

Diversions

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AP

The skeletal remains of "Jane", a juvenile Tyrannosaurus rex, is displayed at the Burpee Museum of Natural History in Rockford, Ill.

Can a tiny T. rex be a big draw?

ROCKFORD, Ill. (AP) — A stretch of highway across northern Illinois now leads to dino heaven.

Jane, an unusually complete skeleton of a juvenile Tyrannosaurus rex, went on display last week at the Burpee Museum of Natural History in Rockford — about 100 miles northwest of more famous T. rex sibling Sue's Chicago home.

"It's kind of amazing that in the distance of 100 miles between Rockford and Chicago, we have the largest T. rex mounted skeleton in Sue and the smallest in Jane," said Burpee curator Michael Henderson. "We have the oldest T. rex specimen, in terms of years when it died, and we have the youngest here with Jane. I think she's a beautiful fossil."

Jane, just 11 years old when she died, resides in a \$1.3 million exhibit built exclusively for her 21-foot-long fossilized skeleton.

Jane may put Illinois museum on the map

Rockford officials hope the 66-million-year-old fossil will put their tiny museum on the map.

"Jane may be a small dinosaur in a small museum, but she is a giant paleontological find. The world is going to come to this doorstep," said Peter Larson, the founder of the Black Hills Institute for Geological Research in South Dakota.

Larson, who provided advice to the Burpee crew, helped excavate Sue, the largest and most complete T. rex fossil yet discovered.

Sue was named after the woman who discovered her, Jane after a Burpee Museum benefactor.

The Field Museum bought Sue at auction for \$8.4 million in 1997. But Jane was discov-

ered by a low-budget expedition of staff and volunteers from the Burpee Museum, searching for fossils in southeast Montana in 2001.

Time ran out before the team determined what a treasure they had found, and so they returned the next year. Soon, it became clear how well preserved and how complete (about 50 percent of Jane's bones have been found) the fossil was — but the museum lacked the money to bring their world-class find back to Rockford.

So Burpee Museum president Lew Cramp-ton got on the phone and raised \$100,000 from community residents and businesses over five days. The exhibit — called "Jane: (Turn to Page 2A, Col. 3)

Keeping up...

Fiddle Contest Saturday at Sauder Village

Sauder Village in Archbold, Ohio, will hold its annual Fiddle Contest and Summer on the Farm event on Saturday, July 9.

The band Just Bluegrass from Lexington, Ohio, performs at 12:30 p.m.,



Photo contributed

with more than 20 contestants competing for prizes in the 1 p.m. Fiddle Contest.

In the Historic Village, the Summer on the Farm event will focus on the sights, sounds, smells and tastes of summer farm life from the 19th and early 20th centuries. Admission is \$11.50 for adults and \$5.50 for students ages 6-16. Children 5 and under are free with family. For information call 800-590-9755 or visit the Web site at www.saudervillage.org

Auburn will host fifth TruckFest

The fifth annual TruckFest will be held July 9 at the World War II Victory Museum in Auburn.

TruckFest is open to every type of truck. The first 100 to register will receive a goody bag which includes a TruckFest T-shirt and a dash plaque. Winners in each judged show class and the contests will be awarded plaques.

Registration is \$15 per truck, with registration beginning at 8 a.m. Judging ends at 1 p.m. Spectators are admitted free.

Auditions set for Shakespeare play

The First Presbyterian Theater, Fort Wayne, is holding auditions July 18 for Shakespeare's "Two Gentlemen of Verona."

The play requires three women and 12 men, ages 16-65, and "one very mellow dog." Actors should call 260-422-6329 to sign up for a one-hour audition slot.

Bikers will search for hummingbirds

Have breakfast with the birds July 20 at Fox Island County Park in Allen County.

Bob Dispenza of the Allen County Parks will lead those attending in an exploration or the hummingbird. Participants meet at Fox Island's Wildlife Observation Building at 7:30 a.m. for a talk and hike. Continental breakfast is provided and the fee is \$3 per person.

Make a reservation by calling 260-449-3180.

Enduring harmonies

The Company Singers perform at Flint Springs School. From left are Paul Kiningham, Mark Stober, Gary Bugge, Rick Henly, and Rich McConnell.



Company Singers give voice to the past



Photo contributed

Gib Young and Don Morgan dance to the music during a performance at Flint Springs Elementary School.

The Company Singers just got back from burying the last Union soldier.

A step back in time, perhaps, but then that's what the group is all about.

For the past four years, the group has immersed itself in the songs of the Civil War, singing and playing for audiences here and elsewhere. Attend one of their performances, and you'll likely hear "Goover Peas" or "When Johnny Comes Marching Home."

The Huntington-based group has been asked to provide "campfire ambience" with its songs during filming of a movie, "Dog Jack," in August. The movie, to be filmed in Pennsylvania, tells the story of a black boy who joined the Union forces.

It was also a Union soldier that took The Company Singers to Missouri, to help bury Cpl. John Byrne — a Union soldier who died Jan.

The Company Singers will perform at 5 p.m. Sunday, July 10, on the lawn at Myers' Ice Cream Parlor, 2809 Theater Ave.

The free concert is part of the LaFontaine Arts Council's 2005 Parlor Music Concert series featuring local entertainers. A freewill offering is taken at each concert to help fund arts programming in the schools.

6, 1920, and whose remains had sat unclaimed in a warehouse for more than 80 years.

The Company Singers, founded in August 2001, includes members of the Sons of Union Veterans, Camp 17, Champion Hill, who sing period pieces as they were originally written. The members accompany themselves on guitar, banjo, harmonica and mandolin, working out of a songbook that includes more than 35 tunes, a melodrama, a temperance speech, and historical vignettes.

Comedy takes over Pulse stage

The good news: You have inherited \$6 million from an uncle you never met.

The bad news: You have to take your dead uncle to Monte Carlo for a final vacation or you lose the money to the Universal Dog Home of Brooklyn.

This predicament is only the beginning of the antics in the musical "Lucky Stiff," the current production at the Pulse Opera House in Warren.

"Lucky Stiff" opens this weekend, with performances on July 8-9, 14-16, and 21-23. Tickets can be re-



served by calling 260-375-7017; tickets are \$15 for general admission and \$10 for children 12 and

under. Doors for each performance will open at 7:30 p.m., and all performances start at 8 p.m.

In "Lucky Stiff," Harry Wither-spoon's banal English existence as a shoe salesman is interrupted by the possibility of wealth and adventure in Monte Carlo — if he agrees to be accompanied by his uncle's corpse and follows a strict schedule of activities. Eventually, Harry, played by Dan Baker, is surrounded by others contending for the same inheritance: his uncle's insanely jealous mistress Rita, portrayed by Melissa Rentfrow; her hen-pecked optometrist brother Vinnie, played by Randy Neuman; and Annabel Glick, played by Abby Niederman, a zealous representative from the Universal Dog Home, the uncle's favorite charity.

Darren Turney appears as Luigi Gaudi, and David Dean fills the challenging role of the dead body of Anthony Hendon. The ensemble cast — Linda Willard, Katey Wilks Houston, Zack Allen and Alex Rader — plays a total of 28 characters.

"Lucky Stiff" is directed by Cynthia Smyth-Wartzok with technical direction by Ron Wartzok. Ben Wedler will accompany the cast on keyboard at the performances.

New park makes a splash

Indoor water park gives new hope to ravaged town

UTICA, Ill. (AP) — A \$90 million resort and indoor water park in the shadow of Starved Rock State Park will pump millions of tourism dollars into a region still rebounding from last year's deadly tornado, officials say.

Utica Mayor Fred Esmond said Grizzly Jack's Grand Bear Lodge is both an economic and emotional boost in the aftermath an April 2004 tornado that left eight people dead and damaged or destroyed a quarter of the buildings in this town of less than 1,000 people.

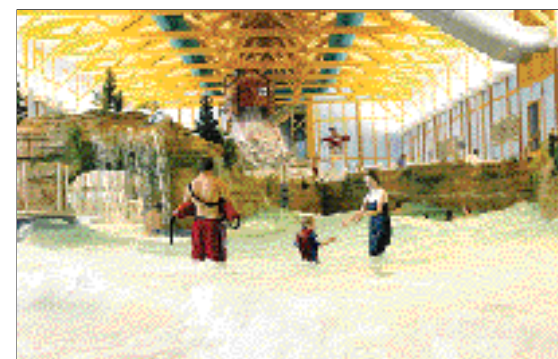
"I think it's a chance for us to say let's not look at the past so much, let's look at the future. The future looks good," Esmond said before

last Thursday's grand opening of the wooded, 60-acre resort.

Tourism officials agreed, saying Illinois' first resort-indoor water park complex will add \$5.5 million to the region's economy this year by luring Illinois tourists away from the Wisconsin Dells and its 18 indoor water parks.

Illinois residents spend up to \$700 million a year on water park getaways in Wisconsin, depriving Illinois of about \$39 million in tax revenue, said Marc Gordon, president and CEO of the Illinois Hotel & Lodging Association.

"I think now that the door is open there will (Turn to Page 2A, Col. 6)



AP

Lifeguard James Hanson, left, watches as Britt Griffin of Aurora and her son Chuck, 4, splash in the wave pool at the new indoor water park at Grand Bear Lodge near Utica, Ill. The 60-acre resort and conference center is modeled after Wisconsin Dells.