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Vol. 1, Issue 9 • August 2005

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Can the Amendment Be Stopped?

Action Wisconsin, Center Advocates and others are working to defeat the proposed constitutional amendment banning gay marriage in Wisconsin. What is their strategy and will it work?

Editor's Note: This story begins Q Life's commitment to provide our readers in-depth and ongoing coverage of the proposed amendment which would ban gay marriage and civil unions in Wisconsin. Every month, Q Life will focus on a different aspect of this important issue.

By William Attewell

In November 2006, Wisconsin will be at ground zero in the battle for civil rights for gays and lesbians when a proposed state constitutional amendment banning gay marriage and civil unions is slated to go before the voters.

Wisconsin's largest LGBT political advocacy organizations — Action Wisconsin and Milwaukee's Center Advocates — have teamed up to work closely on the campaign. The two groups are strategizing and coordinating their efforts to defeat the ban with the support of faith-based coalitions, non-gay civil rights advocates and supportive organizations from across the country.

The groups are preparing for a fight they say they didn't pick but were forced into by the political agenda of Republican state legislators and the religious right.

Opponents of the marriage ban also say that it would jeopardize domestic partnership benefits in the state as well as ban same-sex marriage.

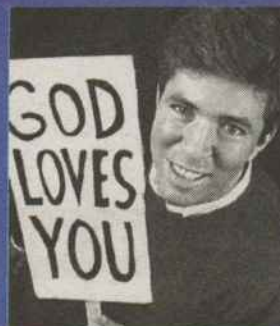
On the other side of the amendment fight is

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HCommunity Rallies Around Art Bar Owner After Shooting

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Local Lutheran Is National Ally

"... Jennifer Thomas is a strong local pastor whose advocacy on our behalf is making a national difference."

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Homophobe Watch

Iran in Crosshairs of Homophobia • 3

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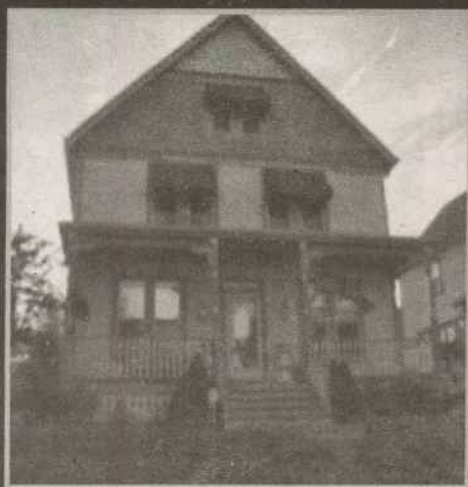
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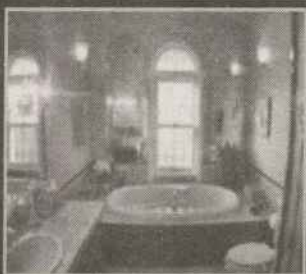
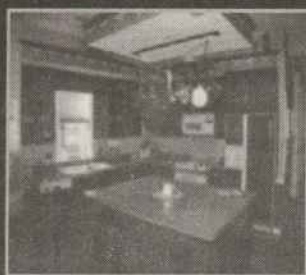
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About our new look:

This issue of Queer Life News marks the exciting launch of a redesigned publication. It is the result of several months' work and research that included valuable feedback from readers and advertisers. Collaborating with a respected newspaper designer, William Attewell, the staff of Queer Life News set out to create a more contemporary, lively, informative and easy-to-read newspaper. We think we have achieved that goal. Queer Life's mission remains unchanged: To inform and enlighten you about news, opinion and resources for Wisconsin's LGBT community and beyond. We hope you will enjoy our new look. Your feedback on our redesign is appreciated. Please send your comments to: editor@queerlifeneews.com.

Homophobe Watch



Photo courtesy of the Iranian Students News Agency.

In what some are billing an anti-gay execution, two teenage boys were hung in Iran last month. These two boys, one 18 and the other only 16 or 17, spent 14 months in prison and were then executed. Reports first came from the watchdog group Iranian Students News Agency. Other reports say the teens also sexually assaulted a 13-year-old boy. While Iran is considering banning executions of those who commit crimes as

minors, the United States has only recently given it up. The lesson here? Religious fundamentalism in its extreme is a socially dangerous tool. Separation of religion and state remains a good idea.

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Can the Amendment Be Stopped?

Continued from Page 1

The Wisconsin Coalition for Traditional Marriage. The nonprofit, volunteer group is spearheaded by Julaine Appling. Appling is also the executive director of the conservative Christian organization Family Research Institute.

Appling is coordinating support of the gay marriage ban in conjunction with a number of Republican state legislators including Assembly Speaker John Gard, State Sen. Scott Fitzgerald and State Rep. Mark Gundrum.

Political Maneuvers

Gard is clearly at the front lines in support of the proposed amendment. In July, Gard wrote a letter to Appling confirming that the Republican-controlled Legislature will wait to put the amendment on the November 2006 ballot.

"I believe that the best time to bring this

issue before the voters is when we have the potential for a high voter turnout," Gard wrote. "The next statewide election with the highest voter turnout will be the general election in November 2006."

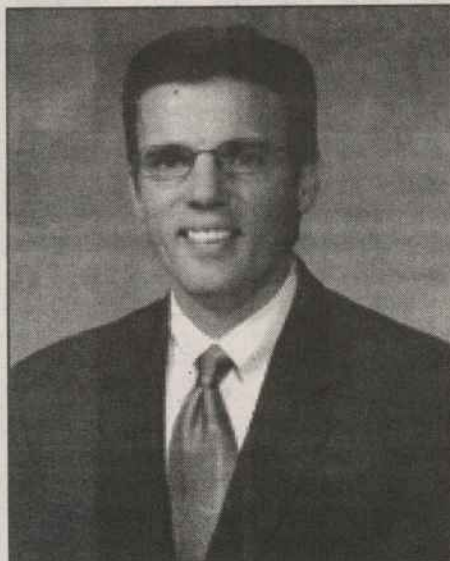
Indeed, a large voter turnout is expected then, as several high-profile statewide races will also be on the ballot, including the re-election battles of Gov. Jim Doyle, Attorney General Peg Lautenschlager, U.S. Sen. Herb Kohl, all state Assembly representatives and half the state Senate.

Political observers say Gard and others are attempting to leverage the amendment fight in a bid to help defeat Democratic candidates in 2006, and virtually everyone agrees that defeating the amendment will be a difficult, uphill battle.

Voters in 11 states — Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Michigan, Mississippi, Montana, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon and Utah — faced ballot measures last November banning same-sex marriage in the state constitutions. All the measures passed. A total of 17 states currently have amendments that ban gay marriage.

"Defeating the ban on civil unions and [gay] marriage will be the hardest political struggle Wisconsin's LGBT community has ever faced — but I've never been more optimistic about our chances," says Chris Ott, executive director of Action Wisconsin.

Pabrita Benjamin, community organizer at the Milwaukee LGBT Center agrees, "Yes, the amendment can be defeated. It will take



Assemblyman John Gard (R-Peshtigo)

the community coming together as a whole to see the detrimental affects of this amendment on all members of our community."

The Republican-controlled Legislature could have put the marriage amendment on the ballot this year but chose to delay it until 2006. Ott believes this will prove to be a flawed strategy and improves chances to derail the proposed ban.

"They could have done it this past April," explains Ott. "They chose to put in on the 2006 ballot. That was a mistake. We plan to use the extra time to organize and defeat this amendment."

Show Me the Money

Action Wisconsin and Center Advocates are keeping their cards close to the vest regarding how much money will be required to in order to have a realistic chance of defeating the amendment. Inside sources say the amount required would likely total in the millions of dollars.

Money will be a key factor in the fight. The two groups have announced plans to hire a professional campaign director, who will direct the campaign against the amendment across the state. The two groups are coordinating a national search for a qualified candidate.



Julaine Appling, director of The Wisconsin Coalition for Traditional Marriage

"This is a winnable fight," says one political insider. "However, no one — on either side of this fight — is going to show their hand any earlier than they have to, especially in regards the amounts of money that need to be raised."

"There is serious money that needs to be raised within the state and much work will have to be done in that regard," said another LGBT activist.

LGBT activists in Oregon raised approximately \$2.9 million in a bid to defeat the amendment there. The amendment passed despite the funding and sources tell Q Life that Wisconsin will need at least that much cash in the bank to defeat the amendment here.

"The amount of money raised in Oregon was for a six-week campaign," said one insider. "In Wisconsin, we are talking about a year-and-a-half campaign and it is a major off-year election. There is a great opportunity for Wisconsin to meet the funding goals."

So far, the groups are "officially" nowhere near that goal, although sources tell Q Life that "significant" additional funding support may be in the pipeline for LGBT organizations opposing the ban.

Ott and other LGBT leaders may have



Robert Starshak, M.D., (right) and Ross Draegert are celebrating their 35th year together by donating \$35,000 (\$1,000 for every year together) to fight Wisconsin's constitutional ban on civil unions and gay marriage.

Gwen Moore, Wisconsin's First Black U.S. Representative, Knocks for Equality

By John-david Morgan

Milwaukee — Gwen Moore doesn't need talking points. Not when the Wisconsin constitution is threatened by an amendment that would deny all Wisconsin couples the right to form legal non-marriage partnerships in their romantic relationships and ban gay couples from any legal recognition similar to marriage.

Moore simply carries with her a pocket reader of the U.S. Constitution. She reads from the civil rights sections of the Bill of Rights. She references the section of the Declaration of Independence that outlines the rights of "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" that are inalienable for all Americans.

She then takes her message to the streets to talk to voters — her voters, black voters on Milwaukee's near north side. "This isn't about gay people — this is going to hurt all of us," she tells them.

Describing herself as a "gally" — an ally of the gay and lesbian community — Moore joined about 100 volunteers and organizers of Center Advocates for a Sunday afternoon of knocking for equality in Milwaukee and north Suburban neighborhoods. The July 10 canvass targeted the districts of North Shore Republican Sen. Alberta Darling and Milwaukee Rep. Polly Williams, two politicians who voted in favor of the amendment.

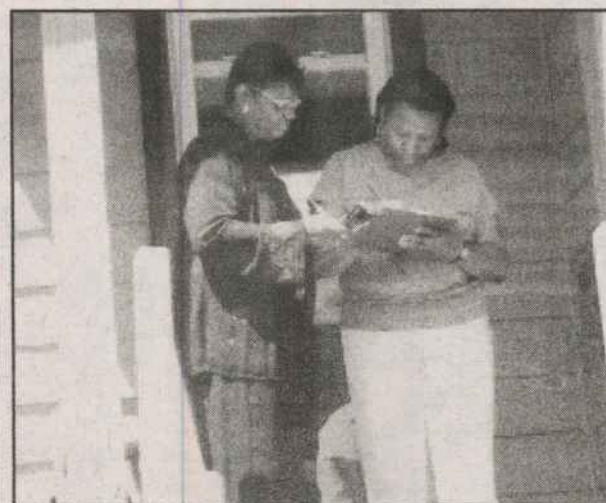
Amendments that allow only marriages between men and women (some of them go as far as banning "substantially similar" arrangements such as civil unions and domestic partnerships) have been passed by 16 states, 11 of them by voters in the 2004 elections.

In Wisconsin, Democratic Gov. Jim Doyle vetoed the anti-gay marriage legislation, but the GOP wants to take the amendment to the voters as a referendum. To make it that far, the bill has to pass in two consecutive legislative sessions. In

the Round One vote, held last year, the amendment was passed 20 to 13 in the state Senate and 68 to 27 in the Assembly. Moore, a former state Senator elected to Congress last fall, voted "No."

"The people who would push this [amendment] through, all the way through, who are out to defeat those of us concerned about quality of life for all in Wisconsin, are sinister people," Moore told volunteers in a speech at Plymouth Church on the East Side. "Insidious," "pernicious" and "poisonous" were other words she used to describe the amendment.

"The constitution says that 'no state shall make or enforce any law that will abridge the rights of the citizenry' ... and Congress shall 'make no law infringing upon the life, liberty or pursuit of happiness without due process under the law,'" she



Rep. Gwen Moore (L) talks with a voter during the July 10 canvass.

said, reading from the text. "This is about the rights of American citizens to live out their lives without interference from the government."

For Moore, the canvass was an opportunity to teach within the glow of her newfound celebrity as the state's first black representative in the U.S. Congress. She is greatly admired, adored even, in the north Brewer's Hill neighborhood where she walked with Patrick Flaherty, director of Center Advocates, an aide and two reporters in tow. At one point, a young mother approached with a camera, asking if Moore would pose with her young daughter.

At the doors, the message is direct. "I need to talk to you about the constitution," she announced to one woman. "We like it just the way it is," the woman responded.

"It's important for us to recruit non-gay people," she told another woman who spoke with Moore on her porch. "For us to look at this issue as a gay issue, or [other civil rights issues] as black issues is wrong. This affects all of us." The woman said she hadn't thought about the amendment until Moore told her about it.

"Yoo hoo ... Hello ... It's Congresswoman Gwen Moore," she called through a porch screen door as a man in his 40s approached from the kitchen, recognizing her.

"I'm out here trying to get people to disagree with the discrimination amendment," she began. "I voted against the amendment to discriminate against gay people, but it really hurts everybody." Moore read the amendment to him, explaining that it is "divisive and discriminatory" and would prevent gay couples from caring for their families and receiving health benefits.

"We can't let this gay bashing occur," she urged, handing the man an Equality Knocks petition to sign. "As black people we cannot allow this to occur."

No we can't, he said, taking the pen and clipboard.

"The Constitution!" Moore called out, raising her fist to the air as he wrote.



Chris Ott, executive director of Action Wisconsin

good reason to be more optimistic about funding at this early stage in the fight. Both Action Wisconsin and Center Advocates have received major cash infusions, expanding their war chests in the fight.

The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) recently made a \$50,000 gift to Action Wisconsin and challenged the group to match that amount with contributions from local donors.

In conjunction with HRC, the Milwaukee-based Brico Fund gave \$75,000 to Action Wisconsin as well as the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center's Center Advocates. The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force contributed an additional \$10,000.

According to Action Wisconsin, individual donors from Wisconsin are already matching this organizational support.

"It is not going to be easy," Ott explains. "But, I am encouraged by the outpouring of support. People have just walked in the door and given us \$500 checks."

Longtime community activists Ross Draegert and Robert Starshak, a Milwaukee couple, have also stepped up to match the joint Human Rights Campaign/Brico grant with a \$35,000 contribution to mark the 35 years that they have been together. Action Wisconsin has already raised nearly \$40,000 toward the match challenge from other Wisconsin donors.

"Support at this early stage goes for campaign staff and technology and will dramatically multiply the effectiveness of our work over time," says Ott.

Action Wisconsin is also planning to beef up its own staff over the next three or four months as its campaign against the ban accelerates. The group plans to hire an outreach coordinator for its speakers network, a communications associate, a canvass coordinator and development associate.

Action Wisconsin currently has a paid staff of 10 people. Center Advocates currently employs three in the fight against the amendment.

A Road Map for Victory?

Action Wisconsin and Center Advocates have created a historic alliance in the fight against the ban. Both groups agree that it is vital to work together to defeat the amendment.

"We needed to make sure we are not duplicating efforts and that our efforts are complementing each other," says Ott.

"We are working together more than we ever have before," says Patrick Flaherty of Center Advocates. "It was very clear with the scale of the amendment fight, both organizations needed to figure out how we can best work together."

The two groups are using a two-track line of attack in their efforts. The first line of defense is to work to defeat the amendment in the Wisconsin Legislature.

Both houses of the Wisconsin Legislature must approve the proposed amendment

before it goes to voters. Observers say the proposed amendment will likely pass easily in the Assembly. However, there is a slender chance of stopping it in the Senate. LGBT activists also point out that 15 state legislatures across the country have defeated such measures, preventing an amendment vote at the polls.

The Wisconsin legislature has approved the proposed ban once, in March 2004, and would need to pass it again before the end of the legislative session next June. The amendment is slated to come to a vote in the legislature in March or April 2006 and, if approved, goes to voters in November.

In a coordinated effort, both Action Wisconsin and Center Advocates are working to lobby state senators to change their position on the issue. The groups have targeted at least nine state senators in hopes that at least five might switch their previous vote and oppose the amendment.

"Our goal is to reach legislators — in person — with a diverse cross-section of gay and non-gay Wisconsinites before they take up this issue again," says Ott.

In January of this year, Action Wisconsin organized a "Lobby Day" event at the State Capitol. According to Ott, it was the biggest event of its kind in history. Several hundred persons attended the event and lobbied legislators on the issue.

Action Wisconsin also conducts weekly phone banks in which they contact voters and encourage them to call their state legislators and show their opposition to the amendment.

In Milwaukee, Center Advocates conduct "Equality Knocks" events in which they canvass potential voters, educate them about the issue and ask them to contact legislators to oppose the ban. (See related story on page 4).

Action Wisconsin also has an active speakers bureau all over the state, training individuals to speak to groups about the ban and its negative effects. More than 300 speakers are helping to spread a carefully crafted message to target audiences throughout the state.

In addition, the two groups are working together with faith-based groups who oppose the amendment. Currently, religious bodies representing more than 400,000 individual congregants and members have taken a stand against the ban.

In the final analysis, the fight will likely come down to the expensive proposition of educating Wisconsin voters that the amendment is wrong and changing votes in November 2006.

"It will take more money and more staff to reach the million plus one voters we need to turn out against the amendment," says Pabrta Benjamin. "But more than anything, it will take everyone who cares about LGBT people to be out there talking to everyone about how the amendment goes too far and hurts our families."

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Wisconsin **Q** Happenings

CCF Announces Grant Writing Workshops

Milwaukee — The Cream City Foundation will be hosting a two-hour grant writing workshop that will guide you through the common grant application that is used by most foundations in the Milwaukee area. The workshop will be led by a professional grant writer. Participants will have the opportunity to meet one-on-one with a grant writer to review a completed grant application in September.

CCF will pay the registration fee for this workshop and the review session for all LGBT groups who are completing a grant application that will impact the LGBT community. Non-LGBT groups may contact us for rates.

The workshop will be held Aug. 5 and Aug. 17 from 5 to 7:30 p.m. If you are interested, call 414-225-0244 as soon as possible, as space is limited.

Murder Mystery Writer Mark Richard Zubro at Outwords

Milwaukee — Outwords Books is bringing to Milwaukee best-selling gay mystery writer Mark Richard Zubro, author of two popular gay murder mystery series. This appearance is timed with the release of Zubro's "Nerds Who Kill," the eighth installment in his "Paul Turner" series and Zubro's 18th murder mystery since publishing "A Simple Suburban Murder," in the "Tom & Scott" series, back in 1989.

Lautenschlager Seeks Dismissal of D.P. Lawsuit



Peg Lautenschlager

Madison — Despite her personal support for domestic partners benefits, Wisconsin Attorney General Peg Lautenschlager asked a judge on July 26 to dismiss a lawsuit seeking benefits for the domestic partners of gay and lesbian state workers.

Six lesbians who work for the state, along with their partners, filed the lawsuit in April with help from the American Civil Liberties Union of Wisconsin. The state employees are asking for employment benefits such as health insurance to be extended to their domestic partners. Lautenschlager, a Democrat, says she personally

supports domestic partner benefits and has been blasted by conservative lawmakers who say she is not vigorously defending the state in the lawsuit.

Lautenschlager's presence at the July 17 Madison Pride rally riled Rep. Mark Gundrum (R-New Berlin). The rally was part of Madison Pride's "Magic Weekend 2005." Lautenschlager spoke to the crowd after speeches by Larry Dupuis, legal director for the ACLU of Wisconsin, and Megan Sapnar and Ingrid Ankerson, two of the plaintiffs in the case.

"She is so far conflicted on this, especially with what she did at this rally," Gundrum told the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel. "You see clearly why the Legislature and local units of government feel there needs to be other legal representation in this lawsuit."

Lautenschlager said her appearance at the rally was "absolutely appropriate," and that she is able to separate her personal feelings about an issue from her duties. Suggestions that she can't do that are overly political and restricted to the issue of same-sex marriage, she added.

Before gay fathers became a visible part of the LGBT community, Zubro introduced the character of Paul Turner in 1992 in "Sorry Now." Paul was not only a father of two precocious sons but also an openly gay detective with the Chicago Police Department.

This latest installment finds Paul, now a father of two teenaged boys, one of whom has spina bifida, rapidly approaching middle age. Despite his job as a homicide detective, his personal and family life has been relatively peaceful.

Until now, that is.

There's a science fiction and media convention in Chicago — one of the world's largest such gatherings — and his sons are excited about attending. In full costume. And Paul Turner, like any good father, is going with them. Then one of the convention's guests is found murdered, most likely with the broadsword found rammed through the corpse's chest. In most circumstances, a

broadsword would be a unique murder weapon, but this time there are hundreds of attendees carrying similar ones as part of their costumes, including Paul's son.

That gruesome murder is just the beginning. As the dead bodies begin piling up amidst the revelers, Paul must sort through a confusing array of suspects in short order if he's to find the killer in time.

Other titles in Zubro's "Paul Turner" series include: "Political Poison," "Another Dead Teenager," "The Truth Can Get You Killed," "Drop Dead" and "Sex and Murder.com."

Mark Richard Zubro will read and sign copies of "Nerds Who Kill" at 7 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 18 at Outwords Books, Gifts & Coffee, 2710 N. Murray Ave., Milwaukee. This is a free event and all are welcome. For further information, see www.outwords-books.com or call 414-963-9089.

CCF Announces Third Annual Women-Only Night Golf Tournament

Milwaukee — The Cream City Foundation's third annual Women-Only Night Golf Tournament will take place Sat., Aug. 27. The event raises funds for CCF's grant giving program that works to strengthen LGBT organizations and programs in Southeastern Wisconsin.

Last year, CCF targeted all funds raised to go towards women-related LGBT programming, including \$1,500 given to the Lesbian Alliance of Metro Milwaukee.

"This is a fun event for women to come together, share a drink, and give back to the community," said event Chair Traci Beaudot. "Last year we had over 30 women golfing in a thunderstorm and still having fun."

The tournament, originally created to form a venue for women to raise funds, has attracted a myriad of sponsors and supporters from LGBT and ally communities, including Aids Resource Center of Wisconsin (ARCW), Associated Wealth Management, and Outwords.

"Sponsorships and auction donations not

only help us raise funds, but they give a clear statement of support," said Cream City Foundation's Executive Director Maria Cadenas. "Currently there is a huge gap between LGBT community needs and mainstream foundation giving. Our sponsors from the business community give a clear signal to other foundations that their support of LGBT programming will be welcomed by the entire community."

The tournament will be held at Noyes Park from 7 p.m. to midnight. The CCF will provide free beer and food to all participants.

Entry forms can be obtained via email at creamcityfund@voyager.net or at the CCF offices, 315 W. Court St., Milwaukee.

Black and Gay Groups Come Together During NAACP Convention in Milwaukee

Milwaukee — The National Black Justice Coalition, a civil rights organization of black LGBT people and allies, sponsored a reception for the NAACP California delegation during the national NAACP convention in Milwaukee. The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) and Freedom to Marry cosponsored the reception, which was held to recognize the support extended by the California delegation when it recently came out in defense of same-sex marriage rights in California.

Donna Payne, Senior Diversity Organizer of HRC, noted her appreciation of that support. "Alice Huffman, the NAACP-CA president, stood behind her decision to support the bill in California," she said. Payne was thrilled at the warm welcome at the reception. "It was a fabulous event and we were greatly received by the NAACP and the new president-elect of the NAACP, Bruce S. Gordon."

The event was well attended by LGBT folks and their supporters. U.S. Rep. Gwen Moore and Wisconsin State Sen. Spencer Coggs were among those present.

Lesbian's Rainbow Flag Burned in Apparent Hate Crime

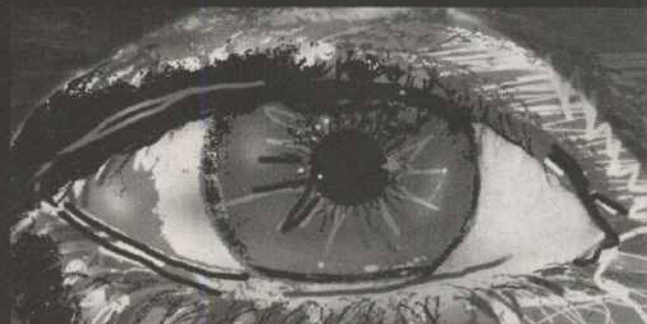
Stoughton, Wis. — Two lesbian women were the targets of a suspected hate crime in July. Someone ripped a rainbow flag off their door, burned it and left it in a neighbor's yard.

Lou Made and her partner Margaret Funk have lived in Wisconsin for about a year.

The couple hung fliers about the incident and filed a police report. They said they hope it will help raise awareness and open eyes to the ongoing fight for civil rights. They have also wrote to Gov. Jim Doyle, Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin and other community leaders about the incident.

"We have a lot of work to do to have people understand there's not need for the hatred," Made said.

The couple doesn't believe the person or people who burned the rainbow flag live in their neighborhood. If you have information, call the Stoughton police at 608-873-3374.



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Milwaukee LGBT Community Center's Anti-Violence Project
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Community Rallies Around Art Bar Owner After Shooting

Milwaukee — In what turned out to be a tragic and dramatic summer evening, Don Krause, the owner of the popular Art Bar, sustained a serious gunshot wound during an attempted robbery. On June 28, shortly



Don Krause. Photo: Melody Carranza

before midnight, Krause asked a youth who had been harassing customers to leave. The youth then shot Krause in the stomach region with a small caliber pistol. The bullet deflected off one of Krause's ribs, going through his gall bladder and liver and eventually lodging between two vertebrae.

Krause was taken to the hospital immediately after the shooting and was operated on to remove his gall bladder. The surgeons were unable to extract the bullet at that time because of its location and the potential of causing more damage so close to the spine.

No suspect is in custody, and police have no solid leads. According to Anne E. Schwarz of the Milwaukee Police Department, they are looking for a youth, perhaps from the neighborhood, who is as young as 14 to 16 years old.

The Art Bar, 722 E. Burleigh, has been a much-loved venue that serves a cross-section of customers. Its focus on art has drawn artists and aficionados from all over the county, while the local Riverwest neighborhood has found in Art Bar a great place for discussing community concerns and socializing with both traditional and non-mainstream area residents. The LGBT community has also found a welcoming and engaging place to congregate outside of the usual gay bar area. The popular "Boy's Night" on Thursdays and other regular LGBT-focused parties, fundraisers and events ensure a regular queer crowd any day of the week.

After the shooting, one of Krause's main concerns was keeping the bar open. On June 30, patrons and friends organized a show of solidarity and support for Krause, his partner John Tomlinson, and the Art Bar. Q Life, the LGBT Center, Riverwest Currents and Riverwest Rainbow Association, along with Tomlinson, coordinated a night to let Krause know that his friends, neighbors and patrons were behind him and would continue fre-

quenting the Art Bar.

Over 200 people gathered to hear a few short speeches from community leaders and to bring to Art Bar a spirit of celebration. James Pennington, the executive director of the LGBT Community Center; Sura Faraj of Q Life; Tess Reiss of the Riverwest Neighborhood Association's e-mail network; and Jan Christensen, editor of Riverwest Currents, all spoke out in support of Krause and his contributions to their various communities.

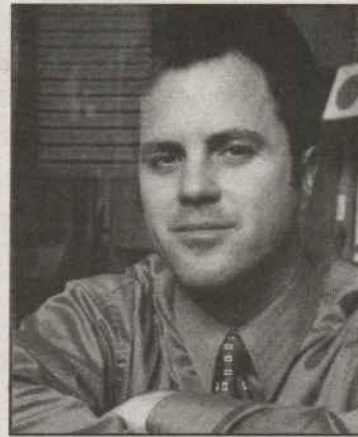
A blank journal was passed around for people to write their thoughts and good wishes for Krause. Krause said the messages it contained were very powerful. "It really moved me, reading what people wrote," he said. "The first time I started reading it, I just broke. I had to stop — it wasn't the time." Krause said he closed the book, which he then read through later. "It really overwhelmed me. I had no idea this support was out there."

Krause says he's not concentrating his energy on the boy who shot him. "I'm focusing my energy on getting better," he said. "I'm very thankful and appreciative of the community support." Krause spent most of July recuperating at home — though still planning events for the bar — and is now back at his business.

The first thing on the agenda for August is a "45 Cakes" birthday bash. Krause, who turns 45 on Aug. 5, will be hosting what he calls the most meaningful birthday party of his life. It will feature the band Fat Pig, food, drink specials and some very special cake.

Come out and celebrate a life worth living!

Don Krause's birthday will be celebrated Aug. 5 from 9 p.m. to closing at the Art Bar.



Neil Albrecht. Photo: Melody Carranza

Albrecht Joins Milwaukee Election Commission

Milwaukee — Former Milwaukee LGBT Community Center Executive Director Neil Albrecht recently accepted the position as Assistant Director of Milwaukee's Election Commission.

Albrecht, who helped build The Milwaukee LGBT Center into one of the largest LGBT service organizations in the Midwest, will assume the second-in-command position under Sue Edman, the newly appointed Election Commission Executive Director.

"The role of an Election Commission is to ensure fair and open election processes, to maintain public trust in election systems, and to encourage voter participation," said Albrecht. "This form of work is very consistent with my commitment to social justice in the Milwaukee community."

"We are pleased to have Neil Albrecht on the Election Commission," Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett told Q Life. "As former Executive Director of the LGBT Community Center, Neil's leadership and work in the community will be an asset to the Election Commission and the people it serves."

Milwaukee's Election Commission was heavily scrutinized following allegations of voter fraud during the 2004 Fall Elections. A federal, state and local investigation led to the appointment of an Election Task Force which last month released a comprehensive report outlining changes that must occur within Milwaukee's election process.

"Milwaukee is experiencing the same challenges and trends that large cities are experiencing nationally," said Albrecht. "Voting systems must be systematically reviewed, assessed and modified to maintain the integrity of the voting process. It is also essential that the public, particularly with-in traditionally under-represented communities, continue to vote. I am very excited to be a part of this election reform process."

Albrecht is one of several openly gay staff members serving in a City of Milwaukee managerial position. "It is a very positive reflection of Mayor Barrett and the City's administration that gay and lesbian people are well represented throughout city government," said Albrecht.

Farewell from Faraj

Dear Readers,

This will be my last issue as the associate editor for Q Life. While I'll continue to write on occasion, I need to dedicate some time to both unfinished and new projects, and I'm not sure where those will take me.

Last November, when I was asked to write for Q Life, I never thought I'd end up in an editorial capacity with the opportunity



Sura Faraj

to have a hand in determining the paper's focus or direction. It's been exciting to be part of Q Life's start-up and it's been a privilege to work closely with Don Hoffman and a very able team of writers, photographers, editorial assistants and other staff members, and to be in a position to create both a visible and a more diverse representation of our community. I am fortunate to have had this experience, and I'm grateful to Don for placing so much trust in me.

Wisconsin now has a viable, respected, statewide paper that aims to view our lives, our responsibilities and our struggles from multiple vantage points. I am grateful to have been part of this and to have seen, firsthand, both the power of the media and the crucial responsibility it holds.

I am also honored to have been able to introduce writers and stories that portray and speak to a myriad of experiences within the queer community. I'm proud to have been part of bringing news and views from those that have traditionally been marginalized, including trans folks, feminist and women's viewpoints, senior and history issues, perspectives from people of color,

international stories, and items from our underground, punk and fringe population. Whether it's been searching for couples who can make the face of our families visible, seeking out straight allies for the "Q Friends" columns, writing stories for our "Q Happenings" section or including your events in our calendars, I have endeavored to be mindful of all of our readers.

Independent media can be a powerful voice. My hope for Q Life is that it will continue in this vein and grow to reflect an even greater diversity of opinions, ideas, experiences, cultures and backgrounds

while maintaining its professionalism. That can only happen if thoughtful readers (maybe you!), who don't necessarily see their ideas and experiences reflected in these pages, continue to step up and become new writers.

I wish Don and the Q Life team all the best in writing and reporting on LGBT issues in the future. I also encourage readers to view this paper as the community resource that it is. We now have a strong and loud voice that is heard all over the state.

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Wisconsin AIDS Fund Fundraiser Set for Aug. 26

Milwaukee — In the face of the highest level of new cases of HIV in the state since 1997, especially among men having sex with men, the Wisconsin AIDS Fund has scheduled a major event to raise money for organizations that provide HIV/AIDS prevention programs to at-risk groups.

The event, a celebration called "Then a Hero Comes Along," will be held Friday, Aug. 26, at the Milwaukee Country Club.

In March, the State of Wisconsin reported that there were 417 new cases of HIV in 2004, a 14.5 percent increase over 2003. More than 8,700 cases of HIV infection have been reported in Wisconsin since 1982.

Studies have found, the report said, that

some men may now be less concerned about becoming infected than in the past and thus may be more inclined to engage in high-risk behaviors. This may be particularly true for young men. In some areas, drug use, especially use of methamphetamine, may play a role in a resurgence of high-risk sexual behavior.

Faced with these figures, the Wisconsin AIDS Fund, part of the Greater Milwaukee Foundation, sees an even greater need to provide money to nonprofit organizations in Wisconsin that provide HIV/AIDS education and prevention programs to at-risk groups. Since its inception in 1988, the fund has distributed more than \$2.5 million to more than 72 organizations in the state.

The highlight of the fund-raising event will be the presentation of the "Honoree of the Year" award to former Gov. Tommy Thompson.

Thompson, who was also secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for four years, has just completed a two-year term as chairman of the board of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. He continues to help raise money and awareness in his role as a "medical diplomat."

The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria was set up in 2002 by the United Nations and the G8 group of industrialized nations. They noted that AIDS, TB and malaria kill nearly six million people each year, mostly in developing nations, and established a kind of international war chest against these infectious diseases.

The Wisconsin AIDS Fund awards program and celebration is open to the public. Ticket information may be obtained by calling 414-272-5805.



Suzanne Westenhoefer

called "Breaking the Lesbian Stereotype ... Lesbians Who Don't Look Like Lesbians." Says Suzanne, "I still get mail from people who tell me how much that show changed their lives. It changed mine, too."

Tickets for the Sep. 23 performance are \$30 in advance and \$35 at the door and will be available in August. Outlets include the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center, OutPost Foods, Broad Vocabulary and Outwords Books. The LGBT Resource Center/UWM, the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center and Q Life are co-sponsoring Westenhoefer's Milwaukee appearance.

Pioneering Lesbian Stand-Up Comic Suzanne Westenhoefer Back in Milwaukee

Milwaukee — In the mood for an evening of fun and belly laughs? Suzanne Westenhoefer returns to Milwaukee this fall, bringing her unique brand of humor and provocative view of the world. Sponsored by the Lesbian Alliance, she'll be performing at the Zelazo Center, 2419 E. Kenwood Blvd., Friday, Sep. 23 at 8 p.m.

Described as both the "girl next door" and a "brazen hussy," she's a quick-witted personality whose material keeps changing — sometimes on the spot. And she clearly loves her audiences — even as she ribs them.

Westenhoefer, one of the first openly lesbian comedians to perform "gay" comedy to straight audiences in mainstream comedy clubs, appeared in 1991 in a ground-breaking episode of the "Sally Jesse Raphael Show"

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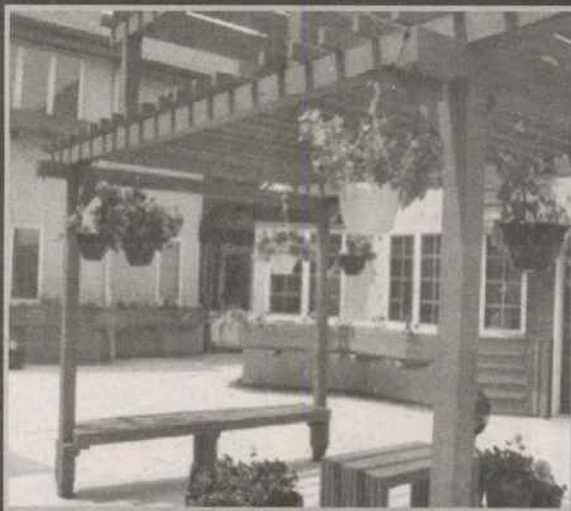
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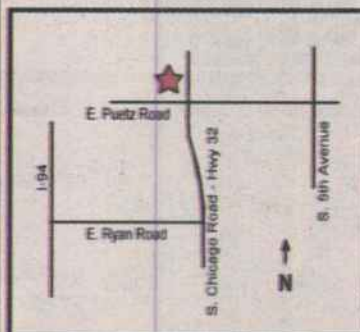


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Milwaukee's CCF is Working to Create Change

By Holly Grey

"You don't have to have a large income to make a big difference," explained the passionate Cream City Foundation (CCF) Executive Director, Maria Cadenas. Funding for conservative, right-wing causes and organizations is a phenomenal \$400 million across the country. LGBT causes



Maria Cadenas. Photo: Melody Carranza

spent on fighting the anti-gay, anti-marriage amendments, we felt it was and is vitally important to keep many of the other LGBT groups funded," explained Cadenas. "Not that funding for this fight is not important, but one of Cream City Foundation's main goals over the next year and a half is to help strengthen other regional LGBT groups."

CCF has already begun reaching out to the 70 other Southeastern Wisconsin LGBT groups and organizations and providing them with the tools, guidance and forum they need to ensure long-term success. Some of these activities have included conducting a variety of workshops over the last year to aid these groups in obtaining nonprofit status, help in grant writing, and assistance in preparing for and surviving the audit process.

In addition, CCF has taken over the financial management of Milwaukee's PrideFest. Over the course of the last several years, CCF has reviewed PrideFest's financial statements on a monthly basis and has been working diligently with PrideFest's board to help the festival become solvent and to ensure its long-term success. "It is our goal to work hard to make sure that PrideFest is strong and sound and can stand on their own two feet," said Cadenas.

Much of Cadenas' and the CCF board's time is spent reviewing grant applications and generating funds. A July fundraising "house" party was conducted for major donors, and an upcoming Women Only Night Golf Outing is scheduled for Aug. 27 as a way to reach out to the lesbian community and raise additional dollars. A "Taste Off" event is in the planning stages for November and many one-on-one fundraising initiatives have been and will continue to be conducted with potential major donors throughout the year. "Our goal is to grant out almost everything that comes in the door. I would like to raise enough money so that in the next grant cycle we could give out twice as much," enthused Cadenas.

The Cream City Foundation is a much-needed Milwaukee-based fundraising and grant-giving entity. "We are a political organization by nature, however, we don't take a position on a candidate or candidates. The LGBT movement cannot be quiet. We need to say we are here to establish our rights. If some people see our efforts as being political, then let them," said an impassioned Cadenas.

Cadenas believes the LGBT community needs to know the foundation exists and understand the depth and breadth of their mission. Many educational efforts are transpiring and Cadenas hopes these efforts will enlighten and inspire. "The more the LGBT community knows about us and the work we do, the more we will be supported," Cadenas stated.

CCF's current active board consists of eight males and one female. All are area business leaders and/or activists who bring a variety of skills to the organization. CCF is currently seeking additional board members and hopes to obtain a 50-50 gender split and create a more ethnically diverse board. "We are looking for potential board members who believe in our mission while filling our board's skill set gap. Someone with a solid background in marketing and advertising or an attorney would be great," explained Cadenas. "Anyone that believes strongly in our mission and can balance out the existing boards skills is welcome to apply. Please call me directly if you have questions or would like a board member application."

Maria Cadenas can be reached at the Cream City Foundation at 414-225-0244 or director@creamcityfoundation.org.

and groups raise \$30 million nationwide. Only one tenth of 1 percent of all nationwide foundation funding goes to LGBT groups.

"This is who and what we are fighting," said Cadenas. "The LGBT movement is greatly underfunded. I believe that it is our responsibility to educate so that the LGBT community as a whole understands why funding is so crucial. This is our life, and why wouldn't people want to donate what they can in order to create change?"

The Milwaukee-based Cream City Foundation, housed in the LGBT Community Center, has been raising and dispensing grant money to local LGBT and other organizations that enhance the quality of life for Southeastern Wisconsin's LGBT people for the past 20 years. Since its inception, CCF has provided over \$300,000 in grant dollars to numerous organizations and projects including local HIV prevention, AODA recovery, anti-discrimination, youth internships, senior outreach, voter education and LGBT playwrights. Last year, both organizationally and in partnership, CCF doled out a total of over \$91,000 to regional LGBT organizations.

In 2002, a Milwaukee LGBT Funding Partnership was formed between CCF, the Greater Milwaukee Foundation and the National Lesbian and Gay Community Funding Partnership. This partnership was created to build and grant funds to organizations and projects that specifically promote social justice and address issues of discrimination. 2004 local recipients of grant money from this fund included: House of Infiniti, an organization that focuses on HIV prevention among African American gay men; Diverse and Resilient, Inc., a nonprofit organization whose mission is the healthy development of LGBT people in Wisconsin through the creation and development of groups to take action; the Galano Club, whose parent organization is Alcoholics Anonymous; the Lesbian Alliance of Metro Milwaukee, the largest lesbian membership organization in Wisconsin committed to educating and serving lesbians; and SAGE/Milwaukee (Senior Action in a Gay Environment), committed to promoting quality of life for senior LGBT people.

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AIDS Walk Wisconsin Set for September 25

Milwaukee — The AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin (ARCW) has announced "A World Without AIDS Begins With You" as the theme for AIDS Walk Wisconsin 2005. The walk will take place along Milwaukee's waterfront Sept. 25.

"This year's theme reflects what thousands of walkers continue to show us each year — that everyone, no matter who they are or what they do — is instrumental in the fight against AIDS," said Doug Nelson, ARCW President and CEO. "This year's walk is going to be a day of high energy demonstrating people throughout Wisconsin are committed to helping people living with HIV/AIDS. AIDS Walk Wisconsin is the largest single-day fundraiser for AIDS in this state."

Over the last year, HIV cases have increased 15-percent in Wisconsin and the number of people living with the disease has reached a record high. Over 5,400 people in Wisconsin are living with HIV.

New this year is a five-kilometer route in addition to the traditional 10 k trail. The 5k path, which also follows Milwaukee's lakefront, was designed for those who prefer a more leisurely pace, and is perfect for parents with children.

The AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin serves the needs of Wisconsin's HIV-positive population and provides prevention education for communities at risk of contracting the disease. ARCW operates the state's largest HIV medical and dental clinic and provides mental health care and social services for people throughout Wisconsin, annually meeting the needs of more than 2,500 people with HIV/AIDS and their families.

Money raised at the walk ensures that people with HIV in Wisconsin will be able to continue accessing high-quality medical care

regardless of their ability to pay.

AIDS Walk Wisconsin proceeds also benefit Camp Heartland, Elena's House, the LGBT Community Center of the Chippewa Valley, the Manitowoc County AIDS Task Force, the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center, the Milwaukee No Condom? No Way! Campaign and the Sheboygan County AIDS Task Force.

To register call 800-348-WALK or go to www.aidswalkwis.org.

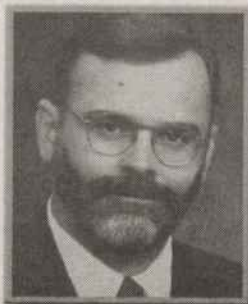
Get a "Taste" of the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center

Milwaukee — On Thursday, Sept. 1, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., Gallery 505 will host a beer and wine-tasting benefit for the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center. Beer will be provided by Lakefront Brewery, one of Milwaukee's premier microbreweries; while Downer Wine and Spirits will provide the wine. Experts will be on hand to answer any questions about the featured potables of the evening.

Barossa, Milwaukee's first restaurant to specialize in organically grown food provided by Midwest farmers, will provide catering/hors d'oeuvres for the evening. Melissa Beastrom will perform live throughout the evening. "An accomplished singer, pianist and songwriter, Melissa brings a fresh original style to all of her songs while adding a little '70s flavor." Additionally, Gallery 505 will donate 10 percent of anything purchased that evening.

A donation of \$25 will be taken at the door the night of the event, or the charge is \$20 for attendees who preregister. Gallery 505 is located at 505 E. Silver Spring Drive in Whitefish Bay. For more information, or to preregister, contact Angie Guerra at 414-271-2656.

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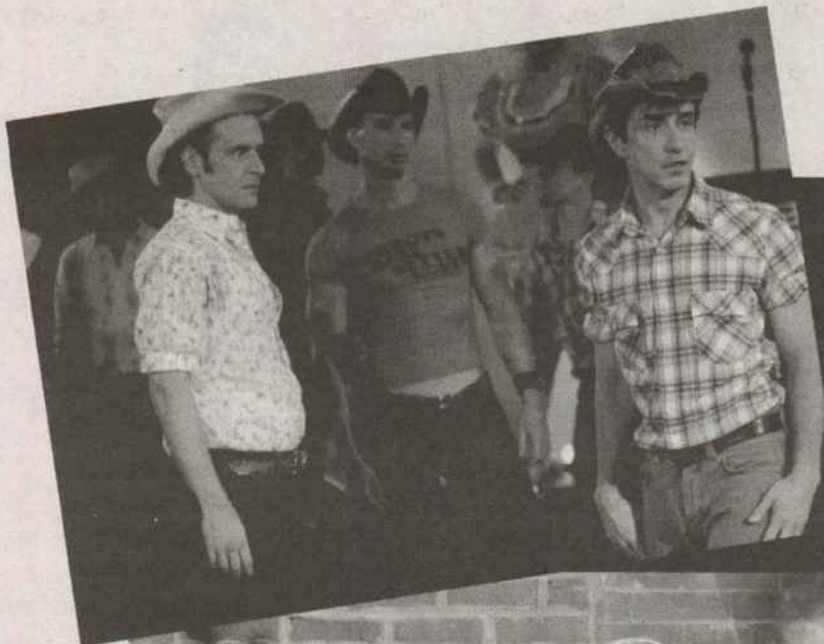
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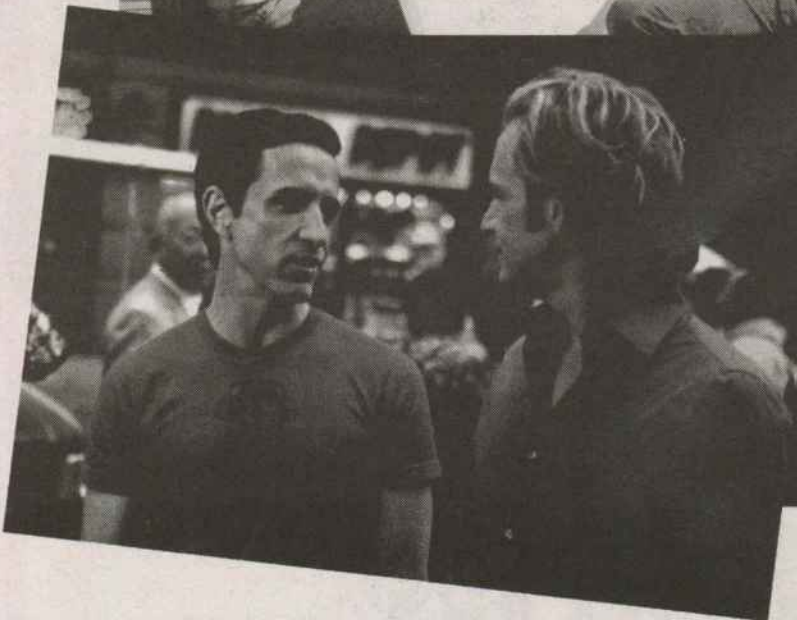
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Cross-Pollination

A Lesson for Human and Civil Rights Movements

Commentary by John-david Morgan

Gay issues, black issues, Hispanic issues, immigrant issues, women's issues. Many activists and organizers say it's time to get over the distinctions that people use to separate political movements along lines of race, color, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation.

That was the message heard recently as Rep. Gwen Moore canvassed with Equality Knocks, Center Advocates' campaign to stop the constitutional amendment that would ban civil unions and legal domestic partnerships for gay couples in the state of Wisconsin.

It was also a message heard at anti-police brutality rallies demanding justice for Frank Jude Jr., William Prado and others, dead and living, who have been recent victims of police mayhem in the Milwaukee.

It was heard again at Stop the Violence rallies throughout the black community in July as the 2005 murder toll climbed to 71, a

number Milwaukee did not reach last year until November.

The message was repeated at the NAACP convention in mid-July, as the NAACP joined forces with unions to back the largest African-American organizing effort in labor history — the campaign by Service Employees International Union (SEIU) to unionize the fast-growing security industry.

The message was heard yet again in June, as Iraqi labor leaders toured the United States to educate Americans on the plight of Iraqi workers and their struggles to form unions during an occupation that has worsened the plight of Iraqi workers and has been a major obstacle to their organizing effort. Their struggle, they said, would help define the success of the growing "humanitarian movement in the world."

And nationally, the message intensified with President George W. Bush's nomination of archconservative jurist John Roberts to replace retired U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor. Roberts is under fire from justice advocates and women's rights groups for participating in efforts to weaken voting rights, equal education rights, reproductive rights, environmental protections and proscriptions on state-sponsored religion.

For the gay and lesbian community and its allies, the opportunity to connect the ties that bind national and international movements for civil and humanitarian rights exists in the fight to stop the attacks on the rights of gay couples to provide and care for their families. The fight in Wisconsin to stop the so-called "Defense of Marriage" amendment is "an opportunity to educate," said Rep. Gwen Moore July 10, a day on which she took a

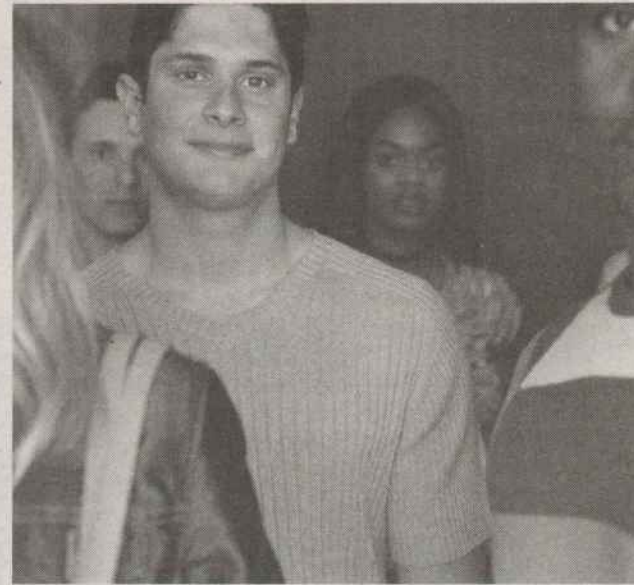
break from NAACP convention activities to join Center Advocates' Equality Knocks campaign.

For the black community, Moore said the movement to protect the constitutional rights of gay citizens "is an opportunity to see the nexus for all the things that are happening to

nation's largest security companies, for "contributing to the economic despair that is all-too-common in the African-American community." "This is about civil rights," said Frank Thornton, an SEIU organizer in Chicago working to organize security guards, "and about justice for workers who have the right to unionize to improve their lives."

SEIU, in particular, with its multi-racial and multi-ethnic membership, has had success cross-pollinating its message throughout movements in black and Latino communities. SEIU Local 150 held a Stop the Violence rally at 27th and Center Streets July 9. As the union geared up for the NAACP convention that week, its members and organizers with their signature purple shirts were on hand at the justice rally for Frank Jude, Prado and others at the police administration building July 12. In support of immigrant workers' rights, the union spearheaded a coalition to support the McCain-Kennedy bill, which holds out the promise of comprehensive immigration reform.

In a region — and world — in which numerous civil rights movements are occurring simultaneously, this may well be a lesson for the gay community in its efforts to bring non-gays into the movement to stop gay marriage amendments.



them in the world, in the context of the black diaspora internationally." She proposed that it is an opportunity to teach and bring about a greater understanding, "and to connect with the larger issue of rights internationally."

This international attack by conservative powers on civil and human rights echoes speeches given during the Iraqi Labor Tour and words of union organizers in the Midwest.

During the NAACP events, convention delegates denounced Wackenhut, one of the

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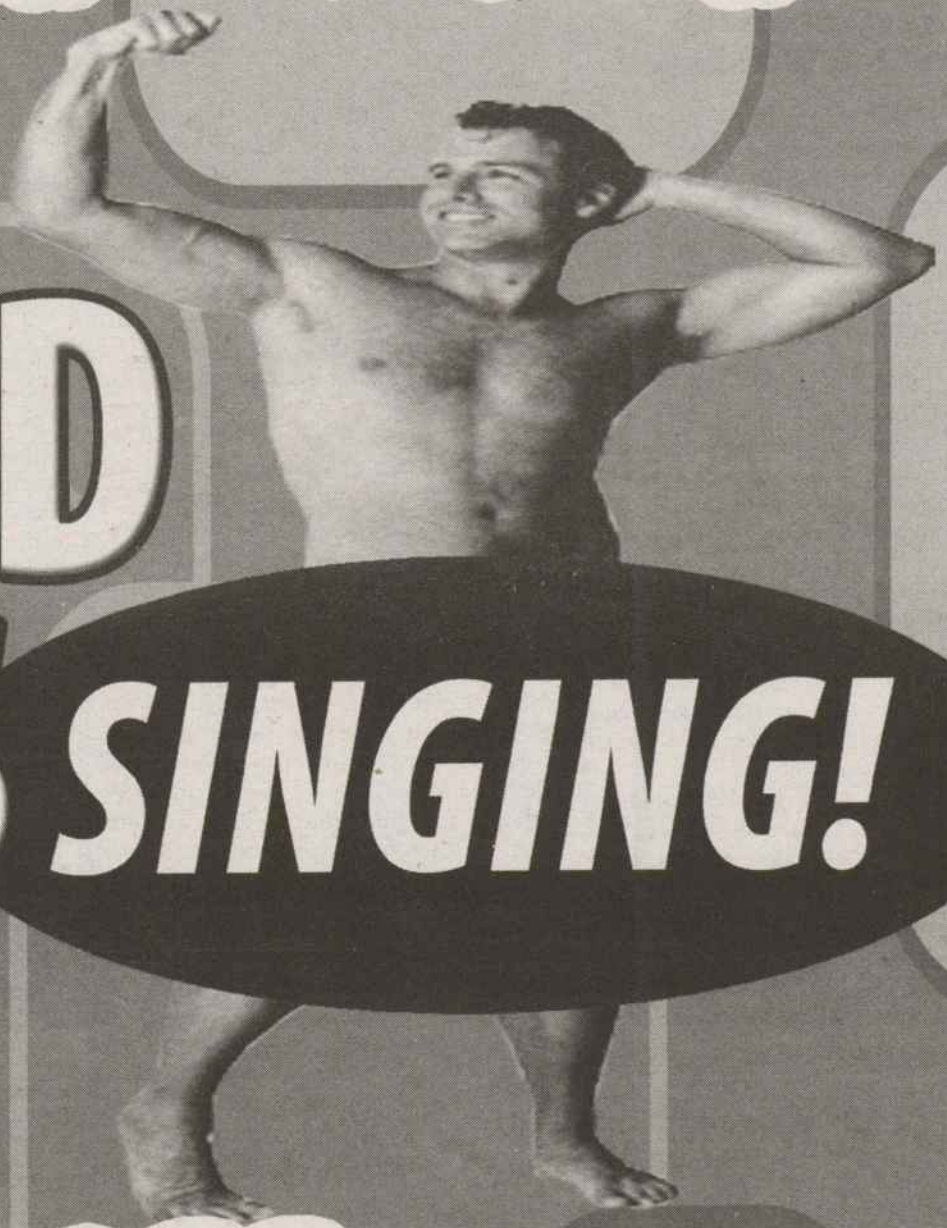
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NATIONAL NEWS

LGBT and Civil Rights Groups Call on the Rev. Willie Wilson for Apology

Washington — The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) and the National Black Justice Coalition (NBJC) have called on the Rev. Willie Wilson to explain and apologize for disparaging comments he made in July during a sermon. According to a report by the Washington Blade, Wilson said, "Lesbianism is about to take over our community. ... I ain't homophobic because everybody here got something wrong with him." Wilson's sermon included additional explicit anti-gay comments about intimate relationships between same-sex couples.

"Reverend Wilson has abandoned his truth," said HRC Senior Diversity Organizer Donna Payne. "Just five years ago, the reverend held a service to bring the black community together over gay issues. He called for the church not to be 'religious haters but people who know how to extend love.' Now he's using the pulpit to rip apart a divided community. It's shameful."

A July 2000 article in The Washington Blade focused on a prayer service organized by Wilson as part of Unifest, a "series of pro-

grams designed to unify the black community." During the service an altercation erupted after anti-gay activists who were angered by Wilson's attempt to foster a positive relationship about gay issues demanded to speak.

Wilson, pastor at Union Temple Baptist Church, was quoted saying, "We've got some serious stuff to deal with. ... We've got to do a whole lot, and there's a need for serious dialogue and communication. In this new millennium, we cannot afford to let everything remain as it has been. ... The black church has helped forge a gap rather than bridging a gap. The church must not be religious haters but people who know how to extend love. And this is a start."

The Union Temple Baptist Church choir has participated in two of HRC's Gospel and Soul events, which encourage dialogue between African-American straight and LGBT people of faith in the gospel community.

"Reverend Wilson's church has a history of community work and honorable activities, which makes the reverend's latest foray into pulpit-bullying, name-calling and the outrageous bearing of false witness against lesbians and gay men all the more troubling," said Dr. Sylvia Rhue, Director of Religious Affairs for NBJC.

NBJC called on Wilson to meet with black LGBT leaders to explain his pulpit rhetoric.

NBJC has repeatedly contacted Wilson about planning for the Millions More Movement March, but calls have not been returned. The coalition is seeking Wilson's support for its bid to be one of the national conveners of the March. After receiving no answer, NBIC Executive Director H. Alexander Robinson sent a letter to Louis Farrakhan requesting that NBIC be considered as one of the national conveners of the march and be afforded the opportunity to help shape the messages that come from the platform.

Big Wigs Gig: NYC's Wigstock Festival to Celebrate 20 Years

New York — The legendary drag festival which refuses to "curl up and dye" will once again rock its original '80s location in Tompkins Square Park in New York City's East Village on Saturday, Aug. 27, 2005, from 5 to 7 p.m.

For the last two years, the wiggy festival has been organized in association with the Federation of East Village Artists, with a goal to revitalize the East Village and commemorate its prominence as a cultural hotbed.

Last year, over 6,000 people turned out in the pouring rain to see such acts as Boy George, RuPaul, Lypsinka, Drag King Murray Hill, Comedy Central's Graham Norton and Holly Woodlawn, the Warhol superstar whose life inspired a character in Lou Reed's classic song "Walk on the Wild Side."

Wigstock 2005 has confirmed transsexual superstar David LaChapelle, muse Amanda Lepore, dancing fool and former Miss Continental Candis Cayne, comedian/actor Mike Albo, the super-sized talents of Sweetie, Billboard chart-topping dance diva Kevin Aviance, and Flotilla Barge, whose evil Star Jones' impersonation in a recent PETA ad made nationwide headlines. Of course, they'll all be curated and emceed by Wigstock founder Lady Bunny.

Expect a freak show with raunchy humor and scintillating song and dance numbers. Attendees are encouraged to dress up as well, providing a perfect audience for the queens' zany antics. It's a throwback to the East Village's glory days when the area was grittier and freaks could still afford to live in Manhattan. For more information check out www.wigstock.nu and www.howlfestival.com.

Hawaii Governor Vetoes Gender Identity Protection Bill

Washington — Hawaii Gov. Linda Lingle vetoed a bill this week that would have added protections based on gender identity and expression to the state's employment discrimination law. Despite passing the bill by large margins, the



Hawaii Gov. Linda Lingle

legislature took no action to override the veto.

The governor did allow a bill prohibiting discrimination in housing based on sexual orientation and gender identity and expression to become law without her signature. "She should follow her constituents, the legislature and businesses who know workplace protections are just as critical," said Human Rights Campaign President Joe Solmonese.

Ten states protect against workplace discrimination based on both sexual orientation and gender identity and expression, and six additional states have sexual orientation-based protections. "The American people don't care whether the person who cures cancer or saves them from a fire is transgender or gay," said Solmonese.

LGBT Civil Rights Groups Weigh In on Roberts Supreme Court Nomination

Washington — With the naming of Judge John Roberts Jr. to fill the vacancy on the U.S. Supreme Court left by the retirement of Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, President Bush has several LGBT civil rights groups concerned that recent advances and decisions involving LGBT rights, such as *Lawrence v. Texas*, might be adversely affected should the Court tilt further toward a conservative legal philosophy. In addition, a right-leaning Court could find means to dismantle the protections afforded by the landmark 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision regarding abortion.

Roberts, currently a U.S. Court of Appeals judge, is a Harvard Law School graduate and served in the Reagan Administration in the White House Counsel's Office during the Iran-Contra scandal. He was a Deputy Solicitor General in the George H. W. Bush administration. His appointment to the Appeals Court a little less than two years ago by the current President Bush has not afforded him much of an opportunity to establish a track record of decisions from the bench for critics or the Senate to review.

However, his written briefs and opinions on certain past cases during his time as counsel highlight a need for a thorough examination of his stances on crucial issues. Given the fact that he is 50 years old, unusually young for a lifetime judicial appointment, he has the potential to influence the Court's direction for up to 30 years.

"George Bush once promised to select Supreme Court justices along the lines of Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas," said National Black Justice Coalition president and fellow Harvard Law School graduate Keith Boykin. "With the nomination of John Roberts, Bush may have done just that," he said. "But a Supreme Court modeled after the judicial philosophy of Scalia and Thomas would be an activist Court that would produce drastic changes in the law. Under a Scalia-Thomas Supreme Court, gay men and lesbians could be criminally prosecuted for their private consensual sexual behavior."

The nomination must be approved by the Senate in the next few months if Roberts is to take a seat on the

Court for the fall term. Matt Foreman, Executive Director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force states, "In exercising its constitutional 'advise and consent' function, the Senate must take the time necessary to thoroughly review and evaluate Roberts' commitment to individual rights and equal justice under the law, including his record and thinking about civil rights, the right to privacy and the reach of Congressional power under the Constitution."

Among the more troubling of Roberts' opinions are the filing an amicus curiae brief on behalf of Operation Rescue in a case regarding anti-choice protestors blocking access to clinics; his statement in a case which wasn't directly about *Roe v. Wade* that read in part, "We continue to believe that *Roe* was wrongly decided and should be overruled"; and his disdain for some provisions of such landmark civil rights laws as the Voting Rights Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Moore and Baldwin Rise to Top of Peace Majority Scorecard

Washington — The PeaceMajority Report, an online, nonpartisan, nonprofit publication dedicated to "building the American peace community," has recently issued scorecards on Congressional representatives.

PeaceMajority works with and acknowledges a wide lineup of local and specialized groups, including military organizations; women's, youth, religious and workforce groups; political parties; institutes; coalitions and others.

According to their Web site, the scorecard includes legislation in three areas: (1) votes to authorize and fund war, and to support its conduct; (2) votes for excessive investment in preparations for war; and (3) votes for strengthening global peace institutions.

With 100 percent being the highest obtainable score, two Wisconsinites ranked high. Rep. Gwen Moore received a 92 percent rating and Rep. Tammy Baldwin ranked at 89 percent.

Reps. Dave Obey and Ron Kind, both Democrats, ranked at 72 percent and 53 percent respectively.

Wisconsin Republicans came in far below their Demo-

cratic counterparts. Rep. Paul Ryan received 21 percent. Rep. Tom Petri voted for peace only 20 percent of the time, and Reps. Mark Green and James Sensenbrenner lagged with only 13 percent and 12 percent respectively.

Wisconsin Sen. Russ Feingold rated at 77 percent, while, not surprisingly, Sen. Herb Kohl only came in with 62 percent.

California Court Ruling Aids Domestic Partnerships

San Francisco — Businesses that provide discounts, special services or other privileges to married couples must extend the same rights and benefits to same-sex couples registered as state domestic partners, the California Supreme Court decided 6-0 on Aug. 1.

The ruling will affect a broad range of businesses, including banks and mortgage lenders, auto insurers and health clubs. Lenders will have to consider domestic partners' joint income in making loans, and insurers will have to offer the same multiple-driver discounts they give married couples.

The decision adds to a growing body of legislation and court decisions that have put California ahead of most other states in extending rights to same-sex couples.

"This is a very significant step toward equality," said Jon W. Davidson, an attorney with Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund who argued the case. Randy Thomasson, an opponent of the state's domestic partners law, responded to Monday's ruling by calling on voters to "stop the out-of-control courts from trampling marriage and trashing the deeply felt standards of private businesses and organizations."

The court ruled in favor of a lesbian couple who sued a country club in San Diego after it denied the member's partner golfing privileges given to spouses. The couple said the club was violating a state civil rights law.

"A business that extends benefits to spouses it denies to registered domestic partners engages in impermissible marital status discrimination," the court ruled.

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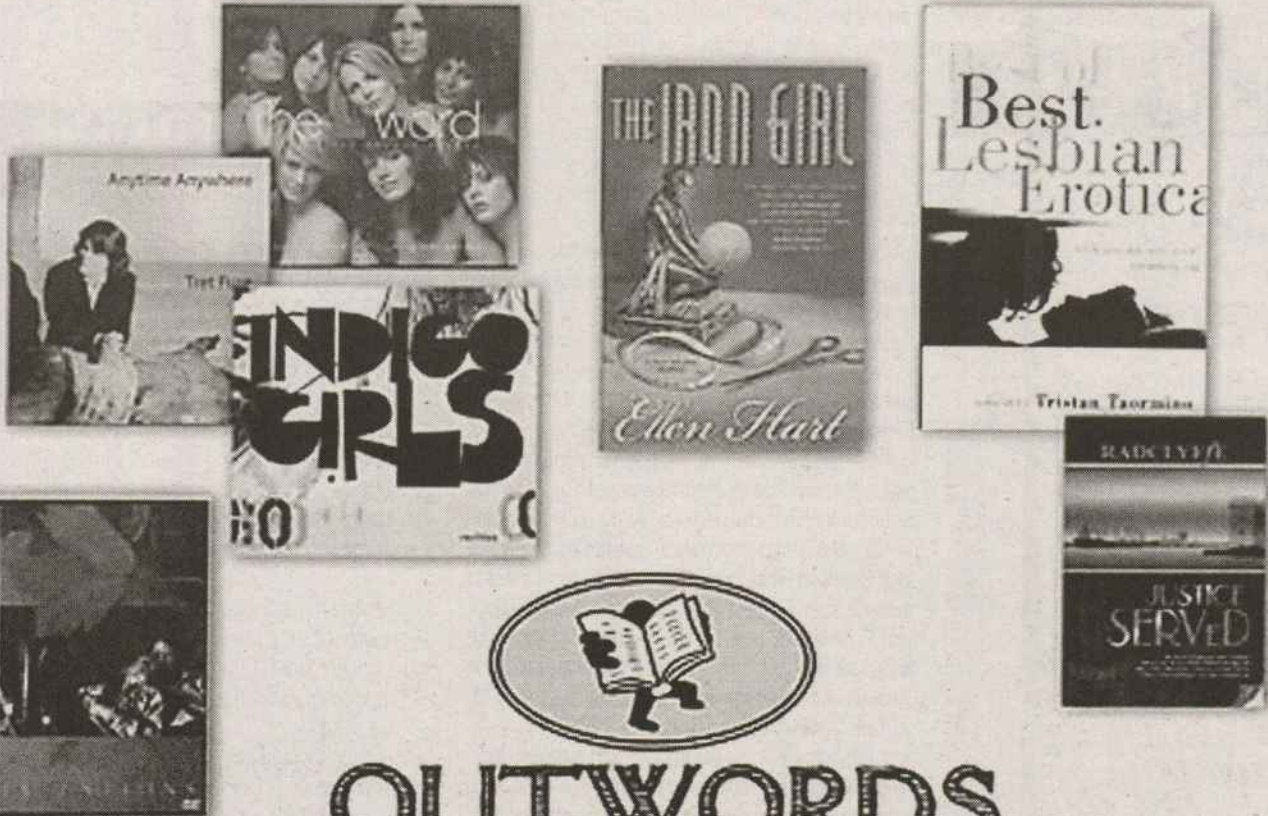
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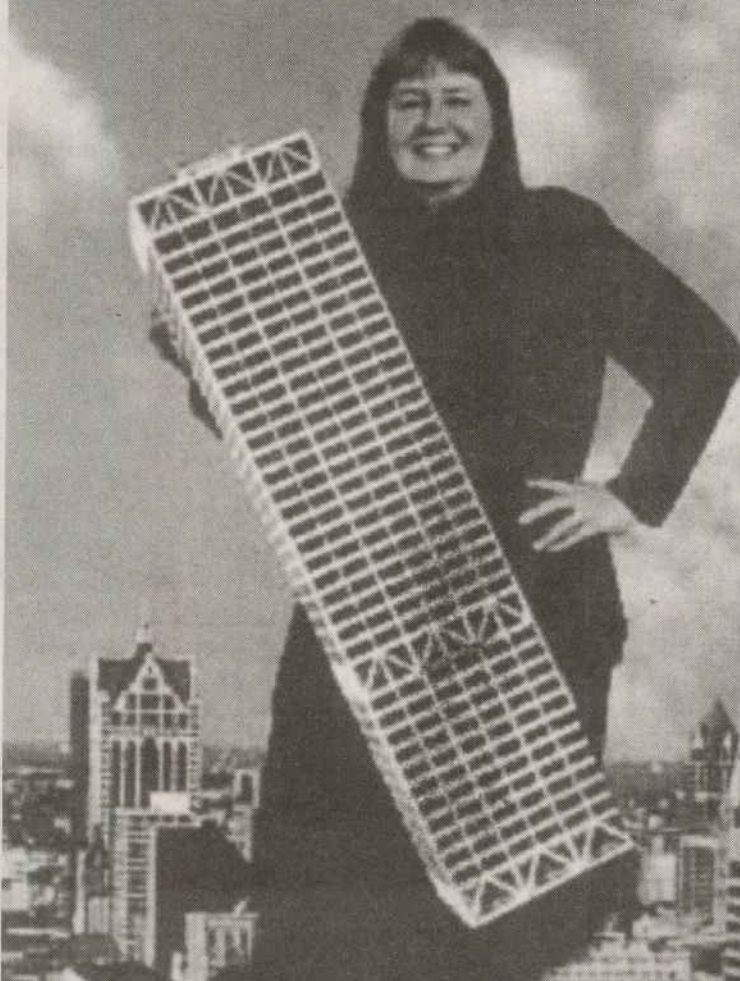
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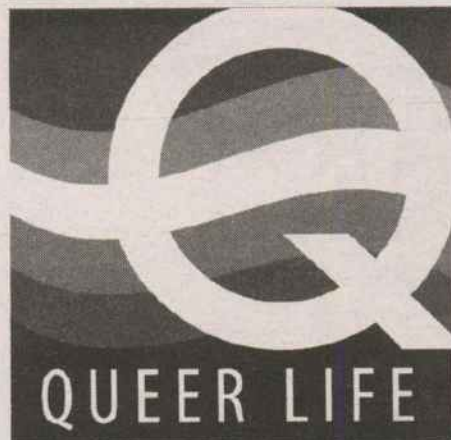
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Time Is Running Out

We are quite obviously in the dog days of summer. In fact, our recent nearly 100 degree weather and a cursory look at our electric bills, bloated by air conditioning kilowatts, prove that point nicely.

So, why would we, here at Q Life, be looking past these balmy months clear into next year so quickly? Because if you've lived here long, you know winter isn't that far off and soon we'll be sipping eggnog and vocalizing auld lang syne.

Honestly, it's the New Year we're scared of.

When 2006 rings in, we must be ready.

Ready to fight like we've never done before.

Ready to give it all we got.

Ready to put our lives on the line because there are many who want to strip us of our rights and single us out for being different because we want to marry a person of the same sex whom we love. Of course we're talking about a select few in Madison — elected officials who think hate and division are the law of the land. They must be stopped. Because hate is certainly not a Wisconsin trait.

Starting this month, we will begin bringing you comprehensive coverage on the proposed marriage and civil union ban which is expected to be on our ballot statewide in 2006. We think it's important to raise this issue early and look closely at what LGBT leaders are doing in order to defeat it. We must believe, and we deserve to be shown, that these leaders have the wherewithal to organize this important fight. We must know if they have the skill set to formulate a winning strategy. And the only way to find out is to ask. That's what we've done.

Our first article, on the front cover this month, highlights some very positive signs that organizers are moving in the right direction. There is, however, some reason to be concerned that they might not be up to the task.

First, the good news.

It has been no secret that for years there has been open contention between two of the state's leading LGBT organizing arms — Center Advocates and Action Wisconsin. This fight has played out in mostly boardrooms, but a couple of times it's meant some open turf wars. However, both of these very competent groups are now working together to defeat this ban and appear to have at least bandaged their wounds. James Pennington, the LGBT Community Center's executive director, has spearheaded this important action. For that, he should be applauded and respected. It also appears that Pennington is attempting to lead other state LGBT leaders to act quickly to get this fight in front of the eyes and the ears of Wisconsin's electorate.

The only problem?

It appears they're not listening to him — as precious organizing time continues to tick away.

Let's be frank about the fight ahead of us — IT'S MASSIVE. And we might as well kiss our butts goodbye if we don't raise an amount of money at least comparable to what the leaders in Oregon raised for their losing battle — nearly \$3 million.

The challenge with raising that much money is it takes a long time — usually years. We only have a little more than one year. For that we need to be concerned. Don't get us wrong: It's not that these LGBT groups have been sitting back and doing nothing, but this is a statewide campaign that must be treated as such. Knocking on doors is an important organizing strategy. And both Center Advocates and Action Wisconsin have done a remarkable job at reaching voters at their doors to discuss this ban.

But no matter how many doors you knock on, the reality remains that this fight cannot be won using traditional activist organizing strategies.

There are no ifs, ands or buts about this: This war will come down to a desperate need for our side to convince hundreds of thousands of straight people here in Wisconsin why this amendment is so damning. There is only one way to really do that. We must run an aggressive media campaign that means purchasing, most likely, \$2 million in TV time alone — not to mention all the other important elements which would ensure a layered media campaign statewide.

So where is this money going to come from?

So far it appears to have trickled in from national LGBT groups. But that's simply not enough.

If these high-powered LGBT advocacy groups — which raise millions of dollars each year from gays across the country — really want to stem the tide of this constitutional ban landslide nationwide, they will put everything they feasibly can into defeating it in the dairy land —



EDITORIAL

because that is exactly what can happen. We can win in Wisconsin.

Also, after we have the money we must know what to do with it, which means we need a campaign manager that can get the job done.

A person who has run a statewide campaign and is savvy in the art of media buying.

A person who knows we must make this fight's strategy understandable to the soldiers in the trenches.

A person who can build alliances with all different types of folks.

A person who will craft this campaign to appeal to the average straight Wisconsin voter.

Why?

Because this ban shouldn't be defeated just because it's homophobic — it should go down because it's hateful and downright barbaric. This statewide campaign manager is going to be very difficult to find.

But we must.

And this task can only be achieved if our state's LGBT leaders and groups check their egos at the door — and begin to realize time is not on our side. The next 30 days will mean the difference between a historic victory ... or just another state whose chances of victory were lost in the planning.

Time is running out.

We respect the vague answers given by several of

Wisconsin's LGBT leaders during our cover story interview, especially when asked about the strategy to victory. After all we know the other side is watching closely and you don't want to give away any of your war secrets. But you folks — the elite few who have been empowered by LGBT constituents throughout Wisconsin — must prove that you know what you're doing... and begin to move our fight forward.

A campaign manager must be hired immediately and money ... money ... money must be raised. If you folks aren't up to that task — get the help you need to figure it out!

After all you have the lives and minds of every Wisconsin voter, straight or gay, in your hands.

A Sad Goodbye: An Editor's Note

Saying so long is always hard. But when you must say goodbye to a friend and an incredible, talented colleague — that task becomes almost impossible. That's where I find myself today.

As highlighted in her farewell message, our associate editor, Sura Faraj, has decided to move on to other journeys. As many of you have seen, during the past months, Sura has been my right hand. She's been my thoughts when I didn't know I had them and my voice when many around me were sick of hearing mine.

And as I am sure the rumors will fly about her departure, Sura was the best addition to Q Life that an editor could have ever hoped for. Within the pages of Q Life, Sura will continue from time to time to write an article or voice her very unique and important perspectives. She remains committed to Q Life's mission and, in a heartbeat, she'll continue to be there to keep me on my toes. We wish her well and know just how lucky we were to have her be part of our family.

TIME is running OUT

LGBT Complacency



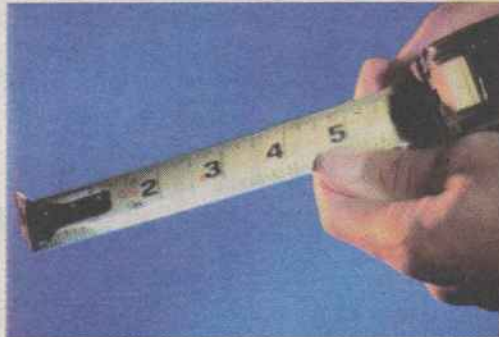
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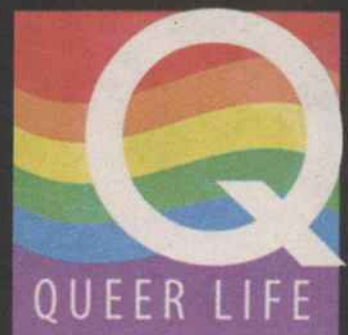
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HEALTH

Gary Hollander, Ph. D. (ghollander@queerlifeneews.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.

our leadership has plans in place about what we can personally do to claim and protect our rights.

But why address the constitutional amendment to ban same-sex marriage in a health column? In February I wrote, "People who are in committed love relationships are generally happier and healthier." There are numerous psychological reasons that relationships make us healthier.

There are practical reasons, too. Marriage allows us access to economic and social gain, and it also gets us access to health care. Marriage gets us into lower cost health coverage options. Marriage extends the privileges of access to our spouses when hospitalized. Marriage gets our closest loved ones at the table when health decisions must be made. Marriage gets us security, peace of mind and happiness. Discrimination, however, makes people sick.

As we work to make this health issue — marriage — a recognized human right that extends to same-sex couples, we should be taking care of our own futures right now in the form of advance directives for health care. Advance directives legally alert providers about what we want and don't want and who can make the final call when in doubt. Directives may not be sexy or fun. And we probably wouldn't buy a new outfit or flowers to wear while signing them, but we can take control of some aspects of our health-care decision-making by developing advance directives.

Several years ago I learned a lesson about this. I had knee surgery in a local hospital where I was working. Just after I had been given a sedative, the nurse asked my partner, "Who is minding the shop?" She assumed my partner was a business partner. Since I was moments away from surgery, I decided not to address this teaching moment with her. I could rest knowing that legally I was secure if anything should happen to me while in surgery because the person I trust most was waiting for me with a document that permitted him to steer the course of my life if necessary.

Our human rights are vital to our health. We don't have to wait for the revolution, however, to develop and sign advance healthcare directives.

When Sally Met Bob

How often do we tell little white lies to avoid awkward social situations, to keep from hurting someone's feelings or to evade a personal question we'd just rather not answer honestly? The other day, I overheard a telephone conversation my 11-year-old son, Kai, was having with my parents.

My father: "So what's his name?"

Kai: (pauses) "Umm, Bob."

Who is Bob, I wondered? Later I learned the conversation was about Kai's 10-year-old teddy who has always been named Sally.

Kai is a very honest kid — easily saying what's on his mind, and just as easily correcting people when he thinks they are wrong. He doesn't mince words and sees no reason to not tell it like it is. He's been raised in a house where honesty is valued and encouraged, where there are fewer negative consequences for telling the truth (even if it reveals inappropriate behavior) than for lying.

When I asked Kai why he didn't just tell my father the bear's name, he said he didn't want him to feel embarrassed he'd gotten the gender wrong. It was better, apparently, to make up a new, gender-consistent, name.

Trans people and SOFFAs (Significant Others, Friends, Family and Allies) often feel the need to change our stories, our histories — out of compassion for someone else's feelings, to avoid a challenging exchange, or because it's just plain easier. Every day, trans people and SOFFAs are faced

with how we will construct our lives.

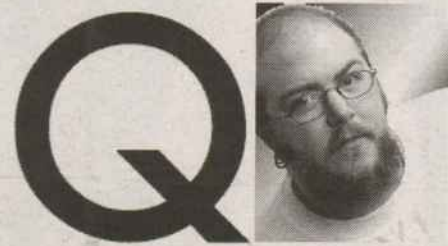
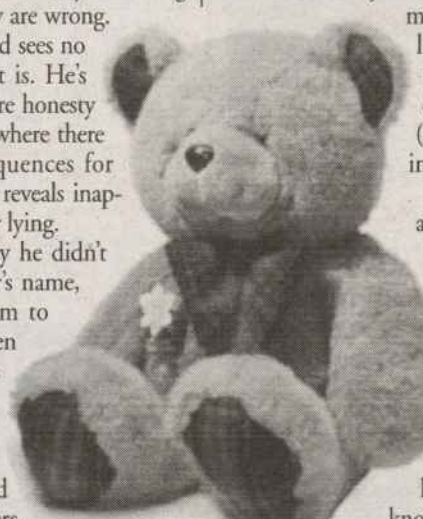
Take, for example, these three scenarios:

1) A woman, married for 21 years to a "man" who has transitioned to living full time as female, is asked by a co-worker in casual conversation how her husband is. She has the choice of revealing the "husband's" transness or allowing the co-worker to continue holding the belief that they are "man and wife."

2) A transwoman, living as female for eight years, is attending church with her 12-year-old daughter. Another parishioner notes their similarity and says, "Your daughter must not look anything like her father." Does the parent say she looks exactly like her father (i.e., her) or silently nod in agreement?

3) An FTM's new male acquaintance starts telling him he should eat tomatoes for prostate health. Does the FTM simply thank him for the unsolicited advice or start the coming-out process with the great opening line, "How should I know, I don't have one?"

In each of these cases, the trans person/SOFFA can assert his or her actual experience or agree to reinforce someone else's alternate reality. How that choice impacts the individual and his or her constellation may be worth examining.



TRANSGENDER

Michael Munson (mmunson@queerlifeneews.com) is an emotionally intense, transgressively gendered, passionate social agitator who strives for inclusion and harmony by focusing on our human similarities and strengths. He is lovingly committed to his partner and their 10 year old son.

Do we heal our past by rewriting our childhood as we wish it had been? Or is declaring and defending our history — as it actually unfolded — the better way to stay sane?

What happens to our health when we live in a state of fear of being "found out" or are constantly on guard to avoid embarrassment — our own or others? Although considering other people's potential embarrassment is an act of caring, we need to consider the cost when we allow someone else to gender us or dictate what our history is. We have a right to our own past, whether we insist on claiming a complicated history or constructing a new past to match who we are now. But it should be done with conscious intent and based on our own values, not on the fly in response to someone else's idle remark or question.

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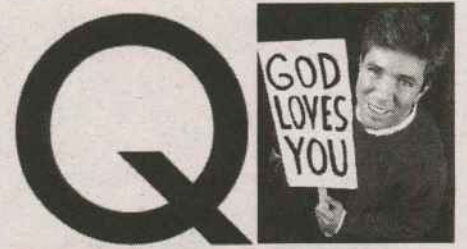
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Dine-In or Carry Out

Local Lutheran Is National Ally

Over the last year, our community witnessed the passing of anti-LGBT marriage amendments in 11 states. Less well known is that we've been making significant progress within Christian traditions. Two of the four Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) synods in Wisconsin passed resolutions approving of same-sex marriage. This July, the United Church of Christ became the first major, mainline Christian movement to approve same-sex marriage rights at a national level. In many other traditions the LGBT issue is simply not going away. We may be losing the statehouse but winning the church house.

The Rev. Jennifer Thomas, one of two ministers at Lake Park Lutheran Church, is at the forefront of LGBT rights issues in ELCA. Jennifer serves as one of 30 members of the Church Council of the ELCA, equivalent to a board of directors for the denomination. At its national convention this month in



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.

the real concerns of actual people."

There are a couple of scenarios for how the vote in Orlando could go. The resolution needs to pass with two-thirds of the delegates voting for it. If the resolution passes, or fails just short of the required super-majority, it

will encourage progressives in the denomination. If it fails by a majority vote, it may encourage conservatives and slow the progressive direction of the ELCA on sexuality. Perhaps the most likely outcome is that delegates may find some way to delay a vote, as happened in 2001 when the church last consid-

Jennifer Thomas is a strong local pastor whose advocacy on our behalf is making a national difference.

Orlando, Fla., the ELCA will consider a pro-LGBT resolution brought forward by the Church Council.

The resolution would affirm the work of local congregations in providing pastoral care for LGBT folks, including blessing of their relationships, and would allow for gay or lesbian pastors to serve in ministry if they are in lifelong committed relationships. On the issue of marriage, the resolution is taking more of a "civil unions" approach. More important is the ordination issue, which would end the current "don't ask, don't tell" policy in favor of allowing openly LGBT folks to serve in ministry. Jennifer says that while the resolution is not perfect, "It's a step in the right direction."

The ELCA resolution is a key one to watch in Christian circles. The ELCA is a mainstream denomination whose five million members come from many of the most contested states in the country — Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. Passage of the ELCA resolution would signal real movement within Christianity towards a greater acceptance of LGBT people.

The stakes are high for delegates to the churchwide assembly in Orlando. Progressives in the denomination have been working for LGBT rights since the early 1990s. Many are tired of the churchwide assembly sending pro-LGBT resolutions back for further study. Conservative Lutherans are threatening to leave the denomination if the vote goes against them. We might see splits in Lutheranism akin to what happened in the Episcopal Church after the consecration of Gene Robinson as an openly gay bishop. The issue will largely be decided by moderates at the assembly who will either agree the issues have been thoroughly talked through or who will vote no to keep the denomination together. As Jennifer notes, "It depends on whether the middle block of delegates will vote for the unity of the denomination or for

ered the issue.

Through the past two decades of debate on LGBT rights within the ELCA, Jennifer moved from a cautious conservative to an active ally of our community. "I grew up in a traditional Lutheran church in South Dakota. I didn't have any healthy images of gay people or gay relationships." Jennifer then went to college at Augustana College in Sioux Falls, S.D. Through intense conversations with a gay student and religion courses she came to a more broadminded approach to LGBT issues.

Jennifer's movement to become an activist came at Lake Park. "When I came to the congregation seven years ago they were just studying the issue. I studied right alongside of the lay members." Together the members of the church and Jennifer discerned a call to publicly welcome LGBT folks in their congregation. Slowly the congregation began to push themselves and Jennifer to take a more active role in advocating for LGBT rights. "Five years ago I was still learning about this issue. Now I've written the resolution [for our local synod] and am helping to pass the national one."

Jennifer, her colleague David Dragseth and their congregation have become leaders in the Milwaukee area on the issue of LGBT rights. They are involved as faith leaders in the "No on the Amendment" Coalition, provide volunteers for Center Advocates' Equality Knocks Campaign, and regularly include LGBT issues in the preaching. Regardless of the vote in Orlando, Jennifer expects that Lake Park will look to amend its constitution to make clear that LGBT pastors could be called to the congregation.

Jennifer is a strong local pastor whose advocacy on our behalf is making a national difference. Regardless of the vote in Orlando this week, we can be thankful for the ministry of an ally like Jennifer.

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Medicare Madness The Government Strikes Again

Chances are, if you are over 60 or receiving Medicare or Medicaid benefits, you have already heard about Medicare Part D. If you haven't heard about it yet, you will. From May through August, the Social Security Administration might call you about it, or depending upon the source of your Medicare benefits, you might have received a letter in June or will receive a letter in the fall. If you receive a letter, you might be just a little concerned, confused and distressed because you may not understand what all of this is about. Well, don't feel bad. Even the experts don't know what it is all about.

Once again the federal government has decided to "fix" a system that seems to be working just fine by changing it to a system that is so complicated no one knows what it is all about or how it works. And for those of us in Wisconsin, it becomes even more confusing because we have a prescription drug plan called Senior Care that is really terrific.

So why would the feds want to do this? Who knows? They certainly don't. What is confusing to me is why we pay people a great deal of money to come up with plans like these that are so complicated that only they know how the plans actually work.

Here is what we know for sure. Prescription drug plans will be available to people with Medicare starting Jan. 1, 2006. Enrollment in these plans will take place between Nov. 15, 2005, and May 15, 2006. Anyone with Medicare Part A (Hospital Insurance) and/or Part B (Medical Insurance) can join a Medicare prescription drug plan.

Part D is a voluntary benefit. This means that an individual who receives Medicare benefits may choose to decline Part D coverage. However, if you join a prescription drug plan after May 15, 2006, you are likely to pay a higher monthly premium, unless you currently have a drug plan that covers at least as much as the Medicare prescription drug plan. You will have to pay this higher premium as long as you have a Medicare prescription drug plan.

Confusing? Probably — and I took all of that information straight from a brochure that has been put out by SeniorLAW/Legal Action of Wisconsin, Inc.

So here's the deal. Don't try to figure all of this out on your own. You may not want to take a friend's advice because the friend may only be confused in a different way than you are. Instead, you should plan on attending some of the trainings that are being presented by SeniorLAW. The training sessions are divided into three parts to provide detailed information on various aspects of Plan D. It will be helpful to attend all three sessions, which will be held at various times and locations throughout the rest of the summer and into the fall. To find out when there will be a training near where you live, call Ann Laatsch or Ginger Rogers at SeniorLAW at 414-278-1222 or view the calendar at www.badgerlaw.net/Home/PublicWeb/SrLAW/SrCalendar/PartDCalendar.

Better yet, attend the first session at SAGE/Milwaukee, Aug. 25 at 1:00 p.m. in their offices at 1845 N. Farwell Ave. SAGE (Senior Action in a Gay Environment) is a



SENIORS

Bill Serpe (bserpe@queerlifeneews.com) is the executive director of Milwaukee's Senior Action in a Gay Environment.

local organization that provides advocacy, social worker services and social opportunities to the senior LGBT community of the greater Milwaukee area. The trainings are all free.

The bottom line is that if you are a little

confused about Medicare Part D, you are not alone. At the same time you should not try to figure it out alone. We can all get through this if we do it together. We in the LGBT community have a bad habit of trying to do it alone or thinking we don't want to bother anyone for help. This is not one of those times. Be strong, bite the bullet and seek help. Medicare Part D is as confusing as tax law. Let the experts help you through it.

For more information visit:

www.badgerlaw.net/Home/PublicWeb/SrLAW/MedicarePartD

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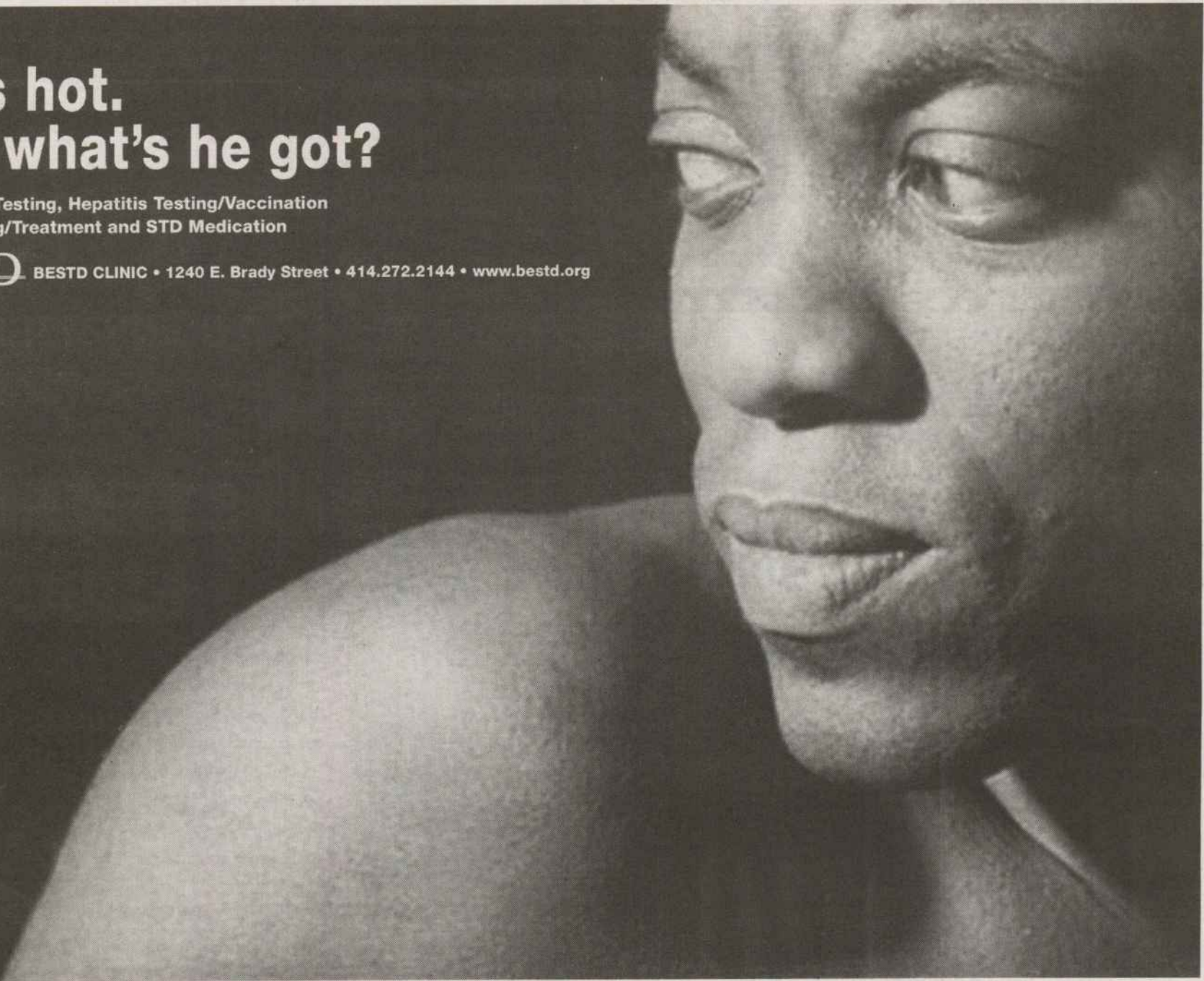


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What Are We Going to Do About White Homophobia?

Sunday, July 10, was a real spirit-restoring day in my work on behalf of Center Advocates (the equal rights arm of the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center) and the fight against Wisconsin's proposed constitutional ban on civil unions and gay marriage. After meeting with an unprecedented 80 volunteers at Plymouth Church in Milwaukee, we all left in pairs to head off to different neighborhoods and talk to voters about the harm posed to real-life people in our communities by the ban. Leaving the church, I had extra bounce in my step, because I had a real pro as my canvassing partner, U.S. Rep. Gwen Moore.

We hadn't begged, cajoled or badgered Moore, Wisconsin's first African-American representative in the U.S. House, to get her there. She volunteered. Just like that. Her office called us after Moore heard we were going out that Sunday to continue the fight that she and 12 other colleagues put up

against the ban in 2004 in her last job — as a member of the Wisconsin State Senate. Gwen would love to see this session of the Wisconsin legislature get beyond the fear-mongering and finish off the ban, stopping it before it hurts the state in what will surely be the most divisive referendum in Wisconsin history in November 2006.

As we worked our block in an African-American ward, Gwen and I each went carefully up to voters' doors and knocked, with dramatically different results — I waited in vain, and she had people running down from their porches to sign the petition and get their photo taken with her. As we continued our purposeful stroll down the block, a very progressive white journalist, along to cover the event, called out pointed questions to Gwen, "What about Polly Williams? What can we do about homophobia in the black community?"

Gwen took it in stride. But I muttered under my breath. I just wish white people would get their own politicians in order



POLITICS

Patrick Flaherty (pflaherty@queerlifeneews.com) is a longtime activist for LGBT equality. He works at the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center and lives with his partner in Milwaukee's Riverwest neighborhood.

before lecturing African-American leaders about "homophobia in the black community." Rep. Polly Williams, you see, is the only one of eight African-American legislators who supported the ban last session (Rep. Pedro Colon, the only Latino member, also opposed the amendment, and regularly sponsors domestic partner bills). That leaves 124 white assemblypersons and senators. How did they vote? White legislators voting for putting discrimination in our constitution: 85; voting no: 32. Let's see... Who has to

tackle homophobia in their own community? White legislators in Wisconsin, who voted 85 to 32 for the ban, or legislators of color, who will vote 8 to 1 against the ban? (One African-American legislator who was for the ban last session was actually replaced by one against the ban.)

My experience with local government in Milwaukee isn't any different. In the local issue campaigns for domestic partner rights in 1999 and 2001, most African-American and Latino alderpersons supported equality (a delicious aside, two who didn't: Alderwoman Rosa Cameron, who was sent away to the federal penitentiary for corruption, and Alderman Terrance Herron, who resigned to go to Washington and work the very affirmative action that black members of the GOP get from the Republican gravy-train.) Let's see who has the bigger homophobia problem from a different angle, using the final vote in 2001 for domestic partner health benefits for Milwaukee city workers as a measure. Alderpersons of color: 5 to 2 for equal benefits; white alderpersons: 4 to 6 against equal benefits. So remind me, who has the homophobia problem?

The answer is of course that all of our communities have work ahead. Homophobia is a deeply hurtful force in the African-American community. I don't want to be glib. It's very true, for example, that African-American voters have supported constitutional bans on civil unions and marriage at rates more like rural whites than their white urban counterparts in nearby neighborhoods. And being a person of color obviously doesn't put one above criticism for homophobia by any sincere person of any race. (I'm white but I don't feel apologetic about asking my assemblyperson, Rep. Polly Williams, who is African-American, to change her vote next time on the ban — colonial powers trying to rule restive cultures from India to Iraq have tried to get people to elect and identify with their representatives based solely on ethnicity, with disastrous results every time; we don't need that mindset here.)

But homophobia is stalking us to one degree or another in every American subculture. If you're white and you want to stop the anti-gay ban in the Wisconsin legislature, your time would be better spent calling mom, dad and Aunt Agnes back in your all-white rural or suburban hometown and telling them to handle their own. That's where most of the hate is coming from right now.

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Get the Health Care You Deserve

In June, this column looked at one woman's struggle to find information on lesbian health. Her conclusions? (1) We don't know much except that lesbians, as women, face many of the same health issues as heterosexual women; and (2) lesbians, as a group, face specific barriers to health care.

In spite of minimal research and significant barriers, you can improve your chances of getting the health care you need and deserve. A first step is educating yourself. Whether or not lesbians are more likely than heterosexual women to get

lifestyles, the more we will recognize when something's not right. This alone prepares us to advocate for ourselves in healthcare settings.

A second step is finding a healthcare provider who is sensitive to your needs. Admittedly, this can be difficult. Your options depend a lot on what type of health insurance you have (if you have health insurance at all).

Still, it's worth the effort to find a decent provider. How do you do this? Ask your friends about their doctors. Call the

Milwaukee LGBT Community Center for referrals from the Center's Resource Directory. Check out Planned Parenthood clinics for your basic reproductive healthcare and screening needs.

Once you have a healthcare provider lined up, interview (and evaluate) her. Are her intake forms inclusive, or are you asked to identify yourself as "married," "single," "divorced" or "widowed," i.e., heterosexual? Is there a nondiscrimination policy posted in the waiting room that includes sexual orientation? In your first meeting with a doctor, does she assume you're in a relationship with a man? What reaction do you get when you say, for example, that you're sexually active but don't use contraceptives?

Prepare a list of questions, and keep asking until you get answers. Discuss with the doctor your overall health as well as any specific concerns you have. Are you experiencing depression or anxiety? Are you dealing with alcohol/drug or tobacco use? Are you concerned about intimate-partner abuse? Do you have pain, fatigue or other symptoms that worry you?

Lesbians need the same routine screening tests as heterosexual women. Don't let anyone talk you out of a Pap smear or other test "because you don't sleep with men." Educate yourself so you can more actively participate in your healthcare maintenance. Online charts for screening guidelines can be found at www.4woman.gov/screeningcharts.

Here's what else you can do: Know your rights. All clinician's offices should have a Patient's Bill of Rights. If you feel your rights have been violated, talk to the clinic manager and/or to the Wisconsin State Medical Board



LESBIAN HEALTH

Kathy Herbst is the Director of Programs at the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center and a Lesbian Alliance board member. She has a long-standing interest in women's health

issues. Lesley Salas is a Cuban American lesbian with two children. She is currently pursuing her main interests: writing, dance, Scrabble and a variety of social justice issues.

(<http://drl.wi.gov/dept/complaintfm.htm>). Create a support network: Talk to other women about health issues, and bring a friend or your partner to clinic visits for support. Be honest with your healthcare provider. Withholding information can lead to misdiagnosis and mistreatment.

We can't stress enough the importance of asking questions — including questioning what your doctor tells you! Increasing your understanding of health maintenance needs and treatment options allows you to decide what's best for you.

It took courage to come out in the first place — you have it within you to advocate for your body and your health.



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Community **Q** Calendar

Wednesday, August 3

Body Mine. A monthly discussion group. Participants will discuss a variety of issues relating to the body, including health, body image, abortion and more. Led by Evelyn, nurse-in-training. 6pm.

Broad Vocabulary, 2241 S. Kinnickinnic Ave., Milwaukee. broadvocabulary.com or 414-744-8384.

Madison Cross Dressers Support Group. 7pm. Outreach, 600 Williamson St., Madison. outreach-inc.com or 608-255-8582.

Thursday, August 4

Big Gay Social Group A safe place to discuss and explore the impact of sexual assault in the LGBT community and its effects on healthy queer relationships. 7pm. Campus Women's Center, 800 Langdon St., Madison. 608-251-5126.

Madison Transgender Support group co-sponsored with Madison Area Transgender Association 7pm. Madison LGBT Center Memorial Union, 800 Langdon St. lgbtcc.studentorg.wisc.edu or 608-265-3344.

Friday, August 5

Grant Writing Workshop. The Cream City Foundation will host a two-hour grant writing workshop that will guide you through the common grant application that is used by most foundations in the Milwaukee area. The Cream City Foundation will pay the registration fee for this workshop and the review session for all LGBT groups or groups who are completing a grant application that will impact the LGBT community. Non-LGBT groups may contact us for rates. 5-7:30pm. Contact creamcityfoundation.org

or 414-225-0244. Repeats Wednesday, Aug. 17.

Saturday, August 6

First Annual Rainbow Community Potluck Picnic.

Get to know members of the LGBT and ally communities. Meats and veggie burgers, buns and soft drinks provided. Please bring a dish to pass as you are able.

split by last initials as follows: A-H munchies and other nonalcoholic beverages, I-O desserts, P-Z side dishes. Cosponsored by BWMT, Lesbian Alliance, PFLAG, Project Q, Rainbow Families and SAGE/Milwaukee. Noon-5pm. Humboldt Park (at South Howell and East Oklahoma Avenues) Area #4, Milwaukee.

FORGE: Surgery and Body Modification Surgery and other body modifications can be an important marker in some people's lives. A discussion of surgical techniques, skill and personality of various surgeons, healing, desired outcome, stating intentions with a surgeon, after care, and financing will be addressed. LGBT Community Center, 315 W. Court St., Milwaukee. forge-forward.org or 414-278-6031.

Sunday, August 7

Brunch Club Lesbian potluck brunch. Meet new friends the relaxed way — over food! 11am. Susan.Kohler@med.ge.com.

LGBTQA Youth Book Club Informational meeting for youth only (ages 13-19). Members will read books by/about/for LGBTQ youth and other books of interest. 2:30pm. Broad Vocabulary 2241 S. Kinnickinnic Ave., Milwaukee. broadvocabulary.com or 414-744-8384.

Monday, August 8

Outwards Book Club Alan Sheridan's "Time and

Place." New members welcome. 7:30pm. 2710 N. Murray Ave., Milwaukee. outwardsbooks@msn.com or 414-963-9089.

Tuesday, August 9

Lesbian Reading Group T. Novan and Taylor Rickard's "Words Heard in Silence." New members welcome. 7pm. 2710 N. Murray Ave., Milwaukee.

outwardsbooks@msn.com or 414-963-9089.

Michigan Womyn's Music Festival 30th Anniversary. Performers include Bitch, Le Tigre, Ferron, Sistas in the Pit, Tribe 8, Hanifah Walidah, Suzanne Westenhoefer, Indigo Girls, Wise Fool New Mexico and more. www.michfest.com. Through Aug. 14.

Wed., August 10

Short Stories Club Read short stories and share your thoughts and opinions. Members will begin reading stories from Dorothy Allison's compilation "Trash." 6pm. Broad Vocabulary, 2241 S. Kinnickinnic Ave., Milwaukee. broadvocabulary.com or 414-744-8384.

Saturday, August 13

Gemini Gender Group Support and social group for cross-dressers and transsexuals. 6-9:30pm. Milwaukee LGBT Community Center, 315 W. Court St. gemini_gender_group@hotmail.com.

Monday, August 15

Men's Voices Milwaukee is holding auditions for its Dec. 10 Holiday Concert. All ranges of male voices are welcome. MVM is a choral ensemble dedicated to musical excellence. For more information and to arrange an audition, call 414-628-7688. Repeats Aug. 16.

Friday, August 19

Gay Wedding Weekend The Marketplace Mall in Oak Creek is hosting a weekend of prizes and store specials as well as guest exhibitors in their first ever Gay Wedding Expo. 10am-4pm. Puetz Avenue and Hwy 32, Oak Creek. Contact Chris at C3 Designs 414-489-1593. Repeats Aug. 20.

Saturday, August 20

BWMT (Black and White Men Together) Open to all members, guests, and visitors. 7-9pm. Milwaukee LGBT Community Center, 315 W. Court St. bwmtmilwaukee.org or 414-540-9437 ext. 3.

Once in a Blue Moon This is your chance to benefit the Alliance School with an evening of class. A blue-themed cocktail party. A classical musician will entertain for the evening and appetizers will be provided. Suggested donation \$100. 7pm-midnight. The Phoenix Building, 219 N. Milwaukee St. 414-220-9080.

Rainbow Families Milwaukee Support and social group for LGBT parents and kids. 3-6pm. mkerain-

bowfamilies@hotmail.com or 414-447-0251.

Sunday, August 21

10th Annual Riverwest Rainbow Potluck Picnic Softball, volleyball, badminton, croquet, frisbee and more! Bring a dish to pass. Soda and two grills provided. BYOB and BYOM (meat) or BYOVB (veggie burger). Network and meet your neighbors. 2-6pm. Kern Park

(at East Keefe Avenue and Humboldt Boulevard) Picnic Area #3. riverwestrainbow@hotmail.com

Open Space A lesbian drop-in discussion group for real talk and new friends. Counseling Center of Milwaukee, 2038 N. Bartlett Ave. 6-8pm. Please be prompt. Door locked at 6:15. Contact Cheryl at groups@execpc.com or 414-271-2565.

Wednesday, August 24

Women of Color Book Club This is the first, informational meeting. Members will read a wide array of fiction and nonfiction authored by women of color. All are welcome to join. Our first book will be "Last Report on the Miracles at Little No Horse," by Louise Erdrich. 6pm. Broad Vocabulary 2241 S. Kinnickinnic Ave., Milwaukee. broadvocabulary.com or 414-744-8384.

Thurs., August 25

Ladies Night! Women-only consciousness raising groups are still alive! Topics will change month to month depending on the direction the group takes. Open to all who identify as a woman, FTM and MTF folks. 6pm. Broad Vocabulary 2241 S. Kinnickinnic Ave., Milwaukee. broadvocabulary.com or 414-744-8384.

Friday, August 26

Serbian Days Celebrating their 50th anniversary! The organizers have gone all out. The food and pastries are on the top of the list. Entertainment will rock. A top carnival with \$12 all-you-can-ride wristbands. Also kids' rides and games! 3201 S. 51st St. Through Aug. 28.

Wednesday, August 31

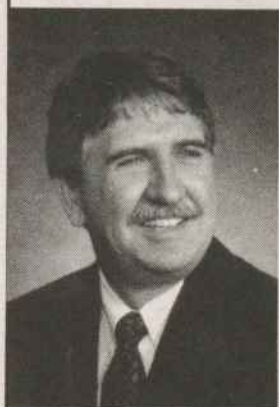
My Book Club Daniel Quinn's "Ishmael." 6pm. Broad Vocabulary, 2241 S. Kinnickinnic Ave., Milwaukee. broadvocabulary.com or 414-744-8384.

September 3, 2005

FORGE: Metrosexuals, Retrosexuals, Femmes, Butches and Other Nontraditional Identities The possibilities of gender expression and identity are limitless. Identities can be complex, so people may have many identities that encompass their gender identity or the way they are perceived in the world. What does it mean to be a femme FTM? Come to the meeting and find out! LGBT Community Center, 315 W. Court St., Milwaukee. forge-forward.org or 414-278-6031.

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Premieres July 1
Liam Neeson, Laura Linney, Chris O'Donnell

KINSEY R

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Jamie Kennedy, Alan Cumming, Ryan Falconer

SON OF THE MASK PG

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Voices of Trey Parker, Matt Stone, Kristen Miller

**★ TEAM AMERICA ★
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Premieres July 1
Michael Keaton, Chandra West, Deborah Kara Unger

WHITE NOISE PG-13

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Premieres July 7
John Travolta, Uma Thurman, Vince Vaughn

BeCool PG-13

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Premieres July 8
Ice Cube, Nia Long, Aleisha Allen

ARE WE THERE YET? PG

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Premieres July 8
Voices of Jim Cummings, John Fiedler, Nikita Hopkins

Pooh's Heffalump MOVIE G

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Premieres July 15
Barry Watson, Emily Deschanel, Skye McCole Bartusiak

BOOGEYMAN PG-13

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Premieres July 22
Kevin Spacey, Kate Bosworth, John Goodman

BEYONDtheSEA PG-13

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Premieres July 22
Voices of Brad Dourif, Jennifer Tilly, Billy Boyd

SEED OF CHUCKY TV-MA

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Premieres July 22
Sigourney Weaver, Emile Hirsch, Jeff Daniels

IMAGINARY HEROES R

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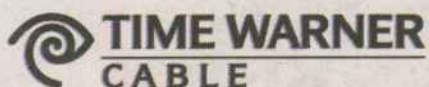
Premieres July 22
Christian Bale, Jennifer Jason Leigh, Aitana Sánchez-Gijón

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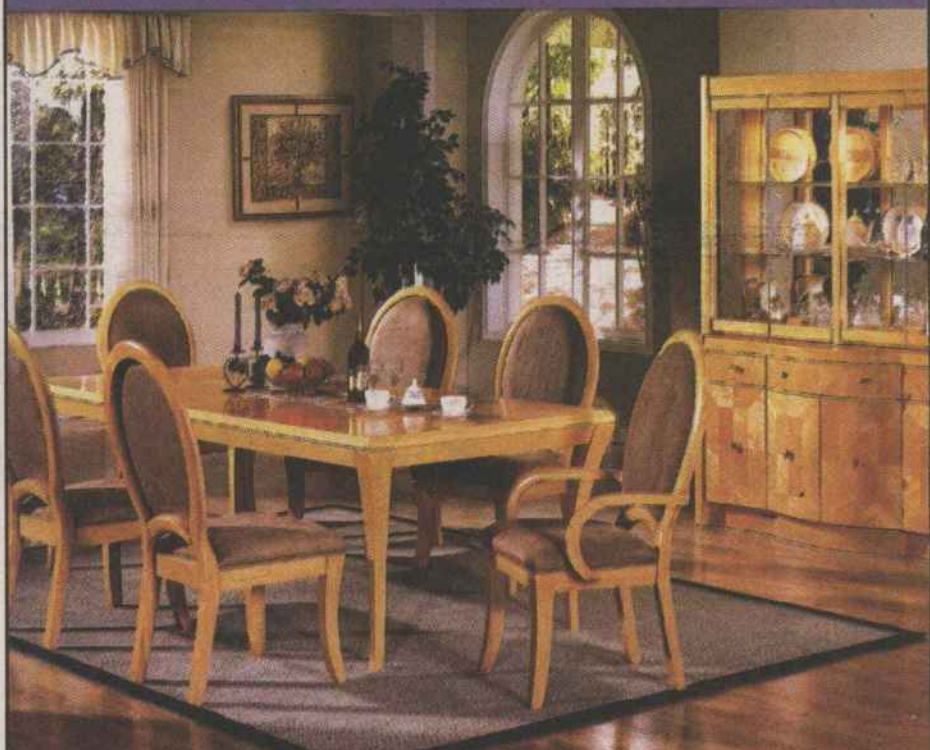
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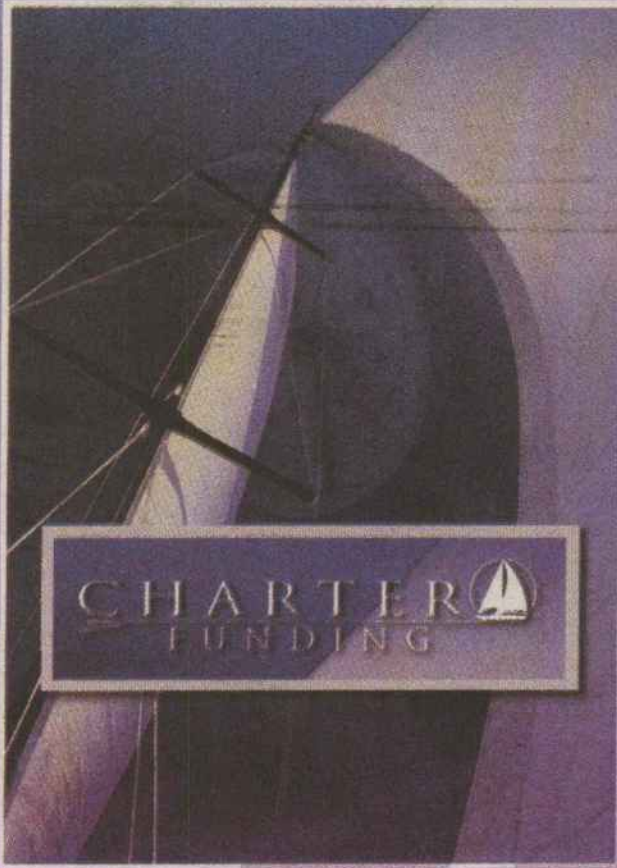
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Frank Lloyd Wright; Table Lamp from the Susan Lawrence Dana House, Springfield Illinois. Made by Linden Glass Company, United States; c. 1903. Glass, bronze and zinc. LACMA. Gift of Max Palevsky. © Frank Lloyd Wright/Artists Rights Society.




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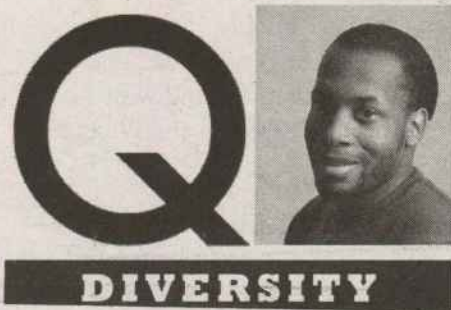
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Bisexuality: Who's Lying About Their Sexuality?

Within the LGBT community there have been many instances of bisexuals being made to feel inadequate about their sexuality. A July 5 New York Times article, "Straight, Gay or Lying? Bisexuality Revisited" by Benedict Carey, suggests what opponents of the gay and lesbian community are trying to prove, using science as their tool.

According to the famous Kinsey scale developed in the mid-20th century, a rank of



0-1 would classify you as straight, 5-6 defines one as homosexual, and anyone from 2-4 could be classified as bisexual. Dr. Alfred Kinsey identified himself as bisexual. Now psychologists are challenging those studies by asking if bisexuality in men actually exists.

In a new study taking place in Chicago and Toronto, researchers are measuring genital arousal in response to images of men and women. The article states that the men who identified themselves as bisexual were found to

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

the article with more intelligent thought on the issue of bisexuality. The Task Force showed that the study had many problems. "The article ... fails to note several serious and obvious questions about the study's methodology and underlying premises," "misstates some of the study's conclusions; and ... fails to reflect the views of any leaders in the bisexual community." The task force went on to say, "The overarching theme of the article, however, is to accept the study's hypothesis that 'arousal is orientation.'"

The author of the Times article does quote researchers who were not involved in this study who say that there is a

need for much more information. However, there is still the question as to why the study was featured on the front page of the Times in the first place. With a headline stating, "You're either gay, straight, or lying," which some gay men have claimed about bisexual men, what justifies this sensational article? It makes it clear to me that its purpose is all about targeting people and their right to privacy. While other arguments within the LGBT community are coming to a head, with parts of the community attacking one another in many respects, there is no need to challenge the many scientific studies which have already reported on the existence of diversity in sexual orientation, especially on the basis of a study which states its results are inconclusive.

To view the article visit:

www.aolsvc.news.aol.com/news/article.adp?id=20050705110009990013&_ccc=5&cid=842

For the full fact sheet in response to the article visit:

www.thetaskforce.org/downloads/NYTBisexualityFactSheet.pdf

Now psychologists are asking if bisexuality even exists.

be mainly attracted to either one sex or the other, usually to other men. The sum of the article can be read to say men who claim to identify themselves as bisexual are actually lying to themselves and society, when in fact they are truly homosexual; bisexuality is some form of initial acceptance, at least for men. On the other hand, previous studies have shown conclusive evidence of bisexuality in women.

It is hard to capture, but many of the remarks attempt to undermine the diversity of sexual orientation. Is there no liquidity in sexuality? Does it have to be one or the other, gay or straight? Is it the conclusion of this study that there is no in between?

In challenging the methods used by the researchers, the question that comes to my mind is how can you determine someone's sexual orientation by measuring the physical arousal of the genitals to pornographic images? Would it not be more accurate to define sexual orientation as a cognitive and physical response?

Recent comments from the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force refute and challenge

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Advocate.com/travel is a great place to get complete Gay and Lesbian travel information.

Advocate.com/travel is a great place to get complete Gay and Lesbian travel information.

The screenshot shows the Advocate.com website interface. At the top, there's a 'Pride 2005' poll section with a 'Get!' button. Below that, there's a search bar and a navigation menu with categories like 'Home', 'News', 'Events', 'Travel', etc. A featured story titled 'Falling in love with San Francisco' is visible, along with a 'Travel Archive' section.

Village near Sheridan Square, a plaque commemorates the Stonewall riots that gave birth to the modern gay civil rights movement.

Just east on Christopher Street is the world's first gay and lesbian bookstore. At the Oscar Wilde Bookshop you can pick up free

copies of the four

copies of the four community publications: *LGNY*, *NY Blade*, *News, HX*, and *Next*. They can also be found at street corner news boxes. Check online for them as well.

A few blocks uptown, on 13th Street near 7th Avenue, the LGBT Community Center hosts social, recreational,

political, religious, and support meetings and events.

In the early 1990s Chelsea, just north of the West Village, became a center of New York's gay male life. If you visit here, don't miss the art galleries, have dinner at one of the dozens of restaurants lining 8th Avenue and clubbing.

Gay New York Tours leads walking tours of gay neighborhoods. The tours are conducted by a gay studies professor and include Chelsea art galleries and gay historical neighborhoods such as the West Village, East Village, and Chelsea.

June is a great time for a visit to New York. Pride Month highlights include the New Festival (a multi-venue, 10-day film fest) and the Heritage of Pride events which include the Gay & Lesbian Pride March, the Rally, Pridefest, and Dance on the Pier. The march, which commemorates the Stonewall

Riots, draws up to a million spectators who line 5th Avenue from 52nd Street down to Washington Square and west to Christopher Street in the West Village.

San Francisco is a beautiful city which would seem to be reason

enough to visit.

Natural beauty notwithstanding, it's attitude has made **SAN FRANCISCO** the Gay and Lesbian Capital of the World. Since the arrival of Alice B. Toklas in 1877, San Francisco has been coming out of the closet and marking a number of "firsts" for LGBT history.

San Francisco is home to the first lesbian organization in North America (1955). And don't forget the day-by-day delights and dalliances of Anna Madrigal and Mouse captured in Armistead Maupin's *Tales of the City*, which

The "look" of New Orleans is easily recognized in this photo with the street sign for Bourbon Street pointing the way.



debuted in the *San Francisco Chronicle* on May 24, 1976.

In 1982, more than 1,300 athletes from all over the world gathered at Kezar Stadium for the first Gay Olympics. Later called the Gay Games, the 2006 event is expected to draw 24,000 participants.

On Feb. 10, 2004 Mayor Gavin Newsom asked the San Francisco County Clerk to create "non-discriminatory" forms and documents that were to be used to apply for and issue marriage licenses. Two days later on Thursday, Feb. 12, Phyllis Lyon and Del Martin were married at 11am, marking another milestone in a union that has spanned 51 years. Over the course of the next few days, thousands of same-sex couples followed in their footsteps.

Openly gay elected officials include the so-called "lavender" ticket of Roberta Achtenberg, Carole Migden and Tom Ammiano in 1990, and the late Harvey Milk (elected to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors on November 8, 1977). A

commemorative plaque mounted at the corner of Market and Castro

Streets at Harvey Milk Plaza is etched with the words: I am all of us.

If you want an inspiring and historical vacation, then San Francisco is the place to visit.

CHICAGO is a very gay-friendly city. The neighborhood commonly referred to as "Boys Town" (Belmont Avenue north to Irving Park and from Halsted St. east to the lakefront) is the center of gay nightlife. There's plenty of daytime action, too.

Gay and Lesbian Pride Week in June

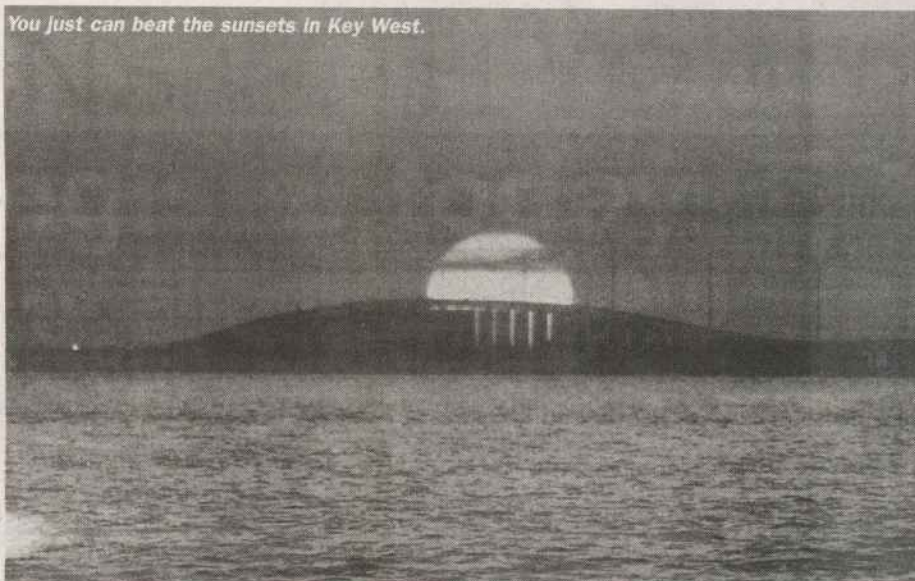
information available on the internet. It's easy to use, loads fast and links you to the hottest gay and lesbian vacation spots around. Each of the featured areas has one or more links to local sites that provide everything you want and need to have a good time in an exotic place.

Advocate Travel has a simple mission: to help lesbians and gay men make the travel choices that are the best and most comfortable for them by sharing our own experiences in a variety of personal, enlightening, and provocative travel stories.

For this special section, we've gathered information on some of the top "national" destinations to tease you into submission. Come on ... you know you want to go somewhere fun and gay.

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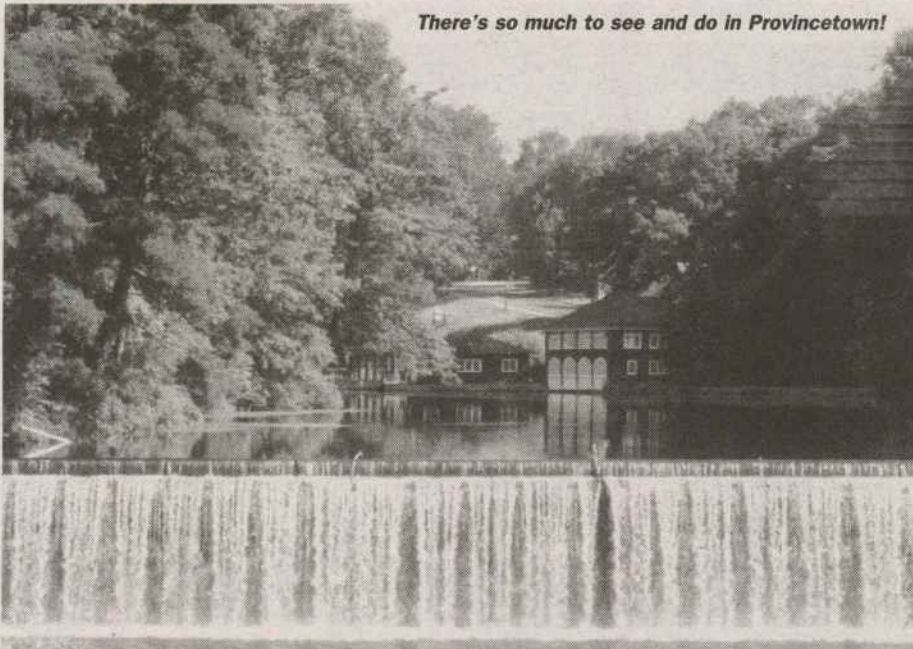
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There's so much to see and do in Provincetown!

communities. Their website offers lots of links to other interesting sites.

The *Impact Gulf South Gay News* is another popular area publication you might want to check out for information on things to see and do.

One other useful website is www.gayneworleans.com, which provides information on lodging, dining, arts, and nightlife as well as links to other information on New Orleans gay life.

The upcoming Psycho Cinéma Diabolique is a New Orleans Halloween event not to be missed.

romance. Here individualism has long been prized. Provincetown has always danced to its own rhythm, and today its music is louder and prouder than ever before.

Here you'll find young couples discovering love for the first time and more seasoned couples marking 30, 40 or 50 years. Two moms or two dads might push by with their strollers. Leathermen, bears, dykes on bikes, transgendered folk, and lots of shirtless hunky boys—you'll spy them all moving easily in the mix. No matter what scene you're looking for, you can find it.

Lie in the sun on awesome beaches

Chicago's night life can't be beat. For a weekend getaway, take Amtrak and enjoy the ride.



North Broadway. It's an excellent independent bookseller with a large lesbian and gay selection. Here and elsewhere in the Lakeview neighborhood, you can pick up several gay publications, including the weekly *Chicago Free Press* (www.chicagofreepress.com) and *Windy City Times* (www.windycitymediagroup.com), and *Gay Chicago Magazine* (www.gaychicagomagazine.com). All these publications cover local news and entertainment.

You can catch the Amtrak to Chicago and not worry about parking your car or getting around. The "el" trains have convenient schedules, stops and ways to pay the fare.

By far one of the most fun places to stay, right in the heart of "Boys Town" is the City Suites Hotel. There's an el stop right down the street and an Ann Sather's just a few doors down.

The Lucky Horseshoe at 3169 North Halsted Street is about two blocks

away and has some of the hottest dancers in Chicago.

They feature male dancers on two stages nightly, plus afternoons on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. There's plenty of room for the mainly male clientele with there full-bars. There's never a cover.

NEW ORLEANS is a very gay-friendly town with a high-profile gay population that contributes much to the color and flavor of the city. You'll find an abundance of establishments serving gay and lesbian interests, from bars to restaurants to community services and businesses.

If you need help finding your way, visit the web site of the Lesbian and Gay Community Center (www.lgccno.net).

Ambush Magazine at 828-A Bourbon Street (www.ambushmag.com) is a weekly entertainment and news publication for the Gulf South's gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender

Halloween XXII runs October 27-30. It begins on Thursday, October 27 with a Dinner and Silent Auction. On Friday, the 28th, drinks, dancing, meet & greet at D-Day Museum-The Hangar on Magazine Street. On Saturday the 29th there's a huge Costume Dance Extravaganza at the Municipal Auditorium in Armstrong Park (costumes are required). At noon on Sunday, October 30th, there's a Gospel Brunch at the House of Blues.

If you love Halloween, then consider spending it in New Orleans this year.

Ever since Native American tribes first canoed their way to the spiraling tip of Cape Cod, **PROVINCETOWN** has been a place of magic and escape. Here, at the end of the world, life is lived on the edge. Provincetown's spirit still calls to the young and the young at heart.

While these days the rest of the country might seem increasingly unwelcome to gay men and lesbians, here in Provincetown you'll find a warm embrace. Gay life is everywhere.

Provincetown has always been many things to many people. A charming New England fishing village, with piers jutting out into the harbor. A bustling art colony of revelry and

and enjoy the "eye candy." Bike or hike along exquisite nature trails. Shop 'til you drop at lively boutiques. Buy art or catch a play. Dance to music spun by DJs from New York, Miami, and beyond. Make new friends. Chances are if you come to Provincetown single, you won't go home that way.

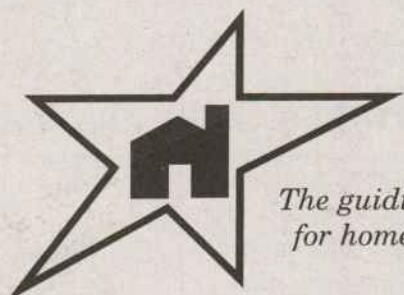
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Ever since the 60's, Key West has provided a home for gays & lesbians, transgenders, drag queens, and an unlimited variety of other characters. Gay authors, artists, designers, lawyers, architects, doctors, hairdressers, bartenders, waiters, actors, and just plain folks flock to this tiny island paradise. Today Key West boasts one of the most diverse populations anywhere in the world, a special place where closets have no doors.

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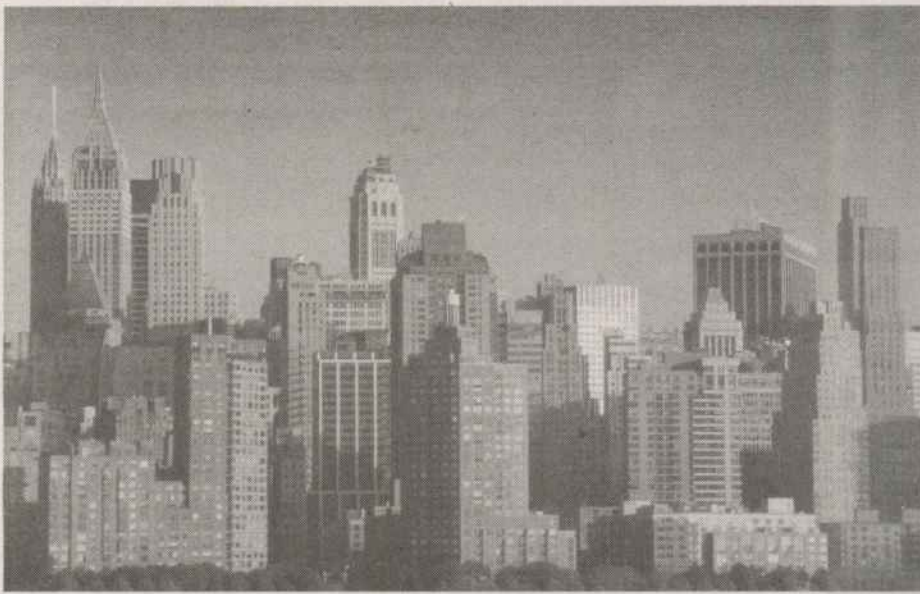
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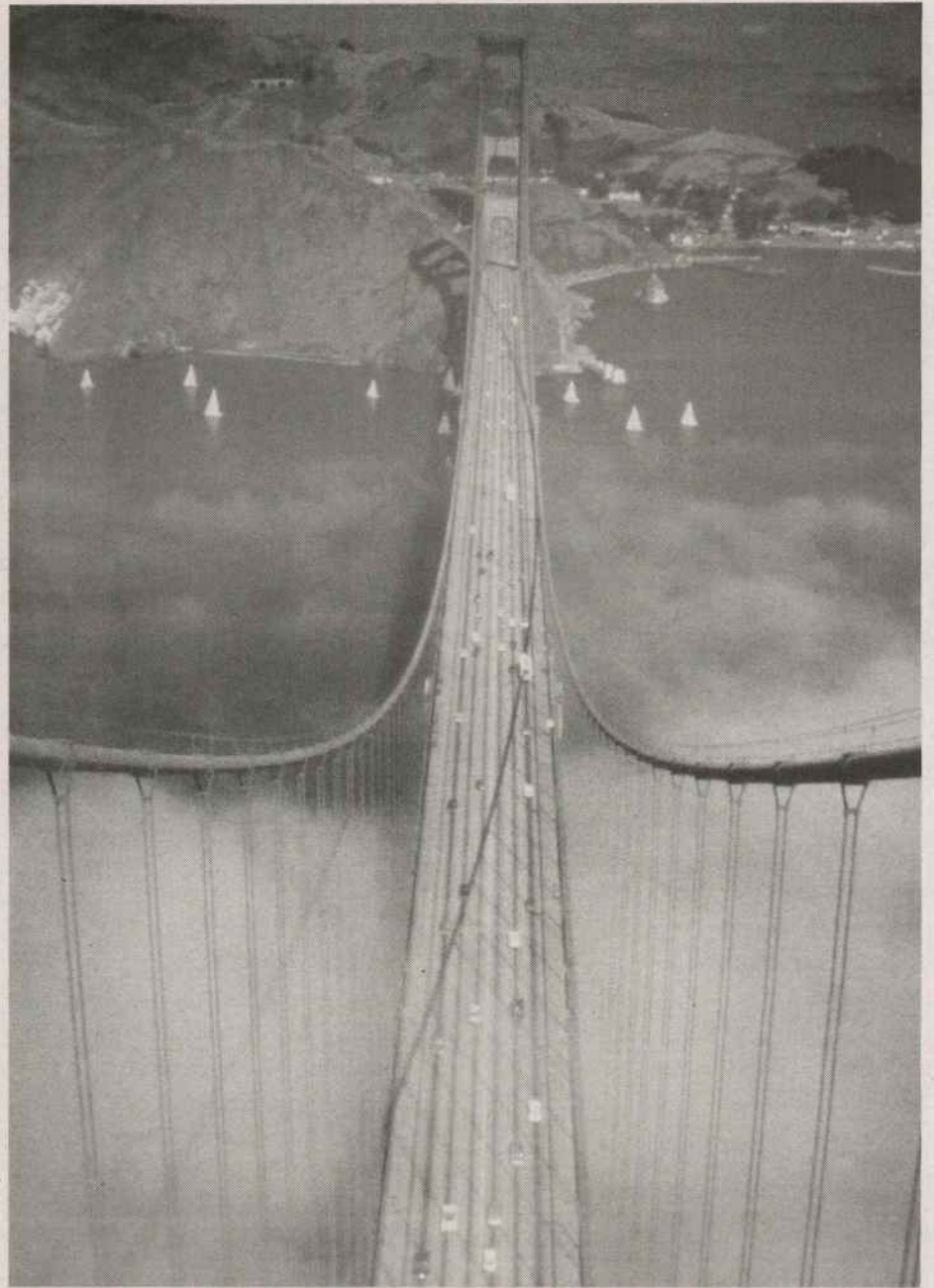


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COMING UP

IN THE SEPTEMBER ISSUE OF
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The International Gay & Lesbian Travel Association (IGLTA) is the world's leading travel trade association committed to growing and enhancing its G&L member's tourism business through education, promotion and networking.

The IGLTA Connections is an essential directory of member travel agents, tour operators, accommodations, airlines, suppliers, tourist boards, publications, and other allied members. Attractive advertising opportunities are available in this indispensable desktop tool that brings IGLTA members' businesses closer to each other.

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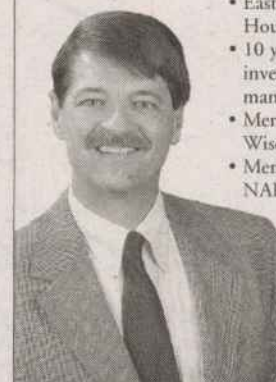


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TOURS FROM 2005

Three great tour packages from 2005 (which will repeated in 2006) included:

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Amerstern Pride will be departing July 31-August 9, 2005.

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When you read the "fine print" at their web site, you'll notice that many tours are a "whole-ship" charter. What does this mean? ... It means it's not just a regular cruise with a few gay couples on it ... it's all gay.

They offer several packages that visit Pride events taking place all over the world. If you want to add some international flavor to your traveling experience, then check out Romance Voyages at www.romancevoyages.com or call 1-866-456-1269.

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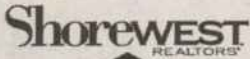
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MUSIC, BOOKS & MOVIES

Roxanne Kupfer (rkupfer@queerlifeneews.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.

Blue Plate Special

**"Red"
John Stevens, CD**

The artists featured in this month's column bring individuality and originality to the increasingly one-size-fits-all world of mass media. Often, decision-makers opt for costly homogeneity and star-studded reproductions of safe templates. With not many exceptions, cultural endeavors which are meant to be eclectic and thought-provoking are yawn-inducing.

In what turns out to be a reassuring thumb to the nose of music's prevailing sameness, John Stevens' debut album is an auspicious statement of independence. It's almost remarkable that a 17-year-old from Buffalo should be eschewing the path of Justin Timberlake and opting instead for that of Lennon and McCartney, Gershwin, Sinatra and Duke Ellington — especially because he was one of the contestants and finalists on American Idol. He had the fortitude to stay free of the hip younger models that most of his fellow teens adopted to ensure lucrative contracts.

Virtually free of warm fuzzies, even when his voice lacks the maturity of that of the Chairman of the Board, or the sophistication of Paul McCartney, Stevens captures much of the best in the American musical essence —

accessibility, easy recognition, optimism. His selections may have been written by legendary composers, but Stevens invites us to sing along.

Hip Beefy Dish

**"Dream On"
Zrazy, CD**

One orders zrazy in a Polish restaurant. One refers to a hip person as zrazy in the streets of Moscow. It's also a perfect name for this innovative Irish band because it sounds just like its lesbian musicians: jazzy, a bit funky, irreverent and very creative.

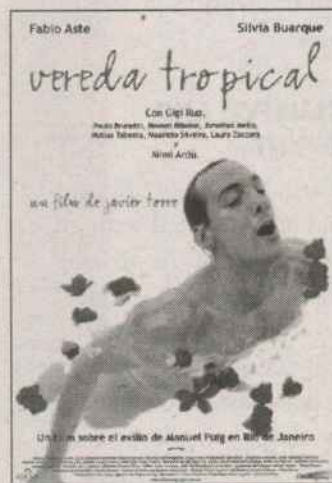
Featuring the combined skills of multi-talented Carole Nelson (alto and soprano saxophone, tin whistle, piano) and Maria Walsh (vocals, flute, percussion), Zrazy have been around since 1992, touring extensively and wowing audiences with musical panache and personal charisma. The 11 tracks on their recent CD blend Maria's wonderful voice with Carole's lyrics — emotional and vibrant but stripped of facile sentimentality. "Just Drive" is one of the tracks that resonates long after you've heard it. "Angel Walking" and "Rain" are sensuous and lyrical. The undulating rhythms of their jazz-influenced music combined with the Irish inflections in Maria Walsh's warm voice create a joyful experience.

Ringmaster of the Bizarre

**"Amphigorey"
Edward Gorey, book**

One of America's most eclectic, creative minds, Edward St. John Gorey (1925-2000) chiseled in words and pictures a merrily macabre world suspended in a vaguely Victorian world. Once exposed to it, one never forgets Gorey's work because most likely one has never come across anything like it.

Although Gorey is not a household name, his work has been familiar for half a century. Since 1980 he has provided the backdrop for the PBS series "Mystery" — swooning heroines in long gowns, sinister men in bowler hats



The Color of Rio

**"Vereda Tropical"
Directed by Javier Torre, DVD**

The past few years have witnessed a dynamic resurgence of Latin American films on the international scene. Perhaps the most energetic and promising film scene is that in Argentina, despite an economy that regularly appears to be on the verge of collapse.

"Vereda Tropical" is a tribute to the life of Argentinean writer and scriptwriter Manuel Puig. Somewhat like Orson Welles, Puig is enjoying a posthumous career as a fictional character — a fitting tribute to a talented writer and political and gay-rights activist.

As a young man in the remote Argentinean pampas, Puig used to be attacked because he liked to dress up as a girl. Cinema was his escape. An opponent of the Peron regime, especially during the reign of Eva Peron, he incurred the critical wrath of the official press. During the 1980s he opted to live in New York and Rio de Janeiro before he settled in Cuernavaca, Mexico, where he died in 1990. Throughout his life he was a prolific writer of plays, novels and movie scripts. "Kiss of the Spider Woman" is his most famous and notorious work; Puig was dissatisfied with both the film and the off-Broadway version.

"Vereda Tropical" focuses on the last few years of Puig's life in Rio: the seductive colorful components of his personal life surrounded by literary friends and rich patrons. The "tropical paradise" is also tinged with melancholy, fear of AIDS and sadness at the prospect of aging.

The film is written and directed by Javier Torre, the scion of a well-known Argentinean artistic family — his father and his grandfather were filmmakers, his mother a writer. Aided by fine performances, Torre offers viewers insightful glimpses into Puig's complex and contradictory personality, moving effortlessly from documentary-like style to fiction, from cinema-within-cinema to Puig's inner thoughts to the outer world of effervescent Rio.

and handlebar mustaches, dark figures playing croquet in a downpour. H. G. Wells' classic "War of the Worlds," reprinted in conjunction with Steven Spielberg's movie version, is stunningly and unsettlingly illustrated by Gorey.

The New Yorker's Stephen Schiff described Gorey as "half bongo-drum beatnik, half fin-de-siècle dandy." The sartorial preferences of this tall, bearded man leaned toward floor-length coyote fur coats (he stopped wearing fur as an animal rights activist and owner of several much-indulged felines) over blue jeans and white Keds. Numerous heavy rings, necklaces and earrings completed his get-up.

He was thought to be British, a myth he rather relished. In fact, he was born in Chicago, drafted into the Army during World War II, and graduated from Harvard with a French degree. He lived in New York and Cape Cod. He traveled overseas only once to a remote area of Scotland.

Gorey taught himself to read when most toddlers are still in diapers, and by age seven he had read "Dracula" and "Alice in Wonderland." Perhaps the former gave him a taste for the horror and the latter for the whimsical. Mostly self-taught as an artist, he was a prolific illustrator and writer. Gorey wore his erudition lightly.

Something of a recluse, he did not behave like one. He ate in the same diners on the Cape where he graciously signed autographs. For three decades he attended every performance of the New York City Ballet until the death of

his idol, George Balanchine. He never married and he avoided direct answers about his sexual orientation. "I'm neither one thing nor the other particularly," he said in an interview. "I've never said I was gay and I've never said that I wasn't."

His work, marginal for many years, is today enjoyed by many faithful devotees. Best known and best selling are his anthologies "Amphigorey," "Amphigorey Too" and "Amphigorey Also." Gorey himself did not particularly like the anthologies because "the originals were carefully designed as small books." The originals are now difficult to find, having become very pricey collector's pieces.

Included in "Amphigorey" is "The Curious Sofa." Subtitled "a pornographic" work, it is penned under the pucky nom de plume Ogdred Weary. In pure Gorey style, the story leaves everything to the imagination. The tale follows a grape-eating damsel through a series of unspecified encounters with various "well-favored" men, women and even a sheep dog.

Because many of his drawings were of children, Gorey was often mistaken for a juvenile illustrator. A glimpse at "The Gashlycrumb Tinies" makes one understand what a misleading description that is. Subverting the Victorian template of instructive, moralizing alphabet books, Gorey goes something like this: "A is for Amy who fell down the stairs," "B is for Basil assaulted by bears," "R is for Rhoda consumed by a fire." The actual demise of the tots is never illustrated because suggestion can be so much more perilous.

"The Bug Book" and "The Wuggly Ump" are among his few stories executed in color. But behind the lovely pastels, Gorey's somber comic vision is lurking. Gorey always insisted he held no morbid relish. "I see no disparity between my books and everyday life... I write about everyday life."

Another book, "The West Wing," was dedicated to Edmund Wilson (who was the first to bestow critical notice to Gorey and whom Gorey greatly respected), because that great literary critic once decried the "lamelessness" of the writing. This is a story without a text. In "The Doubtful Guest" the genteel life of a family is disrupted by a mournful, furry, inexplicable creature wearing tennis shoes. The tennis shoes are among other favorite recurring images: cats, fur coats, umbrellas, bicycles, funerary urns shaped like turnips, and men whose heads are affixed to their necks horizontally and who wear things nobody wears anymore.

Gorey's pen-and-ink illustrations and hand-lettered texts recall Japanese art and the works of Gustave Dore, Aubrey Beardsley and even Goya. His prose reads by turns like Dadaist writing, haiku and television soap opera. "I think my drawing is not terribly good but I do know how to illustrate a book, better than most."

Perhaps New York magazine said it best: "When the world seems especially fragile, there is nothing more reassuring than a story that probably won't happen to you. For some, solace is no further than the latest ghastly murder mystery... or an Edward Gorey book."

So enjoy! But take it seriously at your peril.

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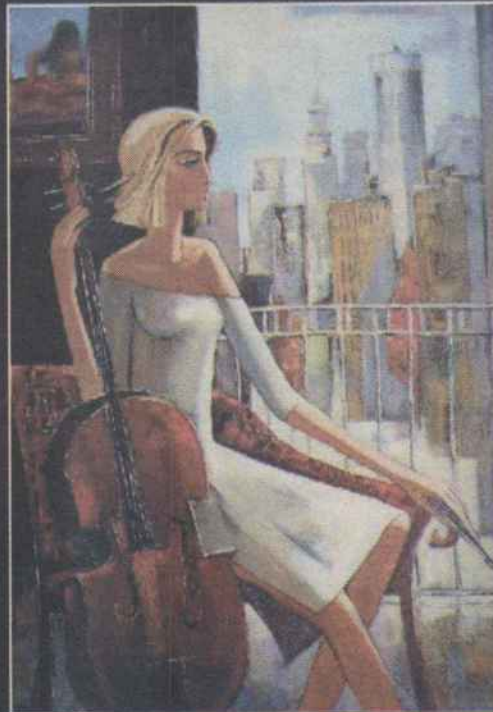
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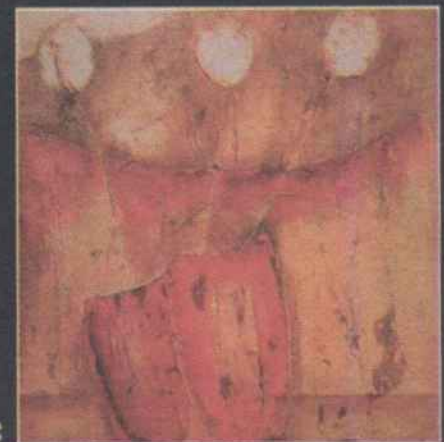


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Take It from a Redhead



DECORATING

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 antiquities. Orientations now offers a full range of interior design services. Stearns is an allied member of the American Society of Interior Designers.

“Look, look, look to the rainbow!” is Ella Logan’s rosy advice in the musical “Finian’s Rainbow.” Color inspirations are all there. It may or may not lead to a pot of gold, but the rainbow reveals all colors in their intensities and hues.

In decorating, a particular color is selected for all sorts of reasons: It’s long-lasting and safe, it goes well with what you already have, etc. But the best reason to pick a color is that you love it — it should be a visceral reaction that says, “I gotta have it.”

When decorators first start working with clients, they often ask what their preferences are, what they see the rooms looking like, how they want them to be used, and how they want to feel in them and about them.

Red is a strong and wonderful color in all its variations.

Along with these basic queries is a discussion of color. Watching a client react to ideas of color and actual responses (both physical and emotional) are all clues and guidelines for us to work with.

Periodically, this column will be devoted to specific colors, starting with the primaries: red, blue, and yellow. This month the subject is red.

Red — the color at the end of the spectrum, next to orange and opposite violet.

Red can be so many things to so many — the color of blood, fire and danger in red lights, stop signs, and red flags; the color of safety and rescue in fire engines and the Red Cross.

There are the reds of richness and royalty: flags, coats of arms, oriental rugs, leather chairs, and deep maroon draperies.

The orangey-red of the Swedish horse, the sacred color in Japan used in shrines, Chinese lacquer.

The reds of the earth: terra cotta, granite, clay and stone, as well as the minerals ruby, garnet and coral.

The lushness of the tropics: hibiscus, orchids and bird of paradise; parrots, parakeets and macaws, as well as the North American roses, carnations, geraniums and cardinals, scarlet tanagers and robin’s breasts.

The ecclesiastical reds: church seasons, vestments, flags, altar hangings and stained-glass windows.

Red can evoke memories and nostalgia: the red of barns, neon signs and advertising logos — Lucky Strike, Pegasus and Coca-Cola.

Red can be playful: red wagons, sand pails, and balloons.

Red, in all its shades, can make your mouth water: tomatoes, beets, cherries, apples and watermelons.

Red can provide eye-warmth in kitchens: Aga stoves, porcelain sinks and red-and-white checked tablecloths.

Red can be the look of love: hearts, flowers and wine.

Red is the color of celebration: poinsettias, fireworks, valentines and cranberries.

Red is the color of visiting dignitaries and honors: red carpets and red ribbons.

Red is all-American from coast to coast: Maine’s lobster pot markers and the cooked lobster itself and San Francisco’s Golden Gate bridge.

When the red of the sunset moves closer to its orange neighbor in the spectrum, it can become shimmery copper to bittersweet in hue. Red orange can make you feel hungry. When red is closer to violet and becomes the bright pink of Pepto Bismol, it can curb violence.

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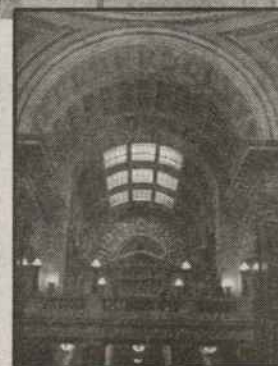
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ASK THE VET

Dr. Jane Pohlman is a veterinary manager at the Wisconsin Humane Society. She has been employed with WHS for nine years.

Dear Ask the Vet:

I recently obtained a pit bull puppy and my neighbors are concerned that when the dog becomes an adult he may not be friendly. What can I do to show that I will be a responsible neighbor?

It is important to start by saying that many pit bulls do make great family pets! Your neighbors are concerned because of many reports of serious human injuries due to bites from this breed. Most of the dogs involved in these situations were not properly socialized. However, a properly socialized pit bull can make a great addition to a family.

Owning a pit bull and showing that you are a responsible neighbor involves many things. First, take your puppy to a veterinarian for a health check up to make sure he or she is healthy. Continue veterinary visits regularly for health checkups throughout your dog's lifetime. Healthy dogs are happier dogs! Also, have your dog spayed or neutered when your veterinarian recommends it to remove the source of fluctuating hormones that can alter an animal's mood.

Second, socialize your new puppy to a

variety of different situations. Arrange for experiences meeting many types of people including different ages, races and sexes. You also want to introduce and socialize your puppy to other puppies and dogs. It may help to attend training classes. Not only will your puppy learn basic obedience commands, but the trainer may also be able to recommend a group of dogs to help your puppy be socialized. When researching training classes, look for a trainer who uses only positive reinforcement, as aversive training will put the dog on the defensive and has the potential to make a dog respond inappropriately in new situations. You may also want to have your dog certified as a Canine Good Citizen. Passing this test means that your dog is well socialized and knows basic obedience commands.

Third, there is a special City of Milwaukee ordinance that addresses owning pit bulls. The city ordinance specifies who can walk the dog and what training is required and includes requirements for installing a fence or kennel in your yard to contain the dog.

Lastly, research homeowner's insurance companies. Some homeowner's insurance companies will not insure homes where pit bulls live. For assistance in locating companies that will insure pit bulls, please contact the Wisconsin Humane Society.

Some aggressive pit bulls have hurt people. If your dog displays any behavior that concerns you, contact the Wisconsin Humane Society for a behavior consultation. Remember that most pit bulls can and do make great family pets!

Dogs behaving badly?

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A Chicken Story

Peacocks. It all started with peacocks. One day, my partner Ken and I were at a local garden center and were both really fascinated with all the peacocks they had roaming around. Since we'd recently bought our place in the country, I thought that Ken would really like waking up each morning and watching a few of our own. I planned on being a bit sneaky and surprising him. Unfortunately, the more I looked into what it took, the more problems I found. For example, have you ever heard just how loud a peacock can be? These giant beauties have a set of lungs on them and, boy, oh boy, do they know how to use them.

It was too late though — having considered raising animals on what we had started calling our hobby farm, I was determined. We were going to have livestock living in our barn. So, off to Farm & Fleet to order some chickens. (I didn't know you could do that either.) Five was the minimum, so that's what I ordered.

After a month or so, our new chicken coop was ready and it was time to pick up our newly hatched chicks. Five beautiful Rhode Island Reds that would soon be providing breakfast for us everyday. In the meantime, they lived in luxury. Their coop had a glass patio door, lots of windows, and some potted trees. Anything less just wouldn't do.

Who knew that little chicks were so cute? By now, Ken was struck by the livestock bug, and he wanted his big beautiful birds. Ken had seen the long, flowing tail on a Phoenix rooster in a catalogue; that's what he had to have. Now it was mail-order time. (Yes, you really can order baby chicks through the mail.) Only problem was, the minimum order for mail-order was 15 chicks.

By the end of our first summer with chickens, we had over 20. One got broody on us over the winter and hatched five more.



PETS

By Richard Goldberg

Before we knew it, we had almost a dozen eggs a day. With the 25 new chicks we added to the flock this spring, we'll soon have over two dozen eggs a day.

Most people show up for a dinner party with a bottle of wine. Not us, we bring farm-fresh eggs. Brown eggs, green eggs, blue eggs (really, some of our chickens lay colored eggs). Lots of eggs. We've yet to eat one of our chickens ourselves, but we have donated a few roosters to a local food pantry that accepts live chickens.

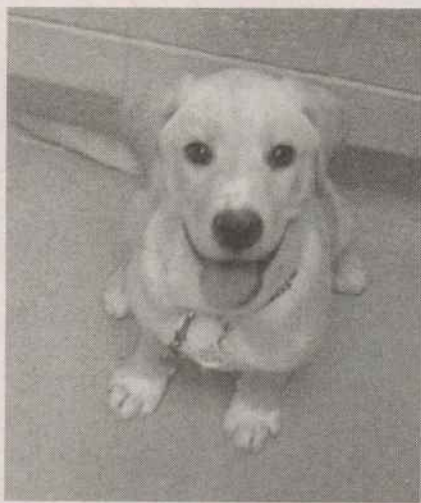
Our chickens have become the center of attention at our place. First-time visitors don't ask for a tour of the house anymore, they want to see the chickens and their accommodations.

Ken and I spend many hours watching our flock. Each chicken has a personality all its own. We still haven't taught them to play fetch, but they've all learned to come when called.

Do you love animals?

Share your pet stories with with the readers of Q Life. Send a brief description of your pet story to qpets@queerlifeneews.com

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Sept. 9 (6:30 p.m.); Sept. 14 (6:30 p.m.)

Adult Manners Classes

Ideal for dogs six months and older; six-week session is \$80 for a Wisconsin Humane Society adopted dog and \$100 for all other dogs

Dates: Aug. 9 (7:45 p.m.); Aug. 20 (noon); Aug. 25 (6:30 p.m.)
Sept. 9 (7:45 p.m.); Sept. 14 (7:45 p.m.)

All classes are held at the Wisconsin Humane Society, 4500 W. Wisconsin Ave. Register by calling (414) 431-6156. Mention this ad when signing up and receive \$5 off your session.

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Come Out, Come Out, Wherever You Are ...

There is nothing healthier than just being yourself. Yet even with hit shows like "Will and Grace" and "Queer as Folk," so many people are afraid to come out. It might be a family issue or job related. The fact is that many people will like you better when you don't pretend.

In this month's column I want to talk about the many artists, dancers and celebrities who are enjoying success as openly gay men and women. Years ago people in the arts had to hide their true feelings. I don't want to use any names, as that is still a sensitive area for some people, but in today's creative world you can now come out of the closet.

Is Anyone Really Straight?

I have been in show biz for a good many successful years. Prior to that, I was a commercial artist. In my spare time, I also did some freelance modeling. Yes, there is such a thing as a "casting couch!" I truly believe many stars and artists had to "put out" in order to make it. Talent always wins out (don't forget that) in the long run, but getting your start can be very difficult. Yes, you can remain "the virgin," but you might not get that break.

Sorry, but it is a competitive business. I remember a casting call for a commercial. I walked into a room of nearly 75 great-looking men. When I auditioned, the agent asked me to strip naked. I remember leaving the audition thinking about how lucky that casting agent was seeing all those hot men. It turned out both the commercial and the agent were phony. Many female models also go through the same degrading situations.

In Chicago, I worked for a director who used to ask me, and other cast members, out for drinks after the show. He would try to get us drunk and also try to get us into the sack. I went to the Actors Union to complain. The



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

Union was there to protect me. They said, "He hires lots of working actors and you should just be an adult and deal with it."

So I believe every big star has been approached and it is part of the business to learn how to handle it. You grow up fast! Having the "talent" is not always enough. Be strong!

So Many 'Closet' Performers

Then there are the artists that live dual lives and try to hide their true feelings. They choose to get married and start a family. After several years of working in the arts, their true feelings can surface. This can be difficult for both the individual and their family. How sad. Just be yourself! You only go around once on this earth.

Recently a few good friends have shed their hairpieces and decided to go "talent." Wow, they look great! So the message of this issue is to just be yourself — come out and be proud.

Naked Boys and Lots of Summer Shows

Soulstice Theatre presented "Once on This Island," a musical choreographed by Michael

Endter. Fireside Theater is opening that great baseball musical "Damn Yankees." If you loved "Hairspray," you will love the wigs and music of the musical "The Taffetas" at the Chamber Theatre.

Please try to go to Spring Green to see **The American Players**. This is one of the finest summer theater troupes in the country. Also, if you love the classics, catch **David Flores, Marilyn White** and **Carrie Williams** (McGhee) in "Richard III" at **Off the Wall Theatre**.

The big bouncing balls of a musical "Naked Boys Singing" will be the next event for **Uncommon Theatre** at **The Milwaukee Gay Arts Center**. This show has had a long run off-Broadway, and is currently still running in Chicago. Uncommon is proud to get the first area rights to this little (or should I say BIG) naked wonder. Check it out!

R.S.V.P. has decided to bring you the 20th anniversary production of "Vampire Lesbians of Sodom" in April 2006. The "star" of the show will be a local favorite.

Last Month's Trivia Answer

"Kiss Me Kate" was filmed in 3D but then later released in Cinemascope.

This Month's Trivia Question

Which '70s rock musical featured full frontal nudity for both men and women?

Well, I have to run — lucky **Aunt Blanche** is doing full body makeup for "Naked Boys Singing."



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The Gay Peoples Union: A Quieter, More Polite Approach to Gay Power

By the mid-1970s, cultural debates surrounding gay and lesbian sexuality had been almost entirely reframed as a struggle for social rights rather than sexual liberation. This shift had enormous implications



for the future direction of gay and lesbian politics. While the gay liberation movement focused on sexual liberation for everyone (including straights) and proposed nothing less than overthrow of the capitalist state

through militant action, the gay rights movement took a different approach. It saw gays and lesbians as unjustly denied the social privileges due them as equal citizens of a democratic state, and sought remedy through education and legislative reform.

By 1972, Gay Liberation Front - Milwaukee, our city's most vibrant and visible gay lib organization, had faded from the political landscape. Other activist groups followed — such as the New Gay Underground and the Radical Queens — but none had staying power. The space left vacant by the radical left was filled instead by a politically moderate organization, the Gay Peoples Union (GPU), which had been in existence since 1970. GPU was conscious of its place in history. In its very first newsletter, the editor disclaimed association with the radical left and affirmed that the "Gay Peoples Union is not a radical political organization... We carry forward the ideas of education and fellowship.... [W]e are a one-issue organization devoted exclusively to homosexual welfare and equal rights."

As the editor explained, GPU took a "quieter, more polite" approach to social change. Over the course of a decade, it amassed a breathtaking number of accomplishments in areas of gay health, legislative reform and public education.

GPU produced the first regularly scheduled, scripted weekly gay radio program in the nation. "Gay Perspective" ran on Milwaukee



HISTORY

Michael Doylen (mdoylen@queerlifeneews.com) is the head of the UWM Archives Department and Milwaukee LGBT History Project member.

WZMF from February to July 1971 and then on WUWM from October 1971.

The organization's news magazine, GPU News, started publication in October 1971 and had a circulation of 2,600 issues by 1978.

In February 1972, GPU presented testimony before the Senate Assembly Judiciary in support of a bill designed to eliminate all criminal sanctions against sexual acts between consenting adults in private.

GPU collaborated with the local, mainstream media on at least two occasions, working with the Milwaukee Journal in February 1972 on its six-part series "The Gay Revolution" and with WTMJ-TV in September 1973 on a five-part series with the sorry title "Some Call Them Gay."

In April 1972, GPU hosted the Midwest Homophile Conference, which featured nationally known gay and lesbian rights leaders Frank Kameny and Barbara Gittings.

GPU organized a 10-day gay and lesbian pride celebration in July 1973.

In October 1974, GPU opened the GPU Examination Center for VD, precursor of the BESTD Clinic now located on Brady Street.

In mid-1975, GPU established the city's first gay and lesbian community center in a rented flat at 1568 N. Farwell Ave. The Farwell Center housed the GPU Library and the VD Clinic.

During the 1980s, a host of other Milwaukee gay and lesbian groups emerged within existing social institutions: in businesses, sports, theater, health care, addiction recovery programs, and the media. It's hard to imagine that any of these groups would have been possible without GPU, which provided the foundation for a publicly visible, unapologetic community organized around the "radical" idea of equal rights for all adult citizens, regardless of sexual orientation.

It's unfortunate that, given the prominence of GPU in the 1970s — the formative decade of a publicly visible gay and lesbian community in Milwaukee — so little of this organization's history has survived and is available for study. Documentation that might shed further light on GPU's history and help researchers to understand the history of Milwaukee's gay and lesbian community more broadly appears either to remain in private hands or to have been destroyed or lost.

The Milwaukee LGBT History Project wants to be sure GPU's history is saved! Contact me at Q Life to learn how you can help.

Outwords Books 'Top-5 Picks for August'

Exclusive to Q Life. Latest Gay and Lesbian Fiction Releases!

For the Girls:

1. "Black by Gaslight" by Nene Adams

Lady St. Clair, a consulting detective, and her companion Rhiannon Moore tangle with a killer in Victorian London.

2. "Call Shotgun" by Jamie Clevenger

Kelly Haldon's idyllic summer plans are sidetracked as she begins an investigation into the death of an ex-military officer involved in a gay political action group.

3. "Justice Served" by Raddyffe

Newly promoted Detective Lieutenant Rebecca Frye once again assembles her unorthodox team of lovers and friends to bring a deadly informant in the police department to justice.

4. "Hunter's Way" by Gerri Hill

Homicide detective Tori Hunter teams up with a volatile new partner, Samantha Kennedy, to solve the cases of a serial killer and drug deals gone bad.

5. "Lesbian Pulp Fiction" edited by K. V. Forrest

Forrest explores the sexually intrepid world of 1950s lesbian paperback novels.

For the Boys:

1. "The Brothers Bishop" by Bart Yates

Yates crafts another poignant and elegant work — the powerful story of two brothers who discover just how difficult it is to go home again.

2. "The Boys in the Brownstone" by Kevin Scott

Snow traps the eccentric crowd at the Brownstone bar on the night before the night before Christmas — unleashing a whirlwind of love stories.

3. "Third & Heaven" by Ben Patrick Johnson

Third & Heaven, a little diner in West Hollywood, plays host to four friends who, over breakfast each week, share love, tears and laughter. www.thirdandheaven.com

4. "A House Is Not a Home" by James Earl Hardy

In the final "B-Boy Blues" novel, James Earl Hardy brings his beloved couple — Mitchell, the Buppie from Brooklyn, and Raheim, the home-boy from Harlem — into the 21st century.

5. "Nerds Who Kill" by Mark Richard Zubro

Death at a sci-fi convention turns out to be a case of Murder Most Geeky in the latest in Zubro's series featuring gay Chicago Police Detective Paul Turner.

Onward to a Golden Year!

QL: Describe your relationship.

Ray: We are a loving committed couple. Each of us sees the other as the most important person in the world. Knowing that has been the source of our strength and has seen us through many difficult situations, including the discrimination our community faces.

Richard: Ditto.

QL: What attracted you to each other?

Ray: Richard's look, his touch and being in each other's arms.

Richard: For me, it was simply love at first sight.

QL: What is the happiest time you had together?

Richard: The day we met in 1956.

Ray: And every night we go to sleep together and every morning we wake next to each other. No matter what, we have each other. So our happiest time is always today.



COUPLES

Richard Taylor, 80, is a U.S. Navy Veteran of WWII. He is an avid reader and enjoys cooking. Ray Vahey, 67, began his career in communications as a messenger at 16 and is now a consultant, easing his way towards retirement. They have been together for 49 years. Their 50th anniversary next year will be a benchmark — they are heading for their 75th anniversary in 2031. Their interest now is to obtain justice, equality and dignity for themselves and their community.

QL: What are your hopes for this relationship?

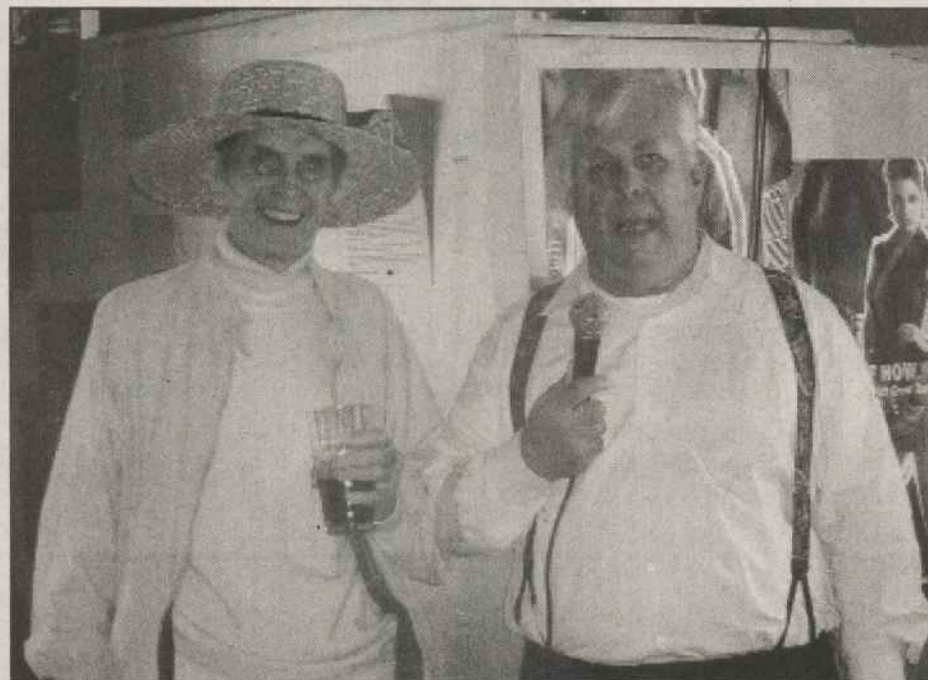
Ray: My hope is that knowledge of our relationship will encourage others. Coming

out in a public way is a very personal decision. We chose to be out to advance the struggle for equality. Now we see that no matter how deep the closet, we are visible because the door is transparent. I encourage anyone who feels able — come out and join the chorus! The more voices speaking up, the more people reaching out will convince more and more people to see the justice of our cause. A civil marriage and all of the recognition, dignity, benefits, obligations and responsibilities that go with it are rightfully ours. Call it marriage, union or whatever, so long as it has all of the benefits and obligations of a marriage.

The battle before us now is to defeat the despicable, divisive, dehumanizing proposed amendment in the legislature. It was born out of ignorance, suspicion, fear and hate. A reporter asked, "What will you do if it passes in the legislature." The answer is that we will pick ourselves up, dust ourselves off and go on from there. The great Civil Rights Movement was not just a series of victories. It took decades of sacrifice and struggle by millions to overcome the oppression of centuries. We are still far short of their goal of complete equality, but we can find no better guides than those great Americans.

Young gay people should be able to form their lives without the anxiety, abuse and alienation that we experienced. All members of the community should take their rightful place as equals in society. We are up to the task. See you on the ramparts!

Richard: Agitate and boycott — those are the only words these bigoted politicians understand. They and their corporate and individual backers are attempting to disenfranchise hundreds of thousands of us in Wisconsin and many millions in the United States. Don't let them get away with it! Speak up now and be liberated! When you buy, be sure to boycott all homophobic companies. We have market power, let's use it!



Richard Taylor (L) and Ray Vahey.

Lazy Days of Sports

As we reach well into the lazy days of summer, we are reminded of two very important questions. First, "Why can't this weather stay like this in Milwaukee year round?" and second, "How many weeks before we get to see Brett Farve and the Green Bay Packers?" For those of you that know me, you know that I bleed Green and Gold. I am already stocking up on antidepressants for when the day finally comes that Farve decides to retire. But in the meantime, there are some hot sports winding down their season while others are beginning once again.

Both the dart leagues and the bowling leagues are once again starting up their seasons before Labor Day weekend. Teams are now forming all over the city, so if you are interested in getting a team together, please contact your favorite watering hole.

Tennis

The MMTCC (Milwaukee Metro Tennis Club) is into the meat of its schedule with Walker's Pint taking the lead in the standings with 36 points followed closely by Boom and Our 'N About with 33 points each and Triangle with 32 points.

Due to scheduling conflicts, game times have switched from noon and 2 p.m. on Sundays to 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. Please make a note of the new times.

Softball

The weather once again turned in Saturday Softball Beer League's favor during the last few weeks, with temperatures in the 80s and bountiful sunshine. The games have heated up as well. The week of July 16, the Switch Hitters (a



new SSBL team this year) broke out the bats and busted up the BestD Clinic 25 to 14. Congratulations also go out to another new team this year, Q Life. Q Life, managed by Steve Ahl, won their first game of the year in convincing fashion by beating Triangle.

On July 23, the SSBL took its teams and



SPORTS

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

players on the SSBL bus and renewed its friendship with Madison by playing a full day's worth of games at Olbrich Park. Each team played a double-header with fundraisers afterward at both the Shamrock and Club 5. There was also a women's exhibition game that pitted the Milwaukee women versus the Madison women. Details on the outcome of this exhibition game will be in the next edition of the sports column.

One of SSBL's Madison teams, the Rough Riders, also competed in the championship game of the MSCR league. The Rough Riders are trying to make it two years running as champions. Details to come in the next issue.

On Aug. 14, the Milwaukee Kosmos will travel to sunny San Diego to compete in its first Gay Softball World Series games in almost eight years. This team is truly an SSBL team with players coming from eight of the 13 teams that play in the SSBL this year. Good luck to the Milwaukee Kosmos, and hopefully you all will be able to show that Wisconsin softball is alive and well.

Last, the Dairyland Classic is fast approaching. In less than a month teams will descend on Milwaukee to compete over Labor Day weekend for the coveted stained-glass trophies. Who will win this year? What memories will be made? What drama will transpire? For these and all the exciting details stay tuned, sports fans!

Games will all be played on Saturday and Sunday at Wick Field. There will be opening ceremonies this year to commemorate the start of the 28th tournament held in Milwaukee. Please come out and support your favorite Milwaukee teams and meet some new people from teams from around the United States and Canada.

Teams are already coming from New York City, Minneapolis, Chicago, Toronto, Boston, Madison and St. Paul.

Hang on, sports fans, it's going to be an extremely fast-paced late summer. Hope you're ready for it!

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Arts

Calendar

Out Now

It's a Bird, It's a Plane, It's Superman. Campy Broadway musical from the '60s about Clark Kent's alter ego. Off the Wall Theatre, 127 E. Wells St., Milwaukee, 414-327-3552. Through Aug. 7

Beauty and the Beast. Fireside Dinner Theatre Business Hwy 26 South, Fort Atkinson, 800-477-9505. Through Aug. 14.

Men on Art. Art Bar, 722 E. Burleigh St., Milwaukee 414-372-7880 artbar-riverwest.com. Through Sep. 1.

Art in the Mail: Milwaukee Mail Art. Bay View Book Arts Gallery 2693 S. Kinnickinnic Ave., Milwaukee rkinney@sbcglobal.net. Through Sep. 4.

Diabolique: Images of the Devil in Contemporary Art Walker's Point Center for the Arts 911 W. National Ave., Milwaukee. 414-672-2787. wpc-milwaukee.org. Through Oct. 1

Candida, The Merry Wives of Windsor, Tartuffe. American Players Theatre, Hwy C, Spring Green. 608-588-2361, playinthewoods.org. Through Oct. 2, various times.

Parallel Play. Watercolor, acrylic, and mixed media paintings and wallcloths by Thea Kovac and Dan Schuchart. Gallery 1661 Danceworks, 1661 N. Water St., Milwaukee. Through Oct. 15

Cutting Loose. Pabst Mansion, 2000 W. Wisconsin Ave., Milwaukee, 414-931-0808. pabstmansion.com. Through Oct. 30

Comedy on Broadway. Skylight Opera Theatre, Broadway Theatre Center, 158 N. Broadway, Milwaukee, 9:30pm. Free. 414-291-7800. Repeats every Thursday

Thursday, August 4

Telling Stories: Dance that Speaks Volumes. Through this collaboration of paintings, dance and poetry, stories of human individuality, so often overlooked, will be told. Off Broadway Theatre, 342 N. Water St., Milwaukee. 7:30pm, 414-278-0765. Though Aug. 6

Friday, August 5

Q Pick

45 Cakes, Owner Don Krause's birthday bash! Live music with Fat Pig. Art Bar, 722 E. Burleigh St., Milwaukee, 9pm, 414-372-7880. artbar-riverwest.com

Saturday, August 6

Q Pick

The "I DON'T Want It Back" Tour. Dirty Found Magazine. Dirty founders Jason Bitner, Arthur Jones and friends celebrate the best raunchy lost and discovered stuff from around the world. "Too nasty for our PG-13 sister, we were forced to create a new home for these *special* finds." Witness a pervy Powerpoint presentation, experience the Dirty Found XXX Survey, and share your smutty finds. For adults only! Admission includes a free copy of Dirty Found #1. Hotcakes Gallery, 3379 N. Pierce St., Milwaukee, 9pm. \$10, dirtyfound.com, hotcakesgallery.com

The Play's the Thing. American Players Theatre, Hwy C, Spring Green, 608-588-2361. playinthewoods.org. Through Oct. 2, various times

Q Pick

SONA Women's Music Festival. Featuring Lis Harvey, Wendy Bugatti, Amelia Royko, Ellis, Ember Swift, and Melissa Ferrick., UW Memorial Union Terrace, 800 Langdon St., Madison, 6pm. Free. 608-262-2215. sonamusicfest.com

Thursday, Aug. 11

Lemon Sky. Dramatists Theatre. In Lanford Wilson's autobiographical drama, we journey through the mind of Alan as he looks back on his relationship with his abusive father and his attempts to reconcile their stormy past. Bucketworks, 1319 N. MLK Dr., Milwaukee, 7:30pm. \$14, \$10 seniors, students, and members. 414-305-1324. bucketworks.org. Through Aug. 28, various times

Luis Diaz Quintet. Latin Jazz. Alterra Coffee Roasters, 1701 N. Lincoln Memorial Dr., Milwaukee, 7pm. Free. 414-291-5700

Q Pick

Naked Boys Singing. Uncommon Theatre Company, Milwaukee Gay Arts Center, 703 S. 2nd St., Milwaukee. 414-248-6481

Open Mic Night. Broad Vocabulary, 2241 S. Kinnickinnic Ave., Milwaukee. Sign-up 5:30 pm, show 6pm. 414-744-8384. broadvocabulary.com

Friday, August 12

Experience The Latin Dance Company. Milwaukee's hottest salsaeros and salsaeras take the stage, presenting the hottest Latin American street dances and a post-performance lesson at Danceworks for all ticket holders. Part of Latin Rhythm Weekend. Danceworks, 1661 N. Water St., Milwaukee, 7:30pm. 414-277-8480. danceworks1661.org

Q Pick

Pink Banana Theatre's Summer Show. Works by Wesley Tank, Michael Moynihan, Peter Woods and a short dance sequence by local choreographer Nick Kane will be featured. Pink Banana uses actors, directors and tech specialists from the community and the local universities, unifying the talents of both town and gown. Brady Street Pharmacy 1696 N. Astor St., Milwaukee. 8pm. \$7, \$5 students 414-347-0439. Through Aug. 20

The Taffetas. Chamber Theatre, Broadway Theatre Center, 158 N. Broadway, Milwaukee, 8pm. 414-276-8842. chamber-theatre.com. Through Aug. 28, various times

Saturday, August 13

31st Annual Morning Glory Craft Fair. Silent auction held Saturday only on the stage of the Peck Pavilion at the Marcus Center and proceeds benefit Artists Working in Education. The Marcus Center for the Performing Arts and Red Arrow Park. 929 N. Water St., Milwaukee, 10am-5pm. Free. wdcc.org. Repeats Aug. 14

Encuentro! Live flamenco performance for Latin Rhythm Weekend. Danceworks, 1661 N. Water St., Milwaukee, 7:30pm. 414-277-8480. danceworks1661.org

Macbeth. American Players Theatre, Hwy C, Spring Green, 608-588-2361. playinthewoods.org. Through Oct. 2, various times

Sunday, August 14

Kelly Clarkson. Resch Center, 1901 S. Oneida St., Green Bay. 7:30pm. pmiwi.com

Monday, August 15

Terry Firkins. A retrospective of several of this artist's favorite painting themes. DeLind Fine Art, 400 E. Mason St., Milwaukee, 414-271-8525. Through Sep. 30.

Chris Squire, Alan White, and Steve Howe. WKLH, Interstate Music/VH-1. Pabst Theater 144 E. Wells St., Milwaukee, 7:30pm. 414-286-3663. pabsttheater.org

Thursday, August 18

Kasey Chambers. Potawatomi Casino, 1721 W. Canal St., Milwaukee, 8pm. 800-729-7244. paysbig.com

Q Pick

Mark Richard Zubro. Gay mystery writer will read and sign copies of his latest book, "Nerds Who Kill." Outwords Books, 2710 N. Murray Ave., Milwaukee, 7pm. Free. 414-963-9089. outwordsbooks@msn.com

Pretty Girls Make Graves. Mad Planet, 533 E. Center St., Milwaukee, 9pm. mad-planet.net

Friday, August 19

Art-to-Art. A showcase for six emerging choreographers and composers. Danceworks, 1661 N. Water St., Milwaukee, 7:30pm. \$18, \$12 seniors. 414-277-8480. danceworks1661.org. Through Aug. 21

Redletter Reading. Open mic followed by two featured readings by Ray Hsu and Aaron Belz. Woodland Pattern, 720 E. Locust St., Milwaukee, 7pm. \$3. 414-263-5001. woodlandpattern.org.

Saturday, August 20

Milwaukee Public Theatre. Washington Park, 4243 W. North Ave., Milwaukee, 10-11am. Free. milwaukeepublictheatre.org

Wednesday, August 23

Brian Wilson: The Smile Tour. 144 E. Wells St., Milwaukee, 8pm. 414-286-3663. pabsttheater.org

Thursday, August 25

Punto De Vista. Salsa music. Alterra Coffee Roasters, 1701 N. Lincoln Memorial Dr., Milwaukee, 7pm. Free. 414-291-5700

Friday, August 26

Experimental Film and Video. Woodland Pattern, 720 E. Locust St., Milwaukee, 7pm. \$2. 414-263-

5001. woodlandpattern.org

Jonny Lang — The Acoustic Band Tour. Interstate Music, 144 E. Wells St., Milwaukee, 8pm. 414-286-3663. pabsttheater.org

Mixed Six. Pair three male dancer/choreographers with three male directors/actors for an adventurous evening of solo works. Danceworks, 1661 N. Water St., Milwaukee, 7:30pm. \$18, \$12 seniors, 414-277-8480. danceworks1661.org. Through Aug. 28

Sunday, August 28

7th Annual Bay View Arts Tour, Bay View Bar (American Legion Hall), 2860 S. Kinnickinnic Ave., Milwaukee. bayviewarts.org

Wednesday, August 31

Richard III. Shakespeare's notorious bad guy, Off the Wall Theatre, 127 E. Wells St. 414-327-3552.

Friday, September 2

Alice Cooper and Cheap Trick. Alliant Energy Center 1919 Alliant Energy Center Way, Madison, 7:30pm. alliantenergycenter.com.

WORD. Syntha-Size-It Text in art with DJs John and Mike. Art Bar, 722 E. Burleigh St., Milwaukee, 9pm 414-372-7880. artbar-riverwest.com. Through Oct. 20

Saturday, September 3

Lifhouse and Special Guest Rocco Deluca. Barrymore Theatre, 2090 Atwood Ave., Madison, 7:30pm. \$20. barrymorelive.com

Thursday, September 8

Leo Kottke. Alverno Pitman Theatre. 3431 S. 39th St., Milwaukee, 8pm. 414-382-6044.

The White Stripes and The Greenhorns. The Rave and Eagles Club, 2401 W. Wisconsin Ave., Milwaukee, 8pm. 414-342-7283. therave.com

Friday, September 9

A Flea in Her Ear. A classic French romp that will have you in stitches from start to finish. Milwaukee Repertory Theater, 108 E. Wells St., Milwaukee, 414-224-9490. milwaukeeerep.com. Through Oct. 9

Blue Rose: The Rosemary Clooney Story. This musical tribute takes us on a unique journey through the highs and lows of Rosemary Clooney's colorful life as a star of radio, television and movies. Milwaukee Repertory Theater, 108 E. Wells St., Milwaukee, 414-224-9490. milwaukeeerep.com. Through Nov. 6

Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat. Uihlein Hall Marcus Center, 929 N. Water St., Milwaukee. 7:30pm. 414-273-7206

Saturday, September 10

Q Pick

Trans. A special Milwaukee LGBT Film and Video Festival screening. Milwaukee Gay Arts Center, 703 S. 2nd St., Milwaukee. 414-248-6481

Coming Soon

Sep. 14: Indigo Girls, Pabst Theater

Sep. 15: Coyote on a Fence, Off-Broadway Theatre

Sep. 16: Out of Fashion, UW-Milwaukee Union

Sep. 19: Fe-mail, Hotcakes Gallery

Sept. 30: 17th Annual LGBT Film Festival, UW-Milwaukee Union Theatre

Deadline for Sept. issue is Aug. 24.

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Just Peachy

In Wisconsin, it is always difficult to find a good flavorful peach. The following are some tips to help you pick out that perfect peach: Look for peaches with a background of color — yellow or cream with a rosy blush. Avoid peaches with green undertones as they were picked too early.

Look for peaches with a smooth skin and no bruises.

Choose a peach that will give slightly at the seam when pressed with your thumb, even though the rest of the peach is firm.

Sniff the stem end of the peach. You should be able to smell the wonderful peach fragrance.

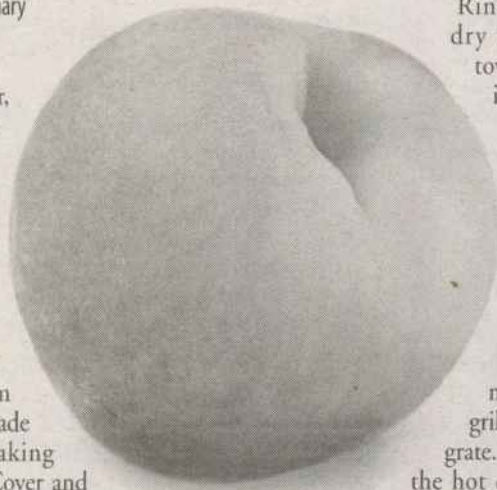
Avoid peaches with tan circles. These are typically an early sign of decay.

Peach Rosemary Chicken

- 3 to 4 boneless chicken breasts
- 3 peach slices (from canned peaches)
- 1/2 cup peach juice (from canned peaches)
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 tsp. chopped fresh ginger
- 1 tsp. salt
- 2 tbsp. lemon juice
- 3 to 4 sprigs fresh rosemary
- 1 tbsp. vegetable oil

In a food processor, puree the peach slices with the peach juice until well blended. Combine this peach mixture with the olive oil, ginger, salt, lemon juice and rosemary sprigs. Rinse the chicken breasts and place them in a bowl. Pour marinade over the chicken, making sure to coat entirely. Cover and place the bowl in the refrigerator. Marinate for approximately one hour.

For grilling: Remove the chicken from the marinade and place on preheated grill. Grill chicken, basting often with the peach



COOKING

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 Milwaukee area.

rosemary marinade.

For stove-top: Add vegetable oil to a non-stick pan and place over medium-high heat. Add the chicken to the pan. Cook chicken, basting often with the peach rosemary marinade. Continue until the chicken is cooked through.

Grilled Peaches

- 4 large ripe peaches
- 4 tbsp. unsalted butter
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 1/4 cup dark rum
- 1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp. salt

Rinse the peaches and dry them with a paper towel. Cut each peach in half and discard the pit. Combine the butter, brown sugar, rum, cinnamon, and salt in a saucepan and bring to a boil over high heat. Let the mixture boil until thick, about 5 minutes. Preheat the grill to high and oil the grate. Place the peaches on the hot oiled grate and grill until nicely browned, three to four minutes per side, basting with the rum and butter glaze. Remove the peaches from the grill and spoon the remaining glaze over the top. If desired, serve over ice cream.

Bohemian Rhapsody

Traveling to Europe can be exhilarating for even the most seasoned gay traveler, but as the plane lowered in altitude and broke in and out of the white puffy clouds, revealing a breathtaking aerial view of Prague, I found myself jumping out of my skin, anxious to explore the new "vogue" place in Europe.

Prague is the capitol of the Czech Republic. Together with Slovakia, these two nations were previously known as the Soviet satellite country of Czechoslovakia. Prague has thrust open its doors and is one of the shining spots in Eastern Europe to have made its way past Communism.

As an American tourist, you will first notice the friendliness of its people. It is quite safe here for Americans, with the usual precautions.

Getting to Prague is not as difficult as you might think. Czech Airlines (CSA) flies direct out of Newark or LaGuardia. CSA is extremely reliable and is a member of Sky Team, the new airline alliance with Delta, Northwest and Continental Airlines. Upon arriving at the airport, simply take a cab to your hotel or guest house. No need to rent a car as the public transportation system in Prague is very current and easy to maneuver around. They boast an extensive bus service and also have a very modern subway system.

There are many places to stay in Prague, but a particular favorite of mine is the Arco Guest House. This is a gay bed and breakfast that is very quaint and nice, also very reasonably priced. Breakfast, with all sorts of Czech delicacies to choose from, comes with your room package.

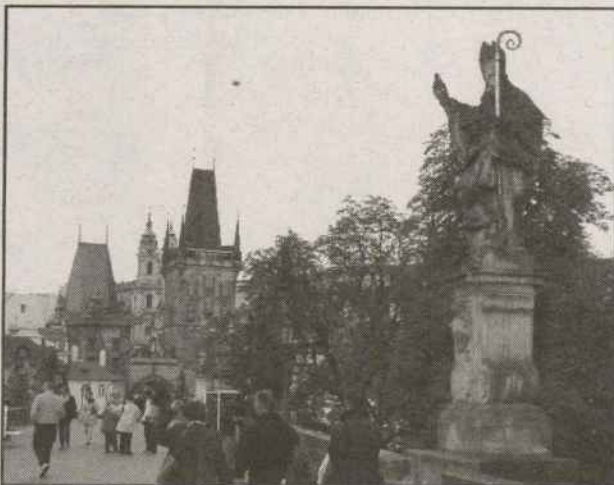
The scenery in Prague is breathtaking. It would simply take too long to list all of the examples. Must-sees are the Old Town Square where the Town Hall Clock is located. Crowds will form 45 minutes or so before each hour to see the procession of the 12 Apostles around the clock. Also, in the Jewish Quarter, the Jewish Cemetery is nothing like you



TRAVEL

By Brian Reinkober

will ever see in your lifetime. It is said that this cemetery has over 12,000 gravestones yet over 100,000 people are buried here. It is truly a surreal experience. The Charles Bridge was the first bridge to cross the Vltava River. Today it is a foot-



The Charles Bridge in Prague.

bridge, adorned with dozens of statues of saints, where artisans sell their wares.

Visitors will find food and beer very inexpensive. For the adventurous, order a Becherovka. This is an alcoholic drink that packs a punch, but remember you're on vacation, so go for it! Imported liquor, however, is quite expensive.

Tip of the Trip: Because the Czech Republic has now been invited to enter into the EU, my advice is to bring Euros along as well as Czech Crowns.

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'Naked Boys Singing!' Aims to Take Milwaukee by Storm

By Tim Grair

Yes, they will be naked when the boys take the stage in Uncommon Theatre's production of "Naked Boys Singing!" which opens Aug. 11 at 8 p.m. in their new home at the Milwaukee Gay Arts Center, 703 S. 2nd St. In fact, the show, which follows the New York production, opens with "Gratuitous Nudity." This rousing number may explain the gimmick which serves to get people in the door, but it is hardly the only attraction. The nudity might actually be the least of several reasons to see "Naked Boys Singing!"

It is doubtful that the show could have proven as popular as it has in big cities like Chicago and New York as well as smaller cities like Portland and Fort Lauderdale if the only attraction was naked male flesh. This cabaret style review has also played around the world: from Rome to Sydney, from London to Capetown to Oslo. It's received good reviews almost everywhere.

Rex Reed, in the New York Observer, wrote, "After the initial shock wears off, you get so accustomed to the nudity that it no longer gets in the way of the entertainment. The effect is strangely liberating. It's only 90 minutes long, and by the time it's over, you'll feel overdressed in a tank top." While in the New York Daily News David Kaufman exclaimed: "Bound to be a hit with gays, straights — and everyone in between."

The feeling of liberation that Reed felt is shared by those involved with the Milwaukee production. Mark Hooker, founder and artistic director of the Uncommon Theatre believes that the songs themselves are liberating. According to Hooker, "The drama and the songs are more important than the gimmick of being naked."

Josh Schumaker, one of the performers and the choreographer of the show concurs. He particularly likes the song "Window to Window" which is performed twice in the show. "Window to Window" is sung separately by two lonely characters who see each other out their windows across an alley. Josh said, "They see each other every day — it's about meeting someone without ever speaking." Another song, "Kris, Look What You've Missed" is sung from a character to his deceased lover.

But don't think "Naked Boys Singing!" is all ballads. The bulk of the show is comedy and among the many writers and songwriters is Bruce Vilanch, who has written for Bette Midler and Cher. Some the lighter songs include: "The Naked Maid," "Muscle

Addiction" and "Nothin' but the Radio On." Most critics agree that "Robert Mitchum" is a highlight of the show. While acknowledging that Mitchum wouldn't make the cut in today's gym-toned world of hard pees and six-pack abs, the song points out that he was "a perfect 10 back in the days of real men."

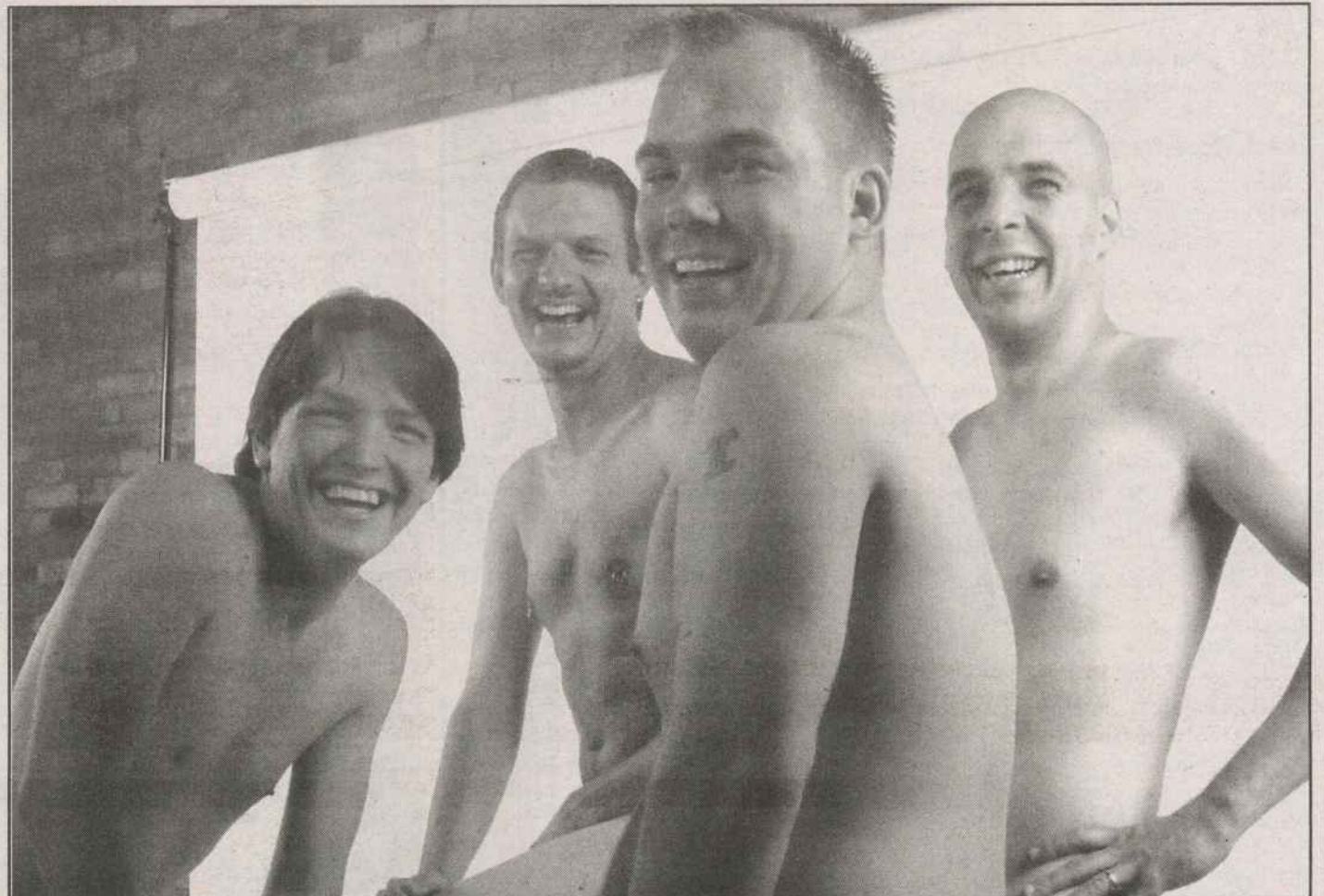
For those who have seen the production in Chicago, Hooker has this to say, "Ours is going to be a little more titillating. We like

in other cities. A production of "Naked Boys Singing!" at the Armory in Atlanta was shut down by the police late last year.

Discounted offers for tickets to the New York production were removed from the tourist board Web site during the Republican National Convention there after complaints from party officials. Although, according to WNBC (NY): "In fact, before the show was removed from the site, about a dozen people — presumably dele-

formance anxiety, replied, "I've been doing theater since I was 13," but, "I thought for about five minutes about this show." He did make the trip to Chicago to see the production there before beginning his own rehearsals and thought, "What have I gotten myself into?" but once in rehearsals that all evaporated. Schumaker finds that the cast is comfortable despite the usual "we want to fix this, we want to fix that about our bodies."

Schumaker is also happy with the dancing of the rest of the cast. "I tried for simple steps, simple movements that look a lot harder than they actually are," he said. Most of Schumaker's friends plan to see the show but there is one exception: his mother. He



Members of the Milwaukee cast of "Naked Boys Singing!" prepare for rehearsal. Photo: Melody Carranza

the slow strip tease approach." When asked what the costume budget was for the show, Hooker laughed and responded, "Less than 10 percent of the show budget because they're naked 90 percent of the time."

Hooker says the show is selling well and if this continues Uncommon Theatre will extend the run of "Naked Boys Singing!" past the end of August. He also expects a diverse crowd. The show has been especially popular with bachelorette parties in other cities but its appeal has reached far beyond gay men and bachelorettes. Hooker avers, "There are some straight middle-aged people from my church who can't wait to see it."

Hooker believes that Milwaukee is a hip progressive town and that we're ready for naked men on stage. This hasn't always been the case

— had purchased tickets using the special code offered on the Web site."

Producers in San Juan, Puerto Rico were shut down by the city's Public Safety Commissioner before the show could even open. "Naked Boys Singing!" was declared "immoral" by Mayor Jorge Santini. The producers were later awarded \$1.3 million from a federal jury in a decision against the city of San Juan.

Hooker expects none of these problems here. He points out that, "This is a legitimate production of a legitimate show in a legitimate theater space." Although, "I fully expect to see them [protesters] there in full regalia — if they behave themselves we'll invite them into the show." He didn't sound the least bit worried.

Schumaker, when prodded about per-

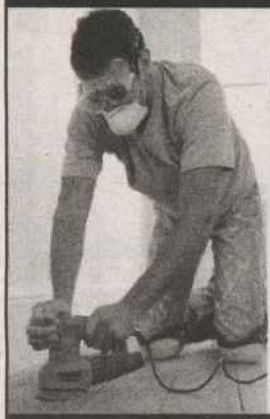
allowed, "My mother has told me this is not a production she is going to make, but she's a big supporter. She's been to every other show." According to Schumaker she saw enough of him naked when she was changing his diapers.

Both Hooker and Schumaker expressed their desire that people who come to the show walk out with the songs in their heads, or as Schumaker put it, "Yeah, they were naked, but it was a really great show."

Uncommon Theatre, which has been based at the UCC Plymouth Church, will be moving to the Milwaukee Gay Arts Center, 703 S. 2nd St. Hooker will continue working with the church on Christian outreach theater projects, but future productions (including "Naked Boys Singing!") will be housed in the Arts Center.

"Naked Boys Singing!" opens Aug. 11 at the Milwaukee Gay Arts Center with a special benefit for the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center. It will run Thursdays through Saturdays until the end of August. The show may be extended. Performances are at 8 p.m. One Sunday matinee is scheduled for Aug. 21 at 5 p.m. Seating is limited. Tickets are \$20, \$16 each for groups of 10 or more. For reservations call Uncommon Theatre, 414-248-6481, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Saturday. For group rate information call 414-383-8200. For further information visit www.uncommontheatre.net.

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CLUB HAVANA

Bigger than Life ... Interview with 'Naked Boys' Top Man Mark Hooker

By Paul Masterson

The Milwaukee premier of "Naked Boys Singing!" is directed by Uncommon Theatre's Artistic Director Mark Hooker. Hooker has a long theater and television career that spans a full spectrum of popular soaps, Broadway hits and even a silver screen appearance as a disco dancing penguin.

Uncommon Theatre presented the Milwaukee Gay Arts Center's inaugural event, the cabaret "Gay Broadway," that launched the city's only venue with a mission to promote LGBT visual and performing arts.

"Naked Boys Singing!" was originally conceived and directed by Robert Schrock. Opening in New York City in 1999, the show immediately took off and has been playing in major American cities ever since. It has also tantalized audiences all over the globe, from Norway to South Africa and from Australia to Brazil. "Naked Boys Singing!" consists of a simple set of 15 songs with choreography and no real costumes to speak of. And though it's hard to put a finger on it, the show has something magic that theatergoers just love. Milwaukee audiences are sure to embrace the charm of the characters and their sensitive parts as well.

Queer Life recently spoke with director Mark Hooker about his upcoming premier.

Q Life: "Naked Boys Singing!" has been on the off-Broadway and international theatre horizon for years. Why hasn't "Naked Boys Singing!" been seen in Milwaukee before now?

Mark Hooker: You're right. New York City's run of "Naked Boys Singing!" began in July 1999 and it's been in Chicago for at least four years. The promoters are very selective about granting the rights to theaters in small-

er cities beyond the larger ones like Houston, Minneapolis and Los Angeles. The fact that Milwaukee finally got the rights certainly has a lot to do with the show being performed by an LGBT theatre company in a venue called Milwaukee Gay Arts Center. I'm sure that formed a significant part of the rationale to allow Uncommon Theatre to stage it.

Q Life: Congratulations. That sounds like quite an accomplishment.

Thank you. It's pretty amazing when you think of it, actually. The Milwaukee Gay Arts Center opened in late March and now, only a few months later, we're offering a regional premier of an international hit show. I'd say the LGBT community has a lot to be proud of. And I've been told we'll be featured on the front cover of Quest and Outbound, as well as included in other statewide media outlets, gay and straight.

Q Life: Speaking of the Milwaukee Gay Arts Center, how do you feel about the venue?

I love it. When Uncommon Theatre performed "Gay Broadway" there in March, it was the start of a perfect relationship. The space offers a comfortable intimacy with truly "live" acoustics. The audience responds accordingly. And there's always art on the walls so you're surrounded by a very special ambiance — it's Brechtian: The environment becomes integrated with the theatrical performance.

Q Life: Mark, what made you decide to bring "Naked Boys Singing!" to Milwaukee?

I saw it in Chicago and was swept away. To be honest, it's really about the music. It's so great. After the first few minutes I forgot the performers were naked. The songs really are the focus of the show, despite what you

might think.

Q Life: What's so great about the music?

It's a male thing, I guess. It's all about celebration. The songs range from perky comedic tunes to introspective ballads. They're about hubris. They're about insecurities. They're about love. The music is typical Broadway style with each song a complete story — a miniature play about the male body. The range varies from clownish to ostentatious and from upbeat to contemplative. The melodies are memorable and the harmonies still give me goose-bumps. I don't think anyone can walk out of a performance without the songs resounding in their head.

Q Life: Does anything stand out worth special mention?

We're still talking about the music, right? Well, for openers there's "Gratuitous Nudity," appropriately enough. That sets the mood and certainly lets the audience in on what's to come. Then there are numbers like "The Bliss of a Bris," "Fight the Urge," and "Muscle Addiction." I could go on but I think you get the point. They're all fun and full of innuendo. Well, innuendo might be an understatement; the lyrics do border on the blatant at times.

Q Life: So tell us something about your production — what about the cast?

You know, a lot of people are asking me if this is the New York cast or the Chicago cast. They're surprised that I'm presenting local talent. Milwaukee has a large talent pool ... some larger than others. But seriously, I'm happy to say that we have both the bodies and the voices. We had very competitive auditions but I went with regular guys not models so everyone can identify with them.

Q Life: Ability went before muscle?

Exactly. Besides, each singer's personality

had to reflect the songs and I think our casting accomplished that.

Q Life: But, who's the star?

All the singers are stars. They all have solos and all perform wonderfully in the ensemble pieces. We have three Joshes: there's Josh Schumaker, who also did the choreography, Josh Wetzel and Josh Perkins. Then there's Jeffrey Townbridge and Anthony Huntoon. All have stage experience and lengthy credits.

Q Life: Anything else?

Well, we couldn't have produced "Naked Boys Singing!" without our supremely gifted musical directors, J. Ruben Piirainen and Chris Wszlek. Both have provided Uncommon Theatre with their invaluable expertise. Plus, I'm really excited about a different twist we've added: Angel Johnson designed semi-transparent costumes that will add a certain something to the visual titillation. They'll be ripped away to reveal the substance of the show.

Q Life: Do you think Milwaukee is really ready for "Naked Boys Singing!"?

I don't know if it is. We'll have to see, won't we?

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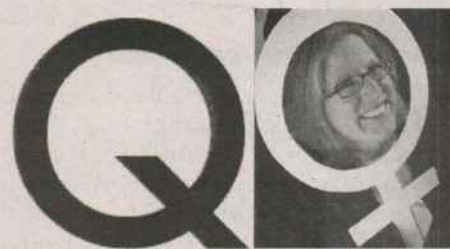
- Monday - Karaoke Night with Tim Cole**
Tuesday - \$2.00 Tuesdays
Wednesday - Queens Night Out
\$1.00 Bar/\$3.00 Martinis
Thursday - Ladies Night Drink Specials
Friday - Teen Night with DJ Will
Wild Saturday - Girls Gone Wild!

I Love My Gay TV!

I love LGBT people. I love our diversity, our tenaciousness, our communal belief in equality and our wonderful ability to throw great parties despite perpetual adversity and years of right-wing conservative demonization. Best of all I love our stories, and beginning this summer, I have a 24/7 basic-cable channel option, Logo, to view authentic stories and images of us, instead of seeing the neutered and sometimes way-off depictions of LGBT people on mainstream television.

Logo, MTV Networks' long-planned and advertiser supported channel, launched June 30 in 10 million digital cable homes in 22 top cities including Milwaukee.

Logo is loaded with a 24-hour lineup of LGBT-themed shows including the well-made, highly informative, Parker Posey-narrated "The Evolution Will Be Televised," a



MEDIA

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.boxxnews.com). Holly is also co-founder and vice president of an Internet risk management company located in Milwaukee.

90-minute documentary on the emerging visibility of gay Americans; "Go Dragons! A Rugby Story," about a Chicago-based gay rugby club playing in an all-straight league; and, to my delight, the feature film "The Hunger," a 1980s classic with the unforgettable love scene with, sigh, Susan Sarandon and, huge sigh, Catherine Deneuve.

Most interesting to me is Logo's "Real Momentum" documentary series highlighting such programming as "Ruthie and Connie: Every Room in the House," which Logo's Web site says is "about two Jewish grandmothers and their turbulent coming together and coming out;" and "Latino Beginnings," which it describes as "a look into the lives of gay Hispanics, whose culture is engrained in religion and machismo."

While movies will be the digital cable channel's mainstay, Logo's other fresh programming consists of MTV-style music and reality series such as "Round Trip Ticket," a world travel series; and "First Comes Love," in which Scott Thompson ("Kids in the Hall") helps gay male and lesbian couples plan dream weddings.

Logo offers a variety of regular series concerts, performances by stand-up comics, sports, reality shows and original sitcoms. Regular news spots are run; Logo is in partnership with CBS News for stories of interest to the gay community. Logo also provided the first TV coverage of the GLAAD Media Awards, honoring positive portrayals in

entertainment.

Wednesday nights are focused on music, Thursday is comedy night and Friday's emphasis is on travel.

Logo is the third gay cable/satellite channel in the United States. It's an ad-supported network, joining here!, which is an ad-free pay service started in 2003 by producer Paul Colichman as an outlet for his independent films. here! is available on cable and satellite systems reaching 44 million homes, either by monthly subscription or as three-hour program blocks. Another pay channel, Q Television, emphasizes gay male lifestyle coverage from major cities but has limited reach.

Typically, I would be reveling in the outdoors during this perfect Wisconsin summer. Instead, to the dismay of my partner, who reminds me of my mother when she keeps repeating, "You should be playing outside," I lounge on the couch completely glued to the TV and Logo.

I love my gay TV!

Advocate for Emancipation

"Silence = Death." During the 1980s, AIDS activists demanded the attention of the government and the medical establishment to fight an epidemic that had decimated the gay community. Realizing that the silence of the closet was no longer a viable option, gay men and lesbians publicly declared their sexual orientation in order to fight for their lives and the lives of their loved ones.

For me and most of my peers — products of Catholic schooling and common prejudice — homosexuality had been little more

than a suspicion, an accusation, a slur or a mysterious threat. The very public story of AIDS unfolding in the newspapers introduced me to the dignity, the courage, the essential humanity of the very real people forced to battle this scourge.

As legal director for the ACLU of Wisconsin, I am one of the lawyers representing six lesbian employees of the State of Wisconsin and their partners who have sued to obtain equal employment benefits. These women work as hard as their straight colleagues, but don't get equal health insurance benefits or family medical leave. Missy, a

plaintiff from the Eau Claire area, has delayed a biopsy after a suspicious lump appeared on a mammogram, because she can't get health insurance through her partner Diane, who works for the State. Eloise McPike, who works for the State in Milwaukee, was unable to take family medical leave to be with her partner Janice, when Janice was hospitalized in Tennessee after a car accident. It is manifestly unfair that gay and lesbian people who do the same work as straight employees don't get the same benefits for their families. This unfairness violates the Wisconsin Constitution's guarantee of equal rights under the law.

Today's struggle for basic rights for LGBT people requires a continued commitment to speaking up. Maintaining prejudice depends on enforcing silence and perpetuating ignorance. It's easy to demonize the impersonal "other," but hard to hate your brother, the couple next door, a childhood friend, the person in the next cubicle or pew. That's why LGBT people must acknowledge their sexuality to their relatives, neighbors, friends, co-workers, fellow congregants.

Anti-gay groups and their allies in the state legislature understand this dynamic, so they are trying to divert attention from the couples in our case and turn the lawsuit into a "taxpayer" issue. They claim that providing benefits to the partners of gay and lesbian employees will bust the budget. This claim is a smokescreen. The benefits cost very little and offering them makes recruiting and retaining highly skilled gay and lesbian job-seekers much easier. That's why almost all of the Fortune 50 offer these benefits.

The ACLU, the Human Rights



FRIEND

Larry Dupuis was born and raised in Milwaukee. He is the Legal Director of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Wisconsin Foundation. The ACLU is the leading defender of individual liberties in the United States and has a long history of advocacy for LGBT rights.

Campaign, Lambda Legal and other organizations are important parts of the effort to secure rights for LGBT people. We defend the rights of gay and lesbian students so the next generation will not have the same ignorance and fear of homosexuality. We fight for equal parenting rights and for equality in core family-sustaining benefits for government employees. And now we are fighting to keep discrimination against same-sex couples out of the Wisconsin Constitution.

I am proud to be part of these efforts. But the only way for us all to win is for LGBT people to keep telling their stories, from the pages of the New York Times to the pages of Q Life, from the national political stage to the front porch at home. The story of emancipation we all know from Exodus, from the American Revolution and from the black civil rights movement resonates deeply in this country. If we keep telling that story, one day lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgendered people will taste freedom.

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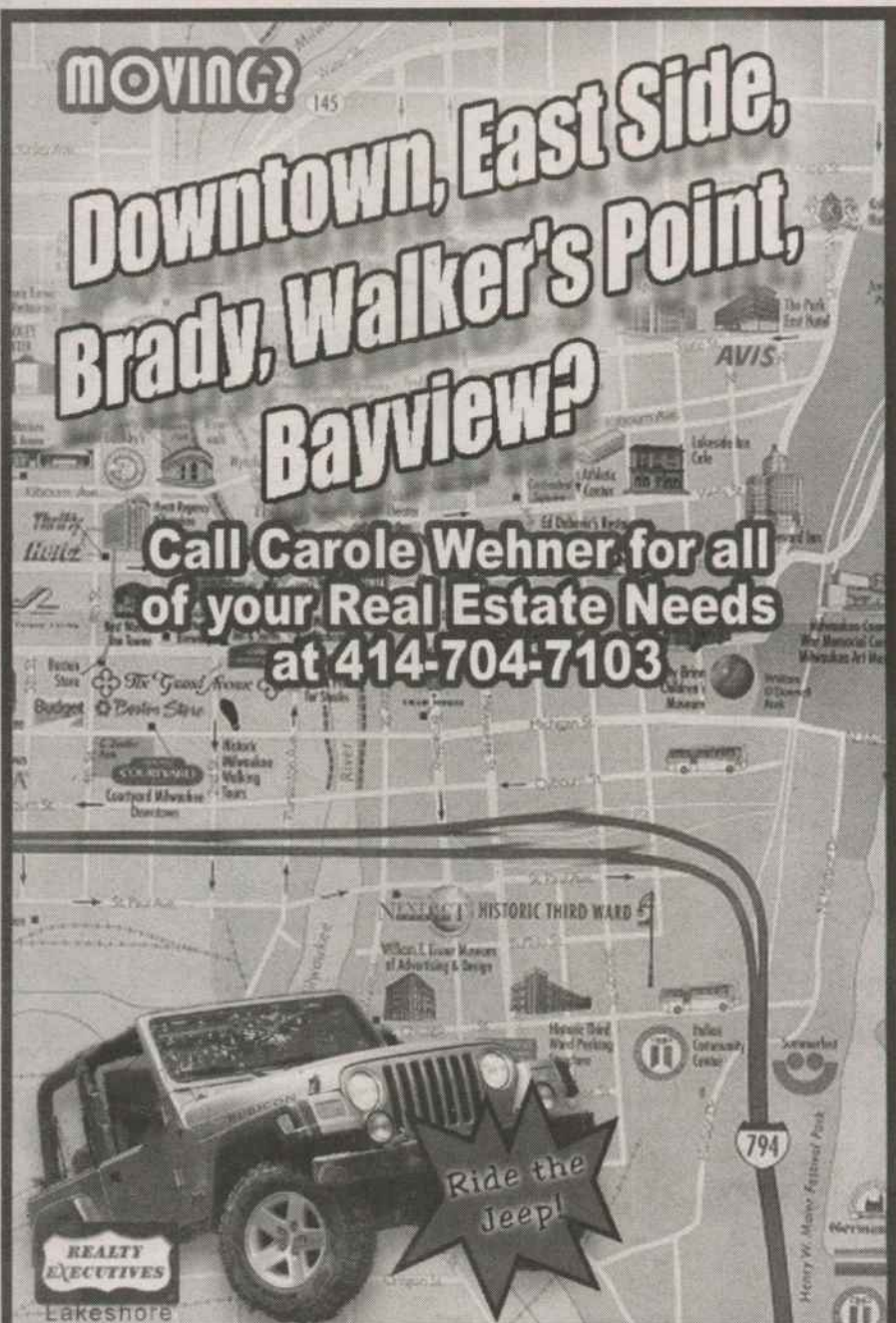
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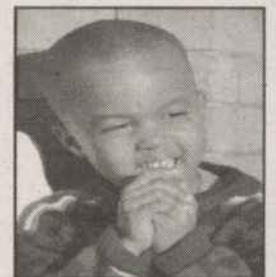
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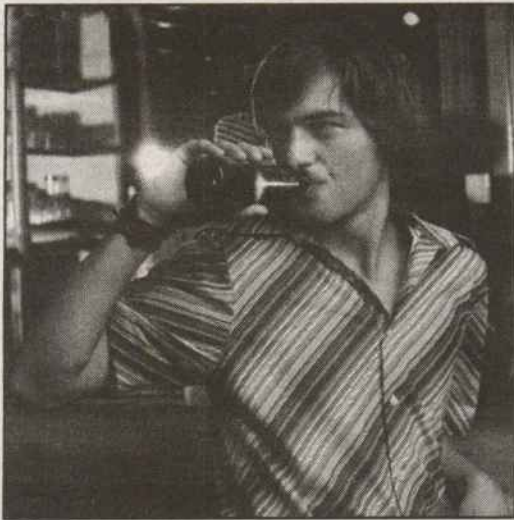


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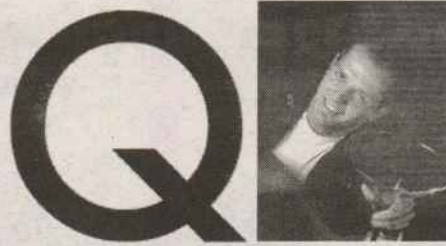
Hidden Gems

With the many Milwaukee summer festivities underway, there is never a dull moment. Like many people, I like to spend my days relaxing in the sun on a beautiful day, or thinking about the sun on those not-so-wonderful days. With this in mind, I have recently attempted to patronize many of Milwaukee's new bars and restaurants, and let me tell you, there are plenty! While I have been to almost all of downtown Milwaukee's bars and eateries, there are a few that stick out when I look back on my excursions. As I said in this column last month, patios are the key to enjoyment during these short but fabulous summer months in the otherwise tundra-like home I call Milwaukee.

The Milwaukee Ale House, 233 N. Water St., is a prime example of wonderful summer enjoyment. With an extensive menu and a full bar featuring an incredible list of beer brewed in-house, the Milwaukee Ale House



has a two-story patio, right on the Milwaukee River, that's to die for. For those with a boat, the Ale House even has docks that accommodate any type of boat. I canoed there once — that was a trip! The patio is busy on nice days and nights, so be prepared for a wait. The bar makes for a superb waiting room, if you know what I mean. The crowd is young and old alike. In fact, this is my grandmother's favorite restaurant in Milwaukee. Being greet-



CLUBBING

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

ed by a happy face and served with enthusiasm adds to this establishment's magnetism. On any given night there might be live music. As advertised in the Journal Sentinel, the music ranges from jazz and blues to country and rock, so keep your eyes peeled for an up-and-coming band that may suit your tastes. This is just another of Milwaukee's best patio restaurant bars.

Another top pick on my list is the hidden gem that is Botanas, 816 S. 5th St. Botanas is remarkable. With authentic Mexican cuisine, the margaritas flow like water and we all know that makes for an extremely pleasurable evening or day, whatever your calling may be. A huge patio, heated during the winter, is the place to be in the summer. The food is very reasonably priced with the most expensive entrée \$10. The staff is so friendly you can just tell they really love their jobs, which is always a plus when dining out. The patrons come from everywhere. Last time I was there, a couple sat next to us who came from Chicago just for the famous guacamole. I guess the saying "Food brings people together" is especially true at Botanas.

All in all, summer in Milwaukee is never lackluster; the food and drinks flow freely. A summer here is never complete until you visit both the Milwaukee Ale House and Botanas, two wonderfully different yet remarkably similar restaurant bars with food to die for.

Rowdy Grrrls Never Get the Blues!

Feminist queer zines are rip curls in the "waves" of feminist thought. With pen and ink in hand, copiers and staplers at the ready, these queer women zinesters directly put into real and practical terms notions and ideas about radical feminism. Not beholden to publishers or editors, they get their message out without any filtering or censoring. What medium could be more empowering?

First up, a zine that magically appeared in my post office box one day many years ago after I met the editor of Cowgrrrl Ink [Issue 1, 1994, 26 pages] through my friends in the punk band Scooby Don't. Cowgrrrl Ink is a concept zine, written from the idealistic perspective of forming a collective of "a rowdy bunch of rad feminist girls who are seeking out their true selves" and golly, they lay out for all the world to see what "true selves" really means.

"Speculum Primer" gets right to the heart of the matter. Who controls the implements used for vaginal examinations? Heartless "medical supply" stores? Yikes! Who needs that? This article discusses how the author was able to navigate through a maze of medical supply store idiots to obtain a vaginal speculum. Once obtained, there is practical advice, such as "the speculum must be warm!" and general encouragement on the path to discovery of all things vaginal.

In "Perspectives ... an accomplished writer's wisdom" there's a reprint of a graduation speech by Naomi Wolf, in which she delineates what "A Woman's Place" can be. Wolf directs graduates to "Become Goddesses of Disobedience" by posing "What's the worst that could happen to me if I tell this truth?"

Cowgrrrl Ink rails against the crappy, generic messages put forth by so-called women's magazines and challenges readers to rebel against mainstream media and the images popular culture puts forth as ideal. If women are looking for a source of ideas for how to literally "rage against the machine" of patriarchy, look no further than this zine!



ZINES

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

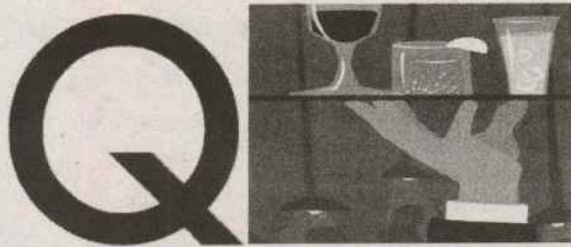
It may read "... another faceless zine ..." but is anything but. PxOxFx [Issue 1, 1992, 12 pages] ended up in my hands by the authors during the 1992 March on Washington on the train back out to the suburbs near Baltimore. The women behind it, Monique and Miranda, created this zine

"produced by lesbians for lesbians," seeking to create a broader community of like-minded radical queer women. Purists might reject it out-of-hand for the crude layout and sloppy cut 'n' paste work, but to me it simply emphasizes the urgency and sincerity of the message.

What's not to like about this edgy zine? It's messages are crystal clear, it reads like an unpolished manifesto. Never self-conscious, never flinching. This is pure queer punk rock in written form. From quotes such as "The Earth hates men. You can just tell. I love hurricanes." to the notion that these women are nonviolent yet "believe in field hockey sticks" — these are the women I want around when the revolution comes down!

Next month, Homocore Chicago — save your change for the toll booths as we drive south to the Windy City to learn more about how I learned to love myself, and occasionally other men and PC Casualties.

These and other zines can be found at www.qzap.org, home of The Queer Zine Archive Project.



BARS & RESTAURANTS

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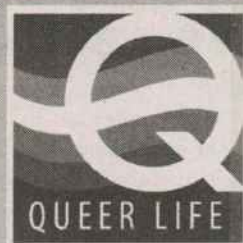
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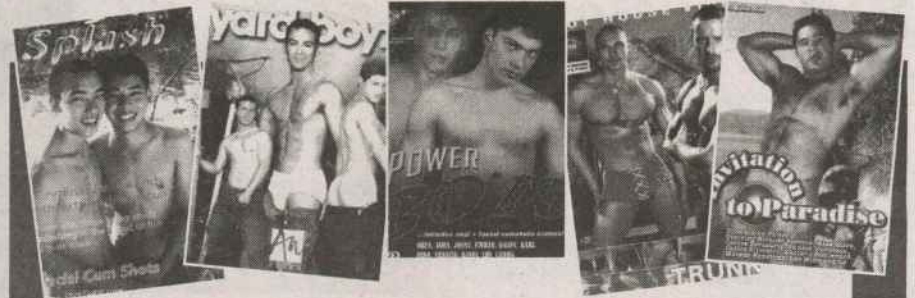
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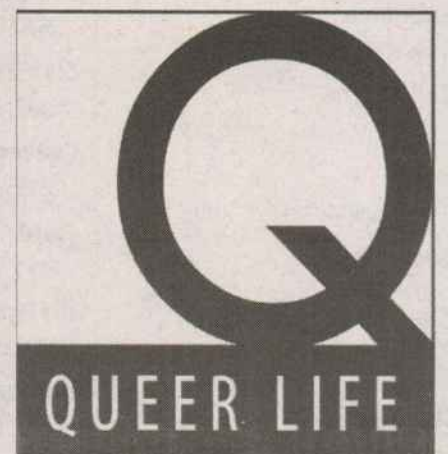
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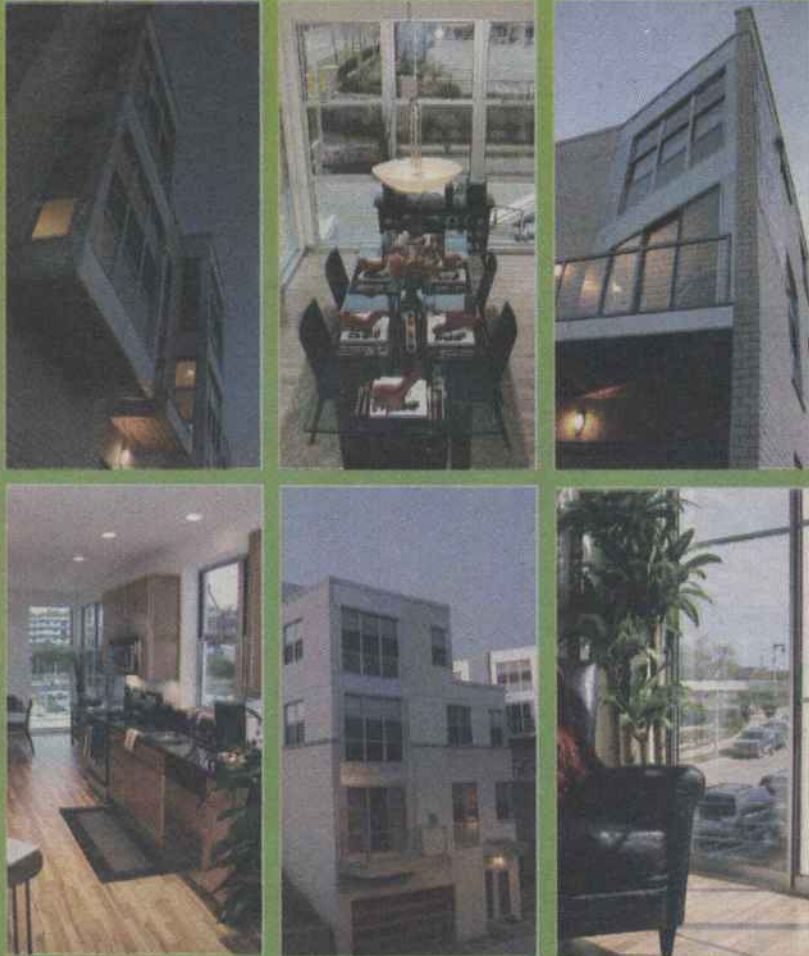
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