

Odds ends

Taverns, nurses unite to make patrons a little bit healthier this season

KENOSHA, Wis. (AP)—Belly up to the bar for a shot, and get another one in the arm while you're at it.

Six Kenosha bars and a visiting nurses group have joined to offer patrons a house special: \$9 for a flu shot and a beer.

Debra Hertzberg, president of the non-profit nursing corporation, said she had been thinking of vaccinating people in taverns for years but was afraid people would find it inappropriate.

But she said a positive response to a similar program in Denver persuaded her to take flu shots to Kenosha bars.

"It brought forth a lot of smiles from people," said David Palmer, owner of TG's Sports Bar. "They think it's a cute idea."

Hertzberg said there is no danger in mixing alcohol with a flu shot, but her staff will not vaccinate anyone who is visibly drunk.

Envelope full of money blows off man's car; thousands of dollars lost

JOHNSTOWN, Pa. (AP)—Leaving a gas cap on the roof of a car is innocent enough. But thousands of dollars?

A 71-year-old man who was driving to a bank left an open envelope full of cash on the roof, police said. He realized what he had done when he got to the bank, but it was too late.

Dozens of people scooped up the bills that were flying around the streets on Friday. Some were spotted shoving money into their pockets as they ran.

Those who took the money can avoid charges if they return it, police Capt. Craig Foust said Monday. He said police are already preparing theft charges against four people who were caught taking some of the cash.

The envelope contained thousands of dollars but police would not say exactly how much.

O'Connor soars from obscurity to famous star

A one-time air traffic controller, Chris O'Connor, the one man impetus of the band Primitive Radio Gods, has skyrocketed from the obscurity of a working man to that of rock star.

He is a real life rock 'n' roll Cinderella with a hit song and Buzz Bin video.

The single "Standing in a Broken Phone Booth With Money in My Hand" is an entrancing and hypnotic lullaby with an infectious sampled beat courtesy of B.B. King. As the song quickly ran up the charts, O'Connor formed a band and went on tour.

In support of his album, "Rocket," which has since gone gold, O'Connor and the rest of the Primitive Radio Gods will be performing this Wednesday at Omaha's Ranch Bowl. The all-ages show starts at 9 p.m. and tickets are \$8.75. Tickets will be \$9.75 the day of the show.

—Bret Schulte



Comedy portrays Hollywood hypocrisy

Theatrix's 'Speed the Plow' explores moviemaking's seedy underbelly

By LIZA HOLTMEIER
Staff Reporter

This weekend's Theatrix production of "Speed The Plow" has challenged its actors as they have worked to fill the shoes of both actor and director.

The play, written by David Mamet, is a black comedy dealing with the hypocrisy of Hollywood's deal-making. The plot revolves around Bobby Gould, a studio executive played by Michael Rothmayer, and Charlie Fox, a movie producer played by Jason Richards. In the midst of the two men's movie dealing, they make a bet with each other concerning Gould's temporary secretary, Karen, played by Lisa Mercer.

The show has been a collaborative effort among the three actors and serves as the first time they have worked without a director.

"It has been interesting as we have tried to step out of our roles as actors and into the role of director," Mercer said. "In other shows, you're only responsible for yourself on stage."

Richards said the extra work has eliminated the room for any ego problems in the show. The actors have to be honest with each other about what areas of the show they think need work, he said. Throughout the process, they have had to be open to each other's suggestions.

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LISA MERCER
actress

"At the very beginning of the process, we decided by the time we got to the end, we would either love each other or hate each other," Rothmayer said. Luckily, he added, the cast has developed a very good chemistry.

Fulfilling the roles of both director and actor has also allowed the cast members to dig deeper into their character analysis.

"We have talked a lot about these characters," Mercer said. "I always do homework for myself for a show, but I don't necessarily have the opportunity to share it. In this instance, we have shared a lot in order to make sure all these characters can exist in the same world."

The cast members' challenge to maintain

the realism has been compounded by Mamet's humor.

"Many of the things my character says when he is angry are actually pretty funny," Richards said. "But in the moment when I am in character, I cannot think about being funny, I have to think about being angry and upset."

Rothmayer added, "The minute you try to play the humor, you're dead. For the characters in the play, this is real life. The portrayal has to be honest."

The play runs from Thursday at 8 p.m., Friday at 7 p.m. and 10 p.m. and Saturday at 8 p.m. in the Studio Theatre of the Temple Building. Admission is \$3.

New artist's acoustics give mellow sound

Sheik to open for Primitive Radio Gods

By CLIFF HICKS
Staff Reporter

In a scene full of angry, brash rock 'n' roll, Duncan Sheik's music makes a nice change of pace.

Sheik will open for the Primitive Radio Gods tonight at Omaha's Ranch Bowl. He is currently touring in support of his new album, "Duncan Sheik."

Most of the record is a combination of Sheik's vocals, acoustic guitars and string arrangements, giving the album a mellow, sophisticated feel.

"I'm just into fresh sounds," Sheik said. "I want to combine an adventurous sonic palette with songs that people can sink their teeth into."

Sheik said he believed many of the songs on his debut album are very introspective. "The songs are really interior monologues," he said. "I just write what moves me."

Sheik began his musical career with a piano, but pestered his grandparents to buy him an electric guitar, which they did. At that point, Sheik said, his musical direction changed.

"I was 12 and in band with a bunch of high school guys," Sheik said. "We played mostly Van Halen and Def Leppard covers. It was horrible."

Later, Sheik would be influenced by the "British Invasion of the '80s," listening to bands like The Smiths, New Order, Tears For Fears and Depeche Mode.

"By the 10th grade, I was into albums by The Blue Nile, David Sylvian, Cocteau Twins and especially Talk Talk's "Color of Spring," Sheik said.

At Brown University, he played in a band with Lisa Loeb before deciding to go solo, doing his own vocals for the first time.

"I didn't really start singing until my first year of college," Sheik said. "But the songs I was writing had gotten to the point where I needed to express them myself."

After graduating from Brown, a demo tape of Sheik's had floated into the music industry. He drove across the country to Los Angeles, where things seemed to go well—for a time.

"I had this quote, unquote \$100,000 deal," Sheik said. "But it ended up not really being the right label for me and I proceeded to spend the next two years in the worst limbo."



COURTESY PHOTO

DUNCAN SHEIK will perform tonight at Omaha's Ranch Bowl.

Sheik eventually signed with Atlantic Records and released his self-titled album. He is currently opening act for the Primitive Radio Gods.

The show at the Ranch Bowl starts at 9 p.m. and tickets are \$9.75 at the door.