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One vote for Kucinich

If you haven't yet heard of Democratic presidential candidate Dennis Kucinich, it's probably because on week days, rather than attending fund-raisers and shooting commercials, he's been busy making his campaign platform a reality in the House of Representatives.

In 2001, Congressman Kucinich was busy speaking out and voting against the unconstitutional USA Patriot Act. Last November, he was busy organizing two thirds of House Democrats to vote against the resolution authorizing the invasion of Iraq. He's already introduced legislation that lays out in detail his plan for single-payer, universal healthcare. And today, while campaigning for the nation's highest office, he's actively continuing these and other fights in Congress as co-chair of the House Progressive Caucus.

Just this past week in the House, Kucinich released a letter asking Vice President Cheney to account for his role in using faulty intelligence to lead our country to war; spoke on the House floor about the need to work with the UN to replace US troops with an international peace-keeping force in Iraq; testified in committee on the dangers posed to parts per billion (ppb). Iowa City's measurement for atrazine in June was less than zero. The city's new water sources and treatment processes have eliminated the chlorinous odor that had been experienced with the old water treatment plant. Finally, the Iowa City Water Division will not be changing the chlorine disinfection process any time soon, as recent studies have shown it to be a much more effective product without the taste and odor concerns of the past.

Correction:
The story "Bottoms up: New treatment processes are improving Iowa City water" in the August Little Village contained several errors. The story incorrectly implied that Iowa City still draws water from the Iowa River. City drinking water is now drawn from a series of wells. Herbicides and pesticides are reduced through natural filtration in the new alluvial wells and completely removed by the new plant treatment filters. The EPA maximum contaminant limit for atrazine is 3.0
The passing of Labor Day marks, traditionally if not officially, the start of the campaign season for the 2004 presidential elections. And by all indications, ladies and gentlemen, we are really in for it this time. The stakes for this election are exceedingly high, with the survival of American constitutional democracy itself conceivably on the table, and the incumbent administration, reportedly under the effective control of political advisor Karl Rove, has shown itself willing to stoop to any low, ignoring both common decency and, on occasion, federal law to bring its political enemies to heel. With a few bright exceptions the purported opposition Democrats have been far too busy trying to keep their names off “The O’Reilly Factor” and “The Rush Limbaugh Show” to have put up even token resistance. Worse, deliberate falsehood has become the currency of American political discourse—the fact that a majority of Americans believed that the Sept. 11 bombers were Iraqis, when in fact none were, becomes truly frightening when one contemplates those same Americans entering voting booths in 14 months. In the spirit of these times, what follows are a few suggestions for getting through the 2004 campaign with your sanity, and with any luck, our country, intact.

The stakes for this election are exceedingly high, with the survival of American constitutional democracy itself conceivably on the table.

**Ignore Joe Lieberman:** Most Americans seem to be doing an admirable job of this so far. It was highly amusing to see in a recent poll that Lieberman, who if I remember correctly played a major role in an ongoing news story a couple of years back, was running third in name recognition among the announced candidates for the Democratic presidential nomination, behind Kerry and Dean in a tie for first. Lieberman, along with John Edwards and the rest of the Vichy Democrats of the Democratic Leadership Council, operate under the theory that electability involves running as a less extreme version of your opponent. This strategy, which they fancifully deem centrist, effectively means offering the Bush administration as little opposition as possible and offering the voters no real alternative whatsoever. Considering that what the incumbent offers in this case is the further erosion of civil rights, probable economic collapse, and a state of permanent warfare, offering real alternatives and real opposition seems pretty goddamn necessary. The DLC stakes its reputation on having gotten Bill Clinton elected in '92 and reelected in '96. They didn’t—Ross Perot and Bob Dole did. So to hell with them.

**Know a hypocrite when you see one:** Several times over the course of the next 14 months you are bound to see a candidate, candidate’s spokesperson or surrogate from that candidate’s party accuse an opposing candidate in aghast and offended tones of “partisanship” or “playing politics” with some issue or another. This person will be talking purest horseshit. Wake up, folks—this is politics, and it’s played in a partisan system. Furthermore, this person will, in every case, be making this statement for partisan political gain. Ignore this person.

**Don’t judge in advance of the facts:** Another popular tactic in recent campaigns involves releasing through surrogate or press leak a particularly vile allegation concerning the opposition candidate, letting it stink under the kleig lights for a couple of news cycles, then publicly disavowing it with an accompanying statement disapproving of such dirty politics. This allows a candidate to both smear his or her opponent and declare him or herself above such things. Like most con jobs, this one only works if you let it. When faced with a politically damaging allegation, ask the following questions—“Is it true?” (it often isn’t) and “Does it matter a goddamn if it’s true or not?” (it often doesn’t).

**Abandon your litmus test:** I am sorry to say it, but in this election letting the perfect be the enemy of the good is a one-way ticket to political disaster. Whatever your pet issue, whatever your individual brand of identity politics, you must be prepared to compromise some or all of it next November. If it keeps you from the polls, or inspires you to cast a vote in protest, it will very possibly contribute to a second Bush term that will be bad for gays, Greens, the environment, the labor movement, and everything else under the sun—bad, in short, for the country, and probably for the rest of the world as well.

I could certainly go on, and in future columns probably will, but the general rules are pretty simple. Be informed. Don’t get played for a sucker. Act like an adult. Make a rational decision, and act on it. Your future, in all likelihood, depends on it.
Long live Irving Weber

An Iowa City downtown gateway boasts a new piece of public art. At the corner of Iowa Avenue and Linn Street, a life-sized bronze statue of Irving Weber waves his hat in greeting to newcomers and old-timers alike.

The sculpture—created by Doris Park and Steve Maxon of Kalona’s Max-Cast, sponsored by the Iowa City Host Noon Lions Club, and dedicated at the Irving Weber Festival this past month—is a piece to celebrate. It is significant not only because public art serves our aesthetic life through the commons but also because it honors an important community member who is no longer with us, and who will remain with us, I hope, forever. Anyone who has lived in Iowa City for even a short amount of time knows who Irving Weber was—the city’s official historian, a man of generous talents and long memory who has helped define our community for over a century now. His historical columns from the Iowa City Press-Citizen remain in circulation through the Lions Club reprint books, an elementary school is named after him, and an annual community festival honors the local heritage he preserved.

Our community identity is bound tightly in our own people. That may seem obvious, but too often we forget it. In a nationalized and globalized world, striving for cosmopolitan coastal chic often trumps homespun heritage. We lose something profound and fundamental to our character if we dismiss the local as yokel.

The Irving Weber statue also reminds us of an important principle in the construction of place, a principle all too often scorned and forgotten: longevity. There is truth in the cliché that we live in a “mobile society.” Countless histories of our nation sound the note of the ever-moving frontier and the restless pioneer as essential icons to our national character, for good and ill. Moving up and out, to the big city, to the coasts, even out of the country, remain signs of success for our young people. The fact that the average American changes jobs, careers and residences with increasing frequency often is a point of pride more than a sad fact. Certainly our society, and our individual communities, are stronger for the freedoms, economic success and cultural understandings that come from the mobility of its members. But without a significant countervailing element of longevity, we only preside over the dissipation of place, and that can only lead to a damaged people. Writer Wendell Berry reminds us that intergenerational continuity and local history are the essences of community. He notes that the interruption of successive generations in one place, “ramifying through a community, destroys the continuity and so the integrity of local life. As the children depart, generation after generation, the place loses its memory of itself, which is its history and its culture. And the local history, if it survives at all, loses its place.... Lacking an authentic local culture, a place is open to exploitation, and ultimately destruction, from the center” (What Are People For?, pp. 165-166).

Irving Weber, by contemporary measures of success, might be considered a failure by many. That’s tragic. Mr. Weber was born in Iowa City, raised as a child here, received his college education at the University of Iowa, led a successful business career in Iowa City, contributed his time and talents to our town throughout his life through generous service, served his community in his later years with his first-hand historical accounts of our town in the local newspaper, and died here. What might your own high school classmates think of you if that were your resume? Never got out of town, huh? Must be a loser. But I can’t think of anyone who would dare call Irving Weber a “loser.” And our reverence for him is steeped in his lifelong residence in and service to Iowa City. We need to capture that reverence for longevity and make it a principle of place-making and pride in our communities.

I came to Iowa City in the latter part of the 1980s to attend graduate school at The University of Iowa. Reading Irving Weber’s columns in the local newspaper, I marveled at the octogenarian’s historical memory and his gifts to the community. Although not a trained historian by academic standards, he wrote a kind of invaluable history that no college professor could possibly recreate. Having lived what he talked about, having familial proximity to decades before he was born (his ancestors first came to Iowa City in 1839), and having written out of love rather than ambition, Weber brought an authenticity and vitality to his history that more than makes up for what he may have lacked in methodology.

Although I have learned that I can never truly say “never,” I can say that I have no intention of leaving Iowa City, and that I have every intention of growing old here. I don’t see that as a failure of ambition in the least. I do value, very much, my experiences in several different places. Those experiences, of course, have made me a better person and a more aware individual. But I’ll never be a 96-year resident of Iowa City, or any community. It’s too late for that (and I don’t know if I’ll make it to 96, period). But maybe I can get 40, possibly 50 years. That’s a long time to learn about Iowa City, to write about it, to live in it, and to provide service to it. I hope Irving Weber would be proud of such intention that I can make, and I hope I honor his legacy with even a fraction of the commitment and love that he gave to this town and its people. Whenever I pass through the intersection of Iowa Avenue and Linn Street, I am happy to return the gesture of welcome that Mr. Weber offers us with his tipped bronze top hat. LV

What might your own high school classmates think of you if that were your resume? Never got out of town, huh? Must be a loser. But I can’t think of anyone who would dare call Irving Weber a “loser.”

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Image: Chris Faust, Approaching Development, Apple Valley, MN, 1993
Black and white photograph, 7 x 22 inches. Courtesy of the artist

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In the middle of July, a woman took her two young kids onto the balcony of her 17th-floor Seoul apartment. First she threw one, then the other over the side. Then she jumped herself.

No, she was not worried about the nuclear crisis with North Korea or the Communist state’s periodic threats to turn the south’s capital city into a “lake of fire.” A reader of American newspapers could be excused for wondering. It’s easy to forget that the coverage, rife with overheated rhetoric and the belligerent speculations of spooks and politicians, is more reflective of fears in Washington than anywhere else. After awhile, you get the impression that the whole peninsula is tinder just waiting for a spark.

Truth is, the woman was broke.

I’m as guilty as the next person for seeing Korea not as a real place populated by real people, but as a past and potential warzone. Before arriving here in May to teach, I was an editor at a daily newspaper and part of my job was to scan the wire for photos. The only images datelined Korea were of anti-American protesters, mostly students wearing bright red headbands and defiantly pumping their fists. They seemed to hate us as much as the commies—not naturally, my curiosity was pricked. Although my moving to South Korea was entirely by accident, I nevertheless hoped for the thrill of a political hotzone, like what P.J. O’Rourke found back in 1987:

“When the young man bit off the end of his finger and wrote the name of Kim Dae-jung in blood on his white anorak, then I knew for the first time what it meant to be a foreign correspondent—I mean, here was something really fucking foreign.”

What I got instead was Daejeon.

News is never made in Daejeon, a city of a million and change two-and-a-half hours south of Seoul. People are too busy building stuff. The neighborhood where I live with my girlfriend, Kate, in the city’s western district, has existed for only three years. The bland gray apartment buildings that dominate the skyline are new, so are all the restaurants, the supermarket, the Dunkin’ Donuts, the Baskin Robbins, the seemingly endless number of karaoke bars and all the Internet game rooms. The 20-plus church steeples are new, most of them sprouting from flat commercial roofs and all flashing identical red neon crosses. The schools are new, and so is the after-school institute where I daily navigate kids through the differences between l and r, f and p.

My boss is Mr. Hur, fat and 50s-ish, who likes to dandy himself up in matching linen shirts, pants, suspenders and short-sleeved jackets. He took Kate and me out for dinner one night shortly after our arrival, and in the darkened restaurant-bar he guzzled cheap Korean liquor (called soju) and warned us against putting much stock in any anti-Americanism we might encounter.

“Young people not remember war,” he pronounced and then wiped his mouth. “They not remember what America did for us.”

Indeed, there was a moment early in the Korean War when a teary-eyed South Korean president, Syngman Rhee, grabbed the hand of American Gen. Douglas MacArthur and said, “We love you as the savior of our race.” That was when the per capita income was $80, on par with, say, the Sudan. Nowadays, through a combination of grit, luck and an almost obsessive single-mindedness, Korea is the 11th most powerful economy in the world. Babies exit the womb chattering on cellphones.

And they’re not talking geo-politics.

When I read in the New York Times about the Bush administration’s recent decision to gradually reposition American troops off the DMZ—a decision that, in the context of the current tensions, Koreans have every reason to be anxious about—I mentioned it to a Korean coworker. She looked at me blankly. Then she spoke briefly in Korean to another coworker, who shrugged her shoulders. Then

When I asked a coworker about anti-Americanism among South Koreans, she answered with a question: “What do Americans think about Korean women? Do they believe we are beautiful or do they think we smell too much like garlic?”

they both looked at me and shrugged their shoulders.

“I did not know about this,” Coworker 1 explained with a non-committal smile.

Young Koreans are not so different from Americans in this respect. Economically speaking, they can afford not to care.

On another occasion, when I asked a coworker about anti-Americanism among South Koreans, she answered with a question: “What do Americans think about Korean women? Do they believe we are beautiful or do they think we smell too much like garlic?”

For all that, the Korean economy has yet to fully recover from the Asian financial crisis of the mid-1990s. This, and not North Korea, is what people seem to be most worried about. When I bring up the rash of kidnappings this summer in Seoul, heads turn. In separate incidents, several young women have been snatched for ransom—and in a couple cases killed—by people attempting to pay off their credit card bills. In a conservative nation with very little crime to speak of, this has not been casual news.

And, of course, mothers are hurling themselves and their children off 17th-floor balconies.

Mr. Hur, for his part, counsels leisure as a surefire antidote to politics and hard times. “Have a lest,” he tells us each Friday night on his way out the door. “Take it easy.”

Once, in the middle of a conversation I believed to be about one of South Korea’s most notorious dictators, he veered off into a description of the sparkling river that cuts through his hometown. With a big smile, he stretched his hands out in front of him. “Tell me,” he said. “Do you like pishing?”
Dave Strackney's stringbean body fills out a vintage T-shirt like a coat hanger. Chicken legs stick out of baggy jeans, blonde shaggy hair sprouts out from under a John Deere cap cocked 45 degrees to port, fresh Adidas bounce on the carpeted floor. Strackney's surroundings are no less eclectic. Public Space ONE is a huge cavern of a room above the Deadwood Tavern in downtown Iowa City. The walls are mostly cheap pegboard, hastily painted. Covering them is an assortment of artwork defining the spectrum between high and low. Crisp black and white photographs of Italianesque piazzas hang next to a breakfast still-life à la Roy Lichtenstein, which hangs next to a realistic pencil sketch of Christina Aguilara—all by local artists.

"Hey, come on in!" Strackney calls to anyone who hesitates at the door. Get them up here for any reason, Strackney explains: chess tournaments, MarioCart playoffs, the promise of the "Psychic Readings" awning—whatever. Just get them up here—then you can convert them.

Not that Strackney considers himself the voice of Public Space ONE. He wants me, you, everyone to understand: Public Space ONE is just that, public, which means no one is in charge, least of all him. Sure, he helps make the work schedule and coordinates when and how performances will happen, but that doesn't make him the boss.

"I'm just an..." Strackney looks above, searching for the words, "...efficiency coordinator." A subsequent expression shows that this was definitely not the right combination of words, but he shakes it off. "It is important to feel ownership to achieve equality. People need to work together—no one owns this, it belongs to everyone willing to put into it."

Which might make him sound a little like a cross between a missionary and a used car salesman. And he might be if his smile weren't so genuine, the spark in his huge blue eyes so sincere, his manic energy so contagious. It is this energy that has allowed Strackney to give power away, helping transfer decision making from one person (lately, him) to committees headed by volunteers dedicated to helping others reach their artistic goals; a sort of power struggle in reverse. If he is not the leader of this Public Space ONE, then it is safe to say he is the embodiment, the poster child, the mascot.

Strackney regards the strange but energizing mix of artwork filling the walls. "We're an art gallery of motley degrees," he concedes. Even as the words leave his mouth, he pounces on them, taking them back, making them what he meant to say. "But it is honest." He points to the pencil sketch of Aguilara. "Sure, it is pop idolatry by a 14-year-old, but it is sincere, not kitsch or ironic."

Strackney, a recent University of Iowa graduate with a degree in Fine Art, knows the perils of kitsch and irony mistaken for depth or wisdom. He remembers the last day of his last painting class, sitting in a circle critiquing final projects and how he encouraged his classmates to bring their paintings to show at Public Space ONE, or any local gallery, to not hide them away in their portfolios. He remembers the graduate teaching assistant's curt smile and pretentious dismissal. No, Dave Strackney would prefer an honest to goodness Aguilara doodle any day.

A second-hand magazine rack is stuffed with 'zines, self-produced magazines formatted with glue and scissors, and published via Xerox. 'Zines are the manifestos and communiqués of the DIY ("Do It Yourself") movement. Many here are local, like Cornfed Hussy or Bradley Adita's A Day in the Air, but others come from all across the nation. Bookshelves flanking the magazine rack house the few dozen used hardbacks that have been donated to Public Space ONE's retail concern. A clothes rack holds several T-shirts sporting logos of local bands. A stack of compact discs by local track studios.

Though the space of Public Space ONE might look a little shabby, the philosophy behind it is what's so exciting to those who participate. It is the very idea of what they are trying to do here that makes it special, inspiring, indefatigable. Public Space ONE might just be trying to buy back the soul of Iowa City—could be giving it away for free to anyone who wants it—and Strackney is betting he and his cohorts might just get away with it.
Room to move: The space at Public Space ONE. Scot West and April Clarke prepare a performance of Clarke's play, *The Stabbiest Mexican*.

First things first

But we are getting ahead of ourselves.

In the beginning, there were Spencer Griffin and Paul Rust, two students in the UI graduate playwriting workshop. Wouldn't it be cool, they thought, to each write a play, then swap and direct the other's? Griffin wrote one called *Making Out With Spencer Griffin*, and Rust wrote another called *The Garvey's*. Auditions were held and all was ready, except for one thing: There was no theater. Even graduate students, must pay hundreds of dollars to rent out theater space for extra-curricular performances. Other local theaters had their spaces booked solid with their own performances and practices. Griffin and Rust's plays might have closed even before rehearsals began, if they hadn't noticed the "Space for Rent" sign above the Deadwood.

The space, one-time home of BJ's Records and more recently the coven to a psychic reader (whose awning still hangs above the door), had been vacant for some time. The pair approached Jim Bell, owner of the building, and asked to use the second-floor space for their one-time play experiment. Bell agreed, but as rehearsals progressed, Griffin realized that this was more than just a hunch—Iowa City needed a more permanent space like this, one devoted to showcasing performance ignored or under-funded and slipping through the cracks between the university and the city.

"I believe that an artist will not grow unless his or her work is received by an audience," Griffin explains. "Now, that audience can be just one person or it can be 100 people, but it must be made public. We wanted Public Space ONE to foster artistic development by allowing artists of all expertise the ability to showcase their talents."

Griffin took his idea to friends in The James Gang, a group of individuals in Iowa City committed to raising awareness and opportunities for local action and involvement. A riff on the outlaw bandits of the Old West, the name also refers to 19th-century philosopher William James, who, among other things, urged action in the face of paralyzing contemplation. Just do something, might be the best modern translation.

The James Gang took this motto to heart, looking for pragmatic opportunities to help others share their creative endeavors, from sponsoring a short film festival to planning the weekend-long Exodus Music Festival. They all agreed that what Griffin had stumbled onto was more than just a one-time answer to a one-time performance space shortage—it was a breakthrough. Griffin approached Bell again, this time with fellow James Gang-member Miguel Soria in tow, and asked another favor: How about instead of lending us the space once, you give the space to the community through us? Like, you know, for free?

"It is such a huge gift, but also a responsibility. We owe it to [Jim Bell] to put effort into it, to earn the gift. None of us will ever get paid, but we have to pretend to be paid, to put that kind of work into making this an indispensable asset, something people will be pissed if it closes."

—Dave Strackney
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**What's a freshman to do?**

Naomi Klein writes in *No Logo*, her best-selling critique of the modern culture of consumerism, “Malls have become the modern town square.” Before the advent of malls and musak, people gathered in public space like town squares and parks to debate, discuss, meet and greet. But the so-called commons have been increasingly supplanted by private, consumer-driven spaces owned by the few. As the shape of our public space changes, argues Klein, so does the style of our activity. You might hang out in a mall, but can you create art there? Spark a debate? Stage a play?

And what better symbol for this loss of the proactive impulse, symptomatic of the loss of public space, than Iowa City? A downtown once vibrant with any number of independent stores and personalities has been slowly bleeding dry, losing its population to the lure of free parking and air-conditioned convenience. Stores close, the community takes their business to the mall. Bars replace boutiques, and soon drinking and shopping pass for culture. Options become limited, and to the uninformed, invisible.

“I asked my resident assistant what there was for a freshman to do on a Friday night, and he said he didn’t know, that I should go ask the hall coordinator,” Steve (Steve-o) Ptacek recalls. “So I asked the hall coordinator and he said he didn’t know, that I should ask the supervisor. So I asked the supervisor, and he said, ‘You could go swimming at the Fieldhouse.’”

Ptacek smiles at the memory. For a person so involved with making other people laugh, he doesn’t seem to give himself over easily to guffaws. He shakes his head, smiles and leans far back into the corner couch at Public Space ONE, exhaling silent chuckles through his nose. His black clothes and hair cut a dramatic contrast with his pale skin, but his presence is soft and unassuming.

“I hate swimming.”

Convinced there was, had to be, something out there, Ptacek began to search the campus for things to do. He discovered No Shame, Friday’s midnight open mike at the UI Theater Building, but what to do the six other nights of the week?

“A friend of mine, Arthur Stewart, said he wanted to start an improv comedy troupe in Iowa City,” Ptacek recalls. “We were both freshmen and feeling that hierarchical 'We-Are-Freshmen-Thus-We-Can’t-Do-Anything thing.” Taking matters into their own hands, the two started a comedy troupe called Paperback Rhino. They began to collect interested friends but could find nowhere to practice or perform. For months, they hijacked the floor lounges in the Currier and Daum dorms until (“By magic,” according to Ptacek) they crossed Spencer Griffin’s path. Griffin offered them some time at Public Space ONE, and they jumped at the chance.

At first, the audiences were small, the donations enough to cover their bottled water, but over time the turnout began to swell, until the last show before summer break had people standing in the aisles to watch the first ever Paperback Rhino Competitive Improv Triathlon.

“We had never done anything that size,” Ptacek says. “We had never done competitive improv. We had no idea we’d be able to.”

As Paperback Rhino began to flourish, Ptacek spent more and more time at Public Space ONE. He took a role in a play produced by Griffin. He wrote and directed a play for the Eleven Minute Play Festival, Public Space ONE’s Spinal Tappian trump to the theater department’s Ten Minute Play.
Festival ("Ours Goes to Eleven"). Eventually, Ptacek volunteered for retail hours, manning the desk a few times a week. As summer approached, his choice seemed easy. "This is where I live now," Ptacek says, like one trying to explain to a toddler why clouds are white. "The university assumes that the university is all that a student needs, but there is a whole town I'm interested in participating in. Most college kids don't invest in the town, but Public Space ONE is a way to bridge that gap, to give back."

But it wasn't always so well thought out.

Saint Jim

"There was this rag-tag, sort of discombobulated idea of 'Well, we'll have this space, and people will, like, do stuff, and we'll just open the doors...'" Strackney gestures and rolls his eyes to show how comic it all seems now. "But Jim Bell said, 'Alright, well, let's try it,' and..." Strackney gestures wide, indicating the art on the walls, the 'zines in the news rack, the stage where already 15 performances have opened, "...it sort of just happened."

Which is not exactly true. Bell's donation of the second floor is no small gift considering rent for a similar space in downtown Iowa City could run a few thousand dollars a month, not to mention the cost of utilities, which Bell has also agreed to donate.

"By creating this public space we are actually building bridges between artists and audiences, between people and communities, between you and yourself," Spencer Griffin explains. "And really, we have Jim Bell and the Deadwood to thank for that. He is the reason Public Space ONE is not just a slogan, and for that we should all be grateful."

"It's a love story about how love conquers all—how you've got to do what you love, whether it's cutting people up or loving people who cut people up."

—Scot West

"It is such a huge gift, but also a responsibility," agrees Strackney. "We owe it to [Jim Bell] to put effort into it, to earn the gift. None of us will ever get paid, but we have to pretend to be paid, to put that kind of work into making this an indispensable asset, something people will be pissed if it closes."

After getting Jim Bell's initial approval, Griffin, Soria and the rest of the James Gang, and their like-minded compatriots, had many hurdles to jump. To begin with, there was nothing but space in Public Space ONE. "When we first co-opted the space, there was no place to sit, as in: no chairs," Griffin says. "How were people going to watch these performances? Forrest Meggers [a UI graduate student in engineering] designed a bench for us. About eight of us over two days brought tools and energy to the back room of [Public Space ONE]. There, while listening to an Iowa football game, we constructed those benches."

It's a love story

And it is on one of those very benches that Aprille Clarke now sits, watching intently the rehearsal of her play, The Stabbiest Mexican, a musical comedy mus ing on the life of serial killer Richard "The Night Stalker" Ramirez. In this scene, actor Scot West, playing the killer, delivers a soliloquy on the metaphorical interconnection between Dr. Phil, Old Yeller and mosquitoes. As West delivers his lines, Michael Tabor (playing Ramirez' friend Jesus "the Slicer" Belén) hums the "Star Spangled Banner," hand over heart.
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But things aren't going that well. West doesn't quite have the words down, and they haven't even begun to work the second musical number. The music was written and will be performed by Iowa City's own King Toad, AKA Jamal River. But he couldn't be here tonight, and neither could one of the other actors, who hasn't actually been seen for days.

"He's still in it, right?" writer/actor/director/producer Clarke asks warily. West scratches his stubble and shrugs. Tabor stares blankly. Clarke relents; "OK, take five, everyone," Clarke says, and then, under her breath, "I'm not hard to please—I just want it to be perfect. No Biggie."

But it is kind of a biggie when you consider that opening night is one week away. That is when The Stabbiest Mexican will go toe to toe with fellow writer and No Shame veteran Chris Stangl's one-act titled Winona Ryder. The evening of theater has been billed as Clarke vs. Stangl, and Clarke wants to win.

How, one might ask, does a pretty, blonde-haired, blue-eyed girl with really white teeth—having earned her Masters of Fine Arts degree in linguistic translation, end up writing a play about a murderer of 13 people? And why would she cast herself as his wife?

"It is kind of an examination of our desires and tendencies toward violence in America," she explains.

"It's about love," interrupts West. He is sitting on the edge of the stage, which is really just a raised portion of floor. There is virtually no scenery, and absolutely no curtain. Lighting consists of four bare bulbs on a track in front of the stage with only two options: on and off. "It's a love story."

Clarke ignores him. "It isn't a critique of violence in America, or media violence or anything," she explains, sounding apologetic, like she's afraid it will sound academic or cliched. "It just thinks about how we love violence, are sort of attracted to it."

"A love story," repeats West. "About how love conquers all—how you've got to do what you love, whether it's cutting people up or loving people who cut people up."

Clarke nods in agreement, as if that was basically the point she was trying to make but couldn't find the words.

Tabor says nothing, sitting in a sketchy wingback chair, face buried in a book. This is Tabor's big chance to redeem himself at Public Space ONE, after the Million Dollar Dog episode. You see, Tabor had been cast as the lead in the film, written and directed by local Jim Nebeling. Shooting took place on and off for months, whenever Nebeling had the time or inclination, and was finished while Tabor was on vacation.

"I went to visit relatives in Arizona, so he killed my character," deadpans Tabor. When the film premiered at Public Space ONE this past February, his character abruptly disappeared after the first 45 minutes, never to return. The Stabbiest Mexican is his chance to complete a Public Space ONE project alive.

Suddenly, at the top of the stairs, a young woman in white terrycloth shorts and shirt asks about the psychic readings. Clarke tells her they moved out. No, she doesn't know where to.

"We should have given her a reading," West says after the woman has left. "We could have scored some good money. Speaking of..." he moves to the back of Tabor's chair, "What are you reading?"

Tabor thrusts the book into the air so West can see the title: 555 Fun Things to Do by Bob Basso, PhD. "I got it off the used bookshelf," he explains. Tabor delivers all his lines with a Steven Wright deadpan, though his voice is a little Ray Romano. "Check this out: #347: Lay down in tall grass: This is the Bible. I have to buy this." He shuffles off to the register where he rings himself up for the book.

Clarke and West agree that it is a total find. It's hard to figure out what they find
more amusing, the fact that the advice on how to have fun is so totally lame, or the fact that such a book got published in the first place. It seems suddenly like Bob Basso, PhD. is sort of the whole point to having a Public Space ONE: When someone can get published, and actually earn money, by telling others how to have fun, by planning spontaneity, and, on top of that, do such a crap job of it, then surely we teeter at a brink. We need a revolution.

And with that silent revelation shared, the three hop on stage for the "Horrible Violent Gangrape" number, one of West's favorites in the whole show.

**Loophole revelation**

Even after Griffin and the James Gang had found a place to perform, had built the stage and seats for their audience, they

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“It’s a beautiful circular motion with everyone feeding off of each other’s artistic energy. Paul Rust’s play helped Chad Simonds perform his play, which helped Megan Walton display her photography, which helped Ben Schmidt sell CDs, and on and on and back again, and using that to create more energy for the next artist to join the circle.”

—Spencer Griffin
```

experienced another near death. Six-one-half South Dubuque Street, a second floor, with a single, pan-gender restroom and no handicapped access, could not be zoned as a performance space. According to city code, they were sunk. Instead of killing the dream, this caused the experiment to grow in a new direction: retail.

A retail space doesn’t have the same zoning restrictions as a performance space, but, conversely, a retail space can legally put on public performance. Translation: Call it a store instead of a theater, and suddenly your play is kosher. What began as a legal end-run, however, became a logical extension of the Public Space ONE ideals: If local actors and playwrights were in need of a free place to put on performances, doesn’t it follow that local artists might need a gallery? Might local self-published authors need a distributor? Could local musicians need a place to sell their compact discs? The more they looked, the more they discovered a huge void, people whose creativity couldn’t find a home at the university or acceptance in the commercial community. An artistic outpouring followed.

“I was so excited to have a place to display my photographs,” explains local photographer Megan Walton. "From the first night I was excited because I saw so much potential there: a ton of artists working together to support each other’s endeavors. Where you don’t need to qualify your art to someone.”

For Spencer Griffin, this non-elitist philosophy is the lifeblood of the Public Space ONE experiment: “Public Space ONE offers a venue that has no quality control. If you are a playwright—let’s put on that play. If you are a novelist—let’s get copies of your novel and distribute. If you are a painter—let’s get those paintings on the walls. It’s a beautiful circular motion with everyone feeding off each other’s artistic energy. Paul Rust’s play helped Chad Simonds perform his play, which helped Megan Walton display her photography, which helped Ben

continued on page 22
Malai Kofta

ProtostarR
Malai Kofta
Vesuvius Records
ProtostarR represents a sort of chimera combination of all the disparate elements of Iowa City's underground music scene. They're a little bit arty, a little bit technologically advanced, and a little bit trippy-hippy. But they're not, as the Germans say, "between the chairs"—they definitely have their own sound, which stands out as unique in a scene dominated by roots rock on the one side and emo mutations on the other.

Malai Kofta took over two years to put together, and the sound represents, several phases and lineups. As such, there are occasional lapses—the peculiarly flat production of the opener "Rid of the Bomb" and the better-in-theory-than-practice bilingual dance track "Disko Nuevo." But these are more than made up for by epic tracks like "Colored Lights" and "Dusk," which are strong songs made stronger by wide-screen production values, varied instrumentation and elliptical lyrics.

And perhaps most representative of their Iowa-City-ness (if there is such a word) is the beautifully cracked ballad "Nonfiction," which twists the metaphor of love affair as literary production into something both touching and silly—"You're the paper mill, I'm the ink Supply, alone at last...yeah the tabs are good, alignment's fine...All we need is closer spacing." The lyric is both compelling and completely cracked, and sung with such innocent conviction that it almost makes sense.

The songs on Malai Kofta have a sunny, tuneful pop quality that seems unstuck in time—"Trance" has a bouncy '80s pop feel, "Capri" is sort-of house music that borrows Prince's organ, and "Eraser" could come from any of the past four decades. ProtostarR are all over the place stylistically in a way that could have been disastrous, but instead seems to work best when it could have been the most disastrous. At the end of "Eraser," for no discernable reason, the key changes and they sing "hell yeah" over and over. Do I know why? Hell no! Is it great? Hell yeah!

ProtostarR's CD-release party is set for Oct. 11 at the Green Room.

Kent Williams

Unknown Component
Living Through Technology
MP3.com/unknown_component

The compact disc is dead. I read it in a magazine, The New Yorker, a periodical known for its accuracy. The recording industry has become unprofitable for all but a chosen few. Downloading music for free has become the norm. The old model of evaluating recorded music has also changed. Now anyone can release songs on MP3 files and share them with listeners at no cost. Unknown Component's Living Through Technology is a hybrid version of such—an MP3 file burned on disc and submitted to Little Village for review.

Is it amateurish? Sure it is, that's part of its DIY charm. The disc's lo-fi quality, strained vocals and unprofessional instrumentation add up to something greater than its parts. Keith Lynch—the local auteur behind the music—doesn't glorify truth or beauty, he shows the truth and beauty in the commonplace: the human voice, a simple riff and an austere beat. The conceptually significant, who's to say what it all means—that's kind of the point. The listener has to decide.

Lynch may not aspire to be a professional musician in the slick sense of the term, but he seems eager to share his love of popular music with others. This document reveals his ambitions. LV

Steve Horowitz

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Late Ten Grand singer affected many

The Iowa City community suffered a devastating loss with the recent death from unknown causes of musician Matt Davis. Davis, best known as lead singer/guitarist for Ten Grand (formerly the vidablue), was a vibrant individual who influenced many people locally and across the globe through his exuberant music and charismatic personality.

Ten Grand performed loud, passionate post-punk-style compositions (sometimes labeled Screamo—a reference to the music’s volume and emotional core). The band had been touring internationally in support of its well-received first release for Southern Records, This is the Way to Rule.

Fellow Ten Grand member Joel Anderson described Davis as “a true individual who stood out in a music world that is oversaturated with no talent rip-off artists and copycat scenesters. He created where others mimicked, and he paved new ground where others found it easier to follow. He did these things in both his music and his life.”

Luke Tweedy, who designed album art and posters for Ten Grand, was a close friend of the late musician. Tweedy remembered Davis with a smile: “He would start a band with anybody. He was not genre specific and went out and performed with his brother and more bands than anyone else I ever knew. He was driven, not by fame or money, but by the sheer pleasure of making music.”

Davis’ effect on others can be clearly seen on the memorial page at www.tengrand.com. Musicians and fans from Poland to New Hampshire to Glasgow to Spokane and almost everywhere in between have posted their condolences. If you were a friend or fan of Davis, the website is a good place to leave a message and find some emotional support.

Steve Horowitz

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**CRONICLE**

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Calendar listings are free, on a space-available basis. Mail entries to Little Village, P.O. Box 736, Iowa City, Iowa 52244 or email little-village@usa.net

Slobberbone, Oct. 2

The Green Room
509 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 354-6350
Blues Jam Mondays, Funk and Jazz Jam Tuesdays
Natty Nation, NICHELBAFOUNK, Aug. 28 · Dave Zollo and the Body Electric, Ben Schmidt, Aug. 29 · Robert Bradley’s Blackwater Surprise, Pseudopot, Aug. 30 · Two Cow Lounge, Aug. 31 · Japonize Elephants, WMD, Sept. 2 · Menagerie, Dead Roots, Sept. 3 · Broken Grass, Eufora, Sept. 4 · Mr. Baby’s Neighbors Solar String Band, Sny Magill, Sept. 5 · Skunk River Bandits, Midwest Dilemma, Sept. 6 · Giglitch, Sept. 7 · The Beads, David Haack Band, Sept. 12 · Family Groove Co., Core Project, Johnny Six, Sept. 13 · Hiersuspec, Diverse, Jake Snyder, Sept. 14 · Jackstraw, The ShWilliams, Sept. 17 · The Reacharounds, Lucy Star, Sept. 18 · Olospo, Sweet Potato Project, Smackeast, Sept. 19 · Orquesta de Jaz y Salsa Alta Maiz, Sept. 20 · On Trio, Sept. 21 · Johnny Six, Sept. 25 · The Westfall, Swivel Hips Smith, Sept. 26 · Euphoria, Sept. 27 · Brothers Past, Future Rock, Sept. 28 · Robert Walter’s 20th Congress, Sept. 30.

Hancher Auditorium
UI campus, Iowa City, 335-1160
Stefon Harris Quartet, Sept. 20, 8pm · University Symphony, Oct. 1, 8pm.

Harper Hall
Voxman Music Bldg., UI campus, Iowa City
Steven Stuske, saxophone, and Elisabeth Lorafitis, piano, Sept. 26, 8pm · Elaine Funaro, harpsichord, Sept. 28, 2pm.

Iowa Memorial Union
UI campus, Iowa City, 335-3059
Honey Tongue, Sept. 11, 8pm, Wheel Room · Cafe performance with Stefon Harris, Sept. 19, 8pm, Wheel Room.

Martini’s
127 E. College St., Iowa City, 351-5536
Shows at 9:30pm · Open Mike Mondays, 8pm; all shows; 9pm doors unless otherwise noted.

Ben Eaton, Sept. 5 · Letterpress Opy, Sept. 6 · Dennis McMurrin and Marty Christensen, Sept. 7 · Nate Basinger and friends, Sept. 11 · Mason Jennings, No River City, Sept. 12 · Dave Olzon, Sept. 13 · Amy Allison, Neil Cleary, Sept. 17 · Neil Michael Hagerty, Sam Knutson, Sept. 18 · Huntington’s Benefit with Big Wooden Radio, Flying Bacchus, Sam Knutson, Ben Schmidt, Sept. 19 · Brother Rabbit, The Great Stupa, Sept. 20 · Ben Weaver, Sept. 25 · Steppin’ in It, Sept. 26 · Joe Price, Sept. 27.

The Q Bar
211 Iowa Ave., Iowa City, 337-9107
Shows at 10:30pm · Adam Richman, Big Tasty, Aug. 30 · Nikki Lunden, Sept. 12 · The Nadas, Sept. 25.

Rock’s Roadhouse
1701 Hwy, 1 S., Iowa City, 358-1514
Patrick Hazell, Sept. 26, 8:30pm.

Sanctuary
405 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 351-5692
TBA, Sept. 27 · John Cord Jazz Band, Aug. 29 · Steve Grismore Trio, Sept. 5 · Gizmo Funk Band, Sept. 12 · Jim Allen and Bob Hillman, Sept. 26.

Smokehouse
511 P St., South Amana, 622-3750
Electric Mule, Sept. 13, 8:30pm · Mackie Blue, Sept. 20, 8:30pm · Eric Noden, Sept. 27, 8pm.

Uptown Bill’s small Mall
401 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 339-4041
Mozzarella, September 2, 8pm · Armadillo’s, September 3, 8pm · House of Stairs, September 4, 8pm · The Distinguished Gentlemen, Sept. 11, 8pm · The Distinguished Gentleman, Sept. 18, 8pm · The Distinguished Gentlemen, Sept. 25, 8pm.

The Great Plains: Iowa’s Landscapes and Native Americans
Grinnell College, 1108 Park St., Grinnell, 1103 Third St. SE, Cedar Rapids, 364-1580
Opening reception Sept. 5, 6-8pm. (See listing for more)

Cedar Rapids Museum of Art
410 Third Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids, 366-7503
What’s so Funny?: Art with Humor
Grinnell College, 1108 Park St., Grinnell, 641-269-4660

What's so Funny?: Art with Humor, through Sept. 28 · From Durer to Blake: Images of War and Peace from the Collection, through September · Villa to Grave: Roman Art and Life, 150 Roman objects-sculture, frescoes, jewelry, furniture, coins and other decorative art objects—displayed in a recreated Roman architectural setting, Sept. 19-Aug. 25, 2005 · Roman Street Fair, Roman re-structors, catapul demonstrations, arts, crafts, vendors and more, Sept. 20, 10am-3pm. (See Words listing for more)
Calendrier des événements:

**Union Bar**
- Tara Dutcher, tara@uptownarts.com, Sundays, 2-4pm
- Jennifer Danielson, Aug. 30, 8:30-11pm
- Silver Lining, Sept. 1, 5-8pm
- Menagerie, Sept. 2, 7-9pm
- Brandon Ross, Sept. 6, 6-8:30pm

**US Cellular Center**
- 370 First Avenue NE, Cedar Rapids, 363-1888
- Good Charlotte, Something Corporate, Sept. 19, 7:30pm

**Yacht Club**
- 13 S. Linn St., Iowa City, 337-6464
- Blues Jam hosted by Flying Bocchus, Sundays, 8pm-12am
- Alma Hovey Hayride, Aug. 30
- Dennis McMurinn and the Demolition Band, Sept. 5 – Star Candy, Sept. 6
- Bastard Sons of Johnny Cash, Sept. 7 – Bryce Janey & Merrill J. Miller, Sept. 11
- Martin Zellar (formerly of the Gear Daddies), Thomas Pace, Sept. 18

**MUSIC FESTIVALS/ SERIES**

**Conner's Home-Grown Dignity Jam**
- Aug. 31, College Green Park, Iowa City
  - 4-8pm
- Evert Conner Center for Independent Living Benefit: Dave Moore, Sam Knutson, Nikki Lunden, Radoslav Lorkovic.

**Fiddlers’ Picnic**
- Sept. 28, Johnson Co. Fairgrounds

**Friday Night Concert Series**
- Weather Dance Fountain Stage, downtown Iowa City
  - 6:30-9:30pm
- Teddy Morgan and Kelly Pardekooper, Sept. 5 – Big Wooden Radio, Sept. 12

**Iowa Women’s Music Festival**
- Sept. 13, 12-5pm, Upper City Park, Iowa City,
  - 335-1486
- Wishing Chair, Kyla Heartwood and Miriam Davidson, Zoe Lewis, Irene Keenan, Amy Finders and Annie Savage, Patty Ankrum (formerly of Black Sheep), food, arts.

**Jazz Under the Stars**
- Noelridge Park, Cedar Rapids
  - 7pm
- Ashanti, Aug. 28

**Just Jazz Saturday Night Concert Series**
- Weather Dance Fountain Stage, downtown Iowa City
  - 6:30-9:30pm
- The Saul Lubaroff Jazz Group, Aug. 30

**Market Music**
- Chauncey Swan Park, Iowa City
  - 5-7pm
- Grace & Beauty & the Mad River Band, Sept. 3

**Mud River Music Festival**
- Sept. 19-21, Izaak Walton League, Iowa City
  - Three days of local music & food, Gospel Music Pancake Breakfast Fund-raiser for the Homeless (Sunday, 10am); Friday, 5pm-12am; Saturday, 10am-12am; Sunday, 10am-2pm.

**Weekend of the Arts**
- Sept. 6-7, Central Park, Grinnell
  - Sept. 6: Grinnell College student bands, 12-1pm – Kelly Pardekooper, 1:15-3:15pm – Tazband, 3:30-5:30pm.
  - Sept. 7: Grinnell College student bands, 12-1pm – Grace and Beauty and the Mad River Trio, 1:15-3:15pm – Orquesta de Jazz y Salsa Alto Maiz, 3:45-5:45pm

**DANCE**

**Arts a la Carte**
- 20 E. Market St., Iowa City, 354-1526
Live Music & BBQ
13 South Linn
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Friday, Sept 5
DENNIS MCMURRIN & THE DEMOLITION BAND
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Saturday, Sept 6
STAR CANDY
Satisfy your tunk craving with our Chicago tunk favorites

Monday, Sept 8
MYTH AMERICA
Poetry, performance art, music

Wednesday, Sept 10
BASTARD SONS OF JOHNNY CASH*
Modern country with an "outlaw" edginess

Thursday, Sept 11
BRYCE JANLEY & MERRILL J. MILLER

Friday, Sept 12
HARMONY RILEY

Saturday, Sept 13
DAVID ZULLO & THE BODY ELECTRIC

Thursday, Sept 18
MARTIN ZELLAR*
A solo acoustic show from one of our all time favorites and former frontman of the Gear Daddies-Thomas Pake opens

Friday, Sept 19
Rearview Mirror*
Wow. Local band Winegarden opens

Saturday, Sept 20
HONEY TONGUE

Thursday, Sept 25
BOB HILLMAN
A very talented singer/songwriter

Friday, Sept 26
BROTHER TRUCKER
These gritty roots rockers put on a great show. Remedy opens

Live Music & BBQ served 11am-2am
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Iowa City Dance Jam, dance to eclectic music, Sept. 5, 8pm-12am, 354-5814 for more info • Salsa Breaks, Tuesdays, 10pm-12am.

Space/Place Theater
North Hall, UI campus, Iowa City
Forged, Alan Sener, UI Dance Department, Sept. 11-13, 8pm.

THEATER/PERFORMANCE

Dreamwell Theatre
Wesley House, 120 N. Dubuque St., Iowa City, 339-7757

Below the Belt, by Richard Dresser, a satirical look at company life, Sept. 26-27 and Oct. 3-4, 8pm.

Graffiti Theatre
Iowa City
Uncolor, multimedia performance examining attitudes toward immigrants and people of color in the Midwest, Sept. 7, 7:30-9:30pm, Community Center Theatre, 927 4th Ave., Grinnell • Getting REAL: Can We Cross the Tracks?, interactive theater performance exploring class and economic difference in our communities, Sept. 18, 7-9pm, United Church of Christ, Fourth Avenue and Broad Street, Grinnell.

Hancher Auditorium
UI campus, Iowa City, 335-1160
The Full Monty, Sept. 23-26, 8pm; Sept. 27-28, 2pm & 8pm.

Cambridge Steele Gallery
1064 Seventh Ave., Marion, 373-9211
Liars Holographic Radio Theatre, music and original skits, Sept. 5-6, 8pm.

Old Creamery Theatre
Price Creek Stage, 39 38th Ave., Amana, 800-352-6262 (unless noted otherwise)
Price Creek Stage: Wed., Fri., Sat. 8pm; Thurs., Sat., Sun. 3pm, Depot Theatre: Thurs. 3 & 8pm; Fri. & Sat. 8pm; Sun. 3pm

Always...Patsy Cline, through Sept. 28, Price Creek Stage • Painting Churches, drama by Tina Howe, Sept. 4-28.

Public Space ONE
6v, 5, Dubuque St. (above the Deadwood), Iowa City
"Sex in Public," performances by Aprilie Clarke, Dan Brooks and Paul Rust, Aug. 28, 8pm • Ladies and Gentlemen, Chuck Monson, by Chad Simonds, comedy based on Bertolt Brecht's A Man's A Man, Aug. 29, 8pm. (See Events Listing for more)

Riverside Theatre
213 N. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 338-7672
Fridays and Saturdays at 8pm and Sundays at 2pm

Theatre Cedar Rapids
102 Third St. SE, Cedar Rapids, 364-8592
7-9pm Thursday, Friday, Saturday; 2:30pm Sunday.

AUDITIONS, CALLS, ETC.

CSPS
1103 Third St SE, Cedar Rapids, 364-1580
Volunteer Kick-off, for volunteers old and new, Sept. 3, 6-8pm.

Deadline for nominations of persons and/or businesses that have significantly contributed to human rights in Iowa City is 5pm, Sept. 5. Send to: Iowa City Human Rights Commission Awards Breakfast, 410 E. Washington St., Iowa City, IA 52240, or call 356-5022.

Women's Resource & Action Center

130 N. Madison St., Iowa City, 335-1486
Volunteer Program Training Orientation Session, volunteers will be trained as group facilitators to lead support and discussion groups at the center, Sept. 8, 6-9pm.

CONTENDS

"The FAIRest Block of All" Contest. FAIR! is sponsoring a contest to identify the "FAIRest Block" in Johnson County. Winning block will be one that, through its social relationships and physical design, best exemplifies the organization's four founding principles of social, economic and environmental justice, and local democracy. To celebrate the winner, FAIR! will sponsor a block party and talent show for the winning block. Deadline for applications is Sept. 12. Send to FAIR! Local Culture Committee, PO Box 1812, Iowa City, IA 52244-1812. More info at www.jcfair.org.


COMEDY

The Green Room
509 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 354-4350
Lightning in a Bottle, Iowa City's new improv theater, Sept. 7 & 21, 8pm.

Hancher Auditorium
UI campus, Iowa City, 335-1160
Emma Goldman Clinic Benefit: Margaret Cho, Aug. 29, 8pm.

Macbride Auditorium
UI campus, Iowa City
Suzanne Westenhoefer, Sept. 12, 8pm, 335-1486.

WORDS

Cedar Rapids Museum of Art
410 Third Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids, 364-7503

The Green Room
509 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 354-4350
Poetry Slam, Sept. 10 & 24, 9pm.

Faulconer Gallery
Grinnell College, 1108 Park St., Grinnell, 641-269-4660
"Putting a Face on Iowans' Food," Professor Neil D. Hamilton, Drake University, Sept. 11, 7:30pm, Mayflower Homes' Carman Center, 2nd Floor, 616 Broad St., Grinnell • "Bounty's Balance," artist's talk with Chaden Halfhill, Sept. 16, 7:30pm, Grinnell Coffee Company, 915 Main St., Grinnell • "Photographing the People of our Place," with Sandra Dyas (Iowa City) and John Shimon and Julie Lindemann (Grandview, Wisc.), Sept. 19, 4:15pm • "The Impact of the Casino on the Meskwakie Settlement," Douglas Foley, Department of Anthropology, University of Texas, Oct. 2, 7:30pm, Mayflower Homes' Carman Center.

IC Public Library
123 Linn St., Iowa City, 356-5200
International Writing Program panel discussions: Wednesdays, 3pm • "Humors of Peace," with Minnesota peace activist Bud Dixon, Korean War veteran and semi-retired Lutheran minister, Sept. 22, 7-9pm, Room B.

Iowa Memorial Union
UI campus, Iowa City

20 | little village | calendar
EVENTS/FESTIVALS

Arts a la Carte
20 E. Market St., Iowa City, 354-1526
Celebration of Co-operation, to honor first anniversary of Arts a la Carte, evening of food, music, dance, and spontaneous entertainment. Sept. 20, 8pm-12am.

From Field to Family
Culinary Celebration
Sept. 11, Iowa City
Sept. 11: Benefit Culinary Walk, featuring seven Iowa City establishments that serve and promote locally produced items, 5-9pm, downtown IA, purchase tickets at New Pioneer Co-op store by 9am day of event.
Sept. 12: "How does Politics Impact Local and Sustainable Food Production?", symposium, Sept. 12, 7-7:30pm, 10 S. Gilbert St. • Book reading by Gary Paul Nabhan, 8pm, 10 S. Gilbert St.
Sept. 13: chefs prepare food from the Farmers Market, 9am-12pm, Chauncey Swan Park • Visit Janette Ryan-Hunt at the Heirloom Seed Movement," 6pm, Jordan Creek Bison Ranch, 1387 Jordan Creek Rd., Solon, tickets available at New Pioneer.

Public Space ONE
6½ S. Dubuque St. (above the Deadwood)
Iowa City
"Sex in Public," drama, art by Alexandra Cmyo, Megan Walton, Jesse Stoefell, a talkback with sexuality guru Tommy Russell, a short film by Jason Nebergall, and free condoms, Aug. 28, 8pm • HTC showcase pre-party with art, activities, workshops, juggling lessons, seven-layer salads, pancakes, films, Aug. 30, 10am-7pm.

Weekend of the Arts
Sept. 6-7, Grinnell
Music (see Music Festivals listing), art sale, street painting festival (Saturday, 12-5pm, Veterans Memorial Building, Broad Street and Fourth Avenue).

Nature/Environment
Kent Park
Rural Oxford (Highway 6, west of Tiffin), 645-2315
JAKES (Juniors Acquiring Knowledge, Ethics, and Sportsmanship) Day, archery, fishing, building turkey calls, Sept. 7, 3-6pm, meet at Youth Group Camp, for more info or to pre-register call 645-2315 • Monarch Butterfly Tagging Program, Sept. 14, 1pm, Conservation Education Center.

MISC.
Brucemore
2160 Linden Dr. SE, Cedar Rapids, 362-7375
The Eastern Iowa Garden and Landscape Show, Sept. 6, 9am-3pm.

Coralville Farmers Market
S.T. Morrison Park, swimming pool parking lot, 354-3006
Monday-Thursday, 5-8pm, through Oct. 10.

Herb Field Day
Sept. 5, 10:30am-5pm, Eric and Ann Franzenburg farm, 6925 19th Ave., Van Horne, 228-8758
Tour of Frontier Natural Products in Norway, 10:30am; growing, harvesting, drying and marketing herbs, 1pm, Franzenburg farm.

Iowa City Farmers Market
Chauncey Swan Parking Ramp, corner of Washington and Gilbert streets, Iowa City Wednesdays 5:30-7:30pm and Saturdays 7:30-11:30am, through October.

Iowa Memorial Union
UI campus, Iowa City

Johnson County Democratic Party
Fall BBQ
Sept. 27, 4pm, Izaak Walton League
Presidential candidates, food, drink, children's activities, raffles, a silent auction, and more, 354-7199.

Oakland Cemetery
Iowa City
UI Annual Deduced Body Program Memorial Service, Aug. 29, 1pm.

Prairie Lights
19 S. Dubuque St., Iowa City (unless otherwise noted), 337-2681
All 8pm (unless otherwise noted)
Broadcast live on WSUI Tim Farrington reads from The Monk Downstairs, Aug. 28 • Iowa author and poet Mary Swander reads from Desert Pilgrim, Aug. 29, Van Allen Hall • Novelist Curtis White reads from his new critique of American Culture, Middle Mind, Sept. 2 • John Domini, Drake University English prof, reads from his new novel, Talking Heads 77, Sept. 3 • German poet and translator Michael Hofmann reads from his work, Sept. 4 • Neil Freudenberger reads from her first book of short stories, Lucky Girls, Sept. 5 • Garrison Keillor reads from his new novel, Love Me, Sept. 6, Clapp Recital Hall, ticket required • Poets Lee Ann Brown and Monica You read from their recent books, Sept. 8 • poet Stephen Corey reads from his newest book, There Is No Finished World, Sept. 10 • Thibe Nissen and Meredith Broussard read stories from a new collection edited by Broussard, Sept. 11 • Frances Sherwood reads from The Book of Splendor, Sept. 12 • Lebanese poet and novelist Venus Khoury-Ghata reads from She Says, Sept. 15 • Frederick Turner reads from his new novel, 1929, about Bix Beiderbeck, Sept. 16 • Annie Proulx reads from her latest collection, That Old Ace in the Hole, Sept. 17. • Van Allen • I: Writers' Workshop grad Brian Young reads from his first collection of poems, The Full Night Still in the Street Water, Sept. 18, no radio • Workshop grad Anthony McCann reads from his first book of poems, Father of Noise, Sept. 19 • Travel writer Tony Horwitz reads from Blue Latitudes, Sept. 22 • Workshop grad Dan Beachy-Quick reads from his first collection of poems, The North Bound South Bound, Sept. 23 • Educator Esme Codell reads from her new book, How to Get Your Child to Love Reading, Sept. 24 • Kate Gleeson, literary collaborator of the late Janusz Bardach, reads from the second volume of his memoir, Surviving Freedom, Sept. 25 • Jeffrey Eugenides reads from his Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, Middlesex, Sept. 26, Shambaugh Aud.

40 Schaeffer Hall
UI campus, Iowa City
"Only Natural: The Horn of Mozart and Beethoven," Kristin Thelander, UI School of Music, Sept. 6, 10am • "Oh Baby! Fertility Decline in the Richest Nations on Earth," Jennifer Glass, UI College of Public Health, Sept. 20, 10am.

Shambaugh Auditorium
UI Main Library, Iowa City
"Voices from the Prairie: The Fourth Annual Iowa Writers Celebration," author Max Allan Collins and Pulitzer Prize-winning editorial cartoonist Paul Conrad discuss the theme of "Writers as Visual Artists," Sept. 19, 2pm.

Shambaugh House
UI campus, Iowa City, 335-0416
International Writing Program readings: Sept. 5, 5pm • Sept. 8, 3:30pm • Sept. 26, 5pm • Maria van Daalen, reading, Sept. 19, 5pm.

UI Museum of Art
150 North Riverside Dr., Iowa City, 335-1727
UI art professor Joseph Patrick talks about his works, Sept. 18, 7:30pm • Marguerite Byrum reading, Sept. 25, 7:30pm.

Uptown Bill's small Mall
401 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 339-0401
4pm (unless otherwise noted)
Conversation Salon Night, Sept. 2, 6-9pm.

Voxman Music Bldg.
UI campus, Iowa City
Master class with Stefan Harris, Sept. 18, 11:30am, Room 306.

Yacht Club
1 S. Linn St., Iowa City, 337-6464
Myth America, poetry, performance art, music, Sept. 8, 9pm.

Letter continued from page 3

workers by two proposed trade agreements that lack enforceable labor rights provisions; continued to work with colleagues on blocking the recent FCC decision allowing media monopolies to expand their control of media outlets; and cosponsored a bill to repeal parts of the Patriot Act that allow for secret surveillance of Americans and to significantly strengthen anti-terrorism provisions. (This bill passed with bipartisan support on July 23.)

I want our next president to have demonstrated the dedication and ability necessary to accomplish the agenda she sets out on the campaign trail. Kucinich has my vote after proving, day in and day out, that he's made dedication to truth and fairness part of a life's work in public office. Imagine what he could do as president!

Irene Friend Coralville
PSI continued from page 15

Schmidt sell CDs, and on and on and back again, and using that to create more energy for the next artist to join the circle."

"One of our missions is to offer diverse programming," Griffin continues, like he's just getting started. "We have a women's playwriting group, Venus Envy, and a Latino performance group, Mas Que Latino, slated to give monthly performances. We also have Nate Staniforth every other week performing an all-ages magic show. Still, that's not enough. There are so many voices in Iowa City and we want to help all those voices be heard."

Public Space ONE debuted on the first day of December 2002, with Paul Rust's play The Garvey's, directed by Spencer Griffin. Since then, dozens of performances, both grand and humble, have been staged.

As the experiment continues, there are many challenges Public Space ONE must still face: the possibility that one day Jim Bell will not be able to afford to let them stay rent free. That returning students may flock right past their doors to the bars. That the volunteers will dry up, the talent will move away, the committees will collapse. But even as these fears rush in, they are brushed aside, blown away, melted into puddles.

"Public Space ONE is intoxicating," Griffin explains. His pride and personal joy make it a little hard to articulate—like explaining what was so funny about the thing you had be there to understand. "Just sitting up there breathes new life into me because there is so much artistic creation and evolution going on every second."

For more information on Public Space ONE, visit www.publicspaceone.org, or go to the source at 612 South Dubuque St., above the Deadwood. Just look for the Psychic Readings awning. LV

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Mud River Music Festival September 19-21st, 2003

Izaak Walton League (south of Iowa City)
email jan@mudriver.org for information and directions

$10 Donation in advance $12 at the gate  Kids get in free
Camping $5 for both nights

Tickets Available at Uptown
Bills Small Mall 401 S Gilbert St
319-339-0401

Lineup:

Friday the 19th
5PM Funkmaster Cracker
6PM Nikki Lunden
7PM Protostar
8PM Caleb Ryder
9PM Dr. Z's Experiment
10PM the Absurd
11PM Alma Howey Hayride

Saturday the 20th
10AM The Mike and Amy Finders Band
11AM Ed Gray
12PM Bree Clime-White & Darren Mathews
1PM Fiona
2PM The Mad River Band
3PM Dave Moore
4PM Ben Schmidt
6PM Jennifer Danielson
7PM The Diplomats of Solid Sound
8PM Half Fast
9PM Shame Train
10PM Kelly Pardekooper
11PM The Letterpress Cpyr

Sunday the 21st
10AM Gospel Music Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser for the Homeless
11AM Gaia Chorus
11:30 AM Scotty Hayward, African Kalimba
12PM Sudanese Drumming with Tabouli
1PM The Andy Parrott Trio

Local food vendors include:
The Pit BBQ
Soleil African Cuisine
Pizza on Dubuque
Sierra Organic Fruit Smoothies

No Dogs

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SUNDAY, Sept. 14, 4pm-9pm

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22 | little village
FORECAST FOR SEPTEMBER 2003 • BY DR. STAR

Aries (March 21-April 19) There is a strong emphasis on work and partnership matters in September. This month, motivated not a little by profound and continuing changes going on inside you. You are seeing the error of your old ways, partly, but you are also driven by visions of a new and more appealing you. Take your time. Don't worry so much about appearances. In sorting through all the issues, strenuously avoid complicated financial arrangements. Concentrate on straightforward cash deals. Feminism and finances mix especially well this month. Listen to the women in your life.

Taurus (April 20-May 20) There is a lot happening in long-term financial areas. Negotiations could be especially difficult because they will affect matters close to your heart. There is a possibility of gain, but the planets suggest the likelihood of deception, manipulation and coercion. Events might force you to handle your finances. You have a lot of cards to play, though, and time is on your side. Seek flexible, non-binding agreements where possible. The needs of the women in your life should play a big role in your decisions.

Gemini (May 21-June 20) The forces of change conspire to keep money coming in despite continuing tensions over important facets of your work and home life. You might be tempted to keep yourself in the good graces of the powers that be. Or to oppose them openly by working all the social and political angles. The opposition is too numerous and too deeply entrenched for a head-on approach to succeed. The planets suggest you would get better results working quietly behind the scenes. Cultivate new attitudes and update personal values and goals.

Cancer (June 21-July 22) You shouldn't blame yourself for tensions on the job. Political and economic conditions have a lot of people, including your fellow workers, very worried. Employers could respond by imposing new and annoying controls in the work environment. Fellow workers could express their anxiety and annoyance by manipulating you. There are probably more layers of confusion and deception. Dig deeper before you act to improve the situation. This month, issues of loyalty and steadfastness are foregrounded in romantic areas. Intimacy could easily lead to long-term involvements, even marriage.

Leo (July 23-Aug 22) Leo's month could end up in a proper pickle this month, with love and romance, marriage, power, money, indulgence, offended sensibilities...all the makings of a major cat fight. And what seems like an innocent little flirtation could turn out to be anything but. The best way to avoid disaster is to show respect for the needs and opinions of the women involved. You can depend on the steadfast support and protection of Jupiter, also. It will help prevent the worst outcome. You might escape with just a little high drama. LV

Virgo (Aug 23-Sept 22) Just because the hurdles seem higher and more numerous than you expected doesn't mean you will not achieve your goal. Neither does it mean that your goal is not worth pursuing. You might have to take things a little slower than you thought and spend more time solving each problem. In addition, you are beginning a whole new Jupiter cycle. Jupiter will offer unstinting support if you don't push too far too fast. You might show more independence, and want to take greater risks than you are really prepared to take. All will probably work out quite well, no matter what, as long as you keep long-term financial goals in mind and don't ignore the advice of those with greater professional experience.

Libra (Sept 23-Oct 22) Outwardly, Librarians will enjoy a month adorned by touches of glamour, charm and romance. Inwardly, Librarians could be feeling otherwise as they balance social demands and work pressures. You can handle it, providing you don't push too far too fast. You might show more independence, and want to take greater risks than you are really prepared to take. All will probably work out quite well, no matter what, as long as you keep long-term financial goals in mind and don't ignore the advice of those with greater professional experience.

Scorpio (Oct 23-Nov 21) Scorpios are under a lot of pressure as they balance their basic economic arrangements. There is also increasing pressure on their day-to-day cash flow. These economic matters are intimately bound up with family and partnership relations. If you must enter into a long-term financial agreement, either as a borrower or a lender, keep it as simple and straightforward as possible. Try to keep things on a cash basis. Question all transactions. Be especially mindful of the effects your decisions will have on those close to you. Their needs are key.

Sagittarius (Nov 22-Dec 21) Family and work concerns have both decided to cause you trouble at the same time. Those who consider themselves authority figures in both areas are making strong and unreasonable demands. Nothing is quite what it appears, either, and options are limited. Don't obsess. Don't take things head on. Don't fret over con­cessions you have to make. Your personal leverage in these matters will grow if you quietly tend to priorities and the demands of outside authority. The change and controversy all around you is working in your favor, though that might not be clear now.

Capricorn (Dec 22-Jan 19) Confusing financial signals make it hard to know which move to make. Partnership matters are under strain. Your local support network is in turmoil. Private worries are hard to resolve because the sources of these worries are hard to define exactly. The planets suggest that you need to decide who you really are and what you really want. For that need you need to relax and play. Taking risks to discover and express yourself is a favored approach, despite present turmoil. Finances will soon ease significantly, taking the edge off most things, too.

Aquarius (Jan 20-Feb 18) Big planets are active in several financially sensitive spots in the Aquarian chart. Aquarians are famous for their love of independence and freedom of action is also being heavily stimulated. A big change is in the works, for sure, and it is hard to tell how everything will come out, but choices will have to be made. Things are likely to work out for the best if you set aside professional priorities and the demands of outside authority figures. Favor home and family interests and your own need for nurture and security.
a quirky comedy
WONDER OF THE WORLD
Sept. 12-21

gen-x drama
THE SHAPE OF THINGS
Oct. 3-12

family holiday musical
HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS
- A TCR Christmas
Nov. 21 - Dec. 13

a classic adventure
TREASURE ISLAND
Jan. 30-Feb. 15

stylish mystery noir
LAURA
March 12-21

Pulitzer Prize winner
PROOF
April 2-17

tantalizing new revival
CABARET
May 14-29

foot-stompin’ musical
BIG RIVER-The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn
July 9-31

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