

**BRIEFLY
EVENTS**

**Night of 1,000 Dinners
to benefit women**

IOWA CITY — The eighth annual Iowa United Nations Association Night of 1,000 Dinners will celebrate International Women's Month with an international buffet, silent art auction, live music, speakers, door prizes, and more from 6 to 8:30 p.m. Thursday at Old Brick, 26 E. Market St. in Iowa City. Proceeds from the silent art auction will go to UNIFEM and U.N. Women's efforts in Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Haiti.

This year's keynote speaker is Martine Songasonga, a Congo human rights activist and founding member of Torture Abolition and Survivors Support Coalition International.

Tickets are \$12 in advance and \$15 at the door and are available at www.ticketriver.com/event/1086, (319) 337-7290 or una-iowa@una-iowa.org.

**I.C. to hold midwinter
Special Olympics event**

IOWA CITY — Nearly 900 Special Olympics athletes from across Iowa will compete in the 24th annual Mid-Winter Tournament March 18 and 19 at the University of Iowa Field House.

Athletes of all ages and ability will participate in basketball, cheerleading, gymnastics and power lifting. There will be 384 coaches and chaperones, and more than 600 volunteers to assist in the event.

Competition will begin at 9 a.m. and run until about 3:30 p.m. Admission is free.

For more information, go to www.soiowa.org.

FUNDRAISER

**Cold Stone Creamery
pairs with food pantry**

CORALVILLE — Cold Stone Creamery, 921 25th Ave., is partnering with the Coralville Ecumenical Food Pantry to raise money for families in need. On the first Monday of each month through August, excluding July, when the fundraiser will be held on July 5, 10 percent of sales from 5 to 9 p.m. will benefit the food pantry.

Cold Stone Creamery also will collect food for the food pantry during each fundraising event.

**Walk for The Arc of
East Central Iowa**

CEDAR RAPIDS — The Arc of East Central Iowa will hold its 14th annual Arc Awareness March on April 2 at Lindale Mall, 4444 First Ave. NE. The goal is to raise \$33,000.

Registration will be held at 8:30 a.m. The march will begin at 9:30 a.m. Pledge forms can be found at www.arceci.org or www.firstgiving.com/arceci.

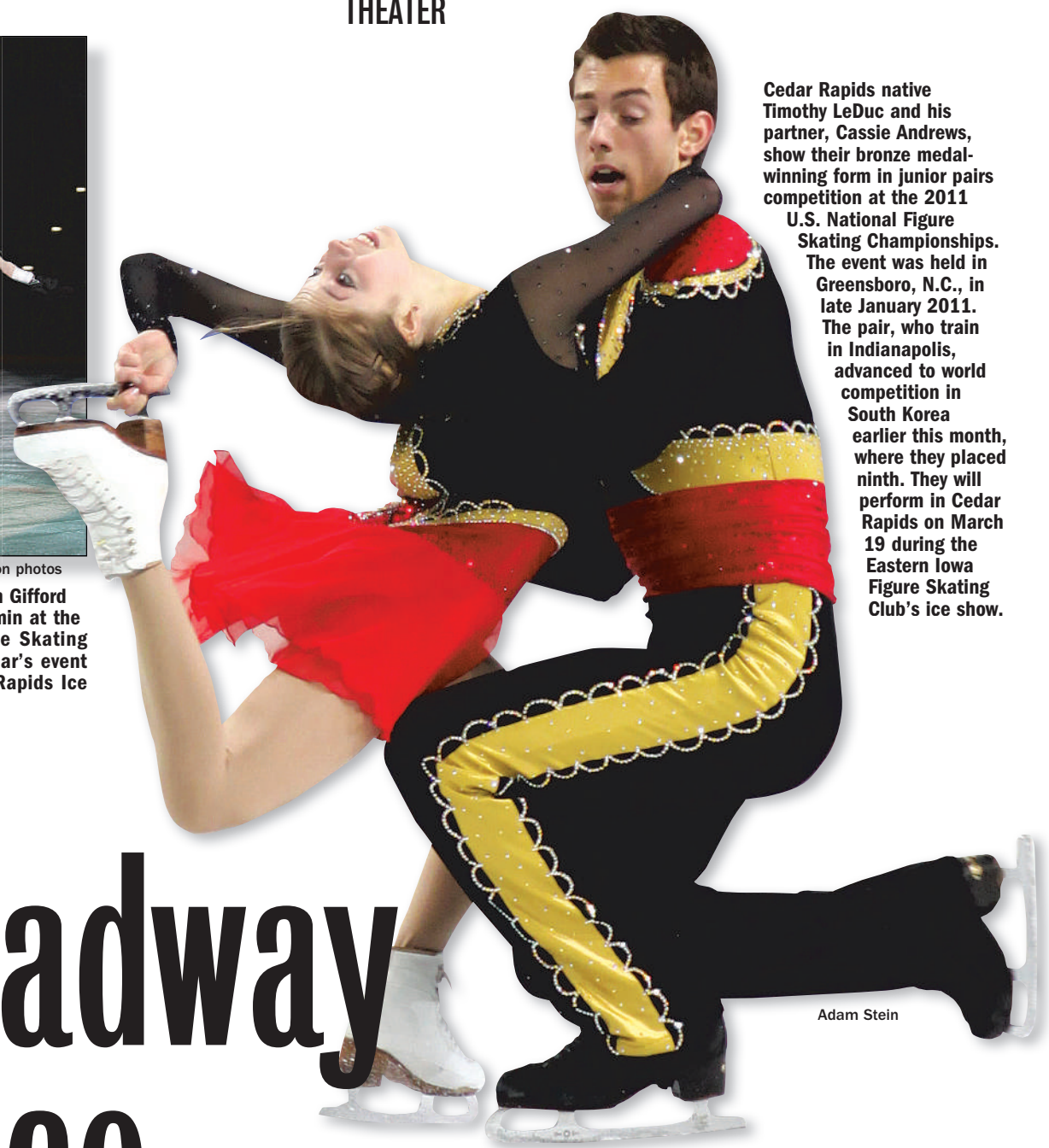
The Arc March provides an opportunity for those with intellectual disabilities, their family members, friends and advocates to increase community awareness and acceptance of people with intellectual and related developmental disabilities.

Preregistration will be available at The Arc office, 680 Second St. SE, anytime before March 18. Everyone who preregisters will receive a T-shirt.

THEATER



Carson Bodnarek and Lauren Gifford perform as Aladdin and Jasmine at the annual Eastern Iowa Figure Skating Club show in 2009. This year's event is March 19 at the Cedar Rapids Ice Arena.



Cedar Rapids native Timothy LeDuc and his partner, Cassie Andrews, show their bronze medal-winning form in junior pairs competition at the 2011 U.S. National Figure Skating Championships. The event was held in Greensboro, N.C., in late January 2011. The pair, who train in Indianapolis, advanced to world competition in South Korea earlier this month, where they placed ninth. They will perform in Cedar Rapids on March 19 during the Eastern Iowa Figure Skating Club's ice show.

Broadway on ice

E. Iowa club pairs stage stars with local, national figure skaters

By Diana Nollen
The Gazette

Don't be surprised if the ice starts melting when the Eastern Iowa Figure Skating Club presents "My Favorite Things."

Organizers are cranking up the heat with plenty of star power for matinee and evening ice shows March 19 at the Cedar Rapids Ice Arena.

Taking a cue from "the latest thing" in ice shows, Broadway stars and local favorites will add their voices to the smooth leaps, spins and triple jumps from local, regional and national skating champs.

Cedar Rapids native Timothy LeDuc and his partner, Cassie Andrews, will be in the spotlight, fresh off their ninth-place finish earlier this month at the World Junior Figure Skating Championships in Gangneung, South Korea.

"Coming home is such a very special experience for me," LeDuc, 20, says by phone from his training home in Indianapolis the day before leaving for South Korea. "To be able to see and spend a lot of time with skaters I grew up with and where I got started is very special."

Joining the lineup are Michael Quadrino, North Atlantic Senior Men's silver medalist, his brother, Danny Quadrino, and Cedar Rapids native Catherine Blades, who appeared together on Broadway last year in "Bye Bye Birdie," as well as their friend Anthony Rapp, who originated the lead role of Mark on stage and screen in "Rent." All are coming from

New York to perform.

The show is filled with such family ties, says director and main choreographer Amy Blades of Cedar Rapids, who is Catherine's mom and a coach for the Eastern Iowa club.

"We have a lot of brother-sister connections," Blades says, including skater Hannah Merrill and her sister, Abby, who appeared in "White Christmas" at Theatre Cedar Rapids, and LeDuc's sister, Leah, a skater who will be singing for her brother's pairs routines.

Theatre Cedar Rapids veterans Jonathan Swenson and Tina Monroe will sing. Swenson will serve as event emcee and cast members from last summer's TCR production of "Rent" will join Rapp onstage.

Skaters, singers and crew will have just one dress rehearsal to pull it all together, but Blades is confident all the ele-

ments will mesh and enhance the experience for skaters and audiences alike.

"It's more like a multimedia production," says Blades, 51, a world professional figure skating bronze medalist in 1980, U.S. professional champion in 1981 and coach for past Winter Olympics and world championship skaters.

"It will be more entertaining for the audience to be able to watch the singers and skaters and see how they relate to each other," Blades says. That doesn't happen in the competitive realm.

She predicts audience highlights will be the guest skaters, a "Glee" parody, the group number "Jai Ho" from "Slumdog Millionaire" and the section from "Les Miserables."

"I think audiences will be really surprised not only at the caliber of the guest skaters, but by



Anthony Rapp
Broadway star of "Rent"



Catherine Blades
Actress



Amy Blades
Ice show director



Victoria Beebout and Echo Cassill perform in "Spamalot" at the 2009 Eastern Iowa Figure Skating Club show. This year's event is March 19 at the Cedar Rapids Ice Arena.

the talents in our own club," she says. "We have lots of competitive skaters who have done well nationally."

One of those is, of course, LeDuc, who moved to Indianapolis in April 2010 to further his pairs training. He began skating in early 2003 at age 12, inspired by watching the Olympics. Within a few months, he was competing in the Quad Cities. By regionals in 2004, he says he "got a taste of that real high-level competition."

He and Andrews

recently placed third in the National Junior Pairs competition in Greensboro, N.C. Since he turns 21 in May, LeDuc will be testing later this month to move up to the seniors level.

But first, he'll cut some figures on familiar ice. "The Cedar Rapids program for ice skating is spectacular — by far the best in Iowa from a training standpoint," he says. "It has a remarkable facility, a great basic skills program and coaches who take skaters to a very high level. ...

"It's one of Cedar Rapids' best-kept secrets."

■ Comments: (319) 368-8508; diana.nollen@sourcemediacorp.net

Fast take

- **What:** Eastern Iowa Figure Skating Club presents "My Favorite Things" Ice Show
- **When:** 2:30 and 7 p.m. March 19
- **Where:** Cedar Rapids Ice Arena, 1100 Rockford Rd. SW, Cedar Rapids
- **Tickets:** \$10 at the Cedar Rapids Ice Arena or at the door
- **Information:** <http://eifsc.org>



Nicole Johnson and Timothy LeDuc perform as Mary Poppins and Bert at the annual Eastern Iowa Figure Skating Club show in 2009. This year's event is March 19 at the Cedar Rapids Ice Arena.