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WiGOUT! Page 18



THE VOICE OF PROGRESS FOR WISCONSIN'S LGBT COMMUNITY

April 19, 2012 | Vol. 3, No. 12

Latinos strongly support gay rights

By Lisa Neff
Staff writer

A new study refutes decades' old assumptions and assertions that Latinos are more anti-gay and less supportive of LGBT equal rights than others.

The study, released on April 12 by the National Council of La Raza, suggests the U.S. Latino population may be more tolerant and supportive than the general population.

"Latinos, like other Americans, have come a long way in acceptance of the LGBT community," said Eric Rodriguez, vice president of NCLR. "Without a doubt there is work to be done within our

own community to promote acceptance and tolerance, but this report is a strong indication that we are moving in the right direction."

Earlier in April, the release of internal documents from the National Organization for Marriage revealed the anti-gay group has tried to exploit the perceived tension between the Latino and LGBT communities to advance its cause.

Civil rights groups responded with criticism and condemnation, including NCLR, the largest national Hispanic civil rights group in the United States.

On April 12, NCLR released "LGBT Acceptance and Support: The Hispanic Perspective," a new Arcus Foundation-funded study from Social Science Research Solutions. The report takes an in-depth look at the factors that affect LGBT acceptance among Latinos and how levels of support are changing.

The study was in the works long before the news of NOM's "wedge" strategy, and its author this month stressed a lack of bias in the research.

"In the end, the research shows widespread support of LGBT policies among

LATINOS page 17



Gardening for the planet

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK

By Lisa Neff
Staff writer

Suzanne Breder is still greening her thumbs, but the city dweller already has a green consciousness.

"It is an awakening really, a realization that we – people – just can't continue on our current course, whether you live in Chicago or Milwaukee or Kenosha. "For our sustainability, for the planet's sustainability we have to learn to love and live with the land."

The 29-year-old Breder and her partner are two of nearly 998 million people who pledged to A Billion Acts of Green. The couple's pledge, made on act.earthday.org, is a simple one

– to plant a garden on April 22, the 42nd anniversary of the eco-holiday pioneered by former U.S. Sen. Gaylord Nelson, D-Wis.

Nelson, for some years, had wanted to turn attention in the United States to the environment. In 1970, when the first Earth Day took place, Americans burned leaded gas in massive V8 engines. Factories belched smoke and sludge. Air pollution signaled prosperity. But, with the work of politicians such as Nelson, scientists such as Rachel Carson and a growing network of activists, there was an emerging consciousness about caring for the environment.

Nelson, looking back, would one

day say that Earth Day organized itself.

An estimated 20 million people participated in the first Earth Day. This year, under the theme "Mobilize the Earth," at least a billion people were expected to get involved in events and activities planned at local, national and international levels.

A march and rally were set for the National Mall in Washington, D.C., and, beyond the beltway, organizations were scheduling rallies, marches, lectures, community cleanups, recycling drives, environmental fairs, repurposed art shows and documentary screenings.

Many Earth Day events tap into the

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

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LGBT news with a twist

WIGWAG

By Lisa Neff & Louis Weisberg

NOM'S LEAK

Leaders of the anti-gay National Organization for Marriage have acknowledged they were angry that NOM's internal memos about them driving a wedge between gays, blacks and Hispanics reached the general public. But NOM leaders are even angrier that their "confidential federal tax return information" reached the press. The leaked document showed a \$10,000 contribution to NOM from Mitt Romney's PAC for 2008 and listed other donors. NOM wants the IRS and the Human Rights Campaign investigated – because NOM wants to keep its cash sources secret.

PRAY THEN PETITION

Catholic parishioners who go to church to pray these days may find themselves pounding the pavement with petitions in Seattle. Catholic bishops in the archdiocese are pledging to "deploy" parishioners in the push to collect signatures for a ballot initiative to repeal marriage equality in Washington. The bishops, in a let-

ter vowing support for the anti-gay campaign, asked only that the petitions not be circulated on Easter Sunday.

FAIR AND BALANCED

A Fox Orlando affiliate aired a report describing the National Socialist Movement, a Neo-Nazi organization, as "a civil rights group." The focus of the station's report was the group's armed patrols of Sanford, Fla., where Trayvon Martin was killed. "They say they are just a civil rights group trying to protect people in case things get out of hand," concluded Fox reporter Jennifer Bislam. She failed to mention that this particular civil rights group refers to Adolph Hitler as "our Fuhrer, the beloved Holy Father of our age."

RATINGS GAME

The documentary "Bully" has gone from an R rating to being shown unrated to a PG-13 for its general release – thanks to a massive petition drive on Change.org. The film opened this month in 55 markets, including

Milwaukee, with the PG-13 rating after three minor edits. FYI: The highest grossing PG-13 films in the United States are "Avatar," followed by "Titanic" and "The Dark Knight." The highest-grossing R film in the United States is "The Passion of the Christ."

PROTESTING TOO MUCH

A new study demonstrates a link between homophobia and repressed homosexual desire. Through a series of psychological studies, researchers from three universities in the United States and Britain found that people with a secret same-sex attraction who grew up with parents who strongly denounced such desires are more likely to support anti-gay policies and to have self-reported homophobic attitudes, discriminatory bias and hostility towards gays.

MOVING BACKWARD

In creating new abortion regulations that will make their state the most restrictive in the nation for a woman seeking to end

a pregnancy, Arizona lawmakers redefined gestational age as "calculated from the first day of the last menstrual period of the pregnant woman." That essentially means that life begins two weeks prior to conception.

TMI ON IMDB?

A 41-year old actress is suing Amazon and its Internet Movie Database for posting her date of birth at IMDB.com. She alleges that the disclosure means she can't get roles for younger women even though she looks younger than her age. But a judge has ruled that the actress, who filed the suit as an anonymous Jane Doe, must pursue the complaint under her own name, Junie Hoang. The judge said, "The injury she fears is not severe enough to justify permitting her to proceed anonymously." Does that provide a clue as to how the judge might rule on the case?

REAL CREEPY

Real Doll, the company that creates creepy, life-like, life-size silicone female dolls equipped to provide sexual pleasure, recently

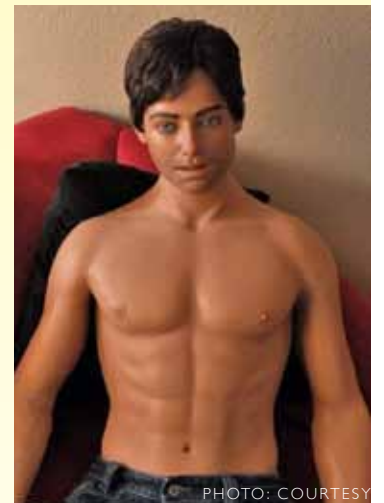


PHOTO: COURTESY

announced the production of life-size male dolls. The standard male model comes with "anal entry, plus one size penis attachment." Buyers can select everything from eye color to pubic hairstyle. The cost: \$5,999. Finally something is available to keep closeted right-wing evangelical preachers and political leaders out of public restrooms and away from cruising rentboy.com.

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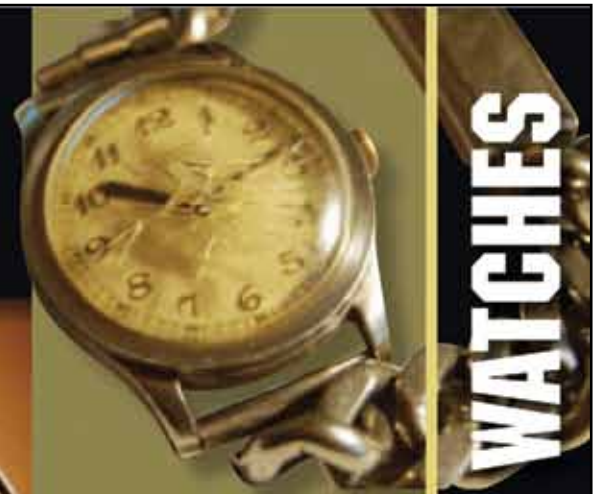
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HIV infections in Wisconsin continue to rise

By Louis Weisberg

Staff writer

The number of new HIV infections in Wisconsin continues to rise, and young African-American gay and bisexual men continue to be disproportionately affected by the epidemic, according to a new report.

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services' 2011 HIV surveillance report found that new infections in the state increased 19 percent last year over 2010. At the end of last year, 6,550 people were reported to be living with HIV or AIDS in the state. In addition, the health department estimated another 1,750 infected people living in Wisconsin who were unaware of their HIV status.

The report showed that Milwaukee County continues to be the epicenter of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Wisconsin, reporting 53 percent of the new cases last year. But "new cases of HIV were diagnosed in more than half of Wisconsin counties

last year," said Mike Gifford, executive director of the AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin.

"The report demonstrates the critical need for expanded access for an increasing number of HIV patients to the health care and medications they need to keep or regain their health as well as aggressive prevention programs targeted toward people most at-risk for contracting HIV," Gifford said in a statement.

Continuing an alarming, nationwide trend, young African American men who have sex with men experienced the greatest increase in both the proportion and number of HIV cases. They also experienced the largest decline in the median age of diagnosis.

Reported cases of HIV in black gay and bisexual men under the age of 30 in Wisconsin tripled between 2002 and 2011. Last year, they accounted for one in five new HIV cases in the state, compared with just 6 percent

in 2002. Half of the black men diagnosed with HIV infection last year were younger than 24.

One in three black men between the ages of 15 and 59 who has sex with men is estimated to be HIV-positive – a prevalence rate that's three times higher than that of gay and bisexual Hispanic men in the state and six times higher than for white gay and bisexual men. It's more than 500 times higher than the adult population of Wisconsin as a whole.

Although the resurgent HIV epidemic among young African American men who have sex with men is not unique to Wisconsin, the problem in Milwaukee is so disproportionate that it's attracted attention from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The CDC sent a team of epidemiologists to Milwaukee in 2009 to investigate.

At that time, researchers found evidence suggesting that the increase was fueled

by a preceding rise in syphilis cases. The presence of syphilis makes it easier to spread and acquire HIV, due to abrasions on the genitals.

The investigation also found possible social and environmental factors, including closed sexual networks and unusually high intergenerational sexual relationships (older men are more likely to be infected).

In the wake of the CDC's findings, new prevention funding was allocated for agencies in Milwaukee. Some of the money is to fund old prevention strategies such as HIV testing, while some is allocated for new approaches.

But Gary Hollander, executive director of Diverse & Resilient, said there's a significant lag time. "Most of the programming associated with the new funding was launched in the past six months, some is still in development," he said. "Most of the program partners at the Center for AIDS Intervention Research, the AIDS Resource Center

African-American gay and bisexual men are still hardest hit.

of Wisconsin, the 16th Street Community Health Center and Diverse & Resilient have implemented new programs in the past year to address this issue, but we will not likely see the results of these changes immediately."

"The issues associated with HIV transmission among young African American gay and bisexual men are really complex and reflect a whole lot of behavioral and socio-economic issues," Hollander added. "The issue is a lot more intractable than people had hoped it would be."

Hollander said the higher rates of infection among young gay and bisexual Afri-

can Americans is not the result of riskier sexual behavior in that population.

"They are likely not engaging in more unprotected sex than their heterosexual peers," Hollander said. He explained that high rates for any STD generally stem from a lack of relevant sex education, limited access to appropriate health care and a higher prevalence rate of that STD within a given population.

"Unprotected sex in a community where 1 in 3 has HIV is going to have a different outcome than unprotected sex in a community where 1 in 1000 has HIV," Hollander said.

Social stigma against HIV and against gay and bisexual men in the African American community deters them from disclosing their sexual behavior to their partners and from seeking medical assistance, Hollander added.

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Wisconsin marriage equality bill raises questions

By Louis Weisberg

Staff writer

In the waning hours of the 2011-12 legislative session, as Republicans focused their energy on controversial right-wing social issues, progressive state Rep. Kelda Helen Roys fought back symbolically. She quietly submitted a bill calling for a referendum to overturn Wisconsin's same-sex marriage ban.

Roys said the move was an act of protest, since she knew the bill had no support and wasn't going anywhere.

"It was something that I just felt really powerfully, really strongly about," she said. "It's been a very depressing session, and I just felt like I wanted to have this little mark in the history books, so that if someone went back and looked at the journals they'd see it there."

But Roys' action caught equality advocates off guard and raised questions about her motives. Although Roys is a reliable advocate for equality, reproductive free-

dom and other progressive social concerns, she's running against openly gay state Rep. Mark Pocan in the Democratic primary for Tammy Baldwin's congressional seat. Some observers asked if she was trying to raise her equality cred in advance of that election.

Introducing a same-sex marriage bill wasn't the first move Roys has made to shore up her credentials with LGBT voters since announcing her bid against Pocan. The day after throwing her hat in the ring, Roys said she was forming an LGBT caucus in the Assembly.

Like the marriage bill, Roys' caucus plan doesn't seem to have gone anywhere either.

"I think that the timing behind (the marriage equality measure) calls it into question," said Fair Wisconsin executive director Katie Belanger. "I'm surprised that anyone would try to put forward a pro-equality piece of legislation that wasn't going to go anywhere. Attempts to

The bill had no support and wasn't going anywhere.

work through the Legislature are wasted efforts right now. We need to build the capacity in the Legislature to advance a proactive, pro-fairness legislative strategy."

Belanger worries that such rogue acts might misfire and draw unwanted attention to the issue at a time when the far right has a grip on Madison.

"Fair Wisconsin has a comprehensive legislative strategy that has successfully prevented any full assault on the LGBT community from the Legislature," Belanger said. "That has been our main goal during this legislative session. And we're very proud of the bad things that

we have prevented. Part of our strategy includes not trying to advance legislation that is not going to be successful. It draws attention to the legal protections that have already been won."

But Belanger said she respects Roys' record, as well as her leadership. In the aftermath of the Republicans' damaging votes on women's issues in the last session, Roys was the Madison media's go-to person for reaction and comment.

"She is bold and she is forward-thinking and she is a rising star in the Legislature," Belanger said.

Pocan declined to criticize Roys for filing the marriage equality bill. He emphasized that his candidacy presents an opportunity to preserve the small gay presence that exists in Congress.

"As the saying goes, 'If you are not at the table, you are likely on the menu,'" Pocan said. "While it is important to have LGBTQ allies in Congress, I am running in part



PHOTO: COURTESY
Rep. Kelda Helen Roys



PHOTO: COURTESY
State Rep. Mark Pocan

to help ensure the LGBTQ community has a seat at the table, rather than being added to the menu."

Currently there are four out members of the U.S. House of Representatives, which has 435 members, and none in the Senate, which has 100 members. That equals an LGBTQ representation rate of less than a quarter of 1 per-

cent. Between 4 percent and 5 percent of the nation's voters are gay.

With Baldwin stepping aside to run for the U.S. Senate, out U.S. Rep. Barney Frank retiring and a third out representative – David Cicilline of Providence, R.I. – tumbling in the polls, Pocan says even the current low representation rate is in jeopardy.

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BRIEFS

WALKER SIGNS ABSTINENCE, ANTI-ABORTION BILLS

Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker has signed GOP-driven bills barring abortion coverage through health insurance exchanges, requiring doctors to consult privately with women seeking abortions and mandating sex education teachers stress abstinence.

Walker signed the bills on April 5 and announced the signing April 6. Spokesman Cullen Werwie said it was simpler to lump all the bills signed into one announcement.

Democrats have ripped the measures as an all-out attack on women. They heaped criticism on the governor, calling the delay in announcing the signings cowardly and the bills bizarre social policy.

Pro-Life Wisconsin, meanwhile, issued a statement praising the governor for signing "common sense bills that protect children, women and taxpayers."

GOP PROTESTERS RALLY AT IOWA SCHOOL

A group of Republican activists is showing support for a conservative lawyer who claims she was passed over for a job at the University of Iowa law school because of her conservative bias.

Ten members of the Johnson County Republicans protested in mid-April on campus in response to a lawsuit filed by Teresa Wagner. Some called for cuts to the law school's funding.

Wagner alleges the school passed her over for teaching positions because of her political positions and affiliations, which included prior work for conservative and anti-abortion groups.

UI officials deny her claims. A trial has been scheduled in the case later this year.

U.S. COURT BACKS SYSTEM FOR NOMINATING IOWA JUDGES

A federal appeals court recently rejected a challenge to the Iowa commission that nominates candidates to serve on the Iowa Supreme Court and Court of Appeals.

The 8th Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the dismissal of a lawsuit brought by conservatives that challenged the Judicial Nominating Commission's makeup at a time when

the panel was vetting applicants to replace three justices ousted by voters after legalizing gay marriage.

The lawsuit challenged a constitutional amendment requiring members of the Iowa Bar Association to elect seven of the 15 commissioners. It argued the commission gave too much influence to lawyers and was unconstitutional because ordinary citizens had no say in those seven appointments.

U.S. District Judge Robert Pratt dismissed the lawsuit last year. The appeals court agreed with Pratt that allowing the Iowa Bar to select commission members did not violate the rights of non-lawyers and made perfect sense.

— from WiG and AP reports



PHOTO: MAD STU MEDIA

A scene from "GenSilent."

LGBT HEALTH CONFERENCE SET

The LGBT Intergenerational Health Conference will take place in May with support from the OutReach LGBT Center in Madison, New Harvest Foundation, UW-Madison and others.

The event includes a free showing of the film "GenSilent" at Market Square Theatre at 7 p.m. on May 4, followed by a discussion with producer Stu Maddux.

The May 5 all-day conference at Agrace HospiceCare, 5395 E. Cheryl Pkwy., Madison, coincides with the introduction of OutReach's Share the Care Station to help care for people after surgeries or living with chronic illness. Workshop topics cover prevention, treatment, caretaking, legal protections, medical costs, insurance and government programs.

For more, go to www.lgbt Outreach.org.

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COMMUNITY BRIEFS

ACLU HOSTS 'CENSORSHIP IN ART' SHOW

The ACLU of Wisconsin Foundation hosts an exhibit featuring Milwaukee area artists who've faced censorship of their work. "Eye of the Beholder: Censorship in Art from Eden to Milwaukee" is on April 20 from 5 to 10 p.m. at the ACLU's Milwaukee office, 207 E. Buffalo.

Featured artists include Anne Kingsbury, whose contract as an art professor at Nebraska's Hastings University was not renewed in 1969 based on criticism of her anatomically correct dolls; Fahimeh Vahdat, whose painting "A Prison Called Iran" was censored at the Intercontinental Hotel's M Gallery in Milwaukee; and Philip Krejcarek, whose photos in the series "Sanctuary" came under fire from a talk-show radio host in 2008.

The open house coincides with the Historic Third Ward's Gallery Night.

Go to www.aclu-wi.org.

LGBT CENTER CONSOLIDATES SPACE, SIGNS NEW LEASE

The Milwaukee LGBT Community Center board recently approved a one-year lease with Siegel-Gallagher Real Estate and is consolidating its programs from four floors to two floors.

The center is located at 252 E. Highland Ave., Milwaukee.

Center board co-president Jennifer Morales said the change "allows the center to consolidate to an appropriate amount of space at a cost that fits its budget, and it gives us the time for strategic visioning to ensure the center's long-term sustainability."

The consolidation will be complete by May 1.

The center is seeking volunteers to help with the move, as well as other work.

Call 414-271-2656 or go to www.mkelgbt.org.

BREWCITY BRUISERS BOUT MAY 5

The Brewcity Bruisers roller derby league rolls toward the end of its season, with a championship bout at 7 p.m. on May 5 at the U.S. Cellular Arena, 400 W. Kilbourn Ave., Milwaukee.

The doors open at 6 p.m., and the first bout begins at 7 p.m.

Adult tickets are \$15 in advance and \$18 at the door. Youth tickets are \$12 in advance and \$15 at the door.

For more, go to www.brewcitybruisers.com.

— L.N.

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Cousins indicted for anti-gay kidnapping, assault

By Lisa Neff

Staff writer

A federal grand jury has returned a three-count indictment charging two men with kidnapping and assaulting a gay man in Kentucky.

The April 12 indictment charges the men with committing a hate crime in violation of the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, which expanded federal jurisdiction to include certain assaults motivated by someone's sexual orientation.

Cousins David Jason Jenkins, 37, and Anthony Ray Jenkins, 20, both of Harlan County, Ky., are accused of kidnapping and assaulting Kevin Pennington, and conspiring with each other and with other individuals to commit the crime.

ON THE RECORD

The Southern Poverty Law Center lists three hate-related incidents in Kentucky in 2011 – the kidnapping and assault of Kevin Pennington in Harlan County in April, vandalism and verbal attacks against an interracial couple in Berea in July and the distribution of Ku Klux Klan literature in Pikeville.

The year before, the SPLC hate crime database included an incident in which swastikas were spray-painted on cars in Newport and the arrest of a Louisville man for threatening President Barack Obama and the first lady on a white supremacist website.

– L.N.

Pennington, who was kidnapped and assaulted on April 4, 2011, was targeted because he's gay, according to the U.S. Justice Department.

The cousins allegedly enlisted two women – Anthony Jenkins' wife and sister – to trick Pennington into getting into a truck. The

defendants then drove Pennington to a secluded area of the Kingdom Come State Park in Kentucky and beat him.

A court document said that while the men assaulted Pennington, the women, identified as Mable Ashley Jenkins and Alexis LeAnn Jenkins,



PHOTO: COURTESY KEF

Kevin Pennington was kidnapped and taken to a state park, where he was beaten.

'I can remember seeing bright flashes of light every time one of them would stomp or punch me.'

both 19, of Harlan County, cheered them on, yelling "Kill the faggot."

Pennington suffered bruises, a torn shoulder ligament, a torn ear and a head injury.

The women, in mid-April, pleaded guilty to aiding and abetting.

They will be sentenced this summer, after the trial of David Jenkins and Anthony Jenkins. If convicted, the two men face a maximum pen-

alty of life in prison for each charge.

The Shepard-Byrd law, enacted in 2009, criminalizes acts of physical violence causing bodily injury motivated by any person's actual or perceived race, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or disability.

The Kentucky Equality Federation, a state LGBT civil

rights group, called for a federal review of the case, raising concerns that local judges who are elected to office neglected the hate-crime elements of the crime. KEF maintains that the assailants probably would have killed Pennington if the gay man had not escaped during an alleged discussion on how to kill him and dispose of his body.

Pennington, in a statement provided by KEF, said, "The whole time I screamed and begged them to stop, I was screaming I'm sorry for whatever I had done to make them want to do this to me."

"I can remember seeing bright flashes of light every time one of them would stomp or punch me in the head with them telling me he was going to rape me."

On April 12, a year after the assault, KEF president Jordan Palmer said, "We believe justice will prevail."

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Feds: Ponzi scheme perpetrated against gays

By Lisa Neff
Staff writer

The federal government is accusing a South Florida businessman of bilking gay investors in an \$11 million Ponzi scheme.

George Elia, 67, who controlled International Consultants and Investment Group and several other companies in Broward County, Fla., was indicted on April 5 on one count of wire fraud, which could result in 20 years in prison if he's convicted.

According to the indictment, from as early as October 2004, Elia solicited inves-

tors by making false assurances about the safety and soundness of their investments.

The indictment alleges that the businessman assured investors that his companies had significant assets, that he engaged in day trading, that investors could immediately obtain their original investments and that Elia's companies consistently earned high rates of return.

However, according to the indictment, Elia's companies had substantially fewer assets than he represented and paid earlier investors using inves-

tor funds from more recent investors. Elia used investor money for his personal use and Elia's companies did not earn the rates of return he had assured investors, it is claimed.

This case resulted from the Southern District of Florida's ongoing Securities and Investment Fraud Initiative, a multi-agency effort targeting criminals operating a broad range of stock and commodities frauds in the state.

"Investors should rest assured that individuals who engage in fraud and manipulate the financial system as

their treasure trove will be brought to justice," said U.S. Attorney Wifredo A. Ferrer.

"George Elia preyed on trusting investors by touting his purported investment experience and by creating fictitious account statements to create the illusion of success. ...George Elia will now have to face his investors in a court of law," said FBI agent John V. Gillies.

The SEC, meanwhile, has filed a civil case against Elia and his companies for allegedly engaging in a scheme to defraud investors, including residents of the heavily gay

He took in 25 investors for as much as \$11 million in a case of 'affinity fraud'.

community of Wilton Manors, Fla. The SEC refers to Elia's alleged focus on the gay community as "affinity fraud"

because he targeted gays.

The government says the businessman took in 25 investors for as much as \$11 million over the past seven years.

A Broward County judge has frozen Elia's assets while the civil and criminal cases take their course in courts.

The FBI, in a release, announced the arrest of Elia on March 27 in Las Vegas.

However, the SEC complaint released several days later said Elia is believed to have fled the United States for Cyprus.

Bill seeks to stop divorces

Couples seeking a divorce would have a difficult time and face additional hurdles if they opt for a so-called covenant marriage proposed in a bill before the Alabama Legislature.

The measure would require couples entering into a covenant marriage to enter counseling before they're married, and then attend counseling if they want to get a divorce. It also limits the reasons for which married couples can divorce.

"(The bill) was designed in part to say that we believe the family unit is the backbone of our society and is worth preserving," said sponsor Sen. Phil Williams, R-Rainbow City. "It simply provides an option, and I stress, it's simply an option."

Williams said he thinks the proposal is necessary because of Alabama's high divorce rate.

According to the most recent figures from the U.S. Census Bureau, Alabama has the fourth-highest divorce rate in the country, with 12.7 divorces per 1000 marriages.

Some legislators question the timing and necessity of the bill.

Birmingham Democrat Rep. Patricia Todd pondered whether it was something the Alabama Legislature really needed to address while facing drastic budget cuts.

Todd, the only openly-gay lawmaker in the state Legislature, said she would offer an amendment to allow same-sex couples to enter into the same deal if the bill made it to the House.

Williams said he has received overwhelming support from conservative groups.

If passed into law, the bill would limit the circumstances in which married couples could seek divorce. Those include:

- One spouse has committed adultery
- A spouse abandons the shared home and refuses to return for at least one year
- The other spouse physically, emotionally or sexually abuses the spouse seeking divorce or one of the couple's children
- The spouses have been living apart for at least two years

The Alabama Coalition Against Domestic Violence had opposed the bill, but worked with Sen. Williams to make changes. Executive Director Carol Gundlach says the group is still only neutral. She believes it's a barrier to people leaving abusive relationships.

"We're not thrilled with this bill," she said. "But it's much better than it was when introduced."

- AP

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Anchorage election flawed, ACLU demands answers

By Lisa Neff

Staff writer

Alaska's ACLU is calling for an independent counsel to investigate the conduct of the April 3 municipal election.

The election included municipal offices, as well as a ballot initiative to enact a ordinance banning bias based on sexual orientation and gender identity. The ballot measure failed, but proponents have not conceded defeat because of election irregularities.

According to the city clerk's office, 53 of the city's 122 precincts ran out of printed ballots, prompting some citizens to drive from precinct to precinct looking for a way to vote.

Additionally, nearly 6,100 questioned ballots were cast on April 3, compared with 1,000 questioned ballots in last year's election.

Also, 1,400 ballots were not scanned, there were problems with addresses on

absentee ballots and polling places closed early because of ballot shortages.

Finally, chief opponent of the gay rights initiative, the Alaska Family Council, sent erroneous e-mails stating that citizens could register to vote at the polls.

In a letter to the elected Anchorage Assembly, the ACLU of Alaska wrote, "The fundamental right for every voter to have her or his vote be counted is essential to the democratic process. We have received credible evidence of voter disenfranchisement and some potential errors by the clerk's office in the conduct of the election. In order to ensure an appropriate and impartial review of the election, a counsel — such as a retired judge or former member of the Attorney General's office — should be appointed."

Assembly Chairwoman Debbie Ossiander, however, said that it's too early in the

review to take that step. As of April 12, Municipal Attorney Dennis Wheeler was still evaluating the election.

For now, the ACLU, which contributed \$10,000 to the gay rights campaign, is collecting comments from voters via a telephone hotline and the Web. The organization will use the information to determine whether the ballot shortage and other polling irregularities disenfranchised voters.

The ACLU already has collected affidavits from a poll chairman who described running out of ballots, a citizen who drove home without voting after being turned away from polling places and a woman who said she was forced to vote using a sample ballot that she tucked into a cardboard box.

The gay rights measure lost by about 9,000 votes, failing by a margin of 58 to 42 percent, according to an unofficial count.

AIDS Quilt panels to return to D.C. this summer



PHOTOS: THE NAMES PROJECT FOUNDATION

Panels in the AIDS Memorial Quilt.

Panels in the AIDS Memorial Quilt, an official National Treasure, will return to the nation's capital this summer. The Quilt consists of more than 47,000 panels representing the lives of 94,000 people taken by AIDS, sewn by more than 100,000 friends and relatives. The Names Project Foundation, caretaker of


the memorial, is calling for volunteers as it prepares to bring all 54 tons of The Quilt to Washington, D.C., in June and July. The showing coincides with the XIX International AIDS Conference. For more information, go to www.quilt2012.org.




— L.N.

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North Carolina mobilizes over Amendment One

From AP

In an election year that was supposed to be all about jobs and the economy, the issue that's energized North Carolina's sleepy May 8 primary has turned out to be a philosophical clash over what constitutes a marriage.

Indie rockers, preachers, county commissioners and business owners are staking out positions on the constitutional amendment that would define marriage as a union between a man and a woman.

Hundreds of thousands of dollars have already been spent on lawn signs, billboards, organizing efforts and other costs, and hundreds of thousands more will be spent as May 8 draws nearer, in a vote that will determine whether North Carolina remains the last Southern state without an amendment that effectively bans gay marriage.

The referendum is partly about partisan politics: previous efforts in the Gen-

eral Assembly to put an amendment before voters was rebuffed when Democrats controlled the legislature, and won approval after Republicans took control of both chambers in 2010. Republicans' traditional allies on social issues, especially conservative churches, have lined up to support the amendment, while Democratic supporters, particularly the state NAACP, have been prominent opponents.

But the lines of demarcation have also been more blurry than in traditionally partisan fights. Among the opponents are Republican Congresswoman Renee Ellmers, a Tea Party favorite; John Hood, head of the conservative John Locke Foundation; the state Libertarian Party; and Richard Vinroot, the former Republican mayor of Charlotte and onetime GOP gubernatorial nominee.

On the other side, amendment supporters are counting on black churchgoers, normally a bedrock Dem-

ocratic constituency, and they've been boosted by the advocacy of prominent pastors like the Rev. Patrick Wooden of Raleigh's Upper Room Church of God in Christ.

The pro-amendment side has also benefited from a surge of resolutions supporting the measure passed by a growing number of county commissions, from rural areas to booming urban centers.

Amendment opponents have also racked up resolutions from cities, but the number and geographic sweep of the resolutions has been surprising to some observers.

"I didn't anticipate that," said David McLennan, a political science professor at William Peace University. "It's probably not going to have a lot of impact, but it's interesting to see that it's become part of the overall campaign."

More resolutions are likely to come, as in Gaston County, where the commission is

scheduled to vote on a measure expressing support for the amendment on April 26.

"The resolution that I'm supporting in my mind has nothing to do with gay rights. It is not pro-gay, it is not anti-gay," said Commissioner Tracy Philbeck, the measure's chief sponsor.

Same-sex marriage is already illegal by statute in North Carolina. But supporters of the amendment contend that a court ruling in favor of same-sex marriage could overturn the law.

"I don't think government should be in anybody's bedroom," Philbeck said. "I don't think the government should tell people what they can and can't do. But I think it's a vested interest for any society to protect its longstanding traditions."

While resolutions from county commissions are welcome for amendment backers, the core of its support comes from North Carolina's conservative churches. Dozens of pastors and churches

are listed as supporters on the website of Vote FOR Marriage NC, the principal pro-amendment group, and the amendment has been endorsed by the Baptist State Convention, the largest religious body in the state.

But just as other communities across the state are divided on the issue, not all Christians are amendment supporters. At Wedgewood Baptist Church in Charlotte, the Rev. Chris Ayers recently replaced the message on the sign in front with the slogan, "Vote Against Amendment One."

"It looks like it's going to basically come down to fundamentalist church get-out-the-vote efforts versus those of us who do not want to codify discrimination in our state constitution," he said. "We're finding conservative Republicans recognizing the amendment is an embarrassment, and I think that's a good sign."

The ability of both sides to get voters to the polls will

Indie rockers, preachers, county commissioners and business owners are staking out positions.

be crucial, McLennan said, because what briefly looked like a possibly significant Republican presidential primary on May 8 lost much of its luster after Rick Santorum exited the race. Turnout at primaries is generally lower than at general elections, meaning the amendment question could be decided by a relatively small number of voters.

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{ Editorial }

Reaching backward

In the days after Gov. Scott Walker signed a bill repealing Wisconsin's pay equity law for women, Republicans put forth excuses even more contemptible than the measure itself.

Adopted in 2009, Wisconsin's Equal Pay Enforcement Act allowed women to sue their employers in state court if they were being paid less than men for doing the same work. Women could already sue in federal court, but the state judicial system is more accessible and less expensive.

Walker waited more than a month to quietly sign the repeal into law along with other controversial measures to limit women's reproductive freedom. The delay and the silence, particularly coming from a man who is nothing if not boastful, signal that Walker knew this legislation was not a winner.

How could it be? Women form half the nation's workforce, and most families are dependent to some extent – often to the largest extent – on women's earnings. Yet those earnings continue to lag behind men's.

In fact, discrimination against women in the workplace persists in a big way. According to a Georgetown University survey released in March, fewer than 5 percent of the nation's top executives in 2010 were women. During the 10-year period that the survey covered, women in executive positions never exceeded 6 percent.

Such discrimination not only hurts women, but also their husbands, partners, children and families. It helps only big business – the ultimate beneficiary for all things Walker. Corporate chieftains want the freedom to hire women at lower wages without facing the cost, inconvenience and bad publicity of a lawsuit.

In signing the bill, the governor hid his true motives behind anti-lawyer sentiment. He proclaimed that the law he repealed was nothing more than a "grave train" for trial lawyers. There's a big gap in his thinking: Lawyers don't prompt pay equity lawsuits, discriminatory employers do. Those employers are the ones riding the grave train by cheating women out of their hard-earned dollars.

Of course, the religious right was also delighted by this repeal. The fundies want women in the kitchen – barefoot and pregnant – not in the workforce.

The Republicans' attitude toward women in the workplace was best articulated by Sen. Glen Grothman. "You could argue that money is more important for men," he said.

Maybe that's true in right-wing Christian sexual fantasies. In the real world, however, women not only have equal ambition and the right to equal treatment, but they're often compelled to support their children. Perhaps Grothman has never heard of a deadbeat dad.

It's no coincidence that at the same time Walker signed the pay equity repeal bill, he also signed measures making it more difficult for women to terminate unwanted pregnancies. The last session of the Legislature was characterized by an unprecedented assault on working women and women's health.

The GOP had to reach back a couple of hundred years to find arguments supporting its views. And a couple of hundred years backward is precisely where Wisconsin Republicans are determined to take the state if they remain in power.

BY THE NUMBERS
Democrats have the enthusiasm advantage**57 %**
Democrats very excited**46 %**
Republicans very excited**70 %**
African-Americans very excited**58 %**
Liberals very excited**58 %**
Voters under 30 very excited

Source: Public Policy Polling survey March 2012

{ Feedback }

MILWAUKEE CENTER RISING

As the new co-presidents of the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center board, we recognize the worry and frustration of the community as a sign that we all urgently want the center to succeed.

Positive change is happening quickly at the center. At the beginning of March, there were four people on the center's board and no co-presidents. By the end of March, we had 13 of 15 board positions filled. Ten of the new board members were recruited from the community meeting held on Jan. 26 and subsequent outreach efforts.

These board members and several new center volun-

Positive change is happening quickly at the center.

teers have been giving many hours every week to a collaborative effort to get the center back on its feet.

The people who volunteered at the Jan. 26 stakeholders meeting have all been contacted to see how they would like to get involved.

Nonprofit turnaround expert Karen Gotzler has been contracted at a nominal pay rate for three months to get the center's business

in order and, with the assistance of the outgoing interim executive director, is reviewing all of the center's operations.

Board, staff, volunteers and community stakeholders are working together to implement financial, governance, communications, operations and programming changes that will allow the center to thrive again.

We are planning another community meeting for May 17 and, in the meantime, we encourage people who would like to help these efforts to contact one of us personally. We would love to have your assistance.

Jennifer Morales
Paul Williams
Co-presidents

Our mission


To inform, engage and empower Wisconsin's LGBT community by providing a professional, independent print and online source for news and commentary, as well as coverage of political and cultural issues. Louis Weisberg Publisher/Editor in Chief Wisconsin Gazette (414) 961-3240.

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ON THE RECORD



"In retrospect, I have to admit I think the critiques (of my work) are largely correct."

— PSYCHIATRIST BOB SPITZER

telling *American Prospect* that he wants to retract his infamous 2001 study that concluded gays could change their sexual orientation. "Ex-gay" groups often cite the study as scientific evidence supporting their work. "I assume the contraception issue got him a little nervous in the social issues."

— AN UNNAMED OBSERVER telling *Hotsheet* why he believes President Barack Obama decided not to sign an executive order banning workplace discrimination of LGBT federal contractors. The White House decision riled activists who say Obama is breaking a campaign promise.

"Trash Your Teen's New Urban Outfitters Catalog Today!"

— THE ANTI-GAY GROUP ONE MILLION MOMS urging parents to shield their kids from the new Urban Outfitters catalogue because it contains a picture of two women kissing.

"Not to be outdone by Cory Booker, Chris Christie just ran into a bakery and saved a tray of cinnamon rolls from burning."

— COMEDIAN FRANK CONNIFF tweeting his followers.

"Find out if your girlfriend is a feminist before you get too far into it. Some of them are pretty. They don't all look like Bella Abzug."

— PHYLLIS SCHLAFELY, warning cadets at *The Citadel* against the danger of being tricked by beauty into dating a feminist.

"Today, Judyism, like Yiddish, is little more than a vague cultural memory."

— WRITER ROBERT LELEUX lamenting the late Judy Garland's loss of iconic status among younger gay men.

"Happy Easter, gay people of the world: You have indeed risen in the last few decades from centuries of persecution and oppression."

— AUTHOR ANNE RICE writing to her gay fans on her Facebook page.

"These laws are vigilantism masquerading as self-defense, and getting 25 states to pass them is one of the best con jobs the NRA's leaders have ever pulled off."

— NEW YORK MAYOR MICHAEL BLOOMBERG blasting new NRA-backed laws such as Wisconsin's "castle doctrine," which allows the use of lethal force by people who think their lives are threatened.

"You need to go home and do the dishes — that's your job. You're a pig. A lesbian pig."

— A STREET PREACHER sharing his version of *Christian love* with Rosie O'Donnell outside the 2012 Super Bowl.



Recalling Wisconsin heroes

One hundred and 50 years ago, on April 19, 1862, Gov. Louis P. Harvey of Wisconsin died in the cold waters of the Tennessee River.

The popular 41-year-old governor, in office for less than three months, was on a mission of mercy to take medical supplies to Wisconsin soldiers who survived the battle of Shiloh. The battle is named after the church in which Gen. Ulysses S. Grant's Union army had its headquarters. Ironically, Shiloh means "place of peace."

Three infantry regiments from Wisconsin fought at Shiloh. All were recently formed units with no battle experience. The Eighteenth Wisconsin Volunteers, the greenest of all, had set out from Milwaukee just a week before. They had the bad fortune to bear the brunt of the surprise Confederate attack that began before dawn on April 6.

After reeling from the initial assault, Union forces were reinforced and won a narrow victory at Shiloh, but with heavy casualties. Hundreds of Wisconsin infantrymen were killed and wounded, many of



them in close combat in places that earned nicknames like "Hornet's Nest" and "Bloody Pond." Hundreds more were captured by the rebels and marched off to miserable prison camps from which some never returned.

Given the terrible conditions and inadequate supplies at battlefield hospitals, it was not unusual for family members or community leaders from the hometowns and states of regiments to send food and medical aid to "their boys." Harvey had been a strong advocate for soldiers, winning a measure that provided a \$5 monthly support payment for their families while they were in the field. When word arrived of the many Wisconsin casualties at Shiloh, he was determined to help his soldiers in person.

Harvey traveled to Tennessee, visiting Wisconsin men in camps along the way and then around the Shiloh

battle site. "Thank God for the impulse which brought me here," he wrote to his secretary in Madison. "I am doing a good work and shall stay as long as I am profitably employed."

But his mission was cut short by a terrible accident. While boarding a steamboat in the dark, Harvey lost his balance, fell into the river and was carried away by the strong current. Rescue attempts failed. His body was recovered 10 days later and miles downstream. It was shipped back to Wisconsin for a state funeral and day of official mourning.

Recovering from her personal loss, Cordelia Harvey carried on the mission of her late husband. She won a commission from the new governor to inspect camps and hospitals in Missouri that housed wounded Wisconsin soldiers. Finding conditions appalling, she set on a course of bold activism that reformed army practices and saved many lives.

Cordelia Harvey met with Grant in 1863 and convinced him to appoint medical inspectors for each army

corps. She also got him to agree that recovering soldiers could be transferred to convalescent homes in Northern states away from field hospitals and camps where they often languished, dying from infections and dysentery.

Then she went to Washington and met with President Abraham Lincoln about federal support for convalescent centers in each state. After several meetings, Lincoln agreed, sending this note to his Secretary of War: "Admit Mrs. Harvey at once; listen to what she says; she is a lady of intelligence and talks sense." As a result of her work, convalescent homes for soldiers were set up in Madison, Prairie du Chien and Milwaukee.

As we observe the sesquicentennial of the Civil War, use the Web and your library to explore its fascinating stories. This one was culled from Frank L. Klement's book "Wisconsin in the Civil War:"

Send comments to
lweisberg@
wisconsin Gazette.com.

Sharing the care for LGBT elders

Who will be there to care for you when you are ill or when you come home to recuperate from a surgery? What resources can you rely on when you become frail and elderly?

The OutReach LGBT Community Center in Madison will introduce its new Share the Care Station to the LGBT community at an LGBT Intergenerational Health Conference on May 5. This station is one of only five in the state. The Caregiving Unit of the Area Agency on Aging of Dane County and the Greater Wisconsin Area Aging Resources encouraged OutReach to house this station, which will serve anyone, regardless of age, ethnicity, ability, or sexual orientation, gender expression or sexual identity.

A group of volunteers experienced in helping professions form the steering committee. The program



is offered to anyone who requests help caring for a loved one.

Often the partner is a sole caregiver. Caregiving partners often become emotionally and physically drained, their own health in jeopardy from the stress of full-time caregiving. The Share the Care program offers support for those who need care and their primary caregiver.

The steering committee is creating a packet of materials based on a book entitled "Share the Care: How to Organize a Group to Care for Someone Who is Seriously Ill," written by Cappy Capossela and Sheila Warnock. The person who needs the care and one or two people closest to that person

will be given free information on how to form a personal Share the Care group.

The Share the Care volunteers get tools to help provide the care and/or find the support and services needed. Group members assist the person needing the care to gather a family-of-choice and determine what type of care they want and by whom.

This reduces the need for strangers to come in and out of your home. The person who is ill maintains control of the environment and care plan. This is a warm and friendly program; everyone is supported as a part of a larger "family." The program provides the opportunity for forming a deeper bond with each person in the care group.

Caroline Werner is an out lesbian who provided case management for seniors in Dane County before retiring. She

wants services to be available for her as she ages. She is paying it forward.

The conference will be held at Agrace HospiceCare, 5395 E. Cheryl Pkwy., Madison. Registration information is online at www.lgbtoutreach.org or by calling 608-255-8582. The \$12 fee in advance (or \$15 at the door) covers the food for the all-day conference.

Early registration is encouraged since space is limited. A limited number of fee waivers are available. Local transportation can be arranged.

The conference is made possible with generous support from the New Harvest Foundation, the Levy Family Foundation and Donald Lamb.

BRIEFS

TENNESSEE MAYOR INTRODUCES NONBIAS ORDINANCE

The mayor of Knoxville, Tenn., has introduced a measure to ban bias based on sexual orientation and gender identity in city employment.

The ordinance proposed by Mayor Madeline Rogero got its first reading during a city council meeting on April 17.

The Tennessee Equality Project announced Rogero's decision early April 11, noting that TEP's PAC studied candidates for mayor last fall and endorsed Rogero.

In March, TEP and the Green Party held training workshops on campaigning for the measure.

NEVADA GAY COUPLES SUE FOR MARRIAGE RIGHTS, EQUALITY

Eight same-sex couples – represented by Lambda Legal – filed a federal lawsuit on April 10 challenging Nevada's constitutional ban on gay marriage.

The lead plaintiffs, Beverly Sevcik, 73, and Mary Baranovich, 76, of Carson City, Nev., have been together for nearly 41 years. They raised three children and now have four grandchildren.

"We've seen each other through thick and thin, in sickness and in health," Sevcik said. "After four decades of sharing a life together, all we want is to show our love for each other as other couples do, through marriage."

BRIGHAM YOUNG STUDENTS RELEASE 'IT GETS BETTER' VIDEO

Brigham Young University students recently launched a Web video aimed at reassuring LGBT youth struggling with their faith and sexual orientation.

The video recently posted to YouTube is part of the "It Gets Better" project, which seeks to give voices and hope to bullied gay and lesbian teenagers.

"In our religion, there is a lot of misunderstanding and ugliness about homosexuality," said Kendall Wilcox, a former BYU faculty member who produced the video. "We wanted to send this message that God loves you just as you are."

NOM FOR ROMNEY IN WHITE HOUSE RACE

The anti-gay National Organization for Marriage announced its endorsement of Mitt Romney for president on April 11, a day after ultra-conservative Rick Santorum suspended his campaign for the GOP nomination.

In a news release, NOM said "it was making the endorsement to help focus social conservatives on the need to defeat President Obama in November."

"We are proud to endorse Mitt Romney for president," said NOM president Brian Brown. "Gov. Romney was an early signer of NOM's presidential pledge, which represents his commitment to the nation to take specific actions as president to preserve and protect marriage as the union of one man and one woman."

Brown said Obama is an enemy of marriage.

The Human Rights Campaign, the nation's largest LGBT group, has called on Romney to reject NOM's endorsement.

However, that seems unlikely. Four years ago, a Romney PAC gave \$10,000 to NOM, according to a document released by HRC earlier this month.

DALLAS HOSTS LARGEST GATHERING OF PWAS

The National Healthy Living Summit took place earlier in April in the Dallas area. The National Association of People with AIDS hosted the event, established to empower those living with HIV to become better advocates for themselves and their communities.

"HIV rates are exploding in the Southern United States," said Frank Oldham Jr., NAPWA president and CEO. "As the largest and oldest patient advocacy group for people living with HIV/AIDS, NAPWA is proud to have the opportunity to bring the National Healthy Living



PHOTO: WWW.MADELINEROGERO.COM

Madeline Rogero, mayor of Knoxville, Tenn., came through on a campaign pledge and proposed an ordinance to protect LGBT city employees.

Summit to the heart of the South to educate about the steps that can be taken to reduce transmission of the virus and promote healthier living with HIV."

NHLS is the only national conference presented exclusively by and specifically for people living with HIV/AIDS.

About 300 people attended.

For more, go to www.napwa.org.

GAY GOP GROUP ELECTS BOARD MEMBERS

Log Cabin Republicans recently elected D.C. activist Marc Morgan, former congressional aide Matt Raymond and New York City businessman Chris Taylor to its national board of directors.

R. Clarke Cooper, Log Cabin Republicans executive director, said, "Marc, Matt and Chris bring energy, insight and strong networks to further position Log Cabin efforts for an inclusive Republican Party while championing the fight for equality in Congress and across the country."

For more, go to www.logcabin.org.

GYT – GET YOURSELF TESTED – CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED

The fourth annual GYT: Get Yourself Tested campaign is under way with the April observance of National STD

Awareness Month.

The GYT campaign involves initiatives on air, online and on the ground at college campuses and in more than 5,000 health centers across the nation.

The primary forces behind GYT are MTV and the Kaiser Family Foundation, which are focused on addressing the high rates of STDs among people aged 25 and under.

The campaign also has the support of a range of organizations, including the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Planned Parenthood Federation of America.

According to the CDC, people age 15-24 represent nearly half of all new STDs occurring in the United States but represent just 25 percent of the population.

– LN.

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Farmers' market brings consumers, producers together

By Michael Muckian
Contributing writer

On April 21, when Larry Johnson officially opens the Dane County Farmers' Market on Madison's Capitol Square, there's a good chance he'll already have irate customers waiting.

"We open at 6 a.m., and there are several ladies who routinely chastise me for not opening earlier," says Johnson, the market's manager and a farmer from nearby Brooklyn. "I get there at 4:15 as it is."

The market closes at 2 p.m.

Johnson is not the only early bird to the market, which celebrates its 40th anniversary this year. As many as 170 vendors from around the state arrive at about 5 a.m. to set up their stalls, put out their produce and begin convivial conversations with locals and tourists, who show up to buy fruits, vegetables, meats, bakery goods and other treats.

The market will continue every Saturday through Nov. 10.

Shoppers of all ages and demographics stroll the booths in search of hard-to-find ramps in the spring, plump red tomatoes during the summer and squash of all types as the weather takes on its fall chill. Chefs from local restaurants turn out early on Saturdays, pulling wagons they will fill with produce to serve to customers throughout the week.

The Dane County Farmers' Market is the largest producer-only market in the country.

Shoppers spend about \$8 million at the market each year, Johnson says, as well as an additional \$6 million at area hotels, restaurants and other businesses. Kids in strollers, college students and senior citizens mix and mingle with vendors, many of whom have to hustle to keep up with shoppers' demands.

About 300 farmers have memberships that allow them to sell at the market, although not all of them show up every week, says Johnson, who has been market manager for the past 10 years.

"We know those who only grow asparagus will be here in the spring and those who only grow pumpkins will be here in the fall," he says. "We're able to alternate the spaces."

There is a five-year waiting list for vendors to become part of the market, a goal that's well worth the

patience. On a good Saturday in the summer, as many as 20,000 people stroll the square – almost all of them counter-clockwise – noshing and supporting Wisconsin farmers financially while gaining greater knowledge about the food they eat and where it comes from.

"Customers can talk to the vendors about types of food, how it grows, where it's from and how to prepare it," Johnson says. It's a way to connect with healthy sources of sustenance and gain greater nutritional knowledge, he adds.

There is no rule that produce for sale must be organic, and only about 10 of the vendors have sought certification. The market's only rule is that all merchandise sold must be produced in Wisconsin, a requirement that dates back to the market's earliest days.

The Dane County Farmers' Market, the largest producer-only market in the country, began in 1972 when then-Madison Mayor Bill Dyke wanted to bring the county's urban and rural cultures together. Inspired by European open-air markets, Dyke worked with city officials to establish a prototype. The first market in 1972 featured just five farmers selling their wares.

By 1973, farmers were parking on or near the square on Friday nights in hopes of getting the best spots the next day. By 1974, then-market manager Jonathan Barry, a farmer who went on to serve in the Legislature and is currently deputy secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, began issuing season passes for the stalls in an attempt to manage the growing market.

The market now rings Capitol Square. There also is a Wednesday morning market in front of the Dane County Courthouse on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, which bisects the square, and indoor winter markets – all



PHOTO: BILL LUBING

The Dane County Farmers' Market officially opens April 21.

of which sell Wisconsin agricultural products.

There are nearly 200 other farmers' markets scattered around the state, from Kenosha in the southeast to Cornucopia, the state's northern-

most community on the Lake Superior shore. Most operate from June to October, but none has the scope or capacity of the Dane County Farmers' Market.

"It's really a downtown

social hub where many people meet each week," Johnson says. "And we're open rain or shine. Or snow."

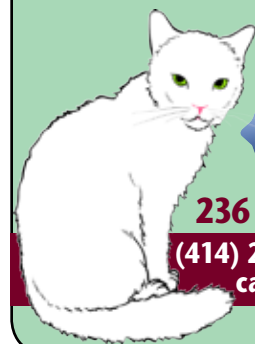
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IN THE MARKETPLACE

Dane County Farmers' Market is the largest producer-only farmers' market in the United States.

The outdoor market opens on April 21 at the Capitol in Madison and takes place Saturdays from 6 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The Wednesday market in the 200 block of Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard in Madison opens April 25 and takes place from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. through November, rain or shine.

Farmers' markets exist in many other Wisconsin communities – from Antigo to Wood County.

For listings, visit www.savorwisconsin.com.

– L.N.

'The act of growing food changes the way people think.'

GARDEN from page 1
ever-growing "growing" campaigns, initiatives that intentionally blur the distinction between gardening and farming. Gardens can be much more than a fence-line of hydrangeas, and farms can be much less than acre upon acre of soybeans.

So, for Earth Day:

- Students were planting gardens for the herbs and vegetables in their lunches.

- Neighborhood groups were planting community vegetable gardens to feed families, supply homeless shelters and sell at market stands.

- Families were creating sunny spots at home – in the yard, on the patio, on the roof, even indoors – to establish food gardens or urban farms.

GROWING YOUR OWN

"It is becoming an option for everybody to grow their own food," says Gretchen Mead, founder and executive director of the Victory Garden Initiative in Shorewood.

The Victory Garden Initiative, which gets its name from the community gardens of WWI and WWII, conducts:

- The Fruity Nutty Campaign to promote the planting of fruit and nut trees to create food forests in city parks and neighborhoods. VGI's goal is to plant more

than 1,200 trees.

- The Great Milwaukee Victory Garden Blitz, which takes place in May and involves planting raised garden beds in partnership with the Urban Ecology Center. For the fourth annual blitz next month, agricultural giant CNH has donated \$20,000 as well as loading equipment, Purple Cow Organics has donated compost and soil mix, the West Allis Health Department is sponsoring the installation of 25 gardens and the City of Milwaukee is offering up to 50 discounted gardens. Organizers hope to plant at least 300 gardens.

- The Garden Mentor program, which trains volunteers who train other volunteers in green techniques.

- The Urban Permaculture program, which includes a course and certification in the design style.

- The Food Leader Certification Program, which provides instruction in growing food and also lessons in food distribution.

- The Lettuce Help You Grow Food campaign, which involves teaching people sustainable gardening techniques and planting gardens.

"Every person, in every household, can connect to their food source, through the act of growing it," VGI's vision statement reads. "This act reminds us that we are of the Earth, that we cannot live

without the Earth, that our needs our met, not by the economy, but from the Earth. Growing food will re-integrate us with deep ecology, guiding our culture towards a sustainable, abundant future, freed from financial inequalities."

VGI envisions a time "when food pantries house vegetable gardens and school children participate in growing their lunches" and "we will have a secure, sovereign, socially just and sustainable food system."

Mead was working as a behavioral therapist for Aurora Health Care when she founded VGI in 2008. "There's an overlap," she says of the two jobs. Food – the quality and the cost – is a major issue in social work in the United States, where about 14 percent of the population experiences "food insecurity" and where, in lower-income neighborhoods, 70 percent of food dollars might be spent outside the community.

People growing their own food, Mead says, is about empowerment, sustainability, vitality and community.

"It's so important that we are all participating in the production of our own food," she says. "The act of growing food changes the way people think... We install gardens at peoples' homes, and gardening becomes a part of their everyday life."

Mead, who describes herself as a gardener, an environmentalist and a foodie, has her own vegetable garden, which provides for the family table, plus produces enough for sales at the local farmers' market on Saturdays, as well as donations to pantries.

Mead is scheduled to talk about the "good food movement" in Milwaukee on the Stonewall Stage at PrideFest on June 9. She's still working on her presentation, but plans to focus on fostering an urban agrarian society in the city.

Mead connected with



PHOTO: HOMESTEAD RANCH/COURTNEY SKEEBA

The Skeebea family on the Homestead Ranch on the outskirts of Lawrence, Kan.

PrideFest organizers through Denise Cawley of Circore Creative, who says she's doing what she can to grow enthusiasm for the garden initiative in the LGBT community.

"I sincerely dream of a time when the Victory Garden Initiative is installing gardens for the LGBT community all over Milwaukee County," Cawley says. "We have people who are hungry in the LGBT community who would benefit from fresh homegrown food."

With programs such as VGI, the wannabe farmer doesn't need to say goodbye to city life to create his or her green acres.

But some sow that seed.

GREEN ACRES

"Farming, it gets you outside, keeps you more active. And it's more wholesome. You are eating better food. Whole, natural food," says Courtney Skeebea. Twelve

years ago, Skeebea and partner Denise Whitesides purchased a 3-acre farm, which they named Homestead Ranch, outside of Lawrence, Kan.

"We had worked in natural foods for some time, and we had the idea to lower our impact on the environment and create a sustainable food source with the farm," Skeebea says. "We just wanted to try our hand at it."

Their know-how came from talking with other farmers, working on other farms and "reading a lot of books."

The women grow vegetables and berries and raise chickens and kids – as in a human child and nine goats. Skeebea, who recently retired from the U.S. Postal Service, is now working the farm fulltime while her partner attends nursing school.

"It's pretty much a green day every day here," she says. "I think it's important. So I try

to live my life accordingly."

The farm produces enough fruits, vegetables, eggs and milk for the family's table and for sales and trades at the Lawrence farmers' market.

"We make enough at the market to be in the black," says Skeebea, who also sells goats' milk skin creams and lotions on the Web at www.circlehr.com.

Farmer's markets are where many people find the inspiration to grow good food themselves. Breder says going to her local market has become a way of life in the summer. Now she hopes her family can also bring its own fresh produce to the table.

Maybe, she adds, the family eventually can sell some of its harvest, like the Homestead Ranch farmers do in Lawrence, Kan., and like Mead does in Milwaukee.

"Ecology is the new economy," Mead says.

ON THE CALENDAR

What: Garden Installation Blitz.

When: May 19-26.

Where: Throughout Milwaukee.

Who: Victory Garden Initiative and an army of volunteers and sponsors.

Why: To install hundreds of vegetable gardens in yards, businesses, schools, churches and community spaces.

Web: www.victorygardeninitiative.org, where people can purchase gardens, donate for a garden or volunteer to help create gardens.

"You can help by donating gardens to those who can't afford it or offering your expertise and service for the event," says VGI executive director Gretchen Mead.

"This year, we especially need trucks to move soil. This is a grassroots movement to grow more food for a nutritious, sustainable food system. Real change, one garden at a time. Help us plant as many food gardens as possible throughout the city in one week." – L.N.



April brings shower of demonstrations

By Lisa Neff

Staff writer

What's in the forecast? April's third full weekend brings a shower of demonstrations.

Day one: A global demonstration against homophobia in schools.

Day two: A global demonstration for LGBT equality.

Day three: A global demonstration for the preservation of the globe.

"Our hope is that a better world blooms," says student activist Anna Palmer, who is working in a Pinellas County, Fla., school on an action for the annual Day of Silence.

The Day of Silence is set for April 20 and is the first of three major protests planned for April 20-22. The Worldwide LGBT Civil Rights Marches are set for April 21 and Earth Day is observed April 22.

The Day of Silence dates back to 1996 and is now

the largest student-led, safe-schools action in the United States, with students taking a vow of silence to illustrate the impact of anti-LGBT bullying and harassment in schools across the country, including in Wisconsin.

"Day of Silence is one event that almost all GSAs organize and, with 142 GSAs in our state, I imagine that at least that many schools will have Day of Silence-related activities," said Tim Michael, manager of GSA outreach for the Gay Straight Alliance for Safe Schools in Madison. "Additionally, many students participate in Day of Silence in schools that don't have a Gay-Straight Alliance. So my best guess is that, of the 430-plus high schools in Wisconsin, probably half of them have students participating in one form or another."

In Madison, GSAFE is partnering with other groups to hold an afterschool, down-

town "Breaking the Silence" march and Capitol rally on April 20. Night of Noise/Breaking the Silence celebrations take place at 5 p.m. April 20 at the Harmony Cafe, 233 E. College Ave., Appleton, and the Harmony Cafe, 1660 W. Mason St., Green Bay. In LaCrosse on April 21, there's a day-after-DOS celebration at 11 a.m. at the LGBT Resource Center Seven Rivers Region, 309 Pearl St., according to the Gay Straight Alliance for Safe Schools.

For the Day of Silence, students will hand out cards explaining the reason for their silence, participate in class assemblies, hold bake sales for campus gay-straight alliances and call on school administrators and educators to join the campaign against bullying, harassment and discrimination.

Unity and equality are the focus of organizers planning

the Worldwide LGBT Civil Rights Marches set for April 21, mostly at noon CST. A call to action states, "This is grassroots organizing of hungry, aggressive and eager LGBT and LGBT-friendly activists, advocates and all other allies worldwide, working at planning and organizing various marches, after parties, watch parties, etc., ... with the trust and hope that ... human rights organizations worldwide will put all egos aside and come together in unity for this historic event."

The founding committee is encouraging people to organize at the local, grassroots level to build an international effort — a model that was widely successful for clean energy, no-drilling protesters who carried out the 2011 and 2010 Hands Across the Sand demonstrations.

Oklahoma activist Joe Knudson, a lead organizer,

said in some locations people will march but in others they may gather for a flash mob, a rally, a lecture or even a picnic. Actions are planned from Albany, N.Y., to Namibia, Africa. As of WiG press time, organizers said the nearest event to Wisconsin was taking place in Chicago's Pritzker Park, downtown at State Street and Van Buren Avenue, at noon.

On April 23, demonstrations commemorate the 42nd anniversary of Earth Day. Organizers hope a billion people will register at www.earthday.org for a Billion Acts of Green and commit to perform a service to promote and preserve the environment. People can

pledge to plant a garden, write lawmakers, circulate a petition, organize an Earth Day action or bike to work.

Thousands of events are scheduled for Earth Day on act.earthday.org, including a downtown cleanup in Chipewawa Falls, the grand opening of the Aldo Leopold Nature Center in Madison and the Honey Creek Clean Up in Milwaukee.

U.S. organizers also want to draw more than 300,000 people to the National Mall in Washington, D.C., for a Mobilize the Earth rally featuring Sting, John Legend, Jimmy Cliff, Bob Weir, the Rev. Jesse Jackson and Robert Kennedy Jr.

ON THE WEB

Organizing for Day of Silence: dayofsilence.org.

Organizing for the Worldwide LGBT Civil Rights

Marches: letsreachonemillionpeople.com.

Organizing for Earth Day: earthday.org.

74 percent of Latinos support marriage equality or other forms of legal recognition for gay and lesbian couples

LATINOS from page 1

Latinos," David Dutwin, vice president of SSRS, said of the work. "There is a clear misperception among the general population about where Latinos stand on LGBT issues, partly because the media pushes this narrative that the culture and values of Latinos and LGBT progress are simply incompatible. Such misperceptions manifest in story after story about a particular Hispanic group opposing a gay rights bill, even though this anti-gay sentiment is not reflective of all Latinos. In reality, as society is evolving on LGBT issues and becoming more accepting of this community, so too are Hispanics."

To conduct the survey, Dutwin and his team interviewed Latinos by telephone in the lower 48 states last spring. They found:

- Support for legalizing same-sex marriage is 54

percent among Latinos, 53 percent among the general population.

- Support for gays serving openly in the military is at 78 percent among Latinos.

- Support for expanding hate crimes laws is at 83 percent.

A separate Bendixen & Amandi International poll found that 74 percent of Latinos support marriage equality or other forms of legal recognition for gay and lesbian couples.

The same poll found that 83 percent of Latinos support housing and employment protections for LGBT people, 73 percent support gays serving openly in the military, 75 percent support anti-harassment policies in schools.

Additionally, the B&A poll found that 68 percent of Catholic Latinos believe being gay is morally acceptable.

Dutwin said his research shows that highly religious

Latinos and those less familiar with American cultural values tend to hold less accepting views of LGBTs. However, the research refutes the oft-made assumption that Catholic beliefs drive anti-LGBT positions in the community.

"That's not the case at all," Dutwin said, noting that about two-thirds of Latinos identified as Catholics and more than 50 percent of Catholic Latinos support legalizing gay marriage. Where support drops below 50 percent is among Protestant Latinos.

The report also found that, as is the case in the general population, men, Republicans and church clergy are less likely than women, Democrats and churchgoers to support LGBT rights.

WiG'S TAIL-WAGGER

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For more information, visit wihumane.org.

MEET SPORTIE

Sportie is a fantastic, one-year-old chihuahua in foster care. He's shy when you first meet him, but incredibly affectionate once he gets to know you. This little guy loves to play fetch and soft, squeaky toys and tennis balls are his favorites! It is clear Sportie's foster parents love him and it's easy to see why. If you are interested in adopting Sportie, visit wihumane.org.

TIP OF THE WEEK:

When meeting a dog that is not your own, always turn to the side, avoid eye contact and let the dog approach you. Once he's comfortable, pet him on the side of his body. Rushing up to a dog, trying to pat them on the head or staring directly into his eyes can be confusing and stressful for him. For more tips, visit wihumane.org.



Sportie is a fantastic, 1 1/2-year-old chihuahua.

wisconsin Gazette.com.

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How I went from sun-fried to light-kissed

Lasers peel away years of skin damage

By Louis Weisberg

Staff writer

With summer around the corner, consider this a cautionary tale – with a happy ending.

Like most boomers, I spent my teen and young adult years braising in the sun. Glazed in baby oil, I lay poolside and rotated every 20 minutes, like a slab of meat on a rotisserie, to ensure even cooking.

Since I lived the first half of my life in Sun Belt areas, I could maintain my shimmering golden tan year round. My tan line never faded. Groovy, man.

Those were the days before skin cancer emerged as one of nature's leading bogeymen and SPF became one of the world's best-known acronyms. So I lived in bronzed ignorance of the price my skin would pay for all that solar indulgence.

While everyone's skin tone degrades with age, the faces of tanners and smokers get the worst of it, according to experts. The damage shows up in the form of those fine

lines and wrinkles that hawkers of skincare products talk about in hushed tones on TV commercials. It also shows up as unsightly veiny patches, particularly around the sides of the nose, and constellations of brown, red and pink spots all over the face. Although most are too small to be seen at a distance by the naked eye, together they create a muddy, unattractive complexion. Occasionally they become cancerous, as happened to my brother several years ago.

Rather than wait for veils to come into fashion for men, I decided some time ago to do something about my face. For at least a decade I've relied on Botox and fillers to minimize the worst punishments of time and sun damage. Unfortunately, those treatments do nothing to improve the tone and brightness of the skin.

Thankfully, new laser technologies have arrived that can essentially refinish your face. During my semi-annual Botox treatment in December from Dr. Andrew Camp-

bell at Quintessa Medical Spa in Mequon, he told me about a corrective treatment program that he developed utilizing broadband light and ProFractional lasers in tandem. He dubbed his program "The Four-Week Challenge."

In three treatments over four weeks, Campbell said I'd experience significant improvement in skin tone, color and clarity, as well as textural improvement, tightening and wrinkle reduction – and with only two or three days of downtime. Staring at my sun-fried, gray winter face in the mirror, my cracked lips parted and said, "Where do I sign up?"

SERIOUS MEDICINE

A medical spa is not where bridesmaids go to pamper themselves for an afternoon of bonding. As the name implies, medical spas offer serious treatments.

At first glance, however, you wouldn't notice the difference. Quintessa occupies a stylish new building with an interior featuring natural finishes and outfitted with

plush, trendy décor. The eastern wall is a floor-to-ceiling window that bathes the lobby and waiting area in natural light, helping to create that ethereal feeling that's essential to any spa experience. The staff is as smooth-skinned and as hospitable as the concierge of a high-end Las Vegas hotel.

Terri Edgar, a veteran registered nurse with an encyclopedic knowledge of laser physics, performed my four-week challenge. The lasers used are powerful devices that can be as harmful in the wrong hands as they are a blessing in the right ones. It's critical, Campbell says, to only have qualified professionals perform laser procedures and to be sure there's a doctor involved to handle any complications that arise.

"Many spas get a physician to be their 'medical director,' but the physician may not have any expertise or background in esthetic medicine, and also is not supervising this person in any sort of regular manner, nor could they if they because of their

lack of knowledge," Campbell warned. "In my opinion, it's like the person using the laser is practicing medicine without a license."

The first treatment, called a FotoFacial BBL, utilized broadband light that infuses heat into darker areas on the skin, such as brown and red spots. People with tans and darker skinned African Americans are not candidates.

As a result of the treatment, webs of capillaries just beneath the skin are broken down and reabsorbed while brown spots turn into something resembling coffee grounds and flake off.

Edgar prepared me for the treatment by applying a numbing cream all over my face. My eyes were covered with goggles to shield them from the light. Then she zapped me for about 40 minutes, going over my face methodically.

The sensation is unpleasant but not really painful. There's an accompanying sound and smell that reminded me literally of a mosquito zapper. Edgar's journey across

my face was accompanied by a kind of travelogue during which she explained what she was working on and why. She also checked in with me frequently about my comfort level, which was aided by a tube blowing chilled air. I waved it across my face during the procedure, following her trail.

The results of the first treatment were immediately visible. A cluster of brown spots on the left side of my forehead, which were probably the result of driving with the window down and the sun beating against the left side of my face, disappeared. So did some red spots on my right cheek and a web of blue capillaries in the right corner of my nose.

There was some slight swelling and bruising for a day, but nothing that kept me at home. My overall appearance was noticeably smoother and softer.

THE PEEL

The second treatment was the big one – the Artic Laser Peel and Profractional treat-



PHOTO: COURTESY

Quintessa Medical Spa, 10604 N. Port Washington Road in Mequon.

ment. She also warned me there would be a couple of days of down time following the treatment.

"It's like your face is an onion, and we're peeling off a layer," Edgar explained after I arrived with my face slathered with numbing cream, as instructed. "We're getting rid of all the dead skin cells – the top layer that looks dull. Your face will be brighter, refreshed."

"The microlaser peel gets rid of the most superficial layer of the skin, while the ProFractional laser vaporizes very small tunnels into the deeper layers of the skin," Campbell explained. "The superficial treatment helps with minor textural irregularities, while the deeper treatment makes the skin heal with more collagen, which causes tightening and wrinkle reduction."

Maximum results are seen after about three months, Edgar said.

The second procedure was significantly more uncomfortable than the first. Each zap was accompanied by a burning sensation – and there were a lot of them. In fact, Edgar left a trail of tiny grid marks across my entire face to the beard line.

For this procedure, the experience level of the laser operator is critical. She has to know how deeply to go in order to achieve the maximum results without going so deep as to cause damage. (The Profractional laser can

also be used under anesthesia for deeper peels, such as to remove scars.) As a result of my first treatment and her expertise, Edgar already had a sense of how my skin would respond.

After about 45 minutes, during which time I made good use of the air hose, my face was a bloody pulp. Edgar warned me before I held the mirror to my face but I was still shocked: Freddy Krueger was staring back at me.

Not everyone bleeds from this procedure, however. Every patient is different, Edgar said. I have a lot of veins just under the surface of my skin, and I bleed easily. In fact, Edgar said that I was among the more reactive patients on this score.

But the good news is that I looked a thousand times worse than I felt. In fact, the sensation in my face was no worse than a slight sunburn. And I was looking forward to shocking my partner when I got home and seeing if the cats noticed. (They didn't.)

Over the next couple of days, I washed my face every four hours with a mild cleanser Edgar had given me, and I soaked my face in a vinegar-and-water solution applied by gauze. If possible, I looked even more monstrous on the second day. But the next day brought a radical improvement in my appearance. By the fourth day I was back out in the world, and by the fifth it was as if nothing had happened.

For a few days following the peel, I experienced some skin flaking similar to the aftermath of sunburn. The real payoff came after about 10 days, when I looked in the mirror and was rewarded with the sight of smooth, soft, radiant skin – and on my face! It had happened so fast that it didn't seem possible.

"You look so bright," Edgar exclaimed when I arrived for the third and final treatment, a repeat of the first. Using the broadband laser again, Edgar zapped the remaining pigmented spots as we gloated together on how much my skin tone had improved. She also zapped my hands, removing those hideous areas known as "liver spots."

The four-week challenge was the most effective non-surgical procedure I've tried yet for skin rejuvenation. It's no wonder Campbell said his colleagues were impressed when he presented the results at the Aging Face Conference in San Diego in January.

The treatment package, which includes a fourth-week follow-up consultation on skincare maintenance, is currently priced at \$1,200. Although the results aren't permanent, Edgar said they can be maintained with BBL touch-ups every four to six months (\$400) and a follow-up peel after about a year.

I'll be there.

IDINA MENZEL

IN CONCERT JUNE 20

Broadway powerhouse, star of *Glee* and her own PBS Special, Idina Menzel, in an unforgettable concert featuring hits from *Rent*, *Wicked*, *Glee* and her new CD, *Barefoot at the Symphony*.

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Photo by Robin Wong

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Milwaukee native hits 'Heights' in touring musical

Theater

MICHAEL MUCKIAN

Actor Kyle Taylor Parker, a cast member of the national tour of "In the Heights," says the play reminds him a lot of his native Milwaukee.

Although the 2008 Tony Award-winning musical is set in New York City's Washington Heights, Parker says local audiences will get a strong sense of home from its story of friends and family. "Heights" makes a stop at the Milwaukee Theatre on May 4 and May 5.

"Washington Heights reminds me a lot of Milwaukee's south side, especially Mitchell Street," says Parker, a chorus member and understudy. "Salsa music plays loudly from car radios, the chatter of gossiping women fills the air and everyone knows someone you know."

"In the Heights" chronicles

three days in the life of a neighborhood, the people who live there and how they all pursue a sense of belonging, Parker says. The cast is multi-generational, multi-racial and as such connects with a broad range of audience members.

"The show is also an emotional roller coaster," Parker says. "You grow to love the characters as you see their dreams come true, and we're reminded there really is no place like home."

Parker's dreams of becoming a theater professional began at the age of 6, when he first knew that he wanted a life in the performing arts.

He credits his mother with being his key influence. She exposed him to live theater performances, art museums, concerts and opera.

"My 'aha' moment occurred in the audience of the former Martin Beck Theatre, now the Al Hirschfeld Theatre, in New York," Parker says. "After a year of

watching the movie musical 'Annie' every day, my mother surprised me with a trip to New York to see the show live on Broadway. I remember thinking, 'I can do that!'"

It didn't take long for Parker to put his dream in gear. He attended Roosevelt Middle School of the Arts and the Milwaukee High School of the Arts.

He also studied acting at the Milwaukee Rep, First Stage Theatre, Modjeska Theatre and Florentine Opera — all of which contributed to his career as what he calls an "imaginative artist."

"I think one of my strengths these days is delving into the pretend world of a play or a musical," he says. "I believe that good theater isn't necessarily about being flashy and polished, but about telling a story. In order for the audience to believe it, the performers have to believe it as well."

"In the Heights" is essentially about chasing your

dream, and being in the production was for Parker a dream that came true. While a student at New York's American Musical and Dramatic Academy, he worked part time selling T-shirts and merchandise for the Broadway production of "In the Heights."

"I would watch the show every night and think to myself, 'I'm going to do this someday,'" he says. "The fact that I get to live that dream every night since joining the cast in 2011 is an incredible honor."

Parker's first big break came in 2009, when he was chosen for the annual Town Hall's Broadway Rising Stars concert. The work of Broadway producer Scott Siegel and directors Emily Skinner ("Billy Elliot") and Scott Coulter ("Wicked"), the concert showcases new musical theater grads from the country's performing arts schools.

Parker credits his Rising Star experience for helping

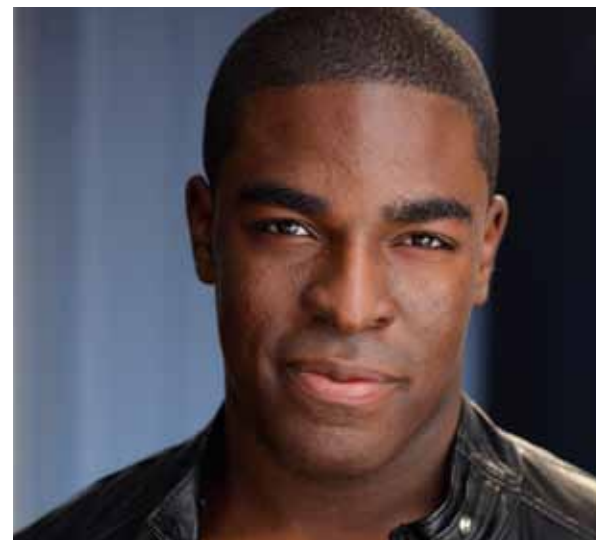


PHOTO: COURTESY

Kyle Taylor

him get noticed in the highly competitive theater world. While luck plays a role in a performing arts career, a lot of hard work precedes most lucky breaks, he says.

"A career in the arts is a marathon, not a sprint," Parker quips.

Parker also cites the words of Emmy-winning actress Margo Martindale: "Sometimes things just take time, but with time comes great appreciation."

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In 'One Time,' memories shape the story

Theater

MICHAEL MUCKIAN

Two people, one park bench and a lifetime of stories form the narrative of Next Act Theatre's premiere of "One Time," by Chicago playwright Richard Lyons Conlon. It's a story of secrets shared as two people meet again after years of separation and discover how past decisions affected their lives.

The production runs April 5-29 at Next Act's new performance space, 255 S. Water St., Milwaukee.

"This is a story of second chances," says David Cecsarini, Next Act's producing artistic director and director of the production. "They find each other after 34 years, but a lot has happened to each of them in the interim."

Conlon keeps current information about the lives of Mason (Jonathan Gillard Daly) and Sonia (Linda Ste-

phens) vague. Instead, he concentrates on past actions that sculpted the characters, actions that are now shared through personal anecdotes.

It's not clear at the start of the play what either of them does for a living or whether their past relationship was romantic in nature. The two agree to meet once a week on the same park bench to share stories about themselves. Through these stories, they come to know each other, and the audience gains insight into what their lives are – and what they might have been.

"There are many things that make Sonia and Mason's relationship unique, but the most obvious is the storytelling," Conlon says. "Did they know each other in the past and in what way? We discover that, too."

Personal interest drove the play's creation, Conlon says, along with recognition that "people of a certain age" rarely lose their curiosity and enthusiasm for life. Quite the

contrary, the playwright says.

"I think we all have known people in our past that we wonder about, and how things might have been different had we kept in touch," he says. "As I talked to more and more older people, I discovered these feelings of curiosity and 'what if?' don't diminish with age, but actually increase."

Neither character exclusively drives the narrative, but each has moments that help carry the story forward, according to Cecsarini. The characters' familiar nature is what makes the narrative compelling, he says.

"It's a reality play," Cecsarini says. "These people are ordinary – they could be us – and they wrestle with questions that are as important to them as many of the extraordinary issues of the day."

"One Time" was developed two years ago and given its first reading at Chicago Dramatists, the nation's foremost theater for developing new plays. Conlon has been a

two-term resident playwright there. Other plays he developed for the group include "Send Forth Thy Mercies" and the children's play "Anastasia and Drizella," which has been produced more than 300 times in North America.

"I've been writing plays for about 25 years, but have spent too much time writing and not enough time marketing my work," Conlon says. "Now I've turned the marketing up a notch and things are really starting to happen."

Conlon hopes strong bonds will develop between audience members and his characters in "One Time."

"I hope one thing audiences remember from the play is that we are all deeply human," Conlon says. "The child we all were is still inside of us. We all have needs, wants, desires, and we want and need to love and be loved."

As sweet as that sentiment sounds, it is not something that Mason and Sonia necessarily find easy to achieve,

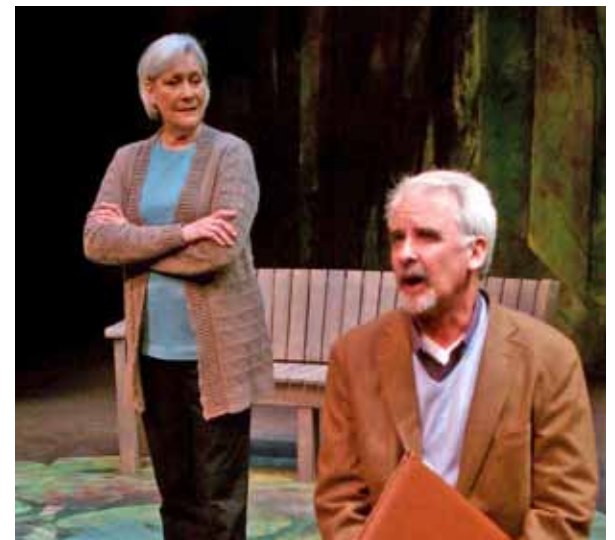


PHOTO: NEXT ACT THEATRE

Linda Stephens and Jonathan Gillard Daly.

Cecsarini says.

"The resolution does not tie itself up in a nice neat bow, and I like that," he says. "The pathway is a bumpy one, but in the end the audience should be satisfied."

ON STAGE

Next Act Theatre's production of Richard Lyons Conlon's "One Time" runs April 5-29 at 255 S. Water St. For details, go to www.nextact.org.

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James Lloyd, *Among the Grasses* (Susanna York), n.d. (detail). Gift of Anthony Petullo. Photo by John R. Glembin.

'Tomato' shows humor can save a relationship

Theater

MICHAEL MUCKIAN

Whether the relationship is same-sex or opposite-sex, the course of true love never runs smoothly. But can you laugh your way through the hardships?

Writer Jeff Kahn and actress/writer Annabelle Gurwitch originally took what Kahn says was a typical approach to couples counseling. The results were questionable.

"We flunked out of traditional marriage therapy," says Gurwitch, the former co-host of TBS' "Dinner and a Movie." She's also appeared on "Medium," "Boston Legal" and "Seinfeld."

"Statistics tell you that the majority of couples who go to therapy end up divorced, so we developed our own therapy called 'a sense of humor,'" Gurwitch says.

The approach resulted in

"You Say Tomato, I Say Shut Up!" The humorous memoir of a not-so-perfect marriage, the work began as a novel and was eventually adapted for the stage. In addition to the novel and the play, the relationship will soon beget a television show.

The national tour of "Tomato" stops at Vogel Hall in Milwaukee's Marcus Center for the Performing Arts April 26-29. In a 75-minute tour de force, actors Mary Jayne Raleigh and Scott Richard Foster assume the roles of the authors who laughed their way to a successful marriage, relatively speaking. The trials and tribulations of marriage and children tested the couple's relationship, but together they found humor to be an antidote that created empathy between them. The process was never easy, but the results were always provocative. And funny.

"I believe the book and the play have made me a better writer, but a worse husband," says Kahn, an Emmy-winning

They laughed their way to a successful marriage.

writer of FOX TV's "The Ben Stiller Show." "We can't agree on anything and we're both opinionated and obstinate people. If Mother Teresa had been married and ran her hospital with her husband, I doubt very much that she would have become a saint."

Kahn and Gurwitch found that humor is more available – and more necessary – when people have, shall we say, complementary personalities. Sometimes there are snafus, but most any pair can find a common ground in humor – eventually.

"Jeff believes his role as husband and father is something akin to being a Carni-

val cruise director of fun," Gurwitch says. "Around the house, my husband and son Ezra both call me 'Sgt. Gurwitch.' Hey, someone has to be the hammer."

"Take marriage away from religious and dogmatic constraints and the paradigms of absolutism that lead to shame, secrets, lies, betrayals, guilt, regret, remorse and recriminations and move to the humane reality that everyone has faults," advises Kahn, in his prescription for marriage success. "It's only through constant forgiveness and compassion that two people can negotiate a long-term complicated, complex and intricate relationship."

Gurwitch has a simpler solution. "Try saying 'You're right,'" she says. "If you say it enough times you just might start to believe it. It's called the 'Stockholm Syndrome,' and it's very helpful in marriage."

For any more wisdom, you'll just have to see the show.

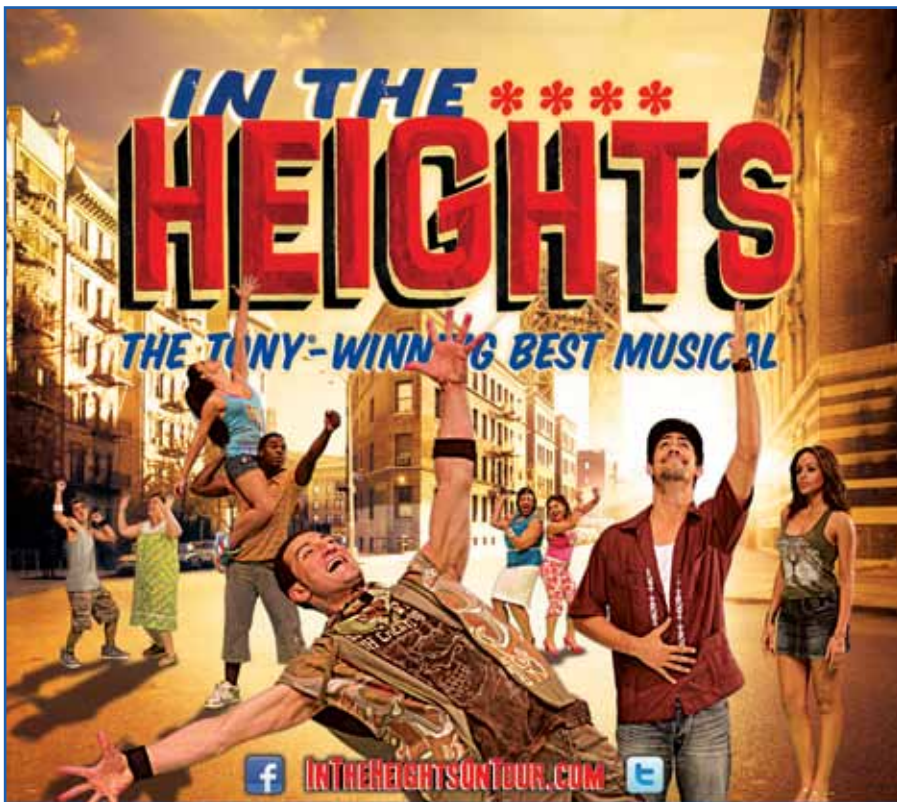


PHOTO: COURTESY

Mary Jayne Raleigh and Scott Richard Foster.

ON STAGE

The national tour of "You Say Tomato, I Say Shut Up!" comes to Vogel Hall in Milwaukee's Marcus Center for the Performing Arts April 26-29. Details at www.marcuscenter.org.



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'Bully' packs a powerful wallop

Film
GREGG SHAPIRO

MPAA ratings battle aside, Lee Hirsch's emotionally raw and gut-wrenching documentary "Bully" must be seen. While some percentage of the audience will be members of the LGBT community, many of whom experienced bullying in one form or another, the important thing is to make sure that the rest of the world sees it, too.

The film opens with the story of a bullying victim, the late Tyler Long, who was driven to the brink and took his own life at the age of 17. Tyler, a loner who was victimized for being unathletic, among other things, was taunted by his Murray County, Ga., peers to hang himself. He did just that. Tyler's father, a religious man, holds onto the belief that he will see Tyler in heaven.

In Sioux City, Iowa, 12-year-old Alex, who has trouble making friends, feels best — meaning safest — at home with his family, including his younger siblings. At school and on the school bus, Alex, who was a preemie, is teased relentlessly. His full lips have earned him the moniker "Fish Face." That's only one of the cruel and frightening things said to him by his classmates.

The most articulate of the bullied students interviewed, lesbian Kelby tries to make her way in Oklahoma's Bible Belt. Unwelcome at church and in the homes of friends,



PHOTO: COURTESY

"Bully" documents how bullying affected the lives of five families.

The important thing is to make sure that the rest of the world sees it.

Kelby nevertheless has a close-knit social circle of those who love and care about her. Verbally abused by teachers and ostracized into quitting the basketball team, Kelby became a cutter and attempted suicide three times.

In Mississippi, 14-year-old Ja'Maya awaits sentencing after pulling a gun on a school bus in 2009 in order to silence her abusers.

In Perkins, Okla., Laura and Kirk, the parents of 11-year-old Ty, are burying their son following his suicide.

At times, "Bully" presents a portrait of hopelessness. The school administrators and board members in the doc appear overwhelmed and powerless. The debate at town hall meetings is heated and feels unresolved. One thing everyone agrees on is that changes must be made to protect children.

But it's the voices of the parents, including those of Tyler, Alex, Kelby, Ja'May and Ty, that ring out as loudly as those of the bullied and may have the most impact. The message is that it's the parents of the bullied who have the most power in this situation.

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Music

GREGG SHAPIRO

KATHLEEN EDWARDS

Compelling Canadian singer/songwriter Kathleen Edwards grabbed our attention almost 10 years ago with her remarkable debut album "Faller" and hasn't let go since. If you didn't think she could top 2008's stellar "Asking for Flowers," you're wrong. "Voyageur," co-produced by Edwards and Justin Vernon (Bon Iver), is her most immediately commercial disc and her most daring. Opener "Empty Threat" has "hit single" written all over it, whereas "Chameleon/Comedian" is decidedly more experimental. Edwards brings on the tears with "A Soft Place to Land," "House Full of Empty Rooms," "Pink Champagne" and "For the Record" (featuring Norah Jones). But she wisely includes upbeat numbers such as "Sidecar" and "Change the Sheets."

KATHRYN CALDER

You may recognize Kathryn Calder's name from her work with the Canadian acts New Pornographers and Immaculate Machine. But her solo albums, including 2010's "Are You My Mother?" are equally worthy of attention. The aptly titled "Bright and Vivid" not only lives up to the promise of her debut album, but exceeds it. Calder is nothing if not versatile, and she proves it from the start on the beautiful "One Two Three," followed by irresistible dance number "Who Are You?" and the Neko Case-like "Turn a Light On." And those are just the first three songs. Equally bright and vivid are "Walking In My Sleep," "Right Book," "City of Sounds" and the extraordinary "Five More Years."

JOHN K. SAMSON

Like Calder, John K. Samson is known first for his association with bands. In Samson's case, the bands are Propagandhi and The Weakerthans. His solo debut "Provincial" doesn't veer all that far from what he did with



PHOTO: COURTESY

Out singer/songwriter Jane Siberry has been a strong influence on other Canadian recording artists.

The Weakerthans. It's a thoroughly enjoyable listen, easy on the ears while unafraid to challenge the listener to think about what he's saying on "Heart of the Continent," "When I Write My Master's Thesis," "Longitudinal Centre" and "Taps Reversed."

JILL BARBER

"Chances," the opening track of the domestic version of Canadian chanteuse Jill Barber's "Mischievous Moon," was co-written by Barber and Ron Sexsmith. It's a musical invitation to take a chance on the artist and the disc, both of which prove to be worth it. From her up-do and eyeliner on the retro-looking album cover, you know exactly what you're being promised and it's a promise kept, particularly on songs such "Chances," "Never Quit Loving You," "Oh My My," "Old Flame," "A Wish Under My Pillow" and "All My Dreams."

WHITEHORSE

Individually, husband and wife Luke Doucet and Melissa McClelland have established solo music careers. As Whitehorse, they pool their talents. It turns out to be a productive pairing, particularly on standouts such as "Emerald Isle," "Broken," "Night Owls" and their cover of Bruce Springsteen's "I'm on Fire."

GRIMES

On her full-length major-label debut "Visions," Grimes (aka Claire Boucher), sounds

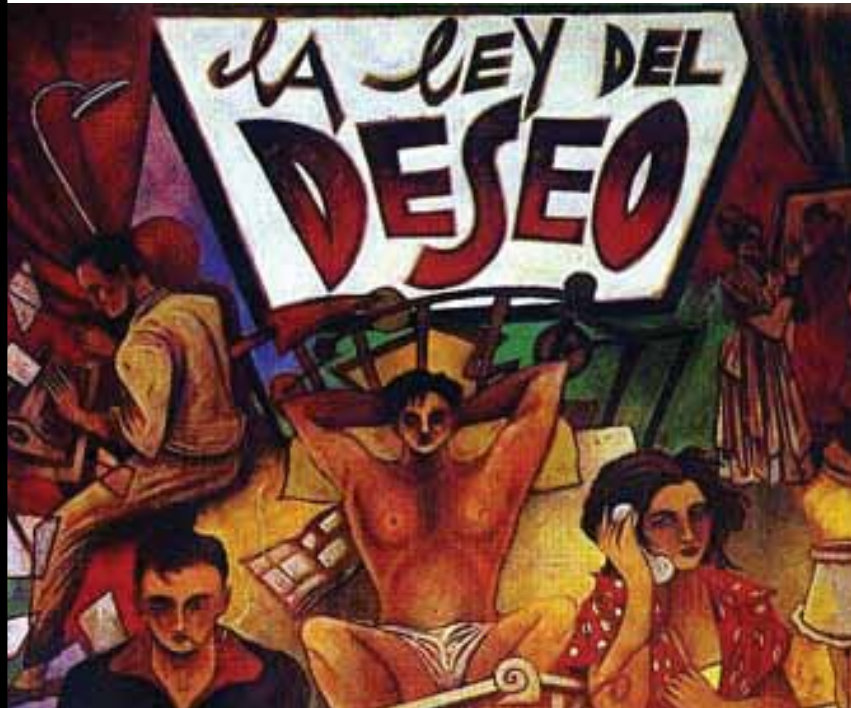
like she's ready to give tUnE-yArDs, not to mention Ellie Goulding, a run for their money. As indecipherable as Cocteau Twins, with magnetic beats that aim for your head and limbs equally, Grimes practically dares you to sit still. It's as if a fleet of DJs from outer space arrived at your favorite dance club. Madonna wishes she were this innovative. As the Borg so eloquently put it, resistance is futile.

JANE SIBERRY

Many of the above-mentioned artists owe queer singer/songwriter Jane Siberry a debt of gratitude for the musical path she paved for them, beginning more than 30 years ago. Since the beginning of her recording career, Siberry has filled her recordings with both traditional and experimental songs, finding a way to make it all sound effortlessly cohesive. In later years, she definitely moved in a more unusual direction, as is evident on "Meshach Dreams Back," the third part of her Three Queens Trilogy. An example of how she weaves it all together can be heard when Siberry performs a rendition of her marvelous song "Love Is Everything" on this mainly spoken-word effort.

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Ruthie Foster turns up the heat on 'Let It Burn'

Interview

GREGG SHAPIRO

Grammy Award-nominee and out blues goddess Ruthie Foster turns up the heat with her latest release "Let It Burn," from Blue Corn Music. She teams up with the Blind Boys of Alabama on a handful of tracks, including the sizzling album opener and her composition "Welcome Home." In addition, she leaves her distinctive mark on Adele's "Set Fire to the Rain," Los Lobos' "This Time," The Black Keys' "Everlasting Light," The Band's "It Makes No Difference" and Pete Seeger's "If I Had a Hammer."

I spoke with Foster earlier this year.

Gregg Shapiro: The title of your new album "Let It Burn" comes from the song "Ring of Fire." I love your smoldering rendition of the song. What was your motivation behind recording it in this fashion?

Ruthie Foster: That song had been in my mind for awhile. It was something I wanted to do. I wanted to do something really different with it. I wanted the song to stand out more. With this particular arrangement I wanted to capture more of the love story behind country music's famous couple. This was my way of putting that into a different context. Which is kind of what I do with a lot of songs. I change them up a little bit and that introduces it to a new genre and a new audience.

Keeping with the "fire" theme, you do a cover of Adele's "Set Fire to the Rain." What did you think about her recent Grammy sweep?

I'm as proud of her as if she was my own sister. I thought that was so great, having her come through the vocal and throat issues she was having. It looks like she's got the right people around her, so I think that's great. When I first heard her I almost ran off the road. Who is this woman and where did she come from?

Other interesting

choices in cover material include songs by The Black Keys and Los Lobos. Why did you choose them?

The Black Keys song was brought to me by my producer John Chelew. I picked it out because it's got the blues progression going on with it, which I thought was really nice coming from one of the newer bands out right now. When we recorded it we put a hallelujah chorus at the end of it, kind of took it back to church. And I love Los Lobos. They're just the coolest of all. I run into these guys at different festivals. I love the song "This Time," because it reminded me of the whole cruising thing, just cruising down the avenues. That's what we wanted to do with it. Vocally I took it to a place where I thought Mavis Staples would take it. That's why I'm singing really low in my register.

The album includes a couple of Ruthie Foster originals. What can you tell me about your songwriting process?

It's really quite simple. Whenever I have time and energy in the same room, that's when I can do it, which is really rare. That's why I don't have as many original songs on this CD. I was really traveling a lot with the last one. I've limited my own writing because I wanted to



PHOTO: COURTESY

Ruthie Foster performs on May 11 at the South Milwaukee Performing Arts Center and on May 12 in Green Lake at the Thrasher Opera House.

concentrate on just picking some really great songs that are already out there on this CD. I wanted to concentrate on being more of a song interpreter.

The Blind Boys of Alabama appear on four of the album's tracks. How did that come to pass?

I traveled with the Blind Boys, and I've opened for them on several occasions. I also grew up with their music, so I'm a huge fan. My manager also manages

them, so that made it a little easier to get them down to New Orleans. I love men's voices when it comes to background vocals. I think it's a great way to feature a female vocalist. When Amy Winehouse recorded, she had male vocalists backing her up. I just love that. Joan Osborne has done that with the Holmes Brothers. And these guys (the Blind Boys) are just fun and righteous.

Some of the songs have what I would call a political spirit. Do

you consider yourself a political person?

People are going to use music and political issues all the time and I am for that. Music has always been used especially in the civil rights movement. I've also been involved with folks who were part of that. It's hard to imagine that that is still going on, but it really is. Music has always been such a huge part of political movements – using music to get people's attention. It's a great way to get your point across.

Do you find the blues community welcoming to LGBT people, or is there still resistance?

I haven't had any face-to-face resistance. I know that Candye Kane had something that happened at some festival, and I thought that was so wrong. She put it out there, she put their name out there and everything, that's what you have to do, spread the word. I haven't had a lot of resistance. I've had more of a welcome. Because we're out here doing what we do and loving what we do and singing about what we love to do. When people come to my shows, I hope they're coming because they love the music. The fact that the music is coming from a gay woman, that says something, too.

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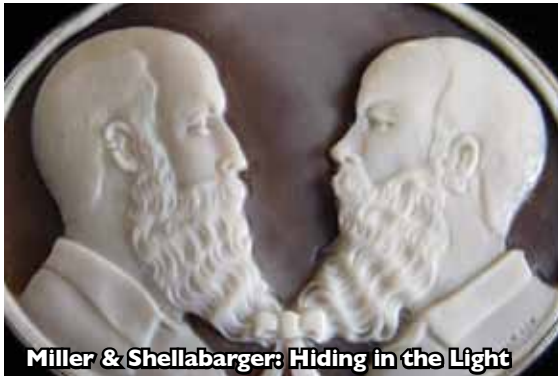
WiG out on the town

Edited and compiled by Gregg Shapiro

April 19, Thursday

Forward Theater Company presents "Love Stories," an evening of three one-act plays by George Bernard Shaw, Bertolt Brecht, and Dorothy Parker, through April 29 at the Overture Center for the Arts, 201 State in Madison Call 608-258-4141.

T.I.M. (Totally Improvised Musical), features some of Milwaukee's best



Miller & Shellabarger: Hiding in the Light

improvisers accompanied by a three-piece band creating a story in song and dance based on suggestions from the audience, at 7:30 p.m. at ComedySportz, 420 S. 1st St.

Sarah Ruhl's "In the Next Room or the vibrator play" runs through April 22 in the Stiemke Studio at Milwaukee Repertory Theater, 108 E. Wells. Call 414-224-9490.

"Sherlock Holmes: The Final Adventure" runs through April 22 at The Racine Theatre Guild, 2519 Northwestern (Highway 38) in Racine. Call 262-633-4218.

April 20, Friday

"Miller & Shellabarger: Hiding in the Light," the collaborative work of husband and husband Chicago artists Dutes Miller and Stan Shellabarger, runs through July 15, at Inova/Kenilworth, 2155 N. Prospect, with an opening reception tonight at from 5 to 8 p.m.

The ACLU of Wisconsin Foundation hosts "Eye of the Beholder: Censorship in Art from Eden to Milwaukee," an event featuring three Milwaukee area artists who have faced censorship, from 5 to



10 p.m. in the Marshall Building, 207 E. Buffalo.

"Always . . . Patsy Cline," starring Kelley Faulkner as Patsy Cline, runs through May 20 in the Stackner Cabaret at Milwaukee Repertory Theater, 108 E. Wells. Call 414-224-9490.

"Othello" comes to life in a modern and edgy adaptation set in the world of motorcycle gangs, through May 6 in the Quadracci Powerhouse at Milwaukee Repertory Theater, 108 E. Wells. Call 414-224-9490.

April 21, Saturday

Out MSNBC commentator Rachel Maddow appears at The Riverside, 116 W. Wisconsin, at 7 p.m. Call 414-286-3663.

The Miltown Kings host the 5th annual KingStock, featuring drag kings from Atlanta, Portland and Oakland, at 8 p.m. at the Miramar Theater, 2844 N. Oakland. Go to miltownkings.com.

Free and open to the public, Kenilworth Open Studios offers visitors three hours and five floors of art, dance, film, music, theatre and hands-on activities from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. at Kenilworth Square East, Studio 508, 1925 E Kenilworth Place Call 414-229-4308.

Next Act Theatre, 255 S. Water St.,



Bus Stop

presents the world premier production of "One Time" by Richard Lyons Conlon, through Apr. 29. Call 414-278-7780.

Milwaukee Chamber Theatre presents "Bus Stop," a collaborative venture with UW-Parkside Theatre, through Apr. 29 in the Cabot Theatre at Broadway Theatre Center, 158 N. Broadway. Call 414-291-7800.

The musical "Little Shop of Horrors" runs through Apr. 29 at Carte Blanche Studios Theatre, 1024 S. Fifth. Call 262-716-4689.

April 22, Sunday

Forward Theater Company presents a staged reading of "Standing On Ceremony: The Gay Marriage Plays," a fundraiser for the Fair Wisconsin Education Fund, at 7 p.m. in the Overture Center for the Arts, 201 State in Madison. Call 608-258-4141.

Wisconsin Public Radio teams up with the Milwaukee Chamber Theatre and stages a radio adaptation of "The Lonely Road" and "Rocket from Manhattan" at 8 p.m. in the Cabot Theatre at the Broadway Theatre Center, 158 N. Broadway. Call 414-291-7800.

April 24, Tuesday

The smash-hit Broadway revival of "West Side Story" runs through April 29 at Fox Cities Performing Arts Center, 400 W. College Ave. in Appleton. Call 920-730-3760.

April 25, Wednesday

Four Guyz in Dinner Jackets launch their retro-rocket into the stratosphere with their salute to '50s and '60s music in "Always in Style," through April 29 at Sunset Playhouse, 800 Elm Grove in Elm Grove. Call 262-782-4430.

April 26, Thursday

Skylight Music Theatre presents "Things That Go Ding!," a musical theatre spectacle featuring an assortment of vintage vaudeville percussion novelties known as Ding's Dynasty, through May 6 in the Studio Theatre at Broadway

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