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R ERIE READER

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Fright Place, Fright Time


Opening the lid on a Hallo-wealth of activities

Mayor Joe Sinnott

An exit interview with our city's outgoing top official

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



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From the Editors:

A Quick Q & A with Erie's Wackiest Shack

Erie Reader: First off, we just wanted to say thank you for sitting down with us. We know you have a busy schedule, and it's a bit of a journey to get out here.

Wacky Shack: HELLO EARTHLINGS!

ER: Hello. There are a lot of people in the community who are excited to hear from you.

WS: I HAVE SOME INSTRUCTIONS THAT YOU MUST OBEY BEFORE COMING INTO MY HOUSE!

ER: Oh yes, we're rather familiar with those. While our community is quite well-versed in these procedures, there are other pressing issues at hand. One question we had concerned the upcoming mayoral election. With Joe Sinnott leaving office, have you decided to endorse either candidate?

WS: YOU MUST KEEP YOUR ARMS AND LEGS INSIDE YOUR CAR –

ER: Excuse me, I'm going to have to cut you off. Our question was regarding Mayor Sinnott's tenure as mayor. Ben Spегgen recently sat down with him, and the interview truly shed some light on the man behind the title. It might prove to be informative for you. So, are we to understand that there will be no forthcoming endorsement?

WS: – AND REMAIN SEATED THROUGHOUT THE RIDE WITH BOTH FEET FLAT ON THE FLOOR!

ER: We don't mean to speak out of turn, but if we could kindly divert from your standard talking points, there are some things our readers would love to know. Maybe something lighter then. We'd also care to know: what do you plan on doing this Halloween season?

WS: NEVER THROW THINGS AT ME!

ER: As in, throwing parties, and hosting events? Interesting. In fact, Matt Swanseger has cooked up a lengthy list of some of the local events going on this month. As someone with an outsider's perspective, what are some thoughts you have on Erie's evolving cultural landscape?

WS: OR I'LL SEE THAT YOU LOSE YOUR WRISTBAND!

ER: So, you so think that we should be admonished for certain actions, and – so to speak – inactions?

WS: MAYBE WITH YOUR ARM STILL ATTACHED!

ER: That seems to be a bit drastic, and, oddly familiar ...

WS: I'LL BE WATCHING TO SEE THAT YOU BEHAVE YOURSELF!

ER: Oversight, along with a system of checks and balances, is important to any scenario. That's actually refreshing to hear. What are your thoughts on our the current state of our nation as a whole?

WS: [laughs maniacally]

ER: Truly telling. Thank you – sincerely. Do you have any final words of advice?

WS: HELLO EARTHLINGS!

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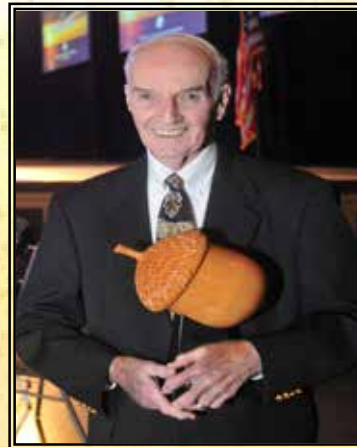
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“I Did The Best I Could”

An exit interview with outgoing Erie Mayor Joe Sinnott



During his first few years in office, Erie Mayor Joe Sinnott rarely left this desk as the demands of the job were “all-consuming.” He recently sat down with contributing editor Ben Spегgen to reflect on his three terms at the helm of the Erie government.

quickly.

JS: There wasn’t a lot of opportunity to prioritize because the crisis was pervasive. So it took reinventing the entire operation and getting our hands around all of the problems at once. It required me to work every day except for Christmas and Easter the first year. It took that kind of dedication to get a hold of everything. It wasn’t a 9-to-5 job, it wasn’t a five-day-a-week job. It truly was all-consuming for the first couple of years. And that’s what it required and that’s what we did.

Managing a crisis like that isn’t really about picking which thing is more important; they’re all important. We had to take it on as an (overall) overhaul of what was going on here. It all had to happen at once.

That said, I had a very good team who were able to take on the crisis and manage things from their perspective and start to get their hands around the philosophy we were bringing in and implement it. In other words, I didn’t have to do everything myself; I just had to manage the overall and get my plan implemented.

BS: I liken the call to run for office to getting the call to become a pastor or a priest in that not everyone gets that call. What was that like for you? When did you know you wanted to run for Council and then for Mayor?

JS: It wasn’t in my plan originally, but I had spent eight years working for the city before I went back to law school, and I had some experience with the city. So when I saw some of the things happening with the city then, I decided to run for council to try to help. At that time, I had no intention of running for this office. But because of my experience, I thought they needed somebody who understood city government on council. I figured it would be something I [spend] some time doing and to help, I would continue to practice [law].

By: Ben Spегgen

Four years ago, Erie Mayor Joe Sinnott wrestled with the decision to run for a third term. A decade before that, he hadn’t envisioned himself running to become the city’s chief executive at all. But with the city in crisis, on the brink of bankruptcy, he did run, leaning on his experience working for the city before earning a law degree and his brief experience on City Council.

In the Democratic primary of 2005, he ran to unseat incumbent Rick Filippi and did. In January of 2006, he walked through the doors of Room 500 of 626 State Street as the city’s new mayor, and after winning both of his reelection bids in 2009 and 2013 — running both times unopposed — he remained there for 12 years. Now at the end of the final year of his final term, he must vacate the office not by

decision by ballot but because he cannot seek reelection due to term limits. And even if he could, Sinnott, a proponent of term limits, says he wouldn’t.

In a few short weeks, Erie voters will decide who will be the new occupant of the fifth floor of City Hall, after having narrowed the field from nine (seven Democrats and two Republicans) to two: Republican John Persinger and Democrat Joe Schember.

Sinnott’s legacy remains too young for history to judge. An early high watermark would clearly be converting an \$11.7 million deficit into a \$5 million surplus. Critics, as they have before, will likely continue to point to his quiet leadership and austere approach to public appearances compared to mayors before him.

In his office on a warm Tuesday afternoon, I had the chance to ask Mayor Sinnott an hour’s worth of questions, ranging from how his perception of

Erie has changed over the last 12 years to what lies ahead for him as he leaves office. (To read the full interview, visit ErieReader.com.)

Ben Spегgen: Let’s go back to the beginning: What was going through your mind at that moment when you walked through the doors of this office for the first time in January 2006?

Joe Sinnott: Well, it was a difficult time for the city then. There was a difficult financial crisis; City Hall was in turmoil — there was a lot to do. What was going through my mind at that time was to get right to it. We started work the first day; there was no standing on ceremony, we went to work. We were very much on the tasks at hand, and that took up our first year and a half. It was very time-consuming.

BS: How did you prioritize that? The city was on the brink of Act 47. I feel like that’d be jarring to a lot of people to take on that amount of work that

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NEWS & VIEWS



NICK WARREN

Signed guitars line the walls of Sinnott's office. If budget were not an issue, Sinnott's dream lineup for Celebrate Erie would've included Paul McCartney and The Rolling Stones.

Fast-forward to a year-and-a-half later when the real trouble hit. Then I felt like *the city's going to go down the tubes unless you get involved all the way. You're the only one with that experience, you know how these departments work, you know how budgeting works, you know how these things work. It's time to get involved and get things back on track and back online.* If there's a learning curve, it's going to be too late, I felt, for somebody else. So I thought I needed to do that. And I was in a position in my life where I was able to give back. But it wasn't a long-term place for me to be involved in politics; it just kind of came up as a need at the moment.

BS: Those things you did the first term, decisions that you thought might not lead to a re-election, what were those tough decisions?

JS: We had layoffs in uniformed services of all places, amongst others. There was a tax increase. All things that were efficiency-driven. We needed to make this operation cost-effective for the taxpayers or there wouldn't be anyone living in the city anymore, or there wouldn't be any businesses in the city, and we'd be completely non-competitive. So we needed to make this operation efficient so that it didn't fall on the taxpayers. What we got to was small tax increases periodically, which you have to have because your costs go up. But you need to get it

to an efficiency so that those increases aren't exorbitant.

A lot of it was personnel-driven. We're a third smaller of an operation than we were. That's never popular. City government is not a job-providing operation; it's an operation to serve the taxpayers with the smallest organization needed to get the job done and get it done effectively. Those are the kind of things that conventional wisdom [says] aren't popular.

BS: Your talked-about goal is to make government easier — to have fixed it — to hand it off to the next person. I see executive leadership less as a marathon and more like a relay race where we have to hand the baton off to the next person. Is that scary for you now that you're about to hand it off to the next person?

JS: I think it always is when you put this kind of time and effort into something. I've put 12 years of my life into this, and I've gone full into it. This has been my life for 12 years, and I've sacrificed a lot for the cause, so any time you then have to relinquish that, the control of where it goes, you get worried. But there are good candidates and I think they care about the com-

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munity, and I think their goal will be to make the city a cost-effective, good place for people to live and a government that runs well. Those are very fundamental philosophies; it's all in how you implement them. And hopefully they'll continue to implement them. I think we've created a roadmap, for lack of a better term, on how to do that, and hopefully their policies will continue to follow that.

BS: Only question on the current election: Early on you said that you didn't want to get involved in it; still confident in that decision?

JS: Yes. When I say yes, that was in regards to the primary. Now that it's the general election, though, I'm still a Democrat. So my level of involvement will be different, because now it's partisan.

BS: When you started in 2006 in this office, would you say you were an optimist, a pessimist, or a realist?

JS: Optimist with a twist of realism. In other words, I thought that there had been too much pessimism for many years before that. What I saw was the community pulling away

from government. Those who have a memory long enough to go back to before 2006 would have seen a city where your businesses were hands-off and were cautious to get involved. It was a toxic situation. One of my goals was to get everyone back to rowing the boat in the same direction, so I was optimistic that the community would, as they saw us correcting our own issues ... begin to engage.

The twist of realism comes in with really understanding what we had to do to make that happen. We had to show them that we were for real — you know, that it wasn't just political rhetoric or smoke and mirrors or any of that. We had to show them that we were really working hard and that we were returning results. And now you see the level that the community is involved in these things, Emerge 2040, Erie Refocused, the different things in the downtown that everybody's coming together for — that wasn't around 12, 15 years ago. It is now. The thing is, to have optimism was correct, but you can't just tell people to get involved — you have to **[cont. on page 38]**



NICK WARREN

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How cattails could help small flow facilities meet environmental regulations



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Cattails, a hydrophilic plant native to the region, may help filter impurities from sand beds in small flow treatment facilities, which handle 2,000 gallons of sewage or less per day. [below] Equipment measures readouts at a small flow treatment facility.

Instead of technical assistance, we received a \$10,000 fine. So I went to the DEP office in Meadville to discuss the situation, and again ask for technical help. I was told they had no one that could assist us, that they have just enough staff to handle the fines.

To say I was frustrated would be an understatement. So I took it upon myself to correct the issue. It was obvious that rototilling my exposed sand beds was not working. This was what the DEP said had to be done, the beds had to be kept weed-free and rototilled.

We were out of tolerance in several areas. Ammonia-nitrogen, carbonaceous biochemical oxygen demand, dissolved oxygen, fecal coliform, pH, and total phosphorus - not good. We didn't want to pollute, but the DEP was unable to advise us as to how to become compliant.

After much research for a solution, I decided to take an all-natural approach. Instead of keeping the sand beds weed-free, I planted a local water-loving plant in the beds. Yes, I planted cattails in my sand beds.



This solved all of the problems except the ammonia. The only way to remove ammonia from water is by adding oxygen. We solved this by simply adding a 'live well fish bubbler' that I purchased from a Cabela's catalog for \$20 dollars. So by planting cattails and a \$20 dollar item we went from an out-of-tolerance, non-functional small flow treatment plant to what I believe to be the best in the state. We also went from approximately 20 labor hours a month to virtually maintenance-free. I am including a link to last year's test results if you care to see how well it works.

Now fast forward to this year as senator. I had the opportunity to listen to DEP Secretary Patrick McDonnell give a talk about the Chesapeake Bay watershed and the sources of pollution that wind up in the bay. Twenty percent of all the pollution in the Chesapeake Bay watershed is from small flow treatment plants. I believe the number is similar for the Lake Erie Watershed.

I shared my results and process with Secretary McDonnell with the hope that my model can be used for the benefit of the entire watershed area. I strongly believe that this system is a natural way to deal with the nearly 3,000 small flow treatment facilities in the state of Pennsylvania. If it continues to produce positive results, I'm hoping it will be a national model.

I have decided to share this information, to make the average citizen aware that there are viable cost effective solutions for maintaining SFTFs. We all have an obligation to protect our environment. I encourage other citizens to share their best practices in finding natural solutions to balance our lives with respect to our natural surroundings.

Senator Laughlin encourages local residents to visit his website, www.senatorlaughlin.com, and his Facebook page, [facebook.com/senatorlaughlin](https://www.facebook.com/senatorlaughlin), to keep up to date with state government news — including the state budget — and learn more about state services and agencies.

By: Dan Laughlin

Hello readers, I am excited to share with you what I consider to be an environmental breakthrough that took place over several years during my time as a private citizen in Erie County. As a small business owner and landlord, I was required to install and maintain a small sewage treatment facility. Small flow treatment facilities (SFTFs) are sewage facilities designed to treat 2,000 gallons of sewage per day or less. They are permitted through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) through the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and monitored by the local Department of Health.

In 2011 we received a letter from the Erie County Health Department and the Meadville office of the DEP. We were having trouble meeting our effluent testing requirement parameters.

We have a professional that is licensed by the state to monitor and take care of our system, and yet we were not meeting most of the requirements. We asked the Department of Environmental Protection for technical help as how to best solve this problem.



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**THURSDAY,
OCTOBER 12**
**WEDNESDAY,
OCTOBER 25**

Back-to-back Debates For Erie's Top Offices

Mayoral and County Executive candidates talk it out at Jefferson Educational Society



Erie's mayoral candidates John Persinger (left) and Joe Schember will face off against each other on Tuesday, Oct. 17, while the next day, challenger Art Oligeri will face incumbent Erie County Executive Kathy Dahlkemper on Wednesday, Oct. 18.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

TUESDAY, OCT. 17

Concerned voters will get a chance to hear from four different local political candidates over the span of two days. The Jefferson Educational Society, in conjunction with WQLN Public Broadcasting, and the Erie Reader are bringing you two back-to-back debates, to be held at the think tank's State Street location.

Democratic candidate Joe Schember will face off against Republican John Persinger during the first night, cover-

ing the ballot for Mayor of the City of Erie. Interest in this race has been running high for some time now, with a field of nine primary candidates being whittled down to just two. Schember, 66, is a former Erie City Councilman and Vice President with PNC Bank. In May, he won a crowded primary race with 30.43% of the vote, besting six other candidates including Bob Merski and Jay Breneman. John Persinger, 35, is a lawyer for MacDonald, Illig, Jones & Britton, and a Harvard graduate. Persinger won his race by a mar-

gin of 39.51% over his opponent, John Whaley.

On Wednesday, audiences will get a chance to hear from the candidates for Erie County Executive. The incumbent, Democrat Kathy Dahlkemper, 59, has served as county executive since she defeated Barry Grossman in the 2013 primary. The former U.S. Congresswoman won her primary with 67.66% of the vote. Republican Art Oligeri, 64, is a Mercyhurst alum and the founder and owner of Meeker Marshall Shoe Fly. Oligeri won his par-

ty's nomination this year by a margin of 214 votes over challenger Brenton Davis.

Both events will be moderated by Ben Spегgen, program director at the Jefferson Educational Society and an Erie Reader contributing editor. The community is encouraged to submit questions prior to the event by emailing contact@eriereader.com with the subject "debate question." Attendees on-site will also be able to write in questions before the debate commences. A recording and live stream of both events will be provided courtesy of WQLN.

An informed voter is a powerful voter, and in local elections like this, every vote counts. Erie's electorate will decide, in no uncertain terms, the future of our community. Before you head to the polls on November 7th election, make sure you know where the candidates stand on the issues that matter to you. — Nick Warren

Oct. 17 and 18 // 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. // Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. // free // register online jeserie.org

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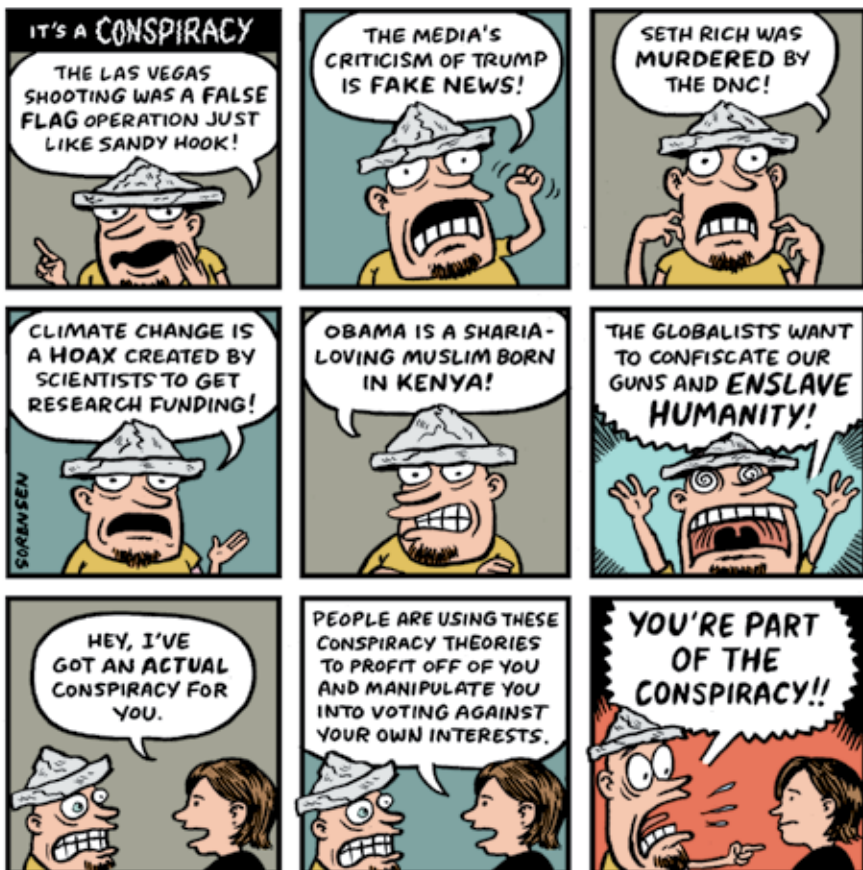
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Opening the lid on a Hallo-wealth of activities



By: Matt Swanseger

The days grow shorter; the nights grow chillier. The Pumpkin Spice Nebula that has been hanging over us since August is condensing into the surer indicators of fall — crisp leaves, cool air, and the steady advance of death that accompanies winter. It is a tale as old as time for beauties and beasts alike. At least we mortals have learned to greet it with a smiling jack o'lantern.

Halloween is the popular primetime spin-off of Samhain (pronounced “sow-in” if you’re a Celt, or “sam-hain” if you’re Glenn Danzig), a Pagan festival celebrated by the Gaels of ancient Ireland. Herdsmen came in from their fields for a much-needed timeout, huddling together to decide which of their livestock would become stew meat for the off-season. During these preliminary meal-planning sessions, it was incumbent upon the herdsmen to not only factor in their living kin, but also dead ancestors and the *aos si*, an elven fairy race belonging to the Otherworld. Different age,

same story — everybody’s trying to get their mittens on your mutton.

The gateway between the living and dead was thought to be especially permeable on Samhain, so to cover their tails, the Gaels took every measure to appease (or *propitiate*) the Otherworldly interlopers. Fires were lit and places were set at dinner tables; some went the extra mile and sacrificed their children. You know, just in case the supernatural entities didn’t like their cooking (“You’re right, it definitely needed more salt. Sorry Finnegan, you’re taking this one for the team.” *Dad, no!*)

As the centuries passed and ethics and traditions evolved, the custom of “mumming and guising” was incorporated into Samhain tradition. People dressed up as the spirits and accepted gifts on their behalf (or played pranks in the absence of gifts); thus trick-or-treating was born. In lieu of parents, processions of children were often led from farm to farm by the *Lair Bhan* (“white mare”), a grown

man wearing a white sheet carrying a horse skull (*Like a good “neigh”-bor, Lair Bhan is there!*)

Well, that’s enough horsing around. Whether you’ve got Samhain on the brain or have yet to conjure the mood, opportunities abound to make yourself a medium for the Halloween spirit. All you need to do is open your schedule up and let the *aos si* in.

Category A: “I’m Scared Of Harsh Consonant Sounds, Muskrats, And Possibly My Own Shadow”

Perhaps you’re a squeamish adult. Or perhaps you don’t want to inflict irreparable psychological damage upon your children. Whether you’re more scared for yourself (we all are at some point) or for others (likewise), you needn’t fear being left out this Halloween season.

Friday 10/13: A night in the woods may sound terrifying, but the good folks at **Asbury Woods** are here to ease your anxieties. We only fear what we don’t understand, and the **Scary Creature Feature** seeks

to educate us about all the things that go bump in the night (without actually running into them). The half-mile guided tour takes you through the forest and introduces you to humans *dressed as* various nocturnal animals. Scientific demonstrations at the Nature Center will further shed light on this often dark world.

Tours begin at 6:30 p.m., last tour departs at 9 p.m. (approx. 40 min. ea.) // 4105 Asbury Rd. // \$8 (\$6 for Nature Center members)

Saturday 10/14: You can take the dog out of the fight, but you can’t take the fight out of the dog. That is, unless you dress him up in a tutu and parade him about at **Icing on the Lake’s Halloween Dog Days**. Suddenly Cujo is a lot less intimidating.

10 a.m. to 3 p.m. // 940 W. Erie Plaza Dr. // homemade treats and complimentary bandana for all costumed dogs

Saturday 10/21: The only risk inherent in *not* attending the **Princess Halloween Party at Milestones Children’s Consignment** is shattering your daughter’s ego like a glass slipper. Make sure she feels every bit as special as she deserves with face-painting, games, activities, and dancing in the exclusive company of other heiresses (don’t worry — Paris Hilton is *not* invited).

6 p.m. // 3735 W. Lake Rd. // 836-0123 // \$5 per child (by reservation only)

Saturday 10/21: Bookmark the **Erie County Library’s Halloween Happenings** in your memory logs for another family-friendly venture. The event features a costume contest and parade (prizes for ages 5-8, 9-12, and 13-17; registration begins at 1 p.m. in the Hirt Auditorium), a showing of the Tim Burton animated classic *The Nightmare Before Christmas* (3 p.m.), and a teen costume party replete with music, games, and dancing

(3-4:30 p.m.).

1 to 4:30 p.m. // 160 E. Front St. // free

Friday 10/27: If they’re kooky and they’re spooky, your kids will no doubt want to be present at the **Erie Children’s Museum** on Halloween for a party set to indulge those of both persuasions. “Trick or Treat Street” will be bustling with activity, including face-painting, “creepy science fun,” and themed crafting.

6 to 9 p.m. // 420 French St. // eriechildrensmuseum.org // \$4 members, \$9 non-members (children under 2 free)

Throughout October: Let the giraffes stick their necks out for others; your cervical vertebrae are only flexible enough to look after your own. **Erie ZooBoo** has long been a safe bet for entertaining the whole brood, with trick-or-treating for the youngsters (under 12), costumed characters, crafts, face-painting, games, and more. Animals don’t wear clothing, but the zoo certainly knows how to dress for the occasion.

Runs Friday Oct. 13 through Monday Oct. 30, 6 to 9 p.m. // 423 W. 38th St. // \$4 members (advance), \$5 members (gate), \$7 non-members; children under 2 free

Category B: “I Love The Pageantry Of All This, But I Prefer To Keep The Otherworld At Arm’s Length”

You want to have fun with it, but you don’t want to get too involved. You’ll certainly attend a soiree, but would never attend a seance. You appreciate a good masquerade, but can’t conceal your disdain for mortuaries. Venture out without necessarily going *beyond* with these events.

Friday 10/20: What better place to rock out with your macabre out than **Nelson Ledges Quarry Park**? The **2017 Gory at the Quarry** is a multilayered musical experience,



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a gudgeon (a type of fitting used in wagon wheels). A more recent tragedy (1964) involved a girl named Darlene Maria Nicholas losing her footing while gathering moss for her sister, tumbling 225 feet from the slippery shale of a cliff to her doom. Adolescents flocked to the site over the ensuing decades, hoping to witness the sound of phantom donkey hooves or the ghostly vision of little Darlene. Unfortunately, the bridge was destroyed in 2008 by arsonists.

Thankfully, Deathdealer Productions has preserved the rich folklore surrounding the historical and cultural landmark in their short documentary **There's Nobody at the Bridge**, which will be shown at the **Erie Movie House**.

Although the bridge may have burnt down, it remains a popular crossing in our memories. *8 p.m. // 3424 W. Lake Rd. // \$6*

Friday 10/27: Is your tolerance for alcohol the most terrifying thing about you? Leave the keys to the hearse at home, but make sure to materialize at **Bourbon Barrel's Halloween Costume Party**. The gala benefits The Film Society of NWP, and fittingly includes a number of Hollywood-inspired wrinkles, such as celebrity bartending and red carpet photos. Jonny Evans will spin the beats while you kibitz and eat (a complimentary buffet will be

provided). Of course, as with anything Hollywood, there will be awards for the best-dressed (or the most awesomely worst-dressed). *6 to 10 p.m. // 1213 State St. // brownpapertickets.com // \$15 (includes buffet and specialty cocktail)*

Friday 10/27: Everyone wants to practice sorcery, but very few have the means or the patience. First off, grimoires can be both expensive and hard to find (especially when the Ancients couldn't be bothered to supply an ISBN). And then there's the matter of getting others to cooperate — fake friends declining invitations to lie across your altar, your Reservoir of Souls running dry, etc. It's frustrating to be sure, but you may be overlooking one key element: inborn talent.

Basement Transmissions' Dark Arts Fest will have you believing in magic again, with a spellbinding array of visual artists and crafters on hand to share their secrets (or reveal yours, compliments of Tarot readings by Christine Stewart and rune casting by Dakota Wagner). Meanwhile, Cult Classics, The Filthy Casuals, Green Fingers, Georgia Buchner, and Elena Przyby will bend soundwaves throughout the night to varying effects — a form of sorcery the Ancients call music. *6 to 11 p.m. // 145 W. 11th St. // \$5*

Category C: "I Ain't Afraid Of No [Sic] Ghosts"

Frankenstein never scared you — nor has much else. You face your fears head-on, with or without proton pack in tow. Your EMF scanner is always active; you make idle chitchat with disembodied voices throughout the day. If there's any chance to get your adrenaline racing at all, you'll find it within these options.

Friday 10/13: Have you ever felt like worship service dragged on for an eternity? Certain long-departed parishioners of **St. Paul's United Church of Christ** are right there with you — literally, some say. The footsteps, whippers, and even choral refrains of the dead have been heard at night in the 150 year-old building, with some spectral presences even being identified by name.

Perhaps they'll join you in the audience when GeekERIE holds its inaugural **Friday the 13th Horror-a-Thon** within those same walls. Gather together with the earthly and unearthly congregation for a horror triple feature, which will include *Halloween* (1978), *The Thing* (1982), and *Trick R Treat* (2007).

During the intermissions, the Reverend Robin S. Swope (a.k.a. the "Paranormal Pastor," author of *Eerie Erie: Tales of the Unexplained from Northwest Pennsylvania*) and Heidi Longstreet will share

with tributes to the rockabilly of the 1950s (The Madison Crawl), stoned-out jams of the '60s and '70s (Into the Blue, covering the Grateful Dead), raucous hair metal of the late '80s (Dead Roses, covering Guns N' Roses), and turn-of-the-century progressive metal (46 & 2, covering Tool). That is just the tip of the geological formation — the weekend will also feature a haunted campsite contest, costume contest, and chili cook-off, as well as hiking, biking, basketball, and volleyball (weather and your mortal flesh permitting). *Runs through Sunday Oct. 22 // 12001 Rte 282, Nelson Ledges Rd., Garrettsville, Ohio // ticketquarry.com // \$20*

single day pass (\$10 for ages 4-14), \$50 all three days (\$65 at the gate), \$35 Saturday and Sunday (\$45 at the gate)

Saturday 10/21: For over 130 years, Girard's Gudgeonville Covered Bridge spanned not only Elk Creek, but also (purportedly) the realms of the living and the dead. One of the more fanciful tales tells of a bluegrass-bred donkey hearing a calliope rendition of "My Old Kentucky Home" (as Dan Rice's circus barge passed by) and having an emotional breakdown in the middle of bridge, too *mule*ancholy to continue. Its owner grew irate as the donkey refused to budge, and bludgeoned the poor beast to death with

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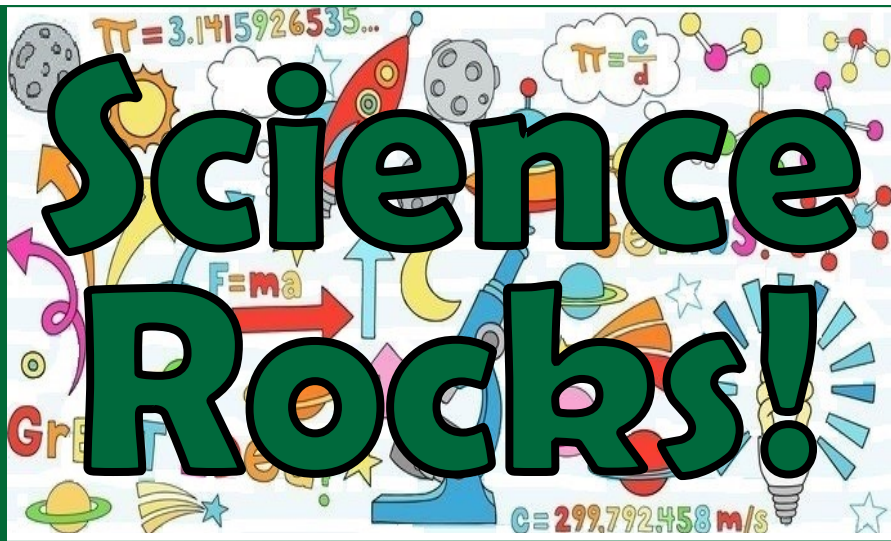
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Event concludes

To register and for full event details, visit **openhouse.edinboro.edu**.

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October 22nd Noon to 3:00 p.m.

Free admission and open to the public
Erie Day School, 1372 West Sixth Street

Budding scientists and curious minds of all ages are invited to enjoy a fun-filled afternoon. Exploration, experiments, and hands-on activities will be enjoyed at Erie Day School.

Children and adults are invited to illustrate an aspect of science, such as animals and plants living in a habitat or the solar system at the 'mural creation station.'

Attendees can also enjoy the school's campus including personalized tours by Erie Day School faculty.



- How does a robot or circuit work?**
- What is blood type compatibility?**
- Can a balloon power a toy rocket?**
- What is a sound wave?**

How does gravity work in aerospace engineering?

- What is forensic entomology?**
- Can plasma membranes be flexible?**
- What creates a tornado?**

The answers to these questions and more will be explored and solved at Science Rocks!

The UPMC Mobile Unit will also be offering health screenings and information.



Participating organizations to date:

Community Blood Bank, EmeryCare, Erie Day School, First Lego League Robotics, GE Transportation, LECOM School of Pharmacy, LORD Corporation, Mercyhurst University, NWPA K-9 Search & Rescue, UPMC Health Plan, WICU and more.



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spooky stories about both the parish and greater communities. Candy, popcorn, soft drinks, and more substantial fare will be available to nourish your body as you mingle with other kindred spirits.

Among those is organizer Kate Copp, who explains: "The GeekERIE thought it would be fun to expand our horror repertoire by offering a night of horror films at an appropriately creepy location (FYI, Erie County is sadly lacking in abandoned insane

asylums), so we approached the Erie Movie House and the Film Society of Northwestern PA to partner with us, and put this event together for the lovers of all things autumnal, dark and creepy."

7 p.m. to 2 a.m. // 1024 Peach St. // brownpapertickets.com // \$20 general admission (triple feature + concession voucher), \$30 VIP (movies, concession and food vouchers, video game pre-party, balcony or "sweet spot" seating; limit 20)

Saturday 10/14: The shal-

lowest of the Great Lakes has some incredibly deep history, especially when dealing with uncanny and/or mysterious phenomena — ghost ships, "wizard lights," weather anomalies, and more. Local author Stephanie Wincik is something of a scholar on the subject, having compiled three books of Erie County ghost stories. Join her aboard the **Victorian Princess** for the **Campfire Cruise**, an extension of her weekly **Candlelight Ghost Walks** (on Fridays through Oct. 28). Enjoy s'mores, hot dogs, hot cocoa, and great storytelling on Presque Isle Bay.

8 to 10 p.m. // [Dobbins Landing // victorianprincess.com](http://victorianprincess.com) // 459-9696 // \$25 adults, \$15 children 6-12; Ghost Walks \$5 for adults, \$4 seniors, \$3 children 6-12 (call 490-5078 for a spot)

[top left] Ghost Lake at Conneaut Lake Park features "13 Levels of Fear," chock full of twists for both the eyes and the mind. [top right] The Gudgeonville Bridge, which was lost in 2008 to arson, was long known as a hotbed of paranormal activity due to the untimely deaths of a little girl and (allegedly) a donkey. [bottom left] Many strange phenomena have been recorded at St. Paul's United Church of Christ, the backdrop of GeekERIE's Friday the 13th Horror-a-Thon.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Throughout October:

- Ghosts wander the halls and blood drips from the walls at **Macabre Manor**, the October alias of Meadville's **Baldwin Reynolds House**. You'll like what they've done with the place. *Fridays and Saturdays through October 28 at 7 p.m. // 639 Terrace St., Meadville // \$10 adults, \$8 adolescents 12-17*
- In its current life as a brewpub, **Union Station** is chugging along just fine. In its past life as a transportation hub, occasionally patrons have gotten it in the caboose. Take it from Ciara, a young girl whose untimely end came courtesy of her father's luggage (he turned to check on her and inadvertently knocked her down the marble staircase). She carries the baggage that claimed her to this day, as paranormal investigators have detected her on the premises. **The Brewer's Haunted History Tours** delve into the "dark and mysterious underbelly of the beast" that is Union Station. Don't let the train leave without you; spots sell out quickly! *Wednesdays through*

Nov. 1 (7:30 p.m.), Fridays through Oct. 27 (7 and 9:30 p.m.) // 123 W. 14th St. // 454-2200 // \$15

- If you're a lover of the-atics, you will no doubt appreciate **Ghost Lake at Conneaut Lake Park**. Tread cautiously through 13 Levels of Fear, crawling with over 160 live monsters (and/or actors who don't object to being categorized as such). After exiting the final stage with what's left of your sanity, hop on the Blue Streak Ghost Coaster and soar through the air like a banshee. *Fridays and Saturdays 7 p.m. to midnight, Sundays 7 to 11 p.m. (through Oct. 29) // 12382 Center St., Conneaut Lake // ghost-lake.net // \$25 (Fri.-Sat.) or \$20 (Sun.) for adults, \$15 (Fri.-Sat.) or \$10 for children 11 and under*

As much as we'd like to leave no gravestone unturned, that's all the physical realm will allow for now. For more, check out the Calendar section or the metaphysical dimension known as the Internet. Until next Samhain, mortals.

Matt Swanseger is always with you in spirit at mswanseger@eriereader.com

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Erie and The New Localism
Bruce Katz, J.D.



NOVEMBER 8, 2017 AT 7:30 P.M.

Linking Founding Fathers to Issues of the Day: Focus on Alexander Hamilton and James Madison
Jay Cost, Ph.D.

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NOVEMBER 9, 2017 AT 7:30 P.M.

Understanding Trump: Washington Insiders on the 45th President

Steve Scully, M.S., Philip Rucker, B.A., Tara Palmeri, B.A. and Byron York, M.S.

The Mary D'Angelo Performing Arts Center at Mercyhurst University, 501 E. 39th St., Erie, PA 16546



NOVEMBER 10, 2017 AT 7:30 P.M.

An Evening with Historian Douglas Brinkley
Douglas Brinkley, Ph.D.

The Mary D'Angelo Performing Arts Center at Mercyhurst University, 501 E. 39th St., Erie, PA 16546



NOVEMBER 13, 2017 AT 7:30 P.M.

The End of One Era, The Start of Another: German-American Relations in the Age of Trump

Jackson Janes, Ph.D.

The Mary D'Angelo Performing Arts Center at Mercyhurst University, 501 E. 39th St., Erie, PA 16546



NOVEMBER 15, 2017 AT 7:30 P.M.

Feeding the World in the 21st Century
Caitlin Welsh, M.P.A.



NOVEMBER 16, 2017 AT 7:30 P.M.

Biohacking: Is Do-It-Yourself Tech the Future of Science?

Ellen Jorgensen, Ph.D.

McGarvey Commons at Penn State Behrend, Reed Union Building, 4701 College Drive, Erie, PA 16510.



NOVEMBER 17, 2017 AT 7:30 P.M.

The Pre-Something Period: America's Leadership Challenge

Lt. General James Dubik, Ret., Ph.D.

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Spotlight on Erie

October 11 – 24, 2017

Thursday, Oct. 12

Such Gold to be Found at BT



Such Gold have been a staple in the underground alternative-punk community since emerging out of Rochester, N.Y. in 2009 with the release of the *Stand Tall* EP. The relatively local boys who made good have found time in their busy touring schedule to come to Erie and Edinboro numerous times since finding success, and are returning to Basement Transmissions on October 12, along with Taking Meds, The Grievance Club, Mallory Run, and Rotations.

Such Gold's latest release, *Deep in a Hole*, shows the band mellowing out their sound from the hardcore-influenced pop-punk that they became known for in their earlier work, perhaps caused by vocalist Ben Kotin taking the reins on guitar after one guitarist left the band, simplifying their new tunes to accommodate for Kotin pulling double duty. This is no criticism however, the songs on *Deep in a Hole* still get caught in your head just as easily and at times are just as hard-hitting as previous releases, just not quite as angst-ridden as their *Stand Tall* and *Pedestals* days.

Taking Meds, which borrows Kotin and bassist Jon Markson from Such Gold, play a far different style than their better-known project. The songs alternate between complicated math rock riffage and simple, relaxed chord progressions topped with droning vocals. That unpredictability makes their album *My Life as a Bro* an enjoyable listen, keeping you on your toes for which direction the next song will take.

Opening acts for the night The Grievance Club (Kent, Ohio), Erie's own Mallory Run, and Rotations

(Pittsburgh) each bring their own unique and interesting takes on emo/pop punk hybrid sound to the stage. Come show support for each band and bring a friend, and help the local scene to grow and flourish. — Tommy Shannon

Doors 6:30 p.m., show 7 p.m. // 145 W. 11th // \$10 advance, \$13 doors //

Friday, Oct. 13

Those are Some Pipes! EUP Homecoming 2017 is Here



Newcomers to the Erie area might notice in early October a chorus of melodic bleating coming from the southern edge of the county and the fact that everyone within half a mile of it starts clapping along to the beat. It's not a hostile invasion of musical aliens; no, it's Edinboro University's homecoming weekend, and that sound which rouses everyone to their feet in joyful stamping is "Scotland the Brave," performed as often as possible by the beloved EUP bagpipe ensemble.

Homecoming weekend is an autumnal highlight not just in the Edinboro community, but for the tri-state region and beyond. Friday's feature includes the All Alumni Gathering at the Culbertson Hills Resort at 8:00 p.m., while the bulk of the festivities occur Saturday, with everything from the pre-parade Keggs and Eggs at the Bufalino home (a well-attended annual tradition for those 21 and older), to the superhero-themed parade itself, slated for an 11 a.m. start-time, to the post-parade community lunch at noon, with free hot dogs, hamburgers and snacks for all, plus a KidZone with face-painting and games. The latter event will be held on the lawn of the Louis C. Cole Auditorium building.

If you make it down to Edinboro for the football match-up against

Mercyhurst, be sure to check out the pre-game beer garden in the parking lot of the Mark Zafirovski Sports and Recreation Center. Of course, the entire town will be awash in red and white as alumni, students and parents fill the sidewalks — and the bars — of downtown Edinboro to enjoy live music, games and local vendors throughout the day and well into the night. — Cara Suppa

Friday evening and all-day Saturday // Various locations around Edinboro and EUP's campus // free // homecoming. edinboro.edu

Saturday, Oct. 14

Peek n' Peak Plans 30th Fall Fest



Though the leaves change every fall, one thing has remained constant for the past three decades. The Peek n' Peak Resort in western New York has consistently held its annual Fall Fest, which features family-friendly fun for two weekends in October.

This season, the resort — known for its ski trails and recently added ziplines — won't disappoint. The 30th annual Fall Fest kicks off Saturday, Oct. 14 and continues into Sunday, Oct. 15. But if one weekend isn't enough, guests can return on Saturday, Oct. 21 and Sunday, Oct. 22 for even more autumn activities. Both weekends feature a magic show, a petting zoo and horse-drawn carriage rides. Plus, a craft show with more than 130 vendors and a SnowSports Equipment Swap will be set up all four days from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The first weekend also includes shows, such as Jungle Terry's Wildlife Adventure and Frisbee dog performances. That Saturday, the ANNA Shelter will bring several adoptable puppies to Peek n' Peak to meet their potential owners. Sunday's line-up includes the 20th annual Greg Neid

Memorial Car Show, where a variety of hot rods, as well as antique and muscle cars will be on display from 1 to 4 p.m.

However, the area's fall foliage will be on display for both weekends.

A complete list of activities can be found at www.pknpkfallfest.com. — Tracy Geibel

10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 14, Sunday, Oct. 15, Saturday, Oct. 21, & Sunday, Oct. 22 // Peek n' Peak Resort, 1405 Olde Rd, Clymer, New York // free admission // pknpk.com

Saturday, Oct. 14th

Humanity Against Heroin: Part Two at Basement Transmissions



The Humanity Against Heroin event being held at Basement Transmissions this month will actually be the second of a three-part series put on by Don't Blink Photography and Design in conjunction with The BOX. After raising nearly \$500 for Gaudenzia Erie the first time around, the organization will once again be taking "a stand against the heroin and addiction epidemic in our city," this time benefiting Grace House for Women.

"Motivation to put this event together began when my dear friend Jess died from an overdose," says Vanessa Seppi, founder of Don't Blink Photography and Design. "I started Humanity Against Heroin with a single event, which 200 people showed up to and supported. We were able to raise funds for Gaudenzia Erie with so much success that we decided to plan Part Two and will continue with Part Three in February."

This time around, Seppi and company have set their bar even higher, hoping to raise closer to \$5,000. Though the event is free, donations are strongly encouraged, and as Sep-

CALENDAR

pi is quick to note, no donation is too small. What might sound like wishful thinking is actually backed by the immense support Humanity Against Heroin has received from a surrounding community fed up with the ways addiction has impacted our city.

“The community response has been amazing,” says Seppi. “Many are donating their time and efforts as a part of this new movement, along with donating funds, sharing the event and donating items for the raffle auctions. Many motivational speakers from the community are also lending their time to speak about recovery and successfully continuing on their new chosen path.”

In addition to motivational speakers, Part Two of the Humanity Against Heroin series will contain more of everything, from band to vendors and intermittent activities. This event’s schedule includes sets from Justin Moyar, Paper Matches, The Rick Ray Band and Doc Proto among others. More information and a full lineup can be found on the event’s Facebook page. — Aaron Mook

2 to 10 p.m. // 145 West 11th Street // donations encouraged

Tuesday, Oct. 17

Secure Your Top Hats and Monocles for ‘A Gentleman’s Guide’

If you happened to catch *Downton Abbey* before its departure, you are



probably quite aware of the fact that wherever there is money, an estate, a title and — of course — an English setting, mayhem is sure to follow. It surely follows the penniless but ruthless lead, Monty (D’Ysquith) Navarro, in 2014’s Tony Award winner for Best Musical, *A Gentleman’s Guide to Love and Murder*.

Set in early 20th century England, *A Gentleman’s Guide* follows the son of a noble family’s disinherited daughter and his vengeful course of murder, as he takes out every family member who stands in the way of his inheriting the earldom — by means both foul and flagrant. Based on a novel published in 1907, Monty’s murderous social climbing might not resonate too deeply with us untitled Americans, but that certainly doesn’t make watching his machinations any less fun.

Aiding and abetting in that overall atmosphere of mirth and grandeur is the glorious and historic Warner Theatre. Now entering into the fourth phase of a multimillion dollar restoration project, the Warner continues

to operate as the premiere spot for national tours, bringing the excitement of the Great White Way to Erie and giving music lovers a break from seven-hour theatre commutes. Though it approaches 90 years of operation in the downtown area, the Warner gives every jewel of a production which passes through a special big-city sparkle you’re not likely to find anywhere else in this area. — Cara Suppa

7:30 p.m. // 811 State Street // \$33.75—\$54.75 // tickets on sale at Erie Insurance Arena box office or by calling (814) 452-4857 // eriewarnertheatre.com/events

Thursday, Oct. 19

Hawthorne Heights Leads Emo Uprising at BT



The highly influential Dayton, Ohio band, Hawthorne Heights, is returning to Basement Transmissions

along with a stacked local lineup, hosted by The Entertainment Collective.

For many people in their early 20s, Hawthorne Heights was their introduction into emo music, acting as a catalyst that led to listeners delving into a rich genre with a vast array of influences, and discovering influences of their own along the way. Many of the bands on the rosters of record labels such as Run For Cover and No Sleep, as well as several opening bands on this show’s bill, can attribute inspiration to Hawthorne Heights and other emo bands that had a strong presence in the mid-2000’s, and having them come to Erie is nothing short of exciting.

Touring with Hawthorne Heights is Awake at Last, who are showcasing their latest release *Life/Death/Rebirth* — a dynamic six-song EP that jumps between dark pop, hard rock, and post-hardcore. To date, Awake at Last has found success in creating a national fan base, even playing the main stage at this year’s Warped Tour in Columbia, Md., all without the help of a record label.

Local opening acts on the bill include Archway, with their aggressive and emotional punk rock from Meadville, for fans of Title Fight and Taking Back Sunday. The Standby — Erie emo/grunge rock for fans of Brand New — will also open, in addition to the Erie pop punk band Well Below Average. Buffalo melodic punk rockers Kill the Clock will also take the

MUSIC

The V Band

Oct. 11, 18, 25 — 6 to 6:30 p.m.

Maxi’s Restaurant at Bel Aire Clarion Hotel, 2800 W. 8th St. jazzerie.com.

MVP

Oct. 12, 19 — 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Dickey’s Barbecue Pit, 3716 Liberty St. jazzerie.com.

Such Gold & Taking Meds

Oct. 12 — 6 p.m.

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

House of Rhythm

Oct. 13 — 6 to 9 p.m.

Maxi’s Restaurant at Bel Aire Clarion Hotel, 2800 W. 8th St. jazzerie.com.

Mo Lowda & Humble

Oct. 13 — 9 p.m. to 2 a.m.

Kings Rook Club, 1921 Peach St. facebook.com/kingsrookclub.

Crush

Oct. 13 — 10 p.m. to 2 a.m.

Sherlocks, 508 State St. facebook.com.

Humanity Against

Heroin Part 2

Oct. 14 — 2 to 10 p.m.

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

1964 The Tribute

Oct. 14 — 7:30 p.m.

Warner Theatre, 811 State St. erieevents.com.

Brahctopus

Oct. 14 — 10 p.m. to 2 a.m.

Kings Rook Club, 1921 Peach St. facebook.com/kingsrookclub.

Ray Lanich Band

Oct. 14 — 10 p.m. to 2 a.m.

Sherlocks, 508 State St. facebook.com.

SAS Acoustics featuring Kayti Stadler

Oct. 15 — 1 to 4 p.m.

Arundel Cellars, 11727 E. Main Rd. facebook.com/SASAcousticDuo.

Blasco Concert Series: Bayfront Brass Quintet

Oct. 15 — 2 to 3 p.m.

Blasco Memorial Library, 160 E. Front St. erielibrary.org.

King 810

Oct. 15 — 6 to 11 p.m.

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

Man Forever with Fall Risk and the Indeterminates

Oct. 17 — 7:30 p.m. to midnight

Jekyll and Hyde’s, 8 E. 10th St. facebook.com.

Hawthorne Heights

Oct. 19 — 6 to 11 p.m.

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

Montana of 300

Oct. 20 — 6 p.m.

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

Bootlegger’s Bible Club

Oct. 20 — 6 to 9 p.m.

Maxi’s Restaurant at Bel Aire Clarion Hotel, 2800 W. 8th St. jazzerie.com.

HaGLOWeen Party Ft. The Romantic Era

Oct. 20 — 7 to 11 p.m.

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

The Originators (DC Ska) + Elektra Kings

Oct. 20 — 10 p.m. to 2 a.m.

Kings Rook Club, 1921 Peach St.

facebook.com/kingsrookclub.

Whiskey Road

Oct. 20 — 10 p.m. to 2 a.m.

Sherlocks, 508 State St. facebook.com.

Erie Chamber Orchestra Concert

Oct. 21 — 6:30 p.m.

Luther Memorial, 225 W. 10th St. gannon.edu.

Pink Floyd Laser Spectacular

Oct. 21 — 8 p.m.

Warner Theatre, 811 State St. erieevents.com.

Tropidelic + Stationary Pebbles

Oct. 21 — 8 p.m. to 2 a.m.

Kings Rook Club, 1921 Peach St. facebook.com/kingsrookclub.

Classic Club Rewind Party with DJ Mad Matt

Oct. 21 — 9 p.m. to midnight

McCoy’s Barrelhouse and Grill, 1013 State St. facebook.com.

Immoral

Oct. 21 — 10 p.m. to 2 a.m.

Sherlocks, 508 State St. facebook.com.

DANCE

Creative Dance Residency

Oct. 13, 20 — 12:30 to 1:30 p.m.

LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. lifeworkserie.org.

Sweet & Spooky Celebration

Oct. 22 — 3 to 4 p.m.

Long’s School of Dance, 826 Selinger Ave. facebook.com.

FOOD & DRINK

Easy Pumpkin Recipes

Oct. 12 — 1:30 p.m.

LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. lifeworkserie.org.

Erie Food Tours

Oct. 14, 21 — 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Like My Thai, 827 State St. eriefoodtours.com.

Pizza Party

Oct. 19 — 5 to 8 p.m.

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

Sip N Sip

Oct. 20 — 6 to 8 p.m.

Presque Isle Wine Cellars, 9440 W. Main St. facebook.com.

Cocktails & Color

Oct. 24 — 6 p.m.

Voodoo Brewery, 215 Arch St. facebook.com.

Mind, Body, Beer

Oct. 24 — 7:30 to 8:30 p.m.

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

FILM

Extreme Weather

Ongoing — 11 a.m. & 3 p.m.

Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. biggreenscreen.com.

Flight of the Butterflies

Ongoing — noon & 4 p.m.

Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. biggreenscreen.com.

Mysteries of the Great Lakes

Ongoing — 1 p.m.

Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. biggreenscreen.com.

Prehistoric Planet

Ongoing — 2 & 5 p.m.

Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr.



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stage, as well as Common Light, which features current and former members of Archway, Mallory Run, One If By Land, and Signal Home (who released their LP, *A Fragile Constitutional* under the now-defunct record label Carbon Copy Media, ran by Hawthorne Heights' JT Woodruff), playing their first ever show. Come out to this show for a great time and support the local scene. — Tommy Shannon

Doors 6 p.m., show 7 p.m. // 145 W. 11th // \$15 advance, \$17 doors

Friday, Oct. 20

World-Class Magicians to Perform at Warner Theatre



These five world-renowned magicians won't settle for second place; they call themselves the "Champions of Magic." The illusionists — who are known for their disappearances, levitation and teleportation — will perform at the Warner Theatre, less than a month into their first tour through

out the United States. "(They are) really excited to bring all the magic to the states for the first time," said publicist Alex Everakes, who promised that audiences of all ages would be "dazzled" by the performance.

The Champions of Magic previously toured in the United Kingdom for four years, where they sold out shows and earned five-star reviews. The five have also been featured on shows like *Penn & Teller: Fool Us*, *A Quest For Magic* and *Caught On Camera With Nick Cannon*.

"Quite simply, mind blowing. I urge you to quickly get whatever tickets are still available because Champions of Magic is a show that has to be seen to be disbelieved," wrote The Sussex Newspaper after one performance.

Each could stand alone as an extraordinary magician, but together, their talents promise to make a memorable performance. Alex McAller is known for his mind-reading abilities, while Edward Hilsum, who was named the International Stage Musician of the Year, says his favorite trick — called "Silver" — doesn't involve props or equipment. The only woman in the group, Fay Presto, was called Britain's best female magician by the Independent. She's known for her close-up magic. And the final two are known simply as Young and Strange.

On stage, these five pull off the seemingly impossible. Perhaps, you'll have

to see it to believe it. — Tracy Geibel

7:30 p.m. // Warner Theatre, 811 State St. // Starting at \$26.50 // 452-4857 // erieevents.com/events/champions-of-magic

Saturday, Oct. 21

Tropidelic Offers Plenty to Funk With



The Kings Rook Club has opened its stage up to many different acts via their downstairs concert complex already this fall (The Toasters, Broccoli Samurai, and the Rumpke Mountain Boys, to name a few). The Rook's latest guests, the Kent, Ohio reggae/hip-hop collaborative Tropidelic, will be headlining a show for those who wish to get down to some rhythmic funk.

Tropidelic built a loyal following by distributing over 10,000 copies of

their debut EP, "Rebirth of the Dope." As the hype grew, eager listeners on street corners and on campuses all throughout the Great Lakes region snapped it up. With a similar sound to groups like Dirty Heads, Pepper, and The Wailers, this band gained exposure from opening for these exact groups at shows and festivals all over the country. While bands like Dirty Heads lead in the world of funk-filled, reggae-type hip-hop with a legitimate and large following, Tropidelic have continued to solidify their spot in the music world by taking as many opportunities they can to perform as they consistently produce a solid sound and vibe. After the release of their third EP *Erie Vibes & Irie Tides* and playing festivals like Warped Tour, Electric Forest, and Bamboozled, the Ohioans released their first full length album, *All Heads Unite* in 2012. The seven band members pool together their diverse range of musical influences on their upcoming EP, *Heavy is the Head*, which offers a unique, exuberant experience to any listener who gives it the time.

NatasK will begin the festivities upstairs, with Stationary Pebbles — a funk rock group from Evans City, Pennsylvania — opening up for Tropidelic downstairs for a one-two punch that is sure to bring the heat. Doors open at 8 p.m. — Maddie Hepler

10 p.m. to 2 a.m. // 1921 Peach St. // facebook.com/kingsrookclub

biggreenscreen.com.

"Bring it to the Table" Film Screening and Live Table Talk

Oct. 12 — 7 to 9 p.m.

Louis C. Cole Auditorium in Memorial Hall, 219 Meadville St. events.edinboro.edu.

Whiplash

Oct. 12 — 8:30 p.m.

Edinboro University of Pennsylvania, 219 Meadville St. facebook.com.

Friday the 13th Horror-a-thon

Oct. 13 — 7 p.m. to 2 a.m.

Erie Movie House, 3424 W. Lake Rd. facebook.com/ErieMovieHouse.

Film 4 Thought

Oct. 19 — 5 to 8 p.m.

Park Avenue Cinema, 960 Park Ave. facebook.com.

Celluloid Liberation Orchestra: The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari

Oct. 19 — 8 to 11 p.m.

Erie Movie House, 3424 W. Lake Rd. facebook.com/ErieMovieHouse.

Burial Ground (1981)

Oct. 20 — 8 to 10 p.m.

Erie Movie House, 3424 W. Lake Rd. facebook.com/ErieMovieHouse.

The Met: Live in HD - Die Zauberflöte

Oct. 21 — 12:55 p.m.

Mary D'Angelo Performing Arts Center, 501 E. 38th St. miac.mercyhurst.edu.

There's Nobody at the Bridge

Oct. 21 — 8 to 9 p.m.

Erie Movie House, 3424 W. Lake Rd. facebook.com/ErieMovieHouse.

NT Live: Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead

Oct. 22 — 12:55 p.m.

Mary D'Angelo Performing Arts Center, 501 E. 38th St. miac.mercyhurst.edu.

VISUAL ARTS

Pairing Similarities: D.W. Martin

Ongoing through Oct. 21

Erie Art Museum, 411 State St. erieartmuseum.org.

Presque Isle Artist

Association Annual Art Show 2017

Ongoing through Oct. 21

Kelly Run Art Gallery & Studio, 264 S. Main St. facebook.com.

Artists in Motion: Illustrations of Perilous Journeys

Ongoing through Oct. 22

Mercyhurst University Cummings Gallery, 501 E. 38th St. miac.mercyhurst.edu

Left to Their Own Devices

Ongoing through Oct. 31

Bruce Gallery in Doucette Hall, 215 Meadville St. brucegallery.info.

Making the Ordinary Extraordinary

Ongoing through Nov. 12

Erie Art Museum, 411 State St. erieartmuseum.org.

Arab Spring/ Unfinished Journeys, works by Helen Zughaib

Ongoing through Nov. 12

Doane Hall of Art at Allegheny College, 520 N. Main St. allegheny.edu.

Michael Camp, Recent Paintings & Erie Clayspace

Artist Association Members Show

Ongoing through Nov. 14

Glass Growers Gallery, 10 E. 5th St. glassgrowersgallery.com.

Tin Plated Dreams: Sculptures by William Brady, Jr.

Ongoing through Jan. 7, 2018

Erie Art Museum, 411 State St. erieartmuseum.org.

Ancient Ink: Mark Perrott

Ongoing through Jan. 28, 2018

Erie Art Museum, 411 State St. erieartmuseum.org.

Tattoosday

Ongoing through Jan. 28, 2018

Erie Art Museum, 411 State St. erieartmuseum.org.

THEATER

Enjoy It Now, Your Children Will Survive

Oct. 11, 24, 25 — noon & Oct. 14 — 5:30 p.m. & Oct. 15 — 2:30 p.m.

Station Dinner Theatre, 4940 Peach St. canterburyfeast.com.

Chicago: The Musical

Oct. 13, 14, 20, 21 — 7:30 p.m. & Oct. 14, 15, 21, 22 — 2 p.m.

The Academy Theatre,

275 Chestnut St. theacademytheatre.org.

Arthur Miller's The Crucible

Oct. 13, 14 — 7:30 to 10 p.m. & Oct. 15 — 3 to 5:30 p.m.

All An Act Theatre Productions, 652 W. 17th St. allanact.net.

The Rocky Horror Show: The Last Floor Show

Oct. 13, 14, 20, 21, 27, 28 — 8 p.m. & Oct. 14, 21, 28 — midnight

PACA, 1505 State St. paca1505.com.

A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder

Oct. 17 — 7:30 p.m.

Warner Theatre, 811 State St. erieevents.com.

Mary Poppins The Broadway Musical

Oct. 19, 20, 21 — 7 p.m. & Oct. 22 — 2 p.m.

Struthers Library Theatre, 302 W. 3rd St. strutherslibrarytheatre.com.

A Canterbury Feast

Oct. 20 — 7 p.m. & Oct. 21 — 5:30 p.m. & Oct. 22 — 2:30 p.m.

Station Dinner Theatre, 4940 Peach St. canterburyfeast.com.

Murder Mystery Magic Mayhem

Oct. 21 — 6:30 p.m.

Woman's Club of Erie, 259 W. 6th St. eriewomansclub.com.

COMMUNITY

2017 Season Sissons Pumpkin Patch

Ongoing through Oct. 29

Sissons Pumpkin Patch, 1244 Springfield Rd. sissons-pumpkinpatch.com.

Fall Harvest Festival

Ongoing through Oct. 31

Port Farms, 2055 Stone Quarry Rd. portfarms.com.

Fishing Rod Loaner Program

Ongoing through Oct. 31 — 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. events.dcnr.pa.gov.

Tai Chi

Oct. 11, 16, 18, 23, 25 — 9:30 to 10:15 a.m.

LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. lifeworkserie.org.

Highmark Medicare Presentation

BlurrieCon Blazes Into Focus

Anime convention sharpening up for fifth year



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

A cosplayer dressed as a Titan from the *Destiny* video game franchise strikes a heroic pose on the Lake Erie shoreline. [right] Birds of a feather flock together at BlurrieCon, a judgment-free zone for characters of all sorts.

converting fans into “makers.”

“Our goal here is to drive Erie towards becoming not just a consumer of mass culture, but a driver and creator,” said an ACE spokesperson.

To that end, BlurrieCon features influential artists such as Mike Bocianowski (creator of “Yets,” fantasy creatures symbolizing various aspects of the human condition) and Aaron Archer (VP emeritus of design at Hasbro, handling the Transformers brand and others for many years). To satisfy the fan in con-goers, talents such as Dorothy Fahn (prolific voice actor in many anime and video game translations) and Team Brotherhood (the force behind *Fullmetal Alchemist Brotherhood: Abridged*) will be on hand.

Cosplayers seeking guidance will find plenty of direction from seasoned veterans such as Katie Carr, Risuru-Chan, Elycium, the Erie Rogues Gallery, and the Arcadia Timelords (who come to the party this year with a 1:4 scale Imperial AT-AT from *Star Wars*). If you’re a gamer who ever felt the urge to take creative control of your own project, join Retrocade Erie (a coalition of game collectors and enthusiasts) in collaboration with Erie Makerspace for a rundown on technology and homebrew gaming. Of course, if you’d rather just dance, you can do that too — Jenna Rose (of Korean hip-hop group Coco Avenue), REAKT, WaddleDeez, Emcee M.D. will pick you up faster than you can hail a Catbus (see *My Neighbor Totoro* if you missed the reference).



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

FRIDAY, OCT. 13

The Land of the Rising Sun has found its perfect setting at BlurrieCon, a three-day anime, gaming, and pop culture extravaganza at the Bayfront Convention Center. The convention formed from the ashes of the Erie Anime Experience (EAE), as fans of anime (i.e., Japanese animation), gaming, and geek culture teamed together to scramble for a replacement in 2013. Fueled by their conviction, unbridled enthusiasm, and perhaps a few energy drinks, they succeeded. BlurrieCon takes its name from the blur of activity that allowed the inaugural event to happen, and the frenzied support that has fostered continual growth for five years straight.

BlurrieCon 2017 promises to be bigger and badder than a 20-foot mech, with three full days of cosplay, artists, vendors, and entertainment. Anime Club Erie (ACE) is adamant about exceeding the typical anime convention by not only providing great content, but

Says regular attendee Tara Terry Petrinc: “The reason we have conventions is so that people with a certain interest, a passion for the things they enjoy, can share it with others who also share the same feelings, and this is what BlurrieCon is all about. BlurrieCon has brought so many people together, and is continuing to do so, even outside of our own city!”

If you’re one of these people, skip the plane to Tokyo and make your way down to the bay — it’s a much less stressful commute. — Matt Swanseger

Friday at 3 p.m. through Sunday at 6 p.m.; visit blurriecon.com for updated schedule // 1 Sassafras Pier // \$25-\$60 (includes one year ACE membership)

Oct. 11 — 1 to 2 p.m.

LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. lifeworkserie.org.

The Red and the Blue: Which Americans Vote for Which Party and Why?

Oct. 11 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. jeserie.org.

Adult Art Classes

Oct. 11, 18, 25 — 7 to 9 p.m.

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

Haunted History Tours

Oct. 11, 18, 25 — 7:30 p.m. & Oct. 13, 20 — 7 & 9:30 p.m.

The Brewerie at Union Station, 123 W. 14th St. brewerie.com.

Nature Tots: We Gather Together

Oct. 12, 16, 19 — 9 to 10 a.m.

Asbury Woods Nature Center, 4105 Asbury Rd. asburywoods.org.

In the Womb, but out in the World: Talking ‘Fetuses’ in American Pop Culture

Oct. 12 — 9:30 a.m.

Diebold Center for the Performing Arts, 217 Meadville St. events.edinboro.edu.

Weight Lifting/Cardio Fitness Class

Oct. 12, 19 — 9:30 a.m.

LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. lifeworkserie.org.

Preschool Nature Discovery: Where the Wild Things Are

Oct. 12, 16, 19 — 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Asbury Woods Nature Center, 4105 Asbury Rd. asburywoods.org.

New Horizons Music Project - Strings and Folk

Oct. 12, 19 — 4 to 6 p.m.

LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. lifeworkserie.org.

Nordic Walking

Oct. 12, 19 — 4:30 to 5:30 p.m.

Asbury Woods Nature Center, 4105 Asbury Rd. asburywoods.org.

Messy Church

Oct. 12 — 5 to 6:30 p.m.

Stone United Methodist Church, 956 S. Main St. stoneumc.org.

Graduate Programs Information Session

Oct. 12, 25 — 6 to 7:30 p.m.

Penn State Behrend, 4701 College Dr. behrend.psu.edu.

Intersections of Equality

Oct. 12 — 6:30 p.m. & Oct. 13 — 8 a.m.

Manufacturer Association, 2171 W. 38th St. greatereriealliance.com.

German Trivia Night

Oct. 12 — 7 p.m.

Erie Maennerchor Club, 1607 State St. gcsoc.org.

Joe Machi

Oct. 12 — 7 p.m. & Oct. 13, 14 — 6:45 & 9:30 p.m.

Jr’s Last Laugh Comedy Club, 1402 State St. jrslastlaugh.com.

Father or Felon: Using Identity Theory to Conceptualize and

Confront the Challenges of Community Re-entry for Incarcerated African American Men

Oct. 12 — 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. jeserie.org.

BlurrieCon 5

Oct. 13, 14, 15

Bayfront Convention Center, 1 Sassafras Pier blurriecon.com.

29th Annual Speech-Language Pathology Alumni Conference

Oct. 13 — 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Frank G. Pogue Student Center, 405 Scotland Rd. events.edinboro.edu.

Tai Chi

Oct. 13, 20 — 9:30 to 10:15 a.m.

Regency at South Shore, 322 Washington Pl. lifeworkserie.org.

Erie Days of Gaming

Oct. 13 — 5 p.m. to midnight & Oct. 14 — 10 a.m. to midnight

Quality Inn and Suites, 8040-A

Perry Hwy. eriedog.com.

ZooBoo

Oct. 13 through Oct. 30 — 6 to 9 p.m.

Erie Zoo, 423 W. 38th St. eriezoo.org.

Scary Creature Feature

Oct. 13, 14 — 6 to 10 p.m.

Asbury Woods Nature Center, 4105 Asbury Rd. asburywoods.org.

Penn State Day

Oct. 14 — 9 a.m.

Penn State Behrend, 4701 College Dr. behrend.psu.edu.

Adopt - A - Beach Program

Oct. 14 — 9 a.m. to noon

Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. events.dcnr.pa.gov.

Emma’s Footprints Memorial Walk

Oct. 14 — 9 a.m. to noon

Beach 1 at Presque Isle State Park, 301 Peninsula Dr. emmasfootprints.com.

Antique Show & Sale

Oct. 14 — 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Zem Zem Shrine Club, 2525 W. 38th St. erikiwanis.org.

The Kilted Mile

Oct. 14 — 9:30 to 11 a.m.

Downtown Edinboro, PA events.edinboro.edu.

Weed Walk

Oct. 14 — 10 a.m. to noon

Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. events.dcnr.pa.gov.

Fall Fest

Oct. 14, 15, 21, 22 — 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Peek’n Peak Resort, 1405 Olde Rd. pknpk.com.

Edinboro University Homecoming Parade

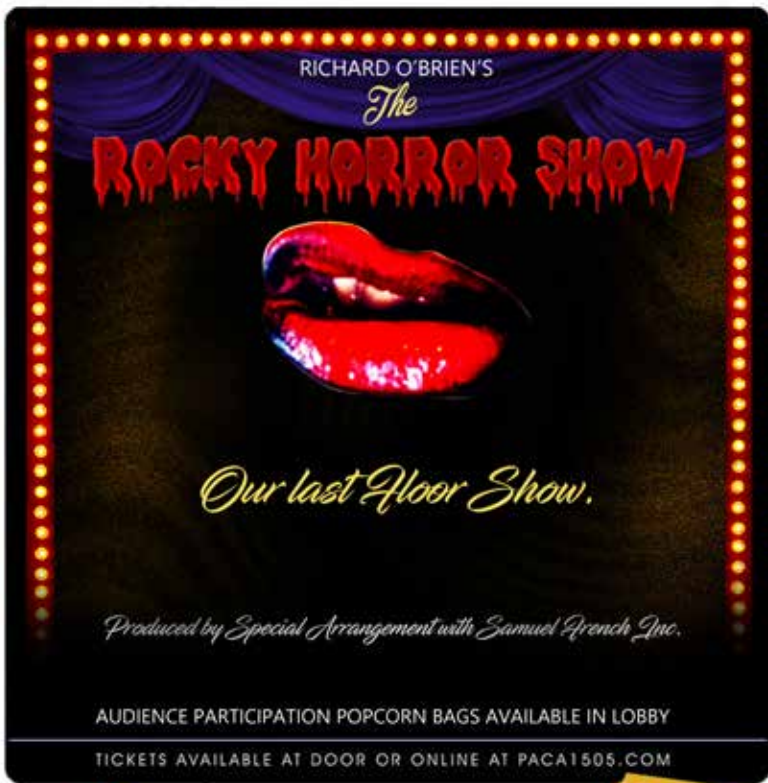
Oct. 14 — 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Downtown Edinboro, PA homecoming.edinboro.edu.

Edinboro Community Party

Oct. 14 — 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

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Talk to Me: Qasim Rashid on Islam and America

Best-selling Author to discuss works at Mercyhurst



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Best-selling author Qasim Rashid will speak on the injustices facing American Muslims as part of the Charlene M. Tanner Lecture Series at Mercyhurst University.

attacks. Good question, and it's one that Rashid, a best-selling author, practicing attorney, human rights activist, and visiting fellow at Harvard University' Prince AlWaleed bin Talal School of Islamic Studies, devotes his life to answering. That, and how we can join together in the cause of peace.

Organizers of the Charlene M. Tanner Lecture Series at Mercyhurst University invited Rashid to Erie, where he will open a conversation on "Islam and America: What Media Won't Discuss."

"Today, certain politicians continue to try and drive a wedge between Muslims and Americans. But we have the power to rise above the hate and bigotry." Rashid wrote in an essay for Time magazine.

Rashid's visit comes as U.S. House and Senate Intelligence Committees confirm that Russian operatives, seeking to interfere in the 2016 election,

bought more than \$100,000 in social media ads, many targeting specific demographics within battleground states with false news and anti-Muslim messages. Some of the campaign ads suggested that Muslims are a threat to the American way of life. The Facebook ads were seen by 10 million people.

While the Russians continue to sow division under the radar, Rashid travels the country speaking openly about Islam. He stands up against all forms of extremism — including violence against people who are Muslim — and challenges each of us to step out of our comfort zone and get to know people of different faiths.

In his latest book, *Talk to Me: Changing the Narrative on Race, Religion & Education* (May 2017), Rashid demonstrates how the power of dialogue can overcome racism, xenophobia, misogyny, and violence. He shares real life stories of how ordinary Americans are rising above forces that seek to drive us apart, and instead finding paths to peace and understanding.

That makes the lecture a perfect fit for

the Charlene M. Tanner Speaker Series, which lays bare the issues of the day in order to inspire a healing environment for our community, and the world. Retired educator and activist Doris Cipolla launched the series in 2007 as a way to honor her partner's legacy and their shared interest in social justice, peace, and the environment.

Rashid's upcoming talk brings to mind the 2016 photography exhibit by Erie Reader photojournalist Maitham Basha-Agha, *Rust Belt New Americans: A Showcase of Erie's Refugee Population*, which tells the personal journeys of Erie's immigrants, many of whom practice Islam, in rich, evocative images. What if these new Americans could step out of their photos and into the Walker Recital Hall to talk with you, face-to-face? My guess is fears stoked by fake ads on Facebook would disappear. — Lisa Gensheimer

7 p.m. // Mercyhurst University's Walker Recital Hall, 501 East 38th Street // free // See Maitham Basha-Agha's photo stories online at eridr.com/newamericans

TUESDAY, OCT. 17

"Why do Americans hate Muslims?" an 11-year-old boy asked Qasim Rashid, who was speaking to a sixth-grade social studies class on the anniversary of the September 11

Downtown Edinboro, PA facebook.com.

Teen Masters

Oct. 14 — 2 p.m. & Oct. 15 — 10 a.m.

Rolling Meadow Lanes, 3304 Zuck Rd. teenmastersbowling.com.

Pokemon Go Cruise

Oct. 14 — 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Victorian Princess, 1 State St. victorianprincess.com.

Erie Otters vs. Niagara

Oct. 14 — 7 p.m. Erie Insurance Arena, 809 French St. erieevents.com.

Ghost Stories Cruise

Oct. 14 — 8 to 10 p.m. Victorian Princess, 1 State St. victorianprincess.com.

Ruck The Bay

Oct. 15 — 2 p.m. Beach 11 at Presque Isle State Park, 301 Peninsula Dr. euma-erie.org.

Presque Isle History Series

Oct. 16, 23 — 6 to 7 p.m. Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. events.dcnr.pa.gov.

Fit for Life Fitness Class

Oct. 17, 24 — 9:30 to 10:15 a.m.

LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. lifeworkserie.org.

Pumpkin Patch Hunt

Oct. 17 — 10:30 11:30 p.m. & Oct. 19 — 4:30 to 5:30 p.m.

Asbury Woods Nature Center, 4105 Asbury Rd. asburywoods.org.

Goin' on a Scent Hunt

Oct. 17 — 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. Asbury Woods Nature Center, 4105 Asbury Rd. asburywoods.org.

Erie Mayoral Candidates Debate

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

Tiny Trees Yoga

Oct. 18, 25 — 10 to 10:45 a.m. LEAF Education Center, 1501 W. 6th St. leaferie.org.

Old Columbus School Backstage Tour

Oct. 18 — 6 to 8 p.m. Community Shelter Services, 655 W. 16th St. preservationerie.org.

Erie County Executive Candidates Debate

Oct. 18 — 7 to 8:30 p.m. Jefferson Educational Society, 3207 State St. jeserie.org.

Wikipedia Fans

Oct. 19 — 9:30 a.m. Diebold Center for the Performing Arts, 217 Meadville St. events.edinboro.edu.

Open House at LifeWorks Erie

Oct. 19 — 4 to 6 p.m. LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. lifeworkserie.org.

How Influencers Influence in the Digital Age

Oct. 19 — 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Radius CoWork Suite 907, 1001 State St. prsanwpa.org.

Women's Health with Integrative Wellness Practitioners

Oct. 19 — 6:30 p.m. Whole Foods Co-Op, 1341 W. 26 St. wfcerie.coop.

Mark Reedy "Mr. Positive"

Oct. 19 — 7 p.m. & Oct. 20, 21 — 6:45 & 9:30 p.m. Jr's Last Laugh Comedy Club, 1402 State St. jrslastlaugh.com.

Service and Job Fair 2017

Oct. 20 — 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. John F. Kennedy Center, 2021 E. 20th St. eventbrite.com.

Fall Foliage Wagon Rides

Oct. 20, 21, 22 — 11 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Beach 11 at Presque Isle State Park, 301 Peninsula Dr. discoverpi.com.

The Rise of David Levinsky Discussion

Oct. 20 — 2 to 3 p.m. Edinboro Branch Library, 413 W. Plum St. erielibrary.org.

The Women's Roundtable Designer Bag Bingo

Oct. 20 — 4:30 to 10 p.m. Hi-Way Hose Company Station 43, 8281 Oliver Rd. wrerie.org.

Pumpkin Paint & Sip

Oct. 20 — 6:30 to 9 p.m. Asbury Woods Nature Center, 4105 Asbury Rd. asburywoods.org.

Snowtown Throwdown

Oct. 20 — 7 p.m. & Oct. 21 — 2:30 p.m. Erie Insurance Arena, 809 French St. erieevents.com.

Champions of Magic Tour

Oct. 20 — 7:30 p.m. Warner Theatre, 811 State St. championsofmagic.co.uk.

Candlelight Ghost Walks

Oct. 20, 21 — 8 p.m. Dobbins Landing, 1 State St. candlelightghostwalks.com.

Autism in Our

Community Event

Oct. 21 — 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. The Burke Center at Penn State Erie The Behrend College, 5091 Station Rd. nwpa-asa.org.

PA Chapter of The American Chestnut Foundation Fall Member Meeting

Oct. 21 — 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Erie Elk Lodge #67, 2409 Peninsula Dr. patacf.org.

Fall Open House

Oct. 21 — 9 a.m. to noon Frank G. Pogue Student Center, 405 Scotland Rd. events.edinboro.edu.

Eerie Fall Fest

Oct. 21 — 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Gridley Park, 598 Liberty St. gannon.edu.

Erie Otters vs. Owen Sound

Oct. 21 — 7 p.m. & Oct. 22 — 5 p.m. Erie Insurance Arena, 809 French St. erieevents.com.

RE/MAX Princess and Superhero Pancake Party

Oct. 22 — 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Zem Zem Shrine Club, 2525 W. 38th St. facebook.com.

Science Rocks

Oct. 22 — noon to 3 p.m.

Erie Day School, 1372 W. 6th St. eriedayschool.com.

Fall Luncheon & Auction

Oct. 22 — 2 to 5 p.m. Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, 1553 E. Grandview Blvd. olmc-erie.org.

Nature Tots: All Around Me, I See

Oct. 23 — 9 to 10 a.m. Asbury Woods Nature Center, 4105 Asbury Rd. asburywoods.org.

Little Leaves

Oct. 23 & Nov. 13 & Dec. 4 — 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. LEAF Education Center, 1501 W. 6th St. leaferie.org.

Preschool Nature Discovery: Trail Mix

Oct. 23 — 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Asbury Woods Nature Center, 4105 Asbury Rd. asburywoods.org.

Amish Country Tour

Oct. 25 — 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. LifeWorks Erie, 406 Peach St. lifeworkserie.org.

Erie Mayoral Candidate Debate

Oct. 25 — 7 to 8:30 p.m. East Middle School, 1001 Atkins St. facebook.com.

I Was a Creature of the Night

Personal confessions of a Rocky-addled mind



[top] Brit Soule (foreground) reprises her role as Dr. Frank-n-Furter (a scientist), flanked by Jess Pierce (left), Aimee Kast, George Silkworth, Adelle Crotty, and Jessie Thorpe. [bottom] Soule (left) confronts Thorpe as Janet Weiss (a heroine), and Michael Hipwell as Brad Majors (a hero).

of weirdness alive in *Rocky Horror*. The show put the word transsexual into the public's consciousness decades before we would truly start to understand the idea. While this show is anything but delicate with touchy subjects — quite the opposite, in fact — it approached gender issues with a unique understanding far ahead of its time. Perhaps it's thanks to the perspective of the show's writer, Richard O'Brien (who plays Riff Raff in the film). He described his own gender identity, explaining that "all my life, I've been fighting; never belonging, never being male or female, and it got to the stage where I couldn't deal with it any longer." It's that feeling of a lack of belonging that might connect just about every Rocky fan. It's for the gay kids, the trans kids, the goth kids, and the punk rockers. It's for the nerds, and the bikers, and the groupies. Let the Betty Munroes and Ralph Hap-schatts (aka the "squares") of the world have their mainstream pop. Rocky is for the misfits.

And *that music*. It was punk rock before the Ramones ever played a note, it's a soundtrack somehow lying perfectly between early 1970s David Bowie and ... early 1970s Elvis Presley.

While on the surface, it's a story about "two young, ordinary, healthy kids," Brad

By Nick Warren

This is the third year in a row that I've been in the *Rocky Horror Show*. It is also — for the foreseeable future — the last.

In 2015, the Performing Arts Collective Alliance (PACA) resurrected Richard O'Brien's classic musical. In the wake of the film's 40th anniversary, it was an auspicious time to do so. The film — which holds the continuing record for the longest theatrical run of all time — even saw a slight resurgence in popularity. The original cast did a small press junket, and it was announced that the film's iconic star, Tim Curry, would be appearing in FOX's (ultimately lackluster) made-for-TV reboot. And just like that "spark, that is the breath of life," something special was being born. 2015's PACA run sold out every single show that year.

This was far from the first time the *Rocky Horror Show* had graced an Erie stage. Starting in 1992, the now-defunct Roadhouse Theatre (which is now the current home of Basement Transmissions) mounted the production for several years. In 2006, they condensed the

show and brought the performance to Sherlock's. That was the first time I saw it live. Up on the stage were fellow musicians I knew like Josh Zimmer, "Morbid" Rob Burke, and the late, ever-talented Jon Miller. It was punk rock, and I loved punk rock. It was weird, wild, raucous, and catchy as hell. I had seen the movie as a teenager, by myself, taped off of a commercial-free screening courtesy of VH1, but that simply did not do it any justice. People were shouting things at the actors like a well-oiled machine. The energy was undeniable, and I wanted to be a part of it.

"Don't dream it, be it." That's a message in the final act of the show which tends to sincerely hit home for fans. It would be a few years, but it was time to finally "be it."

In 2015, it had been years since I had played music on a stage. Thankfully, I was lucky enough to be acquaintances with a few people who had heard about the production and auditioned for it. Thanks to Brit Soule — who has three Rocky-inspired tattoos, and had just gotten the role of Dr. Frank-N-Furter, I noticed that the band was still being formed. I jumped at the chance, and

a few phone calls later, I was in. Guitar was, and is, my first choice when it comes to instrumentation, but I was overjoyed to be able to fill the bass desires the show's plight required.

It's no underestimation to say that the show changed my life. There's something special about this show that keeps people coming back. There's an unadulterated embrace of individuality, a sexual liberation, and a celebration





LIBBY ROSEQUIST

Majors and Janet Weiss, who become suspiciously stranded, going to a nearby castle, whose owner just happens to be bringing his specially-created muscleman to life. It's a plot with, admittedly, many holes. It's part love letter, part satirical throwback to science fiction B-movies that thrived during the 1950s.

Beyond that, it's about finding yourself. It's about casting off inhibitions, and making your way through life's bizarre obstacle course of sexual identity. It's also one of the most inclusive experiences in modern American culture.

Whether you find yourself in the pews of PACA, or the seats of Cleveland's Cedar Lee Theatre, or Pittsburgh's Hollywood Theater in Dormont, you'll hear a whole slew of "callbacks." In PACA's production, "popcorns" are part of the chorus who also help aid in the audience participation, interjecting quips at key moments. In a unique blend of Mystery Science Theater 3000 and cheerleading, the audience interacts with the movie, spouting off well-worn jokes along with the occasional improvised witticism. For a start, feel free to shout "asshole" anytime Brad is mentioned, and "slut" when Janet's name is brought up and you'll fit in just fine.

The people involved with this production have poured their hearts into it. Soule lives and breathes her role, the five foot tall riot grrl diva towering above everyone on stage. There's Graham Scott, who has played keyboards for the show since its Erie inception in the 90s. Aimee Kast and Adele Crotty have developed a deep friendship thanks to the

"Popcorn girl" Colleen Munn (foreground) enjoys her first year in the PACA production, guiding out a stretcher on which the titular Rocky Horror (a creation) lies before being "born."

show, referring to themselves as "the real life Magenta and Columbia." Beginning the PACA tenure as stage manager during the first two years, Annie Rosenthal is now playing the show's narrator. George Silkworth is so devoted to his role as Riff Raff, that he's taken to shaving his head in the character's recognizable hairstyle. Everyone is putting their own special touch to the show, from "popcorn girl" McKenzie Sprague's callbacks and vocal harmonies, to drummer Morgan Brace's special sound effects work.

Local theatre can be a special thing, it can bring people together and help them express their creativity in fresh ways. It builds community and friendships that can last a lifetime. Backstage at nearly every single production, there's a story somewhere. This epic tale finds itself nearing its final chapter.

Opening night has come and gone. The weekend of Friday the 13th will see the return of Chris Gaertner and Earl Kunsman as Brad and Janet, reprising their roles from last year. There are a few weeks left to catch the show before Halloween arrives, with midnight shows every Saturday. So, come along — the master doesn't like to be kept waiting.

Nick Warren (a musician) seems to be a young, ordinary, healthy kid, and can be reached at nwarren@eriereader.com

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Write Into It

Artists reflect on their favorite compositions



Stills from Surgener's 2012 self-made video for "Vagabond" employ stop-motion animation and hand drawn chalk lettering, which illustrate the song's lyrics and themes.

a backup plan, that I needed something to fall back on. If the thing I'm falling back on is a career that doesn't define me, will that truly make me happy? So the world I'm creating is a world of my own personal happiness.

CB: You sing about obtaining the greater things in life but you'll regret it. Where would the regret come from?

BS: Actually the first line is "I can't wait to turn off the lights and dream of greater things in life. I don't know how to get it but I know I'll regret it". This is about my daydreaming of where I want to be, where I can see myself playing music and being someone I want to be. The impacts I know I could make. Problem is, how do I get there? There's no certainty with music or art. It's not like a nursing degree. I don't know how I'm going to get to where I'm dreaming of, but I know I'll regret not trying to get there.

CB: "Vagabond" displays a nice deal of optimism for others. Does it also assist you as well?

BS: "Vagabond" will always be one of my favorites because of this. I don't always feel driven. I wish I had a nonstop positive

drive, but it's so hard sometimes. You feel like you're going nowhere. When I play it, I feel such strength. A reminder flows through my body that it is "okay" to feel that way, but it reminds me "Brooke, don't give up". Go after what makes you happy, do what makes you happy, life will write itself along the way.

It was a song I didn't overthink. I just started singing and it came out probably in 20 minutes or less.

CB: Can you recall where you were, physically and mentally, when creating this song?

BS: I remember being 20 years old in a small recording room my Dad had built for me in the corner of our garage. It was a song I didn't overthink. I just started singing and it came out probably in 20 minutes or less. Also in that room was a wall with that "chalk paint" on it so that you could draw with chalk. I wrote the song and just started staring and envisioned myself writing to words and drawing pictures to explain the song I just wrote so people would actually think about the words. The next night I recorded it and made a stop-motion video. I was up 'til 10 a.m. the next day just putting it togeth-

er on my computer. Sometimes something just sparks inside me and I know I have to go after it.

CB: Who do you think needs to hear your track the most?

BS: This song is for anyone, but especially the ones who feel lost. Another line I like in this is "they built our dreams when we were young just to tear the seams once we're done". When we were young, we were told "you can be whatever you want to be!" Then we hit a certain age and we're told we need to go to college, have a good job, etc. Why did we stop dreaming of who we could be? Look at me. I'm a Disney princess. I'm a music teacher. I dress up as cartoon characters and sing music. There's no path for that. Only a path I had to create myself, and by no means did I have a plan. It took me failing, and still failing to find out where I want to be. I'm still not where I want to be, but I'm still trying. If you're listening to this song, feel it in your heart. Life will disappoint you, but you can at least choose to do what makes you happy — and I believe that happiness is the real success.

Check out "Vagabond" on YouTube

Charles Brown can be contacted at charlesbrowncj@gmail.com

By: Charles Brown

Brooke Surgener, Folk-pop artist

"Vagabond" (composed by Brooke Surgener)

Oh my god won't you save me from, we've learned to point these fingers like a gun. Oh my god I'd be glad if I become an always wandering vagabond.

Charles Brown: Thank you Brooke for introducing "Vagabond!" The song presents a way of seeing the world for what it is as well as what it could be. Is that fair to say?

Brooke Surgener: "Vagabond" is about pursuing what makes you happy without being certain of where you'll end up. Growing up I was told to have

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NICK WARREN

By: Cara Suppa

My friend Clark studied abroad in Seville, Spain during his undergraduate years, and he returned with a passion for all things Spanish. This included tapas, and he promptly ferried our friend group to the nearest tapas restaurant in Pittsburgh, authoritatively exposing us to the delightful method of sharing small plates, wine and much laughter among friends. Thus, my overall impression of tapas has been overwhelmingly positive, but the truth of the matter is that I didn't even realize Erie was missing a tapas restaurant until we actually — and finally — got one.

That would be Bolero, one of the newest players on the downtown scene, set in the lobby-level of Erie's long-established Avalon Hotel and Conference Center at 10th and Peach. What was once Benjamin's Pub and Eatery has been transformed into a bright, airy space with prints evoking Spanish culture adorning the walls, many of which contribute to a sophisticated and subtle red theme.

Jessica Farbo-Copeland, the food and beverage manager at the Avalon Hotel, told me that when she, Executive

Head Chef Jodie Porter, and Director of Sales and Catering Irena O'Sullivan put their heads together to come up with a concept for the restaurant, tapas and Spanish-influenced cuisine was at the top of their list for several reasons.

"There were a few other items tossed around, but we knew we wanted to focus on something that was new and unique for the Erie area," she said. Another reason Farbo-Copeland cited was how Spanish flavors are so "versatile, and fit the palate of even the most picky eater." Hear that, picky eaters? The gauntlet has been thrown down.

"Opening right before summer was tricky," Farbo-Copeland continued, alluding to everyone's desire to be outside and on the water, but Bolero's reach has steadily widened since the restaurant's April opening, in no small part thanks to word-of-mouth concerning Porter's thoughtful one-of-a-kind creations. After nine years at the Presque Isle Downs and Casino, Porter's switch to Spanish cuisine in a full-service hotel is clearly a match made in foodie heaven.

I had the good fortune of grabbing lunch at Bolero, which is available Tues-

day through Friday from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m. In the interest of doing a thorough job for the greater Erie community (the sacrifices!), more than a few delectable plates found their way to my table.

First and foremost, the short rib quesadilla, which is smothered with grilled peach BBQ sauce within and covered with mango salsa atop, was spectacular. When I told O'Sullivan that I had ordered this plate, she looked particularly enthusiastic.

"That's my favorite!" she told me. One bite, and I understood with perfect clarity why. The combination of sweet and savory, never a bad thing, was out-of-bounds delicious. Served with a generous portion of lettuce, sour cream and guacamole on the side, it has left me with a distinct longing and a certain amount of resentment that I can't have it every day.

The seafood platter was another great choice, and I found the salted cod fritters to be a particularly welcome treat, especially when paired with Bolero's house-made cocktail sauce and their creamy, tangy remoulade, which actually made me exclaim, "Capers! They put capers in this!" I hadn't had capers

The Bolero's lunch menu features the short rib quesadilla layered with grilled peach BBQ sauce, backed up by mango salsa with a side of sour cream and guacamole.

in a very long time, so finding them exploding with flavor in a dipping sauce accompaniment to a lunch-time seafood plate was a delight. It's the small things in life, people; Bolero knows this well.

Naturally I had to visit Bolero for its tapas, and my boyfriend Bryce, as well as our friends Bryan and Liz, joined me for the restaurant's happy hour, which is available Tuesday through Thursday evenings from 4:30 until 6:30. By the time we waddled out of there, stuffed to the gills with sauced meats, sangria and their complimentary house-made tri-color flour tortilla chips and salsa, I was convinced that Bolero is hands-down the best happy hour value in Erie.

For just \$20, Bryce and I split four surprisingly filling tapas plates off the special happy hour menu: the pork belly a la plancha, steak empanadas (the previous two items are among the most popular on the menu), chorizo stuffed dates wrapped in bacon, and

FOOD & DRINK



NICK WARREN

Another lunchtime dish, the seafood platter boasts salted cod fritters, homemade cocktail sauce with a Caper-assisted remoulade.

char-grilled asparagus. The pork belly and stuffed dates were so outstanding as to be the source of considerable tension when it came to dividing what was left after first bites were taken. We reached a compromise, but watching him finish off that last stuffed date, which was hugged close by a perfectly rendered strip of crisp bacon, made my

The combination of sweet and savory, never a bad thing, was out-of-bounds delicious. Served with a generous portion of lettuce, sour cream and guacamole on the side, it has left me with a distinct longing and a certain amount of resentment that I can't have it every day.

heart lurch a bit, even as I inhaled what was left of the tender, juicy pork belly that practically melted in my mouth.

We took advantage of Bolero's fantastic paella Groupon as well; I ordered the shellfish version, while Bryce lived his best life with the three-meat. We

had our paellas boxed to go, and once home couldn't resist a bite while it was still warm. Upon lifting the lids, a fragrant herb-and-spice-infused steam wafted upward, and we found the expected saffron evident in both taste (yummm — it's easy to understand why this is one of the most beloved spices in the world!) and color.

There is enough going on around Bolero in The Avalon to fill a city block in itself, from Afternoon Tea, to new sister restaurant Cheyenne Cattle Company Chophouse, as well as upcoming Monthly Winemakers' Dinners, holiday parties and family-themed events. But there is still so much more for me to try at Bolero, like the Spanish stuffed peppers — an Erie favorite with a Bolero twist — or the casuella de mariscos or the charcuterie plate or the...well, you get the idea. That's the thing I've discovered about Bolero: they make sure you don't leave hungry, but dang it, they'll leave you wanting more.

Bolero Spanish Restaurant is located at 16 W. 10th St. Lunch is served from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Tuesdays through Fridays. Dinner is served from 4 to 11 p.m. Tuesdays through Thursdays, with additional hours until 1 a.m. on Fridays and Saturdays. Closed Sunday and Monday.

Cara Suppa can be reached at csuppa@eriereader.com

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The Killers

Wonderful Wonderful
Island Records



The Killers own a strange reputation, never quite critical darlings but very much dominating indie and alternative rock circles to this day (despite peaking in the mid-2000s). Fans have long yearned for a return to form from the band, for something far less hokey than 2008's *Day and Age* and far less boring than 2012's *Battle Born*. Fortunately, *Wonderful Wonderful* is both The Killers' most consistent and most enjoyable album in a decade. The album plays like a natural follow-up to *Sam's Town*, utilizing the keyboard acrobatics of the band's beloved debut, *Hot Fuss*, and the Springsteen dreams of their 2006 cult classic (with just a touch of the lunacy that made singles like "Spaceman" and "Human" so endearing). Sure, lead single "The Man," is a disastrous disco track that compares Flowers to USDA-certified meat — and yes, he may in fact have "the soul of a truck" on the otherwise touching "Some Kind of Love" — but *Wonderful Wonderful* is a thoroughly surprising comeback album filled with just enough recycled success and ambitious experimentation to justify their continued legacy. — Aaron Mook



The World is a Beautiful Place...

Always Foreign
Epitaph Records



I don't think there's a single review of a TWI-ABP (full name: The World is a Beautiful Place & I Am No Longer Afraid to Die) release that hasn't drawn attention to the band's equally silly and pretentious name, and clearly, this review doesn't aim to be the first. But that's because the dissonance between the band's name and the songs they play has never been more apparent than it is on their third full-length, *Always Foreign*. Ditching several elements that marked their 2015 epic, *Harmlessness* (including a primary songwriter), the band's new collection acts in short spurts of scathing energy, cursing the current administration and problematic ex-friends in equal measure. This leaves TWIABP sounding more accessible and vital than ever; even after a very early low point (the flat vocals of second track "The Future"), the band instantly bounces back with some of their heaviest and most poignant writing to date ("Hilltopper," "Faker"). But the ever expanding collective truly hits their stride with the album's three-track closing sequence, serving up ambitious slices of vintage emo riddled with chaotic distortion and a dizzying horn section. — Aaron Mook



Phoebe Bridgers

Stranger in the Alps
Dead Oceans



Drowsy yet provocative, Phoebe Bridgers' debut album is a work of indie folk brilliance. It's minimalist and eerie, replete with detailed, personal imagery. Bridgers has done such an utterly convincing job affecting the identity of a depressive Nashville ingénue that it was purely shocking to learn that she's a Los Angeles native. A sense of emotional brokenness pervades this record. Each track feels like it's coated with whiskey, the scent of stale cigarettes, and the light of an early dawn. It's far from purely morose however, with a tongue-in-cheek self-awareness and a winking tone. After all, how depressing can an album be that gets its name from a misfired TV-dubbing of *The Big Lebowski*. There are, of course, heartbreaking story-rich tracks, like the nearly solipsistic confession of "Funeral." This past year, Bridgers has relentlessly toured, opening up for Conor Oberst, Julien Baker, and the War On Drugs. Oberst even provides vocals on one of the standout tracks of the album, "Would You Rather." With such an identifiable voice feeling distracting at first listen, it's an experience that's ultimately addictively satisfying. — Nick Warren



Worriers

Survival Pop
Side One Dummy



A pitch-perfect follow up to 2015's *Imaginary Life*, *Worriers* return for their third full-length album. The Brooklyn-based band is the work of singer/guitarist Lauren Denitzio, who previously helmed the band *The Measure* [SA]. For well over a decade, Denitzio has been honing her formidable skills as a pop punk songwriter, able to construct perfectly compacted works with seeming ease. The lyrics are far from facile, however, filled with self-examination, doubt, and anxiety. As a queer, non-binary feminist, Denitzio gives listeners a highly personal perspective in general terms that's easy for anyone identify with. The clenched-vocal delivery proves to be an understated, and amazingly effective, translation of the band's anthemic melodies. It's punk rock perfectly suited for a generation of fans who grew up singing along to bands like *The Lawrence Arms* and *The Loved Ones*. It's a full, powerful sound, both streamlined and bombastic. The shades of depression fit perfectly in a world where punk remains in short supply, yet absolutely necessary. Thankfully, as the title implies, this kind of pop is surviving. — Nick Warren



TOMMY IN TOON — BY TOMMY LINK



[cont. from page 7] show them why [they should]. You have to make the environment appropriate for them to want to be involved and for it to be beneficial for them to want to be involved, and I think we've done that.

BS: Do you think we're rowing quickly enough, if we are in fact all in the same boat, and if not, are we too fast, too slow? How do we adjust the pace appropriately moving forward?

JS: That goes back to your analogy of whether it's a marathon or a relay race. My theory is that it's a relay marathon. It's a process. It's not an event — it's a process. It takes time to get the boat going in the right direction and everyone rowing together.

Do I think it's going too fast or too slow? Our ambition tends to lend itself to go very fast, to run out front with the ambition and realism catches up. I don't think we're moving too fast, but I also don't think we're moving too slow. In 12 years, we've come a long way, which included a major reparation of what was happening here. We weren't able to just get the boat going; we had to get the boat off of the bottom first and patch it up. And now that we've got everybody involved, it's moving at a good pace, but it's also moving at a realistic pace.

BS: As you're exiting office now, are you still optimistic with a twist of realism, or has that changed at all?

JS: No, I think it's getting better. I was optimistic *and* hopeful before, now I'm optimistic because I see the engagement. We were optimistic and hopeful in 2006, and now people are involved, so more good things can come [from] that. But everything still has to be realistic. You can't say that the next mayor is going to pave State Street with gold — it'd be very nice — but it's not realistic. What I think the key to moving all of this forward is keeping the community engaged, keeping the larger entities, the universities, the hospitals, Erie Insurance, all of these things that are stakeholders in this community — the nonprofits — everybody that [has] now come to the table to be a part of the solution, keeping them engaged. That's the realist part of it. That's a big part of the mechanism that moves things forward. If all of the sudden everybody walks away, it's going to be much more difficult for government to do it all alone.

BS: What would you say was the

riskiest decision you made while in office that paid off?

JS: The riskiest thing was downsizing public safety, because as soon as people see you're downsizing public safety, they're concerned things are going to run rampant and you're not going to be able to protect them. That was risky politically and operationally. In all departments, downsizing was risky. What if you can't provide the services people need and require? We took a very calculated approach to that. I felt like we were going to be able to be successful, and ultimately we were. But rewind to 2006-2007, when the sky is falling every day and you're making decisions like that; they're very risky decisions because you're afraid the whole system could collapse, even though in your mind you believe it won't, because they're calculated decisions. Reinventing the way

You don't have to glad-hand everyone and tell them that the world is great when it's not. If you're straightforward and honest with them and show them why you're doing it and they see a positive outcome, they appreciate that even though it's not "politically expedient."

BS: To you, what did you see Erie's best assets being when you entered office? How has that changed as you're now leaving it?

JS: Erie's best assets have always been first and foremost — and I've said this from the first day I took office — have always been its people. I believed when I started that Erie was strong enough to reinvent itself because the people here were strong enough to do it and strong enough to support it, and that turned out to be correct. We have other assets here, our natural resources, our lake, and

I'm still going to care; I'm still going to watch;
I'm still going to be a great cheerleader for
whoever comes next, but I'm going to stay away.
I'm going to take my place in the history of the
community and try to let that go forward and
try to detach myself from this as much as I can,
but it's always going to be a part of me.

this operation worked was very risky — could we make it work? And what happens if it doesn't? You've then got a bigger problem than you did in the beginning, and then politically, you're not going to get re-elected.

But the political risk to me was never an issue. I came here to do a job, and if the people didn't like the way I did the job, then send me on my way. That was always my philosophy and anybody that's in this operation will tell you that. I said, "If we do it right, people will see the wisdom and the benefit in it and people will be fine; if they don't like it and they want a political system that simply appeases them as they travel down the road to hell, then I'm not the guy."

BS: I'd say Erie affirmed that. You were re-elected twice with no opposition either of those terms.

JS: I think it showed that people appreciate you doing the job for them and showing them success with it.

all of those things we're able to build off of for other successes, but by far, Erie's strongest asset is the people.

BS: What would you personally say your biggest accomplishment as mayor has been?

JS: I think the city is (much more) different than it was when I came in here. Yes, we're stable here and the operation is good for the betterment of the community, but if you look around this community, very little is the way it was when we started. And again, that would take rewinding to 2006 and taking a look around and talking to people to see what the mindset was, and there aren't a lot of people who remember that anymore, but I do. When I look around the community now, I see a lot of positivity, a lot of forward thinking, a lot of people involved, and I think that's what I feel best about as I leave office. There were a lot of bumps in the road to get there, but we got there.

BS: I imagine picking a term is like picking a favorite kid, but do you think one term was more successful than the other two?

JS: [Laughs] I think it's been a process, but so many important things happened in that first term that allowed us to do what we were able to do in the second and third term. Had we not been successful with some of the things we were doing in the first term, where we are today would not be possible. So much happened that was key to the long-term success of this community in the first term that I think that would be the favorite of my children if I were picking one [laughs].

BS: If you could wave a magic wand to extend time or make the process easier, what's one thing you weren't able to get done that you wish you could've in these 12 years?

JS: I wish I had more time to see more of the Bayfront and the economic impact things we've been working on come more to fruition. Again, those are long-term things, and I knew that when we started. My part of that, for instance, let's say in regard to the GAF site, was to work with the company, secure the site, see it through to clean-up, and get it ready for the next step. Now the next person will have to see the development of that go forward. I know that, but because I was on the front end of that, I'd like to have been there to see it to finish, but time just doesn't permit that. Time runs out of the process for me. But it's also a never-ending process, so there'll never be enough time to see everything to the end, because there'll always be new things happening.

BS: I think there are two types of executives once they're out of office: Those who try to still govern from outside of the office, and those who are honestly able to walk away from it. Do you have a sense of which you'll be yet?

JS: It's funny you ask that question, because I've thought a lot of about that lately. Will I be able to detach myself? I won't involve myself. I won't be calling the new mayor on the phone saying, "Well, I think..." I won't get in his way, or speak publicly against things of any nature, but inside, it's: "Can you let things go?" Or is it something I'll always be armchair quarterbacking? I don't know the answer to that yet. In my mind, when I say I'm leaving, I'm still going to care; I'm still

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going to watch; I'm still going to be a great cheerleader for whoever comes next, but I'm going to stay away. I'm going to take my place in the history of the community and try to let that go forward and try to detach myself from this as much as I can, but it's always going to be a part of me.

BS: Celebrate Erie, unlimited budget, everyone's available during the dates you've chosen. What's your lineup look like?

JS: Wow... [Laughs] okay.

BS: But they have to be touring right now. You could book Paul McCartney, but not The Beatles.

JS: Okay, wow, we have to throw The Stones in there somewhere. They have to be touring now, so Motley Crue's out... Friday night, which tends to be oldies, would be McCartney absolutely. Saturday would be the Stones, and Sunday would probably be Florida Georgia Line, or somebody like that.

BS: Who's your favorite celebrity you've been able to meet?

JS: If I had to pick just one... Ace Frehley, I still talk to him now and again. When he's in this part of the country, I go to his shows and hang out with him. So he's certainly one of my favorites. B.B. King was a very, very nice man. The Cheap Trick guys were great — they were a lot of fun. Viggo Mortensen...

BS: Was that when he was here filming *The Road*?

JS: Yes. He was really a good guy. He ended up inviting me to a birthday party they were having for the director and it was a lot of fun.

BS: BayHawks, Otters, or SeaWolves?

JS: Oh, is that a fair question? [Laughs] I know if I say one the others are going to get angry with me [laughs].

But we helped to bring the BayHawks here and the D-League folks came here and met with myself and Fred Rush originally — we were the ones who got them hooked up with the eventual ownership and all that, so I take a lot of pride in that franchise coming to this community and that we were part of selling this community and getting them here. There's a special place in my heart for them.

The others, I like as well and am glad they're here, but personally, I tend to be more of a basketball fan, I'm a basketball guy. So I gravitate towards them because that's one of my favorite sports.

BS: If you had to describe Erie to another mayor in six words or less, what would they be?

JS: I've actually done this before — I don't know if I've done it in six words or less — but I always tell them it's the best place in the world. And that goes into: We have the Lake and the sunsets and the people and... maybe this is the answer: We have the amenities of a big city with the hometown fabric of a small community.

BS: Six words or less for your tenure as mayor?

JS: I did the best I could.

BS: One item in your office that most symbolizes you as a person.

JS: Interesting... [points to a statuette of "The Thinker" on his desk.]

BS: So why that?

JS: I try to be very cerebral about everything I do.

BS: Did you get that when you came into this office?

I'm actually a believer in term limits. I think you have to have a purpose for each of your steps, and when you get to the end of said purpose, it's time to pass it along to somebody else. I think I'm there. I think I've got it going where I need it to go. I could say, "Well, I want to see this done and that done and I could stay forever." If that's the way it went, but, no, I think three terms was right.

JS: I've had that awhile. It was on my law desk when I was practicing.

BS: Being mayor forces anyone into a public role. What's something the Erie public would be surprised to learn about you that they don't already know?

JS: Maybe that as I'm not as complicated as people think. You know, I have simple likes and dislikes. When it comes to my work, I'm very complicated, but when it comes to my personal life, I'm fairly simple with the way I handle life.

BS: Hypothetical question: If there weren't term limits, would you run again?

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JS: Probably not.

BS: Twelve is enough?

JS: I'm actually a believer in term limits. I think you have to have a purpose for each of your steps, and when you get to the end of said purpose, it's time to pass it along to somebody else. I think I'm there. I think I've got it going where I need it to go. I could say, "Well, I want to see this done and that done and I could stay forever." If that's the way it went, but, no, I think three terms was right.

BS: In 20 years, at least two, if not more, people will have held this office. What do you think Erie's economy, our competitive advantage, our demographics, our population — what do you think that looks like? Because the person you're handing it off to will have had to themselves handed it off.

JS: If they stay on the trajectory it's headed, we stay in a positive direction; if it stays stable, then I expect some very good things to happen. Erie is still in a transition. We have a lot of unrealized opportunities

that we're beginning to tap into now that'll hopefully come to fruition over time. I think that the economic fabric of this community is changing, and I think we'll really see what that's going to become in the next 5 to 10 years. I'm optimistic and confident in those things.

BS: What do you hope the one thing that the citizens of Erie remember you for decades later? For the 12 years you gave, a lot of sacrifices, a lot of hours, a lot of work...

JS: I don't feel like they need to know that or remember that. That was my responsibility to them, and if they never know about that, that's fine with me. But what I do hope as I leave office, whether they remember it long-term or not, that they feel like they're better off, that their lives are a little bit better for the time I spent here. To me, that would be enough.

BS: We've danced around it the whole time: What is next? Running for another office? Back to the private sector? Nice long vacation in the Caribbean?

JS: First off, I don't know if I know how to vacation anymore [laughs]. I'd have to learn that over time because I haven't done it in so long. I don't expect to take any significant time off because I've been working and it's tough to go from a million miles an hour a day to [a complete] stop. I don't want to do that; I want to be busy and I want to keep working right away. It'll be in the private sector. I can go back to the private sector and practice, but I'm also waiting to see what else comes along in the next few months. I'm very much challenge-driven; that's why I did this. I wanted to do it for the community, but the challenge of making it happen against what seemed like at the time insurmountable odds was appealing to me, so I'd like to take on another type of challenge if one comes along. And that's what'll be the determining factor.

BS: What do you think the most pressing crisis for the next mayor is?

JS: We have the GE issue — potentially losing the majority of GE and that's going to be an issue for this

community. There are always the economic challenges that face government. The blight and neighborhood decay — there are large projects that have started but are going to be long-term and are going to take a lot of effort on behalf of the new mayor to get a total revitalization of this community. And that's a process that may go beyond a full term of the next mayor and into another.

BS: Knowing all that you know how 12 years later, would you do it again?

JS: You know, I would. After all of the hardship, I would still do it again for the reason I did it: I did it because I wanted to do something for this community, and I feel like I have. My goal and what I accomplished match, so why wouldn't I do it again?

For a full version of this interview, visit this article online at ErieReader.com.

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