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October 2022

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Veterans Day... a time to honor the courage and sacrifice of our nations heroes who have answered the call to service. With gratitude we pause to remember those veterans and their families whom we have had the privilege of serving October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2022.

William Richard Lambright

Army – Vietnam

Anthony William Skrutsky

Marines – Korea

Patrick Brian Medina

Marines – Vietnam

Robert J. Soder

Navy – Korea

Harry Deeb

Navy – WWII

Robert Earl Tinsley

Air Force – Vietnam

William Richard Wakeley, Sr.

Navy – Korea

Donald Edward Gorman

Army – Korea

James Allen Randolph, Jr.

Army – Korea

Marvin Gay

Navy – Vietnam

Walter J. Wiczorek, Jr.

Air Force – WWII

Eugene Edward Bernhard

Army – Vietnam

Simon Odom, Jr.

Army – Korea

Robert Bruce Totten

Army – Vietnam

Arthur H. Mills

Army – WWII

Walter Franklin Seremet, Jr.

Army – Vietnam

David James Bronakowski

Air Force – Vietnam

David John Comstock

Army – Korea

Lois Kathryn Cochran

Marines – WWII

Gust H. Argerus

Marines – Vietnam

Roy F. Didion, Sr.

Air Force – Korea

David Alexander Jaroszewski

Marines – Vietnam

Stephen E. Franklin

Army – Other

Donald Steinbacher

Navy – Other

Darryl DeWayne Donaldson

Army – Other

Daniel L. Goodwill

Navy – Other

John Taylor Hughes, Sr.

Marines – Vietnam

Stephen Robert Roward

Marines – Vietnam

Robert LeRoy Lynn

Navy – WWII

Kent Anderson Freeman

Navy – Korea

Clyde A. Huff, III

Air Force – WWII

Michael Charles Faycheck

Army – Vietnam

Norbert Robert Haibach

Army – WWII

Ronald Charles Niemic

Army – Korea

Charles H. Brown

Army - Post 1/55

Gary Douglas Forsten

Army – Vietnam

Michael Paul Batuski, Sr.

Army – Other

Franklin Roosevelt Yeaney

Army – Korea

Gerald J. Stauffer

Army – Vietnam

Daniel J. Gregory

Marines – Other

Joseph A. Kalvelage

Navy - Post 1/55

Joseph P. Sell, Jr.

Air Force – Other

Janie Irene Lehman

Army – Vietnam

William Frank Rhodes

Air Force – Korea

Roy Frederick Tenney, Sr.

Navy – WWII

Robert Elon Learn

Army – Other

Jackie Franklin Shuman, Sr.

Army – Vietnam

Jesse Julius Hammerman

Army – WWII

Frederick William Kuzmin

Air Force – WWII

Hubert Carl Clark

Air Force – Korea

Joseph Jeffrey Orlando

Army – Vietnam

Dale Frederick Willats

Navy – WWII

John H. Craft

Army – WWII

Barbara Ann Holcomb

Air Force – Other

Vincent John Vargo

Air Force – Vietnam

James T. Kutterna, Sr.

Army – Other

Denise I. Nelson

Air Force – Vietnam

Lawrence Douglas Schaller

Navy – Vietnam

Frank James Busch

Army – Korea

Phillip Ernest Rekitt

Army – Vietnam

Alan Larue Paulhamus

Navy – Vietnam

John Raymond Coughlin

Air Force – Other

Ronald Merle Gibbens

Army – Korea

Robert Anthony Rudzinski

Navy – Vietnam

Lawrence W. Dana

Army – Other

George Elias

Army – Other

Donald Dean Spinning

Army – Vietnam

William Joseph Moski

Army – Other

William James Shorts

Army – Other

William E. Yost

Navy – Other

Harvey James Miller

Army – Korea

Frank Anthony Mitulski

Navy – Other

Harold Dale Ankenbauer, Jr.

Marines – Other

Craig G. Cunningham

Marines – Vietnam

Michael Steven Wagner

Airforce – Other

David Dale Nesselhauf

Navy – Vietnam

Robert Dale Cowser

Navy – Other

William Eugene Schmid

Airforce – Korea

John Ray Pursell

Army – Vietnam

Gary Lawrence Firster

Army – Other

Eric Harrison Ford

Army – Other

Shawn Christopher Cowie

Army – Other

Patrick Steven Wlozanski

Army – Other

Donald W. Olson

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Kenneth Eugene Mottern

Army – Vietnam

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The Watson-Curtze Mansion is one of a dozen homes that will be decorated for the holidays this year and available for public tours. Page 10

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- 22** Home brewer turns hobby into career

Contributors

Molly Boniger tells us about some fun events we won't want to miss in Erie and the surrounding area. Molly is a sales assistant at the Erie Times-News.

Trill Dreistadt finds home tours have returned for the holidays. She shares some of the region's most popular excursions. She is a retired English and journalism teacher, freelance writer, professional editor and a volunteer document transcriber for the Library of Congress.

Steve Orbanek shares the fascinating story of Chris Fornalczyk's rise from home brewer to head brewer at the Brewerie at Union Station. Steve, an Edinboro native, is the director of communications at Temple University.

Leah Markiewicz helps us understand what's going on with microplastics in our region's waterways. She is a senior at Cathedral Prep and has a passion for writing and environmental activism. She hopes to further her education at a four-year university.

Michael Nesgoda contributed the cover photo for this month, and it illustrates some of the finery that historic home tour patrons will find this season in the Watson-Curtze Mansion. Michael is a visual storyteller who wows us all with his work.

Susan Scholz tells us all about what's trending in holiday centerpieces we can make or purchase to give our homes the festive touches we all love. Sue is a well-known Master Gardener, garden club member and writer of the former Buds & Blooms column that appeared in House to Home.

LAKE ERIE LifeStyle

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On the Cover

Michael Nesgoda captures the magic of historic holiday home tours at the Watson-Curtze Mansion.

Photos by
Michael
Nesgoda



Dear Readers,

It's hard to believe we are preparing for winter holidays, but here we are!

For some of us, the best news is holiday home tours have returned, and history is the tie that binds more than a dozen homes together. You can tour them during November and December but pay close attention to the dates in the article that starts on page 10.

In addition to tours, we have a full slate of activities coming up for people of all ages. Our staff took great care to find and share some of the region's big events, but there are many, many more that rolled in after our deadline.

You can see a full list of events on the GoErie.com calendar at www.goerie.com/things-to-do/events.

This is our last issue of 2022,

but we'll be back next year with more Lake Erie LifeStyle. In the meantime, follow us on Facebook at Friends of Lake Erie Style to keep up with everything we have going on.

To view our magazine online, visit

https://cdn.gatehousemedia.com/gh-sites/global/ads/contests/erie_times/LakeErieLifestyle_August%202022.pdf

Thanks for reading.

Pam Parker



The Lake Erie LifeStyle team includes: Pam Parker, Joanne Conrad-Turner, Linda Skrypzak, Dawn Goodwill, Kristin Schuver, Doreen DeFabio Duska, and Laura Rush-Malencia. Missing from photo are: Dave Papesch, Molly Boniger, Ava Checchio, Andrew Brown, Gretchen Armes, and Rich Angelotti



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Professionals share ideas for holiday centerpieces

By **Susan Scholz**

Photos By Susan Scholz

Thanksgiving and Christmas are coming up, and there are many ways to decorate for these wonderful holidays. Pretty centerpieces on tables and fireplace mantles are classic decorations.

Three local florists commented on what is popular and trendy for the holidays. Melody Potratz, the owner of Potratz Floral Shop and Greenhouses, Inc., said that holiday centerpieces will have a more organic look this year. "Think more free-flowing and less structured; so that it looks like they were picked from your yard. Eucalyptus is very popular; both the silver dollar eucalyptus and the seeded eucalyptus," she said.

Silver dollar eucalyptus, or *Eucalyptus cinerea*, is a small tree from Australia and its large round, bluish gray leaves are commonly used in fresh centerpieces. Seeded eucalyptus has pointy green leaves with a cluster of seeds running down the stem line.

Cornucopias are still the longtime favorite decoration for Thanksgiving. The wicker cornucopia itself can be saved to reuse for future holidays. Potratz also likes to create Thanksgiving table centerpieces in narrow wooden boxes. "This way the centerpiece isn't too high, so you can see above it on the table. They are usually made with fall colors but sometimes people want to match the color of their dishes," she said.

Bob Harris, the floral manager at Gerlach's Garden & Floral, also sees a trend towards the more earthy feel in decorations.



At Potratz, this Thanksgiving table centerpiece in a rustic wooden box features seeded eucalyptus, variegated schefflera, solidago, mums, pomegranates and preserved oak leaves.



A Thanksgiving cornucopia from Potratz features seeded eucalyptus, roses, sunflowers, alstroemeria, mums, and white hypericum berries.

"People like the informal look – that the flowers and grasses could have been picked from their yards. And succulents are huge right now. People like to have a living succulent added to a fresh arrangement. After the flowers fade the owner can enjoy the succulents," Harris stated.

He likes using dusty miller and yarrow and he buys locally-grown cattails from North East for his fall floral arrangements.



Locally-grown cattails are used in this fall centerpiece in a white pumpkin container. Gehrach's Floral also used silver dollar eucalyptus, bunny tail grass, red hypericum berries, carnations, mums and waxflowers in this centerpiece.

He remarked that customers like creating their own floral decorations, too. "People come in and buy loose flowers and greens so they can make their own centerpieces.



Gerlach's employee Karissa Bayhurst is holding a beautiful fall centerpiece of sunflowers, mums, carnations, roses, alstroemeria and solidago.



A natural centerpiece of branches, evergreens, berries and pinecones is available at Allburn's.



A classic candle centerpiece at Allburn's features mini ball ornaments, variegated holly, glittery poinsettias and evergreens.



A Santa wearing a light blue and green coat is the focal point of this silk centerpiece of jingle bell sprays, cedar, mixed greens and gold, glittery leaves at Allburn's.

Some like to use their hydrangeas from their yards. They also like the silver dollar eucalyptus," said Harris.

For Christmas, Melissa Roberts, the manager of Allburn Florist, said there are several schools of thought: the traditional colors of red, green and gold, and the eclectic trend of different colors, like shades of blue. Another combination is all white with a touch of blue. Those cute gnomes, with their hats covering their eyes with large round noses, have been popular for a few years and plaids are still popular. "People like to buy things that are nostalgic; that remind them of their childhood, like old-fashioned Santas. They like Santa mugs and Santa boots as containers," said Roberts.

She recommended giving a fresh mixed evergreen centerpiece with two taper candles as a hostess gift. "It will last for weeks in December to New Year's, and it smells great," she said. "A fresh evergreen wreath is also a nice gift; you get that great fragrance whenever you walk in your house.

Roberts shared a trick regarding garland for stair railings and on fireplace mantles: "Use fake garland, but add some fresh evergreen boughs to it for that evergreen smell," she said. "Candles in hurricane lamps surrounded by greenery are very traditional. "You can use either real candles or the battery-operated ones that look real," Roberts added.

Potratz remarked that black and white for Christmas is popular this year.

Harris, at Gerlach's, is seeing more muted blues and pinks for Christmas, though glitter and glitz are still popular. "Plaids and berries are always big, and cedar, holly and winterberry can be grown in peoples' yards," he said.



Black and white, and plaid, are very popular this year. These deer and trees are available at Potratz.



These whimsical gnomes in plaid and red are very popular at Potratz.

Florists are very happy to help you in choosing a centerpiece. They have photos of centerpieces on their websites. You can also choose what specific flowers you want for the centerpiece, and they'll make a custom design for you. They can incorporate your turkey or pilgrim figurines into the centerpiece for Thanksgiving, or a Santa or snowman for Christmas.

Lastly, you can pick and choose from the vast selection of flowers and greens at the floral shop and create your own personal centerpiece.

Whether you like traditional or eclectic decorations in your home for the holidays; both are available at your local florist. **LEL**

Allburn Florist

1620 W. 8th St.
Erie, PA 16505
814-456-6211
allburnflorist.com

Potratz Floral Shop and Greenhouses Inc.

1418 Buffalo Road
Erie, PA 16503
814-454-1549
potratz.com

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3161 W. 32nd St.
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814-838-2363
gerlachsfloral.com

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VISIT HISTORIC MANSIONS

During November and December Tours

By Trill Dreistadt and Pam Parker *Contributed Photos*



Several historic homes that belonged to Waterford's founding family, the Judsons, will be open to the public during a holiday home tour in November.

We've all missed touring homes decked out for the holidays, but this year, home tours have returned! So, mark your calendar to visit homes in Chautauqua, Crawford and Erie Counties. Some are only open for special tours, so watch the dates closely. Others are open year-round or by appointment. And check the events calendar on GoErie.com.

If you don't see a tour you thought might be coming up, check websites because some groups were working on tour plans after our deadline.

Here's what we know:

Erie County

Waterford

The Fort LeBoeuf Historical Society and the entire Waterford community are rolling out the red carpet and "Putting on the Ritz" in November. The society, volunteers and

Joanne Lenart-Weary worked to open more than six historic homes and buildings. Plus, the society is offering some additional pop up events in town.

How do you get that many homeowners on board for a tour? "We've had such incredible volunteers – young people who got involved – and it's their enthusiasm that helped make this happen," Lenart-Weary said.

Some of the homes on the tour were owned by Waterford's founding family, the Judsons. Additional homes have not been open to the public in recent years and most are private residences. You can keep up to date on what's happening by visiting Fortleboeufhistory.com/holidaytour or visit the Facebook page for Fort LeBoeuf Historical Society for more information.

Here's what we know about Waterford's plans:

Putting on the Ritz Holiday House Tour,
Nov. 18-20
Fortleboeufhistory.com/holidaytour

Special VIP Night:

Nov. 18: Speakeasy Night Knock 3 Times,
6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Altheim-William Judson House
104 Walnut St.
Tickets \$45 per person or \$75 per couple
Roaring 20's costumes encouraged
Signature cocktails and mocktails, heavy
hors d'oeuvres, music, entertainment and
door prizes

Tour dates:

Nov. 19: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Tickets: \$25 at the door or online
Nov. 20: Noon to 4 p.m.
Tickets: \$25 at the door or online

Homes on the tour:

Altheim-William & Clarissa Judson House
104 Walnut St.
Circa 1835
Private Residence

Amos Judson House
31 High St.
Circa 1810
Public Museum

Timothy & Mary Judson House
103 E. Second St.
Circa 1868
Private residence

Faulkner House
134 W. Second St.
Circa 1846
Private residence

Albrecht Gingerbread House
129 S. Hazel St.
Circa 1846
Private residence

Samuel & Mary Brotherton House
104 E. First St.
Circa 1861
Private residence

In addition to the house tours, the society is hosting a Putting on the Ritz Holiday Door Decorating Contest throughout Waterford, with a variety of pop-up shops and stations that include bow making, hot chocolate, and more.



The Woman's Club of Erie, 259 W. Sixth St. will open its doors to the public in November and December with a multitude of events.

West Sixth Street, Erie

The Woman's Club of Erie and the Hagen History Center's Watson-Curtze Mansion will collaborate on tours and events in December. In addition, each home has specific events.

On Dec. 2, both mansions will be open until 8 p.m. to coincide with the Downtown D'Lights tree-lighting ceremony in Perry Square.

A trail of luminaries will be set up along the street between the mansions. Here are just a few of the additional highlights of each historic home:

Woman's Club of Erie

259 W. Sixth St.
Erie, PA 16507
814-452-3844
www.eriewomansclub.com

Christmas in the Mansion Opening Reception

Nov. 11, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Opening reception night \$25 per person
Hors d'oeuvres, refreshments and entertainment

Christmas in the Mansion Public tours

Nov. 12 and 13, Noon to 4 p.m., \$5 admission
Light refreshments, cookies and vendors, entertainment, visit from Santa on Sunday
Dec. 2, 5 p.m. to 8 p.m., free admission
Dec. 3, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., free admission
Dec. 4, teatime, 2 p.m. to 5 p.m., \$20 Vendors, raffles

Judy Husted, the Woman's Club president, is an enthusiastic advocate for the cultural and historic heritage the home provides for area residents. "A group of dedicated Erie women purchased this mansion in 1921 from Winifred Downing Galbraith," Husted says, "and members ever since have preserved the integrity of the original." This 130-year-old Richardsonian

Romanesque architectural beauty has been placed on the National Register of Historic Places and continues to be a spectacular presence on the Sixth Street corridor.

Visitors can enjoy many distinctive interior architectural features including a Juliet balcony, eight fireplaces with Carrara marble, a grand dining room with a butler's pantry, a tearoom with a tin roof and fireplace, built-in cabinetry, Winifred's vast dressing room, and turn-of-the-century servants' quarters with its own staircase. A breathtaking Tiffany chandelier lights the dining room, while another teardrop-shaped Tiffany hangs in the stairwell; both are original to the mansion.

An octagonal, glass-enclosed atrium with floor-to-ceiling windows and a stone floor accent the west side of the house.

Watson-Curtze Mansion

356 W. Sixth St. Erie, PA 16507
814-4554-1813
eriehistory.org

Nov. 13 is Community Day, free admission for the public from noon to 5 p.m., sponsored by Erie Insurance and Erie Community Foundation

Victorian Holidays

Dec. 1 to Dec. 4, free admission thanks to gold sponsor Erie Federal Credit Union and bronze sponsors Erie Community Foundation and Erie Insurance.



Meadville's Baldwin Reynolds Mansion has been described as "Gone with the Wind in Meadville."



The Watson-Curtze Mansion has hosted Victorian Holidays for more than eight years. From Dec. 1 to 4, the Hagen History Center, 356 W. Sixth St., offers free admission, thanks to gold sponsor Erie Federal Credit Union and bronze sponsors Erie Community Foundation and Erie Insurance.

The mansion will be decorated through Jan. 8 with regular admission after the free weekend in December. The mansion is open year-round as follows: Tuesday-Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday, Noon to 5 p.m., Monday, closed. Admission: Adult \$10, seniors, veterans, students \$7.50

Located on West Sixth Street's Millionaires' Row, this Medina sandstone mansion was completed in 1891 for Harrison F. Watson and his wife Carrie T. Watson. The Watsons were among the Erie families who helped build the community. The home was later purchased by Frederick Felix Curtze and his wife, Caroline, and was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1983.

This 24-room mansion boasts more than 15,000 square feet, five bedrooms, four bathrooms, servants' quarters, ornately crafted woodwork, beautiful friezes, intricate stained-glass windows and 12 marble-fronted fireplaces.

In 2021, the mansion was open for its traditional holiday tour with more than 2,500 visitors in one weekend. The mansion features multiple trees and holiday displays in nearly every room. "This year, we are adding to our long-standing tradition of holiday decorating with a pop-up display of dollhouses and many other features," said Executive Director Caleb Pifer.

The museum's 19th century furnishings and multiple exhibits add to the excitement during the holidays. New to the mansion is the Celebration of the Curtze Legacy on the second floor.

Special rooms have been themed so visitors can glimpse turn-of-the-century life: children's toys, Victorian women's elegant dresses and a Curtze family exhibit. The kitchen features a vast array of Griswold cast iron, a connection to the home's past as the Watson's daughter, Winifred Watson married Ely Griswold in 1910.

Crawford County

Baldwin-Reynolds House Museum

639 Terrace Street Meadville, PA 16335
814-333-9882
<http://baldwinreynolds.org>

Trees of Christmas

Open Nov. 18-20 and 25-27, noon to 8 p.m.
Admission: Adults \$5, students \$2

Henry Baldwin gained national prominence with his appointment to

the Supreme Court in 1830. After having practiced law in Philadelphia, he served as both deputy attorney general in Meadville and a member of the United States House of Representatives. In 1842, he and his wife, Sarah, began building their dream home known then as the "Mount Vernon of Meadville."

When her husband died suddenly in 1844, Sarah left this home to her nephew William Reynolds, an Allegheny College graduate and Pittsburgh attorney. He was a driving force in bringing the Atlantic and Great Western Railroad to western Pennsylvania. In 1963, the home was purchased by the Crawford County Historical Society, currently under the leadership of Josh Sherretts, executive director.

This two-story Greek Revival mansion with a southern plantation ambiance "looks like," according to Sherretts, "Gone With the Wind in Meadville!" Its impeccably preserved original windows and brickwork shoulder an original second-floor wraparound balcony.

Distinctive interior features include parquet flooring, original tiger and curly maple woodwork and pine plank floors. Spacious living areas are accented with archway entrances and impressive cathedral-style doors in a French Victorian flair.

Barb Spencer, co-chair of the Trees of Christmas holiday event, invites all to this extravaganza that includes Magical Christmas by the Meadville Garden Club. Relive the fond memories and traditions of your family as you stroll through the rooms titled The Night Before Christmas, Baking With Grandma, Frosty the Snowman, and Gingerbread Houses. Also, you can visit the unique gift and sweet shop.



Every room of the Watson-Curtze Mansion at the Hagen History Center is decorated for the holidays from Dec. 1 to Jan. 8.



The Baldwin-Reynolds House Mansion, 639 Terrace Street, Meadville, will offer tours from Nov. 18-20 and Nov. 25-27

Other special events include Fezziwig's Christmas dinner Dec. 9 at 6:30 p.m. and Dec. 10 at 6:30 p.m., and New Year's Eve party, Dec. 31 at 9:30 p.m.

Chautauqua County

Hamilton Mansion Bed and Breakfast

69 W. Main Street Ripley, NY 14775
716-248-8896
www.hamiltonmansion.com

Holly Tour

Nov. 19: 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Admission: \$3 will be donated to the Northern Chautauqua Canine Rescue in honor of Mrs. Hamilton's love for dogs.

This splendid 9-bedroom, 32-room mansion in Ripley, New York, was home

to Charles and Bertha Hamilton, world travelers who furnished their home with treasures they bought on their worldwide visits. French paintings adorn the bedrooms. The mansion, an active speakeasy during Prohibition, houses artifacts from that era. Currently a B&B operated by Sammie Rodriguez, the public is invited to explore the spectacular grounds and unique interior features.

The mansion's exterior displays a Spanish influence with its stucco walls, 99-ton slate roof and carved wrought-iron fencing and balconies.

Distinctive interior features include the living room's grand floating black marble staircase, a secret stairway and a butler's

pantry. The central chimney that rises three floors is decorated with a window at the third floor.

Westfield Women's Organization Holly Tour

Nov. 20, 1 to 5 p.m.

A variety of Westfield homes will be decorated for this self-guided tour. Details were not available at press time. Check the website for more information westfieldny.com/living-here/event/wwo-holly-tour
22 Elm Street
Westfield, NY 14787

Elizabeth Warner Marvin House

2 W. Fifth Street Jamestown, NY 14701
716-488-6206

<https://marvinhouse.com>

Holiday event: Nov. 15 through January. Contact the mansion for exact days and times.

Self-guided tours throughout the year are available by appointment. Cost: Adults \$10, 17 years and under free.

Built in the Queen Anne, or shingle-style architecture, with Richardsonian attributes, the imposing Marvin House has a castle-like appearance with a prominent turret bracing the front entrance. The interior has beautiful detailing with mahogany and white oak, all intact. The dining room is crowned with an impressive domed ceiling and intricate stenciling around the periphery. Inlaid floors of mahogany form a gorgeous, labyrinth pattern.

When Elizabeth Warner married Robert Marvin in 1898, she was a woman ahead of her times. She was passionately engaged with the women in the community in literary, patriotic, scientific and historic work. When she died in 1951, she bequeathed her home to the women of Jamestown to provide a meeting place and headquarters for women's organizations and, within the year, 400 women had become charter members of Marvin House.

Former president Rosemary Lombardo is proud of Marvin House's legacy: "It is currently privately owned and run by women whose mission continues to be, 71 years later, the accessibility of education, music, and science to women through book clubs, guest speaker and concerts."

A special holiday event showcases spectacular Christmas trees that volunteer Marlin Casker has collected while world travelling. Thirteen of these will be displayed throughout the mansion.

From small, historic homes to castle-like facilities, there's something for everyone to tour and collect ideas for holiday decorating at your own home. **LEL**



The Hamilton Mansion Bed and Breakfast, 69 W. St., Ripley, NY will be open to visitors on Nov. 19 from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.



Helping people take back their lives with better hearing

Compiled by **the Lake Erie Lifestyle staff** *Contributed Photos*

Hearing crashing waves, the melodic song of birds or a simple sentence easily understood, are some of the small things many of us take for granted. For people with hearing difficulties, the inability to communicate effectively in personal relationships, out in the community, or in academic or work environments is costly and detrimental on both a personal and larger scale. At Erie Audiology, Dr. Allison Keenan and her staff offer the latest in audiology technology to improve the lives of those with hearing impairments.

“Our hearing evaluations focus on a patient’s trouble communicating due to hearing loss, struggling with tinnitus, the constant ringing in your ears, or simply seeking expert advice about the best hearing aids available,” Dr. Keenan stated. She shares that many of her patients speak of the loneliness imposed by hearing loss

when communication is so difficult that it becomes exhausting to have to work so hard to stay engaged.

Patients also speak of the certain obstacles and costs they face: the cost to personal confidence and self-esteem when individuals feel embarrassed or stigmatized by their difficulty to hear; the personal and societal economic costs of unrealized academic or professional potential, preventing optimal personal growth and financial security; the cost to personal relationships from the frustration and tensions that occur when important messages have been unheard or misheard.

Dr. Keenan said, “It has been enormously satisfying to see the benefits provided to those with hearing challenges due to advances in hearing technology, early intervention opportunities, and the

depth of developing research into our understanding of the interrelationship between hearing and cognitive function. I look back over my professional 40+ year span and I am amazed at how far we have come in providing care and technology that now allows seamless access in many communication situations but would have been impossible several decades ago.”

Dr. Keenan takes pride in being able to work with patients who have pushed their personal edge and embraced these new technologies to achieve their goals and lead full and engaged lives. Here are a few examples of her life changing work:

Thomas has a history of severe hereditary hearing loss in his family. He realized that he was losing his hearing in his early 20s but was reluctant to find treatment due to the stereotype that hearing loss was a problem associated with old age. He put

off seeking help, even as he was pursuing college and eventually medical school.

After trialing advanced digital hearing devices programmed prescriptively for his degree and pattern of hearing loss, Thomas was astonished. He couldn't believe the range of sounds that he had been missing, and how he could hear more easily in lectures and critical discussions during hospital rounds. He was also able to stream signals from his specialized stethoscope, which interfaced with a cell phone app into his hearing aids, allowing him to complete patient examinations. Thomas will soon be starting a fellowship in his medical specialty and will be providing life-saving medical care to thousands of patients over the course of his career.

Lucille was widowed 15 years ago at the age of 72. Her husband had always handled necessary phone calls to take care of appointments and household needs: Lucille had difficulties understanding people on the phone and was reluctant to use hearing aids. Once on her own, her children became concerned for her safety because she wouldn't hear the phone ring or when

someone would knock at the door. She was also upset because they were encouraging her to move to a senior residential community when she preferred to stay in her own home, as she was otherwise fit and capable of maintaining her independence.

Despite her reluctance, Lucille allowed her children to set up an appointment for her to be fitted with hearing aids. After being guided through an adaptation period, she loved her improved ability to hear on the phone and to socialize more comfortably with her friends and church family. She shared that the hearing aids made the difference for her to continue living safely and securely at home alone, and to travel independently even as she nears her 90s.

Garrett had worked professionally as a musician nearly all his life. He unexpectedly developed progressive hearing loss at the peak of his career, which was impacting his ability to hear fellow musicians or the conductor during rehearsals and performances. His timing, rhythm and pitch were affected, and he was advised that he was at risk for losing his seat in the orchestra.

To Garrett, adapting to a new way of hearing music was a huge challenge and an uncomfortable process for several months; he had to reeducate his auditory system to ranges of sound that no longer felt natural for him. He also practiced endlessly with the improved sensory awareness provided by his hearing devices, regained his musical edge, and was thrilled and relieved when he received compliments on his performances from his fellow musicians. After finally finding the right treatment, his career was no longer in jeopardy.

Dr. Keenan commented that she has always felt a strong sense of professional responsibility to ensure that her office stays at the front of new research technology. She said, "What I hadn't expected when I entered this profession was how much I would learn from, and be inspired by, the many wonderful, resilient and determined people I would have the privilege and pleasure to get to know as they took charge of their hearing, technology opportunities and their lives." **LEL**



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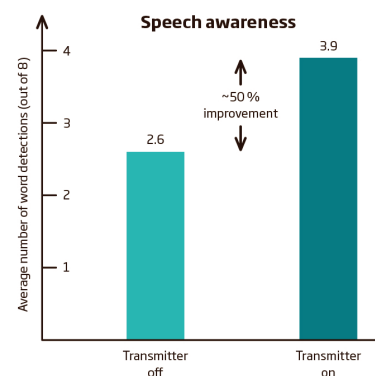
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Winter Wonderland at Asbury Woods – Erie, PA

Dec. 1 – Dec. 31 (excluding Dec. 24 and Dec. 25)

Ready to go walking in a winter wonderland? Returning this year is Asbury Wood's Winter Wonderland boardwalk next to the Andrew J. Conner Nature Center, located at 4105 Asbury Road, Erie PA 16506. This 1/3 of a mile trail transforms our local woods and wetlands into a magical world of shining lights and dazzling colors. You can also head inside the Nature Center and explore their giftshop for locally crafted items. Hours are from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. and admission is free. Children are welcomed, but pets are not permitted on the trail during the event. For more information, call 814-835-5356 or visit <https://www.asburywoods.org/events/winter-wonderland/>.

Contributed by Asbury Woods



Four points

By Molly Boniger

Mark your calendars for these upcoming events around Erie and the tri-state region. Please make sure to contact these sites to verify times and dates before you go.



Contributed by The Academy Theatre

Lionel Bart's "Oliver!" At The Academy Theatre – Meadville, PA

Dec. 2-4, Dec. 9-11, and Dec. 16-18

There's more than just "a little ditty" being sung this December. For three weekends, The Academy Theatre brings Lionel Bart's award-winning musical "Oliver!" to life. Based on the classic novel by Charles Dickens, this heartwarming story of a young orphan looking for a family of his own, takes the audience through the thieving streets of Victorian London. Showtime starts at 7:30 p.m. and tickets range from \$15 to \$23, including fees. The theater is located at 275 Chestnut St. Meadville, PA 16335. To order tickets, you can call the box office at 814-337-8000 or visit <https://ci.ovationtix.com/36250/production/1122508?performanceId=11084049>.

LEGO® Builders Club @ Andover Public Library – Andover, OH

Every Tuesday until Nov. 29

Help build your child's memories and imagination with the Andover Public Library's LEGO® Builders Club. Every week, there are new challenges for building bricks to test your kid's creativity. The club is open to ages 6+ and admission is free. The event starts at 4 p.m. and is located at 142 West Main St. Andover, OH 44003, with LEGO® bricks provided by the club. For more information, call 440-293-6792 or visit <https://visitashtabulacounty.com/events/lego-builders-club-andover-public-library/>. "LEGO® is a trademark of the LEGO Group of companies which does not sponsor, authorize or endorse this site."



*Contributed by Andover Public Library
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"Curious by Nature: Works by Charley and Edie Harper," organized by Springfield Museum of Art and Fowler Artistic LLC – Jamestown, NY

Nov. 12, 2022 – Mar. 5, 2023

Let your curiosity run wild and immerse yourself in the newest exhibition featured at the Roger Tory Peterson Institute. With over 80 original paintings and prints on display, "Curious by Nature: Works by Charley and Edie Harper" delves deep into the minimal realist creations of this artistic, married duo. Their works, individually and combined, draw inspiration from the natural world, offering a window into a fantastical realm of their design. The museum is located at 311 Curtis St. Jamestown, NY 14701. Hours are Wednesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., with tickets ranging from \$6 to \$12. To learn more, call 716-665-2473 or visit <https://rtpi.org/exhibitions/curious-by-nature-works-by-charley-and-edie-harper/>. **LEL**



Charley Harper, Birthday, serigraph on paper, 17x13, Collection of the Springfield Museum of Art, contributed by the Roger Tory Peterson Institute



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What can we do about microplastic ingestion?

By **Leah Markiewicz**

Contributed Photos

Lake Erie is a beautiful setting, but researchers find it also has the second highest amount of microplastics of all the Great Lakes.

Though many people have begun reaching for sustainable options, like reusable water bottles rather than plastic, or shampoo bars rather than bottled hair products, microplastics are still everywhere.

Microplastics are particles of plastic that measure less than five millimeters in length. “We ingest just as many microplastics from the fibers of the clothing we wear compared to the food we eat,” says Sherri “Sam” Mason, director of sustainability at Penn State Erie, the Behrend College. She holds a doctorate in chemistry.

Mason is a leading researcher in freshwater plastic pollution and she helped work in on passage of the Microbead-Free Waters Act of 2015 that helped ban microbeads from products like toothpaste and cosmetics. We still consume microplastics by eating off a plastic plate and using lip gloss. And microparticles have found their way into our bloodstreams.

Smithsonian Magazine reports that Dick Vethaak, an ecotoxologist at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, and his team were the first to find microplastics in the bloodstreams of 77% of the adults he studied.

Closer to home, the Lake Erie Foundation, of which Mason is a board member, reports that while Lake Erie is the smallest of the Great Lakes, it has the second highest amount of microplastics out of all the Great Lakes.

It gets worse. Lake Erie has one of the highest microplastic concentrations in the world. Microplastics can disrupt food webs, as well as the size of the quality of our own local fish. When these fish consume microplastics, and we consume the fish, we are then consuming microplastics as well.

When we consume microplastics, we are not just consuming the particle of plastic, but all the toxic chemicals attached to it. Harmful chemicals such as BPAs, styrene, bleach, perfume, and flame retardants that are attached to these microplastics are not safe for human consumption. Ingesting chemicals like these can lead to a variety of health problems, ranging from a weakened immune system to an increased likelihood of cancer.

Educators are leading the way to study, reduce microplastics

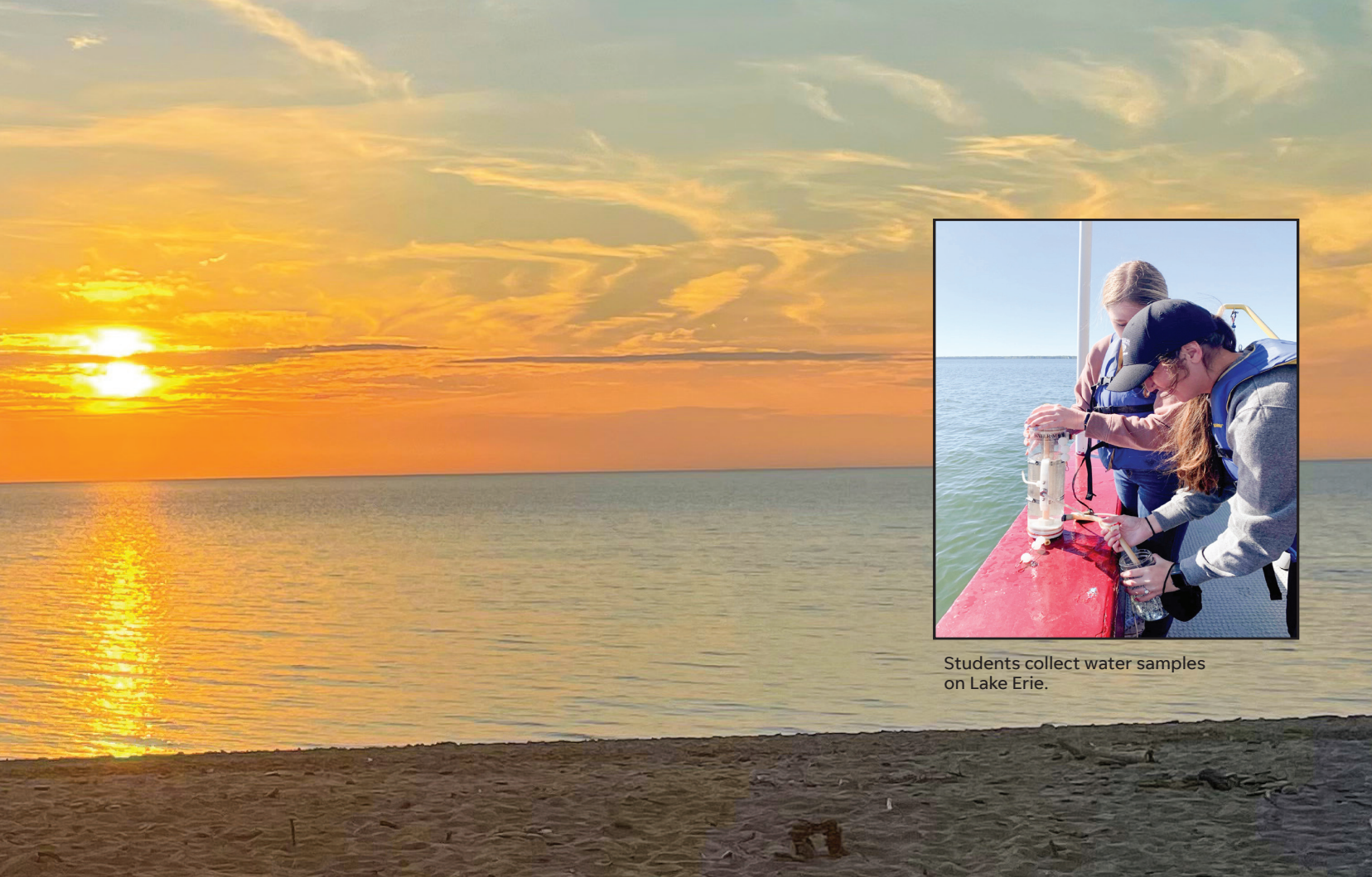
There’s a lot of research being done right here in our own backyard. Mason, is currently collaborating on a study

with Gannon University professor Varun Kasaraneni. Their study focuses on how plastic pollution gets from land to sea.

Mason and Kasaraneni focus on storm water and how the litter from our city is contributing to the ongoing plastic pollution in the Great Lakes. Mason noted that all the microplastics found in the lake started as macroplastics, or bigger pieces of plastic that broke down over time.

Also at Gannon University, Lisa Nogaj, who has a doctorate in physical chemistry, is currently researching nanoplastics in the bay. Nogaj and her students have spent the past year collecting samples from around the bay at different locations and depths. Then, they filter out the larger particles from the samples.

Nogaj does not seem surprised by the number of nanoplastics (which are plastic that range from 1 to 1000 nanometers and are so small they are not even visible to the naked eye) because of the well-known high concentration of microplastics in the Great Lakes, especially Lake Erie. “Large particles of plastic pollution, like a water bottle can break down into micro and nanoparticles through exposure to UV sunlight and by mechanical degradation, where the larger



Students collect water samples on Lake Erie.

particles wear down as they interact with waves, rocks, etc.," she said.

The university's website says its teams are also researching drinking water treatments and harmful algal blooms, among other topics.

The desire to learn more about microplastics has even reached middle schoolers at Fort LeBoeuf School District. Lisa Radock, middle school science teacher at the school, has been working with her students who are learning first-hand about microplastics. "We talked about plastics throughout the school year including problems plastics solve and problems plastics create," says Radock. "The students enjoyed doing a cleanup at Presque Isle and being part of the solution while also identifying that removing plastics from the environment is not the only solution."

What can we do?

According to EcoWatch, a community of publishers dedicated to creating a healthier planet, there are plenty of things that we can do to reduce our consumption of microplastics, such as:

- Rethink reheating food on plastic plates. When the plastic becomes

warm, particles can easily leech into the food being heated.

- Reduce the number of throw-away plastic and Styrofoam cups you use.
- When hot liquid is poured into cups like these, it is easy for the plastics to seep into the beverage.
- Properly filter drinking water and stick to reusable cups and bottles rather than the standard plastic water bottles.
- Recycle.

Jessica Stutzman, the recycling coordinator for Millcreek Township, added that we can all help combat plastic pollution and microplastic consumption. "When storms occur, and trash gets strewn about, it is easy for plastic to make its way into storm drains, and then into our lake," she said. "After a storm, go check the front yard. Pick up any trash and plastic that was blown around and aid your community in keeping the lake and city plastic free."

Stutzman added that switching from plastic to reusable shopping bags and using metal straws are small changes that have a big impact over time. "It's about changing your lifestyle," Stutzman says. "So don't beat yourself if you aren't perfect and you forget your reusable bag when you

go shopping. Just recycle the plastic bag."

What does the future hold?

Mason says that there's a lot of work to be done, but we can change the tide of the ongoing battle with plastic pollution. "New and plant-based biodegradable plastics will change the world. Along with the biodegradable plastic development, there will be a decrease in necessity for single use plastic," Mason says. "One day, we could even see single-use plastic vanish."

Big changes have already taken place. In April, the Giant Eagle locations in Erie decided to go plastic-free when it comes to shopping bags. Now shoppers have the option to use their own reusable bags, or they can purchase a paper bag for 10 cents. Shoppers who have government-funded assistance receive the bags for free. Similarly, Wegmans also eliminated plastic bags, opting for reusable bags or a 5 cent charge for paper bags.

We still have a lot to learn, but educators and students in the Erie area are working to teach us all what we can do to reduce consumption of plastic and plastics pollution. **LEL**

Crafting a career

Chris Fornalczyk leaves longtime job of being a bus mechanic to become the head brewer at The Brewerie at Union Station

by **Steve Orbanek**

Photo courtesy of Chris Sirianni



Chris Fornalczyk started as a home brewer with a beer-making kit he shared with his brother. He turned his hobby into a career during the summer of 2022 when he became the head brewer at The Brewerie at Union Station.

In 2006, Chris Fornalczyk enjoyed a craft beer for the very first time. Coincidentally, he drank that beer at The Brewerie at Union Station, 123 W 14th St., which had just opened as “Erie’s Original Brewpub and Restaurant.”

Sixteen years later, Fornalczyk continues to enjoy craft beer at The Brewerie. Only now, he does more than just drink it. He’s literally the one crafting it.

This summer, Fornalczyk joined The Brewerie as its new head brewer.

“You have to pinch me because I still can’t believe that this is my life,” Fornalczyk says with a laugh.

Brewing beer for a living was never option A, B or C for Fornalczyk, a graduate of Strong Vincent High School. For nearly 20 years, he also had a very stable career as a

bus mechanic, most recently working for the North East School District.

However, after that initial taste of craft beer more than a decade and a half ago, he developed a passion for it, and within a year or so, he was a home brewer. Every year, he hosted friends for a St. Patrick Day’s party where they would sample his beers.

“In 2007, around Christmas, I heard an advertisement that beer-making kits make great gift ideas, so I got one for my brother. I brewed that with him, and I immediately fell in love with it, both the process and learning different things,” Fornalczyk said.

As Fornalczyk’s homebrewing prowess grew, so did the number of folks who wanted to try his beer. And to be clear, the annual St. Patrick’s Day party was no small-scale shindig. Over the years, it grew to

include more than 100 guests where dozens of different homebrews would be sampled. His beer became so popular that Fornalczyk and his wife, Laura Fornalczyk, even built a brand for it: Broken Bus Brewing, a tribute to his day-to-day career.

Despite the popularity of his homebrewed beer, this was still very much just a hobby for Fornalczyk.

“My wife and I thought about maybe one day that we would open our own brewery, but it just wouldn’t make sense on paper,” he says. “But then, I did the Brewer’s Cup here at the Brewerie the last two years that they did it before COVID, and I actually got second place twice.”

The second-place finish led to a discussion with Chris Sirianni, owner of the Brewerie at Union Station.

"He said, 'You make great beer, I would like you to come make beer here.' I thought he was just being nice," Fornalczyk says.

It turns out it was more than that, and this summer, when the position officially became open, Sirianni revisited the opportunity that he first discussed with Fornalczyk a few years ago.

"We were very familiar with him as both a regular and a top-level homebrewer, and we built off that relationship," Sirianni says. "It was just a natural fit as he has both a vibrant and good-natured attitude, and he is someone who yearns for education in the industry and is also an advocate for craft beer. Since he started, the public feedback, which is the ultimate grade or measuring stick, has been overwhelmingly positive."

Making the shift from homebrewing to brewing on a seven-barrel professional system is no easy task. Prior to working for the Brewery, the largest yield that came from one of Fornalczyk's homebrewed batches was just five gallons.

The yields on a professional system are exponentially larger, which brings a new level of pressure with it. It also was a big risk to leave his longtime, stable career.

But it was a job that Fornalczyk says he needed to make.

"Working for a school district, the health benefits are amazing, and the pension is unmatched, but I have described those two things as the anchors that weigh you down," he says. "When your heart isn't in it, those great benefits are anchors."

Fornalczyk has already brewed the Brewery's six flagship beers (Uncle Jackson's Blonde Ale, Hopness Monster I.P.A., Major McNair's Nut Brown, Apparition Amber Ale, Railway Hefe Weizen and Silk Bomb), but they might taste a little different than you remember.

"You can give 10 brewers the same recipe, and they're going to brew 10 different beers," Fornalczyk says.

"Whenever there is a new brewer, you add a new taste and some new ideas and a new perspective. I think it's great for craft beer, as it's always great to get an outside perspective coming in," Sirianni adds.

In addition to the flagships, Fornalczyk has begun to introduce some new, original recipes of his own. One he is particularly proud of is Lite Rail Ale, a light cream ale.

"I always brewed that beer for my wife's family, so the original homebrew recipe was called Pekelnicky Lite, and I made that homebrew every year for Pekelnicky Christmas. Lite in body, low in flavor and just a really easy-drinking beer," he says.

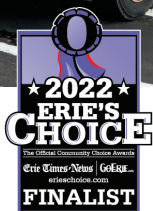
It is one of many beers that Fornalczyk plans to introduce in the months and years to come. He is bullish on the craft beer industry and after leaving his previous job as a mechanic, he is ready to settle in for this next chapter of his career.

Sirianni and the rest of the collective Erie craft brewing company are eager to watch this chapter develop.

"It's just great to see people like Chris who want to get into this industry go ahead and make that jump," Sirianni says. "We've loved to watch success of former homebrewers and people we've worked with like Jason Lavery, the guys of Erie Ale Works, Tom Morris at Black Monk and others. All of these guys came up as homebrewers, and all they needed was a chance. We couldn't be happier to be able to see Chris follow in their footsteps." **LEL**



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