physically.”

The trend may be taking hold locally, also. Mike Augustine, head cook, manager, and menu creator at Like My Thai – also voted a *Reader Top Vegetarian Place* to eat in Erie – estimates that as much as 20 percent of his business is vegetarian or vegan.

“In 2007, I started Pad Thai Tuesdays at my old pizza shop on Eighth Street,” Mike said. “It was a vegetarian dish. On the first night, the place was packed. It

was the only place in town to get Pad Thai. I regularly brought in an extra 60 people a night.”

The local demand for plant-based meals gave Mike the confidence to develop a vegetable-oriented menu in a traditionally meat-dependent town.

“With the exception of only a few items,” Mike said, “I can adapt nearly everything on the menu to meet the diet or allergy restrictions of any customer.”

It is his creativity and willingness to conform his dishes that have helped to make his meals popular.

“When we go to parties or dinners at a new place, we call ahead to see if they will accommodate our dietary requests. We don't have to do that when we go to places that we already know will serve us vegan dishes,” said Lisa Casler, who co-founded the Erie Vegan and Vegetarian Society with her husband, Craig. The couple first started researching veganism after a friend lost more than 100 pounds by following a plant-based diet.

“One snowy Erie weekend, we rented a bunch of documentaries about the food industry,” Lisa said. “We immediately emptied our freezer of meat products and didn't look back. After that, it took about a year to transition completely from fish, dairy, and eggs.”

“We did it for health reasons,” Craig said, whose cholesterol once topped

The local demand for plant-based meals gave Mike and Liz Augustine of Like My Thai the confidence to develop a vegetable-oriented menu in a traditionally meat-dependent town. Nearly everything on the menu can be adapted to meet customers' diet or allergy restrictions.

270. “I had always been told that heart disease is hereditary, but I learned that diet and exercise can prevent and sometimes reverse heart disease. Now, at almost 55 years old, my cholesterol is down by over 100 points, my blood pressure is down by 20 points, and I don't take any medication.”

In the Ornish Reversal Program, a program at UPMC Hamot consisting of four lifestyle wellness elements that, when practiced together, prevent and even reverse such chronic conditions as heart disease and diabetes, patients learn many of the same things the Caslers did through research and trial.

“The idea with the program is to keep things balanced,” said Jennifer Eberlein, Ornish Reversal Program Director and nurse case manager. “The four elements work synergistically, with diet being one of the four elements. We teach a plant-based, low-fat diet. How much a person adheres to the lifestyle is the main factor determining what kind of results a person will see.”

Just as the Caslers, Beyoncé, and Hemsworth all described after switching to a plant-based diet, the positive changes that take place in Ornish Reversal Program participants is noticeable.

“It's neat to see the changes in people as they go through the nine weeks,” Eberlein continued. “To see the change in how they carry themselves, to see how much happier they are as the weeks progress ... it's fun to watch.”

So, you might ask, next time you're standing in the produce department, what should you remember about the kale story? Wear the parka, don't wear the parka – call it vegetarianism, don't call it vegetarianism – the important thing is to go the distance with the plant-based diet. Pedal to the monument and embrace the kale.

Ti Sumner can be contacted at [tSumner@ErieReader.com](mailto:tSumner@ErieReader.com).

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## Geeked Out

*Deadpool: an unlikely superhero movie*

By: John Lindvay

**D**eadpool doesn't have the pop culture presence of other more ubiquitous superheroes, and that's exactly why it was exciting to hear a movie was in the works. Deadpool has been a longtime fan favorite in comic book circles, lovingly referred to as "the merc with a mouth." Deadpool is aware that he is, indeed, a superhero and also in a comic book. So how well did this translate to screen? Turns out, pretty damn well.

While Deadpool has passed through the halls of Xavier's school for gifted youngsters, and has also at times been part of X-Force, he's largely a lone agent. Part is due to his propensity towards bloody violence and lack of remorse for viscerally murdering bad guys, while cracking dick and

butt jokes. But although he is a lone agent, he does have people to talk to – mostly his

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Deadpool is another example of Marvel finding ways to weave the traditionally boring "becoming the superhero" montage into the immediate action and unfolding plot. Perhaps in part this is due to how Deadpool himself is the one telling us the story.

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other personalities that have been a hallmark for his character in the comics. But he also will often speak directly to the

audience.

I typically hate origin movies. While Marvel has been getting better at making origin stories move at a decent pace, nothing can get the bad taste out of my mouth after Sony's several Wolverine origin movies. But Deadpool is just another example of Marvel finding ways to weave the traditionally boring "becoming the superhero" montage into the immediate action and unfolding plot. Perhaps in part this is due to how Deadpool himself is the one telling us the story. Rather than the story simply unfolding, we are right there with Deadpool as he tea-bags a thug in a flipping SUV.

This film moves. In fact, the only down-time is often there to let the joke land or set up the next punch line. Sure, it's full of your **[Cont. on page 38]**

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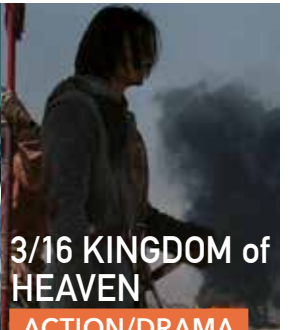
(2015) In the lawless border area stretching between the U.S. and Mexico, an idealistic FBI agent is enlisted by an elite government task force official to aid in the escalating war against drugs. Starring Emily Blunt, Benicio del Toro and Josh Brolin.



3/9 CARTEL LAND

**DOCUMENTARY**

(2015) A physician in Mexico leading a citizen uprising against the cartels and a veteran heading a paramilitary group working to prevent Mexico's drug wars from entering U.S. territory. **With criminal justice panel.**



3/16 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

**ACTION/DRAMA**

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BRAD TRIANA

**[Cont. from page 16]** es wanted the experience to be about freedom, and freedom doesn't fly when it's weighed down by 5 pounds of cupronickel in a fanny pack clasped about the abdomen (just ask the TSA).

"This is about getting people out of the house, getting people moving, and reliving what they enjoyed as kids," says Brad.

**Insert Credits to Continue**

For the first 25 years of their existence, arcade and console games co-evolved. A port of a premiere arcade title could

swing the tide of a console war (as the

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The power of nostalgia is not to be underestimated. Trash-talking a living, breathing person next to you or having a crowd rally around you as you go for a high score – there is a thrill to that which knows no age.

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uncensored *Mortal Kombat* did for the Sega Genesis – the Super Nintendo ver-

sion featured sweat instead of blood and no fatalities, not even your opponent taunting you with a long swig of Gatorade as your character lies on the ground, fully dehydrated) or win it outright (as *Space Invaders* did for the Atari 2600). However, eventually home consoles advanced so much as to push the arcade to the verge of mass extinction.

Nonetheless, the power of nostalgia – and community (the Nuces enlisted local artists Kevin Burfield and Bill Anysz to paint and construct the Erie-themed

Glow Golf area in the rear of the complex) – is not to be underestimated. Trash-talking a living, breathing person next to you or having a crowd rally around you as you go for a high score – there is a thrill to that which knows no age.

Even if, like me, you grew up with dinosaurs.

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**[Cont. from page 36]** s t a n - dard superhero fare: we find out about Wade Wilson's (Deadpool's real identity) life before he donned the suit, where he got the name, the girl he loved and had to leave. But what makes it stand above and beyond your now "traditional" Marvel movie is that this film is rated R. A hard

R, at that.

A big problem with superhero movies is that they tend to downplay the real violence that superpowers can deliver. The best example is from *X-Men*, where Wolverine needs to protect the school full of children. Wolverine is not a "play-nice" character. In the comics, Wolverine would

have simply shredded those dudes into human confetti. In the movie, Hugh Jackman just stabs a dude in the foot? What the hell?

*Deadpool* makes great use of the rating and dishes out gore, vulgarity, and humor in the way a good comic book can. If anything, *Deadpool* is the first comic book movie that feels

like it translated its source material as well as it could, and seemingly unhindered.

So it came as no surprise that not only is *Deadpool* doing well at the box office; it's on track to beat out *The Passion of the Christ* as the most recent top grossing R-rated film. It had the largest February opening of all time. So it is no

surprise that a sequel is on its way. And even more interesting is that this success opens the possibility for more comic movies to go for an R-rating.

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