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IN Step

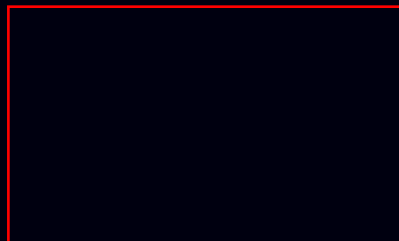
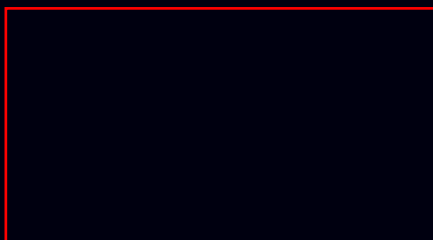
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THE GUIDE



Updated: Tue, Oct 14, 2003

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In This Issue:

[\\$548k Raised by Dual AIDS Walks](#)

Despite rainy, unseasonably cool weather, Wisconsin's two AIDS walks raised close to \$548,000 over the weekend of September 27-28. The officially announced \$502,280 for Milwaukee's 14th Annual AIDS

Walk Wisconsin, when combined with the estimated \$45,000 tallied by Madison's debut AIDS Walk, Roll & Stroll, represents a 4.8% increase in total dollars raised for HIV/AIDS services statewide over 2002.

[By Mike Fitzpatrick](#)

[**Action Wisconsin's LEAD Lobbies for LGBT Equality**](#)

In what has been described by some Capitol pundits as the most visible and dramatic display of support for gay issues in the history of Wisconsin, more than 500 supporters of LGBT equality inundated Wisconsin lawmakers with office visits, phone calls, letters and emails September 30 as part of Action Wisconsin's Legal Equality Action Day (LEAD) in Madison.

[By Mike Fitzpatrick](#)

[**New Group Grapples with PrideFest Debt**](#)

A community "workgroup" has formed to explore options for retiring PrideFest's existing debt and ensuring the future of PrideFest as a yearly festival. PrideFest's current debt stands at at a minimum \$136,483. A complete and independent audit funded by the Cream City Foundation is expected to be complete by month's end.

[**REALITY CHECK: Lies the FRI Tells**](#)

Given their "virtuous" sounding name, it may seem almost impossible to believe. However, the Family Research Institute of Wisconsin (FRI) is attempting to mislead the citizens and lawmakers of Wisconsin through scare tactics, glittering generalities, circular logic, half-truths and outright lies about the need for its so-called "Defense of Marriage Act."

[By Mike Fitzpatrick](#)

[**DOMA Debate Turns Testy**](#)

Just 44 hours after their latest formal introduction, Wisconsin's so-called Defense of Marriage Act bills (AB 475/SB 233) had their day in the court of public opinion during a joint public hearing of the Senate Judiciary, Corrections, and Privacy and Assembly Judiciary Committees August 21 here.

[By Mike Fitzpatrick](#)

[**In Walker's Point, The Future is Now**](#)

The neighborhood is presided over by the old Allen-Bradley clock, its four faces pointing in the directions of the compass, situated atop the old factory, which has been redesigned to look like some kind of postmodern fortress. The Walker's Point area, home to most of Milwaukee's gay clubs and dozens of working class businesses for many decades, is a neighborhood in transition.

[By William Duane](#)

IN STEP INVESTIGATION:

PrideFest Financials Suggest Creative Accounting

How can PrideFest simultaneously have lost \$98,000 — possibly \$133,558 — yet show a \$37,130 profit? It apparently all depends on with whom PrideFest's board is sharing their numbers according to conflicting financial reports obtained by *IN Step*. [By William Attewell](#)

Wisconsin Republicans Rev Up Anti-Gay Marriage Bill

Wisconsin Senator Scott Fitzgerald (R-Beaver Dam) and Assembly Representative Mark D. Gundrum (R-New Berlin) announced their plans to reintroduce a so-called "Defense of Marriage" (DOMA) bill in a co-sponsorship solicitation memo to their fellow legislators August 6.

[By Mike Fitzpatrick](#)

INTERVIEW: Former Gov. Dreyfus on Civil Rights, Civil Unions and Making History

When OutReach, Madison's LGBT center, held its annual awards dinner on July 16, the group bestowed a special honor, its Political Courage Award, on former Wisconsin Gov. Lee Dreyfus. In 1982, Gov. Dreyfus, a Republican, signed the first statewide legislation prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation in housing, employment and public accommodations. Since then, 13 other states have adopted similar civil protections. *Wisconsin IN Step* caught up with Gov. Dreyfus after the awards dinner and asked him about his historic role and his opinions on current gay issues and Wisconsin's political scene.

[By Jamakaya](#)

Out and Equal at Work

Think you're alone at work? "We're everywhere" is how the old activist slogan goes, and it might be closer to the truth than you think. Pick almost any company on the Fortune 500 list and you're likely to find it has stepped into the 21st century when it comes to recognizing the presence and needs of its LGBT employees. [By William Duane](#)

Pride Shines at Madison March and Rally

Madison Pride's sunlit annual post-MAGIC picnic rally and march July 20 had a few twists thanks to the recent Supreme Court sodomy ruling, a local discrimination case and unruly fundamentalists. [By Mike Fitzpatrick](#)

New HIV Infections in Gay Men Rise

AIDS cases and new HIV infections in US gay and bisexual men appear to be growing, according to a new report from the US Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDCP).

LGBTs Center's Cybercenter Opens with Fanfare

The Milwaukee LGBT Community Center celebrated the grand opening of its David Bohnett CyberCenter July 24. The event kicked off with a reception of over 40 community members who came to

show their support for the new computer lab.

[**Ebony Pride Readies Black Pride Conference**](#)

The second annual, three-day celebration of Milwaukee black pride “A Family Affair” is set for Aug. 8 through Aug. 10.

[**Reality Check: Oh, These Summer Nights**](#)

Madison Pride’s sunlit annual post-MAGIC picnic rally and march July 20 had a few twists thanks to the recent Supreme Court sodomy ruling, a local discrimination case and unruly fundamentalists. [By Mike Fitzpatrick](#)

[**Milwaukee LGBT Center Meets with Milwaukee D.A.**](#)

Staff members of the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center held a historic and productive meeting with Milwaukee County District Attorney E. Michael McCann and key staffers on July 18. The LGBT Center had requested the meeting to improve communication between the local LGBT community and the D.A.’s office, which is responsible for prosecuting most crimes, including the domestic violence, sexual assault, and hate crimes targeted by the LGBT Center’s innovative Anti-Violence Project.

[**Dear Ruthie**](#)

Dear Ruthie answers your pressing questions.

[**Supreme Court Overturns Sodomy Ban**](#)

The Supreme Court issued a historic declaration of constitutional liberty for gay men and lesbians on June 26, overruling a Texas sodomy law in the broadest possible terms and overruling a contrary 1986 decision that the majority said “demeans the lives of homosexual persons.” The vote was 6 to 3.

[**Quips and Quotes Special Edition**](#)

What movers and shakers across the country are saying about the court's decision

[**COMMENTARY: Lawrence v. Texas,**](#)

[**Praise the Pioneers and Pass the Ammunition!**](#)

Fifty to 60 years ago when Harry Hay began thinking and writing about gay people as an oppressed minority, we were categorized as criminals, as diseased deviants, and as immoral sinners. Most gay people were isolated from each other, fearful, confused, many crippled by self-loathing. Untold thousands were subjected to incarceration in prison or forcibly detained in mental hospitals where they were tortured with aversion therapies.

[By Jamakaya](#)

[**REALITY CHECK: Sodom Postpartum, Watch Your Ass!**](#)

It's been nearly a week since the historic Lawrence ruling at the Supreme Court swept criminality from the lives of every collective queer in America, and — by proxy — anyone of any sexual stripe who practices anything other than the missionary position with their favorite consenting adult in the privacy of their boudoir. Whee! Yes, even that's permitted now. Without a doubt, the sodomy ruling will be a far greater assault on the Martha Stewart Everyday linen line than those pesky insider trading charges. [By Mike Fitzpatrick](#)

[Letters](#)

The community reacts to PrideFest and more!

[COMMENTARY: The Heart of Liberty](#)

Milwaukee's Human Rights League Political Action Committee (HRL-PAC) was at PrideFest June 7 with a candidates forum again, this time for mayor of the city of Milwaukee. Compared to the days when HRL-PAC sponsored a mayoral forum and no candidates showed up, we have progressed significantly.

[By Barbara Lightner](#)

[Dear Ruthie](#)

Dear Ruthie answers your pressing questions.

[PrideFest Survives Rain and Chill](#)

[But Suffers Huge Deficit](#)

PrideFest 2003 managed to endure a sometimes rainy and chilly festival weekend to reach an attendance of 18,104, just 500 below last year's record. But the festival faces tough challenges ahead as it wrestles to recoup a deficit of between \$100,000 and \$150,000. [By Jamakaya](#)

[EDITORIAL](#)

[Blinded by Pride:](#)

[The Failure and Future of PrideFest](#)

PrideFest's announcement on June 12 of the estimated loss of up to \$150,000 on the 2003 festival is going to come as a shock to our community. This is arguably the largest and most expensive debacle in our community's history and its impact and scope should not be underestimated. [By William Attewell](#)

[Deaf LGBTs Confront](#)

[PrideFest on Accessibility](#)

People entering this year's PrideFest on June 7 were surprised to be greeted by more than the usual fundamentalist zealots quoting scripture. This year, LGBT members of the Deaf community and their supporters picketed outside the gates to protest the absence of sign language interpreters at PrideFest. [By Jamakaya](#)

[**PRIDEFEST DIARY: Entertain Me**](#)

"Welcome to Wisconsin's Largest Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Celebration: PrideFest 2003!" The words blaze from the scrolling sign atop the gate, flashing in rainbow colors to drivers along 7-94. Making my way from the parking lot (\$8!), I see only three protesters have showed up so far, and they look like they regret coming. It's 5:30, raining, and the ground is water-logged. The first fest-goers are slowly making their way inside. PrideFest, entertain me. [By William Duane](#)

[**PrideFest's Official Statement on 2003 Festival**](#)

During the weekend of June 6, 7, and 8th, thousands of Gays, Lesbians, Bisexuals and Transgendered people chose to show pride in themselves and their community by attending PrideFest 2003. Together with the largest group of non-LGBT people ever to attend a Gay Milwaukee event, they made a crowd of 18,104 people.

[**Milwaukee Mayoral Candidates**](#)

[**Seem to Care But Need to go to LGBT School**](#)

Milwaukee's Human Rights League Political Action Committee (HRL-PAC) was at PrideFest June 7 with a candidates forum again, this time for mayor of the city of Milwaukee. Compared to the days when HRL-PAC sponsored a mayoral forum and no candidates showed up, we have progressed significantly.

[By Barbara Lightner](#)

[**Investigation Stalls in Activist's Drowning Death**](#)

Somewhere between the final minutes of April 28 and the morning of the 29th, death came to John A. Klinger. Six weeks following the May 1st recovery of the 49 year-old gay and AIDS activist's body from the Eau Claire River ten miles north of here, that window period remains the key finding of the active, ongoing but stymied probe by the Eau Claire County Sheriff's Department.

[By Mike Fitzpatrick](#)

[**POLICE ACTION: Milwaukee Fire and Police Commission Hears Historic Testimony**](#)

On April 24, in what one activist called an historic night for Milwaukee's LGBT community, the Milwaukee Fire and Police Commission agreed to establish a working group to investigate policies and practices relating to lesbian and gay public safety employees with the goal of improving their work environments. The working group is expected to reveal its findings and recommendations this fall. [By Jamakaya](#)

[**AIDS Network to Launch "Walk, Roll and Stroll**](#)

The AIDS Network has announced the launch of "Walk, Roll & Stroll" — a September 27 AIDS walk slated to raise funds for the agency and other AIDS service agencies in the Madison area. [By William Attewell](#)

[**SAGE-Milwaukee Readies Plans for Future Growth**](#)

SAGE-Milwaukee, a group dedicated to enhancing the lives of older gays and lesbians, is an organization on the move. They recently announced plans to hire an executive director and have significantly expanded their outreach to senior members of the LGBT community in recent months. [By William Attewell](#)

[**PrideFest Round Up**](#)

Information on PrideFest Shuttles, ticket sales and award nominations.

[**REALITY CHECK: Survey Says, "Gay Rights -- Nobody Cares"**](#)

Now that American forces have helped to liberate the Iraqi people from their repressive leadership, not to mention most of their priceless antiquities and zoo animals from safekeeping as well, national attention is returning to meditate on the navel we love best: our own. Unable to trot out a single smoking weapon of mass destruction for the cameras, Republican higher-ups are wisely focusing on the urgent most problem facing our country. [By Mike Fitzpatrick](#)

[**LAMM Welcomes New Leaders; Code Pink Project**](#)

The Lesbian Alliance of Metro Milwaukee Education Fund (LAMM-EF) Board of Directors has a new Chairwoman, Susan Dexter, confirmed at the LAMM Board of Managers meeting on April 8, 2003. Dexter brings an extensive background in business accounting and public sector management to the job.

[**Madison LGBT Campus Center to Become Dean of Students Unit**](#)

The University of Wisconsin-Madison's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Campus Center will formally partner with the Dean of Students office in a new plan by Dean Luoluo Hong and the campus center's student staff.

[**Milwaukee GOP Calls for End to Military Ban on Gays**](#)

Members of Log Cabin Republicans of Wisconsin, a lesbian/gay Republican organization, praised Milwaukee Republicans for recently calling for an end to the ban on lesbians and gays in the military. At the 4th Congressional District Republican Caucus held at the Milwaukee Athletic Club, a resolution calling for an end to discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in the armed forces was overwhelmingly adopted.

[**Anti Gay Remarks Trip GOP Leader**](#)

National gay civil rights groups called on the Republican leadership to remove Pennsylvania Senator Rick Santorum as chairman of the GOP Senate conference after he compared homosexuality to bigamy, polygamy, incest and adultery.

[**Tabloid: Saddam Starred in Gay Porn!**](#)

Deposed Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein has been caught with his pants down -- literally. At least

according to a report in The Weekly World News.

[Letters](#)

Check out IN Step's Mail Bag!

[SPECIAL REPORT: IN Step Investigates PrideFest](#)

It is less than two month until PrideFest 2003. The recent, sudden exit of two key PrideFest leaders in the critical months before the event has apparently put announced plans to hire an executive administrator for the festival on hold. Problems with the PrideFest Web site, the Pride Guide and its marketing plan, the Pride parade, and now community-wide speculation about possible financial wrongdoing challenge the ever-thinning pridedfest leadership.

By William Attewell

[LGBT Center Launches Sexual Assault Awareness Campaign](#)

April is National Sexual Assault Awareness Month and the Anti-Violence Project of Milwaukee's LGBT Community Center has launched a campaign to raise awareness about sexual assault within the LGBT community.

By Jamakaya

[Meet the Gay Press Event at LGBT Center](#)

April is National Sexual Assault Awareness Month and the Anti-Violence Project of Milwaukee's LGBT Community Center has launched a campaign to raise awareness about sexual assault within the LGBT community.

[Organizers Bed to Bring IGBO Tournament to Milwaukee](#)

LGBT bowlers and fans from the area organized to bid on hosting The International Gay Bowling Organization's 25th Anniversary tournament to be held on May 25-30, 2005.

[REALITY CHECK: Drive By Punditry](#)

I don't know about you but I've been a bit distracted these past few weeks. If it wasn't the Iraqi invasion, it was the weather. As I had predicted, George Jr. got his war on before the last Wisconsin snowflake flew. However, I hadn't counted on Mother Nature to provide the millions of extra flakes that she dumped on us these past few days just to prove me right. Our fashionably late winter is exiting with all the panache of a Clairol For Men-dyed comb-over.

By Mike Fitzpatrick

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- [Gay.com](#)
- [Gay & Lesbian Information](#)
- [Gayplanet.com](#)
- [Gerber/Hart Library](#)
- [Human Rights Campaign](#)
- [OutBox](#)
- [National Gay & Lesbian Hotline](#)
- [National Directory of Lesbian & Gay Community Centers](#)
- [National Gay and Lesbian](#)

AIDS/Health Resources

AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin (ARCW)

www.arcw.org

Bars/Night Clubs

Woody's

www.daveant.com/woodys

Human Rights/Activism

Action Wisconsin

<http://www.expecpc.com/~dross/aw/>

Organizations

Log Cabin Republicans

<http://www.lcr-wi.org/>

Madison Area LGB Business Alliance

<http://www.lgballiance.org>

[Task Force - NGTLF](#)

- [OutProud](#)
- [Queer Resources Directory](#)
- [QueerAmerica](#)
- [The Ultimate Gay Links](#)
- [Youth Action Online](#)

Madison Pride (Madison-based Pride festival)

<http://www.madisonpride.org>

Madison LGB Resource Center

<http://tps.stdorg.wisc.edu/MGLRC/MGLRC.html>

Milwaukee LGBT Community Center

<http://www.mkelgbt.org>

PrideFest (Milwaukee-based Pride festival)

<http://www.pridefest.com>

Shake It Up! (Madison social group)

<http://www.mailbag.com/users/dkr/shake.html>

University of Wisconsin (Statewide listings)

- [UW-Green Bay Ten Percent Society](#)
- [UW-Madison Ten Percent Society](#)
- [UW-Madison LGBT Campus Center](#)
- [UW-Parkside Gay and Lesbian Organization](#)
- [UW-Platteville G/L/B Alliance](#)
- [UW-River Falls Gay-Straight Alliance](#)
- [UW-Stevens Point Ten Percent Society](#)
- [UW-Whitewater IMPACT](#)

Publications

Quest (bi-weekly g/l bar entertainment guide)

www.quest-online.com

Real Estate

Jack H. Smith (Shorewest Realtors)

<http://jacksmith.com>

Religious

Angels of Hope (Green Bay)

<http://netnet.net/~austin/hope.html>

Retail/Services

Afterwords (Bookstore/Coffee Shop)

www.afterwords.com

Retail Painting and Restoration

www.execpc.com/redtail

Skylab (Mobile phones/pagers)

www.wwwdotcalm.com

Resort/Bed and Breakfast

The Chanticleer Guest House (Door County, Wisc.)

<http://chanticleerguesthouse.com>

The Dunes Resort (Saugatuck/Douglas, Mich.)

www.douglasdunes.com

Island House (South Beach, Fla.)

www.q-net.com/islandhouse

Prairie Garden B&B (1/2 north of Madison, Wisc.)

www.prairiegarden.com

Web Design

TK Net (Web site design/hosting)

www.tk.net

Web Sites

Gay Universe (Personals)

www.gayuniverse.com

Out and Out (on-line magazine)

www.outandout.com

Wisconsin Government

Rep. Tammy Baldwin (WI-D, 2nd District)

www.house.gov/baldwin

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Justice Delayed in Two Gay-Related Cases

by Jamakaya

Cover Story: Suzanne Westhoefer

Election Report: Pro-Gay Candidates Advance

Story by William Attewell

Gay Marriage Debate Gathers Steam

Story by Keith Clark

LAMM: The Lesbian Authority

by Jamakaya

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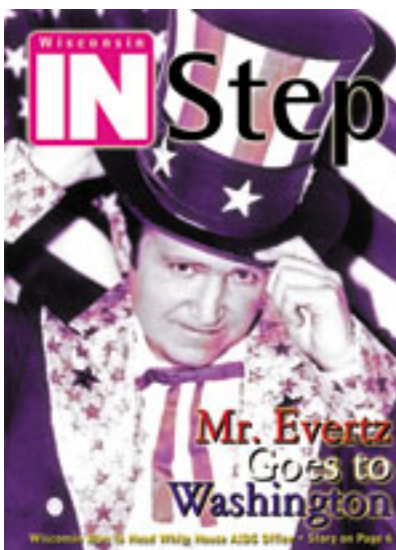
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Strategy Meeting on DP Benefits Vote

Milwaukee – There will be a Town Hall Meeting on Thursday, April 19 at 6 p.m. regarding the Milwaukee Common Council's upcoming vote on the city employees' labor contract which includes a provision on domestic partner benefits. City of Milwaukee employees are asked to arrive at 5:30 p.m.

The meeting will take place at the LGBT Community Center, 170 S. 2nd St. All individuals interested in this strategy session prior to the Council's vote on May 8 are welcome to attend.

Fund-raiser for HIT May 5

Milwaukee — The Holiday Invitational Tournament will be holding a drag show on Sunday, May 5, at Fluid, at 7 p.m. The event will be hosted by the fabulous Nova DeVine. Scheduled entertainers include members of the board for the tournament. Everyone is invited to come out and see all of these fabulous performers in their Sunday best.

This is a fund-raiser to help raise money for the longest-running gay and lesbian bowling tournament in the country which this year is celebrating its 23rd anniversary.

For more information, contact Rick at bowlingdick@aol.com.

Creating Change Steering Committee Meets April 24

Milwaukee — The Steering Committee preparing for the NGLTF Creating Change conference in Milwaukee this fall will meet on Tuesday, April 24 at 6:30 p.m., at the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center, 170 WS. Second St. These regular monthly status meetings are open to the community.

On March 27, volunteers met at the LGBT Center to move forward with planning for the Creating Change Conference. The Host Committee and Steering Committee structure were put in place. Also, volunteers formed several subcommittees and identified key contacts for each subcommittee.

The Host Committee consists of all volunteers in all subcommittees. The Steering Committee consists of the four Host Committee co-chairs and the co-chairs of each subcommittee. The Host Committee will be holding a kick-off meeting TBA.

The Host Committee structure includes the following subcommittees: Outreach, Volunteer Recruitment, Hospitality Guide, Community Housing, Media/Public Relations, Programming, Youth Support, Elders Support, 12-Step Support, Accessibility, Exhibit Area, Spiritual Needs, and Loss Prevention/Security. In addition, the Host Committee is in the process of forming a Diversity/Multi-cultural Support subcommittee. Its purpose will be to address the needs of and to assist with outreach to people of color, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgenders.

Volunteers are presently needed for the following subcommittees: Outreach, Volunteer Recruitment, Hospitality Guide, Community Housing, Media/Public Relations, Programming, Youth Support, Elders Support, and Diversity/Multicultural Support. People interested in becoming involved in a subcommittee are encouraged to attend the Steering Committee meetings.

The 2001 NGLTF Creating Change Conference will be held at the Hyatt Hotel in downtown Milwaukee Nov. 7 -11. For more information, contact Neil Albrecht at (414) 271-2656 or Stephanie Hume at (414) 225-1502.

Bestd Clinic Donates Books To Lgbt Center

Milwaukee — The Milwaukee LGBT Community Center's library continues to expand- thanks to generous donors such as the BESTD Clinic. Earlier this month, BESTD not only donated dozens of books and videos on a variety of topics but also gave the Center a number of bookshelves.

“The clinic's resource room has always been open to the community,” said Kevin Lynch of BESTD. “Since the LGBT Community Center has grown exponentially, it has become clear to BESTD that the books and videos we have would better reach the people they were intended for by being at the Center. It is a testament to the great work done by the Community Center that we have made this donation.”

The Center's library contains a wide-range of books by and about LGBT people including both fiction and nonfiction. Books may be checked out by anyone with valid identification. To find out when the library is open, you can call the Center at (414) 271-2656.

American Cancer Society Hosts Meeting at Lgbt Community Center

Milwaukee — The American Cancer Society invites members of the LGBT community to attend a meeting on Tuesday, April 24, from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Ammie Story, Multicultural Outreach Specialist at ACS, has been working with the Lesbian Cancer Project (a collaborative effort of the Center and the Lesbian Alliance of Metro Milwaukee) to ensure that lesbians with cancer have access to services through ACS.

In an effort to identify needs and improve service to the entire LGBT community, Story will be here on April 24 to share information she has gathered and to hear from individuals in our community.

The meeting will address three questions: What is the cancer burden in lesbian and gay community? What is the community capacity to address its cancer burden? How should the community prioritize cancer issues?

If you are interested in attending this meeting or would like more information, please call Kathy Herbst at (414) 271-2656.

Life Enrichment Series at LGBT Center

Milwaukee — Do you feel you prepared to defend yourself? If not, this class may help to boost your confidence in your ability to protect yourself.

“An Introduction to Self Defense for Women” will be offered for three consecutive Saturdays from 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. beginning May 26 at the LGBT Community Center, 170 S. 2nd St.

Instructor Sahnya Thom, owner of Alive and Kickin’, Inc and a 4th Degree Black Belt, will lead this highly interactive and informative class.

Come prepared to discuss prevention and protection techniques and to learn simple but effective blocks, strikes and kicks. Thom will also demonstrate verbal self-defense and the use ordinary objects in self-defense situations.

Participants who complete all three classes will receive a mini-session completion diploma with the option for refresher courses in the near future.

Preregistration for this class is required and a fee of \$25 for Center members and \$30 for nonmembers is requested. For more information or to register, call Kathy at (414) 271-2656.

Cream City Chorus Adopts New Mission Statement

Milwaukee – At its annual meeting on April 11th, the membership of the Wisconsin Cream City Chorus voted to adopt a new Mission Statement whose main focus is quality music. “It’s really an outgrowth of the chorus’s place in the community and its goals for the future,” explained chorus president, Emory Churness.

“When the chorus was founded in 1987, the community wanted and needed a voice to sing the message of understanding and equal rights for gays, lesbians, and those of alternate sexualities. Today, there are many more voices speaking up for our rights. We’ve become a common sight on TV, in newspapers, and in the movies. Our message is out there. Those that have ears are already hearing it.”

In addition, Churness believes the community has changed in what it expects from the organizations it supports. It’s no longer enough to simply be an LGBT group of this type or that, even one “dedicated to the positive promotion of gays and lesbians,” as the former WCCC mission statement promised. With the explosion of groups, organizations and foundations serving the LGBT community, it’s also about providing quality product or services. For a chorus, it’s about the music and its presentation, a point he hopes their April 8th concert made. “We’ve been refocusing our efforts,” he added, “and the standing ovation we received tells us our audience appreciates that.”

But musical excellence isn’t the only point the mission statement makes. According to the new verbiage, “The Wisconsin Cream City Chorus is dedicated to the performance of quality choral music celebrating the diversity of our community.”

“Although the words gay and lesbian no longer appear in our mission statement,” assures Churness, “that

doesn't mean we've forgotten our roots. The Cream City Chorus was born of the LGBT community, and that's where our strongest ties will always be. But we've grown. Our current membership is diverse in more ways than one. So is our music." As an example, he cited the chorus's last few holiday concerts, which included offerings from many beliefs. "We celebrate the diversity around us. The issues of the LGBT community will always be with us, but they're no longer the only ones near and dear to our hearts."

For more information about the chorus and its upcoming performances call (414) 276-8787, or visit our new Web site at www.creamcitychorus.org.

Milwaukee and Chicago Gay Bikers to Meet

Milwaukee — Great Lakes Harley Riders (G.L.H.R.) announce plans to co-host a meet and greet with the Open Road Riders Of Chicagoland (O.R.R.O.C.) on May 13 from 2-6 p.m. at the The 1100 Club, 1100 S. 1st St. in Milwaukee.

The event is open to the public and will include a \$5 beer and soda bust. Food will also be available.

Regional members of G.L.H.R., an international confidential network of Gay/Bi Harley Riders will join O.R.R.O.C., a group of Gay/Lesbian bikers on their annual ride to Milwaukee's M & M Club for Mother's Day Brunch. The meet and greet at The 1100 Club will follow.

Persons interested in getting to know or joining either of these groups are invited to attend the meet and greet. No reservations are needed.

For more information, e-mail GLHR at BootedHOG@aol.com or ORROC at Gldwng77@aol.com





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Editorial

Blinded by Pride: The Failure and Future of PrideFest

[By William Attewell](#)

PrideFest's announcement on June 12 of the estimated loss of up to \$150,000 on the 2003 festival is going to come as a shock to our community. This is arguably the largest and most expensive debacle in our community's history and its impact and scope should not be underestimated.

I sincerely compliment PrideFest's council and volunteers for their enormous contributions to the festival and our community. Understandably, they may feel defensive and even angry for being challenged so soon after such a super-human and exhausting effort. However, there are deep-rooted, systemic problems within PrideFest that must be addressed and resolved.

Perhaps the most tragic aspect of this loss is that it was a self-inflicted wound. PrideFest's board and council share the ultimate responsibility of financial oversight for the organization to ensure that these types of disasters do not occur. PrideFest's financial mismanagement this year has now precipitated a community-wide crisis.

Funds that might have gone to bolster emerging and established community organizations will likely be diverted to prop up PrideFest. Organizations which historically have received monies from PrideFest for volunteering at the festival may be asked to forego payment. Vendors may or may not be paid. Bankruptcy for PrideFest, Inc. is a possibility, and plans to hold PrideFest on the Summerfest grounds in 2004 may be in jeopardy.

Both from inside and from outside the organization, PrideFest leaders were repeatedly made aware — well before this year's festival — of concerns about the direction, management, organizational structure and leadership of PrideFest.

The unprecedented, good-faith meeting, in the Fall of 2002, which included among other community leaders, Neil Albrecht (Milwaukee LGBT Center), Doug Nelson (ARCW), Denise Wise (CCF), Owen Mahon (House of Infinity), Elna Hickson (PFLAG), and Si Smits (G/L Community Trust Fund),

attempted to show support for — and communicate to — PrideFest’s board concerns about the path the festival had chosen. Those concerns were apparently brushed aside.

Instead, PrideFest’s closed system allowed its leaders to go for a home run when they simply should have tried to get on base. As a result, the LGBT community in Wisconsin may have struck out.

Every PrideFest leader I have spoken with since the festival has blamed poor weather this year for this collapse. The truth is quite the opposite — despite the weather, Wisconsin’s LGBT community DID come out to support PrideFest! Attendance for this year’s festival, at 18,101, was only 500 off last year’s record-setting mark.

PrideFest’s board failed to use sound business principles and practices when planning this year’s festival. It is a continuing pattern of apparent mismanagement and lack of oversight which Wisconsin’s LGBT community can no longer ignore.

The smell of scandal has surrounded PrideFest for years. The clouds of speculation surrounding Christine Klein’s and other PrideFest leaders’ sudden and unexplained departures, the arrest of Justin Lockridge for theft from PrideFest two years ago, and the apparent conflict of interest perpetrated by former co-director Bo Dyer in recent months are but a few examples that point to a board and organization which at times seems unable to live up to even minimal standards of fiduciary responsibility and standards and practices.

Some PrideFest leaders hold a belief that PrideFest remains the last bastion of true grassroots activism in our community. Some PrideFest leaders have privately expressed distrust and disdain for successful community institutions like the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center, the Cream City Foundation and ARCW and perceive those groups as elitist and closed organizations.

This is simply projection on their part. While no organization is perfect, it is PrideFest which is truly an elitist and closed organization.

PrideFest by-laws allow board and council members to serve with no term limits. There is no mechanism by which a community member or organization can directly interface with PrideFest to initiate true change. Given the current ratio of board to council members on PrideFest, it is mathematically impossible for the council to override a unanimous board decision. It is also impossible – given the by-laws – for any well-meaning, talented and accountable individual from our community to join PrideFest’s board without first serving a year on its council. Without delay, PrideFest must become an open and completely transparent organization. Only under an efficient, professional and fully accountable structure will true, successful grassroots activism be able to occur within PrideFest as it already has in many other of our community organizations.

There are many, many individuals and organizations who will now step forward in a sincere effort to rebuild a solid foundation for PrideFest and its future. There remains in our community enough good will

for the concept of a PrideFest to continue.

An immediate, accountable mechanism must be found for PrideFest to be redeveloped and produced. Our community resources and talent pool are currently very lean and there are only a small number of viable organizations which could help facilitate such an enormous undertaking.

I believe we must look to the Cream City Foundation and the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center. These two organizations simply must step up.

The Community Center and CCF are the best representatives of our community in this situation and are among the few organizations which have proven accountability systems in terms of board, staff, and volunteers.

CCF must seriously consider using its current financial assets, endowment and any other resources at its disposal to quickly find and fund an executive director for PrideFest. PrideFest might then be merged with the LGBT Center.

PrideFest's current board and council could then be converted — as quickly as possible — to an interim, advisory, emeritus board until a new board can be put in place, a board which may or may not include the current members.

Other funders, including the G/L Community Trust Fund and sponsors of PrideFest must be developed to help defray any additional costs and to offset PrideFest's current debt to ensure the production of PrideFest 2004.

The LGBT Center's Board should establish a PrideFest Advisory Committee and the Center's Board should name the members of this committee. The Center's Board must have a broad-based Advisory Committee representing the entire community. It would likely include individuals from PrideFest's current board and council for transitional purposes.

Additionally, I urge that PrideFest agree to a Town Hall meeting — well-publicized in advance — to update the whole community on the situation, to report on steps being taken to solve the immediate financial crisis and to announce the steps being taken to reform internal planning and budgeting procedures so that this type of deficit never occurs again. It would be beneficial for an independent group — other than those which may have a direct stake in the future of the festival to facilitate such a meeting.

I can personally promise and assure our community that IN Step will do everything in its power to lobby support for the redevelopment of PrideFest. However, it would be irresponsible to voice support for any such efforts under its current organizational structure and leadership. Sadly, given the current attitude of PrideFest's leadership, its by-laws and organizational structure, the change which is so desperately needed now will only come from a tidal wave of outrage from our community.

IN Step looks forward to community input on this very important issue. Please send your letters to: editor@instepnews.com, fax us at (414) 278-5868, or write to: Wisconsin IN Step, 1661 N. Water St., Suite 411, Milwaukee, WI 53202. We will be holding extra space for you!



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Letters

PrideFest Coverage Generates Reaction

Dear Editor,

As a ten year veteran PrideFest volunteer, I must sadly agree with your last issue's editorial directed at PrideFest. It seems that despite all of the public town hall meetings and all of the articles published in *Wisconsin IN Step* and elsewhere, the PrideFest board continues to ignore the best interests of our community.

As a representative of LGBT Indigenous Americans here in Wisconsin, I must also inform PrideFest that they have offended our tribal elders by offering a discounted admission at the gate only to youth. If it were not for the sacrifice of our elders there would be no PrideFest! Not only is it our cultural belief to help out our youth and elders, but MOST event, – museums, restaurants, etc. – offer a senior discount.

As a lifelong resident of the Milwaukee area, I am also shocked and outraged that our deaf brothers and sisters had to protest outside the gates of PrideFest alongside our enemies, just to gain equal rights. **SOMETHING IS VERY WRONG HERE!**

Like many other members of our community, I have offered to help out the PrideFest Board and Council only to get brushed off. I was told directly last year by a board vice-president and a co-president that the council did not have any openings. Is this how PrideFest “beg[s] for new council members”? I expected at least an interview to inform them of my qualifications.

Now the festival leadership is asking the community to bail them out of a huge deficit, which they have inflicted on themselves. Given the long, questionable reputation of the PrideFest Council, I would not expect our community to help unless there are some major changes made immediately.

Dave Bodoh

Two Spirit Society of Wisconsin

Dear Editor,

Thanks to all who donated their time and effort to the 2003 PrideFest weekend. The army of dedicated, generous volunteers deserves hearty applause for supporting Milwaukee's LGBT community.

However, the announcement of a six-figure deficit, coupled with organizational mediocrity, suggests the need for a full-time, experienced force to take control of PrideFest. Nowhere was the need for keen leadership more evident than the opening ceremonies of the 2003 festival.

A confused and unprepared PrideFest Council member served as Master of Ceremonies, with unfortunate results. He introduced dignitaries with incorrect names, and had no idea what other ethnic festivals were represented on stage. The worst offense, however, was the admonition to festival-goers – in front of honorary, elected officials – not to perform sexual acts on festival grounds. One of the biggest challenges facing the LGBT community is the stereotype that we are unable to control our sexual urges. The comment was embarrassing, unwarranted and vulgar.

The lack of pre-festival advertisement and free public service announcements in local media was disappointing, and undoubtedly was partly responsible for the decreased attendance. One Council member explained, “The TV stations didn’t think that the viewers would accept them.” How could an out member of the LGBT community, especially a PrideFest Council member, be satisfied by such a response from a local media organization? Additionally, the advance piece that appeared in the Shepherd Express newspaper attributed quotes from a spokesperson who agreed to be identified by first name only. How can the local LGBT community express pride when its supposed leaders are fearful of discovery of their own orientation?

Finally, I know of several talented, energetic people who expressed interest in becoming Council members throughout the past year. Every one of them felt that the current Council had no intention of allowing new personal or fresh ideas onto the planning committee.

PrideFest has achieved national recognition through the dedicated efforts of an all-volunteer staff. However, it is now time to allow a focused, professional team to lead the festival to a new level.

Charles Grosz
Milwaukee

Dear Editor,

Thank you for your recent editorial and articles regarding PrideFest 2003

As the PrideFest leadership frantically tries to blame the weather for the enormous and stupefying \$150,000 debt incurred by the festival, I have uncovered the people who were actually responsible for the losses.

They are Michael Lisowski, Lil Lau, Paul Sherry, Cindy Taylor and John Prentice. The members of PrideFest’s board are completely responsible for the financial oversight of the festival and they blew it – big time! This group of so-called LGBT leaders needs to resign immediately, if not sooner!

While I'm sure you are probably reluctant to say it, I am willing say it for you ... "You told them so!"

Gerry Kramer
Milwaukee

Dear Editor,

I cannot be the only member of our community to read the PrideFest coverage in the last issue of the *Wisconsin IN Step* with much dismay. It is disturbing that our Pride event could be so callous to deaf members of the LGBT community and hopefully, Jamakaya's thoughtful article will force a policy change in the future.

Even more disturbing is that this year's festival could have losses approaching \$150,000. While organizers place the blame squarely on the weather, it is difficult to see how, even with an unprecedented increase in attendance, that the festival could have even been a break-even proposition.

So, what happens now? Your editorial highlights a need for our community to become more involved with our Pride celebration. It is important that individuals as well as groups like CCF, the Community Center and the LGBT business community take on a more active role.

There is another important question - just what kind of Pride event does our community want?

Pride festivals around the country have increasingly had to face an identity crisis. Is the event to be a protest — the origins of all such Pride events — or a party? Like many others, PrideFest has clearly gone the party route but one with music festival aspirations.

In their statement, Co-Chairs Michael Lisowski and Lil Lau write, "Promoting pride, not making money, is the mission of PrideFest." But I wonder if this is true. For yet another year, no advertising actually promoted PrideFest as an LGBT event. Where is the pride in this? Featured PrideFest headliner was '80s rocker Pat Benatar and her husband. To see this heterosexual duo, one was required to join the "Proud Crowd." Now, there's a bit of irony.

I know I'd like to see Milwaukee's annual Pride celebration become much more of a community event. I'd like to see the Pride parade begin somewhere, perhaps in the Walker's Point area near so many of our bars before it works it's way to the SummerFest grounds. I would like to see a series of cultural and political events throughout our community. Perhaps the LGBT Film Festival could hold some film programs. Maybe one of the local theatre companies or even Madison's fine Stage Q could schedule performances of an LGBT-themed play. Author readings could be scheduled, perhaps art or history exhibits could be held at the Community Center. One of our fine choruses might be persuaded to offer a program. These types of programs have never been well suited as a part of PrideFest at the SummerFest grounds. Such a program of events would highlight and celebrate the diversity of our community, help to

involve many more of our community and best of all would create a Pride Festival we all could really take pride in.

And what about PrideFest? PrideFest should be the cornerstone event, the best possible LGBT party featuring the best possible LGBT entertainment.

Carl M. Szatmary
Milwaukee

Dear Editor,

I consider it a great honor to have received PrideFest's Lifetime Achievement Award this year. I only hope that it is not the last time this award will be given because PrideFest may die due to its substantial losses this year. I'll not rehash all the incompetent blunders that caused the losses; I will let others do that. These losses cannot be laid entirely to bad weather, because almost as many people attended this event as did last year. Many mistakes were simply bad business errors. Over-booking of high priced has-been entertainment, bad advertising, bad marketing, bad public relations – all of these things were simply business decisions that could have been avoided had a good business plan been in force.

In the business world such bad management would call for the resignation of those responsible so that they could be replaced with persons with the proper credentials to make such decisions. The basic structure of PrideFest needs to be looked at and changed. Anyone who has been a volunteer for one year can become a top leader in the organization (hardly a qualification to be placed in such important decision making positions.) Leaders should be chosen for their competency, commitment, and integrity.

PrideFest should seek professional help and they should do it quickly if they plan to put on an event next year. Perhaps a one year hiatus might give them two years to get themselves back on their feet. Here are some practical ideas that I hope they will think about and follow up on: Someone in the organization should contact the Small Business Administration (414-297-3941). The nearly 60 publications listed in the SBA Directory for Small Business Management include titles related to financial management, planning, marketing, personnel management, and crime prevention and emerging business. All can be downloaded free at www.sba.gov/library/pubs.html. Help could also be sought from SCORE (Service Corps of Retired Executives) which has three Milwaukee locations and might even be able to assign a retired business executive who can consult with PrideFest people to find a way out of the financial mess (414-297-3942).

PrideFest could also seek help and advice from UWM and Marquette. However, I must stress that corrective actions need to be started at once. Properly managed, the event could produce a profit that could be plowed back into many small needy GLBT organizations. PrideFest then would be more than just a big party, and we could be justifiably proud of it.

Eldon E. Murray

Dear Editor,

I am writing in response to your collection of articles regarding PrideFest 2003.

While I was shocked to hear the projected amount of the loss that PrideFest experienced, I was not surprised to hear of a loss. However, I don't feel that a loss of that magnitude can be blamed on weather. PrideFest has long been the victim of Mother Nature. In fact, during my tenure, we even discussed the idea of purchasing rain insurance, guaranteeing we would not lose money due to weather. The idea was scrapped due to cost. As rain is always a chance, I feel it would have been in PF's best interest to make this moderate investment where the savings would have far outweighed the costs. Especially if their investment in entertainment incurred as much of an increase as they proclaim.

In addition, with regard to entertainment, I feel PrideFest also made a fairly large mistake in that area, with specific regard to Pat Benatar. While it is great that PrideFest was able to bring in such a big name performer, their decision to limit admission to Proud Crowd members and paying ticket holders was not in their best interest. While rewarding Proud Crowd members is crucial, it has never been done in this way before. One of the greatest things about PF, and all lakefront festivals for that matter, is that, after admission is paid, all entertainment is free. Had the general public been able to pay nine dollars and seen a legend live, I think attendance would have been more substantial, maybe even close to the 5,000 more PrideFest estimates they would have needed to be out of the red for the year. I would even venture to question how much money was made via the sale of the \$21 tickets versus the cost of Benatar.

I'm also a bit appalled at PrideFest's pleas for donations via an email asking for a \$1 donation to help offset the loss. I'm reminded of the words of a good friend on the PrideFest board: "Poor planning on your part does not denote an emergency on mine." And then to add that they want our support but don't want "the strings attached" is like a slap in the face. Why should we be expected to bail you out when you don't want to be held accountable or have provisions set on that help? It's just not how the business world works.

PrideFest is a great thing for Wisconsin and the LGBT community as a whole and I would hate to see it fail. The thousands of hours that I put into the organization gave me a greater insight into the inner workings and I feel that if PrideFest took some of the suggestions given by IN Step and other community organizations, they could pull themselves out. However, if that is not a possibility, we will all be reminded that we must live with the consequences of your actions.

Justin C. Lockridge
Racine

Dear Editor,

I liked the article on PrideFest and think it hit a few points. I'm from Madison and sometimes it seems that Milwaukee forgets that PrideFest is a statewide institution. This year the PrideFest committee seemed to lay the foundations for a better future by recreating PrideFest as a world class entertainment event and not just a glorified beer bash.

I went this year after years of avoiding PrideFest and surprisingly was really impressed with the new emphasis on entertainment. There was a buzz about this year's festivities despite the weather that I have never experienced at PrideFest before. In other years this has not been the case. I think the current committee took a step in the right direction and that news will spread to Green Bay, Chicago and Madison thus improving attendance from now on. I think a representative from one of the other ethnic fests should be brought on board. (Irish Fest for example has suffered some loss-making years but still goes strong with attendance figures of 100,000+. Irish Fest also seems to appeal to people of a non-Irish background which is something that PrideFest can also learn from.

In conclusion, I think PrideFest should be congratulated on the effort to improve the festival started this year. PrideFest should be aiming for a 100,000+ attendance within 5 years There has to be more LGBT people in Milwaukee than ethnic Irish and yet Irish Fest gets that year in year out.

**Stephen
Madison**

Put the "B" in LGBT

Dear Editor,

Right around Memorial Day, I had the chance to visit Madison and Milwaukee. When I arrived, I promptly picked up a copy of your publication to see what was going on in the GLBT community in Wisconsin (IN Step Issue 20.9). I found the article on the Milwaukee Fire and Police Commission to be very interesting, and the community updates and notes about PrideFest were fascinating.

I also saw that Milwaukee's Bi Definition group was listed under upcoming events, but that was about the only mention of anything specifically related to bisexuality in your otherwise-fine publication. I know that there is an awful lot to cover related to GLBT concerns in Wisconsin, but I hope you will provide some positive coverage in an upcoming issue of the bisexual community there. I know there are bisexuals in Wisconsin – some of them are friends of mine. If we are serious about being the "GLBT" community, then I hope you will do your part to put the "B" into "GLBT." Thanks!

Victor Raymond

P.S.: If you have covered the bi community in another issue and I missed it, my apologies - but a search of your archives did not seem to show anything.



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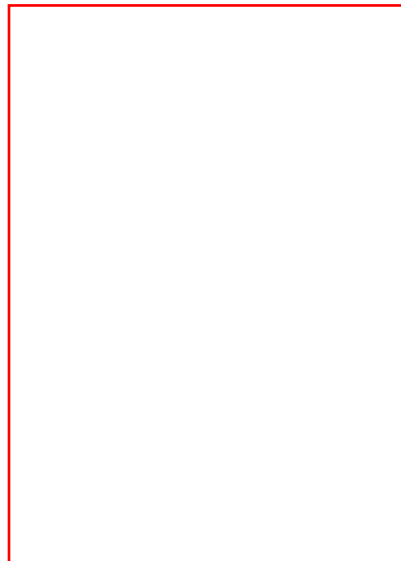
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Cordially Yours

By Michael Johnston

Every time we get together it truly IS a Holiday! This time out: Independence Day! It seems we were just toasting in 2003... Well, while you plan your picnics I'll share with you the charming one I attended.

ARCW threw a lovely afternoon for their much valued volunteers. Kari Behling and Molly Herrington were our warm hostesses. The headliner was John McGivern – what entertainment! But the star(s) of the afternoon were the people who continue to do whatever they can to make our community enriched by their contributions. Kudos to: Virginia (Ginny) Finn - Development; Chris Root - Counseling and Testing; Bob Kuhlman - AIDS Line; Cindy Bowman - Social Services; Deidre Keenan - Food Pantry; Dale Brewster - Food Pantry; Michael Gore - Legal; Tyson Kuch - Prevention; Diana Hashek - Food Pantry; Bob Downey - Administration; and David Harrison - Development. Bravo!

Even though it was Father's Day, attendance was healthy and provided me with the chance to chat it up with: ARCW's Deputy Director Paul Milakovich, David Sagura, Andy Cicero and little Leah, Jim Schleif – who shared with me that he would be leaving the agency, after a considerable tenure. Alas, the world of real estate will be inheriting his talents. I'm sure Shorewest will shine even brighter. Stephanie Hume made for a fun luncheon mate, Jim Moore of The Wisconsin AIDS Fund and ARCW's Legal Eagle Christopher Krimmer and many, many dedicated patrons.

Unfortunately, due to the Holiday I had to miss The Wisconsin Cream City Chorus concert. While I wasn't there in person, I did hear – what was heard was greatly enjoyed and appreciated!

For those music fans wondering what Jerry Grillo's performance schedule is, here's what's on tap for the Summer season: Saturday, July 19, Onopa Brewery on Center St.; Friday, July 25, Gallery H20 at 221 S. 2nd St., for Gallery Night Opening; Saturday, July 26, Jazz In The Park from 9:30 - Noon.

It seems my favorite artist about town is truly that and more. Patrick Farrell is being mentioned all over this city! First the current Milwaukee Magazine. In gossip columns: he was seen kicking up his heels at The Skylight's recent Black Tie Gala. Table #25 with: Tom & Nancy Gazzana, David Todd & Phillip Brune, Janet Matthews and Honeymooners: Jamie & Laura. The event was catered by Scott Shully, and the food was as fantastic as the entertainment: "Skylight Divas" – Sherri Williams Pannell, Peggy Peterson Ryan, Becky Spice and Kay Stiefel. I can't wait for Skylight's Summer show, "The Fantasticks," later this month. On the same note... pun intended: The Cabaret Artists Series 2003, now in its highly successful third season has quite a bit to offer. Milwaukee's Stackner Cabaret is our answer to The Algonquin, The Carlyle and Rainbow & Stars. The fabulous Faith Prince did a "Leap of Faith" in June – to a capacity crowd. This month, July 11 & 12, is "Across A Crowded Room," the Music of Richard Rogers, starring Chicago's most popular performers: Joan Curto, Cory Jamison and Tom Michael. Next month "Judy Garland - Live!" in the body of Tommy Fernia. August 1 & 2 he will take

you on that famous trolley all the way to the end of the Rainbow! Concluding the series will be Wisconsin's very own Tom Wopat - "The Still Of The Night." On August 22 & 23, this Tony Award nominee will serenade you throughout the weekend.

Segueing into the Theater – one of its First Ladies, Lynn Fontanne's, closet will be open for all to see... "Looking The Part: The Costumes and Wardrobe of Lynn Fontanne." will be on display at Stiemke Hall, 2nd Floor of Notre Dame Hall, Mount Mary College, 2900 N. Menomonee River Parkway. This fashion retrospect will run through May, 2004. Miss Fontanne was also the First Lady of Ten Chimneys, and her Genesee Depot Estate is now open to the public.

Sunday, June 22, HIT did a SideTracks Sunday. Brunch at Tequira Azteca was beyond compare. Frank and Iris went way out of their way, olé! An afternoon of Show Tunes – what better way to spend a lazy, hazy Summer afternoon? Broadway was never lovelier! My all-time faves as well as nuevo hits, with a bit of Hollywood. Giving their collective regards to Broadway with HIT and Cordially Yours were: Miss Rona, Princess Charlotte Lorraine, Princess Debbie, Debbie & Bob, Michael & Sarah Jonas – no, they're not married, they're our answer to Donny & Marie, at least that afternoon. Sarah owns the faboo Cafe LuLu. More Royals: Dame David Howser, C.C. & Michael, Jerry Skals, Jay, Rolling Rock Richard, Tom, Dan Petry, Chad, Winnie Walgreen's, Lydia, Baby Jane Hudson and The HIT All-Stars: Rita, Candy Stick, Roland Hoffmann, Jeff Lohman, David Kiefer, Claude, Steve and many more -- Out-Rage-Ous!

HIT's next celebration will be Saturday, July 12, at The M&M Club, 4 p.m. - Midnite. Party on the patio. Celebrating the mid-forties crisis Birthday Bash of: Bill Conklin, Mark Horan, Rick Steiner, James Devargas, Rick Harrelson and Roland Hoffmann. Yet another Disco Party - tunes of the '70s & '80s provided by DJ Yvonee and Patsy. BBQ Cookout including tap beer and soda, cash bar WITH celebrity bartenders, and a fabulous show at 9 p.m. with Charlotte Lorraine, Dear Ruthie, Dame Edna Ross, Wilma Finger Do, Susie Wong and me! All this for \$15 in advance/ \$20 at the door. To benefit HIT 25.

The same day, I went to The Windy City for Show Tunes. I unfortunately miss "Art Pop." Oh to be cloned... Dan Taylor of Taylor's had the wildly inventive and successful idea to do an "Arty" fund-raiser for AIDS Walk Wisconsin (Sunday, September 28). Dan asked a lot of friends and/or artists to decorate blocks of wood and for a small donation you received a piece of art, a cocktail AND you made a difference – to the tune of over \$2,000! I was thrilled to decorate my wood for you Dan, I hope it sold! I always have a ball at Taylor's, especially those anything BUT mundane "Blue Mondays." This year to add a spin, "Blue Mondays" turned into "Blue Mondays _____." The final one was floral, and of course we were all in full bloom... But, no one compared to Jack Igle and his "Beauty Bonnet." What a fashion plate, a true dish!

I had a most wonderful time of it at the "Mid-Summer's Night Dream Party." Hosts: Dr. John Teggatz & Adam Burnett held the quintessential salute to the night. The setting was their charming 1841 farm house sitting on two acres of extraordinary gardens. Very Country French and breath-taking! I loved the Fairy – the one on the trail, with the condoms... and of course I loved all the Fairies at the party too! Lots of

MVM-ers (Mens Voices Milwaukee - in which Adan is a member): Cliff, Gino, Winston, Mark, Bill, Peter & Ric, Jay, Rim Shot to name but a few – truly a dreamy night.

Gladys & Leona also hosted a gracious garden party of a different variety – still as enjoyable, I assure you.

Keep in mind during Summerfest 2003 “The Gay Shuttle” driving about The Walker’s Point area. Fluid, LaCage-ETC, Boom, Switch and The Triangle are providing a ride to the grounds in style. This is being brought to by Sprecher Brewery, so try one the next time.

Switch has a new man at the bar, Chris, working Saturday nights on the patio and Sunday afternoons. Drop by and keep him company. The Patio at Switch is available for private affairs and not so private ones. Craig wants to thank Jazzin’ Jeffrey, former bartender and Karaoke King, for his time at Switch... Seems he has now switched and can be found at Joey Buono’s. Brett and Ramone will now take over the task of making you the star on Thursdays at Switch.

Boom had another “Hump Night Party.” Garrett from Texas Playgirl model entertained us, including sharing a little leather with me – ouch! Speaking of The Harbor Room - Anniversary #3 is the last weekend in July. You won’t want to miss this weekend, X off those days now! I’ve been asked to “Femcee” once again. What a thrill! See you there!

This just in ... South Water Street Docks suddenly closed their doors! While the reasons remain sketchy, we mourn the loss of another gay club in our town — you’ll remember that Off the Tracks closed earlier this year as well.

The Milwaukee LGBT Community Center is saying goodbye to staffer Ita Meno. Ita is heading for Vermont with her partner in a matter of weeks. Here’s hoping Ita likes maple syrup! Speaking of the Center, despite a rainy day, the Rainbow Tour of Homes turned out a respectable crowd who dodged rain drops to see some of Bay View’s finest homes, including the smashing pad of executive director Neil Albrecht.

In my last effort, I mentioned the “Poked at PrideFest” t-shirt. Well, the ad that ran in this publication and others included the model in the shirt and in the ad. I can now reveal that terrific torso belongs to none other than the ravishing Ray Shafer.

Congratulations and Happy 2nd to Transformations and Michael McKinley. Let Michael Transform your world or at least your home. Transformations is at 5706 W. Vliet St.

Also in the strides department, HRL/PAC sponsored the Mayoral Forum at PrideFest, getting almost everyone there: Pedro Colon, Sandy Foloran, Martin Matson, Marvin Pratt. Tom Nardelli was unfortunately out of town. Now Tom Barrett has thrown his considerable hat in the ring – what choices. The Journal-Sentinel quoted Paul Williams, President of HRL/PAC. We’ve certainly come a long way.

Hurrah for the keen insight of our Supreme Court as well —

Remember, it's the Glamour — not the grammar... Happy 227th America. In spite of it all, you're still beautiful to me, as I remain "Cordially Yours,"

e-mail Michael Johnston at cordiallyyours@instepnews.com.



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ADVERTISING

DEADLINE: Don't miss the next issue of Wisconsin IN Step. Display ad deadline is Oct. 12 for the issue appearing, Oct. 18. Make your ad reservation today! IN Step's offices are located at 1661 N. Water Street, Suite 411. We are open every week day from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Call our advertising Hotline at (414) 278-7840, Extension #2 to reserve your ad.

HOUSING

Do You Like It Large? Large 3 bedroom lower in historic neighborhood dining room and parlor, eat in kitchen w/pantry. Natural fireplace. All appliances included. Hardwood floors, built in china cabinets, window seat and walk in closet in each bedroom. Call (414) 344-6085 or (414) 456-7767 (day).

Washington Heights Rental: Gorgeous 3 bedroom lower duplex. Natural woodwork, maple hardwood floors, intricate stain glass, beautiful built in window seat and buffet. Includes stove, refrigerator, washer and dryer. Updated bath and kitchen includes spacious kitchen pantry. Includes basement storage. 3 houses north of Washington Boulevard at 1723 N. 49th Street. \$700.00 per month rental. Call (414) 475-0242 for a showing.

Sherman Park: 2 bedroom with built in china cabinets in living and dining rooms, includes stove, refrigerator, washer and dryer, porch, and artificial fireplace. Pets welcome! \$600.00 a month, call (414) 491-9775.

Fabulous: 1 bedroom apartment located in elegant 1920's home on corner of 27th Street and Rogers. 5 Minutes north of St. Luke's Medical Center. This is a quiet house, perfect for mature adults. HUGE!! Many windows, private patio, access to garden, pets negotiable. \$550.00 + utilities. 1 year lease, 1 month deposit! Leave a message, Jon (414) 403-1414.

MASSAGE

Massage and More! By a young, smooth, bottom boy-toy! Call (414) 614-8883! Out calls only.

Relaxing and Very Gratifying! For all the real men who deserve the simple pleasures in life. I am 6'11" and weigh 180 lbs. I would love to relax all your built up stress. Call 24 hours-a-day (414) 875-6988.

Sensual Swedish/Eselan Massage: Full body focus by Jim, Body Electric CMT. Cal 1 (414) 403-1016.<

Massage With Alex: Relaxing, satisfying full hour sessions in downtown Madison. Saturday and Sunday 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Evenings by appointments. Call (608) 250-9988.

The Real Thing! For people who take massage seriously! This accomplished, muscular masseur has strong, skilled hands, capable of being very gentle, very firm, or anything in between. For men and women, gay or straight. A must for the serious athlete. Simply the best. Indulge yourself. You've earned it. Dennis (414) 315-8551.

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Madison Mobile Massage: In and Out Calls! Swedish therapeutic. Call Randy, CMT at (608) 559-0322.

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Want A Big One! Penis-enlargement.net, FDA approved vacuum pumps/surgical gain. 1-3 inches permanent and safe. Enhance erection. Free brochures! Call Dr. Joel Kaplan for latest enlargement information (312) 409-9995 or (900) 976-PUMP (\$2.95 per min.)

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Share furnished NW side 3 bedroom home with GWM. \$310.00 a month includes washer/dryer, cable, and garage. Non-smoker preferred! Call (414) 354-3879.

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Cleaning Not Your Priority? Allan's Cleaning Service can help you! Efficient, reliable, affordable! Call now, (414) 264-4400.</P>

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Madison Readies for Magic Pride Weekend, July 20-22

Madison — Anticipation is building for Madison's annual pride events — a time to party down with

good music, dancing, food and fun. The weekend's events kick off on Friday evening, July 20 and run through Sunday July 22. Here are some highlights of the weekend.

OutReach Awards

The Banquet unfolds Friday at Monona Terrace Community and Convention center, One John Nolen Drive, in Madison. A reception and silent auction begins the event at 5:30 p.m. Dinner is set for 6:30 with a program to follow. The program includes keynote speakers State Rep. Mark Pocan and US Rep. Tom Barrett. Awards will then be bestowed on community members for their outstanding contributions to LGBT groups and issues. See IN Step's profile of this year's award winners on page 13.

For more information on the banquet, call (608) 255-8582. General admission tickets cost \$50. Sponsorship packages that include two tickets and program book and verbal recognition are available for \$120.

Credit card orders can be placed by calling (608) 255-8582. Tickets can also be purchased from the OutReach office at 600 Williamson St.

Ten Percent Pride Dance

The Ten Percent Society will present its annual LGBT Pride Dance on Friday evening, July 20, from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. The dance will be held in Exhibition Hall of the Monona Terrace Convention and Community Center, One John Nolen Drive in Madison.

All lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and transgendered persons of all ages are welcome to attend. Admission is \$5. There will be DJs and a cash bar. For more information, call (608) 255-9449.

MAGIC Picnic

Madison's MAGIC Picnic returns for its 28th year on Saturday, July 21 from 1-7 p.m. at Brittingham Park. The event is free, for a \$10 you can get a picnic meal plus unlimited beer and soda. The beer garden will open at 1 p.m. and food service will start at 1:30 p.m.

Games, featuring a high-heel race, water balloon toss and purse toss will begin at 3 p.m.. A dunk tank, carnival games, and a lakeside midway offering merchandise and information will run throughout the day. Dancing to the hottest new and classic club cuts will be available in the park pavilion.

On Saturday, post picnic revelers will have plenty of options. In addition to the numerous home and night club parties, a choral concert, a women's musical and theatrical event, a country line dance and a female impressionist pageant are also scheduled.

Perfect Harmony

Madison's gay men's chorus, Perfect Harmony, will perform "Naked Man: A Journey to The Soul" at the Barrymore Theatre, 2090 Atwood Ave. The concert, which features a song cycle of original music composed by P. Littell and R. Seeley, begins at 7:30 p.m.. Tickets are \$10 for general admission with a \$3 discount for senior citizens and available in advance at the theater, OutReach or from chorus members.

Madison's LGBT country line dancing group, the Dairyland Cowgirls and Cowboys, will sponsor a dance at the Sapphire Ballroom beginning at 8 p.m.. The event will feature the group performing line dance routines. For more information about the dance, call (608) 245-0627.

SPRAWL Dance Slated for July 21

Women attending Pride Weekend in Madison this year will be treated to a SPRAWL women's dance and all-grrl gathering in the Spotlight Room of the Madison Civic Center. The evening of Saturday, July 21 kicks off with a free swing lesson from 8-8:30 p.m. The DJ music starts directly thereafter and continues until close at midnight.

SPRAWL organizers are pleased to offer the event at the Civic Center because of its central location in downtown Madison at 211 State Street.

"The Spotlight Room is a lovely room with a huge and wonderful hardwood dance floor," said organizer Betty Friedan-Ginger. "The Spotlight windows showcase the lights of State Street, so that women can appreciate the scenery on the street as well as at the dance itself."

The Spotlight is on the top level of the Civic Center and is wheelchair accessible. A cash bar will be available all evening.

The suggested donation at the door is \$5, although SPRAWL happily accepts whatever women can afford. Proceeds from the evening make further women's dances possible.

Please e-mail SPRAWL at sprawl@herspace.com for further information or to get on SPRAWL's email list.

Flaming Dykasaurus Salutes George W.

Pledging to work with the new administration at any cost, the women of Flaming Dykasaurus have dedicated their Pride weekend performance on July 21st to good ol' George W. Bush. They've been working hard at understanding the new President, including adding some of his common euphemisms to their daily speech to show their support.

“Shoot. It ain’t like nobody really wanted Gore to be in charge, neither,” chides Flaming Dykasaurus member Angela Prestil. “It just took us all some adjustment to get used to. Us women will for sure show him all the respectology he done deserve.”

Flaming Dykasaurus celebrates Madison Pride weekend with this show, and they are proud to be joined by very special guest The Hysterical Women from Chicago. The show will be held at the Madison Civic Center Marquee Room, 211 State Street, at 7:30 p.m. on July 21.

Flaming Dykasaurus’s salute to George W. Bush includes their hilarious blend of improv and sketch comedy. Hysterical Women, an all-lesbian, standup comedy troupe, uses personal anecdotes, props and music to keep the queer community laughing.

“You ain’t gonna be disappointanated by this show. No way, no how!” crows Emily Jones of Flaming Dykasaurus. “You best get on down to A Room of One’s Own to get your tickets before the show. See y’all there!”

The show is open to everyone, is wheelchair accessible and will be ASL interpreted. Ticket prices are \$10-\$12 – more if you can, less if you can’t. Learn more about the performers at <http://flamingd.webjump.com/> and <http://www.hystericalwomen.com/>.

For more information call (608) 241-7020.

Pride Rally

Madison’s 8th annual Pride Rally, March and Celebration kicks off with music and speeches on the State Capitol Steps - State Street side at 1:30 p.m., followed by the march down State St. To Brittingham Park at 2 p.m. Music and bingo will be featured at the celebration at the park from 2:30-6:30 p.m. Admission to the event is free. A \$10 all-in-one meal and beverage package also will be available. For advance tickets or more information, Madison Pride offers a toll-free number: (877) 909-9107.

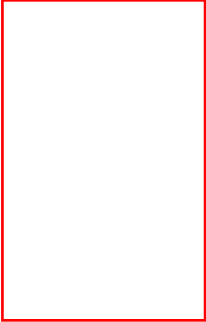






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Murder & Mayhen at Afterwords

Afterwords second evening of gay murder and mayhem certainly won't be for the faint of heart! Join us on June 8th at 7 p.m. as Afterwords welcomes two of the most successful gay mystery writers around: Michael Craft and Mark Richard Zurbo.

With 11 titles offered between his two popular crime series, Mark Richard Zurbo is beginning to need his very own shelf on many Gay Bookcases. Mark's latest, *Drop Dead* (St. Martin's Press HC \$22.95) features Gay Chicago police detective Paul Turner and his partner, Detective Buck Fenwick. Michael Craft has just recently published the third entry in his exciting Mark Manning mystery series, *Body Language* (Kensington HC \$22.00). Please see IN Step's reviews on page 16.

For more information about this or any Afterwords event, call (414) 963-9089. Afterwords is located at 2710 N. Murray Ave.

New Acquisitions at Villa Terrace

Villa Terrace Decorative Arts Museum, 2220 N. Terrace Ave., will have an opening reception for their exhibit of fine objects received from individuals in the greater Milwaukee area from 1989 to 1999 on Sunday, June 6 from 2 to 5 p.m. The most significant bequest was the Cyril Colnick ironwork given by his daughter Gretchen Colnick. Additional pieces have been given to enrich the collection.

Villa Terrace has also been fortunate in receiving a number of pieces of American Art Pottery, a collection of 18th to 20th century glass tumblers, terra

cotta sculpture, Piranesi etchings, ivory carvings, period furniture and other items. Admission to the museum is \$2. For more information, call (414) 271-3656.

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ACTIVITIES

Thursday, July 31

Briarpatch (Madison): Group for middle school LGBT kids, middle school kids of LGBT families, and friends, 6 p.m., 512 E. Washington Ave. FMI: (608) 251-6211.

State Fair! (Milw.): Wisconsin State Fair opens for its 11-day run at State Fair Park in West Allis, running through August 10. FMI: www.wistatefair.com.

Friday, August 1

SAGE Movie Night (Milw.): Featuring "Johns," a film about male prostitutes with Lukas Haas and David Arquette, 6:30 p.m., LGBT Center, 315 W. Court St. FMI: (414) 224-0517.

Polyamory Group (Madison): Discussion group about polyamory or responsible non-monogamy, 7 p.m., OutReach, 600 Williamson St. FMI: (608) 266-7086, or e-mail: blacsheep@bigfoot.com.

Saturday, August 2

Bi Definition (Milw.): Discussion group for bisexuals with topic of "Bi Relationships," 7 p.m., LGBT Center, 315 W. Court St. FMI: (414) 299-9612.

Gay Video Club (Madison): Featuring "Queer As Folk- Episode 308," "No One Sleeps" and "Unspoken," 8 p.m. Call for location: (608) 244-8675.

African World Festival! (Milw.): The annual lakefront festival features music, food, cultural exhibits, dancers, entertainers, and more, through Sunday, Aug. 3 at Maier Festival Park.

Sunday, August 3

Garden Party Fundraiser (Milw.): Fundraising garden party and brunch with Sen. Russ Feingold, raising funds for Human Rights League Political Action Committee, 10:30 a.m., suggested donation \$50, 2714 S. Delaware Ave. FMI: (414) 319-9863.

Bette Davis Bowling League (Madison): Bowling for gays and lesbians, 5-person team format, 3 p.m., Bowl-a-Vard Lanes, 2121 E. Springs Dr. FMI: (608) 273-8275 or 837-8889.

Bjorn Again (Milw.): The ABBA tribute band plays the main stage at State Fair Park, 9 p.m.

Monday, August 4

Living As a Gay Man (Madison): Drop-in discussion group for gay men, 5:30 p.m., OutReach, 600 Williamson St. FMI: (608) 255-8582.

Rural Pioneers (Richland Center): Monthly meeting of Pioneers, A Rural Southwest Wisconsin Gay & Lesbian Alliance, 7 p.m., Richland County Community Programs, 1000 U.S. Hwy. 14 West, Richland Center. FMI: (608) 987-4451, or e-mail: PioneersWI@aol.com.

Coalition for Peace and Justice (Milw.): Monthly meeting of the Milwaukee coalition to help plan upcoming peace actions, 7 p.m., Peace Action Center, 1001E Keefe. FMI: (414) 964-5158.

Tuesday, August 5

Project Q (Milw.): Drop-in for LGBTQ youth ages 14-24, 4:30-9 p.m., LGBT Center, 315 W. Court St. FMI: (414) 223-3220, or visit: www.projectq.org.

Prairie Fairies (Madison): Prairie Fairie Heart Circle, Martha's co-op, 225 E. Lakelawn near McTaggart's, 9 p.m. FMI: (608) 246-8515, or e-mail: prairiefairies@hotmail.com.

Wednesday, August 6

Honeymooners Bowling League (Madison): Bowling for Gays and Lesbians with 3-person team format, 9:15 p.m., Village Lanes, 208 Owen Road.

Thursday, August 7

Queer Student Alliance (Madison): LGBT Campus Center, 7:15 p.m., second floor Memorial Union, 800 Langdon Street. FMI: guerillaqueers@yahoo.com.

Friday, August 8

Transgender Support (Madison): Speaker on self-defense from the Rape Crisis Center, 7 p.m., OutReach, 600 Williamson St. FMI: (608) 235-0512, or e-mail: wistsgroup@charter.net.

Saturday, August 9

Frontrunners/Frontwalkers (Madison): 3K to 10K run or walk, 9 a.m., Lake Wingra Park, Knickerbocker and Arbor Dr. FMI: (608) 663-6463.

Northalsted St. Market Days (Chicago): Annual festival in Chicago's Boystown neighborhood, featuring music, boys, food, boys, merchants, and more boys! 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Sat. and Sunday, Aug. 10, on Halsted between Belmont & Addison. FMI: www.chicagoevents.com <<http://www.chicagoevents.com/>> .

Kelly Clarkson (Milw.): The original "American Idol" plays the main stage at State Fair Park, 9 p.m.

Sunday, August 10

Cream City Squares (Milw.): LGBT square dance club holds bi-weekly summertime dance, 1-4:30 p.m., Lake Park Lutheran Church, 2647 N. Stowell Ave. FMI: (414) 445-8080.

Perfect Harmony Men's Chorus (Madison): Weekly rehearsal, new members welcome! 7-9 p.m., Grace Episcopal Church, 116 W. Washington Ave. FMI: info@perfectharmonychorus.org.

Monday, August 11

Dairyland Cowgirls & Cowboys (Madison): All welcome, beginning and advanced dance lessons for couple, line and folk dances, 7: 30 p.m., open dance to 10:30 p.m. 5 Applegate Ct. FMI: (608) 255-9131, email: rrkilmer@facstaff.wisc.edu.

Tuesday, August 12

GLBT Book Group (Madison): Reading and discussion group with a for all who ID as LGBT and like to read, 6 p.m., A Room of One's Own, 307 W. Johnson St. FMI: (608) 257-7888, or visit: www.roomofonesown.com.

Womonsong (Madison): Madison's feminist community choir rehearses, 7-9 p.m., women of all ages and backgrounds welcome, Beth Israel Center, 1406 Mound St. FMI: (608) 643-0673.

COMMUNITY MEETINGS & EVENTS

(READ CAREFULLY. Some meetings occur the same day weekly, others the same day bi-weekly or monthly. Groups: please send us updated info.)

THURSDAYS

AIDS Network (Madison): Meditation and Wellness, 6-7:30 p.m., 300 Williamson St. FMI: (608) 252-6540, ext. 26.

Disabilities Support Group (Milw.): Support group for LGBTs with disabilities meets final Thursday of the month, 6:30-8 p.m. in Room 201, Independence First, 600 W. Virginia St. Contact is Leslie Myers. FMI: V/TTY - (414) 291-7520, ext. 325.

Diversity G/L Resource Center (Rockford, IL): Located at 610 E State St. Open from 4 to 9 p.m. Teen Drop-in Hours. FMI: call (815) 964-2639.

Gay AA — “Living Sober” (Milw.): Meets every Thursday at 7 p.m., Galano Club, 315 W. Court St., Suite 201. FMI: (414) 276-6936.

Gay AA Open Meetings (Appleton & Green Bay): There are five open AA Meetings for the gay and lesbian community each week in Appleton and Green Bay. FMI: & Locations call (920) 336-2868 or (920) 954-9169.

Gay AA/Gay Al-Anon, 12-Step Meetings (Kenosha): These recovery groups meet every Thursday at St. Mary's Lutheran Church, 2001 80th Ave., at 7:30 p.m. FMI: call Bill or Art at (414) 694-0115.

Gay/Lesbian AA Closed Meeting (Madison): Meets weekly at 8 p.m. at the First Congregational Church, 1609 University Ave. FMI: call (608) 222-8989.

Grief Support Group for Lesbians (Madison): Drop-in group for lesbians grieving the death of a life partner, family member or friend. Meets first Thursday of every month, 6-7:30 p.m., Anderson HospiceCare Center, 5395 E. Cheryl Parkway. FMI: (608) 276-4660.

HIV/AIDS Support Group & Hotline (Upper Peninsula, MI): These projects serve Dickinson, Iron, & Menomonee Counties. For information on the support group in Iron Mountain, Michigan on the first Thursday of each month, call the HIV/AIDS Hotline at (906) 779-2904.

HIV Self-Help Group Monthly Meeting (Baraboo): This group sponsored by persons living with HIV, Sauk Prairie Memorial Hospital & the AIDS Network meets every 3rd Thursday from 1 to 3 p.m. in Baraboo. Refreshments are served, transportation assistance is available. FMI: (608) 643-7241 or (608) 643-7583.

HIV Testing (Milw.): ARCW provides free and confidential HIV/AIDS testing every Thursday from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at Village Church, 130 E. Juneau Ave. Walk-ins welcome. FMI: (414) 225-1535 or 271-HOMO.

Lavender Salon (Fox Valley): Reading and discussion group for gays and lesbians in the Fox Valley area, meets 3rd Thursday of each month, locations vary between Appleton, Green Bay and Oshkosh. Call for details. FMI: (920) 738-0497.

LGBT Community Center Lesbian Singles Discussion (Milw.): Meets the 3rd Thursday of each month from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Ongoing discussion about unique challenges and rewards of being single, open to all lesbians. The group picks a different topic each month. FMI: call (414) 271-2656.

LGBT Community Center Rainbow U Lecture Series (Milw.): Every 3rd Thursday of the month, 7 p.m. Series encourages awareness, discussion of issues important to the LGBT Community. FMI: (414) 271-2656.

LGBT Campus Center - Boy-Oh-Boy Gay/Bi Men's Group (Madison): This weekly group provides outlet for gay/bi students at UWM. Social outings, great discussion. Hosted by University Health Services and Sex Out Loud, Thursday nights at 6:30 p.m., LGBT Campus Center, second floor, UW-Madison Memorial Union, 800 Langdon St.

Sauk Prairie Memorial Hospital (Baraboo): HIV/AIDS support group meets third Thursdays in Baraboo area. FMI: toll-free (877) 744-0677.

Sexual Compulsives Anonymous (Milw.): Closed meeting every Thursday at 7 p.m., Galano Club, 315 W. Court St., Suite 201. FMI: (414) 299-0755.

South Madison Health & Family Center (Madison): Free, anonymous walk-in HIV testing from 5 to 7:45 p.m. at 2202 South Park St. FMI: call (608) 261-9270.

Triangle Coalition - LGB Support Group (Rockford, IL): Meet to establish and explore friendships & relationships. Discuss a variety of topics every Thursdays at 8 p.m. FMI: call (319) 583-1834.

Wisconsin Gender Organization (statewide): A support, education, and activism network whose primary function is to help Transsexual individuals to succeed and grow before, during, and after their gender transition. Meets the fourth Saturday of each month. For location and more information: www.wisgen.org.

Women's Consciousness Raising Group (Madison): Meets weekly at 5:30 p.m. at 122 State St. Suite 403. FMI: call (608) 250-6775.

Unitarian Universalist Church - Lesbian Support/Discussion Group (Rockford, IL): The group meets weekly from 7-8 p.m. at 4848 Turner Rd. FMI: call (815) 636-7298.

FRIDAYS

Frontiers Dining Out (Madison): Madison-area Gay/Bi men meet at the Shamrock Bar around 6 p.m. Decide where to go to eat. FMI: (608) 274-5821.

Gay AA — (Milw.): Sixty Minutes Group, topic meeting. Meets every Friday at 5:30 p.m., Galano Club, 315 W. Court St., Suite 201. FMI: (414) 276-6936.

Gay AA (Milw): Group 794, select A topic/as Bill Sees It. Meets every Friday at 7 p.m., Galano Club, 315 W. Court St., Suite 201. FMI: (414) 276-6936.

High Tea & Talk - Men's Group (Madison): High Tea & Talk is an opportunity for men of all ages, who enjoy the company of other men, to chat and graze at Monty's Blue Plate Diner, 3 p.m., 2089 Atwood Ave. FMI: (608) 257-9751.

LGBT Community Center - Project Q Youth Drop-In Night (Milw.): The group meets Fridays from 5 to 10 p.m and Tuesdays from 4:30 to 9:30 p.m. Drop-In nights provide a variety of youth activities in a space that is welcoming, safe and accessible to LGBTQ (questioning) youth. FMI: (414) 271-2656.

LGBT Youth Group Meeting (Kenosha): This group meets the first & third Fridays of the month from 7 to 10 p.m. at the ARCW Offices, 1212 - 57th St. FMI: call (800) 924-6601.

Madison Transgender Group (Madison): A support and advocacy group for Transsexuals (M-T-F and F-T-M), Cross-dressers and their friends, families and significant others. Confidentiality assured. Meets second & fourth Fridays of the month from 7-9 p.m. at Outreach, 600 Williamson St. FMI: (608) 235-0512 or emailwistsgroup@charter.net.

MGLO & MGLPO - Red Light Night (Marshfield): Every Friday night from 10:30 p.m. to 3:30 a.m., 130 S. Central Ave., above the Thimbleberry Bookstore. Meet local LGBT people, enjoy Videos and Dancing. Everyone is welcome. FMI: Jim (715) 384-6731 or Vic (715) 387-2068.

Northland Gay Men's Center - Weekly HIV/AIDS Social Group (Duluth, MN): The group meets from 5 to 8 p.m. at the Center, 8 N. 2nd Ave. East, Temple opera Block, Suite 309. An opportunity for men with HIV/AIDS to socialize and find support. FMI: (218) 722-8585.

OUTCARE Sexual Health Clinic (Milw.): A satellite clinic of Planned Parenthood inside the LGBT Community Center, 315 W. Court St. Walk-ins Monday, Tuesday and Friday nights from 5:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m. FREE services for teens. (414) 277-9370.

SAGE, Senior Action in a Gay Environment (Milw.): For older gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transsexuals. Offers alternating game nights, movie nights, guest speakers and discussions every Friday, 6:30 p.m., LGBT Community Center, 315 W. Court St. FMI: (414) 224-0517.

Transgender Support (UW-Madison): Providing support for transgendered students at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, meets the third Friday of the month, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., UW Memorial Union, 800 Landon St. (check "Today in the Union" for room). FMI: (608) 235-0512, or e-mail: Wistsgroup@charter.net.

True Colors LGBT Youth Coffee Chats (Milw.): 1st and 3rd Fridays, 7-9 p.m. Open discussion and free beverages. Call for location. FMI: (414) 225-1573.

SATURDAYS

AIDS Network - HIV/AIDS Support Group (Madison): Meets from 10 a.m. to noon at UW Hospital, 600 Highland Ave. in K6/Rm. 280, 2nd floor. FMI: (608) 252-6540 or (800) 486-6276.

BESTD Clinic - Pozitively Social (Milw.): Drop-in HIV+ men's gathering — no structure! No preaching! Videos and music, refreshments but no alcohol please. 8 p.m. to midnite, last Saturdays of the month, 1240 E. Brady St. FMI: (414) 272-2144.

Black & White Men Together (Milw.): Meetings are the third Saturday of the month, 7-9 p.m., at the LGBT Community Center, 315 W. Court St. FMI: Milw4BWMT@aol.com.

Gay AA (Milw.): Group 1094, topic meeting. Meets every Saturday at 8 p.m., Galano Club, 315 W. Court St., Suite 201. FMI: (414) 276-6936.

GLB AA - Open Meeting (Madison): Every Saturday at 6 p.m. at OutReach, 14 W. Mifflin, Suite 103. FMI: call (608) 255-8582.

Northland Gay Men's Center - Social Night (Duluth, MN): Meets every Saturday. Activities include games, videos and other social events from 6 -9 p.m. at the Center, 8 N. 2nd Ave. East, Temple Opera Block, Suite 309. FMI: (218) 722-8585.

Potluck/Social Gathering (Sheboygan): For gays and lesbians in the Sheboygan area, second Saturday of the month. Call for location and more information (920) 208-8695.

Transsexual Support Group (Madison): Offering support, direction, and social assistance to Transsexuals who are pre-op, post-op, M-F, F-M, 18 or older. Seeks to help transsexuals in every aspect of their transition and journey. Confidentiality assured. Group meetings free. Meets third Saturday of the month at Outreach, 600 Williamson St., FMI: (608) 235-0512, or emailwistsgroup@charter.net.

SUNDAYS

AA Rainbow Group (Kenosha): Meets at 7 p.m. every Sunday at St. Mary's Lutheran Church, 2001 80th St. (west entrance). FMI: (262) 694-8951.

AA for GLBTs (Fond du Lac): 6:30 p.m., Fond du Lac County Health Care Center, 459 E. 1st St. FMI: Gay AA Hotline at (888) 492-3439.

Angels of Hope MCC - Religious Services (Allouez and Appleton): Services are held every Sunday at 11 a.m. at 3607 Libal St. in Allouez, and 5 p.m. at 815 N. Richmond St. in Appleton. FMI: (920) 991-0128.

Cream City Squares (Milw.): LGBT square dance club holds weekly dance alternate Sundays through Sept. (then every Sunday thru May), 1-4:30 p.m., Lake Park Lutheran Church, 2647 N. Stowell Ave. FMI: (414) 445-8080.

Gay AA (Milw.): Group 394, step/topic meeting. Meets every Sunday at 10:30 a.m., Galano Club, 315 W. Court St., Suite 201. FMI: (414) 276-6936.

Gay AA (Milw.): Group 1394, Big Book meeting. Meets every Sunday at 7 p.m., Galano Club, 315 W. Court St., Suite 201. FMI: (414) 276-6936.

Gay AA (Milw): Group 94, step/topic meeting. Meets every Sunday at 6 p.m., All Saints Cathedral, 816 E. Juneau Ave. FMI: (262) 790-0197.

Gay Al-Anon (Milw.): Papillion group, topic meeting. Meets every 1st, 3rd and 5th Sunday at 10:30 a.m., Galano Club, 315 W. Court St., Suite 201. FMI: (414) 276-6936.

Gay Al-Anon (Milw): Group 94-1/2, step/topic/slogan meeting. Meets every Sunday at 6 p.m., All Saints Cathedral, 816 E. Juneau Ave. FMI: (262) 790-0197.

Gay Men's Discussion Group - Monthly Meeting (Milw.): The group meets at the Counseling Center of Milw., 2038 N. Bartlett Ave., every second Sunday of the month from 6-8 p.m. Topics range from relationships, dating and HIV/AIDS to spirituality and mental health. FMI: Bill Hanel at (414) 271-2565.

James Reeb Unitarian Universalist Church - Worship Service (Madison): Services at 9 and 11 a.m. at 2146 E. Johnson St. FMI: (608) 242-8887.

LGBT Catholics (Milw.): Monthly discussion group for LGBT Catholics meets from 10:30 a.m. to Noon at Holy Trinity/Guadalupe School, 613 S. 4th St. FMI: (414) 481-8543.

Perfect Harmony Men's Chorus (Madison): Perfect Harmony is Madison's all-inclusive chorus for gay, bisexual, transgendered and gay-friendly/allied men. We are a non-audition chorus. We rehearse Sunday evenings from 7-9 p.m., Grace Episcopal Church, 116 W. Washington St. FMI: (608) 221-9599. **Seeking Sobriety - Non-Religious Recovery Group (Milw.):** This recovery group meets at 6 p.m. every Sunday at BESTD Clinic, 1240 E. Brady St. (use side door). FMI: Danny at (414) 540-0961 or Richard at (414) 442-1132.

Sexual Compulsives Anonymous (Milw.): Closed meeting every Sunday at 6 p.m., Galano Club, 315 W. Court St., Suite 201. FMI: (414) 299-0755.

Silver Space - Older Lesbian Discussion Group (Milw.): Meets on the third Sunday of the month at the Counseling Center, 2038 N. Bartlett Ave., from 6 to 8 p.m. \$3 donation. FMI: (414) 271-2565.

University Congregational Church - Worship Service (Madison): Weekly services are at 10 a.m. at 1127 University Ave. FMI: (608) 256-2353.

MONDAYS

BGLASS - Weekly Meeting (Appleton): The Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian and Straight Society meets every Monday at 7:30 p.m. in Room 109 of Coleman Hall at Lawrence University Memorial Union, 615 E. College Ave. FMI: Irene (920) 722-7572 or Bernie (920) 982-0220.

Gay AA (Milw.): "Came to Believe" group — spirituality in the AA program Meets every Monday at 7:30 p.m., Galano Club, 315 W. Court St., Suite 201. FMI: (414) 276-6936.

Gay AA/Gay Al-Anon - 12-Step Meetings (Racine): These recovery groups meet every Monday at 625 College Ave. at 8 p.m. FMI: Art at (414) 694-0115.

Gay/Bi Men's AA - Closed Meeting (Madison): Meets at 8 p.m. at the University United Methodist Church, 1127 University Ave. FMI: (608) 222-8989.

LGBT Youth Pride Support Group - New Meeting (Green Bay): This group will be available to youth every Monday from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Renaissance Counseling Center, 311 Jefferson St. FMI: (920) 437-4325.

OUTCARE Sexual Health Clinic (Milw.): A satellite clinic of Planned Parenthood inside the LGBT Community Center, 315 W. Court St. Walk-ins Monday, Tuesday and Friday nights from 5:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m. FREE services for teens. (414) 277-9370.

WISH - Generic AA 12-Step Meeting (Madison): Meets weekly at 6 p.m. at the Atwood Community Ctr., 2425 Atwood Ave. FMI: (608) 249-5096.

UWM Rainbow Alliance (Milw.): University LGBT group meets at 7:30 p.m. in Student Union Room E307. FMI: (414) 229-6555.

TUESDAYS

Gay AA (Milw.): The Over and Under 40 group. Topic meeting, everyone is welcome. Meets every Tuesday, 5:30 p.m., Galano Club, 315 W. Court St., Suite 201. FMI: (414) 276-6936.

Gay AA (Milw.): Meeting every Tuesday at 10 a.m. at the Galano Club, 315 W. Court St., Suite #201. FMI cal (414) 276-6936.

Gay Narcotics Anonymous (Milw.): Closed meeting. Basic Text. Meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m., Galano Club, 315 W. Court St., Suite 201. FMI: (414) 276-6936.

HIV/AIDS Support Group - Fox Cities (Menasha): Free, confidential and open to any person living with or affected by HIV/AIDS, the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month from 7 to 8:30 p.m. at the Family Resource Assn. of Fox Valley, Midway Rd., 1488 Kenwood Drive. FMI: (920) 739-4226 or Sylvia at (00) 675-9400.

LGBT Community Center - Project Q Youth Drop-In Night (Milw.): The group meets Tuesdays from 4:30 to 9:30 p.m. and Fridays from 5 to 10 p.m. Drop-In nights provide a variety of youth activities in a space that is welcoming, safe and accessible to LGBTQ (questioning) youth. FMI: (414) 271-2656.

Madison Community Health Ctr. - HIV Testing (Madison): Free, anonymous, walk-in HIV testing from 3 to 5:45 p.m. at 1133 Williamson St. FMI: (608) 255-0704.

Northland Gay Men's Center - Open Discussion Group
 (Duluth, MN): Meets weekly from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Center, 8 N. 2nd Ave. East, Temple Opera Block, Suite 309. Topics include coming out issues, support & resources. No age limits. FMI: (218) 722-8585.

OUTCARE Sexual Health Clinic (Milw.): A satellite clinic of Planned Parenthood inside the LGBT Community Center, 315 W. Court St. Walk-ins Monday, Tuesday and Friday nights from 5:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m. FREE services for teens. (414) 277-9370.

PFLAG Milw. Open Office (Milw.): A representative of Milwaukee PFLAG will be available to speak to parents, youth or anyone who wants to stop and say hello each Tuesday evening from 6 to 9 p.m. at the LGBT Community Center. FMI: (414) 271-2656.

Radical Faerie Heart Circle (Madison): 9 p.m., Martha's Co-op, 225 E. Lakelawn, near McTaggart's. FMI: (608) 442-1695.

Sexual Compulsives Anonymous (Milw.): Closed meeting. "The Blue Group" meets every Tuesday at 7 p.m., Galano Club, 315 W. Court St., Suite 201. FMI: (414) 276-6936.

Sober Seniors AA Meeting (Milw.): This meeting is focused on the unique recovery needs of elders, and meets every Tuesday morning from 10 to 11:30 a.m. at 3200 W. Highland Blvd. FMI: ElderLink (414) 289-6874.

UHS Counseling & Consultation Services Sex Out Loud (Madison): This discussion group for Gay/Bi students meets in the Memorial Union at 12 Noon every Tuesday. FMI: (608) 265-4901.

Womonsong Rehearsal (Madison): This women's chorale meets at the Beth Israel Center at 7 p.m. FMI: (608) 222-2987.

Yoga Spirit Free Classes (Milw.): Every Tuesday there are free classes for all people living with HIV. Among other things you can reduce stress and ease neuropathy & joint pain. Classes are held at 301 N. Water St., Suite 410 at 3:30 p.m. FMI: (414) 289-9660.

WEDNESDAYS

Diversity G/L Resource Ctr. Coming Out Support Group (Rockford, IL): Meets every Wednesday at 610 E. State St. from 7 to 8 p.m. FMI: (815) 964-2639.

Gay AA (Milw.): Group 494, 12 Steps/12 Traditions. Meets every Wednesday at 7 p.m. at the Galano Club, 315 W. Court St., Suite 201. FMI: (414) 276-6936. Gay/Bi Men's Al Anon Group (Madison): Meets at the University United Methodist Church, 1127 University Ave., every Wednesday at 6 p.m. FMI: (608) 256-4107 or (608) 846-2860.

HIV/AIDS Support Group (Milw.): Every Wednesday, 10 a.m. to noon and 7-8:30 p.m. at ARCW, 820 N. Plankinton Ave.

HIV/AIDS Support Group (Green Bay): Free, confidential and open to any person living with or affected by HIV/AIDS on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month. Meetings take place at Renaissance Healing Arts Ctr., 311 S. Jefferson from 7:30 to 9 p.m. FMI: (920) 437-4325 or Sylvia at (800) 675-9400.

HIV Testing (Milw.): ARCW provides free and confidential HIV/AIDS testing every Wednesday from 4-7 p.m., Milwaukee LGBT Center, 315 W. Court St. FMI: (414) 225-1535 or 271-HOMO.

LGBT Campus Center Les/Bi Curious Women's Group (Madison): This weekly group, open specifically to lesbian, bisexual and curious women who are UWM students, meets every Wednesday night, 8 p.m. at the LGBT Campus Center on the second floor of the UWM Memorial Union, 800 Langdon St.

Madison Vet Center GLB Veterans Meeting (Madison): The group meets every Wednesday at 147 S. Butler at 5 p.m. FMI: (608) 262-7084 or (608) 264-5342.

Queer Chicks Social Group (Madison): Meets every Wednesday at 7 p.m. at 219 N. Hamilton St. FMI: (608) 265-3344.

True Colors LGBT Youth (Milw.): ARCW's youth group holds drop-in activity nights every second and fourth Wednesday at 820 N. Plankinton Ave. FMI: (414) 225-1573.





GROUP NOTES

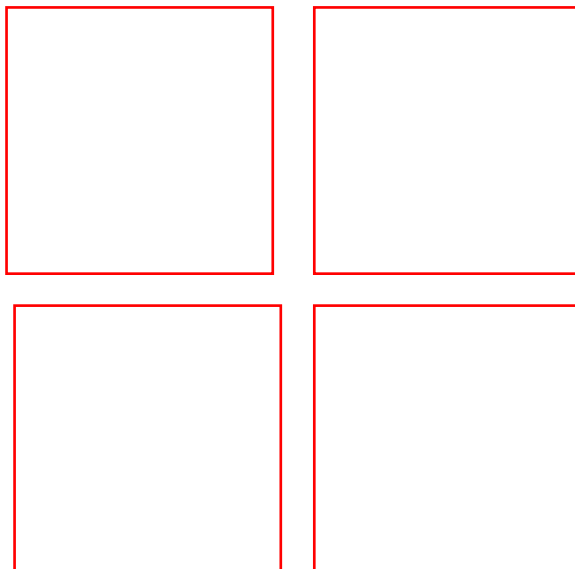
FEATURES

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IN Step ON-Line Edition

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JAMIE'S
PICS

Well Rounded

by Jamie

I told you in the last column about a new business I started. No, I won't shamelessly use this column as an advertisement but I've decided to start JME Services. Everyone I spoke to thought it was a great idea and that there was definitely a market for a handyman type service so I decided to give it a go. (I already have several jobs lined up.) I tossed around a few ideas and decided on something I have plenty of experience with. I have been doing this kind of work since I was 12 years old when my parents bought their home way up north in Wausaukee.

The previous owners started to build a hunting lodge when the guy's health started to fail. So there it was: The "little house" that we lived in while we transformed the beginnings of a big hunting lodge into a home. We were willing to learn, we rarely hired anything out. The whole family helped in one way or the other. My job included running wire, blowing my first electrical circuit at 12 years old. I was afraid, but I learned a lesson on how to wire a circuit in a hurry. So here it is 20 years later with a lot more experience under my belt. I should really thank my parents for that experience 'cause it taught me how to be well rounded. Even if I decided to continue to work for someone else, being well rounded is more valuable than just knowing one particular field very well.



Check it OUT!
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The reasons for this decision were many. To start with, I'm getting tired of punching someone else's time clock. Why am I going to work every day to make someone else more money? Why am I putting up with someone else's rules when I don't agree with all of them? Why am I not my own boss? Don't get me wrong, over the past eight years I have enjoyed my stay at my current 9-5.

Overall, they have been pretty good to me. I started out as an installer and now I'm the Operations Manager. As Operations Manager, I have reached the top of the ladder here. I'm sure as hell not going to get the VP title. That happens to be the president's ex-wife and I doubt she is going anywhere. (Actually, if she left I would probably leave as well. After all, she's the reason I didn't quit five years ago.) So the plan is to be well enough established on my own that by July 2001, I can clean out my desk and wish them the best. This date isn't set in stone, I'll just have to see how things go.

Have you heard the news? Za's has found a new home in Green Bay over at the historic West Theatre. They've got a lot of work to do to get the new place ready but Mark is hoping to have the place open for business by year's end. Until then, it's gonna be business as usual at their current Main Street location.

Speaking of Za's, the 1st annual Mr. & Miss Teen Emerald City Pageant was a great success. I hear, there were a bunch of young hotties there and I'm sure there were plenty of people drooling all over those boys. Speaking of drool, Kandi Barr, Victoria Kelly, Shannon DuPree and Nannette Medved competed recently for the Miss Gay WI USofA At Large Pageant. Pageant owners, Dan E. Dance and Sean North put together a fabulous pageant. Not bad for being new owners. In the end, Shannon DuPree will hold the crown for the next 12 months. Congrats gurl!

Back here in Milwaukee, there have been AIDS Walk fund-raisers all over the place. South Water Street Docks, held theirs this past weekend with a motorcycle ride, raffles and of course drink specials. Fluid also held a fund-raiser that turned out to be lots of fun. (Like any party Jim and Bill have ever thrown isn't fun.) Fluid is also your Wednesday night home for \$2 shots of Cuervo and to wash it down, \$2 bottles of Corona. Switch's fund-raiser included a \$7 food and beer bust that boasted a tasty BBQ. Nearly every gay bar in the state has been working hard to make this year's walk a big success. Kudos to all!

The Boot Camp celebrated their 16th anniversary with a big party on Sept. 16. Lots of people showed up to help Si celebrate and wish him well on the next 16 years.

I had a couple of friends tell me that they stopped over at the Outpost Natural Foods WellnessFest 2000. I'm told it was an "eclectic array of foods, fitness and fun." They run this event every year and from what I've heard, I think I'll make it a point to catch it next year.

Coming up ... September 23rd brings a few events for you to check out. The Midtown Spa is throwing a Primping for Perversion Party. Club Boom put together yet another Underwear Party that if you've been to them before, you know they're lots of fun. Out in Madison, the Rainbow Room will be hosting the Shoosheena Comedy Carousel. Sounds like a blast. Up in Green Bay the Miss N.E.W.-USofA Pgeant will be held at Za's. This is the final preliminary before going to state.

The Packers finally won one against the Eagles recently. Winning makes it a lot easier to enjoy those Packer Parties. Woody's, The Ball Game, The Rainbow Room, Club Boom and others are all great places to catch the games.

If you're looking for something a little different, try joining Wednesday Night Dart League team... lots of fun.

The Milwaukee LGBT Community Center will be hosting an Out and Proud Celebration October 11th (National Coming Out Day) at the center. The celebration starts at 5:30 p.m. and runs until 8:00 p.m.

A variety show to benefit AIDS Network, One Night Stand will be in Madison at the Historic Orpheum Theatre, October 23rd. Tickets are only \$25, not a bad deal for an entire night of entertainment.

That's about it for this issue. I wanted to mention that with the presidential campaign heating up, I encourage you to vote ONLY if you know what your voting for. Take some time to find out what all candidates are about. Don't let someone else make that decision for you. Once again, thanks for reading and as always, slower traffic keep right.



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Men... let me relieve the tension of your day. Complete out calls only. One hour body massage offered at reasonable rates. Please call (920) 909-2535 for availability.

letmyfingersdothewalking@yahoo.com

Young and Serious

GWM, 22 years old looking for serious minded peple. If you are looking for sex... skip this. Clean fun and serious. 6'4", 250lbs. ddlboy@hotmail.com

Want some one to take me

gently through the first steps of gay life. want someone agresive yet tender. looking to try anything. would really like trans. for first time if not okay. so get in touch with me can not wait. Kapone1212@aol.com

Bi-Male, Excellent Build: 5'8", 150 lbs, long + lasting. Seeking young male or couple (18-30's) for fun + exciting times. Hobbies include photography, making movies, flying computer jet fighter simulators, enjoying hours of fun. Call (414) 328-4209.

**WM, 30, Boyish
Good Looks:**

Hot Italian Male

Hey Guys, Are you into the outdoors, camping (Between the Sheets) working out, and just plain having a good time. Then I'm your man. I'm 32 years old, work out 3 days a week, and am looking for a guy that is down to earth, with good looks , and an awesome personality. If this all sounds good to you, then feel free to drop me a line with a pic if you have one.

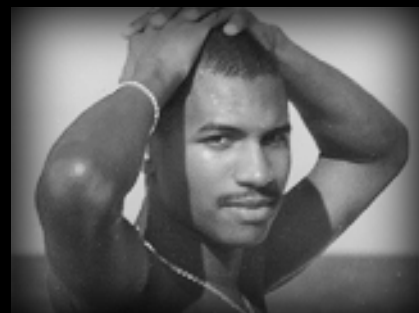
michael32@excel.net

Tried The Rest?

Now Try The Best: Johnathan, 24 years old, WM, is looking to give relaxing massages! Out calls: Mon.-Fri. 5:00 p.m.-12:00 a.m. "No games!" Call (414) 941-0101.



Up All Night?
I'll Stay Up With You! Let



G/BIBM, 25-50 years old, HIV+, top, any background w/similar interests. Call Joe (317) 388-8130.

Pair Of Real Men:

(Leathermen, bikers, wrestlers, construction workers), versatile or tops needed to erotically force submission of attractive, aggressive versatile bottom. Write: Occupant, 10240 W. National #1911, West Allis, WI 53227.

Just Wanna Relax? Young, attractive masseur. Beep Mike (414) 590-2420, for massage plus.

Hottest Massage! With so much more from a young hot black stud with a body to bring out your erotic

Seeking older man for long term friendship or more. I'm seeking to relocate, 5' 8," 160 lbs, muscular, athletic, affectionate, sincere. Wide interests. All answered. Please write to: Brian Sudduth, 631683 P.O. Box 4500, Tennessee Colony, TX 75886.



Diaper Wearing Adult Baby needs playmates and daddies! Cute stocky 31 y/o toddler still wears and wets dypies, needs care, affection, love.

poohkid@anon.nymserver.com

GWM seeking men who need, want, and enjoy old fashioned bare bottom spanking action limits respected and expanded. I'm 47, 5'7 real skinny but top. relationship possible with right gentleman reply to

gordonne@northnet.net

This hot and horny top is looking for a hot and horny bottom, I prefer Asian or Hispanic young males. I like to be oral. I'm 6'0" 190, good looking and I know how to please. If this interests you, e-mail me. bdBoywi@aol.com

Foot Fetish/Cute Younger Guyz!

Call me if you want your socks taken off and your feet worshiped by a GWM 28. Skater guyz wearing Vans/Airwalks A++

Age 20-25 ONLY! yxboy@yahoo.com

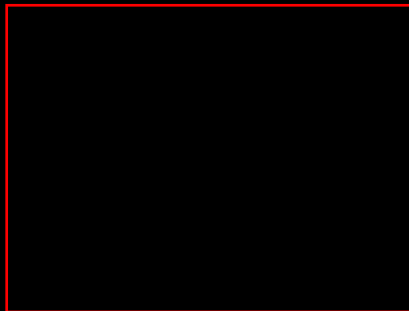
this handsome young caramel colored stud pamper your for an intense 45 minute, hot oil massage session. Satisfaction guaranteed. Julian (414) 320-3227. Mon.-Sun. 1:00 p.m.-1:00 a.m. Outcalls.

Are You Married or BI?

BI/W/M, looking for other BI's whom are not getting the fun at home. I love oral, anal, and bare-bottom-spankings! We cannot meet at my place, maybe yours, or the back seat of your car! Frank Nelson, 320 E. Broadway, Suite 312, Waukesha, WI 53186.

Seeking Young, Cute

GWM! Who enjoys travel (domestic and international), plays, concerts, dining out, and quiet romantic evenings together. I'm an attractive well established GWM. Interested? Write: Adventure "99," P.O. Box 425, Sturtevant, WI 53177.



pleasure. Bay Bay (414) 941-3340.



Coulee Region J/O Buddies

Looking for J/O buddies near you? New group forming, your inquiry includes you on our growing listing. S.A.S.E. and \$1.00: CRJOB's, P.O. Box 1581, La Crosse, WI 54602.

GWPM: I'm 35 years old, HIV+, healthy, good-looking, masculine, 175 lbs, 5' 11". Br/br physician from Indianapolis, love sports, travel. ISO masculine G/BIBM, 25-50 years old, HIV+, top, any background w/similar interests. Call Joe (317) 388-8130.

Looking... Let's Bring In The Spring Time Together.. Then Relax In The Hot Summerdays..n/Dd. Im 5'9 175 Br/Ha Stach Hairy Chested..tan.
dlxpkg@aol.com

Need Good Top Man!

GWM, bottom, 46 years old, tall, slender, shaved, and HIV negative! I'm seeking a sexual soul mate. Hopefully you are well endowed, top, any race, and likes safe hot encounters. Write to Box holder: P.O. Box 311, Appleton, WI 54912.

Massage and More!

By a young stud.
Call (414) 614-8883!

Seeking Young, Cute GWM! Who enjoys travel (domestic and international), plays, concerts, dining out, and quiet romantic evenings together. I'm an attractive well established GWM. Interested? Write: Adventure "99," P.O. Box 425, Sturtevant, WI 53177.

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Go, Tammy Go!

“If you dream of a world in which you can put your partner’s picture on your desk, then put his picture on your desk and you will live in such a world. And if you dream of a world in which you can walk down the street holding your partner’s hand, then hold her hand and you will live in such a world. If you dream of a world in which there are more openly gay elected officials, then run for office and you will live in such a world. And if you dream of a world in which you can take your partner to the office party, even if your office is the U.S. House of Representatives, then take her to the party. I do, and now I live in such a world. Remember, there are two things that keep us oppressed: them and us. We are half of the equation. There will not be a magic day when we wake up and it’s now OK to express ourselves publicly. We must make that day ourselves, by speaking out publicly -- first in small numbers, then in greater numbers, until it’s simply the way things are and no one thinks twice. Never doubt that we will create this world, because, my friends, we are fortunate to live in a democracy, and in a democracy, we decide what’s possible.”

--Lesbian U.S. Rep. Tammy Baldwin, D-Wis., speaking from the stage of the Millennium March on Washington.

Time Machine

“If you take a time perspective -- look at where we were 30 years ago, before Stonewall, the rate of progress has been enormous. ... You don’t go from being despised to being prom queen. There’s a period [in between], and what’s interesting is that we have kind of won substantially intellectually and culturally the battle, for instance, over discrimination.”

--Gay U.S. Rep. Barney Frank, D-Mass., to PlanetOut.com, April 28.

Smooch!

“I had no trouble kissing Valeria [Golina in the movie Things You Can Tell

**Still Only
\$10 for
30 Words!**

Just By Looking at Her]. We had chemistry. And I've kissed Courtney [Thorne-Smith], Jane [Krakowski] and Lucy Liu on Ally McBeal. It's more about whether they have bad breath or not. There are guys who come on Ally McBeal whom I have to kiss, and I'd rather kiss my dog."

--Actress Calista Flockhart
to the New York Post.

Meaning of Life

"What's my purpose in life? I don't know yet. I am passionate about gay rights. If this is the biggest contribution I make to this world, that is OK. But there are a lot of other causes I believe in. I am all for animal rights. I like to speak for those who can't speak for themselves. The bottom line is this: I want to leave the Earth a better place than when I found it. Hopefully, I am doing my share."

--Martina Navratilova to gfn.com.

True Love?

"Sean [Hayes] and I just have this simpatico that money can't buy. We feel each other's timing and we totally enjoy each other. I feel like our true affection for each other and our enjoyment of each other's humor also play a part in fleshing out the relationship between our two characters."

--Actress Megan Mulally, Karen on Will & Grace, to TV Guide.

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Wisconsin's LGBT Community Newspaper. Serving the Community with PRIDE since 1984.

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CASUAL OBSERVER

Adios 1999 and Other Thoughts

by Ed Grover

I'm really getting sick of all this Y2K crap. Milwaukee County slipped an eight-page "Emergency Disaster & Y2K Preparedness Guide" under my door. It's full of numbers to call. Well, what if the phones don't work; then what? The local and national media are having a great time scaring everyone out of their wits by shoving all this hype down our throats. If I hear about one more little old lady who's hoarding cans of tuna and bottles of water in her closet, I think I'll scream. Besides, the millennium doesn't really start until 2001!

Actually, I was thinking it would be much more fun to spend New Year's Eve 2000 on a nice, secluded (nude) beach somewhere in the tropics. I mean, I really don't think anything is going to happen because someone forgot to let the cat out. It's the people who don't have computers and don't know the first thing about them that are freaking out. Get over it! It's going to be wonderful entering a new century. There are those of you who can look forward to some very exciting things.

And that takes me right into my next topic. A few weeks ago I went to the Waterfront Deli. It's in that row of rehabbed buildings right next to Dean Jensen's Gallery on the west side of Water between Wells and Mason streets. You can't miss it; there's a portico over the street with a giant brass ceiling fan whirling away. When the Deli is complete it will be "muraled" from one end to the other. The upstairs is almost complete and the artist who is doing the work is very good. The day we went, the place was filled with people from the neighborhood who were looking for an alternative to eating at Arby's. You can get a decent lunch for around \$5, but it would be very easy to spend a lot more.

You can take out your purchase or you can sit upstairs or in a small area near the street on the main floor. Of the few problems there are, the biggest one is that there

are no trays. When I asked about that, a surly counter witch snarled and offered me a shopping basket ala Pick 'N Save. Now really! I had to walk to our table holding a bowl of HOT soup. Another thing that bothered me was that everything is served in or on plastic (there are a couple of areas where you can get a real cloth napkin or a stainless soup spoon if you must have one, so everything is not lost). The beef barley soup turned out to be quite good, but the curried vegetable my friend chose was way too curried; you couldn't even taste the veggies.

We perched right in the front window facing the sidewalk (or should I say sideshow). A street-person went by rigged out head to toe in imitation leather. The woman next to us said he's been in the same outfit all summer. Then we saw some guy standing out on the median acting like he fell out of the stupid tree and hit every branch on the way down. I recognized Waswo's photographer friend, Mr. Francis Ford. Maybe it was those pre-lunch drinks he's famous for having. He collected his date and proceeded to check things out. Just one word of warning: this place is not designed for a "ladies luncheon." Maybe management will get the message on the trays. It sure would make everything a lot easier, especially going up the stairs.

One of my art instructors at UW-Madison was John Wilde. He paints in a style called magic realism, and is a superb draftsman. The Elvehjem Museum at 800 University Avenue is currently having a fifty-year retrospective of Wilde's work. A friend owns a painting that was borrowed for the exhibit, so we drove up to see the exhibit with his dear friend, "La Grande Horizontal," at the wheel. We got off the freeway and got lost five times on those city streets. What a change from our neat grids here in Milwaukee. I finally spotted the Capitol, we headed for it, and soon found our destination. It's a wonderful show and it runs through the first of the year. Stop in and be amazed if you have a chance.

After the exhibit we decided we were hungry. I remembered to bring the latest copy of IN Step and the Guide supplied us with a phone number for Club 5. We called, got excellent directions and were on our way in a jiffy. As we were there early in the evening, there wasn't a very large crowd. TK and LGH had a few drinks and we were soon seated in the dining room. The place was filling up and we were glad to be seated. We had excellent service from a very busy waiter. Later, he gave us directions to the beltway and we headed home to Milwaukee.

This is my final column. I will be leaving the publication at the end of the year. My thanks to Bill Attewell and Jorge Cabal for allowing me the freedom to write whatever I wanted for this column and to choose books to review that I felt were of value to the LGBT community. Thanks to all of you who have let me know you have enjoyed my writing.

There are, however, a few people who are not very happy about me leaving. In fact,

they are in quite a tizzy about it. My lesbian aunt, Ursula, her partner Zoë, and George and Herb, the un-twins who bought Ursy's farm, have been making frantic telephone calls and sending e-mails asking me to think it over. "What are we gonna do if you quit?," wailed Ursy. I could hear Zoë prompting in the background, "Where will we go?" And, from G&H: "Hey, you just started writing about us and now we're abandoned. What's going on?" I assured them that I WILL keep writing, but this time there's going to be a book. I'm talking with a publisher now, and we'll see what happens in the year 2000.

Thanks again. It's been a great ride! t

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The Latest Dish

Ryan Idol Bushwacked

Stage actor and well-known porn god Ryan Idol and a companion were attacked in Chicago in late July by four youths shouting antigay epithets.



Idol and Steve DeKorne, director of marketing for Actors Theatre of Phoenix, who met Idol after a show at the Bailiwick Theater earlier that evening, went for a late snack at Subway on Clark and Fullerton around 2:15 a.m.

DeKorne said the comments from the four customers, who were all white and in their early 20s, started getting increasingly abusive. One woman said “fucking faggots,” and another asked DeKorne if the two men were a couple according to a report in Outlines, a Chicago gay paper.

As soon as DeKorne and Idol exited the Subway, they say they were ambushed by four young men. DeKorne said Idol was trying to distract the men - DeKorne is much smaller and Idol is a former boxer. Idol punched back, knocking one of the men out. Then the three remaining men started attacking Idol, leaving him bloody and needing five stitches. DeKorne tried to intervene, but Ryan shoved him out of harm’s way. DeKorne said Idol really saved him from being hurt. When police arrived, the attackers scattered.

Idol, who stars in Bailiwick’s Scent of Rain, admits that he has a temper and a violent past. But he says this was an unprovoked hate crime, pure and simple. He hopes that because the police did get the names of the women, and they likely know the attackers, the men can be charged in this attack.

Check it
OUT!

[Interactive Male:](#)
[IN Step's FREE](#)
[ON-Line](#)
[Personals](#)

Chicago Gay Newspaper Cat Fight

If you think the gay newspaper cold war in Wisconsin is rough ... take a look at what's erupted down in Chicago. The Windy City Times was hit by a walkout of at least 13 of the writers, editors, photographers and advertising staff coupled with the announcement that they would be joining the Novus Publishing Group, headed by businessman Jerry Matustik, in putting out a new weekly paper, the Chicago Free Press.

According to several sources, the staffers walked out because of long-standing problems with getting paid by WCT publisher Jeffrey McCourt.

But McCourt, in a news release, denied a payroll problem and said all the paper's workers "were paid in full ... including bonuses with their checks." He said the walkout was "part of a carefully orchestrated plan to devalue, if not destroy" his newspaper.

Sources close to the dispute, however, said there were no checks for the newspaper's workers when they walked out and that McCourt has long had troubles paying staffers.

Among the WCT staffers who bailed out were the paper's managing editor, Lisa Neff, formerly of the St. Louis-based News Telegraph, and highly respected syndicated columnist Paul Varnell.

The new Chicago Free Press is slated to put out its first issue in late August with an initial press run of 26,000.

McCourt quickly announced that he had filled five of the vacant posts and would continue publishing Windy City Times.

Gay Men are Bigger

Gay men may have larger penises than non-gay men, according to a study to be published in the August issue of the Archives of Sexual Behavior.

The study analyzed data collected more than 60 years ago by the Kinsey Institute for Sex Research, and concluded that, on average, the penises of gay men are one-third of an inch longer and one-tenth of an inch wider when erect than those of straight men.

Some gay men have seized on early reports of the study, gleefully e-mailing

friends with the news, but Dr. Tony Bogaert, lead researcher of the study, cautioned, “Based on the data, it seems that there may be a small difference in the average size, but there is a significant amount of overlap.”

Because each participant in the Kinsey studies measured and reported his own penis size, Bogaert suggested that gay men might have tended to exaggerate their size “in order to conform to an ideal standard of sexual attractiveness.”

Personally, I just can't believe that someone would ever embellish something like that...

Speaking of Weiners

Ever wonder if there really is a correlation between a big nose and a big hose? Or the speed of an ejaculation? Or what hospitals do with foreskins once they're snipped away?

Well, the Penis Book, written by Joseph Cohen, has answers to all these questions and many more. With an inspired mix of wit, irreverence and scientific accuracy, it explores everything and anything you ever wanted to know about the male member. Look for it this September in bookstores.

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Pride Goes Statewide

By Mike Fitzpatrick

Milwaukee's PrideFest may be a pleasant memory, but the fun's just begun! LGBT pride events are scheduled for nearly every weekend throughout the month of July. From Eau Claire to northeast Wisconsin, and from Madison to Wausau, rainbow flags will be flying and tiaras will be glittering. *IN Step* has the scoop on all the happenings.

Chippewa Valley

Pride Weekend in Eau Claire, June 30 - July 2

"I'm amazed at both the interest locally and statewide in this year's pride celebration," media coordinator Bret Holstein admitted recently. With statewide organizations ranging from Action Wisconsin to USofA Pageantry getting involved with this year's Chippewa Valley Pride Celebration, it's easy to understand Holstein's amazement.

Pride kicks off Friday, June 30, with a 6 p.m. reception for the Mr. & Miss Eau Claire USofA pageant judges and contestants at the Wolfe's Den, 302 E. Madison St. "Sing with Pride Karaoke" will follow, featuring the finals of the bar's multiple-week Karaoke contest.

The annual Chippewa Valley Pride Family Picnic will be held at the Riverview Island Park in Eau Claire from 1 to 7 p.p. on Saturday, July 1. The picnic will feature music, games, vendors and information booths as well as food and beverages. "This is the one all ages event of the weekend," Holstein said.

The Mr. & Miss Eau Claire USofA Pageant will be held at Scooter's, 411 Galloway St. Saturday evening beginning at 8 p.m.. This official preliminary for the Mr. & Miss Gay Wisconsin USofA pageant will be followed by "Dance

with Pride.” There will be a \$3 cover charge for the events.

A “Looking Forward to Pride Open Meeting” will be held on Sunday, July 2 at a site to be determined. “We had hoped to do more on Sunday this year,” Holstein said. “This ‘recovery’ meeting hopefully will recruit volunteers to organize an even more expanded Pride weekend for 2001.”

According to Holstein, out-of-towners can arrange accommodations for the weekend at the Green Tree Inn (715) 832-1837 or the Holiday Inn Convention Center (715) 835-6121. Both are located in downtown Eau Claire and close to all the scheduled events.

“This year has seen terrific awakening within Western Wisconsin’s LGBT community,” Holstein said. “That change is reflected in many ways, including the excellent local support we have for this year’s pride celebration.”

“We hope our neighbors from around the region will join us this weekend to share in our camaraderie and lend support to help keep this spirit alive,” Holstein added.

Rainbow Over Wisconsin Pride Picnic Weekend, July 7-9

Popular recording artist Ronnie Nyles, “cowtestants,” drag dolls, entertainers, award winners, “Pie in the Sky” and parties galore will mark northeast Wisconsin’s Rainbow Over Wisconsin (ROW) Pride Picnic Weekend, July 7-9.

The weekend formally will begin with the introduction of this year’s herd of “cowtestants” at the 9th Annual Gay Guernsey Pageant Kick-Off Show starting at 10:30 p.m. at Buddies, 1264 Main Street in Green Bay.

According to Guernsey organizer Elsie Bovine (AKA Wayne Thiele), the greatest challenge for this year’s fund-raiser for ARCW will be the amazing success of last year’s contest. “We raised over \$18,000 in 1999,” Bovine said. “That’s nearly half of what this contest has raised in its entire history.”

The annual ROW Pride Picnic on Saturday, July 8 will feature expanded hours, an expanded grill menu and popular recording artist Ronnie Nyles. This year’s event will run from Noon until 8 p.m. at the Al Kamke Farm on Highway 57 in Hilbert.

Nyles will open and close the full day of entertainment scheduled at the picnic, with hour long shows and 90-minute shows beginning at 12:30 p.m. and

6 p.m. respectively. Also scheduled to appear are the Entertainers Against AIDS troupe at 1:30 p.m. and the annual Pride drag extravaganza featuring female illusionist talent from throughout the state at 4 p.m. Rainbow Over Wisconsin's annual Pride Awards will be presented at 2:30 p.m.

ROW will revive drag races at 3:30p.m. Throughout the day, visitors will be able to enjoy ROW's game booths and "tower of strength" tests of skill. Regional and statewide organizations and vendors will offer information and LGBT-themed merchandise to picnic-goers. The grill menu will feature additional side items and combo plates in addition to brats, burgers and grilled chicken sandwiches. Thirsty picnic-goers will find a wide selection of beer, soda and bottled water.

The picnic is the centerpiece event of the weekend, according to ROW President Terry Tetzlaff. "The picnic is ROW's largest single fundraising project each year and requires a battalion of volunteers to entertain and serve an army of partying picnic-goers," Tetzlaff said.

Saturday evening will feature a variety of post-picnic parties being held at the bars in Appleton and Green Bay. Gay Guernsey fundraising will begin in earnest at contestant Diva's "Pie In the Sky" auction and party at Napalese Lounge, 1351 Cedar St. In Green Bay. Party-goers will bid on the rights to throw creme pies at local celebrities such as ARCW's Paul "Cricket" Jacob, drag dolls Katrina Kaye and Elsie Bovine, and *IN Step*'s Mike Fitzpatrick.

Sunday will feature more post-picnic parties at area bars plus the return of Za's famous all-you-can-eat Sunday Brunch on the Patio beginning at Noon at Cafe Bourbon, 1106 Main St. In Green Bay.

Central Wisconsin Pride Fest in Wausau, July 29

Pride events have had a spotty history in central Wisconsin, according to Kevin Grabko, one of the organizers of this year's Central Wisconsin Pride Fest. "Most past events were held in out-of town spots like Eau Claire Dells state park," Grabko said. "Technically it's happening in Rib Mountain, but it's the first pride event ever to be held in the Wausau metro area in years."

Central Wisconsin Pride Fest will run from 1-7 p.m. on Saturday, July 29, at the Nine Mile Recreational area of Rib Mountain State Park. The event is co-sponsored by the Wausau office of ARCW and Wausau's Oz Bar, which is co-owned by Grabko and his partner David Nolen.

Fest goers will enjoy an interactive deejay hosting games and dancing throughout the day. Among the games planned are a cake walk, drag races and horse shoes.

Dinner will be served from 3-5 p.m. and will feature traditional brats, burgers, hot dogs and other grilled treats plus a selection of salads and chips. Beverages will include beer, soda and bottled waters. Following the meal, the Oz show troupe will host a drag show featuring performers from Green Bay, Eau Claire and other cities.

One price will cover the cost of the entire day's food, beverages and events. Advance tickets are \$10 each and available at Oz, 320 Washington St. In Wausau or the ARCW office, 1105 Grand Avenue, Suite 3 in Schofield. Advance tickets may be ordered by phone by calling Kevin at (715) 842-3225 or Steve Korzinek at (715) 355-6867.

A post-picnic party will be on tap at Oz that evening, according to Grabko. "We had thought about doing (another) show, but that's not decided for sure at this time." Grabko said.

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Madison

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ACCOMMODATIONS

Prairie Garden B&B

(800) 380-8427

W13172 Hwy 188, Lodi, 53555

MEDICAL

AIDS Network

252-6540

HIV/AIDS Service Organization

600 Williamson St, 53701

FAX

252-6559

AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin www.arcw.org

258-9103

222 State St., 53701

800/518-9910

Blue Bus STD Clinic (Monday, Thursday)

262-7330

1552 University Avenue 53705

Sauk Prairie Memorial Hospital (HIV Counseling/Testing)

643-7583

80 1st St., Prairie du Sac, 53578

BARS

CE's (Wm)

241-5042

2415 Winnebago St., 53704

Club 5 (MW, Food)

277-9700

5 Applegate Court, 53713

Fox Hole (W)	277-9700
5 Applegate Ct., 53713	
Shamrock (GS, MW, F, D)	255-5029
117 W. Main St. 53703	
Ray's (MW,DJ)	241-9335
3052 E Washington, 53704	
Greenbush (G/S, M/W, F)	257-BUSH
914 Regent, 53715	
Rainbow Room (MW)	251-1030
121 West Main St., 53703	
Planet Q (MW, D, V)	277-9700
5 Applegate Court, 53713	
The Barracks (Mw, L/L)	277-8700
5 Applegate Court, 53713	
ORGANIZATIONS	
Brew City Bears	299-0401
P.O. Box 8815, 53708-8815, Milw.	
E-mail: bcbears@aol.com	
Campus Womens Center	262-8093
710 University Ave, #202, 53715	
Different Spokes G/L/B Bicycling Club	241-8184
Dairyland Cowgirls and Cowboys	255-9131
18-21 Yr Old Social Group	256-2667
Frontiers (Gay/Bi Mens Activities Organ.)	
600 Williamson St, 53703	255-8582
Gay/Bi Father's Group	255-8582
600 Williamson St, 53703	
Gay/Lesbian Information Recording	263-3100
(ask for tape #3333)	
Gay Mens Video Club	244-8675

PO Box 8234, 53708	
GLBT Phone Line (Outreach's Out-line)	255-4297
Kissing Girls Productions (Lesbian Cultural Events)	
PO Box 6091, 53716	
Lavender (Lesbian Domestic Violence Support Group)	255-7447
LesBiGay Issues Committee (UW Advisory Comm.)	263-5700
Dean of Students Office, 75 Bascom Hall, Madison 53706	
LesBiGay Campus Center (Office, Lounge, Resource Center) UW Union	265-3344
LesBiGay Teen Support Group	251-1126
(Briarpatch & Picada) or	246-7606
Lesbian, Gay and Bi Law Student Union	225-8582
UW Law School, Bascom Mall, Madison 53706	
Mad City Bears	
c/o OutReach, 600 Williamson, Madison 53706	251-8716
Madison Volleyball Group (Jeff)	
Madison Wrestling Club	244-8675
PO Box 8234, 53708	
	255-8582
MAGIC Picnic Committee c/o Outreach	
Mens Alanon	255-8582
New Harvest Foundation (G/L Foundation)	
PO Box 1786, 53701	
OutReach, Inc.	
600 Williamson St, 53703	255-8582
email: outreachinc.com, web: www.outreachinc.com	
Parents & Friends of Gays & Lesbians	
PO Box 1722, 53701	

Rainbow Community Collective (L/G/B/T Social Org)	
Wil-Mar Neighborhood Ctr. 2nd & 4th Thursdays	
953 Jenifer Street (Lira)	608/238-9150
10% Society (student organization)	
http:\tps.storg.wisc.edu, e-mail: execs@tps.stdorg.wisc.edu	
P.O. Box 260394, 53726	262-7365
Unicorns of Madison (L/L club)	
PO Box 536, 53701	
UW LesBiGay Alumni Council	262-2551
Womonsong (Womon's Choral Group)	246-2681
RELIGIOUS	
Church of the Holy Spirit (Inclusive)	
2144 E. Johnson St., (meeting at James Reeb)	661-4462
Integrity/Dignity	
Box 730, 53701	836-8886
Affirmation (L/G United Methodists)	
University Church, 1127 Univ. Ave, 53705	256-2353
James Reeb Unitarian Universalist Church	
2146 E Johnson, 53704	242-8887
SERVICES	
Victoria Hewelt Cazal (Attorney)	
6701 Seybold Rd., Suite 103	270-1709
KMA Systems of Madison (Computer Consultants)	
4702 Dutch Mill Road #14	222-9128
RETAIL	
Border's Books	
3416 University Ave., 53705	232-2600
Rubin's	
317 E. Wilson St. 53704	255-8998
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Milwaukee (Area Code 414)

Organizations

Aeon Group (Interactive Fiction Gaming)
P.O. Box 93953, 53203-0953 291-0530

AIDS Awareness Group
(Sue Hall, Carroll College) 524-7764

Alcoholics Anonymous
(Request gay meetings) 771-9119

Beer Town Badgers
PO Box 840, 53201

Bi Definition (Bisexual Community Events)
PO Box 07541, 53207
Steve 483-5046

Black Gay Consciousness Raising 933-2136

Castaways M.C. (Levi/Leather club)
PO Box 1697, 53202-1697

Community Elections Coalition

**Still Only
\$10 for
30 Words!**

P.O. Box 92722, 53202

Counseling Center (LesBiGay support & discussion groups)
2038 N. Bartlett, 53202 271-2565

Cream City Chorus
P. O. Box 1488, 53201 344-9222

Cream City Foundation (CCF)
2821 N. 4th St. #210, or,
Box 204, 53201 265-0880

Cream City Squares
(G/L Square Dancing Club) 445-8080

DAMES (Dykes Against Minority Erotic Suppression)
PO Box 1272, Milwaukee, 53201

Delta Lambda Phi (Gay Frat)
PO Box 413, Union Box 51, 53201 229-4054

Fest City Singers (Gay choral group)
PO Box 11428, 53211 263-SING

Firebirds (L/L group)
P.O. Box 159, 53201-0159 53202

Front Runners (Running Group) 332-1527
<http://execpc.com/~blackjon/frontrun.html>

Galano Club (chemical free recovery club)
2408 N. Farwell 276-6936

GAMMA (sports/outdoors/recreation/social)
P.O. Box 1900, 53201 365-3453
Membership Information 264-9180
<http://www.execpc.com/~mkegamma>

Gay Father's Group
1240 E. Brady St., 53204 372-8008

Gay/Lesbian/Bi Community at UWM

Box 251, 2200 E. Kenwood 53201 229-6555

Gay Lesbian Education Employees of Metro Milw.

(GLEEMM), Larry 462-8404

Gay/Lesbian Studies UWM 229-6402

Gay & Lesbian Tavern Guild

209 East National, 53204

Gay People's Union

PO Box 208, 53201 562-7010

Gay Youth Milwaukee (regular peer group meetings)

PO Box 09441, 53209 265-8500

Gay Men's Discussion/Support Group (Bill) 276-7626

Gemini Gender Group (TV/TS/TG Support/Social)

PO Box 44211, 53214 voice mail 297-9328

Girth & Mirth/Milwaukee

P. O. Box 862, 53201-0862

G/L Community Center Trust Fund

P. O. Box 1686, 53201 643-1652

Great Lakes Harley Riders

PO Box 341611, 53234-1611

Human Rights League (HRL)

PO Box 92674, 53202 228-1921

Holiday Invitational Tournament (G/L bowling event)

PO Box 899, 53201 831-4038

Insight (young women 17-21) support 271-2565

Imani (Support/Social Group for Black Lesbians)

PO Box 92146, 53202 521-4565

Keep Hope Alive (HIV Holistic Support)
PO Box 27041, West Allis, 53227 548-4344

LAMM (Lesbian Alliance of Metro Milwaukee)
PO Box 93323, 53203 264-2600

Lesbian Gay Bisexual Awareness Alliance (LGBAA)
Stephanie King, Carroll College 524-6966

LOC/Women of Color
PO Box 93594, 53203454-9300

Log Cabin Republicans (Gay Republicans)
PO Box 199, 53201 299-9443

MGALA (MU Graduates)
PO Box 92722, 53202

Marquette LesBiGay Student Group
Campus Ministry, 617 N 14th St, 53233 288-6873

Metro Milwaukee Tennis Club (Scott) 962-6124

Milwaukee LGBT Community Center (www.mkelgbt.com)
P.O. Box 93278, 53203 483-4710

Narcotics Anonymous (request Gay mtgs.) 543-4850

Orgullo Latino/a Latin Pride
1532 N. Astor (c/o Murguia)

Outdoors Cooperative Sports Group 963-9833

Parents & Friends of Lesbians & Gays (PFLAG)
PO Box 21853, 53221 299-9198

Pathfinders (Youth counseling, shelter)
1614 East Kane Place, 53202 271-1560

PrideFest (Pride Committee)
PO Box 93852, 53203 272-FEST

The Queer Program (Cable TV Show)

PO Box 09441, 53209 265-8500

Riverwest Rainbow Association

1001 E. Keefe Ave., 53212 225-1645

SAGE Milwaukee (For older LesBiGays)

PO Box 510492, 53202 after 4pm 271-0378

Saturday SoftBall League (SSBL)

PO Box 92605, 53203-0091 454-9204

Sexual Compulsives Anonymous (SCA) 299-0755

Sherman Park Rainbow Assoc.

PO Box 76115, 53216 777-3986

Sister Acts (Lesbian Social Group)

Contact Annie 375-8656

Shoreline (Country Dancing, Instruction)

PO Box 510283, 53203-0051 962-9822

Silver Space (Group for Older Lesbians)

c/o Counseling Center, 2038 N. Bartlett 271-2565

S.O.S. (Alcohol/Addiction Recovery) 442-1132

UJIMA, Inc. (African Am. Support/Social)

2821 N. 4th Street, 53212 263-5330

Fax 263-5530

WI. Leather Mens Assoc. Inc.

PO Box 897, 53201-0897

Religious

Cross Lutheran Church (Reconciled in Christ)

1821 N. 16th St. 344-1746

Dignity (G/L Catholic Church)
PO Box 597, 53201 444-7177

Lutherans Concerned
PO Box 1676, 53201 372-9663

ARCW Spiritual Care
PO Box 92487, 53202 225-1565

Milwaukee Metropolitan Community Church
UFMCC) PO Box 1421, 53201-1421 332-9995

Pentecost Lutheran Church (Reconciled in Christ)
5226 W. Burleigh St. 445-2696

Plymouth Church-UCC (Open & Affirming)
2717 E. Hampshire 964-1513

The Sanctuary (Ecumenical, nondenominational)
1636 W. National 647-9199

St. Camillus (Interfaith AIDS Ministry)
10101 W. Wisconsin Ave., 53226 259-4664

St. James Episcopal Church
833 W. Wisconsin Ave. 271-1340

First Unitarian Society (Unitarian Universalist Church)
1342 N Astor 273-5257

Village Church (Reconciled in Christ)
130 E. Juneau Ave. 273-7617

Organizations

AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin
820 Plankinton Ave., 273-1991
www.arcw.org (800) 359-9272

Mark Behar, PA-C (Family/ Primary Care)
Family Care Center, 1834 W WI, 53233 933-3600

BESTD (Brady East STD) Clinic (STD diagnosis and treatment; HIV tests) 1240 E Brady 53202 272-2144

BESTD Womens Clinic
1240 E Brady, 53202 272-2144
Gay Mens HIV+ Support Group

BESTD Clinic 272-2144
Gay Men's Support Group for Partners of HIV+ Men

BESTD Clinic 272-2144

Health Options (Holistic Health Services)
823 N. 2nd Street, #811, 53202 225-9303

Dennis C. Hill Outreach Center (HIV testing, condoms)
4311 W Vliet, 53208 342-4333

Medical Center Specialties Clinic
945 N 12, 53233 219-7908

St. Camillus HIV/AIDS Ministry
(Nursing Care)
10101 W. Wisconsin Ave., 53226 259-4664

STD Specialties Clinic
3251 N Holton, 53212 264-8800

Help Lines

The Force
(referrals to GBLT counselors) 276-8487

Gay Information Svcs.
(referrals) 444-7331

Gay People's Union Hotline 562-7010

Gay Bash Hotline (confidential) 444-7331

**Gay Youth WI Hotline 272-TEEN
888-GAY-TEEN**

Helpline (Crisis Counseling) 271-3123

Pathfinders (24-hour youth counseling/referrals) 271-1560

**Wisconsin AIDSline (free/anonymous) (414) 273-AIDS
(800) 334-AIDS**

**Milw. Mayor's Office LesBiGay Problem Resolution
286-2200**

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Justice Delayed in Two Gay-Related Court Cases

by Jamakaya

Milwaukee--The cliché that the wheels of justice move slowly proved true regarding two gay-related criminal cases in Milwaukee Circuit Court in February.

The sentencing of Sharon Dixon, who was convicted of arson in the burning of the popular lesbian bar Fannies, was postponed on Feb. 21 due to Dixon's illness. Dixon was admitted to Sinai-Samaritan Medical Center the day prior to her scheduled sentencing by Judge Elsa Lamelas. Law enforcement authorities told IN Step she was released from the hospital and escorted back to the County Jail by sheriff's deputies the following day.

Dixon, unable to make bail pending a appeal, has been incarcerated since her conviction on Jan. 28. She faces 40 years in prison for the arson charge and an additional two years in prison for illegal possession of a controlled substance. Assistant District Attorney James Griffin told *IN Step* a status hearing on Dixon is scheduled during the first week in March. The purpose of the hearing is to clarify Dixon's condition and to set a new date for sentencing.

Fannies, a bar at 200 E. Washington Street which Dixon owned and managed for many years, sustained extensive damage in a fire in October, 1997. A long investigation by fire and police officials resulted in charges being filed against Dixon. Dixon maintains her innocence and vows to appeal.

The case has attracted wide attention in Milwaukee's LGBT community because Dixon has been a well-known lesbian businesswoman, operating bars and restaurants in the city for more than 20 years.

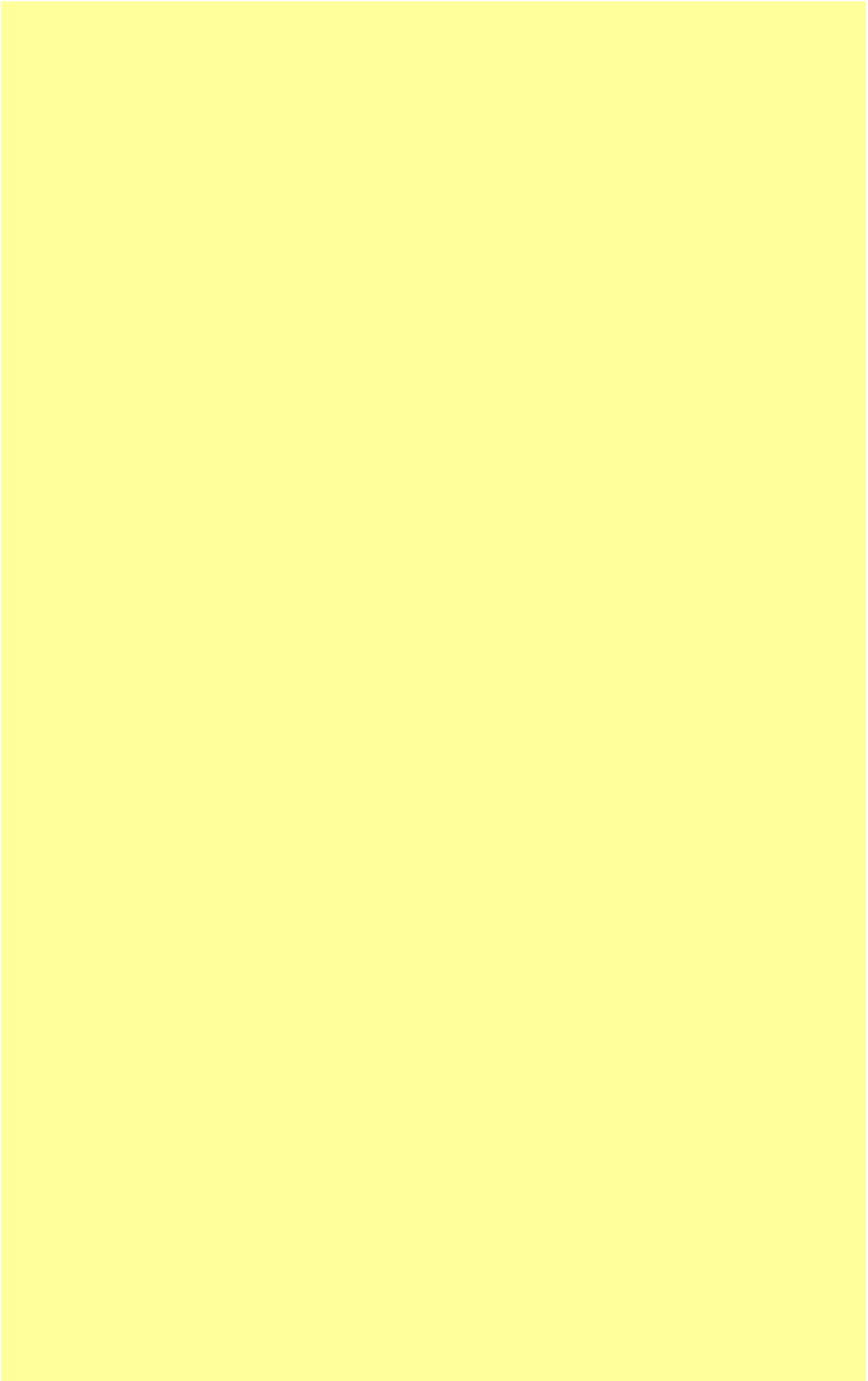
In another case of interest to the gay and lesbian community, alleged gay basher Jason Anthony Mertens has apparently reneged on an earlier agreement to plead guilty to felony battery and misdemeanor battery charges related to an attack outside the gay bar La Cage in December, 1998.

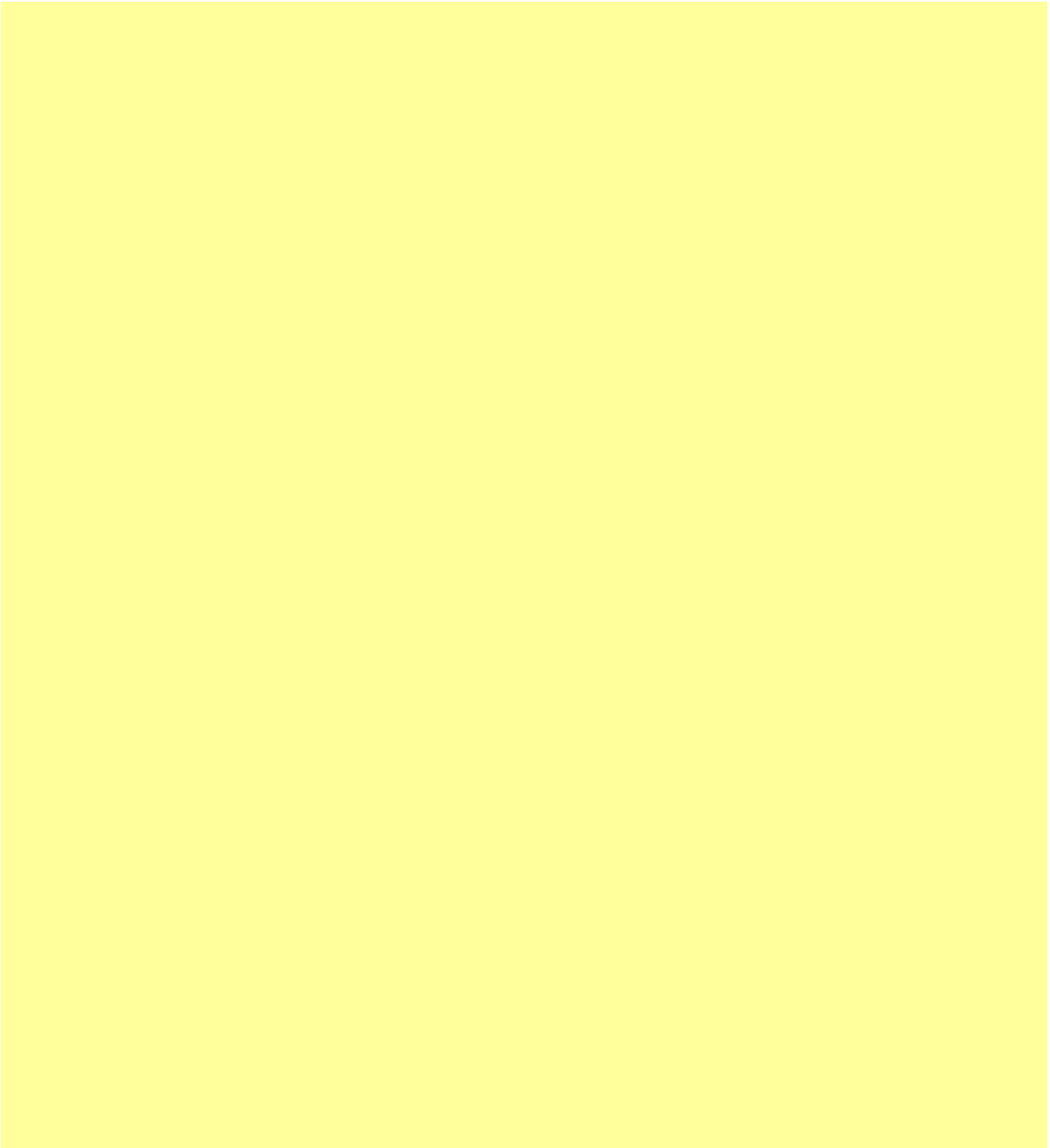
At a hearing before Judge John McCormick on Feb. 10, Mertens' attorney said his client wished to re-enter his plea. This took even Assistant District Attorney Douglas Simpson by surprise; he was expecting a simple sentencing hearing and final disposition of the case. Instead, the matter is set for trial in late April. The change also infuriated the victims of the alleged attack who had been prepared to read their victim impact statements before Mertens was sentenced.

"Both Bob and I are very upset with this latest delay," said Cory Jay Liebmann, referring to the friend who was allegedly assaulted along with him in the incident. "It's taken forever to get charges pressed and now we have another delay," Liebmann told *IN Step*, "I want justice to be done."

In its Jan. 13 edition, *IN Step* detailed the bureaucratic snafus between the City Attorney's Office and the Milwaukee County District Attorney's Office which resulted in no action being taken in the case for nearly ten months. Only when Liebmann took his complaint of government inaction to the media (WTMJ-TV ran a story), did the police department and city and district attorneys begin to respond.

"First of all, the police shouldn't have just ticketed him," Liebmann said of Mertens, "they should have arrested him right away. Then the City Attorney shouldn't have lost the paperwork for months and done nothing. Then the D.A. should have charged Mertens under the hate crimes statute. The person assigned to us from the Victim Witness support program never returned my calls. No one told us about him changing his plea. Now we have to wait two more months before we find out what he's up to. Meanwhile, he's out on the streets. It's ridiculous."





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Looking for Love in All The Wrong Places?

by Carl M. Szatmary
of the IN Step staff

Have you been looking for love in all the wrong places? Valentine's Day approaching and everyone but you has a hot date all set for the big night? Fear not! All the answers you need are in the stars. A perennial favorite is Michael Jay's Gay Love Signs, which has long offered Gay men answers to their many questions about love and sex with prospective boyfriends and current lovers.

In The Lesbian Love Companion Marny Hall uses anecdotal and personal accounts of breakups, distancing and other lesser breakups, revitalizations, and splits, all to shed some measure of light and hope on the slippery slopes of relationships, exploring and celebrating lesbian relationships in all their complexity - and humor.

New this past year are Jill Dearman's hilariously irreverent yet insightful astrological guides, Queer Astrology for Men and Queer Astrology for Women. Her approach to astrology is lively, revealing--and naughty! Sections include: in life, in bed, how to seduce her, doing him and dating him, how to last over the long haul, and if necessary, how to get rid of anyone.

Serious guides for gay men at the millennium include Brad Gooch's widely popular exploration for tapping into each and everyone's own source of love, happiness and respect, Finding the Boyfriend Within as well as Craig Nelson's Finding True Love in a Man-Eat-Man World.

In Husband Hunting Made Easy, Patrick Price offers an essential guide for the gay man who is out, proud, and yet still single. Price offers readers tips about finding, getting, and keeping the husband of one's dreams. Easy-to-use chapters, lists, quizzes, and of course, homework, lead readers through all the pitfalls of landing the (nearly) perfect man.

Love is like a Rose...

A rose, a heartfelt Valentine card plus a small volume of Gay love poetry, what more perfect way to show the one you cherish just much you care?

In the simply titled, *Gay Love Poetry*, Neil Powell offers a wide-ranging and superbly entertaining anthology of poetry celebrating Gay male love from Catullus and Ovid through Marlowe and Michelangelo, on to Walt Whitman and Oscar Wilde, and finally to such moderns as Thom Gunn, and C.F. Cavafy.

With a much more contemporary focus is Michael Lassell's *Eros in Boystown*. Thanks to its inviting small format, appealing design, and involving selection of erotic poems, this is the perfect book for Valentine's Day. It includes contributions by such authors as W.H. Auden, Stephen Spender, Hart Crane, Allen Ginsberg, Tennessee Williams, James Baldwin, and Paul Monette

The Name of Love, also edited by Michael Lassell, is a third delightful volume of gay love poetry. Including works by more than a dozen living poets, this collection pushes the notion of "love poetry" to its limits, at the same time opening doors to understanding gay male love in African-American, Asian, Latino, and Native American communities.

Surprisingly enough, lesbian poetry did not end with Sappho. In *Poems Between Women*, Emma Donoghue offers a marvelous collection, revealing secrets, longings and startling friendships, in an eloquent tribute to love shared by women.

Those looking for a delightful little volume of Lesbian love poetry need look no further than *Portraits of Love*, edited by Susan Fox Rogers and Linda Smukler with a beautiful Michele Serchuk photograph gracing the cover.

How to Spice Up your Valentine's Day!

Think you know whatcha doin'? If you're not sure and want to guarantee a night of passion this fourteenth of February, there are a few manuals at you're disposal.

For all those women who have bemoaned the absence of the long out-of-print *The Joy of Lesbian Sex*, there is a sensational and informative new guide, *The Whole Lesbian Sex Book* (reviewed in *InStep* issue no. 17.2). The first lesbian sex guide of the new millennium may well also be the first comprehensive lesbian sex guide ever. Felice Newman's guide offers lesbian and bisexual women information and encouragement for all sexual practices, from cunnilingus to vaginal fisting to S/M and role-playing.

The final word in Gay sex instruction has long been *The New Joy of Gay Sex*,

written by Dr. Charles Silverstein and Felice Picano. Lavishly illustrated with explicit line drawings, *The New Joy of Gay Sex* offers

Still with questions? Sex advice columnist Tony Palermo answers the 100 most often asked questions about sex between men in the recent published, *Sex Advisor*.

Say cheese...

True love in the LGBT community really isn't all that new - as can be seen in *Affectionate Men: A Photographic History of a Century of Male Couples*. Russell Bush and Ron Lieberman have assembled a unique assortment of antique prints from all parts of the world, forming an idiosyncratic record of love between men. Over a period of 100 years (1850-1950), we can see the changing styles in clothes, hair, and attitudes, but what remains constant is their expression of affection and love

Fans of the *Bel Ami* models probably don't need an excuse to snap up any book featuring these gorgeous young men but available this Valentine's Day is their most sumptuous volume yet, *Bel Ami: Perfect Couples*. Folks, it doesn't get any better than this!

The last word in Lesbian photography has long been Judy Francesconi's hauntingly romantic nude studies. Yet there is a wonderful new book celebrating Lesbian couples, *Women Together: portraits of Love, Commitment, and Life* which features photographs by Cyndy Warwick. This new exemplar of the photo-book-about-relationships genre is visually outstanding; Warwick's black-and-white dual portraits of 29 lesbian couples are beautifully composed, attractively varied in pose and camera placement (from close-up to the opposite end of a room), and often tonally gorgeous.

An attractive little gift book is Chloe Aikin's *Girls' Night Out*. As the official photographer of San Francisco's first Drag King Contest, Ms. Aiken's delights in photographing hot club daners, punk dyke, dream girls, flirting bartenders - alone, in couples, or in small groups.

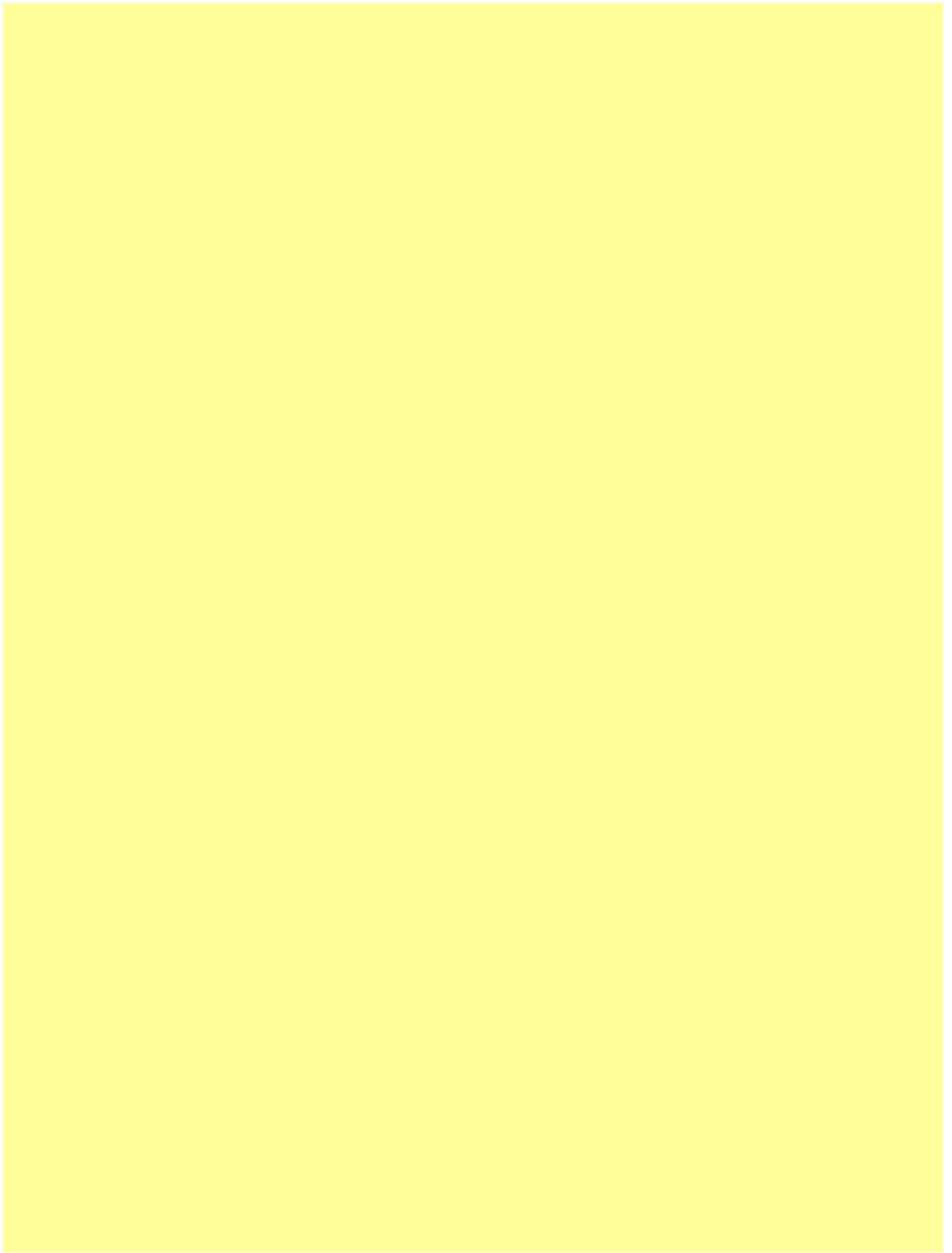
Breaking Up is Hard to Do!

Okay, it is probably pretty heartless to break-up with him on Valentine's Day but hey, you gotta do what you gotta do. But you don't know how to do it? No problem. Just out this past autumn is the ideal guide to *When It's Time to Leave Your Lover: A Guide for Gay Men* by Neil Kaminsky.

Not new but an invaluable classic guide used by many, many Lesbians is *Unbroken*

Ties by Carol S. Becker, Ph.D. Less a “how-to” than a extensive collection of accounts by Lesbian ex-lovers, Unbroken Ties is all about breaking up and beginning all over again.

Happy Valentine’s Day!



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Primary Election Report: Pro-LGBT Candidates Emerge Victorious

by Mike Leon
of the IN Step staff

Madison-- LGBT equity advocates emerged victorious in the February primary election for the Madison School Board and the Dane County Board of Supervisors.

Labor, women, the LGBT community and other progressive activists in Madison are coalescing around the candidacies of Bill Keys, Rob Fyrst and Chuck Erickson.

As the former teachers' union president, Bill Keys was instrumental in securing domestic partnership health care for the Madison school district employees, the second such school district in the nation to offer DP benefits.

Now a candidate for School Board, Keys won his 3-candidate primary with 44 per cent of the vote. He faces another liberal in the general election.

Rob Fyrst is one of two openly gay candidates for the Dane County Board. He easily won his primary and is widely expected to cruise to victory, succeeding State Rep. Terese Berceau's (D-Madison) seat on the Board.

Openly gay candidate Chuck Erickson is running in perhaps the most competitive race as he seeks to knock off a controversial sitting Board Supervisor.

Erickson has picked up the support of U.S. Rep. Tammy Baldwin (D-Madison) and State Rep. Mark Pocan (D-Madison), State Sen. Fred Risser (D-Madison), among other progressive endorsements.

His bid to knock off liberal Supervisor Karen Cornwell stems from disenchantment with the otherwise well-regarded Cornwell for her vote siding with social conservatives in selecting the Board Chair.

“I’m finding people are receptive to my message, and I think people are glad that there are two candidates running,” said Erickson.

Former Board Supervisor and progressive activist Andy Janssen is bolder in his reading of this closely watched race. “With the endorsements he has picked up and his work ethic, I would definitely bet on Chuck winning this seat.”

The general election is set for April 4th.

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Gay Marriage Debate Gathers Steam

by Keith Clark
of the IN Step Staff

The Canadian Parliament is now reviewing a government proposal that would give gay and lesbian couples the same benefits that common-law couples in the country have. The move, prompted by a Canadian Supreme Court ruling that declared same-sex couples have the same legal status as heterosexual couples, has led the government to ask Parliament to change about 60 laws in order to meet the high court's requirement.

But in introducing the laundry list of proposed changes, Justice Minister Anne McLellan reiterated the view of the court itself: "Marriage is a relationship between one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others. There is absolutely no confusion about that."

The whole Canadian package ran into immediate trouble with lawmakers, however. Because the government wanted to make sure only couples qualified for the benefits, the legislation is "contingent upon private physical intimacy" so roommates, for example, didn't begin filing for health insurance and pension benefits. But that, of course, puts the Canadian government in the unenviable position of having to somehow ask people about their private sexual life - the last thing in the world the government wants to start doing, and probably the last thing Canadians want to be asked about.

The problem the Canadians ran into typifies the difficulty of trying to create a special class of relationships for gay and lesbian couples that's sort of like marriage but still isn't actually marriage. It also illustrates the complicated extremes government officials are willing to go to just to keep from accepting gay and lesbian marriages.

Vermont faces much the same difficulty. The state supreme court declared same-sex couples must be have all "the common benefits and protections that flow from marriage under Vermont law." But the court said the legislators should decide the issue and gave them the option of legalizing same-sex marriages or creating a

statewide domestic partnership program.

The state's lawmakers, for the most part, have jumped at the chance to set up a domestic partnership registry; not so much because they want one but because they're terrified at the prospect of legalizing gay and lesbian marriages. So the Vermont Legislature is busy culling through all the state codes to see how many laws they'll have to amend to achieve something approximating a "separate but equal" status.

The unwillingness of most politicians; and a majority of Americans according to polls; to accept gay and lesbian marriage is so intense that now both Democratic presidential contenders Al Gore and Bill Bradley have resoundingly endorsed domestic partnerships for same-sex couples.

But even the best domestic partnership programs leave large gaps between the rights of legally married spouses and registered partners. For example, everything covered by federal law; from income tax to Social Security benefits; is beyond the reach of domestic partners.

One recent example of this limitation arose in San Diego where Charles Lago, a British national who has been living in the U.S. since 1992, faces the possibility of being deported by federal immigration authorities. Lago owns a small theater and a successful bookstore and is in a long-term relationship with another man. But while Immigration and Naturalization Service regulations would permit Lago to remain in this country if he were married, the INS does not recognize same-sex partnerships for establishing legal residency.

In another example of the kinds of heart-wrenching problems that can confront same-sex couples that married couples don't face came earlier in February when a Washington state court ruled that Frank Vasquez is not entitled to any of the estate of Robert Schwerzler, his partner of 28 years. The judge hearing the case declared, "We find no precedent for applying the marital concepts, either rights or protections, to same-sex relationship. Community property law clearly applies only to opposite-sex relationships." The estate, instead, will be awarded to Schwerzler's surviving brothers and sisters unless the state supreme court overturns the appeals court decision.

Like many gay and lesbian couples, unfortunately, Schwerzler had not prepared a will, apparently assuming his partner would inherit without opposition from his family - or that legally his partner's inheritance rights were beyond legal challenge.

The array of such potential problems, large and small, faced by gay and lesbian

couples is in fact almost bewildering - and sometimes entirely unexpected.

When the city of Oakland, Calif., adopted a domestic partners law several years ago, the city council modified more than a dozen regulations to make sure registered partners had things like visitation rights, educational responsibilities for their children, and so on. But a year later a lesbian couple who had ended their relationship discovered that the council had not modified city tax ordinances. As a result they faced a possible \$1,200 tax penalty when their jointly owned home was transferred entirely to the name of just one of the women. Married couples who divorce are exempt from this tax, but only an emergency measure saved the women from an unexpected tax at a time when they least needed an additional hassle.

The same sorts of unexpected and often complex and expensive problems lie like landmines for gay and lesbian couples because they cannot legally marry. A couple might well pay \$1,000, plus attorney fees, just to get both their names on the title of their home. And they face daunting costs and a complicated legal jumble if they want their children to have the legal protections of two parents.

Even seemingly simple things can be costly or even impossible for domestic partners, while married couples can accomplish the same things without trouble or question.

A married couple who want to hyphenate their names can, generally, do so through their state motor vehicle department either at no charge or with a minimal fee. In many states, domestic partners either cannot switch to a hyphenation or must pay fees of \$200 or more.

Judges will often release prospective jurors from duty if, for example, they have made vacation plans with their families. But in San Francisco recently, a judge was reluctant to release a gay man from duty even though his partner was facing cancer surgery. The man was his registered domestic partner, was his partner's primary caregiver, and had power of attorney for his medical care. But it took letters from the man's physician and an appeal from his employer before the judge finally agreed to dismiss him from jury duty.

Many gay and lesbian couples are aware they may face serious restrictions in terms of their children. Courts still regularly hear custody disputes when couples end their relationships, and school districts now routinely are faced with how to deal with children who have two moms or two dads.

But even at the most trivial level, gay and lesbian partners could well face the same restrictions when it comes to trying to retrieve the family dog from the pound. Pets

are typically licensed to only one person, and since gay and lesbian couples aren't spouses, they technically could not claim a runaway Fido that happened to be registered in their partner's name.

The maze of paperwork, resistant bureaucracies, legal fees, court costs and just downright aggravation gay and lesbian couples face on a constant basis just to gain a small part of the legal rights married couples enjoy automatically is one of the enormous motivators behind much of the push for same-sex marriage. In the lawsuit that led to the court ruling in Vermont, in fact, the plaintiffs in that case successfully argued that being unable to marry denied them more than 300 specific state benefits, and more than 1,000 under federal law.

Michael Wald, a professor of family law at Stanford University, put it unequivocally recently. "None of the domestic partners laws in this country even begin to approach the basic legal structure of marriage, both in terms of rights and responsibilities," he said.

Kate Kendell, head of the National Center for Lesbian Rights, was even more succinct. "Domestic partners is not a substitute for anything coming close to marriage," Kendell says.

But resistance to accepting gay and lesbian marriage continues to be high, although there are some signs that the country may be having some second thoughts.

After the state supreme court ruled that gay and lesbian couples in Vermont had to have the same legal rights as married couples and state politicians rushed to endorse domestic partnership instead of same-sex marriage, state Sen. Jeb Spaulding, in a rare political insight, said the state should just go ahead and legalize marriage for gay and lesbian couples.

"It seems ludicrous to me to have the exact same listing of rights and benefits for same sex and heterosexual couples, but have different names for the commitment process," Spaulding said to his fellow legislators. "I predict that a strictly semantic differentiation will please no one in the end and be extremely unwieldy as well."

His advice had little apparent impact on the Vermont lawmakers, but many same-sex marriage advocates agree that it contains such obvious common sense that it ultimately will have to win out.

As Bishop John Croneberger, the new head of the Episcopal diocese of Newark, N.J., said recently of a proposal for the church to bless gay and lesbian unions, "Today's Rosa Parks might just be a lesbian, and we don't need to ask her to go to the back of

the bus again.”

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Wisconsin's Gay & Lesbian Community Newspaper since 1984.

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The History of Wisconsin IN Step

The premiere issue of Wisconsin IN Step, first called “WisconsIN Step,” rolled off the presses on February 9, 1984. The issue was 48 pages long and five thousand copies were printed in a 5-12” x 8-12” newsprint format. Today, after several physical transformations but just one major ownership change,

Wisconsin IN Step — popularly known through all of its incarnations as just “In Step” — remains the longest running, continually published gay and lesbian newspaper in the state.

In Step was the brainchild of David Iraci and Ron Geiman, who, after their stints in the Marine Corps and Army in the 1970s, became involved in Milwaukee’s gay community. In the early 1980s, a series of gay papers and entertainment guides started and folded in very short order. Geiman sold ads for two of those publications, “Escape” and “Gay Milwaukee,” but local businesses were reluctant to advertise because the owners and publishers were based in Chicago. Geiman became convinced he could win local advertising support for a locally run newspaper, and In Step was born.

The first year of operation was a constant challenge, both technically and financially. Computers were not yet in wide use, so stories were typed on the venerable Selectric typewriter. Ads were designed with press type and the old fashioned cut and paste method. Geiman and Iraci learned what most small publishers learn quickly: the work is labor-intensive and not very remunerative. Iraci left In Step after just one year and moved to California, saying he didn’t see much promise in it. But Geiman stuck with it, understanding that it would take more time to establish an advertising base and readership.

Geiman was probably better suited for the job anyway. He had worked as a journalist in the Army and often joked that he had printer’s ink in his blood: “Both my father and my grandfather worked all their lives in the printing industry. I used to go in on weekends when they worked overtime. I’d get to play with the presses. I always loved the smell of ink.”

Ron Geiman led In Step as both publisher and editor for 11 years, until health problems forced him to step back in the summer of 1995. The publication he built grew in size, editorial content and stature over those years, and he became one of the most respected leaders in Milwaukee’s, and Wisconsin’s, gay and lesbian community.

IN Step Grows with the LGBT Community

The growth of In Step has mirrored the growth of Wisconsin’s LGBT community. The “Guide” in the first issue of “Wisconsin IN Step” included just 40 listings, all of them gay bars in Wisconsin or bordering states. By the 1990s, IN Step published between 80-96 pages biweekly and its Guide included hundreds of gay and lesbian-owned bars, restaurants and businesses, political organizations, choruses, churches, sports teams, services and support groups.

From its inception, In Step contained a mix of news, features, columns, photos, cartoons and artwork. Milwaukeean Tom Rezza created original cover art for many issues in the first ten years. The late Bob Arnold contributed his witty “Life’s a Drag” cartoon. Columnists included Arnie Malmon (“Positively HIV”); Shelly Roberts (“Roberts’ Rules”); and Sister Dana Van Iquity (“No Nonsense”). One of the paper’s most popular columns, the irreverent “Juicy Bits” by W.W. Wells III, debuted in In Step’s second issue and ran until 1997. Geiman regularly wrote “Steppin’ Out,” a round-up of gay social and

political events across Wisconsin.

Despite some who dismissed In Step in its early years as a mere “bar rag,” news coverage was always a part of In Step’s mission, and it expanded greatly over time. The addition of nationally syndicated writer Rex Wockner and Milwaukee journalist Jamakaya in the early 1990s solidified the news gathering operation. Photographer James Taylor also joined the magazine at this time.

Reviewing old issues of In Step is like seeing the recent history of the state’s gay and lesbian community before your eyes. You can see photos and coverage of all of our Pride Festivals and Marches on Washington for equal rights. You can learn about past controversies in our community and trace the development of different organizations, from ACT UP to drag pageants to SAGE..

IN Step has documented our victories and our losses — civil rights laws, Supreme Court decisions, the Gay Games, the Pentagon’s policy, Jeffrey Dahmer’s crimes, Tammy Baldwin’s election to Congress, Stonewall 25, gay bashings, gay weddings and, of course, AIDS. The very first issue in 1984 reported that the Centers for Disease Control counted 3,064 cases of AIDS nationwide, while the toll in Wisconsin at that time was just 24. In May that same year, we reported “AIDS Virus Found,” and in January of 1985: “New Blood Test May Limit Spread of AIDS.”

New Owners and a New Century

Advertising and content increased to such an extent that in 1993 Ron Geiman “took the leap,” as he says, and expanded In Step’s format. In December of that year, it appeared in an 8-1/2” x 11” standard magazine format, though still on newsprint. And in deference to the more inclusive spirit among gays and lesbians, it was dubbed “In Step: Wisconsin’s LesBiGay Magazine.”¹⁴⁸;

But further changes were on the way. When Geiman became ill in 1995, Jamakaya served as editor for an interim period until the paper was sold. In April of 1996, William Attewell and Jorge Cabal purchased In Step. Attewell ran Wells Ink, an ad agency which specialized in the gay and lesbian market. He was also the elusive W.W. Wells III, author of “Juicy Bits.” His partner in life and business, Jorge Cabal, was a noted portrait photographer. Together, they had begun publishing a gay magazine, “Q•Voice,” in October, 1995.

Upon taking the reins at In Step, Attewell and Cabal redesigned the magazine to make it more reader-friendly, but promised to retain its most popular features to insure continuity. They thanked advertisers, subscribers and readers for keeping faith, and added: “We’d like to express our commitment to Wisconsin’s LesBiGay Community. In Step Magazine will remain your comprehensive news, information and entertainment resource.”

In May of 1997, the annual Pride issue was published in a new format — a tabloid-size newsprint edition with a banner reading: “In Step Newsmagazine.” Then, in August of 1998, Q-Voice was merged into In

Step, with the letter “Q” retained to mark the paper’s arts and entertainment section. In November of 1998, In Step began bearing the subtitle “Wisconsin’s LGBT Community Newspaper.” A final transformation took place in January of 2000, with a bold new logo that reaffirmed the paper’s geographic market while honoring its roots: “Wisconsin IN Step.”

The tradition continues with ever-expanding coverage of news and arts statewide through our Milwaukee, Madison and Fox Valley bureaus. Wisconsin IN Step showcases the outstanding political cartoons of Paul Berge along with news and commentary by William Attewell, Mike Fitzpatrick, Ed Grover, Jamakaya, State Rep. Mark Pocan, Mike Leon, Christopher Ott, Kathryn Kingsbury, Carl Szatmary, Kevin John, Michael Johnston, Wayne Brasler, Jamie Taylor and “Dear Ruthie.” It’s a dynamic, dedicated, home-grown team committed to providing the best coverage possible of the GLBT communities here in Wisconsin, the Original Gay Rights State.



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2003 Deadlines	Cover Date
Aug. 8	August 14
Aug. 22	August 28
	Real Estate Issue
Sept. 5	Sept. 11
	Fall Arts Preview
Oct. 3	October 9
	Spirituality Guide
Oct. 17	October 23
	Halloween
Oct. 31	Nov. 6
	Best of Issue
Nov. 14	Nov. 20
	World AIDS Day
Nov. 28	Dec. 4
	Holiday Shopping
Dec. 12	Dec. 18
	Holiday Shopping New Year's Eve

2004 Deadlines	Cover Date
Jan. 9	Jan. 15
	Person of the Year
Jan. 23	Jan. 29
Feb. 6	Feb. 12
Feb. 20	Feb. 26
March 5	March 11

Gross Advertising Rates: Effective: 3/1/03

black and white					
	26x	12x	6x	3x	Open
Full	389	465	493	517	542
3/4	361	382	405	425	425
Half	253	285	301	317	332
Third	170	180	201	212	222
Quarter	143	155	161	172	180
Eighth	93	102	109	115	120
Sixteenth	45	47	50	55	57
Back Cover	587	621	655	690	725
Inside Front	488	517	546	575	603
Inside Back	488	517	546	575	603
Center Spread	690	747	805	862	905
four color					
Full	638	683	605	628	850
3/4	578	614	633	652	670
Half	507	520	548	562	575
Back Cover	750	810	840	870	900

Terms and Specifications

Print Specifications

Method of printing is web offset on newsprint. All half-tones should be 85-line screen. Camera ready art should be submitted as a stat, clean copy or compatible Macintosh file either PDF, EPS or Quark Xpress format with accompanying art and font tiles. We accept Macintosh-formatted 1.44mb diskettes and Macintosh-formatted 100mb Iomega-compatible Zip disks.

Frequency Discounts

All frequency discounts must be accompanied by a signed advertising agreement or signed as a phone order by your sales representative. Frequency discounts are based on a total number of insertions run within a 12 month period. Advertising placed at frequency discount rates and not earned will be re-billed at the earned rate. Cancellation: Orders for the back cover position is non-cancellable. All other cancellations received after the deadline date will be charged 50% of the original insertion fee(s).

Payment Policies

Advertisers are required to pay for their first ad and any production fees up front and may be billed for future insertions upon credit approval. Payment is due upon receipt of invoice. Payments not received within 15 days are subject to 2% service charge. Payments may be made with cash, check, money order, Visa or MasterCard. Returned checks will be subject to a \$40 fee and will automatically revoke all credit agreements. We reserve the right to require payment two weeks in advance by certified check or money order.

Ad Design

Ad design is available free of charge to all advertisers. If you have an idea about what you want, but need help creating a camera ready ad, give us a call at (414) 278-7840, ext. 2.

Spot Color

Spot color is available for an additional charge. Black + one spot add \$40. for requested spot color add \$75.

Full Color

IN Step has the ability to print 4-color ads. Ads requiring 4-color should be a minimum of one-half page on the inside and a full page for back cover. Advertisers agree to supply composite separations or digital artwork with Matchprint for any 4-color ad. Please contact your sales representative for prices on 4-color process.

Classified Ads

Classified ads are \$10 for up to 30 words and 20-cents for each word over 30. Payment for classified ads must accompany ad copy.

Boxed Classifieds

Box classified ads are priced at a flat rate of \$25 per column inch.

Inserts

Inserts may be placed at a base rate of \$60 per thousand. Minimum of 5,000 inserts. Price may vary depending on insert weight and/or size. Inserts are non-commissionable.

Office Hours

IN Step's offices are open to the public. Regular business hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday except for holidays.

Ad Sizes

1/16 Horizontal

4-3/4" wide x 2" high

1/16 Vertical

2-3/8" wide x 3" high

1/8 Horizontal

4-3/4" wide x 3-1/4" high

1/8 Vertical

2-3/8" wide x 3-3/4" high

1/4 Horizontal

9-3/4" wide x 3-1/4" high
1/4 Vertical
4-3/4" wide x 6-3/4" high
1/4 Vertical Strip
2-1/4" wide x 13-3/4" high
1/3 Horizontal
9-3/4" wide x 4-1/2" high
1/3 Box
7-3/4" wide x 6-3/4" high
1/2 Horizontal
9-3/4" wide x 6-3/4" high
1/2 Vertical
4-3/4" wide x 13-3/4" high
Full
9-3/4" wide x 13-3/4" high

**For additional information contact
an ad rep at 414.278.7840, ext. 2, or e-mail to:
ads@instepnews.com**

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Milwaukee Area Organizations

Alcoholics Anonymous

(Request gay meetings) 771-9119

Bi Definition (Bisexual community events)

315 W. Court St., Suite 101

(414) 299-9612

E-mail: bidef@hotmail.com

Brew City Bears

(414) 299-0401

P.O. Box 1035, Milwaukee, WI 53201

E-mail: brewcitybears@aol.com

www.brewcitybears.org

BWMT-Milwaukee

(414) 540-9437, ext 3

P.O. Box 091475, Milwaukee, W 53209

bwmtmilwaukee@aol.com

Castaways M.C. (Levi/Leather club), P.O. Box 1697, Milwaukee, WI 53202

Counseling Center (LGB support & discussion groups)

2038 N. Bartlett, Milwaukee, WI 53202

(414) 271-2565

Cream City Chorus

315 W. Court, Milwaukee, WI 53212

(414) 276-8787

Cream City Foundation (CCF)

315 W. Court, Milwaukee, WI 53212

(414) 225-0244

Cream City Squares

(G/L Square Dancing Club)

(414) 445-8080

DAMES (Dykes Against Minority Erotic Suppression)

P.O. Box 1272, Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI 53201 (414) 278-0323

Fest City Singers (gay choral group)

P.O. Box 11428, Milwaukee, WI 53211 (414) 961-0713

Firebirds (L/L group), P.O. Box 159, Milwaukee, WI 53201-0159

Front Runners (running group) (414) 332-1527

Galano Club (chemical free recovery club)

315 W. Court St., Milwaukee, WI 53212 (414) 276-6936

Milwaukee GAMMA (sports/outdoors/recreation/social)

E-mail: mkegamma@execpc.com

Web: www.MilwaukeeGamma.com

P.O. Box 1900, Milwaukee, WI 53201 (414) 365-3453

Membership Info (414) 358-2111

Gay Father's Group

1240 E. Brady St., Milwaukee, WI 53202 (414) 372-8008

Gay Lesbian Education Employees of Metro Milw.

(GLEEMM), Larry (414) 462-8404

Gay/Lesbian Studies UWM (414) 229-6402

Gay People's Union

P.O. Box 208, Milwaukee, WI 53201 (414) 645-0585

Gay Youth Milwaukee (peer group meetings)

P.O. Box 090441, Milwaukee, WI 53209 (414) 265-8500

Gay Men's Discussion/Support Group

(Bill) (414) 276-7626

Gemini Gender Group (TV/TS/TG support/social)

P.O. Box 44211, Milwaukee, WI 53214 (414) 297-9328

Girth & Mirth/Milwaukee

P.O. Box 862, Milwaukee, WI 53201-0862

GLEAM/SPECTRUM (GLBT Employees of Ameritech)

P.O. Box 254, Milwaukee, WI 53201 (414) 482-4310

G/L Community Trust Fund

P.O. Box 1686, Milwaukee, WI 53201 (414) 643-1652

Great Lakes Harley Riders, P.O. Box 341611, 53234-1611

Holiday Invitational Tournament (G/L bowling event)

P.O. Box 899, Milwaukee, WI 53201	
Keep Hope Alive (HIV Holistic Support)	
P.O. Box 27041, West Allis, 53227	(414) 548-4344
LAMM (Lesbian Alliance of Metro Milwaukee)	
315 W. Court, Milwaukee, WI 53212	(414) 272-9442
Log Cabin Republicans (Gay Republicans)	
P.O. Box 199, Milwaukee, WI 53201	(414) 299-9443
MGALA (Marquette U. GL Alumni)	
P.O. Box 92722, Milwaukee, WI 53202	
Marquette Gay/Straight Alliance	
Campus Ministry, 617 N 14th St, Milwaukee, WI 53233	(414) 288-6873
Men's Voices Milwaukee	
315 W. Court St., Milwaukee, WI 53212	(414) 765-9198
Metro Milwaukee Tennis Club (Scott)	(414) 543-9643
Milwaukee LGBT Community Center	(414) 271-2656
315 W. Court, Milwaukee, WI 53212	www.mkelgbt.org
Milwaukee Symphony Chorus	(414) 559-9330
Narcotics Anonymous (request gay mtgs.)	800-711-6375
Orgullo Latino/a Latin Pride	
(c/o Murguia) 1532 N. Astor St. 53202	(414) 276-8546
Outdoors Cooperative Sports Group	(414) 963-9833
Parents & Friends of Lesbians & Gays (PFLAG)	
315 W. Court, 53212	(414) 299-9198
Pathfinders (youth counseling, shelter)	
1614 E. Kane Place, Milwaukee, WI 53202	(414) 271-1560
PrideFest (annual Pride festival)	
907 S. 1st St., 53204	
Web Site: www.pridefest.com	(414) 645-FEST
Project Q (Youth Program of the Milwaukee LGBT Center)	
315 W. Court, 53212	
www.projectq.org	(414) 223-3220
The Queer Program (Cable TV Show)	
PO Box 090441, Milwaukee, WI 53209	(414) 265-8500
Rainbow Alliance at UWM	

Box 122, 2200 E. Kenwood Blvc, Milwaukee, WI 53211	(414) 229-6555
www.uwm.edu/studentorg/glbc/	
Riverwest Rainbow Association	
1001 E. Keefe Ave., 53212	(414) 225-1645
SAGE Milwaukee (for older LGBTs)	
P.O. Box 510492, 53203-0091	(414) 224-0517
Saturday SoftBall League (SSBL)	
P.O. Box 92605, 53203-0091	(414) 454-9204
Sexual Compulsives Anonymous (SCA)	(414) 299-0755
Sherman Park Rainbow Assoc.	
P.O. Box 76115, 53216	(414) 873-1849
Shoreline (country dancing, instruction)	
P.O. Box 510283, 53203-0051	(414) 747-0388
Silver Space (for older lesbians)	
c/o Counseling Center, 2038 N. Bartlett	(414) 271-2565
Two Spirit Society (Indigenous LGBT People of America)	
315 W. Court St., 53212	(414) 607-1182
Wisconsin Outdoor Women (outdoor sporting events)	
P.O. Box 94, Hales Corners, 53130	(414) 427-2082

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Milwaukee Area Spirituality

All Saints' Episcopal Church

818 E. Juneau Ave., 53202

(414) 271-7719

www.ascatherdral.org

ARCW Spiritual Care

(414) 225-1565

P.O. Box 92487, 53202

Central United Method Church

639 N. 25th St., 53233

Cross Lutheran Church (Reconciled in Christ)

(414) 344-1746

1821 N. 16th St., 53205

Dignity (G/L Catholic Church)

P.O. Box 597, 53201

(414) 873-9591

First Unitarian Society (Unitarian Universalist)

1342 N. Astor St., 53202

(414) 273-5257

Lake Park Lutheran Church

2647 N. Stowell Ave., 53211

(414) 962-9190

Lutherans Concerned

P.O. Box 1676, 53201

(414) 372-9663

Milwaukee Metropolitan Community Church

(UFMCC) 1239 W. Mineral St., 53204

Adm. Office: 170 S. 2nd St., 53204

(414) 383-1100

Pentecost Lutheran Church (Reconciled in Christ)

5226 W. Burleigh St., 53210	(414) 445-2696
Pilgrim Christian Church	
15400 W. North Ave., Brookfield 53005	(262) 782-6440
Plymouth Church-UCC (Open & Affirming)	
2717 E. Hampshire St., 53211	(414) 964-1513
The Sanctuary (Ecumenical, nondenominational)	
1636 W. National Ave., 53204	(414) 672-4434
St. Ann's Church	
5933 W. National Ave., 53214	(414) 259-1229
St. James Episcopal Church	
833 W. Wisconsin Ave., 53233	(414) 271-1340
Village Church (Reconciled in Christ)	
130 E. Juneau Ave., 53202	(414) 273-7617

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Milwaukee Area Medical Services

AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin (www.arcw.org)

820 Plankinton Ave., 53203

(414) 273-1991

(800) 359-9272

Mark Behar, PA-C (Family/ Primary Care)

Family Care Center, 1834 W WI, 53233

(414) 933-3600

BESTD (Brady East STD Clinic) (STD/HIV diagnosis/treatment)

www.bestd.org; bestd@execpc.org

1240 E. Brady St., 53202

(414) 272-2144

Health Options (Holistic Health Services)

823 N. 2nd Street, #811, 53202

(414) 225-9303

Dennis C. Hill Outreach Center (HIV testing, condoms)

4311 W Vliet, 53208

(414) 342-4333

Positive Health Clinic

Medical Center Specialties Clinic

945 N 12, 53233

(414) 219-7908

STD Specialties Clinic

3251 N Holton, 53212

(414) 264-8800

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Milwaukee Area Bars

Ballgame

196 S. 2nd St., Milwaukee, WI 53204 ([directions](#)) (414) 273-7474

[Boom](#)

625 S. 2nd St., Milwaukee, WI 53204 ([directions](#)) (414) 277-5040

Boot Camp

209 E. National Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53204 ([directions](#)) (414) 643-6900

C'est La Vie

231 S. 2nd St., Milwaukee, WI 53204 ([directions](#)) (414) 291-9600

Club 219

219 S. 2nd St., Milwaukee, WI 53204 ([directions](#)) (414) 271-3732

Dish

235 S. 2nd St., Milwaukee, WI 53204 ([directions](#)) (414) 273-DISH

Fluid

819 S. 2nd St., Milwaukee, WI 53204 ([directions](#)) (414) 645-8330

[Harbor Room](#)

117 E. Greenfield Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53204 ([directions](#)) (414) 672-7988

Nut Hut

1500 W. Scott St. Milwaukee, WI 53201 ([directions](#)) (414) 647-2673

[La Cage](#)

801 S. 2nd St., Milwaukee, WI 53204 ([directions](#)) (414) 383-8330

M&M Club

124 N. Water St., Milwaukee, WI 53202 ([directions](#)) (414) 347-1962

South Water Street Docks

354 E. National Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53204 ([directions](#)) (414) 225-9676

Off The Tracks

1534 W. Grant St. Milwaukee, WI 53215 ([directions](#)) (414) 384-5680

Pulse

200 E. Washington St., Milwaukee, WI 53204 ([directions](#)) (414) 649-9003

Switch

124 W. National Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53204 ([directions](#)) (414) 220-4340

This Is It

418 E. Wells St. Milwaukee, WI 53202 ([directions](#)) (414) 278-9192

Triangle

135 E. National Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53204 ([directions](#)) (414) 383-9412

Woody's

1579 S. 2nd St., Milwaukee, WI 53204 ([directions](#)) (414) 672-0806

Walker's Pint

818 S. 2nd St., Milwaukee, WI 53204 ([directions](#)) (414) 643-7468

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Milwaukee Area Food

Azteca

816 South 5th St., 53202 383-8816

Bella's Caffé (Coffee House)

189 N. Milwaukee St., 53204 273-5620

Cafe Knickerbocker

1030 East Juneau, 53202 272-0011

Cempazuchi

1205 E. Brady St., 53202 291-5233

Chip and Pys

1340 W. Towne Square Rd., Mequon, 241-9589

Cielito Lindo

733 South 2nd St., 53204 649-0401

Harry's Bar and Grill

3539 N. Oakland Ave, 53211 694-6800

M&M

124 N. Water 53202 347-1962

North Shore Bistro

Riverpoint Village, I-43 & Brown Deer 351-6100

Silver Dollar Cafe

831 South 16th Street, 53204 645-8860

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Milwaukee Area Services

Affiliated Mortgage (414) 453-6700

1233 N. Mayfair Rd., Wauwatosa, 53218

Bay Tax Service, Paul Rathjen (414) 332-9584

Frank J. Berger, (Real Estate) (414) 213-5842

B&G Construction (414) 405-7843

Sean Buckley (Individual Psychotherapy) (414) 562-2403

Bill Buresh (Real Estate) (414) 529-0500

Calyx Counseling Center (Kate Weishaar, Ph.D) (414) 276-4664

1840 N. Farwell Ave. Ave.

Carnival Travel, 611 E. Wells St.. (414) 276-3388

Clarity (Writing and Research) (414) 276-6935

Creative Home Concepts (Home/Remodel) (414) 766-1066

Downtown Autobody (Car Repair) (414) 964-7170

3425 N. Holton Ave.

Roland E. Daneau, CPA (Accountant) (414) 962-1400

Discovery & Recovery Clinic (Counseling) (414) 282-6160

6510 W Layton Ave, 53215

Dykeman Family Heating (heating/cooling) (414) 273-7500

1023 E. Brady St., 53202

Theodore I. Friedman, PhD (Psychotherapist)

2266 N. Prospect, Suite 206 53202 (414) 272-2427

Full Moon Productions (Women's Music Promoters)

N235 Co Hwy W, Campbellsport, 53010

The Garden Room (Garden Design, Gifts)	(414) 963-1657
Hairys Hair Bar	
2385 S. Kinnickinnic Ave.	(414) 486-9299
Horizon Travel (Member IGTA)	
N81 W15028 Appleton, Men. Falls 53051	(414) 255-0704
Hume, Attorney Kathleen	
5665 S 108th, Hales Corners, 53130	(414) 529-2129
Bill Hanel, msw (Counseling, Psychotherapy)	(414) 276-7626
Klaus & Meyers (attorneys)	
5665 S. 108th, Hales Corners 53130	(414) 529-2800
C.A. Klein (Accounting Services)	(414) 384-1640
Landmark Plumbing	(414) 224-8008
Linda Jo Martin (Psychotherapist)	(414) 276-8676
Randy Mickelson, (Ernie Von Schledorn, auto sales)	800-648-6789
Scott Perkins (Realtor)	(414) 476-9070, ext. 461
	cell: 801-1356
Red Tail Painting & Restoration	(414) 607-1180
e-mail: redtail@execpc.com	
Side by Side (performers)	(414) 961-2135
Jeanie Simpkins , (MS), (counseling)	(414) 325-6616
Jack Smith (Realtor)	(414) 962-4413
home/voice mail	(414) 224-1452
Special Touch Massage	(414) 536-8232
Streff Advertising/Sandy Lewis	(414) 771-8300
7600 Harwood Ave., Wauwatosa, 53213	
The Right Angle (carpentry)	(414) 390-0909
Third Coast Courier (delivery)	(414) 562-0935
Travel Directions (Travel Agency)	
515 Glenview, Wauwatosa, 53213	(414) 774-2174
Travel Experience (Travel Agency)	(414) 744-6020
Wauker Photography (Portraits, Commitments)	(414) 383-0740
Wells Ink, Advertising & Design (Advertising, PR)	
1661 N. Water St., Suite 411, 53202	(414) 272-2116

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Milwaukee Area Retail

2Burn (Ventless Fireplaces, Gifts)

11708 W. North Ave., Wauwatosa (414) 607-7000

Absolute Furniture

5520 W. North Ave (414) 875-8326

Body Ritual (Body Piercing, Jewelry, Gifts)

2010 N. Farwell Ave., 53202 (414) 273-3777

Avante Garde (Body Piercing)

7219 W. Greenfield Ave., West Allis, 53214 (414) 607-4068

Clinton Street Antiques

1110 South First Street (414) 647-1773

Constant Reader Bookshop

1627 E Irving Pl., 53202 (414) 291-0452

Eyez Unique (optical)

2238 S. Kinnickinnic Ave, (414) 481-0868

Forever Yours (flowers, fresh cut, dried)

2201 E Capitol Dr., 53211 (414) 963-1006

Genesis (custom jeweler, goldsmith)

6011 W. Layton Ave. (414) 281-1022

Great Frame Up

507 E. Silver Spring Dr. (414) 962-4889

Frank Gentile (Auto Dealer)

Hwy 20, Racine (414) 886-5111

Grava Gallery (framing)

1209 E. Brady St., 53202	(414) 277-8228
Mega Discount Nursery	
1901 E. Rawson Ave., Oak Creek 53154	(414) 571-6565
Miss Groove (gifts)	
1225 E. Brady St., 53202	(414) 298-9185
<u>Out of Solitude Jewelry</u>	
918 E. Brady St., 53202	(414) 223-3101
Outpost Natural Foods	
100 E. Capitol Dr., 53212	(414) 964-7789
exchange@execpc.com	
<u>Outwords</u> (LGBT Books and espresso bar)	
2710 N. Murray Ave., 53211	(414) 963-9089
Popular News (adult books, videos)	
225 N. Water St., 53202	(414) 278-0636
Rosebud Cinema and Drafthouse	
6833 W. North Ave.	(414) 607-9672
Rubin's	
224 E. Chicago St. 53202	(414) 278-8100
Sportland 2 (motorcycles)	
7221 S. 13th St.	(414) 764-2800
Video Adventures (video/dvd sales/rentals)	
1418 E. Brady St, 53202	(414) 272-6768
Wishful Things (Antiques)	
207 E Buffalo, 53202	(414) 964-9799

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IN Step welcomes your feedback.
Send your letters to: editor@instepnews.com

\$548K Raised by Dual AIDS Walks

By Mike Fitzpatrick

Madison, Milwaukee — Despite rainy, unseasonably cool weather, Wisconsin's two AIDS walks raised close to \$548,000 over the weekend of September 27-28. The officially announced \$502,280 for Milwaukee's 14th Annual AIDS Walk Wisconsin, when combined with the estimated \$45,000 tallied by Madison's debut AIDS Walk, Roll & Stroll, represents a 4.8% increase in total dollars raised for HIV/AIDS services statewide over 2002.

Milwaukee's 10K event actually saw an overall increase in the number of walkers this year. The 3400+ participants heard honorary co-chairs Governor Jim and First Lady Jessica Doyle, salute them for their efforts against HIV/AIDS during the opening ceremony held at the Summerfest grounds. "You are all heroes," Doyle said.

According to walk organizers, the Sunday Milwaukee event benefited 11 agencies statewide, including the nine offices of the AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin in Appleton, Eau Claire, Green Bay, Kenosha, La Crosse, Madison, Milwaukee, Superior, and Wausau. Also receiving walk proceeds are the 16th Street Community Health Clinic in Milwaukee; Camp Heartland; Common Ground Ministry/Elena's House; the LGBT Community Center of Chippewa Valley; the Manitowoc County AIDS Task Force; the City of Milwaukee Public Health Department's "No Condom, No Way" Campaign; the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center; Rodney Scheel House Foundation in Madison; the Sheboygan County AIDS Task Force; and the Visiting Nurse Association of Wisconsin.

A day earlier, the 7K Madison event survived both heavier rain and complaints that the fundraiser was being held on what is considered the holiest day of the Jewish year, Yom Kippur. An estimated 600 walkers enjoyed kickoff ceremonies at Brittingham Park featuring the event's honorary chair, '70s disco diva Thelma Houston, who that evening performed a benefit concert at Club Majestic.

The Saturday walk benefited the Beloit, Janesville and Madison offices of AIDS Network.



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Additional DOMA Coverage
See Mike Fitzpatrick's Reality Check Column:
[The Lies Family Research Institute Tells](#)

[DOMA Debate Turns Testy](#)

Just 44 hours after their latest formal introduction, Wisconsin's so-called Defense of Marriage Act bills (AB 475/SB 233) had their day in the court of public opinion during a joint public hearing of the Senate Judiciary, Corrections, and Privacy and Assembly Judiciary Committees August 21 in Madison.

Action Wisconsin's LEAD Lobbies For LGBT Equality

By Mike Fitzpatrick

Madison — In what has been described by some Capitol pundits as the most visible and dramatic display of support for gay issues in the history of Wisconsin, more than 500 supporters of LGBT equality inundated Wisconsin lawmakers with office visits, phone calls, letters and emails September 30 as part of Action Wisconsin's Legal Equality Action Day (LEAD) here.

According to the statewide LGBT civil rights group, more than 200 activists scheduled office visits with legislators during the lobby day. *IN Step's* unofficial count of participants packing AW's lobby training session held at the Capitol tallied 233 in the standing-room only crowd.

Action Wisconsin reported that, according to meeting reports turned in at the end of the lobbying effort, at least 25 state senators and over half the assembly representatives received visits from their constituents who discussed their opposition to AB475/SB233, the so-called "Defense of Marriage" (DOMA) bills, with legislators and their staffs. Although the Senate was in session, several senators left the chamber to meet with AW's citizen lobbyists, only to be unexpectedly called back mid-conference for a floor vote. Though the Assembly was not in session, a majority of the body's DOMA sponsors reportedly had "schedule conflicts" and were unable meet directly with LEAD participants from their districts.

LEAD volunteers also shared their support for civil marriage equality for same-sex couples and the inclusion of domestic partners in benefit packages for state employees similar to those available for married workers. Some also heeded advice provided by AW organizers to also bring up other, non-LGBT related issues of personal concern during their conferences with their elected officials.

AW's lobbyists ranged from 2-year old Parker, the daughter of La Crosse couple Tracie Blumentritt and Rebecca Angle, to seniors from Milwaukee's SAGE group. Plucky Cambridge teenager Dale Gunderson, accompanied by AW Board vice president Tamara Packard, even lobbied DOMA lead cosponsor Sen.

Scott Fitzgerald (R-Juneau).

Additionally, hundreds of other supporters of the LEAD event called, wrote and emailed legislators throughout the day supporting LGBT equality. Emails sent through Action Wisconsin's Internet action center alone tallied over 300 pro-gay, anti-DOMA messages.

The significant mainstream media coverage of the event was aided by an hour-long press conference held at the Capitol the morning of the lobby day. In addition to prepared remarks by AW Executive Director and testimony from the Blumentritt-Angle family, several others offered their personal stories. Madison couple Karl Debus-López and Tanner Wray shared the two commitment ceremonies held during their 20-year relationship - a Unitarian ceremony marking their 10th anniversary and a Canadian marriage last June to mark their second decade together.

Appleton's Angela Stuart spoke of growing up in the loving environment provided by her lesbian moms. Madison PFLAG mom Mary Fiore exhorted her fellow Republicans to "do the right thing" on DOMA.

"I want to ask if religious dogma is dictating legislative decisions, and if that in itself is denying civil rights to a significant part of our population." Fiore said. "I challenge the Republican legislators to uphold their stance as the 'Compassionate conservatives' and to do the right thing."

Action Wisconsin board members put in an exceptionally long day. In addition to involvement in lobby day logistics, the lobby training session and their personal appointments with legislators, the board met for 45 minutes with Governor Jim Doyle to discuss a variety of issues ranging from civil marriage equality to funding for the state's HIV/AIDS programs. Board members also attended a reception for Wisconsin's LGBT community leaders held at the Executive Mansion that evening.

Legislative insiders report that legislators take significant notice of any lobbying effort that brings more than 50 people to the state house. The largest LGBT issue-related lobby day prior to LEAD was ARCW's 1999 lobby day for HIV/AIDS programs. That event brought 141 people to the Capitol, the day following AW's first-ever "Sweeten 'em Up" lobby day that had involved about two dozen volunteer lobbyists.



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Reality Check

The Lies The FRI Tells About Same-Sex Marriage

By Mike Fitzpatrick

Given their “virtuous” sounding name, it may seem almost impossible to believe. However, the Family Research Institute of Wisconsin (FRI) is attempting to mislead the citizens and lawmakers of Wisconsin through scare tactics, glittering generalities, circular logic, half-truths and outright lies about the need for its so-called “Defense of Marriage Act.”

Let’s look at the FRI “Fact Sheet” taken from their own website most recently updated in late August 2003. Then let’s look at the real truth of the matter. The “bold sections” below are taken in order verbatim from the FRI site. My rebuttal follows.

Fri “Facts” On Marriage and Wisconsin Marriage Law

Wisconsin’s current law refers to marriage being between a “husband and wife.” Opponents of AB 475/SB 233 claim that these words are sufficient to protect one-man/one-woman marriage. However, a liberal, activist court could determine because the law doesn’t specify that “husband” means “man” and “wife” means “woman,” and because there is no clear statement of the intent of Wisconsin’s public policy about marriage, that the current law is broad enough to include something other than one-man/one-woman marriage.

SCARE TACTIC & OUTRIGHT LIE: The word “wife” comes from the 11th Century Middle English. For almost 1,000 years it has meant the female partner in marriage. No court in U. S. history has interpreted the word “wife” to mean anything other than that nearly millennium old, gender specific definition. Moreover, every court decision to date that supports same-gender marriage refers not to

redefining marriage but to extending equality of opportunity to having unions legally recognized to all citizens regardless of sexual orientation. AB475/SB233 replace one heterosexual definition with another and thus in reality change nothing. However, the bills do perpetuate ongoing prejudice against LGBT people — the real intent of the FRI.

Throughout history, all civilized cultures have recognized marriage between one man and one woman as the norm.

OUTRIGHT LIE: Even the Bible refers to the plural marriages of some of its greatest heroes. Plural marriages, the same gender marriages and communal marriages have been recorded throughout world history in multiple cultures. The “norm” has been a diversity of unions, the majority of which have been heterosexual.

Throughout history, all civilized cultures have understood that the best environment for children is to have both a physically present mother and a father, that is, a man and a woman married to one another.

GLITTERING GENERALITY: A classic propaganda technique that makes a seemingly important statement using vague language that states nothing factual. If “understanding” means written documentation, there are numerous historical and contemporary documents that show a diversity of environments can produce well-adjusted children. Well-constructed scientific surveys have repeatedly demonstrated that quality parenting involves consistency, boundary setting and other characteristics. These skills can be performed by any number of individuals, couples or even groups of adults. The findings by the American Psychological Association and the American Psychiatric Association simply trump Bible-based bigotry.

Throughout history, all civilized cultures have recognized that children growing up to be stable, contributing citizens is the guarantee of that culture’s future. These societies have therefore historically protected marriage.

GLITTERING GENERALITY COVERING AN OUTRIGHT LIE: Cultures that permit quality parenting are a product of the stable social systems that result from the acceptance of naturally occurring diversity of race, ethnicity, religious belief, etc. Religious intolerance is one of the most pervasive and destabilizing forces in recorded human history. Such intolerance has led to such things as religious wars, pogroms, Inquisitions, heretic burning and - most interestingly - the settling of the majority of the colonies that formed the United States, whose founders wisely created a “godless” Constitution. The FRI of WI is just a contemporary example of such religious intolerance.

Marriage is not just about “love and commitment.” It is the union of the two sexes and the union of two families, and the means by which families are built and maintained and family names and lineages are perpetuated.

OUTRIGHT LIE: Apparently the FRI hasn’t read the traditional marriage vow that expressly asks each

party to “love and honor” and to commit to do same “until death us do part.” If family names and lineages were important to those other than royalty, there would not be a hobby known as genealogy. Tracking lineage has uses a variety of records and tracks not only traditional marriages but “unsanctified” unions.

Marriage is not discriminatory. All citizens have the same right: if they meet the other statutory requirements, they can marry if their intended spouse is someone of the opposite sex.

HALF TRUTH: Marriage is not discriminatory, as long as anyone can participate in it with the adult they choose to commit to. Categorically limiting the civil marriage definition to reflect a particular version of a religious dogma is in fact the very dictionary definition of discriminatory. It also violates both the Constitutional principles of separation of church and state and of equal treatment under the law.

Research has shown and continues to show that monogamous, life-long marriages between one man and one woman result in, among other things, fewer abortions, safer homes for both women and children, safer communities, less poverty and welfare, less premarital sex and out-of-wedlock children, fewer divorces, a healthier society, more revenue and a broader tax base, and more citizen involvement in civic activities.

GLITTERING GENERALITY AND HALF-TRUTH: With the exception of abortion and tax revenue, the same can be said for same-gender unions that are lifelong and monogamous. And if same gender couple’s relationships are legally recognized, the tax revenue issue will be true as well. The statement also begs the question: with over 10,000 heterosexual divorces disrupting families in Wisconsin in the last decade, why isn’t the FRI working to strengthen the above mentioned “lifelong” marriages?

Because monogamous, life-long marriage between one man and one woman brings order and numerous benefits to society, there is a legitimate “state interest.” Governments, therefore, should protect and strengthen this institution in public policy and programs.

CIRCULAR LOGIC COVERING AN OUTRIGHT LIE: In order to ask for the force of law, you have to prove your case. As the above rebuttals show, the FRI has woefully failed to do so. Inclusion of same-gender civil marriages will also bring greater stability to the LGBT community that makes up anywhere from 4-10% of the entire population. Is such enhanced stability not a legitimate “state interest”? (Just a side note to the FRI folks: you put your summary argument last, not next to last.)

Marriage encourages the sexes to complement each other’s strengths and weaknesses. It is the way that men and women, with all their differences, have been united to bring out the best in the individuals and therefore in the children and in society at large.

HALF TRUTH AND GLITTERING GENERALITY: All working relationships between two people - marital or otherwise - work best when the parties bring complimentary skills and deficits to the union. All

people are unique and our society in its advancement of full gender equality has demonstrated that beyond basic biology, most of the so-called “differences” between men and women result from sexual stereotyping and cultural conditioning.

In theory at least, individuals and organizations make decisions after coldly reviewing all the facts and weighing all the risk-versus-benefit arguments. When it comes to its “facts” to prove the need for its so-called “Defense of Marriage” law, the FRI simply hasn’t made its case.

However, the reality of contemporary American and Wisconsin partisan politics is that all decision-making occurs with foresight that extends merely through the next election cycle. Balanced perspective comes only in retrospect. History will not be kind to either the legislative supporters of Wisconsin’s DOMA or its prejudiced primogenitor, the Family Research Institute of Wisconsin.



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Special Report

Marathon DOMA Debate Turns Testy

By Mike Fitzpatrick

Madison — Just 44 hours after their latest formal introduction, Wisconsin’s so-called Defense of Marriage Act bills (AB 475/SB 233) had their day in the court of public opinion during a joint public hearing of the Senate Judiciary, Corrections, and Privacy and Assembly Judiciary Committees August 21 here.

What may have started out as a politically strategic fast track sprint turned into a nearly 13-hour marathon for the LGBT activists and allies who sat through the entire day’s proceedings. The anti-gay bill was the last of five bills being considered by the joint committees and generated over seven hours of testimony prior to the DOMA bills’ hearing. Testimony on those bills, combined with a nearly one hour delay in the start of the hearing, resulted the DOMA portion of the hearing beginning at approximately the start of happy hour.

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But committee members were far from happy by that time. Angrily waving an Action Wisconsin press release recounting in detail the multiple divorces of seven of the cosponsoring members of “Wisconsin’s self-appointed morality police,” Assembly lead sponsor Rep. Mark Gundrum (R-New Berlin) accused the civil rights group of “taking personal shots” and asked that testimony focus on the bills themselves.

Four times-married committee co-chair and DOMA cosponsor Sen. David Zien (R-Eau Claire) characterized the AW statement as “throwing gasoline” on the issue. Later in the hearing Zien ordered Capitol security to arrest and remove from the room AW President Tim O’Brien for his chest-high holding of a typing paper-sized photocopy of the co-chair’s picture overlaid with the words “Defender of

Marriage? Divorced 3X. Hypocrisy?"

The early blasts by committee DOMA supporters were answered in kind by fellow committee member Sen. Tim Carpenter (D-Milwaukee). Characterizing the committee's treatment of the bills' opponents throughout the hearing to that point as "once again treating gays as second class citizens," Carpenter defended the AW statement.

"Divorce causes more damage to marriage as an institution," Carpenter said. "It's about hypocrisy. It's about bigotry. It's about hatred. It's about prejudice. This bill should not be before us at all."

Following ten additional minutes of partisan sniping, Gundrum and Senate lead sponsor Scott Fitzgerald (R-Juneau) began their formal explanation of the need for the bills, which would replace the current statutory definition of marriage as being between "a husband and wife" with the words "one man and one woman." Most of Fitzgerald's testimony was read verbatim from the Legislative Reference Bureau's (LRB) analysis of the bill, an analysis one committee member called convoluted. "Did you ever read an LRB analysis that wasn't convoluted?" Fitzgerald replied.

Gundrum's formal testimony followed. Gundrum claimed the bill was necessary because "activist judges" might interpret the "vague language" of the current statute to include same-gender marriages.

"This is a time when society needs to reinforce the institution of marriage, not reinvent it," Gundrum claimed. "There are activist courts out there that are very, very creative."

In follow-up questioning, Carpenter asked the pair to "cite one instance in Wisconsin's 155 year history where any judge at any level in the court system has interpreted the current state statute to define marriage as anything other than being between a man and a woman." Rep. Charles Hebl (D-Sun Prairie) asked a similar question, asking Gundrum to only go back through a century of jurisprudence.

Gundrum responded by expressing fears that a transgendered person who had undergone "a sex change" operation might be considered a wife by "some judge in Florida" and that Wisconsin would be forced to recognize the validity of the union.

"If you go out and get a sex change, what are you now?" Gundrum asked. "Are you a wife? Two husbands?"

The follow-up questioning apparently became too intense for Fitzgerald, who abruptly left the hearing, leaving Gundrum to defend the bills alone. The senator later returned after citizen testimony had begun and remained until the end of the hearing.

One of the first citizens to testify was openly gay Assembly Rep. Marc Pocan (D-Madison) who claimed the bills cheapened rather than enhanced marriage by saying that "two consenting adults who love each other, who are committed to each other, are somehow unfit to have recognition from the state."

Pocan's testimony was followed shortly by that of registered WI Capitol Watch lobbyist Marvin Munyon. Munyon also founded the Family Research Institute of Wisconsin, the organization that has shepherded the introduction of DOMA legislation in every session of the Wisconsin Legislature since 1995.

Munyon testified that he was pleased with the "pro-family" language of the current bill as opposed to the "negative, restrictive language" of previous bills such as 1997's unsuccessful AB 104 that specifically prohibited same-sex couples from marrying. Munyon failed to mention that in the interim between AB 104's first introduction and its Assembly passage, the US Supreme Court had declared similar language unconstitutional in the *Romer v. Evans* "Colorado Amendment 2" case.

Alternating between DOMA supporters and opponents, testimony continued for about a half hour. Because Senate rules prohibit applauding or vocally reacting to any testimony, the more than a hundred LGBT activists and allies present revived the supportive technique of using the American Sign Language sign for applause, a waving of hands and wiggling of fingers. The silent affirmation had been used by both sides in the AB-104 hearings in Wausau in 1997.

Bill opponents also began using the "shunning" technique of standing up and facing away from any testimony of which they disapproved. The technique had been used repeatedly by Hasidic Jews, evangelicals and other groups opposing New York City's of gay-inclusive anti-discrimination ordinances and other eastern states' adoption of pro-LGBT legislation for nearly two decades.

Apparently co-chair Zien was unaware of such history when his attempt to stop the behaviors led to the tensest interchange of the hearing among he, Carpenter and Hebl.

"Should there be continued demonstrations, continued outbursts this bill will be exec'd." Zien shouted. The punitive "exec" tactic of forcing a full committee vote is rarely used by committee chairs.

Both Carpenter and Hebl immediately rose to object to Zien's threat. Zien then blustered "There you go! This bill is about to be exec'd! You're making sure this bill will be exec'd next Tuesday!"

"How dare you!" Carpenter shouted back.

"Do they just get to clap for your side?" Hebl followed, referring to DOMA supporters in the audience who had added an occasional "Amen" to Biblical quotes offered in testimony and a few brief hand claps following several speakers.

"If there are outbursts, they are not allowed. They are not allowed," Zien said.

Carpenter then jumped up and mockingly saluted Zien. "Yes, sir," Carpenter shouted. The senator's comic gesture defused the tension enough to permit the hearing to continue.

For the next two or so hours testimony alternated between the pro and anti DOMA factions. Supporters of the bill, with only one or two exceptions, were clergy, denominational representatives or individuals referencing The Bible. Those attempting to present a secular argument, such as the Family Research Institute's Executive Director Julaine Appling, cited without documentation the rhetoric of studies conducted by right-wing, so-called "family values" organizations. One minister cited the findings of long discredited right-wing researcher Paul Cameron, who at the late-1980's height of the AIDS crisis released a "study" using obituaries in gay newspapers to "prove" that the average gay man dies thirty years earlier than heterosexual males.

In her appeal for legislators to solve the "marriage crisis" legislatively rather than judicially, Appling could hardly contain herself. Quivering with repressed anger as she obliquely referenced the DOMA opponents Appling said: "There's more I'd like to say but I'll save it for a later time." Appling is featured in an FRI-produced weekly commentary head on Christian radio stations in Wisconsin.

Anti-DOMA testimony ranged from the creative dramatic presentation put on by teens from gay-straight alliances and GLSEN chapters from eastern and southeastern Wisconsin during the closing minutes of the hearing to poignant, personal speeches.

UW-Madison law professor Meg Gaines contrasted her 14 year-old, mortgage and car loan-paying, two child family's rights with those of a married couple. She noted same-gender couples typically cannot get health benefits for their partners or make emergency medical decisions for partners without question.

Gaines noted that even in death she will be discriminated against by the state of Wisconsin. "My (University-provided) death benefits will die with me because I can't be married," Gaines said. "This is an issue of basic human rights."

Suburban Madison resident John Kusch waxed philosophical. In his testimony before the committee he asked "who owns marriage?"

"Is it possible for the government to respect my choice of mate - in my case, another man — despite the fact that parts of society might disagree with that choice?" Kusch asked. "I am here today to ask each of you to consider that I might deserve a chance to try to be the husband my father was the day he married my mother," Kusch concluded.

By about 7:45 p.m., the committee had exhausted the list of DOMA supporters and the last ninety minutes or so of the hearing took on a muted tone. Unlike the DOMA supporters, who typically exited the hearing room within minutes of the conclusion of their testimony, more than a third of the LGBT activists and allies stayed to listen to all of their side's testimony. The silent applause continued. By the final speech in opposition to AB 475/SB 233 offered at 9:20pm by veteran Milwaukee activist Stephanie Hume, all but a handful of the joint committee remained as well. Among them were Fitzgerald and Gundrum.

AW President Tim O'Brien, who was permitted to return to the hearing room after disposing of his mini-placard, felt there had been a number of "teachable moments" in the duration of the marathon hearing. Referring to the committee members of both parties, O'Brien noted: "I watched their eyes while our side spoke. But I really think they were beginning to get it - the reality of our lives."

As of *IN Step's* deadline, neither committee had scheduled the necessary vote to either kill or refer the bills to the Assembly and Senate.



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Special Report

Award Winning Performances Keep DOMA Hearing Hopping

Analysis By Mike Fitzpatrick

As with any event of historical import, the sublime and the ridiculous are rarely far apart. Thirteen hours of Joint Committee Hearings, especially the more than five and a half solely on Wisconsin's Defense of Marriage Act produced its share of superlatives in both categories. Here's a handful:

The "Never Going To Be Picked Last Again" Award goes to the three dozen or so queers who showed up at the Capitol at 9 a.m. for the Action Wisconsin briefing and stuck it out to hearing's close at 9:20 p.m. That's stamina worthy of Olympic class athletes.

The "A Star Is Born" Award goes to Tim Carpenter. Even some of his long time supporters were wondering how firmly our typically mild-mannered, affable, openly gay senator would handle himself in this first true test of working on our issues. Carpenter cut off Mark Gundrum's hissyfit over the Action Wisconsin press release before the representative had reached full snit. His Good Scout salute to co-chair Zien's "exec" blather both brought the house down, effectively neutering the oft-honeymooning senator. Carpenter was Tammy Baldwin on testosterone!

The Queer Eye For The Straight Guy Award goes to Rep. Tom Hebl of Sun Prairie. He acted like a toad at the 1997 AB 104 hearings in Wausau. In a political makeover even Carson and company couldn't pull off Hebl morphed into a pro-gay prince at the August 21 hearing. We're also glad he didn't have to prance around in his undies before he got it right like the poor straight slobs have to on the Bravo reality show.

The "Discretion Is The Better Part of Valor" Award goes to the injudicious use of the "shunning" technique (see the main story for specifics). Queers had already had packed the hearing room by way more than 2-1. When the shun technique was used against a diminutive blonde, suburban, Christian housewife who nervously fidgeted through her paper-clipped Post-Its and Porta Bible as she half whispered her squeaky-voiced, "Fargo" inflected testimony, it came off as bullying. I'm sure that the FRI's Juliane Appling will make that incident the center point of a future radio rant.

On the other hand, the Mein Kampf Award is presented to the testimony delivered by a Verona churchman from one of those "do-it-yourself" evangelical community churches. As he told Sen.

Carpenter anyone who disagreed with his perverted view of Christianity was “seriously in error.” That appeared to include even some of the other DOMA supporters. In both demeanor and rhetoric he was just a mini-moustache and swastika emblazoned armband away from the kind of “truth” that lead to the herding of Jews into cattle cars for the Final Solution.

The “What Planet Do You Live On” Award goes to the elderly, dowager humped, white haired, Mickey Rooney-sized Madison minister who advised the committee that HIV is spread by gay-spewed secondhand smoke. Even Sen. Fitzgerald was stunned by that one. First runner-up was the reed-thin, mini-mullet coifed, wallet chained to the belt loop, personal attendant of a wheelchair-bound man who for all practical purposes looked like a reanimated Howard Hughes. The attendant delivered a 15 minute, disjointed, rambling rant that tried to somehow explain how the Almighty worked his will in the world. He came off as being just a high-powered rifle and a bell tower away from being breaking news on CNN. Sen. Zien wanted him to write it all down so he could send copies to all his friends.



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New Group Grapples with PrideFest Debt

By William Attewell

Milwaukee — A community “workgroup” has formed to explore options for retiring PrideFest’s existing debt and ensuring the future of PrideFest as a yearly festival.

PrideFest’s current debt stands at at a minimum \$136,483. A complete and independent audit funded by the Cream City Foundation is expected to be complete by month’s end.

In recent weeks, PrideFest’s board asked the Cream City Foundation to assist in exploring ways of retiring the debt and ensuring production of a 2004 festival. The PrideFest workgroup was formed to provide diverse representation of the LGBT community in these decisions.

The workgroup will be led by a core committee that will set priorities and delegate responsibilities to the larger group. According to sources, the final composition of the core committee has not yet been determined. However,

IN Step has learned that a preliminary list of candidates includes former PrideFest co-director Susan Cook, longtime PrideFest council member Peter Minns, CCF board member Scott Gunkle, former PrideFest board member Cindy Taylor, HRL-Pac president Paul Williams, Milwaukee LGBT Center board member Brenda Coley, and CCF board member Denise Wise.

The full workgroup features a wide range of activists including John Blaszczyk, Lil Lau, Marcus Smith, Neil Albrecht, Owen Mahone, Lew Boyles, Robert Starshak, Ross Draegert, Sheri Goldberg, Si Smits, Stephanie Hume, Karen Gotzler and Jennifer Gryniewicz among others.

The workgroup has met twice in recent weeks. At the first meeting of this workgroup, held September 25, it was announced that the entire PrideFest board had resigned from their positions, although several key members of the PrideFest organization offered to participate in the workgroup.

According to sources, the workgroup has had preliminary “positive” discussions with Milwaukee World Festivals, Inc. about continuing PrideFest at the Summerfest grounds. PrideFest currently owes Milwaukee World Festivals, Inc. over \$27,000. Further meetings between workgroup representatives and Milwaukee World Festivals, Inc. are expected in coming weeks.

The workgroup also approved paying off all vendors who were owed less than \$300. The total amount of

those 10 vendors totals \$1,595. Additional contacts are also being made with remaining vendors making them aware of PrideFest's financial status via a letter from the core group on Cream City Foundation letterhead.

Finally, starting on October 6, PrideFest will move its office to the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center at 315 W. Court Street.



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Special Report

In Walker's Point, Tomorrow Is Right Now

By William Duane

The neighborhood is presided over by the old Allen-Bradley clock, its four faces pointing in the directions of the compass, situated atop the old factory, which has been redesigned to look like some kind of postmodern fortress. The Walker's Point area, home to most of Milwaukee's gay clubs and dozens of working class businesses for many decades, is a neighborhood in transition.

Part boutique and part blue collar, the businesses of Walker's Point, and the area's residents — loft dwellers living next door to working class renters — rub elbows with each other, sometimes uncomfortably, and provide a glimpse into the near future. Walk down 2nd Street north of the train tracks and you'll discover a Soup Bros. down one street and, a little further on, one of Milwaukee's last tanneries.

The old Teweles building, which seems to lean a little, rises behind the block containing Club 219, C'est La Vie, and sandwiched in between, the new Barossa, an upscale eatery where diners sip wine and watch the trucks go by on their way to Marchese's produce distributor.

Then there is the new multimillion-dollar resident, a state-of-the-art technology high school built with funding from the Bradley Foundation. Its steel edges and sleek design look incongruous surrounded by dance bars and strip clubs. It stands like a silent marker to the big questions on everybody's mind in the Walker's Point neighborhood today: How long will the delicate balancing act last? How long will developers looking to convert crumbling structures into million-dollar cash pits put up with the longtime residents? Can working class entertainment and factories co-exist with upscale housing and boutiques?

Prof. Harvey Rabinowitz, who teaches urban planning at UW-Milwaukee, thinks that it's a matter of timing. "How long will it take?" he asks sipping at a cup of coffee one recent sunny afternoon in Barossa. "Ten, fifteen years I think." He points out that it took fifteen to twenty years for the Third Ward to be developed. "It's a much longer incubation process in Milwaukee." He points to the ultra-trendy neighborhood of Williamsburg in New York as a contrast. "In Williamsburg, it took about two years."

He describes it as “edgy, very edgy,” nodding in approval as he describes the residents’ tattoos.

When asked what will happen to working class businesses in Walker’s Point like Marchese’s, Rabinowitz predicts, “They’ll get an offer they can’t refuse. Some developer will come along with a price —Marchese will have a lawyer — the developer will have a lawyer — and Marchese and the developer will meet,” he finishes, bringing his fingers together. But when pressed about what will happen to the jobs at Marchese’s, Rabinowitz is at first reluctant to answer, then admits that they may very well disappear.

Flies In The Utopian Ointment

The development process is not all wine and roses. For the downside of trendy urban development, one doesn’t have to look too hard. In areas like Seattle’s Capital Hill, San Francisco’s Mission District and South of Market area, and even New York’s Soho, development is twenty or even thirty years down the road from where Milwaukee is at today. And some of the glimpses of the future one gets from looking at these neighborhoods are not encouraging.

Tom Wetzel taught philosophy at UW-Milwaukee from 1976 to 1981, when he relocated to San Francisco’s Mission District. He found himself smack in the middle of a war, with working class residents and community activists on one side, and developers and powerful political players on the other. The stakes: the future of the neighborhood, what kind of jobs and housing it would support, and who would be able to reside there.

In the ongoing battle over the Mission, and other trendy areas of San Francisco targeted for development, Wetzel has become a well known critic of what is usually termed “gentrification,” the process by which working class neighborhoods, made attractive to developers by cheap property prices, are developed to the point where the working class residents can no longer afford to rent there.

Wetzel, who fights gentrification through several grass-roots neighborhood groups, says that gentrification of an area doesn’t just limit who can live there, but also who can afford to enjoy the area. “With a more upscale population, you’ll get businesses that cater to themó candle-lit restaurants, vintage furniture stores, whatever. Many of the businesses that serve working class neighborhoods are pretty marginal, so if commercial rents rise, they may be forced out. —Bars, for example, are often marginal.”

That possible future worries Pam Norby and Beverly Beenan, co-proprietors of one of the newest LGBT-owned business in Walker’s Point, the Out ’n About nightclub and restaurant. Situated on First Street just south of the Allen-Bradley building (now Rockwell Automation), Out ’n About is an ingenious combination of trendy but accessible entertainment. Works by local artists hang in the same space used for everything from spinning techno to live music to karaoke, with a cafe opening sometime this month.

Norby says that the area’s art galleries and dynamic character attracted them. She says they have a

clientele that “encompasses club kids and older upscale patrons.” Having lived in New York for ten years, though, Norby realizes that gentrification is always a threat. She points to their landlord as an advantage on their side. A longtime Walker's Point property owner who was born in the building, “he is extremely protective,” Norby says, and gave them a lease with an option. Norby and Beenan also say that Angel Sanchez, the alderman in the area, was supportive in their efforts to get a license from the City.

“But there was always that fear,” Norby adds, “that Walker's Point didn't need another bar.”

Sanchez, a big smiling man who meets me outside the United Community Center at 9th and Washington, in the heart of the Hispanic community, seems optimistic that developers and the community can work together to control the effects of gentrification in trendy areas under consideration for development. Sanchez serves the Twelfth District, which includes most of Walker's Point and the Hispanic community centered around Historic Mitchell Street.

“We have to make sure there's enough affordable housing if people want to rent close to downtown,” he says, emphasizing the need to include rental property in development plans, since much of the development in the Third Ward has come in the form of high-end lofts. In Walker's Point, Sanchez says he would like to see “a mixture of affordable housing and retail, and room for some rental units, especially along the river.” He states, “My emphasis is to make sure it has the fitness center, the grocery store, the on-site dry-cleaning, recreation — even a golf driving range — businesses that people can use.”

But activists like Wetzel doubt that it is in the interests of developers to listen to the community. His experience in the Mission has been that developers resist any attempt to give the community more input or control over the process. He puts it in clear terms: “For-profit developers prefer to build for the higher-income segment of the population because that's where the big profits are.”

Sanchez is not too receptive to such criticism. “Some people would evidently prefer to see a building rot, empty, rat infested, than to see it developed.”

But Wetzel claims that the portrayal of anti-gentrification activists as simply anti-development is inaccurate. He says that, “the issue isn't really development but displacement” of working class residents and businesses.

The Mission Anti-Displacement Coalition (MAC), a neighborhood resident group, drew up a “People's Plan” that tried to balance the growth in population with the existing population's needs. The main obstacle to the plan, says Wetzel, was a lack of funding for non-profit affordable housing developers. When MAC tried to pass an affordable housing bond issue to set aside money to support non-profit developers, San Francisco real estate interests mounted a campaign and defeated it.

Toto, Kansas Has Been Sold

Hanging over Walker's Point, just as palpably as the shadow of the four-sided clock, is the movement known as New Urbanism. The principles of the movement are embodied in the efforts of the Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU), an influential elite organization made up mostly of architects, real estate developers, and interested big city politicians. Milwaukee's own Mayor John Norquist will soon be leaving office to become the next President of CNU.

In 1996, CNU issued a Charter of New Urbanism which got huge amounts of media attention and drew support from members of the Clinton administration, including then Secretary of Housing & Urban Development Henry Cisneros. The organization now has about two thousand members involved in more than a thousand New Urbanist development projects around the country.

The CNU's Charter at first reads like a wish list of grass-roots urban causes. The opening paragraph cites "disinvestment in central cities, the spread of placeless sprawl, increasing separation by race and income, environmental deterioration, loss of agricultural lands and wilderness, and the erosion of society's built heritage," as the major problems faced by America's big cities. But reading further down one finds that the policies suggested to counteract these problems don't exactly match the way New Urbanism has been applied so far in Milwaukee.

For instance, the Charter suggests that "neighborhoods should be diverse in use and population," but the Third Ward, Milwaukee's (and Norquist's) centerpiece example of New Urbanism in action, is hardly diverse in its population or use. The price of living in the new lofts is out of range for all but a few, and businesses in the area offer nothing but high-end dining and shopping.

Indeed New Urbanism in practice seems to be exactly what critics like Wetzel call itóhousing for millionaires with a few crumbs set aside for the rest of us.

Faced with the lack of socioeconomic diversity in the Third Ward, a supporter of New Urbanism like Prof. Rabinowitz, a longtime member of CNU, shrugs and says, "It's failure by success." He prefers to talk about the differences in transit usage between the residents of suburbs and the residents of areas like the Third Ward. "Do you know how many trips on average per day a car in a suburban household makes? Thirteen!" Whereas residents of New Urbanists areas, closer to downtown and other activity hubs, can walk or use public transit part of the time.

Rabinowitz also likes to talk about the "pioneers" who inhabit trendy neighborhoods (before they're priced out), including artists and the LGBT community. "Developers track these neighborhoods," Rabinowitz says. "They move in after the pioneers."

Norby and Beenan at Out 'n About don't seem to see themselves as pioneers, preferring the much more modest role of small business-owners just trying to make it. "I feel we have a following," Norby states simply.

Sanchez, meanwhile, takes an almost visionary outlook. While accepting that "different developers have

different niches in the market," he insists that the projects being planned today are exceptional. "They're setting the standard for a new Milwaukee, a trendier Milwaukee, a more upscale Milwaukee."

But neighborhood activists in cities where trendy development is further along, warn about the failures of New Urbanism, and doubt its usefulness to the "pioneers." Wetzel says that New Urbanists employ progressive rhetoric to hide an agenda of development at any cost. He uses environmentalist rhetoric about transit usage as an example. "The New Urbanist agenda seems to be especially popular with environmentalists. The problem is, environmentalism is sometimes promoted in ways that are blind to issues of social equity—it becomes a perspective that can be used by for-profit real estate developers to give a progressive spin to their profit-making aims."

As for the LGBT community, Wetzel says that LGBT activists have often worked with neighborhood groups to fight gentrification. He points out, "The Mission Anti-Displacement Coalition — which mainly formed to protect Latino working class families — was allied with progressive artists and gay activists associated with the Harvey Milk LGBT Democratic Club."

Some activists have called for the formation of neighborhood member organizations called community land trusts to fight gentrification. In a community land trust, residents of a neighborhood own their buildings or houses while the trust owns the land and sets rent caps. If a member wants to sell, they have to offer the property back to the trust at a restricted price. This keeps rents in the area from skyrocketing and assures that property ownership remains in the community.

Rabinowitz says that the main drawback to such an arrangement, or any kind of rent control, is that developers would be reluctant to invest in the neighborhood. As an alternative to encourage economic diversity, he suggests laws requiring a threshold amount of affordable housing in any development plan. In practice, however, Wetzel points out that such laws are usually full of loopholes that allow developers to avoid the affordable housing requirements.

Who Is It That Speaks?

Disagreements about the nature and direction of development in a neighborhood often come down to who gets a say in the planning process. When developers and politicians dominate the process, as they did in the Third Ward, the result seems to be a lack of economic diversity and a withdrawal by working class residents and businesses to other areas, or their abandonment of the city altogether.

Still, some businesses manage to adapt and survive. Descending a flight of steps from Second Street just south of National Avenue, you will find yourself in one possible answer to the rapidly changing character of Walker's Point: ETC. The newest addition to the La Cage complex, ETC is a shiny, well-lit lounge with stainless steel ceiling and mirrored waterfalls behind the bar, where the patrons are surrounded by LCD screens continuously showing music videos and computer imaging animation.

If the postmodern chic is a bit over the top, the customers sipping \$10 martinis don't seem to mind. This

is not the usual crowd one finds in Milwaukee's gay bars. They're more upscale (the prices make sure of that), even more trend-conscious (almost painfully so), and more likely to fit in with the loft-dwelling crowd.

If you're lucky, you may find yourself being served by Luke Hobbs, a sharp-looking blond bartender, who also happens to be a student in urban planning at UWM. Hobbs, who hails from New London near Appleton, has lived in Milwaukee for about three-and-a-half years. He attended classes where Mayor Norquist lectured on New Urbanism.

When asked whether he thought Walker's Point was heading in the same upscale direction as the Third Ward, he paused. "Upscale? Yes, it's heading in that direction — more upscale." But he thinks that the development will occur on a much smaller level than in the Third Ward, due to the relative scarcity in Walker's Point of multi-level and architecturally interesting structures.

What about gentrification? Hobbs answers, "Gentrification in Walker's Point is somewhat of an issue — it does push out some people." He points to some subsidized housing in the new loft developments in the area as one solution. He seems optimistic. "It's heading in the right direction," he says, and heads off to pour another drink.

Over at Out 'n About, Norby and Beenan get the karaoke crowd going. A middle-aged woman belts out a Celine Dion number. They're optimistic, too, although they worry about losing the very community they're targeting with their new place. "We want to make it clear," Norby says, "it is a place for young and old, male and female to go — not to be compartmentalized, as other cities have done."

Meanwhile, the eight hands of Stanton Allen's and Lynde Bradley's clock keep turning, counting down the hours to an uncertain future.



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IN Step Investigation

Conflicting Financial Statements Suggest Creative Accounting at PrideFest

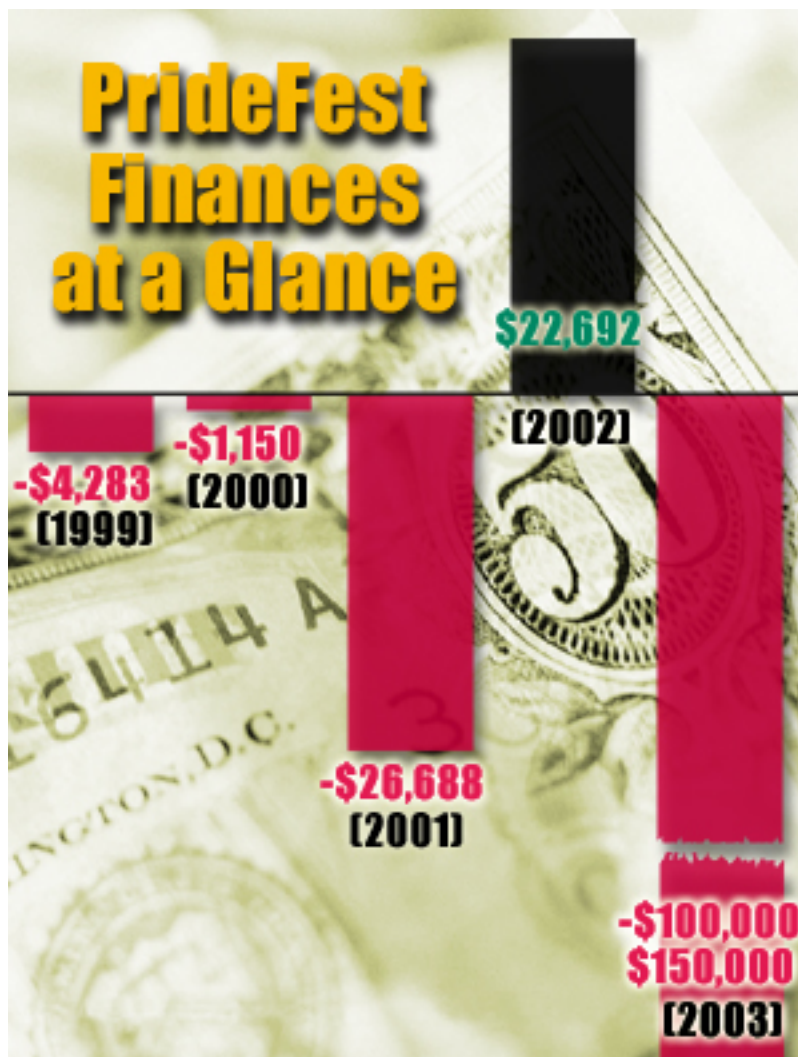
By William Attewell

Milwaukee — How can PrideFest simultaneously have lost \$98,000 -- possibly \$133,558 -- yet show a \$37,130 profit? It apparently all depends on with whom PrideFest's board is sharing their numbers according to conflicting financial reports obtained by *IN Step*.

IN Step's review revealed conflicting numbers and historically atypical accounting practices detailed in a paradoxical series of PrideFest financial reports offered to different sources.

IN Step initially obtained an internal "profit and loss" statement dated Aug. 7 for PrideFest 2003. *IN Step* then compared the August internal report to three additional public reports. These included PrideFest's 2002 audited financial statement, and the June, 2003 projected budget report supplied by PrideFest treasurer Paul Sherry shortly after the organization's announcement of a "\$100,000 to \$150,000 loss" for this year's festival. *IN Step* also obtained a third 2003 report entitled "PrideFest Cost Analysis" provided to the Cream City Foundation on July 31.

A comparison of the documents paint a disturbing, confusing picture. Directly contradictory deficit statistics and tallies are drawn in the differing reports. The reports also appear to some use financial manipulation techniques. One activist, who reviewed the financial material said, "It looks like a situation similar to those uncovered in the recent Enron and Worldcom accounting scandals."



Despite PrideFest’s public statement that “unprecedented bad weather [was] the major factor that caused [its] financial problems” in 2003, *IN Step* found that total revenue in 2003 was down only \$29,860 over the 2002 festival.

IN Step found massive spending increases and substantial losses for PrideFest in 2003 in a wide range of areas including; entertainment, office expenses, merchandise sales, the Pride Guide and the Youth Pride Village.

According to the August internal report, PrideFest has revised current losses for the 2003 festival down to \$98,558. That amount directly conflicts with the “Cost Analysis” report presented to CCF on July 31, which apparently indicates this year’s event showed a profit of \$37,130, hinting that PrideFest currently is not in a deficit situation at all.

However, according to CCF Executive Director Jennifer Gryniewicz, it is unclear whether this “Cost Analysis” report was a budget projection or an actual financial report.

As of press-time, the PrideFest organization failed to clarify this issue with CCF or *IN Step* despite repeated inquiries. According to acting PrideFest spokesman Marcus Smith, Treasurer Paul Sherry is

currently out of the country on vacation.

The June budget report showed total PrideFest expenditures at \$501,909. However, the August internal statement now totals \$471,146, an actual decrease of nearly \$30,000.

IN Step was unable to determine where and how the decrease occurred. However, according to one PrideFest source, the August PrideFest report may not include the final bill from World Festival Inc., for grounds rental and other items. Another PrideFest source said the amount due to World Festivals Inc. may total as high as \$35,000. According to a third source, there is also money owed to ShockHazard, the Internet design firm that developed PrideFest's website and created its advertising. Money may be owed to other creditors as well.

If the World Festivals Inc. amount — unaccounted for in the August internal report — is accurate, PrideFest's final loss for 2003 may rise as high as \$133,558 or more.

Smith conceded that some of that information in August PrideFest statements is incomplete, "The August 7th P&L statement *IN Step* has obtained does not include impending invoices from companies which we haven't received invoices from for remaining balances for services provided for PrideFest 2003. The Summerfest bill has not yet arrived, although some of the bill had been paid as required at the festival's end."

The Proud Crowd Affair

The primary evidence of expense shifting inconsistent with the festival's historical accounting procedures is found in this year's "Proud Crowd" section of the August internal report. PrideFest's 2002 audit showed a "Proud Crowd" expense of just \$1,988. That amount exploded to \$66,897 in 2003, according to the August internal report.

PrideFest reports that \$55,000 of that amount is for entertainment fees paid to Pat Benatar for her lightly attended "Proud Crowd" concert at this year. An additional \$10,195 of "Proud Crowd" expenses in 2003 went for advertising and the remainder under the heading: merchandise.

In a sudden break from PrideFest's long-standing accounting practices, the festival shows their "Proud Crowd" expenses for the Benatar concert to be separate from PrideFest's general advertising, entertainment and merchandise expenses.

The Proud Crowd's only connection with the Benatar concert was the ticket was offered as a premium bonus for a Proud Crowd level donation. Non-Proud Crowd members also purchased tickets to the concert.

In the final analysis -- based on PrideFest's figures -- PrideFest lost \$44,972 on their much-heralded Pat Benatar "Proud Crowd" concert.

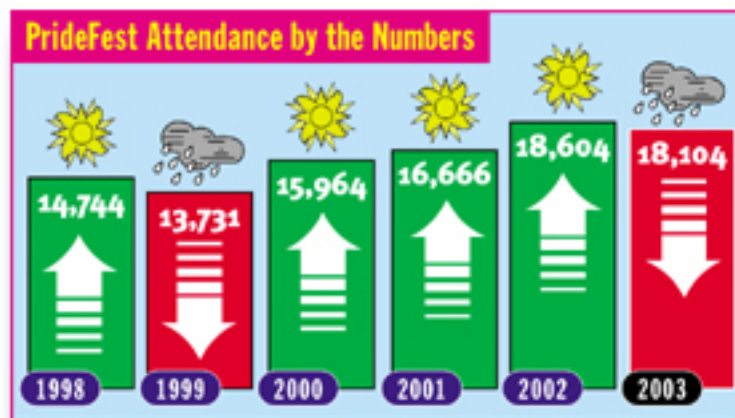
Big Spenders and Big Losses

Excluding the Pat Benatar concert, PrideFest 2003 also showed an almost 80% jump in entertainment expenses over 2002. PrideFest's 2002 audit lists entertainment expenses as \$46,390. That amount jumps to \$83,765 for the 2003 festival.

In what may be another apparent accounting sleight-of-hand, the final expenses declared for entertainment for 2003 does not include the cost for an appearance by "Queer as Folk" star Peter Paige's appearance at the PrideFest Youth Pride Village this year, along with an appearance by Pepper MaShay at the same event.

According to its figures, PrideFest sold \$90 worth of tickets to the Youth Pride Village Prom which featured the appearance by Paige and MaShay. The prom was eventually cancelled. PrideFest shows expenses of \$10,100 for the Youth Pride Village but provides no expense breakdown.

"The financial loss at the Youth Pride Village includes the cost of Peter Paige and Pepper MaShay as well as the fact we had to cancel the Prom because of low ticket sales and poor weather," explained Smith in an e-mail. "With the tickets that were purchased for the YPV Prom, the decision was made to donate all the proceeds to the Matthew Shepard Foundation. The patrons who bought tickets had the opportunity to meet Peter Paige; the total amount raised was \$500. Also, the budget is set up in a way each area of the festival has its own budget line."



In other areas, PrideFest spent \$29,648 for advertising according to its 2002 audit. The August profit and loss statement obtained by *IN Step* shows PR/Marketing expenses down to \$28,854 in 2003. However, that amount does not include its \$10,195 reported expenditure for "Proud Crowd" advertising in 2003.

The Pride Guide -- redesigned with a new format in 2003 -- featured heavier stock and four color printing throughout. PrideFest 2003 showed a loss of \$7,508 for the Pride Guide at a total cost of \$12,468. PrideFest spent \$6,038 for the Pride Guide in 2002 and no income figures were available for last year's

Pride Guide.

“The losses incurred by the Pride Guide were due to new changes to the style of the guide. We had to find a new printer, especially a printing company willing to work with us to induce [sic] costs [for] PrideFest. Unfortunately, we didn’t have enough time once we had found the printer to make enough ad sales in order to get the Pride Guide out in time for the festival. We did send out over 2,000 brochures to businesses and organizations compiled from mailing list provided to us by the Chicago Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce, the Greater Milwaukee Convention & Visitors Bureau, and other organizations,” explained Smith in an e-mail to *IN Step*.

Sales figures for PrideFest merchandise in 2003 show a loss for the festival at \$9,733 with total expenditures for T-shirts and other PrideFest items coming in at \$16,773. That total amount also does not include the additional \$1,702 reported expenditure for “Proud Crowd” merchandise in 2003. PrideFest spent \$6,935 for merchandise in 2002.

“Those numbers are inaccurate,” PrideFest’s merchandise co-ordinator Cindy Taylor told *IN Step*. “Paul [Sherry] has not yet figured out the amount of money that was made on the merchandise and has not factored that in. Also, [Sherry] lumped the “Queer As Folk” merchandise in with mine as total cost even though it’s not part of my merchandise. Again, this didn’t reflect any profit.”

“I’ve asked for these numbers to be fixed a couple of times; however, that hasn’t been done yet. So, unfortunately, I cannot give you any correct numbers at this time,” added Taylor.

Taylor says PrideFest spent roughly \$10,000 on merchandise in 2003 and sold quite a bit of it. “Almost all of what didn’t sell is able to carry over from one year to the next,” Taylor said. “I have very little loss exposure this year. In fact, someone has offered to buy all my 2003 shirts at cost, so it won’t even be a loss. My items are an actual bright spot in this year’s festival.”

In other areas, PrideFest paid \$7,875 in office rent for 2002, compared to a 110% leap in 2003 to \$17,000. PrideFest also spent \$4,004 on motorized golf carts used by PrideFest volunteers, board and council members at the 2003 festival.

Finally, *IN Step* has also learned that PrideFest’s application to the Internal Revenue Service to become a 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization was rejected by the federal government. This means that while PrideFest retains a not-for-profit organizational status, contributions made by individuals to PrideFest cannot be declared as charitable donations.

PrideFest and CCF

In the weeks after this year’s festival, CCF was approached by PrideFest to assist the festival in retiring the 2003 deficit.

A June 23 meeting between members of PrideFest and CCF generated a proposal which required PrideFest to provide a budget, invoices, contracts, general disclosures and any and all payments that have already been made by PrideFest to creditors to CCF.

According to the proposal, CCF would review the financial materials and then produce a financial report upon which it might be able determine what -- if any -- financial assistance could be provided.

PrideFest was to supply the financial material prior to a second scheduled meeting on July 17. PrideFest, on short notice, cancelled that July 17 meeting and has yet to reschedule it. On July 31, CCF did receive various PrideFest financial statements, but PrideFest has failed to respond to CCF questions regarding the material or any future meetings.

CCF had no direct comment on the financial information provided by PrideFest, but indicated a willingness to continue to work with the festival.

“At this point and time we are in the process to trying arrange additional meetings with PrideFest to get more complete financial information and then make an assessment of where PrideFest actually stands,” said CCF Board President Denise Wise. “Pridefest is an integral part of our community and we are committed to perserving this event.”

“PrideFest has been carefully examining invoices, and waiting for the most current figures as to present the most accurate profit/loss statement — which is still not final,” PrideFest co-director Michael Lisowski told *IN Step*. “PrideFest has met with CCF and been in communications with CCF regarding their proposal to assist PrideFest contributors in having a tax-deductible donation. PrideFest will release information when issues and situations are confirmed. Incomplete information only adds more confusion.”

Many community leaders contacted by *IN Step* emphasized the need for PrideFest to quickly provide the community with complete financial information, and others urged PrideFest to initiate organizational change.

“In order for any organization to maintain positive public and community standing, there must be a willingness to openly disclose financial information,” said Neil Albrecht, Executive Director, Milwaukee LGBT Community Center.

“An organization leaves itself open to tremendous speculation and scrutiny if it fails to release consistent financial information on a timely basis. Community members — particularly financial supporters — have an interest and a right to know the financial operations of an organization. We disclose our financials at our Annual Meeting and in our Annual Report. It is certainly in the best interest of PrideFest to regroup, assess their present-day financials, and release some sort of consistent report to the community.

The release of this type of information may just act as a catalyst for garnering community support. Without an open disclosure, I believe that people will remain leery of the fiscal integrity of the organization.”

“It looks as though it is just bad business again at PrideFest,” said long-time activist Eldon Murray. “They need to bring in people who understand PrideFest is a business. PrideFest is a business, and therefore they need people who understand business.”



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Wisconsin Republicans Rev

Up Anti-Gay Marriage Bill

Action Wisconsin Generates Over 1,000 Anti-Sponsorship Messages

By Mike Fitzpatrick

Madison — Wisconsin Senator Scott Fitzgerald (R-Beaver Dam) and Assembly Representative Mark D. Gundrum (R-New Berlin) announced their plans to reintroduce a so-called “Defense of Marriage” (DOMA) bill in a co-sponsorship solicitation memo to their fellow legislators August 6.

“We are introducing a Wisconsin Defense of Marriage Act to clarify that Wisconsin only recognizes as legally valid marriages which are between one man and one woman. Thirty-six states have a clear public policy to this effect, but Wisconsin is not yet among them.” the memo claims.

The Legislative Reference Bureau (LRB) analysis attached to the memo opines that “current law provides that marriage is a civil contract that creates the legal status of husband and wife,” which most readers might typically conclude is a heterosexual definition of marriage. The exact wording of the statutory definition (“a legal relationship between two equal persons, a husband and wife”) does not include the “creation of status” language in the LRB analysis.

Legislators have until August 18 to sign onto the bills, LRB 2957/2 in the Senate and LRB 3017/1 in the Assembly. In an related press release announcing the Wisconsin DOMA bill, Fitzgerald and Gundrum alluded to recent state and federal court cases that have made the possibility of legally-sanctioned same-gender marriages a future possibility.

Cases pending in the Massachusetts and New Jersey State Supreme Courts could rule prohibitions of such unions as discriminatory within the next year, which might result the passage of laws allowing same-gender marriages in those states. The “full faith and credit” clause of the U. S. Constitution would require other states to also honor the unions. The 36 states which already have passed DOMA legislation likely will face potentially expensive legal battles on the federal Constitutional question.

Fitzgerald reports that he also is investigating the possibility of introducing a DOMA-worded amendment to the state’s Constitution. That five year process, if successful, would conclude with a statewide referendum on the same-gender marriage question.

At a press conference in early August, Fitzgerald claimed “We’re moving on it (the DOMA bill) as

quickly as we can.” However, Capitol insiders noted that the Republican leadership dissuaded first-term Sen. Tom Reynolds (R-West Allis) from introducing a similar DOMA bill this past Spring during the first rounds of the protracted budget debate. GOP leaders then warned such a bill would allegedly “send the wrong message” to an electorate preoccupied with the state’s multi-billion dollar budget deficit.

Some Republican legislators also appear to believe that the DOMA bill would somehow prohibit same-gender couples from privately creating advanced directives and other legal documents that currently recognize their non-marital unions, or from utilizing private employer-provided domestic partner benefits. In an interview for a story appearing August 8 in the Fond Du Lac Reporter, State Sen. Carol Owens (R-Oshkosh) explained that her planned co-sponsorship of the DOMA bill was motivated by the reportedly “hidden agenda of gay couples is to obtain tax breaks given to married couples, along with other amenities, including joint insurance policies, family leave for health reasons, hospital visitation rights, provisions in wills and joint tax returns.”

“They (gay couples) can say whatever they want about their relationship being the same as a marriage, but they just can’t make it so,” Owens said.

Fellow Fond Du Lac Republican State Senator Carol Roessler apparently cannot believe long-term, sexually and emotionally intimate, same-gender relationships can exist. In the same article Roessler was quoted as noting such relationships are “no different than my best girlfriend or my dearest niece.”

“I love them (her girlfriends and nieces), but it is not a marriage.”
Roessler said.

For the record, Owens and Roessler both supported the 1998 Republican-sponsored hospital visitation act that allows all Wisconsin citizens, including same-gender couples, to designate in advance who may visit them while hospitalized.

Other Republicans appear to be using a separation of church and state argument to justify their signing onto the bill. State Rep. John Townsend (R-Fond du Lac) linked his support of the DOMA bill to recent pro-gay decisions in the Episcopal Church, moves that he apparently considers disrespectful. “In terms of the Episcopal church, they may take steps to bless or sanctify the union of same sex marriages. This has nothing to do with not treating gay people with respect.” Townsend said.

However, other Capitol observers see the motivation for the DOMA bill as a violation of church-state separation. Fitzgerald and Gundrum initially announced their intention to sponsor the DOMA bill just six days after the issuance of 12-page Vatican decree warning Catholic politicians that they have a “moral duty” to keep same-gender unions from being legalized. “Marriage is holy, while homosexual acts go against the natural moral law,” the document claims. Both Fitzgerald and Gundrum are Roman Catholic.

Ironically, news of the Wisconsin DOMA bill’s pending introduction was overshadowed the following day by mainstream news reports of the discovery of papal documents issued in 1962 ordering the

suppression of all reports of pedophilia and sexual abuse by the church's clergy. The Vatican's suppression decree effectively allowed of the sexual abuse of adults and children of all sexual orientations by a tiny minority of Catholic clergy to continue worldwide for more than three decades.

According to the Madison-based Family Research Institute (FRI), an evangelical Christian-rooted, extreme-right political organization, a dozen additional GOP legislators have signed onto the bill as of *IN Step's* deadline. They include Representatives Jeff Fitzgerald (R-Horicon), Stephen Nass (R-Palmyra), Glenn Grothman (R-West Bend), Michael Lehman (R-Hartford), Ann Nischke (R-Waukesha), Sheryl Albers (Reedsburg), Phil Montgomery (Ashwaubenon), Daniel Le Mahieu (R-Oostburg), Alvin Ott (R-Forest Junction), and Mark Gottlieb (R-Port Washington); and Senators Joseph Leibham (R-Sheboygan) and Dave Zien (R-Eau Claire).

FRI has actively lobbied for DOMA legislation in Wisconsin since 1994. In the last legislative session a similar DOMA bill (AB-753) had 41 cosponsors including, as lead sponsor Rep. Wayne Wood (D-Janesville), only one of two Democrats to sign on to the legislation "by request of Family Research Forum and Family Research

Institute. Referred to Committee on Family Law". Like FRI's long history of anti-LGBT activism, lead sponsors Fitzgerald on Gundrum have years of publicly documented anti-gay animus. Both have repeatedly signed on to FRI-promoted bills. Gundrum also has authored several unsuccessful bills that would have negatively impacted the HIV/AIDS community.

Fitzgerald gained statewide attention in the late 1990's when he tried to force Wisconsin Public Television (WPR) to allegedly stop funding "homosexual propaganda" by running the award-winning, nationally-syndicated series "In The Life." Fitzgerald subsequently was informed during an on-air debate on WPR's "Weekend" program that no taxpayer dollars were expended in the running of the program, as it was offered free of charge by the program's producers.

Others pointed to the fact that the "In The Life" program had aired for several years prior without comment by Fitzgerald. They also point out that the Senator's interest and outrage were piqued only after the program advertised a segment on rural gay couples that prominently featured a same-sex pair living the Fitzgerald's district.

On the same day the current sponsorship memo was circulated, opponents of the bill also began speaking out on the issue. In a morning meeting with the editorial board of the Racine Journal Times Governor Jim Doyle noted "Wisconsin state law says that marriage is between a man and woman. I don't understand their (the Republicans) deep-seated need to say it over and over and over again."

Action Wisconsin, the statewide LGBT civil rights organization, issued an alert later that day to its supporters to contact their legislators and request them not to cosponsor the bill. According to AW public education director Joshua Freker, in less than 24 hours after the sponsorship memo was circulated, 338 messages in opposition to the anti-gay bill had been sent to legislators at least 83 of the 129 Assembly

and Senate districts through the Action Center on the organization's website.

Freker also reported the number of "don't sponsor" messages at *IN Step*'s deadline was close to exceeding 1,000 sent by constituents to elected officials in 119 legislative districts. Freker expected the number would easily pass the millennial mark by publication date. Action Wisconsin was also aware of numerous additional direct letters and contacts to legislators not tallied through the AW Action Center, Freker added.

August 10 saw a flurry of anti-DOMA editorial reaction. At the request of the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel AW's Executive Director Christopher Ott penned an opinion piece for the paper's Sunday Symposium on gay marriage. Ott scolded multiply-married politicians claiming to "defend marriage."

Ott wrote: "Former President Clinton signed the so-called 'Defense of Marriage Act' to prohibit the federal government from recognizing same-sex marriage, even though he was the greatest threat to his own marriage. Then, in the Lewinsky scandal, it turned out that some of the president's loudest accusers had broken their own marriage vows."

Ott also begged the "marriage defense" question in his editorial. "How are the committed relationships of lesbian and gay couples a threat to other relationships? How can gay and lesbian couples be a threat to families when they are families? Opponents of equality can't answer these simple questions," Ott wrote.

Even more dramatic was the editorial vigorously supporting same-gender marriage printed in Madison's Wisconsin State Journal. "The Wisconsin State Journal editorial board has traditionally opposed government meddling in private lives; obstacles to strong families; and unequal protection under the law," the editorial stated. "State and national 'marriage defense' measures deserve defeat on all those counts."

"But it's important to do more than simply oppose legislation that would inflict these wrongs on a minority. Denying gay couples the right to marry condemns them to second-class citizenship and discriminates on the basis of sexual orientation. This is plainly wrong," the editorial concluded.

How quickly the Fitzgerald/Gundrum bill moves through the legislature after the August 18 sign-on deadline is unknown at this time. Stung by the unsuccessful attempt to inject the legislative oversight into gubernatorial gaming compact negotiations with Native American nations, and by last Tuesday's failure to overturn Doyle's veto of GOP-inserted property tax-freeze language in the biennial budget, some Capitol insiders reportedly see the Republicans looking for a surefire veto override issue.

"The 'Defense of Marriage' bill certainly looks like a veto-proof winner, given the lopsided vote AB-104 received in 1997," one LGBT activist lamented.

Introduced by Rep. Lorraine Seratti (R-Spread Eagle), AB-104, bill that would have inserted language prohibiting same-sex marriage, passed by a 78-20 vote on May 13, 1997. Though the State Senate held hearings on the bill in 1998, no vote was taken in that body and the bill died.

However, Action Wisconsin sees the pending DOMA bill as a rallying point for the group's statewide citizen lobbying day, already scheduled for September 30. "No matter what the bill's status by then," Public Education Director Freker noted, "we will have Scott Fitzgerald and Mark Gundrum to thank for energizing our community on the civil marriage equality issue."



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Former Gov. Dreyfus on Civil Rights, Civil Unions and Making History

By Jamakaya

When OutReach, Madison's LGBT center, held its annual awards dinner on July 16, the group bestowed a special honor, its Political Courage Award, on former Wisconsin Gov. Lee Dreyfus. In 1982, Gov. Dreyfus, a Republican, signed the first statewide legislation prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation in housing, employment and public accommodations. Since then, 13 other states have adopted similar civil protections.

Recalling the campaign to pass the bill, former State Rep. David Clarenbach touted the grass-roots work of gay and lesbian activists, the support of religious groups, and the bipartisan support of legislators. "But all of that would have been for naught if not for the signature of one man," Clarenbach said of Gov. Dreyfus, "a man that deserves a chapter in the next edition of 'Profiles in Courage.'"

Wisconsin IN Step caught up with Gov. Dreyfus after the awards dinner and asked him about his historic role and his opinions on current gay issues and Wisconsin's political scene.

Wisconsin IN Step: Governor, you mentioned at the dinner being dismayed by the extreme right-wing influence in the Republican Party.

Dreyfus: I think that's true right now. It's very difficult steering a course as a moderate Republican today, just as it was difficult for somebody like [former Gov.] Pat Lucey or [former U.S. Sen.] Gaylord Nelson, who were moderate Democrats when the ultra-left wanted to push their agenda in that party. I guess these are cycles we go through. I was complaining about that to Pat Lucey, when we were co-chairs of the State Sesquicentennial in 1998. I said, "The right wing has taken over my party." He said, "Listen, we put up with the left wing for 20 years. Now it's YOUR turn." [laughs] And I guess there's some truth to that. But the Republican Party, which was born in Wisconsin in 1854 up in Ripon, was always a two-wing party. And some of these arch-conservatives do not know their party history very well. In those days it was the abolitionists versus the unionists. Some thought abolition [of slavery] was the only issue on the plate and others thought preserving this union was the main issue, as obviously Mr. Lincoln did.

IN Step: You talked about the influence of your mother, Clare Bluett Dreyfus, on your commitment to public service.

My mother was a suffragette. Issues of justice were important to her. We now have a new Clare Bluett Dreyfus who just graduated from North High School in Waukesha and is off to Smith College.

IN Step: Your granddaughter?

Right, and she formed the Gay Straight Alliance at North High. She went to some meeting that [OutReach Exec. Director] John Quinlan had in Madison and she came home saying, “Paca” – all the grandchildren call me “Paca” – “Paca, you didn’t tell me you signed the first law in the United States banning discrimination against gays.” I said, “Well there’s a lot of things I didn’t tell you.” [laughs]

IN Step: How do you feel about being honored for that achievement?

I was pleased to get the award but they listed it like a “Profile in Courage” thing. Frankly, it wasn’t a courageous decision at all. It was just simply the right thing to do, and I said that. It isn’t courageous to do the right thing when you know exactly what the right thing is.

IN Step: There was still a big controversy at the time. Did you get a lot of flack?

I headed it off because I went down and talked to my guys, legislatively, because I knew they were going to have to go back home. Some of them would head back home to those rural areas and they’re heading for deep water. So I’d explain what their governor did and why I signed that. But when I gave it to them based on Republican principles, that made sense to almost all of them – not all of them, obviously. But there were two basic principles. One, I said, as Republicans, you ought to take a firm stand that no government or employer or any individual has the right to ask anyone [about their sexual orientation]. And they agreed with that. Then they said, “Yeah, well what if it’s a teacher and it’s one of your grandchildren?” And I said, “If a teacher makes a pass at one of my grandchildren, I couldn’t care less if they were straight or gay, I want them out of that classroom and I want them out now.” And they agreed with that. But what did it matter what the orientation of the individual is if he commits an act like that in a classroom? Both of those simply made good common sense to the caucus. Now that didn’t shift their votes particularly, they have to vote for their constituency, but at least they were in a position to understand, why I signed it, and why it was important to me to sign it, and also to go back home and say, “Here’s what he’s talking about.” Because I have some very strong notions about how far the government ought to be intruding into our lives, and that’s fundamental Republicanism, starting back in 1854.

IN Step: You sound very libertarian in your approach.

The libertarian is on that side, and much of Republican dogma when it began had quite libertarian – the problem is that libertarians make it absolute: you don’t go to jail if you deal in narcotic drugs and so on. I don’t wish to go that far. I do believe we are 50 sovereign states, that’s the reason I’m anti-Roe v. Wade. I’m not anti-Roe v. Wade because I’m pro-life or anti-abortion. I’m anti-Roe v. Wade because I think the Supreme Court stretched like crazy and didn’t belong in that decision at all. They should have let the state handle it. There are some things that need to be done on a sovereign state basis. The federal government has just extended itself – you know, you can hardly think of any aspect of your life personally that the feds don’t have some intrusion into now. But we’ve allowed that to happen, mostly

because we want them to give us money, which they take from us in the first place.

IN Step: Surveys show that if people know someone gay, whether it's a relative or neighbor, they tend to be more supportive of gay people. Have you found that –

That's true.

IN Step: – and did you know many gay people at the time you signed the bill?

Of course, I'd been a university president! That's true of every stereotyped concept in human endeavor. For example, I really hated Japs as a 17-year-old. I was taught to. By the time I got in [the service], I couldn't wait to get out into the Pacific. After the war, when we went into occupation duty and I had to transport Japanese who were over in Manchuria – they had to be repatriated to Japan – I had one older woman, I think she was 23, well, I was madly in love by the time we got to Japan! She spoke English, and I was the Master at Arms, so we spent a lot of time talking on that voyage and loading those people on and getting them home, and by the time I got over there, I realized, "This person's like I am." That probably motivated me as a university president. We had more overseas branches when I was at Stevens Point than any public campus in the state, including Madison. The reason was, I wanted to get these Wisconsin kids out of here to some other place. Because once you have that experience and start brushing with other people, you know, that changes all the rules. The less parochial you are, the better you have a sense of tolerance. I also come from a family of Freemasons, and the basic drive of freemasonry is tolerance and the notion of the brotherhood of man. If you grow in that kind of notion that you need to be tolerant of people religiously and politically, it shapes how you think.

IN Step: Are you willing to comment on the recent Supreme Court decision striking down sodomy laws?

Oh sure. I think that's a good example. The Supreme Court said the government had no business poking its nose into our bedrooms, and I fully agree. You see, the truth is, I don't want to know your orientation; I don't want to talk to you about mine. I view that as a very private part of my life. The only person I have ever discussed that with is my wife – maybe that's why 56 years later we're still doing well. [Sex in the media] has gotten so open, it's becoming almost oppressive, every time you turn around. I agree that sex is a fundamental function in life but, believe me, it's not the only one – good lord! I wish people were as driven about intellectual growth as they are about those things.

IN Step: What's your opinion about gay marriage or civil unions?

I'm glad you used that last term. What's happened is, we have confused the term 'marriage' and made it synonymous with holy matrimony. Holy matrimony to me is something which a church can and should define. And if they want to define that as male and female only, that's the church's prerogative to do that. I have no fight with that whatsoever. But when you talk about marriage, frankly, I think that's a civil contract authorized by the state, and you get certain benefits from entering into that civil contract and it

can be broken like any civil contract. And I think that probably more and more states are going to go to same sex civil contracts, or civil unions. The best example I've used for people who have moral objections to any kind of gay alliance is, "Okay, let me get off that subject and put you on to the subject of multiple wives." We're still prosecuting Mormons out in Utah. And if our Muslim population grows, certainly within Islam more than one wife is acceptable. In fact in any Old Testament base, including Christianity, supposedly if your brother died you were supposed to marry his widow and take care of her. But, again, I'm wondering why we think that the state ought to tell somebody you can only have one wife if, in fact, they are truly willing to care for two, support the children of those unions and treat them as wives in every respect. I'm wondering why we let the issue of Christian morality get in, starting with the Mormons but now clearly there will be a major issue in Islam. So what are we going to start doing, tagging people who come into the country who have multiple wives from the Middle East? It's a common practice there. What is the state's interest in saying to a man, "You may not support two women and the children from the union with those two women – that it's criminal to do that?" Why? I understand its origin, but that was simply taking a basic church morality and extending it into the [civil realm].

IN Step: Who do you see as new leaders in the post-Tommy Thompson state GOP?

All kinds of them. You never know who's going to take, but I do see leadership jumping out: [Ted] Kanavas and young [Daniel] Vrakas — terrific people, sound heads on their shoulders. Alberta Darling up in [Milwaukee's northern suburbs]. Mary Panzer, who's in there now. Her father Frank Panzer was one of the giants, and I think Mary's just following suit. So I see a pile of good people. I just wish they weren't all full-time. I believe in a part-time legislature. I had them frozen at \$23,000 a year and, believe me, they had to work. They were glad when I left town on that score. [laughs] I think as a historian I can make a case that government by amateurs in this country has been better than government by professionals. I think that people who are going to spend the people's money ought to have a career of their own outside of the legislature, because if they don't and all of a sudden they begin to hit about their forties, and they have no other career line started, then it starts getting frightening, "My God, what if I lose? What have I got going for me? Nothing." And once they need the job, I'll tell you they are no longer independent-thinking legislators in either party. We've got a pile of people down there who've never done anything outside of [the Capitol], and that's not good.

IN Step: What was the best thing about being governor?

The opportunity to guide debate and keep the debate on line and to achieve the goal you set out to. The ten basic goals I had quietly set up in my own mind I was able to get done because I didn't care who got the credit.

IN Step: Thank you again, Governor, for the signature you put on that bill. It really was historic.

I didn't realize it at the time, though I've since realized it. And I've had quite a few people say, "You

made a difference in my life.” You have no idea what a nice encomium that is! All of a sudden you think, “Gee, it’s a good thing I was there!”



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Out & Equal at Work

By William Duane

Think you're alone at work? "We're everywhere" is how the old activist slogan goes, and it might be closer to the truth than you think. Pick almost any company on the Fortune 500 list and you're likely to find it has stepped into the 21st century when it comes to recognizing the presence and needs of its LGBT employees.

Michael Wiggins says he expects the majority of Fortune 500 companies will offer domestic partner benefits soon. Wiggins is a Manufacturing Process Engineer at GE Medical in Milwaukee, where he has worked for the past four years, and where he is involved in the LGBT employee group, GLOBALAGE (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Alliance at GE). Recently, General Electric added domestic partner benefits for its employees. Asked where he thought GLOBALAGE would be five years from today, he says, "Hopefully there will be no need for it." It may sound like Wiggins is reaching for the stars, but consider a few facts.

The national LGBT advocacy organization Human Rights Campaign rates companies on LGBT issues using a "Corporate Equality Index," assigning a score of 1 to 100 based on seven criteria. The criteria range from the basic to the advanced, from whether the company has a non-discrimination policy covering sexual orientation, to whether they offer health benefits to domestic partners of employees, and whether the company markets to the LGBT community. (SEE Sidebar)

Out of the 362 large corporations rated by HRC, 29 get a perfect score of 100. More than 150 companies rate above a 75. But that is only a small slice of the whole picture. HRC also tracks companies throughout corporate America, as well as government agencies and schools, specifically on whether they offer domestic partner benefits, considered to be the cornerstone of an organization's commitment to its LGBT employees. As of this month, 5,805 organizations offer domestic partner benefits, including 10 state governments, 162 local governments, 187 colleges and universities, and 198 companies on the Fortune 500.

Corporate America got a real shock in July when Wal-Mart, known as one of the most conservative of the big businesses, extended its anti-discrimination policy to cover gay and lesbian employees. Even a bulwark of conservatism like the Wall Street Journal had to admit that Wal-Mart's decision was a "watershed" for LGBT workplace advocacy.

Wiggins at GE Medical points out that the corporate climate is better than some LGBT employees might

think when it comes to their issues. Some are “creating problems in their minds that might not really be there.” When LGBT workers are reluctant to come out it often gives them confidence to know that someone has come before, and that’s where LGBT employee groups can help out.

Peter Minns, a Project Manager in Business Support at We Energies, and a member of GLO@WE (Gay & Lesbian Organization at We Energies), points out that “the level of comfort for each individual can vary.” He says that the way a LGBT employee might feel about coming out “is very dependent on who you work with...There are some areas of the company...where members of our organization would feel very uncomfortable being out.” Minns points to some of the company’s operating stations in more remote areas of the state as examples.

Carol Roberts, Change Management Specialist at eFunds, is a member of the LGBT employee group, eQuality. She asserts, “I never second-guess another person’s choice to be in or out of the closet. The personal risk is real. I made a choice to take the risk in the hope that generations to follow will have a better time.”

Gary Osifchin at SC Johnson in Racine agrees that being out at work is an individual decision that takes on different dimensions with different types of work. The LGBT employee group at SC Johnson, the Gay & Lesbian Business Council (GLBC), is working on rolling out diversity training in the manufacturing sector of the company. Osifchin, a Brand Manager in Home Cleaning New Products, points out that an “approach which might be appropriate in a professional environment, wouldn’t be...in manufacturing.”

Osifchin has been part of GLBC since 2000, and became co-chair in 2001, the same year SC Johnson started offering domestic partner benefits to all employees. SC Johnson, in existence since 1886, is known by their motto, “A Family Company.” When asked if this corporate image puts a snag in bringing up LGBT issues, Osifchin just shrugs and says, “Everyone is different in a family.”

But things are not always rosy. Minns says that there have been “isolated” cases of harassment of LGBT employees at We Energies, but he adds, “As far as I know they’ve been resolved successfully.” Aside from the company’s anti-discrimination policy, which covers sexual orientation, Minns says that a mediation process called Consulting Pairs has been very successful in resolving issues. GLO@WE also meets regularly with other employee groups at WE Energies, including Hispanic and African-American groups, in a “diversity summit,” which Minns describes as a “brown bag forum” where people can network and educate each other.

We Energies does not offer domestic partner benefits. Minns says it was brought up in negotiations between his union and the company three years ago, but it was rejected. More recently GLO@WE gathered data on the cost and possible number of employees that would apply for domestic partner benefits, and presented it to human resources, but there was no response.

Carol Roberts at eFunds saw some backlash to an LGBT presence in the workplace firsthand. She has been a member of eQuality since its informal beginning in 1996 (when it was called GLADE, eFunds

then being Deluxe). Roberts says she “had friends attacked both physically and verbally,” and her car was keyed.

But, she continues, “coming out actually tends to protect you more than hurt you in the corporate environment.” It also helped that management at eFunds was supportive from the beginning. The group eQuality, Roberts says, “simply gave the company a heads-up that we were formally going to announce our existence.” She notes that the vice president of human resources spoke on the pro-benefits side at the Milwaukee Common Council meeting on domestic partner benefits for City employees. eFunds has offered domestic partner benefits for four years.

Statements of support from executive management can go a long way. Wiggins at GE Medical says that when GE announced it was offering domestic partner benefits in March of this year, the Chairman and CEO, Jeff Immelt, made a statement that put the change in the context of “living in the 21st century.” Wiggins has used that support from the executive level in fighting what he sees as the passive resistance LGBT workplace advocates encounter today.

Minns at We Energies, referring to the company’s lack of response to GLO@WE’s request on domestic partner benefits, agrees that it can be “very frustrating.” According to him, “It’s more like a ‘Did-you-get-my-letter?’ kind of response.” He points to the role that the local media can play to help out by “focusing a spotlight on those companies who do not perform in their actions.”

Still, most LGBT workplace advocates agree that the climate is rapidly improving, and one of the best measures of advancement is the greater freedom of expression enjoyed by many LGBT employees. Roberts says that LGBT employees at eFunds feel comfortable bringing their partners to company functions, and some are even fellow employees.

She describes how “one couple just adopted a child and both partners received the time off even though this is not required legally. Another couple just gave birth to a child and since they both work at the same location the company has been introduced to [LGBT] parenting in a big way.”

Getting involved in the wider LGBT community can also help an employee group’s development and visibility within a company. Wiggins describes the involvement of GLOBALAGE in the Out & Equal Workplace Summit as a very positive experience. Out & Equal is a national LGBT workplace advocacy organization based in San Francisco. It was formed in 1998 when three Bay area organizations merged to form what was at first called The Pride Collective.

Out & Equal’s annual Workplace Summit gives organizations like GLOBALAGE and GLBC a chance to network and share strategies and stories. Osifchin at SC Johnson says that Out & Equal could be an effective central resource for LGBT employee groups throughout Wisconsin. Roberts at eFunds thinks that a web site where LGBT employees can interact and offer help to new groups would be a useful statewide resource.

Wiggins takes a more aggressive stance, suggesting that LGBT employee groups should organize themselves into a statewide coalition. He uses Action Wisconsin as an example of effective statewide organizing. He sees his proposed coalition as a resource for emerging groups, and says it would allow existing groups “to share information and research, and get people motivated” about issues like ENDA (a previously defeated federal non-discrimination law covering sexual orientation).

Many of the employee groups and their companies are also involved in LGBT community events, as well as AIDS fundraising. Wiggins says that GLOBALAGE hopes to have a team in the upcoming AIDS Walk. SC Johnson is an AIDS Walk sponsor, and the company donated \$35,000 to an LGBT youth center in Racine. GLO@WE has participated in PrideFest, the AIDS Walk, Make a Promise, and other events.

Some of the employee groups have started advertising in the LGBT community to increase their visibility and let other employees know they’re out there. GLOBALAGE ran an ad in this year’s Pride issue of IN Step, a first for the group.

With companies more interested in LGBT consumers than ever before, many big corporations are refreshing their image in the community. For example, Volvo recently started targeting gay families in their advertising, and in one magazine article a Volvo official announced, “Volvos are no longer straight.” Volvo used U.S. Census Bureau data for 2000 to back up its decision. The latest census found nearly 600,000 same-couple households, a more than considerable market.

Since companies now have a vested interest in their image with the LGBT community, treating their LGBT employees poorly by denying their needs, like domestic partner benefits, is no longer seen as a long-term option. Roberts sees eQuality five years from now as “a resource and education group very loosely formed.”

But, as Wiggins reminds us, first you have to begin, or as he puts it, “You have to make a little noise to get attention.”



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Pride Shines at Madison Rally & March

By Mike Fitzpatrick

Madison — Madison Pride's sunlit annual post-MAGIC picnic rally and march July 20 had a few twists thanks to the recent Supreme Court sodomy ruling, a local discrimination case and unruly fundamentalists.

Reactions to the sodomy ruling were evident on the street the issue and at the podium. Placards sprinkled through the estimated crowd of 1,000 included one which quipped "Thanks for the Sodomy But Can We Get Some Marriage With That?"

Madison assembly representative Mark Pocan addressed Antonin Scalia's virulent dissent in his pre-march speech. "What could Scalia possibly have against brunch, the gym and a little shopping?" Pocan said.

Also present at the rally and march was a small contingent of current and former employees of the Madison Parking Utility seeking to make attendees aware of the current Equal Rights Division (ERD) complaint brought by longtime activist Walt Jackson. Jackson has alleged a pattern of anti-gay discriminatory behavior by Utility Manager Robin Williams. Among those charges was Jackson's complaint that he was passed over for promotion six times because he is gay. A recent investigation conducted by Mayor Dave Cieslewicz's office reported Williams' abrasive management style toward LGBT and other employees did not reach discriminatory levels.

Anti-gay protesters briefly attempted to hijack the parade, which circled the Capitol Square and then headed down West Washington Ave. to Brittingham Park where a post-march festival was held. Perhaps emboldened by the recent deluge of pro-gay news, rally-goers appeared to be particularly confrontational with the fundamentalists prior to parade step-off. A pair of the fundamentalists then retaliated by taking one of their banners and briefly marching ahead of the parade's police-provided pace car. The fundamentalists marched about four blocks before being forced off the parade route. The formal parade, featuring floats, drag queens, gay families and Chicago's Freedom Band then began.

Because of a number of changes at this year's MAGIC festival, including a \$5 admission charge to Saturday's picnic and beverage sales by the glass, event planners report that the weekend is expected to show a profit. At the rally, Madison Pride's David Wilcox announced that attendees would be admitted to the post-march festival without charge because "we made enough money yesterday."



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New HIV Infections in Gay Men Rise

Atlanta — Aids cases and new HIV infections in US gay and bisexual men appear to be growing, according to a new report from the US Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDCP).

The report follows earlier local studies, such as those done by public health officials in Seattle and San Francisco, which found dramatically increased rates of new HIV infections and other sexually transmitted diseases among gay and bisexual men.

“A fact of life for every gay man is the threat of HIV,” said Doug Nelson, President of the AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin. “It is a fact of life that must be understood by every new generation of gay men. Our community has suffered far too much from AIDS and the increasing numbers of HIV cases among gay men throughout the country signals more trouble ahead.”

The report found that the number of new HIV diagnoses among gay and bisexual men increased 7.1 percent between 2001 and 2002. The agency’s estimate is based on information collected from the 25 states that report HIV and AIDS cases according to CDCP requirements.

“We are discouraged by the news from CDC that HIV incidence is back on the rise again,” said Bob Power, executive director of AIDS Network. “Especially among gay and bisexual men. I think ... the current administration in Washington D.C. must realize that now is not the time to put the brakes on prevention programs that help men who have sex with other men create realistic goals for themselves and help create optimum sexual health.”



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LGBT Center's Cybercenter Opens with Fanfare

Milwaukee -- The Milwaukee LGBT Community Center celebrated the grand opening of its David Bohnett CyberCenter July 24. The event kicked off with a reception of over 40 community members who came to show their support for the new computer lab.

The reception was followed by a short speech from Neil Albrecht, Executive Director for the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center, Michael Flemming, Executive Director for the David Bohnett Foundation and Roberto Rivera, Program Assistant for the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center.

“There are 15 David Bohnett CyberCenters in LGBT centers nationwide. The Milwaukee LGBT Community Center and Neil Albrecht are to be commended for establishing this tremendous community resource,” said Michael Fleming, Executive Director of the David Bohnett Foundation. “I look forward to hearing the many success stories of how the availability of this CyberCenter has benefited LGBT people in Milwaukee.”

“David Bohnett, an openly gay man was the founder of Geocities which was later sold to Yahoo. He funded the foundation with a gift of about \$30 million,” Fleming told IN Step.

The first David Bohnett Cybercenter was opened in Los Angeles in 1999. That number has now grown to fifteen with Cybercenters now open New York, San Francisco, Philadelphia and elsewhere.

Fleming says the Cybercenters offer a valuable resource for the LGBT community and are especially important as an educational tool.

“I think especially among our youth, the educational benefits that can arrive from technology is very great,” Fleming explained. “Our LGBT youth need a safe place where they can easily access technology and the information the Internet has to offer. Cybercenters are also important for our seniors, many of whom may not be familiar with technology. Now, they can have a safe, supportive place in which to learn about computers, take classes and surf the web.”

“We are very grateful that a national foundation would make this generous investment in the Milwaukee Center. We are also proud to have opened the first David Bohnett CyberCenter in the Midwest,” said Neil Albrecht, Executive Director of the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center.

The CyberCenter, which features sleek new computers and computer stations, provides its users with a safe, comfortable space where they can learn basic computer skills, discover how to navigate the Internet and will offer classes beginning this fall. CyberCenter summer hours are every Tuesday and Thursday Noon-8 p.m.

For more information about the David Bohnett CyberCenter, please contact Roberto Rivera at (414) 271-2656, ext. 1021.



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Ebony Pride Readies Black Pride Conference

Milwaukee — The second annual, three-day celebration of Milwaukee black pride “A Family Affair” is set for Aug. 8 through Aug. 10.

On Friday, Aug., 8 the group will kick-off the three day celebration at the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center starting at 8:30 p.m. Borris Powell a Chicago-based actor will perform. There will also be a poetry slam, dancing and “open mic.” \$5 at the door.

On Sat., Aug. 9 Saad Akbar Kahn will address the conference attendees as the opening speaker. Also speaking will be Tasilah Imani. Participants can choose from workshops on race/diversity issues, health and HIV issues, parent, family and and more. Continental breakfast and lunch is provided. This is a free event at the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center at 315 W. Court St. in Milwaukee.

Saturday evening will feature a cruise on the Edelweiss starting at 5:30 p.m. Entertainment by Shannon Dupree and other local talent. Tickets are \$25 for a two hour cruise.

On Sun., Aug. 10 EbonyPride will celebrate the family at Gordon Park (Humboldt & E. Locust.) A church service will be held at 10:45 a.m. led Rev. Alma Crawford-Pastor of Church of the Open Door, Chicago’s first black gay & lesbian church.

At 1 p.m. the main speaker will be Milwaukee Police Chief Arthur Jones followed by a picnic. Food is \$6 for adults and \$3 for children under 12. There will be entertainers, dancing, volleyball, vendors and more.

For more information call (414) 454-9865 or visit www.wiebonypride.org.



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Reality Check

Oh, These Summer Nights!

By Mike Fitzpatrick

Although it still has six weeks to go, the Wisconsin summer of 2003 is likely to be remembered fondly. Blissfully warm and sunny days have given way to perfectly cool sleeping weather throughout most of late June and July. Even weekends that weather wizards had threatened were to be rainy often proved otherwise. Extremes of heat or humidity and violently turbulent storms have been rare.

For the LGBT community, the political and cultural summer has mirrored the meteorology. From Canada to Washington, DC, the good news on our march for equality seems as abundant as the sunshine. Storm clouds may be on the horizon, but with so much good news it seems almost silly to bring along those activist umbrellas.

This kind of climate seems a perfect time to pack the keyboard in the Cruiser and head for the punditry drive-in for a double feature or two. Since I physically resemble Roger Ebert anyway, why not review some of the recent political and entertainment news releases?

In a summer of real movie sequels, there are two tired new chapters in the “Grumpy Old Preacher” series. First up, “The Heavenly Hillbillies.” Crotchety cracker cleric Pat Robertson prays for God to smote the liberals on the Supreme Court. Not all of ’em mind you, just two or three. Pat doesn’t want to appear too extreme.

Second, there’s an ornate Italian import featuring another aging actor, John Paul II. Best titled “The Agony Over Our Ecstasy,” the Vatican stirs up more political intrigue by issuing a decree that Catholic politicians must heed the papal line on opposing same-sex unions.

I’m old enough to remember that this recent decree is but a gay twist on the exact general scenario American Catholics poo-pooed when Protestants expressed fears about the election of John F. Kennedy. Maybe that’s why conservative Mormon Senator Orrin Hatch brought right-wing appellate court nominee William Pryor out of his Catholic closet in the Judiciary committee in late July.

However, if you know anything about behavioral science, there's a phenomenon known as "extinction behavior." Once scientists trained the pigeons to peck a lever to obtain food pellets, they subsequently delayed the food's delivery until the pigeons pecked the levers in ever increasing numbers of times.

When the scientists stopped giving out pellets all together, the pigeons first went wild, pecking the levers relentlessly. Then they stopped. Just as the behaviorists thought it was all over and were ready to report their findings, the pigeons started pecking again, more desperately than ever. Then the birds really stopped, forever.

Pat and John Paul's recent, over-the-top pronouncements sure look like extinction behavior to me. They're also a good reminder as to the reason why prelates refer to the faithful as flocks. Sheep, pigeons; tomato, to-mah-to.

But on to lighter fare and yet another double bill. It seems the reason that Showtime and Viacom pushed the pause button on their all-gay cable channel may have been the summer schedule now running on Bravo: "Queer Eye For the Straight Guy" and "Boy Meets Boy."

Bravo's announcement of the programs' debut led Traditional Values Coalition spokesbigot Andrea Lafferty to whine, "Just when you think programming can't get any worse, it drops another 100 feet to an even darker place. Clearly they've hit a new low."

"What's next after 'Boy Meets Boy'?" Lafferty droned on. "'Boy Meets Sheep'?" What is it with these religious fanatics constantly equating homosexuality with bestiality? Where is the requisite consenting adult factor? I'm sure if asked, the sheep would negatively reply "baa." So here's a fashion tip not from the Fab Five: when encountering religious wingnuts, avoid wearing wool.

After viewing both the Bravo programs, I would have hazarded a guess that Andrea and her ilk had served as cultural consultants on both shows — the stereotypes in both shows are that offensive.

The premise for "Queer Eye" is every Southern Baptist's ultimate nightmare: screaming queens invade your home and turn you gay. The first ten minutes of each program looks like a raid by Attila the Nun. Everything mainstream goes in less than a day: grooming, interior design, clothing, cuisine, and culture. The finale to this personal assault on your lifestyle? Everyone hugs.

In one particularly ironic scene Carson, the cattiest fashion queen ever to diss a runway, picks through the tops in a straight artist's closet (with barbecue tongs, no less). As he tosses out a decade of no longer fashionable colors "from The Gap," he inadvertently reveals the ultimate absurdity of anyone ever trying to keep up with high fashion.

"Queer Eye's" product placement department has to work overtime to fill the Fab Five's need to plug brand names and trendy salons. These girls give hedonism a bad name. The only place to see greater

gushing over useless products is on a late night infomercial.

Meanwhile, throughout the program the most noxious of all gay stereotypes is acted out over and over again: the supposed goal of every gay male to seduce a straight guy. The constant peeking, pawing, caressing and outright groping mixed with the de reguir shots of the makeover victims in their underwear only proves that this is not reality TV, its gay fantasy football.

The straight seduction theme is a core premise of "Boy Meets Boy" as well. It's the super sized version of that '70s kitschy game show, "The Dating Game" Thirty-two year old uberhunk James is presented with a Baskin-Robbins worth of delectable boy flavors, including a token taste of chocolate. But, as Aussie host Dani Behr salaciously whispers to the audience in a sotto voce voiceover, some of James' dates are straight!

As the show progresses, more gay male stereotypes emerge: there's a nerdy, haircut-impaired romantic, a virginal, just-out-of-the-closet twentysomething, a buzzcut, repressed military type (a submariner no less, can the subtext get any more phallic?) and so on. During James' questioning of the candidates, one hunk reveals that he's already in a relationship but it's okay because the boyfriend lives on the other side of the continent. The cheater makes the final cut to date another day. So much for James' early protestations about looking for monogamy.

The debut show's tropical theme of course means that everyone gets lei-ed. Wink, wink, nudge, nudge. Oh yes, also along for the ride is every gay man's indispensable travel companion: his very own fag hag. Oh, for but one second of subtlety!

As one might now suspect, these two programs were cooked up by straight folks and signal yet another kind of extinction behavior - the drowning of the gay community in America's melting pot. We're accepted because we're marketable, just any other niche such as Latinos, African Americans or senior citizens.

Just as I suspect Martin Luther King's dream did not include gangsta rap or "the hood" as modern expressions of black pride that make Steppin Fetchit or Amos 'n Andy look quaint, I doubt Harry Hay's vision of gay equality included broadcast images of modern day culture queens and gym bunnies that only bluntly retread the sly portrayals of '30s film sissies like Edward Everett Horton and Franklin Pangborn. Even in their second-banana roles, those two actors showed more complex, queer soul than the entire casts of the Bravo shows combined.

So, Ebert-like, I have to give "thumbs down" to Pat, John Paul, the Fab Five and cute-as-a-button James. Oh, I suspect I'll continue to occasionally catch the "700 Club" or EWTN while I'm channel surfing over to Bravo just to "stay in the loop." But I'll allow none of you to sap my own unique gay spirit, even as I burden the unfashionable, oversized yet perfectly normal body it lives in with another mouthful of Pop Secret. Real equality means that much to me.



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Milwaukee LGBT Community Center, Milwaukee D.A. Hold Meeting

Milwaukee — Staff members of the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center held a historic and productive meeting with Milwaukee County District Attorney E. Michael McCann and key staffers on July 18. The LGBT Center had requested the meeting to improve communication between the local LGBT community and the D.A.'s office, which is responsible for prosecuting most crimes, including the domestic violence, sexual assault, and hate crimes targeted by the LGBT Center's innovative Anti-Violence Project.

D.A. E. Michael McCann accepted the LGBT Center's offer to train the office's victim services staff, which assist crime victims through the court process and make referrals to other services. Kathy Herbst, LGBT Center Anti-Violence Program Director, had described the extensive training she gives to providers in other systems responding to violence, including the Milwaukee Police Department, domestic violence service agencies, and sexual assault organizations.

“Being able to train the District Attorney's staff on the needs of LGBT crime victims brings us closer to the day when an LGBT crime victim can call for help with confidence that his or her needs will be sensitively and competently addressed,” said LGBT Center Executive Director Neil Albrecht.

The LGBT Center also asked for and received a liaison in victim services, and expressed community concern about McCann's apparent unwillingness to use Wisconsin's hate crime penalty enhancer, which increases sentences for crimes motivated by bias.

The Milwaukee D.A. has received LGBT community criticism about a perceived reluctance to use the law in cases like the Ricky Roundtree murder in 1991, the vicious 1998 beating of Cory Liebmann outside a gay nightclub, and the 2001 killing of lesbian Juana Vega. D.A. McCann told the LGBT Center visitors that he has “definitely no philosophical opposition” to using the hate crimes enhancer, and that his office would use the law if the evidence was strong and it didn't weaken the prosecution of the underlying charge.

While unable to cite an example, he said that the Milwaukee D.A.'s office has in fact charged criminal defendants with the hate crime enhancer before. For more information about the LGBT Center's Anti-Violence Project, call (414) 271-2656 x111.



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Humor & Advice

Dear Ruthie

[By Dear Ruthie](#)

Dear Ruthie,

I'm a heterosexual woman who reads your column regularly. (I get IN Step from my brother who is gay.) I was wondering if you could help out with some advice.

I'm in my late-twenties and have average to good looks. I have a good job and own my own home. I think I have a good sense of humor. I have many friends – but no boyfriend.

The fact that I'm single isn't the problem. The problem is that the last three men I've fallen for have turned out to be gay! The first two led me to believe they were straight. In both of these cases, I had no clue they were having feelings for men until they told me. In both cases, I was shocked and heartbroken as I thought the relationships were going well.

In all honesty, the third one told me he was gay from the beginning. (I met him through my brother.) We didn't actually date, but I did try to get him to go out with me, hoping he'd change. (I know, I know. That's stupid. But my crush on him was so large I couldn't stand it.)

What's my problem, Ruthie? Why do I gravitate toward gay men? Is it because I can't have them that make them all the more attractive to me? I love going out with my brother but I find myself "cruising" the gay bars. (That's my brother's term, not mine.) What can I do to get over gay guys and find a nice straight boy? Most importantly, when I meet a guy, how can I tell if he's gay or straight? Please help.

Jamie

Dear Jamie,

Of course you're attracted to gay men. Gay men are almost always well-groomed, physically fit, sociable and wouldn't be caught dead wearing a "Who Farted?" T-shirt.

Part of your problem may be that you're looking for love in all the wrong places. Go and enjoy drinks with your brother, but if you're looking to hit the sheets with a full-blooded hetro male, I have two words for you: titty bar.

That's right, honey. Head on over to your local strip joint, set your jugs on the bar and order yourself a cold one. You'll have dozens of men eager to buy your next drink and get your phone number.

Of course, these guys probably won't dress, dance or smell as good as the gay fellows you're used to, but you can't have it all. They may not be much to look at either, but hey – everyone is only a light switch away from being beautiful. (Besides, when you're doing the mattress dance your eyes are closed most of the time anyway.)

Not sure which side a guy butters his bread? Well c'mon, Jamie! The difference between gay men and straight guys is obvious.

Gay men go to stylists; straight guys go to barbers. A gay man will go to an art opening with his friends Jeffery, Vance and Douglas. A straight guy will go bowling with his buddies Nacho, Booger and Godzilla Farts. Gay men watch "On Golden Pond;" straight guys watch "On Golden Blond." It's as simple as that.

Sure, maybe you're attracted to these men because you know you can't have them. But perhaps you're attracted to them because they have many of the qualities you're looking for in a mate (whatever those qualities are). Cheer up, sweetie. Mr. Right will come along eventually. Just don't try to transform anyone into your knight in shining armor. That won't work and you know it.

Have YOU got a question that only Ruthie can answer? If so e-mail it to: dearruthie@instepnews.com



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Special Coverage

Gay in the USA

Historic Supreme Court Ruling Reverses Sodomy Ban

Washington — The Supreme Court issued a historic declaration of constitutional liberty for gay men and lesbians on June 26, overruling a Texas sodomy law in the broadest possible terms and overruling a contrary 1986 decision that the majority said “demeans the lives of homosexual persons.” The vote was 6 to 3.

Gays are “entitled to respect for their private lives,” Justice Anthony M. Kennedy said to the court. “The state cannot demean their existence or control their destiny by making their private sexual conduct a crime.”

The 30-year-old Texas “homosexual conduct” law makes it a crime for same-sex couples to engage in oral and anal sex, even if it is consensual and occurs in the privacy of a person’s bedroom. Violators face a maximum punishment of a \$500 fine.

Other states with sodomy laws are Alabama, Florida, Idaho, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Utah and Virginia. Wisconsin repealed its sodomy law in 1983.

In a scathing dissent, however, Justice Antonin Scalia said the court had “largely signed on to the so-called homosexual agenda” and had “taken sides in the culture war.”

He said the ruling called into question “state laws against bigamy, same-sex marriage, adult incest, prostitution, masturbation, adultery, fornication, bestiality and obscenity.”

Scalia also said the reasoning of the court’s ruling “leaves on pretty shaky grounds state laws limiting marriage to opposite-sex couples.”

While the result had been widely anticipated since the court agreed in December to hear an appeal

brought by two Houston men who were prosecuted for having sex in their home, few people on either side of the case expected a decision of such scope from a court that only 17 years ago, in *Bowers v. Hardwick*, had dismissed the same constitutional argument as “facetious.” The court overturned that precedent with their ruling on June 26.

Justice Sandra Day O’Connor, who was part of the 5-to-4 majority in *Bowers v. Hardwick*, did not join Justice Kennedy in overruling it. But she provided the sixth vote for overturning the Texas sodomy law in a forcefully written separate opinion that attacked the law on equal protection grounds because it made “deviate sexual intercourse” — oral or anal sex — a crime only between same-sex couples and not for heterosexuals.

“A law branding one class of persons as criminal solely based on the state’s moral disapproval of that class and the conduct association with that class runs contrary to the values of the Constitution and the Equal Protection Clause,” Justice O’Connor said.

Ruth Harlow, legal director of the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund and the lead counsel for the two men, John G. Lawrence and Tyron Garner, called the decision “historic and transformative.” Suzanne Goldberg, a professor at Rutgers Law School who had represented the men in the Texas courts, stated that the decision would affect “every kind of case” involving gay people, including employment, child custody and visitation, and adoption.

The vote to overturn *Bowers v. Hardwick* was 5 to 4, with Justice Kennedy joined by Justices John Paul Stevens, David H. Souter, Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Stephen G. Breyer.

In the Texas case, John Geddes Lawrence, 59, was arrested with Tyron Garner, 35, when they were discovered by the Houston police while having sex in Lawrence’s apartment. The police entered through an unlocked door after receiving a report from a neighbor of a “weapons disturbance” in the apartment. The neighbor was later convicted of filing a false report.

The men were held in jail overnight. They later pleaded no contest, preserving their right to appeal, and were each fined \$200. The Texas state courts rejected their constitutional challenge to the law.

Gays Celebrate Ruling

Gays and lesbians across the country were celebratory and enthusiastic in the wake of the court’s ruling. Scores of “Sodomy Parties” were hastily organized across the nation and rallies were held in many cities.

In Milwaukee, an enthusiastic crowd of 40 waved signs and banners heralding the decision.

“Eventually, these types of laws which label gays and lesbians as criminals and second class citizens will be abolished.” Neil Albrecht of the Milwaukee LGBT Community told the group. “This is a victory for the establishment of tolerance, equality and acceptance of all people.”

Albrecht encouraged community members to continue to organize and said that many challenges remain ahead in struggle to gain full equal rights for gays and lesbians.

A statement by Rep. Tammy Baldwin was also read at the gathering, "I applaud the court for again recognizing that the concept of liberty includes a right to privacy. We should all feel safe from unwarranted government intrusions into our homes."

"These types of discriminatory criminal laws have been used as justification to deny custody and visitation rights to parents as well as to deny other important freedoms."

In a symbolic gesture of gratitude to the Supreme Court for striking down the Texas law which banned gay sex acts, San Francisco gay leaders took down the huge rainbow flag that permanently graces the corner of Market and Castro streets and hoisted the Stars and Stripes.

The moment was "genuinely joyous," said Armistead Maupin, who withstood bomb threats and lawsuits when his 1970s "Tales of the City" novels about San Francisco life aired as a TV movie in 1990.

As word of the Supreme Court ruling spread, about 300 people jammed the corner of Market and Castro streets to celebrate. They listened to a lineup of speakers and marked the occasion with a kiss-in on the corner. Some brought their babies, many walked arm-in-arm, and a few carried signs with such messages as, "We won."

Conservatives Furious

Some social conservatives expressed anger and frustration over the Supreme Court's ruling.

"This has not been a good week for social conservatives," said Jay A. Sekulow, the legal director of the American Center for Law and Justice, a conservative legal advocacy group founded by Pat Robertson. "We all were especially surprised by the scope and breadth of [the] opinion. It was a grand-slam homer for the other side."

The Rev. Jerry Falwell, an evangelical leader, said in an interview that "this is probably as bad a day as the court has had on social issues since *Roe v. Wade*."

Ken Connor, president of the Family Research Council, characterized the decision as "classic judicial activism arrogance."

"This opens the door to bigamy, adult incest, polygamy and prostitution," Connor said. "If the hallmark is privacy and consent, as long as you have those two, the court is saying you have no basis for legislating to the contrary. Notwithstanding the public health issues involved when you have sexual

relations, for example, between a mother and an adult son.”



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Special Coverage

Quips and Quotes

Special Supreme Court Decision Editon

“A law branding one class of persons as criminal solely based on the State’s moral disapproval of that class and the conduct associated with that class runs contrary to the values of the Constitution and the Equal Protection Clause, under any standard of review. I therefore concur in the Court’s judgment that Texas’ sodomy law banning ‘deviate sexual intercourse’ between consenting adults of the same sex, but not between consenting adults of different sexes, is unconstitutional.”

—U.S. Supreme Court Justice **Sandra Day O’Connor** June 26, voting to legalize gay sex nationwide, but for a different reason than five other justices, who cited “private conduct in the exercise of their liberty under the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution.”

“In queer dens all over America, the homos are laughing their asses off, salivating over their “victory.” If folks don’t realize what’s going on, here’s a clue: the entire exercise was part of the homo agenda to force their deviant behavior to be protected and given the same right to marriages, etc., equal to the traditional institution of marriage. The homo agenda is to transform this nation into their deviancy play ground.”

—E-mail post at freerepublic.com

“Eventually, these types of laws which label gays and lesbians as criminals and second class citizens will be abolished. This is a victory for the establishment of tolerance, equality and acceptance of all people.”

—**Neil Albrecht** of the
Milwaukee LGBT Center
speaking at a rally on June 26.

“God have mercy on America,”

—**John Giles**, president of the Christian Coalition of Alabama.

“Given previous rulings, it’s extraordinary and it’s inspiring that the court ruled that gays and lesbians be treated the same as their straight brothers and sisters, no better and no worse.”

Charles Francis, founder of the Republican Unity Coalition.

“This has not been a good week for social conservatives.”

—**Jay A. Sekulow**, the legal director of the American Center for Law and Justice, a conservative legal advocacy group founded by Pat Robertson.

“Let’s just say it’s not going to be difficult to celebrate gay pride this year.”

—Author **Amistead Maupin**

“Today’s opinion is the product of a Court, which is the product of a law-profession culture, that has largely signed on to the so-called homosexual agenda, by which I mean the agenda promoted by some homosexual activists directed at eliminating the moral opprobrium that has traditionally attached to homosexual conduct.”

—U.S. Supreme Court Justice **Antonin Scalia**, dissenting from the June 26 ruling.

“The most significant ruling ever for lesbian and gay Americans’ civil rights ... This ruling starts an entirely new chapter in our fight for equality for lesbians and gay men.”

—Lambda Legal, on the June 26 U.S. Supreme Court decision legalizing gay sex nationwide. Lambda argued the case before the high court.

“We never chose to be public figures or to take on this fight. But we also never thought we could be arrested this way. We’re glad not only that this ruling lets us get on with our lives but that it opens the door for gay people all across the country to be truly equal. We’re grateful to everyone who has respected our privacy over the last few years, even if the state of Texas did not respect it that night in 1998.”

—**John Geddes Lawrence**, 59, who was arrested with **Tyron Garner**, 35, on Sept. 17, 1998, in Garner’s bedroom for violating Texas’ law against “deviate sexual intercourse.” The men’s case went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court which used it to overturn the U.S.’ 13 remaining state laws banning gay sex, June 26.

“I applaud the court for again recognizing that the concept of liberty includes a right to privacy. We should all feel safe from unwarranted government intrusions into our homes. These types of discriminatory criminal laws have been used as justification to deny custody and visitation rights to parents as well as to deny other important freedoms.”

— Rep. **Tammy Baldwin**, the only openly lesbian member of Congress.

“It absolutely signals an entirely changed landscape. It’s impossible to be considered a full and equal citizen if you’re a criminal in 13 states.”

—**Kate Kendall**, executive director of the National Center for Lesbian Rights.

“For the first time in history, the rights of gays to live their lives with dignity, free from state persecution and prosecution, was vigorously defended by the nation’s highest court — a conservative one, at that.”

—June 29 editorial
in the New York Post.

“This is now a state matter.”

—White House spokesman
Ari Fleischer declining comment on the ruling, noting the Bush administration did not file a brief in this case.

“This is probably as bad a day as the court has had on social issues since Roe v. Wade.”

—Rev. **Jerry Falwell**,
an evangelical leader.

“I’m going to go commit some sodomy tonight!”

—Overheard at the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center’s
rally in support of the Supreme Court decision.

“This opens the door to bigamy, adult incest, polygamy and prostitution.”

Ken Connor, president of the Family Research Council, characterized the decision as “classic judicial activism arrogance.”

“This is a great day for all people who believe that ALL human beings are created in God's image. Progressive religious communities applaud the court’s decision to uphold

the nation's true promise of liberty and justice for all.”

—Rabbi **Sharon Kleinbaum**,
spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Simchat Torah in New York, the world’s largest lesbian and gay
synagogue

**“Have you heard the phrase, ‘this is a government of, by, and for the people’? Well,
that’s not relevant in the Supreme Court’s Texas decision. The people are irrelevant
here.”**

—**Rush Limbaugh**



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Commentary

Lawrence v. Texas: Praise the Pioneers and Pass the Ammunition!

By Jamakaya

Fifty to 60 years ago when Harry Hay began thinking and writing about gay people as an oppressed minority, we were categorized as criminals, as diseased deviants, and as immoral sinners. Most gay people were isolated from each other, fearful, confused, many crippled by self-loathing. Untold thousands were subjected to incarceration in prison or forcibly detained in mental hospitals where they were tortured with aversion therapies.

I happened to see “Hope Along the Wind,” a new documentary about the pioneering work of Harry Hay, just a week before the Supreme Court issued its historic opinion striking down the Texas sodomy law and its shameful *Bowers v. Hardwick* decision of 1986. The movie gave me a more profound understanding of the historical import of the Supreme Court ruling and of just how far we have come.

The three pillars of our oppression have been the state, which criminalized our conduct; the medical establishment, which declared us mentally ill; and most (though not all) organized religions, which condemned us as willful sinners.

A half century of intense education, agitation and political organizing (along with droves of us coming out to our loved ones, neighbors and co-workers) have reversed many of those homophobic ideas and made life infinitely more comfortable for most gay and lesbian people. It is astonishing how quickly these changes have come about when you consider the centuries of (ongoing) struggle endured by other minority groups to realize their full rights and humanity.

Justice Anthony Kennedy’s words in *Lawrence v. Texas* are indeed historic: “When homosexual conduct is made criminal by the law of the state, that declaration in and of itself is an invitation to subject

homosexual persons to discrimination both in the public and in the private spheres. ... The petitioners are entitled to respect for their private lives. The state cannot demean their existence or control their destiny by making their private sexual conduct a crime.”

We are deeply indebted to the generations of abolitionists and civil rights activists who helped lay the legal groundwork – equal protection and due process claims – that contributed to this victory. But what also jumped out at me from Justice Kennedy’s decision was the repeated citations he made to cases which have upheld women’s rights to reproductive freedom.

Kennedy began by referencing *Griswold v. Connecticut* (1965) which overturned laws that prohibited the distribution or use of contraceptives by married couples. (Yes, as unbelievable as it seems, only 40 years ago some states still outlawed contraceptives.) He then cited a 1972 ruling that invalidated laws preventing unmarried individuals from accessing and using contraceptives.

Kennedy said these opinions, claiming the rights to privacy and personal liberty based on the due process clause of the Constitution, were reinforced by the famous *Roe v. Wade* decision (1973) legalizing abortion. Privacy protections were extended further in a 1977 ruling which overturned a law prohibiting minors from obtaining contraceptives, and a 1992 decision allowing Pennsylvania to enact some restrictions on abortion while reaffirming the overall intent of *Roe v. Wade*.

As a feminist who has worked for reproductive rights along with civil rights for LGBT people for almost 30 years, the connection has always been self-evident to me but not so to many gay men I’ve worked with and to the handful of more hard-core right-to-lifers who are LGBT. As *Lawrence v. Texas* indicates, the pro-choice position – essentially a pro-privacy position – is inextricably allied to the struggle for gay and lesbian civil rights. In the years ahead, as right-wing forces expand their influence and target women’s and LGBT rights, we need to build greater solidarity between these constituencies.

I have one grave concern about *Lawrence v. Texas*. Along with the recent affirmative action ruling by the Supreme Court, it is infuriating the Radical Right in this country and a major backlash is very likely.

The Radical Right is no longer just a few ridiculous loudmouths like Jerry Falwell and Phyllis Schlafly. It is firmly entrenched in the White House and Congress, in corporate boardrooms, and in influential foundations and think tanks. It is active in professional organizations, educational institutions, and in myriad groups at the grass-roots level. The right-wing movement is fueled by powerful media conglomerates which increasingly control how the news is reported and spun. It is well-funded and extremely well-organized, and has a strategy and timeline that extend decades into our future.

We **MUST** remain active and be prepared to donate our time, energy and money to political candidates and organizations that will defend and promote our interests. We must continue building bridges with other communities under attack by the Right and devise effective strategies to discredit their hateful and regressive policies.

There are many valuable organizations in need of our support. I'd like to suggest that everyone who felt gratified by the Supremes' decision immediately write out a check to the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, the folks who funded and argued the case. It can be sent to LLDEF, 120 Wall Street, Suite 1500, New York, NY 10005-3904. Check them out at www.lambdalegal.org.

Lambda Legal was born in 1973 when New York's highest court overturned a homophobic ruling that denied its application to become a nonprofit organization. Since then, it's been litigating cases dealing with adoption and other family law issues, the military ban on gays, domestic partner and marriage rights, the right of gay student organizations to organize, employment rights, AIDS discrimination, sodomy law reform, sexual harassment – you name it.

Please send that check today and stay involved!



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Reality Check

Sodom Postpartum: Watch Your Ass!

By Mike Fitzpatrick

It's been nearly a week since the historic Lawrence ruling at the Supreme Court swept criminality from the lives of every collective queer in America, and — by proxy — anyone of any sexual stripe who practices anything other than the missionary position with their favorite consenting adult in the privacy of their boudoir. Whee! Yes, even that's permitted now. Without a doubt, the sodomy ruling will be a far greater assault on the Martha Stewart Everyday linen line than those pesky insider trading charges.

Pundits and politicians across the extremes have had a field day. More on that in a bit. When editor Bill told me of all the sodomy stories scheduled to appear in this issue I almost switched the topic of this piece to the search for the perfect blueberry muffin.

However, having already invested so much research into the aftermath and its implications for the LGBT community I felt it important to continue. Though I may be pilloried for looking through the glass darkly, history suggests that the court ruling signals the party is over and its going to be one hell of a hangover. How ironic that the immediate impact of the sodomy ruling will mean that very queer in the country will have to watch his or her ass. I suspect the backlash may be that strong.

Many of us took particular pleasure in watching the religious and political right wax apoplectic immediately following the sodomy ruling, the second of a one-two punch for equal rights struck by the court following its affirmative action decision the previous Monday. Nothing like a little adverse news to reveal the black reactionary roots at the scalps of those perfectly coifed “social conservative” blonde rhetorical 'dos. (For the record, “social conservative” is, at once, the best spin-doctoring of “bigot” ever wordsmithed by the gang at the Heritage Foundation and the greatest oxymoron since “military intelligence” and “jumbo shrimp”.)

I listened on June 26 to about a half-hour of Limbaugh going ballistic about “six people overruling the will of the nation”. Rushbo claimed the Court is partisan. If that were true, sweet Rushie, you'd be ripping President Gore a new one daily, rather than slobbering all over George W's.

Other conservative pundits railed at the court's supposedly liberal bias. They chose to ignore AP reporter Ann Gearan's "big picture" piece on the court's last season documenting that 73% of all the rulings toed the conservative line. More disturbing was Antonin Scalia's live reading of his 21-page dissent, again revealing his sharp legal mind overwhelmed by rock-ribbed religious orthodoxy.

The Religious Right's reaction was apocalyptically absurd as expected, yet bland by comparison. Pat Robertson's "going down the moral sewer" comments merely rehashed similar right-wing statements following the Supreme Court's 1954 anti-segregation and 1970 anti-miscegenation rulings. For a preacher old enough to have hand-painted the "Segregation is God's Law" placards held by little old lady evangelists outside Little Rock schools in 1958, you'd think he'd be able to come up something as sassy as the "mongrelization of the human race" rhetoric quipped by segregationists back then.

Over the weekend gay conservative spokesmodel Andrew Sullivan penned a perceptive piece about how the sodomy ruling banished forever the medieval "every sperm is sacred" mentality that has informed so much of the last 800 years of sexual law. However, being the good, dysfunctional Catholic he is, Sullivan couldn't bring himself to step back an extra millenium or so to examine the wellspring of that medieval mentality: the Bible writers' scientifically-naive mindset that perceived earth as the center of the universe and man as its ultimate product, equated the process making babies with planting crops, and solved everything then unknowable by blaming it on an all-powerful Supreme Being. Nor could Sullivan move forward to the tail end of the last century to point out the fundamentalist "Bible as literal truth" precept that informs the Religious Right's modern evangelism was a desperate reaction to the ongoing scientific deconstruction of that Biblical world view which had begun with Copernicus and had most recently added Darwin.

Sullivan's preoccupation with the medieval missed a shot at a more modern monument to religious hypocrisy whose recent anti-gay pronouncements got lost in the hubbub over the sodomy ruling: the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC). He could have pointed out that ever since its foundation by slave holders opposed to the mainstream Baptist abolitionist activism, the SBC has come down against every major movement for equality in the last 150 years: slavery, women's suffrage, women's marital property rights, racial integration and intermarriage and LGBT civil rights. The SBC's only political "win" only lasted 14 years: prohibition.

Sullivan also couldn't bear to bring up the fact that ever since Constantine's fourth century official embrace, Christianity has morphed from a spiritual ethic into an imperial force that has wreaked havoc on the politics and culture of Western civilization as it has simultaneously stymied the search for genuine truth. I won't go into the Church's selection of "approved books" of the Bible (thwarted by the discovery of the Qumran scrolls in 1948) or the systematic destruction ancient secular texts that contradicted the official Christian mindset (such as the burning of nearly all of the works of Greek lesbian poet Sappho) by medieval monks. That's old hat.

Need some contemporary examples? George W's post 9-11 anti-terrorist "crusade" rhetoric is but a

recent slip of the Christian-dominated sociopolitical tongue. His abstinence-only HIV education initiatives are but the latest manifestation of the historic Christian “keep ’em stupid and submissive” modus opperendi.

Now that they’ve had a few days to organize the troops and generate the talking points, the right-wing has lobbed its first volleys across the LGBT community’s bow. GOP Senate Majority Bill Frist told us on a recent Sunday that he wants to take his physician’s scalpel to doctor the Constitution with a Marriage Amendment implant. Though the White House the next day signaled that the already-extant Defense of Marriage law was sufficient (continuing the President’s personal “don’t ask, don’t tell” position on gay issues), what had been dismissed as yet another far-right quixotic venture has begun to gain gravitas. Twenty-five legislators now have signed on and, as I polished this piece, Colorado’s freshman GOP Rep. Marilyn Musgrave declared the federal Marriage Amendment to be her top priority, apparently abandoning her previous work on education, small business and agriculture. Make no mistake, the political backlash has begun. If history repeats, as it most likely will, the violent version is next. Abolition brought the murderous midnight rides of the Ku Klux Klan. Desegregation brought a decade of increased lynchings, church bombings murders and beatings. Children and civil rights workers died by the dozens. The Supreme Court’s 1970 anti-miscegenation ruling resulted in interracial couples being burned out of their homes.

However, unlike the abolition and racial equality movements, the LGBT community currently has no galvanizing political figure like a Lincoln or a Luther King. History also suggests such a figure likely will emerge, but in the interim, the well-entrenched Religious Right will be shape the rhetorical agenda during the postpartum period following the birth of the pro-gay sodomy ruling. To rework the line uttered by Bette Davis’ hard-boiled Margo Channing in all-time gay fave flick “All About Eve,” hang onto your sodomite heines, honeys, its going to be a bumpy ride!



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Commentary

Anchored in the Constitution: The Heart of Liberty

By Barbara Lightner

In recently striking down the Texas “deviate sexual intercourse” law (*Lawrence v. Texas*), the Supreme Court of the United States has given us all cause for celebration. Based on the right to privacy as found in the Constitution (rather than being based on a state law), the ruling means that we in Wisconsin are no longer subject to a fickle and changing state legislature which could on a moment’s notice repeal our statewide consenting adults law that presently provides protection.

This is all to the good, and it is what the Constitution is meant for. When the rights of a minority are denied, we look to the Constitution and the Supreme Court to fix our democracy up. Otherwise a majority could too easily deny minority citizens their basic rights. Such was the case when the Supreme Court ruled on school desegregation, on racial and gender-based discrimination, on the legalization of contraception, on a woman’s right to choose an abortion – and now, the decision in the *Lawrence* case, striking down the Texas sodomy law.

The opinion, in the words of Chicago Tribune Supreme Court reporter Jan Crawford Greenburg, “was extraordinary – sweeping in scope and stirring in tone.” The Court noted that it was its “obligation...to define the liberty of all, not to mandate its own moral code.”

Written by Justice Anthony Kennedy, the opinion quoted with approval from the contraception case, *Griswold v. Connecticut*, preserving the very heart of liberty: “At the heart of liberty is the right to define one’s own concept of existence, of meaning, of the universe, and of the mystery of human life. Beliefs about these matters could not define the attributes of personhood were they formed under compulsion of the state.”

Justice Sandra Day O’Connor, although agreeing with the decision, founded her opinion on equal protection. Although she did not disagree with the right to privacy finding, she noted that the court did not at this time have to take up that issue.

Three justices dissented with the opinion written by Antonin Scalia, who authored an ill-tempered dissent accusing the majority of having “signed on to the homosexual agenda,” and of “taking sides in a culture

war” that would eliminate “the moral opprobrium” that “has traditionally attached to homosexual conduct.”

Hawking to the fear that has become the far right’s ploy – through House Republican leader Bill Frist, for example – Scalia also throws up the bugaboo of a decision that would allow, he says, for bigamy, bestiality, adultery, etc. He throws in for good measure those who don’t want “people who openly engage in homosexual conduct as partners in their business, as scoutmasters for their children, as teachers in their children’s schools, or as boarders in their home.” It is eerily reminiscent of the arguments used against integration.

The ruling has already had positive effects, with the Supreme Court sending back to a lower Kansas court a decision involving sex between an 18-year old and a 14-year old at a residential school for developmentally disabled youth, where the homosexual offense of statutory rape is penalized more severely than a heterosexual case would be.

Scalia warns of even more far-reaching effects, most particularly of lesbian and gay marriage. You bet! It would not be the first time that the language of a cranky dissent became the language of a favorable opinion. Let’s plan on it!

As we celebrate this victory, let us also remember that the Supreme Court – and thus its constitutional interpretations – are themselves political animals. They are not so subject to the ups and downs of elected bodies, but are subject to their own political – and personal – machinations, as Woodward and Armstrong’s study of the Supreme Court in “The Brethren: Inside the Supreme Court” has so ably shown.

Bush is currently engaged in trying to stack the appeals courts with right-wing ideologues. The only thing stopping him have been filibusters, where there are enough votes to keep on talking a subject to death without letting it come to a vote. Let us hope we do not have to continue to filibuster to assure ourselves of judicial appointees with the judicial temperament to view cases clearly and distinctly, in keeping with the law, the Constitution, and the rights of our minority populations. As the Supreme Court looks to two possible retirees – Chief Justice William Rehnquist and Justice Sandra Day O’Connor – we’ll need to make sure that we can negotiate with Bush and his right wing for an acceptable candidate who will follow the law instead of right-wing ideologies. It is here that we must call on the Log Cabin Republicans for more than excuses.

It is for all of us to maintain the vigilance required to assure the heart of liberty be preserved.



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Special Coverage

PrideFest Survives Rain and Chill But Suffers Huge Deficit

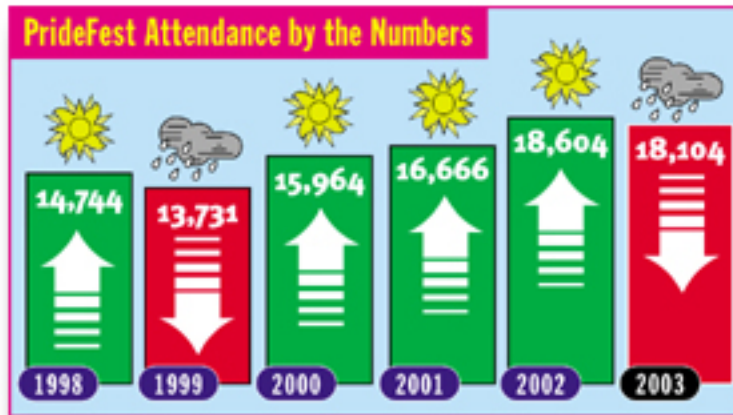
By **Jamakaya**

Milwaukee – PrideFest 2003 managed to endure a sometimes rainy and chilly festival weekend to reach an attendance of 18,104, just 500 below last year's record. But the festival faces tough challenges ahead as it wrestles to recoup a deficit of between \$100,000 and \$150,000.

That was the estimate delivered by PrideFest Treasurer Paul Sherry at a meeting of PrideFest organizers and community leaders at the M&M Club on June 12. An exact figure for the financial shortfall may not be known for several weeks until all the bills come in.

Sherry declared that "Bankruptcy is not an option" as he and other PrideFest Council members tried to steer the discussion to practical solutions for PrideFest's money crunch. The challenge is daunting because PrideFest must pay off record debts while also raising substantial seed money for next year's festival.

When asked how such a huge shortfall could occur, organizers placed the blame squarely on the weather, which reduced estimated attendance as well as the consumption of beer. Sherry pointed out that ticket prices and beer sales comprise about 75% of the festival's income. Co-Chair Lil Lau reported that 21 barrels of beer, estimated to cost \$13,000, went unsold.

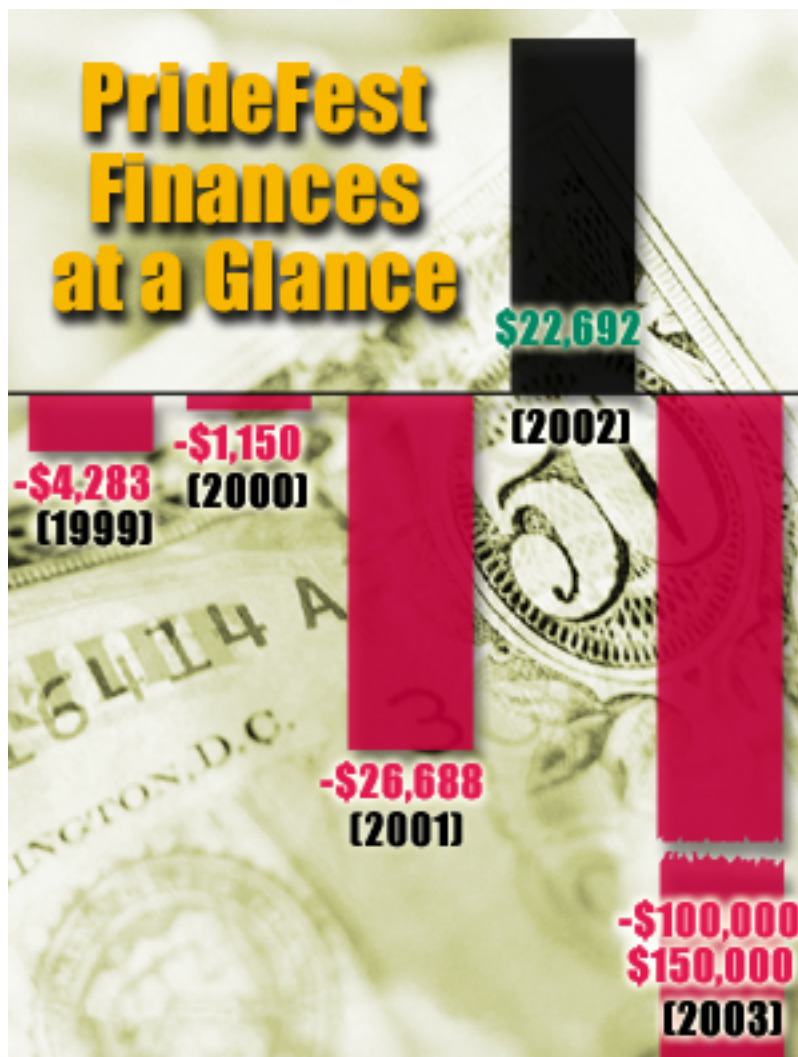


Sherry and others seemed confident that if the weather had been better and 4,000 to 5,000 additional people had attended, PrideFest would not be in such financial straits. Taking the higher figure of 5,000 (which some observers find unrealistic given the festival's incremental growth of just a few thousand every one or two years) and multiplying it by the \$9 gate fee would have netted an additional \$45,000. The loss of beer and gate admissions comes to just \$58,000 of the overall estimated loss.

When pressed about where the rest of the financial loss stems from, Sherry conceded that more money was spent this year on bigger stars like Pat Benatar and Peter Paige of "Queer as Folk."

"We responded to what people have been asking for, which was more big name acts. So yeah, we did take a little more of a risk in that area."

Neil Albrecht, executive director of the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center, praised the Council members for their hard work but noted that "If the Community Center finished the year at a deficit of \$150,000, there would be a tremendous scrutinization of the staff and board."



Wisconsin IN Step requested copies of PrideFest budgets and projections for this year's festival. Sherry emailed a detailed expense budget but no income budget or projections, so it is impossible to analyze the soundness of the financial planning. An accountant told IN Step that any budget without income projections is incomplete and a recipe for "financial chaos."

William Attewell, publisher and editor of Wisconsin IN Step, spoke at the meeting, reading what he described as his next editorial on PrideFest. [[See the full text here.](#)] Attewell has written several extensive articles in the last year about alleged problems with personnel and operations at the festival.

In his statement, Attewell called the financial deficit "a self-inflicted wound" and "arguably the largest and most expensive debacle in our community's history." He said that PrideFest's board "failed to use sound business principles and practices when planning this year's festival" in "a continuing pattern of apparent mismanagement and lack of oversight which Wisconsin's LGBT community can no longer ignore."

"If you publish that," former PrideFest Co-Director Susan Cook responded, "you will pound another nail into the coffin of this organization."

Attewell called for the Cream City Foundation to fund a new executive director for PrideFest and for PrideFest to merge with the LGBT Community Center, an organization with "proven accountability systems." The suggested merger with the LGBT Center drew the most vocal protests, with heads shaking and shouts of "No way!" all around the room.

"We need the help but we don't want the strings attached," said PrideFest Entertainment Director Nick Laurent. (Laurent also dispelled a wild rumor that Pat Benatar and her entourage rented 30-plus rooms at the Pfister Hotel. Fact: Benatar and her husband Neil Giraldo and their two kids shared a 2-bedroom suite, her manager had another room, and band members stayed at Howard Johnson's.)

Co-Chair Lil Lau took particular exception to Attewell's characterization of the PrideFest Council as "an elitist and closed organization."

"We have literally been begging people to join the Council," said Lau, her voice straining with emotion. "This whole festival is put on by a core of nine people – nine people. We want more people to help us. We can't go on like this."

After some of the anger and frustration subsided, many suggestions were thrown around for the rest of the evening.

It is likely that a series of fundraisers for PrideFest will be held over the next 6-12 months. Volunteer Coordinator Sheri Goldberg said that many PrideFest volunteers have already offered to help. Co-Chair Michael Lisowski said that Proud Crowd members and PrideFest sponsors would be contacted, informed of the situation, and asked for assistance.

Council members will re-submit their application to the IRS for 501(c)3 status, which would be beneficial for PrideFest as it would make donations tax-deductible. They are also looking into the possibility of closing the PrideFest office (rent, phone and utilities cost about \$2,000 per month), or relocating to a smaller office to save money. The Rev. Lew Broyles offered the use of the Metropolitan Community Church on the south side for meetings or storage.

Paul Sherry reported that PrideFest had hired a consultant to assess its operations. They met with her this spring and will meet with her again and work to implement her recommendations.

Bill Meunier, a former Co-Director of PrideFest, proposed the creation of an Advisory Council to be made up of community members with expertise in areas that would enhance the operations of PrideFest, like fundraising, budgeting, human resources, etc. Advisory Council members, wrote Meunier in his proposal, "should include representatives of the sponsors, LGBT businesses, political groups, and other interested parties." The Advisory Council would not make the day-to-day decisions that belong to the Pride Council and Board, but would be there to offer their expertise and guidance.

Michael Lisowski liked the Advisory Council proposal. In contrast to the Attewell proposal, he told IN

Step, "I think the Advisory Council is a good compromise. Our supporters are going to want some changes, some accountability. That's understandable. An Advisory Council might make it a more open and professional organization."

In addition, both Denise Wise, board member of the Cream City Foundation, and Brenda Coley, board member of the LGBT Community Center, offered to assist PrideFest as it works through its crisis. As IN Step went to press, we learned that CCF may establish a PrideFest Fund to which individuals may make tax-deductible contributions.

Throughout the meeting PrideFest organizers spoke of the positive energy at the 2003 festival – a record number of volunteers, a wider array of performers, decent attendance despite the poor weather, and good feedback from festival-goers. (No mention was made of Deaf LGBTs protesting the lack of ASL interpreters.)

"The success of PrideFest should not be measured solely by attendance and money," Susan Cook commented.

"I hope we can do this, I hope we can make it," said PrideFest volunteer George Schneider. "Because one day the torch will be passed on to others and we have to make sure PrideFest is there for them."

"Despite all these adversities," he added, "I think this meeting ended on a very positive note."

PrideFest can be reached at (414) 645-FEST.

[Read PrideFest's Official Statement on 2003 Festival](#)



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Special Coverage

PrideFest Statement on 2003 Festival

During the weekend of June 6, 7, and 8th, thousands of Gays, Lesbians, Bisexuals and Transgendered people chose to show pride in themselves and their community by attending PrideFest 2003. Together with the largest group of non-LGBT people ever to attend a Gay Milwaukee event, they made a crowd of 18,104 people.

A line-up of performers that was strong enough to be compared to the entertainment line ups of major Pride festivals on the coasts entertained that crowd. There were hundreds of volunteers who filled over 1,000 volunteer slots.

Dozens of vendors sold thousands of items in the PrideFest Marketplace. Thousands of people became more aware of community issues and volunteer opportunities through informational booths. Electronic media coverage of the event painted a positive picture of our community.

Despite a driving rainstorm, over 50 businesses and organizations proudly marched through the streets in the annual Pride Parade. New exhibits in the History/Herstory tent were seen by hundreds of patrons. From the Drag-A-Thon to the Leather Show, to the Youth Pride Village, special efforts to include all elements of our community were met and appreciated by large crowds.

Local and out-of-town guests were unanimous in praising the quality of the PrideFest 2003. They told us how much they enjoyed the entertainment, food and special events. Above all else, they told us how proud they were that our community could put on such a magnificent festival.

We believe this year's PrideFest displayed the breadth of the talent in our community. We believe the sponsors, volunteers and patrons all have a right to feel proud of what they saw and experienced at PrideFest 2003. All of them have our deepest appreciation and sincere thanks.

Promoting pride, not making money, is the mission of PrideFest. Nevertheless we are keenly aware of our responsibility to make sure there are sufficient funds to pay our bills and to continue the valuable work done by everyone who participated in our festival. It is a responsibility that we take with the utmost seriousness. It is with great disappointment that we must tell you that PrideFest 2003 lost money.

We cannot tell you the size of the losses. It will be several weeks before all of the bills come in. However, we can say that we expect the loss to be substantial. When we are able to fully determine the final figures, we will release them to the LGBT community.

We believe that the unprecedented bad weather is the major factor that caused our financial problems. It was cold all weekend and it rained during two of our three days. On Saturday, the temperature on the festival grounds dipped to 40 degrees. On Saturday evening, the grounds were so foggy that the fireworks were postponed until Sunday night.

Sunday's rain led to the smallest crowd of parade watchers since the early days of PrideFest. By the time the skies cleared it was too late in the day for many who otherwise might have attended PrideFest.

Like other lakefront festivals, PrideFest depends on the sale of tickets at the gate and on beer sales. The combination of rain and cold reduced what should have been a record crowd. Furthermore, no matter how much you enjoy the entertainment it is hard to enjoy a beer while you are peering through the fog and shivering in the cold.

Even with the bad weather, we fell only 500 short of last year's attendance record, which was set with nearly perfect weather conditions. Thousands of people came out in the rain and cold to see the first-rate entertainment on PrideFest's stages. The entertainment was costly, but without it the crowds would have been much smaller and we would still be dealing with a large financial loss.

We also recognize that we made some decisions that contributed to the losses. We will be looking at every decision we made to determine what impact it had on our situation and to be sure misjudgments do not occur again.

We assure you that the members of Board and Pride Council are doing everything they can to minimize the deficit. Every bill will be scrutinized and paid as soon as fiscally possible. We have already talked to officials of Summerfest and they've agreed to help.

Above all else, bankruptcy is NOT an option for PrideFest. All bills will be paid though some may not be paid on time.

We appreciate the many, many statements of support PrideFest has received over the past few days. We also appreciate the suggestions we received concerning the future operations of PrideFest. We will continue our efforts to gather ideas from the LGBT community, and we will carefully consider any fund-raising and organizational structuring ideas presented to us.

We also appreciate the outspoken support we've received from so many members of our community. We are especially grateful for offers of help given by officials of the Cream City Foundation, members of the LGBT Community Center, members of the Proud Crowd and so many others.

We assure them and you that together we will make certain that PrideFest remains an event that all of LGBT Wisconsin can be proud of.

**Michael Lisowski and Lil Lau
PrideFest Co-Chairs**



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Special Coverage

Deaf LGBTs Confront PrideFest on Accessibility

[By Jamakaya](#)

Milwaukee – People entering this year’s PrideFest on June 7 were surprised to be greeted by more than the usual fundamentalist zealots quoting scripture. This year, LGBT members of the Deaf community and their supporters picketed outside the gates to protest the absence of sign language interpreters at PrideFest.

A leaflet handed out declared: “There is no pride in discrimination!” It stated: “For years, the Deaf LGBT community has paid full price for PrideFest without being able to understand most of the performances due to lack of sign language interpreters. Does this make you proud? For years, the Deaf LGBT community has educated PrideFest about their responsibilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), yet they still refuse to make their event accessible. Does this make you proud?”

As the leaflet suggests, the protest was the result of years of what Deaf LGBTs perceive as neglect and broken promises on the part of PrideFest. While there have been volunteer American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters working on an ad hoc basis at past festivals and at least one or two years when PrideFest received a waiver from the state which enabled them to hire interpreters, no organized, reliable system has been instituted to provide the Deaf access to major PrideFest events each year.

Suzette Garay and Greg Puhmann, Deaf LGBT representatives, conveyed the following information to *Wisconsin IN Step* via e-mail.

“We have tried consistently to work with PF for the past 8 years! PF continues to deny the fact that we have been doing the work for ensuring accessibility for Deaf LGBT members entirely on our own (finding both volunteers and paid interpreters), and it was not until recently (last year) that PF recognized that we as a group needed to be involved in their budget planning committee so that we could avoid last minute scrambling to secure interpreters.”

“PF has grown significantly, quality of entertainment is much more complex and volunteer interpreters

are no longer possible ... [W]e have continued to supply the interpreters and work with PF to ensure paying of interpreters is done. However, this has not been done without much resistance, ignorance, and even refusal from PF committees. This recent event was the worst we have experienced from PF. Denying ANY interpreters on stage whether they are paid or volunteered was a direct violation of the ADA law for access.”

Garay and Puhlmann say they worked with PrideFest weeks in advance of the event and even tried to begin working with them back in February.

“Right up to the last week before PF happened we were [as]sured by Mr. Paul Sherry [PrideFest Treasurer] that two paid interpreters up to 30 hours for the three day event would be approved. We had all the interpreters ready and everything worked out and no reason to believe he would not honor the agreement. Then, the day before the event, he tells us NO interpreters will be allowed this year and ‘we will just work with you guys for next year’s event, we just do not have the money’!”

Garay and Puhlmann believe they were strung along to the last minute to prevent them from filing an injunction against the festival. “We will no longer remain a ‘silent minority’ within a minority and we are seeking legal compensation for our inability to access PrideFest this past year,” they wrote.

“We continue to find it hard that PF says every year ‘we do not have the money to pay for interpreters,’ when PrideFest is able to double its size of entertainment, pay thousands of dollars for the entertainment, pay for many things, and even boast every year about giving money back to its community, and they cannot figure out how to pay \$1,500-\$2,000 for interpreting service, which is a mandatory federal law to ensure access to all, including the Deaf.”

Garay and Puhlmann’s complaints were reinforced by Sowa Unora, an ASL interpreter who coordinated interpreters for all but one PrideFest between 1994 and 2000. Unora says: “We recruited, scheduled and coordinated interpreters on-site, and did all outreach, advance planning and follow-up.”

“Once the fest moved to the Summerfest grounds I started talking to various council members about improving the services. Moving to Summerfest was a big step for the growing festival, putting it in the ‘big time,’ and I argued that the access services provided should be consistent with that. A big concern was that the quality of service provided by volunteers was inconsistent; another was issues of coordination with performers, such as a major act which at the last minute refused to share the stage with interpreters. I suggested that for at least the big name acts, interpreters should be paid in order to provide better quality of interpretation. Also, that services should be integrated into PF’s ongoing organizing, planned for in advance and not just brought in at the last minute.”

In 1999, Unora says she told PrideFest organizers that they couldn’t assume a volunteer would be there every year to organize interpreters. “They needed to take responsibility,” she says.

“I finally got the entertainment committee to meet with me to plan ahead for the 2000 fest, and in mid-

April we met. We had a great discussion for over an hour, during which time they not only supported my suggestions, they proffered some of their own including the idea that a board position should be created – Access Coordinator. I do not know if any of what went on in that meeting was recorded or ever conveyed to the board. At that point we were only a few weeks from the 2000 festival so there was no time to get started on the process but they agreed to contact me later that summer or early fall to start planning for the following year.”

Unora says she had a list of about ten people, Deaf and hard of hearing and interpreters, who were willing to work with PrideFest in establishing a committee. All of them agreed that PrideFest had to become more involved.

But Unora heard nothing until of April 2001 when PrideFest Volunteer Coordinator Sheri Goldberg called asking if she would coordinate interpreters again.

“I told her no,” said Unora. “She tried contacting several of the potential committee people, and of course they were no more willing than I to try to throw the whole thing together at that late date. So in the few weeks left before the fest they tried to do what they should have been doing months before, i.e.: learn how to get interpreters. They managed to get the state waiver which would cover the costs. But because they had waited so long, the agency they worked with was not able to get enough interpreters, so very little of the fest got covered. They complained how hard it was – a situation they created for themselves.”

“Last year I understand they did pay for interpreters for at least some acts, but there was a lot of the fest that had no interpreters at all. Furthermore, there was very little info available to D/hh attendees as to when interpreters were scheduled or how to get an interpreter for something they were interested in. All the years we had volunteers, we had had a booth near the main stage with clear signs where Deaf could check schedules and request terps for specific events.”

Unora concurs with the conclusion arrived at by Suzette Garay and Greg Puhlmann: “It is our firm belief that PF continues to ignore us and refuses to make accessibility for its Deaf members a priority ... Shame on you PF!”

IN Step asked PrideFest’s Paul Sherry for a comment, but did not receive his response before press time. Other PrideFest officials, who were admittedly less involved in negotiations with the Deaf community, nevertheless freely made comments calling the Deaf protesters “too angry,” “unwilling to budge,” and “trouble-makers.”

In the interests of full disclosure, this reporter is the domestic partner of the ASL interpreter Sowa Unora. She is also visually impaired and a longtime advocate for the disabled.



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Opinion

PrideFest Diary: Entertain Me

Review & Commentary

[By William Duane](#)

Day One: Opening Under Gray Skies

“Welcome to Wisconsin’s Largest Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Celebration: PrideFest 2003!” The words blaze from the scrolling sign atop the gate, flashing in rainbow colors to drivers along 7-94. Making my way from the parking lot (\$8!), I see only three protesters have showed up so far, and they look like they regret coming. It’s 5:30, raining, and the ground is water-logged. The first fest-goers are slowly making their way inside. PrideFest, entertain me.

I’ve arrived just in time to catch the opening ceremonies at the Miller Stage. Politicians in damp suits, huddle with activists and the Pride Committee. Mayor John Norquist, County Executive Scott Walker, Sheriff David Clarke, Lt. Gov. Barbara Lawton, and many more are present. The rain slows to a drizzle, and for a moment we all think we’re going to dodge the elements this weekend.

PrideFest Co-Chair Michael Lisowski flubs Norquist’s intro, calling him Mayor Maier. A moment of laughter as Norquist slouches to the podium. Lisowski recovers with a quick quip: “They never should’ve named this park after Maier.” Indeed. Summerfest Grounds made a whole lot more sense. Or PrideFest Park? Probably not.

Halfway through Barbara Lawton’s wonderful speech about the importance of diversity to Wisconsin’s future (let’s see if the Doyle administration proves her right), the rain chases me for cover. I make my way to shelter under the airplane hangar of the Dance Pavilion. The DJ is trying valiantly to hold the interest of a few intrepid young people. More on the Dance Pavilion later.

Standing there in the massive empty space, I reflect on how this is a very important year for PrideFest. This once modest event, held to highlight the LGBT presence in and around Milwaukee, has grown into a major happening, with performers sporting national profile: Pat Benatar, Peter Paige from “Queer As Folk,” ANT, Judy Tenuta. I look forward to seeing them, and my spirits return. I’m sure things will look up.

6:30 p.m. The rain is steady. Melissa Beastro, the first act of the night, performs solo on her keyboard for a small group of faithful fans at the Harley Stage. She offers them a mix of standards, melodic covers, and originals – mostly women’s love songs. She tries warming up the listeners, encouraging them to rock back and forth with her as she gently calls out, “Weeee.” She reminds them to stick around for her friend, Kimi Hayes.

7 p.m. The rain has subsided a little. A few more brave souls float into the Fest. I am painfully aware that there is no dry place to sit. I should’ve worn my dungarees rather than khakis – a fool for fashion once again.

Kimi Hayes and Band, a four-piece group from Chicago, rock a sparse crowd with a solid rendition of “When Doves Cry.” They’re a well-practiced group, made up of Hayes, two guys, and bell-bottomed bassist Paula Marr. Hayes’ vocals are in the loud, raspy vein of Melissa Etheridge. They do mostly covers during the show, including a guitar-strafed version of Guns n’ Roses’ “Sweet Child of Mine.” Not my type of rock, but the crowd is getting into it. I drop by the band’s booth to pick up a CD, “Porcupine Girl” (2001, Happy Mellows Music). It’s filled with tough, original song-writing:

“I’m a porcupine girl got no trouble with the world/Keep a safe arms distance from me/I could cut you with my tongue/Leave you slack-jawed and numb/Keep a few long strides ahead of me.” They should do more originals in concert.

With ears still buzzing, I wander back to the Miller Stage to discover that “An Evening with Carol Channing,” featuring Richard Skipper, had been switched to another stage at the last minute. This was confusing. Skipper won the Manhattan Association of Cabaret award, the Oscars of impersonation. Here’s hoping he returns when things are more organized and the weather is a little better for a girl in heels and a boa.

In his place I get to sample Sometimes Y, the local two-time WAMI winners (Wisconsin’s Grammy Awards, sort of). The trio husband and wife Kevin Roberts and Lora Nigro, and bassist Rob McWilliam have a tough job filling a spot when nobody is listening. I’ve seen them before, and I can appreciate their funky brand of ambient alt-rock, but it doesn’t go over with the crowd.

I wish more people in the Milwaukee LGBT community showed interest in the local alt-music scene. This is one of the best places in the Midwest to catch local talent at locally run clubs. Most mid-level cities have been completely overrun by marketing from the record industry, creating an endless stream of MTV-sponsored non-events that push out local musicians. Summerfest has succumbed. Please, PrideFest, don’t go there. There’s a thriving local scene – utilize it more!

8 p.m. Dance Pavilion. Things are heating up. At least it’s warmer in here. I make my way around the floor. What the dancers lack in numbers, they make up for in enthusiasm. Or beer drinking. It’s hard to say.

9 p.m. Time for the big show of the evening. I arrive back at the Miller Stage to catch Irene Soderberg priming the audience of a couple thousand shivering people. Soderberg does a super job. Her renditions of show tunes, complete with amazingly long sustains, go over well. Her one-liners begin thawing out the crowd. "I'm a closet anorexic," she laments over her sequined bulk. She finishes big with "C'mon, Get Happy," and it's time for Judy Tenuta!

As beefy leathermen carry her out, the crowd gets to its feet. Even the Goddess of Bondage seems a little unbalanced by the weather at first, but she quickly works into her set, moving rapidly through her celebrity knock-offs. Cher, Martha Stewart, and Holly Hunter, all take hits, as does "Billary" Clinton: "Was that girl just not paying attention? She needs to pick up the white courtesy phone."

One of her favorite targets, Celine Dion, is next. She drags her ankles around the stage to a squeeze box reworking of Celine's Cirque du Soleil-inspired Vegas show. Next, Michael Jackson takes a broadside: "I mean, I'm good with toddlers, but not THAT GOOD!" She spots me in the audience taking down the line and worries aloud about seeing it in print. Don't fret, Goddess, his lawyers are too busy to care.

She invites somebody from the audience on stage. This is a mistake because he is a wee bit more inebriated than she bargained for. He scoops her up by one spandexed leg and tips her like a mop-headed doll until she screams for the pig to release her.

Before departing, she points out her mom and brother who have driven up from Chicago to see the show. They look surprisingly normal. The Goddess exits to a standing ovation. She never had such a grateful audience. The fireworks sizzle in the rain, and Day One is over.

Day Two: Saying Goodbye to Shelter

1 p.m. I think I'm catching a cold from Day One. I park (\$8 again!) and head inside through the jangling of Pride jewelry all around me. The throngs are here today despite the threatening skies.

Pulsation pounds out a bongo beat at the Miller Stage. The lead singer's yellow do bounces like the ball at the bottom of the screen as she cues a group of fans dancing in front of the stage. Pulsation, out of Chicago, describe themselves as a multi-ethnic all-woman band. This is their eighth year at PrideFest.

3 p.m. Harley Stage. For those of you living in Afghanistan for the past decade, "The Vagina Monologues" is author Eve Ensler's award-winning collection of thoughts, reminiscences, and material drawn from her interviews of a broad spectrum of women. A crowd of a thousand has gathered.

The show turns that particular part of the female anatomy into the main character, interspersing the monologues with responses to questions like, "If your vagina could dress up, what would it wear?" It's a wonderful piece of satire blended with some very serious issues: violence against women, sexual shame, racism. But it has also become one of the most over-performed shows out there.

Still, at the PrideFest reading, one of the more humorous monologues stands out for me. It's Ensler's interview of an elderly Jewish woman terribly embarrassed to find herself discussing her "cellar." "It gets wet down there, and things get trapped sometimes – small animals and such." Revealing, funny, and sad. Gay men need something like the Monologues, but it would be too easy to get us to talk about our genitals (and others).

4:30 p.m. After a quick lunch, I sit down to the Upside Groove Coalition. They've got an infectious sound, blending guitar, wild saxophone, and a heavy R&B beat. It's good to see young musicians at PrideFest, and this time the crowd gets into it, especially when they're joined by vocalist Anjl Rodee.

After their set, I talk with the band. They tell me they've been together for two years, and some are formerly from the hard progressive group True Heart Suzie. Rodee, their special guest, is in the band Midlife Crisis with K.B., who you might know from Dave & Carol on WKLH.

So I'm curious, I tell them, how does a local band like UGC get booked at PrideFest? It turns out the sax player drives limo and met Pride's new entertainment director, Nick Laurent, on the job. Again, it's nice to see PrideFest fostering area talent.

Lisa Jackson and Girl Friday are next on the Miller Stage. They're a smart, sexy, drag punk band from NYC. The crowd doesn't quite know what to make of Jackson at first, as she belts out riffs in a checkered skirt and knee-high stockings. This is not the cabaret drag of yesteryear, but the leather-clad bassist, Mr. Freeze, is my favorite of the entire Fest. I have a thing for "Mr. Clean" look-alikes.

Jackson gives the bemused crowd one of the most memorable sound bites of the weekend: "I used to pray to be normal, but as much as I prayed, Jesus doesn't really care what you do in your spare time." Milwaukee's LGBTs need to grow a little if you want Queer punk acts and the cute boys that come with them (all puns intended).

6:30 p.m. We jump from punk to Christian contemporary. Jason Warner is on stage with partner, deMarco, and a crowd of several thousand are entranced. It might be their good looks, but their voices are pretty good too. This is the most diverse crowd of the Fest, probably because the common interest is spiritual as well as musical.

I'm not a big fan of Christian music, but Warner is a talented young singer with potential. They finish with "Echoes of Eden," a beautiful song, with the two of them singing into each other's eyes. Warner resides in L.A. and has a CD out, "Songs for the Spirit," and more pop-oriented music in the works.

8 p.m. I go to the Harley Stage to catch some comedians. To my surprise, ANT is already performing. He was scheduled for 9 p.m. This is a major gaffe on the part of somebody at PrideFest. ANT is one of the headliners. He's a Hollywood comedian with a lot of exposure, including a spot on NBC's "Last Comic Standing." But with the time change, most of the people who wanted to see him don't even know he's on. There are only a dozen or so people scattered on the benches, so he abandons his material and starts

interacting. He loves heckling Lesbians. He's funny, smart, and quick, but ANT, dear, stop putting down your weight. Your ex can keep his 18-year-old boyfriend. I'd date you (especially if you get more NBC gigs). Next time, PrideFest, don't put a major act on stage early.

Later in the evening, a chill fog rolls in. I'm at the Youth Pride Village to see Peter Paige of Showtime's "Queer As Folk" host the fashion show. They decide to go ahead with the swim suit part of the show despite the bitter cold. Boys, and I mean boys, strut their stuff in speedos, then Paige reappears. "The last time I saw nipples that hard," he quips, "I was biting them."

Paige is well rehearsed, no doubt armed with material from the show's writers. Many from the cast are making appearances around the country at Pride celebrations and, of course, Showtime wants everything just so. The weather has dampened the event considerably, though, and only about a hundred people are present. Pepper MaShay tries to keep things moving with her diva style. She sticks around for an autograph signing to benefit Camp Heartland.

The Kinsey Sicks perform to a crowd of thousands later at the Miller Stage. They are a perennial favorite, and if you've never had the pleasure of seeing six-foot-five drag queens in pastel prom gowns, beehives, and rhinestone glasses, do songs like "Rent A Homo for Your Party," you've missed something.

Over in the Dance Pavilion, DJ Tim from LaCage is spinning the crowd into a frenzy. Green laser lights, twirling sheets of silver silk, boys in a slingshot pile tossing a friend into the smoky air. This is the hottest set in the Pavilion, and it is well attended every year. Still, even more on the Pavilion later. The night comes to a disappointing close with the announcement that the fireworks have been cancelled.

Day Three: Pat In Sight

3 p.m. It pours all morning, so I arrive later, and run into the parade. The police direct me in a circle and I wind up trapped downtown, so I decide to watch from the sidewalk. Two dozen people are gathered outside the Pfister. It's coming – I can here the revving Harley's in the vanguard.

The parade is a source of some friction in the community. Some feel it should be held earlier in the afternoon, say around noon, like it used to be. This criticism usually comes from those who have been attending the Fest since its beginning in Cathedral Square. Others would do away with the parade entirely as an outdated form of protest. Its original purpose was to disrupt goings-on downtown and make people aware of our existence. But who doesn't know LGBT people exist in 2003? If anything, we're a ubiquitous presence in the media, not always portrayed accurately, but certainly present. Like the community, I'm divided.

Marching bands, whistles, rainbow flags. The tight drilling of the Chicago ROTC gets the loudest applause. State Rep. Jon Richards waves from under a wide umbrella, and it's over. More obligatory than usual. Now on to the Fest.

The Orphans get a late start at the Miller Stage. They're a cover band that specializes in classic rock hits: Journey, Jackson Browne, etc. They're obviously versatile musicians, but their set is too predictable. I hear someone beside me ask a friend, "How much do you want to bet they do a Crosby Stills and Nash song?" Sure enough, the next tune is CSNY. There are too many cover bands here this weekend.

6 p.m. The Dance Pavilion has been converted into a leather space. The Argonauts are hosting the show. The contestants mix well with the audience, and everyone is well behaved. Mr. Northwoods and Mr. Harbor Room, among others, make appearances. Leather drag princess Stephanie Michaels, now a student at MATC, represents the technical school's new LGBT organization, MATC Rainbow. The levi/leather organizations of Wisconsin are honored for their work in the local leather community and with charities. They parade their colors: Argonauts of Wisconsin, Castaways Motorcycle Club of Milwaukee, and the Milwaukee Knights. The show breaks up, the DJ takes control, and they dance into the night. Nice job, guys.

6:30 p.m. Ronnie Nyles dominates a large audience at the Miller Stage. The Orphans and her own percussionist back her up. Loyal fans and others are on their feet stage-front. The crowd is mostly female, but a surprising number of the boys have shown up. She's playful with her bandmates, and she works the audience better than any performer I've seen so far. She toasts them, and then, reminded by "the little man behind the curtain," she plugs Miller Lite, again and again and again.

Musically, Nyles is very talented. I close my eyes during her rendition of "Wake Up Maggie" and (I mean this as a deep compliment) I could swear I'm hearing Rod Stewart. Her original material is even better. Her new CD, "January Weather," is available on the net, and she has one out with ChixMix called "Chix Ahoy."

Time to head to the area around the Harley Stage gated off for the Big Finale, Pat Benatar and husband Neil Giraldo. I have a hard time getting in, despite my press pass. Why do they even issue these? I get in to see Shann Carr warming up the crowd of about three thousand. She's one of the most recognizable and well liked of LGBT comedians, for good reason. With twenty years of experience, the last few aboard Atlantis gay cruises, she is worth the wait for Pat. Her bit about her trip with her girlfriend to Key West's Women's Fest is priceless. Stung by jellyfish, hounded by gay men – "those bitches!" – their odyssey makes for a hilarious cautionary tale in gay travel. And don't forget to pack the meat tenderizer (you know if you were there).

After her acrobatic finale, Carr introduces Pat and the crowd gets to its feet. False alarm. The band hasn't done its sound check yet. A rather embarrassing miscue, and not the first this weekend. But the setting sun breaks through, miraculously, and Pat and Neil are soon on-stage. "Looks like it's going to be a beautiful evening after all," Neil comments. For the next hour-and-twenty minutes, the crowd eats up the show. The married duo and their very well practiced band have been doing this for a long time, and they don't disappoint. Giraldo, tanned and tattooed, even comes down into the audience with his cordless guitar, continuing a solo as he makes his way along the first row, getting hugs and piles of beads around

his neck.

Pat mentions the death of her younger gay brother last year and thanks the audience. There are cheers. There are also the familiar hits, including, of course, “Hit Me With Your Best Shot,” and two encores, because the crowd, rained on and put out all weekend, just won’t let them go. If you want more, their new CD, “GO,” comes out in the fall. The fireworks go bang and that was PrideFest 2003. Come again.



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Opinion

Milwaukee Mayoral Candidates Seem to Care, But Need to Go to LGBT School

By Barbara Lightner

Milwaukee's Human Rights League Political Action Committee (HRL-PAC) was at PrideFest June 7 with a candidates forum again, this time for mayor of the city of Milwaukee. Compared to the days when HRL-PAC sponsored a mayoral forum and no candidates showed up, we have progressed significantly. The candidates who participated were supportive. But still, there was something altogether too easy about it all. No hesitations. No concerns. No problems. No difference in programs or approaches. No disagreements with each other. No different formulations. Just a big "Hooray! Made your day!" kind of talk. The candidates clearly needed to have gone to LGBT school to get a more complete understanding of the issues, and how our needs might be met.

That is not to say their intentions weren't good. I think they were, and it certainly looked to me like those who participated were committed to caring. They were State Representative Pedro Colón, business woman Sandy Folaron, city employee Martin Matson, and Alderman Marvin Pratt. Alderman Tom Nardelli informed PrideFest he would be out of town that day, and former U.S. Rep. Tom Barrett, who announced his mayoral bid that very day, did not attend.

If the candidates did not clearly distinguish themselves on LGBT issues, they did – to judge by repeated phrases, and their short introductory comments – have their own take on city politics in general. Pedro Colón was clearly the progressive candidate, urging that representatives of all peoples should "sit down at the table" to discuss how to "put this city together." He emphasized health care, safety, and basic dignity; and saw great possibilities in Milwaukee with its historic roots in progressive policies like unemployment compensation and progressive taxation. He urged that we not "shy away" from this heritage in advancing the LGBT agenda.

Businesswoman Sandy Folaron approached city issues in terms of neighborhood and commercial development. A small business owner (The Great Milwaukee Coffee Company), Folaron has developed

both a marketing plan and a strategic plan for city development, with a strong emphasis on neighborhood development. Active in her neighborhood association, Folaron was active in seeing that the Washington Heights Rainbow Association has a representative on the neighborhood board. She also noted that she included her home in the Gay Parade of Homes. Although taxes were not directly addressed, Folaron pointed out that she would keep property taxes low.

Martin Matson frequently referred to the need to have an open and honest government, with no surprises, making sure that government is transparent and residents have knowledge of what's going on. Humble in his own manner, Matson was the one candidate who most directly referred (by code) to the current mayor, John Norquist, noting for example that he was running against "arrogance," a notion that one might say has resonance both nationally and locally. It is the purpose of the mayor's office, he believes, to "focus" the city on the tasks it must undertake.

Marvin Pratt was clearly the one most adept at "working the audience," laughing here, being humble there, admitting that he did not "know enough" about the LGBT communities (though in a most un-humble posture)! Pratt's priorities included "fighting off the state legislature," where the Republican majority has been outright hostile and skewed in its treatment of Milwaukee; domestic partners; financing for the police department and meeting the city's safety concerns; good jobs; and livable neighborhoods.

On LGBT issues, however, mayoral candidates expressing the caring approach without the subtlety and nuances of real politics are inadequate for today, although they might have been adequate for an earlier time when LGBTs had to scramble for almost any public support. The day has come when we must ask candidates for a more thorough knowledge of LGBT issues, needs, and priorities – before we vote.

We have good reason to be skeptical of mayoral candidates who do not actively pursue and take into account LGBT issues. We have seen obvious hate crimes neglected. We have been victims of domestic violence that has not adequately been addressed. We have law enforcement officials who spurn our rights under the Constitution and the law. We have inadequate health information and services. We have continuing job discrimination.

We have good reason to insist that mayoral candidates provide concrete steps to remove discrimination in health benefits. Today we are penalized, unable to obtain the same benefits – and accept the same responsibilities – as married couples who work for the city. Even where these benefits have been extended in city employment, the qualifying procedures are invasive. Domestic partners must, for example, "prove" their relationship, as married couples do not have to do; they must pay a special fee, and – most distressing – they cannot cover their children because the city refuses to cover the children of domestic partners.

We pay taxes, we have helped revitalize neighborhoods, and we have contributed significantly to the economic and cultural life of Milwaukee. Yet our communities have been only minimally the recipients of city funding and city leveraging of funding.

Most telling – if not the most distressing when it comes to assessing the dignity and status of our communities – is that we have an LGBT liaison in the mayor’s office who is absolutely hidden from view, so much so in fact that many in our communities have not known that such a liaison even exists.

In their presentations, all candidates supported an initiative that would make the liaison visible and accessible to the LGBT communities. They supported a more equitable domestic partners contract. They addressed police and safety issues in general. And they understood that health issues are significant for our communities, including issues related to suicide, depression, alcohol and other drug abuse, breast cancer and HIV/AIDS. So far to the good.

Colón and Folaron in particular emphasized bringing our communities in to “sit down at the table,” suggesting an accessibility that has not previously been forthcoming. In the absence of a genuine political debate at the forum, we should take the winner up on this suggestion, even though it is after we vote.

The last pledge of the day for the mayoral candidates was that they each would support meeting face-to-face with representatives of the LGBT communities to discuss the substance of our agendas, and would require that various department heads, including those from Police and from Health, be there as well. They all agreed this would happen within the first six months of their term.

Let’s go for a little community organizing and get ready for that meeting, with some of our people both old and new. Get substantive agendas together. Make an appointment with the new mayor and his or her department heads. Sit down, talk, and work it out. Yeah!



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News

Investigation Stalls in Activist's Death

[By Mike Fitzpatrick](#)

Eau Claire — Somewhere between the final minutes of April 28 and the morning of the 29th, death came to John A. Klinger. Six weeks following the May 1st recovery of the 49 year-old gay and AIDS activist's body from the Eau Claire River ten miles north of here, that window period remains the key finding of the active, ongoing but stymied probe by the Eau Claire County Sheriff's Department.

According to lead investigator Detective Sgt. John Vogler, though the final coroner's report remains forthcoming, Klinger's body showed no overt signs of struggle and was free of alcohol or other intoxicating drugs that might have triggered an accidental drowning. But the lack of information about what occurred on the river bank just upstream of the reportedly cruisy LL Phillips Park has thus far foiled the search for the cause of Klinger's death. "We've reached an impasse," Vogler said.

The primary reason Klinger's death remains suspicious is the fact that he needed to have been transported to the secluded site where it occurred. "Very simply, John didn't drive. He walked everywhere," surviving sister Sue Klinger said. "How did he get so far out of town?" Klinger also noted that while her brother's eyeglasses were found near the site where a fisherman discovered his body, his wallet and favorite leather coat remain missing.

Detective Vogler confirmed the wide range of rumored motives circulating through region's LGBT community, where Klinger was well known for his service as a founding member the Chippewa Valley LGBT Center and as a member of both the Wisconsin HIV/AIDS Prevention Planning Council and the Western Region Ryan White Consortium. "This might have been a trick that went bad or possibly something more sinister than that," Vogler said.

However, Vogler also believes that the personal fear of revealing sexual orientation, same-sex sexual behavior or simply being present at an accidental drowning might be driving an unknown witness to remain silent. "It could have been a scenario where an accident happened and whoever was there with (Klinger) can't come forward for a myriad of reasons," Vogler suggested. "Not because they murdered

him. We're sensitive to that."

Convincing reluctant witnesses to come forward remains the greatest challenge to solving the puzzle of Klinger's death Vogler admits. "How do you overcome that wall of secrecy?"

With the approval of the investigative team, the Klinger family began posting bright yellow flyers with John's picture throughout the city and outlying areas last Monday. The flyers state that the family is seeking help in finding anyone knowing of the dead man's whereabouts or individuals who might have been seen with him on the night of April 28-29. The flyer also direct anyone with information to call a Confidential Tipster Line at (715) 839-4982 or the Eau Claire County sheriff's office at (715) 839-5102.

IN Step has begun an in-depth investigation into Klinger's death and currently plans to do a feature piece on the activist's life and passing in the near future, in addition to continuing coverage of the investigation.



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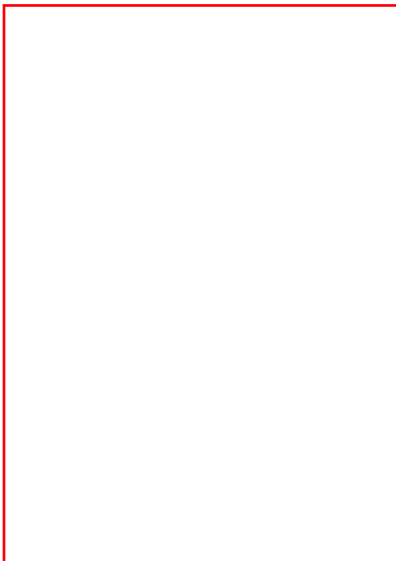
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POLICE ACTION:

Milwaukee Fire and Police Commission Hears Testimony on LGBT Concerns

Creates Working Group to Recommend Reforms

By Jamakaya

On April 24, in what one activist called an historic night for Milwaukee's LGBT community, the Milwaukee Fire and Police Commission agreed to establish a working group to investigate policies and practices relating to lesbian and gay public safety employees with the goal of improving their work environments. The working group is expected to reveal its findings and recommendations this fall.

In a first for the city as well as for the LGBT community, two openly lesbian members of the Milwaukee Police Department (MPD) and the Fire Department gave dramatic public testimony about the current climate within those agencies for LGBT employees. The Commission also heard from gay and lesbian community leaders who have attempted to work with the MPD since 1991 and from an openly lesbian detective on the Madison Police Department who suggested ways to make the Milwaukee departments more LGBT-sensitive.

"It was one of those rare evenings where you feel like you are watching history unfold," said Patrick Flaherty, Director of Community Relations for the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center.

Several speakers thanked Fire and Police Commissioner Leonard Sobczak for working to provide the public forum for a new airing of LGBT concerns regarding the Police and Fire Departments. Sobczak, a prominent gay businessman, was appointed to the commission by Mayor John Norquist in 2001.

Scott Gunkel, a long-time gay activist representing the American Civil Liberties Union of Wisconsin, said: "There's enough pressures in the police department being an officer alone, without the extra pressure of having to live in the closet.. No one in this community, no one here at this table wants special treatment or special rights, nor do we want to be treated differently or discriminated against. We want officers in the LGBT community to be able to do their job in the most professional manner."

Gunkel offered some historical background for the current situation. He talked about the establishment of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Police-Community Relations, created by Mayor John Norquist in 1991 in the wake of the Jeffrey Dahmer murder case.

Among the findings of the blue ribbon panel were: “Appreciation of diversity must be taught not only as a specific topic but through example in all areas. Verbal and behavioral expression of racism, sexism, homophobia or differential treatment is unacceptable. The code of silence in which some officers will not report a fellow officer is also unacceptable. First line supervisors must set an example for those they supervise and be held accountable for ensuring that unacceptable behavior is corrected and stopped. There must be a clear message from command staff reinforced by organizational structures that misbehavior of this kind will not be tolerated. Training alone is not enough. Policy and supervision must reinforce training through correction, retraining, reassignment or termination.”

Stephanie Hume talked about the initiation of LGBT training sessions with the MPD.

“We did our first police recruit training in the fall of 1992. Between then and now we have trained approximately 1,300 police officers, over half of the current police department. I’m really pleased to say that over the years our community and the city of Milwaukee have grown. One of the first questions we’d ask in the class in the very beginning was how many recruits either knew someone who was LGBT or had a family member who was. I can honestly tell you that in that first class no one raised their hand. The affirming part is that since that time more and more hands go up and more and more of the officers that we talk to consider what we’re doing to be a non-issue. We have done well, but we’re not finished.”

Milwaukee Police Sgt. Louise Schaefer began: “I’ve been on the MPD for eight years, and when I saw the notice on the roll call board for this I almost fell over because it doesn’t seem that anyone really cares enough to look into it. That surprised me quite a bit, so I greatly appreciate your efforts here. Unfortunately, I’m not accompanied by a lot of officers. There are many who could sit up here with me. Unfortunately, I extended that invitation and they all said, “No Thanks.” And I think that says a lot about their environment, about why they can’t come forward.”

Sergeant Schaefer spoke of a culture of homophobia within the MPD which sometimes reveals itself through derogatory comments and anti-gay jokes. She also said the fear of being identified as gay or lesbian prevents some officers from lodging complaints about homophobic activity on the job.

In one incident, a sergeant from the Tactical Enforcement Unit was speaking to a recruit class about the relationship of the different units within the Special Operations Bureau and made the comment that “They all get along pretty well, even with those motorcycle officers with their faggy boots.”

“This comment was made by a sergeant to an entire recruit class,” Sgt. Schaefer said. “If that’s the kind of tone the sergeant is going to set for these recruits, then the work of the community members who come in [to do sensitivity training] has just been pushed out the door.”

In another incident, copies of a newspaper article about a gay man coming out had been doctored to include the name of a 7th District officer in place of the name of the gay man. These fliers were left on all the desks in the assembly at District 7 during roll call. “No supervisor removed these fliers from the desks before roll call. They remained on the desks through roll call and they were still on the desks later

in the shift. I do not personally know this officer. I do not know his sexual orientation. I don't think that that matters either way. But this was never addressed at District 7 to my knowledge. It's just that atmosphere of tolerance of this kind of thing."

The MPD, like many police departments, has a tradition of badges and badge numbers being handed down to new family members joining the force. When her domestic partner graduated from the academy, Sgt. Schaefer made the request that her partner be issued the badge from when she first became a police officer.

"To my delight the department approved it," Schaefer reported. But on graduation night, when they announced the badges being handed down, "They skipped right over my partner. Didn't mention it, didn't even make the generic statement that she was receiving badge 1089 that had belonged to Sgt. Louise Schaefer, didn't address it in any way." When she inquired about the lapse, she was told it was not the fault of the speaker that night but that "the decision was made much higher up."

"If that decision was made much higher up, higher up than a captain, and that's the message that someone at that level is sending, then I think that shows that it's an unofficial acceptance of how the department is treating its members."

"What concerns me more than any of the events I've just told you about that involve police officers," said Sgt. Schaefer, "is that if this is how police officers treat each other – those that you rely on to save your life in some cases – if this is how they treat each other, then how do they treat the citizens when they go to a call for service?"

Lieutenant Karen White, employed by the Fire Department for 11 years, said: "The biggest reason I stepped forward is that sometimes you need to put a face on certain issues. I'm not here to get any special attention. Nobody really wants all this recognition because they are gay or lesbian or bisexual. I want to be known as who I am, the officer I am, and how I treat people on the job. My sexual orientation has nothing to do with that."

Lt. White said, "I do know that there are some narrow minds who make up for their narrow minds with their big mouths."

"Nobody has said anything to me but then again I've only been out for three minutes," she said, drawing laughter from the commissioners and the audience. "I can get back to you in three weeks though."

Detective Alix Olson, a 20-year veteran of the Madison Police Department, then described some of the elements which have made the Madison Department LGBT-friendly. Her blueprint for a more LGBT-friendly climate includes: zero tolerance for homophobic or gender identity-phobic language, and discipline for harassment applied consistently and without delay; an anti-LGBT harassment policy publicized and posted in the workplace; inclusive language on all police forms, applications, reports, booking sheets, etc.; more than a few hours of "awareness" training in the pre-service academy; and more

training about anti-LGBT hate crimes for all employees, especially dispatchers, street officers, detectives, forensic investigators, court officers, school liaison officers, neighborhood officers.

She also recommended: an increase in out and visible LGBT supervisors and command staff in varying ranks and assignments; extension of the “police family” umbrella to include LGBT and extended same-sex family members; benefits for LGBT employees equal to those for heterosexual employees, including domestic partner health insurance, sickness and bereavement leave, beneficiaries, etc.; LGBT employees visible and active in their union with the union 100% supportive and actively fighting for LGBT benefits; and recruitment of new employees from LGBT venues nation-wide, including a non-discrimination statement.

According to Olson, the MPD should build a real partnership with the LGBT community which includes: department employees visible at LGBT events like PrideFest and community centers (not just for security purposes); a commitment to sensitive, thorough, accurate investigations of anti-LGBT hate crimes; including a list of LGBT community contacts in department resource guides for beat officers; an annual employees award for outstanding police service in the LGBT community; and exploration of grant monies for police-LGBT cooperative ventures.



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AIDS Network Plans "Walk, Roll and Stroll"

By William Attewell

Madison — The AIDS Network has announced the launch of "Walk, Roll & Stroll" — a September 27 AIDS walk slated to raise funds for the agency and other AIDS service agencies in the Madison area.

"This new event aims to bring the diverse Madison community together in an effort to renew our commitment in the fight against AIDS," said Bob Power, executive director of AIDS Network.

Power says plans are now underway to bring a celebrity to Walk, Roll & Stroll and possibly perform at a post-walk celebration.

In 2001 and 2002, The AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin and AIDS Network worked together to include Madison as a second venue for AIDS Walk Wisconsin as well as the walk's primary site on Milwaukee's lake front.

An agreement with ARCW allowed AIDS Network to receive a 50-50 split of net proceeds from the Madison leg of AIDS Walk Wisconsin. In 2001, AIDS Network gained \$41,000 from the Walk. That amount fell to \$23,000 in 2002.

"Our walkers were close to 1,200 in 2001," Power said. "We were disappointed to see that number fall to 700 in 2002."

"There was a decline in Milwaukee as well," explained Doug Nelson, executive director of ARCW. "The economy was down. We were coming off uncertain times. Many special events and fund-raisers went down in 2002. There are ebbs and flows to these types of events."

"We extended our walk into Madison because we were asked to and because we wanted to help AIDS Network," says Nelson. "Madison has a great progressive community which we thought would embrace it. We kept all the financial risk and responsibility for the Walk. It was a nice arrangement because AIDS Network had no risk."

The Walk, Roll & Stroll is the second major fund-raising event AIDS Network has launched in the past year. The agency is also producing an AIDS ride, ACT I — a six-day bicycle ride through southwest Wisconsin to be held August 4-9.

ACT I replaces the Heartland AIDS Ride which was produced by Palotta TeamWorks. The ride was

cancelled after the 2002 event due to declining returns for participating agencies.

Power says the decision to produce their own walk and ride is mainly based on financial considerations. "Primarily it is because — as an agency — we need to be in control of our financial future. That means with fund-raising in particular we need to determine how we spend the money and what we spend the money on. This will give us an better idea of what we would project in revenue for the event."

"Our decision to take on the production of a ride on our own is the same deal as with the walk," says Power. "There were many things Palotta TeamWorks would spent money on which we believe we can get cheaper or for free."

Power said AIDS Network also had some concerns about the manner in which ARCW has handled promotion for the AIDS Walk Wisconsin event in Madison over the past two years. "Much of the marketing money has historically been invested into point of purchase displays. In Madison, we have found that they don't work that well. Retailers often don't have space to display them and they are very expensive to produce."

"ARCW's efforts included a telemarketing component," says Power. "We don't think that is a good means to recruit walkers in Madison."

Power says the Walk, Roll & Stroll will rely less on printed materials and instead focus on direct personal contact in its marketing of the event. "That is maybe one of the biggest differences between Madison and Milwaukee."

Power says AIDS Network will recruit walkers from the Madison area at community events like the farmer's market and festivals.

"Why spend all that money on production and telemarketing if we can outreach to all of the community at festivals and things of that nature?" Power asked.

AIDS Network received a \$5,000 grant from the Tony Cox Foundation to help market the event. The University of Wisconsin Health Department has also signed on as a sponsor.

Walk, Roll & Stroll will step off Sept. 27 at Brittingham Park in Madison. AIDS Walk Wisconsin will be held Sept. 28 starting at the Henry W. Maier Festival Grounds.

For more information on Walk, Roll & Stroll, check out AIDS Network's website at www.aidsnetwork.org. For more information about AIDS Walk Wisconsin visit www.arcw.org.



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PrideFest Round-Up

Ride the Bar Shuttle Bus To PrideFest

Milwaukee – Back by popular demand, PrideFest is once again offering a shuttle bus to take festival-goers to and from various bars in the LGBT community to the festival grounds. The bus will be stopping at each bar listed below and at the main gate of PrideFest with each trip. It will run on Friday, June 6 from 5 p.m. to 2 a.m., Saturday, June 7 from 12 noon to 2 a.m. and Sunday, June 8 from 12 noon to midnight.

The last two hours of each night consists of the bus running between the bars so that individuals can bar-hop to their heart's content. Bars participating in this year's shuttle route include: Walker's Pint, Kathy's Nut Hut, Triangle, Harbor Room, Woody's, Switch, Pulse and LaCage. It's not too late for bar owners to get on board! Those interested in joining this group can contact Paul Sherry, PrideFest Treasurer, at psherry@pridefest.com, or call the PrideFest office at (414) 645-FEST and leave him a message.

Bus riders are required to get a ticket from within the bar they are boarding at in order to ride the shuttle bus to the festival grounds. A ticket is not required for the return trip. Please help support the bar owners who have helped make this shuttle bus possible by purchasing a drink or two while waiting.

Button Gains You Free Entry Into PrideFest

PrideFest is once again selling buttons that allow festival goers free entry onto the grounds during specified hours each day. These buttons can be purchased starting Friday, May 16, at Outwards Book Store, 2710 N. Murray Ave., or at the PrideFest office, 907 S. First St. Call PrideFest at (414) 645-FEST after May 16 for other potential locations.

By purchasing the buttons ahead of time for \$4 and wearing them to the festival grounds on Friday from 5-7 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday from 12 noon to 2 p.m., festival-goers will receive free entry into the park. Normal daily ticket purchases cost \$9 per day or \$22 for the three-day weekend. The \$4 cost of the button is a great deal and you get a souvenir too!

Nominations Still Sought for PrideFest Awards

Each year, PrideFest accepts the nominations of people who members of the LGBT community think deserve recognition and a "thank you" for all the hard work they have done and/or are doing for the community. The candidates can be gay or straight, male or female. It's not about whether they are one of us, but what they've done and are doing for us. PrideFest is looking for nominations of individuals who are deserving of recognition in regards to community service, lifetime achievement, or Stonewall. These individuals will serve as honorary marshals in the PrideFest parade and will be presented an award for

their service to the LGBT community on Sunday, June 8, at approximately 4:50 p.m. on the Miller Stage.

The Community Service Award is presented to an individual or organization that has demonstrated exemplary contributions of time and energy to the community and its members. The Lifetime Achievement Award is presented to an individual who has demonstrated long-time leadership and commitment to the LGBT community. The Stonewall Award is presented to an individual or organization that has demonstrated the spirit of the Stonewall Riots by fighting to bring about change for the benefit of others.

If you know of someone who is deserving of one of these awards, please submit their name(s) and credentials and explain why you think they deserve the honor. Submissions must be sent no later than Wednesday, May 14, via email to ctaylor@pridefest.com, or via snail mail to Cindy Taylor, VP & Director of Merchandise, c/o PrideFest, 907 S. First St., Milwaukee, WI 53203. Please include your contact information as well as that of the candidate.

Award recipients are selected by the PrideFest Council. People submitting nominations may be contacted for further information. Nominees selected are contacted to confirm their willingness to accept the award and their ability to be present during the awards ceremony. For more information, call PrideFest at (414) 645-FEST.



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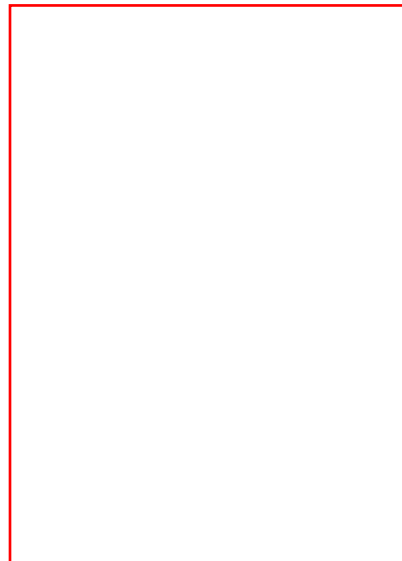
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Reality Check

Survey Says "Gay Rights - Nobody Cares"

By Mike Fitzpatrick

Now that American forces have helped to liberate the Iraqi people from their repressive leadership, not to mention most of their priceless antiquities and zoo animals from safekeeping as well, national attention is returning to meditate on the navel we love best: our own. Unable to trot out a single smoking weapon of mass destruction for the cameras, Republican higher-ups are wisely focusing on the urgent most problem facing our country.

So what's the glaring issue galvanizing the GOP? 6% unemployment in a sour economy riddled by corporate leadership's personal greed? Nah, the stock market's up. Tax cuts anyone?

Perhaps it's the nearly 1 in 5 uninsured Americans unable to survive the financial bunker buster of a three day hospital visit? Pish posh! To nearly every enfeebled hand, the poor poll Democrat. Besides, who even gets to stay a hospital three consecutive days anymore? And those new HIPPA privacy rules make sure no one ever finds that out.

If Senator Rick Santorum is to be believed, the most pressing issue on the American agenda is homosexual conduct. Santorum's comments in a recent news interview - plagiarized nearly verbatim from a February "friend of the court" brief filed by Bush federal court judicial nominee Bill Pryor on the Supreme Court sodomy case (Santorum skipped equating queers with necrophiliacs) - and the subsequent media fallout led to an indirect, unofficial White House anointing of the Senator's stance as "inclusive" of the current American mindset.

Two weeks following his clearly calculated comments, Santorum appears secure in his party's leadership, unlike Trent Lott who was all but physically ejected for his oft-repeated, but still off-the-cuff racist remarks. The reason is simple. In terms of political electricity, race remains a third rail while gay issues have the spark of a 9-Volt smoke alarm battery. As a whole, Americans simply don't care.

Unlike Senator Santorum, I'll attribute my source: the Gallup Organization. Lost last September, amidst the media breast-beating over the first anniversary of 9-11 and the reportage of the rancorous Republican regime change rhetoric on Iraq at the UN, was the news about the release of a report about the comprehensive survey conducted by those prestigious poll-takers on American attitudes toward homosexuality. The report revealed a quarter century of general change for the better, but also pointed out that "the overall sense of urgency to change laws or policies surrounding homosexuality is not strong from either direction."

There's plenty of evidence that suggests the Gallup research is on target. At the federal level ENDA continues to languish, with neither side feeling confident about the political consequences of a win by their side to put the issue to rest with an actual on-the-record-vote. In Wisconsin, power appears to remain divided enough to forestall any protracted battle on same-sex domestic partnership and marriage ban issues, lest the debates spill over into the election cycle. In both the above cases, it's the silence of the mainstream majority on the gay rights issues that politicians fear.

Despite our vested interest in full equality, the attitudes of the majority of the gay community mirror the mainstream mindset. Gay circuit parties routinely outdraw issues-oriented conferences. Gay Days at Disney World routinely draws tens of thousands annually to Orlando, while the NGLTF's Creating Change is ecstatic to have a couple of thou in attendance.

Last April here in Wisconsin Positive Voice's elaborately planned and widely promoted Appleton appearance by national gay Scouting hero James Dale pulled in about 75 people. Many in the audience were straight allies, not card-carrying queers. That same night The Argonauts stopped counting admissions to their "Daddy/Daddy's Boy" contest at a nearby Green Bay bar when the total topped 200.

Both of those events featured good looking men in uniform. Yet Dale appearance, promoted with widespread regional mainstream media coverage and front page photos and feature interviews in Wisconsin's two most widely-read LGBT publications, couldn't compete with bar promotion publicized with a homemade mix of few photocopied flyers and an email message or two. Even taking into account the timing, admission cost and educational vs. recreational nature of the two events, the ease of pulling a crowd to the leather show still says a lot about our priorities.

Even more disturbing is the "post gay" attitude becoming more prevalent almost daily in the next generation of homosexual Americans. For those of you with little contact with young folks, "post gay" refers to the current attitude that being gay doesn't matter any more. Sexual orientation is no big deal. Just be yourself and have fun, a lot of queer kids say.

In some ways, it warms aging activists' hearts both to see homosexual orientation treated equivalently with handedness, eye color or national origin and gay youth developing an understanding of their sexuality concurrently with their straight peers. However, the loss of a strenuous "coming out" process for gay youth has its drawbacks. The lack of struggle fails to shape a gay identity that transforms into the political will to forge change. That does not bode well for activist leaders recruiting their replacements.

So if Gallup is right and no one, including queers, really gives a hoot about gay rights, why did Santorum spout off two weeks ago? With their legislative focus and love of news making confrontation, most pundits, straight and gay, both missed the senator's point and the source of his invective. Future progress on gay equality will probably depend on the judiciary not the legislature.

Simply put, Santorum sees the historical precedent. Lawrence & Garner vs. Texas is not merely a

Supreme Court review of the 1986 Bowers v. Hardwick sodomy ruling. The arguments that have been presented in front of the court and the questioning by the justices both have reflected much more closely the arguments presented at 1954's Brown vs. Board of Education, which ended in an equal-protection ruling for African Americans. Exactly one decade later The Civil Rights Act of 1954 made racial equality the law of the land.

Santorum's remarks were actually a calculated attempt to refocus media's and possibly the Supreme Court's attention away from the equal protection arguments. In the process he raised both the far right's canard of "no constitutional right to privacy" that so agitated mainstream opinion makers and the evangelicals' "love the sinner, hate the sin" rhetoric that so inflamed the gay pundits.

In many ways 2003 America feel a lot like the 1954 version. Republicans largely control the federal government. Iraqi war opposition is branded "un-American" by the heirs to Joseph McCarthy such as Rush Limbaugh and Dennis Hastert. WalMart and corporate America self-censors the programming and distribution of any entertainment less than "family friendly" due to pressure from the modern successors to the Roman Catholic Legion of Decency like James Dobson's Focus on the Family or Donald Wildmon's American Family Association. Average Americans are as preoccupied with the latest computer and electronic gewgaws as their 50's counterparts were enamored of color television and car design. Politically we are now as asleep at the wheel on gay rights issues as 50's Americans were to the Negro Problem.

It took the courts to wake America up back then. Santorum knows and fears a repeat of the political fallout that saw the end of Eisenhower laissez faire Fifties with the Kennedy-Johnson liberal Great Society Sixties, a decade that ended with the Stonewall and the energizing of the gay community. The last thing Santorum wants is for his to be the watch during which we finish what we started.

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57 Days & Counting

With Less Than Two Months Until PrideFest 2003, IN Step Investigates Wisconsin's Largest Pride Event

By William Attewell

It is less than two months until Wisconsin's largest pride festival. Weather not withstanding, PrideFest could be on track for its most successful festival ever.

This year sees a major upgrade in PrideFest entertainment. Multiple Grammy award-winning rocker Pat Benatar is slated to perform at a special "Proud Crowd" performance at PrideFest on Sunday, June 8. Benatar is arguably the biggest name act to appear in PrideFest history. PrideFest organizers consider her appearance to be a major coup and a step up for the festival.

Festival goers can also look forward to performances by a fresh, new parade of entertainers including gay comic and "Hollywood Square" Ant, Olivia cruise line comic Shann Carr, singer Irene Soderberg and Carol Channing impersonator Richard Skipper. Plus, Friday night will feature a performance by the self-proclaimed "love goddess" herself, nationally known comedian Judy Tenuta.

PrideFest also has announced a major revamping of its Pride Guide and Web site among other changes.

While things from the outside may look rosy for this year's festival, an *IN Step* investigation points to an organization that sometimes seems to have bitten off more than it can chew. *IN Step* has also uncovered information about the internal workings of the festival which has left some community members scratching their heads.

The recent, sudden exit of two key PrideFest leaders in the critical months before the event has apparently put announced plans to hire an executive administrator for the festival on hold. Problems with the PrideFest Web site, the Pride Guide and its marketing plan, the Pride parade, and now community-wide speculation about possible financial wrongdoing challenge the ever-thinning pridefest leadership.

PrideFest Leadership Thins

The unexpected April 4 resignation of Ted Berg from PrideFest's board and council is the latest blow to PrideFest's leadership. In his duties as PrideFest's Special Event Coordinator, Berg was in charge of PrideFest's drag marathon, interfaith service, history tent, leather show and other special events. Berg's resignation letter to pridefest advised that his immediate departure was "due to other concerns that have made it impossible to continue my volunteering on the PrideFest's Board and Council."

“I am stunned,” veteran community activist Jerry Johnson told *IN Step*. “It never occurred to me that Ted Berg would suddenly resign from the PrideFest board. I worked closely with him for the past two festivals in bringing my Wisconsin LGBT history and movie poster exhibits to the History Tent. Ted was always wonderful to work with. (He was) easy going, yet always looking out for the best interests of the festival. As a PrideFest volunteer, I know that Ted put in long hours over the years for which our community owes a deep debt of gratitude.”

“Basically, I am burned out,” Berg confided to *IN Step*. “It is time to let go. I have been on the council for seven years. It has finally taken its toll.”

Berg's April 4 resignation leaves just ten community members developing the event's policy and strategy for 2003. Previous PrideFest leadership numbered as high as 19.

Berg's resignation as a PrideFest Vice-president leaves five members on the group's executive board. Co-Charpersons Michael Lisowski and Lil Lau, Vice-president Cindy Taylor, Treasurer Paul Sherry and Legal Council John Prentice remain.

The remaining leaders sit on the PrideFest Planning Council which helps organize the event. Current members include Operations and Security Director Peter Minns, Volunteer Director Sheri Goldberg, PR, Marketing and Pride March Director Michael Goertz, Pride Youth Village Director Marcus Smith, and Entertainment Director Nick Laurent.

PrideFest also hired Smith part-time in January to run the office and assist with obtaining festival sponsorships. Smith currently keeps regular office hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays, with hours increasing as PrideFest moves closer to opening day. However, Smith will receive no commission for his sponsor development, unlike previous PrideFest employee Christine Klein.

Following Bonita “Bo” Dyer's sudden resignation in early February, Lil Lau took over as PrideFest co-director. Lau has been involved with the event since 1993 when she volunteered in the food tent. In addition to her co-directorship, Lau currently acts as the festival's food and beverage coordinator.

Questions Raised After Dyer Departure

PrideFest remains officially mum on Dyer's resignation. That silence has fueled recent rumors and speculation surrounding her departure. Dyer had assumed the co-directorship of the festival in January, 2002 after the resignation of Sue Cook. Prior to Cook's departure. Dyer had acted as PrideFest's entertainment director in 2002 and had served briefly as the group's Vice President in 2001.

According to treasurer Paul Sherry, Dyer had an apparent conflict of interest during her tenure as PrideFest's entertainment director. Dyer had booked appearances by Ronnie Nyles at PrideFest 2002 at the same time she served as the lesbian singer's publicist.

Sherry admits he checked into the problem months after the close of the 2002 event. "Last fall, when that news ... and other information came up Dyer was no longer working for Ronnie Nyles," Sherry said. "I think what Dyer was attempting to do was a conflict of interest, by promoting herself and promoting Ronnie Nyles."

Sherry added that PrideFest has no evidence that Dyer had business relationships with other artists contracted with for the 2002 event. However, the investigation turned up a second apparent conflict in Dyer's 2001 contracting of singer Melissa Beastrom. Dyer served both as PrideFest's local entertainment chair and Beastrom's publicist that year as well.

Nyles, who originally had been contracted to perform only once during the 2002 festival, ended up performing all three days. PrideFest compensated the singer accordingly, board member Michael Lisowski admitted. "What [Dyer] got out of that agreement personally, we don't know," Lisowski said.

Lisowski added PrideFest has rules against PrideFest organizers receiving kick backs or commissions from artists or vendors. However, Lau said that PrideFest currently has no "methods and procedures" or any other written guidelines for the positions on PrideFest's board and council.

While PrideFest has given no official reason for her resignation, *IN Step* has obtained a copy of a January 28 letter from PrideFest's Board to Dyer in which PrideFest formally censures Dyer for a variety of performance lapses as co-director.

Items of concern outlined in the PrideFest letter include unexcused absences at PrideFest board and council meetings, missing contracts for entertainers Dyer had signed for the 2003 festival, a failure to fully follow-up with sponsorships and inform the board of their status and a failure to return phone calls and e-mails from board and community members in a timely manner.

The letter also references PrideFest's concern over verbal contracts Dyer had made with entertainers Melissa Ferrick and Melissa Beastrom to appear at the 2003 festival.

"This puts PrideFest in an unfortunate position of raising more money to fulfill the verbal agreements or cause possible repercussions by not honoring them," the letter reads.

The letter asks Dyer to confirm her commitment to PrideFest via a verbal agreement at a board meeting scheduled for February 6. Dyer resigned just prior to that meeting.

IN Step has also been made aware of allegations surrounding a \$2,500 check apparently paid to Ronnie Nyles for her multiple PrideFest appearances in 2002. A PrideFest source told *IN Step* that a check was issued by PrideFest and then was reportedly cashed by Bo Dyer during the 2002 festival on behalf of Nyles.

Additional allegations — some of which reportedly may have circulated in e-mail correspondence between PrideFest's Cindy Taylor and Paul Sherry — suggest that Nyles wanted the \$2,500 donated back to PrideFest. However, that donation remains unaccounted for in PrideFest coffers according to a second anonymous PrideFest source.

“That issue is one of the things we are probably going to have to look into,” Lisowski said. “I'm not sure how that went.”

Neither Nyles nor her agent returned *IN Step*'s several calls on the matter. Dyer has since moved to Tennessee and also did not return *IN Step*'s repeated calls.

Lisowski said that if there was evidence of persons associated with PrideFest personally profiting from their work with the festival, the organization would look into them and file charges with police authorities if circumstances warranted. In 2002 PrideFest prosecuted PrideFest's volunteer media director Justin Lockridge for theft of goods from PrideFest's offices. Lisowski also posted bail for Lockridge, who was later convicted of stealing tickets, beer and other items.

The situation with Dyer is not the first time clouds have hung over PrideFest's top leadership. Both prior PrideFest directors Bill Meunier and Christine Klein resigned abruptly in the critical final months before the festival.

“It might look like a pattern,” Lisowski suggested. “You just don't know how people are going to turn out. Personalities become more apparent along the way and personalities are bound to clash. As things develop we find that people have to move on or we move them on.”

Lisowski claims PrideFest never had evidence of financial impropriety among departed PrideFest leaders. “All of our audits came through just fine,” Lisowski said.

As a matter of policy, PrideFest does obtain independent audits of festival finances.

However, speculation surrounding the real causes of all three resignations combined with the seemingly revolving door of the PrideFest co-directors' office has been a source of concern among some PrideFest observers. “Dyer's recent sudden and unexplained departure seems to follow an alarming pattern of similar pre-festival exits. It makes one wonder what's really going on at PrideFest,” a regular PrideFest attendee told *IN Step*.

Organizational Structure

According to PrideFest Legal Advisor John Prentice, PrideFest is currently a non-profit, 501(c)4 organization. Prentice told *IN Step* that plans are under way to change the groups status to a 501(c)3 organization.

PrideFest utilizes a two-tiered system to administer the festival. The PrideFest board handles festival policy while the PrideFest Planning Council handles the weekend's day-to-day operation. Board members are selected by the board from the larger council. Council members are recruited from the pool of PrideFest volunteer workers. Once selected, board and council members serve until they resign.

According to Lisowski, PrideFest by-laws list no term limits for either board or council members. Lisowski himself has served on PrideFest's board since its 1993 inception and has been its co-director since 1999. Lau has served on the PrideFest council since 1994 and on its board since 2002. John Prentice has been on PrideFest's board since 1995.

PrideFest by-laws permit current board members to retain their council positions after selection to the board. A two-thirds majority vote by the PrideFest council is required to override any decision by PrideFest's board. Given the current ratio of board to council members on the PrideFest council, it is mathematically impossible for the council to override a unanimous board decision.

In order to become a board member, PrideFest requires a potential board candidate serve at least a one year term on PrideFest's council. PrideFest Board members are elected by the council.

Lau says that she while she is focusing on getting this year's PrideFest off the ground, she hopes to recruit new people into the organization at this year's festival, "At one time we had 16 members now we have 10. We need more people from the community to come on the council. When you don't have people from the community wanting to be on the council, it is difficult to accomplish that."

Lau also expressed a commitment to establish written "methods and procedures" and job descriptions for council and board members. "The ultimate goal is that ten years from now or twenty years from now, somebody else will be able to step up to the plate and pick up where we started," Lau added.

Some community members expressed confusion about the method by which community members can join the PrideFest board and council.

Others had concerns about board diversity and that PrideFest's current organizational structure which allows no direct interface or specific by-law mechanisms by which the Milwaukee LGBT community can directly affect change in regards to PrideFest policy or the status of PrideFest board members.

"PrideFest is unique because it produces a festival that is for a very diverse LGBT community in terms of ethnicity, interests, and values. The immense challenge for PrideFest is to produce a festival that addresses this diversity. The Board of Directors is a vital point of access for policy setting and community input. A successful strategy for PrideFest is having a large Board of Directors as diverse as the community with a universal commitment for seeking out ideas and opinions from all corners of the community," said Doug Nelson, executive director of ARCW.

"Like all community organizations, PrideFest must be accountable to its many constituencies. Can a self-

perpetuating board engender trust from its constituencies?" Long-time community activist Mark Behar said.

www.pridefest.com

According to Lau, PrideFest had problems with its Web site in 2002. Critical consumer information was outdated, incorrect or unavailable. This year, PrideFest has contracted ShockHazard, a Milwaukee-based Web firm, to reinvent the festival's presence on the Internet. ShockHazard will handle all of PrideFest's graphic, Web, and advertising design for 2003.

Lau also said that PrideFest considers the Web site to be a new and important tool for improving and promoting the event. "We didn't just recreate the Web site," said Lau. "We literally had to start from right at the very beginning."

Lau noted PrideFest plans to use the site for ticket and merchandise sales, Proud Crowd memberships and other general information about the festival such as the schedule of events. In addition, plans are also underway to develop a chat function. Organizations and businesses already can download the PrideFest Planner directly from the site.

Despite the game plan to use the Web site this year to sell tickets, Proud Crowd memberships and merchandise sales,

IN Step's several visits to the site revealed none of these functions were available. Web site visitors will also be surprised to find no dates or times listed for any of the major entertainment acts, including the already-heralded Pat Benatar concert.

According to Lau, Michael Goertz, PrideFest's director of public relations and marketing and parade coordinator, is in charge of overseeing the Web site. Goertz has been on PrideFest's council for over four years. He stated that the problems with this year's Web site were due to problems with PrideFest's bank and those functions would be available soon.

Sherry later confirmed those bank problems have been cleared up and the Web site will soon be able to handle ticket sales and other transactions although an exact date was not available.

A check of other pride event Web sites from around the country found that some were able to handle transactions for upcoming event ticket and 2003 merchandise sales. For example, The Twin Cities Pride Web site allows visitors to purchase tickets for Cyndi Lauper's June 27 performance at the festival this year.

Some community members have also questioned the wording on the PrideFest Web site which for several weeks prior to April 2 read, in part: "For those of you who don't know, it's the biggest Pride Celebration in the nation! 3 days of entertainment, dancing, food, fun, frolic, and other things that start with F."

“We are hoping to be the biggest Pride celebration,” Goertz explained. “But people-wise, probably not. As far as grounds and size of the physical location, we probably are one of the bigger pride festivals.”

When also asked for a list of things that the final “F” might stand for, Goertz told *IN Step*, “It can stand for whatever you want it to stand for. We put it in there to create a little buzz and to have fun with it.”

However, several community members not only found the site’s size boast grossly inaccurate, but were offended by the sexual innuendo.

“The last part, that is simply in bad taste,” veteran activist Eldon Murray told *IN Step*. “And it is not the largest pride celebration in the country. Not by a helluva a lot!”

Pride Parade

The annual PrideFest Parade will continue with the tradition of a Sunday afternoon march through Milwaukee downtown streets on June 8. Plans are for the parade to kick off at 1:30 p.m.

The parade is technically considered a march or protest by the City of Milwaukee. As a protest, the City of Milwaukee assesses no permit or parade fees to the festival and a permit is granted after an application is reviewed by police and other city officials.

When asked by *IN Step* if PrideFest had obtained a permit for this year’s march, Goertz reported that he had personally obtained a permit on March 31, 2003.

IN Step’s follow-up with Germaine Speth of the City of Milwaukee Parade Permit Office revealed that PrideFest’s permit status remains pending following receipt of the group’s application on April 4.

The Pride Guide

PrideFest plans to launch an improved and updated Pride Guide for 2003. The festival will replace the primarily black and white newsprint with an all color guide printed on heavier stock. Current plans are to distribute 15,000 to 20,000 copies through out Wisconsin and beyond.

Whether that number of copies are actually read is open to question. A post-PrideFest check of venues carrying the guide outside of the Milwaukee area conducted last year found thousands of copies remained at sites around the state.

One tavern-owner questioned the large number sent to his establishment. “They sent me five boxes. Four of them went in the dumpster along with the most of the fifth box. Why don’t they ask us what we need before they ship them out?” he said.

The 2003 Pride Guide upgrades have resulted in increased ad prices. Advertising rates have jumped 40%

to 50% over 2002 prices for similar sized ads.

Goertz says that PrideFest expected to seek a larger number of advertisers to offset the increased costs of producing the 2003 guide, but admitted that PrideFest recently cut the number of pages from their original projections due to lack of advertiser support.

Sherry said that while ad sales for the 2003 guide are up from 2002, PrideFest expects to see a loss on the Pride Guide this year which could be as high as \$5,000.

Sherry said that historically the Pride Guide has been a money loser for the organization and that PrideFest hopes the changes in the guide this year will lay the foundation for it to break even or even show a profit in years to come.

Several business owners and community group members complained to *IN Step* that they received Pride Guide rate card information only about 10 days prior to the stated March 14 deadline. Goertz told *IN Step* that the festival group already had decided to extend the deadline to April 4. However, Goertz also noted that no press release or advisory on their Web site announced the decision to extend the deadline.

“PrideFest’s deadlines for the Pride Guide have historically never been accurate,” one Milwaukee business owner told *IN Step*. “It has really become something of a joke. PrideFest will tell you the deadline is one date initially, but actually it is almost always pushed back.”

Historically, the Pride Guide deadline extensions consequently have pushed back actual distribution dates. According to Sherry, PrideFest is working to assure the release date isn’t pushed back this year.

PrideFest’s Goertz also admitted that the deadline extensions also compressed the guide’s editorial process in recent years, resulting in a Guide riddled with production errors, spelling mistakes and erroneous information. *IN Step*’s comparison of multiple editions of the guide also revealed that much of the Pride Guide’s editorial content largely has been recycled year after year.

Goertz claims the 2003 edition will offer fresh editorial content. “We will be rewriting all the articles and making sure all the information is correct.” He said.

Marketing

Goertz told *IN Step* that marketing for PrideFest 2003 was well underway in the regional LGBT media. Goertz said that radio spots are currently airing on WKTI radio for the Pat Benatar concert and plans are in the works for TV commercials to air on Milwaukee’s Warner Cable. Goertz said negotiations with the Sheperd Express and other publications are currently underway as well.

Goertz told *IN Step* that ads were placed in The Windy City Times, Minneapolis’ Lavendar Magazine, *Wisconsin IN Step* and Milwaukee’s OutBound. A check by *IN Step* found ads were placed in The Word,

OutBound and *IN Step*, however ads have yet to appear in the Chicago or Minnesota papers.

The ads currently running in The Word label PrideFest as “the biggest pride celebration in the midwest” and urges readers to contact PrideFest’s Web site for more information.

Ted Fleischaker, publisher of The Word, the Indiana-based gay newspaper, expressed frustration to *IN Step* that press releases promised by PrideFest have yet to be received and that his paper has received no specific information about planned PrideFest events, schedules or entertainers.

Indeed, a check by *IN Step* found that only a handful of press releases were generated and sent out by PrideFest and there is one February 8 press release posted on PrideFest’s Web site which hails their new logo and the launching of their new Web site by ShockHazard.

Goertz explained that he did not receive biographical information about scheduled entertainers from PrideFest’s Entertainment Director Nick Laurent and therefore hasn’t been able to generate publicity material for artists appearing at this year’s festival. He also indicated that PrideFest would be submitting to local and regional media a number of press releases in coming weeks.

Fleischaker indicated he had billing problems with PrideFest. “We made a deal with [PrideFest] for an advertising package, they gave me a credit card that turned out to be no good.” Fleischaker said. “We ended up starting their contract just on trust — but there was no money. There was supposed to be payment in advance but there wasn’t.”

Sherry said that the problem was quickly resolved. Fleischaker confirmed that his paper promptly received a check for the advertising after he advised the festival about the credit card problem. Sherry explained that the PrideFest credit card had exceeded its credit limit and he was unaware of the problem when the original payment attempt was made.

Some community members also expressed concern that the words gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender do not appear anywhere on PrideFest marketing materials or Web site.

The Proof is in the Festival

In recent years, PrideFest has been blessed with good weather and has seen an approximate 3-5% yearly growth in attendance since 1998. Last year, PrideFest hit a record high attendance mark of 18,604.

Community members contacted by *IN Step* indicated that despite the increases in attendance they would like to see PrideFest take further concrete steps to substantially increase the number of people who pass through PrideFest gates.

According to Lau those steps are being taken and PrideFest organizers believe this year’s Pat Benatar

concert and other changes PrideFest has planned will significantly boost PrideFest attendance and bottom line. "The proof will be in the festival," Lau said.

"PrideFest is blessed with one of the greatest festival grounds in the country," Doug Nelson said. "In so many ways, having our festival on the Summerfest grounds is a real source of pride. With this advantage, PrideFest has the potential for being among the best attended LGBT festivals in the country. It's a goal worth striving for."

"How the festival will come off this year, I just don't know," one PrideFest observer told *IN Step*. "Unfortunately, many PrideFest goers are more interested in drinking beer and having a good time than they are in the organization and PrideFest's potential to become one of the great Pride festivals in the nation."

"Despite all the turmoil that historically seems to surround PrideFest in the months before the festival. Somehow, PrideFest and the community manages to come together for a great festival," said Ted Berg. "I am hopeful that PrideFest will be able to pull together again this year."

PrideFest will be held at the Henry W. Maier Festival Grounds June 6-8.

Mike Fitzpatrick contributed to this report. Wisconsin IN Step is a sponsor of PrideFest 2003. IN Step welcomes your feedback on this story. Please send your letters to editor@instepnews.com.





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Renee Ramirez Lives Proudly from the Inside and Out

By Carmen Alicia Murguía

When I was about ten, I remember seeing this flamboyant, long-haired, Mexican man walking confidently down National Avenue in Milwaukee. At the time, I did not know his name nor did I know what being gay was all about, but I knew I shared something with this brave, unique and handsome human being.

I later found out that his name was Renee. And I thought to myself, “How fitting – Renee!” It just rolled off your tongue. And I realized that for the first time in my life I was witnessing a proud, out, gay man, gay Mexican man, and gay Tejano man — the two words just always seemed so opposite to one another. Because anyone who knows, knows of the strong presence of machismo in our culture. But right before my eyes was a young man who brought together the Tejano, the Mexicano, and the gay in a graceful, vibrant and candid way without ever looking back.

Renee was born Renee David Ramirez on April 29, 1963 in Laredo, Texas. Since arriving in Milwaukee with his family in 1978, Renee has been a prominent resident of Milwaukee’s south side community. Growing up in a very close family, Renee’s life dispels many myths about the Mexican and Latino cultures in general, and their views on gay life. For starters, Renee’s two very supportive and loving parents, whose most important desire was for Renee to be happy, raised him. Of his 16 brothers and sisters, he and his younger sister, a teacher’s aide who lives in Racine and is also gay, are his mother’s *concentidos* or “the special ones in their mother’s eyes.” He is an uncle adored by 39 nieces and nephews who, when they see him, proudly say, “Oh there goes my Uncle Renee!” which keeps him going and gives his spirit a positive feeling.

This past year in the State of California, they overturned a law which would have allowed same-sex marriages. The television media illustrated a Mexican

man, surrounded by his wife and four children, quoted as saying, “We need to preserve our family and family values for generations to come. This is what our culture is all about.” What Renee has, speaks so ardently of the fact that he is a part of a family unit that feels exactly this way; the major difference is that his family values are inclusive and filled with unconditional love.

“My parents were always very positive influences in my life. When I told my mom about my sexual preference she said, ‘I just want you to take care of yourself, you are my son and I love you very much.’ I’ve never had any family problems concerning my sexual preference,” Renee said. “I see how fortunate I am because usually our culture does not accept their gay or lesbian sons and daughters when they come out. But I think times are changing.”

Renee has known he was gay since the time he was about four or five years old. He’s always played with dolls, got into girls’ makeup and played ‘girl’s stuff.’ But more importantly, Renee says he’s always had the feeling. He describes his childhood in Texas as a happy one, except for the times he remembers his classmates teased him or called him a fag, *joto*.

“It was very hard. I wanted to cry and I felt very uncomfortable. Especially when I heard the name calling coming from my friends, so I thought that meant I would have to take it from everybody in general.” What’s helped Renee get through any of the difficult times is praying to God and the Virgen de Guadalupe to protect and care for him. One of the most traumatic and life-changing experiences was the first time he fell in L-O-V-E. Renee was fourteen years old when he began a relationship with his gay friend’s brother.

“We were together for five years, but it became very abusive suddenly. He used to beat me up, he stole my money, threw me from a second story building, and stabbed me over the course of the relationship. If it hadn’t been for my family who finally got me out, he would’ve killed me. And when you love a person, or say you love them, you don’t abuse them,” Renee said passionately. “That is not love.”

“My family got involved and told me over and over, you’ve got to stop this. I stopped because of my mom. She said she couldn’t see me doing this any more and one night she came for me where we were living together, she packed up all my stuff and took me back home. I’ll never forget it.”

Being gay and Latino in Milwaukee in the late 70’s meant finding support amongst the few who were out: Renee, Julian, Louis and Pete.

“It was weird because there were only about five or six of us, so we really stood out. We were all over the place — the Factory, Circus Circus and C’est La Vie — and people would say, ‘Oh there they go, there go the girls.’”

Renee recalls Milwaukee’s gay community with much fondness and speaks with a smile on his face, elegant hand gestures, and a gleam in his eyes as he describes the music as “old school,” a happier and liberating time with fewer games between people. Having spent much of his time working in community based organizations such as UMOS, the Spanish Center, as a volunteer for Mexican Fiesta, and alongside the community’s movers and shakers like Marilyn Figueroa and Maria Rodriguez, Renee felt he was always treated respectfully and he was well liked by his peers.

Working in the hair and fashion industry was a natural calling for Renee. He began working with Terrence “Terry” Berg, owner of Fashion Impressions, in 1994.

“I’ve always been happy and proud here because I love this ambiance. We have the best stylists, we listen to Latin music all day, and we have a huge clientele. Some clients are fascinated by *locas* (the crazy ones) and they want to see what you are wearing, how you act because they don’t have the same freedom to talk to us in their native countries without being ridiculed. And they always remember you. Whether I’m at the Laundromat, the hospital, at the store, customers always say, ‘Hi! How are you doing?’ and that makes me feel so good.” Milwaukee has always been good to Renee, much different than being in Laredo, Texas or Nuevo Laredo, Mexico where, he says, they treat you terribly, they scream at you, people yell names and point at you as you’re walking down the street.

One of Renee’s most positive and memorable experiences of living in Milwaukee was when he began to notice the Latino population growing outside and beyond 16th Street and National Avenue.

“We went from living up to 16th Street, as if that was the cutoff line for us, to moving beyond it, as far west as West Allis and Brookfield, and as far south as Franklin and Oak Creek. And look at us now, we’re everywhere. We’re on the east side and the north side, too!” Renee said.

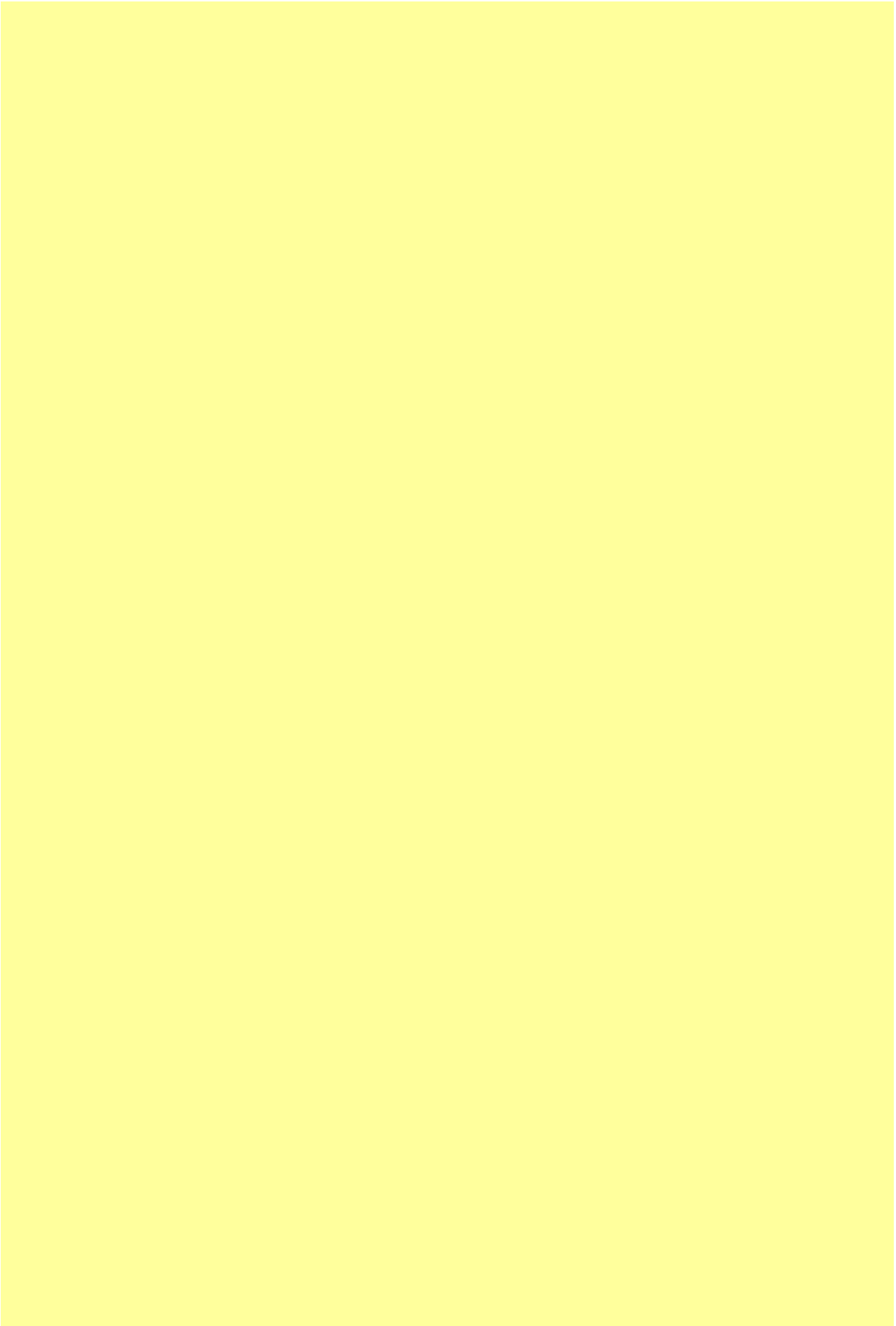
Then, seven years ago, there was a tragic and dramatic turn of events in Renee’s life. He received a call that the man who gave him his life, whom he was close to, had shot himself.

“It was the saddest day of our lives for my family and me – we were all devastated. I’ll never forget going down to Mexico to bury my father.” One of the memories Renee wears proudly is his father’s wedding band, given to him by his mother after he passed away. It serves as a reminder of the bond he and his father shared.

When Renee is not working at Fashion Impressions, he enjoys visiting friends, listening to music, and going out for a drink at his favorite place on 13th and Lincoln, “Ace de Copas,” a straight bar where all the bartenders are drag queens. Given the opportunity, Renee would open a club named after Juan Gabriel’s “El Noa Noa” and have Latin drag queens perform. Even Renee says he would do his version of Lola Beltran’s “Cu, Cu, Ru, Cu, Cu.”

When I asked Renee for a message to give young people coming out, he said, “Never hide your sexual preference, never look down upon yourself, listen to criticism or feel bad regardless of who you are. And most importantly, don’t let anybody cut you down.”

Before I left Fashion Impressions, I asked Renee to tell me about the numerous rings, which accent his long, masculine fingers. He smiled, pointing first to the Mexican flag on a gold band, a diamond ring given to him by his mother, and the ring of luck on his index finger. I knew then how proud and loved he was by his friends, family and most importantly, himself.



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