

MCGIVERN'S SUMMER

John McGivern's latest stage outing finds hilarity in the Wisconsin summers of his youth.

WiGOUT! Page 20



THE VOICE OF PROGRESS FOR WISCONSIN'S LGBT COMMUNITY

May 17, 2012 | Vol. 3, No. 14

Belinda Carlisle

FROM THE GO-GO'S TO PRIDEFEST

Rocker and equality advocate Belinda Carlisle opens PrideFest Milwaukee's 25th anniversary weekend with an 8 p.m. performance on Friday, June 8. Other event headliners include Taylor Dane, Berlin and GOD-DES & She. For more information about the nation's largest LGBT music festival, go to www.pridefest.com. Also, look for Wisconsin Gazette's special PrideFest edition on May 31.

In advance of Carlisle's Milwaukee appearance, she spoke with WiG's Gregg Shapiro about her reunion tour with the Go-Go's and becoming a gay rights supporter following the coming-out of her son James Duke Mason.

INTERVIEW, PAGE 19



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inside and online at wisconsin Gazette.com

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Leader of Wisconsin anti-gay group acknowledges same-sex attraction

By Louis Weisberg

Staff writer

In a recent interview with The Cap Times, the director of Wisconsin's leading anti-gay organization acknowledged feeling same-sex attraction, calling it universal.

"There's not a person alive who hasn't said, 'Well, I wonder' (about my sexual orientation)," said Appling, head of Wisconsin Family Action, in response to reporter Jack Craver's question, "Have you ever felt ... same-sex attraction?"

"It's a natural part of the maturation process," Appling went on to say.

But Appling also insisted that people can leave "gay lifestyles."

"It's not a life sentence," she told Craver.

Appling's answer offered rare insight into the paradox between her personal and public lives. As head of WFA, Appling considers herself the state's leading "defender" of marriage, by which she means the leading opponent of legal recognition for same-sex relationships.

Appling led the effort to take the issue of same-sex marriage to Wisconsin voters, who outlawed it in 2006. She is currently pursuing a lawsuit that seeks to overturn the state's domestic partner registry law.

Appling says all of her actions are meant to "protect" marriage.

But Appling, 60, has never married and, in fact, lives with Diane Westphall, another never-married woman, in a home the couple owns jointly

APPLING page 12

OBAMA BACKS SAME-SEX CIVIL MARRIAGE PAGE 13

LGBT news with a twist

WIGWAG

By Lisa Neff & Louis Weisberg



COURTESY TOM BATIUK/KING FEATURES SYNDICATE

The first panels in the "Funky Winkerbean" series about two gay students planning to go to their high school prom.

FUNNY 'FUNKY'

Cartoonist Tom Batiuk is chronicling a gay couple's effort to go to the Westview High School prom this month in his "Funky Winkerbean" comic. The storyline coincides with the 40th anniversary of the strip, which appears in more than 400 newspapers.

ARIZONA CAMPAIGN DROP-OUT

Pinal County Sheriff Paul Babeu withdrew from the race to represent Arizona's Fourth

Congressional District. Polls showed Babeu badly trailing other candidates for the Republican nomination. He came to national attention when he was forced out of the closet after his ex-partner, a Mexican immigrant, said Babeu had threatened him with deportation if their past relationship was made public.

ASK YOUR OTHER DAD

With time for buyers to still ship a package for Father's Day, the Human Rights Campaign has announced a new partnership with gay designer and activist Marc Jacobs for the Little Marc Jacobs children's line of clothing. HRC and LMJ are selling T-shirts that offer a modern family take on an old tradition – one parent telling a kid to go ask the other parent. The T-shirt slogans read, "If Mom says no, go ask Mom" and "If Dad says no, go ask Dad."

LAND OF DREAMS

A first-ever comprehensive

marketing campaign for U.S. tourism debuted in early May in the United Kingdom, Japan and Canada. The campaign, launched with a Brand USA commercial featuring Rosanne Cash singing "Land of Dreams," is gay-friendly. Watch the commercial closely and you'll see a gay couple – one man resting his head on another man's shoulder – on a bus bound for some great American adventure.

ROMNEY RESIGNATION

Mitt Romney's national security spokesman resigned after right-wing critics raised questions about his conservative credentials because he's gay. At least that's one story. Others say that Richard Grenell quit because of constant attacks from the left. Meanwhile, Romney, the likely Republican nominee for president, says he urged Grenell to stay with the campaign. In an interview on Fox News, the candidate said the campaign hires people "not based upon their ethnicity or their sexual

preference or their gender, but upon their capability."

ROMNEY APOLOGY

Mitt Romney also went on Fox News to apologize over reports that he'd bullied gay students during high school. The Washington Post uncovered Romney's youthful shenanigans in interviews with his former classmates at the exclusive Cranbrook School in Michigan. "Back in high school, I did some dumb things," Romney said. "And if anyone was hurt by that or offended, obviously I apologize for that."

PERSONAL POLITICS

Politics in Wisconsin is indeed dividing families. Following an argument over who she was voting for in the May 8 gubernatorial recall primary, a Chippewa Falls woman struck her ex-husband with her sport utility vehicle. Jeffery Radle was trying to block her from driving to the polls.

WHAT A RIDE!

San Francisco resident Henry Wolf is suing BMW of North

America, claiming his 1993 BMW motorcycle seat caused him to have an erection that's lasted since May 1, 2010. Experts argue that vibrations caused by the bike coupled with configurations of the seat combined to cause the painful condition.

A STIMULATING PERIOD

A Salt Lake City mom found something unexpected mixed in with some tampons she purchased on sale. The applicator in the box of Boots tampons contained a white powder wrapped in cellophane that turned out to be cocaine.

RUB DOWN OR SHAKE DOWN?

At least three unnamed male masseurs have filed a \$2 million suit against actor John Travolta for assault and sexual battery. As WiG headed to press, one of the masseurs had been dropped by the attorney representing the plaintiffs, but others were expected to join the suit. Travolta has long been rumored to be gay.

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Leading opponent withdraws from Pocan's congressional race

By Louis Weisberg

Staff writer

Dane County Treasurer David Worzala has dropped out of the race to succeed U.S. Rep. Tammy Baldwin in Wisconsin's 2nd Congressional District.

Worzala's departure is a boon for out state Rep. Mark Pocan, who hopes to maintain the small gay presence in Congress. Currently there are only four out members of the U.S. House of Representatives, and two of them are leaving – Baldwin to run for the Senate and Rep. Barney Frank, D-Mass., to retire. Another out member of Congress, David Cicilline of Rhode Island, faces a difficult re-election bid.

Worzala, who had raised

a great deal of money for the race, was considered by many to be Pocan's strongest contender. According to the most recent numbers obtained by WiG, Worzala had raised \$413,189 compared with Pocan's \$474,495. State Rep. Kelda Helen Roys, another candidate in the race, had raised \$261,560.

Katie Belanger, executive director of Fair Wisconsin, said Worzala's withdrawal leaves Pocan "a clear path to victory."

"I think the narrower the primary field the better the opportunity," Belanger said. "Dave Worzala had indicated the ability to throw significant resources into this race. This move assures that Mark, who's been the strongest

individual fundraiser in the race, will continue running the strongest campaign. ... He's clearly the frontrunner and the strongest candidate."

"Mark is incredibly strategic and is the best representative for the 2nd Congressional District and the LGBT community," Belanger added.

Worzala announced his withdrawal from the race on his Facebook page.

"Since I announced my bid for Congress last September, we have seen tremendous progress and support. However, after careful consideration, I believe the time is not right for my candidacy," Worzala wrote.

He went on to vow to continue fighting to reverse Citizen's United "and remove the

influence of outside money and negative campaigning in American politics."

"I urge the remaining candidates in this race to run a clean, positive campaign," Worzala concluded. "While this seat is likely to remain in Democratic hands, it is important to stay unified leading into November so we can work together in electing Tammy Baldwin to the U.S. Senate and re-electing President Obama. Although I will not be running for office, I will do my part to ensure Democratic victories this fall."


Get breaking news at www.wisconsin-gazette.com.



PHOTO: COURTESY

Out state Rep. Mark Pocan hopes to win the congressional seat that Tammy Baldwin is vacating to run for U.S. Senate. Two of the four openly gay members of Congress are leaving next year.

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Lesbian pastor's Facebook post draws support

By Louis Weisberg
Staff writer

For 22 years, clergy in the Boscobel area held a ceremony to honor graduating high school seniors, and all local pastors were invited to participate. All except for the Rev. Jen Johnson, that is.

In 2005, Johnson, pastor of the First Congregational United Church of Christ, moved her partner Brenda Larson into the church's parsonage. In response, the "baccalaureate committee" responsible for organizing the annual event let her know that she was no longer welcome as part of the service.

At the time, Johnson declined to make an issue over the rejection. But despite her silence, she felt deeply hurt every year when the invitation to the baccalaureate arrived in the mail, she said. It was a reminder that she could no longer be a part of the service.

"I'm a called, trained and ordained minister," Johnson said. "I have as much minis-

terial standing as the next pastor."

When the invitation arrived this year, Johnson decided that six years was long enough to hold in her feelings. "I've been getting sad every year, but this year I got mad," she said.

Johnson posted an item on Facebook letting "people know that I cannot participate because of my sexual orientation, and I can't keep silent any more," she said.

The post set off a roiling debate in the small southwest Wisconsin town known as the birthplace of the Gideon Bible. In the end, organizers canceled the baccalaureate event, saying the debate over Johnson's exclusion had overshadowed it.

Johnson said she was surprised by both the magnitude of the reaction and the level of support she received, not only from her own congregation but from people throughout the area. One supporter created a Facebook page that drew 3,000 "likes" within a few days.

Exclusion from baccalaureate at issue.

Another Facebook page invited people in the town to attend the May 6 service at Johnson's church to show their support. As a result, 134 people showed up for a service that usually attracts no more than 35 worshippers, Johnson said.

"It was just really cool," Johnson said. "It was love, love, love and respect. I was living the pastor's dream. I've been preaching this message of love and acceptance and Jesus. ... and now people are talking about that."

But Johnson said getting to that point was stressful. She had to confront equality opponents as well as supporters. Although her conversations with naysay-

ers were respectful, they were sometimes painful. She tried to remain grounded in understanding even as she disagreed.

"As a colleague of mine said, 'You can't have surgery without blood,'" Johnson said.

A major factor behind the outpouring of support probably stemmed from the level of involvement that she and Larson have in the town of 3,000, Johnson speculated.

Larson is chief of the rescue squad and a nurse in the local hospital. The couple are "the main volunteers" at the city animal shelter, Johnson said. In addition, Johnson is a volunteer chaplain at the local hospital and president of the Boscobel chapter of the GFWC Wisconsin Federation of Women's Clubs.

Recently, the couple teamed up with a friend to start a small cattle business, as well.

"Brenda and I have given our lives to this community," Johnson said. "That's what it means to live somewhere,

according to our beliefs."

As for the future of the baccalaureate ceremony, Johnson hopes it will evolve into a more student-centered event.

"For 23 years, this baccalaureate has been done without student input," she said. "I'd like to see the students

have some input to choose who they want to speak and where they want to have it. These kids are far more well-spoken and astute than we could ever have imagined to be at their age."

The class of 2012 has already set such a plan in motion, she added.



PHOTO: COURTESY

Brenda Larson, left, and the Rev. Jen Johnson of First Congregational United Church of Christ.



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Protests continue after plea in fatal stabbing

By Lisa Neff

Staff writer

CeCe McDonald has pleaded guilty to manslaughter, but the transgender woman's supporters continue to protest, alleging that the state of Minnesota has prosecuted a survivor not an aggressor.

In a statement after her plea, the CeCe McDonald Support Committee said, "We've been proud to stand with CeCe as she fought this unjust prosecution and will continue to stand with her as she fights for justice as a trans woman of color within the prison system."

Last June, McDonald, 23, was involved in an altercation outside a south Minneapolis bar that turned deadly. She was walking with friends – all of them black – past the Schooner Tavern, where another group – all of them

white – was congregated.

There were words and then a fight, which ended when McDonald grabbed a pair of scissors from her purse and stabbed Dean Schmitz, 47, in the chest. He died shortly afterward.

Authorities arrested just one person, McDonald, who was charged with two counts of second-degree murder in connection with the death of one man.

On May 2, with the jury being seated for her trial and about 100 supporters gathered outside the Hennepin County Government Center, McDonald pleaded guilty to the lesser charge of second-degree manslaughter. Her sentencing is set for June 4.

McDonald's supporters, who have formed a Free CeCe movement, maintain that Schmitz attacked her – that he yelled racial slurs and

anti-transgender epithets and caused physical harm, that he was the aggressor and she the victim and survivor. In April, in advance of a scheduled trial, her supporters delivered a petition containing signatures from 17,000 people wanting the Hennepin County Attorney's Office to end McDonald's prosecution. They argued that her case illustrates the anti-LGBT and racial bias inherent in the legal system.

Witnesses, according to various accounts, have said that as the fighting escalated, a woman threw a glass and cut McDonald's face. Schmitz pulled McDonald away from the woman who threw the glass and they struggled. He was heard saying to McDonald, "You stabbed me." She was heard replying, "Yes, I did" and seen walking away. Schmitz died at the scene.

McDonald, in a police video confession, said she wanted to scare Schmitz but he ran into the scissors. Later, she said she acted in self-defense and was the victim of a hate crime.

But McDonald's plea averted a trial, which means what happened on June 5, 2011, will not be explored in depth in a courtroom.

David Spade, a law professor who observed the plea, said it was "horrifying to watch (McDonald) forced to recount the events of her attack on the stand, to watch the judge speak to her condescendingly about how pulling scissors out of her purse as her attacker chased her down the street unlawfully endangered her attacker. This system is so disgusting. Still, I am inspired by her support team here in Minnesota and people all over sending love."

The national Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, which has encouraged national support for the Free CeCe movement, said in a release, "CeCe's story is yet another reminder of the violence and bias that trans women – particularly trans women of color – continue to face when trying to safely walk the streets of their communities or navigating



PHOTO: COURTESY

Protesters say justice has been denied in the case of Minnesota transgender woman CeCe McDonald.

the criminal justice system."

But the county attorney maintains that McDonald has acknowledged that she could see Schmitz did not have a weapon and that the stabbing was not accidental or in self-defense.

Hennepin County Attorney Mike Freeman told Minnesota Public News, "There was no indication in that point in time that there was any weapon about to be used against Ms. McDonald. Nor was there any evidence that she was in any threat of harm

by the victim. She pulls her scissors out and stabs him in the chest. That's not self-defense."


At the June 4 hearing, McDonald, who has been jailed since last June, likely will be sentenced to three years and five months in prison. Conviction on the murder charges could have resulted in an 80-year sentence.

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Trial date set for Harrell's alleged killer

By Lisa Neff

Staff writer

The Milwaukee man accused of fatally shooting beloved Milwaukee activist Desiree Marie Harrell on Jan. 2 was set, at press time, to go on trial later this month.

Raymond Earl Baker, 35, is charged with first-degree intentional homicide and faces up to life in prison if convicted.

Milwaukee police responded early Jan. 2 to a call about gunshots fired in the 3800 block of North 24th Street. There, officers found Harrell, a popular 43-year-old activist in the LGBT community.

She was slumped over in the front seat of her Buick Regal after having been shot eight times.

On Jan. 4, about 200 friends and family gathered at the crime scene in the North Side neighborhood for a candlelight vigil. Those who attended shared memories of a lover, big sister, mentor, protector and friend as they speculated about the killing. Was it racially motivated? An anti-gay crime? Connected in some way to Harrell's work as a bouncer at Sisters and Brothers Place?

The next day the Milwaukee Police Department pro-

vided some answers after an arrest and a confession.

Baker knew he was a suspect, so he went to an MPD district headquarters with two other women to provide an alibi for the time of the shooting.

But finding inconsistencies in the stories, police arrested Baker, who then allegedly confessed to shooting Harrell. The police complaint states that Baker said Harrell was his wife's lover and that Harrell had been harassing him. He said that he shot her to death on the Monday morning after the New Year's holiday.

Court records suggested an attempt to negotiate a plea.

Baker allegedly told police that he was concluding a drug deal when he saw Harrell drive by. He followed her. She said something that angered him, so he shot her and then hid the .40-caliber Glock in a trash can on North 39th Street.

Baker pleaded not guilty on Jan. 17 and the pre-trial work began.

A mid-April record of court events suggested an

attempt to negotiate a plea. The record noted that the attorneys were "working to resolve the case but need additional time."

But as of May 15 a trial date of May 21 remained on Judge David Borowski's calendar.

In early May, assistant Milwaukee District Attorney Mark S. Williams filed his witness list.

Meanwhile, Baker defense

attorney Robert E. Haney was expected to file his witness list by May 18.

Last September, in a separate case, Baker pleaded guilty to domestic abuse. He received a sentence of nine months in jail, which was stayed, and two years' probation. He also was ordered not to have any contact with the victim, to undergo a mental health evaluation, maintain sobriety, complete a batterer's intervention program, maintain employment and not possess any weapons.

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Bullied teen arrested for taking stun gun to Indy school

A bullied high school student in Indianapolis faces expulsion after going to school with a stun gun that his mother gave him for protection.

Darnell "Dynasty" Young, 17, said he raised the gun into the air and set off an electric charge after he was surrounded by a group of bullies threatening to beat him. The bullies fled and Young was arrested.

"I brought the stun gun because I wasn't safe," Young told CNN.

His mother Chelisa Grimes defended her decision to give Young the gun after school officials failed to do anything about his constant harassment.

"I do not promote violence — not at all — but what is a parent to do when she has done everything that she felt she was supposed to do ... at the school? I did feel like there was nothing else left for me to do, but protect my child," Grimes said.

Meanwhile, officials at Arsenal Technical High School blamed the teen for bringing the bullying on himself by wearing effeminate clothing.

School principal Larry Yar-

Principal blames victim's flamboyance.

rell said his staff repeatedly asked Young to "tone down" his flamboyant accessories.

"If you wear female apparel, then kids are kids and they're going to say whatever it is that they want to say. ... Because you want to be different and because you choose to wear female apparel, it may happen," Yarell told the Indianapolis Star.

Young said it was unfair that he faces expulsion for firing the gun in the air as a warning while his bullies have not been punished. He said he "was at my wit's end."

"I didn't know what to do and I thought about suicide," Young told CNN. "I hate saying that word because God blessed me with this life. I love life. I love my education. I would never ... but this bullying got so bad that I thought about that."

— from WiG and AP reports

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Wisconsin grad explores 'ex-gay' lives

By Lisa Neff

Staff writer

Blair Mishleau is taking an after-college adventure, but not one of the backpacking-through-Europe variety.

The 22-year-old Mishleau, who graduated from Chicago's Columbia College this month and is headed home to Janesville, is exploring the "ex-gay" world, collecting video interviews of men and women who, for whatever reasons, are suppressing their same-sex attractions or struggling with their sexuality.

Mishleau also is preparing for a student teaching gig this summer and then a full-time teaching post this fall in Minneapolis-St. Paul as part of the Teach for America program.

"I'm hoping to start a compassionate dialogue between the ex-gay and gay community," he says. "Being compassionate and loving is the best way to start a dialogue. ... We forget that everyone wants to be loved at the end of the day."

Mishleau stresses the importance of "humanizing everyone" in a world where people dive into the Web and, with a few keystrokes, wish death and destruction on strangers who offend, oppose or outrage them. He mentions a man he interviewed who is avoiding same-sex relations and the casual conversation they had about collecting pinball machines.

"These are people," Mishleau says of those struggling with or suppressing their homosexuality.

He's talked with a college student in suburban Chicago, a middle-aged man living with HIV, the pinball enthusiast and several others.

He recorded his first interview in Villa Park, Ill. "That's where a subject was willing to chat with me," he says.

Mishleau adds that people are not eager to talk about the subject, not even ministers who preach against gays or those who earn a living leading "ex-gay" organizations.

'Not every ex-gay is holding up a picket sign and saying that you're going to hell.'

Mishleau took an interest in the "ex-gay" issue a couple of years ago when he attended an annual Creating Change conference organized by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. He heard from two women associated with PFLAG who infiltrated an "ex-gay" workshop and saw the deep roots of homophobia. The women recounted the story of a

mother at the conference who thought her son was better off dead after a car accident than alive but gay.

"I thought, this is something that needs to be talked about more in the gay community," Mishleau says.

As he interviews people, Mishleau explores the language they use, finding that people generally don't use "ex-gay" to define or identify themselves.

And he explores their politics, finding that "not every person who falls in the ex-gay community is holding up a picket sign and telling you, 'You are going to hell.'"

Mishleau's Kickstarter.com crowd-funding campaign, Examining the Ex-Gay Community: One Trip at a Time, had more than 40 backers as of May 8 and had generated more than \$900.

The funding, he says, will help him on his after-college adventure, traveling to Indiana, New York, Texas and Tennessee to conduct interviews.



PHOTO: COURTESY BLAIR MISHLEAU

Wisconsinite Blair Mishleau, a recent college grad, is interviewing people for a project about "ex-gay" lives. "I'm hoping to start a compassionate dialogue between the ex-gay and gay community," he says.

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PHOTO: TOM FITZSIMMONS/KENNEDY LIBRARY FOUNDATION

Caroline Kennedy, fourth from left, honored three former Iowa Supreme Court Justices for demonstrating judicial independence in a ruling for marriage equality. Ambassador Robert Ford was also honored.

PROFILES IN COURAGE

Caroline Kennedy, president of the Kennedy Library Foundation, honored three former Iowa Supreme Court Justices who were part of a unanimous decision to legalize same-sex marriage with the 2012 John F. Kennedy Profiles in Courage award.

Former Iowa Chief Justice Marsha Ternus and former Justices David Baker and Michael Streit were chosen in recognition of "the political courage and judicial independence each demonstrated in setting aside popular opinion to uphold the basic freedoms and security guaranteed to all citizens under the Iowa

Constitution."

Robert Ford, U.S. ambassador to Syria, also received the award during a program on May 7.

NOTRE DAME DELAYS DECISION ON GAY-STRAIGHT CLUB

Supporters of efforts to recognize a gay-straight alliance at the University of Notre Dame say they're encouraged by a shift in the climate that allows for more open discussion of sexual orientation.

The student senate and the faculty senate at the Catholic university passed resolutions this year urging

recognition of a gay-straight alliance to provide support and education for the LGBT communities.

The South Bend Tribune reports a decision on the proposal will be delayed until the fall while the university reviews existing non-discrimination practices and protections.

INDIANA LAWMAKER GETS ONE DONATION AFTER GIRL SCOUTS BLAST

An Indiana lawmaker who drew criticism for calling the Girl Scouts of America a radical group that promotes abortions and homosexuality

REGIONAL BRIEFS

received one campaign contribution in the months since that controversy.

The Journal Gazette reported state Rep. Bob Morris' latest campaign finance report shows that between Jan. 1 and April 13 the Fort Wayne Republican raised \$5,000 in a single donation from the Northeast Indiana PAC for Better Government.

Morris has about \$19,000 on hand. He's facing Democrat Lee Jordan in the fall.

Morris apologized for the tone of his February accusations against the Girl Scouts, but said he stands by his criticism of the national group.

EX-PRIEST CONVICTED OF ABUSE GETS EARLY RELEASE

A former priest sentenced seven years ago to 32 years in prison is being released early.

Donald Buzanowski, 69, was convicted in 2005 of sexually abusing a student at Green Bay's Saints Peter and

Paul School in 1988.

WLUK-TV reported that a judge agreed to a joint motion to release Buzanowski, but upheld the ex-priest's conviction.

Buzanowski's attorney, Owen Monfils, says the deal came about because of changes to the state's statute of limitations law. Monfils says his client's sentence was cut to time served, and that he will be on probation for seven more years.

Buzanowski is expected to be placed in a supervised group home. He'll remain on the sex offender registry.

EX-DRAKE STUDENT SEXUALLY ASSAULTED FRAT BROTHER

A former Drake University student was convicted earlier this month of repeatedly drugging and sexually assaulting a fraternity brother.

Polk County, Iowa, Judge Scott Rosenberg found Anthony Bertolone, 22, guilty

on five counts of third-degree sexual assault. He faces up to 50 years in prison when he's sentenced June 18.

Bertolone was accused of using an unidentified drug on a Sigma Chi fraternity brother and sexually assaulting him without the man's knowledge for more than seven months in 2010. He was arrested in August 2010 after a friend discovered photos and videos on Bertolone's computer.

"Clearly, the evidence shows in the numerous videos observed by the court that consent of any kind was totally absent," Rosenberg wrote in a 15-page decision.

—WiG and AP reports

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{ Editorial }

The waiting game

On May 8, North Carolina became the latest state – and the final one in the South – to ban legal recognition of same-sex relationships. Voters in the Tar Heel state approved a constitutional amendment barring equality for gay and lesbian couples by a whopping margin of 61 percent.

Although North Carolina is slowly changing, it remains essentially a “Bible Belt” state. While President Obama narrowly won the state’s electoral votes in 2008, for 30 years North Carolinians elected the legendary racist and homophobe Jesse Helms to the Senate.

All Americans should feel shamed by votes like the one in North Carolina, which have now occurred in 30 states. Putting citizens’ personal relationships and civil rights to a popular vote is an outrage to democracy and a stain upon the nation’s soul. Future generations will look back on this period with a mixture of curiosity and disgust.

Perhaps the defining moment in North Carolina’s Amendment One campaign came when the Rev. Billy Graham took out full-page ads in 14 newspapers backing the discriminatory law. Pundits believe the longtime evangelist’s stance held appreciable sway. Religion, particularly fundamentalist Christianity, is the strongest influence against support for marriage equality.

But Graham is 93 years old. As he and his cohort die out, their attitudes will die with them. Poll after poll supports this prediction.

Here at home, a Public Policy Polling survey released in June 2011 found that while 55 percent of Wisconsinites older than 65 opposed marriage equality, 58 percent under 30 said gay and lesbian couples should be allowed to marry.

Young people are far, far more likely to know LGBT people than their parents and grandparents. They are surrounded by positive images of LGBT people in the media and popular culture. In addition, a survey conducted by Georgetown University’s Berkley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs found that millennials are moving away from religious orthodoxy. Less than one-quarter believes the Bible should be taken literally. Roughly four in 10 said the Bible was written by men and is not God’s word.

As a result, nearly 60 percent of college-age millennials support same-sex marriage. Although the vote in North Carolina doesn’t show it, the course of history is on our side. Polls show continual progress in the acceptance of marriage equality.

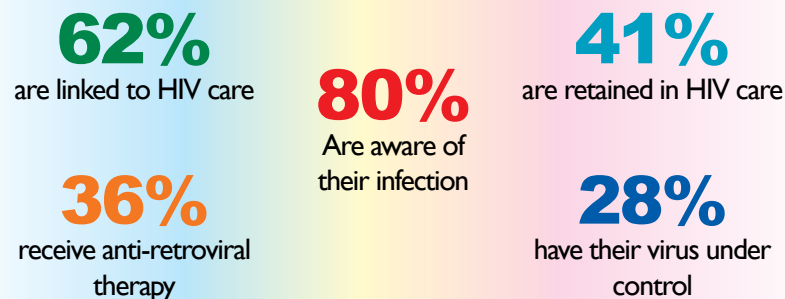
Nonetheless, one of the primary reasons discriminatory marriage amendments pass by such lopsided margins is an enthusiasm gap. While younger voters support equality, it’s not generally a motivating issue for them to go to the polls. Older voters, on the other hand, are driven to the polls by religious fervor.

Advocates must find messaging that makes equality a more compelling issue to the young. They must develop effective strategies to get young voters to the polls.

Otherwise, the path to equality is simply going to be a waiting game, and countless committed couples will go without their rights while waiting for the bigots and religious fanatics to die.

BY THE NUMBERS

Continuum of care



SOURCE: CDC ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE DIVISION OF HIV/AIDS PREVENTION

{ Feedback }

CHANGING COURSE

The White House Office of Public Engagement and Office of National AIDS Policy partnered with Morehouse School of Medicine last month to host the White House LGBT Conference on HIV/AIDS in Atlanta.

Hundreds of advocates, community organizers, health care providers, elected officials and interested members of the public joined Obama Administration officials in Atlanta for an important conversation on the impact of HIV/AIDS on the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community.

There have been tremendous advances in HIV testing and treatment. But there

There is still much work to do in reducing HIV infections.

is still much work to do: There are nearly 50,000 new HIV infections in the United States each year. Among these new infections, nearly two-thirds are among men who have sex with men, with infection rates the highest among black men. And gay men are 44 times more likely to be HIV-infected compared to other men in the United States.

We are in a pivotal moment to change the course of this

epidemic and realize the president’s vision, as stated in the National HIV/AIDS Strategy, of reducing HIV incidence, increasing access to care and optimizing health outcomes, and reducing HIV-related health disparities.

In Atlanta and across the country, organizations and individuals are doing important and innovative work to prevent and address HIV/AIDS in the LGBT community. Engagement with community and academic partners continues to be critical to the successful implementation of this strategy.

*Dr. Grant Colfax,
Director
White House Office of
National AIDS Policy*

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, 414-961-3240.

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ON THE RECORD



“Wisconsin’s never seen anything like this kind of money. ... It’ll be the highest cost per voter spent in the history of the nation in terms of the cost of persuading people.”

– JAY HECK, DIRECTOR OF COMMON CAUSE in Wisconsin, commenting on the report that Gov. Scott Walker has raised more than \$13 million since January for his campaign to hold on to his job – much of it from out of state.

“People like me would like to see Mitt Romney stand up and say, ‘I don’t care what people think, this is my guy, I’m standing behind him’ ... What people ultimately want in a president is somebody who’s strong, somebody who’s bold, somebody who has clear convictions and stands behind his decisions.”

– FORMER BUSH POLITICAL ADVISER MARK MCKINNON criticizing Romney’s campaign for ditching gay former foreign policy spokesman Ric Grenell due to pressure from right-wing Christian extremists.

“Folks are saying, ‘What in the world is going on with North Carolina?’ We look like Mississippi.”

– NORTH CAROLINA GOV. BEV PERDUE expressing her dismay over voters in her state banning any legal recognition for same-sex relationships.

“Dads, the second you see your son dropping the limp wrist, you walk over there and crack that wrist. Man up. Give him a good punch.”

– North Carolina PASTOR SEAN HARRIS of Berean Baptist Church preaching a sermon that urged his congregants to beat their gay children.

“For 300 years, we had laws that would prosecute that lifestyle. We’ve gone down the wrong path.”

– RON BAITY, founding pastor of Berean Baptist Church in Winston Salem, N.C., reminiscing over the good old days when gay people were harassed and prosecuted.

“Tonight Amendment One was passed, which narrowly defines marriage as a union between a bigot and North Carolina.”

– Pundit FRANK CONIFF talking about the ban on all same-sex relationships adopted by voters in North Carolina on May 8.

“It’s insane that civil rights are being denied people in this day and age. It’s embarrassing, and it’s heartbreaking. It goes without saying that I’m completely in support of gay marriage. In 10 years we’ll be ashamed that this was an issue.”

– CHRIS EVANS, who plays Captain America in the blockbuster “The Avengers,” telling Playboy last month that he supports marriage equality. Evans has a gay brother.

“I’m not running on marriage and marijuana, those are state issues, right? Aren’t they?”

– MITT ROMNEY getting testy with a reporter in Colorado. Shortly after this exchange, Romney affirmed that he’d seek to amend the Constitution to ban same-sex marriage.



Wave of Milwaukee feminism

Forty years ago this month, as the new wave of feminist activism took hold in Milwaukee, local women established the Women’s Coalition. Housed in a flat across from UW-Milwaukee’s Student Union, the coalition provided a meeting place and communications hub for the many different women’s groups emerging at that time.

Feminists in and around the Women’s Coalition made an enormous contribution to raising the consciousness and improving the lives of all Milwaukee area women. Lesbians played a significant role throughout the coalition’s history.

The coalition’s earliest project was the Women’s Crisis Line, which received more than 1,000 calls per month from women in various situations of distress. Callers were assured of sensitive treatment by specially trained feminist volunteers, many of whom devoted hundreds of hours to counseling and referred callers to appropriate services.

Rape crisis calls received through the crisis line led to the formation of the citywide Anti-Rape Council in 1973.



The Anti-Rape Council lobbied successfully for a sexual assault counseling unit in the district attorney’s office.

When calls to the crisis line revealed a pervasive problem of violence against women, the coalition formed the Task Force on Battered Women in 1975. In addition to counseling thousands of women over the years, the task force established the first shelter for battered women and their children in Milwaukee. The task force and shelter have evolved into the Sojourner Family Peace Center.

Pressure from the coalition and other feminist groups helped reform Wisconsin statutes regarding sexual assault in 1976. In 1979, the state allocated financial assistance for programs to alleviate the plight of battered women.

Grapevine, a lesbian political and social support group, was formed out of the coalition’s Friday night “raps.”

Amazon and Common Ground, two feminist newspapers, were published out of the coalition’s office for 12 years.

The Women’s Coalition also launched Milwaukee’s “Take Back the Night” movement. Anyone present at the first march in 1979 will never forget what was one of the largest demonstrations ever held in Milwaukee. The march featured 3,000 protesters expressing outrage over a summer season in which more than a dozen women were brutally raped and murdered.

Chants of “No More Parole, No More Bail – Let the Rapists Rot in Jail!” shook the streets. Defiant chants of “Fire Breier! He’s a Liar!” targeted the insensitive police chief. Eventually, the Task Force on Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence was formed by the Common Council, police procedures were changed, and Chief Breier – thank goodness – retired.

In the 1980s, the Women’s Coalition developed other innovative projects, including one that gained national attention by aiding women involved in prostitution. The

Displaced Homemakers Project built public awareness on the topic and helped in the foundation of the state-funded Displaced Homemakers Network.

The history of the Women’s Coalition is one of great commitment and accomplishment on the part of tireless women activists. Their collective and sometimes militant action established social services, reformed laws and institutions, and changed attitudes regarding women’s place in society.

Organizational skills honed by lesbians at the coalition benefitted subsequent campaigns for LGBT rights. Feminist principles of inclusiveness, such as consensus decision-making, racial and gender quotas for governing bodies, ASL interpreters at events and ticket prices scaled to income, are practiced by many progressive groups today.

The Women’s Coalition represented the best that was within us, a special generation of “women loving women” in the broadest sense of that wonderful phrase.

Why I need the center

Editor’s note: This column is the first in an ongoing series featuring clients, volunteers and staff members of the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center explaining why they need – and why the city needs – the center. The center is undergoing a strategic reorganization and planning process to get back on its feet financially and to identify ways to better serve the needs of the community. As part of the process, the center is seeking community input, volunteers, donors and visitors.

In my teenage years I started volunteering for the March of Dimes. It all began as an excuse to hang out with my friends and work the WKTI Haunted Manor. It was a lot of work and also a lot of fun. I also found myself enjoying being part of something bigger than myself. I had the volunteer bug.

Flash forward many years,



and I find myself in class talking with some of my fellow students about volunteering and my attitudes toward it. I had been volunteering off and on since my teenage years and found the camaraderie, flexible schedules and philanthropic efforts to be very rewarding.

I was discussing changing volunteer positions at Froedtert, because I found myself spending a great deal of time just trying to stay out of the way. One of my fellow students let me know that they needed help setting up tables for an event on campus for the UWM LGBTQ organization. I had friends in the LGBTQ community but knew nothing about



PHOTO: CASEY SCHROETER

the organization they were referring to. A quick Internet search led me to Dave Martin. While Dave was not the contact for the student organization, he did invite me in to see the center.

From the start, I was impressed with the center and the programs it offered. I saw a definite advantage to having a place where the needs of people of many dif-

ferent demographic, social, and economic groups were being met. The center not only existed as an independent entity but also as an outreach organization and a liaison to other LGBTQ resources throughout the city.

Simply put, the center bridges the gap between individual needs and the resources available. As an ally, it bridges me to good friends and lots of fun. This is probably why I have volunteered at the Milwaukee LGBT Center for longer than any other place, about five years now.

A straight ally, Brian Langer is a fireman who volunteers for the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center.

Something to share?
Email lweisberg@wisconsinngazette.com.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

MCGIVERN TO MC CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE

Milwaukee celebrity John McGivern will serve as the master of ceremonies for this summer's Champions of Change program.

The event, set for Aug. 16 at the Potawatomi Bingo Casino, includes the presentation of the 23rd annual Commitment to Justice Awards.

Recipients include:

- Ross Draeger and Robert Starshak, both leaders of Cream City Foundation and Fair Wisconsin Education Fund, in the social justice category.
 - Juli Kaufmann of Fix Development, in the environment category.
 - Sabrina Bryant, in the animal welfare category.
 - H. Fisk Johnson of S.C. Johnson & Son, in the business/humanitarian category.
 - Milwaukee County Supervisor David Bowen, for "future of change."
- Community Shares of Greater Milwaukee presents

the awards. Go to www.communitysharesmke.org.

SOCCER LEAGUE REGISTERS FOR SUMMER

The Milwaukee Gay Soccer League is registering players for the summer season until May 21.

For more details, e-mail mkegayssoccer@gmail.com or go to the Facebook page.

MILWAUKEE GAMMA PLANS CAMPING TRIP

The Milwaukee GAMMA social club is planning its Devil's Lake Camping and Wollersheim Excursion for August.

An announcement on the group's website invites GAMMA buddies to share four nights of campfire stories, hiking, swimming and kayaking and also tour the Wollersheim Winery and Ringling Bros. Circus Museum.

The trip dates are Aug. 15-19.

Go to milwaukeegamma.com.

VICTORY FUND HOLDS CONTEST FOR CANDIDATE TRAINING

The Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund is holding its next candidate training forum in Milwaukee.

The organization at the forefront of electing LGBT people to office at the local, state and federal levels also is sponsoring an Onward to Victory contest, offering the winner an all-expenses paid trip to the June 21-24 training.

The contest takes place online, with people voting in a mock election until May 25. The candidate with the most votes wins the training spot in Milwaukee.

For more, including registration, go to the Victory Fund on Facebook.

CAMP BINGO BENEFITS AIDS NETWORK

Tickets are on sale for Summer Camp Bingo, which benefits AIDS Network. The event is held June 16 in con-

junction with Madison's Fruit Fest.

Campers will play four games of bingo for cash prizes, while being entertained and visited by special guests.

There also will be a benefit raffle at Plan B, 924 Williamson St., Madison.

Camp Bingo tickets are \$12 in advance.

For more, go to campbingo.kintera.org.

BAY VIEW CLUB PLANS PLANT SALE

The Bay View Garden and Yard Society, in collaboration with South Shore Park Watch and Milwaukee County Parks, hosts its annual Bay View Plant Sale at South Shore Park, 2900 S. Shore Dr., on June 2 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The sale features plant vendors with hundreds of annuals and perennials, hanging baskets, ornamental trees and shrubs, vegetables and herbs, exotic heirlooms and tropical plants.

For more, go to the group's Facebook page.

DIVERSE & RESILIENT PRESENTS AWARDS

Diverse & Resilient presented 12 awards to Wisconsin leaders on April 23. The nonprofit honored:

- Amy Olejniczak of Madison with the Adult Ally Award for her work on the Wisconsin Adolescent Health Care Communication Program.
- Josh Bartz of Madison with the LGBT Program Staff Award for his commitment to OutReach, Madison's LGBT Community Center.
- Pathfinders with the LGBT Youth Community Partner of the Year Award for its service to at-risk youth.
- Camden Goetz and Xavier Matthews with youth awards for their work, respectively, with the Gay Straight Alliance for Safe Schools in Madison and QBLOK of Pathfinders in Milwaukee.
- Deanna Tappy with the Youth Development

Specialist of the Year Award for running the GLBT Partnership of Harmony Cafe in Green Bay.

• The Men of Color Empowerment and Support Group and Eau Queer Film Festival with the LGBT Program Award.

• Pam Forman and Cathy Arney with the Adult Community Leadership Award. Forman received the award for her commitment to the LGBT community of UW-Eau Claire and Arney for her dedication to lesbian and bisexual women's health issues.

• Pastor Ken Wheeler and Julie Rothwell with the Community Ally Award for their respective advocacy at Cross Lutheran Church and United Way of Greater Milwaukee.

The awards program included a dessert buffet catered by Beans & Barley and took place at Congregation Sinai.

For more, go to diverseandresilient.org.

— Lisa Neff

Appling, 60, said that she's 'frankly too busy to get married right now'

APPLING, from page 12

in Watertown. They've lived together for decades.

When Westphall's father died in 2007, the Watertown Daily Times printed an obituary that listed Appling among his survivors, although she is not a legal member of the Westphall family.

Westphall, who also works side by side with Appling at WFA, was present during Craver's interview, which took place during the Republican Party of Wisconsin's convention in Green Bay over the weekend of May 11.

Given the disconnect between Appling's private life and her activism, Craver said he "wanted to really get a glimpse of her psyche when it comes to sexuality."

Craver said he was surprised by the way Appling dodged his question about experiencing same-sex attraction and then went on to defend herself against potential charges of hypocrisy.

"Look, one thing nobody

can say about our organization is that we've said, 'You don't have a right as two men or two women to live together, or to have whatever relationship you want,'" Appling told Craver. "What we've said is the social recognition that comes with legalization of (gay marriage) is not appropriate."

Appling told Craver that she would have gotten married if the right guy had come along. "She said that she's frankly too busy to get married right now," Craver said.

Appling declined to speak with WiG about the interview.

When Craver asked Appling what gay people should do about their sexuality, she replied that "people have left gay lifestyles by the droves successfully."

But the American Psychological Association and all the other major groups in that profession have condemned so-called "ex-gay" and "reparative" treatments as unethical, ineffective and destructive. No scientific study has ever

shown them to work, and they've been proven to cause serious psychological harm to people who've undergone them.

"I'd like to know what her (Appling's) evidence is," said Wayne Besen, director of Truth Wins Out. He's devoted much of his life to dispelling the "ex-gay" myth and ferreting out proponents who falsely claim to have changed their sexual orientation.

"If not for self-loathing closet cases, this whole 'ex-gay' thing would collapse," Besen said. "They're the driving force behind it. They're clearly fighting their own demons. They think if they publicly fight it, it will help them maintain a façade."

Besen, who is unfamiliar with Appling personally, was speaking to the issue in general. He rattled off a list of former "ex-gays" who have since acknowledged the failure of such treatments or been caught in compromising sexual situations after claiming to be cured.

Last fall, leading ex-gay proponent John Smid finally acknowledged that "reparative therapy" doesn't work. And just last month, psychiatrist Robert Spitzer, author of a 2001 study that was often cited as proof that people could alter their sexual orientation, retracted his work, admitting it was hopelessly flawed.

But Besen said the facts about sexual orientation do little to persuade people like Appling who believe that hell literally awaits those who fail to change.

"They don't give a damn about evidence," Besen said. "Their whole strategy is to repeat a lie often enough so people will believe it, and they believe that lying for the Lord is perfectly fine. I've never seen people so impervious to facts and evidence."

The myth about ex-gays also continues to thrive in large part because the mainstream press allows remarks like Appling's to stand unchallenged in the public record, Besen said. The Gay and Les-

bian Alliance Against Defamation continually challenges broadcasts that present "ex-gay" practitioners as legitimate therapists.

Appling's openness during her interview with The Cap Times comes at a time when her organization appears to be publicly downplaying WFA's involvement in anti-gay activities. Last year she fought — and lost — an effort to prevent the Appleton Common Council from extending domestic partnership benefits to city workers. But her organization's role in the battle was largely played under the radar by using front groups.

Headlines about same-sex marriage used to dominate the homepage of WFA's website at wifamilyaction.org. But days after President Barack Obama announced his support for same-sex marriage, there was nothing about the development posted on the site — none of the invective that has accompanied equal-victory victories in the past.

In fact, marriage is now list-



PHOTO: IN FOCUS

Julaine Appling

ed at the bottom of "issues" addressed by WFA — beneath gambling, school choice, pornography and taxes, among other topics. And WFA's statement on marriage now gives as much weight to preventing divorce as to banning same-sex nuptials.

The weeks and months ahead will tell how permanent this shift in priorities is, but Wisconsin will probably never know how much of it relates to Appling's personal life, particularly her relationship with Westphall.

EVOLUTION COMPLETE

President endorses same-sex civil marriage

By Lisa Neff

Staff writer

President Barack Obama completed an evolutionary journey on May 9 with an affirmation of gay marriage that's considered as monumental as the Stonewall riots.

Obama, in a hastily organized interview with ABC News reporter Robin Roberts, spoke about his strong record supporting LGBT equality, his "evolving" position on marriage and becoming the first sitting president to back civil marriage for same-sex couples.

The president said he reached his decision after conversations with advisers, friends and family, including his wife and young daughters.

"At a certain point, I've just concluded that, for me personally, it is important for me to go ahead and affirm that I think same-sex couples should be able to get married," he said during the interview, which was worldwide news before it aired May 10 on "Good Morning America."

"The winds of change are happening," he added. "They're not blowing with the same force in every state."

Obama's statement came the day after North Carolina voted by a margin of 61-39 percent for a constitutional amendment defining marriage as the union of a man and a woman. The amendment denies recognition of same-sex marriages, civil unions and domestic partnerships.

The statement also came several days after Education Secretary Arne Duncan announced his complete support for same-sex marriage and Vice President Joe Biden said he is "absolutely comfortable" with gays marrying, a position that at least 50 percent of Americans share, according to polls.

White House advisers said Obama had planned an announcement on the issue sometime before the Democratic National Convention in Charlotte, N.C., in September. Biden's statement, which aired on May 6 on

"Meet the Press," influenced the president's timing.

For much of the morning May 9, bloggers buzzed about the possibility that Obama would officially come out for gay marriage in the Roberts interview. The White House had canceled its regular press briefing and was declining to respond to the barrage of questions about Obama's "evolving" position on marriage that began after Biden's "comfortable" quote.

The interview took place at about 1:30 p.m. Press releases praising and criticizing the president's words arrived in journalists' inboxes prior to 3 p.m., before major news outlets had even reported the president's remarks.

Soon afterward, in LGBT neighborhoods across the country, the merriment began. Spontaneous celebrations took place in Washington, Chicago, Los Angeles, Atlanta and many college communities, including Madison.

In San Francisco's Castro, LGBT activists came together to sign a "thank you" card. It was sent to the White House with tear-soaked ink.

"I've never been prouder to be an American, and a Democrat and a Barack Obama supporter," said 62-year-old Harris Jones of San Francisco. "I used to think, what does it matter what the president says. But after I heard what he had to say, I cried for an hour."

In New York, a crowd gathered outside the Stonewall Inn, site of the Stonewall riots and the symbolic birthplace of the modern gay civil rights movement.

New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg praised the president. "The march of freedom that has sustained our country since the Revolution of 1776 continues, and no matter what setbacks may occur in a given state, freedom will triumph over fear and equality will prevail over exclusion," Bloomberg said. "Today's announcement is a testament to the president's convictions, and it builds on the courageous stands

that so many Americans have taken over the years on behalf of equal rights for gay and lesbian Americans, stretching back to the Stonewall Inn in Greenwich Village."

In nearby New Jersey, where earlier this year Republican Gov. Chris Christie vetoed a marriage equality bill, gay rights activist Steve Goldstein said he was on "Cloud 18."

"We will remember for the rest of our lives where we were when we heard the sitting president of the United States say he supports marriage equality," he said.

In the opposing camp, Fox News ran the headline, "Obama flip flops, declares war on marriage."

"The president's announcement today and his flip-flopping on the issue aren't surprising, given the White House being entirely focused on political advantage for the November election right now and the demands of the president's political base and supporters," said U.S. Sen. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa. "However, the majority of voters in every state who've had a chance to have their say with a referendum on same-sex marriage have voted against it."

U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., considered a possible VP nominee, said, "I agreed with the old Barack Obama."

Tony Perkins of the Family Research Council, a designated hate group, said, "The president's announcement today that he supports legalizing same-sex marriage finally brings his words in sync with his actions."

Mitt Romney, the likely GOP nominee for president, showed some frustration over the attention to the issue. But, on May 9, he reaffirmed his position: "My view is that marriage is a relationship between a man and a woman. That's the position I've had for some time, and I don't intend to make any adjustments at this point ... or ever, by the way."

Romney supports an amendment to the U.S. Con-



PHOTO: PETE SOUZA/WHITE HOUSE PHOTO VIA GETTY IMAGES

President Barack Obama announcing to Robin Roberts on ABC's "Good Morning America" that he supports same-sex marriage.

stitution defining marriage as the union of a man and a woman. He fought the legalization of marriage in Massachusetts when he was governor and most recently he said that he doesn't support civil unions if they're "identical to marriage other than in the name."

Yet Log Cabin Republicans, a national gay GOP group, criticized Obama after his announcement, saying it was too late and cold comfort for gay couples in North Carolina.

Pundits and campaign aides are still debating the impact of Obama coming out for gay marriage six months before the election. He caught some by surprise with the announcement – but for the timing of it, not the content.

In 1996, Obama's state senate campaign returned a questionnaire to Chicago's Outlines newspaper that indicated the candidate supported gay marriage. But later, White House officials said an aide, not the candidate, answered the question.

On a 2004 questionnaire, when he was running in Illinois for the U.S. Senate, Obama said his Christian faith led him to believe marriage should be between a man and a woman. In 2008, he said he still believed that and endorsed civil unions as the best way to legally

recognize same-sex relationships. In the White House, the president took several steps to extend protections and benefits to same-sex couples. He announced the Justice Department would not defend the anti-gay Defense of Marriage Act, but he refrained from endorsing gay marriage.

Throughout 2010 and 2011, the White House line on Obama and gay marriage was that the president's position was evolving.

"I've been consistent in my overall trajectory," Obama said in the Roberts interview. "The one thing that I've wrestled with is this gay marriage issue. And I think it'd be hard to argue that somehow this is something that I'd be doing for political advantage because, frankly, you know, the politics, it's not clear how they cut."

He added, "In some places that are going to be pretty important on this electoral map it may hurt me. But, you know, I think it was important for me, given how much attention this issue was getting both here in Washington, but (also) elsewhere, for me to go ahead, 'Let's be clear: Here's what I believe.'"

Hours after the news broke, Obama for America – via e-mail – asked supporters to stand with the president and donate to the campaign.

"I respect the beliefs of others, and the right of religious institutions to act in accordance with their own doctrines," the e-mail from "Barack" read. "But I believe that in the eyes of the law, all Americans should be treated equally. And where states enact same-sex marriage, no federal act should invalidate them. If you agree, you can stand with me here."

The campaign declined to discuss details on dollars, but BuzzFeed reported that \$1 million was raised in the 90 minutes after the appeal went out.

MARRIAGE MAP

Same-sex couples can marry in Iowa, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Vermont, and the District of Columbia.

Maryland and Washington approved marriage equality bills this year.

Legal efforts are under way to overturn the federal anti-gay Defense of Marriage Act and anti-gay state constitutional amendments, specifically Proposition 8 in California. Thirty states have adopted anti-gay marriage amendments.

North Carolina approves anti-gay Amendment One

By Lisa Neff

Staff writer

North Carolinians tell visitors that spring reawakens dormant beauty in their state. But this year, spring spawned a season of hate that culminated on May 8 with voters approving a constitutional amendment barring the recognition of gay marriages, civil unions and domestic partnerships.

When the polls closed and the votes were tallied that Tuesday, election officials confirmed that the state had become the 30th in the U.S. and the last in the former confederate South to define marriage as the union of a man and a woman in its constitution. The amendment, effective on Jan. 1, 2013, reads, "Marriage between one man and one woman is the only domestic legal union that shall be valid or recognized in this State. This section does not prohibit a private party from entering into contracts with another private party; nor does this section prohibit courts from adjudicating the rights of private parties pursuant to such contracts."

The morning after the vote, emboldened amendment backers took aim at repealing marriage equality bills in Maryland and Washington, passing a constitutional amendment in Minnesota and defeating a gay marriage referendum in Maine.

Vote FOR Marriage NC's Tami Fitzgerald said the results sent "a message to the rest of the country that marriage is between one man and one woman. The whole point

is simply that you don't rewrite the nature of God's design based on the demands of a group of adults."

"We are at the beginning of a national campaign in support of defining marriage as the union of one man and one woman," said Brian Brown of the National Organization for Marriage. "Marriage will be a major issue in swing states across the country and will be directly on the ballot in four more states this fall. The victory in North Carolina is a wonderful beginning to what we believe will be a clean sweep of states this year."

Amendment opponents, meanwhile, took action to defend gay marriage in other states and roll back amendments such as the one North Carolina voters approved 61-39 percent.

"Our opponents celebrate ... but their celebration will be short lived," promised Camilla Taylor, National Marriage Project director for Lambda Legal.

"The battle isn't over," she added.

On May 9, the first wave of gay rights demonstrations began at marriage license offices in the Tar Heel state. More than three dozen same-sex couples joining in the "We Do" campaign demanded licenses and, when rebuffed, staged sit-ins in a state known for some historic sit-ins. Organizers promised the campaign would continue in small towns and big cities throughout the spring.

Meanwhile, on the Web, a North Carolina college student's Change.org petition oppos-

ing the vote collected 60,000 signatures in the first 12 hours.

In a message to volunteers and other supporters of the anti-amendment campaign organized by Protect All NC Families, director Jeremy Kennedy focused on the victories in a disappointing vote.

The "result was truly historic," he said. "This amendment began with a 40-point lead just a few months ago but you, undeterred and undaunted, worked to educate your fellow citizens about its harms. ... People from all over the country can now look to North Carolina as an example of a state that fights to protect, defend and support all of its citizens."

While the vote continued a pattern of approving anti-gay amendments at the polls, Kennedy and others noted that the margin of victory was smaller than in other states in prior years. On average, anti-gay constitutional amendments go 67 percent for and 33 percent against. In the South, the average vote for such amendments has been 75 percent.

Campaigners also cheered a new national poll showing majority support for legalizing same-sex marriage and cited as significant the percentage of voters under 30 who opposed the amendment and helped set an early-voting record for the state.

Still, there was no negating the loss on May 8 and no ignoring the gloating from right-wing groups such as the National Organization for Marriage and the Family Research Council.

"So much for the idea being promulgated by the media and the elite that same-sex marriage is inevitable," said NOM'S Brown. "Just the other day, gay activists were predicting victory in North Carolina, but instead marriage won an overwhelming victory."

NOM, according to Brown, directly donated \$425,000 for the Amendment One campaign and raised "countless additional funds for the effort."

North Carolina has had an anti-gay marriage law for 16 years, and Republican lawmakers have talked about amending the constitution to ban same-sex marriage since at least 2004. After the GOP captured control of the Legislature in 2010, the ballot measure was set for the 2012 primary.

The pro-amendment campaign was led by the Vote FOR Marriage NC coalition, with help from some high-profile figures and also some individuals who, as Election Day approached, won notoriety.

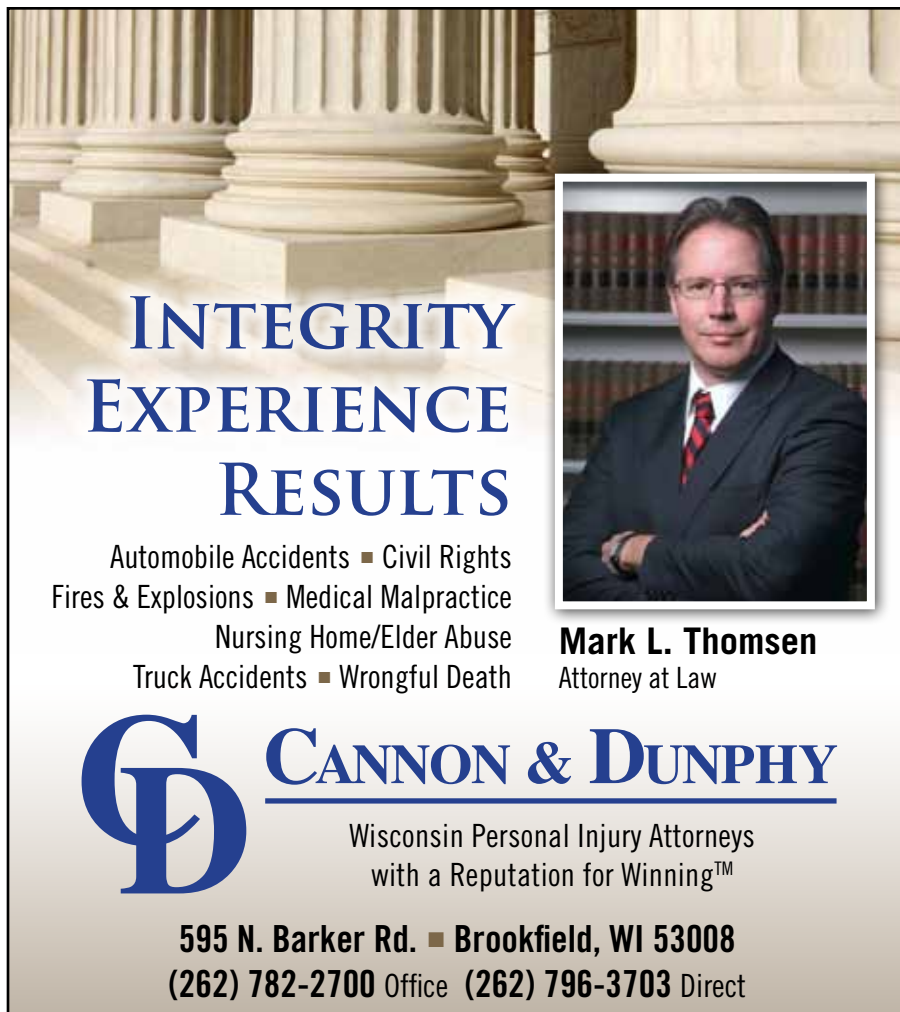
One of the most beloved figures in the state, 93-year-old Rev. Billy Graham, was featured in full-page newspaper ads stating, "Watching the moral decline of our country causes me great concern. I believe the home and marriage is the foundation of our society and must be protected."

Lesser-known minister Sean Harris encouraged his Berean Baptist Church flock to go beyond voting for the amendment and beat the gay out of kids. "Dads," he said, "the second you see that son dropping the limp wrist, you walk over there and crack that wrist. Man up. Give them a good punch. OK?" After a video of the sermon went viral on the Web, more than 10,000 people signed a petition protesting the anti-Christian teachings of the Christian pastor.

Other advocates to make headlines in the final weeks of campaigning included a teenager arrested for shooting at a pro-gay campaign sign and the wife of a state senator who told a poll worker that the amendment protected the Caucasian race.

Protect All NC Families' Kennedy said the campaign had to deal with divisive devices, misleading messages and scare tactics to reframe the debate.

The anti-amendment coalition's members included local, state and national LGBT **CAROLINA**, next page



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CAROLINA, from prior page

groups, civil liberties organizations, women's rights groups, faith-based groups, businesses and student associations. Dozens of organizations were involved in North Carolina's largest cities and rural communities.

In the final week, the coalition won the support of Chelsea Clinton, who penned a letter urging "no" votes and encouraging campaign volunteers and financial help.

Bill Clinton, who in 1996 signed the Defense of Marriage Act but has since amended his position on gay marriage, also lent support – recording a robo-call in which he said the law would hurt business and families and suggested, "North Carolina can do better."

At the national level, Vice President Joe Biden expressed his comfort with gay marriage two days before the vote and Education Secretary Ernie Duncan pledged his support for legalizing gay marriage on May 7.

Later on May 8, the Obama campaign called the amendment "divisive and discriminatory" and said the president was "disappointed" with the vote. And, on the historic afternoon after, the president officially announced his personal support for the legalization of same-sex marriage.



PHOTO: SECRETARYCLINTON.WORDPRESS
Hillary Clinton wins World LGBT Award.

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton is the winner of the first World LGBT Award, which will be presented at WorldPride later this year in London.

England-based Pride London and the global Kaleidoscope Trust created the award, which recognizes "the international attention Secretary Clinton has brought to LGBT rights in publicly supporting the community and advocating for increased LGBT rights. The U.S. government strategy to protect the rights of gay and lesbian people around the world and combat the criminalization of homosexuality was set out in a major speech by Secretary Clinton, at the United Nations in Geneva in December 2011."

- LN.

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Tip of the week:

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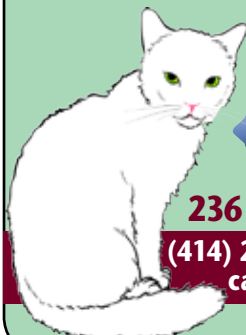


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Bill seeks to end Social Security discrimination

By Lisa Neff

Staff writer

Social Security spokesperson George Takei tells Baby Boomers to "Boldly Go" online to register for retirement benefits. The actor-activist of "Star Trek" fame now is telling lawmakers to boldly pass legislation to extend those benefits to same-sex couples.

In late April, U.S. Rep. Linda Sánchez, a California Democrat, introduced the Social Security Equality Act of 2012, which would end the Social Security Administration policy denying same-sex couples who are married in their states the same benefits as heterosexual couples.

Sánchez announced the reintroduction of her bill at a Rock for Equality rally outside the U.S. Capitol that Takei and other activists attended.

"No American should ever be treated differently by the country they love because of who they love," Sánchez said. "Social Security is based on a simple formula – work hard,

pay into it with each paycheck, and be able to retire with dignity. This must apply to all Americans, regardless of their sexual orientation. It is time the Social Security Administration ends a misguided policy that discriminates against same-sex couples."

The measure, which Sánchez first introduced in 2010, would terminate the SSA policy that denies spousal retirement, spousal disability, survivor and death benefits to same-sex couples because the federal government does not recognize their relationships. Male same-sex couples receive about 18 percent less in Social Security benefits than heterosexual couples and female same-sex couples receive about 31 percent less than heterosexual couples.

Consider:

- Spousal retirement benefits allow a low-income spouse to be eligible for either their own benefit or an amount equal to one-half of their higher earning spouse's benefit. It is common for one

partner to earn more and pay more into Social Security than the other. Once both partners have retired, one may qualify for benefits of \$500 a month and the other for \$2,000 a month. The one who has qualified for \$500 is automatically qualified for \$1,000 instead, which is equal to half of the larger earner's benefit. When retirement comes, the lower earner gets a boost, so that the couple can retire with some security. This benefit is not available to same-sex couples.

- Spousal disability benefits provide for a spouse and dependents to qualify for benefits on a disabled worker's earnings record in the same way as with retired workers. The benefit is not available to same-sex couples. Even the children of same-sex couples may be at risk.

- Survivors' benefits allow a widow or widower to be eligible to claim his or her own Social Security benefit or an amount equal to the benefit for which their

deceased spouse was eligible. If a retired couple qualifies for \$500 for one person and \$2,000 for the other, together their monthly benefit would be \$2,500. Upon the death of the person getting \$2,000, the survivor can receive \$2,000 per month, instead of \$500. This is true in all cases except when the survivor was in a same-sex partnership. In those instances, the survivor has to get by on \$500 per month.

- Death benefits provide a modest benefit of \$255 for burial and other expenses, but not if the survivor was in a same-sex partnership.

"The Social Security Equality Act will make a crucial difference to countless elderly LGBT people who are struggling to survive because their own government has denied them the Social Security benefits their spouses paid for and to which they are entitled," Lorri L. Jean of the L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center said at the rally. "That's not only wrong, it's un-American."

Takei, who attended with

his husband, also spoke. The actor has served as an SSA celebrity spokesperson, filming a "Star Trek" spoof with Patty Duke to promote the government's direct deposit program and appearing in other spots.

Sánchez' bill, recorded as House Resolution 4609, has 94 original co-sponsors, including Democrats Tammy Baldwin and Gwen Moore of Wisconsin. The bill was referred to the House Ways and Means Committee, which is chaired by Republican Dave Camp of Michigan.

In 2010, the measure won endorsements from the L.A. Gay and Lesbian Center, SAGE, AIDS Community Action Foundation, PFLAG and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.

Those organizations also are supporting the 2012 version.

Join WiG on Facebook.

ROYAL SNUB

Queen Elizabeth II, in her speech to the British Parliament on May 9, set out the government's agenda for the next session. To the disappointment of LGBT activists, the agenda did not include the proposed legalization of same-sex marriage for England and Wales. The queen outlined 19 bills, none of them LGBT-related. Stonewall UK is urging the government not to abandon the gay marriage push and is promoting the cause with a high-profile marketing campaign that uses posters, fliers, handbills, the Web and ads on London transit. Activists hope to legalize civil same-sex marriage before the next elections in 2015.

– LN.

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WISCONSIN GAZETTE ENTERTAINMENT

From the Go-Go's to PrideFest, Belinda Carlisle is still rocking

By Gregg Shapiro

Staff writer

As the lead singer of the Go-Go's, the band at the forefront of the all-girl groups of the early 1980s, Belinda Carlisle belted and danced her way through "Our Lips Are Sealed," "We Got the Beat," "Vacation" and "Head Over Heels." Her solo career, launched in 1986, also yielded chart-toppers, including "Mad About You" and "Heaven Is a Place on Earth."

After her son James Duke Mason came out a couple of years ago, Carlisle began making her voice heard on LGBT issues. In 2009, she filmed a PSA for Maine's "No on One" campaign, saying, "Together, let's affirm equal rights for all Americans and give hope to young gay people, like my son, for a better future."

Taking a break from a spring tour with the Go-Go's, Carlisle spoke with WiG about her music and her advocacy prior to her June 8 appearance at Milwaukee's PrideFest.



Belinda Carlisle, front and center, with the Go-Go's in 2001.

PHOTO: COURTESY

Gregg Shapiro: Last year marked the 30th anniversary of the Go-Go's major-label debut disc "Beauty and the Beat." Where did the time go?

Belinda Carlisle: (Laughs.) I have no idea. It feels like yesterday. It's so scary. First of all, when I look back, we formed the band in 1978. So, to go from zero to 100 in three years, without really knowing how to do anything, other than plugging guitars in amplifiers, is a pretty incredible feat. To think of that being in the course of three years, beyond that, it's been a whirlwind, for sure.

The Go-Go's reunited for a tour to commemorate the anniversary, and the group is back on tour. What's the best part of the experience?

Since 1990, we've toured consistently pretty much every year. We did break up in 1985, and then at the end of 1989 we got together for a benefit. We are like one big happy dysfunctional family. We know each other really well. It's family. It's not even like work colleagues, it's beyond that. There's a camaraderie that you don't get, that I can't ever get working solo, because I work solo all the time. The Go-Go's are a special band and we have special relationships with each other.

As the first of the Go-Go's to launch a solo career, you had a number of hit singles. How did you know it was the right time to embark on

your own?

I just got right into it as soon as the band broke up. The band didn't break up because I left, it broke up for other reasons. I always knew that I had the opportunity to have a solo career, so I got into it right away. I had met my husband. I was newly sober, sort of. I should put "sort of" in parentheses. (Carlisle detailed her epic battle with cocaine addiction in her memoir.) It was the right time. I knew I had this big support system behind me.

You are coming to Milwaukee in June to perform at PrideFest. Were you conscious of having an LGBT following?

The Go-Go's have always had a gay audience from its inception. It has always been like that. I don't know really how you can say why or define that. Maybe there's a little bit of the "Valley of the Dolls" element (laughs) thrown in there. Also, gay people have better taste than straight people, generally. They do. We've all been aware that we've always had a gay audience.

What can your fans look forward to during your PrideFest set?

I'm doing all of my solo hits and throwing in a few Go-Go's hits. That's quite a few songs. Generally the music is anthemic and upbeat, and I think people will have a good time.



PHOTO: ADAM BOUSKA

Carlisle's out gay son, James Duke Mason, poses for the NOH8 campaign. He's become a vocal equality advocate.

You became something of an LGBT activist after your son James Duke Mason came out, and you made a 'No On One' video that ran on YouTube.

I believe in equal rights for everyone – and that means everyone. Even if I didn't have a gay son, I probably would be involved. But since my son is gay, of course, that makes it even more important to me. Because he's my baby.

What did you think of President Obama's statement of support for same-sex marriage?

It's about time. I'm glad he said it. It was a really brave thing to do. I think of my parents, for instance, who love Obama but can't come to terms with gay marriage. That's just the way it is, even though they have a gay grandson. There's a lot of people out there who are like that, so it was a brave thing to do.

If there was a film version of your 2010 memoir "Lips Unsealed," who would you want to play you in the movie?

Elizabeth Olsen. I think she has an edge. I think she's a great little actress. There's a similarity. When I saw "Martha Marcy May Marlene," I thought she was amazing. And I thought, "She could probably do me." I know it's in the works. But having a book in the works as a film, you never know if it's going to come to pass. But if it was going to happen, I would love for her to play me.

Finally, is heaven really a place on Earth?

(Laughs.) There are certain places on this planet that absolutely are. I would say Hawaii, I would say Kashmir in India, I would say Rome is heaven on Earth, too. And I would say San Francisco is pretty close to it.

ON STAGE

Belinda Carlisle is the opening night headliner on June 8 at PrideFest Milwaukee 2012.

Theater

KAT MURRELL

McGivern finds hilarity in summer rituals

Great storytellers are like magicians. With a twinkle of an eye and a few words, different times and places suddenly become real.

John McGivern possesses the abilities of a master storyteller in abundance, and he has plenty of great anecdotes to share in his one-man show, "Summer Stories," now playing at Next Act Theatre.

McGivern is something of a perennial host when it comes to the winter holidays. In this program, he turns his attention to the summer months in Milwaukee, bookended by the rituals of Memorial Day and the waning days of August. On a stage outfitted with retro artifacts, including dusty Coke bottles, an antiquated push mower, a tire swing, a clothesline and a picket fence, scenes are set for an East Side duplex, an up-North holiday spot, and even a Girl Scout camp. Amid all this, McGivern's experiences as a gay boy growing up in a

large, working-class Catholic family come to life.

This is the thread that brings complexity into "Summer Stories," as McGivern's orientation is brought out gradually through allusions and spirited, self-deprecating humor. His yarns about sports, particularly the agony of obligatory baseball games, will get nods of recognition from anyone who has ever felt awkward on the athletic field. The character of "young John" is wide-eyed and knowing, highly self-aware and conscious of making his way through the uneven territory of childhood and adolescence.

McGivern also conjures up many other significant players: his gruff father with a penchant for schedules, a boyish girl who became a stalwart friend, badass older cousins and his housecoat-wearing grandmother in a scene of traumatic hilarity.

These scenes unfold in moments of wonder. A particular highlight comes with

decorating bicycles for the annual 4th of July parade and contest. The relish with which McGivern describes this is delightful; for him, bespangling a bicycle was far more electric than baseball could ever be. It is not simply the words that help these memories unfold, but also his knack for vocal and facial expressions, timing and gesture.

There is never a dull moment in this two-act program, with its entertaining and sometimes poignant tales, strong pacing and frequent laughs.

"Summer Stories" is presented in the new Next Act Theatre location, just between the Third and Fifth Wards. The former industrial building is an airy though intimate space. This helps make a show like McGivern's seem less a performance by a distant actor and more of an engrossing evening with an affable host.

This program recreates bygone days through per-



PHOTO: COURTESY NEXT ACT THEATRE

John McGivern in "Summer Stories."

sonal reminiscences, but its coming-of-age stories are timeless. For the start of summer, it is just the thing to set your own stage for whatever adventures lie ahead.

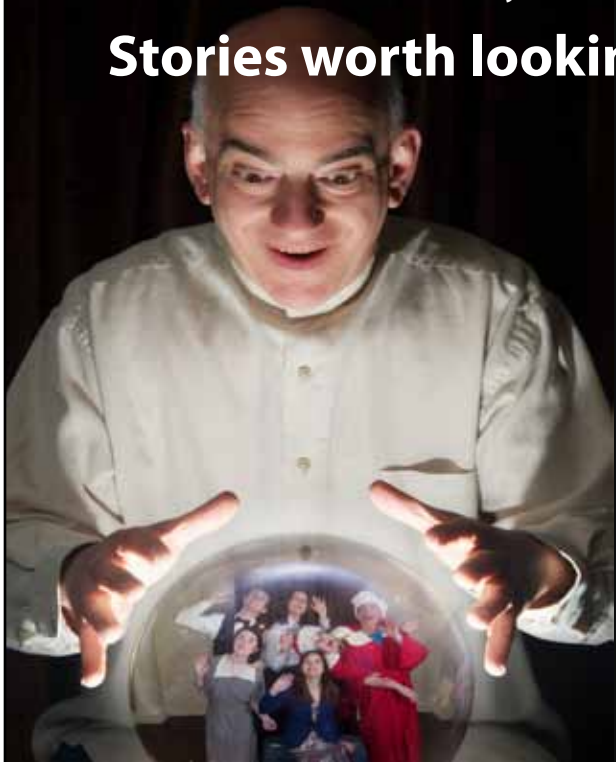
ON STAGE

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'Idomeneo' is the best Mozart people don't know

Opera

MICHAEL MUCKIAN

Anyone who has ever made a deal with the devil knows the odds are not stacked in his favor. But a deal with Neptune, the god of sea, apparently is no picnic, either.

At least that's what Idomeneo, the king of ancient Crete, discovers in Mozart's opera of the same name. Sacrifices, oracles, shipwrecks and a sea monster who won't take "no" for an answer join with the composer's beautiful melodies in "Idomeneo," which closes the Florentine Opera's 2011-12 season. The opera is performed May 18 and May 20 at the Marcus Center for the Performing Arts' Uihlein Hall in Milwaukee.

Mozart was only 24 in 1780 when he composed "Idomeneo," his first "opera seria" and his first major

work. The style had begun falling out of favor in Europe, but nevertheless Karl Theodor, the elector of Bavaria, commissioned Mozart and librettist and court chaplain Giambattista Varesco to compose the opera for a court carnival. History suggests that Elector Theodor probably chose the topic of the opera as well.

Varesco tended to employ choruses and styles more in alignment with French music of the period, and Mozart is credited with drawing the opera, sung in Italian, back to its Italian roots. Through this work, the young composer also demonstrated his mastery of orchestral color, melodic line and accompanied recitatives, the latter of which sets "Idomeneo" apart from other operas of its type, according to William Florescu, the Florentine's general director.

"Mozart's mastery of the recitativo accompagnato — those recitatives accompa-

nied by the orchestra rather than the harpsichord — are musically and dramatically profound, and far beyond anything anyone else wrote in the style," says Florescu. "And like all Mozart, regardless of style, the composer imbues a classical tale of antiquity with a humanity that resonates even today."

To help the opera further resonate with today's audiences, stage director and production designer John La Bouchardiere has updated the production to a more contemporary period and employs video technology to add greater dimension to the story. The English-born La Bouchardiere made his Florentine Opera debut directing Handel's "Semele" in 2009. He is also a filmmaker who directed "The Full Monteverdi," based on a live production of Claudio Monteverdi's fourth book of madrigals.

"Idomeneo" often is updated in performance, but adding the element of video

Adding video has made the production more challenging.

has made the production more challenging, Florescu says.

"The production employs elements of video projection as well as live video, and is cast in a non-specific modern-day way," Florescu says. "This piece resonates in so many ways for modern audiences because of the unfortunate timeless conflicts between people and how love and fidelity both complicate and help heal those situations."

Tenor Arturo Chacon Cruz, who performed the part of the Duke of Mantua in the Florentine's 2010 production of "Rigoletto," will



play Idomeneo. Having been mentored by both Placido Domingo and Ramon Vargas, Cruz has gained a global following since his 2001 introduction.

Soprano Georgia Jarmin, familiar to Florentine audiences from several previous productions, plays Elettra, and mezzo-soprano Sandra Piques Eddy, who also appeared in "Semele," performs the role of Idamante.

The impressive collection of talent combined with the contemporary treatment makes the Florentine's season closer possibly the highlight of the season, Florescu says.

"This is an absolutely world-class cast of singing actors and chorus that should not be missed by any veteran or newcomer to opera," Florescu says. "Idomeneo' is the best Mozart that most people don't know!"

ON STAGE

Florentine Opera's production of Mozart's "Idomeneo" runs May 18 and May 20 at Uihlein Hall in Milwaukee's Marcus Center for the Performing Arts. For more information, visit www.florentineopera.org.

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Art isn't easy when it comes to staging 'Sunday in the Park'

Theater

MICHAEL MUCKIAN

Legend has it that Georges Seurat, the French neo-impressionist painter, may have saved the Broadway career of out superstar composer Stephen Sondheim.

In 1981, Sondheim's "Merrily We Roll Along," based loosely on a 1934 play by George S. Kaufman and Moss Hart, closed to scathing reviews after just 16 performances. Discouraged by the experience, Sondheim announced his intention to leave the theater and write mystery novels.

His mind was changed when he and writer/director James Lapine saw "A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grand Jatte," Seurat's enormous masterpiece of pointillism on permanent display at the Art Institute of Chicago. Lapine noted that the only character missing

from the 10-foot-wide canvas was the artist himself. This set the pair's creative wheels in motion, resulting in "Sunday in the Park with George," produced in 1983 and credited as Sondheim's comeback show.

The largely fictionalized account of the painting's creation by Seurat, who died from diphtheria at age 31, will come to Milwaukee's Skylight Musical Theatre at the Broadway Theatre Center May 18-June 10. The production, Skylight's final one for the season, is a labor of love for director Bill Theisen.

"From the moment I first saw the original Broadway production in 1984, I fell in love with it and thought it would be perfect for Skylight to produce," says Theisen, the company's artistic director. "Skylight has done 10 past Sondheim productions but never 'Sunday.'"

The show follows Seurat (George Allan Krill) and his creation of the mammoth canvas, which eventually leads

ON STAGE

Skylight Musical Theatre's production of "Sunday in the Park with George" runs May 18-June 10 at the Broadway Theatre Center. For more information, visit www.skylightmusicaltheatre.org.

his lover Dot (Mary Alison Forbes) eventually to desert him. Characters on the canvas come to life, each with his or her own backstory. In act two, the entire cast fast-forwards to the future, where Seurat's grandson, also named George, struggles to pursue his own artistic visions.

"One of the things that most fascinates me about the show is what Lapine and Sondheim have created, studying the painting and creating all these individual characters," Theisen says. "What they have given us is rather brilliant, and they were able to use factual

elements about Seurat's life as well."

Striving to be true to the original artwork presented production challenges, Theisen says.

"The color palette is challenging, because there is so much orange in the world of Seurat," he explains. "That was something costume designer Shima Orans had to figure out while still keeping the costumes interesting."

The size of the original painting was a challenge for the Cabot Theatre stage. Pointillism's unique approach to creating images comprised of millions of dots presented elements of both challenge and advantage, Theisen says.

"Sondheim says that he found great inspiration in Seurat's pointillism style when he wrote the music for 'Sunday,' and that's true when you hear the score," Theisen says. "All of the underscoring written for the character of George when he is painting supports the style in which Seurat painted. The seamless way in which Sondheim



PHOTO: COURTESY

George Allan Krill in "Sunday in the Park."

incorporated this is almost genius."

For Theisen, the play is not only about art, but also the universality of expression and the challenge of presenting a unique view of life. That's as true for the show as it was for Seurat's original work, he says.

"What I think is most

important about the play is that it speaks not just to artists, but to all of us," Theisen says. "It shows us what can happen when we pause in our work, take a breath and make a sideways glance and begin to see life once again as a blank canvas filled with unlimited opportunities."

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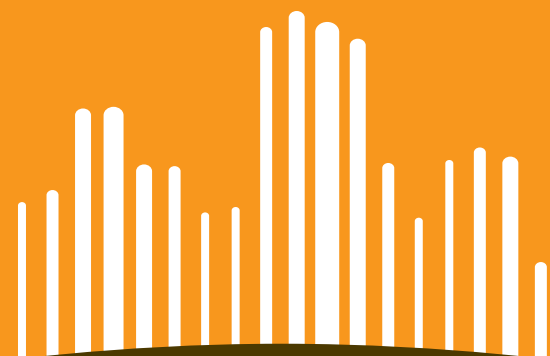
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Movies

GREGG SHAPIRO

VIVID PERFORMANCES FRESHEN AN AGING 'MARIGOLD HOTEL'

Based on Deborah Moggach's novel "These Foolish Things," John Madden's film follows seven characters from dead-end lives in England to their unexpected renewals thousands of miles from home.

Recently widowed Evelyn (Judi Dench) is dealing with the sudden loss of her husband Hugh and the considerable debt he left behind. Unapologetically racist Muriel (Maggie Smith), a former housekeeper, needs hip replacement surgery but doesn't want to be treated by a non-English (i.e., non-white) doctor. Retired civil servant Douglas (Bill Nighy) and his wife Jean (Penelope Wilton) are dismayed to discover how little real estate they can afford on his pension. The oft-married Madge (Celia Imrie) holds out hope for one more marriage, preferably to a man with money. Like Madge, Norman (Ronald Pickup) also is looking for love, but with someone considerably younger. Judge and professor Graham (Tom Wilkinson) dreads retirement because it may cause him to confront his own demons.

All seven stumble across The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel for the Elderly and Beautiful in Jaipur and decide it's the best place to meet their individual retirement needs. Evelyn plans to blog about her experiences. Muriel is able to have her surgery sooner than if she'd stayed in England. Douglas and Jean view the hotel as an affordable retirement alternative. Madge and Norman see the potential for romance in a foreign setting. And Graham returns to Jaipur, where he spent his youth, in search of his lost male lover Manoj.

Upon their arrival, the Brits discover that the hotel is in utter disrepair and bears no resemblance to the photos in the brochure or on the website. But Sonny (Dev Patel), who inherited the business

These distinctly quirky characters find common ground, even as the ground below them shifts.

from his father, is determined to fix it up with aid from an investor and keep his newly arrived guests happy. Sonny also is in love with Sunaina (Tena Desae), who works for her brother at a call-center. Sonny's mother (Lillete Dubey) doesn't approve of their relationship and wants him to return to Delhi and an arranged marriage.

Somehow all of these distinctly quirky characters find common ground, even as the ground below them constantly shifts. Despite its predictability, "The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel" is entertaining, touching, charming, vivid and, if a movie can be fragrant, that, too. Ultimately, it's on the strength of the ensemble cast's performances (Dench, Smith, Wilkinson, Nighy and Wilton are especially good) that this film rests – and the actors don't disappoint.

UNEARTHED 'DARK SHADOWS' NEVER COMES TO LIFE

The Tim Burton/Johnny Depp creative partnership is not always a sure thing, and "Dark Shadows" is proof. It's not campy enough, not scary enough, not funny enough, not dark enough, not really enough of anything but 30 minutes too long. In short, "Dark Shadows" bites.

Loosely based on the pop-goth soap opera from the mid-1960s to early-1970s, "Dark Shadows" takes more than a few liberties with its source, beginning with modifying the story line into a wacky comedy. Unfortunately, it's not funnier.

The film begins with exposition about the Collins family – how they left Liverpool in the late 18th century, arrived in Maine to establish a successful fishing business



PHOTO: COURTESY

Judi Dench in "The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel."

and built their beloved castle Collinwood. But the failure of young Barnabas (Depp) to return the affections of servant/witch Angelique (Eva Green) leads to a series of curses, including Barnabas' transformation into a vampire.

Unearthed in 1972 after being buried for almost 200 years, Barnabas finds his

way to Collinwood. There he meets distant relatives Elizabeth (Michelle Pfeiffer) and her daughter Carolyn (Chloe Grace Moretz), Elizabeth's ne'er-do-well brother Roger (Jonny Lee Miller), Roger's depressed son David (Gulliver McGrath), David's live-in shrink Dr. Hoffman (Helena Bonham Carter), groundskeeper Willie (Jackie

Earle Haley) and the newly arrived governess Victoria (Bella Heathcote). In addition to being startled by Victoria's resemblance to his deceased love Josette, Barnabas must adjust to modern life and once again face his ageless nemesis Angelique, whose successful seafood biz has all but put the Collins out of business.

Sight gags abound. A muddle and a jumble, complete with a required fight-to-the-death finale and the threat of a sequel, "Dark Shadows" is a mere shadow of its former self. Jonathan Frid, the original Barnabas Collins, who passed away in April, must be spinning in his grave.

A NEARLY PERFECT PERFORMANCE IN 'PERFECT FAMILY'

According to Catholic Woman of the Year nominee Eileen (Kathleen Turner), her family is anything but perfect in "The Perfect Family." Her fireman husband Frank (Michael McGrady), sober and in recovery, spent 20 years of their marriage drunk and unfaithful. Daughter Shannon (Emily Deschanel) is a pregnant lesbian who, to Eileen's chagrin, is planning to marry her partner Angela (Angelique Cabral). Son Frank Jr. (Jason Ritter) is leaving his wife and kids for manicurist Theresa (Kristen Dalton).

The only person who appears to have any faith (so to speak) in Eileen's abilities is Monsignor Murphy (out actor Richard Chamberlain), who showers her with words of encouragement. Eileen is considered a shoe-in over longtime nemesis Agnes (Sharon Lawrence), although the home visit by the Monsignor, the Bishop (Hansford Rowe) and unpleasant Sister Joan (Rebecca Wackler) is causing her great anxiety.

Eileen realizes that she is fighting a losing battle, although her own faith never falters. This is what makes watching "The Perfect Family" such an illuminating performance. What starts out as a borderline fanatical performance by Turner soon undergoes a transformation of heavenly proportions. With Eileen's struggles written all over her face and in her body language, Turner makes this patently unlikeable character worthy of our concern. When Shannon is hospitalized with a near miscarriage, Eileen is able to set aside her religious devotion long enough to be a mother. The same thing occurs at Shannon and Angela's wedding, as we watch a whole range of emotions wash over Eileen in a matter of seconds.

Not a perfect movie, "The Perfect Family" deserves to be seen for Turner's near-perfect performance.



PHOTO: COURTESY

Johnny Depp as Barnabas Collins in "Dark Shadows."

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Music

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NORAH JONES

One of the more anticipated collaborations in recent memory, "Little Broken Hearts" finds languorous jazz vocalist Norah Jones crossing the street to team up with Danger Mouse (aka Brian Burton) on a dozen tunes. The partnership is at its most productive on songs such as "Say Goodbye," where all the pieces fit together as snugly as if the pair had been working together for years. We heard hints of this kind of ingenuity on Jones' previous disc of original songs "The Fall." But here she takes a few more chances, as you can hear on "Out on the Road," the funky single "Happy Pills" and the title cut. There are occasions, such as "Good Morning," "Take It Back" and "Travelin' On," where the energy level dips, as it is wont to do on a Jones disc. But for the most part, this is a heart-break worth experiencing.



PHOTO: AMAZON.COM

Norah Jones is scheduled to perform at The Riverside in Milwaukee on Oct. 8.

FEIST

You have to wonder what was going through Feist's usually brilliant head while making her latest record, the challenging "Metals." The first album since her lauded commercial breakthrough "The Reminder," it gets off to a decent start with "The Bad in Each Other." The spooky "Graveyard" is brought to life by the female choir, while it's the male vocals on the Kate Bush-esque "A Commotion" that provide the spark. "Bittersweet Melodies" is so authentically retro that it sounds instantly familiar. Unfortunately, the rest, while beautiful (as in "The Circle Married the Line") is borderline boring.

FLORENCE + THE MACHINE

Florence Welch of Florence + the Machine brings the essential elements together on "Ceremonials," the most magnificent of packages. "Ceremonials" is that rare second album that incorporates and improves on all the components that made a debut disc – in this case "Lungs" – a sensation.



PHOTO:

PCDESKTOPWALLPAPER.COM

Feist performs on June 3 at the Orpheum Theater in Madison and on July 13 at the Pitchfork Music Festival in Union Park in Chicago.

Florence + the Machine will have listeners howling for more when they get an earful of alluring numbers such as "Shake It Out," "Breaking Down," "No Light, No Light," "Spectrum" and "All This and Heaven Too." Florence + the Machine performs on July 27 at the Soundtown Festival in Somerset and on Aug. 5 at Lollapalooza in Chicago.

ANE BRUN

On "It All Starts With One," Norwegian diva Ane Brun sounds like she's been listening to her fair share of both Florence + the Machine (on "Do You Remember," "What's Happening with You and Him" and "One") and Feist (on "Words," "Worship," and "Undertow"). Fortunately, Ane has a strong and distinctive enough musical personality to let her own talents shine through. Ane Brun performs on May 22 at Lincoln Hall in Chicago.

JESSE BAYLIN

Jesse Baylin sets aside the country/folk-pop of 2008's "Firesight" for a retro style on her album "Little Spark," and it suits her well. Songs such as "Hurry Hurry," "Love Is Wasted on Lovers" and "Dancers" are fueled by a '60s girl-group groove that is as appealing as it is effective. "Joy Is Suspicious" sounds like a lost Sam Phillips song.

DVDiva
GREGG SHAPIRO

'WHAT HAPPENS' IS SWEET BUT NOT VERY FUNNY

The Philadelphia-set "What Happens Next" begins with Paul Greco (Jon Lindstrom) retiring or, as he puts it, "cashing it all in after 30 years." At his retirement party, his controlling sister Elise (Wendie Malick) presents him with a French bulldog puppy to give him something to do with all of his free time.

After naming the dog Mrs. Greco and hiring a perky dog trainer, Paul begins the new routine of taking the dog for a walk in Rittenhouse Square. It's there he meets gay copywriter Andy (Chris Murrh), who is with his dog Bean. The unlikely duo strikes up a friendship and, before you can say "coming out party," the notoriously single and sexless Paul finds himself attracted to Andy. From there, the pair navigates the



PHOTO: FACEBOOK

Chris Murrh and Jon Lindstrom in "What Happens Next."

treacherous waters of sex, love and public displays of affection.

Uptight and conservative Elise thinks she has to come to terms with the lifestyle of her son Brian (Ariel Shafir). He's coming out to her as an artist, but she suspects he's also gay (he's not). Andy's best friend Roz (Natalia

Cigliuti) just so happens to run the gallery where Brian is about to have his first big show. Andy is active in PFLAG, and there are times when "What Happens Next" feels like an extended promotional video for the organization.

Although sweet, "What Happens Next" is not funny

or sexy enough to rank among the great gay romantic comedies of recent years, such as "Billy's Hollywood Screen Kiss" or "Adam & Steve." DVD bonus features include a handful of deleted scenes and more.

THIS 'CARDINAL' NEVER TAKES FLIGHT

Philadelphia-based gay filmmaker Robert Gaston ("Open Cam," "2 Minutes Later") goes for a change of location with his latest film "The Flight of the Cardinal." Set at a mountain lodge in North Carolina, "The Flight of the Cardinal" is Gaston's take on the psychological thriller.

Grady (Ross Beschler), an actor-turned-innkeeper, is still trying to settle in to his new career and life in the country. His friends and co-investors in the lodge, Karen (Claire Bowerman), Rye (Jeremy Marr Williams) and Grady's ex-boyfriend Andy (Matthew Montgomery), are coming from New York for a visit. Their visit is partly to



PHOTO: FANDOR.COM

From "The Flight of the Cardinal."

check up on Grady after a suicide attempt and partly to check on their investment. They become concerned for Grady almost immediately, due to his erratic behavior and questionable health.

What they don't know is that townie Beetle (David J. Bonner) is responsible. Under the guise of helping out at the lodge, Beetle has been messing with Grady's meds, replacing his antidepressants with something else. Turns out, Beetle has a history of such behavior. Add to that his ability to manipulate every situation

in his favor, and you have a trailer trash version of Eve Harrington.

Beetle isn't helping out so much as he's helping himself. As low budget thrillers go, this one has a few thrills, but some of the performances are questionable. DVD special features include a behind-the-scenes photo gallery, music video and more.

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Sean Allan Krill and Allison Mary Forbes. Photo by Mark Frohna

MAY 17, THURSDAY

Indigo Girl and out singer/songwriter **Amy Ray** plays The Frequency, 121 W. Main in Madison, at 9 p.m. Call 608-819-8777.

GERALDCASELDANCE presents the world premiere of "Dwelling," as well as the reprise of "Squared Away," through May 19 at 8 p.m. in UWM Mitchell Hall, Room 254, 3203 N. Downer.

Boldt Arts Alive! Series presents "**Whose Live Anyway?**," featuring Ryan Stiles, Greg Proops, Chip Esten and Jeff Davis, at 7:30 p.m. at Fox Cities Performing Arts Center, 400 W. College Ave. in Appleton. Call 920-730-3760.

Willy Russell's musical "**Blood Brothers**" runs through May 20 at La Crosse Community Theatre, 118 Fifth Ave. N. in downtown La Crosse. Call 608-784-9292.



Veronica's Position

In Tandem Theatre presents the regional premiere of "**Veronica's Position**" by Rich Orloff through May 20 at Tenth Street Theatre, 628 N. 10th. Call 414-271-1371.

"**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.

Soulstice Theatre, 3770 S. Pennsylvania in St. Francis, presents the regional premiere of "Goldfish" through May 19. Call 414-481-2800.

Inspired by Thornton Wilder's classic American play, Theatre Gigante presents "**Our Our Town**" through May 19 at Kenilworth Square East, Studio 508, 1925 E. Kenilworth Place. Call 414-229-4308.

Join the celebration at "**Tony & Tina's Wedding**," through May 19 at Turner Hall Ballroom, 103 N. Fourth. Call 414-286-3663.

Boswell Book Company, 2559 N. Downer, welcomes **Harold Eppley**, author of the gay-themed novel "Ash Wednesday," at 7 p.m. Call 414-332-1181.



Rain

MAY 18, FRIDAY

"**Miller & Shellabarger: Hiding in the Light**," the collaborative work of husband and husband artists Dutes Miller and Stan Shellabarger, runs through July 15, at Inova/Kenilworth, 2155



N. Prospect, with an opening reception tonight from 5 to 8 p.m.

Kander & Ebb's musical "**Chicago**" runs through May 27 at The Racine Theatre Guild, 2519 Northwestern (Highway 38) in Racine. Call 262-633-4218.

Lorie Line presents "**Live in the Sunshine**" at 7:30 p.m. at the Barrymore Theatre, 2090 Atwood in Madison. Call 608-241-2345.

Skylight Music Theatre presents "**Sunday in the Park with George**" through June 10 in the Cabot Theatre at Broadway Theatre Center, 158 N. Broadway. Call 414-291-7800.

Fox Cities Performing Arts Center, 400 W. College Ave. in Appleton, presents "**Rain: A Tribute to the Beatles**" tonight and tomorrow night. Call 920-730-3760

Christina Perri performs at 9 p.m. at the Majestic, 115 King in Madison. Call 608-251-2582.

Florentine Opera Company performs "**Idomeneo**" tonight and May 20 at Marcus Center For the Performing Arts, at the corner of Water and State. Call 414-273-2787.

MAY 19, SATURDAY

"Summer Stories," with **John McGivern**, plays through May 27 at Next Act Theatre, 255 S. Water. Call 414-278-7780 or visit www.nextact.org.



Ted Allen

Out foodie and original queer guy Ted Allen is at The Pabst, 144 E. Wells, at 7 p.m. Call 414-286-3663.

Lezberados: The Three Amigas Tour, featuring queer comedians Sandra Valls, Mimi Gonzalez and Belinda Carroll, begins at 8 p.m. at Club 5 Bar, 5 Applegate Court in Madison.

Sharon Lynne Wilson Center for the Arts, 19805 W. Capitol Dr. in Brookfield, presents **Broadway Today!** at 8 p.m. Call 262-781-9520.

MAY 21, MONDAY

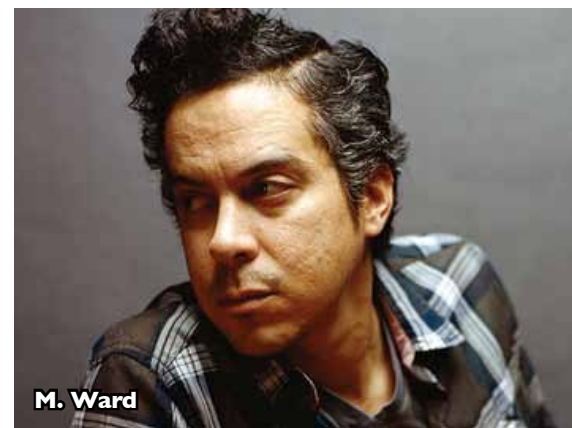
Boswell Book Company, 2559 N. Downer, welcomes **John Nichols**, author of "Uprising: How Wisconsin Renewed the Politics of Protest, from Madison to Wall Street," at 7 p.m. Call 414-332-1181.

MAY 22, TUESDAY

Boswell Book Company, 2559 N. Downer, welcomes gay writer **Samuel Park**, author of "This Burns My Heart," and Diana Abu-Jaber, author of "Birds of Paradise," at 7 p.m. Call 414-332-1181.

MAY 23, WEDNESDAY

M. Ward, the "Him" of She & Him, performs at 8 p.m. at Barrymore Theatre, 2090 Atwood in Madison. Call 608-241-2345.



M. Ward

Festival City Symphony ends its season with Spring Sing, a free "Pajama Jamboree" concert at 7 p.m. in the Bradley Pavilion at Marcus Center For the Performing Arts, at the corner of Water and State. Call 414-273-2787.

Michael Golumco's "**Cowboy Versus Samurai**," a take on "Cyrano de Bergerac" from an Asian point of view, opens tonight at Boulevard Theatre, 2250 S. Kinnickinnic Ave., in Bay View and runs through June 24. Info at www.boulevardtheatre.com.

MAY 24, THURSDAY

High Noon Saloon, 701A E. Washington in Madison, presents **Sam Llanas** (formerly of BoDeans) at 7:30 p.m. Call 608-268-1122.

MAY 31, THURSDAY

StageQ presents "Queer Shorts 7," featuring 11 one-act plays, through June 9 at Bartell Theatre, 113 E. Mifflin in Madison. Call 608-204-0280.

The UWM Department of Dance presents "**Summerdances: Destiny/Chance & Circumstances**," five new works by dance faculty, through June 2 at 7:30 p.m. at UWM Mainstage Theatre, 2400 E. Kenwood Blvd. Call 414-229-4308.

Club 5 Bar, 5 Applegate Court in Madison, hosts **Foxy Veronica's Peach Pies Caburlesque** at 10:30 p.m. Call 608-277-9700.



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