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ISSUE 242 MAY 2-15, 2018

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Iowa City's AME Bethel Church holds strong after 150 years.

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Circle of Justice

A common understanding begins with a conversation. And maybe a feather.

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The Meat of the Matter

Two releases, one show, one power couple. Meet Arin and Dana.

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Little Village is an independent, community-supported news and culture publication based in Iowa City. Through journalism, essays and events, we work to improve our community in the Iowa City, Coralville and Cedar Rapids area according to a few core values: environmental sustainability, affordability and access, economic and labor justice, racial justice, gender equity, quality healthcare, quality education and critical culture.

Letters to the editor(s) are always welcome. We reserve the right to fact check and edit for length and clarity. Please send letters, comments or corrections to editor@littlevillagemag.com. *Little Village* is always free; all contents are the licensed work of the contributor and of the publication. If you would like to reprint or collaborate on new content, reach us at lv@littlevillagemag.com. To browse back issues, visit us at 623 S Dubuque St, Iowa City, or online at issuu.com/littlevillage.



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INTERACTIONS

LV encourages community members, including candidates for office, to submit letters to Editor@LittleVillageMag.com. To be considered for print publication, letters should be under 500 words. Preference is given to letters that have not been published elsewhere.

DEAR RAGBRAI,

Gosh we've missed you these many years since your last visit! Of course we would love to have you stay with us this summer!

BTW our guest room is being remodeled but we have a very nice blow-up bed in the basement that you are welcome to.

Love,
City of Iowa City

—Dhyana Kaufman, in response to the city announcing parts of the Ped Mall will be under construction during RAGBRAI's overnight stop in Iowa City.

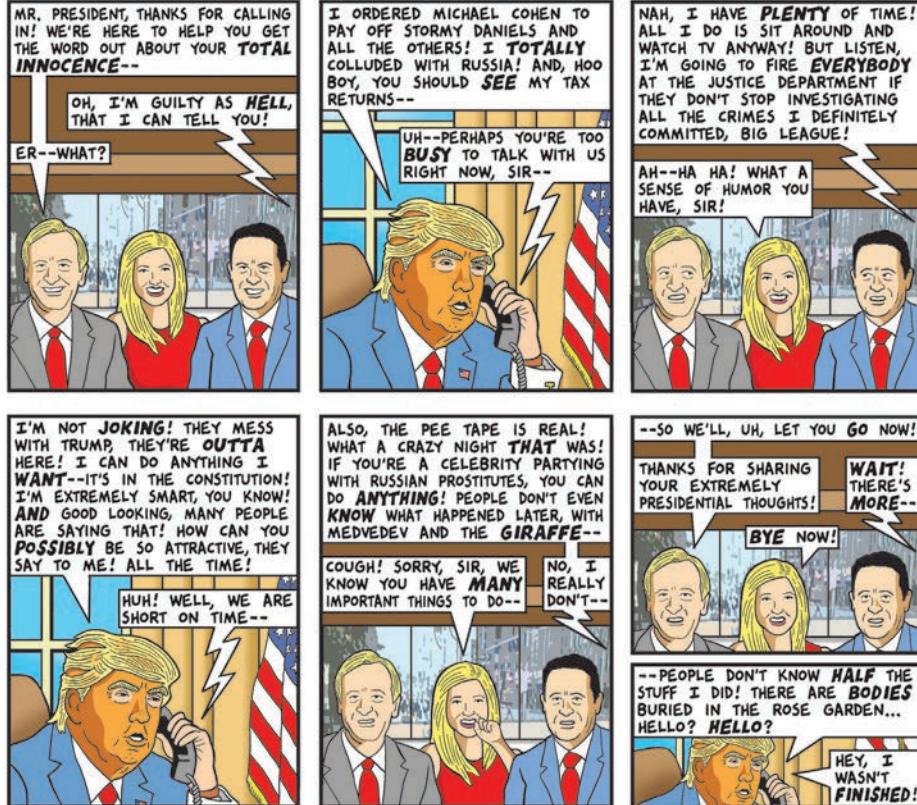
Iowa Senate aide who recently completed mandatory training on sexual harassment fired for sexual harassment

Man who makes video tricking women into signing a petition to end women's suffrage is a sexual harasser. Who would've guessed? —Maxwell O.

Someone posted an ad for a white nationalist website at The Mill last week

As distasteful (to put it mildly) as these things are it is part of the cost of enjoying the right to free speech. The right to free speech doesn't only apply to the speech you like —Edward K.

THIS MODERN WORLD



Construction schedule for the Ped Mall improvements announced

I look forward to the affordable housing—oh wait. —Paul G.

Good luck. This is arguably the most anti-development Council in my lifetime. —Richard J.

Better improvement would be to use that money for food programs and good/free housing for people. —Madi

Video: Little Village Studio Visit with Jane Ellen Gilmor

You and your works are terrific, Jane. You have motivated as well as mentored many. —Sal M.

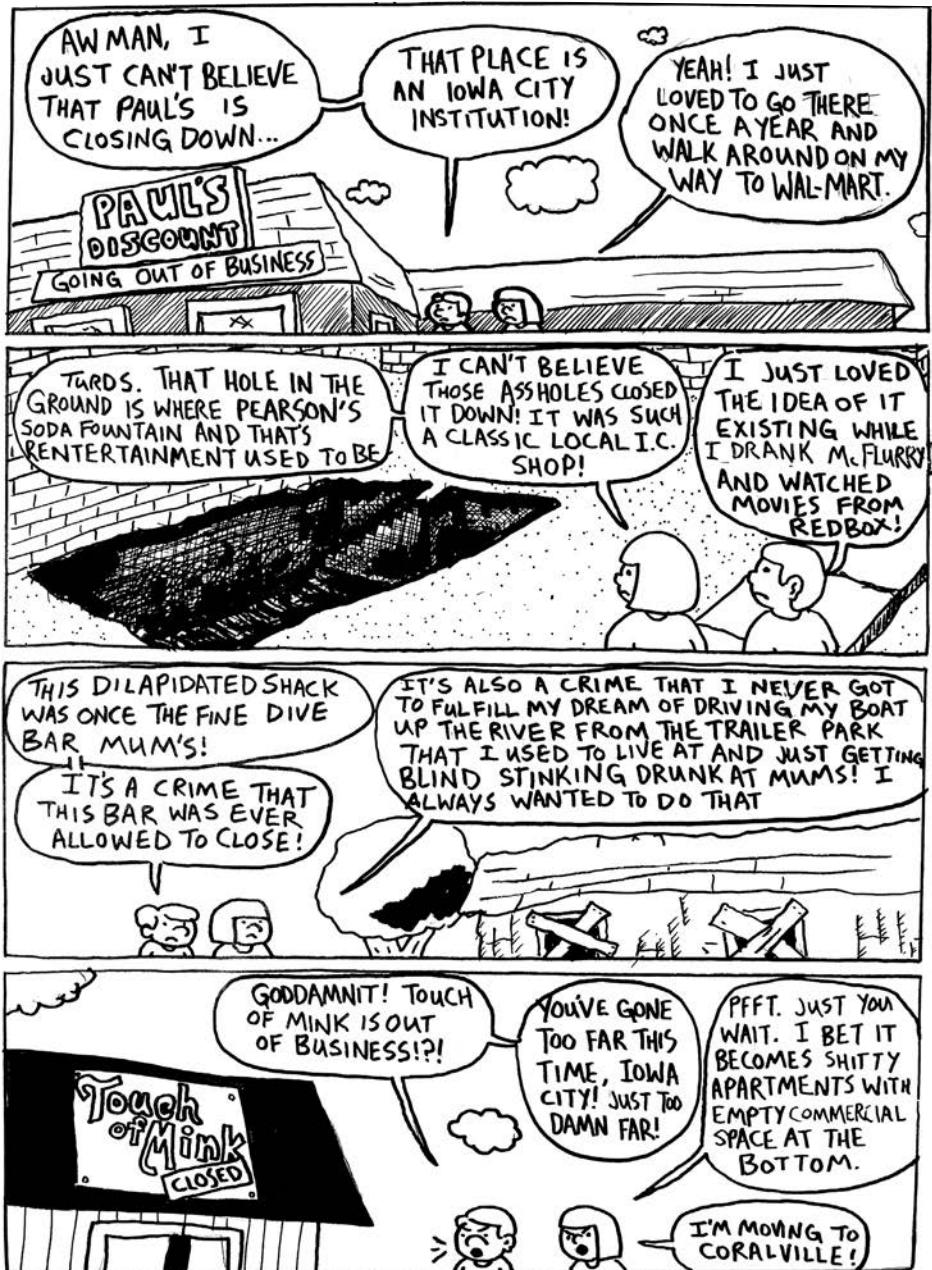
Great to hear about a classmate who has created such an interesting life. —Mary W.

LV Recommends: JiangHu Asian Street Food

I went last Friday and thought about stopping today. Stupendous new addition. The belt noodles with cumin and melt in your mouth beef. The stuff of dreams; I am not exaggerating. And so so nice too. —Catherine W.

Yopo noodle is the bomb! —Lance G.

I would love to visit that restaurant one day. I'm sure the broths would taste delicious! Just like my favorite Au Bon Broth—it's so good that I have it everyday. —Anne



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Ellie Irons, detail from *Asiatic Dayflower/Pokeweed (New Pangea)*, 2017, from the *Invasive Pigments* project. Photo by Daniel Strong.

Falbo Bros. Pizzeria is reopening

Hopefully the new ownership does away with the styrofoam boxes. It seems like 90 percent of them end up in Ralston Creek. —*Doug O.*

Gotta have them late night slices! They should install a window for walk-ups —*Christopher G.*

Finally a glimmer of justice in this cold, dark world. —*Nathan T.*

Adam Ahrens for president!
—*Christopher K.*

Hatchet Jack's: Bringing the axe-tossing bar trend to Iowa City

As opposed to other Iowa City bars that only smell like Axe —*Monique G.*

I see no possible way in which this could

go wrong in any given scenario. At all. Ever. —*Chris W.*

Every good night out begins with signing insurance waivers. —*Trevor J.*

Most bar-goers can't be trusted with throwing plastic-tipped darts, let alone something sharp. —*Randy P.*

No, you're supposed to get drunk and throw knives in your backyard like a normal person. —*Devin D.*

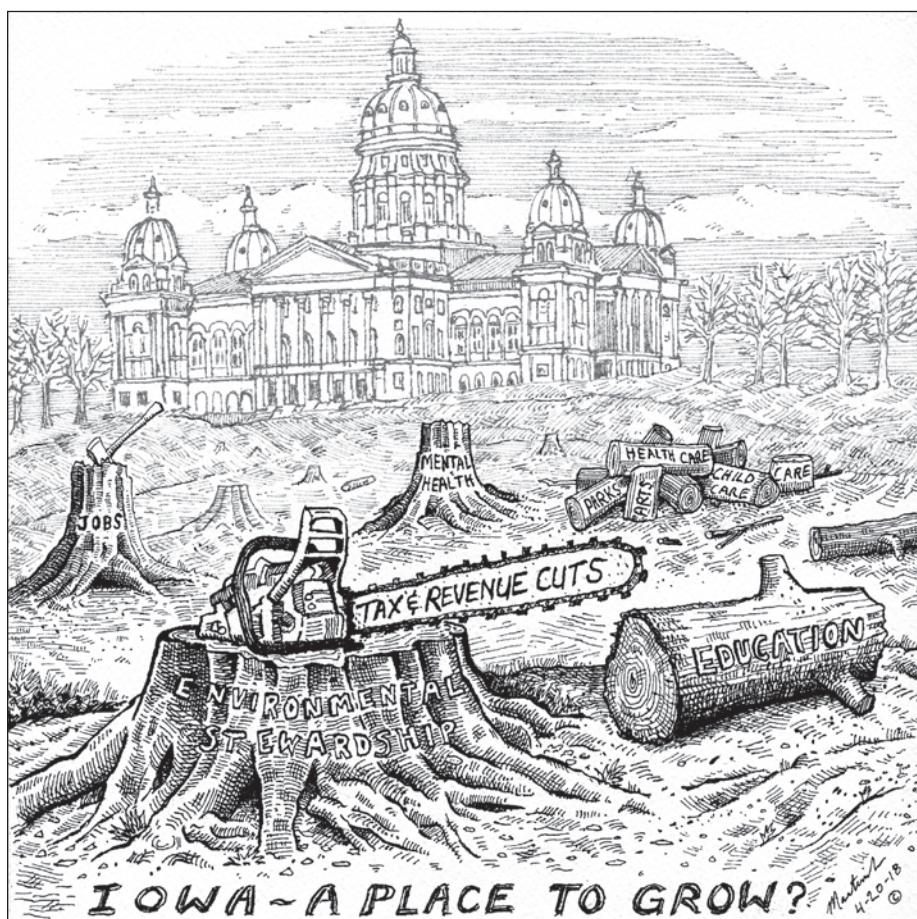
It's nice to have a new place that's not owned by the same three or four people like 80 percent of the restaurants and bars in Iowa City. —*Richard J.*

The only way this gets worse is if they add trampolines. —*Chad M.*

Jokes aside, these are very popular and successful in other areas —*Liza R.G.*

STRESS FRACTURES

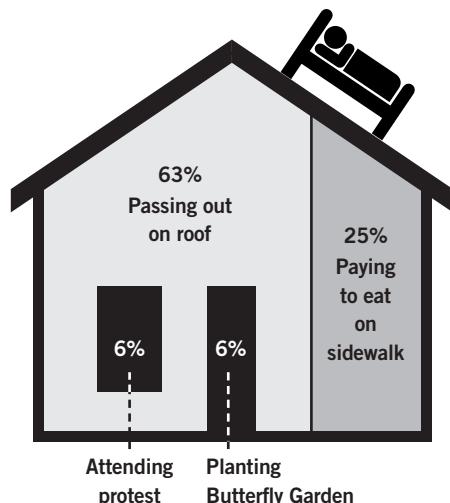
JOHN MARTINEK



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READER POLL:

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Keeping the Faith

Iowa City's Bethel AME Church has been a constant since 1868.

BY PAUL BRENNAN

In a city with few remaining historic buildings and a population constantly in flux, Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church is a rarity. Bethel, Iowa City's only historically black church, is celebrating its 150th anniversary this year. The church still stands on the same Governor Street lot its founders bought for \$50 in 1868, just three years after the end of the Civil War.

"One of the things to think about is the fact that there were enough freed slaves in Iowa City in 1868 to build this church," said Venise Berry, an associate professor of journalism and mass communications at the University of Iowa and a Bethel trustee. "To me that's just fascinating."

The 1870 U.S. Census recorded 89 black residents in all of Johnson County, 37 of whom had been born in slave-holding states. All three of the church trustees listed on Bethel's original deed were born the South: James Howard in Virginia, Henry Boon in North Carolina and Boston Clay in Alabama.

Church members built a one-room sanctuary where the congregation worshipped until 2010, when a new, larger sanctuary was built behind the original structure. Despite its small physical size, Bethel has played a large role in the greater Iowa City community.

"Before coming here, I knew Bethel has a phenomenal reputation in Iowa City for generosity, for helping people in need," said Rev. Kimberly Abram-Bryant, who has been Bethel's pastor for three years. "The church also has a great tradition of hospitality, of welcoming students who have arrived in a new community and at a new school, where the predominant culture is caucasian, and who might be having difficulty making connections."

These traditions were firmly established during the 36 years Rev. Fred Penny served as

Bethel's pastor, Abram-Bryant explained.

Rev. Penny was Bethel's pastor from 1958 until his death in 1994. Accompanied by his wife and children, Penny came to Iowa in 1957 from southern Illinois, where he had served as the pastor two small-town AME churches. His first assignment was in Muscatine, the city where Iowa's first AME church was established in the 1840s. That church, which served as a stop on the Underground Railroad, is no longer there.

"We were in Muscatine for a year," Dianna Penny, the eldest of the six Penny children, recalled. "Then my father attended the annual AME conference in 1958 and the bishop called out, 'Who will take Iowa City?' My dad raised his hand."

Penny was 18 when her family moved to Iowa City, and she vividly remembers seeing the church on Governor Street for the first time. "It was a tiny, little, weather-beaten, grey structure that resembled an old one-room schoolhouse from the pioneer days," Penny said. "Out front, there was a rusted old hitching-post for horses that was left over from the 19th century."

"The church had a heavy oak door, and I was right behind my father when he pushed it open. There was this tiny, but very dignified, little old lady sitting beside the stove that she had lit to warm the church to welcome her new pastor."

Margaret Winston wasn't there to greet the new pastor on behalf of the entire congregation. Margaret Winston was there because she was the entire congregation. After 90 years, Bethel AME had been reduced to one parishioner, and she was well into her 80s.

Paint was peeling from the walls and the floorboards were warped, Penny recalled. "But my dad saw great potential in Iowa City," she said.

During the early years, Rev. Penny had



Jav Ducker

**The AME church
has often been
described, using
the words of an old
spiritual, as "a rock
in a weary land."**

to divide his time between Iowa City and Washington, Iowa, where he also served as pastor of that city's AME church. On Sundays, Rev. Penny held morning services in Iowa City, then drove to Washington to conduct an afternoon service. Throughout the week, he was busy reaching out to people across every strata of society around Iowa City.

Rev. Penny made a special effort to ensure college students felt welcomed, even if they weren't interested in becoming regular members of the church.

"There was no meal service in the dorms on Sundays, so we had dinner for the students who came to church," Dianna Penny explained.



Jay Ducker

The church also held regular social events for students. One of the students who came to those events in the 1970s was Venise Berry.

"I wasn't a consistent member of the church, but I did go to barbeques and other events," said Berry, who earned her undergraduate and master's degrees at UI. "Rev. Penny was very active with the university students."

He also developed a reputation as "that one go-to pastor in the community for anyone in need of help," according to Abram-Bryant.

"Money he had not, but he could always get you what you said you needed," Dianna Penny said.

Rev. Penny provided food for people who would have gone hungry, places to live for those had none, baby items for families with newborns, as well as many other things. And he did it all by appealing to the generosity of community members with whom he'd built relationships.

"Whatever you needed, he knew enough people that he could get it for you," Penny said.

In taking care of bodies as well as souls, Rev. Penny was following the well-established tradition of his denomination, which has always stressed providing social support, as well as spiritual support, for the communities it serves. The AME church has often been described, using the words of an old spiritual, as "a rock in a weary land."

The first African Methodist Episcopal Church, now known as "Mother Bethel," was founded in Philadelphia in 1794, when black members of that city's St. George's Methodist Church quit its congregation due to the church's racist policies. It would take another 21 years and two lawsuits for the AME church to establish its right to be its own

denomination, independent of the traditional Methodist church.

In 1816, one of the organizers of the new church, Richard Allen, an ex-slave who bought his own freedom and went on to become a successful businessman, organized

a meeting for black Methodists throughout the free states on the Atlantic seaboard to introduce them to the AME church. Since then, the church has grown to more than 7,000 congregations with more than 3 million members.

Bethel's congregation grew during Rev. Penny's time, and the church building was repaired. The building Penny and his family arrived at in 1958 had already been extensively renovated in the 1920s, although it remained a one-room sanctuary. The first renovations followed a fire in 1923. The next year, the church caught fire again—in fact, it caught fire three times in one night under suspicious circumstances. As a history of the church, submitted to the National Park Service when Bethel was listed as a national historic site in 2000, noted, the 1924 fire occurred four days before a public attempt to form an Iowa City chapter of the Ku Klux Klan began. No link between the fire and the Klan has ever been established.

In 2005, church leaders decided it was time for Bethel to finally expand.

"It was five years of struggle," Venise



Jay Ducker

Dianna Penny, the daughter of Rev. Penny who served the Bethel congregation from 1958 until 1994, now oversees the church.

Berry recalled. Berry, who finally became a regular member of Bethel's congregation after returning to Iowa City in the 1990s to teach at UI, was co-chair of the fundraising committee for the expansion.

The church had to navigate a maze of city building and land use regulations. It also had to navigate further regulations because of Bethel's designation as an historic site, as well as the sometimes vicious Iowa City real estate market. Most importantly, it had to find the money.

"We were turned down for a loan by the first four banks we applied to," Berry said. "The banks said 'You don't have enough people. We recognize your vision, but we don't see how you are going to make it work.' Finally, MidWestOne, bless their heart, said 'We're going to stand behind you, we're going to support you.'"

"So, we started building."

It took another five years for the building project to be completed.

"August 1, 2015," Dianna Penny's face lit up as she recalled the date of the first service in the new sanctuary. "I felt like we had arrived, like my father's long-term dream had been fulfilled."

The new sanctuary has room for 150 people, which is three times the size of Bethel's current congregation.

Even though Bethel is still fairly small, Dianna Penny, who has watched it grow from just Margaret Winston into its current congregation of 50, isn't worried about Bethel's future.

"We've never let our small size deter us from doing big things," she said. **lv**

Paul Brennan is Little Village's news director.



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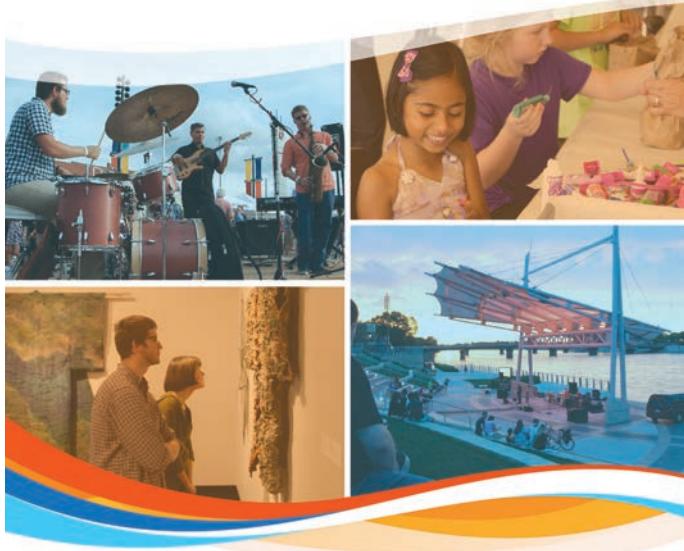
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LISTEN LOCAL



Manifesting Justice

The Power of Being Heard

Restorative justice circles are changing the way local leaders approach discipline and conflict-resolution. **BY DAMITA BROWN**



Jordan Sellergren

When students break rules, juvenile offenders lash out, co-workers lock horns or community debates reach a boiling point, the result is often resentment at best and at worst escalating violence.

Enter restorative justice talk circles, which eliminate winners and losers, drama and punishments, leaving just conversation.

Last fall, the Mediation Services of Eastern Iowa (MSEI) created opportunities for school administrators and coordinators of workplace disciplinary programs and criminal justice diversion programs to learn how to lead one of these peacekeeping circles. The circles are guided by four basic rules:

- One speaker at a time—no interruptions.
- Speak and listen with respect.
- No words that harm or hurt.
- Speak honestly.

In situations where both sides of a conflict feel disrespected or misunderstood, MSEI teaches that these mutually-agreed-upon encounters, facilitated by experts, can provide a space to relate to a social problem or hash out

interpersonal issues.

"As a person experienced in mediation, I experience the power in people being heard, and circle as a process where everyone [has] equal opportunity to speak," Annie Tucker, executive director of MSEI, said.

"We are not just looking at a person who has done harm as a cancer in society, but as a part of the solution to the harm that they caused."

—*Laura Cottrell*

Some form of circle practice is common among indigenous communities around the world. The Hollow Water First Nation on Lake Winnipeg has played a critical role in demonstrating the philosophy and power

of circles to address harms in communities. In the 1990s, Canadian First Nation people began teaching the circle process in order to address mass incarceration of Native peoples, considered another form a genocide.

Since then, restorative justice talk circles and other remedial practices have grown in non-Native communities. The practice has also been adopted in response to mass incarceration of African Americans.

"When non-Native people, including many people of color, experienced the power of the circle process to address harms and conflicts, they began to use the process with other non-Native people and in other areas of life as well," Tucker said. "The Frogtown-Summit University Circle in Saint Paul, Minnesota, for example, operated for many years to keep young African-American men, ages 18-35, out of prison and on a good path."

Tucker brought to Iowa City the Minnesota-based circle keeper trainer Kay Pranis, who taught two three-day series. These circles build a skill that is too often missing in efforts to resolve conflict—genuine communication.

Tucker says the circles have sharpened her intent to listen to and hear people. "It's also deepened my interest in having a powerful open question that helps people get to what's at the heart of the matter for them," she said.

"In a circle that uses a talking piece, it's only when you're holding the talking piece that you can talk," Tucker explained. These talking pieces are traditionally natural objects, such as feathers or wood pieces. "The rest of the time, your role is to listen and trust that when you get the talking piece you will know what you want to say or you will pass. And that is different from most conversations, where you are preparing to elbow your way in."

It appears the practice of making space—that is, time—to listen alleviates the anxiety or impatience that can arise when people worry they will not be heard or understood. Removing that fear in and of itself helps participants to engage more openly. I believe this greater openness is also enhanced by the act of witnessing, both for the witness and the

receiver. Research about mirror neurons supports the idea that witnessing acts of empathy promotes empathy. The kind of modeling of empathetic listening that often happens in restorative justice circles is amplified by group process.

Laura Cottrell, principal at Northwest Junior High, has led circles in the community and for her teachers. She has also co-led two circles for Midwest Telegraph's Urban Retreats—usually one- or two-day retreats based on contemplative and experiential practices that focus on healing community from the effects of racism.

Cottrell said she is attracted by the concept of the circles because she finds the idea of collective accountability really powerful. "We are not just looking at a person who has done harm as a cancer in society, but as a part of the solution to the harm that they caused. And together as community we can figure out what that is," she said.

MSEI circles have been held for teachers at Kirkwood Elementary, Tate High School, Southeast Junior High, Northwest Junior High, West High and Liberty High School. Tucker points out that "experiencing a circle is the standard first step in a school considering restorative practices. The teachers get to experience how a circle works."

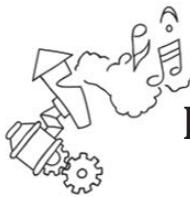
From there, the participants get to decide if and how they will incorporate circles in their communities. Right now efforts are underway to provide more training so that this powerful resource is more widely available.

Lore Baur teaches middle school children and uses circles in her classroom, in addition to co-hosting a circle with Lynn Ahlers at Catholic Worker House (CWH). Her middle school students are prone to conflict, Baur said, but she finds they often lack the communication skills they need to resolve it. Within her circle, she said, the focus is on "listening underneath the conflict."

"We find out what is the value that's important to the other person, the non-controversial essence. When there is no conflict, we all value support. The conflict is about the strategy of how to meet the value." **lv**

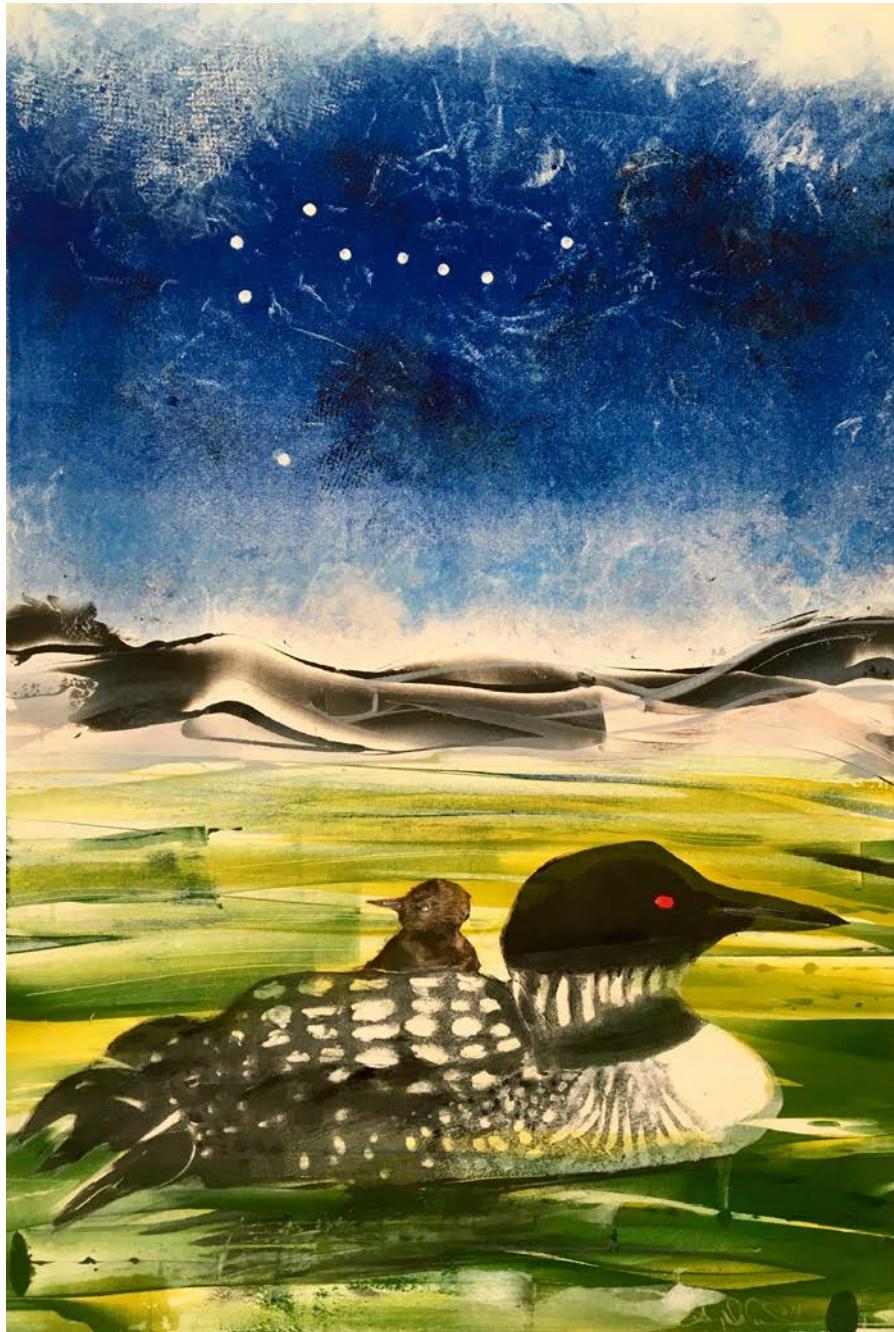
Damita Brown, Ph.D., is the founder of Midwest Telegraph, leading urban retreats that focus on healing communities through anti-racism and allyship. She is also the founder of Freedom School 360 which, thanks to the support of the Beloved Community Initiative, will be offered in Iowa City for the first time this July.

Family Folk Machine



Saturday
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COMMUNITY

En Español

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or qué al conocer a alguien se pregunta “¿de dónde eres?” ¿Qué buscamos? Somos más que un lugar en un certificado de nacimiento o en un pasaporte. Propongo superar categorizaciones que incluyen narrativas nacionales demasiado grandes para caber dentro de una narrativa personal.

Si digo que soy colombiana, soy auténticamente colombiana para internacionales, y cuando digo que soy de Carolina del Norte, soy auténticamente estadounidense para los estadounidenses. Pero cuando digo que nací en Bogotá, Colombia, me mudé a EE.UU. a los ocho años y viví el resto de mi vida en Carolina del Norte, no tengo identidad auténtica. De repente no soy ni lo suficientemente colombiana ni lo suficientemente estadounidense. Pierdo credenciales. Mi español ahora tiene cosas raras y mi inglés no es genuino.

Cuando estoy con mis amigos latinoamericanos me siento mal diciendo solamente “de Carolina del Norte,” porque quizás negaría “mi conexión latinoamericana” con ellos. O ¿pensarán que estoy rechazando mis raíces? Una vez fui a un bar con una amiga internacional que había llegado a Iowa para estudiar su posgrado. Cuando volví del baño vi a dos hombres del Midwest hablándole, fascinados con su acento. Me presenté y me preguntaron de dónde era. Dije que nací en Colombia, pero que casi toda mi vida había vivido en Carolina del Norte. A lo que aquellos hombres respondieron, “¡Pues bienvenida a EE.UU.!” Se perdieron la parte de “he vivido la mayoría años aquí.”

En una clase de traducción en la que examinábamos textos en varios idiomas, me di cuenta de que cuando había alguna pregunta acerca del español y había un compañero latinoamericano en la clase, lo miraban primero a él. En mis clases de español, cuando hay un pasaje en inglés, el profesor les pregunta a los gringos de la clase que lean, olvidando el hecho de que yo también domino el inglés. Conmigo se confunden.

Al ser dos idiomas soy ninguno. No me quejo de mi habilidad de bucear en ambos mundos, pero siento que no hay espacio para

una identidad latina inmigrante dentro del discurso del español y del inglés, que sea validado como oficial. Existe lo experimental, pero no un espacio donde se reconozca de manera legítima. Tener dos idiomas y crecer en un espacio sin distinciones ante los ojos de una sociedad que se obsesiona con la categorización de identidad, es visto con más frecuencia que menos como un bilingüismo sustractivo, en vez de un bilingüismo aditivo. Es decir, al saber dos idiomas, no domino bien ninguno.

Hago un llamado a las voces latinas, que reescriban un español y un inglés nacido de sus identidades bilingües. Que quiera la multiplicidad de voces dentro de una afirmación auténtica de un todo, no de un ser fragmentado y por ende ilegítimo. La próxima vez que conozcamos a alguien, en vez de comenzar una conversación con “¿de dónde eres?” preguntemos “¿quién eres?” y así podremos escuchar y conocer los matices que esa persona escoge, lejos de los prejuicios que se han filtrado en el inconsciente colectivo.

Don't Ask Me Where I'm From

My bilingual identity
**WRITTEN AND TRANSLATED
BY ANGELA PICO**

hen we meet someone, why do we usually ask, “Where are you from?” What are we looking for? We are more than a place on a birth certificate or a passport. I propose we overcome categorizations that include national stories too large to fit within a personal narrative.

Whenever I say I'm Colombian, I'm authentically Colombian for international people; whenever I say I'm from North Carolina, I'm authentically American for Americans. But when I say that I was born in Bogota, Colombia, I moved to the U.S. when I was 8 and that I've lived the rest of my life in North Carolina, then I don't have an authentic identity. I'm suddenly not Colombian or

American enough. I lose my credentials. My Spanish is off and my English is not genuine.

When I'm with my international Latin-American friends, I feel bad only saying, "from North Carolina," because then perhaps I'm denying my international connection with them. Or would they think I'm rejecting my heritage? Last week I went to a bar with an international friend who came to Iowa for a master's degree. When I came back from the restroom, I noticed two Midwestern men talking to her, fascinated by her accent. I introduced myself and they asked me where I was from. I said I was born in Colombia, but most of my life I had lived in North Carolina, to which these men responded, "Well, welcome to America!" They missed the part where I mentioned that my home has been here for most of my life.

In a translation course, in which we examined texts in various languages, I noticed that whenever there was a question about Spanish, and there was a Latin-American classmate in the room, they would look at him first. In my Spanish literature courses, whenever there is a passage in English to read out loud, the professor asks the gringos in the room to read, forgetting the fact that I'm also fluent in English. People get confused with me.

By embodying two languages, I am neither. I'm not complaining about my ability to navigate both worlds, but I do feel as if there isn't a space where a Latina/o immigrant identity is fully validated within both an English or Spanish narrative. We have experimental spaces, but not a space where it is recognized in a legitimate manner. Knowing two languages and growing up in an unmarked space, before the eyes of a society obsessed with categorizing identity, is seen as subtractive bilingualism, instead of additive bilingualism. By knowing two languages, a person masters neither one nor the other.

I call on all Latina/o voices to rewrite Spanish and English from their bilingual identities. For a multiplicity of voices to fit within the authentic affirmation of a whole, instead of within a fragmented body deemed illegitimate. Next time we meet someone, instead of asking, "Where are you from?" let's ask, "Who are you?" in order to listen and learn about the nuances she chooses for herself, far from the prejudice that has filtered into the collective consciousness. *lv/*

Angela Pico is a writer in the Spanish MFA Creative Writing Program at the University of Iowa. She is also a painter and a salsa dancer.

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When the beloved Kalona Cheese factory, which closed in 2014, reopened as the Kalona Creamery in 2017, my excitement was focused on the return of cheese curds. The curds are set to be brought back later this year, thank the dairy gods, but the creamery has more to offer.

On April 21, Kalona Creamery debuted their line of eight hard ice cream flavors. I was greeted that day by their mascot, Lona the Cow, and walked in to find a teenage boy racing the clock to finish 10 scoops of ice cream in under 10 minutes. He finished victorious.

In line for a modest two scoops (\$3.69), I was able to sample the creamery's organic Kalona SuperNatural Whole Chocolate Milk—smooth and tasty—which is also the base of their Udderly Chocolate ice cream. Along with milks, the creamery sells a variety of locally-sourced foods, from meats, cheeses and jarred goods to freshly-made soups and sandwiches.

Their Plain Ol' Vanilla ice cream is used in most of their flavors, including Kalona Crunch, a butter brickle ice cream with pecan butter crunch from Kalona Chocolates; Cow Pie, a peanut butter and chocolate mix; Chicken Feed, with M&Ms and monster cookies made at the creamery; and Parlor Pie, featuring Miller's strawberry and rhubarb jam—made by an Amish family in the area—and The Perfect Blend shortbread, crafted in Mt. Vernon (which I sampled on its own in the shop—absolutely delicious).

I ended up sitting down with a scoop of Moo-Mint and Pecan Pasture, complete with a milk chocolate cow on top.

Pecan Pasture is Udderly Chocolate ice cream with additional chocolate, caramel and pecan brownie bites. The caramel and pecan were understated, but it was the promise of brownie that sold me to begin with, and I was not disappointed. Stretchy chocolate ice cream cradled fresh, fudgy brownie bites that put other "brownie batter" ice cream concoctions to shame. Pecan Pasture is undeniably rich, but didn't leave me with a stomach ache or desperate thirst.

My expectations are always high when I dive into a new mint chip, my favorite flavor of ice cream. I have no complaints for Moo-Mint. The ice cream itself was particularly creamy—necessary to balance an ample mint flavor—and I was delighted by the combination of dark chocolate flakes and chunks.

My mid-morning dessert went great with a cup of Capanna coffee (\$1.99), also served at the counter. On a warmer day, I might have ordered a float (\$3.99), made with your choice of Millstream soda.

By the time I crunched on the chocolate cow, I was already looking forward to my next visit to try the other ice cream offerings, and those yet to be debuted, some hot summer afternoon. Kalona Creamery is a worthy competitor to Whitey's and Heyn's, and makes the lovely town of Kalona even more of a destination. **lv/**

—Emma McClatchey

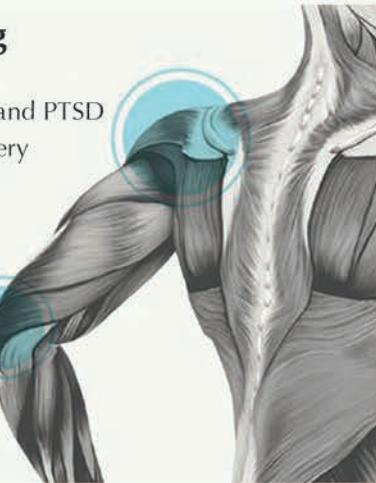


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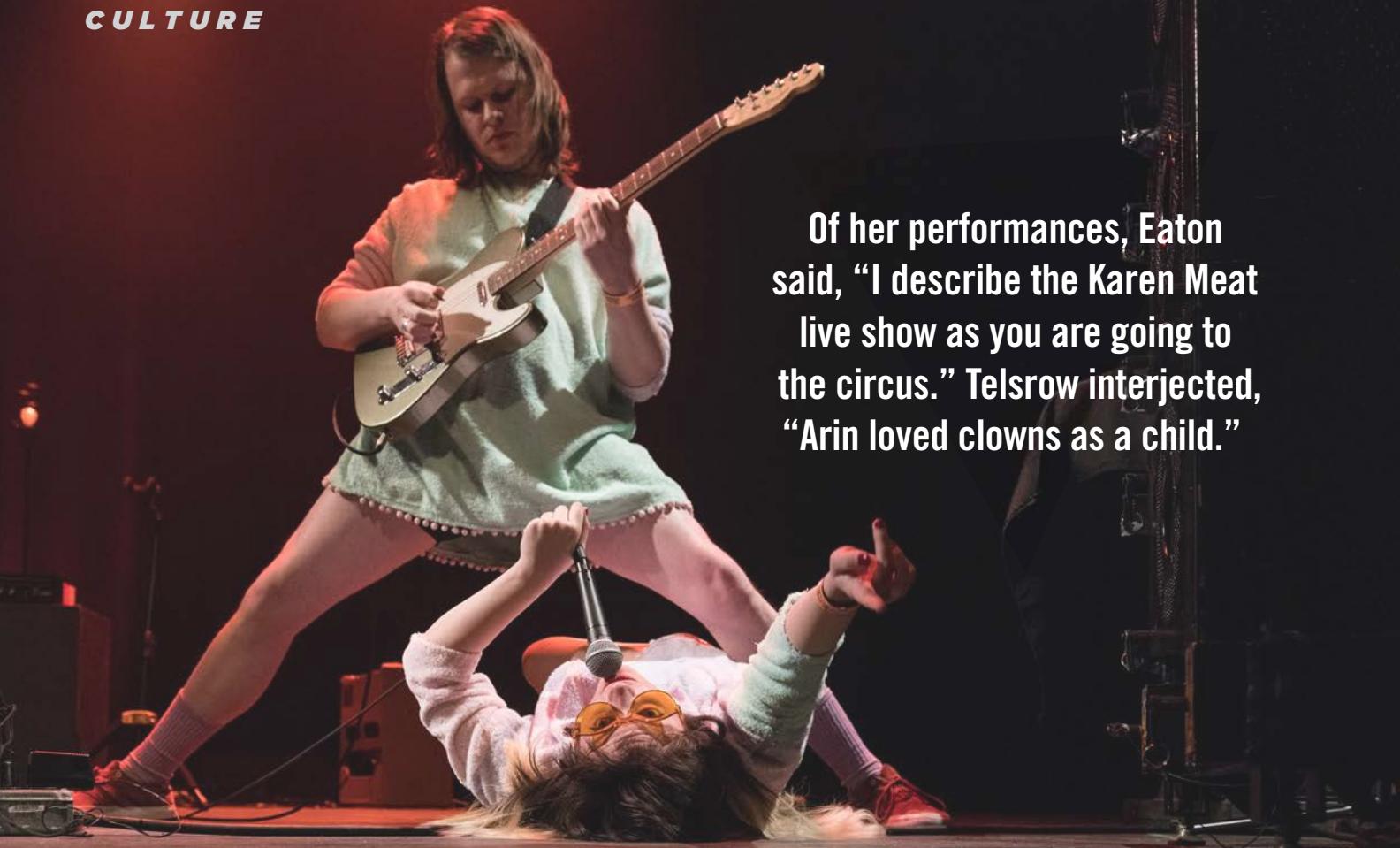


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Of her performances, Eaton said, “I describe the Karen Meat live show as you are going to the circus.” Telsrow interjected, “Arin loved clowns as a child.”

A-List

Harsh and Ugly

With two new albums wrapped, Arin Eaton and Dana Telsrow discuss how they got here. • BY KENT WILLIAMS

t's a tale as old as time: Boy makes albums. Girl makes albums. Boy meets Girl. Boy and Girl make more albums. Boy and girl start touring together, performing in matching silver-lamé dresses.

Or maybe that's a new story, or at least news. In advance of their joint album release party May 12 at Gabe's, I sat down to chat with Dana Telsrow (Dana T) and Arin Eaton (Karen Meat) at the Sanctuary. They're now a couple, both personally and professionally, but met through music: Telsrow played a show at Vaudeville Mews in Des Moines, where Eaton was working the door. Later, Eaton asked Telsrow to play a show in Milwaukee when her full band wasn't available, and they've been performing together ever since.

For a man whose previous album was a concept album about life, the universe and

everything (*tiny mind MASSIVE soul*), and a woman whose previous EP is about romantic betrayal and drunken nausea (*She's Drunk Like The Rest Of Us*), the two of them seemed pretty normal, serious and polite.

Telsrow has been working with Luke Tweedy at Flat Black Studios as an engineer, and that's where their two new albums came together. Telsrow explained, “I wrote all my stuff and put it all together, then Arin wrote everything on her album and then we just worked together to arrange it.”

That is an oversimplification, given Telsrow's propensity for elaborate arrangements, which he admits is heavily influenced by Brian Wilson's experimental productions. “I heard *Pet Sounds* in college, and I had the same experience probably that every Beach Boys fan has, like ‘Holy shit! The Beach Boys did this crazy thing?’ And I can never

Dana T & Karen Meat Double Album Release Show w/ Ramona and the Sometimes, Mr. Jackson Gabe's, Saturday, May 12, 9 p.m., \$10 Photo by Zak Neumann

write music the same again; I've got to find this new level of expression.”

Telsrow started playing guitar in bands as a teenager. After high school he studied at the University of Iowa's School of Music. He had an ambivalent reaction to classical training.

“It was weird; I didn't like classical music much, your typical Bach and Beethoven,” Telsrow said. “Then we got to 20th century music and at first we did serialism, and I totally didn't get it at all. Then we got into John Cage and Ives and Stravinsky and I thought, ‘These people are using music in a way that makes me think of visual art,’ and that's where those crazy moments of discord [in my music] come from.”

The new Dana T album, *Harsh Forever*, retains some of the intricate arrangements and free jazz freakouts of his previous work,

but in a calmer, more focused framework. It's part unhinged musical ambition, part kid in a candy store. He's throwing a whole bunch of cool stuff at the listener, but he isn't being a show off. It's generous.

When asked about his songwriting method, he said "I've always been intrigued by weird harmony and harmonic progressions. At the same time I'm trying to find the balance—I like jazzy stuff, but if it's too much jazz it sounds all the same; I like pop, but if it's too basic, over and over, I get uninterested. I'm trying to fuse both those worlds, and hopefully the eccentric arrangement [of] things will point to something in the experience of being alive better than words."

Eaton's musical education is similar to Telsrow's.

"I started playing music I was about 12; I was in a bunch of neighborhood bands. I was in bands with my brother. Then I went to Kansas City when I was 14 and thought I was awesome and recorded a CD and it wasn't awesome. I went to school at South Carolina University and transferred to MTSU [Middle Tennessee State University] and finished there in music composition and film scoring."

Her new album, *You're An Ugly Person*, is more straightforward pop music than *Harsh Forever*, but you can still hear Telsrow's production and arrangement flourishes. The overdubbed chorus of her own voice is uncomplicatedly sweet at times. Some songs, like "A is 4 Asshole" combine '80s disco beats and funky synth basslines with deadpan

monotone vocals about lying in bed drunk.

Of her performances, Eaton said, "I describe the Karen Meat live show as you are going to the circus," Telsrow interjected, "Arin loved clowns as a child."

Humor is a big component of her lyrics. Telsrow said of her songs, "half [of Eaton's] songs we perform, she sings the first line, the crowd starts laughing. But by the time they get to the end of the song they say 'Oh shit, OK I feel that, it's not just a joke.'"

That humor doesn't just have the effect of disarming the audience and giving them a way into serious emotions, but also reflects some of Eaton's real-life ambivalence towards strong emotions.

"I laugh a lot when I'm uncomfortable," she said. "Someone tells me something serious, and I just laugh at them for a long time. My friend Kelly posted on Facebook, 'My dog Chewy went missing,' and I just busted out laughing, and I thought 'Oh no, this is the worst thing ever.'"

Telsrow added, "I looked at that post and felt incredibly sad," to which Eaton replied, "I just laughed because I didn't know how to act."

True to form, our conversation was punctuated with Eaton's infectious laugh, so much so that I wanted to put together an audio supercut just of her laughs. Even though they both take making music seriously, they're never far from finding humor in a situation and injecting their music with a sense of fun. They feed off each other's different but

compatible musical impulses. As an example, *You're An Ugly Person* is peppered with huge, verging on obnoxious, guitar licks from Telsrow, where on his own record his playing is more exact and restrained.

Their life alternates between working here in Iowa City—Telsrow at Flat Black and Eaton making knit goods she sells at White Rabbit and other stores—and long tours around the United States. But touring is hit or miss as a way to make money.

Telsrow said, "My trajectory went up [financially] until the elections, and when Trump was elected, I feel like something happened and people didn't want to buy merch any more."

"People were too depressed," Eaton interjected. "We go on this one tour and seem to make pretty good money; it's to Florida and back."

It seems strange that two such regular Iowa kids make music that's infected with a touch of the deep crazy. Their performances in matching dresses and makeup, the Captain Beefheart digressions, Eaton's crooked fun-house path to scary emotions in her lyrics, all seem to be part of a separate universe from their everyday demeanor off stage. Maybe their personas are the surreal kind of wacky the country needs now. Or maybe when the going gets weird, the weird turn normal. LV

Kent Williams lives and writes about music in Iowa City.

EVENTS

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WED., MAY 2

PROFESSIONAL THEATRE

'Camelot,' Old Creamery Theatre, Amana, 2 p.m., \$12-31.50, runs through May 20

DINNER EVENT

Hancher Culinary Arts Experience: Trumpet Blossom Cafe, Hancher, Iowa City, 5 p.m., \$40

FOOD ON THE MOVE

Food Tour of Historic Czech Village, National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library, Cedar Rapids, 6 p.m., \$25-30

WORKSHOP/CLASS

Reality Bites: Immigrants and Refugees, Cedar Rapids Public Library-Downtown, 6 p.m., Free

Planning an event? Submit event info to calendar@littlevillagemag.com. Include event name, date, time, venue, street address, admission price and a brief description (no all-caps, exclamation points or advertising verbiage, please). To find more events, visit littlevillagemag.com/calendar.

WORKSHOP/CLASS

Les Macarons: Exquisite Meringue Cookies, New Pioneer Food Co-op Coralville, 6 p.m., \$15

THU., MAY 3

LECTURE

Science on Tap: Opioid Ideas Lab, Hancher, Iowa City, 5 p.m., Free

CRAFTY PURSUITS

Sewing: Eden Baggy Pants, Home Ec. Workshop, Iowa City, 6 p.m., \$40

VIOLIN SUPERSTAR

Quad City Symphony Orchestra: An Evening with Joshua Bell, Adler Theatre, Davenport, 7:30 p.m., \$33-98

LIVE DEPRESSION POP

Bathtub Cig w/ Hot Tang, *Trumpet Blossom Cafe*, Iowa City, 8:30 p.m., \$5

"WONKY GROOVE MUSIC"

Dondu, *Yacht Club*, Iowa City, 9 p.m., Free

LIVE MUSIC FROM FRANCE

Nautilus Trio, *Sanctuary Pub*, Iowa City, 9 p.m., Free

FRI., MAY 4CHILDREN'S EXPLORATION

May the Fourth STEM Celebration, *The Iowa Children's Museum*, Coralville, 5 p.m., Free with admission

WEEKEND CLASS

From First Draft to Final Pass: How to Be Your Own Editor, *Iowa Writers' House*, Iowa City, 6 p.m., \$265/weekend, three sessions

COMMUNITY THEATRE

City Circle Presents: 'Little Women: The Musical', *Coralville Center for the Performing Arts*, 7:30 p.m., \$14-29, runs through May 6

OPENING NIGHT!

'**Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat**', *Theatre Cedar Rapids*, 7:30 p.m., \$31-40, runs through May 27

LIVE COMEDY

Mark Sweeney w/ Adam Degi, *Penguin's Comedy Club*, Cedar Rapids, 8 p.m., \$10-12.50

JAZZ AMERICANA POWER COUPLE

Gaines & Waggoner EP Release, *Sanctuary Pub*, Iowa City, 8 p.m., Free

LIVE MEN

Girls Night Out! The Show, *First Avenue Club*, Iowa City, 8 p.m., \$20-50

LIVE SINGER/SONGWRITER

Kevin Morby w/ Hand Habits, *The Mill*, Iowa City, 8 p.m., \$15

LIVE FUNK

Charles Walker Band, *Iowa City Yacht Club*, 9 p.m., \$7

LIVE AMERICANA

Flash In A Pan, *Big Grove Brewery & Taproom*, Iowa City, 9 p.m., Free

"OMNI-TEMPO HYPERBASS"

Stratus w/ SoFroesch, OnO, Android Antill, Weeknd Warrior, Blue Moose Tap House, Iowa City, 9 p.m., \$8-12

LIVE COUNTRY

Daniel Donato w/ The Bamboozlers, Dick's Tap & Shake Room, Cedar Rapids, 9 p.m., \$8-10

GOOD CAUSE

88.3 KCCK Fundraiser—Cinco da Blues, *The Mill*, Iowa City, 7 p.m., \$20

INDOOR FOOTBALL

Cedar Rapids Titans vs. Arizona, US Cellular Center, Cedar Rapids, 7:05 p.m., \$8-40

CLOSING NIGHT

Dreamwell Theatre Presents: 'Poona the Fuckdog and Other Plays for Children', *Public Space One*, Iowa City, 7:30 p.m., \$10-13

LIVE CLASSICAL

Orchestra Iowa Presents: 'Rachmaninoff's Rhapsody', *Paramount Theatre Cedar Rapids*, 7:30 p.m., \$16-54

LIVE ROCK

Dweezil Zappa: Choice Cuts!, *The Englert Theatre*, Iowa City, 8 p.m., \$31.50-75

UIWA FUNDRAISER

Museum Party: Art & Soul, *Hancher Auditorium*, Iowa City, 8 p.m., \$50

SATURDAY, MAY 5MUSEUM

Free First Saturdays for Students: Ride of the Kings, *National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library*, Cedar Rapids, 9:30 a.m., Free

MIYAZAKI MAY!

'Kiki's Delivery Service', *FilmScene*, Iowa City, 10 a.m., \$8-9

OFF TO THE RACES!

Kentucky Derby Viewing Party, *Big Grove Brewery & Taproom*, Iowa City, 3 p.m., menu prices

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POP-JAZZ-DISCO, YOU NAME IT

Nellie McKay, CSPS Legion Arts, Cedar Rapids, 8 p.m., \$22-27

LIVE SOUL

The Right Now w/ Soul Sherpa, Nonprophet, Iowa City Yacht Club, 8 p.m., \$10

LIVE ROCK

The Shakletons w/ Dan Tedesco, Dick's Tap & Shake Room, Cedar Rapids, 9:30 p.m., \$8-10

SUN., MAY 6

CRAFTY PURSUITS

Bezel a Stone, Beadology Iowa, Iowa City, 1 p.m., \$105

FREE LIVE ROCK/POP

Live Music w/ Justin Goodchild, Cedar Ridge Distillery, Swisher, 1 p.m., Free

FINAL PERFORMANCE

'Noises Off,' Giving Tree Theater, Marion, 2 p.m., \$26-120

LIVE CLASSICAL

Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Hancher Auditorium, Iowa City, 3 p.m., \$20-90

LIVE BLUES

Robert Johnson, Sanctuary Pub, Iowa City, 6 p.m., Free

SKATEBOARDING DOC

Vino Vérité: 'Minding the Gap,' FilmScene, Iowa City, 7 p.m., \$20-25

LIVE FOLK

John Gorka with Amilia K Spicer, CSPS Legion Arts, Cedar Rapids, 7 p.m., \$23-28

MON., MAY 7

KIDS SPORTS

MLB's Pitch, Hit & Run, Lowe Park, Marion, 5:30 p.m., Free

CRAFTY PURSUITS

Sewing: Luna Pants—Session 1/2, Home Ec. Workshop, Iowa City, 6 p.m., \$50/Course, concludes May 14

LIVE DISNEY JUNIOR

'PJ Masks Live: Time To Be A Hero,' Adler Theatre, 6 p.m., \$23-99

LIVE ALTERNATIVE ROCK

Rosedale w/ Bain-Marie, Wenslow, Babydoll, Gavin Scott, Gabe's, Iowa City, 6 p.m., \$5

POLITICS

Environmental Forum: County Supervisor Candidates, Iowa City Public Library, 7 p.m., Free

TUE., MAY 8

CRAFTY PURSUITS

Kirkwood Community College: Chenille Bracelet, Beadology Iowa, 11 a.m., \$58

GOOD CAUSE

Friends of Hickory Hill Park Fundraiser, Big Grove Brewery & Taproom, 5 p.m., menu prices

CRAFTY PURSUITS

Quilting Start to Finish: Modern Twist To The Disappearing Nine Patch—Session 1/3, Home Ec. Workshop, 6 p.m., \$75/Course, continues May 15 & 22

LIVE SPOOKS

Seeking the Paranormal: From Ghost Story to Urban Legend, The Granger House Victorian Museum, Marion, 7 p.m., \$7-10

LIVE INDIE ROCK



▲ Modest Mouse w/ Mass Gothic, McGrath Amphitheatre, Cedar Rapids, 7:30 p.m., \$39.50-59

WED., MAY 9

LIVE COMEDY METAL

Psychostick w/ Sexually Aggressive Silverbacks, Brotherhood of the Mudkat, Frontal Assault, Gabe's, Iowa City, 6 p.m., \$13-15

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CRAFTS FOR MOM!

Caucho Craft Circle: Momma's Day Glass Painting,
Caucho, Cedar Rapids, 7 p.m., \$25

LIVE FOLK ROCK

Leon Majcen w/ River Glen, Iowa City Yacht Club,
Iowa City, 8 p.m., \$10'

HORROR FLICK

Late Shift At The Grindhouse: 'Birdemic: Shock and Terror,' FilmScene, Iowa City, 10 p.m., \$4

TALK AND Q&A

A Night of Adventure with Steve Cannon, World of Bikes, Iowa City, 6:30 p.m., Free

THU., MAY 10

CRAFTY PURSUITS

UI Museum of Natural History Adult Art Nite:
Bracelets, Museum of Natural History at UI,
6 p.m., \$30

LIVE COUNTRY

**Brantley Gilbert: The Ones That Like Me Tour w/
Aaron Lewis and Josh Phillips, US Cellular Center,**
7 p.m., \$34.75-59.75

ROCKUMENTARY

**'Scream For Me Sarajevo,' Marcus Theatres, Cedar
Rapids and Iowa City, 7 p.m., \$15**

LIVE BLUES GUITAR

Kevin Gordon, The Mill, 8 p.m., \$12-15

LIVE COMEDY—SNL ALUM

Jay Pharoah, The Englert Theatre, 8 p.m., \$25-33.50

LIVE EAST COAST ROCK

**When Particles Collide w/ Commanders, Hep Cat,
Yacht Club, Iowa City, 9 p.m., \$6**

FRI., MAY 11

RESCHEDULED CIRCUS JAM

**Cirque Session: Learn to Slackline, Indian Creek
Nature Center, Cedar Rapids, 5 p.m., \$5 suggested
donation**

CR BEER WEEK

**Iowa Brewers Olympics, Lion Bridge Brewing
Company, Cedar Rapids, 5:30 p.m., Free**

LIVE EMO-PUNK

**Hawthorne Heights w/ Listener, Hotel Books, Sienna
Skies, Heavy Things, Manhattan Blockade, Gabe's,
Iowa City, 6 p.m., \$15-200**

FREE LIVE CLASSIC ROCK

**The Agency, Cedar Ridge Distillery, Swisher,
6 p.m., Free**

BOLLYWOOD RETROSPECTIVE

**Iowa Corridor Sangeet Presents: 'Pancham ... The
Genius of R.D. BURMAN,' Coralville Center for the
Performing Arts, 7 p.m., Free**

LIVE COMEDY

**Grant Lyon w/ Greg Henderson, Penguin's Comedy
Club, Cedar Rapids, 8 p.m., \$10-12.50**

LIVE INDIE ROCK

**Halfloves w/ Caleb Condit, The Mill, Iowa City, 8
p.m., \$8-10**

FREE LIVE BLUEGRASS

**Cedar County Cobras, Big Grove Brewery & Taproom,
Iowa City, 9 p.m., Free**

LIVE ROOTS ROCK

**The Lucky Dutch w/ Slackmaster Smooth, Iowa City
Yacht Club, Iowa City, 9 p.m., \$7**

SAT., MAY 12

SHOP FOR SPRING!

**JCMG Plant Sale & Flea Market, Johnson County
Fairgrounds, Iowa City 8 a.m., Free**

CRAFTY PURSUITS

**New Class: Vagearrings, Beadology Iowa, Iowa City,
10 a.m., \$78**

MIYAZAKI MAY!

**'Howl's Moving Castle,' FilmScene, Iowa City, 10
a.m., \$8-9**

IOWA DANCE FEST 2018

**Master Class: Circus Hooping with Lindsay Moon,
Coralville Center for the Performing Arts, 10:30 a.m.,
\$17-27**

SO MUCH BEER

**14th Annual Benz Beerfest, Benz Beverage Depot,
Cedar Rapids, 1 p.m., \$30-40**

Iowa Dance Festival

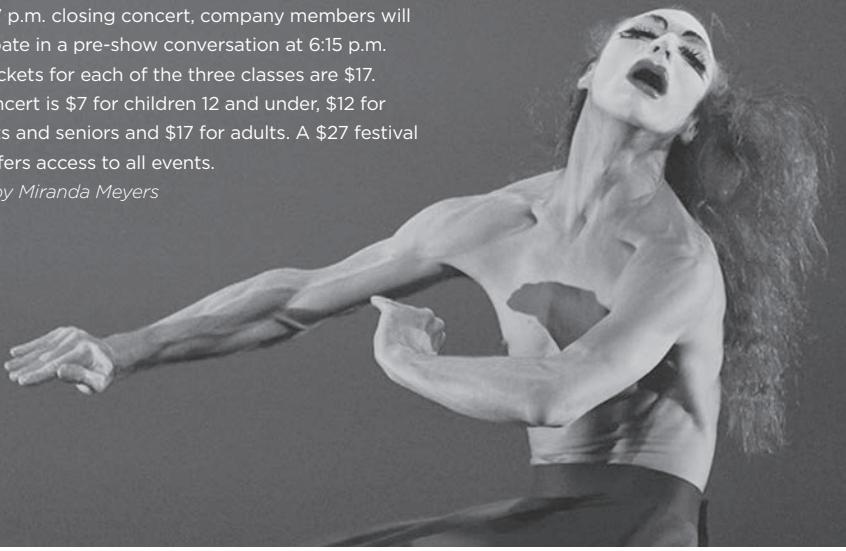
Coralville Center for the Performing Arts, Saturday, May 12, 10:30 a.m., \$7-27

InterDance is celebrating the 12th year of the Iowa Dance Festival with a day of master classes leading up to a closing concert featuring Nimbus Dance Works from Jersey City, New Jersey, and including work by local choreographers. The day high-kicks off at 10:30 a.m. with a class in circus hooping with Lindsay Moon, founder of the Eastern Iowa Circus Collective. Nimbus Dance Works presents a contemporary ballet master class at 1 p.m. At 3 p.m., Ashley Bassett, a dance graduate student at the University of Iowa, will offer an all-ages hip-hop class.

Hannah Weeks, a former student at the University of Iowa and Nolte Academy of Dance, comes home to Iowa City with Nimbus Dance Works. She's in her third season dancing with the company, which was founded in 2005. Other dancers traveling with Nimbus to the festival include founder Samuel Pott, Justin Perez (Orlando, Florida), Victoria Santaguida (Toronto, Canada) and Devon Louis (Washington, DC). Prior to the 7 p.m. closing concert, company members will participate in a pre-show conversation at 6:15 p.m.

Tickets for each of the three classes are \$17. The concert is \$7 for children 12 and under, \$12 for students and seniors and \$17 for adults. A \$27 festival pass offers access to all events.

Photo by Miranda Meyers



IOWA DANCE FEST 2018

Master Class: Nimbus Dance Works, Coralville Center for the Performing Arts, 1 p.m., \$17-27

GARDEN CRAFTS

Workshop: Fairy Garden, Moss Iowa City, 3 p.m., \$30

IOWA DANCE FEST 2018

Master Class: Hip Hop with Ashley Basset, Coralville Center for the Performing Arts, 3 p.m., \$17-27

ANNIVERSARY CONCERT

The Best of the Family Folk Machine, The Englert Theatre, 3 p.m., \$5-10 donation

GARDEN CRAFTS

Wine & Design: Mother's Day Succulent Bowl, Moss Iowa City, 6 p.m., \$65

IOWA DANCE FEST 2018

InterDance Closing Concert, Coralville Center for the Performing Arts, 7 p.m., \$7-27

BATTLE OF THE BANDS!

Camp Euforia Battle of the Bands w/ Trash Wizard, Nonprophet, In the Attic, Death Valley Welcome Center, Interstellar Cave Dweller, Iowa City Yacht Club, 8 p.m., \$5



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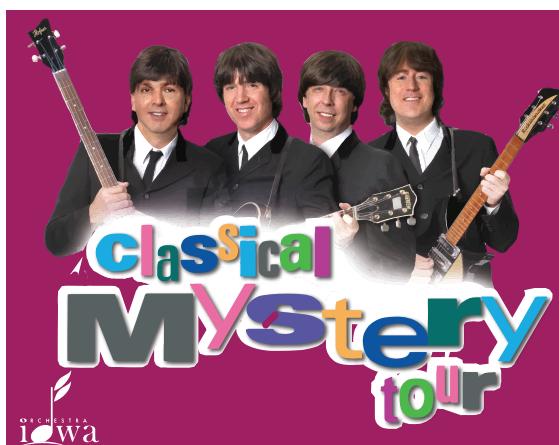
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EDITORS' PICKS

NEW MUSIC RELEASE

Dana T & Karen Meat Double Album Release Show w/ Ramona and the Sometimes, Mr. Jackson, Gabe's, 9 p.m., \$10

SUN., MAY 13

BIKES & DELIGHTS

Cedar Rapids Rad Tour 2018, Goldfinch Cyclery, Cedar Rapids, 10 a.m., \$35-55

PAMPER YOUR MAMA

Mother's Day Brunch Buffet, ReUnion Brewery, Coralville, 10 a.m., menu prices

NO. SERIOUSLY!

Mother's Day Brunch Buffet, Brix Cheese Shop & Wine Bar, Iowa City, 11 a.m., \$10-20

FREE LIVE MUSIC

Live Music w/ Drew Hurn, Cedar Ridge Distillery, 1 p.m., Free

LIVE HARDCORE

Stick To Your Guns w/ Still Standing, avoid., Hardship, Blue Moose Tap House, 6:30 p.m., \$16-18

LIVE POST-HARDCORE

Senses Fail w/ Sharptooth, Bain Marie, Gabe's, 7 p.m., \$16-19

MON., MAY 14

CR BEER WEEK

Beer Sensory Workshop, Quarter Barrel Arcade & Brewery, Cedar Rapids, 6:30 p.m., \$30

IOWA CITY PRIDE SERIES



▲ Pride at FilmScene: 'Tom of Finland,' FilmScene, 7 p.m., \$8-10.50

LIVE AMERICANA

Justin Townes Earle w/ Blake Brown, Driftless Sisters, Codfish Hollow Barnstormers, 8 p.m., \$25

TUE., MAY 15

FOODIE SENSATION

Homemade Ravioli with Chef Gianluca Baroncini, New Pioneer Food Co-op Coralville, 6 p.m., \$25

CR BEER WEEK

Meet the Brewers Beer Dinner, Lion Bridge Brewing Company, Cedar Rapids, 6 p.m., \$50

NYC DOCUMENTARY

'One October,' FilmScene, 6 p.m., \$8-10.50

LIVE HIP HOP

Joyner Lucas: I'm Kind of a Big Deal Tour w/ Eli, Blue Moose Tap House, 7 p.m., \$20-100

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TUESDAYS Blues Jam, Parlor City Pub and Eatery, Cedar Rapids, 7 p.m., Free Yahoo Drummers, Public Space One, Iowa City, 7 p.m., Free Weekly Old-Timey Jam Session, Trumpet Blossom Cafe, Iowa City, 7:30 p.m., Free Karaoke, Studio 13, Iowa City, 9 p.m., Free Karaoke Tuesdays, *The Mill*, Iowa City, 10 p.m., Free

WEDNESDAYS Gentle Yoga, Public Space One, Iowa City, 5 p.m., \$5-10 Break Dance Group, Public Space One, Iowa City, 6 p.m., Free Burlington Street Bluegrass Band, *The Mill*, Iowa City, 6 p.m., \$5 (2nd & 4th Wednesdays) Bluegrass Jam, *The Mill*, Iowa City, 7 p.m., Free (3rd Wednesday) Open Mic Night, Penguin's Comedy Club, Cedar Rapids, 8 p.m., Free Open Mic, Cafe Paradiso, Fairfield, 8 p.m., Free Open Stage, Studio 13, Iowa City, 10 p.m., Free Late Shift at the Grindhouse, Film Scene, Iowa City, 10 p.m., \$4 Talk Art, *The Mill*, Iowa City, 10:30 p.m., Free (2nd & 4th Wednesdays)

THURSDAYS I.C. Press Co-op open shop, Public Space One, Iowa City, 4 p.m., Free Kids Meditation Class Iowa City, Quaker Friends Meeting House, Iowa City, 5:45 p.m., \$5 Iowa City Meditation Class: How To Transform Your Life, Quaker Friends Meeting House, Iowa City, 6:30 p.m., \$5-10 Novel Conversations, Coralville Community Library, 7 p.m., Free (3rd Thursday) Thursday Night Live Open Mic, Uptown Bill's, Iowa City, 7 p.m., Free Daddy-O, Parlor City Pub and Eatery, Cedar Rapids, 7 p.m., Free Underground Open Mic, Open Jam and Mug Night, Yacht Club, 8 p.m., Free Live Jazz, Clinton Street Social Club, Iowa City, 8 p.m., Free (1st & 3rd Thursdays) Karaoke Thursday, Studio 13, Iowa City, 8 p.m., Free Retrofit Vinyl w/ DJ Olaz Fük, Dick's Tap & Shake Room, Cedar Rapids, 9 p.m., Free

FRIDAYS NewBo Open Coffee, Roasters Coffeehouse in NewBo City Market, Cedar Rapids, 8 a.m., Free (2nd & 4th Fridays) Friday Night Out, Ceramics Center, Cedar Rapids, 6:30 p.m., \$40 FAC Dance Party, *The Union*, Iowa City, 7 p.m. Sasha Belle Presents: Friday Night Drag & Dance Party, Studio 13, Iowa City, 10:30 p.m., \$5 SoulShake, Gabe's, Iowa City, 10 p.m., Free

SATURDAYS Pop-Up Market, NewBo City Market, Cedar Rapids, 10 am Family Storytime, Iowa City Public Library, 10:30 a.m., Free I.C. Press Co-op Open Shop, Public Space One, Iowa City, 12 p.m., Free Elation Dance Party, Studio 13, Iowa City, 9 p.m., \$5

SUNDAYS Pub Quiz, *The Mill*, Iowa City, 9 p.m., \$1

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Ferdinand Bac (French, 1859-1952), *What are looking for in the sky, crazy old man?*, c. 1950, ink on paper, Collection of Madame Sylviane Jullian



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An advertisement for the Crowded Closet MCC Thrift Shop. It features a mannequin wearing a straw hat and a white fur collar. On the counter next to the mannequin are various vintage items: a large pink feathered hat, a gold-colored brush, a small green tin, and a gold-colored tray. A blue sign in the foreground reads "Find your style at the Crowded Closet!". Below the sign is a map showing the location of the shop at 1213 Gilbert Court, Iowa City. The map includes labels for Kirkwood Ave, Gilbert Street, Hwy 6, and Highland Ave. A red pin marks the location of the shop. The text "Crowded Closet MCC THRIFT SHOP" is at the bottom, along with the address "1213 GILBERT COURT, IOWA CITY" and the phone number "319-337-5924 | crowdedcloset.org".

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DEAR KIKI

LittleVillageMag.com/DearKiki

Dear Kiki,
Can you recommend some let's-get-it-on music that's not "Let's Get It On"? In other words, how would you set the scene without being heavy-handed and melodramatic? I'm open to all genres of music, but not a huge fan of sappy romantic tunes.

Thanks, Beyond Marvin Gaye

Dear Beyond,

Thank you for such a fun, flirty question! Music creates the urge to get romantic, or passionate, or dirty, or playful. Curating playlists to get your dopamine going is a delicate balance of naughty and nice and totally depends on the type of sex you want to have. Might wanna avoid songs too dirty—"Me So Horny" is a little on the nose—or too cheesy, like "Lost in Love" by Air Supply, which would probably make me cry.

A few things to consider would be the setting and the trajectory of the experience you're fantasizing. Where will you be getting it on? Is it a long, slow night together at home? A steamy, naughty romp in a hotel room? A quickie in the car? Each of these scenarios call for individualized selections. I can vividly recall replaying certain songs over again while waiting for a lover, wanting our first kiss to be so hot we both get goosebumps; getting skin orgasms in response to the beat and to the heat. Fuck—I'm going to play Kevin Drew's video "Good Sex" right now because damn, that's what I wish I was doing right now.

In any case, make sure that the music lasts through your escapade. No one wants to be in the middle of a steamy session when *suddenly*: dead silence. It's almost as disappointing as premature ejaculation.

Timeout's article "The 50 sexiest songs ever made" and Askmen's "The 13 best songs to make love to" contain some great suggestions, from "Wicked Game" by Chris Isaak to "Wicked Games" by the Weeknd, with plenty of Prince, Rihanna and Bruce Springsteen in between.

I'd like to share an apropos story (which definitely dates me). When I lost my virginity, the song playing on the radio through

my 1980s Sharp QT-50 Pink Boombox was "End of the Innocence" by Don Henley. For the next 28 years, whenever I have heard that cheesy fucking song, I am taken back to the first time I had sex, and I giggle and cringe and am reassured that that song will never make my love-making playlist. If you're picking the tunes, it might be worth consulting your partner to see if they have a blacklisted track as well. Xoxo, Kiki

Dear Kiki,
A few days ago, I made a joke Tinder account with friends, with a fake age, job, etc., but all the pictures were my own. Turns out, I really hit it off with a guy and he was still interested after I told him my real information. The thing is, he's 23 and I'm 17. Is there any hope for a relationship?

Sincerely, Conflicted

Dear Conflicted,

Well. Hmm. There are a few ways to answer your question. First, I'm going to assume you're a girl (not that the advice wouldn't hold for a teen boy, but for the sake of personal experience, I'm addressing this like you are me). At 17, I would have thought it was not a big deal to date a guy six years older, but I would also have had high standards. I graduated high school at 17, and then I moved away from home and started college. A boyfriend was not going to stop me from reaching my goals, so I hope you consider what you want for your future. If you truly have similar interests and expectations, the relationship could be fulfilling.

As a mother of a 17-year-old daughter, however, I would not condone it. When I was young, I watched many of my friends graduate high school, start dating someone older, and before you knew it they were pregnant and getting married. If my daughter thought she should forgo an education and spend her first formative years of young adult freedom getting tied down in an adult relationship, I'd strongly advise against this path, no matter how hot the chemistry probably is.

But, hey girl, if this is a "summer fling" type of thing, I'd give it a chance. Xoxo, Kiki lv

KIKI WANTS QUESTIONS!



Questions about love and sex in the Iowa City-Cedar Rapids area can be submitted to dearkiki@littlevillagemag.com, or anonymously at littlevillagemag.com/dearkiki. Questions may be edited for clarity and length, and may appear either in print or online at littlevillagemag.com.



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A photograph of a man with dark hair, wearing a light blue button-down shirt and jeans, sitting on a grey couch. He is smiling at the camera. Behind him is a white wall with some colorful, abstract art pieces hanging on it.

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THE STRAIGHT DOPE BY CECIL ADAMS

Since each can cause microcephaly, is there any correlation between Zika (which everyone seems to fear) and toxoplasmosis (which most seem to have forgotten)? —Maja Ramirez

Are Zika and toxoplasmosis related? Biologically speaking, that one's easy: no. In seeing them as similar, are you nonetheless onto something? Nice work, Maja—the medical world sees it the same way.

Zika needs little introduction, as you suggest, having vaulted into public awareness a few years ago following scary outbreaks in South America. It's a mosquito-borne virus, kin to yellow fever and dengue. Toxoplasmosis is another, possibly weirder story: Linked to schizophrenia, it's caused by a parasite, *Toxoplasma gondii*, that lives in cats and spreads via their feces. As discussed here in 2006, one theory is that *T. gondii* evolved to cause rodents to hallucinate and behave irrationally, increasing their likelihood of being caught by cats and thus the parasite's likelihood of reproduction.

So although infection with Zika or toxoplasmosis during early pregnancy can each indeed result in microcephaly—an unusually small head or brain in the developing fetus—that doesn't make them any more related than two random diseases that might both cause blindness.

But since the early '70s, doctors have grouped toxoplasmosis with a few hard-to-distinguish but otherwise unrelated in-utero infections that share some grim traits: they may cause only mild illness (or none at all) in the pregnant mother but severe problems in the fetus, and treating the mother prenatally doesn't usually improve the outcome for the child. This original group of pathogens—toxoplasmosis, rubella, cytomegalovirus and herpes simplex—was given the acronym TORCH; the O later came to stand for "other" infections that may present similarly, notably syphilis.

Use of TORCH as a diagnostic tool varies from region to region. U.S. medical societies don't recommend full prenatal screening; doctors do typically check pregnant patients for rubella antibodies, but even if they're not there, it's too dangerous to administer a live-virus vaccine with a fetus in the picture—all you can do is keep an eye out for symptoms in the baby once it's born, and vaccinate the mom later so it's not an issue again. Most often, infants are tested for the TORCH agents if they display certain telltale indicators: microcephaly is the most dire, but the list also includes hearing loss, cataracts, jaundice and others.

In the worst cases, of course, there may be little to be done for the newborn, but the screening is valuable in any event. Doctors need to establish whether congenital issues are the result of heredity, meaning there's a high risk of

recurrence in the mother's future pregnancies, or if an infection was the cause instead. Also, as clinicians will tell you, generally parents just want to understand what happened to their baby. TORCH screening can't always help with the problems of a particular kid, but from a public health standpoint it's important to know what caused the problem so we can prevent it from afflicting future kids.

And in the last few years, doctors have come to recognize Zika as the newest member of the TORCH group. The virus was first identified in Uganda in 1947, and for decades wasn't thought to be a big deal: only 20 percent of those infected experienced symptoms, and these were things like fever and achy joints—nothing too heinous. This view prevailed until a series of outbreaks in the 2000s caught everyone's attention—particularly in Brazil, where an explosion of Zika infections beginning in 2013 coincided with a terrifying 20-fold increase in fetal microcephaly. In 2016 the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention concluded that Zika was a cause of microcephaly and other severe brain defects.

The story of rubella, seemingly the best analogue to Zika among the TORCH group, is a pretty close match: it wasn't considered dangerous for about 50 years after its discovery, until it began to be linked with congenital defects in the 1940s. In the American rubella epidemic of 1964-'65, an estimated 50,000 pregnant women were among the 12.5 million new cases, and the result was a tragedy: 20,000 babies with serious birth defects, thousands more dead in infancy or during pregnancy. By 1969 we'd found vaccines and started administering them to children; now annual U.S. cases are in the single digits.

Rubella, says the author of one 2017 paper on Zika, "can be viewed as a model for a TORCH virus that has been controlled through the widespread development of an efficacious vaccine." Again, you can't vaccinate already-pregnant women against rubella without endangering the fetus; to beat the disease, we had to vaccinate the whole population. Presumably that's how a Zika vaccine would work too.

Of course, we don't have a Zika vaccine yet—and, in the U.S. at least, neither have we acquired any natural immunity via exposure. As of the mid-'60s epidemic, rubella had been kicking around long enough that most American women had developed antibodies; things could have been a lot worse. Zika, by contrast, hasn't really shown up here at all thus far. Vaccine researchers are on the case, needless to say, but the clock's ticking. **lv**

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ASTROLOGY BY ROB BREZSNY

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): These days you have an enhanced ability to arouse the appreciation and generosity of your allies, friends and loved ones. The magnetic influence you're emanating could even start to evoke the interest and inquiries of mere acquaintances and random strangers. Be discerning about how you wield that potent stuff! On the other hand, don't be shy about using it to attract all the benefits it can bring you. It's OK to be a bit greedier for goodies than usual as long as you're also a bit more compassionate than usual.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): I bet that a healing influence will arrive from an unexpected direction and begin to work its subtle but intense magic before anyone realizes what's happening. I predict that the bridge you're building will lead to a place that's less flashy but more useful than you imagined. And I'm guessing that although you may initially feel jumbled by unforeseen outcomes, those outcomes will ultimately be redemptive. Hooray for lucky flukes and weird switcheroos!

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Born under the astrological sign of Cancer, Franz Kafka is regarded as one of the 20th century's major literary talents. Alas, he made little money from his writing. Among the day jobs he worked to earn a living were stints as a bureaucrat at insurance companies. His superiors there praised his efforts. "Superb administrative talent," they said about him. Let's use this as a take-off point to meditate on your destiny, Cancerian. Are you good at skills you're not passionate about? Are you admired and acknowledged for having qualities that aren't of central importance to you? If so, the coming weeks and months will be a favorable time to explore this apparent discrepancy. I believe you will have the power to get closer to doing more of what you love to do.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): If you really wanted to, you could probably break the world's record for most words typed per minute with the nose (103 characters in 47 seconds). I bet you could also shatter a host of other marks, as well, like eating the most hot chiles in two minutes, or weaving the biggest garland using defunct iPhones, or dancing the longest on a tabletop while listening to a continuous loop of Nirvana's song "Smells Like Teen Spirit." But I hope you won't waste your soaring capacity for excellence on meaningless stunts like those. I'd rather see you break your own personal records for accomplishments like effective communications, high-quality community-building and smart career moves.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Isaac Newton (1643-1727) was among history's three most influential scientists. Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) has been described as *the* central figure in modern philosophy. Henry James (1843-1916) is regarded as one of the greatest novelists in English literature. John Ruskin (1819-1900) was a prominent art critic and social thinker. What did these four men have in common? They never had sex with anyone. They were virgins when they died. I view this fact with alarm. What does it mean that Western culture is so influenced by the ideas of men who lacked this fundamental initiation? With that as our context, I make this assertion: If you hope to make good decisions in the coming weeks, you must draw on the wisdom you have gained from being sexually entwined with other humans.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): "Every so often, a painter has to destroy painting," said 20th-century abstract expressionist painter Willem de Kooning. "Cézanne did it. Picasso did it with Cubism. Then Pollock did it. He busted our idea of a picture all to hell." In de Kooning's view, these "destructive" artists performed a noble service. They demolished entrenched ideas about the nature of painting, thus liberating their colleagues and descendants from stale constraints. Judging from the current astrological omens, Libra, I surmise the near future will be a good time for you to wreak creative destruction in your

own field or sphere. What progress and breakthroughs might be possible when you dismantle comfortable limitations?

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Mayflies are aquatic insects with short life spans. Many species live less than 24 hours, even though the eggs they lay may take three years to hatch. I suspect this may be somewhat of an apt metaphor for your future, Scorpio. A transitory or short-duration experience could leave a legacy that will ripen for a long time before it hatches. But that's where the metaphor breaks down. When your legacy has fully ripened—when it becomes available as a living presence—I bet it will last a long time.

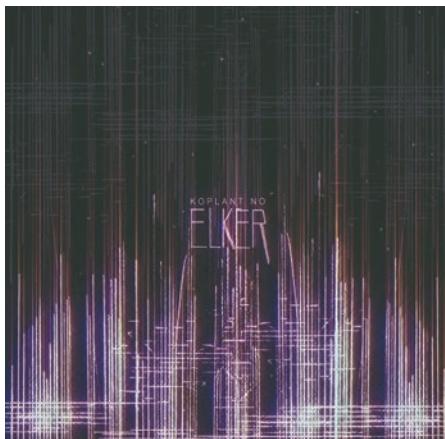
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): When a critic at *Rolling Stone* magazine reviewed the Beatles' *Abbey Road* in 1969, he said some of the songs were "so heavily overproduced that they are hard to listen to." He added, "Surely they must have enough talent and intelligence to do better than this." Years later, however, *Rolling Stone* altered its opinion, naming *Abbey Road* the 14th best album of all time. I suspect, Sagittarius, that you're in a phase with metaphorical resemblances to the magazine's earlier assessment. But I'm reasonably sure that this will ultimately evolve into being more like the later valuation—and it won't take years.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): According to my analysis of the astrological omens, love should be in full bloom. You should be awash in worthy influences that animate your beautiful passion. So how about it? Are you swooning and twirling and uncloiling? Are you overflowing with a lush longing to celebrate the miracle of being alive? If your answer is yes, congratulations. May your natural intoxication levels continue to rise. But if my description doesn't match your current experience, you may be out of sync with cosmic rhythms. And if that's the case, please take emergency measures. Escape to a sanctuary where you can shed your worries and inhibitions and maybe even your clothes. Get drunk on undulating music as you dance yourself into a dreamy love revelry.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): "Life never gives you anything that's all bad or all good." So proclaimed the smartest Aquarian 6-year-old girl I know as we kicked a big orange ball around a playground. I agreed with her! "Twenty years from now," I told her, "I'm going to remind you that you told me this heartful truth." I didn't tell her the corollary that I'd add to her axiom, but I'll share it with you: If anything or anyone seems to be all bad or all good, you're probably not seeing the big picture. There are exceptions, however! For example, I bet you will soon experience or are already experiencing a graceful stroke of fate that's very close to being all good.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): "Enodation" is an old, nearly obsolete English word that refers to the act of untying a knot or solving a knotty problem. "Enodus" means "free of knots." Let's make these your celebratory words of power for the month of May, Pisces. Speak them out loud every now and then. Invoke them as holy chants and potent prayers leading you to discover the precise magic that will untangle the kinks and snarls you most need to untangle.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): I hate rampant consumerism almost as much as I hate hatred, so I don't offer the following advice lightly: Buy an experience that could help liberate you from the suffering you've had trouble outgrowing. Or buy a toy that can thaw the frozen joy that's trapped within your out-of-date sadness. Or buy a connection that might inspire you to express a desire you need help in expressing. Or buy an influence that will motivate you to shed a belief or theory that has been cramping your lust for life. Or all of the above! (And if buying these things isn't possible, consider renting.) *LV*



KOPLANT NO

Elker

www.koplantno.com

The opening track “Before We Go” on the reunited Koplant No’s new album *Elker* is a compound of skittering synth decay and dripping percussion flitting around a lone trumpet carrying a mournful melody. It’s a track that would fit perfectly on a Jack Lion record—which seems obvious when you consider that fellow Iowa City group Jack Lion shares Brian Lewis Smith on trumpet and Drew Morton on bass.

Koplant No’s fourth release, its first since 2012, benefits from a freshened sound—due in part to Smith and Morton’s foray in Jack Lion. The band has incorporated elements of electronic music and jazz on their previous albums; however, it seems that with *Elker* these become more a part of the architecture.

On track four, “Knock Knock Ghost,” the beats, synths and samples construct a support system for the live instrumentation. The harmonies of Joel Vanderheyden’s saxophone and Smith’s trumpet lead off the track with a strong melody and theme, followed by a trumpet solo and then saxophone solo before rejoining for the main theme of the piece again. This is a classic jazz structure: introduce theme and then solos. But in Koplant No’s capable hands, it feels fresh and very contemporary.

This is the real distinction between the works of Jack Lion and Koplant No. Jack Lion has more of a jazz-remixed approach, whereas Koplant No is very rooted in the construction of theme and melody. There are times when the band slides

precariously close to a smooth-jazz vibe. In fact, my favorite track on the album is track five, “Humpty Trumpty,” which features a couple of hot sax solos that wouldn’t sound out of place on a Grover Washington Jr. album. Vanderheyden’s super power is constructing classic sax lines,

family to the plague and retires to an abandoned temple to beseech God, who never answers him.

He Has Abandoned Us is mostly made with synthesizer and sampled sounds. Weilein has a deft touch for layering sampled choir and orchestral sounds to

It's easy to make fun of the operatic hopelessness of the black/doom metal genres, but it's a feeling with which most people can identify from time to time.

for which I’m a big sucker. But the band pulls away from the edge before it gets to the land of smooth.

With *Elker*, Koplant No has added another great record to their growing catalog. It’s one that advances their formula—experimenting without being too experimental and still sticking to their jazz roots with great melodies and musicianship.

—Michael Roeder



PRECIOUS

He Has Abandoned Us

preciousiowa.bandcamp.com/album/he-has-abandoned-us

Precious is Cedar Falls’ Oliver Weilein, and *He Has Abandoned Us* is a concept album based around the story of a man (of unspecified historic time) who loses his

make epic, lush dirges. Even with today’s advanced computer-based sampled instruments, it’s easy to make crappy-sounding music, but Precious’ songs avoid that trap. The synthetic violoncello sound that anchors “I Shed My Blood For You, Lord, I Beg Of You // Self Flagellation,” for example, has a subtly modulated timbre that rubs nicely against the ear. On other tracks a muffled voice sometimes speaks, more as atmosphere than narrative.

He Has Abandoned Us is tagged as “Black Metal” on the bandcamp page, but there’s very little of the roaring guitar and thundering drums of that genre. The only link to black metal seems to be that these songs are like the traditional opening track of metal records: a dour, neo-classical preface to the main event of roaring guitars and punishing drums. Keeping things quieter and more ambient just deepens the mood.

It’s easy to make fun of the operatic hopelessness of the black/doom metal genres, but it’s a feeling with which most people can identify from time to time. Weilein’s hero is a bit like Camus’ Sisyphus: He accepts his depressing fate, but keeps going. Camus says, “We must imagine Sisyphus happy.” Though happiness violates genre conventions in the case of Precious, embracing and wallowing in despair can feel pretty good when it’s done this well. *lv/*

—Kent Williams

FUNNY MONEY BY JOON PAHK AND BRENDAN EMMETT QUIGLEY

The American Values Club Crossword is edited by Ben Tausig.

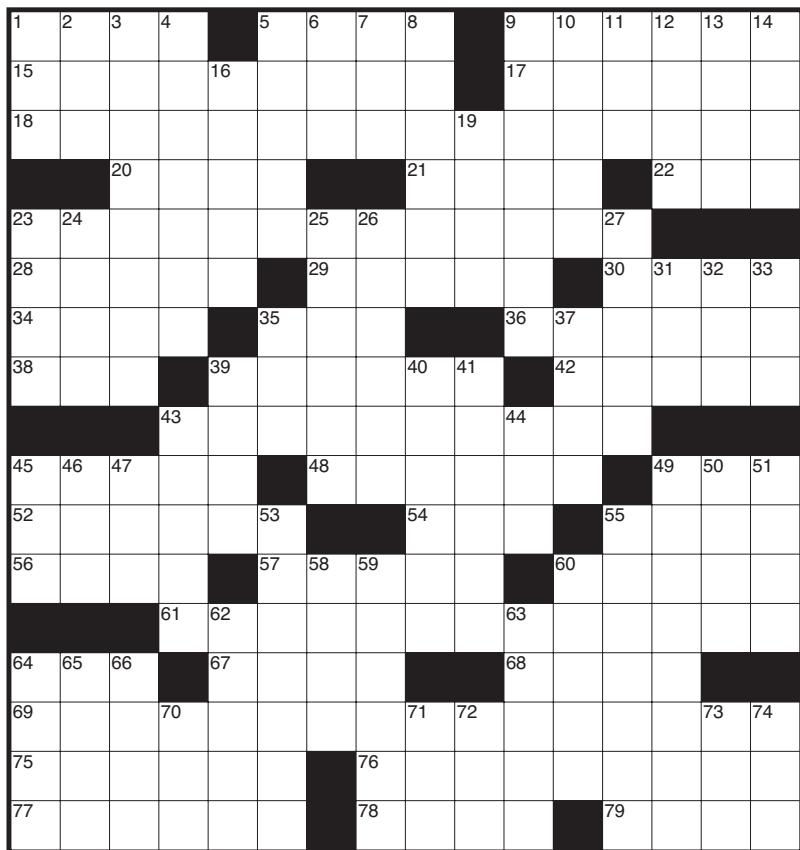
ACROSS

- French cleric's title
 - Beer bash purchases
 - Current amount
 - Where Indians live
 - Key player in a penalty shootout
 - Inveterate fabricator (Turkey)
 - It's blown in a blowout
 - "Now's your chance!"
 - Caps (nonpareils at the pictures)
 - 1979 war movie that ends with the line "The horror ... the horror!" (South Korea)
 - Locked passage?
 - Presses
 - 411, so to speak
 - Schlep
 - "Bracketology" stat that's heavily influenced by strength of schedule
 - Garage job
 - Mind reader's supposed ability, briefly
 - Soda orders
 - Air freshener emanation
 - Stance on a martial arts movie poster (Mexico)
45. Pipsqueak
 48. Charm
 49. Sgt.'s underling
 52. Pulitzer's rival
 54. Reaction to a bug
 55. Model/actress
 Delevingne
 56. Name of the first Holy Roman Emperor
 57. Forced through a sieve, say
 60. Whines
 61. Hot tub feature (Thailand)
 64. They run a lot in August: Abbr.
 67. Langston Hughes poem whose first line is engraved on the wall of the National Museum of African American History and Culture
 68. "Whoa, hold on ..."
 69. Bitcoin and Ethereum ... or a literal description of this puzzle's theme
 75. Is endemic to
 76. Portrayer of Martha Kent in the DC Extended Universe
 77. Fire up
 78. Tubers in some casseroles

LV241 ANSWERS



79. "Let It Go" singer
 DOWN
 1. Deadly Old World snake
 2. Deadly New World snake
 3. "It's cold out there ..."
 4. Principled
 5. Krypton



19. Joel or Ethan who have won Oscars for only two films
 23. Ice pack target
 24. Easter egg coloring brand
 25. One who voted for a pig for president, famously
 26. Place for a big stretch?
 27. React to gross-out humor, perhaps
 31. [You might remember me when I was called this]
 32. Sport
 33. Make a selection
 35. Like Hall of Famers: Abbr.
 37. *The Americans* country
 39. GPs
 40. Up to one's eyeballs
 41. Banana hammock alternative
 43. Hiking trail symbol
 44. Whiskey-aging wood
 45. OTOH
 46. Like some cat food
 47. Get a slice, say
 49. Like one's first house
 51. It's king, it's said
 53. The "devil's interval," heard in many a metal song
 55. Common work space
 58. Sporty Camaro
 59. Turbid
 60. Thing with a cabin that's far from the woods, and not particularly cozy
 62. Kick out the jams!
 63. Recently elected Pro Football Hall of Famer Terrell
 64. Farmland section
 65. Main point
 66. Match
 70. Penultimate Greek letter
 71. Submerged river valley
 72. Butt
 73. Winner's pair?
 74. Midnight zone body

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