

little village

Iowa City's News & Culture Magazine

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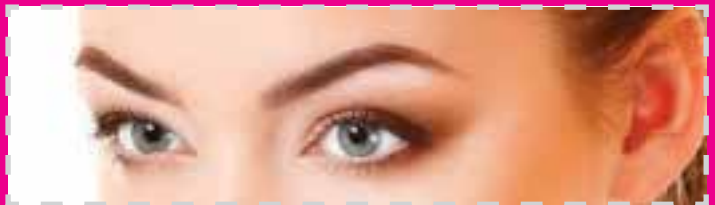
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THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

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Letter to the Editor

Von Maur Antics

I work downtown at an independent clothing store and today I received a call from a customer who had been in earlier. She wanted to compliment me on my friendly customer service.

Not only that, she also wanted to recruit me for the new Von Maur store! She asked, "Are you happy where you are?" You're darn tootin' I am!

It was flattering at first and then I realized the audacity of it all. She called me at my place of work! So not only is the heartless corporation screwing over Sycamore Mall, now they're poaching our downtown businesses. It just goes to show how little they care about our community and our culture.

—Theresa Rensimer

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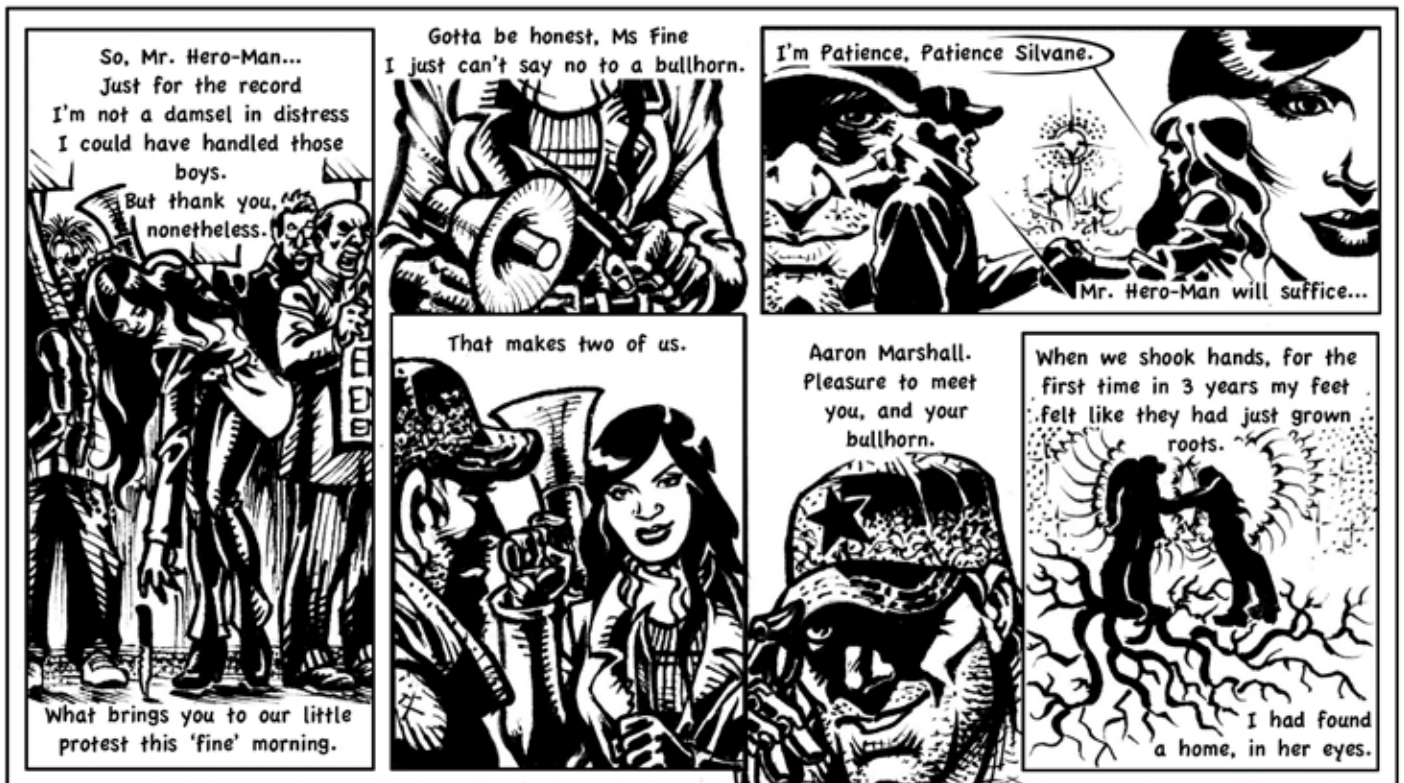
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GREEN STREET by Jared Rogness

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BEST SERVED COLD

Guess what: The Johnson County Justice Center proposal is back from the dead. In November of last year, opponents of the proposal to build a new, bigger jail in the heart of Iowa City (at a cost to the public of \$48.1 million) cheered when it fell 4 percent short of the 60 percent supermajority required for adoption at the polls.

Opponents of the Justice Center derided the project as overly expensive and too likely to perpetuate excessive incarceration.

So, has the project been amended to accommodate these concerns?

No, not really.

When the New Justice Center comes to a vote on May 7, it will be just \$1.9 million leaner, featuring a redesigned façade, 48 fewer beds and two fewer courtrooms.

Officially, the County says it is proceeding with such haste in an attempt to maintain the “freshness” of the information it disseminated about the Justice Center ahead of the November vote. Unofficially, it seems that the County has effectively adopted a goal-line offense with regard to the Justice Center. By establishing their apparent willingness to put the issue to a vote every few months until it passes, the County has created an air of inevitability around the Justice Center. Right now, it feels like the County will just keep pounding this plan up our gut until *something* passes.

The Justice Center's supporters point to several problems with the current jail that the Justice Center would correct. Proponents argue the jail is dangerously overcrowded; despite having only 92 beds, the jail has an average daily population of 160. The Justice Center would feature just over 190 beds, presumably easing the space constraints and improving safety.

Furthermore, according to supporters, the Justice Center is needed to alleviate the burden on the Courthouse, which does not have the space or resources to keep up with the backlog of trials. As a result of the delays, many inmates are kept in jail for too long as they wait for a trial. Along with questions this raises about a person's right to a speedy trial, it also costs the County more money. The Justice Center proposal would increase the number of courtrooms by four.

Opponents of the first Justice Center remain skeptical of the new proposal. First, there's the price tag: \$46.2 million, the vast majority of which will be paid for by taxpayers.

According to some opponents, the Justice Center is unnecessarily expensive, while others argue that the County is rushing to make a decision without adequately considering cheaper alternatives.

But arguably the most popular sentiment is that the Justice Center would perpetuate, and perhaps worsen, the problem of over-incarceration in Johnson County. While the average daily population of the county jail increased by 552 percent between 1983 and 2011, the total population of Johnson County increased by only 154 percent. In fact, between mid-2004 and 2011, the average population of the Johnson County jail was growing at a record rate of nearly 10 percent per year. Shamefully, while only about 5 percent of Johnson County's population is black, about 40 percent of those who passed

place. These programs include case expediting, mental health screening and diversion, various drug diversion programs and electronically-monitored work release, among others. Unfortunately, the county insists that its efforts to expand these alternative programs are hamstrung by the high cost in dollars and resources of maintaining an overcrowded, inefficient prison.

When we wrote about the Justice Center and alternative punishment in October of last year,

While the average daily population of the county jail increased by 552 percent between 1983 and 2011, the total population of Johnson County increased by only 154 percent.

we came to the following conclusion: “When reduced to its most basic state, the controversy surrounding the Justice Center looks like a series of frustrating Catch-22s: We imprison too many people, for example, but the best way to reduce that number may be to increase our capacity to try people [by building the Justice Center].”

We assumed then that if we wanted fewer prisoners, we may have needed a bigger jail. There is now a new dynamic at play in this debate, however: a sense that an unstoppable force—the County's goal-line offense—is about to run up against an immovable object—the public's apparent unwillingness to move forward with the Justice Center. It seems that this conflict could favor opponents of the Justice Center, who could extract more

concessions from Johnson County by continuing to reject the Justice Center referenda.

Perhaps, by further delaying approval, the public can force Johnson County to craft a plan that puts the expansion of jail alternatives with a proven record of saving money and reducing crowding ahead of outright expansion on its list of priorities. **IV**

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Zach Tilly is an undergraduate studying Journalism and Political Science. He also writes for The Daily Iowan and the Washington Post's swing-state blog, The 12.



Image via Johnson-County.com

TRY, TRY AGAIN

Voters already said no once, but a new jail will be on the ballot again May 7

through the county jail in 2011 were black. According to opponents of the proposal, the Justice Center represents a reinvestment in a bad system.

This last point is undeniably true; the system is broken. A report from the Hoover Institution at Stanford University argued last year that the number of inmates in the American prison system is inflated by more than 30 percent thanks to the unnecessary imprisonment of non-violent perpetrators of such “victimless crimes” as the voluntary buying and selling of drugs. The report's author, Nobel Laureate Gary S. Becker, suggests implementing alternative punishments for non-violent offenders to reduce the myriad negative impacts of over-incarceration.

As it stands, Johnson County currently has a handful of jail-alternative programs in

Photo by Tiffany Clemens

**THAT'S DEDICATION**

Waste auditors at Burge Hall looks for items that can be saved from the landfill.

2020

VISION

How exactly do you turn a campus of 30,000 students into a model of environmental sustainability? With seven key targets, The University of Iowa Office of Sustainability is working hard to achieve that goal.

In October 2010, UI President Sally Mason signed the EPA Sustainability Partnership Program Agreement, which laid out distinct goals for the University's green-friendly future. From limiting the production of waste to working to achieve net-negative energy growth, the ambitious goals are being monitored and

practiced with an end goal of full implementation by Dec. 31, 2020.

Liz Christensen, director of the University's Office of Sustainability, said the goals are designed to "take the university and campus to new levels."

"If you go to any university the size of The University of Iowa, and smaller schools here in Iowa—we've come to the recognition that not only are we seeing energy costs increase, but there's also a recognition that our planet

and our people and our economy suffers."

So how does the University ensure a green-friendly future, and what progress has been made toward these goals in the last three years? We did some digging and found some evidence of progress, although the U will likely need all ten years to get where they say they want to go.

GOAL 1: ACHIEVE NET-NEGATIVE ENERGY GROWTH

This goal focuses on structure and building energy. The University of Iowa is pushing to build LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) buildings and also employ conservation efforts on campus.

So far, this goal has been a success. Christensen said that despite the University adding six new buildings to its campus along with two major additions to the Dental Science Building and Carver Hawkeye Arena, the total energy consumption of the campus has remained level.

Meanwhile, facilities management has initiated new tools, such as the Energy Control Center, where some of the most advanced energy management technology allows centralized monitoring of energy consumption across campus. Additionally, new groups like the Energy Hawks have sprung up around campus to address energy consumption.

GOAL 2: GREEN THE ENERGY PORTFOLIO

This goal was set to develop a diverse renewable fuel portfolio that aims to have 40 percent of the University's energy consumed from renewable sources by 2020. As of 2012, Christensen said, renewable energy consumption was 9 percent.

"The University is pursuing plans to expand the use of sustainable biomass while continu-

ing to evaluate other opportunities such as wind and solar," Christensen said. The Iowa Biomass Partnership Project will work to "plan and develop a large supply of biorenewable fuel" to replace coal at the UI's Main Power Plant.

The University has also partnered with the county in an effort to achieve this goal. "Recently, the University of Iowa and Johnson County Conservation Board completed a harvest of dead and dying non-native trees at Kent

Park, with the plan to use the trees as fuels at the UI Main Power Plant,” Christensen said.

GOAL 3: DECREASE THE PRODUCTION OF WASTE

With a push toward recycling, composting organic waste and enhancing green purchase practices, the UI hopes to see a 60 percent reduction in waste by 2020.

“The first step toward better waste management is to learn about what’s actually ending up in the waste stream,” Christensen said.

With help from the UI Facilities Management’s recycling team, waste audits around campus help track what waste is being created and how it could potentially be avoided. One example of waste that has been identified and is now being recycled, Christensen said, is the lab gowns used by the UI College of Dentistry. Another example includes reusing the materials from the Hancher Auditorium demolition and construction site and repurposing them in the new Hancher construction. Meanwhile, campus dining in Burge Hall is using a new food pulper to create compost, currently sending out around 2,800 pounds of food waste every single week.

“Waste in a system is a sign of inefficiency. Driving out waste—whether it’s in the form of garbage or water, emissions, time, materials—makes good business sense,” Christensen said.

GOAL 4: REDUCE THE CARBON IMPACT ON TRANSPORTATION

It’s a typical scene—students packed like sardines on the UI’s Cambus, heading to class, home from class or out for the evening. From the Cambus to university-related air travel, the goal for all forms of transportation is to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 10 percent by 2020.

With the use of fossil fuels and an increase of bio-diesel and E85 ethanol gasoline, CO2

With a push toward recycling, composting organic waste and enhancing green purchase practices, the UI hopes to see a 60 percent reduction in waste by 2020.

emissions dropped 27 percent within the UI fleet over the previous decade. Christensen said over 52 percent of the vehicles managed by the UI Fleet Services are currently either fueled by E85, hybrid or fully electric vehicles.

To encourage ridership on busses, the University offers discounted passes that average 1,600 employees and 2,100 students. Christensen says, “The passes provide unlimited rides on Iowa City or Coralville Transit.”

The smartphone application Bongo is another great way that the University in partnership with the cities of Iowa City and Coralville are trying to encourage citizens to use public transportation. As a real-time, GPS-based passenger information system, it allows riders to find current bus locations and predictions for upcoming arrivals to Iowa City, Coralville and the University of Iowa.

The University is also making efforts to make the campus more bikeable. They worked with the City to update the metro bike plan, and they have also installed two bike repair stations, says Christensen. She adds, “UI received an “honorable mention” from the League of American Cyclists as a Bike Friendly University and the UI Bike Advisory Committee is helping to coordinate additional biking support services on campus.”

GOAL 5: INCREASE STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN AND PRACTICE PRINCIPLES OF SUSTAINABILITY

Besides its emphasis on public transportation, support of bicyclists and

encouragement of recycling, the UI created the Certificate in Sustainability in fall 2009 to inspire more green-friendly careers. Christensen said that the program started with only 11 students, but as of spring 2012, had grown to 145 students. According to Christensen, “The certificate provides students with the knowledge and skills they will need in order to contribute to sustainable systems and their interactions.”

GOAL 6: SUPPORT AND GROW INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH IN SUSTAINABILITY-FOCUSED AREAS

Going green is more than just the responsibility of the energy and waste management facilities or the Office of Sustainability. Through the Iowa Center for Undergraduate Research, students from engineering, business and planning are utilized by various campus departments as research interns.

“Students gain experience conducting trials of the Energy Control Center and the UI Water Plant,” Christensen said, adding that students also work with the College of Engineering to help build stable wind and solar installations, as well as biomass testing and water quality projects. Campus institutes devoted to such research include The Center for Global and Regional Environmental Research and the IIHR Hydroscience and Engineering center.

GOAL 7. DEVELOP PARTNERSHIPS TO ADVANCE

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**COLLABORATIVE INITIATIVES,
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Partnerships abound, and the University continues to grow relationships to advance the 2020 vision for sustainability. The School of Urban and Regional Planning launched an initiative in 2009 to help enhance sustainability practices throughout towns and communities in Iowa to better preserve the environment. The UI College of Engineering has partnered with Iowa Lakes Community College to allow the easy transferral of students and credits, particularly for the advancement of wind energy.

WHAT LIES AHEAD...

“They’re ambitious targets,” Christensen said, “and we need partners. The University of Iowa is very much about collaboration.”

Christensen said that not only are students taking part in green energy through various programs and campus institutes, but she has also seen a piquing of interest in local food sources. “Students want to have a connection with local foods, the natural world and entrepreneurs. They can start their own businesses, they can partner with existing producers and go on and build their own company,” she said.

At the end of the day, however, it all comes down to bettering the environment we live in. “Any university, or any school, is about educating the next generation of thinkers and entrepreneurs,” Christensen said. “It’s imperative that we teach young people about sustainability and how to solve these major issues that are facing our planet. We can do that by modeling a sustainable world.” **iv**

Erin Tiesman is a local freelance writer and comedy blogger who loves a good joke and a laugh. You can see what’s up in Iowa’s comedy scene at her blog, iacornfedcomedy.com.

ENVIRONMENT 101

The Hazy Debate

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), global land temperature has increased by about .188 to .315 degrees Celsius per decade since 1979. This may not seem like much, but it has resulted in a melting of arctic ice equivalent to half of the area of the United States. With obvious changes to growing cycles and extreme weather events, why isn’t there more of a national discussion on possible ways to curb this problem?

Matt Sowada: I find the topic of climate change to be an especially frustrating one to discuss at a very basic level. Intellectually honest rhetoric begins with an agreement on basic facts, and then discussions about the ramifications of those facts. For example, in the past we have discussed gun violence in this country. Now, we had some pretty big disagreements about what needs to be done about gun violence, but we were also fairly ignorant of some of the basic facts. Neither one of us had a clear idea about the scope of the problem, so we did some research and saw that the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says that about 11,078 murders a year are committed by someone using a gun. We agreed that because the CDC bases its reports on high quality scientific data it is a reliable source (it’s an organization that both Democrats and Republicans trust to provide data) and went on to argue about what that number means.

The problem about the climate change “debate” is that the nation can’t even get past this initial stage of agreeing about the facts on the ground.

As late as last March, Gallup polling found that a majority (a horrifying 57%) of Republicans don’t believe that there is a scientific consensus on the existence of global warming. The obvious source for reliable data in this instance is the scientific body that studies climate change, the IPCC, and they could not possibly be clearer on the existence of climate change. Republicans can’t participate in a discussion about the future of climate change because most of them are ignorant of the present.

Vik Patel: Why is it that most Republicans deny the existence of global climate change despite the overwhelming evidence? Usually that question would be followed by an explanation of conservative focus on related economic issues or the poor state of science education, but the real problem deals with the way many in the environmental movement talk about the past. Throughout the history of the environmental movement, very prominent figures like Aldo Leopold have advocated a return to harmony with nature in response to the harm that we have been doing. This may come as a shock to some of our readers; there has never been a time where we lived in harmony with nature. Before the 20th century, we struggled against the dangers of the natural environment so much so that the average person only lived for a little more than 30 years. Thanks to modern technology and accessible energy, we have been able to overcome environment perils to where the average global life expectancy is now nearly 70.

Just to be clear, I am not saying that we have not been harming the environment; in fact, we



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have been doing great harm to it. I am also not saying that climate scientists have been advocating a return to a 'harmonious' life, they have been simply reporting their findings. However, to much of the outside world, climate scientists' voices end up being mixed with those in the environmental movement who advocate for a return to an unreal harmonious life. This, unfortunately, undermines the credibility of those who are accurately stating the great damage that we do to our world.

MS: It's also worth pointing out that the "pre-modern" world is a current reality for millions of The problem with the climate change "debate" is that the nation can't even get past this initial stage of agreeing on the facts.

people around the globe. It's great that the United States has started to take steps towards establishing a green energy industry that can compete, but we have to remember that we burned billions of tons of fossil fuels to build the infrastructure that's making this transition possible. It's incredibly hypocritical and unrealistic to expect growing nations around the world to go without the advantage of inexpensive (although dirty) fuels that we used so capriciously over the last century. Unfortunately, I think the only option we have is to continue to push for the development of environmentally-friendly fuel sources here at home and hope that increasing energy costs render the use of fossil fuels prohibitively expensive at a global scale before irreparable damage is inflicted on the planet's ecosystem.

VP: You're right, it is hypocritical of us to demand that developing nations refrain from using fossil fuels to develop their economies; however, using prohibitive prices to restrict the use of fossil fuels would cause lifestyle changes similar to those of the pre-modern life described above for large parts of the world. The solution is not to wait for expensive carbon, but to make renewables less expensive. If we focus on how we can create a harmonious and prosperous future instead of adopting either real or perceived past behaviors, then we will be able to bring all parties together on climate change. **lv**

Vikram Patel and Matt Sowada are the friendly adversaries behind the twice-weekly ethical debates series, American Reason. Listen on KRUI every Sunday from 4-5 p.m., and find an archive of the shows (as well as exclusive web-only content) online at LittleVillageMag.com.

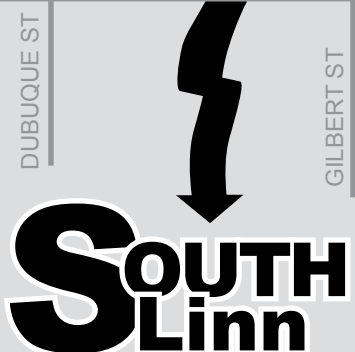


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DRY HOPPING: THE BITTERSWEET EFFECTS OF THE 2012 DROUGHT

Though brewers said the hot, dry summer of 2012 brought an increase in sales due to beer drinkers looking to quench their thirst, there were also consequences. Brewers say that, soon, the drought's effect on corn and soybean crops will influence the cost of malting barley and potentially the price beer drinkers pay for their favorite six-pack.

acres, Swersey said barley growers were not only able to recoup the losses from the previous year, but they harvested 30 percent more actual acres in 2012 than acres planted, or *intended*, in 2011.

Once a commodity crop, Swersey said barley is slowly reverting back to what he called a "custom contract crop." Swersey said barley tonnage has been in steady decline since the '30s or '40s

because fewer industries use it, making it harder to sell and riskier to grow. Growers will not plant barley hoping to sell it in the commodity market, as they would corn or soybeans. Instead, they want a contract from a maltster or brewer before they plant, especially since there is no guarantee their barley will be of malting-grade. Though many factors are involved, growers want the assurance of premium



BREW ON THROUGH

The shifting cost of grain is among the challenges for new breweries like Backpocket in Coralville (pictured).

"Beer is basically grain converted into liquid form and then fermented. And so when grain prices go up it hits the bottom line and prices have to be adjusted accordingly," says Jake Simmons, the co-owner and brewer at Backpocket Brewing, "there's no way around it."

According to Chris Swersey, the Technical Brewing Projects Coordinator at the Brewers Association, even before the drought, the price of barley was "pretty strong." In 2011, Swersey says a very wet winter and late spring in the Dakotas kept farmers off their fields and many acres of barley were not planted. Low production in the Dakotas, typically the largest barley-producing region, resulted in a "significantly small crop year," Swersey said. According to the United States Department of Agriculture, 313,000 fewer acres of barley were planted in 2011 than in 2010. Though Swersey said there was enough carry-over from previous years and inventory of imported barley to get by, the small 2011 crop resulted in strong barley pricing.

That strong pricing, though, drove barley production in 2012. Planting 774,000 more

and competitive pricing before they decide to plant barley instead of something else. That assurance was there in 2012.

But, despite the production increase, the price of barley has remained elevated and Swersey does not foresee it falling. Last year's drought significantly impacted corn and soybean growing regions, increasing the price of those crops. As a result, Swersey said other crops, like barley, need to "compete on price" in order for farmers to plant them instead of the more lucrative corn and soybeans.

Simmons said the price of barley was also influenced by changes in the livestock industry. Corn is the go-to grain for industrialized livestock operations, but when the corn crop suffered and its price increased, grains like barley were substituted in as cattle feed. That placed added pressure on the barley crop.

"It all boils down to supply and demand. And demand can shift between grains because cows don't really care what they eat," said Simmons.

The major cost incurred by brewers as a result of recent droughts, Simmons said, is

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buying grain. When barley is more expensive, it costs more to brew beer. And higher input costs mean higher retail pricing—generally speaking, said Swersey. Whether or not beer will cost more depends on the brewery. “Most businesses, when they’re confronted with increased costs, they raise their prices,” says Simmons. Some, he said, may be able to absorb the costs. Others would need to recover increased expenses with revenue.

Another worrisome affect of the drought could be low water levels. Though there have been no water access problems, Timothy Benson, the brewer and owner of the Lost Duck Brewing Company in Ft. Madison, said algae blooms on the Mississippi River gave the water a foul smell that is difficult to remove.

Benson said his beer was not affected since Ft. Madison draws its drinking water from a deep fresh water well and uses a reverse osmo-

No longer a commodity crop, growers want the assurance of premium and competitive pricing before they decide to plant barley instead of something else.

sis filtration system. But he said the odor in the river water could potentially be a problem for other brewers. During the floods of 2008, when Ft. Madison was still drawing water from the Mississippi, Benson said the excessive amounts of chemicals used by the city to treat increased bacteria levels gave his beer a band-aid taste.

Teresa Albert, co-owner of the Millstream Brewing Company, said they also will not be affected this year. The cost Millstream pays may have increased a penny per pound, which, she said in an email, is not bad. But the brewery’s costs are locked-in because they already signed grain contracts for 2013. “What happens in December when we go to sign our 2014 contract—who knows?” she said, adding that it will depend on what the weather is like this summer.

Despite all of the drought’s possible consequences, it seems brewers are confident the sky is not falling. They will continue brewing and monitoring the grain markets and weather conditions as they always have. **lv**

Casey Wagner lives in Iowa City.

CHICKEN LITTLE

REVIEWS: **JIMMY JACK'S RIB SHACK**
(1940 LOWER MUSCATINE ROAD)



Last weekend, I followed my beak down Lower Muscatine Road, just past Sycamore mall to one of Iowa City’s favorite BBQ joints, Jimmy Jack’s Rib Shack. Owned and operated by James Adrian and Jack Piper (co-owners of Atlas and Basta Pizzeria Ristorante), Jimmy Jack’s is housed in a red and white barn-like structure that features both indoor and outdoor seating. Being as I am a chicken, I instantly felt right at home.

Once inside the “barn” doors, your order is placed at a walk-up counter staffed by unfailingly friendly employees. I put in my order for a pulled pork sandwich dinner, which included two sides (I chose fries and coleslaw) and a slab of honey butter cornbread. I also added an iced tea.

I really like that Jimmy Jack’s brews their iced tea in-house. The clerk working the counter reminded me to use extra ice, because the tea is warm when it comes out of the brewer. It’s a mystery to me why good, unsweetened iced tea is so hard to find—but Jimmy Jack’s does it right.

Once my food arrived, I hopped up to the long, stainless steel sauce counter and slathered the smoky-sweet Cowboy BBQ onto my pulled pork. I added a side of Carolina Mustard for dipping my fries. Four Alarm and Original BBQ sauces were also available, as well as pickles, chopped onions and jalapenos for garnish.

Appropriately sauced up, I took my seat and dug in. The bun on my pulled pork sandwich was big and soft, and soaked up a lot of the sauce, which drives me crazy but you gotta have a bun on a sandwich! The pork inside was so tender and juicy that it fell apart in shreds and had an excellent level of smokiness. I didn’t encounter a single piece of dried-out, crusty meat, which is exemplary BBQ in my book.

Jimmy Jack’s french fries are worth seeking out all on their own: square-cut and skinless, crispy on the outside, fluffy on the inside. These fries really aren’t like any others in town, and be warned: They have been known to induce late-night, no-other-fries-will-do cravings.

The accompanying coleslaw was fresh and crisp, more sugary than savory. This slaw is classic Midwestern: Think the kind Mom used to serve out of her Tupperware at cookouts and tailgates. The meal was completed by a slab of cornbread basted in a shiny coat of honey butter.

The ambiance at Jimmy Jack’s is informal—patrons are seated at low wooden tables flanked by benches or steel booths. The restaurant is always immaculate, with staff jumping to clear tables almost as fast as patrons can abandon them. Much attention to detail has been paid to creating the right down-home BBQ atmosphere, from the rustic farming equipment decorating the walls, to the blues wailing over the sound system.

I’ll admit I’ve eaten at Jimmy Jack’s more than once, and other favorites include the Smoked Portobello sandwich with provolone and roasted red peppers and the Smoked Half Chicken. As the name suggests, they also have some darn good ribs!

It’s no surprise that Jimmy Jack’s was named Best of the Area in the BBQ category in last year’s Press Citizen’s Readers Poll. The next time you’ve got a hankerin’ for some authentic ‘cue in a low-key setting, this spot is a can’t-miss. **lv**

PRICE:

1



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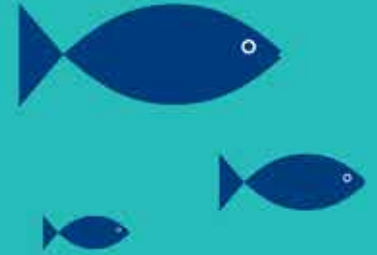


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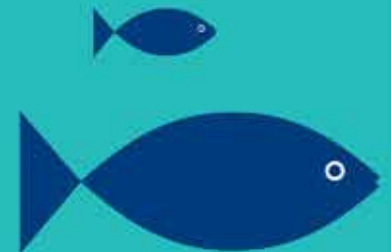
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Waves of amber hit the floor in a sweeping motion, followed by the sound of broken glass.

Jerry had dropped his beer, on purpose. The bartender looked up lazily from the glass he was polishing, only to look back down again. The other patrons in the bar continued to stare into their glasses, uninterested in any interruption of their languid meditation.

Jerry was incredulous. The entire bar seemed to exist on a different plane of the time space continuum, an alternate universe that slowly oozed, spread, and intoxicated those who entered it. From the moment he walked

The bartender leaned forward, still polishing a glass.

“I suppose you need another?”

in the door, Jerry felt his heartbeat slow down and his eyelids droop, yet he was completely sober. A person could get drunk off the air here, he observed.

So he did the most logical thing: he tried to break the trance. He dropped the beer, relishing the sound of the breaking glass, hoping it would tear a hole in the bizarre canvas of the bar’s atmosphere. But there was nothing, absolutely nothing.

Not knowing what else to do, Jerry sat down. The bartender leaned forward, still polishing a glass. “I suppose you need another?” He muttered.

It was a simple question, but Jerry was

suddenly confused. “Yes...” He said, slowly, unsure of himself. He felt himself sink into the cushion of the barstool and his shoulders slump forward. He was overwhelmed by a feeling of dejection.

He solemnly turned his head toward the spot he had dropped his beer. The floor was clean, not a shard of broken glass to be seen. He wondered if he had even broken the bottle, or if he had imagined it. Somehow, it didn’t seem to matter. When he turned back to the bar, there was a fresh bottle of beer in front of him and the bartender had returned to polishing his glass.

“What is this place?” Jerry asked the bartender.

The bartender glanced up. “This is Thompson’s.”

Jerry’s head was spinning. Part of his beer was gone but he could not remember drinking it. “Who are these people?” He asked.

The bartender looked at him oddly. “Customers. Like you.”

“Who are they? Where are they from?” Jerry was getting angry.

“Where are you from?” The bartender walked away slowly, not waiting for an answer.

Jerry’s beer was gone. He could not remember where he was from. He did not know where home was anymore. He looked around desperately for a clock but could not find one.

“Bartender!” He cried. The bartender turned towards him again, but his hair had turned white and his face had aged horribly.

Jerry shuddered. “What time is it?!”

“Five o’clock.”

“When did I come in here?”

“About 30 years ago.”

Jerry covered his face with his hands and moaned. He felt the deep wrinkles on his face and the aches of arthritis in his joints and he knew it had to be true, but how? How had this happened?

“I need to go,” He whimpered. “I need to go, but I’m lost!”

The bartender sneered at him, still polishing his glass. “There’s no point in trying to find your way.”

Jerry struggled to stand up and tipped his barstool over. He fell to floor with a loud crash. Finally, the patrons responded.

“You okay?” They asked. “Let me buy you a drink.”

“No,” Jerry shouted.

“Bartender, buy the man a shot on me.”

“And I’ll get his next beer.”

“I just want to leave!” Jerry struggled to stand up. The patrons grabbed him, putting him back on his stool.

“Get my good buddy Jerry another shot.” The patrons poured a shot down Jerry’s throat. He kicked his legs and gurgled. The alcohol spread through his veins. Slowly, he stopped fighting. He sunk into his stool and his shoulders slumped forward. The patrons patted his back and sat back down.

Jerry decided that he would stay at this place for just a while longer.

Laura Maheras lives in Coralville with her husband Jonathan Shoemaker. She spends her time cooking, running and gathering the motivation to write.

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a {made} community

Rachael Roewe and Tiffany Ralston started out as childhood friends in their hometown of Burlington. Both ventured out of Iowa and eventually found themselves back in their home state, and looking for new career directions. Reunited, in 2012 they joined forces to become co-founders

crafting their art using repurposed, upcycled, local, vintage and natural materials. This helps keep material out of the landfill and offsets the need for production of new materials. On a more personal level, {made}'s creative reuse of materials leads to items that hold a unique connection to the past or the environment.



Photo by John Richard

COMMUNITY CONSCIOUS

{made} co-founders Tiffany Ralston (left) and Rachael Roewe put 9 percent of their sales back into local charities.

and artists at {made}, an online shop selling artisanal goods that is based out of Iowa City.

Since opening, the venture has been more than a shop, as {made} made a pledge of conscious consumption and giving back. These components, which align perfectly with the triple-bottom line ideas of "people, planet and profit." They reduce their environmental footprint by

For Roewe and Ralston, giving back isn't an afterthought but an important part of their model. They put their money where their mouth is by donating a generous 9 percent of brand sales to local educational opportunities for women. They also "walk the talk" with efforts like their upcoming "Let's Run. Period." 5k event to support the Iowa City Domestic Violence Intervention Program.

Little Village recently had the opportunity to learn more about {made} and its sustainable business model from Ralston and Roewe.

LV: Tell us, what is {made} and how did it come to be?

Roewe: {made} is the brainchild of two girls who saw a need for locally made sustainable jewelry designs. We wanted to create a community of conscious consumers who appreciate what we do and value why we do it.

LV: Reuse and giving back are a strong part of your brand. Is this something that you designed into your business model from the beginning, or added over time?

Ralston: Reusing materials and giving back were part of our foundation from the beginning.

Roewe: Anyone can open a catalog and order supplies, the real makers look around and use what they've got and that's what makes our work different and interesting. We love the full karma loop of good sourcing and giveback. To stop short at seeking profits only for ourselves seemed like cutting off the karma a bit. We believe in creating from materials we feel good about and then sharing any success we might have with other women and communities that inspire us.

LV: {made} gives back to the community in a variety of ways. Where do you get the inspiration and what are some of your favorite ways that you've given back?

Roewe: We feel very lucky that we get to do what we do and with that comes the joy of sharing the opportunities that we've created with those who maybe haven't had as many opportunities.

Ralston: When I'm working, designing especially, I get into a zone. Part of what propels

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SUSTAINABLE STYLE

me is knowing that when the piece I'm working on sells, it will directly impact another woman. It's important to give and receive on all levels of your life. We are open to helping many organizations that focus on women. We'd love to hear from Iowa City where we can dedicate our 9 percent to in the future!

LV: Do you have any particularly interesting examples of materials reuse, or have you had any challenges related to materials reuse?

Roewe: I love the challenge of taking things that would have been discarded and turning them into beautiful objects. Last spring and summer,

Reuse of materials leads to items that hold a unique connection to the past or the environment.

we sourced many of our beads from auctions, antique stores and garage sales but by the time winter rolled around we needed a little freshening of our beadstock. This summer we are launching 'Project Re:Make' to encourage our customers to raid their grandmother's closets, and their own, for beads and chains to send in for {made} online store credit. We think people want in on the repurposing. It's just too fun not to.

LV: Are there other ways that you try to reduce {made}'s environmental footprint?

Roewe: People probably laugh a little when they receive their {made} mail packages. We gather up newsprint and egg cartons from friends and family and every holiday we ask everyone we know to save their bows for us: We reuse it all. So no package ever really looks the same. That's kind of our signature.

LV: What impact do you hope to have on your customers or the community?

Roewe: We want our community to hold out for things made better. We get a lot of messaging from media that more and cheaper is better, but sometimes we can buy less "stuff" in order to buy better. **lv**

Sheila Samuelson is founder of Bright Green Strategy in Iowa City, a mission-driven company dedicated to helping businesses and organizations of all sizes find success in adopting sustainability programs. Sheila can be contacted at Sheila@brightgreenstrategy.com.

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Changing the Channel

BEAUTIFICATION AND THE IOWA RIVER DREDGE

Most Iowa Citians don't know how the Iowa River between the Burlington Street Bridge and northern part of City Park came to look as it does, nor that the channel once followed a very different course through the city. Would one know what was underfoot while walking along its banks or viewing it from afar? Who remembers the islands in the river, the quarries along its banks or the changes in 1939 that made them disappear?

The river first changed in 1843 when Walter Terrell constructed his flourmill between current North Dubuque Street and the now nonexistent island located in the river's channel between Dubuque Street and what would become City Park. They powered the large and active mill by water that came from a two section stone mill dam. One section of the mill ran from Dubuque Street to "The Island" (as it was referred to), and the second section ran from The Island to the northeastern corner of what is now City Park. The mill was carried away in a flood in the 1880s but the mill dam still impounded water back to the Coralville Dam, also built in 1843. The river channel between those two dams was a favorite location for boating excursions in the summer and skating in the winter.

Around 1890 Terrell's mill dam was dynamited and with it gone, the river sank back to its original level, flooding curtailed and improvement projects by both the City and the University began along both sides of the river. In 1908 the Iowa River's landscape changed with the construction of Park Bridge, which for the first time directly

linked the City on the eastern side of the river to the park on the west. It provided wagon, auto and trolley car traffic access to the newly opened Manville Heights area.

Between 1917 and 1930 little occurred along the Iowa River except for the completion of the innovatively engineered Burlington Street Bridge in 1918, replacing the 1861 steel arch bridge. During this time, the area along Riverside Drive north of Iowa Avenue consisted of abandoned quarries.



TERRELL'S MILL

Once stood on "The Island." At left, the mill is demolished in 1881.
(Photos courtesy of UI Special Collections)

the west side of the river between Iowa Avenue and City Park Bridge the Maybee Theater Building and the Arts Campus were built atop a series of abandoned quarries. The senior class helped build and fund a shelter house near now nonexistent skate ponds.

Then in January of 1939 something astounding arrived. The Works Projects Administration (WPA) and Army Corps of



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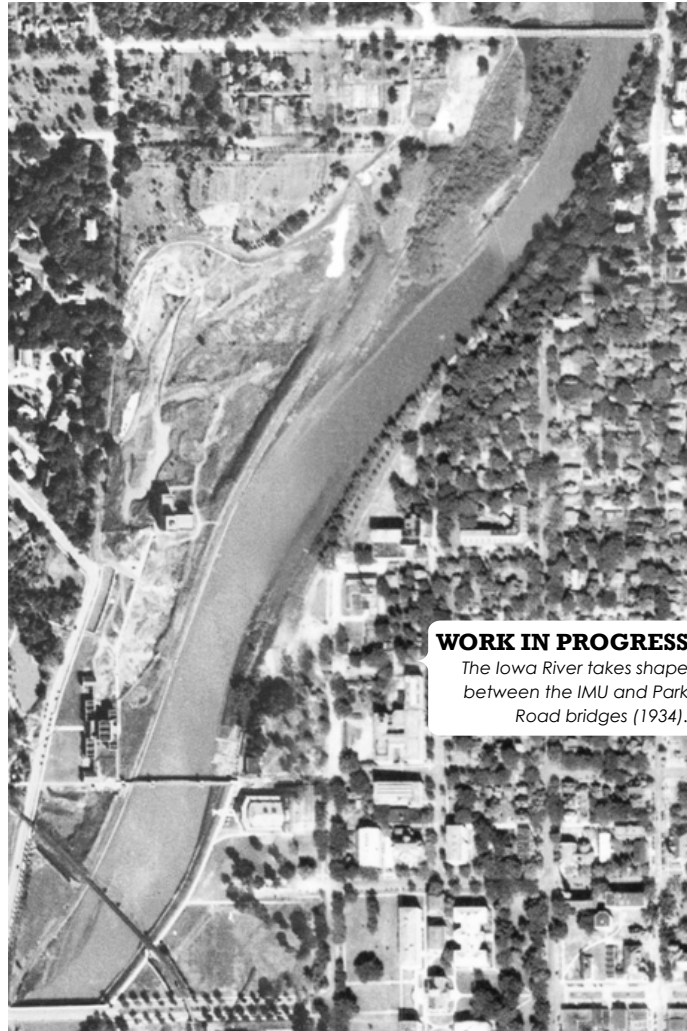
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Engineers brought in a river dredger for the newest campus beautification program: the dredging of the Iowa River. The goals of the WPA works project were to “beautify” and widen the Iowa River, to fill up the old football stadium and to protect Dubuque Street from flooding. With this project, levees and stone retaining walls were built by WPA workers and the river was widened from 25 to 100 feet.

By mid-1939, plans proceeded for extending these WPA works projects past City Park Bridge to the western end of The Island. This meant moving the Iowa River channel through City Park by connecting the northeast end of The Island with the mainland near Dubuque Street. This channel project set the course for the river to run through the north section of the park, necessitating removal of about 130,000 square yards of dirt and making the river in this area 300 feet wide with a 1,200 foot radius. The plans required that the channel started in the northwest section of the park and cut through to a point 700 feet north of Park Bridge on the east side of the park.

To fill the old channel, dams were built on the corners of The Island between it and Dubuque Street.

More dikes were built along the east river bank to prevent street flooding north of the City Park Bridge. A rock wall was built around the park’s west bank and connected to the river wall that ran north from the Burlington Street Bridge. Dredged materials from the new channel were used to fill in much of City Park. The WPA paid



WORK IN PROGRESS

The Iowa River takes shape between the IMU and Park Road bridges (1934).

nearly all the costs for the dredging, stone walls, walkways and levees thus leaving a permanent legacy on the now “beautified” Iowa River.

These “final improvements” of the Iowa River proceeded from April to September of 1939. The dredge worked its way south to north and dispersed the dredged materials along the banks,

into the old football stadium, behind the four to six feet tall rock walls and levees lining both sides of the river. The dredged stone from the river bottom and abandoned quarries was used to fill the original channel and level City Park, resulting in an Iowa River that was never the same again.

What can we see today of these changes? The new skate park lies atop The Island. City Park’s ball fields are built on dredged materials. Huge half-buried stones quarried in 1843 for Terrell’s mill dam can still be seen along the western side of north Dubuque Street just south of Park Bridge at the slope bottom. The stone Lagoon Shelter House marks where ice skating lagoons were. Stone walks can be seen in the woods along the western bluffs and river walls still stick out of the river bank near Park Bridge. **iv**

Marlin R. Ingalls is a professional archaeologist, historian and architectural historian within Iowa’s Office of the State Archeologist. He is a member of the State Historical Society of Iowa’s Technical Advisory Network and former member of Iowa’s State Nomination Review Commission, which reviews nominations for listing on The National Register of

Historic Places. He is also a consultant specializing in helping preservationists and communities evaluate, document and restore their historic buildings, neighborhoods and other historic resources.

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Candles illuminate an intimate setting. Wayne, turban bedecked and bejeweled, sits at the head of a small, mid-century modern kitchenette table surrounded by powerful businessmen and Croatian supermodels. They hold hands and quietly chant “Cadbury, Cadbury, Cadbury ...” Wayne reads ancient incantations in languages lost to all but the most esoteric necromancers. A chill wind blows through the room extinguishing the candles, save one. The supermodels totally nip-out. As do the businessmen. Wayne does not notice the awkward situation because, as they say in the séance industry, he is “laying deep in the cut.” Suddenly, the faint smell of frankincense, porridge and hot dog-water fills the room, thunder peals and Wayne, enthralled by the spirit, leaps to his feet and shouts:

“Have you heard the good news?”

silence

“I’ll be here all week!”

tepid clapping

“Seriously though, it’s me, Jesus. I am raised. Any questions? If so, send them to askwaynediamante@gmail.com”

Dear Wayne,

If the personal computer had never been invented, what would we all be doing now?

Reece

Dear Reece,

Working, for starters. Probably some plowing and sowing. Reaping also, if you’re lucky. And, of course, perusing “Curves,” the finest magazine of agrarian porno. Which, really, is just a collection of topographic maps that look like boobs, sort of. But mostly we’d be working.

—Wayne-Jesus

Dear Wayne,

I’m totally head “over” heels for my new boyfriend! It’s been two weeks and things are getting “pretty” serious. What can I do, “or” say to make him fall in love with me and seal the deal?

Tanya

Dear Tanya,

The power of love is a curious thing. It can make one man weep, or another man sing. It can change a hawk into a dove. Yes, Tanya, that is the power of love. Sadly, there is no tried and true method for making a person fall in love against their will. The best advice I can offer is this: The quickest way to a man’s heart is through his chest. Tell him you will kill him and eat his heart if he doesn’t propose, or put-out or whatever it is you’re after.

—Wayne-Jesus

WAYNE IS RISEN



Dear Wayne,

Is it possible to get ringworm on your ding dong?

Jeff

Dear Jeff,

Yes. Especially if you fool around with Ho-Ho’s.

—Wayne-Jesus

Dear Wayne,

Every time I take pictures of my family it looks like an Iraqi abduction video. Are there any tips, or tricks you can offer to improve my photography?

Sheryl

Dear Sheryl,

Try removing their hoods and nipple clamps. If they complain, waterboard them with a 50-50 solution of butterscotch schnapps and Febreze. That ought to get their attention.

—Wayne-Jesus

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If it looks Like Quality?

Every mall in America has a kiosk full of bright colored, often gaudy purses, intended to mimic designer styles but sold for a fraction of the price. While some of them look quality at first glance, upon closer examination, the stitching usually isn't quite right and the materials just feel cheaper.

This knock-off purse example parallels what is currently happening with a lot of "quality" television shows; they look like quality, but they're imposters. Beyond their aesthetics and the star power of some of their actors, they are formulaic, far from being compelling television and probably won't hold up with time. Some of the quality-imitators I'm thinking of include *Boss*, *House of Cards* and *The Following*.

The term "quality TV" started being used in the '80s, and referenced what some, or at least media scholar Robert J. Thompson, considered to be television's Second Golden Age. Quality shows, such as *thirtysomething*, *L.A. Law* and *Twin Peaks*, stood out as more detailed, complex and edgy (more violence! more sex!) than other "formulaic" and staid television offerings airing at that time. The shows themselves were not only heralded as being different, they were also unique in attracting "quality" audiences, particularly young, affluent and well-educated viewers that were still thought to be developing brand loyalties and had lots of extra cash to burn.

According to TV critic Alan Sepinwall, and his book *The Revolution Was Televised*, we are in yet another golden age of TV because of shows like *Friday Night Lights*, *Breaking Bad*, *The Wire* and a dozen more. I agree with

his book in that these examples of quality TV content do follow certain trends, such as the popularization of the anti-hero, use of large ensemble casts, increasingly serialized narrative forms (basically making TV akin to a bunch of extended novels or more like daytime soap operas) and greater emphasis on single auteurs or program showrunners as having artistic control.

These characteristics or trends are what most quality and faux-quality shows mimic, and they are how channel executives frame and market their programming in order to lure quality audiences to their productions. And every channel is trying to get into the quality TV game right now, particularly Starz, Netflix and broadcasters like Fox.

For example, Starz's *Boss* featured Kelsey Grammer as a Chicago Mayor who hid his degenerative neurological disease that plagued him with dementia and hallucinations. Grammer alone marked the show as "quality," as did the addition of Gus Van Sant directing the pilot, the on-location filming in Chicago and the Golden Globe nods. Despite all of this, the show suffered from weird narrative pacing, annoying plot tangents and was often too cynical to foster any emotional connection with viewers. Yet, the aesthetics and the accolades marked the show as "quality," even if the show as a whole didn't fully convince us of it achieving that status.

House of Cards is Netflix's first attempt at original programming. The show features Kevin Spacey as Frank Underwood, a Democratic Congressman from South Carolina who was skipped over for Secretary of State and is now on a path of vengeance. Underwood is sly, power hungry and generally evil—all characteristics I love—but his talking directly to the camera, a style carried over from the original BBC trilogy, and weak one-liner words of wisdom often come across as trivial and void of charm. The show is visually pleasing, with the first two episodes shot by David Fincher (*The Social Network*), but the show is otherwise a conventional

retelling of behind-the-scenes political maneuvering. *House of Cards* looks like quality TV, but its underdeveloped characters and unbelievable plot twists prevent it from achieving that status (and I say this despite the fact that I enjoyed watching the whole thing in one weekend).

Fox's *The Following* also uses a familiar face to anchor the show: Kevin Bacon. Bacon's character, Ryan Hardy is a former FBI agent who is helping track an escaped serial killer, a college professor named Joe Carroll, whom he is credited with originally bringing to justice. The show is visually interesting mostly because of its gratuitously gruesome embrace of blood and gouged out eye sockets, but we've seen it all before. Ken Tucker, a reviewer for *Entertainment Weekly*, nailed one of my biggest pet peeves about the show: "The weakest part of *The Following* is the idea that Carroll is a college professor who held classes spellbound with lectures about Thoreau, Emerson and, most crucially, Edgar Allan Poe." According to the plot, these lectures are so powerful, the professor's mystique so strong, that they inspire his students to kill! Not only is that just outright annoying, but the continual Poe quoting and literature-inspired killings fail at even being pretentious.

These shows just don't deliver on what their appearances and star powers promise, namely something new, edgy, emotionally compelling and genre blurring, but because they look a certain way we often assume that they're great. Quality shows are supposed to enlighten and challenge the viewer, and these programs fall short of that, too. Of course, quality shows aren't perfect either, yet something about them still captivates us. Faux quality TV may have similar visual style and narrative elements to quality TV, but ultimately doesn't hold up upon closer inspection. **IV**

Melissa Zimdars actually likes most of these faux quality shows, but none of them as much as The Real Housewives of Vancouver.

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Takin' Text to the Streets

In its 11th year, Poetry in Public continues to bring Iowa City voices to the public sphere—literally.

In this UNESCO City of Literature, it's a given that poetry talks the talk. But every April, just in time for National Poetry Month, it also walks the walk. Enter Poetry in Public (PiP); established in 2002 by then-Poet Laureate Marvin Bell, the program transforms seven-line submissions of poetry into posters displayed in some of Iowa City's most accessible public areas.

"When it first started we had just finished the Iowa Avenue Literary Walk," Marcia Bollinger, Iowa City's Neighborhood Coordinator, explains. "The whole component of literature within the art program was really significant. Writers wanted to know what kind of role they could play. So this idea of Poetry in Public came up ... Almost every major city has some kind of major venue for poetry to be on display. Marvin Bell helped come up with the game plan for how to create and promote it."

While Iowa City has no shortage of readings and events for poets—ranging from established reading series events like Anthology and Talk Art, to open-mics at Uptown Bill's

or salon-style house readings—there's really nothing quite like having poetry usually reserved for the page quite so (as the program puts it) public.

"[Poetry in Public] expands every year," Bollinger explains. "We wanted to get them in the downtown kiosks. [In 2002] we had just seen the downtown improvements bring those kiosks in, and we also wanted them on the downtown buses, the rec centers—downtown and Mercer—and at the Senior Center, the public library and last year we had them at Sycamore Mall. The whole idea was to get poetry into places where people who might not otherwise read poetry would see it. It's really become enlightening to me to see how many people have a passion for poetry, whether writing it or participating in it, or simply encountering it."

In a community that bends like a river around an obstreperously steadfast, beautiful stone slab of literature, the reflected sky's the limit for how literature can wash over Iowa Citians. Yet there are limits to how many poems can be a part of Poetry in Public. "It all depends on how many buses there are!" Bollinger laughs. "That sounds really silly, but the first year we

Get Artsy

Mark your calendar with these April art events:

Strange Cage 11

Fair Grounds | April 15 | 8 p.m. | Free

Strange Cage 11 features poetry by the legendary Kate Greenstreet, Writer's Workshop members Ted Mathys, Sarah Smith and Emily MacWilliams, local talents Callie Garnett, Michael Goldberg and Michael Fidel Marquez, and the return of Actualist movement figure Joyce Holland after 40 years of silence. Miss it and die. (Disclosure: Russell Jaffe is basically Strange Cage.)

WALK IT OUT Presents: the 4th Annual Multicultural Fashion Show

IMU Main Ballroom | April 13
8 p.m. | \$3 advance-\$5 day of

The 4th Annual Walk It Out Fashion Show! presents groups performing Africa, Latin America, LGBTQ, South Asia, East Asia, Middle Eastern, and Hip Hop. 6:30 pre-show includes appetizers and a raffle. Proceeds raised at the show will go to the University of Iowa HIV/AIDS Clinic.

Landscape Synthesis: A talk by visiting artist Steve Rothwell

Art Building West | April 11
5:30 p.m. | Free

The highly decorated Steve Rowell is an artist, curator and researcher whose transdisciplinary practice focuses on overlapping aspects of technology, perception and culture related to the landscape.

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did two per bus, and there were 22 buses. The next year, I thought, if we get enough submissions, maybe we can do three per bus. This year there are 89 individual poems ... it depends on the ratio of submissions, but this year we had 308 children's submissions and 93 adult. We promote through the schools and sometimes entire classes will submit. "

Poetry in Public transforms seven-line submissions of poetry into posters displayed in some of Iowa City's most accessible public areas.

The poems, printed attractively on large broadsides, speak to a wide cross-section of writers inhabiting Johnson County. It's a program that not only showcases poetry publically, but also fundamentally, truly, thoughtfully for the public. "I have a hand in selection with the committee," Bollinger says, "and I'll express my opinion about accessibility ... you know, some I wouldn't want my eight-year-old reading. There's been poetry we've received that would have taken an encyclopedia or dictionary to understand. And that doesn't make it bad poetry—we've selected poetry like that—but it makes me wonder, if we have to work that hard to figure out what it's saying, is it something for everyone?"

"In terms of the selection committee, we've got a real balance," she continues. "We have an Iowa City Public Library representative. We have a City of Literature board member. We have a public art advisory committee member. We have a professional, published poet. Then we have my intern and myself. Then we had an at-large member who used to work at the library, but she loved Poetry in Public so much she asked to stay on and participate."

As if the poetry wasn't enough, there's a newer art component to further stratify the already gladly fraught lines of Iowa City's visual

WHO WANTS A POEM? >>>

Poems provided by Poetry in Public

arts culture. "We have a Poetry in Public art component! It was an idea that came from a teacher who had participated and thought it would be cool to encourage artistic renditions

of the poetry," says Bollinger. "First, we get permission from the poets to say yes, it's OK to not only post my poem, but for people to create art from it. We decided that we'd just post all the artwork submitted based on the poems. We do a press release saying the poetry is posted online, and if you'd like to make artwork based on a poem, we encourage it. Last year we put them on display in the library windows."

While artists are given free reign to interpret any work they choose, last year saw a particularly high response to one poem Bollinger remembers quite clearly. "Yeah, we had a poem ... "Sid the Squid!" It was from one of our grade schoolers. Of course, it was a lot of kid artists who responded to that one. But we got some really fun submissions."

"I really think it makes an impression upon people who take the time or are sitting on the bus or on the ped mall or hanging out in the rec center to glance at them and say, 'That's cool, that's friendly, that's something that I can appreciate.'"

You can see the poems around town throughout April and read past PiP pieces—and see some of the artwork submitted, including the Sid the Squid representations—at icgov.org/pip.lv

Russell Jaffe is the editor of Strange Cage.

What is Poetry?

Marvin Bell

A shovel with which to move
skeleton bones.
Fingerprints on a sickle.

Monday Morning Gift

Carol Tyx

Someone is singing in the copy room
across from my office, a joyful noise
rising above the hum of the dehumidifier
that keeps the notes from
sticking together.

Captivated in Iowa City

James Schoenfelder

Fall semester of sixty-five
I and my fifty-six Chevy arrived,
Where protesters gathered with
handwritten signs,
And students and educators were
far from benign.
Today I sit with my Java House brew,
Watching the citizens in orderly queue,
Discussing not the bombing of city hall,
but merits of the chicken stew.

In Sink

Mario Duarte

One sleep-hazy sunrise,
I found Baby Boy, the cat,
curled in the dry sink bowl:
nose and toes unified,
tail wrapped around his back,
until the faucet dripped,
and he leaped in my arms.

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PERFECT GAME

As spring turns the grass green, my fancy lightly turns to thoughts of baseball. The fancies of movie producers must also turn in that direction, because *42*, the new biopic about Jackie Robinson, is just opening.

I have a theory about American sports. (Even the best theory can't contain the whole truth about its subject; so let me warn you right away that my little theory leaves out a lot.) In brief, it's that our sports, especially baseball,



are all about nostalgia. "Is this heaven? No, it's Iowa." There, in a nutshell, is the meaning of baseball: the longing for rural America and its family values.

Historians are people who tell you that everything you believe about the past is false. So it's no surprise that all historians sourly agree that Abner Doubleday did not invent baseball in Cooperstown in 1839. However the nine-position-three-strikes-four-bases game was con-

The rise of baseball coincides neatly with the rise of America as an industrial power.

cocted, it was being referred to as our "national pastime" as early as 1856. Baseball really took off after the Civil War and more or less grew in popularity throughout the first two-thirds of the 20th century. Thus, the rise of baseball coincides neatly with the rise of America as an industrial power. As various cultural historians have pointed out, baseball becomes a pastoral retreat for those whose lives were being radically

transformed by cities, capitalism and technology.

The great political question posed by our most mythic baseball movies is: Can our rural Jeffersonian values survive in the new dog-eat-dog world of modernity? Take the most stirring of them all, Barry Levinson's *The Natural* (1984), based on Bernard Malamud's fine novel. It opens with golden scenes of Roy Hobbs as a young boy running through a wheat field to catch fly balls thrown to him by his dad. Roy (Robert Redford) grows to

be "the natural" who goes off to the city to make it big, immediately is corrupted by its alluring charms and then must make a comeback as an older, wiser ballplayer. After he successfully resists the temptations of money and sex, he hits a light-shattering series-winning home run and is now able to have a family with his childhood sweetheart. The last scene is of Roy throwing flies to

his own son in the wheat field. He's finally rounded the bases and made it back home.

Because our baseball logic implies that we must hearken back to our founding values or else perish by the anarchic forces of modernity, the love of baseball fits nicely with a genteel form of conservatism. It's no surprise that the conservative columnist George Will is obsessed with baseball and routinely declares that it "suits the character of this democratic nation." But even the progressive mind likes to indulge in nostalgia. Movies like *A League of Their Own* (1992) and *The Jackie Robinson Story* (1950), as well as the just-released *42*, show that family values and personal virtue can be connected to progressive principles like feminism and civil rights.

Phil Alden Robinson's *Field of Dreams* (1989) presents a more complex version of baseball mythology, though its diamond-in-the-middle-of-a-cornfield stays true to the idea that baseball is rooted in our agrarian past. Based on W.P. Kinsella's novel *Shoeless Joe*, *Field of Dreams* is about many dreams gone awry, the dreams of the 1919 Black Sox (who were famously corrupted by money and threw the World Series), the frustrated dreams of the

Now Showing



Neighbouring Sounds

Kieber Mendonça Filho (2012)
April 19-25 | Bijou Cinema

This debut from a promising new Brazilian director gives a socio-economic drama the eerie force of a nightmare. In Portuguese.

The Fly

David Cronenberg (1986)
April 26, 27 | Bijou Cinema

For a creepy gory horror movie, this remake of *The Fly* (1958) assumes some of the gravity and depth of a tragedy.



Love Free or Die

Macky Alston (2012)

May 3 | 7 p.m. | Trinity Episcopal Church
(Book signing before film at 6 p.m.)

This documentary is about Gene Robinson and the international controversy that flared up when he was consecrated as the first openly gay bishop in the Episcopal Church. Religion might just come to loving terms with homosexuality, and modern liberalism might just find its religious roots.

main character's father, the disappointed and confused dreams of the 1960s (represented by James Earl Jones's character, a disillusioned radical!) but most of all the dreams of a man who wants to become a farmer and reconnect with his family. The mystic voice of the movie says, "If you build it, they will come." It refers literally to the surreal baseball field in a cornfield but symbolically to the potential of America as a land of dreams.

The interesting thing is that after the efflorescence of epic baseball movies in the

The conservative columnist George Will is obsessed with baseball and routinely declares that it "suits the character of this democratic nation," but even the progressive mind likes to indulge in nostalgia.

'80s and early '90s, baseball has entered a new stage in our astroturfed imaginations. Football, our current national sport, is about the nostalgia for war, violence and manly courage. By comparison the beauties of scorecards and stolen bases seem quaint as George Will's bow ties. Now we're nostalgic for baseball itself, or else we must try to update it à la *Moneyball*.



Someone needs to do a movie about building a baseball diamond on the gridiron!

Nostalgia often gets a bad name. Yet everybody is either a nostalgist or a futurist, and I myself prefer the good old days to the brave new world, even though Eden never existed and New Jerusalem will never arrive. Is this heaven? I doubt it, but let's play ball. And then watch some movies. **lv**

Scott Samuelson teaches philosophy at Kirkwood Community College and blogs about music with his son at billyanddad.wordpress.com.

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On the Beat

STEVE CROWLEY

LIVE MUSIC PREVIEW



William Tyler w. Rachael Marie // Trumpet Blossom Café // April 24 // 9:30 PM // Free

William Tyler is a busy man. Even if you've never heard of him, it is likely you've heard his music in some form. Tyler has been a longtime member of Lampchop and has appeared on records by Bonnie "Prince" Billy, Silver Jews, Charlie Louvin and Wooden Wand. Tyler's first solo effort, *Behold the Spirit* was a substantial critical success if nothing else and showcased his extraordinary skill with a guitar. More than that, the record revealed a serious project from a man with both chops and sensibility. While

Tyler tries to stay away from comparing himself to John Fahey, it's hard to write about his style without bringing the droning finger picking of Fahey to mind. To make a more contemporary comparison, Tyler's aesthetic is reminiscent of James Blackshaw's: His thoughtful compositions are driven by repetition and guided by dynamics and subtle airy flourishes, occasionally broken up by some spaced out ambience. That said, Tyler has his own unique sense of arrangement, which has only been fine-tuned on his latest album, *Impossible Truth* which was released just last month. Local banjo pickin' songbird, Rachael Marie opens up the show.

Calendar

MUSIC

Thurs., April 18

Johnson County Landmark plays John Rapson Englert Theatre, Free, 7:30 p.m. **The Sound of Art** Figue Art Museum, Free, 7:00 p.m. **Mixology** Gabe's, \$1, 10:00 p.m. **Cosby Sweater** Redstone Room, River Music Experience, \$6, 8:30 p.m. **You're Too Kind** Yacht Club, \$5, 7:00 p.m. **Kevin "BF"** Burt Mendoza Wine Bar (Coralville), Free, 7:00 p.m.

Fri., April 19

The Nadas Blue Moose Tap House, \$15, 8:00 p.m. **Eileen Ivers & Immigrant Soul** Englert Theatre, \$30-32, 8:00 p.m. **Euforquestra's 10th Anniversary** Gabe's, \$10-75, 9:00 p.m. **Mykki Blanco, Morris**, **The GTW** Gardner Stage, Grinnell College, 9:00 p.m. **Ryne Doughty** Mendoza Wine Bar (Coralville), Free, 8:00 p.m. **Kris Lager Band** Redstone Room, River Music Experience, \$8, 9:00 p.m. **The Soupcans** The Mill, \$7, 9:00 p.m. **DJ Abilities** Yacht Club, \$7-10, 10:00 p.m.

Sat., April 20

Papa Skunk and Filibusta Blue Moose Tap House, \$5-10, 9:00 p.m. **Twista** Gabe's, \$20-

25, 9:00 p.m. **Disappears, Pillars and Tongues** Gardner Stage, Grinnell College, 9:00 p.m. **David Berkeley** Legion Arts (Cedar Rapids), \$12-15, 8:00 p.m. **Family Groove Company** Redstone Room, River Music Experience, \$10, 9:00 p.m. **Eric Carbonara** The Mill, \$7, 9:00 p.m. **Phish Tribute with Dr. Z's Experiment** Yacht Club, \$6, 10:00 p.m. **Jose Gobbo's Jazz & Bossa Nova** Mendoza Wine Bar (Coralville), Free, 7:00 p.m.

Sun., April 21

Violin Virtuoso Concert by Violin Professor **Katie Wolfe** Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, Free, 2:00 p.m. **Dan Knight: The Kandinsky Suite & Mural** Coralville Center for the Performing Arts, \$12-17, 3:00 p.m. **Final Alibi** Gabe's, \$5, 7:00 p.m. **Shabazz Palaces, THEESatisfaction, Malitia Malimob** Gardner Stage, Grinnell College, 9:00 p.m. **"Weird Al" Yankovic** Paramount Theatre (Cedar Rapids), \$35-55, 7:00 p.m. **Third Sunday Jazz performance and workshop** featuring **Victor Wooten** Redstone Room, River Music Experience, \$5-7, 7:30 p.m.

Tues., April 23

Emery Blue Moose Tap House, \$13-15, 5:30 p.m. **Mansions on the Moon** Gabe's, \$10, 7:00 p.m. **Danny Schmidt & Carrie Elkin** Legion Arts (Cedar Rapids), \$12-15, 7:00 p.m. **The Emilees** PS-Z, Free, 8:00 p.m.

Best Coast w. Emperors Club // First United Methodist Church // April 27 // 7:00 PM
\$25 (\$22 Student)

I remember when I first started hearing about Best Coast. It was around the same time everyone started using the phrase “buzz band.” And Best Coast was certainly getting a lot of buzz for having only released three

Best Coast's washed out, reverby sound will be a perfect fit for the First United Methodist Church's stage.

short songs. The year was 2009 and Best Coast went on to release a few more singles and an EP in that year and indie America took notice of the fuzzy lo-fi garage dream-poppers. Lead singer, Beth Cosentino's knack for tight, catchy songs with honest lyricism has won the appeal of both audiences and critics. Best Coast is now perhaps one of the biggest indie



bands in the country, their first album, 2010's *Crazy for You* receiving the prized “Best New Music” stamp on *Pitchfork*. Their washed out, reverby sound will be a perfect fit for the First United Methodist Church's stage. Opening the evening will be local favorites, Emperors Club, who played a sold out show with Divine

Fits during Mission Creek. Emperors Club also just released their debut full length, *Killer Companion*, which (for the time being) can be streamed from their website for free.

Danny Brown w. Kitty, AWTHNTKTS // Gabe's // April 28 // 9:00 PM // \$15

You won't hear a discussion of current hip hop that doesn't include Danny Brown. In a climate where rappers with raw talent and originality are becoming more and more abundant, Danny Brown sits among the best in the business. Brown's early life living in Detroit is a

major force in his writing and certainly gives his music some authenticity. His young adulthood was spent dealing drugs, running from the law, getting caught, dealing more drugs, etc. His breakout album, *XXX* is largely about just that. And the subject matter combined with his quirky lyricism and comedic pop culture references

Calendar listings are free, on a space-available basis. For inclusion, please email Calendar@LittleVillageMag.com

Calendar

Wed., April 24

Symphony Orchestra Main Lounge, IMU, Free, 7:30 p.m. **Coastwest Unrest** Gabe's, Free, 6:00 p.m. **JAMS** Gabe's, \$10-12, 9:00 p.m. **Euforquestra** Redstone Room, River Music Experience, \$8, 7:30 p.m. **Burlington Street Bluegrass Band** The Mill, Free, 7:00 p.m.

Thurs., April 25

Bro Safari, Jantsen, World Class Art Thieves Blue Moose Tap House, \$13-17, 8:30 p.m. **KEN mode** Gabe's, \$8-10, 6:00 p.m. **Gunnar & The Grizzly Boys** Gabe's, \$10, 8:30 p.m. **Mixology** Gabe's, \$1, 10:00 p.m. **All Night Kitchen** Mendoza Wine Bar (Coralville), Free, 7:00 p.m. **Mat Kearney** IMU Ballroom, \$24, 8:00 p.m. **UI Jazz Performances** The Mill, \$3-5, 6:00 p.m. **Wet Hair** The Mill, \$7, 10:30 p.m. **KEN mode** Yacht Club, \$8-10, 6:00 p.m. **Dana T** Yacht Club, \$5, 10:00 p.m. **Open Mic** Faulconer Gallery (Grinnell), Free, 7:00 p.m.

Fri., April 26

AutoErotique Blue Moose Tap House, \$13, 10:00 p.m. **Dr. Zubo & The Bird Purples** Coralville Center for the Performing Arts, \$8, 7:30 p.m. **Figge Post Pop After Hours Party** Figge Art Museum, \$20, 9:00 p.m. **Autodramatics Album Re-release**

Party Gabe's, \$6, 10:00 p.m. **MikeQ, Prince William, Kelela** Gardner Stage, Grinnell College, 9:00 p.m. **Collectible Boys** Mendoza Wine Bar (Coralville), Free, 7:00 p.m. **Take Note a cappella performance** PS-Z, 6:00 p.m. **Deja vu Rendezvous w. Playlist** QC Redstone Room, River Music Experience, \$5, 9:00 p.m. **Jazz After Five** The Mill, Free, 5:00 p.m. **Mark Kroos** The Mill, \$8, 8:30 p.m. **Dead Larry CD Release Party** Yacht Club, \$7, 10:00 p.m.

Sat., April 27

After The Burial Blue Moose Tap House, \$13-15, 5:30 p.m. **Family Groove Company w. Uniphonics** Gabe's, \$8, 8:00 p.m. **Hue Blanc's Joyless Ones** Public Space One, \$5, 8:00 p.m. **The Steepwater Band** Redstone Room, River Music Experience, \$10, 8:30 p.m. **Best Coast** First United Methodist Church, \$25, 7:00 p.m. **Kevin "BF" Burt** Mendoza Wine Bar (Coralville), Free, 7:00 p.m.

Sun., April 28

Danny Brown Gabe's, \$15-75, 9:00 p.m. **David Wilcox** Legion Arts (Cedar Rapids), \$17-21, 7:00 p.m. **The Devil Makes Three** Redstone Room, River Music Experience, \$15, 8:00 p.m. **Nahko and Medicine for the People** Yacht Club, \$10, 9:00 p.m.

Mon., April 29

Iowa City Girls Choir Coralville Center for the Performing Arts, \$5 Suggested Donation Per Family, 7:00 p.m.

Tues., April 30

Senses Fail Blue Moose Tap House, \$15-18, 6:30 p.m. **Design the Skyline** Gabe's, \$8, 6:00 p.m. **Daniel and the Lion** The Mill, \$8, 9:00 p.m.

Wed., May 1

Like Moths to Flames Blue Moose Tap House, \$13-15, 5:30 p.m. **Acid Mothers Temple** Gabe's, \$12-14, 9:00 p.m.

Mondays: Open Mic w. J. Knight The Mill, Free, 8:00 p.m.

Tuesdays: Lower Deck Dance Party Yacht Club, \$1, 10:00 p.m.

Wednesdays: Free Jam Session Yacht Club, Free, 10:00 p.m.

Thursdays: Open Mic Uptown Bill's, Free, 7 p.m.

Little Village Live Public Space One, Free, 5-6 p.m.



made it one of the best albums to come out of 2011. On the road with Danny Brown is Kitty (formerly Kitty Pryde), whose hit single, "Okay Cupid" came in at #17 on *Rolling Stone's* "Best Songs of 2012." Opening up is AWTHTKTS, who have quickly become Iowa City's premier hip hop group.

Acid Mothers Temple w. Tjutjuna // Gabe's May 1 // 9:00 PM // \$12 Adv., \$14 Day Of

It is a little bit difficult to describe what exactly Acid Mothers Temple is. I'm not even talking about genre (yet); the whole concept of Acid Mothers Temple takes a minute to wrap

one's mind around. Let me try and explain. It is a collective comprised of musicians, artists, dancers, etc., all of whom live in various locations all over Japan. Members are free to come and go between the "AMT houses." You might call it "long distance communal living." There are around 30 members currently belonging to the group and there are numerous projects that fall under the AMT umbrella. The only one that's important here is the musical project. Their form of experimental psych rock is meant to be a little challenging, but ultimately thoughtful and reflective. The band's front man, Kowabata Makoto, has been performing in bands since the late 1970s and founded

NEW MOBILE SITE

Visit LittleVillageMag.com/calendar for updated show information

AMT in 1995. This is one of the most interesting musical projects we'll see all year. Denver band, Tjutjuna will open the show, which is being put on by Mission Creek. **lv**

Steve Crowley is a red blooded Wisconsinite marooned in the fetid morass of Iowa City that had to make due with the yokels and, over the course of five years, came to quite like it here.

Calendar

Calendar listings are free, on a space-available basis. For inclusion, please email Calendar@LittleVillageMag.com

THEATRE/ PERFORMANCE

Fri., April 19

The Corridor Sings Broadway Coralville Center for the Performing Arts, \$10-25, 7:30 p.m.

April 19-21 and April 25-27

By the Bog of Cats Dows Theatre, Coe College, \$5-17, 7:30 p.m. (2 p.m. showing on 4/21)

Mon., April 22

Reading of the play *Permanent Collection* by Tom Gibbons African American Museum of Iowa, Donation, 6:30 p.m.

April 19-27

She Stoops to Conquer UI Theatre Mainstage, \$5-17, 8 p.m.

April 25-26

AXIS Dance Company Space Place Theatre, \$10-35, 7:30 p.m.

April 26-27

Oklahoma! Johnson County Fairgrounds, \$10-18, 7:30 p.m. (4/26-27), 2:00 p.m. (4/27-28)

Sat., April 27

Iowa Dance 2013: Dancing Our Visions Coralville Center for the Performing Arts, \$3-8, 8:00 p.m.

ART/EXHIBITIONS

Thurs., April 18

Art Lover's Book Club: The Painter's Chair: George Washington and the Making of American Art Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, Free, 4:00 p.m.

Thurs., April 25

Wood Sculpting & Wood Block Printing for Beginners Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, \$35, 6:00 p.m. **"For My People: Elizabeth Catlett at Iowa and Beyond"** Lecture by Kathy Edwards Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, Free, 7:00 p.m.

Fri., April 26

Sandy Dyas: Closing Reception & Art Sale Englert Theatre, Free, 5:00 p.m.

Tues., April 30

Curators' Falconer Gallery Talk: Animals Among Us Falconer Gallery, Free, 4:15 p.m.

Wed., May 1

Art Bites "American Gothic" with Michael Daugherty Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, Free, 12:15 a.m.

April 28-May 19

Brendan Baylor Exhibition Public Space One, Free

Ongoing:

Liz Davenport: Maybe This Is The Beginning Of Madness Public Space One, Free (through 4/27) **Madai Taylor** Legion Arts (Cedar Rapids), Free (through 4/28) **TJ Moberg** Legion Arts (Cedar Rapids) Free (through 4/28) **Royal Jarmon** Legion Arts (Cedar Rapids) Free (through 4/28) **Barry Anderson** Legion Arts (Cedar Rapids), Free (through 5/31) **Native Kids Ride Bikes** Black Box Theater, Iowa Memorial Union, UI campus Free (through 7/28)

SUBMIT EVENTS

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SATURDAY, APRIL 27 AT 10PM
MACBRIDE HALL AUDITORIUM at The University of Iowa

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Calendar

Thursdays: Artvaark (Art Activities) Uptown Bill's, Free, 6 p.m.

CINEMA

Thurs., April 18
Vanishing Waves Bijou Theatre

April 19-20
Jackie Brown Bijou Theatre

Sat., April 20
Film screening by Jesse McLean Public Space One, Free, 7:30 p.m.

Sat., April 27
Video Diary of a Lost Girl Bijou Theatre

Sun., April 28
MFA Thesis Screenings Bijou Theatre

April 19-25
Sound City, Neighbouring Sounds Bijou Theatre

April 26-27
The Fly (1986) Bijou Theatre

April 26-May 2
Spring Breakers, No Bijou Theatre

COMEDY

Thurs., April 18
Tom Garland Penguins Comedy Club, \$5, 7:30 p.m.

Sun., April 21
Blue Moose Comedy Showcase Blue Moose Tap House, \$5, 8:00 p.m.

Thurs., April 25
The Comedy Basement: Loni Love First Avenue Club, \$22, 8:30 p.m.

Fri., April 26
Tim Sullivan Penguins Comedy Club, \$15, 7:30 p.m. **Cristela Alonzo** Public Space One, Free, 10:00 p.m.

Sat., April 27
Carlos Mencia Penguins Comedy Club, \$33, 7:30 and 10:00 p.m.

April 19-20
Untamed Shrews Penguins Comedy Club, \$15, 7:30 p.m.

Mondays: Catacombs of Comedy Yacht Club, \$3, 9:00 p.m.

KIDS

Thurs., April 18
Toddler Story Time Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, Free, 1:30 p.m. **Pajama Story Time** Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, Free, 7:00 p.m.

April 20-21
The Grossest Weekend Ever! Celebration Iowa Children's Museum, Free, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Saturday and 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Sunday

Tues., April 23
Doodlebugs Preschool Program Marion Public Library, Free, 10:45 a.m.

Thurs., April 25
Toddler Story Time Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, Free, 1:30 p.m.

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experimental 12-string guitar
- Tim Wehrle (4:00)
60's style psych out
- Trivia Contest
- Hosted by Jarrett Mitchell (3:30)



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Calendar

Calendar listings are free, on a space-available basis. For inclusion, please email Calendar@LittleVillageMag.com

Fri., April 26

Doodlebugs Preschool Program Hiawatha Public Library, Free, 10:30 a.m. **STEM Family Free Night** Iowa Children's Museum, Free, 5:00 p.m.

Sat., April 27

Money Smart For Kids! Iowa Children's Museum, Free, 9:00 a.m. **Dare To Care Day** Iowa Children's Museum, Free, 10:00 a.m.

April 25-26

Kamber Club Iowa Children's Museum, \$36-40, 9:00 a.m.

Fri., April 19

Eco-Fest Kick-off Reception & IQTest Style Show Legion Arts (Cedar Rapids) \$5 Suggested Donation, 7:00 p.m.

Sat., April 20

Rampin' It Up! Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, Free, 1:00 p.m. **University of Iowa College of Medicine: FROLICS** Englert Theatre, \$10, 7:00 p.m. **Community Day** Faulconer Gallery (Grinnell), Free, 1:30 p.m.



WEIRD AL YANKOVIC

Paramount Theatre (Cedar Rapids) | \$35-55 | 7:00 p.m.

Saturdays: Family Storytime Coralville Public Library, Free, 10:30 a.m.

Tuesdays: Preschool Storytime Coralville Public Library, Free, 10:30 a.m.

Thursdays: Wee Read Coralville Public Library, Free, 10:15 & 11:15 a.m. **Homework Help for Kids/Teens** Coralville Public Library, Free, 3:00 p.m. **Art Adventure: Clay Play!** Iowa Children's Museum, Free, 3:30-4:30 p.m.

LITERATURE

Thurs., April 18

Writers@Grinnell: Madeleine Thien Faulconer Gallery, Free, 8:00 p.m.

Wed., May 1

Art Lovers Book Club at the Figge Figge Art Museum, Free; Members Only, 1:00 p.m.

Wednesdays: Spoken Word Uptown Bill's, Free, 7 p.m.

MISC.

Thurs., April 18

Thursday Night Lineup: Spring Landscape Hike Brucemore Mansion (Cedar Rapids), \$12-15, 6:00 p.m.

Sun., April 21

DVIP Fundraising Event Englert Theatre, Free, 3:00 p.m. **IYWP Food Writing Workshop** PS-Z, Free, 10:00 a.m.

Tues., April 23

Panel Discussion: Working with Animals Faulconer Gallery, Free, 4:15 p.m.

Wed., April 24

Redefining Dance and Disability Workshop w. AXIS Dance Company Senior Center Assembly Room, Free, 2:30-3:30 p.m.

Thurs., April 25

Thursday Night Lineup: Hands on History Interactive Family Tour Brucemore Mansion (Cedar Rapids), \$3-10, 6:00 p.m. **PechaKucha Night** Figge Art Museum, Free, 6:30 p.m.

Fri., April 26

Art at Heart 2013 Figge Art Museum, \$100, 6:30 p.m.

April 26-27

Czech and Slovak History and Culture Conference National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library

Sat., April 27

Old Capital City Roller Girls Vs. Paper Valley

A-List

EPX Animation and Gaming Conference 2013

Friday and Saturday, April 26-27
Art Building West, University of Iowa
(141 North Riverside Drive)

Perhaps to the surprise of the casual observer, the video game industry is a diverse network of creative, design-oriented professionals whose names resonate with millions of video game fans across the world. For every J.J. Abrams, there is a Phil Fish. For every Guillermo Del Toro, there is a Jonathan Blow. Their keynotes draw thousands, and their philosophies on interactive design and player agency are incredibly complex for a hobby that's often derided as a brainless exercise in destruction.

On April 26-27, EPX Studios (pronounced "epics") will bring a number of these industry professionals to Iowa City with its EPX Animation and Gaming Conference. Created in 2011, EPX is a student organization that specializes in animation, 3D rendering and video game production on campus. EPXCON will draw in creatives from Disney Interactive's Playdom, stop-motion experts Laika Studios, Gazillion Entertainment and more. The two-day event will feature masterclasses, keynote speeches and student opportunities for one-on-one time with the visiting professionals.

Renaud Bédard, co-creator of the award-winning indie game Fez, will also be in attendance. Bédard is perhaps most commonly known through his divisive role in *Indie Game: The Movie*, wherein the troubled development of Fez and Bédard's terse relationship with co-creator Phil Fish was documented in great detail. As fans of the documentary know, Bédard and Fish's game would eventually sweep through the indie gaming landscape, winning countless awards and being named Eurogamer's 2012 Game of the Year.

Join EPX, Bédard and more on April 26-27 for 12+ hours of game-related pomp and revelry. April 26 events begin at 3:30 p.m., with April 27 events resuming at 1:00 p.m.

Calendar

Roller Girls Coralville Marriott, \$10-13, 7:00 p.m.
Zeta Phi Beta fundraiser PS-Z, 7:00 p.m. **Iowa Dance 2013: Dancing Our Visions** Coralville Center for the Performing Arts, \$3-8, 8:00 p.m.
Iowa Dance 2013: Dancing Our Visions Coralville Center for the Performing Arts, \$3-8, 8:00 p.m.

First and Third Sundays: Super Sunday Pub Quiz The Mill, \$1, 9:00 p.m.

Mondays and Thursdays: Yoga in the Gallery with Monica St. Angelo Faulconer Gallery (Grinnell), Free, 12:15 p.m.

Venues

Akar 257 East Iowa Ave., Iowa City, (319) 351-1227, akardesign.com
Beadology 220 East Washington St., Iowa City, (319) 338-1566, beadologyiowa.com
Bijou Cinema The University of Iowa, 166-B Iowa Memorial Union, Iowa City, (319) 335-3041, bijou.uiowa.edu
Blue Moose Tap House 211 Iowa Avenue, Iowa City, (319) 358-9206, bluemooseic.com
Cedar Rapids Museum of Art 410 3rd Ave. Southeast, Cedar Rapids, (319) 366-7503, crma.org
Coralville Center for the Performing Arts 1301 5th St., Coralville, (319) 248-9370, coralvillearts.org
Coralville Public Library 1401 5th St., Coralville, (319) 248-1850, coralvillepubliclibrary.org
Englert 221 East Washington Street, Iowa City, (319) 688-2653, englert.org
Figge Art Museum 225 West Second St., Davenport, (563) 326-7804, figgeart.org
FilmScene Starlite Cinema - Festival Stage, City Park, Iowa City, icfilmscene.org
First Avenue Club 1550 South First Ave., Iowa City, (319) 337-5527, firstavenueclub.com
Frank Conroy Reading Room The University of Iowa, Dey House, 507 N. Clinton, Iowa City (319) 351-9175, icgabes.com
Hancher Auditorium (Space Place Theater) The University of Iowa, North Hall, 20 W. Davenport St., Iowa City, (319) 335-1160, hancher.uiowa.edu
Iowa Artisans Gallery 207 East Washington St., Iowa City (319) 351-8686, iowa-artisans-gallery.com
Iowa Childrens Museum 1451 Coral Ridge Ave., Coralville, (319) 625-6255, theicm.org
Iowa City Public Library 123 South Linn Street, Iowa City, (319) 356-5200 icpl.org
Iowa Theatre Artists Company 4709 220th Trl, Amana, (319) 622-3222 iowatheatreartists.org
Johnson County Fairgrounds 4265 Oak Crest Hill Road Southeast, Iowa City, (319) 337-5865, johnsoncofair.com
Legion Arts (CSPS) 1103 3rd St. Southeast, Cedar Rapids, (319) 364-1580, legionarts.org

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Mendoza Wine Bar 1301 5th St., Coralville, (319) 333-1291, facebook.com/menzowinebar
Paramount Theatre 123 3rd Ave SE, Cedar Rapids, (319) 398-5226, paramounttheatre.com
Penguin's Comedy Club 208 2nd Ave SE, Cedar Rapids, (319) 362-8133, penguinscomedyclub.com
Prairie Lights 15 South Dubuque St., Iowa City, (319) 337-2681, www.prairielight.com
ps-z 120 N Dubuque St, Iowa City, (319) 331-8893, pszic.com
Public Space One 129 East Washington St., Iowa City, (319) 331-8893, publicspaceone.com
Red Cedar Chamber Music (Ballantyne Auditorium, Kirkwood, Cedar Rapids) 1495 Douglas Ct., Marion, (319) 377-8028, www.redcedar.org
Redstone Room, River Music Experience 129 N Main St., Davenport, (563) 326-1333, rivermusicexperience.org
Riverside Theatre 213 N Gilbert St., Iowa City, (319) 338-7672, riversidetheatre.org
Rozz Tox 2108 3rd Ave, Rock Island, IL, (309) 200-0978, rozztox.com
The Mill 120 E Burlington St. Iowa City, (319) 351-9529, icmill.com
Theatre Cedar Rapids 102 3rd St. Southeast, Cedar Rapids, (319) 366-8591, theatre.org
Theatre Building The University of Iowa, 200 North Riverside Dr., (319) 335-1160 theatre.uiowa.edu
University of Iowa Museum of Art 1375 Hwy 1 West, Iowa City, (319) 335-1727, uima.uiowa.edu
University of Iowa Museum of Natural History Macbride Hall, Iowa City, (319) 335-0480, uiowa.edu/mnh
Uptown Bill's 730 South Dubuque St., Iowa City, (319) 339-0804, uptownbills.org (Spoken Word Wednesdays at 6:30, Artvaark Thursdays at 6 p.m., Open Mic Thursdays at 7 p.m.)
Yacht Club 13 South Linn St., Iowa City, (319) 337-6464, iowacityyachtclub.org (Flight School Dance Party on Tuesdays, Jam Session on Wednesdays)

Submit venues and events:
Calendar@LittleVillageMag.com

Has anyone ever been killed by a falling piano or anvil?

Have there been any confirmed deaths by falling pianos? How about anvils?
—Stephen, Acme Industrial Products

I see you're a Road Runner fan, Stephen, although one of that small subset that wonders, on seeing Wile E. Coyote deploy a piano, anvil, or roadside explosive from Acme Products: is this technically feasible? Some say this attitude ruins a good joke. Not me. I understand that exploring the practical realities of being inadvertently squashed deepens our appreciation of quality humor. I also have to say there's a certain snob appeal in being able to tell a fellow connoisseur: you know, the real danger is when the piano falls *up*.

We'll get to that. First, however, let's concede that large objects fall on people less often than popular culture would lead you to think. I once debunked the myth that 150 people a year were killed by falling coconuts. Death by falling piano is likewise rare. My assistant Una scanned through old newspaper databases and was unable to find a single real-life instance of this classic cartoon trope. She did find the following:

- In 1931 a piano was being hoisted up to a second-story window when a cornice broke free from the building, falling and killing a mover below.

- In 1955 a man ironically surnamed Keys was crushed under a piano being delivered to his home. However, the piano hadn't been hoisted up and dropped; it and the victim just fell out the back of the truck.

- Virtually every other reported case of death by piano resulted from the instrument simply tipping over. Commonly the victims were kids playing near an old upright; perhaps some misguided practical joke was involved, but if so it fell flat.

- The exception was the case of strip-club bouncer Jimmy Ferrozzo. In 1983 Jimmy and his dancer girlfriend were having sex on top of a piano that was rigged so it could be raised or lowered for performances. Apparently in the heat of passion the couple accidentally hit the up switch, whereupon the piano rose and

crushed Jimmy to death against the ceiling. The girlfriend was pinned underneath him for hours but survived. I acknowledge this isn't a scenario you want depicted in detail on the Saturday morning cartoons; my point is that death due to vertical piano movement has a basis in fact.

You didn't ask about safes, which is just as well, because we basically struck out here too. The closest instance may

be a case from 1893, where a 2,000-pound safe being rolled from one building to another broke through the pavement just short of its destination and fell into the cellar below. Regrettably it took one of the movers with it, resulting in his demise. Similarly, during a 1956 shoe store fire in Spokane, a safe fell through the floor and into the basement, killing fire captain Leonard Doyle.

Finally, anvils. It's difficult to imagine why one would ever need to hoist an anvil high enough for it to drop on someone. However, we can't rule falling anvils out entirely, due to a little-known pastime called anvil shooting, an exemplar of the hold-my-beer-and-watch-this school of redneck diversions.

The concept, which can be seen in practice in numerous online videos, is lethally simple: You put an anvil on the ground, fill a concave space on its upper surface with black powder, insert a fuse, set a second anvil on top, light the fuse, and run like hell. The detonation sends the top anvil flying in the air—preferably straight up and then straight down, but you can see where things could go tragically awry. We didn't find any instances of this actually occurring, but thanks to the Road Runner we have an artist's impression of what might happen when it does.

I don't want to give the impression that getting killed by falling objects is uncommon. On the contrary, the advent of large-screen and



more recently wall-mounted televisions has created an entirely new category of real-world danger: death by falling TV. The Consumer Products Safety Commission found that from 2000 to 2011 an incredible 215 people were killed by their own televisions, 29 in 2011 alone. The typical scenario is a child climbing up on a poorly or unanchored television to reach a toy.

This death toll may seem low compared to the 43,000 people injured each year due to objects tipping over on them. However, TVs are to blame for an astonishing 62 percent of tip-over fatalities.

What's more, we have at least one instance of a TV-related death that was every bit as random as getting killed by a falling piano or anvil. Last month a Kansas family was traveling through the newly renovated airport in Birmingham, Alabama, when a bank of video monitors fell on them for no apparent reason, killing a ten-year old boy and injuring his mother and brothers. I hate to keep adding to the list of modern perils, but there's no denying TV can be bad for your health.

—CECIL ADAMS

Send questions to Cecil via straightdope.com or write him c/o Chicago Reader, 350 N. Orleans, Chicago 60654. Subscribe to the Straight Dope podcast at the iTunes.

Curses, Foiled Again

- Police investigating a nightclub burglary in China's Yunnan Province arrested a suspect who covered his head with a wastepaper basket to shield his face from surveillance cameras. Police identified him anyway because the basket was transparent, allowing them to make out his face. (Britain's *Daily Mail*)
- David Zehntner was flying over his home in LaBelle, Fla., when he noticed a truck in his driveway. He flew lower for a closer look and saw a man attach Zehntner's trailer to the truck and then drive away. He followed the truck and notified authorities, who arrested Gary Haines, 59. (Fort Meyers' *The News-Press*)

Fourth-Amendment Follies

- The New York Police Department began testing a high-tech scanner capable of detecting concealed weapons by reading terahertz, the natural energy emitted by people and inanimate objects. "If something is obstructing the flow of that radiation, for example a weapon, the device will highlight that object," Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly said, adding the device is portable and small enough to be placed in a police vehicle or on a street corner where gunplay has occurred. The New York Civil Liberties Union raised concerns about "virtual pat-downs," and some security experts warned that false readings could lead to unjustified stops. (New York's *Daily News*)
- When Virginia resident Aaron Tobey declined screening by advanced imaging technology X-ray machines — so-called nude body scanners — at the Richmond International Airport, opting for a pat-down instead, he stripped to his shorts to display a protest of airport security measures written in marker on his chest: "Amendment 4: The right of the people to be secure against unreasonable searches and seizures shall not be violated." Claiming the Transportation Security Administration then illegally handcuffed and interrogated him for 90 minutes before he was charged with disorderly conduct, Tobey sued the TSA in federal court. He lost, but the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals reversed the decision. (*Wired*)

Victory of Sorts

Saudi Arabia announced it might abolish beheading because of a shortage of swordsmen to carry out executions. If so, it will switch to firing squads. (*Ahram Online*)

Tree Thuggers

- Concert promoter Charles Attal claimed he's the victim of a "witch hunt" after he cut down several dozen juniper trees on his property in West Lake Hills, Texas. City officials said he broke the law, which forbids removing any tree in the city limits, dead or alive, without a

permit. Attal explained he cut down the trees, which he insists were dead, because he feared stray sparks or a discarded cigarette could ignite a wildfire. The city wants him to plant junipers whose diameters total 338 inches, which the city arborist said is the combined diameter of the cut trees; otherwise, it is threatening a lawsuit and fines of up to \$2,000 per tree. Attal is holding out to replace only 200 diameter inches. (*Austin American-Statesman*)

- When retired big-league ballplayer John Olerud moved into his new 12-room, 6,680-square-foot hillside house in Clyde Hill, Wash., he asked the city Board of Adjustment to order his neighbor to cut down two mature, 50-foot trees that partially block Olerud's view of Lake Washington, the Seattle skyline and the Olympic Mountains, and lower the home's appraised value by \$255,000. Even though the trees were there when Olerud built the home, the board backed Olerud's request and ordered neighbor Bruce Baker to remove the trees. At

with their existing ideology and preferred lifestyles," proclaims the website of The Citadel, a walled community of up to 7,000 residents centered on a firearms factory being proposed for northern Idaho. Its website boasts the fortress-like city will feature "no recycling police" and require all residents to "maintain one AR15 variant in 5.56mm NATO, at least 5 magazines and 1,000 rounds of ammunition." Prospective residents must also pledge to "carry a loaded sidearm whenever visiting the Citadel Town Center."

Organizers said Independence and the Citadel will welcome visitors "like Colonial Williamsburg," according to Larry Rosenthal, executive director of the Center for Right-Wing Studies at the University of California at Berkeley. "These communities seem like a cross between the Henry Ford Museum village and the Creation Museum in Kentucky." (*The Washington Times*)

ONE OF OUR OWN!

When police questioned the apparently drunk driver of a vehicle that crashed into some trees in Iowa City, Iowa, she identified herself as Tameka Johnson and gave her age as 34. When they told her they were transporting her to the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics for treatment, she confessed that her real name was Deontee J. Fletcher, 30. Fletcher works at the facility as an assistant professor in the neurology clinic. (*Iowa City Press-Citizen*)

the first of two city hearings, Olerud declared that Baker, a Presbyterian minister, should let Olerud have the same commanding view that Baker enjoys because of Jesus' admonition to love your neighbor. (*Seattle Times*)

Tomorrow Lands

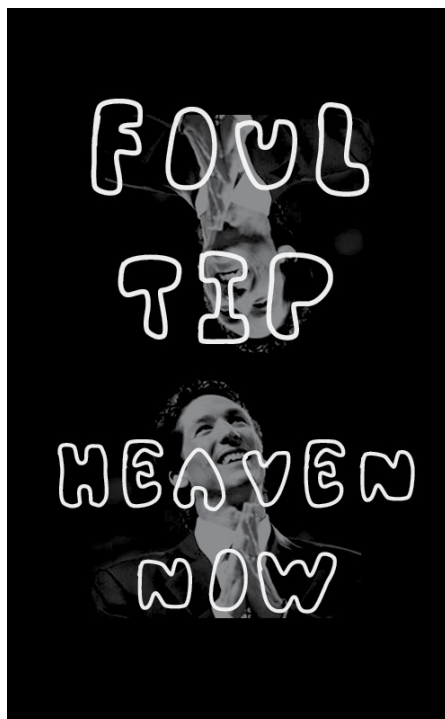
The re-election of Barack Obama has prompted many right-wing Americans to plan a retreat from the world in proposed liberal-free enclaves:

- New-media entrepreneur Glenn Beck announced plans to build Independence USA, a \$2 billion, self-sufficient, libertarian city-cum-theme park that would celebrate "the rebirth of our nation through its own principles." Beck said he was inspired by Walt Disney's original plans for a 20,000-resident Epcot Center.
- PayPal co-founder Peter Thiel pledged \$1.25 million to the Seasteading Institute, which plans to establish self-governing, libertarian-minded nations on giant mobile platforms floating in international waters. Each 12,000-ton platform would house 300 residents.
- "Marxists, Socialists, Liberals and Establishment Republicans will likely find that life in our community is incompatible

Trouble in Nirvana

Claiming exclusive rights to the name and teaching of Transcendental Meditation, the Maharishi Foundation is suing Thom Knoles, a former associate who left in 1997 and set up his own version, called Vedic Meditation. The foundation, which teaches thousands of students a year and owns trademarks for Transcendental Meditation and TM, asked a federal court to enforce its trademark rights and claims of false advertising against Knoles. His supporters accuse the foundation of unfairly seeking a monopoly on a technique that has existed for thousands of years. Maharishi Mahesh Yogi developed its modern incarnation in the 1950s in India and spread it worldwide before establishing a university and the foundation in Fairfield, Iowa, in the 1970s. The legal dispute will decide whether rivals can market similar services and benefits without obtaining a license from the Iowa group. (*Associated Press*)

Compiled from mainstream news sources by Roland Sweet. Authentication on demand.



Foul Tip

Heaven Now

thefoultips.bandcamp.com

Reviewing the latest EP from Foul Tip is, well, sort of a challenge. The duo's second release, *Heaven Now*, has a bit of an identity crisis. Four of the cuts on the cassette are propulsive, evocative chunks of post-punk and three of the tracks are goofy, but still mostly hard hitting. However, two of the songs are so successful, it really doesn't bear mentioning the remaining five in such a short write-up.

"Lifter/Leader," like its weight-training protagonist, is all hard muscle and brawn. The duo tells the tale of a professional bodybuilder over the kind of high-octane rumble that ought

to soundtrack weight rooms worldwide. Ed Bornstein (of T'Bone) lays down a no-frills, six-cylinder drum part that keeps the track roaring along while the overdriven bass work of Adam Luksetich (The Tanks, Big Box) lends "Lifter/Leader" a head-bobbing syncopation. The lyrics are spare but clever, both highlighting the musicians' skill and mimicking the drive and single-mindedness it takes to survive and thrive in a career of bodybuilding. These are best exemplified in the barked orders of the chorus: "Sweat! Pose! Win!"

"Northern Home" operates on an entirely separate level from the rest of *Heaven Now*. Luksetich pulls double-duty and rips off some eerie guitar licks that cap off each chorus—replete with overdubbed ghostly feedback wails. Beyond the guitar accents, Bornstein and Luksetich also show a real dynamic range. The bouncy opening with the clean burbles of bass and upright strut of the drums provide the backdrop for the duo's desire for their titular Northern home and "cool breezes indefinitely." However, after the command that we "pack up" cause "it's time to go," Luksetich's guitar goes haywire and lets off a torrent of buzz-saw licks while Bornstein's strut gets tribal and he finds room for a few machine gun fills before the track fades out.

I don't know if it's a coincidence, but both "Lifter/Leader" and "Northern Home" have an additional lyrical credit for Flat Black Studio guru Luke Tweedy.

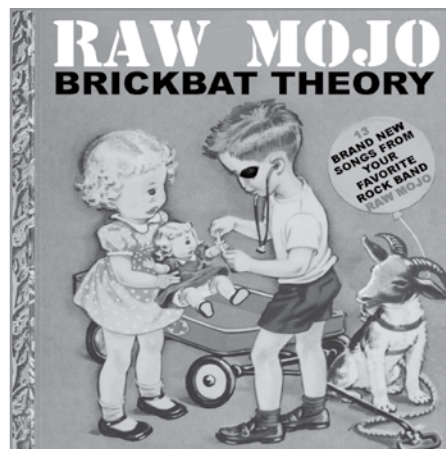
John Schlotfelt is a fan of tie clips and hopes you are too.

Raw Mojo

Brickbat Theory

rawmojo.bandcamp.com

Raw Mojo is a rock band, full stop. Not to be reductive about what Raw Mojo does, but



there's something really basic and elemental about what they do. Hard hitting drums, loud fuzz guitars fused tightly to a deep bass into 10 strings of fury. Lyrics that don't try very hard for profundity. To go looking for precursors try the 1970s; there's a Grand Funk, Joan Jett, Spirit, Jo Jo Gunne and an insouciant soupçon of Black Sabbath.

SWEAT! POSE! WIN!

This record isn't very experimental musically, but the recording process was—they recorded it in Old Brick Church in Iowa City, which was a real gamble. My experience has mostly been that Old Brick is a terrible place to hear music, particularly amplified, because of the pronounced echo and reverberation. Raw Mojo heard something different there, apparently, and the results are nearly perfect. The sound of the hall is there, but it's subtle. A truism of recording is that the more you record the sound of moving air, the better it sounds, and a lot of air got moved during these sessions.

Kent Williams never met a deadline he couldn't miss.



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PUZZLER!

BLUDGEONED SOIL, BLASTED ROCKS ... we don't treat Mother Nature with the respect she's due—but in honor of Earth Month this month's Rhyme Time is dedicated to our abused planet. As always, listed below are synonyms for two words that rhyme followed by the number of syllables in each of those rhyming words. Your challenge is to figure out those two words based upon the clues provided. For example, "Planet Value" (1,1) would be "Earth Worth." (*Hint: In each game, there is always one answer that is a homonym.)

GOOD LUCK, AND REMEMBER—WE HAVE THE BEST EARTH IN THE WHOLE WORLD. IV

Lessen Water

(2, 1)

(*Reduce, Sluice*)

Contaminant Fix (3, 3)

Debris Stopper (2, 2)

Sans Drilling (2, 2)

Challenger:

The budding entrepreneur opened a huge chain of outlet stores that sold nothing but dirt, terra firma, parcels and plots. The name of the chain was (1, 1)

Iterate Gunk

(2, 1)

(_____, *Ooze*)

Sky Sorrow (1, 2)

Abused Copse (2, 2)

Petroleum Fight (1, 2)

Recycle Soil

(2, 1)

(_____, _____)

Slash Excess (1, 1)

Declare Improvement (1, 2)

Gauge "Advancement" (2, 2)

Last month's answers

Exciting Sister (1, 1)

Fun *Nun*

Evil Pastor (3, 3)

Sinsister *Minister*

Mystic Mother (2, 2)

Swami *Mommy*

Hebrew Hospital (3, 2)

Rabbinic *Clinic*

Papal Fondle (1, 1)

Pope *Grope*

Oracle Income (2, 2)

Prophet *Profit*

Cereal Lawmaker (2, 1)

Granola *Ayatollah*

Self-centered Sage (4, 2)

Narcissistic *Mystic*

Palsied Recluse (2, 3)

Spastic *Monastic*

Challenger:

Claiming it as a need to shed his worldly possessions, the Dalai Llama (slightly drunk) changed the entire tone of the party when he ripped off his robe and began walking around introducing himself as the (2, 2)

Buddhist *Nudist*



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