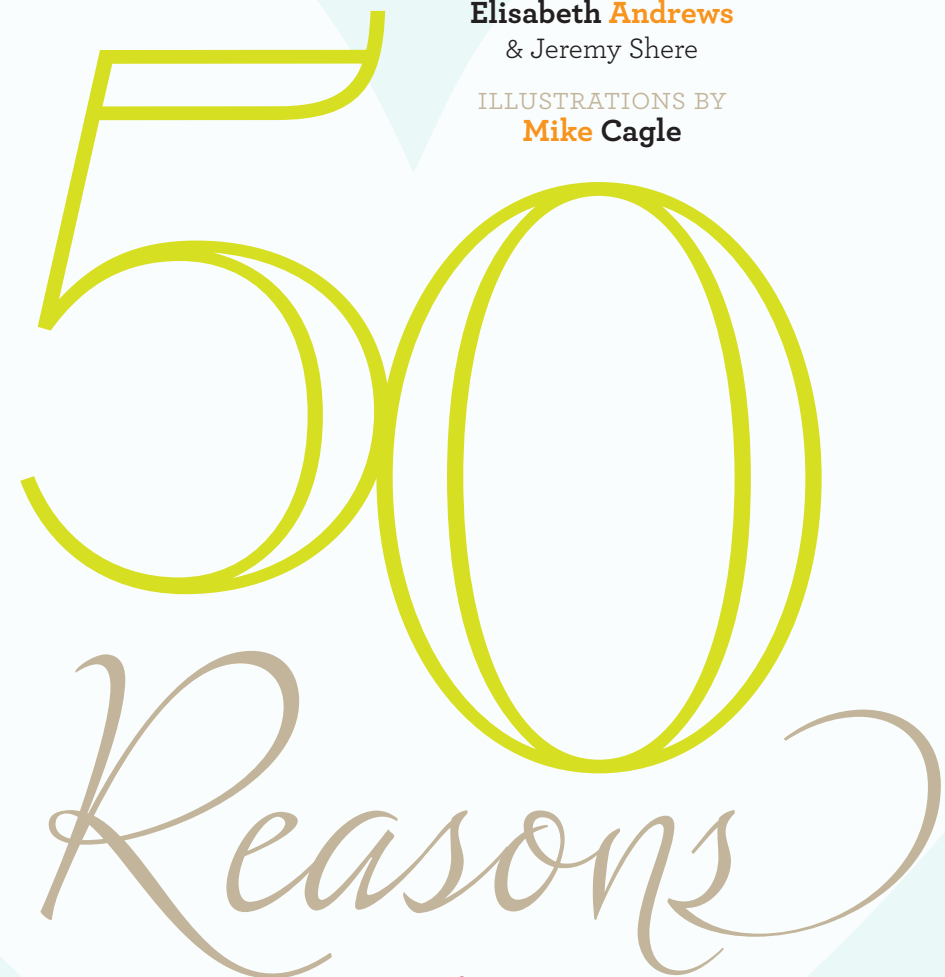


IT'S A WONDERFUL TOWN:

BY
Elisabeth Andrews
& Jeremy Shere

ILLUSTRATIONS BY
Mike Cagle



Elisabeth Andrews
& Jeremy Shere

ILLUSTRATIONS BY
Mike Cagle

50
Reasons

to love

BLOOMINGToN



the Introduction

*"How do I love thee?
Let me count the ways."*

—Elizabeth Barrett Browning

On the occasion of the magazine's 5th anniversary we thought it would be fun to identify all the reasons people love living here. So for most of the past year, we've been making a list, with the help of writers and photographers who contribute to the magazine, our families and friends, community leaders, and people we interact with in the course of a day.

We've checked over the list a number of times, but we just know we've left out something really cool, obvious, and important. No doubt, we'll hear about it from you, our readers.

So don't hesitate to drop us an e-mail with your suggestions and we'll print them in the next issue. Send your reasons to editor@magbloom.com, type "Love" in the subject line, and don't forget to sign your name.

Here's our list in no particular order. We hope you get a kick out of what we picked. —*the editor*



Read on ...





FROM LEFT: Joshua Bell, Sylvia McNair, Violette Verdy, Leonard Slatkin, David Baker, Menahem Pressler, Janos Starker.

PHOTO CREDITS
 Joshua Bell
 —Courtesy of Indiana University
 Sylvia McNair
 —Courtesy of Indiana University
 Violette Verdy
 —Steve Raymer
 Leonard Slatkin
 —Steve J. Sherman/
 Courtesy of Indiana University
 David Baker
 —Steve Raymer
 Menahem Pressler
 —Steve Raymer
 Janos Starker
 —Courtesy photo

Free concerts by internationally renowned musicians. World-premiere operas by Pulitzer Prize-winning composers. More than 1,100 performances each year. What's not to love about the IU Jacobs School of Music?

Arguably the best music school in the nation, the Jacobs school counts among its faculty members piano virtuoso Menahem Pressler, Grammy Award-winning violinist Joshua Bell, celebrated conductor Leonard Slatkin, cello prodigy Janos Starker, Metropolitan Opera diva Sylvia McNair, and "Living Jazz Legend" David Baker. You could easily pay \$100 to hear these musicians in the nation's major concert halls, or you could catch them here in Bloomington, where they perform free as part of their faculty duties.

The school has seven orchestras, twelve choral ensembles, several jazz bands, and dozens of chamber ensembles. There's one ensemble devoted solely to new compositions, another for Baroque music, and one made up entirely of trombones. The centers and institutes also offer something for everyone: Go old school with the Early Music Institute or cutting edge at

the Center for Electronic and Computer Music; groove with the Latin American Music Center or study up at the Center for the History of Music Theory and Literature.

To really experience the school's wow factor, attend an opera at the Musical Arts Center (MAC). It's the largest collegiate opera house in the country, with a stage modeled exactly on New York's Metropolitan Opera, right down to the wagon system that can feature up to three elaborate sets in each performance. From Mozart classics to brand new commissions, Jacobs stages as many as seven operas each year.

IU's Ballet Department is also housed within the music school. Legendary ballerina and Balanchine muse Violette Verdy holds the nation's only endowed chair in ballet. Among the department's three annual ballet performances is the perennial holiday favorite, *The Nutcracker*. Between the MAC's majestic stage, the fanciful costumes and sets, and the talented student musicians and dancers, you have the makings of one of the most magical nights in Bloomington. *EA*

2

OURS IS A FAMILY-FRIENDLY TOWN

Bloomington is, without a doubt, a fabulous place to raise kids. From stellar parks and playgrounds to full-scale theater productions even toddlers can enjoy, there's enough family-friendly fun to fill every slot on your calendar. Nursing moms are welcome in restaurants; the Banneker Community Center hosts free preschool playtimes; the YMCA offers kid care during workouts and a slew of summer programs; and the Monroe County Public Library has a giant collection of books, CDs, movies, and even toys to borrow—not to mention a playroom with an infant area. Bloomington has excellent sports leagues for kids—from baseball and basketball to ice hockey and soccer—and enrichment classes of every kind. We are known for our top-quality schools, with our two public high schools routinely sending graduates to the best universities in the nation. Those seeking an alternative to public schools will find attractive options, from Bloomington Montessori School to the Harmony School—an independent K-12 school that's leading a revolution in education. With Indiana University so prominently in our midst, the importance of education is practically in the air that our children breathe. *EA*



Bryan Park pool, a place for the whole family to cool down. Photo by Ben Weller

ON SATURDAY, WE GO TO THE FARMERS' MARKET

Indiana is known for its corn. But every Saturday from April through November at the Bloomington Community Farmers' Market you'll find not only fresh corn but also locally grown peppers (red, green, yellow, and even purple), mushrooms, squash, apples, peaches, eggs, meat, fresh bread, honey, flowers, and pretty much anything else people grow, bake, brew, raise, or pop (fresh kettle corn, anyone?). Beyond the amazing array of edibles, the Farmers' Market also features live music, street performers, and frequent arts and crafts exhibits. And, perhaps best of all, at the Farmers' Market you see Bloomington and its residents at their multicultural best: Amish vendors next to long-haired, guitar-playing buskers; young families checking out the produce alongside retired couples; and college kids hanging around for the summer. In cooler months, the Bloomington Winter Farmers Market continues the fun indoors with winter crops, dairy, soaps, herbs, and more. *JS*

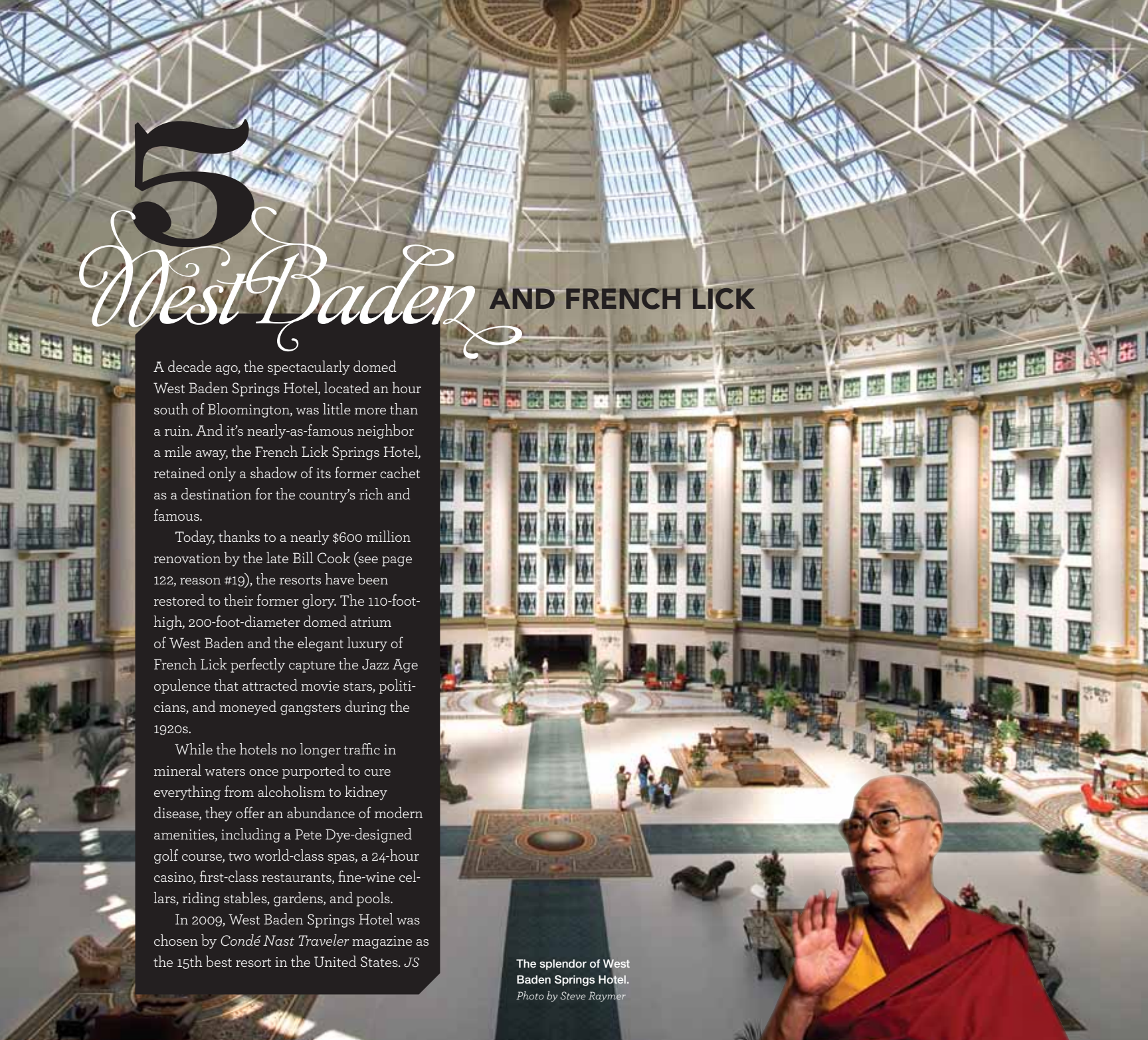


Photos by Daniel Orr

4 B-TOWN ARTISANS MAKE THINGS THE WORLD LOVES

In studios and workshops around the city, Bloomington hands are busy crafting some of the most exquisite home furnishings and décor available. Textillary Weavers produces shuttle-loom woven blankets of extraordinary softness and beauty, appearing in the best hotels around the world. Bella Bella Art creates distinctive tables, frames, and artwork that feature artist Lara Moore's signature luminescent colors and nature-inspired motifs. Nathan Hunter's lyrical furniture is inspired by his many years as a pianist. Robert Harman's striking seating features as many as 20 contrasting fabrics in a single chair. Nancy Hiller creates custom cabinetry that blends seamlessly with period homes from the Victorian and Arts and Crafts eras. Even if much of their work is beyond the average Bloomington budget—a Harman chair runs around \$4,000—it's nice to know we're helping to inspire such elite artistry. *EA*

Robert Harman in one of his distinctive handmade chairs. Photo by Steve Raymer



5 West Baden AND FRENCH LICK

A decade ago, the spectacularly domed West Baden Springs Hotel, located an hour south of Bloomington, was little more than a ruin. And it's nearly-as-famous neighbor a mile away, the French Lick Springs Hotel, retained only a shadow of its former cachet as a destination for the country's rich and famous.

Today, thanks to a nearly \$600 million renovation by the late Bill Cook (see page 122, reason #19), the resorts have been restored to their former glory. The 110-foot-high, 200-foot-diameter domed atrium of West Baden and the elegant luxury of French Lick perfectly capture the Jazz Age opulence that attracted movie stars, politicians, and moneyed gangsters during the 1920s.

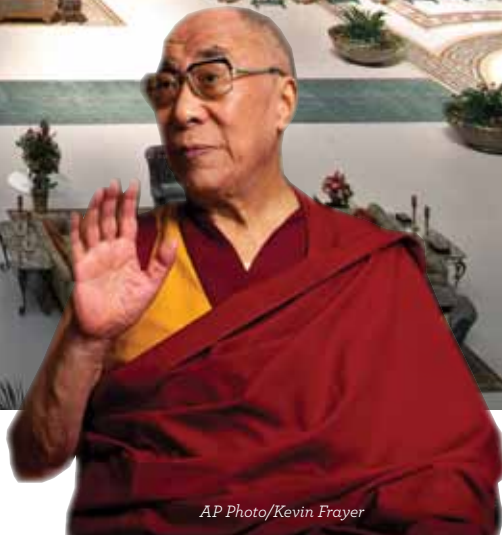
While the hotels no longer traffic in mineral waters once purported to cure everything from alcoholism to kidney disease, they offer an abundance of modern amenities, including a Pete Dye-designed golf course, two world-class spas, a 24-hour casino, first-class restaurants, fine-wine cellars, riding stables, gardens, and pools.

In 2009, West Baden Springs Hotel was chosen by *Condé Nast Traveler* magazine as the 15th best resort in the United States. *JS*

The splendor of West Baden Springs Hotel.
Photo by Steve Raymer

6 THE DALAI LAMA AND OUR TIBETAN CONNECTION

What brings the Dalai Lama to Bloomington? The spiritual leader makes frequent trips to our fair city to visit the Tibetan Mongolian Buddhist Cultural Center, founded in 1979 by his brother Thubten J. Norbu. Not merely an oasis of Buddhist religion amid quiet cornfields, the center also welcomes visitors to its 90-acre grounds, which include two traditional Buddhist stupas, a temple, teaching and retreat areas, and the Happy Yak Gift Shop. Ongoing classes and retreats in yoga, Dharma, art, and meditation are open to the community. Bloomington is also home to the Gaden KhashoeShing Tibetan monastery. It too offers public Dharma talks, concerts, and celebrations. To round out the experience, Bloomington residents and visitors can shop at Yangkey's Tibet Shop on Indiana Avenue and choose from three local restaurants offering Tibetan specialties: Anyetsang's Little Tibet, Snow Lion, and Café Django. *EA*



AP Photo/Kevin Frayer



Photo by Christine Barbour



Photo by Christine Barbour



Photo by Shannon Zahnle



Photo by Shannon Zahnle



Photo by Shannon Zahnle

7 FOOD GLORIOUS FOOD

Our Thriving (and Sophisticated) Restaurant Scene

From our renowned chefs to our expansive array of authentic ethnic fare, Bloomington cooks up a rich local foodie culture.

Those craving sophistication are treated to meticulously crafted and artfully presented dishes made by Dave and Krissy Tallent, who studied at the Culinary Institute of America before opening Restaurant Tallent, which has earned multiple James Beard nominations. Daniel Orr of FARMbloomington gained acclaim in top restaurants in France, New York, and Anguilla before returning to Indiana. Jeff Finch of Finch's Brasserie, a graduate of the New England Culinary Institute, builds his Mediterranean-inspired menu around the seasonal offerings of local growers, while Michael Cassidy features Cajun-Creole cooking at his Uptown Café, and Jake Brenchley draws on his Sorbonne training to bring French-inspired flair to the Scholars Inn Gourmet Café & Wine Bar.

When wanderlust takes over your taste buds, there's no limit to the territory you can cover with a stroll around downtown. Nearly every cuisine you can think of is represented: Italian, Afghan, Indian, Tibetan, Ethiopian, Moroccan, Burmese, Korean, Thai, French, Turkish, Mexican, Japanese, Chinese, Greek, and Irish. And, of course, there's no shortage of tasty American fare throughout Bloomington, as well as vegan and vegetarian options. *EA*

8 IVY TECH

It's a heck of a community college.

Not only does Ivy Tech Community College provide more than 25 associate's degrees (eight in the health services sector alone, and nearly all in direct response to the needs of local employers), it also feeds thousands of transfer students into four-year degree programs; provides adult education and enrichment programs from computer literacy to clay modeling; runs four different centers designed to increase local commerce, innovation, and quality of life (the Gayle & Bill Cook Center for Entrepreneurship, the Center for Civic Engagement, the Center for Lifelong Learning, and the Ivy Tech John Waldron Arts Center); and offers kids' programming like the Ivy Arts for Kids classes and the College for Kids summer program. Whether you're going back to school to finish a degree, taking a class on the art of afternoon tea, or just enjoying the annual Fourth of July Picnic with the Pops on Ivy Tech's lawn, you're sure to appreciate how this hotbed of higher education puts the "community" in "community college." *EA*

9 OUR MAYOR HAS A SENSE OF HUMOR

Running a bustling city like Bloomington is serious business, of course, but it's refreshing to have a mayor who doesn't take himself too seriously. Despite his weighty responsibilities, Mark Kruzan makes a point of bringing levity to everything from staff meetings to campaign speeches—it's a rare mayor who dares joke at an education rally that he wears his nametag upside down so he can easily read it, or who adds, "Sorry, kids!" when he promises to prevent excessive snow days. Rarer still is one who emcees a stand-up comedy show, as Kruzan has done at Bloomington's Comedy Attic two years running, joking in 2009 that "emcee" is French for "time waster." Yet he still manages to have the last laugh: "Sure, laugh," he told the crowd. "It's very funny until you see I had all your cars towed." *EA*



10

IN BLOOMINGTON, WE LOVE OUR PETS

Bloomington's human population has it pretty good. But our pets might have it even better. In fact, B-town might want to consider adopting the moniker "Pet City, USA." Where else can dogs enjoy an exclusive swim in one of the city's best public pools, as they can at the annual "Drool in the Pool" event at Bryan Park? Besides its dog-friendly pool, Bryan Park is also a great place for jogging with your dog and meeting fellow canine enthusiasts. For off-the-leash fun, there are two official dog parks, one at Griffy Lake Nature Preserve and another at Karst Farm Park near the local airport. Bloomington has a bunch of dog-friendly hotels and inns, several dozen top-flight veterinary practices, and many quality pet-boarding options. And to help keep Bloomington's pet population happy and healthy, the city supports Pets Alive, a nonprofit spay and neuter program. In February, Pets Alive fixed 971 pets during NeuterPAlooza! 2011. JS



Ginger (left) and Samantha.
Photo by Steve Raymer

11 OUR FESTIVALS

There's always something to celebrate in Bloomington, whether it's rainbow pride at the PRIDE LGBTQ Film Festival in winter or the Summer Festival of the Arts: 113 Days of Art. From the Hill-billy Haiku Americana Music Festival highlighting roots music to the Dark Carnival Film Festival featuring gore galore, every season offers several themed events showcasing spectacular music, art, performance, food, drink, and more.



The Lotus World Music & Arts Festival is Bloomington's best-known festival, featuring top performers from all over the world. Downtown Bloomington transforms into a multistage concert venue for this unparalleled autumn weekend. From Balkan Beat Box to Tuvan throat-singing, dozens of international musicians converge to get the whole city dancing. In addition to multiple concurrent concerts through which wristband-wearing at-

tendees can traipse on Friday and Saturday of the festival, Lotus includes several free, family-friendly shows throughout the weekend.

Other annual offerings include the Fourth Street Festival with more than 100 participating artists and craftspeople, the fiery Zero Hour Tango Fest, the popular Indiana Heritage Quilt Show, and Taste of Bloomington, which conveniently occurs the same weekend as the downtown Arts Fair on the Square. EA



Courtesy photo

12 WHAT COULD BE COOLER THAN THE KINSEY INSTITUTE?

The Kinsey Institute for Research in Sex, Gender, and Reproduction is a Bloomington treasure well worth sharing—though perhaps not on a first date. The only research facility of its kind, this cutting-edge institute is part laboratory, part library, and part museum. Visitors can stroll the halls and visit gallery exhibitions to see how Picasso, Chagall, and other artists have portrayed sex throughout history.

Kinsey has been leading the field

of sex research since 1947. Current research deals with sex in long-term relationships, attitudes toward condom use, and brain changes in women with post-partum depression as measured by MRI scans. Kinsey also serves scholars through its library and addresses topics of broad interest through its Kinsey Confidential online service. Those discussions might make you giggle, but Kinsey's educational mission is seriously cool. EA

13 SERIOUS ABOUT SUSTAINABILITY

14 So we have no ocean— OUR PARKS AND LAKES are spectacular!



Photo by Ben Weller



Photo by Lynae Sowinski

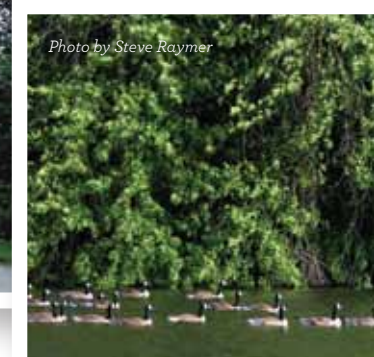


Photo by Steve Raymer



Photo by Steve Raymer

In all but the coldest weather, city parks including Bryan Park, Upper and Lower Cascades, and Olcott Park are teeming with children scrambling over playground equipment, college and high school kids lounging on the grass, and athletic Bloomingtonians sweating away at tennis, basketball, soccer, softball, Ultimate Frisbee, and even the occasional cricket match.

In the evenings, live concerts are de rigueur, as well as other entertainments such as outdoor movies and Shakespeare in the Park.

Just a few miles outside of town, the 200,000-acre Hoosier National Forest, Yellowwood and Morgan-Monroe state forests, Cedar Bluff Nature Preserve (featuring red cedars clinging to dramatic limestone bluffs), McCormick's Creek State Park, and Brown County State Park offer scenic hiking and biking trails, waterfalls, caves, campgrounds, and horseback riding.

And although Bloomington doesn't boast oceanfront property, nearby lakes allow for

plenty of water-related activity. Griffy Lake Nature Preserve is great for canoeing and fishing. During warm-weather months, Lake Lemon and Lake Monroe (the state's largest inland lake) are alive with houseboaters, speedboaters, sailboaters, yachters, water-skiers, inner tubers, and every other type of water-sports enthusiast imaginable. JS

Bike lanes crisscrossing the city. Walkable neighborhoods and shopping districts. Hundreds of dedicated activists working to "green" our houses, businesses, public facilities, and everything else that's green-able.

Local nonprofits including Earth Care, Southern Indiana Renewable

Energy Network, and the Center for Sustainable Living (to name only a few) have initiated many successful sustainability efforts, including a faith-based initiative to raise awareness about climate change, and programs to educate people about alternative energy sources.

Bloomington city government has also pitched in, creating more bike lanes and programs offering free energy audits to homeowners. Meanwhile, hybrid electric buses transport the townspeople.

And IU, through its Office of Sustainability, has gone to great lengths to make the university

more environmentally friendly. University buildings hold an annual competition to see which can save the most energy, and students are encouraged to participate in Electronic Waste Collection Days—an event where students recycle used cell phones, computers, and other electronic devices. JS

15 OUR AMAZING THEATER COMMUNITY

Bloomington is a Midwestern oasis of first-rate live theater. Cardinal Stage Company, powered by a surprising depth of local acting, directing, and stage design talent, and an infusion of professional actors imported from New York and Chicago, Cardinal has staged plays and musicals of unflaggingly high quality since 2006. And Cardinal is not alone. For the past 30 years, the Bloomington Playwrights Project has championed new work, providing opportunities for established and up-and-coming playwrights to have their work produced. IU's Department of

Theatre & Drama is one of the best in the country, staging dramas and musicals throughout the school year and hosting the Indiana Festival Theatre every summer. Plus the Jewish Theatre of Bloomington has brought the rich tradition of Jewish drama to town, while Theatre of the People produces experimental, "performance art" pieces steeped in Absurdism, Dadaism, Surrealism, and other "isms." And Bloomington's Youth Theatre gives young thespians the opportunity to hone their acting chops in local versions of Broadway plays and musicals. *JS*

Cardinal Stage Company:
(l-r) Jordan Goodman,
Terrilyn Dennie, Lauren
Bauman, Randy White,
Ken Farrell, Diane Kondrat,
Mike Price.

Photo by Steve Raymer



Photo courtesy of the
IU Student Foundation

16 LITTLE 500 A RACE LIKE NO OTHER

It may be "The World's Greatest College Weekend," but the Little 500 does much more than give undergraduates an excuse to party. During its 60-year history, the famous bicycle race has inspired the Academy Award-winning film *Breaking Away*, drawn visitors from Bob Hope to Barack Obama, raised millions of dollars in scholarships for working students, and provided thousands of young competitors with a healthy, rewarding experience they'll never forget. Moreover, attending Little 500 is a family-friendly activity that can be enjoyed by all ages. Inside the stadium on race day, the sea of spectators is one giant, revved-up, town/gown mishmash, all cheering their hearts out for this one-of-a-kind Bloomington event. *EA*

18 BLOOMINGTONIANS ARE PROUDLY DIVERSE

It may come as no surprise that, as a college town, Bloomington is pretty diverse. Still, for a city of 80,000 (including IU students), Bloomington boasts a remarkable range of people.

Take a stroll downtown or through campus and you're just as likely to encounter exchange students from China, South Sudan, Brazil, India, and dozens of other countries as you are homegrown Midwesterners. The city's diverse neighborhoods include longtime residents, new arrivals, young couples, retirees, and families of many ethnic backgrounds.

Various cultural centers, including El Centro Comunal Latino, the

17 WE WIN THE REALLY BIG PRIZES

A Nobel here, a Pulitzer there—pretty soon you're talking real honors. Laurels clearly bloom in Bloomington, from political scientist Elinor Ostrom's Nobel Prize in economic sciences to neuroanatomist Jill Bolte Taylor's designation as one of *Time* magazine's 100 Most Influential People. Our shelves hold Emmys (broadcaster Jay Kincaid, choreographer George Pinney), Oscars (B-town native Hoagy Carmichael, for best original song), Grammys (violinist Joshua Bell, cellist Janos Starker, conductor Leonard Slatkin, opera singer Sylvia McNair), and Webbs (IU's Office of Creative Services and School of Informatics and Computing), not to mention Pulitzers (journalist Tom French, cognitive scientist Douglas Hofstadter), the President's National Medal of Science (chemist Ernest Davidson), and a place among *Popular Science* magazine's "Brilliant 10" (chemist David Clemmer). And don't even get us started on the Fulbright grants—last year alone saw five Bloomington scholars scatter from Angola to Australia with the aid of this big-brain prize. *EA*

Jill Bolte Taylor (left)
and Elinor Ostrom.



Photo by Ben Weller

Photo courtesy of Indiana University

Native American Community Center, the Neal-Marshall Black Culture Center, and the Asian Culture Center, connect IU students and community members.

Bloomington is also home to people of nearly every religious persuasion. In addition to two synagogues and a Chabad House catering to the city's thriving Jewish population, there is the Islamic Center of Bloomington and its mosque, the Tibetan Mongolian Buddhist Culture Center and Kumbum Chamtsé Ling Temple, a Baha'i Center, and dozens of churches of nearly every Christian denomination.

The really good news is that Bloomington is a place where people of all ethnic, racial, and religious backgrounds live, work, and play together in harmony, creating something uniquely Bloomingtonian. *JS*





19

Courtesy photo

THE COOK LEGACY

Entrepreneur and philanthropist Bill Cook, who passed away this year at the age of 80, had long been an angel to the Bloomington community. The generosity he and his family have shown transformed crucial sites in Bloomington and nearby areas from crumbling relics to revitalized centers of commerce.

Cook, a trailblazer in the field of minimally invasive medical devices, rose from humble beginnings to become one of the country's wealthiest individuals, with a fortune estimated at more than \$3 billion. Yet in Bloomington he and his wife Gayle continued to live in the modest three-bedroom home they bought in 1967.

Cook is responsible for the revitalization of much of downtown, including Fountain Square Mall, Graham Plaza, Bloomington Antique Mall, Bloomington/Monroe County Convention Center, and the Showers Building. He also spearheaded the restoration of West Baden Springs Hotel and French Lick Springs Hotel, now back to their 1920s beauty. Though the Cooks' contributions supported everything from the local economy to the YMCA, Bill is perhaps best loved for the open-hearted attitude that found him, despite his billions, volunteering his time with such tasks as driving the bus for the Star of Indiana drum-and-bugle corps. *EA*

21

THE STONE AGE INSTITUTE *It rocks!*

Guarded by more than a million pounds of stone that form walls, a tower, and reconstructed "ruins," The Stone Age Institute is the site of groundbreaking investigations of our human origins. This nonprofit, independent research center is the only facility in the world devoted to Stone Age studies. Although its extensive library and artifact collection are not open to the public, these purveyors of Paleolithic prehistory share their findings through a number of exhibits and events in town. "From the Big Bang to the World Wide Web," an ongoing exhibit at IU's Mathers Museum, traces "The Origins of Everything" through objects such as moon rocks, Neanderthal skulls, a life-size replica of a T-Rex skeleton, and the first electric guitar. Talks on topics like tools, ancient architecture, and human evolution take place on the IU campus and in schools and other community spaces. You can even enjoy this look back through time in the most high-tech way possible: Visit The Stone Age Institute's virtual exhibit online at fromthebigbang.org. *EA*



Photo by Steve Raymer

20 BLOOMINGFOODS

Come Hungry, Leave Healthy



Anyone who puts thought into what they eat is grateful for the presence of Bloomingfoods. This health-conscious co-op has been the community's resource for organic, locally sourced, fair trade, and cruelty-free grocery products since 1976. Vegetarians, vegans, and those with food sensitivities shop here, as do gourmands who swoon over the diverse array of exotic cheeses, spices, and oils. From bulk bins to canned goods, Bloomingfoods stocks minimally processed foods to support optimum health. The co-op also caters to hungry, hurried shoppers: Two of its three locations offer hot entrées all day long, and all three boast salad bars, hot soups, baked goods, fresh take-away items, and deli counters with extensive sandwich menus. *EA*

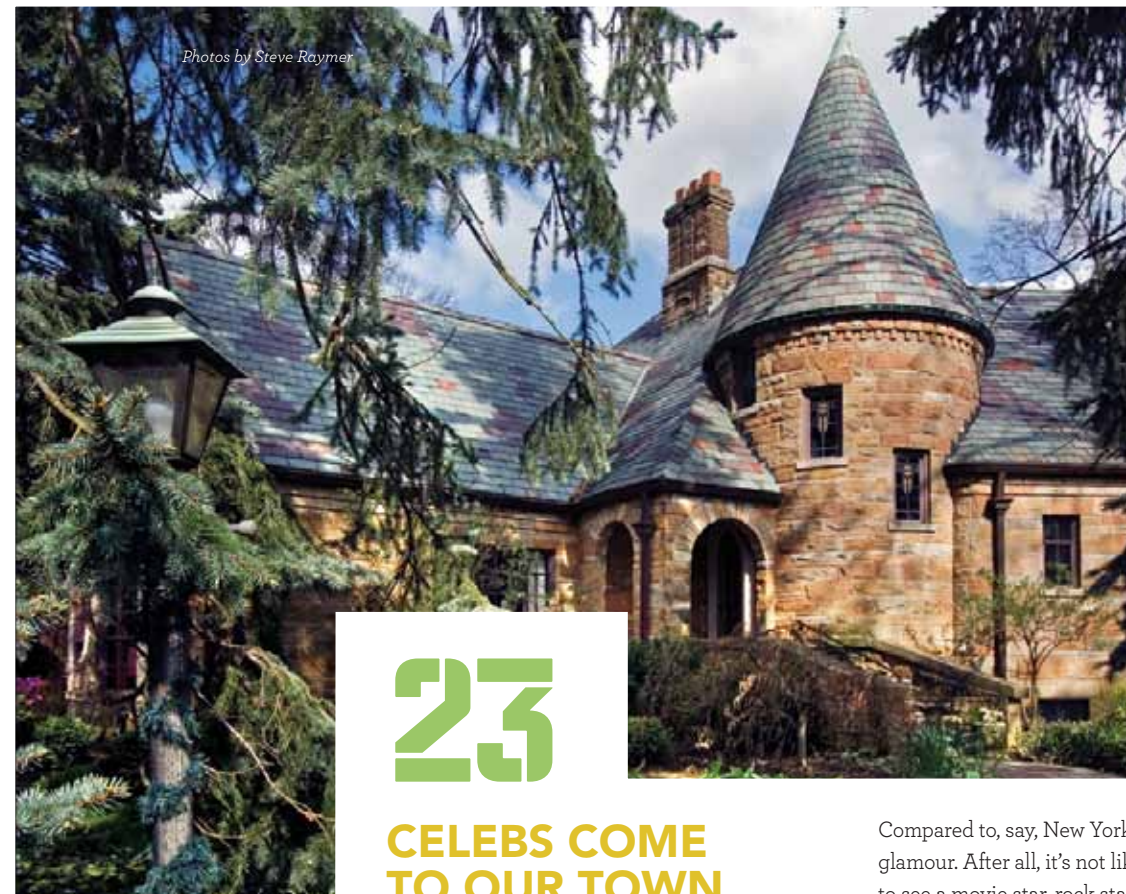
22 OUR NEIGHBORHOODS ARE NEAT

Want to get an idea of what a city is like? Take a tour of its neighborhoods. You'll be able to observe the variety and quality of the homes and gardens and assess the residents' care and pride.

One of the very best things about Bloomington is its eclectic mix of neighborhoods. Just south of campus, Elm Heights features

broad, tree-lined streets and a pleasing mix of homes dating from the 1920s, including a number of stunning limestone mansions with ornate, hand-carved facades. Just south of Elm Heights, the Bryan Park neighborhood's mix of vintage and "modern urban" bungalows has its own quaint vibe. To the west, the Prospect Hill and Near West Side neighborhoods, both on

the National Register of Historic Places, feature artistic bungalows and stately Victorians in all the colors of the rainbow. For those who prefer their houses newer and their lawns larger, Hyde Park Village, Hoosier Acres, Sherwood Oaks, and other planned neighborhoods are complete with winding roads and idyllic culs-de-sac. As for taking care of and feeling pride in one's neighborhoods—that's practically imbedded in the Bloomingtonian DNA. *JS*



Photos by Steve Raymer

23

CELEBS COME TO OUR TOWN

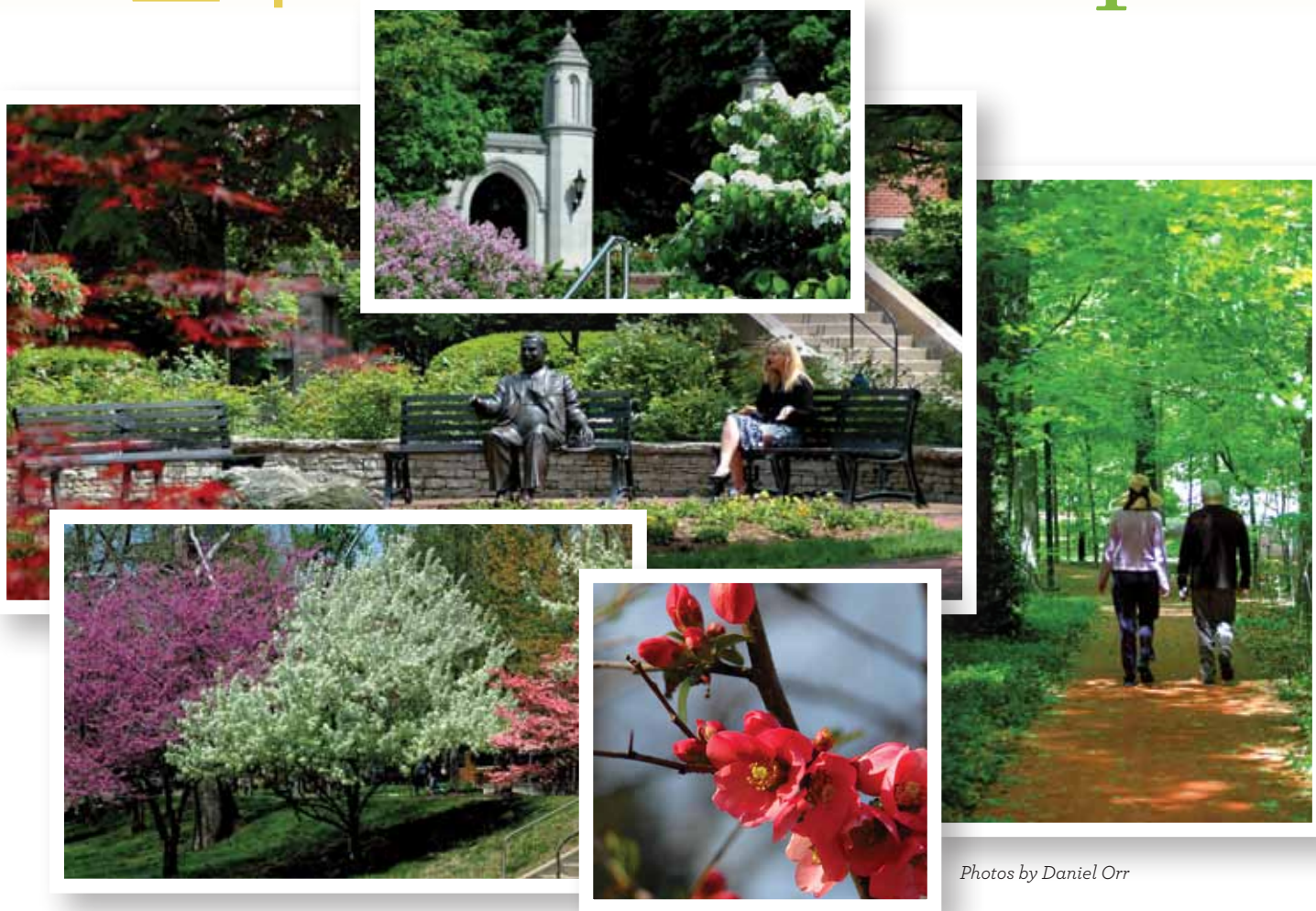
Compared to, say, New York or Los Angeles, Bloomington may be lacking in glamour. After all, it's not like you can walk down Kirkwood Avenue and expect to see a movie star, rock star, or some other celebrity.

Well, actually you can. Because if you've lived here for a year or two you've probably seen rock legend/resident John Mellencamp around town or someone else famous passing through. Bloomington is a regular destination for none other than the Dalai Lama, whose family and cultural ties to Bloomington's Tibetan community are strong. Who else? In the past year alone Bloomington has played host to movie star Meg Ryan (Mellencamp's current squeeze), TV journalist Jane Pauley, Oscar-winners Meryl Streep and Richard Dreyfuss, film directors Spike Lee and Peter Bogdanovich, and political power couple James Carville and Mary Matalin. *JS*

Meg Ryan (AP Photo/Thomas Kienzie) and John Mellencamp (AP Photo/Tina Fineberg).



24 The Beauty of the IU Campus



Photos by Daniel Orr

In 1991, celebrated writer and architect Thomas A. Gaines published *The Campus as a Work of Art* (Praeger Publishers), in which he critiqued more than 100 college campuses for their artistic merit. The campus of Indiana University Bloomington placed in the top five. Its limestone buildings, abundant green

spaces, and pedestrian-friendly layout were among the features setting it apart. Gaines specifically mentioned the Indiana Memorial Union, IU Art Museum, Maxwell Hall, Showalter Fountain, the IU Auditorium, and the floral landscaping and wooded areas. Twenty years and many construction projects later, the

campus is even lovelier. It adds immeasurably to the quality of life in Bloomington, whether daily traversed as an IU student or faculty/staff member or merely glimpsed through the Sample Gates during a stroll along Kirkwood Avenue. *EA*

25 WE ARE A COMMUNITY THAT CARES

Judging from our more than 400 nonprofit organizations, we are clearly a community that cares. From the Shalom Community Center

that assists those experiencing homelessness to Bloomington Area Birth Services with its focus on childbirth education and breastfeeding support, our town is dedicated to doing good. Whether you're passionate about preservation or concerned about computer literacy, learning a new language or struggling with substance abuse, there's an organization to match your

needs and interests. For all those who want to help but aren't sure where to begin, the city of Bloomington runs a Volunteer Network to connect people with the many opportunities to give back, and the annual Get Involved Bloomington Expo! gathers a diverse array of organizations under one roof, making it easy to make a difference. *EA*

26 THE MUSIC SCENE



Photo by James Kellar

Photo by Steve Raymer

Photo by Mia Dalglish

Photo by Steve Raymer

Hey, we're not Austin, but we're getting there.

Top row (l-r): Jenn Cristy, Krista Detor, Malcolm Dalglish. Bottom row (l-r): David Baker, Deno Sanders (on drums), David Miller, Tom Walsh, and Lida Baker.

Musically speaking, is it fair to call Bloomington the Austin of the Midwest? That may be a bit of a push, but not by much. To the outside world, Bloomington owes its musical reputation largely to the IU Jacobs School of Music. But we natives know that the B-town music scene has much more to offer. In the mood for jazz? Bear's Place and Malibu Grill will hook you up. If rock, folk, bluegrass, klezmer, reggae, or pop are more to your liking, venture out any evening to catch local and national acts at The Bluebird

Nightclub, Players Pub, The Bishop, Serendipity Martini Bar and Restaurant, Max's Place, Rachael's Cafe, Café Django, and other venues. Plus B-town is crawling with homegrown talent. It's not uncommon to catch nationally lauded singer/songwriters, including Carrie Newcomer, Krista Detor, Jason Wilber, Tim Grimm, Jenn Cristy, Tom Roznowski, Craig Brenner, and Michael B. White. Look out Austin, Bloomington is coming after you! *JS*

27

IU KELLEY SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Helping Bloomington to help itself

Having one of the country's top business schools in town is nice; benefiting from the time and energy of its students and faculty is even nicer. Through classes and in student organizations like Net Impact, Kelley Cares, and Civic Leadership Development, students at the IU Kelley School of Business gain real-world experience by taking on projects for local businesses and nonprofits, from designing marketing campaigns to solving accounting dilemmas. They're overseen by a faculty with not only research expertise but also high-level business backgrounds at some of the most successful companies in the world. Kelley houses more than a dozen nationally recognized research centers, including the Indiana Business Research Center, which provides economic data for the state; the Center for the Business of Life Sciences, leading the industry in Indiana and beyond; and the Johnson Center for Entrepreneurship & Innovation, which helps IU commercialize its innovations and research. From building a house for Habitat for Humanity to bringing in speakers like Craig Newmark of Craigslist and Jerry Greenfield of Ben & Jerry's, having Kelley on campus is like having a world-class consulting firm working pro bono for Bloomington. *EA*

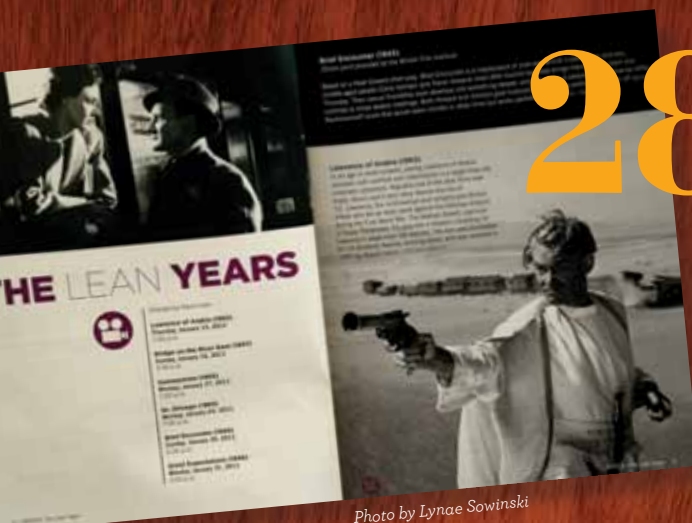


Photo by Lynae Sowinski

28 THE IU CINEMA

Taking the whole art-movie theater thing to another level.

If you still haven't been to the IU Cinema, we strongly suggest you pay a visit. Why? Because, finally, Bloomington has its very own art-movie house. Yes, B-town has benefited hugely from 25 years of The Ryder Film Series' unflagging efforts to screen Hollywood movies, documentaries, and foreign films. IU Cinema, though, takes the whole art-house thing to another level, with state-of-the-art sound and projection technology housed in a beautifully detailed theater with cushy seats and stylish drinking fountains (no popcorn, though). Beyond offering a steady smorgasbord of art films, classic films, and documentaries, the Cinema also brings in top-flight directors to talk about their work and hosts film conferences. It's open to the public and many of the showings are free. *JS*



Photo by Ivona Hedin

29 TAKE A STROLL ON THE B-LINE TRAIL

Is there anything more conducive to community cohesiveness, outdoor family togetherness, and healthy living than a pedestrian walkway? We think not, and as of 2009, Bloomington has been fortunate to have its own such walkway: the B-Line Trail, currently running from West 2nd Street by Kroger north to West 10th and Rogers streets. Where once there lay a dilapidated railroad track, there is now a wide, smoothly paved pedestrian trail populated by bicyclists, joggers, retirees out for their daily constitutional, little kids running ahead of their parents, and a multitude of Bloomingtonians of all stripes. The trail is festooned with art installations and miniparks along the route, as well as plenty of benches and newly planted trees. For now the trail stretches just more than half a mile, but once completed it will run for three miles, from Country Club Drive south of town to Adams Street in the north. *JS*

30 BLOOMINGTON NATIVES GO ON TO BIG THINGS

There must be something in the water.



Jared Jeffries. Photo by Chris Jacob



Meg Cabot. Photo by Steve Raymer

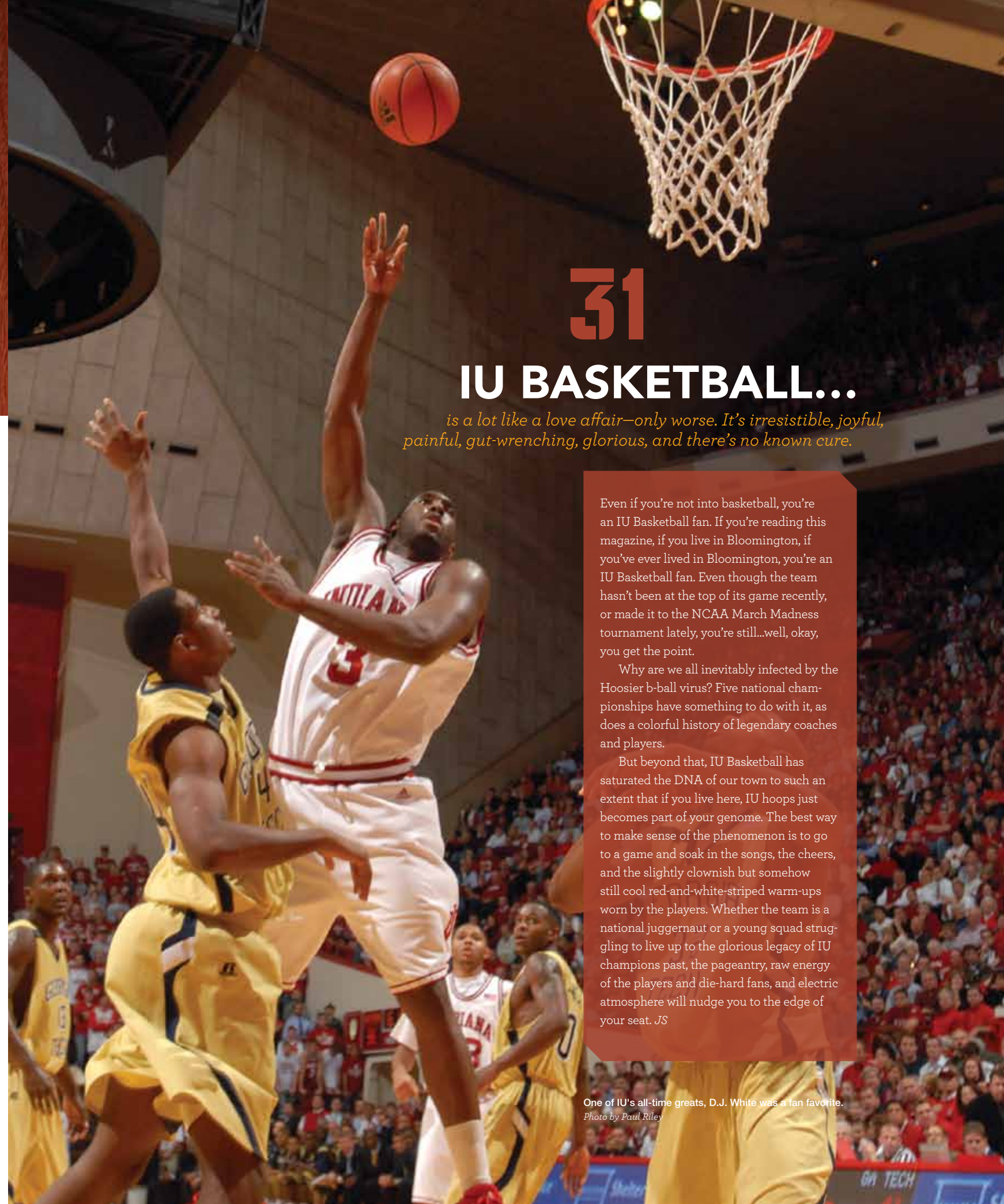


Angelo Pizzo. Photo by Tom Stio

People born here go on to the most incredible careers: There are the athletes like NFL quarterback Rex Grossman, NBA star Jared Jeffries, and racecar driver Steve Kinser; the authors like crime novelist Michael Koryta; Meg Cabot, author of *The Princess Diaries* and more than 50 other books; and Ross Lockridge Jr., whose *Raintree County* was made into a movie starring Elizabeth Taylor; and the musicians like violinist Joshua Bell and rockers John Mellencamp and David Lee Roth. You'll also see the work of Bloomington natives on the big and little screens: Angelo Pizzo wrote *Rudy* and *Hoosiers*; broadcaster David Shuster appears on *Countdown with Keith Olbermann*, and writer and producer Jeri Taylor worked for many years on *Star Trek*. Not bad for a town with about 40,000 non-student residents. *EA*



Joshua Bell. Courtesy photo



31 IU BASKETBALL...

is a lot like a love affair—only worse. It's irresistible, joyful, painful, gut-wrenching, glorious, and there's no known cure.

Even if you're not into basketball, you're an IU Basketball fan. If you're reading this magazine, if you live in Bloomington, if you've ever lived in Bloomington, you're an IU Basketball fan. Even though the team hasn't been at the top of its game recently, or made it to the NCAA March Madness tournament lately, you're still...well, okay, you get the point.

Why are we all inevitably infected by the Hoosier b-ball virus? Five national championships have something to do with it, as does a colorful history of legendary coaches and players.

But beyond that, IU Basketball has saturated the DNA of our town to such an extent that if you live here, IU hoops just becomes part of your genome. The best way to make sense of the phenomenon is to go to a game and soak in the songs, the cheers, and the slightly clownish but somehow still cool red-and-white-striped warm-ups worn by the players. Whether the team is a national juggernaut or a young squad struggling to live up to the glorious legacy of IU champions past, the pageantry, raw energy of the players and die-hard fans, and electric atmosphere will nudge you to the edge of your seat. *JS*

One of IU's all-time greats, D.J. White was a fan favorite. Photo by Paul Riley

32 RECREATION

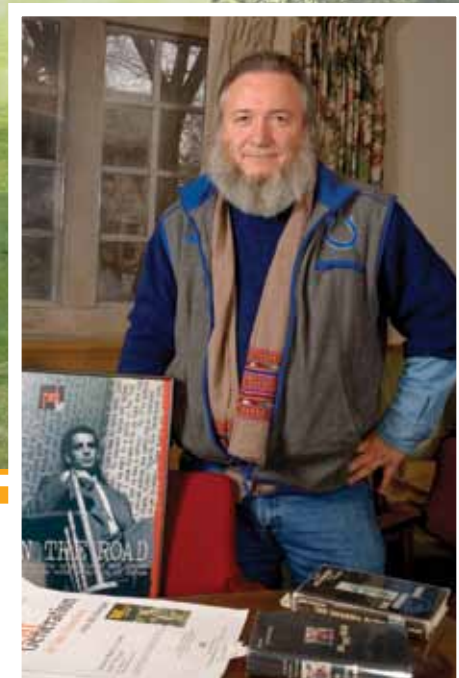
Keep fit and have fun without spending a lot of dough.

We've got golf courses: 6 within a 15-mile radius. Tennis courts: many at our city parks. Hiking trails at Griffy Lake Nature Preserve, Jackson Creek, Clear Creek, Hardin Ridge, and Paynetown State Recreation Area, plus a mountain-biking trail at Wapehani Mountain Bike Park. You can paddle a kayak on Lake Monroe or Lake Lemon; lace up your skates at Frank Southern Ice Arena; get on your high horse at Rocky River Farm or Stone Creek Ranch; or bowl at three local lanes. When

the weather's hot, you can cool off at Bryan Park Pool, Mills Pool, or the Karst Farm Park Splash Pad. You can keep fit at the YMCA, the city-owned Twin Lakes Recreation Center, IU's recreational sports facilities (with a public membership), or at our numerous health clubs. And at one of Bloomington's many yoga studios you can find your center. As for your kids, turn them loose on one of 19 city-maintained playgrounds, from Bryan Park's "Tot Lot" to the multilevel Cascades Park. *EA*



Photo by Steve Raymer



Lilly Library's head of special collections conservation, Jim Canary. Photo by Michael Cavanagh and Kevin Montague

33 OUR MUSEUMS

Oh, the treasures you will find!

If a criminal mastermind were scheming to plunder the city's riches, she would be wise to start at The Lilly Library. Housed in a solid-looking limestone building across from the IU Art Museum, the Lilly's holdings include nearly 400,000 rare books, more than 100,000 pieces of sheet music, and at least 7.5 million manuscripts of immeasurable cultural (and monetary) value. The library's collections cover an eclectic range of materials including one of the world's best assortments of incunabula (books printed before 1501), first editions of many classic works of British and American literature, and rare books and manuscripts relating to science and medicine. Some of the most jaw-dropping items include the first New Testament printed in Greek, George Washington's letter accepting the presi-

dency of the United States, the personal papers of poet Ezra Pound and writer Upton Sinclair, and the original sheet music, manuscripts, and personal letters of songwriter and Bloomington native Hoagy Carmichael. For James Bond fans, there's the original manuscripts of 11 Bond novels by Ian Fleming, and for Jack Kerouac devotees, the Lilly possesses his famed 120-foot scrolled manuscript of *On the Road*.

The Lilly is not the only treasure trove at IU, however. The campus is full of museums and other caches of incalculable worth: The IU Art Museum has works by Picasso, Pollock, Monet, Matisse, Rodin, Duchamp, and Warhol; the Mathers Museum of World Cultures holds tens of thousands of items from around the globe and across time; the Elizabeth Sage Historic

Costume Collection captures both common and couture fashion in more than 19,000 pieces of clothing and accessories; and The Kinsey Institute for Research in Sex, Gender, and Reproduction has extensive collections of erotic artwork from Roman fresco fragments to 19th-century Japanese pillow books as well as works by famous artists.

Beyond the campus, Bloomington boasts the Monroe County Historical Society, rich in tradition and local knowledge. Tour a full-scale pioneer homestead, step into a turn-of-the-century schoolroom, or pore over objects, photographs, and records detailing the history of our incredible town. *JS/EA*

34

THE BUS SYSTEM IS NUMERO UNO

The Bloomington Transit (BT) bus system won the American Public Transportation Association's 2010 Outstanding Public Transportation System Achievement Award for systems of less than 4 million annual riders. The honor was well-deserved. First, because BT's iconic green-and-white buses go almost everywhere, from Bloomington Meadows Hospital in the north to Clear Creek Shopping Center in the south, hitting dozens of stops in between. Second, because you can ride your bike and then hop on a bus, thanks to handy, front-mounted bike racks adorning all buses. Third, because the fleet includes six gas-electric hybrids. And fourth, because BT buses are clean, well maintained, and almost always on time. *JS*



35 A TOWN OF PROUD AND OUTSTANDING WOMEN

Bloomington's a place where women can and do thrive, be they doctors, teachers, artists, administrators, business owners, mothers, or multitaskers succeeding in several such roles. See, for example, Kerry Thomson, executive director of Monroe County Habitat for Humanity; Lauren Robel, dean of IU Maurer School of Law; Leslie Green, Stone Belt Arc CEO; Peggy Welch and Vi Simpson, our state legislators; Tina Peterson, president and CEO of Community Foundation of Bloomington and Monroe County; IU Provost Karen Hanson; and Susan Sandberg, president of the Bloomington City Council.

Many local women embody the spirit of town/gown collaboration that characterizes Bloomington, but few more so than IU's First Lady Laurie Burns McRobbie, who never seems to rest from championing the Middle Way House domestic abuse shelter, serving on the board of New Tech High School, fundraising for WonderLab science museum, or promoting service to the community in her faculty role at the IU School of Informatics and Computing.



Laurie McRobbie. Photo courtesy of IU

Charlotte Zietlow. Photo by Ben Weller

If there's one person who paved the way for all these achievers, however, it is Charlotte Zietlow. As one of the first women to serve in local government during the '70s, she not only led the fight to preserve the Monroe County Courthouse, prevented the construction of a PCB incinerator at Lake Monroe, and facilitated the modernization of the Monroe County Airport, but also put in place enduring commissions on human rights, animal control, telecommunications, and the status of women, and services including Bloomington Transit, the Child Care and Development Fund Voucher Program, and the Health Services Bureau. Still serving on more than a dozen local boards, she is, in her 70s, an inspiration not only to women but to everyone who cares about our town. *EA*

36 OUR DOWNTOWN

Nice shops, quaint galleries, cool restaurants, and it's mostly local.

Unlike many small cities its size, Bloomington's downtown has not succumbed to domination by national chains or abandonment in favor of suburban malls. We have a thriving downtown made up of one-of-a-kind shops and restaurants that contribute mightily to the character of our city. And at the center is our magnificent limestone courthouse.

Much credit for our beautiful downtown and its vitality goes to the late Bill Cook, our resident billionaire who passed away this year. In the 1980s, he and wife Gayle championed the revitalization of the downtown. Since then developers have built a number of large residential buildings, many high-quality stores and galleries have opened, and first-class restaurants have appeared.

We even have a comedy club that pulls in top talent from New York and L.A. *JS*



Photo by Steve Raymer

37

THE WONDERS OF WONDERLAB

A place where kids can get their hands on really neat stuff and not get in trouble.

The most wondrous thing about WonderLab, The Museum of Science, Health and Technology, is that a children's museum of its caliber exists at all in a small city in southern Indiana. Anyone with young kids is already well acquainted with WonderLab's cool, interactive exhibits, such as a room dedicated to the magic of bubbles; a wildlife area featuring a working beehive, snakes, and giant cockroaches, among other critters; and the elaborate, multistory Grapevine Climber. And best of all, everything is hands-on. Spend an afternoon at WonderLab and you'll

see kids (and parents) jumping,

climbing, building things, taking

things apart, and making music, all

while learning about physics, aerodynamics,

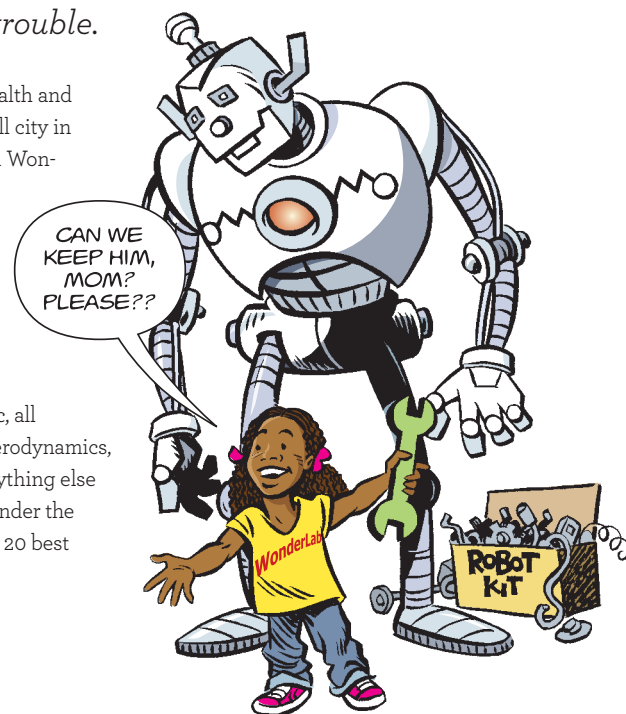
acoustics, mechanics, and everything else

under the scientific sun. No wonder the

museum was named one of the 20 best

science centers in the U.S. by

Parents magazine. *JS*



39

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

Bloomington drivers are so spoiled that a 15-minute distance between home and work is considered a "commute." It's possible to live quite literally in the country—with the chickens and acreage to prove it—and still be only ten minutes away from every modern amenity one could need. Settle closer to the center of town and you can easily walk, bike, or bus your way to a carless existence.

As for Bloomington's geographic location, you can head off toward any point of the compass and soon be in a major metropolis: Indianapolis and Chicago to the north, Cincinnati and Columbus to the east, Louisville and Nashville to the south, and St. Louis to the west. For faraway excursions, you're only an hour's drive from Indianapolis International Airport. And if you just want to experience a change of scenery, you can tour Brown County for spectacular trails and vistas in Brown County State Park and the quaint, quirky artists' community of Nashville, Indiana, just a few miles down the road. *EA*

Brown County.
Photo by Bob Anderson.



40

Our History

In the early 20th century, Bloomington was literally at the center of the U.S. population, reflecting the pivotal role the community has played in American history. In the mid-1800s, it was a stop on the Underground Railroad. After the Civil War, quarrymen began harvesting limestone that was eventually used to build the Empire State Building, the Pentagon, Yankee Stadium, and Chicago's Tribune Tower, not to mention the Monroe County Courthouse and much of Indiana University.

Meanwhile, T.C. Steele made his mark on 20th-century impressionist painting; Hoagy Carmichael lit up the music scene during the

Jazz Age; and Herman B Wells made a lasting contribution to higher education both at Indiana University and by his prescient emphasis on global intellectual collaboration, which he developed through international work during and after World War II that earned him a nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize.

The present town reflects this rich history, with many 19th- and early-20th-century buildings still standing. The downtown Square, laid out in 1818, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It contains the building that housed the 1847 Faulkner Hotel (now the Walnut Street Inn and Roots Restaurant on the



The fish weathervane dates to 1826.
Photo by Ryan Richardson

Square) and the Wicks Building, part of which dates to the 1850s. The courthouse itself was built in 1907, and the fish atop its weathervaned dome dates back to 1826. Other noteworthy sites include the Princess Theatre, originally built in 1892; the Johnson Creamery building from 1912; and the Showers Building that once housed the world's largest furniture factory and is now Bloomington's City Hall. *EA*

38

INDIANA UNIVERSITY GRADS

In almost any field, you'll find a Hoosier at or near the top.

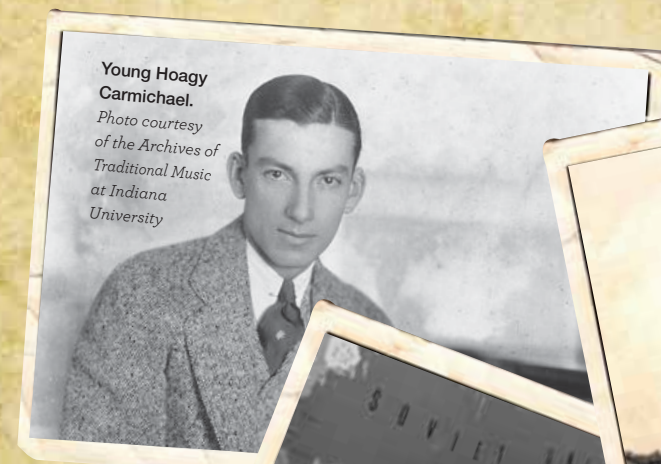
Spend a few years in Bloomington, and you turn into a star—or so the careers of IU grads might suggest. At the top of nearly every field you can find illustrious alumni who got their studious start in our town. Among the more famous faces are those of Oscar-winner Kevin Kline, broadcasters Jane Pauley and Tavis Smiley, and sportscaster Dick Enberg.

Music legends Hoagy Carmichael and Booker T. Jones were also IU students, as was three-time Pulitzer Prize-winning photographer Michel duCille. We've turned out tycoons like billionaire owner of the world champion Dallas Mavericks Mark Cuban and television mogul Steve Bellamy, founder of The Ski Channel and The Tennis Channel; and Hollywood visionaries like *Batman* movie producer Michael Uslan.

Former Bloomington students reveal scientific mysteries like Nobel Prize-winner James Watson, who helped discover the structure of DNA; run the government like former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates and members of Congress Lee Hamilton, Birch Bayh, and Evan Bayh, the latter also a governor along with Frank O'Bannon and Edgar Whitcomb; and, lest we forget, rule the crossword world as only *New York Times* Puzzle Editor Will Shortz can. *EA*

Mark Cuban.

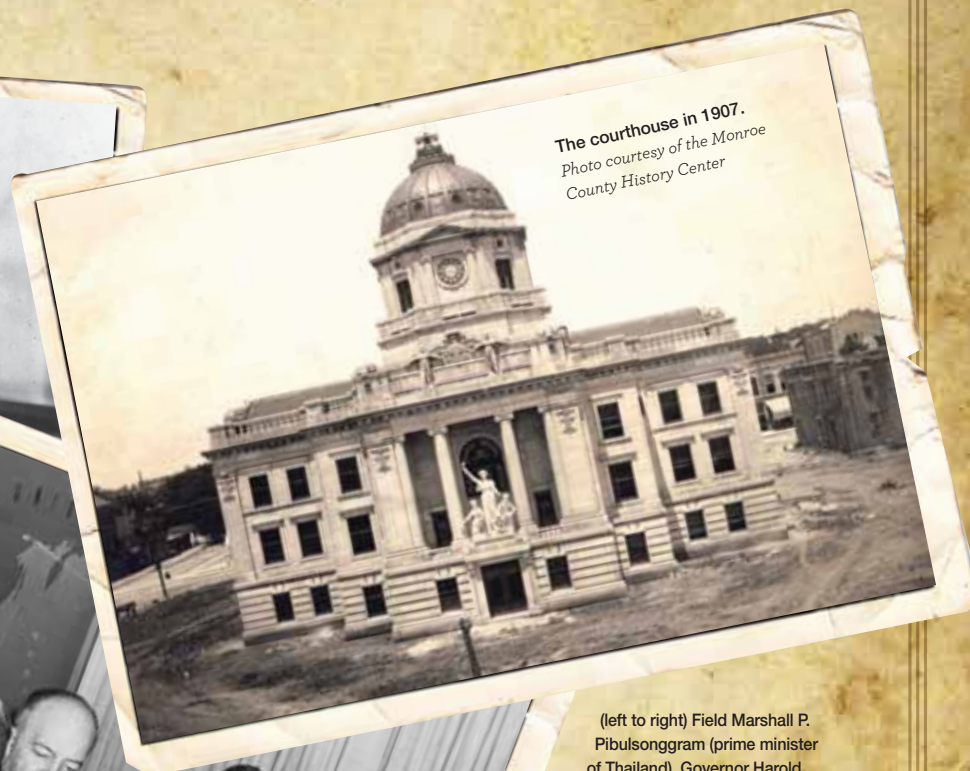
Photo by William Foley



Young Hoagy Carmichael.
Photo courtesy of the Archives of Traditional Music at Indiana University



(left to right) Field Marshal P. Pibulsonggram (prime minister of Thailand), Governor Harold E. Stassen (U.S. director of Foreign Operations), and IU President Herman B Wells working together in 1955 to strengthen public administration in Thailand. Photo courtesy of IU Archives



The courthouse in 1907.
Photo courtesy of the Monroe County History Center

41

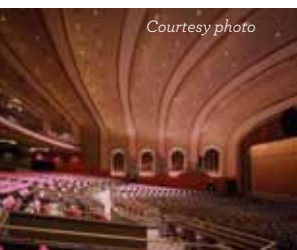


WINERIES AND BREWERIES

Picture yourself relaxing in the sun, chatting with friends while you sip a locally brewed wheat beer crowned with a crisp slice of orange...or swirling a glass of estate-grown cabernet sauvignon as you look out over an idyllic pond and garden. Whether you're a beer drinker or aspiring sommelier, you'll find much to love among Bloomington's handcrafted wines and ales. Microbrew fans adore Bloomington's two brewpubs, the Bloomington Brewing Company and Upland Brewing Company. Both offer a wide range of award-winning drafts, from the palest ales to deep, dark stouts. Oenophiles enjoy sampling dozens of Indiana wines in Bloomington's two tasting rooms at Oliver Winery, with the aforementioned beautiful pond and garden, and Butler Winery and Vineyards. Among the locally grown standouts are Oliver's Traminette and Pinot Grigio and Butler's Chambourcin, but there's something for everyone, from mouth-puckering shiraz to candy-sweet fruit wines in flavors like blueberry, mango, and even watermelon. Bottoms up! *EA*

42

B-TOWN'S BROADWAY AND OFF-BROADWAY



Courtesy photo

IU AUDITORIUM Who needs a 42nd Street or West End when we have the IU Auditorium? This 3,200-seat theater hosts top talent from around the world, including Broadway musicals, Vegas shows, renowned musicians, and dance companies. Previous lineups have featured musicals like *Les Misérables*, *Chicago*, and *A Chorus Line*. Music concerts run the gamut from Itzhak Perlman to Bob Dylan to Vampire Weekend. Dance troupes like the Joffrey Ballet, Martha Graham Dance Company, and American Ballet Theatre Studio Company have graced the stage.

MUSICAL ARTS CENTER (MAC) The 1,460-seat Musical Arts Center, the Jacobs School of Music's grand performance space, is the place for opera, ballet, jazz concerts, and more.

BUSKIRK-CHUMLEY THEATER The city-owned Buskirk-Chumley Theater hosts more than 160 public events each year. Stars like Lyle Lovett and Joan Baez make appearances, but equally popular are the town's signature events like the Bloomington Chefs' Challenge and Dancing With the Celebrities. The acclaimed Cardinal Stage Company also performs here, with hits like *The Sound of Music*, *Oliver!*, and *My Fair Lady*.

Our "Off-Broadway" offerings are just as exciting: At the Ivy Tech John Waldron Arts Center, productions like Cardinal's *Little Shop of Horrors* and *The Grapes of Wrath* take place in the auditorium while smaller plays, concerts, and dance recitals are within reach at the intimate Rose Firebay. Bloomington audiences are also treated to trailblazing theater at the Bloomington Playwrights Project's theater, one of the country's only venues devoted solely to new plays. *EA*



Photo by James Kellar

43

OUR LIBRARIES

A recent National Public Radio blog post declared libraries to be the hottest trend since cupcakes. If that's correct, Bloomington has hit the sweet spot with its terrific array of library collections and services. The Monroe County Public Library, situated in the heart of downtown, not only boasts a beautiful block-long building comprising copious collections including audio, video, and online resources but also a stellar staff, an auditorium, meeting spaces, and a bargain bookstore. The children's area, covering most of the first floor, loans out books, music, movies, and even toys, and is equally beloved for its sizable play areas complete with puzzles, trains, markers, and puppets. IU Libraries, meanwhile, have been named tops in the country by the Association of College and Research Libraries. Indiana residents are eligible for borrower's cards to take advantage of IU's incredible resources like the rare books and manuscripts at the Lilly Library and the digital music archives through the William & Gayle Cook Music Library. If it's your own roots you seek, head to the Monroe County History Center's Genealogy Library, where you'll find all the help you need to map out your family tree. *EA*

44

OUR POLICE AND FIREFIGHTERS

When you call for help in Bloomington, you get one heck of a response. In addition to the multiple emergency vehicles that will likely arrive within minutes, you can expect courteous, informed, and dedicated personnel—something we don't ever want to take for granted. Bloomington police and firefighters have access to the city's state-of-the-art Public Safety Training Center, which draws trainees and active officers from throughout the Midwest. Both departments are also committed to educating residents through courses like the Hoosier Hills Career Center Fire Science Program for high school students and the very helpful web page on "What to do if stopped by a police officer." Beyond the city limits, the Monroe County Sheriff's forces do an excellent job of patrolling our rolling hills. *EA*



45

NOT YOUR MAMA'S

ROLLER GIRLS

How do we love the Bleeding Heartland Rollergirls?

Let us count the ways:

- 1 THESE CHICKS** kick butt in a knock-down, drag-out, skate-so-fast-it-makes-your-eyes-water style. Their bouts are thrilling, heart-pounding events that get spectators pumped and proud.
- 2 OUR TEAMS**, the Flatliners and the Code Blue Assassins, represent every corner of Bloomington society and are made up of nurses, professors, teachers, business executives, and full-time moms. Some are former professional athletes, some are totally new to sports, but every Rollergirl is ready to rock when she enters the arena.
- 3 BOUTS ARE FAMILY-FRIENDLY**, drawing crowds of men, women, and children in equal numbers. What could be a better role model, after all, than a social worker in a helmet charging through her opponents?
- 4 IT'S ONE HECK OF A SPECTACLE.** Between the outlandish outfits (think tulle skirts, striped tights, and leather), the witty pseudonyms (Terror d'Bits, Hell-No Kitty, Felanie Charges), and the entertaining color commentary, the event is one big party. *EA*



Photos by Domingo 'Ding' Prud'homme



Pictura Gallery.
Photo by Steve Raymer

47 WE LIKE TO BIKE

People who've never been to Bloomington but have seen the classic movie *Breaking Away* (about the Little 500 bicycle race) might assume that Bloomington is bicycle-friendly. And they're right! Everywhere you go you see people on bikes: riding to and from shopping areas, peddling to the park for a little R&R, or out for a serious, miles-long workout. The city's love affair with biking hasn't gone unnoticed by the larger bicycle community. Bloomington's burgeoning network of bike lanes and paths earned the town a silver-level "Bicycle Friendly Community" designation from the League of American Bicyclists in 2010. To make the leap to platinum-level, the city recently proposed a funding initiative to build even more bike lanes, shared-road markings, and bicycle boulevards. If you're into riding with a group, you can join the Bloomington Bicycle Club. And if your bike breaks down, you can take it to one of the city's many stellar bicycles shops, including the Bloomington Community Bike Project (BCBP), which provides free access to tools and parts. BCBP also runs the Earn-a-Bike initiative, where participants can earn a donated bicycle by volunteering three hours of time working at the project. *JS*



Photo by Jennifer Ashcraft

46

THE ART SCENE

It's a little like SoHo and a little like Chelsea, only nicer.

If you like art, you'll love Bloomington, where fine art is not only abundant but also accessible. At any given moment, there are a score of free shows around town and at IU's Art Museum and Henry Radford Hope School of Fine Arts Grunwald Gallery of Art. A prime example is Bloomington's bimonthly Gallery Walk, during which 11 galleries open their doors from 5 to 8 pm on a Friday, offering wine, hor d'oeuvres, and a no-pressure viewing of their collections and featured exhibits. There's something for every taste, from photography at pictura gallery to textiles, woodworking, and pottery at By Hand Gallery. Our exhibited local artists number in the hundreds and include renowned limestone sculptor Amy Brier, ceramicist Shu-Mei Chan, jazz- and blues-inspired painters Wayne Manns and Joel Washington, and dimensional weaver Martina Celerin. They never seem to run out of inspiration, and they're always happy to chat about their work. Basically, it's like Chelsea, without the attitude. *EA*

49

THE PEOPLE

We have a mishmash you won't find anywhere else.



Photo by Natasha Komoda



Photo by Ben Weller



Photo by Adam Reynolds



Photo by Steve Raymer



Photo by Laura Beatty

It's an overworked expression to say that what one loves most about a place is "the people." But when applied to Bloomington, the praise really does fit. We are, by and large, a town of high achievers, with skills as varied as developing sports rankings (Jeff Sagarin), knitting miniature clothing (Althea Crome), golfing on the PGA tour (Craig Bowden and Jeff Overton) and discovering sunken ships (Charles Beeker). We are glassblowers, bread bakers, school founders, goat farmers, violin makers, poets, artists, and surgical pioneers. Many of our talented residents could find more fame and fortune in New York, Los Angeles, or Chicago. But like acclaimed writer Scott Russell Sanders, screenwriter Angelo Pizzo, and singer/songwriters Carrie Newcomer, Krista Detor, and Tom Roznowski, they choose to live here for the quality of life. With so much talent in one little city, you might expect some snobbery or aloofness; but that's just not the case. Instead, what you get when you pass someone on the street is a smile, a nod, a "Good morning," or a "How are you?"—Midwestern humility and friendliness at its best. *EA*

I-r: Althea Crome, Scott Russell Sanders, artist Wonsook Kim, Iraq's former Deputy Ambassador to the United Nations Feisal Istrabadi, opera singer Sylvia McNair posing in a risque calendar for charity.



48 RADIO

In Bloomington, radio is alive and well and much loved by the populace. Some might even say our local stations are like glue, helping to bond the community, as well as representing its diversity and interests. There's something for everyone. Anchoring the radio scene are public radio's venerable WFIU and our community, volunteer-run station WFHB.

WFIU 103.7FM is the NPR affiliate where you can hear national shows like *All Things Considered* and *Car Talk*, local programs including *Just You & Me* and *A Moment of Science*, national and local news, and a whole lot of classical music and jazz. WFHB 91.3 FM features local news (for which the station has won numerous state journalism awards), programs focused on the gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender, African American, and Hispanic communities, and local music scene. WGCL 1370 AM, meanwhile, offers more conservative fare, including talk radio heavyweights Rush Limbaugh and Sean Hannity. And as for rocking out, Bloomington radio has the goods: adult alternative on WTTS 92.3 FM, top-40 hits on WBWB 96.7 FM, WCLS 97.7 FM for classic chart-toppers, 105.1 FM serving up the best in contemporary country, and IU's student-run station, WIUX 99.1 FM, playing the hippest college radio tunes. *JS*

50

CONGRATULATIONS, BLOOMINGTON!

OUR REPUTATION IS OUTSTANDING

The accolades just keep pouring in. We can't help it!

Don't take our word for it—read up on the ratings and you'll find that everyone in the know has been singing Bloomington's praises. The city was named one of the top college towns by *USA Today*, one of the best small places for business and careers by *Forbes* magazine, and one of the lowest-stress cities by *Psychology Today*. *Men's Journal* called Bloomington one of the top places to live, *National Geographic Adventure* magazine named it among its top 50 adventure towns, *Bicycling*

magazine placed it among the top ten best places to bike, and advocate.com designated it as the #1 gay- and lesbian-friendly small town in America. Bloomington has won the America in Bloom competition, the National Gold Medal Award for its parks and recreation department, the Indiana Green Community of the Year, and *Prevention* magazine's designation as the state's best walking city. We could go on and on, but we're already blushing. *EA*