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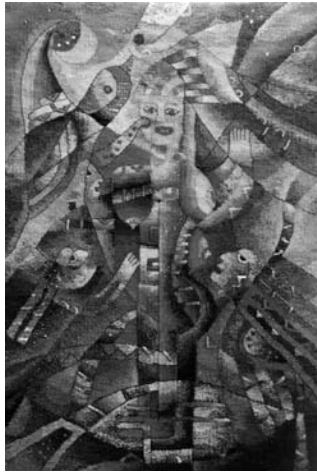
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Below the Surface

A 21ST-CENTURY LOOK AT THE PRAIRIE

Small Expressions 2009



Left: Jin Lee, *Prairie (spring 4)*, 2004. C-print, 30 x 24 inches. Courtesy of the artist
Right: Maximo Laura, *Celebration Life*. Mixed technique: alpaca wool, cotton, mixed fibers, 11.6 x 8 inches

Below the Surface features images of prairie plants, insects and birds by 13 regional and national artists.

Small Expressions 2009 is a juried, international exhibition of small-scale fiber art sponsored by the Handweavers Guild of America, Inc.

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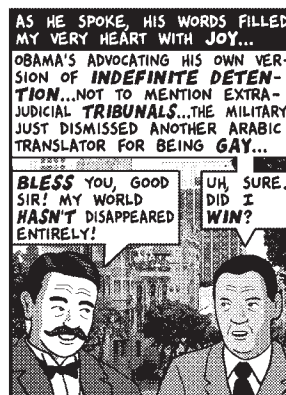
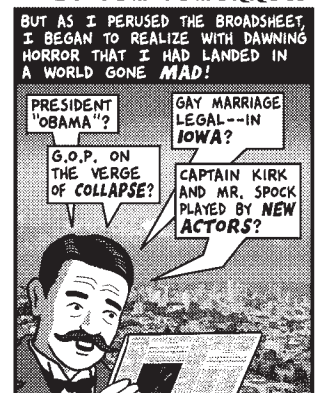
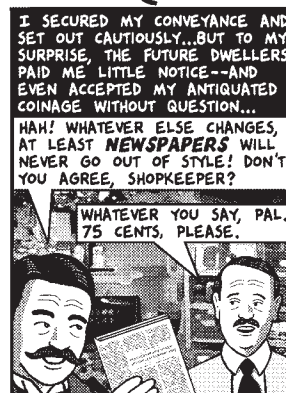
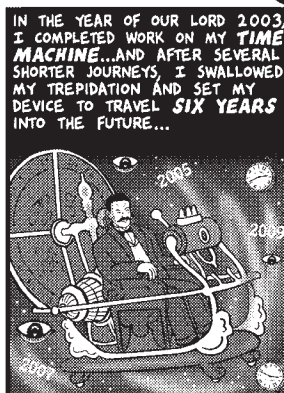
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THIS MODERN WORLD

BY TOM TOMORROW



www.thismodernworld.com

Resistance isn't futile

Adding weight training pushes your workout to higher ground

So, you want to get in shape. Often, when we decide we want to exercise, the first thought is always cardio. Running, walking, biking and all of those heart pumpers are a great way to burn calories, lose weight and be healthier. However, if you're just doing cardio, there's a big part of your workout missing.

Resistance training is a scary idea to some people, but it is an important part of a balanced exercise program geared to improving your overall health. Talk of building muscle may conjure up images of massive barbells and squat machines, which can certainly be intimidating. But, resistance training, with or without the dumbbells, can help you get stronger, look better and feel better about yourself. It decreases injuries and improves both your balance and your ability to carry out day-to-day tasks, like carrying groceries or picking up a small child.

Bone strength is improved through resistance training. When resistance is applied to the muscle, the muscles pull on the bones making them stronger. Building and improving bone strength is an important benefit that everyone should be looking for, but especially people under 25 and women nearing menopause. Up to around age 25, your skeleton is still building itself, and the stronger you can make your bones, the better off you will be. Women in menopause have a lot less estrogen flowing through their bodies. Estrogen plays a huge role in maintaining bone density, so once the hormone drops off, bones are more vulnerable to breaking down.

If weight loss is your exercise goal, resistance training is crucial to your workout. People expend calories everyday just by being alive. Calories are energy that our body

uses to work. The more lean tissue or muscle a person has, the more calories they are going to burn when they are doing nothing. When you lose weight, the pounds come off of every area of the body—whether it was muscle or fat. Through resistance training you are actively building muscle more instead of losing it, and you're increasing the amount of tissue that loves to burn calories.

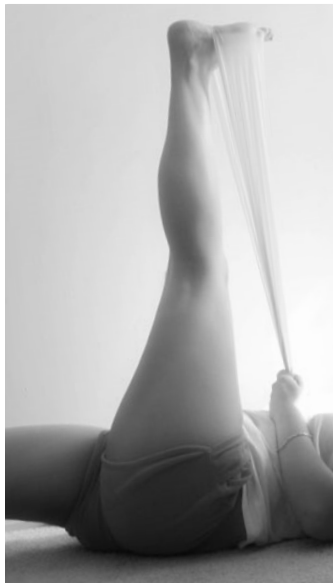
Some see resistance training only as a routine for strong men and athletes, but people of all ages can benefit. Some people mistakenly believe that any type of resistance training will end up giving them the physique of the governor of California, but how muscle develops is due largely to genetics and the time you put into training. (And the governor used to put in a lot of time lifting back in his steroid-induced bodybuilding days.)

Fancy gym memberships are great for some people, but they aren't the only option. They do provide access to free weight equipment and weight machines, but there are tons of excellent exercises you can do with your own body weight, stability balls, resistance bands, medicine balls and other less expensive equipment.

To see health benefits from resistance training, the experts over at the American College of Sports Medicine recommend performing resistance exercises twice each week. At each session you should do eight to 10 different exercises, performing each exercise eight to 12 times.

Body building doesn't have to be a total remodel, complete with mega-biceps and a double-size neck. Like a house renovation, start slow and stay in your comfort zone. What you'll get is a healthier, happier body to call home. **IV**

Kelly Ostrem is watching SNL reruns of Hans and Franz for motivation, or entertainment? Nah, she just loves the muscles.



Fancy gym memberships are great for some people, but they aren't the only option.

Need some help getting started? Try out some of these exercises. All can be performed using your own body weight or with a simple, inexpensive resistance/exercise band that can be purchased at local retail stores.

Planks: With your stomach down, prop your body up so only your forearms and toes are touching the ground. Your elbows should be directly beneath your shoulders and your body should be in a straight line from your head to your heels. Pull your abs in toward your spine and hold for 30 seconds.

Spinal Balance: Come down to your hands and knees. Keeping your back straight and your head in line with the spine extend your right arm straight forward and your left leg straight back. Switch to the left arm and right leg. Remember to keep the abs pulled up toward the spine. Do 15 extensions on each side.

Lunges: Step forward with your right leg dropping your left knee toward the ground. Stop when your right thigh is parallel to the ground. Don't allow your right knee to go past your toes. Switch legs. Do 15 lunges on each side.

Raises: Anchor your exercise band under your feet. Start with your arms by your sides and grip the ends of the bands with your palms facing your body. Raise your arms straight out to the side to shoulder height and return to the starting position. Do 15 raises with each arm.

Curls: Step on your exercise band with your feet to anchor it. Grip the band with your palms facing forward and your arms close to your sides. From a full extension, bend your elbow as far as it can comfortably flex and return to a full extension. Complete 15 curls on each side.

Extensions: Anchor your exercise band at waist level. Facing the band, place your arms at your sides and bend them to 90 degrees. Grip the band in each hand with palms facing down. Move only your elbows, extending your arm straight down and then return to bent starting position. Do 15 extensions with each arm.

Oh, the Hypocrisy!

Nobody likes hypocrites, despite the fact that everyone is a hypocrite to one degree or another: the smoker who tells her kids not to smoke; the closeted politician who works against gay rights; the police officer who gets high. But when it happens in the area to which we are most attuned, say food for instance, we tend to be less tolerant of hypocrisy in others. I've been seeing rash of this lately, especially in the media.

Take last month's flap about Oprah Winfrey's KFC promotion. While the news-media focused on the feeding frenzy that ensued, and the near-riots when KFCs across the country ran out of food or people couldn't download their coupons from the website, precious few were commenting on Oprah's hypocrisy in promoting KFC after she had done so much to promote the cause of animal cruelty prevention. She was even named "Person of the Year" last year by PETA. Yet while KFC continues to buy Tyson chicken, which is raised in heartbreaking conditions, de-beaked and pumped full of hormones and antibiotics, Oprah apparently has no trouble promoting the company. Perhaps the greater hypocrisy lies with PETA though, who have refused to call her out on the issue.

KFC is not blameless in hypocrite rankings either, foisting their products as fresh and healthy, hiding the true costs of cheap food, and claiming that it's cheaper than making the food at home. To their credit, KFC parent company YUM! Brands did cave to the Coalition for Immokalee Workers and their demand for

a fair living wage, but that was after years of protests and even more years of slavery in South Florida.

■ **On NPR, the Monsanto Corporation—monarchs of genetically modified foods—bills itself as “dedicated to sustainability.” Please. I recognize Orwellian doublespeak when I hear it.**

But one member of the list of underwriters on NPR one April morning is what truly pins my ears back. The Monsanto Corporation—monarchs of genetically modified foods—bills itself, there and on their website, as “dedicated to sustainability.” Please.

I recognize Orwellian doublespeak when I hear it. For Monsanto, the inventors of Terminator Seeds (from which plants grow, but the resulting seeds are sterile), Zombie Seeds (which will not grow until treated with a Monsanto-patented chemical); and Utility Patents on Seeds (giving them ownership rights not just on the seeds but on all their progeny) to stake some claim on “sustainability” may well be the height of hypocrisy.

The Orwellian rebranding does not end there, though. Last month Frito-Lay announced a new ad campaign in five states, beginning with Florida, referring to their Lay's

Potato Chips as “local food.” Strictly speaking I suppose it is since some of their potatoes are grown and fried in Florida. But by this logic, all of us here can begin referring to high fructose corn syrup as a local food as well. That's the same HFCS that the corn processing industry calls “an American agricultural product” in their ads. Local Lay's are just the beginning of industrial food's latest foray into absconding with another useful term. They took “natural,” they redefined “organic,” they're taking “sustainable,” and now they want “local,” all the while changing the meaning of the words instead of their own detrimental practices.

I don't know if there is another reason for this behavior besides profit, but I doubt it. And I shan't be hypocritical myself in this regard, as a business owner and father of two kids in college, I am in favor of profit. But when lowering prices increases hidden costs to our environment, our health system, and our security—witness swine flu being traced to an enormous Mexican hoglot owned by Smithfield—then that is false profit indeed.

So my hypocrisy? You'll not catch me at a drive-thru, but I do confess to liking Ramen noodles (and Lay's potato chips, for that matter). **lv**

It's About the Food is a monthly feature of Little Village. Chef Kurt Michael Friese is co-owner, with his wife Kim, of the Iowa City restaurant Devotay and serves on the Slow Food USA Board of Directors. Comments may be directed to devotay@mchsi.com.

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Commons Sense

Our community has been talking a lot about taxes lately. I understand that the economy makes us especially aware of how our leaders spend our tax dollars and whether or not we want to contribute more tax dollars to the public coffers. The discussion has been contentious and adversarial, however. Whenever we have a discussion about getting and spending tax dollars, we should take a step back and also discuss what these dollars mean. In essence, these dollars help create the commons.

Today, “the commons” generally means the resources and institutions to which a community has rights of access; in other words, what we hold in common, such as clean air, the public airwaves, streets, parks, public safety, schools, public art, etc. We determine the commons not only by tax dollars, but more importantly by human rights, mutual commitment, and cultural and social value. Perhaps, sometimes anyway, if we move our tax arguments more toward a discussion of the value of our commons, we can find that philosophical common ground more readily and with less conflict.

If Jay Walljasper had hung around with us for a month or two in Johnson County earlier this year, our debates over the local option sales tax and other recent public issues could have been less ugly.

Twin Cities resident Walljasper is a writer, speaker, former editor of the *Utne Reader*, current editor-at-large of *Ode Magazine*, and author of *The Great Neighborhood Book: A Do-It-Yourself Guide to Placemaking*. Walljasper is also a fellow and editor for *On the Commons* and their website *Onthecommons.org*. *On the Commons* defines itself as “a network of citizens and organizations that champions the cause of the commons on many fronts. Our mission is to advance a new worldview by naming, claiming, protecting and expanding the commons for the good of all.” The organization defines “the commons” as “every-

thing we inherit or create together and must pass on, undiminished, to future generations.” Walljasper says that not until recently did he realize his myriad interests—the environment, social justice, community empowerment, urban revitalization, etc.—were all part of “the commons.” Maybe Jay Walljasper could have put many of our current civic debates into this larger context of “the commons” for us.

Maybe he still can. In fact, he is coming to town this month. He will speak at the Iowa City Public Library at 11 a.m. on Saturday, June 13 on “Everything I Need to Know I Learned at the Public Library: Important Lessons Drawn from Books, Librarians, Neighbors and Life

and visitors have checked out over 7 million items. More than 100 percent of the population of Iowa City holds ICPL library cards. As a community center, the library held over 1,500 meetings and events in its community rooms in the last six months of 2008 (that’s almost 10 per day).

Clearly, the community loves and uses its library. It exists for the common holding and distribution of knowledge, media materials (books, periodicals, DVDs, CDs, computer databases, etc.) and public gathering. Several years ago, Iowa Citians declared that this was a part of the commons we highly valued by voting to pass an \$18.4 million bond referendum in order to expand and update an institution that is so much a part of our community’s identity.

So it seems to me entirely appropriate that we bring Jay Walljasper to town to help celebrate the anniversary of this remarkable community mutual commitment

and the ongoing work of this essential institution. The library also has a great slate of other activities throughout the summer as part of its anniversary celebration. Look for the activities of the library’s first author-in-residence, Jack Gantos, noted children’s and young adult author in June as well. Other visiting authors include Andre Dubus III and Sarah Prineas. The library’s website (www.icpl.org) has all the information.

“The commons” is not a happy land where flowers bloom and the sun shines all day. It’s a real place, with real people. Clashing opinions and realities are inevitable. But there are ways to conduct and support the commons with a greater mutual understanding, compassion and respectful process than our community has shown in recent months. I encourage you to hear what Jay Walljasper has to say when he comes to the library. **IV**

Thomas Dean serves as president of the Iowa City Public Library Board of Trustees and as a member of the Board of Directors of Humanities Iowa.



Photo courtesy Iowa City Public Library

Our debates over the local option sales tax and other recent public issues could have been less ugly.

Itself.” Full disclosure time. I serve on the Board of Trustees of the Iowa City Public Library. The reason I’m on the board (and serving as President this year) is that I believe the Iowa City Public Library is a truly great institution—and one of the most important elements of our local commons.

This summer, the ICPL is celebrating its fifth anniversary in its newly remodeled building. Five years ago, we celebrated an expansion of this community’s beloved library that nearly doubled its size, upgraded its infrastructure, and changed the face of downtown. In those five years, circulation and patronage have increased at a steady five, six, or seven percent each year. In the past five years, Iowa Citians, cardholders from other communities,

Roosevelt Revisited

Iowa City school leaders are still wrestling with how to do the right thing

Though it looks bleak, some area residents don't want to accept the closure of Roosevelt Elementary as inevitable. Recent board meetings have been long, crowded and sometimes tense. The board has set up additional forums to solicit feedback, but some critics see mostly evasive answers to their questions.

"They're just placating," says Ruth Baker, parent of former Roosevelt student and a 30-year resident of the neighborhood. "They're professing that they really 'appreciate your input,' but they're not listening."

After a rally the Friday before, Roosevelt supporters brought green "Save Our Schools" signs to the school board's May 12 meeting to try again to make themselves heard.

The tone was mostly cool, polite, but then a Roosevelt parent sidestepped the usual protocol and asked a direct, non-rhetorical question—Why hasn't there been any money spent on schools in the older neighborhoods? She'd been to all the meetings and forums and never got a good answer. This, she said, was her last chance.

Board President Toni Cilek asked the parent to step down. She wouldn't, and next few minutes were a welter of interruptions, an angry cacophony of overburdened microphones and distorting speakers, until a friend from the crowd gently clasped the Roosevelt parent by the shoulders and led her away.

Trying to bring down the temperature in the room, Lauren Reese said she felt for both the board and neighborhood school advocates. She is a former board member and understands the pressures they are under.

The district is facing a projected \$6 million shortfall. "They can't run deficits," said Reese. "And they can't print money."

But she also understood the pain of losing a neighborhood school. She was disturbed at the lack of clear communication between the board and parents, concluding that "the process is broken."

She challenged the school board to take on the difficult task of comprehensively redrawing boundaries, a remark which drew big applause from the crowd.

"If every school in this district had a representation of 21 percent free and reduced lunch population," Reese said, "this conversation would be very different. And I can't help but empathize with the Roosevelt population because I know what it's like to sit in your shoes and face a Lincoln community or a Horn community where the power and the money and the influence in this community lie. And it just feels impossible to touch—[to make] changes in those schools. And as miserable as this decision is to make, I know changing boundaries will be a thousand times more miserable. But at the end of the day, it's fair and it's equal to everybody."

"I know changing boundaries will be a thousand times more miserable. But at the end of the day, it's fair and it's equal to everybody."

— **LAUREN REESE,**
former school board member

Reese also suggested the possibility of structuring the composition of the board so the interests of every school might be more fairly represented.

While a handful of Iowa City elementary schools—Roosevelt, Wood, Twain, Kirkwood (and a few others)—have disproportionately high concentrations of students of color and students who qualify for free or reduced student lunch, no one on the school board lives in their boundary areas. The board is almost exclusively represented by residents of the more affluent school boundary areas—Shimek, Horn, Penn, Wickham and Longfellow—with some of the highest proportions of white students.

Though the Roosevelt decision means big changes for students from the Pheasant Ridge apartments, their concerns have been mostly absent from public debate of this issue. Valerie Nyberg, member of the board's equity committee, voiced her concerns about a lack

of representation of parents of color. Nyberg said she had no vested interest in the controversy, but greater cultural competency and inclusiveness is needed all around.

She said many of the parents from the Pheasant Ridge apartments were not native English speakers (Spanish and Arabic were first languages for many) and would not necessarily feel welcome or able to participate in the typical forum situation. So Nyberg worked to arrange meetings at the Pheasant Ridge neighborhood center in April. More than 20 parents attended and they had strong interest in Roosevelt and other community school issues and wanted to have their say.

Parents worried about transportation to the new school. How would parents without cars get to the school if their children were sick or injured? They were concerned about placing their children in a high-income area. Would they be safe and well received? Would the transition hurt their performance and undermine their ability to succeed?

Pheasant Ridge parents want to help to get their children through this process, but "they need more information," Nyberg said. "And they needed to be more included in the conversation."

By 10 o'clock, the crowd at the meeting had dwindled from about 80 to a dozen, and the board weighed in on Roosevelt during a work session, with no public response officially permitted. Plugge recommended "decommissioning" the school, closing it as a K-6 institution, with the possibility of reviving the site (perhaps as a preschool) somewhere down the line.

From the back of the room came a quiet, exasperated refrain of "redistrict" as the board enumerated Roosevelt's problems.

Those voices evidently weren't heard or appreciated. The board invoked its concern for all children, but there was no mention of redrawing boundaries district-wide.

Every board member present said he or she was leaning toward agreement with the superintendent's recommendation as they plan their final vote for June 9. **IV**

An alumnus of Iowa City's Longfellow Elementary, Southeast Junior High, and Community Education Center (forerunner to Elizabeth Tate High School), David Henderson is now pursuing a master's degree in journalism and mass communications at The University of Iowa. He can be reached at David.Henderson@LittleVillageMag.com.

Iowa PRIDE

Oh, California. You screwed the pooch on Prop 8 while Iowa one-upped your progress yet again. We might sometimes need a reminder to practice what we preach,* but our history puts us at the forefront of the right fight for civil liberties. Just take a look-see...

- 1838** Constitution of the Territory of Iowa passed.
- 1839** Iowa Supreme Court in *Re the Matter of Ralph* decides that "no man in this territory can be reduced to slavery," 23 years before the U.S. Civil War.
- 1846** Iowa declared the 16th state.
- 1847** State Seal adopted bearing the motto "Our liberties we prize, and our rights we will maintain."
- 1851** Iowa removes ban on interracial marriage, just the third state to do so, and over 100 years before the U.S. does (1965).
- 1851** Iowa Code of 1851 gave married women property rights.
- 1855** The University of Iowa opened its doors to men and women on an equal basis, the first state university in the country to do so.
- 1857** Constitution of the State of Iowa ratified, including the phrases: "All men and women are, by nature, free and equal, and have certain inalienable rights."
- 1867** In *Cole v. Cole*, Iowa Supreme Court abandons "the harsh common law rule that a father was entitled to absolute custody of his children in the event of a divorce."

1905 George Woodson, an attorney from Buxton, co-founded the Niagra Movement, which later became the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

1888 The second Equal Rights Convention was held in Des Moines, where it adopted a platform that, among other things, called for women's suffrage.

1884 Acts of the Twentieth General Assembly of the State of Iowa enacts what is called the "Civil Rights" law.

1875 Emma Haddock became the first female lawyer to practice in U.S. Federal courts.

1873 Iowa Supreme Court upholds rights of all citizens in *Coger v. The North Western Union Packet Co.* in its ruling that Emma Coger, a mixed race woman, could not be denied eating privileges in a steamboat "whites only" dining room; it takes until 1964 for the U.S. Supreme Court to reach the same conclusion.

1869 Arabella Mansfield became the first female lawyer in the U.S. after Iowa Supreme Court rules that she could not be barred from practicing law due to gender; Iowa General Assembly removed "white male" from statute about lawyers one year later.

1868 In *Clark v. Board of Directors*, Iowa Supreme Court decides that a 12-year-old girl could not be barred from a Muscatine school on basis of race, 85 years before the U.S. Supreme Court rules against segregated schools in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954).

** Iowa Territory banned slavery 23 years pre-Civil War, but the State of Iowa's black-to-white incarceration rate is over 12:1. Which the gov's office acknowledges as "first in the nation" status. Let's not set the trend on that one, k?*

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1906 In *State v. Amana Society*, the Iowa Supreme Court ruled for the Amana Society, a religious settlement whose members believed in the communal ownership of property, stating that “in this country all opinions are tolerated and the entire freedom of action allowed.”

1911 Iowa native John L. Lewis organized the American Federation of Labor (AFL), the world’s largest labor federation.

1920 Charles City’s Carrie Chapman Catt, president of the National Woman Suffrage Association, leads the way to the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, giving women the right to vote; Iowa also made women eligible for jury service, which many states would not follow for a decade or more.

1949 Iowa Supreme Court, in *State v. Katz*, upheld the first successful conviction under the 1884 Iowa Civil Rights law, for a drugstore manager’s refusal to serve ice cream to two African American patrons because of their race.

1965 The Iowa Civil Rights Act of 1965 established the Iowa Civil Rights Commission, one year after the passing of the national 1964 Civil Rights Act.

1967 Amish Schools are exempted from educational standards on the grounds of religious freedom.

1969 U.S. Supreme Court decided in *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent School District* that freedom of speech included wearing black arm bands in protest of the war in Vietnam.

1971 Adel High School’s (anti-) Long Hair rule at school is deemed unconstitutional by a district court; boys can wear their hair as they please.

1978 Iowa’s Supreme Court struck down all sodomy laws, ruling that it violates the “equal protection” clause; the U.S. won’t follow suit until 2003.

1979 The Iowa Civil Rights Commission rules in favor of Linda Eaton who had been suspended twice without pay for refusing to discontinue breastfeeding her son during work breaks.

1990 Iowa Senator Tom Harkin was one of the authors of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

1996 Iowa City became one of the first U.S. cities to extend discrimination protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

1999 Cedar Rapids added protections for homosexuals, bisexuals and heterosexuals to its civil rights ordinance.

2007 The Iowa Non-Discrimination Law is extended to cover gender identity and sexual orientation.

2009 On April 3, the Iowa Supreme Court ruled unanimously that marriage cannot be restricted to one man and one woman, upholding “the constitutional rights of all people, as expressed by the promise of equal protection for all.”

Illustration by Andrew Sherburne

A Midsummer Night's Dream
Directed by Ron Clark

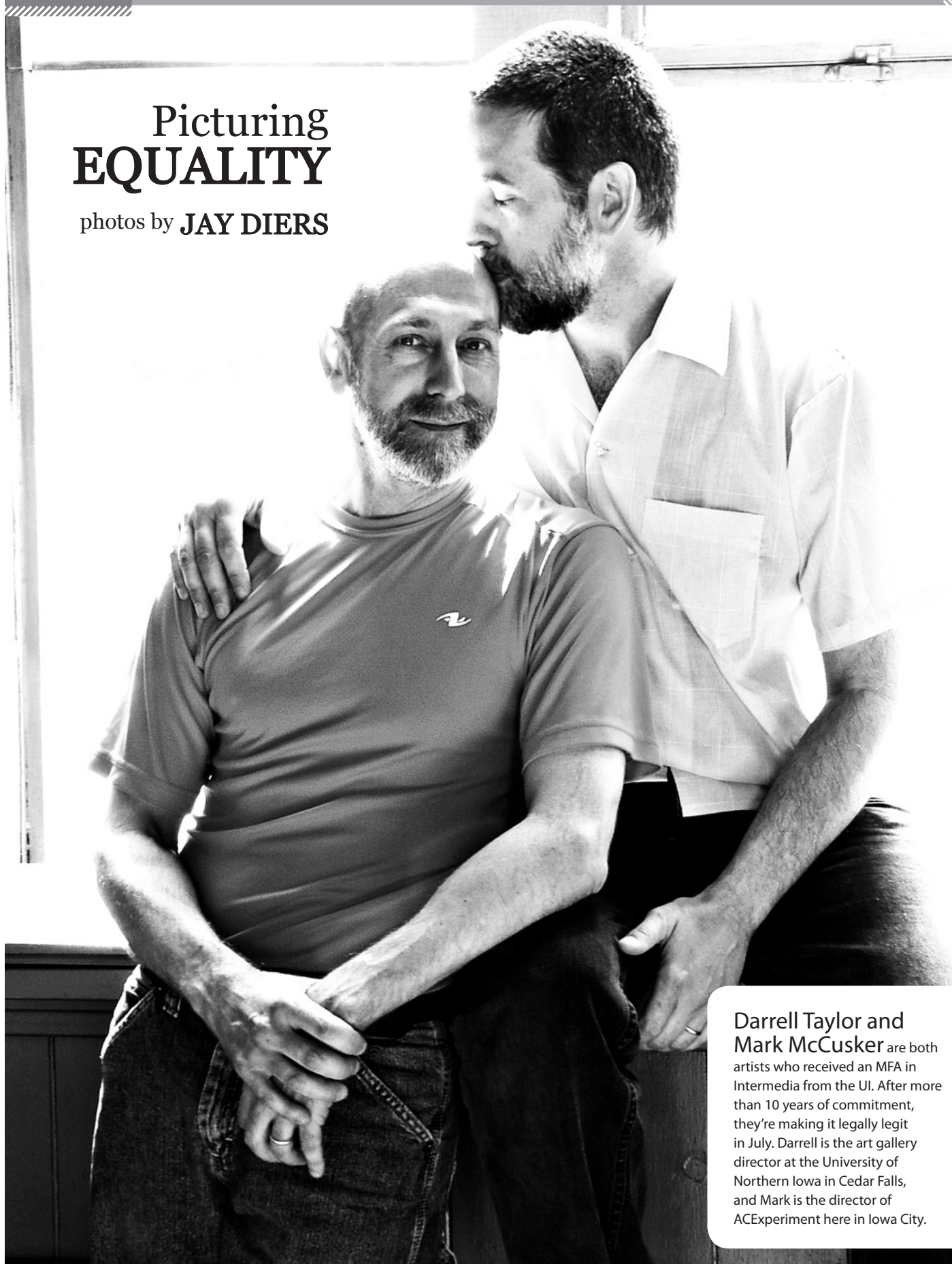
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Picturing EQUALITY

photos by JAY DIERS



Darrell Taylor and Mark McCusker are both artists who received an MFA in Intermedia from the UI. After more than 10 years of commitment, they're making it legally legit in July. Darrell is the art gallery director at the University of Northern Iowa in Cedar Falls, and Mark is the director of ACEperiment here in Iowa City.



Becky Alon and Shannon Alon legally married in the state of Iowa on April 30, 2009, but they consider themselves to have been married November 3, 2007, via a commitment ceremony. They met on Yahoo! Personals and had their first date at Shannon's house, where they played cards and Becky ruled the game.

Jay Diers is a professional photographer who has been published in reFRESH Magazine, AXN and BLUE. He blogs at Jaescott.blogspot.com. He is engaged to his partner and going to enjoy the same marriage rights as straight couples in Iowa. Males interested in modeling can reach him at jaededart@hotmail.com

In Good Faith

Looking through the cracked lens of the culture war, this isn't supposed to happen: Reverend Rich Hendricks stands at a pulpit, dressed in a black and white minister's robe like any of the hundreds of Protestant preachers across Iowa, sharing the teachings of Jesus' gentle hand with the passion of anyone who devotes his life to a cause. This is the assumed functional spot of those opposed to same-sex marriage—a battle between the faithful and secular, the two historically and divinely at odds.

But Rev. Hendricks' Jesus is one who tolerates and loves; judgment comes as an afterthought, if at all. And Hendricks' church, the Metropolitan Community Church of the Quad Cities, has a membership that he describes as "96 percent LGBT"—the common abbreviation for the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community. Hendricks was recently married to his partner of nine years, Rohn, on May 3 and has married 17 same sex couples since it became legal in Iowa in April.

"There are times that I cringe to call myself a Christian, but I decided a long time ago that I would use that anger to fuel a desire in people to follow the teachings of Jesus," Hendricks said. "Jesus just had one commandment: Love one another. That's it. Everything else is just window dressing."

The April 3 Iowa Supreme court ruling has sparked varied response: the most joyous from same-sex couples who are now allowed the Iowa legal benefits of marrying; the most hostile from those who view the decision as an attack upon traditional family structure and moral (often Biblically based) values. Hendricks represents a group that consciously joins faith and legal rights—a segment that isn't always vocal, but nonetheless form a bridge.

These congregations, often self-labeled as "welcoming" or "affirming," exist throughout the state to help provide a home to spiritual and religious seekers who are members of the LGBT community and their straight advocates.

One of these is the Unitarian Universalist Society of Iowa City, which recently hosted

So I know I ran away from religion for quite some time."

Finding the Unitarians was a perfect fit—particularly when the talk of having children together came up. "We wanted our children to grow up knowing about faith and learning about the different religions of the world and exploring what spirituality meant for them." The Linleys lost their son, named Oscar, at birth and have a 19-month-old daughter Norah. They hope to expand their family in the future.

For them, having a Unitarian service solidifies this bond. "Our wedding was filled with love and faith and spirituality. It wasn't religious per se, but it was definitely spiritual and, above all, loving."

If you can ignore that Brenda and Jodi are a same-sex couple, their language reflects common spiritual bedrock, that love is what binds people together above all, and that marriage helps strengthen



Photo by Cathy Bolckam

Reverend Rick Hendricks wed his longtime partner Rohn on May 3, 2009.

17 same-sex couples from St. Louis, Missouri, who drove hours north to celebrate marriage services. Five different celebrants traveled with them, completing the services in Unitarian, Humanist, Jewish and Christian fashion—a collection of all who wanted their marriage to be "spiritual."

Brenda and Jodi Linley are an Iowa City couple who echo this desire to bring the spiritual into same-sex marriage. Though they had a "big wedding" in August of 2003, the Linleys were legally married on May 1 with the Unitarian Universalists, where they are members.

"Jodi and I are both spiritual people. I know I've felt a little 'burned' by organized religion," Brenda Linley said. "My parents are fundamentalist Christians who take those few verses in the New Testament extremely literally and look at the entire Bible with blinders on...no interpretation, no room for error, etc.

family.

Some can't ignore gender. But for those like Rev. Hendricks, "God isn't concerned with who we sleep with but with how we treat people. Just like heterosexual couples, we want to

"Jesus had just one commandment: Love one another. That's it. Everything else is just window dressing."

invite God to be part of the relationship—a ceremony [a holy union or marriage] is symbolic of that uniting of the couple and asking God's blessing on their relationship." Hendricks and his partner took holy union vows eight years ago and, like the Linleys, held a marriage ceremony in May to celebrate their legal rights.

"As far as I'm concerned, we've always been married in God's eyes," Hendricks said. "[Legal] marriage provides us with the civil benefits that other people enjoy."

These benefits represent the most obvious victory of the marriage equality. John Elson,

Wedding Planners

The wedding for Lisa Ann Johnson and Heather Daggett, both of Iowa City, is typical—Johnson describes herself as “the visionary” and Daggett as the “sensible one” who watches the finances. The couple plans on inviting friends and family to their outdoor wedding as one, big celebration on June 26, 2010.

They’re a little more low-key than the bridezillas Johnson watches on television. No big, white dresses and no cake—an ice cream sundae bar instead. They’re planning on Hawaii for the honeymoon. The ceremony, Johnson said, will be “short, sweet and to the

When it was decided they would make the leap to marriage, they knew one thing when planning the big day: Don’t rush.

point,” while the reception will be a celebration, “big and fun,” and a “classy Iowa hoe-down,” Daggett jokes.

“We like to entertain and have parties a lot,” Daggett said. “So we’re doing that but on a grand scale.”

Johnson and Daggett are still in the early planning process. They haven’t found a venue yet but they’re sure the ceremony will be in Iowa City. They’re not sure who will take which name, and both admittedly do not want the others (“Who wants to be a Daggett,” Johnson said, with Daggett’s counterpoint, “Who wants to be a Johnson, it’s so boring!”). Daggett’s mother in Joplin, Mississippi, is excited for her daughter’s upcoming wedding—but relieved it’s a year away. She’s in the process of planning Daggett’s sister’s wedding taking place this month.

The family response to their decision has been supportive overall. Daggett’s mom has been very supportive of her daughter’s life, while Johnson claims hers is “a little oblivious.”

“They’re accepting of Heather but nobody talks about it. I tried lots of ways of telling them [about getting married], like ‘Pass the salt—we’re getting married!’ or ‘What’s on the menu? Gay marriage,’” Johnson said with a laugh. “They’re surprisingly supportive, it went really well. Nobody on my side has really come and

said—‘What do you need?’ I think they’re still trying to figure it out.”

Their coworkers—Daggett works for a lab at The University of Iowa and Johnson as an elementary school teacher—have been supportive as well, but Johnson said it has put her in the position of a “forced coming-out.”

“If they ask about the wedding and don’t know [about your partner], then you’re in a forced coming-out,” Johnson said. “I don’t discuss it at work, I’ve got way more important stuff to talk about. A lot of people at my job don’t know, or have an inkling. Nobody really knows, nobody really asks.”

For Daggett, it’s not discussed but “more obvious.”

“It’s a little different for me because my gender presentation sort of “outs” me wherever I go,”

Daggett said, pointing to her short hair and button-up shirt. “So it’s not as big of a deal,” she said. Johnson, with glasses, a cardigan sweat and skirt said her appearance isn’t so obvious, although a few of her close friends at work are well aware of her relationship.

As the excitement of being able to get married has subsided some, now the pair must face the realities and boundaries of their marriage. Because same-sex marriages are not recognized at the federal level, Daggett and Johnson must file taxes separately and remain listed as “single” on their passports.

“There are these horror stories of people carrying their power of attorneys or wills with them when they travel,” Johnson said. “Like when we go to Missouri [to visit Heather’s family], they don’t recognize us as a legal marriage down there.”

On the bright side, Daggett said, the legal aspect in their state eliminates the need for lawyers or any clarification on who-gets-what in wills and health care decisions. As a married couple, decisions will be immediately left to the spouse.

“It was awesome [to see Iowa make this move],” Daggett said.

Johnson said they plan to register for the marriage license just before the wedding. The option

to have a legal ceremony at the courthouse was available, but they didn’t want to go that route.

“We want to do it all at once,” Johnson said with a smile. When it was decided they would make the leap to marriage, they knew one thing when planning the big day: Don’t rush.

“I think a lot of people, for a lot of different reasons, they want to make sure they get married in case something bad happens either for health problems or if the ruling changes,” Daggett said. “But I think it’s going to stick, I think there’s some assurance that this [ruling] is here to stay.”

It’s interesting to see how quickly everything transpired, they said, from having never thought about marriage to suddenly faced with the question: Should we?

“It was scary,” Daggett said about deciding to marry. “It was—we have to do this. We know we want to do this but do we really want to do it?”

And like most happy couples, Johnson and Heather complement each other’s thoughts

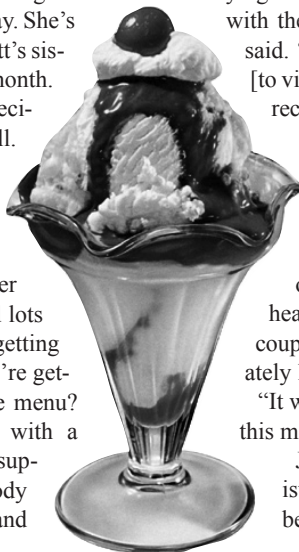
“Nothing changes in our day-to-day life, but it does really change the way that we’ll be able to describe our relationship.”

and elaborate. Johnson’s point of view on marriage was not too far from Daggett’s.

“In theory, we love each other, we’re committed, living together, sure I’ll marry you but when it’s a reality it’s like, what does this actually mean? Like how does this change the relationship, things financially? Really nothing for us changes necessarily,” Johnson said.

“Nothing changes in our day-to-day life, but it does really change the way that we’ll be able to describe our relationship and perceive our relationship, and now other people will be able to perceive our relationship,” Daggett said. “It becomes seriously more legitimate in an actual real, practical day-to-day way in a way I didn’t realize it would.” **lv**

Erin Tiesman is a graduate student at The University of Iowa School of Journalism & Mass Communication. Her interests in writing include women’s issues, religion and community.





The Divining Rock

at Oasis, the Chicago halfway house that aided his recovery.

This format, literary and layered in its rhythms and metaphors, preempts the skepticism “memoir” can evoke by engaging the reader outside of genre convention.

“I want people to try reading this [book] in a different way—understand that it is still memoir because it is still true to the events of my life, it is still true to the emotions of my life, but I’m definitely taking some liberties,” the 35-year-old says. “If people are going to sit there and pick it apart, and figure out what’s true, what’s not true, what’s true, what’s not true, if they’re spending all their energy on that, then, you know, the book’s never going to work for them.”

In Hanuman’s Hands takes its title from the cunning Hindu monkey god Hanuman, known as devoted assistant to hero Lord Rama in the ancient Indian epic the Ramayana.

The elevator pitch

version of UI Writers’ Workshop graduate Cheeni Rao’s memoir, *In Hanuman’s Hands* (HarperCollins, 2009), can sound like an overplayed stereotype: the A-student with strict parents turned drug addict turned, “He cleans up so well!”

But Rao’s telling is more than a recovering-addict cliché.

Blending myth, history and memory, *In Hanuman’s Hands* defies the line between nonfiction and fiction. In the first two paragraphs, Rao takes the reader from the mountains of Kashmir, where his Brahmin (Indian priest caste) ancestors once lived, to a hospital bed where he convulses, having his stomach pumped after a drug overdose. In the first two chapters, he leaps from the story of his birth—Rao, the first American-born child in his very traditional Indian family, received a massive blood platelet transfusion that kept him alive but also gave him Hepatitis C—to his first day

Rao’s ancestors faithfully served for generations in the temple of Kali—the Indian goddess associated with death, destruction, time and change. By immigrating to the United States, Rao believes his family has awakened a curse. He writes that his grandfather, Seetharama, told him he would need to find Hanuman or he would lose himself in America. “You cannot find him with a map,” he said. “Live like him, and you will find him.”

“I found a shortcut to Hanuman by smoking rock,” Rao continues. “I thought all those Hindu priests with their mantras, pujas, homas, oil lamps and incense were doing it the hard way. They chanted his name, they prayed to him, but they just didn’t feel him the way a crackhead does.”

Stifled by his strict parents, Rao dove into addiction while at Williams College, a small, liberal arts school in Massachusetts, and later living on the streets of Chicago. The monkey god acts as his companion and safe keeper, the positive foil to Kali. In his worst moments, Rao feels Hanuman as a visceral, physical presence that guides him to whatever he decides he needs—whether it be his next fix or, eventually, recovery at Oasis.

It was his friends at the halfway house who eventually convinced Rao to return to college

at the University of Chicago in 1996. "You can help the world more if you go to college," they said. "This is about more than you."

Rao began developing the story that would eventually become *In Hanuman's Hands* when he moved to Iowa in 1998 to attend the UI Writers' Workshop. For the writer, who had lived at Oasis for two of his three years at the University of Chicago and knew little about the Workshop, Iowa was a bit of a culture shock.

"Everybody else knew what [the Workshop] was about and had a kind of attitude—well, a kind of confidence that came with that [knowledge]," he says. "And I definitely was just trying to figure it all out, you know. I was just overwhelmed by what the opportunity was."

But it was also more peaceful. Big cities, he says, can trip sort of "panic memories" of his time on the streets, and being in Iowa gave him the space he needed in order to reflect on his past.

"I think that's sometimes the case," he says. "When you move to another place is when you start to have clarity to actually describe and write about the place you've just been."

It wasn't until 2004 that Rao began *In Hanuman's Hands* as a full-fledged project. Since graduating from the Workshop in 2000, he had started an editing business, The Book Doctors, and was working on a novel.

And myth—slightly too big to be true, slightly removed from everyday life—can make tough subjects easier to tackle.

Then, he lost the whole manuscript when his computer crashed; his Hepatitis C flared up, landing him in the hospital; and his wife left him.

"You know, that's the thing. After time on the streets and all that, it's not like life just became all roses. There was a lot of shit still, there always is," he says.

Writing the book became one way to put his past to rest, he says.

"The last 70 pages of the book was written in one sitting," he says. "At the end I just let out this scream, this holler. It was just like, it was done. I could feel it. It was an amazing moment... There are still a lot of things that I remember, that pop up, but I feel like I've done justice to it and found kind of a sense for it, and that's a hell of a lot better than it just floating around."

Still, Rao says he was initially apprehensive about writing a memoir. Digging into his past



"was really hard, and there's a lot that didn't make it into the pages because it was just like too much for me to really work with," he says. "There are things that happened to me that are just, like, seared in my mind."

It was also tough to come to terms with writing in a genre plagued with controversies of veracity (i.e., James Frey, *A Million Little Pieces*).

"This line between fiction and nonfiction... I find it kind of an arbitrary one," Rao says. "When you write a memoir, you are constructing your life. There's also an interpretive lens in play. But one of the critical issues is just like you don't remember every single word, every single detail."

To Rao, complete accuracy is less important than maintaining an overall emotional sense of the time period as he experienced it. To that end, while he did interview some friends and family members, he mostly relied on his own memories to reconstruct the story.

"If you talk about a memory with a lot of different people every time you are kind of re-writing the memory, you're re-creating the memory in your mind," he says. "I didn't want to get it too filtered in that way. There's a point in which I did want it to stay true to the way I remembered these things."

Rao's reliance on memory aligns with his interest in the role of myth. His family history, a recurring theme throughout *In Hanuman's Hands*, is heavily populated by mythic tales: Relatives supernaturally evaded British soldiers, had prodigious strength, and were thought to be gods. And both Rao's story and his father's—an immigrant who achieves great success in the new world after rejecting the family tradition of religious service to pursue logic, in his case the study of medicine—have their own mythic resonance.

And myth—slightly too big to be true, slightly removed from everyday life—can make tough subjects easier to tackle.

"I've had people come to me and tell me really personal stories of addiction or family members or things like that," Rao says. "So if talking about my story in that way helps them to talk about theirs and we can have this conversation, then hell yeah, I'll keep talking about it. Because that's really what this is about. This book is about more than me." **IV**

Maggie Anderson is an Iowa native who has lived and worked in Iowa City for the past five years. She is currently the marketing and media manager for The University of Iowa Museum of Art.

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It's Always Greener

Green Day never really seemed much like a punk band, even back in 1989 when an old friend first brought them to my attention after he snagged their debut seven-inch single. Even though they fit the punk rock bill—loud and short songs, check, spiky hair, check, connections to Berkeley's 924 Gilman Street club/collective, check, and a debut release on the music underground's medium of choice: the independently released vinyl single—Green Day seemed a little too pop to remain obscure.

Pop, in every sense of the word: poppy, because their melodies were so catchy they clung to your eardrums; populist, an outgrowth of their working class family roots; and, as their third album and first major label release *Dookie* would ultimately prove,

popular. Obscurity, especially in America, was the true measure of authenticity in punk circles, and it was clear early on that Green Day would not be trapped exclusively in the indie ghetto. However, no one, including me, thought that they would become so big, or that they would or could stick around as long as they have (formed in 1987, the band is now in its third decade).

In early-1994, when I was working at one of the many record stores that employed me over the years, I distinctly remember getting a promotional four-song cassette sampler that featured tracks from the band's major label debut. At the time, it seemed like Green Day

would be just another casualty of the alt-rock feeding frenzy, in which big record companies signed acts that would clearly never make it, like the brilliant-but-schizophrenic Daniel Johnston and the shambling all-female power pop group from Japan, Shonen Knife. The fact that Green Day's name was a not-so-thinly-veiled reference to smoking marijuana and their first MTV video was about masturbation didn't make them likely candidates for stardom.

I was wrong, obviously. All the songs on that Warner/Reprise cassette sampler went into heavy rotation on MTV later that summer, especially after their star-making turn at Woodstock '94. With the release of their latest album, *21st Century Breakdown*, they have completed another cycle in an unlikely career that has had many ups and downs, twists and turns. Much like



their last album—*American Idiot*, which reestablished their presence in popular culture after a few years in the woods—the new record is something of a rock opera/concept album. It contains long song suites featuring multiple, changing musical sections that are tied together with common lyrical themes. And like *American Idiot*, it's one of the best, most well crafted records the band has released.

Perhaps the reason I've always liked Green Day is because I've never been a musical purist. For instance, the first two albums I bought with my own money were Madonna's *Like a Virgin* and the Butthole Surfers' *Rembrandt Pussyhorse*. I was someone who grew up equally on Casey Kasem's "American Top 40" radio show, dubbed punk tapes shared by skater pals, and early Kurtis Blow records purchased by friends in our awful breakdancing crew, the Virginia Beach Breakers—back when I went by the name Cold Crush Kembrew. At the time of this dual purchase, I didn't see any contradiction in mixing the bubblicious sounds of the Material Girl with the psychedelic Texas scum punk of the Surfers. In fact, I didn't even realize there even could be a contradiction. (Later on, the Butthole Surfers would become one-hit wonders/major label casualties during the waning years of the so-called Alternative Nation, which meant that, for a time, Kasem and other radio deejays regularly uttered the words "Butthole Surfers" on the air. That was hilarious.)

Given the diversity of the songs on Green Day's last two albums, it's clear that the group's members also have no problem with musical miscegenation. Over the course of *21st Century Breakdown*, the band sounds like they have spent a night at the opera with Queen, harmonized with the Beach Boys before their daddy took the T-Bird away, snatched "The Flame" from Cheap Trick's power ballad phase, went racing in the streets with Springsteen, and pogo-ed with punk pioneers the Buzzcocks.

For example, the hard-charging "Know Your Enemy" gives way to "¡Viva La Gloria!"—which begins as a piano ballad before bait-and-switching into an up-tempo, guitar-driven hook-fest. Ever since they proved they could make quasi-prom themes like their last big hit of the 1990s, "Good Riddance (Time of Your Life)," Green Day's albums have contained at least one beautiful ballad. And on *21st Century Breakdown*'s string-laden "Last Night on



The band sounds like they have spent a night at the opera with **Queen**, harmonized with the **Beach Boys** before their daddy took the T-Bird away, snatched "The Flame" from **Cheap Trick's** power ballad phase, went racing in the streets with **Springsteen**, and pogo-ed with punk pioneers the **Buzzcocks**.

Earth," they may have bested all their previous attempts.

Mostly, though, it's a rockin' album, one that deftly embraces pop formulas while simultaneously eschewing convention. After all, if you had told me that the same band my punk rock pal introduced me to 20 years ago would still be making music—let alone crafting hugely popular pop-punk concept albums—I would have laughed. It was as likely as a 13-year-old breakdancer who listens to Madonna and the Butthole Surfers, which, to borrow a phrase from an old Green Day song, is a walking contradiction. **lv**

Kembrew McLeod is currently rehearsing with the Killer Apps, Iowa City's only all-mobile-phone cover band.

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Hollywood has us in its kung-fu grip

Terminating the Nostalgia

Bad news. In the future, at best, the lovely rolling hills of Eastern Iowa have been flattened to deadening Nebraska-like plains, at least according to the imagery of the new *Star Trek* movie. At worst, if we go the way of *Terminator: Salvation*, idiotic robots on motorcycles have killed us all off except for a handful of dullards in trench coats.

Since both movies involve time travel, let's set the Wayback Machine for 1984. I was eleven, still playing with G.I. Joe action figures, still able to transform Optimus Prime into a semi rig with extraordinary efficiency. The one bit of literature I knew by heart began, "Space, the final frontier." I was not yet above commandeering my dad's La-Z-Boy to boldly take the Enterprise into Klingon airspace.

That Orwellian year was the last stand of my childhood before the onslaught of puberty and Maggie Burns. When Riverside, the town that consolidated with my town to make Highland High School, declared itself the future birthplace of James T. Kirk one year later in 1985, I disdained all those foolish enough to put on plastic pointy ears and greet each other with the Vulcan rite. Even in '84, I had begun to turn my attention to the higher things in life: like the Wolverine and Kitty Pride comic-book mini-series and the new blockbuster *The Terminator* by someone named James Cameron. After watching the future governor of California try to destroy a pregnant waitress

from L.A., I spent a whole week trying to wrap my 11-year-old mind around the idea of time travel. Concluding it was impossible, I vowed not to waste mental energy on it ever again.

Despite that wise conclusion, let's bend time almost back to the present moment. About a week ago, I'm sitting in the Sycamore Cinema 12 waiting for *Star Trek* to begin. Behind me, two teenagers are engaged in fierce dialectic over the accuracy of the new X-Men movie about Wolverine. Then come previews for *G.I. Joe: The Rise of the Cobra* and *Transformers:*

Hollywood has clearly figured out that it's profitable to repackage whatever schlock middle-aged people enjoyed way back when we were thin, hopeful, and still unscathed by puberty.

Revenge of the Fallen. I watch Chris Pine, the latest avatar of James T. Kirk, ride a motorcycle across the vast plains of Riverside and, more bizarrely, a bunch of highly neurotic Vulcans taunt each other and occasionally explode with violence. A few days later I am struggling to stay awake in the same theater, afflicted by Christian Bale as the umpteenth incarnation of John Connor.

In *The Gay Science*, Nietzsche imagines that a demon comes to you in your loneliest loneliness and says, "Life exactly as you have lived it, you will have to live all over again, and again and again, innumerable times." He calls the prospect of the eternal return of the same "the greatest weight." Hollywood calls it "a good investment." Hollywood has clearly figured out that it's profitable to repackage whatever schlock middle-aged people enjoyed way back when we were

thin, hopeful, and still unscathed by puberty. We don't have to travel into the heart of a supernova in order to foresee *He-Man: The Cowl of Skeletor* and *Thundercats: Rise of the Hair Balls*.

What's usually missing in the rehash is the original fun. Our Batmans, Spidermans, Wolverines, Transformers, and even James Bonds have all become so dour and sour and washed of color. *Terminator: Salvation* is particularly damnable. The plot seems fine, except for its lack of drama; the characters have everything you would expect, but soul; there is all the action you demand in a summer blockbuster, only it lacks a single prickle of excitement. And what's happened to Christian Bale? An actor who once made his flat affect seethe with spooky energy now delivers his lines with all the finesse of Arnold Schwarzenegger. Look out, California.

My bigger problem is that I actually like being on this side of Maggie Burns. I prefer liquor, sex, music, cars, money and movies about all that stuff to G.I. Joe dolls, Star Trek, the school bus, and getting called Scotty Potty. Sure, I'm happy to see something from my childhood revived and aggressively marketed to my children now and again. But nothing in excess! If I have to live it all over again, or at least watch it all over again, let it not be always as a child. **lv**

Scott Samuelson teaches philosophy at Kirkwood Community College. He is also sometimes a moderator on KCRG's "Ethical Perspectives on the News" and sometimes a cook at Simone's Plain and Simple, the French restaurant in the middle of nowhere.

A Steady Hand

Sylvia Schuster has been making drawings, prints and paintings for nearly 50 years, and has works in the collections of many prominent galleries, including The University of Iowa Museum of Art and New York's Corcoran Gallery. The pieces range from the figurative to the nearly abstract, but always reflect a preoccupation with the human form—particularly the face and head. A petite woman of 64, Schuster dresses in well-worn men's work clothes with hair pulled up in a careless pony tail, exhibiting little in the way of personal vanity. But she speaks with confidence about her work.

She splits her time between New York City, Washington D.C. and Iowa City. Her local ties stem back to work during the 1960s and '70s with Mauricio Lasansky in The University of Iowa School of Art's Printmaking program. Lasansky's devotion to both innovation and traditional technique were seminal in the rise of printmaking. Schuster was planning a retrospective with The University of Iowa Art Museum before last year's flood intervened.

In advance of her upcoming West Bank Show, Schuster gave me a tour of the work she has with her in Iowa City. Most she is storing over a local video store, and she took some wry glee in leading me through the hardcore pornography room to get access to the stairs. There was enough work there to fill a decent-sized gallery—at least a hundred framed paintings, prints, and collages, and even more unframed works. Only a fraction of the work there will fit in the show at West Bank.

Her drawings exhibit an uncommon command of draftsmanship—her strong unerring line complemented by deeply worked shading. Some drawings are taller than she is, making the act of drawing a whole-body gesture. The paintings are so heavy with paint to at first seem almost muddy, but hints and seams of brilliant color limn the faces that seem to be swimming out of depths into light. Her prints reflect the depth of craft common to Lasansky's best students, but her work isn't directly influenced by his style. Rather, she absorbed his technique into her own original palette.

There are as many ways to be an artist as there are artists, but Sylvia Schuster's life has been one lived on paper and canvas; the process of seeing and the physical act of drawing and painting so completely central that everything else is just details. She spends more on rent for climate-controlled storage for her work than for her own living quarters.

While she lectures occasionally, her family



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June 5–August 15

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West Bank, 229 S. Dubuque St., Iowa City

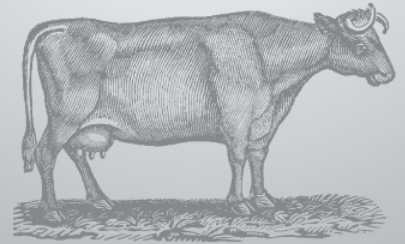
experience (both parents were professors) led her to choose not to divide her time between art and teaching. She also says she chose never to get married or have children for the same reason. She has taken day jobs—notably as a waitress in the Time Square Howard Johnson's—but she's lived for decades mostly by selling her art. The freedom to focus exclusively on creating art has resulted in an immense body of work—some 9,000 drawings, paintings and prints.

Beginning with Warhol, the United States has had a sometimes regrettable tendency to celebrate artists as celebrities. Jean-Michel Basquiat's trainwreck of a personal life, or Julian Schnabel's penchant for public tantrums have made their names more prominent than their art. Sylvia Schuster has taken a different road, avoiding any entanglement that might distract her from her artistic process. She's eked out a modest living from an outlandishly oversized body of work, rather than the other way around. **lv**

Kent Williams is an optimist who loves life, sport, and hates lies. He is Little Village's arts editor.

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FEELIN' BLUES

Driving to Fort Dodge is not what I had in mind on a Wednesday, but when Vicki Price e-mailed saying she and her husband, blues guitar slinger Joe Price would be happy to take time out of their busy touring schedule to chat, how could I resist?

I only met this inductee of the Iowa Blues Hall of Fame and Iowa Rock 'n Roll Hall of Fame Music Association this past February, after reviewing his latest album, *Rain or Shine*. He invited me to their show at The Mill, where the energy was palpable before the first chord, and once Price set to ripping his gutbucket brand of Delta blues, the entire joint got to sippin' and shakin'.

This is what it's all about for Price. It could be a club in San Francisco or a coffee shop in Dubuque, doesn't matter, he just loves to get that guitar singing and see folks up having a good time. His performance at The Mill stuck with me, and I was hankering for another dose of Joe's heartland blues.

Fort Dodge is three hours northwest of Iowa City, out into farm country. Traveling on US-20 west, the road is dead straight for 98 miles, with nothing but pastures and crop fields as far as the eye can see.

At Bloomer's on Central, an intimate coffee shop in downtown Fort Dodge, the Brushy Creek Friends of Traditional Music were hosting, "Blues, blues and more blues!"

The place was standing-room only, filled with a mixture of retro college students and aging boomers. These are Joe's people. He's been bringing solid blues music to city dwellers, Iowa farmers and small town locals alike for over 35 years.

Price is a picker and slide guitar man extraordinaire. Captivated by electrified country

blues, he bends a mind-numbing set of notes, and gets his boots slapping off the stage to create a tremendous display of sound, especially for a soloist.

Like many blues traditionalists, Joe favors National Resophonic guitars. These steel babies were originally designed for jazz and Hawaiian music, but became popular with blues players because the resonator and steel body is several times louder than wood body guitars. National gave Price one as a gift for

both feet going is a visual delight.

Price, 57, got his start coming out of a musical household in Waterloo. His grandparents played the trumpet and ukulele, and his mom had been a flapper in the bathtub gin days of the 1920s. "She'd sing these weird little tunes to me, shake her finger, and do this little dance, it was great," Price said.

Waterloo isn't exactly the blues metropolis of the world but Price recalls a railroad strike being responsible for Southern blacks migrating

to the area for work.

As a result an African American record store opened in town, where his mom, who was a music collector, bought a considerable number of hard to find releases.

"Me and my brother Butch would listen to these jazz and blues records my mom collected back in 1935—that's where it all came from," Price said about his musical lineage.

He also had the opportunity to meet Earl Hooker, one of the greatest slide guitar players to ever live. Hooker,

whose cousin was John Lee Hooker, moved to Waterloo for a time and Price would catch him gigging in music stores.

Once he saw the slide there was no going back.

"Earl showed me how open tuning went and told me to get a bike handlebar to use for a slide," Price said. "So I ran over to my neighbor's house and pulled the plastic thing off the handle and sawed the metal end off."

He's been twanging ever since.

Price moved to Iowa City in 1971, and two years later formed the Rocket 88's, with Ray "Willie" Wohlert and "Blue" Phil Ajioka. This turned out to be an important collaboration for Price, as it was his conduit into the influential MotherBlues Band, and how he met Vicki.

Coming up around the same time was Burlington native Bo Ramsey, a gifted guitarist and producer. After sitting in with the 88's



Photo courtesy Ryan Paschke of FortDodgeWEB.com

his dedication to classic blues traditions.

"Joe really loves the Delta blues and National is the guitar of choice," said Vicki Price, his partner in love and music. "His favorite is a 1930's-era National named "Grandma," which he doesn't take on the road anymore."

Joe always had a rep for sleeping in his truck, often out of necessity from knocking back too much wine.

The other staple of a Joe Price performance is his unique style of footwork or foot slapping. It not only increases his aural presence, but seeing him seated, wailing on a guitar with

Full Slate

June is the month when the days, like so many hipster beards, grow long, which means ample time for you to tan that upper chest region exposed by your favorite v-neck. If things go according to plan, the corn will be knee-high by the Fourth of July, but in the lead-up to our nation's birthday, you'll be knee-deep in shows as the summer delivers a farmers-market abundance of music.

Perhaps the biggest event this month is the legendary country-punk rockers the Meat Puppets (see review on opposite page), who released one of the best records, um, ever, with 1984's *Meat Puppets II*. I was two years old when that album came out, but I was 12 when Nirvana covered three songs from it for their legendary MTV Unplugged session that stands as a landmark moment in music history as well in my young life. No matter which generation of rock-and-rollers you fit into, chances are you have some love in your heart for the Meat Puppets, who are rightly recognized as one of the more influential rock bands of this, or any, era. They play The Mill on June 27th, so go to pay your respects, and stay because the music will be great. And if its old legends you like, then House of Large Sizes is playing The Mill on the 24th. 'Nuff said there.

Also among rock-and-roll royalty—though of a much more recent, indie vintage—is Bill Callahan (see review on opposite page), who will play the Picador on the 20th. Having released a billion albums under the stage name Smog, Callahan's last two efforts, including this year's critically acclaimed *Sometimes I Wish We Were an Eagle*, have been released under his own name. While the moniker's have changed, Callahan's penchant for insightful tales of heartbreak and woe remains the same. Though the music is occasionally very, very sparse, Callahan is an incredibly powerful songwriter, and he also had a well-publicized relationship with sprightly harpstress Joanna Newsom, which says something, though I'm not entirely sure what.

An equally interesting, though much newer songwriter is John McCauley—stage name Deer Tick—who stands among the best, if

strangely overlooked, of the current crop of young country/rock/folksters. His 2007 album *War Elephant* is a kind of hybrid of Bon Iver's songcraft and The Avett Brother's punk-country sensibilities, and as such, is just as good if not better than both of those records. Known for his wild, commanding live shows and oc-



Photo by Matthew Blodgett

casional antics, he'll play The Mill on the 16th. And if you don't trust me, take it from NBC Nightly News anchor-turned-blogger Brian Williams, who has a new video online where he interviews Deer Tick and friends. (It's called "BriTunes." I'm not making that up.)

You'll be knee-deep in shows as the summer delivers a farmers-market abundance of music.

A slew of performers from past Mission Creek festivals (which, full disclosure, I work for) will also be rolling through town this month, including John Vanderslice and Tallest Man on Earth, who played separate shows at this year's fest but have joined forces for this co-headlining tour coming to The Mill on the 3rd. If you missed Tallest Man's beyond-sold out performance at Public Space ONE, it was a jaw-dropping, intense show that featured many of the songs from last year's well-received *Shallow Graves*. He's a very short, and very stunning performer, and as a Swede, might not play the states very often. The comparisons he gets to Dylan are appropriate.

Other Mission Creek alums stopping through town are former Pitchfork darlings Rock Plaza Central, who will hopefully play new songs from a new album that will hopefully come out soon. The follow-up to their 2005 record *Are We Not Horses?* is long overdue. They'll be at The Mill on the 10th. Brighton, MA will bring their high-energy indie-pop to The Mill on the 5th, and Yea Big + Kid Static, who turned heads opening for the GZA, will play The Mill on the 13th. The homecoming that I'm most excited for, however, has to be Skye Carrasco, a former member of the incredible local chamber-popsters Skursula. She'll play The Mill on the 9th with Harlan Muir, whose badass accordion playing was also a part of Skursula. Will they collaborate? Will old Skursula songs be played? We can hope.

If you like your music hard, loud and strange, then this month also doesn't disappoint. The very heavy band Russian Circles will return to the Picador on the 19th. I was introduced to this band by accident three years ago at the SXSW festival, and in the several times that I've seen them since, they're getting even better, which is scary. Local experimental-noise favorites Lwa will play Public Space ONE on the 6th with Our Brother the Native, which should be one of the better out-music shows of the summer. Also noteworthy at Public Space ONE this month are L.A. punks Mika Miko, who will play with our favorite local punks, Lipstick Homicide. That show goes down on the 24th.

But wait, there's more! I would certainly check out Sir Richard Bishop, who will be playing the Picador on the 24th. With a new album coming out on Drag City, expect Lebanese and North African-inspired music on electric guitar, backed by a band. We don't get a lot of stuff like this, so go and be worldly. And speaking of worldly, The New Mastersounds, who are from Leeds, are playing the Yacht Club on the 12th. The Diplomats of Solid Sound, local soul-revivalists who are seriously awesome, open the gig. **lv**

Craig Eley is a music writer, promoter and American studies grad student, usually in that order. Got news on the music scene? Write to him at craig@missionfreak.com.



Meat Puppets

Sewn Together

Megaforce

myspace.com/themeatpuppets

Fifteen years after gaining mainstream success with *Too High to Die*, Meat Puppets put out a new album—*Sewn Together*—and are promoting it at The Mill on June 27. I was skeptical when I first heard of their newest attempt—how many bands successfully release an album that is decent, let alone impressive, more than 10 years past their prime? Quickly consider other musicians from this time—Dave Grohl, Chris Cornell, Sonic Youth, Pearl Jam. Do their current projects stand proudly in your recently played, or would the CDs be put to better use at a firing range?

With *Sewn Together*, I feel the Puppets cemented itself in the more honorable class of the playable passe. The album title is apt in stating what to expect—a mending of the classic sound with that of a new generation.

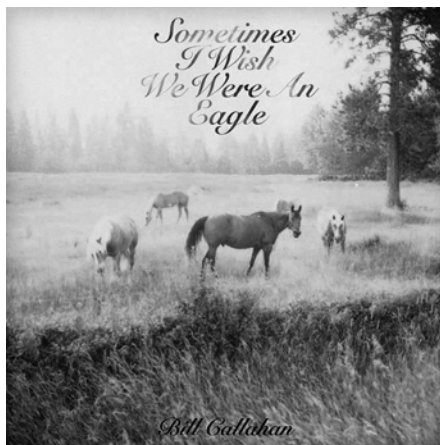
For instance, “Sapphire” starts with a riff identifiable with the late Eighties/early Nineties, but smoothly picks up a more modern tempo during the chorus. The two parts are then intermixed, creating a breathtaking climactic instrumentation. Also, the title track, “Sewn Together”, has more Pop than other Puppet songs, but this seems less an attempt at conformity than an enticing entrance to immediately draw in any listener. It is a brilliant start to an album transitioning between times.

But remember—*Sewn Together* is still the twelfth addition for a band aged nearly 30 years. Members have gone from the inspiration to the inspired, making their music less distinguishable as raw and groundbreaking. The album gets repetitious at times and leaves more room for criticism than past pieces. Regardless, it is still a refreshing splash in an

infinite pool of indistinguishable indie/alternative artists made available by that newfangled Internet.

In a time before mass Internet usage, the Meat Puppets greatly influenced the Nineties’ alt-rock scene, securing its spot as a grandfather to one of the strongest genres in music. Many people associate the band with Nirvana’s 1993 MTV Unplugged session; however, the three Puppet songs played during that show (“Lake of Fire”, “Plateau” and “Oh, Me”) were recorded in 1983, an entire decade before the birth of their mainstream popularity.

Brittany Jade is ecstatic for the live music coming to Iowa City this summer. Kudos to the local venues for pulling in such



Bill Callahan

Sometimes I Wish We Were An Eagle

Drag City

myspace.com/toomuchtolive

Implicit in the skyward-looking title of former Smog mastermind Bill Callahan’s new album are a few melancholy realities: we are very much grounded and not at all together. Though its been rightly and favorably compared to Nixon-era Lambchop, this is not a dynamic record. For all its investment in the space overhead, there are no soaring high points and by consequence no low ones.

The album casts its eyes over a bittersweet emotional landscape—looking up (“something was passing over and over me”), looking back (“all these fine memories are fucking me down”), occasionally looking forward (“It’s time to put God away”)—while never providing a sense of progress. That’s not meant as a

CALLAHAN CONTINUED ON PAGE 24 >>

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Thursday June 18 ALL AGES 6PM
Time Again

Friday June 19
Russian Circles Coliseum

Saturday June 20
Bill Callahan

Friday June 26
Richard Bishop

Thursday July 2 ALL AGES 6PM
A Static Lullaby
Vanna Asking Alexandria Motionless in White Tides of Man

Friday July 10 ALL AGES 6PM
Maylene and the Sons of Disaster
Beneath the Villa Bella An Airbag Saved My Life

Monday July 13
Eastern Sunz

Tuesday July 14
Fake Problems Kiss Kiss

Wednesday July 15 ALL AGES 5:30PM
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Birth Rites

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www.missionfreak.com



online at www.LittleVillageMag.com

I had the chance to see Birth Rites live at The Mill, and a couple of things struck me: First, they're a tight band with a really dynamic drummer. Second, they had a bunch of regular-guy bros down front who knew all the lyrics. Now, I assume these are friends and roommates, but even so, they inspired some touchingly innocent fanboyism.

Their debut album on Mission Freak Records captures some of that energy from their live sets. I can't really decide where they are in the genre pigeonhole matrix; they're closest to being the sort of earnest Midwest emo band. But they don't get bogged down in self-conscious miserableness, and every song is full of proggy riffing and start-stop tempos. They even have a bit of Dinosaur Jr. going on the song "We Put the Fun in Funeral," though the vocals are more conventionally

tuneful. The similarity is one-chord voicing and the limber interplay of drums and bass.

The hype tracks for me are the mini-suite of "Berengia (the thought)" and "Berengia (the action)." The ambition of these songs taken together is breathtaking, collecting about a dozen interlocking song sections going literally from a whisper to a scream. Yet it maintains some balance, never wearing out its welcome. Birth Rights songs are user-friendly and accessible, but never simple. They seek to challenge themselves while still inviting the listener.



Porno Galactica

Romance In The New World

Mission Freak Records

www.missionfreak.com

So... I was pleasantly surprised by this CD. I've seen these guys live a couple of times, which comprises them DJing their own tracks on a laptop and then jumping around and talking crack on the microphone. It works remarkably well for their target demographic—they follow in the footsteps of Dan Deacon and

Girltalk by inviting the audience to surround them on stage, and everyone pogos in place until they're a heaving, sweaty scrum of happy funtime. Thankfully "Romance In The New World" is the high fidelity, no yelling Porno Galactica. These guys grew up in a world where laptops and music software were taken for granted, and music from video games like "Legend Of Zelda" and "Super Mario World" loom larger than the 80s synth pop that influenced the electronic musicians coming of age in the 90s.

The predominant sound here is an odd amalgam of disco-rock programmed drums and synths imitating guitars. Songs like "Sea Beast Released" sound like Van Halen with the players replaced by robots. "Spills and Thrills" has a more dreamy pop feel to it, with a vocal-esque synth out front on the verse, but in the chorus it opens up to a lush piano and synth strings breakdown. The simple minor/major/minor chord changes are filligreed with baroque arpeggiated ostinatos that would give a human player carpal tunnel syndrome. "I'm Not Shy Mister" features the octave-jumping square wave synth lead that is pure video game music.

I was talking with this album with one of the Mission Freak guys and he said the album was 'deep' without a trace of irony. Porno Galactica isn't deep like Mahler's Eighth Symphony—these guys are barely out of high school. Any depth they can bring is the deep romanticism of the young. That's the eternal subject of American pop music, and these guys nail it perfectly. I'm sure they'll go on to make more 'mature' music at some point, but it won't take away from the naive loveliness of "Romance In Then New World."

Kent Williams is an optimist who loves life, sport, and hates lies. He is Little Village's arts editor.

>> CALLAHAN FROM PAGE 23

criticism. The lightness of the spartan musical arrangements and the unfettered directness—almost plainness—of the lyrics create beautiful, introspective moments where "all thoughts are prey to some beast."

For instance, Callahan sums up the complex functioning of friendship like so: "Now I'm not saying we're cut from the same tree / But like two pieces of the gallows / The pillar

and the beam / Like two pieces of the gallows / We share a common dream / To destroy what will harm other men / My friend." The light and hopeful touches of violins accent the irony here as does Callahan's half-growling delivery of the words "my friend." There are some humorous moments, as well. The puzzling title of "Eid Ma Clack Shaw" is revealed to be taken from the lyrics of the "the perfect song," dreamt and scribbled down in the middle of the night. That kind of dream deferred might best capture the mood of this album.

It's possible this album is best appreciated in places where the sky owns more of the hori-

zon, where the freedoms and dreams suggested by such an expanse are so constantly present that they become oppressive or paralyzing. For better or worse, Iowa City can lay plenty of claim to being just such a place, especially in the summer, when the town empties out like a beer bottle.

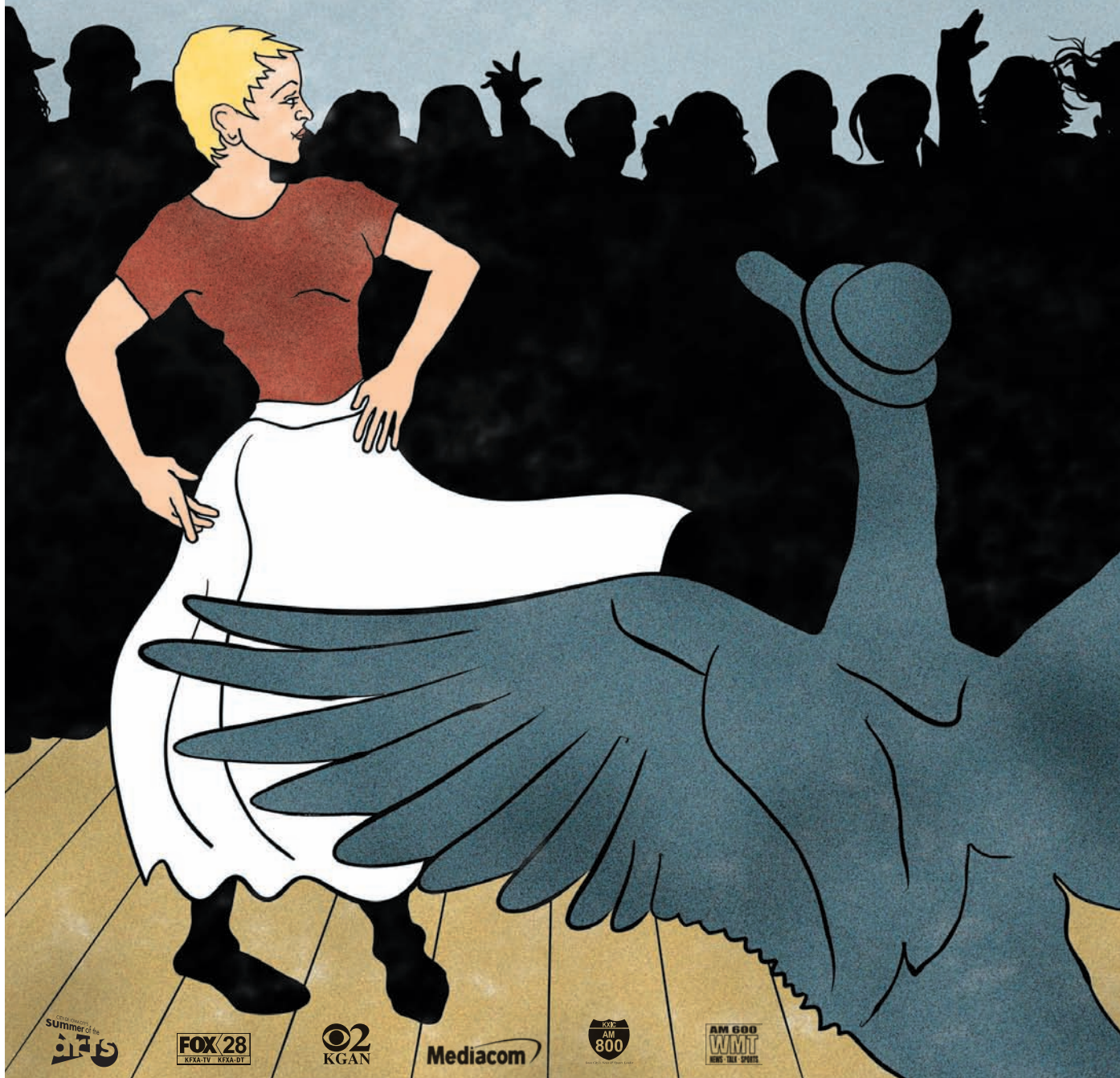
On Saturday, June 20, Bill Callahan will swing through the Picador as part of his summer tour.

Tom Keegan is a beer bottle emptying dissertator as at home in the library as on the porch or behind the bar.

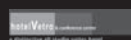
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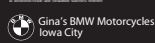
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www.thegalleriesdowntown.com

Gene Anderson: Retrospective, Through July 3

CSPS/Legion Arts

1103 Third St SE, Cedar Rapids

www.legionarts.org

Matters Arising: Art from the Flood Zone, through July 4

Faulconer Gallery

Grinnell College, 1108 Park St., Grinnell

www.grinnell.edu/fulconergallery

Below the Surface: A 21st-Century Look at the Prairie, opens June 12 • Small Expressions, opens June 12

Hudson River Gallery

538 South Gilbert St., Iowa City

www.hudsonrivergallery.com

Tom Langdon, ongoing

Iowa Artisans Gallery

207 E. Washington, Iowa City

www.iowa-artisans-gallery.com

Jenny Braig, through June 14

Old Capitol Museum

Pentacrest, UI Campus, Iowa City

www.uiowa.edu/~oldcap

Fresh Threads of Connection: Mother Nature and British Women Writers, through July 26

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Opening with Jen Delos Reyes, June 5

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Eileen Jewell, June 1 • The Quire, June 5, 8pm • Bonsoir, Catin, June 15, 7pm • Pisolera, June 17, 7pm • The Dixie Bee-Liners, June 19, 5:30pm

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First Fridays non profit benefit concerts

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Englert Theatre

221 E. Washington St., Iowa City

www.englert.org

The Giant Jam Sandwich, June 6, 9:30am and 11am

Friday Night Concert Series

Ped Mall, downtown Iowa City

www.summerofthearts.org

Beaker Brothers, June 12 • Recliners/Awful Purdies, June 19 • Jazz Camp Combos, June 26

The Industry

211 Iowa Ave., Iowa City

www.myspace.com/theindustry

All shows at 8pm unless noted

Houston Calls, Lipstick Homicide and Worse Case Scenario, June 2

Iowa Arts Festival

Downtown Iowa City

www.summerofthearts.org

Main Stage: The Damnwells, 7pm; Squirrel Nut Zippers, 9pm, June 5 • Lipstick Homicide, 11am; Andy Carlson & Casey Cook, noon; Dave Moore, 1:30pm; Finders & Youngberg, 3pm; The 100s, 4:30pm; Kevin Gordon Band, 7pm; Robert Earl Keen Band, 9pm, June 6

The Mill

120 E. Burlington St., Iowa City

www.icmill.com

Shows at 9pm unless otherwise noted

Sunday Night Pub Quiz, Sundays, 9pm-Midnight
Open Mic with J. Knight, Mondays, 8pm, call 338-6713 to sign up

Tuesday Night Social Club, Tuesdays

Caroline Smith and the Goodnight Sleeps, The Daredevil Christopher Wright, Chrash, June 2 • John Vanderslice & The Tallest Man on Earth, June

3, 8:30pm • Insectoid, Five In A Hand & Johnny On Point, June 4 • Brighton, MA, June 5 • Band From Town and Eleisha Eagle, June 6 • Skye Carrasco, Quiet Bears, Harlan Muir, June 9 • Burlington St. Bluegrass Band, June 10, 7pm • Rock Plaza Central, June 10, 10pm • Illinois John Fever, Smokestack and The Foothill Fury / The Gilded Bats, June 11 • Pieta Brown & Dream #9, June 12, 8pm • Yea Big and Kid Static, June 13 • Deer Tick, June 16 • Yuppies, Circuit De Yeux, The Twelve Canons, June 17 • Uniphonics w. special guests JC Brooks and The Uptown Sound, June 19 • Grooveship, June 20 • Snow Demon, Acoustic Guillotine, Gypsy Nomads, June 23 • Summer Soul Spin, June 23 • Burlington St. Bluegrass Band, June 24, 7pm • Kol Shira, June 25, 8pm • House of Large Sizes with Petit Mal and Lipstick Homicide, June 26 • The Meat Puppets with Sam Locke-Ward & the Quiet Men / Birth Rites, June

The Picador

330 E. Washington St., Iowa City

www.thepicador.com

All shows at 9pm unless otherwise noted

Lucero, Chuck Ragan (of Hot Water Music), June 4 • For Today, Beneath the Sky, Venia, June 8, 6pm • The Crinn, A Hill To Die Upon, Spanish Harlem, GMID, June 11, 5:30pm • The Takeover, UGV, Organized Rhyme Family, King Frost, Big Bang, Midwest Maniacs, June 12 • Attack Attack!, Watchout! There's Ghosts, Of, June 17, 6pm • Time Again, Trash and the Timebombs, Dylan Shiv & The Shanks, June 18, 6pm • Russian Circles, Coliseum, June 19 • Bill Callahan, June 20 • Sir Richard Bishop, June 26 • Grave Corps, Albino Spiders, June 27

Public Space One

115 E. Washington St., Iowa City

www.myspace.com/publicspaceone

Media, the Post Mortems, June 2, 9pm • The Killer Apps, June 3, 8pm • Math the Band, Valley Tongues, Beast Wars, June 4, 9pm • Goodbye Kai, Day of the Weak, FTF (for the family), June 5, 9pm • Our Brother The Native, LWA, June 6, 9pm • Spanish Harlem, June 13, 9pm • Mika Miko with the Strange Boys, Lipstick Homicide, June 24, 9pm • Robbers, Polar Opposite Bear, Teddy Boys, June 27, 9pm

Red Cedar Chamber Music

www.redcedar.org

Check website for locations

Vienna by Starlight, June 6, 8pm

Riverside Casino

3184 Highway 22, Riverside

www.riversidecasinoandresort.com

Heart, June 26, 7pm

The University of Iowa Music Events

www.uiowa.edu/artsiowa

Check website for locations

Iowa Band Camp talent show, June 10, 8pm • Iowa Band Camp concert, June 13, 8pm • Iowa Piano Camp faculty recital, June 16, 8pm • Iowa Percussion Camp faculty recital, June 18, 8pm

Iowa Arts Festival June 5-7

Iowa City Pride June 20

Ah, the Season of the Fest. Summertime is the best time in Iowa City not only because all the transient undergrads leave but also because residents and visitors can attend free events each weekend. But y'all know that already, let's get to the why!

The Iowa Arts Festival this year is June 5-7, with the Squirrel Nut Zippers headlining the main stage on Friday. There are more booths this year too, so plan some extra browse time. Details at www.summerofthearts.org

The other June fest—Iowa City Pride—will take place Saturday, June 20. The parade starts at College Green at noon, and the Upper City Park picnic that follows lasts till 5pm. Last year's parade was cancelled due to, y'know, the flooding, so this year should be extra sweet. More info can be found at QueerConnections.org.

• Iowa Piano Camp concert, June 19, 8pm • Iowa Percussion Camp concert, June 19, 8pm • Iowa Jazz Camp faculty recital, June 22, 8pm • Iowa Piano Camp talent show, June 23, 8pm

Uptown Bill's Small Mall

401 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City
www.uptownbills.org
Open Mic, Fridays, 8pm; Sign-up, 7:30pm

Yacht Club

13 S. Linn St., Iowa City
www.iowacityyachtclub.org
Shows at 9pm unless otherwise noted
Roster McCabe, June 4 • Euforquestra, June 5 • The New Mastersounds and Diplomats of Solid Sound, June 12 • Heatbox CD Release with Johnny on Point, June 12 • Camp Euforia Battle of the Bands, June 13 • Dead Larry CD Release, June 19 • Mad Monks and Nifty Mountain PowWow, June 20 • Given to Fly, June 26

THEATER/ DANCE/ PERFORMANCE

CSPS/Legion Arts

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www.legionarts.org
Baile Latino, June 6

Dreamwell Theatre

10 S Gilbert St, Iowa City
www.dreamwell.com
The Drag, June 19, 20, 26 & 27

Englert Theatre

221 E. Washington St., Iowa City
www.englert.org
City Circle: Hello, Dolly!, June 12, 13, 7:30pm & June 14, 2pm

Iowa City Barn Dance

The Center, 28 S. Linn St.
Barn dance fourth Sat. of every month, 8-11pm
Acoustic Mayhem, June 27

Iowa Theatre Artists

4709 220th Trail, Amara
www.iowatheatreartists.org
Squabbles, through June 21

Riverside Theatre

213 N. Gilbert St., Iowa City
www.riversidetheatre.org
A Midsummer Night's Dream, opens June 12 • Richard III, opens June 12

Theatre Cedar Rapids

Lindale Mall, Cedar Rapids

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>> FAITH FROM PAGE 12

a co-chair of the Unitarians LGBT and allies Interweave group in Iowa City, recalls seeing his friends and his son's friends suffer because they didn't have married rights.

"I had a really good friend whose partner passed away, and when she died my friend had no recourse to the things they shared together," Elson said. "When you see someone go through that pain, you empathize. There's an inherent unfairness to it."

So when the ruling was announced, Elson's reaction was "100 percent positive"—him and his wife were visiting their son in San Francisco and subsequently walked down the Castro bragging, "we're from Iowa."

Civil victories can meet roadblocks when personal discrimination abounds. And media reports point to still-prevalent criticism of the gay movement — conservative Des Moines radio host Steve Deace and his pastor, Bob Deever, blasted openly gay State Senator Matt McCoy on May 21 because he is a Christian, which the duo said was "ignorant" because being gay and Christian was only a "self-deception."

Rev. Hendricks, however, reports nothing but acceptance for the members of his church. After appearing in local papers since the ruling, "People would stop us and say, 'here's the couple from the paper—congratulations,'" Hendricks said. "The vast majority of people out there, when they are exposed to human beings, realize that love is love. That's at the heart of who Jesus was."

Hendricks believes that the opposition is only a vocal minority, and Biblically speaking, "aren't particularly well-educated in the Scriptures. If they were, they would have a better understanding of who Jesus was." He can point to interpretations of the Sodom and Gomorrah story and the Isaiah prophecy to strengthen his claim that God wanted people to be hospitable and that Jesus was accepting of all people—but ultimately his best preaching, he says, is done by example.

"When our church started, it was known as the 'Gay Church.' Then it was known as the 'Church with AIDS.' Now we're known as the 'Human Rights Church,'" Hendricks said about the community's progress. "Ten years from now, people will wonder what all the fuss was about." **IV**

Paul Sorenson is Little Village's features editor. Contact him at features@littlevillagemag.com with story suggestions or personal criticism.

www.theatrecre.org

High School Musical, June 18-21

The University of Iowa Dance

Space/Place Theatre, North Hall

www.uiowa.edu/artsiowa

Summer Dance Concert, June 4-6, 8pm

The University of Iowa Theatre

www.uiowa.edu/~theatre

Theatre Building, UI Campus

Iowa Summer Rep: The Clean House, June 19, 20, 24, 25, 30, 8pm & June 21, 2pm • Dead Man's Cellphone, June 26, 27, 8pm • June 28, 2pm

WORDS**Barnes & Noble**

Coral Ridge Mall

1451 Coral Ridge Ave., Coralville

The Writers Workshop, June 11 & 25, 7pm • Coffee and Crime Book Group, June 16, 7pm

Iowa Review Book Fair

Old Brick, 26 E. Market St.

CLMP Book Fair, June 11, 12-6pm

Iowa Summer Writing Festival

www.uiowa.edu/artsiowa

Check website for locations

Elevenes Literary Hour, June 8, 9, 11, 12, 15-19, 22-26, 11am • Andre Dubus III, June 9, 7pm

Prairie Lights

15 S. Dubuque St., Iowa City

www.prairielightsbooks.com

All shows at 7pm unless otherwise noted

Michael Perry, June 4 • Janet Burroway, June 5 • John Miles, June 8 • Flood anniversary reading, June 10 • Robin Hemley, June 11 • Mahbod Seraji, June 12 • Karen Essex, June 15 • J. Robert Lennon, June 16 • Binnie Kirshenbaum, June 17 • Gregg Rappleye & Dan Gerber, June 18 • Simon Van Booy, June 19 • Kathryn Kysar & Shannon Olson, June 20 • Michael Dennis Browne, June 22 • Robert Wachal, June 23 • John Graber & Bruce Bond, June 25

COMEDY**Summit Restaurant Comedy Night**

10 S. Clinton St, Iowa City

www.thesummitrestaurantandbar.com

Shows start at 9:30pm

Mark Fradl, Mike Baldwin, June 3 • Matt Golightly, Jay Harris, June 10 • John Bush, Tommy Thompson, June 17

Penguin's Comedy Club

Clarion Hotel, 525 33rd Ave. SW, Cedar Rapids

www.penguinscomedyclub.com

Check website for showtimes

Don Reese and JosH Alton, June 5-6 • Damon Wayans, Jr., June 11 • Schools Out for Teachers,

June 11 • Mike Merryfield and Brian Hicks, June 12-13 • Scott Novotny and David Beck, June 19-20 • John Bush and JerDog, June 26-27

CINEMA**Bijou Theater**

Iowa Memorial Union

www.bijoutheater.org

Check website for showtimes

Tokyo, June 12-18 • Roadsworth, June 19-25 • Sita Sings the Blues, June 26 - July 2

MidWestOne Bank Free Movie Series

Pentacrest, downtown Iowa City

www.summerofthearts.org

All shows begin at sunset

Cool Runnings, June 13 • Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein, June 20 • Beetlejuice, June 27

KIDS**Barnes & Nobles**

Coral Ridge Mall

1451 Coral Ridge Ave., Coralville

Storytime readings at 10am unless otherwise noted

Sugar Would Not Eat It, June 2 • Night at the Museum, June 5 • Cookie Mouse, June 6, 2pm • Goldilocks, Three Little Pigs, June 9 • Being a Pig is Nice, Martha Doesn't Say Sorry, June 12 • Father's Day, June 16 & 19 • Nothing, Let's Do Nothing, June 23 • Watch Me Throw the Ball, Players in Pigtails, June 26 • The Boy Who Wouldn't Swim, Heatwave, June 30

MISC**Coralville Farmers' Market**

Community Center, Coralville

Every Monday and Thursday, 5pm

Iowa City Farmers' Market

Chauncey Swan Parking Lot

Wednesday, 5:30pm and Saturdays, 7:30am-noon

PATV

206 Lafayette St. Iowa City

www.patv.tv

The Smartest Iowan game show Wednesdays, contestants needed, smartestiowan@gmail.com

Guidelines workshop, June 7, 10am

Riverside Casino

3184 Highway 22, Riverside

www.riversidecasinoandresort.com

Trek Fest, June 27, 1pm

U.S. Cellular Center

370 1st Ave NE, Cedar Rapids

www.uscellularcenter.com

Riverrenaissance, June 11, 7:30pm • Rollergirls: Cedar Rapids vs Old Capitol City, June 13, 7pm

Curses, Foiled Again

- Two car-theft suspects fleeing police on foot in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., ran into an office building, ducked inside a women's restroom, crouched on toilets in the stalls and tried to convince officers they were women by using falsetto voices. The South Florida Sun-Sentinel reported that officers weren't fooled and arrested brothers Kendrick Pitts, 20, and Marquise Pitts, 19.
- Police caught up with a suspected drug dealer who led them on a 90 mph chase after he stopped at a Taco Bell parking lot in Decatur, Ind. Fort Wayne police Sgt. Mark Walters told the Journal Gazette that Jermaine Askia Cooper, 36, explained "he knew he was going to jail for a while" and wanted to get one last burrito.

Casting the First Stone

Two months after the Chicago Tribune denounced American International Group Inc. for awarding its top executives \$450 million in bonuses while accepting public bailout money, the newspaper's owner, the Tribune Co., received permission from a Delaware bankruptcy judge to pay some 700 local and corporate managers bonuses totaling \$13.3 million. "We need to motivate and incentivize the key people who will implement change," Tribune Chief Financial Officer Chandler Bigelow III explained to Judge Kevin Carey, who approved the handouts. "They're the best and the brightest in the company." The Washington Times reported that the Chicago Tribune's editorial asked the company executives responsible for AIG's \$40.5 billion in losses last year, "Shouldn't that kind of 'performance' require those employees to return some of their salaries, if not be fired altogether?"

Homeland Insecurity

The Transportation Security Administration admitted its \$36 million "puffer" machine airport-screening program was a mistake. USA Today reported the 207 machines, designed to thwart terrorists by firing air blasts at passengers and sniffing for explosives particles dislodged from skin and clothing, were too slow to handle passenger screening. They were also unreliable, becoming confused by humidity and jet fumes and easily clogging, resulting in additional operating costs of \$48,000 per machine. The TSA said it is replacing the machines with full-body scanners.

Slightest Provocation

Police arrested Michael Jay Richardson, 48, after a woman told them he threatened her because she forgot to bring home cheddar cheese. According to the police report, when the 29-year-old Myrtle Beach, S.C., woman went to the bathroom after bringing in groceries, Richardson kicked in the door and demanded to know where the cheddar cheese was.

Killer GOP

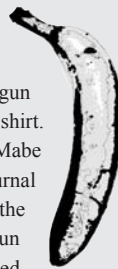
Sen. Arlen Specter, D-Pa., hinted that former Republican vice-presidential candidate Jack Kemp died of cancer because of the Republican Party agenda. Responding to a question from CBS's Bob Schieffer over whether he had let down Pennsylvanians who wanted a Republican to represent them, Specter said he was "becoming more comfortable" with the Democrats' approach and expressed disillusionment with recent changes in the Republicans' health-care priorities. "If we had pursued what President Nixon declared in 1970 as the war on cancer, we would have cured many strains," Specter said. "I think Jack Kemp would be alive today."

Instant Karma

Police said Brandon Goodson, 23, was killed at a railroad crossing in Burseson, Texas, when he "disregarded the railroad crossing signal lights and bells and drove around another vehicle that was stopped at the crossing arms." The Jeep Compass that Goodson was driving "rolled multiple times" when the locomotive hit it.

Monty Python in Real Life

A teenager entered a store in Winston-Salem, N.C., and demanded money, claiming he had a gun concealed beneath his shirt. Instead, owner Bobby Ray Mabe told the Winston-Salem Journal he and a customer jumped the robber and held him. The gun tucked under his shirt turned out to be a banana, which the suspect, John Steven Szwalla, 17, ate while awaiting sheriff's deputies. He left the peel, however, which deputies photographed as evidence.



Out Now

U.S. Embassy workers in Baghdad announced that the first-ever U.S. Embassy Gay Pride Theme Party would be held at the embassy employee association's pub, Baghdaddy's. "Dress in drag or as a gay icon," the May 10 invitation said, noting that prizes would be awarded for best costume and "Best Lip Synch Performance." An embassy official told the Washington Post the event was "organized and sponsored by a group of employees. Given the lack of places to meet in Baghdad, the embassy allows groups to use its social facilities for event on a first-come, first-served basis."

Heads Up

Sikh police officers in Britain want the government to develop bulletproof turbans so they can carry firearms while on duty without having to remove their religious headwear. Sikh officers are exempt from legal obligations to wear crash helmets because their religion requires them to wear a turban, but doing so means they cannot wear the protective headgear of firearms officers. "We would like to follow any opportunity where we could manufacture a ballistic product, made out of a synthetic fiber, that would ensure a certain degree of protection, so Sikh police officers could take part in these roles," Inspector Gian Singh Chahal, vice-chairman of the newly formed British Police Sikh Association, told the journal Police Review.

Give Us the Money

The city of Akron, Ohio, is seeking \$762,000 in federal stimulus money so it can cut down 1,075 healthy ash trees in city rights-of-way and plant other trees to take their place. City arborist Bill Hahn told the Akron Beacon-Journal the project is intended to prevent an infestation by the emerald ash borer, which has not yet appeared in the city or surrounding Summit County, although Hahn insisted the tree-killing beetle is on the way. "It's not a question of if," he said. "It's when."

Can't We Just Twitter Them?

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration is spending \$600 million to spend three and a half years scanning the galaxy for planets like ours. NASA said the newly launched Kepler spacecraft would train its telescope at 100,000 stars hoping to discover hundreds of Earth-size planets in or near their habitable zones.

Modern Times

Police on the lookout for rowdy Amish teenagers charged Chris D. Slabaugh, 17, with underage possession of alcohol after catching him drinking Busch beer while traveling in his horse-drawn buggy in Cattaraugus County, N.Y. "It's not a motor vehicle," sheriff's Capt. Robert Buchhardt told the Buffalo News, explaining the youth couldn't be charged with DWI even if he'd been intoxicated while driving. "The only thing you could charge him with was the possession of alcohol."

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

Do bras prevent saggy breasts?

Do bras keep breasts from sagging as you get older? I've heard reports that they do nothing at all.

—Curious

Oh, bras probably do something. It's just that nobody can agree on what it is. I won't pretend to have the definitive answer, but here's what we've established so far:

(1) The medical term for breast sagging is breast ptosis. One often hears that "the French have a word for it," "it" being any inscrutable aspect of daily life. However, if the French ever get stumped, ask a doctor.

(2) The upper and lateral portion of the breast, as long as we're working on our vocabulary, is known as the tail of Spence. This is an extremely difficult fact to work into ordinary conversation.

(3) There is, so far as your columnist can discover, zero evidence that bras prevent saggy breasts. (I'm not about to keep saying "breast ptosis," which sounds like something you'd take penicillin for.) My assistant Gfactor—Una is still recovering from creme brulee duty—scoured the medical journals and turned up nothing. Admittedly this wouldn't be an easy thing to study: though yes, I'm sure you could find 10 or 20 million guys who'd be happy to help, ho ho ho, my guess is if you actually had to stare at (palpate, whatever) human flesh day after day and rate its sagginess, the novelty would eventually wear off.

(4) Bras originated in 1863 as an alternative to corsets. The purpose of corsets, we can agree, was to squeeze a woman's body into something more closely resembling the 19th-century ideal of beauty, which had the unfortunate side effect of making it impossible to breathe. One may argue that bras are likewise intended to enhance the female figure but in a less drastic manner.

(5) Be that as it may, bras have always been touted for their health benefits, and given that they chased out corsets, who can argue? The

original patent application for a bra, submitted by Luman Chapman, asserts that his breast supporter helps avoid "injuries to the breasts and abdomen." By 1927 bra makers were claiming their products supported "drooping busts" and strengthened "weakened tissues." A 1952 article in *Parents* magazine (then called *Parents' Magazine*), which offers the bizarre suggestion that one should periodically trace the silhouette of one's daughter's breasts (presumably unclothed) to gauge their development, also exhorts parents to get their girls training bras at the first sign of puberty lest the poor kids' breasts drop.

1990 *Runner's World* article, exercise physiologist and biomechanics researcher LaJean Lawson compares the bouncing of breasts during running to the stretching that occurs when a woman "wears heavy earrings all the time" and recommends sports bras during exercise.

(7) In contrast to pretty much everything else you hear on this subject, we do have some scientific evidence that sports bras are a good idea, though for reasons having little to do with sagging. For a 1999 article in *Journal of Science and Medicine in Sport*, Mason et al had women exercise at varying degrees of strenuousness while wearing different types of bra or no top at all; the subjects reported

much less breast pain when clad in a sports bra. OK, the total number of subjects was three, which is not going to win anyone the Nobel Prize, but at least they were making an effort.

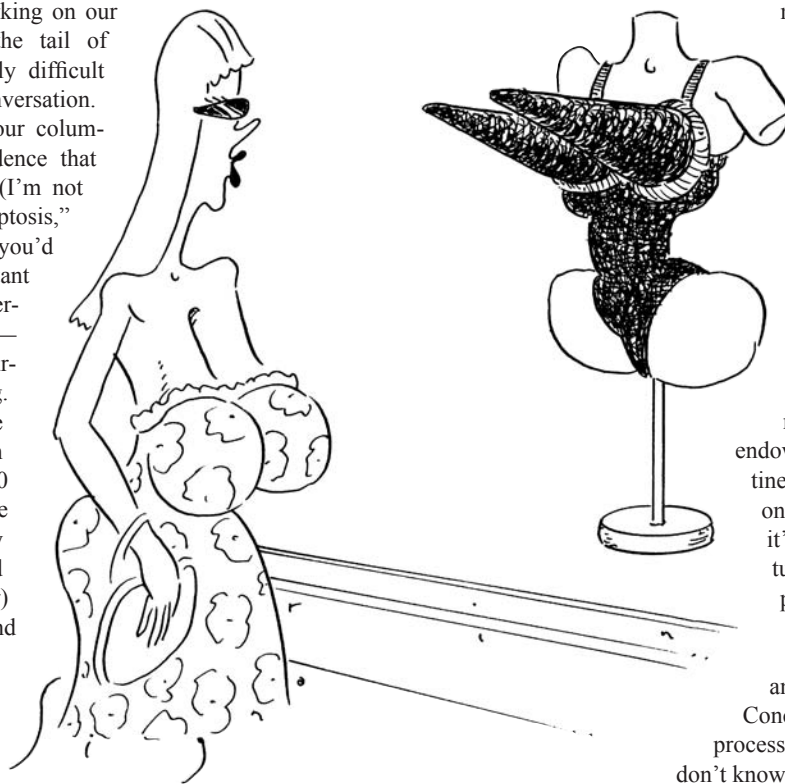
(8) I don't dispute that many if not most women need breast support while exercising and that large-breasted and lactating women need support just for walking around. The question is whether a nonpregnant, nonlactating woman of average endowment needs to wear a bra routinely. Women's breasts, even small ones, clearly sag over time, and it's not hard to believe the steady tug of gravity on minimally supported tissue partly explains why. (Other factors: significant weight loss, postpartum atrophy, and postmenopausal involution.)

Conceivably a bra could delay the process. However, not to harp on this, we don't know it for a fact.

(9) Then again, maybe it doesn't matter. I'd suggest bras are primarily a tool of fashion: they give women an approximation of the idealized female shape plus some control over jiggle, cleavage, and nipple protrusion—the undeniable fact being that most people look better, and feel more comfortable, with clothes on than with them off.

—CECIL ADAMS


Comments, questions? Take it up with Cecil on the Straight Dope Message Board, straightdope.com, or write him at the Chicago Reader, 11 E. Illinois, Chicago 60611.





(6) Bra manufacturers don't necessarily believe their products prevent sagging. In a 2000 article in the *Independent* we find John Dixey, chief executive of Playtex, agreeing with surgery professor Robert Mansell on this point. Mansell: Sagging is "a function of the weight, often of heavy breasts, and these women are wearing bras and it doesn't prevent it." Dixey: "We have no medical evidence that wearing a bra could prevent sagging, because the breast itself is not muscle so keeping it toned up is an impossibility." Others have greater faith. In a


ASTROLOGY FORECAST FOR JUNE 2009


FOR EVERYONE—Keep your balance. This month the planets are churning out a wild mix of conflicting vibes. They are stimulating our romantic and fun-loving side, creating temptations and welcome distractions. They are also stirring up anxieties and clouding our thinking with fear. At the same time, they are demanding that we meet crucial challenges important to our well-being in these changeful times. It would be really easy to give in to the temptations or cave in to anxiety rather than meet our important challenges. To keep things moving in the right direction we all need to rededicate ourselves to common sense and self-discipline.


 **ARIES**—Remember the hard part. You need to make many important changes in a careful and disciplined way. You have the energy and the incentive. But you're in the mood to party. Romance beckons. You're tempted to bend the rules. You're also feeling too antsy to work. But if you don't play a little bit, you could derail. Try to strike a balance. If you do it right, you can play by the rules, establish some long-term friendships and lay the foundation for future prosperity. Be especially careful not to neglect family.


 **TAURUS**—Lifestyle makeover. June is bursting with distractions, temptations, opportunities...and challenges. Amorous feelings, high energy, and ambition will make a heady mix. Charisma and drive will make you irresistible. Be sure to use all this personal fire power to meet the month's real challenges. The balance of power is shifting fast and you must work hard to establish your place in the new order of things. Attend to a much needed financial makeover. And maybe most important, bring your busy schedule into line with shifting health needs.


 **GEMINI**—Fight worry. You are inclined to worry excessively now. The Zodiac is conspiring to fill Gemini heads with scary thoughts. Life's grimmest possibilities will try to fill your mind. But 99.9 percent of it will be purely imaginary. If you dwell on the darker possibilities and let anxiety take over you'll miss the point. What you and everyone close to you need to do, now, is make needed changes and innovations calmly, carefully and with as much skill and expertise as possible. Ironically, this June is an especially lucky month for Gemini.


 **CANCER**—Cancerians hold the key. More than any other sign, Cancerians grasp what is happening now. And traditional Cancerian strengths and virtues are especially important to success during the current crisis. As complex and important as today's challenges are, many are tempted to be mean and inconsiderate in the name of urgency and efficiency. Whatever else you do this month, you must work to make sure that people keep their commitment to finding caring, nurturing, humane solutions to current problems. Make sure people remember that urgency is no excuse for being harsh.


 **LEO**—Take the high road. June's influences could lead you to drugs, sex and rock 'n' roll or make you a healer and a conciliator. Leo being Leo, they will probably do some of both. People are inclined to be overly sociable now to reduce anxiety and dodge the responsibilities they face. There is a whiff of real recklessness and chaos in the air. Join in the fun, but take things in a wholesome and constructive direction. Keep your friends from losing their way in these confusing and stressful times.


 **VIRGO**—Believe in your luck. You need to attend carefully to demanding tasks important to your future. You must also combat an exceptionally strong inclination to fret and worry and imagine the worst. Keep a tight leash on your imagination, or it will keep returning to the most nervous-making thoughts it can find. Then there are all those random flirtatious thoughts. Focus steadfastly on the lighter, friendlier, more playful side of things, except when you are focused on the challenges at hand. Believe it or not, underlying trends are lucky ones.


 **LIBRA**—For everyone's sake. Libra faces a big and uniquely Libran kind of challenge. The vibes are complicated, shifting, intense and sometimes just wild. They will range from metaphysical to sexy, from sober to hysterical, often all at once. Meanwhile, you must focus seriously on decisions important to your future. Others are depending on you to carry it off. Your approach to these frantic, hectic, confusing times will communicate itself to others, for better or for worse. Your intuition will sometimes bring better and luckier choices than reason or imagination right now.

 **SCORPIO**—Clarity and fairness. Strong and confusing currents are flowing through events and communications. Beneath all the confusion, power plays are being made. Don't be swept along by events or the misguided enthusiasm of others. Your needs could easily be misunderstood or ignored. Also, you might feel supportive of everyone, but their disagreements and confusion could cost you money. Let others sort out their differences before you sign on. Consent only to mutually agreed and realistic plans that take your interests into account. It might just be best to delay problematic commitments.

 **SAGITTARIUS**—Patience is best. You can see every side of every argument. Where others see conflict, you know there is a necessary give and take. Where others see order breaking down, you see people maneuvering and experimenting. Where others see only turmoil, you see progress. Where others are impatient, you know that these things take time. But do not take sides. Keep explaining people to each other. Help build a consensus. If you take sides, things could get rocky pretty fast. You are under protective and supportive influences.

 **CAPRICORN**—Finances and emotions don't mix. The changes under way are directly affecting your livelihood. Everyone's success, including yours, requires that difficult choices be made and carried out as calmly and reasonably as possible. But the deep emotional impact of changeful events is breaking the surface, now. Emotional reactions and unrealistic ideas could cloud thinking, causing decisions that make things harder than necessary. A healing confidence and optimism are close to the surface. Communicate the facts as gently and calmly as possible. Then be patient as the healing process proceeds.

 **AQUARIUS**—Connect the dots for people. Aquarians are at ground zero in a turbulent month. People are overflowing with issues and anxieties. You can relate to all of it, and then some. But you know that the changes must continue for the good of all. The planets are granting you special strength and resilience. You'll need it, as time and again people challenge your optimism with their fears. When people come to you, insist that they leave with your healing optimism. If you start feeling overwhelmed, be sure to take a break.

 **PISCES**—Practicality is key. You are moving quickly toward the launch date for a new livelihood and lifestyle. You must soon lay down new foundations and overcome obstacles to your ambitions. Psychologically, you are now experiencing a healing transformation that will make life easier for you. The psychological benefits will allow you to meet challenges and explore opportunities with confidence and enthusiasm. However, the charts suggest it isn't enough to be confident and enthusiastic. You must take care to establish a successful livelihood that will sustain you and your loved ones.

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