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Baghdad belly laughs Interview w/ Danell Dvorak & John Cassidy Blue Moon Coffeehouse schedule



# POST AMERIKAN



BLOOMINGTON/NORMAL VOLUME 32

**FREE**

NUMBER THREE

AUG/SEPT 2003

I Will Fight For

# You



I Will Fight For

# You



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# PAIGE 2



BLOOMINGTON/NORMAL VOLUME 32

NUMBER THREE

AUG/SEPT 2003

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## Pick up a copy

Free copies of the Post Amerikan are now available at the following locations:

### Bloomington

AIDS Task Force, 313 N. Main St.  
About Books, 221 E. Front St.  
All About You, 1214 N. Towanda, #2  
Barnes & Noble, Veterans & Rt. 9  
Bloomington Public Library, 205 E. Olive St.  
Coffehound, 407 N. Main St.  
Common Ground, 516 N. Main St.  
Crazy Planet Kitchen, 414 N. Main St.  
Day's Inn, 1707 W. Market St.  
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Lizard's Lounge, 612 N. Main St.  
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Ecology Action Center, 206 W. College Ave.  
Mother Murphy's, 111 W. North St.  
Movie Fan, 202C. W. North St.  
Normal Public Library, 206 W. College Ave.  
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Other Ports, 120 North St.  
Paintin' Place, 207 North St.  
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## About us

The *Post Amerikan* is an independent community newspaper providing information and analysis that is screened out of or down played by establishment news sources. We are a non-profit, worker-run collective that exists as an alternative to the corporate media.

We put out six issues a year. Staff members take turns as "coordinator." All writing, typing, editing, graphics, photography, pasteup, and distribution are done on a volunteer basis. You are invited to volunteer your talents.

Most of our material and inspiration for material comes from the community. The *Post Amerikan* welcomes stories, graphics, photos, letters, and new tips from our readers. If you'd like to join us, call 828-4473 and leave a message on our answering machine. We will get back to you as soon as we can. Don't worry if it takes a while--we don't meet every week.

An alternative newspaper depends directly on a community of concerned people for existence. We believe it is very important keep a newspaper like this around. If you think so too, then please support us by telling your friends about the paper, donating money to the printing of the paper, and telling our advertisers you saw their ad in *Post Amerikan*.

## Subscriptions

Subscriptions to the *Post Amerikan* are available for the low price of \$6.00 per year for six complete issues. Please send a check (made payable to the *Post Amerikan*) to: Post Amerikan, P.O. Box 3452 Bloomington, IL 61702.

This issue of *Post Amerikan* is brought to you by...

MATT & SHERRIN

## Good numbers

Advocacy Council for Human Rights. 830-2521  
AIDS Hotlines  
National.....1-800-AID-AIDS  
Illinois.....1-800-243-2437  
Local.....827-AIDS  
Alcoholics Anonymous.....828-7092  
Amnesty International-ISU ...Miami@ilstu.edu  
Animal Protection League.....828-5371  
Better Business Bureau.....1-800-500-3780  
Big Brothers/ Big Sisters .....828-1870  
Boys & Girls Clubs of B/N.....829-3034  
Clare House (Catholic workers).....828-4035  
Countering Domestic Violence.....827-7070  
Dept. of Children/Family Services....828-0022  
Gay, Lesbian & Bi teen drop in center.828-3998  
Gay & Lesbian Resource Phonenumber...438-2429  
Habitat for Humanity.....827-3931  
Headstart.....662-4880  
Home Sweet Home Mission.....828-7356  
IL Dept. of Public Aid.....827-4621  
IL Lawyer Referral.....1-217-525-5297  
Incest Survivors Support Group.....827-0790  
LIFE-CIL.....663-5433  
Lighthouse (substance abuse treatment)....827-6026  
McLean Co. Center for Human Services...827-5351  
McLean Co. Health Dept.....888-5450  
McLean Co. Housing Authority.....829-3360  
McLean Co. Humane Society.....664-7387  
McLean Co. Peace Coalition.....828-7070  
Mid Central Community Action.....829-0691  
Mobile Meals.....828-8301  
Narcotics Anonymous.....827-4005  
National Health Care Services/  
abortion assistance.....1-800-322-1622  
Occupational Development Center....452-7324  
Parents Anonymous.....827-4005  
PATH (Personal Assistance Telephone Help).827-4005  
Phone Friends.....827-4005  
PFLAG(Parents, Families & Friends  
of Lesbians & Gays).....862-1844  
Planned Parenthood (medical).....827-4014  
(bus/couns/edu).....827-4368  
*Post Amerikan*.....828-4473  
Prairie State Legal Services.....827-5021  
Project Oz.....827-0377  
Runaway Switchboard.....1-800-621-4000  
Salvation Army.....829-9476  
Safe Harbor Mission.....829-7399  
TeleCare (senior citizens).....828-8301  
Unemployment comp/job service.....827-6237  
Voice for Choice.....827-4005  
Western Avenue Community Center....829-4807  
Youth Build.....827-7507

## What's your new address?

When you move, be sure to send us your new address so your subscription gets to you. Your *Post Amerikan* will not be forwarded (it's like junk mail--no kidding!). Fill out this handy form with your new address and return it to us, P.O. Box 3452, Bloomington, IL 61702.

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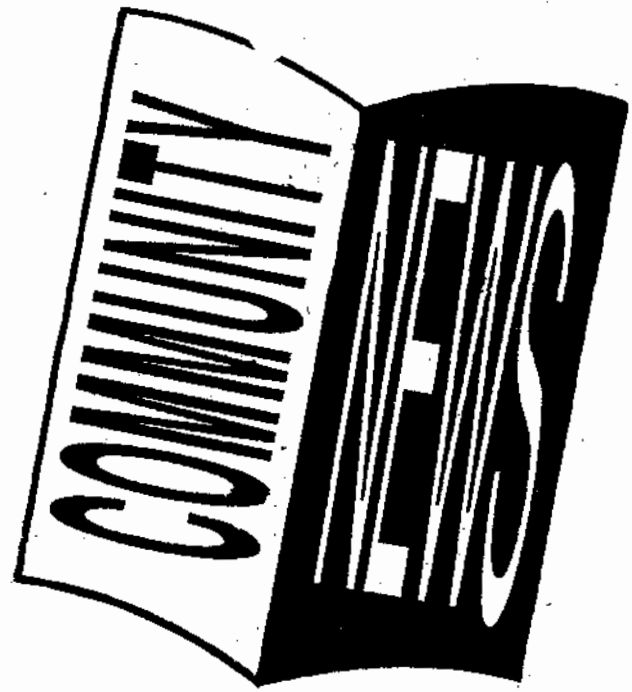
## Due Date:

The due date for submitting articles to the *Post Amerikan* is: (please laser print your articles in columns of 3" using Palatino 10pt. type if possible.); or submit via email at pamerikanusa@netscape.net

Sept 15th



# Community News



## Clare House 25th anniversary

Clare House will be celebrating its 25th anniversary with a variety of activities on Saturday, September 27.

There will be an open house with punch and cookies from noon to 3 p.m. at Clare House, 703 E. Washington, Bloomington.

There will be a blessing of all volunteers of Claire House and Loaves and Fishes Soup Kitchen at 4 p.m. at St. Mary's Church at 527 W. Jackson, Bloomington. There will be a mass, liturgical dancing and wonderful music.

A one-woman play, *Haunted by God* by Lisa Wagner, will be presented at 7 p.m. at St. Mary's. *Haunted* portrays the life of Dorothy Day, the co-founder of the Catholic Worker Movement.

Please bring a canned good to the mass or the play.

For more information call 309.828.4035

## Free health screenings

The McLean County Health Department (MCHD) will be offering free health screenings at Mt. Pisgah Baptist Church (in the basement) in Bloomington on September 13 from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Blood pressure screenings and private, needle-free HIV testing and counseling will be offered, as well as information on stroke, hypertension, tobacco, exercise and nutrition. No appointments necessary.

The MCHD also offers an array of services for parents of infants and young children. If you believe any of the following services could benefit your family please call the number listed for more details.

**Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program**--provides nutrition and health services to pregnant and breastfeeding women, infant & children under 5 years of age who meet nutritional and financial guidelines. Nutritional analysis, health screenings, education, food coupons and supplemental food packages are provided to program clients. Call 309.888.5457.

**Family Care Management**--provides pregnant women, infants and children up to age 2 with health assessments and assistance in obtaining the mental and physical health services that they need Call 309.888.5517.

**Teen Parent Services**--assists young parents ages 19 or younger in obtaining health services, completing education and planning for healthy, self-supporting futures, Call 309.888.5517.

**Dental Clinic**--provides examinations and treatment to children ages 3 to 18 who meet financial eligibility. Call 309.888.5479.

**Eye Clinic**--based upon need, this program assists children and parents with obtaining examinations, glasses and medicines for eye health. Call 309.888.5455.

**KidCare Health Insurance**--the state insurance plan covers children 18 years and younger, pregnant women and their families. The program offers several options for coverage and is designed to fit various financial situations. Call 309.888.5517.

**Immunizations**--child and adult immunizations are offered by appointment and for a minimal fee at the MCHD. Call 309.888.5455.

**All Our Kids--Early Childhood Network (AOK)**--provides information, links to services and referrals for children ages 0 to 3 and their families. Call 309.888.5539.

Need a certified birth certificate? Visit [www.mclean.gov/health](http://www.mclean.gov/health) for a mail-in request form or visit the MCHD at 200 W. Front Street in Bloomington, Monday-Friday between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Closed from noon to 1:00 p.m. for lunch.

For more information call 309.888.5489 or visit [www.mclean.gov/health](http://www.mclean.gov/health) for local updates.

--McLean & Livingston Counties Labor News

## Blue Moon Coffeehouse

**September 13--Christine Lavin**  
It's always a wild night when Christine Lavin comes to play the Blue Moon Coffeehouse, and this year's visit (held in Westbrook Auditorium in IWU's Presser Hall) will certainly live up to expectations for great music and lots of fun.

Singer/songwriter/guitarist/concert artist, Lavin has recorded and released 14 solo albums of original material, sings her own and others' songs on three disks of the *Four Bitchin' Babes* (a group she founded, nurtured and performed in during the '90s) and has put together and produced 8 compilations showcasing the works of dozens of singer/songwriters.

Lavin is one of the hardest working performers on the scene--and when she decided to make a CD from one of her Blue Moon shows it was like Sherman's march to the sea, only without the carnage. Cheryl Wheeler penned a song about Lavin called "Christine Lavin Could Do It" . . . and she sure can.

*One Wild Night* made it to sale in mere weeks after the show at Blue Moon. Ask anyone if such an undertaking is possible and most would doubt it. . . tell them *Christine Lavin* is at the helm and the doubts melt away.

Lavin is truly a tour de force, and one of the most generous folks in the business. . . ask any of the myriad of artists that she has helped over the years. And *One Wild Night* is a great CD. Lavin is touring in support of her latest CD, *I Was in Love with a Difficult Man*. To learn more about the talented Christine Lavin, check out her web site: [www.christinelavin.com](http://www.christinelavin.com).

## October 4--Lucy Kaplansky and Tracy Grammer

Lucy Kaplansky returns to the Blue Moon Coffeehouse after too long of an absence, and we highly anticipate her co-bill with Tracy Grammer.

Singer-songwriter Lucy Kaplansky is a keen observer of the emotional ground people cross as they struggle with their lives and loves. The imagery and emotion of Kaplansky's original lyrics combine with the power and texture of her sumptuous voice to create an illuminating evening of songs that work their way deep into the heart.

Fusing alternative country, roots rock, and folk music with rare style and intelligence--not to mention a truly charming stage presence--She presents her thoughtful songs about the human condition with warmth and power. On *Every Single Day* she sings heartfelt and delicately rendered songs of hope and sorrow, understanding and sometimes, redemption.

Another recent project combined the talents of Kaplansky, Dar Williams and Richard Shindell into a "folk supergroup" of sorts. Calling themselves Cry, Cry, Cry, the three chose to celebrate the amazing revitalization in contemporary songwriting, and recorded some of their favorite songs written by other artists.

To learn more, check out her we site: [www.lucykaplansky.com](http://www.lucykaplansky.com).

It is an honor to welcome Tracy Grammer to the Blue Moon Coffeehouse for a special co-bill with Lucy Kaplansky. We had looked forward to her visit last spring, but those plans, sadly, were put on hold when her partner Dave Carter died.

Grammer and Dave Carter were called "one of the fastest-rising acts in folk music." In just four years they released three internationally-acclaimed albums, toured with Joan Baez, shared stages with everyone from Lucinda Williams to the Cowboy Junkies to Eddie Reader and earned a solid following with their indelible live performances at festivals and venues all across North America.



# Community news continued

Despite Carter's sudden death in July 2002, Grammer's career as an interpreter and instrumentalist continues. "I have no choice but to go on singing, and to go on telling our story," says Grammer, "on behalf of my brilliant partner, and on behalf of every dreamer who stumbles, as I did, upon a profound calling."

Grammer's dark, ethereal vocals evoke a purity and resonance that brings radiance to the songs she performs, and her attention to melody and story lines lends a rare sophistication to her vocal and instrumental interpretations. Her adept accompaniment extends to violin, mandolin, guitar--yet it is her vocal prowess and intuition that infuse her with a numinous quality and has established her as a formidable performer in her own right. Web site: [www.tracygrammer.com](http://www.tracygrammer.com).

### October 25--Jill Sobule

You won't want to miss being among the audience to welcome Jill Sobule back to the Blue Moon Coffeehouse. Before the first set had concluded in her debut show, folks were clamoring for a return by this witty and winsome artist.

Those already familiar with her music know that Sobule can claim her place among the stellar New York singer-songwriters of the last decade. Topical, funny and more than a little poignant, she writes grown-up music for an adolescent age.

Sobule crafts smart, neoclassic pop with a middle child's talent for attention getting. Sobule possesses the uncommon ability to combine lilting, infectious melodies with personal and socially relevant lyrics and then couch them in artfully crafted arrangements.

*People Magazine* has said that Sobule is "Vocally gifted and lyrically witty--a peerless satirist." It's not surprising that Sobule's music is admired by musicians as diverse as Don Henley (for whom she opened), Lloyd Cole (whose band The Negatives she was a part of), Warren Zevon and The Go Go's Jane Weidlin.

She is one of the '90s more interesting, accomplished and regrettably little known singer-songwriters. Sobule draws the listener into some of the finest story-songs being written today. She's witty, charming and devilishly funny. A feisty post-punk feminist, whose work brings to mind a cross between Liz Phair and Gertrude Stein, mixed with a good helping of musical moxie. [www.jillsobule.com](http://www.jillsobule.com).

### November 8--disappear fear

The Blue Moon Coffeehouse delights in welcoming disappear fear for a special reunion concert. It has been too long since disappear fear has played the venue. During the nine year absence, both SONiA and Cindy have been busy--SONiA touring world-wide and Cindy making music while raising two children.

Fans of the duo are already making plans to travel to IWU to catch the show and to experience the intricate and amazing harmonies that hallmark the work of the two.

SONiA writes with intensity and to-the-bone honesty while delivering her songs with both electric and acoustic guitars, a "dylan-esque" harmonica and a big voice that rocks a house. SONiA's writing draws from modern day subjects.

Together with Cindy, she delivers these songs with a powerful angst and passion that moves people to dance, to smile or to cry. Boston-based Rounder Records has released five disappear fear CDs and three critically acclaimed solo efforts, *Almost Chocolate*, *Me, Too* and *From the Down Home* are also available.

Fans across the country respond to disappear fear's call to love out loud and to confront the difficult issues of our times--from the political struggle against censorship to those for human rights to the turmoil and triumph of the heart.

SONiA and disappear fear's web site is: [www.soniadf.com](http://www.soniadf.com).

### December 6--Willy Porter

Willy Porter's return engagement to the Blue Moon Coffeehouse has been much anticipated and audiences have impatiently waited to hear and see him again. The pure joy that Willy puts into a performance is so infectious that a Porter concert becomes both humorous and graceful.

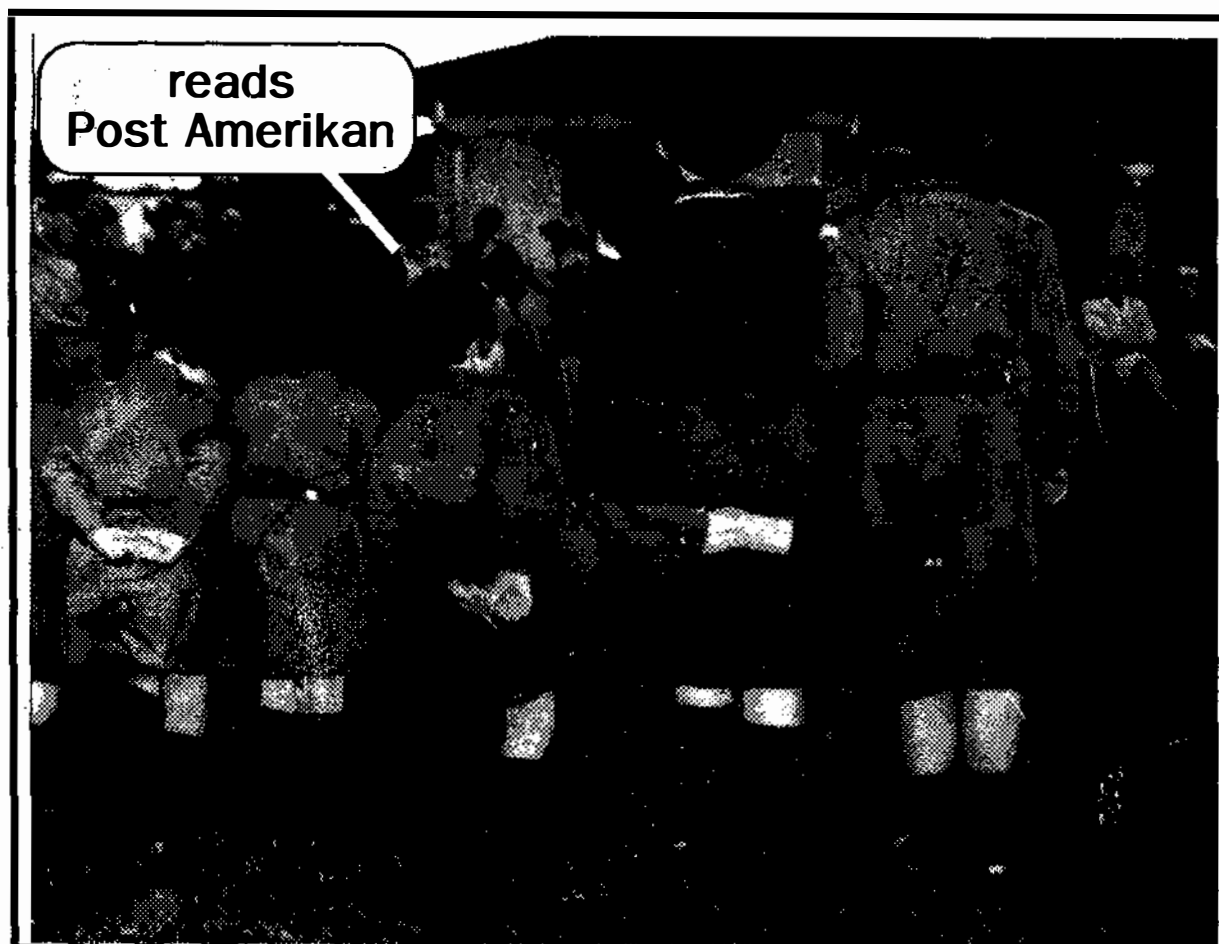
He is totally fearless on stage. Sometimes he invites the audience to write a song with him. Every Porter show puts audiences on the edge of their seats as his skill with the guitar pushes the edge of belief.

A consummate boundary straddler, Porter's originals display a range of tasty influences. Some of his songs are built on the swivel-hips of old-school funk and rock; some on complex new acoustic instrumentals while others seem more rooted in the tradition of the singer-songwriter.

Placing his disparate loves in the blender of his imagination, he dreams up a unique brand of acoustic pop drenched in a upbeat, thoughtful energy. His guitar style, while influenced by Michael Hedges and Leo Kottke, has his own sense of percussive accentuation. Porter's latest CD is the self-titled *Willy Porter* and it is a favorite across college music radio stations.

web site: [www.willyporter.com](http://www.willyporter.com).

The Blue Moon Coffeehouse is in its 12th year of bringing incredible music to Bloom/Nor. It is located on IWU's campus. All shows are free. If you have questions call 556-03815



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# Baghdad belly laughs

Here's hoping you're rolling on the floor over the news from Iraq. After all, life's short and often hard, so you should grab as many laughs as you can.

And there's sure a lot to find here.

Start with the liberals' virgin outrage on finding all the war's justifications—the infamous WMD's, the enriched uranium from Africa, and the ties with Al-Qaeda—were nothing but flat-out lies.

Now *that's* rich. They sent their credit card/bank account numbers to Nigeria's deposed oil minister for a million-dollar payout—and now they're pissed it was a lie?

What a roar.

I mean, who did they think they were dealing with?

But there may be even bigger belly laughs watching the liberals go 911 over the lack of electricity and day-to-day security in Iraq.

*The window of opportunity to win over the Iraqi people is rapidly closing, they squeal. Your stupidity is about to turn our democratic victory into a defeat!*

Of course there's no question that U.S. rule in Iraq is a nightmare for the Iraqi people. No electricity—we're talking not only no lights, but no refrigeration—try living like that. Toss in no fans in a country where the summer heat runs an easy 120 degrees Fahrenheit.

And then no power also means no water, since the pumps can't run.

Get the picture? No refrigeration (we're talking food), no lights, no water, no fans—all in heat so brutal that the worst 100 degree / 100 humidity St. Louis day would look like poolside in Anchorage.

Meanwhile no security means the most cold-hearted can do, even in broad daylight, anything they want—car-jackings, home invasions, robberies, rapes, and industrial-scale pillaging—all without fear or consequences.

Once dark hits, it gets worse.

And so the liberals scream: *We're totally alienating everybody! We're blowing the critical moment to convince Iraqis that we're here to help?*

What's funny—of course—is the gold medal unclear-on-the-conceptness of it all.

It's beyond a roar—these people actually believe that the U.S. occupied Iraq to—(are you ready?)—*help out*.

Sure—and the cockroaches in your cupboards just want to help organize them, and Hannibal Lector just wants you in the basement for a nice warm massage.

I mean, let's get this straight.

This is Iraq we're talking about -- the same place that Washington subjected to a sanctions regime so onerous that it killed—at the very, very least—500,000 dead Iraqi civilians, most of them children.

Murderous—yes, even the badly-abused adjective *genocidal* may be appropriate—sanctions that of course never touched the supposed enemy. No surprise there since the

'next Hitler' Saddam Hussein was long on the CIA payroll and dutifully racked up well over a million Iranian, Shiite, and Kurdish people who were all on Washington's hit list.

Truth is that the various peoples of Iraq have always been Washington's targets.

Truth is that it invaded Iraq precisely because the years of war on those targets—in collaboration with its agent, Saddam Hussein—had so cruelly decimated them that a U.S. takeover *was* a cakewalk.

What could be more hilarious than the idea that Washington is now about to provide electricity, drinking water, and security for the Iraqi people?

Maybe only that Nazi gas chambers were showers to get the Jews nice and clean.

But hold on.

Here's the biggest howler of all.

If we just elect a Democrat president, everything would be different.

Yeah, let's put in the party that killed a half-million Iraqis—now there's a step forward.

Life is short and often brutal, and you should grab as many laughs as you can.

But sheer mercy demands I stop here.

--Steve Eckardt

*Steve Eckardt welcomes comments at Steve@SeeingRed.com.*

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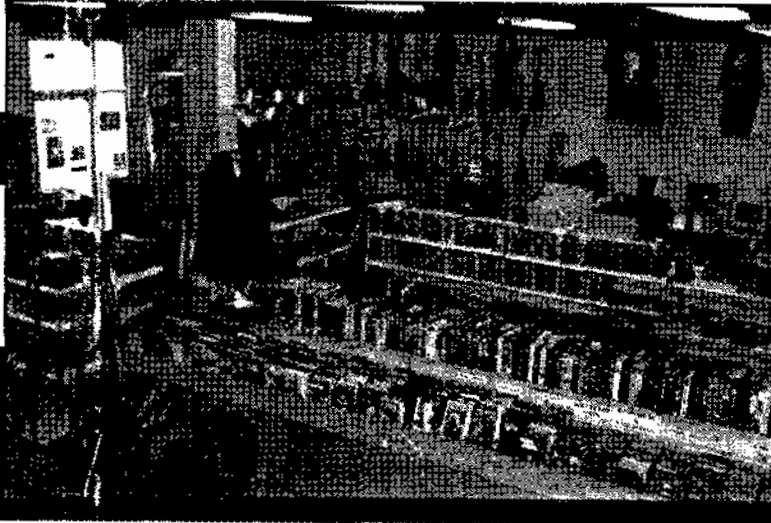
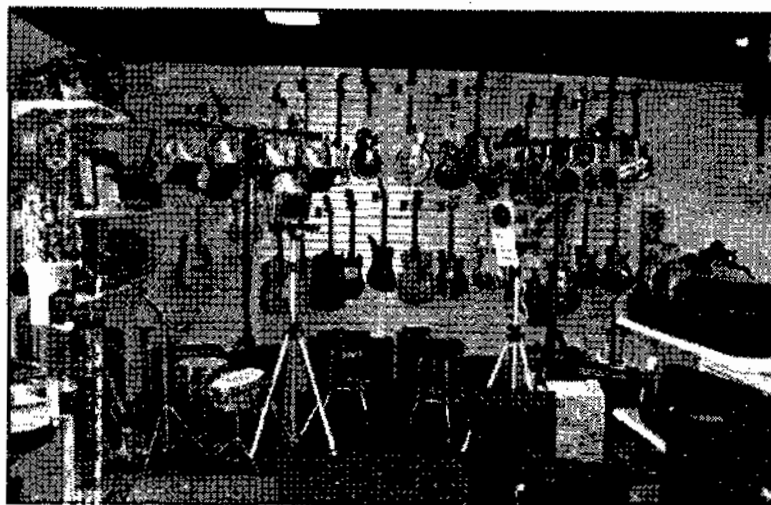


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# Movie picks by William Mandel

1) *The Cuckoo*, a humanist, pacifist, feminist, indigenist film about a Soviet soldier, his Finnish enemy, and a Lapp woman who takes them both in, when they have each escaped sentences of execution by their respective armies. None of them speaks a language either of the others can understand. There is no preaching by any of them about anything. But when a Russian writer or director wants to be humanist, no one of any other nationality can hold a candle to him.

2) *Camp*, not a documentary but filmed in an actual summer camp for would-be theater and other performers in their teens and younger. As performers they are so extraordinary that I think the casting directors (plural) deserve Oscars. But the film is about adolescents. There isn't a single false touch.

3) *Whale Rider*, Maori actors depicting their culture. A lead character is as confident that nothing has changed in 2,000 years as the Israeli settlers I'd seen the previous week at the SF Jewish Film Festival, so it takes a miracle to provide a happy ending, which is about as realistic as if Jonah's whale landed on the beach in Tel Aviv enabling him to provide a solution to the Palestine crisis. Nonetheless, a highly worthwhile film.

4) *Winged Migration*, French documentary. Shot all over the world. Birds is wonderful. Their matching steps in courting dances equal

any pas de deux of any ballet company, and I've been watching the world's best ballet companies for over seventy years,

5) *Step into Liquid*, Awful title for the surfing film to end all surfing films. Documentary. Splendid because it does not limit itself to the beauty and unbelievable athleticism of the greatest surfers. It shows duffers on Lake Michigan who just enjoy, and does not make fun of them. It shows stupendous female surfers who differ from men in that the latter are out not to fall off their boards under any circumstances, while the women are out to have fun.

Three Irish-Americans introduce surfing to Ireland, and do good by bringing Protestant kids down from the North to surf with Catholics. A professional in Southern California and his buddies regularly assist a teen-ager who broke his back surfing a couple of years ago but still loves the sport. A teen-age girl in Santa Cruz understands that her father's insistence on surfing several thousand consecutive days, "sun, rain, or tonsillitis," simply is his life. In short, genuinely a film about human beings, not simply the sport that entrances them. Photography unparalleled and hard to believe.

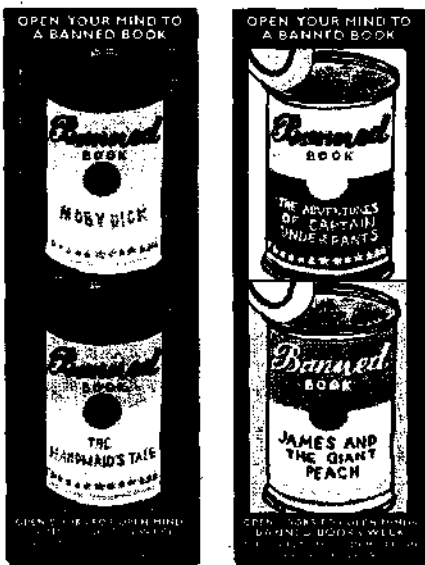
--William Mandel

The title of my autobiography, SAYING NO TO POWER (Introduction by Howard Zinn), is based on my demolition of Sen. Joe McCarthy and later of HUAC in hearings of 1953 and 1960. It is a history of how the American people fought to defend and expand their rights since the 1920s (I'm 86) employing the form of the life of a 30s AND 60s activist, one who was involved in most serious movements: student, labor, 45 years of efforts to prevent war with the USSR and Cuba, civil rights South and North, women's liberation [my late wife appears on 50 pages], 37 years on Pacifica Radio [where I reinvented talk radio, of whose previous existence I had been unaware], civil liberties, and opposition to anti-Semitism and to Zionism. You may hear/see a little of my testimony before HUAC on my website, <http://www.billmandel.net>

I am the author of five books in my academic field, have taught at UC Berkeley, and earlier held a postdoctoral fellowship, by invitation, at Stanford's Hoover Institution. Also a lover of film, art, music classical, folk, and popular, poetry, a downhill skier for sixty years (no more), and a dancer told by strangers literally yesterday that I am still good.

The book may be ordered through all normal sources. For an autographed copy, send me \$24 at 4466 View Pl., #106, Oakland, CA. 94611

# BANNED



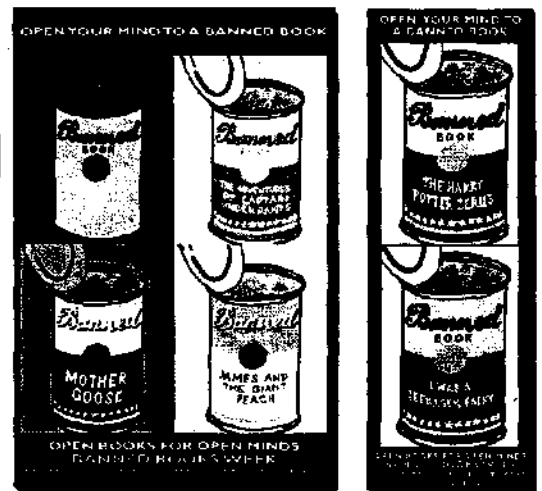
# BOOKS WEEK

## SEPTEMBER 20-27, 2003

Learn more about banned books at [www.ala.org/bbooks](http://www.ala.org/bbooks)



For more info, read the *Indy* [indy.pabn.org](http://indy.pabn.org)  
Email: [indynews@hotmail.com](mailto:indynews@hotmail.com)



Local events scheduled for Banned Books Week:

~ Molly Ivins, visiting author (Wednesday, Sept. 24, 2pm open forum at Milner Library; 7pm speech at IWU's Westbrook Auditorium. Sponsored by ISU's Milner Library and IWU's Ames Library)

~ ISU Cinema Society Banned Movie (Thursday, Sept. 25, 8:30pm, Stevenson 101)

~ Panel on the PATRIOT Act

~ Speech by Chicago artist banned by Kraft from using the nickname "King VelVeeda"

~ Reading from Banned Books

# GLBT news

## Domestic partnerships, gay marriage topics of ACLU meeting

The Central Illinois Chapter of ACLU will sponsor a community meeting on domestic partnerships and same sex marriage at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, October 1 in the Community Room of the Normal Public Library, 206 W. College Avenue.

The June Supreme Court decision outlawing state sodomy laws, gay marriage rights in Ontario and British Columbia, and an impending court decision on same sex marriage in Massachusetts have made the issue of same sex unions one of the most discussed and hotly debated topics in the nation.

The meeting will include a legal professional from the ACLU of Illinois office and speakers on both side of the issue.

## New group for children of lesbian moms

A new group for children ages 8-12 with lesbian mothers is forming to make new friends and discover that they are not alone.

The group will meet from 1 to 4 p.m. on Sunday, September 14. Activities will include playing games and visiting. Those attending are encouraged to bring a snack to share as well as a favorite outdoor game to play. Drinks will be provided. Both children and their moms are invited.

For more information and location email [Bloomingtonrml@aol.com](mailto:Bloomingtonrml@aol.com) or call 309.287.0620

## Advocacy Council to sponsor lesbian-themed play at Heartland

The Advocacy Council is proud to sponsor *Stop Kiss*, a lesbian love story to be performed at Normal's Heartland Theatre Company in early 2004.

The play by Diana Son will be performed on February 12,13,14, 20, 21, 22,27, and 28 at the theatre, located in northeast Normal on the campus of the old Soldiers and Sailors Home.

*Stop Kiss* is the story of Callie, a savvy New Yorker, and Sara, a recent transplant from the Midwest. The two meet, become friends, and develop, much to their surprise, mutual affection, fears and desires. In time, an unspoken attraction develops between the two friends.

Critics applauded the play during its New York run. *The Daily News* gushed that "there is so much that is vital and exciting about *Stop Kiss*. You want to embrace this young author and cheer her on to other works. The writer on display here is funny and credible. You also will be charmed by its heartfelt characters and up to the minute humor."

More information on the play will be posted at the theatre's web site: <http://www.heartlandtheatre.org>.

## University of Illinois adopts benefits for same sex domestic partners

On July 17 the University of Illinois Board of Trustees voted to extend medical and dental benefits to the same sex partners of its glbt employees.

The University of Illinois system, which includes campuses in Urbana, Springfield and Chicago, is the first public university in the state to offer such benefits. Officials expect that 80-100 employees will enroll in the program.

The U of I joins most of the other Big Ten schools in offering domestic partner benefits. The benefits are increasingly seen as necessary in order to attract the best candidates for faculty and staff positions.

While the vote was applauded by most in the glbt community, there was some concern that the benefits created a "separate but equal status" for glbt employees and their partners.

A pure "domestic partner benefit" would have to be passed via legislation by the General Assembly in Springfield. U of I trustees saw no indication such a measure was being considered, so they created an alternative system where glbt employees would be reimbursed by the university for the cost of the insurance they purchase privately for their partners.

Critics say that this process of reimbursement is an extra step that straight employees don't have to take when insuring their spouses. In addition, some say that glbt employees who are forced to purchase private insurance policies for their partners would probably have to pay more and may not be able to get coverage similar to what the university's insurance provides.

## GLBT supporter runs for Congress

Tari Renner officially announced his candidacy for Jerry Weller's congressional seat at 10 a.m. on Monday August 11 on the steps of the old county courthouse in downtown Bloomington.

Renner, a longtime local resident of Bloomington/Normal, has been active in local politics. He serves on the McLean County Board and is called on often to conduct scientific surveys for city governments. Renner also serves as chairperson of the political science department at Illinois Wesleyan university.

As a supporter of the glbt community Renner has included questions about sexual orientation issues on the surveys conducted by his political science students. One of his surveys in 2002 showed that 57% of registered voters in Bloomington favored a human rights ordinance that would protect glb people against discrimination. The results of this survey were instrumental in the Bloomington City Council passing a gay-inclusive human rights ordinance in 2002.

Incumbent Jerry Weller has a poor record on glbt issues. The Human Rights Campaign, the nation's largest glbt lobbying organization, gave him a 17% rating on glbt issues. At the other end of the spectrum, the conservative Christian Coalition recently gave Weller a 100% rating.

If you would like to make a contribution to Renner's campaign, send a check to:  
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# The burden basket: Lessons from

*"As I walk through the winter forest, the courage that I sense is a quiet courage, not the courage for great heroic deeds, but for humility to live with loss. We need such courage to face those losses and see in them the source of new visions: a courage to nourish the seed beneath the snow."*

-Fred Taylor

On the sacred crimson and vermillion cliffs near where I live one can find the visage of the Green Man of the Southwestern Deserts, the mountain emissary of the ancients who lived here up until a thousand years before my arrival. He is the symbol of fertility, the agent of the peoples of the South, the bearer of magic and medicine: Kokopelli. Ko-ko-pelli!

His name once called out from the escarpments, his visage now pecked or painted into volcanic rock. They call him the hunch-backed flute player, but that is no deformity you see. It is, rather, his burden basket.

Both physical and metaphorical, the "burden basket" is yet another shared concept common to a wide range of primal cultures. The basket may contain nothing but the personal quandaries or seemingly overwhelming responsibilities of an individual's life, or be filled all the way to the top instead, brimming with the joy, needs and anguish of an entire planet as experienced by each sensitized bearer.

Its freight is a product of our emotional engagement, and the degree of sensory input we allow access to our psyches. The more conscious, alert and caring the person, the heavier the load. The more we allow the eyes to see, the ears to hear and the heart to feel, the more we pack into the basket.

Enter the cooing of babies, the weight of parental relationship, the redeeming reality of familial love. A lifetime of lessons. Accomplishment. Dreams of the night and visions of the day. The experience of and desire for smells and sights, new sounds and a familiar touch. The passion for fruit.

The coming and going of lovers, and the lessons they each leave behind. People and places and ideas we become attached to, stored carefully where we can find them. Kisses and art next to laughter and sighs, retrievable memories at the top, with precious hope lying deepest in the basket.

But do leave room for disappointment and the strength it engenders. For personal failure and the humility that comes with it. For the certainty of bodily death, the frustration of failed campaigns to save the life of the planet, the silent screams of humanity's unrealized dreams. Enter the hurt of unwanted children, the saddened wife, the hopeful actress who never really gets to live the roles she has no hand in writing.

Add the taste of disappointment and the scent of lost lovers. The fumes from the foundry, the refinery, the smelter, the paper mill, the freeway. The latest wars of hegemony, intolerance and profit, and the so called "war against terrorism." Then if we add a conscious identification with the non-human world, the basket strains at the seams, stuffed with the flight of birds and the celebrations of indomitable coyotes, the desires of elk in Fall, the contentment of shellfish, the anxious calling of the salmon.

Followed for balance and truth by mountains groaning at the hands of strip mines, earth pierced by fence posts and oil wells, leveled for golf courses and condominiums. Pack it with the majority of rivers, dying behind dams. With creatures big and small, shot, trapped and

poisoned, crushed by unfeeling cars and trucks, denied more and more habitat until faced with the complete and irreversible extinction of their kind.

For the truly sensitive, for the conscious and awakened examples of humanity making use of every unhampered sense, every vital instinct-- it can be one heavy basket. Those who see and feel enough, those given to love, truly can be said to carry the weight of the world. On willing shoulders.

The key word here is willing. One usually has the option of "keeping it light," of ignoring the gravity of unfolding events while suppressing intuition, instinct and emotion. In modern society illusions receive widespread support, and denial is seen as an acceptable way of dealing. On the other hand, for the most conscious and engaged the basket may house the accumulative transgressions of our kind, the mistakes of the past and the formidable weight of our future choices.

Yet always it's a load we voluntarily pick up and carry. Unlike the powerful metaphor of the cross, no authority figure assigns the burden of the basket, no vested human judge sentences us to carry ponderous awareness through the streets of a new Jerusalem. For Kokopelli, the flowers are as important as the crown of thorns they fell from. They're to be worn not on the forehead, but as pointed messages of awakesness on those prickly bushes that line the trails of our mortal lives.

The basket also differs from the cross by being a testament to aware, voluntary participation rather than to blind obedience. But both speak of the essential ingredient, devotion. For Kokopelli, for the non human world and for primal humanity that devotion is to sacred life, to flesh and God in unbroken unity. Sensory, emotional and spiritual interaction with the rest of the Earth-body in a glad and holy communion.

The lifting of the basket is a matter of tuning-in to the ecstasy as well as the agony of uninsulated, unmitigated perception. It is willing participation in destiny, the responsibility inherent in consciousness, and the acceptable consequences of our acts of love.

The nice thing about the basket is that you can always put it down when you need to. Nobody is watching and besides, you were the one who put it on in the first place. You're trying to do everything on your list, but who wrote the list, after all? Lay down the cross for even a minute and the Roman Centurions, the dream police, the eye-in-the-sky will see to your immediate punishment. The burden basket is a different story altogether.

Set it down, and be assured you will be the first to know when you've rested enough, and when the time has come to move ahead with it again. There's no way to post a basket in the ground, or to nail you to it. "This basket is made for walking." When you're not moving, in simply lies in full view in the corner. When it is really felt is when you move with it, carrying out the course of action it inspired in you, instigating through you the necessary cures to the specific malaise.

Ignorance, the developed ability to ignore and to suppress, is a successful defense against the highs and lows of a more receptive existence. The result is at least a muddling and graying, a temporary objectification, an emotional distancing from threats and challenges. While we often hear about the "blissfully ignorant" rural underclass, it is more often the educated, the financially secure, and the intellectuals who are best at this deliberate obfuscation of reality.

With sufficient effort one can avoid most primal, direct experience up until the imposing physicality of the hospital ward, and our society can ignore the worsening condition of the natural world right up until the moment when it impinges on the survivability of our own kind. The basket is a mixed-blessing, containing both the high price and ultimate reward for our willingness to feel-- our willingness to share a living world's pleasure and pain, our inspiration to actively and accordingly respond.

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# the incorrigible Kokopelli

Wherever the image of Kokopelli is found, with bent, laden back and flute in hand-- cast into silver earrings, misappropriated for trendy cafe menus or carved into crimson canyon rock-- a single message cries out: No matter how heavy the load, one must dance their dance, live their song.

As I write this we mindfully set a match to the wood in the fire circle, practicing the vulnerable widening of perception, the opening up of our individual baskets to the instructive world around us. Tonight is a night of power, and we remain vigilant for the arrival of new experience, new revelation, new depths of compassion to pack in with all the rest. Off to the side of us, just beyond the reach of firelight, we feel a certain power entertaining the darkness. Somehow, from his place of concealment he's able to excite our physical and spiritual engagement. Able to encourage the intensity of our assigned quests. It is the spirit of Kokopelli, providing us with a magical, visual metaphor. Setting the example of a basket so heavy. And a heart so big.

To fail to enjoy is often to fail to enjoy. Interestingly enough, those who eschew the burden of the basket are the least likely to dance, the least likely to fly. But for the load-bearers every movement is a dance, gracefully and powerfully making their way between the obstacles and pitfalls, delights and desires of their destined paths. For basket wearer, every utterance is a sincere demonstration, every shout both an urgent warning and exclamation of gladness. Glee that reverberates off of looming high-rises, as off these rising Anasazi cliffs.

-Jesse Wolf Hardin

JESSE WOLF HARDIN is an activist, restorationist, musician and presenter on topics of mindfulness and radical Gaian spirituality.... working and living seven river crossings from the nearest road in the wilderness of SW New Mexico. His books include Kindred Spirits: Sacred Earth Wisdom (SwanRaven 2001) and the upcoming Gaia Eros: New Nature Spirituality (New Page 2004). Seekers come from all over the world for his no-B.S. counsel, wilderness retreats, quests and residencies: The Earthen Spirituality Project & Sweet Medicine Women's Center, Box 509, Reserve, NM 87830 <earthway@concentric.net> <www.concentric.net/~earthway>

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# The Poetry Page

## Time Again

Dear Mr. Bukowski  
 I have just read about your unfortunate writer's block in "Upon This Time."  
 Don't complain about writer's block at age fifty.  
 Go to hell.  
 You think you have it bad.  
 You've made a life out of writer's block.  
 I'm twenty three and when I can't write I hate myself  
 And play flight simulators on my computer  
 Or amuse myself with fantasies of war.  
 I used to think I might be published early at nineteen  
 Like Rimbaud  
 But I messed up and will end up like you  
 If I'm lucky  
 Published late in life.  
 I can't wait.  
 What am I supposed to do now?  
 I guess maybe I should go to hell  
 Get some inspiration  
 But I don't seem to have a creative bone in my body  
 Making it difficult to imagine or do anything  
 Requiring an inkling of desire (how does one go to hell anyway?)  
 I hate you Mr. Bukowski, but at least you have those books of poetry  
 And I have plenty of time to read.

--Jarolaw Szymanski

## Love lock jaw

bite down hard  
 bite down on me  
 putting me down  
 will set me free  
 like a pit-bull  
 my bite is tight  
 love lock-jawed  
 motivated to fight

kicking me and screaming  
 the silence is my fight  
 more pain tends  
 to a tighter bite  
 soldiers in love  
 prefer death to loss  
 march for what's right  
 wearing dynamite  
 and own blood-soaked clothes

A warm solution  
 put me down  
 my brain has shrunk  
 silly it sounds  
 three things left  
 that I really know  
 I love you  
 I'm unlike you  
 and can't let you go

Love Lock Jawed

--Thomas L. Johnson

## Gorgeous (To Liz H.)

Destined to stand beneath the luminous  
 billboard in Hollywood,  
 she buries her tan toes into the sand,  
 letting the baptismal waters  
 of small town America  
 carry away forever  
 her last drop of innocence

--Diego Baez

## American Spirits

Something calls away from here  
 Perhaps the fleeing atmosphere  
 The cooling sun's lowering arc  
 Or birds on wing to some southern  
 wonderpark

A feeling pulls within my breast  
 Away its urgent pleas  
 Chilling air and quickening night  
 Now engulfing me

Something calls away from here  
 Be quicker, get away  
 Something calls away from here  
 But Something makes me stay

--Urban Frost

## Genius

Lin Yang, a prodigy at age six,  
 Played Chopin in Carnegie Hall  
 Rode a camel in dry Egypt  
 Climbed the mossy Mayan temples  
 Won at chess in Moscow  
 And ate with the Queen.  
 But Yang still cannot beat me at  
 Spades.  
 And until he does I'm not impressed.  
 Not at all.  
 No.

--Jarolaw Szymanski



## Amerika, Amerika

Onesmart bomb  
 through the window of  
 the UN Human Rights Commission  
 would teach those ingrates  
 who's in charge  
 of this world.

A nation  
 with wisdom  
 to produce  
 this planet's  
 most lethal  
 arsenal  
 mustmuster  
 the will  
 to use it.

Save freedom  
 for trade.

--Urban Frost

## 21st century prayer

if there is one true god  
 and one true religion  
 for the twenty-first century  
 it's television

it teaches us what's wrong and right  
 how to think and what to buy  
 what is funny, what is not  
 who to hate and when to stop

it helps us to classify ourselves  
 into slots or onto shelves  
 true believers it will show  
 all we really need to know

we pray to thee, our lord T.V.  
 ever may we follow  
 irradiate your sacred light  
 and maketh our minds hollow

our Father, who art on T.V.  
 censored be thy name  
 thy programs come, they will be done  
 on Earth, as it is in our living rooms

--Peter Elvidge

## Back to the Farm

as guided back to dancing cloud setting  
 falling star firefly out windshield country road  
 golden full sideview mirror moon  
 skies of opposite pull me along  
 blend of the color mood she swirl  
 what then of the man in ishe  
 of much and little can this one share  
 to others it must be always free

--matt

## Pondering Pungent Political Hacks

Too close now, the Breathless Edge  
 is nowhere I would never right-mind  
 strive to reach  
 for its most unnatural place of cosmic un-blessing  
 emanates from the lower-worldly scent  
 of ten thousand twisted-official souls.  
 Like that unbelievably stenchy stale-cigar aroma.  
 Hey, I'm already stressed out enough  
 by the recent slippage  
 of hyper-space gravitational aberrations.  
 While as on-going quarks  
 these stand-up comic "leaders"  
 keep queering up the besmirched-green trails  
 of this our marbled planet's  
 purest nature. . . what a waste.

--Jim DeWitt

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We have the right to reject any poem.



# I.D.A.S.: An army of chicken-footed gourd bowls and a

Hello again everyone, in this installment of interviews, i hung out w/ Danell Dvorak & John Cassidy who share a studio in the old Bloomington Jr. High building on Washington St. Danell has been there about 10 years and John for about 6 now. I first met John at the Artists Open Studio Show in May which featured all the artists in the building. After telling him i'd like to feature them in the next issue he warned me w/ a hearty laugh that Danell had made the last guy who interviewed her cry, so i knew right away that it would be a great time.

This round of question & answers never really went that way. As the time & day we agreed upon came up i found myself w/ only 4 questions, a crappy old recorder from a thrift store, & pretty much ill prepared. Thankfully that turned out to be the most fitting method with these two, "...this winging-it lifestyle is essential to the nature of the artwork."

Anyway, this session was filled w/ laughter but you won't find any of those ha ha quotes here. i felt so welcome by them that when i did ask a formatted question it almost made me feel outside what we had going on. During the taping we had music going & we moved all around the large studio w/ me forgetting to take the recorder along so what you read here came out of two muffled & incoherent 90 minute tapes, both of which stopped taping who knows how long before i noticed.



We started off checking out the pieces that Danell created after receiving a Cultural District Grant in 2002 (John also received a grant & purchased some really good pastels & is currently "playing with them") :

D- "this is what i wanna do; this is what it will cost."

me- what she did was make anthrax. She came across a magazine photo of anthrax under a microscope & proceeded to reproduce it on ceramic tiles (with glazes).

D- the fun thing about glazing is that these don't look like this when you put them into the kiln, "so there's that surprise when they come out."

J- "this one looks like head cheese gone bad."

me- "i love that you can only control so much of it & then it determines itself."

D- "if you notice, they are all the same composition," even though all 65+ tiles differ in colors, "this is what i got out of science class."

J- "terrorism inspires me."

D- Catina Briscoe came over once and figured out how to arrange them. it came out mathematically perfect which i had not done on purpose. "you wouldn't think anthrax could be so much fun."

J- "or pretty!"

D- "i think that whole psychological treatment of things that are pretty but bad for you is what i try to put in all my figurative stuff too, like a moth to a flame."

me- "do you guys think you can succeed in turning the audience into moths?"

D- "no i don't want the audience to be turned; i'm always attracted to a lot of surface in figurative work."

J- "you want them to be a part of that."

me "do both of you ever work from photos?"

D- "we like to have a lot of photo shoots!"

J- "sometimes i'll set up a still life & photograph it to balance it out; the things i make up myself is my best stuff;" pretty figures in the landscape that is very organic; using turquoise (sort of rivers of) works against what else is there; it provides the soothing to the busyness.

D- i have a two story house to fill so "this can just be my art world."

J- it's nice for me too 'cause psychologically, i can just look over there and feel like i can breathe more.

me- something i noticed right away when i entered the studio is the contrast in each side (John's is packed w/ piles of everything everywhere & Danell's is very open in the center w/ materials around the edges).

J- "i actually think i have too much stuff but, you know, what are you gonna do."

Danell brings me a handful of polaroids to look at.

D- "she's in a lot of my paintings;" Missy Bradstreet, an actress who's married to Tim Bradstreet the cartoonist artist.

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## monkey on a stick or "Oh yea, art is supposed to be fun."

J- it's great, Missy comes back & immediately starts posing for us; that's Allison Carr there, she's upstairs (her studio); that's Jackie, she works at Garlic Press; sometimes you're like 'who the fuck is that?'

D- "it's pretty hard to be friends w/ John and i & not be in a photo shoot sometime; some people look great in photographs but don't come across in drawings."

me- one of the things i found missing growing up here is the lack of communication & interaction between artists; it's obvious you don't have that problem here.

D- some are artists; some work at the library, some are musicians; some are writers. they don't really make their living off their art.

J- "it would be nice to know some that lived off their art. i mean i don't really know any."

me- i find that whatever i do outside of it always translates over into what i'm creating because it's what i'm learning & experiencing.

J- "most definitely, yea, even if it's just to take out frustration. so what do you do?"

me- most people say that my stuff looks like a few different people did them. ya know some say it's shit an some say it's great.

D- (talking about school & galleries wanting you to pump out the same work over & over) "...it's like a poop factory, you have to do just one thing w/ 1000's of variations."

J- "it is so boring, you know what it's going to look like before it's even done. i hate that."

Danell mentions Lucian Freud & John brings me a book of his life's work that must weigh 10 lbs. (he just bought it for his b-day).

D\_ "he's always changing & searching for that perfect way to express himself. i love his work."

Danell grabs a couple of her "gourd bowls," about 12" tall ceramic bowls in the shape of different gourds w/ chicken or duck feet & such; "you get to form them, paint them, & then we name 'em. John uses them in his still life's." as we jump back & forth from ceramics to L. Freud to films to books as there is plenty of things here to play with.

me- "you guys ever see *Pecker* (the John Waters movie)?"

D- "that's a great film, so much making fun of pretension."

me- (getting back to the topic at hand) do you guys want one of these? (referring to having a huge book of your artwork published as you reach the end of your life)

J- "if it meant that i could afford a Lucian Freud painting- Yes!"

John works at Babbitt's Books in normal & has a huge library of his own.

J- "i began my library when i was 12. that was one of my goals when i grew up was to have the best library."

D- John taught me to never forget to buy yourself a present.

J- "that's my first piece of artwork i bought"- a huge ceramic bowl by Catina Briscoe.

me- "that painting i told y'all i bought for my b-day at the Sugar Creek Arts Festival is by Fernando Cornejo. it's very small but so beautiful, & he's friends w/ Jeffrey Little who i bought my first piece from also at the S.C.A.F. several years ago."

D- John is a lot better than me at painting small work. large to me is a 2 person canvas (to carry) & is always more expensive to do.

me- i was wondering if you guys frame much?

J- "i think about it a lot; i don't necessarily do it often, unless i have to."

D- yea like for a show or something, at my home i believe push pins are more than adequate.

me- so basically whatever the piece calls for?

Both- yea

D- we were in a show together in the Phoenix Gallery about 4 years ago, the D'town Artists Shows that Allison Hatcher would put together & "we'd push pin up work up so that the immediacy was right there."

me- i really like that move, bringing the viewer more into it like it could be theirs, other than being a piece hanging on the wall saying 'don't touch me, i'm expensive!'

D- i have a dog whose hair looks just like pubic hair & it's really embarrassing when one shows up under the glass of a piece.

me- do y'all see the other artists in the building much?

D- at night nobody's really here; i see Donovan at the Arts Center more 'cause he teaches there too, Rick Harney is with his family at night & weekends.

J- Ian stops in sometimes as it's on the way to his studio

me- did you ever go through any art classes in schooling, high school or further?

D- i was an art undergrad/Grad; "to me it was about having time to paint. i moved around a lot 'cause i was really bored, so i threw out applications to see who'd pay the most to financial aid so i could go there and be their token poor person (at private schools).

J- "that's how i got into Bradley too; i'm going to raise this gpa, i need some fuckin money;" (John was an English major & took only 1 painting class where he met Danell).

me- do you hear or see much of people putting on their own shows of whoever, outside the gallery scene like a club or house or wherever?

D- years ago in d'town normal, Tony Schreck & Catherine Preston-Schreck opened up the Kitchen Gallery & John had a show there but then they left & nobody picked it up.

J- "it was a really nice place & cool that they did that."

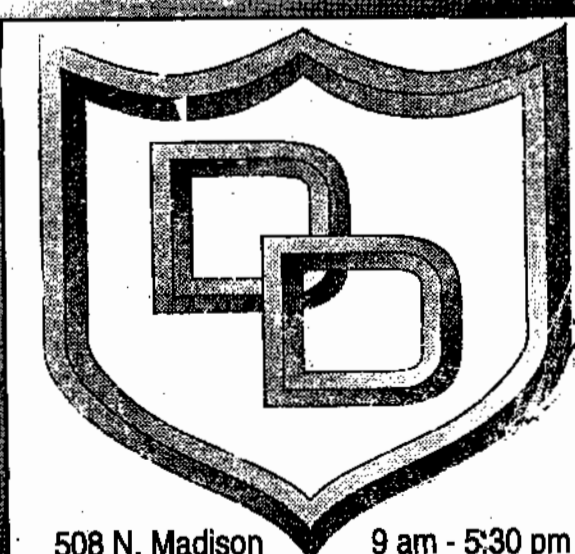
me- the Agape Coffeehouse came & went; i had a piece up there for a while, heard some poets also.

D- when we were undergrads there was a place in the Eddy building & the Electric Coffee had a stage/gallery & practice space. we had a group show there.

J "i was living in Chicago at the time."

J- "as undergrads we would put on shows in the drawing studio, make a flyer & keep it & put it on our resume; i assume they still do that."

D- "galleries come and go."



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# Labor News: Book & movie

## Migrant trail lives in songs

If a little salsa caliente enlivens your dñet, check out a new disc of border songs, performed by a union president.

Baldemar Velasquez is President of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (AFL-CIO), a struggling and valient union that has made great strides for Midwestern farm workers and is now tackling North Carolina's agricultural laborers.

Baldemar grew up a migrant, picking crops with his family, listening to that mix of Mexican, Tex-Mex and country-western tunes that marked the migrant trail.

Between founding a union and improving conditions for some of America's poorest workers, he found time to relax with his guitar, adapting lyrics to traditional songs, folk songs and corridos, recording his favorites in *Canciones Por La Causa* (Songs for the Cause).

Backed by the Aguila Negra band with an accordion, mandolin, dobro, banjo and bass, this eclectic album tells the migrant workers story: the broken promises, harsh conditions and striving for human dignity while living in the "borderland" between two cultures.

Like all people's music, the songs are spirited, their emotions out front, the lyrics direct. The ensemble performing and Baldemar's singing easily transport one to a dusty Texas roadhouse or a Midwestern restaurante on a Saturday night.

*Canciones Por La Causa* is directly available from FLOC for \$20, at 1221 Broadway Street, Toledo, OH 43609, or via their website, [www.floc.org](http://www.floc.org). Besides fine music, the sales proceeds directly benefit FLOC's continued organizing efforts.

--Mike Matejka, *Union News*

## Musicians against sweatshops

The anti-sweatshop movement is taking on the multi-billion dollar music merchandising business with a new initiative that is being launched at the 2003 Glastonbury Festival in the UK. Spearheaded by folk rock legend Billy Bragg, No Sweat Apparel (US) and Ethical Threads (UK), Musicians Against Sweatshops is calling on all musicians of conscience to take a stand.

"It's time for activist musicians to step up and put things right with their own merchandising," said Bragg. "We cannot make the case for a better world while tacitly supporting exploitation."

Musicians who sign on to the fledgling organization will agree to source their merchandise from union shops or worker owned cooperatives as soon as their pre-existing contract obligations expire.

A supporting web site is launching this fall to promote MASS, sell sweat free merchandise and provide free downloads to the fans. The new site will serve as a hub of a virtual mall where union shops, cooperatives and affiliated designers can make their threads available to a new generation of consumers.

"The kids all know this is a problem," said Geoff Martin of Ethical Threads, the distributor of rock & roll t-shirts produced by cooperatives in the developing world. "What they don't know yet is that there is an alternative."

Today, the music merchandising business is much bigger than t-shirts. With hot young stars like Eminem (Slim Shady) and Puff Daddy (Sean Combs) launching wildly successful clothing lines, rock stars have largely replaced the role of young designers at the cutting edge of the fashion business.

"The fashion industry listens to the youth and the youth listens to the music," said No Sweat founder Adam Neiman. "Musicians Against Sweatshops has the potential to make the global garment industry face the music."

MASS enlisted indie bands as well as established acts to be part of the launch on June 27, at the massive Glastonbury Festival, the UK equivalent of a yearly Woodstock. All interested parties are encouraged to contact the organization at [info@NoSweatApparel.com](mailto:info@NoSweatApparel.com).

## Is the media telling the whole truth?

Do we ever get the whole truth? Is the media biased? With Middle East conflict and a seething world, do Americans ever get the whole story?

Two new books on the media explore that topic thoroughly, with a complete and methodical analysis.

*What Liberal Media? The Truth about Bias and the News*, by Eric Alterman, Basic Books, \$25, ISBN 0-465-00176-9


How often has a radio commentator sneered at the "liberal media?" Listeners to talk radio hear it daily.

If there is a media bias, Alterman contends, it's to the right, not the left.

Looking at talk radio and TV, Alderman contends that nary a liberal voice is heard. What often passes for liberal is actually centrist, while the Rush Limbaughs of the world dominate the electronic opinion spectrum.

Alterman focuses his print analysis on the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, believing those two publications set the media tone the electronic reporters follow.

Looking back over the past two decades, he notes how conservative dollars funded new foundations and think tanks that provide plentiful conservative commentators. Meanwhile, news and entertainment mixed; like TV wrestling, what passes for news is a stage show, heavy on barbed comments and insults, light on actual facts and analysis.



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*Margaret Sanger*

McLean County Voice for Choice advocates for reproductive choice and provides assistance, when needed, to women making reproductive choices whatever the choices may be. All contributions made to the address below go to the assistance fund.

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McLean County Voice for Choice  
PO Box 905  
Bloomington, IL 62702-0905



# reviews & more

## Equal Rights Amendment

Alterman does agree there is a media liberal bias, but it is a selective bias. On social issues like gun control, abortion and homosexual rights, he agrees there is a liberal bias. However, when it comes to economic issues, particularly around union rights and trade issues, the media parrots Wall Street, painting workers as obstructionist dinosaurs.

Alterman is particularly effective in taking apart the 2000 election. Al Gore never had a chance, Alterman believes, because the media painted him with a thick brush as humorless and self-important. Gore was the high school intellectual show-off, while Bush got a free ride as the fun-loving frat boy.

Although Gore's misstatements were probed, Bush often got a free ride. And when the presidential election turned on Florida, the media turned on Gore as obstructionist. Alterman particularly dissects the staged Republican "rally" (or riot) outside the Miami-Dade canvassing board on November 22.

No matter what Gore did, he was outflanked on every media angle, a win Alterman credits to superior Republican spin and posturing.

Alterman plainly displays his liberal bias, an honesty more news purveyors should share. A careful reading of his book will leave the average American wondering whether they are the news or a stage show.

*Media Wars: News at a Time of Terror*, by Danny Schechter, Rowman & Littlefield, ISBN 0-7425-3109-0

Danny Schechter used to work for ABC and CNN. Discouraged with the poor quality of American international news reporting, he has chosen a different path as a news critic.

This book is a collection of essays on reporting, strung together with Schechter's 9/11 media diary. As the disaster in New York unfolded, Schechter found himself asking as many Americans did, "Why did this happen?"

Watching American news coverage and the foreign media, Schechter claims Americans never got the full story. Instead, the American media simply stayed home, probing the suffering in New York and Washington, but never exploring the complicated world of international terrorism and the tensions that motivate extreme action.

Schechter looked at the world media and found more thorough analysis and reporting. In a statistical fashion he analyzed American newspaper and TV news, finding a diet heavy on celebrity gossip and fashion tips, with little on the larger world and how it impacts us.

U.S. international news centers on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Schechter finds these stories follow a predictable pattern, with little probing of underlying human motivation.

Schechter raises a fear for Americans; will U.S. citizens lose their liberties and will the press, instead of playing a vigilant role to protect them, instead aid the process, by parroting Washington's line?

Schechter goes a step forward and has been trying to not only critique the media, but build alternatives. His website, [www.mediachannel.org](http://www.mediachannel.org), not only offers media critiques, but links to international news sources.

In an age of corporate media mergers and more concern for the bottom line than telling the news, the media deserves continued scrutiny. As famed CBS broadcaster Walter Cronkite wrote in his introduction to Schechter's book, "The strength of the American system is possible and can be nurtured only if there is lively and provocative dissent. In a healthy environment, dissent is encouraged and considered essential to feed a cross-fertilization of ideas and thwart the incestuous growth of stultifying uniformity."

-McLean & Livingston Counties Labor News.

Since 1787, American women have waited for inclusion in the US Constitution and their legal equality as citizens. Courageous women fought for and won the right to vote in 1920. The Equal rights Amendment is the next step toward full legal, and constitution equality for women...It's About Time!!!

\* Tell your Senator now and again in the November Veto Session to vote YES on ERA (HJRCA0001). Locate contact information for Illinois Senators at <http://www.earillinois.org>

\* Educate your friends, family, and co-workers about why it's time for ERA and urge them to call on their Senators.

\* Get more involved. Visit <http://www.eraillinois.org>

### Equal Rights Amendment to the US Constitution

Section 1. Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

Section 2. The Congress shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provision of this Article.

Section 3. This Amendment shall take effect two years after the date of ratification.

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# I.D.A.S. continued

D- the Bloomington Public Library does a lot (for artists) & they're very aware of expanding & getting artwork to readers, they helped us do the 'exquisite corpse' thing.

Talking now about the teaching gigs.

J- "i taught an Imaginative Drawing & Color class this year at MCAC."

D- (on her demonstrations at various elementary schools) "it's neat to be sponsored by the state & go into schools as an anti-culture person."

me- "to infiltrate!"

D- "oh, yea."

She took one of John's paintings to a 4th grade class & asked the kids to write what they thought about it. John lets me read copies of what they wrote.

D- it was great. Allison Carr took one of hers; the artists were so happy to get these absolute pure critiques (read: no pompous ass art critic theologies or egos to muddle a moment of expression)

J- "i like their diction & some of their sentences are that pure kid poetry; they have that imaginary way of spelling & sentence structure."

me- i really prefer that too mostly; screw the rules of writing.

me- "this kid gives you 3 titles for the painting"

D- "The Future Set, The New World or The Coolest Journey"

J- "i love The Coolest Journey. the ones that include drawings are nice too."

me- "this one says 'if i were there i would be someone!'"

J- "i like this one '...it looks like things getting all blurry, it makes me happy', there's a drug artist in the making"; also this one says 'it makes me want to ask questions!'"

D- "look at this one '....and here's the song to sing while looking at the picture -(as John & Danell rambunctiously sing together) Lets go to the art world!'"

me- so many artist statements at shows just make me numb, i read the same sentences at every show over & over, blah, blah, blah; i'd much rather read a kid's explanation.

This is right where my tape player begins to make obscene buzzing & hissing noises, no matter what i try it refuses to work so....



One of the major conclusions i came to after the interview is: if you want to be entertained & enlivened by the spirit of artists & their creations, go talk to them & see their work. Danell & John's pieces are lively, unpretentious, questioning & whether a painting is of a massive toothache or a killer virus it is above all, FUN.

Danell and John will be exhibiting work at the Bloomington Public Library with other artists that teach at the McLean County Arts Center from September 2 through the end of the month.

To talk to the artists & ask to see their studio work call  
Danell 828-2363 John 828-5449

--matt erickson

## Post notes

We wanted to thank the subscriber who sent us a donation "in honor of the spirit and life of Deborah Wiatt--keep up the good work." Thank you--it means a lot.

We also wanted to brag a little. We got an email telling us that the *Post* was voted publication of the week by *Alternative Press Review*. Pretty cool, huh?

As usual we need help--people who want to write, do layout, sell ads etc. Give us a call--don't know how long we can hang on without you.

# Sex

*...okay, now that we've got your attention...*

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