## The Daily lowan

Thursday, October 4, 2007



NEWSPAPER • DI DAILYIOWAN.COM • TELEVISION

50¢

**INSIDE BANJO** 

**BONANZA** Bluegrass heavyweight — and Iowa City area resident — Bob Black continues to help the banjo take back popular music. 80 Hours, 1C

#### There is no spoon

Really. There's absolutely no mention of silverware in this week's 80 Hours calendar, 2C



#### Sacks top Iowa's laundry list

The Iowa football team knows it must cut down on the nine sacks it allowed against Indiana to have a chance at Penn State on Saturday. Sports, 1B

#### Private protection

With citywide safety concerns, two UI sororities combine resources to increase their security. Campus, 2A

#### **Excess Ethanol**

As ethanol distilleries sprout, supply increases and demand doesn't, causing prices to fall. State, 4A

#### Missing in action

The gradual dilution of the GI Bill does our veterans a disservice. Opinions, 10A

#### Rowers excited to start

Early morning practices and off-season adjustments have Mandi Kowal's Hawkeye rowing team ready to start this weekend. Sports, 1B

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#### Daily lowan Television

To watch Daily Iowan Television, go online at dailviowan.com or tune into UITV. The 15-minute newscast is on Sunday through Thursday at 9:30 and 10:30 p.m., with reruns at 12:30 and 1:30 a.m. and 7:45 and 8:45 a.m. the following day.

#### WEATHER



Partly sunny, breezy; 20% chance of late showers





1C Opinions 10A Classifieds 4B Sports Crossword 12A

**MELROSE RIDGE APARTMENTS** 

## 15-year wait over moves

At long last, an apartment complex opens its doors to the mentally ill.



Ariana McLaughlin/The Daily Iowan

After a day at work breaking in horses, Luke McClimon enjoys his new independence with the help of Jeff Knock, the on-site manager (left) of Melrose Ridge. Knock helps in the facility by keeping up a daily routine.

By Margaret Poe

THE DAILY IOWAN

In the common area uniting the eight apartments, a plush maroon couch and a scattering of painted wooden pumpkins evoke home.

Down to a resident's photo of a white silo framed on the wall, the aura contrasts with the scent of newness wafting through the corridors.

The Melrose Ridge Apartments, which cater to lowincome mentally ill residents, may have just opened last month, but the facility is an effort 15 years in the making.

Today, an open house and ceremony will officially dedicate the 18 apartments housed in two buildings on the western edge of Iowa City. Iowa first lady Mari

Culver will tour the complex, which is funded by federal, state, and local sources.

The new apartment complex is the first of its kind in Johnson County, developers say. By offering a transitional option between full institutional care and independent apartment living, the new housing fills a need for residents such as Luke McClimon, who moved into Melrose Ridge after living for two years at Chatham Oaks, a private nonprofit care facility adjacent to the new property.

"It gives people with mental illnesses the opportunity to live like a normal adult," he said as he sat in his spacious new home.

SEE **HOUSING**, 6A

#### **New facility**

For the last 15 years, mental-health advocates have tried to build a new facility on the western edge of Iowa City. Today, their vision is realized.

Johnson County chapter of the National Alliance for the Mentally III members begin lobbying for an apartment complex.

Johnson County Board of Supervisors agree to support the plan and submit a federal grant application. But largely because the land is outside city limits and not connected to city bus service, the effort fails.

Alliance members renew struggle to build an eight- to 12-unit complex, again seeking federal funds. The site now falls within city boundaries and on bus routes.

A Johnson County needs assessment finds serious gaps in housing options for mentally ill residents.

Iowa City City Council rezones the Melrose Avenue plot to house two nine-unit buildings, which will become the first such accommodation in the county.

Residents begin moving into the completed apartments, which open onto a common living area. **October 4, 2007** 

First Lady of Iowa, Mari Culver, dedicates the residences.

## on errors

The medical facility was found violating federal health and safety standards.

> **Bv Zhi Xiona** THE DAILY IOWAN

Cited by federal regulatory entities for several health and safety violations, officials at the UI Hospitals and Clinics said on Wednesday that there are still numerous chances for them to make corrections before losing accreditation.

"Hospitals almost have to try to lose accreditation," said Tom Moore, a UIHC spokesman. "Our goal is to get it right on

the first try." Initial investigations by the Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals were catalyzed by a June incident in which the hospital failed to report the release of a patient to the nursing home. The



**UIHC** director

patient was later found miles away at a relative's house. The UIHC was given 30 days to respond to suggestions of improve-

ment, but a subsequent visit by inspectors in August combed out the newest set of violations. The inspections department

found that nine unreported deaths where patients were restrained or secluded occurred since Feb. 2007, which was revealed at the request of the Des Moines Register.

The inspectors also discovered outdated medical equipment in several units, such as labor and delivery, pharmacy, bone-marrow transplant, and "crash carts" that support emergency victims.

SEE **VIOLATIONS**, 3A

## UI as political sounding board

The UI continues to serve the double function of higher-learning institution and political playground.

By Abby Harvey

THE DAILY IOWAN

The IMU, Hancher, Carver-Hawkeye Arena, and the Pentacrest are among the most highly used venues at the UI by political candidates and stumpers.

Although the political leaders who make appearances at the university have a seemingly endless supply of campaign dollars, they are, for the most part, able to rent space and speak their piece at the same rate charged to student organizations — what amounts to pocket change for campaigns with

multimillion-dollar coffers. "The student rates are, basically, quite a deal compared to public rates," said Cory Lockwood, the manager of IMU event services, who works in conjunction with student organizations to set up various political events.

The public base-rate for the IMU Main Lounge, for example, is \$3,600; student organizations can rent it for a \$565.

Political leaders are able to rent space at student rates because all campaign activities that take place on the UI campus — including the sciences and UIHC must be sponsored by a recognized UI student organization.

"By sponsorship, it actually means that the student group is putting on the event," Lockwood

Lockwood, and other venue managers who set up studentsponsored events, often do the brunt of the work: setting up, making arrangements for parking and food service, and meeting, if necessary, with the Secret Service.

SEE IMU, 6A

## Obama knocks Dems

Presidential hopeful Barack Obama said Wednesday that U.S. troops aren't in Iraq just because of President Bush.

Obama speaks in Iowa City



By George Sweeney

Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill., said on Wednesday that his judgment is more valuable than the experience of other candidates for president to a packed IMU second-floor ballroom.

Obama also said the war in Iraq is not just the work of the Bush administration — the members of Congress who voted in 2002 to give Bush the authority to send troops are also to blame

"They argue that they were really voting not for the war, they were voting for inspectors, or they were voting for diplomacy," he said. "But the American people understood in 2002 what we were debating.



Peter Klopfenstein/The Daily Iowan

Sen. Barack Obama, D-III., calls on an audience member after his speech on foreign policy on Wednesday in the IMU. After a speech criticizing the private security contractors such as Blackwater and current diplomatic stagnation with such countries as Iran, Syria, and Venezuela, Obama answered a handful of questions from the audience.

This was a vote about whether or not to go to war. Without that vote, there would be no war."

Shifting his focus against

criticism that he lacked experience. Obama again turned to the Iraq war.

SEE OBAMA, 3A

## 2 sororities hire guard

By Ben Travers

THE DAILY IOWAN

Despite citywide efforts to protect women from the recent onslaught of sex attacks, two local sororities are employing private security guards to ensure its members safety.

The Kappa Alpha Theta and Zeta Tau Alpha sororities recently hired Per Mar Security to guard the two houses from unwanted visitors.

In a joint collaboration between the national and local chapters of Zeta Tau Alpha, the sorority cited concern for its members' safety on campus as the reason for hiring additional

Per Mar and the sororities declined to comment on how much the protection service cost. Zeta Tau Alpha national President Laura Mauro said the two sororities were sharing the costs of the security guard. Kappa Alpha Theta refused to comment for this story.

Zeta Tau Alpha's decision to hire a guard stemmed from an undisclosed incident earlier this semester pertaining to the 815 E. Burlington sorority, as well as the profusion of attacks in the surrounding area, Mauro said. The national chapter has received nothing but positive reports from its UI chapter concerning the patrolman from Per Mar Security Services in Cedar Rapids, she said.

"They really enjoy seeing the patrolman around," she said. "[The national office has] heard great reports from the chapter."

The sorority plans on retaining the service until the chapter members feel comfortable again, Mauro said.



Sarah O'Brien/The Daily Iowan

Chad Hale of Per Mar Security patrols during the night at the Kappa Alpha Theta and Zeta Tau Alpha sorority houses on Burlington Street on Tuesday. The sororities hired a private security company to patrol the area around their houses in light of the recent sex attacks in Iowa City.

Iowa City police Sgt. Troy Kelsay said the sororities contacted a watch commander at the department a short time ago to notify the police of their new patrolman, a common practice for security-guard employers.

"It was an individual decision," Kelsay said. "The police department is not saying they need to do it."

The guard has already aided in the apprehension of one lawbreaker, Kelsay said. On Sept. 16, the patrolman notified the police of an intoxicated individual refusing to leave Zeta Tau Alpha's property, leading to a public-intoxication charge.

Kelsay said the Iowa City police would remain neutral on private employers' use of patrolmen as long as they act as security guards and not as police officers.

The guard has the same rights as any civilian and uses no weapons, said Steve Sabatke. Per Mar Security's vice president of fiscal security. The guard is extensively trained, equipped with a cellular phone, and is permitted to detain an individual if a crime is committed, Sabatke added.

He said the two sororities hired the service to patrol both houses and look for suspicious activity.

"If you smell burning wood in a rubber factory, there's something out of place," Sabatke said, describing how security guards identified suspicious activity. "A male individual would be suspicious right off the bat because there wouldn't be a male living at a sorority house."

Sabatke said the company does a lot of security work in the Midwest for other sorority and fraternity houses, but usually only for parties or other social

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#### The Daily Iowan

Volume 139 **BREAKING NEWS** 

**Phone:** (319) 335-6063 E-mail: daily-iowan@uiowa.edu Fax: 335-6184 **CORRECTIONS** 

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#### Of close to 300 UI student veterans, some say the federal assistance is not enough. By Shajia Ahmad

THE DAILY IOWAN

After serving their country in a time of war, some student veterans say they are not being served in return.

For soldiers who receive educational assistance from the Montgomery GI Bill, many hope the 24 proposed bills before Congress will address what they see as failings of the current measure.

UI student Cathleen Waddle, a member of the UI Veterans Association, served nine years in the army. A senior in pre-pharmacy, the mother of two said the assistance she receives through her GI Bill benefits does not make life any easier for her and her husband, who is also a war

veteran and works full-time. "It just doesn't make any sense to dedicate that kind of time and service and then be overlooked," she said.

Close to 300 UI students receive some sort of assistance through the federal program, said Herald Kempnich, an assistant to the registrar. While the majority of the students are in-state tuition payers, even those who receive the most aid do not receive full tuition

The total assistance tops out at about \$40,000 — \$14,000 shy of the estimated \$54,000 cost of expenses.

benefits, he said.

Yet, some say the entire costs of higher education should be covered, and call the current bill outdated.

"Unfortunately, the bill has not kept up with the pace of inflation," said UI graduate student John Mickelson, an adviser in the UI veterans' center. "Pretty much all of the students that are getting some sort of federal aid are also working a lot to make ends meet, to make sure we can eat, pay tuition, pay our U-Bills, just like anybody else."

GI Bill falls short, many say

The original GI Bill, signed into law by former President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1944, was designed to help veterans assimilate into civilian life by providing educational assistance, home loan benefits, and unemployment allowances. Veterans entering colleges and universities were provided \$500 tuition costs — often covering in full the tuition rates during mid-century — and monthly liv-

ing allowances. The assistance, which is limited to 36 months, must be used within 10 years following a veteran's release from active duty and cannot exceed the costs of education, according to the U.S.

Department of Veterans Affairs. While Kempnich declined to comment whether student veterans should receive more aid, he said he and his colleagues work to make sure they are treated fairly.

Of the five more years Waddle estimates it will take her to finish pharmacy school, she said she is only eligible for one more year of educational assistance.

"If a person is going to serve their country, I don't really think it's asking that much for government to step up and take care of soldiers and marines - it kind of blows my mind that they don't," Waddle said.

Active Duty and Selected Reserve and National Guard service members are eligible for GI bill benefits if they choose to deduct \$100 from their salaries during their first 12 months of service. Service members who initially refuse to participate are permanently ineligible.

The amount of assistance they receive depends on their duty status, deployment status, and the amount of time they served, said Kempnich.

E-mail *DI* reporter **Shaiia Ahmad** at: shajia-ahmad@uiowa.edu

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#### **POLICE BLOTTER**

Sunday with public intoxication. Anthony Brocka, 19. Readlyn, Iowa, was charged Sept. 29 with public intoxication and simple assault.

Sean Dlady, 18, Oak Forest, Ill., was charged Sept. 29 with disorderly conduct. Tyler Eckhoff, 24, Oceanside, Calif., was charged Sept. 29 with fifth-degree theft and

public intoxication.

Sir Mason Isles, 26, Cedar Rapids, was charged Sunday with disorderly conduct. Kyle Jacobson, 21, 201 E. Burlington St. Apt. 1515, was charged Aug. 26 with public intoxication. William Jensen-Willis, 20, Oxford, Iowa, was charged Wednesday with public intoxication. Matha Keating, 45, 1517 Burns Ave., was charged Oct. 1 with driving with a

suspended/canceled license. Franklin Kebschull, 45, address unknown, was charged Oct. 2 with possession of marijuana. Joshua Nitchals, 24, Wallingford, Iowa, was charged Wednesday with OWI.

Seth Paysen, 20, Comanche, Iowa, was charged Sept. 29 with public intoxication. Travis Randels, 41, address unknown, was charged Oct. 2 with possession of an open alcohol container, possession of marijuana,

Brian Rorris, 22, 201 E. Burlington St. Apt. 1515, was charged Aug. 26 with public intoxication. Maree Thrash, 19, Cedar Rapids, was charged Sunday with public intoxication. Maira Vasquez, 29, 1015 Cross Park Ave. Apt. C, was charged Oct. 2 with fifth-degree theft. Susan Yousif, 18, 802 Benton Drive Apt. 34 was charged Wednesday with OWI, driving with a suspended/canceled license, and PAULA.

#### **METRO**

#### SUV hits store

A Toyota Highlander reversed across a Clinton Street sidewalk and smashed into two front windows at Blick Art Materials Wednesday morning, sending glass shattering onto the sidewalk and into the store.

Iowa City police Officer Ed McMartin said the light-blue SUV was pulling into the parking ramp next to the store, but edged too close to the ticket machine.

The driver reportedly tried to back out but hit a post on the left side of the vehicle, McMartin said. The driver then tried to force the vehicle off the post in reverse, but smashed the bumper and lost control by accelerating too quickly. The SUV reversed a large U-turn, and its back end slammed into the store.

No one was injured, and McMartin, who responded around 10:14 a.m., attributed the incident to "just an inexperienced driver." Police don't expect to see any charges filed in the incident.

"It's not as bad as it seems," he said. "Cars hit buildings all the time."



Wesley Cropp/The Daily Iowan

A Toyota SUV sits lodged in the front windows of Blick Art Materials, in the Old Capitol Town Center, on Wednesday. No one was injured in the incident. Officers said that accidents such as this are often caused by drivers with little experience.

Blick manager Craig Carman was in the back of the store during the incident and said he heard a crash that "seemed to go on for quite a long time."

Two of the store's display win-

dows were shattered, and the

support beam in the middle of

light that hung above the windows dangled by its cord. Shoppers at the store were still checking out at 10:30 a.m. Police said they were not sure

them was crooked. An outside

of the extent of the damages.

- by Kurtis Hiatt

### **Travel more. Spend less**



## UIHC reacts to violations

**VIOLATIONS** 

**CONTINUED FROM 1A** 

Some equipment for wound care and tubing were more than five years past their expiration date.

They found inadequate infection control, with sullied and clean supplies kept together in the same utility rooms. In addition, inspectors found food that did not meet patients' specific nutritional needs, even under physicians' orders.

The UIHC received a copy of the report on Sept. 11 from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, which ordered the investigation. No press releases were issued.

"It was never intended to be secret," said Donna Katen-Bahensky, the UIHC director and the UI senior associate vice president for Medical Affairs.

She said it was "unfair" that the inspectors' report was released without the UIHC's corrective plan attached.

The deaths under restraint were not reported to the Medicare/Medicaid Services, which Katen-Bahensky said was due to the national agency changing its rules for reporting such incidents. The fatalities resulted from

medical causes, not the restraints themselves, she said. Deaths from January to August are currently under review.

Finding three inadequacies out of approximately 490 "conditions for participation" or criteria is "not a sufficient amount of deficiency," said

'It was never intended to be secret.'

— Donna Katen-Bahensky, UIHC director and the UI senior associate vice president for Medical Affairs

Deborah Thoman, a UIHC senior assistant director.

"They went through every single drawer and cupboard," she said, adding that finding three violations in a 3-millionsquare-foot facility is not unusual

There have been no such incidents in other hospitals around the state in his recollection, said David Werning, an inspections-department spokesman.

The UIHC is under a 90-day review period that started Aug. 10, Moore said.

The inspections department will return for an unannounced visit sometime this

Despite violations at the federal level, Katen-Bahensky said, the hospital is not losing accreditation with the Medicare and Medicaid pro-

In the meantime, UIHC officials are working on a formal corrective plan involving additional education of staff and labeling inspected equipment among other details. The plan must be approved by the Medicare/Medicaid Services before the hospital can regain its deemed status.

E-mail D/reporter Zhi Xiong at: zhi-xiong@uiowa.edu



### Obama jabs opponents on war

OBAMA

**CONTINUED FROM 1A** 

"Who got the single most important foreign policy decision since the Cold War right, and who got it wrong?" he asked the crowd, referring to a speech he gave in Chicago Oct. 2, 2002, against the war, before Congress voted to authorize it.

He also blasted the use of private security firm Blackwater USA in Iraq, calling it an "unaccountable contractor." Obama also unveiled a plan to improve companies' accountability, including "a special FBI unit devoted entirely to investigating abuses by contractors."

Wednesday's speech was part of the Illinois senator's "Judgment and Experience Tour," which began Tuesday with a speech at DePaul University in Chicago. Obama held events in Des Moines and Coralville that same day, accompanied at both by Ted Sorenson, former adviser to President John F. Kennedy.

The first-term U.S. senator has been targeted by Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton's presidential campaign because of his alleged lack of experience, an issue Rodham Clinton exploited following the July 23 Democratic debate in South Carolina, when Obama said he would be willing to open direct dialogue with the leaders of Iran, Syria, Venezuela, Cuba, and North

A former secretary of State under President Clinton, Madeleine Albright, publicly disagreed with Obama's answer,



Supporters and audience members fill the IMU Ballroom to listen to Democratic presidential-nominee hopeful Sen. Barack Obama, D-III., speak on Wednesday.

backing Rodham Clinton's position that she would not agree to meet with leaders of those countries. Rodham Clinton said she didn't want such meetings "to be used for propaganda purposes" and possibly further worsen relations with those countries.

In an interview with The Daily Iowan, Obama pointed out that former Carter administration National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski took his side.

"Obviously, Madeleine Albright has loyalties to Sen. [Rodham] Clinton, because President Clinton gave her her job as secretary of State. But I think that if you talk to thoughtful foreign-policy analysts, they'll tell you that we need to open up a new era in diplomacy," Obama said.

He gave the speech on the heels of a poll released Monday by the Washington Post/ABC News

ww.paradise-skydives.com 1-800-SKYDIVE showing a 12 percent jump for Rodham Clinton from three weeks previously and a 7 percent slip for Obama in the same period.

"Hillary Clinton enjoys more support nationally," said UI political-science Professor Peverill Squire, noting that Obama will feel more pressure to close the gap with Rodham Clinton and that as the Iowa caucuses near, "things could potentially

#### **Rodham Clinton v. Obama in Primary Polls**

Respondents to a Sept. 27-30 Washington Post/ABC News nationwide poll of Democrats:

• Rodham Clinton: 53 percent • Obama: 20 percent Margin of error: 4 percent Oct. 3: Rasmussen Reports nationwide poll of likely

Democratic primary voters
• Rodham Clinton : 44 percent • Obama : 23 percent

margin of error: 4 percent Sept. 26-27: Newsweek poll of likely lowa caucus attendees

• Rodham Clinton : 24 percent • Obama: 28 percent

margin of error: 4 percent

grow nastier."

Rodham Clinton also won the third quarter's fundraising battle over Obama, though he still has raised more money raised overall. The New York senator raised \$27 million in the third quarter of 2007, while Obama pulled in \$20 million. E-mail D/reporter George Sweeney at:

george-sweeney@uiowa.edu

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## Ethanol production up, price down

Fueled by an alternative-energy boom in Iowa, corn and ethanol production has jumped significantly, but the market outpaced consumer demand to drop the price.

#### Looking at ethanol

With production outpacing current demand, some worry that the development of ethanol production may start to slow.

National average price

Ethanol production

Ethanol production in thousands of gallons / National average ethanol price

500
\$4

400
\$3

300
\$2

200
\$1

2006
\$2

2007

Source: ethanolrfa.org

**Dylan Salisbury**/The Daily Iowan

By Matt Nelson
THE DAILY IOWAN

Four years ago, Renewable Fuels Association President Bob Dinneen told a Senate environmental subcommittee that when need was mandated, the ethanol industry would

"The U.S. ethanol industry has proven it can supply such demand, if necessary," he said at that hearing.

The industry supplied it and more — since mid-2006, ethanol prices have dropped. Fueled by an alternative-energy boom in Iowa, corn and ethanol production has skyrocketed, creating what the U.S. Department of Agriculture expected to call the largest corn crop in U.S. history this year.

'When you look at the price of corn, there are so many variables. The demand for ethanol has been positive, but I think the price of ethanol and corn will always fluctuate.'

— Pam Johnson, Floyd County corn farmer

But a market flooded with ethanol and outpacing consumer demands is slowing the development of ethanol production.

"It's time to sit back and take stock of where we are," said Pam Johnson, a Floyd County corn farmer.

Though positive about the growth of ethanol, she noted that the industry has started to affect corn prices in mercantile exchanges.

"When you look at the price of corn, there are so many variables," Johnson said. "The demand for ethanol has been positive, but I think the price of ethanol and corn will always fluctuate."

Previous projections by the Iowa Renewable Fuels Association, endorsed by the Iowa Department of Agriculture, expected Iowa to produce nearly 4 billion gallons of ethanol by 2009. Current estimates of production are just under 2 billion gallons, but new plant construction is expected to slow as expansions are added to current plants.

"There's no big hand guiding the ethanol industry," said Department of Agriculture Communications Director Dustin Vande Hoef. "The price of ethanol has gone down some recently, but I don't think it's overwhelming and completely unexpected."

Vande Hoef pointed out that the ethanol market is reacting

as it naturally would to an excess of supply, highlighting the need for ethanol investors and Iowa industry to find new markets for the corn-based fuel.

The investing approach favored by Johnson, however, is a bullish one — steady and cautious.

"I'm positive about ethanol's effects on economics and especially economics in Iowa," she said. "If you're a corn grower and investor, you just try to do the best job you can."

E-mail DI reporter **Matt Nelson** at: matthew-s-nelson@uiowa.edu

#### **METRO**

### County officials study global warming

Global warming and the measures the county can take to combat it were major points of discussion at Wednesday night's joint informal meeting between the Johnson County Board of Supervisors and Johnson County Board of Health.

Board of Health member Maureen McCue presented her group's concerns on climate change, saying that the "health implications are quite long." "This is going to affect everyone," she said. "I can't say strongly enough how much we need to be a part of the solution and not the problem."

One of the actions the Board of Health decided to take was to send a letter to lowa Gov. Chet Culver, urging him not to support additional coal plants in lowa because of the "increase in local and global warming pollution ... which is a cost to our health."

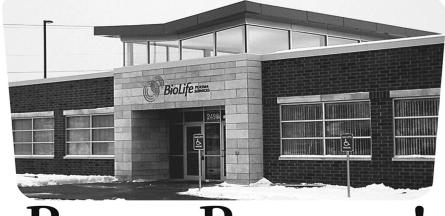
Although no additional plants are planned to be built in Johnson County, the members stressed that

it was more than just a county problem.

Supervisor Terrence Neuzil said that although he agreed with the sending of the letter, he maintained the need for the Board of Health to address other county health issues as well.

"It seems very reasonable to do what you're doing," he said. "But there a lot of things out there that are worthwhile causes that may have even a closer effect on residents. And we hope that you're sending those letters too."

— by Shawn Gude



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## BioLife PLASMA SERVICES

# Forum probes incarceration of blacks

With a significantly higher black incarceration rate in Iowa, officials search for solutions at local forum.

#### By Nicholas Kelly

THE DAILY IOWAN

The Iowa City Human Rights Commission held an open forum Wednesday night on the disparity of black incarceration in Iowa prisons.

The forum, held in the Iowa City Public Library, was led by Cedar Rapids attorney Anthony Haughton, who said systemic issues in the Iowa legal structure have led to a situation in which black Iowans are finding themselves in the penal system more often than whites.

Relations between law enforcement and the community need to improve to rectify problems such as heightened incarceration rates, he said.

"Communication is key," Haughton said. "How do you speak to the people, how do you treat them, how do they feel they're being treated? If they feel that they're being treated unfairly, it undermines the system as a whole."

He also argued that increased representation of blacks in the law-enforcement field, especially in positions such as judges and litigators, would lead to a more balanced representation of ethnic groups in the penal system.

"There are very few African-American attorneys, and there is only one African American that I know of in the 6th Judicial District who practices in the area of criminal defense, and you're looking at him," said Haughton to the crowd. Attendees at the forum were pleased that dialogue on disparity among ethnic groups in the penal system was being addressed in an open forum.

"The whole criminal-justice system in the Iowa City, and in the entire state I think needs at least some review and some consideration," said Richard Klausner, Iowa City's chief public defender. "The statistics are disturbing."

Others hope the forum is just the start of dialog on the issue.

"I think we need a part two, a continuation," said Iowa City Human Rights Commission coordinator Stefanie Bowers. "I just don't think we could do it all tonight. I don't think everybody's' questions were answered, all the solutions, all the problems, I think it's an ongoing debate."

Some felt though the current system may not be perfect, the most permanent solution to the incarceration of Iowans, regardless of ethnic group, may be to foster environments that discourage criminal behavior and advocate personal responsibility.

"If you automatically assume criminal, and your environment is criminal, and people tell you you're criminal then of course, over time you're going to have a criminal," said Doyle Landry of Positive Vision, a Cedar Rapids based career development program for high school students.

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## Congress eyes private-security law



**Price**Representative, D-N.C.

By Anne Flaherty

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Congress is moving to close a loophole in the law that has left private security contractors in Iraq such as Blackwater immune to criminal prosecution, despite warnings by the White House that expanding the law could cause new problems.

The House was expected to pass legislation today by Rep. David Price, D-N.C., that would extend criminal jurisdiction of U.S. courts to any federal contractor working alongside military operations. Senate Democratic leaders said they planned to follow suit as soon as possible and send the measure to President Bush.

The legislation comes amid a string of allegations involving Blackwater USA employees hired by the State Department to protect diplomatic personnel in Iraq. In one case, a drunk Blackwater employee left a Christmas eve party in Baghdad and fatally shot the guard of one of Iraq's vice

presidents. The contractor was fired, fined, and returned home to the United States, but no charges have been filed.

More recently, Blackwater guards were involved in a Sept. 16 shootout that left 11 Iraqis dead. The FBI is currently investigating the incident.

But whether charges can be brought against any of the contractors is unclear, with federal officials citing murky laws governing the conduct of U.S. personnel abroad not hired directly by the military. The current law,

called the Military Extraterritorial Jurisdiction Act, covers personnel supporting the mission of Defense Department operations overseas.

Because Blackwater's primary mission is to protect State Department officials, defense lawyers would likely argue successfully that the law doesn't apply.

At the same time, U.S. contractors are immune from prosecution by Iraqi courts.

White House officials say they

White House officials say they support increasing accountability of contractors abroad, but worry

that the House bill is too vague and may go too far. An administration statement issued Wednesday said the bill would have "unintended and intolerable consequences for crucial and necessary national security activities and operations."

But the statement did not explain further or give examples on how the bill would affect national security. The White House referred questions to the Justice Department, which declined to comment.

## Farmers hearing bad pop

ASSOCIATED PRESS

ANTHON, Iowa — Farmers in western Iowa are hearing a sound they'd rather avoid — pop.

It's the sound of soybeans springing from their pods, an aftereffect of a hail storm that smacked parts of western Iowa on Sunday afternoon.

For some, like farmer Eric O'Connell, the damage could end up costing thousands of dollars.

"You hear that?" he asked, standing in one of his fields three miles east of Anthon. "Those are soybeans. The pods are popping open, and the soybeans are falling off."

O'Connell estimates that damage he suffered across 400 acres of farmland will cost him tens of thousands of dollars. It's the result of the storm, which swept quickly west to east, affecting farms in several northwestern Iowa counties, including Woodbury, Ida, Sac, Buena Vista, and Plymouth.

This week, crop adjusters are expected to flock to northwest Iowa to estimate the damage brought by the storm.

O'Connell estimated that his gross soybean revenue would have been about \$650 per acre, based on a yield of 65 bushels per acre. His estimate takes soybeans at their current price, about \$10 a bushel.

Multiplied by 400 acres, that means his farming operation could have taken in roughly \$260,000 in bean crops. But after the hail storm knocked his soybeans from their pods, his combine can't gather them in.

He expects that they will go to waste leaving him with gross revenue of around \$28,000 — a difference of \$232,000. He doesn't believe his crop insurance will cover the hit, either, because when he bought the insurance soybeans were only trading at \$7 per bushel.

O'Connell tried to make the best of his problem, combining his fields earlier this week to collect as much as he could before the soybeans popped. Still, fields he expected to yield 60 bushels only netted seven.

He is taking a philosophical approach to the setback.

"You're at Mother Nature's mercy," he said staring at thousands of healthy soybeans in the muck beneath his boots. "You play the hand she deals you."





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## Politics no stranger to UI

#### IMU

**CONTINUED FROM 1A** 

Lockwood pointed to Wednesday's Barack Obama event as an example, saying that with all the time required, the compensation is meager.

"It's a whole new level when the Secret Service is involved," he said.

The UI Democrats is one student organization that aids political candidates in their desire to speak to the liberal-leaning campus.

"Campaigns contact us." said Atul Nakhasi, the president of the UI Democrats. "Often, we don't have to even take part in any transactions; the campaign itself will write a check to the venue managers."

But precautions have been taken to ensure that speakers are not being paid to campaign for themselves, as happened with Wesley Clark who declared his candidacy on Sept. 17, 2003, and then spoke two days later at the Boyd Law Building. Clark then returned the nearly \$30,000 he garnered for the speech.

"Within the event into form, we do ask that question, 'Are you paying this person?' " said Lockwood, in regards to student organizations giving money to the candidates or stumpers.

Single-candidate events are an easy feat in comparison with setting up an event such as a debate, Nakhasi said. The UI Democrats are making

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arrangements to host the top six Democratic candidates and more than 1,500 students representing 47 higher-education institutions across the state for a presidential-youth discourse at Hancher in November.

Nakhasi said that with Hancher, it will be a little different, with numerous candidates.

The student base price for renting Hancher is around \$7,000, a far cry from the cost of renting IMU space especially when it is the student organization pursuing the candidates and coughing up the money. But funding for events such as this does not rest solely on the shoulders of the UI Democrats. The Young Democrats of America and the local Democrat Party has been very generous, Nakhasi said.

Greg Baker, the chairman of the UI College Republicans, said there has been talk of hosting both Rudy Giuliani and Mitt Romney in late October or early November on campus.

"We've never hosted a larger campaign on campus yet," said Baker. "They usually tend to use the hotels in Coralville; they think they'll have better luck out there."

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## Facility finally open

#### **HOUSING**

**CONTINUED FROM 1A** 

McClimon has dealt with symptoms of schizophrenia and bipolar disorder for nearly a decade, ranging from delusional episodes to extreme emotional swings. The structured lifestyle at a facility helps level him, he said, but he also treasures the freedom of coming and going as he pleases.

In McClimon's living room, cowboy hats hang above his couch, and a saddle is propped in the corner, reflecting his weekly horseback rides. In the kitchen, the gleaming stovetop range is like that in any local apartment — though a bit cleaner. But unlike most landlords, Melrose Ridge staff can quickly deactivate the appliance if residents feel it poses a safety risk, given their current mental conditions.

Such safety features make the apartments unique, said on-site manager Jeff Knock. A trained supported community living associate, he spends most of his day between the two apartment buildings.

While residents are free to go about their own lives, he coordinates group sojourns to the grocery store and other activities. Several times weekly, employees check on residents, making sure they are taking their medications and maintaining their homes. And they always offer a listening ear, he said.

"If they're having a bad day, they can step out and say hi,' Knock said.

The new housing option complements the services offered by Chatham Oaks, which houses around 80 men-

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'There was a turnover in the Board of Supervisors. and we managed, little by little, to persuade the social workers this was a good idea.'

Gene Spaziani, 12-year member of the Johnson County chapter of the National Alliance for the Mentally III and UI biology professor emeritus

tally ill patients, said Vivian Davis, the facility's director.

"Melrose Ridge is a big step toward independence," she said. "Ultimately, the biggest benefit is to be living kind of a typical life."

Yet, as anyone involved with the project declares, achieving that goal wasn't easy.

Along with other committed mental-illness advocates, Rose Marie Friedrich envisioned the complex 15 years ago. That initial group drew out the plans with the help of Burns & Burns L.C. But some supervisors worried the land was too far out of town, and local social workers worried that the farwest location was merely an attempt to "warehouse" the mentally ill, said Gene Spaziani, a 12-year member of the Johnson County chapter of the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill.

But over the ensuing years, the advocates doggedly fought for their vision.

"I never gave up, not even for a minute," said Friedrich, a former psychiatric nurse and instructor in the UI College of Nursing. "It was frustrating, but if I really believe in something strongly, I'll continue to work on it.'

By 2002, the project renewed its momentum.

"There was a turnover in the Board of Supervisors, and we managed, little by little, to persuade the social workers this

was a good idea," said Spaziani, a UI biology professor emeritus.

As is the case with many alliance members, Friedrich has a family member, a daughter, who deals with a mental

illness. At the urging of advocates, the supervisors offered a 50year, \$1 annual lease on the land. Supervisor Terrence Neuzil committed himself to the project, in part because his aunt dealt with mental illness.

"[Affordable housing] is a need in this county like no other," he said. "In this case, we've found a way to help that issue."

Ultimately, the project united the community, he said.

"There have been many people within the community that wanted this for a very long time," Neuzil said. "It was a matter of putting the resources and the ideas together to really make this happen."

> E-mail D/reporter Margaret Poe at: margaret-poe@uiowa.edu



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landing. The September 11th security fee of up to \$10 is not included. Airport Passenger Facility Charges of up to \$18 are not included. @AirTran Airways 2007



North Korean workers and students perform North Korea's biggest propaganda spectacle, the Arirang, at the May Day stadium in Pyongyang, North Korea, on Wednesday. North Korea pledged Wednesday to disable its main nuclear-weapons facilities by the end of the year, while leader Kim Jong II huddled with his South Korean counterpart at the two Koreas' first summit in seven years to talk about a greater peace on the peninsula.

# N. Korea agrees to disable reactor

By Burt Herman
ASSOCIATED PRESS

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea pledged Wednesday to detail its nuclear programs and disable all activities at its main reactor complex by the end of the year, its firmest commitment to disarm after decades seeking to develop the world's deadliest weapons.

The agreement at talks in China came on the same day North Korean leader Kim Jong II held talks in the communist nation's capital of Pyongyang with South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun at the first summit between the two countries in gaven years.

in seven years.

In Washington, President Bush hailed the nuclear deal and said it reflected the "common commitment" of the talks to shut down North Korea's atomic-weapons program.

Under an agreement reached in February, Pyongyang was required to shut down and seal its sole operating reactor at its main nuclear complex, which it did in July after the United States reversed its hard-line policy against the regime. The second phase required it to disable the reactor and provide a full description of all its nuclear programs. Wednesday's agreement calls for that to happen by the end of the year.

The North said it would allow the United States to lead a group of experts to Pyongyang within two weeks "to prepare for disablement" of its nuclear facilities, Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Wu Dawei said in Beijing. The United States wants the dismantling process to be so thorough that a nuclear facility could not be made operational for at least 12 months.

The United States was secretive about what it promised in

return.

The United States has agreed to lead disablement activities and provide the initial funding for them. Washington also iterated

its willingness to remove North Korea from a list of countries that sponsor terrorism, a key demand of Pyongyang.

No timetable was set for this action, but a joint statement said it will happen "in parallel with" the North Korean government following through on its commitment.

"The two sides will increase bilateral exchanges and enhance mutual trust," the statement says.

Besides the United States and China, three other countries — Russia, South Korea, and Japan — participated in the talks with the North.

The five countries reiterated a commitment to deliver aid under the February disarmament deal granting the North the equivalent of 1 million tons of fuel oil. On Sept. 28, in anticipation of the new agreement, the United States also announced it would spend up to \$25 million to pay for 50,000 tons of heavy fuel oil for North Korea.

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## **Bush vetoes health bill**



Carolyn Kaster/Associated Press

President Bush speaks to the Lancaster Chamber of Commerce and Industry at the J Group in Lancaster, Pa., on Wednesday.

By David Espo

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — It was a quiet veto, but one certain to produce a big echo.

President Bush rejected a politically attractive expansion of children's health insurance, triggering a fierce struggle with the Democratic-controlled Congress certain to reverberate into the 2008 elections.

"Congress will fight hard to override President Bush's heartless veto," vowed Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid of

Republican leaders expressed confidence they have enough votes to make the veto stick in the House, and not a single senior Democrat disputed them. A two-thirds majority in both houses of Congress is required to override a veto.

Bush vetoed the bill in private, without the television cameras and other media coverage that normally attend even routine presidential actions. The measure called for adding an estimated 4 million mostly lower-income children to a program that currently covers 6.6 million. Funds for the expansion would come from higher tobacco taxes, including a 61-cent increase on a pack of cigarettes.

"Poor kids first," Bush said later in explaining his decision, reflecting a concern that some of the bill's benefits would go to families at higher incomes. "Secondly, I believe in private medicine, not the federal government running the health care system," he added in remarks to an audience in Lancaster, Pa.

The president said he is willing to compromise with Congress "if they need a little more money in the bill to help us meet the objective of getting help for poor children."

It was the fourth veto of Bush's presidency, at a time his popularity is low, the legislation popular enough to draw support from dozens of GOP lawmakers, and an override certain to seal his lame-duck status.

Democratic leaders scheduled the showdown for Oct. 18 to allow two weeks for pressure to build on Republicans. A unionled organization said it would spend more than \$3 million trying to influence the outcome. "It's going to be a hard vote for Republicans," promised Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif.

Criticism of the veto was instantaneous, from every quarter of the Democratic political

Sen. Joseph Biden of Delaware, a presidential hopeful, called it unconscionable, party chairman Howard Dean labeled it appalling, and Pelosi said, "It's very sad that the president has chosen to veto a bill that would provide health care for 10 million American

children for the next five years."

Republicans said none of the criticism would matter. "I'm confident that the more time we have to explain the veto, the more people will be with their position," said Rep. Roy Blunt of Missouri, second-ranking GOP leader in the House.

Longer term, Republicans said their goal was to sustain the veto and force Democrats into negotiations on a compromise GOP lawmakers could embrace.

"Democrats now face an important choice: either work with Republicans to renew this program or continue to play politics on the backs of our nation's children," said Rep. John Boehner of Ohio, the House Republican leader.

He and other Republicans said Democratic plans to delay an override vote revealed an eagerness to score political points.

Democrats were in no mood to compromise. Several officials, speaking on the condition of anonymity because they were discussing strategy, said Pelosi and Reid seemed set on sending obtained by the Associated Bush successor bills that are

nearly identical with the one he just vetoed. The goal would be to force him — and his congressional allies — to repeatedly expose themselves to criticism that they were denying health care for kids.

Both sides took comfort from polling data as they settled in for their struggle.

Democracy Corps said its poll showed the public sides with Democrats by a margin of 60-35. The veto battle "gives Democrats a large advantage with independents, as well as mobilizing democratic supporters. Indeed, the president has not won over Republican voters on this issue," said an accompanying memo.

House Republicans quietly distributed a survey by David Winston, who is close to Boehner, that came to a different conclusion. It said critics of the legislation can win the public debate if they say they favor "covering uninsured children without expanding government coverage to adults, illegal immigrants, and those who already have insurance A cop

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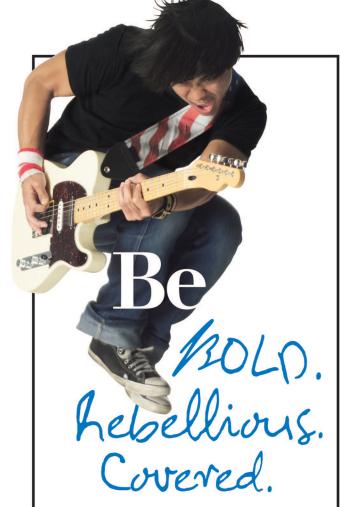
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## Burma steps up pressure

RANGOON, Burma — After crushing the democracy uprising with guns, Burma's junta stepped up its campaign to intimidate citizens Wednesday, sending troops to drag people from their homes in the middle of the night and letting others know they were marked for ret-

"We have photographs. We are going to make arrests," soldiers yelled from loudspeakers on military vehicles that patrolled the streets in Rangoon, Burma's biggest city

People living near the Shwedagon Pagoda, Burma's most revered shrine and a flash point of unrest during the protests, reported that security forces swept through several dozen homes about 3 a.m., taking away many men and even some women for questioning.

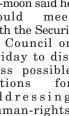
A U.N. Development Program employee, Myint Nwe Moe, and her husband, brother-in-law and driver were among those detained, the U.N. agency said.

Dozens of Buddhist monks jammed Rangoon's main train station after being ordered to vacate their monasteries - centers of the anti-government demonstrations — and told to go back to their hometowns and villages.

It was not clear who ordered them out. Older abbots in charge of monasteries are seen as tied to the ruling military junta, while younger monks are more sympathetic to the democracy movement.

"People are terrified," said Shari Villarosa, the acting U.S. ambassador in Burma. "People have been unhappy for a long time. Since the events of last week, there's now the unhappiness combined with anger and

In New York, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said he would meet with the Security Council on Friday to discuss possible actions for addressing human-rights abuses



Villarosa U.S. ambassador in Burma

Burma, calling the situation here a top international con-

Ban said his special envoy, Ibrahim Gambari, delivered "the strongest possible message" to Burma's military leaders during a four-day visit to this Southeast Asian nation but added that he could not call the trip "a success." The junta has not commented on Gambari's

Gambari called on the regime to stop repression of peaceful protests, release detainees, and move more credibly toward democratic reform, the U.N. spokesman's office said.

Anti-junta demonstrations broke out in mid-August over a fuel price hike, then ballooned when monks took the lead last month. But the military crushed the protests a week ago with bullets, tear gas, and clubs. The government said 10 people were killed, but dissident groups put the death toll at up to 200 and say 6,000 people were detained.

New video broadcast on CNN showed police and soldiers rounding up demonstrators and beating them before loading them on trucks. In one view, around six young men squat on the street, hands on their heads, cringing. One in a red shirt the color adopted by the protest movement — is singled out for particular abuse.

## **Carter confronts Sudanese**

By Alfred de Montesquiou ASSOCIATED PRESS

KABKABIYA, Sudan — Former President Jimmy Carter confronted Sudanese security services on a visit to Darfur Wednesday, shouting, "You don't have the power to stop me," at some who blocked him from meeting refugees of the

The 83-year-old Carter wanted to visit a refugee camp in South Darfur, but the U.N. mission in Sudan deemed that too dangerous. Instead, he agreed to fly to the World Food Program compound in the North Darfur town of Kabkabiya, where he was supposed to meet with refugees, many of whom were chased from their homes by militias and government forces.

But none of the refugees showed up, and Carter decided to walk into the town, a volatile stronghold of the progovernment Janjaweed militia, to meet refugees too frightened to attend the meeting at the compound.

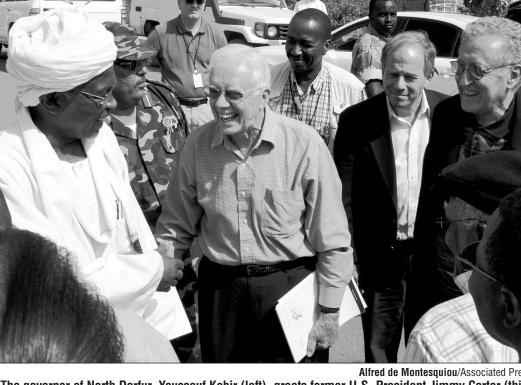
He was able to make it to a school where he met with one tribal representative and was preparing to go farther into town when Sudanese security officers stopped him.

"You can't go. It's not on the program," the local security chief, who only gave his first name as Omar, velled at Carter, who is in Darfur as part of a delegation of respected international figures known as "The Elders."

"We're going to anyway," an angry Carter retorted as a crowd began to gather. "You don't have the power to stop me."

However, U.N. officials told Carter's entourage the Sudanese state police could bar his way. Carter's traveling companions, billionaire businessman Richard Branson and Graca Machel, the wife of South African former

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Alfred de Montesquiou/Associated Press

The governor of North Darfur, Youssouf Kebir (left), greets former U.S. President Jimmy Carter (third from left) and U.N. diplomat Lakhdar Brahimi, right, at his residence in El Fasher, North Darfur, Sudan, on Tuesday. A group of elder statesmen, including former Carter and Nobel peace laureate Desmond Tutu, urged all sides in Darfur's bloodshed to reach a peace deal as they began touring the region Tuesday.

President Nelson Mandela, tried to ease his frustration, and his Secret Service detail urged him to get into a car and leave.

"I'll tell President Bashir about this," Carter said, referring to Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir.

Omar, the security chief, said Carter had already breached security once by walking to the school and would not be allowed to breach security again.

"We are in the security field. We're not that flexible," he said after the confrontation ended.

In an interview with the Associated Press, Carter later played down the encounter.

saying the security chief was

only doing his job.

"But it's true that I'm not accustomed to people telling me I can't walk down the street and meet people," he told the AP after returning to a United Nations compound in El Fasher, the capital of North Darfur

Branson said some refugees had slipped notes in his pock-

"We (are) still suffering from the war as our girls are being raped on a daily basis," read one of the notes, translated from Arabic, that Branson handed to the AP.

The note said that on Sept. 26, a group of girls had been raped and a refugee had been shot two days ago. Branson

Gempu-Dry II 🚱

said it had been handed over by an ethnic African man.

For the most part, the refugees in Kabkabiya appeared too frightened to speak to the visiting delegation. Most of the community leaders the mission met during its two-day visit to Darfur appeared to be governmentvetted, and several ethnic African delegates told AP they had been intimidated by authorities into turning down invitations from "the Elders."

'This illustrates the challenges that communities and humanitarian workers face in Darfur," said Orla Clinton, spokeswoman for the U.N. Mission in Sudan, who witnessed the incident.



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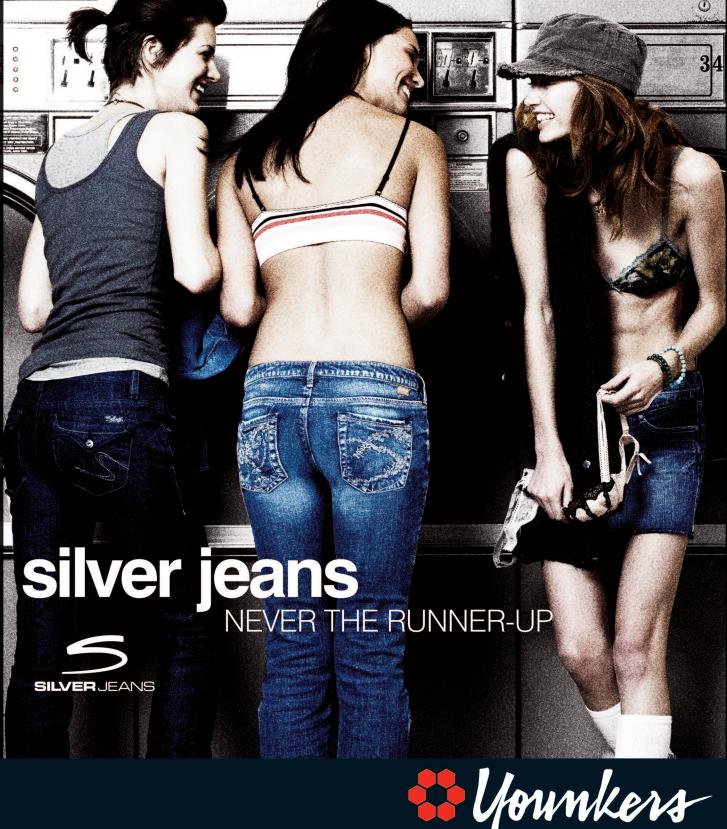
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**10A** - The Daily Iowan - Iowa City, Iowa - Thursday, October 4, 2007

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**Editorial** 

### GI bill needs reinforcements

The Montgomery GI Bill for soldiers in active duty was intended to provide a means for returning soldiers to gain access to higher education or job training. Initially a resource for returning World War II veterans, the GI Bill has devolved into a complicated system that provides limited financial aid to soldiers meeting the program's qualifications. For many years, the system was an extremely helpful tool for American veterans. However, in recent years, the high costs of education have vastly outstripped the financial assistance provided by the bill — greatly reducing its potential to help veterans seeking higher education.

pinions

The assistance provided by the active-duty GI Bill is not without cost. Over the course of a year, soldiers must take a monthly pay cut of \$100 in order to qualify for the benefits provided by the bill. Furthermore, potential recipients must have been on uninterrupted active duty for a period equal to that of her or his initial enlistment. This means soldiers must spend a substantial amount of time in active duty in order to receive the maximum benefits. Thus, the GI Bill essentially provides assistance to those brave enough to risk their lives in active duty. It would seem that such a great risk would merit an equally substantial amount of aid, but this is, unfortunately,

The GI Bill provides a multitude of payment plans depending on the amount of time that the recipient spends in the pursuit of education or job training. For veterans enrolled as full-time students, the bill provides a monthly check of \$1,101 for a period of three years. Conversely, recipients enrolled in a minimal amount of course work can stretch the period out for as long as 10 years, though they will receive only \$275.25 per month. For returning soldiers seeking job training, this might suffice. Many on-site

training programs, such as trade schools, pay trainees for their time. However, for veterans hoping to receive a four-year degree, the assistance provided by the GI Bill is far from sufficient.

According to U.S. Census Bureau statistics for 2003-04 enrollment — the latest available data of attendance costs — the average cost of attending a public four-year institution is \$15,039 per year. Full-time attendance at a private four-year institution requires an average of \$26,790 per year. Clearly, \$13,212 — the maximal yearly aid provided by the GI Bill — cannot support a student attending a four-year institution. In fact, because the maximum amount of aid encompasses only three years, veterans attending

four-year programs will not receive any aid in their fourth year.

There are, of course, sacrifices that could help veterans to make the most of their GI benefits. Returning soldiers could simply attend less expensive two-year colleges or make up the monetary difference through work. However, this should not be necessary. The GI Bill was intended to reward those who risked everything by giving them a head start in their pursuit of a better life. American veterans have done everything in their power to help their country. As such, when they finally come home, it seems right that their country return the favor.

The lacking provisions of the GI Bill complement the already insufficient treatment of American veterans. Scandals such as that concerning the neglected patients at Walter Reed Army Medical Center cast a skeptical shadow over the notion of veteran "benefits." Clearly, a portion of American soldiers continue to slip through the cracks of the system intended to support them — an unacceptable reality in consideration of what veterans have done to merit such benefits.

#### Letter

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR may be sent via e-mail to daily-jowan@ujowa.edu (as text. not as attachment). Each letter must be signed and include an address and phone number for verification. Letters should not exceed 300 words. The DI reserves the right to edit for length and clarity. The DI will publish only one letter per author per month. Letters will be chosen for publication by the editors according to

GUEST OPINIONS that exceed 300 words in length must be arranged with the Opinions editor at least three days prior to the desired date of publication. Guest opinions are selected in accordance with word length, subject relevance, and space considerations.

#### Don't blame Big Ten Network for football woes

I'm still not sure who Edwin van Beek is asking his questions of, or what his point really is, but there are a few things from his recent letter to the editor (Oct. 3, "Big Ten network could have been big mistake") that I can clear up.

How can the "400,000" people in eastern Iowa support their Hawkeyes when the game is on the Big Ten Network? Simple. Keep calling Mediacom and Comcast and impress upon them your passion for college athletics. They foolishly believe that more people would rather have numerous shopping-at-home channels than a network that contains the local favorite team and the ability to watch the rest of its brothers. Not only does this channel air the most recent Big Ten football contests all week long, but it also takes you down memory lane with previous great

games from the gridiron. And it has been a boon to women's athletics, providing a place for women's soccer, volleyball, and other nonrevenue sports to finally get more exposure. And this network is somehow a mistake? Just wait until basketball season.

Edwin, if you truly believe that Iowa fans are turning their backs on the Hawkeyes because of a sports channel that is readily available to most people, then you haven't been an Iowa fan very long. Through 19-straight non-winning football seasons, lowa fans showed up at Kinnick, averaging more than 50,000 per game, to support teams they knew were not very good. Disappointment in losing to Iowa's favorite Homecoming foe should not be misconstrued as lack of support. That is just what happens when your team gives a game away, a game they needed badly.

UI staff



#### Commentary -

## Cruel but not unusual

In agreeing to decide whether some executions by lethal injection are so painful as to violate the Constitution, the Supreme Court has given at least some death-row inmates a reprieve. After deciding last week to hear a lethalinjection case from Kentucky, the court stayed a scheduled execution in Texas. Executions in California already were on hold pending a federal judge's approval of new lethal-injection procedures.

Opponents of the death penalty — including this page — must welcome any legal development that leads to fewer executions, even in the short term. But it would be a mistake to regard the Supreme Court's decision to review Kentucky's lethal-injection procedures as the beginning of the end of the death penalty.

In the debate over capital punishment, lethal injection is a sideshow. To be sure, some death-penalty opponents have sought to make it the main event. Last year, after a federal judge in San Jose postponed the execution of Michael Morales because of defects in the lethal-injection procedure, one lawyer observed that states were "hitting the wall in the futile search for a humane death penalty."

We wish that were so. But if the definition of a "humane" execution is one in which there is no "unnecessary risk of pain and suffering" - the standard being urged on the high court by lawyers for two Kentucky inmates — it is clearly within the ken of science to provide such a procedure. If surgical patients can be reliably anesthetized, so can prisoners. Given that fact, it is shocking that with present protocols, an inmate may not be unconscious when he is injected with drugs that cause paralysis and then death.

By all means, the high court should require states to ensure that inmates facing the death penalty don't suffer unnecessary pain. But that is a gesture of basic humanity, not the ultimate solution. It isn't the "how" of capital punishment that has led other civilized societies to abolish the death penalty. It's the 'what" — the taking of a human life by the state when there are other ways to both punish the perpetrator and protect society.

Paradoxically, then, if the Supreme Court authorizes more humane methods of execution, it may abet an increase in state-sanctioned killing — and thus deepen this nation's inhumanity and moral isolation.

This editorial appeared in Wednesday's Los Angeles Times.

#### On the Spot

Should the financial aid provided to veterans by the GI bill be increased?



66 Definitely, it should be increased considering what they have done. "

**Heather Quigley** UI senior



**66** Obviously, it should be increased. It's not fair for them to come home and not get enough money.

Tim Reed UI freshman



ff It should be increased for students going to school, and other benefits should be increased, too.

Kyle Sieck UI senior



😘 If you want to be a full-time student, it's not enough money, so they should be increased."

**Bryan Welch** 

### Nate's news-pourri

 I'm thinking those not native to the Iowa City/Coralville area might understand my point of view on this a bit better than "corridor" lifers, but is anyone else baffled at how ridiculous our local television market is? When I moved here, I was blown away by the fact that Dubuque is in our market, as well as Cedar Falls/Waterloo and Cedar Rapids. I can turn on the local news and see maybe one story relevant to my municipality, but hear weather warnings for

Lafavette County. What's that? You've never heard of Lafavette County, Iowa? That's understandable, seeing as Lafayette County is in freaking Wisconsin. How

can a station effectively cover such a large geographic area? Answer: It can't.

 I, like most hairy, testosteroneriddled Adam's apple-having 20somethings, am hooked on sports. Because of the sad state of affairs that is modern FM radio (excluding you, of course, KRUI) I usually listen to AM sports radio when I don't have a CD in. I've noticed that, as I drive within a mile of the Dodge Street exit on Interstate 80, KXIC's signal almost always bleeds over, no matter what station I'm trying to listen to. If it's amplitude modulation, it's completely hijacked by AM 800. This creates a strong urge to intentionally steer my car into oncoming traffic when my sports talk radio suddenly mutates into the crystal clear blather of Sean Hannity. Isn't there some kind of FCC rule that should prohibit a signal from being so intense as to be heard through your fillings while driving by the broadcast tower?

- This just in: O.J.'s been arrested

 CNN.com featured a story Tuesday with the headline "Halle Berry: Pregnancy took a lot of work." Clicking on the story link (I know, I shouldn't have) pulled up a bulleted list of "story highlights," the first of which was "Halle Berry and boyfriend Gabriel Aubry worked on getting her pregnant." The story makes it sound like knocking Berry up involved a New England think tank, a team of NASA researchers, and the original construction crew of the Panama

Yeah, I'll bet that process was quite the tedious drag for Mr. Aubry. I'll bet he had to put in a lot of long (watch yourself, now) days to achieve his objective. I feel so bad for you, Gabriel Aubry. Some advice for the tired couple; when you begin "work" on your second child — which the story explains you'll do in the near future — let me know. Hell, let just about any guy know, and I promise he'll be willing to help with that burdensome task. Whatever.

 Lots of people were frustrated with the high price of the iPhone when it débuted, but Dongmei Li of Queens, N.Y., is suing Apple because it cut the cost of the phone. She had the misfortune of purchasing her eight gigabyte paperweight for \$499 just before its price was slashed by \$200. Li somehow figures that her impatience and bad luck oh, and that \$200 — could easily be made up for with a nice sevenfigure check from Apple. So we're really suing companies now for lowering prices? I'm guessing Dongmei Li is just a bent Mets fan.

 This just in: O.J.s been acquitted again.

Various Democrats proposed a "war surtax" on Tuesday, aiming to assist in paying for the war and provoking me to wonder again why I recently registered as a Democrat. Much as Republicans think everything from AIDS in Africa to pigeon poop on federal buildings can be fixed by cutting taxes (I know that was ridiculous; Republicans would never consider ways to end AIDS in Africa), the old stigma of Democrats hiking taxes is just as true, evidently.

- It's a futile pursuit, and I know I'll pay for it emotionally further down the road, but I'll be cheering on Lou Piniella and the North Siders this week, so I'd be remiss if I didn't say GO CUBBIES! Whoo.

DI columnist and editorial writer Nate Whitney's kaleidoscopic view of pop culture should not be administered to children under the age of 35 E-mail him at mightyisthepen@gmail.com



## Envoy survives ambush

By Kim Curtis
ASSOCIATED PRESS

BAGHDAD — A daring ambush of bombs and gunfire left Poland's ambassador pinned down in a burning vehicle Wednesday before being pulled to safety and airlifted in a rescue mission by the embattled security firm Blackwater USA. At least three people were killed, including a Polish bodyguard.

The attack — apparently well planned in one of Baghdad's most secure neighborhoods — raised questions about whether it sought to punish Poland for its contributions to the U.S.-led military force in Iraq. But Poland's prime minister, Jaroslaw Kaczynski, said his nation would not retreat "in the face of terrorists."

The diplomatic convoy was hit by three bombs, and then attackers opened fire in the Shiite-controlled Karradah district. Polish guards returned fire as the injured ambassador, Gen. Edward Pietrzyk, was pulled from his burning vehicle. At least 10 people, including four Polish security agents, were wounded.

U.S. Embassy officials dispatched Blackwater helicopters to evacuate the ambassador and others. Blackwater was not involved in protecting the Polish convoy.

Pietrzyk, who was commander of ground forces in Poland before taking the ambassador post in April, suffered minor burns over 20 percent of his body, including his head and right arm and leg, said Polish Charge d'Affaires Waldemar Figaj.

"They were waiting for us,"

Figaj told the Associated Press as he gave details of the attack. Shortly after the assault, Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri

al-Maliki renewed



Khalid Mohammed/Associated Press

U.S. soldiers inspect damaged vehicles, including the one (top) in which Polish Ambassador to Iraq Edward Pietrzyk was traveling when he was injured in a car-bomb attack in central Baghdad on Wednesday. The ambassador was slightly wounded, and one civilian was killed in the attack.

government's offensive against Blackwater.

"There have been 190 victims of Blackwater ... The kind of accusations leveled against the company means it is not fit to work in Iraq," he told a news conference.

It was not known if al-Maliki knew Blackwater rescued the Polish envoy. It also was not clear if the 190 victims represented a new figure arising from an Iraqi investigation or a reference to the 195 incidents involving the U.S. security company outlined in a House report earlier this week.

Congress is looking into Blackwater's role in a Sept. 16 shootout that left 11 Iraqis dead in a west Baghdad intersection and other incidents by the Moyock, N.C.-based company, which protects U.S.

diplomats and others in Iraq.

Diplomatic missions or fo

Diplomatic missions or foreign envoys in Iraq have been attacked at least seven times since the war began, including the July 2005 kidnapping and murder of Egypt's ambassador.

Poland, a staunch U.S. ally, contributed combat troops to the 2003 U.S.-led invasion and has since led a multinational division south of Baghdad. About 900 Polish troops remain in the country training Iraqi personnel; 21 Poles have died during the conflict.

Last year, the Polish government extended its mission in Iraq until the end of 2007, but has made no decision on next year.

Pietrzyk was treated at the U.S. military hospital in the fortified Green Zone and later flown to Warsaw.

"He is going to be fine," Figaj

said. "He is stable, but he needs rest."

Two Iraqi passers-by also were killed in the 10 a.m. blasts, according to an Iraqi police official who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to release the information.

A Polish security guard, Bartosz Orzechowski, 29, died at the hospital, said Poland's Interior Minister Wladyslaw Stasiak. The slain guard had been employed by the service since 2004.

Robert Szaniawski, a spokesman for the Polish Foreign Ministry, said officials "don't have the reasons for the attack," which destroyed three armored vehicles just a few hundred yards from the Polish Embassy.

AP correspondents Katarina Kratovac and Rvan Lucas contributed to this report.

## Panel: Raise vets' benefits

By Hope Yen
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Veterans disability payments should be increased immediately by up to 25 percent as part of a sweeping overhaul designed to compensate for a wounded warrior's lost "quality of life," a special commission recommended Wednesday.

The 2 1/2 -year study released by the Veterans' Disability Benefits Commission offers the most comprehensive look yet at the ailing government benefits system that provides millions of injured veterans with a total of about \$30 billion a year in payments.

Tracking the findings of recent reports that detailed flaws in veterans care, the 13-member congressional commission concluded in its 544-page report that both the Defense and Veterans Affairs departments fall woefully short in providing adequate mental health care as well as timely and fair disability payments.

But going a step further, the commission also recommended immediate extra payments to injured veterans, many of whom feel they lose out on benefits because of an overly narrow government focus on earnings losses or other reasons.

es or other reasons.

That could offer veterans some stopgap relief as the Bush administration and Congress consider proposals from an array of task forces and commissions aimed at fixing an outdated system that critics have long said was broken. Such changes could take into account new medical therapies, prosthetics and other effects of war injuries on the daily functioning of wounded

warriors.

"Congress should increase the compensation rates up to 25 percent as an interim and baseline future benefit for loss of quality of life, pending development and implementation of quality of life measures," the report states. "In particular, the measure should take into account the quality of life and other non-work-related effects of severe disabilities on veterans and family members."

In an interview with the Associated Press, retired Lt.-Gen. James Terry Scott, the commission's chairman, said the disability system must be revamped, saying the Army might be trying to lowball veterans' disability ratings to avoid paying more benefits.

A key commission recommendation seeks to bring more fairness to the government system by shifting more responsibility for assigning benefits from the Pentagon to the VA, which tends to rate disabilities higher, even if it ran the risk of putting more strains on an already backlogged VA.

Scott cited a Pentagon policy established in the mid-1980s at a time of budget restraint that calls for consideration of only one disability when determining benefits, not numerous ones as the VA does.

That policy remains in place today, creating a climate in which Army officials might consider — at least subconsciously — cost-saving factors when awarding benefits, he said.

"We have come up with 113 recommendations — some of them are cheap. Some are easy. Some are extremely hard and complex. Some of them, there is a significant bill attached to it," Scott said. "But what we're hoping is that the Congress carefully looks at all 113."





**Open Houses** 

Thursday, **October 4 •** 4:00 - 6:00 p.m. Saturday, **October 6 •** 9:00 - 11:00 a.m.

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horoscopes Thursday, October 4, 2007
— by Eugenia Last

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Love, intrigue, travel, and doing things up in a big way are all part-and-parcel today. Past partners will look you up — and much can be clarified and put

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Don't let your emotions get the better of you. You will overreact to trivial matters when you should be enjoying your friends, family, and peers.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Look for an outlet that can help you to utilize your creative mind. You need to be able to express your views, ideas, and intentions, leading to a more goal-

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Get into the swing of things. Loosen up; have some fun. You can mesmerize whomever you encounter with your ideas, originality, and ability to listen and

find solutions. By making a few alterations or traveling to new places, you will make new

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Your heart is in the right place, but sometimes it's best to make it crystal-clear where you stand. Get involved in activities that allow you to show off. Money

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): It's what you do outside the home or for those less fortunate

that will count. The speed and precision at which you work will pay off and bring you recognition. Ask for a raise, apply for a better position, or sign up for a course.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Don't let someone else's bad mood get to you. A chance to put

your inventive mind to work for you will pay off. A job prospect should be investigated even

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Take a look at real estate or the potential to work in a different geographical location. A creative idea you've been working on should be up and running,

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Someone older or with more experience will have

something to contribute. If you don't listen, you will make a mistake. Take care of any pend-

ing legal matters or chronic health problems. Check out the possibility of a new partnership.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You may feel a little stretched, but the end result will be accomplishing that much more. You can handle whatever comes your way, so work your

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Someone will offer you something you cannot turn down.

The chance to learn something new that will help you change your direction is evident. Educational pursuits will pay off. Travel about, and talk to people in the know.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): You can entertain, make deals, change your living quarters, or

come into extra cash today if you play your cards right. There will be plenty going on in your

if it doesn't sit well with someone you are close to. Follow your heart.

bringing in some revenue. If it isn't, don't wait any longer to proceed.

magic. A new idea can bring cash rewards.

world, so sit back and enjoy, but don't go overboard.

- collecting old debts, winnings, or a settlement can all make you

to rest if you address the past, present and future.

oriented direction. Contact someone from your past.

Focus on the brighter side of life.

will come your way

— Paleontologist Terry Gates, describing a recently discovered duck-billed dinosaur. Gryposaurus monumentensis at least 30 feet long and 10 feet tall.

### the ledge

author and not the DI Editorial Board, the Publisher, Student Publications Inc., or the University of Iowa.



#### Overheard in **Iowa City**

• "If I had a nickel for every guy who's offered me money for sex, I wouldn't have to take their money anymore." One girl at a table of friends outside Pita Pit.

• Guy: Babe, is "data" the

singular form or is it

"dati" or "datum"?

Girl: About 20 minutes

past 3, Sweetie.

- A loving couple doing their homework at the downtown Starbucks. • "Don't think of it as losing your daughter, think of it as gaining a son -

dirty, hot, incestuous sex with his sister." One woman in her mid-40s to another at the downtown Starbucks.

a son that's going have

• "Well, he didn't just use me for sex, because he posted on my wall the next morning." Girl in Burge stairwell.

· "Everything I've touched since I got out of bed this morning has either immediately stopped working or broken in half. I'm afraid of going to the

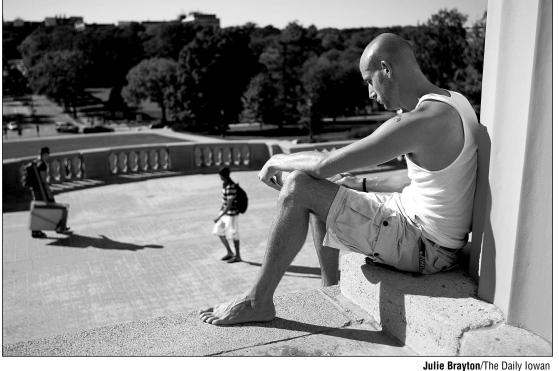
bathroom." — Male grad student at the EMRB Café.

— Andrew R. Juhl encourages all to keep their ears open and send him funny "eavesdroppings. E-mail him at andrew-juhl@uiowa.edu.

Think you're pretty funny? Prove it. The Daily lowan is looking for Ledge writers. You can submit a Ledge at daily-iowan@uiowa.edu. If we think it's good, we'll run it -

No. 0823

#### STUDY HALL



Mikel Morris, 27, studies for an Intro to Management midterm on the steps of the Old Capitol on Wednesday afternoon. At 3:30. Morris had been studying for at least an hour in that spot, and he planned to stay there until he took his test at 8 p.m. Morris said, "It is a very inspirational spot to study."

### today's events Want to see your super special event appear here? Simply e-mail the name, time, date, and location information to: DAILY-IOWAN@UIOWA.EDU

• "Plying the Inland Waterways," Central Technical Services, 10:30 a.m., 2032 Main Library • "Lunch With the Chefs, Voilà! Regional

French Cuisine," IMU Food Service, 11:15 a.m.-12:45 p.m., IMU Main Lounge • "Amish Educational Practices and

Implication for a Postmodern World," Mark Dewalt, noon, N201, Lindquist Center • Pharmacology Graduate Student

Workshop, "Make or Break Decisions: Neuronal Survival & Mitofusin-2 Phosphorylation," Shanna Nifoussi, 12:30 p.m., Bowen Science Building Spivey Auditorium

• Linguistics Deptartment Fall 2007 Colloquium Series, "A Phonological Account of Javanese Stops," Craig Dresser, 4 p.m., 214 English-Philosophy Building

• Iowa Human Trafficking Awareness **Project meeting,** 6 p.m., Java Juice, 122 E. Washington

• Best Buddies Organizational Meeting, 7 p.m., 348 IMU

• King of Kong: Fistful of Quarters, 7 p.m., Bijou

Thomas, 7 p.m., Prairie Lights Books, 15 S. • "Opera and the Novel: Antithetical or

• "Live from Prairie Lights," Abigail

Complementary?" Ida Beam visiting Professor Herbert Lindenberger, 7:30 p.m., E109 Adler Journalism Building.

• Horizon, Rinde Eckert, 7:30 p.m., Hancher Auditorium

• "The Persistence of the Medieval in Early American Book Culture," Matthew Brown, 7:30 p.m., UI Museum of Art Carver

• Jorie Graham, poetry reading, 8 p.m., Van Allen Hall Lecture Room 2

· Campus Activities Board movie,

**Knocked**  $\bar{U}p$ , 9 p.m., 348 IMU • Killer of Sheep, 9 p.m., Bijou

 Gen Ed and Dan Tadesco, 9 p.m., Mill, 120 E. Burlington

• U-Melt and Mint Wad Willie, 9 p.m.,

Yacht Club, 13 S. Linn • Sangria Night, Dustin Louis Blank, 9:30

p.m., David's Place, 100 S. Linn

#### **CAN'T GET ENOUGH SUDOKU?**

CHECK OUT DAILYIOWAN.COM FOR MORE PUZZLES



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### **UITV** schedule

12:30 p.m. News from China-Beijing (in

 ${\bf 1}$  A Prairie Lights Reading from the UITV Archives, Andrea Portes

2 News from Germany (in German)

3 "Java Blend," Music from Mike & Amy Finders

 ${\bf 4} \ {\bf Energy} \ {\bf Expo}, {\bf Kirk} \ {\bf Amrhein}, {\bf Dell} \ {\bf Compute}$ 5 Energy Expo, Doug Litwiller, Interstate Power & Light

6 Energy Expo, Billy Parish, founder Climate Campaign

Campus channel 4, cable channel 17 7 "Java Blend." Music from Mike & Amy

8 UI Lecture Committee presents, Robert

F. Kennedy Jr. 9:30 News from Daily Iowan TV

10 Incompetent Sports Talk from Student Video Productions 10:30 News from Daily Iowan TV

10:45 Student Video Productions

11 "Java Blend," Music from Mike & Amy

For complete TV listings and program guides, check out Arts and Entertainment at dailyiowan.com.

#### DILBERT ®

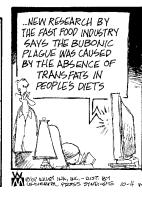






#### NON SEQUITUR DO YOU KNOW WHERE DANAE 15, KATE? UH...COME AGAIN? IT'S A SCIENCE ... SHE'S PROJECT TO MANUFACTURE PLAYING THEORIES FOR THINK PROFIT TANK WELL, THAT







#### BY GARRY TRUDEAU



**Doonesbury** 







#### The New Hork Times

Note: The clues in this puzzle appear in a single list, combining Across and Down.
Where two answers share a number, the unclued Down answer is a homophone of the corresponding Across answer.

trie	e corresponding A
	Clues
1	Obstruction at the entrance to a cave, maybe
2	Rarely used golf

club 3 Picture on a \$50 4 Drip, say

year 6 Want ad abbr 7 Some needle holders, for short

8 Like jail cells 9 Makes like

10 Connecticut or begins "O Wild Colorado: Abbr West Wind, thou 11 Touch up, as a

**ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE** 

# TOSSIN ARTY 48"

#### Crossword 22 Carcinogenio substance

on, maybe

Russia

"Henry V"

31 Rich Spanish

32 Big blasts,

informally

33 Duck down

34 Tailors

listees

37 Seat at a

38 Place for a

guard

39 Recondite

41 Tolerates

42 Logged

43 Singer who

44 Letter before

Peter in old radio lingo

45 Bygone council

46 Donations at

47 Essential

hootenanny

decorations

23 Victorian 24 Headquartered 25 Lowers the cuffs 12 Country named for its location 26 Legis. period on the globe 27 Point to 13 Bring down 28 Wood of the

14 Having hit a

15 Neuter 16 For one 17 Party of the first part and party of 5 Seventh-century

the second part, e.g. 18 Gets going 19 Weapon in old hand-to-hand fighting

20 Does some yard work 21 One famously

painting Autumn's being'

### P R I E S T V I A S O S A L A N D S N E E D A L I F T O T T O V A A R A R A T T E S T W I N G O P E R A I T S F O R Y O U S A U D I S W E E P I C A E L N I N O E N D N O M L I K E A R O C K E L T O N N D S R O O L E O

#### Edited by Will Shortz



35 Social register Puzzle by Joe Krozel 36 Residents: Suffix 49 Accent

> 50 NASA subj. 51 French town 52 Contents of

some shells pioneer founded Reprise Records

54 Wiped out

55 Verb of which letters "sum" is a form 56 Campsite visitor 62 Calculator button

57 Job specifications B. Wells early civil rights advocate 59 Individually

60 Race unit 66 Pretended to be

63 Wears down

64 Work force

For answers, call 1-900-285-5656, \$1.20 a minute; or, with a credit card, 1-800-814-5554. crosswords from the last 50 years: 1-888-7-ACROSS Online subscriptions: Today's puzzle and more than 2,000 past puzzles, nytimes.com/crosswords (\$39.95 a year). Share tips: nytimes.com/puzzleforum. Crosswords for young solvers: nytimes.com/learning/xwords



Arizona 3, Chicago Cubs 1

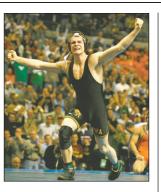
**PHONE:** (319) 335-5848 **FAX:** (319) 335-6184

Thursday, October 4, 2007

Women's Tennis: Women face challenge, 3B

dailyiowan.com DI





#### **HAWKEYE SPORTS**

#### Wrestling schedule released

The 2007-08 schedule for second-year coach Tom Brands and the third-ranked Hawkeye wrestling team was released on Wednesday.

Among the 18 dual meets total, the slate has the Hawkeyes at home for key dates with Northern Iowa on Dec. 13, Oklahoma State on Jan. 5, Penn State on Jan. 20, and Michigan on Feb. 17.

After trouncing the Cyclones at Carver-Hawkeye Arena last season, Iowa will take on Iowa State in Ames on Dec. 9. Perennial Big Ten power Minnesota (Feb. 1) is among the important road dates for the

Led by senior Mark Perry, who won the 165-pound NCAA championship in the spring and is ranked first in the country in his weight class, Iowa has four other wrestlers ranked in the top 10 individually by W.I.N. Magazine. As a team, Iowa is behind

only Minnesota and Iowa State

— by Charlie Kautz

#### Women's hoops gets more TV dates

The Big Ten Network announced Wednesday that it will televise eight women's basketbal Igames from the upcoming season,

with seven them against conference f o e s Included are h o m e g a m e s against Ohio State.

"The expanded Big Ten television package is great exposure for us and the league." lowa head coach Lisa Bluder said in a release. "Hawkeye fans and recruits will be able to enjoy

Bluder

head coach

age of the Hawkeyes.' The Big Ten Network will televise 55 regular-season women's games along with the Big Ten Tournament's opening, quarterfinal and semifinal rounds.

unprecedented television cover-

lowa will be televised locally

an additional four times. - by Mike Brownlee

#### **TICKET SALES**

#### **MLB** sets attendance record

NEW YORK (AP) - Major League Baseball drew a record average of 32,785 fans to games this season, breaking the previous mark of 31,423 that was set in 1994 — before a  $7\frac{1}{2}$ month players' strike caused a steep drop.

The major leagues set a total attendance record for the fourth straight season, drawing 79.5 million, an increase of 4.5 percent from last year's 76 million.

#### **TV TODAY**

#### **MLB Playoffs**

Rockies at Phillies, Game 2, NLDS, 2 p.m. TBS Yankees at Indians, Game 1,

ALDS, 5:30 p.m., TBS Cubs at Diamondbacks, Game 2, NLDS, 9 p.m., TBS

College Football Kentucky at South Carolina. 6:30 p.m., ESPN2



**DIAMONDBACKS 3, CUBS 1 ARIZONA LEADS SERIES, 1-0** 



## D'Backs get 1st bite



Ross D. Franklin/Associated Press

Chicago Cub Carlos Zambrano (38) wipes his face after Arizona Diamondback Chris Young steals second base in the first inning in Game 1 of their playoff game Wednesday at Chase Field. Cubs' Ryan Theriot walks past.

By Bob Baum ASSOCIATED PRESS

PHOENIX — Brandon

Webb won the duel in the desert.

Webb shut down the Chicago Cubs with his superb sinker, and the young Arizona Diamondbacks got home runs from two of their kids in a 3-1 victory Wednesday night in their NL playoff opener.

Stephen Drew homered in the fourth off Chicago ace Carlos Zambrano, who was pulled after six innings and only 85 pitches.

Right after he left, Mark Reynolds homered on the fourth pitch from reliever Carlos Marmol to break a 1-1 tie in the seventh. Pinch-hitter

Conor Jackson added a sacrifice fly, and the Diamondbacks got two scoreless innings from their strong bullpen.

Webb, the reigning NL Cy Young Award winner, allowed four hits and struck out nine over seven outstanding innings in his postseason debut. He walked three and hit a batter.

"The most exciting game so far," Webb said. "I was able to keep them off-balance. I had pretty good stuff tonight, great off-speed. Had some great strikeouts, key situa-

Game 2 will be tonight, with Ted Lilly on the mound for Chicago against Doug Davis.

SEE CUBS. 6B



Lilly pitcher



**Davis** pitcher

#### TONIGHT'S GAME

LHP Ted Lilly (15-8, 3.83) vs. LHP Doug Davis (11-8,

First pitch: 9:07 p.m. TV: TBS Ballpark: Chase Field, Phoenix, Ariz.

Breakdown: One night after righties Carlos Zambrano and Brandon Webb dueled in the series opener, both squads send their top southpaws to the bump for Game 2. Neither scorched opposing hitters in September, but they did fare similarly in their final

While Lilly finished 2-1 in the last month of the regular season with three no-decisions, Davis finished 1-1, with the Diamondbacks splitting his four starts. Righthanded batters had better luck against Davis (.290) than Lilly (.230) this season, but the stats didn't seem to matter when the duo squared off in August.

The only regular-season start for either pitcher against the playoff opponent came in the same game on Aug. 25, when Davis and the D'Backs beat the Cubs at home, 3-1. Both hurlers struck out eight batters in the previous meeting, and fans should expect another tight contest in pitcher-friendly Chase Field.

Refusing to play the blame game for Iowa's nine sacks allowed last weekend, the Hawkeyes must protect Jake Christensen better at Penn State.

> By Charlie Kautz THE DAILY IOWAN

Junior offensive lineman Seth Olsen watched as the pocket collapsed around Jake Christensen like a cardboard box.

With grass stains prevalent on his gold pants, facing a 18-point deficit in the fourth

quarter, the sophomore quarterback picked himself off the turf for the ninth and final time against Indiana.

fans

Christensen quarterback



the huddle hop- Saturday's contest keep in State College upright. If only for the final minute.

"It's tough watching him take some of those shots, even on plays where he gets the ball off," Olsen said. "It's tough to see him take those shots, and it makes your block long enough, and it kind of motivates you to hold that block longer."

SEE FOOTBALL, 6B

#### **UI ROWING**

## Rowers eager to take to the water

Loaded with a group of talented youngsters, the Iowa rowing team is ready to race on Oct. 7.

By Mike Brownlee

THE DAILY IOWAN

While describing her rowing team, Iowa coach Mandi Kowal mentioned an attribute desirable in any group of athletes.

"They love to race," she said. After six weeks of practices, Kowal has the Hawks ready to do what they love on Oct. 7 at the Head of the Rock Regatta in

Rockford, Ill. "I'm looking forward to them putting everything together that we've worked on up to this point," Kowal said. "I want them to race hard.'

At the regatta, Iowa will have nine entries racing in three events. There will be five sets of Hawkeyes competing in the pairs race, two sets in the 4's race and two sets in the 8's race.

The pairs is a race the team has been practicing most this fall, and it is the hardest to master. The pairs, as opposed to the 4's and 8's, doesn't feature a

#### **Fall Rowing Schedule**

Oct. 7 — Head of the Rock Regatta, Rockford, III. Oct. 19-21 — Head of the Charles Regatta, Boston Oct. 28 — Head of the Iowa Regatta, Iowa City

coxswain, meaning the rowers have to steer and row all while having their backs to where they're going.

"Imagine biking backwards and seeing where you're going. In the pairs, you're rowing, steering, and trying to motivate each other," Kowal said. "We're putting in lots of miles and working on our technique in the two-person boat. We're rowing the pairs really well for how young we are.'

Kowal will be counting on her only seniors, Brittany Keyes and Jessie McBride, to lead their younger brethren this weekend and throughout the

SEE ROWING, 6B



Julie Brayton/The Daily Iowan

Members of the lowa rowing team practice on the lowa River, starting at 5:45 a.m., on Wednesday. The team is preparing for its season-opener this Sunday in Rockford, III.

## SPORTS 'N' STUFF

#### POSTSEASON BASEBALL

DIVISION SERIES American League Boston vs. Los Angeles Wednesday's Gam

Boston 4, L.A. Angels 0, Boston leads series 1-0 Friday's Game Los Angeles (Escobar 18-7) at Boston (Matsuzaka 15-12), 7:37 p.m.

Sunday, Oct. 7 Boston (Schilling 9-8) at Los Angeles (Weaver 13-

Monday, Oct. 8 Boston (Beckett 20-7) at Los Angeles (Lackey 19-

Wednesday, Oct. 10 Los Angeles (Escobar 18-7) at Boston (Matsuzaka

15-12), 7:37 p.m., if neces

#### Cleveland vs. New York

Friday's Game New York (Pettitte 15-9) at Cleveland (Carmona

Sunday, Oct. 7 Cleveland (Westbrook 6-9) at New York (Clemens 6-6), 5:37 p.m.

Monday, Oct. 8
Cleveland (Byrd 15-8) at New York (Mussina 11-10), 5:07 p.m., if necessary

Wednesday, Oct. 10 New York (Wang 19-7) at Cleveland (Sabathia 19-7), 4:07 p.m., if necessary

#### National League

Wednesay's Game Arizona 3, Chicago Cubs 1, Arizona leads series 1-

Today's Game Chicago (Lilly 15-8) at Arizona (Davis 13-12), 9:07

Saturday, Oct. 6 rnandez 11-11) at Chicago (Hill 11-8).

Sunday, Oct. 7 Arizona (Owings 8-8) at Chicago, 12:07 p.m., if

Tuesday, Oct. 9 Chicago at Arizona, 9:07 p.m., if necessary

Philadelphia vs. Colorado

Wednesday's Game Colorado 4, Philadelphia 2, Colorado leads series

Today's Game Colorado at Ph o at Philadelphia (Kendrick 10-4), 2:07 p.m

Saturday, Oct. 6 Philadelphia (Lohse 9-12) at Colorado, 8:37 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 7 Philadelphia (Moyer 14-12) at Colorado, 9:07 p.m.,

Tuesday, Oct. 9 Colorado at Philadelphia (Hamels 15-5), 5:37 p.m.

NATIONAL HOCKEY LEAGUE								
EASTERN CONFE	REN	CE						
Atlantic Division	w	L	ОТ	Pts	GF	GA		
New Jersev	0	0	0	0	0	0		
N.Y. Islanders	0	0	0	0	0	0		
N.Y. Rangers	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Philadelphia	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Pittsburgh	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Northeast	w	L	ОТ	Pts	GF	GA		
Montreal	1	0	0	2	3	2		
Ottawa	1	0	0	2	4	3		
Toronto	0	0	1	1	3	4		
Boston	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Buffalo	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Southeast	w	L	ОТ	Pts	GF	GA		
Carolina	0	0	1	1	2	3		
Atlanta	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Florida	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Tampa Bay	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Washington	0	0	0	0	0	0		
WESTERN CONFI								
Central	w	L	ОΤ	Pts	GF	GA		
Detroit	1	0	0	2	3	2		
Chicago	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Columbus	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Nashville	0	0	0	0	0	0		
St. Louis	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Northwest	W	L	ОТ	Pts	GF	GΑ		
Colorado	1	0	0	2	4	3		
Calgary	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Edmonton	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Minnesota	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Vancouver	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Pacific	W	L	ОТ	Pts	GF	GΑ		
Anaheim	1	1	1	3	7	8		
Los Angeles	1	1	0	2	5	5		
Phoenix	0	0	0	0	0	0		
San Jose Dallas	0 0 0	0	0	0	0 0 3	0 0 4		

Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss or Wednesday's Games Montreal 3, Carolina 2, OT Colorado 4, Dallas 3 Today's Games

Toronto at Ottawa, 6 p.m Florida at N.Y. Rangers, 6 p.m. New Jersey at Tampa Bay, 6:30 p.m. Colorado at Nashville, 7 p.m. Chicago at Minnesota, 7:30 p.m. San Jose at Edmonton, 8 p.m. Philadelphia at Calgary, 9 p.m.

#### TRANSACTIONS

American League
CHICAGO WHITE SOX—Sent OF Luis Terreo and
LHP Paulino Reynoso outright to Charlotte (IL).
TEXAS RANGERS—Named Jim Sundberg execu-

pase coach. ST. LOUIS CARDINALS—Announced Walt Jocketty, general manager, will not return. Promoted John Mozeliak from assistant general manager to interim general manager. Eastern League TRENTON THUNDER—Named Bob Shinn grayndekepper.

groundskeeper.

BASKETBALL

National Basketball Association

DENVER NUGGETS—Signed F Stacey Augmon.

LOS ANGELES CLIPPERS—Signed G Dan Dickau. PHILADELPHIA 76ERS—Named Aaron McKie

assistant coach.
FOOTBALL
National Football League
NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS—Re-signed TE
Marcellus Rivers. Placed TE David Thomas on

Marcellus Rivers. Placed TE David Thomas on injured reserve. NEW YORK JETS—Signed WR David Clowney. SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS—Signed FB Zak Keasey to the practice squad. Waived LB Tyson Smith from the practice squad. SEATTLE SEAHAWKS—Signed CB Kevin Hobbs from the practice squad. Placed RB-KR Alvin Pearman on injured reserve. Signed LS Jared Retkofky and OT Kyle Williams to the practice squad.

National Hockey League
BOSTON BRUINS—Signed C Glen Metropolit.
BUFFALO SABRES—Assigned F Clarke
MacArthur and D Andrej Sekera to Rochester

MacArthur and D Andrej Sekera to Rochester (AHL).
COLUMBUS BLUE JACKETS—Assigned C Kris Beech and D Marc Methot to Syracuse (AHL).
DALLAS STARS—Released D Matt Nickerson.
OTTAWA SENATIORS—Agreed to terms with LW Dany Heatley on a six-year contract.
PHILADELPHIA FLYERS—Signed RW Jesse Boulerice and C Jim Dowd to one-year contracts.
Placed D Mike Rathje and F Scottie Upshall on injured response.

Boulerice and C. Jim Down to one-year contracts. Placed D Mike Rathje and F Scottie Upshall on injured reserve. VANCOUVER CANUCKS—Assigned D Nathan McIver to Manitoba (AHL).

American Hockey League
HAMILTON BULLDOGS—Assigned F Mathieu Aubin, F Thomas Beauregard, F David Desharnais and G Cedrick Desjardins to Cincinnati (ECHL) and G Loic Lacasse to Bloomington (IHL). Released D Dominic D'Amour and D David Cornacchia. QUAD CITY FLAMES—Assigned F Adam Cracknell and F Ryan Donally to Las Vegas (ECHL). SPRINGFIELD FALCONS—Assigned C Justin Chwedoruk to Elmira (ECHL) and G Glenn Fisher to Stockton (ECHL).

SYRACUSE CRUNCH—Signed LW Kevin Harman. TORONTO MARLIES—Signed D Bryan Muir, D Todd Perry, D Patrick Wellar and F Joe Coope. Assigned G Todd Ford to Columbia (ECHL). UTAH GRIZZLIES—Re-signed F Travis Rycroft and F Soct Burt.

SOCCER

Major Indoor Soccer League
CALIFORNIA COUGARS—Agreed to contract terms with MF Brian Farber.
PHILADELPHIA KIXX—Re-signed D Pat Morris to a three-year contract.

a three-year contract.

COLLEGE
OAKLAND, MICH.—Named Tracy Huth athletic

director.

OKLAHOMA STATE—Named Chris Ferguson men's assistant basketball coach.

PHILADELPHIA—Named Jenn Devinney women's

acrosse coach. PITTSBURGH-JOHNSTOWN—Named Billy

## New coach, new attitude

**By Sean Monahan** THE DAILY IOWAN

"I've never seen somebody so into golf."

That's senior golfer Dan Holtherhaus' opinion of new men's coach

He gets up in the morning with his Iowa men's golf team for  $_{
m the}$ workouts.  $_{
m He}$ spends noon until dark

Mark Hank-



stalking his golfers on the putting greens and driving ranges of Finkbine Golf Course. When tournament time comes, he even eats with his team.

"How many of the football players eat with Kirk Ferentz?" Hankins asked.

"He's doing something with golf probably 12 hours a day," Holterhaus said. "I don't know what he does in his free time, but it just seem like he's totally committed to the golf team."

Such freedom wasn't always afforded to the leader of the men's golf program. When Hankins' predecessor, Terry Anderson, was head coach, it was also his duty to serve as the director of golf at Finkbine.

When Iowa Athletics Director Gary Barta went searching for a new coach this past summer — following the resignation of Anderson — eliminating the director of golf title from the role of head coach was one of the commitments he made to Hankins and the program.

"Right there, that was the commitment that I needed to see," Hankins said.

"I shared with him commitments that were already in place as well as those on the horizon," Barta said in an email. "I told him I was looking for a coach that shared those visions and was committed to working with us to get them accomplished."

It was clear that Hankins and Barta shared the same

vision, and on July 9, the university announced that Hankins would leave Michigan State to take the head post at Iowa.

The move had to be an exciting one for a program that has seen little success in years past — Iowa has continually lingered in the bottom half of the Big Ten standings during the past decade. Hankins brought with him a résumé that included two Big Ten titles in the past three seasons and two Coach of the Year awards to accompany his Big Ten trophies

"From the beginning, Mark appeared the most qualified, the most interested, and the best potential fit," Barta said.

"I met him when he came in on his interview and thought he was great," Holterhaus said. "I thought he had a lot of good ideas, so I was really glad that he decided to make the change.

The hire already appears to be a good fit for the Hawkeye program.

Because of what the Hankins has been able to accomplish in his coaching career, Holterhaus said he believes there is a different perception of the Iowa golf program among the other schools they encounter.

In the first tournament of the season, the Big Four Championships in Cedar Rapids, the Hawkeves finished in second place behind Iowa State. The previous season Iowa finished in a tie for last.

"Everybody's seeing improvement overall," Holterhaus said. "I think that's just really got the team excited to come to practice everyday.'

Now he's starting to see why Hankins has been so successful in his past endeavors, too.

"He is one of these guys that can watch you take about two swings and if you're doing something wrong he might just give you something to think about, or maybe just try something a little different," Holterhaus said. "And then you'll start hitting it good."

E-mail D/reporter Sean Monahan at:

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## Field hockey not satisfied

Even with a 9-2 record overall, the Iowa field-hockey team feels it still has much to prove before season's end.

#### By Ryan Young THE DAILY IOWAN

Since embarking on their campaign in late August as the defending Big Ten Tournament champions, Iowa coach Tracey Griesbaum and her proficient corps of field-hockey cadets have only been subdued twice in competition.

Treading through the terrain dubbed the 2007 schedule, the fifth-ranked Hawkeyes have upended higher slotted opponents, such as Duke, Louisville, and the then-No. 2 Wake Forest - the 2006 NCAA Tournament runner-up.

After their first 11 skirmishes this season, the Hawkeyes have found themselves diametrically opposite from the younger, 12loss squad a year ago, which had the tools for conquest but inexplicably couldn't reap the rewards of battle.

With a 9-2 overall record, a four-shutout goalkeeper, a sniping .462 shot percentage junior back, and three members ranking individually in the top 20 of their respective statistical categories, Griesbaum and company love their recent explosion of success but would much rather have it without cardiac game

Only two of Iowa's victories have been by more than four points, and six wins have had a margin of two goals margin or fewer.

"Sometimes, we're leaving the game, [and] we're winning going, 'Oh my gosh, we could have had four goals instead of two,' 'Griesbaum said. "There's still tangible things about the game that we thought we could have done better, which would



Hawkeye junior forward Caroline Blaum fights with an Indiana Hoosier for control of the ball at Grant Field on Sunday. Tied 1-1 during regulation, the Hawkeyes won, 2-1, in sudden-death overtime on Lauren Pfeiffer's winning goal.

strive to do better every single

have lead to a much more dominating win on the scoreboard, whereas last year, I felt at times we had that.

"It's not good or bad; it's just a little bit different than what we experienced last year." Coming off a 2-1 overtime vic-

tory against Indiana on Sunday and a 3-2 double-overtime defeat at the hands of Michigan the week prior on the road, the Hawks' mentality is to continually examine their performanc-

"It's really about having high expectations for ourselves," senior back Kadi Sickel said. "We don't want to settle. We want to

But expectations aren't simply high, they're altitudinous. In Hawkeye field-hockey history, this season's budding record is the best in nearly a

decade, and it is the first since Iowa's 1999 Big Ten Tournament champion team — the most recent outside the Griesbaum era — to have fewer than five losses in a season. The 1999 squad was also a field-hockey Final Four contender.

Granted, with six games and

week than the week before, but agenda, the emphasis changes not only that, individually and daily. The Hawks concentrate collectively reaching that final on player performances and goal of playing the best we can." group tactics, and they focus solely on the next matchup. "We just haven't been playing

a full game of field hockey,' sophomore back Meghan Beamesderfer said. "Ever since I got here as a freshman, we've always had 'the edge' as our motto-type thing, and I don't think you can ask for anything better than to go above and beyond."

a postseason remaining on its

E-mail D/reporter Ryan Young at: ryan-c-young@uiowa.edu

## Women face challenge

The Iowa women look to turn the lessons from its opening week struggles into success at the Indiana Invitational.

By Lars Headington

THE DAILY IOWAN

The early season jitters and off-season rust have both been shaken off.

Despite falling short in several close matches and finishing the Roberta Alison tournament last weekend 6-12 in singles competition, head coach Daryl Greenan and the Iowa women's tennis team are confident they are improved heading into the Indiana Invitational on Friday.

"We were up against very good competition, which was a real good test for us," Greenan said. "I thought we got better every day. Our goal was to go down there and get better and I think we did that."

He said that what held his players back in the opening weekend was not a lack of physical ability.

"We identified a few things we really need to focus on when we go to Indiana this weekend." he said. "We don't have a lot of time to work on it, but a lot of it is mental adjustments, attitude adjustments, tactical adjustments — it's not how they're hitting the ball."

Returning to bolster the Iowa roster at Indiana are senior Jacqueline Lee and freshman Alexis Dorr, who both competed in the Intercollegiate Tennis Association's All-American Championships in California last weekend.



Sarah O'Brien/The Daily Iowan

Hawkeye freshmen Jessica Young (left) and Lynne Poggensee-Wei practice at the Hawkeye Tennis and Recreation Center on Tuesday. The team will travel to Bloomington this weekend for the Indiana Invitational.

Despite an early exit from that tournament, Lee says the tournament made her a stronger player.

"I was a little disappointed because I didn't play as well as I'd hoped — up to my expectations," Lee said. "But I'm just going to take it and learn from it. I learned a lot from the loss, and because of the loss, I'll win a lot more matches."

With Lee returning to the top of the Hawkeye lineup, last week's order will shift down to comparatively less difficult competition at Indiana, creating many favorable pairings for the Iowa women.

Senior Milica Veselinovic, who competed in the No. 1 bracket at Roberta Alison with a 1-2 singles result, will slide back into her No. 2 spot for the Hawkeyes. She posted a 16-3 Big Ten record in the spot last

Veselinovic also believes the tough competition last weekend will improve her play for Indiana this weekend.

'I played with some good players — those were players who would play the All-American main draw — so I actually got really good competition," Veselinovic said. "I tried to do my best. I played some really

good matches, and that was our first tournament, so I didn't expect that I was going to play perfect."

Other players look to use their performances from last week to move up in the lineup. Freshman Jessica Young finished 3-0 at Roberta Alison, winning her bracket and showing poise in playing close points and close sets.

"I didn't wear out — I didn't mentally wear out," she said. "I mentally prepared for every match. If I lost a point, I would forget about it, and set up for the next point and go from there."

Greenan gave full credit to his freshman's successful start.

"There really wasn't much separating some of our wins and losses," he said. "In Jessica's case, she just had a little bit more than her opponents.

"Her tools are there and if she can manage her game, she's a very dangerous player."

The Hawkeyes last participated in the Indiana Invitational in 2004, before Greenan took the helm. Similar to the Roberta Alison, he said, the Indiana will include some top-notch teams that he wants to challenge his players with.

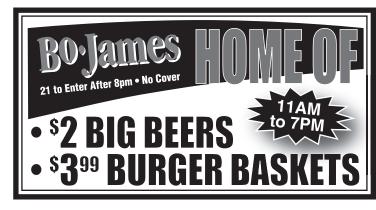
"It's really good competition, and we get some really good inregion play," he said. "It's all high-quality opponents."

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## Rockies take pitchers' duel

By Rob Maaddi

ASSOCIATED PRESS

PHILADELPHIA — So much for a slugfest. This was a pitchers' duel.

Jeff Francis held the league's highest-scoring team in check, and the Colorado Rockies took advantage of one shaky inning by Cole Hamels to beat the Philadelphia Phillies, 4-2, in Game 1 of their NL playoff series Wednesday.

"Who would've thought a good old-fashioned National League game would break out in this ballpark?" Rockie manager Clint Hurdle said.

Making just the second postseason appearance in the franchise's 15-year history, the Rockies played like October regulars. Colorado posted only its second postseason victory, the other coming in 1995.

Matt Holliday, his chin still cut up from the face-first slide that won Monday's wild wildcard tiebreaker over San Diego, hit a solo home run. Colorado carried over its momentum from that victory, and won for the 15th time in 16 games.

Francis pitched six effective innings and stayed out of big trouble, mostly by shutting down the Phillies' top trio of Chase Utley, Ryan Howard, and Jimmy Rollins.

Utley, Howard, and Rollins combined to go 0-for-11 with eight strikeouts. Utley, a .332

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hitter, struck out four times for the second time in his career.

Some of the hitters may have been uptight, but Francis was way better than the other times I've seen him," Phillies manager Charlie Manuel said. "His command was excellent, and maybe we tried too hard."

Francis' lone problems came in the fifth when Aaron Rowand and Pat Burrell hit consecutive homers.

Francis gave up four hits and struck out eight. Once the 17-game winner departed, three relievers pitched three hitless innings, with Manny Corpas closing for a save.

With the two highest-scoring teams in the league playing in two of the most hitter-friendly ballparks in the majors, this series figured to see plenty of

Instead, the clubs combined for six runs and 10 hits in the opener. Many hitters expected the late-afternoon shadows to be a problem, and they certainly struggled.

Game 2 will be this afternoon with rookies Kyle Kendrick and Franklin Morales taking the mound.

Kendrick (10-4) made the jump from Double-A to bail out Philly's depleted staff in June. Morales (3-2) made eight starts for Colorado, which also lost two starters to season-ending injuries.



Mel Evans/Associated Press

Phillies' Tadahito Iguchi looks back as he is forced out a second by the Rockies' Kazuo Matsui in the eighth inning against the Phillies in Game 1 of their NLDS playoff series Wednesday in Philadelphia. The Rockies won, 4-2.



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## Zook unwilling to accept Illini hype

By David Mercer

ASSOCIATED PRESS

CHAMPAIGN, Ill. — Illinois football fans this week are enjoying something they haven't experienced in six years — a little hype.

The Illini's 27-20 upset on Sept. 29 of Penn State, ranked 21st in the country at the time, has fueled more talk of Illinois football than just about anything else has since Ron Zook took over as coach in

Gamblers so far this week think Illinois (4-1, 2-0) is three points better than fifth-ranked Wisconsin (5-0, 2-0), the Illini's opponent Saturday at Memorial Stadium in

And cbssportsline.com, in a set of very early bowl predictions, has the Illini heading to the Outback remember that point right there," Bowl in Tampa on Jan. 1 to face South Carolina — that'd be the team coached by Steve Spurrier, the legend Zook replaced at Florida in 2002.

Zook insists he's scarcely aware of the buzz about his team.

"I don't read the paper; I listen to a Christian radio station, and that's all I listen to," the third-year coach said.

But he worries about the affect the attention can have on his play-

So he said he's reminded his veterans about some of the more humbling moments of the past few seasons — like the 53-point loss two seasons ago to Penn State — and asked them to pass the word along.

"I think it's important that they

Zook said. "[Penn State] took everything but our equipment."

Senior linebacker J Leman says the atmosphere on campus is far different from that in any of his first three seasons at Illinois. And after the Penn State win, he said, fans in the student section didn't want to leave the stadium.

The Illini are, after all, two wins away from bowl eligibility, with Ball State, Northwestern, and Minnesota still to play, all games in which they are likely to be favored. A bowl trip would end the six-year drought since Illinois' 2001 trip to the Sugar Bowl.

But circumstances suggests Zook is right to talk only modestly about his team's progress.

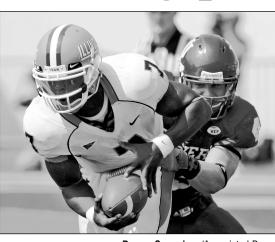
Voters in the Associated Press

football poll still don't think Illinois belongs in the Top 25.

And, while the Illini have the best running game in the Big Ten at 255.6 yards a game, they're ninth in pass defense (giving up 242 yards a game) and last in punting (just under 32 yards a kick) and pass offense (157 yards a game). Illinois didn't complete a pass in the second half against Penn State. Leman said Zook tells his team

to moderate their celebration over any one win, even the upset of Penn State.

"We have 24 hours to celebrate the win, and after that it's done and it's on to the next opponent,"



Darron Cummings/Associated Press

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JULIA'S FARM KENNELS

Illinois quarterback Juice Williams (7) runs out of the tackle of Indiana linebacker Matt Mayberry (43) during the second quarter in Bloomington, Ind., on Sept. 22.

## Goodman's Cub song lives

**Bv Don Babwin** 

ASSOCIATED PRESS

CHICAGO — Minnette Goodman was cheering along with the thousands of fans packed into Wrigley Field after a Cubs win this summer when a man's voice on the loudspeakers started to sing. Soon everybody around her had joined in. "I turned to the people I was

with, and I said, 'Am I hearing what I'm hearing?" " said the 80-year-old Goodman. "There was my kid singing at the ball

Her kid was Steve Goodman. A folksinger best known for writing "City of New Orleans," which Arlo Guthrie turned into a mega-hit, Goodman was a native Chicagoan and lifelong Cub fan who just months before he died of leukemia in 1984 wrote and recorded a little song called "Go Cubs Go." And now that very song, which Minnette Goodman hadn't heard in years, was all around her.

"Isn't that wonderful?" she said. "That's what they play at the park when they win."

The Cubs have been winning a lot this year, enough to win the National League Central Division. Even before they hoist the big white flag with the blue W on it, it is Goodman and his chorus of fans who alert anyone within blocks of the stadium what just happened.

Like the Cubs, who won just 66 games last season, the song is making a comeback. Written by Goodman at the request of WGN radio, the station that carries Cubs games, "Go Cubs Go" was used by the station as the team's theme song for years. Over the years, though, it gave way to the likes of Kool & The Gang's "Celebration" and KC and the Sunshine Band's "Get Down Tonight." Then, when the Cubs played

it this year at the team's annual convention in the dead of winter and fans stopped what they were doing and sang along, the Cubs brass decided it was time for the song to take center stage again. And the results have been

remarkable, said Jay Blunk, the team's marketing director. "I don't remember people ever staying for the victory song, but they are staying for that song," he said.

The song has even made its presence felt in the Cub clubhouse.

"I get tears in my eyes," manager Lou Piniella said of hearing fans sing the song. "My eyes get moist. They really do.'

Who knows why the song has caught on the way it has. But those who know Goodman or just know of him say the reasons begin and end with who he

"This was a song written by a Cub fan [who] really understood what it was to feel the pain of loss and the euphoria of

a Cubs' win," Blunk said. "He sort of represented to me that whole period of bleacher bumdom," said Dan Fabian, the WGN program director at the time who asked Goodman to

write the song after listening to him give an interview in 1984. "He was a hard-core Chicago kid ... The guy was blood, for heaven sakes, a Cub groupie." That much was clear to any-

one who had heard Goodman speak about his childhood or heard a song he wrote and performed a few years earlier: "A Dying Cub Fan's Last Request." Though written from the perspective of an old man, "it's obviously an autobiographical song, because he's dealing with his own mortality," said Clay Eals, the author of Steve Goodman: Facing the Music, a biography about Goodman that came out this year.

It was just as obvious that Goodman had suffered with his

"Do they still play the blues in Chicago, when baseball season rolls around?" the old man asks in the song. "When the snow melts away, do the Cubbies still play in their ivy-covered burial ground?"

Fabian said Goodman, though obviously frail from his leukemia at the time, jumped at writing "Go Cubs Go," and within days, he was back at WGN, guitar in hand, playing what he'd written. He recorded the song, with some Cubs players later adding the chorus. WGN then put the song out as a single, with the proceeds going to charity

"It sold like crazy; eventually more than 60,000 copies over the next three years," Eals said.

Unlike, the first song, "Go Cubs Go" is upbeat and optimistic. But even the optimism of lyrics such as, "Well this is the year and the Cubs are real" hints at the futility of being a fan of a team that has not, as the old man in the first song said, even been to the World Series "since we dropped the bomb on Japan."

Goodman never took the field to sing either song. The closest he came with "Go Cubs Go" was in 1984 when he stood in an aisle to sing it during a game. During the strike of 1981 he sang "A Dying Cub Fan's Request" inside Wrigley as part of a television interview, and a couple years later a television crew had wanted him to sing it there again but Dallas Green, the general manager at the time, wouldn't hear of it.

"He said 'Dying Cub Fan' was about losers," said Eals.

The new song came out the same season the Cubs were on their way to winning their division - something Goodman did not live to see.

"He goes into a coma and dies four days before the Cubs clinch the NL East in '84," Eals said. "It's like a race to the end of the season, and he lost, in a sense."

Goodman did, however get back to Wrigley. A few years after his death, Goodman's brother, David Goodman, took some of his ashes to Chicago.

"They donned blue caps and went to the bleachers, and they sang 'A Dying Cub Fan's Last Request,' and scattered some ashes," his mother said.

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## Rowers ready to dip the oars

'It's fun to work with this group. I haven't had this much fun in a while. I love going to practice every day, it's all I want to do.'

— Mandi Kowal, rowing coach

#### ROWING

**CONTINUED FROM 1B** 

"Keyes has an incredible work ethic," Kowal said. "McBride wants to prove herself this year. I hope she comes out this year and leaves on a high note, doing everything she intended to do at Iowa."

With the paucity of seniors, Kowal is expecting greater contributions from her sophomores and juniors this year, a task Kowal feels they're ready for.

"We've got a strong underclassmen group that I feel good about. I've asked them to step up into some leadership roles more than usual and they've done a really good job of that," Kowal said.

Kowal expects to use a number of her rowers in two events Sunday, but final lineups won't be determined until later today. Along with Keyes and McBride, juniors Stacy Dettmann, Laura Kanaris, Kristin Kelly, Hannah Miller, and Melissa Wordelman and sophomore Romy Post are among the many vying for key positions on the team.

"Overall, the entire team is really competitive, they know what it takes to get to the next level," Kowal said.

In collegiate rowing the fall  $\,$ and spring seasons differ greatly. During the fall, races are always down a river, at varying lengths ranging from two to three miles and boats leave the starting line in 10-second intervals. On the river setting, the ability to maneuver the boat can be crucial, and slower boats are required to give way to faster ones.

With the staggered start, 'you don't know how you did until the end of the race when you get your time," Kowal said. Fastest time wins.

In the spring rowing season, each boat has a lane, the race is straight, and the length is always 1 1/4 miles long. Each boat starts at the same time with the first to finish winning. The competitions are generally on a lake or a wide river with a long enough straight-away.

"The fall gets you ready for the spring. You get to feel yourself out and see how you stack up against the competition,' Kowal said. "Everything we do now is to make us better for the spring."

No matter what the setting or racing style, she said she's enjoyed the beginning of the season and expects a good year from her team.

"It's fun to work with this group. I haven't had this much fun in a while," she said. "I love going to practice every day, it's all I want to do.

"I'm looking forward to the weekend, seeing how we do. My expectation is that we will make a clear step forward this year. People will see we're back on the rise.

E-mail DI reporter Mike Brownlee at:

### SACKS A WORRY FOR HAWKS

#### **FOOTBALL**

**CONTINUED FROM 1B** 

Starting under center in all five of Iowa's games this fall, Christensen has been banged around like a pinball in the backfield, absorbing a bone-bruising total of 20 sacks this season.

Without a single senior on the offensive line and a handful of aerial threats succumbing to injuries. Ken O'Keefe's unit has struggled to find a rhythm and more importantly, protect No. 6.

Of the 119 teams in Division-I football, only Syracuse (22) and Notre Dame (29) have allowed more sacks than the Hawkeyes.

'The sacks aren't all [the offensive line's] fault," Christensen said. "Some of them are my fault, and it's everybody. We do everything together, and getting sacked is just part of playing quarterback, so it's no big deal."

While Christensen shrugged off the skeleton-shaking hits he's endured behind the line of scrimmage, the guy snapping him the football wasn't shy in taking responsibility for the sacks.

That starts with us up front," said sophomore center Rafael Eubanks. "We're not giving him the confidence he needs to sit in the pocket and really make the plays.

"As soon as we give him the confidence and give the chance for the skill players to make the plays, that's when stuff will really start happening."

Despite Christensen's finishing the game 24-for-42 for 308 yards and three touchdowns, fans and analysts alike have questioned the first-year starter's comfort level in the pocket.

Insisting that the offensive woes are too complex to fault only one party, Iowa head coach Kirk Ferentz knows Christensen has room to improve and will undoubtedly benefit from better protection.

"You've got to be logical when you analyze performance," Ferentz said on Tuesday. "It's just like the sacks. Are some of those his fault? Certainly they are. But some of them aren't and until we can support him a little bit better it's going to be tough to evaluate him realistically.

"That's the goal right now — to get him in situations to find some

Aware that responsibility falls on the running backs, as well, senior Albert Young said a film session on Sunday helped pinpoint the root problems of the negative-yardage plays.

"It's really just a fundamental thing; it's not that guys don't know who to pick up," he said. "It's really not as bad as it seems trust me after we saw the

Again without sophomore tight end Tony Moeaki and junior receiver Andy Brodell, who is almost certain to miss the rest of the season with a torn hamstring, the offense can't get any older than another start this

Hoping to hold a seventhranked Penn State defense in check on Saturday, Eubanks vowed to improve the line's stability this week - starting with himself.

Being the center and the leader of the offensive line, I think I need to really try to work to get this group going, because I really think it does start with us," he said. "We saw the effect we had last weekend on the game with some of the things we did, and we really need to pick it up at this point.'

E-mail DI Sports Editor Charlie Kautz at: charles-kautz@uiowa.edu

## **Cubs fall** to Webb



Arizona Diamondback Brandon Webb throws a pitch against the Chicago Cubs in the first inning in Game 1 of their National League playoff series Wednesday in Phoenix.

A pair of solo homers from Stephen Drew and Mark Reynolds help the Diamondbacks top the Cubs.

#### **CUBS**

**CONTINUED FROM 1B** 

Zambrano gave up four hits, struck out eight, and walked one before he was pulled by manager Lou Piniella in a move that could be questioned. Before the game, Piniella said he likely would limit Zambrano's pitch count because he would probably bring him back on three days' rest to pitch Game 4 on Piniella said he trusted his

bullpen to take over. But planning for Game 4 might have cost the Cubs in Game

The showdown between 18-game winners was as advertised, with Zambrano matching Webb pitch for pitch through six innings.

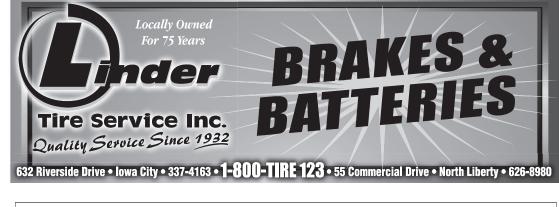
With Zambrano gone, the Diamondbacks went ahead in the seventh. Reynolds hit Marmol's 2-1 pitch just over the left-field fence for a 2-1 lead. Chris Snyder walked and went to third on Augie Ojeda's single before Jackson came through while batting for Webb.

#### **DIAMONDBACKS 3, CUBS 1**

Chicago 000 Arizona 000 CZambrano, Marmol (7), Howry (8) and Soto; Webb, Lyon (8), Valverde (9) and CSnyder. W—Webb 1-0. L—Marmol 0-1. Sv— Valverde (1). HRs—Arizona, Drew (1), Reynolds (1).







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**Baskets** 

# I TOURS

Thursday, October 4, 2007 dailyiowan.com

by Cole Cheney/The Daily Iowan
Photos by Robin Svec

## Moon as round as a



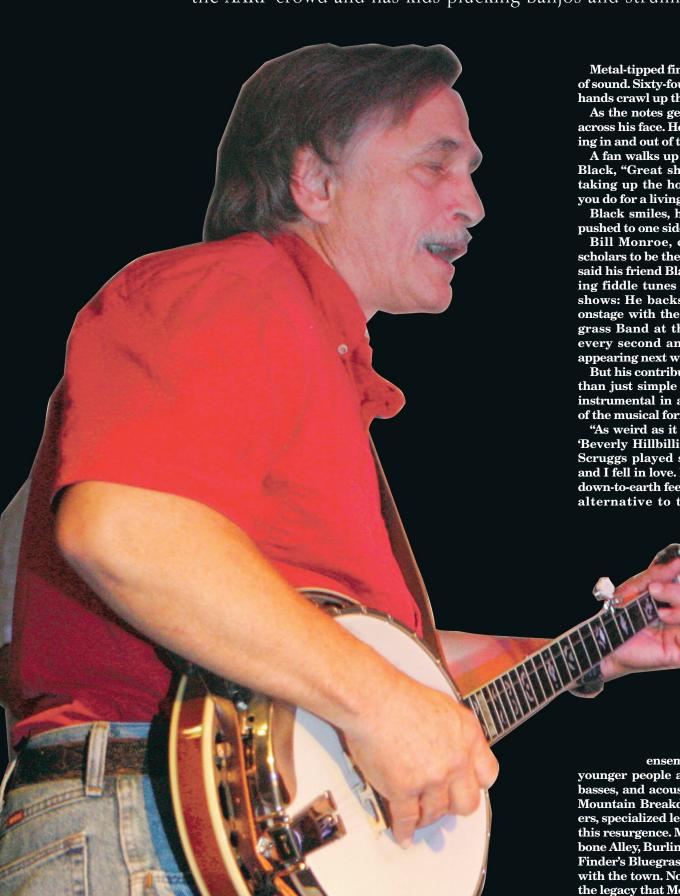








Professional banjo player and Iowa City native Bob Black sparks the return of bluegrass, which goes beyond the AARP crowd and has kids plucking banjos and strumming acoustic guitars.



Metal-tipped fingers pluck at five strings, releasing a flurry of sound. Sixty-fourth notes fly out of Bob Black's banjo as his hands crawl up the instrument's neck.

As the notes get higher, his eyes close, and a smile shoots across his face. He rushes the beat, then falls behind it, winding in and out of the backup band's sound.

A fan walks up after a show and says to Black, "Great show; I'm thinking about taking up the hobby myself. So what do you do for a living?"

Black smiles, his eye-brow length hair pushed to one side. "I play the banjo."

Bill Monroe, considered by musical scholars to be the father of bluegrass, once said his friend Black was "the best at playing fiddle tunes of any banjo player." It shows: He backs up fiddler Al Murphy onstage with the Burlington Street Bluegrass Band at the Mill, where he plays every second and fourth Wednesday — appearing next week on Oct. 10.

But his contribution to the scene is more than just simple backup. Black has been instrumental in a nationwide resurgence of the musical form.

"As weird as it is, I got started with the Beverly Hillbillies," Black said. "[Earl] Scruggs played some stuff on the show, and I fell in love. I was a teenager, and the down-to-earth feel really spoke to me—an alternative to the top-40 commercial radio."

### (Immediate) future of IC bluegrass

• 10.10 —
Burlington Street
Bluegrass Band,
7 p.m., Mill
• 10.12 — Gilded
Bats, 9 p.m.,
Java House
• 10.24 —
Burlington Street
Bluegrass Band,
7 p.m., Mill
• 10.25 — Mike
and Amy Finders,
8 p.m., Mill
• 11.14 —
Burlington Street
Bluegrass Band,
7 p.m., Mill
• 11.19 —
Cornmeal &
Electric Junction,
9 p.m., Yacht

Legendary three-finger-style banjo innovator Scruggs was said by the Eagle's drummer and vocalist Don Henley to be "one of the true pioneers of American music. He is a living example of a strain of musical authenticity that runs back to the earliest musical traditions of this country." Black went on to form a friendship with his idol Scruggs.

The attraction to this type of Americana doesn't stop with a veteran such as Black. Twanging string ensembles are appearing all over the Midwest; younger people are picking up mandolins, banjos, upright basses, and acoustic guitars to play such classics as "Foggy Mountain Breakdown" and "Rocky Top." Regular performers, specialized lessons, and festivals, all in Iowa City, extend this resurgence. Mayflies, Bluegrass Pals, Castle Ridge, Shinbone Alley, Burlington Street Bluegrass Band, Mike and Amy Finder's Bluegrass Band, and Banjoy all share a relationship with the town. Not only are these musicians locally carrying the legacy that Monroe laid down, but so are music stores.

"We are seeing a lot of people interested in buying their first banjo," said James Kipp, the owner and manager of the Musician's Pro Shop, 309 E. College St. "The figures are up to 30 to 50 banjos a year, which is a definite increase from around five years ago."

Just under 1 million 18- to 24-year-olds identified themselves as bluegrass consumers in 2006, according to Simmons Research, a marketing-analysis company in New York. The trend seems to be thriving, well beyond the old-timers.

SEE **BANJO**, 3C



list of Iowa City events

#### Remember the local musicians

To celebrate the Sept. 25 release of her new CD, *Remember the Sun*, lowa native Pieta Brown returns to the Mill. The songwriter is on a promotional tour, and she recently collaborated with indie fave Calexico.



#### West Africa meets Eastern Iowa

Gambian Alhaji Papa Susso brings his unique mastery of the kora, a 21-string bridge harp, to lowa City Friday for a particularly colorful gallery walk at the lowa Artisans Gallery.

## weekly calendar of events

#### Today 10.4

• Gen Ed and Dan Tadesco, 9 p.m., Mill, 120 E. Burlington

• U-Melt and Mint Wad Willie, 9 p.m., Yacht Club, 13 S. Linn

• Sangria Night, Dustin Louis Blank, 9:30 p.m., David's Place, 100 S. Linn

• "Live from Prairie Lights," Abigail Thomas, fiction, 7 p.m., Prairie Lights Books, 15 S. Dubuque

• Jorie Graham, poetry, 8 p.m., Van Allen Hall Lecture Room II

#### THEATER

• Horizon, Rinde Eckert, 7:30 p.m., Hancher Auditorium

• Mike Birbiglia, 8 p.m., Englert Theatre, 221 E. Washington

#### **LECTURES**

• "Plying the Inland Waterways," 10:30 a.m., 2032 Main Library

• "Amish Educational Practices and Implications for a Postmodern World, Mark Dewalt, noon, N201 Lindquist Center

• "Why Faith and Politics Matter," noon, Iowa City Public Library Meeting Room A, 123 S. Linn

• One Community, One Book Discussion, Blood Done Sign My Name, by Timothy B. Tyson, 7 p.m., Barnes &

Noble, Coral Ridge Mall • "Opera and the Novel: Antitheti-

cal or Complementary?," Ida Beam Visiting Professor Herbert Lindenberger, 7:30 p.m., E109 Adler Journalism Building

Saturday 10.6

• Miracles of God, Harvey, Bald

• Cello Daze: Solo and Chamber

Choral Collage: Kantorei, Uni-

Concert, 8 p.m., Voxman Music Build-

versity Choir, Women's Chorale and

Camerata Singers, 8 p.m., Clapp

Fabulous Flippers and

• Dennis McMurrin & The Demolition Band and Chris Gelbuda, 9

• Girl Talk, Dan Deacon, Raccoo-

• Pieta Brown CD Release Cele-

Global Express, staged readings

of works by current IWP participants, 8 p.m., Theater Building Theater

• College of Liberal Arts & Sci-

ences Saturday Scholars Series

"Freedom of Expression, For a

oo-oon and White Williams, 9 p.m.

FunkDaddies, 8:30 p.m., Speakeasy

Eagle and Red Lining Aspects, 5

p.m., Yacht Club

ing Harper Hall

p.m., Yacht Club

THEATER

**LECTURES** 

bration, 9 p.m., The Mill

Recital Hall



Stanford University Professor Herbert Lindenberger will dissect the varying perspectives scholars apply to both opera and novels when he speaks at the UI today at 7:30 p.m.

"The Persistence of the Medieval in Early American Book Culture," Matthew P. Brown, 7:30 p.m., UI Museum of Art

#### **MISCELLANEOUS**

• Coralville Farmers' Market, 5-8 p.m., Coralville Community Aquatic Center, 1513 Seventh St.

Introduction to Meditation General Program, 7 p.m., Java Juice, 122 E. Washington

• Free Karaoke, 8 p.m., Nickelodeon, 907 Second St., Coralville

• Iowa City Experimental Film Festival, 8 p.m., the Picador, 330 E.

Washington • Thursday Night Karaoke, 9 p.m., Charlie's, 450 First Ave.,

Gemini Karaoke, 9 p.m., Speak Easy, 171 Highway 1 W.

Price," Kembrew McLeod, 10 a.m., 40

Country Dance, DJ Scoot-A-

• English Country Dance, 7 p.m.,

Dance Party, with music by

· Pilot Club Breakfast and

• Iowa City Farmer's Market, 7:30-

• Rock 'n' Roll/Country Night, 9

• Four Seasons Garden Club

• Iowa City Experimental Film

• Game Night, 6-10 p.m., Fair

Festival, 4:30 p.m., Iowa City Public

Grounds Coffeehouse, 345 S. Dubuque

Bazaar, 9 a.m.-noon, Johnson County

Fairgrounds, 4265 Oak Crest Hill Road

11:30 a.m., Chauncey Swan parking

Bazaar, 7 p.m., First Methodist Church,

St. Andrew Presbyterian Church, 1300

Rock 'n' Thunder, 9:30 p.m., Charlie's

**MISCELLANEOUS** 

214 E. Jefferson

p.m., Speak Easy

Boot, 7 p.m., Eagles Lodge 225 Highway

Schaeffer Hall

Melrose

#### Friday 10.5

Iowa City native Joanna Klink will read from Circadian, her new poetry collection, at Prairie Lights tonight. The Iowa Writers' Workshop grad teaches at the University of Montana, and she received a Rona Jaffe Foundation Writers' Award in 2003. The poems that are compiled in Circadian thematically feature the circadian clock, the internal mechanism that regulates basic functions in living things. The Colorado Review said the collection was "beautiful writing, sensuous, and troubling."



#### **MUSIC**

• "Java Blend," Dick Prall, noon, Java House, 211 1/2 E. Washington

• Nikki Lunden, noon, MC Ginsberg, 110 E. Washington

· "Know the Score Live," with Joan Kjaer, cellist Matt Haimovitz, and director Jason Weinberger, 5 p.m., UI Museum of Art

• Katharine Goeldner, mezzosoprano, and Shari Rhodes, piano, 8 p.m., Clapp Recital Hall

• Suzanne Vega, 8 p.m., Englert

• Magik Markers, 9 p.m., Picador Towncrier and the Blue Island Tribe, 9 p.m., Mill

 Tony Brown and 608 Riddim Section, 9:30 p.m., Yacht Club

• Alhaji Pap Susso, 5 p.m., Iowa Artisans Gallery, 207 E Washington

• "Live from Prairie Lights," Joan-

**na Klink, poetry**, 7 p.m., Prairie Lights International Writing Program reading, Reginald Gibbons and Ilya Kutik, 8 p.m., Shambaugh House

• No Shame Theater, 11 p.m., UI Theater Building

#### **LECTURES**

• IWP Panel Discussion, "Writing for an Age of Migration," Diaspora, Exile," noon, Iowa City Public Library

• Floating Friday: The American Studies Lecture Series, "From Jumping Jack to Jim Crow: Lessons from a French Pantin, Barbara

Mooney, 4 p.m., 704 Jefferson Building
• Writers' Workshop Lecture Series: Slash Slash, Kiss Kiss: Some Versions and Examples of Juxtaposition in Contemporary Poems, 4:30 p.m., Dey House Schaeffer Library

Toxic Talk 2007, "Little Reactor on the Prairie: Stories from an Atomic Oral History," Susan Futrell, 5 p.m., 106 Bowman House

• Dance Party, with music by Rock 'n' Thunder, 9:30 p.m., Charlie's

The UI Chamber Orchestra per-

forms a concert under the baton of

Conductor David Nelson at 8 p.m.

today. The concert will feature

pieces by Beethoven, Schubert,

and Donizetti from the Classical

and early Romantic musical peri-

ods. The orchestra is an ensemble

of graduate students; its repertoire

includes contemporary works as

well as Romantic and Classical

#### Sunday 10.7

#### MUSIC

• Cello Daze, Cello Ensemble Concert, 3 p.m., Clapp Recital Hall

• West Music Conservatory Week-

end Warriors, 6 p.m., Mill

• UI Chamber Orchestra, 8 p.m.,

• Reggae Night, 9 p.m., Yacht Club

• IWP reading, Daniel Weissbort, Matvei Yankelevich, and Michael Judd, poetry, 5 p.m., Prairie Lights

#### **LECTURES**

• "The Relationship Between Reli-

gion and Violence: Is Peace Possible?," John Kelsay, 7 p.m., Old Brick, 26 E. Market

• Kripalu DansKinetics, 11:30 a.m., Arts à la Carte, 20 E. Market

**MISCELLANEOUS** • Pool Tournament, 4 p.m., Speak

• IWP alumni film screening, Jellyfish, and The Magic Gloves, 7 p.m.,

• The Original Mill Pub Quiz, 9

"Secret Public Journal" became his main focus, getting nation-

wide exposure from morning radio program "The Bob and

that was like 'I went to JCPen-

ney today ...' and there's only 1 comment," Birbiglia said. It

doesn't seem there's much to worry about there — to date,

the comedian approximates

that more than 30,000 people

have signed up to get "Secret

Public Journal" updates e-

As his interview with *The* 

Daily Iowan wraps up, Birbiglia

is unfailingly courteous, profuse

in his thanks for the coverage.

And will he make fun of me if

this article becomes the next

"sad sack" punch line in a future

"I make no guarantees," he

"I didn't want to have a blog

Tom Show.'

mailed to them.

## Laughter as the best medicine

It's not uncommon to get relief from a therapist — but how 'bout a comedic living? The career of funny man Mike Birbiglia proves that counseling can in fact get laughs.

#### By Anna Wiegenstein

THE DAILY IOWAN

"This clever New York comedian is on the cusp of comic greatness ... Soon, it will be impossible to see this funny man." -New York Post

This is the quotation that tops off Mike Birbiglia's press packet, and taking the praise into account, it would not be surprising for him, who is backed by Comedy Central as its Next Big Thing, to be somewhat full of himself. When you're on the "cusp of greatness," it seems permissible.

However, ask Birbiglia himself if he sees any sort of "cusp," and he earnestly responds, "I honestly don't even know what that means. I see that quote a lot, but I can't really comment on it.'

Unexpected modesty aside, the large amounts of press on the Massachusetts native has begun to take something of a toll on the 29-year-old ("I'm gonna be 29 for a few more years, I think").

"When people start writing about you a lot, it's sort of like overhearing someone talking about you at the break room at

#### Mike Birbiglia

When: 8 p.m. today Where: Englert Theatre, 221 E. Washington **Admission:** \$26. 50

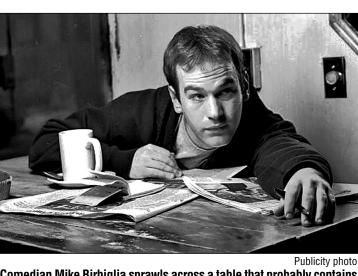
He took issue with one profile that described him as a "sadsack comedian." Though Birbiglia said the line made for fine comedic fodder with his family and girlfriend, the depiction isn't one he buys.

"Soft-spoken, maybe, but a sad sack?" he said, sounding pointedly upbeat. His demeanor has certainly helped his confessional brand of standup.

Despite an auspicious start to his career — he was named "Funniest Person on Campus" at Georgetown University — Birbiglia was quick to point out that he's never fit the traditional mold of classroom cut-up.

"The class clown was always the one who was mean," he said. "I'd like to think I'm a little more truthful and honest than most comedians."

The value of openness is



Comedian Mike Birbiglia sprawls across a table that probably contains more than just a few personal, yet hopefully humorous, secrets.

certainly one addressed in his current comedy project — the so-called "Secret Public Journal." What began in the unfunny confines of his therapist's office is now giving him his latest and largest wave of success, after the cult-like reception to his first two comedy albums, Dog Years and Two Drink Mike.

"[My therapist] told me our

time was up, and I said, 'No, I have many more problems.'

dot-com twist: not only did Birbiglia starting keeping, yes, a journal, but he decided to publish the thing online.

"I asked, 'Can I e-mail this to thousands of people?' She didn't have a problem with it."

From there, the newly (and appropriately) christened

said and laughed. But don't say The answer is a cliché with a he didn't get a chance to set the record straight: When pressed, he picks an appropriate, if unconventional phrase to

describe himself. "Can I say 'a pleasant sack?" I like that."

interview?

E-mail D/reporter Anna Wiegenstein at: anna-wiegenstein@uiowa.edu

#### new movies **OPENING THIS WEEKEND**



Sycamore 12, Coral Ridge 10 The Farley Brothers (There's Something About Mary) release their newest gross-out romantic comedy about newlyweds Eddie Cantrow (Ben Stiller) and Lila (Malin Akerman), whose honeymoon collapses after her true, vulgar colors are exposed replete with fart jokes aplenty. Keep your fingers crossed, kids. I think someone gets punched in the



#### The Seeker: The Dark Is Rising

Sycamore 12, Coral Ridge 10 This Harry Potter knockoff follows Will Stanton (Alexander Ludwig of Air Bud: World Pup fame) who discovers that he's part of a mysterious cabal of wizards. Traveling through time, Stanton fights mounting evil forces that could destroy the world. Where is Air Bud when you need

#### AT THE BIJOU



#### Crazy Love

Dan Klores, in his full-length directorial début, explores the volatile relationship between Burt and Linda Pugac whose love affair exploded across headlines in 1959. After their violent relationship ended with a prison term for Burt, followed by a series of shock treatments, his obsession for Linda resulted in a decades-long marriage. Oddly lighthearted, this strange documentary meditates on the often bizarre twists of "true" love.

Each week, the D/finds an **lowa City resident who** really likes to read. Zach Power, an assistant manager for Daydreams Comics, recommends Immortal Iron Fist Vol. 1: The Last Iron Fist Story, by Ed Brubaker.

66 I like this comic mostly because he takes a character that most people don't care about and makes him more interesting than your A-list character. He's really good at cliffhanger endings, which makes you want to read more. 99



#### **DI RECOMMENDS**

That you finally get around to preparing that tornado survival kit. Although odds are slim that another will strike lowa City, Tuesday was a little too close for comfort.

#### QUOTABLE

**66** Radiohead is the best band in the world; if you can pay whatever you want for music by the best band in the world, why would you pay \$13 or 99 cents for music by somebody less talented?

Anonymous record executive.

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## Bluegrass comeback

**BANJO** 

**CONTINUED FROM 1C** 

"Young kids and adults alike can understand it, and it's happening here," said the salt-andpepper-mustached Black.

Tve traveled all over, but somehow, I just keep ending up back here," he said, his eyes animated and direct. Finding opportunities to play, he commutes to Iowa City from the nearby North English almost as often as his wife and bandmate, Kristie Black, an orthopedic nurse at the UI hospi-

She had little musical knowledge when she met Bob Black. Years of being around him "rubbed off," she said. Acoustic guitar in hand, she gradually integrated herself into the local music scene. Her latest song with Bob Black, "Blood on the Moon," will be featured in the PBS prairie ghost-town documentary Rediscovering Hinkletown.

"We are trying not to look like ancient dinosaurs stuck on oldtime music," she said. "We play and respect the tradition, but do it our way and have fun doing it. I wasn't always a folkie person, but now I'm noticing the strong connection I feel with anyone I can talk music with, and [Iowa City]'s

While her initiation into the bluegrass scene was subtle, her husband found a different path.

The banjo took Bob Black by storm, and as a young man, he tried out for Monroe's Bluegrass Boys. After he finished playing, Monroe told him, "Get your stuff together; we leave at 4 this morning for the tour." Since then, Black has played with Ricky Skaggs, Rhonda Vincent, Sam Bush, and Tony Trishka, and he has also often performed onstage at the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville.

The beauty of venues such as the Opry dwells within the live stage, which Iowa City also supplies. Wednesdays at the Mill, the Fiddlers' Picnic, Sweethearts' Serenade — all bring forth this overflowing talent.

"We're not pushing to get out and about, we just get together for our common love of the music," Bob Black said. "And I think people sense this and gravitate toward us because of it. That's what makes it so fun to

play here and want to be heard."
"People didn't know the gross politics behind corporate radio years ago," Kristie Black said. "Things have changed, and more informed people understand the jockeying and foul play behind mainstream music. Suddenly, bluegrass has a whole new appeal."

"It's an acquired taste," said UI freshman Adam Locke, referring to a Burlington Street Bluegrass Band show he attended at the Mill. "I stumbled on these guys while I was eating here and realized I really liked it. This band is, like, the best in Iowa City.'

First United Methodist Church pastor John Raab has led

"Art is . . .

those who

-Aaron Howard

a question mark

in the minds of

want to know

what's happening."

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Robin Svec/The Daily Iowan

Banjo master Bob Black performs at the Mill during one of his Wednesday performances. Black, who lives in the nearby town of North English, has played with significant bluegrass legends, including the "father of bluegrass." Bill Monroe.

philanthropies around town with a bluegrass theme. "I'm watching kids come to our jams and charity shows — it's great. People are loving it, and, obviously, we are, too."

While charities are supported, the artists find that it is sometimes tricky to make ends meet. The line between love and making a living is continually an issue.

"We are at a tough part in the progression of bluegrass," bob Black said. "Record labels are seeing that the genre is starting to make money, and they want in. It happened with country a few years back, when producers began churning out artists based a formula that told them 'what sells.' Artists are feeling pressure to conform to powers that have an influence on their income not what bluegrass is about." With more than 10 self-produced albums on the Blacks' own record label, Green Valley, this note of independence rings true.

This separation of bluegrass from the mainstream is appealing, drawing more pickers and strummers, for, some say, one rea-

O Brother, Where Art Thou?, a Coen brothers film released in late 2000, is the cause, maintains Van Hayes, the executive director of the International Bluegrass Music Association in Nashville. According to Simmons research, a 42 percent increase was documented for bluegrass inventory in stores during 2001. "The build up of young, innovative talent from people such as Allison Krause, Del McCoury, and the String Dusters that transcended genres was pushed into the limelight by the buzz of the film.

Bob Black agreed with this notion, though it took him time to appreciate it. "When it first came out, I thought, 'Oh no, another movie that places bluegrass in the

back country, connecting the music with illiteracy and prison work camps.' Instead, the movie was a smash hit and actually made some of my fellow musicians' careers.'

Media crossovers of bluegrass, such as the one into cinema, have helped blend folk seamlessly into the modern American music scene. Even pop bands have taken note: both Matchbox-Twenty and the Counting Crows feature songs with a strong banjo lead and R.E.M. features the mandolin. Modest Mouse lead singer Isaac Brock plays the banjo during his concerts, while the growth of indie-folk acts such as Iron and Wine and Sufjan Stevens help bring the instrumental arrangements to a new demographic.

"Some would say it's the dilution of our style, but we can't all sound alike. That, and it attracts a wider audience," Bob Black said.

Hayes of the bluegrass association agreed: "Any exposure is good exposure — it will lead people to seek the sound."

The sound hasn't only permeated the Midwest or just soaked the United States. Thousands of bands are sprouting up all over the world.

"In Japan, Bill [Monroe] and I were treated like rock stars. In Australia, they had made specialty banjo for me. In the Czech Republic, I found literally hundreds of bluegrass brands following the style Bill laid down," Black said. "You see, there is research into the fact that nearly every aboriginal culture has some form of an instrument where strings are plucked over animal hide. There's some universal sound that appeals to mankind."

E-mail *DI* reporter **Cole Cheney** at: cole-cheney@uiowa.edu

- American South and Appalachia fashioned the earliest banjos after instruments they knew in Africa, with some of the earliest instruments sometimes being called "gourd banjos."
- During the 1800s, the banjo gained international popularity, when traveling American minstrel shows such as the Virginia Minstrels toured England, Ireland,
- Today's banjo took shape in 1878, when frets, or narrow strips of wood glued across the fingerboard, were added by New Yorker Henry Dobson.

#### The following songs are staples for any bluegrass musician:

by Earl Scruggs

Most famous banio song of all time, prerequisite for professional banjo player, Steve Martin played it live onstage with Earl Scruggs on "The Tonight Show"; no

• "Rocky Top," by Felice and Boudleaux Bryant, one of seven state songs of Tennessee, uses odd minor chorus uncommon to

#### A History of Banjo **Picking**

- Enslaved Africans in the
- and France.

• "Foggy Mountain Breakdown,"

vocals, breakneck banjo speed.

- bluegrass.
- · "Grandfather's Clock," by Henry Clay Work in 1876, went on to be covered by Johnny Cash, said to be responsible for the common name "grandfather clock" for what is properly called a "longcase clock.'

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Daily updates

artsiowa



## Endless horizons, no vacuums

The multi-talented Rinde Eckert kicks off his UI residency with a performance of his latest piece of musical theater, Horizon.

By Tessa Ruddy
THE DAILY IOWAN

Returning to the land of pork chops and sweet corn, writer, composer, performer, and director Rinde Eckert is now a resident in theater. In celebration of his return, the UI School of Music alum will perform in his most recent piece of musical the-

Music alum will perform in his most recent piece of musical theater, the critically acclaimed *Horizon*, today at 7:30 p.m. in Hancher Auditorium. *Horizon* is the story of one theologian's "crisis of faith" — not because of his belief in God but within the nature of his service in the seminary.

Likening *Horizon* to a child, the 2007 Pulitzer Prize in drama finalist admits that it's not only currently his favorite work but one of his strongest to date.

"You are always, in a sense, as far from the horizon and as close to the horizon as you are going to get," Eckert said. "Religion is about this kind of metaphysical event that you can't approach—the unseen. We are human beings; we operate from desire. We are not limitless as God is limitless."

After 25 years of teaching



Whitney Wright/The Daily lowan

Rinde Eckert, a finalist for the 2007 Pulitzer Prize in drama, talks in the Theatre Building on Sept. 28 about his play *Horizon*, which he will perform at Hancher today. "I'm very much a collaborator," he said.

ethics, the show's protagonist, Reinhart Poole — modeled after a combination of 20th-century Christian theologian Reibhold Neibuhr and Eckert's grandfather and Lutheran minister Thomas D. Rinde — has been asked to leave his seminary home. Poole must make the transition from the insular, academic environment of the

seminary to the real world — and he's scared.

"I think he has a reason to be frightened," Eckert said. "Just today, you open the paper, and a whole group of church people are trying to make gay marriage illegal ... it's madness."

After tonight's performance of *Horizon*, Eckert will spend a yearlong residence at the UI,

#### Horizon

When: 7:30 p.m. today Where: Hancher Auditorium Admission: \$21-\$36, UI students \$15

made possible through a Creative Campus Innovations Grant. He will compose an original piece of theater, which will examine visual impairment and visual loss through the eyes of a painter. He's started a process of interviewing and observing patients, doctors, and medical students for his new piece, which will première in November 2008.

He is already brimming with ideas, paging through a notebook with snippets of dialogue between two medical interns about a costume party, drawings of the personification of disease (a child stabbing hemispheric eyeballs with a stick), and a dream involving Oedipus and Themis, the blind goddess of justice.

"It's something that's just not seen very often," Eckert said. "You don't see many people on the street with canes, yet it's one of the most terrifying things to imagine — your world going dark."

Hancher's goal with sponsoring the new work is to bridge the gap between art and science on campus.

"The arts can really get into things deeper and bring people together, said Hancher director, Charles Swanson. "We hope this can make an impression and a difference."

E-mail *DI* reporter **Tessa Ruddy** at: tessa-ruddy@uiowa.edu



# Madness ensues when girls talk

The top-40 mixing, club-rocking giant Girl Talk lands at the Picador this Saturday at 9 p.m.

By Ann Colwell
THE DAILY HOWAN

Blatant nudity, sexual intercourse, Paris Hilton dancing onstage. Is it MTV? "Girls Gone Wild"? Perhaps Ibiza?

Almost. It's a Girl Talk show.
"It's a complete madhouse," said White Williams, a solo performer touring with Girl Talk.
"Every night, there are tons of people dancing onstage. You heard about the two people having sex onstage, right? It's absurd. We've really gotta rest and bargain a lot of energy for ourselves at night."

Williams is taking it easy before the Girl Talk storm hits the Picador, 330 E. Washington St., at 9 p.m. Saturday. Williams, Dan Deacon, and Raccoo-oo-oon will open.

"It's funny, because I've seen a lot," said 25-year-old Gregg Gillis, a.k.a. Girl Talk. "Anymore, it's not really that bizarre. It gets really hot in these small clubs if it's sold out, so I take my shirt off. I instigate it, and people follow. I don't think that's weird for me."

Not too shabby for a nowretired biochemical engineer. After two years with a normal day job, Gillis quit his engineering position ("Which I never expected I would ever do," he said) in May to fully devote his energy to a musical career. "You know, I sit in my bedroom all day mixing music," he said. "So when I see people getting into it, it's pretty cool. I really like interacting with the audience, especially at club-level shows, where I can really hang out with everyone there."

Musically, just imagine around 20 of your favorite top-40 hits rearranged and collaged to form one new song. It's a mash-up lover's dream come true, even though Gillis wouldn't classify his songs under that genre. After his third album, *Night Ripper*, exploded onto the scene in 2006, his live show became famously and typically sold out. So picture Gillis with his laptop, mixing and matching music samples on the fly, surrounded by dancing fans.

Kick off a song with Ciara's "Oh," layer in the Black Eyed Peas' "My Humps," throw in some Paula Abdul, and close things out with Kansas, Boyz II Men, Kelis, and Smoky Robinson. Final result? A two-minute long contagiously catchy song that makes people want to get naked. But as Gillis said, it requires a little more to faze him.

"Probably the most extreme thing happened at a sold-out show in [my hometown] Pittsburgh," he said. "My parents and family were all there. I jumped off the stage over my dad's head

Suzanne Vega

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and landed on my sister's friend. My face hit her shoulder, and when I got up, my front left tooth was missing. My mom started screaming that I had to go to the hospital; my parents were freaking out in front of everyone."

Having gone from playing tiny commonplace shows in friends' basements to this madness, Gillis and Williams take the pandemonium with a sense of humor.

"[Gillis] gave me his tooth after he broke it," Williams said, laughing a little. "I'm supposed to turn it into a necklace."

E-mail *DI* reporter **Ann Colwell** at: ann-colwell@uiowa.edu



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The Anatomy of a Girl Talk song
Track 3 from Night Ripper

**0:12** Ludacris — "Number One Spot" **0:21** 50 Cent — "In Da Club"

0:21 Timbaland — "Indian Flute"

0:32 Pixies — "Where Is My Mind?"0:40 Young Gunz — "Can't

Stop, Won<sup>\*</sup>t Stop" **0:43** Nas, Puff Daddy — "Hate Me Now"

**1:25** The Strokes — "Hard To Explain"

**1:46** D4L — "Laffy Taffy"

2:08 Buckwheat Boys —
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2:28 Weezer — "Say It Ain't

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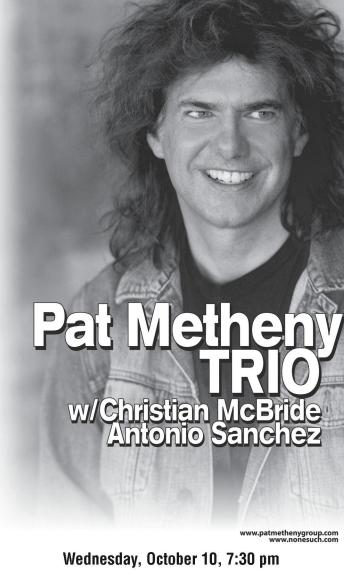
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Step aside, Hollywood. This weekend, experimental filmmakers celebrate the art and the freedom of underground cinema.

#### **Bv Brent Johnson**

THE DAILY IOWAN

In the often murky and elusive world of experimental filmmaking, many creators abandon storytelling altogether and use the freedom for strange abstractions of color and sound.

Jean-Patrick Mahoney laughed while describing his short film, "Arhat (The Shoten Zenjin of David Carradine)," in which he manipulated yoga and kung-fu exercise videotapes.

"It kinda deals with the Westernization of Eastern concepts and ideals through workout videos," he said. "But I edited it in a way to give it a dark, meditative quality that the originals obviously lack for being so bad."

Mahoney's film will be one of 65 competing in the first Iowa City Experimental Film Festival, showing local, national, and international film around campus on Friday and Saturday. These works challenge the conventions of filmmaking with categories including animation, installation pieces, and meditative documentaries.

Co-directors Chris Renaud and Charlotte Taylor, both graduate students in film and video production, spoke enthusiastically from a hidden, cramped office in the Becker Communication Studies Building. They agreed that Iowa City needed some outlet to promote the often opaque world of experimental film

"[The festival] is a way for filmmakers to see what others are doing," longtime resident Renaud said. "It's a barometer for what types of film are circulating."

'We wanted to show people here what's going on," Taylor said. "But it's hard to know what's going on in experimental film without going to a festival it's hard to go to a festival when there aren't anv."

"I'm excited about the festival," Mahoney said. "Because, as it turns out, [Iowa City] used to be a good place for experimental film. It's nice to see things happen like this in the Midwest. I'd



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Reggae with members from Natty Nation

like for things to be more active here with film in general — especially with the avant-garde vari-

Although Renaud appeared to struggle with a concrete definition of the term "experimental," he said one criterion in the festival's mission statement says these films should fall outside of commercial exhibition and distri-

Taylor nodded. "For the selection, we were looking for films that push the boundaries of film itself, genre, and form: things that we haven't seen before, things experimenting with content and form."

One filmmaker, Austrian Peter Miller, took this formula to fantastic realms with his submission, "Firefly." In this camera-less exploration of light and darkness, Miller allowed a collection of fireflies to expose the film with their bioluminescence, resulting in poetic pulses of light.

North Carolina native Richard Wiebe, now a UI graduate student of film, worked as assistant director and editor for his sub-mission "Ringo," which won Grand Jury prize for best animated short film at the Seattle International Film Festival. Over the course of several years, the filmmakers took footage from 20 public-domain clips featuring silver-screen cowboys John Wayne and Roy Rogers and edited them into a bizarre music video.

"We were a bit surprised to get an award for it because it wasn't

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properly animated," Wiebe said. We just took an empty landscape [from a video] and placed characters in it."

After the first Iowa City Experimental Film Festival ends, it seems unlikely that a consensus will be reached for what constitutes an experimental film. But the event's celebration of the independent spirit and the joy of filmmaking, regardless of mainstream viability, supersedes any need for one.

"In eighth grade, I got a camcorder and messed around with a lot of friends," Mahoney said. "And I remember how much fun it was and the sense of accomplishment that came along with it. I never expected to make any money."

E-mail *DI* reporter **Brent Johnson** at: brent-johnson@uiowa.edu

Film Fest Schedule Today: Center, 28 S. Linn **Becker Communication Building West** Studies Building

Riverside Drive and 116 Art **Building West** 6:30 p.m. 10 films, 202 Senior **9 p.m.**, 15 films, 116 Arts

**1:30 p.m.**, 13 films, 14 N.

Saturday: noon, 11 films, Bijou 2 p.m., three films, Bijou **4:30 p.m.**, 16 films, Iowa City Public Library, Meeting Room A,

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Photo illustration by Arian McLaughlin





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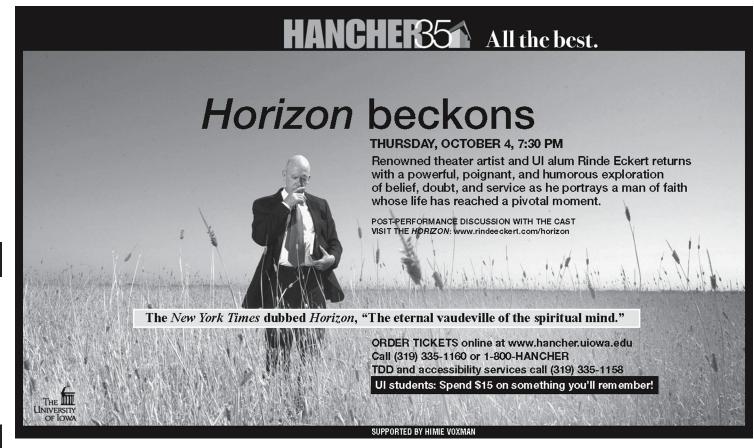
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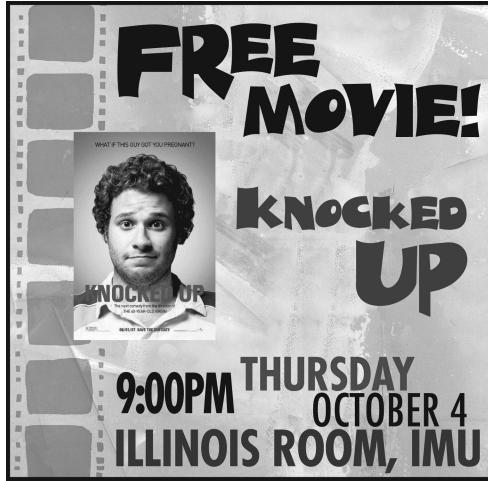
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## Adieu to albums



**LOUIS VIRTEL** 

Full-length albums are in enough trouble without Matchbox-Twenty getting snarky

Imagine my distress upon hearing the title of the Rob Thomas group's new album, Exile on Mainstream. It's part greatest hits, part new material, and designed to chap my

Look, I've never even seen High Fidelity, but I think we're in danger when a 2007 pop album references the Rolling Stones' double disc Exile on *Main St.* A couple more pangs: the Matchbox-Twenty song "Disease" was co-written by Mick Jagger. Not only can Thomas get away with alluding to Jagger's work, he can nudge his buddies about his linkage to the icon. Also: Exile on Mainstream? As far as I remember, Matchbox-Twenty is a perennial Billboard favorite. And that's fine -

Medium media filtered through us brought to

there's no sense resenting popularity. However, let's not kid ourselves, there's no "exile" occurring. I'm reminded of Avril Lavigne's once-persistent insistence that she was no pop tart — or rather, that she was, in fact, "the Sid Vicious of her generation." Never mind the bollocks, guys ... especially if you're a sk8r boi.

All this frivolity points to one dubious reality: Not only does the iPod generation disregard the weight and importance of classic albums, it also prefers not to regard albums at all except in senseless, ironic references, as Matchbox-Twenty exhibits.

Album sales, besides the recent surge ignited by the 50 Cent/Kanye clash, sink lower every year. Double platinum albums are now considered, by and large, major successes. If you glance at the "5 Years Ago" rewind chart at *Billboard*'s website, you're treated to a smorgasbord of smashes: the 8x platinum Come Away With Me, by Norah Jones, the quintuple platinu and Nelly's quintuple

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platinum Nellyville. And don't even think about the '90s, when at least one or two albums topped 10 million every year (or, if you're Shania Twain, 20

I'm mad because we're all missing out. As much as I can always appreciate a new Rihanna single (and believe me, I do), it benefits me more to hear a cohesive selection of songs that surrounds a theme or follows a creative impulse through several tracks. Joni Mitchell's Blue riffs on one emotion but paints several portraits of isolation, homesickness, and despair. Prince's Sign O' the Times approaches urban violence and drug abuse but turns those sun-streaked alleys into welcoming block

Exile on Mainstream is, meanwhile, mostly a collection of singles. Here's the real selfexile I'm looking for: a band that opts only to sell its complete album online, insisting it has a sensibility, and not just a single, that's worth buying. Mind you, it may not even be a self-exile for that renegade band: Judging by the popularity of singles, the everdistracted, radio-listening populace will likely run the group out of town first.

E-mail *DI* advice columnist **Louis Virtel** at:

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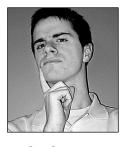
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**LOUIS VIRTEL** 

louis-virtel@uiowa.edu

Dear Louis, OK, a friend of mine browsed your Facebook photo albums and saw that you met Perez Hilton. I'm so jealous! What was he like in person? Was he funny? Did you get any good dirt from him? Love the column, keep up the sass! — Anonymous

Oh, anonymous. You're so nice — almost ... too nice. Ifear you are fragile, and thus, I warn you with utmost affection: You may be disappointed at the end of this column. Grab some comfort food, and let's settle in to talk about our favorite (and least favorite?) pink-haired blogger. I spent my summer in LA,

working an internship for *The Advocate*, the big national queer mag. While I was there, I decided to get all entrepreneurial and try to seek out big stories. Because Perez is so accessible (all I had to do was e-mail the address on his website), I thought I could make a big splash and write some funny, frilly story on how he treats celebs. At first, things went swimmingly we talked on the phone a couple times, and he was nothing but cordial and professional. He told me I could attend whatever event I wanted with him, and he made a few suggestions. I was all set to meet up with him at a barbecue Tori Spelling was hosting — for real — but then my credentials fell through, and an evil lady publicist/Kodiak bear kicked me out.

But don't worry, I got to meet him! I covered a Bravo party for "Tim Gunn's Guide to Style," and after I interviewed (and seduced!)

Tim, I found Perez. What can I say? Um. He was sort of boring. I asked him to respond to how condescendingly the ladies on "The View" treated him, and he just said, "People have their opinions." Um, what? You can dish it out on your website, but you can't tell lil' ole country bumpkin Louis that Joy Behar needed to get off the soapbox?

Here's the thing: Perez Hilton, in my mind, peaked two years ago. I remember when he wasn't so obnoxiously famous, when he ranted and ripped apart everyone, including Paris Hilton. Of course, he's now BFF with Paris and everyone in LA, for that matter, which totally sours his appeal for me. Seriously, an editor at The Advocate said to me: "Jeez, who hasn't met him?"

Essentially, here's what I think of him: He's loud, a little gross, a little kickass, but most of all unavoidable.

Someone, somewhere could write a dissertation on how healthy this is for society. I would, except I'm too busy checking his site for updates every minute of the day. Perhaps you can relate?

E-mail your letters to Louis Virtel at: louis-virtel@uiowa.edu

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