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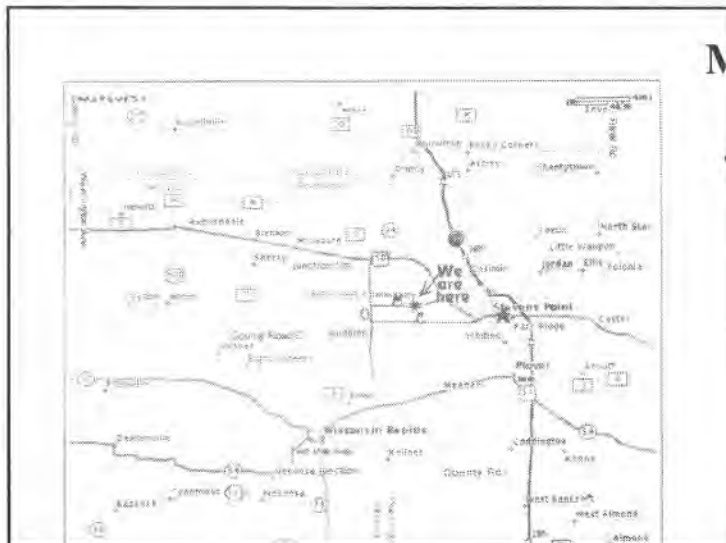
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## GARD CONTINUES TO OUTRAGE WISCONSIN'S GAY COMMUNITY

**Madison** - Less than two weeks after *Quest* exclusively broke the story about Wisconsin Assembly Leader John Gard's (R-Peshigo) anti-gay remarks at the Republican State Convention and the call for his resignation by the State's Log Cabin Republicans group, two new incidents of Gard's homophobic bigotry have surfaced.

On June 14 Rep. Mark Pocan (D-Madison) issued a press release claiming that despite three requests since last February, Gard has failed to sign a routine citation for the New Harvest Foundation, honoring the Madison-based LGBT philanthropic organization's 20th anniversary and its record of donating more than \$300,000 to area organizations.

The press release, which also alluded to the *Quest* convention remarks story, also alleged that the speaker's office has repeatedly "lost" the citation, despite an Assembly rule that requires the speaker to sign citations under procedures set by the Assembly organization committee. "When repeated requests are ignored and a citation cannot even be signed over three months after a 20th anniversary celebration on Feb. 28, something is clearly wrong," Pocan claimed.

Gard spokesperson Steven Bass claimed Gard had signed the citation, though he admitted that he "wasn't sure when." "It has been signed and it's not in the office," Baas told *Capital Times* reporter on June 14. "He hasn't been here since Thursday (June 10). It may have gone to the clerk's office. Sometimes the sergeant-at-arms' office plaques them," Bass said.

Pocan told the paper that his office still had not received the citation as of June 15. Pocan reported that his office first originated a citation in February and sent it to the chief clerk's office for drafting. It came back to Pocan's office and then went to Gard's office. "This is something that generally turns around in 48 hours," Pocan said.

Last May, Pocan's office made a second request. "On May 17, (Gard's office) acknowledged that they had the citation. On May 25 we called and it was still on his desk," Pocan staffer Glenn Wavrunek said. On June 8, Pocan sent an email to Gard asking about the citation. The speaker's office called and said it needed a third version, according to Wavrunek. The citation was sent again by email

to the chief clerk's office. "We still have not received it, three redraftings later," Pocan told the *Capital Times*. "The rules are very clear. John Gard thinks he is above the rules."

Gard's defense of his convention remarks also has spurred further uproar. On June 15, Gard's office produced a "letter of response" allegedly sent to Jim McFarland, author of the June 1 Log Cabin letter

demanding Gard retract his anti-gay convention comments and calling for fellow legislators to oust Gard as Assembly leader. McFarland claims that, as of *Quest's* deadline, he has yet to see such a letter.

Gard's response "regrets" that McFarland took offense to the remarks, but neither apologized nor retracted them. Instead Gard claimed McFarland "immediately...took a dramatic leap" suggesting that Gard was equating homosexuality with bestiality. Gard continued: "if the institution of marriage is merely a semantic or legal construct subject to a definition-du-jour relativism, then the variety of definitions one could pursue for it is virtually limitless."

Pocan was quick to quip that "it's the far right wing that seems to confuse love between two consenting adults and barn-yard fantasies."

Others were less amused. In a June 18 editorial the *Capital Times* announced that "Gard has come out of the closet as a bigot." After summarizing the Gard-McFarland interchange, the editorial characterized the alleged "letter of response" as "a shocker." "Gard argued that he was merely trying to make the point that 'if the institution of marriage is merely a semantic or legal construct subject to a definition-du-jour relativism, then the variety of definitions one could pursue for it is virtually limitless.' Far from a retraction or an apology, Gard returned to the same suggestion he made in his speech. And, in so doing, he confirmed McFarland's point," the editorial said. he editorial concluded that "Gard has become a liability (to the state GOP)... by virtue of the fact that he serves as Assembly speaker, Gard is, as well, an embarrassment to all Wisconsinites."

## BUSH TO BAPTISTS & POPE: "HELP ME WIN THIS NOVEMBER!"

**Indianapolis & Rome** - In the past two weeks President George W. Bush has called upon the leadership of the two largest religious denominations in the United States to make same-sex marriage an election year issue. In a satellite address to the Southern Baptist Convention's annual meeting in Indianapolis June 15, Bush reiterated his call for Congress to vote on the antigay Federal Marriage Amendment. A week earlier he called on the Pope to step up the Catholic Church's opposition to gay marriage.

The Bush campaign is betting heavily on churchgoers in his re-election effort, and how Baptist and Catholic voters apply their faith to politics is emerging as a focal point of the race. There are an estimated 16 million Southern Baptists and 63 million Catholics in the United States. Bush campaign pollsters have said that in the 2000 election, people who attended church regularly voted disproportionately for Bush, though Catholics were much more evenly split than Protestants were.

Bush's courtship of Southern Baptists began when he addressed them in a live telecast from the White House and thanked them for their prayers. The campaign's appeals picked up in earnest the next day, when Ralph Reed, the former head of the Christian Coalition



According to his staff, Assembly Speaker John Gard allegedly responded to LCR's Jim McFarland and signed a proclamation praising Madison's New Harvest Foundation. The LGBT community has seen neither document to date.

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and now an official of the Bush campaign, arrived to ask pastors more explicitly for their help in winning votes. Mr. Reed delivered his remarks at a Bush-Cheney "pastors reception," paid for by the Bush campaign. The hosts were the departing president of the Southern Baptists and three other prominent leaders, and the reception was in a conference room of a hotel adjacent to the convention. As the pastors came in, a campaign aide collected about 100 signatures and addresses from ministers pledging to endorse Mr. Bush's re-election publicly, to "host a citizenship Sunday for voter registration," to "identify someone who will help in voter registration and outreach" and to organize a "party for the president" with other pastors on specific dates closer to the election. As the pastors mingled around a buffet of soft drinks and cubed cheese, Mr. Reed urged, "Without advocating on behalf of any candidate or political party, you can make sure that everyone in your circle of influence is registered to vote."

Bush's political advisers often repeat their belief, Mr. Reed reminded the pastors, that about four million conservative Christian voters did not vote in the last presidential election. The campaign is determined not to let that happen again. And the leaders of the 16 million Southern Baptists have already organized what they say is the first major voter registration drive in their history, beginning at the annual meeting.

A week earlier, on his trip to Rome, President Bush asked a top Vatican official to push American bishops to speak out more about political issues, including same-sex marriage, according to a report in the National Catholic Reporter. In a column posted June 11, John L. Allen Jr., NCR correspondent in Rome and the dean of Vatican journalists, wrote that Mr. Bush had made the request in a June 4 meeting with Cardinal Angelo Sodano, the Vatican secretary of state. Citing an unnamed Vatican official, Mr. Allen wrote: "Bush said, 'Not all the American bishops are with me' on the cultural issues. The implication was that he hoped the Vatican would nudge them toward more explicit activism." Allen wrote that others in the meeting confirmed that the president had pledged aggressive efforts "on the cultural front, especially the bat-

tle against gay marriage, and asked for the Vatican's help in encouraging the U.S. bishops to be more outspoken." Cardinal Sodano did not respond, Mr. Allen reported, citing the same unnamed people.

A spokesman for the Vatican declined June 12 to disclose the contents of the meeting, which followed the president's brief meeting with the pope. White House spokesperson Jeanie Mamo claimed that "They had a good, private discussion. They discussed a number of priorities of shared concern, and the president's and the Vatican's positions on these issues are well known." Pope John Paul II later praised Bush for "the promotion of moral values," but also reminded the president of the pope's "unequivocal position" on Iraq.

Rev. Barry W. Lynn, executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, called the report "mind-boggling." "It is just unprecedented for a president to ask for help from the Vatican to get re-elected, and that is exactly what this is," Lynn said. Linda Pieczynski, a spokesperson for the Catholic group Call

to Action, said, "For a president to try to get the leader of any religious organization to manipulate his fellow clergymen to support a political candidate crosses the line in this country."

Once a reliably Democratic constituency, Catholics have become divided, with traditionalist Catholics making common cause with conservative evangelical Protestants on social issues like opposition to same-sex marriage and abortion. Bush is a born-again Methodist who is likely to face a Roman Catholic opponent, Senator John Kerry, Democrat of Massachusetts. And the pope and other Catholic officials have repeatedly criticized the Bush administration over the war in Iraq. However, in the last six months, a handful of Catholic bishops in the United States have already weighed in on the presidential race by threatening to withhold communion from Catholic politicians who disagree with the church's stance on abortion, a group that includes Senator Kerry. The bishops took up the matter at a closed-door conference June 15-17 in Colorado.



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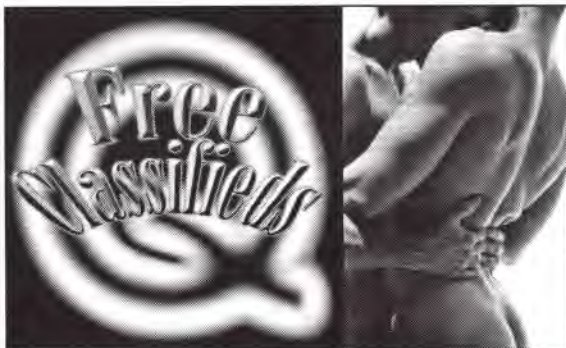
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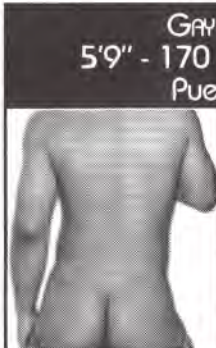
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**Massachusetts: Catholic Church May Fire Gay Spouses** - The Roman Catholic Church in Massachusetts is considering firing gay employees who marry their same-sex partners in the only American state where such unions are legal, a church official said June 17. "There have been conversations about how one needs to act consistently with the church's teachings and this has been discussed," Daniel Avila said. Avila is the associate director for policy and research at the Massachusetts Catholic Conference, which formulates public policy for state's four bishops.

Gay marriages were legalized in Massachusetts in May. But the Catholic Church, which has been swept up in a sexual-abuse crisis, continues to oppose the law. The church defines marriage as between a man and a woman and believes homosexuality is unnatural. "The church has long had a position that the people working on its behalf need to display conduct consistent with the beliefs of the church," Avila said. The *Boston Herald* has reported that memos about employment policies have been sent to bishops. Christopher Coyne, a spokesman for the Archdiocese of Boston, was not immediately available to comment.

Avila said he does not know of any gays who have been fired by the church for having married a same-sex partner. He added, "this is the first time we've been faced with this issue. Practically and theoretically, we have the right to conduct our activities consistent with our practices."

#### Massachusetts: Study - Ballot Questions On Gay Marriage Rights Harmful To Communities

This fall voters in a number of states, including Georgia, Kentucky, Missouri, Mississippi, Oklahoma, and Utah, will go to the polls to vote on whether same-sex couples should be denied equal marriage rights. A new report shows that these elections may carry significant negative psychological and social consequences for local residents and for the community at large. Research compiled by the Institute for Gay and Lesbian Strategic Studies (IGLSS) finds that referenda can affect the lives of both gay/lesbian/bisexual and heterosexual people in several ways.

The report finds that referenda on same-

sex marriage can lead to serious negative psychological consequences for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) individuals. "These elections create high levels of psychological and social stress for many LGBT individuals as well as for the children of lesbian and gay families," Glenda Russell, author of the report and the Acting Executive Director of IGLSS, said. "Studies have demonstrated that these elections can lead to increased anxiety, depression, alienation, and isolation in LGBT people."



Earlier ballot measures on same-sex marriage and other gay-related issues have frequently resulted in divided communities, with hostile rhetoric a mainstay of such campaigns. The political fight often reinvigorates old stereotypes and has led to deep divisions within families and communities.

Lee Badgett, research director of IGLSS, noted, "Our research findings indicate that states may pay a heavy social price for putting the rights of any group up for a vote."

In addition to the states already scheduling votes for the fall, legislators in some other states (such as Arkansas, Kansas, Michigan, North Carolina, Ohio, and Oregon) are still considering a referendum on marriage.

"Legislators should look at the big picture. While a referendum sounds democratic, putting marriage rights to a vote runs some big risks," concluded Russell. "Political science research indicates that voting on rights for minority groups tends to increase prejudices that divide members of the community. These elections also allow majority rule to make decisions that

have a significant impact on the day-to-day lives of people who are not the majority."

Data for the report were drawn gathered from a variety of sources including surveys, interviews, analyses of campaign materials, mental health indices, and other research strategies. The report, "The Dangers of a Same-Sex Marriage Referendum for Community and Individual Well-Being," compiles and analyzes results of roughly 30 studies and accounts of referenda on gay issues in eight states. Dr. Russell was lead investigator on several of these earlier studies.

#### Minnesota: Stillwater Learns the Impact Of Gay Money

Out in the Valley, a gay-rights advocacy group in the St. Croix River Valley, has started handing out hundreds of cards to members and shoppers to give to merchants in the Stillwater, a medium-sized suburban community just north of the Twin Cities. "You are being paid with GLBT dollars," the cards say. "Your business and our community are supported by gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender customers and citizens."

The effort by Out in the Valley is in response to a recent, loosely organized gay boycott of Stillwater businesses.

The action is intended to raise the profile of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender shoppers in the city according to organizers. The Monopoly money-sized cards were evident this past weekend at the popular Stillwater Art Crawl.

Some members of the LGBT community called for a boycott of downtown Stillwater last month to pressure Sen. Michele Bachmann (R-Stillwater) to change her mind on gay marriage. Bachmann led the charge for a state constitutional amendment to ban marriage between same-sex couples.

Out in the Valley newsletter editor Ken Moses said the group did not support the boycott, which he characterized as "ill-conceived." "The boycott should have been of Michele Bachmann - not the businesses of Stillwater," Moses said. "It was done independently by several individuals unknown to us." In response to the boycott, a group of Stillwater business owners took out an ad in the recent issue of the Twin Cities LGBT magazine *Lavender* to specifically welcome gays and lesbians to the city.

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# Safonda Says All

**HEY KIDS,** It is summer and the shows are starting to wind down a bit. However, one of the biggest pageants of the year was held at the Historic West.

It was time to crown our new Miss Wisconsin Continental. Stella and Neely sure know how to put on a great show. It was a usual crowd for this caliber pageant. It started out just a touch late but it was well worth the few minutes of wait. The line up of entertainment was like none other. It included, Trixie Deluxe, Miss Wi. Continental plus, Loretta Lamour, Miss Wi. Continental Plus 2002, Angel Sheridan Miss Continental Plus 2001, C C Rae, Miss Wi. Continental Elite 2004, the ever fabulous Miss Erika Norell Miss Continental 2003 and if that is not enough, the names continue. Miss Cass Marie Domino, Miss Wi. Continental 2001, Miss Maya Douglas, Miss Continental 1985, Miss Michelle DuPree, Miss Continental 1998, Miss Emir Illuzion, Miss Wi. Continental Plus 2003. Let me tell you, these girls really brought down the house. Can you say best of the best in the Continental system?

On to the competition, seven girls ran for the big crown including, Justine D'Zire, Erica Girl, Eileen Dover, Krystal Styles, Jennifer Alyce, Taylor Roberts and Diamond Girl.

The first category was swimsuit, I personally was not impressed, most wore black. Then came evening gown, except for Justine and Taylor again, I was not impressed. Talent was a little better, Justine did her "superstar" number while Taylor did a dance number with back up dancers. The rest were ok also. I saw about three nice evening gowns out of seven. It is to bad some girls still do not get what it takes to win these things.

The evening went on without a hitch. Alexis St. James, did a wonderful job giving up her title being the gracious queen that she is. In the end, Taylor Roberts won with Justine running a close second. One of the best parts of the night for me, was judging the competition and having the distinct privilege of sitting

next to Maya Douglas all night.

Thanks again to Stella and Neely for putting together a really great evening.

Another Pridefest in Milwaukee has come and gone, I was unable to make it because of some other commitments. However, a fellow writer sent me this report:



*"Can I start out by saying the drag review show was more like the dud review at this years Pridefest. The show opened with a Hollywood theme, which Jackie Roberts was honestly not bad. But when Nova came out as Marilyn Monroe, we knew we were all in for a night of bad drag. Christina Chase came out as Joan Crawford, even Joan would have rather hung herself with a wire hanger than come out looking like that. The number was topped off by the falling of Nova's handmade Hollywood prop. How professional. Then came Lady Gia from 219 doing a Selena megamix. It was the battle of 'can my costume stay together for the entire 15 minute song?' Poor Selena would have rolled over in her grave. Next in line was Tracey Ross, looking very fit and lovely this year, but one thing must be said. Do Diane Ross or leave the curly mess behind. Shannon Dupree came next doing her ever popular Patti LaBelle, (we have seen it the past 13*

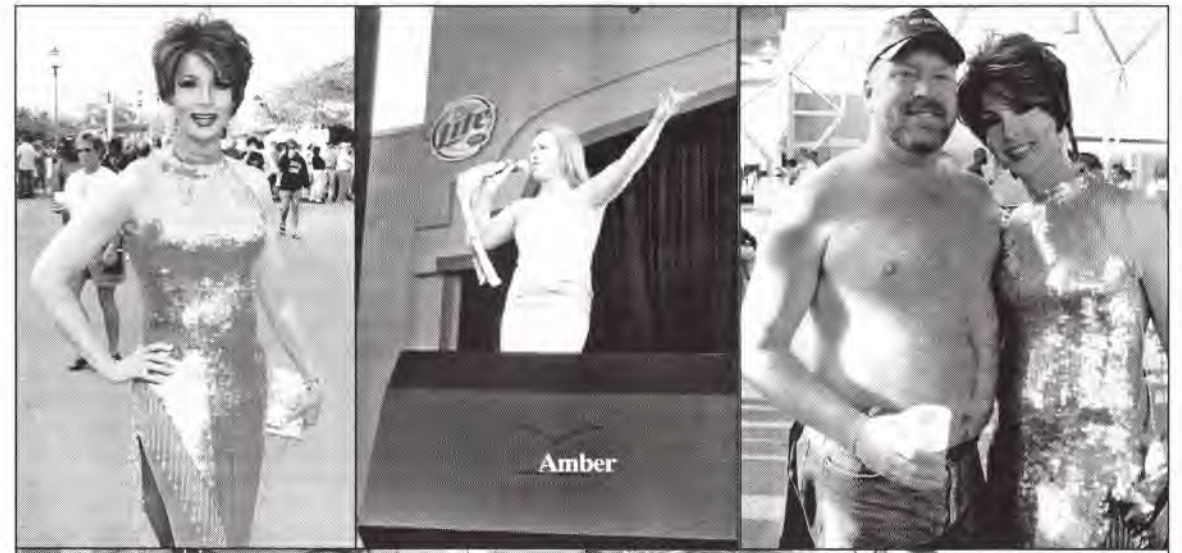
*years) mix. At least it was a crowd pleaser. On to our next number was Riley, a boy performer, the first two rows were captivated by your spare tire. I would stick to button up shirts and burn all the muscle shirts at this point. Next came a production number of Copa Cabana. Jackie Roberts took the lead, next came Billy (pork chop) Blaze and Christina (where am I) Chase and a yellow feather in her hair Nova (can I do another shot) Devine. And can I say you are looking more like Brittany Morgan every day. At this point in the show, people were leaving in droves and terrified at that! Following up was Lady Mia, your side kicks are as sloppy as your thigh pads. The performance was like watching the movie "Day After Tomorrow" a disaster. Next up was Lady Samone doing Beyonce'. Old cottage cheese legs did her best booty dance. Basically the show just never really got better."*

Well, that is what somebody sent me on the drag show at Pridefest, from what it sounds like they should drop doing the drag on stage. What I want to know is, where were all the good performers? How about a state title holder or two? Why the same old tired drag every year? I sure hope that people who see this show do not think that is a good representation of what our drag queens in Wisconsin can perform like. Please have some one take control of this horrendous attempt at representing the drag community or just make it stop already.

Well kids. It wasn't much, but that is all I can muster for now.

Til next time, See ya at the shows  
Safonda  
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opinions and gossip are  
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# Katie

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Moses has encouraged Out in the Valley members and others attach the cards to cash payments or credit-card slips or include them in envelopes when paying bills. Scott Fearing, senior director of OutFront Minnesota, said the statewide advocacy group is considering distributing the cards as well. "I think it's a really wonderful idea," Fearing said. "It's a thoughtful and insightful way to let businesses know that we are there shopping, and we are their customers." Quest has learned that Action Wisconsin is also considering a similar project.

Back in the early days of gay activism, Fearing said, people used to write or stamp "Gay Money" on dollar bills. "This is a more legal way of getting the point across, and it's a little more direct," Fearing added.

**New York: Court Says Gay Marriage Ban Unconstitutional-** A New York state court on June 10 ruled in favor of same-sex marriage because denying gays the right to wed goes against equal protection measures in the state's constitution. In the state's first such ruling, the Justice Court in New Paltz threw out charges that the town's mayor, Jason West, violated the law by marrying dozens of gay couples last February without licenses.

"None of the reasons stated in opposition to same-sex marriage is paramount to the equal protection guarantees enshrined in the state and federal constitutions," Judge Jonathan Katz said in his ruling. "Even if the financial issues could be addressed in some comprehensive way short of allowing same-sex partners to marry, there would still be no emotional substitute for marriage," Katz wrote.

A spokeswoman for New York Attorney General Eliot Spitzer said, "We are reviewing the decision." An official at the attorney general's office who asked not to be named said the ruling "could be viewed as a major decision."

Ulster County District Attorney Donald Williams was not immediately available to comment on whether his office would appeal the decision. West's attorney, Joshua Rosenkranz, said the court had ruled that denying same sex marriage was "irrational." "This marks the first official step in the march toward full equality for gays and lesbians in New York state," Rosenkranz said. "It is the first time that any court in this state has declared that same-sex couples have the same rights, same status, and same dignity as every other citizen."

Gary Buseck of gay rights advocacy group Lambda Legal said the ruling was "another example of a judge doing the right thing and recognizing that there simply isn't any point in denying marriage rights to same-sex couples."

Buseck added that the issue ultimately would be decided by New York's highest court in a process that could take up to two years.

**Virginia: Gay Activists Urge Boycott** - Gay activists are urging a boycott of Virginia because of a new ban on civil unions and other marriage-like arrangements for same-sex couples. VirginiaIsForHaters.org urges people not to buy products or services from Virginia-based companies and suggests tourists visit other states. The name is a play on the state tourism motto, "Virginia is for lovers." Another group, Make Love Legal, is developing strategies for boycotting the 400th anniversary celebration of the founding of Jamestown in 2007.

of the founding of Jamestown in 2007.

"This whole idea is: Don't spend your money in a place where people hurt you," Diane Horvath, a Richmond attorney who is spearheading the Jamestown initiative, said.

The state's Affirmation of Marriage Act, which prohibits gay marriage, was amended this year to also ban civil unions and arrangements "purporting to bestow the privileges of marriage." Gays fear it may interfere with legal contracts, such as powers of attorney, medical directives and wills. "This is a national issue," said Jay Porter of Seattle, who with his partner created the boycott website. "Someone came up with this really punitive legislation and got it through the state legislature and in my mind, that could happen just about anywhere in the US."

The bill's sponsor, Republican Delegate Robert Marshall, said he believes the threat of economic harm to Virginia is remote. "If they don't like the expression of the will of the people of Virginia, they don't have to come here," he said. "This was done by freely elected representatives." Democratic Gov. Mark R. Warner tried to amend the bill to make it less restrictive, but lawmakers rebuffed his attempts by veto-proof margins.

"Governor Warner has devoted considerable time and effort to promoting Virginia tourism, and this certainly will not help," said Warner spokesman Kevin Hall.

The new ban takes effect July 1, and gay-rights group Equality Virginia plans a legal challenge. Republican Attorney General Jerry Kilgore has vowed to defend its constitutionality.

The boycott website also targets companies that have contributed Marshall's campaign, including Altria Group Inc., parent company of tobacco giant Philip Morris. Altria spokesman David Sylvia said his company contributes to both Democrats and Republicans and offers domestic partner benefits to employees. Another targeted company is clothing retailer J.Crew, which has a distribution and customer service center in the state and, according to the boycott organizers, many gay customers. A company representative declined to comment.

**Washington, DC: Senate Vote On Anti-Gay Federal Marriage Amendment Set** - The US Senate will vote on a proposed amendment to ban gay marriage the week of July 12.

The announcement was made June 18 at a Capitol Hill news conference. The vote will come just two weeks before the start of the Democratic national convention, July 26 in Boston, and is seen as a way of embarrassing Democrats most of whom are opposed to the amendment.

"It demonstrates the disgusting nature of the GOP leadership, specifically doing this in an attempt to embarrass Democrats. But it's the Republicans who should be embarrassed," National Stonewall Democrats spokesperson John Marble said.

Sen. John Cornyn (R-Texas) denied scheduling the vote to coincide with the Democratic convention. "This was an issue that was thrust upon us by the Massachusetts Supreme Court," Cornyn said. "We didn't pick the battle, we didn't pick the timing." More than a dozen court cases are either pending or being prepared challenging laws barring same-sex marriage. "We must not stand still when the courts are being used to challenge and distort civilization's oldest, most venerable social institution," Cornyn claimed.

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## Music on CD/DVD

### BOND "CLASSIFIED"



Bond is a string quartet made up of four good-looking women, two from Australia, one from Wales, one from Great Britain. Their training is in purely classical music, which this CD certainly is not. Their previous CD was banned from the UK classical charts, presumably because of the overly insistent use of beats and other intrusions, and this CD too contains African, electro, Latin and hip-hop beats. Bond will be the first to acknowledge that they're heavily influenced by the club scene and pop culture from London to Bangkok. Here they are joined by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, and the sound is enormous: there's level upon level of overdubbing. Some of the tracks have, as their basis, classical works: Pachelbel's Canon, snippets of Swan Lake, the Nutcracker, Carmen's Habanera, Brahms' Hungarian Dance no. 5, Barber's Adagio for Strings. But the sound we get is lush, beat-heavy, club-ish, full of excitement and basic rhythms, and the "classical" connection—aside from the melodies from the above-mentioned pieces—must be taken on faith. The women's solo playing, if there is any, is not audible. The over-riding feel is disco; this is for dancing and for creating a mood of excitement

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### CYNDI LAUPER LIVE...AT LAST (DVD)

What best describes this DVD is Cyndi Lauper as a complex mix of rock and roll queen, Janis Joplin, with a little Betty Boop thrown in for good measure. Cyndi Lauper is as unpredictable a singer, as what comes out of her mouth when she is casually addressing her audience, during her song breaks. She still has a little of that Betty Boop sound in her voice when she speaks. But watch out when she sings. Lauper's voice as never sounded more strong and powerful as it does in this concert and in this decade. This concert demonstrates that, when Lauper's belting a show stopping rock version of Walk on By. Lauper is equally powerful on Money Changes Everything and the punk rocker It's Hard To Be Me. Another standout is the title track from her EP Shine. Beautiful vocals, and already a true classic. Lauper is very funny in the bonus like-documentary, as she takes the viewers



through a driving trip of her old Queens neighborhood. At one point her and her friends get lost, and Lauper lets out more than a few expletives (the "F" word gets quite a work out from her). The audio and visuals are outstanding, and should be viewed in widescreen, to get the full visual effects. This is one excellent DVD, and Cyndi Lauper's incredible talent is still in evident.

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# QUEST DEADLINES

Vol. 12 Issue 1

Deadline is

Tuesday, June 29

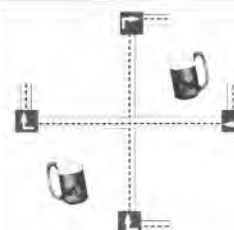
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Word began circulating on Capitol Hill the week of June 14-18 that the Republican leadership was anxious for a Senate vote. Republicans not only want to use the issue in the election, but also to energize the GOP. Conservative Christian activists have been pressing for a July vote, sending out mass emailings to supporters calling on them to lobby their senators to support the amendment. "Force your senators to take a public position before voters go to the polls this fall," the Christian Coalition has instructed its minions.

But even Cornyn, and the amendment's chief sponsor in the Senate, Sen. Wayne Allard (R-Colorado) admit they are not even certain they can get the measure through. "We're not certain we'll be successful in this effort," Cornyn said.

The Human Rights Campaign was critical of the GOP for scheduling the vote. "Congress should focus on the real priorities of the American people: jobs, the economy and the war in Iraq," HRC spokesperson Steven Fisher said. Amendments to the US Constitution require approval by two-thirds majorities in the House and Senate and ratification by three-fourths of state legislatures.

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## Please Sir, May I Have Another?

Hot Folk in Leather Indeed!

I was the first to arrive for the Pridefest Leather show rehearsal on Friday evening, and naturally I panicked. Okay, so I was thirty minutes early. I parked and entered through Gate 6, and strolled through the park over to the Dance Pavilion. It felt a little strange to see people still setting up on Friday evening. In previous years things would have been hopping on a Friday evening at Pridefest.

The sound system wasn't set up yet, and technicians were all over the stage running cable, mounting speakers, and generally acting pretty butch, but I was too nervous to even notice (much). This was the first time I was ever to "co-host" any event, and this was going to be with a drag queen, -er, excuse me- female impersonator, and one I had never even met, at that. The organizer for our opening number wasn't able to attend the rehearsal because he is a mortician by profession and someone died, and our show director Marty had just experienced a mild heart attack on Wednesday. I was just relieved to hear from the mortician that our stage director was not the person who had died.

In my opinion, the stage was perfectly and literally set for the biggest disaster of my gay flipping life.

Soon, a few familiar faces appeared, then some new faces, and then Marty arrived, bad heart and all, looking a little pale but determined nonetheless. Our stage directors Brian and Ron immediately went to work collecting model biographies and descriptions of the leather wear they would be sporting in the show, and Marty fairly flew into action calling the performers to the stage for a step-by-step walkthrough of the entire production.

Jeez, Marty. Take a nitro tablet, but don't jump around too much. We don't want you exploding.

Yes, it was a true production this

year, with nearly 40 participants involved. I was amazed at the level of participation and support. I met "Ruthie," or Mark, as I got to know him on Friday- a quiet, unassuming, extremely well-organized and talented (and handsome) young man, who was there for the rehearsal with his equally handsome partner Todd. Despite the relative insanity of the rehearsal, Marty managed to walk us through the entire

one-hour show in less than two hours, while still allowing everyone to reach some kind of personal comfort level with the rather imposing venue. And he didn't explode.

As I walked back to my car afterwards, I got a personal review of IML from Mr. Northwoods, John Weiler, who finished very respectably in Chicago- placing higher than any former competitor from Wisconsin other than Andrew Sagan and Michael McMichaels. Congratulations, John!

On the drive back to Green Bay Friday night, I realized I wasn't nervous any more. I was feeling nothing but pride. Sure, there was a touch of personal pride, but mostly it was pride in our leather community. I will take a little credit for LAST year's leather show, as it was kind of "dumped" on me at the last minute and it was a scramble to organize something in three weeks. I can not take any credit for this year's leather show, as much as I would like to.

If anything, I was given the golden opportunity to start the "leather snowball" rolling at the

top of the hill. But that is all I did. The planning meetings were lively and productive, and all I did was watch that snowball get bigger and bigger.

Leon and I got to Pridefest Sunday just a few hours before the show, but had plenty of time to stop by the Castaways beer pod to have a beer with Rich, Kevin, Peter, Carl, and Cheesecake Joe.

We saw lots of friends wandering past, some of whom

stopped to say hi or car afterwards, I got a personal review of IML from Mr. Northwoods, John Weiler, who finished very respectably in Chicago- placing higher than any former competitor from Wisconsin other than Andrew Sagan and Michael McMichaels. Congratulations, John!

Papa Joe was darting around backstage with his camera, checking to make sure everyone was legally attired, I'm sure.

Brian, Ron, and Marty had

things completely under control. The entire cast was ready- the models, the title holders, DJ John Murges, our dancers for the opening spoof on Michael Jackson, Shoreline Milwaukee, vocalist Steve Polifka, the Righteously Outrageous Twirling Corps (ROTC), Young Leather Milwaukee, and our special guest Ruthie.

The music started, and the show was rolling.

It hardly seemed right that after months of planning, and so much blood, sweat, and tears by so many fantastically dedicated and committed individuals- it should all be over in one hour. I wanted to pick them all up and carry them around the dance pavilion on my shoulders. I wanted to spray them with champagne. I wanted to dump the ice cooler on them.

I was pretty sure Marty's heart couldn't take that, and I wasn't so sure that mine could either. Nitro tablets just don't do the trick when your heart is bursting with pride.

Congratulations to the Cream City Foundation for a successful festival, and congratulations to the "Hot Folk in Leather" for sharing your leather pride with Milwaukee in such a spectacular and exciting way!

### UPCOMING EVENTS

July 10, N.E. Wisconsin Pridefest Picnic; Al Kamke farm; Hilbert, WI

July 24, 11:00 p.m. Mr. Harbor Room contest; The Harbor Room; 117 E. Greenfield Ave.; Milwaukee, WI

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## ON STAGE

by Glenn Bishop

### "Jeffrey" by Paul Rudnick Presented by R.S.V.P. Productions

Overcoming his initial trepidation after some considerable persuasion, Glenn ventured forth to R.S.V.P. Productions' offering of Paul Rudnick's "Jeffrey." Like most in the audience, Glenn was familiar with Rudnick's Obie-winning AIDS comedy only from the tepid 1995 film version starring Patrick Stewart, Michael T. Weiss and Steven Weber.

Recently released on DVD, "Jeffrey" is quite simply a hopeless mess, burdened as it is with Steven Weber's disagreeably insipid Jeffrey, the young gay man afraid to have even safe sex in the midst of the AIDS epidemic of the 1990s. Nor was stage director Christopher Ashley even remotely successful in adapting Rudnick's quirky sequence of comic sketches to the inherent realism of the big screen.

One might be forgiving if the cinematic "Jeffrey" possessed sufficient heart but no point in the film does it become apparent just what Michael T. Weiss's studly Steve could have possibly found attractive or appealing in Weber's Jeffrey. After all of Jeffrey's whining, wasn't everyone in the audience rooting for Patrick Stewart's marvelous Sterling to finally haul off and just bitch-slap him silly?

As a film from 1995, "Jeffrey" seems something of a museum piece. So how does Rudnick's comedy hold up nearly a decade later in 2004? Well, surprisingly enough - quite well.

In R.S.V.P. Productions' fine effort, director Raymond Bradford has been blessed with casting two fine young actors to play Jeffrey and the target of his affection, Steve. Jeffrey is an immensely difficult character to play, needing to be irrationally scared of any and all physical contact during a very real and very scary AIDS epidemic yet be genuine enough so as to not totally exasperate all of his



friends. Ryan Schabach nicely plays Jeffrey as an attractive scamp, unable to keep himself from a bit of cruising, despite his "no-sex" resolve. He is well paired with Kirk Thomsen's thoughtful and engaging, HIV-positive Steve.

Nearly overshadowing the productions' two cute leads are Alan Wallisch and Michael Endter as Sterling, the fabulous interior designer with the scathing wit and his boyfriend Darius, a chorus boy cast now and forever in "Cats." Both actors invest in their roles real and endearing depth as well as a charm not immediately apparent in Rudnick's script.

One must also mention how well director Bradford paces this romantic comedy shoe-horned in Off-the-Wall Theatre's intimate playing space. But really, Mother Theresa with flaming red finger and toe nails??

### Full-price, half-price or worth a skip...

Well, this is a perfect example of "you snooze, you lose." Sadly, this fine production of "Jeffrey" ended its two-week run on June 13, although perhaps R.S.V.P. Productions might be persuaded to bring it back if provided sufficient encouragement.

## Letter to the Editor

Shame on you...

Shame on the GLBT community for staying away from the opening ceremonies at PrideFest 2004. We should have been honored to have such a panel of guests come out and show their support of Milwaukee's Gay and Lesbian community. How dare us take this for granted when there is so much we have yet to achieve in both Milwaukee and for the State of Wisconsin.

If only we could've taken a few minutes out of our busy day to come out and fill the seats at Miller Stage to hear what Governor Jim Doyle, Russ Feingold and Tammy Baldwin had to say. Can you imagine what impact that would have made on them? People, we have a lot of work to do for Wisconsin and the GLBT communities in this state and nation. As close as we are to opening the eyes of our politicians, we have a long way to go.

We came very close to losing our pride, a weekend that makes a huge impact and lets our neighbors know we're here and fighting for diversity, that we be treated equal. I understand that this was the first weekend that we had great weather, but the gardening could've waited. we had one weekend to show a strong driving force and we failed.

Thank you to all the people that did come out. I feel that they showed a real caring for us.

- WSD -



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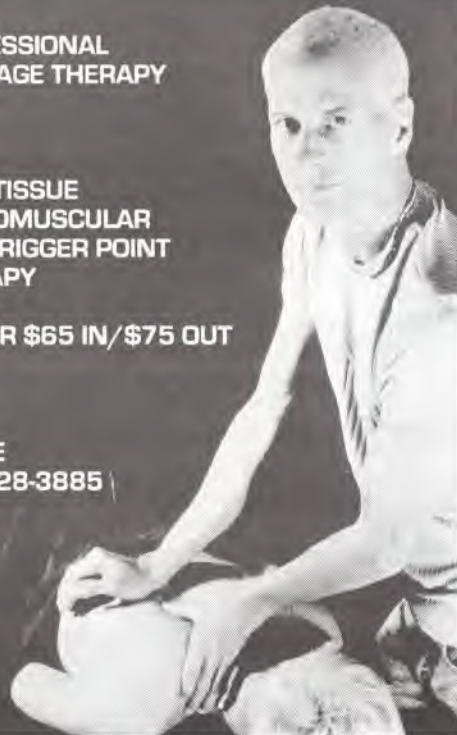
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## Community Calendar

**Thursday, June 24**

**SAGE (Milwaukee) Women's Roundtable**, 4 pm, at SAGE offices to discuss organizational involvement & future roundtable discussions. FMI (414) 224-0517

**Friday, June 25**

**Cricket's Fox River Lounge (Green Bay) Glamarma** performs on the patio, 8 pm. No cover. **L.D. CrossRoads (Appleton)** **Jess Blackwell** (local singer/songwriter) on stage

**Saturday, June 26**

**Harmony Cafe (Appleton) HARMONY MUSIC FEST**, the first annual fundraising event benefitting Harmony Cafe...out in the street in front of Harmony, 124 No. Oneida St. - 10am-8pm: 10-noon, Community drumming circle w/ Middle Eastern belly dancing display; noon-2, Mayville Steel Drum band; 2-3, jazz duo Helen & Red; 3-5pm, Unity the Band (reggae); 5-6, native flutist James Kvalvik, and 6-8, Phat Phunktion, 9 piece horn-drive funk & R. Jo-dee's Int'l (Racine) The Layla Del-Rio Show - *Divine Intervention* - (an encore performance) starring Brittany Morgan, Jackie Christine & Eva Reba! Show dedicated to the memory of Ron Geiman (1951-2004). **Office Nite Club (Rockford, IL)** On Stage - Cece Martin, Tajma Hall, Kyllie West, Shannon Dupree & Kevin Kline

**SAGE (Milwaukee) Potluck & Cookout**, 11:30 a.m. at the G/L Community Center, 901 1st St. FMI (414) 224-0517

STD Specialties free HIV & syphilis testing. Club 219, 10pm-1am

**Wednesday, June 30**

**Harmony Cafe (Appleton)** Galyne Goodwill - pop, soul, folk, 7 pm

**Saturday, July 3**

**Club Night Out (2533 Hwy. M, Stevens Point)** Katrina Kaye Productions presents **Miss Central Wisconsin USofA 2004**, 10 pm; FMO (920) 435-4107

**L.D. CrossRoads (Appleton)**

Sheepshead tourney

**Wednesday, July 7**

STD Specialties free HIV & syphilis testing, **Harbor Room**, 10pm-1am

**Saturday, July 10**

**Fundraising Auction & Show, Club Night Out**, 2533 Cty. M, Stevens Point, 9 pm; fmo (715) 342-5820

**Metropolitan Community Church - Mary & Diane Social & Campout** in Menomonee

**Wednesday, July 14**

STD Specialties free HIV & syphilis testing, **94 North (Kenosha)**, 10pm-1am

**Thursday, July 15**

STD Specialties free HIV & syphilis testing, 10pm-1am, **Boom**

**Madison's MAGIC WEEKEND July 16-17-18**

**Sat., July 17 - MAGIC Picnic**, 1-6 p.m. @ Brittingham Park; Entertainment - The Kinsey Sicks, Irene Keenan, Jr., Ronnie Niles++

**Sun., July 18, Pride March**, 1-6 pm; State Capitol to Brittingham Park

**Wednesday, July 21**

STD Specialties free HIV & syphilis testing, 10pm-1am, **Fluid**

**Saturday, July 24**

STD Specialties free HIV & syphilis testing, 10pm-1am, **Club 94 (Kenosha)**

**Sunday, July 25**

**Rockford Pride Picnic - Fuller Park**

**Saturday, August 7**

**Central Pride Day Out - Pride Picnic**, 12 noon : **Club Night Out**, 2533 Cty. M, Stevens Point, \$7 at gate. fmo (715) 212-3068

**Metropolitan Community Church (Green Bay & Appleton) Church picnic today in Wrightstown**

**XS Night Club (Green Bay) 4th Annual Sage LaRue Memorial Show - champagne reception at 9, show at 10 pm. Special Guest Erica Andrews, Miss Gay USofA '99.**



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**Milwaukee: PrideFest Has \$220,000 Turnaround, Breaks Records** - Amidst the debate over civil marriage equality, Wisconsin's PrideFest delivered a record-breaking weekend of entertainment, advocacy and education centered on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) culture.

PrideFest reported June 10 that it earned a record net profit of approximately \$70,000, a turnaround of nearly \$220,000 from its financial position one year ago. "With the help of dedicated volunteers and generous donors, we were able to deliver a well-programmed festival and the community responded with tremendous support," Cream City Foundation Executive Director Jennifer Gryniewicz said.

PrideFest is Wisconsin's largest LGBT pride celebration. The festival is traditionally held the first weekend of June at the Henry W. Maier Festival Park (Summerfest Grounds). Under nearly cloudless skies this year, approximately 15,200 people attended the festival Saturday and Sunday, an increase of 900 people over comparable days at last year's festival.

"This year's success guarantees that PrideFest will live on. We will have a festival in 2005," Cream City Foundation Board President Denise Wise said.

In 2003 PrideFest ended a three-day run with a debt of approximately \$150,000 due to cost-overruns and poor financial oversight. Following the festival, a new leadership group

helped by the Cream City Foundation began a community effort to retire the debt and ensure the continuation of the festival on the Summerfest grounds. Organizers were able to raise \$72,000 in debt-reduction donations, allowing them to move forward with production of the 2004 festival. More than \$50,000 is still owed to 2003 vendors.

This year's festival was streamlined and restructured to incorporate new programs that responded to community interests. There were more family and youth activities, more educational workshops, and an expanded opening ceremonies that featured Governor Jim Doyle, Senator Russ Feingold, Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin and a host of other public officials.

Additional facts about the festival and the debt management effort: 67% of the outstanding debt has been cured (33% from 15 "Angels" who contributed at least \$3,333 each); 33% of the original debt was negotiated with favorable terms; and a transparent and accountable business structure was put into place.

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WI Continental was a great show, with talent from all over. top lft the contestants for the evening, top rt. Alexis St. James, above, Michelle Dupree, Cass Marie Domino & Taylor Roberts. Rt. Erika Norell & Maya Douglas. To see the out come of the pageant check out SaFonda's column!

**Madison: Coordinated Campaign Against Wisconsin Marriage Amendment Proposed** - A June 7 statewide "summit" of LGBT and allied leaders invited by US Congressional Representative Tammy Baldwin (D-Madison) heard about a draft proposal for a \$1.2 million "coordinated campaign" to defeat the anti-gay Wisconsin Marriage Amendment. About 40 were in attendance at the 90-minute meeting, held at the University of Wisconsin student union.

The proposal called for the statewide LGBT advocacy group Action Wisconsin to take a lead fiscal role in the coalition of member organizations that may include organizations ranging from such mainstream groups as the Wisconsin Education Association Council (WEAC) and the Wisconsin Council of Churches, to regional LGBT groups such as the Milwaukee LGBT Center and the numerous regional chapters of PFLAG. Numerous questions about the legal structure of the group's make-up, the group's need to raise funds and work within the boundaries of federal and Wisconsin lobbying and election laws as the amendment bill transitions from legislative proposal to referendum remain to be answered.

The timeline, as presented, assumed the likely Republican retention of control of both legislative houses, followed by a successful January 2005 required second passage of an identical constitutional amendment bill. Those events then would most likely lead to an April 2005 statewide referendum on the amendment. It was also noted that 85% of all constitutional amendment referendums historically have passed. The proposed coalition would

have about 10 months to organize, raise the funds and develop a successful campaign to defeat the amendment.

LGBT leaders noted repeatedly that unprecedented level of cooperation among the various gay groups that has occurred since the first passage of the amendment bill last April. Leaders also agreed that mainstream Wisconsinites



Compiled and written by Mike Fitzpatrick

have not heard about the real economic and personal damage that the amendment's passage could cause. One leader reported the state's largest business group has been telling their members privately not to support the bill because of the negative impact to the state's competitiveness in gaining new business. Another referenced a letter from a group of family law practitioners read during the Senate debate on the bill pointing out the potential for havoc to non-traditional, heterosexual relationships that the amendment's overly vague wording could cause. Leaders also agreed that if the extremist right is successful in peddling the referendum as solely about gay marriage, it likely would pass

overwhelmingly.

The Wisconsin proposal is similar to a Michigan effort that has progressed more quickly due to the November 2004 ballot facing that state's voters. On June 16 the Coalition for a Fair Michigan announced that it had hired a campaign manager. CFM reported that Wendy Howell has begun serving as the committee's Campaign Manager. Howell will be responsible for oversight of CFM's statewide operation to defeat a proposed anti-gay constitutional amendment.

"I wish I could say I was happy to be here," Howell said, "but the truth is that this is a fight we shouldn't have to take on in the first place. Gay marriage is already illegal three times over in our state laws, so there's absolutely no need for this amendment in the first place. But, it's obvious that the right wing is trying to use this highly divisive and contentious issue as a distraction from the issues that matter a lot more to most Michiganders - like the economy and terrorism - in an important election year."

**Madison: Transgender/Genderqueer Discussion Group Starts** - OutReach Inc., Madison & south-central Wisconsin's LGBT Community Center has announced that a new group forming in July specifically focused on transgender/genderqueer health and quality of life issues. It is being organized by Laura G., founder of the Madison Transgender Group and long-time community activist, and will cover issues from health care and assertiveness/self-esteem skills to legal resources. Food will be provided at each session as well as a small cash stipend for attendance. The group will meet in the safe space of OutReach. If

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