CONCERTS

Andrew Bird: Sept. 3: Violin virtuoso and multi-instrumentalist Andrew Bird performs. 6:30pm, free. Pritzker Pavilion, Millennium Park, Chicago, 312/742-5555.

Chicago Sinfonietta: Sept. 21 & 23: The Sinfonietta begins its 22nd season taking the stage with the Apollo Chorus of Chicago, Amma Young Singers of Greater Chicago and other headliners. Sept. 21—4pm, $26-$40. Lurie Auditorium, Dominican University, 7900 W. Division St, River Forest. Sept. 23—7:30pm, $30-$110. Symphony Center, 740 S. Michigan Ave, Chicago, 312/236-3300.

An Evening With Earth Kitt: Sept. 20: The History of Pop preview. "An Evening With Earth Kitt," a collaboration with and performed by singer and actress Earth Kitt. Gurnee will conduct the interview, and Merrie Dee will serve as master of ceremonies for this black-light event. 7:30pm, $50. Gurnee Park, 45150 N. Gulfview Dr, Gurnee, 847/380-4900.

Jazz

Hyde Park Jazz Festival: Sept. 27: World-class headliners and local emerging artists team up for 14 hours of nonstop jam sessions of performance venues in Hyde Park. Free festival shuttles continually loop the venue to take audiences around. Noon-2am. For more information, call 773/551-3720.


National Jewish Medical and Research Center: Sept. 17: Former White House Press Secretary Ari Fleischer is the keynote speaker at this Humanitarian Award dinner, 6pm. Four Seasons Hotel, 100 E. Delaware Place, Chicago. For ticket prices, call 312/292-1796.

Northwestern University Settlement House: Sept. 18: "Style Under the Stars" is a New York-style runway fashion show, with models showing off fashions from local stores. $15. For more details, call 773/728-7471.


Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago: Sept. 6: This year's Medical Ball benefit has a Great Gatsby theme, with elegant 1920s or black-tie attire recommended. $500. Chicago History Museum, 1601 N. Clark St, Chicago. For more details, call 312/228-6223.

Robert Crown Center for Health: Sept. 26: Proceeds from this gala help Chicago-area schoolchildren. 6pm. $350. Peninsula Chicago, 106 S. Superior St, Chicago. For more information, call 312/277-1773.

Ted Fund: Sept. 27: "Car Hop," with classic rock 'n roll by the Ragtops. Field's Chrysler Jeep Dodge, 670 Frontage Road, Northfield. For more information, call 630/848-1280.

EVENTS

Look back over the history of athletics, and you'll find that even the field's greatest minds needed a little time to make. It wasn't until he was 36—years old that James Naismith finally got around to inventing basketball. Knute Rockne waited until he was 25 to revolutionize football's forward pass. So in the pantheon of sports innovators, Douglas Jones has got a heck of a head start.

Jones, a 15-year-old Waukegan High School student, is the inventor of the Roller Boggan, a variation on the skateboard he designed to be both safer and easier to master than the original version. Jones created his prototype by reshaping his skate deck, attaching it to a baby bathtub and making a few other modifications, the result being that instead of riders standing on the apparatus and propelling it with their feet, they kneel down and move it with their hands.

We think he might be on to something, and we're not the only ones. The Roller Boggan took the top spot in the BY Kids For Kids Sports Evaluation Challenge—a national online contest that invited youngsters to enter their ideas for new sports and sporting goods, then put the best of them up for a vote—an honor that included a $10,000 prize and the chance to meet an ESPN personality. It's Jones, who turns 16 in October, planning to invest his winnings in his first set of car keys? He's saving the cash for college, he says.

The big thinkers that Northwestern are no strangers to innovation either, and of late they've been getting some recognition as such. In July the announcement came that Northwestern professor Sir Fraser Stoddart was the recipient of the Royal Society's 2008 Davy Medal, putting him in the company of chemists such as Linus Pauling and Pierre and Madame Curie. Stoddart got the nod for his significant work bridging "the gap between chemistry and the scientific and engineering challenges of nanoelectromechanical systems," according to the award citation.

Stoddart's honor came on the heels of another NU faculty member's big news: the announcement, in June, that Professor Chad A. Mirkin had been selected for one of six spots in the inaugural class of the Department of Defense's National Security Science and Engineering Faculty Fellows Program. The program, which is designed to assist defense-related research, will provide up to $3 million for Mirkin's work in nanotechnology.