Mon, August 1
**Metal Monday**
w/ Freak.Label, Catastrophic Solutions, State of Insomnia

Thurs, August 11
**Micawber**

Sat, August 13
**Condor**
w/ Plagued by Saints

Wed, August 17
**Bubblegum Octopus**

Thurs, August 18
**Dastardly**

Fri, August 19
**Kidnap the Sun**

Sat, August 20
**Identity Crisis**

Fri, August 26
**Glaciers**
w/ Sleep Serapis Sleep, Maria Singer, A Casual Affair

Sat, August 27
**Dubstep/EDM Summit V6**

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10 Books
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11 Prairie Pop
Stick a fork in me

14 Technology
Community in the Twitterverse

16 The Tube
Revolution Laura Palmer Style

18 UR Here
After disaster, what of place?

19 Hot Tin Roof
Electric deal

22 The Stage
Escape the swelter, hit the theater!

24 Talking Movies
Film Fests 2011

30 The Haps
(We’re not sure why it’s about the Counting Crows)

32 Local Albums
Full grown, gettin’ known

34 The Straight Dope
Now fear this

35 News Quirks
Flexible logic

36 Calendar
Free-time fun

37 A-List
’Bout time

39 Astrology
Get the local forecast
Back in March, I mentioned a presentation given by John Millar of Divaris Real Estate in Virginia Beach, VA. A press release indicated that Millar had been invited by a “coalition of businesses, developers, community members, The University of Iowa and the City of Iowa City,” on account of his being “an expert on the development of mixed-use college town centers.”

Since then, the city and university have hired Millar at $55,000 as a consultant. From the council’s hiccuping official minutes: Millar “has developed a highly specific analysis tool for use in communities with special populations of universities, military installations and government functions. The analysis goes beyond the typical demographics found in the US Census each area studied [sic] and factors in, for college towns the hometown demographics of students [sic] populations, visiting populations and the staff and faculty populations within the community.”

Daft councilman Terry Dickens was predictably behind the move. UI Business Manager George Hollins enthused incoherently about Millar’s February presentation is available at iegov.org (search “Hidden College Town Economies”). Some spoilers: The University of Illinois has been relocated to a place called “Urban-Champaign.” Concord, NH is also listed as a college town, despite its eminence as a state capital and the fact that only the University of New Hampshire School of Law and the New Hampshire Technical Institute contribute significantly to the college-aged population there. The rest—including Millar’s recommendation of “Sports Bar” as an important tenant—I’ll leave you to judge for yourself.

The chill comes when you look for a “mixed-use college town center” developed by newly hired consultant John Millar. You won’t find one. Millar’s résumé on Divaris’ website already promotes his involvement with Iowa City: In a section titled “Projects John has worked on include,” he links to a Cedar Rapids Gazette article reporting the city council’s vote to approve his hire. The same section includes several links to press releases commissioned by Divaris itself and limply branded “Divaris Commercial Real Estate Review.” Among these is his sole claim to expertise in developing mixed-use retail areas in college towns: The Town Center at Toftrees, in State College, PA. The Town Center is part of the Toftrees Planned Community, or Toftrees West, depending on which report you read. As of this writing, ground hasn’t yet broken on the broader project, let alone on Millar’s purported brainchild, but you wouldn’t know that from Divaris’ website, which lists the Town Center as a case study. And whose Real Estate Review features this Millar-enhanced gush: “State College Town Center at Toftrees is on target to open in August 2009 in time for Penn State’s fall semester, followed by the Christmas season, ensuring that our retailers will have a highly successful start. It’s the optimum time to open!”

The other entries in Millar’s portfolio as of this writing include signing Anthropologie to a lease in a Virginia mall and his involvement in “Big Changes for Biltmore Mall.” The Biltmore Mall, in Asheville, NC, was managed until 2008 by Millar’s old firm of Jones Lang LaSalle; Divaris is now its property manager.

Millar’s overweening claims echo those of his employer. Divaris developed the St. Charles Town Centre ... which, again, doesn’t exist. The city council voted it down on May 9, 2010, but not before stand-up citizen Jim Mizgalski wrote to the city asking “Why does Divaris and [fellow developer] Shodeen show the Towne Centre project on their website when the zoning hasn’t been approved? What do they know that we do not know?”

Divaris does manage several malls, most of them in or near the resort town of Virginia Beach, and not all of them successful. Saddest of all might be the Springfield Mall in Springfield, Virginia. Divaris’ site misplaces it ten miles away in Fairfax.

Divaris got involved with Springfield Mall after Vornado Realty Trust bought it in 2006. A few years and a lot of talk later, nothing
of practical value seems to have come from Divaris’ claim that it “consulted with Vornado Realty Trust on an upgrade, remerchandising and expansion program to add a mixed-use component in the Washington, DC suburb for Springfield Mall.”

As the mall deteriorated, its value shrank against the loan Vornado had taken out to buy the property in the first place. So, in 2010, Vornado defaulted. A year later, it bought back the loan, netting $45 million in the bargain. Some people short stocks—Vornado apparently shorted a whole town.

Divaris got paid for its consultancy on Springfield Mall. So, too, will John Millar get paid. If we’re hiring him to tell us who’s here and to look vaguely like Tom Davis, that’s great. That’s a lousy use of 55 grand, and I’ll bet dollars to donuts that FasTrac, the terrific mentoring program dropped by City High last year, could’ve put that money to much better use.

And maybe, just maybe, we know god-damned well who we are and who we want to be. Maybe we’ve got enough good ideas and elbow grease, enough smarts and enough gumption, to build a local economy more FUBU than FUBAR.

If that strikes a chord with you, run for city council, or start a business of your own.

At the very least, look skeptically at a council eager to spend our money on sizzle over steak. Many of them have never run businesses, or run them well. Our taxes shouldn’t buy them a sense of confidence. That’s the essence of any con game.

Bob Burton is loaded for bear at bob.burton@littlevillagemag.com

References available at www.LittleVillageMag.com/yourtownnow

**Hefeweizen**

**BREWS OF THE MONTH: AUGUST**

August kind of sucks. Summer vacation ends (for those who still have it), there is no reason to drive to Missouri for fireworks and the beginning of football season is painfully close. Basically, it is 31 days of heat, humidity and perseverance. Thankfully, there is hefeweizen.

Brewed with over 50 percent malted wheat, refreshing on hot days and properly served in special, curvaceous glasses, hefeweizen is my favorite style of beer. Though a quest for hop tolerance is the national rage, I prefer to while away warm afternoons in the shade of a beer garden, a half-liter weizen glass filled with golden nectar and topped with a meringue-like foam within arms reach. So instead of suggesting one specific version, I have decided to recommend the hefeweizen style as a whole.

The good stuff comes from Bavaria. Excellent choices include Weihenstephaner Hefeweissbier, Franziskaner Weissbier, Paulaner Hefe-Weizen and Schneider Weisse Original. In regards to freshness, Millstream’s Hefe-“r”-weizen cannot be beat.

More or less, all good hefeweizens exhibit the same characteristics. The color will range between lemonade and deep gold. Since they are unfiltered, hefeweizens are naturally cloudy. When pouring into a pint or weizen glass, leave a little beer in the bottle and gently loosen the yeast at the bottom with a couple swirls, then pour the remaining mix, which will cloud the beer and give it a thick foam topping. The aroma and flavor are sweet and wheaty and will usually feature ripe banana, apple, lemon, orange, clove, a little ground pepper, maybe strawberry and, sometimes, bubblegum.

*Casey Wagner*

**ALCOHOL CONTENT:** Ranging from 4.9 to 5.5 percent ABV.

**SERVING TEMPERATURE:** 45ºF.

**FOOD PAIRINGS:** Tangy cheeses such as Edam, Feta and Brick (I suggest Brick); chicken or vegetable pie; salads; seafood; and traditional Bavarian fare such as weisswurst and pretzels (hold the spicy mustard, though).

**WHERE TO BUY:** John’s Grocery, New Pioneer Food Co-op and most area Hy-Vee stores.

**PRICE:** $8-10 PER SIX-PACK, AND $3-4 FOR 500 ML BOTTLES.
So you think you know the Iowa City food scene? With several new restaurants opening their doors of late, it may be time for you to reconsider your options. If you’re looking to impress the belly-dancing goddess from College Green you finally scored a date with, allow us to recommend a few of the dishes that inspire us.

These off-the-beaten-path offerings are guaranteed to stir the senses, arouse the taste buds, or at the very least provide an interesting conversation piece.

TIRAMISU FOR TWO
Baroncini’s Tiramisu makes for one very happy ending.

Photo credits clockwise from left: Adrianne Behning; Bill Adams; Adrianne Behning; Stephanie Catlett
**LET’S EAT**

**LA MICHOACANA**  
1566 S Gilbert St. (at Stevens Drive)  
Iowa City  
(319) 471-0593

This eatery makes no pretensions. Seating is on picnic chairs, the view is of SUVs rolling on pavement and platters are, well, Styrofoam plates. It does make, however, some of the most authentic Mexican street food in Iowa City. Tucked away along Gilbert Street, on the way to Sand Road, south of downtown, the taco truck (because it’s actually a truck) offers meats such as beef tongue ( lengua) and beef cheek (cabesa) at a surprisingly low price ($1.50 a taco!). For the more adventurous, do try the Beef Tongue Taco; it is juicy and tender. When paired with onions, sprinkled with fresh lime and wrapped in warm corn tortilla, this is no prickly animal tongue, just bliss.

**BARONCINI RISTORANTE**  
104 South Linn Street  
(319) 337-2048

This is where to go if you really want to impress that girl. Order a bottle of Chianti and attempt to ask for the “Insalata di Polipo Seppie e Gamberi Nella Conchiglia di Pasta Sfoglia” in perfect Italian. If you order the Lasagna—with silky layers of pasta embracing small piles of béchamel and sweet Bolognese—or the Tiramisu (the mascarpone is smooth and custard-like), you’ll likely earn a kiss. The two-month old upscale restaurant serves “traditional and creative Italian,” according to Owner and Chef Gianluca Baroncini, who adds personal touches to the space such as the family crest, cast in copper plating that frames the entrance. Also, pastas here are made on-site, enhancing features such as Ravioli and Rigatoni and making a simple Linguine in Spicy Tomato Sauce into an amazing gastronomical experience.

**BASTA**  
121 Iowa Avenue  
(319) 337-2030

If you’re looking for a less fish-posh take on Baroncini’s elegant setting, try the wide open, family-style atmosphere of Basta. The noodles here are also homemade, but we recommend starting your date night right with a dish of colorful olives; their firm, salty but not briny flavor makes them top competitors for best olives in Iowa City. Also, you probably won’t be able to resist your waiter’s entreaty to try the rich and spicy Stuffed Dates, an irresistible plateful of decadent sausage-stuffed, prosciutto-wrapped sin. For the entrée, share a bowl of Roasted Butternut Squash Ravioli in creamy sage butter sauce. The fresh sage is the ticket in this mellow little dish; it’s the kind of warm, cozy comfort-food that makes you want to get a little closer.

**AZUL**  
720 Pacha Parkway, North Liberty  
(319) 665-2656

Located in a contrived little faketon—get it? A fake town?—in North Liberty, Azul distinguishes itself by focusing on the far-flung bounty of the sea. The salsa is spicy and the guacamole is fresh, but the cajun Mahi Mahi Tacos and the Seafood Burrito stand out as items you just won’t find anywhere else around. The burrito is large enough for two, which makes its $16.95 price point slightly less intimidating, and it’s stuffed to the gills (har har) with scallops, mahi mahi, shrimp, onions, peppers and garlic. The kicker, however, is that it’s smothered in a two delectable sauces: a mild jalapeno and a chipotle cream. The side-by-side pairing of these two unique sauces make an already good burrito party-in-your-mouth good.

**CHILI YUMMY**  
100 South Linn Street  
(319) 338-1038

Asian cuisine can be tough to navigate, and anecdotes abound regarding the difficulty of getting any straight answers out of this waitstaff, but don’t let that stop you from trying the Hong-Kong-style food that Chili Yummy has to offer. The restaurant features hot pots or “Asian fondue” as some like to call it and dim sum, which could be considered “Chinese tapas.” Hot pots include a choice of several meat-based broths, the most popular being the Mandarin Duck Pot, in which customers check off the variety of meats, seafood and vegetables they would like to dunk into the soup that is presented on small electric burners. If you don’t feel like soup, dim sum offers sweet and savory delicacies in a tradition that is centuries old. Try Barbecue Pork Buns, which are slightly sweet, steamed bread with sweet barbecue pork inside. Or get the Shrimp Funn Roll, which are large steamed rice noodles rolled with shrimp and topped with splashes of soy sauce. Don’t feel like any of these foods? They also have Bubble Tea.

**WHAT TO DRINK WHEN YOU’RE DRINKIN’**

**BASTA: AMALFI PRESS**

It’s officially berry time. Soon, we’ll be biking out to Lone Tree’s Sand Road Farm, picking blueberries, makin’ pie. Until then, get your berry fix with Basta’s Amalfi Press, a concoction of Limoncello, Stoli Blackberry, blackberry puree, lemon juice and mint. The drink is cool, sweet and refreshing, and the mint cuts through the sweet blackberry like a lone swimmer scissoring across a cool, green pool—a welcome diversion from the slushy blackberry base.

**THE SANCTUARY: BUFALA NEGRA**

Nothing smells more like summer than fresh basil, and the Bufala Negra is an earthy homage to backyard gardens … a little dirty, a little bitey, a little hint of what’s under the surface. It’s a rather dark drink, but the basil and ginger keep it refreshing. Drinking balsamic vinegar takes a little getting used to, but when it’s made properly, the Sanctuary’s Bufala Negra is a well-balanced and bittersweet gem of a drink.

**MOTLEY COW: BLACK TEA SPRITZER**

A sweet, fizzy little sparkler, this pretty cocktail is almost too easy to drink. Served with a lemon garnish, it’s the perfect way to start your evening out. Made with Prosecco, black tea syrup and lemon bitters, this seasonal offering is a fun twist on the classic iced-tea-on-a-hot-summer-day, and a welcome addition to The Motley Cow’s always-inventive drink menu.

**THE RED AVOCADO: SANGRIA**

The deep scarlet color of The Red Avocado’s sangria is a telltale sign that it’s a drink for berry lovers. Seasonal fruits blend with the piquant flavors of red wine, leaving a wonderfully sweet and tart aftertaste.

**SHARE: MOSCOW MULE**

This cocktail with an unfortunate name gets the royal treatment at Share, the only place in town (that we can find) that presents the cocktail as it is traditionally served, in a shiny copper mug. Far from just an accessory, the mug keeps the drink refreshingly cold and accentuates the mixture of vodka, ginger beer and lime, as the subtle flavors dance on your tongue.

**DATE NIGHT CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 >>**
THE MORNING AFTER

So, things worked out? Let the good times continue to roll ...

BANDITOS: EL GUAPÓ

Potatoes and huevos cooked your way, smothered in a revelation of a five-cheese (er, cinco-queso) sauce, sided with pico de gallo and guacamole. Add your choice of chorizo or bacon and this is the brunch your hungover tummy wakes up dreaming about.

T SPOONS: BLUEBERRY & SPINACH FETA SCONES

It’s hard to find a perfect scone, but this might be it. Baked by your friends at John’s Grocery, T Spoons offers the choice between blueberry—which is buttery and dense with a note of sweetness—or spinach and feta, the most aromatic with its blend of oregano and other Italian spices. I’d choose both!

BREAD GARDEN: GLAZED DONUTS

Get up early if you can to catch these while they’re hot and before they’re all sold out. Sweet, warm and buttery-soft insides with a crunchy outer layer, just add coffee and it’s the perfect way to start the day, every day.

Inspiration can come from anywhere, but we prefer ours in food form. Here’s hoping our little list will reignite your passion for the IC dining scene.

>> DATE NIGHT CONTINUED FROM 7

Stephanie Catlett and Hieu Pham are accepting bribes in the form of ice cream.

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Imagine five-hundred humpback whales. Twelve max-weight 18-wheelers. These amount to one million pounds—or the milestone reached by Iowa City’s Table to Table, a charitable organization that rescues food to support local service agencies that assist the hungry, homeless and at-risk. And for the first time in its 15-year history, Table to Table rescued more than one million pounds of food in one fiscal year.

Bob Andrlik, Table to Table director, said that while the amount per year has grown throughout his 10 years with the nonprofit, this year’s record take of 1,030,886 pounds was an incredible achievement.

“To put it in perspective, we did about 150,000 to 180,000 pounds [in 2001]” he said. “It’s grown that much over that time. It’s a building block kind of thing. You don’t just jump in and rescue that much at once.”

Founded in 1996, Table to Table is a “food rescue” organization that collects quality food from local grocers, restaurants, bakeries, farmers’ markets and other vendors to provide for recipient agencies such as Four Oaks.

“It is often hard to believe sometimes how much good and healthy food they are able to save and provide those organizations in need,” said Dusti Dalton of the Iowa City Four Oaks office. “Being a non-profit can be difficult when it comes to having the money in the budget needed to provide everything for the clients and families we serve.”

With budget cuts across the state and the nation in recession, Andrlik said food pantry needs are only increasing.

“They are seeing cuts in their funding streams as governments tighten their belts,” Andrlik said. “It has a real impact on those agencies that are that front line social service safety net. We want to make sure we’re supporting those agencies.”

After the floods in 2008, there was a spike in the number of people seeking out food programs and crisis centers. Andrlik said it’s the abrupt and unpredictable changes in nature that can make people fine one day and in need the next.

“I guess that was the ‘gift’ of the flood. It helped bring back focus to where the needs are locally,” he said. “It can happen to anyone. You’ve got to be there when it happens.”

More than twenty-five food vendors in the Iowa City area provide donations to Table to Table. Andrlik said efforts began with guidance and oversight from the Johnson County Health Department, who helped determine what kinds of food to rescue and how much. Foods such as non-perishable or canned items, breads and other packaged foods are favored, as is fresh produce and foods from local farmers’ markets.

Food is usually switched out as it nears the “best use” date, Andrlik said. Though the food is being switched out for newer products, the item is still a very valuable resourceful to local pantries and service organizations.

“We’re very cognisant of how to handle the food and make sure it’s being handled correctly,” he said. “When we pass food out, we make sure to let the recipient agency know the food handling guidelines, reheating instructions and common sense things so you can mitigate any potential problems.”

Other agencies that benefit from Table to Table include the Crisis Center Food Bank, Shelter House, Domestic Violence Intervention Program and the Free Lunch Program, among others. Andrlik said it’s not only these organizations that make the process happen, but the over 100 volunteers who work with Table to Table to pick up and deliver the rescued food.

“It’s that kind of volunteerism that Andrlik credits with making the one-million-pound milestone possible.

“Iowa City has that spirit of activism. It’s a great community for volunteering,” he said. “Our 110 volunteers are a powerful motivator, as well as just wanting to do the right thing. It’s so silly to discard perfectly good food.”

Dalton said she couldn’t agree more.

“The symbol of Four Oaks represents the family, the community and the agency standing together with a child to build a future as strong as the mighty oak. I think this symbol can be reflective of the Iowa City community as a whole,” she said. “We are so impressed with the level of commitment Table to Table has to provide for those in need.”

Andrlik said about 775,000 meals are provided by the food rescued each year.

“You hate to think that people in Iowa are hungry, but the fact remains: They are. As times get tighter, often times food is the thing that gets squeezed.”

He said that getting good, quality food to places like the Crisis Center Food Bank is just one way they can help fulfill the basic human need of daily meals.

“If you’re a person going to school and you’re hungry, you don’t do as well in school. If you’re hungry and you go to work, you won’t do as well at work. Whether it’s traditional housing, crisis intervention or food, we’re helping agencies facilitate their services with that crucial safety net for people in need.”

Erin Tiesman is an advertising writer in Iowa City and freelance journalist. She is a 2009 graduate of the University of Iowa School of Journalism master’s program.
Much of the celebration of the 75th Anniversary of the Iowa Writers’ Workshop has involved the program’s graduates coming together to reflect on the craft of writing. In June, the Workshop hosted an alumni reunion and this month sees the publication of *We Wanted to Be Writers*, a series of conversations with Workshop graduates discussing the writing process. But for those whose enthusiasm for writing is matched by an enthusiasm for language, one of the most intriguing aspects of the craft is the relationship a writer forges with their words. These enthusiasts yearn for a peek into a writer’s “wordly” insights precisely because they recognize how unique a writer’s perspective on words is; after all, the work of a writer often boils down to a series of determined and painstaking searches for just the right word, a word with just the right sound, meaning and impact. It is in this literary-meets-lexical spirit that we appreciate the legacy of the Workshop by highlighting some its notable graduates’ writing on words.

Published in June, the transparently titled *Favorite Words of Famous People* contains contributions from several prominent writers, including Workshop graduates T.C. Boyle and Jane Smiley. Smiley’s favorite words keenly unpack the various senses that ‘favorite’ can take on. Firstly, there is the word that is your favorite because of its euphony: “I like the sounds of the words ‘Krakatoa’ and ‘glistening’”; your favorite because of how it evokes associations: “I like the word ‘baby,’ because the b’s remind me of baby cheeks,”; your favorite to (over)use: “Clearly”; and, for the sense of favorite most often implied by the favorite word question (“What word is your favorite because of its personal significance?”) Smiley’s word is “garlicky,” a word that signals for her the most sublime of gustatory

The Writers’ Workshop

For those whose enthusiasm for writing is matched by an enthusiasm for language, one of the most intriguing aspects of the craft is the relationship a writer forges with their words. Given scene, say, the one framed by a window, is its own orchestra.” Swenson defends her erroneous definition by arguing that it fills a gap for describing the harmony one senses in a scene, a harmony not of tone but of meaning. “Through solmization, all objects have a voice, which changes in relation to the others around it, some coming together in chords, others in discord.”

Hemley’s is a tour de force among the entries, as it thematically joins together four definitions of Ur: the Sumerian city purported to be the birthplace of Abraham, a prefix signifying “the earliest,” the first known board games and the muttered utterance one makes when groping for a word. To both profound and comic ends, Hemley blends the denotation of the prefix with the mystic connotations evoked by the biblical-era city. “Place the word *Ur* in front of any other and watch as it causes the word to emit a charge, a pop, or sometimes a thin wisp of white smoke as the word folds into itself, becomes itself in its truest sense, reverts to something like a cousin, grows horns, hoofs, loses its prehensile grip on modernity. *Ur-waistcoat. Ur-invasion. Ur-zebra. Ur-occupation. Ur-piano. Ur-insurgency.*”

The workshop is an apt way to describe the Writers’ Workshop, given that its mythic status among creative writing programs owes much to being among the first such programs in the country. The word *workshop* alone, with its artisan roots, nicely captures the feature of the program most likely responsible for it its success, its approach to the writing process. At the Writers’ Workshop, writing isn’t a project that has an inherently musical relationship with those objects around it, and that any

Arash Sangha studied linguistics at the University of Iowa and currently teaches in the university’s ESL program. His favorite words (of the moment) are “abstruse” and “schmutz.”
My editor assigned me to find out, in his words, “Is the Pitchfork Music Festival still fun?” As luck would have it, I’ve been perfecting an algorithm that calculates the objective quality of the festival experience using the Pitchfork website’s well-known rating system, from 0.0 to 10.0. Heat is a deciding variable, and this year offered a perfect controlled experiment because the weather went from sunny and mild on Friday to off-the-charts oppressive by Sunday. Other calculations include: quality of the music and its appropriateness for the open air; the effects of drugs and/or alcohol; and, of course, one’s age (a negative coefficient).

Pitchfork did have many highlights—tUnEyArDs, No Age, and Off! all spiced things up—but there were a few aesthetic atrocities. The most heinous crime was programming DJ Shadow in the daylight. I was lucky enough to catch his set two days later at the Blue Moose and it was like, er, night and day. Back in Iowa City, the darkened venue stage became a quasi-holographic spectacle, with Shadow performing inside a rotating ball on which mesmerizing animations were projected. It was the most visually stunning and innovative performance I’ve ever witnessed in a rock club. But at Pitchfork it was like watching Star Wars without any of the special effects, in the frying heat. These variables conspired to turn a 10.0 set into a lackluster 2.3.

By the time Sunday afternoon rolled around, some dazed audience members looked like they had been pummeled by Mike Tyson. It was only with the setting of the sun and the light electro-pop lilt of Cut Copy that the crowd got its second (or fifth) wind. Soon, people all the way back to the food tents were dancing. Even the angry-looking macho man at the furthest edge of the grass—whose T-shirt read “TWO WORDS: SUCK IT”—was nodding his head. After TV On The Radio’s powerful closing performance, the festival’s overall rating crept back up to a 7.1.

Kembrew McLeod will be spending the month of August trying to figure out how to turn his name into a symbol. Input is welcome.

PHOTOS CONTINUED ON PAGE 12 >>
1. Thurston Moore: Pastoral acoustic guitars and strings from the King of Noise. (Photo: Kembrew McLeod)

2. Cut Copy: Lilting electro-pop that gleefully pillages from New Order and OMD. (Photo: Benjamin Franzen)

3. Neko Case: Melancholy twang from a fiery redhead with the mouth of a sailor and the voice of an angel. (Photo: Benjamin Franzen)

4. James Blake: Mellow electronica-tinged blue-eyed British soul. (Photo: Kembrew McLeod)

5. Guided By Voices: Tuneful guitar pop from everyone’s favorite alt-rock oldies act. (Photo: Benjamin Franzen)

6. DJ Shadow: For those about to rock the turntables, we wish we could see your light show! (Photo: Benjamin Franzen)

7. Ariel Pink’s Haunted Graffiti: Wacky spazz-rock that sounds better with headphones than in the open air. (Photo: Lynne Nagent)

8. Gang Gang Dance: Trance inducing polyrhythms with a dash of New Age-y cheese. (Photo: Kembrew McLeod)
9. **Odd Future**: Transgressive rhymes about rape, incest, etc. Some folks think they’re funny and groundbreaking; most don’t. (Photo: Benjamin Franzen)

10. **Superchunk**: Candy coated early-1990s punk from everyone’s favorite slack motherfuckers. (Photo: Benjamin Franzen)

11. **Zola Jesus**: Tribal goth rhythms from a pint-sized dancing singer with massive lungs. (Photo: Kembrew McLeod)

12. **No Age**: Sidewalk blistering punk rock with enough hooks to fill a fishing tackle box. (Photo: Kembrew McLeod)

13. **Off!**: Former members of Black Flag, Redd Kross and Rocket From the Crypt create old school hardcore heaven. (Photo: Benjamin Franzen)

14. **TV On The Radio**: With a killer version of “Waiting Room,” they became America’s best Fugazi cover band for a night. (Photo: Benjamin Franzen)

15. **Deerhunter**: Droning walls of sound that can rewire your synapses. (Photo: Kembrew McLeod)

16. **The Dismemberment Plan**: Melodic anthems that make one feel young again. (Photo: Kembrew McLeod)

17. **Battles**: A peaceful baby sleeps through the extreme heaviness of this math-rock trio. (Photo: Kembrew McLeod)

18. **tUnE-yArDs**: Vocal freakouts and effervescent rhythms thrown into a multi-genre blender. (Photo: Lynne Nugent)
When it was announced that the mastermind behind the 9/11 attacks had been taken down by Navy Seals, I was on Twitter. My community—a group of people I love, loathe and manage to get along with—is now online. I wasn’t even 21 when the Twin Towers collapsed. My community was my roommates, neighbors, coworkers. I digested news through the expressions on their faces. I had never been to New York, but the roommate who broke the news to me had. The look on his face that day is burned into my memory.

My fellow revelers and I in 2006—by this time we all had cell phones—managed to find a radio (with batteries!) to take with us to the basement. That evening, cell phone towers were overrun with communication attempts. Parents trying to reach their children who were away at college. Friends trying to text friends to see where they were at, where they were going to witness the devastation. And when we couldn’t get through by phone, we reached each other on foot. The path of the damages seemed to lead all roads to each other.

On May 1, 2011, I saw avatars. I saw joke after joke being retweeted and a few facts reported as they came available. I watched President Obama’s speech streaming over the internet with my partner on his computer, dog at our feet, cat contented on the couch in the living room. Sharing this momentous American event with a new kind of peer opens up the word “community” to a whole new set of definitions. It’s not just that we’re online together—or Alone Together, as Sherry Turkle portends in her book of that title—we are making meaning together.
We are sharing in this information moment beyond all local boundaries. We are remembering our grief together. The best one-liners are all at one dinner party. The funerals of our neighbors are witnessed through glass. We are alone but experiencing the same moment, complete with all its nuanced emotions.

And then there’s the power to share the right information at the right time to your own followers waiting for the same thing you are but watching a different source. I have this piece of information; you need it—immediately. We are collective journalists, our digital footsteps hitting the series of tubes, observing different sources and reporting back to our community. These are the moments that strengthen our weak ties, that win us social capital with people whose names we might not even know.

In this exciting time, we must think hard about what we are losing when we share information only online. The expressions on the faces of community members are less spontaneous in this context. Instead, we get staged representations of their self-images projected to select publics. A smile may be genuine, but it’s almost always out of context. And when it comes to meaning, context is king.

But I wonder, too, what we might gain. How do our online connections impact our collective consciousness? How do they affect the stories we tell and with whom we share them?

The killing of Osama bin Laden may have only been a symbolic event when it comes to current politics and military reality, but these stories are our social glue. Bin Laden’s image is a picture of American hatred. Our interpretations of it may differ, but we still understand it to mean the same thing. I know that you know that I know that we know a chapter in this American story has come to an end.

I am moved by how we are all reading it together.

Melody Dworak loves words, information and libraries. She blogs at melodydworak.com.
THE QUEEN ISN’T DEAD
TWIN PEAKS AND RIOT GRRRL FIND COMMON GROUND TWENTY YEARS LATER

A ccording to my Tumblr feed, all the hip kids are raving about David Lynch’s early ’90s serial drama Twin Peaks. Bloggers such as high school pop culture genius Tavi Gevinson of Style Rookie wrote about not just the “teen bedroom” aesthetic, but the artifacts left behind after the death of a teenage girl, a theme that also occurs in later films such as Sofia Coppola’s The Virgin Suicides and is later parodied in the 1999 film Jawbreaker.

Twenty years later, Twin Peaks—the Kafkaesque small town in the Pacific Northwest shaken by the murder of the local sweetheart, Laura Palmer—is back on the map. This can’t be nostalgia per se. Though the show was set specifically in 1989, like many Lynch works, it is unmoored from the zeitgeist of any particular time. Watching Twin Peaks isn’t like watching I Love Lucy, in which the clothing styles and cultural signifiers bind it tightly to the 1950s. It is more like having a dream and, if you were around for the first run in 1990, it was like having a recurring dream.

Anyone that’s lived in a small town can draw parallels between Lynch’s fictional hamlet and their own. Though far from the misty fir trees of Washington state, I have seen more than my share of Log Ladies lounging on benches in the Iowa City Pedestrian Mall on summer afternoons. Your brilliant creative writing teacher that seems so full of clever idioms? More like Agent Dale Cooper than you’d like to admit. Your post-collegiate, minimum-wage waitress job echoes the Double R diner. I swear, if you’re sitting in Tobacco Bowl and you squint through the smoke and take a sip of coffee, you will easily imagine you’re in the Book House.

Since Twin Peaks can even seem like the mysterious older cousin to our small community (especially with the David Lynch Foundation, a center headed by Lynch to promote transcendental meditation in schools and other organizations, based in nearby Fairfield), the tragedy of Laura Palmer’s death seems all too real, even two decades after the show aired.

From the first episode, we are faced with Palmer’s body, with its tangled blonde hair and blue lips, and Lynch doesn’t give us much time to feel what the rest of Twin Peaks feels: an eerie sense of guilt. At her funeral, Laura’s estranged boyfriend, Bobby Briggs, spells it out for us in a coked-up outburst: You all killed her!

If we’re thinking in terms of archetypes, we probably did. Laura Palmer is the girl you love to hate: perfect grades, pristine and pretty features and a list of volunteer projects to rival Max Fischer’s extracurricular activities in Rushmore. She was the girl who seemed to have it all together while you were squeezing zits and listening to Bright Eyes. Unless we were the prom queen, we’ve all wanted, at least for a second, to kill the prom queen. Take her down a few pegs. Yank the tiara from her crown of blonde curls. Destroy!

What really killed Laura Palmer is the bitterness and angst of our high school years, which seems to follow us into adulthood. Her death becomes something of a feminist cautionary tale. Kathleen Hanna of the band Bikini Kill—a pioneer of the Riot Grrrl movement—perhaps explained the reason for Laura’s demise best: “To force some forever identity on people is stupid. Point out inconsistencies in their behavior, explain how they are not ‘truly what they say’ because you saw them ‘do this’ one time ... why? Because it’s easier to deal with cardboard cutouts than real people.”
Riot Grrrl—a feminist movement started by the women in bands like Bikini Kill, Sleater Kinney and Bratmobile—came about in the Pacific Northwest at around the same time Twin Peaks was being filmed. The rag-tag crew formed bands, published zines and renounced their hatred of and alienation from other girls, perhaps in an attempt to prevent horrific events like Laura Palmer’s murder. It seems anomalous that these two unrelated cultural events—a television show created by a man who dreamed up some of the most horrific scenes of female victimization on the one hand, and a bunch of punk girls with glue sticks and access to copy machines on the other—could coexist in the same universe. This was, of course, before the internet.

One of the main themes of Riot Grrrl’s manifesto—Revolution Girl Style Now!, passed around on Xerox pages and stapled into zines—was that cattiness and jealousy of other women are dangerous. They called the phenomenon “Girl Hate,” and demanded that you drop the words “slut,” “whore,” etc. from your lexicon.

Is David Lynch a feminist, and did he plan to incorporate a feminist undercurrent in Twin Peaks or any of his other films? The answer is as complex and murky as the series itself and it is widely discussed among film critics. There is no “yes” or “no” answer as Lynch doesn’t seem to hold any particular reverence or hatred for women.

Yet again, Twin Peaks and Riot Grrrl are surfacing side by side, an odd couple. They lasted only a short time as a televised series and as an active movement, but both are undergoing a cultural revival among children of the ’90s today. The genius of David Lynch and the passion of Riot Grrrl movers and shakers like Kathleen Hanna exist not only for their aesthetic, but for their contributions to pop culture as a whole. Why are we still so compelled? What is so timeless about the show that it can be brought to life again? Well, David Lynch might have said it perfectly: “The thing is about secrets.”

Denise Behrens has recently returned to Iowa City after a semester in Portland, Oregon. She continues to pursue her BA in English this fall.
Blowing the Place Down

The spring and summer of 2011 have been historically devastating: an epic earthquake and tsunami, EF5 tornadoes, wildfires and floods. The aftermath photos of these disasters can be incomprehensible. Vistas of unidentifiable rubble, boards, debris and trees—sometimes it’s hard to tell the difference if it’s tsunami-wrecked Fukushima or tornado-ravaged Joplin. As I have tried to take in these images of utter devastation, I can only ask, “Where would you start?” Or should you even try? Underlying that question is also a challenge to the very idea of place—is place left, and can it be restored?

Place is multifaceted. I have often defined it as the web of environments in which we dwell—natural, built, social and cultural. Advocates of place usually promote intentional place-building, place identity and place preservation. Community building, environmental sustainability, local cultural practices and traditions and historic preservation all combine to create what some call a sense of place. So what happens to place—places themselves and even the idea of place—when all of it can be and is literally blown to the ground in an EF5 tornado?

One of the most important lessons of place is that it does change. Place cannot be immutable. So one of the major problems of keeping and building place is knowing what to fight to keep and what to let go.

Place is not a zero-sum game but is often challenged by those who wish to make it so, usually in the name of “progress,” which almost always means monetary gain or a particular notion of human convenience. The first step in the zero-sum argument is “practicality.” The historic old opera house downtown needs major repairs. So the zero-sum folks first say tear it down and put up a gas station and convenience store, which would be more “useful” because it would fill a more “practical” need and increase the tax base. When arguments for more intangible values arise—including those about a sense of place—If place is so demonstrably fragile, its value must be low. So therefore our obligation is more toward maximal profit and convenience than toward history, memory, or character.

The zero-sum argument holds no water for those of us who fight hard for keeping place. As I’ve striven to illustrate in this column for the past ten years, the value of place is high for creating a meaningful human life and for respectful stewardship of the natural world. It very often trump “progress” and economic “development,” and it always overwhelms fatalism.

The disasters of 2011 do present their challenges to the very idea of place. How do we confront these monstrous devastations when, literally, barely any place—in practically all senses of the word—remains? The answer is that even though place can be and has been changed—perhaps even to its very fundamentals—place should be rebuilt and renewed. It happened on Iowa City’s Iowa Avenue when old homes damaged by the 2006 tornado were restored to a level of historical accuracy not seen in decades. It happened in Greensburg, Kansas, when a community decided to rebuild its entire tornado-flattened town with the most advanced green practices available. And hopefully with the right vision and community spirit, it can happen in Joplin, Tuscaloosa and Fukushima. These places will have certainly changed, and they may no longer even resemble what they were before, but they can become places of even deeper character, community and stewardship.

Thomas Dean hopes never to have to help rebuild a place from scratch. But he will if he has to.
HERMAPHRODITE IN IOWA

You think kissing your inner thighs is easy. You think you can stand there while I lick you ON and OFF. It’s true. There is electricity. That new currency you have been paying me with.

For kissing me, you say, I will pay you with my electricity, my chemistry, my biological appliances.

My reply: Surely you can pay with something else. Maybe the keys in your pocket or in my pocket. Or whatever.

And when I lick your inner thighs, the toaster strudels jump up in the air like a pair of bisexual bubble mailers, yellowed out of the toaster.

I swallow while something in you jumps. At first I think it is your electricity paying me. And I think: paycheck, pay stub, and Europe. But this nosedive is not easy because there are bumps along the shore—


When my kiss can penetrate deep, I begin charging by the cubic foot. You complain because you think the economy of kissing is cut-throat.

You say you are not an aquarium that just goes on sale.

Immediately I like that you say aquarium and not tank.

Before covering more estate, I respectfully request that you toast your bread so that it’s warm and hard and rustic.

Your reply: Isn’t that your job? To toast and butter me?

While your bread hides in the drawer of the toaster, I stare at your ankles.

When I say this, your bread pops up. After licking your inner thighs, I spread your bread with butter.

I ask you: Do you want anything else with it?

You reply: More milk please.

When I dip your bread into milk, you seem satisfied.

So satisfied that I increase your electricity bill by $40.

After you sit down, you say: This is so rather unfair. It is so natural for bread to want more milk and not be charged for it.

Nature necessitates economic endeavors, I reply.

You repine in a manner that I would later describe as cavorting.

I run my nails along your shores, to feel the heavenly realm of your tapioca. While my nails devour you, you cavort. And your toaster pops on and off. I learn to lean against the refrigerator to keep my cool.

In fact—at the refrigerator, I take out three eggs from the carton.

I close the door. You become afraid. My uncertainty has become apparent.

You grow alarm and demand: What are you doing with my eggs?

I reply: Are you a hermaphrodite?

You immediately increase your estrogen and decrease your testosterone. You try with all your will for the tapioca to disappear.

I ask again: Is that your bread, your toaster strudels, or something else?

You reply: White grapes do not grow outside of the vine.

I say: No grapes germinate on the sandbed like octopus’ nipples.

You think my disappointment is enlarged by the eggs sitting politely on the palm of my hand. You try to retrieve them by kicking me but I am relentless and I am hard on the outside.

I say: I charge three times more for unknown AND unexpected landmark.

You say: This is exploitation.

I reply: You owe me so much more electricity. Don’t forget. So much more.

You say: The burden of rewiring always falls on me.

I think you are thinking of winter. The snow drifts. The negative 30 degrees. The bitter windchill. You think in winter—without electricity—how you are going to milk the cows with a paraffin lamp? And you are thinking about the knob protruding from the glass—it will be stuck and not be able to adjust the height of the wick. You grow lonely with despair. Perhaps even unconscious. Winter can be seen from the angle of your face. You may even think that semen is inappropriate, like the way wick crawls out of a metal disc and I am your glass chimney. Perhaps to give the illusion of having something of yours contained and hot and enlarged.

I think you are hopeless and flamboyant.

Rewire me if you have to. You say, give me light. Give me light.

I stop touching your sandbed. I stop staring at the sea in search for answers. I have stopped at the border between land and sea.

I say: I do not care if you are land or sea, but I must have my electricity paid, as promised.

I stop you as you walk across the room toward the door. The red byre, the bovine air. Your nails are falling apart. Your skin is shredding left and right. Your oxford shirt is slowly unbuttoning itself. Your watch falls from your wrist onto the floor. Segments of you crumple into the wilderness of the carpet. You are a passenger drifting into the freeway. Your kidney stops working half a century ago. You re-grow your facial hair. Imagine if you are old. Your earrings fling from the swingset of your ears. You think femininity makes you a child again. You collect tanks into cardboard boxes and place barbies next to each other on a row. I lick you and my lick thwarts your electricity and your plumbing.

Vi Khi Nao appears in the 2011 edition of NOON. Fugue State Press recently released her novella.
SUMMER TAKES A BOW

For reasons known only to God and the bureaucrats, school starts in Iowa City in August instead of waiting decently until after Labor Day. Despite the resumption of scholarly activity, however, August is very much the dog days in this town. The novelties of summer—the outdoor concerts and splashing in the fountain, the frequency with which streets are blocked off—is starting to wear thin. Swimming in the outdoor pools is starting to feel like swimming in hot soup and you’ve already seen all the summer blockbusters twice just to get out of the heat—and they did not improve on a second viewing.

Thankfully, this August does bring with it a few new theatrical events, plus some big teasers for the fun that is to come.

Suds
Old Creamery Theatre

*Suds* is described in its publicity materials as “a musical soap opera set in a laundromat.” Anyone who’s ever spent much time in a laundromat has probably wished the places were more exciting—even the funky paint colors and free popcorn at the old place on South Gilbert (now a plasma center) didn’t ever really make up for the dreariness—so this sounds like an excellent way to shake off the blues and enjoy some 1960s pop while you’re at it.

*Suds* runs regularly at the Old Creamery Theatre from August 4 through September 11. Tickets are available online at oldcreamery.com or by calling 1-800-35AMANA.

The Sound of Music
Iowa City Community Theatre

Some people might be tempted to describe The Sound of Music as a musical soap opera, or at the very least as a musical melodrama. They sing! They dance! They find love! They lose it! They find it! They flee the Nazis! But those of us who love it know it is much, much more. It’s the thing you were allowed to stay up late to watch on television as a kid, and the thing you danced to in ballet class at Halsey Hall, and the thing you were shocked to find your friend in college had never seen, and the thing you knew all the words to, and the thing that made you desperately, desperately hope your first kiss would involve a gazebo.

The gazebo and the Alps will not be present at the staged reading taking place this month at The Englert, but all the words and music you love will be there and proceeds will benefit the Iowa City Community Theatre, which has been bringing sounds of all sorts to the area for 55 years.

If you are feeling loaded and would like to help the ICCT out, check out the “Exclusive Red Carpet Event” on Friday, August 12 at 7:30 p.m. You get the show, champagne and a post-show reception at the Chef’s Table next door.

The show will be performed again twice the next day, August 13, at 2:00 and 7:30 p.m., for those who are not quite so flush. Tickets are available at the box office, online at englert.org or by calling 319-688-2653.

The Englert School for the Performing Arts

If you’re looking for one last creative educational opportunity before school starts in earnest, the Englert is also sponsoring two drama classes in August. The first, for teens, focuses on playwriting; the latter, for ages sixteen and up, deals with auditioning. Details for both are available at englert.org.

READY FOR ACTION
The CCPA opens August 26

FEET FIRST IN THE WATER WITH A BABY IN MY TEETH. Sept 9 - Oct 2, 2011
SMALL MIRACLES, Nov 25 - 27, 2011
GUYS ON ICE: AN ICE FISHING MUSICAL COMEDY Jan 20 - Feb 19, 2012
WALKING THE WIRE: THIS WILL NEVER WORK March 2-11, 2012
A STEADY RAIN March 30 - April 15, 2012

www.riversidetheatre.org • (319) 338-7672
Coralville Ribbon Cutting

Perhaps the most exciting premiere this August is the long-awaited opening of the Coralville Center for the Performing Arts. The massive structure at the corner of 5th and 12th in downtown Coralville (a phrase that I, a born and bred Iowa Citian, never thought I’d say) will open its doors to the public officially during a series of activities from August 26 through 28.

The center includes a 482-seat theatre and will be open for both public and private arts events in the area. Friday and Saturday night will feature special events for sponsors, but the public is invited to an open house on Saturday, August 27, from 1 to 4 p.m. Informal entertainment will take place on stage, and the box office will be open. That evening, the All in a Day Play Festival begins. The names of a playwright, a director and a cast from Circle City Acting Company and Dreamwell Theatre will be drawn from a hat. The participants then have the next 24 hours to write and put on a 10-minute play, which will be performed at 7:30 p.m. on Sunday, August 28.

Megan Flanagan, Managing Director for the CCPA, says of the new facility, “Our mission is really about providing opportunities. We have great creative people in this community, and this is about giving them a space to make things happen.”

Laura Crossett is a writer, a librarian and an Iowa City native. She has been a theatre-goer since she was tall enough to climb on a seat.

“Our mission is really about providing opportunities. We have great creative people in this community, and this is about giving them a space to make things happen.”

MEGAN FLANAGAN, MANAGING DIRECTOR FOR CCPA

Now Playing:

• Beginning Group Guitar Class | 4 sessions | Ages 10+ | Starts September 12
• Weekend Warriors. WW is an adventure that begins with a jam and ends with a gig. WW takes away all the hassles of organizing rehearsals and gigs, leaving you to get on with what you want to do... making great music.
• Jazz Piano lessons with Steinway artist, Dan Knight.
• Master (or just get started) with lessons from any one of these local musicians at our Coralville store: Saul Lubaroff, Brian Cooper, Seth May, Jim Viner, Nic Coffman, or Chris Dimond.
• Learn Irish fiddle with Tara Dutcher.
• Kindermusik for ages 0-5. The premiere early childhood music and movement program.

Laura Crossett is a writer, a librarian and an Iowa City native. She has been a theatre-goer since she was tall enough to climb on a seat.
Errol Morris once said, “People are wrong if they think the profound and the ridiculous are incompatible.” This belief is pretty much the underlying premise of *Breaking and Entering*, Benjamin Fingerhut’s documentary about people attempting to set and/or defend world records and have these achievements documented in the *Guinness Book* of the same name. Over the course of the film we meet a guy who can break 700 concrete blocks in one minute’s time; a Priest in Illinois who has invented and apparently uses the world’s smallest telephone; a woman with a clear—if undiagnosed—adrenal problem who holds the records for fastest talker (just try speaking 11 words in a second—go ahead); the holder of records not only for fastest mile on a kangaroo hoppy-ball but also for fastest mile while pushing an orange with his nose; a couple who share the male, female and couples records for most phone books ripped in half in three minutes’ time (something your smart phone likely can’t do); and a somewhat sinister-looking math type, mysteriously still single, who has memorized the value of pi to 67,000 digits.

Amongst these bizarre and astonishing feats, the backbone of the movie is the competitions between three “protagonists” and their respective Guinness nemeses over records for grape-catching by mouth (number and distance), fastest marathon time while juggling objects (officially termed “joggling”—yes, it’s a word), and longest continuous time on a stationary bike (the shot of George Hood’s ass after breaking this record is sort of worth the price of admission alone).

In following their stories we learn some fairly profound, if also predictable, things. All of these central characters are obsessives to a fairly disturbing degree, often willing to sacrifice relationships, financial stability and a general sense of perspective to their cause. They do possess some degree of true athletic skill; after all to hold the joggling record, you do have to actually run a pretty fast marathon.

The various interviews suggest that many are often making up for a vague sense of inferiority, whether inflicted by parents, siblings, lack of career success, general boredom or some other source. Perhaps least surprising: The central characters are all middle class white guys. They are also, to a person, relentlessly dedicated to the idea of human striving and that every person wants to feel they are the absolute best at something, no matter how ridiculous that something may seem to other humans. They are admirably unashamed or self-conscious about this belief. Near the end of the film, one of the records holders puts this most succinctly: “Everybody has to try; if you’re not going to try, what’s the point?” Without being heavy-handed, *Breaking and Entering* does a good job of contextualizing this basic belief as underlying much of human endeavor.

**Warren Sprouse**

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**SpokAnarchy!**

Directed by David W. Halsell, Theresa Halsell, Erica K. Schisler, Heather Swanstrom, Jon Swanstrom, & Cory Wees

Landlocked Film Festival

If the people of Spokane, WA dropped their entire punk-rock scene from 30 years ago into a time capsule, *SpokAnarchy!* would be it. The 80-minute documentary is a multimedia mashup of hundreds of long-lost tapes, old posters and recent interviews, deftly cut...
of the award-winning King Corn, Ian Cheney has made The City Dark, a lovely, meditative documentary on what we lose when we drown out the glittering constellations overhead with our bustling city lights. Get this: It’s going to be screened outdoors at the Hardacre Film Festival.

I hate documentaries where everything feels stamped with official approval. The City Dark is the polar opposite of a this-is-exactly-what-you-must-think kind of documentary. Cheney digs up all sorts of eccentrics in his quest for understanding: obsessed astronomers and physicists, a nurse for injured birds, a late-night TV jewelry saleswoman, wide-eyed criminologists and various other oddballs who shed light on what the night means, and what the loss of the stars portends for who we are.

It turns out that light pollution is probably linked to cancer, screws up the migrations of hatchling turtles, causes birds to smack into skyscrapers and may prevent us from seeing a killer asteroid until it’s too late. But the concern the movie keeps coming back to is a personal one. Growing up in rural Maine, Cheney was an avid stargazer. When he moved to New York City, as much as he loved the place, he felt strange about his dramatically decreased ability to see stars.

The City Dark isn’t just a lament for what’s been lost; Cheney is very alive to the safety and beauty of city lights. But he worries that our humanity is diminished when we no longer have the stars “to stay our minds on,” in the words of Frost. If you check out this poetic, fascinating documentary at Hardacre, not only will you get to add to the light pollution, as soon as it’s over you can in perfect silence look up at the stars.

Andrew Sherburne

The City Dark

Directed by Ian Cheney

The City Dark, a non-profit, student-run cinema screening independent, art house, foreign and classic films since 1972.

www.LittleVillageMag.com
**Shorts Weather**

Something has gone desperately wrong. I recently went to a movie and the ads and previews took up forty minutes—and that’s not even counting the loop of ads preceding the previews! Like everybody else, I love a few previews. But, forty minutes?! This is particularly galling because there are so many beautiful, interesting, shocking, intelligent, gripping short movies which we never get a chance to see. Couldn’t we take, say, twenty of those forty commodified minutes to show two short movies? This would make moviegoing even more of a draw, for shorts pack such a concentrated punch. Shouldn’t the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, which gives out a couple major awards for shorts at the Oscars, support my proposal?

In the meantime, we have film festivals, where the shorts are always my favorites. Until the blessedly-brief credits roll, you never know quite how long they’ll be, what’s going to happen, or even what genre they’re supposed to embody. By the time you’ve figured it all out, they’ve already stolen your heart. And when they occasionally come up short, who cares? You’re only out ten minutes. Would you rather have been watching ads?

**Hardacre Shorts**

- **The Renter** by Jason Carpenter
- **The Magic Man** by DC Kasundra
- **Fatakra** by Soham Mehta

In the space of nine minutes, Jason Carpenter’s animated short *The Renter* tells of a child’s visit to a sympathetic grandma who kills chickens and boards an inscrutable renter. When you’re little, the world seems more weirdly full of reality, and *The Renter* uses a mysteriously-colored blend of hand-made and computer-generated animation to capture that childhood perception. You’re not quite sure what it all adds up to in the end, but you’re somehow glad to have had the experience, which is exactly how you feel as a kid encountering something for the first time.

Speaking of encountering something unexpected, I’ve never seen anything quite like *The Magic Man*, a silent short in the manner of the 1920s—shot in 3D. The movie narrates a Pygmalion-like fable about a magician who uses an old, forbidden family spell to bring to life a painting of a ballerina (2D to 3D!), with predictably bad results. The movie weaves its own magic by means of an alluring blend of black-and-white imagery. It’s like some of old-time melodrama, surrealism and lovely its own magic by means of an alluring blend of 3D. The movie narrates a Pygmalion-like fable about a magician who uses an old, forbidden family spell to bring to life a painting of a ballerina (2D to 3D!), with predictably bad results. The movie weaves its own magic by means of an alluring blend of black-and-white imagery. It’s like some of old-time melodrama, surrealism and lovely

» When My Eyes Are Closed by Jon Perez

When My Eyes Are Closed is a bit more palatable. Benjamin Busch’s *Bright*, relatively long at 40 minutes, is somewhat afflicted with a Touched By An Angel writing style and visual aesthetic: “You have to go where it’s dark,” one character remarks, if you want to see the light from the stars. The film is a bit overstuffed with such talk, but the characters urge each other forward with such sincerity and loyalty that the result is a warming reminder of how different we all are, how difficult it can be to take the smallest step and how much it can mean to have one true friend.

*It’s Natural To Be Afraid* deals with loss—that other aspect of love and friendship—and recovery. Like the shaken-up lives of the main characters, the narrative feels choppy and out of sequence. As the momentum builds, though, the story congeals and swells movingly to a beautiful score by Bill Ryder-Jones, formerly of British pop group The Coral, whose solo work heads in a minimal direction, in the vein of Brian Eno. The film is stylishly shot, and Ryder-Jones’ accompaniment brings it up to Sophia-Coppola levels of cool.

*If Natural* is about regaining balance and control over your life’s direction, *When My Eyes Are Closed* is more like a suspended swoon. Though digitally shot, the camera work is analog-flavored, with a handheld feel and a hazy, dreamlike sheen on everything. The audio track is full of swooshing and clicking, like the sound of film in an old camera, and the noises compound into another intensely beautiful score—a washed out soundscape that buoys the haunting whisper of a young female narrator. It’s like Radiohead and Joan Didion had remixed footage from Easy Rider to make a sunbleached, visually and emotionally disorienting doom-love poem. I think that the director Jon Perez, a BFA candidate at The University of Southern California, would take that as a compliment.

With 20 narrative shorts, 11 animated shorts, and 12 documentary shorts, all of which leave out as much as they put in, this year’s Landlocked shorts are guaranteed to leave you with lots to talk about.

**Landlocked Shorts**

- **Of Frogs And Gods** by Brad Pattullo
- **Bright** by Benjamin Busch
- **It’s Natural To Be Afraid** by Justin Doherty
- **When My Eyes Are Closed** by Jon Perez

Stripped down to the bare essentials, shorts are to be loved for celebrating what is often the most gripping element of story—all that you cannot see. The Landlocked shorts consistently answer the call for complexity and economy. This year they also seem to be on the hunt for a moral, paying homage to another classic tiny medium, the fable.

In the hand-drawn *Of Frogs And Gods*, Brad Pattullo takes on religious intolerance with an eight-minute adaptation of Aesop’s “Frogs Desiring a King,” in which a frog colony is consumed by its search for the one true king. “We want a real king, one that will really rule over us,” the frogs demand in Aesop’s original. Pattullo opts to limit the dialog to the sound of frogs croaking, ever louder and louder, as the happy colony descends into civil war. The untranslatable dialect deepens the sense of universality, the hallmark of any worthwhile fable.

Pattullo and Aesop ought to be credited for setting a tone that makes the confrontational, moralistic leanings of some of the other shorts a bit more palatable. Benjamin Busch’s *Bright*, relatively long at 40 minutes, is somewhat afflicted with a Touched By An Angel writing style and visual aesthetic: “You have to go where it’s dark,” one character remarks, if you want to see the light from the stars. The film is a bit overstuffed with such talk, but the characters urge each other forward with such sincerity and loyalty that the result is a warming reminder of how different we all are, how difficult it can be to take the smallest step and how much it can mean to have one true friend.

*It’s Natural To Be Afraid* deals with loss—that other aspect of love and friendship—and recovery. Like the shaken-up lives of the main characters, the narrative feels choppy and out of sequence. As the momentum builds, though, the story congeals and swells movingly to a beautiful score by Bill Ryder-Jones, formerly of British pop group The Coral, whose solo work heads in a minimal direction, in the vein of Brian Eno. The film is stylishly shot, and Ryder-Jones’ accompaniment brings it up to Sophia-Coppola levels of cool.

*If Natural* is about regaining balance and control over your life’s direction, *When My Eyes Are Closed* is more like a suspended swoon. Though digitally shot, the camera work is analog-flavored, with a handheld feel and a hazy, dreamlike sheen on everything. The audio track is full of swooshing and clicking, like the sound of film in an old camera, and the noises compound into another intensely beautiful score—a washed out soundscape that buoys the haunting whisper of a young female narrator. It’s like Radiohead and Joan Didion had remixed footage from Easy Rider to make a sunbleached, visually and emotionally disorienting doom-love poem. I think that the director Jon Perez, a BFA candidate at The University of Southern California, would take that as a compliment.

With 20 narrative shorts, 11 animated shorts, and 12 documentary shorts, all of which leave out as much as they put in, this year’s Landlocked shorts are guaranteed to leave you with lots to talk about.

Matt Steele needs your help filling up his Netflix cue. Tweet him up @matthewsteele.
Norman Mailer: The American

Directed by Joseph Mantegna
Hardacre Film Festival

Here’s an idea: Establish a literary reputation early in your career which puts you in touch with many of the important artists and writers of your generation; party incessantly with these artists and writers often to the point of debauchery, depravity and violence; make films of these activities and release them as part of a desire to promote a new American cinema; after releasing said films, decide to run for mayor of New York City on a platform of NYC seceding from the United States, but fail to tell your running mate that this is not a joke. During this time you have also won a Pulitzer Prize, founded The Village Voice, gotten married three times, stabbed your second wife and spent time in a mental institution. This is roughly the first half of Norman Kingsley Mailer’s life and these events are just some of the focal points of Joseph Mantegna’s Norman Mailer: The American.

An additional bonus if you are Norman Mailer is that you get to narrate much of Mantegna’s documentary of your own life, perhaps not unreasonable given Mailer’s conspicuously outspoken nature throughout his 84 years.

The film tells Mailer’s story in a traditional, linear way, beginning with his Jewish childhood in Brooklyn—including the obligatory paean to his mother and portrayal of his dad as a drunken, gambling scoundrel—and then following all the major developments right up to Mailer’s final interviews.

The questions posed here about Mailer’s life are familiar: Did he hate women? Was he homosexual? Was he a caring or totally abusive husband? How much did his drug and alcohol-fueled lifestyle contribute to his personal problems and limit his literary achievement? Much of the perspective, however, is somewhat new. Mantegna chooses to focus less on critical appraisals of Mailer’s work or on the opinions of his biographers (though some of them do make appearances) and more on the accounts of the family—especially his daughter Danielle and his second wife Adele Morales. Despite the unpredictability and chaos that must surely be part of being related to Norman Mailer, these family perspectives form an undeniably—perhaps unbelievably—positive portrayal of an incredibly controversial figure in America and American letters. The fact that the various wives and kids seem to get along at all is sort of astonishing and is part of Mantegna’s argument that the tumultuous, controversial, contrary and contradictory nature of Norman Mailer’s life is also part of American life. As the title would suggest, Mailer is presented more as an inevitable, if outsized, embodiment of his times than an active shaper of them.

We are left ultimately with the same balance-sheet approach that much of the Mailer discussion heretofore has given us. On the plus side: credit for pretty revolutionary new forms of journalism and political commentary, as well as several novels which would surely make a short list of the most important American fiction of the twentieth century. On the minus side: a drunken, philandering drug addict who perhaps cared more for his own well-being and public image than for a focused dedication to his art or to his relationships. Also the wife-stabbing thing—pretty uncool.

Warren Sprouse teaches high school in Cedar Rapids. He still believes that going out to see movies is one of the absolute best ways to waste a summer afternoon.

Out for the Long Run

Directed by Scott Bloom
Landlocked Film Festival

To be gay. To be an athlete. In the public arena, those identities have long seemed polar opposites. There has never been an openly gay male in any of the United States’ four major...
sports leagues—the NFL, NBA, NHL and MLB—nor in the PGA, NASCAR or Division I college football.

In the hyper-masculine, profit and image-driven world of pro sports, it will take great courage to be the first. But the truth is coming out in lower-profile sports at collegiate and high school levels. Director Scott Bloom celebrates these athletes in his feature-length documentary *Out for the Long Run*.

The film’s central character is Austin Snyder, a Berkley, CA high school senior who is both openly gay and the captain of the cross country team. The film opens by setting up Snyder as a talented young runner, capable of filling up his medal wall with lots of trophies as he enters his final year of high school.

Eschewing the natural narrative arc that makes sports films easily compelling, Brown’s *Out for the Long Run* muddies the waters, introducing us to three more young athletes, all with stories similar to Snyder. Sports movies, at their best, use competition as a proxy for more compelling issues; and this topic should’ve given Brown the perfect setup. Instead, our four characters never develop much depth and must share screen time with a who’s-who of advocates for gays in sports, like Greg Louganis and former major leaguer Billy Bean. Even the main characters are primarily captured in sit-down interviews, which violates the documentary axiom of “show, don’t tell.”

Still, *Out for the Long Run* gives us just enough to chew on to get us to the 60th minute where suddenly, finally, the filmmaker shifts gears, letting the sports action have its moment and giving Snyder a chance to deliver some much-needed emotional relevancy.

It’s a shame that the whole movie doesn’t feel like the last 15 minutes. But, in a year where athletes dropping the f-word (the one that rhymes with maggot, that is) has earned lots of airtime and resulted in heavy league fines, the topic is ripe for exploration. *Out for the Long Run* makes good on giving voice to a new era of openly gay athletes. As Snyder, full of youthful sincerity, rhetorically asks, “If you’re kicking ass at what you do, why should anyone have a problem with who you sleep with?”

Andrew Sherburne is a documentary filmmaker, stay-at-home dad, graphic artist, author, fundraiser or political activist, depending on the day.

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**FILMS CONTINUED FROM 27**
Semingly no one hates Counting Crows more than Guided by Voices frontman Robert Pollard. An oft-cited gem from his 2005 stage-banter album, Relaxation of the Asshole, goes something like this: “I wanna know how the guy from the Counting Crows used to fuck everybody from Friends? How the fuck’d he do it? He’s an ugly motherfucker! He’s fatter than me! What the fuck’s he got? Money.” A friend of mine once heard Pollard say something slightly more aggressive at a concert. “If the person beside you ever bought a Counting Crows album,” he said, “punch him in the face!” I certainly would have been punched in the face that day. Me and approximately 10 million other people.

Produced by the not-yet-weirdly-idolized folk-curator T-Bone Burnett, August and Everything After catapulted the Crows to near-overnight success back in 1993, on the strength of lead single “Mr. Jones,” an uptempo romp through Duritz’s impeccably tortured, fame-obsessed psyche. Like so many teens, I was working on my own tortured psyche—with unrequited crushes, sad pop music and European literature—and found in Duritz my juvenile poet laureate.

If we read the lowercase meaning of “august” into the title and allow ourselves some poetic license, we might understand the album’s title to mean “a fall from dignity”: august and everything after. But Duritz, like my adolescent self, is much too literal for that. I’m guessing he meant the eighth month of the year and the other months and serious moments that follow: August and Everything After.

If we understand that some music is like some food—best enjoyed seasonally—then August and Everything After is certainly a “late summer,” or an August, menu item. “Mr. Jones” is a flat-out sing-along, best served in a moving car or on a front porch. But even the lovelorn midtempo ballads, perhaps best listened to in breezy, open-windowed bedrooms, also retain a sense of hope: “every time she sneezes I believe it’s love.” August, then, retains a sense of August, which in a college town is about transitions: the end of one thing and the start of another.

In terms of live music, August marks the transition between the outdoor summer concert scene and the more vibrant and musically diverse fall touring schedule. In essence, this makes August the perfect month to (re)acquaint yourself with homegrown, Iowa talent—including those who stayed close to home and those who have gone out West with hopes of “making the big time.”

Of the latter group, the artist of the moment is a certain Rock Island native called Lissie, who plays at the Blue Moose on the August 8. Born Elisabeth Maurus, she started in the coffeehouse circuit before making her way to LA, where she generated all kinds of buzz. Paste called her the best new solo artist of 2010 and her live cover of Kid Cudi’s “The Pursuit of Happiness” became a big hit on YouTube.

If we read the lowercase meaning of “august” into the title and allow ourselves some poetic license, we might understand the album’s title to mean “a fall from dignity”: august and everything after. But Duritz, like my adolescent self, is much too literal for that.
Her debut album, *Catching a Tiger*, was released in June and, while the critical reception has been mixed, everyone agrees the live show is worth seeing. File under: “local(ish) girl makes good.”

One local artist whose development I’ve had the pleasure to watch firsthand (we lived in the same apartment building for awhile) is that of Brendan Hanks, aka Ex-Action Model. His particular brand of electronic music features glitchy, IDM-inspired beats with healthy doses of synth melody lines, and his live show is increasingly engaging. He’s headlining a show at the Blue Moose on the August 4 that is a veritable local showcase. *Little Village*’s own electronic guru and scene veteran Kent Williams will perform as Chaircrusher and newcomers Dream Thieves will kick out some huge beats, and possibly play their cover of Arcade Fire’s “Wake Up,” which out-bombasts one of the most bombastic bands in the world right now.

Also in the electronic vein, locals Lwa and Alex Body will be opening for Six Organs of Admittance on August 4 at the Englert Theater as part of the Intimate at the Englert series, which means the show takes place on the stage with a limited amount of seating. If you haven’t heard Lwa, but have been known to say in passing that you “are a fan of the work of Brian Eno,” then you have some explaining to do. No one in town makes more interesting electronic soundscapes then these guys. Alex Body makes electronic pop songs for loners and stoners, among others.

Speaking of stoners, San Francisco’s Sleepy Sun is bringing their brand of West Coast psychedelic rock back to the Mill on August 24 and house troubadour Sam Knutson plays there on August 19.

Finally, this writer has been a longstanding supporter of DJ nights for genres other than dance, electronica, or pop mash-ups, which is why I couldn’t be happier to announce Pressure Drop, an upcoming 70s reggae and soul night at the Blue Moose on August 6. Go watch *The Harder They Come*, smoke a marijuana cigarette and get ready to hit the dance floor. It’ll be irie.

Craig Eley is a music writer, promoter and American studies grad student, usually in that order. Got news on the music scene? Write to him at craig@missionfreak.com.
Subtle natural sounds of birds, cicadas and frogs surround and infuse the songs with front porch ambience. Field Songs was recorded with remarkable transparency and clarity by Will’s cousin Luke Tweedy at Flat Black Studio. Will and Luke do something impossible, making music that is as evocative and mythic as a John Ford Western, and as intimate as sharing a jar of home made corn liquor sitting under a black locust tree.

I’ve seen Will silence 300 liquored up, sweaty people at Gabe’s so completely that it seemed everyone in the room was holding their breath, with just a $50 banjo and his voice.

William Elliott Whitmore
Field Songs
williamelliottwhitmore.com

William Whitmore grew up in Lee County Iowa near the shore of the Mississippi River. He makes a living singing for people, accompanying himself on guitar and banjo. He writes simple songs, in the American acoustic folk music idiom. Field Songs is his latest record and comprises eight songs that say what they have to say in plain language.

But, for people all over the world who have seen Will play live, the bare-faced, look-you-in-the-eye simplicity of his music is a thing that evokes awe and reverence. I’ve seen Will silence 300 liquored up, sweaty people at Gabe’s so completely that it seemed everyone in the room was holding their breath, with just a $50 banjo and his voice.

You can’t really explain that kind of talent. Or maybe it’s Will’s complete lack of pretension and disdain for artifice that powers his music. Writing simple songs that people want to hear is much harder than constructing something flashy and complicated.

“Field Song” is a simple song that begins by describing the lives of the homesteaders who settled Iowa: “Let’s go to the field we’re gonna do some work. Spend our day digging in the dirt. We’ll hope the rain follows the plow.” This contrasts devastatingly with the next verse: “...the manifest destiny of the factory farms, when those cutthroats came and burned down the barn.”

“Let’s Do Something Impossible” celebrates the peculiarly American cussed individualism, invoking both the liberation of Paris and the Battle of Little Big Horn: “...when Custer comes over the hill oh let ‘em fly, let your arrows fly.”

Billy Raygun/Lipstick Homicide
Split LP
lipstickhomicide.bandcamp.com

Lipstick Homicide (Kate Kane, Rachel Feldman and Lucas Ferguson) have been making a big noise in Iowa City for six years or so, starting out at West High School. If you haven’t seen them play live, then you don’t get out much—and you’ve missed out. Their live sound is an exquisitely textured roar made up of Kate Kane’s slashing guitar, Rachel’s driving bass and Lucas’ frenetic drumming.

The new songs on this Split LP with Billy Raygun aren’t really that different from their previous work, but these recordings capture their live sound better. Rachel & Kate’s singing is stronger and more confident and cuts through the mix without sounding hyped or unnatural. The songs are all high tempo rave-ups that seem to start out fast and speed up out of sheer excitement.

Kate & Rachel’s songwriting is sharply focused on producing hook-filled punk-pop anthems, comparable to (but in my opinion more vital and genuine than) bands like Green Day and Blink 182. But I kinda hate those bands for the craven calculation that goes into their image and unthreatening, radio-friendly sound. Lipstick Homicide might not mind achieving punk-pop stardom, but they’re not going to do anything different to get there. Every song on their side of this record is instantly hummable pop perfection that they rip into like it’s their last night on earth.

Billy Raygun are definitely musically sympatico with Lipstick Homicide, but they seem to come more from the Hüsker Dü school of punk rock. Where the girls write honey-sweet pop melodies, Billy Raygun comes up with more angular dissonant riffs. There is a bit of the Dead Milkmen’s sardonic humor in their writing and vocal delivery. They are a good complement with Lipstick Homicide on this LP, but my heart’s really with the hometown heroes on this one.

Supersonic Piss
This Shit’s S/T (a.k.a. Umbilical Noose)
supersonicpiss.bandcamp.com

Ah yes, Supersonic Piss. Iowa City’s scary heavy metal punk rock cosmic bummer band. When I first heard the band name, I flashed on visiting the Omaha Zoo’s rain forest when the tapires were in heat. Their courtship seemed to involve a stealthy yet brutal assault by the male, which the female answered with a fire-hose-like stream of steaming urine, whose fragrance had no trouble reaching the visitor walkways overhead.
It’s tempting to classify Finnders and Youngberg as a bluegrass band based on the mastery of the fiddle, banjo and mandolin on display in FY5. But those aren’t the only ingredients in this recipe. “It’s definitely more of a country outfit than what Amy and I were doing... but probably where I was heading all the time—back to my roots,” Mike Finders said recently. He is referring to his previous musical efforts as The Mike and Amy Finders Band, an Eastern Iowa group that enjoyed a critical and popular run of albums and performances in the area dating back to 1997.

FY5 leans much more into what I would call “classic” country than the folksy creek-dipping of The Mike and Amy Finders Band. Album opener “Red Mountain Pass” is a dark tale of peril told from the perspective of a mountain snow plow driver. It recalls songs like “Ghost Riders in the Sky” or the Jimmy Webb ballad “The Highwayman,” most famously recorded by country supergroup The Highwaymen.

Thanks to the joining of Finders with Aaron and Erin Youngberg, FY5 benefits from the blend of multiple voices and perspectives. When Erin sings, “And the wind hits the grass like the waves on the rocks, and it moans and it howls and it never stops out in Nebraska, Nebraska on the plains,” her pretty soprano convincingly delivers the lonely desperation of the Finders-penned “Nebraska.”

The whole album is enjoyable to listen to in a sitting, but I find myself most drawn to the darker songs that are sung by Mike. The slightly bawdy subtext of the call-and-response freedom anthem “Driftwood” makes me chuckle every time, but it is Mike’s spitting, angry delivery on “Connie” that is probably the most impressive performance on FY5. When asked about the darker tunes, Mike said, “It’s been a couple of years ago (since the split of Mike and Amy), and it has allowed me to scoop deeper into my own stewpot, work with some amazing musicians and follow through with the tones in my bones much more than before. I think our new album represents this ‘bottom’ of the stew pot, where all the good chunks are.”

So, grab a ladle and serve yourself some FY5. I reckon you’ll be back for seconds and thirds. ★

Michael Roeder is a self-proclaimed “music savant.” When he’s not writing for Little Village, he blogs at www.playbsides.com.
Is Australia the deadliest place on earth?

I’ve often heard Australia contains more things that can kill you than anywhere else on the planet, often coupled with the proud assertion that our deadly wildlife is deadlier than everywhere else’s deadly wildlife. I live in suburban Sydney and have personally encountered funnel web spiders, redback spiders, red-bellied black snakes, and a blue-ringed octopus. So I’m not surprised by the idea that there are lots of things in Australia that can kill you. But are we Aussies really blessed with a more lethal fauna than the rest of the world?

—Christine Moffat

Your letter provoked yet another controversy here at the Straight Dope. I too had heard boasts about Australia’s dangerous wildlife, and was quite content to believe it was the most noxious pesthole on earth. However, my assistant Una felt Oz’s creeping perils were all bark and no bite. Declining my offer to airdrop her into the outback to investigate personally, she proposed the next best thing: a book-off.

I knew immediately my weapon of choice: travel writer Bill Bryson’s entertaining volume about Australia, In a Sunburned Country (2000). Bryson lovingly catalogs the many horrors infesting the land down under, leading him to declare it “the most extraordinarily lethal country.” Pulling out my copy, I recounted the notorious vermin for Una’s benefit:

• First, at least 14 different types of poisonous snake, including the taipan, the most toxic land snake known, whose venom clots the victim’s blood. Una groused that by Bryson’s own admission the last fatal taipan bite had occurred in 1989.

• Next, I continued, spiders. These include the funnel web spider, which Bryson claims is “the most poisonous insect in the world.” Una was scornful, noting that spiders aren’t insects but arachnids. Whatever you call them, I retorted, they’re murderous little bastards, and we’re more likely to encounter them than the rest of the world. The redback spider, a relative of our American black widow, has slain at least 14.

• Never mind, I said, let’s turn to aquatic monstrosities. To hear Bryson tell it, on some Australian coasts merely dipping a toe in the water will result in certain death. You’ve got box jellyfish, snotty jellyfish, poisonous sea snails. There are stinging coral, sea snakes, stonefish, lionfish, and scorpion fish. Giant groupers. The blue-ringed octopus. And let’s not overlook sharks.

• Other menaces include the cassowary, a large flightless bird capable of administering a fatal kick to the neck. I concede middle-class white people spook easily, said Una. However, consider South America, specifically the Amazon jungle—there’s my idea of scary.

She produced David Grann’s The Lost City of Z (2009), about the search for a mythological El Dorado in Brazil. Never mind the cannibals, she said. Here’s a land where you can be crushed by anacondas, eaten by piranha, and jolted by electric eels. Angry wild pigs roam the forests; colorful frogs are deadly to the touch.

But it’s bugs that give the region its charm, she continued. Look here on page 83. Poisonous flesh-eating fire ants can drive you mad or strip you to the bone. Berne flies deposit their eggs under your skin, which turn into hungry wriggling larvae. I’d also watch out for cyanide-squirting millipedes, blindness-causing parasitic worms, and flesh-eating bees.

Una, I said, these vermin are indeed worrisome if you’re dumb enough to go on an expedition through the rain forest. But it’s unfair of you to suggest Australia’s reputation stems solely from bourgeois paranoia. Remember those deadly funnel web spiders? The deadliest variety is found only within 100 miles of Sydney. Our suburban letter-writer herself said she’d had run-ins with numerous lethal critters.

And humans don’t always escape. The fearsome saltwater crocodile reliably eats an Australian every year or two, and likely holds the record for most people killed by animals at one go. During the Battle of Ramree Island in February 1945, British forces chased 1,000 Japanese soldiers into a croc-infested swamp. No more than 20 were taken prisoner; presumably hundreds were eaten alive. OK, that was off the coast of Burma, not Australia. But I say close enough.

Feh, said Una. You’ve forgotten about the South American fish with a horrifying talent once considered mythical. You yourself showed it wasn’t. I speak of the impromptu urology exam administered by the inquisitive ...


—CECIL ADAMS

Send questions to Cecil via straightdope.com or write him c/o Chicago Reader, 11 E. Illinois, Chicago 60611. Subscribe to the Straight Dope podcast at the iTunes Store.
Curses, Foiled Again
- Police believe Jamie Minor, 26, tried to break into the Austin, Texas, restaurant where she worked by crawling through an exhaust duct leading to the office. She apparently became trapped when the duct tapered into an opening she couldn’t fit through, and she couldn’t back up. Noting that Minor had been missing more than a month before maintenance worker found her body, police Commander Julie O’Brien explained, “That area is located in a part of the building where it’s not readily accessible to anyone, so noises inside of the duct work couldn’t be heard.” (Associated Press)

- Police quickly identified Lucas Jeffrey James, 23, as the man who accosted two women in downtown St. Petersburg, Fla., because his getaway landed him in a rap video. According to police officer Bill Proffitt, James spits beer on the women, hit one of them over the head with a beer bottle, then fled down an alley that led to a film crew. The shirtless, wild-haired James ran straight at the camera for an extreme close-up. Police released the video and promptly received several tips where to find the suspect. (St. Petersburg Times)

Petty Cash
Defense Department officials said they cannot account for $6.6 billion in cash that was supposed to be used for the reconstruction of Iraq. The money was part of a shipment of $12 billion, mostly $100 bills packed in shrinkwrap and airlifted to Iraq between March 2003 and May 2004. The Bush administration determined the vast cash influx was desperately needed to restore government services and give Iraqis confidence that post-U.S. invasion Iraq would be a big improvement over Iraq under Saddam Hussein. Federal auditors suggested some or all of the cash might have been stolen, some by U.S. contractors for kickbacks and bribes during the chaotic post-invasion period but most by corrupt Iraqi officials. Stuart Brown, special inspector general for Iraq reconstruction called the loss “an outrage.” The Iraqis are determined neither the cash nor the corruption would continue under the new Iraqi government. Federal auditors suggested some or all of the cash might have been stolen, some by U.S. contractors for kickbacks and bribes during the chaotic post-invasion period but most by corrupt Iraqi officials. Stuart Brown, special inspector general for Iraq reconstruction called the loss “an outrage.” (Los Angeles Times)

Big-Bang Theory
Sean Michael Ogden, 19, bought some fireworks in Durango, Colo., but then “decided the fireworks he purchased were too small,” fire Marshal Tom Kaufman said. After searching the Internet for directions how to blend smaller fireworks to make big fireworks, he put the fireworks in an electric coffee grinder. Kaufman said friction from the coffee grinder ignited the mixture, causing an explosion that shook houses a quarter-mile away. Ogden suffered severe burns and was hospitalized in “fair” condition. (Durango Herald)

Rubber-Dubber
Germany’s Green Party demanded that the government protect citizens from cancer-causing sex toys. Noting that 20 percent of Germans use the erotic aids, 10 Green Party legislators in the Bundestag released a paper, “Sexual Health as a Consumer Protection Issue.” It urged the government to take responsibility and action, declaring: “Many dildos and other sex toys such as vibrators and anal plugs contain a high amount of phthalates, other carcinogenic plasticizers and toxic substances,” which enter the body through mucous membranes and can lead to infertility, hormone imbalances, diabetes and obesity. Green Party lawmaker Volker Beck wants Germany to follow the example of Denmark, which, he said, “urges users of vibrators, artificial vaginas and other such items to first cover them with condoms and to avoid models made of PVC.” (Spiegel Online)

- The European Union endorsed a wonder-condom that promises not only protection, but also firmer erections and better sexual performance. The British company Futura Medical said gel in the tip of its CSD500 condom, sold under the Durex brand, dilates the arteries and increases blood flow to the penis, enhancing erections. Futura added that a clinical study showed both men and women believed the condom also increased penis size. (Reuters)

Paperless Crime
Massachusetts authorities said touring rock musician Michael Todd, 30, robbed an Attleboro pharmacy of prescription pain pills just hours before his scheduled concert in nearby Mansfield. He showed the clerk a holdup demand posted on his cellphone. “It is somewhat routine that in robberies, the robber gives a note to the clerk, but obviously this was a little more high-tech,” said Gregg Miliote of the Bristol County District Attorney’s Office, adding the suspect fled by cab to the band’s tour bus, parked outside the concert hall. Investigators identified Todd from surveillance videos. Todd’s band, Coheed and Cambria, announced Todd would miss the last three stops of the tour, but reassured fans, “For now, we just want to have a great time out there and finish with some killer shows.” (Reuters)

Litterbuggery
Firefighters were called in Fond du Lac, Wis., after Earr Stokes, 20, got his hand stuck in a car’s gas tank while trying to retrieve a Snickers candy bar someone had unwrapped and jammed in the tank. Capt. Tony Knecht said rescuers had to cut the filler pipe while a firefighter kneed nearby with a hose in case a spark ignited the fuel tank. Firefighters were then able to access the underside of the gas tank opening and release Stokes’s bruised fingers. (Fond du Lac Reporter)

Flexible Thief
Spanish police arrested two Polish citizens they said stole from luggage on airport shuttle buses in Barcelona. One man rode as a passenger after depositing a heavy suitcase containing the other man in the luggage compartment. Once the 90-minute trip began, he “would get out of the suitcase, search for valuable objects and hide them in a smaller bag he carried with him,” police reported. The accomplice would claim the suitcase on its return. The scheme unraveled when a suspicious bus official notified police, who opened the suitcase and found the would-be burglar inside, “doubled up almost like a contortionist.” He wore a headlamp and had a sharp tool to open bags. He explained he was riding in the baggage hold because he couldn’t pay the fare. (BBC News)

Luck-Pushing Follies
When a pickup truck drove off the road and into a pond in New London, Conn., the man and woman inside managed to get out of the vehicle safely. State police Trooper Kelly Grant said the man decided to return to the vehicle to retrieve some belongings. “Unfortunately, he never made it back,” Grant said, noting the man’s drowning appeared accidental. (New London’s The Day)

Modi Operandi
- British police appealed to the public for information about four men and two women who burglarized a shop in Doncaster. The notice said some of the group distracted the clerks while one of the women entered living quarters at the back of the shop and reportedly stole a large amount of jewelry and cash. Closed-circuit video shows the woman wearing trousers when she goes in, but she has on a long skirt when she leaves and appears to be struggling to walk. “It is believed,” the notice said, “that the woman may have had the safe between her legs under the skirt.” (South Yorkshire Police news release)

Compiled from mainstream media sources by Roland Sweet. Authentication on demand.
Calendar listings are free, on a space-available basis. For inclusion, please email Calendar@LittleVillageMag.com

**ART/EXHIBITS**

**Akar**  
257 East Iowa Ave., Iowa City  
www.akardesign.com  
“The Dessert Plate” featuring 22 artists, thru Aug. 12 • Featured work by Kevin Snipes, gwendolyn yoppolo, and Steven Roberts, Aug. 26 thru Sept. 9

**Amana Heritage Museum**  
705 44th Ave, Village of Amana  
www.amanaheritage.org  
See website for times and locations  
GPS Adventure, Monday-Friday thru Aug. 12 • Craft Demonstrations, thru Sept. 3 • Walking Tour, Aug. 5 • Lily Lake Bike Tour, Aug. 12 • Industrial Tour, Aug. 19 • Amana Wine Walking Tour, Aug. 26

**Cedar Rapids Museum of Art**  
410 Third Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids  
www.crma.org  
Art Bites: “Roger Brown’s Great American Farmer,” Aug. 3, 12:15 p.m. • Art Labs at Grant Wood’s Studio ~ Artist Portfolio Lab with Mary Zeran, Aug. 6, 1 p.m. • Art Labs at Grant Wood’s Studio ~ Teens Portrait Lab with Mona Muse, Aug. 13, 1 p.m. • Art Labs at Grant Wood’s Studio ~ 3D Collage Lab with Mary Zeran, Aug. 20, 1 p.m.

**Legion Arts**  
1103 3rd Street SE, Cedar Rapids, IA  
www.legionarts.org  
See website for more information TBA  
CSPS Hall Grand Reopening Gala, Aug. 26

**Figge Art Museum**  
225 West Second St., Davenport  
http://figgeart.org  
“Thursdays at the Figge,” Thursdays at 5 p.m.  
Exhibition: Museum for Innovative Objects of Design, Aug. 27 thru Oct. 23 • Architecture Walking Tour, Aug. 3, 6 and 20, 10:30 a.m. • Art Lovers Book Club, Aug. 3, 1 p.m. • Art Fun: A Chair for Your Wall, Aug. 4, 6:30 p.m. • Art Fun: A Chair for Your Shelf, Aug. 11, 6:30 p.m. • Art of Percussion, Aug. 13, 10 a.m.

**Herbert Hoover National Historic Site**  
110 Parkside Drive, West Branch  
www.nps.gov/heho  
See website for volunteer details  
Hoover’s Hometown Days, Aug. 6, 10 a.m. - 10 p.m. • Our Sister’s Many Hats, thru Aug. 31, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

**Public Space One**  
129 E. Washington St., Iowa City  
www.publicspaceone.com  
Summer Residency Closing Reception for Tyler Luetkehans and Nate Wilson (See website for TBA information regarding this show’s opening), Aug. 26, 6 p.m.

**University of Iowa Museum of Natural History**  
10 Macbride Hall, Iowa City, IA  
www.uiowa.edu/~nathist  
No events listed for August at time of publication. See website for events TBA

**MUSIC**

**Blue Moose Tap House**  
211 Iowa Ave, Iowa City  
www.bluemooseic.com  
Local Hip-hop Showcase featuring Ion, MC Romulan, Generic, DNA, Anonymous (And.On.I.Must), Aug. 5, 8 p.m. • Pressure Drop: A soul, ska, mod and DJ event, Aug. 6, 9 p.m. • We the Kings with The Summer Set, The Downtown Fiction, Hot Chelle Rae and Action Item, Aug. 7, 5:30 p.m. • Lissie, Aug. 8, 7 p.m. • Rasputina with Smoke Fairies, Aug. 12, 8 p.m. • Santah with others TBA, Aug. 13, 8 p.m. • Letlive with others TBD, Aug. 14, 8 p.m. • Rising from the Ashes with Messin’ with Texas, Sunday’s Best, A Casual Affair and What We’ve Become, Aug. 23, 5 p.m. • The After Party with Floral Terrace, Aug. 24, 6 p.m. • J.C. Brooks and the Uptown Sound and others TBD, Aug. 27, 8 p.m. • Boombox with Sovereign Sect, Aug. 29, 8 p.m.
A-List

Roll Out!
Old Capitol City Roller Girls, ft. HOTT! August 26 | 7:00 p.m. | $5 Coralville Marriott

When roller derby broke on to the Iowa City scene between 2008 and 2009, it was so well-received that it seemed like it had always been here; the rough-and-tumble Roller Girl was just waiting to bust out of our friendly female neighbors.

The bouts were exciting and they quickly gained a reputation for family-friendliness as fans of all ages admired competitors, both for their tailoring and for their toughness.

At the time of this writing, the Old Capitol City Roller Girls are 8-1 in what is just their third competitive season. They are bonafide athletic achievers and truly priceless as a cultural asset.

We scarcely see women this empowered through athletics, and it’s a damn shame. In mainstream sports, from the college level up to the pros, we see gifts piled on gifts to attract almost-always-male jocks. Entire television channels are devoted to their boys’ club melodrama. Meanwhile, each OCCRG team member pays for the opportunity to compete and, on top of that, they donate all the proceeds from their bouts to local charities.

Support their efforts by bringing $5 to the August 26 mid-season showcase. In return, you get a live demo by the Old Capitol City Roller Girls, a performance by local rock stars HOTT!1 and a chance to thank all of the sponsors that help make it possible. Add on a few local DJs and, cultural significance aside, this ain’t nothin’ but a party y’all.

Englert
221 E. Washington St., Iowa City
www.englert.org
Intimate at the Englert: Six Organs of Admittance, Aug. 4, 8 p.m. • Intimate At The Englert: David Olney & Sergio Webb, Aug. 20, 8 p.m.

Friday Night Concert Series
Pedestrian Mall, downtown Iowa City
www.summerofthehearts.org
See website for more information
Hexbreakers with Clean Livin’, Aug. 5 • Orquesta Alto Maiz, Aug. 19 • Bermuda Report with OSG, Aug. 26

Gabe’s
330 E. Washington St., Iowa City
www.iowacitygabes.com
FreakLabel, Catastrophic Solutions, State of Insomnia, Aug. 1, 9 p.m. • Micawber, Aug. 11, 5 p.m. • Condor, Plagued by Saints, Aug. 13, 9 p.m. • Bubblegum Octopus, Aug. 17 • Dastardly, Aug. 18 • Kidnap the Sian, Aug. 19 • Identity Crisis, Aug. 20, 9 p.m. • Glaciers, Sleep Serapis Sleep, Marla Singer, A Casual Affair, Aug. 26, 8 p.m. • Dubstep/EDM Summit V6, Aug. 27

The Mill
120 E. Burlington St., Iowa City
www.icmill.com
Shows at 9 p.m. unless otherwise noted: Study Hall, the game, Sundays, 9 p.m.-Midnight; Open Mic with J. Knight, Mondays, 8 p.m., call 338-6713 to sign up; Tuesday Night Social Club, Tuesdays, 9 p.m.
Ruby Jane, Aug. 2, 8 p.m. • April Verch with The Beggarman, Aug. 5, 8 p.m. • Brooks Struse with Skye Carrasco and Natural Curiosities, Aug. 6 • Burlington Street Bluegrass Band, Aug. 10, 7 p.m. • John Common and the Blinding Flashes of Light with John Watkins, Aug. 11, 8 p.m. • Catfish Keith, Aug. 12, 8 p.m. • Paleo, Aug. 13 • Claude Hay with The Mayflies, Aug. 18, 8 p.m. • Shame Train with Matt the Electrification and The Grand Tetons, Aug. 19 • Wyle Id Nept, Aug. 20 • Burlington Street Bluegrass Band, Aug. 24, 7 p.m. • Sleepy Sun, Aug. 24, 10 p.m. • Jason Reeves with Rosi Golan, Aug. 31, 8 p.m.

Old Capitol Museum
Pentacrest, Iowa City
www.uiowa.edu/~oldcap
See website for locations
Piano Sundays resume Sept. 4

Riverside Casino
3184 Highway 22, Riverside
www.riversidecasinoandresort.com
Peter Frampton, Aug. 27, 7 p.m.

Sand in the City
Downtown Iowa City
www.summerofthehearts.org
The Funkaddledies, Aug. 12, 5 p.m. • Porch Builder, Aug. 13, 12 p.m. • Catervaulla, Aug. 13, 2 p.m. • Nicole and Benji Upchurch, Aug. 13, 3:30 p.m. • Uniphonics, Aug. 13, 6 p.m. • Local performers TBA, Aug. 14

Saturday Night Concert Series
Pedestrian Mall, downtown Iowa City
www.summerofthehearts.org
See website for more information
New Broom, Aug. 6 • The Recliners, Aug. 20 • Sarah Cram and Awful Purdies, Aug. 27

Uptown Bill’s
401 South Gilbert Street
www.uptownbills.org
Open Words, Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m.; Arts & Music, Thursdays, 6 p.m.; Open Mic, Fridays, 7 p.m.

Yacht Club
13 S. Linn St., Iowa City
www.iowacityyachtclub.org
See website for more information
Open Mic every Monday; Dance Party every Tuesday; Jam Session every Wednesday; Dennis McMurrin & The Demolition Band with The Fowler Brothers, Aug. 6 • Taj Wekes and Adowa with Tribal Momentum, Aug. 12

THEATER/DANCE/PERFORMANCE

City Circle Acting Company
www.citycircle.org
See website for times and locations
Events resume Sept. 9 with Hairspray, directed by Chad Larabee

Englert
221 E. Washington St., Iowa City
www.englert.org
The Sound of Music, Aug. 12-13

Penguin’s Comedy Club
Clarion Hotel, 525 33rd Ave. SW, Cedar Rapids
www.penguinscomedyclub.com
Check website for showtimes
Mike Armstrong, Aug. 5-6 • Bull Bauer, Aug. 12-13, Gayle Becwar, Aug. 19-20 • Tony Boswell, Aug. 26-27

Riverside Theater
www.riversidetheatre.org
See website for showtimes
Events resume Sept. 9 with Hairspray, directed by Dottie Ray

Theatre Cedar Rapids
4444 1st Ave NE, Cedar Rapids
www.theatrecr.org
See website for showtimes
Events resume September 1 with Dottie Ray

Working Group Theatre
www.workinggrouptheatre.org
No events listed for August at time of publication. See website for times and locations
CINEMA

Bijou Theatre
IMU, UI Campus, Iowa City
http://bijou.uiowa.edu
No events listed for August at time of publication. See website for events TBA

Engleart
221 E. Washington St., Iowa City
www.engleart.org
New Wave Summer: A Celebration of New Wave Films, Aug. 5-6

Landlocked Film Festival
Downtown Iowa City, Aug. 25-28
www.llff.org
See website for more information
Schedule will be announced on or around Aug. 1

Summer of the Arts: Free Movie Series
Pentacrest, downtown Iowa City at sunset
www.summerofthearts.org
The Goonies, Aug. 6 • Lilo and Stitch, Aug. 13

University of Iowa Museum of Natural History
10 Macbride Hall, Iowa City, IA
www.uiowa.edu/~nathist
Planet Earth: “Deep Ocean,” Aug. 7, 1:30 p.m.

LITERATURE

The Mill
120 E. Burlington St., Iowa City
www.icmill.com
blue/green Reading Series, Aug. 17, 8 p.m.

Prairie Lights
15 S. Dubuque St., Iowa City
www.prairielights.com/live
No August “Live from Prairie Lights” events listed at time of publication. See website for events TBA

KIDS

Cedar Rapids Museum of Art
410 Third Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids
www.crma.org
Doodlebugs Preschool Program at the Cedar Rapids Public Library: Funny Faces, Aug. 5, 10:30 a.m. • Doodlebugs Preschool Program at the Hiawatha Public Library: Make a Post-Impression!, Aug. 26, 10:30 a.m.

Herbert Hoover National Historic Site
110 Parkside Drive, West Branch
www.nps.gov/heho
See website for volunteer details
Be a Junior Ranger, thru Aug. 31, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Iowa City Public Library
123 South Linn St. Iowa City
www.icpl.org
Storytime at 10:30 a.m. Monday - Saturday, 2 p.m. Sundays

Sand in the City
Downtown Iowa City
www.summerofhearts.org
See website for times of operation
Children’s Sand Pit, Aug. 12-13

MISC

Old Capitol City Roller Girls
www.oldcapitolcityrollergirls.com
See website for locations
Versus Mid-Iowa Rollers (away), Aug. 13 • Mid-Season Party at the Coralville Marriott, Aug. 26, 7 p.m.

Sand in the City
Downtown Iowa City
www.summerofhearts.org
Sand sculpting competition, Aug. 12, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
ASTROLOGY FORECAST FOR AUGUST 2011

FOR EVERYONE—This is not a test. August brings a tumultuous blend of powerful but conflicting influences. People will be overstimulated and wired. But they will need to think things through calmly and carefully. They will need to address urgent, long-term challenges while they are facing urgent, short-term challenges. At the same time, events and decision-making processes will slow to a crawl, bringing frustrating delays on all fronts. The upshot is that we will all need to dig much deeper into our own minds and our own hearts. We will need to find personal strengths that we did not know we had, or that we haven't used recently, if ever. Most of all, we are being asked to find the courage to follow our own best instincts.

ARIES—Reach out. There's hardly a kind of challenge that doesn't somehow figure in. Family, job, health, elder care, finances ... the whole nine yards. It's more than one person can handle. The solution is not to do a heroic balancing act, or make a heroic individual effort. It's more a matter of creating or activating support networks to access necessary resources. The family will rise to the occasion brilliantly. Time is on your side. You can convince others to do what they already know they need to do.

TAURUS—Leadership. It's true. The challenges are major for all concerned. Stakes are high. You have definite vulnerabilities. The memory of past failures still haunts you. You'll have to overcome personal weaknesses, resist old temptations and make others do so, too. So ... definitely not a walk in the park. Having said all that, you are uniquely well-placed to provide the motivation and guidance others need to work through all the issues. Help others see the need to pool resources and pull together. Don't try to go it alone.

GEMINI—Home field advantage. Tough decisions are being made. The process is messy and hard to watch. And the outcome will significantly affect your bottom line. However, the issues will be familiar; you'll know what moves to make. And circumstances favor an outcome you can live with. Work hard to suppress your ego and convince others to do the same. You don't have much leverage, by yourself; you must build alliances. Confidence and pluck will overcome confusion and uncertainty. The non-stop pace of recent months will slow allowing more careful thought.

CANCER—Work it out. It's been too easy to put a foot wrong. Tempers are short. Stakes are high. Issues are complicated. And your nerves are wound tight, making a misstep more likely. Your famous intuition isn't quite up to the job, either. The past is no guide. To succeed, you must take a fresh, hands on approach. Work ideas up from scratch when necessary. Events will allow the time you need for a thorough re-think. You need to fine tune long-term financial plans, now. The right partnerships will boost income.

LEO—Explore. Whatever the issue—finances, politics, relationships, family, work, all of the above—everything's been in serious flux. And every move you made seemed to only shake things more. The planets have just bought you a little time. Things will move more slowly, now. You can experiment, if you are careful. Higher ups will back you, to a point. Subordinates will cooperate, mostly. You can count on Lady Luck, a little. Some of your luck will even rub off on others. Money will remain fairly tight, though.

VIRGO—Pause. Change is at work in financial areas. Events are dissolving old ties. New experiences are changing your understanding of the world in radical ways. The planets are protecting your interests during all this; you will probably come out of it all much better than you went in. Others being affected could experience an undesirable outcome, though, setting you apart, perhaps creating tensions. There are no simple, perfect solutions. Things will slow down, soon, giving everyone time to regroup. Home and family will provide many of the answers you need.

LIBRA—Business and pleasure. Librans are carrying a heavy load over slippery, unfamiliar ground this month. Patience and tempers are short, too. High-minded goals are fine when things are simple. When things are this fluid, when you are just feeling your way, it's best to concentrate on what and who is immediately in front of you. A down-to-earth, hands-on, close-to-home approach works best. Mixing business with pleasure will let you meet people and gather information. Powerful people will be supportive, if you are willing to meet their terms. Delays work for you.

SCORPIO—Home turf. You are under a lot of pressure and your vulnerabilities are exposed. The situation is unstable and confusing. Dysfunctional, manipulative people are exploiting the confusion. New alliances and support networks must be built amidst this confusion and mistrust. However, this game is being played on your turf. It's all second nature to you. Your instincts about what's happening are spot on. Modest efforts on your part will bring surprising benefits. Don't fret over long-term finances. Focus on day-to-day expenses. Take advantage of delays to fine tune your message.

SAGITTARIUS—Reconcile. You know now that your financial future depends on a fair and just financial arrangement. But a financial arrangement can't just look fair, it needs to be fair. The long-term financial life of this country will take many moves and the complicated, long-term financial stuff—loans, pensions, mortgages, insurance, taxes, etc., etc. And the things you can't put into words. In other words, your financial arrangement has to be all the things it probably isn't right now. Think of current delays and disorders as a chance to start building such an arrangement.

CAPRICORN—Stalemate? Events seem to be making your expectations irrelevant. Events are also blocking the changes you thought you would make. Finances allow some flexibility. You have a good sense of what will work, temporarily. So you can patch something together, for now. But better solutions are needed and they will take much longer. The planets don't intend to hand you any answers. They need you to keep looking more deeply within until you discover a way to change the way you think about things. They'll keep pushing until you do.

ARIES—Breakout. There's hardly a kind of challenge that doesn't somehow figure in. Family, job, health, elder care, finances ... the whole nine yards. It's more than one person can handle. The solution is not to do a heroic balancing act, or make a heroic individual effort. It's more a matter of creating or activating support networks to access necessary resources. The family will rise to the occasion brilliantly. Time is on your side. You can convince others to do what they already know they need to do.

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5th ANNUAL FESTIVAL AUGUST 25-28 2011

LANDLOCKED FILM FESTIVAL
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www.LandlockedFilmFestival.org
Still from Bathing & the Single Girl - official selection 2011

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