

## FORGING IDENTITY

WiG talks to out director Dee Rees about her new film "Pariah," which deals with queer youth.

**WiGOUT!** Page 21



THE VOICE OF PROGRESS FOR WISCONSIN'S LGBT COMMUNITY

January 12, 2012 | Vol. 3, No. 5

## Three more arrested in ongoing Walker probe

By Louis Weisberg

Staff writer

Prosecutors announced a second round of arrests Jan. 5 in conjunction with an ongoing secret probe of Scott Walker staffers. The latest charges stem from his tenure as Milwaukee County executive.

Tim Russell, a top former Walker associate who served as county housing administrator, was charged with three counts of theft, including two felony counts. The most serious charge is tied to Operation Freedom, an annual event that Walker sponsored to raise money for the families of killed or wounded veterans.

A 40-page complaint filed by Milwaukee County District Attorney John Chisholm's office charges that Russell diverted more

than \$20,000 intended for Operation Freedom to his personal bank account. Russell also is charged with embezzling funds from two political campaigns.

Prosecutors allege that some of the stolen money was spent on vacations in Hawaii and a Caribbean cruise with Russell's long-time domestic partner Brian Pierick. Other funds allegedly were used by Russell to attend a December 2010 political strategy session with former GOP presidential candidate Herman Cain. Interestingly, Cain's campaign got into hot water for employing Scott Toomey, another gay Republican with a history of alleged financial misconduct, as treasurer of his political action committee.

Russell's partner Pierick also was taken into custody on unrelated charges of child enticement after seized evidence led to a separate investigation. Pierick was not part of Walker's administration but campaigned on his behalf with Russell. Pierick was fired from his position as an administrative assistant with the state Department of Public Instruction, which provides education for homeless youth, the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel reported.

In addition to Russell and Pierick, former Walker staffer Kevin Kavanaugh was charged on five counts

**ARRESTS** page 14



# COMPASSIONATE CANNABIS

## Medical marijuana bill reintroduced for 2012

By Lisa Neff

Staff Writer

Erin Silbaugh went home to Lodi after multiple tours in Iraq, but he couldn't find peace.

Silbaugh, a 28-year-old Marine Corps veteran, returned suffering from post-traumatic stress, a sometimes debilitating anxiety disorder affecting as many as 20 percent of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans.

The Veterans Administration answers PTSD with prescriptions for antidepressants and antipsychotic drugs, treatments that research indi-

cates may be no more effective than placebos.

But in New Mexico and Delaware, the pains and symptoms associated with PTSD are being treated successfully with medical marijuana. In New Mexico, about a third of the nearly 5,000 patients with medical marijuana prescriptions are dealing with PTSD.

So Silbaugh now finds himself in another fight — this one for the legalization of medical pot in Wisconsin.

In November 2011, he joined state Rep. Mark Pocan, D-Madison,

and State Sen. Jon Erpenbach, D-Waunakee, to announce the reintroduction of the Jacki Rickert Medical Marijuana Act for the 2012 legislative season.

Marijuana helps, Silbaugh said. But, he added, "I'm forced to hide within my own country to be able to use medicine that helps me."

Pocan and Erpenbach filed a similar bill in 2009 that was heard by a joint Assembly-Senate health committee but died when the session ended in April 2010.

**CANNABIS** page 19

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inside and online at [wisconsin Gazette.com](http://wisconsin Gazette.com)

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# LGBT news with a twist

## WiGWAG

By Lisa Neff & Louis Weisberg



### TRUMPING GAGA

Headline-seeking, follicle-challenged billionaire Donald Trump is taking credit for giving Lady Gaga her first big break in his new bio "Time to Get Tough: Making America #1 Again." "I own the Miss Universe pageant," he wrote. "About four years ago, during what you call half-time, we always have an entertainer. We've had a lot of great people, and you don't pay them anything because it's one of the biggest audiences and my people told me, 'Nobody knows who she is, but there's this woman with good talent named Lady Gaga.' ... I said, 'I don't care ... if you like her, put her on.' So we put her on ... and the next day, nobody was talking about Miss Universe, everybody was talking, 'Who was the woman, who was the entertainer?' She was unbelievable." Interestingly, La Gaga has never mentioned her beauty pageant stint in her biographical materials.

### WEDDING ON ICE!

Figure skater Johnny Weir tied the knot over the holidays,

marrying Atlanta lawyer Victor Voronov in New York. The three-time U.S. champion said in a Twitter post that the two will have a wedding this summer, but "all the official stuff is done now!" We assume that means the marriage has been consummated. Weir has not competed since the Vancouver Olympics, where he finished sixth, but he has not ruled out a comeback for the 2014 Sochi Games.

### BEAUTIFUL INSIDE & OUT

Two lesbian contestants made history by competing in the recent Miss California USA pageant. Jenelle Hutcherson, 26, of Long Beach and Mollie Thomas, 19, of West Hollywood are the first out lesbian contestants in the 60-year history of the state pageant. Unfortunately, neither beauty made it to the finals.

### BEAUTY TO DIE FOR

A study conducted in the United Kingdom found that 48

percent of gay men would sacrifice a year or more of their lives if they could have what they consider to be the perfect body. Researchers also found that 10 percent of gay men would sacrifice 11 percent of their lives if they could have their ideal body immediately. Nine in ten gay men admitted they have "unrealistic" images of leanness and muscularity when talking about other men's shape. In comparison, only a third of straight men said they would give a year or more for an ideal body shape.

### BUDDY COMES OUT

We're not sure that she was ever really in the closet, but Kristy McNichol, best known for her Emmy-winning role as Buddy on TV's "Family," has officially come out. The former actress, 49, has lived with her partner Martie Allen for almost two decades, she told People magazine. She said she was coming out because she "is very sad about kids being bullied ... and she hopes that coming out can help kids who need support."



### KISS & TATTOO

Shaquille O'Neal offered \$1,000 to anyone who got a tattoo depicting the kiss Charles Barkley gave NBA ref Dick Bavetta. Shaq made the offer in late December on TNT's "Inside the NBA," but the kiss happened five years ago at an all-star celebration. Three days after Shaq made the offer, Emmet Bentley, a Santa Barbara, Calif., bartender, was saying pay up. Bentley got a tattoo of the man kiss just above his ankle.

### BRIT OF DISTINCTION

A portrait of the late Alan Turing, famed mathematician and legendary father of artificial intelligence, will be featured on a series of U.K. stamps celebrating "Britons

of Distinction." The stamps will be released next month. Meanwhile, an online petition drive continues to secure Turing a posthumous pardon. He was convicted of gross indecency for homosexual acts in 1952 and sentenced to chemical castration. Two years later, he committed suicide.

### HE SINGS THE SONGS!

Elton John says he'd like to see Justin Timberlake portray him in an upcoming biopic. E! News reports that Timberlake is seriously considering the role in the film, which the Rocket Man promises will be as surreal as "Moulin Rouge!" "I just don't want it to be a normal biopic, because my life hasn't been like that," John said.

### APP APPLAUSE

Where to go. What to do. How to visit. The Greater Madison Convention and Visitors Bureau recently released one of the smartest visitor guide apps WiG has seen for iPhones and Androids. Download the app at visitmadison.com before trekking to the Capitol during the 2012 session.

## Wisconsin Gazette

# REGIONAL GAZE

Got news? Tell us managingeditor@wisconsin-gazette.com

# Two charged in beating

By Louis Weisberg  
Staff writer



Two men have been charged with a hate crime in connection with the brutal beating of a gay man outside PJs, 1601 Oregon St. in Oshkosh, early on Christmas morning.

Lyall Ziebell, 20, and Jake Immel-Rhode, 20, met the alleged victim outside the bar when he asked them for a cigarette in exchange for buying them a shot, according to a criminal complaint filed in Winnebago County Circuit Court.

After having the drink, the three returned outside to smoke and Ziebell punched the victim in the face, the complaint states. Then Immel-Rhode began kicking the victim's head while shouting anti-gay slurs.

The victim told responding officers that he was attacked "because I'm gay." He suf-

fered a broken jaw and a brain injury that required emergency surgery.

In a Jan. 7 Facebook message, the victim's partner said, "We've only had time to try to get him healthy again and only just now is the magnitude of it all starting to seep in."

Ziebell admitted to Oshkosh police that he is "very homophobic" and attacked the victim for mak-

ing a pass at him, according to the complaint. He also told officers that he and Immel-Rhode stole cash and pre-paid cell phones from a market on their way back to Ziebell's home after beating the victim.

The two suspects are each charged with battery causing great bodily harm while committing a hate crime, in addition to other counts. If convicted on all charges, the

suspects face more than 23 years each in prison.

Ziebell was set for arraignment on Jan. 12, after WiG went to press. Immel-Rhode has pleaded not guilty.

James Combs, a friend of the victim, has started a petition at change.org to bring attention to the crime and to call on Winnebago County Assistant District Attorney Adam Levine and state Rep. Jessica King to ensure that "every effort to bring justice to this situation is being made," including pursuing hate crime charges.

"We really need to draw attention to this kind of thing," Combs told WiG. "People have not really grown accustomed to gay people, and there is still violence and horrible things happening."

Combs said friends might start a fund to help the victim pay for medical costs.

### CAGE LEAVES MILWAUKEE LGBT COMMUNITY CENTER

Maggi Cage is no longer employed by the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center in any capacity, WiG learned as it was headed to press.

The center's former executive director, Cage stepped down from that position in November 2011 after five years. A Nov. 7 press release said that Cage, who has a doctorate in psychology, would not leave the center altogether but rather "lead the new LGBT Mental Health Clinic."

But Cage has now left the center altogether, according to interim executive director Sheldon Walker.

"Right now, we are working on the mental health clinic in a different way," Walker said. He declined to answer questions about the circumstances surrounding Cage's departure, calling it "a personnel matter."

Walker resigned from his former position as co-chair of the center's board to serve as interim executive director. He is remaining in that position, he said, adding that no one had been hired to replace Cage in either of her former roles.

As the straight leader of what is likely the state's largest LGBT-specific organization, Cage was a controversial director from the start. The center lost donors as well as members over her appointment.

The center, located at 252 E. Highland Ave., will hold a community meeting beginning at 6:30 p.m. on Jan. 26 to discuss the center's future. The meeting will take place in the center's community room.

- L.W.

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# Lesbian slain in Milwaukee

By Louis Weisberg  
Staff writer

A man has confessed to the fatal shooting of Desiree Marie Harrell, a popular member of Milwaukee's LGBT community.

Raymond Earl Baker, 35, told police he shot Harrell, who was romantically involved with his wife, in the early morning hours of Jan. 2, according to the complaint filed by prosecutors in circuit court. Harrell's body was found in her car in front of a house at 3836 N. 24th Pl. She'd been shot eight times, according to the Milwaukee County Medical Examiner's office.

A candlelight vigil for Harrell drew more than 200 friends to the site of the shooting on the evening of Jan. 4. Bundled up against the cold, speakers stood before a makeshift shrine of candles and stuffed animals and shared their grief along with happy memories of the woman they knew as "Dee" and "Silky Dee."

Variouly described as a lover, big sister, mentor, pro-

tector and friend, Harrell, 49, was remembered for her charismatic smile and the way she brought people together.

"She may be gone in flesh, but never from my heart," said a woman who introduced herself as Brook.

Harrell worked as a bouncer at Sisters and Brothers Place, 4106 W. Lisbon Ave. Friends said the bar, which was owned by Harrell's family, featured lesbian nights.

But Harrell was best known as the owner of Viva la Femme, a former gay bar in the Walker's Point neighborhood. That was one of several bars Harrell ran over the years, said longtime friend Lance Hamilton.

"I was there when she opened her first bar," Hamilton said. "I went through her trials and tribulations, and she went through mine. She was just like my sister."

Hamilton, like many attending the vigil, said he was heartbroken.

"This is a great loss," he said. "She was a very popular person, and she's going to be missed by a whole lot of

people."

In the immediate aftermath of the killing, it was feared that Harrell had been targeted for her sexual orientation, due to her high profile in the community. Harrell reportedly was found with more than \$1,000 in cash, so robbery was never considered a motive.

In his confession, Baker told police that he was conducting a drug deal in the area when he saw Harrell drive by, and he began following her. He said that when she parked her car, he walked over and shot her. Baker said he was angered by a remark she made, according to the complaint.

Baker led police to the murder weapon, a .40-caliber Glock pistol that he'd thrown in a garbage can.

Baker is being held on a charge of first-degree intentional homicide. A preliminary hearing is set for 8:30 a.m. on Jan. 17.

Baker was arrested in June on a domestic abuse charge and a temporary restraining order was issued. He has

a troubled history with the law that includes numerous arrests for criminal traffic, reckless endangerment and drug possession, as well as for battery and theft.

"I'm just happy that he's been caught and there can be peace for the family now," said Harrell's longtime friend Kelly Roldan. "I just wish it had never happened. She opened up an establishment where lesbians could go and be themselves. To take a person like Desiree away from us — it hurts. It hurts the community real bad."

Mari Santiago Velez, who volunteers to help coordinate security at Milwaukee PrideFest, said, "It's unbelievable that she's not going to be there this year."

"When she'd walk into a room, her smile would brighten up the room," Velez said. "And she had no tolerance for any kind of hatred. She put people together. She made people friends you wouldn't think of as friends. She was out for us. Her satisfaction was giving to the world. She loved the world.



PHOTO: MIKE LISOWSKI

At a Jan. 4 vigil, friends of Desiree Harrell placed candles and stuffed animals in front of a tree at the site where she was fatally shot.

She loved her community. She embraced everyone."

Harrell's was one of four homicides reported in

Milwaukee during the first four days of 2012, three of them in the same general area of the city's northwest side.

## CENTER TO HOST COMMUNITY MEETING

The Milwaukee LGBT Community Center, 252 E. Highland Ave., will hold a community meeting beginning at 6:30 p.m. on Jan. 26.

The meeting — to discuss the center's future — will take place in the community room.

A center news release said interim executive director Sheldon Walker and the board of directors will provide "information on the current state of the organization as well as its future" and invite attendees to share concerns, offer solutions and volunteer for new committees "designed to meet the needs of our community and sustain the organization into the future."

For more information about the center or the meeting, e-mail Walker at swalker@mkelgbt.org.



PHOTO: AIDS NETWORK  
Dan Guinn.

## AIDS NETWORK NAMES NEW ED

Madison-based AIDS Network Inc. in early January announced the appointment of Daniel Guinn as the nonprofit's new executive director.

AN is the state-designated AIDS service organization for southern Wisconsin, providing prevention and multiple care services.

"The AIDS Network board of directors appreciates Dan Guinn's vision and 11 years of service to the HIV community," said board president Mary Vasquez. "We are excited to work with him as we continue moving forward."

Guinn said, "We look forward to working with our patients, clients, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, and other partners throughout the state."

Guinn previously served as the AN's legal services direc-

tor and started with the nonprofit in 2001, as an intern.

For more information about AIDS Network, go to [www.aidsnetwork.org](http://www.aidsnetwork.org).

## EQUALITY ILLINOIS PLANS GALA

Illinois' statewide LGBT political group, Equality Illinois, will hold its annual Justice for All gala on Feb. 11.

The event, this year at the Hilton Chicago on South Michigan Avenue, is a black-tie optional affair that traditionally draws some of the biggest names in Illinois politics — and sometimes national politics.

For more information about Equality Illinois, go to [www.eqil.org](http://www.eqil.org).

## BREWCITY BRUISERS ROLL IN TO 2012

Milwaukee's hometown roller derby league, the Brewcity Bruisers, opens the 2012 season at the U.S. Cellular Arena at noon on Jan. 15.

The afternoon will feature Milwaukee's four teams in two bouts — Maiden Milwaukee vs. the Shevil Knevels, and the Rushin' Rollettes vs. the Crazy 8's.

The season opener brings the only daytime contest of the Bruisers' five-game season. The doors to the arena, 400 W. Kilbourn Ave., Milwaukee, open at 11 a.m.

Adult tickets are \$15 in advance from Ticketmaster or \$18 at the door. Kids 12 and under are \$12 in advance, \$15 at the door.

An after-party will take place at Turner Hall Ballroom, 1032 N. Fourth St., Milwaukee.

The all-female Bruisers was established in October 2005.

For more information about the league, go to [www.brewcitybruisers.com](http://www.brewcitybruisers.com).

## ACLU SUES MICHIGAN OVER ANTI-PARTNERSHIP LAW

The American Civil Liberties Union has filed a federal suit against a new Michigan law banning public entities from providing health insurance to the domestic partners of their employees.

## REGIONAL BRIEFS



## STARTING A NEW QUEST

The new Quest, an LGBT publication that combines elements of Outbound Magazine with the former Quest magazine, was launched on Jan. 6 with a party at The Hamilton in Milwaukee. The new publication presents feature stories, reviews, columnists and work by area photographers. Enjoying the send-off, above, are popular columnist Dear Ruthie, Kelton, cover model Garrett, photographer Jan Rios and longtime publisher Mark Mariucci.

— LW.

The lawsuit was filed on behalf of schoolteachers, city and county workers and their domestic partners.

"This is not about politics or ideology for us," said Peter Ways, an Ann Arbor, Mich., teacher whose partner will lose his benefits. "This is about real families who are facing the real consequences of discriminatory laws. Just like our colleagues whose families will continue to receive health insurance, we want to care for our families."

The four couples named in the lawsuit are in long-term committed relationships. Several of the domestic partners need ongoing medical care for chronic conditions.

The lawsuit charges that the new law discriminates by categorically denying domestic partners access to benefits and violates the constitutional right to equal protection by forcing gay and lesbian employees in committed relationships to carry the financial hardship and anxiety of being uninsured, while allowing heterosexual couples to marry and receive family health protections.

## IOWA COURT ORDERS BIRTH CERTIFICATE NAMING 2 MOMS

The Polk County, Iowa, District Court on Jan. 5 ordered the state health department to issue a birth certificate listing two women as the parents of a 2-year-old child.

The women had married under Iowa law and had their daughter in 2009, but the

health department refused to list both lesbian moms on the birth certificate.

Judge Eliza Ovrom, in the ruling, wrote that there "is a strong indication that the (Iowa) Supreme Court intended married same-sex couples to have legal recognition that their children are legitimate and entitled to the support of both parents. The department's refusal to place (the child's) name on the

award recipients include: Lambda Legal, the Tammy Baldwin Statewide Impact Award; Jen Murray of the UWM LGBT Center, Activist of the Year; the Alliance School, Organizer of the Year; Milwaukee County Executive Chris Abele and members of county board who supported domestic partner benefits, Community Advocates of the Year.

For more information about the Fair Wisconsin Education Fund, go to [fairwisconsineducationfund.com](http://fairwisconsineducationfund.com).

— Lisa Neff



PHOTO: COURTESY

Chaz Bono is the guest of honor at Fair Wisconsin's 2012 awards gala on Jan. 14 at Hilton Milwaukee City Center. For information, go to [www.fairwisconsineducationfund.com/conference/dinner](http://www.fairwisconsineducationfund.com/conference/dinner).



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# New women's events target after-work set

More than 100 women turned out on Jan. 6 for a new monthly event for lesbians who "still love to party but don't want to wait until 10 to get started," in the words of the event's Facebook page.

Held the first Friday of each month at Hotwater Nightclub, 818 S. Water St., "Ladies Night Out" runs from 5 p.m. to closing - which, for this group, means it's over by about 11 p.m.

"At a certain point in life, the idea of starting to play at 9 or 10 and staying out until 1 or 2 loses its charm," said Wendy Ottow, one of six friends who joined with Hotwater owner Paul Mueller to establish Ladies Night Out. Co-host Diane Davis agreed, adding that the group picked a 5 p.m. start time "to attract women who are more likely to make it if they come right from work."

To cater to the after-work

crowd, Ladies Night Out features Carol Alms at the piano from 5 to 7 p.m., playing the music of Cris Williamson, Joni Mitchell and other songwriters who appeal to the audience. Patrons can order takeout pizza, salad, sandwiches and other fare delivered from a nearby restaurant.

Starting at 7 p.m., DJ Shawna, a familiar face at Walkers Pint and Hybrid, provides dance music selected for an "older" crowd.

"This is a great new addition to the entertainment scene for our community," said Wendy Young, organizer of the monthly Out to Brunch Milwaukee event for gay women. "The fact that it immediately drew such a great turnout shows this is something our community was looking for."

For more information, visit facebook.com/ladiesoutmilwaukee.

- Anne Perry



1. Mary Bergeson, Sue Hietala, Diane Davis, Sheryl Kay, Tess Gallun and Cheri Setzer. 2. Pianist Carol Alms featured Cris Williamson's music during cocktail hour. 3. Starting at 7 p.m., DJ Shawna played dance music, primarily from the 1970s and '80s. 4. Cindy Chamberlin, Peg Dyer and Cheryl Hunte.

PHOTOS: ANNE PERRY/DIANE DAVIS

# Gay Wisconsin Facebook group is growing fast

By Lisa Neff

Staff writer

Cold? The Gay Wisconsin group on Facebook received a cordial, casual invitation from one member saying, "Come to San Diego. It's warm here."

Coming out? Some gays in Gay Wisconsin have advice - they've been there, done that. Others are wondering in posts if and how they should do it.

Confused? The growing group's wall is peppered with discussions on a variety of issues and questions: Why the obsession with "Glee"? Is Lady Gaga just redoing Madonna? Xbox 360 or PlayStation 3? What constitutes cheating?

The group, as of Jan. 8, could count 869 Facebookers as members. It's a cyber social club, not a dating service.

Members are invited to "please just stay around and be part of our community and get to know some awesome people."

Two people that members quickly get to know - two faces behind the Facebook group - are Luke Ashauer, a 23-year-old store manager who lives in Appleton, and Bradley Lambie, a 21-year-old Fox Valley Technical College student in Appleton.

"Gay Wisconsin is a place to just hang out," Ashauer says.

The group formed in February 2011 because, Lambie says, "I saw that there was this gay community on Facebook, but it wasn't really all togeth-



Luke Ashauer.



Bradley Lambie.

er in one place. So I wanted to create a group where people from across the state, Milwaukee to Superior, a group where the LGBT community can go for events, updates and (to) make friends."

Ashauer remembers the beginnings. "In our little corner of the Northeastern woods, in a town of Seymour, there was a young boy still in high school who committed suicide because of the torment he was given for being gay."

"I was talking with Brad Lambie, and we had originally wanted to do a traveling group. However, with career changes and schooling, we did not think it was possible. So Brad took the cue and started the Facebook group. We wanted to keep things as close to reality as possible. So ... we put a few guidelines and rules in and told the group to have fun."

The two young group

administrators say Gay Wisconsin has fostered friendships and helped build community.

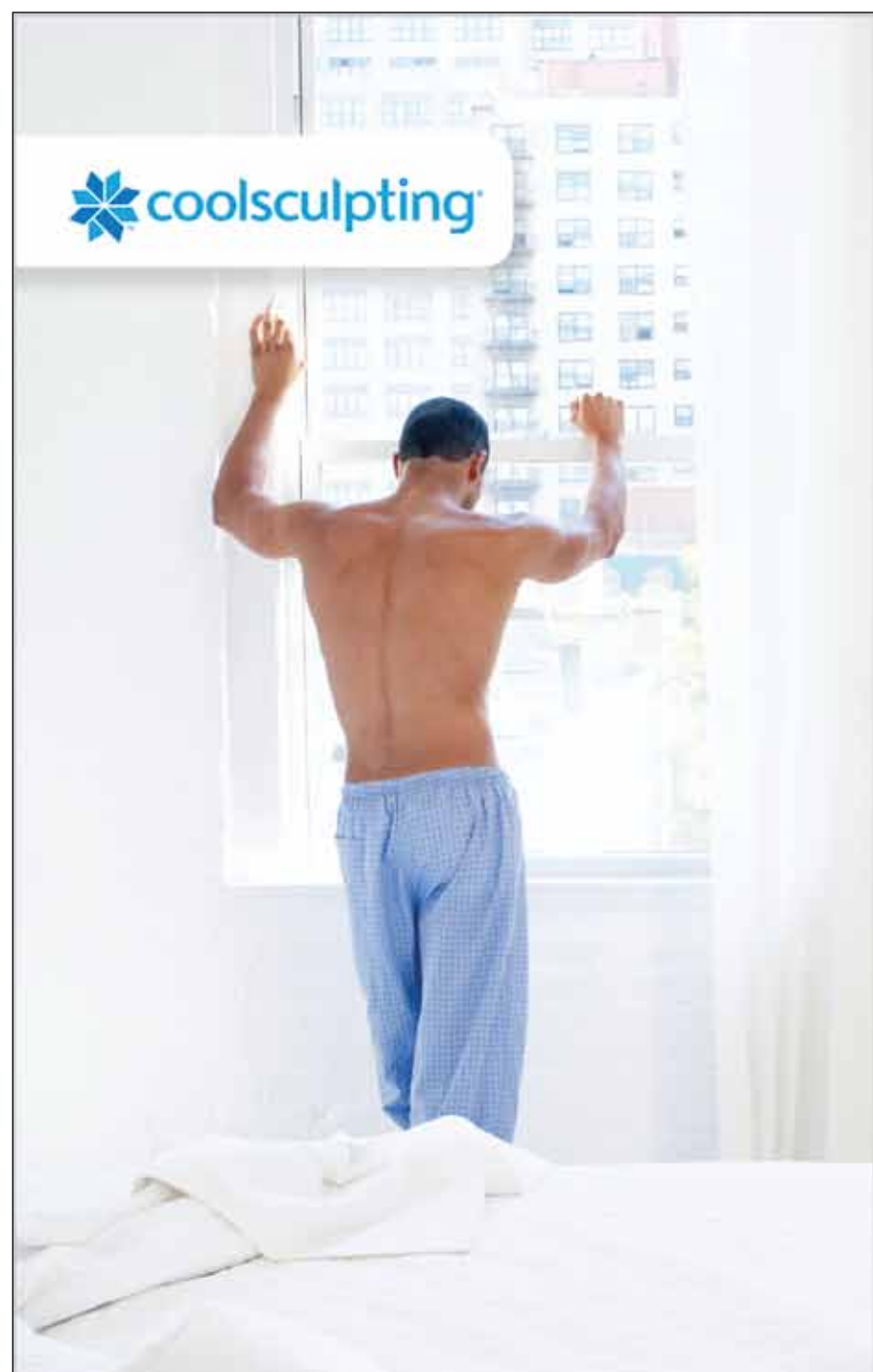
"People have come out to their friends and family because of the group," Lambie says. "Friends of mine have found their other half. Some, like me, have found really close friends."

Ashauer adds that the group can be vital to young LGBTs - a second home for some kids. "They can't be gay at their home and they can escape to our group," he says.

Both hope Gay Wisconsin can number 1,000 members by the first anniversary - in about a month.

Lambie goes "ha-ha" when asked what the 1,000th member might win. Probably not cash, but maybe a free hug, he says.

But then, free hugs can be easy to come by in the Gay Wisconsin group - (((hug))).



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# Activists differ on cardinal's apology to gays

By Lisa Neff  
Staff writer

A handful of LGBT civil rights demonstrators gathered outside Chicago's Holy Name Cathedral on Jan. 8 to denounce Cardinal Francis George, who in late December likened LGBT activists to Ku Klux Klansmen.

The protest — much smaller than originally planned — took place despite a late Jan. 6 apology from George and the sponsoring groups' decision to call off the event (see full apology in Feedback section, page 12). Activists, in statements on the organizers' Facebook page, questioned the sincerity of the cardinal, who has long opposed LGBT equality.

George first publicly made the comparison of LGBT activists to the KKK during an interview on a Chicago Fox affiliate while objecting to a proposal from organizers of the city's Pride parade. The organizers wanted to start the parade, held on the last Sunday in June, at 10 a.m. instead of noon and shorten the parade route.

George objected because the parade would pass Our Lady of Mount Carmel, a Catholic church, during a Sunday Mass.

The cardinal said on Fox, "I go with the pastor. He's telling us that he won't be able to have services on Sunday if that's the case. You don't want the gay liberation movement to morph into something like the Ku Klux Klan, demonstrating in the streets against Catholicism."

George cited similarities between the rhetoric from the KKK and LGBT civil rights advocates: "The rhetoric of the Ku Klux Klan, the rhetoric of some of the gay liberation people. Who is the enemy? Who is the enemy? The Catholic Church."

LGBT activists challenged the cardinal, who, even after parade organizers decided to start at their traditional noon hour, repeated his KKK comments in several other media interviews.

George also posted this statement on the archdiocese website: "The organizers invited an obvious comparison to other groups who have historically attempted to stifle the religious freedom of the Catholic Church. One such organization is the Ku Klux Klan, which well into the 1940s, paraded through American cities not only to interfere with Catholic worship but also to demonstrate that Catholics stand outside of the American consensus. It is not a precedent anyone should want to emulate."

By then a campaign was under way to petition for his resignation.

"It seems the sin of pride is keeping George from saying he is sorry for his outrageous and misleading remarks about Gay Pride.

At this point, the only road to redemption is his resignation," said Wayne Besen of Truth Wins Out. The LGBT group purchased a full-page ad in the Chicago Tribune on Jan. 1 that was headlined "Hey, Cardinal Francis George, Gay is not like the KKK."

A week later, activists announced a demonstration would take place on Jan. 8 outside the 136-year-old Holy Name Cathedral, seat of the archdiocese and perhaps the most important

Catholic church in the city. Organizers with the Gay Liberation Movement and Rainbow Sash said they timed the peaceful picket to coincide with the noon Mass.

GLN's action statement said, "A serial opponent of legal equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people, and safe and affirming schools for LGBT youth, George has embraced the worst of the Vatican's medieval mindset."

Less than 48 hours before the protest, George posted an apology on the archdiocese website. He said he was distressed that what he said "has been taken to mean that I believe all gays and lesbians are like members of the Klan. I do not believe that; it is obviously not true."

George also said, "I can only say that my remarks were motivated by fear for the Church's liberty. This is a larger topic that cannot be explored in this expression of personal sorrow and sympathy for those who were wounded by what I said."

Bernard Cherkasov of Equality Illinois responded, "His apology is important and will go some way toward healing the pain he has caused. However, his actions will speak louder than words."

Rainbow Sash organizers then canceled plans to picket outside the church. "The cardinal spoke directly to us in sincere language. We got what we asked for and that was an apology," said executive director Joe Murray.

Also, activist Lair Scott, who initiated the protest, dropped plans to attend.

Next the Gay Liberation

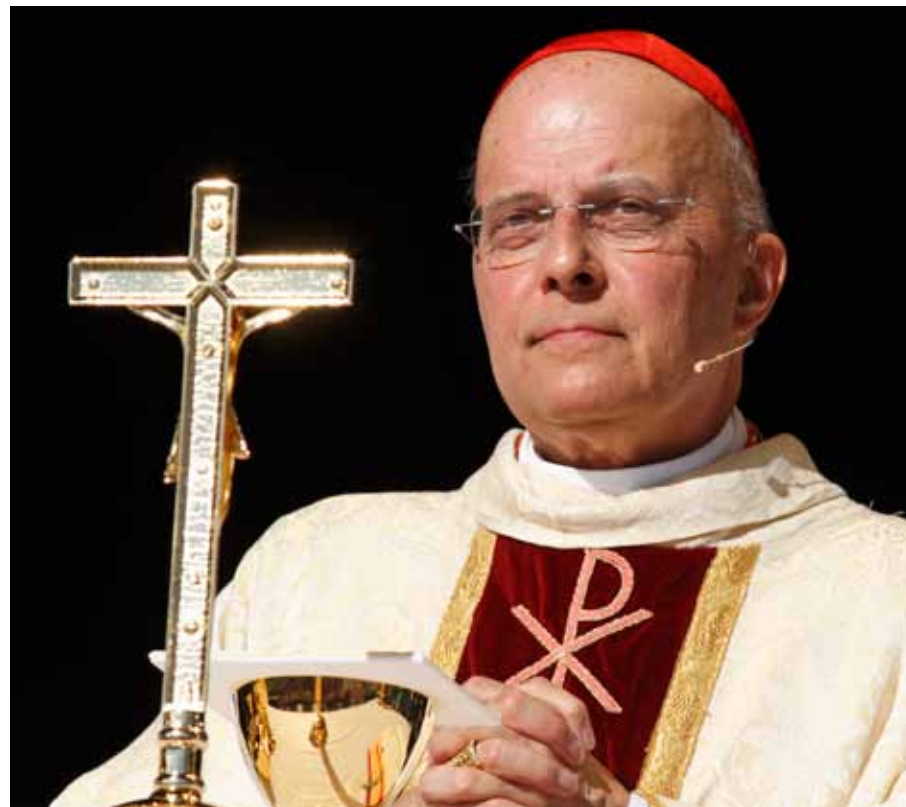


PHOTO: COURTESY

Cardinal Francis George, archbishop of Chicago.

Network issued a lengthy statement that read, in part: "Even though the Gay Liberation Network finds the 'apology' of Francis George woefully inadequate, we nevertheless agree to call off the protest scheduled for Jan. 8 ... at Holy Name Cathedral. While taking this action, we highlight our sharp disagreement with some LGBT groups, which previously backed the protest and now bubble over with undeserved praise for Cardinal George." GLN will formally stage a demonstration at Holy Name on Feb. 12, which is Freedom to Marry Day.

Some activists still showed

up on Jan. 8 at the church.

At the same time that George was denigrating LGBT activists, Catholic bishops in the state were ending a year in which they closed most Catholic Charities affiliates rather than comply with a requirement that they consider same-sex couples as potential foster-care and adoptive parents. The requirement, tied to state funding, followed passage of Illinois' civil unions law.

George had opposed the civil unions law, saying, "No one has the right to change the nature of marriage."

George, in 1997, succeeded the late Joseph Bernardin

as the archbishop of Chicago, leading 2.3 million Catholics. Before his installation, he served as archbishop in Portland, Ore., and as bishop in Yakima, Wash. George also served as president of the powerful U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops from 2007 to 2010.

Bernardin, too, faced LGBT demonstrators for initially opposing an anti-discrimination ordinance in the city in 1986. However, longtime LGBT civil rights activist Rick Garcia remembered that when the ordinance passed in 1988, Bernardin chose to remain silent.

Bernardin also supported the Archdiocesan Gay and Lesbian Outreach in Chicago and Dignity, a national group of LGBT Catholics. And, when the Vatican issued an anti-gay directive in 1987, Bernardin responded that the Church will "always welcome in our midst people of every ... background, even those who are most alienated from the church and society."

Garcia said, "One of Bernardin's requests for his wake was to have the Windy City Gay Chorus perform in the cathedral. They sang in prime time in a packed cathedral."



# NATIONAL GAZE

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# Anti-gay rhetoric hurts Santorum in N.H.

By Lisa Neff

Staff writer

Rick Santorum's surge to second in Iowa sent his religious right devotees over the moon and left his LGBT detractors dismayed.

Santorum's fifth place finish in New Hampshire on Jan. 10 didn't diminish the attention devoted to the most ardent Christian right candidate in the race for the GOP nomination.

"His bona fides as a religious right leader are unquestionable. But Rick Santorum isn't just close to traditional religious right organizations and activists: the former Pennsylvania senator also has ties to even the most fringe parts of the movement," reported the Right Wing Watch.

In the Iowa Caucuses on Jan. 3, Mitt Romney took first place just eight votes ahead of Santorum. Ron Paul, largely with the support of independent and younger voters, placed third, followed at a greater distance by Newt Gingrich, Rick Perry and Michele Bachmann.

Bachmann only bested Jon Huntsman, who had opted to focus on New Hampshire instead of Iowa, and Herman Cain, who quit the race weeks before the voting.

On Jan. 4, Bachmann, who in the summer had won the Iowa straw poll, quit the race after her single digit showing in the caucuses. With her controversial husband standing to her right, the

Minnesota congresswoman said, "Last night, the people of Iowa spoke with a very clear voice. So I have decided to stand aside."

A week later, in the first primary of the GOP race for the nomination, Romney took another first — this time decisively, with about 39 percent of the vote. In distant second was Paul, followed by Huntsman, Gingrich, Santorum and then Perry.

Romney's showing in the Granite State pleased officials with Log Cabin Republicans, a gay GOP group. "Romney has established himself as a candidate who can unite Republicans and a clear threat to Barack Obama in November," said LCR executive director R. Clarke Cooper. "Gov. Romney was consistently clear in the debates that he opposes discrimination based on sexual orientation. While he continues to support a constitutional amendment banning marriage equality — a position Log Cabin strongly opposes — he is also on record saying that such an amendment has been tried, rejected, and is unlikely to ever succeed. Romney has also taken a position that the repeal of 'don't ask, don't tell' has been settled, and he would not seek to reinstate the ban on open service."

Cooper also expressed satisfaction in Paul's second place finish and Huntsman's third-place finish, noting that Paul voted against a federal

marriage amendment and for the repeal of DADT and that Huntsman favors civil unions for same-sex couples.

"As the nomination process moves forward, Log Cabin Republicans suggest all the candidates recognize the lesson learned from New Hampshire: that inclusion wins," Cooper said.

But that may not be the lesson from South Carolina.

Even before the vote in New Hampshire, where Romney had long dominated the polls, the pack was chasing votes in South Carolina, the first contest in the South and the real test of whether a candidate could trip Romney from his front-runner status. Santorum predicted he could take over the race on Jan. 21 in the land of Palmetto trees, live oaks and sweet tea.

South Carolina, which has 50 GOP delegates and nine electoral votes, is a conservative state where Gingrich and Perry were polling strongly until Santorum's post-Iowa windfall.

In 2010, tea partiers dominated GOP politics. So civil rights activists in the state suspect that the most conservative of the social conservatives would perform well on their primary day.

While none of the main GOP candidates has a good record on LGBT rights, Santorum has the worst and boasts about it. That's why Iowa entrance polls showed he appealed most to born-



PHOTO: COURTESY

Rick Santorum and Mitt Romney at a New Hampshire debate. Although Santorum nearly tied Romney in Iowa, he finished fifth on Jan. 10.

again Christians and "very conservative" voters.

The former Pennsylvania senator opposes lesbians and gays adopting children, called the repeal of the DADT "tragic" and voted against hate crimes reform and banning employment discrimination based on sexual orientation.

Listed as one of Time magazine's "25 most influential evangelicals," Santorum was among the first to sign pledges to push for a federal constitutional amendment against same-sex marriage. He recently said that as president he would seek to invalidate the legal marriages of gays and lesbians.

Defending his position against same-sex marriage while a U.S. senator, Santorum infamously said, "In every society, the definition

of marriage has not ever to my knowledge included homosexuality. That's not to pick on homosexuality. It's not, you know, man on child, man on dog, or whatever the case may be."

More recently, Santorum said kids are better off with a dad in prison than a straight dad.

"Santorum rose by appealing to a uniquely socially conservative electorate," said LCR's Cooper.

However, Cooper predicted that Santorum's appeal isn't broad enough to win the Republican nomination, or the White House.

On Jan. 5, after a remark comparing homosexuality to polygamy, a crowd of New Hampshire college students, including a number of Republicans, booed Santorum off the stage.

"Winning the White House will require the politics of addition, not division," Cooper said. "It is very early in what promises to be a long and drawn-out nomination process, and Log Cabin Republicans are confident that ultimately our party will select the candidate with the best chance to win the White House. Rick Santorum is not that candidate."

Joe Solmonese of the Human Rights Campaign, the nation's largest LGBT civil rights group, said, "Santorum is only exemplary in that no other candidate has made opposing basic rights for LGBT Americans such a guiding principle of his or her public life."

But Romney is also not acceptable to HRC, an early endorser of President Barack Obama's re-election bid. "These men who have pledged to amend the constitution to ban marriage for gay couples, keep the failed 'don't ask, don't tell' policy and oppose basic workplace protections for LGBT people, are not fit to lead," Solmonese said. "The anti-LGBT positions shared by these candidates will not serve them well in a general election."

After South Carolina, the next major balloting in the nomination race will take place in Florida on Jan. 31. The Sunshine State's primary is a winner-take-all contest for delegates.

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# Delaware, Hawaii recognize civil unions

By Lisa Neff  
Staff writer

Gay and lesbian couples rang in 2012 with exchanges of rings under new civil union laws in Hawaii and Delaware.

Shortly after midnight Jan. 1, four same-sex couples — Monica Montgomery and Donna Gedge, Saralyn Batt and Isajah Morales, Gary Bradley and Paul Perry, and Bonnie Limatoc-DePonte and Lydia Pontin — were the first to be joined in civil unions in Hawaii. The ceremony took place at a private home.

In Delaware, about 400 people attended the first civil union ceremony, held the afternoon of New Year's Day in Wilmington. Guests witnessed the union of lawyers Lisa Goodman and Drewry Fennell, who have been partners for 14 years. The couple fought long and hard for recognition of same-sex relationships in their home state.

Goodman is a lawyer with Equality Delaware, the statewide LGBT civil rights group. Fennell heads the Delaware Criminal Justice Council and once led the state's ACLU chapter.

U.S. Sen. Chris Coons, D-Del., delivered a sermon at

**The civil union laws in the two states guarantee rights and responsibilities similar to marriage.**

later, the court ruled that discrimination in marriage was unjustifiable. But an appeal stalled same-sex marriages and, by 1998, with religious right groups pumping millions into a campaign, Hawaii voters backed a state constitutional amendment defining marriage as the union of a man and a woman.

While celebrating civil unions, activists still hope to secure marriage equality. One avenue might be cleared with a U.S. Supreme Court decision overturning California's anti-gay Proposition 8 ballot measure and similar measures in other states, including Hawaii.

In the meantime, same-sex couples in Hawaii can go online to complete applications, pay fees and receive civil union certificates.

"I've waited all my life to be able to get married," Limatoc-DuPonte, 57, told the Honolulu Star-Advertiser. "I'm ecstatic that other couples will see us and know that they can have the same thing — and they won't have to wait as long."

Follow the news at [www.wisconsin Gazette.com](http://www.wisconsin Gazette.com).



PHOTO: AP/THE WILMINGTON NEWS-JOURNAL, FRED COMEGYS  
**The Rev. Patricia Downing looks on as Patricia Goodman, left, and her partner Drewry Fennell, right, prepare to kiss after becoming the first couple to unite under Delaware's new civil-union law — which they helped to write — at Trinity Episcopal Church in Wilmington, Del., Jan. 1. Goodman and Fennell have been partners for 14 years. Goodman is a lawyer who led Equality Delaware's fight for the civil union law. Fennell heads the Delaware Criminal Justice Council and formerly led the ACLU's Delaware chapter.**

## NATIONAL BRIEFS

### NATIVITY DISPLAY WITH GAY COUPLES VANDALIZED

Police in Claremont, Calif., treated the vandalizing of a church nativity display featuring hand-holding same-sex couples as a hate crime.

The damage at Claremont United Methodist Church occurred on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day.

The display's three panels featured silhouettes of three handholding couples — two men, two women and a heterosexual pair. The vandal or vandals knocked over the depictions of the gay and lesbian couples but left the straight couple alone.

### CATHOLIC BISHOP URGES REPEAL OF MARRIAGE EQUALITY

A New Hampshire bishop marked the Christmas season's holy days with an endorsement of the attack on the Granite State's marriage equality law.

Bishop Peter A. Libasci, in a letter posted on the Diocese of Manchester website, said he was "encouraged that the

New Hampshire General Court will have the opportunity in this coming year to vote to restore the traditional understanding of marriage, and I sincerely hope that the General Court will accomplish this important task."

State lawmakers are expected to vote as early as this month on two bills to repeal the marriage equality law.

Standing Up For NH Families, a bi-partisan, grassroots group composed of residents and a leadership council of more than 200 civic, business, academic and political leaders, is challenging the repeal effort.

### CHAT-LINE ROBBER SENTENCED TO 14-PLUS YEARS

A robber who found his Portland, Ore., victims through gay chat lines and pretended to be interested in romance or sex was sentenced in late December to more than 14 years in prison.

Investigators said 35-year-

old Elijah Whitney Cohens II held up four victims earlier in 2011, ranging from their 20 to their 60s. Once he met victims, he pretended to be a policeman, according to The Oregonian newspaper.

Investigators used DNA to identify Cohens, who pleaded guilty to robbery, burglary and impersonating an officer. He was sentenced to 150 months and ordered to pay \$7,000 in restitution.

### TRANSGENDER WOMAN SLAIN, ARREST MADE

Authorities in Kansas City, Mo., arrested a 26-year-old man for the Christmas Eve slaying of a 31-year-old transgender woman.

Dee Dee Pearson was fatally shot Dec. 24. The Kansas City Anti-Violence Project, soon after arriving at the crime scene, arrested Kenyan L. Jones.

"Dee Dee was a friend to many people in the community — KCAVP and The Justice Project offers our sincerest

condolences to those grieving this loss," read a statement from the KCAVP.

KCAVP and other groups, including the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, took issue with early media reports on Pearson's death that contained "transphobic language."

### POLL: MORE NM VOTERS BACK MARRIAGE EQUALITY

A new poll shows that for the first time more New Mexicans support legalizing same-sex marriage than oppose same-sex marriage.

The poll was conducted by the Public Policy Polling firm in Washington, D.C., and celebrated by Equality New Mexico, a statewide LGBT civil rights group.

The poll, conducted from Dec. 11-13, found that 45 percent of New Mexico voters now support same-sex marriage, while 43 percent oppose. A similar PPP poll in June found voters were against

legalizing same-sex marriage 48 percent to 42 percent.



PHOTO: COURTESY  
**NAACP president Benjamin Jealous will deliver the keynote address at Creating Change in Baltimore on Jan. 26.**

### BALTIMORE TO HOST CREATING CHANGE

More than 2,500 LGBT activists are bound for Baltimore this month for the national Creating Change conference, the largest gay

convention in the country. The conference, organized by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, is set for Jan. 25 to Jan. 29, with NAACP president Benjamin Jealous delivering the keynote speech on Jan. 26. Plans include a lobby day on Capitol Hill and hundreds of workshops.

### WASHINGTON GOVERNOR BACKS MARRIAGE EQUALITY

Washington state Gov. Christine Gregoire said she supports a marriage equality bill soon to be introduced in her state.

Gregoire held a news conference on Jan. 4 to make her statement: "It is time in Washington state for marriage equality. It is time, it's the right thing to do."

Gregoire, who has held the office since 2004, signed the state's domestic partnership bill into law in 2007.

Washington's 2012 legislative session begins on Jan. 9. Six states and the District of Columbia have enacted marriage equality measures.

— from WiG and AP

### ON THE BOOKS

Civil union laws that provide state marriage rights and responsibilities exist in Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, New Jersey and Rhode Island.

Domestic partnership laws that provide most state marriage rights and responsibilities exist in California, Oregon, Washington and Nevada.

Domestic partnership laws that provide limited rights for same-sex relationships exist in Maine, Maryland, Colorado and Wisconsin.

Marriage equality laws exist in the District of Columbia, Connecticut, Iowa, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York and Vermont.

— LN.

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## { Editorial }

## Abolish corporate free speech 'right'

As we dive into another supercharged political year, at least one outcome is guaranteed: a tsunami of corporate and special-interest cash will flood the political arena.

The obscene spending – and the resulting cronyism – that sullies our political process is a bipartisan problem. President Barack Obama spent \$740.6 million in his 2008 presidential race, eclipsing the combined \$646.7 million spent by George W. Bush and Democratic presidential nominee John Kerry – in 2004. Although Obama broke new ground in successfully soliciting small individual donors, he ultimately relied heavily on megadonor bundlers, whom he handsomely rewarded.

Overall, about one-third of Obama bundlers or their spouses – 184 out of 556 – joined the administration in some capacity, according to Politico. Nearly 80 percent of the bundlers who collected more than \$500,000 for Obama took key administration positions.

The records for political spending set in 2008 will be shattered this year, thanks to the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission in January 2010. That ruling banned limits on political spending by corporations and unions, declaring that such entities must be treated as individual citizens with the First Amendment right to free speech.

The ruling opened the floodgates for independent, third-party campaign spending. In Wisconsin we saw a shocking \$35 million spent over the summer on races to recall eight state senators. Much of that money was spent by clandestine groups with misleading names that were formed expressly to conduct smear campaigns against specific candidates.

And that was just a hint of what's to come.

It's unlikely that the nation's founders wanted our political system to degenerate into the pay-to-play scheme that it's become, with political donors rather than the common good dictating the legislative agenda. But that's exactly the kind of a political system that Citizens United codified.

Although unions were empowered by the ruling, their membership and power are only a fraction of what they once were. That's why busting the unions was such a high priority on Gov. Scott Walker's agenda – it helped to eliminate the strongest political player on the progressive side, leaving corporate donors such as his backers in the political driver's seat.

No corporation, union or any other kind of group should be endowed constitutionally with the right to control the political process through undue influence. Government offices should not be for sale to the highest bidder. That is not what democracy looks like.

The only way now to return government to the hands of voters is by enacting a constitutional amendment proclaiming that only human beings and not corporations are entitled to constitutional rights. Last year, Madison and Dane County were among the first municipalities in the nation to adopt resolutions calling for such an amendment. The year ended with the city council of Los Angeles unanimously voting to abolish corporate constitutional rights.

We urge readers to support the effort launched by Move to Amend to eliminate the poisonous effects of Citizens United through a constitutional amendment. Go to [www.movetoamend.org](http://www.movetoamend.org) to learn more about the campaign and to sign the petition.



"I'm gay."

## { Feedback }

**MEA CULPA**

(The following is an open letter from Chicago's Cardinal Francis George.)

During a recent TV interview, speaking about this year's Gay Pride Parade, I used an analogy that is inflammatory.

I am personally distressed that what I said has been taken to mean that I believe all gays and lesbians are like members of the Klan. I do not believe that; it is obviously not true. Many people have friends and family members who are gay or lesbian, as have I. We love them; they are part of our lives, part of who we are. I am deeply sorry for the hurt that my remarks have brought to the

hearts of gays and lesbians and their families.

I can only say that my remarks were motivated by fear for the Church's liberty. This is a larger topic that cannot be explored in this expression of personal sorrow and sympathy for those who were wounded by what I said.

Francis Cardinal George, OMI

**REVELATION**

(The following is a statement from "ex-gay" leader Alan Chambers, who was recently named Christian Hero of the Year by the anti-gay evangelical publication World Magazine.)

The majority of people that I have met, and I would

say the majority meaning 99.9 percent of them, have not experienced a change in their orientation or have gotten to a place where they could say that they could never be tempted or are not tempted in some way or experience some level of same-sex attraction.

I think that there is a gender issue there. There are some women who have challenged me and said, "Well that – my orientation or my attractions have changed completely."

Those have been few and far between. The vast majority of people that I know do still experience some level of same-sex attraction.

Alan Chambers  
Exodus International

## ON THE RECORD

"I'm believing in a miracle because I know the one who gives miracles." – FORMER GOP PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE MICHELE BACHMANN predicting a Jesus-inspired, come-from-behind win in the Jan. 3 Iowa caucuses. Bachmann placed near the bottom and suspended her campaign.

"I must thank my wonderful husband of 33 years Marcus Bachmann. He is the best campaigner in our family. And yesterday when we were out on Main Street in Des Moines, he was out buying sunglasses for our dog Boomer."

– MICHELE BACHMANN giving yet more material to late-night comedians as she addresses supporters in Iowa on the evening of Jan. 3 to announce she was suspending her campaign.

"I'm an amateur paleontologist. I spend a lot of time looking at the Earth's temperature for a very long time. I'm a lot harder to convince than just looking at a computer model."

– GOP PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE NEWT GINGRICH explaining to Iowa voters that he doesn't believe in human-generated climate change because he knows more than the scientists who do believe in it.

"Marriage is not a right. It's a privilege that is given to society by society for a reason. ... We want to encourage what is the best for children."

– FORMER U.S. SEN. RICK SANTORUM, who lost the Iowa GOP presidential caucuses by only a handful of votes.

"Initially I wondered if the organizers and other contestants would accept or ostracize me, but I've been fine."

– MOLLIE THOMAS, one of two lesbians who competed recently for the title of Miss California USA.

"I'd say Shakespeare slept with men. ... Shakespeare obviously enjoyed sex with men as well as women."

– OUT ACTOR SIR IAN MCKELLAN saying that the complexities and plot devices of Shakespeare's work clearly reveal that the Bard was gay.

"The bigotry question goes both ways. And there is a lot more anti-Christian bigotry today than there is concern on the other side, and none of it gets covered by the news media."

– NEWT GINGRICH trying to convince voters that fringe-right Christians are more persecuted in the United States than LGBT people.

"I was criticized last night by Gov. Romney for putting my country first. He criticized me while he was out raising money, for serving my country in China. Yes, under a Democrat, like my two sons are doing in the United States Navy. They're not asking what political affiliation the president is."

– GOP PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE JON HUNTSMAN responding to Mitt Romney's attempt to paint him as a turncoat for serving in President Barack Obama's administration.

## Landmark year for trans progress

Transgender people have never seen a year like 2011 – nearly every month brought news of a major advance.

It began with a clarification that any physician can certify a passport applicant who had appropriate treatment for a gender transition. All that is now needed for a transgender person to obtain a passport is the correct name and gender.

Since passports are one of the few "gatekeeper" documents that can be used to change other forms of identification, such as driver's licenses, this change should go a long way toward lowering the rate at which trans people are involuntarily outed and exposed to prejudice.

In February, the National Center for Transgender Equality and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force issued "Injustice at Every Turn," the largest transgender study ever. Documenting the many ways transgender people and their family members experience discrimination, violence and prejudice, the study was later augmented with special reports on the additional discrimination faced by African-American and Latino

Opinion  
LOREE COOK-DANIELS

transgender people. Although data isn't a policy change, this study has already been used as justification for many advances and will continue to spur improvements for years.

In May, the U.S. Office of Personnel Management issued a suite of documents concerning the rights of transgender federal workers. Although federal employees account for only a small fraction of the workforce, the extremely progressive policies set the goalposts for other employers.

In June, the United Nations passed its first resolution focused solely on protecting people based on their sexual orientation and gender identity. The Veterans Administration also issued a directive requiring all VA facilities to provide respectful health care to transgender veterans "without discrimination." Up to 40 percent of transgender people are military veterans, and there were reports of care improv-

ing overnight.

In August, NCTE issued a Medicare fact sheet publicizing new and little-known benefits. Not only did they clarify that Medicare covers hormones used by transgender people, but they also published a special billing code (condition code 45) that, when used in conjunction with the appropriate specific procedure codes, prevents the automatic "error" rejection that usually complicates payment for sex-linked procedures. The code can also be used by health care professionals to bill insurance companies.

August also saw an advance that was 10 years in the making: the World Professional Association for Transgender Health issued its 7th Standards of Care for the health of transsexual, transgender, and gender non-conforming people. The new standards are markedly more progressive.

In September, the Social Security Administration stopped issuing "no-match" letters telling employers when an employee has a different gender on Social Security records. Originally

designed to combat domestic terrorism, the letters had instead served to out transgender employees.

In November, the White House hosted a meeting with transgender activists to discuss violence against transgender people. While FORGE announced there that it had received more than a half-million dollar federal grant to improve care for transgender crime victims, the meeting focused on what else the White House can do to address the problem. That month NCTE and the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network issued a ground-breaking model policy for school districts to protect transgender and gender nonconforming students.

The year ended with news from the Human Rights Campaign that nearly one-third of the largest U.S. corporations now provide health insurance covering at least \$75,000 worth of surgery for transitioning transgender employees, a rate that had quadrupled in just two years. We're making progress.

Loree Cook-Daniels is policy and program director of FORGE.

## Stand up for women's health care

We begin the new year hoping for good health and a change of priorities after an unprecedented attack on women's health care access in 2011.

We are in the greatest economic recession since the Great Depression. While Wisconsin citizens are doing their best to weather decreased wages, lost jobs and health insurance fee hikes and coverage reductions, state legislative leaders have instead focused on advancing their personal social agendas.

This year alone, eight legislative proposals seeking to limit access to essential health care services and information have been introduced in the Legislature. The Legislature premiered its agenda on women's health by eliminating \$1 million dollars in state funds directed to the essential preventative care of women seen at Planned Parenthood.

Opinion  
TERI HUYCK

After eliminating our ability to provide prevention services under the state family planning program, Gov. Scott Walker has now stopped funding the Well Woman Program at Planned Parenthood in Winnebago, Outagamie, Sheboygan and Fond du Lac counties. One thousand women receiving breast and cervical cancer care have been left without anywhere to turn, putting their health and lives at risk.

Additionally, two legislative proposals seek to eliminate Planned Parenthood's ability to provide breast and cervical cancer screenings and referrals to any woman in the Well Woman program despite Planned Parenthood's exemplary 16-year record of partnering with the state.

Legislative leaders also continue their push for a repeal of the Healthy Youth Act, an action that would end comprehensive sex education programs in schools. Investment in these prevention-based services saves taxpayers millions in annual costs associated with unintended pregnancy and STDs and results in healthier, more economically viable communities.

Unfortunately, the insanity does not stop there. The latest is a bill seeking to amend the Wisconsin Constitution to grant legal personhood rights to a fertilized egg. That threatens to outlaw fertility treatment, birth control and abortion. This proposal, inspired by the one recently defeated in Mississippi, would make miscarriage a cause for criminal investigation. While the political motivations behind all of these attacks could not be clearer, we welcome the opportunity to tell the Wisconsin peo-

ple about the work Planned Parenthood does every day to detect and prevent cancer and STDs, help parents and teens talk about healthy relationships, reduce unintended pregnancy and provide safe, legal abortion care.

While the legislative leadership continues to push its personal social agenda during this economic downturn, Planned Parenthood remains committed to our priority of providing essential health care services and education to keep women and our communities safe healthy and strong. We call on the public who shares these same priorities to urge their elected leaders to break away from the pack mentality, stand up for what is right and end these senseless attacks on women's health care access and sex education.

Teri Huyck is president and CEO of Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin.

**Wisconsin Gazette .com**

The Wisconsin Gazette is published every other week and distributed throughout the Milwaukee area, Madison, Racine, Kenosha, and 40 other cities statewide. To have WiG delivered to your address, contact [rwright@wisconsinngazette.com](mailto:rwright@wisconsinngazette.com) or call 414-961-3240, ext. 101

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Adam Horwitz, Debra Brehmer,  
Jody Hirsh, Rick Karlin,  
Cory Liebmann, Jamakaya,  
Mike Muckian, Kat Murrell

# Prosecutors' charges include embezzlement, fraud and child enticement

**ARRESTS** from 1 involving embezzlement and fraud involving the Operation Freedom fundraiser. Prosecutors say he stole more than \$42,000 in donations.

Held at the Milwaukee County Zoo around the July 4 holiday, Operation Freedom was a high-profile event. WTMJ's right-wing talk radio stars Charlie Sykes and Jeff Wagner hosted at least two of the occasions.

Prosecutors state in the complaint that Walker transferred control of Operation Freedom to Russell in October 2009.

In a statement released after the arrests, Walker said that his chief of staff had alerted law enforcement officials about concerns over funds associated with the military fundraiser. "We appreciate learning that the District Attorney's office investigated those concerns," Walker said.

Wisconsin Democratic officials have called on Walker to explain why he appointed Russell to a high-level post in his administration after Russell was

reportedly terminated from his previous position at the Wisconsin Housing & Economic Development Authority for misuse of a department credit card.

A Log Cabin Republican, Russell has a long history with the Wisconsin GOP and with Walker. He managed former Gov. Tommy Thompson's Milwaukee office before a failed run for the Assembly in 2000. He then joined the recall campaign that brought Walker into the Milwaukee County Executive position in 2002.

Russell went on to serve as an adviser to Walker's campaigns as well as in various positions in Walker's Milwaukee County administration. He was appointed to serve as the county's interim director of economic development, but the county board refused to confirm him to the position due to his lack of experience and poor performance. Walker responded by shutting down the agency.

Walker next appointed Russell as his community relations director and then

as housing administrator, where he served throughout Walker's gubernatorial campaign.

In August 2010, investigators seized computer equipment and iPhones from Russell and Pierick's home as part of an ongoing John Doe probe of Walker staffers. After that, Russell was not asked to join Walker's gubernatorial administration.

Prosecutors said the charges against Pierick resulted from an investigation launched after inadvertently discovering pornographic images of underage males on Russell's computer. Also found were graphic text-message chats with a then 17-year-old Waukesha boy that included references to sexual "role play" between "daddies" and "sons," according to the complaint against Pierick. A lengthy chat in which Pierick attempts to arrange a three-way sexual tryst involving him, Russell and the teen, who repeatedly claimed to be over 18, is transcribed in the complaint.

Among the usernames that Pierick and/or Russell



PHOTO: AP/MILWAUKEE JOURNAL-SENTINEL, GARY PORTER, FILE  
In this March 2, 2002, photo, Scott Walker, center, meets with Tim Russell, left, and Brian Pierick, in the parking lot at Kinko's on Mayfair Road in Wauwatosa.

used on pornographic fetish sites were "Walker04" and "TRusell." Russell has not been charged so far with sex crimes in the ongoing investigation.

The recent charges follow

the December 2011 arrest of Andrew P. Jensen Jr., a past president of the Commercial Association of Realtors-Wisconsin. He was taken into custody for refusing to cooperate with the probe.

Under the rules of so-called "John Doe" investigations, witnesses can be subpoenaed and forced to testify under oath. Jensen apparently refused to testify after a subpoena was granted.

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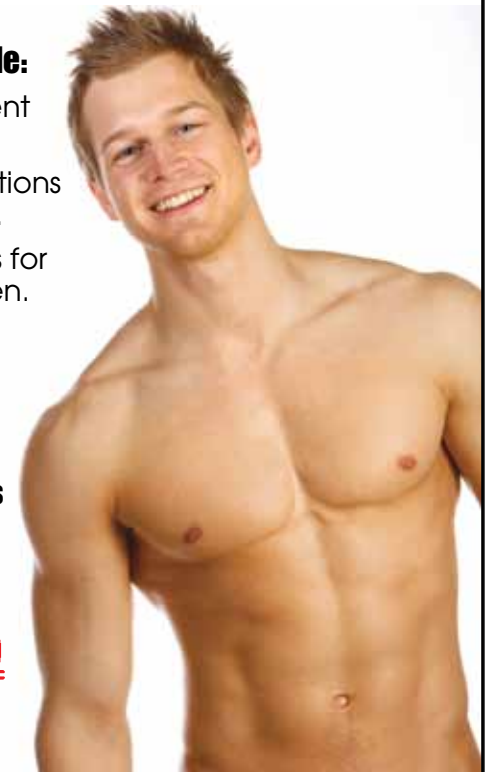
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# This 'pet' is for the birds – and the record books

From AP

A tiny summer visitor has turned into something of a pet and a backyard tourist attraction for a family in North Vernon, Ind.

Nicknamed "Frosty," Dave and Norma Jackson's unusual pet is a female calliope hummingbird – the smallest species in the hummingbird family found in the United States.

The species is extremely rare to find in the Midwest. You're more likely to find it buzzing around the Pacific Northwest than living in a bush behind a busy residential street in Indiana not far from a railroad track.

In fact, Frosty is the first calliope hummingbird documented in Indiana. And it's even more rare that such a sighting came in the winter – a time when hummingbirds normally leave their breeding grounds and fly south.

"We're just so excited. This is a once-in-a-lifetime experience for us," Norma Jackson said. Since learning about the unique nature of the bird, the Jacksons have opened their door to area bird enthusiasts. They have had as many as 45 visitors in one day, including one person who traveled from Chicago. They were as busy with family and friends on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day as they were with birders, as they hosted 28 of Frosty's visitors.

But the bird doesn't seem to mind the attention. "She's just so active in the morning," Norma Jackson said of the hummingbird. "And she just loves to show off for all these birders. She just loves it."

The Jacksons don't consider themselves bird enthusiasts by any stretch of the imagination. In fact, they actually saw the bird in their backyard for months without thinking much of it. "We had no idea this bird was anything more than any other usual hummingbird," Norma Jackson said. But once winter came, they knew enough to understand that it was very rare to have such a bird lingering around in the cold. Just for fun, they put a picture of Frosty in the local paper, and it drew immediate interest. The photo was passed around to local wildlife workers and soon made its way to Don Gorney, president of the Amos W. Butler Audubon Society, based in Indianapolis. Gorney visited the Jacksons and took several pictures of the bird. He was astonished to find that it was calliope hummingbird, far from home. "Nobody knows for certain why the bird shows up in the eastern United States," he said, citing Ohio, Wisconsin and New Jersey as states that also have documented calliope sightings.

Gorney encouraged the Jacksons to have the calliope banded or tagged, so if it is caught again, others could know where it came from and where it has been. Through the banding process, done by a licensed bander, the Jacksons were able to find out the bird's weight – 3.57 grams. It also was identified as a young female not much older than one year and a half. The brander let the Jacksons hold the bird and listen to its heartbeat – which beats about 1,200 times per minute. "It sounded like a little motor running," Norma Jackson said. Gorney said because the Jacksons left out their hummingbird feeder over the winter, he would not be surprised if Frosty stayed until deep into January. He even lent the couple his feeder and heat tape to keep the water from freezing. However, he added that the bird is heavier than the average female, which would suggest it's ready to migrate. The Jacksons have become attached to Frosty. "It's like other people have cats and dogs as pets, but she's become our pet," Norma Jackson said. The two said they often sit and watch Frosty through their dining room window while they eat. Once the Jacksons found out the identity of their unique guest, they canceled a trip to Gatlinburg, Tenn., the day after Christmas to allow visitors to see the hummingbird. "Gatlinburg's going to be there," Norma Jackson said. "But Frosty could leave any day."

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PHOTO: BIRDWATCHINGDAILY.COM

A female calliope hummingbird.

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# US sees call for more gay-friendly senior housing

By Kathy Matheson  
AP writer

Many LGBT seniors fear discrimination, disrespect or worse by health care workers and residents of elder housing facilities, ultimately leading many back into the closet after years of being open, experts say.

That anxiety takes on new significance as the first of the 77 million baby boomers in the United States turned 65 last year. At least 1.5 million seniors are gay, a number expected to double by 2030, according to SAGE, the New York-based group Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders.

Recognizing the need, developers in Philadelphia have secured a site and initial funding for what would be one of the nation's few GLBT-friendly affordable housing facilities. They hope to break ground on a 52-unit, \$17 million building in 2013.

Anti-discrimination laws prohibit gay-only housing, but projects can be made GLBT-friendly through marketing and location. And while private retirement facilities tar-

geted at the gay community exist, such homes are often out of reach for all but the wealthiest seniors.

Census figures released this month indicate about 49 percent of Americans over 65 could be considered poor or low-income.

Gays are also less likely to have biological family to help with informal caregiving, either through estrangement or being childless, making them more dependent on outside services. That makes them more vulnerable, SAGE executive director Michael Adams said.

"They cannot at all assume that they will be treated well or given the welcome mat," he said.

Cities including San Francisco and Chicago also have projects planned. But the first and, so far, only affordable housing complex for gay elders in the United States is Triangle Square-Hollywood in Los Angeles.

Open since 2007, the \$22 million facility has 104 units available to any low-income senior 62 and over, gay or



PHOTO: STOCK

**To become a part of Milwaukee's senior gay community, join SAGE/Milwaukee. Go to [www.sagemilwaukee.org](http://www.sagemilwaukee.org) to learn more.**

straight, according to executive director Mark Supper. Residents pay monthly rent on a sliding scale, from about \$200 to \$800, depending on their income. About 35 units are set aside for seniors with HIV/AIDS and for those at risk of becoming homeless, Supper said.

The Triangle's population is about 90 percent GLBT and it has a waiting list of about 200 people. The project's

developer, Gay & Lesbian Elder Housing, plans to build a second facility in Southern California in the next 18 months, Supper said.

Chris Bartlett, executive director of the GLBT William Way Center in Philadelphia, noted that advocates spent the better part of two decades devoting their energy to programs for those affected by HIV or AIDS, which were decimating the

gay community.

While AIDS remains a priority, Bartlett said, the crisis mentality has passed and allowed the community to focus on other things. He said he looks forward to the Way Center providing social services at the planned Philadelphia senior housing facility, in a sense repaying those who led the gay liberation movement.

"Don't we owe it to them ... to ensure that they have an experience as elders that's worthy of what they gave to our community?" Bartlett said.

Adams said the real solution lies not only in building more facilities, but in cultural competency training for staffers at existing elder programs. The Philadelphia Corporation on Aging, the private nonprofit that serves the city's seniors, began offering such seminars to health care workers a couple of years ago, said Tom Shea, the agency's director of training.

"They're going to be seeing a diverse slice of the aging population in Philadelphia ... and we need to be sensitive

to all their needs," Shea said.

Adams suggested that discrimination faced by today's GLBT elders could diminish in the decades ahead, since he said opinion research shows that younger generations are less likely to harbor anti-gay biases than older generations.

"So we hope that the passage of time will provide part of the solution," he said. "But of course, today's LGBT elders can't wait for that." Jackie Adams, 54, said being diagnosed with AIDS many years ago meant she never thought she'd live long enough to need elder housing. But now Adams, a transgender woman, is part of a local initiative focused on GLBT senior issues.

On a limited income after losing her job, Adams said affordable, GLBT-friendly senior housing is badly needed. "I would be incomplete if I had to go from wearing stockings and dresses to (work boots) and jeans," Adams said. "I would like to be able to live in a community where I could fully be me."

# The vast majority of Americans support the use of medical marijuana

CANNABIS from 1

Opponents of the 2009 bill included the Wisconsin Medical Society and Wisconsin Narcotics Officers Association, as well as Wisconsin Attorney General J.B. Van Hollen. In written testimony, Van Hollen said the Jacki Rickert Medical Marijuana Act would violate federal drug laws and complicate prosecution of state cases.

JRMMA would allow a chronically ill patient with a doctor's recommendation to possess up to 12 plants and three ounces of medicinal marijuana. The measure also would create a system of regulated access to marijuana — through state-licensed, non-profit distribution centers. If it passes, patients suffering from cancer, glaucoma, HIV/AIDS and other diseases will not have to use the criminal market to obtain their medicine.

To regulate the program, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services would create a registry and issue medical marijuana ID cards. Currently, a person convicted of possession of less than an ounce of marijuana can be sentenced to six months in jail and a \$1,000 fine in Wisconsin. "Patients with a debilitating medical condition should not live in fear of being prosecuted for using marijuana to ease their pain or aid their healing," Erpenbach said. "People deserve compassionate legal treatment prescribed by their doctor."

A number of studies show pot can be a painkiller and an effective treatment for some disorders and diseases. The Center for Medicinal Cannabis Research at the University of California-San Diego, for example, has completed five studies on medicinal marijuana. Four of them demonstrated that cannabis has analgesic effects in pain caused by injury, such as spinal cord injury, or diseases of the nervous system, including complications from AIDS. The studies showed that medical marijuana may provide a treatment option for patients who do not respond or respond inadequately to currently available therapies.

A fifth study found medical marijuana reduces Multiple Sclerosis muscle spasticity, "at least in the short term, beyond the benefit available from usual medical care." "Plenty of evidence already exists proving the relative safety and efficacy of marijuana when used to treat a variety of ailments, and more studies on the potential benefits of marijuana treatments are being released regularly," said Robert Capecchi, legislative analyst for the D.C.-based Marijuana Policy Project. Capecchi was among the more than 100 witnesses who testified at the 2009 hearing in Madison in favor of medical marijuana. So was Jacki Rickert, the Mondovi woman for whom the bill is named. Rickert lives with Ehlers-Danlos syndrome, a group of heritable connective tissue disorders characterized by articular joint hypermobility, skin extensibility and tissue fragility. People with EDS can have frequent joint dislocations, skin that easily tears and bruises, wounds that won't heal and debilitating musculoskeletal pain. When she testified in 2009, Rickert recalled her doctor telling her, "You will die," if she could not gain weight. She weighed about 68 pounds at the time, and there was one medicine that could help — marijuana. "We've never wanted to break the law, but sometimes you have to," she testified. Rickert had planned to join Pocan and Erpenbach for the Capitol press conference on the reintroduction of JRMMA, but for medical reasons she could not attend. "JRMMA is about real people with real needs," she said, adding that passage of the bill is urgent. People, she said, need medical marijuana "now, not next time. How many people are not going to have a next time? Maybe next time I won't be around. How many friends have I lost? How many times have I said you will know someone who needs medical cannabis? Things really need to be done to make it a reality. I've run out of ways to make sense of the senseless. We do know that it does help." Rickert's friends and supporters have said they want JRMMA enacted to help ease

her pain, not in her memory. Is 2012 the year?

By late December, JRMMA had 15 co-sponsors in the Assembly and two in the Senate — Erpenbach and Lena Taylor, D-Milwaukee. And the Marijuana Policy Project is ready to help lobby and gather testimony to increase support among lawmakers, said spokesman Morgan Fox.

Still to come in the process is scheduling reviews in committees, all of which are chaired by Republicans in a state government headed by Republican Gov. Scott Walker.

In the Senate, one of the two health committees where the bill might be assigned is chaired by Leah Vukmir, R-Wauwatosa, who during the 2009 hearing on JRMMA called it "nothing more than a ruse for you to move forward for full legalization of marijuana."

Pocan recognized the Capitol might not be fertile territory to grow support for JRMMA in 2012. He cited another obstacle — a short legislative calendar that ends in March.

"But it's important to have a hearing and get people to come out and talk about it, because we find there's so much more support in this state than opposition," Pocan said. "Every time we put it out there, we gain additional support," he added.

And JRMMA, which Pocan said could become model legislation for other states, already has popular appeal.

In Wisconsin in 2010, non-binding referendums for medical marijuana passed in Dane County and River Falls with overwhelming support.

Also, statewide polls put support for medical marijuana at 75-80 percent. In November 2010, an estimated 3,200 people marched on the Capitol in support of medical pot.

At the national level,

## ON THE BOOKS

The District of Columbia and 16 states — Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Delaware, Hawaii, Maine, Michigan, Montana, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont and Washington — provide access to medical marijuana for patients suffering certain illnesses.

polls show similar support for legalizing medical marijuana. A CBS News poll in November 2011 found 77 percent of Americans support it.

"This is an issue where people are clearly way ahead of the policy makers," said Pocan, who is openly gay. "The Wisconsin Legislature needs to catch up with the public and pass this bill, because making medical marijuana legal is the right and compassionate thing to do for patients in pain."

Wisconsin, which has a long history of enacting progressive policies, lags behind 16 other states and the District of Columbia on the issue, according to compassionate cannabis campaigners. In some states, voter-approved ballot measures created access in others.

The lawmakers argue that marijuana should not be in the same class as heroin, PCP and LCD, which are labeled as dangerous drugs with no

medical use. "The time has come for the federal government to stop preempting states' medical marijuana laws," Frank said. "For the federal government to come in and supersede state law is a real mistake for those in pain for whom nothing else seems to work."

Frank and U.S. Rep. Ron Paul, R-Texas, also introduced the Ending Federal Marijuana Prohibition Act of 2011, which would end marijuana prohibition at the federal level and allow states to decide whether to prohibit marijuana, allow use for medical purposes or decriminalize possession altogether.

Reform at the federal level would cease the federal raids on medical marijuana dispensaries in California and Washington.

Reform at the federal level also would make it easier for Wisconsin to make and enforce its own policy, Fox said. And the best policy is to legalize medical marijuana, he added. "There is absolutely no reason that people should be treated like criminals for trying to treat their conditions ... with what can be a far safer method than currently available pharmaceutical drugs," Fox said.

isulators in Florida, Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio and Pennsylvania may take up medical marijuana bills.

MPP will be involved in lobbying for legislation in the other states, as well as continuing to promote legislation that would remove the federal prohibition against marijuana.

In 2011, a coalition of progressive lawmakers introduced four bills to reform federal marijuana laws, including the Medical Marijuana Patient Protection Act sponsored by U.S. Reps. Barney Frank, D-Mass., and Jared Polis, D-Colo., who are both openly gay, and Pete Stark, D-Calif.

The measure would make individuals and entities immune to federal prosecution when acting in compliance with state medical marijuana laws. The bill also would direct the White House to initiate the process of rescheduling marijuana under the Controlled Substances Act so that it is placed in a schedule other than Schedule I.

The vast majority of Americans support allowing sick people to use marijuana to treat their illnesses, and more and more states are taking steps that reflect that," MPP's Capecchi said. This year, in addition to lawmakers in Wisconsin, leg-

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## pariah

### New film explores double lives of queer youth

**Interview**  
 GREGG SHAPIRO

Dee Rees' feature film debut "Pariah" is a remarkable achievement. The story of queer African-American teenager Alike (pronounced uh-lee-kay) is sure to strike a chord with viewers from all walks of life. The film examines the double life Alike leads, both at home with her religiously conservative family and with her friends at school and in night clubs. The performances by Adepero Oduye as Alike and Kim Wayans as Alike's mother Audrey are especially riveting.

I spoke with writer/director Dee Rees and actress Adepero Oduye shortly before "Pariah" opened in theaters.

**Gregg Shapiro: Dee, I want to begin by asking you about the film life of "Pariah."**  
 Dee Rees: I first wrote the fea-

ture script in 2005. The first draft was like 140 pages. I needed a thesis film (in the grad program at NYU), so I took the first 30 pages, the first act, and shot it as a short film. As the short made its way around the festival circuit, it got the attention of the Sundance Institute. They invited us out for the screenwriting lab and again for the directing lab. From feature to short to feature, it's been a six-year journey.

**Like the character of Vanessa in the 2011 release "Gun Hill Road," Alike changes her clothes before walking through her parents' doors. Do you think it's a coincidence that two films about the double lives of queer teens are currently on everyone's radar?**

DR: I wrote "Pariah" first, but I think the story has universality. Gay or straight, I think all teens go through that period where they try to stake out identity and self. I think it's something that everybody can relate to — finding your-



"Pariah" director Dee Rees, left, and star Adepero Oduye pose before a film poster.



self. I think the irony with "Pariah" is that Alike is neither of the things that she changes into. She's not this stud in the club and neither is she this pink princess. She's somewhere in between. It's finding that space, that identity, that's the nuance of her self.

**As with the mothers of many teenagers, Alike's mother Audrey doesn't approve of her friends. Is this something from your experience, Dee?**

DR: I think everybody has those friends that your parents don't like. I think in this case, Audrey's objection to Laura is not just because she's openly gay, but because she perceives Laura to be of lower class. Alike's is this brownstone, working-class family — napkin rings on the table. Laura and her sister are eating Ramen noodles. Audrey has this idea of what her family should look like and who they should associate with.

**Did you have the same experience, Adepero?**  
 Adepero Oduye: Yeah, totally. It was made clear that there were certain kinds of people not to hang out with and this is why. Don't even act like those people, because in this house we do it this way.

**Would you do the same**

**thing to your children?**  
 AO: I guess I understand why parents do that. If you see your kids going down a path, running with a dangerous crowd. But in terms of being friends with somebody who maybe not from the same socio-economic background, no, that's dumb.

**This is not the kind of role in which we are accustomed to seeing Kim Wayans. Dee, please say something about casting her as Audrey.**

DR: Kim Wayans does an amazing job playing Audrey. Audrey's character is lonely and vulnerable and required a nuanced approach. What Kim brought to that role was that sensitivity. We'd seen a lot of Audreys before we got to her. They kept playing anger, and that wasn't who Audrey was. Kim brought that layer to Audrey and made her a full person.

**Alike's friendship with Bina (Aasha Davis) develops into something more. Have either or both of you had a similar experiences — where a friendship blossoms into love?**

DR: I think love starts in friendship. Because your lover is your friend.

**Dee, did you have a target audience in mind for "Pariah?"**  
 DR: We knew going into it that the art-house crowd would love this film and that the queer community and African-American community would, too. But it's universal. Gay, straight, no matter your background or where you're from, you're going to be able to relate to that space in your life where you find out who you are and have the courage to be that.

swipes you. You have this friend, and all of sudden something is said or something happens. And you're like, "Wait a second, what's happening here?" But like Dee said, the best ones start out as friendships.

**At one point Bina describes herself as not being "gay-gay." Was that a comment on the fluidity of female sexuality?**

DR: In Bina's case, it's a distancing. Bina is intrigued by Alike and wants to unwrap the mystery of her. Once they come together, it's so intense, I feel like she's not ready to commit. Bina's just a flaky, inconsiderate person. Had it been male or female, she would have pushed herself away. She's not ready to commit or be intimate with somebody.

**Dee, did you have a target audience in mind for "Pariah?"**  
 DR: We knew going into it that the art-house crowd would love this film and that the queer community and African-American community would, too. But it's universal. Gay, straight, no matter your background or where you're from, you're going to be able to relate to that space in your life where you find out who you are and have the courage to be that.

## Play asks: Who owns art? Who should profit from it?

### Theater

MICHAEL MUCKIAN

The most famous character in "A Thousand Words," a play by Madison author Gwendolyn Rice, never appears on stage. But his influence characterizes the often-uncomfortable collusion between art and commerce that forms the cornerstone of Rice's work, giving rise to the question of whether art is produced primarily for commercial consumption or for the benefit of its makers.

"A Thousand Words," opens as a world premiere by Madison's Forward Theater Jan. 19-Feb. 5, with a subsequent run at Milwaukee's Chamber Theatre Feb. 16-March 11. The play revolves around a reported cache of formerly unknown photos taken by famed photographer Walker Evans of author Ernest Hemingway, when the two spent three weeks together in Cuba in the 1930s.

The heirs of Evans, who died in 1975 and is best known for his stunning visual characterizations of America's Great Depression, had earlier bequeathed all

his work to New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art. The ensuing debate over the rights to the prints, uncovered in a Havana bar's backroom, is the catalyst for the play, which spans from the 1930s to the present day.

Despite his influence, Hemingway never quite appears on stage.

"The play was conceived after I read a small newspaper article about a bar owner in Key West, Fla., who had stumbled on a treasure trove of Hemingway's books, fishing gear and personal effects, including a collection of Walker Evans photos," says Rice, a Milton native who serves as Forward's communications director. "Originally, I thought Hemingway would be a character in the play, but when that didn't work out, I changed the story to focus on Evans."

The narrative cleverly intersects the modern day pursuit of rural handmade patchwork quilts by Met staffer Sally Quinn (American Players Theatre's Sarah Day) with the 1930s backstory of Evans (Josh Aaron McCabe) and journalist Shirley Hughes (Molly Rhode). The latter were assigned by the federal Farm Security Administration to chronicle the plight of the dustbowl farmers. The two



PHOTO: COURTESY

**This 1932 portrait of dock workers in Havana by photographer Walker Evans is part of the collection at the Smithsonian American Art Museum.**

stories, separated by more than 70 years, collide on the plains of Kansas over another cache of Walker photos.

The narrative puts the question of art's ultimate beneficiaries at its most personal level.

"This was inspired by the

public who clamor for their work and the money that changes hands."

The play connects the concepts in the form of both quilts and photos. If there is a moral thread to the story, Rice says it's best embodied by Quinn, who was dispatched by her unsympathetic boss Brian (T. Stacy Hicks in multiple roles) to both secure the quilts and assist in the acquisition of the photos. In both instances, her personal sensitivities collide with her professional duties.

"Sally is a curator at the museum and deeply passionate about fiber art. She studies quilts and the women who have created them," Rice says. "When she uncovers the photos, she can do what's best for the museum, or she can value the people and the stories behind the artwork as much as the art itself. It's not an easy choice for her."

Day, who plays Quinn, agrees. "She is someone who believes she understands the 'value' of art, but sometimes the price and the cost are very different things."

Despite having its upcoming world premiere performance in both Madison and Milwaukee, "A Thousand Words" has already been staged in various forms. In 2008, Rice's work won the

Wisconsin Wrights playwrighting competition, which led to a workshop performance at UW-Madison that May. In 2009, Chamber Theatre produced a staged reading of the work directed by Jennifer Uphoff Gray, prior to Gray's forming of Forward Theater Co.

Last year, when Gray and Chamber Theatre artistic director C. Michael Wright talked about mounting a collaborative effort, "A Thousand Words" was at the top of the list, Rice said.

The ability to offer a world premiere by a Wisconsin writer appealed to both companies, and so did the message of the play itself.

"Ultimately, I think the play is about the power of words and images, both to tell the truth and to obscure it," Rice says. "In our media-soaked culture, I think it's good for audiences to think about who's telling the story and how."

#### ON STAGE

Gwendolyn Rice's "A Thousand Words" is at Madison's Overture Center Jan. 19-Feb. 5 and Milwaukee's Chamber Theatre Feb. 16-March 11.

## 'Neat' is a one-woman show with 24 characters

### Theater

MICHAEL MUCKIAN

A bare stage and a talented actor are all that's required for Milwaukee's Renaissance Theatreworks to mount its production of "Neat," a one-woman show based on actor/playwright Charlayne Woodard's autobiographical memoir.

Local actor Marti Gobel said she draws deeply from personal — and painful — emotional experiences to create the 24 individual characters who fill the stage in this coming-of-age tale of love, remembrance and understanding.

Based on the personal experiences of Woodard, herself a talented actor who appeared in everything from Arthur Miller's "The

Crucible" to the TV sitcom "Roseanne," the play tells the tale of Woodard's Aunt Beneatha Harris, known as Neat. She was a developmentally disabled African-American woman whose childlike character gave her a childlike honesty that was especially appealing to a young Woodard, who is the play's narrator.

"What attracted Renaissance to 'Neat' was the simplicity of the story and how compelling it was," says Suzan Fete, who directs the show. "We also loved the fact that, although there are tragic events in the play, it is ultimately a story of triumph."

Neat developed her disabilities as the result of accidental poisoning as a baby — and the refusal of a "whites only" hospital in Georgia to treat her. As a

child, Woodard idolized her disabled aunt, but her views changed as she matured and Neat stayed the same. The playwright eventually grew to understand and appreciate Neat just for what she was, Fete says.

"In spite of her sweet childlike innocence, Neat has an uncanny ability to speak the truth, as well as a vast appreciation for life," Fete says. "Charlayne loved and idolized Neat as a child, but came to appreciate and respect her as an adult. I think the audiences will come to love and respect her, too."

The play, most of which takes place in Albany, N.Y., where Woodard grew up, follows on the heels of "Pretty Fire," her earlier one-woman work described as one of theater's most positive shows about the African-American experience. The "pretty fire"

of the title was cast by a Ku Klux Klan cross burning on a Georgia hilltop — a touch of irony in Woodard's five-part celebration of life.

Gobel, a San Diego native, undertook the monumental task of creating all 24 roles with a mix of current research and rich memories, which combined to produce the traits needed to play both the male and female characters who populated Woodard's past.

"I prepared by watching everyone," the actor says. "I spent weeks shopping for physical and vocal traits, when someone in the grocery store or gas station would catch my eye. The physical nature of many of the characters comes from members of my own family."

Gobel drew the emotional depth to respond to Neat from a sibling in her own

life. For the Milwaukee actor, however, the situation was much different and infinitely more tragic.

"I had a younger brother, Phillip, who was murdered when I was 11 and he was 9, and my memories of Phillip stop after the day after his death," Gobel remembers. "I recognize the pit of sadness that my mother had to climb out of to continue to live and love her two remaining children, and sometimes I can see the man Phillip would have become in my son."

Gobel's loss gave her an emotional and intellectual clarity about aspects of the rest of her life, she says.

"I am keenly aware of the great gift my adult self has been given in continuing to live," Gobel says, "and the richness I have in a family that appreciates each other as individuals and all that goes

#### ON STAGE

Renaissance Theatreworks production of Charlayne Woodard's "Neat" runs Jan. 13-Feb. 5 at The Studio Theatre in Milwaukee's Broadway Theatre Center, 158 N. Broadway. Call 414-291-7800.

## Jackman's song-and-dance show sets box office records

By Mark Kennedy

AP writer

Hugh Jackman has left Broadway with a lot of broken hearts — and records.

The hunky Australian actor's one-man Broadway concert show closed on Jan. 1 at the Broadhurst Theatre after earning \$2,057,354 in its final week, the highest weekly gross recorded by the Shubert Organization, which owns the Broadhurst and 16 other Broadway theaters.

Over its 10-week run, Jackman earned a whopping \$14,638,428, producers said. He now owns 10 of the 11 top-grossing weeks at the Broadhurst.

Best known for being the hairy Wolverine in "The X-Men" franchise, Jackman routinely sold out the 1,176-seat theater and usually posted weekly grosses of \$1.5 million, often higher than rival musicals such as "Jersey Boys," "Mama Mia!" "How to Succeed in Business," "Anything Goes" and "Follies."

Only "Wicked" and "The Lion King," produced by other organizations, consistently outdid Jackman. But those shows also had much higher overhead costs.

Al Pacino's "The Merchant of Venice" held the previous record at the Broadhurst, taking in \$1,175,750 earlier this year. Until now, the Shubert Organization's one-week biggest haul was "Billy Elliot," which earned \$1,663,895 during an eight-show stretch last year.

During the run, Jackman raised a record \$1,789,580 for the charity Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS. The run "not only confirms him as one of the most bankable stars in Broadway's history but also as a fundraiser,"



PHOTO: JOAN MARCUS

**Hugh Jackman with, left to right, Emily Tyra, Laura Seibert and Kearran Giovanni, in "Hugh Jackman, Back on Broadway."**

producer Robert Fox said.

Backed by an 18-piece orchestra and six leggy dancers, a charming Jackman belted out about two dozen musical theater songs in "Hugh Jackman, Back on Broadway." It was his third time on the Great White Way, following "The Boy From Oz" in 2003 and the play "A Steady Rain" with Daniel Craig in 2009.

The show featured his interpretations of songs ranging from

the sexy R&B tune "Fever" to "Rock Island," from "The Music Man" to a medley of classic movie songs such as "Singin' in the Rain" and "Luck Be a Lady." The average ticket went for \$160, with top premiums going for \$350.

Some of the highlights included the eight-minute "Soliloquy" from the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical "Carousel," and a collection of songs from Jackman's Tony

Award-winning turn in "The Boy From Oz," while wearing Peter Allen-inspired matching gold lamé pants, jacket and shoes.

Jackman's other stage credits include Australian productions of "Sunset Boulevard" and "Beauty and the Beast." In London he starred as Curly in Trevor Nunn's staging of Rodgers & Hammerstein's "Oklahoma!" Next year, he plans to star in a version of the musical "Les Miserables."

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GREGG SHAPIRO

## 'THE HELP'

Gay director and screenwriter Tate Taylor's movie adaptation of "The Help," based on Kathryn Stockett's acclaimed and bestselling novel of the same name, is set in 1960s Mississippi. One can immediately see that not much has changed in race relations since the 1950s – or the Civil War, for that matter. Most of the white society women of Jackson treat their maids as less than human, refusing to share toilets with them. And yet these maids are indispensable in the kitchen and in the nursery, where they essentially raise the children of women who can barely conceal their disdain for them.

Then along comes Eugenia (the ubiquitous Emma Stone), aka Skeeter, fresh from college with her wild and frizzy hair and her progressive attitudes. For her first job, Skeeter is



From "The Help."  
PHOTO: COURTESY

hired by newspaper editor Mr. Blackly (gay actor Leslie Jordan) to fill in for the cleaning advice columnist. Raised by a maid herself, Skeeter knows nothing about cleaning or housekeeping. So she solicits the help of Aibileen (Viola Davis), the maid of a family friend. Observing how badly Aibileen is treated sets

Skeeter on a path she never expected to follow. "The Help," which could afford to shed about 20 minutes, is nevertheless a film full of Oscar-worthy performances, powerful social messages and enough laughter and tears to require a full box of tissues. In the Blu-ray+DVD combo pack, bonus material includes

deleted scenes, featurettes and the Mary J. Blige music video for "The Living Proof."

## 'MEMPHIS'

You'd think 2010 was a slow year on Broadway if "Memphis" won four Tony Awards, including best musical. But it was also the year of "American Idiot," "Fela!" and

"Million Dollar Quartet," so that isn't the case.

Whatever the reason, "Memphis," with a book by Joe DiPietro and score by DiPietro and David Bryan, was a hit with Tony voters. It tells the story of the rise of Memphis DJ Huey (Chad Kimball, whose accent can best be described as distracting), and his singing girlfriend Felicia (Montego Glover).

The Blu-ray features the original Broadway cast, including Glover, whose performance is the best thing about the show. Special features include cast interviews, the "How Memphis Was Captured" featurette and more.



From "Memphis."  
PHOTO: COURTESY

relationships. And Memphis airwaves weren't exactly welcoming when it came to playing what was then called "race music." Combining the stories of the birth of rock 'n' roll with elements of the civil rights movement, "Memphis" borrows liberally from other sources, including "Hairspray."

The Blu-ray features the original Broadway cast, including Glover, whose performance is the best thing about the show. Special features include cast interviews, the "How Memphis Was Captured" featurette and more.

# Björk goes weird again – and other new releases

**Music**

GREGG SHAPIRO

## BJÖRK

After her first couple of solo studio albums, Björk began moving in an increasingly less commercial and less accessible direction – and her devoted fans followed. In fact, it seemed as if the more bizarre Björk got, the happier her fans became. This trend reached its peak with 2004's "Medúlla." By 2007's "Volta," Björk sounded willing to make a concession to comprehensibility. But her latest work finds Björk once again venturing into strange realms. "Biophilia" is an interdisciplinary multi-media project that incorporates a 13-track deluxe edition CD, an app, live shows, a doc and a website. It was created by a "close team" who were "up for pioneering into new territories, improvising" and taking on multiple tasks. The result is a set of songs featuring, first and foremost, Björk's distinc-



Björk  
PHOTO: COURTESY

tive vocals accompanied by such custom instruments as a pendulum harp and a midi-controlled pipe organ.

## ACTIVE CHILD

Active Child, the best thing to come out of New Jersey since Bruce Springsteen, has released the second most gorgeous album of 2011 (the first being Gem Club's

"Breakers"). On "You Are All I See," former choir-boy Active Child (aka Pat Grossi) swathes the listener in the musical equivalent of sequined gauze. As ethereal as this release can be, it also is grounded in a sexy and earthy Philly soulfulness, as you can hear on "Hanging On," "Playing House," "Johnny Belinda" and the slow groove

of "Way Too Fast." This is the kind of orgasmic music (see "Shield & Sword") that couples, gay and straight, can get busy to. Let's hope that the immature one-man-band Owl City is listening and learns something.

## tUnE-yArDs

"WHOKILL" by tUnE-yArDs (aka Merrill Garbus)

is as exotic and exciting as the Active Child disc is beautiful. You've probably never heard anything quite like "WHOKILL." This is a rollicking rollercoaster ride that will have you on your feet, waving your hands in the air and inventing dance steps. From the body slamming "Gangsta" to the Afro-pop of "Riotriot" to the hula-hoop loop of "Bizness," this release earns a loud, "Brava, diva."

(aka Annie Clark). On this 11-track disc, St. Vincent explores her dark dance diva persona on "Cruel" and "Hysterical Strength," goes for 1970s fusion freak-outs on "Surgeon" and unleashes her inner beast on "Year of the Tiger." The cuts "Northern Lights," "Cheerleader" and "Neutered Fruit" provide all sorts of insight into this always-fascinating artist.

## BACHELORETTE

The self-titled album by Bachelorette (aka Annabel Alpers) would be another good object lesson for Owl City, not only because of the inventive use of electronics, but also for the refreshing way Bachelorette has with lyrics. That combo makes this disc a delight. Right after "Grow Old With Me" and "The Light Seekers" lull and lure you in, Bachelorette shifts gears and looks at you "through the hole in my chest" on the electrified "Blanket" and "Polarity Party." "The Last Boat's Leaving" goes for a VU vibe and "Generous Spectre" stirs up ghosts of new wave.

## ST. VINCENT

"Strange Mercy" is easily the most provocative recording to date by St. Vincent

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Danceworks

JAN. 13, FRIDAY

Danceworks DancelAB presents "Jumpstart: An Emerging Artist Showcase," featuring new works by up-and-coming Milwaukee choreographers and dancers, tonight and tomorrow night at 7:30 p.m. at 1661 N. Water St. Call 414-277-8480. "A Tribute to Pine Valley" celebrates 41 years of the ABC soap opera "All My Children," featuring cast members Walt Willey (Jackson), Cameron Mathison (Ryan), Vincent Irizarry (David), Darnell Williams (Jesse), Alicia Minshew (Kendall) and Jacob Young (JR), at 7 p.m. at the Fox Cities Performing Arts Center, 400 W. College Ave. in Appleton. Call 920-730-3760.

JAN. 15, SUNDAY

The U.S. Cellular Arena, 400 W. Kilbourn, hosts **Brewcity Bruisers** roller derby at noon. Visit www.brewcitybruisers.com. Club 5 Bar, 5 Applegate Court in Madison, presents a **live female impersonator show**, at 10 p.m. Call 608-277-9700.

JAN. 19, THURSDAY

Sugar Maple and Boswell Books present **Pub-Lit**, with Wisconsin native Patrick Somerville and Hannah Pittard, at 7 p.m., 441 E. Lincoln in Bay View.



Will Durst on Jan. 20

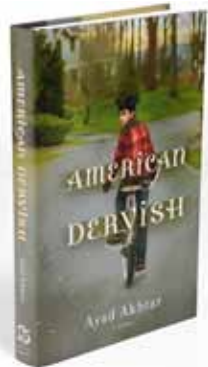


EDITED AND COMPILED BY GREGG SHAPIRO

JAN. 20, FRIDAY

Forward Theater presents the world premiere production of "A Thousand Words" by Madison playwright Gwendolyn Rice, through Feb. 5 in Promenade Hall at Overture Center for the Arts, 201 State in Madison. Call 608-258-4141. Five-time Emmy-nominated political satirist **Will Durst** returns home to Milwaukee to put the "mock back in democracy" in his one-man show "Elect To Laugh!" at 8 p.m. at Next Act Theatre, 255 S. Water. Call 414-278-7780 or go to www.milwaukeeecomed.com. "Glorious!" Peter Quilter's play about Florence Foster Jenkins, the Diva of Din, runs through Feb. 5 at the Racine Theatre Guild, 2519 Northwestern (Highway 38) in Racine. Call 262-633-4218.

The Bay Players present "Wrong Window," a comedy/mystery by Bill Van Zandt and Jane Milmore, tonight and tomorrow night at Whitefish Bay High School Auditorium, 1200 E. Fairmount in WFB. For more info, visit www.thebayplayers.com.



**Ayad Akhtar**, an American-born, first-generation Pakistani-American who grew up in Milwaukee, reads from his novel "American Dervish" at 7 p.m. at Boswell Book Company, 2559 N. Downer. Call 414-332-1181.

JAN. 21, SATURDAY

Miltown Kings' Annual "Half n Half Show" has nine acts available for guests to be part of the show. Sign-up is on a first-come, first-served basis. Show up at the Miramar Theater, 2844 N. Oakland, at 5:30 p.m. to be part of the show or at 9 p.m. to be part of the audience. This is recommended for audiences over 18.

**Retro Comedy Night** combines stand-up, improv and sketch comedy based on hot topics from the 1970s and '80s, featuring Patrick Schmitz, at 8 p.m. at the Next Act Theatre, 255 S. Water. Call 414-278-7780.

The only show endorsed by the Holly, Valens and Richardson estates, John Mueller's "Winter Dance Party," the official tribute to Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens and the Big Bopper, is a live, authentic concert re-creation of the legendary performers' final tour. Catch it at 8 p.m. at the South Milwaukee Performing Arts Center, 901 15th in South Milwaukee. Call 414-766-5049.

JAN. 22, SUNDAY

Outreach LGBT Center in Madison holds an **Interfaith Dialog on Sexuality** from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. at the Pyle Center, 702 Langdon St. Learn strategies for creating open and affirming congregations, develop relationships with other people of faith and hear stories of those who have struggled for justice and inclusion in religious ceremonies. Featured speaker is Scott Anderson, the first openly gay man to be ordained as a minister since the Presbyterian church voted to be an affirming organization. For more information visit www.lgbtoutreach.org or e-mail interfaith@lgbtoutreach.org.

JAN. 23, MONDAY

Bring your dancing shoes and show off your footwork to enter for a **chance to go to Los Angeles to see a live taping of "Ellen: The Ellen DeGeneres Show"** for you and a guest, 6-9 p.m. at SPiN Milwaukee, 233 E. Chicago.



Ellen DeGeneres

JAN. 24, TUESDAY

The incredible singer/songwriter **Kathleen Edwards** performs at 7 p.m. at Turner Hall Ballroom, 103 N. Fourth. Call 414-286-3663.

JAN. 26, THURSDAY

Current staff and board members are holding a **community meeting to discuss the future of the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center**. The session will be held 6:30 to 8 p.m. at the Center's community room, 252 E. Highland Ave. The public is encouraged to attend.

**Atlantic Wave** and **Paris la Nuit** perform at 7 p.m. as part of the Jean's Jazz series at the Racine Theatre Guild, 2519 Northwestern (Highway 38) in Racine. Call 262-633-4218.

Boswell Book Company, 2559 N. Downer, presents "Dispatches from the Classroom: Exercises for Creative Writers and Creative Teachers," with UWM grad students Joseph Michael Rein, David Yost, and Chris Drew, at 7 p.m. Call 414-332-1181.



Brewcity Bruisers on Jan. 15

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