

# KEEPING ERIE WEIRD 10 TOP STORIES

Continued from 1A

**1** John E. Herrick was angry because he said it took Saint Vincent Health Center too long to care for his girlfriend. So the 52-year-old called 911 and threatened to blow up the hospital. That got Herrick plenty of attention. He was sentenced to at least six months in prison.

**2** An Erie man might have found an answer to the mysterious worldwide epidemic of bee die-offs. Chester Lee calls it a "bee pole." It's a simple invention: a 6-foot-tall piece of decomposing timber that he smooths out and drills a series of holes into. Bees use it as a habitat to lay their eggs. The bee pole works so well that Lee was invited to install a bee pole at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., in January.

**3** A chase in New York came to a watery conclusion when the suspect dove into Chautauqua Lake to escape police. Kenneth J. Penhollow, 24, was found swimming near the center of the lake and rescued — or captured — by boat.

**4** The Erie School District adjusted its policies after Erie School Director Ed Brzezinski had his yard raked by about 15 students during a school day, raising questions about the use of their time. The students, part of the district's horticulture program, were not reimbursed for their work, though Brzezinski later donated \$100 to the program.

**5** We've all heard stories of one or two underage drinkers sneaking past bouncers at bars. But 65 of them? That's what Erie police said they found at the Dog tavern early on a Saturday morning in March. Some were as young as 17. Dog owner Kenneth

Toglia faces 135 criminal counts related to the March 13 raid.

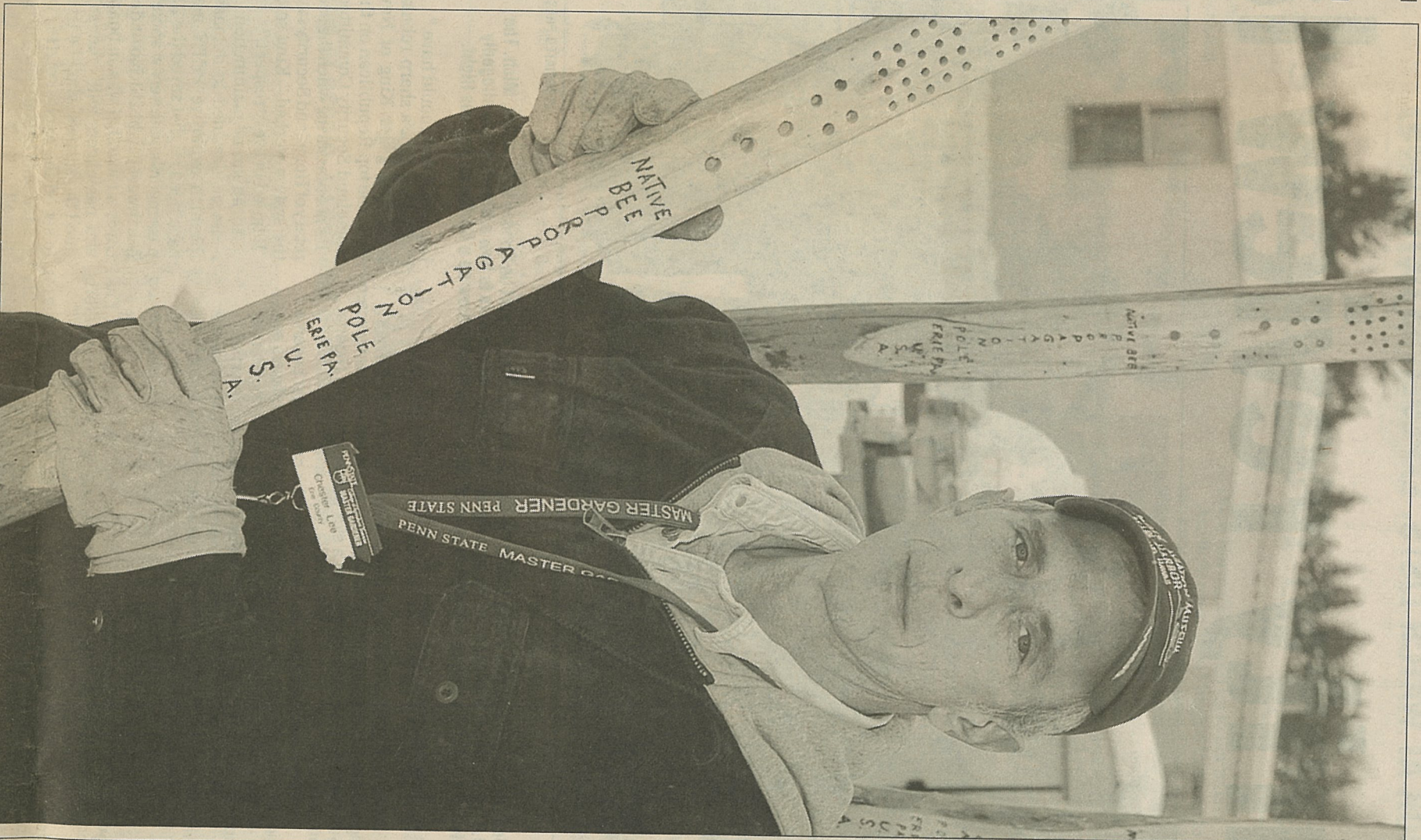
**6** A VisitErie video trumpeting the city's tourism offerings was posted on YouTube in March. The idea was a good one, but the video had some pretty basic errors — including missing the year the city was founded by 101 years.

**7** A Vernon Township man threatened in April to hole up in a homemade soundproof shed and begin a hunger strike to combat noise from the Dad's Products Co. plant near his home. Both sides won, though, when Dad's offered to buy Harry Davies' property, which meant dinner was back on.

**8** A 94-year-old Crawford County man was charged with criminal mischief for using a tractor to push over a hunting cabin. Thomas McGranahan, of East Fallowfield Township, said he pushed the cabin off his property after the cabin's owner refused to move it. McGranahan avoided jail time by agreeing to pay restitution.

**9** Ebert G. Beeman was elected to Erie County Council, despite the fact that the IRS says he owes \$2 million in back taxes and he ran on a campaign platform that included advocating selling the Erie County Public Library. He is set to be sworn in to office in January.

**10** Those who knew him best knew Brad Foulk was attached to his cell phone. They also knew he had a unique sense of humor. That's why family and friends decided the beloved Erie County District Attorney should hold his cell phone in his casket. The sight brought a smile to the faces of many of the hundreds of mourners who filed by his casket during his two-day viewing.



FILE PHOTO CHRISTOPHER MILLETTE/Erie Times-News

Chester Lee makes bee poles, which mimic the type of deadwood that bees native to North America prefer to live in. Lee, of Summit Township, was invited to install a bee pole at the American Victory Garden at the Smithsonian Institution's Natural History Museum in Washington, D.C. Unlike the more-common European bees, native North American bees do not live in colonies, such as beehives.

## THEY SAID WHAT?

■ "These are some funky rodents." Erie

## WHAT WE SAID IN 2009

■ Green: No longer just a color, but a state of mind.

## ANIMALS IN THE NEWS

■ We have a voice in the White House. Kind of.