

Putnam Nabs Bix Grant

Written by Joe Collins

Tuesday, 10 October 2000 18:00

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The National Endowment for the Humanities has recently given a \$9,300 grant to the Putnam Museum of History and Natural Science to continue work on the Bix Beiderbecke Exhibition. Money from the grant will be used to assemble a group of humanities scholars and programming specialists to assist in developing the exhibition. The Bix Beiderbecke Exhibition Project was started in 1997 with a grant award from the Riverboat Development Authority. An advisory committee has worked closely with the museum staff under the leadership of Curator of History Eunice Schlichting. Chicago designer Roy Alexander will provide a foundation for the continuing research and development of the project. You can see the concept for the Bix Biderbecke Hall as outlined by Alexander at (<http://periodictable.com/Bix2000/>).

If you were looking for another reason to stop smoking, here it is: A study by the University of California-Davis shows smoking is the leading global cause of fires and death from fires. Smoking results in an estimated cost, by fire, of nearly \$7 billion in the United States and \$27.2 billion worldwide in 1998. Some 2 million fires occur in the U.S. alone, resulting in about 5,000 deaths, 54,000 hospitalizations, and 1.4 million injuries. The overall cost of fire in the U.S. has been estimated at up to \$200 billion a year, representing almost 2 percent of the U.S. gross domestic product. A frightening statistic is that of these U.S. fires, children under the age of 10 with access to cigarette lighters and matches cause about 100,000 fires, 300 to 400 child deaths, and 11 percent of all injuries in reported fires each year.

The debate continues on recent tapping of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve to drive down the high cost of gasoline. The Libertarian Party points out that a moratorium on all gasoline taxes would save the average consumer 42 cents per gallon. There are 43 different taxes imposed on the production and distribution of gasoline. With a proposed moratorium, consumers would save \$67 billion in one year.

The Muscular Dystrophy Association will be offering free flu shots for area residents affected by neuromuscular disorders covered by MDA programs. For information, or to set up an appointment for a flu shot, call Tonya Kramer at (319)393-8905.

On October 4, the Illinois State Board of Elections officially placed Green Party presidential candidate Ralph Nader on the Illinois general-election ballot. Nader's name was placed on the ballot due in part to Democrats withdrawing their objection at a September 27 court hearing to

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petitions submitted by Ralph Nader's campaign in Illinois. The state board had counted 27,698 valid signatures on petitions calling for his name to be placed on the ballot. You can learn more about Nader's campaign at his Web site at (<http://www.nader2000.org>).

Rock Island recently unveiled a new section of the Great River Trail as part of its \$1.9 million, five-phase project that began in 1991. The Great River Trail is 62.5 miles long and connects to the city of Savanna, Illinois, via a hard-surface bike path. Rock Island is considering connecting the path to a trail along the Hennepin Canal, crossing the Rock River on a lane the State of Illinois plans to add to the West Rock River Bridge.

Applications for Davenport's annual Halloween parade are now available at Davenport City Hall at 226 West 4th Street, the Davenport Public Library at 321 Main Street, and United Neighbors at 808 Harrison Street, or by calling (319)322-7363. This year's theme is "Our Four-Legged Friends' Halloween," with retired police dog Hershey as the grand marshal.

The Illinois Commerce Commission reports that during the month of September, only 65 percent of Ameritech customers who lost their service had it restored within 24 hours. This sharply contrasts with August, when 85 percent of customers with line problems had them fixed within a day. State standards call for service to be resumed within 24 hours for more than 95 percent of those affected by an outage. The poor performance means that Ameritech's owner, SBC Communications, Inc., will have to fork over more than \$30 million in fines by the end of the year.

If you registered to vote at a driver's license office, you need to check in with the Scott County Auditor's Office to see if they do, in fact, have your voter-registration card. A problem with Iowa Department of Transportation computers messed up nine months of data, and your registration might have gotten lost. You can reach the Scott County Auditor's Office from 7:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday at (319)326-8631. If you haven't registered to vote, you have until October 28 in Iowa for the November 7 election. (In Illinois, the deadline was October 10.)

Although he isn't up for election, U.S. Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA) seems to be bringing a great deal of money into his home state. Included in the list of 30 press releases on his Web site for the month of September are seven releases obviously referencing money coming to Iowa. You can see for yourself at Senator Harkin's Web site at (<http://www.senate.gov/~harkin/press.html>). In contrast, Iowa's other senator, Charles Grassley (R-IA), only has two of 27 press releases mentioning money. You can compare at (<http://www.senate.gov/~grassley/prind.htm>). By the way, if you access either of these sites, be sure to pack a lunch; they are very slow.

Iowa will receive \$7.8 million in emergency money to assist low-income families with high heating bills this winter. The money comes from \$400 million in federal emergency money released by President Clinton to help low-income families pay for heat. The price of home-heating oil and natural gas is expected to increase significantly this winter. The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance program helped 62,000 Iowa households last winter and is administered by the Iowa Department of Human Rights. To learn more, including the income guidelines, you can call (515)281-3268 or look on the Web at

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(<http://www.state.ia.us/government/dhr/caa/LIHEAP.html>).