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Vol. 2, Issue 2 • January 2006

Wisconsin's Premiere LGBT News Leader • QUEERLIFENEWS.COM



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Cathy Stepp



David A. Zien

Photos: State of Wisconsin Legislature Web Page

Shame on You

By Holly Grey

Wisconsin legislators full of hate and discrimination

Some are hypocrites. Some are off-the-chart conservatives. Some want to stop "activist" judges. Some hope to preserve the "sanctity" of marriage. Some are just plain homophobic. Some are run-of-the-mill followers of the party line. But what they all have in common is that they are members of the Republican party. The same Republican party that on so many occasions has claimed it wants to limit government intrusions into people's private lives but is now painstakingly

intruding into people's private lives.

Riding the wave of this new Republican party agenda and affecting the private lives of a large number of taxpaying, law abiding citizens is a throng of 19 Wisconsin state senators. These Republican senators banded together on Dec. 7 in Madison to vote yes on a proposed Wisconsin constitutional amendment forbidding same-sex marriage and civil unions.

Their yes votes were enough to propel the

proposed amendment to the State Assembly for a vote sometime this spring and ultimately to Wisconsin voters for their consideration in November.

Included in this partisan gang of 19 is the three-time divorced co-sponsor of the bill, Sen. Dave Zien of Eau Claire, and the storied Sen. Mary Lazich from New Berlin, another co-sponsor of the amendment who was rumored

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SHAME *continued from page 1*

to have made an on-air confession that she has lied and is a whole-hearted believer that "abstinence (from sex) should be taught to Wisconsin students unapologetically."

Also included is another co-sponsor of the amendment, Senate Majority Leader Dale Schultz of Richland Center, who is quoted as saying on his Web site, "The time has come when we can no longer trust activists judges to make the right decisions in the area of defining marriage." He does not elaborate on who these judges are, what activities they have been involved with, or what actions they have taken that would warrant the designation "activist."

By their yes votes, this conservative-agenda pushing unit is proposing that the citizens of Wisconsin vote with them in November to discriminate against their fellow taxpaying, law abiding Badger state residents — even though Wisconsin law already defines marriage as "a legal relationship between two equal persons, a husband and wife." The amendment these senators are supporting makes it clear that "husband and wife" means one man, one woman.

These 19 senators want Wisconsin voters to deprive same-sex couples of the rights heterosexual couples have. They hope voters in November will deny same-sex couples the right to visit their sick or injured partners in the hospital and deny LGBT

workers the right to family leave to take care of their partners. They want to deny LGBT partners, who pay payroll taxes too, the right to receive Social Security survivor benefits. They want to continue to force LGBT couples, unlike straight married couples, to pay estate taxes on any property and 401(k) funds inherited from a deceased partner. And they hope Wisconsin voters will vote yes to deny elderly LGBT couples, unlike elderly married heterosexual couples, the right to spend their last days together in a nursing home.

These senators voted for amending Section 13 of Article XII of the Wisconsin constitution to read: "Only a marriage between one man and one woman shall be valid or recognized as a marriage in this state. A legal status identical or substantially similar to that of marriage for unmarried individuals shall not be valid or recognized in this state."

In order to add this amendment to the constitution, both the Senate and the Assembly must approve this measure and then it must be passed by the voters of Wisconsin in a statewide referendum in November. The full 99-member Assembly vote will most likely take place this spring. Unlike with regular bills, Gov. Jim Doyle has no say on constitutional amendments.

Assembly members, spearheaded by then-Rep. Mark Gundrum of New Berlin, launched a drive to amend the state

constitution after Doyle vetoed a bill in 2003 that would have defined marriage as being between one man and one woman.

"Gay couples are caught in the crossfire of trying to elect more Republican candidates and defeat a Democratic governor," said Sen. Jon Erpenbach a Democrat from Middleton in a Dec. 7 Milwaukee Journal Sentinel article about the amendment.

Gay civil rights and marriage were hot topics in the last presidential election and these issues can still be considered "the fuel" to bring out voters in upcoming elections. Doyle's Republican challengers, U.S. Rep. Mark Green of Green Bay and Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker, have already said they support the amendment.

Efforts to prepare for a November vote are under way on both sides. Julaine Appling, executive director of the Family Research Institute of Wisconsin, an organization supporting the amendment, has told reporters that her group has mailed out some 4,000 anti-gay DVDs to conservative churches across the state. Supposedly the seven-minute video juxtaposes images of the American flag and traditional families with gay and lesbian couples — all the while intoning warnings regarding the Massachusetts court ruling last year that cleared the way for gay marriage in that state.

The No on the Amendment effort, co-led by the groups Action Wisconsin, based in Madison, and Center Advocates, the equal rights arm of the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center, have been actively working to raise funds, lobby politicians and educate voters, including canvassing door-to-door since last year.

"We must talk about these

inequalities with everyone. Talking about our rights as gay people is the crucial first step in the battle against this amendment," explained Melissa Beastrom, a local activist and LGBT Community Center board member.

In July, the Human Rights Campaign, America's largest LGBT civil rights organization, contributed \$50,000 to Action Wisconsin to fight the amendment. The Brico Fund, a Milwaukee-based organization working to drive change that creates a more just and equitable society, also donated \$75,000 to Action Wisconsin and Center Advocates.

"Over the next several months, we will multiply the grassroots operation we have already put in place in every region of Wisconsin," claimed Mike Tate, Action Wisconsin's newly hired campaign manager in a Dec. 7 press release. "A majority of Wisconsin voters will reject this harmful and far-reaching amendment in November 2006. We have 335 more days to talk to Wisconsin voters about the far-reaching consequences of this amendment, we will fight every day for every vote. We are ready for this fight, and we will win this fight."

Currently Massachusetts is the only state that issues marriage licenses to same-sex couples. Connecticut and Vermont each have a statewide law on civil unions that provides state-level spousal rights to same-sex couples. Hawaii, Maine and New Jersey have statewide laws that provide some spousal-like rights to unmarried couples, and California's domestic partnership law provides almost all of the same rights to unmarried couples as to legally married ones.




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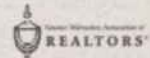
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An Interview with the Director of 'Angels in America'



Mark Hooker interviewed Jim Bloomingdale for Q Life. Bloomingdale is the director of the upcoming Uncommon Theatre production of Tony Kushner's "Angels in

America, Part One: Millennium Approaches," which will be playing at the Milwaukee Gay Arts Center in January and February.

Q Life: How do you think that "Angels in America: Millennium Approaches" is relevant to audiences today, and why do you think it's important to bring it back to the stage now?

Jim Bloomingdale: Well, I think it's an important play in that not only does it talk a lot about AIDS, it talks about relationships and how people deal with each other. And while over the years new medicines have been able to dramatically reduce the number of people who die from AIDS, it doesn't mean that it's going away. There's still no cure.

In developing countries there are

over 6.5 million new cases of AIDS and only roughly one million people are receiving life-saving medicines. People are dying and contracting AIDS on a regular basis — and until there's a cure for it I think it's an important topic to make sure that people are still talking about.

Q Life: What do you think about the fact that we've received so much support from the religious community about doing this show? For instance, I've been talking with Pastor Andrew Warner about Plymouth Church co-hosting a benefit to raise money to fight the anti-gay marriage amendment, and Andrew indicated that there are three other churches who are interested in doing this benefit jointly with Plymouth Church.

Jim: It doesn't surprise me because I do know that there are a lot of Christians out there who are very tolerant of other beliefs, who are very supportive of the (gay) community at large, and who really believe in helping people and supporting people whoever they are.

Q Life: As a straight theater practitioner who is a staple at the Uncommon Theatre as an actor and as a director, what is your vision in terms

of developing gay audiences and also reaching beyond the boundaries of an LGBT audience?

Jim: I think it is important to have theater that talks about gay and lesbian issues because a lot of theaters just can't because of their audience base and the people that support them. But by the same token just because Uncommon Theatre is an LGBT-oriented theater doesn't mean that straight people can't enjoy it, too.

Look at the recent movie version of "Rent" that just came out. "Rent" is very much about a number of gay people and people dealing with AIDS, and it's beloved by audiences from all walks of life. So having an outlet for this kind of theater I think is important because there's great theater out there that deals with these kinds of issues. And if it isn't being done somewhere else, it should be done here.

Q Life: Do you think that working in a primarily gay-oriented theater hurts your chances of scoring with chicks?

Jim (laughing): Generally not, although romance is not my primary purpose for doing theater. I do theater because I love it.

Q Life: Thanks, Jim. Anything you'd like to add?

Jim: Yeah, one other thing. When I've talked about doing this play, a lot of people have said to me that they thought it was a tremendous undertaking in a small space like ours. But the challenge of doing "Angels" in this intimate space is incredible! The other thing I've heard is why do you want to do this play when they just made an HBO movie a couple of years ago? And the response I always have to that is: That's a movie, it's not theater. Nothing can replace the experience of live actors, so close you can touch them, telling a powerful story.

Q Life: Some audience members might be uncomfortable being so close to such raw emotion.

Jim: That's the idea!

"Angels in America: Millennium Approaches" plays at the Milwaukee Gay Arts Center, 703 S. 2nd St., at 8 p.m. on Jan. 27 and 28 and Feb. 3, 4, 10, 11, 17 and 18. Tickets are \$17.50 and can be ordered online at www.uncommontheatre.net or by calling 1-800-595-4849. Seating is extremely limited.

Enhancing a Sense of Community

By Holly Grey

Red, orange, yellow, green, blue and purple sewn together in stripes to create the international symbol of LGBT pride. James Kuchta wants to use this symbol to enhance the sense of Milwaukee LGBT community — by hanging over a hundred rainbow banners along 2nd Street from Lapham to Pittsburg.

"I am hoping we can help define this area as the LGBT business area that it is," said James Kuchta, founder and director of the 2005 Pride Parade. "Most of the economics in this area comes from LGBT-run businesses."

The vertical pride flag banners will be hung year round from 100 lampposts along the street. Kuchta has already approached the City of Milwaukee with the idea and pulled the permit. Per city requirements, Kuchta is in the midst of notifying the area businesses of the idea. Pending outright opposition from any of the businesses, Kuchta plans to have the banners flying by March.

Kuchta is also approaching the area businesses to sponsor a banner. "I want this to be a community effort," said Kuchta. "Each banner and pole costs about \$15 to make. Plus, there is the permit expense and the expense of hanging the banners. Roughly \$5,000 is needed for the entire project."

Individual sponsorship is also available. Kuchta did say however that the city will not allow anything but very small text and logos on the banners. "It doesn't make sense for us to put anything on the banners simply because it will be too small to read."

Betz Boenning, owner of Walker's Pint, is all for the banners — text or no text. "I think it's a good idea. It's a way to get other businesses in the area involved with the LGBT community and a way to signify this area as the gay area."

"When the idea was originally brought to us, there

was some debate that not everyone would be aware of what the rainbow flag means, but if someone were from out of town and driving through and saw the banners, I think most would know this is a LGBT friendly area," expanded Boenning. "And, if nothing else, why not add some color to the area?" Walker's Pint, 818 S. 2nd St., caters to an eclectic group of mostly younger lesbians and their gay and straight friends.

The use of flags consisting of stripes in the colors of the rainbow has a long tradition. They are displayed in many cultures around the world as a sign of diversity and inclusiveness.

According to legend, the first gay-pride rainbow flag was designed in 1978 by Gilbert Baker, a San Francisco artist. Baker created the flag in response to a local activist's call for a community symbol. Using the five-striped "Flag of the Race" as his inspiration, Baker designed a flag with eight stripes: pink, red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet.

Baker soon approached San Francisco's Paramount Flag Company about mass producing and selling his "gay flag." Unfortunately, Baker had hand-dyed the

colors; since hot pink was not commercially available, mass production of his eight-striped version was impossible and the flag was reduced to seven stripes.

Although the rainbow flag was initially used as a symbol of pride in San Francisco, it received instant visibility in other cities. Today, the rainbow flag is everywhere. It has become the recognized standard symbol of pride for the LGBT community.

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Body Image Journal of a Guy with HIV

By Mark Hooker

Exclusive to Q Life

Let me introduce myself. I'm Mark Hooker, I'll be 48 years old on Jan. 15, and I've been living with HIV for over 20 years. Since 1979, I have kept a personal journal. I find that it helps me sort out my life issues. Writing in my journal gives me clarity, like practicing yoga. Or cleaning house. Or pining over Alec Baldwin as he was in the '80s.

I'd like to share with you excerpts from what my friends Marc and Eric call "Old Lady Hooker's Diaries." The excerpts I'll share focus on my life with HIV, specifically related to body image. Here's the situation — a situation that is not unique to me. Countless others share it. But I'll talk about it in terms of me (even though my friends will tell you that's so unlike me).

HIV and the meds I take to treat it have had devastating effects on both my mind and my body. We'll get into my mind another time (if we dare). For now, I'll stay in the physical realm. A condition called lipodystrophy, from which I and many other men, women and children with HIV/AIDS suffer, has devastated me. In a nutshell, this condition unnaturally redistributes a person's body fat. And it isn't pretty.

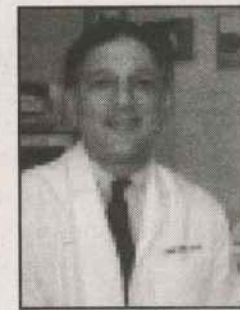
The look is unmistakable: sunken cheeks, facial wasting, limb wasting, protruding veins, and swelling of the belly — due to body fat redistributed between the abdomen and the vital organs — are a few of the consequences some people living with HIV endure. Oh, and there is the dorsal fat pad which can form on your back around your neck and shoulders called "buffalo hump." Buffalo hump is not only ugly, it can

also hinder movement and cause pain and difficulty sleeping.

At one point, I went to visit my physician, AIDS specialist Dr. Ian Gilson at Aurora. I was distraught because my insurance company would not approve the reconstructive surgeries that would alleviate both my physical and my psychic pain. This was a few months ago. I was at an all-time low.

I asked Ian how long it would take to die if I just went off the medications. If I had to live in this body for the rest of my life, it just wasn't worth continuing. Ian called the HIV nurse specialist, the incomparable Mary Busalacchi, into the examination room, and closed the door. For the next 45 minutes Ian and Mary read me the riot act. It would take years for me to die, and if I thought I was suffering now, just wait until my immune system weakened, and then all of the opportunistic infections started to set in. Then they described my fate if I went off my meds in graphic detail.

OK, OK, I finally gave in. I'll take my meds and I'll live, dammit. But not like this. I need those corrective surgeries, and I will find a way to get them. But how?



Dr. Gilson was (as always) sympathetic. "For years the HIV/AIDS community has been 'dissed' by the insurance companies. Many insurers refuse to take responsibility and pay for the surgical correction of disfigurements caused by this medical condition.

"It's really the same struggle that women had to go through years ago with breast cancer. After



a mastectomy, the insurance companies refused to pay for breast reconstruction. It took lawsuits and long battles to get this injustice corrected.

"Now HIV/AIDS patients face a similar battle. This is a medical condition, and reconstructive surgery would make it easier for people to get through it."

Already my mind was running a sub-routine on how to take charge of this situation. Let's see, I'm on Social Security Disability, and I get a check every month for \$1,075. I'm allowed to work a part-time job as long as I don't earn over \$800. If I make \$801, they'll take away the \$1,075. So working part-time won't really help me get the surgery right away.

But I do have three credit cards with about \$20,000 worth of unused credit on them. Don't ask me why credit card companies gave me this credit, but they did! The cards just keep coming in the mail, preapproved. And up until now, with the financial guidance of my very responsible partner, Dave, I've been very good with credit. I pay the balance each and every month. That's when I'm picking up jeans and a T-shirt at the Gap, however. Not when I'm about to embark on an insurance-denied reconstructive surgery extravaganza.

Next month, Q Life readers, the saga begins!

Gay Arts Center Opens Womyn's Boxes Gallery Night Features Lesbian Artists

By Paul Masterson

The Milwaukee Gay Arts Center announces a new art exhibition and sale entitled "Womyn's Boxes," opening on Gallery Night and Day, Jan. 20 and 21. This second of three women's exhibitions showcases the art of Rise Christesen, Vala Mohr and RoSSo presenting their works in contrasting media of boxes and maps.

This exhibition was conceived as a show of spatial perception. We all constantly define and redefine our space. The resultant territory consists of natural, unnatural and emotional borders. In turn, these create a spectrum of social confinement, personal space and unlimited expanses containing the elements of our experience.

As members of the LGBT human subset, three lesbian artists with wholly different perspectives offer access to their collective territory; the works themselves require the close proximity of the viewer to trespass and explore.

Boxed Sculpture

Rise Christesen creates mixed-media assemblages. Each sculpture consists of a shell containing a collection of parts. These tell a story in which everyday objects find their places in a new context with other objects. The resulting dialogue or narrative creates interactions not seen before, transposing their sense and construct.

Christesen's sculptures portray uncommon relationships. These allude to universal emotions and the difficulty of the individual's interaction with society. She addresses issues that are sometimes LGBT specific but her intent is not to segment relationships into gender or sexual factions. Overcoming the urge to define ourselves as distinct entities recognizes differences as well as universalities. We are all subject



to the same concerns viewed according to our personal sensitivities. We all confront and resolve in an ultimately similar way.

Rise Christesen currently studies at UWM's Peck School of the Arts, where she is pursuing a double major in sculpture and art history and criticism.

Maps as Sculpture

Vala Mohr described her contribution to this exhibition: "I like maps. A lot of people do. And of course, I like to sculpt as well. I was looking for something fun, easy, fast, accessible to make. ... So when I happened to look upon an atlas one day, I thought, well, there you go. I think when we look at the way a map is made, you know, flat, it's easy to see how much fun you could have with that. After all, it represents nothing that is flat at all — unless, of course, you live in Indiana."

She continued, "Sometimes people want to know how I make them and that's funny to me because it's really not about technique. All I did was trash my 2003 atlas with an Exacto knife, you know? Getting started with these, I was more interested in all the stuff behind the making of things, stuff like experimenting and exploring and finding joy. I'm a daydreamer and so my favorite places aren't on maps. Map sculpture — I think that's a way of finding them again, and making those imaginary places real."

Vala Mohr is a graduate of the Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design.

Opening the Box

"These boxes beg to be touched," says RoSSo. The boxes in this case provide a microcosm of the artist's life and, more specifically, of a very particular chapter of that life. RoSSo has created a series of 11 cigar boxes to present a progressive chronicle of memories.

Each box contains a collage of collected objects. In contrast to the "found object" medium, these objects have

been deliberately assembled, though perhaps unconsciously or subconsciously. Individually, these are mere bits and pieces: photos, texts, a letter, a key, a phone bill.

Likewise, the sum of RoSSo's chapters creates a whole. The details compose a woman's coming-out and love story.

It's like many others that have provided the substance for millennia of art and literature. In fact, its significance in the grander scheme of things might be lost in the tumult of previous and subsequent events were it not for its documentation.

RoSSo wants to preserve her story as an interactive experience. She laments the hands-off attitude of other galleries and hopes that this showing at the Milwaukee Gay Arts Center will provide interaction with each box. The contents of the 11 environments may be touched, read and rearranged. Viewers are encouraged to give in to a very human weakness: voyeurism. They should become "involved."

RoSSo is a mother, artist, teacher and lover of life. She actively pursues a very personal agenda of social activism. She is an advocate of positive parenting and the rights of the incarcerated.

All art works are available for sale.

"Womyn's Boxes" opens Gallery Night, Friday, Jan. 20, from 6 to 9 p.m.; and Saturday, Jan. 21, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. The exhibition runs through Feb. 24, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and by appointment. The Milwaukee Gay Arts Center is located at 703 S. 2nd St., just north of a National Avenue in Milwaukee's Walker's Point.





Tate Hired to Lead Fight Against Amendment

A day after over 700 people packed a Nov. 29 hearing on the constitutional ban on civil unions and marriage, Action Wisconsin and Center Advocates announced the hiring of an experienced, full-time campaign manager. Mike Tate is leading the effort to defeat the amendment at the ballot box in November 2006.

"Mike Tate has a high level of experience, a strong background in Wisconsin politics and fresh ideas. By hiring him, we are taking a major step forward in defeating the amendment in 2006," said Action Wisconsin board president Tony Sheehan. "He will build a tremendous campaign that mobilizes a majority of Wisconsin voters to oppose this harmful, far-reaching amendment."

Tate has an extensive political resume in Wisconsin. In 2004, he oversaw one of the largest grassroots voter mobilization efforts in Wisconsin political history as the deputy director of America Coming Together. Tate was also the state director for Howard Dean's presidential campaign. In 2002, he worked as the state field director for Dane County Executive Kathleen Falk's gubernatorial bid and as a regional political organizer for AFSCME council 40 in the general election. Tate has worked for the Democratic Party of Wisconsin and is a former national vice president of the College Democrats of America.

"Wisconsin will be the first state in the nation to defeat a constitutional ban on civil unions and marriage, and I'm excited to lead the effort," said Tate.

"This effort is critical for families in Wisconsin, families across the nation, and everyone who is tired of the way these amendments are being used to divide our country. Wisconsinites will draw a line in the sand next November and send a powerful message that they stand squarely for fairness and equality for all our citizens."

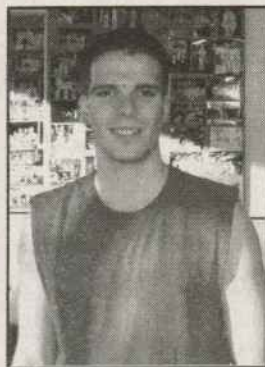
The proposed ban on civil unions and marriage must still clear the required second vote in the State Legislature. Although Action Wisconsin and the Milwaukee-based Center Advocates have been working hard for over a year to pressure key lawmakers, it seems likely the amendment will pass the Legislature and be sent to a statewide vote.

MGAC Announces January Classes

New Sessions of Middle Eastern Dance for Men and Intermediate Yoga

The Milwaukee Gay Arts Center (MGAC) expands its fitness and educational programs with Intermediate Yoga. The new hour-long classes start Saturday, Jan. 7, at 9 a.m.

Chris Jansen, a popular icon in the Milwaukee health and fitness scene, will teach the new class. Jansen instructs a broad range of aerobic and yoga classes in various local venues and holds certifications in group exercise systems and Pilates through the Aerobic and Fitness Association of America (AFAA). He has six years of experience in the fitness industry and has been teaching yoga for three years.



Chris Jansen

Jansen's Intermediate Yoga concentrates on fitness. His style of yoga differs from that based on meditation and focuses on physicality and strength. In Jansen's words, "Yoga is a journey." Anyone of any age can make that journey with progress based on ability and training.

The session runs eight weeks and costs \$40. Please register in advance if possible. Pick up a registration form at the Milwaukee Gay Arts Center or e-mail milwgac@yahoo.com and a form will be sent to you.

All classes take place in the Milwaukee Gay Arts Center, 703 S. 2nd St. in Walker's Point.

Ricky Heldt's Monday Evening Yoga Now in Session!

Ricky Heldt offers continuing hatha yoga and yogalates in the ongoing session that began Dec. 12. Each six-week session meets Monday evenings and consists of one-hour classes. Hatha Yoga takes place from 6 to 7 p.m. Yogalates follows from 7:10 to 8:10 p.m.

Heldt encourages the curious to drop in for a free introductory class. The next session begins Feb. 6.

A six-week session costs \$40. Register soon as space

is limited and classes sell out fast! Registration forms are available at the Milwaukee Gay Arts Center or through Ricky Heldt at 414-759-8169 or rickyroo4u@yahoo.com.

Belly Dancing for Men with Shaia Begins Jan. 8

After a successful Middle Eastern Dance Workshop for Men in December, a new eight-week class starts in January. See the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel's Cue report on this event at www.jsonline.com/onwisconsin/arts/dec05/378891.asp.

Classes are taught by Milwaukee belly dance icon Shaia Fahrid and are open to everyone.

This latest rage in aerobic exercise is sweeping the country and MGAC is proud to be the first venue to offer it in Milwaukee. Belly dancing is a logical extension of more rigid exercises like weight training and aerobics. It focuses on the torso and requires independent control and muscle isolation of the various parts of the body.

This discipline improves flexibility and, though energetic movement, cardio burn at the same time. Posture and attitude play a major role in the style as well, with specific movements relating to male roles in the ancient world, namely those of protector, warrior and hunter. Hence masculine style belly dancing exhibits spirited, sharp and heavier traits as opposed to softer or demure feminine ones. These masculine movements are intended to project power and energy.

This is your opportunity to enter the mystical world of Rags Sharqi, or Oriental Dance, in a class specifically geared to men.

Class attire: Participants will dance in bare feet, no shirt or a fitted stretchable top and stretchable athletic pants. Come prepared!

The Middle Eastern Dance Workshop for Men begins Sunday, Jan. 8, from 4 to 5:30 p.m. The cost is \$40 for the eight-week session.

All classes are held at the Milwaukee Gay Arts Center, 703 S. 2nd St., Milwaukee. To register or for more information, call 414-383-3727.

MGAC Calls for Artist Contributions for Saint Sebastian Project

The Milwaukee Gay Arts Center (MGAC) announces a special art show to open in coordination with PrideFest in June 2006. The Saint Sebastian Project, named for Saint Sebastian, a fourth-century Roman soldier who was martyred for his beliefs, was conceived by the center's director and curator, Paul Masterson.

Masterson is looking for artists to present a multi-media exhibition with a focus on contemporary LGBT depictions of saints and martyrs. "But even more," says Masterson, "this show should be a mirror of traditional supernaturalism reflecting the highest human virtue. It should articulate it in an LGBT context."

The artistic statement should portray the gay heart in the bliss, ecstasy, love, loyalty, sacrifice and commitment of martyrdom. It should also portray suffering, the destruction of beauty, loss, hatred, victimization and oppression. Works may be in any media. They should articulate the image and impact of saints and martyrs, but particularly of Saint Sebastian, whose fate has been the subject of artists' interpretations for centuries.

Masterson added, "Art conveys who we are. The dilemmas we face as members of the LGBT community in today's society and our emotional response to them are best expressed through art. It's my intention to accomplish that through this exhibition."

Potential contributors are asked to contact the Milwaukee Gay Arts Center at 414-383-3727 or milwgac@yahoo.com for more information.

Women's Fund Launches Lesbian Fund

The Women's Fund of Greater Milwaukee Inc. launched its Lesbian Fund with gifts of more than \$13,000. It is hoped that the fund will have the capacity to make its first grants by 2007.

"It's exciting to be shaping the future of Milwaukee's first philanthropic fund to focus solely on meeting the unique needs of lesbians in all stages of their lives," says Angie Guerra, a founder of the fund. Other founders include Tanya Atkinson, Maria Cadenas, Fai De Mark, Christine Harris, Kathleen Herbst, Ruth Irvings, June Kriviskey, India McCause and Barbara Morgan.

The mission of the Lesbian Fund is to encourage philanthropy that will increase the visibility of lesbians as strong community leaders, inform and advocate for lesbian concerns, and provide financial support to initiatives benefiting lesbians at all stages of life.

The Lesbian Fund will make grants to Greater Milwaukee nonprofit agencies. Founders of the fund have identified health care, parenting issues, employment, civil rights and partner rights as some of the issues of greatest concern to lesbians in the Greater Milwaukee community.

"As an endowment, the Lesbian Fund will be available to help meet the pressing needs of our community for generations to come," says Barbara Morgan, a founder of the Fund. "It's our legacy to future generations."

The Lesbian Fund is one of a number of changes that coincide with the timing of the Women's Fund process of branching out from the Greater Milwaukee Foundation as an independent entity. The Fund is now separately incorporated.

Festival of Queer Arts

By Paul Masterson

Lawrence University's LGBT organization, GLOW (Gay, Lesbian, Other, & Whatever), in collaboration with Beloit College's The Alliance, announces a Festival of Queer Arts and Aesthetics.

This historic celebration of queer arts takes place Friday through Sunday, April 7 to 9, at Lawrence University in Appleton. Lawrence has been ranked among the nation's most gay friendly colleges.

The weekend extravaganza includes art exhibits, a Lawrence Conservatory of Music concert featuring the music of world-famous queer composers, poetry readings, an open mic event, drag show and craft fair. Saturday's schedule presents 10 workshops on a broad range of topics, including What Is Queer Art?

Keynote performer will be biracial queer folk musician Pamela Means.

Organizers are looking for artists, poets, drag performers, professors and anyone else interested in being a part of this LGBT arts conference.

For more information, contact Sara Bernstein, bernstes@lawrence.edu or 920-832-7395, or Heather Salus, salush@stu.beloit.edu.

National



Happenings

Gay Soldier Assaulted at Arizona Army Base

Fort Huachuca, Ariz. — Private Kyle Lawson, a 19-year-old Tucson resident, was physically assaulted and threatened at Fort Huachuca Army Base after fellow soldiers learned he is gay, according to a report in the Dec. 18 Arizona Daily Star. Fearful for his safety, Lawson is leaving the Army, while the soldier accused of his assault appears to remain unpunished.

Servicemembers Legal Defense Network (SLDN) called on Army officials to hold the responsible party accountable for the assault and called on the Pentagon to implement an Anti-Harassment Action Plan adopted in 2000 but never implemented.

"Pentagon leaders have consistently refused to take harassment seriously, and our men and women in uniform continue to pay the price," said Sharra E. Greer, SLDN's director of law and policy. "The Pentagon has found, in its own survey, rampant anti-gay harassment in the armed forces. Service members report harassment, violence and threats to SLDN on a regular basis. At least two service members have been murdered because of unchecked anti-gay harassment. Yet military leaders have utterly failed to send a strong, clear message that anti-gay harassment is unacceptable or that those who harass will be held accountable for their actions. The result is yet another anti-gay assault."

According to the Star, Lawson's nose was broken and he was later threatened with a knife after a friend revealed during a Battalion party that Lawson is gay.

While the soldier who Lawson says attacked him was originally charged with aggravated assault by civilian police, Fort Huachuca officials have decided not to prosecute the case "for reasons fort officials say they are not at liberty to explain," according to the press report. Lawson says the soldier used an anti-gay slur during the attack.

In August 2003, 22 members of Congress asked the Department of Defense to implement its Anti-Harassment Action Plan, which includes steps to curb anti-gay harassment. Those Congressional representatives concluded "that the Services are not in full compliance" with the plan and asked DoD to report on its progress by February 2004. Dr. David Chu, the Pentagon undersecretary charged with implementing "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," replied that no further action was required and the Pentagon's actions to address and deal with harassment were sufficient. Many military personnel report to SLDN that they are unaware the plan even exists.

Private Lawson's mother told the Star that she has "been crying myself to sleep" and is "afraid for his life." Private Lawson was told to sleep on a cot in his drill sergeant's office following the attack, and reports to the Star that his attacker's only punishment appeared to be revocation of his weekend pass. A Fort Huachuca spokeswoman said officials took "appropriate action" in dealing with the case.

Sharpton to Headline Black Church Summit on Gay Rights

Washington — The board of directors of the National Black Justice Coalition (NBJC) will convene a major discussion on lesbian and gay rights among black faith leaders. The two-day summit is to be hosted by First Iconium Baptist Church in Atlanta and is scheduled for Jan. 19 to 21.

Refuge Ministries Bishop Dr. Yvette Flunder, senior pastor of the United Church of Christ's City of Refuge Church in San Francisco, and former Democratic presidential candidate the Rev. Al Sharpton of New York will be featured speakers. Sharpton recently announced an initiative to vigorously challenge homophobia in the black church. This will be his first participation in a meeting that will deal directly with that initiative.

"These high level discussions are about developing specific strategies that will challenge homophobic attitudes in our nation's black religious institutions — from the seminary to the pulpit," said Dr. Sylvia Rhue, NBJC director of religious affairs and constituency development. "Through enlivened and educated discussions about the lives of LGBT people, we hope to bring love and spiritually infused enlightenment to our communities of faith."

New Buyer's Guide for LGBT-Friendly Companies

Washington — The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) has released a new buyer's guide, "Buying for Equality," that highlights corporate policies on LGBT equality so consumers can make purchasing decisions based on those policies.

"LGBT Americans are changing the policies of corporate America at the check-out line," said HRC President Joe Solmonese. "With an estimated \$610 billion worth of buying power, this guide empowers our community to easily support companies that take a stand for fairness."

The guide lists hundreds of popular products, services and retail outlets along with their scores on the Corporate Equality Index. For example, the guide illustrates Best Buy's 100 percent score over Circuit City's 43 percent for electronics purchases, and Iams' 86 percent tops Alpo's 29 for pet food.

HRC Foundation's Corporate Equality Index is a scorecard of corporate policies affecting their LGBT employees including domestic partner benefits and nondiscrimination policies. This year, 101 companies scored a perfect 100 percent on the index — more than seven times as many as when the index was introduced in 2002.

The guide is available online at www.hrc.org/BuyersGuide.

Ford's Commitment to Equality Questioned

San Francisco — Out & Equal Workplace Advocates, a national nonprofit organization that champions safe and equitable workplaces for LGBT people, is calling upon Ford Motor Company to disavow a reported agreement between the company and a special interest group to discontinue advertising in LGBT publications for its Jaguar and Land Rover brands.

"As advocates for workplace fairness and equality for all, we call on Ford Motor Company to preserve the principles of equality they themselves have set," said Selisse Berry, executive director of Out & Equal Workplace Advocates. "Ford's decision to remove advertising from LGBT publications under the threat of a special interest group such as the American Family Association raises questions for all of us. Ford must confirm its historic commitment to a safe and equal workplace for all, including its LGBT employees."

The Ford Motor Company response stands in stark contrast to Wells Fargo, which has stayed true to its principles of inclusion and equal commitment to LGBT consumers after Focus on the Family withdrew its funds from the bank.

State Department Condemns UAE Anti-Gay Arrests

Washington — The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) praised the State Department for condemning the United Arab Emirates' arrest of two dozen individuals at a purported gay wedding and threats of forced psychological and hormonal treatment, according to news reports.

"The State Department's condemnation of these arrests and threats is an important component of resolving this atrocious episode," said HRC President Joe Solmonese. "LGBT people are in every country in this world and should be afforded the same dignity and respect that every human being deserves. The United States should support a resolution in front of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights acknowledging that sexual orientation and gender identity protections are part of internationally recognized human rights standards. Unfortunately, our government has not yet supported such a move."

The State Department statement, released Nov. 28, called on "the government of the United Arab Emirates to immediately stop any ordered hormone and psychological treatment and to comply with the standards of international law."

International

Q

Happenings

South Africa Court Rules in Favor of Same-Sex Marriage

On Dec. 1, in a unanimous decision, the Constitutional Court of South Africa extended equal rights and responsibilities to same-sex couples and their families in a decision that will allow same-sex couples the freedom to marry in the next year.

South Africa becomes the first African nation to extend marriage to same-sex couples. Elsewhere, Canada, Belgium, Netherlands and Spain grant equal marriage rights.

Following is an excerpt from the judgment: "The exclusion of same-sex couples from the benefits and responsibilities of marriage was not a small and tangential inconvenience resulting from a few surviving relics of societal prejudice destined to evaporate like the morning dew. It represented a harsh if oblique statement by the law that same-sex couples are outsiders, and that their need for

affirmation and protection of their intimate relations as human beings is somehow less than that of heterosexual couples. It signifies that their capacity for love, commitment, and accepting responsibility is by definition less worthy of regard than that of heterosexual couples. The intangible damage to same-sex couples is as severe as the material deprivation. They are not entitled to celebrate their commitment to each other in a joyous public event recognized by the law. They are obliged to live in a state of legal blankness in which their unions remain unmarked by the showering of presents and the commemoration of anniversaries so celebrated in our culture."

Read the complete ruling at <http://freedomtomarry.c.topica.com/maaejq7abmQSdaLuNdlcadlejD>.



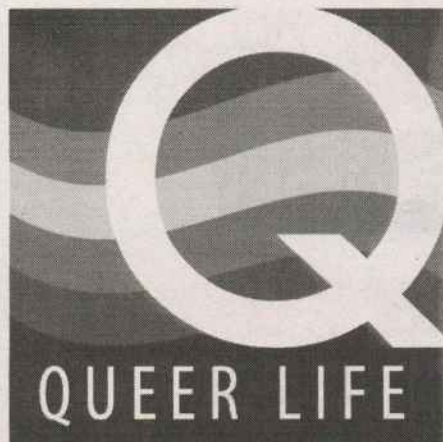
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Q Life is a monthly publication which highlights Wisconsin's diverse population with boldness and class. Each issue contains insightful articles penned by local personalities who are in the know. Available throughout Wisconsin, Q Life fills an information void involving the LGBT community. As Wisconsin's Premier LGBT News Leader, Q Life serves an important buying audience ready to embrace companies friendly to the gay community.

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EDITORIAL

Hate vs. Pride

The enemy has been identified.

The battle lines have been drawn.

History has been written.

In one of the most cowardly moves in Wisconsin legislative history, so-called "public servants" weighed in on an issue which is about nothing more than basic civil rights. The ability to marry the person you love.

And while in 2006 this right may seem a privilege afforded to only those who are of opposite sex, when history remembers these "lawmakers," BIGOT will be the term used in our state's documenting books.

A quick look back on U.S. history proves this point.

Remember it was not too long ago when women couldn't vote, bi-racial marriages were outlawed and the ability to get a front seat on a bus was controlled by the color of your skin.

Just like the gay-hating bigots highlighted on our front page, legislators of previous eras spent their legislative careers writing

and voting on laws that, when we look back on them today, we cannot believe were ever instituted.

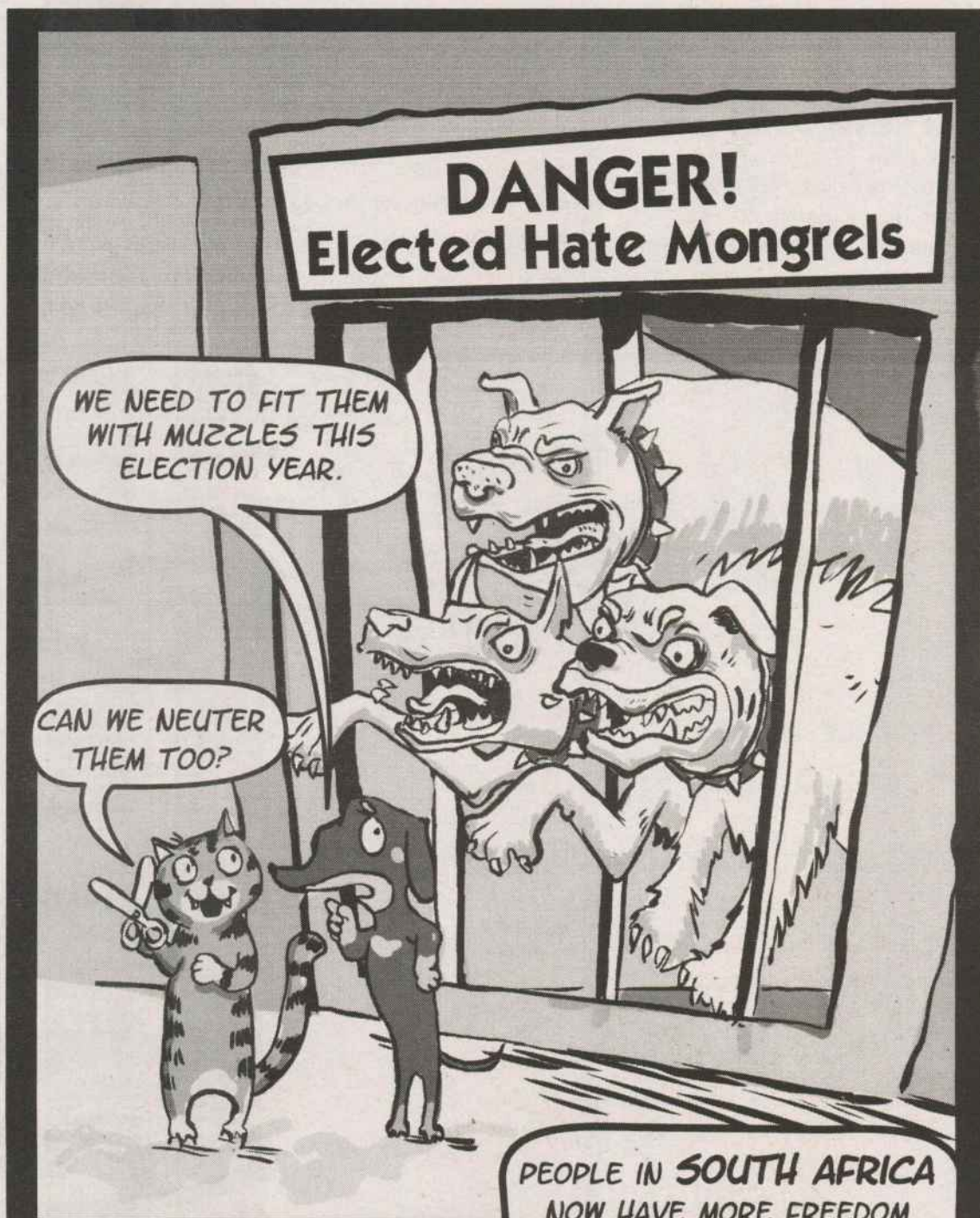
This is how our very own Wisconsin homophobic legislators' actions will be viewed. And if history repeats itself — as it often does — those memories of hate will be strong and damning, leaving most in the future to wonder how people could be so backward that they would vote for a law that would deny LOVE.

Gays in Wisconsin are under attack. And while we might feel now that many people believe

we're second-class citizens, we must not forget how far we've come. We've all been told that we must organize to defeat the proposed state constitutional ban on gay marriage, set to be on our ballots in November. Most of us will do so. But we must also not lose site of the fact that no matter how this vote comes out, we are just in fighting back discrimination of any kind.

It's said many LGBT folks are forward-thinking, a little ahead of their time. If this issue is used as the barometer, there's no denying that. But it's also said

continued on page 13



MKE TOONS

C. Beetow © 2006



EDITORIAL *continued from page 12*

forward thinkers are not always embraced and accepted.

We must remember that fact and begin now to fight like hell to beat back our state's very powerful, hateful political machine.

We're on the right side of this issue; history will be kind to us and prove our point.

For those faces on the front of this month's Q Life, we can only hope that, like their hateful comrades, they too will learn to forgive themselves and ask history to do the same. Unfortunately as they grow older and face their final years in life, it's not legislative pride they will be able to look back on. They will forever be labeled as hate mongers who were out of touch, a trait which is a hard sell when trying to lie in peace in an internal place.

Hate is never forgotten.

Living with it inside of you will forever haunt your past and present.

Kudos

A high five to James Kuchta for his newest goal of lining 2nd Street in Walker's Point with pride flags.

Like many cities, Milwaukee has a thriving LGBT district which should be highlighted and celebrated. Adding these colorful pole flags will go a long way toward proving our city's acceptance of our diversity.

We call on the community to get involved to help raise the nearly \$5000 needed for their installation. Also we hope both gay and non-gay businesses will rally around this idea to make it a reality.

This small statement will cement our rightful place as an established neighborhood in Milwaukee — full of pride and acceptance.

"For me, to make someone suffer penalties because of their sexual orientation is on the same level as making people be penalised for their gender, or race."

South African Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu, a Nobel Peace Prize winner.

Dear Editor:

A bill that would have ended the practice of paying Milwaukee police officers salaries and benefits after they've been fired failed to pass the Republican-controlled Assembly Committee on Corrections and the Courts this week.

The defeat of this bill is unfortunate.

Milwaukee remains the only city in Wisconsin that pays cops after they've been fired. Cops are paid during the appeal of their termination to the Fire and Police Commission.

According to news reports, 81 Milwaukee police officers were fired in the last 15 years; all but two filed appeals. This has cost Milwaukee over \$2 million in wages and benefits. The tax dollars spent on these 79 fired police officers represents a practice built on politics rather than justice.

This ridiculous law is providing nine of Milwaukee's so-called "finest" an opportunity to profit after being fired for their criminal misconduct in the beating of Frank Jude Jr. Recently, one of those officers was re-arrested for allegedly calling in a bomb threat to a Milwaukee police station.

The officers who brutalized Jude are representative of police who betray their profession and sully the image of this department. Indeed, they represent cops on the force who would rather yank a Latino out of the window of his car, smash his face onto the front fender for simply asking the cop why he was being stopped.

These dangerous cops have wounded the reputation of their profession. Is it any wonder some in the public view cops as criminals hiding behind a badge? Dirty cops are the bane of the department. Paying them after being discharged from the department while they appeal their firing is wasteful and ridiculous.

Why is it that right-wing radio talk-show hosts accuse the Democrats of being servants to the state's teacher unions yet stay silent when the GOP bends over backwards to accommodate the police union?

By voting down the effort to have this 25-year-old law removed and by supporting the special interest groups known as the police union, the GOP has proven that the people of Milwaukee are insignificant and turned its back on the notion of local control.

Robert Miranda
editor-in-chief,
the Milwaukee Spanish Journal

Dear Editor:

I am disturbed and dismayed by the serious breach of basic journalistic ethics exhibited by Q Life and its editor, Don Hoffman, in his editorial "Milwaukee Needs a Leader, Not Just a Good Guy" (December 2005).

It is the generally recognized obligation of a newspaper to provide the open exchange of views — not simply those of an editor with a serious conflict of interest and an axe to grind.

Q Life failed to provide any independent and impartial news coverage of Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett's meeting with the LGBT community that might allow readers to place Hoffman's editorial remarks in proper context and to provide community reaction to the event that might differ from its editor's personal opinions. Q Life's failure in this regard is simply poor form and bad, lazy journalism.

It is a basic tenet and obligation of journalists and editors to disclose all conflicts of interest — whether real or perceived.

Hoffman's deep, personal conflict

of interest regarding the Milwaukee Gay Arts Center, "Naked Boys Singing" and the pending lawsuit with the City of Milwaukee over the production's closure points to a very serious lack of journalistic ethics which our community should not ignore.

In his editorial, Hoffman failed to disclose that he is the co-director of the Milwaukee Gay Arts Center, that it was Hoffman's personal attorney that filed the \$650,000 discrimination lawsuit against the City of Milwaukee on behalf of the Milwaukee Gay Arts Center and that Q Life shares leased space with the Milwaukee Gay Arts Center.

Additionally, Hoffman was the board member of the now-defunct Circlestage Theater whose nonprofit status he personally transferred to the Milwaukee Gay Arts Center. I also note that Don Hoffman was quite vocal in his support for Marvin Pratt over Barrett in the mayoral election.

Also interesting: There are scores of "out" LGBT employees and appointees who work for the City of Milwaukee, including Leonard Sobczak chairman of the Milwaukee Fire and Police Commission. Yet, Hoffman singled out Neil Albrecht, the deputy director of the Elections Commission for his failure to attend the event and ask tough questions of Barrett.

Hoffman slyly implies some nefarious collusion for Albrecht's decision not to attend the event. Our community needs to ask Hoffman what evidence he has to support his scurrilous assertion.

I also wonder, as a city employee, how is Albrecht's lack of attendance at the meeting in any way newsworthy?

I call on Don Hoffman to abide by the same high standards to which he apparently holds others and for Q Life to clarify and explain its egregious conduct in this matter.

William Attewell
Greendale

An Open Letter to Sen. Alberta Darling

Dear Sen. Darling:

I am writing to you with my concerns about the so-called Marriage Protection Act. I attended a meeting with you in Shorewood on Dec. 5 with about 50 concerned citizens including clergy, LGBT community members and straight community members — all of whom oppose this amendment. We oppose the amendment for one simple reason: It will hurt families. It will hurt children. It will hurt women. And yes, it will hurt gay people like myself.

My concern is that Wisconsin voters will see only the first part of the language that deals with marriage being between one man and one woman, and vote yes on that premise. But the bill goes much deeper than that, as you well know. This bill will pave the way to barring civil unions in the future, and this kind of moral judgment has no place in legislature. You have denied that this is the case, but those denials are empty. You know full well what this language will allow for in the future. It has only one name: discrimination.

Here are a few ways this bill will hurt Wisconsin citizens:

- Let's start with me. I have been living with HIV/AIDS for 20 years. If this amendment passes and I become seriously ill, my partner, Dave, may be denied the right to make medical decisions for me or even visit me in the hospital.

- Gay and lesbian parents will not be able to share parental rights. In many cases, should the "legal" parent die, what will

**Letters to the Editor**

happen to the children who are left behind with the only parent they have ever known — and that person has no legal rights to them whatsoever?

- Is it fair to deny the possibility of Social Security benefits and retirement benefits to gay and lesbian couples who have spent their entire lives together, only to be discriminated against in their old age?

- What about health insurance that is already shared between nonmarried committed partnerships? Will those benefits be taken away now as well?

- What about elderly partners who end up in nursing homes with no legal ties to each other? Will they be ripped apart as a family in their last few weeks or years of life?

Sen. Darling, I know that you disagree with the nonconservative viewpoints of your constituents. And we here on the East Side have been very cleverly gerrymandered into your district where Mequon and its "family values" rule. Kudos to you, Sen. Darling. We have been effectively rendered voiceless by the conservatives you serve, and who keep you in office.

But I have to ask you — what about the fundamental principal of separation between church and state? Let's not put the religious aspect of marriage into constitutional law. Let each individual church decide for itself what marriage is for its members.

And let the State declare marriage between one man and one woman. I don't care. I never wanted to model myself in the image of the heterosexual paradigm anyway. Why should I? Fifty percent of heterosexual marriages in this country fail. If you want to protect marriage, make divorce illegal.

But do not put a bill in the constitution that will take away rights from American citizens and ban the possibility of civil unions by prohibiting any arrangement that is "substantially similar to marriage."

As I sat in the meeting room with you listening to clergy and gay and straight community members begging you with tears in their eyes to reconsider your position on this amendment, I was reminded of the story in the Bible where Moses pleaded with the Pharaoh to let his people go. But the Pharaoh had a "hard heart" and refused. Now I know how Moses felt.

And I pray that no one ever discriminates against you in the way that you and your conservative colleagues are facilitating discrimination against so many American citizens here in Wisconsin.

Sincerely,
Mark Hooker
resident, Milwaukee's East Side



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STROLL OVER & SUBS DOWN

Be It Resolved

Since it has been shown time and time again that our health as LGBT people relates directly to our self-esteem, I suggest that we individually and collectively resolve to be less tolerant in 2006. The link between discrimination, self-esteem, and poor mental and physical health points the way: We need to stop putting up with junk aimed at us.

By suggesting that we become less tolerant, I am not suggesting we target others with discrimination. In fact, I urge all of us to consciously work to end anti-Semitism, racism, age-based bias and sexism. However, as individuals and as a community, we continue to put up with the most absurd limits to our own lives, consistent misinformation disseminated by people in the public eye, marginalization as consumers instead of engaged participants, and invisibility in almost every corner of society.

Our tradition of making New Year's resolutions in the United States is generally a marketing opportunity and not a real commitment to change. But we can decide to do that differently as LGBT people. We can decide to improve our health by addressing those discriminatory and harassing issues that come our way each day, week and month.

What would constitute some useful resolutions on our own behalf? I've drafted a few to get us going:

- I will tell my boss, co-workers,

neighbors, and rabbi or pastor to ask about my partner, date or friends each week, just as they do with other people at work, over the back fence, or in church/synagogue.

- I will insist that mail be properly addressed to me and my family by government, family members and others in a way that honors our relationship(s).

- I will ask for a different table in a restaurant whenever I find myself possibly being put off to the side so I am not so noticeable.

- I will call my alderperson, state legislator, and local educational and social service organizations at least once in 2006 to learn what they are doing to support the healthy development of LGBT youth and seniors.

- I will send a request to my local Social Security office for a 50 percent rebate because there is no provision for my current or future spouse to receive survivor benefits.

- I will create a form letter that respectfully asks my employer every month about providing domestic partner benefits (even if I don't need them or want them) until they are granted.

- I will ask my physician, physician's assistant, nurse practitioner, and/or psychotherapist about their training in working with LGBT people.

- I will call the local public television station and ask about their LGBT programming and their decisions about



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.

scheduling it.

- I will check with Center Advocates and Action Wisconsin to learn the negative voting records of area legislators on issues important to our community — like the proposed state constitutional amendment — and organize my family and friends to defeat that person in the next election independent of the outcome of the amendment itself.

- I will interrupt any negative comments about any one of my beloved LGBT sisters and brothers no matter who they come from.

Certainly each of us can think of many more examples of great resolutions. I'd love to hear yours.

Best wishes for more health in 2006.

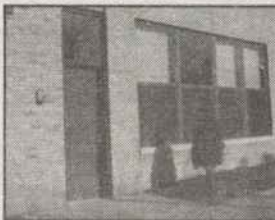
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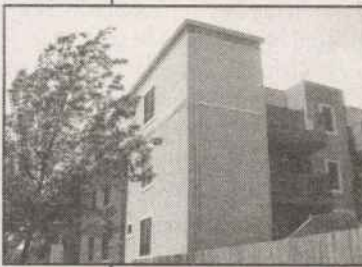
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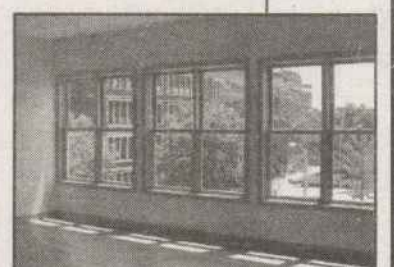
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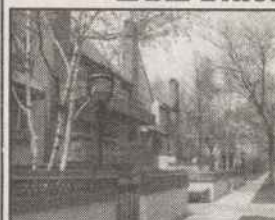
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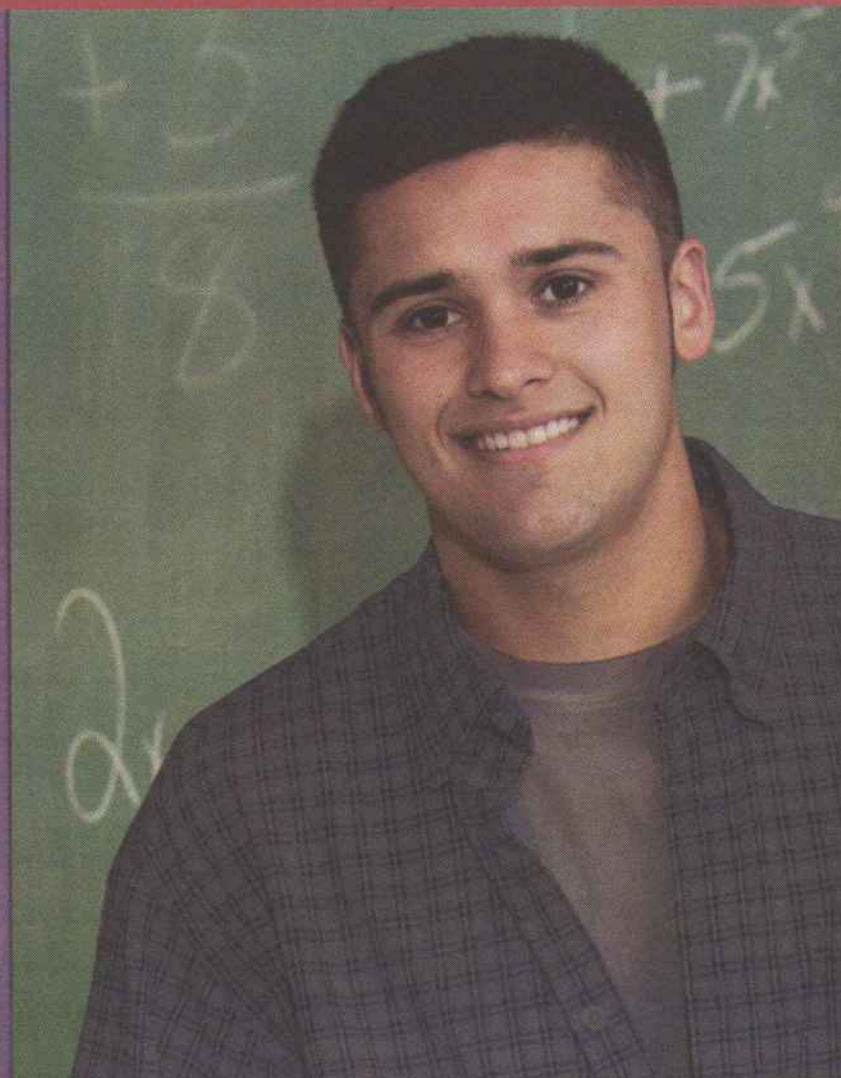
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ASK THE VET

Dr. Randal Zeman is a veterinary manager at the Wisconsin Humane Society. He has been employed with WHS for 18 years.

Can my dog get the avian flu?

Answer:

Avian influenza is caused by different strains of bird flu virus. Wild birds often carry these viruses in their intestines, but usually do not get sick from them. There is one type of avian influenza that has caused concern recently. In Asia and Eastern Europe it has been causing serious disease in domestic ducks and chickens, resulting in high mortality rates. It is also more virulent in wild birds and has caused many deaths.

This virus has also infected humans and caused serious

illness, which is not typical of bird flu. Humans can pick up the virus through handling infected poultry or contaminated surfaces. At this point it is not easily transmitted from person to person. The concern is that the virus could mutate or change at some point and become easily transmitted between people, similar to human influenza viruses. An influenza pandemic could then result.

It is uncertain what other species could be infected with this virus. There have been cases of wild cats (tigers, leopards) becoming sick with avian influenza after eating contaminated poultry. It is presumed that it could also infect domestic cats. At this time, there are no reported cases of this disease in any wild or domestic dogs.

Luckily the virus has not been reported in the United States. Hopefully it will be kept under control and not enter our country.

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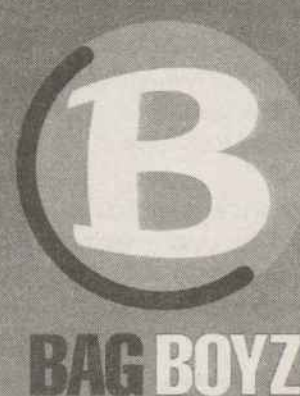


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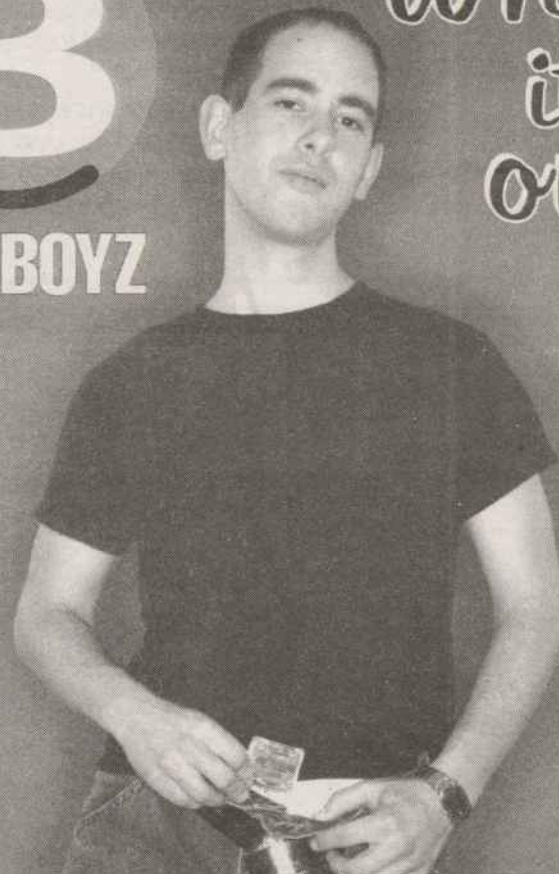
A WHS veterinarian performs the surgery and charges a fee based on a sliding scale.

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Clubstitutes

For good or ill, one pervasive aspect of queer culture is club life. From the days of secret bars with no windows and minimal markings to neon pink triangles in big picture windows with rainbow flags fluttering in the breeze, club life still bounces along to its own beat. This month we look at two zines by some of the club kids whose sensibilities rise above the complexity-of-car-alarm beats to pound out a rhythm all their own.

Not Terribly Keane on Klones

The cover of **Tantrum** [Summer Issue, 1991, 64 pages] has a charcoal drawing by Tyler Bob Ingenu Popstitute of a Margaret Keane-eyed, buzzed headed, multiple pierced, leather jacket clad club clone crying big ol' tears into his drink. That, coupled with the introduction welcoming readers to a zine for "ultra-sophisticated, semi-misanthropic, post-queer, quasi-glamourati," sets the tone for a romp through the world of early 1990s San Francisco club life and political activism. The SF scene at that time launched what would become a strong, enduring antidote to vacuous party boys that people often think are the only thing going in queer life.

By bringing together diverse elements, with a generous dose of campy clip art and retro porn, **Tantrum** encourages those who are on a fight for their "right to be groovy." Who knew there was hot hippie porn? Long before the current battles over same-sex marriage, the artists in **Tantrum** detoured 1950s sterile graphics of same-sex couples to denounce the "cold and bureaucratic" term domestic partners and give warning to poets that "nothing rhymes with domestic partner."

Along with anti-capitalist sensibilities expressed in an open letter to newly liberated former Soviet-bloc countries, there's also a four-page spread of photos from a 1985 Madonna look-a-like contest at a Michigan shopping mall. The juxtapositions found in **Tantrum** are nothing short of amazing, probably because they happened at random and don't appear forced or planned in any way.

Rock Out with Your Politics Out

Bridie is part of a long line of feminist zines which take the power of awesome women in punk rock and turn it around to make powerful statements about the politically and socially screwed up world in which we all exist, and **More Than A Feeling** [Summer Issue, 2001, 40 pages]



ZINES

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

breaks it all down.

Contributor Aldona writes the transcendent article of this issue examining her inability to confront a guy at a Bratmobile show who was wearing a T-shirt with a deeply sexist sentiment. Delving deeper, she brings together a brilliant critique exploring the connections between the oppression of women and the oppression of animals. Much of this zine is in the same vein, finding images and attitudes pervasive in pop culture and exploring how these attempts to be humorous or cheeky can be construed as detrimental and disgusting.

In "I Can't Get No Satisfaction" there is a statement ripping open the reality of why people who are active enough to go out to punk shows, bars or clubs aren't terribly political. "A major part of the problem is the specific fear of being political. Many people associate being political with some kind of cartoon image of a dirty hippie with a protest sign or some other cheesy, uncool caricature." It's also a call to challenge assumptions, and be mindful about political beliefs and activism. In the process, these challenges help us create that which doesn't exist — a sort of existential filling of a dance floor where all of us and our differences feel welcomed and safe.

These and other zines can be found online at qzap.org along with information on "The Hotties of QZAP" calendar 2006!

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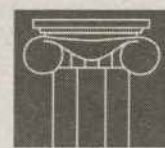
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Oscar and Felix

How and where did you meet?

Monica: I answered an ad in the Shepherd newspaper. We decided to meet at the Hi-Fi Café for coffee. The minute she walked in the door, I felt a connection. We spent the rest of the evening together and when we parted for the night, I knew I had found my true love.



COUPLE

Kathy Mesa, CEO of Positive Image Promotions, and Monica Moe, a high school special education teacher at MPS, have been together for 10 years and own a home in Bay View. They have three dogs, two Golden Retrievers and a tri-colored Collie, and three cats. They are in the process of adopting two beautiful girls.

County and Key West.

Kathy: The happiest time for me is everyday waking up next to the love of my life. The first time we met and had a wonderful evening; it seems to me that even today, when there are situations that are not always happy, we still can make the best of any situation and find something to laugh about.

What are your hopes for this relationship?

Monica: Kathy is my lifelong partner. My hope is that we will continue to roll over each morning, look into the eyes of the other, and know that we still fall in love each day.

Kathy: At the end of my day, as I leave my office, I still am excited about going home and seeing Monica's smile and the sparkle in her blue eyes when I get home. I hope this magic lasts forever.

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Who Were You When Kennedy Was Shot?

In late November 1963, I was a college freshman at Wisconsin State University at Eau Claire. There was a guy down the hall who admitted to everyone that he was a homosexual. Most of the guys in the dorm were from small farm towns in northern Wisconsin so they didn't even know what that meant. I knew what it meant, but I didn't refer to myself as one even though I was pretty sure that's what I was. One warm night in late October I managed to steal away into the woods with "Rick," but day to day I steered clear of him as often as possible. If he's reading this now and recognizes the event, I'm sorry for not being a better friend at the time. It was just too scary.

Gay, back then, for most people, still meant what it says in the dictionary — cheerful and lighthearted, or merry. "Out gay" was a phrase that did not exist at all. "Homosexual" was a term spoken in a whisper and almost never in mixed company. It was most certainly never said out loud in a family situation, a church or even in a classroom setting, except maybe in Psych 101 by some brash young pup of a professor who wanted to titillate the students.

For the next six years things didn't change much. There weren't very many gay bars and finding them meant having to have the courage to walk up to someone you suspected was "homosexual," try to start a conversation and hopefully bring it around to talking about what you might have in common. One would find these people in public bathrooms, at the library, or in parks. Sometimes it would be eye contact or recognizing a certain mannerism in each other that would cause you to be brave enough to speak. If you were a man in the late 1940s and early 1950s you might wear a red tie to let others know of your secret identity. (I wonder if George Bush knows about that?) There was a certain color that you might wear on a certain day that would set you off as being a "homo," but most of us who suspected that in ourselves certainly didn't advertise by adhering to that code.

We didn't have gay bookstores. Hell, we didn't have gay books. In late 1963 "Tropic of Cancer," by Henry Miller, a book about heterosexuals with lots of "dirty" stuff in it, was still banned in the United States. If there

was an article in a magazine, it was not about homosexuality as a lifestyle but rather an exposé about the underworld of people who were living an unnatural existence. There were no dances or dance bars. Bars in Milwaukee were able to get a one-night cabaret license seven times a year, but you could always count on that being a night that the police would make a raid. On other nights in the bars there was always the possibility that a bunch of straight guys would come in the place to "beat up a few faggots" or they would be waiting outside on the street with the same intention.

In the early 1960s you didn't want to be who you really were if you thought you were gay. Most of us led two lives. By day we were trying to pull off a straight existence and at night we strove to let our true selves come alive. Most of us had a friend of the opposite sex who was understanding and filled in as the expected date at weddings or office parties, but most of the time they believed that someday we would go straight and fall right into their loving arms.

Now things are much different. There are still things that we don't

Q



SENIORS

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

have, like gay marriage, but when you think back 40 years, who would have ever believed that someday it would even be a national topic of conversation?

Those of us who were around in the late '60s took a deep breath when we heard about the Christopher Street riots. We weren't sure if we were taking a step forward, or putting ourselves into harm's way. But we did step forward, and we continue to move ahead toward building an honest recognition for ourselves. We still have a lot of hard work to do, and because of our very nature we will get that work done. We've come a long way since the day Kennedy was shot, and we should all be very proud of who we are, what we are, and where we are going.

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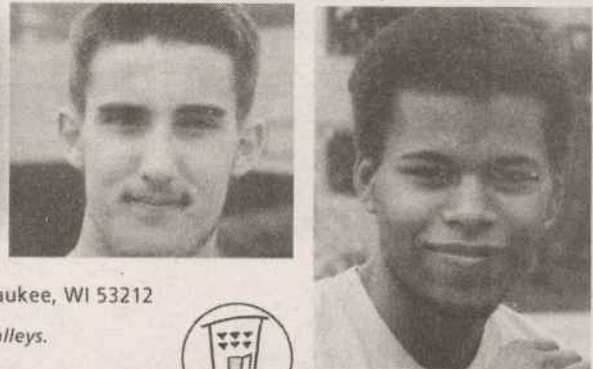


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Timeless Tiles

In this self-indulgent age, we Americans are spending thousands of dollars on the latest tiles for the floors and walls of our hallways, kitchens and bathrooms. Tiles are as popular and varied as they have ever been. Fabulous, fresh and new. You think? Not necessarily so. Everything old is new again.

Enamelled bricks from the ninth to the sixth centuries B.C. have been found in Assyrian ruins. Greek and Roman excavations have revealed mosaics from before Christ was born.

On a recent trip to Sicily I was fascinated and enchanted by a visit to Villa Casale, an opulent Roman villa that was most likely built in the first century A.D. In the 62 rooms, 42 multicolored floorings form a delightful pictorial mosaic telling much about the owners, their lives and religious beliefs.

The technique of mosaic consists of the creation of images by means of tesserae — small chips of multicolored marble and various colored glass

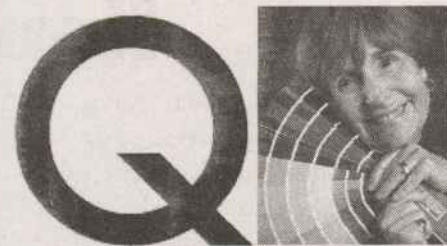


measuring about one-fourth inch square. In addition to the tesserae, small chips of colored limestone and pieces of marble, onyx, enamel and clay were used at the villa to create an overall impression of a complexly woven tapestry or rug.

Another Sicilian stop was the Cathedral of Monreale. The cathedral and its cloister were built by the Normans starting in the 11th century. The mosaics in the cathedral are both magnificent and awe inspiring. Their subject matter is biblical, but their design reveals Byzantine, Arabic, Scandinavian and French influences.

The many national and ethnic influences of the early mosaics on the Sicilians exist today in contemporary ceramics and tile making. Everywhere we went on the island we saw local terra cotta, hand-painted and glazed tiles — in use and for purchase. Italian tile is readily available in this country too, but it's much more fun to buy it in Italy. It is not, however, any cheaper, especially if you ship it to the United States.

My continuing fascination with the mosaics and tiles of Sicily came home



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

with me and led me to Murray Hill Pottery Works at 2458 N. Murray Ave. on Milwaukee's East Side. Murray Hill (414-332-8828) is an absolutely wonderful place; it has a gallery in front exhibiting many local ceramicists and pottery artists and a classroom in the rear for pottery-making lessons.

Geralyn Flick, the owner, put me in touch with a tile artist located in Riverwest. Heather Eiden started out as photography major at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee but became interested in clay sculpture when she took a course with Adolph Rosenblatt.

Heather sees clay as a permanent design surface. She became interested in tiles after traveling in Mexico and seeing them as an everyday part of architecture. She studied woodcarving in Bali, and in Spain she researched Antonio Gaudi, learning to incorporate mosaics into architecture.

Some of Heather's tiles have a wonderful sense of whimsy, others evoke a warm feeling of nostalgia; all of them show a nice balance of color, texture and design.

Heather's tiles of steaming cups of coffee hang on the north wall of Alterra at the Lake. Her artistry is also part of a permanent installation at the Walker's Point Center for the Arts.



Heather's tiles are for sale at Murray Hill, where you can see a basketful of them shaped into small dishes — perfect for sushi sauces or errant teabags, and also at the Art and Soul Gallery on Vliet Street in Wauwatosa, affordably priced from \$5 to \$50.

Heather welcomes custom design through her aptly named Blacksplash Tile Design. She may be reached through Murray Hill or at eidsplash@aol.com. Everything old is new again.


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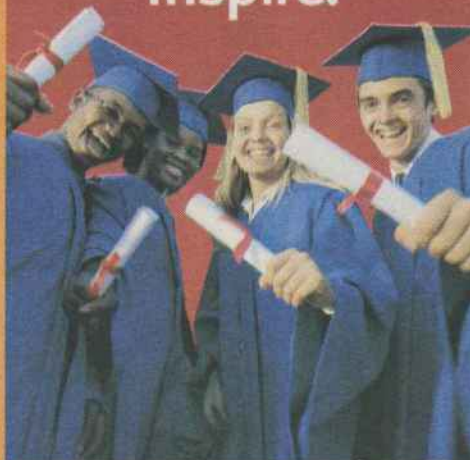


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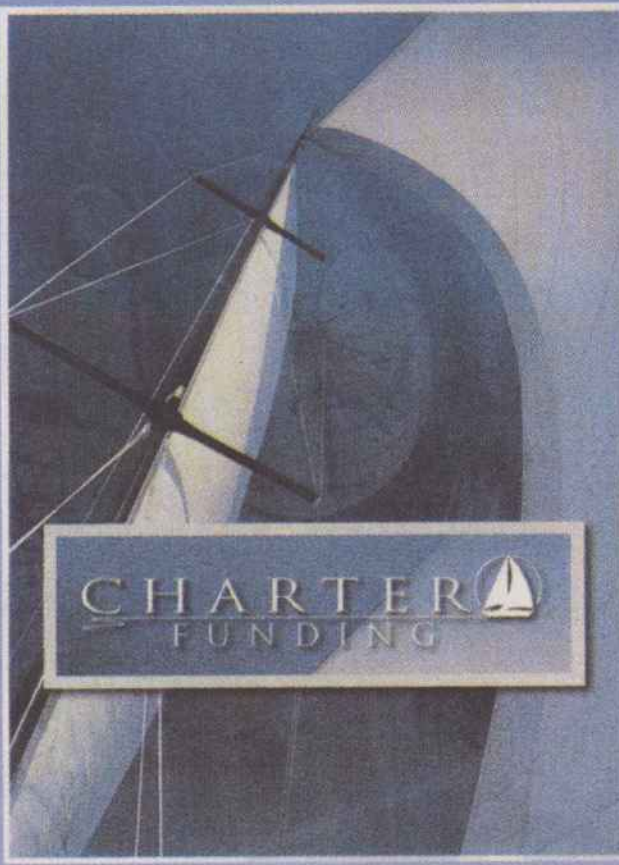
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Queer Job News

One job filled, and another opening announced in Madison.

Action Wisconsin, in conjunction with Milwaukee's Center Advocates, has announced that Mike Tate will run the campaign to defeat the proposed amendment to prohibit civil unions, domestic partnerships and marriage for same-sex couples in Wisconsin.

Tate has extensive experience running campaigns in Wisconsin. He was deputy director of America Coming Together in 2004. Before working with America Coming Together, Mike was Wisconsin State director for Howard Dean's presidential campaign. In 2002, he served as state field director for the gubernatorial campaign of Dane County Executive Kathleen Falk, and he got his start as a regional political organizer for AFSCME.

Tate sees the amendment to prohibit civil unions, domestic partnerships and marriage as the civil rights issue of our time, comparing it to the American Revolution and the fight against racial segregation in the 1960s. It's time for every queer in Wisconsin to step up and help Mike in this battle.

Tate points out that in Wisconsin, unlike in every other state that has faced a constitutional amendment to prohibit civil unions and marriage, we have nearly a year to organize. But we still have to use that year effectively. Volunteer for the campaign by contacting Action Wisconsin at www.actionwisconsin.org or Center Advocates at www.centeradvocates.org.

The State Capitol was the place to be on Nov. 29, as opponents of the ban on civil unions, domestic partnerships and marriage outnumbered supporters and kept the Senate committee hearing the proposal busy all day.

You can send your thanks all at once to all of the Democratic senators who voted against the amendment by visiting this link: <http://eqfed.org/campaign/senate14>.

In other queer employment news, OutReach is hiring a new executive director. The position description and application requirements will be available on the OutReach Web site, www.outreachinc.org, soon. They're looking for someone who has substantial ability to administer the agency on a daily basis, with significant



MADISON

Bill Turner is president of the OutReach board of directors in Madison.

emphasis on fundraising. Review of applications will begin in mid January. The position is open until filled.

OutReach's program coordinator, Harry Straetz, and I, in my capacity as OutReach board president, recently went all the way out to Mount Horeb, in the western half of Dane County, to talk to a class at Mount Horeb High School. We went at the invitation of a student there who organizes the school's gay/straight alliance.

We had a great time talking to a great group of students. The best news is what today's high school students think about LGBT civil rights issues. Everyone in the class knew or was related to an LGBT person. The only problem was that they all agree in supporting same-sex marriage and other LGBT civil rights, so it was a bit hard to get the discussion going.

Are you male and between 14-19 years old?

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Helping Our Community, Just Being Ourselves

I have always been blessed with a number of LGBT mentors and role models. Even before I was aware of sexuality or sexual orientation, I was positively influenced by the kindness and generosity of educators and leaders who happened to be LGBT. Through church and through Southeast Wisconsin's progressive community, I have been able to get to know and be inspired by numerous caring, committed, professional and talented LGBT folks.

At first, this doesn't seem particularly earth-shattering. This is particularly true for those of us who are out, or close to someone who is out. We all know and come to take for granted that role models come in every variety.

However, for many who are questioning or struggling with their sexuality, which includes but is far from limited to youth, the positive impact a respectable gay neighbor, community member, educator or leader can have is tremendous.

Yes, information and communications technology have made it easier for people of all ages and localities to connect with the LGBT community. But technology creates a sense of disconnect that can make a thriving, dynamic LGBT community seem like a distant abstraction.

Yes, high school gay/straight alliances and similar organizations at post-secondary institutions are spreading like wildfire.

But the mission of such organizations is often limited to creation of the tolerant conditions needed for LGBT students to be educated safely.

Yes, there are more images of LGBT characters on network television than there were, say, 10 years ago. But in no way do these images constitute an accurate, full representation of the diversity of the LGBT culture, or convey the humanity and dimension of gay people and relationships.

None of these developments can fully communicate or foster an understanding of the meaning of sexual orientation and identity. Even our allies — though it would never be my intention to downplay the compassion and support of our allies — cannot offer quite the same perspective. LGBT mentors and leaders are uniquely positioned to convey the profound normalcy of homosexuality and homosexual people, both to those who struggle with their own sexual orientations and to the wider community.

This demands of us nothing more (and nothing less) than that we be ourselves, that we let our goodness (and yes, ordinariness) shine through.

Nothing has the power to positively change hearts and minds or inspire others to come out of the closet like the courage of ordinary LGBT people, proudly and publicly living their ordinary LGBT lives.



YOUTH

David Seitz (davidkseitz@yahoo.com) is a senior at Wauwatosa East High School. He is opinions editor of the nationally recognized East High School Cardinal News and an active member of Amnesty International and Unitarian Universalist Church West in Brookfield. Questions and comments are welcome.

It's our most powerful tool in fighting the constitutional ban on marriage equality and civil unions. It's also integral to making life better for LGBT youth.

On "Yes I Am," the first album she released after coming out, Melissa Etheridge wrote a song called "Silent Legacy" about the struggles she faced growing up as a lesbian. In the final verse, she urges: "Mothers tell your children / Be quick you must be strong / Life is full of wonder / Love is never wrong / Remember how they taught you / How much of it was fear / Refuse to hand it down / The legacy stops here."

It is our responsibility to create a new legacy for ensuing generations of LGBT people, a legacy of safety, confidence and freedom.

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featuring new writing by:

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- Ellen Bass
- Louise A. Blum
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Cream City Review has reinvented itself again and again, distilling the cultural pulse of American literary life, concocting for us a most wicked Midwestern brew. — Timothy Liu

Fighting with Joy

Republicans in the State Legislature are moving ahead with the hateful anti-same-sex-marriage amendment. In December the State Senate passed the proposed amendment with a party-line vote. The Assembly is expected to vote soon.

While we need to respond to this amendment politically, supporting the work of the No on the Amendment Coalition and educating our friends and neighbors, we also need to respond spiritually.

Last month the clergy caucus of the No on the Amendment Coalition in Milwaukee gathered to go Christmas caroling at the homes of Rep. David Cullen and Rep. Peggy Krusick. David and his family came outside to listen to us carol. His family clearly enjoyed the singing regardless of the views of the singers. Peggy Krusick was not home and her husband shut the door on us. Despite the inhospitality we sang on.

One of the lead organizers of our caroling was the Rev. Jamie Washam, pastor of Underwood Memorial American Baptist Church in Wauwatosa (414-258-4246). Caroling may seem like an odd way to lobby a legislator, but Jamie was clear about its importance.

Joy can be a weapon whose effect is transformative according to Jamie. We can see that our political situation is serious and that the amendment poses a

real and intimidating threat to the queer community in Wisconsin. Joy does not deny any of this. Instead it is a form of resistance. Jamie notes, "You can smack me down but you can't take away my joy."

Jamie led folks in caroling, and leads her congregation to base themselves on joy, because it is important that we not get overwhelmed by despair. "Despair can be seductive and tempting," Jamie says, "but joy is greater. When we respond to people with joy we are refusing to be crushed and defined by their hatred."

There is a similar sentiment in scripture, where Paul once said, "When you show kindness to those who hate you it is like dumping burning coals on their heads." I certainly feel like dumping coals on the heads of those who support the amendment. I found that as I sang with Jamie and the other carolers I was filled with a joyous spirit. It was a joy that transformed my despair over this amendment and maybe even opened the heart of Reps. Cullen and Krusick a bit.

Jamie finds it central to base our advocacy in joy. As she says, "People don't remember what you say but how you say it." Many people are finding a welcoming community at Underwood Memorial, where Jamie not only says that queer folks are welcome but actively lives out an inclusive vision of church.



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.

"Sometimes people get hung up on the fact that we're Baptist." People often forget that while the Baptist tradition includes many social conservatives it also counts many social justice advocates, like the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

Jamie herself became supportive of the queer community because of friends and good teachers who challenged the status quo gospel she had learned as a child in Texas. She became aware of the ostracism many queer people felt from the church and the pain too many pastors had caused. She decided that "either I was taught wrong about gay people or God was smaller than I thought. God is not small."

Jamie preaches the truth about a God who is larger than all our limited understandings and shares a joy that overwhelms our despair. This is how we can spiritually deal with the pain of the amendment — testify to the greater vision of God and share your joy.

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We've Come a Long Way, Baby!

Lately, I've thought a great deal about a woman I met almost 20 years ago. We both sat in the front row of a required undergraduate humanities course — two introverted students who dutifully showed up for every class and didn't interact with anyone else.

I was immediately attracted to Roxanne — not a romantic attraction, but one of intrigue, compassion and similarity.

After class one day, I approached her and we quickly became close friends, shaping each other's lives in ways that we would only understand years later.

She was a returning social work student — tall and shy with the most beautiful, long, curly salt-and-pepper hair. She wore skirts and dresses nearly every day, and her face was always made up in a

professional, conservative style.

Even though it was politically incorrect to assume she was trans based on her appearance, I "knew" — the thickness of her wrists, her Adam's apple, the dense patch of dots on her face where she shaved off stubble several times each day before reapplying foundation makeup.

Roxanne was probably the first transgender person I formed an in-person friendship with. I was drawn to her, in part, because she was transgender.

We would sit in her dorm room — a 40-plus year old, pre-op, MTF living in the dorms and a 20-something questioning-boi — for hours. She would talk and sob for hours on end about her struggles to pass and how painful each day was. Her mascara would stream down her face, creating an

almost tribal appearance.

During our friendship, we only had each other and a few others in our friends/partner circle. The world was quite a different place then:

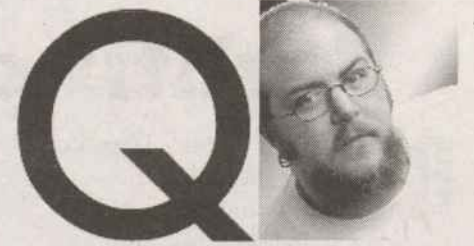
Gemini Gender Group and FORGE did not exist. Being trans meant transitioning from one binary gender to another (or being a crossdresser, which was often looked down upon with disdain). Literature on transgenderism was highly medicalized or focused on pathology. Most queer organizations and services were lesbian and gay, not LGB let alone LGBT. There were no drag king troupes. No out trans person had been tenured at any university.

The world is different now. There is a transgender movement — and every one of us who is or who knows a trans person, is part of it.

We are creating our history with every small action we take — most often starting with some form of human connection.

So many options are available to us in 2006. There is no longer a one-size-fits-all gender model that we must adhere to.

The Internet has made it possible for anyone to find nearly anything they seek. Each year there are many transgender-focused conferences in cities around the country. Nearly all queer organizations have added "T" to their names (and many of them have done the work to



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.

actually make their group trans-inclusive). College professors across the country are teaching classes on gender — including two transgender allies in Milwaukee. Some therapists, surgeons and physicians work exclusively with transgender clients. Parents are recognizing gender diversity in their small children and are supporting free expression, including advocating at grade schools!

What continues to be true today is that people are still human and have human needs for connection, love, understanding and support.

We got here one person at a time. One compassionate person, reaching out to another and listening long enough to expand his consciousness. We created the resources that are now available to us. We've changed the world from a place that is isolated for transgender people and SOFFAs to a world where there are limitless support options.

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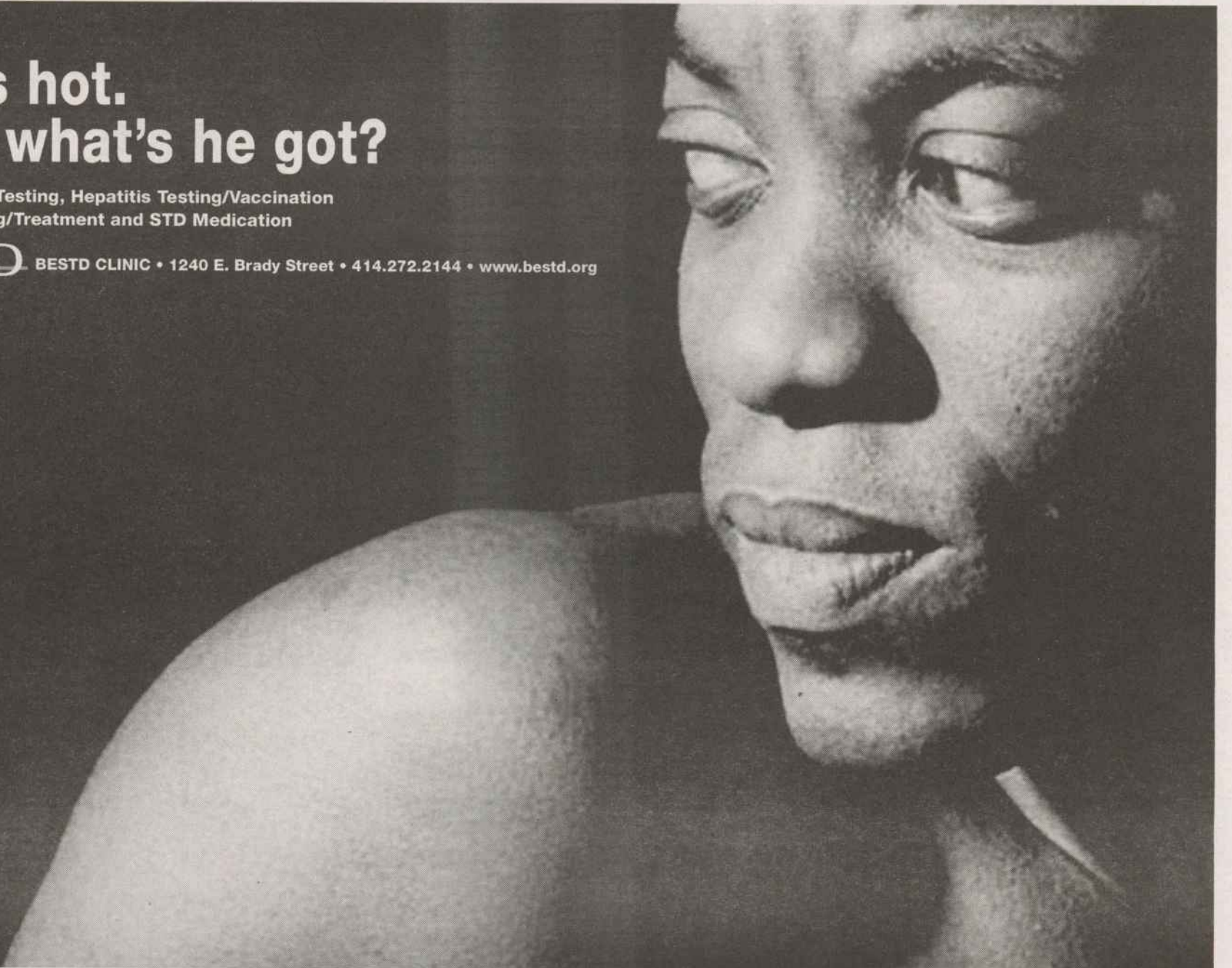
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I stumbled upon what I thought was only a swanky restaurant the other night and had quite possibly the most fun I have had in a long while. Roots restaurant and its amazing downstairs restaurant and bar, the Roots Cellar, astounded me with their aesthetic charm, musical genius and astonishing cookery. This awesome addition to the wonderful Brewer's Hill community has taken the city by storm and has been all the rage since it opened.

Many themed nights in the cellar bar and restaurant, and excellent service, menu and drinks in the main upstairs restaurant, make Roots one of Milwaukee's premier destinations for anyone looking for a great time and terrific food. The bottom line is that you must try this wonderfully organic dining experience.

Owners Rebecca Goldberger, Joe Schmidt (organic farmer) and John Raymond (executive chef) have created, in my opinion, the perfect place to hang out with friends, have a fine dining experience or even throw a party. The owners of Roots have a greenhouse and nine acres of organic property where they specialize in growing unique produce, edible flowers and hard-to-find herbs.

Using these products, Roots has concocted a fabulous menu consisting of "American regional cookery with contemporary world fusion cuisine,"

highlighting their wonderful organics and fresh seafood.

The dinner menu, a little on the pricey side, consists of many seafood dishes, delectable appetizers and salads — some of which you will not see anywhere else. The lunch and cellar restaurant menus have a more laid back feel. And may I highlight the amazing build-your-own burgers, both meat or veggie? Roots also has a wonderful brunch with all the usual concoctions and wonderful champagne.

Roots serves lunch from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday through Friday. Dinner is served upstairs from 5 to 9 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and 5 to 10 p.m. Friday and Saturday. The upstairs dining room is closed Sundays. They serve in the more casual Cellar from 5 to 10 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 5 p.m. to midnight Friday and Saturday, and 5 to 9 p.m. on Sundays. Last but not least, Sunday brunch is served from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The Roots Cellar has wonderful theme nights. Wednesday is Reggae night, featuring an amazing series of Reggae artists and DJs. It's the best night in Milwaukee. With \$3 tap beers and \$5 for a Red Stripe, an amazing Jamaican beer, and a shot of Appleton Estate rum, Wednesdays are frequented by all walks of life and the dancing doesn't stop until the lights turn on.



CLUBBING

Christopher Schmidt frequents many area clubs. He is always on the lookout for the newest hotspots.

Roots Cellar offers Broke Ass Thursdays. If you are on a budget definitely stop by on a Thursday. With \$1.50 canned beers, you can't go wrong. Get Leied Fridays are fun too. Featuring a wide array of tiki drinks adorned with umbrellas and all, you are guaranteed to have a blast and maybe even get leied.

Go to Roots and try out the Cellar, you can't go wrong either way. It truly is a remarkable establishment with a lot to offer its patrons.

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The Scoop on Coffee

Coffee is not just for breakfast anymore! You can find people drinking "the joe" anytime of the night or day. Like wine, coffee now has many connoisseurs and aficionados. Lucky for me, my brother Randy happens to be one of those experts.

Randy and his wife, Tammi, own two coffee shops — the Cedarburg Coffee Roastery on the main drag in Cedarburg and in the newly opened Milwaukee Public Market. Randy has been so kind as to share some of his knowledge with us.

First, it is important to understand what influences a cup of brewed coffee. It should be made using freshly roasted coffee beans to get the most desirable flavors into the cup. Once coffee is roasted, the oxidation process begins, and moisture and flavor are lost as time goes by. It is like wine in that once you uncork the bottle, it is best to drink it as soon as possible before it goes stale. With wine you only have hours, with coffee, a week to 10 days. Storing the coffee in an airtight container and in whole bean form helps slow down the oxidation process. Storing in the refrigerator or freezer does not help, since there is still oxygen in your refrigerator or freezer, which is the element that causes coffee to go stale. The best way to enjoy the fullest

flavors of your coffee is to look for the date the bean was roasted, buy in small quantities, use it as soon as possible, then go back and get more fresh roasted coffee.

Coffee flavors are influenced by the geographic region in which they are grown and by the roasting process. A Central American coffee, such as Guatemalan, may naturally have nut-like and buttery flavors, whereas an African coffee, such as Kenyan, may have a dry, berry-toned acidity. These are distinctions that are best observed in a light roast. Why a light roast? Think in terms of toast. If you toast bread lightly in your toaster, it still tastes much like the original bread before you put it in the toaster. If you burn it slightly, the bread takes on a more charred, pungent flavor that tastes less like the original bread but is desirable to many people for its bittersweet taste profile.

You can tell how a coffee is roasted by looking at the bean. A light or medium roasted bean will be milk-chocolate in color and have a dry surface. A dark roast will be a dark chocolate color and have glints of oil on the surface or be completely glossy with oil. The light roast will taste brighter, or more acidic, and will carry more of the original flavor notes such as berry or nut. A dark



COOKING

Steve Ahl (sahl@queerlifeneews.com) resides in the Third Ward. He is employed as a chemist for a company located in the Milwaukee area.

roast will be much less acidic, which people perceive as mellow, and will take on a cocoa-like bittersweetness which is gained from the toasting of the starches and the caramelizing of the sugars within the bean. If you like cream or milk in your coffee, go with the dark roast, which will cut through the cream and still give you a strong coffee taste. The more acidic light roast flavor will get washed out when cream is added.

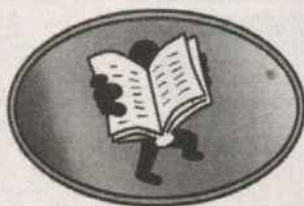
When brewing coffee, how much should you use? Your taste is the best guideline, but most people use too little coffee for the amount of water when brewing. You can always thin it slightly with some hot water, but you cannot thicken it up once it is brewed!

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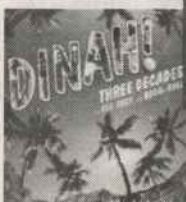
2. "The Brothers Bishop"
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3. "Locker Room Nudes"
by Francois Rousseau



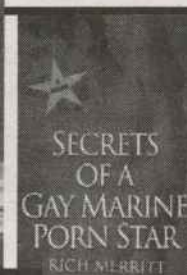
4. "Son of a Witch"
by Gregory Maguire



5. "Dinah!: Three Decades of Sex, Golf & Rock 'n Roll"
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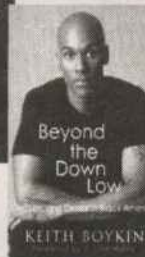
6. "Lesbian Pulp Fiction"
edited by Katherine Forrest



7. "Secrets of a Gay Marine Porn Star"
by Rich Meritt



8. "When I Knew"
by Robert Trachtenberg



9. "Terror of the High Seas"
by Melissa Good



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Outwords Books

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- "Honor Guards" by Radclyffe.** This latest installment in Radclyffe's popular "Honor" series finds First Daughter Blair Powell and Secret Service agent Cameron Roberts at the center of a conspiracy that will rock the world.
- "Galveston 1900: Swept Away" by Linda Crist.** The tropical cyclone that hit the island of Galveston, Texas, on Sept. 7 and 8, 1900, is the exciting backdrop for a romance between loner Rachel Travis and Madeline "Mattie" Crockett, a woman trapped in a loveless marriage.
- "The Iron Girl" by Ellen Hart.** After years spent mourning the death of her partner, Christine, Jane Lawless discovers a gun when she finally sorts through her belongings and must tackle difficult questions as to why Christine feared for her life.
- "Terror of the High Seas" by Melissa Good.** Melissa Good's latest action/romance finds Kerry and Dar on a fabulous Caribbean vacation that turns deadly when they come face-to-face with pirates.
- "Black by Gaslight" by Nene Adams.** Lady St. Clair, a consulting detective, and her companion, Rhiannon Moore, tangle with a killer in Victorian London in the first in a terrific new series.

FOR THE BOYS:

- "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.
- "You Can Say You Knew Me When" by K. M. Soehnlein.** Jamie Garner is living a sexy slacker's life in San Francisco when he gets the call that his father has died. It's time for the prodigal son to come home to face the emotionally barren family he left behind.
- "Rainbow Road" by Alex Sanchez.** The third entry in Alex Sanchez's wildly popular "Rainbow" series. During an eye-opening post graduation summer road trip, each of the three protagonists embarks on a personal journey across a landscape of love, sexuality, homophobia and, above all, friendship.
- "Son of a Witch" by Gregory Maguire.** Best-selling author Gregory Maguire returns to the land of Oz to follow the story of Liir, the adolescent boy left hiding in the shadows of the castle when Dorothy killed the witch.
- "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 homeboy from Harlem — into the 21st century.

Community



Calendar

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 4

Body Mine. 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. Broad Vocabulary 2241 S. Kinnickinnic Ave., Milwaukee. 6 p.m. 414-744-8384. www.broadvocabulary.com.

THURSDAY, JAN. 5

Legal Night. Free legal consultation with LGBT-friendly attorneys. First come, first served. Milwaukee LGBT Community Center, 315 W. Court St. 6-8 p.m. 414-271-2656 ext. 111. www.mkelgbt.org.

SATURDAY, JAN. 7

FORGE (For Ourselves: Reworking Gender Expression). Join us for a relaxing evening following the bustle of the holidays to watch "Call Me Malcolm." Thanks to Milwaukee LGBT Film Festival coordinator Carl Bogner, we have the opportunity to screen this engaging documentary featuring a transgender seminary student struggling with faith, love and gender identity. 414-278-6031. www.forge-forward.org/socialsupport.

MONDAY, JAN. 9

Outwords Book Club. A delightful mix of historical adventure and romance, Chris Hunt's "Duval's Gold" will be discussed. Read the book and come join the discussion! Outwords Books, 2710 N. Murray Ave., Milwaukee. 7:30 p.m. 414-963-9089. outwordsbooks@msn.com.

TUESDAY, JAN. 10

The Lesbian Reading Group. A. K. Naten's debut romance, "Turning Tides," is the book to be discussed. New members are always welcome! Outwords Books, 2710 N. Murray Ave., Milwaukee. 7 p.m. 414-963-9089. outwordsbooks@msn.com.

SATURDAY, JAN. 14

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

My Family Playgroup. Madison's playgroup for LGBT parents with children ages 0-10 will be having a movie and pizza party. Rocky Rococo's Pizza Parlor in the private party room, 1753 Thier Rd., Madison. 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. \$7.50/\$5.50 children under 10. RSVP to Jim Schmid at jhs1120@yahoo.com. www.myfamilyplaygroup.com.

SUNDAY, JAN. 15

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

THURSDAY, JAN. 19

Financial Planning for the Artist. Learn tips and techniques to begin saving for that much-needed vacation, purchasing a home or studio, or retirement. Make your money work for you, and come away with a plan to put your money woes to rest. Hotcakes Gallery, 3379 N. Pierce St., Milwaukee. 6-8 p.m. \$10 MARN members/\$15 nonmembers. To preregister, mail your check, name, contact information and the workshop you'd like to attend to MARN, P.O. Box 1879, Milwaukee, WI 53201. To pay at the door, RSVP to melissa@marnonline.com.

SATURDAY, JAN. 21

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

Rainbow Families Milwaukee. Support and social group for LGBT parents and kids. 3-6 p.m. 414-447-0251. mkerainbowfamilies@hotmail.com.

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 25

3rd Annual Roe v. Wade Celebration and Silent Auction. Help NARAL Pro-Choice Wisconsin celebrate the anniversary of the landmark decision that legalized abortion and a woman's right to choose. Marcus Center for the Performing Arts, Milwaukee. 414-489-9996. www.naralwi.org.

THURSDAY, JAN. 26

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. 6 p.m. Broad Vocabulary, 2241 S. Kinnickinnic Ave., Milwaukee. 414-744-8384. broadvocabulary.com.

Puttin' on the Ritz. Zoological Society of Milwaukee's black-tie affair. Six amateur boxing bouts, five-course dinner, and both a voice and silent auction. All proceeds go to the Milwaukee County Zoo. Hyatt Regency Hotel, Milwaukee. 414-258-2333. www.zoosociety.org.

SATURDAY, JAN. 28

A Winter Soirée ... Asian Style. Because there simply aren't enough excuses to wear a kimono in public these days. Food, drink and entertainment; silent auction and raffle. All proceeds go to arts education and programming at the Wilson Center. Sharon Lynne Wilson Center for the Arts, Brookfield. 262-781-9520. www.wilson-center.com.

SUNDAY, FEB. 5

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

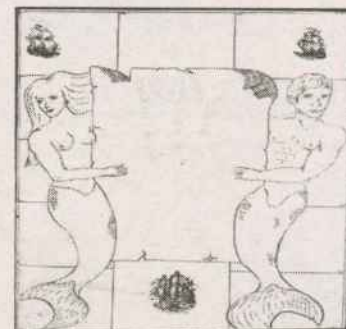
Deadline for February issue is Jan. 23.



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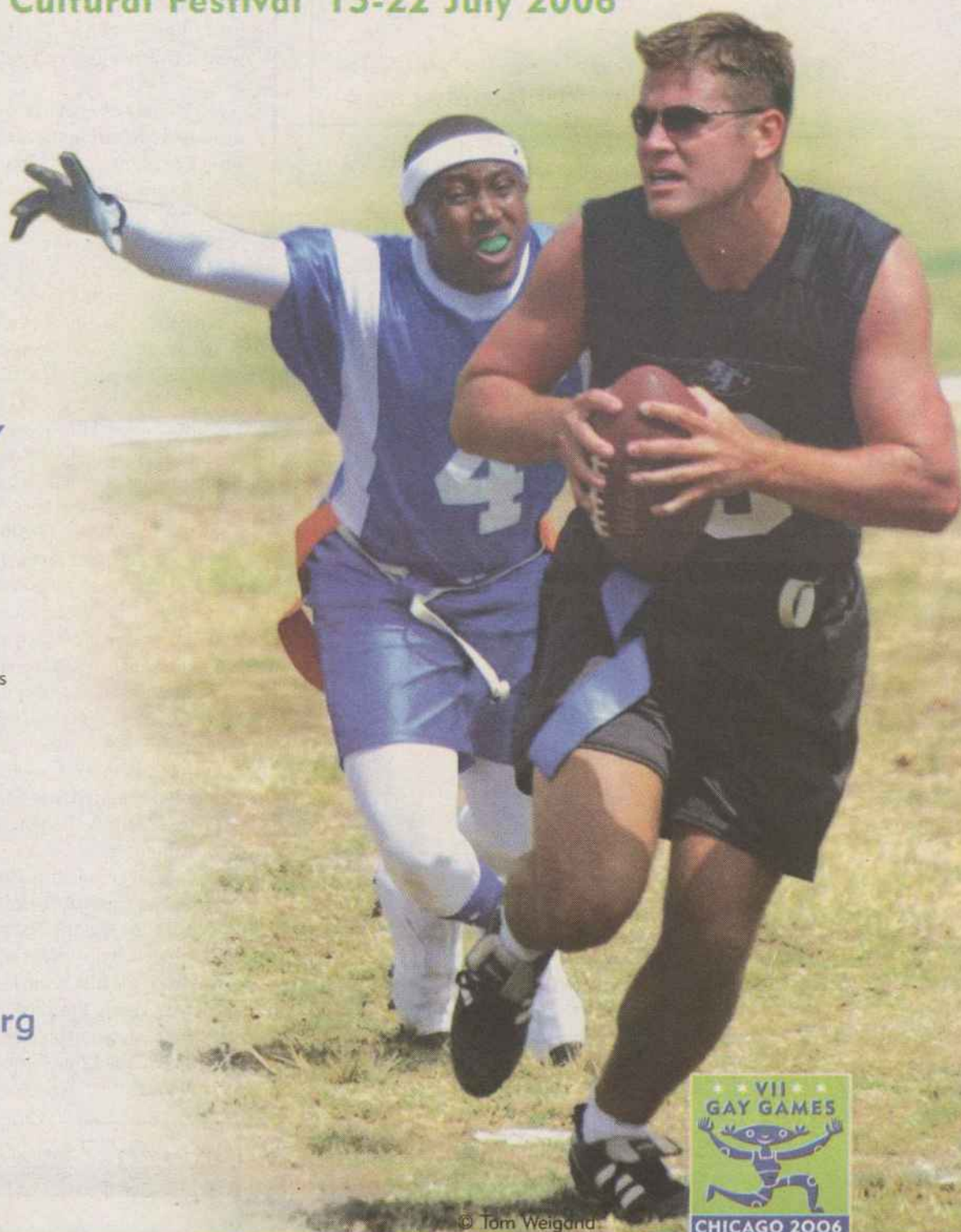
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Upcoming Events

Bars as Meeting Places

Gay people (men and women) have experienced a drastic evolution in their methods of social interaction over the past 50 years. Prior to the 1960s, gay people tended to gather with one another only in the privacy of their own homes, there being no or few public places to gather.

As late as the early 1960s, the only "public" venues in which to gather and meet others of like mind were a few restaurants or bars that provided an opportunity for gays and lesbians to meet either in certain sections or in separate "back rooms." Examples of these places in Milwaukee are the Loop Restaurant, Antlers Hotel bar, and The Royal. The sole exception known to the author is the Mint Bar, founded in 1949; but even that bar and many other gathering places for gay men were still often either primarily straight or at least mixed.

Milwaukee began to see more dedicated gay bars in the early 1960s: The River Queen opened in 1960, Your Place in 1965, and both This Is It (which is still open) and The Rooster in 1968. After Stonewall (1969), gay people throughout the country began to stand up and demand some rights, and the list of gay organizations and media shows how things evolved over the next few years.

Since the early 1970s, there has been no shortage of both gay and lesbian bars in Milwaukee and the major metropolitan areas of Wisconsin: Castaways, Stud Club, Nite Beat, Beer Garden, The Wreck Room, JoDee's in Racine (still open), the Shack in Kenosha, Back Door in Madison and many others opened in the first half of the '70s.

The mid to late '70s was also the era of disco. The combination of gay rights and the popularity of disco, particularly among gay men, was a key factor in seeing an explosion of bars and clubs founded by and dedicated to gays and lesbians. This was when many of Milwaukee's legendary bars (many of them dance bars) came into being: Ten Hundred East, The Factory, C'est La Vie, the Ball Game, Red Baron, and M&M among many others.

But even in the '70s there was some bias against gay bars; in fact it was not until 1984 that the first gay bars in the city opened up large windows to the street (with the first being the M&M and La Cage). Prior to this time, windows and doors were closed to outside view (with the exception of the 12-inch-square window



HISTORY

Don Schwamb has been active in the LGBT community since the early 1970s. He has served as president of CCF and GAMMA, vice president of ARCW, and in many other roles in other organizations. The LGBT history Web site, mkelgbthist.org, is Don's passion today, consuming much of his spare time.

that city ordinance required of all bars).

Since the mid 1980s, gay and lesbian bars have been a staple in the major metropolitan areas of Wisconsin, and violence against them is seldom heard of. Since the 1990s, bars are openly advertised as gay in public media, chambers of commerce literature, etc.

Check out the history Web site at mkelgbthist.org to view a timeline of the bars we are aware of. Many of the bars have pages dedicated to them, often including photos, advertisements, etc. We welcome any additional information on bars or clubs we missed: names, locations, photos, etc. that any of readers have.

(Note: the bulk of this perspective is from the standpoint of gay men's bars and meeting places. Lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people all have developed their own patterns of meeting and socializing, unique to them not just as groups but as individuals. For example, even today, some gay men go almost exclusively to straight bars and clubs, while some bi men go to straight and gay clubs about equally. So there is no attempt to depict every nuance here, but rather to convey a somewhat predominant thread of change and evolution.)

History Puzzler of the Month:

Scattered about this issue are a few logos from advertising of bars in the past. See if you can locate and identify them. Tell us what you know about each, and we'll feature some of your comments and recollections in a future article.

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2006 — A Blockbuster of Hits



THEATER

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.

It is 2006, and I can't seem to believe it! Last year was so difficult; I was just waiting for this new year to start.

Again, I did not go home for Christmas. I always hate the holiday traveling. I think I will just plan to visit my family in the spring. But I can't help but be excited about all the interesting theatrical events going on in Hollywood, Broadway and Milwaukee.

The rock musical "Rent" opened last month to so-so reviews. I think everyone should go see this exciting movie. The show deals with AIDS issues from the early '90s. It has some extremely touching moments and many exciting song and dance numbers. The movie also features most of the original Broadway cast.

"The Producers" will be another exciting holiday event. Will there ever again be a show announcing in song, "Keep It

Gay"? For the movie version they are again bringing back most of the Broadway cast. The director **Susan Stroman** won a Tony Award for her Broadway version — now recreated on film. If only they had had the original cast members in the films "Gypsy" and "Hello Dolly"! How could they ever turn down **Ethel Merman** and **Carol Channing**? Pity!!

On Broadway, **Oprah Winfrey** has produced a musical version of "The Color Purple" — which also opened to some lukewarm reviews. As they say, it is only one person's opinion.

The Hits of Milwaukee

At the Milwaukee Repertory Theater complex they present "Bad Dates" in the **Stiemke Theater**. This story sounds too close to home for most of us but should really be funny. In the **Stackner Cabaret** the show "Polish Diva" sounds really hilarious. Come to think of it, I know about 10 Polish divas in Milwaukee-area theater ... hint, hint!!

The Dramatists Company at **Bucketworks** presents "Abstinence" and a few other one-acts. This also sounds like the short story of many area singles. The **Boulevard Ensemble** continues the exciting "Rounding Third," a two-character play.

Ah, the **Skylight Opera Theater** will open "The Tragedy of Carmen" and **Next Act** opens "The Retreat from Moscow."

If you are looking for some new, exciting, original works, catch the "Pink Banana" company at the new **Astor** theatre.

For those of you who enjoy fine community theater, the **Bay Players** bring you **Steve Martins'** hilarious comedy "The Underpants." The popular comedy "Sylvia" opens at the **Sunset Playhouse** in Elm Grove.

A major event this month is "Angels in America" at **Uncommon Theatre**. This amazing work of art will bring fine theater to the **Gay Arts Center**. The show deals with important AIDS issues. There was also a successful HBO special of "Angels" which won critical acclaim.

Hollywood and Broadway — So Close to Milwaukee

I was so thrilled and extremely proud to go see the movie "Rent." **Anthony Rapp**, who plays Mark, was a young person I directed several times in Chicago. We still keep in contact. Then in the movie "Producers," the role of the gay director is played by **Gary Beach**. When he was in Milwaukee several years ago doing "The Music Man," I was excited to be in that production with him. When I saw the Broadway version of "Producers," Gary Beach helped me get into a sold-out performance. Sitting right near me, taking notes, was **Susan Stroman**, the director.

As I look around our town, I notice that a lot of my "celeb" friends are working at their craft. **Paul Helm** is appearing at the **Stackner Cabaret**. **Jason Powell** and **Thomas Rosenthal** are performing together

at **Boulevard Ensemble**. The charming **Kelly Simon** stars in "The Underpants." Multi-talented **John Manno** directs a one-act for "Pink Banana." And **Mark Hooker**, **Brian Richards** and **Sandra Stark** are working with the "Angels in America" cast.

Look for These Future Topics

As I go into 2006, I plan to discuss some of the politics of the world of theater and the importance of our "critics." I also want to discuss the backstage life of a director and to showcase some of the people in Milwaukee who are making a name in the theater, music and dance arts.

It may be cold outside, but please go out and support the bars — and warm your insides!

Last Month's Trivia Answer
The **Skylight** also did the **Marx Brothers** musical "The Coconuts" several years ago.

This Month's Trivia Question

Was **Anthony Rapp** featured in the movie "A Beautiful Mind"?

Aunt Blanche is still sleeping off her 40-hour binge on New Year's Eve!!!

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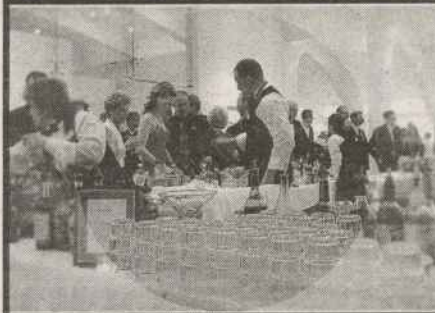
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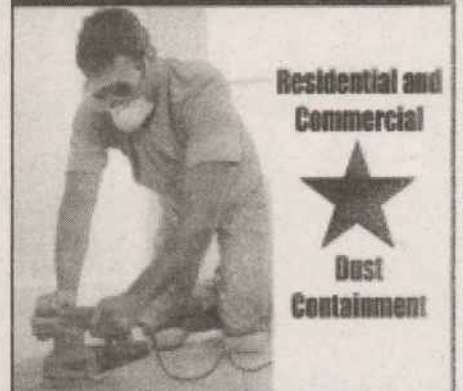
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Washington Heights — 2176 N. 51st St. 2BR upper. Charming LR/dining with built-ins, HWF, ceiling fans. Contemporary kitchen and bath; laundry hook-ups; electric garage door. Pets. \$650. 414-378-3331.

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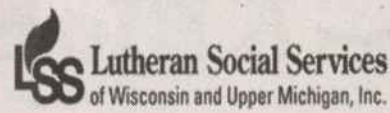
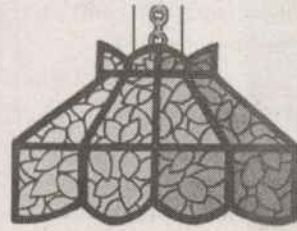
Washington Heights. Large and sunny upper 2BR flat. Living room with large porch and wfp, formal dining room, all with built-ins; HWF throughout. Kitchen appliances, wash/dry and garage spot included; pets negotiable. \$725. tgorSmith@yahoo.com.

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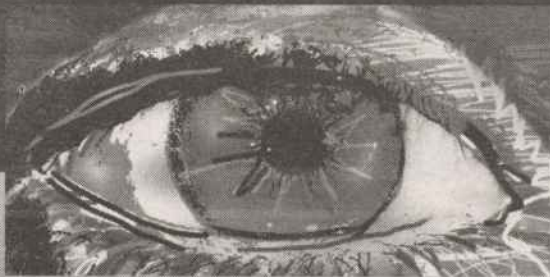


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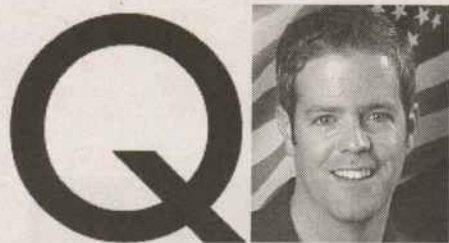
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Bikini World View

In 2004, I went with some other volunteers of the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center door to door on Milwaukee's near South Side as part of a nonpartisan voter registration project sponsored by Wisconsin Citizen Action Fund. It was a nice change of pace from talking to affluent suburban voters about gay marriage, meeting many wonderful people — most Latino — starting new families and pursuing their version of the American dream. At one house I met a group of poor white folks, including a couple chronically unemployed men and an older woman whose disability check supported the household. She was warm and friendly, invited me in, and proceeded to tell me how she was voting for George Bush because he was a man of God. She recounted her conflicts with her housemates: One, who associated Bush with his unemployment, leaned toward John Kerry; the other said there was no one to vote for since Ronald Reagan left office.

During December, the month when our mostly secular, consumption crazy country pauses for a moment to piously continue its buying and consuming in the name of God and Christmas instead of Mammon, there were many notably unrighteous acts by "righteous" men. Vice President Dick Cheney, strong and in charge, ended an overseas diplomatic mission for peace and security early to cast an apparently more vital tie-breaking vote in the Senate to cut student aid, and health care for seniors and poor people. Wisconsin Rep. Mark Gundrum and Sen. Scott Fitzgerald, strong family men, continued their strong attack on gay and lesbian families in Wisconsin, winning Senate passage of the proposed ban on civil unions and gay marriage and moving us closer to a November 2006 showdown over discrimination. President Bush, a vocal proponent for keeping "Washington" out of Americans' lives, got caught personally ordering the government to spy on Americans' e-mail and phone conversations.

These are men who confuse moral leadership with playing moral leaders on TV, men whose moral worldview is limited to the area of the human body covered by a bikini. Guys who feel like, as long as they are doing it to their wives missionary style, they're upright all-American types entitled to go out and screw the rest of the world to get what's theirs. And for a long



POLITICS

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

time, Americans were buying their act. As long as people posed as "men of God," they were free to live as 21st-century Vikings, overseeing historic transfers of wealth to the rich from the rest of us by giving huge tax breaks to the wealthy and special favors like "get-out-of-jail-free" lawsuit immunity to corporations in the fast food, pharmaceutical and gun industries.

Our country has always been deeply ambivalent about what public life is for. On the one hand we have a legacy of village commons and communitarian barn-raising, the people using government to secure basic labor standards and clean water, and free primary and secondary education. But we also have shameful moments — the Puritan's stockades, government returning human beings to others as "property" (except in Wisconsin, which refused to recognize the Fugitive Slave Act), mob lynchings, House hearings to sanction dissenters as "un-American," and of course the use of the full force of government to undermine gay and lesbian families and sexuality.

In this tug and pull about what the American people want government to do for them — hold down groups they dislike or fear, immigrants, African Americans, unwed moms, gays, labor organizers, or lift them up — the bikini moral view is getting a little ... well, stretched. With the president and Republican congressional leaders staggering under a sickening lobbying scandal and a war in Iraq with no end in sight, and acting and spending like royalty, Americans seem to be looking for something a little more practical. As the Rev. Al Sharpton has said, the role of government should be to help people put food on the table in the kitchen, not decide who is sleeping together in the bedroom.

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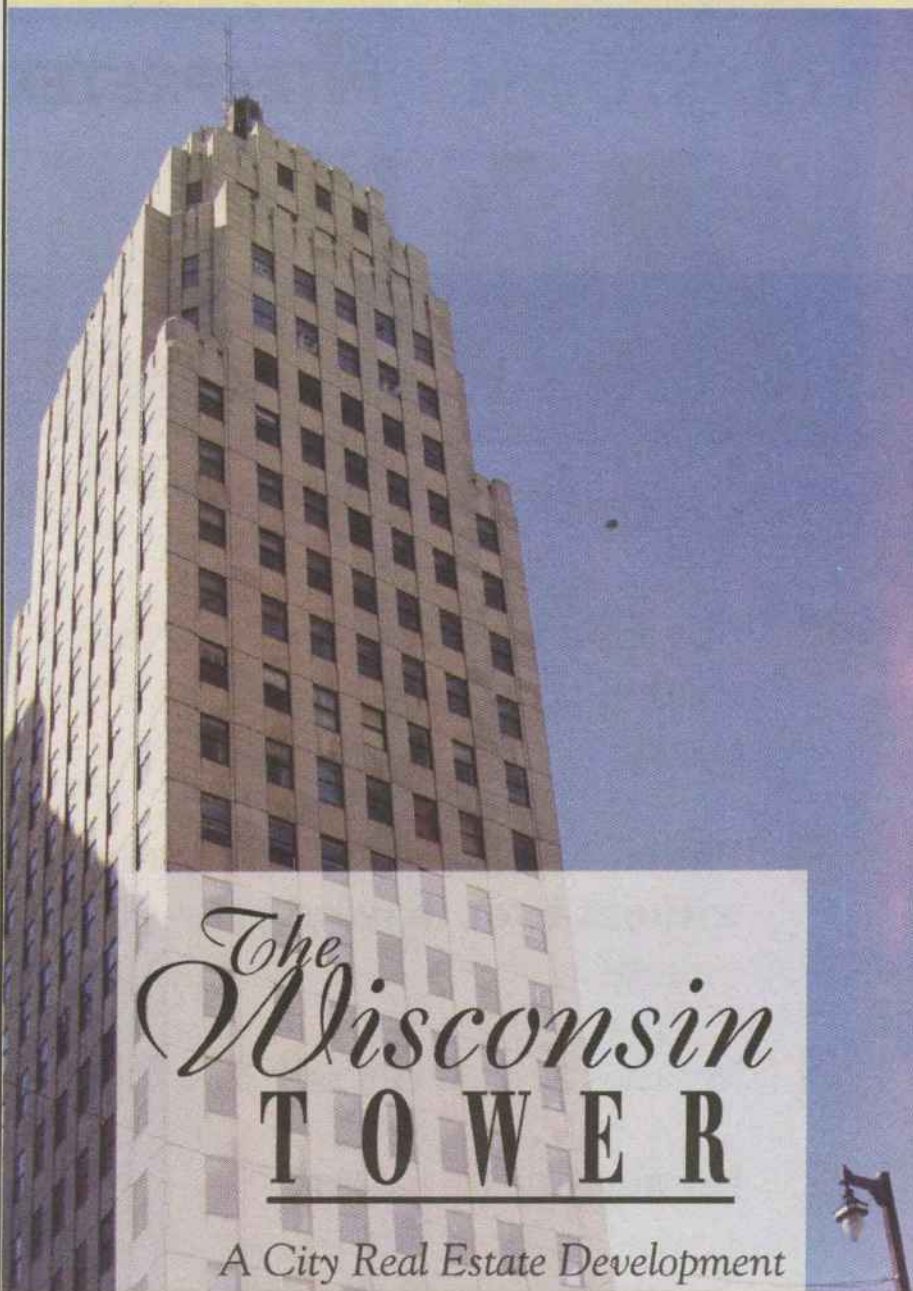
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KINGDOM OF HEAVEN



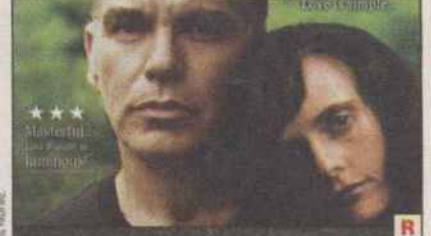
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