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Wisconsin's Premiere LGBT News Leader

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MPD Admits Mistake, Promises a New Kind of Leadership

By Don Hoffman

In an open attempt to reach out to the gay community, Milwaukee Police Department (MPD) officials admitted they were wrong in how they dealt with numerous media requests from Q Life in December of last year.

"When you make a mistake, you admit it and then you must move on," said Anne E. Schwartz, public relations manager for the MPD.

The missteps Schwartz was referring to were highlighted last month on the cover page of Q Life.

During the course of writing a story on the recent bar raids in some area LGBT clubs, Q Life attempted to contact the MPD on several occasions for information on what exactly happened during those police actions.

Although we followed proper protocol, the police department stonewalled our request for any written documentation and even went as far as having us show up to get information that they then refused to give us.

In an editorial, Q Life called on the MPD and Chief Nan Hegerty to look into why the cops were being mum. We also asked the department to review some of the other allegations that we uncovered during the writing of the story.

Assistant Chief of Police Joe Whiten contacted Q Life and informed us that he has been reviewing the bar raid files. Whiten said he will let us know what follow-up, if any, the department will take.

He also promised to share all the written reports that he is allowed to.

As far as not being able to get anyone to call us back?

Schwartz responded that she is not yet sure about all the specifics of what went on while we were trying to get our information. She asserted, however, that this type of behavior will not happen again.

"My policy, and now the policy of this department, is that we return media calls in a timely fashion. We also will share what information we can in an open fashion, period," Schwartz said.

In addition, Schwartz says it's important for the community to know that other issues that were brought up

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Citizen Lobbyists Swarm Madison

By Patrick Flaherty

In what appears to be a victory for gay rights advocates, a lobby day organized by Action Wisconsin against the constitutional ban on civil unions and gay marriage brought more than 400 people from around the state to the Capitol in Madison on Jan. 27.

"The turn-out was nearly double the previous lobby day attendance back in 2003," said Christopher Ott, the executive director of Action Wisconsin. "We really made our presence felt."

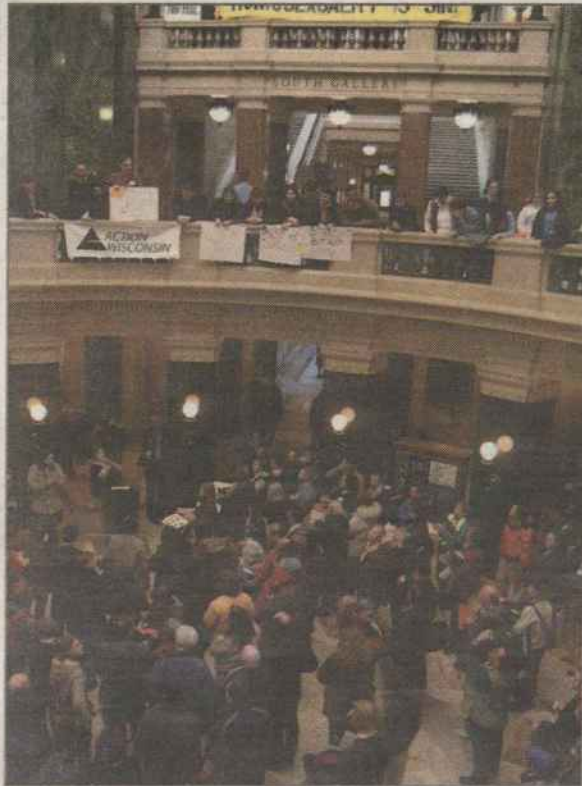
However, Ott was quick to add, "We aren't celebrating just yet — this challenge is far from over, in fact, we've just begun," said Ott.

The Uphill Fight

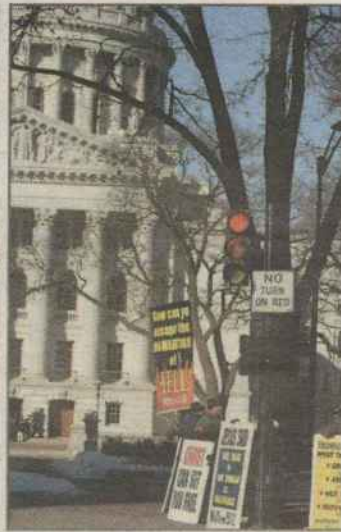
Action Wisconsin co-sponsored the event with 30 other organizations statewide, including the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center which sent a bus, a car caravan and nearly 80 people to Madison. The lobby day was scheduled to try to stop the proposed constitutional ban by defeating it in the legislature.

The legislature passed language for the amendment in March 2004 that would forbid Wisconsin courts and legislators from opening up marriage to gay and lesbian couples.

Civil unions and comprehensive domestic partnerships would also be prohibited by the amendment's second sentence, which bans any "legal status identical or substantially similar to that of marriage."



More than 400 people from around the state lobbied at the Capitol in Madison on January 27.



Other legislators or their aides privately admitted that they were uneasy with the ban, but that they feared being voted out of office if they voted against it.

However, for the ban to become part of the state's constitution, it must be passed again by the legislature before being approved by voters in a general election.

Ott and other activists fear that early action by the legislature this year would place the ban before voters as early as April 2005 — too early in their eyes to educate the public about the broad reach of the amendment.

"We think time is important — we need as much time as possible educating the public on what this amendment really says," Ott said. "As soon as people understand that this

ban goes too far and bans civil unions as well, hurting real families, people in Wisconsin will say no. Fair minded people will reject it," said Ott.

continued on page 4

ARCW Launches Major HIV Awareness Campaign

By Jamakaya

"Focus on the Negative" is the theme of a bold new AIDS awareness campaign being launched this month by the AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin (ARCW). Targeted to young adults ages 18-34, the ads encourage viewers to educate themselves and get tested for HIV.

"I am a negative person" is the eye-catching declaration that appears across the faces of the appealing individuals featured in the print ads. "HIV negative," the ad clarifies. "Knowing is a positive thing. Get smart. Get tested." The ads then steer viewers to www.FocusOnTheNegative.com and to the AIDS Hotline,

800-334-AIDS. From there, they can find out where to be tested.

The new campaign, involving print, billboard, bus shelter, radio and TV ads along with posters in popular bars and clubs (both straight and gay), covers three Wisconsin markets: Milwaukee, Madison and Green Bay/Appleton.

According to Kate Venne, public affairs manager at ARCW, the Milwaukee-based brand management agency Kohnke Hanneken played a critical role in the planning and design of the campaign — all on a pro-bono basis: "We couldn't have done it without

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PrideFest Town Hall Meeting: Changes Abound

Nonprofit Status Sought, New Board of Directors Search On, Parade Apparently Out

By Holly Grey

Community feedback, next-step recommendations based on this feedback and volunteer solicitations filled the agenda for PrideFest's most recent Town Hall meeting held Tuesday, Feb. 1.

Roughly 40 individuals listened intently to the community feedback results presented by Karen Gotzler of Urban Strategies, a local company hired to create a vehicle for community involvement in PrideFest. Based on the results, Gotzler's charge is to make recommendations to create a strategy to sustain PrideFest for the next three to five years.

The results of multiple "listening sessions" and personal interviews were presented along with 299 online survey results.

Ninety-five percent of respondents rated PrideFest's World Festival Park location excellent, and 72 percent rated the fireworks and "sense of community" excellent.

Seventy-five percent of all respondents attended PrideFest in 2004 "to see other LGBT people and show their commitment to the community."

PrideFest will stay on the World Festival Grounds, but despite 60 percent of respondents indicating that it is important to have a parade in conjunction with the event, Gotzler recommended there not be a parade in 2005.

Gotzler said she reached this conclusion after analyzing respondents' statements and feedback from consultations with Pride event and parade organizers in other comparably sized cities.

"In most cities with successful parades, the number of volunteer hours and parade budgets are similar to the amount invested in Milwaukee's PrideFest total event," she said.

Gotzler advocated that the focus stay concentrated on the actual PrideFest event and that a committee be established to explore and develop a strategy for future parades.

In addition, based on Urban Strategies' recommendations to sustain and grow PrideFest, Scott Gunkel, Cream City Foundation's second vice president, explained that PrideFest will apply for nonprofit group status under IRS Code 501(c)(3) using a new, but not yet created, "parent" name.

This status will allow tax-deductible contributions to be made to PrideFest by foundations and individuals. "This should open avenues for additional educational and cultural programming year round," said Gotzler.

Additionally, according to Gunkel, PrideFest will maintain its close ties to Cream City Foundation and create a group of "transition advisors" with nonprofit and management experience to assist the current seven-member PrideFest-Task Force in creating a new 11- to 15-member Board of Directors.

Efforts are also underway to solicit more major corporate sponsorships for the actual PrideFest event and to create a planned growth strategy for increasing programming and space parameters.

ARCW *continued from page 1*

their creative skills and their marketing savvy." The value of contributions to the campaign by Kohnke Hanneken, media outlets and other participants is over \$350,000.

Currently, there are more than 5,200 individuals in Wisconsin who have been diagnosed as HIV-positive. Another 5,000 may be unaware that they are HIV-positive. Approximately half of all new HIV patients are under 25, a trend of deep concern to ARCW.

"We really need to get the word out to younger people that HIV and AIDS are still out there," said Venne. "They don't remember the early years of the epidemic, and some don't think it's a problem any more. But they're at an age where they may be experimenting with their sexuality or drugs and they need the information to protect themselves."

Although new medications have helped delay the onset of AIDS and given some people greater longevity, those drugs often have their own toxic side effects and lose effectiveness over time. The harsh reality is that there is still no cure for the disease. In Wisconsin, 3,360 individuals have died from AIDS complications since 1982. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that nationally the death toll passed the one half million mark (501,669) in 2004.

"The challenge in designing an effective HIV/AIDS awareness campaign is motivating people in a positive way to learn and to act," said Dave Hanneken, partner and co-creative director of Kohnke Hanneken. Research indicates that using fear as a motivator is not effective, so his creative team developed images that "focus on the positive and powerful emotional benefit to a person that comes from knowing he/she is HIV-negative."

The television ads feature a young African-American man saying, "I am confident, I am caring, I am proud ... I am negative." The apparent contradiction is what attracts attention and leads viewers to the ultimate message: "Knowing is a positive thing. Get smart. Get tested."

Another ad, likely to be placed in targeted publications and posted in bars, is a bit more provocative. It features nude bodies with a bar or negative

sign over their "privates" with the FocusOnTheNegative.com Web address printed on the bar.

All of the ads feature young adults, male and female, of different races and ethnicities, to appeal to the diverse communities in the cities targeted.

ARCW hopes the marketing campaign will draw thousands to the Web site and hotline where they can obtain more information and find out where to get tested.

"Many people don't realize how easy it is to get tested," said Mike Gifford, vice president of ARCW. "We believe this campaign will be successful in increasing the number of people who get tested in the state of Wisconsin this year."

Individuals found to be HIV-negative can learn prevention strategies to help them stay that way. Those found to be HIV-positive will benefit from early intervention and support.

For more information, call 800-334-AIDS, or visit www.FocusOnTheNegative.com.

'We really need to get the word out to younger people that HIV and AIDS are still out there.'

FocusOnTheNegative.com

I AM A NEGATIVE PERSON

HIV NEGATIVE
KNOWING IS A POSITIVE THING
GET SMART. GET TESTED
FocusOnTheNegative.com
800-334-AIDS

LOBBYISTS *continued from page 1*

A Day to Persuade

During the day, citizen lobbyists met in groups as large as 100, in the case of one Madison senator, and as small as one in a meeting with gay marriage-ban crusader Mark Gundrum. Gundrum, the Republican Assembly representative from New Berlin, stepped out of Assembly floor debate to briefly meet with constituent Georgia Henry, president of the Milwaukee area Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG).

According to Henry, Gundrum told her that the amendment did indeed go beyond banning gay marriage, and outlaws civil unions as well.

"Gundrum said that the amendment had to be written this way because if it's not, the next thing is that bigamy and polygamy will also be acceptable," Henry said.

Henry asked Gundrum to attend a meeting in her home or come to a PFLAG meeting. He refused. According to Henry, "He said he wouldn't come because he's afraid he'll be set up."

Henry said furthermore that Gundrum still claimed the amendment would not affect domestic partnerships, usually a more limited status that ranges from private corporations adding an employee's partner to the company health insurance plan to California's comprehensive legal status granting most state-given marital rights and responsibilities.

"He reminded me that he was conservative," said Henry, "and that the only real marriage was between a man and a woman. A child needs both."

Recognized in the Capitol: Amendment Bans Civil Unions

Perhaps the biggest development of the event was the apparently growing willingness of the constitutional ban's supporters to admit that the amendment also bars civil unions.

Civil unions are a legal compromise that would grant virtually all of the state-conferred rights and responsibilities of marriage (though none of the federal rights). Civil union legislation has only been enacted thus far in the state of Vermont.

Mike Mikalsen, legislative aid to Rep. Steve Nass (R-Whitewater), agreed in a meeting with this writer and two Nass constituents that the amendment banned civil unions, and volunteered that Nass and others disagree with the contention of the ban's lead Senate sponsor, Scott Fitzgerald (R-Juneau), that the amendment is merely a gay marriage ban.

Fitzgerald is one of the last ban backers to hold to this line. Even Family Research Institute executive director Julaine Appling admitted to Q Life in December and in a follow-up statement to the media that the amendment would indeed ban "Vermont-style" civil unions (that is, the only kind of civil union there is).

The Legislature's own Chief of Legal Services has stated to legislators that the amendment would ban civil unions. Members of a nonpartisan panel of constitutional and family law scholars at the University of Wisconsin Law School also agree.

Pressured to Join the 'Ban' Wagon?

Sen. Alberta Darling (R-River Hills) voted last year to limit access to contraception and to support the con-

stitutional ban. Darling said to nearly two dozen constituents that she supported civil unions. She seemed unable to square this statement with the amendment's wording which bans the same.

Other legislators or their aides privately admitted that they were uneasy with the ban, but they feared being voted out of office if they voted against it.

Not one legislator or aide was able to name a single person who would benefit from the ban.

Getting Ready for the Challenge

The lobby day's events included an extensive training held at a nearby hotel that focused on the central challenge facing equality supporters intent on defeating the constitutional amendment.

Even though 60 percent of Wisconsin voters surveyed by a national polling firm in November 2004 say they would support either marriage or civil union rights for gay couples, after hearing the language of the amendment for the first time, a majority of them said they would vote for it.

Now what?

The answer, say organizers, is to educate, educate, educate, telling voters how far this amendment goes — beyond a marriage ban — to hurt real people in Wisconsin.

Ott says Action Wisconsin will keep a close eye on the Legislature in the coming weeks. Ott claims he's not operating in a vacuum and recognizes that in at least 13 other states around the country organizers worked hard

Perhaps the biggest development of the event was the apparently growing willingness of the constitutional ban's supporters to admit that the amendment also bars civil unions.

to defeat similar gay marriage bans. Ultimately, those bans passed. Ott claims the difference is that those places weren't Wisconsin.

"We are hopeful that we can stop this ban in the legislature. If it goes on the ballot we need to remind people how fair-minded this state has been in the past. Wisconsin has a history of firsts. We were the first state to pass a gay rights law in 1982 and in 1998 we were the first state to send an open lesbian (Tammy Baldwin, D-Madison) to congress.

"We can be one of the first states to say no to the ban on gay marriage as well," said Ott.

But to Georgia Henry this issue is much more than just about organizing techniques and strategy. Henry says it really comes down to how you treat a loved one:

"As a mother of a 23-year-old gay son, I hope that some day he'll have the right to marry and live with whomever he wants. All I want for my child is what everybody wants for their child — for them to be free and treated like everyone else."

"They pay taxes. Whom they sleep with and whom they choose to marry and spend their life with is their own business," Henry said. "I wish we wouldn't have to waste all this time organizing for something that should be a basic civil right."

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POLICE *continued from page 1*

in January's Q Life are also being looked into, although she doesn't feel the LGBT community was singled out for unfair raids on gay places.

"The most important message that we want the gay community to know is that we treat all communities the same. We are not choosing to check on only gay places. These types of sweeps and checks are done geographically — not based on their clientele."

Schwartz claimed up and down that this is not the MPD of old.

She pointed to a new set of "cultural competency" in-services that ultimately all Milwaukee police officers will be required to attend in order to remain on the force.

According to the MPD, during these classes, cops receive training and hands-on skill development techniques to develop and foster respect for racial, ethnic and cultural difference among co-workers and the many communities they serve.

"We have a chief that is interested in working with all different types of people. I hope the LGBT community will not judge this department by this one incident," said Schwartz.

Crying Out for Help: LGBT Youth in Foster Care

By Sura Faraj

It doesn't matter how they get there.

Some kids run away and then find themselves in the system. Some are kicked out when their parents find out they're gay. Others are already in foster care homes when they realize they're queer.

There are hundreds of LGBT kids in the foster care system in Wisconsin. Some of them are closeted for fear of losing their foster homes. Others come out and risk facing harassment, sexual abuse and abandonment by their foster parents.

Faces of LGBT Youth in the Foster Care System

Amber is a 16-year-old lesbian. She's courageous, though reserved. She has reason to be.

Amber is in her third foster home, after spending an interim period in a shelter for girls, and she's not sure if her current foster mother knows about her sexual orientation.

What will Amber do if her foster mom finds out she's gay? What will happen if her foster mom has a negative reaction? "I wouldn't let it get to me," she hesitates. Then she says quietly, "Either way it would get to me."

"I'm not afraid," she says, and in the next sentence she talks about the discrimination she sees LGBT kids facing. She tells about kids in school who beat up gay kids, and adults who preach that she's going to hell. "And people who look down on gay people like they're disgusting," she adds.

"I understand why kids in foster care are afraid, especially the ones who are kicked out of their homes for being gay," she says.

And she is right.

According to Jay Warner, case manager at Children's Service Society of Wisconsin (CSSW), LGBT youth in the foster care system are as young as 12. Compounding the hardships of dealing with sexual orientation issues are the problems of home instability. Warner says, "A lot of the kids we hear about are often bounced from home to home [when caregivers find out they're gay] so they try to hide their identities."

Other kids who are not kicked out have to endure a different set of hardships. According to Jane Ot-

tow, a child and family therapist at CSSW and the LGBT Youth in Foster Care program coordinator, "We've seen foster parents trying to convert kids or put them through reparative therapy. Some foster parents try to force LGBT youth into their religion, thinking it will 'fix them.'"

Ottow talks about hearing of LGBT children who are physically or sexually abused in the foster care system. She relates the story of a lesbian girl in a group home: "The staff decides the girl should like boys so male staff members sexually assault her. These kids, who's on their side?"

Julie Bock, program director at Pathfinders, deals with "runaway, throwaway and homeless" youth, many of whom she says are LGBT. She adds her own observations: "Kids in their search for identity go over the top, which is what teenagers do. They dye their hair purple and get a nose ring. It's a shock for parents who don't know how to cope with that. And some parents will say 'if you don't act gay, you can come home.' They have no idea what queer kids are going through."

Warner sums up the added hardships that LGBT kids face. "They have a significant amount of behaviors they display in order to divert attention from their sexual orientation, such as alcohol use, severe depression, high levels of social anxiety, drug use, eating disorders, suicidality, promiscuity, prostitution, running away, legal issues..."

The difficulties get even more complicated with transgender kids. Warner notes that they have even more to deal with but aren't necessarily more visible. Ottow agrees, "I would guess that they would keep a low profile." Warner adds, "Or they would start out with an orientation issue first and then later deal with gender identity."

James Pekarul, founder and executive director of Foster Youth Independence Center of Milwaukee (FYIM) knows firsthand what some of these kids experience. He was a foster child once, and was bounced around until he was placed in the home of a lesbian.

He is now both a foster parent and works with foster youth, both gay and

straight. He says that many kids enter the foster system when they are coming to terms with their sexuality, sometimes because they run away or their parents put them out. "They're homeless, going from house to house, and they're picked up on the streets."

Pekarul says, "Gay kids face some major emotional and developmental issues because of their sexuality and abandonment by their parents." He goes on to describe how some LGBT kids in foster care may feel extremely isolated in their home because they often have a completely different culture than their foster siblings, for example in music, clothing and communication styles.

The isolation is heightened because these kids also don't have a network of peers. Pekarul said that when he was a foster youth, he didn't know any others gay foster kids.

Ottow gives us a picture: "LGBT youth in foster care deal with a dual closet. Most of them don't want to be known as foster kids. And then when they are realizing their identity, they're again closeted because they don't want to work with this dysfunctional system."

A New Generation

Pekarul started FYIM to teach kids the skills they need to live on their own and to help them transition into adulthood. Pekarul says that for children aging out of foster care, things can be very disheartening. An 18th birthday can be a cause for panic, not celebration, as these kids are often turned out of their homes when the funding gets cut.

He works with them while they're still in foster care, teaching them a variety of things, including budgeting, how to apply for a job or apartment, how to get ahold of vital records and how to deal with food including shopping, storage and cooking.

Problems in the Foster System

All of the misfortunes these kids face are heightened because the foster care system is not set up to deal with them.

Warner and Ottow acknowledge that it is hard to find good foster homes because so many foster parents refuse to accept LGBT youth.

Warner says, "We have been attempting for the last eight months to identify foster homes here at CSSW and the vast majority of them absolutely will not take LGBT kids and have horrible views of what it would mean to have a gay child in their homes."

An 18th birthday can be a cause for panic, not celebration, as these kids are often turned out of their homes when the funding gets cut.

He says that many foster parents view these kids as perpetrators and the response he usually gets is: "I don't want them to assault any of my other kids."

LGBT Foster Parents in the System

On the other side of the story are LGBT adults who want to be foster parents.

Pekarul said that when he first applied to be a foster parent and stated that he wanted to foster gay kids, "The licensing worker raised her eyebrows and asked why would I want them." He understands why more LGBT adults don't get involved as foster parents: "I see why people don't jeopardize their careers. It's a stigmatism that licensing agencies put them through."

Warner acknowledges, "A lot of LGBT foster parents have had really negative experiences with the state and child welfare system. We're trying to change that and we want them to recognize that there are agencies out there that are very open to having them as foster parents."

CSSW, through their LGBT Youth in Foster Care program, is actively recruiting LGBT foster parents and allies from the queer community. "We're trying to build a network of people that we can place kids with when they come to us," says Warner. "Our agency is very open to working with LGBT couples and singles as foster parents."

Sandie Hines is a recruitment specialist with Lutheran Social Services (LSS), which provides recruiting, licensing, training and support for foster parents. She makes it clear that LGBT people can both foster and adopt kids, and she has been active in attempting to recruit them, for example at PrideFest and through a couple of neighborhood "rainbow" groups.

Julie Brown, quality improvement manager for LSS is straightforward: "We need more homes where LGBT kids can be placed." When asked about transgender parents Brown stated emphatically, "Absolutely! It makes sense intuitively to have functioning transgender adults as role models. It's valuable, which is part of the reason we're recruiting in that community."

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FOSTER KIDS *continued from page 5***Changing the Foster Paradigm**

Ottow and Warner are both passionate about trying to improve the scenario for LGBT kids. The LGBT Youth in Foster Care program is part of a larger, national network, "the National Advisory Network to address the needs of LGBTQ youth in foster care," which formed as a result of the "Youth in the Margins" report. According to Ottow, the report contains surveys conducted in 14 states and shows that, across the board, the needs of LGBT youth in foster care are not being met.

The first problem the report identified is a lack of awareness or sensitivity training for people that work with LGBT youth. So Ottow's and Warner's immediate objective is to provide awareness that problems exist. To that end, Ottow is focusing on training caseworkers to be aware that kids in their caseloads may be LGBT youth. "They're sympathetic and once they become educated, they're much more likely to talk to their colleagues and supervisors — it opens the dialogue which starts the ball rolling so more referrals will come in."

She is also working with the Department of Health and Family Services and the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare (BMCW), noting that BMCW doesn't yet have a nondiscrimination policy. "We've submitted suggestions," she says, noting that the nondiscrimination policy should cover foster kids, foster parents and staff.

Ottow and Warner have also started a taskforce of 16 individuals from 12 different agencies to help give direction to their program. Project Q, The Alliance School of Milwaukee, Pathfinders, PFLAG and Foster Youth Independence Center of Milwaukee are all part of that taskforce.

Ottow is hopeful. "We're optimistic that the more the word spreads, the more we're able to educate, that the system will change."

And while the struggle is on to find long-term answers, the challenges continue to mount for both LGBT kids and parents in the system now.

We must not lose sight of those kids, like Amber, who don't know what tomorrow brings.

For more information, call 414-264-KIDS.



Sura Faraj (sfaraj@queerlifeneews.com) is the associate editor of Q Life. She is also an organizer, activist, poet and flag dancer. She calls Riverwest home and headquarters for action.

Bush Accused of Using Tax Money to Fund Anti-Gay Activist

The controversy of the Bush administration using taxpayer money to support independent commentators has heated up again with the National Stonewall Democrats' (NSD) announcement that \$40,000 was paid to anti-gay activist Maggie Gallagher to write a report advocating marriage discrimination against gay couples.

According to The Independent, Gallagher admitted she had received a payment of \$21,000 from the Department of Health and Human Services to promote Bush's \$300 million initiative encouraging the "sanctity of marriage."

"Maggie Gallagher is perhaps the best-known advocate for marriage discrimination against gay families," said Dave Noble, NSD executive director. "The White House should not be funding her activities while Re-

publicans call on her to testify before Congress as an independent voice on such matters."

For example, in 2002, she publicly voiced her support for Bush's proposal to constitutionally ban gay marriage. Currently, an article on Gallagher's Web site claims evidence from Sweden suggests gay couples are more likely to divorce than heterosexual couples.

Gallagher also received \$20,000 from the Bush Administration to write a report titled "Can Government Strengthen Marriage?" The report, published by the National Fatherhood Initiative in 2004 in conjunction with the Institute for American Values and the Institute for Marriage and Public Policy, urged the government to "protect the boundaries of marriage" by strictly defining marriage for policy

Canadian Liberals Clash Over Same-Sex Marriage

Fredericton, New Brunswick — As liberal Members of Parliament against same-sex marriage make a gallant effort to persuade other liberals to switch sides on the argument, Prime Minister Paul Martin continues his campaign to bring same-sex marriage legislation to all of Canada in the coming year.

The liberal caucus is meeting in Fredericton for a three-day retreat where caucus chairman Andy Savoy has dubbed it the 3M's summit: missiles, marriage and mad cow disease. But the issue of same-sex marriage seems to have taken center stage.

"When the country's split 50-50, how can you win on such a notion?" asked Liberal Member of Parliament Paul Steckle, who argues that a law legalizing gay marriage could one

day lead to one that legalizes polygamy. "There are going to be those of us who are not with the prime minister on this issue."

"The fact is I am going to defend minority rights and I'm going to defend all minority rights," Martin told the Globe and Mail. "You can't simply pick and choose."

The bill is expected to be tabled soon after the House of Commons resumes. Martin has said backbench Liberals can vote as they choose on the same-sex bill but has ordered his cabinet to vote alongside the government to ensure its passage.

Seven of Canada's 10 provinces have ruled in favor of same-sex marriage laws, making Martin and his cabinet confident that the bill will pass.

Israel Gives Lesbian Couple Green Light for Adoption

Tel Aviv, Israel — In a major accomplishment for same-sex couples in Israel, the country's high court ruled that a lesbian couple be legally allowed to adopt each other's children.

The Supreme Court decided in a 7-2 ruling that Tal and Avital Yaros-Hakak, who have been living together for 15 years and have three children, be allowed to adopt each other's children.

In 1997, they petitioned the Ramat Gan Family Court seeking the right to and court recognition of their joint parenthood. The court rejected the petition because Israel's adoption laws had no provisions for same-sex couples. The courts granted them guardianship of each other's children, a precedent that has since become the norm.

The couple appealed. While they failed to get a favorable ruling in the Tel Aviv District Court, the Supreme Court accepted the case.

Citing Article 25 of the Adoption Law, the Yaros-Hakak argued that the law allows for "special circumstances" for adoption when it is for the good of the child, even if the child's parents are still alive. The only condition is that the person seeking to adopt be single.

The two women signed a joint-life agreement that merged their property. The children know who their biological mother is but treat both women as mothers.

Avital said yesterday that because the family court had been quick in granting the couple joint guardianship over each other's children, they had the courage to take their fight all the way to the Supreme Court.

In the appeal to the Supreme Court, the mothers did not ask to be recognized as "a couple" or a single-sex family, but to be allowed to adopt each other's children "for the sake of the child" and "under special circumstances."

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Upcoming Foster parent orientations will be held Feb 10th, Feb 16th, Feb 24th, and March 9th at various libraries around the city. Call (414) 264-KIDS for times and locations.

Ex-Gay-Themed Billboards Anger Texas' LGBT Community

Houston — A series of billboards touting a Christian alternative to homosexuality have outraged LGBT activists in Houston.

Fifteen billboards popped up with the message, "I questioned homosexuality. Change is possible. Discover how." Each billboard features either a man or a woman and is intended to promote Focus on the Family's upcoming "Love Won Out" conference in Houston Feb. 19.

The conference will focus much of its agenda on "understanding, addressing and preventing homosexuality," and while representatives for Focus on the Family claim they have members who have been able to change their sexual orientation, community activists say the billboards are just an act of desperation.

"Focus on the Family charges big bucks for this seminar," community activist Ray Hill told Planet Out. "And Grace Community Church, which is hosting the thing, is worried it will take a bath. So the billboards

have been put up so the church won't suffer."

Attendance at the conference costs \$50 in advance, \$60 at the door, and Hill is speculating these last-minute billboards indicate that sales aren't going well.

Sue Null, an advocacy chair for the Houston chapter of Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) told the Houston Chronicle that her organization is considering an appropriate response to the billboards. "For an organization to spend their time and money promoting untruth and lies against gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgenders is a deplorable situation," she said.

John Paulk, founder of Focus on the Family, made the cover of Newsweek for claiming people could change their sexual orientation. He left the organization after being photographed by a Human Rights Campaign staffer at a gay bar in Washington, D.C.

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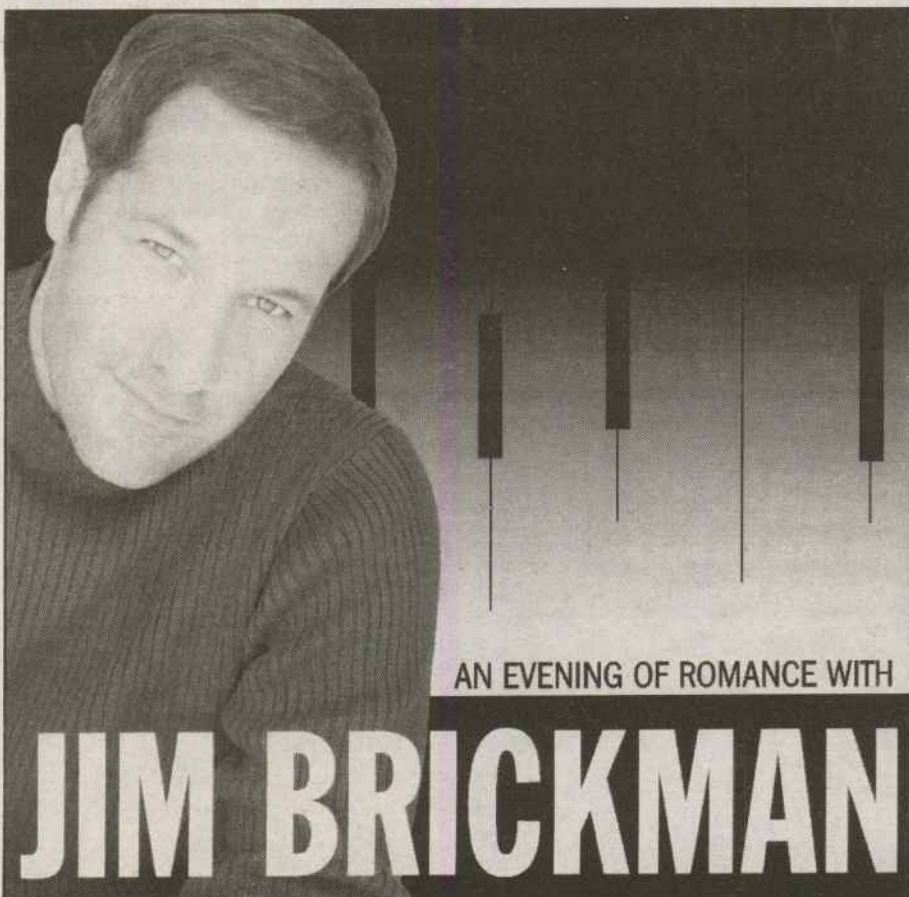
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Gay Rights Bill Passes Illinois House

Springfield, Ill. — After nearly a decade of fighting by gay rights activists, a bill banning discrimination of gays and lesbians passed the Illinois House Jan. 12 and is on its way to Illinois' governor.

The House voted 65-51 on the measure, which was approved by the Senate. Gov. Rod Blagojevich said the bill has his support.

The action came on the last possible day; the bill would have died had it not been approved before the new Legislature is sworn. The House reviewed the bill under pressure from Senate President Emil Jones (D-Chicago); Blagojevich; and the governor's sister-in-law, gay activist Deborah Meil.

The measure will add "sexual orientation" to the list of reasons for which people cannot discriminate in housing, lending and employment.

"It sends a message that we in the Illinois Senate and Illinois believe that everybody has the right to equal protection," Sen. Carol Ronen (D-Chicago), the sponsor of the measure, told the Chicago Tribune after the vote.

If the governor signs the legislation, Illinois will join 14 other states that bar discrimination based on sexual orientation.

Wal-Mart Acknowledges Same-Sex Couples in Responsibility but Not in Benefits

The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) applauded Wal-Mart Stores, the nation's largest private employer, for a new definition of family that includes same-sex partners recognized under state law.

"We hope that with equal responsibility come equal benefits," said HRC's Daryl Herrschaft, deputy director for HRC's workplace project. "We are encouraged by this sign showing America's heartland employer understands same-sex couples share the responsibilities that come with being a family. It's only appropriate for these families to also receive the same benefits as others."

Wal-Mart's definition of "immediate family" was included in a conflict-of-interest policy the company filed yesterday with the Securities and Exchange Commission. A portion of the policy follows:

"You are responsible for advancing Wal-Mart's business interests when the opportunity to do so arises. You may not take any opportunities or use any confidential information for your benefit, or for the benefit of your immediate family members, that you discover or obtain through your employment with Wal-Mart. Immediate family members include (whether by birth, adoption, marriage or Domes-

tic Partnership or Civil Union, if recognized by your state or other local law) your spouse, children, parents, siblings, mothers and fathers-in-law, sons and daughters-in-law and brothers and sisters-in-law."

"We will continue our work to encourage Wal-Mart and other companies to expand fair-minded policies to areas where same-sex couples are not recognized by law," added Herrschaft.

Currently 228, or 45 percent, of Fortune 500 companies offer health-care benefits to employees' same-sex domestic partners or spouses. The number has increased tenfold since 1995 when only 21 Fortune 500 companies offered the benefits. Wal-Mart competitors Costco Wholesale, Best Buy and Home Depot all offer domestic partner health benefits.

Currently, nine of the 10 top companies in the Fortune 500 include sexual orientation in their non-discrimination policies, and three of these companies also include protection against discrimination based on gender identity in their policies.

"We urge Wal-Mart and other companies to add protections for transgender employees so that no employee is at risk for losing their livelihood for reasons that have nothing to do with their work," said Herrschaft.

Education Secretary Criticizes PBS for Featuring Lesbian Character

Washington — The nation's new education secretary has denounced the Public Broadcasting System for spending public money on an episode of a cartoon featuring lesbian characters, saying many parents would not want their children exposed to such lifestyles.

Margaret Spellings said the episode did not meet with the objectives Congress had intended for public programming. By law, she said, any funded shows must give top priority to "research-based, educational objectives."

PBS officials said Tuesday they have decided not to air the episode of "Postcards from Buster." PBS Vice President of Media Relations Lea Sloane said the Education Department's objections were not a factor in deciding not to air the program.

"Ultimately, our decision was based on the fact that we recognize this is a sensitive issue, and we wanted to make sure that parents had an opportunity to introduce this subject to their children in their own time," Sloan told the Associated Press.

In the episode, titled "Sugartime!," the title character, an animated bunny named Buster, takes a trip to Vermont, where same-sex civil unions are legal. The episode features two lesbian couples, although the focus is on farm life and maple sugaring.

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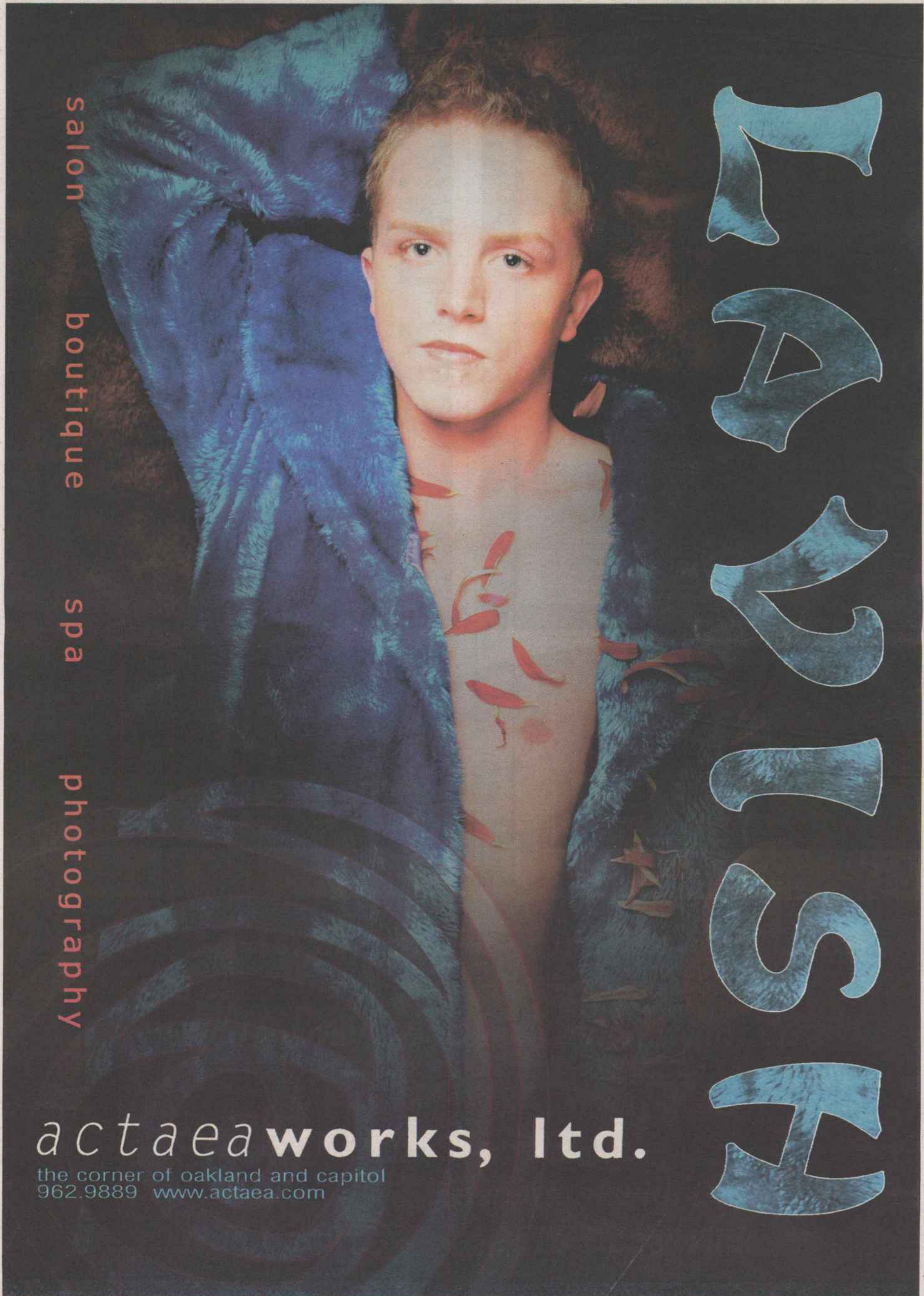
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Queering Femininity: A National Femme Conference

Seattle — A national conference to explore and celebrate queer femininity and to build community based in cooperation, understanding and respect is being organized for Memorial Day weekend.

Queering Femininity, a three-day national conference, will be held at the Washington State Convention Center May 27-30. The conference will present opportunities for those invested in exploring queer feminine gender expression to share information, network and support one another. Activists will challenge themselves to recognize and negotiate the impacts of gender, age, class, race and other aspects of our identities, and to examine how they influence our lives and communities.

Queering Femininity will feature a variety of workshops, panels and caucuses addressing aspects of living as queer and feminine, and the complex

challenges of building and sustaining community. Minnie Bruce Pratt, award-winning femme poet and author of seven books, will be featured as the keynote speaker. Other confirmed presenters include Dossie Easton, Laura Harris, Emi Koyama, Veronica Monet, Shar Rednour and Annie Sprinkle.

Conference organizers are actively soliciting workshop proposals, and strongly encourage people of color to apply.

Accompanying events include a vendor fair, art exhibit, cabaret, all-ages dance, spoken-word performance and play party.

Queering Femininity is open to anyone interested in the lives of feminine-identified people in relation to queer, lesbian, bisexual, dyke and trans communities. Queering Femininity is a trans-friendly event. www.femmeconference.org

Conservative Right Goes After SpongeBob



Washington — On the heels of electoral victories in 11 states banning same-sex marriage, some influential conservative Christian groups are shifting their focus to a new target: a popular cable TV cartoon character.

SpongeBob SquarePants needs no introduction to fans. He is popular with kids and grownups alike for living in a Pineapple under the sea. SpongeBob has also become something of a camp classic for gay men, largely because he regularly holds hands with his sidekick, Patrick.

Focus on the Family founder James Dobson started in on the cartoon character at a recent black-tie gala for members of Congress and other political allies to celebrate the election results.

Dobson said SpongeBob's creators had enlisted him to appear in a "pro-homosexual video" alongside other recognizable cartoon faces including Barney and Jimmy Neutron. Dobson urged attendees at the dinner to stand

against it as part of a "spiritual battle" for our country.

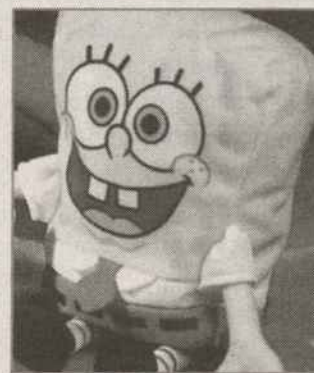
The video's creator, Nile Rodgers, suggested that Dobson may have gotten his video confused with another organization.

Rodgers said he founded the "We Are Family Foundation" after the Sep. 11 attacks to create a video featuring 100 cartoon characters to teach kids about multiculturalism. The

video, which has appeared on Nickelodeon and other networks, makes no mention of sexual identity.

Rodgers said that the company "We Are Family," based in Charleston, S.C., hosts an unrelated Web site supporting gay youth, and may have caused the confusion.

Still, Focus on the Family is standing by its assertions. "We see the video as an insidious means by which the organization is manipulating and potentially brainwashing kids," said Paul Batura, Dobson's assistant.

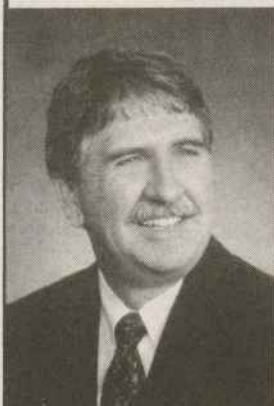


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Love Makes a Family

By John Quinlan

Hello from Madison, where there are several events of interest to people throughout the state in the next month. It's said that a picture speaks a thousand words. Never has the message been as powerful or timely as it will be when a photo-text exhibit travels to the State Capitol rotunda and other venues in Madison in late February and early March — thanks to a grant from the Madison-based LGBT New Harvest Foundation.

For 10 years, the beautiful and award-winning Love Makes a Family photo-text exhibit has been traveling the country, spreading understandings about lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender families wherever it goes. Its highly evocative portraits by photographer Gigi Kaeser of culturally and racially diverse LGBT families in many forms are complemented by Peggy Gillespie's skillfully executed interviews with the family members themselves. The resulting mélange of words and pictures bridges the emotional gamut from inspiring to poignant to irrepressibly humorous. In addition to the traveling exhibit, the photos are included in a wonderful coffee table book from the University of Massachusetts Press that provides a perfect means of educating others about our families' lives.

Photographer Kaeser is from Madison originally, and about a dozen of the families portrayed are from the Madison area. (I have the honor of appearing with my "niece" Sol Kelley-Jones as an extended family member in her "family-of-creation.") Madison was one of the first venues for the exhibit when it began in 1995. Ironically, despite our liberal reputation, Madison is virtually the only city where there has been an

organized protest.

Scheduled to be displayed in the library of Hawthorne Elementary School 10 years ago, the exhibit met with protests by fundamentalist parents who objected to its sympathetic portrayal of gay families. The school superintendent at the time enabled their efforts, until the rest of the community rose up to counter the absurdity of the protest, pointing out that these were simply photos of families — families bound together by love.

OutReach, in association with Madison PFLAG and Action Wisconsin, is bringing these photos to the Capitol as a means of showing state legislators images of the families and children their actions will be harming if they continue to advance the pending anti-gay constitutional amendment. It is hoped that the exhibit will be viewed by people from a wide variety of backgrounds during its two week stay in the Capitol, and in other public venues, during its five weeks in Madison. It is my hope that funding will be eventually found for the exhibit to travel the state as a powerful educational tool. Volunteers are being sought to help with logistics and publicity. For more information, go to www.outreachinc.com or call OutReach at 608-255-8582.

Also, please note these important events:

Madison playwright and director Callen Harty's spiritually transcendent play "Radical Harry," about gay rights pioneer and Radical Faeries leader Harry Hay, continues at Madison's Broom Street Theater on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays at 8 p.m. through Feb. 20. Already attracting national attention, it's an intelligently written, skillfully acted,

The beautiful and award-winning Love Makes a Family photo-text exhibit bridges the emotional gamut from inspiring to poignant to irrepressibly humorous.

uplifting and surprise-filled theatrical experience you won't want to miss. For more information, go to www.broomstreet.org or call 608-244-8338.

"Safe Schools, Safe Communities" is a daylong conference on Friday, March 4, that is a culmination of 10 years of program development and evaluation, resulting in a statewide model for LGBT youth development. Held at the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Pyle Center, participants will learn about ways to support LGBT youth through school-based and community-based programs, and will also gain an increased understanding of the harassment, prejudice, stereotypes and family issues facing LGBT youth. Conference keynote speakers will include Gary Hollander, Ph.D., and Paul Wesselman. To register, call Mark at Diverse and Resilient at 414-390-0444.

Christians for Equality, sponsors of a highly successful gay-supportive conference in November, will host a lobby day at the State Capitol on Tuesday, Feb. 22. Members of various religious congregations statewide will gather to show that there are many faith communities supportive of full acceptance of us in their

congregations, and full recognition for us as families and individuals, directly countering the messages of the religious right. A 10:30 a.m. press conference will be followed by a training at 11 a.m. and then a rally and visits to legislative offices. For more information, call First Congregational Church in Madison at 608-233-9751 or toll-free statewide at 877-578-9844.



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Constitutional Ban on Gay Unions Threatens Domestic Violence Safeguards

Madison — States that passed constitutional amendments banning gay unions last year are discovering that such bans have consequences far beyond defining marriage. In the latest example, a public defender in Ohio has dismissed domestic violence charges against unmarried defendants, arguing that the Ohio amendment prohibits him from giving unmarried couples protections granted to married couples.

“What is happening in Ohio and other states could happen in Wisconsin if we pass this amendment,” said Action Wisconsin executive director Christopher Ott. “The backers of the Wisconsin amendment want to deny gay couples — and for that matter, all unmarried couples — the rights, protections and responsibilities of marriage. Even for people who oppose marriage for gay couples, this amendment goes too far.”

The Wisconsin amendment would prohibit any legal status that is “substantially similar” to marriage. The Legislature could take up the amendment any day.

Other states with constitutional bans are feeling the effects. In Utah, a man is claiming the constitutional amendment there invalidates a restraining order taken out against him by his ex-girlfriend.

In Ohio, the public defender in Cuyahoga County (Cleveland) is dismissing domestic violence charges against unmarried defendants, and the University of Toledo announced it cannot offer domestic partner benefits to its employees.

In Michigan, Gov. Jennifer Granholm ordered domestic partner benefits to be removed from contracts that were being negotiated for state workers.

Queeruption 7: Sex and Anarchy in the Antipodes



Sydney, Australia — A growing number of fashionistas, radicals, funsters and queers are planning Queeruption 7, the latest in a global carnival of queer chaos and revolutionary fun. Set to happen in Sydney, Australia, from Feb. 16-23, Queeruption 7 will be seven days of talk-fests, graffiti-throw-ups, skate-boarding, hoola-hooping, jelly-wrestling, actions, workshops, parties, gender re- and de-assignment, make-up classes and hair-styling.

Instead of waiting for a capitalist-free utopia and a world without war, participants are encouraged to make it happen — right here, right now. Theory and politics, having your cake and eating it too and ensuring our queer brothers, sisters and tranny siblings around the world get their share.

From the serious (John Howard's imperialism) to the domestic (vegan baking), from the empowering punk lifestyle of DIY fetish wear (how to make a rubber harness from old bike inner tubes) to the gentrification of Redfern and invisibility of indigenous Queers, this will be one gathering of empowered fun, critical chaos and democratic DIY action.

Queeruption is a free, Do-It-Yourself, international gathering for Queers of all genders and sexualities. The Web site is www.queeruption.org

Online Gay Travel Agency Founded to Support LGBT Equality

Dallas — A new Internet-based travel agency with a philanthropic mission hopes to capture a piece of the estimated \$54 billion gay travel market and contribute toward the advancement of equal rights for all.

eDIRP.com Travel Inc. recently launched its online portal with a pledge to give 10 percent of annual profits to organizations working for LGBT rights.

The company's Web site

combines online booking engines for mainstream travel products and a database of gay travel options including lesbian and gay cruises, tours, and resorts available through the travel agency. Categorized community calendars and travel guides for popular destinations are among the other travel-related tools featured on the site.

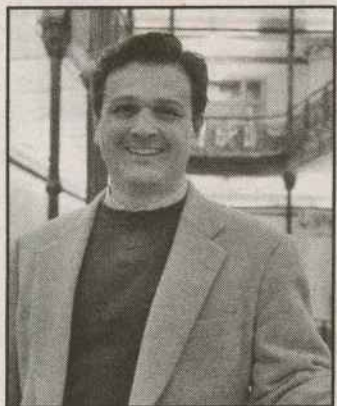
According to eDIRP.com president and founder C. W. Kemp, “Besides

giving the LGBT community and their allies a gay-owned alternative when it comes to booking travel online, we look forward to supporting organizations that work to preserve the community's advancements and continue the push forward with our call for equality.”

The company was founded with a mission to support nonprofit organizations working for LGBT equal rights. www.edirp.com



FRIENDS



Michael S. D'Amato, 3rd District Alderman

Taking Important Steps Toward Equal Treatment

By Michael S. D'Amato, Milwaukee's 3rd District Alderman

Congratulations on the continued success of Q Life! As the alderman for Milwaukee's East Side and Riverwest neighborhoods, I have the honor of representing one of the most vibrant, diverse mix of residents in southeastern Wisconsin. Whether it's Brady Street, North Avenue, Downer Avenue or Center Street, 3rd District constituents are dynamic and diverse: in their professions, in race and in sexual orientation.

While the diversity and open-mindedness of the East Side and Riverwest may attract the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community, LGBT members are among the most active leaders in neighborhoods throughout the district. As couples, you live together with love and commitment in sharing homes, providing for each other, raising children and caring for your neighbors.

That's why I introduced legislation to create the City of Milwaukee's Domestic Partnership Registry in 1999 and fought for equal health and bereavement benefits for the domestic partners of city workers in 2001. This service means so much to those people who have devoted their lives to one another yet cannot legally express that devotion.

While the Domestic Partnership Registry does not create new legal rights, it does support committed, stable same-sex couples, which is an important step toward equal treatment. And, as progressive corporations throughout the world have learned, the recognition of these relationships gives a competitive advantage in attracting the best and brightest employees.

Civil marriage brings more than 1,000 federal and state protections, benefits and responsibilities designed to support and protect family life. In addition, legally married couples receive discounts from employers, insurers, banks and other businesses. Yet, when other states are granting same-sex couples nearly identical legal rights and responsibilities as married spouses, some in the Wisconsin legislature are proposing an amendment to Wisconsin's constitution that would ban marriage between same-sex partners and threaten Milwaukee's Domestic Partnership Registry.

This is nothing more than a cheap, mean-spirited politically motivated effort to further divide the people of this state and our city. Nonetheless, supporters of this effort have no intention of giving up on this issue. It will take all of us, working together, to help defeat this divisive agenda.

As the alderman for Milwaukee's 3rd Aldermanic District, I will continue to support and fight for equal treatment for Milwaukee's lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community. I appreciate Q Life naming me a Q Friend and look forward to your continued success and service to all Milwaukeeans.

As progressive corporations throughout the world have learned, the recognition of [LGBT] relationships gives a competitive advantage in attracting the best and brightest employees.

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A Risqué Campaign Worth the Risk

OPINIONS & Editorial

Whenever taxpayer money is spent you must be cautious. This is particularly the case when you're talking about doling out money on a public outreach campaign. Bottom line: There are many people out there who believe that spending money on marketing and outreach is silly and they are extremely vocal in their opposition.

But most of the time, this type of thinking is downright wrong, especially when spending that money could save lives.

The recent ARCW campaign, highlighted in one of our cover stories, deserves attention and merit. It also proves that when you have the guts to think out of the box and are not afraid of tackling health issues with boldness, there's no limit to how effective your campaign can be.

Only time will tell if this new campaign will work in its overall mission to stop the spread of AIDS here in Wisconsin. There are many who believe that negative campaigns don't work. This is one case where the negative is positive. It only makes sense that by increasing the number of people who are aware of their HIV status you will, in effect, make individuals more responsible in practicing safe sex measures.

We are sure that the sight of near bare men and women with just a bar of text over their privates might create a backlash of radical misstatements from a group far to the right who often like to use their self-righteous morality to measure society.

We must stand up to these bullies and realize what most LGBT people have known since the '80s. This enemy is not afraid of what's right and what's wrong. It only knows death and won't stop until it reaches its mission.

Until we have eradicated AIDS we must remember that knowledge is and will continue to be our only solution, even if the pictures and the tactics seem crass to some. We must not fear knowledge and most of all we must not shun new ideas which may educate a hard-to-reach population.

LGBT Foster Kids Must Not Be Forgotten

Until our recent cover story on the challenges facing both LGBT foster kids and potential foster care parents, we had no idea just how broken this system really is.

In the story's moving paragraphs, Sura Faraj highlights the plight of a young girl named Amber, whose sexual orientation consumes all parts of her being. Amber shared what it means to be gay for her and others in a system that is often overloaded and out of touch.

However, we must not hang our heads low and feel pity for Amber and kids like her. In fact, we must use her situation as a call to action and begin now to get involved and help the many kids in need of homes, love and ultimately acceptance.

We are aware that not every person is a right match for foster care, and we know that this type of commitment is one that must not be taken lightly. But, we are heartened that there are people working within the system to help identify LGBT friendly parents while also keeping in mind the needs of LGBT kids and the special challenges they face.

If possible, we ask that you keep Amber's story in mind when trying to identify for yourself ways in which you can give back to society and your community. While you may not be able or willing to commit yourself to being a foster parent, you can make sure that

the challenges faced by some LGBT youth will not go unnoticed.

Don't allow gay kids in the system, who are at the receiving end of many of the same prejudices that you experienced as a young person, face them alone and parentless.

Let us, as a community, band together and raise awareness that these kids exist and must not be forgotten. You have the opportunity to speak out when they can't.

Use every chance you have to bring this problem to light. The future of our community depends on your actions now.

The Battle Has Just Begun

Gay activists have reason to celebrate for at least the moment, proving that when you organize you can accomplish great things.

It's important not to understate the success of Action Wisconsin's recent lobby day in Madison. After all, 400 people traveling to the Capitol to have their voices heard doesn't seem like a lot.

But don't be swayed by that number, thinking that it seems small and insignificant.

These people weren't there merely to rally but to meet with their legislators and their aides. In fact, having 400 people converge on the halls of state government in an organized fashion is no easy feat.

But what we must realize in this fight — in the uphill battle to defeat the marriage ban — is that we have many challenges that are going to demand not just that we organize, but that we start building coalitions with our allies, both straight and gay.

All you have to do is look carefully at what Georgia Henry, the Milwaukee area president of PFLAG, said. She knows that this is a fight for our basic civil rights, and in order to win, she's in the trenches fighting for her loved ones.

Now it's our job to make sure we spread the word in any way that we can, both inside and outside of our community.

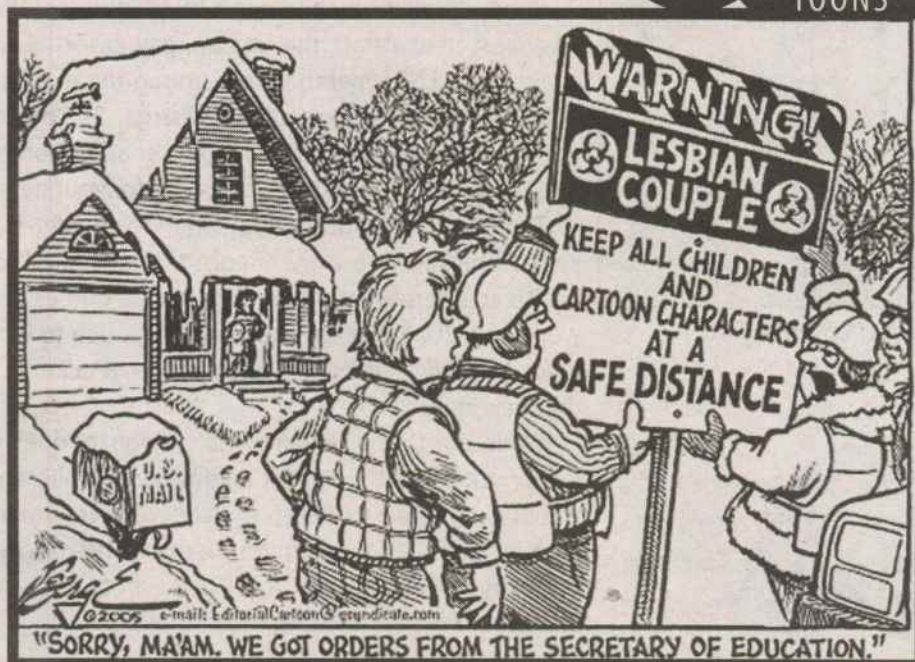
We must not be disheartened by the results from similar ban campaigns throughout the nation. Remember Wisconsin is the gay rights state and no matter how insurmountable this challenge to defeat the ban may seem, it's doable.

Back in 1982, many of the same far-right gay haters said our dairy state would never be a fairy state.

Oh, well.



Paul Berge
TOONS



Have something to say? Tell it like it is.

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Recognizing the T in LGBT



DIVERSITY



Deon Q. Young
(dyoung@queerlifeneews.com) is a field specialist at the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center. He lives in Riverwest.

The state of Wisconsin was the first state to recognize the rights of gays and lesbians. In 1982, the state of Wisconsin passed a law preventing employers or landlords from denying employment or housing based on sexual orientation.

However, this law is not inclusive of gender identity and expression.

Recently, LGBT activists in states such as Illinois and cities such as New York have had victories in getting laws passed that recognize equal rights on the basis of not only sexual orientation but also of gender identity and expression. These laws prohibit discrimination against transgendered people in employment, housing and public accommodations. Four other states have laws protecting transgendered persons: California, Minnesota, New Mexico and Rhode Island.

When we think of the issues that concern the LGBT community the first individuals that we start referring to are the L, lesbians, and the G, gay men. Often we touch on the issues that affect the B, bisexuals. Hardly ever do we begin to focus on the issues that concern our T, transgendered people.

As a young gay male, I am guilty of not paying much attention to the issues that face our transgender community. After listening to what many of them have to say, I feel that we exclude this population a great deal. When it comes to healthcare, equal treatment and in-

clusion, our community and society as a whole only acknowledge the LGB community and exclude the T.

Within the transgender community, we have female to male (FTM) and male to female (MTF) transsexuals, cross-dressers, drag queens and kings and intersexed individuals. We like to see the performances our drag queens and kings put on. However, I never see us embracing the fact that our transgendered folk are being discriminated against and are unappreciated within our own community. We may even ridicule those who are identified as intersexed.

While it may be easy to understand that we have come rather far in challenging gender roles and norms, we still hardly acknowledge our own prejudice and we disregard the feelings of our trans community.

For me, it was hard to understand the reasons why many individuals decided to have operations, why they were not happy with their bodies. It took me a while to realize that many transgendered people go through some the same issues that we face as gays and lesbians.

It was troubling at first, because some gay men that I encountered said that the reason why they wanted the operation was because they felt that they could pass as the opposite

We like to see the performances by our drag queens and kings. However, I never see us embracing the fact that our transgendered folk are being discriminated against and are unappreciated within our own community.

sex and not be judged as a gay male.

It then became clear after listening to other stories and after watching a couple of documentaries about trans issues that it was about dealing with the perception of one's self not matching one's body. Acknowledging this led to doing something about it.

To go more into the prejudices that come out of our own community, sometimes we ridicule our transgendered people based on how they appear. Someone who is not the best looking drag queen or king is just considered a guy in a dress and heels, or a girl trying too hard to be a guy.

Now is the time to add to the state law and make sure that our transgender community is included. While it was a wake up call for me a while back, there needs to be another wake up call for many other people in our community. It is also time that we advocate for the real issues, such as healthcare, and work against the discrimination that the rest of society so easily places on our transgendered folk.

The Coming-Out Party Is Just Beginning

Can the sleek, beautiful, stylishly dressed and sex-obsessed women of "The L Word" continue to expel stereotypes while keeping us so lushly and lustfully entertained in season two? I can't wait to watch the well-heeled, steamy "dyke drama" starting Sunday, Feb. 20 on Show-Time to find out.

This show and new season have me ecstatic for at last I've found some TV lesbians I can relate to. TV characters or not, when I first came out, I didn't identify with a lot of lesbians I saw or met. Many, many, many years later I still don't connect or identify with the majority of lesbians out there. However, I do know gay gals in the large lesbian sphere similar to the women portrayed in "The L Word." It's like watching my friends on TV and it's about time these friends received some airtime.

Lesbians have long been portrayed as humorless, man-hating, depressed political junkies clomping around in Birkenstocks or army boots sporting tool belts, flannel shirts, baseball caps and a mullet or some other equally atrocious version of what my girlfriend calls "the haircut." What

better way to dispel these stereotypes, show the diversity of our "community" and narrow the divide between how we see ourselves and how the world see us than through the day-to-day escapades of the smart, sexy, job-holding 20-somethings on "The L Word."

Across "The L Word" Internet chat rooms and message boards, many argue for more butch inclusion and less glam on the show. Doesn't that defeat the idea of breaking down stereotypes and displaying our diversity? Besides, the glam factor, in my opinion, provides better eye candy. After all this is entertainment where things should be, well, entertaining.

Maybe this season butch fans will be granted their wish. I am all for it as long as the show maintains its first season élan, sexiness and integrity. Maintaining and attracting viewers could translate to more seasons (a third season has already been announced) or maybe, just maybe, lead other cable channels and even the networks to produce stereotype-crushing TV shows

about lesbians.

I am also hoping Dana (Erin Daniels), the squeezably cute tennis player, will give the old stiletto heel in the rear to her wired fiancée,

Tonya (Meredith McGeachie), and hook up with the real-life gay actress playing lighthearted bisexual Alice (Leisha Hailey). If this happens, we all know the two will be embroiled in transitioning from friends to lovers until the final episode. Who can't relate to this traditional lesbian story line?

I may be the only one on the planet sincerely wishing the sexy but wound tight Bette (Jennifer Beals) and the bland Tina (Laurel Holloman) work it out. I am anticipating at least a few scenes of Tina becoming even more independent, going back to work and evolving into a less dull mommy wannabe. I am also anticipating Bette "getting it out of her system" with some sultry woman or women she meets in a bar at least one quarter of each episode. For my viewing pleasure and

continued on page 16



WOMEN



Holly Grey
(hgrey@queerlifeneews.com) is the general manager and co-editor of *Boxx*, a Milwaukee-based newspaper that promotes women's visibility and educates on women's issues (www.bosnews.com). Holly is also co-founder and vice president of an Internet risk management company located in Milwaukee.

Whose Saint Valentine?

Will you be my Valentine? Lovers across the world will ask each other this question as they exchange chocolate and roses and cards. Even though the celebration of Valentine's Day is very popular, few know the man behind the day, St. Valentine.

There are several stories of a St. Valentine from the early history of the Christian tradition. The most common stories tell of a priest named Valentinus who lived in Rome in the third century. Christianity was an outlawed religion; Christians were persecuted by the state.

The anti-Christian laws at the time forbid Christians from marrying. Christians caught at weddings were threatened with death unless they renounced their faith. Despite this, Valentinus would wed young couples.

Eventually the authorities arrested him for performing illegal marriages. Valentinus would not deny Jesus so he was condemned to death. On Feb. 14, 270, he was stoned and then beheaded.

Saints, across religious traditions, are holy women and men whose lives show us how to live spiritually in the world. For early Christians Valentinus was an example of bravery and courage in maintaining one's beliefs, even under the threat of torture and death.

Saints are also associated with a particular cause or concern. Valentinus is celebrated as a patron of marriage, and of lovers, because he died for marrying people who the state said could not marry.



On Valentine's Day it's appropriate not only to send a note or card to a loved one, but also to ask how the life of St. Valentine can inform our own lives. Could we claim St. Valentine as a patron saint of marriage equality? He showed

bravery in the face of unjust laws that prohibited some from marrying their true loves. This Valentine's Day I'm giving my partner a note. I'm also going to light a candle for our new patron saint of marriage equality, Valentinus.

Of course Valentinus is not the only saint who took a stand against unjust marriage laws. During the long history of slavery in this country it was illegal for two slaves to marry. Slave masters knew that if they recognized the marriages between slaves they would also have to recognize their humanity, dignity and families. So marriage between slaves remained illegal.

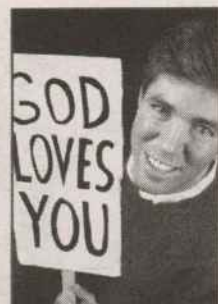
Yet enslaved African Americans formed loving, committed relationships and raised children in caring families. Even though the state did not recognize it, these couples were married in their own eyes and in the eyes of St. Valentinus.

A custom arose among enslaved folks of "jumping the broom stick." In a community denied the normal traditions of legal marriage, jumping over a broom stick became a way for a couple to honor and celebrate their commitment to each other. We may not know the names of the people who took this stand against discriminatory marriage laws, but we can celebrate their daring affirmation of their love.

The lives of saints are meant to be emulated, so this Valentine's Day try to live with the boldness of Valentinus

Q

RELIGION



Rev. Andrew Warner (awarner@queerlifeneews.com) is a pastor at Plymouth Church UCC on the East Side. He lives with his partner Jay and their two children in Whitefish Bay. Your questions about LGBT spirituality are welcome.

Valentinus is celebrated as a patron of marriage, and of lovers, because he died for marrying people who the state said could not marry.

and the audacity of countless enslaved Americans by affirming marriage equality. We can all be a Valentine by taking a public stand for the rights of same-sex couples to marry in this state.

أحجار كريمة

PRECIOUS STONES

אבנים יקרות



A Play by **JAMIL KHOURY**

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UW-Milwaukee Union Ballroom

UWM Union - 2nd level • 2200 E. Kenwood Blvd.
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Complimentary tickets are available at the following locations: Center for Women's Studies (Bolton 735), Cultures and Communities Program (Garland 324), Union Sociocultural Programming (Union 334), Women's Resource Center (Union WG33), and the LGBT Resource Center (Union WG89). For off-campus ticket locations, please contact the Center for Women's Studies at 414-225-5918.

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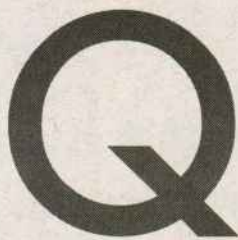
Q-WOMEN *continued from page 15*

for interesting character development she needs to get out of her up-market business attire for at least three quarters of the season before rekindling her relationship with Tina.

Will Ivan (Kelly Lynch) and that hair snag Kit (Pam Grier)? Will Shane's hair be more appealing to everyone? Will the scrawny, doe-eyed, highly manipulative and bewildered Jenny (Mia Kirshner) have a less prominent role in season two? Will they transition Tim (Eric Mabius) and all "straight" sex out of the show? How will Marina, the hottest woman in the first season, be transitioned out of the story line? What other dyke drama is in store?

My ShowTime has been reordered so hurry up and come out, again, girls. As far as I am concerned, your coming-out party is just beginning.

If you haven't seen season one you have a few more days to get caught up before the second season begins Feb. 20. Grab some popcorn and a glass of your favorite libation, lay claim to a comfortable chair and rent season one of "The L Word" on DVD from your local video store.



YOUTH

Christopher Allen and Colin Kaehler are both teens and attend high school in Milwaukee. They are members of their school GSA and are involved with Diverse and Resilient, a social service organization whose mission is to ensure the healthy development of the LGBTQ community.

Apathy Kills

As youth, we're always faced with new concerns. We find ourselves bogged down with so much pressure that we begin to feel more than just a little stressed out. Yet somehow we find ways to get everything done. We procrastinate, veer off topic and end up making things even more difficult than they were when we started. It's no wonder why we stop caring about more important things here and there.

A lot of today's youth ignore the fact that sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) are out there. We want to have fun, we want to break the rules, rebel against authority. However, we fail to realize that we're putting our lives on the line in the process. There's an automatic assumption that everything will be OK.

As teens, we have our whole lives ahead of us; we think nothing could possibly interfere. We see ourselves as invincible.

But we aren't: Every hour one person in America between the ages of 13 and 21 is infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, and I can guarantee that more than half of those infected never thought it could happen to them.

Why do we act so foolishly?

We know not to stand in the middle of traffic, not to eat rat poison. So why can't we under-

stand that something as simple as a condom could save our lives? Maybe the pressure of getting good grades, the need to work a job in order to get that little bit of money we throw away on expensive clothes, and the responsibilities we have at home, take precedence over protecting ourselves. With so much on one's mind, it's easy to see why we might sometimes forget even something this important.

And then there's the total disregard to the feelings of others, the absolute resolve that caring is just a useless feeling in the first place. We'll assume that nothing was contracted during a previous sexual encounter and go on with our lives as if nothing happened at all. Among the one third of teens who say they're sexually active, 62 percent of them say they've never even considered getting tested.

Some of us use the little saying that ignorance is bliss as the motto for our life. Out of sight, out of mind, isn't that how it's supposed to be? Only 16 percent of youth infected with HIV are aware of their status.

Who needs a conscience when you could have the boy or girl of your dreams? Knowing that an STD could be knocking at our door, we still forget the protection in our dresser drawer, or that the most effective STD prevention method is the practice of abstinence, and go on with plans as if nothing were wrong.

After accidents, homicides, and suicides, HIV is ranked number four as a teen killer

There's a commercial on MTV that states the greatest love of all is the love of self. It goes on about how knowing is caring, sending the message that there's nothing wrong with being tested for STDs.

If it helps at all, some of us listen. Since when do we need to be told by a famous face that being tested is OK though? If that person that we idolize hadn't have been there on TV, would we have actually taken the time to think about getting tested? Would it have even been a concern?

Shouldn't we already know this? And shouldn't we have been told this before?

Of course we should've, the problem is we just don't care.

Apathy kills, so know about yourself, and make sure you know about that special someone before you decide to put your lives at risk. After accidents, homicides, and suicides, HIV is ranked number four as a teen killer. About 150 million young people between the ages of 13 and 25 die from AIDS related illnesses every year around the world. Don't be a statistic; a little knowledge can go a long way.

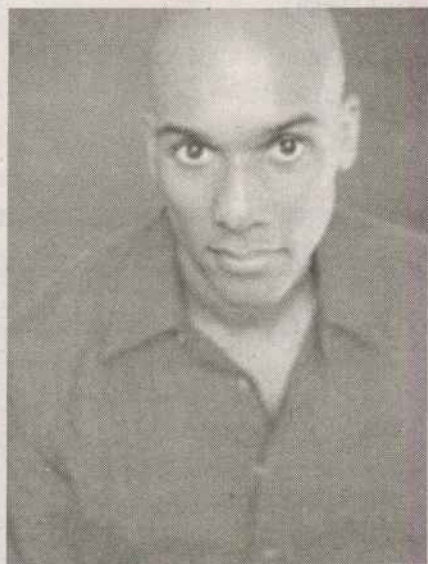
Statistics are from kidshealth.org, Planetout.com, and Rense.com

Your comments and encouragement are welcome at qyouth@queerlifeneews.com



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Q

HEALTH



Gary Hollander, Ph. D. (ghollander@queerlifeneeds.com) is president and executive director of *Diverse and Resilient*, a nonprofit committed to the healthy development of LGBT people in Wisconsin (www.diverseandresilient.org). He is also owner and principle consultant of Gary Hollander Enterprises, a firm that assists organizations with their development, emphasizing change management, team development, and cultural competency.

Check Your Batteries

People who are in committed love relationships are generally happier and healthier.

For several decades researchers have asked questions about the health implications of being in relationship. A consistent finding has been that people tend to have a greater overall sense of well-being, are generally healthier with fewer specific health problems, and have a greater quality of life when they are in relationships. This is shown to be true of men and women — lesbian, gay and bisexual. (Regrettably, research has not yet apparently gotten around to this level of research on transgendered people, but the findings would reasonably extend to them as it does to other LGB or straight folks.)

So it makes sense to periodically check out not only how satisfied we are in our relationships, but also how healthy those relationships are. But when and how should we do this?

Many years ago government and private safety organizations began to promote the notion of changing the batteries in smoke detectors twice a year, in spring and fall when we set our clocks ahead or back with Daylight Savings Time. Why not use another event to trigger our relationship assessments?

Valentine's Day!

This proposal really does make sense. Look at it this way: There is plenty of media support to remind us of the event; there is visual imag-

ery (cupids, red color, cartoon-like hearts) to keep the date in our awareness; and there is a load of social pressure to do something about its celebration.

Here is a five-part approach I'd suggest to use for our relationship assessments. (My apologies to folks who actually know anything at all about cars.)

1. Wash the vehicle. In looking at our relationships we will do much better if we rinse away any chronic patterns of disappointment we hold. We're much more likely to get more out of our relationships if we start by being pleased with what we have. If you're not currently in a relationship, you know that there are times when being single is just right for you. Again, start by being pleased.

2. Look in the map or glove box. Are you compatible? Do you share complementary interests and enjoyable pastimes? Are you going the same way in your lives? Generally, relationships that exist only on chemistry and not compatibility end up coasting on fumes after awhile.

3. Check the oil. Intimacy — that honest expression of our thoughts and feelings — is an essential of loving relationships. Not every single thing needs to be shared, but usually far more needs to be said than most of us believe.

4. Check the plugs. Is the spark still there? Like intimacy, passion is a must in solid relationships. For many, this is expressed through sex.

Relationships that exist only on chemistry and not compatibility end up coasting on fumes after a while.

It can also be found in romance and fighting for (not with) one another.

5. Gauge the tire pressure. Yep, the "C-word." Commitment. We know we are in a relationship when we decide how and how long we will be together. No one need fall into the fantasy trap of pledging lifelong commitment on date two. But we can clarify if we are dating anyone else (how we plan to be together) and if we want to see one another again (how long). For me, after 21 years in the same relationship, both the how and the how long of the relationship have changed numerous times and always with great success.

6. Get a tune-up if needed. No matter where we are in relationships — from none to too many simultaneously — they can all use some tweaking (a highly technical automotive term). For some that might mean couple's counseling. But for most of us, it will mean turning any dissatisfaction into some small but important strategies to make a difference, like devoting more time to joint activities, visiting friends together, or coming clean about a challenge we've been facing.

Happy Valentine's Day and remember to check your batteries.



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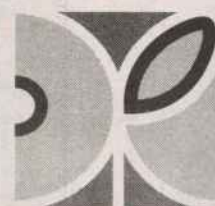
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is a nonprofit organization whose mission is the healthy development of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people in Wisconsin through the development of groups and communities to take action. The organization's name is intended to serve as reminder that LGBT people are everywhere, engage in interesting and meaningful lives, and contribute to the welfare of each other and the broader community.

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The Paris of South America: Buenos Aires

By Brian Reinkober

Imagine winter in the Southern Hemisphere with high temperatures in the 80s, evenings in the 50s, and joggers running along the Rio de La Plata working up a sweat. People flock to the heladeria (ice cream shop) to cool themselves down. This is Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Buenos Aires has over 11 million inhabitants yet in many parts of the city, cozy friendly neighborhoods such as La Boca, San Telmo and Recoleta give the city a laid-back atmosphere and appearance. It is a city that is relatively safe for the average tourist with the usual precautions. For the traveler who likes to people watch, the people of Buenos Aires or "the portenos" are beautiful with striking features.

The trip to Buenos Aires is long and leaving from Milwaukee will add several hours to your travel time. The easiest route from Milwaukee is on Delta Airlines to Atlanta and then to Buenos Aires. There are direct flights from Chicago on either United or American Airlines. The actual flights to and from South America are extremely easy. It is different than flying to Europe with all travel being at nighttime. The time is only two or three hours different from Central Time, depending on the time of year.

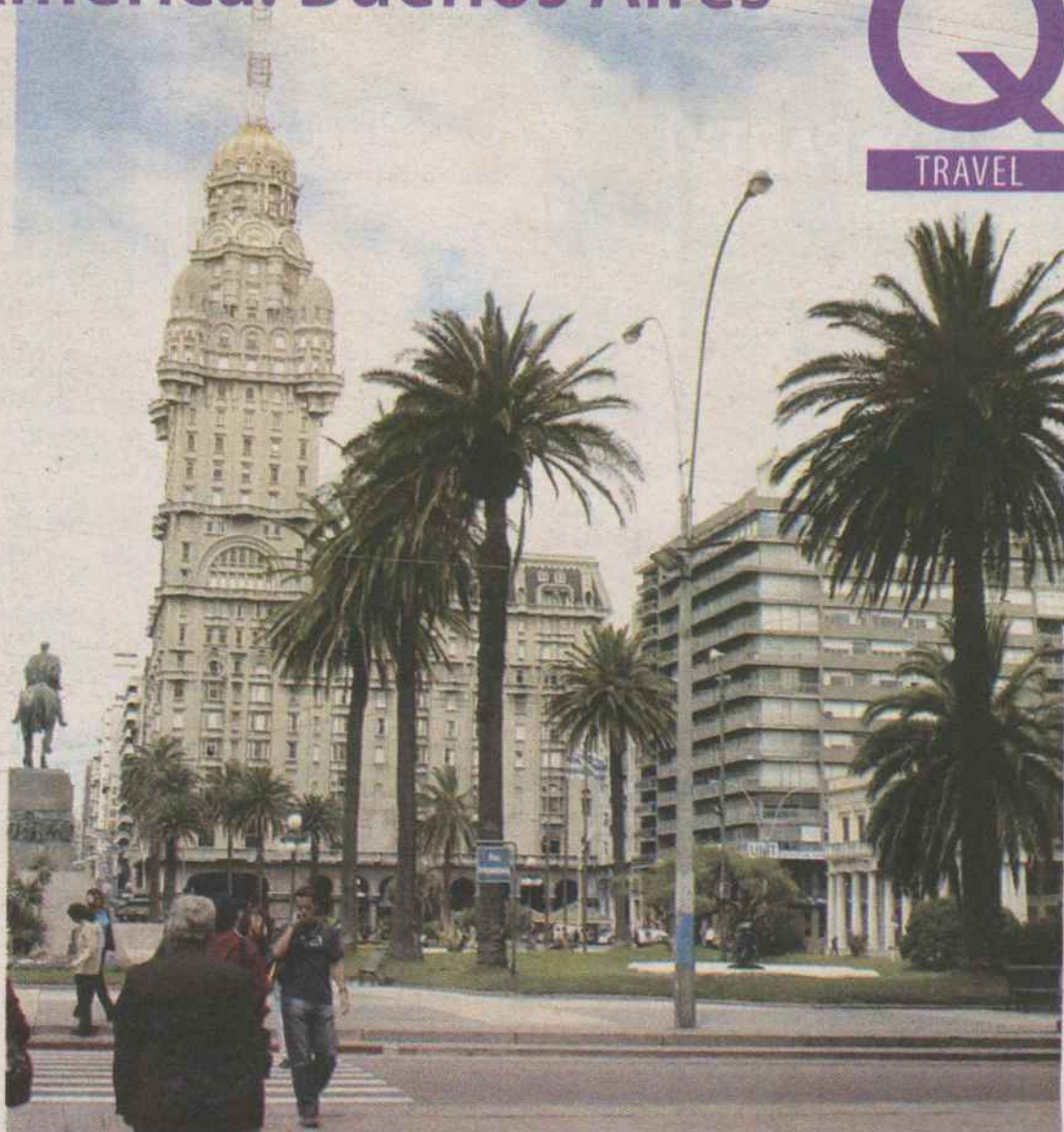
Buenos Aires is known as the Paris of South America and for good reason. Buenos Aires boasts the largest boulevard in the world: Avenida 9 de Julio. The similarities to the Champs-Elysees in Paris are remarkable. At the center of Avenida 9 de Julio stands "the obelisk," a towering sculpture overlooking the central part of the city just as the Arc de Triomphe stands impressively in Paris. Gardens, major corporations with their large neon signs, and stores line the boulevard on both sides. Traffic will be bumper-to-bumper at any given time of day or night.

No excursion to Buenos Aires is complete without a visit to the tomb of Eva Peron, the first lady of Argentina. To the world outside of Argentina, she was Latin royalty and became the topic of great works such as "Evita," the musical by Andrew Lloyd Webber. Eva Peron's ornate crypt can be found in the Cementerio de La Recoleta. A walk within the cemetery walls can last for hours. Down every pathway are beautiful ornate crypts, some of which show pictures of the deceased residents, furniture, and sitting rooms.

Other points of interest in Buenos Aires are the Casa Rosada (or the Pink Palace), where the Perons lived, the Plaza de Mayo, just outside the Pink Palace which includes gardens and fountains, or La Boca, where you can take a stroll and see the tin houses—painted every primary color. Stop and rest there, sipping on

continued on page 23

You'll see people whose bodies are painted gold, mimes, accordion players, singers and, of course, tango dancers.



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Featuring Becky Spice and Jamie Johns.
Skylight Opera Theatre
Broadway Theatre Center
158 N. Broadway 414-291-7800
Through Feb. 12

A Water Bird Talk and Gianni Schicchi

Skylight Opera Theatre
Broadway Theatre Center
158 N. Broadway 414-291-7800
Through Feb. 13

Radical Harry

A comedy-drama about Harry Hay, pioneer of the modern American gay movement.

Broom Street Theater
1119 Williamson St., Madison
608-244-8338
Fridays through Sundays, 8pm, \$7
Through Feb. 20

Yes. No. (Maybe So...)

Milwaukee Repertory Theater
Quadracci Powerhouse Theater
108 E. Wells St. 414-224-9440
Through Feb. 20

Fresh from Julieanne's Garden: The Bronze Work of Preston Jackson

Cast bronze figural sculptures on themes such as the ravages of war, racism, sexism and injustice.
The UWM Union Art Gallery
2200 E. Kenwood Blvd. 414-229-3111
Through Feb. 24

PICK Josie Osborne and Bill Budelman Exhibit "2"

Collage, mixed media prints, assemblage, found materials. In a time when commercialism and planned obsolescence seem to dominate our culture both Budelman and Osborne choose to work with older, discarded and found objects and surfaces. Presented to us anew, in compositions that redefine the contents, the viewer is offered an experience that is timeless and contemplative.
KM Art
226 S. 1st St. 414-226-2272
Wednesdays through Fridays, 6-8pm;
Saturdays, 11-4
Through Feb. 26

Riverwest

John Ruebartsch chronicles every day life in his neighborhood.
Alverno Art & Culture Gallery
414 382 6149
Through February 26

Forbidden Broadway

Marcus Center
Vogel Hall
929 N. Water St. 414-273-7206
Through Feb. 27

The Goodbye People

Next Act Theatre
342 N. Water St., 2nd floor 414-278-0765
Through Feb. 27

Mrs. Farnsworth

Wisconsin premiere. This political comedy spins the yarn of Mrs. Farnsworth who joins a creative writing class. Her new manuscript suggests an

affair with George W. Bush!
Boulevard Theatre
2252 S. Kinnickinnic Ave. 414-744-5757
mbucher@juno.com Through Feb. 27

Model Railroad Show

Floral Show Dome
Mitchell Park Horticultural Conservatory
524 S. Layton Blvd. 414-649-9800
Through March 6

The Underpants

Milwaukee Repertory Theater
Stiemke Theater 108 E. Wells St.
414-224-9440
Through March 13

The Visual Voice: Communication Design Alumni Exhibition

Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design
Layton Gallery
273 E. Erie St. 414-276-7889
Through March 19

Lana Mae's Honky-Tonk Laundry

Milwaukee Repertory Theater
Stackner Cabaret
108 E. Wells St. 414-224-9440
Through March 20

Out of the Shadows

A portrayal of the healing journeys of women survivors of physical and sexual abuse, and our connections to each other. Thirty-two black-and-white toned prints by Jan Goff-La Fontaine.
Charles Allis Art Museum
1801 N. Prospect Ave. 414-278-8295
Through March 27

I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change

Broadway Baby Dinner Theatre
5132 W. Mill Road 414-358-2020
Through April 4

Wednesday, February 9

The Dolly Sisters

Classic film (1945)
Charles Allis Art Museum
1801 N. Prospect Ave. 414-278-8295

Mission Against Terror

Milwaukee premiere of Cuban/Irish film on terrorism. Co-director Bernie Dwyer will be present.
UWM Union, Wisconsin Room
414-273-1040, ext. 12
7pm, suggested donation \$5-\$10

Thursday, February 10

Peking Acrobats

Pabst Theater 144 E. Wells St.
414-286-3663

Winterdances

An evening of dances.
Mainstage Theatre
2400 E. Kenwood Blvd. 414-229-4308.
Feb. 10-12, 7:30pm; Feb. 13, 3pm
\$16/\$9 students and seniors

Friday, February 11

Cha Cha Cha

Latino Arts and Present Music
1028 S. 9th St. 414-384-3100
10:30am
\$20/\$15 60-plus/\$10 FT students
Repeats Feb. 12, new time and place

A Sleep of Prisoners

Passions, moral dilemmas, sacrifices,

hidden truths and fears.
Chamber Theatre Studio Theatre
158 N. Broadway 414-276-8842
www.chamber-theatre.com
patrick@chamber-theatre.com
Through March 6

Airport Eye: Harvey Oppenorth and Nate Page

Opening Reception
Hotcakes Gallery
3379 N. Pierce St. 414-961-7714
6-9pm Through Feb. 20

Sleeping Beauty

Concordia University
12800 N. Lake Shore Dr. Through Feb. 13

Saturday, February 12

Jerry Grillo

Mimma's Cafe 1307 E. Brady St.
7:30-10:30pm

Cha Cha Cha

Latino Arts and Present Music
Milwaukee Art Museum
700 Art Museum Drive 414-271-0711
7:30pm, \$16/\$26/\$36
Sunday, February 13

The Fine Arts Quartet

Johannes Brahms, Bernard Herrmann, and Juan Crisostomo Arriaga
Zelazo Center
2419 E. Kenwood Blvd. 414-229-4308
7:30pm; informal talk, 6:45pm
\$16/\$9 for students and seniors

Jerry Grillo

New CD release "Under the Influence" with Russ Long on piano.
Wisconsin Conservatory of Music
Helen Bader Recital Hall
1584 N. Prospect Ave. 2pm, \$5

Wednesday, February 16

PICK Keith Boykin

Author of "One More River to Cross: Black and Gay in America" and "Beyond the Down Low: Sex, Lies, and Denial in Black America"

Lecture and discussion, examining the issues of race and their impact upon sexual orientation, exploring discrimination and prejudice on multiple levels, the current state of America and the road to equality.
UWM Union Ballroom
2200 E. Kenwood Blvd.
414-229-4116
7:30pm, free

PICK Will Fellows

Talk, reading, slide presentation, Q&A and book-signing.
Fellows, author of "A Passion to Preserve: Gay Men as Keepers of Culture," explores gay men's extraordinary involvement in historic preservation and urban revitalization. The book profiles early preservationists throughout the United States.
Brunner Mansion Bed & Breakfast
3046 W. Wisconsin Ave. 7-9pm, free

Thursday, February 17

PICKS Mornings at Seven

RSVP Productions
Off the Wall Theatre
127 E. Wells St. Through Feb. 27

The Pabst Series: Four World Premieres

Milwaukee Ballet
Pabst Theater
144 E. Wells St. 414-286-3663
Through Feb. 20

Friday, February 18

PICK JUNK: An Evening of Queer Underground Cinema

A traveling film festival for all the queers who never fit in. The Milwaukee LGBT Film Festival, The Queer Zine Archive Project and Mutate Zine join together to screen DIY, no budget, campy, underground, independent, fagacious, genderbending, pro-fattie, furry and freaky images for a night of queer underground cinema.

Sixteen short films will be screened in one evening including music videos for Le Tigre, Gravy Train!!! and Scream Club; documentaries on trans youth, queers in hip hop and homo organizing in Brazil; animation pieces and soon-to-be cult classics.

The Tannery Studio
1950 S. Hilbert St., 3rd floor (1 block east of KK)
www.mutatezine.com or www.qzap.org
7:00pm, \$4/\$3 with NP food item
Repeats Feb. 19

Saturday, February 19

An Evening of French and American Song

UWM Recital Hall
2400 E. Kenwood Blvd. 414-229-4308
7:30pm, \$16/\$9 students and seniors

Jerry Grillo

Mimma's Cafe 1307 E. Brady St.
7:30-10:30pm

Monday, February 21

Pat Methany Group

Pabst Theater 144 E. Wells St.
414-286-3663

Wednesday, February 23

Irish Eyes Are Smiling

Classic film (1944)
Charles Allis Art Museum
1801 N. Prospect Ave.
414-278-8295

Thursday, February 24

Omar Sosa

Composer and pianist who combines jazz, classical, world music, and hip hop.
Latino Arts
1028 S. 9th St. 414-384-3100
Repeats Feb. 25

Friday, February 25

National Acrobats of Taiwan

Tumbling, spinning, dancing, plate spinning, contortionists and jugglers.
UW-Whitewater 930 W. Main,
Whitewater
262-472-2222

Saturday, February 26

Jerry Grillo

Mimma's Cafe
1307 E. Brady St.
7:30-10:30pm

One HOT NIGHT!

Chamber Theatre's 30th Anniversary Champagne reception, Italian dinner, a unique raffle, jazz musicians, dancing and a one-time-only reading of Bernard Shaw's "Don Juan in Hell."
Italian Community Center
414-276-8842
\$100-\$300

Thursday, March 3

This Is Our Youth

A Midwest premiere of Lonergan's "slice-of-life" dramatic comedy.
Boulevard Theatre
2252 S. Kinnickinnic 414-744-5757
mbucher@juno.com Through March 20

Saturday, March 5

PICK Precious Stones

An award-winning play that boldly examines the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the "safe" yet turbulent terrain of American Diaspora. Two women, one Jewish, the other Palestinian, join forces to organize an Arab-Jewish dialogue group, only to find themselves falling in love. As they each cross "enemy lines," they stumble upon the disputed territories of sexuality and class. In dramatizing the fear, insecurity, anger and hurt that permeate this complex relationship, the play uncovers the layers of familiarity, hope, kinship and eroticism that inevitably strengthen it. Dialogue with playwright Jamil Khoury and actors following the performance.
Silk Road Theatre Project
UWM Union, 2nd level
2200 E. Kenwood Blvd.
414-229-5918
7:00pm, doors open 6:30pm
Free (with complimentary ticket)

Coming Soon

March 15: Works by Poulenc and Fauré, Zelazo Center

March 20: The Chieftains, Uihlein Hall
April 20: David Sedaris, Pabst Theater
April 22: Elton John, Bradley Center
May 6: You Should Be So Lucky, Uncommon Theatre

Deadline for March issue is Tuesday, February 22.



Color Cures for the Winter Blahs



Mary Stearns (mstearns@queerlifeneews.com) is the owner of Orientations, Ltd., which she co-founded in 1977. Originally, the business imported Korean chests and other Asian antiques. Orientations now offers a full range of interior design services. Mary is an allied member of the American Society of Interior Designers.

Are you suffering from cabin fever? Are the walls closing in on you? Have you actually noticed your walls? Are they dull, boring and depressing? If so, it's time for some color.

A basic step in interior design is to consider the shell of a room: the walls, ceiling and floor. Of the three, painting the walls is the biggest, cheapest and easiest way to create an immediate impact.

Of course, that can open a can of worms — oops, I mean paint — straight color, glossy, flat, faux finish, textured or neutral, dark, pastel, bright — lots of decisions. For most people color choice is the biggest hurdle. Sometimes, but rarely, it's easy: You love blue, paint the room blue. Or take a sample of a favorite color from a fabric, accessory or artwork. Often it is harder: You're starting from scratch or have no clues from existing furniture, art or accessories, and no personal color preference.

If that's the case, here are some things to consider. What are the colors in the rooms that can be seen from the one you want to paint? Would you like to use those colors again, maybe in a softer or stronger tone? A contrasting color or a coordinating one would be an option too. Consider a vibrant, strong coordinating or contrasting tone, but with a metallic or textured finish.

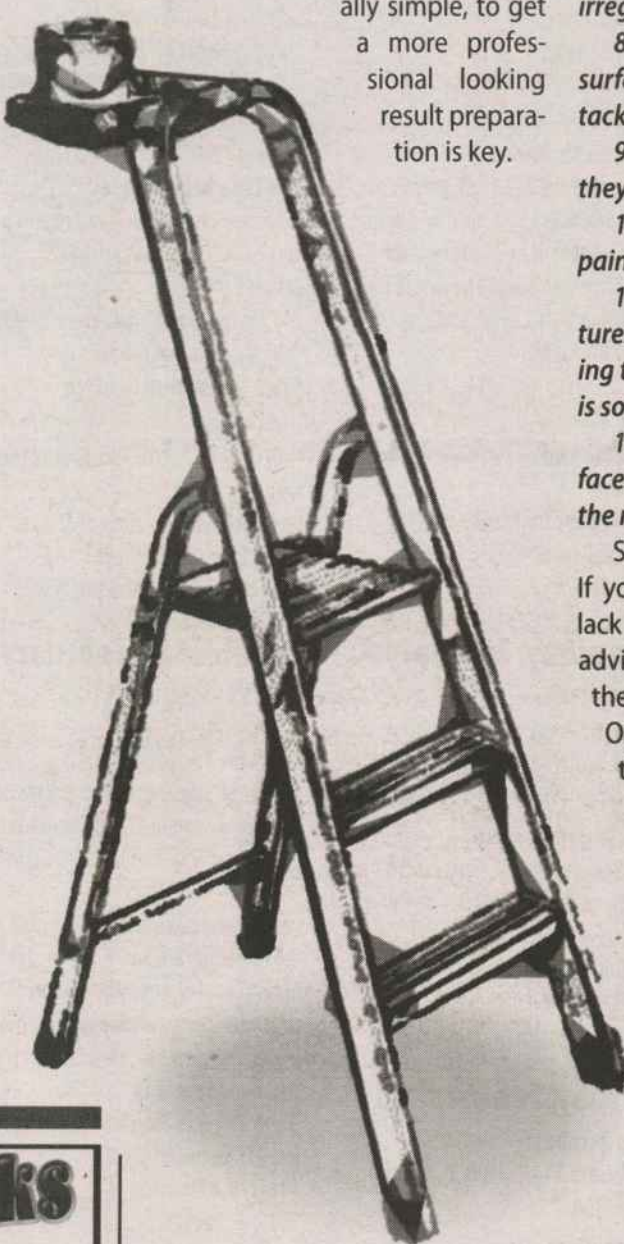
If you are still stumped by color choice or its compatibility or intensity, you may want to buy the smallest amount of paint that you can get (usually a quart) and paint a swatch of it on the wall.

Painting a folded newspaper with the color in question provides a fast-drying sample that you can try in different parts of the room.

Some other points: Paint tends to dry darker than the sample chip because walls reflect off each other. Lighter colors tend to make rooms look larger; darker colors tend to make them look smaller and more intimate. Some colors can make rooms look warmer (in general, reds and yellows), some cooler (in general, blues and greens), and some can make rooms more cheerful or more subdued. And be sure to test samples at all times of the day: during daylight, at night and under artificial light.

While painting your walls can be the fastest and easiest way to make a major change of décor, and the job of painting is usually simple, to get a more professional looking result preparation is key.

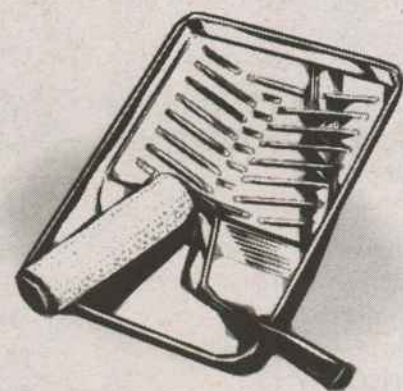
Painting the walls is the biggest, cheapest and easiest way to create an immediate impact.



- The golden rules, twelve in all:
1. Clear the area. Remove as much as you can from the room.
 2. Cover everything else. Use tarps or plastic drop cloths.
 3. Mask the woodwork and any carpet edges with blue, low-tack tape that is called painters' tape.
 4. Remove hardware, lightswitch and outlet covers. If you are painting a ceiling with overhead fixtures or walls with sconces, pull the plates away from the surfaces.
 5. Scrape and remove loose paint, wallpaper etc. from the walls and ceiling.
 6. Wash all surfaces with mild soap and rinse thoroughly. If the surfaces are particularly stained, dirty or greasy, wash them with TSP-PF.
 7. Patch and repair cracks, nail holes or irregularities. Use caulk or putty to fill.
 8. Sand smooth any repaired or rough surfaces. Remove dust with a vacuum or tack cloth.
 9. All surfaces are ready to paint when they are clean, dry and dull.
 10. Ceilings, or the highest area to be painted, should be painted first.
 11. Use a brush to paint around light fixtures, windows, moldings etc. After removing tape, paint the woodwork. A small roller is sometimes useful.
 12. Use a roller to roll paint on flat surfaces. To get the paint spread evenly, work the roller in all directions.

Still not convinced after reading all this? If you would really love to get going but lack the confidence and need some expert advice, I have a final suggestion: Talk to either Kevin or Marin at Sherwin-Williams on Oakland Avenue in Shorewood. They are the best.

Then sit back and watch the paint dry.



Lighter colors tend to make rooms look larger; darker colors tend to make them look smaller and more intimate.

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Raymond Bradford
(rbradford@queerlifeneews.com)
is a freelance director,
choreographer and
actor. Ray lives on
the East Side and is
the artistic director of
R.S.V.P. Productions.
Ray also teaches acting.

Friends, Romans, Countrymen — A Prince, a King and a Phantom

'My Funny Valentine, Sweet Comic Valentine.'

As a Libra I'm a hopeless romantic. Many of us know what it is like to go to dinner and theatre with someone special; or to stay home alone eating a gallon of ice cream. Don't get down around Valentine's Day — always remember you are the most important person in your life! Going to the theatre or taking interest in the arts can always be an alternative romantic adventure.

A Bouquet of Theatre

"Julius Caesar" opens at **Milwaukee Shakespeare Theatre** featuring **David Begel** and **William Harlow**. **Montgomery Davis** directs "A Sleep of Prisoners" at **Chamber Theatre**. "Yes, No (Maybe So)" continues at the **Milwaukee Repertory Theatre**. Their acting ensemble is known around the world. The heartwarming "Mornings at Seven" opens at **R.S.V.P Productions** featuring **Gladys Chmiel**, **Cynthia Paplaczky** and **Colleen Hart**. The most romantic musical of all time, "The King and I," plays at **The Milwaukee Theatre** starring **Stephanie Powers**. Also the "King and I" restaurant on 2nd Street is unique before or after the show. "All Shook Up" and "Spamalot" starring **Tim Curry** and **David Hyde Pierce** made their pre-Broadway tryout in Chicago.

Ah! Romance!

Make the entire year Valentine's Day with a new look from the Institute of Beauty and Wellness, Moda Salon or Capricio's. Then, flowers at Bella Fiori or Buds by Brenda. Take in the **Sunset Playhouse** production of "The Rainmaker," or attend the **Scottish Rite** for **Shorewood Players**: sexy "Chicago," featuring **Linda Stieber**. Try Centanni Piano Bar following the show.

My St. Valentine's Day Massacre! Me, in Jail?

Marilyn Monroe starred in the movie "Some Like it Hot." There is a musical version called "Sugar." While I was playing the comic **Jack Lemmon** role in a dinner-theatre, and also directing the production — I almost landed in jail. As I got into comic drag, I struggled into my huge bra. Accidentally I pushed some alarm that went directly to the police station. Within minutes four or five police cars pulled up. As the director, I had to walk outside in full

drag and explain what had happened. They just stared at me in disbelief! But, jail could have proven fun!

Music of Romance

Florentine Opera will open the enchanting "Le Cenerentola" (Cinderella). Go meet your Prince Charming. **Milwaukee Ballet Company** creates "Our Waltzes" this month. In the cinema, "The Phantom of the Opera" is beyond words! So lavish and creative. The music, the costumes, the sets, the stars! It will weave you into a web of love, magic and romance!

If you are staying home for a cozy night, the DVD "It's De Lovely" starring **Kevin Kline** has wonderful **Cole Porter** tunes. **Rod Stewart** has released three CDs of "Great American Love Songs" with duets by **Dolly Parton**, **Bette Midler** and **Cher**.

Cupid's Arrows or Back-Stabbing Gossip

Is "Stepping Out Productions" still stepping out? To the **Miramar** soon, rumor has it! Many of the **Skylight** dancers were from **Danceworks**. With **Skylight** in mind, a winter case of laryngitis kept baritone **J. Robert Baker** from performing. Was this now healthy baritone in "The Unsinkable Molly Brown" on Broadway in 1960? **Ryan Schabach** was thrilled to land a lead in "The Underpants" as an intern at the Rep. **Boulevard Ensemble** has rescheduled their production of "Stevie" to "Mrs. Farnsworth," featuring **Carol Hirschi**. And on a sad note **Nate Berkus** from "Oprah" lost his partner **Fernando** in the Tsunami disaster. Our hearts go out to him.

Last Month's Trivia Answers

The "Forbidden Broadway" song spoof from **Evita** is "Don't Cry for Me Barbra Streisand."

Next Month's Question

What **Rodgers and Hart** show features the song "My Funny Valentine?"

Time to go, as my Aunt Blanche is drinking a Cosmopolitan and re-reading "Julius Caesar." She warns, "Beware the Ides of March!"

Till next month... "Stay little Valentine, Stay."

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Dine In or Carry Out

TRAVEL *continued from page 19*

a cafe latte in one of the many cafes that dot the map of La Boc.

Buenos Aires is a shopper's paradise. At the time of this article, for every U.S. dollar, you receive almost three Argentine pesos. Must-buys for the traveler are leather products, including jackets, shoes and bags; clothing; and silver.

Calle Florida, the major downtown pedestrian shopping street is filled with stores from one end to the other. Pack lightly — you'll fill your suitcases. On Sundays, peruse the antique fair in the central part of San Telmo.

Equally fun in Calle Florida are the vendors and artists that line the street. Local artists hock their wares. You'll see people whose bodies are painted gold, mimes, accordion players, singers and, of course, tango dancers. To get a flavor of the culture, spend time watching these events. Don't forget to throw your coins to them if you like what you see or hear.

Eating and drinking are also major bargains for American travelers. Feast on the Argentine beef raised in the Patagonia region southwest of Buenos Aires. Dinner will not start until 10 p.m. and can be drawn out

until the early hours of the morning, especially on weekends. A mid-priced dinner for two, a bottle of wine and multiple courses will not cost more than \$35.

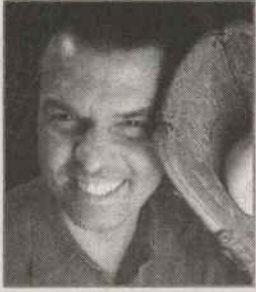
Gay life in Buenos Aires is not as vibrant as in Rio de Janeiro, yet the city is very open-minded. Bars and discos do not get going until well after midnight but remain open until 6 a.m. or later. For a truly wild experience, try Amerik. This disco has the capacity to hold thousands of sweaty dancers. It has three dance floors. Down the road from Amerik is Sitges, a large bar where gays and lesbians congregate. Beer here is inexpensive, even by Milwaukee standards with a bottle costing less than \$1. The leather crowd is mostly underground at present, with private parties advertised in the local rags.

Buenos Aires is not for everyone, but if adventure is in your blood and you like the hustle and bustle of city life, then this is the place for you.

Tip of the trip: Instead of renting a car, use cabs. A taxi ride rarely costs more than \$5. When arriving at or departing for the airport from your hotel, ask the concierge to arrange the ride. It will cost less than hailing a cab on your own.

Q

SPORTS



Brian Reinkober (*breinkober@queerlifeneews.com*) is the commissioner of SSBL (Saturday Softball League) for three years running. He is also involved in the bowling league and the tennis league.

The Kosmos jumped out to an early lead giving the Knightmares 'very bad dreams.'

Milwaukee Kosmos Heat Up Orlando Meltdown Tournament

The Milwaukee Kosmos traveled to Orlando, Fla., over Martin Luther King weekend for the 6th Annual Meltdown Charity Softball Tournament. They joined 35 other teams from cities like Orlando, Ft. Lauderdale, Tampa Bay, Atlanta, Knoxville, Minneapolis and Washington, D.C.

As the weather turned cold in Milwaukee, seven members of the Saturday Softball League (SSBL) (Kurt Baldwin, Greg Roth and Brian Reinkober from Woody's; Chris Wolf and Rick Meronek from Harbor Room; Jim Strange from Fluid; and Bill Carr a.k.a. Ms. Nadia from M & M Club), one past member of SSBL (Justin Eichmann of Tucson, Ariz.) and four players from Tampa Bay (Bill Auella, Tori Falzone, Will Curtis, and Shannon Britton) headed for sunny and warm Orlando. Unfortunately, the weather gods were again against the Kosmos. Instead of heat and warmth greeting them, Mother Nature threw temperatures in the 50s with windy and rainy conditions much of the weekend.

On Saturday, the Kosmos started round robin competition by winning both games behind strong pitching performances from Ms. Nadia and Bill Auella. The first game was against the CFL Appraisals from Orlando. The Kosmos won the game 18-15, but had to come from behind in Kosmos' dramatic fashion with four runs on their final at bats.

The second game was against the University of Central Florida Knightmares, also from Orlando. The Kosmos jumped out to an early lead giving the Knightmares "very bad dreams" as the score was 7-1 after five innings. Unfortunately, that lead would evaporate as the Kosmos found themselves down by a single run going into the last half inning of the game.

Brian started out with a single in the bottom of the seventh and reached third on a throwing error. Brian scored on a double by Kurt tying the score at 9. Kurt scored the winning run with two outs on a single by Will. The 10-9 win meant the Kosmos began tournament competition as the second seed behind the Paladin Knights of Ft. Lauderdale.

The Kosmos caught a break right out of the starting blocks in the double elimination tournament as the 10th-seeded Tampa Bay Chaos upset the seventh-seeded UCF Knightmares sending UCF to the losers' bracket. The Chaos, however, were no match for the big Kosmos bats. The final score read Kosmos 24 - Chaos 4.

The Kosmos' luck ran out against the second-seeded Orlando Heat. With the elements becoming a bigger factor, the

Kosmos fought to stay in the game, down by a single run midway through the game. Unfortunately, the second half proved disastrous as the Heat caught fire and exploded for 9 runs on their way to a 17-7 win and throwing the Kosmos into the losers' bracket heading into Sunday's competition.

The gloomy Florida weather continued to wreak havoc on the Sunday games. All games were delayed for five hours as the fields tried to "dry out." Play finally began at 1 p.m., but games were shortened to a 30-minute time limit with Kansas City playoff rules in effect (one pitch count).

The Kosmos trek through the losers' bracket began with the CFL Appraisals, just as it did the previous day. The outcome was the same as it had been the day before with the Kosmos winning 10-1. The Kosmos dominated their next opponent, the Paladin Knights, winning that game 11-1.

Inspired by the first rays of sunshine since they had left Milwaukee, the Kosmos again battled the Heat, but this time, it was the Kosmos blistering out to an early lead 5-1 after two complete innings. Confidence was lost in the third inning as nothing went the Kosmos' way and by the fifth inning, they trailed by two runs. Confidence was regained when they ran the batting order and scored six times. The inning was highlighted by a two-run double by Greg scoring the tying and winning runs. Ms. Nadia then stymied the last three batters of the Orlando Heat, striking out the side and sending the Kosmos into the championship games. Final score, Kosmos 13 - Heat 9.

The Kosmos were now the winner of the losers' bracket, but it meant they would have to beat their next opponent twice, the Ft. Lauderdale MCC Sluggers, to become champions.

In the first game, the Kosmos continued their domination by jumping out to an early 8-2 lead after three innings. This time, there would be no letup in the Kosmos' concentration. There would be no lead relinquished and the Kosmos took the first game 19-7 setting up one final game for 1st place!

The Kosmos jumped out to a 5-0 lead after the first inning. The Kosmos grip tightened on the defensive side with Jim, Tori, Chris and Rick all making spectacular defensive plays and not allowing a run to score until the fifth inning. By that time, it was too late for the MCC Sluggers and the Kosmos ran the score to 13-1 giving them 1st place!

Each player received a "D" Division Champion sweatshirt in

Bowlers prepare to roll into Milwaukee!

Final preparations are underway for the largest gay sporting event to hit Milwaukee. The International Gay Bowling Organization's 25th Anniversary tournament will be held Memorial Day weekend drawing 800-1,000 bowlers from around the world.

The tournament committee has been diligently working the past two years planning this historic event and is still looking for groups or individuals to volunteer to assist with many different aspects of hosting the tournament. Those interested can e-mail igbomilw2005@aol.com, or visit the Web site at www.igbo.org.

As part of fundraising efforts, there will be a "shop & share" with Jewel-Osco stores. Present one of the coupons which you can find in Q Life or on our Web site. IGBO Milwaukee 2005 will receive 5% of your purchase, excluding sales tax and prescriptions. The first "shop & share" will be the week of Valentine's Day and will run February 7-14. The second will run March 21-27 and the last will be April 4-10. Watch upcoming issues for coupons for each week and feel free to make copies for your friends, co-workers and families.

addition to the team trophy. Since this was a charity tournament, the Kosmos were presented a \$500 check payable to the Kosmos charity, BESTD Clinic. Presentation of the check to BESTD Clinic will be Feb. 26 at the SSBL Winter Banquet to be held at Ballgame.

Congratulations to all Milwaukee Kosmos for a job well done!

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March Madness

By Brian Reinkober

Football season has now ended, and March Madness is close at hand for both collegiate men's and women's basketball. Spring training is right around the corner and that means opening day is also right around the corner. Gay sports is hotter than it has ever been in wintertime.

Bowling (<http://hitmilwaukee.org>)

The Monday Night Irregulars are well into their second half of the season. The 1st-place team of T-M-T is leading by 8 points, with 40 wins and 2 losses; over 2nd-place IGBO 25, which has 32 wins and 10 losses with only 8 weeks remaining in the season. The race for 3rd and 4th places (presently held by Spin This and Club Boom, respectively) is in a virtual deadlock with 11 teams all within 6 points of one another. It should prove to be a very interesting finish coming down to the wire with the very last week of bowling pitting the winners of the first half (Kum & Go) against the winners of the second half. Stay tuned.

Rita Bowl, a fundraiser for Holiday Invitational Tournament (H.I.T.) is being held Friday, March 18 at the AMF Lanes in West Allis at 8 p.m. with registration starting at 7 p.m. Space is limited, as only 48 teams are able to participate in this yearly fundraiser. Cost is \$20 per bowler but it proves to be one of the most exciting fundraisers that bowling has, and this year will be no exception. Even if you don't bowl, stop on down and watch these bowlers do amazing things with their bodies and bowling balls and create art out of saran wrap or tin foil. It truly is an event not to be missed!

Also taking place March 21-28 is the IGBO fund-

raiser with Jewel-Osco. For that week, just clip out the coupon that will appear either in Q Life or OutBound News. Take the coupon to Jewel-Osco and shop. Present the coupon to the cashier when paying, and 5 percent of the sale will go to benefit IGBO 2005.

Finally, teams are getting organized to travel to the MAKIT Bowling Tournament in Kansas City, Mo. This event takes place over Easter Weekend. Singles, doubles and team competition will be at this tournament. For more information, please see any one of the league officers on Monday Night at AMF Lanes in West Allis.

Darts (www.m-gdl.com)

Like the Monday Night Irregulars, the Milwaukee Gay Dart League is heading into the home stretch of its season. As of week 16, there has been a shift at the top of the standings. The Ballgame Killers headed by Arnie "Aqua Net" Garcia bulls-eyed right into first place by virtue of their 11-1 win against the Cage Dick Ticklers and caused a log jam for 2nd through 4th places, with the Fluid Bullshitters, the Fluid Horsemen and the Fluid Plaid and Proud all within 4 points of one another.

Leaders in the individual stats department after week 16 are as follows: assists, Jake K from Ballgame 1 (43); busts, Jeremy P from the Cage Dick Ticklers (45); and Arnie Garcia with wins (55), bulls (354), tons

Teams are getting organized to travel to the MAKIT Bowling Tournament in Kansas City, taking place over Easter weekend. Singles, doubles and team competition will be at this tournament.

(91), hat tricks (18), 4 round outs (15), and 3 round outs (11). Hey, Arnie! How come you can aim on the dart board with pinpoint accuracy, but have trouble finding the strike zone? Just kidding around, everyone. Arnie is one of the pitchers for the Ballgame Softball team that competes in the Saturday Softball League (SSBL).

Softball (www.ssblmilwaukee.com)

On Feb. 18 and 19, the Milwaukee Kosmos travel to Tampa Bay, Fla., for the 11th Gasparilla Tournament. There will be a large cheesehead contingency with two additional teams coming from Madison. Anyone interested in playing please contact Brian "Kitty" Williams at Fluid during happy hour.

On Saturday, Feb. 26, SSBL is having the Snowball Softball Cup. Games will be played at either Mitchell Field or Wick Field depending on the number of teams that enter. Entry fee is \$100. Trophies will be awarded to the first and second place teams. Afterwards, there will be the SSBL Winter Banquet, open to everyone, at Ballgame. There will be prizes, raffles and food and the first inductees to the newly created SSBL Hall of Fame. Come and see the who's who of Milwaukee softball past as well as the memorabilia that will be on display.

It's also not too early to start putting your teams together. This will be a very fun and exciting year. Contact your bar of choice and let them know of your interest in playing this summer.

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For any questions, please contact IGBOMILW2005@aol.com or see our website for more details at www.igbo25.org
Watch for more coupons in March and April! Thank you for supporting IGBO Milwaukee 2005!

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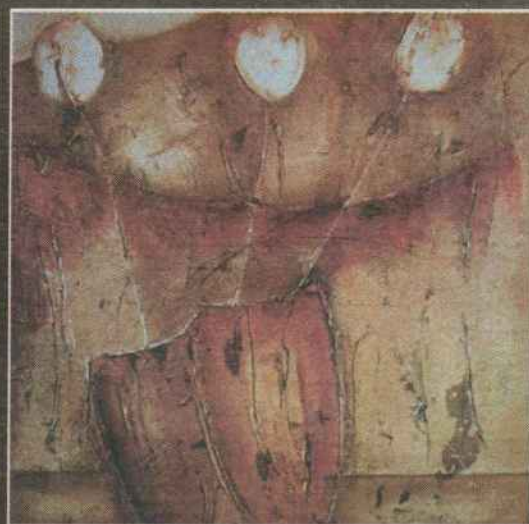
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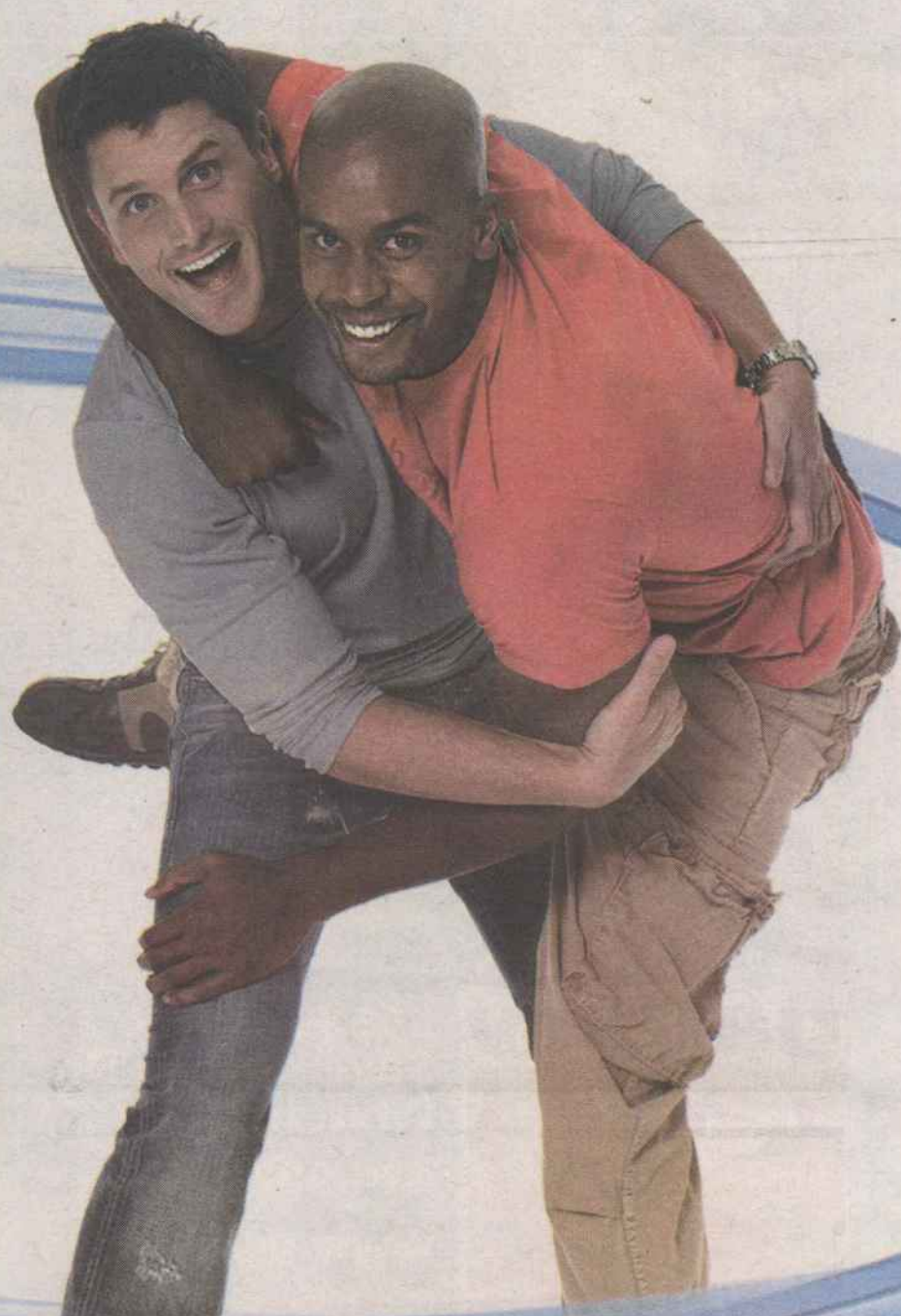
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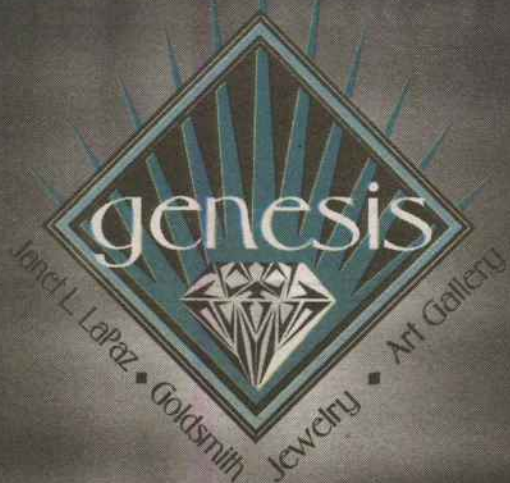
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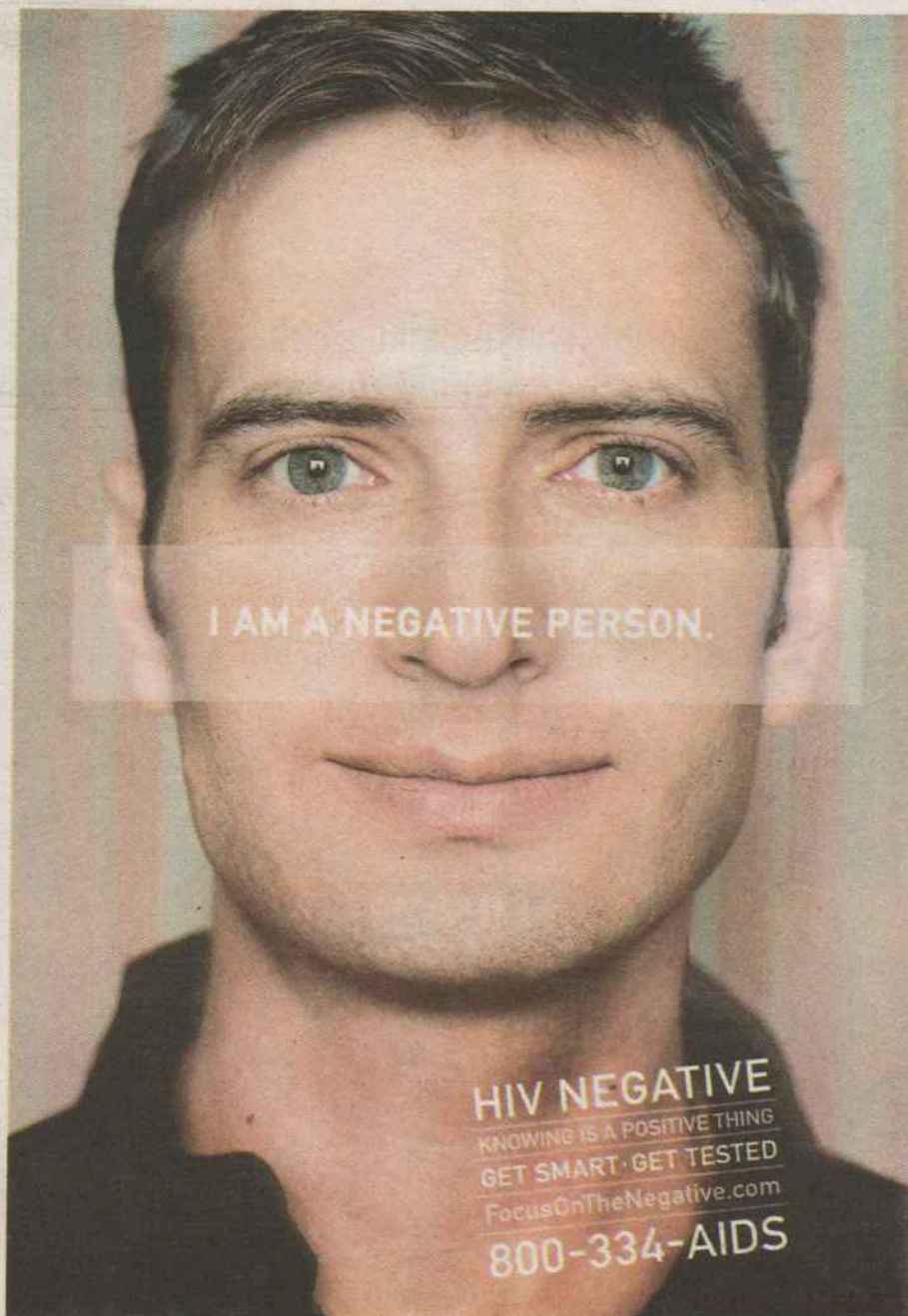
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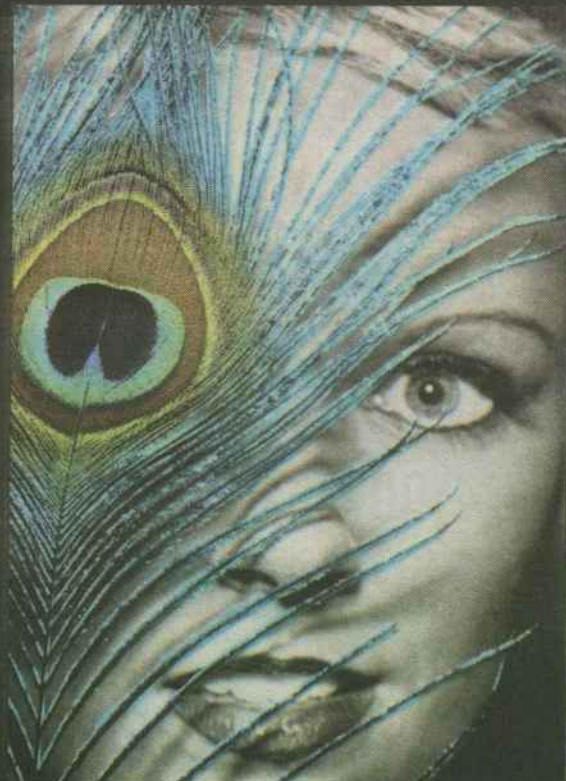
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CALENDAR

Thursday, February 10

Legal Night Free legal consultation with LGBT-friendly attorneys. First come, first served. Milwaukee LGBT Community Center, 315 W. Court St. 6–8pm.

Saturday, February 12

3rd Annual LAMM Valentine's Day Dance Back by popular demand! With DJ Sandy Seuser. \$10 pre-sale at People's Books, Outpost and Outwards Bookstore. \$12 at the door for non LAMM members, \$10 for members. South Shore Pavilion, 299 South Shore Dr., 8pm. www.lesbianalliance.org

Have a Heart 14th annual gala dinner, silent auction and entertainment in the Atrium at historic Lambeau Field in Green Bay to benefit the AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin, by raising funds to support prevention programs and health and social services for their patients and clients. To register, call 800-359-9272, ext. 1545. www.arcw.org

Gemini Gender Group Support and social group for crossdressers and transsexuals. Meets 2nd Saturday each month, Milwaukee LGBT Community Center, 315 W. Court St., 6–9:30pm.

Project Q Drop-In: V-Day Bash ~ Heartbreaker Party for LGBTQ youth under 24. A heartbreaker party, not a Valentine's Day party and not an anti-Valentine's Day party. Celebrate it all and more. Everyone is welcome; all couples, anti-couples and especially the heartbreakers. Wear red, pink, white or black; we are sure to have a good time. 414-223-3220. www.projectq.org.

Monday, February 14

Don't Amend! Valentine's Day Rally to oppose a Wisconsin ban on civil unions and same-sex marriage. Show your support for love, commitment and tolerance for all Wisconsin families. Learn how the proposed amendment to the Wisconsin constitution goes too far and why people from all walks of life are opposing it. Milwaukee City Hall Rotunda, 200 E. Wells St., 5–6:15pm (note new time). Sponsored by the Milwaukee "No on the Amendment" Coalition. Patrick: 414-271-2656, ext. 112.

Outwards Book Club meets to discuss "Moth and Flame," the latest entry in John Morgan Wilson's best-selling and Lambda award-winning "Justice" series. New members are always welcome! 7:30pm, 2710 N. Murray Ave. outwardsbooks@msn.com or 414-963-9089

Tuesday, February 15

Stitch 'n' Bitch Into needlecrafts, crocheting, knitting or cross-stitch? Work on your projects, chat and enjoy the company of other LGBT people. 1st and 3rd Tuesdays at Outpost Natural Foods, 100 E. Capitol Dr., 7–9pm. dawn@uwalumni.com

Thursday, February 17

Rainbow U Lecture "Unnecessary Losses: Alternatives to Civil Unions." Ways to protect your relationship. Presenter, Judy Seltzer of Schmidt & Bartelt. Free and open to the public. Milwaukee LGBT Community Center, 315 W. Court St., 7–8:30pm. 414-271-2656.

Milwaukee LGBT Center Annual Meeting Year-in-review and program updates. New Board member elections. Socializing and more! 315 W. Court St. 6pm reception, 6:30–8:30 meeting. 414-271-2656.

Saturday, February 19

The New Harvest Foundation's 2005 Dinner Dance Attorney General Peg Lautenschlager will be the keynote speaker and "Ladies Must Swing" will provide the entertainment. Monona Terrace, Madison. Tickets available only in advance 608-256-4204. www.newharvestfoundation.org

Women's basketball weekend in Minneapolis, UW vs. MN. www.careyonsocialadventures.com or 608-692-7386.

BWMT (Black and White Men Together) 6–8:30pm. 414-540-9437 ext. 3.

SEWDG BDSM support and instructional group. 6–8pm. wolfgrey@aol.com

WI Rainbow Alliance for the Deaf Meeting and socializing for deaf and hearing-impaired LGBT people. Milwaukee LGBT Community Center, 315 W. Court St., 6–10pm. www.wiscrad.org or Suzette at sgaray@uwm.edu.

Sunday, February 20

Open Space Drop-in discussion group for all lesbians. Real talk, meet new friends. 3rd Sunday each month at the Counseling Center of Milwaukee, 2038 N. Bartlett Ave., 6–8pm. Please be prompt. Cheryl at 414-271-2565 or groups@execpc.com.

Women's basketball weekend in Minneapolis, UW vs. MN. www.careyonsocialadventures.com or 608-692-7386.

Tuesday, February 22

Sufi Poetry Night Hosted by Godsil, featuring poetry of Rumi & Hafiz. Club Timbaktu, 520 E. Center St., 7–8pm. www.clubtimbaktu.com or 414-265-7000.

Christians for Equality Lobby day at the State Capitol. Members of various religious congregations statewide gather to show that they are supportive of full recognition for LGBT families. 10:30am press conference, 11am training followed by a rally and visits to legislative offices. 608-233-9751 or toll-free 877-578-9844.

Friday, February 25

Project Q Drop-in for LGBTQ youth under 24. Screening of the critically acclaimed "Brother to Brother" which addresses personal, social, sexual and historical concerns with a remarkable impact. Milwaukee LGBT Community Center, 315 W. Court St. www.projectq.org or 414-223-3220.

Saturday, February 26

UWM's Annual Drag Show Benefits Project Q. Donations accepted at the door. UWM Union Ballroom, 8pm. yves@uwm.edu or 414-229-4116.

Project Q Speakers Bureau Training Peer Counselors and Educators training. Project Q youth leaders and those interested in being youth leaders are encouraged to attend. Snacks and refreshments. Milwaukee LGBT Community Center, 315 W. Court St., noon–3pm. Warren@ProjectQ.org or 414-223-3220.

Tuesday, March 1

Stitch 'n' Bitch Into needlecrafts, crocheting, knitting or cross-stitch? Work on your projects, chat and enjoy the company of other LGBT people. 1st and 3rd

Know an event that will interest the LGBT community?

Email us at qcalendar@queerlifeneews.com

Tuesdays at Outpost Natural Foods, 100 E. Capitol Dr., 7–9pm. dawn@uwalumni.com.

Silver Belles Women's Conference "HIV and Menopause." Children's Health and Education Center, 1533 N. River Center Dr., 9am–1:30pm.

Saturday, March 5

FORGE How to Handle Public Restrooms Presentation by Waring Finck, a local lawyer familiar with issues

Group Meetings at The Milwaukee LGBT Community Center & Around Town

BiDefinition

A social and discussion group for bisexuals and those questioning or supporting. Visit www.mkelgbt.org/community/bidefinition.asp or www.groups.yahoo.com/group/bi_definition for more information. BWMT (Black and White Men Together) 6pm to 8:30pm, third Saturday each month. For more information, call 342-0705.

Cream City Squares

Square dance Sundays, "friendship set to music." Casual attire. Singles, couples, and families are all invited. Lake Park Lutheran Church, 2647 N. Stowell St. Lessons 1–3pm, club dances 3–4:30pm. Meets every Sunday. For more information visit <http://iagsdc.org/creamcity> or e-mail djiliges@execpc.com

FORGE

(For Ourselves: Reworking Gender Expression) A social support group open to all people interested in Female to Male+ (FTM+) and Significant Others, Family, Friends, and Allies (SOFFA's) issues. Meets first Saturday of the month at 7pm.

Gemini Gender Group

Support and social group for cross-dressers and transsexuals, 6pm to 9:30pm, second Saturday each month.

Lake Park Lutheran Church

A "Reconciling in Christ" congregation (LGBT welcome), Sunday mornings, 2647 N. Stowell St. 8am worship in chapel, 9am education hour for all ages, 10am worship in sanctuary, fellowship hour following the service. For more information call 414-962-9190 or visit www.lakeparklutheran.com

Men's Voices Milwaukee

A men's choral group. Rehearsals every Monday, 7:30–9:30pm for its two seasons, August to December and January to May. Auditions two weeks before and after start of rehearsal season. For more information write mvmchorus@hotmail.com

Metropolitan Community Church

A gay group here in Milwaukee. We exist to magnify God's love, minister God's will, celebrate God's creation, and cherish God's people. Sunday mornings, 1239 W. Mineral St. 10am Christian education and 11am worship service. For more information visit www.queerchurch.org or e-mail review2004@yahoo.com

Open Space

Support group that strives to create a welcoming, safe and supportive space for lesbians of all ages. Meets third Sunday each month, 6–8pm at the Counseling Center of Milwaukee, 2038 N. Bartlett Ave. \$5 fee paid as you are able. For more information call Cheryl at 414-271-2565.

faced by the trans community. Come with your questions and listen to a lively exchange on fears of passing, differences in bathroom etiquette, etc. Milwaukee LGBT Community Center, 315 W. Court St. info@forge-forward.org, www.forge-forward.org/socialsupport or 414-278-6031.

Sunday, March 6

Brunch Club Lesbian potluck brunch, first Sunday each month, 11am. Meet new friends the relaxed way

OutCare Sexual Health Center

Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 5–9pm. Walk-in health center that is tailored to meet the needs of the LGBT community. For more information or to check the current clinic hours call 414-277-9370. A service of Planned Parenthood.

Out to Brunch

Monthly lesbian brunch meets on the first Sunday of the month at 11am, call for location. It's a potluck with juice and coffee provided. For more information or to be added to the monthly newsletter call Deb or Donna at 414-276-5070 or write deblang@ameritech.net

Pilgrim Christian Church

815 Northview, Waukesha. An Open and Affirming Congregation, gladly welcoming and affirming all people. LGBT members participate fully, holding office, teaching children and sharing their faith journeys. Worship at 10am Sundays, call 414-443-0976 for more information.

Positive Direction Milwaukee

Every Wednesday, 7–8:30pm. A social support group for HIV-positive gay men from Milwaukee and the surrounding areas. We provide a confidential, welcoming environment where we can seek sound social support, freely air our emotions and suggestions, and find new social opportunities with each other. Also, hosts various events, including get-togethers and social outings. For more information, call John at 414-461-5894.

Project Q Drop-in

For LGBTQ youth ages 14–24. Every Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday. Call 223-3220 or visit our website www.projectq.org for more information.

The Queer Program

Live weekly call-in show by, for, and about the Queer community. Live Mondays at 6:30pm on Cable Channel 96, Milwaukee Community Media. Hosted by Michael Lisowski and Charles Daniels. Replays on Saturdays at Midnight and 10pm.

SAGE Milwaukee (Senior Action in a Gay Environment) Various events. Visit www.mkelgbt.org/community/sage.asp or call 414-224-0517 for more information and SAGE events listings.

Stitch 'N Bitch

Every 1st & 3rd Tuesday, 7–9pm. OutPost Natural Foods, 100 E. Capitol Dr. Into needle crafts like crocheting, knitting, or counted cross stitch? Join us and work on your projects, chat, and enjoy the company of other LGBT people. Contact dawn@uwalumni.com for more information.

Unitarian Universalist Church West (UUCW)

Two worship services concurrent with children's religious education classes at 8:45 & 11AM Sundays, 13001 W. North Ave., Brookfield. For more information call 262-782-3535.

WI Rainbow Alliance of the Deaf Meeting

Every 4th Saturday, 6:30–10pm. Contact Suzette at sgaray@uwm.edu or Jake at jakestercool@2way.net for more information.

FILMS, BOOKS and MUSIC

Q

Heirs to History**"A Passion to Preserve: Gay Men as Keepers of Culture"**

Will Fellows



Roxanne Kupfer (rkupfer@queerlifeneeds.com) has a lifelong love for movies and books which started in Paris decades ago. The mother of two creative children, she lives in Milwaukee and Cape Cod.

The men profiled in "A Passion to Preserve" immediately distinguish themselves from the "Queer Eye" men.

The Queer Eye Team has become a ubiquitous part of the mainstream "redo" industry. Fashion, home decorating — they're the experts. I beg to differ.

Instead, I urge you to run to your nearest bookshop (try the local store first) and buy a copy of Will Fellows' "A Passion to Preserve." First, because it's a landmark in gay cultural history. Second, because he lives right in our community.

The book grew out of Fellows' own experiences and the insights he gleaned while writing his first book, "Farm Boys," which related the stories and profiles of gay men in a rural/agricultural environment who found creative outlets ranging from preserving photographs to raising exotic poultry. In his most recent work Fellows continues to examine the relation between gay men and their striking — and often neglected or willfully obliterated — contributions to America's cultural heritage. An ingenious tapestry that weaves together personal histories and interviews, fascinating historical details not widely known and incisive analysis, this is an affirmation of the central role gay men have played in America's cultural life. In fact, the men profiled in "A Passion to Preserve" immediately distinguish themselves from the "Queer Eye" men. While the former provide a "context in which to live," the latter dispense commercial ephemeral commodities. Gay men frequently restore old houses — for reasons that go beyond "This Old House." Perhaps Ron Markwell of Delavan explains most eloquently the frequently overlooked *raison d'être* for their involvement with house restoration: "We've always felt that our ownership transcends just having our names on the deed. We're stewards for future generations seeing to it that this structure stays around. ... Owning a place like this dictates learning about the people who created it." In other words, the preservation of the house goes much further than carpentry and carpeting, it includes remembering lives. Fellows argues that gay men project themselves in ways that are "gender-atypical" — they often share traits with straight women. It's not external appearance but interests, aptitudes and values that intrigue Fellows: the rich heritage these men have created because and in spite of being displaced by mainstream society. Living in an era when the past quickly becomes obsolete and whose present often mass-markets antiques, gay men are the authentic custodians, collectors and decoders of cultural and sociological history.

North Carolina writer Allan Gurganus

uses humor to explain the link between gay men and urban revitalization: "You can always tell an urban neighborhood in transition by that harbinger of change, the Art Deco opened by two gentlemen friends. They sell 1930s gewgaws ... aware of the architectural possibilities, sniffing out incoming prosperity and willing in some extremely brave way to put their own lives on the line, to live an esthetic vision, to fight militantly for a sense of beauty." Like Fellows' first book, "A Passion to Preserve" is published by the University of Wisconsin Press.

Body and Soul**"The Young and the Dead"**

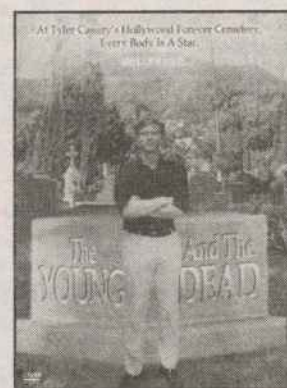
Directed by Shari Springer Berman and Robert Pulcini

DVD

February is not a pretty time in Wisconsin. Cabin fever is as prevalent as the flu. If you cannot escape to warmer climates, I recommend a virtual getaway, the documentary "The Young and the Dead." It's the tale of a famous cemetery located in the heart of Hollywood, the resting place of Rudolph Valentino, Marion Davis (the mistress of newspaper magnate William Randolph Hearst), Douglas Fairbanks father and son, Janet Gaynor, Nelson Eddy, director Cecil B. De Mille and many other celebrities. The cemetery is even known for the "famous who aren't there": Although there is a marker for sex icon Jayne Mansfield, she was cremated and her remains scattered elsewhere.

Established in 1899, Hollywood Memorial Park was intended to double as a park, like the renowned Pere Lachaise in Paris. But by the late '70s the crematorium was closed. (It seems Mama Cass Elliott was the last person to be cremated.) An earthquake in 1994 severely damaged graves. Nine million dollars were looted by the longtime operator from funds intended for grave care. Revenues, if any, came from people paying to dig out and move remains of loved ones. When most of the studios moved to Burbank and Culver City, the area gradually became home to first generation immigrants, the homeless, and teenage runaways. In 1998, two entrepreneurs arrived on the scene to save the park and joined the larger revitalization of that significant part of Americana. Thirty-something brothers Tyler and Brent Cassity enlisted a team of energetic (and very photogenic) executives, and began to lovingly fix the damaged tombs and mausoleums. They identified graves that had been forgotten and overtaken by weeds, and restored them. The lush grounds, which included a small lake, were returned to their tropical elegance. The facelift included new road patterns which also yielded space for additional graves for the future. Interviewed in "The Advocate," the film's director recalled her first encounter with Tyler Cassity as "expecting Vincent Price and instead we got a quiet, intellectual movie star." In the same article, Cassity described himself as the "Martha Stewart of the death industry." He was right on target.

Cassity, like the domestic diva, understood that inspiration may be the mother of invention but it is not



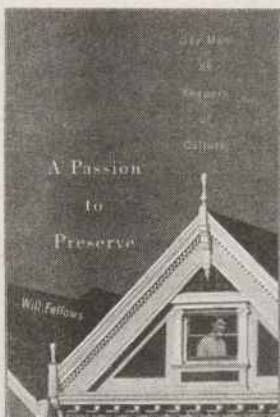
Cassity described himself as the 'Martha Stewart of the death industry.'

enough. A masterful trend catcher and marketer who had been trained in the family's death-care trade, Cassity knew that his cemetery, Hollywood Forever, had to be more than an archive of movie stars' tombs. He transformed his ideas into products and enhanced the park tours with elaborately staged tributes to his famous residents. Of course, Cassity demonstrated that his cemetery could be both a profitable business and an integral part of Tinseltown's history, culture and tourism.

With empathy, the film captures fans of all ages — with everyone from teenagers to octogenarians in attendance at the 77th annual memorial service for Rudolph Valentino. Many of the participants were also the "regulars" who lovingly continue to bring flower bouquets, reminisce and enjoy the closeness to their idols day after day. And we get a glimpse of the "ultimate Los Angeles experience," a classical film festival held in the park on summer weekends. "Historic movies in a historic setting," beams Cassity. The event is also billed as an "evening below and above the stars."

Finally, in the touching and uplifting category is the special ceremony captured in the documentary of the unveiling of a monument in honor of Hattie McDaniel. Although she won an Oscar for her performance in "Gone with the Wind," when she died in 1952, she was denied burial simply because she was black.

Meanwhile, Cassity brought to life Andy Warhol's dictum of empowering everyone with their "15 minutes of fame." With the help of digital technology, Forever Hollywood enables regular folks to construct a permanent record for future generations. Editors churn out mini-documentaries using family photos, oral interviews and homemade videos which can be viewed at kiosks in the park or on the Internet. For about \$400 for a 15-minute episode, everyone can construct their "Here's Your Life" album and become part of Hollywood mythology! Of special interest in the documentary is the symbiosis between the motion picture industry and the business of death. The main neighbor of Hollywood Forever is Paramount studio, the only major studio remaining in Hollywood. Founded in 1913, the studio moved to its current site in 1926 on land purchased from the cemetery. And for several decades, cemetery and motion pictures flourished together. Whether you're planning a visit to Los Angeles or just want to enjoy the sunny and beautiful vistas, I recommend "The Young and the Dead." And if you do go, make sure to put both Hollywood Forever and Paramount on your sightseeing itinerary.



Will Fellows will be the guest speaker at a special evening presented by the Friends of Golda Meir Library and Historic Milwaukee, Inc., at 7 p.m. on Wednesday Feb. 16 at the Brumder Mansion Bed & Breakfast, 3046 W. Wisconsin Ave. The event is free and will include a slide presentation and the author's observations on restoration and preservation in our community. His book will also be available for purchase.



A Master Tunsmith

"It's De Lovely"

The Authentic Cole Porter Collection

CD

Forty years after his death, Cole Porter remains an American icon almost without equal. According to Forbes magazine, his music generated \$6 million in 2004 alone, making him one of the year's "top earners." Born to privilege, Porter enjoyed from an early age the best of musical education including the Worcester Music Academy and Yale University. Porter's success also came early. At Yale they still play the football anthems he composed as a student. By the 1930s he was an international celebrity whose sophisticated words and music were a welcome flight from the economic depression and rise of Nazism. Because he enjoyed such stardom, his frequent globetrotting was gleefully recorded and preserved. In a recent issue of The New Yorker, John Lahr cites

Porter's "valets, his 16 dressing gowns, his Art Deco Paris house with zebra rugs on marble floors." The CD's headline song, "Anything Goes," is from the 1934 Broadway musical with Ethel Merman. It also expressed Porter's lifelong depiction of free spirit as victorious over Puritanism. "Times have changed/...Since the Puritans got a shock/When they landed on Plymouth Rock." Or "If bare limbs you like/If Mae West you like/Or me undressed you like/Anything goes." Pretty courageous for his time! "Anything Goes" also articulated Porter's personal lifestyle. Fellow composer Alan Jay Lerner described him as "a homosexual who has never seen the closet." But he was married for 35 years to divorcee and socialite Linda Thomas — it was an alliance of like minds for securing financial and social high standing. It seems the arrangement worked quite well, in spite of the squabbles that erupted when Porter began to spend more time in Hollywood's large gay community. The selections in this CD span a quarter of a century — from the bright and snappy tunes of "Let's Misbehave" (1927) to the sultry and continental "I Love Paris" (from the Broadway show "Can Can," 1953) and one of his lesser known tunes "From This Moment On" (dropped from the stage version but used in the screen version of "Kiss Me Kate," 1953). Most special in "It's De Lovely" is that two of the songs feature Cole Porter himself with orchestral accompaniment. Also featured are outstanding artists including Lena Horne, Dinah Shore and Frank Sinatra.

Outwords Books "Top 5 Picks for February"

Exclusive to Q Life

The Best Romantic Titles for Valentine's Day

For the Boys:

"Almost Like Being in Love" by Steve Kluger

Charming, "feel-good" story of gay love lost and found.

"Best Gay Love Stories 2005" edited by Nick Street

A fabulous smorgasbord of romantic fiction by the hottest gay writers!

"Hot Gay Sex Coupons" by Marty Kantor

44 passionate ways to make your romantic fantasies come true.

"Man of My Dreams" by Dave Benbow et al.

Kensington's hottest writers chronicle love, lust, rock and roll, and sizzling male-on-male fantasies.

"The Romantic Friendship Reader" by Axel Nissen

Real love stories between men in Victorian America.

For the Girls:

"Best Lesbian Love Stories 2005" edited by Angela Brown

Curl up and spend a cold winter's night with this magical, moving collection.

"Curious Wine" by Katherine Forrest

Quite simply the most popular lesbian romance novel of all time!

"Desert of the Heart" by Jane Rule

Jane Rule's pioneering 1964 novel became the basis for the marvelous 1985 cinematic adaptation.

"Erotic Interludes: Change of Pace" by Radclyffe

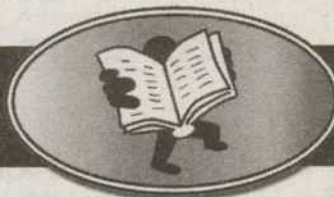
The hottest dreams, desires and fantasies from the hottest lesbian writer of today!

"Highsmith: A Romance of the 1950s" by Marijane Meaker

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PARENTING



Megan Krick
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Dating with Children

Love is in the air, or is it? When you have children it can be difficult to handle the dating scene. At times, it can seem like being a parent is your only identity, but that doesn't have to be the case. You can have children and still have romance in your life.

Having children does not allow for a lot of time to rejuvenate your mind, body and soul. Spending time with other adults can help. Being able to date and find adult companionship can also bring you happiness, and when you're happy your children tend to be happy also. However, finding places to meet that someone special may be a challenge.

When you have children you can't always go out to the usual meeting places, such as the bars. You need to find other places to meet people, for example, the LGBT Community Center, LGBT friendly bookstores and other shops. You can also find other LGBT people with children at a Rainbow Families Milwaukee get-together. As always, your friends are another source of new people to meet.

When you meet someone there are many questions that will arise. Does he or she have or

like children? What are his or her interests and does he or she share any interests with your children? All of these questions can affect any potential relationship. How you answer these questions can help you find what you want.

Usually when you first meet someone you talk for a while and get to know each other. During that stage of the dating game you can find out the answers to your questions and at the same time let him or her know about your children. At the same time if you discover that he or she does not like children, you can evaluate how to handle that.

While dating, it is important to have adult time, time away from the children. It is often hard to find a sitter for the children. When looking for a sitter it is important to trust the person who will be watching the young ones. Personally, I have been fortunate to find a sitter that I can trust with the little guy. Where I am going and how late I will be out determine if the sitter comes to my house or if I take the little guy out to her house. Every time that he has gone to the sitter he has come back happy and exhausted from playing.

It is more difficult to carve out the time for dating when you have children. But the quality of the date is often more important than the quantity. Having a general plan for the date is a good idea. You can let the sitter know where you will be in case of emergencies. In the age of cell phones it is easier to check in on the children if the plans change during your date. The flip side of that is that it is easier to be reached at the most inopportune times.

In addition to going on dates with just the person you are seeing, you can also go out with the children. It is beneficial to you and your children. Being able to spend time with someone who is important to you is good for your children. These family dates let your children interact with your special someone. How they all react together can show you if this person is right for you and your family.

Dating can have its ups and downs. If it doesn't work, it can be difficult on you and the children. This can happen to anyone and it is OK. Just because one relationship does not work out does not mean that you should stop dating. The important

continued on page 54

You can have children and still have romance in your life.

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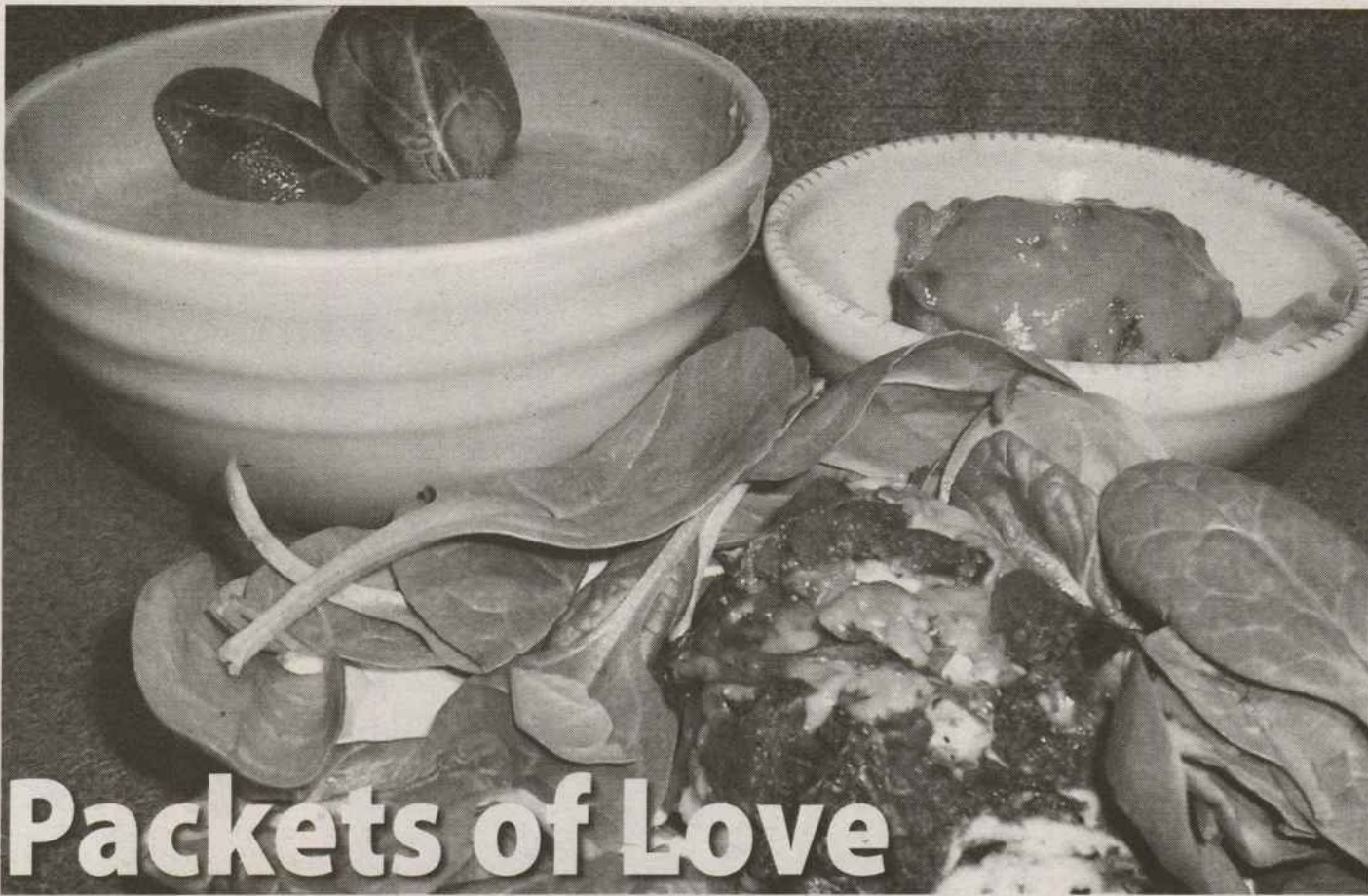
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Packets of Love

The feeling surrounding Valentine's Day is a wonderful reminder for everyone to turn to their loved one (or ones!) and say "I love you." These are three simple words — words that should definitely be said more often. An even better way to convey your love for someone is to cook them a scrumptious meal. I always find it a special treat when someone else does all the work. ...I mean cooking. For some reason it always seems to taste better when someone else makes it! Unfortunately if you're reading this, then you are probably the one who is doing the cooking.

To show someone how much you care, make them this main course dish that I like to call "My Big Fat Greek Chicken Packet." It's a great combination of chicken, spinach and feta all cooked in an aluminum foil pouch. If you are looking to really impress your snooggy — eh, I mean loved one — add an appetizer of "Spicy Peanut Soup" to the menu. And for an all-out blitz of appreciation finish off the meal with "Banana Bread Pudding with Carmel Rum Sauce."

My Big Fat Greek Chicken Packet

- 4 boneless, skinless chicken breast halves
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 bag baby spinach
- 1 10-oz. can stewed tomatoes with basil, garlic and oregano
- 4 oz. feta cheese

Preheat oven to 500 degrees. Prepare four sheets of aluminum foil to measure about 12 by 15 inches. Fold in half crosswise to crease, then unfold. Place a handful of the baby spinach on each foil sheet, putting it on the bottom half. (You can use the remainder of the baby spinach for a nice salad.) Lightly coat both sides of each chicken breast with the olive oil, then season with the salt and pepper. Place one chicken fillet in the center of each spinach portion. Divide the stewed tomatoes and spoon on top of the chicken, spreading to cover evenly. Allow any liquid to puddle around the chicken. Top each portion with 1 oz. cheese. Place the top of the foil over the chicken and fold the edges to create a tight seal. Place the packets on a baking sheet and place in the preheated oven for 15 minutes. Turn oven down to 450 degrees and bake another 20–25 minutes.

Spicy Peanut Soup

- 2 cups roasted peanuts
- ½ cup peanut butter
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- ½ cup diced celery
- ½ tsp. cayenne pepper
- ½ tsp. ground cumin
- 6 cups chicken broth
- ½ cup milk
- ½ cup cream

In a blender or grinder, grind peanuts to a fine consistency. Heat oil in a saucepan and sauté the celery until soft. Add ground peanuts, peanut butter, cayenne pepper, cumin and chicken stock. Bring to a boil and then lower heat and simmer, covered, for 30 minutes. Add the milk and the cream, cover, and gently simmer for an additional 20 minutes.

It is all delicious! You will leave your special someone wanting nothing more than you! Lots of Love.

Banana Bread Pudding with Carmel Rum Sauce

- 4 cups cubed banana bread (see recipe below)
- 3 eggs, beaten
- ½ cup milk
- caramel rum sauce (see recipe below)
- ½ cup sugar
- 2 tbsp. raisins

In a large bowl combine the banana bread, eggs, sugar, milk and raisins. Let mixture stand for 15 minutes. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spoon bread mixture into muffin pan and bake for 20 minutes or until golden brown. Place each muffin in a bowl, cover with warm caramel rum sauce and serve.

Banana Bread

- ½ cup shortening
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup mashed bananas
- 1 tsp. lemon juice
- 2 cups flour
- 3 tsp. baking powder
- ½ tsp. salt

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Combine all ingredients in a large bowl and mix together with a blender. Pour mixture into a loaf pan and place in oven for 1¼ hours. Cool on wire rack.

Carmel Rum Sauce

- 1½ cups cream
- ¼ cup dark rum
- ¼ cup sugar
- 2 tbsp. cornstarch

In a saucepan, combine 1 cup of the cream with the rum and sugar. Bring to a simmer over medium heat, stirring to dissolve sugar. Remove from heat. In a small bowl, dissolve the cornstarch in the remaining ½ cup cream. Add to the warm rum mixture and return to medium heat. Bring sauce to a simmer, stirring until the mixture thickens. Remove from the heat.



Steve Ahl (sahl@queerlifeneews.com) resides in the Third Ward with his partner Don and their cat Shirley. He is employed as a chemist for a company located in the surrounding Milwaukee area.

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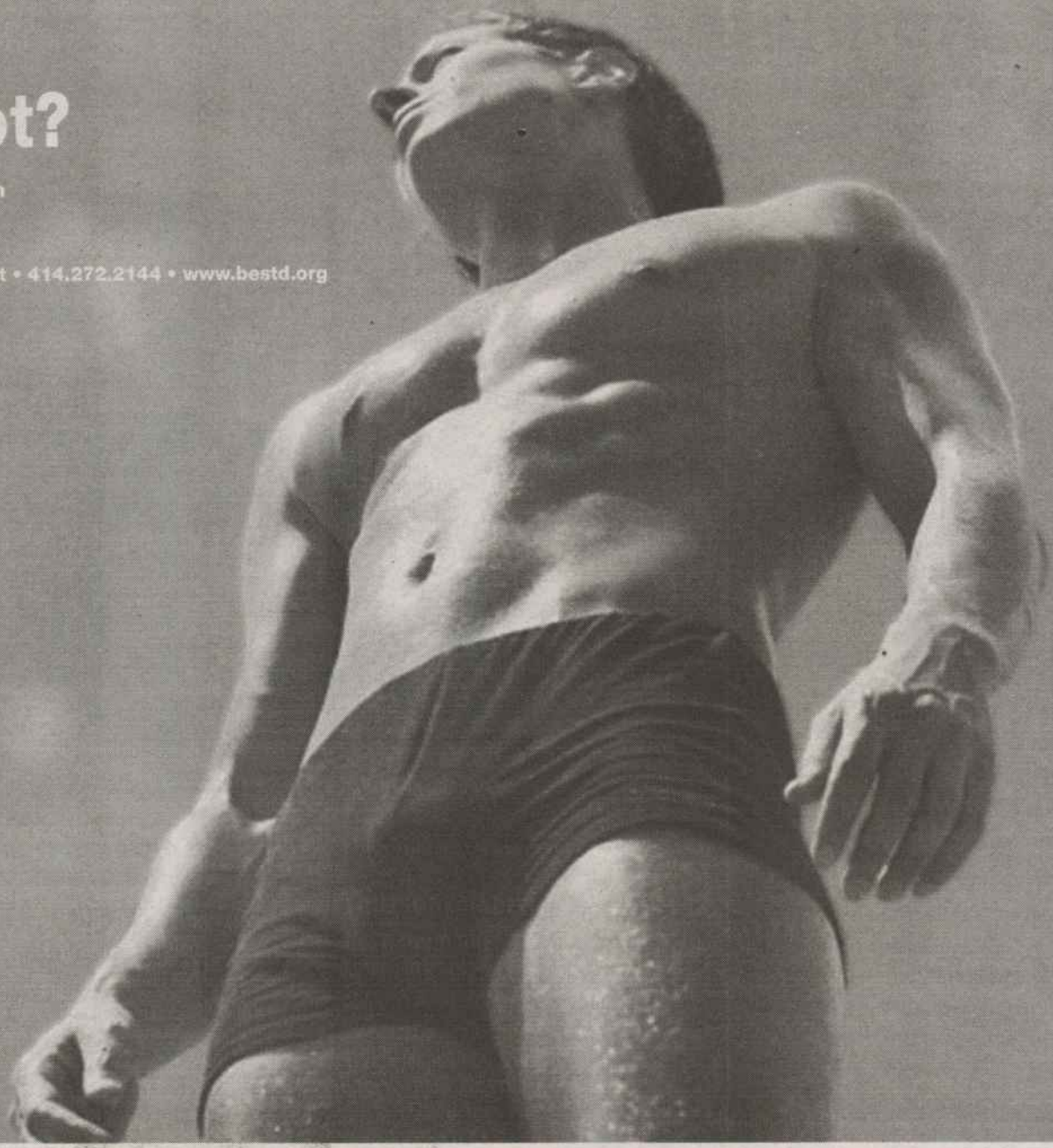
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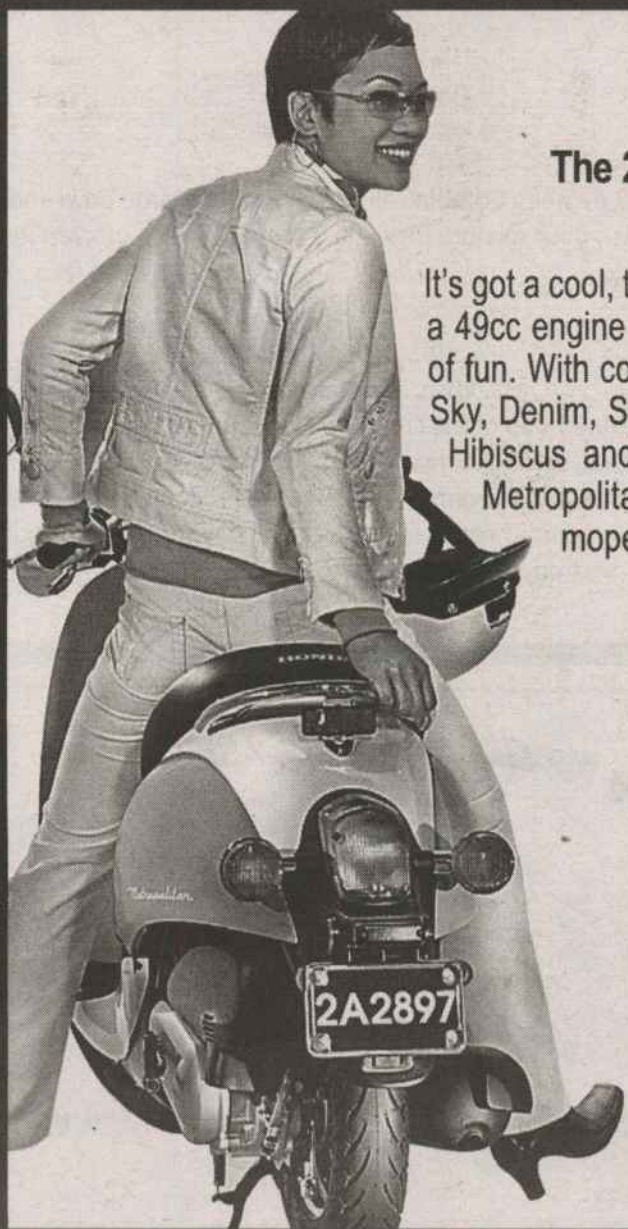
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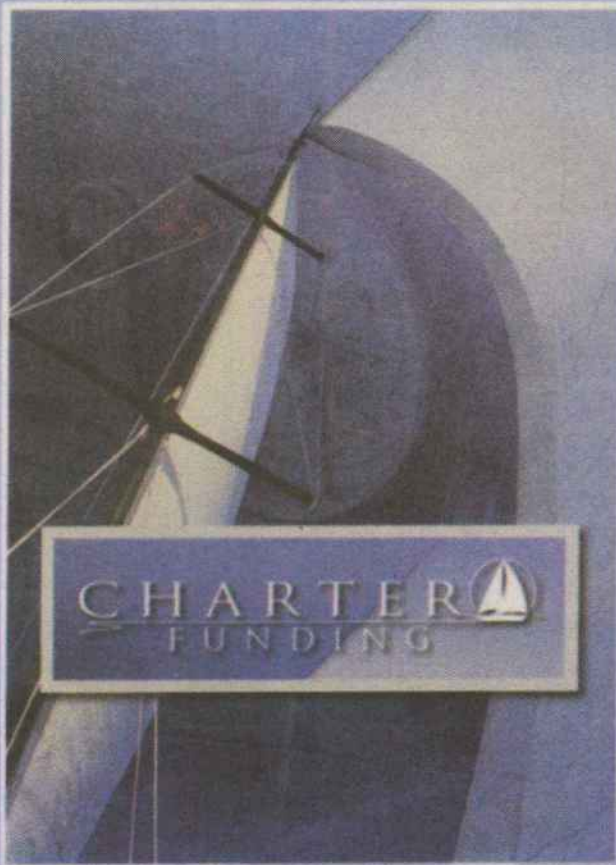
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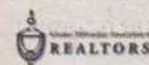
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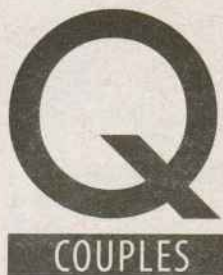


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Noel and Britt Brown are both 41 and have been together for 17 years. They live in Bay View and are the proud parents of 4-year-old Truman. Britt is an International/VIP Specialist with American Express Travel and Noel is a bilingual research associate for the Medical College of Wisconsin's Center for Aids Intervention and Research (CAIR).

Half Full, with a Twist

How did you meet?

Britt: Eighteen years ago our "boy-friends" were secretly dating each other. They didn't last six months; we are going on 18 years!

Noel: I was forewarned before being introduced to Britt, by the guy I was dating at that time, that he was a complete jerk. But I found him, on the contrary, quite charming and genuine. It didn't take me long to discover who the real jerk was.

What's the biggest difference between you and your partner?

Britt: Noel is more introverted, more likely to think before he speaks.

Noel: Britt is never at a loss for words. I'm the reserved, twisted one. Plus he's constantly the one that keeps saying the glass is half full!

What is unique about your partner or your relationship?

Noel: We're lucky we have employers, family, friends, a church community and

neighbors that allow us to feel free to be open about who we are. It's so hard for so many lesbian and gay couples to be open for fear of losing their jobs, family and friends. Because of this, we find we are approached a lot to talk about our lives as a gay couple and parents.

We never set out to be "gay activists" or advocates about ourselves, or our lives. We understand there is a need for people like us to share our experiences with others, to hopefully help enlighten people that our "alternative lifestyle" consists of kinky stuff like: waking up too early in the morning for work, feeding the pets, sending our kid off to school, balancing our checkbook, trying to eat healthy and exercise, scrubbing the bathtub, going to church on Sundays, etc.

What is the happiest time you had together?

Noel: There are just so many. Our first few months together we were poor,



but it was such a great adventure getting to know each other. Vacations we have taken. Buying our home together. Bringing home our beautiful baby son for the first time. Bringing Truman back home again after his heart surgery. Getting married in Canada. Our ceremony last year at our church. I could go on...

How do you handle fights?

Britt: We are the worst fighters. Noel grew up with loud arguments and I grew up with "quiet discussions."

Noel: I tend to keep it all in, but Britt drags it out of me. (Although, he can get sooo defensive sometimes.) It still amazes me on how much we agree. We don't like to hurt each other — complete wimps when we fight. We just want to "find a happy place."

What are your hopes for this relationship?

Britt: Grow very old and be spoiling our grandchildren together.

Noel: It's always sad to hear about good friends who seem so perfect together, only to learn that they grew apart in different directions. It reminds us how lucky we are to have each other. Britt and I have been to that dark place where we weren't so sure if we were going to make it, but here we are. Our hope is to continue to grow in the same direction. (And for Britt to finally see the light — and see things my way more often.)

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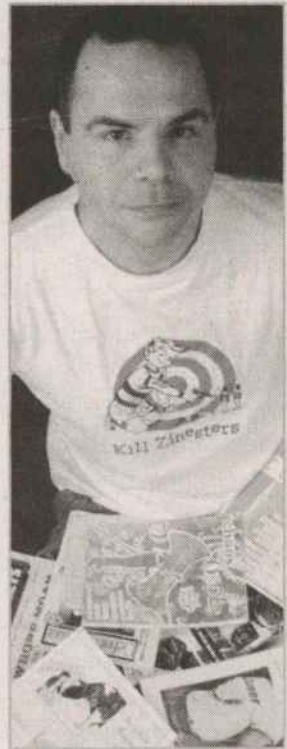
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Christopher Wilde (cwilde@queerlifeneews.com) is a co-founder of QZAP, an artist, DJ, and Mac tech support specialist building community in Riverwest.

A zine (rhymes with "scene") is a self-published magazine with a small print run devoted to unique topics of sociopolitical, cultural or artistic interest.

The Queer Zine Archive Project (QZAP), www.qzap.org, is a digital repository of queer zines past and present, providing downloadable PDF files free of charge. QZAP's mission is to encourage emerging queer zinesters as well as give props to those whose work inspired a previous generation of zine devotees. Every month I'll be highlighting one new and one old zine.

First up, **Take Heart! with Pinkie Raised** (Issue 1, 2004, 12 pages). Produced in Eugene, Ore., by Ryan Blomberg, it is short and sweet, full of delightful, hand-drawn illustrations with a page of good old cut-and-paste thrown into the mix. Ryan's artwork is reminiscent of London artist Sina Shamsavari's style in *Boy Crazy Boy* and *Atomic Love*.

The cover bears the tagline "for hopelessly romantic fags" a theme which Ryan explores in such features as "Anti-Dating Tips," "Boys' Fashion for the Off-Days" (athletic sock cuffs and twist-tie rings are among the suggestions) and concludes with "e-mail scraps" a compilation of hackneyed "let's just be friends" e-mail quotes.

Gender Trash from Hell (Issue 1, 1993, 38 pages)

was created in Toronto by editor Xantra Phillippa with layout and design by Jeanne B. Written during a time when transgender issues were completely ignored by mainstream queer communities, Xantra and Jeanne articulate the complexities of life, love and basic existence for transgendered people.

They pull no punches, writing on everything from identity politics to practical information on healthcare and how words and language are used to describe transgender life. Part resource guide, part poetry chapbook, part manifesto of the world they envision, *Gender Trash from Hell* helped set the stage for the current gender politics revolution we are witnessing today. The back cover shout out is as poignant now as it was in the 1990s "cause we're just as queer as dykes and fags, maybe even more so!!"

Stay tuned. Next month we encounter grrrl fiends and aliens! **Girl Fiend** is a mid-1990s queer feminist zine from Amherst, Mass., which burst onto the zine scene during the Riot Grrrl era. **Resident Alien** is beautifully done and is written by a queer Latino male in Texas.



Part resource guide, part poetry chapbook, part manifesto of the world they envision, *Gender Trash from Hell* helped set the stage for the current gender politics revolution we are witnessing today.

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From Threats to Respect: Sue Cook on the Origins of Pride

To better document our community's history, the Milwaukee LGBT History Project conducts interviews with individuals from all walks of life. On April 30, 2003, Laura Sutherland and I talked with Sue Cook about her involvement in PrideFest and its predecessor, the Milwaukee Lesbian/Gay Pride Committee (MLGPC).

Born in 1959, Cook grew up in what she describes as a "typical south-side, Polish, working-class" family in Milwaukee. Following a brief marriage and an intense, but very closeted, relationship with a woman, Cook came out in the early 1980s. Her first exposure to the Milwaukee community was through Grapevine, a lesbian social group. Cook gravitated toward political activity in response to other events at the time: Jesse Jackson's 1987 campaign, the gay/lesbian march on Washington, D.C., and raids on gay bars by the Milwaukee police department.

In the following excerpts from a much longer interview, Cook describes the beginnings of Pride in Milwaukee.

LS: How was the MLGPC organized?

SC: We started organizing in late 1987. I don't rightly know who was the first one to say, "We should do this." I think they saw something similar in Washington, D.C. But I remember that Grapevine received a letter inviting us to send someone to an organizing meeting. At first, the Grapevine people said, "We don't want to go." But I said, "I'll go to see what it's all about."

There was all this turmoil. [At the meeting], the lesbians all got up and stormed out. One of them said I was not a lesbian because I was going to work with men. A bunch of guys also left because they thought the lesbians were being left out. So the group became very small.

MD: The issue was about representation on MLGPC?

SC: The issues were voting power and what the Pride celebration would be. Once we began the work, it was almost all gay men and myself. I can't remember a single woman who stayed with us. The co-chairs of this new organization, the MLGPC, were Gary Wells, Don Clabots and myself.

The first year we planned a Pride event [September 1988], we had a softball tour-

namment at Mitchell Park, behind the Domes, with a cook-out. UWM hosted a dance. At what we called the community center; elected officials came to talk. The mayor was there.

[Afterwards, we] decided we needed to do something more. Someone said, "We need to march. We should march from our turf to city hall." That was [June] 1989. Five hundred people marched. [Another] 500 people were at the rally at Cathedral Square.

The mayor made a proclamation ending with the words, "We are proud of who you are," and County Executive Dave Schultz used a similar phrase. And that caused a whole brouhaha. People were getting signatures to recall the county exec and the mayor. Jamakaya remembers me talking in a wavering voice [to a group of lesbians], "We have received bomb threats.

We have received death threats. Do not let them scare you away. Please come to the march." And a lot of lesbians did.

We started [Pride] as a political activity. We marched from 2nd Street to city hall. We were demanding that we get respect, that we get rights, that we be recognized. I remember some of the speeches: "You come to us when you need our votes, but you give us nothing back." That was the first big rally.

I remember my mother saying, "That's terrible. Why do they have to march in the streets?" [I came out to her, and she took it very hard, saying], "I don't agree with it. I hope you're not going to march."

"Mom, I'm organizing it. I'm the co-chair of the march."

She replied, "Oh, my god, what about the family?"

I remember saying, "I am done thinking about the family. I need to think for myself. This is who I am."

LS: Looking back, what are you most proud of?

SC: I think back to the bomb threats and the death threats, and now we can say "gay" and "lesbian" openly pretty much anywhere. We are very out. And I think PrideFest had a lot to do with that. Sometimes it was necessary to get in their face.

But this is the result. A lot of people probably never even knew about that little baseball tournament behind the Mitchell Domes, and that little picnic, and that little march, but this is what it's become.

I think it's important for the younger crowd to go back to our history. They may not have known about our struggle, and there will be struggles ahead. You never know how the law will stand 10 years, 20 years from now. Just as the pendulum can swing to the left, it can swing to the right. Just because it's this way now doesn't necessarily mean it will always be this way. It is important for people to know our history and bear that in mind.

Cook left Milwaukee in January 1990, but returned in 1994 when the MLGPC was dissolved and PrideFest incorporated. You may listen to the History Project's entire interview with Cook at the UWM Archives Department. Footage of the first Pride celebration (1988) and the first annual parade and rally (1989) is also available at the UWM Archives, 414-229-6980.



HISTORY



Michael Doyle is the head of the UWM Archives Department and Milwaukee LGBT History Project member.



'I think back to the bomb threats and the death threats, and now we can say 'gay' and 'lesbian' openly pretty much anywhere.'

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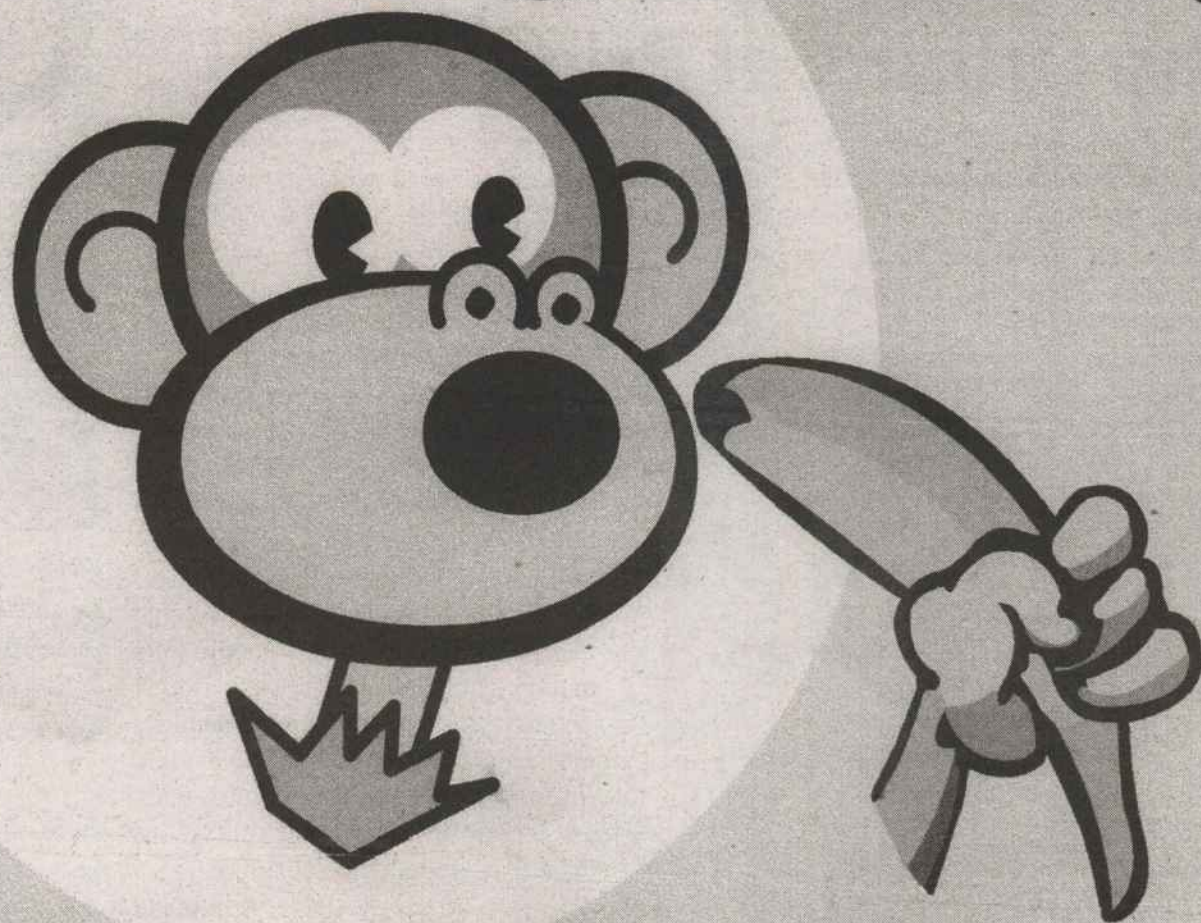
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Of Course Animals Are My Stress Relief

By Hannah Medrow

There've been studies to support the idea that people who live with animals enjoy longer, happier and more productive lives. The theory is that animals are instrumental in relieving stress.

This is where I need to pause.

Really, I do need to pause. I can't continue because Simon, the now fat, gray tiger cat (formerly known as "Stripe" when he was living on the street) is parked on the arm of my chair. He's trying to get my attention by reaching over to repeatedly bat at my arm; he's hoping that I'll stop whatever it is I'm doing and play with him. Sometimes I do, until he gets tired and bites me, before running away.

At the same time, Scruffy (short for "Scruffy Cat" as in "Did you see that scruffy-looking cat outside? He looks sick, and it's so cold...") is wailing nonstop in a cracked and raspy meow (he had been very sick, it

turned out) and looking at me meaningfully. I don't understand what he wants, and neither does Ling, the quiet, shy little cat who was found as a kitten, looking for something to eat in a parking lot off Mayfair Road. Ling weaves in and out between my feet so I don't forget that she's there. Soon she'll be busy with her incessant and meticulous personal toilet, ensuring that there will be something substantial to hack up in the middle of the night.

Festus (the Springer-hybrid who was going to be destroyed 13 years ago because the old man who owned him was going into a nursing home) is pressed with his nose against the space under the door in the kitchen. He's breathing in and out (think Darth Vader) as his 17-year-old senses try to capture any new scent from the back hall. He leaves a trail of slime around the bottom of the door and along the threshold that, if not wiped off while it's fresh, will dry to a DNA veneer that adheres to surfaces with the tenacity that late-night infomercials can only promise of "space-age" polymers.

I often wonder how living like this is relieving any stress in my life. I do understand the increased productivity piece — the never-ending watering, feeding and waste-management alone keep me busy enough to not need cable TV. At those times I'm reminded of something I heard a comedian say about his family life with small children, likening it to living in a frat house. "It's always loud,

nobody gets enough sleep and someone's always throwing-up."

I sit down and sigh heavily, feeling like I never get anything done. Simon knows when I've surrendered and he steps carefully into my lap, climbing up so he's resting mostly on my chest, staring at me, blinking slowly. Scruffy takes Simon's place on the arm of the chair and leans up against me, resting his paws on my arm as the legal pad I've been trying to use slips to the floor next to my feet. He starts to purr and I remember back to a time when I thought he wasn't able to. Ling sits on the legal pad and pretends the other cats aren't there.

Festus comes over then (probably wondering why Scruffy's stopped shrieking) and rests his head on my knee. I pet his head with a free hand and tell him he's a good boy. He lays himself down slowly, as close to my feet as Ling will allow, making little, old-man noises until he's comfortable.

"I'll miss you all when you die, but my life will be easier," I say later, scrubbing slime off the back door. Festus wags his tail and the cats purr. They know I'm lying. I admit that the quality of my life might be better with them in it; carrying 20- to 40-pound bags of pet food and cat litter is probably aerobic, and if I had more free time, I would only be watching more TV.

'I'll miss you all when you die, but my life will be easier.'

Is your pet queer? Or are you queer? If so, we'd like to hear about your best friend. Email us at qpets@queerlifeneeds.com



Hannah Medrow is single, has 3 cats and a dog and lives in Riverwest. She doesn't have cable - she makes her own fun.

Ask the Vet Have you ever wondered how frequently your golden retriever should be bathed?

Fact or fiction? Our furry friends should never have chocolate.

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Q Life readers are invited to submit their companion animal questions to askthetvet@queerlifeneeds.com. Veterinarians from the Wisconsin Humane Society will provide answers monthly in Q Pets.

Send your questions in and watch for next month's Q Pets column. Happy reading!

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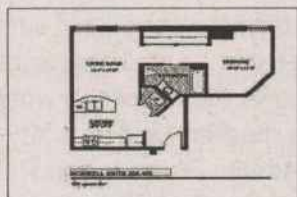




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Newfound Territory

Many bars and clubs in the area don't even remotely appeal to my lifestyle nor my desire. I admit, my horizons need to be broadened and I believe these articles will force me to find hidden gold mines of fun and excitement. There will always be the staple bars, clubs, and lounges frequented by both myself and many of Milwaukee's club-goers, but the seemingly less popular hot spots have proven to be just as exciting and utterly fulfilling as those I have previously patronized and written about.

Fluid, a smaller, yet not desolate, bar is located at 819 S. 2nd St., a prime location. With a dart board and a large bar, Fluid falls within the realm of "bar" not "club." Though they have great music, the dancing is left to those with the undying urge and the willingness to be the only ones in the place on their feet. Tables and plenty of seating allow a more intimate atmosphere which in turn makes for a large part of the entire Fluid experience. The drinks are great, and the clientele ranges from your newly legal crowd to the elder generation.

Not only does Fluid have a great atmosphere, but the specials are outstanding. With a happy hour running Monday through Friday from 5-8 p.m., Fluid has something for everyone. Mondays also feature two-for-one drinks all day long — how can you beat that? Tuesdays highlight \$2.00 rail drinks from 8 p.m. until close, and on Wednesdays the special consists of \$1.00 off bottles of all Miller beers. Thursdays Fluid has \$3.50 Cosmopolitans which, in my opinion, is a steal.

On the weekends the specials don't stop like in most other bars. On Saturdays between 5 and 9 p.m. they offer \$4.00 Long Island or Long Beach drinks. Then on Sunday head over after brunch and take advantage of their open-to-close special: \$2.00 Jose Cuervo drinks or Coronas. Fluid has great specials and more importantly a great atmosphere and vibe.

Another great place to go, hang out and have both a great meal and a wonderful drink is **Harry's Bar and Grill**, located at 3549 N. Oakland Ave. in Shorewood. Having frequented this bar since it opened years ago, I must say you can't go wrong once you step through the door.

Many TVs accommodate the sports-minded, though music is continuously playing for those uninterested in the whole sports situation. And the menu is great! Salads, burgers, appetizers and entrees make for an easy decision and a large selection. Harry's can get quite crowded, especially on weekends, so your best bet is to eat dinner first then move over to the bar to get a seat and have a drink, all of which are wonderful.

Experienced bartenders and servers make the experience just that much more enjoyable. Service with a smile is always a good thing until it becomes excessive and a nuisance; don't worry, that will never happen at Harry's.

Harry's also has a couple of special nights. Tuesday at Harry's is martini night. With a large selection and an unbeatable price, these martinis are to die for,



Christopher Schmidt (cschmidt@queerlifeneews.com) frequents many area clubs. He is always on the lookout for the newest hotspots. Stay tuned for more on Milwaukee's wonderful array of nightlife opportunities.

Service with a smile is always a good thing until it becomes excessive and a nuisance; don't worry, that will never happen at Harry's.

and, I must say, a staple in my diet. Then on Wednesdays from 7 p.m. until close they have recently implemented an Energy night: Any drink with some sort of energy alcohol, meaning Zygo vodka, Red Bull, etc., is specially priced. They also feature \$2.00 Red Bull energy drink bomb shots alongside a couple other Red Bull infused shot specials.

The crowd at Harry's ranges from the whole frat boy college kid thing to the North Shore Nancy crowd. Basically it encompasses all walks of life. As a whole, Harry's Bar and Grill is a great place for countless drink and food options.

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William "Bill" Serpe (bserpe@queerlifeneews.com) is the executive director of SAGE/Milwaukee. He is single, loves to travel and lives with two cats, Clio and Chloe.

Taking Care of Our Two Hearts

When Carole Wehner stopped in to see me a while back I congratulated her on the publication of Q Life, told her how great it is that we finally have an LGBT community newspaper again and how generally impressed I am with the paper. I then went on to tell her that I was a little disappointed that there was no column that represented the senior LGBT people. She smiled and reminded me that the paper was in its infancy and then asked if I would like to write that column. So here I am. Be careful what you wish for.

Then, of course, came the dilemma of what I should write about. Should I talk about the benefits of becoming a SAGE/Milwaukee member (Senior Action in a Gay Environment for those of you who don't know about us), since we are doing our annual membership drive at this time, or would that be too self-serving?

It's OK, when you get to be a certain age, to sit back and let other, younger people do the things that put too much physical strain on your heart.

I could write about the events that SAGE presents each month because it would be good for the seniors in our community to have another outlet for them to find things to do. Then, like a ton of bricks, it hit me. This is the February edition. Write about the heart.

Everyone does in fact have two hearts. There is the muscle/organ that is the pump of life in every human being, and then there is the heart of the soul that builds compassion into our being. Now some would say that not all people have this second heart, but I believe it doesn't always show in a person and you just have to wait for the right opportunity to see it pop out.

This time of the year it is very important to take care of the muscle/organ heart that we have, especially if you are older. Senior people need to get over their ageism and stop trying to do all the things they always did, like shoveling and pushing cars out of snow drifts. It doesn't make you younger to continue to do things that can essentially hurt you. It's OK, when you get to be a certain age, to sit back and let other, younger people do the things that put too much physical strain on your heart. You've done your years of helping others so take a break for the rest of your life.

Now, I'm not suggesting that you don't do anything. Get out of the house after everyone else has done all of the shoveling and enjoy the winter. Sitting there and complaining about it won't make it go away. You've lived here in the Midwest for how long and you still hate winter? That's silly. This is the time of the year when you push your heart a little harder than you do in the summer to go for a walk,

but pushing just a little harder is OK. Besides, this is the only time of the year that you can experience the way the sun feels when its cold, and how your cheeks get all pink and tingly in the wind, and you think about getting all warm and cozy (as opposed to the summer when warm and cozy sounds oppressive.)

For that other heart, the one that allows us to care about things, do something for the LGBT community that will make you feel better about yourself and others. Most organizations, including SAGE/Milwaukee, the LGBT Community Center, and others are doing their membership drives at this time of the year. Joining one or more gives them a little extra working cash to do the things they do, things that make our community stronger and healthier. By doing that you are investing in the future of the LGBT community. That makes your second heart feel better and its also pretty good for that first heart that I told you about.

So all you LGBT seniors, and there are about 16,000 of you in Milwaukee County who are 50 and older, get out of the house, enjoy the winter and become a member or renew your membership in one or more organizations that serve our community. We will all feel better for it.

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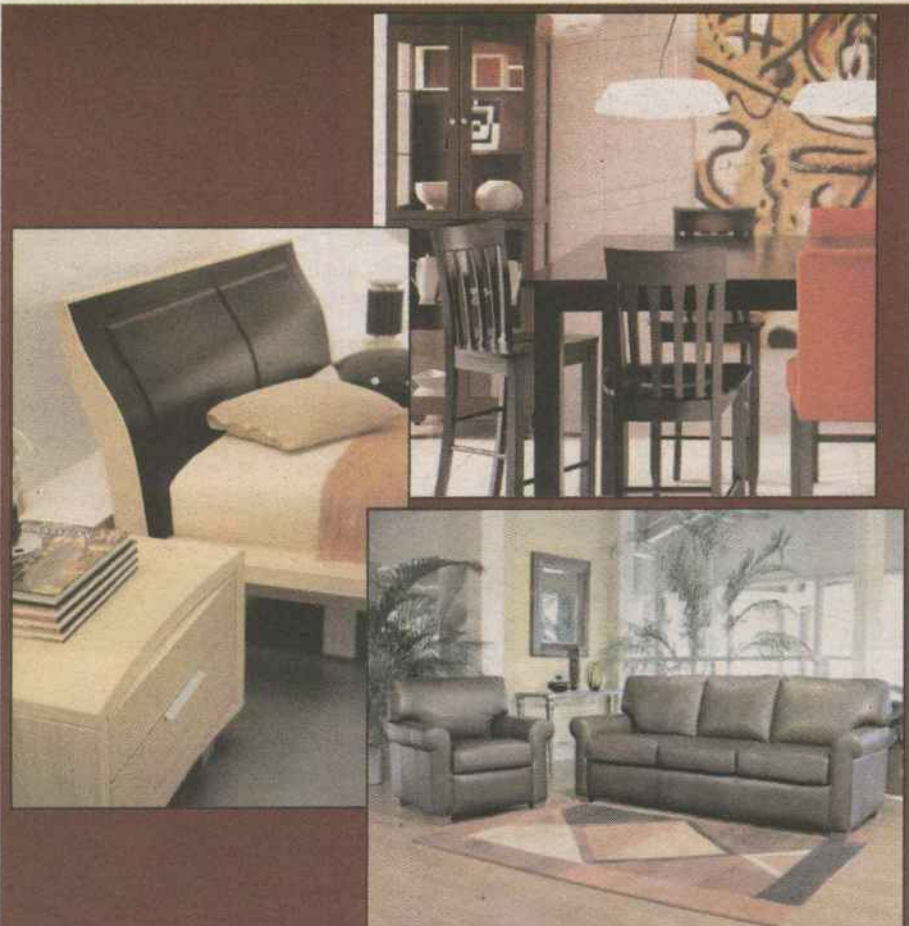
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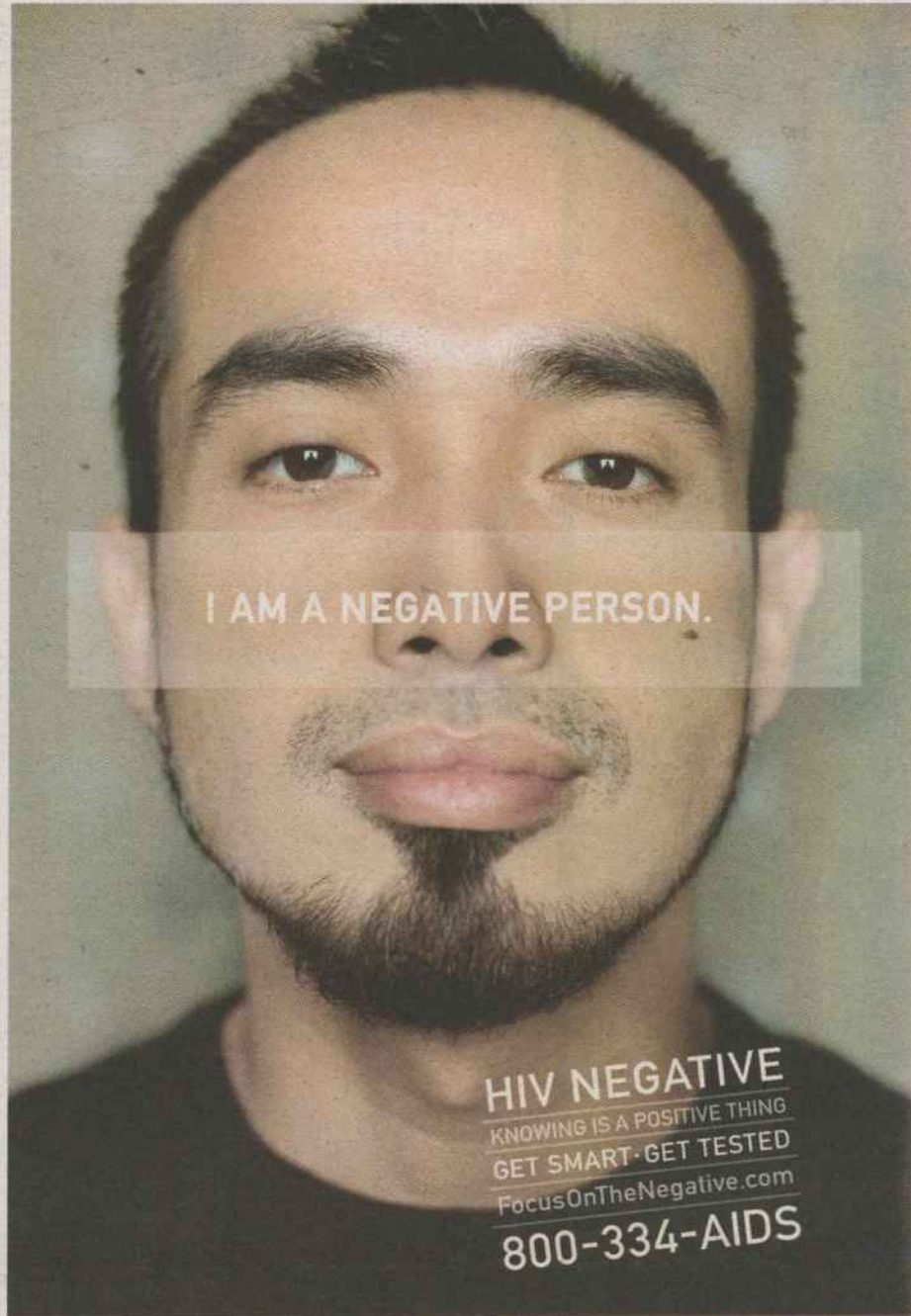
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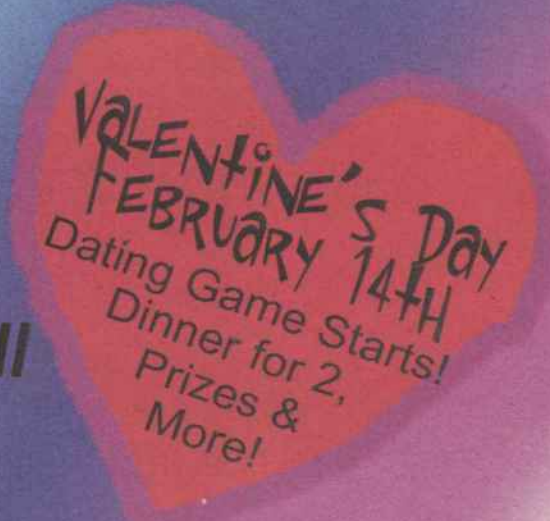
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Gallery 505 (Fine art)
505 E. Silver Spring Dr., Whitefish Bay
414-962-6302

Great Frame Up (Art framing)
507 E. Silver Spring Dr., Whitefish Bay
414-962-4889

Grava Gallery (Art framing)
1224 E. Brady St., Milwaukee
414-277-8228

Miss Groove (Gifts)
1225 E. Brady St., Milwaukee
414-298-9185

Optix (Fashion eye frames)
2616 N. Downer Ave., Milwaukee
414-964-3125

Out of Solitude Jewelry
918 E. Brady St., Milwaukee
414-223-3101

Outpost Natural Foods
100 E. Capitol Drive, Milwaukee
414-964-7789
and
7000 W. State St., Milwaukee
Wauwatosa, WI 53213
414-778-2012

Outwards Books, Gifts and Coffee
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414-963-9089

Popular News
(Adult books, videos)
225 N. Water St., Milwaukee
414-278-0636

Rubin's (Furniture)
224 E. Chicago St. Milwaukee
414-278-8100

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adult toy store)
804 E. Center St. Milwaukee
414-562-9338
toolshedtoys@yahoo.com

Saturn of Milwaukee
(Auto dealer)
3 locations:
www.saturnofwisconsin.com
888-473-1632

Sportland 2 (Motorcycles)
7221 S. 13th St., Milwaukee
414-764-2800

Video Adventures
(Video/DVD sales/rentals)
1418 E. Brady St., Milwaukee
414-272-6768

Wishful Things (Antiques)
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*This being human is a guest house.
Every morning a new arrival.*

*A joy, a depression, a meanness,
some momentary awareness comes
as an unexpected visitor.*

*Welcome and entertain them all!
Even if they're a crowd
of sorrows,
who violently sweep your house
empty of its furniture,
still, treat each guest honorably.
He may be clearing you out
for some new delight.*

*The dark thought, the shame,
the malice,
meet them at the door laughing,
and invite them in.*

*Be grateful for whoever comes,
because each has been sent
as a guide from beyond.*

- Rumi -

Q

Dave Brousseau

TOONS



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414-277-5040

Boot Camp
209 E. National Ave.
414-643-6900

Cage
801 S. 2nd St.
414-383-8330

Café Fabrika
240 E. Pittsburgh Ave.
414-291-8860

C'est La Vie
231 S. 2nd St.
414-291-9600

Chip & Py's
1340 W. Town Square Road,
Mequon
262-241-9589

Club 219
219 S. 2nd St.
414-271-3732

Fluid
819 S. 2nd St.
414-643-5843

Harbor Room
117 E. Greenfield Ave.
414-672-7988

Harry's Bar & Grill
3549 N. Oakland Ave.
414-964-6800

The Knick
1028 E. Juneau Ave.
414-272-0011

Lazaro's Cuban Cuisine
565 W. Lincoln Ave.
414-645-2822

M&M Club
124 N. Water St.
414-347-1962

The Mosaic
2624 N. Downer Ave.
414-961-9560

North Shore Bistro
8649 N. Port Washington Rd.
414-351-6100

Nut Hut
1500 W. Scott St.
414-647-2673

Out 'N About
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414-643-0377

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and Coffee**
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414-649-9003

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124 W. National Ave.
414-220-4340

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1712 W. Pierce St.
414-672-8466

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414-278-9192

Triangle
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414-383-9412

Woody's
1579 S. 2nd St.
414-672-0806

Walker's Pint
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414-643-7468

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608-632-0171

Ray's Bar
2526 E. Washington St.
608-241-9335

Shamrock
117 W. Main St.
608-255-5029

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Crickets Fox River Lounge
405 W. Walnut St.

Napalese
117 W. Main St.
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920-437-7277

XS Nightclub
1106 Main St.
920-884-2949

Za's Historic West Theatre
405 W. Walnut St.
920-435-5476

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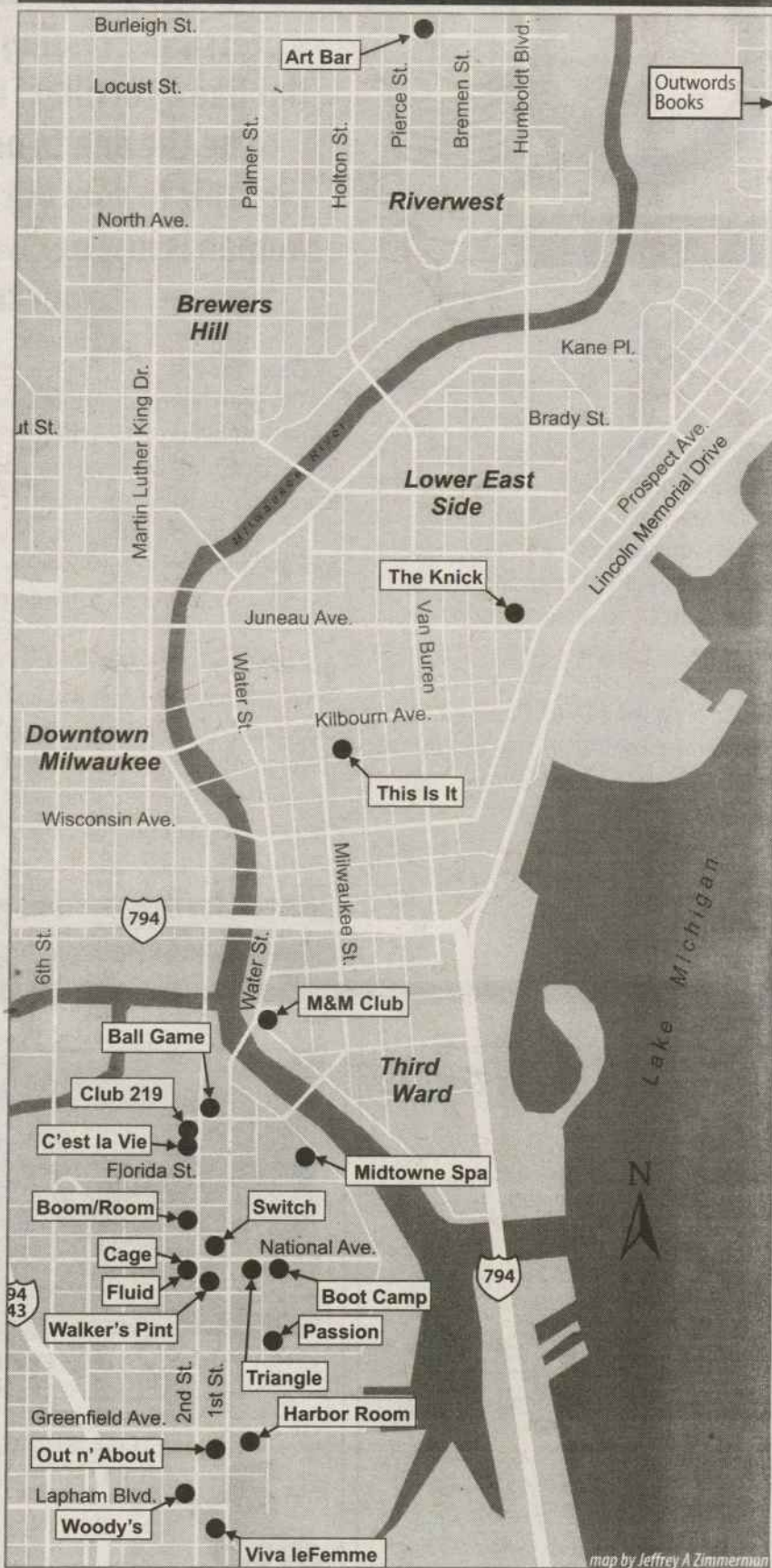
Racine/Kenosha

94 North Dancebar
6305 120th
Kenosha
262-857-3240

JoDee's
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Racine
262-634-9804

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MILWAUKEE MAP



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ADVICE

The Boudoir Babbler

I'd say this issue is pressing! Pressing you flat like a tortilla! I hate to be the one to break this to you, but this woman is just not worth your trust.

Dear Sparky,
I am having a huge problem and I am hoping you can help. I have been friends with this guy for over 10 years. When we were young and stupid we fooled around a little. But after a while things got complicated and we made the decision to stay best friends, nothing more. But, after all this time, there is still tension between us (at least, there is tension with me) and I have found myself completely in love with him. I would never want to jeopardize our friendship because I need him in my life. Any ideas on what to do? Do I tell him, or leave things as is?

(Name and area of residence withheld by request)

Dear Whoever,
Ten years?! Wow... Are you sure you aren't combining all of the things you like about him, then saying you're "in love?" You must gauge whether or not he has a physical attraction to you before an attempt to "cross over" — that is, see how he responds to flirting. If you know this is the case, proceed. If not, the two of you are better off as friends. Time may have matured you, so that you may avoid complications, but unless the feeling is truly mutual, you won't get far. Regardless of the outcome, remind him that you respect him as a friend above all else.

Dear Sparky,
I've been in a relationship with my partner for almost five years, and it's gone really well except for one problem: Whenever he drinks (not too often) he spills very specific details about our sex life, sometimes to complete strangers. He's a real catch, but I've had just about enough of this — it's really embarrassing. When I bring it up, he just giggles and asks me, "What's the big deal?" How can I convince him without losing him?

Michael, Wauwatosa

Dear Michael,
Step one: He needs to admit he has a problem and that his mouth has become unmanageable. In all reality, your partner may have a chemical dependency issue (you don't have to drink every day to be dependent). His "boudoir babbling" is a by-product of this habit. You must lovingly and supportively ask that he curb or stop drinking, since he won't take your requests to heart. If this continues, before he knows it, he'll be spouting off about how he wet the bed until he was 12 years old — oops, there I go...!

Hello, Sparky,
My girlfriend and I are having troubles. We have been together nearly two years, but we are struggling with trust issues. We love each other very much, no doubt about it, but I keep thinking she might be cheating on me... I snuck around for proof (which is not like me to invade people's privacy) and found very little. I know she flirts, as we all do. Her past is full of infidelities, and she says she's changed (learned her lesson), but still I struggle, which makes it hard for both of us to be relaxed! There are many factors that put stresses on us, but this one is pressing at the moment! Do I bite the bullet and give her all my trust (so what, she flirts...)? I'm just afraid she may act on it one day.

Clueless

Dear Clueless,
You've already bitten, chewed up and swallowed the bullet! "So what, she flirts...?" You've indicated her record of cheating and are now simply rationalizing it. I'd say this issue is pressing! Pressing you flat like a tortilla! I hate to be the one to break this to you, but this woman is just not worth your trust. As for your lack of proof, I'll bet your partner is just bright enough to cover her tracks. I recommend ending this relationship and beginning another with someone with whom this is simply not a variable. When doing so, take your time in establishing your foundation — trust. You'll thank me later.

Need advice or a friendly pat on the head?
Ask Sparky: qadvice@queerlifeneews.com

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Jack Fertig, a professional astrologer since 1977, is a founding member of the Association for Astrological Networking. He can be reached at www.starjack.com.



FEBRUARY 2005

SCOPES

Scram, Aries!

Mars just entered Capricorn, focusing energies toward our goals. For better or worse, ambitions get more intense and goals seem more urgent. Idle hands lead to frustration and fights. Interest in maturity and leather picks up a bit. Plan ahead, work hard, have fun!

ARIES (March 20 - April 19): Scram! Beat it! You need a change of scenery, some new sights. Staying in your familiar space will just get you into trouble. Mountain-climbing is ideal, but anything combining adventure and physical challenge will do you good.

TAURUS (April 20 - May 20): You're up for some kind of a power struggle. It could be nasty office politics or a sweet and simple bit of wrestling to see who gets on top. Some B/D or rough play at home could shake off that energy and keep work more smooth.

GEMINI (May 21 - June 20): Your fast talking can get you into a relationship or out of one! Think carefully about what you're saying and what you really want. You're coming off a lot stronger and stakes are higher than you probably realize.

CANCER (June 21 - July 22): Moisturize, baby! Be careful now of dry skin, inflammation, and burns. You're in a productive streak; work it — but carefully! High speed and obsession can lead to accidents. Slow, steady, and careful wins the race.

LEO (July 23 - August 22): Time for you, the born entertainer, to get to work on what you love best. Whether stagecraft or sports, sassy or saintly, polish the skills your stardom calls for. The only audience worth performing for deserves your best!

VIRGO (August 23 - September 22): Feeling like Cinderella? There's no fairy godmother in sight, so decide how much you want to work for your family or community and kick whatever ugly step "tuchis" you need to get people into line.

LIBRA (September 23 - October 22): Ever polite and gracious Libra, your tongue is suddenly a bit sharper than usual. Hone your critical insights, and don't tolerate b.s. But the mind can always use sharpening. Stay tactful - all the better to get your critiques across.

SCORPIO (October 23 - November 21): Take time and energy to budget and plan your finances. Money is coming and going easily now, burning a hole in your pocket. With a bit of discipline and restraint, you can easily turn that cash flow around.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 - December 20): Your energy has been especially high lately, but now it's time to apply it! You can do almost anything you set your mind to. Discipline is a virtue not normally associated with your sign. This is an excellent time to cultivate it!

CAPRICORN (December 21 - January 19): When Mars hits your Sun, your energy flares up (e-mail me with your birthday on that date!), and you will be nearly invincible. In the meantime, charge your batteries, meditate, clean house, and pay attention to dreams.

AQUARIUS (January 20 - February 18): You're shifting gears now from social butterfly to political Mothra. Count on your friends — within reason! Don't be too demanding of them. Some team sports can keep things in balance, if you can remember that fun is more important than winning.


PISCES (February 19 - March 19): Your ambition is showing, perhaps in a way that's bothersome to your boss. Competitive? Insubordinate? Focus on getting the job done, and you're sure to do it well enough to earn the attention you want.

Club ?

Guilty Pleasures?
 Thursdays @ Club

Club ?
 807 S 5th St
 SOMEWHAT FREAKY FRIENDLY ALWAYS!

INNOCENT




TOONS

bitter girl

JOAN HILTY ©2005

THE LAYAWAY PLAN

WHY WON'T SHE TELL ME ANYTHING ELSE ABOUT HERSELF?
 I'M NOT EVEN LETTING HER TAKE MY SHIRT OFF UNTIL SHE DOES!!!



WELL, OK... I'M NOT GOING INTO THE BEDROOM UNTIL I KNOW MORE!!!



I MEAN IT... I'M NOT SLEEPING WITH HER, PERIOD, UNTIL...

OK, SOMEWHERE AROUND THE PART ABOUT THE SHIRT, I LOST TRACK OF THE PLAN...



KNOK!! KNOK!! KNOK!!
 DAMN, WE WOKE UP THE NEIGHBORS.

bittergirl@qsyndicate.com

Q-CLASSIFIEDS

HOUSING

Bayview Duplex- Newly decorated, Lots of charm. 3 Bedrooms, Living Room, Dining Room, Kitchen. Appliances, Blinds, Hardwood Floors, 10 Ft. Ceilings, Garage, Parking. Available: Feb/Mar. \$850/lower, \$800/upper. Non Smokers please. Call 414-807-0805.

Bayview Apartment-3 Bedrooms-Upper. 2 Porches, Pets Negotiable, Utilities separate. Students Welcome. \$750+ Security deposit. Available March 1. Call 414-403-4602.

3149 N. Humboldt Blvd-2 Bedroom-Lower Flat. 1 Garage space w/opener, Stove & Refrigerator, Washer & Dryer, Clean, Carpeted, Pet Negotiable, No Smoking, \$695/month + Security, lease. Call 414-213-8791.

Walker's Point- A charming newly restored historical bungalow. 2 Bedrooms, 2 Baths, Cathedral Ceilings, Skylights, Bright and Sunny. Available immediately. Security Deposit required. \$1000 per month. Call 414-405-9594 or 424-241-8024.

Bayview Must See-Beautifully remodeled upper. 3 Bedroom, 1300 Sq.ft, gorgeous Hardwood Floors. Stained Glass, Tin Ceilings, Central Air. In great neighborhood near the lake. \$800 per mo. Available March 1. Call 414-807-3731.

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DATING with Children

continued from page 34

thing is to talk to your children to make sure that they know what is going on so they do not feel left out. It is also important that you do not give up. One day everyone will find what they are looking for.



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E-mail: dhoffman@queerlifeneews.com

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1 issue 30 words or less is \$10 (add 20 cents for each word over 30) \$

Number of issues ad should run: _____

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Signature required for all ads to verify certification of lawful placement, legal age, and credit card authorization. All ads submitted must have all information completed with a verifiable address (no PO box), area code, and verifiable daytime phone. Your phone number may be necessary if some of the information needs clarification. This information is strictly confidential. For personal ads, your signature attests that your request to meet other persons is at no expense on their part. Q LIFE reserves the right to place ads where most appropriate. Q LIFE will grant credit only for any ad cancellation prior to deadline or errors in ad copy by Q LIFE. There is a \$35 charge for checks returned NSF.
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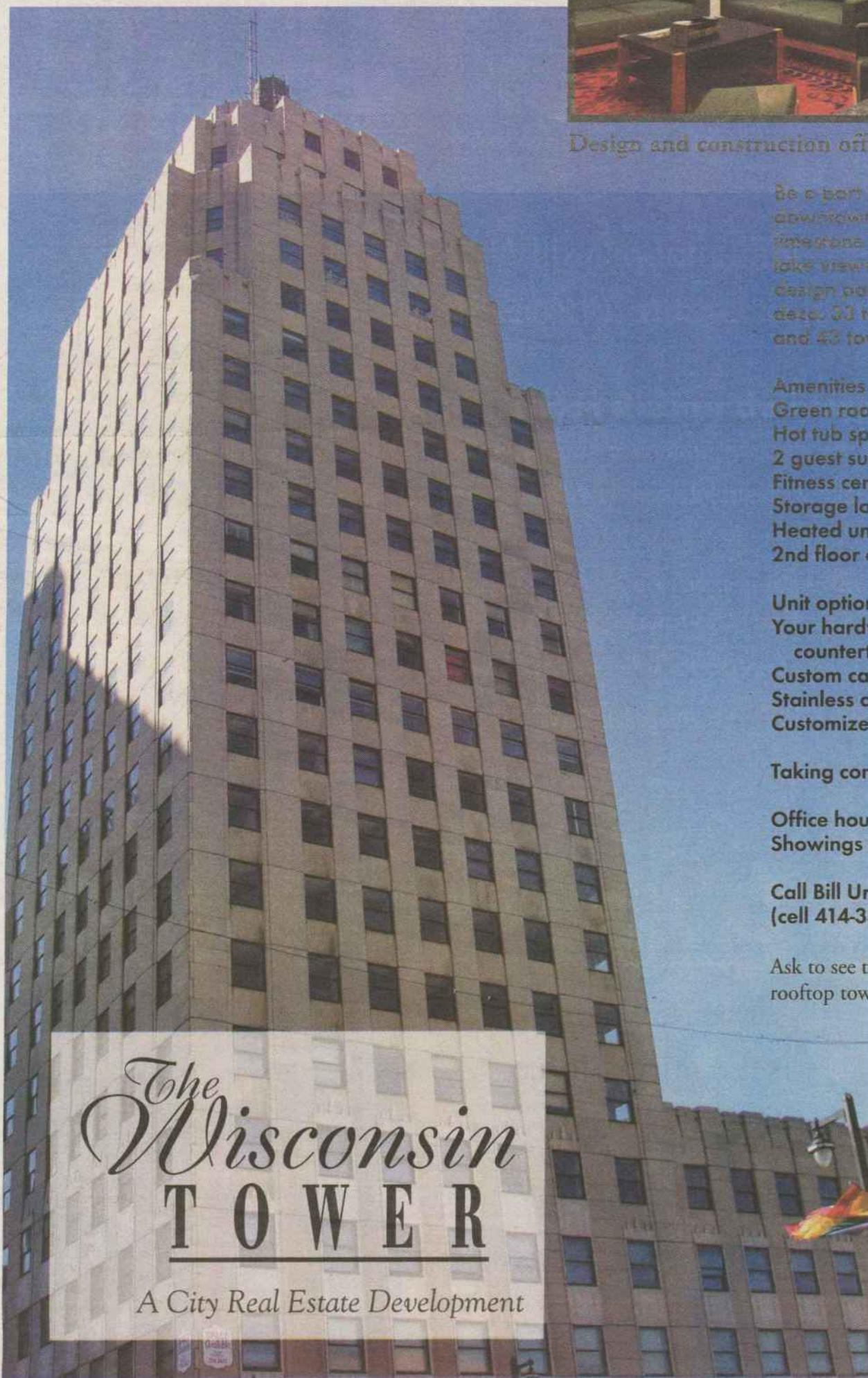


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Shopping for your Valentine



The legendary personage, St. Valentine, whose name has been taken as the sponsor of courtship, has given rise to superstitious beliefs, love charms and customs which are just as popular today as they were centuries ago.

The persistence of certain symbols throughout the centuries demonstrates the hold that folklore and tradition have upon all of us.

Heart-shaped epistles of greeting were in common use by the beginning of the 14th century.

Red is the color of Valentine's Day, symbolic of the color of the heart. Above all it expresses fervor and devotion.

Roses, candy, greeting cards — well I'm sure you know that those traditions, though not centuries old, have been around as long as shopping has.

A HANDMADE CARD

If you're not happy with what the card stores have in the way of Valentine's cards for your special someone, and you have an afternoon free, you can make your own handmade card. You don't need to be

*"A magic spell will bind me fast
And make me love you to the last.
Let Cupid then your Heart incline
To take me for your Valentine."*

an artist — and you don't have to worry about it looking like a 3rd grade art project. Several places in the Milwaukee area have card making kits that can be purchased for about the same amount of money that a lacy, frilly Hallmark card would cost you.

Check out Michael's craft store and any of the larger JoAnn stores for card making kits complete with paper, vellum (that translucent paper) for writing your love poem on, plus doodads for decorating.

FRESH FLOWERS

If you're expecting to see these pages lined with ads from flower shops, you're going to be disappointed. Valentine's Day is THE day when florists, large or small, need not advertise to get people in their door in droves. Fresh flowers, and particularly roses, are the most popular flower (and the most expensive) at Valentine's Day. Supply and demand is the name of the game for roses and the demand is extreme. Nothing says love, friendship, "I'm sorry" or "Will you be mine?" better than roses.

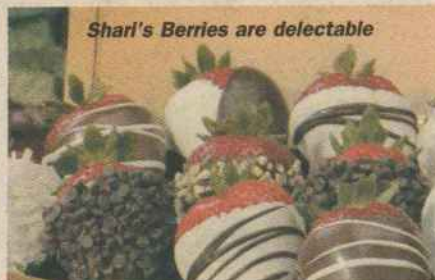
If you want to know which color rose conveys what sentiment, see the "Rose Color Key" chart within these pages.

CANDY

Sweets for the Sweet, as the old saying goes. In this era of Godiva, some of the finest chocolate known to man, it's hard to deny it's not worth it when it sells for around \$30/pound. I have an old

saying I always live by, "men are like a Whitman sampler, you should take a bite of each piece and then throw the box away before it gets stale."

But if you're looking for unique and delectable things to put in your mouth, then check out Delightfuldeliveries.com. They offer fast delivery on bakery, candy bouquets, Mrs. Field's cookies, cake, cheesecakes, fresh baked tarts and other food finds, including a giant fortune cookie sprinkled with hearts (no, it's not big enough for you to jump out of).



Shari's Berries are delectable

Another source, one I found at RedEnvelope.com is **Shari's Berries**. Talk about unique and delectable, they have some great things to order, including a dozen huge strawberries dipped in chocolate and made up to look like little tuxedos in a box that looks like one, too. They can also make berries look like tuxedo roses in a floral box. These gifts run about \$70, but that doesn't include delivery.

1. A handmade card
2. Fresh flowers
3. Candy
4. A romantic dinner or getaway for two
5. Jewelry
6. Love songs
7. The new Volkswagen Beetle convertible

Delightfuldeliveries.com can find you delightful Valentine cookies, if that's what your sweetheart wants.



Send red roses to convey love, beauty, courage and respect.



You can call Shari's Berries at 1-877-774-7797 (Mon-Fri, 8am-5:30pm pacific time).

RedEnvelope.com has lots of other unique items you can buy for the "him" in your life: nickname boxers, pre-embargo cuban cigars, seven deadly sins chocolates, a frog prince, watch winders, plus lots of things you won't find anywhere else.

A ROMANTIC GETAWAY OR DINNER FOR TWO

If the two of you aren't your best when you're out to dinner together, then consider a romantic getaway. You can enter our giveaway for a gift certificate to the Prairie Garden Bed & Breakfast in Lodi, WI (just 30 miles from Madison). See their ad (complete with pictures) in these pages. Plus, you can use the gift certificate anytime. Prairie Garden is open all year round and there's plenty to see and do nearby. If you visit in the warmer months, you can visit the Mazo nude beach - a place to find some real candy ... eye candy

that is. Devil's Head Ski Resort, the Wisconsin Dells and Ho Chunk Casino are just 15-20 miles away.

If it's romance you want, you can swing under the majestic oak in the bench swing while admiring the spectacular views of the Baraboo mountain range.

JEWELRY

There's only three words to say when it comes to giving jewelry for Valentine's Day: diamonds, bigger, better.

LOVE SONGS

With the new technology in personal portable music, you can buy an iPod or an MP3 player, download some of those wonderful songs that mean so much to the two of you, and present it to your lover as an extremely special Valentine gift. I love this idea, but then I'm a real sap when it comes to romance and music. I still get tears in my eyes when I hear the music from *The Bodyguard*.

Here's the scoop on the Apple® iPod™ Mini 4.0GB* Digital Audio Player. It retails for \$250.

There's a world of features whirled into this mighty mini iPod with its ultraportable design. It comes in 5 metallic colors to suit any personality. This particular unit offers:

- 4.0GB storage capacity that holds up to 1,000 songs
- Small size — it measures just a half-inch thin and weighs a mere 3.6 ounces. It's as small as a cell phone.
- It has a recessed 1.67-inch LCD screen with blue-white LED backlight

THE NEW VOLKSWAGEN BEETLE CONVERTIBLE

Really! This is considered one of the top romantic gifts this year. Experts say this is one of the most romantic cars. What other car comes with an integrated flower vase.

NEW FOR THE 2005 MODEL YEAR

The 2005 Volkswagen New Beetle Convertible is a 2-door, 4-passenger convertible. The GL 2.0L is equipped with a standard 2.0-liter, 14, 115-horsepower engine that achieves 24-mpg in the city and 30-mpg on the highway.



An alternate model, the GLS 1.8L, is equipped with a standard 1.8-liter, 14, 150-horsepower, turbo engine that achieves 25-mpg in the city and 30-mpg on the highway. A 5-speed manual transmission with overdrive is standard on both models, and a 6-speed automatic transmission with overdrive is optional.

HOW ABOUT A REALLY UNIQUE GIFT?

VALENTINE CHICK KIT A retro lunch box filled with all of the items that today's woman needs for any "social emergency." For Valentine's Day, **cookiepots.com** produces a special "Slick Chick Kit" including a pink cosmetic brush set, teeth wipes, mouthwash, Valentine heart-shaped note pad with pen, lip balm, antacid tablets, pain reliever, pink cherry facial scrub, hand lotion, Valentine emery board, nail polish remover, tampons, stain remover, band aids, berry face mask, facial tissues, yummy pink frosted girlfriend sugar cookie and a milk chocolate Valentine heart. \$45 at **cookiepots.com**.



STUD'S STUFF is also a retro lunch box filled with "romantic emergency items" including mouthwash, teeth wipes, deodorant, shaving cream and a razor PLUS, items to guarantee a fun romantic getaway: IOU game (cute card game with peel-away tickets revealing suggestive activities that one partner "owes" the other), sizzling body candy, "Wheel of Passion," liquid love lotion that goes on cool and quickly warms when you blow on it, and handcuffs. \$45 at **cookiepots.com**

STUD'S STUFF

What would mother say?

Doesn't EVERY man like to think of himself as a stud? Why not send him the gift that confirms his "Stud Status." Whether he's outgoing or shy, this is a great gift.

Stud's Stuff kit includes:

- mouthwash
- teeth wipes
- deodorant
- shaving cream and razor

PLUS, items to guarantee a romantic getaway: IOU game (cute card game with peel-away tickets revealing suggestive activities that one partner "owes" the other), Sizzling Body Candy, Wheel of Passion, Liquid Love lotion that goes on cool and quickly warms when you blow on it, and handcuffs.

CookiePots.com

Cookie Pot Bouquets and unique gifts themed for all special occasions

Nationwide Delivery
TOLL FREE
866.533.GIFT

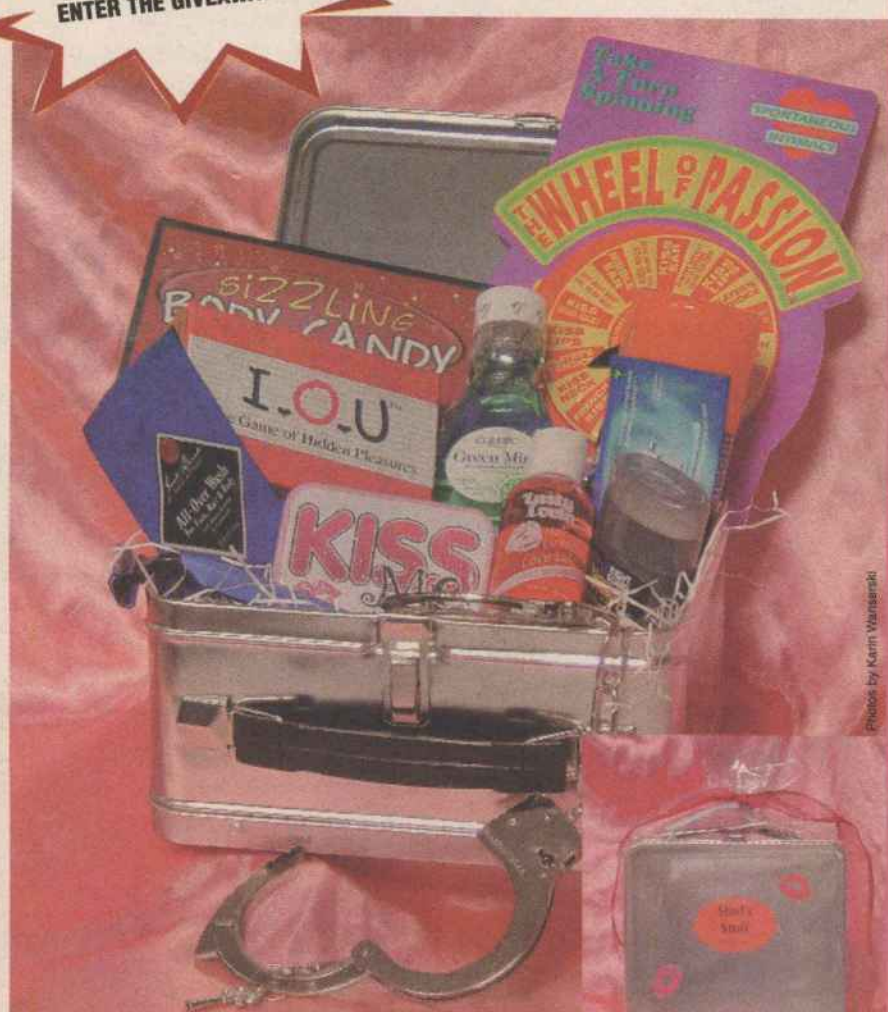


Photo by Karin Wintersmith

Enter to win one of 3 prizes in the Queer Life News Valentine Giveaway!



A Stud's Stuff retro lunch box from CookiePots.com. A \$45 value.

Doesn't EVERY man like to think of himself as a stud? Why not give him the gift that confirms his "Stud Status"? Whether he's outgoing or shy, this is a great gift.

See description on page 3

You can win this for your Valentine or for yourself.



Entering our Valentine Giveaway Contest

couldn't be easier.

All you have to do is send your business card to:
Valentine Giveaway
c/o Queer Life News
703 South 2nd Street
Milwaukee, WI 53204

**DEADLINE IS:
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 28**

If you don't have a business card, send us a postcard with your name, address and daytime telephone number.

If you win one of our 3 prizes, we promise we'll be discreet and contact you by phone. If you're not available, we'll leave a message saying "You've won, please contact us"

Names will be drawn randomly on Monday morning, February 28 at approximately 10am and will be witnessed by a member of our staff. The first name drawn will win prize #1, second name drawn, prize #2, third name drawn, prize #3.

NO PURCHASE NECESSARY TO ENTER



Lasso a western-style meal at The Branded Steer Wood Grill Rotisserie and Saloon. You could win a \$50 dining certificate.

The Branded Steer has a wide variety of food to satisfy any hungry appetite: hearty soups like "Cowboy Chili" and sandwiches like "The Brander," a rib-eye steak sandwich that will bring satisfaction after a day of wrangling and branding! For a lighter meal, try one of the fresh salads, like "The Maverick," a pork tenderloin chargrilled and sliced over crisp lettuce with tomatoes, red onions, pine nuts and a roasted red pepper vinaigrette!

For the meat-lover, they serve up oven-roasted ribs and fresh chicken, as well as steaks and chops — the freshest cuts are also available from their own butcher shop. Enjoy a half-pound Black Angus Beef burger, grilled on a hardwood charcoal grill and served with steak fries.

The Branded Steer, 1299 West College Avenue, Oak Creek. Open 7 days a week from 11:00am until midnight. 414-571-8672.

Gift certificate is not good for cash, change or tip. Can be used for alcohol with meal purchase.



Prairie Garden Bed and Breakfast



Win this great opportunity to get away from it all with the one you love — at a unique bed and breakfast just 30 miles from Madison.

Our grand prize is a one night stay in one of the suites at Prairie Garden Bed & Breakfast in Lodi, Wisconsin. Value \$145.00.

Good any time, subject to availability. Valid for one year.



ROSE COLOR KEY

| | |
|--|--|
| RED | Love, beauty, courage and respect, romantic love, congratulations, I Love You, job well done, sincere love, courage and passion. |
| DARK RED | Unconscious beauty |
| RED (Single) | I Love You |
| WHITE | Purity, silence, secrecy, reverence, humility, youthfulness, innocence, I am worthy of you, you're heavenly, you're charming |
| WHITE (Bridal) | Happy love |
| PINK | Appreciation, "Thank You," grace, perfect happiness, admiration, gracefulness, gentleness, please believe me |
| DARK PINK | Appreciation, gratitude, "Thank You" |
| LIGHT PINK | Admiration, sympathy, gentleness, grace, joy and sweetness |
| YELLOW | Joy, gladness, friendship, delight, the promise of a new beginning, welcome back, remember me, "I Care" and jealousy |
| YELLOW WITH RED TIP | Friendship, falling in love |
| ORANGE | Desire and enthusiasm |
| RED & WHITE | Given together these signify unity |
| PEACH | Closing of the deal, let's get together |
| CORAL | Desire |
| LAVENDER | Love at first sight and enhancement |
| SINGLE (any color) (except red) | Simplicity and gratitude |

COMING UP

IN THE APRIL ISSUE OF *Queer Life News*

REAL ESTATE SPECIAL SECTION

To Discuss Advertising Opportunities,
contact Annabelle Havlicek
414-241-0585

Prairie Garden Bed and Breakfast

Perched high on a hill within walking distance of Lake Wisconsin, Prairie Garden Bed & Breakfast is a charming farmhouse that combines the old and the new. Enhanced with antiques throughout the house, you can sit around the fireplace, view the spectacular vistas of Devil's Head Ski Resort, play the piano, feed the farm animals, visit Ho Chunk Casino or take a short hike and experience the quiet beauty of a sunset.

You'll start your morning with a homemade farm breakfast while enjoying the breathtaking views of the Baraboo Bluffs.

If you visit during warmer weather, you can take a short drive to Mazo Beach, a nude beach located on the Wisconsin River. Tour the local winery, clown around at the Baraboo Circus World Museum, or bring your binoculars and experience the abundant wildlife.

OPEN ALL YEAR!

W13172 Hwy 188
Lodi, WI 53555
(800)380-8427 • (608)592-5187
www.prairiegarden.com

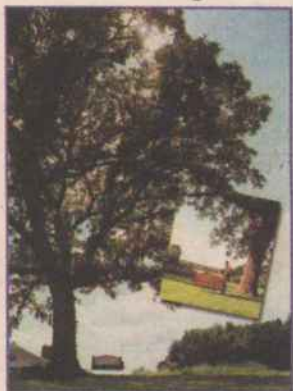
HOST: Todd Olson

Gay owned & operated



◀ The Master Suite has a queen size sleigh bed, an overstuffed love seat, and a large screen TV with cable and VCR. A private bathroom and fireplace makes the setting complete.

The Country Loft Cottage ▶



◀ A romantic tree swing.



▲ Country Suite, bright and sunny with skylights, private bathroom and fireplace.

The bedroom in the Country Loft Cottage. Deluxe unit comes with 2-person whirlpool, central air, ceiling fans, full kitchen. ▶



**WIN A GIFT
CERTIFICATE!
ENTER THE GIVEAWAY!**