

QUEST

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DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIPS BEGIN
WISCONSIN BECOMES THE FIRST MIDWEST STATE
TO ENACT PROTECTIONS FOR SAME SEX COUPLES

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SAME-SEX DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIPS BEGIN IN WISCONSIN

Lighter-Than-Expected Turnout Around The State

By Mike Fitzpatrick

Statewide - August 3 marked one small step toward marriage equality for Wisconsin's committed gay and lesbian couples as the state opened its domestic partner registry. However, by the end of the first day turnout statistics showed no great leap by gay partners into county clerk's offices around the state.

Small step it may have been but it was also a historic one. By initiating the registry Wisconsin became the first state in nation with an existing ban on both marriage equality and civil unions to enact domestic partnerships. It is also first state in Midwest to legislatively enact protections for same-sex couples.

'Today is a historic day for fairness in Wisconsin,' Fair Wisconsin Executive Director Katie Belanger said. 'We are very grateful for the exceptional leadership of Governor Doyle, the Co-Chairs of the Joint Finance Committee Rep. Mark Pocan and Sen. Mark Miller, and the many state legislators who voted to enact this legislation that recognizes and values our state's same-sex couples. They know that the government shouldn't stand in the way of someone being able to care for their long-term partner.'

'This is an important step toward ensuring that someone in a caring, committed relationship is able to care for his or her partner,' Belanger added. 'No one should ever have to worry about being blocked at their partner's hospital room door, or have to make the heartbreaking decision to quit their job in order to care for a seriously ill partner. This isn't about being gay or straight - it's about being decent.'

Though turnout was light overall, several counties saw brief early morning rushes to register. Most notable was Dane county, which experienced first-hour lines. As they waited, some couples sang their own version of the 60's ditty "Chapel Of Love," substituting the original lyrics with "Goin' to the clerk's office and we're gonna get registered." About 50 couples registered in Madison during the first day.

Janice Czynscon and her long time partner, Crystal Hyslop, were in line at 5:30 AM so that they could be the first Dane County couple to register for the benefits. "I'm really, really emotional about it, Hyslop told WISC-TV. "It's just after 29 years working so hard to get something this is just really significant."

Milwaukee reported twenty or so couples regis-



tered their partnerships on August 3. A few were lined up at 7:30 AM but according to County Clerk Joe Czarnezki there weren't as many applicants as some had expected.

"I would say it was a typical Monday morning, we're always busy on Monday morning, Czarnezki told Wisconsin Public Radio affiliate WUWM. "There were people who were in a celebratory mood, there were people who were just going about their business filling out legal documents. So I don't see that there was anything out of the ordinary."

In northeast Wisconsin about 50 couples tied the partnership knot: 18 in the Oshkosh area, 16 in the Appleton area, ten in Green Bay and three each in Calumet and Waupaca counties.

In Green Bay, Michael Knaapen, 22 and John Becker, 24 waited outside the Brown County clerk's office building at 6 AM for the doors to open so they could gain their newly legalized domestic partnership rights. "We thought there would be a line and we wanted to be able to get to work on time," Knaapen said.

In Kenosha, four couples registered the first day, with two of the four waiting at the door as the clerk's office opened at 8 AM. Mike Brooker, 31 and T.J. Cousins, 45 were the first to register.

"It's about time the state recognizes and stops discriminating against a group of people," Cousins told the Associated Press.

In St. Croix County, 60 year-old Deborah Monicken and her partner Susan Kattas, 65 celebrated their silver anniversary by being the first couple to register there. The couple told the St. Paul *Pioneer Press* that they had been concerned that they might encounter protesters, though none were at

the clerk's office when they arrived. "I've always felt that Wisconsin would do well by us," Monicken said as she fought back tears.

Rural counties throughout the state reported single digit registrations August. Some reported no registrants at all.

Also, not every couple who showed up to register were able to do so. Clerks statewide turned away about twenty couples for failure to have all the necessary documentation needed in order to register. Others learned that some counties only accept cash payments for marriage and domestic partnership applications.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 14,000 same-sex couples in Wisconsin identified themselves as in committed relationship in the 2000 Census. After some waffling on the issue, the bureau will again attempt to tally gay and lesbian couples in next year's census.

The Wisconsin Domestic Partner Registry offers 43 of the approximately 200 benefits the state provides married couples. Opponents of the registry, such as Wisconsin Family Action (WFA), which filed a lawsuit with the state Supreme Court in late July to overturn the law, call the partnerships "mimic marriages," while "gay marriage or bust" progressives derided the unions as "21.2% marriages."

Now that the first day mainstream media pre-occupation with domestic partnerships has abated, gay and lesbian couples are expected to continue to register their relationships throughout August. No decision on the WFA lawsuit is expected until September when the state Supreme Court reconvenes.

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PSYCHOLOGISTS REJECT GAY "THERAPY"

Toronto - The American Psychological Association declared August 5 that mental health professionals should not tell gay clients they can become straight through therapy or other treatments.

In a resolution adopted by the association's governing council, and in an accompanying report, the association issued its most comprehensive repudiation of so-called reparative therapy, a concept espoused by a small but persistent group of therapists, often allied with religious conservatives, who maintain that gay men and lesbians can change.

No solid evidence exists that such change is likely, the resolution stated. It was adopted by a 125-to-4 vote. The association said some research suggested that efforts to produce change could be harmful, inducing depression and suicidal tendencies.

Instead of seeking such change, the association urged therapists to consider multiple options, which could include celibacy and switching churches, for helping clients live spiritually rewarding lives in instances where their sexual orientation and religious faith conflict.

The association has criticized reparative therapy in the past, but a six-member panel added weight to that position by examining 83 studies on sexual orientation change conducted since 1960. Its report was endorsed by the association's governing council in Toronto, where the association's annual meeting is being held this weekend.

The report breaks ground in its detailed and nuanced assessment of how therapists should deal with gay clients struggling to remain loyal to a religious faith that disapproves of homosexuality.

Highland Park, N.J. psychologist Judith Glassgold, who led the panel, said she hoped the document could help calm the polarized debate between religious conservatives who believe in the possibility of changing sexual orientation and the many mental health professionals who reject that option.

"Both sides have to educate themselves better," Glassgold said. "The religious psychotherapists have to open up their eyes to the potential positive aspects of being gay or lesbian. Secular therapists have to recognize that some people will choose their faith over their sexuality."

TRANS-INCLUSIVE ENDA INTRODUCED IN U.S. SENATE

Washington, DC - Democrat Jeff Merkley of Oregon introduced the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) in the U.S. Senate August 5. It marked the first time that a transgender-inclusive version of the bill has been introduced in the Senate. Co-sponsors of the Senate bill were Susan Collins (R-Maine) and Edward Kennedy (D-Massachusetts). An inclusive version of ENDA was introduced in the House in June.

Each co-sponsor issued remarks about the bill's introduction. "There is no place in the workplace for employment discrimination," lead sponsor Merkley said. "No worker in America should be fired or denied a job based on who they are. Discrimination is wrong, period. I'm proud to join Senator Kennedy, who is a civil rights legend, and Senators Collins and Snowe, both champions for equality, in taking this next step in our ongoing effort to create a more perfect union and guarantee every American, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, the right to earn a living."

"The promise of America will never be fulfilled as long as justice is denied to even one among us," said U.S. Senator Kennedy added. "The Employment Non-Discrimination Act brings us closer to fulfilling that promise for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender citizens."

Senator Collins characterized the ENDA bill as catching up to policies already in place in several states and the private sector. "Similar to the current law in several states, including Maine, and the policies of many Fortune 500 companies, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act would close an important gap in federal civil rights laws by making it illegal to discriminate in employment," she said.

The Human Rights Campaign hailed the bipartisan, historic introduction of the ENDA bill. "The introduction of an inclusive employment non-discrimination bill in the U.S. Senate is an important and historic step in ending discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity," HRC President Joe Solmonese said. "No American, and that includes LGBT Americans, should have to worry about their livelihood being taken away from them simply for being who they are. The overwhelming majority of the American people are in favor of this legislation and now is the time for our community to visit their representatives in Congress to let them know we need this passed into law."

The Employment Non-Discrimination Act would address discrimination in the workplace by making it illegal to fire, refuse to hire or refuse to promote an employee based on the person's sexual orientation or gender identity. An inclusive ENDA was also introduced in the U.S. House on June 24 of this year. The legislation reflects the values, shared by the vast majority of Americans, that employment decisions should be based on a person's qualifications and work ethic.

According to the recent State of the Workplace report by the Human Rights Campaign Foundation, 85% of Fortune 500 companies include sexual orientation in their equal employment policies, and more than one-third also include gender identity. More than 60 companies have joined the Business Coalition for Workplace Fairness, a group of leading U.S. employers that support the Employment Non-Discrimination Act.

ENDA also is supported by a broad range of civil rights, religious, civic and professional organizations, including the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, NAACP, AFL-CIO, Service Employees International Union, AFSCME, National Education Association, National Employment Lawyers Association, Anti-Defamation League, Religious Action Center, Unitarian Universalist Association, United Church of Christ, American Civil Liberties Union, and many others.

Currently, federal law provides legal protection against employment discrimination on the basis of race, sex, religion, national origin, age and disability, but not sexual orientation or gender identity. In 29 states across America, it is still legal to fire someone based on his or her sexual orientation, and in 38 states, it is still legal to fire someone for being transgender.

TASK FORCE'S "CREATING CHANGE" SEEKS PRESENTERS

Washington, DC - The 22nd National Conference on LGBT Equality: Creating Change wants you. Yes, you. We want you to teach your colleagues how to build LGBT power from the ground up. Come to Creating Change, the national gathering of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender movement sponsored by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, and strut your stuff!

Creating Change touches down in Texas at the Dallas Sheraton Hotel, February 3 - 7, 2010, gathering together over two thousand movement stalwarts who are hungry and thirsty for new ideas, best practices, stronger skills and inspiration.

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A large portion of the Creating Change Conference program is planned and presented by movement heroes just like you. Perhaps you want to lead a session to grapple with pressing immediate issues like how to win back marriage equality in California or how the right-wing is attacking LGBT families. Or maybe you have longer-term issues on your mind, like the impact of the AIDS epidemic, especially in communities of color, or building a multi-racial advocacy organization in your community. The Creating Change Conference is a chance to organize a teaching/learning session to present the lessons you've learned and the best practices you have developed.

Attendees at Creating Change include colleagues who are young and old; organizers and activists of color; volunteers and staff people at LGBT organizations; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender advocates and straight allies; and leaders of campus communities. Creating Change attracts people from every corner of the United States who are working on many of the issues that you care about.

Conference presenters receive a steeply discounted registration fee and experience the deep satisfaction of building a stronger, smarter, more powerful grassroots LGBT movement.

Creating Change Conference session proposals are due on September 30, 2009. Online proposal submission and complete information can be found at www.creatingchange.org.

GAY DADS STUDY SEEKS VOLUNTEERS

Charlottesville - Are you a gay or a bisexual dad? Would you be willing to answer several confidential questions about your life and about your family? The purpose of this study is to examine the many ways families headed by gay fathers have been created, explore how families function, and learn about the relationship between partners. The study consists of

an online survey and will take approximately 25-35 minutes of a volunteer's time. To qualify for the study, participants must identify as male, a father, and gay, bisexual or homosexual and have at least one child of any age. The child can be biological, adopted, foster, step, or other child. Participants do not need to be the child's legal parent to participate.

The study has been approved by the University of Virginia (IRB #2008-0407-00), and Samantha L. Tornello is working with Dr. Charlotte J. Patterson, a Professor of Psychology at the University of Virginia.

If interested in participating or want further information please contact Samantha via email at: GayDadsStudy@gmail.com. She will send a web link to access the study.

CAPITOL ROTUNDA COMMITMENT CEREMONY SET FOR AUGUST 14

Madison— Same-sex couples from across Wisconsin will have the opportunity to take part in a commitment ceremony at the state Capitol on August 14th as part of a weekend-long gay pride festival in Madison. Wisconsin Capitol Pride has organized the commitment ceremony to take place in the rotunda of the state capitol building starting at 5 PM.

The ceremony will take place less than two weeks after Wisconsin's new domestic partnership legislation goes into effect. Starting on August 3rd, same-sex couples can register to receive some legal rights; such as hospital visitation rights and the ability to take Family Medical Leave (FMLA) to care for a loved one. Participants in the ceremony are encouraged to register their domestic partnership at the event.

"This is an important moment," Capitol Pride co-chair Scott Willems said. "We're encouraged to see Wisconsin's government leaders taking steps toward affording basic rights to same-sex couples, and

there's no better place to celebrate that than right in the state capitol."

A number of clergy from the Madison-area faith community will preside over the ceremony and other faith organizations have committed their support. Supporters include: First Congregational, First Unitarian, Fitchburg Memorial UCC, James Reeb Unitarian, Lake Edge Lutheran, McFarland UCC, Plymouth UCC, UW Hillel Integrity/Dignity, Sufi Movement International, First Baptist Church, Spiritual Life Ministries, Madison Jewish Council, St. Francis House, Affirmation, and Coming Out.

"While the ritual itself will be brief, the effects for all of us could be long-ranging," ceremony organizer Derwin Leigh said. "Justice, denied for so long to those gifted by God with a gay or lesbian orientation, may find cause for renewed hope in the small step forward that the State Registry represents."

Couples and individuals interested in attending or taking part in the commitment ceremony are asked to contact Derwin Leigh via email at: dleigh@wisconsin-capitolpride.org. Several restaurants in the Capitol Square-downtown area are also taking reservations for celebratory dinners after the commitment ceremony. See the Wisconsin Capitol Pride website (www.wisconsin-capitolpride.org) for a listing of the restaurants.

Wisconsin Capitol Pride invites participants in the ceremony to stay for the weekend of festivities planned on Willow Island at the Alliant Energy Center August 15 and 16. A gay pride parade around the Capitol Square will take place at 1 PM on Sunday, August 16.

The Radisson Hotel in Madison is offering rooms for a special rate of \$99 per night for those staying in town for the Pride festival. Event schedules and additional information is available at: www.wisconsin-capitolpride.org.

VETERAN GAY ACTIVIST CLEVE JONES IN MADISON AUGUST 31

Madison - Veteran gay activist Cleve Jones will visit Madison Monday, August 31. Jones is scheduled to present "Why We Can't Wait: Now is the time for a new LGBT Civil Rights Movement" in Room 3650 of the Humanities Building on the University of Wisconsin - Madison campus, located on the corner of Park and University Aves. Jones, best known as a protégé of gay pioneer Harvey Milk and the creator of the NAMES Project (the AIDS Memorial Quilt), is expected to promote the recently renamed National Equality March (NEM) during his presentation. On June 7 Jones called for a national march on Washington, DC on the upcoming National Coming Out Day (October 11) while speaking at a Utah Gay pride event. The speech kicked off a four-and-a-half month countdown to what some consider a controversial event that seeks to bring LGBT activists and allies from across the country to the nation's capital.

In a July 31 statement, Jones announced further plans for NEM. "Our single demand: Equal protection in all matters governed by federal law in all 50 states," Jones wrote. "We will continue this fight in every state, in every county, every city and every town, but we are now determined to take this fight to the federal government, to our President Barack Obama, to the Congress and the Supreme Court of the United States."

According to earlier versions of the NEM website (www.equalityacrossamerica.org), two specific goals at the federal level are the repeal of the Defense of Marriage Act and an end to the "Don't Ask Don't Tell" military policy.

Jones recently said that his organization has raised \$150,000, which he thinks will be sufficient to underwrite the event. Jones also has indicated that the nation's two largest LGBT civil rights groups will partner on the NEM. However, HRC spokesperson Trevor Thomas declined July 31 to comment to the Wash-

ington Blade on the matter. Inga Sarda-Sorensen, a Task Force spokesperson, told

the paper that her organization had no plans to release a joint statement on the march and was unclear as to what Jones was referring.

Other gay civil rights organizers have been openly critical of Jones' plans, questioning the limited amount of time to organize a mass march - the NEM website originally a goal of bringing 250,000 to Washington - and expressing concern about whether sufficient practical support for such a large crowd can be put in place in time. Others were concerned that the lack of publicity for the march thus far would doom any chances for success. The official Facebook page for NEM currently lists just over 22,000 fans, less than 10% of the march's original state goal.

A newly-formed Madison group, LGBT Equality NOW! plans to assist Jones' efforts by organizing charter buses to get masses of people to the march. "We would love more cosponsors for both these events, so please spread the word and get involved," organizers asked in a recent email.

LGBT Equality NOW! currently meets at 7:30 pm each Monday at the UW Memorial Union. Interested attendees should check the "Today In The Union" board for the meeting room number.

The new group also has scheduled a march from Library Mall on the University of Wisconsin - Madison campus to the Capitol on Friday, August 14 to support Wisconsin Capitol Pride's mass wedding ceremony. Attendees are asked to meet at 4:30 PM on Library Mall by the fountain.

LGBT Equality NOW! also has organized a "Full Equality Under the Law" political contingent to march in the August 16. Organizers have asked "all individuals and groups who want a place to make some noise for equality should feel free to join us" at the Sunday march.

For more information about LGBT Equality NOW!, contact the group by email at: lgbequalitynow@gmail.com or by phone at: 608 446 0273.



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LA CROSSE, MADISON PRIDE EVENTS NEED VOLUNTEERS

La Crosse, Madison - La Crosse Pride is seeking volunteers on the following dates: Friday, August 21 for set-up; Saturday, August 22 for button sales, beer ticket sales, bartending, information booth staffing, food sales, children's games and other tasks; and Sunday, August 23 for clean up. Please stop in the LGBT Center for the Seven Rivers Region, 303 Pearl Street to sign up. Volunteers may also call the center at: 608-784-0452 to sign up.

Madison's Wisconsin Capitol Pride has also asked for help with their event August 15 and 16. Volunteers are still needed for set-up, tear-down, registration, admission, security, parade assistance, entertainment & stage coordination, and beverage team. Volunteers are asked to contact Steven Stafford by phone at: 608-335-1834 or by email at: ssafford@wisconsincapitolpride.org.

BUSINESS ALLIANCE HAS SAVOIR FAIRE AUGUST 18



Business Alliance
Greater Madison's LGBT Chamber of Commerce

Madison - The Business Alliance will hold its monthly "meet and greet" mixer from 5:30 - 7:30 PM at the Savoir Faire Cards, Gifts & Wine Bar, just off the Capitol Square at 5 North Pinckney Street here on Tuesday,

August 18. There is no charge to attend the event for current or prospective members.

Since 1994, the Business Alliance has served as Greater Madison's LGBT Chamber of Commerce. The organization is open to business owners, professionals, LGBT individuals and straight allies. Business Alliance member-sponsored events welcome all current & prospective members and are held at venues that support the local LGBT community. At the mixer, introductions will follow a membership update and discussion. Also offered will be a review of upcoming events, plus time for attendees to network. The group encourages everyone to bring and exchange their business cards for a chance to win a door prize. Past winners have received valuable discount coupons and gift certificates.

No longer just a card, gift, & wine bar, Savoir Faire is has gain a reputation for being a great meeting place - either inside or outside. Savior Faire now offers a full service bar, featuring fabulous martinis.

For the mixer Savoir Faire will be pouring Marcus James Riesling and Cabernet Sauvignon along with delicious appetizers. A cash bar will also be available. Door Prizes for the mixer will include an edgy trendy aluminum bottle of delicious Think Red Portuguese wine, a set of classy ceramic golf coasters and a \$25 gift certificate.

For more information, contact Scott Mickelson by phone at: 608-288-7859, or by email at: business-alliance@live.com. To learn more about the Business Alliance, visit the organization's website at: www.madisonbusinessalliance.com. The Business Alliance is affiliated with OutReach, Inc.

7TH ANNUAL WISCONSIN AIDS RIDE RAISES \$300,236

Madison - After four days, 300 miles, over 150 riders, almost a hundred crew members and scores of volunteers, ACT 7 (AIDS Network Cycling Together) - the 7th Annual Wisconsin AIDS Ride - came to a wet but welcome close here August 9. In the process the fund raiser for AIDS Network became one of the most successful in event's history.

Despite an early morning rain, crowds welcomed the riders and support staff at a closing ceremonies held on Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. There ACT Steering Committee Chair Shawn Waldron presented AIDS Network Executive Director Karen Dotson a check for \$300,236, the second-most raised for any single ride to date. The total came close to the 2005 record of \$303,500 and was a 4.5% increase over last year's total. ACT 7 also helped push the total raised by the AIDS rides to close to a cumulative \$2 million benefitting the AIDS service agency.

The ride had kicked off following an opening ceremony here August 6 at Olin Park. Well-wishers had gathered to see the riders and crew off on a four-day bike tour of South Central Wisconsin. WMTV's Morning Show Host Christine Bellport emceed the event.

"This is a much anticipated event for all of us involved with the ride," Dotson said at the opening ceremony. "It is the culmination of a year-long effort of literally hundreds of people. During the past six years ACT has raised over \$1.6 million for our agency. I'm proud to say all of that money stays right here in our community, used to assist in providing much needed case management support, prevention, legal



Lora Wilinon celebrates the end of her AIDS ride from an earlier year.

and client services."

ACT 7 was produced almost entirely by the effort of volunteers. Corporate sponsors and in-kind contributions underwrite the cost of this event. The agency reports that almost every product or service consumed during the ride is donated. For additional information or to make a post-ride pledge to the event or one of the riders, visit the official website: www.actride.org.

MILWAUKEE LGBT CENTER LAUNCHES LBT WOMEN'S BREAST HEALTH INITIATIVE

Milwaukee - The Milwaukee LGBT Community Center recently launched a breast health initiative for lesbian, bisexual and transgender women at Milwaukee's PrideFest. The LBT Breast Health Initiative is one of several Center-sponsored programs that provide educational and health promotion services to the Milwaukee LGBT community. The goals of the LBT Breast Health Initiative are to work within the LGBT community to promote breast health awareness through outreach to at least 2,000 people, referring at least one hundred people for breast cancer screening, and having at least 75 of those referrals receive screening.

During the Pridefest kick-off, the LBT Breast Health booth questioned 456 participants about when they last had a mammogram. A higher percentage of these participants had not had a mammogram in the last when years, when compared to Milwaukee women overall. The Initiative will be assisted in these goals by volunteer health promoters recruited from the LBT community to teach and reach people in need of breast cancer screening.

"Our long term goal is to increase positive health outcomes in the LBT community. According to the Susan G. Komen for the Cure, nearly 100% of women diagnosed with early stage breast cancer are alive five years later," program coordinator Claudia Kabler-Babbitt said. "LGBT people have additional barriers to health care, and some additional risks for breast cancer."

The LBT Breast Health Initiative is partnering with many Milwaukee health and LGBT organizations. The

program also provides cultural competency training for healthcare providers and staff, empowering them to better serve LGBT people who are referred to them through the Initiative.

For a referral for breast cancer screening or for more information concerning the LBT Breast Health Initiative please, contact Claudia Kabler-Babbitt by phone at: 414-292-3061, or by email at: ckb@mkelglt.org.

The LBT Breast Health Initiative is funded through a grant from the Milwaukee Affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure.

SAGE-MILWAUKEE SETS RUMMAGE SALE

Milwaukee - SAGE-Milwaukee will hold a rummage sale as a fundraiser for the organization on Friday and Saturday, August 21-22 at the home of Arlene Schultz and Michaelle Schall, 3162 N. 84th St. here

SAGE Executive Director Bill Serpe has asked members and supporters to donate items to the sale. "We need your old and no longer needed 'treasures' because, as you know, 'one person's junk is another person's treasure,'" he said. "So anything that you have that you want to get rid of, we will take it."

Donations will be accepted at the SAGE/Milwaukee offices at 1845 N. Farwell Ave., Suite 220 we would appreciate that. Pick-up arrangements can also be made by calling SAGE at 414-224-0517. Offices are always open Monday through Friday from 9 AM. until 1 PM, except for Thursdays when the office is open until 5 PM.

Volunteers are also needed to help with pricing and on the days of the sale. Call the office at the above listed number to volunteer.

LA CROSSE PRIDE FEST TO RUN AUGUST 22



La Crosse - La Crosse's annual Pride Fest will be held on Saturday, August 22 at the Southside Oktoberfest grounds in downtown La Crosse at the corner of La Crosse and Second Streets. This year's theme is "Your Rights, Our Rights, Human Rights."

Admission to the festival will be by an admission button. Buttons are now on sale for \$5 each and will be available for \$7 at the gate on the day of the event. Children 12 and under are free. The day-long festivities will begin with the 3rd Annual Motorcycle Pride Ride. Registration for the ride begins at 10 AM Saturday morning at the festival grounds.

The festival officially will open at Noon. Activities will include sales and information booths, a free children's activities area, karaoke, a talent show put on by GALAXY youth, an Euchre tournament and food and beverage sales. The evening's entertainment will feature Alisha Leafgreen with Agent Orange, Ronnie Nyles & Tina, and "A Show of Hometown Pride" drag show featuring the show cast of Illusions. For more information, visit the La Crosse Pride Fest website at: www.lacrossepride.us Information is also available by contact the festival by email at: pride@7river-slgbt.org or by phone at: 608-784-0452.

CHIPPEWA VALLEY LGBT COMMUNITY CENTER SETS PRIDE EVENTS

Eau Claire - The LGBT Center of the Chippewa Valley has announced several events that will occur during the Chippewa Valley Pride 2009.

On Friday, August 14 from 7-10 PM, the Community Center will hold an open house featuring tours, free food and prizes given away each half hour. There is no admission charge. Also on Friday, August 14 from 7-9 PM, free confidential rapid HIV testing will be offered. ARCW-Eau Claire prevention specialist Erin McLaughlin will conduct the tests. For more information, contact Erin by phone at: 715-836-7710, Ext 110.

On Saturday, August 15, from 11 AM - 5 PM it's the main event of the weekend: the Chippewa Valley Pride Picnic at the Riverview Island Pavilion. Share your LGBT Pride with the community. Food (including vegetarian options), beverages, volleyball, paddle boat rides, vendors, LGBT organizational exhibits and fun are on the "gay agenda."

Following the picnic on Saturday evening the Center's popular Saturday Night At The Movies offers a movie marathon. Doors are set to open at 6:45 PM, with movies showing at 7 and 9 PM respectively. On the August 15 bill are "Saved" and "Latter Days."

"Saved" is the story of the fanatic and wealthy Hilary Faye and Mary. The girls are best friends, but their friendship ends when Mary gets pregnant, after having sex with her gay boy-friend trying to "save" him. In "Latter Days," a promiscuous gay party animal falls for a young Mormon missionary, leading to crisis, cliché, and catastrophe.

Discussion to follow the movie for those interested. Admission & popcorn are free. Beverages and movie snacks are also available to purchase.

On Sunday, August 16, the Center will sponsor an Ice Cream Social and Pontoon Boat Ride. Come and have fun on the Chippewa River by enjoying a refreshing sundae followed with an hour long pontoon boat ride on the river. Cost is \$10 per person or \$100 to reserve the boat for you and up to nine of your friends. All funds go to support the LGBT Community Center. Reservations are required.

Three cruises will be offered: Participants for the first cruise should arrive between Noon and 12:20 PM for ice cream social in the yard. The boat will depart at 12:45 PM and return at 1:45. The second and third cruises will follow a similar schedule and begin at 2 and 4 PM respectively.

The 4 PM cruise has already sold out. To place a reservation for one of the earlier cruises, send an email to: lgbtcommunitycenter@yahoo.com or call 715-552-LGBT. Please state the number of tickets needed and state shift preferences. Directions to the event and all other pertinent information are sent with reservation confirmations.

FREE HIV TESTING AT HARMONY CAFÉ DURING AUGUST

Appleton - ARCW will offer free rapid HIV testing at the Harmony Café here every Thursday during the month of August. Testing will be available from 3-7 PM at the café's 233 East College Ave. location.

Rapid testing offers results in 20 minutes. The entire testing procedure takes between 30-45 minutes and participants can elect to have their tests done either anonymously or with name association. All tests are confidential and participants receive a copy of their test results.

For more information about local HIV testing, contact the Appleton office of ARCW at 920-733-2068 or 800-773-2068. For general questions about HIV and testing options, call the Wisconsin AIDS hotline at 800-334-AIDS.

PRIDE WEEKEND BREAKFAST AT OUTREACH

Madison - Start Pride Weekend with a hot breakfast at OutReach, Madison's LGBT Community Center. The breakfast will be held Saturday, August 15 from 8-10 AM at the Center, 600 Williamson St. Suggested donation for the meal is \$5. The breakfast will be an opportunity to meet the staff, Board and volunteers of OutReach.

For more information about the breakfast, contact OutReach by phone at: 608-255-8582 or by email at: steves@lgbtoutreach.org



BENEFIT TALENT SHOW AT NAGAAAFEST SEPT. 2

Milwaukee - SSBL will sponsor its 20th Annual Talent Show during the NAGAAAFest World Series week on Wednesday, September 2 at 8 PM at the Pabst Theatre, 144 E Wells St. Special guests at the event will be Mimi Marks, returning to Milwaukee as the #1 Female Impersonator, and Ginger Grant from the Baton Lounge in Chicago. Emceeding the event will be co-hosts Bubba D Liscious, Selma Sue and Dear Ruthie.

The talent show will benefit local AIDS charities. In 25 events over the last twenty years, SSBL has raised over \$175,000 for these charities.

WISCONSIN CAPITOL PRIDE BEGINS AUGUST 15



Madison - Thirteen months after Madison's last "back to basics" pride event drew just hundreds, organizers of the new Wisconsin Capitol Pride hope to rejuvenate the city's gay pride with a two-day series of events that mimics the former MAGIC picnic and Madison Pride in their scope, and comes just weeks after the first significant LGBT community political and cultural victory - the establishment of a statewide same-sex domestic partnership registry.

The festival kicks off at 2 PM Saturday, August 15 at the Alliant Energy Center on Willow Island and offers two stages of entertainment. Following the 3 PM Welcome ceremony, main stage attractions will include the Ms. WCP Presentation at 3:45, and a Latino drag show at 4 PM. Singer Ann Christopher follows at 5 PM and Madison's gay choral group Perfect Harmony takes the stage at 6.

The gay "Texas-BBQ flavored" humor of nationally-known lesbian comedian Vickie Shaw at 7 PM has been billed at the festival's headline event. However, Madison's chart-topping home town rappers God-Des & She may challenge the comic with an evening-ending concert at 8 PM.

The Dance Stage will offer DJs from 2-5:30 PM and after 6:30 along with two special events: "Dancing with The Queens" at 5 PM and an hour-long drag show beginning at 5:30.

Following the 1 PM pride parade around the Capitol Square, Wisconsin Capitol Pride will again offer two stages of entertainment. On the Main Stage menu is a 2:45 PM magic show, followed by a drag show at 3:30. Entertainers Lynette's Enchanted, Earthling Invasion and the Kingtown Rockers will each follow with shows between 4:30 and 6 PM. The Dance Stage will offer family dancing and sing-a-longs throughout the afternoon.

In addition to entertainment, vendors and organizations will be offering merchandise and information both days at the festival. Area bars, including Club 5, Woof's and the recently-opened Plan B are also offering events on days before, during and after the pride festival.

Full details about Wisconsin Capitol Pride, the pride parade and ancillary events can be found on the festival's website:

www.wisconsincapitolpride.org

MILWAUKEE'S QUEER PROGRAM ANNOUNCES AUGUST GUESTS

Milwaukee - Meighan Bentz, program coordinator for the Anti-Violence Program (Victim Advocate Outreach) at the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center, will be a guest on The Queer Program, on Milwaukee Time-Warner Cable Channel 96 on Monday, August 17, from 6:30-7:30 PM. Meighan will discuss the recent National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs (NCAVP) 2008 Hate Violence Report and Milwaukee's 64% increase in violence reports from 2007.

Rev. Wendy Woodruff, Senior Pastor at Milwaukee Metropolitan Community Church, will appear as a guest on Monday, August 24th.

The Queer Program has been heightening the visi-

bility of Milwaukee & Wisconsin's queer communities since October, 1992 on Milwaukee Community Media (MCM) Time Warner Cable public access Channel 96. The Queer Program, co-hosted by Michael Lisowski and Infamous D, broadcasts live on Mondays at 6:30 PM and replays Fridays at midnight and Saturdays at 10 PM. The Queer Program is produced by Gay People's Union. Funding is provided by Gay People's Union & The G/L Community Trust. Past support has also come from Cream City Foundation.

Want to be a guest for your 15 minutes of fame? Promote your event or organization? Have an event you'd like us to cover? Please contact The Queer Program by email at: queerprgm@aol.com, by U. S. mail at: PO Box 090441, Milwaukee, WI 53209, or by phone at: 414-265-8500.

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ART SHOW OFFERS PORTRAITS OF WISCONSIN SAME-SEX COUPLES

Racine - With the registration of domestic partnerships becoming the law throughout Wisconsin recently, it is appropriate that the LGBT Center of SE Wisconsin unveiled its newest gallery exhibition, "Shall Not Be Recognized: Portraits of 30 Same-Sex Couples." The exhibition opened August 3 and will run through September at the LGBT Center, 1456 Junction Avenue in Uptown Racine.

In 2006, voters in the state of Wisconsin approved an amendment to the state constitution banning legal recognition of same-sex unions: "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."

"The battleground surrounding legal recognition for same-sex people in committed and often long-term relationships has been grabbing headlines from coast to coast," LGBT Center Director Dr. Bruce Joffe said. "Lost in the debate, however, have been the voices of same-sex couples, themselves."

Created by photographer Jeff Pearcy and author Will Fellows, "Shall Not Be Recognized" features compelling portraits of 30 local couples whose love and commitment to each other are considered by some to be unworthy of recognition.

The exhibit is funded, in part, by a special grant from the Racine Arts Council. More information can be found on the Center's website at: www.lgbtsewisc.org.

MADISON GAY HOCKEY RECRUITING NEW MEMBERS

Madison - Recruiting for the Madison Gay Hockey Association (MGHA) recruiting has begun. The league is currently accepting new player interest forms for the 2009-2010 hockey season. MGHA will officially kickoff the season with a skills clinic designed for new players on Sunday, September 13. The first official game night will be Sunday, October 18.

The Madison Gay Hockey Association is an adult developmental ice hockey league for members of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning and Allied (LGBTQA) community. MGHA provides opportunities to learn and teach ice hockey in a safe, supportive and fun environment. The Association aspires to the highest standards of sportsmanship and promote integration within the LGBTQA and wider Madison Communities.

For more information about the MGHA, visit the association's website at: www.madisongayhockey.org

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Sunday August 16
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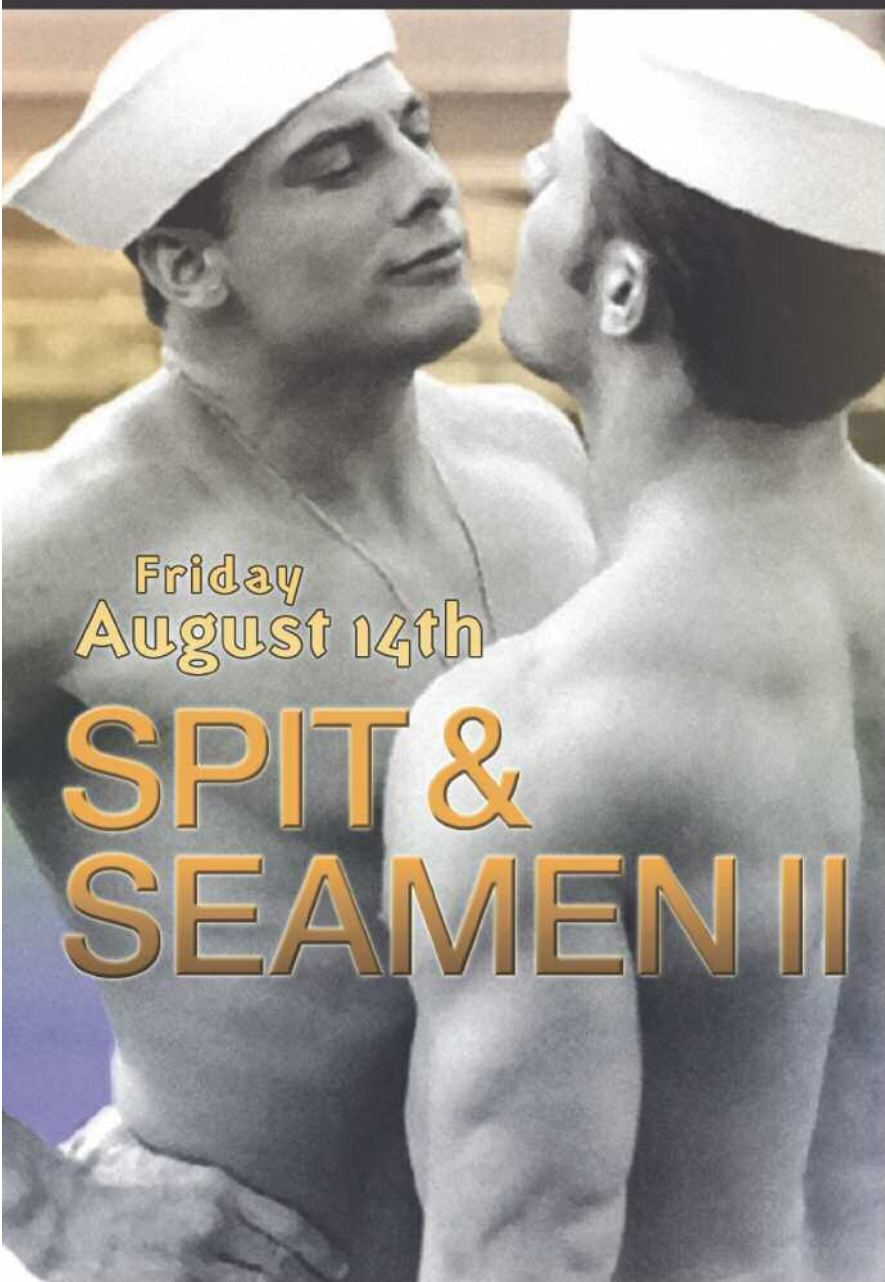
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The Dating Diet by Anthony Paull Two Of Farts

Dad thinks it's ok if he farts in my face, because he's recovering from heart surgery, and that's just part of my new full-time job as his personal assistant. You see, it's not *him* doing it; it's the medication. It depletes him of the keen ability to hold his butt-cheeks together long enough to make it to the bathroom.

"Who ever knew your ass was so loose?" I play with him, rather than argue about the despicable matter for the third time today. Mind you, this I how I grant myself a breather, a short reprieve where I can relax long enough to laugh. Lately, it seems, we haven't been doing enough of that. Not since dad made it through his quintuple bypass surgery. Five days ago, my brother had phoned me from the ER to relay the information that my father had suffered a heart-attack. Now, we're all back at the house, where I'm woken up daily by the piercing rattle of a cowbell, meaning dad either has to pee or down a pill. It's all quite fun, honestly. That is, if you can ignore dad's irritability due to being void of a smoke. And did I mention his incessant jabs about gay men?

"What do you mean you want me to suck on this? I'm not gay. That's your department," he tells me, as I hand him a small tube that's supposed to prevent him from catching pneumonia after the surgery. Sucking and blowing on it is said to stir the fluid in his lungs. "Dad please...pretend it's a cigarette," I reply. Mind you, it's 7 a.m., and my patience is Lindsay Lohan-thin. "Fine," he grunts, before attempting the feat, which he can't seem to do. Of course, he wants me to show him, and oh how he gets a kick out of telling me that I could suck the sand out of a tornado.

"Oh, you know me. That's why I was soooooo popular in college," I smile, returning the jab, ever so gently. "Best blow-jobs in the tri-state area." "It's a shame," dad huffs to himself. "How did you get like that?"

Good question, I ask myself, while handing him his colorful assortment of meds. Homosexuality: that gift was bestowed upon me at birth. But where did I obtain this nutty personality that lacks a stop-switch when it pertains to making the most inappropriate comments at the inappropriate time?

Picture the intensive care unit. Overhead, white fluorescent lighting blinds dad as a fiery fleet of female nurses hover over him to make sure he's comfortable. Resting in bed, he has more tubes in him than Keanu Reeves in *The Matrix*, and each time a nurse is naïve enough to get close, he whispers, sounding oh, so Long Island, "C'mere, give me a kiss." Disturbed, the nurses look to me for assistance.

"Oh, don't mind him," I assure them. "In his condition, he can't even get his dick hard." Then crickets, followed by a moment of my awkward laughter, as I wave good-bye to the nurse exiting the room.

Dear God, why do I say these things? Why does life suddenly feel like a bad reality TV show, sans the camera, wherever I go? I'm trying to figure out where it all went foggy, but I'm too busy waving away the gas fumes permeating the house, where dad has decided it's ok to fart, particularly when I'm standing behind him. "Anthony, I don't care anymore. I'm tired of keeping up appearances," he tells me. Then he lets another rip, before voicing an utterly pathetic, "Sorry."

"My God! Will you stop? I don't want to smell

your ass!" I scream.

That's when I realize: I've become my dad. Aiding in his recovery process, I've morphed into the potty-mouthed parent who ridicules him for inappropriate behavior, even when I act no better myself. How did this happen? One day, is it inevitable for all of us to become our parents and then poorly parent them just as they have parented us? Is it merely karma's way of granting us a chance to return the favor of mashing our brains since birth? Daily, dad and I go back and forth, tirelessly arguing about gay this, straight that, firing off rounds of ammunition in regard to who's right. I swear; the profanity could decimate the Vatican. Still, I've come to realize, I wouldn't want it any other way.

It's odd; most of us spend a lifetime battling loved

ones before we realize that without love, there is no battle, and without battle there is no love.

It took dad nearly dying for me to figure it out. So for me, it's ok to fight; it means we may not always agree, but at least we care enough to say it. Still, if only dad had another way of showing he cares so much. "The meds...they're constipating me," he moans, as I help him into bed. "It hurts. You don't know the pain." A moment later, he recants the statement. "Well, you like it in the butt, so you probably do."

"No one said love comes easy," I reply, kissing his bald head. Reaching for his cow bell, he taps it to ensure it's by his side. It's hard for him to sleep, because he feels that if he stops breathing, no one will remember him. No one will care.

"I care, papa," I offer. And for once, he doesn't argue the point. Instead, he closes his eyes, farts, and loves me enough to fight about it the next morning.



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ASK THE IRREVERENT UNCLE BARBIE Your Intellectual Whore

(An effervescently gay advice columnist)

Disclaimer: Although the author of this syndicated column holds a doctorate in clinical psychology, the tongue-in-cheek advice given is for entertainment only and is not a substitute for therapy. Barbie responds to all emails...whether you deserve it or not. Send your questions to Uncle Barbie at: askunclebarbie@aol.com

What Devil?

Dear Uncle Barbie,

All my life I have been told that sinful thoughts and actions came from the Devil. Later, as a teenager, a Catholic priest told me that homosexual desires were from the Devil. Anything I did wrong was because the Devil made me do it. Now that I am an adult, I still have these beliefs sometimes, but not all of the time. It's just that every once in a while I get the feeling that the Devil has caused a lot of the problems in my life. For example, I have had trouble at work because I sneak food from the kitchen when I am not supposed to. I also feel the temptation to lie a lot, even when I do not have to. I just do. Anyway, I am sure that I am a good person, so it MUST be the Devil who is tempting me. What do you think? Well, this question is getting rather long, and I think I made my point, so I will just end this email and send it to you, now.

Signed, Time Warrior

Hello Time Warrior,

Did you give that nickname to yourself? You said that you are an adult, but your nickname seems more appropriate for a child. As I read your question, the thought struck me that you are trying to avoid responsibility for your own behavior by putting the blame on this character you call the Devil. Again, this gives evidence of your lack of emotional maturation. Let me be blunt about this; the only devils are the ones of your own creation. It is clear to me that you do not want to face your own dark side, so you choose to believe in some kind of evil creature that makes you do things that are viewed as "bad." No doubt, your parents and religious leaders reinforce this belief system within your mind. It is time to face the fact that your gay feelings are stemming from you. I hate to be the one to tell you this, but your gay desires are a reflection of you, not the Devil.

The more you believe in the Devil the more power you give to him or her (on a side

note, isn't it interesting that most people think of the Devil as a male figure? Hmmm.) Personally, I believe the entity called Satan is a creature of energy, which is continually fed by your energy and kept alive by the ongoing beliefs of fearful people like yourself. This type of creature is a phenomenon known as an elemental, an energy source sustained by the thoughts of humans. The dictionary defines an elemental as, "That of which something exists." This can be something positive, negative, or neutral. The Devil is an example of a negative elemental. So stop feeding him or her your energy and own your own shadow.

I think that Satan, and other demonic creatures, were created in history by the need to externalize the human dark-side or shadow-self. People sometimes want someone or something to place blame upon for all the destructive events that are otherwise unexplainable (like natural disasters). Of course, those same people would never consider the possibility that God caused the destruction. Consequently, the Devil became a convenient scapegoat. (By the way, this is precisely what you are doing when you blame the Devil for your unethical behavior at work and your compulsive lying.) You also have what we call in psychology a "blind spot." Meaning that you are unaware of the fact that you refuse to look at your shadow self,



Exercise your intellect.

and instead excuse the negative behaviors that are incongruent with your idealized self. It is obvious why people do this, because the incongruent behaviors create a feeling of anxiety, which people attempt to escape by externalizing the anxiety-producing behavior onto something outside of themselves. This type of blind spot is evident in your question by the way you stated, "Anyway, I am sure that I am a good person, so it MUST be the Devil who is tempting me."

So how did all of these misunderstandings come about? Over time, as societies in numerous countries became increasingly religious, the churches became more and more politically powerful. Consequently, a polarizing effect occurred in people's thinking. Things were viewed in extremes, like good or bad, Heaven or Hell, of God or of the Devil, one or the other. It was believed that everything had to have an opposite ("black or white thinking"). In order for one thing to be holy, something else had to be unholy. All things deemed "good" were thought of as being from

God. Anything deemed as "bad" was thought of as "evil" and the direct result of the Devil. The unfortunate outcome of this type of dual thinking is that belief in a purely divine God creates devils as opposites. Worse yet, some members of fundamentalist religious groups make the mistaken assumption that homosexual behavior is a sin, so people who are gay and lesbian must be evil as well. Tragically, when fundamentalists demonize gay people, it justifies (to them) their acts of discrimination, mistreatment, and hatred against us.

So how does all of this affect you? Since demons dwell in the collective unconsciousness of humanity (which knows no time barriers), the shared historical beliefs of humanity become our common human experiences. And so, the past becomes the present, and the Devil walks beside us in our shadow, day after day. Satan was conceived out of human fears and exists only in the minds of those who choose to believe in him or her. (This response has become more intense that I had originally thought, so I would like to end on a positive note.) You can remedy this dysfunctional belief system by changing your thoughts and attitude. Acknowledge the old beliefs for what they are--historical myths that thrive on our society's collective belief in them. If you want your demons dead, stop believing in them, and for goodness' sake, take responsibility for your own behaviors.

Happy Transformation, Barbie

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DIVERSION OF THE DAY Community Events Calendar

Friday, August 14

LaCage (Milwaukee) Madonna's Birthday Bash special themed show! 10pm

Napalese (Green Bay) Argonauts Club Night 9pm

Saturday, August 15

ICON (Kenosha) Miss WI USofA Benefit Show

Mitowne Spa (Milwaukee) Porn Star meet-n-greet Flavamen 5pm-8pm & again at bar close. Midtowne celebrates 10 Years!

Saturday, August 15 & Sunday August 16
Wisconsin Capitol Pride, Madison (See ad this issue)

Sunday, August 16

Fluid (Milwaukee) Bingo 4 pm

Monday August 17

Outwards Book Club (Milw) (Please note date change!) 7pm A discussion of James Bennett's *Unrequited*, a poignant novel about love and revenge. Come meet the group.

Friday, August 21- Sunday August 23
Argonaut & Castaway's Joint Run at the Farm in Hilbert

Friday, August 21

LaCage (Milwaukee) Traffic Light Party 10pm Wear Green if single, Yellow if undecided and red if taken but still want to party!

Metropolitan Community Church (1239 W Mineral St. Milw) Movie Night showing *Ratatouille* at 7pm fmi call 414-383-1100

Saturday, August 22

ICON (Kenosha) ICON All Make Revue

Sunday, August 23

LaCage (Milwaukee) Miss Club Wisconsin 9pm

Wednesday, August 26

Ballgame (Milwaukee) Hawaiian Nights. wear a Hawaii shirt and get 2-4-1 cocktails all day & night.

Thursday, August 27

LaCage (Milwaukee) Local Softball World Series kickoff party 7pm special show@ 8:30pm with Velveeta and Dear Ruthie.

Saturday, August 29

Fluid (Milwaukee) Back in Black, Blacklight Party 10pm

ICON (Kenosha) Ronnie Nyles performs live.

Sunday, August 30

Fluid (Milwaukee) Bingo 5 pm

LaCage (Milwaukee) Softball World Series kickoff party 8pm
Transformations show@ 9pm dancing follows

Boot Camp (Milwaukee) Annual White Party to benefit the G/L Community Trust Fund 3-9pm DONATIONS GLADLY ACCEPTED!!! Hors d'oeuvres and complimentary wine served.

Monday, August 31

NAGAAAFest Opening Ceremony (See ad this issue)

Tuesday, September 1

Fluid (Milwaukee) Post Office Party

Friday, September 4

NAGAAAFest Street Bash (See ad this issue)

Jack (Milwaukee) Switch @ Jack presents hot male dancers
also on Saturday night - both nights 10pm

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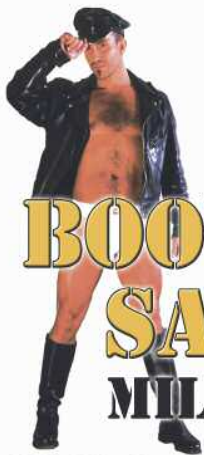
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New on STAGE by Glenn Bishop

"Phantom of the Opera" by Andrew Lloyd Webber et al

Having just overcome his faintly irrational albeit rather intoxicating dread of "Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street" (please see Quest Vol. 16, Issue 12), Glenn can now quite comfortably embrace the musical canon of Stephen Sondheim in its entirety, even that woeful, sure-to-be perpetually unfinished, "Gold/Bounce/Road Show."

What then about that other master of the musical, Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber?

The much heralded return of "Phantom of the Opera" to the Marcus Center's cavernous Uihlein Hall will likely prove the musical highlight for many this summer. Glenn, too, proved quite keen to catch "Phantom" this go around, thanks largely to two fascinating news articles he recently received from a loyal Quest reader.

In the first, Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber revealed that not only was Michael Jackson a huge fan of both "Cats" and "Phantom," but that Michael expressed the wish to play the Phantom in a possible movie version.

Pause for a moment as Glenn muses on the thorny subject of differentiating between Michael's signature soprano and that of any Christine cast to play opposite his Phantom during their various duets.

The second article offered confirmation to the rumor of a sequel to "Phantom." Watch out world; get ready for "Phantom 2." Or as it is destined to be called: "Phantom: Love Never Dies," which will hit both London's West End and Broadway in 2010. This "Phantom" is to be set in Coney Island, New York.

Quite simply, Glenn can't wait! Sadly, as yet, there's no word as to a Milwaukee premiere.

In the meanwhile, Milwaukeeans have the entire month of August to luxuriate in a true Broadway legend, one which boasts opulent costumes, spectacular sets as well as Webber's lush, if often rather repetitive operative score.

As is so often the case in classic literature ("The Phantom of the Opera" is by 19th Century French novelist Gaston Leroux) "Phantom" boasts a simple yet extraordinarily compelling love triangle. The Phantom (Tim Martin Gleason) is a facially disfigured genius, one who lives in the bowels of the Paris Opera House. There he spies the beautiful Christine (Trista Moldovan), a young girl in the chorus who has long awaited the "angel of music" her beloved father promised would come. The Phantom sings to her, soon molding her talent. Could this mysterious, masked figure be her "Angel of Music?" He, of course, falls truly, madly, deeply in love with her.

The proverbial fly in this oh-so Gallic ointment is the handsome Raoul, Vicomte de Chagny (Sean MacLaughlin). Once in love with Christine, his love for her is renewed afresh upon hearing her triumphant performance at the Opera's gala.

Who will Christine choose?

As a veteran audience member for Broad-

way-inspired touring shows, Glenn is delighted to report that Milwaukee audiences are in for sumptuous treat, for this "Phantom" matches a dazzling production with a company possessing the necessary vocal chops to do justice to Webber's famed (not to mention often rather repetitive) operative score.

Oops, Glenn has already mentioned Webber's often rather repetitive operative score, hasn't he? Twice?

The longest running Raoul on record, Tim Martin Gleason's Phantom effectively captures all the pain behind the mask. Opposite him, Trista Moldovan's Christine is lovely as the young girl first in awe of her "Angel of music," only to

forget him in the heartbeat it takes for Raoul to profess his love for her.

Still, Glenn was not nearly as swept away with the central love story as his romantic soul demanded. Perhaps this was due in part to the incessant chatter of various audience members too ill-bred to be properly shushed.

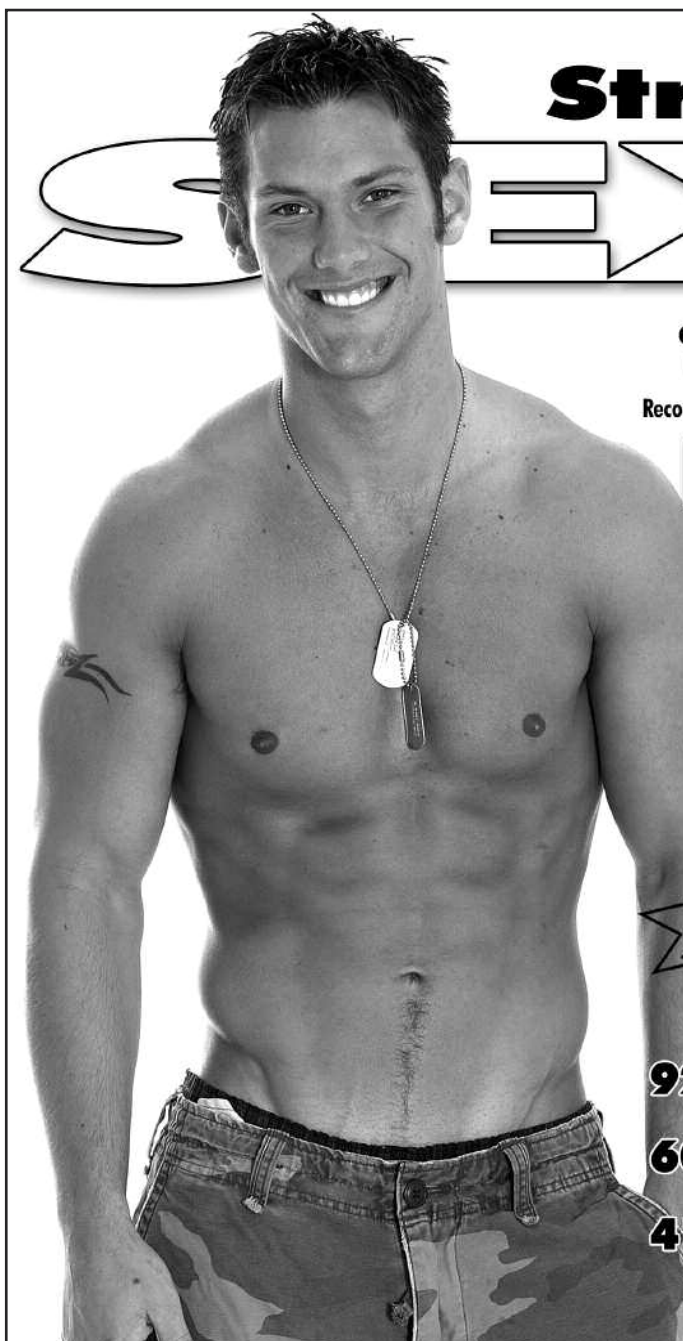
Glenn, too, thought the company rather less sharp than expected. The delightful operatic parodies fell a bit flat; the marvelous second act "Masquerade" seemingly unrehearsed. The bizarrely surreal amplification of the Phantom's voice around Uihlein Hall is surely meant to represent how fully the Phantom inhabits the Paris Opera but felt merely mechanical and ultimately rather distancing. And, much like his

cinematic counterpart, Sean MacLaughlin's Raoul is suitably handsome, sings delightfully and is singularly lacking in dash, weakening the love triangle more than he should.

If Glenn had these few reservations about this "Phantom," they were evidently not shared by the sell-out house which surrounded him last on Friday night. Rarely has Glenn experienced such an extraordinary outpouring of love?

"Phan-tom!" "Phan-tom!" "Phan-tom!" "Phan-tom!"

"Phantom of the Opera" continues until Sunday, August 30 at the Marcus Center for the Performing Arts 929 N. Water Street, Milwaukee, WI 53202 (414) 273-7121



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Boom (& The ROOM) 625 S. 2nd St
(414)277-5040

Boot Camp 209 E National
(414)643-6900

City Lights Chill 111 W. Howard Ave
(414)481-1441

JACK (New bar w/dancing for Men & Women)
200 E. Washington (414)389-3596

ETC (Basement level of LaCage)
801S 2nd, (414)383-8330

Fluid 819 South 2nd (414)643-5843

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

KRUZ 354 E. National (414)272-KRUZ

LaCage Video Dancebar
801S 2nd, (414)383-8330

M's 1101 S. 2nd St. (414)383-8900

Midtowne Spa (*this is not a bar*)
315 S Water (414)278-8989

Mona's 1407 S. First St (414)643-0377

Nut Hut 1500 W Scott (414)647-2673

PUMP @ Decibel (Sundays only)
1905 E North Ave 414-272-3337

PURR Nite club 3945 N. 35TH
(off 35th & Capitol Dr.) Milwaukee

This Is It 418 E. Wells Street
(414)278-9192

Triangle 135 E National,
(414)383-9412

Two (Milwaukee's Make-Out Bar)
718 E. Burleigh St.

Walker's Pint 818 S 2nd St
(414)643-7468

Wherehouse (Fridays only)
818 S. Water St. 414-383-7593

Woody's 1579 S 2nd (414) 672-0806



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DIAMOND DIVAS

www.series2009.org

Niki Haris
The Voice Behind Madonna



**Larry Edwards
as Tina Turner**



Martha Wash



**NAGAAAFest
Opening
Ceremonies**
Monday, August 31, 2009

Legendary Diva
Thelma Houston



Location: Miller Lite
Oasis Stage at the
Summerfest Grounds

Start Time: 5:30pm

A very special performance
by the Grammy Legend
performing her #1 Dance/Pop
hit "Don't Leave Me This Way"

Open to the public! Admission \$10

Reserve your ticket by going onto www.series2009.org and pay through Paypal.

Beer and food will be served throughout the night on the grounds. Come down and see the awesome "pomp and circumstance" of the NAGAAA Opening Ceremonies including the Parade of Cities, NAGAAA's Rich World Series history put to music, NAGAAAFest's mascots, Ruthie & Velveta and the DIAMOND DIVAS, featuring the legendary Thelma Houston. Then to top it off, what would a festival be in Milwaukee without our own great NAGAAAFest Fireworks Display!

All of this for \$10 per ticket! Come be a part of history as we introduce Milwaukee and the NAGAAA Cities to the 33rd annual GSWS and NAGAAAFEST!