

little village

Iowa City's News & Culture Magazine • August 16-31, 2001



FREE!



TATTOOS R US



Welcome
back, students

pg 3



Author Thisbe
Nissen can take
Iowa City and
leave New York

pg 12



Neko Case tells
it like it is

pg 15

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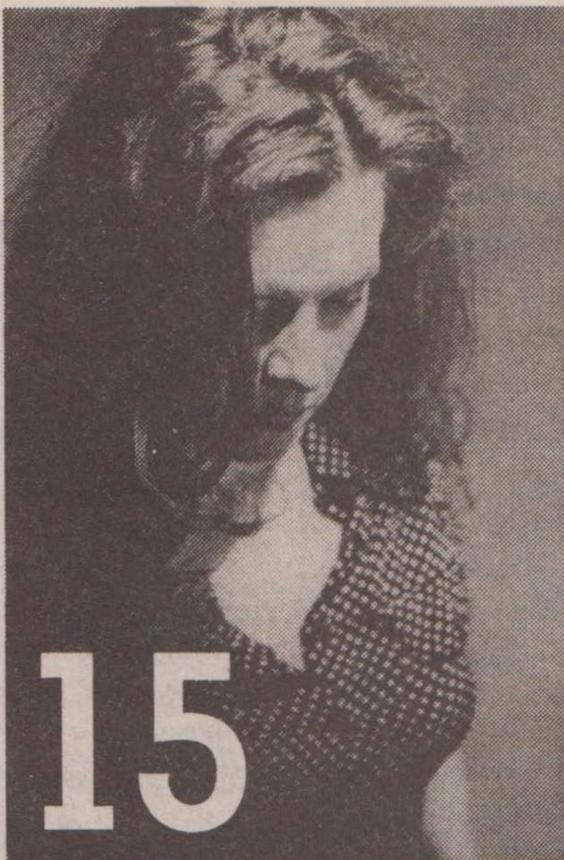
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She's a pistol

Neko Case brings her no-apologies brand of classic country back to town



Tattoos R Us

Used to be only sailors and bikers had them. Now everyone from grandmas to cops is getting in the act. But tattoos are still cool. They're so cool around here, in fact, that tattoo studios nearly outnumber fast-food restaurants. Introducing members of the local tattooing community: blackhearts, greenhorns...some who dare call tattoos fine art and even a map of the human soul.

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P.O. Box 736 • Iowa City, IA 52244



Todd Kimm



OPINION

Iowa City Fall Orientation 2001

Dear student:

Welcome back to Iowa City—or what's left of it. It's been a long, hot summer in the Athens of the Midwest and a lot has happened while you were away. What follows is a very modest primer on what you missed and what you'll be facing during this new semester—followed by a pop quiz. Seriously—this is required.

Not that kind of malt liquor

You've no doubt already heard the bad news that the city council made good on its threat to put the kibosh on binge drinking by you student types. The upshot, at least for now, is that two-for-one drink specials and all-you-can-drink nights are out; chartered buses to North Liberty and hoarding pints at downtown liquor stores are in. "Wait," you say, "but there aren't any liquor stores downtown." Well, just so happens that while you were away, Hy-Vee made a successful bid to purchase Pearson's Drug Store (going strong on the corner of Linn and Market streets for 70 years) and will turn it into a Regal Liquor Store. Good timing. A reliable source reports that Hy-Vee first looked into buying other properties, including Prairie Lights Bookstore and the former First Christian Church on Iowa Avenue. Prairie Lights wouldn't bite and Hy-Vee eventually grasped the fact that replacing a church with a liquor store might look bad. They should have realized that replacing an Iowa City institution like Pearson's looks even worse. One by one, we're losing the places that make Iowa City unique. Now we'll have to drive all the way to Grinnell (Cunningham Drug) for that old-fashioned pharmacy-soda fountain experience of eating egg salad sandwiches from plastic plates and gulping malt overflow from those Hamilton Beach stainless-steel mixing cups. One piece of advice, though: Please buy your booze at John's Grocery (just down the street from Pearson's); let's keep another beloved Iowa City landmark

in business for years to come.

(Hold the presses. Looks like local opposition has caused Hy-Vee to reconsider the idea of turning Pearson's into a liquor store. Here's an idea: Turn it into a Hy-Vee pharmacy and keep the soda fountain. It's a perfect fit. Hy-Vee, you can be a local hero.)

A victory and a defeat

And while we're in a reminiscing mood, let's take a look at what happened with the Carnegie Library building, which (if you remember) was threatened with demolition this spring when a local developer wanted to tear it down and put up an apartment building. Well, local historical activists sprang into action and got the 98-year-old building registered as a historical landmark. An ordinance is now being considered that will allow the developer to incorporate the structure into his plans by exempting the project from a requirement that all downtown buildings have commercial space on the ground floor.

On a sour note, while activists were occupied with the Carnegie building, plans to demolish the old Vogel house went through unnoticed. Built in 1898 and located on the corner of Iowa Avenue and Linn Street, the house will be replaced with a six-story building, according to associate city planner Shelley McCafferty.

Brave new world

But enough with the history. You should know that local activists mounted a petition drive this summer to have three proposals added to the November ballot. The first proposes a ballot question every four years that would reaffirm or deny the city council's appointments of city manager and police chief. The second would make the Police Citizens Review Board, which basically watchdogs the police, free to recommend changes to police department policies and practices. The third would have officers issue citations instead of arresting people accused of simple offenses such as the possession of marijuana. This proposal would also ban tactics like garbage searches and "knock-and-talks" for the purpose of getting into peoples' homes.

The groups circulating the petitions have set an Aug. 20 deadline to collect a minimum of 784 signatures. Caroline Dieterle, of Citizens for Accountable Local Government, said the drive is going well, but the groups (which include Citizens for Alternatives to a New Jail and Students for Local Politics) want to exceed the goal by a comfortable margin. "Nine out of 10 people approached are happy to sign [the petitions]," she said. Throughout her 30-plus

years of activism in Iowa City, Dieterle said she has "heard over and over the despairing complaint that real city policy is made by the city manager, and that he is untouchable." Overturning the system itself is "a bigger task," she said. "Let's see if we can fix what we've got so we don't have to scrap the whole thing." The erosion of privacy rights and the escalating crackdown on alcohol and marijuana are other issues that brought activists together for the petition drive.

Pop quiz

So now...pop quiz. The question, dear student, is why should you care? One answer is obvious: These developments could affect you directly in ways inconsequential (loading up at John's instead of Joe's) to the more serious (getting thrown in jail). The not-so-obvious answer involves the fact that fate has brought you into this little college town at a very crucial time: when small, independent and locally owned enterprises are being chewed up and spit out by corporate chains. When affordable (and often historic) housing stock is being knocked down and replaced with thrown-together high-rent apartment complexes. When only the well-to-do can afford to own property within the city limits due to inflated property values. When the university is being run more like a corporation (with a "CEO" who, as tuition skyrockets, makes 10 times more than many of its employees) than an institution of higher learning, where a good liberal arts education is treated with the respect it deserves.

But it's also a time when activists, many of them students, are working together and fighting back.

Though you'll only be in Iowa City for a few years, your experiences here will shape how you see the world. Why not honor this town—why not cultivate a sense of place and community—by becoming involved, especially when you're at your most idealistic or (at least) unfazed. If more of you voted in local elections, the impact would be incredible.

And by the way, one other thing that happened this summer in the midst of the above was the rising of this magazine from the ashes of *Icon*. This is our third issue (twice a monthly), and we want you to read and depend on us. We are local and independent, struggling to survive in this "New Economy." Please support us, and our kith and kin.

You are a student; you've got a lot of stuff going on; not to saddle you with too much. But please do more than the least of what's expected of you; do more than just leave this place like you found it. *

Not to be confused with a regular advice column, *Good Advices* dispenses wisdom gathered from both the distant winds and local gurus and experts. If you have some good advice on pretty much any topic, call or email us with it. If, on the other hand, you need advice, do the same and we'll see what we can do.

The thing about things

Objects we treasure need to be viewed as things unto themselves. Otherwise there's a very real danger of us being had by what we have. Possessive thoughts should immediately bring to mind the ravings of poor demented Kurtz concerning his ivory, his natives, his jungle and how these delusions of ownership drew from Captain Marlowe the response, "But to what did he belong? What powers of darkness claimed his as their own?"

Source: Steve Johnson, *Mythos*, Iowa City

The "check engine" warning light

Many cars built after 1996 have a "check engine" warning light as part of the onboard diagnostic system that lights up if the computer detects a problem that could cause an emission-control failure. Sometimes the glitch is intermittent—in many cars, the light will turn off after three driving sessions if the glitch does not reoccur. One

[Good Advices]

common event that may turn on this light is a missing or loose gas cap. This should always be checked first before taking the car in for expensive diagnostics. The cap needs to be threaded on correctly and tight, usually until it has clicked three-to-four times. Also keep in mind that the "check engine" warning really has nothing to do with the engine itself—as in low oil level, overheating or other mechanical problems. The warning only refers to the electronically controlled systems that relate to emission. Once the light has been on there will be a code stored in the computer that must be retrieved with a scan tool. Shops must charge for this, since the tools are very expensive. But checking the gas cap first may save a trip to the shop.

Source: Evan Evans, *Whitedog Imported Auto Repair & Sales*, Iowa City

Graduate school

The first step is the hardest. Start by making a guess at the field or topic that you might want to study in graduate school. Then pick a professor who seems approachable and might know something about that topic, per-

haps because he or she teaches a course in that area. Show up in that person's office during scheduled office hours and say, "Hello. I'd like to ask your advice. I am thinking I might want to go to graduate school, but I'm still uncertain about where I would go or what exactly I would study. I do know that I'm pretty interested in such-and-such. How would I find out about graduate schools in that area?"

Source: <http://dliis.gseis.ucla.edu/people/pagre/grad-school.html>

Telescopes

The higher the power, the smaller the field of view. For example, at 50 power you're looking at a magnified piece of sky about as small as your little fingernail covers when held at arm's length. An 8x finderscope, on the other hand, displays about as much sky as a golf ball covers at arm's length. This is big enough to aim at something you see with the naked eye and get it in the finderscope's view. Once it's there, you center it in the finder's crosshairs. That should be a precise enough aim for the object to appear in the view of the main telescope.

Source: <http://www.skypub.com/tips/tips.shtml>

Through the looking glass

Still scratching your head? Ask Alice's caterpillar at <http://www.ruthannzaroff.com/wonderland/caterpillar.htm> *

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THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

LANGUAGE IS A VIRUS

HOW IDIOTIC ARGUMENTS ENTER THE POLITICAL MAINSTREAM

STEP ONE: SOMEBODY SOMEWHERE HAS A BRIGHT IDEA.

HEY--WOULDN'T IT BE GREAT IF WE COULD SPEND THE ENTIRE SOCIAL SECURITY TRUST FUND ON RARE SINGLE-MALT SCOTCH AND EXOTIC PROSTITUTES FOR CEO'S SUCH AS OURSELVES?

WORKS FOR ME.

STEP TWO: THINK TANK LACKEYS COME UP WITH AN INTELLECTUAL RATIONALIZATION.

WHY SHOULD WE WASTE SOCIAL SECURITY ON NON-PRODUCTIVE RETIREES--

--WHEN WE CAN USE IT TO HELP HARD-WORKING CEO'S RELIEVE THEIR STRESS?

The Institute For American Values

STEP THREE: IDEOLOGICALLY SYMPATHETIC TALKING HEADS PARROT THIS RATIONALIZATION AT EVERY OPPORTUNITY...

OUR NATION'S CEO'S ARE UNDER TREMENDOUS PRESSURE! IF WE DON'T PASS THE HOOKERS AND WHISKEY ACT, THE CONSEQUENCES FOR OUR ECONOMY COULD BE DEVASTATING!

...WHILE TALK RADIO HOSTS GIVE IT A POPULIST SPIN.

THIS IS AMERICA! ANY OF YOU CAN MAKE IT TO THE TOP IF YOU WORK HARD ENOUGH!

AND WHEN YOU DO, DO YOU WANT TO LET THE LIBERALS DENY YOU THE FINER THINGS IN LIFE?

NO WAY, RUSH!

STEP FOUR: THE ARGUMENT IS REPEATED SO FREQUENTLY, PEOPLE BEGIN TO ACT AS IF IT ACTUALLY MAKES SENSE.

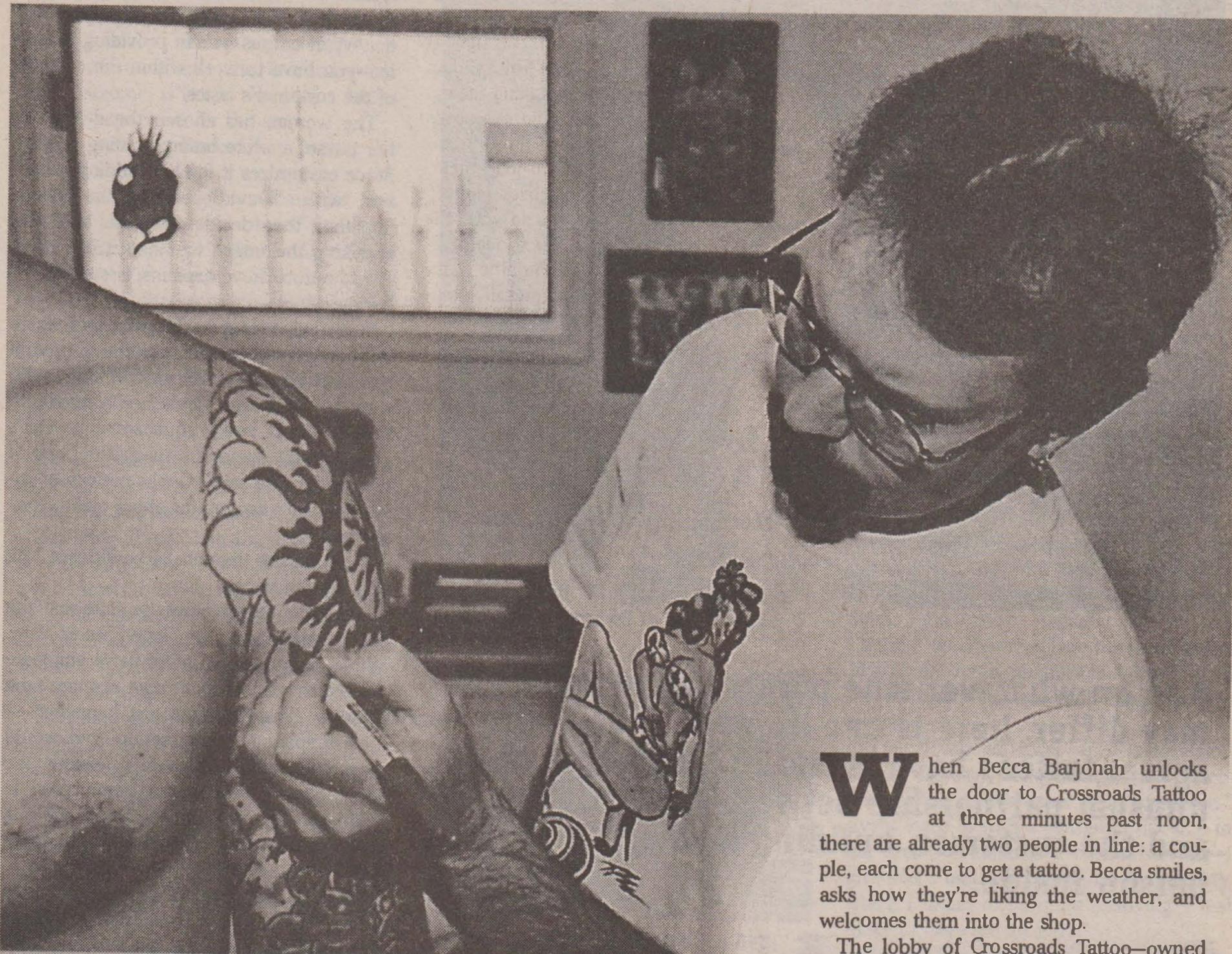
PERHAPS THE SERVICES PROVIDED UNDER THE HOOKERS AND WHISKEY ACT SHOULD AT LEAST BE REGULATED IN SOME WAY.

WHAT ARE YOU-- SOME KIND OF BIG-GOVERNMENT SOCIALIST?

I SAY GIVE 'EM ALL THE HOOKERS AND WHISKEY THEY WANT!

NEXT WEEK: BIPARTISAN CONSENSUS IS ACHIEVED!

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Steve Barjonah of Crossroads Tattoo on the job

TATTOOS R US

Used to be only sailors and bikers had them. Now everyone from grandmas to cops is getting in the act. But tattoos are still cool. They're so cool around here, in fact, that tattoo studios nearly outnumber fast-food restaurants. Introducing members of the local tattooing community: blackhearts, greenhorns... some who dare call tattoos fine art and even a map of the human soul.

When Becca Barjonah unlocks the door to Crossroads Tattoo at three minutes past noon, there are already two people in line: a couple, each come to get a tattoo. Becca smiles, asks how they're liking the weather, and welcomes them into the shop.

The lobby of Crossroads Tattoo—owned and operated by Becca and her husband Steve—is an odd hybrid of Ricky Ricardo's Club Babalu and my dentist's office: groovy curves to the counters and couches but clean and bright-lit like *2001: A Space Odyssey*. The building, located in Coralville, was custom-built for the Barjonahs—the carpet smells new, the couches are immaculate, countertops gleam. On the walls hangs a menu of sorts: thousands of designs, each meticulously catalogued and priced. This is not your grandfather's tattoo parlor.

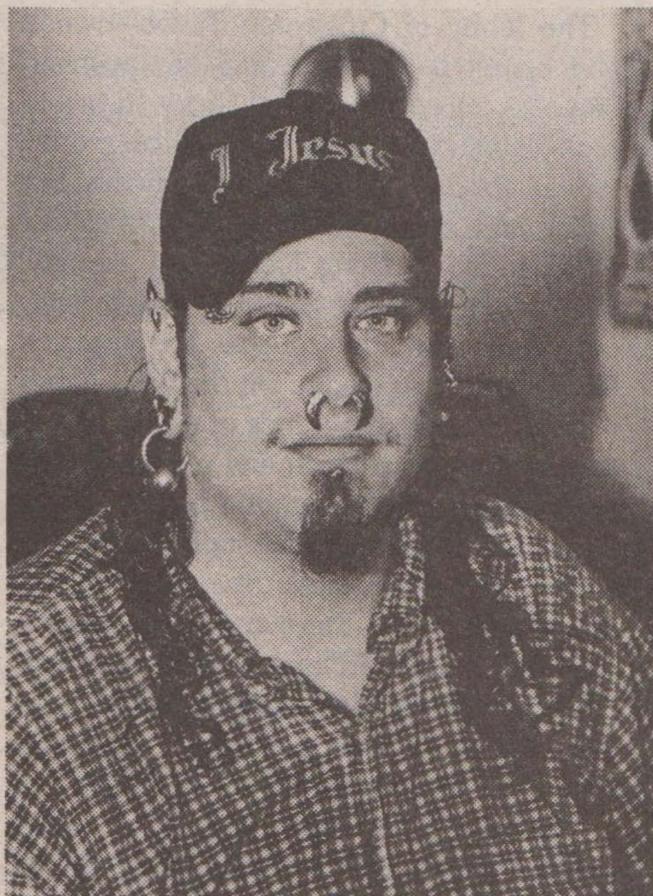
Becca is the entire office staff, making this a truly family business. Standing side by side in their lobby, Steve and Becca make a very hip update of Grant Wood's *American Gothic*, good salt-of-the-earth-type folks who just happen to have matching honeymoon tattoos on their feet.

"Tattooing is not really fine art, it's commercial art," Steve explains. "Fine art is heart-and-soul straight from the artist." On a

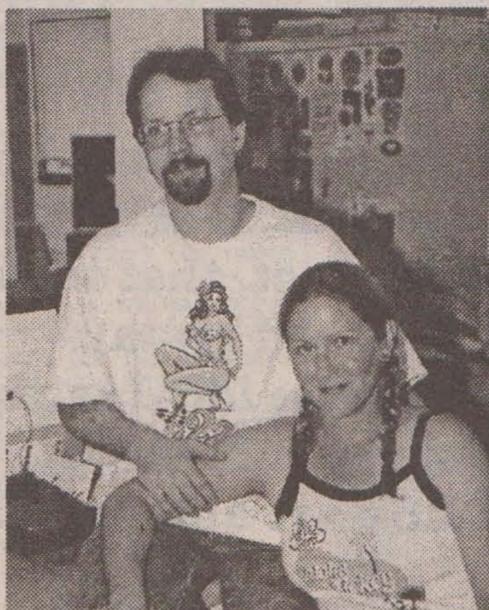


Kris Evans of Endorphinden Tattoo

And on whatever fine points tattoo artists may differ, here is one on which they all agree: tattoos have meaning. The art is an unusual partnership between the artist and the customer, building a map of the person inside.



Endorphinden Tattoo apprentice the Rev. Matthew T. Cooper



A hip *American Gothic* couple: Steve and Becca Barjonah

spotless steel tray, Steve is laying out his instruments. He unwraps a new needle and locks it into the machine. Everything in the room, including Steve, is wrapped in plastic. "With tattoos, you're providing a service—you have to work within the confines of the customer's tastes."

The woman has chosen the design for her tattoo: a white bunny holding a heart. Steve customizes it for her, adding a banner with "David" across the heart. Together, they decide on colors and size, tweaking the image to make it just right. Every tattoo, Steve explains, is customized for the client.

Steve wipes down the woman's ankle with surgical soap. He rubs the area with goo and presses a transfer of the tattoo onto her skin. He hands her a mirror to check how it looks, squeezes a jeweler's glass into his eye and inspects the point of his needle. She says it looks perfect, exactly what she's wanted for about eight years. He smiles.

"I appreciate the vote of confidence," he says, totally sincere.

Steve Barjonah comes by tattooing the old-fashioned way: the United States Navy. While stationed in California, a shipmate noticed that Steve spent a lot of spare time drawing. This shipmate just happened to have a spare tattooing set-up—and would Steve be interested? After leaving the Navy, Steve worked as a tattoo artist in southern California; but the So-Cal attitude didn't fit him; he relocated to the Midwest with his wife Becca.

There is the sound of an electric bee as he dips the needle of his tattooing machine into a thimble of black ink and begins to outline the rabbit. The woman winces slightly, just a line between her eyebrows and nothing more; after three tours of childbirth, she says, this isn't too bad.

"Tattoos are a luxury," Steve says. "You don't have to get a tattoo. You have to pay bills; you have to buy food. People use their extra money for this." Every few strokes with the gun, Barjonah wipes the extra ink away from the tattoo. "When you go to a nice restaurant and splurge, you expect to be pampered. Same with tattoos."

Barjonah is bent in total concentration over the woman's ankle, buzzing and wiping, buzzing and wiping. He pauses only to dip the needle in an ultrasonic bath to rid it of excess pigment before adding or blending a new color. He works quickly, conscious of time. Time, in the world of tattoos, is literally money—clients are charged for how long it takes the artist to complete the design. In less than half an hour, the bunny has gone from the menu on the wall,

to a stenciled outline, to a six-color tattoo on a woman's leg.

Before he places a bandage on her leg, Barjonah snaps a picture of the new design for his portfolio. The woman's companion leans over to admire the finished work. This, I assume, is David. He smiles, kisses her and pays Steve for the work.

After watching Barjonah in action, I'm not sure I agree with his assessment of tattooing as commercial art. Consider that some of the greatest works of fine art—from Jonathan Singer Sargent's portraits to Michelangelo's ceilings to the *Mona Lisa* herself—have been commissioned pieces. If he had been born 500 years later, da Vinci might be bent over Francesco del Giocondo, drilling Mona's sly smile onto a canvas of skin.

"Oh god, there are a lot of crappy tattoos out there—idiots think they can just pick up a machine for 500 bucks and...*brrrrrt!*"

The thing about Skott Kautman, manager of Electric Head Tattoo in Iowa City, is that he tends to talk in sound effects, *bings!* and *splats!*; and when he talks about giving tattoos, he scribbles in the air with the end of his lit Winston and growls like a tenor garbage disposal.

"Good tattoo artists don't just go around marring people," he continues. "Good tattoo artists have a background in art, study art. Good tattoo artists apprentice with someone for three years." He pauses to take a drag. "Artists work in mediums. Some artists work in acrylics, some artists work in oils. This is just another medium."

Sitting in his studio, Kautman looks every bit the tattoo artist—long hair and pierced lower lip, his wardrobe as black as Johnny Cash's. The sleeves of his shirt are rolled up to reveal hands and arms tattooed from knuckle to shoulder.

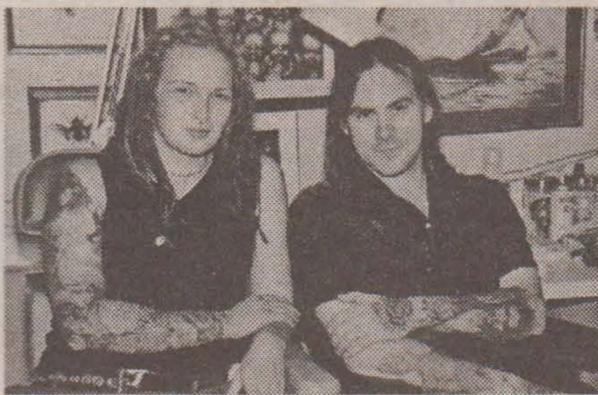
"Tattooing is an art form," he says, his voice losing the cartoon inflection. "A really difficult one."

The modern tattoo machine was inadvertently invented when Thomas Edison patented an engraving tool for hard surfaces in 1897. Basically, it consists of an oscillating motor and cam that vibrate a needle forward and back at 50 to 3,000 cycles a minute. The needle pierces the skin at about one-16th of an inch, where it injects dye into the lower layers of dermis. Too shallow and the dye won't take—it just leaks out. Too deep and you inject the dye into the fatty tissue below the skin, where it spreads to become the inarticulate mud you see on the forearms of VFW types.

This is what Kautman means when he says that tattooing is difficult—the canvas is

alive. Imagine Monet trying to work on a painting that twitched and moved every time he touched it with his brush. Imagine a canvas that the artist must stretch with the fingers of one hand while the other hand maintains a light, perfectly even touch with a brush humming at 3,000 cycles per. Too light and the paint won't stick, too hard and

"They're a picture book that only I know how to read," Electric Head tattoo apprentice Beth Emmerich explains as she shows me her right arm. "Lots of people don't think before they do them. They don't visualize it as an explanation of the self"



Electric Head tattoo apprentice Beth Emmerich and manager Skott Kautman

the brush tears the canvas, causing it to bleed—the paint will blot and never come out.

"There is little room for mistakes," Kautman tells me, chuckling at his own understatement. "Other artists can paint over or erase, but not in skin. You have to know what you're doing."

After nearly five years of working in the medium, Kautman thinks he might just be getting the hang of it, but only just. "I'm the most critical motherfucker I know when it comes to my own art," he says, clapping for emphasis. "I don't ever want to think I'm the shit. Once you're the shit," and here he rolls his eyes at the ceiling and blows a raspberry, "you've got nowhere to go. That would suck."

By some estimates, Kris Evans, owner and head artist of Endorphinden Tattoo, has been tattooing in Iowa City longer than any-

one still practicing. For the past 10 years or so, Evans has been inking friends, family and herself. But she won't let you get just any tattoo.

She explains: "Some people come in and just want a fix: 'I just want a tattoo, I don't care what it is.' And I tell them I can't do it. It's got to be thought out." She gives an exasperated sigh and raises her hands to the heavens, revealing a scrolling latticework of ink running up her entire right arm. "I make it difficult for people, I think, because it is a permanent part of the body. It's much more of a spiritual thing than some people put into it."

This attitude is reflected in the atmosphere of Endorphinden. Evans greets customers personally at the door and has a consultation session with each client to talk about placement, design, color, style, even how the tattoo will affect their lives. She deals only in custom art—her portfolios are only to show what's possible; once she's done a tattoo for someone, she will never repeat the design. On the walls, paintings and sculptures by local artists like Aaron Sinift, John Coyne, Anthony Molden and Chelsea VanOrden replace the usual tattoo "flash," the roses, anchors and hearts with "Mom" that adorn the walls of most tattoo parlors.

"I just wanted local and local-related artists," she says. "They are personal collections of friends and some that I've bought." Evans leans in with a conspiratorial arch to her brow. "Sometimes I trade art for art—I give you a tattoo, you give me the painting, which I found to be quite satisfying. I feel lucky to have the art here."

Behind the counter, Evans' apprentice, the Rev. Matthew T. Cooper (an ordained minister of the Universal Life Church), nods attentively. Cooper is tall and stocky, one entire forearm covered by a huge blue tarantula, and more than a dozen piercings about his face, including a septum run through with chrome tusks. He is the guy you do not want to meet in the proverbial dark alley but is betrayed by a gentle voice and the bluest eyes this side of a Siamese cat. Though he had been a practicing "professional" tattoo artist in Seattle, Cooper signed on as Evans' student when he moved to Iowa City because he believes in her art and philosophy. He says that in Japan, a master artist takes on only one apprentice in his or her life, and that student will learn and observe for years before ever picking up a tattoo needle. When the master dies, the student takes control of the shop and only then becomes master.

"We're not quite that strict around here," Evans assures me; but she is clear that the

future of tattooing is in the cultivation of the craft. "There's always scratchers, somebody coming to town, doing it out of a motel room. You're always going to find that. But I don't think it's right to crank out new apprentices. You need to take time to learn."

She goes on to say that the origins of tattooing predate even the Japanese, with Maori and Samoan tribes tattooing by tapping cuttlefish bone or bamboo along the skin. She mentions the mummified body of a woman found in Mongolia, estimated to be 7,000 years old, whose skin was covered in tattoos of animals and symbols.

"How are we to say what that signified for her—social class, beauty? Were the ink and needle technique also medicine? I don't know." Evans may not know, but she understands her responsibility to the customer and the art and to what has come before.

"That's what makes Iowa City the perfect place for artistic tattooing, because the people here really appreciate it."

Stingray never said being a rock star was easy.

"There's not really more pressure when you tattoo a rock star; it's just a time issue,"

he explains. "Most of them don't have time; they have to get on the road, so you don't have time to be nervous or fuck around." Stingray lays his glitterati portfolio on the counter at Nemesis Studios in Iowa City and flips through page after page of publicity stills and album covers autographed by the people he's tattooed: mem-

The subject of his leaving Electric Head less than a year ago is a sensitive one that both Stingray and the folks at Electric Head are hesitant to discuss. In terms of rock-star breakups, on a scale of one to Van Halen, it ranks about an eight—Nemesis was not named by accident.

bers of Ozzy Osbourne's band, Quiet Riot, Motley Crue, Fishbone, Firehouse, MU-330, The Lords of Acid, The Blue Meanies, Modern English and on and on and on. "Of course, you have to do it after the show at about four in the morning, which requires staying sober." He winces as he closes the cover of the portfolio.

When you walk into Nemesis Studios, the first thing that hits you is how compact it is—a single room, maybe 20-by-20, houses Stingray's business office, art studio, piercing lounge, tattoo parlor and personal museum. Shelves overflow with his trophies (45 national titles in seven states since 1994) and action figures (everything from Duke Nukem! to Barbie). A glass case preserves three tattooed grapefruits—the first endeavors of some of his past students. A statue of a huge manta ray swims frozen in the air.

Elvis plays on the stereo. Stingray looks a little like a rough-neck Elvis. His choppy mohawk is more pompadour than punk, with a Presley-esque curl dipping down in front. Stingray paces back and forth in front of his windows, sitting for a few seconds only to pop up again and circle the other way. He smokes angrily, chewing the ends of his menthols and puffing in angry bursts.

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After a few minutes, there is a hazy cloud of nicotine hovering around the room.

Though he'd always been into art, Stingray never thought of tattooing until his cousin died in 1986 and willed Stingray her tattooing equipment. He started working in Joliet and soon moved to Jimmy Delgado's studio in Chicago. Then there was a woman.

"I followed a girl I used to date to Iowa City," he explains. When he landed in the Hawkeye State in 1996, he founded Electric Head Tattoo with friend Robert Lee. "It's kind of a love/hate relationship with this town," he says. "I've met a lot of great people here; this place will always be a part of my life, but there is nothing to do but go to bars. There's so much in this world that I want to see that's not here."

But, he adds, Iowa City is also a liberal town with a large selection of people from all over the world—that environment makes for a lucrative tattoo market. "It is a town that changes constantly, as far as the people in it," he says. "So every year there are x-amount of people that come in here without tattoos that, for the first time in their life can get them because they're the right age. That's what makes Iowa City a place that can keep us all alive, that there is always fresh canvas."

Stingray and the girl didn't last, but Electric Head flourished. In his years there, Stingray worked with virtually every tattoo artist in town and apprenticed many of them, including Skott Kautman and Beth Emmerich. Then, sometime last year, Stingray sold his half of the shop and, sometime after that, left altogether.

Elvis wraps "Kentucky Rain" and slides into "Suspicious Minds." The subject of his leaving Electric Head less than a year ago is a sensitive one that both Stingray and the folks at Electric Head are hesitant to discuss. In terms of rock-star breakups, on a scale of one to Van Halen, it ranks about an eight—Nemesis was not named by accident.

"Having my own place gives me peace of mind. I make 100 percent of my decisions on what I do and don't do," Stingray explains, clearly choosing his words carefully. "I try to give 110 percent all the time, and not everyone does."

The interesting thing about the word nemesis is its double meaning. The first comes from the Greek goddess of retributive justice and vengeance; there may have been a little nose-thumbing at the old partners when hanging out the new shingle. But another definition of the word is "unbeatable foe," an entity that you will never defeat, be always hounded by, eventually succumb to—and this meaning may be



Elder statesman of Iowa City tattooing, Stingray, in his Nemesis Studios

more apt than even Stingray is conscious of. Staring out the window inhaling his last cigarette before he unlocks the door to start his day, Stingray seems a man hounded by demons. All the awards, all the rock stars, the thousands of custom tattoos over 15 years—you sense none of it is quite enough. Something is pushing him to do more, better, always—and never being satisfied can make a person hard to work with.

"I know I can be an asshole, but I am because it's important," he explains. "I want to give back to the trade, the art. I just want to do what I want to do." He opens the door and welcomes the first appointment of the day.

"They're a picture book that only I know how to read," Electric Head tattoo apprentice Beth Emmerich explains as she shows me her right arm. It is covered from wrist to shoulder with an intricate collage of images. "Lots of people don't think before they do them. They don't visualize it as an explanation of the self. They want to be rebellious or they think it's cute. Tattoos are not cute."

Unfortunately, Emmerich is button-cute: shy and quiet and very blousy when talking about staying in Iowa City because she fell in love with someone. She sits in her chair at Electric Head, twisting one of her pink dreadlocks. It seems impossible for the lobes of her ears to support their thick steel rings. At one point, Electric Head's receptionist, Lurch, wanders in complaining of a migraine. She tells him to sit for a while, that she'll make him a peanut butter-and-jelly sandwich. Emmerich speaks softly and smiles

often, showing an incongruous mouthful of braces. She doesn't say "fuck" once.

After coming to Iowa City to attend Kirkwood Community College, Emmerich found college wasn't going to be her thing. By the middle of first semester she had dropped all but her painting class. "Then one day when I was here getting a tattoo from Stingray, I asked if he had an opening for an apprentice, and he said no, and I showed him my portfolio of drawings, and he said OK." She left Kirkwood for Electric Head and never looked back.

"My dad tells people I work in retail," she says. "He still hasn't quite gotten used to what I do—but he's trying."

And your mother?

Emmerich smiles. "I tattooed my mom; the most nervous I've ever been." She shows me a tattered book of children's verse. "She used to read this to me when I was going to sleep." Emmerich opens to a picture of a fairy kissing a sleeping child. "I did that one—just the fairy, not the little girl."

Sailors around the turn of the century used to get a rooster tattooed on one foot and a pig on the other because they believed it would keep them from drowning. An anchor on the arm symbolized having sailed across the Atlantic Ocean. Emmerich explains that the barbed-wire tattoo popularized by Pamela Anderson originated as a convict tattoo, the barbed wire symbolic of their very real confinement.

Symbolism is important to Emmerich. She explains that Georgia O'Keeffe and Frida Kahlo are huge influences. She refers to

skin over and over as "the palette." And she just doesn't understand what some people are thinking.

"One guy had me do a half-peeled banana that was a penis inside with stars and things shooting out of it. What's that about?" She shakes her head. "On the other hand, who am I to judge? I tattooed a third eye on a good friend of mine—right on his forehead. Most people would find that really strange; but since I knew him, his spirituality, it makes total sense.

"Women tend to be flakier about their tattoos. Men grasp the idea of symbolism better." She pauses, then seems afraid she's given the wrong impression. "Men aren't very creative, mind you—a shamrock if you're Irish, their initials, whatever. A woman wants a tattoo because it's important to her, not just because it's cute." The cringe is subtle, but she can't help it. "Then you know it's chocked full of meaning.

"I just think it's crazy that people allow me to have this impact on their lives. I never want to lose this fascination."

And on whatever fine points tattoo artists may differ, here is one on which they all agree: tattoos have meaning. The art is an unusual partnership between the artist and the customer, building a map of the person inside.

"The biggest misconception that I find is that you'll regret it." Emmerich shakes her head. "But if you feel something so much inside that you want it on the outside, then you won't regret it. You can't."

Across town, Evans concurs. "Of course, I want them all to be beautiful, but every tattoo is important. You remember where you were and who did it and why you wanted it."

"It's a diary of my life that I will never lose," Stingray says. "I will never forget what it means. No one will ever take it from me; no one can have half of it. It is who I am. I have no regrets about that." Stingray draws on his cigarette. "To me, it sorts out the riffraff: those shallow-minded people."

And tattoos are no longer the oddity they were even a few years ago. "Grandmas have tattoos. Sorority girls have tattoos," Kautzman says. "It is accepted in the mainstream, which is cool because it gets it that much closer to being seen as a legitimate art form."

"You would be surprised at the people walking around town with tattoos under their three-piece suits," confirms Steve Barjonah. "I've tattooed lawyers, police, a Superior Court judge, doctors, you name it. Tattoos are the great equalizer."

"Of course," he concludes, "if it's tattooing, it's all good to me." *

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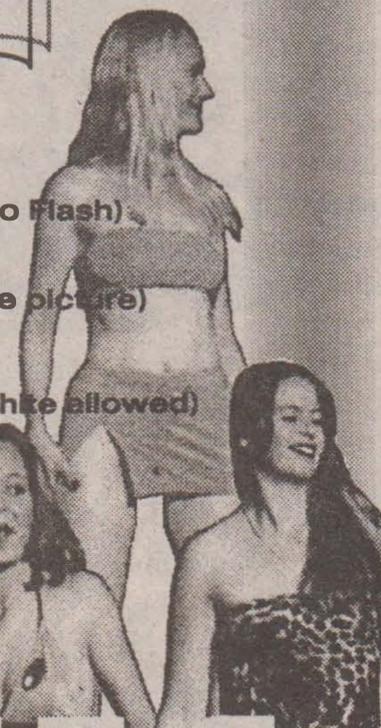
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BOOKS



Rob Cline

Thisbe Nissen finds solace in Iowa City following an arduous book tour and mixed reviews



An Iowa City state of mind

"I really can't stand New York at all," author Thisbe Nissen said during an interview at Iowa City's Java House. "I sort of fled as soon as I could. I can't hack New York at all." Nissen grew up in the Big Apple but left as soon as she could to attend college in Ohio.

This all may seem odd given that Nissen's new book, and first novel, is titled *The Good People of New York*. Although the story does take place in and around New York City, this is not a book in which the city itself is a key character. The novel is fundamentally about relationships and could, with some minor setting changes, take place almost anywhere.

The core relationship in the book is that of Roz Rosenweig and her daughter Miranda. We meet Roz in the opening chapter as she meets Edwin Anderson, the man she will eventually marry and divorce. Miranda, their only child, grows up to be like her mother—forthright, brave, brazen, sarcastic and yet basically insecure and unsure of who she is and who she wants to be. By the book's end, as Miranda has just begun college, we have followed both women through a number of possible selves, none of which seem quite final as the story closes.

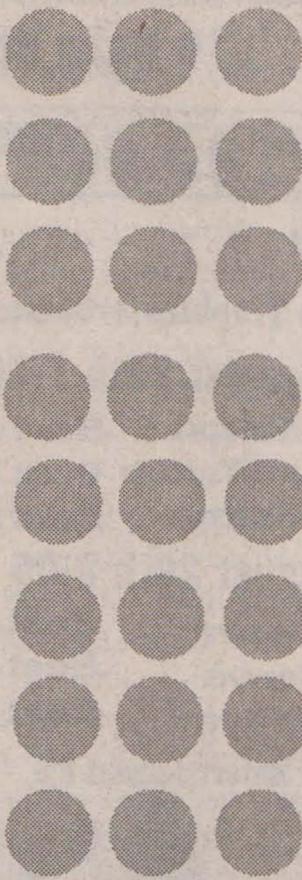
Nissen created a structure for her book in which chapters that focus on Roz are narrated in the past tense, while those that focus on Miranda are delivered in the present tense, a device she used because she felt the present tense added more immediacy to young Miranda's story, while the past tense provided a more reflective tone for Roz's chapters. The points of interaction between the two characters, whose relationship runs the gamut from overpowering love to distracted coexistence and back, form the heart of the story as both women try to establish an identity for themselves and define their roles to each other. The structure is muddled a bit by an early chapter told largely through letters to and from summer camp and a late chapter that focuses on Darrin, Miranda's best friend, which is told in the past tense.

Regardless of tense or perspective, however, each chapter, even the incongruous "Darrin chapter"—"That chapter was my fear...A chapter like that makes it feel messy to me in some ways. I don't know what it's doing there really," Nissen admitted—is written in the same engaging voice that is the driving force behind the short stories in her award-winning collection, *Out of the Girls' Room and into the Night*. In fact, *The Good People of New York* started as two unrelated short stories that appeared in the University of Iowa Press edition of her collection, but not in the Anchor paperback.

The stories, "The Rather Unlikely Courtship of Edwin Anderson and Roz Rosenweig" and "Think About If You Want," didn't even share any characters when originally conceived. But Nissen discovered that Sheila, the original protagonist of "Think About If You Want," might, in fact, be Roz 15 years after her "rather unlikely courtship." She set about bridging the two stories in what she thought of as a "novel in stories," a structure ultimately abandoned, though the novel still feels fairly episodic, covering as it does such a lengthy period of time.

Nissen is now at work on her next novel, *Osprey Island*, a project she began prior to writing *The Good People of New York*. Though her agent was quite excited about *Osprey Island* and largely indifferent to her story about Roz and Miranda, "For whatever reason, [*The Good People of New York*] was what I needed to be working on. In some ways, I just wanted to get it out so I could get into the next story."

An arduous book tour and mixed reviews have slowed her process on the new novel, however. With her head cocked so



THE
GOOD
PEOPLE
OF
NEW YORK

THISBE NISSEN

that it rested against the coffeehouse wall, Nissen recounted various book-tour horror stories and spoke plaintively of her struggle to deal with less than glowing reviews.

"It's been a lot harder than I thought it was going to be. I haven't been dealing with it that gracefully.... I'm itchy to get back to writing. I have to start learning to say 'no' and I have to know what I want my life to be and don't want my life to be. I want to be a writer; I don't want to be a reader or a tourer or an interviewee."

Some extended time back in Iowa City may help her find her voice again. The 1997 graduate of the University of Iowa Writers' Workshop has been "smitten" with Iowa City since her first visit.

"The pace here is more my pace," she said. "It never felt like I had enough reflective space in my head to write in New York.... When I first set foot in Iowa City, I felt a sense of ease." *

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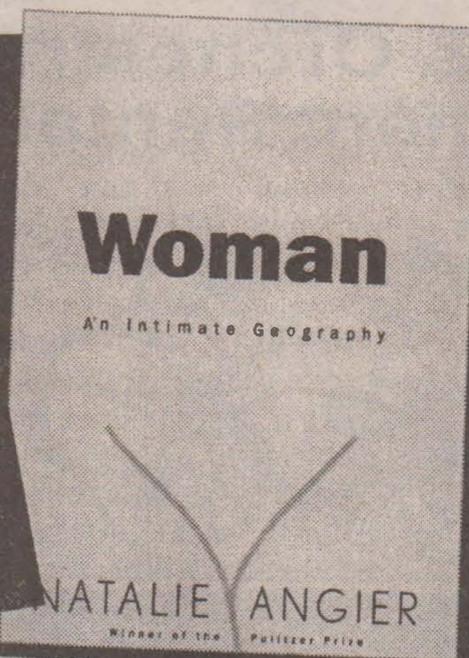
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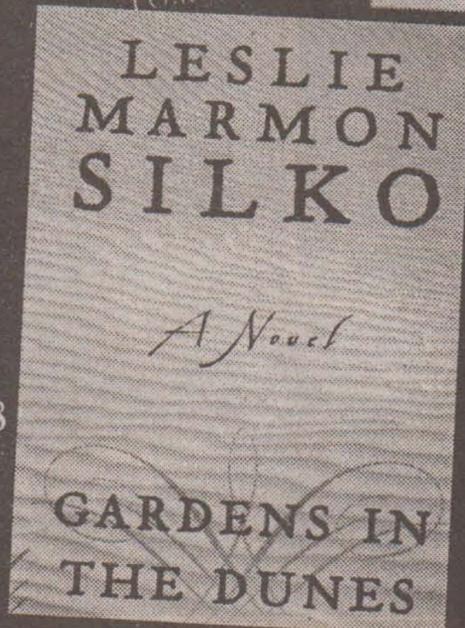
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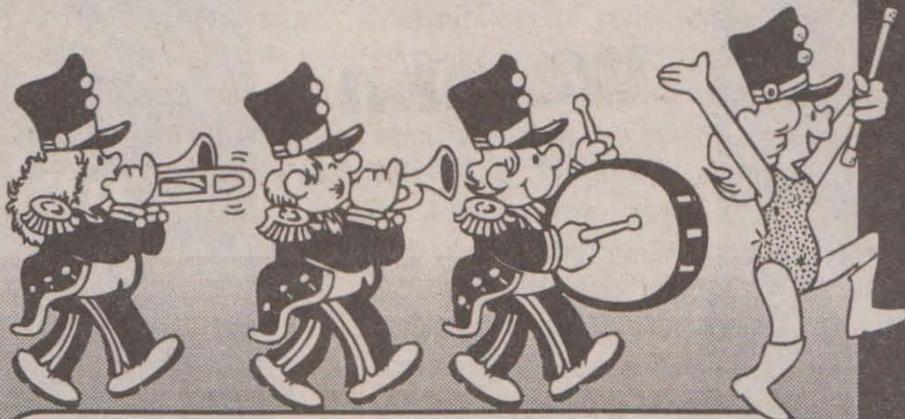
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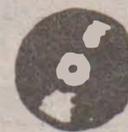
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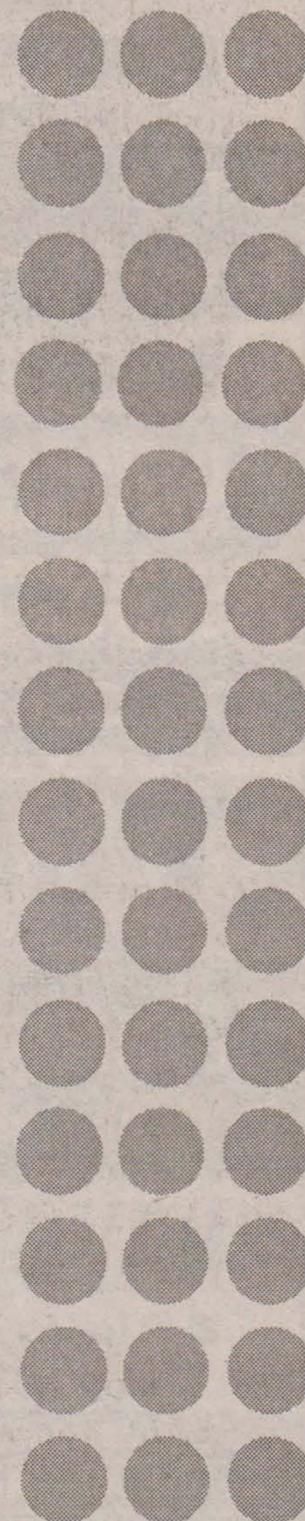


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Steve Horowitz


Neko Case & Her Boyfriends

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When: Tuesday, Aug. 21



She's a pistol

Neko Case brings her no-apologies brand of classic country back to town

Redheaded Neko Case sings passionately with a powerful twang. Her voice is reminiscent of those classic-country women crooners of another era: Loretta Lynn, Lynn Anderson and Tammy Wynette. And like her forbears, Case can be tough and vulnerable at the same time.

Case was born in Virginia; so one might think her sound comes naturally from her rural Southern roots. Think again.

"Hell, I come from Alexandria. That's really just a part of Washington, D.C.," Case snarled over the telephone from her Chicago apartment. "I think all that stuff about regional routes and geographic location is just a pile of shit music critics and record companies put out to sell product."

Case ended up being as difficult to interview as she was to reach. Her record label, Bloodshot, arranged to have me call her for an early-afternoon interview, giving me both her home and cell-phone numbers. She answered neither (although her cell-phone voice-mail greeting revealed her rather strange sense of humor: "Hi, this is Neko and I can't talk right now because I'm in Mexico getting all my blood replaced with children's blood and kid's blood, which is baby goat's blood, baa baa").

When I finally reached Case after 5pm, she seemed reluctant to talk. Obviously, she doesn't enjoy the publicity mill—at least not on that day.

The songs on Case's latest release, *Furnace Room Lullaby*, concern the more basic aspects of life: love, sex, death. Case said she'll never run out of ideas for songs. "I choose to write about pretty simple things. Sometimes I write fairy tales," she said, then declined to elaborate on how she writes songs. Her modesty—or whatever it was that was holding her back—doesn't change the fact that Case consistently pens literate lyrics that can capture a mood or a place in the heart with just a few



words, including a song about songwriting itself, "Guided by Wire," that begins, "The voices that did comfort me/were furthest from my sanity/and come from places I had never seen/Even in my darkest recollection/there was someone singing my life back to me." Those voices are the personae of Case's songs, which come from places inside her, places of which she's not even aware—that is, until she's in the act of writing the songs.

"Hell, I come from Alexandria. That's really just a part of Washington, D.C."

Case is also involved with the Canadian indie band The New Pornographers. She provided vocals for several songs on the band's recent CD, *Mass Romantic*, and even recently wrapped up a tour with the band. Insisting that her involvement with the band is an ongoing thing, she said, "I have to sing louder to get heard singing in a rock band, but I also get to lay back since I'm not in charge."

It's hard to mistake Case, along with "Her Boyfriends," for anything other than a country outfit, but they can rock with the best of them. Hell, they sometimes just get all-out gut-bucket nasty. Neither are they afraid to play quiet and let Case's vocals take center-stage. Of course, it would be difficult to stop the fiery and feisty Case from doing or saying what she wants. Last time she played Iowa City, she complained about the sound coming out of the monitors almost

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as much as she sang. Still, her singing made it a memorable night.

"Hey, when you are on the road, things happen and you have to wing it," Case said. "I wasn't mad at anyone, but the sound on stage sucked. The guy at the bar [Gabe's] said the monitors were going to be replaced soon. We were just there at the wrong time." A quick call to Gabe's revealed that no one knew if the monitors have been replaced; Case will be sure to let them know.

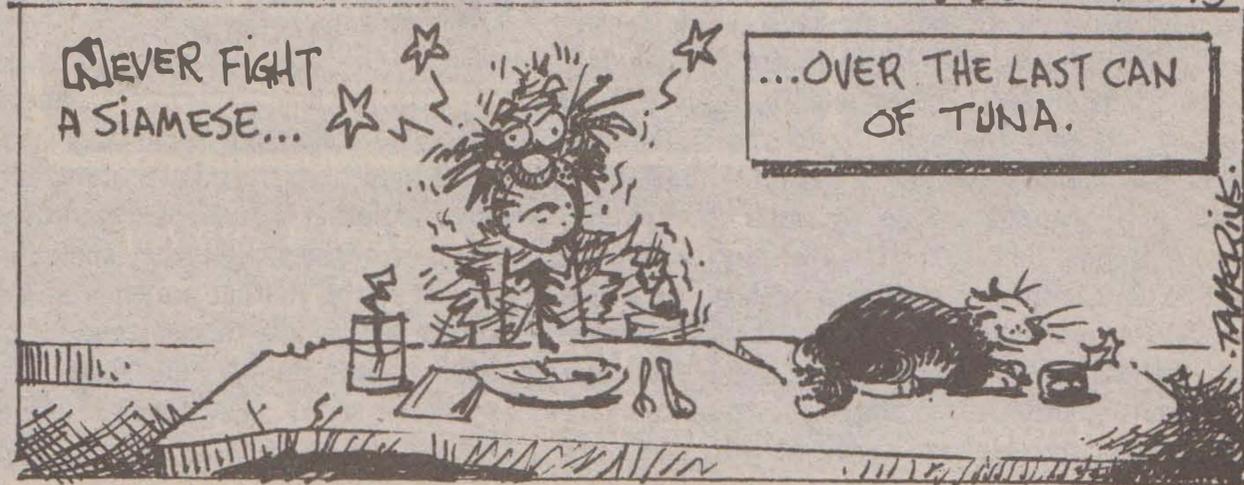
This spring, Case was surprised during the South-by-Southwest music conference when keynote speaker Ray Davies of the Kinks joined her onstage during a set with the New Pornographers. They chose to do "Starstruck" from the Kinks' *Arthur* album. "It was very, very weird but a great honor," Case remembered. "I mean, Ray Davies... What a thrill. We had to teach him the words to his own song because he forgot them, which is understandable as it was written as part of a soundtrack and the Kinks never toured playing the music from that record." Case said that one of

the pleasures of touring is never knowing who will show up at a gig.

Case will be bringing copies of her latest disc, *New Canadian Amp*, which was recorded in her Chicago kitchen and bedroom for her own label, Lady Pilot. The CD will only be available at her shows. "I got a nice place, an old greystone building with wood floors and a tile ceiling," she said. "It's comfortable and has good acoustics." She added that the material on the new CD continues in the same vein as *Furnace Room Lullaby*. That should hold fans over until spring when Bloodshot releases a full-length release, part of which Case recorded with members of Giant Sand and Calexico at Wavelab Studio in Tucson, Ariz. *

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by Don Tamaricus



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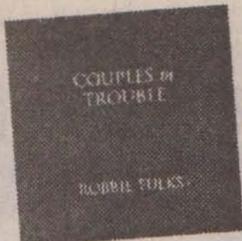
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Robbie Fulks
13 Hillbilly Giants
Couples in Trouble

Boondoggle

The humorous and talented country idjit, wild man and Ivy League graduate Robbie Fulks has released his latest two CDs exclusively over the Internet on his own label, Boondoggle. On *13 Hillbilly Giants*, produced by Steve Albini (Nirvana, PJ Harvey), Fulks pays tribute to some past masters of country craziness. He skips over more predictable candidates like George Jones and Merle Haggard in favor of some truly weird and obscure performers who wrote and sang from the bottom of their warped hearts. While the songwriters and musicians Fulks covers are purposely obscure, there are a few unknown gems by the more famous, like Dolly Parton's "Jeannie's Afraid of the Dark," about a child's death and the eternal flame above her grave, and Bill Anderson's ode to liquor, "Cocktails."

Fulks sings and plays acoustic guitar with his usual intensity—slightly manic (OK, maybe more than slightly, but not full-bore). Iowa City fiddler and guitarist Al Murphy, a former bandmate of Robbie in Special Consensus, does a kick-ass job of accompaniment. The best cuts are the truly deranged, like Bill Carlisle's "Knot Hole"—about a brother who gleefully enjoys watching his sister and her boyfriend make whoopee through a hole in the fence—and the eccentrically straight-edged—like Bobe Bathrop's "Family Man"—which come off as pure expressions of sincerity.

Less successful is the Fulks-produced *Couples in Trouble*, a dozen self-penned tunes of varying quality. On the best cuts, Fulks uses his playful wit in a serious way to shed light on the hypocrisy of our public and private lives, like on "Real Money," a song about political corruption. However, Fulks' verbal skills are less original on the Elvis Costello-like "Brenda's New Stepfather," and he comes perilously close to James Taylor territory on "I've Got to Tell Myself the Truth." Still, there's plenty to enjoy here as Fulks exuberantly

conveys the many sides of difficult relationships.

Couples in Trouble will soon be available through Bloodshot Records as well, while *13 Hillbilly Giants* can be downloaded, as well as ordered, from his Web site. Fulks will appear at Gabe's on Friday, Aug. 31 *

Steve Horowitz



Roy Harper
Hats Off

The Right Stuff

British singer-songwriter Roy Harper might be

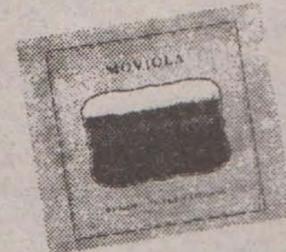
the most famous musician that you've never heard of. Led Zeppelin recorded a song dedicated to him, appropriately titled "Hats Off to Roy Harper," on *Led Zeppelin III*. Harper provided vocals on Pink Floyd's "Have a Cigar" from the *Wish You Were Here* album. Keith Moon of The Who, Ronnie Lane of The Faces and Small Faces, Bill Bruford of Yes and King Crimson, Ian Anderson of Jethro Tull, Paul and Linda McCartney of Wings, Kate Bush and members of the aforementioned Led Zep and Pink Floyd have all played on many of Harper's solo discs during the past 30 years.

Harper's latest release collects many of his finest songs from the last three decades, including his collaborations with the above-mentioned musicians. The disc is not a "best-of," Harper says in the liner notes, as much as a sampler of some of his favorite tunes. Missing are the anti-imperialist "I Hate the White Man," the plaintive "When an Old Cricketer Leaves the Crease" and other underground classics from the '70s. What's here seems a clear attempt to promote Harper through his associations with more popularly successful artists. That's not a bad thing; and like his spirited British kin who join him on this disc, he believes music can make magic.

The selections on this disc illustrate the wide range of styles in which Harper has written and performed. There is the transcendent acoustic folk of "Same Old Rock" (which includes a great guitar solo by Jimmy Page), the hard blues-rock of "The Game," the sweet psychedelic pop of "One of Those Days in England (Part 1)," and much more, all held together by Harper's peculiar vision of modern life and off-the-wall lyrics (i.e. "A million tons of printed

shit/comes to my door each day/Up to my dick around my neck"). Make no mistake about it, Harper is an oddball—but an endearing and intellectual one. This collection shows why so many other musicians admire him. *

Steve Horowitz



Moviola
Rumors of the Faithful
Spirit of Orr

Mining some of the same

wintery terrain as Scud Mountain Boys/Pernice Brothers, this Columbus, Ohio, four-piece nevertheless breathes far easier (and deeper) than their East Coast brethren. Maybe it's the inspiration of open skies on those clear, the-sun-is-shining-but-it's-cold-as-hell Midwestern winter days that lends such a distinctly regional flavor to this release.

Whether brought about by the land-locked environs from which the band hails, or their proximity to Appalachia, there is a certain restlessness about this album, something subtly dissatisfied, yet peculiarly clear about, the path chosen. *Rumors of the Faithful*, Moviola's fifth long-player, speaks with the quiet sincerity and deliberate grace of a band that could only have sprung from an area not known for its musical output.

The clarity of the vocals belies a lyrical vagueness; songs speak suggestively of emotional stagnation ("This Conversation") and friends who have wandered off to "God Only Knows"-where places ("Misdirected Brother").

Emotionally, *Rumors of the Faithful* is not far from the wistful melancholia of that Beach Boys tune, crossed occasionally with the backing vocals of Dinosaur Jr. ("Exit Pearl (Paddington Platform 7)") or the pop efforts of Matthew Sweet ("Covers and Pages").

All four members of Moviola—Scotty Tabachnick, Jake Housh, Ted Hattemer and Jerry Dannemiller—write songs (three each for a dozen total), sing lead vocals and switch-off instruments. Impressively, these change-ups never distract; the flexibility helps create a solid, unique sound that rarely wavers and ultimately defines the band. *

Joe Derderian

Kraut rock, pupe-pop and Utah hip-hop

Coming straight outta Omaha like a Ritalin-crazed hair-metal band (minus the hair and the metal), **The Faint** bring their spazztastic, fog-machine-and-light-drenched stage show to The Green Room Aug. 29. Sounding like late-period Gang of Four having group sex while the *Pretty in Pink* soundtrack plays in the background, Faint vocalist and synth-noodler **Todd Baechle** and his merry gangsters of groove play the New Wave card on their third album, *Danse Macabre* (Saddle Creek). Here, the group stacks the deck in their favor with melodic robot-pop that'll have you shakin' it like you're an extra on the "New Wave Bar Mitzvah" episode of "Square Pegs." Baechle (whose vocal tone and phrasing bear more than a passing resemblance to Four vocalist Jon King's) rattles off emotionally detached lyrics over candy-coated, postmillennial-death disco beats that are the kind of thing Kraftwerk would play when they cruised and had fun, fun, fun on the Autobahn.

In 1971, **Michael Rother** and **Klaus Dinger** split from Kraftwerk, forming **Neu!**, a German dynamic duo that released three minimalist masterpieces during their short time together and influenced everyone from Stereolab and David Bowie to Julian Cope and Sonic Youth. Recently, *Neu!, Neu! 2* and *Neu! 75* (Astralwerks) received their first reissue treatment after years of circulating widely as bootlegs.

Another group that's gotten a pasty anti-tan from lurking in the shadows of Kraut-rockers like Neu! is **The Beta Band**, a band of crusty Brits whose new album, *Hot Shots II* (Astralwerks), glides atop subtle beats, shimmering harmonies and slow, slithering sound-

scapes. Recently, on a hot August night in Chicago, the group cooled down an overheated crowd waiting for Radiohead, sprinkling the kids with hypnotic fairy dust and sharp-toothed stage banter that skewered everything from MTV to G.W. Bush. The large outdoor stage setup turned out to be a boon, rather than a bust, because the massive, bass-heavy sound system made you *feel* The Beta Band, sending pulsating waves of hip, adult-contempo drone-pop through the baking bodies strewn about Grant Park. Oh, and Radiohead? They seem to have successfully recovered from their irritatingly self-pitying post-*OK Computer* downer phase with a performance that included dancing, **Thom Yorke** making goofy faces into the onstage camera and, brace yourself, actual smiling.

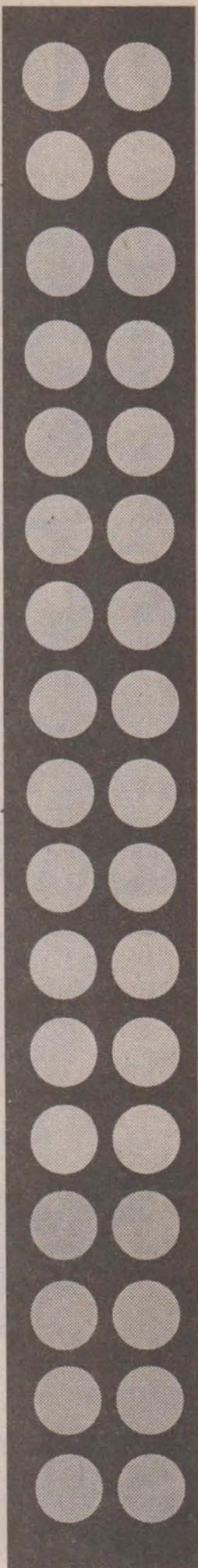
Mandy Moore seems to be smiling a lot lately, and she should be with her multi-year VJ contract on MTV, a sponsorship deal with Neutrogena and millions of dollars in the bank (that is, until we find out in a few years on "Where Are They Now?" that her parents squandered it on crack, circus midgets and clown pornography). On her third album of jailbait anthems, the youngest of all the blonde teen tramps sets herself apart with a surprisingly mature outing (she's not as campy or vampy as Britney Spears, not as annoyingly histrionic as Christina Aguilera, not as destined-for-*Penthouse* slutty as Jessica Simpson and not as inconsequential as Hoku). Like most pre-fab pop albums, there's too much filler for *Mandy Moore* (Sony) to stand up to repeated listens, but at its best, this is Grade-A, chewy-gooey Prozac pop churned out by Satan's hit factory.

If you're too cool, skeptical or jaded to buy into today's by-the-numbers pube-pop, chances are you're open-mindedly hip enough to dig **Margo Guryan**, an obscure Brill Building songwriter who only released one solo album of wispy, crispy meant-to-be singles that, despite her very American origins, recall the bubbly work of French chanteuses France Gall and Françoise Hardy. Guryan's 1968 album, *Take a Picture*, and her previously unreleased *25 Demos* (Oglia Records) have both been re-released in the United States after gathering momentum in (where else?) Japan.

On their third long-player, *The Word* (Guapo), **Numbs** demonstrate they are hip-hop's hottest group from, er, Utah? What's next? A moronic, nine-piece complaint-metal band from Iowa that dresses in goofy, "scary" clown masks and rages against the washing machine? Oh yeah, that already happened. All jokes aside, this fantastic foursome keeps the party rockin' on and on 'till the break of dawn with booty-bouncing beats and swinging samples that remind us that hip-hop was founded, quite literally, on "Good Times" (for those not up on their trivia, the hip-hop single that started it all, "Rapper's Delight," used as its instrumental foundation Chic's "Good Times"). Numbs are the real deal and, as Chuck D says about the group, "Believe the hype."

Spacewurm keeps it real. Not like NWA, but more in a reality television kind of way...without the TV. Spacewurm's fourth album, *See You Later Oscillator* (Gravity), invades our privacy and penetrates our minds by blending discomforting cell-phone conversations with trippy bleep-and-bloop music. "I don't care how you rationalize it in your fucking mind, Michael," a woman rants. "You gave me \$445. That is what you gave me, bottom line. Anything else you gave me was out of guilt. That is how you worked your life. Out of guilt and money. Money is love and love is guilt and you and money—all three are intertwined." She ends her point the way Heidegger concluded most of his treatises: "So eat me!" *

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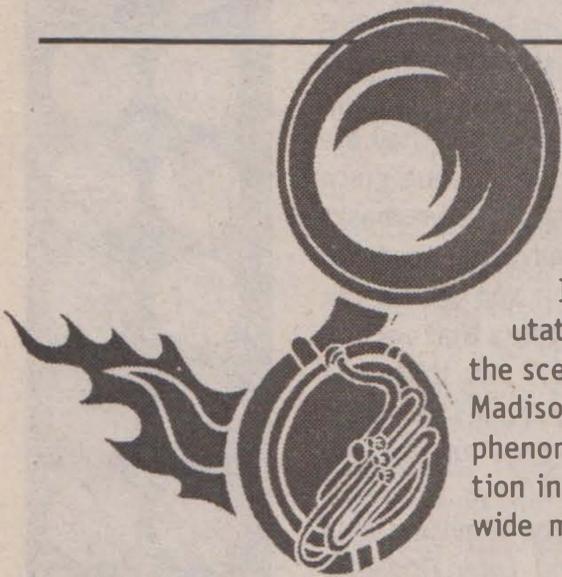
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Monotypes by Keum Won Chang

Studiolo • Through Aug. 30

The nearly monochromatic pieces that make up *A Romance with Life and Nature* explore both the energy and fragility of nature. For Korean artist Keum Won Chang, the brush stroke is the thing. Bold, yet delicate, the gestures somehow convey emotional spontaneity through highly disciplined technical skills. Educated in both Korea and the US (she received her masters and masters of fine arts degrees from the UI), Chang's work bridges the gap between two distinct cultures. She currently teaches art at Duksung Women's University, Seoul, South Korea. 415 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 341-8344.



YoungBlood Brass Band

The Green Room • Aug. 25

It's called brasshop (brass-band hip-hop); and the reputation of New Orleans' Coolbone as the reigning family of the scene has apparently been shaken by this nine-piece from Madison, Wisc., of all places. The band's press describes the phenomenon like this: "What started as a jazz-funeral tradition in New Orleans, has evolved and blossomed into a worldwide movement. From gospel to swing to bebop to soul to

funk to hip-hop to YoungBlood." One highlight of many is Nat McIntosh's simulation of beat-boxing and turntable effects through his tuba. And you thought House on the Rock and cheese curds were the height of Wisconsin cutting-edge. 509 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 354-4350.

ART Cedar Rapids Museum of Art
410 Third Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids, 366-7503

Remnants of Journeys Reconsidered, multi-media work by Cedar Rapids artist Velga Easker, Aug. 18 through Oct. 7, Iowa Gallery, opening reception, Aug. 23, 5-7pm.

Iowa Artisans Gallery

117 E. College St., Iowa City, 351-8686
Native Mysticism and Everyday Life: Paintings by Gary Bigbear, oil paintings and graphite drawings by this Sioux City artist and Omaha Tribe member, Aug. 16-Oct. 1.

Lorenz Boot Shop

132 S. Clinton St., Iowa City, 339-1053
Photographs by Sandra Louise Dyas; monoprints and monotypes by Lucy David; sculpture, photos and prints by Chris Burd, all Iowa City, through Oct. 1

Mythos

9 S. Linn St., Iowa City, 337-3760

Ethnographic art, antiquities and museum copies; specializing in African, Mayan Indian from Guatemala and Asian, ongoing.

Paul Engle Center for Neighborhood Arts

1600 Fourth Avenue SE, Cedar Rapids, 364-1580

Free workshops, Aug. 20 and 27, 5 to 7pm, the center will host Street Artreach, a program designed for middle- and high-school students; at 7pm, the center will offer Color & Shape, a one-hour workshop for children 6 to 12 led by neighborhood resident Denise Ganpat.

Red Avocado

521 East Washington St., Iowa City, 351-6088

Local Painting Exposition, through Oct 1 • *Water Dance*, paintings by Sarah Clunis, through September • *Weathered*, locally wood-

fired ceramics.

Senior Center

28 S. Linn St., Iowa City, 356-5220

The Amanas: A Photographic Journey 1959-1999, exhibition of over 50 photographs by Joan Liffing-Zug Bourret, Aug. 16-Sept. 30 • Related event: Gallery lecture by Liffing-Zug Bourret and Madeline Roemig Bendorf, first director of the Museum of Amana History, Aug. 16, 2pm.

Studiolo

415 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 341-8344

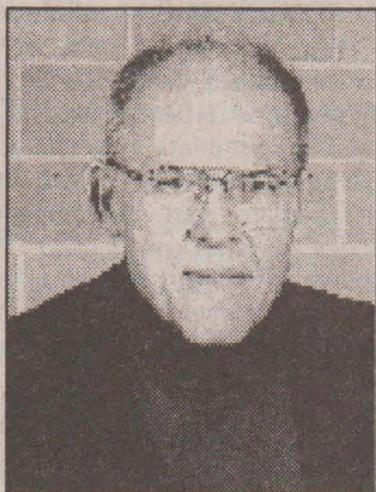
A Romance with Life and Nature, monotypes by Korean artist Keum Won Chang, through Aug. 30.

UI Hospitals and Clinics

Project Art of UIHC, Iowa City, 353-6417
UI Printmaking, thesis Prints; 1992-1995, through Sept. 10, Hospital Dentistry Gallery, fifth floor Pomerantz Family Pavilion • Ina Loewenberg, photography, through Aug. 31,

THE A LIST

Calendar listings are free, on a space-available basis. Mail PO Box 736, Iowa City, Iowa 52244 or e-mail little-village@usa.net



Jim Heynen

Prairie Lights • Aug. 30

Born on a farm in northwest Iowa, Jim Heynen attended one of Iowa's last one-room schoolhouses. Rural life figures strongly in Heynen's fiction and poetry, much of it written about or for young people. Educated first as a Renaissance scholar, he turned to writing poetry, fiction and nonfiction, and spent nearly a year translating old Lakota songs. Heynen, who now teaches at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minn., has twice been awarded National Endowment for the Arts fellowships, once in poetry and once in fiction. He will read from his new book, *The Boys' House: New and Selected Stories*, at 8pm. 15 S. Dubuque St., Iowa City, 337-2681.

Heart of America Tattoo Festival

Burlington • Aug. 24-26

Now that we've settled the fact that Iowa City is a tattoo Mecca ("Tattoos R Us," page 5, this issue), let's look east for a more bracing pilgrimage. Quad Cities tattoo artist Timmy "ink" started the Heart of America Tattoo Festival in 1999 to help recognize the work of regional tattoo artists. "Artists on either coast have enjoyed extensive coverage," he said, "while Midwestern artists have gone almost unnoticed. The festival was started to show that great art can be obtained right here in the Midwest." The three-day event includes live music, tattoo contests, a leather-and-lace fashion show, food and lots of cool merchandise.

The schedule: Friday, Aug. 24 (5-11pm), The Dead Ringer Band, 7pm • Saturday, Aug. 25 (11am-11pm), Tattoo Contest, 1pm; After Dinner Mints (band), 2pm; Tattoo Contest Awards Ceremony, 4pm; Fashion Show, 6pm; Unspoken with guests Rock Bottom (bands), 7pm • Sunday, Aug. 26 (11am-8pm), Too Far Gone (band), 2pm; Tattoo Contest, 3pm; Tattoo Contest Awards Ceremony, 7pm.

Memorial Auditorium, 200 Front St., Burlington. For more information, contact Timmy "ink" at The Heart of America Tattoo Co & Body Piercing, 752-5793.



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Patient and Visitors Activities Center • Tom Aprile, oil paintings, through Aug. 31, Boyd Tower East Lobby • Michael Harker, photography, through Sept. 3, Boyd Tower West Lobby • *Masks of China*, an historical and contemporary view of Chinese mask traditions, through Sept. 30, Main Lobby and Gallery B of the Medical Museum (take Elevator F to the eighth floor).

MUSIC

Fest Hall

Main Street, Amana

Trailer Records showcase with Dave Zollo and the Body Electric, Brother Trucker and Kelly Pardekooper and the Devil's House Band, Aug. 18, 7pm.

Gabe's

330 E. Washington St., Iowa City, 354-4788

Sam Knutson and Shame Train, CD release, Aug. 16 • DJ Alert, Aug. 17 • Rotation DJs, Aug. 18 • Tattoo Vampires of Love, with Kita, Burnout and Breakdance, Aug. 19 • Neko Case and Her Boyfriends, with Dave Olson and the One-Timers, Aug. 21, 8pm doors • Special acoustic performance by cast members of *Rent*, Joshua Kobak and Matt Caplan, plus local opener, Aug. 22 • Rugged roots rock with Iowa City's Skunk River Bandits, Dirt Cheap and Silas Marner, Aug. 23 • Kelly Pardekooper and the Devil's House Band, with The Diplomats of Solid Sound and special opening set by singer/songwriter from Austin, Texas, Kevin Deal, Aug. 24 • Rotation DJs, Aug. 25 • Asian Man recording artists from Chicago, The Honor System, with Thick recording artists The Arrivals, plus openers, Twinstar, Aug. 26 • Tack Fu presents another hip-hop spectacular with Them Bad Apples, MC Lord 360 and Organic Mind Unit, Aug. 30 • Robbie Fulks and band, no opening act, 6pm early show, Aug. 31; MU330, with guests PCU and another TBA, Aug. 31, 9:30pm late show • House of Blues presents Elektra recording artists from Chicago, Lucky Boys Confusion, plus other acts TBA, Sept. 1.

The Green Room

509 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 354-4350

Blues Jam Mondays, Latin Night Tuesdays
Corey Basset, comedy and DJs, Aug. 16 • Frontline Seal, Aug. 17 • Rebel's Advocate, Aug. 24 • YoungBlood Brass Band, with The Committee, Aug. 25 • The Faint, with DJ Espina, Aug. 29 • Bohemian Soul Tribe, with Nickel-Bag-O-Funk, Aug. 30 • Dave Zollo & The Body Electric, with Dave Olson Band, Aug. 31.

The Marketplace

511 P St., South Amana, 622-3750, all 7:30-11:30pm

Carol Montag, Aug. 17 • Jasmine, Aug. 24 • Rob Lumbard, Aug. 25 • BillyLee Janey, Aug. 31 • Dennis McMurrin, Sept. 1.

The Mill

120 E. Burlington St., Iowa City, 351-9529

Jan Smith, Aug. 16 • Sam Knutson and Shame Train, Aug. 17 • Ben Schmidt, Aug. 18 • Dave Olson, Aug. 23 • The Instigators, Aug. 24 • Jennifer Danielson, CD-release party, Aug. 25 • Greg Brown, Aug. 26 • Mayflies, Aug. 31 • Tornadoes, Sept. 1 • Stuart Davis, Sept. 2.

Northside Books

203 N. Linn St., Iowa City, 466-9330, Sunday Live!, all 2-3pm

Dustin Busch & Co., back-porch Americana, Aug. 19 • Keith Haworth, folk ballads (fiddle, guitar, mountain dulcimer, etc.), Aug. 26 • Deb Singer, classical guitar, Sept. 2.

Sal's Music Emporium

624 S. Dubuque St., Iowa City, 338-7462

Kevin Deal, Aug. 24, 6pm • Jennifer Danielson CD-release party, Sept. 1, 6pm • Mayflies CD-release party, Sept 8, 6pm.

Sanctuary

405 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 351-5692
John Rhodes Jazz Band, Aug. 18 • Tom Jessen & Andy Parrott, Aug. 25.

Red Avocado

521 East Washington St., Iowa City, 351-6088, all 6:30-9:30pm
Reality Trio, jazz, Wednesdays • Acoustic Jazz, Thursdays • Annie Savage, harpist, Fridays • Mad River Duo, clarinet and guitar, Saturdays.

FESTIVALS /SERIES

Friday Night Concert Series

Plaza Fountain Stage in front of the Sheraton City Plaza Hotel, Iowa City, 6:30-9:30pm

Aug. 17: Lazyboy and the Recliners • Aug. 24: Bohemian Soul Tribe • Aug. 31: Big Wooden Radio.

Market Music

Chauncey Swan Park, Iowa City, musicians entertain Farmers Market-goers, 5-7pm, Wednesday evenings
Aug. 22: Mike Haverkamp • Aug. 29: Guy & Megan Drollinger • Sept. 5: Joe Price.

Saturday "Just Jazz" Series

Plaza Fountain Stage in front of the Sheraton City Plaza Hotel, Iowa City, 6:30-9:30pm
Aug. 18: Abilities Awareness • Aug. 25: Theolonius Assault • Sept. 1: Blue Tunas.

THEATER

Old Creamery Theatre
39 38th Ave., Amana, 800-352-6262

Performance times: Wednesday, Friday & Saturday 8pm; Thursday & Sunday 3pm

Over the River and Through the Woods, new comedy by Joe DiPietro about a young executive and his two sets of grandparents who try to keep him from moving away, through Sept. 2.

WORDS

IC Public Library
123 Linn St., Iowa City, 356-5200

"Women's Issues, Women's Lives" book discussion group, presented by ICPL/Rape Victim Advocacy Program, Aug. 26, 2pm, Rm. B, call 335-6001 for book titles.

Prairie Lights

15 S. Dubuque St., Iowa City, 337-2681, all 8pm
David Hamilton, *Iowa Review* editor, presents a reading by writers recently published in the magazine, Aug. 29 • Jim Heynen, author of *The Boys' House: New and Selected Stories*, Aug. 30 • Etgar Keret, UI International Writing Program visiting writer, author of *The Bus Driver Who Wanted to be God*, Aug. 31.

EVENTS

Deadwood
6 S. Dubuque St., Iowa City, 351-9417

Miss Iowa City US of A Drag Pageant, Aug. 18, 9pm.

Fly Iowa 2001

Aug. 25-26, Iowa City Airport, 356-5045
Saturday, Aug. 25
EAA Young Eagle Rides, 3-7pm • Barbecue, 5-7pm • Hangar Dance with DOX Big Band, 7-10pm
Sunday, Aug. 26

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GABES 330 E. Washington Ave. Iowa City 354-4788

21 ^{Thurs}	NEKO CASE with Dave Olson	Robbie Fulks 6pm	31
30 ^{Thurs}	MC Lord 360	MU330 9:30pm	
	Lucky	Boys Confusion	1 ^{Sat}

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19	20 Nails by Diane FREE Set of Acrylic Nails with 2 prepaid files \$50 Value	21 GABE'S BEER GARDEN 25¢ TAP BEER	22 MUSIC LOFT Rent a band or orchestra instrument!	23 \$2 Guinness Stouts at The Sanctuary	24 g Hair Design Walk-ins Welcome!	25 Uptown Bill's Small Mall \$1 Ice cold 20 oz. sodas
26	27	28	29 Today Only!	30	31	
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2 Sal's ROLL THE DICE STOREWIDE PROMOTION!	3 Nails by Diane FREE Set of Acrylic Nails with 2 prepaid files \$50 Value	4 See ad on page 23 Relics Records Midnite Release of System of a Down	5 Matt's Guitar Shed 30% off retail on any guitar	6 MUSIC LOFT 10-50% off Storewide Savings All Month Long!	7 \$1.25 PBR ON TAP Every day at The Green Room	8 g Hair Design Walk-ins Welcome!
	10 75¢ Dom. Pints \$1 Dom Bottles Monday Blues Jam at The Green Room	11 GABE'S BEER GARDEN 25¢ TAP BEER	12 \$2 Rogue Dead Guy Pints at The Sanctuary	13 NEMESIS TATTOO \$25 BODY PIERCING Jewelry Included	14 Hemp Cat T-shirts 20-50% off	15

SEPTEMBER



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Kevin Deal

Sal's & Gabe's,
Aug. 24

This hailed Austin, Texas, singer-songwriter is actually from Iowa—Council Bluffs, to be exact. Deal put his musical career on the back burner for more than a decade, working as a stone contractor to put food on the table for his growing family. His third—and most recent—release, *Kiss On The Breeze*, features the kind of true-blue alt-country that's born from no nonsense and hard work, a Texas export as regular as dirty oil, dead minorities and lousy presidents. Deal opens for Kelly Pardekooper and the Devil's House Band, along with The Diplomats of Solid Sound, at Gabe's, 6pm at Sal's. Gabe's, 330 E. Washington St., Iowa City, 354-4788; Sal's Music Emporium, 624 S. Dubuque St., Iowa City, 338-7462.

Hot Air Balloon Lift-off, 6:30-7:30am • SER-TOMA Annual Fly-in Pancake Breakfast, 7am-noon • Exhibits and Displays, 8am to 4pm • Pilot Safety Seminars, all day • Air Show featuring Chuck Coleman's Aerobatics in his Extra 300 High Performance Plane Sail Plane And More, 10am & 2pm • "Get Excited About Science" program with Steve Belliveau, 10:30am & 1:30pm • Awards, 3-4pm • Close of Fly-in, 4pm.

IC Public Library

123 Linn St., Iowa City, 356-5200

World Wide Web Classes, a one-hour hands-on introduction, call 356-5200 ext. 125 to register, Aug. 18, 10am, Rm D.

City of Iowa City

Civic Center, 410 E. Washington St., Iowa City (unless noted otherwise), 356-5236

Aug. 16: Council Economic Development Committee, 9am, Lobby Conf Rm; Planning & Zoning formal, 7:30pm, Council Chambers; Housing & Community Development Commission, 6:30pm, Lobby Conf Rm • Aug. 20: Planning & Zoning Commission informal, 7:30pm, Rec Ctr, Rm B; special council work session 6:30pm, Council Chambers • Aug. 21: Senior Center Commission, 3pm, Senior Center; special council formal, 7pm, Council Chambers • Aug. 23: Library Board of Trustees, 5pm, Library, Second Floor Conf Rm • Aug. 27: Telecommunications Commission, 5:30pm, Lobby Conf Rm • Aug. 28: Human Rights Commission, 7pm, Council Chambers.

MISC **The Mill**
120 E. Burlington St.,
Iowa City, 351-9529

I.C. Improvs, improvisational comedy, Aug 30.

Ruby's Pearl

13 S. Linn St., Iowa City, 248-0032

Stitch ' n' Bitch, bring your sewing, knitting or whatever and bitch or gab, every Wednesday, 6-7pm.

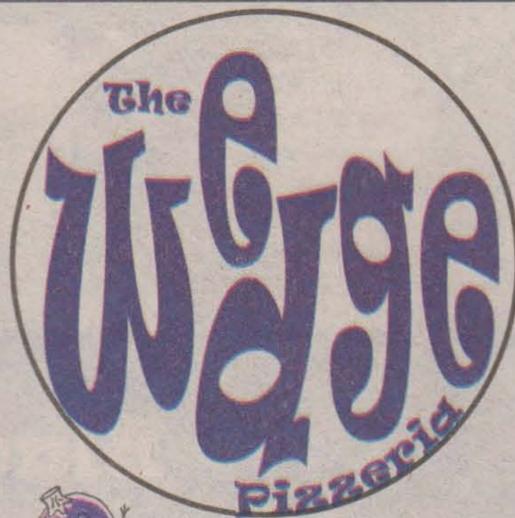
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The Budda...The perfect balance of tomato slices, spinach, fresh zucchini and black olives, atop an olive oil and fresh garlic base, finished with a triple crown of mozzarella, white cheddar and feta cheeses.

Wedgetable Garden...Vegetable lover's delight. Tomato sauce layered with a hearty combination of garlic, broccoli, pineapple, jalapenos, green olives, mushrooms, red onions, tomato slices and mozzarella.

Obi-Whannel...Barbecued chicken breast, parmesan, red onion and roasted peppers, sheathed in mozzarella, all layered on our house tomato sauce. "You will eat this pizza.....and you will be rewarded."

The Duke...A six gun salute of pepperoni, sausage, ham and beef, blanketed in mozzarella and white cheddar, on a tomato sauce base. This town's not big enough for more than one Duke.

Tootie Fruitie...A tropical blend of pineapple, mandarin oranges and sliced ham, atop tomato sauce, covered in mozzarella, then splashed with ricotta.

Love Supreme...A fusion of sausage, pepperoni, mushrooms, red onions and green peppers, laid down under a bed of white cheddar and mozzarella. Truly a love supreme.

Red Hot Pepper...A traditional fresh garlic and refried bean base, piled high with tomato slices, yellow onions, beef, jalapenos, hot sauce and mozzarella, oven baked, then topped with lettuce and chips.

The Nutcracker...An enchanting creation of mozzarella, parmesan, gorgonzola and fontina cheeses, sprinkled with pistachios and roasted peppers, all topping our house basil pesto sauce.

The Meatball Parmesan...This Italian classic is sure to please with red onions, parmesan cheese, meatballs, garlic and white cheddar, decorated with a layer of fresh sliced tomato. Mama would be proud!

Chicken Fajita...Grilled chicken breast, roasted onion, red, and green peppers, mozzarella and monterey jack cheeses on a refried bean and garlic base. Served with sides of salsa and sour cream.

Chicken Alfredo...Grilled chicken breast, onion, mushroom, artichoke hearts, alfredo sauce, topped with mozzarella cheese.

Veggie Fajita...Roasted red and green peppers, zucchini, onion, mozzarella and monterey jack atop a refried bean and garlic base.

Fat Tony 'Roni...Flavor country! Pepperoni, gorgonzola, green olives, white cheddar and red onion on an olive oil and garlic base.

Pesto Chicken...Our house basil pesto sauce with grilled chicken breast, red onion, mushroom, feta and mozzarella cheeses.

Little Green Martian...Our house basil pesto sauce with zucchini, spinach, tomato, garlic and mozzarella cheese.

Veggie Alfredo...A delicious veggie alfredo combo of broccoli, onion, sun dried tomato, mushroom, light jalapeno and garlic with white cheddar and mozzarella cheeses.

Ragin' Cajun...Spicy Cajun Chicken Breast, Red Peppers, Onion, Mozzarella and White Cheddar on an Olive Oil and Garlic Base.

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Friday August 17 **SHAME TRAIN**

Saturday August 18 **Ben Schmidt** NO COVER

Thursday August 23 **Dave Olson** NO COVER

Friday August 24 **B.F. Burt & The Instigators**

Saturday August 25 **Jennifer Danielson**
CD Release

Sunday August 26 **Greg Brown**
Reserved Seating

Wednesday August 29 **BROWN & RAMSEY** NO COVER

Thursday August 30 **I.C. Improvs**

Friday August 31 **The Mayflies**

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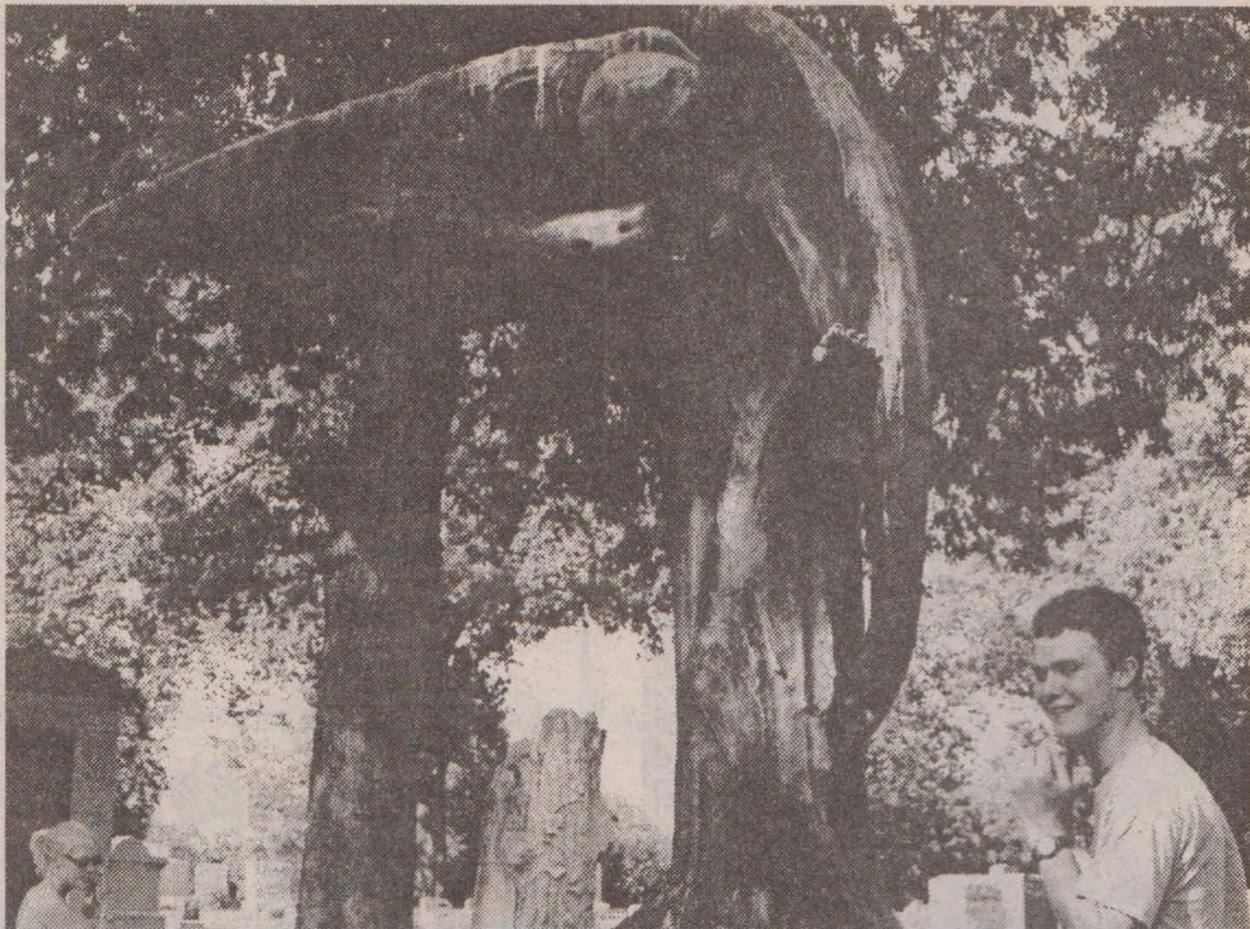


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2. **Bratwurst**– Sauerkraut, Hot Mustard, Grilled Onions, Cheddar Cheese. \$4.25
3. **Jambalaya** – Smoked Sausage, Grilled Chicken, Rice. \$4.95
4. **Garden Burger** – The Original Garden Burger, Lettuce, Tomato, Onions, Sour Cream, Salsa, Pepper Jack Cheese. \$5.50
5. **Beans and Rice** – Black Beans, Rice, Salsa, Sour Cream. \$4.50
6. **Buffalo Grilled Chicken** – 1/4 lb. Chicken Breast, Buffalo Wing Sauce, Grilled Onions and Celery, Lettuce, Tomato, Choice of Blue Cheese or Ranch Dressing. \$5.75
7. **Philly steak** – Green Peppers, Onions, Mushrooms, A1 Steak Sauce, Cheddar Cheese. \$5.95
8. **Grilled Chicken and Swiss** – 1/4 lb. Chicken Breast, Lettuce, Tomato, Onions, Mayonnaise, Swiss Cheese. \$5.50
9. **BBQ Bacon Burger** – 1/4 lb. Beef Patty, BBQ Sauce, Bacon, Lettuce, Tomato, Grilled Onions, Cheddar Cheese. \$5.50
10. **BBQ Chicken** – 1/4 lb. Chicken Breast, BBQ sauce, Bacon, Grilled Onion, Lettuce, Cheddar Cheese. \$5.75
11. **Falafel** – Lettuce, Tomatoes, Cucumber Yogurt Sauce. \$4.50
12. **Chicken Philly** – 1/4 lb. Chicken Breast, Green Peppers, Onions, Mushrooms, Ranch Dressing, Cheddar Cheese. \$5.50
13. **Tuna Melt** – White Albacore Tuna, Celery, Grilled Onions, Lettuce, Tomato and Pepper Jack Cheese. \$5.50
14. **Bacon Ranch Burger** – 1/4 lb. Beef Patty, Ranch Dressing, Bacon, Lettuce, Tomato, Grilled Onions, Havarti Cheese. \$5.50
15. **Salsa Burger** – 1/4 lb. Beef Patty, Salsa, Sour Cream, Jalapeno Peppers, Lettuce, Tomato, Onion and Pepper Jack Cheese. \$4.95
16. **Steamed Veggie Mix** – Broccoli, Carrots, Cauliflower, Mushrooms, Ranch Dressing and Double Cheddar Cheese. \$4.50
17. **Blackened Cajun Chicken** – 1/4 lb. Chicken Breast, w/ Beans and Rice, Cajun Spices, and Pepper Jack Cheese. \$5.95
18. **B.L.T.** – Bacon, Lettuce, Tomato, Mayo, and Cheddar Cheese. \$3.95

Cold Wraps (also served hot)

1. **Tuna Salad** – White Albacore Tuna, Celery, Lettuce and Tomato. \$4.50
2. **Ham and Cheese** – Ham, Swiss and Cheddar, Lettuce, Tomato, Onion, Mayo and Mustard. \$4.50
3. **Turkey and Cheese** – Turkey, Swiss and Cheddar, Lettuce, Tomato, Onion, Mayo and Mustard. \$4.75
4. **Veggie** – Cucumber, Zucchini, Green Peppers, Mushrooms, Lettuce, Tomato, Onion, Lemon Vinaigrette and Havarti Cheese. \$3.95
5. **Clubhouse** – Ham, Turkey, Bacon, Lettuce, Tomato, Mayo and Cheddar Cheese. \$5.50

Breakfast (all day)

1. 2 Eggs, Sausage, Hashbrowns, Green Peppers, Onions, Mushrooms, Cheddar Cheese. \$4.50
2. 2 Eggs, Bacon, Hashbrowns, Onions, Mushrooms, Cheddar Cheese. \$3.95
3. 2 Eggs, Jalapeno Peppers, Onions, Mushrooms, Salsa, Sour Cream, Pepper Jack Cheese. \$3.95
4. Hashbrowns, Wild Rice, Green Peppers, Onions, Mushrooms, Swiss and Cheddar Cheese. \$3.95
5. 2 Eggs, Steak, Hashbrowns, Mushrooms, Onions and Cheddar Cheese. \$5.50
6. 3 Eggs, Swiss and Cheddar Cheese. \$3.50
7. 2 Eggs, Ham, Onions, Swiss and Cheddar Cheese. \$4.50

Soup or Salad

Cup of Soup	\$2.25
Bowl of Soup	\$3.00
Side Salad	\$1.95

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Cranberry Peach Juice		
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Tattoo and photo by Steve Barjonah @ Crossroads Tattoo

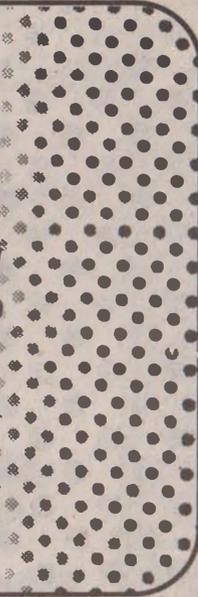
If you know who is the bearer of this tattoo, be the first person to e-mail us your name, address and phone number at

little-village@usa.net and you'll win 2 free tickets to the Iowa Renaissance Festival, September 1-3 at Middle Amana Park in the Amana Colonies!

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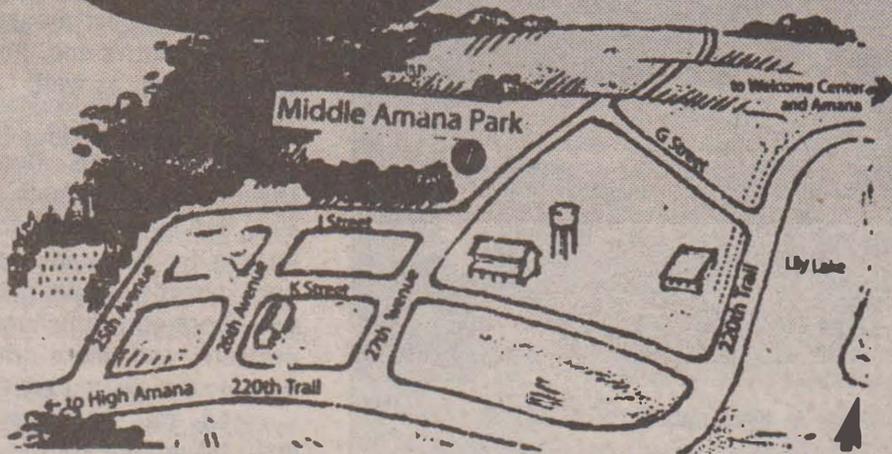
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STARS OVER



Iowa City by Dr. Star

FORECAST FOR AUGUST 16-31, 2001



ARIES (March 21–April 19) The pace of the last two weeks will slow; even an Aries couldn't keep that pace up. Home will continue to be a source of support and strength. Work could be having a depressing effect, though, making change necessary. You need less work and more life. The changes could cause serious arguments and soul searching. These planetary pressures are designed to bring greater balance in your life. Expect solid progress soon. Be wary of power plays disguised as good advice, though.



TAURUS (April 20–May 20) You are about to pass a hard-fought financial milestone. Even greater gains are possible. Pent-up desire for rest and recreation, or just some nice stuff you've had your eye on, could tempt you into overspending. On the other hand, maybe efforts to save are causing a strain. Give in a little. You're due for a break. Intense talks and fast footwork might be necessary to keep financial matters clear and on course. Unexpected costs could arise by month's end.



GEMINI (May 21–June 20) There will be definite movement on the relationship and partnership front before month's end. Living and partnership issues are likely to spur important and difficult discussions with appropriate levels of worry. Pressures could force your hand as the month closes. The outcome could affect your living situation. If dealing with legal papers, dot your i's and cross your t's. Leave as little to chance as possible. Your financial luck should hold, though, and you will probably get the last word in, too.



CANCER (June 21–July 22) There will be lots of intense discussion in your life. Long-pending changes will go into effect at work, adding even more verbal intensity. You will have to supply the peace, calm and optimism needed in the next couple of weeks yourself. On the upside, all this intensity will help clarify the financial picture. Love and money-making should mix well too. Renewed optimism and self-confidence, as well as increasing prosperity, will aid efforts at self-improvement.



LEO (July 23–Aug 22) Your dreams and creative aspirations could burn a big hole in your budget. They could also shake up your life. Still, there's no stopping the powerful urge you feel to branch out in more idealistic, creative and enjoyable directions. Fight about it with your friends if necessary, but you will rearrange your finances and your life to suit your new goals. Expect progress and irreversible decisions at month's end. Romance will rear its pretty head soon, as well.



VIRGO (Aug 23–Sept 22) You've taken that step. Don't look back, because there's no going back. Movement might seem slow, but by month's end consequences will start kicking in. You can expect friction and resistance, but it's not likely to block you. Annoy you, yes. Block you, no. August will close with more pressure and more irreversible decisions. By now, you know you are right and you know you'll succeed. You still have lots of time before the train leaves the station, though.



LIBRA (Sept 23–Oct 22) Your strenuous efforts at self-improvement are paying off where it counts. You'll soon be seeing positive movement on many fronts, all in accord with your hopes. So far, you've kept your heightened expectations private. But as your new vision of life takes shape, you'll have to make your expectations public. That could cause tension, but you want change, and a public announcement is necessary. Increasing work responsibilities increase the need to go public. Your overall situation is not at risk.



SCORPIO (Oct 23–Nov 21) What's that old saying about carrying the world on your shoulders? And what's that one about rolling large boulders up steep hills? It isn't your imagination. You really have been carrying a heavy load. You deserve a much better deal all the way around and you'll get a better deal now. Recent planetary changes have tilted the balance of power in Scorpio's favor. But you'll have to speak up. Protect your interests and pursue your dreams. Your demands will be met.



SAGITTARIUS (Nov 22–Dec 21) You've cleared the big hurdle, no doubt about it, and the road ahead is clear for awhile. Your ability to make important things happen will begin returning any day now. You can also expect continuing benevolence from a variety of sources. Overall, you are in a very good place. Authority figures of various kinds will have a lot to say for the next couple of weeks that you'd rather not have to hear. They mean well.



CAPRICORN (Dec 22–Jan 19) Things are moving forward again. Slowly but irresistibly, events will soon begin moving in your favor like the cars of a long train when the locomotive starts up. Direction, inspiration, healing, clarity, desire? They are returning. The worst that could possibly happen? It happened a couple of weeks ago. You're still standing. You probably didn't even notice it happen. They say when God closes a door, He opens a window. I say, when He closes a window, He opens a door.



AQUARIUS (Jan 20–Feb 18) It hasn't been easy, pursuing your vision and making money at the same time, especially the last few weeks; but it has been encouraging. You'll soon regain the initiative, and momentum will return. Partners are beginning to see things your way. Good people are emerging to fight your battles with you. Discussions about shared resources should produce beneficial financial results. It will take work, but the necessary elements are all there and you won't have to compromise your ideals.



PISCES (Feb 19–March 20) The framework of your life got a good shaking-up—home, friends, work...your ego. The windows have stopped rattling and no more upheavals are scheduled, but the intense discussions will continue. All this should lead to some pretty important realizations. Meanwhile, play. Really. Play is the most healing and profitable way to go for now. The important stuff will stay on course. Lots of friends are willing to join you and they're in need of our support and advice.

Write Dr. Star at doctortwinkler@home.com

News Quirks

Compiled by Roland Sweet

Strange but True!



Grand Scheme of Things

Thailand's prime minister proposed fixing his country's ailing economy by turning the clocks ahead an hour. The change would put Thailand on the same time as Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia. "The economies of these three countries are in good health, and our time adjustment to them would benefit the Thai bourse, which will open and close at the same time as theirs," said Thaksin Shinawatra, an electronics billionaire who was elected by a landslide in January after promising to speed economic recovery.

Things That Go Kaboom

Investigators in Minnesota's Castle Rock Township said four boys between 12 and 16 wanted to see how far they could make a bicycle seat fly, so they stuffed the frame with 64 ounces of gunpowder and ignited it. The seat flew about 120 feet, but the explosion also blew apart the frame, injuring all four boys with flying metal. "When the boys placed the bicycle seat onto the bike, they essentially created a pipe bomb," Dakota County Sheriff Don Gudmundson explained. "When the pipe bomb exploded, it turned into a grenade with multiple pieces of shrapnel."

Police investigating an explosion at an electricity substation in Rock Forest, Quebec, concluded that a crow caused the blast by flying into it. Besides the remains of an electrocuted crow, officers reported finding a rucksack hidden at the scene containing "thousands and thousands of dollars" believed to have been robbed from the Banque Nationale De Rock Forest. "Without the crow's sacrifice," police spokesperson Andre Lemire said, "we would never have recovered the money."

Authorities in Muskegon, Mich., blamed an explosion that blew part of a house off its foundation, started a fire that destroyed the building and damaged two neighboring houses, on the homeowner, whom they accused of sniffing propane while smoking marijuana. They said Brian Miller Sr., 40, was in his first-floor bedroom with a 20-pound propane cylinder—the type used for barbecuing but with a modified valve—when propane vapors were ignited after he lit up a joint. "If there was a charge for ignorance," prosecutor Tony Tague said, "this would be appropriate."

Australian police blew a hole in a dead whale to keep it from becoming an environmental hazard and a danger to tourists. The carcass of the Southern Right whale had been off the coast of

South Australia state for about two weeks. Television pictures showed great white sharks tearing chunks of flesh from the whale while sightseers in boats patted the sharks' snouts and even climbed onto the back of the whale as the sharks fed. People's disregard for their own safety prompted state Environment Minister Iain Evans to propose regulations "to protect people too stupid to protect themselves."

Playing to the Stereotype

Off-duty police officer Mark McGowan was waiting in line at a Chicago Dunkin' Donuts store when one of the three men ahead of him showed the clerk what looked like a handgun and demanded money. McGowan identified himself as a police officer and tried to wrestle the man to the ground. One of the other suspects hit McGowan on the head with a gun, but all three men fled without taking any money. An off-duty detective heading for the store saw the suspects running, followed them and got their license-plate number. The three men were in custody within 45 minutes. A manager at the doughnut shop told the *Chicago Tribune* he couldn't understand why someone would try to rob the shop because police officers often come in for coffee at night.

Meanwhile, Philadelphia's police union leaders pledged to support striking Dunkin' Donuts drivers and warehouse workers by boycotting the doughnut chain.

There's Never a Porta-John When You Need One

During a meeting of the St. Louis Board of Aldermen, Alderman Irene Smith was leading a filibuster to hold up debate on a redistricting plan when she said she needed a restroom break. Acting Aldermanic President James Shrewsbury ruled Smith must yield if she left the floor for a break, so about 40 minutes later, her aides surrounded her with a sheet, tablecloth and quilt while she appeared to use a waste basket to relieve herself. After the board adjourned without voting on the issue, Smith told reporters, "What I did behind the tablecloth is my business."

Authorities in Greene County, Mo., accused prison guards Justin K. Hastings, 21, and Curtis A. Myers, 26, of urinating from a roof onto four inmates who were playing basketball below them. "All of a sudden there was a shower," said prosecutor Darrell Moore, noting samples of the liquid, which ended up on the inmates' faces and bodies, were sent to a lab for testing. "It looks and smells like pee."

Way to Go Six-year-old

Eddie Ness died while playing with a homemade blowgun made from PVC pipe. Police in Levittown, Pa., said the boy was using a pushpin as a projectile, but instead of blowing it through the pipe, he inhaled it.

Six-year-old Michael Colombini died while having an MRI exam to check his progress after an operation to remove a benign brain tumor. Officials at Westchester Medical Center in Valhalla, N.Y., said the magnetic resonance imaging machine's 10-ton electromagnet caused a metal oxygen canister that had been accidentally brought into the exam room to fly across the room and hit the boy in the head.

Compiled from the nation's press by Roland Sweet. Send original clippings, citing source and date, to P.O. Box 8130, Alexandria VA 22306.

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