

## ON 'HOWL'

The directors of the new flick about Allen Ginsberg wax poetic about their subject. Page 15.



THE VOICE OF PROGRESS FOR WISCONSIN'S LGBT COMMUNITY

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# State turns right

By Louis Weisberg

Staff writer

In a striking political reversal from just two years ago, conservative Republicans prevailed in races throughout the state on Nov. 2.

It was the first time since 1938 that Republicans in Wisconsin gained a governor and U.S. senator in the same election, and the state was the only one where Democrats lost the governorship, a Senate seat and the legislature.

The GOP also took several congressional seats, capturing a majority of them for the first time in 14 years. The sweep brought many Republicans into local offices formerly held by Democrats as well.

"It feels like in the space of two years our country has gone from riding this crest of hope to running in fear," said transgender activist and union organizer Brice Smith at Milwaukee's Serb Hall, where Democratic gubernatorial nominee and pro-equality candidate Tom Barrett delivered his concession speech.

Most of Wisconsin's newly elected Republicans kept silent on the stump about LGBT issues, instead focusing with discipline on the economy. According to exit polls, social issues barely registered, if at all, on the public's radar.

Just as in 2008, voters were in the mood to throw out the bums, and Democrats in Wisconsin were unable to overcome pervasive national feelings of discontent.

When pressed during the campaign, Gov.-elect Scott Walker said he'd overturn the state's domestic partner registry law and eliminate employment benefits for the same-sex partners of gay and lesbian state workers. But Walker, who has close personal and professional relationships with gay individuals, tried to avoid discussing LGBT issues, as did other Republicans.

Katie Belanger, executive director of Fair Wisconsin, said that's a positive sign.

"Since 2006, the dialogue about LGBT issues really Local election page 3



PHOTO: AP/STEW MILNE

Providence, R.I., Mayor David Cicilline will be the fourth openly gay member of Congress. The Democrat, shown here after his primary victory, won the race in Rhode Island's First Congressional District, defeating Republican John Loughlin by 51 percent to 44 percent.

# Gay candidates score at the polls

By Lisa Neff

Staff writer

Today, three of the 435 members of Congress are openly gay. That number will increase by one in January, when a new House of Representatives is sworn in and seated in the capitol.

On Nov. 2, Rhode Island voters elected openly gay

Providence Mayor David Cicilline, D, to Congress, keeping the seat held by Patrick J. Kennedy in the Democratic fold.

Also on Election Day, voters in her Wisconsin district elected to send lesbian U.S. Rep. Tammy Baldwin, D, back to D.C. Voters also re-elected openly gay Reps. Barney

Frank, D-Mass., and Jared Polis, D-Colo.

However, Democrat Steve Pougnet, openly gay mayor of Palm Springs, Calif., lost his bid to unseat Republican Mary Bono Mack. The race went 52 percent for Bono Mack, 41 percent for Pougnet.

Baldwin faced Republican Chad Lee and, according to

unofficial results, won with 62 percent of the vote.

Polis also had an easy win. He faced three opponents – Republican Stephen Bailey, Constitution Party nominee Jenna Goss and Libertarian Curtis Harris – but none were serious contenders. Polis received 56 percent of General election page 6

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**POLITICAL HYGIENE**  
A shelf-stocker who works at an undisclosed supermarket posted this picture online.

**WHAT ABOUT MONEYLENDERS**

St. Ann Catholic Church in San Antonio, Texas, discontinued a Mass that it had offered for more than 15 years to the gay and lesbian community. The action was taken in response to complaints the Vatican received from the secret group Defenders of the Magisterium. Change.org reported that San Antonio's gay Catholic community, which includes many same-sex couples with children, is now searching for a new place to

worship.

**OUT OF SYNC**

Speaking of the Catholic Church, one out of every three adult Americans raised in the Church has left it behind. If these lapsed Catholics were to form their own church, it would be the nation's second largest denomination.

In addition to the church's coddling of pedophiles, many American Catholics are turned off by the Church's anti-gay hate rhetoric. A recent survey showed Catholics overwhelmingly support legal recognition of same-sex unions. Forty-one percent of white Catholics and 46 percent of Latino Catholics support same-sex marriage, while an additional 36 percent of white Catholics and 22 percent of Latino Catholics support same-sex civil unions. This level of support is considerably higher than that of Americans as a whole.

**TEN TIMES A HOMO**

In the final days of the mid-term election, a robocall to vot-

ers in Midland County, Mich., warned them that Toni Sessoms, an out lesbian candidate for the state house of representatives, is "homosexual." In fact, the call dropped the "H" a word 10 times, which is believed to be a robocall record. The calls about Sessoms were produced by Campaign for Michigan Families, a fringe-right Christian group.

**FIVE TIMES A MOTHER**

A lesbian couple in Brisbane, Australia, is expecting quintuplets after one of the women was artificially inseminated with sperm donated by a U.S. law student.

Melissa Keevers, 27, did not undergo fertility treatment. The chances of conceiving quintuplets naturally are less than one in 60 million.

"It took me a long time to get my head around what was happening. But now I've come to terms with it, I'm excited," Keevers told Woman's Day magazine.

Keevers and her partner Rosemary Nolan, 21, had a daughter via the same donor.

The quint is due at the end of this year.

**THE GREAT PUMPKIN**

Linus, the great pumpkin, was found in a patch in Wisconsin. Guinness World Records confirmed in late October that a Wisconsin grower produced the world's heaviest pumpkin - 1,810.5 pounds, 85 pounds over the prior record holder. Chris Stevens of New Richmond showed off the pumpkin, which measures 15 feet in circumference, at the Stillwater Harvest Fest in Minnesota. He said then that his feat was the result of a mix of sunshine, rain, cow manure, fish emulsion and seaweed.

**BROADWAY VS. BULLIES**

Broadway performers are singing out against bullying as part of the ever-expanding "It Gets Better" video project on the Web. Performers with "Spring Awakening," "Wicked," "Rock of Ages," "Chicago," "Memphis," "Billy Elliot," "Jersey Boys," "Mama Mia" and other shows have recorded videos urging people to, as a chorus sings in "Spamalot," "Look on the bright side of life."

**BROADWAY VS. BULLIES II**

New York performers also have joined in a "We Are The World"-style anthem promoting a positive message about life. The song, "It Gets Better," written by Jay Kuo and Blair Shepard, contains the line, "Don't give up/Cause your life is like a book/All you have to do is turn the page." See the videos at [www.itgetsbetterbroadway.com](http://www.itgetsbetterbroadway.com).

**IN DEVELOPMENT**

ABC Family is working on bringing to TV the story of Constance McMillen and her fight to bring her girlfriend to the high school prom. McMillen, represented by the American Civil Liberties Union, won a \$35,000 settlement against the Mississippi school district that canceled the school dance rather than allow McMillen to attend with a same-sex date and in a tux. Too early to say who might be cast to portray McMillen, but with this conflict being our modern day "Harper Valley PTA," there's got to be a role for Barbara Eden.

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## Kleefisch's gay uncle urged voters to support the Barrett-Nelson ticket

Local election from I

has improved in Wisconsin," Belanger said. "I think people learned in 2006 that talking against the gay community only serves to rile it up. While some (politicians) are willing to go out on a limb, most understand that using the gay community as a wedge for political gain doesn't work."

Lt. Gov.-elect Rebecca Kleefisch, an avowed evangelical Christian, was one of the few GOP candidates who wandered off message and into hot water. Her remarks comparing gays to animals and inanimate objects on Christian radio went viral on the Web and sparked outrage on college campuses.

Even Kleefisch's openly gay uncle spoke out against her and urged voters to support Barrett and his pro-equality running mate Tom Nelson.

The Walker campaign kept Kleefisch, who has no experience in political office or any sort of management, invisible during the campaign. She was not allowed to debate her opponent Tom Nelson or to appear at public events where media might be present.

On election night, Kleefisch appeared briefly before a cheering crowd of GOP supporters in Pewaukee awaiting Walker's arrival. "Our hour is coming," she said, using a coded phrase by which evangelical Christians refer to the second coming of Christ.

Kleefisch was not the only evangelical-backed candidate who triumphed in Wisconsin on Election Day. State Rep. Leah Vukmir, a Tea Party zealot who has modeled her public profile in the image of Minnesota's Michelle Bachman, handily defeated pro-equality state Sen. Jim Sullivan in a district that includes portions of Wauwatosa, Waukesha and Brookfield. LGBT voters, who had been instrumental in Sullivan's victory over another anti-gay evangelical



PHOTO: AP/JEFFREY PHELPS

**U.S. Sen. Russ Feingold (left) lost his seat to political newcomer Ron Johnson (right). Feingold was one of only 14 senators who voted against the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act.**

in 2006, never seemed to coalesce behind him this time around, despite aggressive outreach from his campaign.

In the 68th Assembly District, Chippewa County Clerk Kathy Bernier won the seat held by Kristin Dexter. Bernier cited the desire to overturn Wisconsin's domestic partner registry as one of her reasons for seeking legislative office.

Bernier complained the registry was a burden to her as county clerk, saying she'd

had to register 10 same-sex couples as domestic partners since August 2009.

Former reality TV star Sean Duffy prevailed over pro-equality state Sen. Julie Lassa in northern Wisconsin's 7th Congressional District. Democrat David Obey had held the seat for a generation but decided not to seek re-election this year.

Duffy was embarrassed during his primary campaign when his Republican opponent showed voters video of him and his wife at the same-

sex wedding of gay friends in California. But Duffy vowed to follow right-wing anti-gay ideology if elected.

Pro-equality U.S. Rep. Steve Kagan lost his seat in the 8th Congressional District, which includes Green Bay, to political newcomer Reid Ribble.

Most progressive pundits said the ouster of pro-equality U.S. Sen. Russ Feingold was the most devastating loss of this political cycle.

Feingold was one of only 14 senators who voted

against the Defense of Marriage Act in 1996 - and one of only seven of them remaining in office.

Feingold, whose political independence as a champion of good government sometimes put him at odds with leaders on both sides of the aisle, remained true to his principles in his vigorous fight to defend his seat.

Republican Ron Johnson, a wealthy plastics manufacturer who has never held political office, dipped into his personal fortune to fund

his race. Third-party sources funneled more than \$1 million into commercials blasting Feingold.

But Feingold, who prided himself on being one of the U.S. Senate's only non-millionaires, stuck to his guns and refused outside cash, even turning down help from the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee.

For progressive and pro-equality voters in Wisconsin, the bright spots on Nov. 2 were few and far between. Open lesbian Tammy Baldwin easily won re-election to Congress in her liberal district, which includes Madison, taking over 60 percent of the vote.

Milwaukee's pro-equality U.S. Rep. Gwen Moore also coasted to re-election.

In western Wisconsin's 3rd Congressional District, Democrat Ron Kind narrowly held on to his seat in a race that was not thought to be close heading into the final weeks of the election.

Another victory for equality was the election of Milwaukee County Supervisor Chris Larson to the state Senate. Larson defied this year's conservative backlash by defeating a less progressive incumbent in the Democratic primary in September.

JoCasta Zamarripa, a pro-equality candidate, became the first Latina elected to the General Assembly. She will replace retiring state Rep. Pedro Colón in Milwaukee's Assembly District 8. He was the first Hispanic elected to the Legislature.

Fair Wisconsin's Belanger said that overall her organization is disappointed but undeterred by the outcome of Nov. 2.

"Today (Nov. 3), I am driving to Green Bay to fight the city council from signing on to the lawsuit to overturn the domestic partner registry," she said. "We are not stopping for a minute in continuing the fight for equality. We are going to redouble our efforts to defend our community."

# Milwaukee rally remembers victims of violence

By Louis Weisberg  
Staff writer

Nearly 100 LGBT activists and allies gathered in Milwaukee's MacArthur Square Oct. 23 for a rally to remember recent victims of violence and suicide and to denounce bullying and other acts of hatred.

The event began with a march around the Milwaukee County Courthouse, where the convicted killer of transgender woman Chanel Larkin is set to be sentenced Dec. 20. Andrew Olaciregui faces up to 25 years in prison and a \$100,000 fine for shooting Larkin in early May.

Marchers carried signs and chanted as they worked their way up North 10th Street and east on West State Street. A number of marchers wore blue T-shirts that said, "I am worth protecting," which were provided by the event's organizer FORGE, a transgender rights group.

Despite the solemn theme and gloomy skies, the march's mood was positive. Some participants were veterans of such rallies, including Stephanie Hume and Jacquie Lindo, the former coordinator of the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center's anti-violence program.

Others were newcomers. Sagar Tolani, a member of the Milwaukee Graduate Assistant Association, said he only began learning about transgender issues over the summer, in the wake of Larkin's death. "This is something we all need to be aware of," he said. "I'm here to support people who are being hurt by dumb actions."

The march was followed by speeches on the square under the watchful eyes of Milwaukee police officers.

"We're here to mourn the four violent deaths in Milwaukee of LGBT people since May," FORGE's Loree

Cook-Daniels said. Those incidents include a hit-and-run accident in which a gay man was killed in front of a gay bar, the unresolved slaying of a gay man who was found dead in his apartment and a lesbian who was shot to death by her partner. (WiG did not report on the deaths of the two male victims because they were closeted and sources would not identify them as gay on the record.) All four victims were African-American.

"Hatred and discrimination falls hardest on those who are transgender and people of color," Cook-Daniels said. Milwaukee MCC Pastor Wendy Woodruff read a statement from U.S. Rep. Gwen Moore, D-Milwaukee. "We must stand strong together to end hate violence," she read. "Hate is not an American value."

Larkin's grandmother Carla Clemmon tried to



PHOTO: DAN WILSON

Two men listen to speeches during an Oct. 23 rally in MacArthur Square.

address the rally but broke down and was unable to speak.

"As more of us continue to live our truth, it's possible that more of us will face

this (violence)," Brice Smith told the rally. "People are yearning for a sense of community. Today that's what we are doing. If you ever forget or doubt that you are loved,

let me, the other people on this stage, those around you ... remind you that you are loved."

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# MOVING ON UP

The Milwaukee LGBT Community Center opened to the public Nov. 3 in its new, larger home at 252 E. Highland Ave.

The expanded size will allow the center to increase its services, according to Patrick Price, director of philanthropy. Those services will include a new mental health clinic targeting the needs of the LGBT community.

The clinic was made possible in part by a \$100,000 grant from the Johnson Family Foundation, Price said. The clinic will be developed over a three-year period in collaboration with Jewish Family Services.

The Johnson Family Foundation also awarded the center \$50,000 for broad technical assistance and development, Price said. CenterLink, the national organization of LGBT community centers, will help the center determine the best use for the funds early next year.

- Lucky Tomaszek



PHOTO: DAN WILSON  
The community room of the new Milwaukee LGBT Community Center sits empty, awaiting movers Oct. 30. The space at 252 E. Highland Ave.

# UW-Waukesha protesters greet Kleefisch

By Louis Weisberg  
Staff writer

One week before she was elected lieutenant governor, Rebecca Kleefisch made a rare and brief public appearance at UW - Waukesha, only to be greeted by students protesting her anti-gay statements.

A demonstration organized by the campus group Pride Alliance brought about 30 sign-carrying protesters together in front of the building where Kleefisch was scheduled to address a student Republican group Oct. 26. The students spoke with a Fox6 reporter as the lieutenant gubernatorial candidate was whisked secretly into the building through a back door.

Kyle Callen said the protest was called to object to the way Kleefisch is "per-

petuating the idea that it's not OK to be gay."

"The last thing we need right now is a lieutenant governor who takes an openly hateful stance toward a group of people," student Dee Landers said.

The protesters regrouped in a room where Kleefisch spoke for about 15 minutes. They stood silently against a back wall, their numbers nearly equal to those of Kleefisch's supporters, Pride Alliance co-president Jessica Bemis said.

After winning the Republican primary in September, Kleefisch refused to debate Democratic opponent Tom Nelson or to appear at any public press events. Her Republican Party handlers kept Kleefisch so far out of sight that AP photog-

raphers were unable to get a picture of her during the campaign. Editorial boards throughout the state condemned Kleefisch's strategy of invisibility.

But Kleefisch, a former TV news anchor and outspoken evangelical Christian, appeared several times on right-wing radio and television programs during her primary campaign, telling one radio host that allowing people of the same gender to marry is identical to allowing people to marry clocks, tables or dogs. She said the Bible should be the authority on the issue.

Several UW - Waukesha protesters carried signs referencing Kleefisch's remarks on same-sex marriage, including one held by a young man that read, "What if it's a

female table?"

During her talk on campus, Kleefisch said her controversial statement was taken out of context. "I was talking about a slippery slope and what we would have to do in legislation to define and

redefine what marriage is," Kleefisch told students. "If I sounded insensitive, that's wrong."

In addition to protesting Kleefisch's appearance on campus, Pride Alliance is planning to hold public vig-

ils for every gay youth who commits suicide, Bemis said. She said Pride Alliance is the second largest student group on the UW - Waukesha campus, behind the Campus Crusade for Christ.

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## Barney Frank survived a tough challenge from a Tea Party favorite

General election from I

the vote, according to unofficial returns.

Frank, though one of the more powerful and prominent members of Congress, faced a tough challenge from Republican Sean Bielat, a Tea Party favorite who amassed a hefty war chest for his campaign. A third candidate on the ballot was Tax Revolt Independent Don Jordan.

In the final month of the campaign, the Democratic Party dispatched some help to Massachusetts, including the crowd-pleasing Bill Clinton, and Frank, a member of the House since 1981, survived a fight for another term, winning with 54 percent of the vote.

"Barney Frank is nothing if not a fighter, and we're very happy he will return to the House and continue to fight for the people of Massachusetts and for all LGBT Americans. Nobody has worked harder or longer in the U.S. Congress for fairness and equality for the LGBT community," said Chuck Wolfe, president of the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund.

In Rhode Island, President Barack Obama helped rally support for Cicilline, whose Facebook page the morning after the election contained congratulations from "friends" around the world.

Wolfe said Cicilline "will be a strong advocate for all Rhode Islanders, but he will also be an authentic voice



**Openly gay U.S. representatives Tammy Baldwin (left) and Barney Frank (top right) won their re-election bids. Openly gay Palm Springs, Calif., Mayor Steve Pougnet (bottom right), lost his bid for Congress to incumbent Republican Mary Bono Mack, the widow of Sonny Bono.**



### DID YOU KNOW?

Six openly LGBT Americans have served in Congress:

- Gerry Studds, D-Mass., from 1973 to 1997. He came out in 1983.
- Barney Frank, D-Mass. from 1981 to present. He came out in 1987.
- Steve Gunderson, R-Wis., from 1981 to 1997. He came out in 1994.
- Jim Kolbe, R-Ariz. from 1985 to 2007. He came out in 1996.
- Tammy Baldwin, D-Wis., from 1999 to present. She was out when first elected in 1998.
- Jared Polis, D-Colo., from 2009 to present. He was out when first elected in 2008.

Washington State representative.

- Democrat Aaron Kampfe lost his race for Montana state senator.
- Democrat Victoria Kolakowski won her race for Alameda County, Calif., superior court judge.

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for the millions of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender Americans who long for the day when we will be treated equally under law."

In California, Bono Mack campaigned with an endorsement from the Log Cabin Republicans while Pougnet went into the race with the backing of many other LGBT

groups, including the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund.

The victory fund, which helps train openly gay candidates for office in addition to assisting with campaign fundraising, endorsed 164 candidates in the midterm election cycle.

On VF's list of top races:
 

- Democrat Marcus Brandon

won his race for North Carolina representative and will become one of five openly LGBT officeholders serving in state legislatures.

Democrat Jim Gray won his race for mayor in Lexington, Ky., defeating incumbent Jim Newberry. "This is a tremendous victory for Lexington, for

Kentucky's LGBT community and for fairness," Wolfe said. "We are proud of Jim Gray and his fantastic campaign staff who fought hard for this win."

Republican Dan Hill lost a close race for Nevada State Assembly.
 

- Democrat Laurie Jinkins won her race for

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# MIDTERM MADNESS

## GOP seizes House, makes Senate gains

By Lisa Neff

Staff writer

When maps are redrawn, often either a coup or a disaster are involved.

And maps were redrawn Nov. 2, with voters giving the Republican Party the majority in the U.S. House and awarding gains to the GOP in the U.S. Senate and governors' mansions.

The morning after, the GOP's top leaders refrained from claiming a coup and Democratic leaders denied a political disaster. But activists with the populist conservative Tea Party trumpeted a revolutionary victory and activists with left-leaning movements, from LGBT civil rights advocates to environmental reformists, warned of possible disaster in 2011.

LGBT activists said the midterm message meant that significant civil rights legislation, specifically the repeal of the "don't ask, don't tell" policy banning gays from serving openly in the Armed Forces, must be passed during the lame-duck session of Congress.

Going into Election Day, it seemed the only certainty in national politics was that Barack Obama would continue to occupy the White House — but that's because he isn't running again until 2012.

The entire U.S. House was up for grabs, as well as 37 U.S. Senate seats. Numerous hotly contested seats in state legislatures and 37 governor-

ships also were on ballots.

With some races still undecided as WiG went to press Nov. 3, the Senate was projected to have 51 Democrats and 47 Republicans. The GOP picked up at least six seats, including in Illinois, where Republican Mark Kirk was the projected winner in the race for Barack Obama's old seat.

For the U.S. House, projections showed Democrats with 185 seats and Republicans with 239 seats. One Election Day loss was that of U.S. Rep. Patrick Murphy, D, a champion of the DADT repeal effort. At deadline, 11 House seats remained undecided.

"The past four years of Democratic leadership stopped anti-equality lawmakers from being able to move the most damaging legislation and amendments forward," said Joe Solmonese of the Human Rights Campaign. "However, the 110th and 111th Congresses did not hold pro-equality majorities on every issue. The 112th Congress will prove even more challenging in rounding up the votes needed to advance pro-LGBT legislation."

LGBT leaders emphasized that though some incumbent allies struggled and lost at the polls, equality-minded candidates in races against vociferous anti-gay candidates did fairly well, suggesting that anti-gay rhetoric repels voters.



PHOTO: COURTESY

**Gov.-elect Jerry Brown of California (right).**

Additionally, of the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund's 164 endorsed LGBT candidates, 106 won, including David Cicilline, who in January will be the newest out member of Congress.

"There is no sugar-coating the loss of so many of our straight allies in Congress, but we can be proud that our community continues to expand its voice at all levels of government in America," said Victory Fund president Chuck Wolfe. "Out public officials are having a sizable impact on the local, state and national debates about LGBT equality. Increasing their numbers is a vital part of a longterm strategy to change America's politics and make our country freer and fairer for everyone."

### KEY FEDERAL RACES

In California, longtime ally Barbara Boxer, D, held her U.S. Senate seat against a challenge from Carly Fiorina, who was backed by the National Organization for Marriage.

In Florida, Republican Marco Rubio won the race for U.S. Senate, defeating Democrat Kendrick Meek and Charlie Crist, the state's outgoing governor who, mid-campaign, abandoned the Republican Party to run as an independent.

Rubio, with 90 percent of precincts reporting, had 49 percent of the vote, followed by Crist with 30 percent and Meek with 20 percent.

The race was full of controversy for the Sunshine State and captured national attention in its final days, with claims and counter-claims that the Democratic leadership and Crist tried to encourage Meek to bow out and deliver his votes to the governor.

Meek carried the endorsement of HRC and other LGBT groups, but Crist strengthened his support from the community with his opposition to the now defunct gay adoption ban and the release of an LGBT position paper that Equality Florida called the most progressive of any Florida governor.

Rubio, a charismatic Cuban-American and Tea Party darling, is considered a potential candidate for vice president or president.

In Nevada, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D, deflected a challenge from Republican Sharron Angle. Reid, with 99 percent of precincts counted, had 50 percent of the vote.

In the final weeks of the campaign, the LGBT group Working Families Win went door to door for Reid, who, not without criticism from the community on strategy, has steered the effort to repeal DADT in the Senate.

WFW estimated that with 250,000 LGBT citizens in the Las Vegas area, the community's vote could make or break the Senate race.

"Voting is the doorway to greater dignity and justice,"

said WFW campaigner Jane Heenan.

### IN THE STATES...

In California, former eBay CEO Meg Whitman spent a fortune on her gubernatorial campaign but couldn't sell her candidacy to a majority of voters. The Republican, who had the backing of the National Organization for Marriage and who voted for the constitutional amendment against marriage equality, lost her gubernatorial bid to Democrat Jerry Brown, who as attorney general refused to defend in court the anti-gay amendment known as Proposition 8.

Brown had 54 percent of the vote, with 71 percent of precincts counted Nov. 3.

In Florida, pro-equality can-

didate Alex Sink, a Democrat,

traded GOP candidate Rick Scott in the race to succeed Crist as governor. Sink had 48 percent of the vote to Scott's 49 percent with 89 percent of the precincts counted when she conceded mid-morning Nov. 3.

In Maine, LGBT activists were hoping for the election of a Democratic governor — candidate Libby Mitchell had promised to work to restore the marriage equality measure repealed by voters. But with 93 percent of precincts reporting, Mitchell had 19 percent of the vote, a distant third in the race with Republican Paul LePage and Independent Eliot Cutler, who, at press time, were running just a percentage point

apart.

In New Hampshire, NOM failed in its campaign to unseat incumbent Gov. John Lynch, D, for supporting the legalization of marriage for gay couples. Lynch defeated Republican John Stephen 52 percent to 46 percent.

Lynch's victory was said to be significant symbolically, as well as vital for protecting marriage equality in the state — three repeal bills already have been filed for 2011.

In New York, Democrat Andrew Cuomo defeated Republican Carl Paladino in the race for governor.

Paladino, in the final month of the campaign, had what LGBT activists characterized as a homophobic meltdown and publicly denounced gays as sick perverts.



PHOTO: COURTESY

**Newly elected U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla.**

Several New York legislative candidates with strong backing from HRC also won their elections on Tuesday, leading activists in the state to predict that 2011 might be the year lawmakers legalize marriage for gays and lesbians.

"The focus will move from the ballot box to the state capitol," said HRC's Solmonese.

The midterm ballots contained no questions related to marriage or adoption, but voters in Arizona faced a push to legalize medical marijuana — at press time the results were 50/50. In South Dakota, voters defeated a medical marijuana measure 63 percent to 37 percent.



PHOTO: COURTESY

**The Tea Party's anti-gay Sharron Angle.**

# Green Bay may join anti-gay suit

By Louis Weisberg  
Staff writer

Green Bay City Council might join with Wisconsin Family Action's efforts to overturn the state's domestic partner registry law.

An unusual proposal to involve the city in the lawsuit was approved Oct. 25 by the council's Protection and Welfare Committee, acting on a request from Ald. Shae Sortwell. The measure, which was being considered by the city's full council as WiG went to press, would

authorize the city's legal department to contact WFA and offer its support in overturning the law.

Approved by state lawmakers and enacted in 2009, the registry grants same-sex couples 41 of the more than 200 benefits offered to heterosexual married couples, including hospital visitation rights and family leave for medical emergencies.

But WFA's suit contends the registry "mimics marriage" and thus violates a constitutional ban on same-

sex marriage or any legal status "substantially similar" to that of marriage.

WFA president Julaine Appling told the Green Bay Press Gazette that she did not ask for the city's help and doubts it will influence the suit's outcome. But she said it would help sway public opinion on the issue if council passed the measure.

"That sends a very powerful message, and we appreciate it," she said.

Seventy-five same-sex couples in Brown County

are registered as domestic partners under the state law, according to Fair Wisconsin director Katie Belanger.

Observers said Sortwell's proposal was an act of retaliation against an openly gay city truck driver who asked the council to consider extending medical benefits to the same-sex partners of city workers. But Dave Fowles' request to look into partner benefits was dropped without comment over the summer.

"I think the most disturb-

**'It's mind-boggling.'**

ing part is that this is really about retribution for one individual who had the courage to stand up before his employer and his city government and ask for equal treatment," Belanger said. "(City council members) are focusing on political tactics to undermine and strip even the most minimal protec-

tions from caring and committed couples."

"It's mind-boggling," Fowles told the Press Gazette. "It's like you're taking progress and you're tearing it down."

Belanger said Fair Wisconsin would take action in Green Bay Nov. 3 when the council votes on Sortwell's proposal.

Elected to city council for the first time this year, Sortwell also backed an ordinance to exempt Green Bay from the state's public smoking ban.

# Lesbian sues GOP candidate, says he got her pregnant

With just days to go before the election, a woman filed a lawsuit against the Republican candidate for Wisconsin secretary of state, charging that David King got her pregnant after she passed out in his home.

Charlette Harris contends there could be no other

explanation for her pregnancy, because she's a lesbian and has been in a monogamous relationship with a woman for four years.

In her lawsuit, Harris claims that King got her drunk on margaritas over lunch, when they both worked for a New Berlin-based costume distrib-

utor. Harris says King then took her to his home Aug. 26, where she passed out on his couch. Later she awoke in his bedroom with her pants unbuttoned, she says.

Harris says she discovered her pregnancy a month later.

The lawsuit, filed Oct. 26 in Milwaukee County, includes

claims for battery, violation of privacy, intentional infliction of emotional distress and negligent supervision, on the part of BuySeasons costumer distributor.

King is a Tea Party activist and fundamentalist Christian who founded the Milwaukee God Squad. On the campaign


stump, King has referred to Gov. Jim Doyle as "a crack head."

King refused to return e-mails and messages to the Associated Press. But he told the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel that the lawsuit is a ridiculous plot against his campaign.

Harris denied King's assertion, telling WTMJ-TV that she isn't motivated politically and hasn't voted in a decade.

King's Democratic opponent, Secretary of State Doug La Follette, told the TV station he has nothing to do with the lawsuit.


From WiG and AP reports



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# Anti-gay depictions of school are wrong and unfair

Opinion  
GENIA STEVENS



It's a sad day for the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community when a member of our community exploits an ally just to make a buck.

Several weeks ago, Zach Patterson, a Junior at Beloit Memorial High School in Beloit went to the advisors of the school's Gay Straight Alliance and showed them his "Marriage is so gay" T-shirt.

He asked his advisors if they thought it would be OK for him to wear it in school. Because Beloit Memorial High School has been working hard to eradicate the use of "is so gay" as a derogatory phrase, Zach was informed that it might not be a good idea to wear the T-shirt at

school. But several weeks later he wore it anyway.

Last week, Justin Weaver, a reporter at the Beloit Daily News, wrote an article that stated Beloit Memorial High School administrators asked Zach to remove his "Marriage is so gay" T-shirt because it supported gay marriage. That's a lie.

Zach was not asked to remove his T-shirt because it supported gay marriage. Zach was asked to remove his

T-shirt because it made use of a phrase that the school's staff has worked hard to eradicate. Zach was also asked to remove his T-shirt because it could be misinterpreted in so many ways. Some staff members saw it as a job at traditional marriage. Some thought it was anti-gay, and some thought it was pro-gay. Since staff members interpreted the T-shirt in different ways, it was assumed that students would do the same. Therefore, Zach was asked to remove his T-shirt - just to be on the safe side.

After Zach's story made the Beloit Daily News, it started to go viral on the Internet - with a lot of help from the folks over at the "Marriage is so gay" camp. The creators of this T-shirt have been running Facebook advertisements that exploit the story. The ads falsely state that Zach was asked to

remove his T-shirt because it supports gay marriage. The ads ask people to support Zach and his activist efforts by, of course, buying a "Marriage is so gay" T-shirt. Thousands of LGBT activists and our allies have taken the bait and purchased a T-shirt without knowing they're pawns in this ridiculous money-hungry game.

I am an open lesbian in Beloit. I have two children who attend Beloit Memorial High School. I know several teachers at the high school and I'm on good terms with a couple of top administrators at the high school. I am aware that Beloit Memorial has a GSA club. I also know that the school recognizes National Day of Silence and that there are posters up at the school that provide acceptable alternatives to the derogatory phrase "is so gay." Armed with this kind

**I am an open lesbian in Beloit with two children who attend the school.**

of information, I can honestly state that Beloit Memorial High School is not anti-gay, nor does the school have any interest in promoting an anti-gay agenda.

What Justin Weaver and the "Marriage is so gay" camp have done to the staff at Beloit Memorial High School is unacceptable. Weaver has promoted the idea that Beloit Memorial High School is anti-gay just to shock and anger people - because shock and anger are powerful emotions

that can help sell newspapers. The "Marriage is so gay" camp - members of our very own LGBT community - has jumped on the bandwagon because shock and anger has helped them sell more T-shirts. Bulldozing a valuable LGBT ally just to make a buck is pathetic and inexcusable.

The administrators and teachers at Beloit Memorial High School have worked hard to create a safe space for local LGBT youth. When a member of the LGBT community puts a knife in a valuable ally's back, every member of the LGBT community should question the motive.

Genia Stevens is the host and producer of SistersTalk Radio, an internationally syndicated online radio show for the LGBT community. You can listen to the radio show at <http://sistertalkradio.net>.

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COMPANY DONATES T-SHIRTS TO UW-WHITEWATER

American Apparel, the company that makes "legalize gay" T-shirts, donated 500 of them to UW-Whitewater in response to a September hate crime. The company shipped the T-shirts to the student organization IMPACT to give away.

In addition, the company bought a full-page ad condemning the attack in the campus' student newspaper.

Freshman Lauren Meyer was wearing the T-shirt near

the UW-Whitewater campus when she was punched in the face and called a "faggot" by two men Sept. 26.

Hundreds of students rallied Oct. 15 to protest the assault, as well as another attack that occurred on the campus in December 2009. In that incident, a woman was approached by three men in a campus parking lot and punched in the face as they said, "God fucking hates dykes."

Meyer, wearing the same T-shirt that she wore when she was attacked, addressed the Oct. 15 rally to thunderous applause, GazetteXtra.com reported.

"Hopefully, people will start to change and be open-minded because stuff like this really shouldn't be happening," she said. "I know I'm not going to change for anybody just because they feel they have the right to knock me down."

American Apparel reported that employees of its Washington, D.C., store

received threatening phone calls after the "legalize gay" T-shirt was displayed in its store window, which was smashed.

"American Apparel is a company that believes in freedom of expression and equal rights," the company said in a written statement. "Despite the unfortunate event that triggered (the attack on Meyers), the immediate response of this young woman's fellow students to hold a campuswide rally as a show of unity was incredibly inspiring."

Although Meyer provided police with a detailed physical description of the suspects, no one has been taken into custody.

OFFICIALS DENY CODY BARKER WAS BULLIED

Officials with the Schiocton school district refute charges that the suicide of Cody J. Barker, 17, was related to anti-gay bullying.

Barker was the third gay

teen to commit suicide in Outagamie County since May 2009, and his death came amid a spate of national stories about gay youth taking their lives after being harassed.

"Right now everybody's looking for someone to be the poster child for this issue," school Superintendent Chris VanderHeyden told the Post-Crescent. "As soon as it was announced that this young man was gay and that he killed himself, everyone immediately started connecting dots that weren't there."

However, Barker's mother Darla said she suspects that bullying did play a role in her son's death. She told the Post-Crescent that she was "dumbfounded" at how quickly the school district acted to quash the allegation.

"(Teens) are smart about when they do it," Barker was quoted as saying. "They don't do it in front of a teacher. I know there was name-calling and dirty looks in the hallway. I know that went on."

Darla Barker said she even witnessed teens taunting Cody at their home. She asked students to look out for each other.

"(When) you see somebody in the hall and they look like they're having a bad day, ask them how they're doing," she said. "If you see somebody getting picked on, stick up for them. Just help each other."

GAY SUICIDE REPORTED

A 19-year-old openly gay Oakland University student took his own life Oct. 19.

The Oakland County, Mich., medical examiner's office confirmed that Corey Jackson's death was a suicide, but police said that anti-gay bullying did not play a role.

"Oakland's an accepting school and we're pretty broad and diverse so it's pretty shocking something like that would happen here," he said.

His family disagreed. "I believe (it happened) because he recently realized he was a homosexual and he was getting pressured at school by his peers because he told his family and nothing changed here," Jackson's

grandmother Carolyn Evans told ClickOnDetroit. "Corey was the most loving, giving, funny person. ... When he went to school and he realized his sexual preference had changed, he changed completely. He withdrew."

Evans told the website that her grandson was outgoing before becoming self-conscious.

Jackson's aunt Kim Jones said he was having a difficult time.

"He said, 'I don't know what's wrong. Ever since I came out people are treating me different. I don't know what to do. I don't know where I belong,'" Jones said.

Student legislator Darrell Boyd said the campus has a very accepting environment.

"Oakland's an accepting school and we're pretty broad and diverse so it's pretty shocking something like that would happen here," he said.

From WIG and AP reports

Chicago LGBT Jews possible target of terrorists

By Matt Simonette Special to WIG

An LGBT Jewish congregation is believed to have been the target of a thwarted terrorist attack.

Government officials announced Oct. 29 that packages containing explosives were addressed to two Chicago-area Jewish organizations. The packages were intercepted late last week en route from Yemen to the United States.

Or Chadash Rabbi Laurence Edwards said an official with the Jewish United Fund of Metropolitan Chicago advised him that his predominantly LGBT congregation was one of four area synagogues that should heighten security efforts. Or Chadash meets in a building owned by Emanuel Congregation on Lake Michigan in the city's Rogers Park neighborhood.

Congregants were informed of the development at night services Oct. 29. "The news was greeted with calm bemusement," Edwards said. "I think our first thought was, 'Why someone as small as us?'"

Although the congregation has faced protests from the Rev. Fred Phelps' Westboro Baptist Church, Edwards questioned why a Jewish community of only about 100 members would be on a foreign terrorist group's radar.

William Wahler, co-president of Or Chadash, said he and his co-president were reassuring members via e-mail that the situation was under control.

"We have to remember that this is just a rumor, first and foremost," Wahler said. "But that doesn't mean that we're not going to be vigilant about this."

Police have begun patrols of Emanuel Congregation's parking lot, and officers on

police boats are keeping the building under surveillance from Lake Michigan, according to Wahler.

"Ironically, there is probably no safer place to pray in Chicago than Emanuel right now," Wahler said.

Wahler said his congregation has received an immense outpouring of support from around the world. Many Chicago Jewish organizations pledged advice and support.

"One thing I keep saying is Or Chadash is not marginalized in the Chicago Jewish community," Wahler said.

Or Chadash and other Chicago-area synagogues proceeded with business as usual over the weekend. Edwards taught his regularly scheduled Sunday morning classes on Oct. 31.

"We're just going to watch out for things out of the ordinary," Wahler said. "We can't stop our lives because of this."

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"We're just going to watch out for things out of the ordinary," Wahler said. "We can't stop our lives because of this."



PHOTO: AP PHOTO/DAVID BANKS

Congregants do a prayer for bread after Sabbath services at Temple Emanuel in Chicago Oct. 30. Rabbi Michael Zedek said he was told by a "very well placed and reliable" Jewish official that the smaller Or Chadash congregation was one of the targets of a foiled terror plot. But he and Or Chadash Rabbi Larry Edwards said neither had been contacted by law enforcement officials. The FBI in Chicago has not confirmed which synagogues were targeted.

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# The rubber meets the art in new exhibit

By Debra Brehmer

Contributing writer

I thought for sure Chakaia Booker's series of sculptures made from re-claimed automobile tires would finally succeed in looking good in the long hallway of the Calatrava addition at the Milwaukee Art Museum. Her show is part of an exhibition series called "On-Site" that focuses on artists interacting with this non-traditional space.

In a sense, all of the artists in this series, including Liam Gillick, Richard Long, Santiago Cucullu and Andrea Zettel, have contributed interesting installations that allow us to newly experience Calatrava's dazzling ribbed passageway. Yet we are always aware of the struggle and tension between the art and the architecture. Nothing sits quite right in these long expanses of white.

Why? Because they are too complete in and of themselves. The experience of walking through the connective channels diminishes anything that attempts to occupy them.

But I thought Chakaia Booker's work would be the perfect foil. She is an African-American artist who lives in New York City and works with tire rubber. She cuts, shreds and uncoils the tough, thick oil-derived material and uses it to sculpt human-scaled forms that carry a robust, gestural street-savvy grace. Because the work is gnarly, dense, textured and black, it seems that it would converse well with the light and white of the space.

Unfortunately, there is no conversation here. Booker's



PHOTO: ART ELKON

## A Chakaia Booker sculpture on display at Milwaukee Art Museum.

sculptures simply sit there, just as they would in any gallery. And there are too many of them. They look crowded and uncomfortable. Many of the pieces occupy conventional sculpture pedestals or hang from metal stands, which constricts the spirit of the work. Only one piece sits directly on the floor and one is on the wall. These two pieces mesh best with the corridor, because they fuse and interact with it.

The problem with this installation is that it takes the power of Booker's work, which should be a bit wilding and unwieldy, oozing energy

from the depths of its coarse, turgid black flesh. Yet there is almost a zoological or specimen-like feel to this display. We walk through and around the sculptures but a polite, erect distance pervades and the work begins to feel mannered and uptight when it should uncoil.

There are some great things about Booker's sculptures, however. They effectively and exuberantly transform and transcend the point of their origin as tires. Booker has developed an immense vocabulary of how this nasty material can be formed into various patterns

installations, was shifted to the east corridor, and the Modern bronze sculptures that are normally displayed there were moved to the west hallway. What is lovely, even though we can't see both hallways at the same time, is the dialog between them.

Hallways are linear like the presentation of history. In one we have the standard white man's hall of fame, with modern sculptures by Jacques Lipchitz, Henry Moore, Gaston Lachaise, etc. These serious art stars of the 20th century use bronze — molten, ballsy, expensive. The black girl in the east hall wields her forms with used tires — also quite a strong-armed medium, but grown from different roots.

The history of bronze lies in the aristocracy and military. The history of rubber is industrial, economic and proletarian. Thus we have a clean display of the Western and non-Western canons decorating two parallel hallways.

Ms. Booker offers an entirely different lineage as her work pulls from diverse African sources, such as Nkisi figures, tribal headdresses, carved doors and scarification patterns. But Ms. Booker occupies this space temporarily as a guest and those other guys have been there forever and will remain. We must note, however, that the MAM's African American Art Alliance is making significant inroads in acquiring works by black artists and the permanent collection is beginning to reflect this important change.

When artists work with refuse — such as the sculptor John Chamberlain who crushes auto parts, the contemporary artists Alison Saar and Judy Pfaff or the African artist El Anatsui — they fully intend to keep the history

and texture. In some pieces, it is as if she is coiffing hair, letting tendrils fall, braiding, twisting and knotting, adding extensions or leaving elegant tangles. In others, there's more of an assertion of an underlying idea or form, such as the plant-like "Hybrid" (2003) or the wing forms of "Industrial Perpetuity II" (2001-2010).

These sculptures are all about black skin but the message is delivered in a strong dose of formal, sculptural beauty, in which most viewers find comfort. There's something else quite wonderful that happens in this hallway. Booker's work, unlike the other "On-Site"

being merely utilitarian, has its rewards.

For a concentrated dose of high-end design that goes beyond any mere mall experience, there are two shows to catch.

"European Design Since 1985: Shaping the New Century" is the latest major exhibition at the Milwaukee Art Museum, 700 N. Art

Museum Drive. On view until Jan. 9, 2011, this airy survey compiles a variety of not-so-ordinary household items and furniture. Clever twists are found in the transformations of chairs, sofas, lights and the exquisite lines drawn out from culinary tools.

Maybe it's a result of the conditioning that is part of our consumer culture.

Despite the fact this is a museum show, it wouldn't be surprising if piped-in music and price tags suddenly appeared, such is the boutique feeling that permeates the show. To counteract this, pieces are organized in categories of modern and postmodern movements, which anchors them to the scholarly underpinnings of

the show. The surrealist furniture is especially striking in its cutting playfulness, rather like couture designs among ready-to-wear fashions.

The Villa Terrace Decorative Arts Museum, 2220 N. Terrace Ave., takes up the topic of decoration and furnishing with "Tom Loeser: Trees are the Biggest Vegetable." An artist with an

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# 'Gay Bar' offers 1950s snapshot

By Will Fellows

Special to WiG

"I own a homosexual bar," Helen Branson declared. "In the nomenclature of the homosexual, it is called a Gay Bar."

Vivacious, unconventional, candid and straight, Helen Branson operated a gay bar in Hollywood in the 1950s. After years of fending off drunken passes as an entertainer in L.A. nightclubs, this divorced grandmother discovered that she preferred the wit, variety and fun she found among gay men. Enjoying their company and deploring their plight, she decided to give her gay friends a place to socialize. And then she wrote an extraordinary little book, "Gay Bar." Published in 1957 by a small press in San Francisco, it was soon out of print.

I first became aware of "Gay Bar" several years ago when I noticed the book's snappy title among the results of an online used-

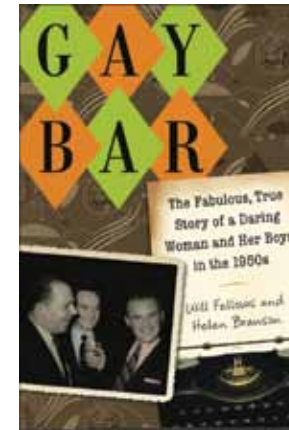
book search. It was an intriguing but expensive item and not what I was looking for, so I didn't purchase it. Before long I found myself in St. Paul breakfasting with my playwright friend Dean Gray, discussing a script he was working on. Dean asked if I knew of any books that described gay life in L.A. in the 1950s. About the only thing that came to mind was "Gay Bar" — the excellent "Gay L.A." had not yet been published. That same day, Dean and I were delighted to find a copy of "Gay Bar" at Quatrefoil Library in St. Paul. So began my excursion into the long-gone world of Helen Branson and her boys.

With her freethinking ways and abiding interest in the occult, Helen was very much on the edge, even by Hollywood standards. By the late 1930s she was working as a palm-reading nightclub entertainer in gypsy costume. This was the beginning of what Helen called her "gradual convergence"

with gay men. She worked as housemother and cook in a gay rooming house, then managed several gay bars owned by others. In 1952, deciding to operate her own gay bar in her own way, Helen took over a small Melrose Avenue tavern. In 1955, a year of major anti-gay hysteria around the country, she started writing her book.

At a time when most books on "the homosexual problem" were written by psychiatrists who viewed homosexuality as neurosis, "Gay Bar" was truly something new and startling. It was the first book by a heterosexual to depict the lives of homosexuals with admiration, respect, and love. It was published under the author's real name at a time when it was uncommon for straights to speak out in support of gays. And the book's introduction was written by a psychiatrist who stated plainly, "I do not consider homosexuality to be a disease."

Pondering Helen's obser-



## IN PERSON

Will Fellows will read from "Gay Bar: The Fabulous, True Story of a Daring Woman and Her Boys in the 1950s" at 7 p.m. Nov. 17 at Boswell Book Company, 2559 N. Downer Ave., Milwaukee.

ventions on gay men's lives, I sometimes wondered what the men themselves would have said. I was fascinated

to discover in two homophile periodicals of that period, ONE magazine and Mattachine Review, a rich trove of voices from the 1950s that complemented Helen's views. And so I began to imagine a new edition of "Gay Bar," an interleaving of the book's original text with other voices from the era, including a fuller portrait of Helen herself, thanks to my conversations with her daughter and grandson.

Today one might regard Helen Branson as a woman ahead of her time, but for the gay men she befriended she was there at just the right time. In 1955, when the California legislature declared it illegal for a bar to serve as a "resort for sexual perverts," Helen had been running her bar for several years. Thanks to her commitment and savvy it remained open, a relaxed haven, remarkably free of police raids, vice squad surveillance and other anti-gay hazards.

American culture has changed so much since the 1950s, we can never fully grasp what life was like for gay people in that age of anxiety. "Gay Bar" is a time capsule that helps us to get a better grasp of where we've been and how far we've come. Many of the positive changes that young gays today are able to take for granted were largely unimaginable 50 years ago, even in places like Los Angeles and San Francisco.

By operating her bar during America's most anti-gay decade, Helen fostered safety, connection and hope for her beloved boys. And because she chose to write a book on their behalf, we have this illuminating sketch of gay men's lives in a time of momentous challenge and change.

Will Fellows is the author of "Farm Boys: Lives of Gay Men from the Rural Midwest and A Passion to Preserve: Gay Men as Keepers of Culture."

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Maarten Baas, Your Best Kitchen Mate! knife block, 2004. Photo courtesy Ivan Terestchenko for Contrast Gallery.

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# Madison's Forward Theater is feeling a good vibration

## Theater

MICHAEL MUCKIAN

A doctor, his female and male patients, and a vibrator. Was there ever a better prescription for an "examining room" comedy?

Forward Theater Company opens its 2010-11 season Nov. 4 at The Playhouse in Madison's Overture Center for the Arts with Pulitzer Prize nominee Sarah Ruhl's "In the Next Room, or the vibrator play." The play was both a 2010 Pulitzer finalist and Tony Award nominee.

"It's a comedy, but not a sex comedy," explains cast member and gay Madison actor Richard Ganoung. "It's about the total lack of communications between men

and women on many levels."

The play, fresh from a Broadway run, marks the start of Forward's second season. The company is one of two to rise from the ashes of the former Madison Repertory Theatre, another performing arts troupe that fell victim two years ago to mounting debt and a declining economy. But Forward has already made its mark, kicking off 2010 with the Midwest premier of Christopher Durang's "Why Torture is Wrong, and the People Who Love Them." It was a bold step for the new group, according to Ganoung.

"We scooped Chicago, Milwaukee and Minneapolis with that one and now Christopher is a friend," Ganoung, 52, says. "We also were the first to get the Ruhl play."

In the current production, Ganoung plays Mr. Daldry, the husband of one of the female patients who visits the offices of Dr. Givings (Mark Ulrich) during the late-1800s - America's Victorian Age. The doctor treats female "hysteria," thought to be caused by a buildup of water in the womb, with a wonderful new vibrating device. The electric vibrator brings "relief" to his patients, but does little to cross the divide between the physician and his wife Catherine (Jessica Bess Lanius). She longs to be closer to her husband, but can only listen at the door to his office and live at the edge of his world.

"Given that it takes place in the 1880s, the play is remarkably contemporary," Ganoung says. "That has to do with how we're producing the play and Sarah's dia-

"In the Next Room, or the vibrator play" runs Nov. 4 -21 at The Playhouse in Overture Center for the Arts, 201 State St., Madison. Call 608-258-4141 or visit [www.forwardtheater.com](http://www.forwardtheater.com).

logue. It's ... very accessible to 21st-century audiences."

Ganoung was born in Lake Geneva and is best known to gay audiences for his role in the 1986 indie film "Parting Shots," in which he appeared with Steve Buscemi and Stevens Point native Kathy Kinney. He came out after the film was released. Since then, Ganoung has made Madison his home, a concession to his life partner and his own sensibilities. Forward Theater Company

provides him with an artistic outlet that reaches beyond what he can do on the stage.

The troupe is the only Actors Equity theater group between Milwaukee and Spring Green, the home of American Players Theatre. It also is one of the few companies nationwide that gives equal authority to its executive, artistic and advisory committees. Based on the fact that every opening night for the year has sold out and that the company was the recent recipient of a \$75,000 grant from the city of Madison, the strategy appears to be working, Ganoung says.

The nature of the current production has raised curiosity among Ganoung and his fellow cast members about the sexuality of the American Victorian era. When the vibrator was

introduced, it was one of the most popular home appliances after the iron, the toaster and the tea kettle.

"This period seems like a time when homosexuality would have flourished," Ganoung says. "Homosexuality was banned during Victorian times, but lesbianism was not, because 'nice girls didn't do that.' I'd love to be able to uncover information about men that were lovers during that period, but it just doesn't seem available."

Ganoung says he hopes that audiences will leave the play "with a desire to be open about who they are and what they want."

"It's the best way to bring us all together," he says.

Find WiG on Facebook

"The object of art is to give life shape."

**Dawn Bloomfield**  
Photographic Artist

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## Music

GREGG SHAPIRO

### JENNIFER KNAPP

Among the musicians who came out of the closet in 2010, Jennifer Knapp, a popular singer in the contemporary Christian music world, was preceded by both Ricky Martin and Chely Wright when she came out as a lesbian. She has gained a whole new fan-base in the LGBT community, despite the impact it may have on her core fans. On the album "Letting Go" (Graylin), which was released around the time Knapp made her public announcement, she proves herself to be a writer of open and moving songs, including "Dive In," "Fallen" and the contemporary country of "Mr. Gray."



Jennifer Knapp



Ellis

### ON STAGE

Ellis performs at 7 p.m. Nov. 28 as part of the Millions For Music Concert Series in Milwaukee. For reservations, e-mail [millions4music@wi.rr.com](mailto:millions4music@wi.rr.com).

(Flying Machine) McCue's bluesy side unapologetically bares itself on "Ol' Black Sky," "Lonesome Child" and the title track, while "The Lonely One" is the most straightforward pop-rock number on the disc. "Motorcycle Dream" definitely has a wistful quality and "Rock 'n' Roll Outlaw" rocks just the way

The album's title tune, a song written for her newborn daughter, contains the perfect message and sentiment for someone new to the world. Ellis turns out to be, not surprisingly, wise beyond her years and displays the most delightful (and caffeinated) sense of humor on "Coffee Song." Love dominates this album, as is made clear on "Everybody Wants To Belong," "Coming Home To You" and "You Are Royalty To Me," a song for Ellis' granny.

### ELLIS

Just when you thought the amazing modern folksinger/songwriter Ellis couldn't possibly do anything else to thrill or delight listeners, she releases the album "Right On Time" (Rubberneck).

### ANNE McCUE

Can Anne McCue rock or what? On her new release "Broken Promise Land"

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# La-la-la-la lesbians



Anne McCue



Jamie Anderson



Tret Fure

you might expect a song with that title to do.

### JAMIE ANDERSON

Jamie Anderson's ear-to-ear grin on the cover of her "Better Than Chocolate" (Tsunami) EP is a pretty good indication of what you are going to find inside. "Public Radio" is a humorous endorsement of the subject of the song's title and Anderson even injects a smirk into the break-up blues of "Her Problem Now." It's not all laughs, as you can hear on "January" and "Ghost Song."

Fure, one of the grand dames of the women's music circuit, returns with the luminous release "The Horizon" (Tomboy Girl). Love is at the heart of this disc, especially on songs such as "Nine" and "To Find Our Love." Fure even reveals a wicked sense of humor on "Blackberry Blues" and "Dog Gone Blues" (to which most dog lovers can relate). She also makes great use of backing vocals on "Millie" and "Grace of God," creating a gospel choir sound.

### THERE'S MORE...

There's much more to choose from when it comes to music by queer women,

### TRET FURE

Madison resident Tret

including "Junior" by guitar virtuoso Kaki King, "Closer to the Surface" (Stonecutter) by Jen Porter, "a ways away" (K) by Tara Jane O'Neil, Steff Mahan's third album "Never A Long Way Home" (stef-fmahan.com), "Half Empty" by Amanda Lucas and "Finally Red" (Graciemae) by Maren Christensen.

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Film

GREGG SHAPIRO

'FOR COLORED GIRLS'

(Lionsgate) There's little doubt that Tyler Perry wants his film version of Ntozake Shange's choreopoem "For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When The Rainbow Is Enuf" to be this year's "Precious." But the film falls short of that goal. Tyler Perry is no Lee Daniels.

Part of the problem is Perry's screenplay. Expanding on the original text, "For Colored Girls" feels like it wants to be a hipper version of "The Women of Brewster Place," with most of the characters living in the same New York apartment building. The language moves back and forth between traditional

dialogue and the more performance-poetic voice of the play. The poetic tone exists mainly in the lead female character's monologues and could potentially be off-putting as an obscure form of poet-speak.

A star-studded cast of strong female actors plays a myriad of characters in this made-for-film community.

Building manager Gilda (Phylicia Rashad) is a god-motherly woman who keeps a watchful eye on her tenants. Crystal (Kimberly Elise) lives with the physically abusive, alcoholic father of her children. Joanna (Janet Jackson) is a high-powered magazine editor with a persistent cough (is that foreshadowing caught in her throat?). Her latest husband is obviously on the Down Low.

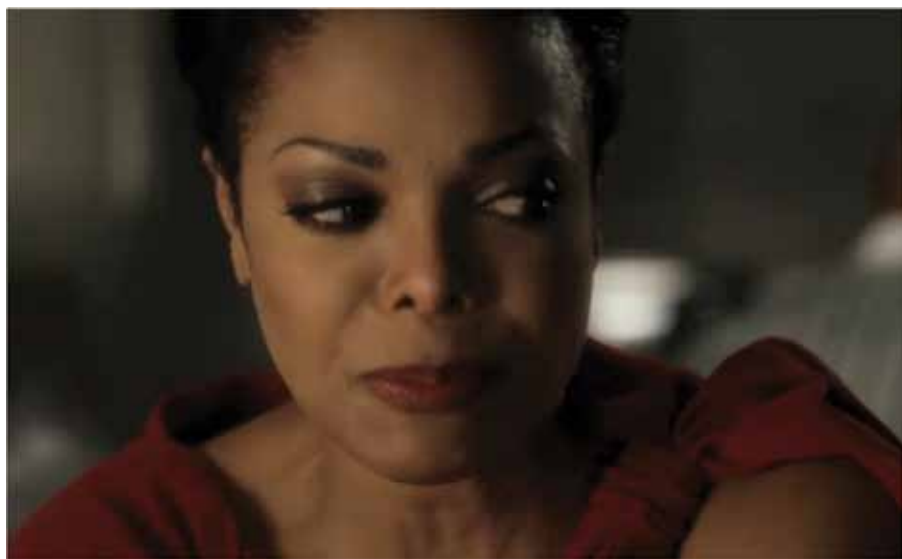
There is also bartender and coke fiend Tangie (Thandie Newton in a cheap wig), Tangie's mother, reli-

gious fanatic Alice (Whoopi Goldberg in a head wrap) and Tangie's younger sister Nyla (Tessa Thompson). Juanita (Loretta Devine) runs an HIV-prevention workshop at the health center and is in a dead-end relationship.

The actresses, who clearly know the power and value of the original material, seem willing to do whatever is necessary to breathe life into their characters. Elise and Rashad are especially good.

But what should be a graceful, poetic and graphic dance with the themes of relationships, sisterhood, faith, HIV, community, abortion, love and death is clumsy and wildly uneven. The unrelenting bleakness of watching the women experience an almost endless series of hardships and losses, with very little promise of hope, is difficult.

Perry's handling of the



Janet Jackson in "For Colored Girls."

PHOTO: COURTESY

down-low situation is questionable. It feels like he's pandering to his devoted, religious and mostly female audience without providing a cultural context for the behavior (see the recent scandal involving African-American pastor Eddie Long). It's one of a number of missed opportunities that make this long-overdue film adaptation such a major disappointment.

'HEREAFTER'

(Warner Brothers) Leave it to Clint Eastwood to make the afterlife as boring as, well, "Midnight in The Garden of Good and Evil." Following a spectacular opening sequence (the only spectacular thing in the film), involving a tsunami that devastates a seaside resort town in Thailand, we are served up a trio of low-key stories.

Marie (Cécile De France), a French TV personality who barely survives the tsunami,

is haunted by the visions she witnessed as she teetered between life and death. Profoundly affected by the experience, Marie takes a sabbatical at the insistence of her producer/boyfriend Didier (Thierry Neuvic), to work on a book. But her original politically themed book proposal morphs into a project about, you guessed it, the hereafter.

Retired psychic George (Matt Damon) is urged by his money-hungry brother Billy (Jay Mohr) to return to the psychic business he abandoned for a quieter, less traumatic life. George tries to stay the course, but he reluctantly does a right-on reading for Christos (Richard Kind), which naturally backfires on him. A potential relationship with cooking-classmate Melanie (the vacant Bryce Dallas Howard) also goes awry when she insists on a reading and gets more than she bargained for.

British twins Marcus and Jason (Frankie and George McLaren) are as close as brothers can be, helping each other with homework and housework and covering for their irresponsible mother when child welfare services comes around to check on them. When Jason is killed, Marcus finds himself adrift and searching for a way to reconnect with his dead twin.

Of course, the stories of Marie, George and Marcus aren't unrelated. Through the course of the movie, Marcus becomes aware of George, while George does the same in the case of Marie. By the time they finally merge and meet, at a book fair in London, you may think you have died—of boredom. Just check your pulse, you're still here. And the credits are about to roll.

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PHOTO: COURTESY

Cécile De France (left) and Matt Damon in "Hereafter."

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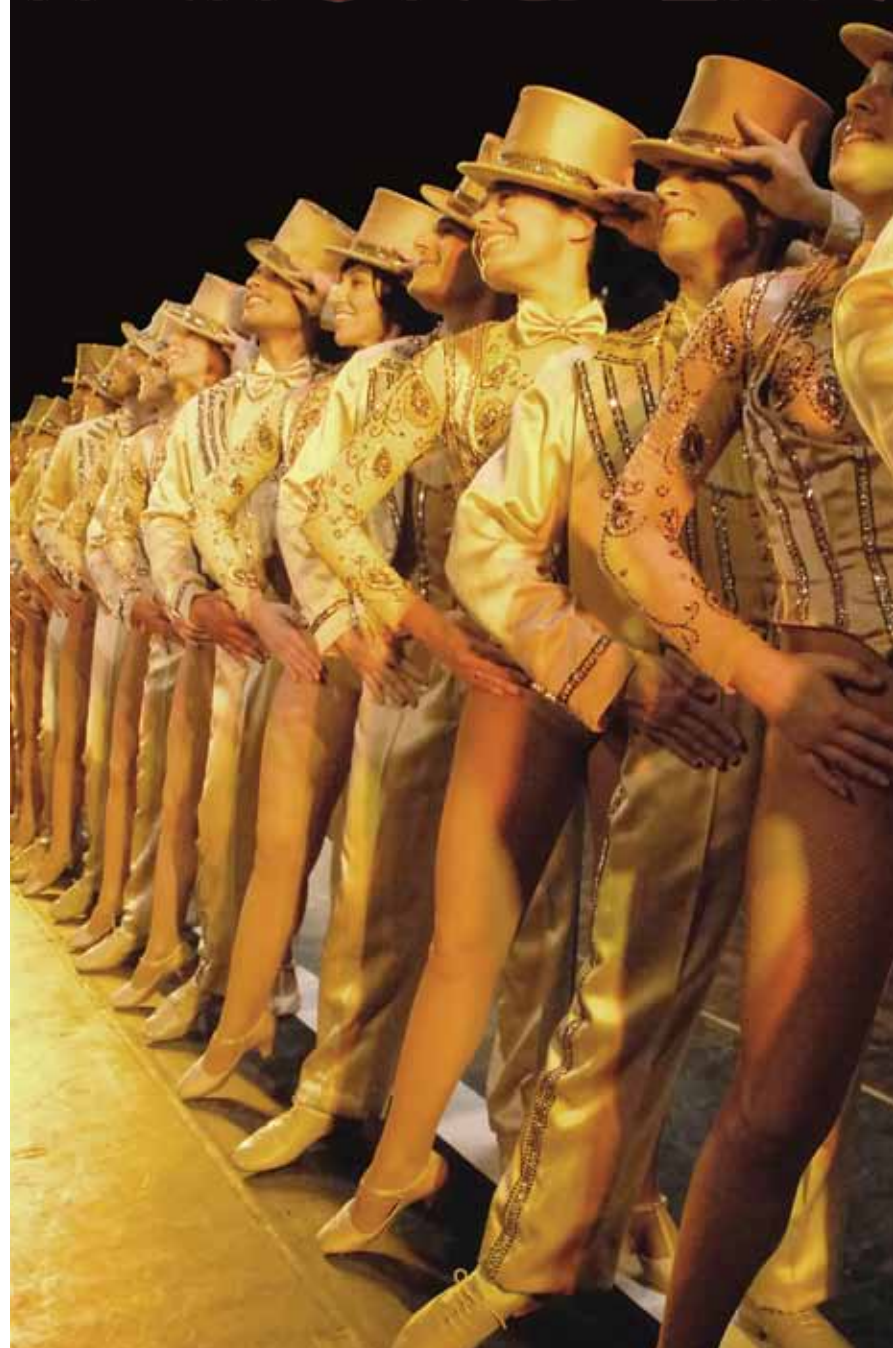
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DVDiva  
GREGG SHAPIRO

# Reasons to drool

**'DROOL'**  
(Strand Releasing/Upload/  
Instinctive)

"Drool" is a feature film about an abused wife who goes on the lam with a "sister in crime" after murdering her husband. You can tell that writer/director Nancy Kissam must have watched her fair share of John Waters films. Waters' use of sexual frankness, violence and other shock value techniques are not a bad thing to imitate. But "Drool" simply doesn't have the necessary spit to keep things lubricated.

Mousy Oklahoma housewife Anora (Laura Haring of "Mulholland Drive") is married to the wretched racist Cheb (Oded Fehr), who is verbally and physically abusive to her and their children. Things come to a head when Anora's friendship with perky new next-door neighbor Imogene (Jill Marie Jones), a Kathy K cosmetics salesperson, develops into something more.

Anora shoots and kills Cheb in a moment of self-defense and then heads east to the safe haven of Kathy K's (Ruthie Austin) house with Imogene and the kids, and Cheb's corpse in the trunk. All but one of the characters has some sort of same-sex interactions or attraction, including Cheb orally servicing his male boss in order to keep his job.

"Drool" has an abundance of ideas, but only a couple of them get are fully developed. DVD bonus features include the original theatrical trailer.

**'PRINCE OF PERSIA: THE SANDS OF TIME'**  
(Disney)

Sadly, in "Prince of Persia," Jake Gyllenhaal as title character Dastan doesn't spend enough time shirtless to justify you spending any time on this big-screen adaptation of a video game.

An orphan born in the slums of Nasaf, Dastan is



Jill Marie Jones as Imogene Cochran and Laura Haring as Anora in Drool.

PHOTO: COURTESY

adopted by a Persian king and raised alongside his sons Tus (Richard Coyle) and Garsiv (Toby Kebbell). Dastan is blamed for the king's death following a raid on the holy city, the capture of its princess Tamina (Gemma Arterton) and a sacred dag-

ger. He, Tamina and the dagger make a narrow escape.

But this isn't just any dagger. When the handle is packed with the magical Sands of Time, it can turn back clocks like nobody's business. The king's evil brother Nazim (Ben Kingsley) is eager to get his hateful hands on it, and with the assistance of the ninja-like Hassansins, his dastardly plot has a good chance of succeeding. Thank goodness, Alfred Molina turns up as cut-throat but comical Sheikh Amar for a few laughs.

The three-disc combo pack includes a Blu-ray, a DVD and a digital copy. DVD bonus features include the featurette "An Unseen

World: Making of Prince of Persia."

**"JUST SAY LOVE"**  
(E1/Regent/here!)

Much less a movie adaptation of a play than a play filmed for the screen, the stagginess of "Just Say Love" is the least of its problems. Plato-quoting Guy (Matthew Jaeger) sits on a park bench near a construction site reading, you guessed it, Plato. Swarthy construction worker Doug (Robert Mammana) joins him and digs into his brown paper lunch bag, which includes a beer. Doug has good gaydar for a straight guy and immediately begins talking suggestively to

Guy. He's horny all the time because his girlfriend Gita is pregnant. An accommodating fellow, Guy brings Doug back to his place for some non-reciprocal oral sex.

A pattern is established, with no strings attached. But predictably, as time passes, the guys form an attachment. When they eventually have sex together in Guy's bed, it's a transformative experience for both men. Then, Doug invites Guy to his home (with Gita away) to meet his newborn son Charlie and spend the night in Doug's bed. The story takes an unexpectedly hippie-like turn, adding yet another hard-to-swallow aspect to the film.



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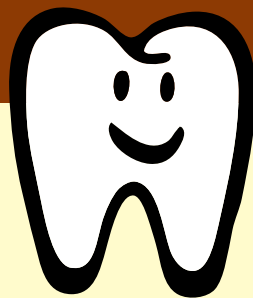
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Ailey II on Nov. 4

NOV. 4, THURSDAY

Fox Cities Performing Arts Center, 400 W. College Ave. in Appleton, presents dance company Ailey II at 7:30 p.m. Call 920-730-3760. Pat Cook's "You Can't Get There From Here" runs through Nov. 7 at Sunset Playhouse, 800 Elm Grove Road in Elm Grove. Call 262-782-4430. The Mel Brooks musical "Young Frankenstein" runs through Nov. 7 at Marcus Center For the Performing Arts, at the corner of Water and State. Call 414-273-2787.

NOV. 5, FRIDAY

The American premiere of "Laurel And Hardy" by Tom McGrath runs through Nov. 14 in the Stackner Cabaret at Milwaukee Repertory Theater, 108 E. Wells. Call 414-224-9490. "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," presented by Strollers Theatre, runs through Nov. 20 at the Bartell Theatre, 113 E. Mifflin in Madison. Soulstice Theatre Company presents "The Foreigner" by Larry Shue, running through Nov. 13 at the Marian Center Auditorium / Marian Center For Nonprofits, 3195 S. Superior. Call 414-841-3707. Boswell Book Company, 2559 N. Downer, welcomes Gina Frangello (author of "Slut Lullabies"), Davis Schneiderman (author of "Drain") and Zoe Zolbrod (author of "Currency") at 7 p.m. Call 414-332-1181. UWM Mainstage Theatre, 2400 E. Kenwood Blvd, presents Labworks Series: Shortcuts, tonight through Nov. 14. Call 414-229-4308.

NOV. 6, SATURDAY

"My Name Is Asher Lev" continues through Nov. 14 in the Stiemke Studio of the Milwaukee Repertory Theater, 108 E. Wells. Call 414-224-9490. The Racine Theatre Guild, 2519 Northwestern (Highway 38) in Racine, presents iO Theater in "The Improvised Musical" at 8 p.m. Call 262-633-4218.

NOV. 8, MONDAY

Renaissance Theaterworks presents a play reading of "Two Sisters And A Piano" by Nilo Cruz, at 7:30 p.m. in the Skylight Bar & Bistro, on the 2nd floor of the Broadway Theatre Center, 158 N. Broadway. Call 414-291-7800.

WIGOUT ON THE TOWN EDITED AND COMPILED BY GREGG SHAPIRO



A Chorus Line on Nov. 9

NOV. 9, TUESDAY

The new production of the Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award-winning musical "A Chorus Line" runs tonight through Nov. 14 at Fox Cities Performing Arts Center, 400 W. College Ave. in Appleton. Call 920-730-3760.

NOV. 10, WEDNESDAY

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Union's Distinguished Lecture Series presents author and food activist Michael Pollan at 7 p.m. in the Wisconsin Room of the UWM Union, 2200 E. Kenwood Blvd. Call 414-229-5538. Linda and Allen Anderson, authors of "Dogs and the Women Who Love Them," are at Boswell Book Company, 2559 N. Downer, at 7 p.m. Call 414-332-1181. The Great Unknown plays Brewing Grounds for Change at 7 p.m., 2008 N. Farwell. Call (414) 273-9777. Breathe Owl Breath is at High Noon Saloon, 701 E. Washington in Madison, at 8 p.m. Call 608-268-1122.

NOV. 12, FRIDAY

"The Electronic Music Collective of UW-Milwaukee hosts Synesthesia, a free night of live art, electronic music, dance, projection and interactive installation featuring Tokimonsta, a Los Angeles-based producer/DJ and other music acts, including JTodd of Milwaukee's Def Harmonic, Adoptahighway, Tarik aka The Architect and MC Oneself, in the Ballroom at the UWM Union, 2200 E. Kenwood Blvd., at 7 p.m. Call 414-229-5538.

NOV. 13, SATURDAY

Outwords Books, 2710 N Murray, welcomes photographer John Gress, signing copies of "The Score," his debut photography book, as well as his stunning, over-sized 2011 "The Score" calendar, at 4 p.m. Call 414-963-9089.



Photography by John Gress

NOV. 14, SUNDAY

The Fine Arts Quartet performs a concert for its 65th anniversary season at 3 p.m. in Helen Bader Concert Hall in the Helene Zelazo Center of the Performing Arts, 2419 E. Kenwood Boulevard. Call 414-229-4308. Marcus Center For the Performing Arts, at the corner of Water and State, presents "The Golden Days" concert featuring the Florentine Opera 2010-2011 Studio Artists at 2:30 p.m. in Vogel Hall. Call 414-273-2787.

NOV. 17, WEDNESDAY

Will Fellows, author of "Gay Bar: The Fabulous, True Story of a Daring Woman and Her Boys in the 1950s," reads from his book at 7 p.m. at Boswell Book Company, 2559 N. Downer. Call 414-332-1181. Paula Cole performs at 8 p.m. at the Majestic, 115 King in Madison. Call 608-251-2582.

NOV. 18, THURSDAY

Theatre Gigante reinvents "King Lear" with a fresh look at aging parents, duty and selfishness in "The Lears," tonight through Nov. 21 at Kenilworth Square East, Studio 508, 1925 E Kenilworth Place. Call 414-229-4308.



Synesthesia featuring Tokimonsta on Nov. 12

OUT & ABOUT

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NORTHERN Scooters, 411 Galloway Street, Eau Claire, 715-835-9959 JT's Bar and Grill, 1506 N. Third St., Superior, 715-394-2580 The Flame, 1612 Tower Ave., Superior, 715-395-0101 The Main 1217 Tower Ave., Superior, 715-392-1756 OZ, 320 Washington St., Wausau, 715-842-3225



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Tyson is a sweet and friendly 7.5-year-old American pitbull terrier mix. He is a social canine who likes to meet new people and socialize with the volunteers at the shelter. He especially enjoys going on walks and playing fetch. Meet Tyson today at WHS, located at 45th and Wisconsin Avenue in Milwaukee.

Tango's Tip: Does your dog pull when walking? Try the Sense-ible Harness, a more gentle way to stop your dog from pulling. The straps do not cause rubbing, pinching or squeezing. For more information on this harness or other products, visit www.wihumane.org.



Tyson





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