



LITTLE VILLAGE
IOWA CITY'S NEWS & CULTURE MAGAZINE

*VOL. 14 | ISSUE 138
AUG. 21 - SEPT. 3, 2013*

**BACK TO
SCHOOL**

ENROLL IN A BIG-ASS CLASS P. 4

ROAD TRIP

BEST OF MIDWEST BEER P. 6

TEN GRAND

*REMEMBERING A LOCAL
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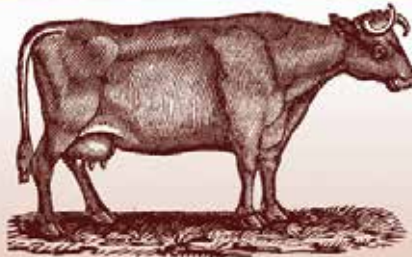
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Little Village is a free publication from Iowa City, Iowa, featuring regional events, opinions and original creative work in many genres. Distribution is available throughout Linn & Johnson counties, and in Des Moines. Founded in 2001, *Little Village* has published hundreds of the artists that have called Iowa City home. Fully indexed back issues can be downloaded free of charge at ir.uiowa.edu/littlevillage (with thanks to Special Collections at UI libraries), and shared via issuu.com/littlevillage.

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Mary Laube painting as photographed by John Engelbrecht

WILL DRIVE FOR BEER

Some of the nation's best bars and breweries are just a short drive away.
BY CASEY WAGNER

While there may not be enough time left for a long summer vacation, there's still time for a short excursion or weekend getaway. So, for those of you who love beer and are yearning to take a quick trip, here are a few beer-related destinations not far from Iowa City.

Before continuing, please remember: Be responsible and respectful, and do not drink and drive.

DOWNTOWN DES MOINES

Des Moines' downtown offers a number of European-inspired establishments. Billed as an authentic German bier hall, **Hessen Haus** (101 4th St.) delivers on the claim: It has communal seating, vaulted ceilings, stereotypical German fare (which, I believe, is more Bavarian than Hessian), and oodles of German beer on tap and in bottles. A few blocks away is **The Royal Mile** (210 4th St.), a British pub that offers 21 draft beers, 105 bottled beers and 115 single-malt Scotches. It even boasts a second bar upstairs: **The Red Monk**. Featuring church-inspired decor, the Red Monk is Central Iowa's only Belgian bar and serves over 90 Belgian-style brews.

The downtown area is also home to a pair of brewpubs. Between Hessen Haus and The Royal Mile is the **Court Avenue Restaurant and Brewing Company** (309 Court Ave.). Some of the seven in-house brews include Honest Lawyer IPA, Pointer Brown, BlackHawk Stout and 21st Amendment Ale, a rye pale ale aged 90 days in Templeton Rye barrels. Court Avenue Brewing also offers two handcrafted sodas. The **Raccoon River Brewing Company** (200 10th St.) brews six year-round beers and also has a five-table pool hall. Though not inside the downtown core, the **Confluence Brewing Company** taproom (1235 Thomas Brick Rd.) and **Exile Brewing Company** (1514 Walnut St.) are nearby.

Last but not least are the "big three," the establishments that I--a humble beer drinker with admittedly limited experience in revitalized downtown Des Moines--consider must-visits in Iowa's capital city. **Zombie Burger + Drink Lab** (300 E. Grand Ave.) not only has a playful theme and a menu featuring poutine

and shakes made from your favorite childhood breakfast cereal, it also has a massive selection of beer. And their menu even has a category for soups.

Another must-visit is the venerable **El Bait Shop** (200 SW 2nd St.) with a beer selection that is mind-boggling: 120 beers on tap and another 150 available in bottles. El Bait Shop, which has been included in *Draft Magazine's* Top 200 Bars in America three times, is quite a place: Its walls are covered in beer signs, used bicycles, stuffed animals and there is an outdoor bar, a giant patio and a working shower. It also has a gem of a bar right next door: The **High Life Lounge**, a 1960s-style corner tavern reminiscent of the bars in a Martin Scorsese mob movie. Though the beer selection is true to the theme (mostly limited to classic American pilsners like Schlitz and Miller High Life), the High Life Lounge is a simple, classy place where lovers of all things retro will feel right at home.

THE TWIN CITIES

The Minneapolis-St. Paul area is home to great breweries, great bars and great beer stores.

Town Hall (1430 Washington Ave. S., Minneapolis) is a Twin Cities institution that brews five year-round beers and five seasonals—many of which have medaled at the Great American Beer Festival. Town Hall also offers fruit-infused versions of their seasonal beers as well as a "brewer's choice," which is usually whatever seasonal the brewers feel like brewing at that moment.

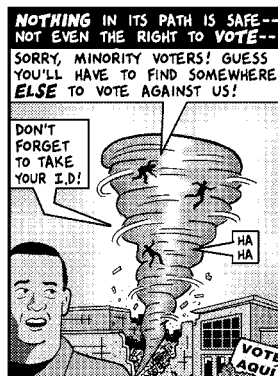
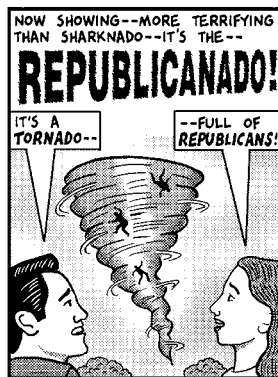
Just a quick trip across the street is the 7 Corner's location of **Republic** (221 Cedar Ave. S.). Recently named one of the Top 100 bars in the country by *Draft Magazine*, Republic features 56 taps and a traditional beer engine that serves cask-conditioned ales. According to the Republic website, "We hand-pick breweries and styles with painstaking care parallel to making a mix tape for a high school sweetheart."

>>PARTY ON THE PATIO

El Bait Shop and the High Life Lounge next door are the perfect bars for a summer night in Des Moines. Photos by Lincoln Deckleaver

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



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CHICKEN LITTLE REVIEWS:

SUTLIFF CIDER COMPANY TASTING ROOM 382 SUTLIFF RD., LISBON, IA



As a new semester approaches and Iowa City begins to fill with students again, leaving town can recoup and extend the blithe feelings of summer that seem to fade in Iowa City around Aug. 1.

Not far from the gravitational pull of the University—about a 25-minute drive—the Sutliff Cider tasting room offers an escape back to summer. When I shut my eyes and imagine the most beautiful of Iowa landscapes, I see the fields around the Sutliff tasting room: Set among rolling farmland that expands to all horizons—a highway seam runs through lush fields of soybeans and corn—a

beautiful, brown wooden barn is the only structure in sight. From a distance, this scene is bucolic, tranquil Iowa at its finest. But on Sunday afternoons, an outdoor party happens for three hours, and as the barn comes closer into focus during the drive down Sutliff Road, the sun's reflection beams off rows of cars, conveying the sheer energy emanating from this place.

Outside the tasting room, which is located on the ground level of the 120-year-old barn, there is always a huge gathering of people piling into communal picnic tables to socialize, listen to music, take in the beautiful scenery and enjoy an afternoon snack. While Sutliff's tasting room is open on the weekends beginning at 11 a.m., the live music only plays and the kitchen only opens on Sundays from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. Each week, a rotating lineup of honky-tonk bands provide the background music for chattering friends sipping the nectar that is Sutliff Cider.

The small staff that handles the large Sunday afternoon crowds never seems to change: A few Iowa-nice women—possibly sisters—deal with the stress of a dense group of patrons and the awkwardness of a slow credit card machine (hint: bring cash) by occasionally making a witty remark. There is also usually a teenage boy or two walking around with an endearing air of care, determined to quickly pick up every empty cider glass.

For a kitchen that only opens to the public for three hours once a week, the food is surprisingly delicious: five different types of sliders, a few snacks, local beers and their own signature cider. The tortilla chips are tissue paper thin with little pockets of air that make eating them kind of like popping delicate bubble wrap. The accompanying mango salsa is sweet with a noticeable viscosity imparted by the slimy nature of the fruit. The spicy peanuts—free with drink purchase—are just mild enough to not leave any lingering mouth pain, and they provide the perfect pop-in-your-mouth snack for those moments of spacing out, reveling in the late summer landscape.

The beef sliders seem to vary in quality from week to week. On my first visit, the patty—which in my opinion is the most important part of the sandwich—on the Jalapeño Popper Stuffed Slider was surprisingly delicious. The beef was well-seasoned, juicy and slightly charred, and the heat of the jalapeño was balanced by earthy cheddar cheese. On another Sunday visit, the Steak and Swiss Stuffed Slider made me question my memory of the little burger that I had enjoyed previously. A bland, dry patty was served with a cake of indiscernible, barely melted swiss.

But the food is really secondary to the cider, which is some of the best that I have ever tasted and rivals many international ciders, as well as some of the new, boutique cider projects like Virtue out of Chicago. Dry, somewhat grassy and slightly yeasty, the makers clearly are yielding to the inherent qualities imparted by the apples. The pale, amber-gold colored cider is light-bodied and slightly tart, perfect both for savoring and for quaffing down on a summer Sunday. **lv**

PRICE:

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Golden Eggs
(\$10-20)

TASTE:

3/5

-CLUCKS-

SERVICE:

4/5



ATMOSPHERE:

5/5



Psycho Suzi's Motor Lounge (1900 Marshall St. NE, Minneapolis) is better known for eccentric cocktails, but it has a decent beer selection that includes brews from Surly, Summit and even Kona. Plus, it's a tiki bar. Enough said.

Across the river in St. Paul is **The Happy Gnome** (498 Selby Ave.) features 76 rotating taps, 150 different bottled beers (including vintages of J.W. Lees Harvest Ale) and an astonishing array of 300 different whiskeys.

Speaking of the Twin Cities' revered breweries, the **Surly Brewing Company** (4811 Dusharme Dr, Brooklyn Center) recently opened a public taproom and a food truck is usually stationed outside in the afternoon. The **Summit Brewing Company** (910 Montreal Cir., St. Paul) also has a taproom, but it is only open on Fridays. Both breweries operate tours.

For the return trip, stock up on beers unavailable in Iowa at **The Wine Thief and Ale Jail** (1787 St. Clair Ave., St. Paul) or **Zipp's Liquors** (2618 E. Franklin Ave., Minneapolis). **Haskell's** is a chain of liquor stores that offers a sizable beer selection, and there is a "last chance" location in Faribault just off Interstate 35 (2921 Lavender Pkwy.) in case you forgot to buy beer before leaving the Twin Cities. Be mindful, though, that liquor stores are closed on Sundays in Minnesota.

And, while you are in the North Star State, keep an eye out for "whiskey plates," which are plain white, have blue or black lettering, and have a "W" as the first letter. Among the reasons car owners receive whiskey plates is because they have received multiple Driving While Impaired violations in the past 10 years, were caught driving with a blood-alcohol content greater than .16 percent or received a DWI with a child under the age of 16 present.

NORTHWOOD, IOWA

Downtown Northwood may not have skyscrapers or bars with hundreds of different beers, but it has free parking and is home to Iowa's first nanobrewery: **Worth Brewing Company** (826 Central Ave.).

Opened in 2007 by husband-and-wife team Peter Aussenhus and Margaret Bishop,

<< PICK YOUR POISON

Bartender Eric Helven pulls a pint of one of the 76 drafts available at the Happy Gnome in St. Paul. Photos by Chris Bock

Worth offers a different seasonal brew every month and five year-round beers. Ausenhus, an award-winning and passionate homebrewer who has worked at Summit, brews each in the back room on a tiny 10-gallon SABCO brewing system. (By comparison, many small microbreweries use 10-barrel systems, which can brew 310 gallons at a time.)

Worth is located in a historic two-story building originally built for the Worth Country State Bank in 1886. According to the brewery's website, the bar itself "was most likely the original bank teller cage." Ausenhus and Bishop give informal tours of the brewery when convenient, but patrons can see the equipment themselves when they pass through the brewery to the outdoor patio behind the building.

NEW GLARUS, WISCONSIN

New Glarus is home to a revered icon of American craft brewing: New Glarus Brewing Company (2400 State Hwy. 69), which looms majestically atop a hill just south of the city.

A trip to New Glarus is like a religious pilgrimage--or at least it is for me. The brewery itself looks like a massive Swiss chalet, and New Glarus' Founder and President Deb Carey said the Hilltop location has undergone a great deal of expansion over the last few years. Along with three outdoor and two indoor serving areas, there is a gift shop that can double as a taproom on slow days. With a sampler or pint in hand, enjoy the outdoor patio with picnic tables and the yard games set out on the lawn. Also check out the brewery museum. New Glarus allows self-guided tours everyday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Reservations are required for a three-hour "Hard Hat Tour," which offers visitors a behind-the-scenes peek at the Hilltop Brewery and the Riverside Brewery on the north side of the town. (Carey said the next available tour openings are in November.) New Glarus brews are unavailable outside of Wisconsin, so stock up on Spotted Cow, Moon Man and Blacktop at the Hilltop Brewery Beer Depot, which is on the ground floor of the brewery.

Also, there's no need to return your logo pint or sampling glass to the tasting room--they are included in the cost of your first beer. While standing in line for another sample, watching the tasting room workers open a new box of glasses, I asked one of the servers why they did not want the glasses back. "We don't like doing dishes," she told me. **lv**

Casey Wagner lives in Iowa City.

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COME ONE COME ALL

Online-only courses could make diplomas more accessible, but does that make them a good deal? • BY VIKRAM PATEL AND MATT SOWADA



As they sign up for classes, students at some of the nation's largest universities (like the University of Kentucky and the University of Colorado at Boulder) will notice that they can enroll in online-only courses with thousands of students for college credit. Does an expansion of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) into degree programs signal more affordable access to education or a degradation of the academic process?

WHEN STUDENTS PAY TUITION THEY AREN'T PAYING FOR CONTENT THAT COULD HAVE SIMPLY BEEN READ IN A BOOK: THEY'RE PAYING TO HAVE DEEP INTERACTIONS WITH EXPERTS IN A FIELD AND THE UNDERSTANDING OF MATERIAL THAT COMES ONLY FROM POINTED DISCUSSION AND INDIVIDUALIZED ATTENTION.

MATT SOWADA: I love the idea of these MOOCs. Fledgling concepts like this remind me that while the information age is fraught with threats to privacy, security and liberty, it also has the capacity to deliver tremendous boons to society. What differentiates a MOOC from iTunes U or some lecture set available at the library is the possibility of an online forum capable of granting access to TAs, other students and possibly even professors. I've never taken one, but if a MOOC is capable of producing a vibrant, responsive online classroom, then there's no ethical reason why an institution couldn't accept one for credit. Students are currently able to transfer credits because there's trust that the previous institution left the student with an understanding of the material. If some university decides it can trust one of these MOOCs, how is that any different?

If the costs of these courses reflect the lower overhead they are bound to have, then we've got to give these MOOCs a chance.

VIK PATEL: I don't think the couple of MOOCs I've taken have risen to the level of a college course, primarily because of the first word in that acronym: 'massive.' MOOCs generally use pre-recorded lectures supplemented by online tests, quizzes or assignments. Due to the enormous 'class' sizes (thousands of students at a time) and spotty participation rates, coursework is usually limited to what a computer can automatically check, such as multiple choice or short-answer questions. In the education community, straight lecturing and multiple choice tests are considered the worst ways to foster student learning. When students pay tuition they aren't paying for content that could have simply been read in a book: They're paying to have deep interactions with experts in a field and the understanding of material that comes only from pointed discussion and individualized attention. MOOCs in their current form provide for accessible extracurricular enrichment, but they don't rise to the quality of a well-developed college course.

MS: Well, if MOOCs can rise from what you describe to the level of even an introductory college course, the student community will have to be the tool they use to do it. By mentioning lecturing and testing you bring up the two tasks of a formal education: learning and assessment. The quality of MOOCs as an educational tool will depend on their ability to crowdsource these two endeavors.

You're right that what a college classroom supplies is an environment that fosters discussions and individual attention, but online-required study groups that are assembled and scheduled by the MOOC might be able to

adequately serve that purpose. Going over some guided discussion questions online with a group could be a very useful exercise, just as meeting classmates in the library to walk through study questions can be helpful. Combine that with lectures, new technologies and interactive online content and it may be possible to approximate a college-level experience.

Assessment would have to involve a similar mix of old and new systems. Multiple choice and short answer questions are not my favorite methods of assessment, to be sure, but given their robust presence in many traditional college classrooms it hardly seems fair to let their use lead us to discard MOOCs altogether.

Look, I'm not guaranteeing that these things are going to work, but I think it would be worth the experiment to attempt to render some particularly well-suited general education classes more affordable.

VP: What concerns me is not the best possible use of MOOCs, but how I think they will most likely be used. It's true that many of the criticisms that I leveled against current MOOCs could easily be applied to most large introductory college courses, but that doesn't invalidate them. In an effort to cut costs, universities have been pushing to increase class sizes and use inexperienced (cheaper) instructors to teach more and more courses. The way that most MOOCs are currently run exemplify a culmination of this pattern of creating effectively infinite class sizes and pre-recorded lectures where contacting the instructor is sometimes expressly forbidden.

I'd like to emphasize that my problem is with the way most MOOCs are *currently* implemented. I think you have correctly identified better blending of old and new technologies as MOOCs' salvation. The old technology here is the small group, TA-facilitated discussion. MOOCs could be used to deliver material to students, but small discussions would give students the individualized context of the material that is necessary for learning. Small sections also allow for the use of a wider variety of assessment tools (oral exams, essays, presentations), thereby giving a more accurate and nuanced view of a student's understanding of materials. As we introduce MOOCs into university curricula, we need to make sure they don't exacerbate the flaws already in the system. **IV**

Matt Sowada and Vikram Patel, former hosts of American Reason, bring monthly political, social, and ethical musing to Little Village. (Photo by Rachel Jensen)

> CONTEST OVERVIEW

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Submit your work to: htr@littlevillagemag.com. Please attach your work as a Word Document, PDF or Rich Text file. Your name and contact information will be removed from your entry and it will be judged anonymously. Judges are Andre Perry (UI Nonfiction MFA graduate and executive director of the Englert Theatre), Hugh Ferrer (associate director of the UI International Writing Program and board member at Iowa City UNESCO City of Literature) and Matt Steele (publisher and managing editor of *Little Village* magazine).

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dental floss. I want to stitch something whole and manipulating into the pillow's center, but when I hear the garage door open, I put the dog back in his kennel and lie under the raised couch cushions breathing

the mold of our stale taco dinners until someone picks up a frying pan. Your new husband is calm, but you are suggestively assertive

in your demands for my physical removal.

There is swearing, vigilant discussion, and the two of you

have sex twice on the coffee table positioning your chest, his knees, in such a way that from where I am still attempting to hide I can see no genitals or evidence of cholera. After he comes to you saying *big boy, my big, big*

boy, you roll a cigarette and he mentions something about what's good for a body in the process of trying. You tell me many times that this is it. You lean in close to where you hope my face is facing and say, quietly, that

the next time you find me still in your home you will take from my insides a much needed organ of health. I make a joke about waiting in vain, or being so vain, or walking into a party like I was walking onto the set of a low-

budget infomercial, and you light the couch on fire and throw the dog on the arm rest so I can hear him howl the heat straight into the Russian blanket you've tied around his legs to keep everyone on an equal playing

field. For as long as I can I wait before pushing my way from the cushions. I am not on fire but my face is hot and I am not wearing any pants. I feel at home in the cold sweat of my socks while your new husband fans

out the flames with seltzer water and a pamphlet on the medical theory of composed decomposition. I want to hug him but we both have erections. I want to sit in my chair and unwrap the dog, but you remind me that

it isn't my chair and that I am a home-wrecker. The smoke in the room has made everyone attractive. I ask about the dog and you say *his teeth*, then point to the door.

—Daniel Khalastchi



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CHUGGING, LURCHING, SHUFFLING & VOMITING

The history and evolution of Beer Zombies in Iowa City
BY MARLIN R. INGALLS



Iowa City is about to receive its annual plague of beer zombies. Between students coming back, the ruckus of football weekends and party-town binge drinking, the number of these late-night drunks staggering the streets will increase exponentially. For all residents that find beer zombies lost in their neighborhood, flailing in their yard or evacuating their bladder and retching off the neighbor's porch, this can be a time for fear. Beer zombies may boldly walk into your house, try to break down your door, pass out in your shrubbery or accost you on the street. For residents looking to elude these beer zombies or wondering how Iowa City got to this place and point in time: Knowledge is power.

From the 1850s to the 1890s, Iowa City was a crazy drinking town, but still not as bad as some cities that were *stupid crazy*. The stupidest was Dubuque with Sioux City (John Wayne crowed about "Saturday night in Sioux City" in *Angle and the Badman*), Clinton, Davenport and Ottumwa rounding out the top five.

In Iowa City, saloons were prevalent downtown and local breweries provided for personal

consumption. For only a nickel, a person of any age could take a bucket of beer home for the family. Beer was both a food, a beverage and a substitute for unsafe water. Many children drank beer along with adults as beer was integrated into family life at an early age.

Liquor was treated differently. In Iowa City, liquor was sold only at bars and these were called "standup bars," which meant that there were no chairs. If you were too intoxicated to stand up you had to leave. Most alcohol consumption occurred from five in the afternoon until nine in the evening, so the length of time people were out drinking was relatively short, ended early and occasionally a fellow fell off his horse. This changed little from 1855-1933 during the five state prohibitions and the National Prohibition, as bootlegging and liquor importation ran rampant.

From 1890 to 1940, the drinking of townspeople and students was conducted civilly and manners stopped most from public overindulgence. Women drank only in private, and public intoxication was a product of the riff-raff. Boarding

houses banned alcohol as did all University-related housing. With the drinking age at 21, alcohol was hard to acquire for underage consumers, and enforcement was conducted with care. Outside of bars, the state liquor stores controlled access to alcohol; beer and liquor couldn't be purchased at grocery stores or gas stations.

From the late 1930s to early 1970s, much of the youthful population lived above businesses on Washington, College, Dubuque, Gilbert and Clinton streets. When Urban Renewal was introduced to America and Iowa City in the late '40s, older buildings--including the Carson Building--were torn down in order to put up "modern" buildings that fit the post-WWII aesthetic. Unfortunately, very few new buildings were actually constructed. Instead, beautiful, well-built homes and buildings were razed, driving the city's youth out of the established housing areas downtown and into the hands of developers and landlords. On both sides of the river, many private residences were either torn down for the construction of large apartment complexes or divided up into cheap rental units.

Between the end of WWII and the early 1970s, the University also tore down many beautiful old homes to construct dorms and

<<THE CARSON BUILDING

Razed to build Old Capitol Mall.

modern campus buildings. The city and the University both seemed to favor parking lots to historic homes, and these construction projects forced students to move to outlying neighborhoods such as the Old North End, Goosetown, the neighborhood around College Green Park and the area around South Van Buren Street. The student population, which was once diversely and diffusely living throughout Iowa City, was suddenly clustered together in disparate pockets of the city, resulting in the first student ghettos.

As the 2013 University of Iowa school year opens, beer zombies are coming back in force. On the march, most are stoically quiet, some are raucous but others are dangerous. Beer zombies are here because they handle alcohol poorly, and their habits are helped by the binge-drinking promoted at many bars and the perpetuation of a culture of party-town frivolity.

There is also a sense of entitlement that comes with excessive drinking and poor behavior; there is a perceived attitude that a right has been bestowed upon beer zombies

to uphold the party-town mentality. The concentration of thousands of people in high-occupancy house rentals, large apartment complexes and poorly zoned residential neighborhoods helps normalize this attitude by creating drinking enclaves. These zombie-box apartments, rentals and whole neighborhood blocks breed a social obliviousness that borders on contempt and takes the form of beer zombie marches, black-outs, break-ins, fights and excessive after-hour revelry.

So what are the consequences? Certain neighborhoods are greatly affected. While the downtown is obvious, there are neighborhoods where zombies roam in mass: the Old North End, Goosetown, College Green and South Van Buren.

The majority of beer zombies cause little trouble. They are a small nuisance, perhaps, by crashing the wrong party, being a navigational hazard or contributing to the local color—something to remark about or laugh at from the porch. Conversations with local residents have described encountering beer zombies lost around Oak Grove Cemetery. The more serious stories tell of beer zombies wandering into private homes, or

insistently pounding on their doors late at night.

So far the zombies are winning. Our party town ranking is at its historical climax—if you happened to miss the recent headlines, the University of Iowa is the number one party school in the nation according to the Princeton Review.

Due to cultural lag and official process, the city's zoning and enforcement are years behind. Ever more zombie-box complexes rise each year while it seems self-indulgence and entitlement are at an all-time high. Neighborhoods are under zombie siege until winter comes and they thin out again. **lv**

Marlin R. Ingalls is a professional archaeologist, historian and architectural historian within Iowa's Office of the State Archaeologist. He is a member of the state historical society of Iowa's Technical Advisory Network and former member of the Iowa's State Nomination Review Committee, 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.



EARLY ZOMBIES>>

Students dine in Currier Hall, 1910. Old Iowa Stadium (below) between Burlington St. and Iowa Avenue on the Iowa River.



STATE OF THE ART

The Iowa State Fair as tribute to the boundless hunger of the individual
BY RUSSELL JAFFE

If you're going to lose yourself in Iowa like I have for the last four years, you need to obey the gravity of our place and time and go to the Iowa State Fair. This year's slogan, "Nothing Compares," is totally appropriate and a total understatement for the kind of place that prides itself on both measuring Primary-election voter trends and coming up with terrifying, new ways to fry and consume things that were once a part of the plant or animal kingdom—maybe.

The entire State Fair itself is an art display, not just about the art of entertainment or of capitalism or of Iowa itself, but rather a massive artful tribute to a uniquely individualist place on earth: America, and its internal satellites equally beaming signals that are tributes to the iconography of the self. My friend who goes with me, basic-training bound and a soon-to-be Army band member, calls this place a sociologist's dream—a confluence of agriculture, art, commerce and gluttony,

among other things.

Men and women in makeshift official attire and orange vests sail front lawn seas atop broken plastic chairs or ratty living room armchairs. They hold plywood signs or scribbled posterboard showing the rates—\$5 or \$6—to park in their yards. One glares at me with a burning, ice-eyed hatred as I park in an open spot on the street for free.

By one of the main entrances, WHO-radio's Crystal Studios has an angry man screaming, "Obama ... these children of the Obama generation ... they don't think there's prosperity out there. They have been told that evil corporations and evil Republicans can take their rights. The vast majority of college graduates are taught this! Folks, we need to fight back against this liberal indoctrination!"

Across the way is a "double dipped corn dogs" stand. There's a "double bacon wrapped corn dogs" stand next door.

It's probably worth taking a second to break

down what art actually is: Something that grabs one's attention deliberately or with some measure of an artist's intention in a visual, auditory or somehow sensory way that presents an environment or landscape—a realm, a dimension, something people can both relate to and escape within—to explore new ground and reconcile with the familiar. So there is something very artful to the gaudy, inflatable ice creams atop some stands, the spinning neon lights, the bright neon paint and countless, useless striped flags, the ephemeral artery of walkways channeled by fatty walls of block letters and the smell of fryer oil and smoked meat and dense, damp sugar. The heavy air is briefly intoxicating when you walk by.

And the people. Overweight men with goatees, sunburned folds of skin; T-shirts that say "my Indian name is RUNS WITH BEER;" older cowboys eating corn dogs while they're hunched over trash cans; young girls with huge eyes and huge eyelashes wearing oversized Hawkeyes shirts or homemade sports-team, neon inside-joke displays with numbers and names on the back; hats, hats, hats; power scooters; Hawaiian shirts and khaki shorts that break the treeline of the knees; incredibly blond children; shirts tucked into jeans



tucked into cowboy boots; tank tops hanging on shoulders that are just extensions of arms; people shuffling, skipping, spinning and dancing.

It's such a rich cross section of profoundly loud and proud expressionists. It's like a USA convention, a massive tribute to the manifest destiny of the individual and their boundless hunger.

The entire state fair is a justification for the way of life in the state. Food, corn, plants, animals—animals that can be eaten, and animals that jump and run and smell good and be attractive and are herded and obedient. And eaten. I cannot stress that enough. From the best to the worst to the wierdest to the most, the prizes make sure the hierarchy of the individual is the ultimate showcase of art. And how different, really, is that from any art gallery?

We drink some beers and go down the giant slide which we ride down on burlap bags. There's a strange DIY undercurrent like the chalky dirt that lines the entire shining light and smoke of the fair. At one stand you can get a bucket of cookies for \$14. That's another



>>BUCKETS OF FUN

Iowa State Fair photos by Russell Jaffe





Handwritten notes and signatures surrounding the central photograph, including names like 'David Rollins' and various dates and locations.



>>TRIBUTE
Photo by Russell Jaffe

Handwritten text in a spiral notebook at the bottom of the image, including phrases like 'the love of the one who gave their life for us'.



Robert L. ...

*THANKS FOR THE
SENDING RECIPIES TO
THE AMERICAN PEOPLE
I'M VERY GRATEFUL
FOR THE MILITARY*



*293
506*

Handwritten notes and signatures on the right margin of the illustration, including names like 'Mrs. ...' and 'John ...'.





"Remembering Iowa's Heroes"
 David Rottenghaus



thing art does: Art allows you to do things. Art makes rules and sometimes you have to decide if those rules are worth figuring out and obeying. I think the mental processes behind eating a bag of cookies from the store in one sitting changes drastically when suddenly you're presented food in a bucket that's differently accessible.

Iowa's functional economy is on display as if it was a gallery show. Iowa Beef Industry Council! Iowa Pork Producers! Shiny, waxen and right next to the colossal line to the famous, infamous, kitschy iconic butter sculptures. This year they're Abe Lincoln themed. Crowds of people like clusters of fried nuts stick together closely as their butter president twirls limitlessly on display.

The individual vendors and prize winners are more tributes to Iowan tenacity. And the Iowa individual is more than hard-working—they are strange, quixotic and laser-focused on strange things (like crops, for example) that were once life necessities but are now ornamental blends of the educational and commercial. In many cases you can't tell where one stops and one starts.

At 3 p.m., at a talent show stage that has become a kind of ad-hoc vaudeville of scripted shows and themed competitions, we watch a woman in a pinafore skirt, smock and wrist gauntlets lift at least five pounds of potatoes with her tongue.

We take the sky tram from one end of the fair to the other. It is a continuous state of observation. We observe the observers, it's the gallery view within the gallery. It's almost unreal how symbolic the layers of observing within observing there are at the fair. Looking is the all-important method of being at the Iowa State Fair, where this year "Nothing Compares." The gallery of the gallery, the looking at people looking at things looking back at people is uniquely individualistic, utilitarian and surreal—tacky artifice and raw bravado. Indeed, the way the art is presented is as art as the art itself.

And what better way to end the fair than to check out the Rabbit Skills Agility Test? I don't think I've ever cheered so loud for rabbits hopping through hoops in my life. **IV**

Russell Jaffe is maximal man doing maximal things.

ONE PLAY DOTH NOT A SEASON MAKE

How do local theatres decide what's next? • BY JORIE SLODKI



In an episode of the beloved Canadian dramedy *Slings & Arrows*, about a prestigious theatre festival, business manager Richard approaches interim artistic director Geoffrey about selecting plays for next year's season. Geoffrey pulls out a pen and scrap of paper. "*Electra. Pericles. Mother Courage. Don Carlos.*" He barely pauses to breathe. "*Tempest. Murder in the Cathedral* ... One, two, three, four, five, six," Geoffrey counts. "What else? How about, oh, *Troilus* and *Cressida*? You haven't done that in a long time." Thus, in less than a minute, Geoffrey creates a season with the perfect mix of Shakespeare and other classics. But after this encounter, the business-minded Richard ditches Geoffrey's more sophisticated list in favor of a season with three musicals.

When the theatrical process appears in popular culture, it tends to follow this pattern: A creative genius has the idea for a perfect play or season, and must struggle with a business staff that is only concerned about profits. But when theatre companies in the Corridor release their list of upcoming plays in late Spring, few people outside of the inner circles of these theatres know the long, complex process required to select a season. It is not the work of one genius, but rather the result of a team of hardworking people deliberating for several months.

For Dreamwell Theatre, founded in 1997, the process begins with co-artistic directors Chuck Dufano and Rachael Lindhart working

>>RACHAEL LINDHART, Co-artistic director of Dreamwell Theatre, reads a catalog of plays in the Iowa City Public Library. Photo by Rachel Jessen

with a selection committee to create a short list of play suggestions. They then take additional suggestions from the theater company's board, directors and fans. The brainstorming does not last indefinitely.

"We do give these folks a deadline because our next step is to read as many of the plays suggested as we can," Lindhart explains.

According to Dufano, the selection committee can read as many as 30 plays over the course of several weeks. After the reading period, the committee creates a "short list" of plays that the committee prefers. They must take into consideration many factors, including access to performance spaces, the local actors and technical considerations. They also try to select plays that reflect their goal of being a "theatre of exploration." Once the committee creates the final list, they submit it to board members for final approval.

Iowa City Community Theatre, founded in 1956, has followed different methods for collecting plays. A selection committee led by Vice President Brenda Christner first decides how they want to create the list of play suggestions. "One way is to come up with the plays we would like to perform, the other is to find directors and find out what they would like to direct," says Christner. "This year, it was more like the second route, but we've

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Urban Theatre Project presents the area premiere of Tracey Letts' Pulitzer Prize-winning drama about a family that brings repressed feelings to the surface after their patriarch goes missing. The performance venue is the restored CSPS landmark in downtown Cedar Rapids. urbantheaterproject.org



STOP KISS

AUG. 29-30, SEPT. 5-7

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After a staged reading in July, Fourth Room Theatre presents a full production of Diana Son's funny and touching play about the relationship between two women before and after a life-altering incident. This is a fitting--and sobering--play to see at the end of a summer of historic developments regarding LGBT rights. coralvillearts.org

PRO TIPS

WELCOME TO YOUR "BACK TO SCHOOL" EDITION of Pro-Tips with Wayne Diamante! I hope you all had terrific summer vacations, internships, voluntary rehabilitations and work release programs. I myself have just returned from vacation in the Old South, and ... well, *I'ah do declare* the splendor of the Savannah airport's Paula Deen souvenir display is undiminished by the latest addition to her colorful personality and folksy worldview. Way to go Paula. Maybe they will call it Type II Deenabeetus in celebration of your humanity after you've shuffled off this mortal coil to the great lard vat in the sky. Plop. I digress: This Pro-Tips is about hitting the books and keeping your nose to the grindstone! Got it, buster?

Dear Wayne,

I'm an incoming graduate student here at the U of Iowa and my wife and I are expecting our first child in a few months. We've been brainstorming names and we recently learned the sex: Do you have any name suggestions for our boy-to-be? Also, what's the best way to turn down someone's name suggestion? Thanks!

Cheers,
Z

Dear Z,

Congratulations! All of the best male names are also parts—or terms—associated with firearms. For instance:
-Trigger -Kobra RDS, and
-Hammer -Full Auto
-Marksmanship

Those are just to name a few.

As for the second portion of your question: Politely turning down other people's ideas can be difficult—I recommend not doing it. For instance, if someone says, "You should name your son blahblahblah" you should say, "You're an idiot" or "Quiet over there, dumbass." It's not going to make you any friends, but that's why you build a family to begin with. There's nothing better than tricking someone into marrying you and then getting built-in people forced to put up with your shit as long as you live. Here's to families! Congratulations again on the little turd-pump, you should name him Wayne.

Sincerely,
Wayne

Dear Wayne,

What is the strangest, true thing you learned in college?

Yours Truly,
Melissa

Dear Melissa,

That's a great question. It's a two-part answer, but it's all about Mennonites. First thing is, the only real distinction between the Mennonites and the Amish is that Mennonites are allowed to wear ski-jackets, drive cars and do other normal shit.

The second has to do with the Amish and the reason they have no mustaches on their beards. Because many Amish women have to outwardly endure some ridiculous 15th century notion of subservience, they were quid-pro-quo'd, on demand, unconditional and unlimited nominal congress. The no-mustache look is collateral damage vis-à-vis the bargain above. Truth.

Science,
Wayne

Well, that about wraps it up for this B2S edition of Pro-Tips with Wayne Diamante. Good luck this semester to all you students out there! I look forward to seeing all of your couches and mattresses on the street next Aug. 1, assholes. Seriously, I've never seen so many mattresses on the street. Who are these people? Do they have bed bugs? Are they that fucking lazy? It makes your town look like shit and no one wants to see your blown-out, urine-stained Serta lying there like Paula Deen: occasionally flopping around a little bit, feebly gesturing for more butter, jowls fluttering softly in the moonlight. Just behave like an adult and take your big garbage to the dump. Class dismissed. **lv**

done both ways of selecting a season.” They conduct interviews with potential directors about their suggestions. The committee then presents a potential season to the ICCT Board of Directors to vote on the season. Christner notes, “Sometimes, it comes down to liking every show but one, so we change it.”

Founded in 2011, Fourth Room Theatre is the Corridor’s newest theatre group and the one with the most flexible play selection process. Currently, they do not put on “seasons” in the traditional theatrical sense. Instead, they focus on planning one production at a time.

“That’s how we like it,” Marketing Director Angie Toomsen says. “It allows us to stay nimble and respond to ideas, as well as the availability of our members and collaborators.”

When selecting plays, Education Director Rachel Howell adds, “We find something that really gets our creative juices flowing and follow it down the rabbit hole.”

Currently, the six artistic core members of Fourth Room Theatre generate most of the suggestions for plays. The final decision for each project comes from this core group’s consensus.

Sometimes, the plays selected embody a certain theme. For the 2012-2013 season, Dreamwell Theatre chose plays by female playwrights, and ICCT’s upcoming season features plays based on literary works. Occasionally, theatre companies must make changes to a season due to unforeseen circumstances. Last season, ICCT was unable to get the performance rights to Tennessee Williams’ *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* because the play had a Broadway revival. Fourth Room Theatre’s recent production of Shakespeare’s *Cymbeline* had been delayed for a year due to a cast member’s injury.

Local theatre companies are finding innovative ways to reveal their seasons and excite audiences. Dreamwell Theatre has posted clues for each play on Facebook. The names of people who guessed correctly were entered into a drawing for free tickets. Once theatres announce their seasons, audience members plan their entertainment schedules and actors prepare for upcoming auditions. For the selection committees and board members, however, their work is never done—there is always next year to think about. **lv**

Jorie Slodki earned her MA in theatre research from University of Wisconsin, Madison, and has past experience in acting, directing and playwrighting.

SMALL SCREEN SCHOLARS

What TV teaches us about the college experience • BY MELISSA ZIMDARS

For better or worse, television teaches us a lot about the world. Frequent watchers of the *CSI* franchise learn that DNA evidence is infallible. Those who watch the local nightly news understand the world around them to be comprised mostly of lurking criminals, and believe their chances of falling victim to violent crime are much higher than the statistical reality. These examples, of course, do not bode well for television being considered a reliable instructor, but sometimes television can teach us important things. Or not so important things.

When I was in fourth grade I actually won a class geography bee because I watched an episode of *The Simpsons* the previous night, specifically “The City of New York vs. Homer Simpson” (Sept. 21, 1997). My classmates and I were asked, “Which boroughs of New York are on separate islands?” Staten Island, duh, give away! But what was the other? WHAT WAS THE OTHER?! Images of Homer Simpson attempting to drive his car with a wheel clamp popped into my head, as did the Simpson family touring what I would later learn to be an extremely accurate replication of the borough of Manhattan. I really had no idea the right answer at the time, but I decided that no one could ever be a loser if they reference *The Simpsons*.

Shows have taught me a lot of important lessons over the years. In honor of another school-year that will undoubtedly be full of learning both important and not-so-important things, here are a few lessons learned from TV about the nature of higher education:

Lesson 1: College classes last less than 5

minutes. Of course, it isn’t possible to depict classes in real time, but college kids in the TV universe barely spend any time in the classroom. *Saved By The Bell: The College Years*, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *Boy Meets World* are all guilty of showing characters entering classrooms only for bells to go off a few minutes later signalling the end of learning. Also, I’ve never been to a college with bells or hallway lockers that don’t cost money to rent, have you?

Lesson 2: Colleges are fucking weird. Everyone can find a place or clique in college, whether you are a private investigator à la Nancy Drew (*Veronica Mars*), a cranky millionaire who just needs something to do (*Community*) or the type of person that has a desire to live in a frat house 40 years after doing too many drugs (*Glory Daze*). Campuses and college towns are places for political protest, activism, pillow forts, paintball tournaments that shut down entire buildings and strange hazing rituals that require running the length of a football field with an oreo cookie wedged between your buttocks (*Blue Mountain State*). Although, this lesson is probably somewhat accurate, as Iowa City itself, thankfully, is pretty fucking weird.

Lesson 3: Professors and Teaching Assistants regularly date or have sex with their students. From Ross Geller on *Friends* to Professor Shales on *Fresh Meat* and Max Bickford on *The Education of Max Bickford*, this is a pretty common trope that makes the practice seem far more likely of happening than it actually is. But TV also teaches us that these trysts never work out too well. Elena

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- Mr. Pryzbylewski, a.k.a. Mr. Presbo (*The Wire*)
- Ms. Frizzle, a.k.a. "The Frizz" (*Magic School Bus*)
- Mr. Kotter (*Welcome Back, Kotter*)
- Miss Bliss (*Good Morning, Miss Bliss*)
- Mr. White (*Breaking Bad*)

WORST:

- Señor Ben Chang (*Community*)
- Mrs. Krabappel/Flanders (*The Simpsons*)
- Mr./Mrs./Mr. Garrison (*South Park*)
- Dr. Richard "Dick" Solomon (*3rd Rock From the Sun*)
- Mr. White (*Breaking Bad*)

Tyler on *Felicity* becomes increasingly paranoid about how she is earning her high marks and eventually learns she is only one of many women seduced by her science professor. On *Gilmore Girls*, Paris Geller's older academic love ultimately dies of a heart-attack. Julie Taylor of *Friday Night Lights* is even forced out of school after being physically assaulted for sleeping with her already-attached TA. I could list several more examples of this happening, and all of them involve younger, female students and older, male instructors. If this lesson must continue, at the very least, I'd like to see lady instructors get some action, too.

Lesson 4: College students are flush. Gone are the days of not being able to afford anything to eat but ramen. *The O.C.* and *Gossip Girl* teach us that skyrocketing tuition and fees are no excuse for not having trendy clothes, expensive highlights and a swanky apartment. And if you do find the dollars in your bank account dwindling, your minimum-wage job at a local coffee shop should easily be able to pay your tuition, fees and living expenses, even if you're going to school in Manhattan (*Felicity*). Of course, some shows do try to

create a more realistic portrayal of the financial status of college students. Malcolm of *Malcolm in the Middle* works as a custodian to help pay tuition when he starts going to school at Harvard, and even privileged Rory Gilmore on *Gilmore Girls* is shown swiping cards in a Yale cafeteria to make some extra dough.

Lesson 5: Your roommate will cast spells on you. This one is probably the most true, so be careful (*Sabrina, The Teenage Witch*).

All television representations are pretty much funhouse mirror versions of reality; they contain elements of truth, but are ultimately distorted in often-hilarious ways. We don't need to look any further than shows about high school with their 30-something high school students (*Beverly Hills, 90210, Dawson's Creek*) to know this to be true. **lv**

Melissa Zimdars is about to start her 10th year as a college student, and will soon begin construction of her pillow fort in the Becker Communication Studies Building.



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THE COMPREHENSIVE LIST

Ten years after the band's sudden end, a history of Iowa City hardcore legends Ten Grand • BY BRENDAN LEE SPENGLER

The late 1990's marked the beginning of Iowa City's independent rock glory years and the emergence of Vidablue, a four-piece, hardcore punk band that would eventually become one of the most important musical acts to ever come out of Iowa.

Vidablue's first show was Oct. 23, 1998 at Gabe's Oasis, and at the time there was a strong venue scene in Iowa City: More national acts were playing at local venues as they travelled through the midwest corridor; more local bands were leaving the nest and going out on the road.

Locally, there were quite a few very talented punk rock bands of various sub-genres that were making the scene. Burmese was at the top, along with USA USA, Canary in the Mine, Island Woman, The Horrors, Bottle Dog and others. Vidablue, which would eventually change its name to Ten Grand, was formed by members of these different bands, but there was something unique about them.

"Everyone who came together [in Vidablue] was hungry for music at the time," explained Luke Tweedy, who started ft(the Shadow Government) with Vidablue alumni. "They were more than your average, cookie-cutter screamo band. They had more melody, they were closer friends, they had more inside jokes."

The band consisted of Zach Westerdahl on bass, Bob Adams on drums, Joel Anderson on guitar and vocals and a handsome, 21-year-old, black punk rocker named Matt Davis on guitar and lead vocals. Davis would keep a detailed record of every show the band played for the

next four and a half years. He was an intelligent, self-aware, socially-charged punk from Wichita, Kan., who lived and breathed music.

Vidablue also had a network of friends like no other band in the midwest. In the spring of '99, they adopted a young banjo player with the "world's tiniest suitcase" who listened to the same music and went to the same shows as the band members. This musician, William Elliott Whitmore, became a close friend of the four musicians and soon joined Vidablue, touring and performing with them.

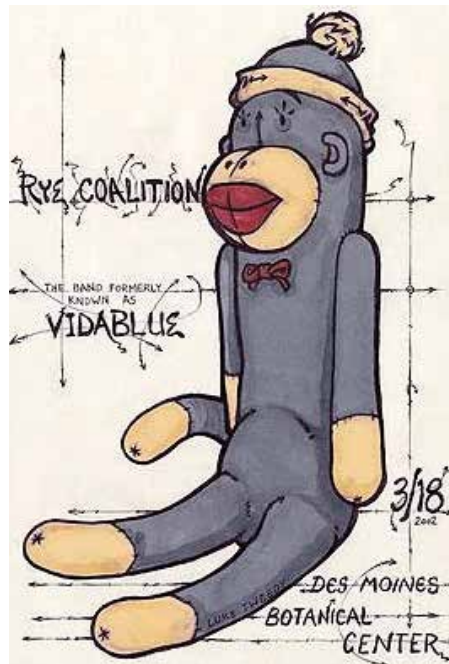
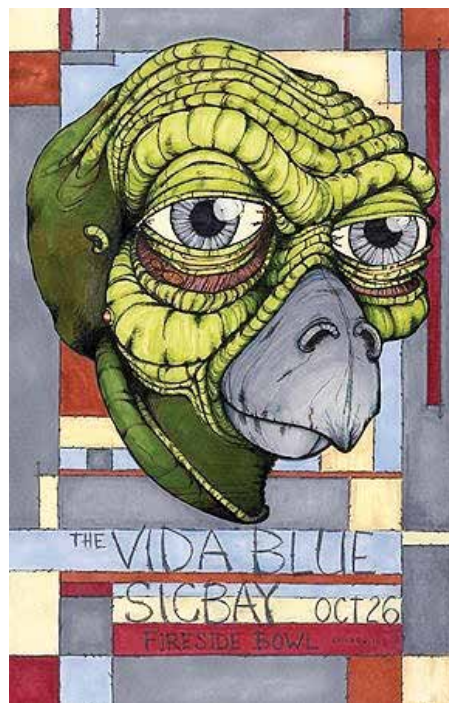
As Vidablue began to play more shows together, they took a loose, raw, cacophony of punk noise and honed it into a tight, frenetic, emotional frenzy. Then they began to record.

"We were fairly prolific, so we'd record stuff and be ready to put it out," explained Westerdahl. "But labels would make us wait, so we had to sit on songs for quite awhile. By the time they came out on record we'd be sick of them."

Vidablue's first full-length album, *Our Miracle Point of Contact*, was a 10-song collection recorded in a dark Chicago basement with wild-eyed rock and roller Mike Lust. The Minneapolis label Blood of the Young released *Our Miracle Point of Contact* with money won during a single night at a casino. The title was a reference to a religious poster Anderson found that showed a bright red hand enticing the viewer to touch it to receive a miracle.

>>VIDABLUE SHOW POSTERS

Artwork by Luke Tweedy.



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Their second full-length record, *The Comprehensive List of Everyone Who Has Ever Done Anything Wrong To Us*, was recorded in October 2000, again with Lust in Chicago, though it would not be released until 2002. It had songs with titles like “Never Let Your Girlfriend Go Camping With That Guy She Met In Pottery Class” and “The Face I Make While You’re Crying.” The record is smart, funny and wholeheartedly aggressive.

At that point, Vidablue was touring constantly, playing at least several out-of-town shows a month. The four band members and Whitmore developed roles on the road.

“Joel had the contacts, put together the tours, booking. I did t-shirts, websites, photos and layouts. Matt initially kept all the shows jotted down in a notebook and had his journal and Zach kept the morale up,” said Adams.

In the meantime, Whitmore had begun to open shows for the band, performing with just his voice and banjo—a contrast to Vidablue’s sound.

“Will was different. But, even though he was different, kids understood genuine, real music no matter what genre it was, and they loved it,” said Adams. “At the merch table they would buy his records and totally gloss over ours. I really think of Ten Grand as Ten Grand and Will.”

Vidablue began to gain momentum from their relentless touring after the release of their second album, leading the band to make several life-changing decisions. In 2002, all four members decided to ditch their safety net, quit their jobs and devote an entire year to the band and nothing else. They released *The Comprehensive List* on Chicago’s Sickroom

<<TEN GRAND AT CBGB

Stills from footage taken by Will Whitmore

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Records—the label’s sixth release and their biggest one to date. A third LP, *This Is The Way to Rule*—a unique, catchy and flawless hard-core record—came out on Southern Records later the same year. And, they changed their name.

Southern Records contacted the band one day in 2002 and warned them that there was another band called Vidablue that was stealing their press.

“This was in the earlier days of internet, so Bob did some research and found out it was a guy—Page McConnell—from Phish using the name Vida Blue,” explained Anderson. “At that point, we were picking up momentum with Southern, and there was an article about

“MATT (DAVIS) WAS, WITHOUT A DOUBT, THE MOST COMMITTED MUSICIAN I’VE EVER MET. I KNOW IF HE WAS STILL AROUND TODAY, HE’D BE ON HIS WAY TO A SHOW OR PRACTICE OR STUDIO THIS VERY DAY. HE LIVED THE DIY IDEOLOGY UNTIL HIS LAST BREATH.”

- JOEL ANDERSON, VIDABLUE/TEN GRAND

them in *Rolling Stone*. So, it was getting in the way of what we were trying to accomplish.”

With a few recordings under their belt, Anderson and the other members of Vidablue had already solidified the copyright to the name before the Phish side project ever started. Meanwhile, Phish’s Vida Blue had received permission to use the name from Oakland A’s southpaw pitcher, Vida Blue. After much deliberation, Vidablue decided to change their name to Ten Grand and forget about McConnell and his noodling side project. Anecdotal and numerous online accounts suggest a connection between those deliberations

and the band’s new name, but the official story leaves those details to the imagination.

As Ten Grand started anew, they continued to tour with Whitmore—who had started his own successful solo career—in tow, in their van, Lucy. They played shows with Paul Cary from The Horrors, Indiana indie-heroes Murder By Death, Minneapolis mainstays Signal to Trust and others. As they toured, they built close ties and strong relationships with the people they crossed paths with.

In the spring of 2003, they went on their first overseas tour. They blazed across Europe, playing 30 shows in one month. Their last show, with Whitmore opening, was in Kortrijk, Belgium, a beautiful town with elaborate bell towers, giant bowls of potato fries covered in gravy and cavernous record stores. Davis tallied it as their 394th show.

Ten Grand returned from Europe triumphant. There was talk of renting a cabin in the woods and seeking solitude to write and record another album. Larger labels were beginning to contact the band and court them with offers. Adams went to New York and got to meet Ric Ocasek, lead singer of The Cars, to talk about the possibility of making a record.

Ten Grand started to realize that what they loved more than anything in the world could become sustainable and actually support them.

Then, sometime during the night of Aug. 10, 2003—the night before the band’s homecoming gig at Gabe’s—Davis passed away in his sleep.

“In a blink of an eye it was all over. When Matt passed we had started to cross this threshold, we were starting to lock-in on another level,” said Anderson. “We had to figure out how to start our lives over again.”

“We were supposed to play a show the next day—I think—at Gabe’s,” said Westerdahl, the shock of the memory seeming to cloud his recollection. “Bob and Joel and I went into

Joel’s bedroom in his house on Church Street and talked about it. It wasn’t really a meeting. It was obviously over and it was very confusing. I thought I was going to drive around in a van with my friends forever, so I was extra lost.”

Without their singer, guitarist and friend, Ten Grand knew that they couldn’t go on. The band members eventually split and moved to Chicago one by one.

There were other amazing bands like Tornavalanche and ft(the Shadow Government) that rose from the ashes of Ten Grand. But no subsequent group could capture the musical, emotional urgency and deep friendships that Davis introduced to the members of Ten Grand and their many friends and fans.

“Matt was, without a doubt, the most committed musician I’ve ever met,” said Anderson. “Others came close, but nobody I’ve met could just let go of everything but music like him. He gave music all he had. I know if he was still around today, he’d be on his way to a show or practice or studio this very day. He lived the DIY ideology until his last breath.”

On Aug. 10, 2013, the 10-year anniversary of Matt Davis’ death, the remaining members of Ten Grand assembled a website in honor of their friend. There, you can find rare footage, photos, show flyers, entries from Davis’ tour diaries and other ephemera, as well as contribute your own material. The band also has plans to make some of their material available to the public, since most of their records are rare and out-of-print. **lv**

Brendan Lee Spengler is a musician and writer originally from Memphis, TN. As a session musician, he has over 30 records under his belt. He never says anything online that he wouldn't say in front of a cop.



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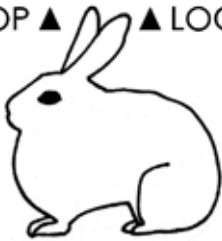
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AUDIO VISUALS

A look at recent films about music • BY WARREN SPROUSE



Woe to the cinephile who tries to make sense of the U.S. music industry through its representation in film. Never has a more confusing and hopelessly self-referential picture been painted under the guise of recounting cultural history. Not so long ago, popular films about music might include the bands themselves—the romping Beatles films are still the best example. These films, of course, are not really films, but just extended promotions for the band. Inevitably they play like extended music videos; the narrative is a thin excuse to create situations for us to hear the songs.

What we might call ‘musical tragedies’ essentially do the reverse: They treat music icons as just another type of dramatic hero, a character around which a tragic personal narrative can be built. Most typically, these are the rags to riches stories of a particular performer’s rise to celebrity and the struggles which pertain to it. (*Coal Miner’s Daughter* in my view remains unassailable in this category.) These

<<BIG STAR: NOTHING CAN HURT ME

Andy Hummel, Alex Chilton, and Jody Stephens.
Photo by William Eggleston

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Get this: Income disparity has become so bad that the super-wealthy now get to live on a posh space station with access to space-age health care, good interior design and probably lots of Harry and David’s, while the rest of us languish on a violent, under-resourced, disease-ridden Earth.

Crazy, right? Fortunately we have regular guy, Matt Damon, to put on a Bane-esque robot suit and go save us by doing some 22nd century B and E. From *District 9* Director, Niell Blomkamp and featuring Jodie Foster in possibly her best role since she defended rich people and Nazis in *Inside Man*.

THE HEARTS OF AGE

Wow, the internet is random and awesome. While digging around in its basement recently, I discovered a previously un-released Orson Welles short titled *The Hearts of Age* which was filmed while Welles was in high school in Illinois. The film is mostly a collection of overly-allegorical images and goofiness, but still interesting as an artifact of Orson Welles before *War of the Worlds* or *Citizen Kane*, and it’s available now on your computer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pXKIMag5hHE>.

IF YOU BUILD IT, THEY WILL WATCH

Petula Clark may have been right—the lights are always brighter downtown. But, unlike in her song, Iowa City currently has no ‘movie shows’ in our city center to help us forget all our troubles and forget all our cares. Film Scene, for the last two years, has been trying to fix that. Through a collaborative effort led by Film Scene, Iowa Citians are mere weeks away from being able to access alternative, small-release and independent films, as well as classic cinema (and beer) in a new 85-seat, snack bar and surround-sound equipped theater on the Ped Mall. Film Scene is hoping to crowd-source the final push to complete the theater and generate the film lineup. The goal is to reach \$75,000 by Sept. 8. Real movies. Downtown. Nate Kaeding supports it; you probably should too. The website is here: igg.me/at/filmscene

films typically treat musical stardom as redemptive, and the stars themselves could just as easily be athletes or soldiers. Significantly, in these films the music industry itself also remains un-dissected, a sometimes inconvenient yet mostly positive force in the various characters' journeys.

IF DIGITAL FILM HAS MADE EVERYONE A DIRECTOR, THEN DIGITAL LIFE MAY WELL HAVE MADE EVERYONE A HISTORIAN, WITH UNPRECEDENTED ACCESS TO ARTIFACTS OF ART, MUSIC AND CULTURAL RESEARCH.

Because digital film has made everyone a director, a recent addition to this genre has been independent biopics about specific bands. These films help viewers remember a particular period in American pop culture and offer new insights or material to fans. Though many of these biopics are quite good, they are all fan-centered and depend on the audience's existing appreciation for a particular artist. Tim Irwin's *We Jam Econo* is an informative and entertaining portrait of an overlooked American band, but it is unlikely that he will convince anyone not already a fan of Minutemen that this is in fact the case.

Predictably, mainstream Hollywood has done a shaky job of mediating these different approaches to music films. Films that feature musicians themselves are inevitably reverential and one sided; films that feature bankable film stars as musical icons can be equally unbalanced or incomplete. Like some giant, immensely wealthy reissues label, mainstream cinema asks us to re-purchase the musical heroes of our youth without even the honest service of showing those performers themselves. I grew up listening to Johnny Cash—you, Joaquin Phoenix, are no Johnny Cash.

A couple of films in current release may help us get our bearings by adding some new and interesting approaches to storytelling about music. If digital film has made everyone a director, then digital life may well have made everyone a historian, with unprecedented access to artifacts of art, music and cultural research. Part of this new reality is an increasing comfort in allowing film to correct or re-interpret musical history, sometimes with very tangible effects on audience awareness, even decades later. Malik Bendjelloul and Simon Chinn's *Searching for Sugar Man*, the winner of last year's Best Documentary Oscar, may

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come to be seen as a turning point in cinematic representations of music, since it not only tells a musician's story but actively engages in altering musical history, essentially creating Sixto Rodriguez's late career.

Similar in agenda may be Drew DeNicola and Olivia Mori's *Big Star: Nothing Can Hurt*

Me, which tells the story of the highly revered, though commercially irrelevant, 1970s band that often takes the title (or shares it with the Velvet Underground) of 'most underrated band of all time.' Make no mistake, *Nothing Can Hurt Me* is a fan-fest to be sure—with testimonials from prominent indie-ish musicians

<<TWENTY FEET FROM STARDOM

Director Morgan Neville's documentary about backup singers includes interviews with famous lead singers as well, such as Bruce Springsteen, Stevie Wonder, Mick Jagger and Sting.

about how great the three proper Big Star albums are and how influential this band was on legions of apparently non-record-buying fans. But amongst the Mike Mills and Robyn Hitchcock fawning, Mori and DeNicola make a subtle argument about the randomness of the music business and the frequent failure of labels to know the potency of their own talent and to market it effectively. While Alex Chilton's songs with the Box Tops are found on every oldies station and shopping mall mix of 1950s songs, his work with Big Star remains strictly college radio. We are asked, at least indirectly, to decide whether the record labels help or hurt musicians and to ask ourselves if we trust the musicians we have come to worship as anything other than random beneficiaries of inconsistent marketing. At a time when media companies select the target

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LIVE MUSIC PREVIEW: AUG. 21-SEPT. 4

BY REBECCA ROBINSON

demographic before a computer writes the song (looking at you, Bieber), it is useful to reflect on a time in which a band of seeming talent and pedigree could go so unrecognized. The marketing of this film will likely not expand Big Star's fan base much—it is playing for short runs only in select cities (interestingly, not Memphis, the band's hometown), but screenings have been organized in concert with speakers, listening parties and of course the available soundtrack.

Morgan Neville's directorial credits are almost exclusively films about music. His latest is *Twenty Feet from Stardom*, which tells the story of backup musicians, their personal stories and the various ways they deal with being crucial to but untouched by the spotlight. Neville's film is star-studded, with performers like Bruce Springsteen, Mick Jagger and Sting in extended discussion about the role of backup singers and their importance to the production of music. More interesting are the interviews with these 20-footers themselves, discussing their backgrounds in church music, working with the stars, drug addictions, career limitations and whether *Hammer of the Gods*-type escapades truly happen (looking at you, Jagger). While Neville's tone is overwhelmingly celebratory, he is also interested in the ego-driven choices that backup singers must make as they go from being stars of their choir to realizing they will not be the next Whitney Houston and therefore must transform star power into song craft. He also makes a subtle criticism about the delayed ways in which the music industry honors the non-stars: Darlene Love's induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, for instance, is a focal point.

Though none of the recent documentaries about the music world are likely to change it in a fundamental way, these films offer new interpretations of how the musical and cinematic worlds interact. They may also make you hear your album collection somewhat differently, which to these directors is half the game. **IV**

Warren Sprouse teaches in Cedar Rapids. He feels that just because summer is ending, there is no reason not to continue eating ice cream every day.

**MARY GAUTHIER & RAY WYLIE HUBBARD
// THE MILL // AUG. 23 // 8 P.M. // \$22
ADVANCE, \$25 DOOR**

Singer-songwriter Mary Gauthier is often praised for the emotional honesty and stripped-down poignancy that her music delivers. While it may be true that she is an incred-

WHILE IT MAY BE TRUE THAT SHE IS AN INCREDIBLY TALENTED FOLK SINGER, IT IS EQUALLY IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT MARY GAUTHIER IS ALSO A BADASS.

ibly talented folk singer, it is equally important to note that Gauthier is also a badass. Over the course of her nearly 20-year music career the New Orleans native has sung openly about her life experiences which include drinking way

artists on an Australian radio show, and she used to own a Cajun restaurant. Need I say more?

Joining Gauthier will be Texas singer-songwriter Ray Wylie Hubbard, who is also a badass. He is best known for writing the song "Up Against the Wall, Redneck Mother," made popular by recording artist Jerry Jeff Walker in 1973. My personal Hubbard favorite however is "Screw you, We're from Texas." Like Gauthier, Hubbard is a talented artist who has channeled personal struggles and hard living into well-crafted songs. You can see them perform up close and personal at The Mill.

**THE LONELY WILD W. ROADKILL GHOST
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On Aug. 27, The Mill will be filled with the sounds of eerie folk rock and lots of percussion crescendos as L.A.-based The Lonely



too hard, spending stints in jails and halfway houses, running away with strippers, living with drag queens and growing up gay in a conservative, southern family. As a performer she projects a rare combination of frank vulnerability and unflappable coolness, all while looking incredibly sharp to boot. Tom Waits listed her alongside Elvis as one of his favorite

THE LONELY WILD

appeals to the starry-eyed, pearl-snap-shirt wearing, cowboy-romantic in all of us

Wild takes the stage. The band has gained an increased following after their first album *The Sun as it Comes* was released earlier this year.

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BIRDS OF CHICAGO

J.T. Nero and Allison Russell have cultivated a family-band feel in the best of possible ways.

Bay Area artist Sean Hayes, the two have been making a name for themselves amongst folk circles across the country.

The Birds of Chicago sound incorporates a mix of vocal harmonies showcased in the foreground with an eclectic mix of instruments, including clarinets and accordions, layered throughout. Between the revolving door of contributing musicians and the laid back quirkiness of the core duo, Birds of Chicago has cultivated a family-band feel in the best of possible ways.

My first exposure to them came at last year's SXSW, where they performed their signature stripped-down, roots music in the most appropriate venue that I can imagine: an idyllic wood porch out in the middle of the Texas hill country. Though not quite as pastoral a setting, they will be performing in Iowa City at the Yacht Club on Aug. 28 to an all ages crowd, which is great if you are looking to enjoy some American folk music with a slightly less degenerate vibe. **lv**

Rebecca Robinson is a streetwise grad student, an unrepentant Texan, an amateur UFO enthusiast and a co-host of the Fuzz Fix on KRUI. For more info you can go to thefuzzfix.com.

With songs that combine a little bit of twang, tambourines, echoed vocals and dramatic swells, The Lonely Wild builds something that appeals to the starry-eyed, pearl-snap-shirt wearing, cowboy-romantic in all of us. This show will provide the perfect excuse for donning boots in the summertime. If you enjoy bands like Lord Huron, Okkervil River or Great Lake Swimmers, then you are sure to be blown away by these indie folk up-and-comers.

Florida's Roadkill Ghost Choir will be opening up the show with a more flannelled take on the eerie folk rock genre. Their song "Drifter" would provide a perfect accompaniment for a long night's drive on an open highway through the middle of nowhere, perhaps after committing a non-violent crime. Plus, they have an awesome name. The night promises to be filled with whiskey, regrets and great music.

BIRDS OF CHICAGO // THE YACHT CLUB // AUG. 28 // 8 P.M. // \$10

If you are a fan of Americana, folk and any music that can be described as "down home," the last weeks of the Iowa City summer will feel like a dream come true. Rounding out this wave of folk troubadours are singer, songwriter duo Birds of Chicago, a.k.a. J.T. Nero and Allison Russell. After releasing their debut, self-titled album last year and touring with

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Gemini Karaoke *Blue Moose Tap House Free, 9 pm*

Mixology *Gabes \$1, 10 pm*

WED., AUG. 21

RumSpringer *ps-z \$5, 8 pm*

THURS., AUG. 22

Tom Nothnagle *Mendoza Wine Bar, 7 pm*

Steel Magnolia *Englert Theatre, 8 pm*

Daddy-O *Parlor City Pub and Eatery, 8 pm*

FRI., AUG. 23

The Barnstormers *Iowa Theatre Artists Company \$5, 7 pm*

Mary Gauthier & Ray Willie Hubbard *The Mill \$22-\$25, 8 pm*

Super Size 7 *Wildwood Smokehouse & Saloon, 8 pm*

Beaker Brothers *Parlor City Pub and Eatery, 8 pm*

Belladiva *Riverside Casino & Golf Resort, 8 pm*

The Vault Dueling Piano's *The Vault-Cedar Rapids, 9 pm*

Mighty Shady *Iowa City Yacht Club \$6, 10 pm*

SAT., AUG. 24

Erin Ebnet *Uptown Bills, 7 pm*

Belladiva *Riverside Casino & Golf Resort, 7 pm & 10 pm*

North of 40 *Wildwood Smokehouse & Saloon, 8 pm*

Jeffrey C. Capps with Tara McGovern *Mendoza Wine Bar, 8 pm*

Creedence Clearwater Revisited *Riverside Casino & Golf Resort \$15 and up, 9 pm*

Brian Johannesen (of Grand Tetons) *The Mill \$5, 9 pm*

Desert Noises *Iowa City Yacht Club \$5-\$7, 10 pm*

SUN., AUG. 25

River City Six *Riverside Casino & Golf Resort, 2 pm*

Music in the Vineyard with Lojo Russo *Tabor Home Vineyards and Winery Free, 3 pm*

In this Moment US Cellular Center *\$25+, 5 pm*

Carnival of Madness Tour *US Cellular Center \$15+, 5 pm*

Curtis Hawkins Band *Parlor City Pub and Eatery, 6 pm*

TUE., AUG. 27

Tom's Guitar Show *Uptown Bills, 6 pm*

The Lonely Wild *The Mill \$10-\$12, 9 pm*

Buttonhoof *Gabes, 9 pm*

WED., AUG. 28

Blues Traveler *Englert Theatre \$42.50+, 12 pm*

Burlington Street Bluegrass Band *The Mill \$5, 7 pm*

Birds of Chicago *Iowa City Yacht Club \$10, 8 pm*

Dharma Dogs *Gabes Free, 9 pm*

THURS., AUG. 29

Gayla Drake *Mendoza Wine Bar, 7 pm*

El Ten Eleven *Iowa City Yacht Club \$10-\$12, 8 pm*

Daddy-O *Parlor City Pub and Eatery, 8 pm*

El Ten Eleven *Iowa City Yacht Club \$10+, 9 pm*

Touch People *The Mill \$6, 9 pm*

FRI., AUG. 30

Chris Cagle *Iowa River Landing in Coralville \$15 and up, 7 pm*

The Barnstormers *Iowa Theatre Artists Company \$5, 7 pm*

Minus Six *Blue Moose Tap House \$5, 7 pm*

Amy Schendel Performance *University of Iowa, Riverside Recital Hall, 7 pm*

Tony Brown *Mendoza Wine Bar, 8 pm*

Casey Donahew Band *First Avenue Club \$15+, 8 pm*

Little Vito and the Torpedoes *Riverside Casino & Golf Resort, 8 pm*

Bleeding Rainbow *The Mill \$8, 9 pm*

Uniphonics *Iowa City Yacht Club \$6, 9 pm*

Brass Transit Authority *Parlor City Pub and Eatery, 9 pm*

Back to School Bash: Item 9 & The Mad Hatters, Das Thunderfoot, The Savage Hacks, Whistleblower, HouseCoat *Gabes \$5, 9 pm*

The Vault Dueling Piano's *The Vault-Cedar Rapids, 9 pm*

SAT., AUG. 31

Jennifer Danielson *Uptown Bills, 7 pm*

Stampede *Wildwood Smokehouse & Saloon, 8 pm*

Joy Kills Sorrow *Englert Theatre, 8 pm*

Skeeter Lewis & the Cedar Rapids Allstars *Parlor City Pub and Eatery, 9 pm*

Karaoke *The Mill Free, 9 pm*

Cake Tribute w/ Nugget *Iowa City Yacht Club \$5, 10 pm*

SUN., SEPT. 1

Tony and Friends Recital *University of Iowa-Riverside Recital Hall, 3 pm*

Joe Diffie *Riverside Casino & Golf Resort, \$17-\$35, 8 pm*

Dragons + Hip Lips + Housecoat *ps-z, \$5, 8 pm*

Kelsey Klingensmith *Riverside Casino & Golf Resort, 9 pm*

Art/Exhibition

ONGOING:

Thursdays: Artvaark *Uptown Bills, 6 pm*

WED. AUGUST 21, 2013

Ongoing: Western Africa Exhibit *African American Museum of Iowa*

Endless Possibilities Exhibit *African American Museum of Iowa*

SAT., AUG. 24

Boom-fest *Downtown Vinton, 9 am*

Through Aug. 25: Bill Voxman: Photo

Portraits of Nepal *Iowa Artisans Gallery, 10 am*
David Plowden's *Iowa Old Capitol Museum, 10 am*

Through Sept. 3: Captured: Hot Glass, Cold Iron *Englert Theatre, 12 pm*

Through Sept. 15: Bertha Jaques: Eye on the World *Cedar Rapids Museum Of Art, 12 pm*

Through Sept. 29: From Houdini to Hugo: The Art of Brian Selznick *Cedar Rapids Museum Of Art, 12 pm*

Brucemore Garden & Art Show *Brucemore \$6, 9 am*

Theatre/Performance

FRI., AUG. 23

Urban Theater Project: "August: Osage County" *Legion Arts CSPA Hall \$15-\$18, 8 pm*
Friday August 23, Friday 30 - Saturday 31, 2013

Anything Goes *Coralville Center for the Performing Arts, 7:30 pm*

SAT., AUG. 24

Anything Goes *Coralville Center for the Performing Arts, 2 pm*

SUN., AUG. 25

Songs & Stories of the Lincoln Highway Iowa Theatre Artists Company \$10, 1 pm

TUE., SEPT. 3

Slices: Performance and Pie Uptown Bills, 7 pm

Comedy

ONGOING:

Mondays: Catacombs of Comedy Iowa City Yacht Club \$3, 9 pm

Wednesdays: Comedy Open Mic The Vault-Cedar Rapids Free, 8 pm

SUN., AUG. 25

Daniel Frana Blue Moose Tap House \$5, 9 pm

Literature

THURS., AUG. 29

Sally Ooms Prairie Lights, 7 pm

FRI., AUG. 30

Paul Schneider Prairie Lights, 7 pm

Kids

ONGOING:

They Walked to Zion: The Mormon Handcart Trail: 1856-1857 Johnson County Historical Society

A Home on the Farm Johnson County Historical Society, 10 am

Saturdays: Kalona Gospel Sing Windmill Ridge Campground, 3 pm

Saturdays: Family Storytime Coralville Public Library, 10 am

Sundays: Kalona Gospel Sing Windmill Ridge Campground, 10 am

Tuesdays: Toddler Storytime Iowa City Public Library, 10 am

AUG. 23 - 25

Woodfest Amana Colonies RV Park and Event Center, Free, 11 am

SAT., AUG. 24

Boom-fest Downtown Vinton, 9 am

SUN., AUG. 25

Get Moving for Healthy Kids Race City High School \$20-\$60, 8 am

Songs & Stories of the Lincoln Highway Iowa



Theatre Artists Company \$10, 1 pm

WED., AUG. 28

Iowa City Farmers Market Ground level of Chauncey Swan Ramp & Chauncey Swan Park, 5 pm

THURS., AUG. 29

The Avengers Movie Coralville Public Library, 6 pm

Sports

FRI., AUG. 23

Double Elimination Pool Tournament Blue Moose Tap House \$5-\$10, 6 pm

SAT. AUG. 24

Aug. 24, 26, 27: Cedar Rapids Kernels vs. PEO Veterans Memorial Stadium - Cedar Rapids, 6 pm

SUN., AUG. 25

Iowa vs. Western Michigan Iowa Soccer Complex Free, 1 pm

Cedar Rapids Kernels vs. PEO Veterans Memorial Stadium - Cedar Rapids, 2 pm

AUG. 28-30

Cedar Rapids Kernels vs. KC Veterans Memorial Stadium - Cedar Rapids, 6 pm

FRI., AUG. 30

Football: Iowa City vs. Cedar Falls City High School, 5 pm

Football: Iowa City West vs. Linn-mar West High School, 7 pm

SAT. AUGUST 31, 2013

Football: Iowa vs. Northern Illinois Kinnick Stadium \$55+, 2 pm

TUE. SEPTEMBER 3, 2013

Volleyball: Iowa City vs. Cedar Rapids

Kennedy City High School, 5 pm

Volleyball: Iowa City West vs. Waterloo East West High School, 7 pm

Community

ONGOING:

Wednesdays: Iowa City Farmers Market Ground level of Chauncey Swan Ramp & Chauncey Swan Park, 5 pm

Aug. 23-25: Kalona Gospel Sing Windmill Ridge Campground

Woodfest Amana RV Park and Event Center Colonies Free, 11 am

Saturdays: Iowa City Farmers Market Ground level of Chauncey Swan Ramp & Chauncey Swan Park, 7 am

SAT., AUG. 24

Boom-fest Downtown Vinton, 9 am

Foodie

SAT., AUG. 24

Shelter Our Community Englert Theatre, 7 pm

SUN., AUG. 25

Music in the Vineyard with Lojo Russo Tabor Home Vineyards and Winery Free, 3 pm

TUE., AUG. 27

Fresh Italian Pasta 101 Class New Pioneer Food Co-op \$25, 6 pm

THURS., AUG. 29

Food of the Civil War Demonstration New Pioneer Food Co-op \$15, 6 pm

A - L I S T

ANNUAL READING: THE IOWA REVIEW

WED., AUG 28 | 7 P.M.
PRAIRIE LIGHTS BOOKS

THIS MONTH, Iowa City's preeminent literary journal, *The Iowa Review*, celebrates 43 years of continuous publication with a reading on Aug. 28 at Prairie Lights Books (15 S. Dubuque St.).

There will be readings from several writers published in the journal, and an open reception at the Café at Prairie Lights immediately afterward.

This annual reading and celebration coincides with the release of the forthcoming fall issue. Founded in 1970, *The Iowa Review* has published some of the most acclaimed writers of our era from around the world, including William Carlos Williams, Ann Patchett, Samuel Beckett and Jorge Luis Borges, among many others.

This year there is even more to celebrate as the new editor, Harry Stecopoulos (pictured), takes the helm. Currently an Associate Professor of English at The University of Iowa, Stecopoulos brings over a decade of academic and literary expertise to this role.

The reading will feature several award-winning authors whose works are either forthcoming or have already been printed in the journal. Steven Flores and Kyle Minor will read fiction and Vi Khi Nao, Caryl Pagel and Julia Whicker will read poetry. **lv**

—Andres Carlstein



is excited to invite you to their annual Fall Open House:

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ARE THERE STILL UNEXPLORED PARTS OF THE WORLD WHERE UNKNOWN ANIMALS MAY LURK?

I've heard rumors about gargantuan animals living in the deepest parts of the sea that we haven't been able to explore properly yet. One such tale was of deep rumbling sounds that could come from the belly of an enormous beast. Is there any truth to these stories? Are there large enough stretches of unexplored ocean to reasonably suggest there might be unknown animals there? —Johannes Lund With

You bet. While finding new megafauna is tougher than it used to be, there are still remote reaches of the globe where you might stumble across an animal nobody's ever seen before. However, be forewarned: don't get your hopes up if it goes "bloop."

That's the lesson we draw from those rumbling ocean sounds you refer to, which were recorded by underwater microphones in the South Pacific in 1997. The Bloop, as it was soon nicknamed, sounded like Godzilla with a bad case of gas. Unfortunately for cryptozoologists, the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration declared it was most likely vibrations from the breaking of Antarctic sea ice. To the lay ear the sound files NOAA provided don't sound much alike, possibly because the Bloop for some reason was sped up to 16 times its original frequency, whereas the comparable sea ice recording was sped up only three times. However, the people at NOAA work for the government. One presumes they know what they're doing.

But let's get to the heart of the matter: yes, there are large stretches of ocean where unknown megafauna could be hiding. NOAA estimates 95 percent of the sea remains unexplored. Since the ocean covers 70 percent of the Earth's surface, that means almost two-thirds of the planet is as mysterious to us as it was in Magellan's day.

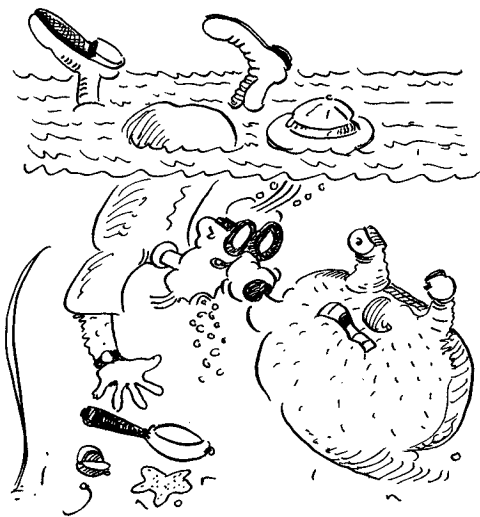
The immense mid-ocean ridges formed by plate tectonics, which at 40,000 miles are by far the longest continuous mountain range in the world, weren't discovered until the 1950s. The amount of properly mapped seafloor in the public domain is 2 to 3 percent, and even when you add in what's been mapped by the world's navies and kept secret, the figure is likely no more than 10 percent. Bear in mind this is strictly topographical mapping, to keep submarines from crashing into underwater mountains. (The USS *San Francisco* did this in 2005, killing one sailor.) So we have no systematic account of what's living in even that 10 percent.

A 42-day expedition to the Philippines in 2011 found hundreds of new marine species, including a type of swell shark (which can inflate itself with water) and a pancake-shaped sea slug. The ocean around Antarctica is vast, deep, and poorly explored, and more than half the deep-water creatures known to live there have been spotted only once or twice.

Most newly discovered species don't qualify as gargantuan, but some are pretty big. The megamouth shark, undiscovered till 1976, can reach 18 feet in length. The giant squid, long believed to be the largest invertebrate in the world, had never been seen alive till 2004, when a specimen more than 25 feet long was caught on camera; meanwhile an apparently even bigger critter, the colossal squid, remains elusive. Researchers from the massive Census of Marine Life project reported in 2010 that even though there are 250,000 known ocean species, perhaps 750,000 more await discovery, to say nothing of more than a billion types of microbes.

But it's not just the sea that holds mysteries. The forested mountains of the Sierra de Maigualida region of Venezuela, covering more than 4,500 square miles, are almost entirely unexplored. The same is true of large swaths of Antarctica, most surveys having been done from aircraft. Antarctica also features enormous freshwater lakes locked deep under the ice. The largest, Lake Vostok, holds about 1,500 cubic miles of million-year-old water, potentially harboring prehistoric creatures unlike anything else we've encountered.

Megafauna could be hiding in caves. By some estimates, even in well-explored regions like the U.S. only 50 percent of caves have been investigated, and worldwide it's maybe 10 percent. However, big critters would have big appetites, and a cave, lacking photosynthesis, is necessarily a low-energy environment.



As a result, most new wildlife discoveries in caves are bug-scale.

Personally I'd stick with the tropics. The Vu Quang ox of Vietnam wasn't proven to exist until 1994, when a live specimen was captured. Soon afterward, a new species of deer was discovered in the same Vietnamese rain forest. In fact, since 1993 more than 400 new species of mammal have been discovered, about 10 percent of the total mammalian species known. Most of these are small (lots of rodents and bats), but 40 percent are large and distinctive. Some researchers think we'll eventually find another 100 to 200 new mammal species, most of them in North and South America.

Are there swarms of enormous beasts out there, waiting for a doughty explorer to find them? Probably not. But just because we've got Google Earth doesn't mean we've discovered all there is to know about the world. —CECIL ADAMS

Send questions to Cecil via straightdope.com or write him c/o Chicago Reader, 350 N. Orleans, Chicago 60654.

CURSES, FOILED AGAIN

- Sheriff's deputies hunting robbery suspect Matthew Oliver in Pasco County, Fla., posted his wanted picture on their Facebook page, naming him their "Fugitive of the Day." Oliver replied, posting daylong comments, along with his photo and personal details, including his address. Insisting he was set up by a "crack head," Oliver elicited such comments as, "Ur runnin from the popo & post on your picture? Lol." Deputies arrested Oliver leaving his apartment. (*Tampa Bay's WTSP-TV*)
- Police named West Virginia University football player Korey Harris their armed robbery suspect after the victims recognized Harris, who was wearing WVU-issued football sweatpants with his uniform number, 96. Harris was arrested and dropped from the team. (*Charleston's Metro News*)

SNOOP PROOF

Russia's Federal Protective Service offered to pay \$15,000 for 20 typewriters. The agency, a KGB successor assigned to protect President Vladimir Putin and other top officials, explained that it began using typewriters after Edward Snowden's disclosures about U.S. National Security Agency secret surveillance to print drafts of official documents intended for Putin. (*Associated Press*)

THANKS FOR NOTHING

To point out to voters how much Canada's Conservatives are doing to improve life for disabled citizens, the party mass mailed a flyer headlined "Supporting Jobs for All Canadians." It repeated those words in a series of Braille dots. Only instead of being raised, the dots were printed on the flyer's flat surface, making them unreadable to blind people. Jim Tokos of the Canadian Council of the Blind called the flyers "baffling." (*Toronto Star*)

SECOND-AMENDMENT FOLLIES

- Police reported that a man's ex-girlfriend dropped by his home in San Antonio, Texas, while he was with his current girlfriend. During the ensuing argument, the man aimed a gun at the ex-girlfriend but accidentally shot the current girlfriend in the chest. She was hospitalized in critical condition; the ex-girlfriend wasn't injured. (*San Antonio's KSAT-TV*)
- Charged with killing a 5-year-old girl with an assault rifle, Jon Andrew Meyer Jr. explained that the rapid-fire weapon fired accidentally while he was using it as a crutch to help him stand up from a couch while visiting a friend in Grants Pass, Ore. The fully automatic weapon

fired out of control; one burst blasted through the ceiling, killing the girl and wounding an adult with her. (*Grants Pass Daily Courier*)

- When neighbors confronted Rhonney Jacobs, 43, for speeding through a community in Norfolk, Va., he left but returned brandishing a gun. Police official Chris Amos said Jacobs then accidentally shot himself in the leg. (*Norfolk's WAVY-TV*)

FIRST IS WORST

First-class airline passengers are nine times more damaging to the environment than coach passengers, according to a study by the World Bank. The report noted that first-class seats are bigger than other ones, meaning planes can hold fewer people, thereby requiring more fuel per passenger to fly and increasing carbon emissions. First-class passengers are also likelier to have more luggage per person, requiring even more fuel. The report calculated that average coach passengers have a 0.76 carbon footprint, business-class passengers 2.30 and first-class passengers 6.89. (*Britain's Daily Mail*)

CURSIVE'S LAST GASP

Two German entrepreneurs invented an ink pen that recognizes misspelled words and bad handwriting. Its name is Lernstift, German for "learning pen," according to Daniel Kaesmacher, co-founder of the company that spent 18 months developing the digital pen. It's a regular pen with real ink, but also contains a tiny motion sensor and a battery-powered Linux computer with a WiFi chip. "The pen will have two functions," Kaesmacher said, "calligraphy and orthography mode." In the spelling mode, the computer compares words it writes to its language database; when it doesn't recognize a word, it vibrates. If it senses bad letter formation or messy handwriting, it also vibrates. The company intends testing the digital pen with a whole school class before selling it, for 130 to 150 euros (\$170-\$200). The device will work with smart phones and tablets eventually, but its "basic functionality is all in the pen," Kaesmacher said, pointing out "there's no app needed" or special paper. (*ABC News*)

HORSELESS-CARRIAGE FOLLIES

An automobile killed a woman and injured three other people when it overturned outside Zion National Park in Utah. The vehicle was a 1915 Ford Model T. "There's no rollover protection," said Russ Forstnow, chairman of an international Model T club's annual outing in which the soft-top vehicle was taking part. Troopers said it went off the pavement, causing the wheel's wooden

spokes to separate, then flipped, ejecting all four occupants. (*Associated Press*)

YOU BE THE JUDGE

- Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge Karen Nudell ordered Arman Samsonian to stand trial for manslaughter in the deaths of two women who tried to rescue him after he crashed his sport utility vehicle into a utility pole and a fire hydrant. Irma Zamora and Stacey Schreiber were killed when they stepped into a pool of water that had been electrified by 4,800 volts from the fallen power line. Nudell said Samsonian, 20, "was definitely driving negligently," but defense attorney Andrew Flier argued that his client couldn't have foreseen the "intervening acts" once he crashed and that the victims should have known the dangers created by downed power lines and standing water. (*Los Angeles Times*)

- Tennessee Child Support Magistrate Lu Ann Ballew was listening to the parents of a 7-month-old baby who couldn't agree on the child's last name, but when she heard that the boy's first name was Messiah, she promptly ordered it changed to Martin. "The word Messiah is a title and it's a title that has only been earned by one person and that one person is Jesus Christ," Ballew said, explaining that her decision is best for the child, especially while growing up in a predominantly Christian community. Meanwhile, according to the Social Security Administration, Messiah ranked fourth among the fastest-rising baby names in 2012. (*Associated Press*)

BEATEN TO THE PUNCH

Tony Gesin, 50, called police in Fairbanks, Alaska, to report that his neighbor had assaulted him. He repeated his story to troopers who responded but then admitted punching himself in the face because he wanted his neighbor arrested. Department of Public Safety official Megan Peters said Gesin and his neighbor are engaged in a civil dispute about property. (*Fairbanks News-Miner*)

DO THE MATH

Several students at Virginia's George Mason University signed a petition urging the legalization of fourth-trimester abortions "so that women have a choice," according to Dan Joseph of the conservative Media Research Center, who circulated the petition. (*CampusReform.org*)

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



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DAN BEE

Coffee And Other Caffeinated Delights
danbeemusic.bandcamp.com

Dan Bee is the solo project of Dan Bobek, the guitarist for Raw Mojo. Unabashedly devoted to 1970s-style hard rock, Raw Mojo

COFFEE AND OTHER CAFFEINATED DELIGHTS IS DEFINED BY AN ELEMENTAL PURITY; THERE'S NOTHING IRONIC ABOUT BOBEK'S MUSIC.

has been gigging around Iowa City for years. Their recent album *Brickbat Theory* is a high watermark for the band, finally capturing the vitality of their live sound. For Bobek to come up with another album so quickly shows that he doesn't sleep much.

Coffee and Other Caffeinated Delights is defined by an elemental purity; there's nothing



ironic about Bobek's music. It isn't a time capsule from 1976—"The Best I Can" has a real Pixies vibe—and there's nothing arch or self-conscious about these songs. The influences I hear in Bobek's songs are well-aligned with my tastes: You'll hear Screaming Trees but not Pearl Jam; Meat Puppets but not Stone Temple Pilots; Metallica but not that sucky post-rehab stuff. And no punk rock, which in Iowa City is really refreshing.

Humor is present, but it's never cruel or cynical. "When Pigs Fly"—with its relentless chain of cliches like "beat a dead horse by beating around the bush"—is as gleeful as a roomful of third graders, but the clever way he chains them together into song is careful and crafty. "Set It Free" is, by contrast, quite earnest. The acoustic guitar riff that anchors the song quotes New Order's "Ceremony," but it goes somewhere much different. It has the untethered, wide-eyed loopiness of Syd Barrett, with mentions of black holes and cancer that obscure more than they reveal.

For a self-recorded album where Bobek

where plays nearly all instruments, the quality of production is top-notch. A connoisseur's attention to the myriad flavors of guitar distortion and use of the entire stereo field gives the record a spacious feel. The simplicity of his arrangements keeps the sound razor sharp. The album's title is apt—this is Dan Bobek at his most focused and meticulous. High on coffee, life or whatever, I think he's gotten the dosage right.

Kent Williams rêve de courir à travers un champ de carottes.

DOUGLAS KRAMER NYE

No Good Samaritan
dougaskramernye.bandcamp.com

There is something amazing about watching a musician evolve from square one. Shawn Reed from Wet Hair described it as the "without a net" stage of a musician's career: They tend to be a little more timid, experimenting with voices, phrasings and nuances for the first time. Onstage you can watch them fail and succeed during what can be a spellbinding evolution of their talent. Douglas Kramer Nye had only been playing the guitar for three months when he wrote his first songs. And, over the course of three years, he learned more guitar chords, wrote more songs and made connections around the Iowa City music scene. His album, *No Good Samaritan*, is the record of these first steps.

On stage, Nye is quiet, but sharp-witted—he once told a KRUI DJ who was having technical difficulties to speed it up because his "mother was listening." He often plays alone with just his guitar, but has added a collection of A-list players from around Iowa City to his

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RHYME TIME

A NEW YOU

Hey Rhyme Timers,

A wacky friend of mine once told me that every seven years, all the atoms in your body are replaced—and as such, it really makes no sense to feel bad or take credit for anything you did more than seven years ago because you are technically an entirely different person now. The science surrounding the theory is questionable, but I dig the sentiment. It reminds me of how I feel at the start of every school year: My books are pristine, each journal page is blank and I'm not behind on any assignments. School, for all of its shortcomings, is great in its annual gift of a new start.

So in the spirit of a new semester with new beginnings, here is this month's Rhyme Time. 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.

Make sense? Off you go—and best of luck this coming semester.

BY LUKE BENSON

Shrewd Kickoff (1, 1): SMART, START

Class Choice (2, 3): _____, _____

Successful Commencement (2, 3): _____, _____

Possible Certificate (3, 3): _____, _____

Onset Ardor (1,2): DAWN, _____

Renaissance Depot (5, 2): _____, _____

Restoration Landing (3, 3): _____, _____

Resurgence Propellant (3,2): _____, _____

Keen Undertaking (2, 2): _____, _____

Precise Intellect (2, 1): _____, _____

Affirmed Able (2, 2): _____, _____

Firm Embarkation (1, 1): _____, _____

Challenger: *"I know I dropped out of school, but this time around is different. Now I've got the guts and initiative I need to pick up where I left off. I guess you could say that I have (3, 2)."*

ANSWERS FROM THE LAST EDITION OF RHYME TIME:

Morsel Foray (1, 2): Snack Attack	Curd, Por Favor (1, 1): Cheese Please
Tough Chip (2, 2): Macho Nacho	Cheese Worrywart (2,2): Cheddar Fretter
Chewie Treat? (2, 2): Wookie Cookie	Enlightened One's Cheese (2,2): Buddha
Hostess Stair-stepper? (2, 2): Twinky Slinky	Gouda
Sharp Produce (2, 1): Acute Fruit	Cheese Ardor (3, 2): Parmesan Elan
Coral Citrus (2, 2): Orange Orange	"No no, those biscuits are for intellectuals only. That's why we call them "(4, 3)":
Tiny Fruit (1, 2): Wee Kiwi	Literati Biscotti
Alligator-Pear Pomposity (4, 3): Avocado	
Bravado	

live sets. And, while Nye is captivating to listen to solo, *No Good Samaritan* greatly benefits from these collaborations.

"Vicious V" is a character study in the tradition of Lou Reed or Bob Dylan, telling a story about the good and bad elements of human nature. Accompanied by Skye Carrasco's beautiful, lulling violin melody, the song turns a few simple chords into an impeccable tune.

The classic Johnny Western tune "The Ballad of Paladin" is given a stomping renovation by Nye. "Paladin" has sympathetic, droney guitar and vocal combinations and bare bones percussion.

"Pockets," a live staple for Nye, benefits from Samuel Locke Ward's minimal percussion—which sounds like an anvil being struck—and Ed Gray's moody, sauntering electric guitar, a raw sound that reappears throughout the album, giving it an honest, naturalistic flavor.

The style only breaks periodically, like during "Reaper," when a misplaced, distorted bass drum leads a haunting, baritone Nye singing, "Many things got strange, when you left me that day." A track of guitar feedback from Locke Ward eventually develops, rounding out the song in an appropriately brutal, heart-felt crescendo.

Locke Ward recorded *No Good Samaritan* on a cassette four-track, giving the album a DIY sketchbook feel, and one that suits Nye. True to do-it-yourself form, Nye pressed the record at Palomino in Kentucky, and put it out himself. There is also a European pressing of the record. An Italian label called Almost Halloween Time, who put out Ed Gray's last album, *Old Bending River*, pressed 110 copies of *No Good Samaritan* and are printing several different covers based on song titles on the album.

While Nye has been under the radar for the last couple years, *No Good Samaritan* is a sign that more great things can be expected from this songwriter and performer. **lv**

Brendan Lee Spengler is a musician and writer originally from Memphis, TN. As a session musician, he has over 30 records under his belt. He never says anything online that he wouldn't say in front of a cop.



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