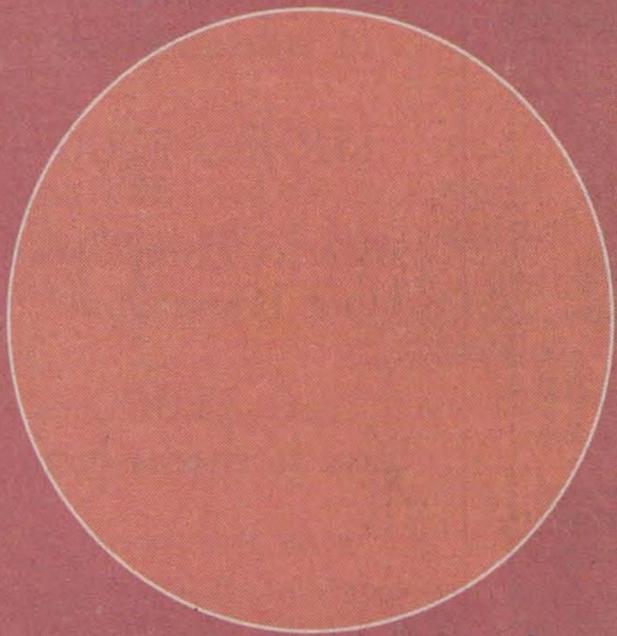
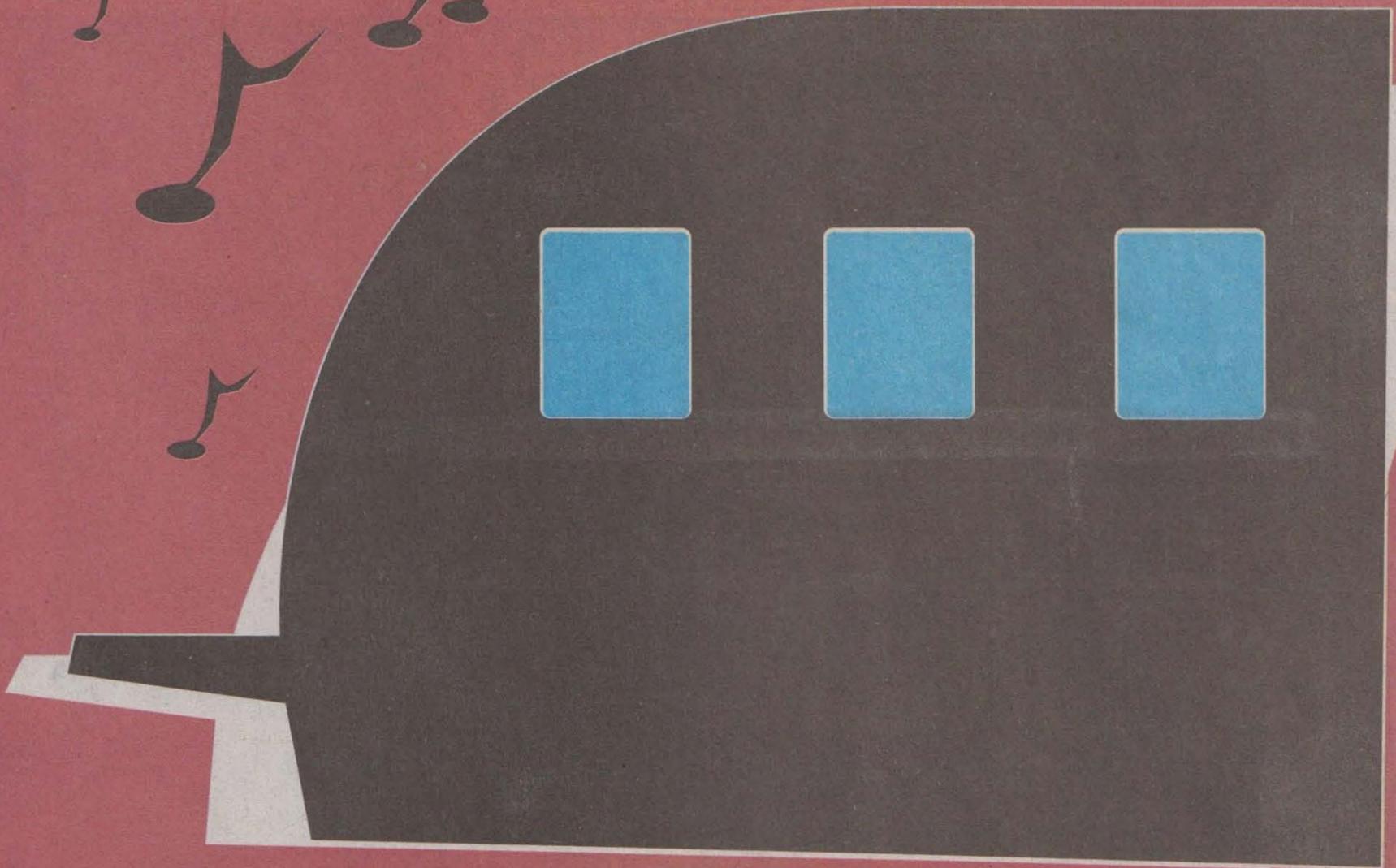
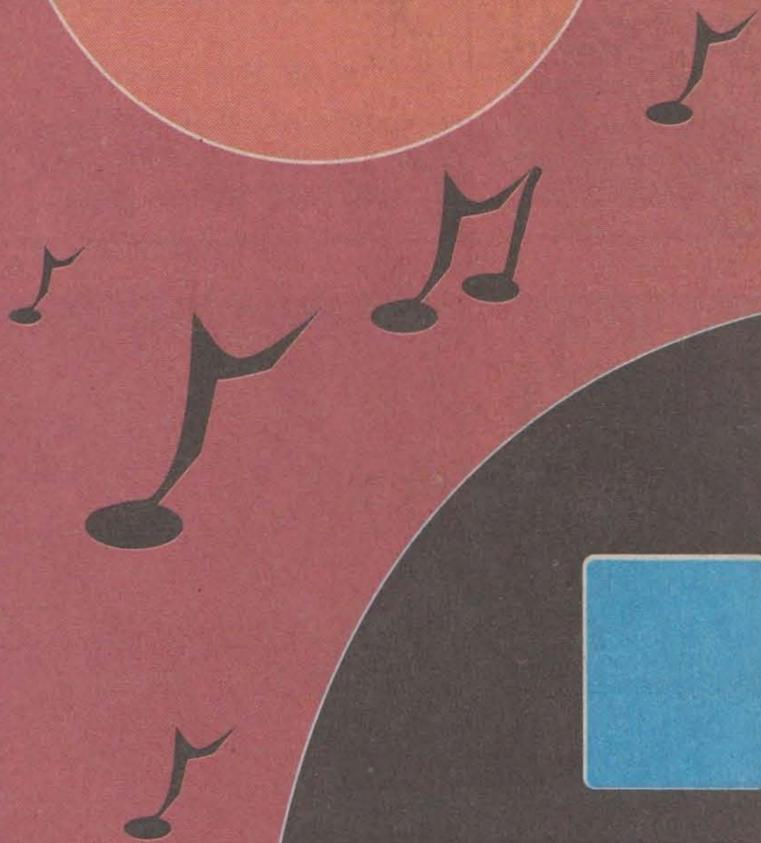
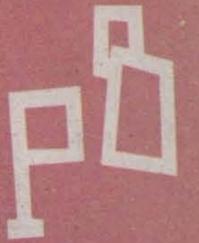


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THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

LIFE IN THE BUBBLE

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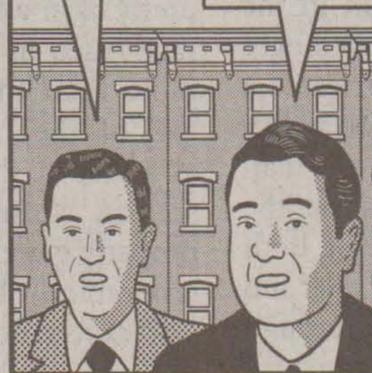


HE DOESN'T ATTEND THE FUNERALS OF SOLDIERS KILLED IN IRAQ. UM--THE PRESIDENT HAS BEEN--ER--**BUSY.**



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Now it's about democracy

With weapons of mass destruction, removal of a brutal dictatorship, and the continuing war on terrorism having exhausted themselves as plausible reasons for the invasion of Iraq, the Bush Administration's rationales for that bloody and expensive conflict have taken on a flavor of the month quality, redolent of equal parts marketing and forced sentiment. Just in time for the holidays,



the administration is now serving up Iraq covered in democracy and sprinkled liberally with quotations from Ronald Reagan. In a speech before the National Endowment for Democracy, President Bush declared the democratization of Iraq a future "watershed event in the global democratic revolution" on a par with the democratization of the Axis powers and the fall of the Soviet Union, a first step to a democratic, and thus stable, Middle East.

If recent history is any precedent, this reason for going to war in Iraq won't last either. Despite its supposed focus on the "big picture" and its self-conscious (and self-proclaimed) status as an Event of Historical Import, this particular flavor of the month tastes a little funny.

For starters, despite the president's attempts to compare Iraq to postwar Germany and Japan, the historical precedent more likely to leap to the Arab mind is 1950s Iran, where the democratically elected Mossadegh regime was forcibly replaced by the Shah of Iran with the approval and collusion of the United States. If sincere, Bush's statement that the lack of freedom in the Middle East and elsewhere will no longer be excused or accommodated represents a dramatic break from the US foreign policy of the last century, which, far more than merely excusing and accommodating the lack of freedom, actively sponsored it, both directly in places like Allende's Chile and Mossadegh's Iran and indirectly through our sponsorship of juntas and dictatorships worldwide during the Cold War and after.

The expectation that democracy is likely to result from free elections on the part of the Iraqi people is a product of the same thought process that previously posited Iraqis welcoming invading US forces with strewn rose petals and spontaneous displays of native folk dance.

Unfortunately, if sincere, it also directly contradicts most elements of Bush foreign policy to date. Bush's previous contribution to the doctrines of foreign policy—the doctrine of pre-emptive warfare—implicitly disregards the very concept of national sovereignty, fundamentally putting all the nations of the world on notice that the opinion of the president of the United States will take final precedent over the will of any government anywhere. Without the concept of sovereignty, the concept of popular sovereignty—that is, democracy itself—is meaningless. Nor was the administration's naked contempt for the many democracies worldwide—countries that declined, in accordance with the expressed wishes of their citizens, to participate in our Iraq invasion—a strong indicator of respect for democratic values. In every particular, from treaty negotiations, to the role of the UN, to its treatment of democratically elected Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, the Bush administration's approach to international relations has been that of a government far more interested in its own interests and hegemony than in any squishy abstract notions of world freedom.

As is usual with the Bush Administration, sincerity is not so much the question as the notions and assumptions that underlie it. In dealing with Iraq policy thus far, the neo-conservatives in charge seem to be operating on the assumption that Baghdad is an oil town—a sort of Houston with minarets—and that they, by God, understand oil towns pretty darn well. As such, the term "democracy" used in relation to Iraq connotes far more than the institutionalization of the will of the Iraqi people, serving instead as a sort of shorthand for a Western-style, secular, consumerist free market that is properly grateful, politically deferential and economically beholden to the United States. The expectation that such a government is likely to result from free elections on the part of the Iraqi people is, unfortunately, a

product of the same ideologically blinkered delusional process of thought that previously posited Iraqis welcoming invading US forces with strewn rose petals and spontaneous displays of native folk dance.

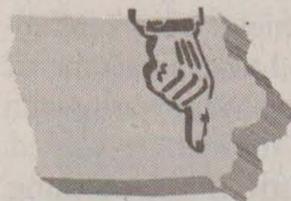
Like our real welcome in Iraq, the government that results from a democratization of Iraq is likely to be something else entirely. This is said not, as the president quoting Ronald Reagan would have it, out of some "cultural condescension" that suggests that the Iraqis are somehow not ready for self government, but out of a realization that nothing in Iraqi culture or history suggests a predisposition for the sort of secular capitalist democracy the administration is expecting to help them lead the Middle East into the New American Century. Extensive polling by the Zogby organization and the considered analysis of Coalition Provisional Authority constitutional consultant Noah Feldman both indicate that a popularly elected Iraqi government would look a lot like Washington's worst nightmare—an Islamic republic with a constitution based on Koranic law, "unlikely to recognize Israel and, frankly, moderately unlikely to be pro-American." Official administration reaction to both the Zogby poll and the Feldman report has been swift—Vice President Cheney misrepresented the Zogby results so completely as to inspire a public repudiation from Zogby himself, and Feldman has been denounced by an unidentified Pentagon official as "soft on Islam."

If the president is in fact sincere in his desire to bring democracy to Iraq, he should do so with all possible speed, and devil take the hindmost. If instead he sees his mission in Iraq as the installation of a government that will somehow magically combine the will of the Iraqi people with the geopolitical convenience of the United States, we can expect to spend the next few years, billions more dollars, and the blood of hundreds more young Americans chasing an impossibility for the sake of a delusion. LV

Pentacrest stories

It's December. The little bluestem in our new backyard "prairie patch" has turned red and gone dormant, warm and moist mulch brooding over the burgeoning root system so it's ready to spread further next spring. The tomato stalks have been cut down. The holiday lights are going up. In many traditional societies, this time of darkness and cold is the time for stories. Our

stories and myths are our own cultural root systems holding us in place. They can be grounded in ultimate veracity or dance with the fantastic. They can be intimately personal or embrace the whole community. They all contain truths about our places. So let me share some stories, of my own making, from the center of



**UR
HERE**

THOMAS DEAN

our community, the UI Pentacrest.

EPB EPIPHANY

Reaching the east end of the fourth-floor hallway of the English-Philosophy Building one day in the late 1980s, I looked out the window to see the first snowflakes of the season. I stopped, enchanted by the delicate floating swirls of white. The Old Capitol dome up on the Pentacrest hill was framed by the trees near the train tracks outside EPB, the snowflakes forming a moving scrim over the shining gold. I spent a long time silently watching Iowa's first protecting blanket of cold and wet accumulate on the Pentacrest, the next spring's lifeblood for growth.

As Iowa's gravity pulled the snowflakes from the sky to hold soil in place through the season of rest, I felt its tug, too. This was the moment, I think, when I knew that I belonged to this place. I welcomed the millions of tiny gossamer threads attached to each flake, pulling me gently into Iowa.

THE BEAR MAN OF IOWA CITY

When I was a graduate student in Iowa City in the late 1980s and early 1990s, I knew spring had come with the reappearance of the Bear Man. Some may say he was "just" a homeless guy wandering through

town every year, but he was more than that. He was instantly recognizable in that brown jumpsuit he always wore, maybe a custodian's outfit he picked up somewhere. And then there were the bear slippers—big, fuzzy brown slippers with little claws.

The Bear Man always sat in the burgeoning warmth at the base of a big tree in the middle of the Pentacrest lawn on the west side of MacLean Hall, soaking in the Iowa spring sun after hibernation, sometimes eating fruit. Occasionally, I'd see him walking around campus or downtown, talking to pretty, young women. He seemed to enjoy the hustle and bustle of young people moving about him, their energy giving him joy. Maybe, though, he was giving

In many traditional societies, this time of darkness and cold is the time for stories. Our stories and myths are our own cultural root systems holding us in place. They can be grounded in ultimate veracity or dance with the fantastic.

them something: the energy of spring, the strength of the Bear just awakened from winter's slumber.

When I moved back to Iowa City in 1999, the big tree the Bear Man always sat under was gone, victim to the straight-line winds that pummeled our town in 1998. I haven't seen the Bear Man since. Maybe when he returned in the fall of '98 for his spirit to snuggle down for a long winter's nap in that tree, he had to move on to another tree in another town.

Spring in Iowa City is still full of energy, of excitement over the completion of another academic year, of flowering redbuds, of flowing sap. But I miss the Bear Man. I hope he's sharing his spring tonic with another welcoming community,

someplace with a nice big tree for his winter spirit's slumber.

RUSTY'S NIGHT OUT

That extra minute of daylight on the summer solstice—the longest day of the year—is a unique moment, especially precious. In those fleeting seconds, magic happens. In Iowa City, Rusty the Giant Sloth, of the UI Museum of Natural History, comes alive in that moment, enjoying one night of slow but joyful frolic.

A few years ago, I was determined to stay up all night on the solstice in order to catch a glimpse of Rusty. Macbride Hall was closed, but I planned to spy him sneaking out for his annual clamber up the Old Capitol to burnish the golden dome. At the stroke of the solstice, I peered into the front door of Macbride atop the old stone steps.

It was dark inside, but I'm pretty sure I saw Rusty sneak into the gift shop and rearrange all the rubber animals in the bins (the clerks just laugh and shake their heads the next morning every year). I strained to listen, and I think I heard him singing his annual slow summer ballad to his lugubrious soft shoe across the Macbride Auditorium stage. I think I heard some bones rattling, too—Rusty and the whale skeleton are especially good friends, the giant sloth telling his annual giant joke to the bleached remnants of Moby Dick.

Rusty would never come out with me looming so closely, so I crept under the comforting bower of the big larch tree on the Pentacrest lawn. As the moon rose, though, I grew tired, and, dang it, I fell asleep. I awoke to the robins chirping, the rising sun warming my blood. I had missed Rusty! I looked up to the waving flag and the golden dome of Old Capitol, and I swear it did shine a lot more brightly than it had the day before.

THE BRAIN TREES

The ginkgo trees on the Pentacrest shed their fat seeds each fall. And when those "berries" are stepped on, man, do they stink! It's fun to try to come up with apt descriptions: barf, rotting corpses, rancid cheese. But then the cawing starts: "Stinky trees! Stinky trees! Cut them down! Cut them down!" These squawkers don't know the trees' story.

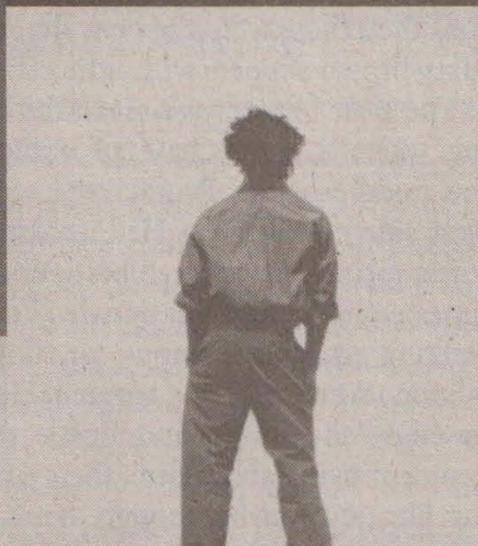
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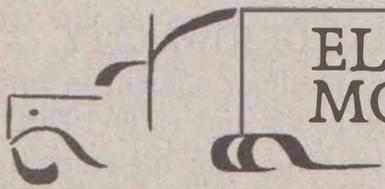
the Schaeffer presidency, the UI had growing pains. High schools were few and far between in Iowa in the mid-19th century, so the university in its early years helped many students, most of them local, with preparation for college through the "Preparatory Department." Since half the student body was "preparatory," the early UI earned the mocking nickname "Johnson County High School."

President Schaeffer is known for transforming "Johnson County High School" into The University of Iowa. Not to diminish his great achievements, but he had a little help. I'm not sure where they came from or what they were doing in Iowa City in the late 1880s, but some Buddhist monks surreptitiously planted ginkgo trees in the middle of the Pentacrest one night. They ceremoniously placed the small twigs in geometric precision between Jefferson and Washington streets, and throughout the night meditated, prayed and chanted softly. In the morning, their ginkgoes were already five feet tall, and they have grown robustly ever since.

The ginkgo is an ancient tree, "living fossils" some call them. They even saw the dinosaurs walk in the Jurassic Age. They live a long time, maybe thousands of years. They're mysterious, not quite fitting into our modern flora taxonomy, being both conifers and cycads. They shed their leaves all at once when the fall temperatures reach a certain cold point, like a wig suddenly slipping off an actor's head on stage. Most likely native to Asia, the trees are sacred to Chinese and Japanese Buddhist monks. And traditional herbalists use the ginkgo extract to increase intelligence. In more scientific though less romantic times, some recognize that ginkgo increases blood circulation in the brain.

Well, it seems to work. Once those monks planted their "brain trees," President Schaeffer turned "Johnson County High School" into The University of Iowa. Sure, they smell funny in the fall. But these anchors on the Pentacrest are treasures. We've lost some already. The autumnal "stink decriers" need to love what remains.

The ginkgoes have shed their leaves and seeds. It's snowing. I need to run down to EPB and look out the fourth-floor hallway window. Happy storytelling. LV


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Food for peace

Companion, (kəm-pān'yən) *n.* 1. A person who accompanies or associates with another; comrade. [Latin *com-*, together + *pānis*, bread.]

Modern societies are a conglomeration of age-old folkways and mores that have evolved over the centuries to accommodate circumstances. Break them down into their constituent parts and what you find are families, a term I use here in the broadest possible sense. The bond that holds families together is their desire to



it's about the
FOOD

Chef Kurt
Michael
Friese

share food with each other. Think about that fact in reference to your own family—take away the willingness to share food, and the household quickly descends into chaos. Looked at from the other direction, most likely the happiest moments of your life were spent around a table with people you love and great food in front of you.

Sharing food is certainly almost as old as eating; at least it is for all us primates. Recall that image you store in your head of what prehistoric man was like. Perhaps you picture scenes from films like *Quest For Fire* or *2001: A Space Odyssey*. You “B” movie fans might think of *1,000,000 Years BC*. All these images show the hunt and the meal as central preoccupations of the familial unit. When they have food and share it, everyone is happy. When they have food and do not

Breaking bread and offering a piece to someone else, whether literally or metaphorically, is the simplest act of peace we can do, and one we should do more often both individually and as a nation.

share, somebody gets clocked with a mastodon bone. Thus has it ever been.

It was Robert Fulghum who pointed out that one learns this simple truth in kindergarten: Share everything. The reasoning behind this could fill several dissertations, or it could be encapsulated this simply: Sharing reduces fear and breeds understanding; where fear is diminished love reigns, and where there is love there is peace.

In that frightening time after the Sept. 11 attacks, in the build-up to the military actions in Afghanistan, an email began circulating through the inboxes of various soft-hearted peaceniks like myself. Its subject was “Bomb Them With Butter,” and its premise was that showering Afghanistan with food would go much further in securing peace in the world than showering it with bombs. It is an argument reminiscent of the old bumper sticker, “Fighting for peace is like screwing for virginity.” Simple old truths are hard to escape: Sow war, reap war.

Stop and think for a moment what it might have accomplished if we had invaded Afghanistan with columns of supply trucks instead of tanks. Though no pacifist himself, Abraham Lincoln said that the surest way to defeat an enemy is to make him your friend. If you sit at a table with someone, break bread, share a meal from that person’s kitchen, you are far less likely to kill him. The old adage, “Tell me what you eat and I’ll tell you what you are,” could be amended to say, “Share what you eat and I’ll better under-

stand who you are.” People who understand each other do not attack each other.

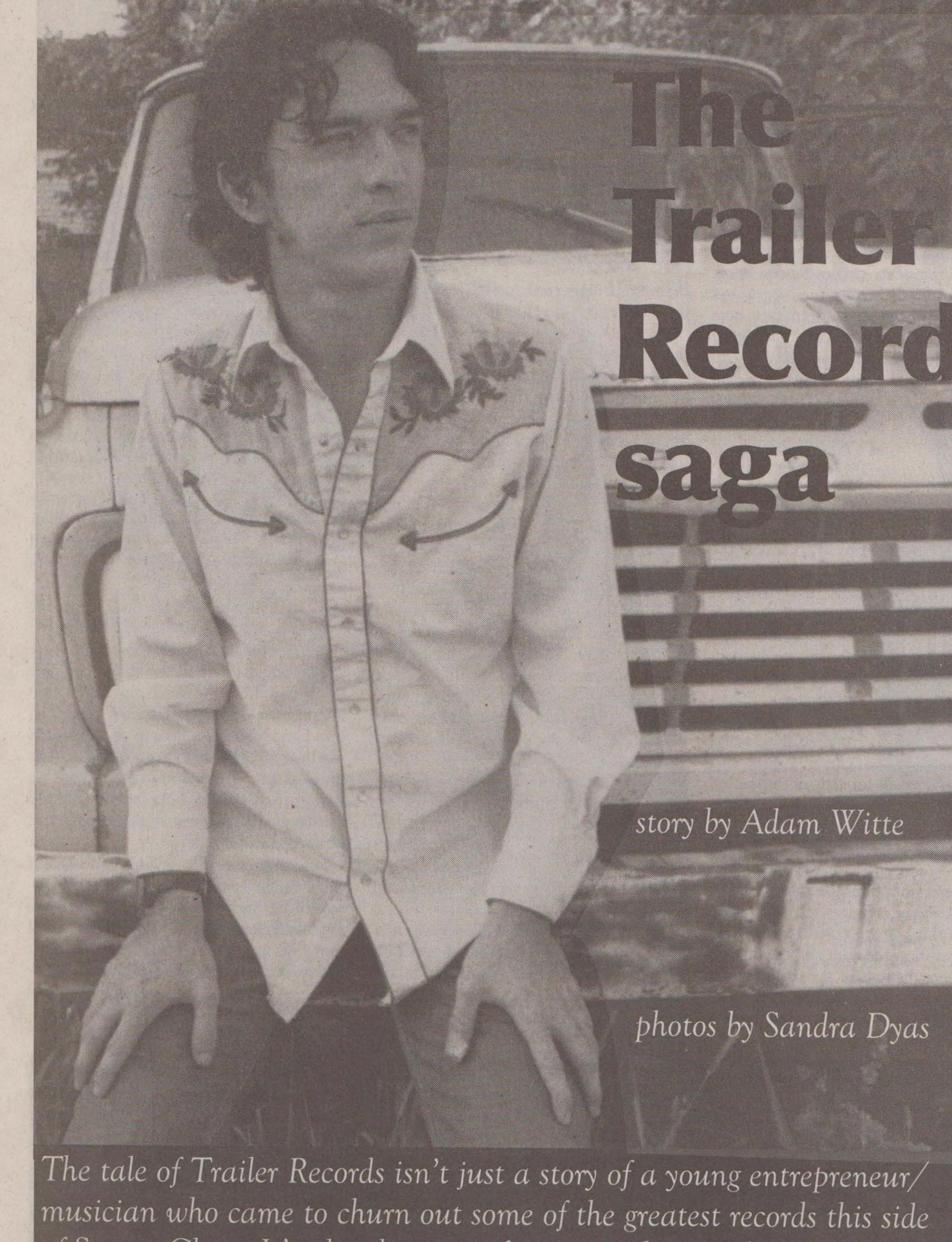
And so, as we enter our third holiday season—“The Season of Peace”—since those infamous attacks in New York and Washington, pause for a moment and reflect on the awful fear and hatred that caused those people to brutally murder so many innocents. What caused it? Surely, Americans as a whole are not entirely evil; I’m not and neither are you. But these suicidal/homicidal extremists must have thought so, must have misunderstood something about us in order to be willing to attack us so wantonly.

A companion, we learned from the *American Heritage Dictionary* definition above, is someone with whom you share your food; just look at the etymology. The word “enemy,” by the way, is also from Latin: inimicus, meaning “not friend.” Breaking bread and offering a piece to someone else, whether literally or metaphorically, is the simplest act of peace we can do, and one we should do more often both individually and as a nation. We all need all the companions we can get.

I am not the first to say this, but I wish I could be the last. Every action has its consequences, and the cycle of violence will not be broken with more violence. Until someone in a position of power amongst us has the fortitude to offer up butter, we will continue to deal in bombs, and so will they. LV

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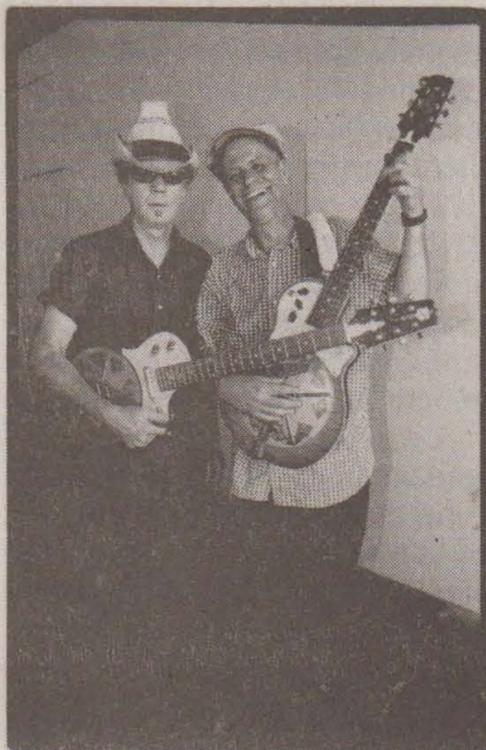
The Trailer Records saga

story by Adam Witte

photos by Sandra Dyas

The tale of Trailer Records isn't just a story of a young entrepreneur/musician who came to churn out some of the greatest records this side of Sun or Chess. It's also the story of a seemingly super-human struggle to keep an independent, community-based enterprise alive in a world of anything but.

Dave Zollo aches all over.



“Being young and stupid and not knowing any better, I said, ‘Yeah, I’ll start a label.’”

- Dave Zollo

The 34-year-old musician has a tough time finding a comfortable position in the hard wood booths of the Deadwood. His fidgets and tics are not the nervous energy of a young valiant, though; he shifts to find a comfortable position for a back ruined by years stooped over the keys of his piano. He constantly massages his legs, even punching his thighs to work out the pain: muscles knotted with more than three decades of pushing the pedals of pianos here and around the world; muscles strained against the gas and brakes of his tour bus (a monster 1990 Cummings diesel that Zollo drives to nearly 200 gigs a year); muscles worn sore with the midnight pacing of a new father.

The bar noise hurts his ears. His boots are scuffed. There are holes in his jeans. Dave Zollo is getting old, and he seems to know it. Even his face—still smiling, still eager—shows the beginnings of crows feet and crags etched by profound joy and worry—a face that will age like Lincoln’s or Keith Richards’ (albeit with the lips of a Mick Jagger). The deepening lines hint at character and years; and his last few years as owner of Trailer Records have been nothing if not character building.

Trailer Records, formed by Zollo in 1995, is an Iowa City-based blues/country/roots-rock label focused on promoting talent in our own backyard. To date, 26 albums have been recorded for the label, including the MUSE compilation, benefiting the Englert Theater. With each release, the reputation of and respect for Trailer Records have grown, but the road has proven rough and full of potholes, with more than its fair share of harrowing curves.

Surprising and not

The fact that Zollo owns a record label is both surprising and inevitable. He wasn’t even supposed to be a musician. In 1992, Zollo was just six credits shy of a bachelor’s degree, finishing his honors thesis and preparing to apply to graduate programs that would earn him a PhD and the life of a professor.

“Music as a life never even crossed my mind,” he explains, kneading his calves. “I was going to be an American studies professor.”

Opposite page: Dave Zollo.

This page: Bo Ramsey and Joe Price, upper left. Bo Ramsey and Greg Brown, right.

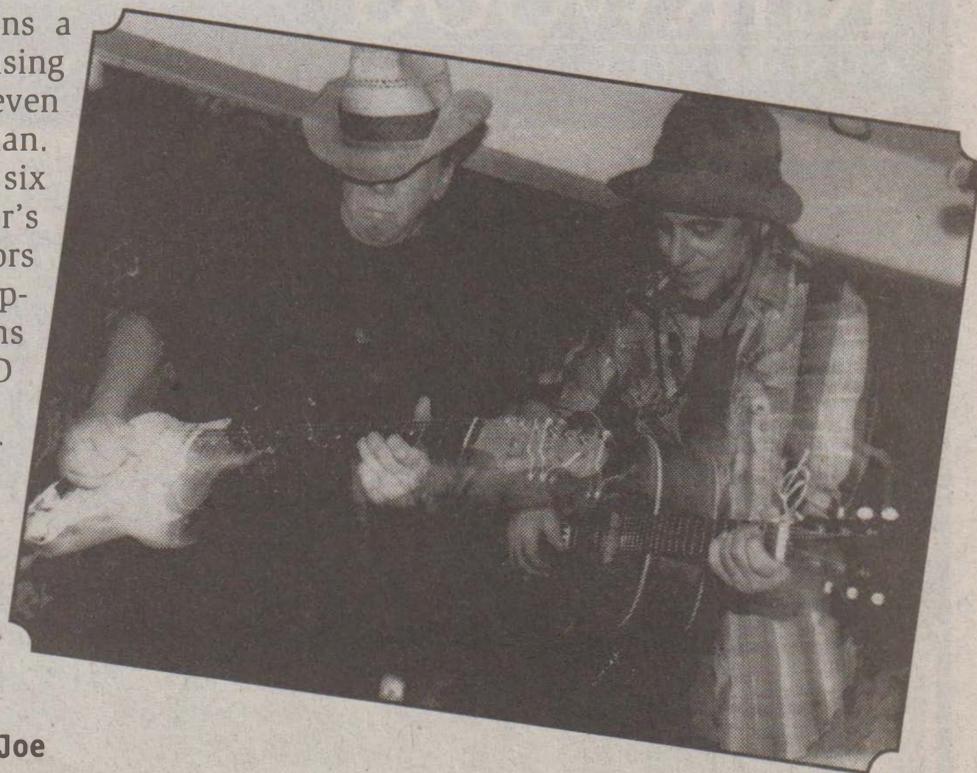
It is probably his parents’ fault, by virtue of both nature and nurture, that Dave Zollo is not ensconced in some ivory tower today. Though a writer and graduate of the UI Writers’ Workshop, father Rick Zollo is a full-fledged music junky. The young Dave Zollo was raised on a healthy diet of American pop, from Motown to Nashville, and through his father, he learned to love music.

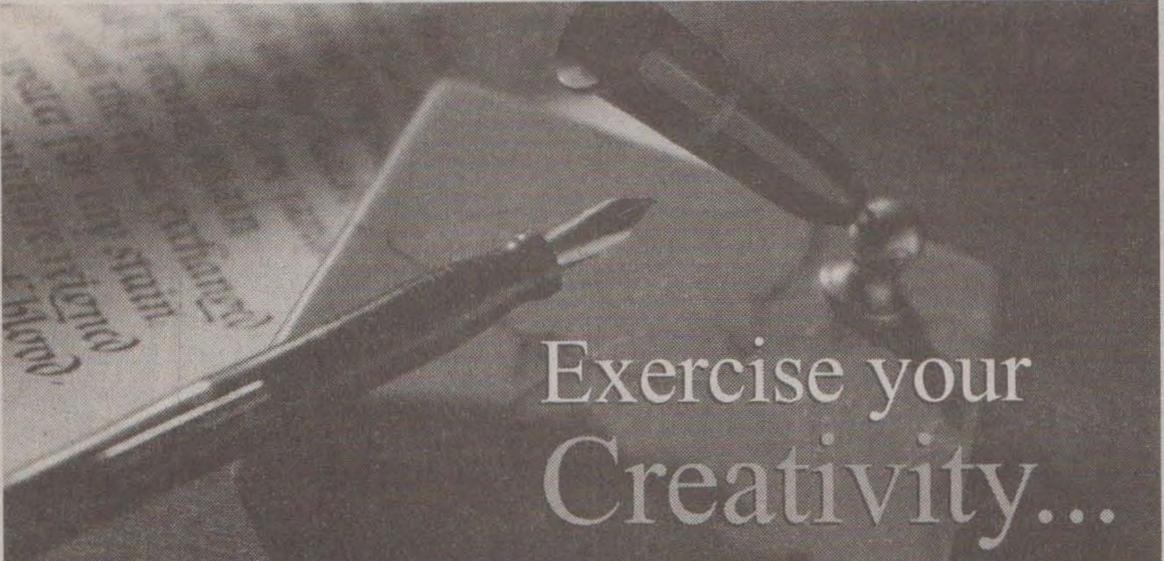
But music was also in Dave’s blood. His mother’s father was Payson Re, who led the orchestra at New York’s Stork Club from the 1930s to the 1950s, sharing the stage with Walter Winchell’s weekly broadcasts. Re was drinking buddies with Pee Wee Russell. He gave Bobby Hackett his first trumpet.

“He’s kind of a footnote in the history of jazz and in the reference books,” Zollo says with a smile. Re was crippled by a stroke not long after Dave was born, and lost the ability to play. At the age of 6 or 7, Zollo would play for his grandfather, keeping the music alive in a way Re himself no longer could. The symbolic importance of that reverberates loud in Zollo’s own music history: “He died when I was 8 or 9, but I was aware of his presence from the minute I started playing the piano. It was made clear to me that it is what he did for a living, that it could be done.”

“Payson Re and the History of White Jazz” was the title of the honors thesis Dave Zollo was working on in 1992. At the same time, his band, High and Lonesome, was playing more and more gigs, beginning to tour, and the music came into direct conflict with his academic future.

“I thought: ‘Do I want to write about it or do I want to do it?’ So I said, ‘Fuck it, let’s do it.’ I quit school and I never looked back.”





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Devoting himself to his new music career, Zollo recorded High and Lonesome's first album for Shed Records, a label run by area musicians Greg Brown, Radoslav Lorkovic and Zollo's mentor, Bo Ramsey. The album enjoyed a modest success, the band toured more extensively in the United States, then Europe, and Zollo wrote prolifically. Two years passed. Zollo's musical style evolved and became more personal. He ultimately decided he had enough original material for a solo album but suddenly suffered a setback. The members of the Shed collective had their own touring schedules that made management impossible, and with no one at the helm, the company foundered in a sea of paperwork and administration. With no label, but a record bubbling in his brain, Zollo stepped up.

Young and stupid

"Being young and stupid and not knowing any better, I said, 'Yeah, I'll start a label,'" and thus Trailer Records was born. Zollo produced his solo album, *The Morning is a Long Way From Home*, and soon Brown and Ramsey were signed on as well. "The idea was to have a place to put out my own records, obviously," Zollo explains, "but also as a way to give back to Bo, who's really done so much for me, selflessly and generously. I don't have much to offer a guy like this, but I can offer up my energy and my youth and my ignorance, throwing myself in there."

And that's what he did, at first operating out of an actual trailer south of town that lent its image for the label's logo. Iowa artists Joe Price, Jennifer Danielson, Brother Trucker, even Greg Brown's daughter Pieta joined the Trailer Records stable. From the beginning, Zollo ran the organization like a family, a community based on trust and cooperation. "It's an organic thing that operates under the philosophy that a family, a community, can go out into the world and support each other, and when something good happens to one member of the family, then everyone benefits."

"There are no contracts, no advances, no big budgets, and no illusions," explains Kelly Pardekooper, recently returned from a European tour promoting his second Trailer release, *House of Mud*. "Trailer is a great, loose, cooperative-type affiliation. It's hard work, but it's made easier when you have folks who are in the same boat and have been there and can guide you."

While Trailer resembles a collective, Zollo's fingerprints are everywhere: in the recording, producing, publication and distribution of virtually every album. That level of involvement has so

far been interrupted only once, during a 1996 sabbatical to Nashville, where he recorded with Todd Snider for the RCA label. But the lure of Nashville's bright lights and industry clout couldn't blind Zollo to the connection he felt to Iowa; after a year, he and his wife, Des Moines native Beth Oxler, returned to buy a house in the town of his blood and musical families.

"I didn't view being an artist in Iowa as being a second-class existence," Zollo says. "It's what I do, who I am, where I'm from, and it's really important to me to have that reflected in my work."

Under Zollo's command, the label slowly grew in size and respect. In 2000, Grammy nominee and folk/roots landmark Greg Brown brought a national spotlight to the label when he chose Trailer to release *Over and Under*, a record many consider to be Brown's best work to date. Bo Ramsey released three albums on Trailer in the late '90s, during the period when he was touring, recording and producing with alt-country star Lucinda Williams, performing with her on stage and in front of David Letterman's studio audience. The glow of this spotlight lit up other Trailer artists, and the relentless touring schedules of Brown, Ramsey, Zollo and the entire

"There are
no contracts,
no advances,
no big budgets,
and no illusions."

- Trailer artist
Kelly Pardekooper

Trailer stable spread the label's name across the state and country, a family of musicians climbing up together.

Andy Fleming of the Des Moines-based Trailer band Brother Trucker remembers, "Once, Bejae Fleming drove hours from Ames to Cedar Falls just to record four lines of beautiful harmony for one song. Sitting next to Greg Brown on the steps, or singing along with Bo—



Joe Price

it gives me chills and blows my mind. Witnessing that real brotherhood—we feel lucky as hell."

What almost ended it all

By the turn of the millenium, the label was bursting local seams. It was time for wider distribution. Several distributors courted Trailer, including the label Greg Brown founded and still releases on, Red House. But Zollo signed with New York outfit The Knitting Factory, in part because Iowa native Kenny Sehgal ran it. Little did Zollo know, that his years of hard work and enthusiasm were being rewarded with a success that would almost destroy Trailer Records.

Though not a roots music label, The Knitting Factory's brand recognition promised to increase Trailer Records' revenues and exposure. With one catch: Zollo had to pay up front for the advertising that the wider distribution required. So Zollo borrowed money to promote the records.

Not long after, The Knitting Factory was bought out by a larger interest and reorganized. Then the Knitting Factory's smaller in-house distribution collapsed.

"It was a clusterfuck." Zollo wipes his brow at the memory. Based on the sales projections given him by The Knitting Factory, Zollo had personally borrowed a large amount of money to spend on promotion, and now his vital distribution was imploding. "Kenny wasn't responsible for the fucking, but still. Instead of running around, frantically trying to borrow all this money, I should have taken a closer look, but anyway..." He rubs his shoulders, burdened by the clarity of hindsight. "When the statements came in, they were 15 percent of projections."

Zollo's voice darkens with emphasis: "One-five."

The Knitting Factory, up its own creek without a paddle, did nothing to remedy Trailer's woe, concentrating instead on those acts that might bring the biggest hits in the short term. "You see a Hootie that sells 18 million records, so they want a bunch more Hooties," Zollo laments. "You got a Garth Brooks, they want to sign a bunch more Garth Brooks. So instead of inspiring creativity and artistry, you inspire this cookie cutter thing that takes away from artistry and makes for a shallow industry."

It seemed like Zollo was being punished for breaking his own rules—convinced to sign with a large New York distributor by the promise of big money and industry connection. Even Zollo himself might admit he should have known better, that he should have taken the advice he now gives to new musicians: "I tell everyone the same thing: Develop your home area first: your states, your region, your town. You're not going to make a living playing in New York—so many young bands get seduced by that. They say, 'Well, I'm going to play in New York.' Well, who gives a shit if no one knows who you are—it doesn't matter."

If only he'd listened.

The advertising money wasted and debt piling up—and The Knitting Factory unable even to get the records into stores—Trailer was at a low point. Zollo closed the label's downtown office and moved it into his own home. He severed the contract with The Knitting Factory—leaving Trailer without national distribution—having spent so much time and money to wind up in

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essentially the same position he'd been in two years before.

To the rescue

It was then that the community he'd built supported itself. None of the acts fled; the partnerships Zollo had cemented with a handshake instead of a contract became the foundation of the resurrection, and the family came together. Artists on the label performed together to increase visibility and share in each other's art.

In a performance at the Maintenance Shop in Ames, Pardekooper saw the essence of the Trailer ethic: "Even with crazy performing schedules, we had Greg Brown, Ba Ramsey, Joe Price, Dave Zollo, Brother Trucker, Eric Straumanis, and myself doing two separate shows to a packed crowd," he reminisces. That coming together, even in the toughest times, distinguished Trailer as unique in an industry ruled by craven consumerism. "It was a special night where we all got to hang out and enjoy each other's music, a rare chance for people to see a great collection of Iowa music in one night."

Reconnecting to the Iowa roots of their roots sound also taught Zollo that liability is a matter of perspective. "OK—Iowa does not have many people, and many of them are old people who don't like rock and roll," he says, pointing out the obvious drawbacks to remaining local in focus. But another word for small is intimate. "The lack of visibility is the up-side. The audience is smaller, but Iowans embrace their own, and in Iowa you're not under the watchful eye of corporate Big Brother telling what musicians can and can't be: too old, too fat, too provocative."

Instead of shattering his faith, The Knitting Factory fiasco taught Zollo to trust more—in those things he knew were right all the time: those Midwestern values of hard work and stamina that New York producers find simple and quaint. Zollo did not need a distributor with connections so much as he needed a distributor he connected with.

Enter Red Eye USA, a company Zollo had turned down a year before. As most of the entertainment industry suffered from the weakened economy and fickle public, Red Eye prospered. Based in the Midwest, and voted the Independent Distributor of the Year by National Association of Independent Record Distributors (NAIRD) two years running, the company's corporate model matched Zollo's own.

"Companies that work closely with their labels and do it the old-fashioned way"—Zollo's face and voice acknowl-

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“Sitting next to Greg Brown on the steps, or singing along with Bo—it gives me chills and blows my mind. Witnessing that real brotherhood—we feel lucky as hell.”

- Andy Fleming,
Brother Trucker

edge the cliché, but how else to say it?—“where they cultivate relationships and believe in artist development and the long term—they’re flourishing now, while the business as a whole is struggling.”

The new distribution deal, only a few months old, promises to help lift Trailer from its financial debt. Trailer has moved operations out of Zollo’s house and back downtown. Zollo’s newest release, *The Big Night*, has received critical success and is beginning to earn the sales it deserves. The much anticipated release of Greg Brown’s next album on Trailer promises to break old sales records. More than that, it represents the complete circle Zollo has traveled to find home, a story began in youth and ignorance and ending with maturity and wisdom.

“Some artists have a persona that is their stage persona, and then they’re someone else entirely off stage, and I don’t think that’s the case with me,”



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Zollo says. "It's the same with running the label, and I think what little success I've had professionally is because of that."

Perhaps that is what makes Zollo seem old: He is an anachronism. A record mogul whose ethics have never allowed him to be paid one cent by the company he owns. A rock star who mows his own lawn. A sex symbol (and if you've ever seen his effect on a crowd, you know) who loves his wife. A troubadour who cherishes tummy-time with son Rocco more than the road.

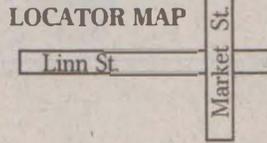
"We're still standing, though the snarling jackals are nipping at our heels," Zollo says. "I plan on surviving long

enough to give the bastards the bird before I go anywhere." Hands behind head, Zollo clearly relishes the thought. "Preferably with a glass of champagne in one hand and a stogie in the other."

OK—so he is kind of a rock star.

As he slides out of the booth, excusing himself to return home to help Beth with Rocco and watch the tragedy of the Cub's playoff hopes, Zollo stretches his ropy arms and shakes out his legs. He appreciates the interview, if there are questions just give him a call—anytime, and offers his hand. A 21st-century man who believes in the old-fashioned way. **LV**

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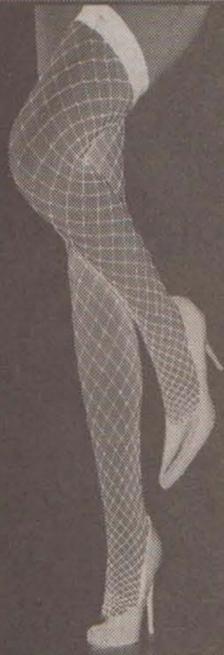


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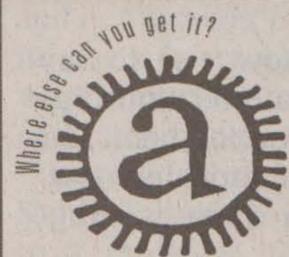
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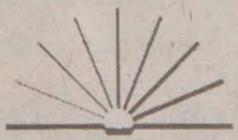
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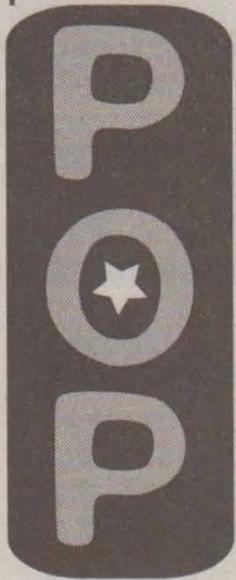
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Deconstructing Eminem

In 2001, a new kind of pop music genre emerged from the arty, ironic bowels of London, snowballing into a full-blown pop music movement called mash-ups. The first mash-up classic that got major media attention was Freelance Hellraiser's "A Stroke of Genie-us," a shotgun wedding where pop diva Christina Aguilera

prairie



Kembrew
McLeod

sings atop the music of the Strokes, NYC's premier über-hip band for three years going. Even Aguilera, trying to gather as much street cred as possible, said of the intellectual property-infringing song, "It's cool." Since this summer, I've been working with my friend Ben Franzen on a documentary about sampling titled *Copyright Criminals: This is a Sampling Sport*, which has sent me to London, New York and San Francisco to ask musicians really nerdy questions about copyright and art. Rather than reporting to you what was said in these interviews, I want to offer my own meditations on this illegal subject.

One of the finest mash-up masterpieces is Soulwax's "Smells Like Teen Booty," a smirky track that hammers Nirvana's "Smells Like Teen Spirit" into "Bootilicious," by Destiny's Child. Everything is business as usual when the song kicks off with that familiar riff, until you hear the voices of Destiny's Child: "Kelly, can you handle this? Michelle, can you handle this? Beyoncé, can you handle this? Woououououou!" It's a marriage made in hell, and it sounds heavenly. My favorite mash-up, though, crosses Eminem's "Without Me" with "Come On Eileen" by Dexy's Midnight Runners, which—dare I say it?—aurally emasculates the hyper masculine white rapper by placing him atop a goofy one-hit wonder of the 1980s. At their best, mash-ups sound equally right and wrong—meaning the fusion is seamless (like it was *meant to be*), but the effect is also weird and jarring.

The mash-up phenomena couldn't have happened without personal computers,

Mash-ups are an extension of the experimental spirit of hip-hop, before it was co-opted and lost that loving feeling. It's popular-culture democracy at work, allowing people to participate in—to make and remake—the pop culture that surrounds them.

which run the simple programs that allow amateur bedroom composers to juxtapose two or more songs in interesting ways. It also couldn't have happened without, of course, the digital distribution power of the Internet. Although I'm very skeptical of some of the overblown claims made by techno-savvy readers of *Wired* and their ilk—claims that miss the point that not everyone has or will have access to these new technologies—I think something interesting and new is gong on. The Internet is the Wild West of today, sort of like hip-hop in the late 1980s before laws and bureaucracies strangled its creative potential.

I hope this won't happen to the Internet, but history demonstrates over and over that the creative door eventually slams shut (though history also shows that alternatives always pop up, like a crazy sociological version of that gophers-and-hammers carnival game). Mash-ups are an extension of the experimental spirit of hip-hop, before it was co-opted and lost that loving feeling. It's popular-culture democracy at work, allowing people to participate in—to make and remake—the pop culture that surrounds them. Also, by blurring high and low culture (Nirvana representing the high and Destiny's Child the low), these mash-ups help to demolish the elitist pop cultural hierarchy that rock critics and music collecting snobs have perpetuated. With mash-ups, Nirvana and Destiny's Child can sit comfortably at the same table, perhaps showing holier-than-thou arbiters of cool that legitimate pleasures can be found in both varieties of popular music.

In many ways, mash-ups unknowingly follow Derrida's deconstructionist method, where a text is pried open, disassembled and drained of its authority. Instead of one meaning there is a multiplicity of meanings. I realize that my explanation of deconstruction is bound to get me in trouble, because,

as Derrida himself warns us, "All attempts to define deconstruction are bound to be false." He's less a curmudgeon than a prankster; the impulse to undermine any and all definitions of deconstruction stems more from a desire to say, "Fuck authority." The deconstructivist must borrow "all the strategies and economic resources of subversion from the old structure," ripping them off wholesale. Much like a judo master turns the strength of the enemy against itself, the deconstructionist combatant does the same with the opponent's philosophical assumptions (resorting to deception and dirty tricks if necessary).

In the case of mash-ups, the underlying motivations of bedroom computer composers—both explicitly stated and implicitly assumed—is to explode music genres and the arbitrary hierarchies of taste that rule pop music. When you take the bad boy rhymes of Eminem and force him to rap over "Come On Eileen" by Dexy's Midnight Runners, you've engaged in an act of violence and trickery. What makes this example significant is that the humorless white rapper takes himself far too seriously, which at times reduces his image to self-parody. This is ironic because at the same time that he makes fun of boy bands and others in his videos, Eminem doesn't like it when others satirize him. (At his most pathetic and defensive, he once got into a backstage verbal fight with a sock puppet that mocked him during an MTV awards show skit.)

I can guarantee you that Marshall Mathers isn't too happy about having to rap on top of the "gay"-sounding Dexy's Midnight Runners, but there's nothing he can do about it. His powerlessness illustrates how he, as an author, has no control over how his music is received and understood—that he literally doesn't have the final word, as Roland Barthes would say—no matter how many sock puppets he tries to beat down. LV

CD Reviews

Nick Stika

Big Ol' Moon

Nick Stika's name should be familiar to longtime fans of Iowa City music. He's been playing professionally around these parts in various bands for over 25 years. He played guitar and sang in the pop-punk band The Buzzards in the early '80s, was part of the original Stickman (who are still around and will be releasing a new disc soon—but without Stika), and a longtime member of Dogs on Skis (with whom Stika still performs).

Stika also has been performing as a solo acoustic artist for more than a decade. Although he usually gigs as a cover artist, he's just released his first solo disc of all original tunes.

Stika favors folk-based, pop-style music. If you catch him live, he plays songs like James Taylor's "Fire and Rain," Steve Goodman's "City of New Orleans" and such. His self-penned songs follow in that tradition, if maybe a bit more folk than pop oriented. Consider a tune like "Places," which is about, well, places, and as he lives in Iowa City, they are locations we all know—Ralston Creek, Hickory Hill Park, Oakland Cemetery. Stika sings and plays as the tranquil sites he visits compel him to reflect: "When we were kids the skies were bluer/The truth seemed just a little bit truer/The trees were green/The air was clean/Things were just a little bit purer." Stika's reminiscences are more heartfelt than profound, but ring with a clear, sweet earnestness.

Almost all the songs are upbeat, even when dealing with unpleasant topics, such as the laconically titled "Happy Place," which concerns the mental haven one creates when life's circumstances are rough and hard. And there is the sad lament, "Drink You Gone," which as the title suggests, concerns a person drinking to forget a relationship that's over. Stika sings these and the other tunes in a conversational tone, as if he's speaking to a friend, and every word is plainly enunciated and understood. Don't let the simplicity fool you, though. Singing this clearly is a difficult art. The same is true of Stika's guitar playing. He seems to be merely strumming behind the lyrics, yet the gentle shifts in tone and meter reveal a more subtle talent. In fact, one of the disc's special highlights is the lovely, lilting instrumental, "Hey Baby, I'm Wishing on a Poet."

Stika sings all the vocals and plays all the instruments (acoustic and electric guitars, harmonica) on *Big Ol' Moon* and recorded it at his home studio. It's a finely crafted work full of tender surprises—including a surprise track at the end of the disc, the funny "I Faked Mine, Too." Be sure to listen for it.

Steve Horowitz



Jason Reeves

Makeshift Aircraft

I'm beginning to think if you throw a rock in Iowa City, you're going to hit a musician. Jason Reeves graduated this year from City High, and is my son's roommate. When he gave me a copy of his new CD, I didn't have particularly high expectations. While I think everyone who can, should play music, most aren't doing the world a favor by recording a CD of their songs.

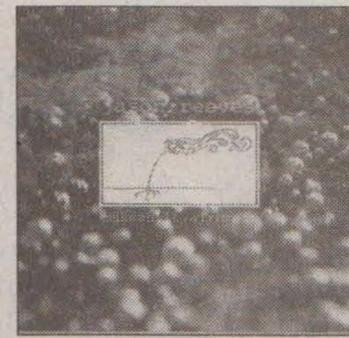
That being said, *Makeshift Aircrafts* is an especially pleasant surprise. Jason has a sure hand with the acoustic guitar and a near-perfect ear for folk-pop melody. Where his lyrics can sound like the work of someone too young to be in the places he performs, he smoothes over the rough edges with his sweet, sleepy, slurred tenor. Best of all, while you can point to his precursors—James Taylor, Jackson Browne, Greg Brown—Reeves doesn't really sound like anyone other than himself.

Reeves has an ability to glean a fresh melody and an open-hearted lyric from the well-trampled fields of the folk-pop tradition. He has a knack for effortlessly chained rhymes: "I've dreamed of the feeling when words lose their meaning and rooms fall away from their horrible ceilings and love is the center of all of our being again" ("Never Be Free"). And he devastates with lines like "the flood is coming/Put the children all into a boat and float 'em far away/They won't miss their mommies and they never really knew their daddies anyway." That song ("Makeshift Aircrafts") is in the grand tradition of folk apocalypses like Jackson Browne's "Before the Deluge" and Crosby Stills & Nash's "Wooden Ships." But Jason's apocalypse couches its bleak imagery in a sunny melody; in the manner of Joy Division's "Love Will Tear Us Apart." It's a feat of delicious misdirection, like an Irish lullaby about murder, and a sign that Reeves already knows how to comfort and disturb at the same time.

He can write a line like "peace is the prettiest magical potion/Peace is the gentlest wave in the ocean/Peace has been buried by waves in the ocean" ("Buried By Waves in the Ocean") that starts out giddy only to revise its way into something darker. While you're still scratching your head over that line, he hits you with "the world is a factory doped up on everything/Fiending for chemicals/God is in anything." I'm not sure that even he knows where he's going with this, but he's quite good at persuading you to come along for the ride.

The simple, spare, arrangements—mostly just guitar and voice—and the subtle, unobtrusive production work by Ken Heaton give the CD an intimate feeling. You feel like a fly on the wall in Jason's room, hearing him work out the puzzle of the world with his guitar. It's our good luck that he's been able to get this far in mastering his craft without yet realizing it's a puzzle no one solves.

Kent Williams



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A-LIST

Poison the Well

Dec. 6 • Gabe's

The Holidays seem like a good time to take in some hardcore music with heart, and Poison the Well fairly blazed the trail when it comes to the "noisecore emo" genre. When the band formed in '97, guitarist Derek Miller says "that idea was something kind of new and fresh since we were all fans of both heavy and melodic music." Following the release of an EP, *Distance Only Makes the Heart Grow Fonder*, the band toured, "playing to 15 kids, sleeping on sticky floors, living off the Amoco special everyday." In 1999, band members finally cleared high school, signed to Trustkill Records and recorded *The Opposite of December*, soon followed by *Tear From The Red*, their angriest and most melodic work to date. Now they've released their best record yet, *You Come Before You*. Says Derek, "We write without thoughts of mainstream success or indie credibility. We aren't



Poison the Well

here to change the world or any of that crap, we are here so that you can put in our record, sit back, and feel good about what you're hearing. No conspiracies, no plots, no bullshit; just honest music." Early show: 6pm; Everytime I Die opens. 330 E. Washington St., Iowa City, 354-4788

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Roots of Renewal, paintings, photographs, sculpture and installations by 18 artists, most from the Midwest, examining the culture and life of the great plains as it faces pressure from new industries, new farming practices, new immigrants, and new attitudes toward the original tall grass prairie, through Dec. 18 • *Return and Bounty's Balance*, installation by Chaden Halfhill, Des Moines, through Dec. 14, Falconer Gallery and Davis Building • *Roots of Renewal* sculpture by Patrick Dougherty, through Dec. 14, Holden Sculpture Courtyard.

Hudson River Gallery

538 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 358-8488

Wood-fired ceramics by James Kasper, Dec. 4-Jan. 16; opening reception Dec. 4, 6-8pm.

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Red Avocado

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

Grace and Beauty *Ragtime* CD-release and craft sale, Dec. 7, 2-4pm.

Riverside Theatre

213 N. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 338-7672

Foil imaging by Nora Cross, through Dec. 21.

Ruby's Pearl

323 E. Market St., Iowa City, 248-0032

Paintings by Iowa City artist Betsy Ray, through December; opening reception Dec. 5, 4-6pm.

UI Hospitals and Clinics

Project Art of UIHC, Iowa City, 353-6417

Overcoming Obstacles: Artists with Disabilities, drawings and paintings by Mary Mitchell, Des Moines; watercolors by Kevin Bunch, Albia; drawings by Mary Mitchell, Des Moines; acrylic paintings by Bonny Thayer, Burlington; and artwork by the late Alva Gene Dexheimer of Missouri,

through December, Patient and Visitor Activities Center, 8th floor John Colloton Pavilion • Photographs by Thomas Lamperti, Iowa City, through Jan. 24, Boyd Tower West Lobby • Oil paintings by IC artist Aaron Sinift, through Jan. 30, Patient and Visitor Activities Center, 8th floor John Colloton Pavilion.

UI Museum of Art

150 North Riverside Dr., Iowa City, 335-1727

Exhibition and sale of more than 50 works by former UI School of Art and Art History faculty member James Lechay, through Dec. 7.

MUSIC

The Barn Restaurant

4709 220 Trail, Amana, 622-3214

7:30-11:30pm

Steve Price, Nov. 28 • BillyLee Janey, Nov. 29 • Merrill Miller, Dec. 4 • Ben Eaton, Dec. 5 • Jean Blum, Dec. 6 • Bryce Janey, Dec. 11 • Mad River Duo, Dec. 12 • The Tornadoes, Dec. 13 • Open mike with Kimberlie Lambert, Dec. 18 • Scott and Michelle Dalziel, Dec. 19 • Merrill Miller, Dec. 20.

Clapp Recital Hall

University of Iowa campus, Iowa City, 335-1160

Jeffrey Agrell, horn player; Evan Mazunik, jazz pianist and composer, Dec. 2, 8pm • Iowa Center for New Music, Dec. 4, 8pm • "Schumann by Three: Songs and a Lecture," with soprano Rachel Joselson, pianist Uriel Tsachor and UI music theory faculty member Gregory Marion, Dec. 5, 8pm • UI Jazz Repertory Ensemble, Dec. 6, 8pm • Philharmonia and All-University String Orchestra, Dec. 7, 3pm • Composers Workshop, Dec. 7, 8pm • David Gier, trombone; David Greenhoe, trumpet; Shari Rhoads, piano; Mark Weiger, oboe; Maurita Murphy Mead, clarinet; Volkan Orhan, double bass; Dan Moore, percussion, Dec. 9, 8pm • University and Concert Band, Dec. 10, 8pm • Annette-Barbara Vogel, violin, chamber concert, Dec. 11, 8pm • *Midnight at Maxim's: A Merry Night with the Merry Widow*, UI Martha-Ellen Tye Opera Theater, Dec. 13, 8pm • Oddbar Jazz Ensemble, Dec. 14, 2pm • Last Chance Percussion Concert, UI Percussion Ensemble, Dec. 14, 8pm • John Jensen, piano; John Muriello, baritone, Jan. 23, 8pm • Maia Quartet, Jan. 24, 2pm • Honor String Orchestra concert, Jan. 31, 7pm.

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Dec. 6th 5:30 - 6:45 New Horizons String Orchestra / 7 - 9 P.M. Uncalled 4
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Dec. 12th Brother Bob Bisbee's Guitar LIVE 7 P.M.
Dec. 20th Celtic sounds from The Beggermen LIVE 7 P.M.

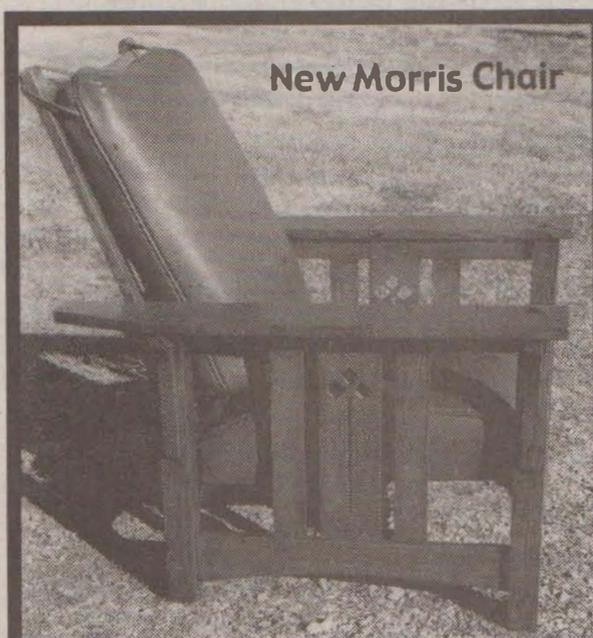
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- Sat Dec 20 **TECHNO HOUSE DJs**
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Tribute, Dec 4-6 • A Celtic Christmas with Bohola, Dec. 18 • Vance Gilbert, Jan. 9 • Kelly Joe Phelps, Jan. 25 • Eric Bibb, Jan. 28 • John Gorka, Jan. 31.

Downey Street

Hoover Kiosk Courtyard, West Branch,
643-4545

West Branch Band Ensemble (5:30-6:15pm), Uncalled 4 (6:30-9pm), Dec. 5 • New Horizons String Orchestra (5:30-6:45pm), Uncalled 4 (6:30-9pm), Dec. 6 • Tom's Guitar Show, Dec. 13, 7pm • Brother Bob Bisbee, Dec. 12, 7pm • The Beggermen, Dec. 20, 7pm.

Falconer Gallery

Grinnell College, 1108 Park St., Grinnell, 641-269-4660

Boland-Dowdall Duo, Dec. 6, 7:30pm.

First Presbyterian Church

2701 Rochester Ave., Iowa City

Christmas with Musick's Feast, Dec. 6, 8pm, 430-4165.

Gabe's

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

DJ Nate Unique, Nov. 27 • Kita, Burnout, Breach Loader, Standing Akimbo, Bottom Feeder, Nov. 28 • The Leah Quinelle All-Stars, Dec. 1 • Flag Grigory's Five Limb Offering and Automaton Consort, Dec. 3 • Leven, 8 Found Dead, Dec. 4 • Grasshopper Takeover, Sny McGill, The Peal, Dec. 5 • Early show (6pm): Poison the Well, Everytime I Die, The Bronx, Code Seven; Late show (10pm): Human Aftertaste, Meth and Goats, The One Night Standards, Dec. 6 • Rope, Dec. 7 • Whitsend, Dec. 10 • Kill Hannah, Swizzle Tree, Dec. 11 • KRUI/Daily Iowan Battle of the Bands, Dec. 12 • Early show (6pm): Destrophy CD release; Late show (10pm): Techno/house DJ, Dec. 13 • Benefit for the Matt Davis Scholarship Fund, Dec. 16 • Early show: The UFC (Undisputed Freestyle Contest hosted by Vilic with appearances by Automatik and Bloodthirsty); Late show: Bad Fathers, Breech Loader, Breakdance, Sharing Mass Graves, Dec. 19 • DJ Nate Unique, Dec. 20 • Split Lip Rayfield, Dec. 21 • Black X-Mas Party!, Dec. 25 • My Life Anthem, Dec. 27 • New Years Eve Party with Terrence Parker, Dec. 31 • Gravity Shackles, Babies with Rabies, Rockodiles, Jan. 2 • Ricky Fitts, Jan. 12 • Daughter, Jan. 15 • Youngblood Brass Band, Jan. 30.

The Green Room

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

Blues Jam Mondays, Funk and Jazz Jam Tuesdays

Kevin Basset, Nov. 28 • Heiruspecs, Alon Project, Dec. 4 • Spacklebury, 5th of Paradise, Dec. 5 • Broken Grass, Bockman's Euphio, Dec. 6 • Natty Nation, Dec. 12 • Hackensaw Boys, Schwillbillies, Dec. 13 • Heart of Gold, Dec. 19 • Nolan, Sny Magill, Dan Szech, Dec. 20 • Euforia, Gglitch, Dec. 31.

Hancher Auditorium

UI campus, Iowa City, 335-1160

University Symphony and Choruses, Dec. 3, 8pm • "Cocoa and Carols," annual holiday extravaganza of the UI Old Gold singers, Dec. 6, 2 & 8pm • *Mamma Mia!*, international hit musical featuring 20 of ABBA's songs, Dec. 9-12, 8pm; Dec. 13-14, 2pm & 8pm • SoVoSó, Jan. 28, 8pm.

Harper Hall

Voxman Music Bldg., UI campus, Iowa City

The Fulton Piano Trio, Dec. 2, 8pm • Nancy Buck and Andrew Campbell, viola-and-piano duo, Dec. 5, 8pm • Improvisation Class concert, Dec. 8, 8pm.

Iowa Memorial Union

UI campus, Iowa City, 335-3059

Bela Fleck, Dec. 9, 8pm.

The Java House

211 E. Washington St., 341-0012

WSUI's "Iowa Talks Live from the Java House," Fridays, 10am

Kirkwood Community College

Ballantyne Auditorium, Iowa Hall, 6301

Kirkwood Blvd. SW, Cedar Rapids, 398-5578

Kirkwood Chorale, Dec. 5, 7:30pm • Kirkwood Concert Band, Dec. 6, 7:30pm.

Martini's

127 E. College St., Iowa City, 351-5536

Shows at 9:30pm

Soul Power DJs, Nov. 29 • Johnny Kilowatt, Dec. 5 • Soul Searchers, Dec. 6 • Moe Band, Dec. 12 • Ashanti, Dec. 13 • McMurrin/Johnson Trio, Dec. 19 • Dave Zollo, Dec. 20.

The Mill

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

Friends of Old Time Music acoustic jam session Tuesdays, 9pm; Open Mike Mondays, 8pm; all shows 8pm doors unless otherwise noted

B.F. Burt and the Blues Instigators, Nov. 29 • Punk/Folk singer-songwriter SPOT, Nov. 30, 7pm • Jazz Repertory Ensemble, UI Latin Group, Dec. 4 • Mike and Amy Finders Band, The Letterpress Opry, Dec. 5 • Big Wooden Radio, Dec. 6 • Lazy Boy and the Recliners, Dec. 7, 7pm • Flying Bacchus, Dec. 11 • Brother Trucker, Dec. 12 • Acoustic Mayhem, Dec. 13 • Sam Knutson's Birthday Party featuring Shame Train, Ben Schmidt and more, Dec. 18 • Pieta Brown and Bo Ramsey, Dec. 19 • Dave Zollo and the Body Electric, Dec. 20 • Becca Sutcliffe, Sara Pace, Dec. 27 • Kelly Pardekooper, Joe Price, Dec. 31.

The Q Bar

211 Iowa Ave., Iowa City, 337-9107

Shows at 10:30pm

The Schwag, Dec. 5.

Paramount Theatre

123 Third Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids, 363-1888

"Music from Many Lands," Cedar Rapids Symphony Discovery Concert, Jan. 10, 9:30am & 11am • "An International Celebration," Cedar Rapids Symphony Youth Concert, Jan. 13, 9:45am & 11:10am • Ani Difranco, Jan. 20, 7:30pm • "Scandinavian Symphonies," Cedar Rapids Symphony Orchestra, Jan. 24, 8pm.

Red Avocado

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

Grace and Beauty Ragtime CD-release and craft sale, Dec. 7, 2-4pm.

Sanctuary

405 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 351-5692

Jazz Jam, Thursdays

Kelly Pardekooper, Nov. 28 • Jazz Jam w/ Steve Grismore, Dec. 4 • Inception, Dec. 5-6 • UI Jazz Combo, Dec. 9-11 • Chesnik, Neuman & Wilson Jazz Trio, Dec. 12 • Combo Nuevo, Dec. 13 • Dave Moore, Dec. 18 • Steve Grismore Jazz Band, Dec. 19-20 • Brad Townsend Quartet, Dec. 27 • Dave Moore Band w/ Al Murphy, Rick Cicalo and Dustin Busch, Dec. 31.

Senior Center

28 S. Linn St., Iowa City

New Horizons Orchestra, Dec. 4, 11:30am • Heartbeats Choir, Dec. 15, 12:15pm.

Theatre Cedar Rapids

102 Third St. SE, Cedar Rapids, 366-8592

La Traviata, Cedar Rapids Opera Theatre, Jan. 9 & 11.

UI Museum of Art

150 North Riverside Dr., Iowa City, 335-1727

The UI Walker Opera Quartet, arias and duets from popular operas, Dec. 4, 7:30pm.

Uptown Bill's small Mall

401 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 339-0401

Mud River Open Mic, Fridays, 8-11pm, sign up 7.30pm, all welcome • Irish slow session (for more info contact Tara Dutcher, tara@schoolperformingarts.com), Sundays, 2-4pm
Israel Neuman/Cheznik/Wilson Jazz Trio, Nov. 29, 8-11pm • Peter Mulvey, Ben Schmidt, Dec. 6, 8:30pm • Classical Woodwind Quartet, Dec. 7, 4-6pm • The Unsung Forum, Dec. 11, 7:45pm • Mad River Duo, Dec. 13, 8:30pm • Wave, Dec. 16, 7-9pm • Mud River Dinner and Jam, Dec. 18, 5-9pm • Small World Holiday Concert, Dec. 20, 8-11pm • The Unsung Forum, Jan. 8, 7:45pm • Jeffery Morgan, Mark Chorpene, Jan. 10, 8-11pm • Mud River Dinner and Jam, Jan. 15, 5-9pm • Ben Schmidt, Jan. 17, 8-11pm • Brandon Ross, Jan. 24, 8-11pm • Edie Carey, Jan. 25, 6-8pm • DVIP Benefit w/ Robert Morey, Jan. 31, 8-11pm.

US Cellular Center

370 First Avenue NE, Cedar Rapids, 363-1888

A Perfect Circle, Dec. 6, 8pm • Cedar Rapids Symphony Holiday Pops Concert, Dec. 13, 2:30pm & 8pm; Dec. 14, 2:30pm

Yacht Club

13 S. Linn St., Iowa City, 337-6464

Blues Jam hosted, Sundays 8pm-12am

The Recharounds, Dec. 2 • Funkmaster Cracker, Dec. 3 • Rut Huxter, The Spread, Dec. 4 • ProtostarR, Dec. 5 • Dennis McMurrin and the Demolition Band, Dec. 6 • Renaissance, Dec. 9 • Emmett & Friends Jam Session, Dec. 10 • Nikki Lunden, Dec. 11 • Alma Hovey Hayride, Dec. 12 • Star Candy, Dec. 13 • Meerfolk, Dec. 16 • Funkmaster Cracker, Dec. 17 • Tom Hatch, Dec. 22 • Euforia, Jan. 23 • One Year Anniversary Party with David Zollo and the Body Electric, Kristie Stremel, Jan. 24 • Star Candy, Jan. 31.

Zion Lutheran Church

310 N. Johnson St., Iowa City

The Quire, "Magnificat, Magic and Mysteries," Dec. 6, 8pm, 337-6203.

DANCE

Hancher Auditorium

UI campus, Iowa City, 335-1160

Full Cycle, Tamango's Urban Tap, Jan. 24, 8pm • Cinderella, Moscow Festival Ballet, Jan. 30, 7pm.

Old Brick

26 E. Market St., Iowa City

Tamango's Urban Tap Welcome/Jam Party, Jan. 22, 7:30pm.

Scattergood Friends School

1951 Delta Ave., West Branch, 643-7600

Barn dance, begins at 8pm

Wapsi Creek; Roger Alexander & Marcia Minear, callers, Jan. 16.

Senior Center

28 S. Linn St., Iowa City

Dancers of Habeas Corpus and Arts a la Carte present a dance workshop focusing on the 1960s Go-Go and 1970s Disco dances, Dec. 5, 2pm.

Space/Place Theater

North Hall, UI campus, Iowa City

Graduate Concert, UI Dance Department, Dec. 4-6, 8pm • Advanced Choreographic Design Concert, Dec. 11-13, 8pm.

THEATER/ PERFORMANCE

Campbell Steele Gallery

1064 Seventh Ave., Marion (Unless noted otherwise), 373-9211

Liars Holographic Radio Theatre, music and original skits, Dec. 19-20, 8pm, Theatre Cedar Rapids; Jan. 30-31, 8pm; Feb. 1, 7pm.

Iowa City Community Theatre

Johnson Co. Fairgrounds, Iowa City, 338-0443

Shows Fri. & Sat. 8pm, Sun. 2:30pm

The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe, Jan. 9-10, 16-18, 23-25.

Old Creamery Theatre

Price Creek Stage, 39 38th Ave., Amana,

800-352-6262

Wed., Fri., Sat. 8pm; Thurs., Sat., Sun. 3pm.

Holiday Hijinks, 1963, Lance Merckelson brings back the high school holiday variety show canceled 40 years ago in the wake of President Kennedy's assassination, through Dec. 21.

Paramount Theatre

123 Third Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids, 363-1888

The Sound of Music, Jan. 7, 8pm • The Music Man, Jan. 29, 7:30pm.

Riverside Theatre

213 N. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 338-7672

Wed. & Thurs. 7pm; Fri. & Sat. 8pm; Sun. 2pm

The Last Five Years, musical about a five-year relationship between a nice Jewish boy and a small-town girl living in New York City, written and composed by Tony Award-winner Jason Robert Brown, through Dec. 21 • The Goat, Jan. 23-Feb. 15.



*Slave to the Needle ('98-'00), Revolution Tattoo ('01-'03)

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DECEMBER

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- 29** B.F. Burt & the Blues Instigators
- 30** SPOT
- 1** Open Mic Night
- 3** Talk Art Cabaret
- 4** Jazz Repertory Ensemble with U of I Latin Group
- 5** Mike & Amy Finders Band w/ The Letterpress Opry
- 6** Big Wooden Radio
- 7** Lazy Boy & the Recliners
- 8** Open Mic Night
- 11** Flying Bacchaus
- 12** Brother Trucker
- 13** Accoustic Mayhem
- 15** Open Mic Night
- 18** Sam Knutson's Birthday Party featuring Shame Train, Ben Schmidt and much more
- 19** Pieta Brown & Bo Ramsey
- 20** Dave Zollo & the Body Electric
- 27** Becca Sutcliffe w/ Sara Pace

PLANNING A HOLIDAY PARTY?

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Theatre Cedar Rapids

102 Third St. SE, Cedar Rapids, 366-8592
7:30pm Thurs.- Sat.; 2:30pm Sun.
Home for the Holidays—A TCR Christmas, Nov. 28-30; Dec. 4-7, 11-13 • *Treasure Island*, Jan. 30-Feb. 5.

UI Theatre

Theatre Bldg., UI campus, Iowa City, 335-1160
No Shame Theatre, Fridays, 11pm, Theatre B • *The Shape of Things*, Neil LaBute's acclaimed play about a beautiful graduate art student and the frumpy undergrad she makes over, Dec. 5-6, 11-13, 8pm; Dec. 7 & 14, 3pm, David Thayer Theatre. (See *Words* listing for more)

AUDITIONS, CALLS, ETC.

IC Public Library

123 Linn St., Iowa City, 356-5200
Bluebox Limited film auditions for feature film, *University Heights*, Dec. 1 & 3, 6-9pm; Dec. 2, 5:30-9pm, (563) 370-1806 for more info.

Theatre Cedar Rapids

102 Third St. SE, Cedar Rapids, 366-8592
Auditions for *Treasure Island*, Dec. 7-8, 7pm (pre-audition read-through, Dec. 1, 7pm), call for more info or www.theatre.org.

WORDS

Cedar Rapids Museum of Art

410 Third Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids, 366-7503
"When is War a Woman's Job?," Carin Green, UI Classics Department, Dec. 3, 12-1pm • "If Mosaics Could Talk," Tim Ellsworth, mosaic artist, Dec. 6, 1-2pm • Family Fun Day—Famous Ancient Olympic Wrestlers, Dr. David Gilman Romano, Dan Gable, Jim Leach and Mike Chapman: Dec. 13, 1-2pm • "Reviving Rome: Christianity and the Eternal City," Christina McOmber, assistant professor of art history, Dec. 27, 1-2pm.

The Green Room

509 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 354-4350
Poetry Slam, Dec. 3 & 17, 9pm.

Iowa Memorial Union

UI campus, Iowa City
Panel discussion following *Everyone's Child* screening (see *Film* listing), with John Riber, founder and director of Media for Development Trust; Kathleen Tangenberg, assistant professor of social work; and Laurence Fuortes, professor of occupational and environmental health; Dec. 1 following film, Illinois Room • "Christian Civility in a Pluralistic Society," panel discussion with Arnold Andersen, professor of psychiatry; William Klink, professor of astronomy and physics; Stephen Swanson, professor of music, Dec. 5, 12pm, River Room 1.

The Java House

211 E. Washington St., 341-0012
WSUI's "Iowa Talks Live from the Java House," Fridays, 10am

MacBride Hall

UI campus, Iowa City
Mitch Albom, author, newspaper columnist and radio talk show, Dec. 4, 8pm, Auditorium.

The Mill

120 E. Burlington St., Iowa City, 351-9529
Talk/Art/Cabaret, Dec. 3, 9pm.

100 Phillips Hall

UI campus, Iowa City
"The Blank Slate: The Modern Denial of Human Nature," psychologist, linguist and author Steven Pinker, Dec. 2, 6:30pm.

Prairie Lights

15 S. Dubuque St., Iowa City (unless otherwise noted), 337-2681

All 8pm

Naturalist and essayist Trudy Dittmar reads from *Fauna and Flora, Earth and Sky: Brushes with Nature's Wisdom*, Dec. 1 • Patrick McCabe, Dec. 3 • Poets Mark Levine and Emily Wilson, Workshop faculty members and alumni, Dec. 4.

Sanctuary

405 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 351-5692
Dai Parker-Gwilliam reads Dylan Thomas' *A Child's Christmas in Wales*, Dec. 18, 8pm.

Senior Center

28 S. Linn St., Iowa City
"Solomons' Travelogue to Morocco," Dec. 16, 2:30pm • Prelude to the Holidays, the history of Santa as told by Mr. Claus Dec. 19, 10am • Janie Yates Holiday Reading, Dec. 19, 2pm.

UI Art Bldg.

UI campus, Iowa City
Sculptor Natalie Charkow discusses her work, Dec. 4, 7pm, Room E109.

UI Museum of Art

150 North Riverside Dr., Iowa City, 335-1727
"KSUI Know the Score Live," Cedar Rapids Opera Theater director Daniel Kleinknecht and IC opera lover Arthur Canter talk about upcoming production, *La Traviata*; UI Martha-Ellen Tye Opera Theater director Gary Race and cast members talk about upcoming production, *Midnight at Maxim's: A Merry Night with the Merry Widow*; classical tenor Peter Buchi gives solo recital and talks; UI poet Marvin Bell, Dec. 5, 5-7pm.

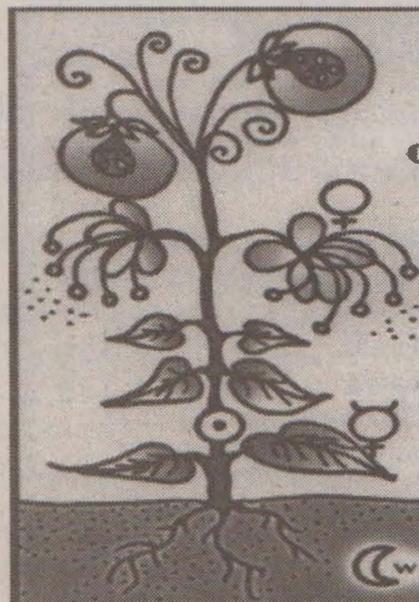
UI Theatre

Theatre Bldg., UI campus, Iowa City, 335-1160
The Shape of Things "talkback" session, featuring Jon Winet, UI intermedia; Ron Cohen, UI School of Art and Art History; and Mark McCusker, intermedia graduate research assistant; Dec. 5 following 8pm performance. (See *Theater* listing)

EVENTS/FESTIVALS

UI Museum of Art

150 North Riverside Dr., Iowa City, 335-1727
Snowflake Family Festival, Dec. 7, 12-4pm.



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FILM

Cedar Rapids Museum of Art

410 Third Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids, 366-7503
Roman City, Dec. 20, 1-2pm.

Iowa Memorial Union UI campus, Iowa City

Everyone's Child, four Zimbabwean children orphaned by AIDS must fend for themselves until the community reconsiders, followed by panel discussion (see *Words*), Dec. 1, 7pm, Illinois Room.

MISC.

Brucemore

2160 Linden Drive SE, Cedar Rapids, 362-7375
Holiday House Tours, through Dec. 31, Tues-Sat, 10am-3pm; Sun, 12-3pm • Santa, Snacks and Stories, storytelling, crafts, interactive performance, Dec. 2, registration required • Evening Tours, Dec. 3, 10, 17, 4-7pm • Holiday Open House, Dec. 7 & 14, 4-7pm.

CSPS

1103 Third St. SE, Cedar Rapids, 364-1580
Paul Engle Christmas, Nov. 30, 2-4pm, Paul Engle Center.

Sheraton Hotel

210 S. Dubuque, Iowa City
Iowa City Record and CD Fair, Dec. 6, 10am-5pm.

CLASSES

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Every Sunday 2-4PM
Irish Slow Session
(Celtic Jam)

Saturday Dec 6th

\$12 8:30PM

Peter Mulvey w/ special guest Ben Schmidt

Sunday Dec 7th

no cover 4-6PM Classical Woodwind Quartet

Thursday Dec 11th

no cover 7:45PM The Unsung Forum

Saturday Dec 13th

\$3 8:30PM The Mad River Duo

Tuesday Dec 16th

no cover 7-9PM Wave songwriter

Thursday Dec 18th

no cover 5-9PM Mud River Dinner and Jam

Saturday Dec 20th

\$3 8-11PM Small World Holiday Concert

Thursday Jan 8th

no cover 7:45 PM The Unsung Forum

Saturday Jan 10th

\$3 8-11PM Jefferey Morgan and MarkChorpening

Thursday Jan 15th

5-9PM Mud River Dinner and Jam

Saturday Jan 17th

\$3 8-11PM Ben Schmidt

Saturday Jan 24th

\$3 8-11PM Brandon Ross

Sunday Jan 25th

\$5 6-8PM Edie Carey

Saturday Jan 31st

\$5 8-11PM DVIP Benefit w/ Robert More



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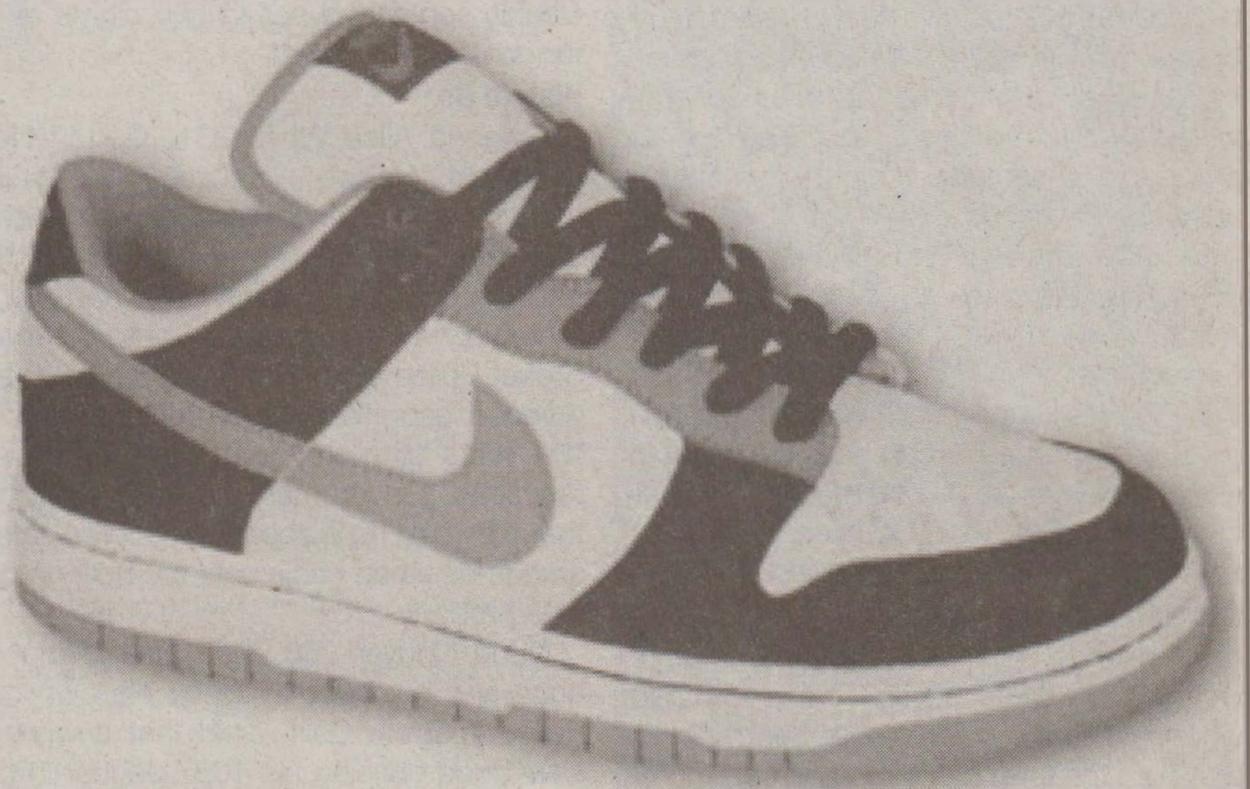
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Strange but True!

News Quirks

Compiled by Roland Sweet

Curses, Foiled Again

A man threw a paper bag on the counter of a video store in Greensboro, N.C., and pointed what looked like a 9mm handgun at manager Ron Simpson, but Simpson said he was "95 percent sure" the muzzle was too small for a bullet. "That is not a real gun," Simpson said he told the robber while pulling his own .25-caliber derringer from his jeans pocket. "This is a real gun." The robber pulled a rack of gummy bears in front of him for protection, "like that's going to stop the bullet," Simpson said, noting that after he picked up the phone and called the police, the man fled.

Footless Feats

Federal prosecutors in Santa Ana, Calif., said that podiatrist Robert Ken Kasamatsu, 41, billed Medicare for treating patients who turned out not to have feet. Kasamatsu's bogus claims totaled \$600,000, according to Assistant US Attorney Jeannie Joseph, who noted that at least 30 of the 100 or so people Kasamatsu sought payment for were already dead.

Despite having no legs, Francois Johannes Pieterse, an inmate at South Africa's Westville Prison, escaped. Corrections official Vusi Shabalala explained that Pieterse slipped out "unnoticed" from a guarded bed at a Durban hospital, either in a wheelchair or carried off by unknown accomplices. Two months later, authorities still had not found him.

Can You Hear Me Now?

Thousands of New York commuters were delayed and several trains rerouted while rescue workers tried to free a man's arm from the toilet of a suburban commuter train. Metro-North Railroad's Dan Brucker said that Edwin Gallart, 41, of the Bronx got stuck when he dropped his cell phone in the toilet and tried to fish it out. Passengers heard his cries for help and alerted train workers, who were unable to pry Gallart from the metal toilet. Finally, police and firefighters arrived with "jaws of life" equipment and a blowtorch to cut it apart, Brucker said, noting that the rescue operation took

90 minutes. The phone wasn't retrieved.

Police in West Bridgewater, Mass., said that Bethaney Lawton, 20, of Abingdon, Mass., died driving home while talking on her cell phone with her friend Jessica Poor when her car plowed through the front of a Cingular Wireless store. "Jessica heard a loud crash," officer Daniel Desmond said, "and the cell phone went dead."

In Randolph, Mass., police reported that a 37-year-old man was stabbed at a movie theater showing *House of the Dead* after he put his feet on the back of a man's chair because the man wouldn't put his cell phone away when asked. Lt. Richard Crowley said that the cell phone user, Jose Pujols, 27, "pulled out a knife, turned around and stabbed him in the foot." Crowley added: "You have to obey movie house etiquette: Turn off your phone and don't put your feet up."

When a cell phone rang in a Charleston, S.C., courtroom during a sentencing hearing, spectator Lashenda Floyd, 25, tried to rush outside to take the call, but Circuit Judge Markley Dennis ordered deputies to detain her. After sentencing the defendant to life in prison, Dennis turned to Floyd and asked if she had seen signs posted throughout the Charleston County Judicial Center warning visitors to switch off their phones. When she admitted that she had, Dennis sentenced her to two nights in jail for contempt of court.

Way to Go

Gwenda Alice Whyte, 81, died in New Zealand's Nelson Hospital after being thrown from a homemade cable car that she used to get her mail and milk at the front gate when it broke loose and plummeted down her accessway onto the road. Stoke Police Sgt. Brian Wood said the wooden cable car, which had been used "30 years or more," had no seatbelts or restraints. Government officials explained that they had no authority to enforce safety standards when cable cars are built on private property.

Quoc Nguyen, 50, died after being hit once and run over twice by his own car. Police in Brea, Calif., said that a witness saw Quoc chasing his 1987 Jaguar in circles in a parking lot. The car caught up with Quoc and knocked him to the pavement, then circled around twice more, running him over each time. The last time, Lt. Martin Needham said, Quoc was "rolled up inside the wheel well," causing the car to stop.

Canine Games

German prosecutors decided not to prosecute a man for teaching his dog Adolf to raise its paw in a Hitler salute, but

they said the 54-year-old man, identified as Roland T., still faces up to three years in prison for wearing a T-shirt with Hitler's picture and shouting "Heil Hitler!" on a busy street.

A toy dog that farts alerted screeners at the Norfolk, Va., airport when sensitive monitoring equipment registered the toy's wind-breaking mechanism as a high explosive. The mechanical terrier's owner, British designer Dave Rogerson, 31, said that FBI agents questioned him and took a series of swabs from the life-sized toy's rear end. "They were very jumpy," he noted, "and convinced there was something explosive in the dog."

Your Money or Your Life

A new book that analyzes terrorism in economic, rather than political, terms declares that the business of terrorism has grown so large and the financial networks supporting it so complex that if the flow of money to terrorists were suddenly cut off, the drop in liquidity could seriously affect the Western economies. *Modern Jihad: Tracing the Dollars Behind the Terror Networks*, puts the value of the "new economy of terror" at about \$1.5 trillion, or roughly 5 percent of the world's gross domestic product. The author, Italian writer Loretta Napoleoni, told *Newsweek* that this figure "includes illegal activities like arms dealing and money laundering and legal activities like charity donations, because even if the money arrives legally, it is then used illegally." Napoleoni traces today's terrorism to state-sponsored terrorism by the Soviet Union and the United States during the Cold War. As a result, she said, the terrorists "know our system inside out."

The Defense Department reported that US troops sent to attack Iraq spent their own money to buy better equipment than the military issued them. "There were a lot of reports that prior to the war, people would go out and buy their own gear," defense analyst Patrick Garrett said. Among the upgrades cited by the Pentagon's draft report, "Operation Iraqi Freedom Lessons Learned," were better field radios, extra ammunition carriers and commercial backpacks to replace standard-issue but under-sized rucksacks.

One Marine, Sgt. Mike Corcoran, asked his parents for and received \$2,000 night-vision goggles, a global positioning system and a short-wave radio, which was used to intercept enemy transmissions.

Compiled from the nation's press by Roland Sweet. Submit clippings, citing source and date, to POB 8130, Alexandria VA 22306.



SAGITTARIUS (Nov 22-Dec 21) The risk for Sagittarians now is being overwhelmed by a rapidly expanding range of personal and professional relationships. You could have a hard time remembering who you are, what you need and what you really want out of it all. The situation is not helped much by the fact that there is a healthy dose of neurotic and obsessive energy in the mix. Probably the best advice I can give you is to take the New Agey and/or Zen approach to things. Tend your own garden, go with the flow.



CAPRICORN (Dec 22-Jan 19) Capricorns remain at the center of a highly charged and very lively debate. You might even want to say, conflict. Unfortunately, things will probably get worse before they get better, and when they start getting better, they will get better only gradually. The good news is that Capricorns are well suited to this sort of role. Also, your opinions and actions carry special weight now. To continue as successful mediator, mentor, power-broker and tie-breaker, you should continue your program of rest and recreation. Stay fresh. Keep up your strength.



AQUARIUS (Jan 20-Feb 18) Aquarians might, for awhile, feel that they have only their ideals to keep them warm. But a turbulent and uncertain time in your life is rapidly coming to an end. A great deal is about to change for the better. You will soon experience a lengthy series of opportunities, extending for some years into the future, to share your views with like-minded people and positively affect the thinking of others. This will lead to a more secure and fulfilling lifestyle and deeper roots in your community. Reassure worried friends.



PISCES (Feb 19-March 20) Pisces must set aside more time for making decisions. The planets are pulling you in two rather different directions AND bombarding you with enough change and surprise and general unexpectedness to keep three or four people busy. Added in is a big dose of neurotic, hysterical energy at home and at work. The stars think you would be best advised to concentrate on domestic, family, neighborhood and other kinds of local relationships, for now. Focusing will help you get through the blizzard of questions and distractions to come.



ARIES (March 21-April 19) No one has the luxury of coasting or standing pat. Decisions are required. Many are throwing their weight around trying to influence events to profit themselves. Others are excited just for the sake of being excited. All of them are managing to rock Aries' boat, but none of them really seems to have a clue. Faith in the future and a healthy dose of pluck is the winning combination for Aries. Keep things simple; don't get ahead of yourself and you'll do fine. Mysterious, uplifting influences are entering your life.



TAURUS (April 20-May 20) Taurus has his or her own quiet, secure path through the chaos in December. There's a lot of excess drama in the world around you. Keep your thoughts and feelings mostly to yourself and rely on that quiet sense of positive personal momentum that you now enjoy. Leave those in power to their own devices, for the time being. The world will leave you out of its many problems if you tend to your own affairs. Luck and the strength of previous investments will help you through these tricky times.



GEMINI (May 21-June 20) Gemini is definitely not without resources, or access, or support, or cards to play. However, Gemini is also well supplied with complications, confusion and pressures. Your partners and associates are not being reasonable. In fact, they are being obsessive and controlling and generally obstructive. You are going to have to play this hand one card at a time. Financial pressures prevent dramatic, conclusive action to resolve these situation(s). You can avoid a great deal of trouble simply by keeping to yourself and avoiding unnecessary interactions. Keep your own counsel.



CANCER (June 21-July 22) Cancerians will find themselves in the thick of it again. Decisions to the right of them, decisions to the left of them. Cancerians will have crucial input on every one. The pace of change will soon pick up considerably and carry you along with it, but in a good way. It might be your job to explain why things are changing and why these changes are good. In fact, Cancerians could emerge as spokespeople. Take advantage of good economic conditions now to consolidate your finances. Tougher times are coming.



LEO (July 23-Aug 22) The back seat is especially uncomfortable for Leos. They like to be out in front and in charge, especially at work. There is an avalanche of change on the job front, though. These changes are so numerous and so big and so complicated and the outcome so unpredictable, that Leos will do better, when all is said and done, if they just take orders and go along for the ride, at least for the time being. This goes seriously against the Leo grain, but it is for the best. You'll see.



VIRGO (Aug 23-Sept 22) Virgos would be well advised to "keep it simple." No need to seek new involvements at home or at work. Involvements are seeking you out. No need to complicate matters; matters are complicating themselves. The sense you should have is that all the sound and fury has more to do with the past, with things that are fading from your life. Stick to basics. Don't be easily drawn into things. That includes relationships. You should find that your life stays on course to a brighter future.



LIBRA (Sept 23-Oct 22) A powerful, long-term influence affecting Librans' work and health situation kicks in during December. It will bring changefulness to your work life and many interesting surprises in the health department. You could be involved a lot on the giving and/or receiving end of healing activity. While this influence can bring a new financial freedom, rewarding work opportunities and renewed health, you should exercise discernment. Not everything caused by this influence will have lasting value for you. Be careful about any job- and healing-related choices that you make.



SCORPIO (Oct 23-Nov 21) Scorpio's excellent adventure is about to get back on track. Setbacks and missteps caused delays, but that's over. A new era of surprising, playful and broadening experiences is beginning for Scorpio. Certain minor annoyances may occur as neurotic and controlling individuals cause minor complications in your financial affairs, but don't sweat it. Scorpio is still under some rather confusing influences, so you would still be wise to accept the guidance of your partners and associates. Things aren't as complicated or difficult as they might appear to you at the moment. LV

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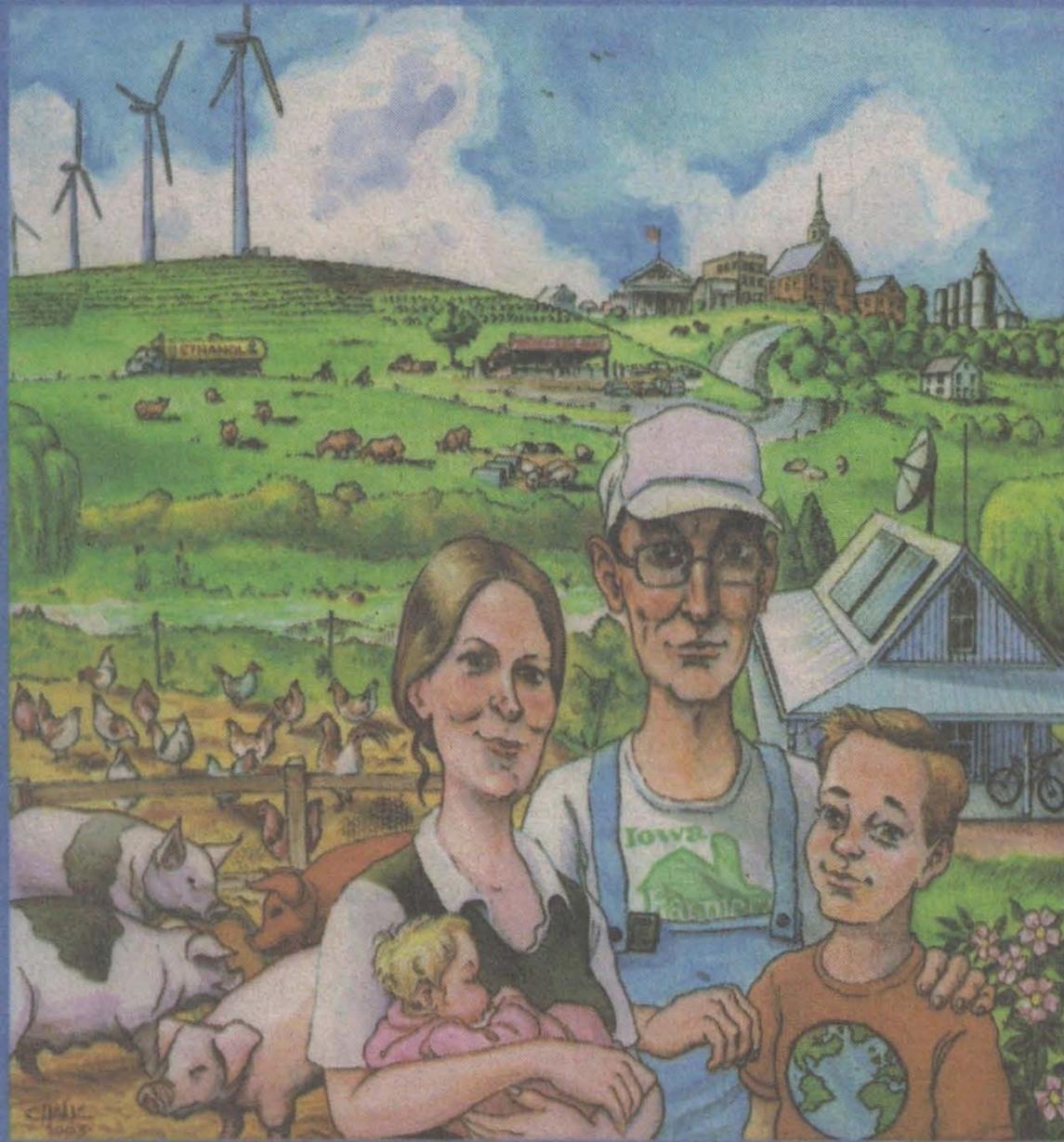
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