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The Post Amerikan (1972-2004)

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Post Amerikan

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Prisoners exposed to unsafe drinking water

Lots of poetry



# POST AMERIKAN

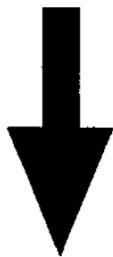


BLOOMINGTON/NORMAL VOLUME 29

FREE

NUMBER THREE JUNE/JULY 2000

# Your cover here!



## It's the first ever Post Amerikan Cover Contest!

The winning entry will be chosen by a field of local judges and published on the cover of the August/September issue.

Please submit your creative work (10" x 10")  
by July 15th.

Send entries to the Post Amerikan,  
P.O. Box 3452, Bloomington, IL 61702

Good luck!

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BLOOMINGTON/NORMAL VOLUME 29

NUMBER THREE JUNE/JULY 2000

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## About us

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

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

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

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

## Subscriptions

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

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

**David, Linda, Ralph and Sherrin**

## Pick up a copy

Copies of the *Post Amerikan* are now available for free at the following locations:

**Bloomington**  
 AIDS Task Force, 313 N. Main  
 About Books, 221 E. Front  
 Barnes & Noble, Veterans & Rt. 9  
 Bloomington Public Library, 205 E. Olive  
 Common Ground, 516 N. Main  
 CoffeeWorks, 608 N. Main  
 Gaston's Upper Cut, 409 N. Main  
 Heartland Community College Academic Support Center, 1226 Towanda Ave.  
 Last Chance Newstand, 404 N. Main  
 Lizard's Lounge, 612 N. Main St.  
 Medusa's, 420 N. Madison  
 the Movie Fan, 401 N. Veterans (Cub Food Plaza)  
 Mystic Link, 1206 Towanda Ave. Su.4  
 Shockwaves, 415 N. Main  
 Twin City Exchange, 411 N. Main  
**Normal**  
 Acme Comics, 115 W. North  
 Babbitt's Books, 104 W. North  
 Co-op Records, 503 S. Main  
 the Coffeehouse, 114 E. Beaufort  
 Deadpan Alley Records, 107 W. North  
 Koffee Kup, 205 W. North  
 Mother Murphy's, 111 W. North  
 Normal Public Library, 206 W. College Ave.

## What's your new address?

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Street \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

## Due Date:

The due date for submitting articles to the *Post Amerikan* is: (please laser print your articles in columns of 3" using Palatino 10pt. type if possible.)

**July 15**

## Good numbers

Advocacy Council for Human Rights.830-2521  
 AIDS Hotlines  
 National.....1-800-AID-AIDS  
 Illinois.....1-800-243-2437  
 Local.....827-AIDS  
 Alcoholics Anonymous.....828-7092  
 Amnesty International-ISU...Miami@ilstu.edu  
 Animal Protection League.....828-5371  
 Better Business Bureau.....1-800-500-3780  
 Big Brothers/ Big Sisters .....828-1870  
 Boys & Girls Clubs of B/N.....829-3034  
 Clare House (Catholic workers).....828-4035  
 Countering Domestic Violence.....827-7070  
 Dept. of Children/Family Services...828-0022  
 Gay, Lesbian & Bi teen drop in center.828-3998  
 Gay & Lesbian Resource Phonenumber...438-2429  
 Habitat for Humanity.....827-3931  
 Headstart.....662-4880  
 Home Sweet Home Mission.....828-7356  
 IL Dept. of Public Aid.....827-4621  
 IL Lawyer Referral.....1-217-525-5297  
 Incest Survivors Support Group.....827-0790  
 LIFE-CIL.....663-5433  
 Lighthouse (substance abuse treatment).....827-6026  
 McLean Co. Center for Human Services...827-5351  
 McLean Co. Health Dept.....888-5450  
 McLean Co. Housing Authority.....829-3360  
 McLean Co. Humane Society.....664-7387  
 McLean Co. Peace Coalition.....828-7070  
 Mid Central Community Action.....829-0691  
 Mobile Meals.....828-8301  
 Narcotics Anonymous.....827-4005  
 National Health Care Services/  
 abortion assistance.....1-800-322-1622  
 Occupational Development Center...452-7324  
 Parents Anonymous.....827-4005  
 PATH (Personal Assistance Telephone Help).827-4005  
 Phone Friends.....827-4005  
 PFLAG(Parents, Families and Friends  
 of Lesbians and Gays).....663-0831  
 Planned Parenthood (medical).....827-4014  
 (bus/couns/edu).....827-4368  
*Post Amerikan*.....828-4473  
 Prairie State Legal Services.....827-5021  
 Project Oz.....827-0377  
 Rape Crisis Center.....827-4005  
 Runaway Switchboard.....1-800-621-4000  
 Salvation Army.....829-9476  
 Safe Harbor Mission.....829-7399  
 TeleCare (senior citizens).....828-8301  
 Unemployment comp/job service.....827-6237  
 Western Ave. Community Center.....829-4807  
 Youth Build.....827-7507



# Community News

## GLT News Department tops public radio stations in Illinois

The Associated Press has honored the GLT News Department for Journalistic Excellence for the sixth consecutive year. This year GLT won nearly a third of all awards given to downstate radio stations and more than any other public radio station in Illinois. No Illinois radio station outside of Chicago won more acclaim this year than WGLT in Normal.

GLT won five awards in this year's contest: Best Reporter -- Charlie Schlenker, Best Newswriter -- Charlie Schlenker, Best Sports Report -- Charlie Schlenker, 2nd Place Sports Reporting -- Willis Kern, and 2nd Place Editorial and Commentaries -- Lane Crothers.

Schlenker won Best Reporter for the second time in his career. Last year he finished second in that category measuring overall performance on a variety of issues and stories. WGLT swept the Sports reporting category. Schlenker won for his profile of Olympic Archer Vic Wunderle of Mason City, and GLT News Director Willis Kern took second place honors for his piece about the retirement of beloved ISU Women's Basketball Coach Jill Hutchison. Contest Judges from among Associated Press Broadcaster in Ohio also viewed Schlenker as the best Newswriter in downstate Illinois for the clarity and style of his communication.

Illinois State University Professor Lane Crothers took 2nd Place honors for his commentary, "Buffy 'stakes' the case for Gun Control." Crothers used the TV Show "Buffy the Vampire Slayer" to illustrate his claim that the availability of guns is more important than other societal factors in tragedies like the one at Columbine High School. Crothers' commentary is part of an ongoing series done in cooperation with the ISU Political Science Department.

In the last six years the GLT News Department has won 20 awards from the Associated Press and United Press International for its Journalistic accomplishments in six categories including: overall Reporting, Features, Best Newscast, Mini-Series or Documentary, Sports, and Editorial and Commentary. "The wide range of accomplishments shows the breadth and solidity of GLT reporters," said General Manager Bruce Bergethon. "GLT listener and the Bloomington, Normal and Peoria communities are fortunate to have a resource providing in-depth information presented in a thoughtful manner," Bergethon said.

WGLT 89 FM is a 25-thousand Watt National Public Radio affiliate licensed to Illinois State University. Founded in 1966 and now under the ISU Communication Department, GLT offers 24-hour service including News, Blues, and Jazz programming to listeners in Bloomington, Normal, and Peoria.

## MCATF/Open door training workshops announced

A few volunteers come to us already trained for the work to be done, but most don't. That's why MCATF has always offered various training workshops to its volunteers so they can get the background needed to have a good volunteer experience. To this end, we are again offering the first three workshops.

These first workshops are being offered June 26-27. They will be repeated September 27-28. Workshops will be held at MCATF's Connections Community Center, 313 N. Main Street, Bloomington.

### June 26, 7:00-9:30 PM Basic HIV/AIDS issues

Topics include terminology, HIV-disease progression time line, HIV prevention skills, and the relationship of HIV and other STDs. You will have an opportunity to practice some prevention skills. There are no prerequisites for this workshop.

### June 27, 6:30-8:30 PM Basic resources and referrals and diversity issues

Topics will include community resources, peer counseling, and diversity issues. You will have an opportunity to participate in role-playing exercises. The prerequisite is "Basic HIV/AIDS Issues" workshop. This workshop will qualify you to apply for volunteer work on the "MCATF Phoneline/Office Information and Referral program."

### June 27, 8:30-1:30 PM Open Door Youth Center

The Open Door Youth Center is a weekly support group for 13-20 year old gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered and questioning (LBGTQ) youth and their straight friends.

Topics include mentoring, crisis management, coming out issues, how to set limits, and mandatory reporting issues.

Preregistration is required. "Basic HIV/AIDS Issues" workshop is a prerequisite. Adults (21+) interested in volunteering at PFLAG-MCATF sponsored Open Door Youth Center activities must attend this workshop. These volunteers must also complete an "Illinois Department of Children and Family Services Authorization for Background Check Child Abuse and Neglect Tracking System (CANTS)" form, available at the workshop. It is a plus that we can show our policy of doing this background check to interested parents and guardians to allay any fears they may have concerning their GLBTQ children.

--from Red Ribbon Review newsletter



## 2000 Spring fund drive

Thanks to the outstanding community support, GLT 89FM has successfully completed the 2000 GLT Spring Fund-Drive. Over 850 pledges were made by GLT listeners across central Illinois totaling over \$76,000 in pledges. This generous support will help GLT to continue to deliver high quality "News, Blues and All That Jazz."

Over 150 volunteers staffed the pledge room during the annual Spring Fund-Drive. At GLT, we extend our sincere thanks to the many volunteers who gave over 370 hours of their time to answer the phones and take pledges during this event.

Many local restaurants and businesses also donate meals and refreshments for the volunteers and staff. During the Fund-Drive, the GLT staff and volunteers enjoyed over 800 cups of coffee, over 300 cinnamon rolls, 200 bags of chips, and 30 large pizzas.

Listeners may pledge their support at any time by calling (309) 436-8910.

For more information, please contact: Kathryn Carter, Developmental Director (309) 436-2257 work (309) 663-2040 home

## Health insurance for Illinois children

If you do not have health insurance and you are a pregnant woman or you have children 18 years old or younger you may be eligible for low-cost or no-cost health insurance from the Illinois "Kid Care" program.

If you think you qualify, please call the McLean County Health Department at (309) 888-5517 to fill out an application.

Health Department  
200 West Front Street  
Bloomington, IL 61701  
(309) 888-5517

cont.



## Prisoners exposed to unsafe drinking water

### Genealogy program

Bloomington Public Library has planned a program on genealogy research. "Sprouting Your Own Family Tree at the Library" will be held from 10 a.m. to 12 noon Saturday, June 24 in the library's community room. Reference librarians Jane Chamberlain, Bloomington Public Library, and Anne Shaughnessy, Mt. Prospect Public Library, will show participants how to successfully search for family information in libraries.

Researching a family tree is rewarding and sometimes difficult. The program will give basic knowledge, skills and tips for using the variety of resources available in libraries and on the Internet.

### Library book sale

A book sale has been planned by the Friends of Bloomington Public Library. The book sale will go from 9 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. Wednesday, June 7 and Thursday, June 8; from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Saturday, June 10. A \$2 bag sale is planned from 1 to 3 p.m. Saturday, June 10.

A preview sale for Bloomington Friends members will be held from 5 to 8:30 p.m. Tuesday, June 6; memberships will be available at the door.

Thousands of hardback and paperback books for children and adults will be available. Large print books, cassettes, videos, and CDs will be available too. Prices for most items range from 25 cents to \$3.

Money raised at the book sale will be used for children's programming.

The Friends will be collecting non-perishable food items at the book sale. In return for donating canned goods, participants will receive a free paperback book. All collected food items will be donated to a local food bank.

Dear Editor,

We are inmates at the Stateville Correctional Center and we were recently made aware of the funding that this facility will receive for renovations in the amount of 104 million dollars. We were shocked that this large amount of money is not going towards correcting a more serious problem that has existed here for quite some time.

About six months ago we were made aware that the drinking water here has a high level of radiological contamination in it in the form of radium 226 and 228, which is a byproduct of uranium. Combined radium is known to significantly raise the risks of several types of cancers if ingested in high levels over extended periods of time. The level of combined radium here averages over twice the legal limit set forth by the E. P. A. and has for the last eight years.

Prison officials have known about this problem since 1992 and have made no real effort to correct it. In fact, it seems as if the administration here has chosen to try to keep this information away from the very people that it affects the most: the inmates. This is contrary to E. P. A. guidelines.

The staff and officers here were made aware of the high levels of radium in the water and no longer drink it due to the inherent risks of ingesting such high levels of contaminants. The inmates here are not given the same choice as the staff because the vast majority of the inmates are completely unaware that there is anything at all wrong with the drinking water. I was here for over two years before I was made aware of the problem myself and I was told by another inmate, not the administration of Stateville as it should have been.

Since I found out about the problem I have been trying to force the administration to address this potentially dangerous problem, or at the very least inform all of the inmates about it. So far I have not accomplished much. I have used the grievance procedure here, written to my counselors, the warden, the hospital administrator and other officials here at Stateville concerning the issue. I have also written the E. P. A. numerous times, the Justice

Department, the Prison Action Committee and various governmental agencies to try to get someone involved.

My main goal is to force the administration here to do the morally right thing and inform all the inmates here of the potential dangers of ingesting the water, and to fix it in a timely manner. They have had at least eight years so far and have done nothing. There are supposed to be memos posted inside the institution for all inmates to see describing the problems with the water but I have yet to see one posted anywhere. I have spoken to inmates that have been here for as long as fifteen years that were completely unaware of the water issues and they were understandably upset that they had not been told before.

This is the reason that it is so disturbing that Stateville is using such a large amount of the taxpayers' money on renovations and ignoring such a serious issue. It seems to me that this money should be used for ion softening exchange or another method of removing the combined radium from the drinking water here.

There are already several lawsuits filed on the issue and I find it to be shameful that we must be forced to use the courts to get anything addressed while incarcerated. This was a last resort to ensure that no more damage is done to the unsuspecting men who are forced to drink this water on a daily basis. Just because we are in prison does not mean that we should be treated like we are less than human without the basic rights afforded everyone else in a free society. This problem would not have been allowed to go on for such a long time if it were a small town involved instead of a prison, but since it is just inmates involved it is allowed to be ignored.

This is not a localized issue either. There are many IDOC facilities that have highly contaminated water and have for many years. IDOC Director Snyder is on a crusade to improve "his" prisons and make them safer for his employees by continuing to restrict what we can do and possess. But it seems that Director Snyder does not seem overly concerned about the health and welfare of the very people that are his responsibility, the inmates. If he were, then the problems with the water here would have already been addressed. Instead of spending millions on new things how about making the facilities that already exist safer for the men who must stay in them?

We are sent to prison as punishment; we are not sent to prison to be punished and there is a world of difference between the two, especially if your view is from this side of the bars. It's time something was done to address the real issues and stop the lobbying for vast amounts of funding that are misused. This letter is being written despite the very real fear of retaliation by the administration but it was past time that the public was made aware of the problem before it costs them millions in lawsuit damages later on.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jason Stinson, Levi Nash

# Rape Crisis Center of McLean County

We're a non-profit volunteer group whose main purpose is to offer assistance and support to victims of sexual assault and their friends and families.

Female and male volunteers answer your calls and are available for crisis assistance, information and speaking engagements. You may request to speak only with female volunteers.

If you want to talk to one of us  
Call PATH 827-4005  
and ask for the  
RAPE CRISIS CENTER



# Notes from the land of anti-fat

## A SAN FRANCISCO TREAT

It's the little things that sometimes drive change: as the recent passage of a size discrimination law in San Francisco shows.

Sparked by the presence of an offensive 24-Hour Fitness billboard, the law makes Frisco one of the few enclaves of legal protection for fat adults in the country. The law, unanimously passed by the city's Board of Supervisors, added weight and height to the full list of characteristics protected against discrimination in the city.

Way to go, Frisco!

The new legislation allows the Human Rights Commission to investigate complaints and make a finding of discrimination. While the law affords a discriminated fat person the right to file a civil lawsuit, it doesn't carry any other penalties. City contractors who break the discrimination law can be fined or lose their contracts, however.

Like most discrimination laws, this 'un will likely be a bear to enforce. But that hasn't put a damper on size acceptance advocates' celebration. For one thing, the whole story kept the issue in front of the city media for months, giving spokesfolk the opportunity to articulate the concerns of fat Americans. Marilyn Wann, the editor and author of Fat!So?, is a good example. The 270-pound writer (where most fat women in this country would be reluctant to announce their weight, for size acceptance advocates it's practically de rigueur) is an energetic proponent for fat rights and a mistress of the telling sound byte.

"We don't need a diet... We need an end to discrimination," Wann told a panel considering the anti-discrimination legislation. Testimony before said panel included a series of telling stories from fat women who'd experienced size discrimination in the city by the bay.

Sixteen-year-old Margarita Rossi, who said she leads "a healthy and active life," complained that the nurse-practitioner she visited for help with a gynecological problem made repeated remarks about her weight and never got around to conducting an exam. Singer/artist Deborah

Iyall said that once when she quit a job her boss told her, "I don't think you should leave, because you're so fat you won't get another job." Carole Cullum, a lawyer who is a member of the city's Board of Appeals, told of constant problems being able to fit into seats at restaurants or theaters.

The offending billboard in question, an ad for a fitness club featuring an extraterrestrial under the logo, "When they come, they'll eat the fat ones first," was the object of public outcry when it first appeared last Summer. Within the ad was the assumption that fat adults didn't exercise: an assumption that fat activists challenged during the meeting. Fitness instructor Debby Burgard told of teaching a movement class for women over 200 pounds.

"In this safe place, they were sparkling, exuberant, radiant," Burgard said. "After my class, I went to teach an eating disorder class where thin and average-size women were torturing themselves about every bite of food. They had broken spirits and beautiful nails. I realized I was working with the healthiest fat women and the sickest thin women."

The term "safe place" is worth noting, since the stance of many size acceptance advocates was that the cavalier joke in the original fitness club billboard made a clear statement that fat adults were not welcome.

This kind of message was not one that the Frisco board wanted to endorse, and good for them. As Carole Cullom noted with canny civic pride: "San Francisco is a city of tolerance. That's why we all love to live here."

## Pyruvite Bites It

A couple of years back, one of the P-A's regular writers returned from a women's music fest with a tape that she thought would be of interest to me. Given out as a freebie from one of the tents, it turned out to be a taped infomercial for another "miracle fat burner" named pyruvite.

Now one of the manufacturers of this wonder drug has been ordered to repay customers \$10

million to settle government charges that they used deceptive advertising. The Federal Trade Commission said Enforma Natural Products, which advertises and sells "The Enforma System," used false claims about scientific testing to promote its product.

This agreement "is the largest settlement of its kind" involving a weight-loss product or program, said the FTC's Claudia Farrell.

The drugs sold as part of Enforma's "system" contained both pyruvite and chitosan (derived from shellfish exoskeletons), which ads by the company claimed have been "scientifically proven" to burn off calories and block fat absorption. According to the FTC, neither claim has been supported by any scientific studies.

The Enforma system was being sold over the Internet and via television infomercials featuring former baseball great Steve Garvey. (Say it ain't so, Steve!) A two-month supply of the drugs went for about \$70.00

Under the settlement, Enforma will pay the FTC \$10 million, which will be refunded to consumers who bought the weight-loss system directly from the company before March 31, 2000. If the commission decides that refunds are impractical, it may pay the money to the U.S. Treasury. By settling the charges, the company doesn't admit having broken any law.

Moral of the story? As usual, it's buyer beware. There are a lot of sleazy promoters out there in the Land of Anti-fat.

Some of em may even show up at women's festivals.

-Bill Sherman



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# News from Voice for Choice

## Choice at a Crossroads

Source -- National Abortion Rights Action League

The freedom to choose stands at crossroads. And those roads cross in the Oval Office, where the next President will have the power to make pivotal appointments to the Supreme Court and the federal bench; sign or veto anti-choice bills; and set Administration policy on matters ranging from family planning to enforcement of the federal law banning violence at abortion clinics. The freedom to choose faces a direct threat against which the only defense is electing another pro-choice President.

Vice-President Al Gore will protect a woman's right to choose. Texas Governor George W. Bush wants to end legal abortion. At stake are women's lives and health. The values are freedom and dignity. And the consequences are clear: The election of an anti-choice President could erase the freedom it has taken American women a generation to achieve.

### Presidency is Pivotal

Key presidential powers, and how they will affect choice, include:

— **The courts:** The next President may have the opportunity to appoint the two to three Supreme Court justices whose votes are all that are needed to overturn *Roe v. Wade* and end legal abortion. That's an especially ominous sign, since three of the four oldest justices — those most likely to retire and be replaced by the next President — support some form of a constitutional right to choose.

If *Roe* is overturned, the anti-choice majorities that control 23 state legislatures will be unleashed to restrict reproductive freedom in virtually any way. George W. Bush says he believes *Roe v. Wade* should be overturned. And he says he'll only nominate judges who support strict constructionism — code words for no right to privacy, and no *Roe v. Wade*.

— **The lower federal courts** have also become key battlegrounds in the defense of abortion rights, rendering key decisions on state restrictions on choice. The next President will make a deep imprint on the federal bench.

Because Senate republicans have stalled the judicial nomination process with partisan politics, dozens of current judgeships are vacant. The next President will fill those vacancies and appoint the 69 new judgeships the judiciary has requested to

handle growing caseloads. They will also fill the hundreds of slots that normally open on the federal bench during a presidential term.

— **Legislative powers:** The President's power to sign or veto legislation — which President Clinton has used to fend off dozens of attacks on reproductive rights since the anti-choice majority took control of Congress — has been at the epicenter of clashes over reproductive freedom. Since 1995, the anti-choice majority in congress has voted 1200 times to restrict reproductive rights, winning all but 22 of those votes.

Congress voted to ban abortion procedures for the first time since *Roe*, and tried to reclassify commonly used contraceptives as abortifacients and to exclude them from federal employee health benefits plans. Congress sought to prevent minors from obtaining contraceptive services at Title X family planning clinics without parental consent. President Clinton stopped these anti-choice measures with vetoes. If Bush becomes President, similar measures could become law.

— **Executive powers:** The President holds immense power to shape reproductive rights through executive orders, appointments and other powers. Presidents Reagan and Bush used that power to set critical medical research back years by banning research on fetal tissue. President Clinton signed an executive order lifting the ban, clearing the way for groundbreaking progress in treating diseases from Alzheimer's to AIDS.

President Bush used his authority over the Food and Drug Administration to block the import of mifepristone (RU-486), which European women have used safely and effectively for years as a medical alternative to surgical abortion.

President Clinton signed the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act and his pro-choice Attorney General, Janet Reno, has rigorously enforced it. George W. Bush has opposed protecting clinics against violence. As President, he could use his executive power to weaken enforcement, prevent research, block medical progress and otherwise chip away at choice.

### Who decides?

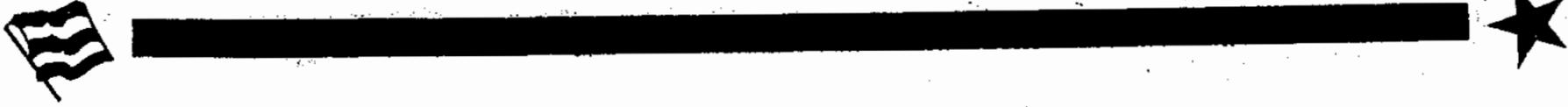
Who should make decisions about pregnancy and abortion? Women and their doctors, or politicians and the government? Choice stands at a crossroads. Down one road lies an end to legal



abortion, and a return to the days when women risked their dignity to exercise their choice under the law, or risk their lives to exercise their choice illegally. Who decides which road America takes? We do.

### Bush reveals preference for anti-choice justices

Throughout his campaign, Governor George W. Bush has muddled the issue of abortion and claimed he won't use any litmus tests for nominating Supreme Court justices. In a recent interview with Tim Russert on NBC's Meet the Press, Bush stated that his two favorite Supreme Court justices are Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas. Both justices are vehemently opposed to abortion and have been consistent votes on the court for narrowing abortion rights. Additionally, both are opposed to affirmative action for women and minorities. In fact, Scalia has been the strongest vote on the court against minority rights.



**Around the states...**

State lawmakers introduced 439 anti-choice measures in 1999 and enacted 70 of them, more than in any previous year. Among other measures, states enacted 25 percent more abstinence-only or abstinence-until-marriage education legislation than comprehensive or STD/HIV education legislation.

Texas and Michigan were ranked by the National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL) as the two most dangerous legislatures for reproductive rights, each enacting seven anti-choice laws this year. Louisiana followed close behind with five laws. In NARAL's measurement of cumulative effects of existing laws and court cases relating to reproductive rights, more than half the states received a D or an F and the country as a whole received a D+.

Despite a record year of attacks on choice, states still enacted 57 pro-choice measures in 1999, compared with 22 in 1998. Nine of those new laws require insurers to cover prescription contraceptives.

**Presidential candidates voting records on choice, family planning, women's rights**

**George W. Bush**

— Supports an amendment to the Constitution to outlaw abortion and make it a crime. In 1999 Texas was one of the nation's most anti-choice states in its legislative activities. As Governor, Bush has signed 18 anti-choice bills into law.

— Supports restrictions on family planning funding, and the defunding of Planned Parenthood.

— Quote: "I will do everything in my power to restrict abortion."

**Al Gore**

— Pro-choice voting record while a U.S. Senator (1984-1992).

— Supports family planning funding.

— Quote: "There is no more fundamental challenge than protecting a woman's reproductive health. That means guaranteeing a woman's right to choose — and making abortion safe, legal and rare."

**Local candidate news**

Mike Kelleher (D), who is running against Tim Johnson (R) for the U.S. House of Representatives in the 15<sup>th</sup> district, has been endorsed by the Planned Parenthood Federation Action Fund Political Action Committee.



**BEST**

**ORIGINAL  
LIVE MUSIC  
in the TWIN CITIES**

Figure 31

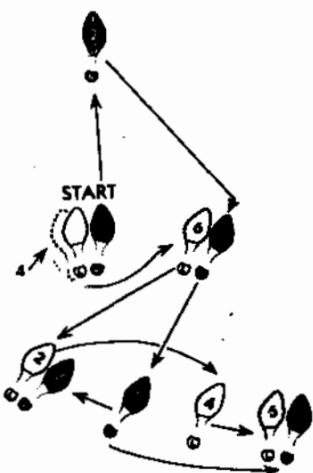
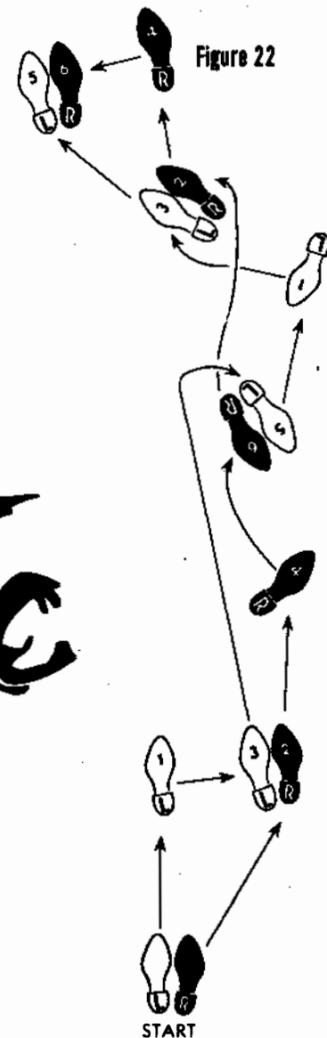


Figure 22



**The Lizard's Lounge 612 N. Main Street. Bloomington, IL 309.827.9580**

# Mental illness awareness

## NAMI seeks to start program for caregivers for children with brain disorder

NAMI Illinois has the opportunity to participate in a new program called "Visions for Tomorrow," an education program written for primary, direct caregivers of children and adolescents with brain disorders. The focus is on symptoms, not diagnosis. The curriculum covers more than a dozen major diagnoses and the basics of day-to-day skills building.

At this time, NAMI Illinois is seeking to identify NAMI members who may be willing to become teachers of this 12 week course. Teachers will operate as a team of two.

The requirements to become a teacher of Visions is that they must be a direct caregiver of a child with a brain disorder who is twenty-five (25) years old or less to ensure that the teacher has experience with the various systems of care.

The course topics would include: brain biology, ADD/ADHD/, PDD/autism, Tourette's, conduct disorders, anxiety disorders, obsessive-compulsive disorders, post-traumatic stress, separation anxiety, childhood schizophrenia/psychosis, empathy and sharing, parents as case managers, communications skills, caregiving, system and sibling support, coping and self care, problem management, rehabilitation, recovery and transition, advocacy, the judicial system and stigma.

Visions is not the same as Family-to-Family. Both are multi-session education programs that capture the core of NAMI's messages and values, but are not the same.

NAMI Illinois expects to co-host a training session for teachers with NAMI Wisconsin soon. Anyone interested in this program should give their name to Anne Olson at 309-454-4983.

## Wonderland has gone Neverland

A great victory for NAMI Stigma Busters and the Mental Health Coalition Against Stigma in Hollywood brought together and led by NAMI. We let the world of television know that TV producers and writers cannot depict persons with mental illnesses as monsters!

With ratings falling and sponsors withdrawing their ads, ABC made the final decision to put Wonderland on indefinite hold.

NAMI appreciates and commends the terrific work of dedicated Stigma Busters who helped make this happen. Please thank the sponsors who responded to your messages and removed their support for this program that reinforce ignorance and stigma toward persons with mental illness.

## Massachusetts becomes 31st state to adopt insurance parity

Massachusetts Governor Paul Cellucci signed into law the nation's 31st state statute requiring health insurance plans to provide parity of coverage for mental illnesses.

"With Massachusetts, New England now stands solidly for parity," NAMI director Laurie Flynn noted. "Every state in the region will serve as a beacon for the rest of the country."

--from NAMI of Livingston/McLean Counties newsletter

## What to do during a crisis

-- Do not take the person's behavior personally. In many cases, the illness itself creates a tremendous distortion of reality. It helps to remember that the person is badly frightened and probably not responsible for what he/she is saying or doing. Understand it is not your fault nor is it the fault of the person in crisis. Brain disorders are biochemical disorders of the brain and diagnosed by the symptoms which cause much distress to the person suffering from it.

-- Stay calm and low key. Don't hurry. If possible, remove the individual to a quiet place away from crowds and excitement. Even minimal stress adds to the illness. Be firm and in control of the situation.

-- It will not help to argue or deny that what your relative is seeing, hearing or feeling is real. Instead, assure him/her that you love him and understand that what he is experiencing is real to him or her and that you want to help.

-- Maintain on-going communication by talking directly to the person and avoiding side conferences with others. Often people have brief periods of lucidity. Learn to recognize them and gear your communication to those stretches.

-- Always be honest. Your relative needs to know that he/she can trust you. Discuss hospitalization with him/her if this is a possibility. Do not hide books about mental illness. Do not make threats if you do not plan to follow through.

-- Unless necessary, do not immediately move in close or touch the person as this may encourage paranoia or other symptoms.

## Illinois needs this program

When the number of mentally ill inmates in jails started increasing in Lubbock County, Texas, they did something about it.

Officials started a program to keep the mentally ill out of jail and started providing proper treatment for mentally ill persons who were required to remain incarcerated because they committed violent offenses.

The sheriff said the program "starts out on the street" when an individual is detained. An evaluation team, which includes mental health workers, is called in to determine if the offender has a mental impairment and should be diverted from jail. The mental health center said "they can call us 24 hours a day and we will go where ever they are and meet that individual."

A mentally ill offender accused of a non-violent misdemeanor offense is eligible for release on a personal recognizance bond if the district attorney determines that is appropriate. However, individuals determined to have mental impairments must agree to receive treatment if they are released. Those arrested for violent offenses or felonies are not released on personal recognizance.

Services are provided whether or not an individual is a county resident. "we don't discriminate against any individual. . . Everyone is treated as if they belong to the county," said Mary Mahan adult director of the Lubbock regional Mental Health Center.

Lubbock County, Texas has urged that the state adopt similar programs throughout the state and to train law enforcement officers on how to work with the mentally ill.



# Seeing Red

## Natives Good, Cavalry Bad

by Steve Eckardt

The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) brought a fitting coda to its kidnapping of Elian Gonzalez with the commando raid on its stooge's home.

How else to end the whole appalling and illegal affair but ... appallingly and illegally?

Of course if it wasn't for the tremendous near-daily mobilizations of people in Cuba --the greatest since the Revolution's early days-- poor Elian STILL wouldn't be reunited with his dad (though he's not out of Washington's clutches yet).

Thanks to Cuba --and eventually U.S. and world public opinion-- it became politically too expensive for Washington to keep the child from his only parent.

Forced to retreat, the U.S. salvaged what it could with a commando demonstration of its contempt for law and (it hoped) a white hat for its largest police force, the widely-hated INS.

Now THAT takes real gall. After all, the entire affair was Washington's creation from beginning to end. And it was the INS in the first place which --in gross violation of international law and treaties-- handed Elian over to

his distant counter-revolutionary relatives in Miami instead of sending him home.

Of course every part of the U.S. government was soon involved, too --aiding, inciting and instructing its Miami stooges to drag out Elian's kidnapping as long as possible -- while milking its propaganda portrayal of Cuba as a wretched dictatorship unfit for children.

None of this would have happened if Elian was from any country except Cuba.

It's all part of Washington's forty-year "eat-shit-and-die" policy toward the revolutionary island, a policy that the U.S. rulers will NEVER abandon. After all, Cuba's uppity natives committed the ultimate crime -- they overthrew capitalism and expropriated U.S. corporate property. They built healthcare and educational systems better than those of the Northern Colossus --and, adding insult to injury-- shared it all with any country that asked ... for FREE!

Such impudent challenges to the Empire can't be allowed to stand. (Hey, let one store owner get away with not paying 'protection' money and, before you know it, the whole racket's in jeopardy.)

But thanks to the Cubans' great pride in their revolution's accomplishments --and their willingness to sacrifice to defend them-- Washington's been unable to make them either eat shit or die, despite over forty years of trying.

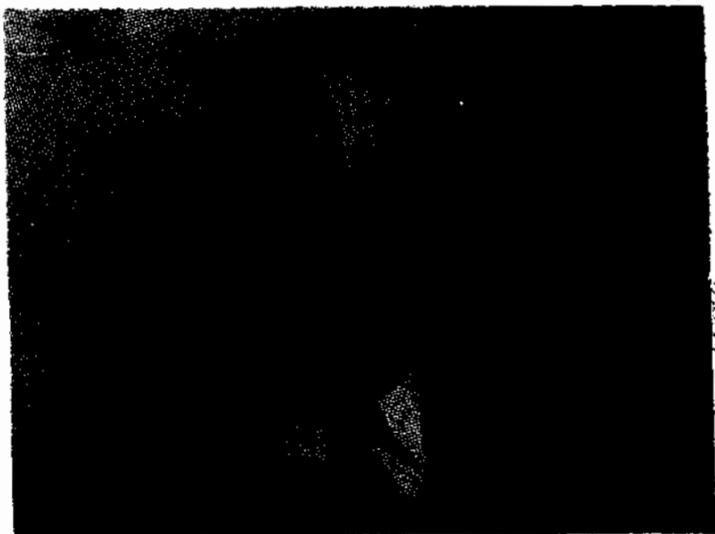
No, the U.S. will never surrender its Cuba policy. Still --as the Elian case shows-- it can be forced to retreat on it ... if everybody keeps scandalizing Washington for trying to illegalize Cuba's very existence.

Just don't wait for a change of heart in Washington -- the for-real good-guys aren't carrying battering rams and machine guns.

If you're interested in Cuba --or just support its right to live-- go to Havana for the Second World Gathering in Solidarity with Cuba this coming November 9th through 15th. This will be the most important political event of the year anywhere ... and Fidel--having pledged to attend the whole thing--thinks so, too. The web-magazine SeeingRed <[www.SeeingRed.com](http://www.SeeingRed.com)> is organizing travel and transportation at very low cost, along with the National Network on Cuba. Contact [Steve@SeeingRed.com](mailto:Steve@SeeingRed.com) for further information.

## What?

## The Post Amerikan needs money? James, get my checkbook!



That's right. We're a little short on cash. Actually, flat broke.

We are depending on our readers, those who feel an alternative newspaper is good for the community.

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# The Poetry Page

## MY BIRTHRIGHT

The white world is crippled with denial when they remember all those black men, hanging in tree after tree, so still, my birthright is a twisted dream that did survive, my ransom paid in money an blood, and I carry uh weight of secret wisdom, though they did forbid us our langwedge, and even the drum, we spoke of what could not be said in the code of song, we made their langwedge do things it was never meant ta do, we did uh brutal ballet in the subtext of their world, an baby, we are still dancing, in the footnotes, in the misquotes, in the space of what is unsaid, the untranslatable window between joy an sorrow.

--John Firefly

## MY MOTHER

My mother had a big butt, and a very large bosom, she could've nursed the world as a baby, my mother was black, she was not a stereotype, she was not an Aunt Jemima Barbie doll, all the people in the neighborhood black an white knew my mother, when they said her name they paid her homage, even after she died, she was one of the strongest women I have ever known, even though Om sure she did, I never saw my mother cry, my mother came out of Mississippi, when lynching was a very popular sport, white men took the defense, it was never uh fair game, the outcome always the same, black women had to have an iron reign on the famuhlee, that's just the way it was, when my mother was angry she could cuss uh sailor blue, and if us kids did somethin' really wrong, she would chase us round the house with uh broomstick, but forever, if somebody came to our house, an did knock on the door, she would ask that careful question, is they white or cullard?, she had the most elegant slightly chubby hands I've ever seen, when she cookt she would never measure anything,

she could just feel how much, she made us food that was uh memory of Mississippi, and it did whisper Africa, we had black-eyed peas and chitlins for evree New Year's Eve, people would call my mother about dreams, an she would tell them what she saw, her father Levi, who is from Jamaica, never wanted her to marry my father, when she died, he didn't come to the funeral, my mother's mother was half Choctaw, my mother always had two thick braids wrappt around her head with uh scarf, when my mother was teaching me how ta spell, if I got uh word wrong she would slap me, so I did learn the pain of words early on, an Mama, if you can look down an see this poem, I want you ta know, I love you for evree-thing you taught me, as I still learn an marvel, at how hard an white uh world you did survive, as the black ink of this poem does remember you, my mother, holding us children as complete as night does hold the stars, my mother.

--John Firefly

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## YOUR POEM HERE.

The Post Amerikan is seeking poetry submissions for the Poetry Page.

If interested, please mail your poem to: Post Amerikan, P.O. Box 3452, Bloomington, IL 61702 or e-mail to [pamerikan@aol.com](mailto:pamerikan@aol.com).

We have the right to reject any poem.



## REMEMBERING UH TWILIGHT

(for Michael Dubina)

He would paint  
uh landscape like  
the eyes of God  
were weary, they  
see too much  
an too little  
at the same  
time, opening  
an closing  
like uh goldfish  
breathing, this  
painter's father  
is dead an in the  
grave, yet we all  
step into the twilight,  
a tree,  
a cornfield,  
a telephone pole,  
with an evree color  
blue sky,  
an these paintings  
are about reaching  
out, an never  
getting to  
the other side,  
about the struggle,  
an how sad  
words like good-bye  
touch us all, an  
time runs forward an  
backward irrevocably,  
when the ones you  
love aren't there,  
and in the golden  
ring of twilight, I  
can almost hear  
my father, old  
weary goldfish,  
gulping last breath,  
and I think about  
how my father had  
such large brutal  
hands, an yet how  
he was such uh  
gentle man, with  
uh quiet dignity,  
who went through  
the trial of evree  
old black man,  
almost hanging  
on too long,  
heart broken  
by the world,  
in secret ways  
only he does know,  
he had uh wife  
before my mother,  
she died,  
he never did  
mention her,  
I was fourteen,  
snooping, found  
old newspaper clipping,  
but I never did mention  
her ta him, and I began  
to understand how two  
worlds entangle each  
other, as my father  
looks for me through  
the eyes of this poem,  
...past the grave, I  
am his shadow, his  
mirror, his  
echo, from the  
other side, as  
this poem dances  
in between,  
for the weary  
eyes of God

--John Firefly

## The Men Who Walk With Tigers

In a world of dreams, where clouds could be walked upon  
where giraffes were ridden like horses.  
When the mountains were young.  
There was born a breed of men with a quiet strength  
men above others, humble and gentle.  
Like shadows through time, they have always been with us  
pointing "the way"  
one with God, conjoined with the spirit of the tiger.  
Who walked with all beings as equals  
in harmony with nature  
these men who walk with tigers

--Nikolai Alexanderovich Zarick

## KATRINA NIGHTINGALE

Your words are a pillow  
I long to lay my  
head upon, as you  
sing out of the blue,  
of your homeland,  
of the ocean,  
you take me where  
drowning is swimming,  
such a young pearl,  
to learn the secret  
of a glimmer.

--John Firefly

## The Naked Trees of October

Lonely and forlorn . . . leafless skeletons  
washed in bright cold sunlight . . . caught  
between days past and days yet-to-be.

Embarrassed sentinels. . . standing watch  
over Indian Summer. . . shivering in  
anticipation of winter's chill.

Only bleak and toughened gray bark. . .  
unadorned with fruit or cover

Not pretty now. . . but smugly aware of how  
splendidly they will be attired alter their  
long dreamless sleep.

--Gary Riepe

## Writing

When you slept in my belly I was careful to feed myself  
with the proper nutrients, a science article, a technical report,  
the astute ramblings of Samuel Coleridge, a little T. S. Eliot,  
mayhap that odd article in Potato Farmer News, that one  
liner heard at the dinner table.

When you were born, how odd you looked, your legs were  
weak, your curves were flat, I massaged you, dressed  
you nicely, picked the cooties out of you, until I could call  
you rough draft.

Proof reading you, you had no sense of humor, how could  
this be? the egg from which you came was fertilized with  
irony and entropic sarcasm, but there you were, about as funny  
as a turnip. I gulped down a pot of coffee, the caffeine  
bolted my brain into a rewrite mode. by noon you were the  
second draft, the humor came little by little, how proud  
I was to see you standing on your own two feet.

When you graduated into final draft, it was scary to let  
you go out into the universe, where you will be edited,  
condensed, chopped into chapters, and, if you're lucky you'll be  
married to some sweet page. ultimately, you'll end up  
as a bird cage liner, and I'll begin the birth cycle  
again.

--Nikolai Alexanderovich Zarick



## Utopia

What non-sense it is to speak of utopia as an un-attainable chimera

I live in utopia, for

in the absence of love, I am bathed in love.  
Whilst existing in the cruelest gehenna, the vision of paradise is so clear.  
When friends faded away, I met friendship in the divine.  
As I cried, my eyes were given new insight.  
Heaven exists, especially when everybody says it does not.  
In a cell gray, void of color, the incarcerated create rainbows.  
When society rips out a tongue, sonnets are heard eternally.  
Love disappears, and we know the purest love.  
In the void, of darkest space, great festivals abound.  
The poet needs not the pen, the artist needs not the brush.

Utopia exists, because we are so far from it.

--Nikolai Alexanderovich Zarick

## Time In

If I were a bee, time would seem to never end.  
If I were a mayfly, would I appreciate how ephemeral my time is?

For Einstein, time was relative.  
For Neils Bohr, it was quantum.  
For the night jasmine, the tree of sadness, time is circadian.  
For the snail, motion and tempo stands still.

But, I am an incarcerated human.  
Where you do your time, or it does you.  
Gone are the landmarks, monuments and moments that I used to gauge my life's time span.  
Holiday stuff, love stuff, job stuff. . . .  
Smiles and tears shared with decade long friends.  
All these things are gone when you're in this time warp, or warp time.

For the foolish, it's all just one big card game.  
Wasting time is an eternal crime, with karma the judge.  
For the depressed, it's just one big nap, where the nightmare within a nightmare is seamless.  
For the blessed, it's just one continuous prayer.  
For me, there is not enough time in this one big day.

What is tomorrow, but another yesterday.  
PRAES NS

--Nikolai Alexanderovich Zarick

venuswims  
like fetus wings

& i'm setting at this big ol' table  
by myself on the ledge  
full fledged in the  
happiness of life  
& there's this girl in a painting holding a guitar &  
her shawl over her breast & she's  
dreaming of her  
tonight  
just like these musical vibes  
dancing around the room in my mind

if only i could make  
small talk  
but how can words be that big  
anyway  
compared to congos & bass & guitar & sax oh yea  
there i go again  
using those words  
i guess that's what they're there for  
what else do they do  
nothing really kinda like when you're  
speaking writing them i guess  
after all they're  
material even from the  
mouth shit i'm alone again  
besides these words i guess  
everytime i use words are they what  
is right anyway  
well ask anyone & they'll tell ya  
unless they're shy like me  
or scared like this one girl I know  
who disappeared amongst my phone messages  
but managed to stay alive  
through these there's that  
again  
can't escape  
wooden chair checkered red & white cloth holding my  
expressions  
soft cotton like grandma's dinner settings  
in the celebration of the newfound  
sun & warm weather & gravy only the way  
she could make  
& grandpa's meat on the strings  
while she & mother gossip in the way  
only women can  
it's a dance of what should be mentioned  
& what should be insinuated or so thought

--matt erickson

out into the night  
what will i find  
maybe somethin' new  
to wheel my mind

another girl  
for another whirl  
windblown mind rewind  
mixup twistup slide  
round the heart right down  
to the soul pounding  
sidewalk street 2 step  
all over her feet  
triple trample over my intentions  
pick one if i only knew  
what's a clue  
and whats the hell i'm  
makin' up i'm supposed to know  
but i don't know wait  
i know too much of this lonely touch  
feel the heal of figure out  
i hop  
and sometimes do  
know the feel  
of U

A GIRL CALLED ANSWER

--matt erickson



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### The Blue Chair

You kiss my eyes in cobalt blue  
 Your legs not quite straight, a little wobbly  
 Soft sumptuous curvaceous lines  
 From the trash heap you came  
 When the sunlight hits you, the bleakness of my gray  
 existence is filled with an azure hue.  
 Alone are we in this neighborhood, there is no one  
 quite like you, nor I, here.

--Nikolai Alexanderovich Zarick

### Death Muse I

Shadows of a black ship  
 Skim a dark and gray-blue sea.  
 Soaring white gulls call  
 Yearning to be free.  
 Suddenly I awake  
 With a shallow, icy breath.  
 Frightened by the glimpse  
 Of a vivid, crimson death.

--Gary Riepe

### Death Muse II

A yellowed skeleton stumbles in the mud  
 Falling to earth with a sickening thud.  
 Sucking mud mires the brittle legs  
 The sound is hollow -- like wooden pegs.  
 Gnarled hands raise, as if in a dream  
 Bony jaws part in a chilling scream.  
 To suffocate in a shroud of slime  
 Deathly silence is the sound of time.  
 The promise of pain and endless strife  
 Strangles and chokes the gasp of life.  
 Thorns of evil -- by Satan chose  
 Out of the mud comes a blood-red rose.

--Gary Riepe

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# Gay/Lesbian/Bi/Trans News

## ACHR street cleanup June 11

Sunday, June 11 is the date of the next Advocacy Council for Human Rights Street Cleanup of College Avenue in Normal.

Volunteers will meet at 1 p. m. at the north end of the Jewel-Osco parking lot on East College Avenue. If possible volunteers should bring gloves and plastic bags to collect trash.

Last fall the Advocacy council adopted a stretch of College Avenue from Grandview Drive to Veterans Parkway. The group meets once a month to clean up the street; in recognition of ACHR's efforts, the Town of Normal has erected a sign listing the group as the street's caretaker.

The cleanups usually take no longer than a couple of hours. For more information, call the ACHR hotline at 309-830-2521.

## McLean County AIDS Task Force to unveil updated web site

A group of dedicated community volunteers have been hard at work on updating the McLean County AIDS Task Force web site. Remodeling of the site is not yet complete, but several new features are up and running. To check out the new web site go to <http://homepage.dave-world.net/~mcatf>

## Group for children of GLBT parents forming in Peoria

Children Of Lesbians And Gays Everywhere (COLAGE) is the name of a new group being formed in the Peoria area.

The group will be tailored for children whose parent(s) are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgendered. The group will meet to discuss issues such as divorce, dealing with a parent coming out, and telling friends about parents. The group also will meet for social gatherings and serve as a means of networking among children in similar situations.

For more information, call Lori at 309-693-9903 or e-mail the group at [PeoriaCOLAGE@aol.com](mailto:PeoriaCOLAGE@aol.com).

## Legislative update on House Bill 474

from Rick Garcia, Political Director of Illinois

House Bill 474 enjoys unprecedented support and we are within striking distance of passing the bill. We have approximately 60 votes -- the minimum needed. We will not call the bill with less than 62 solid votes. We want to make sure the bill will pass -- we do not want it to fall short. We have asked the sponsor to request that the bill's deadline be extended through the veto session (November).

We have three new yes votes. Unfortunately, we have lost three previous yes votes. In the coming months we must not only try to get new yes votes, we must solidify and strengthen our base of support to prevent defections.

Constituent lobbying has played a critical role in garnering support for nondiscrimination legislation. Equality Illinois arranged and/or participated in meeting in a number of districts throughout the state. Constituents from Carbondale, Decatur, Champaign, Urbana, Bloomington, Spring Valley, Normal, Peoria, Berwyn, Arlington Heights, Mt. Prospect, Elgin, Elmhurst, Rockford, Palatine, Princeton, Edwardsville, Quincy, Springfield, Aurora, and Dupage County and Suburban Cook County, have met with their representatives over the past few months. In addition, our lobby day at the Statehouse brought people from throughout the state to talk to their representatives at the capitol. For the first time, non-Lakefront participants outnumbered Lakefront participants!

We have worked closely with all our constitutional officers, asking for their advice as well as asking them to use their influence to get greater support in the General Assembly. We have met numerous times with the Governor's staff regarding HB474. Secretary of State Jesse White has been extremely helpful in offering his assistance. Comptroller Dan Hynes, Lt. Governor Corinne Wood and Treasurer Judy Baar Topinka, also have been helpful to us. We have met regularly with all of these officials and their staffs. They have assisted us in many ways. Chicago Mayor Richard Daley has been extremely helpful, as has Calumet City Mayor Gerry Genova. Cook County Board President John Stroger and some other downstate mayors and county commissioners also have been helpful to us.

We work very closely with a variety of organizations and lobbyists in Springfield. We have strong working relationships and the support of the ACLU, NOW, Protestants For the Common Good, Service Employees International Union, United Auto Workers, AIDS Foundation of Chicago, the City of Chicago, Chicago Bar Association, AFSCME, Illinois Federation of Teachers, Chicago Teachers Association. Lobbyists for these groups have worked closely with us speaking to legislators with whom they have influence and offering us advice and assistance.

We are analyzing all districts on Illinois to determine exactly what it would take to get a yes vote from the rep and senator from those districts. We will then determine which districts are possible for a yes vote, and what it will take to get a yes vote. We will then develop and implement an appropriate strategy in each targeted district.

We have come a very long way from the day when there were only 18 votes for a "gay rights bill" in the Illinois General Assembly and when religious bodies, daily newspapers and political leaders opposed us in our quest for equal treatment under the law. Success is incremental -- one step, sometimes one very small step, at a time. We've come a long way; we still have a long way to go. We are committed and more important, we have a plan. A plan that is reasonable, doable and we believe, effective.

The calls, letters and visits to your representatives do have an impact. Your support of Equality Illinois and your participation in our activities bring us close to the time when Illinois will outlaw discrimination based on sexual orientation.

If you have any questions or comments please contact us at 773-477-7173 or toll-free 888-IFHR-888 or by e-mail: [ifhr@suba.com](mailto:ifhr@suba.com).

---from The Rainbow Connection newsletter

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artwork by local artists



# Mind Candy's gallery & museum web site listing

Welcome Post Amerikans to a special edition of Mind Candy. There is a whole cyber world emerging within the art scene. Galleries, museums, special collections, and on-line museum shops and art auction services are constantly upgrading their data bases. Some, like The Louvre, The Museum of Modern Art (MOMA), and many other great museums offer virtual tours. Soon you will be able to tour the international museums and galleries from your arm chair. Whilst nothing can compare to actually standing in front of a Calder sculpture, or Monet's Water Lillies, this virtual touring is sure fun stuff. Many galleries allow you to buy what you're viewing, so be careful of what you click, you just may be buying a Matisse for like a zillion pesos. . . Okay, here's the list, grab your Earl Gray tea and start your conversion into a cyber gallery rat. . .

The Museum of Modern Art: [www.moma.org](http://www.moma.org)  
 The Louvre: [www.louvre.fr](http://www.louvre.fr)  
 The Metropolitan Museum of Art: [www.metmuseum.org](http://www.metmuseum.org)  
 The Whitney Museum of Art: [www.whitney.org](http://www.whitney.org)  
 The Smithsonian American Art Museum: [www.americanart.si.edu](http://www.americanart.si.edu)  
 The Neuberger Museum of Art: [www.neuberger.org](http://www.neuberger.org)  
 The Getty Center: [www.GETTY.EDU](http://www.GETTY.EDU)  
 The Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum: [www.si.edu/ndm/](http://www.si.edu/ndm/)  
 The Fredric Remington Art Museum: [www.remington-museum.org](http://www.remington-museum.org)  
 The Los Angeles County Museum of Art: [www.lacma.org](http://www.lacma.org)  
 The Brooklyn Museum of Art: [www.brooklynart.org](http://www.brooklynart.org)  
 The American Museum of Natural History: [www.AMNH.ORG](http://www.AMNH.ORG)  
 The Jewish Museum: [www.jewishmuseum.org](http://www.jewishmuseum.org)  
 The Fern Bank Museum of Natural History: [www.fermbank.edu/museum](http://www.fermbank.edu/museum)  
 The Museum of the City of New York: [www.mcny.org](http://www.mcny.org)  
 The National Gallery of Art: [www.nga.gov](http://www.nga.gov)  
 The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston: [www.mfa.org](http://www.mfa.org)  
 The Norton Simon Museum: [www.nortonsimon.org](http://www.nortonsimon.org)

The Museum of Jewish Heritage: [www.mjhnyc.org](http://www.mjhnyc.org)  
 The Art Institute of Chicago: [www.artic.edu](http://www.artic.edu)  
 The Morgan Library: [www.morganlibrary.org](http://www.morganlibrary.org)  
 Houston Museum of Natural Science: [www.hmns.org](http://www.hmns.org)  
 The Cleveland Museum of Art: [www.clevelandart.org](http://www.clevelandart.org)  
 The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum: [www.ushmm.org](http://www.ushmm.org)  
 Philadelphia Museum of Art: [www.philamuseum.org](http://www.philamuseum.org)  
 Corcoran Gallery of Art: [www.corcoran.org](http://www.corcoran.org)  
 Duke University Museum of Art: [www.duke.edu/web/duma/](http://www.duke.edu/web/duma/)  
 El Museo Del Barrio: [www.elmuseo.org](http://www.elmuseo.org)  
 The International Center of Photography: [www.icp.org](http://www.icp.org)  
 The National Academy of Design Museum: [www.nationalacademy.org](http://www.nationalacademy.org)  
 DaHesh Museum: [www.daheshmuseum.org](http://www.daheshmuseum.org)

The Hibel Museum of Art: [www.hibel.org](http://www.hibel.org)  
 The Flint Institute of Arts: [www.flintarts.org](http://www.flintarts.org)  
 The Hermitage: [www.thehermitage.org](http://www.thehermitage.org)  
 The Yale Center for British Art: [www.yale.edu/ycba](http://www.yale.edu/ycba)  
 Yeshiva University Museum: [www.YU.EDU/MESEUM](http://www.YU.EDU/MESEUM)  
 Indianapolis Museum of Art: [www.ima-art.org](http://www.ima-art.org)  
 Museum of Contemporary Art: [www.mocanomi.org](http://www.mocanomi.org)  
 Joslyn Art Museum: [www.joslyn.org](http://www.joslyn.org)  
 Grand Rapids Art Museum: [www.gramonline.org](http://www.gramonline.org)  
 Institute of American Indian Arts Museum: [www.iaiancad.org](http://www.iaiancad.org)  
 Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art: [www.wadsworthatheneum.org](http://www.wadsworthatheneum.org)  
 The Museum of Glass: [www.museumofglass.org](http://www.museumofglass.org)  
 Corning Museum of Glass: [www.cmog.org](http://www.cmog.org)  
 Museum of Latin American Art: [www.molaa.com](http://www.molaa.com)  
 The Textile Museum: [www.textilemuseum.org](http://www.textilemuseum.org)  
 The National Museum of Women in the Arts: [www.nmwa.org](http://www.nmwa.org)  
 The Crow Collection of Asian Art: [www.crowcollection.org](http://www.crowcollection.org)  
 Falconer Gallery: [www.grinnell.edu/falconergallery](http://www.grinnell.edu/falconergallery)

Charles Demmuth House & Garden Museum: [www.demuth.org](http://www.demuth.org)  
 University of Kentucky Art Museum: [www.uky.edu/artmuseum](http://www.uky.edu/artmuseum)  
 Illustration House, Inc. : [www.illustration-house.com](http://www.illustration-house.com)  
 Museum of Art, Fort Lauderdale: [www.MUSEUMOFART.org](http://www.MUSEUMOFART.org)  
 The Japan Society: [www.japansociety.org](http://www.japansociety.org)  
 The Sharlot Hall Museum: [www.sharlot.org](http://www.sharlot.org)  
 The Museum of Tolerance: [www.wiesenthal.com](http://www.wiesenthal.com)  
 Demuth Museum: [www.demuth.org](http://www.demuth.org)  
 Detroit Institute of Arts: [www.dia.org](http://www.dia.org)  
 High Museum of Art: [www.high.org](http://www.high.org)  
 Hiram Blauvelt Art Museum: [www.hmns.org](http://www.hmns.org)  
 Liberty Science Center: [www./sc.org](http://www./sc.org)  
 Montclair Art Museum: [www.montclair-art.org](http://www.montclair-art.org)  
 Museum of American Folk Art: [www.folkartmuseum.org](http://www.folkartmuseum.org)  
 New Orleans Museum of Art: [www.noma.org](http://www.noma.org)  
 Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute: [www.clark.williams.edu](http://www.clark.williams.edu)  
 U.C.L.A. Hammer Museum: [www.hammer.ucla.edu](http://www.hammer.ucla.edu)  
 Winter Thur Museum, Garden and Library: [www.winterthur.org](http://www.winterthur.org)  
 Art Museum.Net: [www.artmuseum.net](http://www.artmuseum.net) (museum info, etc.)  
 Onview.com: [www.onview.com](http://www.onview.com) (an online gallery)  
[www.museumshop.com](http://www.museumshop.com) (40 museum gift shops on one site)  
 The Frick Collection: [www.frick.org](http://www.frick.org)  
 The American Numismatic Society: [www.amnumsoc.org](http://www.amnumsoc.org)  
 The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art: [www.nelson-atkins.org](http://www.nelson-atkins.org)

Well Post Amerikans, that is all for today. If you know of any other galleries, museums and web sites related to the arts please send them along. Likewise if you or any one you know, or know about has a zine, poetry or photo, illustration, or graphics collection, or mayhap a book, or any kind of goody (excluding tapes, discs, vinyl -- at this time) send them directly to me, along with thoughts, letters of adoration or disdain to: Nik Zarick, #162110, C.C.I., 900 Highland Ave, Cheshire, CT, 06410-1698.

Hopefully you'll make good use of this gallery and museum listing; and you'll like my selections, if not shoot me! Remember that Post Amerikan needs financial support in this crucial make or break time. Please buy your friends gift subscriptions, and/or treat a local library to a subscription. Without you Post Amerikan will be a lost memory like tears in the rain. Next issue, it's back to zine reviews, zum web sites and tasty bits of Mind Candy. Thanks to all the wonderful people who sent stuff to be reviewed. Nearly everybody will be in the upcoming editions. Love to ya all, peace.

**Karen Schmidt**  
Alderman ~ Ward 6

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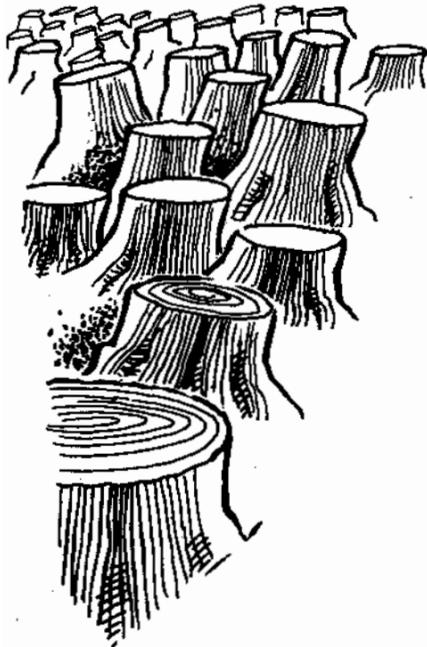
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Ward 6 is mostly downtown  
Bloomington and  
the surrounding area



# Guess who's coming to dinner



As if we didn't have enough to stress us out, the price of fuel rising, will Mp3 just be another 8-track phenom, will Post Amerikan fold because you played the slacker and didn't support it when we needed you? (That was a hint to subscribe, by the way. . .) And then there is all that whacky weather, this time caused by La Nina. Well there is a new stressor on the block, a menace to everybody, although many will say that it does not affect them. It is the dreaded Asian Long-Horned Beetle. Whilst this little creature is only about an inch long, the damage it can do is nothing to joke about.

The Asian Long-Horned Beetle was first spotted in the United States in the Chicago area in 1998, where it probably hitched a ride in wooden packing material from China, where it devastated whole forest regions. Giving the regions that "clear-cut" look, if you like moonscapes, and not having any air to breathe and nothing to sequester the carbon from the atmosphere then you'll love this bug. (Metaphorically speaking.) Mostly it goes after maple, elm, poplar, willow, and horse chestnuts. But who is to say that it won't adapt to any woody plant in sight. . .

The female beetle bores deep into a tree and lays eggs. The eggs metamorphose into larvae and eat their way out of the tree, leaving our poor tree friend looking like it has been used for machine gun fire practice. The adult beetles are only active during the warmer months, but that has been enough time to destroy thousands upon thousands of trees throughout the United States. The only clear sign that an Asian Long-Horned Beetle has entered your tree is a perfectly round hole, as if someone drilled it. Sometimes the beetle will exit a limb to move onto another tree, so checking limbs is a sound concept.

If your (and they are all our responsibility) tree(s) have been invaded, the sad, but true, only option (right now) is to cut the tree down, make sure it is ground into chips and have the chips burned.

The United States Department of Agriculture says that they will eventually win this war, but that it will take a long time, and we must all be soldiers in this "good war." The U.S.D.A. is developing a nicotine-based pesticide (get out that chewing tobacco kids. . .)

There is no known natural predator in the U. S. A. of this pest, and since Woody Woodpecker has turned down our assassination contract, it looks like it is up to us free thinking -- Gaia loving folk to take up arms and protect our trees who give us so much with so little reward.

**What can you do?**  
Start monitoring your, and any nearby trees closely and regularly. If you spot evidence of invasion, contact your county extension agent, the local health department, the E. P. A. and the Department of Agriculture pronto -- and if they stall, put your foot down until you get action. In the same way we humyns wiped out polio and small pox (through a global effort...), we can likewise win this war.

Nobody cherishes the idea of cutting down zum of our beloved trees; in fact it's a nightmare of mine. But maybe we Post Amerikan can stop the Long-Horned Beetle before it comes to a complete loss of our sacred forests. The beetle itself can be identified by its long antennae, "horns," which are twice its body length, and the shell is black with light spots; but it is more likely that you will spot the perfectly round holes first. Millions of bucks have been spent on this war already, and the war has just begun.

Let's drive this little critter back to Gehenna, where this little demon came from. Normally I am quite a peaceful humyn, I will release insects instead of squishing them, and I believe that all creatures have their place in the universe, but in this case my Christian/Zen/Taoist belief system says you're outta here bug. After we mobilize to fight the Asian Long-Horned Beetle, mayhap we can all figure how we can save Post Amerikan. Through bottle drives, selling advertising to our buddies, buying gift subscriptions for our friends and robbing our piggy banks to fund this little gem we can keep the P. A. going. After all, if Post Amerikan folds who will tell you about Asian Long-Horned Beetles, abuses at the Gap, and how to build homes out of log ends, straw and recycled materials? There is an old saying "You never miss the water until the well runs dry." When our trees disappear because of pollution and pests, and our little independent zines vanish, who will you blame? We are the power, act!

--Nikolai Alexanderovich Zarick



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## Target & Kohl's producer fires workers for union attempt

Kohl's and Target stores are amongst the importers of clothing from Nicaragua where workers are facing mass arrests for attempted unionization.

The Mil Colores Company, owned by American Gregg Miller, has a maquiladora factory in Managua, Nicaragua, according to the National Labor Committee.

At the Nicaraguan facility, approximately 700 workers sew children's, men's and women's clothing with the following labels: No Fear, Sonoma and High Sierra. High Sierra is a Target brand label and Sonoma is a Kohl's label.

On January 10, the workers held an assembly and elected union leaders. To date 200 workers have been fired and 68 face criminal charges.

The workers charge the firm with forced overtime of ten hour shifts, six days a week, including occasional Sunday work and 15 hour shifts; starvation wages as low as 20 cents an hour; filthy sanitary conditions and poor ventilation in the factory; and cheating the workers on Social Security and health care.

Pedro Ortega, the union's general secretary, who has been criminally charged with "disturbing the public order" and "illicit association to commit crimes," said, "After paying starvation wages all along, now the company is spending a great deal of money on this legal suit, hoping to throw us into jail. What Mil Colores is really seeking is to wreck the union and treat us all like criminals and terrorists. They want everyone in the factory to be afraid of them. They want to break the back of the workers' courage. They don't want people to stand up to defend their basic rights and dignity."

Meanwhile, the U. S. Congress is considering expanding the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) to apparel producers in Central America and the Caribbean. The bill, as structured, requires no maintenance of basic human rights in factories.

The National Labor Committee is urging letters to Kohl and Target stores, encouraging them to negotiate with the union. Or a visit to their local stores and raising the concern to the manager would also be useful. Target's CEO is Robert J. Ulrich, Target Corporation, 777

Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis, MN 55402; 612-370-6948, e-mail to bob.ulrich@target.com. Kohl Store's CEO is Larry Montgomery, N56 W17000 Ridgewood Dr., Menomonee Falls, WI 53051, 262-703-7000, e-mail: larry\_montgomery@kohls.com.

Or you can help feed the family of the fired workers for \$1.59 a day. To send donations or for more information contact the National Labor Committee, 275 Seventh Ave., 15th Fl., NY, NY 10001, www.nlcnet.org.

--from Livingston & McLean Counties Union News

## Cows & Unions: Kids' book raises fun issues

Click, Clack, Moo, Cows that type  
by Doreen Cronin and Betsy Lewin  
Simon & Schuster, 2000, \$15  
ISBN: 0-689-8323-3

Ever try to explain to your kids what your job is? And a little more challenging, ever try to explain what a union is?

Reach out to the nearest children's book shelf and grab *Click, Clack, Moo--Cows that Type* by Doreen Cronin, with pictures of Betty Lewin.

This delightful little volume, aimed at the pre-school/kindergarten set, is set in a typical children's book venue--a barnyard, complete with cows, chickens and ducks--and Farmer Brown. With one significant difference--these cows type.

The cows not only type, they also strike. They use the typewriter to demand electric blankets from the farmer. When he refuses, they withhold their milk, joined in solidarity by the chickens, who withhold their eggs.

With the ducks as mediators, the farmer and the barnyard union reach an agreement. In exchange for giving up the typewriter, the chicken and cows get electric blankets.

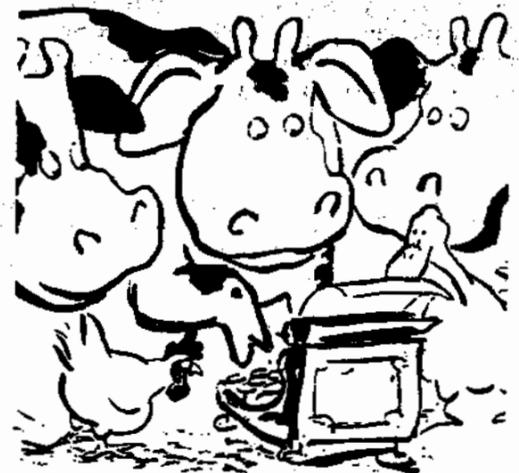
All is peaceful in the barnyard--except the ducks keep the typewriter and soon they are hammering out their own demands.

This fun little volume is a great way to talk to your kids about group solidarity, standing up for decent conditions (who wants to sleep in a cold barn?) and conflict resolution through compromise and mediation. Children will love the brightly colored illustrations and just might start to understand why a union is important for workers (and cows too).

--Mike Matejka

### CLICK, CLACK, MOO Cows That Type

by Doreen Cronin pictures by Betsy Lewin





# It's all about

Science has got us doing cartwheels in space. We have reached the moon. Can we reach the face across the breakfast table, or over the back fence, or across the railroad tracks. Have we ever thought of investigating the wilderness in the seat next to us? Or exploring the constellations locked up in our own skulls? We are in orbit, all right, alone, sealed off as no astronaut ever was -- out of communication, all our lives calling out, "This is my name! This is my name! Can you hear me? Do you hear my voice? Who are you? Speak!"

--Agnes de Mille

Fear tastes like a rusty knife and do not let her into your house.

--John Cheever

I have learned through bitter experience the one supreme lesson to conserve my anger, and, as heat conserved is transmitted into energy, even so our anger controlled can be transmitted into a power, which can move the world.

--Mohandas Gandhi

We imagine that our mind is a mirror that more or less accurately reflects what is happening outside us. On the contrary, our mind itself is the principal element of creation.

--Rabindranath Tagore.

As soon as you have made a thought, laugh at it.

--Lao Tzu

Never apologize for showing feeling. Remember that when you do so you apologize for truth.

--Benjamin Disraeli

The day in the woods I took a compass was the day I got lost for sure.

--John Cage

The unconscious wants truth. It ceases to speak to those who want something else more than truth.

--Adrienne Rich

God bless the roots! Body and soul are one.

--Theodore Roethke

Freedom FROM choice is what you want. Freedom OF choice is what you've got.

--DEVO

My friend, Ariane Lydon, and I were talking about the worlds we have created around us the other day. We were both in awe of the fact that we have created the PERFECT world for us, and we talking about how the doors are opening ever more quickly for us. Why is it all happening so effortlessly, so easily? She pointed out that it is simply this: I am aligned with Universal Consciousness. Such a lofty but simple explanation, but she pointed out that when you are on a path you need to be on, the doors around you open up everywhere.

Another friend was teasing Mark one day about something he had said, and told him, "It's all about you, isn't it, Mark?" Mark shared this with me, thinking how funny it was...but you know, in each and every moment it IS all about us. Everything I do, every moment of the day...whether it is to help others or feed my children, or to read a book for pleasure.... Each and every decision I make is all about me. What I want to do, and how it will effect me. Anyone who claims to serve others all the time is lying to themselves. In serving others, in being selfless, ultimately you are serving yourself in some way. All of our decisions are for ourselves. We say, "Oh, I couldn't do that because it's illegal/ would hurt my folks/ my kids/ their feelings/ the environment/ it's immoral/ not right...." and what does this translate into? YOUR feelings about your actions and the world around you. You may choose to recycle because you believe it is best for the world and the world around you.... But you are making a choice based upon the world YOU want to live in, with a vision of the world as YOU want it. Each of us does this at every moment in time. So, yes, it is ALL about me. And it is all about YOU. We each create our own Universe, and are solely responsible for all of our decisions and the outcomes.

## These Boots Are Made For Walking

When I was a young girl I wanted, more than anything, to be a go-go dancer, wearing white boots, dancing in a cage. Nancy Sinatra had the greatest boots, and even a groovy song to go with them ("These boots are made for walking-that's just what they'll do! One of these days these boots are going to walk all over you!"). I wanted to dance with the world watching, in that iron cage, free inside the bonds of iron around me. Honestly, that still hasn't changed--I do think it would be fun to dance in a cage, but maybe not with the white boots. I'd still go for that fringed dress to jiggle in though, shaking to and fro. It has always symbolized wildness to me, an ultimate freedom. Some folks think about taking off in the sunset on a Harley...I want to be locked up. Hugh, you still want to weld that cage for me?

As I became older, my goals changed. In third grade I wanted to be a judge...and I became one. I harshly judged those around me for their cruelties to others, and wanted them to be kinder, gentler. I wanted children to all be friends. Sometimes I tried and convicted them in public, making my point. At other times I just went home and cried for the cruelty I saw around me. I still can cry over these things easily, still want to fix everything, still want to make all things perfect and make people be nice. What situation do I find myself in constantly to this day? The one of the observer, watching jerks be mean and controlling of others, and I am there attempting to intervene, getting worked up, trying to make everything nice. Somehow I keep finding myself in this situation over the years, recreating this experience. What is the lesson I need to learn from it? Maybe how to succeed in fixing it...but more likely, to understand that I can step out of it, not be a part, and let others be responsible for their own reality. Either way, it is all about me and the lessons I want. Those being stepped on, told what to do, controlled, really don't seem to care about it as much as I do. What is the lesson here for me?

Later I wanted to be a doctor. I wanted to go to medical school and heal people. This turned into mental health, wanting to be a psychiatrist. I didn't approve of medical school and modern medicine, so it turned into a psychologist. And then just a social worker. I was a social worker, and tried to help others help themselves. I really believed, at first, that I could help change the world by the work I was going to do in the field, and by helping change the system. I found the system too difficult, too broken, too unbearable. Sadly, I discovered that many of the people in the system enjoyed where they were on some level, and even when the golden apple was held in front of them, waiting to be taken, they would often ignore it. It almost broke me. I found myself drinking shot after shot of tequila one day trying desperately to stop feeling, to stop crying, to be numb. I quit. my job.

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# me, baby!

I decided to do what I had wanted for a long while. I wanted to work with children, and I started a day care in my home. I would change the world by working with the children. Then I had my own children. And then.... I became a healer, of sorts. I became a midwife. And an herbalist. And, soon I will begin my studies to become a homeopathist. I have combined my desires to work with people, help them heal their hearts, minds, souls, help heal families, and have an interesting job which people give me money for.

I have also grown more callused over the years. "Not my life, not my problem" has become one of my many mottoes of existence. It sounds harsh, but serves me well. I am able to listen to another's sufferings, but still fall asleep at night. We are each responsible for our own lives. It is difficult enough getting done all that I need to for myself and my family, with the choices I made. Every day I am in a race against time, dangling by a thread, prioritizing each thing that should have been done yesterday, and yet somehow I have grown past my insomnia and put my head on my pillow each night...knowing that my life is perfect, the world is perfect, and all is well. But I still haven't danced in my cage.

For many, many years the Amish and their lifestyle have fascinated me. I have wanted to get to know about them, and their community. I have romanticized their lifestyle, wishing it were mine at times. Simple, clear-cut, focused on each daily skill and never thinking beyond this. There are many Amish up here, and I have aspired to being midwife to the Amish. Now I wish to add "homeopathist" to the list of services I want to offer them. Ah, but what if they knew of my secret desire to dance in white boots in a cage? Would I be good enough for the Amish to speak with? Would they reject me?



## ON THE MOVE

White boots and short dresses help girls go go.

### The Plain Folk?

Ah, the buggies! The cute little children in their bonnets and hats! Every other Sunday the road by our house has so many buggies on it that we must be extra cautious in our driving on the curves. We can hear the clopping of the hooves as the horses make their way down the road as we sit outside. But, I began to notice other things and the Judge re-emerged.

Walmart had a hitching post. Walmart? They shopped at WALMART!?!?! I was even more appalled when I saw what they bought. "Horrible chemicals" for their clothes. Generic cheese curls. And how they are chauffeured around! You constantly see old retired guys snoozing in their cars as a bunch of Amish women browse the flea market or garage sales. These are the folks I was secretly wishing to be like (while secretly wearing my white go-go boots under the Amish clothing)? How were they any different than anyone else? They seemed to use people with cars, people with phones. They seemed snobbish, standoffish.

I talked with my friend Molly, who is midwife to the Amish in Kalona, Iowa about this, and she told me I was WRONG. I reflected upon my view of Russia and how I looked at everything wrong when I first arrived there, judging it all from my cultural perspective and bias, and remembered the way my world view changed when I put it all in perspective...looked at THEIR cultural view. I then did what I do best. I bought a book on the topic and read all about the Amish way of life.

Guess what? The judge was wrong! Their taboos, isolation, restrictions are all about keeping them a tight community. They do not honor individuality, but instead honor serving the group. They believe that the group is more important than the individual and to keep humble they dress alike, have the same type of buggies, and keep the same types of restrictions on all the members of the community. If they had cars, they wouldn't need to rely upon each other and could instead get a job anywhere...which would break down their community.

Interestingly enough, joining the church is not a required decision. You can choose to not join the church, and not be shunned. Most join the church at eighteen. On the other hand, having only an eighth grade education and spending your early life "isolated" in your community, surrounded by loved ones makes the idea of leaving the community a bit far fetched. Some folks up here think the Amish are brain washed. I wish we had similar values.

So, if the Amish knew me, Miss Queen Individualist, what would they say? My nose is double pierced. Should I take my noserings out if I meet the Amish so I don't scare them and so they will be more likely to like me, so I can learn from them? Or, should I try being myself and hope for the best. Ah.... When the opportunity arose, I chose to be myself.

### enter Mrs. Samuel (Rosa) Schwartz

Molly had ordered Herbal Iron for an Amish midwife up here, and needed me to deliver it to her. I made the necessary connections through mail, and then panicked! I can't remember when I was so nervous. Would she like me? Do I take my nose rings out? Do I leave them in? What do I do? It's all about me, remember, and what I want out of life. I want to be myself, but I don't want to scare away the Amish by being who I am. I want to understand this subculture of America, and hopefully be a part of it in some way. I opted for a cotton dress...and nose rings. After all, I was only delivering herbs. It would take 5 minutes and I would be gone.

Rosa is in her seventies. She invited Christiane and I into her home, where she and I proceeded to discuss birth for the next hour and a half. She was so happy to have another midwife to talk with! I was so happy to find out she was so NORMAL and not put off by me at all. She invited me to come back and share information with her, expressed a desire to learn how to suture and wanted to take classes. She learned I am going to be traveling to Kalona a lot where her relatives live, and asked if she could ride down with me.

Since then, I have gone to Iowa, driving the Amish both ways, and have had amazing conversations. Amos is very intelligent and well read for the Amish. Because I am not a retired guy, but myself with my nose rings and all, he had a lot of questions to ask my about my culture as opposed to his culture. He is witty, insightful, and I think he was most amazed to discover that my worldview and his are probably much more similar than different. We discussed windmill pumps and how they work, the best way to use a woodstove for cooking, sawdust toilets, which we both have, and the best methods for irradiating quack grass naturally. As we loaded up the car in Iowa to return to Wisconsin, my kids hung out with the Amish children there, talking, giggling. Amos had purchased a peacock because one of theirs died. I opened the car top carrier, and he was thinking wondering about where to put his bird. "Does it get hot up there when you drive?" he asked. "I don't know," I told him. "I've never ridden up there." Pause. And then he cracked up laughing.

We have agreed that I will let them know every time I go to Iowa in the fall, which will probably be weekly. I still wonder what they would think if they knew of my secret go-go girl fantasies. After all, it is all about me, always. I hope to do births with them, homeopathy for them, and even though I can't be Amish, wouldn't WANT to be Amish (how would I ever dance in a cage if I were Amish?), being connected with people that my heart identifies with is quite enough.

Every choice I make is about the life I want to lead, and I am responsible for that choice. Every moment is all about me. Remember this in all you do: it's all about you too, what you want, and how you want to live.

-Marcee Murray

# crazy planet kitchen

*Dining for the Casual Gourmet*

**eclectic mix of beers & wines**

**breakfast omelets**

**homemade pastries**

**breakfast burritos**

**nothing is fried**

**vegetarian options**

**eclectic menu**

**lunch**

**sandwiches**

**main dish salads**



414 North Main Street  
Bloomington, IL  
tel: 309.827.7787

## HOURS

**Monday**

6:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

**Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday**

6:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

**Friday**

6:30 a.m. to midnight

**Saturday**

11:00 a.m. to midnight

**Sunday**

closed

crazy  
planet  
kitchen

**Midway Artists Gallery**

**on second floor**

**Thursday-Saturday**

**11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.;**

**or by appointment**

**Stop in during Pub Crawl &  
the Sesquicentennial celebration**