

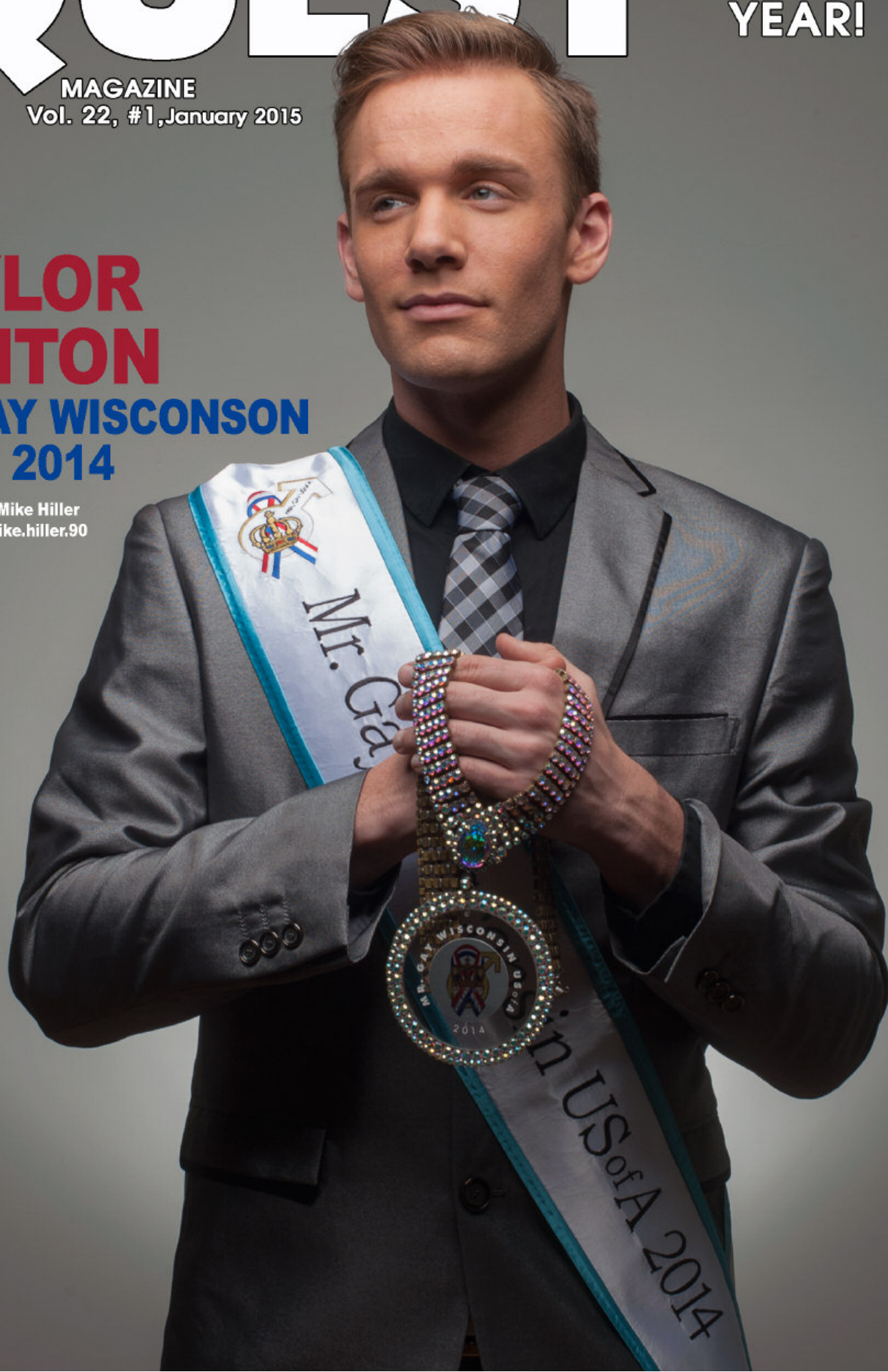
QUEST

MAGAZINE
Vol. 22, #1, January 2015

OUR
22ND
YEAR!

TAYLOR ASHTON MR GAY WISCONSON USoFA 2014

Photography by Mike Hiller
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Taylor Ashton is the current Mr. Gay Wisconsin USofA representing our state at the national competition. He was photographed for Quest Magazine by Mike Hiller.





TRIXIE, TRIXIE, TRIXIE

by Paul Masterson

In case you live under a rock, or under a bridge, as the case may be, you might not know Wisconsin's new international TV celebrity, Trixie Mattel. Based on the name, you may have gathered Trixie isn't a Green Bay Packer, although she may at times wear similarly form fitting tights and shoulder pads. Trixie is a drag star and now one of a select cast of queens on the upcoming 7th season of *RuPaul's Drag Race* on LOGO TV.

Trixie, aka Brian Firkus, hails from a small town up north (really up north). Making his way to Milwaukee, he graduated UWM in Theater Arts. A singer/songwriter and professional make-up artist, he began his drag career performing during midnight screenings of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*. From there, Firkus developed his drag persona, Trixie Mattel. A new generation drag queen, Trixie explores glamorous boy/girl gender ambiguity rather than traditional torch song female impersonation. With her unique style, ambition, and pure, unadulterated talent her career instantly took on an instant upward trajectory. Soon Trixie was the toast of the Midwest's drag circuit, playing the club scene from Madison and Milwaukee to Chicago. His unblended brand of drag became a cause.

Then the rumors started. It seems in the drag-blogsphere, the sudden social media absence of a high profile drag queen like Trixie can mean only one thing (aside from her demise). And that one thing is every drag queen's dream: a place on *RuPaul's Drag Race*. Trixie's absence was duly noted and the speculation began. But Trixie remained mum. That only fueled the fire of the ever churning rumor mill. Queens in the know were under a gag-order (the other kind of gag-order...the hush-hush kind) Then, appropriately enough, on Sunday, December 7th, Pearl Harbor Day, *RuPaul's Drag Race* announced the cast for its 7th season. Some hopes were indeed torpedoed. But Trixie made the cut. For Trixie, it was a day which will live in Fame.

Now for those unfamiliar, *RuPaul's Drag Race* is like Monday night football for gays. It's the cultural phenomenon of drag taken from its gritty roots and raised to high entertainment. The format is like any other reality show. A season's cast is selected from thousands of video auditions. Mercifully, unlike *American Idol*, we don't get to see the fails. And, instead of being dropped on a desert island with a bag of rice and a silly headband (although that could be a fun drag challenge), the cast is flown to Los Angeles. Like the other reality shows, the contestants face challenges to push the limits of their talents. But, unlike those single skill competitions like singing or cooking, *Drag Race* demands much, much more. Drag, as an art, combines multiple disciplines – make-up artist, costume designer, actor, singer, dancer, comic writer, stand-up comedian, and fashion model. That range is put to the test with the varied challenges the contestants must face. It could be a high fashion photo shoot in a dunk tank or producing a video spot pitching RuPaul's make-up line. A panel of professional judges critiques each. Failure to perform to perfection results in elimination. Of course, in case of tie losers, there's a fall back to the classic drag "Lip-synch for your Life" challenge.

For Trixie Mattel and her competition, there's a lot at stake. Just being a contestant brings national recognition. There's the big cash prize for the winner, of course. Beyond that, winning practically guarantees fame and fortune with all the trimmings from product endorsements to film roles.

Trixie has the talent, the poise and the personality to be the next Drag Super Star. Con-Drag-ulations and Best of Luck, Trixie!



Photo of Trixie from PrideFest 2014 taken by Paul Masterson



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THE OBLIGATORY LOOK BACK AT 2014

by Paul Masterson

Happy New Year! A bit belatedly, but I hope the new year, 2015, brings you, yours and the LGBT community all the happiness and success of the last.

2014 was indeed a rainbow banner year. Despite the polar vortex and all the drudgery of a typical Wisconsin winter, spring sprang with inklings of an impending Federal court decision on marriage equality. Then, late one Friday afternoon in June, just an hour before PrideFest's opening ceremony, the news broke: Wisconsin's state constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage was struck down! As it happened, the American Civil Liberties Union's director, Chris Ahmuty, was on the dais for PrideFest's opening ceremony to accept the PrideFest Medal. The ACLU received the award for its support of the LGBT community and, especially, for its work in the pursuit of marriage equality. Within a week, 500 hundred LGBT couples tied the knot. Then, our Governor Walker objected and the State Attorney General van Hollen appealed. Not only did it stop future marriages but it also put those that had already happened in a legal limbo. Another Federal court decision in favor

was also appealed. Finally, in October, the Supreme Court decided it wouldn't hear the appeal. Wisconsin finally had achieved marriage equality and the wedding bells rang again, this time for sure. By then, in anticipation, QUEST had already published its special wedding edition. Then, a month after the SCOTUS decision, the Wisconsin LGBT Chamber of Commerce held the state's first LGBT Wedding Expo. The Milwaukee event showcased over 50 wedding industry vendors.

There were other major moments in 2014. Milwaukee PrideFest enjoyed a record breaking attendance of over 31,000 visitors. It also became a 503(c)3 charitable organization and expanded its board to include three new members. Among them is the first trans-woman to sit on its board, Jessica Baker.

Several Wisconsin volunteer organizations made local and national headlines in 2014. The North American Gay Amateur Athletes Alliance (NAGAAA) elevated Brian Reinkober, Saturday Softball Beer League commissioner, into its prestigious Hall of Fame. In July, the Milwaukee's Black and White Men Together affiliate hosted that organiza-

tion's national convention. A dozen BWMT chapters convened here to hold seminars and enjoy the city's LGBT hospitality.

The LGBT Film/Video Festival returned to its traditional 11 consecutive day format, running eleven consecutive days. SAGE, Seniors in a Gay Environment, became a program of the LGBT Community Center. It also hired a new director, Scott Miller. Under its new president Bim Florek, GAMMA, Milwaukee's oldest LGBT social and recreational organization, expanded its programming and raised membership by a third, from 100 to over 135.

2014 was also a landmark anniversary year for many of the region's LGBT organizations. Brady Street East STD Clinic (BestD) and the Green Bay based Argonauts Motorcycle Club each celebrated 40th year anniversaries. FORGE, a Milwaukee based organization that advocates and educates for transgender rights, marked its 20th anniversary.

Trixie Mattel, of course, made Wisconsin history as the Dairy State's first cast member on RuPaul's Drag Race.

It was a very good year indeed.

Little Red Ribbons

by Robbie Sims

The Christmas decorations in the bar are always a well-kept secret. Each year on the day after Thanksgiving, the "regulars" rush to Rascals in Appleton to see what Todd has come up with this year. There is no point in trying to guess the theme for the year because the decorations have included everything from decorated wreaths, flocked branches with black lights creating a feeling of a winter evening, to a mannequin who's dress was decorated like a Christmas tree – and she even spun around on the stage.

One thing that isn't a well-kept secret at Rascals is the small Christmas tree that can be found standing next to the cash register at Rascals each year during the weeks leading up to Christmas. The tree is decorated with little red ribbons and brings Christmas joy to as many as 50 children each year thanks to the patrons of the bar.

Todd West, owner of Rascals in Appleton, started

the "Little Rascals Gift Project" in 2001 in association with the Appleton and Green Bay offices of the AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin (ARCW). Each year, Todd receives a list of names of children that are in some way affected by HIV or AIDS from ARCW. Every year, the "Little Rascals Gift Project" helps to ensure families who are under the financial burden of the costs of medication and treatment for HIV or AIDS are still able to provide Christmas gifts for their families – with a little help from the community. "It took a little organizing in the beginning," said Todd, "but now it has just become part of my Christmas routine each year." Patrick Krol, who has worked at Rascals since the project started, has noticed that it's become part of the customer's Christmas routine as well. "Each year, there are many of the same names on the list, but there are always a few new names there, too. It nice to see so many customers get involved," Patrick said.

Due to patient confidentiality requirements, ARCW is only able to provide the first names of

the children that are in need. Each red ribbon on the small Christmas tree at Rascals has the first name, age and gender of the child in which you are purchasing a gift for. You are asked to purchase gifts with a minimum value of \$25, wrap the gift and attach the red ribbon with the child's information to the gift. "I ask that the gifts be returned to the bar early so I can get them to ARCW in Green Bay early enough so each case worker can get them to the family before Christmas," Todd said. "This way, the family can choose to use the 'Little Rascal' gifts as a Santa gift for young kids if they want to."

With all the hustle and bustle of the holiday season, it's sometime easy to forget those that are under the tremendous stress of trying to stay healthy and provide a joyful time for their family. The "Little Rascal Gift Project" had another successful year in 2014! It is one way that Rascals in Appleton, with the help of their customers, is doing their part to help make Christmas a happy time for everyone in our community.

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Fluid, Mon. 5th, 9:30-11:30

Woodys, Thurs. 8th, 9-11

Kruz, Fri. 16th 7-9

Harbor Room, Fri. 16th 10-12

LaCage, Wed. 21st, 10-1ish

Club Icon, 23rd, 9:30-12:30 (Kenosha)

On Second Thought...

Opinion by Paul Masterson

Remember last November's election? Perhaps you voted. Lots of LGBT people didn't. Well, lots of Democrats didn't so I can't be too hard on our community for its lack of civic engagement. Still, for all the talk of the Democratic loss of the Senate that put Congress in Republican control, there was some good news locally. It seems there are two new gay members of the Wisconsin State Assembly. It makes a total of four. That sounds like a step in the right direction, doesn't it?

One is 45th district Democrat Spreitzer. He is an outspoken advocate of LGBT rights. The other is Todd Novak, a Republican of the 51st. Former mayor of Dodgeville, a town of less than 5,000 in Iowa County, Novak is a proud father of two and lives with his partner of 17 years. They are neither legal domestic partners nor, at this point, married. In fact, Novak, voiced his opposition to the Federal court's intervention that gave Wisconsin marriage equality. You see, Novak is a good conservative and a firm believer in states' rights. In other words, he is willing to sacrifice his own inalienable rights, those of his partner, and yours, in deference to Wisconsin's right to discriminate. I don't know where

he stands on desegregation or woman's suffrage but presumably he'd oppose them unless the individual state approved. Anyway, FAIR Wisconsin, our LGBT political advocacy group, endorsed both. Apart from his being gay, I'm not sure why it favored Novak. Being gay is nice, of course, but, based on his own statements, sexual orientation had nothing to do with his candidacy. It was all about the Republican mantra of lower taxes, jobs, and education. That's great but why would a gay politician not stand for LGBT rights? Maybe it's because he knows that his Republican base wouldn't stand for it. So why should we?

Meanwhile, Wisconsinites sent another Republican to Washington, Glenn Grothman of West Bend. Now, whereas Novak is a low-key homosexual, Grothman is a high profile homophobe. It does say something about the Grand Old Party's diversity. Aside from hating gays, Grothman isn't particularly fond of women (single moms in particular), blacks (especially the ones who celebrate Kwanzaa), or other minorities, or even weekends off from work. He's actually already in the running for "dumbest" Republican on various online watch

lists. Chalk it up to Wisconsin voters' collective sense of humor or their sheer ignorance.

Speaking of voter ignorance, last, but certainly not least, Scott Walker is still our governor. As you'll recall, after fighting tooth and nail against marriage equality, he said his opinion on the subject didn't matter anyway. There's nothing like leadership, is there? Wait a minute; he later backpedaled, restating his support for "traditional" one man – one woman pairings. And gay Republicans love this guy.

And speaking of gays, social media is a wonderful outlet for our astute LGBT political acumen, isn't it? Aside from "I didn't vote" boasts, it's not uncommon to see the gays venting and ranting against immigration, the Affordable Care Act, and even Cuba. I recently saw an "I hate Obama" tantrum posted by some disgruntled gay. Yeah, too bad for you. Let's see, under Obama the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) was scrapped, the military's "Don't Ask Don't Tell" policy was rescinded, and 35 states now offer marriage equality. Tens of millions of dollars have gone to LGBT causes through Federal grants. I guess having a president recognize Stonewall and the LGBT struggle for equality in his inaugural address wasn't enough either. Well, at least we can legitimately complain about the price of a gallon of milk. It's twice the cost of gas... *and we live in a state full of cows!* Thanks, Obama!

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Four, count 'em, four of Milwaukee's leading male actors take on the roles of four females desperate for stardom! Mark Hagen, Jeremy C. Welter, Patrick McCann and J.F. Prisz will camp their way into your heart. And they are supported by some very talented real females like Jacqueline Roush, Alejandra Gonzales, Kristin Pagenkopf, and others. The males in the cast are no slouches either. Donald Lobacz, Robb Preston, the limber-limbed Max Williamson, Lawrence Lukasavage, and James Feeley turn in stunning performances, some that need to be seen to be believed.

A variety of roles are played by Sandy Lewis, Barbara Weber, Heidi Woelck, Mark Ninneman, and the versatile Paul Pfannenstiel.

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Before screening Mischa Kamp's **Boys**, Glenn challenged members of the monthly cinema circle (and knitting bee) to list their favorite coming out films. Certain films, **Beautiful Thing**, **Latter Days**, and **Edge of Seventeen**, would find their way to many of the lists, Glenn felt sure. Might people remember such extraordinary films as André Téchiné's enchanting **Wild Reeds**, Marco Kreuzpaintner's **Summer Storm**, and Eytan Fox's deeply poignant **Yossi & Jagger**?

As it turns out, the film dominating discussion proved to be Ang Lee's **Brokeback Mountain**, a film curiously back in the news thanks to Annie Proulx extraordinary claim: "I wish I'd never written the story. It's just been the cause of hassle and problems and irritation since the film came out."

"Shameless hussy," Glenn giving voice to what many surely thought!

The potent influence of Proulx's original short story and subsequent Best Picture Oscar-nominated Ang Lee film can be seen in several recent film releases, none more so perhaps than Stephan Lacant's **Free Fall (Freier Fall)** which has been touted as "Germany's answer to **Brokeback Mountain**."

If such a claim can be made of **Free Fall**, then, too, Tomasz Woszczyński's somber, sexually explicit **Floating Skyscrapers** might well be touted as "Poland's answer to **Brokeback Mountain**." And indeed, a similar claim might well be made of Antonio Hens' Cuba-set **The Last Match**.

Fortunately, no such claim can be made of Mischa Kamp's **Boys**, an evocative made-for-TV movie from the Netherlands.

Sieger (Gijs Blom), a young runner, is at the center of the narrative. As the film opens, Sieger and his best mate Stef (Stijn Taverne) have just recorded the fastest two sprint times and are duly promoted to the track team's relay squad, a distinct honor. Almost immediately Stef's confidence swells, giving him the courage to chat up a couple of girls. A bemused Sieger remains in the background, bashful and looking none too comfortable with the proceedings.

One begins to sense that Sieger actually prefers to remain on the outside. This is especially true with regard to his tumultuous home life where Sieger often finds himself in the role of buffer between his rebellious older brother Eddy

NEW ON DVD BOYS (Jongens)

By Glenn Bishop



(Jonas Smulders) and his often exasperated father. One the one hand, older brother Eddy expects Sieger to keep his many secrets. On the other, Sieger feels duty bound to placate his father. In this role, Sieger plans a Father's Day surprise. Yet, even as turbulent as is the relationship between Eddy and his father, their relationship nevertheless is one which leaves Sieger, another in a long and illustrious line of "best little boys in the world" still on the outside looking in.

The promotion to the relay team brings about changes in Sieger's life. Sieger can, for example, see how proud his father is of his accomplishment.

More importantly, Sieger now finds that he's spending more time with another runner, Marc (Ko Zandvliet). Marc is something of a free spirit and unlike Sieger, Marc is completely comfortable with his sexuality. Unwilling to play it safe, Marc is crazy enough to ride his bike right into the local swimming hole, fully clothed. Later, after their teammates head off for home, Marc convinces Sieger to stay longer. The two lads spend the rest of the afternoon frolicking in the water and out; they even share their first kiss. It is difficult to imagine a more idyllic afternoon, at least until Sieger hisses, "I'm not gay."

And from this moment, Sieger finds himself increasingly drawn in opposite directions.

Over the years, it is easy to imagine, Sieger and Stef riding their bikes across the gorgeous countryside, not a care in the world. Only now, spending time with Stef actually means spending time with Jessica (Lotte

Buy it, Rent it, or forget it...

Set within the cozy confines of the liberal Netherlands, it is to be expected that **Boys** lacks the onerous homophobia one encounters in the previously noted **Free Fall** and **The Last Match**. Similarly, **Boys** manages to avoid the dreaded **ABC Afterschool Special** earnestness which plague so many American offerings. The disappointing cinematic adaptation of Brent Hartinger's **Geography Club**, comes quickly to mind.

Belying its humble made-for-TV origins, **Boys** boasts striking visuals from cinematographer Melle van Essen, which lends the narrative a timeless quality even as the obligatory racing sequences are given an appealing dramatic flair.

Best of all are the performances of Gijs Blom (Sieger) and Ko Zandvliet (Marc). The growing relationship between Sieger, who has long settled for what was safe, and Marc, a little older and more confident thanks to his supportive family, is beautifully crafted and proving to be immediately compelling; the chemistry between the two young actors undeniable.

Reminiscent of **Beautiful Thing** and **Summer Storm**, director Mischa Kamp's **Boys** proves a gentle story of first love, one which went down rather well with Glenn's cinematic circle. Glenn offers **Boys** an enthusiastic thumbs-up.

Just the facts...

Boys (Jongens) clocks in at a swift 78 minutes and is in Dutch with English subtitles

Boys (Jongens) will be available on DVD on February 3rd, SRP: \$24.95 A Wolfe Video release **Boys** offers no noteworthy DVD extras. If you're lucky enough to get the British DVD, look for the excellent short, **Even Cowboys Get to Cry** which features Ko Zandvliet (Marc) and Jonas Smulders (Eddy).

Razoux Schultz), Stef's girlfriend Kim's best mate.

Yet during his illicit trysts with Marc, Sieger is changed and definitely for the better, able to finally let down his guard. Yet these encounters with Marc leave Sieger feeling at best confused and at worst, guilty.

After an especially awkward scene at a local carnival where both Jessica and Marc vie for Sieger's attentions, Sieger knows he will have to choose, a resolution needing to come sooner rather than later what with the big race coming up.



BOUND MAGAZINE

Volume 14 #11 January 2015



Erv Uecker and Ross Walker Get Married



Send us photos from your wedding to share with our readers.

Out and about with KV.
Upper Left: at KRUZ with Mr. Harbor Room, Alex
Below L to R: On Santa's lap at Harbor Room,
This Is It! Xmas Party with George & Jerry
and at Club Charlies with Steve Miller.





Cordially Yours

by Michael Johnston

Welcome to 2015, a new column, and a new year – one that I hope brings all you desire. I trust your Holidays were fulfilling and the suggestions that follow will ward off that old “Cabin Fever”. First off, on the topic of welcoming in a New Year – welcome Peter Holbrook as the new Executive Director of The Cream City Foundation.

Dale Gutman's Off The Wall Theatre offers up Jackie Susann's steamy “Valley of the Dolls”. Our very own Brew City (sorry no Valley) Dolls – Dear Ruthie, Jeremy Welter, and Maple Veneer bring these celluloid sensations to life! A life, you'll have to see to believe! As Shaw is quoted as saying “Be careful what you pray for in your youth, you may get it in your middle years!” Come watch our starlets shine in this camp classic of stardom & spoils ...

BMO Harris Bank Broadway at The Marcus Center season continues and ushers in 2015 with “Anything Goes”. Cole Porter's well-regarded classic opus that is timeless. We'll all be docking at Uihlein Hall, all aboard for a voy-

age you'll never forget!

The Northern Lights Theatre of Potawatomi Hotel & Casino has a roster of hot talent to thaw you out with on a cold winter's night: let's twist again with Chubby Checker and The Wildcats, the wit, words and wisdom of Steven Wright will get you thinking... Disco Princess Taylor Dayne closes out the first month of the New Year with the talents of special guest John Waite. No gamble here, for the best in live entertainment, this is a sure bet. To get your tix -- paysbig.com/shows.

The Florentine Opera Company brings the movie classic “Wuthering Heights” to life and song this month. American Opera composer Carlisle Floyd resurrects this masterpiece of literature to the stage Friday, January 9 and Sunday, January 11 The Harris Theatre of the Sharon Lynne Wilson Center for the Arts. An exciting point to share is this production will be recorded for posterity. Georgia Jarman and Kelly Markgraf will bring the classic couple – Catherine and Heathcliff to voice.

Renaissance Theaterworks stages “The Kreutzer Sonata” adapted from Tolstoy's classic novella, a Midwestern premiere by Nancy Harris. A sonata of virtuosic story telling of lust, jealousy, murder and Beethoven, including live music!

Actor, comedian, and humanitarian Chris Tucker will be taking over The Riverside Theater – an evening you won't want to miss!

The Florentine Opera Company offers another opportunity for you to enjoy their joyous sound this month with: an Alumni Recital starring Alison Suzanne Jordheim at The Wayne & Kristine Lueders Florentine Opera Center 930 East Burleigh Street.

Next Act Theatre – provoking you for 25 years continues their mission and starting the year with “No Child” by Nilaja Sun. A tale of a teacher who challenges her class to become actors and produce a play, the students suffer push backs and bullying from their peers, but it doesn't stop the unwavering belief that the arts can enrich lives and trump all adversaries.

Howie Mandel closes the merry month of January The Riverside Theater – proving to America he does have talent ...

This Month's Bucket List

below please find a quick calendar of January's offerings you can clip and carry to keep in touch

Valley of the Dolls

Jan 1,2,3,4,7,8,9,10,11
Off The Wall Theatre
127 East Wells Street
414-484-8874

Liberace starring Jack Forbes Wilson
Now through Sun, Jan 11
The Milwaukee Rep 414-224-9490

Anything Goes Jan 6 -11
Marcus Center for the Performing Arts
414-273-2787/MarcusCenter.org

Chubby Checker & The Wildcats
Fri, Jan 9
Northern Lights/Potawatomi
paysbig.com/shows

Wuthering Heights/The Florentine Opera Co Jan 9 & 11
Harris Theatre of the Sharon Lynne Wilson Center

Steven Wright Thurs, Jan 15
Northern Lights/Potawatomi
paysbig.com/shows

Taylor Dayne & John Waite
Fri, Jan 23
Northern Lights/Potawatomi
continues next page

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The Kreutzer Sonata Fri, Jan 23 – Sun, Feb 15
Renaissance Theaterworks 414-291-7800

Chris Tucker Fri, Jan 23
The Riverside Theater 414-286-3663

No Child Thurs, Jan 29 – Sun, Feb 22
Next Act Theatre 414-278-7780

Alumni Recital Fri, Jan 30 & Sat Jan 31
Alison Suzanne Jordheim Florentine Opera Center
-800-32-OPERA

Howie Mandel Sat, Jan 31
The Riverside Theater 414-286-3663

Christmas came early for Wisconsin's favorite doll – Trixie Mattel! I'm sure you all remember the cover story "Quest" did last year on our favorite Diva. Trixie is heading west as one of 14 contestants coveting the brass ring on LOGO TV's "RuPaul's Drag Race". The show is in their seventh season, this is Wisconsin's turn to shine! Trixie has what it takes and can be the Terry Anne Meeuwssen (Wisconsin's Miss America, 1973) of the new century! Trixie is young, fresh, and unique. She stands center stage proudly. I was fortunate enough to meet Trixie at Timothy Westbrook's Fall Fashion Show at the Charles Allis Art Museum. Stardom awaits you my dear, show the world what you've been sharing with us and victory will be yours!

Jay Schmidt (of Jay Schmidt Realty Group) & Blake McKinney launched the holiday season for me with a grand soiree for all to be spoiled and enjoy! They get bonus points for their creativity too! I loved walking the red carpet and having a photographer snap us upon our arrival! I wasn't worthy an invitation myself; I tagged along with my "Office Wife" Mary H. Nelson, but with such gregarious hosts – I felt the party was held in my honor. I think every Real Estate tycoon was in attendance, except for Donald Trump and to quote Martha Stewart "that was a good thing!" Jay & Blake's mansion-ette was dressed to the nines as were their guests and what a time! Another nice touch, in lieu of the traditional "Host Gift" they suggested food for the Hunger Task Force, when you're endowed, it's so kind to share. So thrilled they shared with me!

The following weekend Brian Reinkober & Michael Ulatowski rolled out the red carpet of holiday celebration as they opened their splendid doors to a fun group of revelers. Picture downtown Milwaukee, a high rise, floor to ceiling windows and looking out into the night – the city lights dressed for the holidays, the lake, the flawless Eric bartending – recently wed and admitting to his birthday – you can catch him in the Ward at Club Charlies – he's also a dandy dancer! Brian and Michael continuously providing a delicious, unending buffet of delicacies, and the people all festive, all gay – in the traditional sense, lost in the sentiment and in the pure fun of the season – Stuey & Muhammad, Allen Finefield, Janet, Craig, Mona Garcia, David Jach, Jay & Blake, Tom Morden & Nick Tice, Dan Riedl & Rick Stabler, Don & John from Art Bar, Club Charlies First Couple Craig & Dawn, Peter Nyes, Eric Peterson, and that was just one corner! What a great gift to provide, such a fun time. I have a fun time every time I get to work with Brian at Club Charlies with Sunday Fun

Day Show tunes, now that the football season is winding down, please watch for a more regular schedule for us at Club Charlies what a time we have with all of You!

Not to be left out Dr. Beto & D.J. Tim had their well-appointed penthouse rocking with seasonal merriment and offered up a splendid soiree! Greg Ross & Roy, Cris Ross Dukler, Cory Haywood & Jim Ollrogge, She-Devil AKA Dan whom I've known since his stint at The Triangle, Jerry Gin&Tonic tending bar and to everyone's needs, Stan Rittleman, Marvin & Brandon, Kevin Rude & Mark Krueger, Roger RamJet, Craig currently of Angelo's fame, Jeff Massey, Hal and many more the fortunate recipients of sensational Saturday.

In my acknowledgments of gratitude – I must thank all of you (over 25 – yes I counted) who popped in at BLU at The Pfister Hotel to help Jay Reinke and me as we "BLU-tended" for the United Way of Greater Milwaukee. Over \$260 was raised – due to your generosity! And guess what? They want us back! I guess adding a little lavender to any room, BLU or otherwise always enhances...

The Red Star Cocktail Club – high above The Trocadero celebrated the Holiday Season with new owners! Not to fear the party continues and will continue to grow! What a fun Holiday Party that included Mrs. Claus and her favorite elf, Lance, bartending. A glittery Revue starring Goldie Adams, Maple Veneer and her co-stars from "Valley of the Dolls" Neely O'Hara and Jennifer North – promoting their current sizzling theater offering at Off The Wall Theatre and Karen Valentine served as FemCee.



In the crowd munching on muscle men gingerbread cookies were: Joe Pabst, Jack H. Smith, Dale Gutzman, Nick Tice, Joe Kender, Mark Norman, Jerry & Jim, KC Rae, Janet Gurwitz, Dawn & Cathy, Mary H. Nelson, Dan Taylor, Cole & Abby, Tall Keith & Todd, Jim, Mark Christopher, Lance Kleebea & Tim Stephens, Ron, Always Happy Hour's Brian & Andy, Bart Smith, Scott, Brian Roenkoeber & Michael Ulatowski, Stuey & Mohammed, Allan Finefield & Jeff, Lowell, Zach and so many other smiling faces.

ARCW put lots of smiles on lots of faces as they held their uber-popular winter gala – Jolly, Holly, Folly. This year we all gathered once again at The Bradley Pavilion for a selection of edible wonder-

ments from local restaurants, of course many cups of good cheer than off to "The Nutcracker"! And trust me it is true everything is beautiful at the ballet! I haven't seen this ballet in over 45 years and I felt the magic, the fantasy, the escape – once again of my childhood. We are so fortunate to have a first rate ballet and the vision and taste of Michael Pink. Please put "The Nutcracker" on your calendar for 2015 we all need the escape! And speaking of balls, and having a ball at balls – The Red Star's First Anniversary Party was quite the to-do! So happy over 230 partiers came out to play! A.J. Dubbz from Chicago made for a great D.J. and spun us all into another world – by his looks and music. Dylan Flynn our photographer captured the night in pictures, the beautiful flowers from Grande Flowers and designed by Kurt AKA KC Ray, Lance, Alyssa, Danny, Olianna, Chad, and John – all did their magic behind the bar and throughout. Jeremy & Paige got engaged, what a great way to break in the next year! The Red Headed Chef Tiffany kept me company and got me home safely. Thanks – it's hard to find a carriage made from a pumpkin ALA Cinderella at 2:30 a.m.! In my haste, in my last effort – I gave too many digits to Tiffany's phone it is: 414-502-5320 if you are having an affair this is the lady to provide the buffet for you to carry on!

Jack Forbes Wilson captures "Liberace" and breathes freshness, life, humor, pathos, and well-round-ness into the famed Mr. Show Man. I had a grand time of it taking it in with all my Thespian friends of the Off The Wall Theatre.

On the topic of a good times – I always love touring the bars this time of year and taking in their seasonal décor. Roger RamJet one of my BFFs captured our tour in film and through this effort, please enjoy my "Rainbow Tour" of some of our favorite "Drink-er-ees" dressed for the season.

So long sadly to Charlie Morreale! Charlie has taken a new position in Texas and with the New Year, comes a new job and a new city. While your current city mourns your departure, we seek comfort in knowing you leave us custody of Todd, so I know you'll be returning – frequently!

Food time – I was devastated when Brocach Irish Pub 1850 North Water Street went out of business this fall. I had noticed that things were not up to par – but things happen... then it was closed. This eatery is in my neighborhood and tasty, affordable and convenient. Well fear not – the bistro has reemerged as The Red Lion Pub. It went from Irish to English – and a pub, is a pub, is a pub – to paraphrase Alice B. Toklas' wife Gertrude Stein. An array of savory pies – Shepherd, Chicken, Pot Roast, Fish & Chips (2-4-1 on Mondays) and many other tasty selections await you and will let you feel as though you are in little old London town! Josh our server was remarkable, and won me over as we were seated, with his brilliant British accent and clipped tones. Give it try – you won't be disappointed!

I started this effort with welcome to the New Year 2015 and now I must close; how fast the time flies! Remember, it's the glamour, not the grammar as I remain still Cordially Yours,.

Welcome to Ruthie's Bitchin' Kitchen



HAPPY NEW YEAR! I never get tired of saying that! I mean, c'mon... "happy," "new" and "year" sounds pretty damn good to me. So let's make a great, healthy, successful and delicious 2015, my little Ruthie Rooters.

Speaking of a great New Year, mine was kicked off with the opening of the comedy "Valley of the Dolls," featuring me, Jeremy Welter and Maple Veneer. So many friendly faces came to the performances on New Year's Eve, and I can't thank you all enough! If you'd like to check out this hilarious parody about stardom, drugs and dames, visit www.OffTheWallTheatre.com and get your tickets to this crazy show.

Speaking of crazy, delicious and new things, let's hop in the Bitchin' Kitchen for a bite to eat! Check out these super easy, super tasty and super comforting recipes just perfect for Wisconsin's chilly weather. See you next month, but until then, eat good and shut up!

BACON-STUFFED CINNAMON ROLLS

Yes—you read that correctly. Bacon...stuffed...cinnamon rolls. Holly balls! If you've never baked anything before, this is a great place to start. Two ingredients, a sweet-savory combo and bacon! These are ideal for lazy Sunday mornings, brunch donations or treating last-night's trick! Did I mention....BACON?!

5 bacon strips

1 (17.5 ounce) tube Jumbo Cinnamon Rolls with Icing

Prepare bacon strips according to package directions just until cooked. Drain on paper towels. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Remove packaged icing and set aside. Slice cinnamon roll dough into five rolls (if not already pre-sliced). Carefully unroll a cinnamon roll and top with a slice of bacon. Re-roll. Repeat with remaining cinnamon rolls and bacon. Set rolls on a

baking sheet spritzed with cooking spray or covered with parchment paper. Bake at 350 degrees for 18 to 20 minutes. Drizzle with icing. Refrigerate leftovers.

Ruthie's Culinary Clues

Be sure to purchase the cinnamon rolls that come in a tube, and not those that come frozen in a pan. You can try preparing this recipe without cooking the bacon first. Just be sure the bacon is sliced thin and is cooked through via the oven before serving the rolls. These cinnamon treats are actually better the next day. Simply reheat in the microwave for a minute or two.

SLOW-COOKED CHEESY NOODLES

A stick-to-your-ribs combo of mac 'n cheese and buttered noodles this easy slow-cooker sensation is sure to become your new favorite. This recipe serves a lot, so it's perfect for trailer-park potlucks, redneck weddings and trashy barbecues, but it's also a great way to warm up during a chilly night at home.

1 (16 ounce) box of elbow pasta

4 eggs

1-1/2 cups heavy whipping cream

1 (12 ounce) can evaporated milk

1/2 cup butter, melted

Dash hot sauce, if desired

1-1/2 teaspoons salt

1/2 teaspoon pepper

4 cups shredded cheddar cheese

Heat up the Night

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Prepare pasta per package directions; drain. Lightly beat the eggs in a very large bowl. Stir in the cream, evaporated milk, butter, hot sauce if desired, salt and pepper. Stir in 3 cups cheese and cooked pasta.

Spritz a 6-quart slow cooker with nonstick cooking spray. Add pasta mixture. Top with remaining 1 cup cheese. Cover and cook on high for 3 hours. Switch to low and cook an additional hour. Refrigerate leftovers.

Ruthie's Culinary Clues

This dish has a browned, chewy crust around the edges and a soft buttery center. Yum! There are 4 cups of shredded cheese in this sucker! Feel free to mix things up and use a few different varieties if you'd like. Toss in a handful of cooked and cubed ham, chicken or turkey for a heartier dish.

PULL-APART PIZZA LOAF

This appetizer comes from Jeff and Tony of Jackson, and it friggin' rocks! Featuring lots of melted cheese, pepperoni and a golden crust, it comes together in minutes. Jeff and Tony bake the cheesy bread in a bundt pan for easy flair but you could bake it in a 13x9-inch baking dish, too. What a great party pleaser! Thanks for sharing the recipe guys.

2 (16 ounce) cans of Jumbo Buttermilk Biscuits

1 (5 ounce) package sliced pepperoni

1/3 cup olive oil

1/2 cup chopped green pepper

2 cups shredded Mozzarella cheese

1/2 teaspoon garlic powder

2 tablespoons Italian seasoning

1 cup shredded Parmesan cheese

Pizza or spaghetti sauce

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Separate biscuits and cut into quarters. Cut the pepperoni slices into halves. In a large bowl, combine the biscuits, pepperoni and oil. Stir in green pepper, Mozzarella cheese, garlic powder, Italian seasoning and Parmesan cheese. Set mixture into a bundt pan, fluted tube pan or 13x9-inch baking dish heavily coated with nonstick cooking spray.

Bake at 350 degrees for 35 minutes or until the top is golden brown. If baking in a bundt pan or tube pan, invert warm loaf onto a serving plate. Serve warm with sauce for dipping. Refrigerate leftovers.

Ruthie's Culinary Clues

This loaf is best served straight from the oven. If baking in a bundt/tube pan, you may need to run a butter knife around the edge of the pan to loosen the loaf a bit. You can use grated Parmesan cheese with great results, but the final loaf may not be quite as cheesy. Don't like green peppers? Leave 'em out? Like sliced black olives or chopped onion on your pizza? Add them to the recipe. This makes a wonderful appetizer, but you can serve it alongside salad and/or soup for a kick-ass meal.

Can't get enough of the Bitchin' Kitchen? Check out the Web series, "Ruthie's Bitchin' Kitchen" at www.RuthiesBitchinKitchen.com and "like" the Facebook page of the same name. Send YOUR recipes to Ruthie and get a free T-shirt. Submit your best dish to DearMsRuthie @Yahoo.com today!



Catch Mark Hagen starring in Valley of the Dolls

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Photo courtesy of Peggy Helack. Dogs adopted 2013. Readopted 2015.

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editor@quest-online.com www.quest-online.com

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Well we are back; I hope that you all remember New Year's Eve! But of course then again I am talking about my readers so I really can't hope for much. There is one thing I could do though! Knowing what kind of people who read this and actually think I know what I am talking about I can say this. Rather than hope you remember what happened new year's eve, I just hope you remembered to grab all of your clothes before you left whoever's house it was you went home with on new year's day. And of course I hope you at the very least kept it wrapped up, and for those women out there I hope you either protected that cucumber or at least threw it away. Lord knows I refuse to eat a salad made by any of my friends!

Well I think I have bored you enough this month lets get on with it. Last month I was talking with a friend and he wanted to know why people get pierced. So I figured any idea was a good idea for this column so I ran with it, so here we go.

People get pierced for tons of different reasons! Some people like them just for the look of

it, wanting to separate themselves from the rest of our modern world. They just want to stand out, so they die their hair and get pierced so all the little ladies at Pick'n Save freak out as soon as they walk into the dairy section.

Yet other people get pierced because of the social groups that they hang around with. For instance in the Leather/Kink community it has always been expected of the bottoms to get their nipples and genitalia pierced. (Gee, no wonder I like the leather community!)

Some of the people who get pierced do it for a deeper and more sentimental or emotional reason. Therefore are some people who obtain piercings and tattoos do so mainly because they feel some sort of a connection to the roots of tattooing and piercing. These people will usually get tribal piercings and/or tattoos, and usually there will be a deep spiritual meaning for these people with regard to their piercings and tattoos.

So in conclusion it really does depend on each individual person to find out the reason people get pierced or tattooed. So in my opinion if you want to know why people do it, then ask them!

Don't sit there and assume that you can figure it out, because odds are that you will never hit upon the right reason. And you will end up buying a drink some night at a bar for someone you didn't even know existed until the exact moment you walked into the door! (Sorry, had a little flash back there, I'll try to keep them under control for you in the future!)

Well now that I have answered that let us see what we have in the old email bag shall we?

Brent,

I was talking with a friend of mine the other day, and he asked me about my nipple piercings. He asked if they hurt and all the normal questions but then he said something I had never heard of. He told me that nipple piercings reject out of the body in 5 years and they leave you with a split nipple. I have had my piercings for 4 years now tell me that he is wrong! —Becky

Well Becky, first off thanks for writing in. And secondly, your friend is full of horse shit. Piercings do not just reject at a certain time frame. Most piercings migrate out due to people not taking care of them properly. Any form of irritation, such as sleeping on them without the piercing being protected or playing with them can cause the body to give up on healing them and then it just pushes the piercing straight out the human body. So in a nut shell you have nothing to worry about in the coming year, provided you don't irritate your piercing.

Well it seems I have run out of space all over again so until next time have a great January and I will talk to you all again in February, the month of love! Well kind of the month for love. Either way you have to spend money on crap & we will talk about the best thing to buy your special someone. . . PIERCINGS!

Do you have questions? Do you want a piercing? You know you do! Email Brent at avantgarde@voyager.net.

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Jeff's Birthday Show at SHELTER
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