I attended the John McCain rally at the Bettendorf home of Carrie and Pete Peterman on Sunday, August 5. I parked my car at a school down the road and rode a shuttle to their home and arrived about five minutes before the 5 p.m. event was to start.

The nice lady who was working the table with name tags asked if I was on the list, to which I replied that I didn't know that there was a list that I was supposed to be on. She said, "Well that's okay" and asked me my name, which she wrote on a name tag and handed to me.

I stuck on the name tag and proceeded to the back yard, where the event was being held. I joined in by filling my plate with a roast-beef sandwich and some buffalo chicken and had myself a pink lemonade. There were kegs of beer for the guests, but I don't usually choose to drink on a Sunday when I have to work the following day as a construction foreman.

I have attended many "meet the candidate" events, and as usual I was cordial and shook hands with anyone that approached me in my position toward the back. I met a friend from high school and was having a conversation with a nice man who wasn't a McCain supporter but had family that was on the staff of his campaign when a Bettendorf police car pulled up to the front of the house, and an officer made his way to the back yard.

The police officer walked through the people and directly to me, and he asked me to come speak with him in front of the house. He said that this event was invitation-only, and because I wasn't invited I had to leave.

I asked him why the nice lady at the table would write my name on a name tag and hand it to me knowing that I wasn't on the guest list if they hadn't made an exception to the list. I asked him if the other people who I saw enter that were not on the guest list were being asked to leave by the police. I asked him why the people who were responsible for maintaining the sanctity of the guest list had not just asked me to leave rather than calling the police to remove me. Finally, I asked Bettendorf officer Ramos if there had been any complaints about my behaviour. His reply was that there were no complaints other than that I was not on the guest list, and that the person at the door may not have been the final authority to decide if an exception could be made.

I have my suspicions why I was treated like a criminal when a simple "sorry, you are not on the guest list" from the staff would have sufficed. I have a long ponytail and a beard, and there is still discrimination against people who look like I do in our free society. Either John McCain doesn't want to represent me, his campaign is afraid that I might be called on in the "question and answer" period and ask a pointed question that he would want to avoid, or his local staff or the host are just prejudiced snobs. Remember, they didn't have police remove other people that the lady working the table made and exception for, just the "long hair."

In all the "meet the candidate" events that I have attended over the years, I have never been treated so poorly. Yes, officer Ramos was polite and even gave me a ride back to my car in the back of his squad car after running my driver's license, but to think that the John McCain people would call the police on me without ever once saying that there was a change of policy or a problem with the management of the entrance was extremely rude. I will remember this when I vote.

Chris Rice

Rock Island

Celtic Highland Games Omitted from Annual Manual

How could you leave the Celtic Highland Games out of the festival list in the Annual Manual for the Arts? (See *River Cities' Reader* Issue 643, July 25-31, 2007.) Bands include Searson, playing at 4 p.m. on the Mississippi Valley Fairgrounds, and at 8:30 p.m. in the Ceildih; Barley House, opening the Ceildih at 6 p.m. and playing during the day in a music session; a dance performance by the Mullane Irish Dance Academy at 7:15 in the Ceildih; and a full list of new workshops in flute/tin whistle, Irish drumming, Irish fiddle, etc.

A full list of events can be found at (http://www.celtichighlandgames.org). Click on "schedule."

Lisa

(From the *River Cities' Reader* Web site.)

Editor's note: *The omission was an oversight. The* Reader *regrets the error.*