

Musicians matched summer's splendor

How often is Labor Day as green as springtime? We've been blessed with good rain, the second-coolest July on record, the prospect of record corn and bean crops, green lawns without being watered, magnificent expanses of wildflowers — a summer like few others in our time.

You can say the same about the entertainment world in our town. It has been a summer like few others.

When the time came to do the annual "Top 10" in local music and theater this summer, the "Top 10" reached almost to infinity — and that doesn't include any of the full schedule of amped-up electric music this curmudgeon does not tolerate. That's a "Top 10" for someone else.

The astonishing summer has been filled with words and/or music every night. The summer seemed to get better each evening, making me think I've been too easy to please, even though I left several performances at intermission.

We will do this summer's "Top 10" in two columns instead of one. Music first — in no particular order.

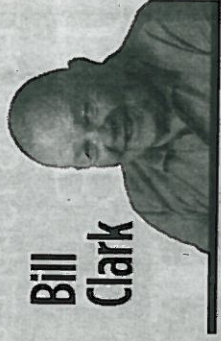
► The Missouri River Festival of the Arts in Boonville has been with us since 1976, bringing classical music to Thespian Hall. David Halen, the concertmaster of the St. Louis Symphony, has been artistic director for the past 10 years, and each year it seems that the three-day musical feast cannot get better — then does.

David brings at least a dozen of the symphony's best — both young and old — to Boonville for three days, and this year's festival was the best ever.

We had violinists turning up as vocalists singing Gershwin, Weber and Rodgers and Hammerstein and the pianist, Peter Martin, playing Gershwin, Miles Davis, Hoagy Carmichael and Dmitri Shostakovich. A tribute played solo by Halen recognized the contribution to the festival by Boonville's Bunny Long, and the final night was an unmatched string performance of Antonio Vivaldi's "Four Seasons" with a solo violinist highlighting each season.

I can't wait till next August to see how Halen tops this year.

► The Missouri Symphony Society's Maestro Kirk Trevor gave us the usual six weeks of quality he calls "Hot Summer Nights" — a total of 25 concerts for young, old



**Bill
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and families. Every night was a "Top 10," but some were "Top One." Like Umi Garrett, the 13-year-old piano prodigy who opened the season with Chopin's Piano Concerto No. 1.

The Wicked Divas gave us Broadway — wickedly, in general, and "Carmen," in particular. The Dover Quartet was mesmerizing and otherworldly in Leos Janacek's String Quartet No. 1. Maria Duho-va Trevor and her harp, first with flutist Tim Hagen in Jacques Ibert's "Entr'acte," then with her cellist husband, Kirk, teaming up to do "La Cinquintaine" by Jean Marie. The orchestra gave us two great Rimsky-Korsakov favorites — "Scheherazade" and "Capriccio Espagnol."

► "jazz, Pops and Boone" on the Boone piano at the Boone County Historical Society with Sutu Forte, Zane Omahundro and Michael Butterworth challenging the old Chuckering.

► Sutu's celebration of former City Councilman Jerry Wade's life with all local musicians Jerry loved. ► Alarm Will Sound gave us three nights of different sounds. I particularly enjoyed the delicate tones of Zhou Long's "Bell Drum Towers" and Beat Furrer's "Linea delorizzonte." Sorry I missed the night of eight premieres.

► Central Methodist University's presentation of Mozart's "Impresario" — a revised script, additional characters and inserted music put together by Susan-Ann Quigley-Duggan, was a fun night that included the one and only Joe Geist on the operatic stage.

► Columbia's three major dance studios' year-end performances filled June with everyone from kindergarten to the professional world. Of particular interest was Columbia Dance Academy's "It's Our Wild Nature Ballet," with original music by Sutu Forte and Bill Roe.

My apologies to those I didn't see and to those who fell victim of space limits on the printed page.

Next — a review of summer theater.

Bill Clark's columns appear Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Reach him at 474-4510.

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150 YEARS AGO TODAY

ST. LOUIS — U.S. Rep. James Rollins withdrew from the Ninth Congressional District race claiming he wanted harmony among Conservatives but pointedly did not endorse his chief rival, former Brig. Gen. Odon Guitar.

Rollins' withdrawal fulfilled a promise to his wife, he wrote to her in a private letter. "I do this in deference to your wishes and what I esteem to be the best interests of my family," Rollins wrote. "But if I was a younger man, or even if I had not so large a family, I would give some gentleman a good deal of trouble in the progress of their political objects."

Rollins, of Columbia, was in his second term in Congress. Guitar, a successful Columbia attorney and politician before the war, resigned his commission in August to run for Rollins' seat. With the nomination in the hands of a district convention set for Sept. 28 at Mexico, Rollins had time to engineer Guitar's defeat.

"A number of gentlemen have been mentioned for the position, and any fair mode which may be adopted to the selection of a proper candidate to make the race ought to be satisfactory," Rollins wrote in his withdrawal notice. ■

JEFFERSON CITY — State Treasurer George Caleb Bingham was beaten by soldiers who were upset that he had reported military attempts to break up the Cole County Democratic Party mass meeting.

Bingham was returning to the Cole County Courthouse when he "was met by four or five soldiers on horseback, who immediately commenced a violent assault upon his person," said a letter to the St. Louis Daily Missouri Republican, signed "Anti-Lincoln."

A campaign of intimidation began in the days leading up to the meeting. "Anonymous letters were written and open threats were made that no man would be allowed to advocate the election of General McClellan," a second letter to the Republican, signed "Free Speech," said.

The meeting successfully



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