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Iowa City's News & Culture Magazine

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December 09

HOLIDAY

6 Trash
Throwdown

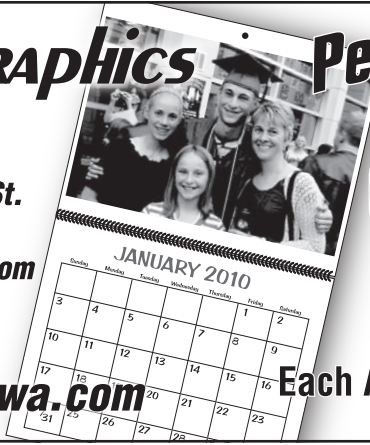
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THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

THE ASSOCIATION OF RIGHT-WING BEDWETTERS PRESENTS 5 EXTREMELY COMPELLING REASONS NOT TO HOLD TERROR TRIALS IN NEW YORK CITY

1) SOME LIBERAL JUDGE MIGHT LET THE TERRORISTS OFF ON A **TECHNICALITY**.
THE AMERICAN JUDICIAL SYSTEM CAN'T BE TRUSTED!

THE FOUNDING FATHERS SHOULD HAVE INCLUDED A "NO-TRIAL-NECESSARY-IF-YOU-KNOW-THEY'RE-GUILTY" CLAUSE!

2) THE REST OF THE WORLD MIGHT LEARN TOO MUCH ABOUT THE AMERICAN TORTURE PROGRAM.
ANY MORE ATTENTION TO THAT BUSINESS ABOUT SLICING DETAINEES' GENITALS WITH **SCALPELS** ISN'T GOING TO WIN US ANY FRIENDS.*

THE REST OF THE WORLD IS SO JUDGMENTAL!

*GOOGLE IT.

3) TERRORISTS COULD USE THE TRIAL TO SPREAD THEIR HATEFUL IDEOLOGY.
AND THEN THE NEXT THING YOU KNOW OUR KIDS WILL ALL BE RUNNING OFF TO JOIN THE **JIHAD!** IS THAT WHAT YOU WANT?

OUR LEGAL SYSTEM IS FOR DEFENDANTS WITH PLEASANT THINGS TO DISCUSS!

4) SINCE THE TRIAL COULD PUT NEW YORK CITY AT RISK, IT SHOULD BE HELD SOMEWHERE ELSE SO OTHER PEOPLE ARE PUT AT RISK INSTEAD.
THESE TERRORISTS--THEY'RE **SUPERVILLAINS!** THEY'RE LIKE **LEX LUTHOR** OR SOMETHING!

CAN'T WE JUST HOLD A **TRIBUNAL--IN THE NEGATIVE ZONE?**

5) WE'RE VERY, VERY AFRAID.
IT HAS BEEN THE DEFINING PRINCIPLE OF OUR LIVES FOR MORE THAN EIGHT YEARS.
WE'RE DAMN SURE NOT GIVING IT UP NOW.

OOOPS! I THINK I JUST WET MYSELF.

WHO CAN **BLAME** YOU?

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Parking, Not Recreation

At this festive time of year, nothing will turn your holiday cheer sour more than circling, and circling, and circling the mall parking lot, hoping against hope that soon someone will have exhausted their credit cards and have to pull out of a space so you can zoom into it before another jerk does. If I am tooling down I-80 and glance over at the Coral Ridge parking lot on a weekend afternoon during high Christmas shopping season, I am flabbergasted—and frightened—by the vast acreage of automobilage.

The massive seas of vehicles we encounter in December reveal one of the most important but least commented upon problems with Americans' automobile obsession. The environmental damage that emanates from even the cleanest of our tailpipes is only one of the reasons that the car culture is simply impractical. What we often fail even to think about is the impracticality of the physical space our vehicles occupy.

One of the biggest complaints about downtown Iowa City is parking. In a mall culture, we expect to see an open plain of parking spaces and (presumably) have one available to us close to our specific destination. That expectation goes awry in an urban center, even one as small as our hometown.

The first way the expectation goes awry is in perception. Very often, the walk from a mall parking space to your specific destination within a store is just as long, if not longer, than the parking-to-business walk downtown. Because we can see Target from our car, we think it's close, even though the hike is a good two or three blocks across a long stretch of pavement to the shoe section you're heading for within the store. Those same steps down-

town are broken up by intervening buildings and maybe turning some corners, but the walk really isn't that much different.

The second way the "right in front or close by" expectation for downtown goes awry is space itself. Simply put, it is physically impossible for our downtown—or any downtown, for that matter—to accommodate an average-size vehicle for every resident, employee or visitor.

An average mid-sized modern car (I used the Ford Fusion for my calculation) is a little over 100 square feet in surface area. Let's say an average human being occupies about four square feet of surface area (that's pretty gener-

now home to over 14,500 people. No doubt that number will be greater in the 2010 census. I could not pin down an exact number of downtown employees, but according to a 2007 downtown market analysis by Marketek, Iowa City's daytime employee population within a one-mile radius of Washington and Dubuque Streets is 33,000. Regardless of the precise number, it is a fact that central/downtown Iowa City today—the same 325 acres—is the home and workplace to tens of thousands of people, compared to 1,250 160 years ago.

My analysis so far only accounts for people. Now put all those people into cars—remember, those things that cover 25 times more

area than one person. If we translated one car per person into persons themselves, the physical space necessary for 14,500 cars (the population of central Iowa City) would be the equivalent of 362,500 people.



When people complain about lack of parking downtown, the mote in their eye is the simple impracticality of finding space on this earth for an object that is 25 times larger than they are.

ous). What we fail—or refuse—to realize is that our one li'l ol' car takes up 25 times the space of our li'l ol' selves.

Let's play with a few numbers for downtown Iowa City. First, we must realize that the downtown and central city were never intended to accommodate the number of people who live and work there now. The original 1839 plat of Iowa City extends from the Iowa River on the west to Governor Street on the east, and from Brown Street on the north to Court Street on the south. This space accommodated all residents, the state capitol and its functions (replaced in a decade or two by the university), and the entirety of commerce in Iowa City. This space occupied about 235 acres.

As Nick Johnson in a recent blog entry regarding the relocation of Hancher Auditorium noted, the 1850 population of Iowa City, which would have occupied this approximate space, was 1,250. According to the 2000 census, the approximate "original Iowa City" area, extended somewhat to the east and south, is

ple. In other words, we would need to stuff the equivalent of over 150 percent of the population of the City of Des Moines into what is essentially the space for an Iowa small town.

Let's put the numbers in a different context. If we converted the original 325 acres to a surface parking lot, it could accommodate approximately 50,000 cars (assuming twice the average square footage of a car for each vehicle—that is, you need space for rows between cars and on either side of a parked car). While the total occupancy of the original central Iowa City area may not ever reach 50,000 at any one time (though it might), it can get pretty darn close. In other words, we would need to close to double the central city area to provide one parking space per person who happens to be there (resident, worker, or visitor) at any one time. What should we do, raze everything north to the interstate, east to City High, south to Highway 6, etc., for parking?

DAMN CARS CONTINUED ON PAGE 7 >>

Chile Winter

A CHILE PEPPER PRIMER // Considering our imminent plummet into the depths of winter, Chef Kurt Michael Friese explains one of the best culinary warm-ups: the hot chile. Look below for his very own Iowa City Chili recipe.

Chipotle (10K – 50K SHU)

A chipotle is the smoked and dried version of the jalapeño and can be found dry or packed in cans in a sauce called chile adobo. The regard for this one is on a steep rise in the US due in no small measure to the popularity of the burrito chain of the same name. They lend a sweet, smoky, full-flavored heat and are quite versatile in the kitchen, at home in anything from chili to vinaigrettes.

Serrano (10K – 23K SHU)

This is the first pepper that sits on the other side of that line drawn by the jalapeño. A touch hotter than the jalapeño, it has a distinct bite that gives way to nice, full flavor.

Jalapeño (2.5K – 8K SHU)

The most ubiquitous fresh chile available in the US, the meaty, tapered jalapeño tops the heat scale for most consumers. Above here, you find mostly masochists and true connoisseurs (and sometimes they're one and the same). This is the chile you'll find, usually pickled and sliced, on top of your nachos at the local Mexican chain restaurant, but fresh they have a bright heat to them.

Pasilla (1K – 2K SHU)

A *pasilla* is the dried form of a *chile chilaca*, and is most commonly found either whole or powdered. Like its cousin, pasillas too are featured in moles from their native region of Oaxaca in Southern Mexico. Their flavor is deep and complex with a lingering tartness.

// RATING THE HEAT All chiles are measured for heat intensity using something called the Scoville Heat Unit, which measures the amount of capsaicin present in a chile. A sweet bell pepper is a zero on this scale. At the other end sits the downright dangerous Indian chile called Bhutt Jolokia or Naga Jolokia ("death" or "ghost" pepper) at a little over one million SHU or roughly three to ten times hotter than a commercially available habañero. Our humble and elusive chiltepin? A respectable 100,000 SHU.

Habañero/Scotch Bonnet (100K – 350K SHU)

These are not for amateurs. In fact even the most devoted chileheads are wary when approaching these bell-shaped beauties. They look like miniature bell peppers and come in a variety of colors, but don't be fooled; they're a very powerful heat source. If you get past the whopping, eye-watering bite, habanero's finish is bright and tangy.

Cayenne (30K – 50K SHU)

Cayenne is most commonly available in powdered form, where it packs plenty of heat but very little discernable flavor or character. It gets its name from the city in French Guiana.

Poblano/Ancho (500 – 2.5K SHU)

These are the same pepper, with the *poblano* the fresh form and the *ancho* the dried version. Each is famous in the two most well-known dishes of their Mexican region of origin—Puebla. The poblano, like a meaty full-flavored bell pepper, is most often stuffed with cheese then battered and fried as a chile relleno. The ancho, with a deep chocolaty flavor and low-hum of heat, is a key ingredient (along with about two dozen other spices) in the intense sauce called mole (and yes you pronounce that last "e," this is not a small rodent).

Iowa City Chili

There's a chill in the air here in the Heartland, the kind of windy, rainy days that drill into your bones and create a hankerin' for a rib-sticking bowl of chili. It's also a great way to use up the last of your tomatoes and peppers, or to begin to use your new "puttin' ups" (as my grandma used to call them).

1 tablespoon olive oil
1-1/2 pounds lean ground beef
2 medium onions, diced
4 cloves garlic, minced
Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 medium green bell pepper, diced
1 medium red bell pepper, diced
1 cup corn kernels (frozen is fine)
2 hot peppers of your choice, fresh or dried, seeded and minced
4 tablespoons hot smoked Spanish paprika
3 cups cooked pinto beans

1 pint canned diced tomatoes
1 pint tomato puree
18 ounces dark beer (such as bock or stout)
4 tablespoons ground cumin
1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce

Heat olive oil in a large stockpot over medium-high heat. Sauté ground beef, onion and garlic with a pinch of salt and pepper for 10-12 minutes, until browned, breaking up meat as you stir. Add bell peppers, corn, and hot peppers. Continue to cook over medium heat until

peppers are tender, about 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Add the remaining ingredients and gently bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer for 2-3 hours, then turn off heat and allow to cool before refrigerating. Reheat when ready to eat. Serve with grated cheese, chopped onions, corn bread, tortilla chips, or whatever accompaniments turn you on.

Serves 8

Trash & Consequences

In last month's *Little Village*, I urged state legislators to expand our 31-year-old bottle bill to include bottled water. That measure would help capture and recycle thousands of tons of plastic every year. Bottle bill expansion—effective as it may be—isn't a cure-all. We Iowans pitch a lot more in our dumpsters than 20 oz. Dasani bottles. As towns across the country have learned, city lawmakers can compliment a statewide deposit law with robust pay-as-you-throw waste collection. Iowa City should reward recycling and resource reduction by amping its current system.

Long a darling of the Environmental Protection Agency, pay-as-you-throw plans create a monetary incentive to produce less waste and

recycle more. In this way, it acts much like Iowa's bottle bill. Under that law, consumers pay a nickel deposit for certain drink containers, namely those holding beer and soda. They then return the container to retail stores or redemption centers and receive their five cents back; the promise of a nickel, at least in theory, prevents Iowans from littering or dumping their empties. The bottles and cans then go through the recycling process, which diverts them from our landfills.

Pay-pay-as-you-throw, sometimes referred to by the acronym PAYT, operates on an even simpler level. With such systems, trash collectors charge households a varying fee depending on how much garbage they produce. A house that generates one trash bag a week pays less than a house that generates two, and so forth. The law, in essence, urges residents to toss their margarine tubs and milk jugs into curbside recycling bins—at no expense. The more they put in the recycling bin (or compost,

or reuse, or reduce the amount of stuff you buy in the first place), the lower your garbage bag fees will be. Most systems also charge a small monthly fee to every house, to ensure a minimum amount of likely profit.

typical household cut its trash output by nearly 40 percent within four years of shifting to a pay-as-you-throw system. In other states, the numbers are even more striking. Brunswick, a small Maine community, increased recycling by 61 percent and slashed solid waste by 35 percent within one year.

Residents who were once too busy to recycle found the time.

"Most people are trying to get one kid to soccer practice, one kid to dance class," said Craig Worth, deputy public works director for Brunswick. "Having to pay per bag got their attention."

Despite its progressive leanings, Iowa City has a rather feeble approach with its pay-as-you-throw plan. Residents can leave two trash containers of up to 50

pounds each before receiving an additional charge. That means a house generating, say, 10 pounds of trash a week pays the same as a house unloading 100 pounds of garbage at its curb. Only after exceeding 100 pounds must that house begin paying for its wastefulness. The city is transitioning to a new metric, but the new one—one giant container per home holding 95 gallons—doesn't offer much of an improvement. With either system, the frugal subsidize the profligate.

"If you start hitting people where it hurts, namely the pocketbook, then recycling programs are going to start looking a lot more appetizing," said Jennifer Jordan, the recycling coordinator for the Iowa City Landfill. Jordan, who described the current program as "weak," said it's remained unchanged largely due to inertia; past lawmakers established the 100-pound hump, and none have built the necessary momentum to change it.

Not everyone agrees with Jordan and me. Rodney Walls, assistant superintendent of solid waste in Iowa City, must think about these issues everyday, and he flatly rejected my asser-



In Iowa City, a house generating 10 pounds of trash a week pays the same as a house unloading 100 pounds of garbage at its curb.

Can you imagine reducing the trash we send to the Iowa City Landfill by one-third? The numbers say it's possible.

A seminal Duke University study found that most communities using these systems cut landfill waste by 14 to 27 percent within one year. Iowa hosts a number of such success stories. In Mt. Vernon, for example, the

tion that expanding the system would increase recycling. Walls argued in a town where “college students are in and out like changed diapers,” operating a pay-as-you-throw program would require constant education. In addition, it presents serious logistical hurdles, namely the need for additional labor and storage space for trash bins. Most systems offer bins of various sizes; providers, as such, must house enough of each for the town, while workers must replace bins every time a citizen requests a new size. Lastly, pay-as-you-throw operations function the smoothest with houses, not the kind of gargantuan apartment buildings in which Iowa City specializes.

His solution for recycling: “Put a nickel on those stupid Gatorade bottles” through the expanded bottle bill proposal I wrote about last month. In other words, place the burden on industry, not government. Ask an Iowa grocer or beverage distributor, and they’ll give you the exact opposite answer.

And so one sector passes the buck to another ad nauseam, out of economic self-interest. Bottle bills and incentives for curbside recycling, after all, mean added expenses for someone. The answer, I believe, must involve the product stewardship mantra of “sharing the load.” A recent comprehensive study from the consulting firm DSM Environmental concluded that, at least in Rhode Island, a statewide pay-as-you-throw system would capture 15,400 more tons of recyclable material a year

than an expanded bottle bill. It would also cost over one-half million dollars less annually.

Bottle bills often do cost more than curbside recycling programs, but this cost spreads across a number of sectors: retailers, drink distributors and consumers. Paying consumers to recycle at curbside, on the other hand, plops the burden on governments and citizens, letting manufacturers and retailers off the hook. These sectors, thus, have no tangible incentive to create more sustainable products. While hitting consumers’ pocketbooks provokes them to reduce waste at the curb, deposit laws (and other forms of product stewardship) force manufacturers to consider the environmental impacts of the items they sell.

Together, bottle bills and pay-as-you-throw systems reward good behavior from producers and consumers, respectively. They hit us in our most vulnerable spot—the piggybank—and force

us to connect with the waste we create. I believe it’s fair to expand both programs to capture the greatest amount of recyclable materials in Iowa. Such an approach would advocate greater consumer and producer responsibility; everyone would hurt a little, but no one would cripple. In Iowa City, we can craft a stronger bond between citizens and their trash with a more robust pay-as-you-throw system. **lv**

Soheil Rezayazdi is a master’s student in journalism and mass communication at The University of Iowa. This article is one of many written for his thesis on bottle bill expansion. You may reach him, if you are so bold, at soheil.rezayazdi@littlevillagemag.com.

Bottle bills and pay-as-you-throw systems force us—producer and consumer—to connect with the waste we create.

>> DAMN CARS FROM PAGE 4

That’s hardly right in front of Prairie Lights!

Also remember that the 1839 area we’re talking about was not built for automobiles in the first place, and very few vehicles at all. All of the functions of Iowa City were within walking distance—and, for the most part, people did walk.

The simple point of all this number crunching? I hope you can see that, realistically, the car culture as many would like to live it is a physical impossibility, even in terms of simple space. (Having said that, Iowa City tries valiantly to accommodate the car culture—there are, in fact, over 4,000 parking spaces within two blocks of downtown according to the Downtown Association).

When people complain about lack of parking downtown, the mote in their eye is the simple impracticality of finding space on this earth for an object that is 25 times larger than they are. If parking in downtown Iowa City is a “problem” for someone, the answer is not just to go to Coral Ridge Mall. It’s just as big a “problem” there, especially for the environment, but also in terms of space, even if we won’t admit it. Until we truly realize what we’re asking of our planet and our built environment, we’ll be burning gallons of gas and who knows how much time circling, and circling, and circling that mall parking lot at Christmastime, only to boil in anger at that jerk who just stole “your” space. Rethinking how we transport ourselves could lead to much happier holidays. **lv**

Thomas Dean takes the bus, rides his bike, walks or employs some combination thereof to go to work at The University of Iowa. If he does drive to downtown Iowa City, he never has a problem finding a parking place.



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It Comes Again

Photos and words by
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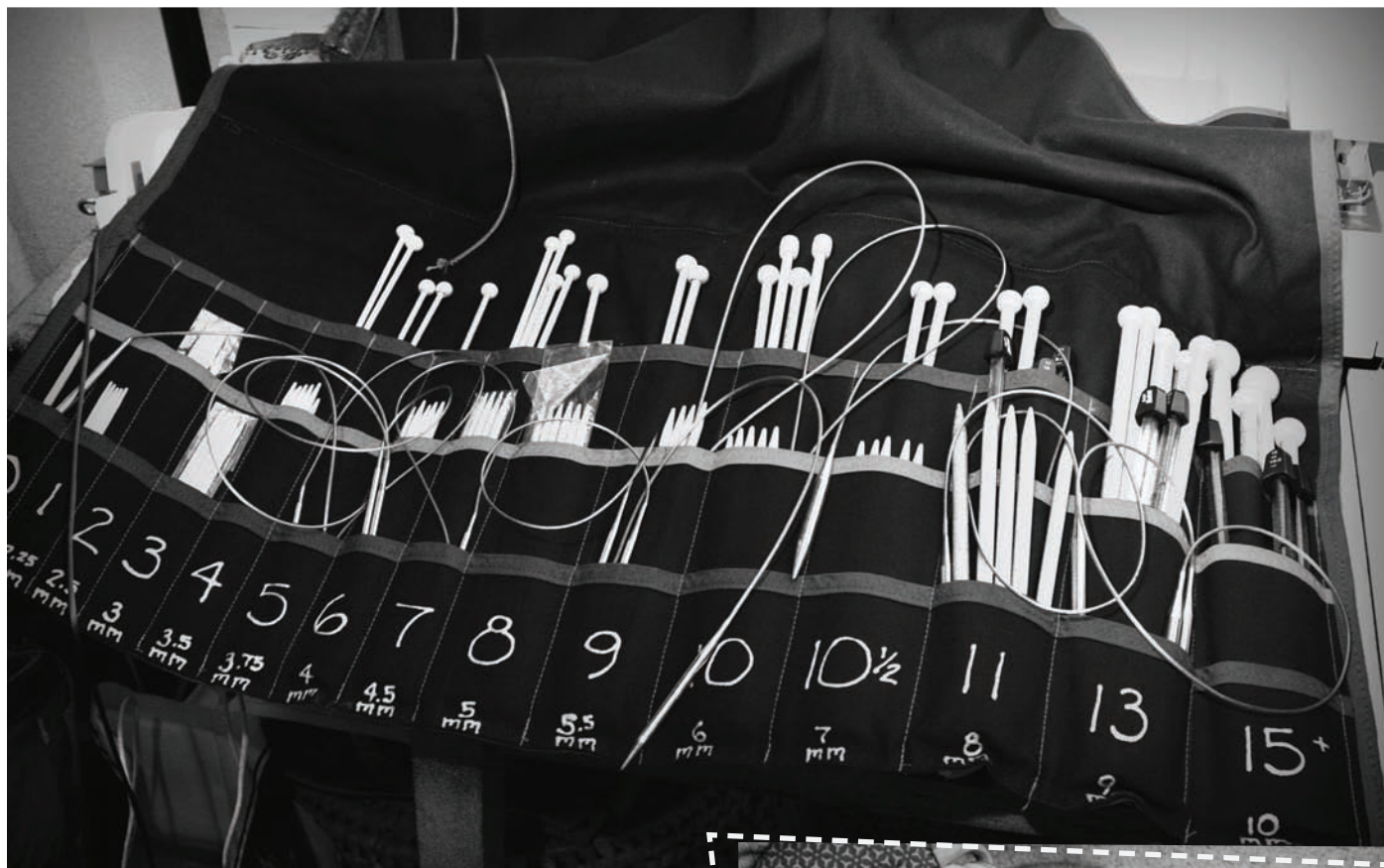
As the holiday season descends upon us and everyone we know may be running around trying to find that perfect last-minute Christmas gift for family or friends, local crafters Colleen “Bean” and Phoebe will likely be found tucked snugly in their homes, filled with the truest kind of holiday cheer. That cheer comes not from copious amounts of eggnog or rum-spiced fruit cake, but from knowing they have produced one-of-a-kind wearables, toys or home furnishings with—literally—their own bare hands. Christmas craft season is here, Iowa City, and it’s not too late to spin some yarns of your own.



I made this hexagon-patterned afghan as a gift for Layla, my first niece. She probably won't appreciate this until she's older, but many, many episodes of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* were viewed during its creation.



Coralville craftstress Bean made these bears without using a pattern. She finds inspiration in Amigurumi, which is the Japanese art of knitting or crocheting small stuffed animals or anthropomorphic creatures. "It's toys and art!" she says.



Phoebe received this needle organizer from a friend. It was tailor-made to fit Phoebe's needs and the front (not shown) features remnants of various fabrics, which make for a colorful addition to Phoebe's already colorful Yarn Room.

Phoebe's seven-month-old son Isaak helps himself to a handful of soft wool yarn, perhaps fantasizing about a new handmade blanket from mommy for Christmas...

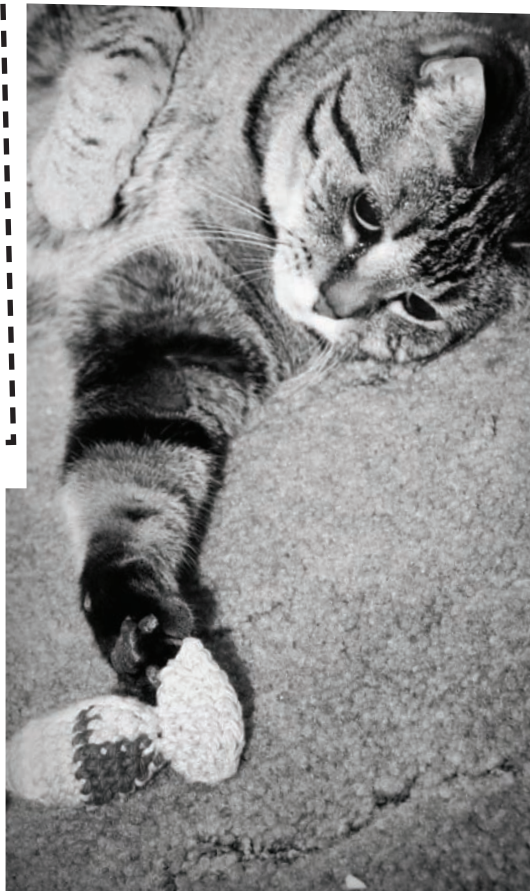
Dawn Frary is a freelance photographer and owner of the Dewey Street Photo Company (come visit the DSPC at What a Load of Craft!). When she's not rehabilitating injured birds of prey at the Macbride Raptor Project or practicing banjo, she can be found geeking out on various craft projects with lots "assistance" from Oliver and Clementine, her two awesome kitty helpers.





Manos Del Uruguay is a co-operative of over 800 women, producing and supplying hand-spun, hand-dyed yarns to customers throughout the world. Manos Del Uruguay wools and yarns are made using natural fibres sourced in South America. Phoebe buys only hand-dyed and hand-painted yarns—nothing is produced in a sweatshop.

Bean also makes hand-crafted cat toys that she fills with catnip or crinkly paper, which her kitty Tater Tot happily tests for her. Clearly, the toys have been approved by the National Cat Council for Happy Fun Play Times.



TWEETBACKS AND WALL-TO-WALLS

We asked our Twitter followers and Facebook friends...

Are You Making Your Own Holiday Gifts This Year?

Tanisha Black

Definitely, make your own cards. Art. Pastries.

Jason Vajgrt

We're making candles and homemade hot cocoa. Also, we have some family pictures that we're giving out to friends.

Maeve Clark

This takes work, but if one collects enough beer caps one could cover a table top. That would make a lovely gift for someone special. Or maybe a smaller project and make coaster with the beer caps.

Meg Ives

Re-gift; wrap stuff you already own but don't want anymore; sweet sweet lovin'!

Jessie Ramey

Gifts, gem wraps (necklaces) Munny dolls, Silverware jewelry, paintings and badass massages! That's what my loved ones are getting. :D

JoAnn Larpenter-Sinclair

Of course! Everyone in my family actually makes a lot of their gifts—we are all artists, musicians and/or love to cook. Or we choose to support independent local businesses and craftspeople. Making your own gifts puts some meaning and love back into that time of year.

Teacher Teacher

Dick in a box?

Sherry Christoffer

Always! Crochet all kinds of useful things!!! Making lots of bags this year and rugs.

Hannah Agnes Fleck

Yes! I can't decide what to make though. Something cheap, easy and lovely would be nice.

Well-Crafted

December 12 is a day where locals can not just Buy Iowa, but they can also Buy Iowa City. For the sixth time, do-it-yourself craft fair What a Load of Craft! rocks out that day—this time in a new location, the Johnson County Fairgrounds, 4261 Oak Crest Hill Road.

“The Picador is hard to leave behind because they have been so supportive and helped us make this event large enough to require a venue change,” said WALOC co-organizer Grace Locke Ward. “It’s bittersweet to move on, but we believe the added vendors and attractions will be enough to get people to make the drive and stay and hang out for the day.”

Locke Ward co-owns the at-home sewing business Skirt with her business partner and long-time friend, Susan Junis. The two began crafting together in 2000, started selling their wares under the Skirt name around 2004, and hatched the idea for an Iowa City DIY craft fair that came to fruition in May 2006. The first WALOC was held in the Hall Mall and started the tradition of live bands, local art and handmade goods where the money a person pays for an item goes directly to the person who made it.

“I love having a direct interaction with the people that wear what I make,” said JoAnn Larpenter-Sinclair, a three-time WALOC vendor. “Part of my motivation is the joy that comes from seeing someone wear what I have made, as well as having a means to pay for materials, so I don’t feel so guilty about buying fabric and beads and paint—art supplies are so expensive, that’s why so many artists are starving!”

Larpenter-Sinclair crafts vintage-influenced jewelry and other accessories, selling under the name Pretty Kitty. Design from the 1950s and ‘60s play a heavy role in influencing her art, and she looks to old movies, catalogs and

magazines for additional inspiration.

“DIY craft culture has become a way for people to take the means of production into their own hands,” says the WALOC website, Whataloadofcraft.com. It “allows people an alternative to the big box, to own one-of-a-kind handmade items produced locally and

to the dominant processes and materials.

“I see [crafting] as taking this back and making it a feminist statement,” said Junis. She also recognizing its limitations. “There’s still this small part of me that thinks I’m not breaking down any barriers.”

The women of Skirt use their sewing medium for a variety of subject matter. Sometimes it’s just a squirrel with a gun but often extends to more dissent- or resistance-centered images like Molotov cocktails.

Once they made a quilt that showed a gun pointing at a blindfolded girl. They said it was a commentary on the concept of blind justice, and was

Susan Junis shows off her wares at the WALOC number 3.



Grace Locke Ward officiates as two craft death match competitors lock pinks at WALOC 2008.

made by the same person who is selling it to you.”

For some DIY crafters, handmade items take on greater importance when considering how they are *home* made. The feminist part of the movement recognizes how the public sphere has been traditionally biased towards academy-endorsed arts, which have been dominated by men. Historically women’s creative endeavors have been societally relegated to the domestic sphere and have endured denigration by fine arts communities. Crafting for some is a continuation of the fibre art genre, initiated in the ‘70s by feminists as a challenge

inspired by an incident where a police officer shot a young girl during the officer’s pursuit of a suspect. They made the quilt for an art show at the Anarchist Bookfair in Montreal. More people will look at that kind of quilt rather than buy it, they said, adding that the cute stuff just sells more.

Larpenter-Sinclair said her beliefs in feminism and buying locally influenced her deci-



Oh, Craft!

Iowa City East Side Artists may be the craftiest collective in town.

Comprised of over 20 local artists, ICESA will hold its annual holiday event from December 11, 10am-8pm and December 12-13, 10am-5pm at the Masonic Lodge on 312 E. College St. downtown. But other than simple dates and numbers, the collection offered for sale would be difficult to define for the likes of an in-season catalogue.

"We all make it happen together," said Laurie Haag, publicity coordinator for the event and program developer at the UI's Women's Resource and Action Center. "These are not silly crafts—we're serious people with serious art. [The event is] a little bit more user-friendly than other gallery shows...but we're all serious artists."

Haag says that the group has been around for about 15 years and chooses its around 20 permanent members (by jury) based on a rubric of quality and diversity. "We're careful when we invite people so we don't pick too much of the same sort of things," Haag said, further explaining that even though ICESA have a number of people who do textiles, they all specialize in a number of different types. Same goes for the woodworkers on board or print artists like Haag (who focuses on digital photography).

The mix also extends beyond the art itself—ICESA membership is "all over the place," aged 30 to 70-something. Although Haag says it skews toward the older end, (much of the group is retired, thus can devote more time to the craft), several are school art teachers or other community professionals like Haag. And yes, prices range too—their hundreds of gifts range from \$1 to \$1,000, good for the deserving loved one and obligatory present alike.

Paul Sorenson

More Handmade Fun

Two art and craft fairs not enough?

The University of Iowa Fine Arts Council's annual **Holiday Thieves' Art Market** is December 5-6, 10am-5pm at the Iowa Memorial Union.

Not to be left out, local craft boutique Home Ec. Workshop is throwing **Craft and Fancy, a Homemade Gift Sale** on Saturday, December 5 from 10am-5pm.

sion to be part of WALOC.

"I do love that so many women have reclaimed traditional woman's work and made it their own, and that it has given so many women an artistic outlet," said Larpen-Sinclair. "I really love that the culture of making things by hand is still appreciated and alive."

Both Larpen-Sinclair and the organizers agree that the Iowa City community supports this kind of work, as evidenced by the need for WALOC to expand and the success of the downtown DIY consignment shop, White Rabbit.

Locke Ward and Junis also strive to keep the punk rock feel of the event alive. Local music personalities Kevin Koppes of the Tanks and Coolzey of Public Space Records will be co-emceeing the event's Craft Death Match, competitive rounds of crafting to the backdrop of heavy metal selected by Iowa City's Killed by Death.

New this year, Nemesis Tattoo is sponsoring a kids' coloring contest, the Red Avocado and Cookie Doe are selling eats and treats, and PATV will be screening holi-

The feminist part of the movement recognizes how the public sphere has been traditionally biased towards academy-endorsed arts, which have been dominated by men.

day films. And yes, there will still be beer, but not the kill-me-now cocktails patrons came to expect from the Picador.

Those who can't make it that day have other options to buy Iowa City-made arts and crafts. Besides finding handmade items at downtown businesses like White Rabbit, Revival and Modela (which is in the back of Decorum), Iowans can use Etsy.com's buy-local search option.

Over 75 artists and crafters in Iowa City have Etsy sites through which they can sell their wares. It's not exactly the same as in-person neighbor-to-neighbor exchanges that can happen at WALOC, but it offers 364 more days to buy local. **lv**

Melody Dworak is editor of Little Village and can't sew without managing to prick her thumb.

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Jan 30 | Cedar Rapids West
3750 Williams Blvd SW (next to Toys R Us)

Naughty or Nice? We bake. You decide.

The holiday feast is the perfect centerpiece for friends and family to gather around to celebrate, providing opportunities for conversation, shared experiences and showing off mad kitchen skillz. Revelers shouldn't have to avoid the celebration in order to avoid the caloric celebrating. But for some, the decadence is the celebration. Summer's bikini season would be an unwelcome time for fudge, after all, and everyone has a favorite dish an aunt, mother, father or grandmother makes—a dish that sometimes requires a third helping to fully honor the familial chef behind it.

Instead of the self-flagellation approach to holiday treat management, why not revel both in the hedonistic and the healthful options for holiday entertaining? We've selected a few devil-made-me-do-it treats as well as some of the sin-free variety to help guide your celebration planning.

To be like permaculture practitioners and master the energy-in/energy-out equation, check out "Nice Nice Baby" by LV Active Life columnist Kelly Ostrem. Body consciousness doesn't have to start on January 1.



Pumpkin Cheesecake a la Satan

};)

NAUGHTY NEEDS:

1 15 oz. can pumpkin
3 8 oz. packages of cream cheese
5 large eggs
1 cup sugar
2 tsp vanilla
2 chocolate crusts
Ganache topping:
8 oz. chocolate chopped up finely
3/4 cup heavy whipping cream
2 Tbsp unsalted butter

YUMMYLISCIOUS EXTRAS:

chocolate covered coffee beans
whipped cream
ground cinnamon

THE HOW TO:

Those whose dessert follows a dinner of dressing-less salad, or those on the 12,000-calorie-per-day Michael Phelps Diet, can try this take on the traditional pumpkin pie.

The cream cheese will be easier to work with if it's allowed to soften. Place the three blocks of cream cheese in a bowl and beat till creamy. Gradually beat in the sugar and add the eggs one by one after the sugar looks like it's been evenly distributed. Then beat in the pumpkin and vanilla.

Once this mix is done, pour it into the two pie crusts and place the pies in an oven

that has been preheated to 350° F. Bake for about 45 minutes or until the filling looks firm. Chill it to room temperature then chuck it in the fridge so it can set completely.

Most people would just stop here, but we can take the decadence further. A ganache glaze can be made from chopping up the chocolate super finely (for even meltability) and placing it in a metal bowl. Heat the butter and cream in a saucepan over medium heat, bringing it just to a boil. Pour over the chocolate bits and wait five minutes then whisk till smooth.

Ideally, this step would take place the morning after the cheesecake was put in the fridge to set—because now the ganache has to cool on top of it all. If you want to make clean-up easy, use a wire rack and baking sheet under your cakes when you're at the ganache-ing step. There will be drip! Gently pour on the ganache, wait a bit, then decorate with the chocolate covered coffee beans if desired. Put back into the fridge.

Twenty-four hours after your cheesecake adventure has started, it's ready to serve. Keep the whipped cream ready so guests can have another devilish option. Sprinkle the cinnamon on top and the pumpkin treat is complete.

Melody Dworak

A Date with Prosciutto

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NAUGHTY NEEDS:

dates
goat cheese (see the Robiola recipe for a naughtier substitute)
La Quercia prosciutto
toothpicks

THE HOW TO:

A very nice, easy, hedonistic appetizer is dates with goat cheese wrapped in prosciutto. New Pioneer has Medjool dates right now, and there is a wonderful Iowa prosciutto called La Quercia. Cut the dates in half (pit them if necessary), scoop in some goat cheese; slice the prosciutto in long strips and wrap each stuffed date with a strip, then stab each one with a toothpick. It's helpful to soak the toothpicks in water first, because the next step is to broil them for a few minutes, until the cheese bubbles. Sometimes people put an herb in the mix too, like a basil leaf.

This approach works well with figs too. If you're thinking of wine with it, then a delicious white wine would go well. A really good Savignon Blanc, or I like an unoaked Chardonnay (Chablis, if from France). My rule with wine: if it is a good wine, it goes with most things. If it isn't, it doesn't go with anything.

Scott Samuelson is a film critic and a sometimes-cook at Simone's Plain and Simple

Nice Nice Baby

While a 50-minute walk seems like a hard trade-off to cancel out a single cookie, just remember that the walk isn't the only time you burn calories. A person burns calories every second of the day (even when sleeping). Here are a few ideas to burn a few calories* more quickly and actively to help out in those naughty moments.

Burn 100 Calories

- Do push-ups, sit-ups, pull-ups or jumping jacks hard for 10 minutes
- Jump rope for 10 minutes
- Shoveling snow for 15 minutes
- Dance for 20 minutes
- Wash dishes by hand for 30 minutes
- Bowl for 30 minutes
- Cook for 40 minutes

Burn 150 Calories

- Go sledding for 20 minutes
- Use a snow blower to clear your sidewalks for 30 minutes
- Shoot a basketball for 30 minutes
- Play with kids (or pets) for 40 minutes
- Walk for 50 minutes
- Hatha yoga for 60 minutes

Burn 200 Calories

- Play ice hockey for 30 minutes
- Play touch football for 30 minutes
- Play Ultimate Frisbee for 30 minutes
- Jog for 35 minutes
- Ice skate for 35 minutes
- Ski for 35 minutes

Kelly Ostrem

*Calorie counts based on a 160lb person. Times are rounded.

Sweet Potato Ginger Cupkins

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NICE NEEDS:

- baked sweet potatoes
- 1 Tbsp olive oil for 3 potatoes
- mini phyllo dough cups
- crystallized ginger pieces
- salt & pepper to taste

THE HOW TO:

Probably the nicest calorie-wise among these recipes, this treat is a Melody Original and was envisioned after walking down the frozen dessert aisle at Hy-Vee and thinking, "I want to put something in those cups!" The Athens brand of mini phyllo shells pack a whopping 35 calories into two shells, and the baked sweet potatoes contain so much flavor on their own that not a lot of oil or seasoning has to be added. The naughtiest thing in these things is the sugar on the crystallized ginger, which adds a gentle sweetness to the heat of the ginger and the savoriness of the sweet potato mixture.

So how to make them? Bake the sweet potatoes at 400° F for 40 to 60 minutes, depending on their size. They'll be soft and easily mashable when they're done. Peel off their skins and add them to a bowl to do your mashing. Add one tablespoon of oil for every three sweet potatoes, just to give it a leg up on the savoriness and smoothness. Salt and pepper to taste and set aside.

Follow the instructions for baking the phyllo dough cups. Add a tablespoon of the sweet potato mix into the cups and then stick a piece of ginger in it to top it off. Back into the oven for about eight more minutes and you're done. Ideally these should be served while they're still warm.

MD

Hedonism, Iowa

;))

NAUGHTY NEEDS:

- Reichert Dairy Air's Robiola di Mia Nonna (DIY'd near Knoxville)
- Cedar Ridge LaCrosse (DIY'd near Swisher)
- fresh loaf of French bread

THE HOW TO:

If you get the bread fresh from New Pioneer Co-op while you're shopping for the LaCrosse and the robiola, then this treat does earn some Nice points for being all from Iowa. The LaCrosse is Cedar Ridge's estate-grown white wine that fits the Naughty bill because you can't just drink one glass.



And although Lois Reichert racks up the Nice points for her über-goat friendly dairy and herding practices, this cheese put the fat back in low-fat goat cheese. Rumor has it that Anthony Bourdain will be giving it a mention in the upcoming Midwest episode of No Reservations. Fans know him as King Hedonist, relishing in animal fat sacrifice after animal fat sacrifice.

Sacrificing the fat this cheese does not. The robiola looks like frosting in the right lighting, having a sheen to it I've never seen on a cheese. It almost sparkles like fresh snow on a moonlit walk home after bar close. It's a cheese you want to play with with your fingers—don't let the knife do the spreading. I've had moisturizing body washes this smooth. Oh, and the bread is just the delivery device. Skip it if you don't need anything to soak up the LaCrosse.

MD



ONE MORE NICE TREAT
ON PAGE 25 >>

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Is it Love or Desire?

To say that Betty Davis was different is kind of like saying that Marie Osmond has a wholesome reputation. It's an extreme understatement. Born Betty Mabry (she briefly married Miles Davis and kept his last name), Betty Davis is the greatest funk artist you've probably never heard of. Eclipsed by her more famous spouse, just as what happened to Yoko Ono and Alice Coltrane, she nevertheless gained the respect of her peers.

A friend of an eclectic array of musical and cultural icons—including Jimi Hendrix, Muhammad Ali, and T-Rex's Marc Bolan—she was also credited with helping to reinvent Miles Davis's career in the late-1960s. After meeting Betty, she exposed him to Jimi Hendrix, transformed his wardrobe, and soon Miles was making freaky jazz-fusion albums like *Bitches Brew*, *Black Beauty*, and *Filles de Kilimanjaro* (she appeared on the cover of the latter album, which also contained a song titled "Mademoiselle Mabry").

"Here was this young beautiful black woman with this fire and spirit and freshness that kind of opened Miles' eyes up," Herbie Hancock recalled in the liner notes (written by Oliver Wang) that accompanied the 2007 reissue of

Betty Davis's self-titled debut release. Hancock added, "She introduced Miles to Jimi Hendrix's

music and got him interested in the hardcore rock stuff." But she was loath to be relegated to the status of "muse." Betty Davis wrote songs for rock-soul hit makers the Chambers Brothers during the second half of the 1960s, and she released a couple singles recorded under her given name before hooking up with Miles—who produced the sessions for what would have been her first record.

The mercurial jazz musician ultimately canned the album because, she later said, "he thought I would leave him" if the album was successful. Still, she earned his respect. In his memoirs, Miles favorably compared Betty Davis to Madonna and Prince. "She was the beginning of all that," he wrote. Carlos Santana

Betty Davis scared away white audiences, and she also came under fire from some of the more conservative voices from the black community.

put it more colorfully: "She was the first Madonna, but Madonna is more like Marie Osmond compared to Betty Davis. Betty Davis was a real ferocious Black Panther woman." And Rick James remembered, "When I first saw her album cover, I fell in love. because she was the only girl, the only woman, who was totally cutting edge. I mean, she was what funk was."

With self-penned songs like "He Was a Big Freak," "If I'm in Luck I Might Get



Picked Up,” and “Don’t Call Her No Tramp”—and wearing sexy, glitterastic space-funk stage costumes—Betty Davis scared away white audiences, and she also came under fire from some of the more conservative voices from the black community. In fact, the

In the early-1970s, the world was simply not ready for this iconoclastic figure.

NAACP mounted a campaign to keep her single “Don’t Call Her No Tramp” off the air, because it was supposedly demeaning to African American women. Far more extreme, though, was *They Say I’m Different’s* “He Was a Big Freak,” a song reportedly about Miles. “He was a BIG FREEEAAAK,” she screams in the opening seconds of the song, letting out a guttural yowl that wouldn’t be out of place on a punk rock record. As the walloping drums and the bottom-heavy bass kick in, she adds, with a devilish tinge in her voice, “I used to beat him with my turquoise chain!” In the early-1970s, the world was simply not ready for this iconoclastic figure.

After dropping out of music in the late-1970s, Betty Davis virtually disappeared. (She retired to a town in Pennsylvania, where she has led a quiet life for the past three decades.) In the mid-1990s, her long out-of-print records—*Betty Davis*, *They Say I’m Different*, and *Nasty Gal*—were reissued under dubious legal circumstances in England. This helped revive interest in her music, and it led to a full-scale reissue campaign mounted by the Seattle-based indie record label Light in the Attic, which reissued her first two records in 2007, with bonus tracks. This fall, the same record company released her final official release, *Nasty Gal*, and it unearthed a jaw-dropping lost album (more on that later).

Throughout her brief recording career, Betty Davis worked with some of music’s great instrumentalists—from the legendary Afro-Pop drummer Tony Williams and Jimi Hendrix bassist Billy Cox to Sly & the Family Stone’s rhythm section: drummer Greg Errico and bassist Larry Graham (who later founded 1970s funk powerhouse Graham Central Station). But wait, there’s more! She recorded with members of the killer funk-rock fusion band Mandrill, the aforementioned Graham

Central Station, and Latin-rock pioneers Santana. Also, gay disco legend Sylvester and an early incarnation of The Pointer Sisters performed on her first official album, *Betty Davis*, as did Grateful Dead collaborator Merl Saunders. It’s a remarkable musical pedigree

for someone who is virtually unknown.

Her first two albums were released in the first half of the 1970s on an indie label and they garnered few sales, though she did gain some music industry attention from her outrageous live shows. After moving to a major label—Chris Blackwell’s Island Records, home to Bob Marley—for her third album, it looked like Betty Davis might just break on through to a mainstream audience. But things soon fell apart after that album failed to chart. During this time, in 1975, she was recording what was to be her fourth album (originally titled *Crashin’ From the Passion*) with her crack band, dubbed Funk House. Sadly, after the recording sessions were finished Island dropped its most extreme artist, shelving the album.

Thanks to Light in the Attic, the record (now titled *Is It Love or Desire*) can now be heard. Unlike most “lost” albums that tend to contain weak material that will only appeal to fans, this one was worth the wait. It’s a revelation, a more-than-worthy follow up to her previous three records. (I’ve heard a leaked song from her first, still-unreleased record and it is also fantastic; let’s hope Columbia Records finally puts out this Miles Davis-produced album—after 40 years in the vaults.)

As one of her biggest admirers—one who had resigned himself to believing that Betty Davis’s oeuvre was limited to only three classic albums of steaming hot funk-rock-n-soul—*Is It Love or Desire* is like getting an early Christmas present from god. A funky-ass god. Let’s hope the deities at Columbia Records will deliver another awesome XXXmas record next year, but until then, *Desire* is worth the wait. **IV**

Kembrew McLeod is preparing to enter winter hibernation, and also planning for a national broadcast of his co-produced documentary Copyright Criminals, which will air on PBS’s Independent Lens series on January 19, 2010.



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Photo © Laura M. Orsteen

GOODWILL HUNTING

It's a Tuesday, two days before Christmas, and I'm standing in front of the bookshelves at the Goodwill store on Highway 6.

In my pocket is the \$15 I received after returning several months' worth of empty cans to the Hy-Vee next door. I wanted a new frying pan but they don't have anything I like.

Nothing looks like it's been seasoned by good meals shared with family and friends prepared inside it. Every pan that's for sale hasn't been used much, if at all, and if it wasn't worth using when brand new why would I want to buy it used? I want something that's at least seen a few eggs inside it before, maybe some bacon or some chicken breasts. I need to know that it runs well.

Nothing in housewares speaks to me though, so I wandered over to the book section where my imagination springs to life. It's easier to profile someone based on their used books than it is on their used crock pot or popcorn popper.

Paperbacks are only 88 cents on Tuesdays and Goodwill doesn't discriminate between a TimeLife book on microwave cookery or an owner's manual to a 1997 Honda Civic or a Steinbeck or Hemingway or Tim Gautreaux novel. Everything's the same price today and this is why I like buying books here so much.

Seeing nothing I'd like for myself, I decide to do some early Christmas shopping instead. Two days before Christmas is still one day earlier than I normally do my Christmas shopping, but since I'm here I might as well. One less thing to worry about, right?

There's no categorization to the display here, no order at all other than, perhaps, by size, so it's pretty easy to discern that the books that are displayed together came in together and were shelved in that order. It's a dead giveaway.

Looking at the wild hodgepodge of books lining the shelves here, you start to wonder about the lives of the people who held them in their hands before they were left on Goodwill's doorstep swaddled in sweaters, pajama bottoms and jeans. Whose hands - whose lives - did they pass through before they ar-



rived here? These are stories likely far more interesting than those told in any of the books themselves.

Sartre, Kant and Hegel: A college philosophy major who realizes the futility of a college degree in a world with no meaning, drops out

Whose hands, whose lives did they pass through before they arrived here? These stories are likely far more interesting than those told in any of the books themselves.

of school and needs to unload some ballast before moving back home to take a job at his father's heavy equipment company in Decorah until they have a fight about the categorical imperatives of regularly checking the oil levels in front-end loaders and he quits, takes up acoustic guitar, moves in with his girlfriend and gets a job as the night clerk at a video store

and starts writing screenplays. None of which, sadly, will ever be as original as the story of his own journey to that very place.

Three well-worn picture books about N'Sync with more words than a Chinese take-out menu but not many: once the property of a teenage fan, now with a daughter of her own nearly the same age she was when she got the books. Her father rolled his eyes at her musical tastes then and her choice of boyfriends now. Her daughter begs her for the same kind of books about the Jonas Brothers when she sees them at the Wal-Mart, but mom can't afford them on her on her salary as a part-time waitress with no health insurance.

There are four copies of Paul Reiser's *Couplehood* interspersed among the other books on the shelves, the same number as were here several months ago.

Did the book's humor not appeal to their owners' sense of humor, or did the relationships themselves become uncoupled? Since the books are still here it seems that no one was willing to give Mr. Reiser - or their relationship - a second chance. I feel bad for the broken-up couples, less so for Mr. Reiser.

A pristine hardback copy of *Women Who Run With the Wolves* catches my eye: bought by a just-out-of-the-closet college-aged daughter for her mother in the hopes that it would wake her up and help her cast off the shackles of the patriarchy to discover her true self outside the home, possibly through a sculpture class or a woman's weekend where she could get in touch with her inner Goddess but, alas, it's left untouched at her bedside under a stack of old TV guides whose crossword puzzles held much more allure to her.

I take this book from the shelf and discover that I was wrong - but not by much - when I open it and a greeting card that was tucked inside falls out.

The front of the card features a drawing of a multi-colored figure pushing a dark curtain aside in order to walk behind a light one that has *Person Entering Another World At the Place Between Night and Day* written on it. The back of the card indicates that this is also the title of the work, truncated as "A Pearson Entering.»

I figure the card came from some holistic gift shop heavy with incense and candles and bath salts and crystals - a modernized update on the shaman's healing lodge that accepts both Visa and MasterCard and has its own website.

I open the card and see that it was more than a mere bookmark. It was given along with the book and has this message written inside it:

Lynn, Here are some stories to feed the spirit. This is one of those books that will sit by the side of your bed for a year or two as you read

a few pages from time to time to remind yourself who you are and where you come from. These stories are meant to remind you that you are and always have been OK. It is the culture around you that is 'out of balance.' Tom was a jerk anyway, you deserve better. Be at peace, Heather.

I'm sure Heather meant well and it was a very generous gift at nearly \$30 new, but Lynn, apparently, wasn't interested. The spine hasn't been cracked, the book jacket is not scuffed and no page shows any evidence of wear.

It's easier to profile someone based on their used books than it is on their used crock pot or popcorn popper.

Were Heather's good intentions squashed by all-nighters prepping for her GRE or cute boys at nickel beer night? Did Tom re-enter the story after being written out? I'll never know the ending to this tale, but I'd like to.

Next to it is a copy of E. Annie Proulx's *Accordion Crimes*, bought, I imagine, by a freshman English major for his grandmother who taught him to love reading, sure she would enjoy its insight into the human condition as seen through the struggles of generations of immigrants. A book she read each night with her feet up on the coffee table after working double shifts at the laundromat - a life just as hard as any portrayed in the book. How much he could learn from her if he only asked.

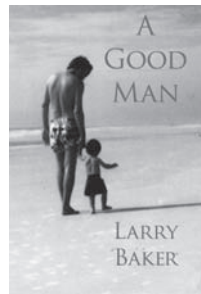
There are so many stories here, not just in the books on the shelves, but in the lives of the people who held them in their hands, however briefly, before they arrived here.

BOOK LIFE CONTINUED ON PAGE 21 >>

FALL 2009 BOOKS FROM IOWA FOLK

The days of porch sitting with a glass of chilled wine or beer won't come around for another few months. Some of you will have a whole Winter Break to sit under your Snuggie, Cuddlies or Slanket (which bills itself as the original blanket with sleeves), to get through your list of page turners, while others will just want an escape from the early onset of darkness each day. Little Village would like to remind you that you have authors from Iowa to consider putting on your list, and we've got three for you to take a peek at right now.

A Good Man Larry Baker



Released this fall on Ice Cube Press, *A Good Man* is Larry Baker's third novel, following *The Flamingo Rising* (Knopf, 1998) and *Athens, America* (First Coast Books, 2005). The latter is straight-up Iowa City fiction and even has a picture of Oakland

Cemetery's Black Angel on the cover. Baker also served two terms on the Iowa City City Council, one in the 1980s and one in the '90s.

From Marshall Bruce Gentry, editor of the *Flannery O'Connor Review*: "Larry Baker's *A Good Man* updates the world of Flannery O'Connor's characters through the Bush years and into the age of Obama. Fans of O'Connor's fiction will be intrigued by Baker's imaginative reunion, in the home of the fountain of youth, of Bevel Summers with a very grown-up Harry from O'Connor's 'The River.' Without imitating O'Connor, Baker does serious honor to her legacy."

Reruns Patrick Irelan



Irelan's roots are in Iowa. After growing up on an 80-acre farm, he attended high school in Bloomfield and received both bachelor's and master's degrees from the UI. And he's still kicking it here in Iowa.

From Jim O'Loughlin, professor of English at the University of Northern

Iowa: "The short stories in Patrick Irelan's collection, *Reruns*, take place in a humorous and often surreal world. It's an added bonus that the world is the one in which we live. Prepare to laugh and shake your head (both at the same time if you can manage it without hurting yourself)."

Irish Girl Tim Johnston



Irish Girl won the University of North Texas' 2009 Katherine Anne Porter Prize in Short Fiction, which awarded Johnston with \$1000 and publication by the press. Johnston was born and raised in Iowa City and graduated from the UI. His short story, *State v. Stucky*,

was published in the Winter 2002/03 issue of the *Iowa Review*.

From David Sedaris: "It's dark in here, but brilliant. Tim Johnston is as wise as he is original, and his stories are impossible to forget."

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A scene from Agnès Varda's *Beaches of Agnès*

Reel to Real

Sometimes artists ask what you honestly think of some atrocious work of theirs. You say, politely but truthfully, “Well, I find that part to be a little strange.” Inevitably they respond, “But that’s exactly what I intended!”

Agnès Varda’s new documentary, *The Beaches of Agnès*, which plays at the Bijou December 4-10, is, in fact, a commendable movie—but it is a little strange. Yet the strange parts are very clearly just what she intended, and these strange parts are revelations of something important both to our culture and to the famous movement in cinema known as the New Wave.

Varda’s *Cléo from 5 to 7* (1962), which portrays in real time two hours of a starlet’s life as she waits to get her cancer results, established her as a world-class New Wave director. Along with Éric Rohmer, Claude Chabrol and Jean-Luc Godard, Agnès Varda is still making interesting movies nearly five decades after the origins of their influential movement. What is La Nouvelle Vague? On the one hand, as Varda herself says in *Beaches of Agnès*, it’s simply a name of some friends of Jean-Luc Godard. After *Breathless* (1960) made a big splash, the studios asked Godard if he knew any other young directors who could make such successful movies on such low budgets. He did.

Perhaps it’s fruitless to seek out the unifying definition of an artistic movement beyond its historical contingencies. But if I had to take a stab at the inner essence of the New Wave, it would simply be: obsession with film. The New Wavers lacked the spiritual discipline of the “auteurs” they so admired, directors like Charlie Chaplin, Howard Hawks and Jean Renoir. But they made up for this lack of discipline, insofar as it can be made up for, with their high spirits and intense passion for film’s possibilities.

This energy takes two general forms. First, there is the attempt to capture life as it passes—in a sense, to erase the distinction between movies and living. Second, there is the realization that film can’t merge with life—that cinema isn’t everything—and so there is a conscious theatricality in response. If I can’t give you life itself, the New Wavers say to us, I’ll simply put on a big act for you, like they do in Hollywood. But the sardonic, sometimes

campy theatricality of the New Wave, unlike the highly feigned Hollywood style, betrays the disappointment of their intense desire to get at reality.

The Beaches of Agnès, a memoir of movies and life, is a summing

up of the spirit of the New Wave and Varda’s involvement with it. Besides a fragmented narration of her attempts to connect to life through the use of images, the movie keeps coming back to a symbolically charged beach, where Varda frequently sets up highly theatrical shots—like trapeze artists doing their tricks with the sea as a backdrop—that are intended to amuse and disappoint us at the same time.

Such shots are light-hearted improvisations against a reality which she knows she can never

fully capture, similar to when a poet gives a long list of metaphors for one and the same thing. By far the most moving images in the movie are of her long-time partner and fellow filmmaker Jacques Demy in the weeks preced-

Godard famously said, “Cinema is truth 24 times per second.” But the real truth is that between every frame is that momentum of time, of living and dying, that escapes even the cinematographer.

ing his death, where her camera tries to bore into his aging physicality. Godard famously said, "Cinema is truth 24 times per second." But the real truth is that between every frame is that momentum of time, of living and dying, that escapes even the cinematographer.

The best of all Varda's movies, in my opinion, is *The Gleaners and I*, which deals with the same themes as this movie, but in a more coherent fashion. *The Beaches of Agnès* is purely self-reflexive, where *Gleaners* used its subject as an occasion for only a few poignant moments of autobiography. But *Beaches*, like all Varda's movies, has a way of getting into you and making you reflect; there is about Varda a generosity, an inclusiveness, an ability to combine common humanity with the avant-garde, that is altogether admirable.

In Plato's famous allegory for reality as we know it, prisoners are chained in a cave, and their whole lives revolve around images cast by shadow-puppets that flicker on the wall in front of them. Is this even an allegory any more? We do spend our lives staring at images—on screens, billboards, t-shirts, baseball diamonds, everything—that have been cast before our eyes in order to manipulate us.

We are *in love* with the images of our culture, their coolness and their energy, and yet at the same time we long for a more authentic reality.

The spirit of the New Wave is still, more or less, our own. We are in love with the images of our culture, their coolness and their energy, and yet at the same time we long for a more authentic reality. Are we not, as Godard says, "the children of Marx and Coca-Cola"? In the penultimate scene of *The Beaches of Agnès*, the director portrays herself in a house made literally of unspooled reels of film. The sublimity of Varda's documentaries comes from the fact that she never lets us forget there is a reality inside that house. **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.

>> BOOK LIFE FROM PAGE 18

There's plenty of King and Koontz and McBain, lots of "airport fiction" much of it purchased at actual airports as evidenced by the receipts still tucked inside - diversions far more effective than any pill for taking your mind off the fact that you're inside an aluminum tube six miles above the earth that could plummet from the sky at any moment.

Danielle Steel makes several appearances, as does Dan Brown—thrill-a-minute page turners about divorces, infidelities, Masonic conspiracies, Vatican assassins and other of life's day-to-day tribulations.

Dozens of well-worn soft-cover fantasy and science-fiction paperbacks line the shelves - their covers featuring knights and their amply endowed heroines and the promise of journeys to worlds far beyond our own. Books read dozens of times by dozens of readers before they ended up here, all of them, however beloved, assured of the same fate once the chain of friends with similar tastes runs out of links.

The people who couldn't bear to part with these escapist fantasies ultimately accruing little more than "clutter" in the eyes of their landlords - or their kids if they had them - when their own final adventure comes to an end and it's time to clean out the garages and the closets before the apartment can be put up for rent again, the house put up for sale.

So many adventures, so much intrigue and romance and mystery shoved into black plastic garbage bags or a cardboard box and abandoned unceremoniously here, on Highway 6.

I have to believe that the people who read and reread these books and hung onto them until the very end would be pleased to know that their favorite characters will continue to live on every time a new reader invites them into their lives.

I hunt and peck until I have enough books in arm to deplete the \$15. I don't yet know who I'll give them to - or if they'll even read them when I do - but I'm more than happy to put a few more dollars in Goodwill's coffers at this time of year.

Ultimately though, I'm confident that these books will find another life here or someplace similar once they've passed through the lives of those people and become some small part of their own stories as they're written each day. **lv**

Yale Cohn wishes it didn't take a holiday for people to buy each other gifts and to give to charities—to be, in the language of his people, a "mensch"—but, if it does, he encourages people to support local charities and to shop at local, independently owned businesses.

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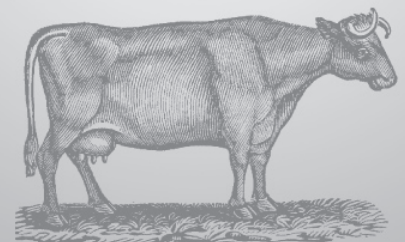
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2009 will go down as a banner year for music on the indie, rap, and local scenes.

The blogosphere was almost constantly abuzz over some of the most consistent and interesting work from indie stalwarts like Animal Collective, Flaming Lips, Grizzly Bear, and Dirty Projectors; who either offered up the cross-over album everyone had been waiting for (Animal Collective and Dirty Projectors), or finally fulfilled a crazy promise that everyone had seen in the band for years (Flaming Lips and Grizzly Bear).

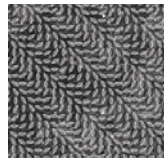
2009 Also saw the resurrection of rap legends Raekwon and Mos Def who not only returned to their roots, but also delivered career high-points in *Only Built 4 Cuban...Linx II* and *The Ecstatic* respectively.

Locally, we saw the birth of a new label, Mission Freak Records, which put out a varied (electronica, alt-country, to emo-core) and exceptional clutch of records.

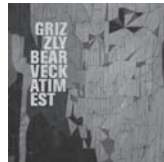
There was also the assention of Iowa superstar William Elliott Whitmore who joined the Anti- label (home of Tom Waits, Neko Case, Nick Cave, etc...) with his fourth release *Animals in the Dark*. Let's not forget that Public Property celebrated the release of its latest album, *Work To Do*, recorded with reggae legend Toots Hibbert.

John Schlotfelt, KRUI deejay (Corn-Fed Music), Little Village music critic.

// TOP 10 ALBUMS OF THE YEAR //////////////////////////////////////



1 Animal Collective
Merriweather Post Pavilion



2 Grizzly Bear
Veckatimest



3 Dirty Projectors
Bitte Orca



4 The Flaming Lips
Embryonic



5 Mos Def
The Ecstatic



6 Wilco
Wilco (The Album)



7 Raekwon
Only Built 4 Cuban Linx...Part II



8 Future of the Left
Travels with Myself and Another



9 Andrew Bird
Noble Beast



10 Sunset Rubdown
Dragonslayer

CONSPICUOUSLY MISSING: Here We Go Magic, *Here We Go Magic*; Tortoise, *Beacons of Ancestralship*; Dan Deacon, *Bromst*; David Bazan, *Curse Your Branches*; The Avett Brothers, *I and Love and You*; Mastodon, *Crack the Skye*

Many thanks to KRUI deejays Christy Aumer, Justin Denman, Joe Derderian, Nathan Gould, Andrew Ingersoll, Dolan Murphy and Ross Tasch. LV contributors Matt Butler, John Schlotfelt, Paul Sorenson and Kent Williams also helped us generate this list.

// TOP 10 LOCAL ALBUMS //////////////////////////////////////

- 1** Wet Hair
Dream and Glass Mountain
- 2** Marble Sky
The Sad Return/Reflect Sawyers Look/Sway
- 3** Miracles of God
O'What a Wonderful Day
- 4** William Elliott Whitmore
Animals in the Dark
- 5** Evan Miller
Transfigurations on Lap-Steel Guitar

- 6** Alexis Stevens
Flood or Drought
- 7** Aseethe/Shores of the Tundra
12" Split
- 8** Petit Mal
Bless Your Little Heart
- 9** Birth Rites
All Success Stories
- 10** Molly Ringwald
Rub a Nickel and Bury it Under the Next Full Moon

John Schlotfelt

// TOP 10 HIP HOP ALBUMS //

- 1. Mos Def, *Ecstatic*
- 2. J-dilla, *Jay Stay Paid*
- 3. Jay-z, *Blueprint 3*
- 4. Brother Ali, *The Truth is Here*
- 5. Raekwon, *Only Built 4 Cuban Linx... Part II*
- 6. Eminem, *Relapse*
- 7. Knaan, *Troubdoure*
- 8. Jadakiss, *The Last Kiss*
- 9. Drake, *So Far Gone*
- 10. UGK (Underground Kingz), *UGK 4 Life*

Tanki Nyane is a hip hop enthusiast and promoter based in Iowa City. Information on his events and the Iowa City hip hop scene can be found at Amazashow.com.

LAST ACT



Melt-Banana

As someone who walked into a Walgreen's this fall to find Christmas decorations up before Halloween—yes, *before Halloween*—I will tell you: Christmas-creep sucks. I even like Christmas, in a kind of general, non-religious sort of way, but for real: at least ease up on shoving tinsel down my throat until I've had Thanksgiving dinner. This is the code we have all agreed to live by. The music world's version of Christmas-creep is list-creep, whereby the last two months of the calendar are essentially discarded so that all of the journalists and bloggers can make their "best of" lists. Unlike the movie world, where everyone holds onto their cards until the last second, the music world tends to go out with a whimper, especially when it comes to big record releases.

But it's also true of live shows, and whether that has to do with fatigue, bad weather or just wanting to be home for the holidays, bands tend to leave their vans parked. This year is no different, oh wait, except for one face-melting Japanese noise show and some of the finest local bills of the year. I'm only going to highlight two shows in this column, so do right and go to both of them.

If one band can warm up a winter's night, it's Melt-Banana, the Tokyo noise/punk/ band who have been known to play songs that are very, very fast and very, very short. Take, for example, *13 Hedgehogs*, a compilation album that assembles a bunch of EPs and singles from early in their career: 56 songs on one CD! However, in recent years Melt-Banana has been

I'M ONLY GOING TO HIGHLIGHT TWO SHOWS IN THIS COLUMN, SO DO RIGHT AND GO TO BOTH OF THEM.

branching out into the different territory, especially for their United States live shows, which have become as important as the three studio albums they've release this decade: *Teeny Shiny* (2000), *Cell-Scape* (2003), and the amazingly titled *Bambi's Dilemma* (2007). (Unrelatedly, my favorite use of a cartoon deer on an album cover is Bran Van 3000's *Glee*, released in 1998.)

While the band has always incorporated electronic elements along with their percussive assault, *Bambi's Dilemma* especially features the band stretching out their sound and their song structures. Recently, they've been replacing the guitars in the live set-up with synths and samplers, calling it (jokingly?) Melt-Banana Lite. They released a live record of songs performed in that style this year, which is also worth checking out. At the end of the day, no matter which Banana you get, you're guaranteed a whole bunch of noise

DECEMBER CONTINUED ON PAGE 25 >>

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Molly Ringwald

Rub a Nickel and Bury it Under the Next Full Moon

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Not only is Molly Ringwald an actress who's height of fame came in the '80s but it's also an Iowa City indie-rock trio, and the latter has a new album, *Rub a Nickel on it and Bury it Under the Next Full Moon*. The band leans heavily on the the shaggy-dog swagger of Modest Mouse but have also embraced mathematical precision of emo-core bands like At the Drive-In. *Rub a Nickel* walks a line between these influences, so passionate that the band is just about to burst a blood vessel to so lackadaisically stoned that the band might just play the same riff until they run out of tape.

After the goofy and sort of threatening little intro, Molly Ringwald launches their percussive attack. "Hell of a Copter" relies on the group's signature everything-and-the-kitchen-sink percussion, which includes a CO₂ canister, a pot and pan or two, and a hub cap adding tiny little interludes to their high-hat strut.

The six and seven spots on the album, "Yeti Spaghetti" and "Boys II Men II Wolves" show off the balancing act between stoner laureates and emo bombast—as well as track titles that would make Isaac Brock and Frank Zappa proud. "Yeti Spaghetti" opens with a stumbling, murky bit of interwoven guitar lines, propelled by staccato bass plucks before breaking into a mariachi-tinged march, only to be succeeded by a Converse-clad strut all within the first two-and-a-half minutes.

While the turns and spark of the music is impressive, the album, like it's title, feels a bit long. I'm at a loss to point to one song or a handful of moments that bog down the record. Maybe it's just a bit too much of a really good thing.

tion of stripped-down pop gems called *Stop, Runk & Roll*. Like Weezer—and nearly every other pop act for the last 60 or more years, Lipstick Homicide trade primarily in relationships, most of them bad.

The opening track, "A Song" might be the most positive relationship recounted on *Stop, Runk & Roll*. "If you want me to, I'll go / If want to me stay, then I won't mind," Rachel Feldmann sings over a shimmering burst of churning power chords.

It seriously gets bleaker from here on out. "Burning Bridges" is exactly as pleasant as it sounds and there's "dddrrunkkkksong," which delves into a relationship that only seems to work under the influence. Then Lipstick Homicide drops a dirty little sneering number called "In Control (You Think You're)" in the middle of their album. Ridding the slinky plunk of Feldmann's bass and flashes of feedback, we're treated to a cold, hipster pick up from Kate Kane.

"Hypertension" comes along next with an almost textbook rave-up riff and tear-soaked chorus which bookends with "Tell You Everything," the most acerbic and disturbing entry on the record, "Icky." The bile's a bit shocking, but the song is very short. Plus the playful keyboard line on "Tell You Everything"—and the coos that join it as the song fades out—are the perfect thing to get that icky taste out of your mouth and really bolster the mid-tempo rocker.

Stop, Runk & Roll's brusque attitude towards failing relationships is remarkably refreshing after a decade that's seemed a bit too weepy. The songs come quick and dirty. With the album's 11 tracks clocking in just a few hairs shy of 40 minutes, the snotty come-on's and door slams never overstay their welcome.

John Schlotfeldt is the most optimistic cynic he knows.



Lipstick Homicide

Stop, Runk & Roll

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www.myspace.com/lipstickhomicide

Do you remember when Weezer was good? Lipstick Homicide does. In fact the Iowa City outfit could vie for the throne with their collec-

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>> **DECEMBER FROM PAGE 23**

and screaming when they hit the stage of the Picador on the 3rd. And speaking of screaming, local band Supersonic Piss opens the show. Their increasingly tight, blistering set is one of the best things going in local music right now.

Lwa is also on that bill, presenting you the first of two somewhat rare opportunities to see them this month—they'll also play at the Mill on the 15th as a part of the Tuesday Night Social Club. An enigmatic two-piece band, I've seen sets by them that range from intimate, haunting ambiance to harsh analog noise. They've opened and/or toured with some of the best bands in their genre—like Yellow Swans and Wolf Eyes—and I consider them a must-see band every time they schedule a show. Due to sickness, they had to cancel their last show, so if you were planning on seeing them in November as a part of the Naked Lunch show, now's your chance.

The other show that's a must-see this month is a friendly musical chairs of sorts between Sam Locke-Ward and Alex Body at Public Space ONE on December 11th (disclosure: I volunteer at PS1, but did not book this show). The crazy-prolific Locke-Ward's newest project is The Boo Hoo's, a wild romp through rock songs with a lounge-singer aesthetic. Locke-Ward wears a suit and tie, plays no instruments, and flails about while his backing band (featuring members of Petit Mal and Lipstick Homicide) rips through a set of 12 to 15 songs in around 30 minutes. I saw him play a bar the size of a postage stamp in Omaha, Nebraska a few months ago, and the place nearly collapsed in drunken mayhem. At PS1 the show will be much drier, but no less exciting.

Meanwhile, Alex Body (of Bongrider fame) has been working his solo project all over town recently, and it's good. Working some

synths, a loop pedal, and a microphone, Body creates his own, very dark, very twisted versions of pop songs. He's been known to use strobe lights, so epileptics beware.

Finally, the two will get together as a part of the Miracles of God, a country-punk extravaganza that only happens in Iowa City about once or twice a year, by design. They played last December and it was phenomenal.

Of course, there will be a ton of ways to ring

**LWA HAS OPENED
AND/OR TOURED
WITH SOME OF THE
BEST BANDS IN
THEIR GENRE—
LIKE YELLOW
SWANS AND WOLF
EYES—AND I
CONSIDER THEM
A MUST-SEE BAND
EVERY TIME THEY
SCHEDULE A
SHOW.**

in the New Year this December as well, and while many places haven't yet announced their plans, I do know that Dead Larry and Five in Hand will playing the Yacht Club. Auld Lang Syne! **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.

>> **TREATS FROM PAGE 15**

Vegan, Gluten-free 0:) Chocolate Chip Cookies

NICE NEEDS:

1 3/4 cups oat flour
1/2 tsp baking soda
1/4 tsp salt
1/4 cup sugar brown sugar
1/2 cup turbinado sugar
1/3 cup canola oil
1 Tbsp flax meal
1/4 cup soy milk
1 tsp vanilla
3/4 cup chocolate chips

THE HOW TO:

Triple Nice points for this recipe being friendly to vegans and gluten-sensitive folks. But are still using sugar in this recipe, so we're not Naughty-free.

Aside from using the fiber-friendly oat flour in place of more traditional baking flour, this recipe follows standard cookie baking procedure. Sift together flour, baking soda and salt in one bowl. In another, stir the flax meal into the soy milk before adding the sugar and mixing some more. Next add your oil and vanilla and beat everything thoroughly (another moment where it'd help to have an electric beater) until the oil has emulsified with the other wet ingredients.

Add the dry ingredients to the wet, mixing well, and fold in the chocolate chips. You don't have to worry about greasing the baking sheets, but do make sure the oven has been preheated to 375° F. Use a spoon to drop cookie dough balls on to the sheets and bake 10 to 12 minutes.

This recipe was tested to much success by my former roommate, Erin Mills, and is based off of a recipe she found on the Post Punk Kitchen's website, ThePPK.com. To my recollection, the cookies delighted everyone no matter the dietary choices or needs.

MD



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AKAR

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www.akardesign.com

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Brucemore

2160 Linden Drive SE, Cedar Rapids

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A Douglas Family Christmas, Dec. 2, 3, 9, 10, 16, 17, 5-8pm •

Cedar Rapids Museum of Art

410 Third Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids

www.crma.org

Grant Wood Studio and Visitor Center, Guided tours of Grant Wood's home and studio, Saturdays & Sundays, hourly 12-4pm

Creative Connections-Artists in Action with Joyce Schmidt, Dec. 12 • Norman Rockwell: Fact & Fiction, ongoing • Malvina Hoffman, ongoing • Mauricio Lasansky, ongoing • Art in Roman Life, ongoing • Grant Wood: In Focus, ongoing

The Chait Galleries Downtown

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2nd Annual Small Works Show, ongoing

CSPS/Legion Arts

1103 Third St SE, Cedar Rapids

www.legionarts.org

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Faulconer Gallery/Bucksbaum Center for the Arts

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www.grinnell.edu/fulconergallery

Molecules that Matter, ongoing

Herbert Hoover Presidential Museum

West Branch

www.nps.gov/heho

A Christmas Past, Dec. 4-6 • Iowa A to Z, ongoing

Home Ec. Workshop

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Craft and Fancy, a Homemade Gift Sale, Dec. 5, 10am-5pm

Iowa City East Side Artists

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Holiday Sale, Dec. 11, 10am-8pm, Dec. 12-13, 10am-5pm

Hudson River Gallery

538 South Gilbert St., Iowa City

www.hudsonrivergallery.com

JDeborah Zisko and Michael Kienzle, ongoing

Iowa Artisans Gallery

207 E. Washington, Iowa City

www.iowa-artisans-gallery.com

Handmade for the Holidays, ongoing

Johnson County Historical Society

310 5th St., Coralville

www.jchsiowa.org

Me, Myself, and Hayden, ongoing • Submerged, ongoing

Old Capitol Museum

Pentacrest, Iowa City

www.uiowa.edu/~oldcap

WorldCanvass, Dec. 11 5-7pm • The Museum Goes to the Fair, ongoing • History of ACT, ongoing

University Museum of Art

www.uiowa.edu/uima

Check website for locations

UIMA@IMU, ongoing

UI Fine Arts Council

Iowa Memorial Union, UI Campus

www.fineartscouncil.org

Holiday Thieves Art Market, Dec. 5-6, 10am-5pm

UI School of Art

Studio Arts, 1375 Hwy 1 West

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Check website for galleries and hours

Young Hee Yim, through Dec. 4 • Matthew Egesdal, through Dec. 4 • Anne Cleavenger, through Dec. 4 • Lindsay Warren, Dec. 7-11 • New Work by Sculpture Seminar, Dec. 7-11 • Andrew Chmill and Clare Edmonds, Dec. 7-11 • Amber O'Harrow and Allison Tipton, Dec. 14-18

What a Load of Craft!

Johnson County Fairgrounds

www.whataloadofcraft.com

What a Load of Craft 6, Dec. 12, 11am-7pm

MUSIC

Agave Bar & Grill

2781 Oakdale Blvd, Coralville

www.tequilabarandgrill.com

8 Seconds, Dec. 4 • Drag Show, Dec. 5, 9:30pm • Scott Cochran & Flannel, Dec. 18, 8:30pm

CSPS/Legion Arts

1103 Third St SE, Cedar Rapids

www.legionarts.org

Ellis Paul, Dec. 3, 8pm • Tribute, Dec. 9-12, 8pm •

Englert Theatre

221 E. Washington St., Iowa City

www.englert.org

Big Bad Voodoo Daddy Holiday Show, Dec. 10, 8pm • Blind Boys Of Alabama, Dec. 13, 7pm • Festival Of Carols, Dec. 17, 7pm • Public Property, Euforquestra & Uniphonics, Dec. 31, 8pm

Hancher Auditorium

www.hancher.uiowa.edu

See website for temporary locations

Natalie McMaster, Christmas in Cape Breton, Dec. 5, 7:30pm • Straight No Chaser, Dec. 8, 7:30pm

Java House

211½ Washington St., Iowa City

www.thejavahouse.com

Java Blend, Fridays at 11:30am

Friday Night Music, Fridays at 8pm

Java Blend, Ellis Paul, Dec. 4; Kris Delmhorst, Dec. 11; Ernie Hendrickson, Dec. 18 • Friday Night Music, The Savage Young Taterbug & The Old Scratth Revival Singers, Dec. 4; Matthew Davies and the Sneaky Band, Dec. 11; Rebecca Williams, Todd Warner Moore, Dec. 18

The Mill

120 E. Burlington St., Iowa City

www.icmill.com

Shows at 9pm unless otherwise noted

Study Hall, the game, Sundays, 9pm-Midnight
Open Mic with J. Knight, Mondays, 8pm, call 338-6713 to sign up

Tuesday Night Social Club, Tuesdays

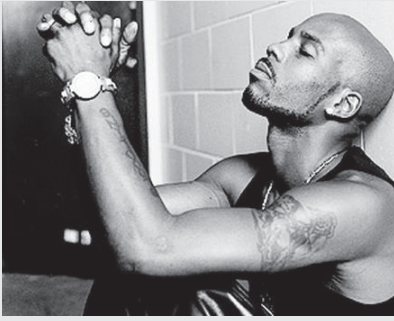
Bright Giant (formerly Josh Davis Band), Unknown Component, Dec. 3 • Liberty Leg (record release party), Dec. 4 • Dave Zollo & the Body Electric, Dec. 5 • University of Iowa Jazz Performance, Dec. 8, 8pm • Burlington St. Bluegrass Band, Dec. 9, 7pm • Birth Rites, Coyote Slingshot and Grand Tetons, Dec. 10 • Kris Delmhorst & Jeffrey Foucault, Dec. 11 • Kol Shira, Dec. 12, 5:30pm • Cuddle Magic, Skye Carrasco, Dec. 12 • Benefit for Citizen Q, Dec. 16 • Mitchell Moylan & The Cedars Of Lebanon, special guest Jeffrey C. Capps, Dec. 17 • Kevin Gordon, Dec. 19 • Starlings, special guests The Gilded Bats, Dec. 20 • Burlington St. Bluegrass Band, Dec. 23, 8pm • Catfish Keith-Acoustic Blues Legend, Dec. 26, 8pm • Bold City Lights, Band From Town & Slip Silo, 1/1 • The Beaker Brothers, 1/2

Musick's Feast

First Presbyterian Church,

2701 Rochester Ave., Iowa City

Musick's Feast holiday program, Dec. 5, 7:30pm



A gentler, wiser DMX?

DMX

Coralville Marriott

Dec. 11, 7-11pm

www.amazashow.com

Oh, Dog Man X. Why have you abandoned us?

The days of «Rough Riders Anthem» seem a decade old (wait, they're actually a decade old? Youth fail...), but DMX is poised for a comeback with *three* albums slated for next year (and one is a gospel album! Gospel!). To celebrate, he'll come to the Coralville Marriott on December 11th. YES, IC WILL NOW HAVE AN «X» IN IT.

For those who forget, DMX is the fifth best-selling rapper of all time, putting out oddly Biblically-titled solo albums *Flesh of My Flesh*, *Blood of My Blood* and *...And Then There Was X* and *Ryde or Die* releases with, who else, the Ruff Ryders. DMX also took a detour into film with works like *Exit Wounds* and took a jaunt into jail with works like animal cruelty.

But forget all that for now. The show is brought to you by Sid the Kid and his Amaza Show crew, who take the cake for the most unexpected success story of the year. After a poor, awkward showing of Kidz in the Hall at The Industry in April, they rallied with Yung Joc's October appearance and now convinced the biggest rapper this side of GZA to bring some hot tracks into the Iowa freeze.

For such a main draw, tickets are reasonably priced (\$30 in advance, \$35 at the door) and can be purchased online at amazashow.com or at either of the Inbox stores in town. Opener is the quasi-local Mike Page & Backdrop.

Orchestra Iowa

www.orchestraiowa.org

Check website for locations

Celebration of Carols, Dec. 5-6 • Follidays: Hooray for Holidays!, Dec. 18-20

The Picador

330 E. Washington St., Iowa City

www.thepicador.com

All shows at 9pm unless otherwise noted

Melt Banana, Super Sonic Piss, Lwa, Dec. 3 • BackDrop, Kidnap the Sun, Here's My Chance, Girl Repellent, Dec. 4, 6pm • The New Bodies, The Half Hearts, Breaking Even, Grey Matador, Olivia Rose Muzzy, Dec. 4 • Nihil Seraph with Four Story Fate, Lost Nation, Dec. 5 • An Evening With Cross Canadian Ragweed, Dec. 10 • Emmitt-Nershi Band, TBA, Dec. 11 • Five In A Hand, Johnny On Point, The Workshy, Dec. 12

Public Space One

129 E. Washington St., Iowa City

www.myspace.com/publicspaceone

The Stoop Van Patton Music Experience, Dec. 3, 9pm • Icarus Himself, Vincent Peiffer, Skye Carrasco, Dec. 6, 9pm

UAY

355 Iowa Ave., Iowa City

www.unitedactionforyouth.org

Owen Pye and Plane Crashes and Slow Dancing, Dec. 11, 7pm

University of Iowa Music Dept

www.uiowa.edu/~music

See website for locations

Steel Band II/ Percussion Ensemble, Dec. 1, 6:30pm • Wisconsin Brass, with the Iowa Brass Quintet, Dec. 1, 7:30pm • University Symphony & Choirs, Dec. 2, 7:30pm • Center for New Music and Composer's Workshop, Dec. 5, 7:30pm • UI Philharmonia and All-University String Orchestra, Dec. 6, 3pm • Center for New Music Ensemble, Dec. 6, 7:30pm • UI University and Concert Bands, Dec. 7, 7:30pm • UI Percussion Concert, Dec. 13, 3pm

Uptown Bill's Small Mall

401 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City

www.uptownbills.org

Open Mic, Fridays, 8pm; Sign-up, 7:30pm

The Ronald Wilson Ray Gun Experiment, Dec. 5, 7pm • Reunion, Dec. 12, 7pm

U.S. Cellular Center

370 1st Ave NE, Cedar Rapids

www.uscellularcenter.com

Papa Roach, Shinedown, Halestorm, Dec. 12, 7pm

Yacht Club

13 S. Linn St., Iowa City

www.iowacityyachtclub.org

Shows at 9pm unless otherwise noted

Pert Near Sandstone, Smokin' Joe Scarpalino, Dec. 3 • Natty Nation, Uniphonics, Dec. 4 • Dennis McMurrin and the Demolition Band, Matt Skinner

Skirt

presents
the 6th



Sat. Dec 12th

11am - 7pm

Johnson Co. Fairgrounds

4261 Oak Crest Hill Rd, IC

A Day of Local Art and Music

FEATURING:

*Over 40
art and craft
vendors

*Live Music

Olivia Rose Muzzy
Kate and Amanda
Lipstick Homicide
Skye Carrasco
Pete Balestrieri

*Craft Death Match

*Food and
Booze, too!



SKIRT

and James, Dec. 5 • Jumbies, Collectible Boys, Dec. 10 • Merlin, Renegades of Sound, Dec. 11 • David Zollo and the Body Electric, Porch Builder, Dec. 12 • White Tornado Outbreak, The Amanda Miller Experience Free Show, Dec. 17 • The Gglitch, Melted Whiskey, Dec. 18 • The Uniphonics, Dec. 19 • New Year's Eve with Dead Larry, 5 in a Hand, Insectoid, Dec. 31, 8pm

THEATER/DANCE/ PERFORMANCE

Englert Theatre

221 E. Washington St., Iowa City

www.englert.org

The Nutcracker, Dec. 4 & Dec. 5 7:30pm, Dec. 5 & Dec. 6, 2pm

Iowa Theatre Artists

4709 220th Tr., Amana

www.iowatheatreartists.org

Check website for showtimes

A Musical Fairytale for the Holidays, Dec. 3-13

No Shame Theatre

Theatre B, UI Theatre Building

www.noshame.org

Fridays in December, 11pm

Penguin's Comedy Club

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

www.penguinscomedyclub.com

Check website for showtimes

Pat Dixon & Chris Smith, Dec. 4-5 • Mike Toomey & Denise Ramsden, Dec. 11-12 • Dr. Jim Wand, Hypnotist, Dec. 18-19 • Jason Russell & Richie "The Hammer" Holliday, Dec. 31-Jan. 2

Riverside Theatre

213 N. Gilbert St., Iowa City

www.riversidetheatre.org

Check website for showtimes

The Tag Sale Project, Dec. 11-13

Riverside Casino

3184 Highway 22, Riverside

www.riversidecasinoandresort.com

Sawyer Brown, Dec. 12, 8pm

Summit Restaurant Comedy Night

10 S. Clinton St, Iowa City

www.thesummitrestaurantandbar.com

Shows start at 9:30pm

Kris Shaw & Gene Renfro, Dec. 2 • Mike Merryfield & Steve Hartman, Dec. 9 • David Beck & Jay LaFarr, Dec. 16

Theatre Cedar Rapids

4444 1st Ave NE, Cedar Rapids

www.theatreocr.org

Annie, through Dec. 6

The University of Iowa Dance

Space/Place Theatre, North Hall

www.uiowa.edu/artsiowa

Graduate/Undergraduate Dance Concert, Dec. 3-5

• Collaborative Dance Performance, Dec. 10-12 •

Dance Forum/UI Youth Ballet Winter Concert, Dec. 19 & 20

The University of Iowa Theatre

Main Theatre Building, UI Campus

www.uiowa.edu/~theatre

Check website for showtimes

Yellow City, Dec. 4-5, 8pm • How Catherine D_

Got Her Expression, Dec 11-13

Bijou Theatre

IMU, UI Campus, Iowa City

www.bijoutheatre.org

Night of the Living Dead, Dec. 1, 7pm • M, Dec.

2, 7pm • Metropolis, Dec. 3, 7pm • Anichrist, Dec.

4-10 • Beaches of Agnes, Dec. 4-10 • Ong Bax 2,

The Beginning, Dec. 11-17 • Crude, Dec. 11-17

Englert Theatre

221 E. Washington St., Iowa City

www.englert.org

Napoleon Dynamite, Dec. 6, 9pm • Miracle On 34th

Street, Dec. 20, 7pm

Latino Native American Cultural Center

UI Campus

imu.uiowa.edu

Sin Nombre, Dec. 6, 6-9pm

WORDS

Barnes & Noble

Coral Ridge Mall

1451 Coral Ridge Ave., Coralville

The Writers Workshop, Dec. 14 & 18, 7pm

The Mill

120 E. Burlington St., Iowa City

www.icmill.com

Poetry Slam, Dec. 2 • Talk Art - Writers' Workshop,

Dec. 2 & 16, 9pm

Prairie Lights

15 S. Dubuque St., Iowa City

www.prairielight.com

All "Live from Prairie Lights" readings at 7pm unless noted

Rob Schlegel, Dec. 2 • Stephen Elliott, Dec. 3 •

Stephen Bloom, Dec. 4 • Dori Butler and Tess

Weaver Book Signing, Dec. 5, noon

Public Space One

129 E. Washington St., Iowa City

www.myspace.com/publicspaceone

Wordplay: A Fiction Reading, Dec. 10, 3:30pm

University of Iowa

Philips Hall, UI Campus

international.uiowa.edu/centers/european-studies

European Studies Conference "Memories and

Visions: Europe 20 Years after the Fall," Dec. 3-4

CINEMA

Alexis Park Inn

1165 S. Riverside Drive, Iowa City

www.alexisparkinn.com

Aviaton Movie Night, Dec. 1, 8, 15, 22, 6:30pm

KIDS

The Iowa Children's Museum

1451 Coral Ridge Ave., Coralville

www.theicm.org

Art Adventure: Make your own Gift Wrap, Dec. 3 •

Troop ICM: Weather Watch, Dec. 5 • Art Adventure:

Banners!, Dec. 10 • Troop ICM: Weather Watch,

Dec. 12 • Preucil School of Music Cello Concert,

Dec. 12 1pm • Luminary Day Celebration!, Dec. 13

• Art Adventure: Wright Brothers Airplane, Dec. 17

Iowa City Public Library

123 South Linn St. Iowa City

www.icpl.org

Storytime at 10:30 Mon-Sat, 2pm Sun

University of Iowa Museum of Natural History

Macbride Hall, UI Campus

www.uiowa.edu/~nathist

Lewis and Clark, Dec. 5, 2-4pm

MISC

Critical Hit Games

89 Second St, Coralville

www.criticalhitgames.net

Board Game Night, Dec. 2, 9, 16, 23

iRenew

120 E. Boyson Road, Hiawatha

irenew.org

Residential Wind Workshop, Dec. 12 9am-5pm

PATV

206 Lafayette St., Iowa City

www.patv.tv

The Smartest Iowan game show Wednesdays,

contestants needed, email smartestiowan@gmail.com

Bionic Bottom

After suffering massive internal injuries from a car accident, Ged Galvin, 55, needed a colostomy bag, until British surgeons rebuilt his rectum. The Daily Telegraph reported that the medical team at the Royal London Hospital removed a muscle from above Galvin's knee, wrapped it around his sphincter and then attached electrodes to the nerves that Galvin operates using a remote control that he carries in his pocket. "It's like a chubby little mobile phone," he said. "You switch it on and off, just like switching on the TV." The Yorkshire resident, who said he doesn't mind being called "the man with the bionic bottom," added that he can live with having to have his improvised sphincter muscles replaced every five years.

Win Some, Lose Some

- Mary Lait, a custodian at the Cook County, Ill., sheriff's office, was awarded \$14,022 for injuries she claims she suffered on two separate occasions while "reaching around to pick up a piece of toilet paper," according to court documents.
- After his release from prison, David M. Cohen, 43, a former police sergeant in Stoughton, Mass., asked the town to reimburse him \$113,496 for expenses related to his case. The Brockton Enterprise said that Cohen claims the town owes him for 87 accrued vacation days, 125 unused sick days, 144 hours of comp time accrued for not using sick time, 152 hours of supervisor comp time, 481 hours for court appearances related to his criminal case, 280 hours of overtime to prepare for his case, at least 61 percent education incentive pay for 2007, and 61 percent for accrued stipends and benefits. Cohen's conviction in 2007 was for attempted extortion. "We will reject the man's request," Town Manager Mark S. Stankiewicz declared.

Opportunity Knocks

- The Illinois Attorney Registration & Disciplinary Commission announced it's considering sanctions against Chicago immigration attorney Samir Chowhan for telling a woman seeking employment at his firm that sex was a job requirement. The Chicago Tribune said the woman complained to the commission that after she responded to Chowhan's ad on Craigslist seeking an "energetic woman" for "general secretarial work, some paralegal work and additional duties for two lawyers," Chowhan replied by e-mail that "in addition to the legal work, you would be required to have sexual interaction with me and my partner, sometimes together sometimes separate." Chowhan added that previous women filling

the position "have not been able to handle the sexual aspect of the job later. We have to be sure you're comfortable with that aspect, because I don't want you to do anything that you're not comfortable with. So since that time, we've decided that as part of the interview process you'll be required to perform for us sexually." The e-mail concluded: "I am free to interview today."

- Los Angeles authorities charged Jeffrey Graybill with posing as a fertility doctor after two men said they responded to his ad on Craigslist offering \$4,000 a month for donations to his fertility clinic. The men complained that Graybill insisted on examining their genitals at his apartment complex before he would accept them as sperm donors. KPHO News reported the men were never paid, but when they called the clinic to ask about their money, employees told them Graybill didn't work there. Investigators concluded that

Curses, Foiled Again

Police investigating a drive-by shooting at a home in Buchanan, Wis., found auto glass in the street and deduced the shooter had forgotten to lower his car window before firing five shots. Appleton's Post-Crescent reported that a check of area auto glass repair shops led to Andrew J. Burwitz, 20, who admitted shooting at the house, where his ex-girlfriend lived.



ruse was a way for Graybill to molest young men and that there are as many as 24 victims in California and Arizona.

How the World Works

- After last year's chocolate sale failed to raise enough money, a parent advisory council at Rosewood Middle School in Goldsboro, N.C., suggested selling test scores instead. According to Raleigh's News and Observer, students can buy as many as 20 test points for \$20 and add 10 extra points to any two tests of their choice. Although the extra points might change a "B" to an "A" or from a failing grade to a passing grade on the two tests, principal Susie Shepherd insisted that they wouldn't amount to enough to change a student's overall grades.
- The 2002 Municipal Rehabilitation and

Economic Recovery Act that put Camden, N.J., under state control set aside \$175 million for dozens of city projects that officials promised would create jobs and lift Camden out of poverty. Instead, a Philadelphia Inquirer investigation revealed that most of the bailout money, \$99 million, went to universities, hospitals and government agencies and tourist attractions—including \$25 million to expand the aquarium to accommodate hippopotamuses and sharks. Noting the money turned out to have no effect on Camden's median income, which remains the lowest of any medium-sized American city, the Inquirer observed, "Thanks to \$25 million in recovery money, America's poorest city now has hippos."

More Nails in Print's Coffin

- Nearly half of regular Internet users in the United States said they're willing to read news online, including on mobile devices. The survey, commissioned by Boston Consulting, found that the 48 percent who said they would pay for online news indicated the average amount they would pay is \$3 a month. Although both figures were lower than those surveyed in other Western countries said they'd pay, Americans were much more likely than the others to pay for admission to sites that offered Internet access to multiple papers.
- A meeting of magazine salesmen at a motel in Tacoma, Wash., ended when two men announced they wanted to quit their jobs and were promptly beaten with baseball bats and golf clubs. Police arrested the remaining six salesmen in a sport utility vehicle just blocks away after discovering one was armed with brass knuckles and a gun. KOMO-TV reported the door-to-door subscription operation, called Fresh Start Opportunities, was a scam in which young men claiming to make a fresh start in life take donations ranging from \$50 to \$800 without delivery the magazines.

Pre-Partum Follies

Police who said they caught Shanae Harston, 19, robbing a home in Vallejo, Calif., added that while she was being arrested, she went into labor. The Vallejo Times-Herald reported Harston was taken to a hospital, where she gave birth.

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

You can't handle the truth

What's the straight dope on truth serums? What are they? What exactly do they do? Do sodium pentothal and the like really make witnesses spill their guts? If so, why don't we use it for courtrooms and police interrogations? Please hurry, my suspect is wrestling his way out of the handcuffs.

—J.F.

Truth serums are based on a phenomenon known since ancient times, when Pliny the Elder coined the phrase *in vino veritas*: “in wine, truth.” He meant anything that lowers your inhibitions is likely to cause you to say things you'd normally keep secret. Unfortunately for cops and CIA interrogators, what you spill isn't necessarily the truth.

Although people have been plying one another with liquor for centuries, the earliest confession induced using something stronger was reported in a 1903 criminal case involving a New York cop. He admitted under ether that he'd faked insanity when accused of killing his wife.

The first drug to catch on in a big way as a truth serum was scopolamine, a depressant and sleeping agent. Mixed with morphine, it was used to put women in labor into a “twilight sleep” so they'd forget the pain. To gauge the dose, the doctor would ask the patient questions until she could no longer remember anything. The pioneer of truth serum research, a small-town Texas obstetrician named Robert House, claimed his patients always answered truthfully during these times, and from this concluded the drug rendered them unable to lie. In 1922 he tried the technique on two prisoners in a Dallas jail, helping to exonerate both. The age of truth serum investigation, also called narcoanalysis, had been born.

Although truth serum caught the fancy of reporters and some scientists, it was never widely accepted as a way of extracting criminal confessions. Several sensational early cases produced a variety of results. In 1924, five black men in Birmingham, Alabama, reportedly confessed under the influence of an

unspecified truth serum to eight ax murders, then confirmed their guilt after the drug had worn off. (This comes from a four-paragraph account in the *New York Times*; I admit to some skepticism.) A few years later a chauffeur in Hawaii confessed under scopolamine to writing the note in a kidnap-murder case but repudiated his statement afterward; ultimately the crime was pinned on someone else.

jects are suggestible and will tell you whatever they think you want to hear. Plus, just because somebody thinks something is true doesn't mean it is.

But hope lives on in the shadowy corners of government. During World War II, the Office of Strategic Services, forerunner to the CIA, tried using cannabis extract to make people talk. Later generations of spies wondered

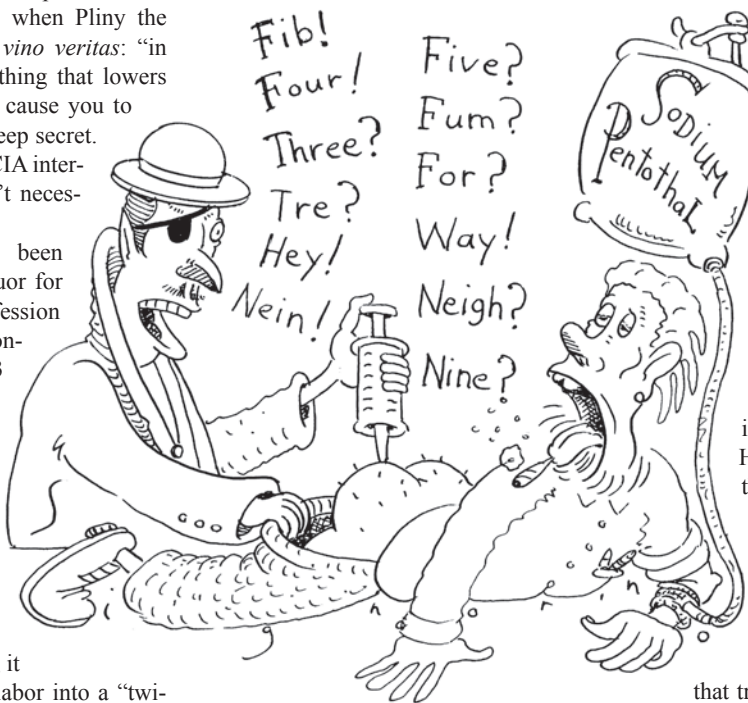
whether they could get results with mescaline and LSD. In the 1950s the CIA launched a covert research program called MK-Ultra to explore the possibilities of truth serums and behavior-modification drugs; it's said to have run at least through the late 60s. The project gained notoriety after one participant jumped out a hotel window while on LSD.

The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that confessions obtained using drugs are inadmissible as evidence, on the premise that the practice violates the constitutional protection against self-incrimination. The European Court of Human Rights has likewise prohibited the practice. Nonetheless, drugs continue to be used to extract confessions in some parts of the world. Police in India reportedly used drugs to convince two suspects to confess to a series of grisly killings in 2007.

After 9/11, some in the U.S. argued that truth serum ought to be used to extract information from terrorism suspects. Nothing so far suggests American authorities tried it, although it's possible we turned suspects over to intelligence services in other countries with fewer scruples.

Though I don't make light of ethical considerations, the argument likely to carry more weight in these nervous times is the practical one. Let's say out of 100 bits of data forcibly extracted using drugs or other means, five are legitimate. How do you know which five?

—CECIL ADAMS



By the mid-1930s, scopolamine had been largely abandoned in favor of safer drugs such as sodium amytal and sodium thiopental (of which Pentothal is a brand name). But the theory stayed the same: once you're in a trance and have thus lost the complex brain functions needed to sustain a lie, you're reduced to telling the truth. Drugs were also said to be helpful in dredging up lost memories.

Sometimes they probably were. The problem with truth serums is the results can't be depended on. It's easy to find case reports of people recounting detailed stories under the influence of drugs of which they have no recollection afterward—and the stories check out. But researchers also admit despairingly that they know of just as many confessions that were demonstrably false. Drugs reduce some subjects to unintelligible babbling. Other sub-

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. And now you can subscribe to the Straight Dope podcast—search for “straight dope” in the iTunes Store.

ASTROLOGY FORECAST FOR DECEMBER 2009

FOR EVERYONE—Clash of visions. This month, again, pits our visions of the future against sometimes harsh realities. The situation is one of extreme flux and it seems very hard to predict, let alone control. Yet there is also a lot of flexibility in the situation. The outcome really will depend a lot on how we envision the future for ourselves and there will be many people promoting their particular vision of the future. The problem is that some visions are realistic and some are not. Visions can also conflict. The challenge will be to decide which of the visions on offer is realistic and which of those that are realistic will work for you.

♈ ARIES—Avoid flash points. You'll need to rethink parts of your lifestyle. The role of at least one key partner in your life will change significantly. Initiatives by friends, children and other loved ones will make adjustments necessary, too. People are being driven by potent new visions for their own lives, but it isn't clear that they have thought through the details of these visions. Keep impatience and temper in check as you work through the details together. Deeper involvement in spiritual and philosophical matters will help you process these changes.

♉ TAURUS—Routine. A blizzard of changes are on the way. Uncertainties and unknowns stretch as far as the eye can see. It isn't so much that Taurus needs to sit all this out. It's more that you need to stay the course. Somebody needs to keep up with the routine stuff while people make all the big moves. Right now, that someone is Taurus. Deviating from the slow and steady approach could cause health issues or lead to stress and excessive worry. Achieving long-term financial goals should remain a top priority.

♊ GEMINI—Peacemaker. The process of change is penetrating deeply into your life and environment. Important relationships are at stake—personal and professional. People are thinking and acting too quickly as they come to terms with events. Tempers could flare. Help everyone concerned get their ideas across without rancor. The outcome of all this could significantly affect your finances. With respect to finances, you are entering a cycle better suited to consolidation than expansion. However, in the months ahead, you will find yourself in increasingly greater harmony with the forces of change.

♋ CANCER—Explain the benefits. There is no question of going back to the way things were. Your livelihood and the livelihood of others depend on making others understand the advantages of new plans and the impossibility of going back. Use your intuition to appreciate the beauty of the new plans and your emotional sensitivity to explain them as delicately as possible. Express yourself calmly and patiently. Harsh words or hasty action will do more harm than you think and they won't prevent the changes. You have more influence than you realize.

♌ LEO—Tread as lightly as possible. Leo's the one who must break the eggs to make the proverbial omelets this time around. You need to take the initiative to help yourself, friends, loved ones and others cope with the demands of change. People will disagree with you about what needs to be done. Some heated exchanges are inevitable. High levels of confusion will complicate issues. Be very sure to sort through the concerns of those you upset for any good points and try to find the common threads in everyone's ideas.

♍ VIRGO—Embrace your optimism. Much as everyone would love some certainty, right now, there isn't any. That's the reality. But as irrelevant as optimism seems, you can't help but feel optimistic. Maybe that's because you realize just how in tune you are with the forces and processes of change. You sense an underlying unity and direction despite the confusion and upset. When things do begin to solid up, Virgos will be among the first to know. Present alliances and existing assets will turn out to be more important than you think.

♎ LIBRA—Vision and objectivity. Considering how complicated and tough the situation is, Librans are remarkably well positioned. The difficulties are manageable. Help yourself and others but be realistic and honest about what you need and what you can contribute. People also need your honest opinion about their own options. Stay focused on the future. People need help developing a realistic, workable vision of the future. You will have to put a lot of complicated and challenging ideas into simple and encouraging words. Schedule more quiet time to process your thoughts and feelings.

♏ SCORPIO—Involvement. The realities surrounding you seem harsher than usual and the uncertainties greater. There are viable solutions in the works, though. You know that the solutions chosen will affect your lifestyle as well as those of your family and other important people in your life. Consequently, you will likely find yourself in the middle of the debate. But the devil is in the details, and the details can take awhile to work out. You need to make a long-term commitment to implementing solutions. Your participation will be rewarded, and rewarding.

♐ SAGITTARIUS—Finale. For Sagittarians the wave of change moving through your life is more of an end than a beginning. Changes will continue, but, starting fairly soon, difficult transitions you may have been experiencing will find happy endings, pretty much. The changes that follow will be less challenging, more harmonious and fulfilling. The focus for the foreseeable future will be on firming up your financial situation. You need to devote your attention to controlling expenses and accumulating assets, long term. You will need to balance your budget in the coming year, particularly.

♑ CAPRICORN—Stirrings. Part of the focus for Capricorns is inward. Personal issues you thought were long settled, or at least long buried, are beginning to require your attention again. As you engage in financial planning, for yourself and others, include resources for spiritual and psychological renewal. Take special care to remain calm and balanced in discussions with higher ups. Issues can be vague and solutions elusive. Higher ups could be more than a little touchy. Still, the overall mood remains one of optimism for the future. Community involvements will soon expand.

♒ AQUARIUS—Shift. Aquarians can look forward to major shifts of activity in the coming year. Your income is due for a boost and financial issues should also settle into a more predictable and secure pattern. At the same time, your involvement in community activities will increase significantly. You might need to be a bit self-protective. There is a lot of excitement surrounding issues you are involved with. People you know, and some you don't, could get a little pushy. Tactful silence might be the best safeguard. Shield growing assets against future shocks.

♓ PISCES—Stand firm. Be clear about who you are and what you want. Make sure you know where your own best interests rest. You will soon get an avalanche of offers and advice. Many will be very tempting. Don't take any at face value. Your present status might seem modest to you, but it is hard won and easily lost. Pick and choose carefully and negotiate hard. Be very sure that the offer you accept is in keeping with your goals. The wrong involvement could threaten all you have worked for.



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 Helps with Problems Natural & Unnatural

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