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**ERIE READER**

May 10 - May 23 // Vol. 7, No. 10 // ErieR



# *Our Vote*

The *Reader* endorses  
Jay Breneman to be  
Erie's next mayor

# *When Nine Become Two*

A final breakdown of  
all the candidates

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Nick Warren

**Copy Editor:**

Katie Chriest

**Contributing Editors:**

Ben Speggen

Jim Wertz

**Contributors:**

Maitham Basha-Agha

Ed Bernik

Mary Birdsong

Tracy Geibel

Lisa Gensheimer

Gregory Greenleaf-Knepp

Dan Schank

Tommy Shannon

Ryan Smith

Ti Sumner

Matt Swanseger

Bryan Toy

**Cover Photo / Design:**

Nick Warren

**Photographers:**

Maitham Basha-Agha

Ryan Smith

**Publisher's Assistant:**

Emily Hanisek

**Intern:**

Angie Jeffery

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

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



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## From the Editors

### Why Jay Breneman is the leader worthy of this moment



NICK WARREN

Our city is at a crossroads. That statement is neither hyperbole, nor is it generic election speak. It is the truth, and even though it may sound like a cliché, it's exactly where we find ourselves in 2017. We are, right now, living through a critical moment in our city's history, and who we elect as our next mayor will play a vital role in determining the course we take next.

With the outgoing administration doing little more than managing our decline over the past decade, we are faced with a plethora of issues (crumbling public schools, the lack of a community college, urban flight, the loss of most of our manufacturing jobs, and a deteriorating urban core just to name a few) that must be addressed quickly and thoughtfully.

Will we sit idly by and settle for a continuation of the same brand of conservative policies, and outdated, out-of-sight management we've grown accustomed to these past 12 years?

Or will we collectively find it within ourselves to once again be bold, and elect a leader capable of making the decisions and forging the partnerships necessary to truly revitalize our city?

A leader worthy of this moment.

Our choice for that leader is Jay Breneman.

The *Erie Reader* editorial board, as comprised of its two editors in chief and managing editor, interviewed all of the mayoral candidates except one, Bob Merski, who did not make himself available for a sit down. With the exception of Merski, we were generally quite impressed with the candidates we did have the pleasure of spending time with, and agree with former mayor Rick Filippi's assessment in his March 29 column that "it is one of the strongest fields in an open race in a lifetime."

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several of these candidates displayed was at times palpable. These are individuals whose love for Erie is unquestioned, and whose valuable experience in our community we hope will be relied upon in meaningful ways by whomever is eventually sworn in as our next mayor.

Several candidates impressed us with their ideas of how best to revitalize Erie, but it is Breneman who we feel has the vision, the drive, and the fortitude to guide our city at this pivotal time. The one who we feel is best prepared to run the marathon we have in front of us.

We first heard of Jay when he was just an intern, already making a name for himself at the Erie Area Council of Governments, and were surprised when this "Mercyhurst University social worker" unseated popular two-term incumbent Erie County Councilman Ronald "Whitey" Cleaver in the 2013 municipal primary election to represent Erie's 4th District. But it's the story of how he made it to Erie in the first place that's so inspiring. A story we chronicled in August of 2013.

Jay grew up very poor, one of seven children, in western Montana. He worked hard for his family as "the rugged and self-reliant attitude of the people who call that rocky region home rubbed off on a young Jay Breneman, and he eagerly displayed a willingness to get his hands dirty for the greater good from a very young age."

Those qualities were put on full display after September 11, 2001. Breneman had already left Montana for work in Ohio when he witnessed the events of 9/11. "I was 18, and it had a huge impact on me. I felt like I had to do something."

Fast-forward a year and he was shipping off to basic training. Fast-forward another six years of active duty in the Army and he was being honorably discharged as a staff sergeant after two tours in Iraq, an experience that profoundly shaped his worldview. It was also at this time that Jay met his future wife, and found himself eventually bound for Erie. "My wife Jamie [Stubenhofer] and her family are strongly rooted here, and I fell in love with the Erie area."

By the time Breneman made it onto Erie's 40 Under 40 in 2014, he had earned himself a Bachelor of Arts in

Social Work from Mercyhurst University and a Master of Science in Social Administration from Case Western Reserve University, had won that seat on County Council, and accepted a position at Edinboro University as a licensed social worker and coordinator of the Veterans Success Center.

Since then he has continued to work tirelessly for our community, while becoming a driving force on County Council. He currently serves as chairman of County Council, and works as the director of outreach and governmental relations for LIFE-NWPA, a

---

**Our next mayor must be a vocal and visible champion for our city, willing and able to take our message and tell our story far beyond the borders of Erie County. Being articulate, intelligent, and gracious in the public eye as well as on a person-to-person basis is a key component of this equation. While other candidates meet that criteria, we believe Mr. Breneman is the best person for the job.**

---

program focused on helping local senior citizens receive the health care they need while maintaining their independence. This in addition to his continued work with local veterans' groups, and the many other volunteer roles he has occupied over the years.

"People don't relocate or travel to Allentown or Lancaster (more comparative communities) because those cities remind them of the Big Apple, B'more, Philly, or D.C.," Breneman wrote in 2014, "they go there because they have a chance to carve out something new in a place that supports their hope, and facilitates their energy and effort."

"That is the foundation to the American experience."

Erie's problems are not unique, and the lessons of how once-thriving industrial economies were forced to reinvent themselves are all around

us. As a city we are a decade or more behind the curve, and what we need now is someone dynamic and energized with the passion to change our city for the better. The fact that Breneman comes from outside Erie, that he brings with him new insight and optimism, is far from a detriment. In fact, it occurs to us that this could be one of his most important attributes for the job ahead.

In that same March column, Filippi also correctly points out that "The next mayor needs to lead, not only the city of Erie, but its related entities, as well as all of Erie County and northwestern Pennsylvania. Without a real representative in Congress, and with the local legislative districts gerrymandered beyond reason, the mayor of Erie must be looked upon as that individual with the driving vision to move us forward. The mayor must be able to assume a leadership role that might not necessarily be within his or her technical "job description," but rather one of far more extensive and meaningful import."

This is a point that we feel cannot be overstated. Our next mayor must be a vocal and visible champion for our city, willing and able to take our message and tell our story far beyond the borders of Erie County. Being articulate, intelligent, and gracious in the public eye as well as on a person-to-person basis is a key component of this equation. While other candidates meet that criteria, we believe Breneman is the best person for the job.

"What stands to be our city's greatest challenge," he wrote in an August 2016 op-ed, "can also be the greatest opportunity in building up our next generation, and a chance to redefine Erie as a community of choice because of our people and our unwavering commitment to revitalization that puts them front and center."

We believe the level of Jay's commitment to himself, his family, and our community as a whole makes him the best choice to be our next mayor. A choice worthy of the moment we're living in.

As the old saying goes: "Fortune favors the bold."

To that, Jay Breneman answers: "We can build big, so long as we drill down. We can save a community, as soon as we go beyond the business-as-usual."

We couldn't agree more.



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## Just a Thought

Giving the green light



SHELDON PETERSON

By: Katie Chriest

At a baby shower I attended several years ago, guests were given African violets as favors. Though I'm generally an equal opportunity greenery fan, I've never cared much for African violets (or baby showers – but at least this one provided gin). I always equated the plants with hospitals, offices – places where they'd be mostly ignored.

But this little African violet donned purple-magenta flowers atop rich hunter green leaves, bold and bright and lively. In January, it bloomed. And in February. And even in early March, when our region is awash in torpor-tinged slush.

Then it finished out its initial bloom cycle. I watered it, but that's all. I moved across town, so it did, too. For years, I gave it inadequate light, often diffused by other foliage I preferred. It had to know, poor thing. But it just wouldn't die.

Last year, we installed a wider shelf by the sunny back door, and I – feeling guilty for neglecting the Afri-

can violet – moved it there. Out of its green depths emerged a new trio of sweetly royal blooms. I admired the little sucker's pluck.

Eventually, thinking I was giving it a big boost in the world, I transplanted it to a much more spacious pot. You're only supposed to go up one size when repotting, but I figured – with all of those years of neglect – the waif deserved a major upgrade. The new pot was bigger and fetchingly patina'd, like dishes on a vegan hipster's blog.

It finished out its blooming again and then stopped. For months. Its leaves looked healthy, but no flowers emerged.

One day this past March, I was reading a gardening website in antsy anticipation of *actually* gardening, and I came across some information about how healthy African violets will bloom continuously, under the right circumstances.

Turns out they don't want a larger pot. Turns out they need a pot just big *enough*, with just enough soil. Nothing fancy. A little room, some light, and minor care and support.

**Tenacious AV: The African violet that patiently waited for me to get it right.**

So I "right-sized" the plant by transplanting back down a size. Within weeks, blooms reemerged. Now they seem unstoppable.

A lot of us who live in Erie are like that. A smaller, simpler, more modest city is our right size. Too big, and we can survive, but we're not going to bloom.

There's big talk around election time about colossal dreams, expansive ideas, and ways we could make our city more like the major cities who've gotten it "right."

But right for us isn't necessarily the same as right for everywhere else. And as we dream

these big dreams and germinate these big notions – a few of which might even take root – it's important to remember that what Erie *already is* is worth cultivating. And, to not lose our senses of humor.

A lot of us who live in Erie are like that. A smaller, simpler, more modest city is our right size. Too big, and we can survive, but we're not going to bloom.

This city celebrates a few things I'm not crazy about – its role as a perennial tour stop of washed-up 80s bands, for one.

But it's also the right size for a lot of us. Many of the folks here creating, owning, managing, or simply *being* are just as gifted as those in bigger cities. Replanted there, they would surely survive. But they might not bloom as well.

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

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## News of the Weird

### Sculptura dentata and questionably clogged pipes

By: **Chuck Shepherd**

#### Entrepreneurial Spirit

**A** San Francisco startup recently introduced a countertop gadget to squeeze fruit and vegetables for you so that your hands don't get sore. However, the Juicero (a) requires that the fruit and veggies be pre-sliced in precise sections conveniently available for purchase from the Juicero company, (b) has, for some reason, a Wi-Fi connection, and (c) sells for \$399. (Bonus: Creator Jeff Dunn originally priced it at \$699, but had to discount it after brutal shopper feedback. Double Bonus: Venture capitalists actually invested \$120 million to develop the Juicero, anticipating frenzied consumer love.) [BBC News, 4-21-2017]

#### Great Art!

**M**onument to Flossing: Russian artist Mariana Shumkova is certainly doing her part for oral hygiene, publicly unveiling her St. Petersburg statuette of a frightening, malformed head displaying actual extracted human teeth, misaligned and populating holes in the face that represent the mouth and eyes. She told Pravda in April that "only (something with) a strong emotional impact" would make people think about tooth care. [Pravda, 4-12-2017]

**A**rtist Lucy Gafford of Mobile, Alabama, has a flourishing audience of fans (exact numbers not revealed), reported AL.com in March, but lacking a formal "brick and mortar" gallery show, she must exhibit her esti-

mated 400 pieces online only. Gafford, who has long hair, periodically flings loose, wet strands onto her shower wall and arranges them into designs, which she photographs and posts, at a rate of about one new creation a week since 2014. [AL.com (Mobile), 3-20-2017]

#### Bright Ideas

**T**hough complete details were not available in news reports of the case, it is nonetheless clear that magistrates in Llandudno, Wales, had ordered several punishments in April for David Roberts, 50, including probation, a curfew, paying court costs, and, in the magistrates' words, that Roberts attend a "thinking skills" course. Roberts had overreacted to a speeding motorcyclist on a footpath by later installing a chest-high, barbed-wire line across the path that almost slashed another cyclist. (A search did not turn up "thinking skills" courses in Wales or in America, where they are certainly badly needed, even though successful classes of that type would surely make News of the Weird's job harder.) [Wales Online, 4-12-2017]

**R**aising a Hardy Generation: Preschoolers at the Elves and Fairies Woodland Nursery in Edmondsham, England, rough it all day long outside, using tools (even a saw!), burning wood, planting crops. Climbing ropes and rolling in the mud are also encouraged. Kids as young as age 2 grow and cook herbs and vegetables (incidentally absorbing "arithmetic" by measuring ingredients). In its most recent accreditation inspection, the nursery was judged "outstanding."

[Metro News (London), 4-10-2017]

#### Compelling Explanations

**C**riminal Defenses Unlikely to Succeed: (1) To protest a disorderly conduct charge in Sebastian, Florida, in March, Kristen Morrow, 37, and George Harris, 25 (who were so "active" under a blanket that bystanders complained), began screaming at a sheriff's deputy that Morrow is a "famous music talent" and that the couple are "with" the Illuminati. (The shadowy "Illuminati," if it exists, reputedly forbids associates to acknowledge that it exists.) Morrow and Harris were arrested. (2) Wesley Pettis, 24, charged with damaging 60 trees in West Jordan, Utah, in 2016, was ordered to probation and counseling in March, stemming from his defense that, well, the trees had hurt him "first." [WPLG-TV (Miami), 3-28-2017] [Salt Lake Tribune, 3-29-2017]

#### Leading Economic Indicators

**L**egendary German Engineering: The state-of-the-art Berlin Brandenburg Airport, originally scheduled to open in 2012, has largely been "completed," but ubiquitous malfunctions have moved the opening back to at least 2020. Among the problems: cabling wrongly laid out; escalators too short; 4,000 doors incorrectly numbered; a chief planner who turned out to be an impostor; complete failure of the "futuristic" fire safety system, e.g., no smoke exhaust and no working alarms (provoking a suggested alternative to just hire 800 low-paid staff

to walk around the airport and watch for fires). The initial \$2.2 billion price tag is now \$6.5 billion (and counting). [News.com.au (Sydney), 3-27-2017]

**R**ich Numbers in the News: (1) A one-bedroom, rotting-wood bungalow (built in 1905) in the Rockridge neighborhood of Oakland, California, sold in April for \$755,000 (\$260,000 over the asking price). (2) Business Week reported in April that Wins Finance Holdings (part of the Russell 2000 small-company index) has reported stock price fluctuations since its 2015 startup of as much as 4,555 percent (and that no one knows why). (3) New Zealand officials reported in March that Apple had earned more than NZ\$4.2 billion (\$2.88 billion in U.S. dollars) in sales last year, but according to the country's rules, did not owe a penny in income tax. [SFGate.com, 4-19-2017] [Business Week, 4-21-2017] [ArsTechnica.com, 3-20-2017]

#### New World Order

**W**hy? Just ... Because: (1) The AquaGenie, subject of a current crowdfunding campaign, would be a \$70 water bottle with Wi-Fi. Fill the bottle and enter your "water goals"; the app will alert you to various courses of action if you've insufficiently hydrated yourself. (2) Already on the market: A company called Blacksocks has introduced Calf Socks Classic With Plus a pair of socks with an internet connection. The smartphone app can help you color-match your socks and tell you, among other things, whether it's time to wash

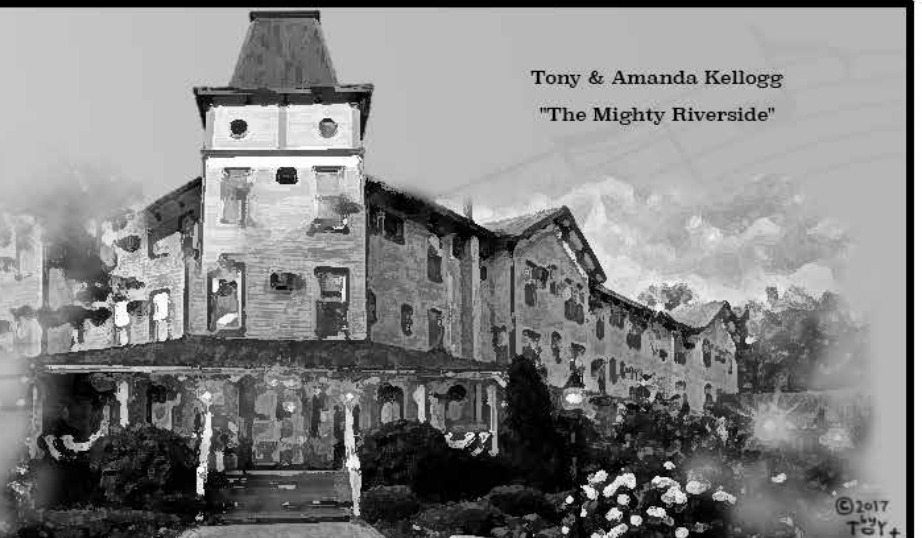
### Just Toyin Witcha - By B. Toy

*Our voices rang in your halls  
Our feet danced on your floors  
Our photos captured your walls  
Our hands opened your doors*

*Our laughter shook your stage  
Our babies crawled in your grass  
Our eyes awed at your age  
Our minds soaked up your past*

*You're just a memory now  
Time marches right on by  
We'll never forget what was  
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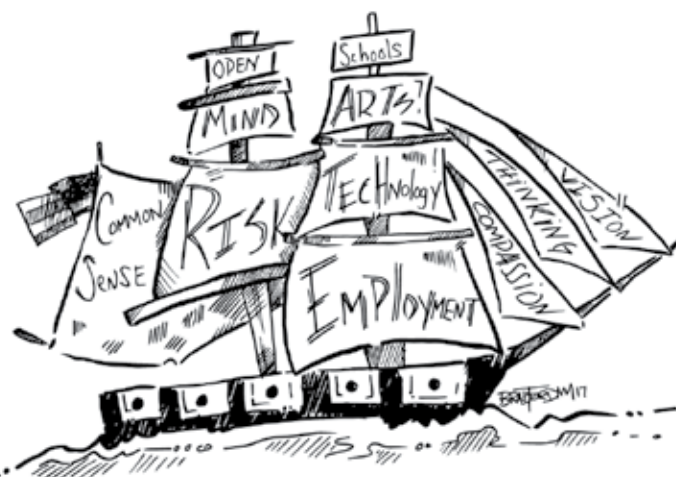
### Undignified Deaths

**D**ark Day for Competitive Eating: A 42-year-old man choked to death on April 2 at a Voodoo Doughnut shop in Denver as he accepted the store's "Tex-Ass Challenge" to eat a half-pounder (equivalent of six regular donuts) in 80 seconds. Later the

same day, in Fairfield, Connecticut, a 21-year-old college student died, three days after collapsing, choking, at a pancake-eating contest at the Sacred Heart University student center. [KUSA-TV, 4-3-2017] [Connecticut Post, 4-4-2017]

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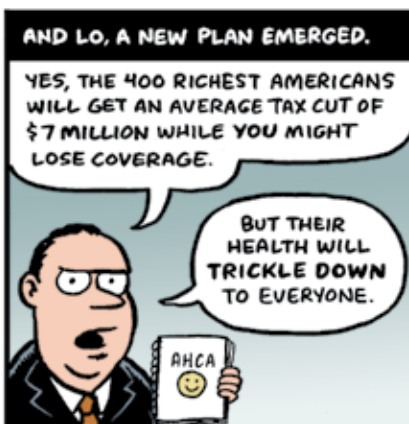
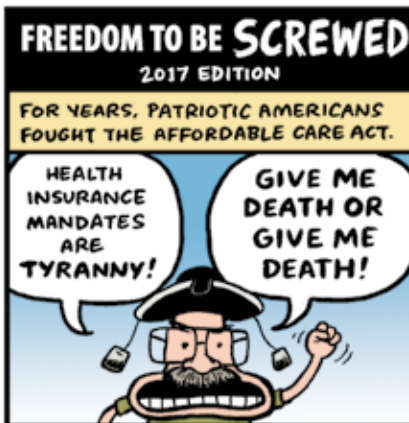
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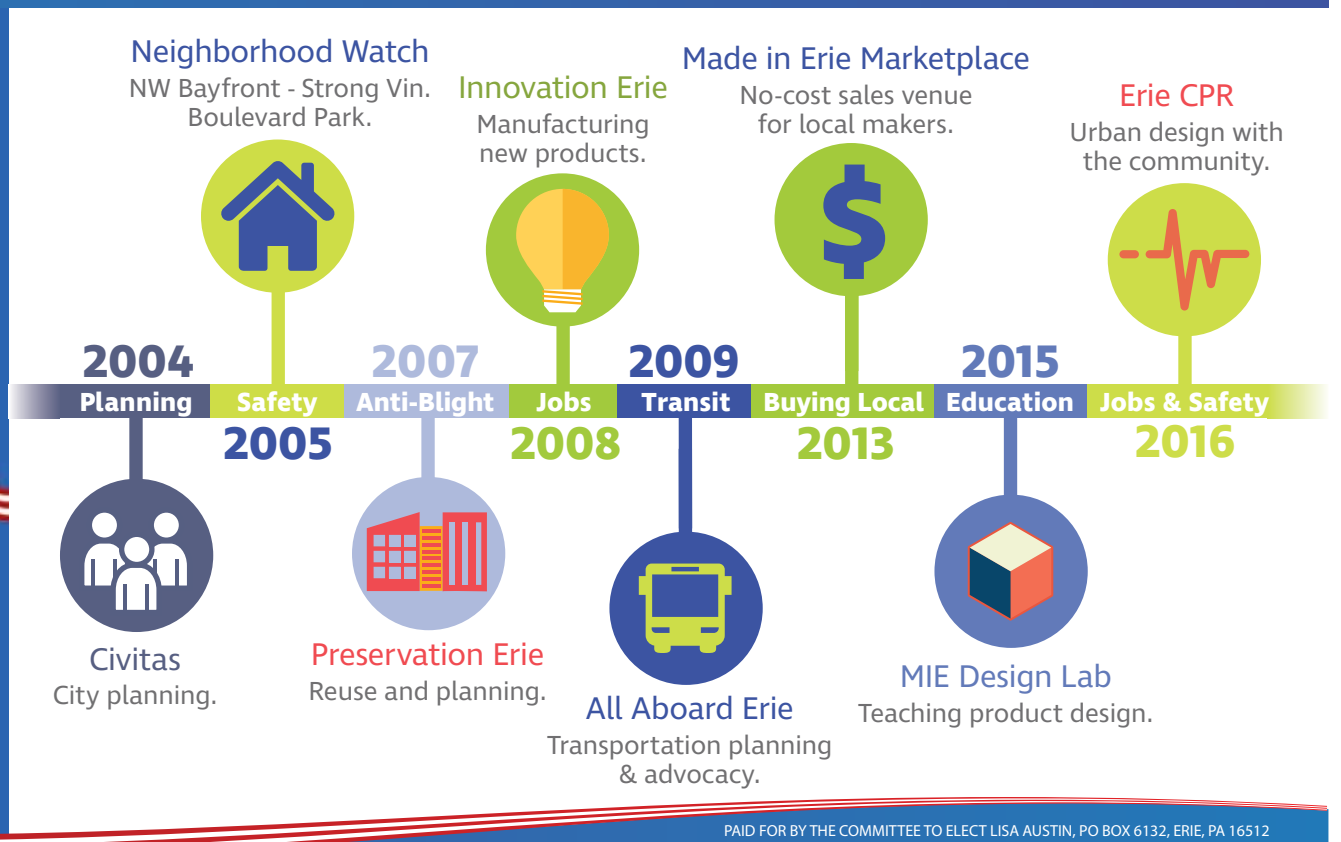


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## Bliss by the Mugful

Edinboro's Happy Mug Coffee stirs up warm feelings.



RYAN SMITH

By: Ryan Smith

I walk into Happy Mug Coffee, and get hard-smacked in the nose with the smell of thousands of prize beans.

I'm content.

A calm electrical whir preceding him from across the roasting company's warehouse-area floor, owner/founder Matt Shay zips up to me on a hands-free segway, all smiles.

*Man, I think, I would be smiling, too.*

We say how-do, then Shay offers up a sample of some new coffee, freshly roasted right here in sunny Edinboro. It tastes like beer, he says.

I feel the liquid's warmth in my hands. I smell. I sip.

It's coffee that tastes like beer. Not just coffee, but a really punchy, bright, lively coffee – and not just beer, but a hearty, wholesome stout, smoothly imparted with little hints of oak barrel-aging.

I stand next to that very barrel as Shay, Happy Mug's founder and roaster-in-chief, tells me more about it: It's Meadville-based Voodoo Brewery's, he says, and they used it to make a special breakfast stout featuring Happy Mug's Ugandan coffee, then passed it on to these specialty coffee roasters about 20 miles north so they could do their thing with it.

So now, he says, "they have a beer that tastes like coffee, and we have a coffee that tastes like beer."

That's just one particular new roast – some of the roughly 2,000 pounds of coffee Shay says go out the doors of the Happy Mug roastery each week.

In only a couple of minutes, I've seen that coffee, I've smelled it, I've tasted it, and I've touched it, with Shay filling me in on the details of its origins along the way.

I'm very happy here at Happy Mug, and I've barely made it through the door.

I'm picking up a pretty good vibe from Shay, too. He gets a bit of a sparkle in his eye when it becomes clear that I (kinda) know my stuff. And he seems like a guy who's most happy in this chockful-of-coffee element: surrounded by the beans, talking about the beans, roasting the beans, tasting the beans, and – thanks to the marvel of internet-based commerce – sharing the best results with coffee lovers near and far.

He's also the kind of guy (and these are his words, not mine) who, if you showed up to his house for dinner, might not be wearing matching socks.

**Happy Mug owner and founder Matt Shay scoops up an aromatic handful of coffee beans (top), and helps program machinery to aid in the coffee's production (right).**

Who may, say, put some lumpy gravy on the table.

"But the coffee," he says, "would be perfect."

I can dig that.

He's also a guy who seems to have figured out, for himself anyway, the difficult puzzle of savoring life's work.

I can dig that, too.

"I just come in and have fun," the 36-year-old western Pennsylvania native tells me, and it shows that he means it. "I see this as my hobby.

"Obviously, it's gotten way out of control."

Out of (or in?) control enough, he says, that he relies on the help of five full- and part-time employees to help receive, sample, test-roast, re-roast, perfect, and ship coffee beans from singular, ethical sources – as well as some coveted coffee-crafting estates around the world – to customers' doors in all 50 states.

Their catalogue of offerings is high-stacked, with dozens of (not-so) standard, special and espresso roasts, as well as roast-your-own green beans, teas, and related tools and accessories.

Happy Mug's aim, Shay says, is to "produce the most exotic, unique coffee" you'll find, and "make sure that

it's delivered to you freshly."

Their motto? *Drink Coffee. Be Happy.*

There's a refreshing lack of pretense in that, in the whole operation, and in the coffee, too, which seems to allow it to sort of stand up and speak for itself without a lot of background noise.

For Shay and his cohorts, it really does seem to be all about love for that glorious bean.

"Coffee has a way of bringing people together," says Shay. "It's a way of making your day better ... [an] extra little spark in the morning."

With a good cup of coffee, he says, "we might have a good day."

Thanks for filling it up, Happy Mug.

*To learn more about Happy Mug, including its hours, list of offerings, where you can find it locally, and how to place an order, visit [happymugcoffee.com](http://happymugcoffee.com), call 547.3462, or visit their facility at 220 W. Plum St. in Edinboro.*

*Ryan Smith is always up for a good cup of coffee. He can be reached at [rsmith@eriereader.com](mailto:rsmith@eriereader.com), and you can follow him on Twitter @ryanmsmithplens.*



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# When Nine Become Two

Who will win, and who should win, as mayoral momentum mounts



**The magnificent seven:** Democratic candidates Lisa Austin (left to right), Almi Clerkin, Joe Schember, Steve Franklin, Jay Breneman, Rubye Jenkins-Husband, and Bob Merski take the stage at the Jefferson Educational Society as former Erie Mayor Joyce Savocchio (head in foreground) looks on.

adorned.

The city has a comprehensive plan. There's a downtown masterplan. Individual neighborhoods are planning, too.

So the list goes. And this will all be laid at the feet of Erie's next mayor. Which is why this election matters.

The *Reader's* coverage began back on Feb. 15 when "What History Will Erie Elect to Make?" graced the cover. The feature focused on what *New York Times* columnist David Brooks dubs "The Fallows Question." Based on the work James and Deborah Fallows have done in their most recent project for *The Atlantic* – "City Makers: American Futures," a series Erie was part of – Brooks asks: If you had to move where history is being made, where would you move?

Earlier this year, he asked the Fallows themselves. Amongst their responses: Erie, Pennsylvania.

What's significant to note is that while Erie is currently making history for a host of reasons, the narrative is about to get a new storyteller in its chief executive office at City Hall. A new mayor can mean an adherence to the storyline as being told, advance the plotline more aggressively, pivot course, put down the pencil, or pick up an eraser.

The coverage continued a little less than a month later with a call for voters to head to the buffet of forums and debates to see how the candidates stacked up against each other. While some candidates stood out more than others,

By: Ben Speggen

There's a famous urban legend that involves Ernest Hemingway, a short story, a bar, and a bet.

So it goes, Hemingway bragged to a table of friends that he could write a complete story in just six words. It'd have a beginning, a middle, and an end. All wrapped up before his word count hit double digits.

They balked, the lot of them gathered around that table.

Hemingway said 10 bucks each. If he could do it, he'd win the pot. If he couldn't, he'd pay up.

Out flew the Hamiltons. And presumably a few skeptical chuckles, too.

And then out poured the words, not five, not seven, but six, etched on a bar napkin: "For sale: Baby shoes, never worn."

A beginning, a middle, an end. A complete story.

Unfurling heartbreaking flash fiction before his friends, Hemingway, winning the

bet, added to his legacy that he was the king supreme of squeezing the most into the least, packing punch without flailing, crunching an entire story arc into six words (still less than 10 syllables!) without a shred of excess. In a stroke of literary genius, Hemingway showed that you only need a little to get a lot when you have a story and focus intensely on the significance of each word.

The story – although largely unsubstantiated and widely debated – makes for a great discussion point amongst budding English majors and a great conversation starter amongst libating literature lovers. Whether or not it's true in the sense that it actually happened, a truth it teaches – the importance of the distillation of a narrative, the squeezing of substance until the purest essence emerges – is as important as it was the first time the tale was told.

In short, a lot can be said with a little. And much energy should be expended on deciding exactly what to how and

how to say it.

The same can be said for politics. More on that later.

## Let's Do the Time Warp Again

This story marks the fourth in a series the *Reader* has published in the lead-up to May 16's mayoral primary election when Erie will elect a candidate to represent the Democratic Party and a candidate to represent the Republican Party.

We've dedicated this space to this race because many have argued that this may be the most important election Erie has ever faced. For many reasons, it is.

Erie is still grappling with a steady population decline that began during the Tullio administration. The city's public schools are facing their greatest challenge to date. The opioid epidemic has found its way to Erie, and drug-related deaths are outpacing those caused by violent crime – which is still a major concern.

Erie's on the national radar,

for the good, the bad, and the ugly. Some national correspondents claim that if you want to move to where history is being made, move to Erie. Others are calling Erie a "fading factory town."

Regardless of the reason, Erie's in the spotlight. And the opening music has begun.

And potential abounds.

Fiber Internet expansion is being provided not by Google but by Velocity Network, a local company that's chosen to relocate in the city. Erie Insurance – a Fortune 500 company anchoring downtown development – is continuing to expand.

The making of an innovation district is being planned. The reality of a community college (note: Erie is the largest metropolitan region not served by a community college) seems more likely now than ever (and that's a 30-plus-year discussion!).

Our universities are expanding and growing. So are our hospitals.

Our Bayfront remains largely a blank canvas waiting to be

they all largely settled for a polite decorum and stuck to their scripts without much sparring. And no candidate stalked another around the stage, there were no nasal issues, and no one called anyone else a liar.

Our most recent coverage featured the candidates in their own words, at length, speaking on innovation, business, and the future of Erie. While truncated responses appeared in the print edition, fully fleshed out answers were run online.

In fact, they're still there. Along with all of the other coverage.

But noting how and why we got here is still important. And here must be noted in two ways: The short and the long paths.

### The Long and Not-So-Winding Road

Term limits draw the lines along the long path – first by their absence, second by their presence.

Prior to the close of the 20th century, Erie mayors were not limited in the number of terms they could seek. Such freedom afforded Lou Tullio – first elected in 1965 – to continue to hold office until his death in 1989. Although he had decided not to seek a seventh term, Tullio served as mayor through three decades. He was the last to be unencumbered by limits.

As Joyce Savocchio entered office in 1990, she knew that at best, her total time in the mayor's office would only be half of Tullio's. Savocchio, Erie's first woman to be elected mayor, would serve as the first mayor under the newly-imposed term limits, limiting candidates to three four-year terms.

Savocchio went on to win both of her re-election bids and left office inevitably not because of the ballot but because of the limit. Her successor, Rick Filippi, would not experience the same fate.

Battling state prosecutor allegations of using his position to broker real estate deals near the then-proposed \$80 million lake front gambling enterprise that arose prior to 2005's primary election, Filippi served just one term in office from 2002 to 2006. Although Filippi was acquitted of all charges facing him, publicity the case drew may have factored in when voters pulled the lever, marking his tenure as the only one since the imposed term limits cut short by ballot and not by limit.

Joe Sinnott bested Filippi and his challengers in the 2005 primary, and since then, he's remained at City Hall, slated to depart in January 2018. For both of his re-election bids, Sinnott faced zero opposition.

So now, whether they want it or not, Erieites must undergo a change in leadership.

With that change comes two important notes: Erie's long, blue line, and Erie voters' penchant to vote for reactionary successors.

While it's only been four mayors since Tullio took office, it's been more than 50 years of straight Democratic leadership from the mayoral post. Erie's last Republican mayor, Charles Williamson, took office in 1961, and since then it's been a long, blue line, as the city's shifted to a more than two-to-one Democratic voter-registration edge, making the path to victory for a Republican in the general election a more difficult one.

Even the recent presidential election, which saw many Democratic voter strongholds turn red, didn't sway the city. An overwhelming majority of city residents voted for Hillary Clinton, despite the county tipping toward Donald Trump.

But Erie voters – when a new mayor is about to take office – use the occasion to push the political pendulum away from where it's been.

Savocchio – who addressed Erie's critically crumbling in-

frastructure – came as an answer to Tullio, who'd left it largely unaddressed. With money banked in reserve from Savocchio, in came Filippi to spend it. And then with bankruptcy a la Act 47 knocking on the door, Sinnott crossed the 626 State Street threshold to balance the budget.

If time follows the course of history, voters will react in the booth to Sinnott.

Although still too early to judge, the historical success of the Sinnott administration will be that of converting an \$11.7 million deficit into a \$5 million surplus. Criticism, as he leaves office, is that that's where he's spent too much of his time; rather than in public, on the street, attending numerous meetings like his predecessors did, Mayor Sinnott remained less in the public eye.

And it's not to say that he did not do what he thought would be in Erie's best interest or was absent on the job. Fair or not, perceptions, for many, become reality. And the reality today is: Voters want a mayor whom they perceive as active.

### The Mayoral Nine, or The Candidates' Crusade: A Duty-dance with Destiny

At the onset of Erie's current mayoral primary election, there were plenty more names rumored. That there are more folks running than voting is a joke that could've worked at Jr.'s Last Laugh for several months and not gotten old, and placing proverbial bets on who might run might've gotten more ticket play than the races at Presque Isle Downs. Even local cartoonist Bryan Toy ran a panel in which Godzilla was considering running.

But then the listening tours began. Websites and Facebook pages started lighting up, and before long, candidates declared publicly that they would seek to serve Erie as its next mayor.

The announcement timeline

runs from Nov. 2, 2016 to Feb. 2, 2017. It is bookended by the two youngest candidates in this election to declare their bids to become Erie's next mayor.

Democrat Jay Breneman, 34, first told the *Erie Times-News* on Nov. 2, 2016 that he would formally announce his candidacy on Veterans Day. After that, announcements – as reported by the *Erie Times-News*, go like this:

Dec. 5, 2016: Democrat Lisa Austin, 60

Dec. 7, 2016: Republican Al Zimmer, 73

Dec. 19, 2016: Democrat Almi Clerkin, 53

Dec. 30, 2016: Democrat Rubye Jenkins-Husband, 67

Jan. 5, 2017: Democrat Joe Schember, 66

Jan. 10, 2017: Republican Jon Whaley, 53

Jan. 12, 2017: Democrat Bob Merski, 41

Jan. 18, 2016: Democrat Steve Franklin, 64

And then on Feb. 2, 2017, John Persinger, 35, confirmed he intended to be included on the dance card. For more than a month, Erie voters would spend their time discussing those 10 names – until it shrunk to nine.

On March 6, 2017, just one day prior to the filing deadline for nomination petitions, Zimmer, the elder amongst the candidates, ended his campaign. He cited personal reasons, telling *Erie Times-News'* Kevin Flowers: "It's not a matter of life or death, but there are things I have to see to."

As of March 7, all of the remaining nine obtained the necessary 100 signatures and filed their paperwork. Kind of.

First, in March, the signatures obtained by Whaley were challenged. He obtained 105 and the attorney for a citizen challenging Whaley's signatures convinced Judge John Garhart to toss six invalid signatures, leaving him with 99.

But to Whaley's credit for knowing specifics of nomina-

tion petition challenges, he cited that a citizen must file a copy of the complaint with the county election office – which wasn't done. When Whaley brought that to the attention of Judge Garhart, the challenge was scrapped and Whaley remained on the ballot.

Then in April, the ballot could've been reduced to two. Seven of the nine candidates failed the Pennsylvania Ethics Commission requirement to file a statement of financial interests not only at the County Courthouse's Voter Registration office but also with City Clerk Rose Boyer's City Hall office.

Only Jenkins-Husband and Merski complied, but because no one challenged what otherwise would've been a fatal error for five Democrats and both Republicans, the dance card remained unaffected. So at the time this feature was submitted, nine of the original 10 remain in the race and are seeking election on Tuesday, May 16.

### But (quickly) Let's Do the Numbers: A Break for Some 'Marketplace' Math

Back to the ages: Breneman is the youngest candidate (if only by a year) at 34 (to Persinger's 35).

Jenkins-Husband is the oldest candidate (if only by a year) at 67 (to Schember's 66).

The average age amongst candidates: 52.5

The median (and mode): 53

When Tullio took office, he was 50; Savocchio, 47; Filippi (Erie's youngest mayor), 35; and Sinnott, 40. The average age of the last four mayors: 43.

As for finances (between Jan. 1 and May 1, and as reported by *Erie Times-News'* Nico Salvatori), it's a wide range with Schember at the top with a reported \$111,000 and Whaley at the bottom, at approximately \$3,000. Initially, Whaley, who is self-funding his campaign, declined to file campaign finance reports be-



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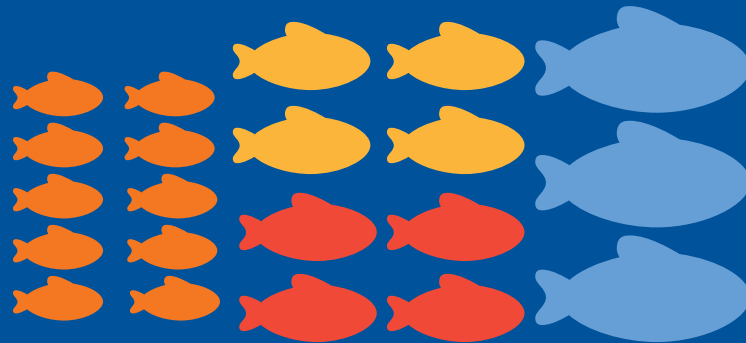


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- Clerkin: \$17,270
- Jenkins-Husband: \$8,368
- Franklin: \$7,368

Persinger's report was not available.

And as for sheer odds of winning based on number of challengers: Of the seven Democrats, each has slightly more than a 14 percent chance of winning; of the Republicans, each has a 50 percent chance.

**Of All the Words in All the World**

And now, we return to the beginning.

A week from when the issue of the *Erie Reader* featuring this story hits stands, the

pool of candidates vying to become Erie's next mayor will have been whittled from nine to two: One Democrat, one Republican. Tuesday, May 16 marks Erie's primary election, and with polls closing at 8 p.m. and precincts closest to the Erie County Courthouse (where votes are tallied) coming in first, it's safe to assume that barring extraordinary situations, a pair of candidates will be giving their victory speeches before the 11 o'clock news.

In the feature prior to this one, we highlighted the candidates' responses to five questions in print and an additional three online. They were lengthy, thoughtful, and in the candidates' own words.

This time around – because most've heard the speeches, seen the commercials, and have a general sense of who's who and who stands for what and why – I asked each

candidate to describe their platform and campaign in six words. I also asked them, in six additional words, to tell me (the writer) why they're running so that you (the reader) could get a sense of them at their most distilled essence.

I didn't tell them about the Hemingway story. But I did tell them that they could opt for a couple of sentences. Or not. And I did tell them that they'd be printed verbatim as they were received.

In fairness to the candidates, their responses are in the order in which they will appear on the May 16 ballot.

Some pushed the boundaries and used more than six words. Some used less.

Maybe that's daring and bold. Maybe they weren't counting articles or conjunctions. Maybe it's an indication that they're rule benders or breakers. Can an ampersand be counted as punctuation?

Or maybe they're folks who don't like following directions.

But of all of the words in all of the world, these were the six-ish each candidate chose. I have my notes on what stands out to me, but dear readers and voters, you get to be the judge on who gets the proverbial Hamiltons.

Of note: Breneman and Persinger – a Democrat and a Republican, both the youngest vying to represent their respective parties – are running to "end the status quo," answering that part nearly identically.

Similarly, Austin is running to "change course" while "collaboratively" – a word Clerkin uses in her reason for running – rebuilding Erie.

Jenkins-Husband went heavy on "experience," using it both in her platform-campaign answer as well as her reason for running, citing community and government-

tal experience.

While Schember's platform-campaign answer features "champion" – for his case: children, residents, businesses, and region – Merski is running to "be a champion for Erie."

Franklin wants to "restore 'balance' to Erie," while Schember's running to "restore hope." Perhaps in a similar vein, Whaley's platform-campaign is "desperate times call for desperate measures."

Seven candidates' responses featured "Erie." Only Breneman and Schember did not. Franklin used it twice, once in each answer.

Two featured "jobs" – Austin and Merski – while one – Persinger – wants to "get Erie working again" (which I presume means jobs and not that Erie's broken and needs to be fixed).

Alliteration award: Clerkin





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# ARTrageous

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for “better, brighter, bolder.”

Positivity award: Whaley for “I love Erie and its potential.”

Not-so-positivity points: Whaley for “desperate times call for desperate measures.”

**Forums, Polls, Endorsements – oh my.**

First, Erie clearly favors forums over debates – even if candidates are asked to debate.

Perhaps it’s because that’s what candidates have become accustomed to. Perhaps it’s because everyone’s so darned polite. Perhaps it’s because they fear running the risk of looking negative vis-à-vis attacking another candidate’s platform and hope that you, the voter, can distinguish the differences between sound arguments and empty rhetoric.

Whatever the case: You, the viewer-turned-voter, bear the burden of paying closer attention.

It should be celebrated that various Erie organizations hosted various candidates’ gatherings – be they debates, forums, meet-and-greets, or town halls. It’s a clear sign that Erie wants to hear from those running for mayor. Those who attended – both candidates and voters – should be celebrated, too, despite several audiences looking sparse. An expectation that constituents will want to continue to hear from candidates-turned-elected-officials exists.

Voters should look for video of the debates/forums. And re-watch them. Again. And again. They should re-watch because debates give voters of sense of preparation, poise, and positions when put on the spot.

Although developments after the Kennedy-Nixon debate of 1960 suggest that debates should be watched first with the sound off – since debates are now largely about image – I recommend the opposite: Listen to them without the video.

Listen for the energy. The passion. The dynamism. The knowledge. The ability to actu-

ally answer questions.

Listen for the incomplete thoughts, trailing off compared to complete, confident comments. Listen for ability to articulate a depth of knowledge compared to the limited quips and phrases that make for easily repeated stump speeches. Listen for not just the passion but the political awareness.

Of critical note, C-SPAN Senior Executive Producer, Political Editor, and Primary Host Steve Scully, who hosted the debate held at the Jefferson Educational Society in partnership with the *Erie Reader* and WQLN Public Media asked a straightforward question of all of the Democratic candidates.

“One of you will represent your party; the others will be voted off of the island. Show of hands: Who will support the Democratic nominee?”

Every candidate raised their hand.

**The Tale of Two Polls – and a Grassroots Survey**

The first indication of how voters were trending came from the Merski campaign. In late March, the campaign released an internal poll conducted by D.C.-based Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research with Merski reporting at 37 percent amongst likely Democratic primary voters. Behind him, Schember reported at 15 percent, Jenkins-Husband at 14 percent, and Breneman at 10 percent. The remaining three candidates – Austin, Clerkin, and Franklin – according to the poll, each notched 5 percent.

The second indication came in late April from the Breneman camp. According to that internal poll conducted by the campaign, Breneman leads the pack with 29 percent, followed by Merski at 25 percent, and Schember at 20 percent. Clerkin and Jenkins-Husband reported 6 percent, in front of Austin and Franklin at 4 percent.

The reports of each poll came from 400 likely voters, and Breneman’s poll featured a 3.9 percent plus-or-minus margin of error, while the Merski poll was at 4.9 percent. The Breneman campaign released its methodology; the Merski camp did not.

The most recent data yet comes from the Austin campaign, which surveyed 1,000 likely voters with a 3 percent margin of error. Austin’s poll revealed that 22 percent responded they would vote for Austin, while 24 would not. Fifty-four percent remained undecided.

But when it comes to polls and surveys, if recent history offers any reminder, it’s that they aren’t perfect. Reminder: Clinton led Trump in the polls leading up to the election, yet lost when those polled became those who voted.

Polls aside, history also reminds us that big news in the final days before an election can impact the election results. As Nate Silver at 538 reported after the 2016 presidential election, FBI Director James Comey’s letter to Congress issued just before the election had a “measurable impact” on the outcome of the election, noting that Clinton would’ve most likely won had the letter not been released.

Which is to say: Polls are good barometers, but a break or gathering of clouds without warning can come with a strong enough change in the winds.

**Supporting Acts to the Stage!**

Undoubtedly, endorsements will affect this election. How they affect it, however, remains largely to be seen because we’ve yet to see how they’re affecting the campaigns and the candidates.

Editor’s disclaimer: This feature is not an endorsement of any particular candidate. And, as I finish writing this feature on Sunday, May 7, I do not know if the *Reader* will en-



**Rubye Jenkins-Husband**

Platform-campaign: Leadership, Experience, and Vision to move Erie Forward.

Why running: Experience, over 30 years community service, 12 years on City Council.

Age: 67

Facebook.com/ElectRubyeMayor

Former Erie City Councilwoman



**Joe Schember**

Platform-campaign: Champion for Children, Residents, Businesses, Region.

Why running: Build Opportunity. Restore Hope. Create Legacy.

Age: 66

www.JoeSchember.com

Former Erie City Councilman



**Lisa Austin**

Platform-campaign: Good Jobs – Strong Schools – Safe Neighborhoods

Why running: To Change Course & Collaboratively Rebuild Erie

Age: 60

www.AustinForErie.com

Founder of numerous community organizations



**Almi Clerkin**

Platform-campaign: Better, Brighter, Bolder Future for Erie

Why running: Experienced, Collaborative, Resourceful, Creative, Respectful, Optimistic.

Age: 53

www.AlmiForErie.com

Erie Playhouse Executive Director

dorse a candidate. If it does, I have not weighed in on that decision in a fair approach to my coverage here, which is guided by my own research and own opinions of how the research and my thoughts should be presented.

What cannot be ignored in the lead-up to the election and

the impact it’ll have is the endorsement of the *Erie Times-News* editorial board.

On Sunday, May 7, the *Times* endorsed Joe Schember as “the Democrats’ best choice.”

“John Persinger,” the headline read, “merits nod from Erie GOP voters.”

Neither selection should



**Bob Merski**

Platform-campaign: I'm running for jobs, community, better government.

Why running: To be a champion for Erie.

Age: 41

[www.BobMerski.com](http://www.BobMerski.com)

Erie City Council Finance Chair



**Jon Whaley**

Platform-campaign: Desperate times call for desperate measures.

Why running: I love Erie and its potential.

Age: 53

[www.JonWhaley.com](http://www.JonWhaley.com)

Business Owner



**Steve Franklin**

Platform-campaign: To restore "balance" to Erie.

Why running: Return the investment Erie gave me.

Age: 64

[www.SteveFranklin.org](http://www.SteveFranklin.org)

Former Chief of Police, City of Erie



**John Persinger**

Platform-campaign: Let's Get Erie Working Again.

Why running: To end the status quo.

Age: 35

[www.PersingerForMayor.com](http://www.PersingerForMayor.com)

MacDonald, Illig, Jones & Britton - Attorney



**Jay Breneman**

Platform-campaign: High standards, mission oriented, people driven.

Why running: We must end the status quo.

Age: 34

[www.JayBreneman.org](http://www.JayBreneman.org)

Erie County Councilman

CANDIDATE PHOTOS BY MATTHAM BASHA-AGHA

come as a surprise to Erie voters, as both candidates have garnered wide support. Both have performed well in the debates and forums. Both have demonstrated passion without relying solely on it as a means of driving their campaigns. And both speak often and loudly to the critical juncture at which Erie finds itself.

The differences in the *Times'* endorsements is that one candidate is said to stand out for his temperament and intellect, while the other for his temperament plus experience and character.

It needn't be made more obvious, but a certain level of risk is being assumed with the unproven, young Persinger. Perhaps he was the safer choice

in a limited field of candidates (after all, the other often says a sledgehammer is needed to fix City Hall).

Whereas risk seems to be used to justify the non-endorsement-yet-worthy-of-being-mentioned notes on Breneman and Merski the *Times* ran.

The *Times* offers two paragraphs to the other two candidates who "separated themselves from the Democratic field in the judgment of Editorial Board members" but don't get the endorsement:

*Breneman, 34, is an impressive and promising young leader who strikes us as still in need of some seasoning. However voters choose, we hope he will continue to pursue his obvious*

passion for public service.

*Merski, 41, credibly presented himself as an agent of change, but we're given pause by elements of his record at City Hall. They include the sluggish rollout of Erie Refocused and City Council's intransigence in the Erie Metropolitan Transit Authority dispute, both when Merski served as council president.*

The *Times* endorsement carries weight and cannot be ignored.

In its history, the *Times-Publishing Company* had not endorsed a primary candidate until it endorsed Joyce Savocchio the Sunday prior to the primary election of 1989. Some credit Savocchio's victory to the endorsement; others argue she had already built enough momentum and that that was the proverbial icing on the cake. However the cake is sliced, though, Savocchio did come from behind in early polls (she was actually last) to claim a victory in that primary election.

What makes the *Times* endorsement interesting here is that it comes not just a few days but more than a week before the election. The potential

greater impact comes in how candidates will react and respond to it.

Will it be enough to tempt some to turn their campaign to an attack formation? If so, who's holding onto what cards and when – if at all – will they be played? Is it enough to discourage anyone from finishing the race? Will it inspire individuals to form a coalition and begin lending their resources and support to another candidate?

The *Times* decision to endorse – and endorse early – undoubtedly is making the election cycle more interesting and exciting.

**Every New Beginning Comes from Some Other Beginning's End – And It is the End, My Friend**

Voters will decide the course of the next iteration of Erie in seven days. How many voters deciding that fate remains to be seen.

One of the troubling aspects of Erie's election cycles is that the mayoral races fall on "off years." That is, there is not a major election driving up voter turnout at the polls.

This is not, however, to say

that this election is not major. It is. Perhaps our most important one in decades and for decades to come. Which has been said before, but bears repeating.

But without a presidential or gubernatorial race, voter turnout – if trends can be trusted – will be projected to be lower. Erie's record-high turnout was in 1992 when Bill Clinton's presence yielded a nearly 90 percent turnout. Even 2016's presidential election – one in which many voters are now criticized for staying at home – saw a nearly two-thirds turnout.

Without a national headliner on the bill, though, anything greater than one-third voter turnout will be heralded as a "good" turnout.

Which is to say: One out of three registered voters reading this (maybe fewer) will determine the outcome of Erie's next mayor. The other two, whatever their reasoning, will keep off the field and stick to the sideline.

How we got here – the critical challenges Erie faces coupled with the growth gaining momentum – is as important as the why. We are here today because of yesterday. And the course of tomorrow will be determined by today.

And while Erie may be quick to criticize the style of soon-to-be-former-mayor Joe Sinnott, it did elect him. And re-elect him. Twice. Both re-elections without opposition. Both through action and inaction, Erie voters determined the fate of the now, the here.

If ever a change in Erie exists, it's the hope that we've been good students of history, lest be we doomed to repeat the past, doing the same thing and hoping for different results.

*Ben Speggen can be reached at [bspeggen@ErieReader.com](mailto:bspeggen@ErieReader.com) and you can follow him on Twitter @BenSpeggen. Nick Warren also contributed to this feature and can be contacted at [nick@eriereader.com](mailto:nick@eriereader.com).*

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 6pm Bible Study

# Spotlight on Erie

May 10 – May 23, 2017

**Friday, May 12**

## Goodell Celebrates National Public Gardens Day



Beautiful and bustling with all sorts of spring growth, Edinboro's Goodell Gardens & Homestead would be a fine place to spend part of any Mother's Day weekend.

Turns out National Public Gardens Day falls on the Friday before Mother's Day every year, and Edinboro's historic public gardens are among nearly 600 throughout the U.S. celebrating it – and, by extension, promoting good things like green living, sustainability, and conservation – by inviting everyone out to explore what's there.

Goodell Gardens is providing free admission for all visitors on Friday, May 12 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., with guided tours around the gardens at both 1 and 3 p.m. On top of that, Goodell officials said they're planning other activities and will be offering discounts on new memberships purchased that day.

For more information about National Public Gardens Day and Goodell Gardens, visit [NationalPublicGardensDay.org](http://NationalPublicGardensDay.org) and [goodellgardens.org](http://goodellgardens.org). – Ryan Smith

11 a.m. to 5 p.m. // 221 Waterford St. (Rte. 6N) // [goodellgardens.org](http://goodellgardens.org)

**Friday, May 12**

## Tropidelic's Groove Amalgam

Fusing funk, hip-hop, and reggae with a dash of metal and more, Cuyahoga River Valley-grown and Cleveland-hewn sonic guerrillas Tropidelic always put out a fired-up amalgam of grooves.

This summer, they're focused on burning through a steady stream of festival gigs including spots on lineups at Electric Forest, Shadefest, Bragg Jam, Burning Foot Festival, and elsewhere along the way.

And they're headlining plenty of



TROPIDELIC

club gigs, too – including a stop at the Kings Rook Club on Friday, May 12.

They'll be there with alt-reggae/hip-hopsters Oogee Wawa, blazing out of Long Island for an Erie show that's one of more than 200 on their heavy touring schedule.

It's gonna be a high time at the Rook that evening, alright. – Ryan Smith

8 p.m. // 1921 Peach St. // [facebook.com/kingsrookclub](http://facebook.com/kingsrookclub)

**Saturday, May 13**

## Ludwig plays Ludwig with the Erie Chamber Orchestra



The almighty Beethoven suffered a box office flop? Boohoo, let's all take out our violins.

First performed in 1806, Ludwig van Beethoven's Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 61 did not enjoy the sort of premiere the composer extraordinaire was accustomed to. Legend has it that Franz Clement, the first violinist to ever perform it, improvised between movements because Beethoven (the consummate procrastinator) had

only finished writing the solo section shortly before the debut. Being the showoff that he was, Clement soloed on one string with the violin held upside-down! This here was a "Rockstar," ladies and gentlemen – a whole two centuries before Chad Kroeger of Nickelback.

The piece fell into obscurity until 1844, when 12-year-old prodigy Joseph Joachim resurrected it in a rousing performance with the London Philharmonic under the direction of Felix Mendelssohn. Thousands have been taking out their violins ever since, and not out of pity – the concerto became one of Beethoven's more enduring works, heralded for its bright, lyrical quality. Internationally renowned violin soloist, recording artist, and chamber musician Michael Ludwig will be the latest to make his strings sing, with the Erie Chamber Orchestra providing the backing under director Matthew Kraemer.

The 45-minute violin concerto will be followed by Joseph Haydn's Symphony No. 104 in D Major (HUGE night for D Major fans), otherwise known as the "London Symphony." Unlike Beethoven, Haydn made bank when this ditty hit King's Theatre way back on May 4, 1795 – 4,000 gulden, to be exact (cha-ching). Regardless, concertgoers will cash in handsomely (with nothing out of pocket) with these two landmarks of classical music. – Matt Swanseger

6:30 to 9:30 p.m. // First Presbyterian Church of the Covenant, 250 W. 7th St. // free

**Wednesday, May 17**

## Portman in Pillbox



Presented by Film at the Erie Art Museum and the Film Society of Northwestern Pennsylvania, the 2016 film *Jackie* will be shown on Wednesday, May 17.

"Intensely affecting and insistently protean, the film *Jackie* is a reminder that for a time Jacqueline Kennedy

was bigger than any star, bigger than Marilyn or Liz," said Manohla Dargis of the *New York Times*.

The film tells the story of former First Lady Jacqueline (Jackie) Bouvier Kennedy, during the few days after John F. Kennedy's assassination. It follows Jackie as she faces a harsh reality, planning the unexpected funeral and comforting their two fatherless children. But despite her grief, Jackie recognizes that her next moves determine how she and her husband will be remembered, so she works tirelessly through the agony.

"This is a portrait of Jackie Kennedy, well and conscientiously played by Natalie Portman; it imagines her stunned, stricken existence in the days between President Kennedy's brutal assassination and his state funeral: a period that the film sets out to evoke almost moment by moment, with wordless lonely scenes in corridors, looming closeups on faces, amplified conspiratorial whispers, poignant memories of banal happier times," said film critic Peter Bradshaw of *The Guardian*.

Pablo Larraín's film was also nominated for three Academy Awards. – Tracy Geibel

7 p.m. // Erie Art Museum, 20 E. 5th St. // \$5 // [brownpapertickets.com/event/2755805](http://brownpapertickets.com/event/2755805)

**Wednesday, May 17**

## A Good Evening with Good Morning Bedlam



Some sounds are distinctly American. And there's nothing quite like the bright clamor of a string band to remind you where you are. Minneapolis-based Good Morning Bedlam has a beautiful rootsy folk authenticity that's absolutely integral to the success of the genre. An acoustic quartet, the band features guitar, upright bass, fiddle, and banjo. Nary a drum in sight. Songwriter and guitarist Isaak Gil Elker serves as the primary singer of

## CALENDAR

the band, and has a wonderful lilt to his voice, so much so you might think he was a long-lost Avett Brother. Elker is sometimes joined by fiddle player Sophia Mae, as she provides rich harmonies to fill out each note. The band released their debut full-length *Prodigal* in July of last year. It features 10 tracks of energetic music borrowing

An acoustic quartet, the band features guitar, upright bass, fiddle, and banjo.

from elements of bluegrass, country & western, jazz, indie rock, and most importantly, folk.

Erie's own Brooke Surgener will open the evening. Anyone familiar with Surgener knows that she is a brilliant songwriter with a voice to match. The astounding clarity with which she sings will impress fans of any genre. Often switching between guitar, mandolin, and guitalele (a charming guitar/ukulele hybrid), her captivating performance should be an amazing kickoff to the evening.

Join the bands on the "Hyde" half of

the Jekyll & Hyde's: the more dimly-lit side toward State Street. — Nick Warren

8 to 11 p.m. // *Jekyll & Hyde's Gastropub*, 8 E. 10th St. // Free // 456.0072

### Friday, May 19

#### Terror's Hard Way Back to Erie



For the first time in eight years, Terror is finally returning to Erie.

Since 2002, Terror has been a mainstay in the hardcore scene, their music acting as a model that many bands continue to mold themselves after. It's not anything groundbreaking, the songwriting isn't risky or experimental, and the guitarists aren't virtuosos (other than an occasional solo). They play simple mosh-hardcore, but they're just really damn good at what

they do, with a passion for hardcore that puts them above any other band in the genre. At least in my mind, their albums *One with the Underdogs* and *Keepers of the Faith* should go down as hardcore classics.

While Terror is based out of Los Angeles, vocalist Scott Vogel spent his formative years in Buffalo. He holds a special connection to Erie, and references coming to shows in Erie as a teenager in the liner notes of *Live by the Code*.

Filling out the rest of the bill are God's Hate, also from Los Angeles, Steel Nation from Pittsburgh, Erie's own Human Animal, and Pissing Match from Buffalo. Members from each band, save for God's Hate, have all played in Erie in the past with their former bands, so this show will be somewhat of a hardcore family reunion.

The hardcore scene in Erie isn't quite what it used to be, but true believers remain. It may be a while before another hardcore band of this caliber comes through Erie again, so take this chance to do some stage dives. — Tommy Shannon

6 p.m. // *Basement Transmissions*, 145 W. 11th St. // \$15 // All ages // [facebook.com/BasementTransmissions](https://www.facebook.com/BasementTransmissions)

### Friday, May 19

#### Erie Art Museum's Spring Gallery Night



Here's a challenge: Can you visit more than 15 Erie art locations in three hours?

That's what's in store for those who attend the Erie Art Museum's next Gallery Night. The event features artwork at the museum and other local venues. Some locations also promise live entertainment, artist meet-and-greets, and demonstrations.

At the Erie Art Museum, visitors can view the 94th Annual Spring Show, *Earth Stories* (environmentally themed quilts), *Tin Plated Dreams*: sculptures by William Brady, Jr. (an exhibit of tin mobiles), and more. Poetic tours led by Chuck Joy, author of *Theme of Line*, will be offered at 7:30

## MUSIC

### "Next Generation" Concert

May 11 — 6 to 9 p.m.

*General McLane High School*, 11761 Edinboro Rd. [jazzerie.com](https://www.jazzerie.com).

### Gem City Revival

May 12 — 6 to 9 p.m.

*The Cork 1794*, 17 W. Main St. [cork1794.com](https://www.cork1794.com).

### Dave Callaghan Quartet

May 12 — 6 to 9 p.m.

*Wegman's Cafeteria*, 6143 Peach St. [jazzerie.com](https://www.jazzerie.com).

### Young People's Chorus Spring Concert: Love Call me Home

May 12 — 7 to 9 p.m.

*Penn State Behrend*, 4701 College Dr. [behrend.psu.edu](https://www.behrend.psu.edu).

### Tropidelic and Oogee Wawa

May 12 — 8 p.m. to 2 a.m.

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

### Gimp Guy Underground Acoustic Night

May 12 — 9 p.m. to 1 a.m.

*Bobbys Place*, 1202 W. 18th St. [facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com).

### A Night of Disturbed

### and Korn

May 12 — 10 p.m. to 2 a.m.

*Sherlocks*, 508 State St. [facebook.com/sherlocksparkplace](https://www.facebook.com/sherlocksparkplace).

### The Clarks

May 13 — 6 p.m. to 2 a.m.

*Sherlocks*, 508 State St. [facebook.com/sherlocksparkplace](https://www.facebook.com/sherlocksparkplace).

### Michael Ludwig

May 13 — 6:30 p.m.

*Church of the Covenant*, 250 W. 7th St. [gannon.edu](https://www.gannon.edu).

### Gem City Revival

May 13 — 7 p.m.

*The Back Deck*, 4636 Buffalo Rd. [thebackdeck.menu](https://www.thebackdeck.menu).

### The Rusty Haywhackers

May 13 — 10 p.m. to 2 a.m.

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

### Ron Yarman

May 14 — 1 to 4 p.m.

*Arundel Cellars*, 11727 E. Main Rd. [arundelcellars.com](https://www.arundelcellars.com).

### Blasco Concert Series: Presque Isle Flute Choir

May 15 — 7 p.m.

*H.O. Hirt Auditorium at Blasco Memorial Library*, 160 E. Front St. [erielibrary.org](https://www.erielibrary.org).

### Presque Isle

### Saxophone Quartet

May 15 — 7:30 to 9:30 p.m.

*Cathedral of St. Paul*, 134 W. 7th St. [facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com).

### Bad Omens and Darke Complex

May 17 — 6 to 11 p.m.

*Basement Transmissions*, 145 W. 11th St. [facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com).

### Good Morning Bedlam and Brooke Surgener

May 17 — 8 to 11 p.m.

*Jekyll and Hyde's*, 8 E. 10th St. [facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com).

### Downtown Edinboro Art & Music Festival

May 18, 19, 20, 21

*Downtown Edinboro*, 111 Erie St. [edinboroartandmusic.com](https://www.edinboroartandmusic.com).

### Jackson Station

May 19 — 6 p.m.

*Coconut Joe's*, 28 N. Park Row [cjoes.com](https://www.cjoes.com).

### Terror and God's Hate

May 19 — 6 to 11 p.m.

*Basement Transmissions*, 145 W. 11th St. [facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com).

### SASS Acoustics

May 19 — 6 to 9 p.m.

*Arundel Cellars*, 11727 E. Main Rd. [arundelcellars.com](https://www.arundelcellars.com).

### Cosmic Rhythm

May 19 — 9 p.m. to 2 a.m.

*Sherlocks*, 508 State St. [facebook.com/sherlocksparkplace](https://www.facebook.com/sherlocksparkplace).

### Trohoske's Art Groupies

May 19 — 10 p.m. to 2 a.m.

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

### Jesse Taylor Smith

May 20 — 1 to 4 p.m.

*Arundel Cellars*, 11727 E. Main Rd. [arundelcellars.com](https://www.arundelcellars.com).

### Geek Army

May 20 — 6 p.m.

*Coconut Joe's*, 28 N. Park Row [cjoes.com](https://www.cjoes.com).

### Anger Is A Gift: RATM Tribute and Broke Boland

May 20 — 9 p.m. to 2 a.m.

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

### I-90's

May 20 — 10 p.m. to 2 a.m.

*Sherlocks*, 508 State St. [facebook.com/sherlocksparkplace](https://www.facebook.com/sherlocksparkplace).

### Whamm'n Jamm'n 4 Our Veterans Music Fundraiser

May 21 — 1 to 6 p.m.

*Oasis Pub*, 3122 W. Lake Rd. [oasispuberie.com](https://www.oasispuberie.com).

### Symphonic Spring

May 21 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.

*First Alliance Church*, 2939 Zimmerly Rd. [facerie.org](https://www.facerie.org).

## DANCE

### Reflections 2

May 11 — 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

*Erie Dance Theater*, 1603 Cherry St. [eriedancetheater.org](https://www.eriedancetheater.org).

## FOOD & DRINK

### Erie Food Tours

May 13, 27 & June 2, 3, 9, 16, 17, 23, 24, 30 — 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

*Like My Thai*, 827 State St. [eriefoodtours.com](https://www.eriefoodtours.com).

### Tea, Bags and Tiaras

Mar. 13 — 1 to 3:30 p.m.

*Erie Maennerchor Club*, 1607 State St. [thearcoferie.org](https://www.thearcoferie.org).

### Cocktails and Clay

May 13 — 3 to 5:30 p.m. & 6 to 8:30 p.m.

*Erie Clayspace*, 1505 State St. [erieclayspace.com](https://www.erieclayspace.com).

### Mother's Day Brunch

Mar. 14 — 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. & 1 to 3:30 p.m.

*Erie Clayspace*, 1505 State St. [erieclayspace.com](https://www.erieclayspace.com).

### Mother's Day at the Isle House

Mar. 14 — 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

*Presque Isle Wine Cellars*, 9440 W. Main St. [piwine.com](https://www.piwine.com).

### Mother's Day

May 14 — 12:30 to 6:30 p.m.

*The Cork 1794*, 17 W. Main St. [cork1794.com](https://www.cork1794.com).

### Erie Brewing Company Tap Takeover

May 18 — 6 to 8 p.m.

*Mad Mex*, 5800 Peach St. [eriebrewingco.com](https://www.eriebrewingco.com).

### European Riviera Wine Dinner

May 18 — 6:30 to 8 p.m.

*The Cork 1794*, 17 W. Main St. [cork1794.com](https://www.cork1794.com).

### American Craft Beer Week

May 19 — 6 to 9 p.m.

*Arundel Cellars*, 11727 E. Main Rd. [arundelcellars.com](https://www.arundelcellars.com).

### Cellar Night

Mar. 19 — 7 to 9 p.m.

*The Brewerie at Union Station*, 123 W. 14th St. [brewerie.com](https://www.brewerie.com).

### A Charming Day in Lake Erie Wine Country

Mar. 20 — 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

*Various Locations*, [lakeeriewinecountry.org](https://www.lakeeriewinecountry.org).

### Erie Brewing Company Sampling

May 20 — 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.



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The Russian Orthodox  
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Presents the 9th Annual

# TROIKA

## Russian Festival

Friday, May 26, 2017 - 4 p.m. to 9 p.m.  
Saturday, May 27, 2017 - Noon to 6 p.m.  
Sunday, May 28, 2017 - Noon to 9 p.m.



Church of the Nativity Community Center  
109 German Street Erie, PA 16507  
www.churchofthenativity.net/troika

Russian Food • Ice Bar • Children's Area • & More

# Kings Rook Club

\*\* SAT 20  
MAY

## ANGER IS A GIFT

RATM TRIBUTE

UPSTAIRS LOUNGE BROKE BOLAND

\*\* FRI 02  
JUNE

## START MAKING SENSE

UPSTAIRS LOUNGE FUNKTIONAL FLOW

DOORS 8PM | MUSIC 10PM

### EVERY THURSDAY NIGHT!

Grab your gear and get here! • 10PM

No Cover • Drink Specials • Open 8 PM

[Sign up before 10 PM & first drink is on us]

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Music at 10pm • Fri & Sat Happy Hour Specials: \$2 Wells & select beers 8pm-12am • Free pool, shuffleboard & games always!!! • 1921 Peach St. • Members & guests only  
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FRI 05/12  
TROPIDELIC  
+ OOGEE WAWA

SAT 05/13  
THE RUSTY HAYWHACKERS  
FRI 05/19  
TROHOSKE'S ART GROUPIES

SAT 05/20  
ANGER IS A GIFT: RATM TRIBUTE  
[DOWNSTAIRS]

BROKE BOLAND  
[UPSTAIRS]

FRI 05/26  
OF GOOD NATURE  
+ DRUNKEN SUNDAY

SAT 05/27  
TREESPEAK

FRI 06/02  
START MAKING SENSE  
[DOWNSTAIRS]

FUNKTIONAL FLOW  
[UPSTAIRS]

SAT 06/03  
PINE DIARY

FRI 06/09  
MOCHESTER

SAT 06/10  
JEREMY PORTER  
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**Erie Art Museum** THE CURE FOR MEDIOCRE CINEMA

Showing 4/26 • 6pm • \$10 **INVISIBLE HAND**

**LOVESONG (2017)**  
Neglected by her husband, Sarah embarks on an impromptu road trip with her daughter and her best friend, Mindy. Along the way, the dynamic between the two friends intensifies before circumstances force them apart. Years later, Sarah attempts to rebuild their intimate connection in the days before Mindy's wedding.  
Showing 5/3 • 7pm  
filmsocietyinwpa.org

**BUSTER'S MAL HEART (2017)**  
With filmmaker Skype Q&A  
Rami Malek (Emmy nominee, "Mr. Robot") stars as Jonah, a troubled man on the run from fate. Malek exposes the depths of Jonah's soul in this smart thriller, peppered with dark humor and laden with interlocking mystery.  
Showing 5/10 • 7pm

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731 W 8th St (@Liberty) Erie, PA  
814-456-1313 www.ufipax.com

and 8:30 p.m.

Meanwhile, the Renaissance Centre will house the display of The Visual Snack Shop by HigherGlyphics, which includes mini-sculptures, prints, and other work by Todd Scalise. Two other exhibits, Erie Ink and Desvelado, will also be featured there.

Voodoo Brewery plans to show off Pennsylvan Wabi-Sabi by “Hollerin’ Jer” McGinty, which is a “collection of barn-built bar hopper motorcycles.”

Voodoo Brewery plans to show off Pennsylvan Wabi-Sabi by “Hollerin’ Jer” McGinty, which is a “collection of barn-built bar hopper motorcycles.”

There’s something for everyone. At Erie ClaySpace Studio, guests take their turns throwing pots on the wheel, and at Glass Growers Gallery, they can meet Joanne Loew, the artist behind the exhibit “Lucid Dreams,” a collection of oil and acrylic paintings.

A complete list of locations and their exhibits is available on Erie Art Museum’s website. – Tracy Geibel

um’s website. – Tracy Geibel

7 to 10 p.m. // various locations // Free // 459.5477 // [erieartmuseum.org/events-gallery-night/](http://erieartmuseum.org/events-gallery-night/)

**Tuesday, May 23**

**Signals Midwest Gonna Be Golden at BT**



Cleveland punk band Signals Midwest have long been a treasure just across the Ohio border. In September, the band released their fourth album. On Tiny Engines Records, they’re label

mates with bands like Wild Pink and The Hotelier. They’ve toured almost nonstop for years, and are staples of The FEST in Gainesville, Florida. Most recently, they were joined on tour with the London band Great Cynics. Throughout their career, they’ve also been favorites of the seminal review site Punknews.org, with all of their albums receiving the “Best New Music” distinction.

When you listen to them, you quickly understand why.

Their songs have recurring themes of nostalgia and introspection. They employ singalong choruses so catchy they’ll be in your head for weeks.

Fronted by songwriter Max Stern, the band plays a melodic blend of punk rock and indie rock. Their songs have recurring themes of nostalgia and introspection. They employ singalong choruses so catchy they’ll be in your head for weeks.

Sometimes it makes me you won-

der why more artists from Cleveland, Pittsburgh, or Buffalo neglect to stop over in Erie. Signals are no strangers to Erie, however, having graced the stage of Basement Transmissions, but at the venue’s former State Street location back in 2013.

The band will be joined by a fine collection of Erie artists. Opening up the show will be The Cartwrights, comprised of singer Chris Cherry, guitarist Jason Pinte, bassist John Molnar, and drummer Pat Bolla. They have an impressive, energetic sound similar to the headliner’s. Following The Cartwrights will be Flora, a local dream pop band led by McKenzie Sprague, better known as Optimistic Apocalypse. Sprague’s songs are hauntingly beautiful, and amplified further with the full band to back her up. The third act will be Archway, who recently completed a tour that took them all the way to the Rocky Mountains. Playing a potent style of emotional pop punk, they promise to bring a fantastic show, with every band adding something new. – Nick Warren

6 p.m. // Basement Transmissions, 145 W. 11th St. // \$8 // all ages // [facebook.com](http://facebook.com)

Wegman’s, 5028 W. Ridge Rd. [eriebrewingco.com](http://eriebrewingco.com).

**Beer Coaster Craft Beer and Amusement Fest**

Mar. 20 — 4 to 8 p.m.

Waldameer Park, 3100 W. Lake Rd. [brewerie.com](http://brewerie.com).

**Mercy Center Purse & Pearl Luncheon**

May 23 — 9:30 a.m.

Bayfront Convention Center, 1 Sassafraas Pier [erie.dressforsuccess.org](http://erie.dressforsuccess.org).

**FILM**

**Extreme Weather**

Ongoing — 11 a.m. & 1 & 3 p.m.

Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. [biggreenscreen.com](http://biggreenscreen.com).

**Lewis & Clark: Great Journey West**

Ongoing — noon & 4 p.m.

Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. [biggreenscreen.com](http://biggreenscreen.com).

**Prehistoric Planet**

Ongoing — 2 & 5 p.m.

Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. [biggreenscreen.com](http://biggreenscreen.com).

**Buster’s Mal Heart**

May 10 — 7 p.m.

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

**Flirting With Fate (1916)**

May 11 — 8 to 10 p.m.

Erie Movie House, 3424

W. Lake Rd. [facebook.com/ErieMovieHouse](http://facebook.com/ErieMovieHouse).

**Doomed! The Untold Story of Roger Corman’s the Fantastic Four**

May 13 — 7 to 11 p.m.

Erie Movie House, 3424 W. Lake Rd. [facebook.com/ErieMovieHouse](http://facebook.com/ErieMovieHouse).

**Jackie**

May 17 — 7 p.m.

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

**Spirit Quest Film Festival 2017**

May 19, 20 — 6 to 10 p.m.

Erie Movie House, 3424 W. Lake Rd. [facebook.com/ErieMovieHouse](http://facebook.com/ErieMovieHouse).

**The Met: Der Rosenkavalier**

May 20 — 12:30 p.m.

Mary D’Angelo Performing Arts Center, 501 E. 38th St. [miac.mercyhurst.edu](http://miac.mercyhurst.edu).

**VISUAL ARTS**

**Far From Home: Recent Painting from Tom Ferraro**

Ongoing through May 16

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

**Care For Your Mind: The Mental Health Show**

Ongoing through May 27

Meadville Council on the Arts, 910 Market St.

[artsmeadville.org](http://artsmeadville.org).

**Natural Impressions 6th Annual Mixed Media Student Art Show: All Things That Flower**

Ongoing through May 28 — 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

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

**Earth Stories**

Ongoing through June 11

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

**Photographs by Gary Cardot**

Ongoing through June 24

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

**94th Annual Spring Show**

Ongoing through July 9

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

**Tin Plated Dreams: Sculptures by William Brady, Jr.**

Ongoing through January 7, 2018

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

**Second Sundays**

May 14 — 2 to 4 p.m.

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

**Erie County Art Teachers**

May 14 through Aug. 11 (Reception May 20 — 2 to 4 p.m.)

Mercyhurst University

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

**Gallery Night**

May 19 — 7 to 10 p.m.

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

**Lucid Dreams by Joanne Loew**

May 19 through June 20 (Reception May 19 — 7 to 10 p.m.)

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

**Art In the Woods**

May 20 — 5 to 8 p.m.

Montessori In The Woods, 1390 Townhall Rd. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

**THEATRE**

**James and the Giant Peach**

May 12 — 7 p.m. & May 13 — 2 & 7 p.m. & May 14 — 2 p.m.

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

**Lend Me A Tenor**

May 12, 13 — 7:30 to 10 p.m. & May 14 — 3 to 5:30

All an Act Theatre, 652 W. 17th St. [allanact.net](http://allanact.net).

**Laughter on the 23rd Floor**

May 12 — 8 p.m.

Dramashop on 2nd Floor of Renaissance Centre, 1001 State St. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

**Enjoy It Now, Your**

**Children Will Survive**

May 13, 20, 27 — 5:30 p.m. & May 14 — 2:30 p.m. & May 16, 17, 24 — noon

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

**The Glorious Ones**

May 21 — 2 p.m.

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

**COMMUNITY**

**Tai Chi**

May 10, 15, 17, 22, 24 — 9:30 to 10:15 a.m.

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

**Spring Homeschool Day (Migrating Bird Identification)**

May 10 — 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Niagara Boat Launch in Presque Isle State Park, 301 Peninsula Dr. [events.dcnr.pa.gov](http://events.dcnr.pa.gov).

**Age Out Loud: Celebrate Older Americans Month**

May 10 — 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

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

**Body Language: It Says More Than You Think with Janine Driver**

May 10 — 1 to 4 p.m.

Zem Zem Shrine and Banquet Center, 2525 W. 38th St. [janinedrivererieevent.com](http://janinedrivererieevent.com).

**DiscoverE: Fish**

May 10 — 2 to 3 p.m.

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

**Messy Church**

May 10 — 5 to 6:30 p.m.

Stone United Methodist Church, 956 S. Main St. [stoneumc.org](http://stoneumc.org).

**Local Quality of Water**

May 10, 17 — 6:30 p.m.

Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. [uuerie.org](http://uuerie.org).

**Humility, Curiosity and Bold Moves Forward in Science & Medicine**

May 10 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. [jeserie.org](http://jeserie.org).

**Weightlifting & Cardio Fitness Class**

May 11, 18, 25 — 9:30 a.m.

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

**Annual Spring Book Sale**

May 11 — 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. & May 12 — 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. & May 13 — 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Admiral Room at the Blasco Memorial Library, 160 E. Front St. [erielibrary.org](http://erielibrary.org).

**Adult Art Classes**

May 11, 18 — 1 to 3 p.m.

LEAF Education Center, 1501 W. 6th St. [leaferie.org](http://leaferie.org).

**Discover Your Hidden Talent: Drawing for Absolute Beginners**

## New Scene for Erie Comic Con 2017

Basement Transmissions comes to the rescue amidst library renovations.



THE GEEK ERIE

**Reporting for Duty: Cosplayers decked out in full Halo accoutrements surround the entrance of Erie County Public Library at last year's event.**

and will provide the venue as Blasco regenerates itself. By no means will the Comic Con be stripped of its usual attractions – Geek Erie has done everything in its power to deliver it justice.

Artists include: Eerie Eric (watercolors, pencils, and inks with particular interests in the cryptic and paranormal), Deep Fried Comics, Franklin O' Neal (pro-wrestling art/caricatures), Dee Fish (owner of CAE Studios/Big Pond comics), Mike Bocianowski (animator), and Mark Welser (illustrator), along with Hillary Upperman, Bernard Crowsheet, and Aaron Mueller.

The vendors represented are even more extensive. There will be booths specializing in: collectibles and memorabilia (ActionToyman, Robot Zero Comics, In the Zone Cards & Games, World War Games & Distractions), fan art and crafts (Squishy Productions, ConFabriqations), face- and body-painting (Taradoodles), and yes, even form-fitting clothing (Leggings for Days). This is not to mention creative talents selling their work (Mord McGhee, Brianna Abello's Eerie Dolls horror stories, Ramone

Outlaw's *Germaine Cabbage-head* children's books, Uncommon Universes Press, Stellar Comics Group) and local think tanks for *more* creative talent (Box of Light Studios, Erie Makerspace). A complete list can be found on the event's Facebook page.

Aspiring artists, writers, and designers should pencil and/or

**Basement Transmissions has stepped up and will provide the venue as Blasco regenerates itself. By no means will the Comic Con be stripped of its usual attractions – Geek Erie has done everything in its power to deliver it justice.**

ink themselves in to the Comic Con's workshop series, a crash course in the basics behind a good book. Comic Books 101 will focus on characters, Comic Books 102 will delve into script, and Comic Books 103 will center on layout. Uncommon Universes Press will offer an additional class for writers in world-building – a compelling setting can add more color than color itself.

Convention-goers can enjoy wood-fired pizza (Sticks N' Bricks), barbecue (The Que Abides), tacos (Ashley Sayre de

Rivas), and/or craft ice cream (Northern Scoop) between panels. Your superhuman physique cannot be maintained without feeding your outsized muscles.

9 a.m. to 4 p.m. // 145 W. 11th St. // free admission

**PART III: Doomed – The Untold Story of Roger Corman's The Fantastic Four (2015)**

At one time an occasional curiosity, the comic book film is now a fixture of the cinema landscape. Unfortunately, directors have not always done as well as their heroic counterparts in differentiating right from wrong. According to the review aggregator website Rotten Tomatoes, Roger Corman's *The Fantastic Four* got it very, very wrong (91 percent rotten). Erie Movie House will cap off Comic Con with a *Doomed* double feature: the documentary followed by the ill-fated feature film. Those who show up early will be treated to unlimited arcade, board, and table games, refreshments, and a surprise bonus feature.

*Doors 7 p.m.; Double feature: 8 to 11 p.m. // 3424 West Lake Rd. // \$5 – BYOB with I.D.*

*Matt Swanseger can be reached at mswanseger@eriereader.com. You can follow him on Twitter @SwazzySwagga.*

By: Matt Swanseger

Do you ever wonder what it's like to be a superhero? Spare yourself the freak lab accident and fly down to Erie Library Comic Con. It should fit your inner geek like a 100 percent spandex, full-body glove.

**PART I: Hero Prom (Friday, May 12)**

Jean Grey is dating WHO?! She-Hulk wore WHAT?! Bruce Wayne is still single HOW?! Plotlines thicken as comic universes collide in a crossover event for all ages. The Hero Prom invites costumed couples (and eligible bachelors/bachelorettes) from all corners of the cosmos to step out of their interdimensional wormholes and onto the

dance floor at Basement Transmissions. Prizes will be awarded for the best dressed, so it's probably wise to leave your Val Kilmer or George Clooney-era Batsuit back at the cave – where their more questionable elements won't stick out.

8 p.m. to midnight // 145 W. 11th St. // \$2 at the door, children under seven free

**PART II: The Con Proper (Saturday, May 13)**

The Erie County Public Library and the Comic Con have enjoyed a symbiotic relationship since its inception in 2015, but ongoing renovations to Blasco had organizers seeking a new host this year. As heroes are wont to do, Basement Transmissions has stepped up

May 11, 18, 25 & June 1 — 1 to 3 p.m.  
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. lifeworkserie.org.

**American Short Stories**  
May 11, 18, 25 & June 1, 8, 15, 22 — 4 to 5:30 p.m.  
Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. jeserie.org.

**New Horizons Music Project: Strings and Folk**  
May 11, 18, 25 — 4 to 6 p.m.  
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. lifeworkserie.org.

**European Travel Adventures**

May 11 — 7 p.m.  
Erie Maennerchor Club, 1607 State St. gcsoe.org.

**Paint and Rock**  
May 11, 18 — 8 to 10:30 p.m.  
Kings Rook Club, 1921 Peach St. facebook.com/kingsrookclub.

**Erie Spring Classic**  
May 12, 13, 14  
Gannon University Hammermill Center, 602 Peach St. eriesportscommission.com.

**19th Annual Arbor**

**Day Celebration**  
May 12 — 8:45 to 11 a.m. & 11:20 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.  
LEAF Education Center, 1501 W. 6th St. leaferie.org.

**North East Community Yard Sale and Retail Night**  
May 12, 13 — 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
North East Chamber of Commerce, 44 W. Main St. business.nechamber.org.

**Tai Chi**  
May 12, 19, 26 — 9:30 to 10:15 a.m.  
Regency at South Shore,

322 Washington Pl. lifeworkserie.org.  
**National Public Gardens Day**  
May 12 — 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Goodell Gardens & Homestead, 221 Waterford St. goodellgardens.org.

**Salamander Hike**  
May 12 — 7 to 9 p.m.  
Asbury Woods Nature Center, 4105 Asbury Rd. asburywoods.org.

**Hero Prom**  
May 12 — 8 p.m. to midnight

Basement Transmissions, 145 W. 11th St. facebook.com.

**Trash to Treasure Sale**  
May 13 — 7:30 a.m. to noon  
Penn State Behrend, 4701 College Dr. unitedwayerie.org.

**Erie Library Comic Con 2017**  
May 13 — 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
Basement Transmissions, 145 W. 11th St. facebook.com.

**Mother's Day Little Leaves Program**  
May 13 — 10 to 10:45 a.m. & 11:15 a.m. to noon

LEAF Education Center, 1501 W. 6th St. leaferie.org.

**Mono Printing Class**  
May 13 — 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.  
Millcreek Branch Library, 2088 Interchange Rd. erielibrary.org.

**LEAF in Bloom Spring Walking Tour Event**  
May 13 — 1 to 4 p.m.  
LEAF Education Center, 1501 W. 6th St. leaferie.org.

**Midday Cafe Fundraiser**  
May 13 — 3 to 7 p.m.  
Oasis Pub, 3122 W. Lake

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at the 3rd Annual Street Soiree at the  
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Live entertainment, Street performers  
Local food samplings, Drinks, Cheer  
and more fun than you can imagine!

Date: Saturday, August 5, 2017

Time: 6 - 10 pm

Place: French Street in front of the expERIENCE  
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Tickets are on sale  
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Party of the year.



To purchase tickets,  
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**THE SPRING TERM 2017**



**Kevin B. Jones M.D.**  
 Humility, Curiosity and Bold Moves  
 Forward in Science & Medicine  
 Wednesday, May 10 - 7 to 8:30 p.m.

**Joshua A. Tuck, D.O.**  
 The Evolution of Sports Medicine  
 Monday, May 15 - 7 to 8:30 p.m.

**Michael Hill, M.A.**  
 Civility in Discourse: The Past, Present, and Future of Adult Civic Learning  
 Wednesday, May 17 - 7 to 8:30 p.m.

**Rev. Charles Brock, M.Litt.**  
 The Gardens of Monticello and Little Italy  
 Thursday, May 18 - 7 to 8:30 p.m.

**Michael E. DeSanctis, Ph.D.**  
 A Proper Seat for Emmanuel: Personal Reflections on the History and Meaning of the Christmas Crèche  
 Monday, May 22 - 7 to 8:30 p.m.

**Preston Love, Jr., B.A.**  
 Economic Cataracts: A Chronicle of Efforts to Remove the Obstacles of Urban Community Engagement & Economic Inclusion  
 Tuesday, May 23 - 7 to 8:30 p.m.

For the full list of events, please visit [www.JESERie.org](http://www.JESERie.org) or call us at 814.459.8000

## Edinboro Festival Fosters Community



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

**Pickin' and Grinnin':** The Downtown Edinboro Art & Music Festival, now in its 13th year, features more than 30 artists appearing onstage over four days.

Maybe? No doubt it can.

It will, too – and soon – as the Edinboro Art & Music Festival gears up for its 13th year of celebrating music and art with, as always, a special nod toward the deep-steeped, well-simmered, and long-storied lines of Appalachian folk traditions.

It's happening, as usual, during the third weekend of May, kicking off with what's become an annual blowout set by regional jam mainstays Donna the Buffalo on Thursday, May 18 at Culbertson Hills

volunteer-run festival's founders and chief organizers.

And Parker really nailed it when he added this: "The whole thing's just about having a good time, and generating a feeling of community. That can enrich our town, our society ... I dunno, maybe even our world."

### MAY 18-21

Each May, the Downtown Edinboro Art & Music Festival provides two things "that people desperately need in their lives: music and art."

Those words came awhile back from Tiger Maple String Band's Fred Parker, one of the

near downtown Edinboro.

This year, Donna will wrap up the weekend with another set (earlier and more family-friendly) on Sunday, May 21 at Goodell Gardens & Homestead, the festival's de facto central headquarters.

In between, there are more bands to see than can be listed here: The Town Pants, Sun King Warriors, Eric Brewer & Friends, TK Blues Co., Claire Stuczynski, Jim Avett, Jakob's Ferry Stragglers, and Strangers and Liars are just a few from the lineup, which will take fest-goers to various venues around town.

On top of that, there are tons of local arts exhibits and worthwhile workshops throughout the weekend, ranging from beginner drum, mandolin, and fiddle playing, to family yoga, Tai Chi, mask making, caricature drawing, and gardening (just to name a handful).

And, as always, it's all free.

Since I call sunny Edinboro

home, I've been here and there for most of the Downtown Edinboro Art and Music fests over the years. And as I've mentioned before, one of the coolest things about it is that no matter where you go – and despite the fact that it may attract thousands over its four-day stretch – it feels small and intimate, unhurried and always of-the-heart.

It's close by, and genuinely family-friendly, too. So if other plans for your weekend aren't already set, there's really no reason not to go check it out for at least part of one day (or two, or three, or four).

For the full lineup, directions to performance/workshop/exhibit venues and other locales in and about town, and plenty of other details about this year's festival, visit [edinboroartandmusic.com](http://edinboroartandmusic.com). – Ryan Smith

May 18 – 21 // Various venues around Edinboro // [edinboroartandmusic.com](http://edinboroartandmusic.com)

Rd. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

#### Mother's Day at Goodell Gardens

May 14 — 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
Goodell Gardens & Homestead, 221 Waterford St. [goodellgardens.org](http://goodellgardens.org).

#### Mercyhurst University Graduation

May 14 — 2 p.m.  
Erie Insurance Arena, 809 French St. [erieevents.com](http://erieevents.com).

#### Cathedral Prep vs. McDowell High School Baseball

May 15 — 4 p.m.  
UPMC Park, 110 E. 10th St. [erieevents.com](http://erieevents.com).

#### The Evolution of Sports Medicine

May 15 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.  
Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. [jeserie.org](http://jeserie.org).

#### Fit for Life Fitness Class

May 16, 23 — 9:30 to 10:15 a.m.  
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. [lifeworkserie.org](http://lifeworkserie.org).

#### Great Books: Standing Down, From Warrior to Civilian

May 16, 23, 30 & June

6 — 4 to 5:30 p.m.

Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. [jeserie.org](http://jeserie.org).

#### Erie SeaWolves vs. Reading Fightin Phils

May 16 — 6:30 p.m. & May 17, 18 — 11 a.m.  
UPMC Park, 110 E. 10th St. [erieevents.com](http://erieevents.com).

#### Junior League of Erie Annual Meeting

May 16 — 7 to 9 p.m.  
Mad Mex, 5800 Peach St. [juniorleagueoferie.com](http://juniorleagueoferie.com).

#### American Heart Association Basic Life Support

May 17 — 1 p.m.  
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. [lifeworkserie.org](http://lifeworkserie.org).

#### Franz Liszt: Pianist, Educator, Composer

May 17 — 1 p.m.  
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. [lifeworkserie.org](http://lifeworkserie.org).

#### Weekend Warrior Injuries

May 17 — 6 p.m.  
Millcreek Municipal Building, 3608 W. 26th St. [lifeworkserie.org](http://lifeworkserie.org).

#### Civility in Discourse: The Past, Present, and Future of Adult Civic Learning

May 17 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.  
Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. [jeserie.org](http://jeserie.org).

#### Highmark Medicare Presentation

May 18 — 12:30 p.m.  
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. [lifeworkserie.org](http://lifeworkserie.org).

#### The Gardens of Monticello and Little Italy

May 18 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.  
Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. [jeserie.org](http://jeserie.org).

#### The New Jim Crow

May 18 & June 1 — 7 to 9 p.m.  
Unitarian Universalist Congregation, 7180 Perry Hwy. [uuerie.org](http://uuerie.org).

#### Shoot the Rock NTBA Super National Qualifier

May 19, 20, 21  
Family First Sports Park, 8155 Oliver Rd. [eriesportscommission.com](http://eriesportscommission.com).

#### Excel I

May 19 & June 23 — 9 a.m. to noon  
Blasco Memorial Library, 160

E. Front St. [erielibrary.org](http://erielibrary.org).

#### 0.01K Foot Race

May 19 — 6 to 8 p.m.  
Erie Ale Works, 416 W. 12th St. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

#### Bike Around the Bay 2017

May 20 — 7:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
Presque Isle State Park, 301 Peninsula Dr. [environmenterie.org](http://environmenterie.org).

#### Duran's Down Home Days

May 20, 21 — 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.  
Waterford Community Fairgrounds, 13012 Old Rte 19 N. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com).

#### Global 6K for Water

May 20 — 10 a.m.  
Frontier Park, 1501 W. 6th St. [teamworldvision.org](http://teamworldvision.org).

#### Shades Beach Historical Marker Dedication

May 20 — 10 a.m.  
Shades Beach Park, 7000 E. Lake Rd. [harborcreekhistory.org](http://harborcreekhistory.org).

#### LuLaRoe Pop-Up Boutique

May 20 — 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
Arundel Cellars, 11727 E. Main Rd. [arundelcellars.com](http://arundelcellars.com).

#### Erie Bluffs Wildflower Walk

May 20 — 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
Erie Bluffs State Park, 1122 W. Lake Rd. [events.dcnr.pa.gov](http://events.dcnr.pa.gov).

#### Asian Festival

May 20 — 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.  
Rainbow Gardens, 22 Waldameer Park Rd. [erieapaa.org](http://erieapaa.org).

#### Catholic Charities Ball

May 20 — 6:30 p.m.  
Bayfront Convention Center, 1 Sassafras Pier [erieevents.com](http://erieevents.com).

#### Bayfront Brawl III

May 20 — 7 p.m.  
Erie Insurance Arena, 809 French St. [erieevents.com](http://erieevents.com).

#### Discovering Bluebirds

May 21 — 2 to 3 p.m.  
Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. [events.dcnr.pa.gov](http://events.dcnr.pa.gov).

#### Labyrinth Celebration: Memorial

May 21 — 8 to 10 p.m.  
LEAF Education Center, 1501 W. 6th St. [leaferie.org](http://leaferie.org).

#### Erie SeaWolves vs. Harrisburg Senators

May 22, 23 — 6:30 p.m. & May 24, 25 — 11 a.m.

UPMC Park, 110 E. 10th St. [erieevents.com](http://erieevents.com).

#### A Proper Seat for Emmanuel: Personal Reflections on the History and Meaning of the Christmas Creche

May 22 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.  
Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. [jeserie.org](http://jeserie.org).

#### Economic Cataracts: A Chronicle of Efforts to Remove the Obstacles of Urban Community Engagement and Economic Inclusion

May 23 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.  
Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. [jeserie.org](http://jeserie.org).

#### Guided Meditation

May 24 — 1:30 p.m.  
LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. [lifeworkserie.org](http://lifeworkserie.org).

#### The Death of the Roman Republic: Lessons For The American Republic Today

May 24 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.  
Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. [jeserie.org](http://jeserie.org).

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Schedule Highlights

A PIRATE, A PRISON, A PLOT  
**REBELS ON LAKE ERIE**



May 11 at 8pm  
on WQLN-TV 54.1



**FOREVER PURE**  
A FILM BY MAYA ZINSSTEIN

POWER, MONEY, POLITICS... THIS ISN'T A GAME

May 15 at 10pm  
on WQLN-TV 54.1

**ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT**

**Remembering the Riverside**

Holding on to the good times at the Cambridge Springs inn



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS/NAGARA

By: Ryan Smith

Cambridge Springs' beautiful Riverside Inn was a lot more than just some old local gem. It was a living, lively treasure.

Before I saw those first early morning texts about the fire that destroyed the Riverside from my brother and a friend who lives down the street from where it was, I hadn't really ever thought too much – never had to – about all the Riverside had given me, even as a relatively infrequent visitor.

But once I saw the first images of the gorgeous, iconic 132-year-old inn being devoured by horrific high flames in the early morning hours of May 2, I was washed over with a stream of sweet memories.

I remembered being at one long-past springtime music festival there, walking barefoot and newly in love through its beautiful lawns with the girl who'd become the woman who'd become my wife.

I remembered being there a handful of years later, slow-dancing with her – beautiful in that moment, too, with her belly full of baby – at my brother's wedding. That was after I'd stood before a crowd of friends and family in that lush, low-lit room, choking up while trying to give my speech, overwhelmed with love for the bride and groom and everyone around us.

I'd seen some of the best local concerts I've ever witnessed in that same great space. Celebrated a good many other friends' weddings there, too. Taken my son backstage to help me photograph musicians at play. Chased my daughter through its lawn. And, out on

its sprawling, lovely old wraparound porch, we'd shared everything from smokes to jokes to new baby news with friends.

And then it hit me: The Riverside is gone.

"Almost brings tears to your eyes," my brother said, and I agreed.

The news of the inn erupting into an uncontrollable blaze came as a sad shock to us, to be sure. So we couldn't imagine what it must have done (and is doing) to the small core group of young entrepreneurs who've devoted their time, energy, and efforts in recent years to restoring and improving the Riverside, opening a new gastropub, lining up cool events, and giving it what looked like – until May 2 – a secure foothold for a bright future.

Where once stood a beautiful 133-year-old landmark that inspired countless memories, now only rubble remains. Tuesday, May 2 was a mournful day for the entire community, as reports of the Riverside Inn's destruction rolled in.

"It's just a sad way to end. It was such a beautiful place," Riverside owner Marie Halladay told *Erie Times-News* reporter Tim Hahn in a story published Thursday, May 4. "I feel so badly for [Riverside General Manager] Jeremy [Ball]. He had been working so hard it, doing a wonderful job. It really is too bad. I feel badly for a lot of people."

So do we. And, it seems, that's about all there is to be said.

But plenty of people – local artists, musicians, event planners, and supporters – are talking about it, writing about it, singing about it: remembering the Riverside.

And maybe remembering is the best thing we can do right now. Maybe that's how we lend some grace to this ugly mishap. Maybe that's how we keep it.

So, if you loved the Riverside, keep loving it. Keep sharing what it meant to you. Keep remembering.

That won't bring it back, but it will keep it, in some sense, a living thing – not just a ghost.

Ryan Smith can be reached at [rsmith@eriereader.com](mailto:rsmith@eriereader.com), and you can follow him on Twitter @ryansmithplens.



DAN AUSTIN



## Sesqui!

The strange fate of the Philadelphia World's Fair



Thomas H. Keels' new book *Sesqui! Greed, Graft and the Forgotten World's Fair of 1926* answers the question, "What if Philadelphia hosted a world's fair and no one came?"

Well, okay, some people came. Actually, over four-and-a-half million. But they were expecting 30 mil-

lion.

*Sesqui!* recounts this flopped historical event, from the humble dream of a local merchant wanting to showcase his city to the world, to civic leaders blinded by hubris, to the final project being hijacked by the corrupt political machine that ran Philadelphia, sealing its doom and plunging the city into massive debt for decades afterwards.

Philadelphia department store visionary and philanthropist John Wanamaker had a simple idea: Host a world's fair in 1926 to showcase the 150th signing of the Declaration of Independence. This sesquicentennial would bring visitors from around the world to witness new and different cultures, inventions, and major sporting events.

Then the Fates intervened. Wanamaker, the chief and only real proponent for the "Sesqui," died in 1922. As time ticked away

toward 1926, plans for the event weren't faring much better than Wanamaker: off, then on, then off, then on again, but unclear. While there was never much civic interest in hosting such an event, city leaders finally proceeded with the blessing of the "Duke of South Philadelphia," William S. Vare, a construction contractor and politico, whose "Organization" ran the city.

After haphazard planning, earnest construction for the Sesqui began in 1925, at a hard-to-reach South Philadelphia location that had formerly been swampland (not coincidentally under Vare's bailiwick).

First visitors found workmen unloading curios in some exhibition halls while other buildings and monuments were under construction. The main gateway to the festival featured an 80-foot tall Liberty Bell that served as the Sesqui's symbol. Adorned

with 26,000 lights, the bell itself was complete – yet its supporting stanchions were still encased in wooden scaffolding.

Visitors seeking the Tower of Light – a 175-foot Art Deco pillar that was to be the event's highest structure, equipped with the world's largest searchlight termed "The Light of Independence," capable of shining light 70 miles away – had to be disappointed. According to Keels, "When visitors asked Sesqui police where they could find this wonder, they were directed to five large holes dug for its foundation between the two main palaces."

Poor word-of-mouth followed. And one of the rainiest periods in Quaker City's history further damned the event to failure and financial disaster.

Keels' well-documented tome recalls Sesqui's attempted grandeur, its few high points (it hosted the classic boxing match be-

tween Jack Dempsey and Gene Tunney), and its many low points. The author then proceeds to recount Sesqui's failed financial aftereffects, reducing the city's once-proud reputation as "Workshop of the World" to a squalid Third World burg, to its phoenix-like resurrection of today. In 2015, UNESCO named Philadelphia the first World Heritage City in the U.S., "putting it in the same league as Jerusalem, Prague, and Paris."

Yet with Sesqui all but forgotten, and a semiquincentennial for 2026 in the works, Keels, an apt historian, appears to caution its organizers in *Sesqui's* final sentence: "Dear God do people learn nothing from the past?" – Gregory Greenleaf-Knepp

*Sesqui! Greed, Graft and the Forgotten World's Fair of 1926*, by Thomas H. Keels, Temple University Press, 2017, 400 pp., \$40

## MUSIC REVIEWS

### Black Angels

Death Song  
Partisan

★★★★★

**A** lurching mass of fuzzy garage rock goodness, this album is immediately incendiary. With



*Death Song*, the Black Angels deliver their fifth studio album, their first since 2013's *Indigo Meadow*. The title seems like a no-brainer since the band took its name from "The Black Angel's Death Song," the penultimate track on the quintessential *Velvet Underground & Nico* album. This quintet from Austin, Texas has gone back to basics. There's less of a psychedelic throwback sound at play here, especially compared to 2014's *Clear Lake Forest EP*. The album starts off slowly as "Currently" lumbers in. Standout tracks include the earworm riffs of "Comanche Moon," and the epic final track, fittingly titled "Life Song." Though there are plenty of fine moments within these 11 tracks, they certainly fall short of greatness. Even within the same small genre, they get lost in the sea of similarly-named bands like the Black Lips, Black Mountain, and of course, the extremely popular Black Keys. To quote the DVD intro to *Spinal Tap*, "it's like a pastel black."  
– Nick Warren

### Sylvan Esso

What Now  
Loma Vista

★★★★★

**W**ith their sophomore release, Sylvan Esso paints their vision with a cleaner brush. The electronic duo consists



of singer Amelia Meath and producer Nick Sanborn. Interestingly, both musicians come from stripped down, acoustic-based folk acts: Mountain Man and Megafaun, respectively. Moving out from the backwoods into a postmodern cityscape, Sylvan Esso blends melodic sensibilities with an electropop twist. Opening with the solemn promise of "Sound," Meath is almost a capella, her voice layered with its over-processed doppelganger. The singles start coming with "The Glow" and "Song," both vibrant, uplifting tracks that take listeners back to the simple magic of The Postal Service. Ironically, the poppiest point of the album has to be "Radio," a cynical reflection about fitting in with the music industry. Meath ends each line of the chorus singing "three point three oh," lamenting the length of a successful radio track. Each song has luscious production, full of bass hits and mechanical pings, all against Meath's gorgeous vocals. With somber rumination, the album builds on their debut for an even stronger release.  
– Nick Warren

### Willie Nelson

God's Problem Child  
Legacy

★★★★★

**T**he red-headed stranger has been grey for as long as most can remember. At age 84, country music super-



star and all-around national treasure Willie Nelson continues to make great music. *God's Problem Child* marks the artist's 61st studio album since his 1962 debut. Nelson finds himself directly confronting his own mortality – in his own way, of course. For example, the original title of the album was slated to be *I'm Not Dead*. Sounding as strong and iconic as ever, Nelson's voice tells us that he still has plenty to give to the world. Tracks like "True Love" are wistful and contemplative, while songs like the uptempo "Still Not Dead" provide a hilarious, tongue-in-cheek wink at the grim reaper. The album ends with a touching tribute penned by Gary Nicholson to Nelson's friend and contemporary, Merle Haggard. The majority of the album was written by Nelson along with Tennessee producer Buddy Cannon (known for his longtime association with Kenny Chesney). The two exchanged text messages during the weeks leading up to the album's recording, crafting song lyrics along the way.  
– Nick Warren

### Jensen & Three Sharks

Two Heads, No Brain  
Basement Transmissions Records

★★★★★

**T**he cohesiveness of Jensen & Three Sharks is on full display on this debut album. This venture from Bob



Jensen and Josiah Haughwout joins two old friends for 10 tracks of insane, ludicrous fun. The two have been making music together for a long time now. In 2014, Haughwout and his family relocated to Oregon. The two still traded tracks back and forth, eventually creating *Two Heads, No Brain*. The oddball geniuses served as the heart and soul of two of Erie's favorite bands, The Jargonauts and Pegasus Unicorn. Haughwout sang for both bands, while Jensen provided electronic percussion and programming. After hearing "Which Is Which," you might find yourself faced with similar questions posed in the song ("which one is Jensen and which one is three sharks?"). While some things were never meant to be known, the pair have made a fantastic album. Imagine if Panda Bear and Atom and His Package joined forces. Humor is not lost on the band, even in attempts be politically pertinent ("Meat Machine"). You wind up with a potent mixture, its creative juices overflowing.  
– Nick Warren

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Fun Run: 3:30pm • 5k Race Time: 4:00pm

\$12 - Pig Roast Tickets Only

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5K RUN (three times around the track) Runners 21 years of age or older  
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Register online before 5/12 and receive \$5 Free Play.  
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Do you want to see our Assistant General Manager Kevin O'Sullivan kiss a pig? Donate \$10 Cash to the Boys & Girls Club of Erie and Receive \$10 Free Play.



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Limit One per Person, per Day.  
See Guest Services for Details.

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FRIDAY, MAY 26 | 4PM - 10PM



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One Lucky Winner at 10pm will drive away in a Kia Sorento  
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Photo does not represent the vehicle given away.  
The actual car will be located in front of the casino.



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