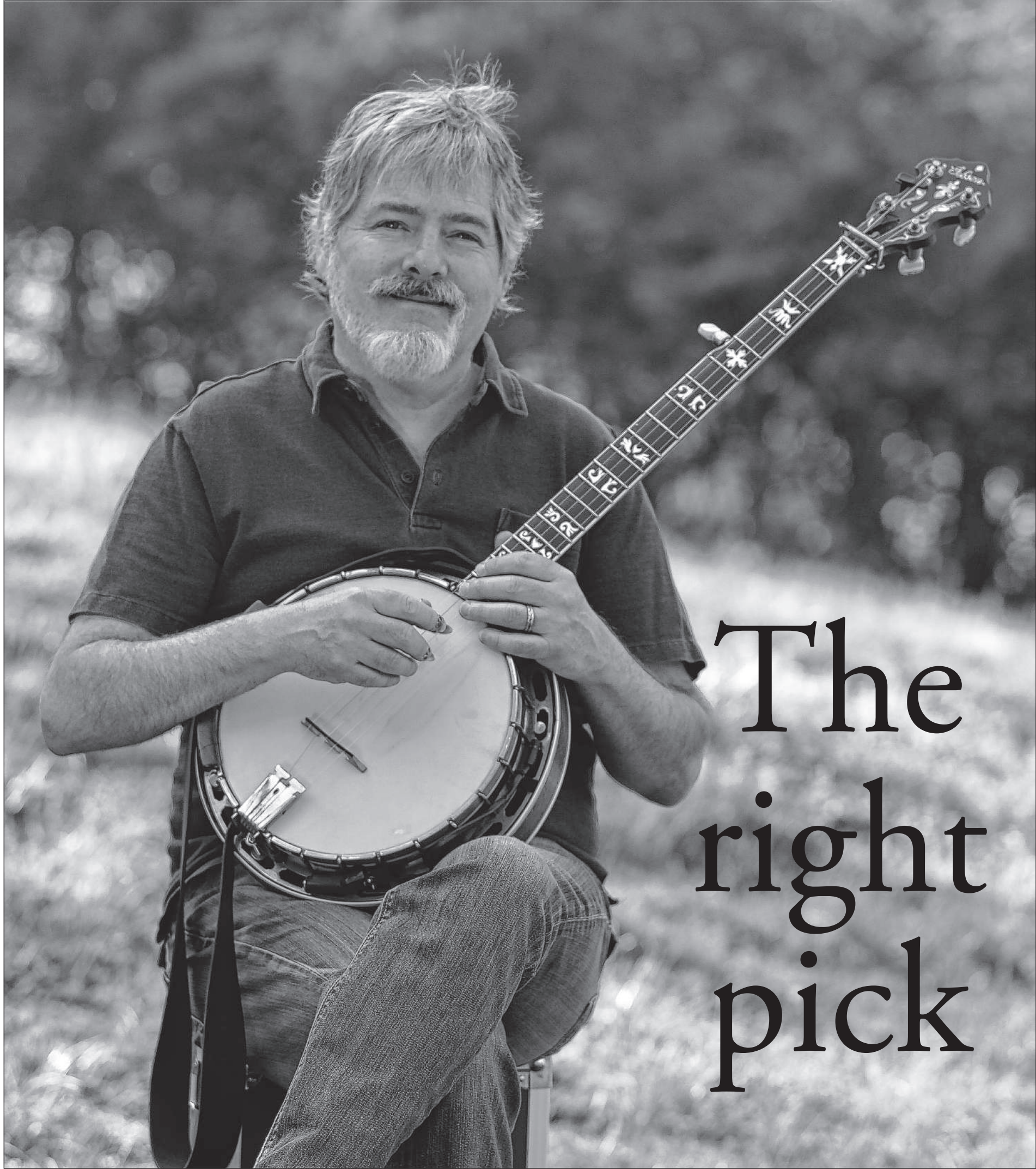




# hoopla



## The right pick

Grammy-winning banjo chameleon Bela Fleck is bringing his "My Bluegrass Heart" tour to the Englert Theatre in downtown Iowa City on Tuesday. (William Matthews)

### Banjo virtuoso Bela Fleck returning to bluegrass roots in Iowa City

By Diana Nollen, The Gazette

**B**ela Fleck, an artist who has raised the banjo to new heights across the musical spectrum, is getting back to his roots with his "My Bluegrass Heart" tour, coming to the Englert Theatre in Iowa City on Tuesday night.

The 2021 album of the same name marks his latest Grammy win, taking Best Bluegrass Album honors in 2022. That brings his career total to 15 Grammy wins and 36 nominations, beginning with a

Grammy in a country category in 1987, and moving through jazz, producer of spoken word for children, world music, pop, bluegrass, classical, folk, American roots, historical and bluegrass categories.

In a 2002 Cedar Rapids concert, Fleck wove classical stylings into his music, evoking a harpsichord sound from his instrument.

He's well aware of the kinship between banjo and harpsichord, two stringed instruments emerging from Africa and Europe, respectively,

around the 17th century.

"Yes, I do hear that similarity," Fleck said via email from his home in Nashville. "And in fact, when I had my album out, called 'Perpetual Motion,' many people wondered what the instrument was that was playing the classical pieces on it, I guess because they didn't expect the banjo to sound like that. Remember that a harpsichord is like a plucked piano, and a banjo is kind of like a plucked lap piano."

#### FINDING HIS GROOVE

Named for Hungarian com-

#### IF YOU GO

- **What:** Bela Fleck: "My Bluegrass Heart"
- **Where:** Englert Theatre, 221 E. Washington St., Iowa City
- **When:** 7:30 p.m. Tuesday
- **Tickets:** \$60 to \$84.50; englert.org/events/
- **Artist's website:** belafleck.com/

poser and pianist Bela Bartok, innovative Austrian composer Anton Webern and Czech composer and folklorist Leos Janacek, Bela Anton Leos Fleck seemed destined to a life

in music.

"I got my names from my father, but he wasn't around when I was a kid," Fleck said. "In fact, I didn't meet him until I was in my 40s, but I was very much in a musical family, since my brother and I both loved music passionately and my stepfather was a cellist."

He and his brother listened to the Beatles; progressive jazz rock bands like Yes; and jazz fusion bands like Chick Corea's Return to Forever and Mahavishnu Orchestra.

► **BANJO, PAGE 4C**



kids gazette  
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# Theatre Cedar Rapids brings ‘Madagascar’ to Bruce more

Story leaps from screen to stage in hourlong family show

By Diana Nollen, The Gazette

Last summer, goats were romping, chomping and entertaining onlookers in Bruce more’s timber. This summer, a lion, a hippo, a giraffe, a zebra, some lemurs, penguins and foosas will be doing the same thing in the historic estate’s outdoor amphitheater.

What’s a foosa, you say? It’s a carnivorous catlike creature that prowls for food in Madagascar.

And Madagascar is where the escapees from New York’s Central Park Zoo wind up in the rollicking hourlong stage version of the popular animated film and its various spinoffs.

Theatre Cedar Rapids is bringing all the excitement and danger of this African island adventure on the stage and through the lawn from Friday to July 23. Hopefully, the hungry animals won’t eat your picnics and snacks. But you never know — anything can happen during these theatrical summer family excursions. Especially when a lion’s on the loose.

The play follows the movie’s story line “pretty closely,” director Lisa Kelly said, with the addition of new music for the play.

The four main characters — Alex the lion, Marty the zebra, Gloria the hippo and Melman the giraffe — are big fish in the small pond of the Central Park Zoo.

“Marty the zebra decides he doesn’t want to live cooped up in a zoo anymore. He wants to at least experience what it’s



Embarking on an overseas adventure in “Madagascar” are (clockwise from back left) Jenub Wan as lemur King Julien; Belle Canney as hippo Gloria; Christi Engelmänn as giraffe Melman; Christian Drollinger as lion Alex; and Jon Turk as zebra Marty. Theatre Cedar Rapids is staging the hourlong musical in Bruce more’s outdoor amphitheater starting Friday through July 23. (Studio Reserved)

like to go out to the wild. So after his birthday, he runs away and decides to go find the wild, which he believes to be a train ride away. Turns out (it’s) just a little bit farther,” Kelly said.

“And then they all end up on a boat to Madagascar and land in Madagascar, which is definitely

not a zoo. There are new animals to encounter who don’t follow zoo rules. And (the zoosters) have to figure out how to deal with this new environment,” Kelly said.

The foosas are the “bad guys,” she explained. “Their goal in life is to mess up the lemurs’ parties, and as

lemurs say, ‘rip their limbs off.’ They’re the hunters and they’re the characters that create drama amongst the other characters.”

But they aren’t the only ones with a flair for drama.

“Poor Alex, the lion, is a carnivore, and most of the food that (the zo-

## IF YOU GO

• **What:** Theatre Cedar Rapids presents: “Madagascar — A Musical Adventure”

• **Where:** Bruce more’s Peggy Boyle Whitworth Amphitheater, 2160 Linden Dr. SE, Cedar Rapids

• **When:** July 7 to 23; 6:30 p.m. Thursday to Sunday

• **Tickets:** \$25 adults, \$15 ages 3 to 12, \$10 ages 2 and under; TCR Box Office, (319) 366-8591 or theatre.org/event/madagascar-a-musical-adventure/2023-07-07

• **Extras:** Site opens at 5:45 p.m. for parking and seating; bring seating; bring light snacks and beverages or buy concessions

osters are) offered is fish and plants. He gets very hungry and starts to hallucinate about wanting meat, so there’s a bit of drama between him and his friends when he accidentally tries to eat them,” Kelly said.

Horrified, Alex runs away. But in his darkest hour, the penguins arrive with a boat “and save the day,” Kelly said. “They have to repair the friendship between Alex and Marty, and Alex has to figure out what he can eat in Madagascar.

“Of course, it all ends up happily in the end.”

And like all the kid shows TCR stages at Bruce more, the audience gets in on the action.

“Several of the songs have audience participation ideas, like ‘Move It, Move It,’ which is the famous song from the movie,” Kelly said, “and there are times where we repeat certain choreography so the audience can learn it. We hope that

they move it, move it along with us.

“So the hope is that, especially the little kids, will want to join in and sing and dance right along with them.”

Kelly has directed several animal-themed shows at TCR, including the recent “SpongeBob” musical on the main stage, and at Bruce more, “A Year with Frog and Toad” and “Elephant and Piggie.”

The trick is to help the actors create the human version of the animal, she said.

“We talked a little bit about characteristics ... Like, Melman’s a giraffe, so how can the actor playing Melman be bigger, and showing height a little bit — and just thinking about staging in that way,” Kelly said.

Kelly, cast and crew are having fun with this one.

“This particular cast is just so excited — they jump in and they’re full energy, and they’re so excited to portray these characters. They all grew up in the late ‘90s, early 2000s, so they know like the source material so well,” Kelly said. “Many times in rehearsal I’ll say something and they’re like, ‘My character wouldn’t do that because in spinoff number three, “The Penguins of Madagascar,” they did not do that.’

“They’ve just been so great at understanding that this show is for kids, and to be ready to deal with whatever the kids bring with them, and share the show with the kids.”

Comments: (319) 368-8508; diana.nollen@thegazette.com

## THEATER

### OPENING

#### MADAGASCAR: A MUSICAL ADVENTURE

July 7 to 23, Theatre Cedar Rapids at Bruce more  
See story for details.

### THE RAPIDS

July 12, Mirrorbox Theatre, Cedar Rapids  
“The Rapids” is a new, improvised soap opera comedy created by Cavan Hallman. In each monthly “episode,” presented live on stage, greedy industrialists, lovers, corrupt

politicians, and other big personalities keep getting into hilarious trouble based on audience suggestions.  
**Where:** Mirrorbox Theatre, 1200 Ellis Blvd. NW, Cedar Rapids. **When:** 7 p.m. July 12, Aug. 9 and Sept. 6. **Tickets:** \$15, mirrorboxtheatre.com/the-rapids/

### CONTINUING

#### ROCK OF AGES

To July 23, Theatre Cedar Rapids  
Aqua Net, Lycra, lace and liquor flow freely at one of the Sunset Strip’s last legendary

venues, a place where sexy Stacey Jaxx takes the stage and groupies line up to turn their fantasies into reality. Amid the madness of the Sunset Strip, aspiring rock star Drew longs to take the stage as the next big thing, and pines for small-town girl Sherri, fresh off the bus from Kansas with stars in her eyes. But the rock ‘n’ roll fairy tale is about to end when German developers sweep into town to turn the fabled Strip into just another strip mall. Can the gang save the Strip — and themselves — before it’s too late? The music

of Styx, Journey, Bon Jovi, Whitesnake and more hold the answer. **Where:** Theatre Cedar Rapids, 102 Third St. SE. **When:** To July 23; 7:30 p.m. Thursday to Saturday; 2:30 p.m. Sunday. **Tickets:** \$18 to \$42, TCR Box Office, (319) 366-8591 or theatre.org/event/rock-of-ages-2/2023-06-23/

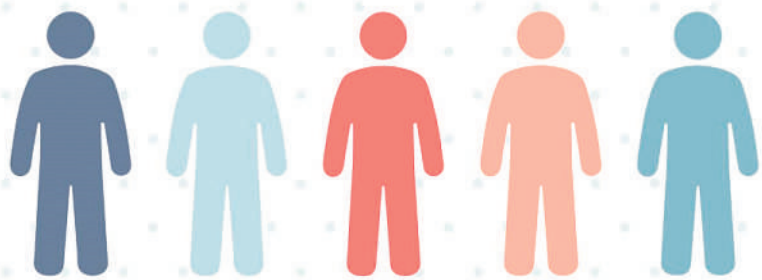
### UPCOMING

#### DISNEY’S HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL

July 14 to 23, City Circle, Coralville  
It’s the first day after winter

break at East High, and the school’s cliques are about to collide when basketball team captain Troy and brainiac Gabriella decide to audition for the high school musical — together. Can they deal with the issues of first love, friends, and family, while balancing their classes and extracurricular activities? **Where:** Coralville Center for the Performing Arts, 1301 Fifth St. **When:** July 14 to 16 and 21 to 23; 7:30 p.m. Friday, Saturday; 2 p.m. Sunday. **Tickets:** Box Office, (319) 248-9370 or coralvillearts.org/256/Disneys-High-School-Musical

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HOOPLA

# Dream Theater ready to wake up C.R.

Prog-metal band creating a recurring festival vibe

By Alan Sculley,  
Last Word Features

**D**ream Theater is launching Dreamsonic this summer — the first of what the band hopes will be a recurring traveling festival showcasing prog-metal, the hybrid style that blends the power and crunch of heavy metal with the intricate musicality and the multifaceted compositional nature of classic progressive rock.

It's a sound Dream Theater helped pioneer in the late 1980s.

The tour stops at the Alliant Energy PowerHouse in Cedar Rapids on July 13. Also in the lineup are two openers making waves in the prog-metal world — Animals as Leaders and Devin Townsend — and it could have other impacts.

For one thing, Dream Theater guitarist John Petrucci hopes Dreamsonic raises the profile of the prog-metal genre itself.

"Anything to boost the community and make more and more people aware of it (is good)," he said in an early June phone interview.

Petrucci said he and his bandmates — singer James LaBrie, bassist John Myung, keyboard-



The curtain is rising on Dream Theater's Dreamsonic 2023 tour, an event the prog-metal band hopes to turn into a traveling festival. It's coming to the Alliant Energy PowerHouse in downtown Cedar Rapids on July 13. (Dream Theater)

ist Jordan Rudess and drummer Mike Mangini — expect to begin work on a new studio album at the end of this year.

"We haven't started anything as far as the

music is concerned. But we have had discussions on a direction," Petrucci said of the next album. "Sometimes it takes perspective to think about the next record, and the

perspective comes from what kind of record did we just make and what happened on the tour."

The most recent album, "A View from the Top of the World," creat-

ed during the pandemic, was unique for the band.

"Normally we do go in, and it's important to have a plan and a direction and get everybody on the same page," Pe-

IF YOU GO

- **What:** Dreamsonic 2023: Dream Theater, with Devin Townsend and Animals as Leaders opening
- **Where:** Alliant Energy PowerHouse, 370 First Ave. NE, Cedar Rapids
- **When:** 7 p.m. July 13
- **Tickets:** \$39.50 to \$124.50; creventslive.com/events/2023/dreamsonic-2023-dream-theatre
- **Band's website:** dreamtheater.net/

trucci said. "In this instance, this example, that was not the case. It was us just kind of like, 'Hey guys, it's better to get together and play music and hang out with each other than to sit around at home doing nothing. This is what we do. Let's just make music.'"

This more spontaneous approach worked well. "A View from the Top of the World" was well received by fans and critics. What's more, the album's lead track, "The Alien," won Dream Theater its first Grammy, for Best Metal Performance.

As for the upcoming concert, Petrucci expects to collaborate with Animals as Leaders and Townsend.

"It's an opportunity that it would be a shame to miss," he said.

# Flat River Band in harmony onstage and off

Sitze brothers bringing new music to the Ideal Theater

By Ed Condran, correspondent

A sibling sound is hard to beat, and few singers are on the level of the Flat River Band, which features three brothers.

"There's something about a genetic harmony," vocalist Denny Sitze said while calling from his Nashville home. "Having brothers or sisters sing together is so different than two people on the street. We pride ourselves on our ability to create harmonies."

But harmonizing seems to be waning.

"It's true that it's almost a thing of the past," Sitze said. "But we can't stop. We love it. This is our passion."

Cedar Rapids audiences will hear all that when Flat River Band stops at the Ideal Theater and Bar on Friday night.

The bluegrass band, which includes vocalists Andy Sitze and Chad Sitze, will showcase its latest single, "The Wings of a White Dove," a gorgeous, deep tune.

"It's a positive song, which is about raising awareness of mental illness," Denny Sitze said. "We were impacted by our manager taking his life two years ago. He was going through a dark place, and we want to raise awareness so people who are having issues, stay alive."

In Cedar Rapids, the brothers will preview the song and some other new



The sibling Flat River Band is bringing its bluegrass harmonies to the Ideal Theater and Bar in Cedar Rapids on Friday night. (Barbara Potter)

tunes that will grace an as-yet untitled album.

"Playing Iowa is something we know well," Sitze said. "We played all over that state since we were young kids in our family band. We enjoy coming back since the audiences are so supportive and enthusiastic. It's always fun playing Iowa during the summer. It's such a beautiful place in July."

Denny Sitze, 46, was just 9 years old when he started with his family group, the Sitze Family Band, which played for a dozen years in Branson,

Mo., and a half-decade at Dollywood in Pigeon Forge, Tenn.

"Playing in a band is all that we've ever known," Sitze said. "It's always been a normal way of life for us — to get up there and play and travel."

After performing as a bluegrass-gospel act, the Flat River Band was formed in 2008. The siblings are bucking a trend of brothers in bands that tend to break up.

"Even though we know how to push each other's buttons, we manage to stay together

and sing to the unfortunate. It opened our eyes up at an early age."

So what's ahead?

"We're just going to stay together and do what we're doing," he said. "We enjoy what we

do and we get along so well that I hope we end up in the same nursing home together. We actually want to grow old together. I don't know how many guys in bands say that."

IF YOU GO

- **What:** Flat River Band
- **Where:** Ideal Theater and Bar, 213 16th Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids
- **When:** 8 p.m. Friday
- **Tickets:** \$13, theidealtheaterandbar.com/
- **Band's website:** flattriverband.com/

because we enjoy each other's company," Sitze said.

"I remember when we were little and we would drive to Chicago in our parents' Thunderbird. We would get out on skid

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After a career of genre jumping, Bela Fleck (left) is getting back to his roots, bringing his "My Bluegrass Heart" tour and band to the Englert Theatre in downtown Iowa City on Tuesday. (Alan Messer)

# Banjo/Interest sparked from TV show

► FROM PAGE 1C

"But we loved everything," he said.

Now 64, Fleck became enamored with the banjo in his youth, hearing the "The Beverly Hillbillies" television theme song.

"It was just the sound of the banjo that got me — it got me so deep. Earl Scruggs had a way of turning on activated banjoists," he said. "I don't think I was attracted to the country or hillbilly side of it. Just the sound of the banjo fascinated and excited me."

At age 15, the New York City native received a banjo from his grandfather, and on his train ride home, a gentleman seated nearby suggested he get a copy of Pete Seeger's banjo instruction book, "How to Play the Five-String Banjo."

Fleck began studying banjo in earnest and credits his instructor with setting the example for infusing bluegrass with jazz, classical and rock sounds.

"My banjo teacher, Tony Trischka, was experimenting with a lot of these ideas and kind of built a template for some of the things that I have gone on to do," Fleck said.

His educational path took him to the "Fame" high school in New York City, where he met other teens who shared his artistic aspirations, if not

his love of banjo.

"Finding folks like me wasn't that hard, because everybody was quite different, quite unique, and except when it came to the bluegrass banjo part of it, we were very much in sync," he said. "My friends really couldn't relate to the banjo thing, but they could relate to the creativity thing."

"After school, I found musicians to play with, and traveled to play with them and developed friendships among the best musicians I could find, and these became my peers. ...

"Then, when I joined bands, it was always progressive bluegrass bands. They were trying to push the music to new places, such as new grass revival. Meanwhile, I worked on my jazz chops in the closet, and when I started playing with Victor Wooten and Howard Levy (in Bela Fleck and the Flecktones), I whipped them out."

**BACK TO HOME BASE**

His latest project has brought him full circle.

"I do love bluegrass, and for a bluegrass musician like myself, you have to come back and touch home base every once in a while," he said. "It was just time for me."

Fleck's Iowa City audience will hear a musical mix honed during his long and storied career.

"This concert will

feature some of the greatest players on the scene these days. We'll be featuring a lot of the music from 'My Bluegrass Heart' and also some traditional music — because we've got to," he exclaimed.

Joining him onstage will be what he called "a stepped lineup," featuring Sierra Hull on mandolin, Bryan Sutton on guitar, Micheal Cleveland on fiddle, Justin Moses on dobro, banjo and fiddle, and Mark Schatz on bass.

**INSPIRATIONS AND ASPIRATIONS**

"I go in and out of listening to music these days," Fleck said. "My mentor Chick Corea used to say sometimes you're inputting and sometimes you're outputting, and I guess when I'm creating music, I don't wanna be listening to other people's music. But when I'm feeling a little bit dry and I need new information to get my fires burning again, that's when I start doing a lot of listening, and that's the inputting side. (Corea) was a smart guy."

His favorite artists come from the realms of jazz, classical, pop and bluegrass.

His collaborations are equally diverse, from violinists Joshua Bell and Jean-Luc Ponty to percussionist Evelyn Glennie and tabla player

Zakir Hussain.

"I guess it's part of my mission to open up people's perceptions of what a banjo can do," Fleck said. "Plus, I just love interacting with great musicians and learning from them."

One of those favorite musicians is his wife, Abigail Washburn, whose style varies from his. They've joined forces on the road, too, performing together at the Englert on Feb. 24, 2015.

"We have a blast to-

gether — personal level and a musical level," he said. "We're both rippers with different techniques to ripple with. I'm a bluegrass player with three finger pics. She's a claw hammer player who uses her fingernails. She happens to be a fantastic singer, which really helps."

And their two young boys are making music, too.

"Juno is coming along on the fiddle and Theo is really good on the

drums," said the proud papa, whose idea of a great time is hanging out with his family.

Now that Fleck is turning 65 on July 10, what does he hope his legacy will be?

"I hope I opened people's minds about the possibilities of the banjo," he said. "It's been an incredible journey, and I hope it goes on for a lot longer!"

Comments: (319) 368-8508; diana.nollen@thegazette.com

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HOOPLA

# Say cheese

Marco's tests new market in Coralville, hopes to expand to C.R., Ankeny

By Elijah Decious, The Gazette

**C**ORALVILLE — After 23 years in business, a late-night food cart brand is hoping to get in with a new crowd.

Marco's Grilled Cheese, long a fixture for students at the late-night Ped Mall and football games in Iowa City, has opened the first of two new brick-and-mortar locations this year — part of a plan that will triple its presence in Johnson County by this fall.

Along the Coralville Strip, the new location opened June 15 as Marco's second brick-and-mortar opening, after its Linn Street location. In about two months, Marco's plans to open a third permanent location at 1621 S. First Ave. in Iowa City.

"I'm seeing what we can do with expansion. We're proven with the late night, downtown (Iowa City) college-age crowd," owner Mark Paterno said. "Essentially, we're testing the waters to see how the non-college-aged population reacts."

Located where Pita Pit used to be, the expansions come with an ambitious new vision for the brand across the Corridor and in other parts of Iowa. Finding the right real estate locations in Coralville and Iowa City for size, build, rent, visibility and low competition sparked this year's growth, which will triple Marco's footprint.

As he gauges the taste for late-night grilled sandwiches, quesadillas and more with a different customer base, Paterno also will be testing the viability of the vision that goes outside Johnson County. If Coralville and Iowa City are successful, Paterno hopes to expand to North Liberty, Cedar Rapids and his native Ankeny.

"It's probably not what they teach you in business school, but my target demographic is everyone," Paterno said. "I want anyone to come to Marco's and see something that catches your eye."

With no fryers for now, the Coralville location presents a streamlined menu that includes all the tried and true favorites from Marco's Linn Street location: the multiple classic grilled cheese and quesadilla options, street tacos, burgers, plus a new line of salads.

But with continued expansion of the brand, now older than most of the college graduates it has fueled for more than 23 years, comes the question of its identity as it serves a new type of customer.

Will the brand's food cart roots remain a central part of its identity as it continues growing in permanent locations with new demographics? Instead of shedding its reputation as a rite of passage for students' munchies late at night, Marco's is leaning into it.

"It's been at the forefront of my mind — our identity," the owner said. "It's an evolution of the story. I think every cart



Employees pull apart a classic grilled cheese to show the cheese June 27 at Marco's Grilled Cheese in Coralville. (Savannah Blake photos/The Gazette)



A bird-dog grilled cheese features a chicken quesadilla inside a grilled cheese at Marco's Grilled Cheese in Coralville.



Marco's Grilled Cheese has a new location at the former Pita Pit in Coralville.

owner in America at some point either wants or wanted to expand their cart into a business or restaurant. It's a true graduation in the business itself."

No longer does Marco's run the risk of starting from scratch each spring after workers are sent home for the slow winter seasons. Or, for that matter, lose business as the cold sets in.

But as Marco's evolves from a single cart to a small local chain, nostalgia will remain a central part of the story. Many of the more mature customers that it wants to reach with its new locations were those late-night students at one point, too.

Lined with a collage

of Marco's busiest days on the Ped Mall over the years, the walls inside its new locations will remind them of that, in case they hadn't realized it.

And while the memories are connected to relatively simple foods, perhaps the ties to an amateur cook's specialties are part of the college nostalgia, too.

"I'm just trying to do good food, the best food for what I, as a non-chef, can pull off," Paterno said. "I was just a Spanish major who became a Realtor. I never thought I was going to be in the restaurant business."

Comments: (319) 398-8340; elijah.decious@thegazette.com

## IF YOU GO

- **What:** Marco's Grilled Cheese
- **Address:** 517 Second St., Coralville
- **Hours:** 11 a.m. to midnight Sunday through Thursday; 11 a.m. to 2 a.m. Friday and Saturday
- **Website:** marcosgrilledcheese.com
- **Phone:** (319) 259-7087
- **Details:** Get the same classics Marco's made its name with at a new Coralville location with late-night hours: grilled cheese sandwiches, quesadillas, new salads and more. Available for dine-in and carryout, with delivery coming soon via DoorDash and Chomp.



Salads, including this one with steak, are the newest addition to the menu at Marco's Grilled Cheese in Coralville.



CHEW ON THIS | ELIJAH DECIOUS

# ‘Iron Chef’ cast member opens Coralville restaurant

**CORALVILLE** — An elevated deli, bakery and cafe opened Wednesday by the hand of a James Beard Award semifinalist, with TV accolades from Food Network’s “Spring Baking Championship” and “Iron Chef.”

Barrett’s Quality Eats, first announced in January by owner Chef Cory Barrett, will serve a variety of elevated comforts alongside a few niche novelties at 3242 Crosspark Rd. in Coralville. A full deli bar, breakfast menu, salads, soups, sandwiches like muffalattas and hearty classics like rotisserie chicken will be served alongside a full dessert and pastry menu — one of Barrett’s specialties — with coffee, cocktails and more.

Diners can try familiar comforts delivered with gourmet quality, or try new novelties like the deep dish cinnamon rolls — available on a first-come, first-served basis on Saturday and Sunday only.

In addition to a James Beard Foundation semifinalist nod for Rising Star Chef in 2008, Barrett has twice received recognition as a semifinalist in the Outstanding Pastry Chef category in 2009 and 2010. Notably, he has also worked with Cleveland, Ohio’s Michael Symon, a barbecue master who co-hosted ABC’s “The Chew.”

Locals may recognize Barrett’s work at Big Grove Brewery, including the brewery’s exclusive annual Richard Dinner, where he has served as a consultant over the past several months since moving to the Corridor. Before working as a culinary arts instructor and program director at a Michigan community college, the Ohio native worked in fine dining for 12 years in cities across the country.

Barrett appeared as a sous chef on “Iron Chef America” 17 times, and won Season 5 of the “Spring Baking Championship” on Food Network in 2018.

The new restaurant, in a new development near Hy-Vee, will offer daily counter service for breakfast, lunch and early dinner most days, opening at 7 a.m. daily.

The first 100 customers at Barrett’s Quality Eats at its opening



The deli counter at Barrett’s Quality Eats is shown during an open house June 30 in Coralville. (Geoff Stellfox/The Gazette)

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Wednesday morning received free cookies for a year.

### NEW BANH MI SANDWICH SHOP OPENS IN AREA

**HIAWATHA** — A new Vietnamese sandwich shop with boba tea and Vietnamese coffee has opened in Hiawatha.

It appears to be the only restaurant in Linn County focused solely on banh mi sandwiches, and joins one of a select but growing number of Vietnamese restaurants in the Corridor.

Yummy Banh Mi

opened with a dining room and drive-thru June 17 at 1950 Blairs Ferry Rd. NE, Suite 116.

The sandwich shop, which bakes its bread daily in-house, has a full menu of milk teas, fruity teas, coffee and a focused menu of the classic Vietnamese sandwich style with unique meat and green options.

Options include ham and headcheese, pork belly, chicken shrimp cake, fried egg and barbecue beef.

Comments: (319) 398-8340; [elijah.decious@thegazette.com](mailto:elijah.decious@thegazette.com)



A Vietnamese sandwich shop, Yummy Banh Mi, opened in Hiawatha in late June. (Yummy Banh Mi)

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HOOPLA

# REO keeps the fire burnin'

Speedwagon rolling out hit parade in Manchester

By L. Kent Wolgamott,  
Last Word Features  
correspondent

Last year, REO Speedwagon's Kevin Cronin traveled a few miles from his Southern California home to catch the Foo Fighters at a club with a capacity of 600.

"It was so inspiring," Cronin said, making mention of the recent passing of Foo Fighter Taylor Hawkins during a recent phone interview. "When I took that opportunity to see what they did, they were playing really loud and really fast in this small place."

It conjured up memories of the past. "It brought me back to when REO Speedwagon was playing clubs. We weren't called REO Speedwagon for nothing," Cronin said. "Seeing the Foo Fighters playing fast and loud inspired me to go back, and there are now a couple songs from the early days in the set."

That's the set that REO will play this year as the band follows up a summer 2022 co-headlining tour with Styx with a headlining run. REO will headline the Delaware County Fair grandstand in Manchester on July 13.

The band's earliest days were in 1967, when a bunch of University of Illinois students in Champaign put together a musical group that took its name from the REO Speed Wagon, a 1915 truck designed by Ransom Eli Olds.

Playing first around Illinois then throughout the Midwest, REO, which had a shifting lineup early, signed with Epic Records in 1971. But that didn't immediately send the band into arenas — not even close.

"We played bars," said Cronin, who took over as REO's singer in



REO Speedwagon began revving up its engines in 1967, when some University of Illinois students put together a musical group that took its name from the REO Speed Wagon, a 1915 truck designed by Ransom Eli Olds. More than 50 years later, the band still is going strong and will be at the Delaware County Fair in Manchester on July 13. (Randy St. Nicholas)

1972. "We had a 1972 Impala station wagon and a truck for the equipment. We played bars, worked our way up to bigger bars. Then there were small theaters and we got to be an arena band."

"I always got the feeling that people in the Midwest were rooting for us because we were underdogs that finally made it. Our first hit song was from our ninth album."

That was 1980's "Keep on Loving You," which hit No. 1 on the Billboard Top 40 chart. It's one of four Top 10 songs REO had from 1980 to 1984. But if all the band's earliest charting singles are counted, its run reaches back to a live version of "Ridin' the Storm Out," which made the bottom reaches of the chart

three years earlier.

Those songs, Cronin said, keep people coming back to REO shows year after year, decade after decade.

"We had a 10-year run between 1977 and 1987 where we had nine platinum-plus albums and the big one, 'Hi-Infidelity,'" he said. "There are a number of songs that got into people's bloodstreams. At a certain age, you get connected to music and those songs stay with you."

No matter how many times the band has played them, those songs will never be left out of REO's set.

"We don't do that," Cronin said. "If we did, there would probably be an angry mob waiting for us when we got to the tour bus. If you're buy-

ing a ticket to an REO Speedwagon show, know there are songs we are going to play."

"I, frankly, don't understand when I hear an artist talking about how they aren't going to play their hits, how they don't like their biggest songs," he said. "That makes absolutely no sense to me. To me those songs are why we can still do it. It isn't a coincidence. It just so happens, they are my favorite songs of ours."

That said, unlike most bands that play the same set in show after show, REO switches things up every night as Cronin calls frequent "audibles" around the core songs.

"I'm the quarterback of the band," he said. "I get a vibe from the crowd. Going from city to city, I don't know why,

but I remember which tracks off of the albums did well there. It's different in every area of the country and I'll call them out."

Like every other band in the world, REO was off the road for more than a year during the coronavirus pandemic. That was bad for business. But, for Cronin, it had some unexpected positives.

"I'd never been home for that long in 50 years," he said. "I got to see the seasons change at my home. All my kids moved back in, colleges closed down and all that. I had my whole family around me for a year and a half. It was the closest my family has ever been. That kind of bond wouldn't have happened without a worldwide

IF YOU GO

- **What:** REO Speedwagon
- **Where:** Grandstand, Delaware County Fair, 200 E. Acers St., Manchester
- **When:** 8:30 p.m. July 13, doors open 7 p.m.
- **Tickets:** \$50 SRO track tickets, with a few benches for sitting; \$159 premium pit tickets are sold out; free seating in the Scooter's Grandstand with fair admission; [delawarecofair.com/visit-the-fair/main-events/](http://delawarecofair.com/visit-the-fair/main-events/)
- **Other concerts:** Josh Baldwin, 7 p.m. Wednesday, Festival Area, free with fair admission; Carly Pearce with Aaron Watson, 7:30 p.m. July 14, Grandstand, free to \$60
- **Fair admission:** \$15; \$3 ages 1 to 11
- **Band's website:** [reospeedwagon.com/](http://reospeedwagon.com/)

pandemic." That bonding time gave him an appreciation for the people he loves and a fair amount of realization for the time missed with them while out on the road.

"I didn't know what I was missing before," he said. "We can block out dates for birthdays, graduations, etc. The great gift I was given during the pandemic was being around for the little things. ... Bump into them in the hallway and all of a sudden you're having a conversation, a real conversation. Now I kind of know what I'm missing."

Still, Cronin was itching to get back on the road when venues reopened.

"I'm raring to go," Cronin said. "I'm the luckiest guy in the world to be a singer in a rock band that's been going for 50 years. There's nothing like standing at the microphone in a place that's full of people and hearing them singing along with every song, seeing them."

FESTIVALS

Here's a glance at July festivals and fairs around Eastern Iowa:

**July 7 to 9:** Lake Red Rock Balloonfest, Lake Red Rock, 393 Baseline Dr., Pella. Hot air balloons, live music and more. [lakeredrockballoonfest.com](http://lakeredrockballoonfest.com)

**July 8:** Kinderfest, Amana Games. [amanacolony.com/things-to-do/events/themed-weekends/kinderfest](http://amanacolony.com/things-to-do/events/themed-weekends/kinderfest)

**July 8 and 9:** Reflections of the Civil War, Seminole Valley Farm Museum, 1400 Seminole Valley Rd. NE, Cedar Rapids. Encampments, music, cannon fire.

[seminolevalleyfarmmuseum.net/reflections-of-the-civil-war.html](http://seminolevalleyfarmmuseum.net/reflections-of-the-civil-war.html)

**July 13 to 15:** Walcott Truckers Jamboree, Iowa 80 Truckstop, 755 W. Iowa 80 Rd., Walcott. Antique truck display, fireworks, music and more. [iowa80truckstop.com/trucker-jamboree](http://iowa80truckstop.com/trucker-jamboree)

**July 13 to 16:** Snake Alley Festival of Film, Burlington Capitol Theater, 211 N. Third St., Burlington. Celebration of short films from around the world. [snakealleyfestivaloffilm.com](http://snakealleyfestivaloffilm.com)

**July 15:** Des Moines Water

Lantern Festival, Riverview Park Amphitheater, 710 Corning Ave., Des Moines. [waterlanternfestival.com/desmoines.php](http://waterlanternfestival.com/desmoines.php)

**July 21 and 22:** Solon Beef Days, Solon. Food, live entertainment. [beefdays.com](http://beefdays.com)

**July 22 to 29:** RAGBRAI, Annual bicycle ride across Iowa, Sioux City to Davenport. Overnight stops include Storm Lake, Carroll, Ames, Des Moines, Tama-Toledo, Coralville. [ragbrai.com](http://ragbrai.com)

**July 27 to 29:** Nordic Fest, 507 W. Water St., Decorah. Celebration of Scandinavian

heritage, culture and food. [nordicfest.com](http://nordicfest.com)

**July 28 and 29:** Walker Pickle Days, City Park, Walker. Celebrating town's 150th anniversary; 5K and fun run, fireworks and more. [facebook.com/pickledays](http://facebook.com/pickledays)

**July 28 to Aug. 5:** National Balloon Classic, 15335 Jewell St., Indianola. View more than 100 hot air balloons, competitions, balloon rides and more. [nationalballoonclassic.com](http://nationalballoonclassic.com)

FAIRS

**July 10 to 16:** Delaware

County Fair, 200 E. Acers St., Manchester. Exhibits, entertainment, food, rides and more. [delawarecofair.com](http://delawarecofair.com)

**July 19 to 23:** Great Jones County Fair, 800 N. Maple St., Monticello. Concerts, rides, exhibits, food and more. [greatjonescountyfair.com](http://greatjonescountyfair.com)

**July 19 to 23:** Allamakee County Fair, Allamakee County Fairgrounds, 705 Allamakee St., Waukon. [allamakeecountyfair.org](http://allamakeecountyfair.org)

**July 23 to 26:** Johnson County Fair, 4261 Oak Crest Hill Rd. SE, Iowa City. [thejohnsoncountyfair.com](http://thejohnsoncountyfair.com)

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MOVIE PROFILE

# Allen's 'Indiana Jones' cameo

By Mary McNamara,  
Los Angeles Times

When "Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny" premiered at the Cannes Film Festival in May, no one was happier than Karen Allen.

She could finally answer the question she had been asked repeatedly by journalists, fans and friends for years: Yes, she and Marion Ravenwood were returning to the franchise they helped make famous.

Not that she was at Cannes. Disney was so determined to keep people guessing that it created a pre-Cannes poster that did not include Allen.

"I was sworn to secrecy, which was torture," Allen said of the project, in theaters now.

"For almost two years, whenever anyone asked me if I was in the film or not, I had to come up with something to say, like, 'I could tell you, but then I'd have to kill you,'" she said during a recent Zoom interview.

When the film's IMDb page was initially launched, Allen was not on it.

"People kept consoling me," she said. "They'd be upset on my behalf, say



Harrison Ford as Indiana Jones and Karen Allen as Marion Ravenwood made a dynamic duo during "Raiders of the Lost Ark," in 1981. The two actors and characters are reunited in the latest adventure, "Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny." (Paramount Pictures/Entertainment Pictures/ZUMA Press)

things like, 'How could they not bring Marion back?' and I'd have to stand there like, 'Errrr.' They're very serious about this.

"I had to do it for the

last one ("Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull")," she added, "but not for as long as this."

Allen, like Marion, is more than used to wait-

ing for Indiana Jones.

WATCH IT!

- **What:** "Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny"
- **Cast:** Harrison Ford, Mads Mikkelsen, Phoebe Waller-Bridge, Oliver Richters, Thomas Kretschmann, Boyd Holbrook, Toby Jones, Antonio Banderas, John Rhys-Davies, Shaunette Renee Wilson, Ethann Isidore
- **Rated:** PG-13 for sequences of violence and action, language and smoking
- **Run time:** 154 min.
- **Where:** Marcus Cinema, Collins Road in Cedar Rapids, Coral Ridge Cinema in Coralville, Sycamore Cinema in Iowa City

When she was cast in "Raiders of the Lost Ark," she was told there would be three films and Marion would only be in the first. When the fourth, "Crystal Skull," took a leap forward in the narrative timeline, director Steven Spielberg brought Marion back into Indy's life.

"I was thrilled and taken by surprise — especially when I found out they were going to marry," Allen said. "I always felt he was the love

of her life." Over the ensuing years, as the fifth film was developed, Allen had no idea if Marion would be part of the story.

"George Lucas said it would be a more personal film and I didn't know what that would be." The script Spielberg worked on for years had Marion more side-by-side with Indy, Allen said, but when Spielberg stepped aside and James Mangold came on board, "It was a whole new day. For a year and a half, I didn't know. I was just waiting.

"Then I saw the story that they decided to tell, and I was just very happy that at least ... there was a reuniting of those characters." Allen's scene took only a day and a half to shoot, but she went to London's Pinewood Studios a couple of weeks before to figure out hair and wardrobe.

"I got to watch and meet James Mangold for the first time, hung out with Harrison a bit, though he was working. It was very easy and he seemed so happy that I was there. It meant a lot to both of us to bring these two characters together. Bringing the first

film back ... felt good, it felt right."

It certainly felt right to audience members in both Cannes and at the L.A. premiere of the film in June. Marion's appearance elicited emotional gasps, cheers and applause.

"I think (Lucas and Spielberg) created these indelible characters," Allen said of the couple's enduring popularity. "This archaeologist who's off the beaten path — he knocks out a Nazi and when he tries to put on the uniform it's too small. It won the hearts of people. The stories are modern and kind of a throwback, and Marion is his partner from the beginning."

Now Marion appears to have something of a new partner in Indy's goddaughter Helena, aka Wombat, played by Phoebe Waller-Bridge; she instigates Marion's return to Indy. Ford has said this is Indy's last hurrah, but many have speculated that "Dial of Destiny" sets up a Wombat spinoff. And who better to serve as her mentor than Marion?

"I hadn't thought of that," Allen said, laughing. "That's a great idea. I'm in."

MOVIES

OPENING

INSIDIOUS: THE RED DOOR

The horror franchise's original cast returns for the final chapter of the Lambert family's terrifying saga. To put their demons to rest once and for all, Josh (Patrick Wilson) and a college-aged Dalton (Ty Simpkins) must go deeper into The Further than ever before, facing their family's dark past and a host of new and more horrifying terrors that lurk behind the red door. (PG-13, 107 min., Marcus Cinema in C.R., Coral Ridge Cinema in Coralville, Sycamore Cinema in I.C.)

JOY RIDE

When Audrey's (Ashley Park) business trip to Asia goes sideways, she enlists the aid of Lolo (Sherry Cola), her irreverent, childhood best friend who also happens to be a hot mess; Kat (Stephanie Hsu), her college friend turned Chinese soap star; and Dead-eye (Sabrina Wu), Lolo's eccentric cousin. Their no-holds-barred, epic experience becomes a journey of bonding, friendship, belonging and wild debauchery that reveals the universal truth of what it means to know and love who you are. (R, 94 min., Marcus Cinema in C.R., Coral Ridge Cinema in Coralville, Sycamore Cinema in I.C.)

THE LESSON

Liam (Daryl McCormack), an aspiring and ambitious young writer, eagerly accepts a tutoring position at the family estate of his idol, renowned author J.M. Sinclair (Richard E. Grant). But soon, Liam realizes that he is ensnared in a web of family secrets, resentment and retribution. Sinclair, his wife Helene (Julie Delpy), and their son Bertie (Stephen McMillan) all guard a dark past, one that threatens Liam's future as well as their own. As the lines between master and protege blur, class, ambition and betrayal become a

dangerous combination in this taut noir thriller. (R, 103 min., Marcus Cinema in C.R.)

SOUND OF FREEDOM

Based on true events, this film sheds light on the grim reality of child sex trafficking. It is the true story of a man who risks everything to bring a ray of light and hope to the most hidden corners of our world, seeking to save children chained in the dark. (PG-13, 135 min., Marcus Cinema in C.R., Coral Ridge Cinema in Coralville, Sycamore Cinema in I.C.)

CONTINUING

**ASTEROID CITY**  
A Junior Stargazer/Space Cadet convention is spectacularly disrupted by world-changing events. (PG-13, 105 min., Marcus Cinema in C.R.)

ELEMENTAL

In a city where fire, water, land and air residents live together, a fiery young woman and a go-with-the-flow guy discover something elemental: how much they actually have in common.

(PG, 110 min., Marcus Cinema, Collins Road in C.R., Coral Ridge Cinema in Coralville, Sycamore Cinema in I.C.)

THE FLASH

Worlds collide when Barry uses his superpowers to travel back in time to change the events of the past. But when his attempt to save his family inadvertently alters the future, Barry becomes trapped in a reality in which General Zod has returned, threatening annihilation. (PG-13, 144 min., Marcus Cinema in C.R., Sycamore Cinema in I.C.)

GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY VOL. 3

Peter Quill, reeling from the loss of Gamora, must rally his team to defend the universe, along with protecting one of their own. (PG-13, 149 min., Sycamore Cinema in I.C.)

INDIANA JONES AND THE DIAL OF DESTINY

Daredevil archaeologist Indiana Jones (Harrison Ford) races against time to retrieve

a legendary dial that can change the course of history. Accompanied by his goddaughter, he soon finds himself squaring off against Jurgen Voller, a former Nazi who works for NASA. (PG-13, 154 min., Marcus Cinema, Collins Road in C.R., Coral Ridge Cinema in Coralville, Sycamore Cinema in I.C.)

THE LITTLE MERMAID

Ariel longs to find out more about the world beyond the sea. While visiting the surface, she falls for Prince Eric. She makes a deal with evil sea witch, Ursula, which lets her experience life on land but places her life — and her father's crown — in jeopardy. (PG, 135 min., Marcus Cinema, Collins Road in C.R., Coral Ridge Cinema in Coralville, Sycamore Cinema in I.C.)

NO HARD FEELINGS

Maddie thinks she's found the answer to her financial troubles when she discovers an intriguing job listing: wealthy helicopter parents looking for someone to "date" their introverted

19-year-old son, Percy, and bring him out of his shell before he leaves for college. But awkward Percy proves to be more of a challenge than she expected. (R, 103 min., Marcus Cinema in C.R., Coral Ridge Cinema in Coralville, Sycamore Cinema in I.C.)

RUBY GILLMAN, TEENAGE KRAKEN

Sweet, awkward 16-year-old Ruby Gillman (Lana Condor) is desperate to fit in at Oceanside High, but she mostly just feels invisible. She's prevented from hanging out with the cool kids at the beach because her overprotective supermom (Toni Collette), has forbidden Ruby from ever getting in the water. But when she breaks her mom's No. 1 rule, Ruby will discover that she is a direct descendant of the warrior Kraken queens and is destined to inherit the throne from her commanding grandmother (Jane Fonda). (PG, 91 min., Marcus Cinema, Collins Road in C.R., Coral Ridge Cinema in Coralville, Sycamore Cinema in I.C.)

Cinema in I.C.)

SPIDER-MAN: ACROSS THE SPIDER-VERSE

After reuniting with Gwen Stacy, Spider-Man is catapulted across the Multiverse, where he encounters Spider-People charged with protecting its very existence. But when the heroes clash on how to handle a new threat, Miles Morales must redefine what it means to be a hero. (PG, 136 min., Marcus Cinema, Collins Road in C.R., Coral Ridge Cinema in Coralville, Sycamore Cinema in I.C.)

TRANSFORMERS: RISE OF THE BEASTS

This '90s globe-trotting adventure introduces the Maximals to the existing battle on Earth between Autobots and Decepticons. (PG-13, 127 min., Marcus Cinema in C.R., Coral Ridge Cinema in Coralville, Sycamore Cinema in I.C.)

FILMSCENE

For movies at Film Scene's Iowa City sites, go to icfilmscene.org.

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