Celtic Highland Games

Mississippi Valley Fairgrounds

Saturday, August 25

On the Web site for the Celtic Highland Games of the Quad Cities - occurring at the Mississippi Valley Fairgrounds on Saturday, August 25 - you'll find this note beneath the day's schedule of activities: "Remember, there's plenty to do and see elsewhere on the grounds if you want a break from seeing large objects fly through the air!"

Yeah. Whatever. Bring on the caber toss!

Seriously, though, the list of events at this annual celebration of all things Celtic isn't just impressive; it's intimidating.

Headlining the festival will be the Canadian country/rock band Searson (pictured), with a fiery set that incorporates fiddle, bass, electric and acoustic guitars, mandolin, drums, and step dancers; the performers, currently working their way through a 200-site tour, made their Quad Cities debut in 2005, and entertainment chair Mike Davis says, "We've had people begging us to bring them back ever since."

You know what else is back? Everything. Workshops on Celtic musical instruments, Gaelic languages, and cultural heritage. Animal attractions such as sheep-herding demonstrations and dog-agility presentations. Eleven regional groups participating in the afternoon's Bagpipe Band competition. Vendors supplying the finest in Celtic food, crafts, and artwork. (A few years back, my roommate and I made a pretty kick-ass wall hanging out of sarong bought at the festival.) Plus, the traditional Parade of Tartans. The Highland Dance competition. The post-fest Ceilidh party, with music by the Barley House Band and a performance by the Mullane Irish Dance Academy.

And in addition to those flying cabers, hammers, and sheafs, don't forget about the day's "just for fun" games, which a press release says will include "the ‘bonnie knees' contest for men, the ‘haggis howl' for loud voices of both genders, and the ‘wellie toss.'" Thankfully, no word on which gender *that* one's geared toward.

For more information on this year's Celtic Highland Games, visit (http://www.celtichighlandgames.org).

- **Mike Schulz**

Coalesce

The Picador

Thursday, August 23, 6 p.m.

Reunited metalcore juggernauts Coalesce - with special guests This Is My Condition and The Serpent Son - will be bustin' sick moves at Iowa City's the Picador on Thursday, August 23.

Formed in January of 1994, the group's venomous guitars, crashing drumbeats, and barking vocals made the band legendary among the underground metal/hardcore elite and produced legions of followers. Dropping numerous recordings over the years through metal/hardcore hotbed labels Earache, Relapse, and Hydra Head Records, the band also, at various points, released split albums and singles with fellow bad-asses Today Is the Day, the Get Up Kids,

Converge, Boys Set Fire, and Napalm Death.

True metalcore soldiers that they were, Coalesce's tours typically experienced the types of hardships that have historically inspired some of the greatest hardcore music of all time, including hostile crowds, broken-down vans, fights, members leaving the group mid-tour, and financial setbacks that sent the band home early on more than one occasion.

Excepting the occasional reunion show, the band called it quits in 2000. But in the fall of 2005, they announced that they were back for good, began writing and recording, and are now back on tour.

Doors for the all-ages show open at 6 p.m.; for more information, visit (http://www.thepicador.com).

- **Brad Vidmar**

Princeton Days

Princeton, Iowa

Friday, August 24, and Saturday, August 25

Feeling guilty that summer is almost over and you haven't attended nearly as many outdoor festivals as you'd planned to? The annual Princeton Days celebration, taking place in Princeton, Iowa's riverfront district August 24 and 25, will let you make up for lost time: It's like a whole bunch of festivals rolled into one.

The visual arts will be covered through numerous crafts vendors, a street-painting event, and the weekend's art exhibit, featuring the works of 15 area painters, photographers, and sculptors. Live music comes courtesy of performances by Lynn Allen, the Lovedogs, and the finalists in the Princeton Days' Battle of the Bands. Kids can enjoy pony rides, hair and face painting, and a jumping tent. The sports-oriented can take part in the "Gladiator Joust" competition, attend the Olathea Golf Tournament, or shake hands with Spike TV's

Ultimate Fighting contender (and Local Boy Made Good) Wayne Weems. The hungry can indulge in Saturday's pancake breakfast and pork-chop dinner.

And, as Princeton finds its roots on the Mississippi River, there will be plenty of aquatically themed activities, including a fishing derby, a "Krazy Kanoe Race," and boat tours throughout the afternoon. I'm told that Princeton Days organizers actually had a catch-all title in mind for these events: River Roots Live (as in "give"). Apparently, though, some other area festival has the rights to that one.

For more information on the weekend, call (563) 370-3756.

- **Mike Schulz**

Dale Jones

Penguin's Comedy Club

Thursday, August 23, through Saturday, August 25

Comedian Dale Jones has worked with such famed stand-ups as Steven Wright, Lewis Black, and Emo Phillips. He has appeared on The Bob & Tom Show and at the Boston Comedy Festival. And on his Web site (http://www.dalejonescomic.com), you can watch the man doing a pretty mean impression of a wind-up toy monkey.

Yet the site also makes mention of Jones' gifts for "animated facial contortions," and helpfully provides several examples of each.

Which of the following is the correct caption for the accompanying Dale Jones Web-site photos?

2) Are you kidding? Larry Seinfeld?

2) "A lot of times I'm in the middle of a joke and I just forget what I'm talking about."

1) Why? Is it noticeable?

Thanks for tuning in! Tune in next week for more questions, more answers, more jokes, more fun! Peace out, August 28