



ERIE EVENTS

2023
COMMUNITY
REPORT





FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As I mark my one-year anniversary as Executive Director, I am pleased to present our 2023 Community Report. There is a lot to celebrate from this past year at our venues, including record-setting event activity at the Bayfront Convention Center and, of course, the Erie SeaWolves' first-ever Eastern League Championship. Erie Events and our staff take tremendous pride in bringing a diverse selection of live entertainment and sports to our community. Additionally, we are proud of the role we play in boosting our local economy through the attraction of large conventions and meetings associated with our Bayfront Landing properties.

Erie Events employs nearly 70 full-time associates and just under 750 part-time staff members. We operate the Erie Insurance Arena, Warner Theatre, Bayfront Convention Center, and UPMC Park, as well as the two hotels owned by Erie Events: Sheraton Erie Bayfront and Courtyard Erie Bayfront by Marriott. All our venues are supported exclusively by operating revenue and hotel occupancy tax. Erie residents enjoy our venues and provide no local tax dollars to support Erie Events or any of our facilities.

In the proceeding pages, you will read more about the venues we manage, along with some of the highlights from this past year. In 2023, we hosted nearly 728,000 fans and attendees across our facilities. There are many exciting things happening at Erie Events, and we hope you join us in celebrating our successes. I trust that you will find our report encouraging and informative, and I look forward to seeing you at one of our venues in 2024.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gus Pine', written in a cursive style.

Gus Pine



FROM THE BOARD CHAIRPERSON

On behalf of the Erie Events Board of Directors and staff, I am excited to present our 2023 Community Report. We are extremely proud of our role as a world-class community institution in downtown Erie that has become so much a part of the social and cultural life throughout the city — and well beyond.

This past year was marked with tremendous strides in our organization. Under the leadership of Gus Pine, we expanded our offerings, providing a robust schedule of events and activation of collaborative partnerships within the Erie community, and implemented new patron experiences.

As we embark on another year, we will expand the diversity of our programming and services, reflective of an ever-evolving community. We are proud to bring artists, leaders, and communities together to enhance the quality of life for all people. At the heart of what we do — and what fosters our continued growth — are the things for which you rely on us the most:

- Our dedication to delivering high-quality events to as many audiences as we can
- Our commitment to delivering an outstanding patron experience to all those attending our events
- Our focus on growing as a leader in the community, recognizing the important role that entertainment and sports play in the lives of everyone

Whether you are attending your first event or have been a long-time patron of the Warner Theatre, Erie Insurance Arena, Bayfront Convention Center or UPMC Park, we appreciate your continued support. No matter your passion, no matter your interests, there is something for everyone at Erie Events.

Gwendolyn White
Gwendolyn White



ERIE EVENTS

Get Up and Go!

The mission of Erie Events is to provide world-class convention facilities and entertainment venues throughout the region to visitors and residents, their families, and friends. Erie Events strives to present a diverse selection of performing arts and sporting events that are enjoyable not just to residents of our own community, but also to meeting and convention visitors, travelers, and vacationers.

The Erie County Convention Center Authority (Erie Events) Board of Directors is made up of 11 members who each serve four-year terms without compensation. The Mayor of the City of Erie appoints two members, the Governor of Pennsylvania appoints two members, and each member of Erie County Council appoints one member. The appointment process ensures the Board represents all of Erie County.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Gwendolyn White
Chairperson



Steven E. "Tim" Riley Jr.
Vice Chairperson



Joseph Hilbert
Secretary



Mike Glass
Treasurer



Kathleen A. Dahlkemper



Todd J. Dietrick



Sean Johnson



Michael McCormick



James Nuber



Roger W. Richards



Lawrence A. Sapienza

TOTAL DIRECT SPENDING
\$106 MILLION

2023

TOTAL EVENT ATTENDANCE
727,956



WARNER THEATRE



BAYFRONT CONVENTION CENTER

DIRECT SPENDING
\$22 MILLION

EVENT ATTENDANCE
128,410

DIRECT SPENDING
\$22 MILLION

EVENT ATTENDANCE
144,942



UPMC PARK



ERIE INSURANCE ARENA

DIRECT SPENDING
\$35 MILLION

EVENT ATTENDANCE
251,467

DIRECT SPENDING
\$27 MILLION

EVENT ATTENDANCE
203,137

2023 PAYMENTS MADE TO THE CITY OF ERIE

TOTAL: \$393,890

AMUSEMENT TAX
\$142,126

INFRASTRUCTURE PAYMENTS
\$109,128



EARNED INCOME TAXES
\$92,156

PARKING TAX
\$13,896

REAL ESTATE TAXES
\$36,584





As the premiere sports and entertainment venue in the tri-state region, the Erie Insurance Arena continues to host a wide range of events that include national touring concerts, family shows, sporting events, graduations, and special events. It has been home to the **Erie Otters** for the past 28 years. The Club Level features 13 modern, fully equipped suites that can accommodate 22 guests.

Last year, Erie Events and Gannon University announced a new partnership that provides an enhanced experience for suite-level patrons at the Erie Insurance Arena. The **Gannon Club** offers guests access to unique food and beverage experiences paired with stellar views during events at the Arena. The collaboration provides internships for work experience along with tickets, so students have equitable access to attend events. The partnership represents a shared commitment to the growth and cultural richness of the Erie region.

Family events included the **Harlem Globetrotters, WWE Saturday Night's Main Event**, six performances of **Disney On Ice Mickey's Search Party**, and **AEW Wrestling**, which made its first appearance in Erie. The Arena also hosted several college and high school hockey games and graduations.

The Erie Otters returned to the ice with the following achievements and initiatives:

Team Highlights

- First 30+ win season since 2016-17
- First playoff appearance since 2016-17
- Average attendance up 27 percent in the last five years
- Partnered with nearly 100 local and regional corporate and non-profit organizations
- Finished 5th in the Western Conference, top 11 in the OHL

Community Involvement

- Nearly \$100,000 donated back to non-profit organizations for cancer research, housing for the people with intellectual disabilities, indigenous peoples, and veteran affairs
- Over 4,200 pairs of socks donated to Community Shelter Services
- Over 2,000 bears donated to Salvation Army as part of the annual Teddy Bear Toss
- Over 1,200 tickets donated to active-duty and retired military personnel for Military Appreciation Night

Special Theme Nights

- Children's Grief Awareness Night
- Inaugural Native Heritage Night
- Inaugural Mental Health Awareness Night
- Martin Luther King Jr. and School Day Games
- Women's Empowerment Night

Major Sports Tournaments (in addition to OHL hockey)

- 30th Annual Sarah Backstrom Memorial Tournament Girls Hockey (3 days)
- TCS Hockey MLK Cup (3 days)
- TCS Hockey Erie Bay Cup (3 days)
- ACL Cornhole Mania (3 days)
- College Hockey East Women's Club Hockey Championships (2 days)
- Champion Cheer National Cheer & Dance Championships (2 days)

EVENT ATTENDANCE
203,137

EVENT DAYS
84

SEATING CAPACITY
CONCERTS **9,000**
HOCKEY **6,700**

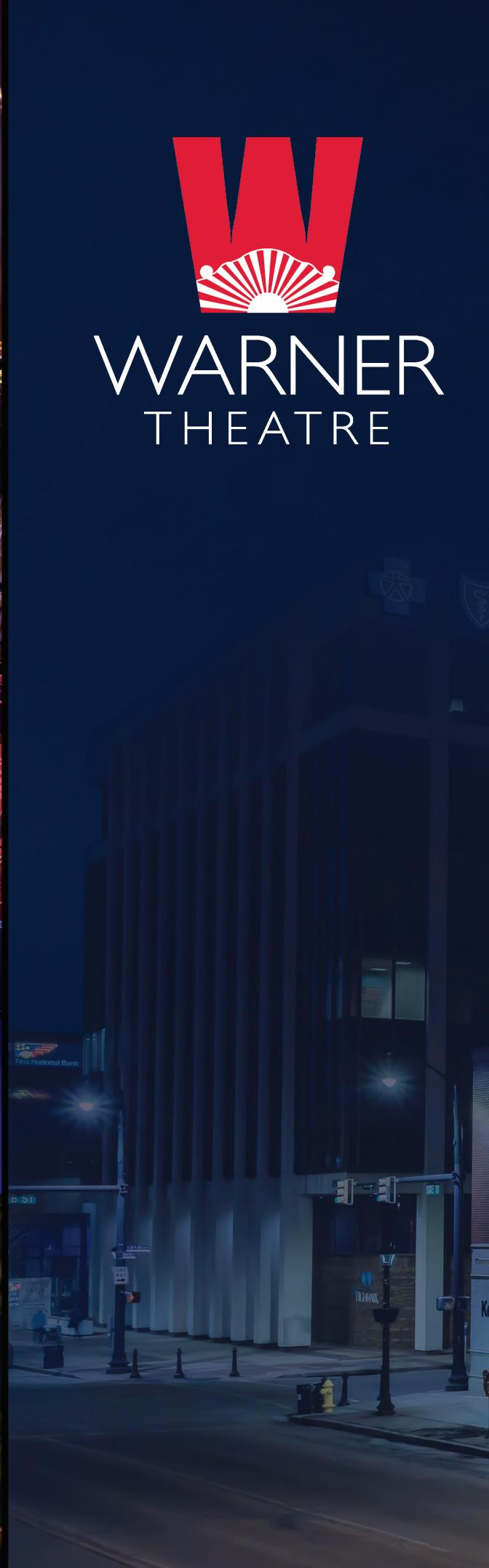
USER GROUPS
11

ICE TIME
HOURS **377**

DAYS
60



WARNER
THEATRE



It's been two full years since the Warner Theatre's **\$36 million renovation, expansion, and restoration** was completed. In that time, the theatre has seen a tremendous increase in event activity. With the addition of the 4,000-square-foot Rehearsal Hall, the Warner can now host two separate events going on at the exact same time — a reception in the Grand Lobby and a wedding in the Rehearsal Hall.

Last year, the Warner had one of its most diverse schedule of events in the history of the theatre. Performances from the **United States Army Field Band**, **Joe Gatto**, and **MercyMe** to **Dark Star Orchestra**, the **Magic of Motown**, and **The Nutcracker** are just a sample of the various types of programming. **Jerry Seinfeld**, **Bob Dylan**, **Jeff Dunham**, **Aaron Lewis**, and **Nate Bargatze** attracted record crowds with six sold-out performances. After a very busy weekend in late October, the Warner stagehands logged 678 hours from working six performances over six consecutive days.

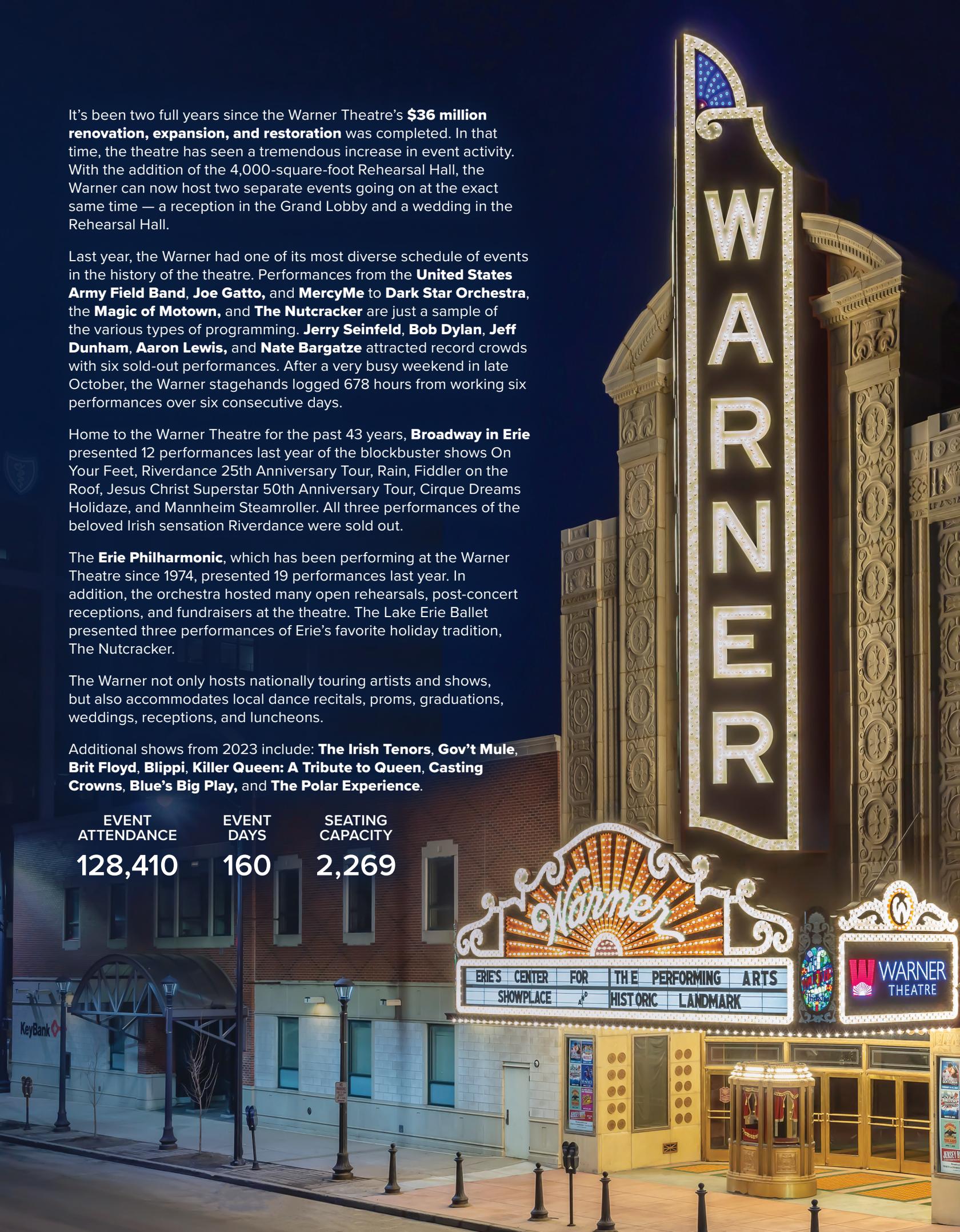
Home to the Warner Theatre for the past 43 years, **Broadway in Erie** presented 12 performances last year of the blockbuster shows *On Your Feet*, *Riverdance 25th Anniversary Tour*, *Rain*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Jesus Christ Superstar 50th Anniversary Tour*, *Cirque Dreams Holiday*, and *Mannheim Steamroller*. All three performances of the beloved Irish sensation *Riverdance* were sold out.

The **Erie Philharmonic**, which has been performing at the Warner Theatre since 1974, presented 19 performances last year. In addition, the orchestra hosted many open rehearsals, post-concert receptions, and fundraisers at the theatre. The Lake Erie Ballet presented three performances of Erie's favorite holiday tradition, *The Nutcracker*.

The Warner not only hosts nationally touring artists and shows, but also accommodates local dance recitals, proms, graduations, weddings, receptions, and luncheons.

Additional shows from 2023 include: **The Irish Tenors**, **Gov't Mule**, **Brit Floyd**, **Blippi**, **Killer Queen: A Tribute to Queen**, **Casting Crowns**, **Blue's Big Play**, and **The Polar Experience**.

EVENT ATTENDANCE	EVENT DAYS	SEATING CAPACITY
128,410	160	2,269







UPMC Park has been home to the **Erie SeaWolves** since 1995. The ballpark features six 20-guest luxury suites, a 40-person super suite, picnic areas in right and left field, three primary concession stands and a Party Deck with 20-person boxes for a semi-private, outdoor experience. In addition, the ballpark features the most unique gathering space in downtown Erie. Located on the top level of the left-field building, the UPMC Park Stadium Club is a 175-person space overlooking the playing field.

The 2023 season was filled with accolades and accomplishments for the Erie SeaWolves. For the first time in franchise history, the SeaWolves won the **Eastern League Championship**.

Additional 2023 Highlights

- Four SeaWolves named E.L. All-Stars
- Six SeaWolves alumni made their MLB debuts Gabe Alvarez was named Eastern League Manager of the Year
- SeaWolves broadcaster was heard Greg Gania on the Detroit Tigers' radio call
- SeaWolves highlights made ESPN SportsCenter's Top 10 Plays twice in a week
- Colt Keith named Detroit Tigers' Minor League Player of the Year
- 15% attendance increase from 2022

Community Involvement

The Erie SeaWolves are proud to provide a meaningful, positive impact on the quality of life across Northwest Pennsylvania. In 2023, the SeaWolves contributed over \$300,000 in goods, services, and monetary donations to support local and regional causes.

Notable Initiatives

- \$6,100 in Chace Numata Scholarships were issued to collegebound student-athletes
- UPMC Health Plan Strike Out Cancer Weekend
- Autism Society NWPA Sensory-Friendly Day
- Hagan Business Machines Strike Out Poverty to benefit United Way of Erie County
- Donations to VetTix for veterans in the Erie region
- Fundraising for the Miracle League of Erie County and other local amateur baseball programs
- Hosted six movie night family-friendly events
- Major sponsor of Erie's Walk to End Alzheimer's
- CVS Health free Play Ball event for 200+ kids
- Reading to school students across the region
- Hosted Chevy Youth Baseball Camp for 200 kids
- Jackie Robinson Day initiative in partnership with United Way of Erie County Community Schools and 100 Black Men of Erie
- Encouraged students with C. Wolf's Reading Club presented Erie County Community College
- NAMI Movie Night for Mental Health

EVENT
ATTENDANCE
251,467

EVENT
DAYS
150

SEATING
CAPACITY
6,000



BAYFRONT
CONVENTION
CENTER



Offering breathtaking views of Erie’s magnificent waterfront, the **Bayfront Convention Center** is Northwestern Pennsylvania’s largest convention and meeting venue. The Convention Center provides world-class amenities and is the perfect location for meetings, conferences, events, trade shows and weddings. The Convention Center experienced a record-setting year in 2023, having hosted 215 events.

Notable Events

- Pennsylvania Art Education Association
- Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs
- New York State Teachers Conference
- NEC AAAE NE American Association of Airport Executives
- TRSO, Inc. – Tri-State Region of Narcotics Anonymous
- International Union of Operating Engineers
- Marcellus Shale Coalition Insight
- County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania
- NALMS – North American Lake Management Society International Symposium
- Western Pennsylvania United Methodist Church
- Jurassic Quest Dinosaur Show
- Mother Earth News Fair

EVENT ATTENDANCE
144,942

EVENT DAYS
329

CONVENTION/ TRADE/ CONSUMER SHOWS
97

BUSINESS MEETINGS/ CORPORATE EVENTS
119

BANQUETS
67

OTHER EVENTS
46



BAYFRONT LANDING

Seize the Bay

Bayfront Landing is a popular Erie destination for both visitors and locals alike. With the **Bayfront Convention Center** at its core, our Bayfront properties boast 5 restaurants, nearly 400 hotel rooms and over 128,000 square feet of meeting and convention space. Creating a space on Erie's Bay for locals and tourists to interact is at the core of our mission for Bayfront Landing.

Future plans for the area include additional retail space and a Market House, along with a partnership to develop green space on the waterfront with mixed-use properties.



The Sheraton Erie Bayfront Hotel is waterfront luxury at its best. With 200 fully-renovated rooms offering a contemporary design and stunning views of Lake Erie, the Sheraton features five versatile meeting spaces with modern technology for all business needs.

2023 Highlights

- Full renovation of all 200 rooms (April 2024)
- Post-renovation GSS score: ranked Top 20% of the brand
- Opening of reimagined restaurant, Two45 Waterfront Grille (April 2024)

2023 World Luxury Awards

- Gallup Award-Winning Hotel for Associate Engagement, Gold BSC
- Bruce White Living the Vision Award for all BSC Green (or better) categories

2023 Hotel Awards

- Sheraton Brand #1 Changemaker Award-Winner
- Awarded highest-possible AAA score (3 diamond) for our category
- Booking.com Most Booked Award



The Courtyard Erie Bayfront Hotel is a waterfront retreat that boasts breathtaking views, modern accommodations and is connected to the Bayfront Convention Center. The Courtyard features 2 restaurants; The Bistro and Shoreline Bar & Grille; an outdoor infinity pool; and a fitness center that overlooks Presque Isle Bay.

2023 Highlights

- Platinum GSS (Top 11%)
- Platinum F&B (Top 3%)
- Restaurant Revinate 4.85 (out of 5.0)

- Inspiring Followership Award for Platinum Associate Engagement, Top 3 in Company
- Bruce White Living the Vision Award for all BSC Green (or better) categories

- Awarded highest-possible AAA score (3 diamond) for our category
- Booking.com Most Booked Award



ERIE EVENTS

Get Up and Go!

809 French Street, Erie, PA 16501 ErieEvents.com

Administrative 814.453.7117 **Box Office** 814.452.4857 **Fax** 814.455.9931

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Photography by: Gibbens Creative, David Desin, Erie Otters, Mike Godlewski