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May12

[Bob](#)

[Hey Alex: Rochester is cool](#)

So, Alex Doonesbury thinks RIT is "[fine](#)"....but there is some concern that she prefers to be near a "big city."

We've been keeping up with Alex through our [blog](#)....Alex now seems a tad confused on what to do next....One day it's Cornell, the next day Cal Tech...and now she may simply spend time following Pearl Jam because "they've stopped sucking."

Consider this an open invitation for Alex to visit our great community:

First of all, Greater Rochester is home to about 1.2 million people...we are the third largest metro area in New York State. We are the perfect mid-sized city, with all the amenities of a big city (restaurants, museums, sports, music scene, diversity, etc.); without the problems of big cities (smog, traffic...)

While Rochester was once called "Smug Town" because of its big corporate presence with Kodak, Xerox and Bausch & Lomb, times have changed. Yes, the area is going through some economic challenges, but most American cities are in the same boat... I sense a renaissance brewing in Rochester. [Check us out.](#)

Alex, I know you have an entrepreneurial spirit...You will find that spirit in Rochester and RIT, where we even have an [incubator](#) for students to create businesses. Did you know that Greater Rochester is home to more than 60,000 college students?? The University of Rochester is right down the Genesee River from RIT, and we're home to many other private and public colleges.

I hope you're not overly concerned about the weather. You're from Seattle! Our rain turns to snow and you can join the [RIT ski club](#). Ski club is one of 160+ clubs we have at RIT.

Alex, give us a closer look. You will discover [Rochester](#) has plenty to offer.

PS: Pearl Jam often tours Canada, and we're a short 2.5 hour drive to Toronto, our friends across Lake Ontario.

1. [b-man](#) May17

Rochester actually has a horrible music scene. We get maybe... MAYBE five good acts per school year in the greater Rochester area as opposed to Toronto, which gets them every night practically. Plus even if you want to go to one, it's not like you could walk there like you could in a place like Boston. It requires a car to do anything. Sorry, Rochester's not cool.

2. [steyblind](#) May18

Just because Rochester isn't feeding cheap pop to your dorm room door doesn't mean it's not cool. If you'd ventured further than the ritz for a music scene then you'd realize that stuff goes on in the city every night. Also, Toronto's a bigger city, why don't you compare apples and oranges. . . . I like Rochester.

3. [Mike Saffran](#) May19

I agree with steyblind -- though Rochester has a lot to offer, comparing its music scene with Toronto's is a tad unfair. Having said that, I think it's hard to top the free, live (and super up close) music, featured seven days a week, at the [Dinosaur BBQ](#). My personal favorites: Joe Beard ("Rochester's Main Man Of The Blues") -- on stage tonight (May 19); he's awesome. Dynamics ("Mad Front Man Joe F. Takes You On A Trip From R&B Thru Blues To Soul And Back Again") -- on stage tomorrow night (May 20). For those unaware: "Mad Front Man Joe F." is RIT's own Joe Fornieri, assistant professor of political science (Lincoln scholar by day, "mad front man" by night; and high school classmate of Bob Finnerty, college classmate of mine). While it's true, b-man, that a car (or a Harley) is needed to get around Rochester (don't get me started on Rochester's poor state of public transportation), you won't regret an excursion to the Dinosaur.

4. [John Follaco](#) May19

My opinion may be a bit biased. I'm a born and raised Rochesterian who, other than a two-month journey to Washington, D.C. for an internship, has never left for an extended period of time. But instead of being ashamed by that bias—I'm going to embrace it. I love this city. I agree with Bob, Rochester is the perfect "mid-sized city". Disagree? Head to the Park Ave. or East Ave./Alexander St. areas of the city, or venture to the Lilac Festival at Highland Park this weekend. This is what you'll see: Diversity: Young and old. Black and white. Gay and straight. I'm not going to claim that Rochester is the most diverse city around, but we have our fair share of diversity—and it helps make Rochester special. Energy: All of the areas mentioned above will be hopping—probably even if the weather doesn't cooperate (that's the nice thing about Rochesterians, a little rain or 10 inches of snow doesn't stop us from having a good time). Culture will be prevalent. You'll find art and music. There will be live performances at the Lilac Festival (Pittsford resident, turned pop star Teddy Geiger closes the festival Sunday at 7 p.m.—free admission, by the way) and plenty of music will fill the bar scene (personally, I'll be at J.W. Prepps on Park Ave. where my good friend and RIT alum D.J. Dan will be behind the D.J. booth). Pride: Take a look at some of the arts and crafts booths at the Lilac Festival. A huge chunk of the drawings and photographs feature the Rochester community. This is our home: it's beautiful, and we take pride in it. Stop into a restaurant or sports bar on Saturday around 2 p.m. Eyes will be fixed on television screens as the Sabres take the ice in the Eastern Conference Finals. Yeah, I know it's the Buffalo Sabres. Rochester doesn't have any professional sports teams of our own, but we've adopted both the Sabres and the Bills. You could probably even get a few Buffalonians to admit that those teams are as much ours as they are theirs. And if they don't, ask them where the teams would be without our ticket money (moving the Bills Training Camp to Rochester and expanding its fan base was instrumental in keeping the Bills in Western New York) and Tom Golisano (Rochesterian and

owner of the Buffalo Sabres, who saved the team from bankruptcy and kept it in Buffalo). As has been pointed out, the downside is that you do need a car to get to many of these places. Perhaps, one day, Rochester will offer the kind of public transportation that would further enhance this community. We're not perfect, but we're good enough for me—and hopefully for you, too, Miss Doonesbury. P.S. Mike, I enjoy the Dinosaur as well. But honestly, I go for the food.

 Name (required) E-mail (required) Website

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The Tiger Beat takes you behind the scenes with the members of [RIT University News](#)—the news and public relations division of [Rochester Institute of Technology](#). Get the "story behind the story" and an insider's look at who we are and what we do to publicize RIT news.

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