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Vol. 22, #4, April 2015

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Ready for One More Trip to Oz?

Interview with Ryan Jay on the Making of the documentary "The Sound of Oz"

by Michael Johnston

Ryan Jay (Today's TMJ4 Film Critic and Fashion Police in Us Weekly magazine) has an exciting new project he and Aaron Harburg want to bring to fruition - "The Sound of Oz" - a documentary about the songs of America's favorite movie "The Wizard of Oz."

Even though "The Wizard of Oz" opened in 1939, the same year as another celluloid epic, "Gone With the Wind," both are memorable and a part of American fiber; but which one has a better soundtrack? Exactly!

Can you imagine our world without Judy Garland's anthem "Over the Rainbow?" And that is just one of the chestnuts in this treasure trove from the American Songbook. Composer Harold Arlen and lyricist Yip Harburg brought these songs to life and to our lips. Now it's time for us all to learn the backstory of how America's #1 Film Song of All Time (as deemed by the American Film Institute) and the #1 Song of the Twentieth Century (by The National Endowment for the Arts and the Recording Industry Association of America) came to be!

This is a call to action - You can be a part of this

dream-come-true project by investing in the making of "The Sound of Oz." Please share and visit the "The Sound of Oz" trailer, to consider supporting on any level: www.thesoundofozmovie.com

Consider a gift and help make this return visit to Oz a reality! Please read the interview below with the film's director, Ryan Jay - then visit the website and see what's on the other side of the rainbow.

Ryan everyone loves "The Wizard of Oz." We were raised on it. A great slice of Americana - what does "The Wizard of Oz" mean to you? It's my favorite movie of all time and as a professional film critic, I hope that speaks volumes of my taste in film. It's as close to perfect as any movie can be. I've loved it as long as I can remember and it has always been my gold standard in entertainment. To me, it means happiness, fantasy and hope.

What is your favorite tune from "The Wizard of Oz" and why?

I really love all of the songs in the film for different reasons but my very favorite, as with most peo-



Ryan Jay (left) and Aaron Harburg (right) with Stephen Schwartz, the writer/composer of Broadway's **WICKED**

ple, is "Over the Rainbow." I love the original version performed by Garland in the film, but also love the countless covers by other artists over the decades. It's beautiful, powerful and moving.

How did you meet Aaron Harburg (the great-grandson of lyricist Yip Harburg - who wrote the words to all of the songs in "The Wizard of Oz")?

We met in 2014 at Oz-Stravaganza, the largest, annual Wizard of Oz festival in America. I was presenting my red carpet interviews with Lea Michele and the cast of the animated musical movie "Legends of Oz: Dorothy's Return" and Aaron was presenting on behalf of his great-grandfather's legacy. We became friends instantly and when he told me about the documentary he was developing, it clicked. I have a background in TV production for companies like Bravo, Showtime, Nickelodeon and MTV. Our skills blend well with our love for Oz and we make a great team.

Do you have a theory of why "The Wizard of Oz" is still alive and well and living with us to this very day?

"The Wizard of Oz" crosses all generations and cultures. Its story, themes and songs are universal. Time is powerless to diminish its entertainment value and emotional impact. I've mentioned I consider it to be perfect and that's on every level - from casting to design to effects to story arc. We often see technological improvement in the film industry with 3D, effects, etc... but to look back at "Oz" as a single film from 1939 whose makeup, costumes, effects and story still hold up against modern movies, is quite phenomenal.

It took a lot of work to get this classic filmed in the first place. A lot of actors originally slated to star in this opus like Shirley Temple, Buddy Ebsen and Gale Sondergaard were all replaced or unavailable for various reasons. Somehow serendipity took over and an entirely new vision was completed. Would you care to comment on the casting struggles of "Oz" and it's evolution from the children's book to the movie to the inspiration of other offshoots such as "The Wiz" and "Wicked"?

Adaptation from page to screen is always tricky and more often than not, audiences agree that "the book is better than the movie." I'd argue the opposite for "The Wizard of Oz." I love the original book by L. Frank Baum, but the MGM film improves upon the source material. The songs, for one, are such a brilliant hook. But Dorothy's journey in the film is more transformative to her character than is the case with her in the book. The film sees her learn a lesson and grow. The friends she meets and the adventure she embarks upon changes her "for the better" (a theme echoed in the lyric to the song "For Good" in the Broadway smash "Wicked"). The story can be reimagined, as has been the case with "The Wiz," "Wicked," Sy Fy's "Tin Man," etc... but still, the classic Judy Garland film remains most popular. The casting troubles were epic and almost a metaphor we often use in life - "everything happens for a reason." If even one cast member were different, "Oz" might



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not have become the special entity it is.

Is it true "The Wizard of Oz" was too long a movie in length and there were many edits including the Oscar winning theme song "Over the Rainbow" to save time"? But by popular demand Garland's signature song was returned to the film.

There were cuts to the final film including reprises of "Over the Rainbow" by Judy in the witch's tower and the Winkie guards singing "Ding-Dong! The Witch is Dead" after the melting. Another musical number was filmed and cut called "The Jitterbug." It was a dance number by the foursome while en route to the witch's castle, but was eliminated for time and because the filmmakers worried its sound would date the picture. The score is uniformly timeless while "The Jitterbug" had a rhythm popular among dance songs of the '30s. The Scarecrow had a wonderful dance sequence during "If I Only Had a Brain" which was cut for time, but can be seen on current home video releases as a special feature. And it's true, "Over the Rainbow" was cut and reinserted into the film a few times prior to release for various reasons - runtime and the questionable notion of an MGM starlet singing in a barnyard among them.

What is the timeline for "The Sound of Oz"? When do you think this project will be released?

We have an approximate 18 month production calendar. The start time depends upon when we're funded and able to begin. As for release date, we have to complete the film before we can look into that.

Of all the characters in "The Wizard of Oz" -- which one do you most identify with and why?

Ultimately we all identify with Dorothy because she experiences self-discovery on her journey. And there are times we all yearn for more color or excitement in our lives. But then we often get homesick too. The Scare-

crow, however, has always been my favorite character because I wanted to be him. And brains turn me on.

You've reached out to a brilliant man, the Wizard, if you will, behind "Wicked" - composer Stephen Schwartz - and have earned his support, how did this take place, any other celebrities or people of note behind your project?

Having the opportunity to interview Stephen Schwartz for "The Sound of Oz" was both an honor and a dream come true. I've seen "Wicked" 42 times and am obsessed with it. I love his work and the influence of "The Wizard of Oz" upon "Wicked" is undeniable. For one, it is a sort of prequel and reimagining. But Stephen further illustrates in our film how he strategically hid melodic fragments from "The Wizard of Oz" within his score for "Wicked." That synergy delights me to no end. As far as I'm concerned, including him in "The Sound of Oz" was vital. He admits to being a big fan of Arlen and Harburg and was very gracious to discuss that on camera. Aaron and I have amassed what I hope is an impressive list of celebrities who will appear in our film, from pop music to film to Broadway.

What has been the hardest part of getting "The Sound of Oz" up and off the ground - giving it legs? Defying gravity if you will, pun intended...

Scheduling is always a challenge. Aaron and I both work full time in addition to producing "The Sound of Oz." It's a total passion project and ultimately it comes down to the difference between talking about doing something versus actually doing it. We committed to doing it.

There are many, many layers to "The Wizard of Oz" and other classics such as this - a children's story, a movie, a musical, animated feature - many incarnations - do you have a personal favorite?
It always comes back to "Oz" for me. But I do enjoy fairy

tales and fantasy... and I'm a big kid at heart. Some of my other favorite fantasy films are "Stardust," the "Harry Potter" series, "Moulin Rouge," and "Into the Woods."

Following up on the multi layers of Oz - there is a decidedly Gay bent to this classic. Do you see and feel it as well? Would you like to address this for our Audience?

I don't see "Oz" as inherently gay as much as I see the gay community proudly claiming it. That makes more sense to me. In all reality, many communities claim it - cultures, races, religions, sexualities... all can find universality within the themes of "Oz" and Dorothy's journey. Over time, however, the rainbow flag and Friend of Dorothy term have certainly caught on. Ultimately, I'm all for anything that keeps the spirit of "Oz" alive.

What is on your back burner, the next project you are formulating?

I love my career and hope to continue celebrating film, entertainment and pop culture as long as I'm living. I have a lot on my plate now so it's difficult to project too far forward - but Aaron and I have discussed collaborating on other films in the future.

Do you have a message, an invitation you would like to extend to our Readers on this project?

"The Sound of Oz" is a group effort. We're offering many perks and exclusive collectibles when you join our team. Please check us out on IndieGoGo and see which reward interests you - from copies of the film, to artwork and T-Shirts - we're humbled by any support - even simply sharing our project on social media is invaluable and appreciated. Thank you for this opportunity!

Thank you Ryan Jay, we look forward to following you and Aaron as you continue your trek on the yellow brick road to your rainbow!



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Amy Basting, Recruitment Specialist, Children's Hospital of Wisconsin Community Services talks about becoming a Foster Parent. Photo by Caitlin Staedler Photography cstaedlerphotography@gmail.com

"Questions are welcome during the meeting. Please save the questions that are more personal in nature until the end and we can talk privately afterwards."

That night, many people who attended the information meeting lingered at the end, waiting a turn to ask questions about their circumstances. Most people want to make sure, when they apply to be foster or adoptive parents, that their home situation is acceptable.

As the crowd cleared, two women waited patiently. One was hesitant as she spoke, looking concerned.

"Is it ok for us to be licensed?" I paused, not sure of what she meant. "... together. Can we be..." Her sentence was not finished and the specific concern, not clarified. The implication was clear.

There are plenty of questions to ask when you

are considering applying to be a licensed foster or adoptive parent. I expect people to stay after the information meeting; to talk about their personal matters. I am asked all types of questions. Can I be licensed if I had a criminal conviction? What if my husband doesn't want to be a foster parent but I do? Can I give my bedroom to a foster child and sleep on the living room couch? Am I too old to be a foster parent?

I can't speak for all foster care and adoption licensing agencies in Wisconsin, but I can speak for the organization for which I work. We welcome lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender applicants. Yes! It's okay to apply to be foster or adoptive parents. In case you are opening a Google tab, that's Children's Hospital of Wisconsin Community Services. Oh wait, let me make that easier for you.

www.chw.org/childrens-and-the-community/

coming meetings.

During the month of May, we celebrate National Foster Care Month. We thank, commemorate and recognize all the foster parents and professionals dedicated to changing the lives of foster children for the better. Children's Hospital of Wisconsin Community Services is busy planning the annual celebration for our licensed foster parents. To learn more, visit <https://www.childwelfare.gov/fostercaremonth/>

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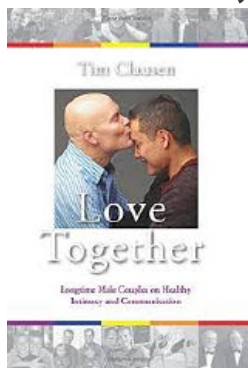
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TIM CLAUSEN TO APPEAR AT OUTWORDS BOOKS SATURDAY, APRIL 25TH



Outwords Books will host a reading and signing for Tim Clausen's "Love Together." This unique look into the lives of longtime gay couples and how they keep their relationships healthy will begin at 4:00pm on Sat., April 25.

Longtime couples share candidly in "Love Together" how they navigate issues of monogamy, intimacy, communication, money, spirituality, and parenting. The first military couple in America to wed, a practicing Buddhist couple who recently celebrated their 60th anniversary, a Canadian couple who produce a line of gay erotic comics, a Christian pop-singing duo who became parents through surrogacy are just a few of the longtime couples interviewed. With hundreds of years of collective experience, these couples share their life wisdom and offer practical advice for singles who want to find a lasting love relationship.

Tim Clausen is a self-taught jazz pianist and jazz historian. In 1995 he founded and facilitated the Milwaukee Gay Fathers Group, which ran for ten years and helped launch at least one successful long term relationship. Currently single, Tim lives with his cat Pepper, who thinks that she is his girlfriend and that his interest in men is only a phase.

Tim Clausen will offer a presentation and sign copies of "Love Together" beginning at 4:00pm on Saturday, April 25th, 2015 at Outwords Books.

This is a free event and all are welcome. Please arrive early since seating is limited. Outwords Books is located at 2710 N. Murray Ave. in Milwaukee. For further information, please go to www.outwordsbooks.com or call (414) 963-9089.

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An Interview with PrideFest Board Member Jessica Baker

by Paul Masterson.

Transwoman Jessica Baker recently joined PrideFest's Board of Directors. Her duties include negotiating trans-issues as they relate to PrideFest, and, by extension, to Milwaukee's LGBT community. QUEST spoke with Baker about her personal story and her role on the PrideFest board.

QUEST: Before we begin, can you tell us about yourself?

Jessica Baker: I was raised in South Milwaukee, studied at UW-Whitewater, spent 10 years in the navy, and am now in digital financial services. I started to transition 2003. I realized I couldn't avoid it. At that point I had three kids and an 18 year marriage. But there was no other way to justify being alive. It was either check out or transition. Since then I've been estranged from my kids and have four grand kids I've never seen. Within two months of hormone replacement therapy, it was clear I had to rebuild everything from scratch. But, I kept the same job. I was the first male to female (MTF) at my company. I identify as gender queer but use the feminine pronoun.

QUEST: Some say female to male transgender people have it easier than MTF. Why is that and how is the trans community addressing it?

Jessica Baker: FTMs blend in socially. The basis is facial hair. That's a huge gender marker. People always assume a penis comes with it. Transwomen still struggle to be recognized and included. The trans community isn't addressing it.

QUEST: Why did you join PrideFest's board?

Jessica Baker: I've always had strong feelings of alienation as a transperson at Pride. Even the Health & Wellness area surveys never addressed trans issues. I get "he'd" at every vendor. I felt obligated to help PrideFest be more transgender inclusive. One issue I'm working on directly is the binary bathroom situation.

QUEST: That's about a trans person's ability to use the bathroom of their gender choice. What is the current status nationally?

Jessica Baker: There are bathroom bills pending in states like Florida, Tennessee, and Kentucky. These would make it illegal for a transperson to use the bathroom they feel comfortable in. The bills are driven by people who oppose "men" using women's bathrooms. For the most part transmen blend in. Transwomen don't. If the laws pass, we could be jailed or fined. A pending Texas law even offers a bounty to anyone who turns in trans person.

I worry more so than before when I use a Women's Room. I've had confrontations but nothing that ever turned too ugly. Wisconsin isn't yet there but wherever there are Republican controlled legislatures, it appears to be on their agenda. And there's TERF.

QUEST: What is TERF?

Jessica Baker: TERF stands for Trans-exclusionary Radical Feminists. The key word is "exclusionary". That's a direct affront to the LGBT concept of inclusion. Like Republicans, they don't feel transwomen are women and belong in any



"women only" space including bathrooms. They are a small but loud faction. Their propaganda has filled enough feminists' minds with that opinion. People wouldn't care were it not for them. Our biggest problem is a lack of LGBT and non-LGBT allies. So TERF has been effective. I've argued with exclusionary feminists. There's logic to their position. To them I'm not a woman, but I'm also not a man. I'm "me."

QUEST: How do you as a trans PrideFest board member help effect change?

Jessica Baker: Last year a transperson had a problem in a PrideFest bathroom. I felt it was time to get engaged. I was surprised how little trans awareness there was on the PrideFest board but I'm impressed how engaged and ready its members are to address trans issues. They get it. I know PrideFest can do more to promote the entire trans umbrella and incorporate trans and gender identity issues into its mission. My goal is to raise trans awareness at the festival. Transvestites and drag queens broke ground for us. But there are those like me who are living it. Yet we still don't



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I meet with local trans organizations to better understand their issues. Still, we don't have the numbers to effect the changes we want. Now, more than ever, we need our allies to stand up with us. However, PrideFest cannot control how people treat each other. But PrideFest endeavors to make the party enjoyable for all.

Jessica Baker: PrideFest has had a gender neutral bathroom policy since 1996. That's awesome but it was never really publicized. It was understood. Even so, some under the trans umbrella are uncomfortable with the accommodations. They identify as non-gender conforming and feel "erased" because they have to choose between the Men's or Women's. They want all gender neutral bathrooms. That would be ideal. It's problematic because public bathrooms aren't built that way. We're working on a solution.

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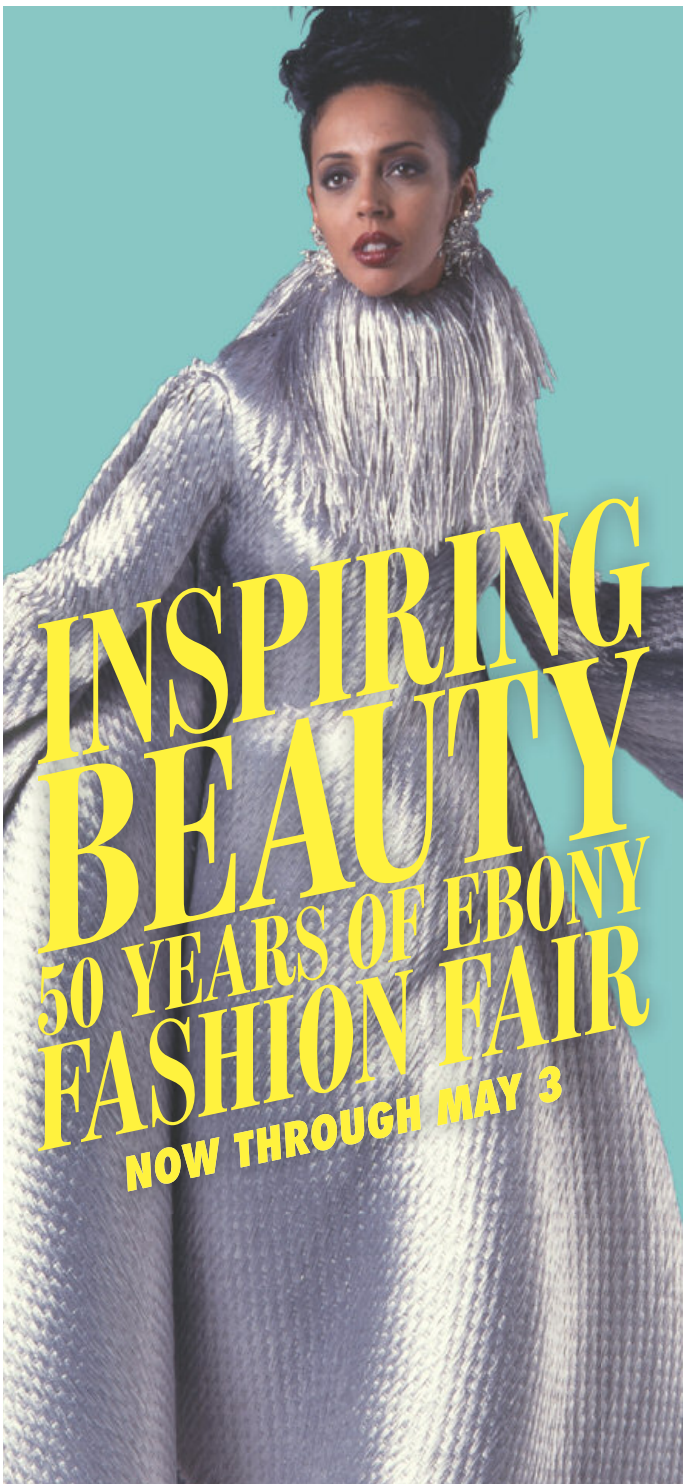
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NEW ON DVD By Glenn Bishop

Land of Storms (Viharsarok)

Gay men and the wonderfully wacky world of sport have long been at odds. So many of Glenn's cinematic circle, gentlemen of a certain age all, dreaded the embarrassment of always being picked last in gym class; to routinely being banished to the nothingness of right field. Often told to play deep, Glenn was occasionally forgotten about; left in right field until the arrival of Glenn's counterpart in the next class turned up. Or sometimes not even until when darkness would finally fall.

Now of course we're seeing professional athletes out and proud and not just from the so-called suspect sports like figure skating and synchronized swim. From would-be NFLer Michael Sam to popular NBA journeyman Jason Collins, gay athletes increasingly are bravely challenging the much heralded masculine mystique of the locker room.

It was surely kismet when last week Glenn received a copy of **Coming Out to Play**, the biography of Robbie Rogers, a dead sexy professional soccer player for the LA Galaxy.

Full confession: Glenn only perused the handful of photographs accompanying Robbie Rogers' life story. Still, Glenn felt confident to suggest Adam Csasz's sexy and violent debut, **Land of Storms** (Viharsarok) for the monthly cinema night.

The film's opening sequence firmly establishes that Szabolcs, nicknamed Szabi (Andras Suto),

is a real boy, a fine athlete never to be banished to the Siberia of right field. If in fact, that is, schoolboys in Hungary even play baseball.

Right from the start, we're told that Hungarian Szabi is the best player on the otherwise German soccer team. Rough and tumble to a fault, Szabi remains unabashed after his enthusiastic play leads to giving his coach a pop in the mouth. In advance of the big match, Szabi joins in with the rest of the team for matching tattoos and a bit of communal masturbation, to het porn, naturally.

Szabi's aggressive play in the big game however proves disastrous. The locker room is fifty shades of somber after the game. The coach even does a 180, "You are a zero, a nothing, a nobody." A sexually-charged altercation in the shower room with his best friend Bernard (Sebastian Urzendowsky) leaves Szabi ready to bail on the beautiful game.

Where Szabi ends up is the tumbledown farmhouse he's inherited from his grandfather and the film becomes something of a "*Little House on the Hungarian Prairie*." Since there's no studly Michael Landon on hand, Szabi decides to make do with a young man called Aron (Adam Varga) who lives nearby. A would-be builder, Aron offers to help Szabi repair the roof, partially perhaps as penance for trying to steal Szabi's scooter.

Shirts are shed under the hot Hungarian sun, as the two lads set to their task, their relationship growing with each and every broken tile they replace. Never mind any bothersome, superfluous dialog that might get in the way of the more tried and true method which here amounts to looks bursting with longing and two pair of nipples so pert and erect they are positively twitching.

Nothing suggests romance to Glenn, after all, as does a drunken nocturnal ride out into the countryside culminating with an evocatively filmed hand job.

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

After the opening credits roll, there is an on-screen statement alerting moviegoers that **Land of Storms** is based on a true story, although the basic narrative is so familiar as to be archetypal. Just within the past year or so, Glenn can think of such films as Malgorzata Szumowska's **In the Name of**, Tomasz Wasilewski's **Floating Skyscrapers** and Stephan Lacant's **Free Fall** which similarly explore the homophobia still prevalent in Eastern Europe, a homophobia deeply rooted in religious intolerance and doubly dangerous thanks to a heady, testosterone-driven violence.

What separates **Land of Storms** from these earlier films is the evocative portrayal of Szabi's journey thanks largely to Iván Szabó's deft, deceptively simple screenplay as well as a powerful yet vulnerable performance from Andras Suto.

When Szabi flees, he flees not only soccer and the machismo of the locker room but a life that has been long dictated by first father and later coach.

Szabi's relationship with Aron proves all the more remarkable by the tenderness of their intimacy, tenderness in stark contrast to the otherwise prevailing undercurrent of violence. True, Szabi experiences a bit of a wobble, heading back home to a father whose affection is laced with violence but Szabi knows his new life is worth fighting for and is soon back home and back to Aron, determined to stay whatever the costs after exposing Aron to hostility.

Land of Storms boasts excellent performances, a fearless portrayal of the homophobia of the rural regions of Hungary as well as the requisite helping of male flesh; only the disturbing final scene proving a serious and deeply disappointing misstep.

Just the facts...

Land of Storms clocks in at 105 minutes and is in Hungarian and German with English subtitles.

Land of Storms is available on DVD with a SRP: \$24.99 DVD features consist of two TLA Releasing trailers



BOUND MAGAZINE

Volume 14 #4 April 2015

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Welcome to Ruthie's Bitchin' Kitchen

Faux leopard fur coat? Check. Powder Puff Girls earmuffs? Check. Neon long johns? Check. No, I'm not appearing in a West Allis fashion show, I'm bundling up to walk to my mailbox. Welcome to spring in Wisconsin! I'm not sure who pissed off Mother Nature, but she needs to snap out of it and send us some warm weather. Oh, well...that old broad isn't going to rain (or snow) on my spring parade. I'm still going to paint the town red and hope you'll join me.

Meet up with me at Art Bar on April 18 for the annual kickoff party for my charity, Ruthie's Kennel Club! We'll enjoy a Saturday Happy Hour (5:00 pm) with free food, drink specials, raffle prizes and more. Help us roll out a new year of helping animals in the Greater Milwaukee area by attending this no-cover event.

Speaking of helping animals, don't miss me at Hybrid Lounge on April 19. Yep! Hybrid has drag shows now. Catch Milwaukee's blond bombshell Nova D'Vine as she rolls out another installment of her "Bubbles and Beauties" monthly soiree and show. This month enjoy the bubbly along with BJ Daniels, Shawna Love and me. The fun starts at 8:00 pm. Swing by and say hello...and buy me champagne.

Until then, let's step into my Bitchin' Kitchen and cook up some Wisconsin comfort food. Macaroni and cheese has been a hot menu item for quite awhile now, and its popularity doesn't show any signs of waning. That said, here are some stick-to-your-ribs recipes that jazz up boxed mac and cheese. So simple. So yummy. So damn good. Cook up one of these finger-licking delights, then eat good and shut up!

RUTHIE'S BITCHIN' CHILI MAC

I love this tasty way to dress up a box of macaroni and cheese. All you need are a few canned goods, an onion and a green pepper. It's easy, fast and comforting!

- 1 (5.5 ounce) box mac & cheese**
- 1/4 cup chopped onion**
- 1/2 cup chopped green pepper**
- 4 tablespoons butter**
- 1 (14 ounce) can chili**
- 1 (12 ounce) can corn, drained**
- 1 (14.5 ounce) can diced tomatoes with green chilies**
- 1/4 cup shredded cheddar cheese**

Boil macaroni in a medium pot over medium-high heat until al dente; drain. Meanwhile, sautee the onion and pepper in butter over medium heat until vegetables are crisp-tender. Stir in chili, corn, tomatoes and content of cheese packet. Simmer for 10 minutes. Stir in cooked macaroni and top with cheddar cheese. Refrigerate leftovers.

Ruthie's Culinary Clues

Like it hot? Add a dash of dried red pepper flakes when stirring in the chili. Not a fan of spicy foods? Replace the tomatoes and green chilies with a can of plain diced tomatoes. Use canned chili with or without beans. It's your call. Serve this stovetop dish with Fritos or tortillas chips. Oh, yes! That's how we get fancy at the trailer park!

PESTO MAC & CHEESE

Jarred pesto sauce is a great touch to mac and cheese in this three-ingredient specialty. Rich and easy (sounds like my cousin Gloria), it's a dish you'll whip up time and again.

- 1 (5.5 ounce) box mac & cheese**
- 1/2 cup heavy whipping cream**
- 1 cup prepared pesto**

Boil macaroni in a medium pot over medium-high heat until al dente; drain. Meanwhile, combine cream and contents of cheese packet in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Bring to a boil; add pesto. Simmer for 5 minutes. Add macaroni and heat through. Refrigerate leftovers.

Ruthie's Culinary Clues

This is a great side dish to serve alongside any entrée, or, add some cooked chopped ham or chicken to make it meal. Round out the pasta with a green salad and breadsticks or garlic bread.

GO-BREWERS MAC & CHEESE

This combination of cheesy pasta and barbecue sauce may sound unique, but you'll friggin' love it! I promise. Applesauce is the secret ingredient that adds just a touch of sweetness to the savory dinner. It's great if you're feeding kids!

- 1 (5.5 ounce) box mac & cheese**
- 1/4 cup milk**
- 4 tablespoons butter**
- 1/2 cup barbecue sauce**
- 2 tablespoons applesauce**
- 1 (10 ounce) can diced tomatoes, drained**
- 4 cooked hot dogs, sliced**

Boil macaroni in a medium pot over medium-high heat until al dente; drain. Return macaroni to pot and stir in milk, butter and contents of cheese packet. Stir until well combined. Combine barbecue sauce and applesauce in a large pot over medium heat. Add tomatoes, hot dogs and macaroni and cheese. Heat through. Refrigerate leftovers.

Ruthie's Culinary Clues

The higher quality the dogs, the better this one-dish meal will be. Look for all-beef franks. I'm partial to Hebrew National Franks – the best hot dog in the universe. If desired, you can stir in a can of chili beans or a little cayenne pepper.

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!



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Cordially Yours

by Michael Johnston

Happy April – it's no joke & I'm not fooling. File your taxes & enjoy the improving weather! Spring has finally sprung and April Fool's Day – be damned we're together once again. An exciting month ahead, please read on ...

To launch this month – Off The Wall Theatre 127 East Wells Street - the home of Wisconsin Artist of the Year – Dale Gutzman offers up "Odyssey" – based on the epic by Homer. This time out Dale and John Angelo prepared their unique view on this work, starring: Claudio Parrone, Jr., Jacqueline Roush, Patrick McCann, Jeremy C. Welter, Max Gutzman and John Angelo (co-producer) 414-484-8874 www.offthewalltheatre.com/ the run begins April 1- 12 All seats: \$25. In this time of "Wounded Warriors" and "Honor Flights" -- this production salutes the heroes among us, living in agony, fighting to get back home. Come share the journey.

Thursday, April 9th BMO Harris Bradley Center hosts the return of "The Solitary Man" who is "Forever in Blue Jeans" Neil Diamond! To be there – please visit bmoharrisbradleycenter.com TicketMaster. So thrilled we have these giants of the musical industry in our midst! Last month The Bradley Center was home to Barry Manilow! His Farewell Tour, at 72, he isn't retiring or not performing -- just no longer extensive

touring. He has played Milwaukee 14 times in 40 years. I had the pleasure of singing back up for Manilow three times, being a part the Cream City Chorus (thanks to The Florentine's and former CCC Director Scott S. Stewart)! Barry was fabulous in spite of a nasty nasal/cold issue that everyone had! His "Fanilows" still loved him and celebrated him and rightfully so. I was a guest of The Cream City Foundation and their new President/CEO Peter Holbrook and his husband noted architect/artist Tom Hoffman, Board President Paul Milakovich and Terri Coughlin. Others enjoying the Man "Who Writes The Songs" were Carlton Stansbury, Esq., Chad Ellingboe, Wes Shaver, Erika & Anne & many more. What fun!

Next Act Theatre (Intimate and Powerful) 255 South Water Street 278-0765 mounts "Ten Questions To Ask Your Biology Teacher About Evolution" by Stephen Massicotti Thursday, April 9th – Sunday, May 3. A rolling World Premiere. Massicotti's other works: "Mary's Wedding" and "The Clockmaker". Seeing is (not always) believing. Love this theater – brand spanking new and convenient parking!

"Lettice and Lovage" by Peter Shaffer – Enlarge! Enliven! Enlighten! Lettice Douffet Friday, April 10 – Sunday, May 3. This is a charming and hilarious British comedy, written for Dame Maggie Smith

("Downton Abbey's Grand Duchess Violet") delivered to us here in Brew Town by Renaissance Theaterworks The Broadway Center 158 North Broadway 273-0880 broadwaytheatrecenter.com This show has a great cast- Laura Gordon, perhaps Milwaukee's answer to Dame Maggie, Carrie Hitchcock – perhaps our very own Dame Judi Dench and directed by Miss Jenny Wanasek. The Renaissance's Roman Holiday Salon Soiree is Thursday, May 21st The Wisconsin Club 900 West Wisconsin Avenue 2nd Floor Ball Room 6 pm. Noted actress Concetti Tomei of "China Beach", "Murphy Brown", "Providence" and many more credits will entertain – celebrating "Roman Holiday" – the Audrey Hepburn version leave all togas at home!

To close out the 40th Season of The Milwaukee Chamber Theatre 158 North Broadway The Cabot Theatre of The Broadway Center – Margaret Raether's "Jeeves Take A Bow". Thursday, April 16 – Sunday, May 3

milwaukeechambertheatre.com.

Mr. Hal Holbrook is "Mark Twain Tonight" Monday, April 20th 7:30 pm Uihlein Hall of The Marcus Center for the Performing Arts. One night only, to see this Tony winning Play – and this American iconic treasure in his signature role of Samuel Clemens AKA Mark Twain -- not to be missed.

Mil-M-Aids – Milwaukee & Madison Against AIDS – a fundraiser for The Holton Street Clinic takes place on Saturday, April 25th Registration 11:30 am, Bowling 1:00 pm JB's on 41 4040 South 27th Street 281-8200 \$30 in advance, \$35 at the day of the event. 30 years of sharing fun & funds and bowling! Kudos to Debi Vance & Cindy Olseske and Bob (BoBo) Glienicki and Rick (Candy Stick) Steiner for their im-



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pressive dedication for three decades! And of course all our good sports Patrick, Keith and Jason from our State Capitol that volunteer to make this spring fling a must on every calendar. I never bowl, but do attend!

The Florentine Opera Company's next production and final for the season is Gaetano Donizetti's "The Elixir of Love" (L'elisir d'amore) May 8 and 10 – Sung in Italian, with English super caps to translate. The Camerata Opera Party is scheduled for Sunday, April 26 7 pm Movida 524 South Second Street a free celebration brought to the Community by The Cream City Foundation and The Joseph R. Pabst Fund of The Greater Milwaukee Foundation. Drinks, Delectable, with an Aria & Songs and a Bar Talk with Artists from The Opera - I'm your scheduled host! See You then ...

In Tandem Theatre 628 North 10th Street 271-1371 www.intandemtheatre.org offering a season with a lot of heart! Has "Little by Little" Thursday, April 30 – Sunday, May 24th by Brad Ross, Ellen Greenfield, Hal Hackady and Annette Jolles. A fast paced, witty, romantic romp – perfect for this time of the year!

It may be in May – but very early in May and you have to make your reservations now to "electrify the promise" the Make A Promise Dinner and Auction benefitting ARCW (the AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin) Saturday, May 2, Derby Day, The Wisconsin Center. This year will also offer BidPal so you know their dynamic Silent Auction will be state of the art. Can't wait to see what Mary Hartwig, "Tall" Tony Bilot and Kristin Wollenberg "turn on" for us this year! Electric Daisy Carnival (EDC) is hint... I had a tres magnificent time last year! The evening begins –civilly with cocktails and silent auction at 5:30 pm, Dinner will follow at 7:30 pm, 9:30 pm – Midnight – The Dance Party to "electrify" your evening.

Megin McDonnell is the Interim Executive Director of Fair Wisconsin, since Katie Belanger has departed.

Dr. Peter Holbrook is the New President and CEO of The Cream City Foundation. A celebration was held at The Potawatomi Hotel, Serenity Room and a virtual who's who was there - - Cindy Olsheske and Peter Nys of PN Promotions, Kerry Shannon of Residence 612 North Broadway, Marty Hintz & Pam Percy, Dan Mueller of ARCW, Tracey Carson & Bill Zaferos, Deborah Unger, Jerry Janis and Mary H. Nelson all of Aurora Health Care, Elaine Maly & Tom Taubert, Marybeth Budisch of The Greater Milwaukee Foundation, Dr. Robert Starshak & Ross Draegert of The Birch Lodge Fund, Tony Rhodes, Paul Matthews of The Marcus Center for the Performing Arts, Tom (TC) Hoffman, Bill Morley, Kate Venne, The CCF Board: Paul Milakovich, Jim Schleif, Jose Milan, Dan Sawall, Renee Kimberger, Terri Coughlin, Griselda Aldrete, Syd Robinson, Juan Carrasquillo, and Rob Doerfler-Eckstein as well as countless other family, friends, neighbors and interested/interesting bystanders.

Paul Milakovich of Marquette University and Board President announced a Fund he is forming as well a teeny, tiny Fund, The Valentine Fund that is hopefully going to do good works and good will for ARCW – in instituting an Art Therapy Program.

In last month's effort I made mention that The Marcus Center was to release next season's selections I hinted with "Kinky Boots and "42nd Street" - - well

the boots were right, where you can wear them have changed... sorry no "42nd Street". However, I know you'll love their line up - - more hits than you can shake a Tony at! "Dirty Dancing" will play and no one puts Baby in the corner! "Come and Have the Time of Your Life" with this pop favorite Tuesday, October 16 – Sunday, October 11. Back by "Popular" demand "Wicked" this bewitching Broadway favorite will cast a spell on you, come and "Defy Gravity!" Wednesday, November 4 – Sunday, November 15 a great pre-Thanksgiving Family Feast!

"Newsies" kicks off the New Year 2016 January 5 – 16 – Their debut will make headline news here. Disney is very proud of this trophy earning 2012 hit. In conjunction with their Golden Anniversary – it's "Cabaret" once more Tuesday, February 23 – Sunday, February 28. Come to the Kit Kat Klub, you know you'll always be Willkommen. Tuesday, April 5 – Sunday, April 10 another premiere "Once" the 2012 Tony Award's Best Musical. This award winner tells the story of a Dublin street musician's path to romance, success and all the complexities that come with life. This barn burner of season - - well worth its weight in Tony gold strut out with "Kinky Boots" another new show, lots of awards, featuring the marriage of the talents of Cyndi Lauper, Harvey Fierstein and Jerry Mitchell. These Boots were made for viewing and that's just what you'll want to do ... To Subscribe or purchase tickets 414-273-2787 929 North Water Street Uihlein Hall You haven't lived until you've seen The Marcus' Maven Paul Matthews sport those infamous red sequent foot wear almost as famous as Dorothy's.

Talk about clever segues there is an exciting new project out there called "The Sound of Oz" – a documentary based on the phenomenal musical score of the classic movie "The Wizard of Oz". Aaron Harburg – the great grandson of lyricist E.Y. "Yip" Harburg, (Harburg with Harold Arlen created all the terrific tune-age of Oz) and Ryan Jay plan to make this rainbow come true. Unfortunately this much needed salute can not come to fruition without You! Please visit the trailer and website- - www.the-soundofozmovie.com and see if you can invest in their journey in taking us all back to Oz and beyond! This is a gift for the ages! When time permits please scan my exclusive interview with this project's producer Ryan Jay in this very issue!

Happy Fifth Anniversary of success and fun times to Nate and Crew of the Hybrid Lounge. Thanks for adding so much to Brady and Van Buren.

Five years is nothing in comparison to "Papa" Joe celebrating eight decades of decadence! Congratulations and my very best wishes to Joe Mallien on turning 80 - - You're an inspiration to us all!

What a smashing time I had at Collin & Matt's St. Patrick's Day Gala! Starting at 12:30 pm and going strong until after midnight! Talk about the spirit of the Irish! Who needs a green river when you have these two bon vivants?

So sad to report the passing of Vernon (Vern) Haag, we all remember Vern from his serving days at The M&M Club. As of late he was enhancing dinners at Sebastian's Restaurant in Racine. I "worked" with Vern only one memorable time - when he competed for Mr. Harbor Room – The First Mr. H.R. that is and I believe out of 10 or 12 Contestants he got the sash and the hearts of all present. What a charmer – a true gentle, sweet soul – sleep well ...

March, 2015 Bucket List

April 1 April Fool's Day – Beware!

April 1 – 12 "Odyssey" Off The Wall Theatre
E Wells Street www.offthewalltheatre.com
414-484-8874

April 3 Good Friday

April 4 Passover begins

April 5 Easter

April 9 Neil Diamond In Concert

BMO Harris Bradley Center 1001 North 4th St.
Bmoharrisbradleycenter.com TicketMaster

April 9 – May 3 "Ten Questions To Ask Your Biology Teacher About Evolution" Next Act Theatre 255 S Water St 414-278-0765

April 10 – May 3 "Lettice and Lovage"
Renaissance Theaterworks The Broadway Center
158 N Broadway broadwaytheatrecenter.com
414-273-0880

April 15 Tax Day

April 16 – May 3 "Jeeves Takes A Bow"
The Milwaukee Chamber Theatre The Cabot Theatre of The Broadway Center
158 N Broadway milwaukeechambertheatre.com

April 20 "Mark Twain Tonight" Starring Hal Holbrook
Uihlein Hall The Marcus Center
929 North Water Street 414-273-7121

April 22 Earth Day

April 24 Teach Children To Save Day

April 25 March of Dimes National March for Babies

April 25 Mil-M-AIDS, a Bowl-a-thon to benefit
The Holton Street Clinic

JB's on 41 4040 South 27th Street 414-281-8200

April 26 Camerata Opera Party celebrating "The Elixir of Love" Movida 524 South Second Street

April 29 Denim Day, International Day to Salute the Survivors of Sexual Abuse

April 30 – May 24 "Little By Little" In Tandem Theatre
628 N 10th St www.intandemtheatre.org 414-271-1371

May 2 Kentucky Derby

May 2 Make A Promise Dinner to benefit ARCW
"electrify the promise" Wisconsin Center 400 W Wis Ave Kristin.wollenberg@ARCW.org 414-225-1570

Forgive me a bit of shameless self-promotion – but I must share the unfortunate news that my gig at The Red Star Cocktail Club, upstairs of The Trocadero is now history. It was a dream job with wonderful colleagues! Thank You Lance Lanigan and Chad Ellingboe for taking a chance on me. John Seitz, Alyssa Russo, Chris, Danny and Olianna Peer-Drake it was bliss working and learning from you. Red Star is now closed for remodeling and will remerge again I'm sure, please watch Face Book. It's just unfortunate that our Star turned into a Nova (not to be confused with the popular Super Star Nova D'vine) and crashed too soon! Once again I have my Fridays free, anyone for a fish fry? It is Lent... anyone hiring?

Food time - - We're running a little long – why don't I turn the dinner table on you and have you share with me where You like to dine, especially now that it is so beautiful and everyone wants to sup el fresco (Dining outdoors).

As always and I'm not fooling – it's the glamor, not the grammar – even with spring fever as I remain still Cordially yours..

Megawoof - WOOF'S 8YR ANNIVERSARY PARTY

DJ John Murges provided the music. The evening included special appearances from the Mad City Sisters Inc. (Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence) and Titan Men exclusive Hunter Marx who mingled with patrons and handed out free drink coupons. Toby Sigle attended patrons at our Leather Market and Raven performed a flogging demo. The final contestants pictures were taken for our "Furry Bear" commemorative anniversary T-shirt contest, the winner will be announced later in the week. Several times throughout the night we briefly reached occupancy capacity and had a short line forming at the door, the total attendance estimate was around 200.

See photos from Megawoof on the next page or online in our photo gallery at www.quest-online.com

Statement from the Owners:

MEGAWOOF....MEGA comes from the Greek megas, meaning "great" and WOOF (according to the URBAN dictionary) an adjective used to describe a sexy guy! 2015 marks our 8-year anniversary and we've certainly had our share of GREATNESS and SEXY GUYS...thanks to you! We've been fortunate enough to make and grow many friendships over the past eight years as well as maintain a consistent presence as Madison's premier downtown gay men's, Levi, leather, bear, and sports bar! Thank you for your patronage and support! All kidding aside...we have strived to create a warm, friendly, welcoming space for all members of our LGBT Community as well as for Madisonians in general. This past year celebrated the inception of our monthly Saddle Up Saturday events-celebrating Country Western Music and dancing-hosted by some of our own Cowboy patrons, A FREE concert featuring International Music star Matt Alber, numerous monthly themed events including the most recent visit from The Castaways MC club of Milwaukee and one of the most celebrated dart league nights in town. The many memories we've collected are overwhelming, including the amazing contributions made by our MADD DAWGS teams to benefit AIDS Network, ARCW, The Rodney Scheel House and other local and statewide charities. Our efforts with the Drag Down Cancer benefit, Gay Straight Alliance for Safe Schools (GSAFE), Out-Reach, Perfect Harmony Men's Chorus, Stage Q, The Mad City Sisters as well as a host of sporting organizations (darts, bowling, hockey, rugby, volleyball and softball) that have truly enriched our community, as well as our own lives. We are honored to continue to bring our community "WOOF PRIDE"—our own block party on King Street—as well as to be associated with OUTREACH as they continue to grow Madison Pride with the rebirth of the Pride Parade and Rally. This year's PRIDE kicks off on Sunday August 9th and spans an entire week with events and celebrations city wide, when Madison also plays host to the IGLFA (International Gay Lesbian Football League) including our famous SPIT-N-SEAMEN Boat cruise and BLOCK PARTY on August 15th featuring DJJM, FUR-LESQUE, MATT ALBER and culminating with BEARRACUDA the NUMBER 1 BEAR DANCE EVENT in the country. PRIDE... Not only in our diversity and community but in our history as well! A heartfelt THANKS to all of our current and past staff members who've helped us achieve or many successes over the years! One of the goals we set out to achieve when we opened was to create an environment where everyone felt welcome, where you could express yourself comfortably and completely without judgment and where you could meet friends old and new-where the spirit of community was celebrated and encouraged and you left feeling like you'd been to visit a friend's house instead of a bar-We're happy to say, thanks to all of you, we've achieved that goal!

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And now for another installment of Ruthie's bitchin' kitchen.....APRIL FOOLS! Yea okay so it wasn't really a good one. It's April and that mean Pride is just two months away! I hear the Parade is shaping up to be a great one, check out all the hype about it on the Milwaukee Pride Parade's Website at www.prideparademke.org. Also on the topic of pride, how about that Pridefest. Pridefest is putting some serious effort into the trans happiness factor this year, check out their site for more info at www.pridefest.com. Don't forget that both of these great organizations are on Facebook as well @Milwaukee Pride Parade and @Pridefest Milwaukee respectively. Also as a side note both of these organizations really do need your help every year! So get out there and volunteer!

Well seeing as I have gobbled up enough of my space on promotions for the community, so let's get to it. As I sat at a local watering hole last night destroying my liver an old friend talked to me about his piercing, and he had a question about his piercings. The

question was about a common problem but is almost never asked in my professional time in the shop, "Why do my Piercings smell? I have had them for years!"

There is actually a simpler reason for the smell, cleanliness. The smell is actually caused by dead skin. Your body sheds skin all the time and normally this dead skin just falls away and creates the dust the we all love so much. Well, when this happens in a piercing the dead skin cells cannot fall away and get trapped between the jewelry and your skin. The trapped skin then begins to do what all biological materials do when they die, they rot. The smell you are smelling is actually rotting flesh. It's perfectly normal and is nothing to be worried about. Additionally, the larger the piercing is, the faster (and more pungent) the smell will be.

To keep this smell at bay all you really need to do keep cleaning your piercings even after they are healed. At least once to twice a week, or anytime you take a shower, take the jewelry out of your piercing and dismantle it

totally if possible. Then give it a really good scrub with the soap of your choosing (although be careful of soaps on Bone, Wood, Ivory, Plastic, glass as some soaps can damage your jewelry, talk to your piercer for more details on this) and then rinse thoroughly. After doing this your piercing will remain stink free for a few days before you need to repeat the process.

One trick to keep the smell away for even longer is after you take a shower leave the jewelry out for about 15-30 minutes this will allow the skin inside the piercing to dry out and not stay soaking wet for a long period of time thus causing even more skin loss and increasing the stink factor by a bunch!

Any who lets get to some reader mail.

Brent, My BF has a piercing down below and I want to know if he can get more, I really like the one he has and would like him to get more! -- Thanks, Jo

Well Jo, your question is a little vague. What piercing does he have? Where is it placed? You see Jo these are the things I need to know as I have no idea what the hell your Boyfriend's penis looks like! You may carry around a mental picture of it everywhere you go but I don't so I need a little clarification on this! But I guess I could take a stab at answering this question. It really depends on what piercing he has, if it is a P.A., ampallang or apadravya, then odds are there will not be enough room to do a second one, although I have seen it done and done it to people myself. Most of the other piercings you can get more of by just moving the placement somewhere else. If you want to know more Jo, then contact your friendly neighborhood piercer.

Well it seems I have run out of space again. Don't forget about the Milwaukee Pride Parade at www.prideparademke.org and Pridefest at www.pridefest.com, or their respective Facebook pages for updates on all the wonderful stuff going on for Pride Month. Until next time have a great month of April and have some fun this April fools!

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