

LUPONE'S GYPSY WAYS

In advance of her Madison appearance, Patti LuPone talks to WiG about the gypsy in her soul.

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THE VOICE OF PROGRESS FOR WISCONSIN'S LGBT COMMUNITY

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RECALL REWIND

Documentary chronicles state's uprising

By Lisa Neff

Staff writer

Through her lens, documentary filmmaker Sam Mayfield is going up close and personal to capture the impact that Gov. Scott Walker's union-busting budget bill has had on the lives of ordinary Wisconsinites.

"Wisconsin Rising" follows the historic events in Wisconsin that

led up to the recent filing of more than one million signatures seeking to recall the governor. Mayfield says her film is about "the reanimation of the American labor movement" and the fight for justice.

A freelance video journalist from Burlington, Vt., Mayfield has reported for Democracy Now!, TheUptake, Free Speech TV and Toward Freedom.com. She's

worked in places as distant as Palestine and as near as Madison, where last year she covered the battle over Walker's assault on organized labor for a Web publication.

In his State of the State address on Feb. 1, 2011, Walker announced that in the coming weeks he would offer a "budget repair bill."

"This is the right moment in

time, our moment in time, to refocus government to better serve the taxpayers of this state," Walker said. "To do this, we must provide flexibility to our leaders at all levels. One area we will have to look at is public employee benefits."

Soon afterward, Walker sent the Legislature a measure largely stripping public employees of their collective bargaining rights.

Democrats were first stunned and then outraged, particularly after GOP leadership rammed the bill through the Assembly without notice.

As Senate Democrats fled to Illinois to stall the bill in the Senate, protesters flooded into Madison. The largest demonstrations since the Vietnam War era surrounded

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Shawano school paper runs hate column

By Lisa Neff

Staff writer

Shawano middle-schooler Tanner Uttecht went home one January day carrying a newspaper column to discuss.

The Shawano High School Hawk Post contained a page with point-counterpoint commentary on gays adopting and parenting children. Tanner and his three siblings live in a duplex in Shawano. His two dads – Nick Uttecht

and Michael McNelly – live in one apartment. His mom, Uttecht's ex-wife and his best friend, lives in the other apartment.

When 13-year-old Tanner arrived home that January day, he told Nick Uttecht, "Dad, I need to talk to you." Then he showed his dad the newspaper.

In one column, high-schooler Maddie Marquardt argued that children need homes, and gay couples can

provide those homes.

In the other column, high-schooler Brandon Wegner argued that gays are sinful and gay parents are an abomination.

"Jesus states in the Bible that homosexuality is a detestable act and sin which makes adopting wrong for homosexuals because you would be raising the child in a sin-filled environment. Leviticus 20:13 states, 'If there is a man who lies with

a male as those who lie with a woman, both of them have committed a detestable act; they shall surely be put to death. Their bloodguiltiness is upon them,'" he wrote.

The 16-year-old writer went on to say that children of gay parents suffer and are "at risk of many different things."

Tanner said, "I first thought to my self, 'This can't be serious. I am being raised by gay parents and there is nothing

wrong with me.' There was a feeling of anger and sadness flowing through me, but I thought to myself not to let it get best of me."

Nick Uttecht read the opinion piece and thought, "This is really bad. This is telling my kids they're not going to amount to anything because I'm gay."

He summed up his reaction to the publication of the commentary in

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KATHLEEN FALK ANNOUNCES RUN FOR GOVERNOR PAGE 4

LGBT news with a twist



By Lisa Neff & Louis Weisberg

FAWNING FATHERS

A former archivist for the Catholic Diocese of Kansas City in Missouri claims he was fired after he reported sexual harassment by priests and a co-worker. Ex-employee Larry Probst alleged that the Revs. Charles Michael Coleman and Robert Cameron "fawned" over co-worker Michael St. George and that Coleman described for him a gay game in which the loser services another man under the table, among other offensive comments and gestures.

DRIVEN TO SUE

An Arizona woman has lodged a class-action suit against Avis Rent A Car alleging discrimination based on sexual orientation. Lynn Evenchik was bothered about paying full price for a rental in the San Diego area after she learned that Avis offers discounts to members of the International Gay and Lesbian Travel Association and National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce. Maybe she should file

an age-discrimination suit over special deals for AARP members.

IT DIDN'T WORK

After broadcasting two episodes to small audiences, ABC canceled "Work It," a sitcom in which two unemployed guys dress in female clothes to get jobs. The LGBT community criticized the show, saying it mocked transgender people. The feminist community criticized the show, saying it mocked women and reinforced the idea of the recession as only a "mancession."

SUPER BOWL'S SUPERSTAR

OK, the Packers aren't bound for Indianapolis and Super Bowl 46. Still, the world watches — and Wisconsin will watch. Do not expect to see the right-wing commercial that Broncos QB Tim Tebow and his mom taped for the Family Research Council. But be certain to see the halftime show that FRC and the Catholic Conference of Bishops don't

want you to see. This year, the show features Madonna. Game day is Feb. 5.

BIGFOOT'S NON-BELIEVER

The Animal Planet's popular show "Finding Bigfoot" features openly lesbian research biologist Ranae Holland, who is skeptical about the existence of Sasquatch. Holland is part of a four-member research team searching for evidence to prove or disprove the existence of the creature. Join the mystery gang. Busted

Republican Kip Smith, a state representative from Georgia who sponsored a bill that would have submitted welfare recipients to random drug testing, was arrested in Atlanta Jan. 13 for driving under the influence of alcohol. The right-wing politician was pulled over after running a red light on his way home from a restaurant.

'NORMAL' STARS

Alec Baldwin and Julia Roberts have signed on to star in the film version of Larry Kramer's Tony

Award-winning play "A Normal Heart," which follows the early days of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The two stars join Mark Ruffalo, cast as protagonist Ned Weeks. Baldwin will play Weeks' brother and Roberts will play the doctor who understands the seriousness of the mystery sickness.

OPEN HYPOCRISY

Newt Gingrich asked his second wife for an "open marriage" at the same time he was promoting family and religious values, his former wife, Marianne, told The Washington Post. The GOP presidential candidate, who's running as a "family values" candidate, wanted permission from her to continue his illicit relationship with his current wife. Gingrich has divorced twice to marry his mistresses.

BAD SIGN FOR WALKER

A poorly placed billboard touting Gov. Scott Walker's job creation record has been removed. The billboard, which featured a picture of Walker next to the text

"Creating Jobs for Wisconsin," was placed in front of a General Motors factory in Janesville that shut down in 2008, costing the area 10,000 jobs.

K.D. UNTIES THE KNOT

Singer/songwriter k.d. lang filed documents to end her 9-year-old domestic partnership with Jamie Price. Lang, 50, cited irreconcilable differences in papers filed on Dec. 28 to dissolve the relationship. The two reportedly met through their mutual Buddhist teacher.

MARY VISITS MARY'S

Hamburger Mary's, a restaurant known for its gay karaoke and drag queen bingo nights, is the latest eatery to report a sighting of the Virgin Mary. Customers of a franchise of the restaurant chain located in the Ybor City neighborhood of Tampa, Fla., first noticed the image on a stainless steel plate on the wall near the kitchen. The restaurant's tagline is, "eat, drink and be Mary."

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Kathleen Falk announces gubernatorial bid

By Louis Weisberg

Staff writer

It's not surprising that Kathleen Falk attended Fair Wisconsin's leadership awards gala in Milwaukee just days before announcing her gubernatorial bid, in effect giving the LGBT community a personal heads-up about her intentions. The former Dane County executive is a staunch equality supporter who takes pride in her record of achievement for LGBT civil rights.

"I was not in office long when I made sure that domestic partner insurance benefits were available to all county employees," she told WiG. "And I made it happen in the year 2000. That's how important that was to me. I followed that a year later by changing the county's anti-discrimination ordinance to (include) gender identity. That also was very unusual for a government body to do (at the time)."

In 2006, Falk extended the federal Family Leave Act to the domestic partners of Dane County employees. She also campaigned vigorously that year against the constitutional amendment that banned same-sex marriage in Wisconsin.

Fair Wisconsin recognized Falk with a leadership award

in 2009.

"Kathleen's record of advancing equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Wisconsinites is incredibly strong," said FW executive director Katie Belanger. "We welcome her to the race and look forward to working with all of the gubernatorial candidates in our endorsement process in the weeks ahead."

Falk's bid, of course, is contingent on whether United Wisconsin, the group that organized the petition effort to recall Gov. Scott Walker, submitted enough signatures to call for an election. But although it will take months for the state's election board to sift through the more than one million signatures submitted to validate at least 540,000 of them, even Walker has acknowledged the inevitability of facing a recall election. In fact, the governor has begun a vigorous out-of-state fundraising campaign tapping his large corporate supporters.

Walker was in New York attending a fundraiser hosted by ousted AIG chairman Maurice Greenberg on the day that the recall petitions were filed. AIG — which is short for American International Group — became a household name



PHOTO: FACEBOOK

Democratic gubernatorial candidate Kathleen Falk, center, with former Gov. Jim Doyle, left, and President Barack Obama, right.

for its leading role in the international financial meltdown. A scandal erupted over the company's use of a \$185 billion government bailout to give its officers huge bonuses and pay for them to go on a \$440,000 spa retreat.

After the recall is certified, Falk will face what could be a crowded and potentially bruising Democratic primary. So far, the only other Democrat who's announced for governor is Sen. Tim Cullen, D-Janesville. But a number of prospective candidates are waiting in the wings, including Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett, who ran against Walker in 2010.

Barrett was running well ahead of other prospective candidates in a recent PPP poll, leading Falk 46 percent to 27 percent among likely Democratic primary voters. Dave Obey, a former congressman from Wausau, was ahead of Falk in the poll with 43 percent to her 28 percent.

The poll found that core Democrats prefer Barrett over Falk, Barrett over Obey and Obey over Falk.

Falk said the polling numbers reflect Barrett's current name-recognition advan-

tage and not her electability potential. "He just spent around 10 million dollars a year ago running a state-wide campaign," she said.

But Falk has also run state-wide campaigns. She lost the Democratic primary for governor to Jim Doyle in 2002. In 2006, she lost a bid to become Wisconsin attorney general to Republican J.B. Van Hollen.

Falk, however, pointed out that she received 50,000 more votes in 2006 than Barrett did in his gubernatorial race. And, although she didn't say it, Falk appears to have the edge among union voters, who are disenchanted with Barrett for using Walker's union reforms to balance Milwaukee's budget. In fact, some union leaders have reportedly asked Barrett not to run.

Progressive leaders are frustrated that Democrats have not succeeded at avoiding a primary struggle by coalescing behind a single candidate in the way they did behind Tammy Baldwin's U.S. Senate candidacy.

"The strongest candidate in the primary may not be the strongest candidate in the general," Evan Zeppos, a

longtime Democratic strategist, told the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel in a recent interview. He described the prospect of a primary battle as "a tragedy."

Many observers believe the race is the Democrats' to lose, given Walker's poor record of job creation and political missteps.

Although some Democratic officials have said publicly that a primary race is the most principled way to select a candidate, most say privately that they're worried about raising sufficient money to fund so many elections this year. Walker, on the other hand, has access to unlimited cash from the mega-corporations he's provided preferential treatment to since taking office.

Democrats are also concerned about voter fatigue. In addition to local, state and federal elections in 2012, Wisconsin faces a number of recall races and related primaries.

Besides overcoming her current poll numbers, Falk has to surmount any negative perceptions stemming from her mid-term resignation as Dane County executive last April. She'll tell voters that

after 14 years in the position, she's "the second-longest serving executive in the state's history" and that she only left because "I completed my promises," she said.

And Falk said she believes that the historic dimension of her candidacy — if elected, she would become the state's first woman governor — will play to her advantage as well. She said this is particularly true in a year when Baldwin stands to make history as the first woman to be elected to the U.S. Senate from Wisconsin and the first out gay person to ever to be elected to that chamber.

Falk said she's working hard to improve her name recognition and ensure that she'll beat Walker.

How? "By being everywhere across the state," she said. "I announced on Wednesday and by Friday I was in Hurley, which is as far north in the state as you can get. That's the demonstration of how hard I will work and what it takes to win."

Falk appears to have her stump speech ready to go.

"I'm running because I, like one million other Wisconsinites, want to restore our state to the values that we so love, and Scott Walker has turned our state upside down and is not fighting for us," she said. "He did the biggest cut in education in our state's history and then gave huge tax breaks to the wealthiest corporations. And here we are a year later with a sixth straight month of job losses. So the Walker way hasn't worked. The Walker way is wrong."

"He told us last spring if we took the medicine, the state would get better. A year later we see that we took the medicine and it did not get better. ... His my-way-or-no-way style is not what people want in a leader. They want leaders who can bring us together in these challenging times. He is moving forward the agenda of the extreme right on a national level instead of working for Wisconsin citizens."

Mentors help guide homeless LGBT youth

By Louis Weisberg

Staff writer

The holidays are supposed to be a joyous time, but they can be exceptionally depressing for people estranged from their families. The pervasive images of families gathered around festive dinner tables are a poignant reminder of what's missing in their lives.

"I don't celebrate holidays," said Xavier, 24, whose shaky relationship with his family left him homeless at one point during his youth. "I don't like them. I've been let down so many times."

(Due to the sensitive nature of this story, WiG did not use some last names.)

Michael, 21, agrees. "This past Christmas felt just like a regular Sunday to me," he said. "I really don't feel too comfortable around my family. Sometimes, I feel like I'm around strangers. It makes me feel even more out of place that they're so comfortable around each other and not me."

Michael, who described his family as "heavy Christians," said he spent Christmas 2011 with a close friend's family.

But 2012 is off to a much better start for Xavier and Michael, thanks largely to a social service program called Q-Blok. A collaboration involving Pathfinders, the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center and Lad Lake, Q-Blok supports LGBT teens and young adults in crisis, including those who've been forced out of their homes due to their sexual orientation.

During their first three months in the program, Q-Blok clients have their rent, phone and utilities covered. After that, they begin contributing to their own overhead, covering an increasing portion of their expenses each month. By the ninth month, they're living independently.

Clients also benefit from a food pantry operated by Lad Lake, as well as donated household items, such as furniture and cooking utensils.

Michael has completed the program and Xavier is in his final months. Like most participants, they are success stories.

BY THE NUMBERS

During the first 18 months of Q-Blok's homeless LGBT youth program:

- **80 percent** of participants found permanent housing.
- **71 percent** exhibited independent living skills.
- **71 percent** made educational progress, either enrolling in or graduating from high school.
- **51 percent** secured either employment or volunteer positions to help them develop job skills.
- **90 percent** reached either their schooling or employment goals.

An important component of the program is the pairing of clients with volunteer mentors, who help them develop independent living skills. As a result of inadequate parenting, Q-Blok clients enter the program lacking such basic knowledge as how to scramble eggs or balance a checkbook. Mentors help to fill in these gaps and also serve as adult LGBT role models.

"A lot of (clients) don't have bank accounts or even family members who have bank accounts," said Ryan Vos, who was a mentor to Michael during his time in Q-Blok and is now a mentor to Xavier.

At 26, Vos is not much older than his mentees, which he said gives him an advantage in communicating with them. But Vos had a childhood that better prepared him for adulthood and success, including a supportive family and a college education, he said.

"I've seen a different, more positive side of gay life and home life," Vos explained. "I'm giving back to gay young men, because I did have such a different experience growing up and coming out. I'm guiding them a little bit. It's almost like being an older brother. The program helps them move from childhood to adulthood."

One of Q-Blok's goals is for clients to celebrate important life cycle events, such as birthdays and graduations, with their mentors. Mentors and their mentees attend monthly meetings and check in periodically to discuss problems.

In addition to helping them learn practical skills, Vos has offered his mentees advice and guidance. "He's very level-headed,"

Xavier said of Vos. "He's very calm. I'm very spontaneous."

Vos' relationship with his partner Chris serves as something of a model for Michael and Xavier of what a successful same-sex relationship looks like.

"(Michael and Xavier) have low expectations of loved ones," Vos said. "They've become numb. They've set themselves up not to be disappointed."

Vos' relationship is an inspiration to the two. "That's where I want to be — stable and happy," Michael said. "He's kind of like my motivation."

LOOKING FORWARD

Xavier and Michael are from single-mother households with complex family dynamics, which were made more complicated by their sexual orientation. When they found Q-Blok, they were at low points in their lives.

Michael was living from couch to couch and suffering from low self-esteem when he entered the program. His situation "was demoralizing," he said. "It made me feel like less of a man. I was sad a lot."

Xavier's low point came during the time between living with a friend in Minnesota and with his grandmother. For about a week, he had no place to sleep but on the street.

"With my mom, it was like, 'No, you're not gay,'" he said. "And then it was, 'If you are gay, I'm going to kick your ass out.'"

Eventually, Xavier was hospitalized for depression after a suicide attempt.

"No one wanted to take care of this grown person who couldn't take care of himself," Xavier said. "I was



PHOTO: ADAM HORWITZ

Michael, left, and Xavier, right, have both been mentored by Ryan Vos, center, a volunteer for Q-Blok, which supports at-risk LGBT youth and young adults. "It's almost like being an older brother," Vos said.

feeling like I'm a double failure — now I'm old, I'm gay and I'm black and I don't have a job."

Xavier said his evangelical Christian family has a double standard when it comes to the way his lesbian cousin is "tolerated" while he's more or less shunned.

Today Xavier has a job at a fast-food restaurant and an internship in a position where he's learning about information technology. He

also has his own apartment and a budding relationship.

Michael has a flair for fashion and theater, which he hopes to turn into a career. He currently works in retail clothing, doing sales and visual display. He's also interning for a personal stylist.

The two feel that they're beginning 2012 on a positive trajectory. They said they've come to peace with the hardships of their youth.

"Maybe it wasn't the most

stable childhood, but I feel like I was raised to the best of my (mom's) ability," Xavier said. "That's why I love this program. It takes you and builds on what you are on the inside."

"I'm more confident because of what's happened to me," Michael said. "I think everything happens for a reason."

To find community resources and other listings, go to www.wisconsin-gazette.com.

LGBT Center, Diverse & Resilient consider merger

By Louis Weisberg
Staff writer

Representatives from the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center and the organization Diverse and Resilient are negotiating a possible merger, according to a statement released on Jan. 20.

"While it is too early to speculate on the outcome, a positive working relationship has been established and a single committee representing both organizations is working diligently on the many issues involved," the statement said.

The committee's membership is composed of four representatives from each organization, including D&R executive director Gary Hollander and the center's interim executive director Sheldon Walker.

The announcement came less than a week before a planned Jan. 26 meeting between the center's board and the city's LGBT community at large to discuss

the organization's future. The center is reeling from the abrupt departure of executive director Maggi Cage and a financial crisis apparently created by expiring grants combined with dwindling membership and individual contributions.

"If we're going to keep the doors open, the center needs cash," Walker said during a recent interview. "The center needs donations to support its operational budget ... to protect its clients, partners (tenants) and members."

Walker, who resigned as board co-chair to serve in his current position, said he's making a "much lower" salary than Cage in order to cut costs. Other positions have been cut altogether, he said. In addition to cutting costs and raising revenue, Walker said he's focusing on rebuilding relations with community members, donors and other organizations - relations that grew frayed under Cage's five-year tenure. He

COMMUNITY MEETING ON JAN. 26

The Milwaukee LGBT Community Center, 252 E. Highland Ave., holds a community meeting at 6:30 p.m. on Jan. 26, the day this issue of WiG hits the streets. The meeting, organized to discuss the center's future, takes place in the community room. The public is invited to attend.

described the center's current process as one of "re-engagement."

"We have to bring the community back to the community center," he said.

Walker described his first weeks as interim executive director as "literally shock and awe."

"There are things that as board members we were unaware of," he said. "We made decisions based on information that was presented to us, and it turned out not to be the best choice."

"It's not like the center had gone to hell in a hand basket, but there were things that needed to be addressed," he continued. "The level of

being taken to make the center more engaged with the community, as well as more responsive and transparent. For one, he submits weekly reports to the board detailing his activities.

"I firmly believe in getting people the information they need, in getting transparency," he said.

That's a very different approach than his predecessor's. Under Cage's direction, there was a virtual gag order forbidding employees to speak about the center's operations. When WiG refused to publish verbatim the center's press releases, either Cage or her staff removed this publication from the center's press list and stopped e-mailing WiG its newsletter. Visitors to the center complained that the doors were often locked during operating hours.

But Walker said those days are over. He said one of his primary goals is to create committees focused on com-

munication and community relations. He's in the process of developing a grant specifically supporting those activities. In the transparency department, Walker is off to a good start: According to the statement announcing merger negotiations with D&R, the minutes from each merger meeting are available to all "interested stakeholders."



PHOTO: COURTESY
Sheldon Walker of the community center.

REGIONAL BRIEFS

DEMS ENDORSE BALDWIN

The Democratic Party of Wisconsin has endorsed U.S. Rep. Tammy Baldwin as the party's nominee for the U.S. Senate seat being vacated by Herb Kohl.

"While the Republican Tea Party field runs further to the right and into the arms of their Wall Street masters, Tammy Baldwin has shown that she will fight these interests and protect our struggling middle class," Democratic Party of Wisconsin chair Mike Tate said in a press statement.

If elected, Baldwin would be the first out gay person ever to serve in the U.S. Senate and the first woman ever to represent Wisconsin in that chamber.

MAN WHO ESCAPED DAHMER SENTENCED FOR ROLE IN KILLING HOMELESS MAN

The man who led Milwaukee police to serial killer Jeffrey Dahmer two decades ago has been sentenced to a year and a half behind bars in a separate criminal case.

Tracy Edwards pleaded guilty to aiding a felon in a plea agreement with prosecutors in Milwaukee County. The 52-year-old Edwards and Timothy Carr were accused last summer of throwing Johnny Jordan into a river from a downtown bridge during an argument. Jordan drowned.

Both the district attorney and the defense attorney asked Judge Rebecca Dallet to sentence Edwards to probation for lying to police. But, Dallet told Edwards that at age 52 he should have known better.

In 1991, Edwards escaped from Dahmer's Milwaukee apartment after he was handcuffed and threatened with a knife. Edwards testified against Dahmer, who admitted killing 17 young men and boys.

SAGE Milwaukee was moving the last week of January into office space at Plymouth Church, 2712 E. Hampshire Ave., Milwaukee.

SAGE Milwaukee, in a news release, said the new

office is smaller than its former space on North Farwell Avenue but that the church offers a variety of amenities, including a commercial kitchen, dining room, gym and meeting rooms.

In advance of the move, SAGE Milwaukee sold some furnishings, office equipment and other items to downsize and fundraise.

For more information, go to www.sagemilwaukee.org.

PRIDEFEST FUNDRAISER PLANNED

A fundraiser for PrideFest Milwaukee will launch the opening of "25 years of Pride," a multimedia celebration of the Milwaukee LGBT community's signature event.

The fundraiser - tickets cost \$50 - takes place at 6 p.m. on Feb. 10 at the Milwaukee Gay Arts Center, 703 S. Second St., Milwaukee.

Guests will see large format HD screens showing images from past PrideFests. They'll also find computer workstations where they can "tag" the images on PrideFest's Facebook album.

For more information, go to www.pridefest.com.

For date savers, PrideFest Milwaukee 25 is June 10-12.

NATIVE AMERICAN LESBIAN ELECTED IN MINNESOTA

Susan Allen won a special election in mid-January for a Minnesota House seat. She is the first openly lesbian Native American elected to a state legislature, according to the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund.

Allen, a tribal law and tax attorney, said, "I am excited to get to work on your behalf and on behalf of the entire district at the state Capitol. My early priorities will be to bring jobs and job training to our district, work on a fair tax system for Minnesota and fight the discriminatory constitutional marriage amendment. I look forward to getting to know you better, hearing about your priorities and about how I can best represent you."

OPEN HOLDS ANNUAL DINNER

The Out Professional

Executive Network Madison will hold its annual dinner on Jan. 31 at the new Union South, 1308 W. Dayton St.

Paula Bonner, president of the University of Wisconsin Alumni Association, is the scheduled keynote speaker.

Tickets are \$40-\$75 or \$500 for a table of 10.

Dinner choices include apple-almond stuffed chicken, peppercorn salmon or mushroom ravioli with tomato-Chevre cream sauce.

For more information, go to openmadison.org.

INDIANA DEBUTS LGBT YOUTH AUTO TAG

A specialty license plate that raises money for an LGBT youth group is available from the Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles.

Sales of the plate, which costs an additional \$40, benefit the Indiana Youth Group, which serves about 1,300 young people in the state each year.

The group operates a youth center in Indianapolis and works with more than 35 gay-straight alliances at the high-school level.

The youth group applied to become part of the specialty plate program several years ago and, denied admission, sued the state in 2010.

DIVERSE & RESILIENT IMPROVES WEB SERVICE

Milwaukee-based Diverse & Resilient, in partnership with other organizations, is offering expanded healthy partnership resources to the LGBT community via www.rm2bsafe.com.

"LGBT community members seeking information on healthy relationships, LGBT partner abuse survivors, LGBT people who are abusers, partner abuse agencies, case managers, legal advocates and law enforcement will all find something useful on this website," said D&R's Brenda Coley. "This website is designed and directed towards the community to educate about healthy and unhealthy relationships."

For more information about Diverse & Resilient, go to www.diverseandresilient.org.

BRANSTAD SUED FOR DISCRIMINATION

Iowa Workers Compensation Commissioner Chris Godfrey accused Branstad of wrongfully cutting his salary after he declined to resign. Godfrey also says he was singled out because he's gay.

An attorney representing Iowa Gov. Terry Branstad and his staff in a discrimination lawsuit has agreed to a \$325-an-hour payment, which the state treasurer has said is four times the going rate for outside attorney assistance.

VETS GROUP CHANGES NAME

The Wisconsin-based Vets Do Ask Do Tell board recently voted to change the group's name to Veterans for Diversity Inc. to reflect the group's purpose in a post-DADT nation.

Dee Beaubien, the representative's wife, will accept the award during El's annual Justice for All gala on Feb. 11 in Chicago. She said

are still traumatized from the effects of serving in the military prior to (the DADT's) dissolution. The new name was picked to develop a more open relationship with not only the gay community, but the entire community as a whole, so that they can institute programs to benefit more veterans."

For more information, e-mail president Ellen Kozel at ellen.kozel@veteransfordiversity.us.

EQUALITY ILLINOIS TO PRESENT FREEDOM AWARD

Equality Illinois, a state LGBT civil rights group, will honor the late Mark Beaubien Jr., who served as a Republican state representative, with its Freedom Award. Beaubien, an advocate for equality in Springfield, died last June.

Springfield, the representative's wife, will accept the award during El's annual Justice for All gala on Feb. 11 in Chicago. She said

her husband "remains an example of all that could be right about politics: serving, giving back, keeping your word even if it isn't politically correct or popular, a sense of humor even in the most difficult times, and most importantly, believing in the right of individuals to live according to their own values."

For more information, go to www.eqil.org.

CHICAGO GAINS ONLINE LGBT PUB

The Chicago Phoenix, an online alternative serving an LGBT readership, launched in January after a 40-day trial run.

"We are completely blown away by the fantastic response and warm reception from our readers," said editor-in-chief Tony Merevick. "This has been a truly remarkable rise to the scene."

The editorial staff includes WiG writer Gregg Shapiro and other veteran journalists.

For more information, go to chicagophoenix.org.

- WiG and AP

E-mail news releases of regional interest to lmneff@wisconsinngazette.com.

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Top mayors married to equality push

By Lisa Neff
Staff writer

A bipartisan group of 80 mayors launched a drive to promote marriage equality on Jan. 20 in Washington, D.C.

The announcement of the Mayors for the Freedom to Marry group at the Capital Hilton Hotel coincided with the U.S. Conference of Mayors' 80th winter meeting.

The broad-based Freedom to Marry coalition of mayors is chaired by Jerry Sanders of San Diego, Thomas Menino of Boston, Michael Bloomberg of New York City,

Antonio Villaraigosa of Los Angeles and Anise Parker of Houston.

"Everyone here believes in the vital importance of marriage to our constituents, to our communities, and to our country," said Parker, who is openly gay. "Together, we will work to ensure that our cities have what they need to thrive — and in order to keep our cities competitive in business and welcoming in culture, we will work hard to win the freedom to marry everywhere and end federal marriage discrimination once and for all."

Coalition members include mayors from small towns, suburbs and major cities, including Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel, a former chief of staff to Barack Obama and senior advisor to Bill Clinton.

Wisconsin members include Tom Barrett of Milwaukee, Paul Soglin of Madison and Mel Nieuwenhuis of Delavan.

Villaraigosa, who is the president of the mayors' conference, said, "If we truly believe in family values, we should value all families. Denying gay and lesbian couples the freedom to marry weakens society by hurting our communities, neighbors, and families."

The coalition is part of the broader Freedom to Marry campaign, which is:

- Encouraging citizens to sign a pledge promoting marriage equality.

- Lobbying President Barack Obama to back marriage equality.
- Backing court challenges to anti-gay marriage laws.
- Seeking congressional repeal of the Defense of Marriage Act.
- Pursuing legislative reform in the states.

"Many Americans who for decades opposed the freedom to marry for same-sex couples are rethinking their position, and hearts and minds are changing," said Freedom to Marry campaign director Marc Solomon.

"We are proud — and thankful — for the leadership these mayors from across the country are showing in support of this cause."

Already this year, committees have heard testimony on marriage equality bills in New Jersey and Washington. And legislation has been introduced in Maryland.



PHOTO: COURTESY Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett is part of the Mayors for the Freedom to Marry group.

In Washington, majorities in the House and Senate support marriage equality, as does the governor.

In New Jersey, Gov. Chris Christie has threatened a veto and urged a referendum.

President reclaims values in State of the Union

By Lisa Neff
Staff writer

The state of the union is strong, but can be even stronger with "a return to the American values of fair play and shared responsibility," President Barack Obama said in his State of the Union address on Jan. 24.

In an election year in which the GOP candidates are using divisive rhetoric about securing the White House to promote "Christian" and "traditional" values, Obama in his third annual address spoke in a populist tone about American values. He mentioned "values" seven times and "American values" three times.

"No challenge is more urgent," the president said. "No debate is more important. We can either settle for a country where a shrinking number of people do really well while a growing number of Americans barely get by, or we can restore an economy where everyone gets a fair shot, and everyone does their fair share, and everyone plays by the same set of rules. What's at stake aren't Democratic values or Republican values, but American values. And we have to reclaim them."

Seated for the address in first lady Michelle Obama's box were Air Force Col. Ginger Wallace and Lorelei Kilker, among others. Kilker is a chemist who lives in Colorado with her domestic partner and their

'What's at stake aren't Democratic values or Republican values, but American values.'

two children. She was one of a class of women who benefitted from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's investigation of systematic sex discrimination at her former employer. The investigation resulted in the award of back wages as well as significant remedial relief.

Television cameras turned to Kilker at various times during the address, including when the president spoke about fairness.

Wallace, an intelligence officer who has led multiple military operations, lives in Virginia with Kathy Knopf, her partner of more than 10 years. In December, Knopf attended Wallace's promotion ceremony and participated in the traditional "pinning on" of Wallace's rank, marking the first such event reported following the repeal of "don't ask, don't tell."

Television cameras found Wallace when the president

spoke about the dedication of U.S. military personnel.

"Those of us who've been sent here to serve can learn from the service of our troops," he said. "When you put on that uniform, it doesn't matter if you're black or white, Asian, Latino, Native American, conservative, liberal, rich, poor, gay, straight. When you're marching into battle, you look out for the person next to you, or the mission fails. When you're in the thick of the fight, you rise or fall as one unit, serving one nation, leaving no one behind."

That statement led the president to a call for greater got-your-back unity — inside the Beltway and beyond.

"Each time I look at that flag, I'm reminded that our destiny is stitched together like those 50 stars and those 13 stripes," Obama said, delivering one of the evening's more memorable lines.

"No one built this country on their own. This nation is great because we built it together. This nation is great because we worked as a team. This nation is great because we get each other's backs. And if we hold fast to that truth, in this moment of trial, there is no challenge too great; no mission too hard. As long as we are joined in common purpose, as long as we maintain our common resolve, our journey moves forward, and our future is hopeful, and the state of our union will always be strong."

The speech on Capitol Hill lasted about 65 minutes and focused on domestic issues and the role that government plays in the lives of citizens. "We should all want a smarter, more effective government," Obama said. "And while we may not be able to bridge our biggest philosophical differences this year, we can make real progress."



The White House bullet-pointed the president's economic agenda in "Blueprint for An America Built to Last," which was released minutes after the address began and called for a task force to enforce the equal pay for equal work law and passage

of the Dream Act. The president did not address marriage equality, as many gay civil rights advocates had hoped. Obama has said his position is evolving on same-sex marriage. His administration has refused to defend the Defense of Marriage Act and stated its opposition to "divisive and discriminatory" efforts to deny benefits to same-sex couples.

More explicit advances have occurred elsewhere. Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel, Obama's former chief of staff, joined a coalition of 80 mayors endorsing marriage equality (see story, page 8). And in Washington, Gov.

Christine Gregoire, a special guest of U.S. Rep. Nancy Pelosi at the State of the Union, endorsed marriage equality.

Gregoire, in a speech that was three months in preparation, said, "We applaud the generations before us for their wisdom and courage to fight for equality. Now it's our time ... this generation's call to end discrimination — discrimination against our gay and lesbian citizens. It is time for marriage equality. That means the state of Washington should not deny our citizens a marriage license based on sexual orientation."

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Activists mobilize against Citizens United

By Lisa Neff
Staff writer

A coalition of progressive organizations is rallying to void the U.S. Supreme Court ruling that allows unlimited corporate and special-interest financing for political campaigns.

The High Court issued the ruling in Citizens United v. FEC on Jan. 21, 2010. The Court, in a 5-4 decision written by Justice Anthony Kennedy, held that political spending is a form of protected speech under the First Amendment, and the government may not keep corporations or unions from spending money to support or denounce individual candidates in elections. Corporations or unions may not give money directly to campaigns, but they may seek to persuade the voting public through other means, including ads.

The ruling allowed for the formation of super political action committees to spend unlimited amounts of cash on behalf of campaigns — \$10 million in super PAC money



PHOTO: PUBLIC CITIZEN

Activists in Washington, D.C., rally for a constitutional amendment overturning the Citizens United Supreme Court decision.

already has been spent in 2012 presidential races.

Now a coalition under the banner United for the People is pushing for a 28th amendment to the U.S. Constitution that would void Citizens United.

"The groundswell of national grassroots activity in support of a constitutional

amendment we're seeing is tremendous," said Mark Hays of Public Citizen. "With this sort of momentum, we're ready to write the next chapter of our campaign to ensure that democracy is for people, not corporations."

Public Citizen is part of the United for the People coalition, along with People for

the American Way, Common Cause, Public Citizen, Communications Workers of America, Move to Amend, Progressive Democrats of America, MoveOn.org, A New Way Forward, African American Ministers in Action, Center for Science in the Public Interest, the Coffee Party USA, Earthworks, Greenpeace, Hip Hop Caucus and Wisconsin Wave, among others.

On Jan. 20, activists demonstrated against Citizens United at federal courthouses, including in Milwaukee and Madison.

In sunny downtown Tampa, Fla., where the Republican National Convention will take place this summer, about 40 demonstrators gathered outside the federal courthouse. Some held red-and-blue signs that read "Money isn't free speech."

"Corporations aren't people," said protester Travis Averkamp. "Corporations are Soylent Green."

Another 50 people, bundled for a blizzard, demonstrated in outside the

Dirksen Federal Courthouse in Chicago. One sign read, "Citizens united against Citizens United."

The Minneapolis, Minn., demonstration drew about 100 people, who witnessed a mock wedding — a judge presiding over the marriage of corporation and a person.

The next day, activists demonstrated at state capitols. Meanwhile, at the local and state levels in California, Colorado, Florida, Hawaii, Massachusetts, Maine, Michigan, Montana, North Carolina, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania,

Rhode Island, South Dakota, Vermont, Washington and Wisconsin resolutions have been introduced or passed opposing corporate contributions to political campaigns.

Last March, Milwaukee County Democrats passed a resolution for a constitutional amendment. The Democratic Party of Wisconsin and AFSCME 40 also approved non-binding resolutions, as did 84 percent of voters in Madison and 78 percent of voters in Dane County.

Find news updates at www.wisconsin Gazette.com.

ON THE DOCKET

The Supreme Court's Citizens United ruling is playing a major role in the 2012 presidential race, allowing heavy investments from super PACs.

What's next for the High Court?

• **Health care** — A ruling on the constitutionality of portions of the Affordable Care Act that was intended to be an overhaul of the U.S. health care system.

• **Immigration** — A ruling on portions of Arizona's law requiring police to check the status of anyone they detain and suspect of being in the country illegally.

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STUDY EXAMINES QUALITY OF LIFE FOR TEENS WITH TWO MOMS

The quality of life of 17-year-olds reared in lesbian-parent families does not differ from that of adolescents who grew up in heterosexual-parent families, according to a study in the Journal of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics.

"The favorable outcomes for these adolescents are a reflection of good parenting by mothers who prepared their daughters and sons for the prospect of adversity," said investigator Nanette Gartrell of the Williams Institute.

COUPLES SEEK S.C. MARRIAGE LICENSES

Three same-sex couples sought marriage licenses in Greenville, S.C., on Jan. 17 and Jan. 18, part of a continuing campaign for equality across the South.

The Campaign for Southern Equality is organizing the We Do civil rights initiative to promote equality at the state and federal level.

NATIONAL BRIEFS



FROM BAGRAM WITH LOVE

Military personnel stationed in Bagram, Afghanistan, recently posted a video to the It Gets Better campaign. The video runs 2 minutes and 29 seconds and encourages viewers to believe in themselves, make some good friends, be brave, celebrate differences and reach for the stars. "From Bagram, Afghanistan, it gets better," they soldiers say.

The action took place in Greenville. Days later the state held the "first in the South" Republican presidential primary.

Alyssa Weaver and Michel McIver sought licenses at the Greenville County Probate

Court on Jan. 17, followed by Misha Gibson and her partner Ivy Hil. Erin King and her partner Sam Dawkins requested licenses on Jan. 18.

They knew they would be denied the licenses under the state law, which defines mar-



GMHC TURNS 30

The New York-based Gay Men's Health Crisis, which has a local prevention and treatment focus and a national reputation on policy, celebrates its 30th anniversary as the fourth decade of the AIDS epidemic begins. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says that every nine and a half minutes someone in the United States becomes infected with HIV.

riage as the union of a man and a woman.

LIBERTY U SPONSORS OLYMPIC HOPEFUL

Liberty University, a private Christian college

founded by the late Rev. Jerry Falwell, is sponsoring a freestyle skier who hopes to compete in the 2014 Winter Olympics.

Jay Panther says he will promote Liberty while skiing for a spot on the U.S.

team. "I think that part of the reason that God has me here is to give this place the national and international exposure it deserves, and you know, I travel all over the world," Panther said.

Liberty University has hosted a number of anti-gay conferences and its professors have long claimed that the LGBT civil rights movement runs interference for pedophiles and preys on children.

LAMBDA BRIEF SUPPORTS CARE ACT

Lambda Legal has filed a friend-of-the-court brief on behalf of 16 national HIV advocacy organizations in support of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, commonly referred to as the ACA.

In the brief, Lambda contends that the ACA's minimum coverage requirement — also known as the individual mandate — is constitutional under the commerce and necessary and proper clauses.

— Lisa Neff

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FAR RIGHT GROUPS LAUNCH BUS TOUR

Two of the nation's largest and best-funded extremist groups – the Family Research Council, a designated hate group, and The Heritage Foundation, a right-wing think-tank – recently launched the Values Voter Bus Tour to promote their anti-gay, anti-choice agenda.

FRC said the tour is to "tell Americans about practical, conservative solutions to the most critical issues confronting the nation." The "solutions" include eliminating reproductive rights, halting the legalization of marriage equality and challenging anti-discrimination laws.

The first tour stop was on Jan. 19 at the College of Charleston in South Carolina for speeches by South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley, a Tea Party favorite, as well as FRC president Tony Perkins and Heritage president Ed Feulner.

The bus tour will continue until the Nov. 6 general elections. FRC also plans a voter registration initiative.

Perkins said FRC wants the next president "to address the values issues, which include restoring fiscal sanity, protecting marriage, safeguarding religious liberty and protecting the rights

ELECTION 2012 BRIEFS

of the unborn."

He announced the tour days after he and more than 100 Christian right leaders pledged their support to far-right GOP presidential candidate Rick Santorum.

FAIR WISCONSIN PAC BACKS POCAN

The Fair Wisconsin PAC endorsed Wisconsin state Rep. Mark Pocan's bid for the U.S. House. Pocan, who is openly gay, is running in the Democratic primary for the District 2 seat held by Tammy Baldwin, who is running for the U.S. Senate.

"On behalf of the Fair Wisconsin PAC, we are very pleased to support a candidate and maintaining a seat at the table for the LGBT community," said PAC member Dick Wagner. "Rep. Pocan has been fighting for LGBT equality along with Fair Wisconsin since the very beginning, and we are confident he will continue to do so in Washington."

The PAC also endorsed state Rep. Kelda Helen Roys and Dane

County Treasurer Dave Worzala. "I believe we have hit an historic turning point in the movement for LGBT equality when we have so many pro-fairness candidates to consider in determining who will be the strongest leader for the LGBT community," said PAC executive director Katie Belanger.

JOHNSON EARNS PERFECT SCORE DURING KOCH-BACKED GROUP

U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson is one of five senators who received a 100 percent score from Americans for Prosperity, the ultra-right PAC financed by the billionaire Koch brothers. The Kochs, who've given Johnson \$27,900, were the top contributors to his campaign to unseat Democratic U.S. Sen. Russ Feingold in 2010.

It is unknown how much the Koch brothers contributed to Johnson's effort to defeat Feingold through third-party advertising. The Kochs have spent heavily on anonymous third-party advertising for other Wisconsin GOP candidates, including in last summer's recall races.

"It's a disgusting charade of money," said Democratic Party of Wisconsin spokesman Graeme Zeilinski.

"Ron Johnson would be the big story in Wisconsin right now, if it wasn't for Scott Walker," Zielinski added. "He was willing to let America's credit rating be downgraded just so that he could get deep cuts to Medicare. It's been a long time, dating back to Joe McCarthy, since we had a senator this extreme. He's doing McCarthy proud!"

McCarthy was censured by the U.S. Senate after using trumped-up charges of communism during the "red scare" to ruin the careers of politicians and people in the entertainment industry.

Other senators with perfect scores were Tom Coburn, R-Okla., Mike Crapo, R-Idaho, Orrin Hatch, R-Utah and Marco Rubio, R-Fla.

In addition to the five senators, 39 members of the U.S. House received perfect scores for their performances in the first half of the 112th Congress.

— Louis Weisberg and Lisa Neff

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Mayfield says she's witnessed 'one state's rejection of a conservative take-over'

RISING from 1 the Capitol for weeks.

"The people of Wisconsin rose up, occupied their state Capitol and took to the streets," Mayfield said.

Senate Republicans used a series of parliamentary tricks to overcome a three-week stalemate and pass an amended version of the legislation. But the protests continued.

Ripples from the revolt were felt far beyond Madison. The events in Wisconsin helped spark the nationwide "We are the 99 percent" protests – the Occupy campaigns – that came later in 2011.

The first political casualties for Republicans came with last summer's recall of two Republican senators, leaving the GOP with a one-vote majority in that chamber. And on Jan. 18, activists with the United Wisconsin coalition filed petitions containing more than one million signatures seeking to recall Walker, nearly twice the number required.

Petitions were also filed to recall Lt. Gov. Rebecca Kleefisch and Sens. Scott Fitzgerald of Juneau, Pam Galloway of Wausau, Terry Moulton of Chippewa Falls and Van Wanggaard of Racine. Petition signatures still must be verified and no date has been set for the election, which will likely be over the summer.

Mayfield said what she's witnessed in Wisconsin is "one state's rejection of a conservative take-over ...

'I've talked to so many people whose stories stand out.'

a microcosm of what is at stake in America today, at a time of fiscal crisis and ideologically-driven budgets and social reforms."

When she arrived in Madison last March, Mayfield knew the magnitude of the issue. In addition to the GOP leaders in Wisconsin, Republican leaders in Florida, Idaho, Indiana, Michigan, New Jersey, Ohio, Oklahoma and Tennessee were also trying to limit the role of labor unions and collective bargaining rights.

She completed the assignment that took her to Madison but continued to cover the story – or history. She attended news conferences, demonstrations, rallies, marches, sleep-ins and Walker's bill signing.

The journalist, who had planned to stay only a few days in the capital, stayed much longer. She went from lodging in a hotel to renting an apartment.

"I set up shop there," Mayfield said. "And I started traveling around the state."

Eventually she knew she had a documentary to make

– "Wisconsin Rising."

Mayfield was touched by the people she met – teachers, nurses, custodians, firefighters.

"I've talked to so many people whose stories stand out," she said.

She recalled an interview with Elden Jelle, a state employee who said his earnings under Walker went from \$15 an hour to \$12, and the "intimate stories" of how that changed his life. In his early 60s, Jelle said he was probably going to need a second job.

Mayfield said government workers shared fears that they might have to leave their jobs, that benefits might be further reduced, that rights might be further eroded.

The "Wisconsin Rising" trailer begins with Walker signing the budget bill in March 2011 and then the statement, "With the stroke of his pen, Walker undid 50 years of collective bargaining rights."

Over mournful music, there are shouts of "Shame, shame, shame." One protester calls the legislation a total attack on a generation of people. Another demonstrator says young people were encouraged to enter "honorable professions and now they're getting screwed for it." A shot of the Capitol shows a banner that reads "FAX EAT THE RICH."

"I have shot 95 percent of the film," said the filmmaker, who probably will return to Wisconsin for extra footage later this year.

In January, Mayfield turned to Kickstarter.com, a funding service, to raise money for editing, copyright research and licensing, website construction, scoring and other post-production work. Online supporters pledged amounts from \$1 to \$5,000.

"Right now, all I am doing is fundraising," Mayfield said. She hopes to travel the film fest circuit after completing the documentary.

And she hopes that completion will be this year, in advance of the general election. It's important, she said, because in a broader sense the film explores a fight to rescue a democracy from failure.

The premiere, Mayfield said, probably will be in Wisconsin. "I feel like it should," she said.



PHOTO: COURTESY SAM MAYFIELD
Filmmaker Sam Mayfield is working on "Wisconsin Rising," a feature-length documentary about the people's revolt against Gov. Scott Walker's anti-union initiative. Mayfield, a video journalist, also made "Silenced Voices," a 2010 documentary about the death of a migrant farmworker.

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{ Editorial }

A million 'no thanks'

Apologists for Gov. Scott Walker are struggling to downplay the historic filing of more than one million signatures seeking his recall.

Walker's supporters contend the number is inconsequential. They say Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett received more than a million votes in 2010 but still lost the gubernatorial race to Walker. They maintain that the recall election will be an ordinary race and that Walker will win again.

We disagree. There are one million signals that the recall election will be anything but ordinary. And while the 2010 race was Walker's to lose, given the national backlash against the Democrats over the economy, this time it will be Walker playing defense.

Numbers do count. The recall effort has already drawn more participation than any such race in the nation's history. That's how energized Walker's opponents are.

When California voters ousted Gov. Grey Davis in 2003, only 7 percent of voters signed recall petitions. By contrast, 23 percent of Wisconsin voters signed petitions to recall Walker.

Walker and his supporters appear confident he can buy his way out of this pickle. The day petitions were filed against him, Walker was in New York at a fundraiser hosted by the disgraced former chairman of AIG, bowing before the same people who toppled the economy. The campaign ads stemming from that appearance should be entertaining.

Walker and his supporters don't seem to understand there's a lot more behind those one million signatures than outrage over Walker's union bashing. Wisconsinites are boiling mad over the jobs the state has lost every month since Walker signed his destructive budget into law (while neighboring states gained jobs). Tens of thousands of Wisconsinites are angry they no longer have health care or vital school programs for their kids because Walker sacrificed those necessities to give tax gifts to the wealthy — gifts that he promised would create jobs.

Then there's that ongoing investigation into Walker's Milwaukee County staff, which has already yielded some embarrassing headlines and promises to produce more. There's Walker's transparent pandering to his rich benefactors and cronies. And, worst of all, there is the way that Walker has divided the state by engaging in a level of partisan bullying perhaps unprecedented in Wisconsin politics.

That all adds up to a difficult record to buy his way out from under.

There is some good news for Walker. Apparently his disapproval rating is nowhere near as low as the one that Davis faced. In October 2011, the last time Walker's approval rating was polled, 51 percent of voters disapproved of him — far fewer than the 75 percent of Californians who disapproved of Davis.

Walker also has virtually unlimited cash. The nation's wealthiest special interests are aligned desperately behind him, and the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in Citizens United gave them a blank check.

Really, though, the only thing that can save Walker now is a contentious Democratic primary that leaves the winner weary and tarnished. It's not out of the question. Falling on the sword is a cherished Democratic tradition.

For Wisconsin's sake, we hope this time Democrats resist the urge.

BY THE NUMBERS

Percentage of Fortune 500 companies that have non-discrimination policies that include gays:

86%

Percentage in 2002: 61%

Percentage of Fortune 500 companies that offer domestic partner benefits:

66%

Percentage in 2002: 34%

Total number of Fortune's "Best Companies To Work For" that have non-discrimination policies that include gays:

100

Number in 2002: 95

{ Feedback }

CALLING OUT BULLIES IS NOT BULLYING

(The following is an open letter to Karen Santorum, wife of anti-gay GOP presidential candidate Rick Santorum. It first appeared in the Advocate.)

Karen, we need to talk. And by that, I mean that I need to talk and you need to listen. You love your husband — I get that. You love your faith — fine by me. But when you pretend that hate is love, that lies are truth, and that victims are oppressors, you have become insane.

Your husband believes that LGBT people cannot be trusted to serve in the military, raise children, form stable relationships or be fully respected under the law. According to you, Rick may love us, but honey, his love is killing us, and we want nothing to do with this abusive relationship. Our community has endured expulsion from

family, mass firings, daily epithets, assaults, harassment, humiliation, death, and suicides. We know that if your husband becomes president of our country our long suffering will only deepen and magnify.

In some ways, it's very sad. In another two or three months, the cameras will be gone, and the press will not care about you or Rick. The march of justice will continue, leaving you and your family a forgotten footnote on the wrong side of history. I'm glad we talked, Karen. I feel better now. While I know you will keep saying whatever that reprobate PR firm is telling you to say, at least we understand each other. You and Rick are the haters. My community is the victim, and anyone paying attention knows the truth.

Given what so many of my brothers and sisters live through daily, you calling us bullies is contemptible. It did not have to be this way. Many people of faith truly and authentically do love the

Kate Kendell
National Center for
Lesbian Rights director

ON THE RECORD

“

"In honor of Miss California USA's first two openly lesbian contestants, all beauty pageants will now feature a pantsuit competition."

— JOAN RIVERS on Twitter.

"I never let my politics supersede my manners. She came up with her husband and was sweet as can be. She was like, 'My kids love the show. I don't watch it myself, but I'd love it if you could sign these postcards.' It dawned on me that she didn't know what the hell 'Glee' was."

— "GLEE" STAR DARREN CRISS recounts an encounter with Michele Bachmann for Details magazine.

"(Citizens United) was one of the worst decisions I have ever seen. I predict to you that there will be huge scandals associated with this huge flood of money."

— U.S. SEN. JOHN MCCAIN condemning the 2010 U.S. Supreme Court decision that guaranteed free speech rights for corporations, paving the way for the creation of unaccountable super PACs.

"But if he wants to make it, he will have to soften some of his positions. To take a stand against homosexuality or to oppose divorce is harmful. Principles count, but in politics one must have the capacity to be open-minded."

— MARIA MALACARNE SANTORUM, husband of GOP presidential candidate Rick Santorum's late cousin, expressing her liberal Italian family's dismay over the right-wing politics of their American relative.

"(Barney Frank) chooses a party that supports his values. They've chosen a party that supports their income — a party that denigrates them and treats them with disrespect."

— HOUSE MINORITY LEADER NANCY PELOSI commenting on the attacks made on out U.S. Rep. Barney Frank by members of GOProud, a conservative Republican gay group.

"I do believe it's generational, much like the civil rights movement. Young people started taking to the streets and things changed. This really is the final leg of the civil rights movement."

— ACTOR/DIRECTOR GEORGE CLOONEY on the fight for full LGBT equality.

"I cannot listen to stories about kids killing themselves any longer without thinking (to myself), 'When are you going to have a little blood on your shirt for not being honest about who you are?'"

— TODD GLASS, a popular Los Angeles standup comedian, exiting the closet.

"My mother knew I was gay and performed an exorcism on me in an attempt to cure me."

— ERIC JAMES BORGES, 19, of Visalia, Calif., who committed suicide after a traumatic coming-out experience

On big lies and bleeding hearts

At a recent rally for Gov. Scott Walker, former Gov. Tommy Thompson belted, "We are going to take our state back!"

Um, would that be the state with the Republican governor and executive branch filled with right-wing appointees? The state with Republican majorities in both houses of the Legislature? The state with the Supreme Court with a growing number of ethically compromised, corporate-funded conservatives?

It's those trying to oust Walker who are trying to take their state back. But then not much of today's political rhetoric is based on logic or truth. Republicans and right-wing ideologues are particularly adept at the politics of fear, of the Big Lie and of mobilizing resentment.

Fear is the central motif of Newt Gingrich's campaign. In his closing statement at the GOP debate in Charleston, S.C., he called President Barack Obama "the most dangerous president of our lifetime, and if he is re-elected after the disaster he has

Opinion
JAMAKAYA

been, the level of radicalism of his second term will be truly frightening."

Radicalism? Obama? The guy who compromises away any ideals he might have? Like removing the public option from the health reform bill? Having an economic team in bed with Wall Street? Not coming out in support of marriage equality? Hmm...

Nevertheless, Gingrich sounded alarmed and probably succeeded in alarming many listeners. Similar fear-mongering about socialism, "death panels," illegal immigrants, government regulation and more have become staples of right-wing rhetoric.

Like fear-mongering, Big Lies are declared boldly and repeated frequently, often gaining credibility. Conservatives are much better at Big Lies than liberals. Lies don't always last in the long run, but they are an essential tactic in the 24/7

offense that the right has been honing for 40 years.

Pokey old liberals, forever in defensive mode, are sidetracked by complexity and nuance. They're generally too crippled by conscience to tell Big Lies.

So Gov. Rick Perry labels Social Security — a bipartisan, payroll tax-funded insurance program that's kept generations of older Americans out of poverty — as a Ponzi scheme, a criminal enterprise. Every GOP presidential candidate denies the growing, irrefutable evidence of global warming, calling it fraudulent and an anti-business plot.

These and other Big Lies are gaining traction. Every hit against Social Security adds to the drip, drip, drip wearing down of people's confidence in the one modest retirement program protected from Wall Street sharks.

The ongoing corporate-funded campaign to deny the science of global warming has been incredibly effective. A 2007 Harris Poll found that 71 percent of Americans believed the burning of fossil fuels contributed to climate

change. In 2009, only 51 percent believed it. Last year, the figure dropped to 44 percent.

Another effective tactic has been mobilizing the resentment of Americans, deflecting it from the real bad guys, and targeting it at fellow Americans. This can be seen in the hostility aimed at recipients of food assistance, jobless benefits and Medicaid. Instead of acknowledging and addressing the conditions that are increasing poverty, too many Americans, coached by right-wing media, are blaming the victims and grousing about the small amount of their taxes supporting our fragile safety net.

I have attended many conservative conferences and it is deeply disturbing to hear the mostly white, well-off audiences complain how bad they all have it and express contempt for those who are truly oppressed or struggling. Have they no shame?

Liberals aren't perfect. But the next time someone accuses me of being a bleeding heart, I plan to say, "Thank you."

We've got the numbers to win

No. 1: Unless you have been in a buried time capsule for the last 15 years, you know the Republicans will vote at all levels for candidates who, if elected, will work to harm the LGBT community. That is a no-brainer.

If you care for members of the LGBT community and/or equality of treatment for all American citizens, you must support Democratic candidates. Even if the Democrat is not friendly, he or she must vote with the party in organizational votes. It is a must do.

No. 2: The population of Wisconsin residents 18 or older is about 4,354,800. At least 5 percent of these people are lesbian or gay — that's 277,740 people. Each of them has at least seven people — friends and family members — who love and support them. That equals 1,524,180 pro-equality residents.

So, the community and its allies equal 1,801,910 pro-

Opinion
BILL MCCONKEY

ple with lots to lose and gain in elections. Lots. All of them should join the battle for equality at the polls by donating, displaying yard signs and bumper stickers, doing opposition research about Republican foes and their donors, going door to door, and making phone calls.

Those who are not out can still contribute in many ways. Applying my multiplier effect of seven to the Williams Institute's estimate of 4 million gay Americans, LGBT people and their allies itotal at least 21,000,000 people strong. With these numbers and these activities, we can win.

No. 3: Straight allies and friends must speak up and fight anti-gay rhetoric and activities. It must become a cause to which we donate

effort and courage at every opportunity. We must let no shot go unanswered, and we must be proactive communicators in person, on the Web and in the media.

No. 4: Although somewhat personally risky, every American who "comes out" strengthens our cause. I know that is easy to say, but I encourage you to find friends and allies and encourage them to step out. The community needs them.

No. 5: Go to court. I was denied standing on the substantive merits of my lawsuit against Wisconsin's constitutional amendment against equal marriage rights. Why? Because I am straight, married and have children. The court said the amendment did not directly impact me, so I had no standing.

I argued that the straight community was allowed to vote on an amendment that did not impact them. But still I was denied standing.

If you want to be married, go the courthouse and ask

for a marriage license. When you're denied, go to court. You can represent yourself and it will cost very little. I did it. There are people to show you how and help you. You will have standing. The fight should be made continually and in every county. I don't understand why not a single Wisconsin couple has put up such a fight.

No. 6: Get involved in the anti-bullying and anti-hate efforts in your school districts and community. At birth, an infant hates no one. People are taught to hate. But you can fight that in your school district, in your local community and in your own families.

Join the fight. It is vitally important.

Bill McConkey is a professional public speaker, trainer, political consultant and social activist. He is the author of "Fighting the Merchants of Hate: the War for America's Soul." For more information, go to www.billmconkey.com.

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GPS devices help owners find lost pets

From AP
Houdini the dog lived up to his name.

The lab-shepherd mix, known as a crafty escape artist, was placed in a foster home by Best Friends Animal Sanctuary in Kanab, Utah. Despite his new owner's best efforts to keep him close, the dog pushed an air conditioner out of a window and made his getaway.

Fortunately the staff at Best Friends anticipated Houdini's wandering ways and outfitted his collar with a GPS tracking device. It worked as promised, and Best Friends adoption manager Kristi Littrell found the errant dog in an overgrown lot in Kanab.

About half of the pets that enter animal shelters each year are strays or lost animals, but the growing use of GPS technology offers owners a new option for trying to track down roaming cats, missing dogs and other runaway pets.

Several GPS devices are now being marketed that attach to collars and can be monitored by handsets, cell phones or computers with relative ease.

"I would never have found (Houdini) without the GPS device on his collar," Littrell said. "It's great these devices

are available to us now. They will undoubtedly help in a lot of cases where pets would otherwise not be found and returned home."

Best Friends uses a device called Loc8tor to keep track of Houdini. A handset picks up a signal from a tag attached to his collar and indicates which way to go to locate the tag. It's designed to work within a range of 400 feet, though obstacles like walls and floors can reduce the range.

Another GPS tracking device designed for pets is Tagg The Pet Tracker. Its fans include Jessica Vogelsang, a San Diego veterinarian who received a free Tagg for review on her blog, Dr. V at Pawcurious.com.

"I've tried out a few GPS trackers but the Tagg is the only one I liked enough to recommend," she said. "I've been testing it for about a month now and I've been getting accurate locations with it consistently. What I find really innovative about it, however, is how well they've integrated mobile technology so you can track your pet in real time not only on the site but with your phone, using the app or even text messaging."

To use Tagg, you need a home computer and a cell-

phone. You program your pet's safety zone - it can be as small as your house or as big as your neighborhood. If she leaves that space, you will get an e-mail or text (your choice) telling you she's gone and where she is. If she's on the move, you can track her movements until you find her and take her home.

GPS devices could help people locate missing pets in all kinds of situations where animals are vulnerable to getting lost, such as when pets are shipped by plane or after natural disasters.

While many consumers rave about the GPS technology, complaints tend to fall into several categories.

Some say batteries in the devices do not always hold a charge for as long as promised; that digital maps associated with the devices are not always easy to read or use; and that the devices do not always cover the range of distance that pet owners expected.

The Tagg Master Kit costs \$100 and comes with a battery charger and a month of wireless service; service is \$8 a month after that. A basic Loc8tor Pet kit costs \$100.

Find news updates at www.wisconsin-gazette.com.



PHOTO: COURTESY

This purrfectly lovely feline is less likely to get lost thanks to her Tagg pet tracker GPS collar. The Tagg Master Kit costs \$100 and comes with a battery charger and a month of wireless service; service is \$8 a month after that. A basic Loc8tor Pet kit costs \$100.

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Tracy is a 5-year-old beagle with a playful personality.

TIP OF THE WEEK

Does your dog struggle with the "drop it" cue? Let him hold a toy in his mouth then show him a treat. The instant your dog opens his mouth, say, "Drop it." With lots of practice, your dog will soon associate mouth-opening with the cue, and you'll no longer have to offer the treat. For more tips, visit wihumane.org.

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Christie nominates gay man to N.J. high court

From The Associated Press

New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie proposed two historic firsts for the state Supreme Court by nominating an openly gay black man and a Korean-born law enforcement official to the bench.

The Republican governor announced the nominations of Bruce A. Harris and Phillip H. Kwon at a state-house news conference attended by the nominees and their families.

"I am proud to be standing here today to announce

two historic nominations to the New Jersey State Supreme Court," Christie said, adding that he had "extreme confidence in their records and respect for their intellect."

Harris is the mayor of Chatham in Morris County. He would be the third African-American to be seated on the court and the first openly gay member. His longtime partner attended the announcement.

Six openly gay justices sit on state supreme courts

nationwide.

Garden State Equality chairman Steven Goldstein praised the choice. The gay rights leader acknowledged he was surprised by the announcement, but said the Christie administration has always treated gay community leaders with "warmth and responsiveness."

Kwon works in the New Jersey Attorney General's Office and lives in Bergen County. He would be the first Asian-American on the high court.

Christie has two vacan-

cies to fill on the court as of March 1.

The current court is made up of five women and two men, all of whom are white.

Christie created a firestorm when he decided not to renominate the court's only black member, John Wallace, in 2010.

The nominations need confirmation from the Democrat-controlled Senate.

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Bruce A. Harris
PHOTO: COURTESY

Washington poised for marriage equality

From The Associated Press

As lawmakers held their first public hearing on legalizing same-sex marriage on Jan. 23, a previously undecided Democratic senator announced her support for the measure, all but ensuring that Washington will become the seventh state to let gay and lesbian couples wed.

The announcement by Sen. Mary Margaret Haugen, D-Camano Island, that she would cast the 25th and deciding vote in favor of the issue came as hundreds of people filled the capitol to advocate for and against same-sex marriage.

The state house is widely expected to have enough support to approve

same-sex marriage, and Democratic Gov. Christine Gregoire publicly endorsed the proposal this month. If a marriage bill is passed during this legislative session, gay and lesbian couples will be able to get married starting in June unless opponents file a referendum to challenge it. Opponents already have said they will.

A referendum can't be filed until after the bill is signed into law by Gregoire. Opponents then must turn in 120,577 signatures by July 6.

Democratic Sen. Ed Murray, a gay lawmaker from Seattle who has led the push for gay civil rights and domestic partnerships, testified before the Government Operations, Tribal Relations

& Elections Committee with his longtime partner, Michael Shiosaki.

"I have waited 17 years to ask this body to consider marriage equality for gay and lesbian families," said Murray, who is sponsoring the bill in the Senate.

Others argued that the measure goes against the Bible.

"You are saying as a committee and a legislature that you know better than God," said Ken Hutcherson, pastor of Antioch Bible Church.

Washington would join New York, Connecticut, Iowa, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont and the District of Columbia in legalizing marriage equality.



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Tanner has taken up the cause, wearing rainbow buttons to school

BULLYING from I one word on Facebook – “Unfreakingbelievable.”

The father had many more words for Shawano School District administrators and teachers in the days that followed.

“This is bullying,” Uttecht said. “What impact does this have on gay kids in school? I want kids to be safe. But how can they feel safe with this?”

HARMFUL WORDS

Kids grow up hearing, “Sticks and stones may break your bones/but words will never hurt you.” But there’s evidence – in science and day-to-day life – that words not only hurt but incite physical violence.

On Jan. 11, Eric James Borges, a 19-year-old intern with a gay crisis hotline, committed suicide. Weeks before, Borges made a video for the anti-bullying “It Gets Better” project. He recalled being tormented in his Christian-right home and assaulted at school. “My name was not Eric, but Faggot,” he said.

Gay California teen Jeffrey Fehr also committed suicide in January. The 18-year-old was found hanging in the entrance to his family’s home on New Year’s Day. Fehr’s father said, “For years and years, people knocked him down for being different. It damaged him. It wore on him. He could never fully believe how wonderful he was, and how many people loved him.”

“School climate and victimization can affect students’ educational outcomes and personal development at every grade level,” said Eliza Byard, executive director of the Gay, Lesbian & Straight

Education Network.

The week of Jan. 23, the New York-based GLSEN sponsored No Name-Calling Week in partnership with several companies and leading educational associations. For the campaign, teachers received lesson plans, educators got tips to counter bullying and students made buttons and posters to spread the No Name-Calling message: “No Sticks. No Stones. No Dissing.”

GLSEN also shared the findings of “Playgrounds and Prejudice: Elementary School Climate in the United States,” a survey of 1,065 grade-schoolers and 1,099 grade-school teachers.

The survey found:

- Forty-five percent of elementary school students and 49 percent of elementary school teachers regularly hear “that’s so gay” in a negative way.
- Twenty-six percent of students and teachers hear homophobic remarks such as “fag” and “lesbo” in grade school. Students at a similar percentage hear negative racial comments.
- Three-fourths of students report that students at their school are called names, made fun of or bullied with at least some regularity. Most commonly this is because of students’ looks or body size, followed by not being good at sports, how well they do at schoolwork, not conforming to traditional gender norms/roles or because people think they’re gay.
- About 48 percent of teachers said they feel comfortable answering



Tanner Uttecht, rear left, and his family.

PHOTO: COURTESY NICK UTTECHT

questions from students about LGB people and 41 percent are comfortable answering questions about transgender people.

- Seven in 10 students say they have learned about family diversity, but only two in 10 have learned about families with gay or lesbian parents.
- Nearly 90 percent of elementary school teachers surveyed said they include representations of different families in the classroom, but only 21 percent report representation of LGB parents and only 8 percent report representation of transgender parents.

POSITIVE REP

In Shawano, in the first month of 2012, Nick and Tanner Uttecht and others in

their family did much to offer a complete lesson in family diversity, gay parenting and no-name calling.

Nick Uttecht, who works as an emergency medical technician, complained to the high school principal, the district superintendent and the school board about the student newspaper article on gay parents.

District superintendent Todd Carlson responded, “Offensive articles cultivating a negative environment of disrespect are not appropriate or condoned by the Shawano School District.”

The point-counterpoint feature also was removed from leftover copies of the Hawk Post.

But Uttecht, who read a three-page statement to the school board on Jan. 16, said he still wants assurances of disciplinary measures against the faculty advisor to the paper and the student.

The anti-gay commentary, which begins with the false statement that same-sex couples can marry in 11 states and cites the work of long-discredited sex researcher Paul Cameron, was not edited for accuracy or the credibility of assertions, Uttecht complained. Cameron, he observed, was expelled from the American Psychological Association and has worked with the Family Research Institute, labeled a hate group by

the Southern Poverty Law Institute.

Uttecht also remains concerned about the climate for LGBT students and children of gay parents in the district. “Kids in the closet, they must be scared right now,” said the 33-year-old Uttecht, who came out three years ago after years of struggling with his own fears.

Uttecht, who is on the Menominee Indian Head Start Policy Council, has requested another appearance before the Shawano School District School Board – this time under an agenda item so board members can respond to his concerns.

In the meantime, the family is hearing from supportive families and faculty in the Shawano district. The controversy has, in a sense, outed the family.

“My friends are quite OK with it ... with words of encouragement,” Tanner said. “Some of my friends I never wanted to tell, but they accept it too. He is my dad and always will be. There isn’t anything wrong with him.”

Now Tanner has taken up the cause at his middle school, where he has been wearing rainbow-adorned “coming out” buttons.

“A few teachers have questioned my pin that I’m wearing and said it was inappropriate,” he said. “I had to explain what it was for and they then said it was OK. I want kids to know it is OK to be gay and it is OK to have gay parents. I’m afraid this will make kids not come out and be who they are and that is wrong.”

Uttecht said of his son, “I’m so proud of him.”

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WIGOUT!

WISCONSIN GAZETTE ENTERTAINMENT

BRASSY GYPSY

Though always well-rehearsed, Patti LuPone is a risk-taker

By Michael Muckian

Contributing writer

Having set the standard for many of the juiciest roles the musical stage has to offer, Patti LuPone is frequently asked to name her favorite. She bristles at the question.

“I don’t have a favorite anything – it’s too binding,” she snapped into the receiver as she prepared for a recent performance in Kansas City with frequent co-star Mandy Patinkin. “I’m a tourist and I’m a fan, and it’s too limiting to tie myself down to favorites.”

The Broadway legend went on to explain that she’s always been a risk-taker, both in her life and her profession. Despite her infamous reputation for being exacting and demanding, LuPone described herself as someone who waits to see what life will bring her way and then makes the most of it.

LuPone is bringing her devil-may-care attitude to “The Gypsy in My Soul,” her one-woman show that stops at Madison’s Overture Center for the Arts on Feb. 1. Even though our conversation was only about two weeks prior to opening, LuPone said she’d yet to decide on the final playlist.

Like she said, she’s a risk-taker. “I sing for about two hours,” she said. “There will be some show tunes, some songs the audience may not recognize and, I hope, a few laughs.”

But there’s little at risk for the audience, no matter what she

chooses to perform. It’s not just that her repertoire includes many of the choicest musical selections ever written. With her soaring voice, uncanny comic timing and larger-than-life presence, LuPone is one diva who inevitably delivers.

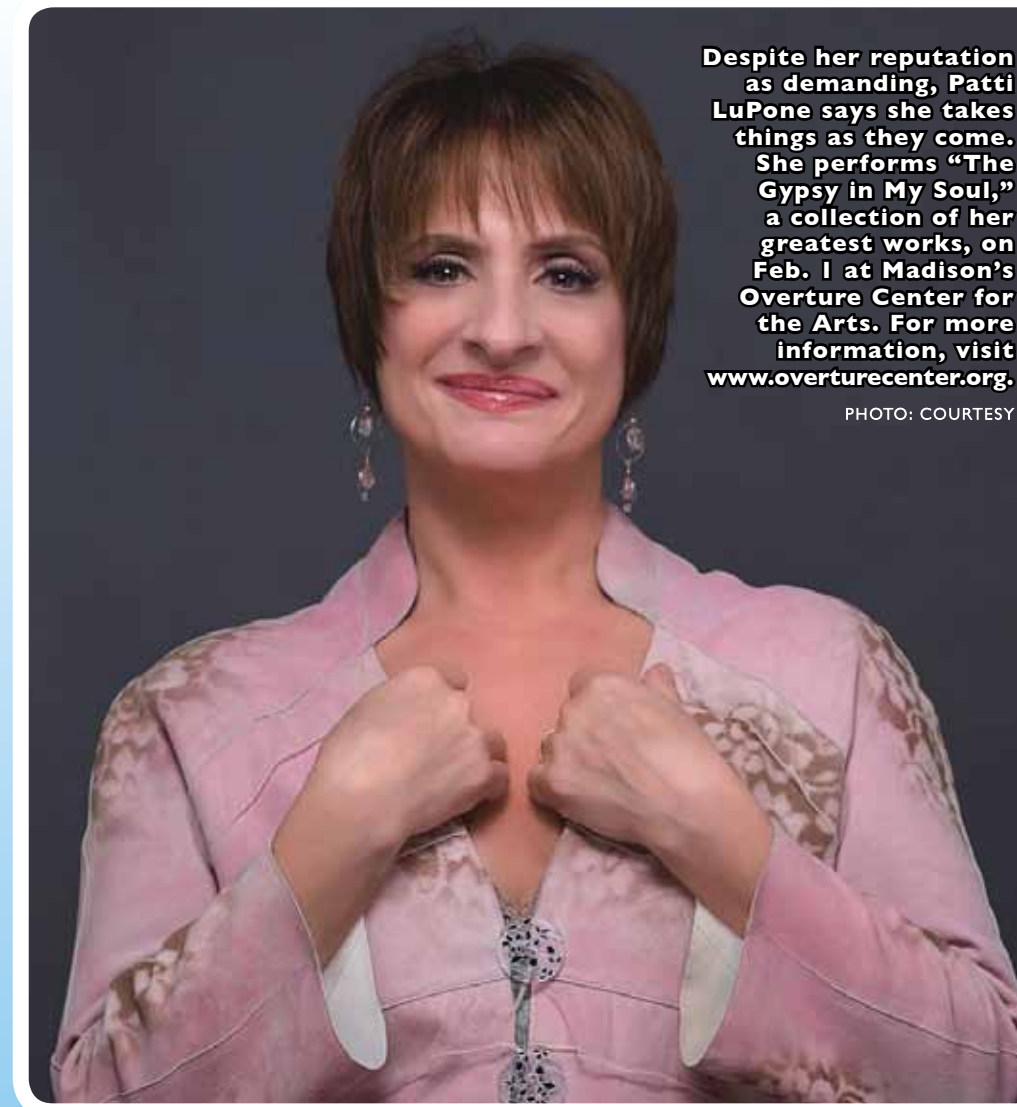
Although three decades yawned between her two Tony wins, they were years filled with constant work at a craft she’s never stopped striving to perfect.

LuPone, a Long Island, N.Y., native, was seemingly born for the theater, a conceit she readily allows. Her parents were teachers, as is her brother William. But her great-grand-aunt was the celebrated 19th century opera singer Adelina Patti. Her other brother Robert LuPone originated the role of Zach in “A Chorus Line.”

While she’s largely been regarded as a musical star throughout her career, LuPone has significant dramatic acting experience.

LuPone was part of the first graduating class at Juilliard School’s drama division. Since 1977, she’s been a frequent collaborator with playwright David Mamet in his gritty, naturalistic dramas. Her portrayal of Jolly in “The Old Neighborhood,” received rave reviews.

In fact, LuPone is perhaps best known among hoi polloi for her TV role as Libby Thatcher, the mother of a son with Down syndrome, on the ABC drama “Life Goes On.” Although it was her best-known



Despite her reputation as demanding, Patti LuPone says she takes things as they come. She performs “The Gypsy in My Soul,” a collection of her greatest works, on Feb. 1 at Madison’s Overture Center for the Arts. For more information, visit www.overturecenter.org.

PHOTO: COURTESY

gig, it was one of her least favorites, as she wrote in “Patti LuPone: A Memoir.” Never one to mince words, LuPone spared few bad ones for her “Life Goes On” co-star Bill Smitrovich.

Only Andrew Lloyd Webber, who fired her from “Sunset Boulevard,” fares worse in her juicy backstage chronicle.

Ironically, it was Webber who gave LuPone her breakout role as Eva Peron in 1979’s “Evita.” Under the direction of Harold Prince, she scored her first Tony for the role.

But, “‘Evita’ was the worst experience in my life,” she said in a 2007 NYT interview. “I was screaming my way through a part that could only have been written by a man who hates women.”

Nevertheless, in 1993, she took another chance with Webber, traveling to London to appear as Norma Desmond in the premiere

of his “Sunset Boulevard.” Her contract had called for LuPone to also open the show on Broadway, but the composer decided to replace her in New York with Glenn Close. She learned about her firing from a gossip column.

“I didn’t take it well,” LuPone writes in her memoir in an uncharacteristic moment of understatement. The saga ended with LuPone winning a hefty settlement from Webber for breach of contract.

“I would never work with Andrew Lloyd Weber again under any circumstances,” LuPone said. “But I sing ‘Don’t Cry for Me Argentina’ all the time in my performances. Some of his songs are very good.”

Despite her hesitancy to identify favorites, LuPone admits that Broadway composer Stephen Sondheim holds a special place in the musical pantheon. “He is by far

the most challenging composer, both lyrically as well as musically,” she said. “It all starts and ends with Sondheim.”

She’s also a fan of Cole Porter. The 1987 Lincoln Center revival of Porter’s “Anything Goes” earned her a 1987 Tony Award nomination. More recently, she won nearly every theater award on the planet for her nuclear portrayal of Rose in the 2009 revival of “Gypsy.”

Last year LuPone found herself on stage with the New York City Ballet in a production of Kurt Weill’s and Bertolt Brecht’s satirical ballet chanté “The Seven Deadly Sins.” It’s a place in which, a few years ago, LuPone would never have seen herself.

“It’s part of being a risk-taker,” LuPone said. “I don’t hope for anything. It’s more exciting for me to wait and see what life has in store for me.”

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Larson's monologues come to life in musical

Theater

MICHAEL MUCKIAN

Fans of the musical "RENT" are, by default, fans of its creator, the late Jonathan Larson. And fans of Larson would do well to treat themselves to Soulstice Theatre's production of "tick, tick ... BOOM!," Larson's musical that preceded his better known Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award-winning update of "La Boheme."

A portion of the proceeds from ticket sales benefit AIDS Research Center of Wisconsin.

The story of "tick, tick ... BOOM!," which started out as a musical monologue, concerns the character of Jon (Jordan Gwiazdowski), an aspiring musical theater composer, and his fear that he has chosen the wrong path for his life. On the eve of turning 30, Jon considers leaving the theater for a safer, more financially secure future, only to recant at the last moment and follow his heart.

Although the story seems autobiographical in nature, it's not, according to Jillian Smith, a Soulstice Theatre board member who also directed the show.

"Larson told these stories as part of the one-man rock monologue he performed, but the char-



PHOTO: COURTESY
Jonathan Larson, the late composer of "RENT."

acters and incidents were compilations of people and events, not precise retellings," Smith says. "I think everyone can relate to the idea of chasing a dream and having to decide whether or not to continue its pursuit."

Larson performed the work, which debuted in 1990, as a solo artist until his death on Jan. 25, 1996, from aortic dissection, a condition caused by undiagnosed Marfan syndrome. After Larson's death, playwright David Auburn revised the work, creating a three-act musical that premiered off Broadway in 2001.

"Jon had performed and

recorded many of the songs with overdubbing or additional singers during his life," Smith says. "The addition of actual cast members was a logical extension. The emotional journeys benefit from being told by multiple voices."

Soulstice's production expanded the original three-member cast to seven. Smith believes the extended cast improves the musical harmonies and adds to depth of the story.

There are distinct comparisons between "tick, tick ... BOOM!" and Stephen Sondheim's "Company," a parallel that Smith says is an intentional result of the relationship Larson had with the out Broadway composer. In fact, Sondheim was a mentor of sorts to Larson, attending the composer's workshop performance of "Superbia," another Larson play.

"While both 'tick' and 'Company' take place around the birthday of the main character and address coming-of-age issues, 'Company' focuses much more on the character's emotional journey and readiness for marriage," Smith says. "The life stages of the two characters are vastly different, as are the core personal conflicts they face, making 'tick' truly a unique work in its own right."

Both Smith and Gwiazdowski worked closely with friends and family of Larson, including actor Daphne Rubin-Vega, who origi-

nated the role of Mimi in "RENT" on Broadway, and Larson's father Al Larson to better understand the character of Jon.

"Our entire cast has worked hard to ground their characters in the real people in Jon's life," Smith says. "Where the character is really an archetype, we've tried to establish who it was that Larson was trying to get his audiences to understand when he told the story in the first place."

For as much fun as the musical is, Smith says "tick, tick ... BOOM!" is underscored by a serious message for audience members.

"We know that Jon's efforts and sacrifices were rewarded just a few years later with the amazing success of "RENT," but we also know, tragically, that he did not live to see the full measure of that success," Smith says. "We hope that audiences will come away from the show with a desire to go for the brass ring in their own lives."

ON STAGE

Soulstice Theatre presents Jonathan Larson's "tick, tick ... BOOM!" Jan. 26-Feb. 11 at the Keith Tamsett Theatre, 3770 S. Pennsylvania Ave., St. Francis. Go to www.soulstice-theatre.org.

Artworks returns to Waukesha for annual clearance sale



Detail from "Splash," a mixed media by Michael Anderson.



"Autumn" by Cynthia Linnabary.

ArtWorks presents its annual studio clearance sale from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Jan. 28 at the Waukesha Expo Center, 1000 Northview Road, Waukesha. Artists of various media from all over the Midwest attend the annual event to sell old, discontinued and damaged pieces to the public at reduced prices. Included are paintings, jewelry, fiber, photography, ceramics, mixed media and wood.

Admission is \$3 at the door – or get free admission by donating two canned food items. Food and admission fees collected benefit the Food Pantry of Waukesha County. Children under 12 and adults over 65 can attend at no charge, and parking is free. For more information, go to artworksmadison.com.

– LW.

Glass's opera 'Galileo Galilei' is as unorthodox as its subject

By Michael Muckian

Contributing writer

"In a dark time, the eye begins to see," wrote American poet Theodore Roethke. That same conceit may have contributed to the construction of "Galileo Galilei," minimalist composer Phillip Glass' biographical opera of the 17th century scientist and astronomer. History remembers Galileo as the man persecuted by the Catholic Church for his support of the theory that the earth revolved around the sun.

Glass's 2002 work, performed by Madison Opera Jan. 26-29, tells Galileo's life story in reverse. It begins with his final days as a blind old man forced by the Inquisition to recant his theories to save his life. The ensuing 90-minute narrative traces backward through that life, touching on the moments that contributed to his scientific achievements and his realization that humankind is not the center of the universe.

The unusual structure of Glass' 18th opera suits the subject matter. The reverse storytelling provides clarity to a fairly verbose libretto by Glass, Mary Zimmerman and Arnold Weinstein – clarity that might have been lost in a standard narrative style, according to director A. Scott Parry.

"Near the opera's end, there is a line regarding Galileo's invention of the telescope, that 'we are looking backwards through the glass, seeing the image twice twisted over,'" Parry says. "It is this concept of seeing Galileo's own life this way, as if through a telescope, that gives reason for the opera's unique construction."



PHOTO: MADISON OPERA
John Arnold as the younger Galileo and William Joyner as the older Galileo in Madison Opera's upcoming production.

Opera fans may find some of Glass' music challenging. Don't expect the lush romanticism of Puccini or Verdi, or the classical construction of Mozart. Glass' minimalist, often atonal approach generates strong responses – negative as well as positive – from listeners.

But even if "Galileo" is not a textbook operatic score, Glass takes a more traditional approach with it than some of his other work.

"Glass does not write opera in the usual narrative sense, nor

does he generally put heavy focus on character motivation or interactive dialogue. His musical language tends toward rhythm and texture rather than melody and harmony," Parry says. "However, 'Galileo Galilei' takes a more traditional approach than most of the composer's other operas due to its unusually dense libretto and compact plot delivered as 10 swiftly moving scenes."

Central to the emotional narrative is the relationship between Galileo (tenors William Joyner and John Arnold as the older and younger versions of the character) and daughter Maria Celeste (sopranos Jaime-Rose Guarrine and Jennifer DeMain, daughter of Madison Symphony Orchestra maestro John DeMain, also representing different ages.) A Catholic nun, Maria Celeste characterizes Galileo's internal conflict between his scientific discoveries and devotion to the church that sought to discredit him. In exploring their relationship, the opera also addresses this question, albeit with little resolution.

Guest conductor Kelly Kuo, who last appeared with the Madison Opera conducting Mozart's "Così fan tutte" in 2009, conducts 13 members of the

ON STAGE

Madison Opera's production of Phillip Glass' "Galileo Galilei" runs Jan. 26-29 for four performances at The Playhouse at Overture Center for the Arts in Madison. Some performances already have sold out. For more information, go to <http://madisonopera.org>.

Madison Symphony Orchestra. The production takes advantage of The Playhouse's intimate size and thrust stage.

"I am thrilled by the opportunity of producing this opera in such a wonderful and unique space," Parry says. "The Playhouse allows for a very immediate and intimate level of performance from the cast while providing a venue in which to bring the piece into the audience rather than having it viewed at arm's length within a proscenium. The production will envelop the audience in a way I think this opera has not been able to do previously."

Add to that the intellect behind it, and "Galileo Galilei," Madison Opera's modest mid-year production, may be its most compelling offering of the season.

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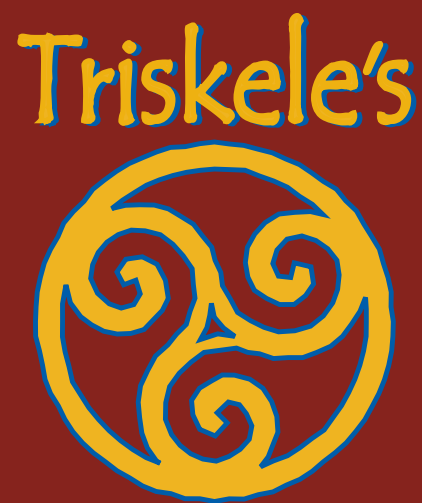
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A cross-dressing Close, a rusty 'Iron Lady' are among new film releases

Film

GREGG SHAPIRO

'ALBERT NOBBS'

A patron at Morrison's Hotel refers to Albert Nobbs (Glenn Close) as "such a kind little man." If only he knew. Albert, a self-described "bastard" with a convent education, was born female. Underneath the spit-spot suit, tight-fitting corset and layers of bandaging, Albert is still a woman. But he's lived so long as a man and is so desperate to hold onto his job in 19th century Dublin that Nobbs can't even recall his birth name.

Albert's day-to-day existence consists of working and keeping an account of his earnings, which lie hidden in

the floorboards of his room at Morrison's. Everything goes smoothly until he meets painter Hubert (Janet McTeer), hired by Morrison's owner Mrs. Baker (Pauline Collins) to touch up the hotel. When Albert and Hubert are forced to share the bed in Albert's room, his secret is revealed. Fortunately for Albert, he and Hubert have something in common.

While keeping each other's secrets, the two also reveal their personal stories. Albert is intrigued by Hubert's situation, especially since he is married to a woman named Cathleen (Bronagh Gallagher). This bit of information leads the usually levelheaded Albert to begin dreaming about the possibilities in his life, including romance. At the encouragement of Hubert,

Albert expresses an interest in hotel maid Helen (Mia Wasikowska). But Helen has her eye on ruffian Joe (Aaron Johnson), who vows to get the two of them to America.

"Albert Nobbs" is, first and foremost, Glenn Close's movie. She owns every frame she's in, although McTeer gives her a run for her money. The movie is at turns sweet and sad. It should come as no surprise that there is death and disease and tragedy on-screen. But there is also a kind of redemption and joy. The cast of familiar faces adds to film's entertainment value.

'HAYWIRE'

Steven Soderbergh really can do anything. From his Spalding Gray doc "And Everything Is Going Fine" to his sci-fi thriller "Contagion" to his "Ocean's" series,

Soderbergh is a master of his art. He excels at multi-character pieces, and "Haywire" fits the Soderbergh mold.

When we first encounter Mallory (mixed martial artist Gina Carano), she is trying to blend in at a cafe in upstate New York. That doesn't last long, because soon she's kicking the living daylights out of Aaron (Channing Tatum), who has tracked her down. Badly banged up, she grabs cafe diner Scott (Michael Angarano) and commandeers his car. As they drive away from the cafe, she tells him her story.

The daughter of Marine John (Bill Paxton), Mallory was also in the service doing special ops. Her exceptional talents made her a valuable commodity and an in-demand hire for special and dangerous missions. Her

From "Albert Nobbs." PHOTO: COURTESY



Continued

last one, which took her to Barcelona and Dublin, among other places, involved the transfer of a Chinese dissident from a safe house to the supposedly safe hands of government officials.

But the whole thing was a set-up, orchestrated by her boss and psycho ex-boyfriend Kenneth (Ewan McGregor). As she plots her revenge (and her future, for sequel's sake), she encounters an array of untrustworthy men, all of whom she has no problem disposing of.

"Haywire" is sparked by elements reminiscent of "The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo," "The Debt," and the best of the "Mission: Impossible" series. It's a taut and violent thriller, perfect for heating up the winter movie season.

'THE IRON LADY'

If you thought that out lesbian director Phyllida Lloyd couldn't sink any lower than she did with her offensive movie version of the annoying Abba musical "Mamma Mia!," you'd be wrong. Teaming up once again with Meryl Streep (who apparently can't say no) for the unflattering biopic of the extremely unlikely British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, Lloyd has outdone herself.

Rusty and dented, "The Iron Lady" begins with the doddering present-day Thatcher (master of accents Streep, who is as magnetic as ever), sneaking out as the local shop for a pint of milk. Shocked by the high price,

she tells her husband Denis (Jim Broadbent) about it. The problem is that Denis has been dead for several years. So now the stage has been set for "The Ghost and Mrs. Thatcher."

"The Iron Lady" shifts back and forth from the present day to the past. In the former, the retired MT drinks too much, hallucinates conversations with Denis, is cold and unfeeling toward her devoted daughter Carol (Olivia Colman) and is generally a prisoner in her own home. In the visits to her past, we learn that grocer's daughter Margaret always had deeply conservative roots. Thatcher's social awkwardness failed to deter the smitten young Denis (Harry Lloyd), who made her his wife and encouraged her political leanings.

Unfortunately, the time transitions are haphazard and distracting. Streep is ultimately the glue (or maybe that should be the hairspray) that holds this whole flimsy affair together. A massive disappointment on many levels, "The Iron Lady" has all the grace of an anvil.

'NEWLYWEDS'

Writer/director/actor Edward Burns continues his quest to be the Irish Catholic Woody Allen with his edgy new romantic comedy "Newlyweds." The titular newlyweds, personal trainer Buzzy (Burns) and restaurant manager Katie (Caitlin Fitzgerald), are both on their second marriage. They believe the lessons learned

from their previous marriages will strengthen theirs. But that assumption is about to be put to the test.

First, there's the arrival, on their New York doorstep, of Buzzy's flaky, irresponsible, substance abusing, sex addict half-sister Linda (Kerry Bishè). Linda is the kind of self-absorbed character who comes back to town and expects to pick up where she left off with ex-boyfriend Miles (Johnny Solo), despite the fact that he has recently married.

Then there's Dara (Dara Coleman), Katie's perpetually penniless and pretentious actor ex-husband. Finally, Katie's older sister Marsha (Marsha Dietlein) and her husband of 18 years Max (Max Baker) are experiencing their own domestic issues. And people worry that gay marriage is going to ruin things? This movie suggests straight people are doing a pretty good job of it themselves.

As the story unfolds, the characters alternate between talking to each other and addressing the camera. It's a device that works for the film's comedic and dramatic purposes. In spite of their best efforts, Buzzy and Katie's happy new marriage is already beginning to show signs of strain. Will they weather the storms around them or be blown apart? Genuinely funny and intimate, "Newlyweds" finds Burns at the peak of his skills. "Newlyweds" is available on Video on Demand via iTunes, Vudu and other Web sources.



From "The Iron Lady." PHOTO: COURTESY

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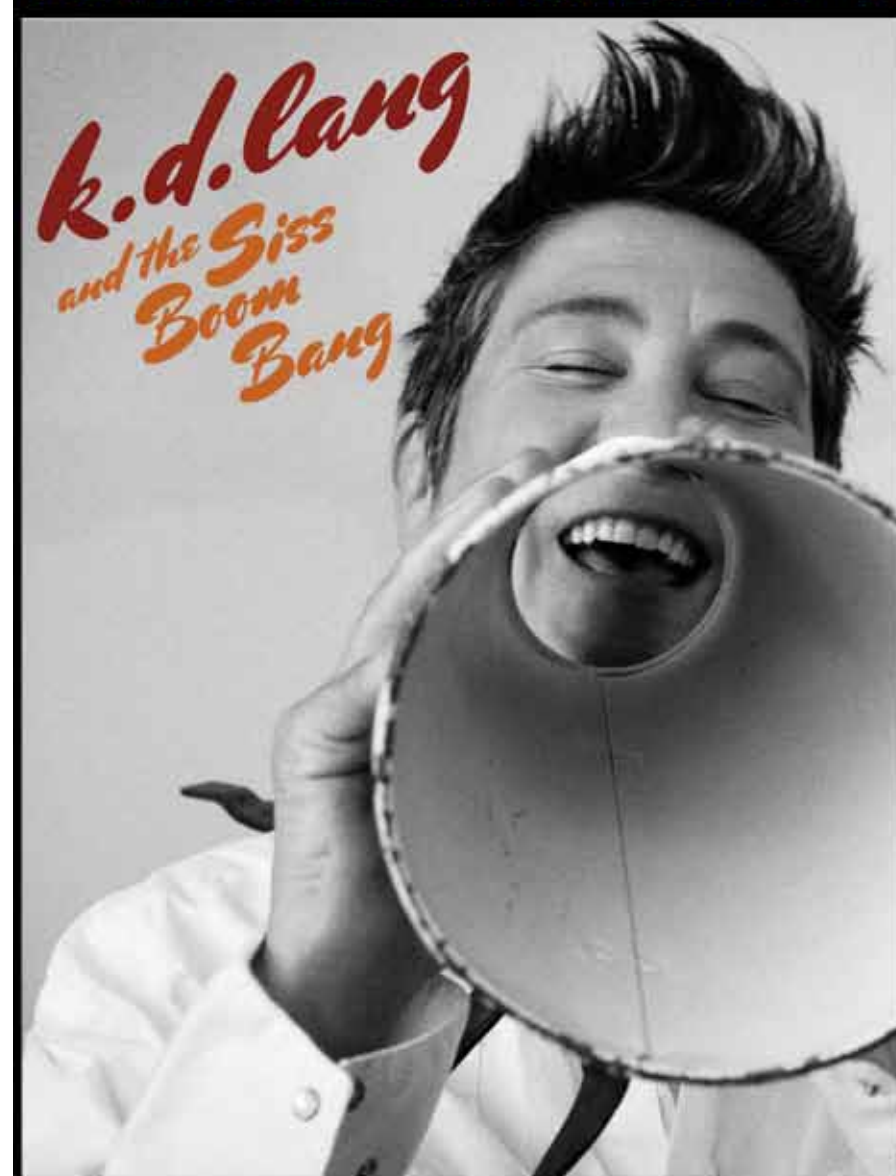
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Memor finds humor in end-of-life caregiving

Interview
GREGG SHAPIRO

In "The Living End" (St. Martin's Press, 2012), gay writer Robert Leleux's second memoir, he brings the reader up close to the experience of caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's disease — and the toll it takes on family and friends. Leleux writes about his grandmother Joann's illness with loving care and respect. He keeps a level head throughout the book and even succeeds in infusing the tale with much-needed doses of humor.

I spoke with Leleux shortly before the book's publication.

Gregg Shapiro: In the chapter "Hello, I Must Be Going," you write about the 2008 New York Times essay you wrote about your grandmother Joann and Alzheimer's. Was that the basis for the book or had you already

begun to write it?

Robert Leleux: That's a great question. Both, I suppose. I can be a very slow writer. It's a meditative process for me. The wonderful thing about a (New York Times) "Modern Love" piece is that I knew exactly how long it would have to be. It's a wonderful way to force yourself to tell a complete narrative. I knew that I had a story that I was desperately longing to tell, and I had no means of framing it. I thought, "I bet if I framed this as a 'Modern Love' piece, I could compel myself to give it some sort of structure."

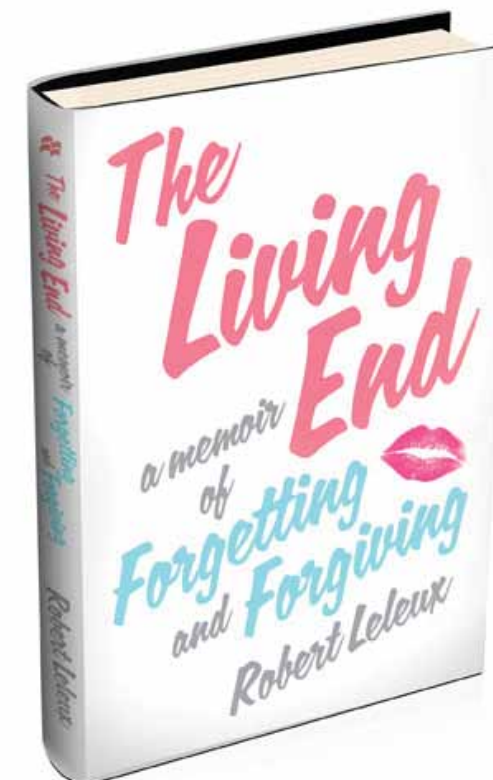
Did you have a specific audience in mind?

Yeah, because the world is dying for stories about old ladies (laughs). I heard Meryl Streep talking about Margaret Thatcher and playing old Margaret Thatcher. She said there's really no group less tended to or spoken to than old ladies. Maybe commercially it's not the smartest idea, but I love older ladies. I'm that kind of

a gay guy. You sit me next to some old lady with a mouth on her and I'm a happy fella. My grandmother would definitely fall into that category (laughs). But what I've been struck by ... is that, it speaks to a wider audience than I ever would have imagined. Not only have almost all of us been touched by Alzheimer's in some way, we've all had the experience of someone we love changing with time and extreme old age. I've been so moved by the way that people have spoken to me about it. It makes me incredibly happy to know that the way I've written about it, in some way, seems to rekindle people's memories of people that they've loved very much.

In addition to dealing with your grandmother, your mother-in-law Yvella also became ill, increasing your and your husband Michael's roles as caregivers.

It's God's work. I got to be this kind of fun gay uncle (laughs), even to the older people in my life. It's one



mother-in-law, who's actually doing quite well now, when they were going through that. I also worked hard to distract my mother and take her out for pedicures or to the theater as often as I could.

In Chapter 7, "Twelve Miles of Bad Road," you write about humor and why Southerners are funny. Would you say that you agree with the "tragedy + time = comedy" equation?

I'm afraid I do (laughs). I so wish it was otherwise. Phrased in a more empowering way, you have no control over anything that occurs in your life. There's almost nothing, as far as the circumstances of your life goes, that is determined by you. It is a humbling human fact. We do have control over the way we tell the story. If you can find a way to keep the dignity of the situation and to honor what has occurred, but can also make it funny, I do feel that it is one of humanity's ways of winning and being victorious over circumstances.

thing to flit in for a couple of weeks or months. It's another thing to do it day in, day out, day after day. The difficulty of it multiplies

exponentially. It's very easy to lose your way in that forest of caretaking. It was a blessing to spend as much time as I did with my mother and

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GREGG SHAPIRO

'CHO DEPENDENT'

Filmed in December 2010 at The Tabernacle in Atlanta, Margaret Cho's latest concert doc "Cho Dependent" combines her celebrated stand-up comedy/monologist style with music. Cho takes the audience on another of her characteristically side-splitting (and occasionally gross) journeys, beginning with the time she spent as a competitor on "Dancing with the Stars." Stressing the difficulty of the process, Cho delivers plenty of laughs, telling tales of her battle with homophobic Bristol Palin and her evil mother Sarah and her pronounced camel toe. She also reveals that her own mother (who often emitted a low-pitched moan of dread that only Margaret could detect) was at every show and the olive oil trick that she learned.



Margaret Cho. PHOTO: COURTESY

Cho also covers Provincetown, spending her money with LGBT businesses, what it's like to live in suburban Atlanta, attending Bonnaroo (and the detailed feces routine that it entailed),

her family (including her strong bond with her grandfather), boyfriends, sexting, online sex and addictions. She performs a priceless Cyndi Lauper imitation. The "Cho Dependent"

tour was one of the star's gayest shows ever. Identifying as a member of the LGBT community as well as being a fag hag, Cho cemented her standing as a champion of queer community causes. The addition of music, with Cho performing the songs "I'm Sorry" (about a former crush who killed his wife), "My Puss" (a duet with gay comedian John Roberts, in which they sing as their respective mothers), "Your Dick" (on which she was joined by the Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus) and "No Offense" (performed as the encore) were pleasant additions to the show.

'LADY GAGA PRESENTS THE MONSTER BALL TOUR'

The concert DVD "Lady Gaga Presents The Monster Ball Tour," filmed in early 2011, opens with black-and-white pre-concert footage a la "Truth or Dare," shot in a Lower East Side bodega and backstage at Madison Square Garden. Gaga gets emotional in front of the make-up mirror, saying that she still feels like "a fuckin' loser high school kid." But like Dorothy leaving Kansas, Gaga's concert stage Oz is in living color.

Lady Gaga's journey to the Monster Ball involves a broken-down car, an F train and a stroll through Central Park to get to the last of her five MSG shows. It also

features elaborate sets (a subway car, a broken-down Rolls Royce with a keyboard under its hood, a fame monster) and almost a dozen costume changes, including killer shoulder pads; a Latex nun getup and the moving dress and headpiece for "So Happy I Could Die"; and a spark-firing brassiere and panties for "Paparazzi," among others.

There is lots of posing and strutting, as well as laughable but well-meaning dialogue. Lady Gaga's potty mouth earns her a parental advisory sticker. Her gratitude to her Little Monster fans is maybe a little too effusive, bordering on disingenuous. There's more than a bit of ego in her storytelling, which come off as the kind of showbiz war stories you'd expect from someone who's been at it far longer than La Gaga. But it's obvious that her fans (including Liza Minnelli and Marisa Tomei, who get shout-outs) worship her. When the Lady says jump, the Little Monsters ask, "How high?"

Unlike Donna Summer, who turned her back on the gay following that made her career in favor of "capital H-I-M," Lady Gaga's devotion to her LGBT fans seems sincere and boundless. Throughout the show, she celebrates her Pride with infectious enthusiasm.

And there's real talent underneath all the distractions. Her vocals are never canned like Britney's or Fergie's. And when she sat

at the piano for a couple of tunes, including the song "Speechless," one could glimpse her potential. DVD bonus content includes "Backstage at The Monster Ball," a photo gallery and more.

And don't forget about: Adele's DVD/CD set "Live at the Royal Albert Hall" is almost too good to be true. A consummate professional, Adele is so at ease on stage you'd think she was born there. The true story behind "Turning Tables" is worth the price of admission.

"Get Along" from lesbian twin sisters Tegan and Sara contains a 15-track live album as well as a DVD consisting of three short films. "States" by Danny O'Malley combines summer 2010 tour footage with interviews and more. Elinor Svoboda's "India" follows Tegan and Sara on their first concert tour of the country. "For The Most Part" by Salazar was filmed during two days of shows in Vancouver, B.C.

"VH1 Storytellers: Dixie Chicks" is a live DVD containing the full VH1 program performed by the outspoken country trio, along with previously unseen performances.

The deluxe two-DVD concert film set "Beyonce: Live at Roseland-Elements of 4," features 26 live songs and a DVD anthology of videos from Beyonce's "4" disc.

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Stephen Holden, THE NEW YORK TIMES

"FASCINATING TOUCHING AND TWISTED"
Stephen Farber, THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER

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From "Lady Gaga Presents the Monster Ball Tour." PHOTO: COURTESY

Music from the small screen to the iPod

Music

GREGG SHAPIRO

'GLEE'

Fox's cash calf "Glee" hits a new low with the seventh installment of its "Glee: The Music" series of soundtracks. Uninspired performances combined with pointless song selection ("Hot For Teacher" and "Uptown Girl," really?) earns this one an "F." As covers of Coldplay's "Fix You" go, the "Glee" rendition doesn't hold a candle to the one performed by the senior citizens in the documentary "Young @ Heart." The duet on "Somewhere," featuring Idina Menzel, isn't too bad. "Constant Craving" is too faithful to the original. But worst of all is the blatant (and uncredited) rip-off of Greg Laswell's brilliant arrangement of the Cyndi Lauper hit "Girls Just Want to Have Fun," originally heard in Laswell's version on the "Confessions of a Shopaholic" (search it on YouTube). If McKinley was a real high school (and thankfully it's not), someone would be expelled for plagiarism.

KELLY CLARKSON

Poor Kelly Clarkson. As if her support of Ron Paul and constant denial of lesbian rumors weren't enough, she'll forever be known as the first-season champ of "American Idol," the 21st century version of low-rent talent competition shows like "Star Search." But give her credit for turning such a disgrace into a success-

ful and rewarding recording music career. There's nothing as alluring as "My Life Would Suck Without You" (from 2009's "All I Ever Wanted") on her new disc "Stronger." But there's still plenty to recommend. "Mr. Know It All," "What Doesn't Kill You (Stronger)," "Breaking Your Own Heart," "You Love Me" and "Hello" make this a strong album.

'SONS OF ANARCHY'

The popular motorcycle gang-themed FX series "Sons of Anarchy," starring Charlie Hunnam (from the original UK version of "Queer as Folk") and Katey Sagal (formerly known as one of Bette Midler's Harlettes), has earned its own soundtrack. "Songs of Anarchy: Music from Sons of Anarchy, Seasons 1-4" makes good use of Sagal's vocal skills. The soundtrack includes her singing "Son of a Preacher Man," "Bird on a Wire" and "Strange Fruit." Other highlights include Audra Mae's reading of "Forever Young" and Alison Mosshart's take on "What A Wonderful World."

GREYSON CHANCE

Whether you first saw 14-year-old Greyson Chance via his viral YouTube vid performing Lady Gaga's "Paparazzi" at a school talent show or on "The Ellen DeGeneres Show," one thing was clear: The boy can sing and play piano. "Hold On 'Til the Night," his debut album, doesn't include "Paparazzi." But there are 10 other songs, some co-written by Chance and many co-written by the



"Glee" PHOTO: COURTESY

usual songwriting-by-committee suspects. The result is a not-unpleasant series of undistinguished tracks that could easily have been recorded by Katy Perry or Gaga.

'BOARDWALK EMPIRE'

There's no reason why HBO's lauded series "Boardwalk Empire" shouldn't have an equally noteworthy soundtrack to accompany it. That can be found on the various-artist set "Boardwalk Empire, Volume 1: Music from the HBO Original Series." In addition to several instrumental numbers performed by Vince Giordano and the Nighthawks, there are period tunes sung by Regina Spektor ("My Man"),

JOE JONAS

As one-third of Disney's prefab trio The Jonas Brothers, Joe Jonas (the most attractive of the bros) got a taste of the rock star life. Stepping out on his own on "Fastlife," Jonas sounds eager to snatch the crowns from the heads of the Justins (Timberlake and Bieber). Tracks such as "Just in Love" (the version minus Lil Wayne), "Not Right Now," "Take It and Run" and the title cut indicate that it might be entirely possible for him to succeed.

HUGH LAURIE

It probably looked like a good idea on paper, but the final result is anything but. English actor Hugh Laurie, who was half of a comedy duo with out actor/writer Stephen Fry before achieving fame on the TV series "House," is an accomplished musician. Laurie's debut disc "Let Them Talk" is an excursion into traditional blues.

The album suggests that Laurie is better off being a fan of the music than performing it. He's a decent performer, but the musical selections, especially for a first album, have limited appeal. This runs the risk of coming off as a novelty act.

BILL MUMY

For the generation that came of age on 1960s TV (and those who came of age on the reruns of 1960s TV), Billy Mummy is known as the actor who played young Will Robinson on "Lost In Space." Mummy has been plying his trade as a singer/songwriter for more than 30 years. On his latest album "Until The Big Bang Whimpers," he sounds like he could be a contemporary of Joe Henry, especially on tracks such as "The Big Barn is Burning," "I Owe a Little Money," "The Other Side of the Other Side" and the romantic "Isn't That What You Said?"

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JAN. 26, THURSDAY

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" at 7 p.m. Call 414-332-1181. Looking to the movies for inspiration, Danceworks presents "The Sequel!" through Jan. 29 at Danceworks Studio Theatre, 1661 N. Water. Call 414-277-8480. The Milwaukee Premiere of Jonathan Larson's "tick, tick... Boom!" runs through Feb. 11 at Soulstice Theatre, 3770 S. Pennsylvania, Ste. 2 in St. Francis. See page 22 for a preview.



WIGOUT ON THE TOWN

EDITED AND COMPILED BY GREGG SHAPIRO



"The Sequel!" through Jan. 29.

FEB. 2, THURSDAY

Off The Wall Theatre, 127 E. Wells, presents Wendy Wasserstein's "The Sisters Rosensweig" through Feb. 12. Call 414-327-3552. Soulstice Theatre, 3770 S. Pennsylvania, Suite 2, in St. Francis, presents "Full Frontal Puppety! (an evening of Limited Entertainment with Angry Young Men, Ltd.)," a new variety sketch comedy puppet show for adults, at 7:30 p.m.



"La Pasión Flamenca"

FEB. 4, SATURDAY

The Pabst, 144 E. Wells, welcomes Ira Glass of NPR's "This American Life" at 7 p.m. Call 414-286-3663. Pitman Theatre on the campus of Alverno College, 3400 S. 43rd St., presents Kamancheh (spike-fiddle) player Kayhan Kahlor and string quartet Brooklyn Rider at 8 p.m. Call 414-382-6044. Flamenco Vivo Carlota Santana performs "La Pasión Flamenca," a journey back to the cultural crossroads of Andalusia, at 7:30 p.m. at South Milwaukee Performing Arts Center, 901 15th St. in South Milwaukee. Call 414-766-5049.

FEB. 7, TUESDAY

Boswell Book Company, 2559 N. Downer, presents Wisconsin writer K. M. Koenigs, author of the mystery "Cast a Cold Eye" (set "in the numbing deepfreeze of January on the gray gritty streets of Milwaukee"), at 7 p.m. Call 414-332-1181.

JAN. 27, FRIDAY

Sponsored by Lesbian Alliance, the "History of Women's Music" concert features Women's Voices Milwaukee at 7:30 p.m. at the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center, 252 E. Highland. Skylight Opera Theatre presents "Gershwin & Friends" through Feb. 12 in the Cabot Theatre at Broadway Theatre Center, 158 N. Broadway. Call 414-291-7800. Boldt Arts Alive! Series presents "Swan Lake" at the Fox Cities Performing Arts Center, 400 W. College Ave. in Appleton. Call 920-730-3760. 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 Whitefish Bay. For more info visit www.thebayplayers.com.

JAN. 29, SUNDAY

"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. Combining jazz and classical music, Festival City Symphony presents "And All That Jazz" at 3 p.m. at The Pabst, 144 E. Wells. Call 414-286-3663. Madison's AIDS Network goes back a few decades for their "I Love the 70s" Camp Bingo fundraiser. Doors open at 1 p.m. and the first ball is called at 2:30 p.m. at The Edgewater, 666 Wisconsin Ave. Visit www.madcampbingo.org for tickets or more details.

JAN. 31, TUESDAY

Union South, between the Computer Sciences and Statistics Building and Engineering Hall on the south side of the UW-Madison campus, hosts the "Third Annual OPEN (Out Professional and Executive Network) Dinner Celebration," featuring keynote speaker Paula Bonner, president and CEO of the University of Wisconsin Alumni Association. Visit openmadison.org for more information.



"Swan Lake"

JAN. 28, SATURDAY

Forward Theater presents the world premiere production of "A Thousand Words" by Madiso playwright Gwendolyn Rice, through Feb. 5 in Promenade Hall at Overture Center for the Arts, 201 State in Madison. Call 608-258-4141. Milwaukee Art Museum, 700 N. Art Museum Drive, presents "Asian Art Weekend: Artwork Assessments," where guests can learn about Asian art they own and how to develop an Asian art collection today and tomorrow. Visit www.mam.org. High Noon Saloon, 701A E. Washington in Madison, presents "Fire Ball Masquerade IV: Play," featuring Miss Tamale, Sable Sin Cyr, Miss Ammunition, The MUTES, Davina DeVille, Ashar Dance Company, Kitty La Rue and Peach Pies, at 9 p.m. Call 608-268-1122. Artists from all over the Midwest present their fine art and crafts, including painting, jewelry, fiber, photography, ceramics, mixed media and wood, at greatly reduced prices at ArtWorks Studio Clearance Sale, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at The Waukesha Expo Center, 1000 Northview in Waukesha. Visit artworkswisconsin.com or call 608-712-3440 for more information.

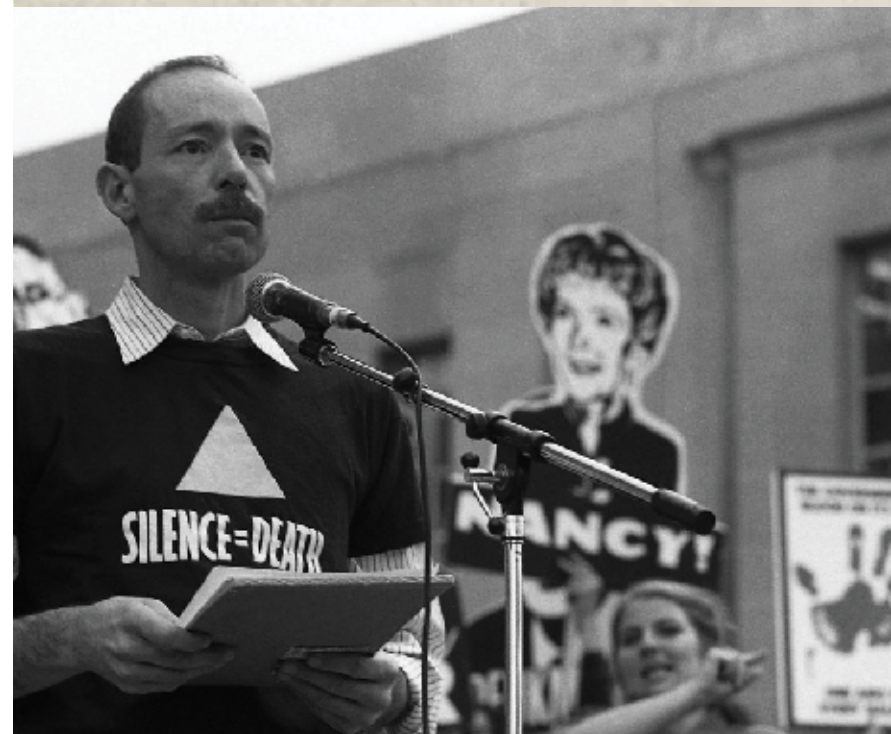


"Neat"

FEB. 1, WEDNESDAY

Cinemark Tinseltown, 7101 70th Court in Kenosha, presents "The Chemical Brothers: Don't Think," a film of the Grammy-winning duo's first live experience, at 7:30 p.m. Call 262-942-8530. Renaissance Theaterworks' production of "Neat" continues at The Studio Theatre in the Broadway Theatre Center, 158 N. Broadway in Milwaukee, through Feb. 5. Call 414 273-0800 or go to www.r-t-w.com.

MILWAUKEE LGBT FILM/VIDEO FESTIVAL



Advertisement for 'Gershwin and friends' at Cabot Theatre. Includes text: 'Gershwin and friends', 'TICKETS ON SALE NOW!', 'JANUARY 27-FEBRUARY 12, 2012', 'CABOT THEATRE', 'www.skylightopera.com | 414-291-7800', and 'Skylight opera theatre'. A red circle says 'BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND!'.

Advertisement for 'WINTER SERIES' at Milwaukee Ballet. Includes text: 'WINTER SERIES', 'Three World Premieres', 'The Pabst Theater', 'February 16-19', 'Featuring the Florentine Opera Studio Artists', '414.902.2103', 'www.milwaukeeballet.org', and 'MILWAUKEE BALLET MICHAEL PINK, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR'.

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