

## Some of Summer's Noteworthy Events

Written by Mike Schulz

Wednesday, 24 May 2006 01:05

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**THE LIVING SEA AND A-MAZING SEA**   
 Putnam Museum & IMAX Theatre   
 Opening Friday, May 26   
 There's no better time than summer for enjoying a trek to the beach, venturing into deep waters, submerging yourself in the briny blue, and communing with some of nature's most spectacular underwater creatures. Unless, like me, you're hydrophobic.   
 Leave it to Davenport's Putnam Museum & IMAX Theatre to provide an educational, entertaining alternative for the defiantly landlocked. Beginning on Friday, May 26, IMAX visitors can witness aquatic wonders in the Oscar-nominated *The Living Sea*; narrated by Meryl Streep, and featuring a score by Sting, the 50-minute film celebrates the beauty and power of the ocean, creating, according to *Box Office Magazine*, "an underwater fantasia where the creatures' sinewy ballets move in time to the music." Putnam guests can also enjoy a multi-sensory experience with the museum's new traveling exhibit A-Mazing Sea, which will enable visitors to reach into an octopus cave, climb into enormous sea-turtle shells, and even crawl through a whale's mouth. Sounds like great fun, although Jonah and Pinocchio might argue otherwise. For information on current and future Putnam offerings, visit [\(http://www.putnam.org\)](http://www.putnam.org/).   
 **DAVID R. COLLINS WRITERS' CONFERENCE**   
 St. Ambrose University

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Wednesday, July 12, through Friday, July 14

Without guidance, writers can easily find their talents going to waste, or worse, can find themselves writing weekly, smart-alecky quips about upcoming local events. So whether you're a veteran or a newbie, the Midwest Writing Center's David R. Collins Writers' Conference (at Davenport's St. Ambrose University from July 12 to 14) may be your ticket to literary greatness. Fledgling authors can get their feet wet through such courses as "Getting Started" and "Publishing 101," the latter of which promises "nearly everything you wanted to know, and some things you really didn't" about the industry. More seasoned scribes can experience "Da Vinci Decoded," described as "a no-nonsense, demystified, nuts-and-bolts approach to novel writing," and "Writing Short Stories," which shows "how experimenting with form and point of view can help you find the real story." And then there's a course on poetic, prosaic, and artistic traditions entitled "Illegitimate Poetry," which, even for practiced hands, sounds like a real bastard. Thank you!

Thank you! I'll be here all week! For more information and to register, visit <http://www.midwestwritingcenter.org/>.

**MISSISSIPPI VALLEY BLUES FESTIVAL** LeClaire Park Friday, June 30, through Sunday, July 2

Eddie Cochran famously warned us that "there ain't no cure for the summertime blues." With the lineup of artists scheduled for this year's Mississippi Valley Blues Festival, why on earth would you want one? In addition to providing a series of music workshops and the presentation of the annual River Road Lifetime Achievement Award – which this year goes to the legendary James Cotton – the Mississippi Valley Blues Society will, from June 30 through July 2, fill Davenport's LeClaire Park with an extraordinary roster of national and local blues musicians. A highlight of the festival is sure to be the Sunday-night appearance of the great Delbert McClinton. But audiences will also be treated to performances by the Reverend Robert Jones, Popa Chubby, Rich Del Grosso, Mavis Staples, Kelley Hunt, Calvin Cooke, Sonny Landreth, Joe Krown, and the Dirty Dozen Brass Band, plus Walter "Wolfman" Washington, James "Super Chikan" Johnson, and The Mannish Boys, who are probably terrific blues artists, but whose monikers also suggest excellent Dick Tracy villains. More information on the weekend is available by visiting the Blues Society's Web site at <http://www.mvbs.org/>.

**FLAVOR FLAV** Penguin's Comedy Club Saturday, June 24, 7 & 9:30 p.m.

God bless Wikipedia. Legendary rap artist Flavor Flav will host a one-night-only event at the Penguin's Comedy Club on June 24, and even if you're familiar with the accomplishments of Mr. Flav, the invaluable Web-based encyclopedia provides reams of information that you might not have been hip(hop) to. Fans of the star certainly recognize his signature look – the sunglasses, the gold teeth, the clock around his neck. They've grooved to his performances with Public Enemy, witnessed his frequent reality-show TV appearances, and heard tell of his brushes with the law. But because of Wikipedia, I now know Flavor Flav began his musical career as a classically trained pianist, and met Public Enemy's Chuck D when the latter was a graphic-design student at Adelphi University. I know he credits himself with originating the platinum grill craze in hip-hop fashion. I know he did traffic reports for New York City's Power 105 in 2002. And I now have closure on a subject that has plagued my editor, Jeff, and I for two days: According to Wikipedia, the correct spelling of his catchphrase is "Yeeeeaaaahhhh, Booooyyyy!" For more information on Flavor Flav's Bettendorf appearance, visit <http://www.penguinscomedyclub.com/>.

**MUSICALS** June through August "Summer

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lovin', had me a blast / Summer lovin', happened so fast ... ." I do love me some summer musicals, but **Grease**, it turns out, is one of the few I **won't** be seeing at local venues this summer. Considering the scheduled lineup, though, I doubt I'll notice the loss: Moline's Quad City Music Guild presents **Aida** (opening June 9), **George M!** (July 7), and **The Wizard of Oz** (August 4). The Clinton Area Showboat Theatre is producing **The King & I** (June 8), **Anything Goes** (July 12), and **Cabaret** (August 10). Our area's Countryside Community Theatre opens its annual summer musical – this year it's **Oliver!** – on July 14. Rock Island's Circa '21 Dinner Playhouse debuts the family musical/comedy **The Ugly Duckling** on July 11, and the city's Genesis Guild and Opera@Augustana co-present **The Mikado** (June 10). The talents behind last summer's Galvin Fine Arts Center production of **Ragtime** are back at St. Ambrose with **The Secret Garden** (August 11). And finally, Mt. Carroll's Timber Lake Playhouse unveils **Thoroughly Modern Millie** (June 1), **Urinetown** (June 29), **Ain't Misbehavin'** (August 10), and ... **The Wizard of Oz** (July 27). Looks like I'm off to see the **Wizard**, folks! Twice!

**GUMBO YA YA** The District of Rock Island Friday, June 9, and Saturday, June 10 Feel like a little vay ya or makin' the veiller with friends? Got an ahnvee for some boudin? Don't be coo-yon, podna! Throw on your garde soleil and head to the District of Rock Island's 14th annual Gumbo Ya Ya festival! On June 9 and 10, the district's own Mardi Gras will feature Cajun, Creole, and southern chee wees and bouilles, artisans and vendors of high-class dreegailles, activities for the possedes, and, on two stages, an electrifying group of bands sure to give you the freesons. At 10 p.m. on Friday, New Orleans musicians The Radiators will put a ga lee on your face, and at 7 p.m. on Saturday, the N'Awlins Gumbo Kings will entice all the bebs and Boos in the crowd. Add Dora & the Zydeco Badboyz, Hurricane Gumbo, Donna Angelle & the Zydeco Posse, Dikki Du & the Zydeco Krewe, Dennis Stroughmatt & Creole Stomp, and our area's own Backwater Bayou Band ... . Cho! Co! Go to bed! J'ai gros couer just thinkin' about the festival ending! For a translation of this glance, consult the Cajun-slang Web site of your choice. For more information on Gumbo Ya Ya itself, visit (<http://www.ridistrict.com/>).

**COMEDIES AND DRAMAS** May through August You know what I call people who love theatre but hate musicals? Mom and Dad. If, by chance, you're just like my parents, the area's stage offerings should keep you more than satisfied this summer. Geneseo's Richmond Hill Players offers comedy, with **Perfect Wedding** (opening June 1) and **A Bad Year for Tomatoes** (August 10), and drama, with **Proof** (July 6). Beloved films come to life at the Circa '21 Dinner Playhouse (**On Golden Pond**, June 30) and the Playcrafters Barn Theatre (**One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest**, July 14). Classics are on-hand with the Genesis Guild troupe (**The Tempest**, June 24; **7 Against Thebes** and **Antigone**, July 8; **Comedian**, July 22; **The Birds**, August 5), and Iowa City's Riverside Theatre (**Twelfth Night**, June 16, and a dueling **The Tempest**, June 24). My Verona Productions debuts **The Pillowman** (May 26) and **Blue City: An Evening of David Mamet** (August 4). The Timber Lake Playhouse presents the comedic **The Philadelphia Story** (June 15) and **Tom, Dick, & Harry** (July 13). And the Clinton Area Showboat Theatre delivers Agatha Christie's **The Mousetrap** (June 22) and **Incredible Sex** (July 27). Be sure to walk up to the CAST box office and say, "I'd like to see **Incredible Sex**, please." Betcha

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*that* joke won't get old. </span></span>