



Nov. 1, 2012 | Vol. 3, No. 26



Jay Kohn, of Morristown, N.J., holds a sign during an NAACP voter ID rally on Sept. 13 in Philadelphia.

PHOTO: AP/MICHAEL PEREZ

## Ballot box bullies Citizens fight to protect the vote

By Lisa Neff  
Staff writer

A third of voters may go to sleep on the eve of the general election with Hitchcockian visions of hanging chads and boxes of uncounted ballots in their heads.

Two swing state polls, one conducted in late September and another in early October, found 33 percent of voters seriously concerned about electoral shenanigans — not on the part of people ineligible to vote but on the part of those steering campaigns, supplying voting machines, issuing ballots and tallying votes.

But there's a counter to the compromised confidence: A growing number of citizens are taking an interest in safeguarding voting rights at the polls, promoting transparency in the process and protecting the integrity of the electoral system. Surveys find more people volunteering to serve as election observers, increased interest in the process and a spike in the number of voting rights marches this year, especially in the South.

"Voting must be free, fair and accessible to all, and voters should know their rights," said Bob Edgar, president of Common Cause, a national organization at the forefront of fighting for fair and free elections. "It is important to maintain the integrity of our election system, and that means that candidates, parties and political activists should be focused on persuading and turning out voters, not bullying them or trying to manipulate the law to freeze them out of our democracy."

### SUPPRESSION

With days left to go before Nov. 6, concerns about voter suppression, intimidation and disenfranchisement existed around the country, but especially in the swing states.

Intimidating billboards declaring "Voter Fraud Is A Felony!" went up in low-income and minority communities in Milwaukee.

Those billboards and others like them in Cleveland and Columbus, Ohio, were funded by Wisconsin venture capitalist Stephen Einhorn

and his wife Nancy. The couple has given over \$50,000 to Gov. Scott Walker since 2005, according to the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel.

Following protests from community groups condemning them as voter-suppression efforts, Clear Channel Outdoor company took them down. The company also announced it would work with the Milwaukee Election Commission to post digital bulletins, digital posters and transit shelter totems encouraging voters by saying, "Skip the Election Day line — vote early."

Voters in some Democratic areas in Wisconsin received mailers from the Republican Party with incorrect information about their polling places or the wrong election date.

Controversy also arose over the appearance in Wisconsin of GOP strategist Nathan Sproul's Issue Advocacy Partners firm. Another Sproul firm is connected to a voter fraud scandal in Florida, as well as an ongoing criminal case against a paid

**BULLIES** page 14

## Mememes a big factor in 2012 elections

Amanda Hess  
Special to WiG

On the evening of Oct. 16, in the second presidential debate of 2012, Mitt Romney mentioned that as governor of Massachusetts, he had requested "binders full of women" to help recruit top female candidates to his cabinet. One minute later, 23-year-old social media manager Veronica De Souza registered bindersfullofwomen.tumblr.com and began furiously Photoshopping.

Soon, images of Christina Aguilera, Sandra Fluke and Dora the Explorer were all trapped within

three-rings and posted on the site. Thirty minutes out, the blog had amassed 3,000 followers. The next day, @BarackObama released a binder-themed campaign ad attacking Romney's policies on women's rights. The National Republican Congressional Committee countered with its own submission, daring Barack Obama to fit his lengthy health care bill into a binder.

Forty-eight hours after the birth of the meme, De Souza sat in front of CNN's cameras with Soledad O'Brien and former D.C. Mayor Adrian Fenty to discuss her role in

the electoral news cycle. "I really didn't make this for any political reason," she told them. "I just thought it was funny."

De Souza may have done it for the lulz, but election-themed GIFs, hashtags and Lolcat-style image macros now constitute serious news pegs on the campaign trail. As journalists chase down Google searches and trending hashtags, the trajectory of U.S. election coverage is unmoored from campaign headquarters and D.C. bureaus and placed into the hands of the loudest crowds and their swiftest

microbloggers.

"The modern reporter, especially the embed, is constantly checking his smartphone, as is the aide," Slate political reporter Dave Weigel told me in an instant message. "It's hard not to be influenced."

### MEMES THROUGH HISTORY

Political journalists have long riffed on sound bites and candid photos to skewer candidates' positions and personas. After the first televised debate in 1960, commen-

**MEMES** page 6



# News with a twist



IMAGE: COURTESY

**The Million Muppet March was scheduled for Nov. 3 in Washington, D.C. Organizers announced the event – encouraging puppet-makers to gather on the Mall – after Mitt Romney's debate pledge to take out Big Bird and public funding for PBS.**

## PRICKED ON PORN SET

A man is suing Falcon Studios and other gay porn companies for allegedly forcing him to inject models' penises with an enhancement drug, even after he poked his thumb with a syringe during a

shoot. Ronald Baker said he was fired after complaining about the assignment, which involved an illegally obtained drug.

## OUT FOR OBAMA

Jane Lynch, Jesse Tyler Ferguson, Billie Jean King, George Takai, Wanda Sykes, Zachary Quinto and Chaz Bono are out for Barack Obama in a YouTube video celebrating the president's LGBT-friendly policies and positions. King, noting advances in the past several years, said, "You always have to protect change."

## KIND OF OUT FOR ROMNEY

Log Cabin Republicans on Oct. 23 issued a "qualified endorsement" of Mitt Romney. Prior to that, the gay GOP group had gained some ground in the "respectability" category for hinting that it would sit out the presidential race because of the anti-gay



## WIGWAG

positions of Romney and running mate Paul Ryan. There was speculation that aides secretly told LCR that a president Romney would be better than candidate Romney on LGBT issues. LCR denied that there were any promises that he'll get better.

## LIKE FAULKNER'S FICTION

The former wife of Southaven Mayor Greg Davis wants \$1 million from the 26-year-old Starkville, Miss., man she says lured away her husband. Suzann Savage Davis alleges in a lawsuit that Jansen Fair courted the mayor with a promise of a tryst in Las Vegas "locked away in bed in each other's arms." He also allegedly promised the mayor – who already faces possible criminal charges in an FBI probe into theft of city funds – a role in

"certain lucrative business enterprises," including a cosmetics store and "eco-friendly condominiums."

## PETITIONED IN VAIN

A New York civil court judge has informed the Rev. Michael Nwadiuko and wife Angela of Staten Island that they cannot change their last name to ChristIsKing. Six years ago, the same judge denied a request from the couple to change their son's first name – from Jeremy to JesusIsLord. The judge cited the separation of church and state. There is no controversy over the daughter's name – Rejoice.

## BRAT BATTLE

Who gets bragging rights to the biggest bratwurst? Earlier this fall, there were reports that a grocery store in Prescott, Wis., grilled a world-record-setting bratwurst measuring 52 feet, 2 inches and placed in an

By Lisa Neff & Louis Weisberg

equally long bun. But citizens of Davis, Wis., protested, pointing out that four years ago for Oktoberfest the community grilled a bratwurst that measured 135 feet long. Dallas didn't get the record because it didn't use a bun but, more importantly, didn't pay the World Record Academy in Florida a \$1,900 fee.

## COMING OUT FIGHTING

In his first bout since coming out as gay, pro boxer Orlando Cruz slugged his way to a victory by unanimous decision over Jorge Pazos. "That was my moment, my opportunity, my event. And I won," Cruz told AP after his win, with his mother Dominga Torres-Rivera seated beside him.

## GAY OLD PARTY?

Grindr, a smartphone app that's emerged as the world's most popular gay

hook-up site, reported that use of its service skyrocketed in Tampa during this summer's Republican National Convention. Usage of the service in Tampa was under 2,000 for the week ending Aug. 5. But during convention week, usage soared to well over 5,000 – and that figure does not even include the preceding or following weekend.

## WITH FRIENDS LIKE YOU ...

Actor Max von Essen, who is in the Broadway revival of "Evita," published an open letter on his Facebook page asking all Mitt Romney supporters to unfriend him. The gay actor said he wanted those connected to him to know that by supporting Romney, they are opposing him, his life and his ability to love a partner and raise a family.

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- This can be a printed document or an online bill or statement shown on an electronic device, such as a smartphone or laptop
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# On appeal, UWM grants in-state rate to husband

By Louis Weisberg

Staff writer

UWM officials have decided to award in-state tuition rates to a gay man who moved to Milwaukee to be with his husband. The couple was legally married in New York.

Admission officials originally rejected Jorge Quintero's tuition request, citing the state's constitutional ban on recognition of same-sex marriage and civil unions. He and husband Dr. Robert Schneidewend, who has lived in Milwaukee for more than a year, appealed the decision.

At a hearing, university officials said Schneidewend's position as a medical resident does not conform with state statute governing in-state tuition status, because it involves a contract with a fixed end date.

In a story that appeared in WiG on Sept. 21, Schneidewend said admission officials had treated them dismissively. Requests for information were "often ignored, unresponded to and ... inconsistent," he said.

Equality Wisconsin executive director Jason Burns contacted university officials to advocate for the couple.

"When I first learned of this situation, I was completely surprised," Burns said. "This just didn't seem like the values I know UWM to have embraced. In the end this was an issue that was caused by ineffective communication and misinformation. Upon learning of this issue, the university's administration took immediate action to remedy the situation."

At an Oct. 10 meeting with Michael Laliberte, vice chancellor of student affairs, the couple finally got a chance to explain their situation, Quintero said. Laliberte



PHOTO: COURTESY

Jorge Quintero and Dr. Robert Schneidewend.

apologized for the insensitive way that the situation had been handled and urged them to file yet another appeal, this time based on merit, Schneidewend said.

Peck School of the Arts faculty considered Quintero an exceptionally strong candidate who would be a great asset to their student body, Schneidewend explained. With exceptional vocal skills

and 15 years of experience as a professional dancer with world-class ballets, Quintero had a rare blend of talent and experience to bring to the school. He'd already been cast in the school's spring musical.

The final appeal resulted in Quintero receiving the Regents Equity Award, which qualifies him for in-state tuition rates based on merit in the spring and summer semesters of 2013. Next fall, he can either apply for an extension of the award or receive regular in-state tuition, Schneidewend said.

Quintero was notified of the decision by email.

"This award is not documented or advertised anywhere," Schneidewend said. "It's used for extenuating circumstances based on merit or academic performance."

"We are over the moon," he added. "We're just really excited and relieved, but at

the same time it's a shame we had to go through all this."

"I think this has been a great experience for this university," Quintero said. "I have a feeling the university will do what's right from now on, because this is an embarrassing situation for them."

Quintero credited the intervention of Equality Wisconsin with helping to change the outcome.

"Without the help of Equality Wisconsin, specifically executive director Jason Burns, I would not have been awarded in-state tuition," he said. "This experience with Equality Wisconsin has given me confidence about our community. Together we can accomplish great things."

Prior to the couple's successful appeal, Laliberte emailed WiG to complain that its coverage of the original story was misleading.

"I want to make it clear

that the headline and portions of the article, which implied that UWM had discriminated against a gay couple in the context of a residency decision, were incorrect," he wrote.

"As an institution, UWM values and is supportive of our LGBT students, faculty, and staff. In the case of residency, the qualifications are set by statute and UWM does not have the discretion to ignore the statutory criteria. While UWM may be required to follow Wisconsin law, which does not recognize gay marriage, UWM does not make decisions based on sexual orientation or any person's membership in a protected status. On the contrary, we have a strong nondiscrimination policy to which we strictly adhere."

Find us on Twitter  
@Wigazette.

# MPS again delays action on implementing benefits

By Louis Weisberg

Staff writer

The Milwaukee Public Schools Board has again delayed action on facilitating access to domestic partner benefits for MPS employees.

The current application process is more burdensome than any used by other employers in Wisconsin, say equality advocates.

The system is based on a mysterious \$65,000 report commissioned by MPS, a report that the school board has refused to make available despite requests from Equality Wisconsin and the ACLU

of Wisconsin under freedom of information laws.

In May, the board agreed to review the system in advance of the July school board meeting. But at that meeting, board members released a report defending the unwieldy and unusual procedures already in place, while continuing to duck questions about their origin.

Responding to protesters attending the meeting, the school board promised to revisit the matter, but it has failed to do so every month since then. Ironically, the latest pass given to the issue

occurred at a meeting held on Spirit Day, a day when people are encouraged to wear purple to show their opposition to the bullying of LGBT students.

"It's an unconscionable tragedy that on Spirit Day ... Milwaukee Public Schools continue to stonewall on this important issue and infringe upon the negotiated benefits of their employees. This is yet another example of bullying faced by hard working LGBT public servants," said Equality Wisconsin executive director Jason Burns.

In addition to an appli-

cation process that former school board member Jennifer Morales described as an obstacle course, MPS estimated the value of the benefits at \$20,000, twice the amount set by other local governments and school boards. That estimate creates an excess tax of nearly \$3,700 for each employee and \$755 per policy for the employer, according to EW.

Heterosexual married couples pay no taxes on health benefits and must simply present a marriage license to qualify. But domestic partners must produce extensive

proof of their relationships, including life insurance policies, wills, mortgages, checking accounts and credit cards in both names, along with other documentation.

Equality advocates contend that couples should not have to submit anything but proof of domestic partner registration, which is what other employers require.

WiG first reported on the issue in an Aug. 7 story titled "Milwaukee Public Schools stonewalls on partner benefits." Two months later, WiG received an email from MPS chief human services officer

Karen Jackson charging that the story "contained numerous misrepresentations, mischaracterized the implementation of domestic partner benefits ... and assailed the character of dedicated and fair public servants."

She said WiG had not contacted the MPS communication office or filed an open records request, as EW and the ACLU of Wisconsin have done unsuccessfully.

While the school board has repeatedly told EW that it is reviewing the terms of the application process, Jackson said the board has no authority in the matter.

"The eligibility rules were in fact negotiated with the Milwaukee Teachers Education Association (MTEA) — not unilaterally decided upon or implemented by the board, the superintendent or his administration," Jackson said. She added that the rules were not discriminatory toward gay and lesbian couples, because they are also applied to unmarried opposite-sex couples.

Calls to Jackson's office were not returned, and the MPS communication office could not clarify the situation.

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*-Democratic National Convention  
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# Lee campaign's gay volunteer recants beating story

By Lisa Neff

Staff writer

A gay volunteer for Republican Chad Lee's congressional campaign told the Madison Police Department on Oct. 29 that he was recanting the claim that he was beaten by an unknown assailant at his home on Oct. 24.

The MPD, in an updated incident report, said Kyle Wood of Madison met with police that day. "In an interview this afternoon with Madison Police detectives, the victim in this case recanted his earlier statements in regards to this crime. This crime, alleged to have

occurred on High Street in the South Police District, will be cleared as 'Unfounded' for case reporting purposes. Once follow up investigation is completed, MPD's case file will be reviewed with Dane County District Attorney's Office," the report stated.

The first incident report, based on Wood's false claims, listed the incident as a battery and said, "A 29-year-old ... resident contacted the MPD Wednesday morning to report a battery inside his residence. The victim said a man entered through an unlocked door around 8:00 a.m. and attacked him. He

said nothing was taken. Investigators believe this was not a random crime. The victim was treated at a hospital and released."

Wood then told the conservative Daily Caller website in an email that he answered a knock at his door and a guy wrapped a ligature around his neck, slammed his head into the doorway, smashed his face into a mirror and told him to keep his mouth shut. He also said he was "kidney-punched" as the assailant continued the beating.

He was hospitalized with injuries that the police

described for the Capital Times as minor.

Earlier in October, Wood claimed someone put graffiti on his car. The alleged messages included, "house trained republican faggot," "traitor" and "ur like a jew 4 hitler," according to the Daily Caller report.

As Wood's beating story gained attention, he embellished and claimed the assault was politically motivated and that he had been threatened by those associated with Mark Pocan's campaign, the openly gay state representative running against Lee.

On Oct. 30, the Lee cam-

paign dismissed Wood and stated, "Today, our campaign unfortunately learned that a deeply troubled volunteer misled police, news outlets, and our own team in regards to events that he alleged to have occurred."

The Pocan campaign also issued a statement: "The recent events affecting the 2nd District campaign are an example of what is wrong with civility in politics today.

"We hope that those who are responsible for the recent events are quickly brought to justice. We are keeping every option open on legal actions towards organizations and

individuals that perpetrated this lie.

"We are appreciative of the work of the Madison Police Department in handling this swiftly and decisively. At this time, we do not plan on making any further comments on this matter."

Police are still investigating and may seek charges against Wood.

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## Equality Wisconsin Endorsements

Equality Wisconsin, a Milwaukee-based LGBT advocacy group, has endorsed the following candidates in the Nov. 6 general election.

### PRESIDENT

Barack Obama

### US SENATE

Tammy Baldwin

### U.S. CONGRESS

District 2: Mark Pocan

District 4: Gwen Moore

### WISCONSIN STATE SENATE

District 6: Nikiya Harris

District 10: Daniel Olson

### WISCONSIN STATE ASSEMBLY

District 7: Daniel Riemer

District 8: JoCasta Zamarippa

District 9: Josh Zepnick

District 10: Sandy Pasch

District 11: Mandela Barnes

District 13: John Pokrandt

District 14: Chris Rockwood

District 17: La Tonya Johnson

District 18: Evan Goyke

District 19: Jon Richards

District 23: Cris Rogers

District 28: Jim Ward

District 34: Merlin Van Buren

District 42: Paula Cooper

District 45: Janis Ringhand

District 46: Gary Hebl

District 48: Melissa Sargent

District 49: Carol Beals

District 51: Maureen May Grimm

District 52: Paul Czisny

District 56: Richard Schoenbohm

District 62: Melissa Lemke

District 68: Judy Smriga

District 71: Katrina Shankland

District 74: Janet Bewley

District 82: Kathleen Wied Vincent

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District 96: Tom Johnson

District 98: Eric Prudent



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## Some memes have evolved from Internet jokes to top-level campaign messages

**MEMES** from page one

tators (and lazy pollsters) pushed the narrative that John F. Kennedy's easy screen presence gave him the edge over a gruff, stubby Richard Nixon. Eight years later, Esquire manipulated a stock photograph of Tricky Dick to show a fleet of makeup artists applying powder, lipstick, mascara and hairspray to his head.

These days, political parodies spawn and expire at a much more accelerated clip. Magazines are printed far too slowly to set the tone. Weigel sees the seeds of the political meme's rise in the 2000 catchphrase "Sore-Loserman" – a parody of the Gore-Lieberman ticket's refusal to concede in the drawn-out 2000 election that spread from car bumpers to political forums. Lefties countered with their own parody, "Bush-Cheated."

In the 2004 Bush-Kerry debates, Weigel watched the mockery of Bush's claim, "You forgot Poland," spread even further, gaining traction with no "nudging" from either political campaign. The 2008 election brought mainstream attention to Mat Honan's feel-good, single-serving website "Barack Obama Is Your New Bicycle," the viral video "I Got a Crush on Obama" and a Photoshopped image of Sarah Palin's face on an American flag bikini body.

But this is the first presidential election where the endless riffing of the true Internet meme – a repeating, morphing, crowdsourced play off some minute detail – has

### MEME-ATHON

The images illustrating this story were gathered from various sources, including [thetwist-gossip.com](http://thetwist-gossip.com), [crooksandliars.com](http://crooksandliars.com), [WesleyMears.nytag.willrabbe.com](http://WesleyMears.nytag.willrabbe.com), [LLWProductions.com](http://LLWProductions.com), [Dakinland.com](http://Dakinland.com).

taken hold of the campaign conversation, and directed it into some weird territory. As Brad Kim of Know Your Meme told the BBC, a meme by definition "changes in form or meaning" with each iteration, mutating further and further from the original point every time it's shared.

### FROM MEMES TO MESSAGES

Some of these memes, like "Menacing Josh Romney" or "Eastwood-ing," have remained in the realm of Internet inside joke. But others have evolved from crowd-sourced meme to top-level campaign message, often stripping quotes of their wider context along the way. Take "You didn't build that": a selectively edited phrase from an Obama rally that portrayed the president as anti-business. "Local reporters and national reporters thought (the phrase) was pretty minor, or nothing," Weigel says. But online, "people went over the heads of the media and shared it amongst themselves." Later, the Romney campaign "belatedly grabbed it after it was field-tested," Weigel says. Obama's gaffe birthed the Republican National Convention's catchphrase "We Built It." The media ended up covering four of Obama's words for months.

Leveraging memes is a tricky move for presidential candidates – leaning too hard into Internet culture can make their campaigns seem frivolous, or else out of touch. At the Republican National Convention, speakers like Mia Love employed the "We Built It" refrain in contexts that made no sense. By the time the Obama campaign converted the Big Bird meme into a political ad, the joke was already a week old. (It could be worse: The National Republican Congressional Committee was three years late to the Kanye West VMAs interception meme.)

No matter how the tactic hits, political reporters and commentators are covering every wrinkle, chasing a wild trajectory of phrases that would have previously gone unnoticed. Some of these memes don't even begin as substantive critiques before they take off. I asked De Souza, via Tumblr, why the phrase "binders full of women" energized her in that minute after it left Romney's mouth. Isn't seeking out and hiring female candidates a good thing? "I would say he hired those women to fill a quota," De Souza replied. "Politicians are all about status (especially if they're running for president) so a cabinet full of women looks good for him."

I'd argue that a cabinet full of women looks good because it is good. But in the narrow context of the 2012 election, "binders full of women" is a phrase worth mocking for one reason: Mitt Romney said it. The progressive women who fueled the binder meme already view Romney as a candidate with a robotic demeanor and a poor record on women's rights. Hearing him mimic the language of affirmative action feels wrong to them, even if it's right.

The meme devolved from there. Romney's critics have since used "binders" to mount vaguely related personal attacks against the candidate, including the suggestion that he's a horndog. (Of the feminist critiques leveled against Romney, a history of sexual harassment is not one.) Other entries are even less substantive. What relevance does the pop song "Call Me Maybe" or a years-old upskirt photo of Britney Spears have to this meme? At a certain point, the feeling fueling the meme gave way to Trapper Keeper free-association. Not only does the meme make no sense as a political critique at this point – it isn't funny anymore, either.

I blame journalists like myself for beating the binders to death.



Even when we're not consciously gunning for SEO dominance, the way we report today – glued to Twitter, absorbing and articulating snap judgments simultaneously – makes it increasingly likely that we'll sweat the small stuff. In *The New Republic*, Maria Konnikova offers a few studies on the brains of online multi-taskers that shine a light on how minute details can grow into lasting news pegs. Viewers who juggle multiple platforms during the debates – tweeters, Facebookers, Tumblr creators, live-bloggers, and journalists – are more likely to be distracted by "irrelevant stimuli" in the content they watch. The greatest multitaskers "paid partial attention to a lot and complete attention to less." During the debates, they can "notice the seemingly superficial stuff" but miss the gist.

### INTERNET JOKES ARE AIMED AT COMMITTED VOTERS

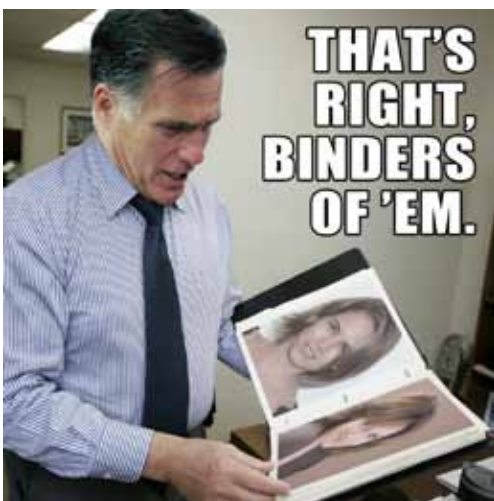
The people obsessively live-tweeting these minute details are unlikely to be impartial spectators. The Internet's "dual viewers" – the 7 million Americans simultaneously watching and commenting on the

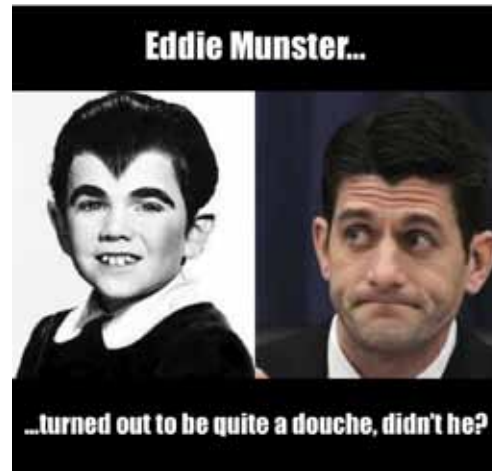
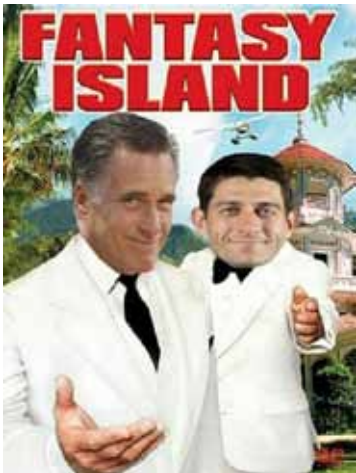
debates – have largely made up their minds. In September, Ezra Klein reported that 43 percent of decided voters said they were following the election "very closely"; only 12 percent of undecided voters said the same. Undecided voters are those least likely to tune into election news, debates, ads and memes.

"Most of the time, these things that go viral are spreading among people whose opinions are granite-set," Weigel says. "You're not seeing jokes that will make it into the campaign shorthand of the swing voter."

So covering Internet memes can mean we're serving up inane coverage to highly polarized groups of people. This is not necessarily a new concept in political reporting – a 24-hour news cycle online and on cable has expanded to reach the die-hard political junkies, not the blissfully unaware. But journalists on the memebeat don't just amplify the nonsense – they also challenge and enrich the conversation.

When David S. Bernstein, the Boston Phoenix's political reporter, heard Romney say "binders," he used his years of experience reporting on Romney's record in





Massachusetts to drop some facts and context into the developing meme. Bernstein revealed that Romney's "binders" actually originated with a bipartisan women's group working to diversify political gigs in Massachusetts. Romney hadn't requested them at all. The narrative around the binders began to pivot with the facts. (Maybe assembling binders of top-shelf female candidates isn't so bad after all; only Romney is bad.) Other commentators chimed in to add additional context. Almost a week after it was published, Bernstein's "Mind the Binder" was still one of the most-read stories

on the Phoenix's website. Like De Souza, Bernstein also appeared on CNN to discuss his work.

"I have to do my work thinking that it can change minds," Bernstein told me over the phone when I asked him if dissecting memes like this can reach the undecided set. "I don't really think that it does."

Bernstein watched his piece blow up thanks to social sharing from mammoth liberal voices like Arianna Huffington and Markos Moulitsas — people who already "think Romney is a horrible person." But Bernstein's work helped make the liberal critique against Romney more informed, and forced progressives to talk about women

in political office, which was not otherwise on the agenda in an election season with four male candidates flanking the stage. Thanks to some quick and dirty Photo-shopping, a niche issue became big news — even to those people who aren't obsessively checking Tumblr (or even know what it is).

**MESSAGES, MEMES AND MEANING**

The campaigns can capitalize on memes to cut through the traditional news cycle, no fact-checking necessary. But journalists are faster than flacks. By following and researching and translating memes, they can key into the issues and

values relevant to at least some segments American voters — including those, like women, whose issues are sometimes neglected. If they push the meme far enough, it can even translate to cable TV segments and op-ed sections around the country, where undecided voters are more likely to take a look. My own piece on binders got play in opinion sections in Dallas, Miami and Long Island.

But co-opting the meme also tends to undermine its initial purpose: the lulz. Memes like Romney's binders or Clint Eastwood's chair are a form of catharsis for political news creators and consumers, a break from the endless election

cycle we all must endure every four years. Reporting out the meme takes the fun out of it; explaining a joke is never funny.

Romney set off the foreign policy debate bracing for gaffes, joking that the debate would be a platform for the candidates to "say funny things not on purpose." When the night brought few gaffes to riff on, viewers and reporters hungry for a new viral meme fixated on a deliberate joke instead: Obama's use of the phrase "horses and bayonets" to burn Romney's outdated military policies. The obligatory Twitter hashtag, Photoshop Tumblr, and Reuters wrap-up quickly surfaced.

It didn't feel right. This was a catchphrase crafted in campaign HQ, not some 23-year-old's apartment. The message-makers can pre-manufacture memes, and reporters can herald the "latest debate catchphrase." But without even a few minutes to live on its own, free of media scrutiny, even President Obama riding a unicorn isn't very much fun.

*This article from Poynter.org. was reprinted with permission from the Poynter Institute.*

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# Anti-gay campaigns flush with Catholic cash

By Lisa Neff

Staff writer

The Catholic Church has channeled over \$1 million into the four states where initiatives on marriage are on Nov. 6 ballots.

Minnesota voters are deciding this election whether to amend their constitution to define marriage as the union of a man and a woman. In Maine, Maryland and Washington, voters are deciding whether to legalize same-sex marriage.

In each state, Catholic leaders have spoken against gay marriage and encouraged parishioners to vote against marriage equality. The church also is spending its money on the campaigns – at least \$1.1 million, according to a report from the Human Rights Campaign, the nation's largest LGBT civil rights group, and Equally Blessed, a coalition of faith-based groups backing LGBT equality.

The church and the National Organization for Marriage, which is led by three Catholics and has spent another \$1.4 million this cycle, are responsible for nearly 60 percent of the anti-gay campaigns in the four states.

The financial analysis found the Knights of Columbus, a fraternal group within the

church, provided more than \$640,000 of the Catholic money invested in the 2012 anti-gay campaigns.

And from 2005 to 2012, the Knights invested \$6.25 million in anti-gay marriage efforts, with most of the money going to ballot measure battles in 12 states, including the four 2012 initiatives and Proposition 8 in California in 2008. The Knights made at least 25 contributions to Prop 8 that ranged in size from \$100 to \$1 million.

"The Catholic Church hierarchy has positioned itself as the leading religious organization funding discrimination against LGBT people," said HRC president Chad Griffin.

This election cycle, in Minnesota, the church has funded more than 50 percent of the anti-gay ballot campaign. The Minnesota Catholic Conference Marriage Defense Fund contributed about \$600,000; the national Knights of Columbus, \$100,000; the Minnesota Knights of Columbus State Council, \$15,000; Knights of Columbus local councils, nearly \$20,000; and more than \$180,000 from dioceses across the nation – from Anchorage to Winona, Minn. The campaign has received

smaller contributions from churches.

In Maryland, based on information from the state board of elections, the Knights donated \$250,000 to the Maryland Marriage Alliance; the Maryland Catholic Conference, nearly \$12,000; St. Ignatius-Hickory, \$525; and Our One Nation Under God, Inc., \$500.

In Washington, based on information from the state public disclosure commission, the Knights donated \$250,000 and St. Monica Parish, \$5,000.

In Maine, according to the state ethics commission, the Knights donated \$1,135.

The Knights of Columbus also has contributed \$1.5 million to the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty for legal challenges to marriage equality and more than \$1.1 million to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Ad Hoc Committee for the Defense of Marriage.

Where does the Knights money come from?

The group was founded in 1882 as a U.S. mutual aid society for Catholic immigrants. The organization flourished in the 20th century, becoming a major provider of life insurance policies to its increasingly middle-class Catholic membership. Today



PHOTO: COURTESY HRC

**Chad Griffin is president of HRC.**

it has 1.8 million members, \$85 billion of life insurance policies in force and \$16.9 billion in assets.

Also, according to Equally Blessed, since 2009 the Knights has assessed each of its members a \$2 annual fee to support its Culture of Life initiative, which includes the campaign against marriage equality.

HRC's Griffin said he wondered whether knights and parishioners know how much money the Catholic Church is spending on the anti-gay campaigns. Other activists wondered what impact the involvement in politics has had on membership.

A Public Religion Research Institute poll conducted

earlier this year found that nearly 60 percent of U.S. Catholics support marriage equality.

The survey also found:

- Eighty-three percent of Catholics felt their bishops should stay out of the political campaigns.

- Sixty percent of Catholics said the church should focus more on social justice issues.

"The majority of Catholics support equality for LGBT people – they want their dollars funding things like soup kitchens, homeless shelters and domestic violence programs, not discrimination against people several states away," Griffin said. "The church hierarchy owes the laity an explanation as to why they are spending this much money on discrimination, and at what cost to other crucial church programs."

Equally Blessed representatives observed that, at the local level, the Knights of Columbus councils hold community fish fries and collect money for the disadvantaged. But the organization's national leadership, under

Supreme Knight Carl Anderson, a former Reagan administration staffer, has become increasingly politicized.

"Carl Anderson is using the good name that the Knights have developed over generations as cover while pursuing policies and making alliances that many Catholics find deeply troubling when they learn about them," said Marianne Duddy-Burke, executive director of DignityUSA, a member of Equally Blessed.

"So many of us have memories of our fathers and grandfathers putting on their Knights' regalia to march in parades and participate in special Masses," said Francis DeBernardo, executive director of New Ways Ministry, a member of Equally Blessed. "We remember them raising scholarship money so Catholic kids could go to college. It is deeply disheartening to know that this same organization is requiring its members to contribute to campaigns aimed at making sure that some of those kids are treated as second-class citizens."

## High court rejects Okla. personhood appeal

From AP reports

The U.S. Supreme Court has refused to take up an Oklahoma Supreme Court ruling that said a proposal to grant "personhood" to human embryos would be an improper ban on abortion.

The proposed constitutional amendment, which was never considered by voters, would have given human embryos the rights and privileges of citizens in Oklahoma and was called "clearly unconstitutional" by the state supreme court in an April ruling.

The measure was challenged by the American Civil Liberties Union and the New York-based Center for Reproductive Rights on

behalf of several Oklahoma doctors and residents before it could be placed on the ballot.

"Today's rejection by the highest court in the nation is yet another resounding message to the opponents of reproductive freedom that such extremist assaults on our fundamental rights will not stand," Nancy Northrup, president and CEO of the Center for Reproductive Rights said.

"Pure and simple, these tactics are an affront to our nation's Constitution and a bald-faced attempt to foreclose women's access to a full range of reproductive health care," Northrup added.

Mathew Staver, founder of

the Liberty Council, which filed the appeal on behalf of Personhood Oklahoma, said, "Certainly we would have hoped the court would review this issue because we think it's a significant one that grants citizens the right to express their opinion. We'll continue to move forward with these initiatives."

A personhood bill passed in the state Senate during this year's legislative session but was not heard by the House.

The Oklahoma Attorney General's Office did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

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### FORMER PRIESTS BACK MARRIAGE EQUALITY

A group of 63 former Catholic priests endorsed the campaign for marriage equality in Washington state, where voters were to decide whether to legalize same-sex marriage on Election Day.

The group of ex-priests challenged the church's bishops, who have lobbied against marriage equality, encouraged parishioners to vote against the measure and helped raise money for the anti-gay campaign.

"We feel the bishops are abusing their power in attempting to direct Catholics on how to vote on this civil matter and impose their position on all citizens, Catholic and non-Catholic," the former priests said in a statement.

— L.N.

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## NATIONAL BRIEFS

### N.Y. WEDDING VENUE BANS LESBIAN COUPLE

Two New York women turned away from a potential wedding site because they are gay have filed a discrimination complaint, setting up a possible precedent-setting battle involving the state's new same-sex marriage law.

Melisa Erwin and Jennie McCarthy, of Albany, filed the state complaint on Oct. 11 after the nearby Liberty Ridge Farm said it would not host their wedding next summer. McCarthy said when the owners, Robert and Cynthia Gifford, found out they were a same-sex couple, the women were told there was a problem.

The couple is no longer considering the farm as a wedding venue, but McCarthy said, "We just want to know that the policy is being changed to fit the laws so this doesn't happen to anyone else."

### ARIZONA BARRED FROM CUTTING PLANNED PARENTHOOD FUNDING

A federal judge has prohibited Arizona from halting public funding that the state indirectly provides



PHOTO: AZ GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

**Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer, R, signed into law legislation that would cut Medicaid funding for Planned Parenthood. A court has halted implementation of the statute.**

Planned Parenthood for general health care services that don't include abortion.

The preliminary injunction by U.S. District Judge Neil Wake bars the state from applying a new state anti-abortion law to Planned Parenthood Arizona and physicians with their own practices.

Arizona already bars public funding for most abortions, but the new law would go beyond that by barring public funding for general health care services provided by abortion clinics and doctors. The Arizona law was

enacted earlier this year but it hasn't been implemented.

### CUB SCOUT PACK WOULD DEFY BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA'S BAN

A cub scout pack in Beverly, Mass., says it will not abide by the Boy Scouts of America's policy that bans gay scouts and scout leaders.

An 11-member pack committee unanimously voted to reject the policy and has issued a statement of inclusion that says the benefits of Scouting "should be available to all children and their families, regardless of their sexual orientation."

Hundreds of thousands of people have signed petitions on Change.org calling on the BSA to drop its policy.

### U.S. APPEALS COURT: DOMA UNCONSTITUTIONAL

A federal appeals court has ruled that the federal Defense of Marriage Act

unconstitutionally discriminates against married same-sex couples.

The court found that government discrimination against lesbians and gays is unconstitutional and that the defenders of DOMA – Republicans in the U.S. House – offered no good reason for treating married same-sex couples differently from all other married couples.

The U.S. Supreme Court is the next stage in the case. The justices are expected to conference on several gay marriage cases on Nov. 20.

### CONGRESS' RATINGS ON LGBT ISSUES FALL

The Human Rights Campaign scorecard for the 112th Congress shows the average score for House members was 40 percent and 35 percent for senators, down significantly from the 111th Congress.

In the House, 115 members scored 100 percent, including 33 from states with

marriage equality and eight from states facing marriage related ballot measure this November.

In the Senate, 22 scored 100 percent, including seven from states with marriage equality and five from ballot measure states.

The number of senators with a zero percent score decreased from 32 last Congress to 14 this year, but in the House, the number of zeros increased from 144 to 219.

In Wisconsin:

- U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson, R, received a 15 percent; Herb Kohl, D, received a 76 percent.

- Republican U.S. Reps. Paul Ryan, James Sensenbrenner, Thomas Petri, Sean Duffy, Reid Ribble received zeros.

- Democratic U.S. Reps. Tammy Baldwin and Gwen Moore received 100 percent scores. Democratic U.S. Rep. Ron Kind received 95 percent.

– from WiG and AP reports



PHOTO: POSITIVELY AWARE

### A DAY WITH HIV

At 7:58 a.m. on Sept. 21, Chicagoan Kevin Irvine shared this photo as part of Positively Aware's A Day With HIV campaign. Some 170 photographs were submitted from around the country for posting online at [www adaywithhiv.com](http://www adaywithhiv.com). Some will appear in Positively Aware magazine's next issue. Irvine says of his photograph: "Dropping my daughter off at school. She loves first grade, but not smiling on cue for a picture! When I came to terms with having HIV 23 years ago, I thought I would never have the chance to be a dad."

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# New laws chipping away at women's choice

## From AP reports

It remains legal for women in America to terminate some dangerous and unwanted pregnancies, but in many states it is hard and getting harder.

If enough Republicans are elected on Nov. 6, it could become nearly or virtually impossible for a woman to end her own pregnancy, according to activists who support reproductive freedom. The GOP platform endorses overturning Roe v. Wade, the Supreme Court decision that legalized choice, as does Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney. Further, Romney would have the opportunity to appoint one or two new justices to the court if he wins, meaning the High Court would likely overturn that ruling in the future.

Just this year, 17 states set new limits on choice and 24 did so last year, according to the Guttmacher Institute, a pro-choice nonprofit. In several states with the most restrictive laws, the number of abortions has fallen slightly, pleasing the conservatives who oppose reproductive freedom. They say the laws are working.

Some of the states with the toughest laws are spread across a big middle swath of the country, stretching from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico.

In South Dakota, which has just one abortion clinic, lawmakers want to extend the required waiting period from two days to three for women seeking to end a pregnancy. Next door in North Dakota, there's also only one clinic. The same is true in Mississippi, where a new law threatens that lone clinic's existence. In several states, doctors now must warn women about so-called "risks" from abortion, even though they are scientifically unsupported.

There are hurdles even in states like Illinois, where abortion laws are more lenient and clinics relatively plentiful.

Women seeking help in terminating their pregnancies at a Granite City, Ill., clinic can expect their photographs to turn up on a right-wing,

anti-choice activist's website. And before her abortion in June, a Chicago woman says her own gynecologist refused to offer any advice, fearing that just mentioning abortion could endanger her job at a Catholic hospital.

"The level and scope of activity on abortion and family planning is completely unparalleled to anything we have seen before," said Elizabeth Nash, Guttmacher's states issues manager.

"The way people are attacking abortion is distressing because they are getting much more creative in the way they're chipping away" at it, said Dr. Renee Mestad, an ob-gyn who provides reproductive health services in upstate New York. Access to abortion isn't much of a problem there. But it was where she used to work in Missouri.

"The ideal thing would be that no one gets pregnant unless they're ready—that all pregnancies are desired pregnancies, but that's not what happens," Mestad said.

While surveys have consistently shown most Americans support keeping abortion legal in certain circumstances, many people's views are nuanced. A Gallup poll this fall found nearly as many voters consider themselves "pro-life" as those who say they are "pro-choice."

And another new Gallup poll found that nearly 40 percent of female registered voters surveyed in 12 swing states consider choice the most important election issue for women.

President Barack Obama supports access to abortion. Romney says Roe v. Wade, the Supreme Court's nearly 40-year-old decision legalizing abortion, should be overturned, which would allow states to ban choice.

## MORE BANS

Anti-abortion attorney Teresa Collett, a law professor at the University of St. Thomas in Minneapolis, says her ideal would be "to live in a country where abortion is not even really thinkable." She'd like to see Roe v. Wade overturned, but even if it is, she said, the debate won't end because it would

**It could become impossible for a woman to end a pregnancy.**

be up to states to ban abortion. Some are moving in that direction:

- More than 30 new abortion laws have been enacted this year, a record topped only by the unprecedented 92 laws last year.

- Forty-one states ban abortion after a certain stage of pregnancy, generally around 20 weeks, unless the mother's life or health is in danger. In many of those states, the bans are based on an unsupported premise that fetuses can feel pain at that stage of development.

- Pre-abortion counseling is required in 35 states; 26 require waiting periods after counseling, and in 13 states, the counseling must caution women against terminating their pregnancies by providing them with information that is not based on legitimate science.

Texas has the most prescriptive counseling laws—requiring, among other things, that doctors tell women abortion is linked with breast cancer. A group of scientists convened by the National Cancer Institute in 2003 concluded abortion did not raise the risk of breast cancer.

A Texas law passed last year requires women to get an ultrasound and their doctors to describe the fetus. Texas abortions have dropped every year since 2008.

While records from several states with laws restricting women's reproductive choices show fewer abortions in recent years, it's uncertain whether the decline is real. Not all states track the number of abortions per 1,000 women of reproductive age. And pregnancies are also declining in many states, a development some experts link to a weak economy.

The most recent national



PHOTO: AP/CHARLIE RIEDEL

**Protesters from the Rev. Fred Phelps' Westboro Baptist Church demonstrate in 2009 during funeral services for Dr. George Tiller in Wichita, Kan. Tiller, 67, a late-term abortion provider, was shot in the head as he handed out programs while ushering at a local church.**

abortion statistics are from 2008, and the trend shows the number and rate of abortions have generally leveled off after a long period of decline.

## MORE HURDLES

In South Dakota, the new law facing a legal challenge would impose a three-day waiting period. During that time, a woman would have to visit a crisis pregnancy center discouraging abortion. Utah is the only other state with a waiting period that long, but it doesn't require such specific counseling.

In July, a federal appeals court in South Dakota upheld a 2005 law requiring doctors to warn that abortions increase risks for suicide. Scientific research disputes this.

Dr. Carol Ball, at the state's lone abortion clinic in Sioux Falls says information she's required to tell patients is "of questionable validity" and designed to make them feel shame and guilt.

Across the state to the west in Rapid City, Dr. Marvin Buehner cares for women

with high-risk pregnancies and does a few abortions each year when pregnancy endangers the patient's life.

He's required to describe each fetal stage and explain that abortion ends the life of a separate human being—even to women whose fetuses have deadly abnormalities and won't survive.

"It's just incredible," Buehner said.

One of his patients is a 31-year-old woman who gave birth Oct. 14 to a stillborn baby with a rare, inherited and ultimately fatal condition called achondrogenesis, which causes severe deformities. She had two previous babies with the same condition. One was also stillborn, the other died an hour after birth.

She had considered abortion when tests showed this baby, too, was doomed, but couldn't afford the cost. It would have involved traveling nearly six hours to the Sioux Falls clinic. And because her life wasn't at risk, Medicaid in her state wouldn't pay for it, even though it was clear her baby would be born dead or

die shortly after birth.

In Illinois, laws are relatively lenient. The Hope Clinic in Granite City in southern Illinois caters to women from neighboring states like Missouri and Kentucky where it's harder to get an abortion.

Tamara Threlkeld, the clinic's executive director, said despite increasingly difficult access, Hope Clinic has not seen any increase in patients with later-term pregnancies seeking abortions.

Though you'd expect to see that trend, "they're able to find us" early on, she said.

Most abortions occur in the first 12 weeks when the embryo is about the size of a lima bean. Major organs have begun developing, but the embryo at this stage looks nothing like the photographs of mangled fetuses that abortion foes promote. Those pictures generally represent late-term abortions, those after five months, which account for fewer than 2 percent of abortions.

Find us on Twitter @Wigazette.

## WISCONSIN BRIEFS



PHOTO: PEGGY MORSCH

**Paul Fairchild, executive director of Cream City Foundation, and Daniel Baer, deputy assistant secretary at the U.S. Department of State.**

#### OVER 200 ATTEND CREAM CITY BUSINESS LUNCHEON

More than 200 business leaders from more than 35 Milwaukee-area corporations, foundations, small businesses and community organizations attended the Cream City Foundation's annual Business Equality Luncheon at the Harley-Davidson Museum on Oct. 25. Mayor Tom Barrett presented a proclamation proclaiming the day Business Equality Day in Milwaukee.

Keynote speaker Daniel Baer, deputy assistant secretary at the U.S. Department of State, enumerated the gains for LGBT equality that have been made abroad under Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

#### MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL WILL NOT MAKE POLITICAL ENDORSEMENTS

The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel took a lot of heat for backing Wisconsin Supreme Court Justice David Prosser last year, as well as Gov. Scott Walker in his recent recall election, even though the endorsements in both cases read to many people like apologies for the embattled candidates they backed.

In 2008, the newspaper endorsed President Barack Obama.

Editorial page editor David Haynes wrote in a recent column that making endorsements puts readers' perceptions of the newspaper's independence at risk during the election season.

He said the paper's reportedly divided editorial board would continue to recommend candidates on occasion, but he called endorsements "a relic of a time when every town had more than one newspaper." He said readers now have a wide array of commentary available.

Haynes said the newspaper's editorial board would continue to share opinions on political issues, but it will leave the final vot-

ing decisions up to the voters. Reporters at the paper are said to be critical of the decision, accusing their bosses of wimping out.

"Inside the paper, I'm told, there's the feeling that 'we have two tough picks to make and we're taking a pass,' and the paper is less relevant because of it," wrote Michael Patrick Leahy on Breitbart.com. The reference is to the race for president and the U.S. Senate race between Democrat Tammy Baldwin and Republican Tommy Thompson.

Newspaper endorsements have little impact on voters, according to studies.

#### GREEN BAY BISHOP URGES PARISHIONERS TO VOTE AGAINST PRO-CHOICE, PRO-GAY CANDIDATES

Green Bay Bishop David Ricken recently sent parishioners a letter saying voting for candidates who support what he calls "intrinsically evil" positions could "put your own soul in jeopardy."

Ricken's letter says the Catholic Church has a responsibility to speak out on moral issues. His letter goes on to note that parishioners, when voting, should keep in mind church teachings on abortion, euthanasia, embryonic stem cell research, human cloning and gay marriage.

The Catholic Diocese of Green Bay has 304,000 members in 16 counties. The diocese made headlines when litigants in a fraud suit over clerical sex abuse discovered that diocesan officials had shredded massive amounts of evidence in order to shield pedophile priests from the law. Both campaigns consider Green Bay the key to winning Wisconsin.

#### DIVERSE AND RESILIENT AWARDED MAJOR GRANT

Diverse and Resilient has been awarded a five-year grant from the Medical College of Wisconsin to develop a program designed to help LGBT youth and young adults develop healthy relationships, according to a press announcement.

Dr. Carol Galletly will serve as principal investigator for the program, which will seek to involve 5,000 participants through social marketing and approximately 550 participants in a more intensive course.

Galletly previously partnered with Diverse and Resilient in an investigation of LGBT intimate partner violence. That 2010 project resulted in the development of a website as well as training for agencies and communities in how to address the issue.

The healthy relationship program will build on the work done to address intimate partner violence. The curriculum to be used is an adaptation of an evidence-based program originally designed for heterosexual youth.

Diverse and Resilient pilot tested the adaptation with 50 youth across the state who found the revised materials culturally appropriate.

— Louis Weisberg

Find us on Twitter @Wigazette.

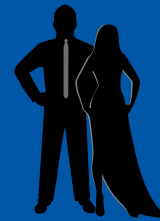
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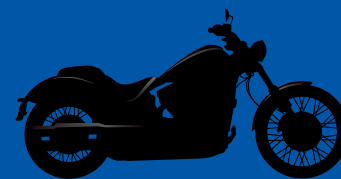


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## { Editorial }

## Changing our minds about Change.org

A year ago, a 22-year-old nanny working two jobs started a petition on Change.org protesting a \$5 monthly banking fee levied by Bank of America. More than 300,000 people signed, and dozens of other citizens launched copycat petitions targeting their banks for similar fees.

In less than one month, Bank of America and other major national banks dropped the charges.

The incident was a remarkable grassroots victory for the 99 percent. It demonstrated the potential of the Web to empower the Davids of the world to fight back against the Goliaths without big advertising budgets and expensive public relations firms.

But now Change.org is itself changing. Internal documents show the company has decided to allow corporate advertising, Republican Party solicitations and astroturf campaigns, in which masked big interests sponsor campaigns that pretend to be legitimate grassroots efforts. Right-wing campaigns against choice, unions and other progressive issues will also find their way to the new Change.org.

In other words, Change.org has gone for the big bucks and left us the loose change.

According to documents leaked to the Campaign for America's Future, a liberal organization, Change.org did not plan to alert users about its new direction. Instead, its strategy was a matter of "queuing up positive press profiles to launch around Oct. 22," according to the company's own words.

Benjamin Joffe-Walt, director of communications for Change.org, has said the company never intended to position itself as strictly progressive. He said a general guideline for the new company policy is that it will accept anything Google would allow.

The company apparently sees its mission as one of empowering everyone, regardless of perspective. That's a sweet notion but not an accurate reflection of the role that the company has played in the political dialogue since its inception.

The airwaves are already flooded with right-wing opinionistas who present as facts views that defy actual facts. The Christian right has layers of TV and radio networks.

The corporate right owns the nation's largest business paper, the Wall Street Journal, and its largest TV "news" outlet – Fox News. Corporations and politicians tied to special interest groups have billions of dollars to propagandize the public.

Change.org offered a refreshing counterpoint to the right wing's media dominance. It gave progressives a platform to inform others who are open to their way of thinking and to enlist them in their causes.

Change.org has changed its mind about us, and we have changed ours about it. We hope that the site's major sponsors, including Sierra Club, Amnesty International and Credo Mobile, will take their business to Care2.com, a for-profit company that is proudly progressive, and to MoveOn.org, a non-profit progressive organization that offers petition software called SignOn.

Change.org officials call this merely a business decision, and we'd like to show them that selling out your base is not a smart business strategy.

## BY THE NUMBERS

A new Gallup poll surveyed 121,000 U.S. adults on identifying as LGBT. Who identifies as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender?

**3.4%**

Overall

**4.6%**

of African-American

**3.2%**

of whites

**4.0%**

of Hispanics

**3.6%**

of women

**4.3%**

of Asians

**3.3%**

of men

SOURCE: GALLUP SURVEY

## { Voter information }

### ELECTION DATES TO REMEMBER

**Nov. 1:** Last day to request absentee ballots by mail (by 5 p.m.).

**Nov. 6:** General election.

### No photo ID required for voting – yet

Two different judges, on March 6 and on March 12, issued injunctions preventing the Government Accountability Board from enforcing the photo ID requirements enacted by Republicans in 2011. The Wisconsin Department of Justice has appealed those injunctions, and the law is on hold pending a ruling.

### Where to register and vote

Look up your voter registration and polling place at <https://vpa.wi.gov/>.

### Register to vote online

Online voter registration is at <https://vpa.wi.gov/OnlineRegistration/Default.aspx>.

### ELECTION NIGHT RESULTS

WiG will post news on election night at [wisconsin-gazette.com](http://wisconsin-gazette.com), as well as to its Facebook page and Twitter account.

Other sources on election night include:

CNN and its breaking news Twitter feed, for getting results first; Comedy Central, for making results funny; realclearpolitics.com for probing the results; Madison's Capital Times/madison.com, for getting state results.


The earliest returns on Nov. 6 will show up on news wires and special election services shortly after 7 p.m. CST, when the polls close in Indiana and Kentucky. The pace will quicken to a peak about 11 p.m. CST. But the counting will continue through the day Nov. 7.

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## ON THE RECORD



“Does this now say that somebody can get married to their dog?”  
– Ill. state Rep. JOHN CABELLO, R, telling a tea party forum why he’s “dead-set opposed to civil unions.”

“If someone is dealing with same-sex attraction or homosexuality, and they want someone to be their life partner of the same gender, though we would oppose that in our churches, it should be allowed by the state.”

– Disgraced evangelical right pastor TED HAGGARD supporting marriage equality during an online debate with an Orthodox Jewish rabbi that was moderated by Deyoon.com.

“I knew that I was a gay boy fairly early; what was interesting to me was that my mother didn’t know. She made me play baseball – I had no desire to do that. I said, ‘Mom, I don’t like direct sunlight, I don’t like bugs, I don’t like grass, and I’d rather be in the house playing with your fabric samples.’”

– Interior design guru NATE BERKUS talking to Joy Behar in an interview about his semi-autobiographical new book “The Things That Matter.”

“Unfortunately, pregnancy is not a risk-free life event, particularly for many women with chronic medical conditions. Despite all of our medical advances, more than 600 women die each year from pregnancy and childbirth-related reasons right here in the U.S. In fact, many more women would die each year if they did not have access to abortion to protect their health or to save their lives.”

– The AMERICAN COLLEGE OF OBSTETRICIANS AND GYNECOLOGISTS responding to U.S. Rep. Joe Walsh’s statement that medical advances have made it impossible for pregnancy to endanger a woman’s life.

“OK I’ll say it. Matt Bomer isn’t right for Christian Grey because he is openly gay. He’s great for other roles but this is too big a game. I think Matt Bomer is incredibly handsome and a good actor, but I think he comes off totally gay in ‘White Collar.’”

– “American Psycho” screenwriter BRET EASTON ELLIS tweeting in August that out actor Matt Bomer could not play the male lead in a screen adaptation of “Fifty Shades of Gray” because of his sexual orientation. Bomer also was reportedly ditched as a potential lead in a new Superman movie.

“Let me just be candid: My party is full of racists, and the real reason a considerable portion of my party wants President Obama out of the White House has nothing to do with the content of his character, nothing to do with his competence as commander-in-chief and president, and everything to do with the color of his skin, and that’s despicable.”

– LAWRENCE WILKERSON, a former aide to Colin Powell, blasting Romney campaign operative John Sununu for saying that Powell, a Republican, only endorsed Obama because they’re both black.



## Local institutions failing us

## Opinion

JAMAKAYA

Recent events have got me thinking seriously about the fall of civilization.

No, society’s foundations aren’t crumbling because gay people want to get married. In fact, the passion for commitment on the part of gays and lesbians may be one of the healthiest trends in an otherwise dying culture.

We’re cooked because our most critical institutions are betraying all of us and failing in their most basic missions. A series of events in the Milwaukee area has just about everybody dizzy with dismay.

Close on the heels of another black man dying in the custody of Milwaukee police came the story of the deadly ineptitude of the Brown Deer police in the case of Radcliffe Haughton. Twenty times police were called to his residence, seven of those times on domes-

tic violence calls. Despite evidence of abuse, despite the existence of a mandatory arrest law for domestic violence, despite Haughton allegedly raising a weapon against the police, despite the police announcing one time that Haughton was under arrest, police repeatedly withdrew from the scene. On Oct. 21, Haughton murdered his wife and two of her co-workers and injured three others at a spa in Brookfield.

Experts are baffled by the inaction of the Brown Deer police. The once voluble police chief clammed up and, no doubt, lawyered up. Another village official, who didn’t clam up, kept saying things that revealed the shoddy procedures and lack of transparency of Brown Deer law enforcement. The drama might read like a satire by Shaw if it didn’t sting like his deepest tragedies.

Meanwhile, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services identified deficiencies “so serious” that the Milwaukee Mental Health Com-

plex “constitutes an immediate jeopardy to patient health and safety.” This declaration followed the death of yet another patient at the facility. Brandon Johnson complained to staff for three days that he was paralyzed and begged to be transferred to a hospital. He became incontinent and was still ignored. He died on the third day of complications from a broken neck. Previous media reports have detailed other patient deaths and patient-on-patient sexual assaults at the complex.

Finally, new data revealed that 85 percent of Milwaukee Public School students are not proficient in reading; 80 percent are not proficient in math. Private charter schools were even worse, with 90 percent of students underperforming in both areas. This is a catastrophe for our children and our community.

When the law is unenforced and made meaningless, when those under the rule of law and the care of our institutions are neglected and abused, when standards

of conduct, of intellectual proficiency and of collective responsibility are abandoned, when people’s faith in their institutions erodes, when leaders are anemic or gridlocked – there lies chaos.

I’m reminded of the scene in “A Christmas Carol” when the Spirit of Christmas Present parts its robe to reveal two children, “wretched, abject, frightful, hideous, miserable.”

“This boy is Ignorance,” says the Spirit. “This girl is Want. Beware them both, and all of their degree, but most of all beware this boy, for on his brow I see that written which is Doom, unless the writing be erased.”

“Have they no refuge?” asks Scrooge.

“Are there no prisons, are there no workhouses?” the Spirit replies.

Yes. This year, 2012 of the so-called ‘Christian’ Era, Wisconsin made history by spending more money on prisons than on schools.

Find us on Twitter @Wigazette.

## Why I need the center

## Opinion

PETER LARSON

I grew up in Chicago and have spent most of my career working for banks and wealth management institutions in Chicago, Minneapolis and, now, Milwaukee.

The word “gay” was not acknowledged when I was growing up, but the word “homosexual” was – and I knew the term was not positive. I was oblivious to any gay community and only associated “gay” with people hanging out in men’s rest rooms, not anything positive. You knew better than to be out because it wasn’t safe. Actually, it was pre-unsafe – it was simply denied.

As a young man, I lacked confidence in myself. It took me a long time to realize I could be a fully functional adult and live out, but even after that realization it was still difficult. After I came out

to my father, he didn’t speak to me for the last 15 years of his life.

I was a pastor’s child and, knowing I was different, I grew up with a sense of being very oppressed. It took me a while to realize I was born privileged: white, in an educated family, at a fortunate moment in history. I don’t feel guilty about being a white, educated male. I am in a position to help others, to share and be of service to others; and so I ask myself, “How can I make a difference for those who have not been blessed in these ways?” Working with the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center is a way for me to share my blessings.

I do have some selfish reasons for being involved in the center. For example, I think I would have been more successful if I’d been fully out earlier in life. I am now a bit jealous of people who are not starting their professional lives under the burden of feeling oppressed or unsafe.

I was a heavy smoker until about eight years ago. I think that if I’d had a place where I felt safe, like the center, I could have looked at my health sooner. I had friends whose lives were destroyed by cocaine and meth. I think that the center provides us a place where we can help the LGBT community learn to avoid unhealthy behavior.

I’m on the center’s board because it sustains and saves lives every day. We know that the center helps prevent youth from drinking and drug abuse, and I believe the center saves hundreds of thousands of tax dollars each year by creating more healthy people. The center is a good investment.

I get a great deal out of my work with the center. I’ve met lots of people and have learned so much from the volunteers and board members – especially since the new changes that have taken place in the last 10 months. We now have an amazing team of effective people, and



they help me become more effective and engaged. I feel privileged to work with them.

I urge you to be involved with the center and become part of this amazing place where you can be yourself and help others become their best.

*Peter Larson has an master’s degree in economics, finance, accounting from the University of Chicago Booth School of Business. He serves as treasurer for the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center’s board of directors.*

## Waukesha's Nickolaus problem persists; election monitors to be deployed

**BULLIES** from page one

voter registration supervisor accused of destroying forms in Virginia.

In 28 Florida counties in October, voters received bogus letters informing them they might be ineligible to vote, prompting an FBI probe. And in Palm Beach County, some 27,000 absentee ballots couldn't be digitally scanned because of a design flaw. So election workers were duplicating the markings on bad ballots on new ballots.

This was in addition to the yearlong campaign by Republican Gov. Rick Scott to remove people from registered voter lists, an effort to reduce early voting opportunities, new rules that pushed citizens groups out of registration drives and a scandal over fraudulent voter registration forms in 10 counties that involved a contractor hired by the GOP.

In Ohio – in minority neighborhoods in Columbus, Cincinnati and Cleveland – a right-wing family foundation erected billboards intended

to scare off voters with the warning, "Voter Fraud Is A Felony!" Clear Channel, co-owned by the private equity firm co-founded by Mitt Romney, agreed to remove the ads, but civic leaders said some harm was done.

Meanwhile, liberal bloggers were raising questions about whether ballots in at least one county in Ohio would be accurately counted because investors in Hart InterCivic, the company supplying voting machines, have ties to Bain Capital and Tagg Romney.

All this was in addition to a failed attempt to reduce early voting opportunities in a state where thousands of people were left waiting in lines hours after the polls closed in 2004 and where officials this fall sent out notices to some voters with an incorrect election date.

Elsewhere, confusion over voter identification policies continued after a spate of new voter ID laws, driven by another right-wing group, led to showdowns between state governments and the

U.S. Justice Department. In Pennsylvania, where a photo ID isn't needed to vote Nov. 6, the state ran a campaign – posters, mailings and TV ads – saying otherwise.

There were reports of other problems with early balloting to aggravate anxiety.

In Maryland, some absentee ballots were mailed missing the page that included Question 6, the marriage equality question, and voters who received Spanish-language ballots complained that the summary for the marriage question contained an error that could lead people to vote opposite their intention.

In Texas, the state attorney general threatened to arrest observers with an international group invited to monitor the election if they came within 100 feet of polling places.

### WATCHING IN WAUKESHA

Concerns about the next election were being raised as questions about prior elec-



PHOTO: COURTESY

**Billboards like this went up in minority neighborhoods in Milwaukee and Ohio cities but were taken down by Clear Channel in response to protests.**

tions remain, specifically in Waukesha County, where County Clerk Kathy Nickolaus has been challenged by good government groups, urged to resign by the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel and investigated by the Wisconsin Government Accountability Board.

Nickolaus came to national attention in April 2011 after she failed to include Brookfield results – 14,315 votes – in the totals reported on election night. That contributed to a recount in the Wisconsin Supreme Court race between conservative Justice David Prosser and liberal challenger JoAnne Kloppenburg. Nickolaus' discovery was convenient for Prosser, who was declared the winner, costly for taxpayers and highly controversial.

The GAB, after a four-day canvas, stated, "Although there were some anomalies identified, the GAB found no major discrepancies between Waukesha County's official canvas report and the documentation provided by the municipalities. This does not warrant correction of the canvass absent any post-election proceedings."

In September, after a more extensive review, the GAB said it found probable cause to believe Nickolaus violated state law requiring clerks to post all returns on election night, but the violation was not willful and did not con-

stitute criminal misconduct.

The GAB chair wrote to Nickolaus: "When one election official fails to act consistent with those responsibilities, steps must be taken to correct the failure in order to prevent it from recurring, and to restore public confidence and trust in the administration of elections."

Fair election advocates have focused on the clerk again.

In the April presidential primary, because of computer problems, Nickolaus' office manually entered vote totals by hand, proofed them against machine tapes and posted unofficial results online – at about 2 a.m. the day after the election.

Soon after, the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel headlined an editorial "Waukesha County clerk needs to step down. Upcoming elections – from the gubernatorial recall to the presidential – are too important to leave in the hands of Kathy Nickolaus."

The newspaper also reported that Waukesha County Executive Dan Vrakas said he would call for Nickolaus' resignation unless she handed off her election duties in the upcoming recalls to her deputy. According to the newspaper and a news release from the GAB in April, Nickolaus agreed to delegate vote-tallying duties to deputy Kelly Yaeger in the upcoming

recalls.

But, for the May 8 recall primaries, Nickolaus was in the office on election night and several media outlets reported she appeared to be in charge.

That, and conflicting statements from county officials, led to concerns about who would be in charge of collecting and counting the June 5 gubernatorial recall ballots. On recall day, Kelly Steele of the activist group We Are Wisconsin, said, "Vrakas promised the voters of Wisconsin he'd taken care of his 'Kathy Nickolaus problem' so that the stench of incompetence and possible corruption emanating from Waukesha County was a thing of the past. Alarming, as we tabulate the most important election in Wisconsin history, Kathy Nickolaus remains firmly planted in the heart of Scott Walker's base and Dan Vrakas has not only failed to keep his word, he's now stonewalling questions about who's actually running the election in Waukesha County."

Controversy continued through the summer, with Nickolaus, according to watchdog groups such as Liberty Tree's Wisconsin Wave project, putting up barriers to a hand count of the June 5 ballots, part of a statewide citizen audit effort. In mid-August, she threatened to destroy the ballots.

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**Texas threatened to arrest observers with an international group invited to monitor the election.**

Vrakas' office returned press calls regarding Nickolaus' role on Nov. 6. Nickolaus, in an email, said, "I have no comment. Thank you."

At the GAB, public information officer Reid Magney stated, "We continue to work with the Waukesha County Clerk's office. There were no problems in the August partisan primary, and we do not expect any in November."

He added, "Questions about responsibilities in the Waukesha County Clerk's office should be directed to that office or the county executive's office."

Waukesha County Corporation Counsel Thomas P. Farley said state law provides Nickolaus' authority and mandates her responsibilities. "Statutorily, she has to do what she has been elected

to do," he said, adding that he was unaware of how her office would run on Nov. 6.

If Nickolaus does run that show, it will be her last. She announced in April she would not seek re-election and on Nov. 6 voters will elect either Republican Kathleen Novack or Democrat Jessie Read, whose campaign slogan is "HINT: Honesty, Integrity, Nonpartisanship, Transparency."

**PROTECTING THE VOTE**

Several groups plan to monitor Wisconsin's vote.

"We have a major election observer program," said Andrea Kaminski, executive director of the League of Women Voters of Wisconsin Education Network. "We've been recruiting and training volunteers from all over the state. This is the fourth

time we've done this in a fairly big way. ...With this kind of election observer program, Wisconsin is out front."

For the June recall election, the league fielded 150 observers at 110 polling places. On Nov. 6, it will dispatch at least 300 volunteers trained to observe and primed on state election law. They'll be looking to see whether the polls operate on schedule, equipment is operational, voting is private, check-in and registration tables are separate and that eligible voters aren't being turned away due to confusion over the law.

Observers take any concerns to a chief inspector at the polling place and, if necessary, the league headquarters or attorneys. "We assess the situation," Kaminski said, noting that observers

don't interact with voters. By state law, observers must stand at least 6-12 feet from any voter casting a ballot.

Common Cause also is watchdogging the election. In addition to fielding poll monitors, the organization has lobbied for the removal of the voter fraud billboards, called for an investigation of alleged intimidation in Florida and campaigned to extend early voting hours in Ohio.

"The entire voting rights community is mobilized to protect voters' rights," Edgar said.

Meanwhile, legal groups, including the ACLU of Wisconsin, are working hotlines on Election Day to help voters with concerns and questions.

After Nov. 6, expect the watchdog work to continue, along with efforts to reform the election

system and increase voter participation.

In its September newsletter, the Wisconsin Wave project said, "We will also again be putting out the call for nationwide voter assemblies on Nov. 7 – the day after the election, gatherings that will serve as instant organizing platforms if there is evidence that the fall election was stolen."

**ON ELECTION DAY**

The nonpartisan Wisconsin Election Protection coalition is part of the 866-OUR-VOTE (866-687-8683) hotline. Volunteers and attorneys answer calls from voters.



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## Opinion

LOUIS WEISBERG

# Tammy vs. Tommy exposes the hypocrisy of 'family values'

The agenda of so-called "family values" candidates has nothing to do with supporting families. In fact, those candidates oppose measures that would help families, particularly families who are economically disadvantaged, non-white and lesbian or gay. They're seldom concerned about such family issues as affordable health care, a strong public education system and ensuring working people earn a livable wage.

The actual "family values" agenda is narrowly focused on policies involving sexual behavior. They want to ban contraception and abortion in order to discourage women from having sex for pleasure rather than for procreation. They don't want young people to have access to information about sex, because they fear it fosters temptation.

Most so-called family values supporters want same-sex relations to be criminalized and LGBT people back in the closet. They'd like to make pornography illegal. They disapprove of drinking and partying, because they fear it leads to licentiousness.

As scandal after scandal on the religious right has proven, however, embracing this philosophy publicly is no guarantee that it's practiced. Republican U.S. Senate candidate Tommy Thompson appears to be a prime example.

## AGING PARTY BOY

When one of Thompson's top campaign staffers disseminated a tweet and an email this summer calling into question the "heartland values" of Democratic opponent Tammy Baldwin, the implication was that her sexual orientation removed her from the moral mainstream.

Following a Thompson speech at the Milwaukee Rotary Club, I asked the former governor if raising the issue of Baldwin's private life had opened up his private life for public scrutiny.

"I don't have to answer that," he spluttered angrily, waving me away in dismissal.

Sexual morality is a dicey issue for Thompson, if you

believe those who claim to have observed the governor's personal behavior up close. Although no one would speak to me on the record about Thompson's fabled drinking and womanizing, everyone had a story or two to share. Throughout his political career, rumors of Thompson's sexual promiscuity have been pervasive.

Whether there's fire behind this smoke is something that voters concerned about sexual morality might consider.

The stories of Thompson's drinking don't need to be substantiated. They can be confirmed with a visit to YouTube — just search "Tommy Thompson drunk." Many watchers, I included, thought he was half-tanked during his second debate with Baldwin, where he was not only unnecessarily bellicose and rambling but stumbled over words such as "Libya."

A motorcycle enthusiast, Thompson, now 70, apparently joined in many group rides during his heyday. One colleague who recalls him from those times said he always traveled with one or more buxom young women, who became known as "Tommy's girls." The exact nature of Thompson's relationship with his "girls" is unknown, although it was clear they weren't relatives.

One Madison journalist wrote that Thompson added to suspicions about his private life shortly after being elected governor, when he ended the practice of logging in the names of guests. But it's also rumored that Thompson conducted many of his alleged trysts at Madison's Concourse Hotel.

Although four particular women are most frequently mentioned in connection with Thompson, I was able to find published reports concerning only Janice Barr.

In 1997, the Republican-leaning Milwaukee Journal Sentinel filed an open records request for the governor's phone records. The records spanned more than a year and a half and included at least five land lines and cell

## Thompson airbrushed his life story for his campaign.

phones.

According to the records, Barr was one of the people Thompson called most frequently — 24 times. That was more than the 19 calls he placed to his wife. Barr was Thompson's secretary for a number of years. MJS reported:

"Thompson shows signs of being a night owl. His phone lines show 103 calls placed after 10 p.m. and before 6 a.m. Most of the night calls were placed from his car phone."

Readers were left to draw their own conclusions.

Sly in the Morning, a Madison radio personality on WTDY, has had a field day ridiculing the blustery former governor's love life. In a 2011 spiel, he ridiculed Thompson for saying his wife and family kept him from running for Senate in 2010.

"We have these marriages of convenience — look at Sue Ann Thompson!" he said. "She put up with that bum for years. Tommy has been hopping from bed to bed to bed and everyone knows it! And we still put this charade on that Sue Ann Thompson had objections to him running. Sue Ann Thompson plays no role in his life whatsoever. The last time she saw his penis, TV was black-and-white. I am sick of these women vouching for their bum husbands."

## A STUDY IN CONTRASTS

During debates with Baldwin and at public appearances, Thompson inevitably brings up his family as the bedrock of his life. He paints a portrait of himself suggesting he's spent the last decade of his life as a farmer, dandling grandchildren on his knees when he's not milking the cows.



PHOTO: AP/JEFFREY PHELPS

**Former Gov. Tommy Thompson, left, in his final debate with Democratic candidate U.S. Rep. Tammy Baldwin at Marquette University on Oct. 26.**

The manner in which Thompson has overhauled his narrative airbrushes reality. He has so many expensive homes that he recently forgot about one of them during an interview — a mere \$1.3-million luxury lakefront condominium. He spent a decade living in the Washington, D.C., area, where he bought and sold numerous other homes while earning an estimated \$13 million peddling the influence he'd gained as a member of George W. Bush's administration.

Still, he's managed to reinvent himself as a Washington outsider, a good ole Wisconsin boy — and an irrepressibly folksy one at that.

"You can call me Tommy, everybody always has," he announced to the Rotarians in one of his characteristic verbal slaps on the back.

During debates, Thompson repeatedly assailed Baldwin for allegedly sitting in a seat of power and doing nothing for 14 years. In fact, she was a diligent member of Congress — only one of 535 — who served mostly under Republican control, having few opportunities for legislative success. Meanwhile, Thompson used his considerable power and influence to get rich.

He accused Baldwin of supporting the repressive, misogynistic regime in Iran, despite the fact that she's worked for social justice and gender equality throughout her political career. In fact, it is Thompson who has supported Iran. He owned stock

in companies that do business with the country. Some of them support its nuclear programs.

During a debate, Thompson asserted that he hadn't known about the stocks and assured the audience he'd sold them that morning after learning about them. The audience groaned.

In fact, it was later reported that Thompson owned about 800 shares in several companies at a value of up to \$50,000.

Thompson, like other GOP candidates in the 2012 cycle, has taken the cynical approach not only of denying his own unpopular positions but also trying to pin them on his opponent. I recently received a mailer from the Thompson campaign assailing Baldwin for seeking to destroy Medicare. In fact, Baldwin has always been a champion of Medicare while Thompson has vowed to turn it over to private insurance companies via a voucher system.

Similarly, Thompson has called Baldwin's stand on the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, into question because of a vote she took against a Republican resolution that amounted to pro-Bush propaganda during a political year. She was one of only 22 U.S. representatives brave enough to oppose the cynical measure, which she felt was an insult to the families of 9/11 victims.

Baldwin has fought hard for 9/11 victims, and survivors have condemned Thompson's shameless attempts to

exploit their tragedy politically. At their final debate, Thompson laughably claimed to have been among the first responders to the attack, cradling dying victims in his arms as they thanked him, calling him "Tommy."

The truth is somewhat different. Thompson made what Baldwin estimates to be about \$3 million from Logistics Health, a Wisconsin company that won a contract to provide care to 9/11 responders. According to multiple reports, that company denied them adequate care.

Although the two camps have repeatedly sparred over the facts, there are clues that signal who's telling the truth: Baldwin has released all of her tax records, while Thompson has refused to release even one of them since 1997. A tally of Politifact ratings on statements by Baldwin and Thompson as of Oct. 8 showed that Baldwin had received only one "false" rating, compared with Thompson's six. Three of his outrageous statements were rated "pants on fire."

Thompson's transparent dishonesty puts to shame even Paul Ryan's staged appearance at a soup kitchen in Ohio, where he scrubbed already-washed dishes for the camera.

Tammy versus Tommy exposes the hypocrisy of traditional values candidates. Dishonesty, infidelity and political corruption are traditional Machiavellian values, perhaps, but not mainstream American ones.





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## REGIONAL BRIEFS

### BIG TEN SCHOOLS IN TOP 10 FOR SEXUAL HEALTH

An annual survey sponsored by Trojan and conducted by the Sperling's BestPlaces research firm named the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign No. 1 for sexual health.

U of I climbed from No. 64 in 2010 to No. 2 in 2011 to No. 1 in 2012, by investing "time and resources to provide their students with exemplary sexual health programming on campus, earning perfect scores in condom availability, HIV testing, lecture/outreach programs and student peer groups, quality of the sexual health information on the school website and overall website usability and quality."

In the survey, Brown University rose two spots to finish at No. 2. Columbia University finished in third and Princeton University ranked No. 4, down from third place last year.

With Illinois' No. 1 ranking, the Big Ten showed sexual health spirit with two other schools in the top 10: University of Wisconsin went from No. 11 last year to No. 5 and the University of Iowa moved up a spot to No. 8.



### HOUSING GROUPS ACCUSE BANK OF AMERICA OF DISCRIMINATION

A coalition of fair housing groups that includes the Metropolitan Milwaukee Fair Housing Council filed a federal discrimination complaint against Bank of America.

The complaint is the result of an undercover investigation of Bank of America that found the financial giant maintains and markets foreclosed homes in white neighborhoods in a much better manner than in African-American and Latino neighborhoods in Chicago, Milwaukee and Indianapolis.

Shanna L. Smith, CEO of the National Fair Housing Alliance, said, "Bank of America is not a good neighbor in communities of color. Instead, one of the nation's largest holders of foreclosed homes is busy making excuses and passing the buck when it comes to taking responsibility for the homes it owns or services. In many white neighborhoods, Bank of America's foreclosed properties fit in with most other homes for sale on the block, with manicured lawns and 'for sale' signs. African-American and Latino neighborhoods deserve equal treatment."

### IOWA CLERK ARRESTED FOR FORGING FLA. GAY COUPLE'S MARRIAGE LICENSE

A Florida man said he's angry a rural Iowa court official duped him and his partner into

paying for an invalid marriage license, saying the case illustrates the difficulty facing gay couples who cannot get married in their own states.

Joab Penney, 28, of Williston, Fla., said he recently learned the license obtained in February was bogus after he contacted an attorney to get a divorce.

"I was pretty upset," Penney said in an interview with The Associated Press. "What she did was wrong."

Grundy County deputy clerk of court Brigitte Van Nice was arrested and charged with two counts of forgery and one count of perjury.

A criminal complaint says Van Nice filed documents falsely claiming she officiated at a Valentine's Day ceremony and included the phony signatures of two witnesses. It says the couple paid her \$150 and was issued a license.

### CHICAGO AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT RESCINDS TRANSGENDER PROTECTIONS

The East Aurora School District in suburban Chicago rescinded a policy put in place just days earlier protecting transgender students.

The Chicago Tribune reported that following a special meeting of the district school board, proponents of the protections policy called out "shame" and "coward." About 100



TONIBERRIOS.COM

### The Civil Rights Agenda adviser Rick Garcia.

people attended that meeting on Oct. 19.

Days earlier, the same board voted unanimously for the policy, which, among other things, would have allowed transgender students to use rest rooms and locker rooms for their identified gender and to go by their gender-identified name.

The special meeting took place following complaints from several Christian right organizations and some parents. The most vocal opposition came from the Illinois Family Institute, an anti-LGBT group associated with the far-right American Family Association.

Both groups have circulated lies and misinformation about LGBT people. IFI spokesperson Laurie Higgins has called being gay an "evil" and likened same-sex relations to incest. AFA spokesman Bryan Fischer has said that gays are responsible for Adolf Hitler and the Holocaust, according to GLAAD.

Efforts are now under way to reinstate the policy.

"The board's decision to rescind the policy threatens the safety of our transgender students and students who may not conform to gender norms," said Anthony Martinez of The Civil Rights Agenda. "We will now take the necessary steps toward overturning this decision."

Rick Garcia, an adviser to The Civil Rights Agenda and longtime LGBT rights advocate in the state, said, "As a public accommodation, this school district is prohibited from denying or refusing a transgender individual the full and equal enjoyment of the facilities, goods and services provided to all students."

Garcia noted the climate of harassment that LGBT students face in school, which is documented in reports from the Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network, which found:

- About 57 percent of students reported hearing negative remarks about gender expression from teachers or other school staff.
- About 44 percent of students felt unsafe in schools because of their gender expression.
- Students who were more frequently harassed because of their sexual orientation or gender expression had lower grade point averages than students who were less often harassed.

— L.N.

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**COMMUNITY BRIEFS**



PHOTO: THEYMIGHTBEGIANTS.COM

**They Might Be Giants will perform next spring at a concert to benefit marriage equality.**

**SANDY DELAYS N.Y. CONCERT FOR MARRIAGE EQUALITY CAMPAIGN**

The super storm Sandy forced postponement of the first Freedom To Love Now! A Concert for Marriage Equality.

The event was set to take place at New York City's Beacon Theatre on Oct. 30 but the storm forced its postponement until next spring.

Organizers hope the concert is one of many across the country to raise money for the Freedom to Marry and equality efforts in the states.

Performers booked for New York included Thomas Bartlett aka Doveman, Rufus Wainwright, fun., The National, Toshi Reagon, They Might Be Giants, John Cameron Mitchell with Stephen Trask and Justin Vivian Bond.

Singer and guitarist John Flansburgh from They Might Be Giants said, "I can't recall being in better company for a better cause."

For more, go to [www.freedomtolovenow.com](http://www.freedomtolovenow.com).

**SOUTHEAST CENTER PLANS HARVEST MOON BENEFIT**

The LGBT Center of Southeast Wisconsin holds the Harvest Moon Celebration 6-9 p.m. on Nov. 10 at the Riverbend Nature Center Lodge, 3600 Green Bay Road, Racine.

Tickets to the end-of-year fundraiser start at \$30.

Supporters are invited for cocktails, a silent auction, appetizers, dancing and "a roaring harvest fire in the grand fireplace."

For more, call the center at 262-664-4100.

**MADISON RIDES TO TOP 10 FOR BICYCLING**

USA Today recently named Madison one of the top 10 places in the country for blending



BESTTREKBIKES-REVIEWS.COM

**Madison is a top 10 cycling city.**

bicycling and dining out.

Noting the calories burned in a cycling ride, the newspaper highlighted Madison's restaurant offerings along with being a leader in creating bike lanes and routes.

**SEVEN RIVERS CENTER PLANS POTLUCK, RECEPTION**

LGBT Resource Center for the Seven Rivers Region hosts a discussion at 6 p.m. Nov. 4 with Marilyn Levin.

Levin is the founder of the Gay Alliance of La Crosse Youth or GALAXY.

The program includes a reception and a

potluck.

Also, on Nov. 3, the center encourages volunteers to help in a community clean up. The center will provide a light breakfast before the 9 a.m. work and a lunch after.

For more, contact Melanie Stebbins at [mel.stebbins@hotmail.com](mailto:mel.stebbins@hotmail.com) or 608-377-0975.

The center is at 309 Pearl St., La Crosse.

**REGISTRATION BEGINS FOR GSA CONFERENCE**

The Gay Straight Alliance for Safe Schools is taking registration for the Fall GSA Conference, which takes place 9 a.m.-5 p.m. on Nov. 17 at the First Congregational Church, 137 Algoma Blvd., Oshkosh.

Registration costs \$7, and scholarships are available.

The conference is open to Wisconsin middle and high school students, GSA faculty advisors and other school staff interested in supporting a GSA.

For more, email Tim Michael at [tim@gsafewi.org](mailto:tim@gsafewi.org).

- L.N.

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# WIGOUT!

WISCONSIN GAZETTE ENTERTAINMENT

## Masters of the Canvas

By **Kat Murrell**

Contributing writer

The Milwaukee Art Museum is the second stop for a tour of 48 paintings from the historic Kenwood House outside of London. While the building, a masterpiece of neoclassical elegance, undergoes restoration, the art is taking a working vacation. It is an exquisitely charming guest in Milwaukee.

The paintings are part of what is known as the Iveagh Bequest, given to the British nation by Edward Cecil Guinness, first Earl of Iveagh. If that surname conjures up visions of a frothy pint of dark beer, you are quite right. His great-grandfather founded the Guinness brewery.

However, his prospects in life were not as certain as one might expect. The exhibition catalog says, "As the third son, Edward Cecil stood to inherit neither a title nor an estate nor a family fortune. ... His older brothers and sister fulfilled their social ambitions by marrying into the Irish aristocracy, but Edward Cecil set his sights far beyond Dublin." Showing considerable business savvy, he acquired control of the family company. In 1886, he took it public and, with this fortune, turned to other pursuits, including collecting art.

The sorts of painting especially popular with well-to-do art aficionados of the time included aristocratic portraits. Even though buyers might not have any relation to the subjects, the paintings were prized for the cachet of the artists' reputations and the glow of social status that conferred on the new owner. Guinness' buying spree began in earnest in the late 1880s, as he snatched up sought-after works by

Dutch and Flemish masters such as Rembrandt, Frans Hals and Anthony van Dyke, along with English paintings by Gainsborough, Reynolds and others.

At MAM, the famed Rembrandt self-portrait is shown in its own alcove, like a mini-exhibition within the larger scope of the show. The painting depicts the artist at around 60 years old, a virtuoso in his life's work. The translucent lines splayed across his body are the implements of his trade – brushes, a maul stick and palette. Expressive yet concise, this series of symbols communicates what Rembrandt knew best.

Rembrandt's face, however, is a locus of change. The surface is almost otherworldly. It seems like something that accumulated over time rather than a single painting by one man. It has been speculated that the painting is unfinished, though this is not certain.

Circles in the background add to the mystery. One theory is they were eventually going to be painted as maps. Another theory, more widely disseminated, is that they reflect an old story, tracing back to ancient Greece, that the evidence of an artist's expertise was in the execution of a perfect circle.

A contemporary of Rembrandt, also famed for panache with a paintbrush, was Frans Hals. The exhibition includes his portrait of Pieter van den Broecke – a traveller, cloth merchant and one of the first Dutchman on record to have sampled the then-exotic beverage coffee.

Hals paints this worldly man with bravado. His eyes twinkle, his lips are pursed as though sharing a joke. Hals' paint handling makes this

painting exciting. Thick, skittering slashes of paint form the hands, and dashes and slashes make up lacy collars and cuffs, part of the fashion of the day.

The second half of the exhibition largely focuses on British artists. Artistic rivals Sir Joshua Reynolds and Thomas Gainsborough are well-represented.

Gainsborough was an adventurous upstart. In 1759 he moved to Bath, England, in hopes of improving his painting career by attracting a fashionable clientele for portraiture. He succeeded, and one stunning example is "Mary, Countess Howe." While her husband was being treated for gout, she was having her portrait done.

She is a commanding figure with a clear and steady gaze, glistening in lush pink satin, her bloodless white flesh appearing sculptural against an ominous sky. She lifts her diaphanous skirts and lace with a bare hand, her other hand still sheathed and holding the other glove. This is a small detail, but is meant to relieve the sense of formality. It shows that she is comfortable, yet still a formidable, important figure, which was on a par with her social ambitions.

In contrast, Reynolds' paintings often presented society ladies in the guise of goddesses or other figures of flattering mythology. The most sensual of these is "Kitty Fisher as 'Cleopatra' Dissolving the Pearl." This plays on a famous story of Cleopatra and her amorous designs on Mark Anthony. To impress the Roman, she dropped a large pearl in wine, dissolved it, and then drank it.

Kitty Fisher was a famous courtesan in the London

### ON VIEW

"Rembrandt, Van Dyke, Gainsborough: The Treasures of Kenwood House, London" continues at the Milwaukee Art Museum through Jan. 6, 2013.



PHOTO: COURTESY AMERICAN FEDERATION OF ARTS

**"Princess Henrietta of Lorraine Attended by a Page," oil on canvas, by Anthony van Dyke.**

scene, a modern femme fatale with similar powers of seduction. When these paintings were shown during their day, exhibition visitors would have recognized the contemporary figures – aristocrats and actresses alike – and the tangled stories of scandal and romance attached to them.

While the taste for celeb-

rity gossip was not new, the depiction of children in art was. Prior to the 19th century, kids were usually shown as miniature adults. The exhibition rounds out with examples of youngsters in the spirit of the new view of childhood, which is familiar to us today.

Joseph Wright's dark paint-

ing shows two girls, illuminated by candlelight, who have given up dressing dolls and have moved on to placing a bonnet on a disgruntled kitten. Today, there is probably a similar video somewhere on YouTube.

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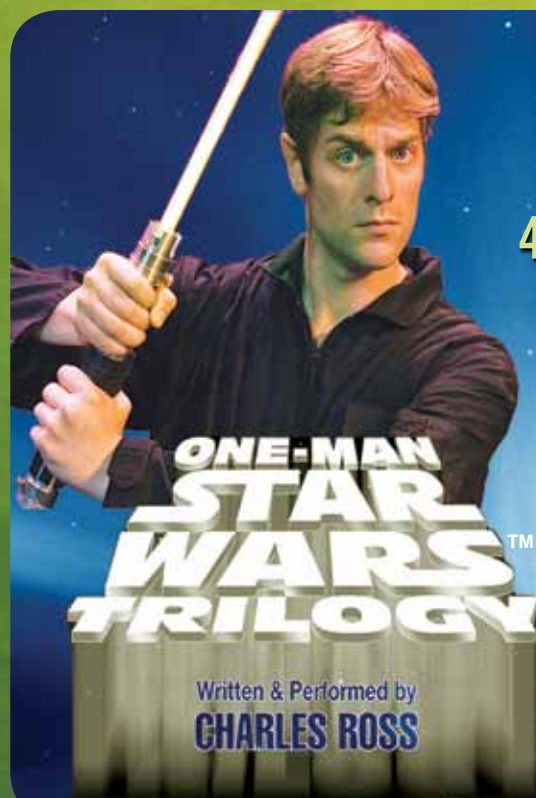


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## 'Cloud Atlas' aims for profound and misses



PHOTO: COURTESY

"Cloud Atlas" is in theaters now.

By Christy Lemire

AP writer

Maybe if you're 20 years old and high in your dorm room with your friends, the platitudes presented in "Cloud Atlas" might seem profound.

Anyone else in his or her right mind should recognize it for what it is: a bloated, pseudo-intellectual, self-indulgent slog through some notions that are really rather facile.

Ooh, we're all interconnected and our souls keep meeting up with each other over the centuries, regardless of race, gender or geography. We're individual drops of water but we're all part of the same ocean. That is deep, man.

Perhaps it all worked better on the page. "Cloud Atlas" comes from the best-selling novel of the same name by David Mitchell, which encompasses six stories over 500 years.

Sibling directors Lana and Andy Wachowski — who actually have come up with some original, provocative ideas of their own in the "Matrix" movies — teamed up with "Run Lola Run" director Tom Tykwer. They chopped up the various narratives and intercut between them out of order. The A-list actors who comprise the cast play multiple parts across the var-

ious stories and in elaborate makeup that's often laughable.

Tom Hanks is a scheming doctor on a voyage across the South Pacific in 1849, a trash-talking novelist in present-day London and a peaceful goatherd who's part of a post-apocalyptic tribe in the 2300s. Halle Berry is a composer's white trophy wife in 1936 Scotland, an investigative reporter in 1973 San Francisco and a member of an elite society of precursors in the farthest future. Hugh Grant is often the least recognizable of all beneath layers of prosthetics and goop: At one point, he's a vengeful old man; at another, he's the raging leader of a band of cannibals.

Maybe the concept of transformation felt especially resonant for Lana Wachowski, a transgender woman. But rather than serving as a satisfying, cohesive device, the multiple-parts strategy feels like a distracting gimmick. It keeps you constantly wondering: "Who is that actor made up to look Asian? Who is that beneath the henna tattoos and macrame?" It takes you out of the heart of the stories and holds you at arm's length.

"Cloud Atlas" is edited fluidly and often wondrous to look at, but totally inef-

fective from an emotional perspective. As you're watching it you may ponder as I did whether any of these six stories across disparate genres would be more compelling as a stand-alone film. Possibly the one set pre-World War II, starring Ben Whishaw as an up-and-coming composer who flees London when he's exposed as gay.

The most ridiculous segment takes place "After the Fall" in Hawaii in the mid-2300s. It requires Hanks and Berry to yammer at each other in a disjointed, stripped-down version of English that's as indecipherable as it is laughable.

On the other end of the spectrum, the most engaging tale is set in the gleaming, futuristic city of Neo Seoul, a place of detailed, totalitarian precision built atop the remnants of a flood. Sonmi-451 (Doona Bae) is one of countless fabricated restaurant workers locked in a daily routine of servitude. But she longs to think for herself and dares to escape with the help of a young revolutionary played by Jim Sturgess. Sure, it's hugely derivative with its garish, dystopian aesthetic and themes of machines turning on the people who invented them, but it's also the only one that comes close to capturing any real sense of humanity.

# Broadway lights up Wisconsin's theater season

From an oversized elf to a creepy TV family from the 1960s, from "hair bands" of the 1980s to doo-wop legends of the 1950s, from an English nanny who can fly to witches who wish they weren't, Broadway hits are headed to at least three Wisconsin performing arts venues this season.

Fans of several of the shows can catch them multiple times during their in-state runs.

Milwaukee's Marcus Center for the Performing Arts, Madison's Overture Center for the Arts and the Fox Cities Performing Arts Center in Appleton are each offering a five-show series during the remaining 2012-13 season. Three of shows – "Catch Me If You Can," "Rock of Ages" and "Wicked" – are scheduled to appear in two of the three venues.

Following is a rundown of the hits.

## MARCUS CENTER, MILWAUKEE

**"Rock of Ages"** (Nov. 13-18). Young love blossoms on L.A.'s Sunset Strip in 1987 as a boy, a girl and a bevy of heavy metal hair bands take us back to the decade that a lot of us might rather forget. If your life has seriously lacked regular doses of Twisted Sister and Whitesnake, this headbanger is for you.

**"Memphis"** (Jan. 8-13). Music of a different sort vibrates across the stage in this musical about a 1950s radio DJ and a nightclub singer ready to change the world. Boasting soaring emotions and roof-raising rhythmic sounds, "Memphis" returns to the start of the rock 'n' roll revolution.

**"Sister Act"** (Feb. 19-24). Oscar-winner Alan Mencken's music helps tell the tale of a wannabe diva, on the run after witnessing a murder, who winds up hiding in a convent. In this show based on the Whoopi Goldberg film, she does what any diva would do and teaches the other sisters to perform.

**"Catch Me If You Can"** (April 23-28). Based on the true story of con artist Frank Abagnale Jr., as told in the Dreamworks film, the show boasts a dream cast of creators, with a book by

Terrence McNally, a score by Marc Shaiman and Scott Wittman and choreography by Jerry Mitchell.

**"Wicked"** (June 12-July 7). So much happened in Oz before Dorothy dropped in, including this back story of Glinda the Good Witch and Elphaba, her green-skinned sister who went on to become the Wicked Witch of the West. The role won Idina Menzel the 2004 Tony for best actress.

Info: [www.marcuscenter.org/broadway](http://www.marcuscenter.org/broadway).

## OVERTURE CENTER, MADISON

**"Jersey Boys"** (Nov. 7-25). Combine four New Jersey street toughs, one with an impressive falsetto voice, and a closeted bisexual record producer and songwriter, and you have the story of The Four Seasons, arguably the best doo-wop group of all time and one of Broadway's hottest tickets.

**"Rock of Ages"** (Dec. 4-9). See above.

**"West Side Story"** (Feb. 12-17). Blend Anglo and Puerto Rican street gangs with the lyrics of Stephen Sondheim and the music of Leonard Bernstein and you have a Broadway classic that hauntingly retells the story of Romeo and Juliet in 1950s Manhattan.

**"Mary Poppins"** (March 12-17). One of the season's two Disney retreads tells the tale of a magical English nanny and a cockney chimney sweep who sing, dance and soar through the air to the music of the film, including the tongue-twisting "Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious," for those who like to sound precocious.

**"Wicked"** (May 22-June 9). See above.

Info: [www.overturecenter.com](http://www.overturecenter.com).

## FOX CITIES PAC, APPLETON

**"Elf"** (Nov. 13-18). This is a faithful adaptation of the 2003 Will Ferrell comedy about Buddy, the boy who thought he was one of Santa's helpers. He survives a variety of misadventures to discover his inner elf.

**"Catch Me If You Can"** (Dec. 18-23). See above.



PHOTO: PHOENIX ENTERTAINMENT

The national touring company of "Rock of Ages."

**"The Addams Family"** (Feb. 26-March 3). They are still creepy and kooky, mysterious and spooky, and altogether ooky. (Is that a word?) But this time the tale of Gomez, Morticia and the gang is set to music, with the book by "Jersey Boys" authors Marshall Brickman and Rick Elice and creative consultation by four-time Tony winner Jerry Zaks.

**"The Lion King"** (April 9-May 5). Award-winning director Julie Taymor's arresting imagery, which integrates live performers and puppetry, is visually stunning in this reinterpretation of Disney's tale of Simba, the young lion prince called upon to take back his kingdom. Music and lyrics are by Elton John and Tim Rice.

**"War Horse"** (June 25-30). South Africa's life-size Handsprings Puppets tell the tale of a beloved horse shipped to the front lines during World War I and the animal's courage and survival. This is the rare case of the Broadway show that then became a movie, rather than the other way around.

Info: [www.foxcities.broadway.com](http://www.foxcities.broadway.com).

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# Director approaches 'Anne Frank' with documentary precision

By Jody Hirsh

Contributing writer

"The Diary of Anne Frank," produced in 1955, only 10 years after the Holocaust won both the Tony Award and the Pulitzer Prize in 1956. Playwrights Frances Goodrich and Albert Hacket based their work on the actual diary of Anne Frank, a Jewish girl living in Amsterdam who, at 13, went into hiding from the Nazis with her family.

For many people, "The Diary of Anne Frank" constitutes their first exposure to the Holocaust. The book is still read in public schools as part of Holocaust education programs.

KJ Sanchez, who directs the Milwaukee Repertory Theater's current production of "The Diary of Anne Frank," is a specialist in what's known as "documentary theater."

Based in New York, she is founder and CEO of American Records, a theater company that produces edgy, thought-provoking theater about contemporary issues, such as the piece "ReEntry," based on interviews with U.S. Marines returning from combat.

Sanchez says her direction of "Anne Frank" is similar to the way she approaches the contemporary stories that American Records produces.

"Anne Frank is far from a dusty chestnut," she says. "Context is always contemporary. A show like 'Anne Frank' is a story that took place more than 50 years ago, but it shows us today what we're capable of as humans."

Sanchez says "Anne Frank" demonstrates that even in the worst possible circumstances, we are capable of joy, compassion, love, humor, strength, courage, and dignity.

The eight characters of the story hid in a secret annex for two years. Yet they got up every day, dressed and went about their lives in the cramped quarters of their hidden home.

There is great humor in the play, along with wisdom and spirit. A particularly touching moment occurs when Anne, by this time 15, has "a date" with 17-year-old Peter, who shares the Frank family's cramped quarters. Although they can't actually go out, each dresses up – she in a dress, a stole and jewelry, and he in a jacket and tie.

In many ways, the production is a total ensemble piece, and Sanchez, new to Milwaukee and to the Rep, created a tightly knit team among the company members and the out-of-town performers. Properties director Jim Guy says, "KJ is one of



PHOTO MICHAEL BROSILOW

Emily Berman, Jonathan Gillard Daly, Larry Neumann Jr., J. Alexander Coe, Deborah Staples, Lee E. Ernst, Laura Gordon and Lauren Hirte in "The Diary of Anne Frank."

the smartest, most thoughtful, well-prepared directors I have ever worked with – a true listener and collaborator. When I told her what a pleasure it is working for her, she corrected me saying, 'You mean working WITH me.'"

Sanchez's passion for documentary theater has lent much to the Rep production. "In other productions I've seen of this play," she says, "I've thought it odd that this is a play about confinement, yet the designers open up the stage, giving the impression of space."

The design of her production, by scenic designer Dan Conway, is modeled after the historic space. The furniture replicates that of the secret annex in Amsterdam, and the square footage is exactly that of the original space.

The actors have to create a sort of natural choreography, navigating the corners of the common space – the kitchen – just as the actual people must have.

Sanchez believes there might be an LGBT angle to the show. The dentist Mr. Dussel, who shares the hiding place with the Franks and the Van Daans, was in reality Fritz Pfeffer. He was married, divorced, engaged and had a grown son. The character Dussel, however, was never married and lived alone. He suddenly had to go in hiding, arriving at the annex in broad daylight.

Jews were the primary victims of the Holocaust, but the Nazis persecuted gays as well as other minorities. Ultimately they exterminated 12 million people, half of them

## ON STAGE

"The Diary of Anne Frank" runs through Dec. 2 in the Quadracci Powerhouse at Milwaukee Repertory Theater, 108 E. Wells. Call 414-224-9490. Visit [milwaukeearep.com](http://milwaukeearep.com).

Jews.

Why did the playwrights change the details of the real biography? "Maybe it's me wishing there was a way to highlight the plight of gays," Sanchez says. "It's possible. I discussed the possibility with the company. But ... it's my secret."

Sanchez says experiencing "Anne Frank" makes members of the audience better people. "Don't be afraid to come to this play," she says. "It's entertaining, uplifting and surprisingly funny."

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# Is Milwaukee ready to 'stand up and dance'?

By Michael Muckian

Contributing writer

Ruth Pointer "was a struggling single mother trying to raise two children and living with my parents," she says, when she joined her sisters' singing group. "I realized how much money I could make in a short amount of time singing and said, 'Wow! I can support my children doing this,'" says Pointer, now 66.

Pointer's first paying gig was singing backup to Sylvester James, a notoriously androgynous gay performer and former member of The Cockettes, who was then performing in San Francisco as Sylvester and His Hot Band. The sisters also sang backup on Sylvester's 1972 jazz album "Scratch My Flower," so named for the gardenia-shaped scratch-and-sniff sticker on the cover.

Sylvester was Pointer's first exposure to gay audiences. The experience helped set her expectations

for a career to come.

"Gay concertgoers love music and they love to dance," she says. "I have visited several gay clubs since and I have always had so much fun."

Thanks to that early exposure, Pointer decided that her group would be all about the performance. She plans on showing Milwaukee what that means when The Pointer Sisters appear Nov. 15 at Northern Lights in the Potawatomi Bingo Casino, where the vocal trio's greatest hits will populate the evening's playlist.

"I want Milwaukee to know that they can stand up, they can dance, they can whoop and they can holler," she says. "I want everyone to have a good time."

The current Pointer Sisters consist of a revolving cast of family members. Ruth and her sister Anita remain from the original group, but Anita's health issues sometimes keep her from performing. Ruth's daughter

Issa Pointer and granddaughter Sadako Johnson fill in as needed to maintain the three-voice balance on stage.

The Pointer Sisters first began performing when sisters June and Bonnie formed "The Pointers, a

## The Pointer Sisters are all about performance.

Pair" in 1969 in West Oakland, Calif. The duo grew to a trio with the addition of sister Anita and became a quartet in 1972 when Ruth joined the group in the wake of record deals — first with Atlantic Records and then with Blue Thumb.

"My sisters got a recording contract and asked me if I wanted to join the group," Pointer says. "I said, 'Hell, yeah!'"

Pointer and her sisters, the daughters of the Rev. Elton Pointer and his wife Sarah, came from a Church of God musical background. The parents were from Arkansas and brought with them a love of country music to complement the church hymns, which were not traditional gospel, but more harmonic and serene. They did not approve of rock 'n' roll.

The traditional influences eventually combined with the jazz preferences of producer David Rubinson to give The Pointer Sisters' self-titled first album its unique sound. The 1973 recording, which went gold the next year, yielded the band's first hit, composer Allen Toussaint's "Yes We Can Can." Old-fashioned thrift store clothing also

gave the group an original look, which helped them appeal to 1970s audiences.

Pointer says the group's penultimate performance came in 1974 at the then-new San Francisco Opera House. The concert, captured on the double album "Live at the Opera House," was the group's first live recording and the first time contemporary artists had performed at the prestigious venue.

"I can still remember it," Pointer says. "I was so nervous backstage that I thought I was going to throw up."

The Pointer Sisters' blend of pop, rock, blues, dance and country kept the group's sound fresh and evolving. They won a 1975 Grammy Award in the country category for "Fairytale," eventually covered by Elvis Presley. They landed on the stage as the first

African-American female artists to perform at Nashville's Grand Ole Opry.

The sisters went on to record Bruce Springsteen's "Fire" and appeared on MTV with their dance hits "Jump (for my love)," a 1985 Grammy winner, and "I'm So Excited."

Pointer credits the group's stability partly to the fact that they are all members of the same family. They incorporate a wide variety of influences,

including heavy doses of the Motown sound and Philadelphia soul. The Temptations, The Supremes, Stevie Wonder, Marvin Gaye, the O'Jays and Teddy Pendergrass also come up frequently in discussions about musical influences.

"These were people we loved and we wanted to have their music in our ears all the time," Pointer says.

Performance characterizes the essence of The Pointer Sisters, something she says is true for most musicians. "Studio recordings are very

controlled, with the producer dictating a lot of what you do. It can be frustrating," Pointer says. "When you are on stage, it's all about what you want to do."

And what Pointer wants to do is leave a legacy of enjoyment for audiences of all types.

"I'd like us to be known as good people who worked hard, loved their fans, and didn't know when to stop," Pointer says. "As musicians, we play as hard as we can, and I think we're pretty damn good."



The Pointer Sisters, with Ruth Pointer in the center.

PHOTO: COURTESY

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# Why Lynn Shelton is so interested in gays

## Interview

GREGG SHAPIRO

Straight filmmaker Lynn Shelton sure likes the gays. Her 2009 comedic feature "Humpday" was about a hetero bromance that went to the next level. Without giving away too much detail, "Your Sister's Sister" is a film stocked with a variety of revelations. The movie shines a spotlight on strained sibling relationships and complicated friendships. It doesn't offer easy answers, but it makes you laugh and cry and keeps you guessing.

"Your Sister's Sister" was scheduled for release on Blu-ray and DVD in early November.

**Gregg Shapiro: The movie opens at a memorial service where Jack (Mark Duplass), the brother of the deceased Tom, doesn't speak well of the dead. Have you had such an experience?**

Lynn Shelton: I've been at memorial services where people have drunk too much (laughs) and said things that made other people uncomfortable. I like the idea of introducing the character in a way that makes the audience just as uncomfortable as the other people room. But then you eventually end up rooting for him. It's kind of like saying right at the outset, these people are flawed. But you also get in the process of his little speech that he really knew and loved his brother probably more than any of the other people in that room. He just wants him back, really, and he wants the whole person to be acknowledged, as opposed to this glorified, sanctified version.

**Jack has a number of problems, including alcohol. Are you trying to send a message about drinking?**

No, I really wasn't at all. It's a little confusing, because there is an initial talk. There is this memorial scene and there's this talk and Iris says, "This is your intervention."



PHOTO: COURTESY

"Your Sister's Sister" was just released on DVD.

I was worried that people would think she was talking about an alcohol intervention, but it really wasn't. It was just that he had this year where he had just been mired emotionally and he's been acting self-destructive in general. It wasn't so much a drugs-and-alcohol kind of intervention, it was an emotional one: "It's time to get your head together." It's true, when you are in really bad depression (laughs) alcohol's probably not going to be your best place to go.

**The character of Hannah (Rosemarie DeWitt) is the lesbian half-sister of Jack's best friend Iris (Emily Blunt). Why did you make Hannah a lesbian?**

In that initial encounter with (her) and Jack, it definitely changes the timbre of their relationship. Sex is off the table. There's a certain level of rapport that they can have that (they couldn't) if they were both straight and single and on the market. I think the biggest delight about seeing the film is all the little reveals.

**Your previous film "Humpday" dealt with gay subject matter, too. Do you have a gay relative or something?**

(Laughs.) My stepsister is a lesbian, yes. I've had dear friends who are gay men and lesbians my whole life. I feel very at home in the gay community. I was an honorary lesbian when I was asked to understudy Lisa Kron of the New York theater group the Five Lesbian Brothers many

years ago when I went on tour with them. I was like, "You are my family, you are my people." And I've had crushes on women. I remember them asking me, "Why aren't you a lesbian, Lynn?" (It's because) I fell in love with this guy (laughs). I've always been interested in the boundaries of sexual identity. There was a time in my life where I thought everybody must be bisexual. You should be able to just fall in love with anybody.

**Was this movie a way for you to comment on sisterly and female bonds?**

I'm endlessly fascinated by human beings and by our relationships with the self and how the self shifts. How we have different masks that we show with different people as we try to connect, because we're so desperate to connect with others. In "Humpday," here are these two straight guys who really love each other and want to be bonded the way they felt that bond in college, and yet they're straight guys so they can't – it's complicated for them. I find that incredibly poignant. Here are these two sisters (in "Your Sister's Sister") who clearly adore each other and yet they can't quite connect because of all of the stuff in between. That breaks my heart and draws me in again and again, that subject matter.

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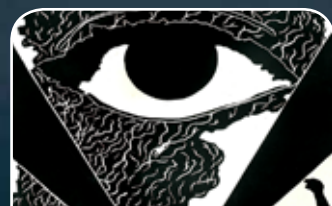
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# Soulstice turns to comedy with 'Blithe Spirit'



PHOTO: FROM DVD BEAVER.COM

Actress Kay Hammond portrayed Elvira in the 1945 Technicolor British film version of "Blithe Spirit," also starring Rex Harrison and directed by David Lean.

By Michael Muckian

Contributing writer

What could be funnier than watching the spirit of a departed socialite, mistakenly conjured by a séance gone wrong, torment her re-married husband? Noel Coward found the concept so funny that he wrote the play "Blithe Spirit" – possibly his best-known work – around it.

Soulstice Theatre opens its 2012-13 season on Nov. 2 with the phantasmagorical comedy by the legendary gay author and entertainer.

"I have always loved the show," says Char Manning, who founded the St. Francis theater company and is directing the Coward play. "Soulstice usually gravitates toward drama, but 'Blithe Spirit' has always been on my list. When the chance to put it into the season came, I jumped."

The premise behind this campy comedy of ill manners is simple. Novelist Charles Condomine (Steve Pfisterer), seeking material for his next book, stages a séance in hopes

**'It's a comedy that invites reflection.'**

of generating ideas. He invites the eccentric clairvoyant Madame Arcati (Liz Mistele) to lead the proceedings.

Things don't quite go as planned, however, and the séance brings back Condomine's annoying first wife Elvira (Jillian Smith), much to the dismay of his current wife Ruth (Shannon Tyburski). It's clear that Elvira hasn't lost her amorous feelings for her spouse, who is the only one who can see her, and that's something that the button-down Ruth eventually finds intolerable.

Coward's witty dialogue crackles throughout the play, written in 1941 over a period of just five days while the author was on holiday on the Snowdonia coast in Wales.

Comedy is notoriously dif-

ficult to stage, but Manning is confident that the talents of her cast, the high quality of the writing and her understanding of the material will make "Blithe Spirit" a success.

"Tempo and timing are the keys to effectively playing comedy," Manning says. "Noel Coward is brilliant, and if we trust that we'll be just fine."

"Blithe Spirit" originally opened in London's West End, enjoying the longest run of any nonmusical play in British theater up until that time. Coward had by then spent time in New York, and he transported the tougher, faster-paced American style of theater to London's more genteel stages. This gave the work a fresh quality and added to its popularity.

Coward wrote "Blithe Spirit" at a time during World War II when things were not going well for Britain, and a small protest arose from critics who felt the play made fun of death. However, the entertainment value of the work prevailed – and has endured. The play has

## ON STAGE

Soulstice Theatre's production of Noel Coward's "Blithe Spirit" runs Nov. 2–17. For tickets and information, go to [www.soulsticetheatre.org](http://www.soulsticetheatre.org).

been adapted for film, radio and television, and a musical version titled "High Spirits" opened on Broadway in 1964.

Generally considered escapist fair, the play presents themes that might invite reflection, Manning says.

"A part of our mission is to do meaningful theatre," she says. "It is not always easy to find a comedy that 'makes meaning,' but this show has several nuggets. If the audience walks away having some things (to think about) after having spent an evening of laughing and enjoying a night of theatre, I will feel we have been successful."

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# Wisconsin uncorks Beaujolais Nouveau season

## Dining

MICHAEL MUCKIAN

By Michael Muckian

Contributing writer

Mark your calendars and ready your palates. At one minute past midnight on Nov. 15, the 2012 Beaujolais Nouveau will begin making its way to thirsty wine lovers around the world.

The third Thursday of each November is set aside for the ceremonial release of the new wine from France's Beaujolais region. Pressed from grapes picked a scant eight weeks before, the wine is light, fruity and intended to be drunk young. Enthusiastic imbibers around the world will race for the first taste.

The Alliance Française de Milwaukee will host its 15th annual Fête du Beaujolais Nouveau on Nov. 15 from 6 to 9 p.m. at the Intercontinental Hotel, 139 E. Kilbourn Ave. At Chez Jacques, 1022 S. First St., the bottles will uncork at 5 p.m., and the wine will be accompanied by a complete dinner with entrée choices that include Beef Bourguignon, Coq au Vin and Moules Marinières.

For Philippe Coquard, winemaker and co-owner of Wollersheim Winery outside of Prairie du Sac (north of Madison), the event strikes a little closer to home. A native of Beaujolais, Coquard will that same day release his own Ruby Nouveau, a wine he says ties his past firmly with his future.

"Our Ruby Nouveau is very dear to me because it's really about my heritage and my family," says Coquard, who arrived at the winery in 1984 as an intern

**'It's a fun light way to celebrate that first taste of the season.'**

to founder Bob Wollersheim. "Not only does it reflect my roots in Beaujolais, but it also was the first wine Bob had asked me to make when I got to Wollersheim."

Wollersheim, who died in 2005, liked what his new employee had produced and promoted him to winemaker in 1985. Coquard now co-owns the winery with his wife Julie, Wollersheim's daughter. The winery was recently named the 2012 Winery of the Year at the San Diego International Wine Competition.

Although similar in style and process, Ruby Nouveau differs from its French cousins in the type of grape used in its production. Authentic Beaujolais Nouveau is produced from Gamay, a red wine grape often found in French rosés. By French law, the grapes must be hand-picked and pressed using carbonic maceration, a whole-berry fermentation process that extracts the grapes' fruit flavors while helping it avoid the bitter tannins from the grape skins. Close to 50 million liters of Beaujolais Nouveau are produced each year for local consumption and distribution to the United States, Germany and other countries.

Coquard uses a similar process with estate-grown Marechal Foch, a heartier red

wine grape better suited to the Wisconsin climate. Like Beaujolais Nouveau, Ruby's brief fermentation time does not allow for much extraction from the fruit, including the tannins from the skin. The result is a wine that is well rounded and easy on the palate, Coquard says.

"This year's Ruby Nouveau is similar to last year's as it is softer, fuller and rounder than a typical Nouveau, with an extra deep ruby color with flavors reminiscent of black raspberry and blueberries," Coquard says. "But that flavor concentration and body is the result of a more concentrated fruit from the dry summer and intense summer sun."

This summer's uncooperative weather has reduced slightly the amount of Ruby Nouveau available. But there will be plenty of the wine on hand, especially at the winery's Nov. 15 release party, which begins at 11 a.m. with a toast to the new vintage.

Serious wine lovers have always challenged the excessive hype around the release of Beaujolais Nouveau, which, because of its youth, does not enjoy the same prestige as its more sophisticated counterparts. Coquard dismisses the criticism, remembering the events of his youth in Beaujolais and the reason for the celebration.

"In my village, Nouveau was always a celebration," Coquard says. "One of the village's winemakers would invite all of the others to toast at midnight, and there would be goat cheese and sausage and wine. It was more about talking about the harvest and hunting and the Nouveau of that year."

The winemaker admits that much of the current attention

paid to Beaujolais Nouveau is simply designed to sell more wine. But the hype shouldn't detract from the wine itself, which has a distinct role to play in global viticulture.

"I don't think the Beaujolais Nouveau is as popular as it used to be, but I feel it's still important because it's really about the celebration of a new vintage," he says. "It's a festive time of year and it's a fun light way to celebrate that first taste of the season."

### CHEERS!

For information on the Wollersheim Ruby Nouveau release party, visit [www.wollersheim.com](http://www.wollersheim.com). For information on the Alliance Française de Milwaukee's 15th annual Fête du Beaujolais Nouveau, visit [www.afmilwaukee.org](http://www.afmilwaukee.org). For more on the Beaujolais wine dinner at Chez Jacques restaurant, visit [www.chezjacques.com](http://www.chezjacques.com).



PHOTO: COURTESY

**Winemaker Philippe Coquard, co-owner of Wollersheim Winery outside of Prairie du Sac, samples pinot noir right from the barrel to determine when it will be ready to bottle.**

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Thomas Gainsborough, *Mary, Countess Howe*, ca. 1764 (detail), Kenwood House, English Heritage; Iveagh Bequest. Photo courtesy American Federation of Arts.

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## Music

GREGG SHAPIRO

# Aimee Mann's brings her charm to Milwaukee

We met Aimee Mann, crowned with spiky, bleached blond hair and braided tail, belting "hush, hush, voices carry" in the video for the song "Voices Carry" by the Boston band 'Til Tuesday. Mann's charismatic performance and songwriting skills were superior to the band as a whole. By the end of that decade, with two solid albums under their studded belts, 'Til Tuesday called it quits.

Mann was plagued with record label troubles from the demise of 'Til Tuesday through the release of her marvelous 1993 solo debut "Whatever," on the short-lived Imago label. Unfortunately, although not surprisingly, she didn't receive much better treatment from the otherwise preoccupied folks at DGC/Geffen when she released the equally good "I'm With Stupid" in 1995.

Mann's fortunes began

to change when "Save Me," one of the songs she wrote for the 1999 Paul Thomas Anderson movie "Magnolia," earned her Grammy, Oscar and Golden Globe nominations. Some of Mann's songs from "Magnolia," including "Deathly," "Driving Sideways" and "You Do," were included on her third solo album "Bachelor No. 2 or, The Last Remains of the Dodo," released on Mann's own SuperEgo record label. In the years that followed, Mann put out three more enduring studio albums, as well as a live CD/DVD set and a Christmas disc.

"Charmer," her latest release, takes a while to warm up the listener. But when it does, there's no turning back. The synthy title track/album opener harkens back to Mann's early days in Boston. It sounds like a long lost track by her fellow Bostonians The Cars – but

with much better lyrics. Even if you aren't a dog lover, it's hard to resist "Labrador," the musical equivalent of a cold wet nose and sloppy kiss, complete with Mann's trademark turn of phrase and life lessons.

The track "Crazytown" is worth a visit and "Living a Lie," featuring guest duet vocals by James Mercer of The Shins, is a treat. Mann offers useful and concerned advice on "Gumby" ("Please, call your daughter again") and toys with explosives on "Gamma Ray."

Prepare to be charmed.

## ON STAGE

Aimee Mann performs on Nov. 11 at The Pabst, 144 E. Wells, Milwaukee, and on Nov. 16 at the Stoughton Opera House in Stoughton.



PHOTO: COURTESY

From the video for Aimee Mann's bouncy single "Charmer."

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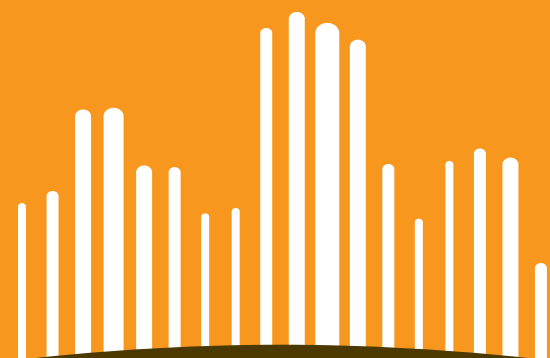
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Blues in the Night

PHOTO: MICHAEL BROSILOW

## ~ ONGOING ~

Bartell Theatre, 113 E. Mifflin in Madison, presents the Tony Award winning play **"The Normal Heart"** by Larry Kramer through Nov. 3. Call 608-204-0280.

UW Madison's University Theatre presents a collection of Samuel Beckett's short plays under the production title **"I Can't Go On. I'll Go On,"** through Nov. 3 in Hemsley Theatre, 821 University in Madison. Call 608-265-ARTS (2787).

Milwaukee Repertory Theater, 108 E. Wells, presents **"The Mountaintop"** by Katori Hall, through Nov. 4 in the Stiemke Studio. Call 414-224-9490.

Renaissance Theaterworks begins its 20th season with **"Enfrascada,"** a comedy of romantic revenge, through Nov. 11 in the Studio Theatre at the Broadway Theatre Center, 158 N. Broadway. Call 414-291-7800.

**"Big The Musical,"** based on the motion picture "Big," runs through Nov. 11 in the Todd Wehr Theater at Marcus Center for the Performing Arts at the corner of Water and State. Call 414-273-2787.

The Racine Theatre Guild, 2519 Northwestern (Highway 38) in Racine, presents the Thanksgiving comedy **"A Nice Family Gathering"** by Phil Olson through Nov. 11. Call 262-633-4218.

**"The Diary of Anne Frank"** runs through Dec. 2 in the Quadracci Powerhouse at Milwaukee Repertory Theater, 108 E. Wells. Call 414-224-9490.

**"Blues in the Night"** runs through Dec. 23 in the Stackner Cabaret at Milwaukee Repertory Theater, 108 E. Wells. Call 414-224-9490.

**"Trainspotting,"** a stage adaptation of Irvine Welsh's novel, continues through Nov. 4 at Off the Wall Theatre, 127 E. Wells St. in Milwaukee. Call 414-327-3552.



Red Hot Chili Peppers

## NOV. 1, THURSDAY

Lesbian guitar virtuoso **Kaki King** plays Shank Hall, 1434 N. Farwell, at 8 p.m. Call 414-276-7288.

Jingle all the way when **Sleigh Bells** performs at the Majestic, 115 King in Madison, at 8 p.m. Call 608-251-2582.

**Passion Pit** plays The Riverside, 116 W. Wisconsin, at 7 p.m. Call 414-286-3663.

The **Red Hot Chili Peppers** spice things up at 7:30 p.m. at BMO Harris Bradley Center, 1001 N. Fourth. Call 414-227-0400.



## NOV. 2, FRIDAY

Milwaukee foodies rejoice as The Riverside, 116 W. Wisconsin, welcomes **Ina Garten: The Barefoot Contessa**, at 7 p.m. Call 414-286-3663.

The Top 10 finalists from season nine of **"So You Think You Can Dance"** bring their 2012 live tour to the Milwaukee Theatre, 500 W. Kilbourn, at 7:30 p.m. Call 414-566-1375.

Soulstice Theatre, 3770 S. Pennsylvania in St. Francis, presents Noel Coward's classic comedy **"Blithe Spirit,"** through Nov. 17. Call 414-481-2800.

**The Gothic Milwaukee Walking Ghost Tour** begins at 8 p.m. tonight and tomorrow night at Cathedral Square, 520 E. Wells St. Call 414-257-8005.

The Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra presents César Franck's **Symphony in D minor** and Hindemith's **"Mathis der Maler,"** featuring Todd Levy on clarinet, at 8 p.m. tonight and tomorrow night in Uihlein Hall at Marcus Center for the Performing Arts. Call 414-273-7206 or go to marcuscenter.org.

## NOV. 3, SATURDAY

Milwaukee Art Museum, 700 Art Museum Drive, presents its **12th Benefit Art Auction**, a unique opportunity to bid on numerous museum-quality works of art in a wide variety of media, beginning at 6 p.m. Call 414-224-3220 or go to [www.mam.org/calendar/events](http://www.mam.org/calendar/events).

Sample beer, wine and food at the annual **St. Francis Sip & Taste** fundraiser for Community Projects for Seniors from 7-9:30 p.m. in the gym of Marian Center for Nonprofits, 3211 S. Lake Drive, St. Francis. Call 414-483-2430 or go to [cpcforseniors.org](http://cpcforseniors.org).

## NOV. 4, SUNDAY

**The Klezmatiks**, a leading world performer of Eastern European Jewish music, performs at 6 p.m. at UWM's Helen Bader Concert Hall, 2419 E. Kenwood Blvd. Call 414-229-4308.

The Royal Ballet's performance of **"Swan Lake"** screens at noon at Marcus South Shore in Oak Creek, Marcus North Shore in Mequon, Marcus Majestic in Brookfield and Marcus Menomonee Falls.

The **2012 Wisconsin Dog Fair** starts wagging at 10 a.m. at Madison's Alliant Energy Center. Go to [www.badgerkennelclub.com](http://www.badgerkennelclub.com).

## NOV. 7, WEDNESDAY

Overture Center for the Arts, 201 State in Madison, presents the award-winning musical **"Jersey Boys"** through Nov. 25. Call 608-258-4141.

Turner Hall Ballroom, 103 N. Fourth, presents singer/songwriter **Selah Sue** at 7:30 p.m. Call 414-286-3663.

## NOV. 8, THURSDAY

**Pentatonix**, an a cappella act with gay members, performs at 7:30 p.m. at the Majestic, 115 King in Madison. Call 608-251-2582.

As part of the SideNotes Cabaret series, Sunset Playhouse, 800 Elm Grove Road in Elm Grove, presents **"A Sentimental Journey: A Doris Day Retrospective,"** featuring a revue of Doris Day classics performed by Kerry Hart in an intimate cabaret studio setting, through Nov. 18. Call 262-782-4430.

## NOV. 9, FRIDAY

The Domes at Mitchell Park Horticultural Conservatory presents **"Music Under Glass,"** featuring live local bands and an LED light show, from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. at 524 S. Layton Blvd. in West Allis. Go to [www.countyparks.com/horticulture](http://www.countyparks.com/horticulture).

**Uriah Heep** appears at 9 p.m. at Potawatomi Bingo Casino, 1721 Canal St. Call 800-729-7244.



Wanda Sykes

## NOV. 10, SATURDAY

The Riverside, 116 W. Wisconsin, has out and outspoken comedian **Wanda Sykes** at 7 p.m. Call 414-286-3663.

## NOV. 11, SUNDAY

Singer/songwriter **Aimee Mann** is in concert at The Pabst, 144 E. Wells, at 7:30 p.m. Call 414-286-3663.

Boswell Book Company, 2559 N. Downer, presents Milwaukee-based poet **Louisa Loveridge Gallas**, author of the new collection, "Rescue the Good Stuff," at 3 p.m. Call 414-332-1181.

Dresden Dolls fans delight as Turner Hall Ballroom, 103 N. Fourth, presents **Amanda Palmer & The Grand Theft Orchestra** at 7 p.m. Call 414-286-3663.

## NOV. 13, TUESDAY

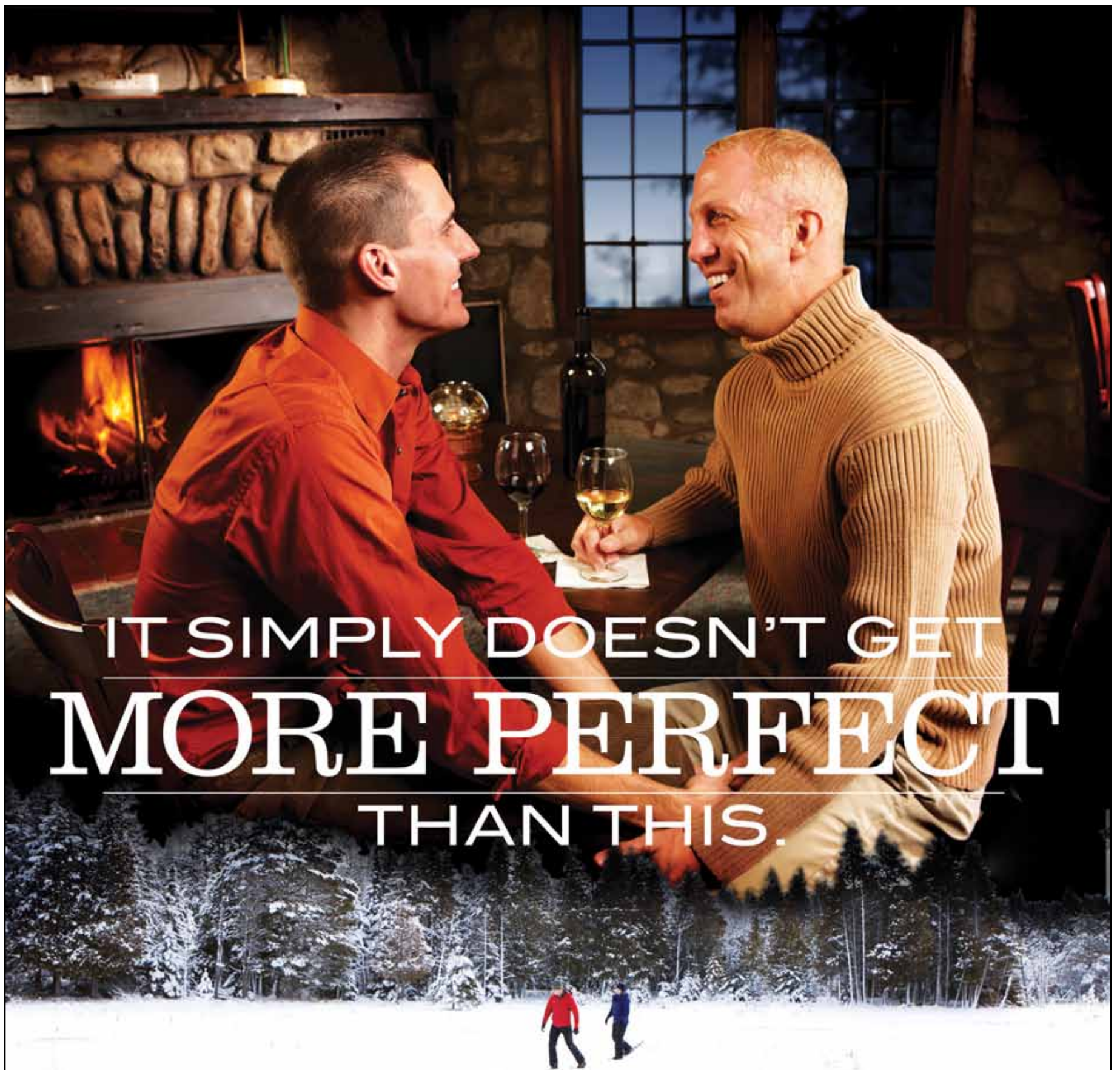
Based on the hit 2003 movie, **"Elf the Musical"** runs through Nov. 18 at Fox Cities Performing Arts Center, 400 W. College Ave. in Appleton. Call 920-730-3760.

The Marcus Center for the Performing Arts and Broadway Across America present **"Rock of Ages,"** through Nov. 18. Call 414-273-2787.

## NOV. 15, THURSDAY

Still "So Excited" after all these years, **The Pointer Sisters** play The Northern Lights Theater at Potawatomi Bingo Casino, 1721 W. Canal, at 8 p.m. Call 414-847-7922.

**Luna Negra Dance Theater** performs Latin-inspired dance at 7:30 p.m. at the John Michael Kohler Arts Center, 608 New York Ave. in Sheboygan. Call 920-458-6144.



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