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A fast-tracked "right-to-work" bill presents the first big challenge of Scott Walker's presidential aspirations.



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News with a twist



BEARDED BARE BREWERS' BENEFIT

A group of brewers — brawny and bearded — bared nearly all for the 2015 Brew Men Calendar. The 11 brewers from 3 Sheeps Brewing, 8th Street Ale Haus and Plymouth Brewing Co. posed for the calendar for a cause: to raise money for the Movember Foundation, a nonprofit organization focused on prostate and testicular cancer, and other men's health issues. How did the calendar come to be? From a conversation over a few beers.

BREWED FOR BLACK FRIDAY

Note for next year: A good way to avoid a Black Friday funk is to spend it picking up the highly prized Black Friday beer from Lakefront Brewery in Milwaukee. Within hours of opening on Nov. 28, the brewery sold out of its 5,000 22-ounce bottles. There's no way Wal-Mart could match the brewery's Black Friday, which featured beer on tap, a DJ and breakfast.

R-E-S-P-E-C-T

The Queen of Soul says not to waste your money



WIGWAG

— or soul — on *Respect: The Life of Aretha Franklin*, a recently released unauthorized biography about her that she calls "trashy." The twist is that the writer, David Ritz, collaborated with Franklin on her 1999 biography *Aretha: From These Roots*. Apparently, the diva put the kibosh on letting him write about certain elements of her past, so he decided to follow up all by himself. Sounds like he should have run through the lyrics of "Think" once or twice instead.

YES, VIRGINIA, THERE IS NO GOD

The nonprofit American Atheists ushered in a season of bad tidings with the placement of anti-church billboards in several Bible Belt cities. The billboard shows a girl writing a letter that reads, "Dear Santa, All I want for Christmas is to skip church! I'm too old

for fairy tales." A billboard also went up in Milwaukee courtesy of the Southeast Wisconsin Freethinkers.

PAGING PEPE LE PEW

France has given the world fragrant perfume and stinky cheeses, but the country's latest and greatest olfactory contribution may be a pill that makes farts smell like chocolate. The sweet-smelling product is the creation of Christian Poincheval, an inventor who says the pills will "allow the user to fart through to the New Year in grand style."

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER?

Mariah Carey is known for her five-octave voice, her slinky dresses and her many hits, including "All I Want for Christmas is You." But she's also known for her tardiness, and her behavior at the Rockefeller Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony won't help that reputation. NBC decided to tape Carey performing

By Lisa Neff, Louis Weisberg & Matthew Reddin

before a live audience the night before and air it the next day during the telecast, but the self-titled Queen of Christmas kept the audience waiting while she allegedly met with her estranged husband's divorce attorney. After three hours, NBC pulled the plug. Carey went on live the next day and butchered the song.

GONE FISHING

A Pennsylvania prisoner is free — from his prison toilet. Officials with the Correctional Institution in Coal Township say an inmate was fishing out an object from his toilet when his arm became trapped in a connecting pipe. Emergency personnel worked for several hours before deciding to remove the toilet to free the prisoner's arm.

PRICEY HOLIDAY

The cost to make a gift of the 364 items in the "Twelve Days of Christmas" is \$116,273, just 1.4 per-

cent more than a year ago. Purchasing one set of the 12 items in the Christmas carol costs just \$27,673, according to the 31st annual PNC Wealth Management Christmas Price Index. The cost for many items on the list remained about the same as in 2013, but the cost to hire 10 lords-a-leaping went up from \$5,243 to \$5,348 and the cost of two French hens rose from \$165 to \$181.

FLUSHING FICTION

The Green Bay Water Utility poo-poo'ed tales of a dramatic surge in water use — because of bathroom breaks — during halftime in Packers games. The service checked water consumption during the Oct. 2 game against the Vikings and the Nov. 8 game against the Bears. The results were unremarkable — typical for a Sunday evening and way less than a weekday morning in Green Bay, when kids and workers are readying for the day.

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THE TIME LORDS' BALL</p> <p>DECEMBER 28 • TURNER
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DEC. 29-31 • PABST
JIM GAFFIGAN</p> <p>NEW YEAR'S EVE
DECEMBER 31 • TURNER
THE GET DOWN</p> <p>JANUARY 17 • RIVERSIDE
FRANK CALIENDO</p> <p>JANUARY 17 • TURNER
PABLOVE 6</p> <p>JANUARY 18 • PABST
RAILROAD EARTH</p> <p>JANUARY 19 • TURNER
JUKEBOX THE GHOST</p> | <p>JANUARY 23 • RIVERSIDE
DANCING WITH THE STARS LIVE!</p> <p>JANUARY 25 • PABST
GHOST HUNTERS LIVE</p> <p>JANUARY 31 • RIVERSIDE
HOWIE MANDEL</p> <p>FEBRUARY 1 • PABST
COLD WAR KIDS</p> <p>FEBRUARY 6 • TURNER
SEBASTIAN MANISCALCO</p> <p>FEBRUARY 7 • TURNER
GALACTIC</p> <p>3 SHOWS!
FEBRUARY 12-21
TONY & TINA'S WEDDING</p> <p>FEBRUARY 13 • PABST
CHERUB</p> <p>FEBRUARY 14 • RIVERSIDE
ALTON BROWN LIVE</p> <p>FEBRUARY 18 • PABST
LADYSMITH BLACK MAMBAZO</p> <p>FEBRUARY 15 • RIVERSIDE
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ZZ TOP</p> <p>APRIL 3 • TURNER HALL
EXTREME MIDGET WRESTLING FEDERATION</p> <p>APRIL 10 • 11 • PABST
C.S. LEWIS' THE GREAT DIVORCE</p> <p>APRIL 11 • TURNER HALL
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MILKY CHANCE</p> <p>MAY 28 • TURNER HALL
MURDER BY DEATH</p> <p>MAY 28 • RIVERSIDE
JOHNNY MATHIS</p> <p>JUNE 5 • RIVERSIDE
JOHN MELLENCAMP</p> <p>AUGUST 6 • RIVERSIDE
DIANA KRALL</p> |
|---|--|--|--|

FLASHBACK: THE YEAR'S TOP STORIES



The year the world learned it's lethal to be black in America

By Louis Weisberg

Staff writer

"Hands up, don't shoot," "I can't breathe" and "black lives matter" will go down in history books as the defining phrases of 2014. Those words were chanted during rallies, vigils and demonstrations throughout the nation during the year's final months.

A wave of sometimes-violent protests began after a Nov. 24 grand jury decision not to indict officer Darren Wilson in the August killing of unarmed black teenager Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri. Then on Dec. 3, a New York grand jury declined to prosecute an officer captured on video applying a fatal chokehold on Eric Garner, a 43-year-old, unarmed black man.

The decisions reignited

demonstrations and riots that followed the killings over the summer and fall.

In Milwaukee, protesters have been gathering in Red Arrow Park, where Dontre Hamilton, a 31-year-old unarmed, mentally ill black man was gunned down last spring. Milwaukee Police Chief Edward Flynn fired officer Christopher Manney, 38, six months after he instigated a fight with Hamilton and fired 14 shots into the unarmed man's body, including his back.

Hamilton's family and civil rights advocates have continually called for Manney's prosecution, but Milwaukee District Attorney John Chisholm says he's waiting for the results of a second investigation before filing charges.

Three months after the

incident, the state Department of Justice's Division of Criminal Investigation issued Chisholm a report that's required by Wisconsin law. The report has not been made public.

Hamilton's family and supporters say they will not give up until justice is served. Hamilton's family protested the official lighting of the Christmas tree at Red Arrow Park in November. On Dec. 8 they papered Chisholm's Bay View neighborhood with flyers condemning his failure to act. And the next day protesters, including Hamilton's family, college students and members of the Milwaukee branch of the NAACP, marched from UWM to Red Arrow Park to draw attention to Chisholm's failure to bring charges. One protest-



PHOTO: AP/JOHN HART

Eric Upchurch of Madison's Young Gifted and Black Coalition marches with his hands raised during a Dec. 5 rally highlighting the country's racial disparities.

er was arrested.

But the odds are against Manney's prosecution. No police officer in Wisconsin has been found at fault in an officer-involved death in 129 years.

21 TIMES THE RISK

Although African Americans have been aware for years of the disproportionate rate at which black men are killed during "legal interventions," such deaths have never received the level of attention they did during 2014.

It's anyone's guess whether the number of such killings sharply increased in 2014 or if the issue had previously flown beneath the media's radar.

Reliable figures are hard to come by, because the government doesn't track the number of people killed by law-enforcement personnel. Coroners often fail to note the deaths, police departments categorize them in different ways and many data glitches occur.

Some 18,000 agencies contribute to the FBI's broader crime reporting program, but only about 750 reported their "justifiable homicide" figures in

2012, according to a story that appeared in *Mother Jones* magazine. New York State is among the many that do not report what are categorized as "justifiable homicides" to the FBI.

An October analysis reported by Pro Publica, a journalistic group, found that black male teens 15 to 18 are an astonishing 21 times more likely to be killed by police than their white counterparts. Pro Publica calculated that more than 185 white teen males would have to be killed by police every week to make the risk equal.

POLICE TAKEN TO TASK

With wave after wave of protests and riots from New York City to Berkely, California, where stores were looted on Dec. 7, the federal government and municipal police departments are finally addressing the twin problems of racism and overuse of police force.

The Justice Department is investigating police departments in Ferguson and other cities. Across the nation, patrol officers are being outfitted with body cameras. Milwaukee

approved a pilot program earlier this year that will equip a few dozen officers with such devices.

On Dec. 4, U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder announced the troubling findings of an investigation of the Cleveland Police Force that began last year after a series of high-profile incidents involving excessive use of force by officers in that city.

It was the second time in recent years that the Justice Department has taken the Cleveland police to task. But unlike in 2004, when the agency left it up to local police to clean up their act, federal authorities issued a consent decree that will allow them to intervene.

The Justice Department examined nearly 600 use-of-force incidents in Cleveland from 2010 to 2013, both lethal and non-lethal. Investigators concluded that Cleveland police "engage in excessive force far too often, and that the use of excessive force by CPD officers is neither isolated, nor sporadic."

The worst examples of excessive force in the DOJ

RACE next page



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RACE from prior page

report on Cleveland involve patrol officers who unnecessarily endanger lives by shooting at suspects and cars, hit people over the head with guns, and punch and use Tasers on handcuffed suspects.

The DOJ said Cleveland officers are poorly trained and some don't know how to implement use-of-force policies.

The DOJ also said supervisors encourage some of the egregious behavior and often do little to investigate it. Some told investigators that they often write their reports to make an officer look as good as possible. The DOJ found that only six officers had been suspended for improper use-of-force over a three-year period.

The Columbus, Ohio, police department, which operated under a consent decree in the early 2000s, has long given officers state-of-the-art technology to make their jobs easier and safer. But in Cleveland, the report said, mobile computers that are supposed to be in patrol cars often don't work and, even when they do, officers don't have access to essential department databases.

In addition to Cleveland, eight other police departments in the country currently operate under federal consent decrees.

"Accountability and legitimacy are essential for communities to trust their police departments and for there to be genuine collaboration between police and the citizens they serve," Holder said in prepared remarks.

'HAVE TO CHANGE'

Despite all the interventions and investigations, it's unlikely that more law-enforcement officials are going to be indicted for unnecessary use of lethal force. To make a federal case against Wilson, for example, the Justice Department would have to show that he knowingly used more force against Brown than the situation called for. It's easier to make a case when an officer kicks a handcuffed man who poses no threat than when an officer shoots a man he believes might kill him.

And in past high-profile

shootings, that bar has been hard to clear.

The department found insufficient evidence to bring civil rights charges in the 1999 shooting of Amadou Diallo, an African immigrant who was unarmed when he was killed in a fusillade of bullets by New York City officers who mistakenly thought he was pulling out a gun from his pocket.

Also in New York, federal authorities investigated but did not bring charges in the 2006 fatal police shooting of Sean Bell as he was driving away from his bachelor party at a club in Queens. The officers had seen Bell's friends arguing with another patron outside and said they thought Bell's group planned a drive-by shooting.

Federal prosecutors declined this year to charge officers who fatally shot an unarmed woman with a baby in the back seat of her car after a high-speed car chase from the White House to the U.S. Capitol.

But clearing officers of criminal charges is not necessarily an affirmation that they did everything right. And it does nothing to address underlying problems within a police department.

Even though police are legally empowered to use deadly force when appropriate, an officer's perception of danger can be strongly influenced by the race of a suspect. That's particularly true in a community like Ferguson, where an overwhelmingly white department patrols a majority-black city, said Lori Lightfoot, a Chicago lawyer who used to investigate police shootings.

"Take any environment you live in — if there's not diversity in your workplace, that is a void in your experience," she said.

As WiG headed to press on Dec. 10, the demonstrations continued, as did vandalism and looting, in cities across the nation. Protesters snarled traffic, staged die-ins, waved signs and chanted.

Meanwhile, politicians on both sides of the aisle called for calm while activists push for police reforms. NAACP president Cornell William Brooks, appearing on CBS' *Face the Nation*, called for

universal body cameras and changes in police policy.

Ohio's Republican governor said the unrest underscores the need for political leaders to be inclusive and to unite, not divide.

Gov. John Kasich said on ABC's "This Week" that a "significant percentage" of the country believes the system's not working for them and can be working against them.

"They need to be listened to and they need to be responded to," Kasich said. "In our country today, there's too much division, too much polarization — black, white; rich, poor; Democrat, Republican. America does best when we're united."

The Associated Press contribute to this story.

UNACCEPTABLE DISPARITIES

On Aug. 29, the United Nations blasted the United States for the use of excessive force on display in Ferguson during the demonstrations following Brown's killing. After examining records and hearing testimony from witnesses, a UN committee concluded that minorities are victims of unacceptable disparities in the United States.

A panel grilled a U.S. delegation about persistent discrimination against minorities. Among those who testified in Geneva was Sybrina Fulton, mother of Trayvon Martin, an unarmed black teen killed in Florida by a neighborhood watch volunteer. Also attending was Ron Davis, father of Jordan Davis, a 17-year-old who was shot dead in a car in Florida during an argument over loud rap music in November 2012.

Announcing the committee's conclusions, CERD vice chairman Nouredine Amir said, "Racial and ethnic discrimination remains a serious and persistent problem in all areas of life from de facto school segregation, access to health care and housing. (Ferguson) is not an isolated event and illustrates a bigger problem in the United States, such as racial bias among law enforcement officials, the lack of proper implementation of rules and regulations governing the use of force, and the inadequacy of training of law enforcement officials."

CERD also concluded that the "Stand Your Ground" laws in 22 states should be reviewed to "remove far-reaching immunity."

Many Americans agree. Only 45 percent of Americans believe that race relations are good — a drop of 10 percent since 1997, according to a Dec. 10 CBS News Poll. — L.W.

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FLASHBACK: THE YEAR'S TOP STORIES

Keystone pipeline galvanizes environmental movement

Hundreds of young people risked arrest protesting the proposed Keystone Pipeline XL in early March and forming the largest youth demonstration at the White House in a generation.

"We're prepared to do whatever it takes to stop this pipeline," Felix Bick, a student at the University of California-Berkeley, said at the time.

Bick returned to Washington, D.C., in the late fall, during the lame-duck session of Congress. He joined dozens of demonstrators outside the U.S. Capitol, where the Senate was debating a bill to bypass the federal review process and approve the pipeline, which would further the exploitation of Canada's Tar Sands and deliver dirty oil across the U.S. to the Gulf of Mexico.

The House, in the days after the Nov. 4 election, rushed to approve a KXL bill. The Senate, after a long day of debate, defeated the measure — barely — and KXL opponents returned their focus to the president, who eventually must decide whether to approve a permit for the project.

"I think he's with us, the president. I really do," said Milwaukee green activist Chelsea Wainthorpe.

She and other Wisconsin activists pointed to breakthroughs in climate action in 2014, including:

- The Clean Power Plan proposed by the Environmental Protection Agency, which would impose the first-ever

national limits on carbon pollution by power plants.

- The Obama administration's announcement in November that the United States and China had reached an agreement to cut carbon emissions.

- The growing movement on college campuses and in college towns to divest from fossil fuel stocks.

These developments occurred as scientists sounded a series of alarms, warning global leaders that failure to radically reduce emissions could put the planet on a trajectory with irreversible impacts — rising sea levels, warmer waters, melting glaciers, intense heat waves, weird and severe weather and lost or declining species.

The threats brought hundreds of thousands out to demonstrate on Earth Day in April and again for the People's Climate actions in September.

The threats also fueled protests in Wisconsin, where environmentalists dealt with global concerns, but also local regional matters — Gov. Scott Walker's anti-green administration, open-pit mining, frac sand mining, pipeline permitting, groundwater pollution and the hunting of wolves, long considered an endangered species.

— Lisa Neff



PHOTO: PEOPLE'S CLIMATE

Thousands, including a contingent from Madison, joined in the People's Climate March in New York City on Sept. 21.



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What's up with state's air, land and water?

Opinion

ANNE SAYERS

If you breathe air or drink water, listen up. The Legislature has the ability to impact your air, land and water — and all indications are that the session beginning Jan. 5 will not be a positive one for our natural resources. A review of the last session combined with the recent election results shed a little light on what we're up against.

ELECTION RESULTS

We are disappointed by many of the outcomes of the recent election, especially at the top of the ticket, where we ran our biggest electoral campaign to date to help elect Mary Burke.

However, we're happy to let you know 74 percent of the candidates endorsed by Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters won. And of the winners, we are especially excited about a bipartisan set of legislators entering the state Assembly who will bring new commitment to our work to raise natural resource issues above the political fray.

LAST SESSION

All in all, the incoming Legislature looks very much like the last. Still, during the last session we defeated 75 percent of the anti-conservation attacks, including attacks on groundwater supply and local control. We even successfully passed 50 percent of the pro-conservation bills proposed.

In every case, the key to success was the engagement of Wisconsin citizens state-wide. By the thousands, they were willing to call their legislators, send an email, or even head to Madison for a hearing when their conservation values were at stake. Citizens acted quickly, decisively and with great dedication.

We're going to need that kind of engagement again. There is absolutely no doubt that we have challenges ahead, but we're encouraged by the fact that — together — we've brought home natural resource victories in this political environment before.

Like last session, we expect two issues to remain front and center: groundwater supply and frac sand mining.

GROUNDWATER SUPPLY

With all of the lakes, rivers, and streams in Wisconsin, it may be hard to believe that the aquifers below us are drying up. But it's true. Years of unfettered water use are driving parts of the state to a crisis point. Something needs to be done.

This session, we'll advocate for legislation that will proactively protect groundwater supplies for future generations at the same time we are guarding against attacks on our groundwater, like we saw (but defeated) last session.



FRAC SAND MINING

The hills of western Wisconsin contain the sand necessary to do hydraulic fracking for natural gas, which means our rural communities have become the Grand Central Station of open-pit frac sand mining. There is very little oversight of this new industry, allowing it to wreak havoc on our air and water, which wreaks havoc on public health.

With a gubernatorial administration that has not made enforcement of our air and water laws a priority, bad actors are often getting off scot-free. We will continue to call on the state to prioritize the monitoring of frac sand mines so we know when an environmental crime is committed and can enforce the law when violations are noted. And, of course, we will continue to advocate for better protections to keep frac sand mines from polluting in the first place.

LOOKING AHEAD

With other potential threats coming in the form of more mining, unsafe drinking water, and renewable energy stagnation, we are recommitted and reenergized to do the immense amount of work that needs to be done. In fact, we're already back at it — doing what we know works. We're out there listening, organizing, and building networks. We're finding opportunities. And in some cases, we're creating new ones.

We know Wisconsin voters care deeply about natural resources (and the polling proves it), which is why we are in this for the long haul. Thank you for staying informed and standing with us!

To learn more about Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters and the very latest on conservation issues, please visit conservationvoters.org.

Anne Sayers is program director of the Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters, a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to electing conservation leaders, holding decision-makers accountable, and encouraging lawmakers to champion conservation policies that effectively protect Wisconsin's natural resources and public health.



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FLASHBACK: THE YEAR'S TOP STORIES

Legal challenges threaten to destroy Obamacare

"The court, I fear, has ventured into a minefield," Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg warned in June in her 35-page dissent in the Hobby Lobby case. She called Justice Samuel Alito's majority opinion a decision of "startling breadth."

Alito said Hobby Lobby, which has a chain of 500 arts-and-crafts stores, and Conestoga Wood Specialties, a small Pennsylvania furniture company, cannot be forced to comply with the Affordable Care Act mandate that health care plans, at no extra charge, cover contraception for women as part of a range of preventive benefits.

The court, which previously had ruled in favor of "corporate personhood," said closely held companies — those with a few people owning more than 50 percent — can hold religious views.

The court's four liberal justices said the decision to extend religious protections to for-profit companies will have untoward effects and, as Ginsburg wrote, closely held corporations can be large or small, public or private. Cargill is a closely held company. So is Koch Industries.

And the court's 5-4 decision weakened the Affordable Care Act, which said birth control should be covered by insurance in the same manner in which other preventive drugs and treatments are covered.

U.S. Rep. Gwen Moore, D-Wis., was dismayed and disappointed by the decision. "No one should be denied access to health care because of her employer's religious beliefs," she said.

U.S. Rep. Mark Pocan, D-Wis., said the ruling "continues a dangerous trend of favoring the rights of corporations over people, but also tramples on health-care decisions made between a woman and her

'No one should be denied health care because of her employer's religious beliefs.'

doctor."

Political challenges to overturn or weaken the Affordable Care Act continued into the fall, before and after the midterms.

Meanwhile, opinion polls showed more negative attitudes than positive attitudes toward Obamacare and, as the health care marketplace opened for a second year, many Americans learned their current plans were being canceled and premiums were on the rise.

"I've defended the Affordable Care Act because we needed to do something," said Madison resident Amy Beadle. "But I'm deeply disappointed in what it offers me, as a consumer. I paid less for insurance before it."

As Beadle was looking for a new and affordable plan, the U.S. Supreme Court agreed to hear a challenge from the right that threatens the tax credits for millions — including Wisconsinites — buying insurance through the federal exchange.

The challenge, said Ron Pollack of Families USA, is "the most serious existential threat" facing the Affordable Care Act.

— Lisa Neff

Executive action required for immigration reform

On an icy day last February some 100 people assembled outside the ICE office in Milwaukee to protest racial profiling at courthouses in Milwaukee, Racine, Dane, Ozaukee, Waukesha, Kenosha, Walworth, Winnebago, Washington and Rock counties.

"Courts should be a safe place for people complying with or seeking protection from the legal system," said Christine Neumann-Ortiz, executive director of the immigrant rights group Voces de la Frontera.

Days before the demonstration, 22 Democratic members of the Wisconsin Legislature called on U.S. Immigrations and Customs Enforcement officials to stop harassing people in the state's halls of justice.

The demonstrators and lawmakers also urged an end to the deportations that separate children from their parents and grandparents.

Those calls were echoed throughout the year, as Republicans in the House refused to act on a comprehensive reform bill passed by the Senate and yet also failed to advance any legislation of their own.

Meanwhile, with deportations on his watch approaching 2 million, the president's progressive coalition was splintering and immigrant rights activists began referring to him as "Deporter in Chief." Still, he resisted pleas for executive action.

Not until after the midterm elections did Barack Obama announce executive action to protect some immigrant workers from deportation, make work permits eligible for about 4.1 million people who are in the United States illegally but whose children are lawful permanent residents and loosen eligibility requirements for a waiver program for people seeking green cards.

U.S. Rep. Paul Ryan, R-Wis., said the president had poisoned the well. He wasn't

alone in working off the talking points memo issued by his party.

Republican National Committee Chairman Reince Priebus, who is from Wisconsin, characterized Obama's action as granting amnesty. "If he believed that his actions were urgent and that he had the constitutional authority all along, why did he wait six years into his presidency to act?" Priebus said. "If he believed he was doing the will of the American people and acting in the best interests of American workers and those waiting in line to become Americans, why did he wait until after this last election?"

On the Democratic side, there were those who quietly agreed the party would have done better on Nov. 4 had the president taken action on immigration earlier in the year.

And, among the activists who repeatedly called for reform, there was praise but caution.

"I have been in this movement for many years, and though I am one of those who will not benefit, I am not defeated," said Guadalupe Romero, a Voces de la Frontera member who has lived in Milwaukee since 1990. "I will continue to fight for myself and all the people excluded from this relief."

On Dec. 3, a coalition of 17 states, including Wisconsin, sued the Obama administration over the executive action.

The next day, the House voted mostly along party lines for the Preventing Executive Overreach on Immigration Act, a bill that says the executive branch lacks the authority to stop certain deportations. The legislation was DOA in the Senate.

— Lisa Neff

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Opinion

TANYA ATKINSON

State's GOP assails women's health

In Wisconsin, we have a long history of working together to ensure our friends, family and neighbors have access to essential health care, and we believe in a government that trusts people to make personal health decisions. But our elected leaders have embarked on a divergent path.

In 2014, no other governor or state legislature in the nation put more time and effort than ours into taking health care decisions and services away from its citizens. While Gov. Scott Walker backpeddled from his extreme record on women's health in an effort to appeal to voters during his re-election campaign, his moderation is already disappearing.

It's hard to imagine just how much the right-wing leaders of our Wisconsin Legislature have taken away from Wisconsinites in the last year. Thousands of individuals and families lost access to affordable health care in their communities when five Planned Parenthood health centers providing cervical and breast cancer screenings, cancer treatment referrals, STD testing and



treatment, health exams and birth control were closed by Walker and the state's GOP leaders. An additional 87,000 Wisconsin women, children and families making over \$12,000 a year were kicked off BadgerCare, the only affordable health insurance option for many in the state.

Access to safe and legal abortion at the four remaining health centers that provide this essential care hangs in the balance, as legal action to preserve this care awaits final resolution. Thanks in part to the passage of four additional abortion restrictions in the last legislative session, Wisconsin now has more abortion restrictions than any state in the nation. Under current leadership, Wisconsin is one of the worst states when it comes to job creation, and we are No. 1 in abortion restrictions.

Are those the kind of distinctions that Wisconsinites want?

We have already seen a preview of what's to come in 2015 for women and families. Now that the election is over, the Walker administration is continuing its efforts to put community-based health-care organizations that provide birth control and cancer screens to women in need out of business. These safety net providers are being targeted by the Walker administration with baseless audits claiming wrongdoing in Medicaid billing for birth control. There is no evidence of wrongdoing at these health

centers — on the contrary, they are valued organizations that provide care to women and families who otherwise would have no place to go.

Walker is simply using his executive authority to harass health centers and find a back-door way to eliminate critical funding for birth-control services.

The Walker administration is already again targeting family planning organizations with a new proposal to block them from providing breast and cervical cancer screenings under the Wisconsin Well Woman program. Under this new proposal, low-income women would no longer be eligible for the Well Woman program if they received their cancer screenings and referrals from a family planning provider. Family planning providers have been entrusted to provide this essential care to women in need for decades. In many areas, such providers are the only option for this care.

The state also faces new bills aimed at banning abortion even for women whose pregnancies put their health at risk. Regardless of how you feel about abortion, decisions about whether to choose adoption, end a pregnancy or raise a child are better left to a woman and her family instead of politicians.

If the November election proved anything, it is that voters across all party lines care about women's health. Politicians like

Walker were forced to distance themselves from their extremism in order to get elected. Now it is up to voters to hold them accountable for their toned-down campaign rhetoric.

For nearly 80 years, Planned Parenthood has served communities across Wisconsin with essential reproductive health care, including lifesaving cancer screenings, birth control, testing and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases, health exams and community education. We have not achieved this long history alone. With your continued engagement, we will achieve our shared vision of collaboration and fairness and put an end to the political extremes that are impacting peoples' lives.

Tonya Atkinson is vice president of public policy and education at Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin, Inc. For more information on policies that impact women and families and how you can help, go to www.ppawi.org. To access health care information and to make an appointment at any of PPWI's 22 health centers, go to www.ppwi.org.



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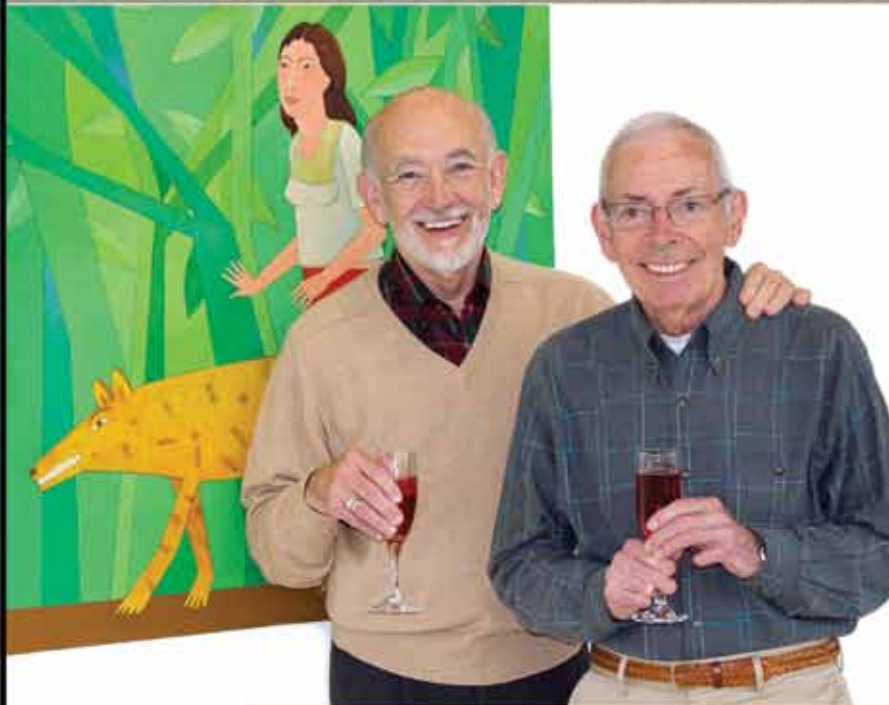
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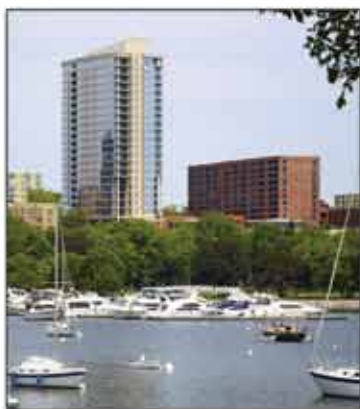


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FLASHBACK: MARRIAGE

Marriage equality momentum builds

The battle over marriage equality was in the headlines at dawn on Jan. 1, 2014, and the first newspapers of the New Year hit the streets. An unexpected ruling from a federal judge had overturned Utah's constitutional amendment banning same-sex couples from marrying. Before the U.S. Supreme Court intervened on Jan. 6, some 1,000 gay and lesbian couples had exchanged vows in the heavily Mormon state.

Conservatives took their defense of Utah's anti-gay amendment as far as the U.S. Supreme Court, which declined to hear their case and other cases in a year that brought sweeping change for same-sex couples and their families.

Couples, represented by private attorneys and civil rights groups such as the ACLU and Lambda Legal, filed more than 70 lawsuits after the U.S. Supreme Court's landmark ruling for marriage equality in June 2013.

In the past year, in case after case, judges ruled for equality and bans against same-sex marriage toppled in state after state, including in Wisconsin, where the first same-sex weddings took place in June.

About 550 couples married in Wisconsin during the week before Attorney General

J.B. Van Hollen obtained a stay on same-sex marriage pending the decision of a federal appeals court in Chicago. When that court also ruled the state's ban was unconstitutional, a determined Van Hollen obtained yet another stay while appealing directly to the U.S. Supreme Court.

The court declined to hear Van Hollen's case and similar appeals from other states on Oct. 6, finally making marriage equality the law of the land in Wisconsin as well as Virginia, Utah, Oklahoma and Indiana. The 550 marriage licenses handed out in Wisconsin the second week of June were also declared valid.

As of Dec. 5, same-sex couples could marry in at least 33 states.

As for the non-equality states, civil rights leaders are looking to the nation's highest court to take up the issue in 2015.

"Now is the time for the Supreme Court to take up a case and end marriage discrimination once and for all," said Evan Wolfson, a longtime advocate for marriage equality and the founder of the Freedom to Marry advocacy group.

— Lisa Neff



PHOTO: AP PHOTO/JEFFREY PHELPS

HITCHED IN MILWAUKEE: Jill Winkler, left, and Pamela Dietzler kiss after they were married at the Milwaukee County Courthouse June 6. Same-sex couples began getting married in Wisconsin shortly after a federal judge ruled the state's gay marriage ban unconstitutional. The marriages were later invalidated — and then validated again.



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Wisconsin's voter ID law delayed

Less than a month before the midterms, the U.S. Supreme Court stayed an appeals court order and put the brakes on Gov. Scott Walker's rush to implement a controversial voter photo ID law.

The measure had been declared unconstitutional by a federal judge in April. However, a federal appeals court lifted a stay and eventually issued a ruling that the law does not violate the Voting Rights Act of 1964 or the U.S. Constitution.

The decision sent the Republican administration scrambling to put the photo ID law into effect for the Nov. 4 elections, even though some ballots already had been mailed to voters.

The decision also sent voting rights advocates scrambling. They had to prepare for likely problems on Election Day and educate people about the law, even as they continued to challenge a statute they said would disenfranchise voters, especially younger, older and minority voters.

Dale Ho, director of the ACLU's Voting Rights Project, said to allow the state to implement the law would have fueled confusion and caused chaos.

The U.S. Supreme Court, responding to a motion from the ACLU of Wisconsin, issued a stay in early October.

The ID law was not the only tool Wisconsin Republicans held. Earlier in

the year, Republican lawmakers advanced a series of measures that reduced opportunities for in-person absentee voting and expanded the amount of time lobbyists have to make campaign donations.

After the votes, state Sen. Nikiya Harris, D-Milwaukee, said, "The Republicans have been on a vendetta over the past few years to increasingly make it harder for individuals to vote. ... Republicans should be ashamed at the role they are playing in attacking the freedom to vote in Wisconsin."

Legislation aimed at restricting voting rights also advanced in Ohio in 2014 and was introduced in 27 other states.

And the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law reported that new restrictions on voting were in place on Election Day in 21 states, including in Texas, where an estimated 600,000 people — a disproportionate number of them African American and Latino — lacked the photo IDs needed to exercise their legal right to vote.

Wendy Weiser, director of the democracy program at the Brennan Center, said, "A quick look at the numbers show that in several key races, the margin of victory came very close to the likely margin of disenfranchisement."

— Lisa Neff

Workers strike out for living wages

In the brutally wicked winter of 2014, Wisconsin lawmakers turned a cold shoulder to the plight of the minimum-wage worker.

The state Senate, by a party-line vote, defeated a Democratic push to raise the state's minimum wage. Meanwhile, Republicans at the Capitol offered up a proposal to "allow" people in manufacturing and retail to work seven days a week.

The GOP's hostility toward workers earning low wages continued throughout the year — at both the state and federal levels, despite public opinion polls and voter-approved initiatives showing strong support for basic wage increases. And also despite repeated strike actions by workers in Wisconsin and other the other 49 states.

"I work hard. I exhaust myself and I don't get paid enough to live a comfortable life," said Milwaukee resident and fast-food worker Tim Roach, who joined strikers nationwide on Sept. 4 in demanding better benefits and a minimum-wage increase to \$15 per hour.

Fast-food workers went on strike again on Dec. 4 in the fight for \$15. A week earlier, workers at Wal-Mart stores staged strikes, also demanding better benefits and the right to organize.

Gov. Scott Walker's administration had answered pleas with a finding that \$7.25 an hour — about \$15,080 a year — is a fair wage and dismissing workers' complaints.

Progressives, however, understood the difficulties low-wage workers face and paid attention to the polls. Minimum wage increases were approved in major cities, including Chicago. In some cases the increases applied only to municipal workers and government contractors. In other cases, the increases were broader.

At the federal level, progressive lawmakers unsuccessfully pushed legislation to raise the minimum wage from \$7.25, which U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-VT, called "a starvation wage."

Congressman Keith Ellison, D-MN, said, "Too many hardworking fast-food workers don't make enough to live on while the company executives pocket \$9,200 an hour. Even after a year and a half of organizing, workers are continuing to march until they get a wage increase and the right to organize."

At the White House, the president took executive action to raise the minimum wage for employees of federal contractors from \$7.25 an hour to \$10.10 an hour.

The president also took executive action to ban discrimination based on gender identity in the federal government and to ban federal contractors from discriminating against LGBT employees.

Laura W. Murphy of the ACLU said the "critical, long overdue protections ... build on a bipartisan tradition dating back over 70 years of prohibiting taxpayer-funded discrimination."

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FLASHBACK: SPORTS

PROTESTING PUTIN'S GAMES

"Faster - Higher - Stronger" — that's the Olympic motto. But in talking about the February Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia, add the words "controversial," "risky," "corrupt," "environmentally bankrupt" and "anti-gay."

Athleticism and sport were eclipsed at the Sochi Games by outrage over Russia's abysmal record on human rights, specifically the adoption and enforcement of a law allowing authorities to arrest and fine people who deliver "propaganda of nontraditional sexual relations" to minors.

President Barack Obama did not attend the games. Neither did the first lady. Instead, the president appointed a delegation that included three openly gay athletes — Billie Jean King, Caitlin Cahow and Brian Boitano.

SAM'S OFF-FIELD PLAY

Early in 2014, college football star Michael Sam publicly came out as gay. He then pursued his dream of becoming a pro — signing first with the St. Louis Rams and later getting picked up by the Dallas Cowboys. Sam made history as the first openly gay player in the NFL a year after Jason Collins did the same as the first openly gay player in the NBA. Sam was cut by the Dallas Cowboys and is now a free agent.

SPURS HIRE WNBA VET TO COACH

The San Antonio Spurs hired WNBA veteran Becky Hammon as an assistant coach, making her the first full-time, paid female assistant on an NBA coaching staff. Hammon had a 16-year WNBA career that ended with the San Antonio Stars. She then went to work on the staff of the defending NBA champions. After the announcement, Hammon said, "I'm up for challenges. I'm up for being outside the box, making tough decisions and challenges."

ROGERS SIGNS MULTIYEAR CONTRACT

Robbie Rogers, the first openly gay player in the MLS, agreed to a multiyear contract extension with the LA Galaxy. Galaxy coach Bruce Arena said the 27-year-old Rogers "has proven to be a dynamic player in our league and an integral part of our success."

CLIPPERS CHANGE OWNERS

Microsoft CEO Steve Ballmer purchased the Los Angeles Clippers in August, bringing to an end to its ownership by Donald Sterling, who was ousted from the NBA after his racist remarks were made public. Ballmer said he wanted to make the Clippers "America's team."

— Lisa Neff

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FLASH FORWARD: A LOOK AHEAD TO 2015

Wisconsin economy faces dual challenges of deficit and Walker's presidential plans

By Louis Weisberg

Staff writer

Aside from "right-to-work" legislation, the thorniest issue the state faces during the first months of 2015 is the next biennial budget.

Revenue shortfalls combined with tax cuts, primarily in the form of corporate tax giveaways, have left Wisconsin with a budget gap that stands at \$2.2 billion — the exact size as the one Democratic former Gov. Jim Doyle's administration forecast at the same time in 2010. Walker pointed to Doyle's shortfall that year and declared the state was "bankrupt."

As an unannounced Republican presidential candidate, Walker cannot afford politically to preside over a deficit or to raise taxes. Political observers were surprised when he proposed raising taxes on Wisconsin drivers by nearly \$800 million and announced support for \$670 million in new transportation borrowing to pay for road-building projects on a span of highway where traffic decreased by more than 12 percent from 2002 to 2010, according to the nonpartisan Wisconsin Public Interest

Research Group. Yet, without evidence, the Walker administration projects a 43-percent increase in traffic in the area through 2040.

"With a staggering budget deficit of his own creation ... how can Walker with a straight face ask the rest of the state to pay for this pet project?" asked Mike Tate, chair of the Democratic Party of Wisconsin.

At least part of the answer could be the ginormous campaign contributions that roadbuilders have made to Walker. The sudden need for highway spending at a time when traffic counts are either flat or dropping in most areas of the state reveals a third factor in Walker's economic political equation — the need to raise huge campaign funds for a presidential campaign.

Considering Walker's needs and choices, John Peacock, research director at Wisconsin Council on Children and Families Health Care, thinks Wisconsinites will see a lot of new fees in the next budget as opposed to taxes. Although they are not called taxes, fees function in the same way, and fees are considered regressive because everyone, regardless of ability to pay, shoulders the

burden.

"I'd rather see gas taxes go up than see the general fund drained to pay for highways that aren't needed," Peacock said. "But the first thing we need to do is reconsider what is needed."

Walker and his fellow Republicans are highly likely to pass on two other methods to raise revenue: hiking the minimum wage and accepting federal Medicaid-expansion dollars that Walker has turned down. Both methods are also guaranteed economic stimulators.

And they are popular with the voters.

In referenda that appeared on the Nov. 4 ballot, 19 counties and the city of Kenosha asked if the state should accept federal funding to expand BadgerCare in Wisconsin. In all cases, the referenda passed.

A majority of voters in 13 communities also said yes on referenda asking if the Legislature should raise the minimum wage to \$10.10 per hour.

The results are particularly notable because Walker and Republicans won the election, indicating GOP voter support for both measures. But Walker would alienate the far-right base that determines the outcomes of Republican primaries if he were to support either.

"There are any number of business people in Chicago who supported the minimum wage increase there, because they know they need people who can purchase their goods and services," Peacock said. "But the policymakers in Wisconsin don't seem to understand that."

DENIAL

Observers see little chance that Walker

ECONOMY next page



PHOTO: AP/ANN HEISENFELT

Gov. Scott Walker and fellow GOP presidential hopeful Gov. Chris Christie, R-NJ, toured a plant in Wisconsin as part of an effort to position Walker as a "job creator" during his gubernatorial race.

will change his economic policies, because they have served him politically, even if they have held back the state. He's proven adept at getting around voters simply by denying the existence of the dire financial situation in which he's put the state.

In fact, during his re-election campaign, Walker exhorted voters to continue "the Wisconsin comeback," even though there's strong evidence his policies of slashing public programs and giving massive tax cuts to the wealthy seriously delayed the state's recovery. As even the right-leaning Politifact Wisconsin acknowledged, the state suffered less economically during the recession at its peak under Doyle than under Walker during the national recovery.

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To progressives: Make 2015 the year of no regrets

Opinion

SCOT ROSS

With November's elections failing to achieve a change in leadership, the year 2014 was disappointing for progressives.

The year did have bright spots, however. Despite Gov. Scott Walker's and Attorney General J.B. Van

Hollen's efforts to stop marriage equality in Wisconsin, it is now the law. And, in a surprising development, the U.S. Supreme Court stepped in to keep Republicans and a far-right judge from imposing a photo ID requirement mere weeks before the elections.

Looking to 2015 we are, in many ways, eerily, right back where we started four years ago — with Walker as governor and GOP legislative majorities.

The state faces a significant budget deficit, possibly in excess of \$4 billion.

Our economy remains slow in creating jobs and state wages are stagnant.



There is a brewing attack on the middle class with rumblings of quick action to pass "right-to-work" legislation before opponents have the chance to show how these measures are wrong for Wisconsin.

And in Congress, U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson continues to earn the moniker of "our dumb senator" on an alarmingly frequent basis.

So what should we expect for 2015? What challenges do progressives face? And what do we need to do to start taking our state back?

Walker is running for the 2016 Republican presidential nomination. He has shown his eyes are always on the next election and higher office, and he will do and say anything to win. No doubt he'll use the 2015 state budget as a \$70-billion campaign ad for himself. In fact, it has been reported that his campaign began conducting a poll right after the election to decide what to put in his budget plan.

It is wrong to be making decisions about how our tax dollars are spent based on what is best for Walker's political future. And it will be our job to let everyone know about it.

Assembly Speaker Robin "Boss" Vos gave us a preview of how he'll operate in 2015. When asked about the possibility of state assistance for the construction of a new arena for the Milwaukee Bucks, Boss Vos raised concerns that one of the owners had the temerity to meet the president of the United States when he visited Milwaukee

and has made political donations to Democrats in other states.

It is wrong, not to mention illegal, for legislators to engage in pay-to-play. It will be our job to expose it when laws are decided on loyalty tests and campaign contributions rather than their merits.

The state Senate may have lost Glenn Grothman — serial basher of women, minorities and the LGBT community — but don't expect a kinder, gentler upper house of the Wisconsin Legislature. If anything, the gang set to take the reins of power is the farthest right seen in generations.

There's no outcry from the mainstream in Wisconsin for radical privatization of our public schools, rolling back workplace safety and benefits like sick time and overtime protection, or making women second-class citizens when it comes to their health care. But those are agendas that the GOP leadership is poised to push, and it will be our job to fight back.

In Washington, D.C., Johnson is now in the majority in the U.S. Senate. This guy has a truly stunning portfolio of off-the-wall-statements — from asserting that sunspots are causing global climate change to asserting that more for-profit colleges would solve the student debt crisis.

It's going to be our job as progressives to present the alternative to such ideas — an alternative that's commonly referred to as reality. It's a full-time job pointing out how

Walker and Republican leaders at the state and local levels are selling us out, but as progressives we have ample opportunity to do so.

Consider just one example of an opportunity to lead — the debt crisis of student loans. There are common-sense solutions that have and will be offered by progressives, like letting graduates refinance their student loans just as people can refinance their mortgages.

We can show that we're on the side of the middle class and not the big banks and special interests. That we believe that if you work hard and take the personal responsibility to get an education you've earned a fair shot at the middle class and your share of the American dream.

And we can engage Generation X and Millennials on economic issues of primary concern to them that have a massive impact on our entire economy.

This 2014 didn't turn out how many of us hoped, but that is the past. The future is before us and we have a choice: wallow in sorrow or spend our time and energy holding the right wing accountable and leading the fight for justice and equality.

Let's fight back and have a 2015 with no regrets.

Scot Ross is the executive director of One Wisconsin Now, a statewide progressive advocacy organization with more than 80,000 online supporters.

ECONOMY from prior page

private sector job growth averaged about half the nation's, while public sector jobs were slashed. The vast majority of new jobs created during Walker's first term were low-level, service-industry jobs that put many previously middle-income earners at or near the poverty level unless they worked multiple jobs.

Meanwhile, the jobless rate fell under Walker largely because workers ran out of unemployment benefits or stopped looking for work and therefore were not counted. The same is true of the national jobless rate.

"The pace of the national recovery has been somewhat disappointing and the pace of the Wisconsin recovery even more disappointing," Peacock said. "It certainly doesn't appear that the policy choices the state has made have accelerated economic growth."

Specifically, Peacock pointed to the "trickle-down" policy promoted nationally by Republicans and also championed by Walker and Wisconsin GOP leadership. According to trickle-down policy, huge tax breaks are given to the wealthy and corporations with the belief that the beneficiaries will use their added wealth to stimulate job growth by investing in business development and spending more money on consumer goods. That scenario has never proven to work since the policy shot to the top of the Republican economic agenda in the 1980s.

But trickle-down economics still manages to dominate the Republican Party's thinking

'I'd rather see gas taxes go up than see the general fund drained to pay for highways that aren't needed.'

due to the massive political contributions made to the GOP by corporations and the wealthy. The donations pay for aggressive political advertising campaigns that have distorted public perception to the point that it's widely believed that trickle-down works, despite all evidence to the contrary.

Still, trickle-down tax breaks and budget cuts that save the government money but decrease the tax base as well as public services such as education, which is essential to the state's economic future, are expected to remain the primary economic focus of the Republican leadership again during the next legislative session.

As a Republican presidential candidate, Walker cannot afford to raise taxes or expand government services. But he also cannot remain politically viable if the state's economy continues to lag. National media scrutiny will be more thorough and critical than state media, so it will be harder for Walker to use sloganeering as a stand in for data, as he has during his three statewide races.

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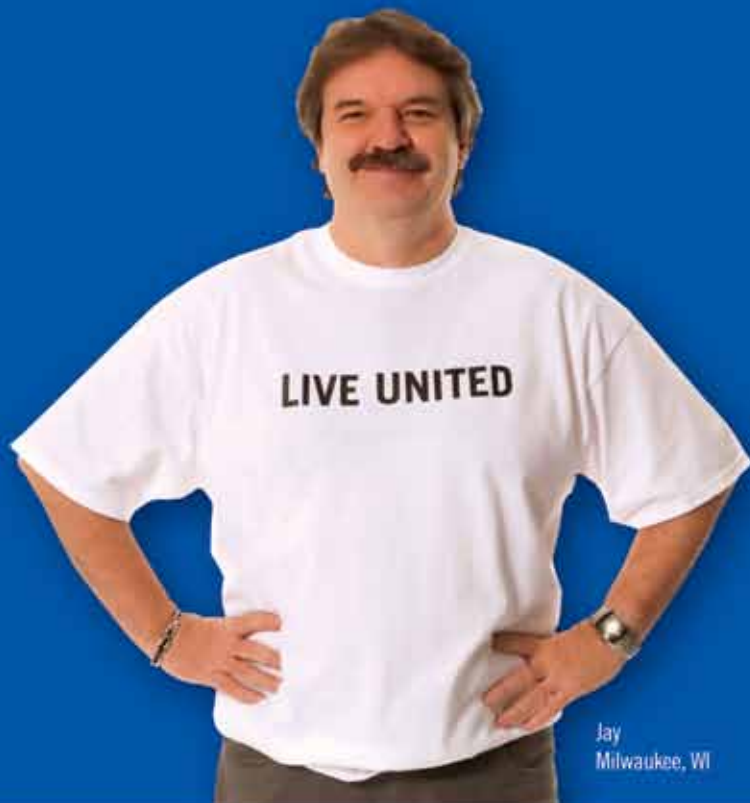
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FLASH FORWARD

Fast-tracked 'right-to-work bill' presents political conundrum for Walker

By Louis Weisberg

Staff writer

Gov. Scott Walker won re-election with 52 percent of the vote in a race that drew 55 percent of registered Wisconsin voters to the polls. That means only 28.6 percent of the state's voters handed him a second term, which is far from the mandate he claims to have received.

But Walker's victory, along with an increased Republican majority in the Legislature, allows the governor to continue dominating the state's agenda in the same tight-fisted manner that he has for the past four years — and it's not a solidarity fist. In fact, the GOP is expected to pass a so-called "right-to-work" bill at the beginning of the next legislative session on Jan. 5.

Political observers also expect Walker and the state GOP will continue to: hack away at government programs that benefit the middle class and the poor; offer taxpayer give-aways to wealthy cronies; restrict abortion rights; relax environmental and consumer protections; and expand the state's school voucher program, which transfers taxpayer funding from cash-starved public schools to private and religious schools, including elite schools for the wealthy.

But during 2015, this new/old agenda will be complicated by the governor's presidential aspirations, according to pundits from both parties. He'll be playing more to the interests of a national audience and right-wing donors than to the needs of Wisconsinites. As political pundit James Rowen wrote in a recent blog post, "It's all about Iowa, the state, not about Wisconsin's Iowa County anymore." (Neighboring Iowa holds the nation's first caucuses for the next presidential campaign early in 2016.)

"Basically, we're all subsidizing his personal, partisan quest for right-wing publicity, fundraising and eventually caucus and primary state voting, as he uses his position and state programs of all kinds for career advancement," Rowen added.

The effect of Walker's White House dreams can already be seen in how he's handling Republican leaders' efforts to fast-track a so-called "right-to-work" bill through the Legislature in January.

"We're calling it 'right-to-work-for-less' legislation," said state Rep. JoCasta Zamarippa. "We're now wondering if they're going to try pushing it through so quickly that it happens before the next term."

A longtime conservative activist in Wisconsin already has formed a group advocating for right-to-work. The group launched a radio ad statewide on Dec. 5 making the case that a right-to-work law would be good

for Wisconsin's economy. Democrats and labor unions promise to fight the measure, but they were unable to prevent Walker and Republicans four years ago and now the GOP has even larger majorities in the Legislature.

The actual effect of euphemistically named "right-to-work" laws is to require unions to represent all employees, regardless of whether they pay dues: Workers who pay nothing still enjoy all the benefits of union membership in right-to-work states. Non-paying workers who are represented by a union can even sue the union over how effectively it represents them.

The intent behind such laws, of course, is to destroy unions. But in destroying unions, the laws lower workers' compensation and workplace conditions for all workers.

On average, workers in right-to-work states earn \$5,538 a year less than workers in states without such laws, according to the AFL-CIO. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics has found that the rate of workplace deaths in right-to-work states is 52.9 percent higher than in states without such laws.

PLAYING COY

Walker fears that after the Legislature passes a right-to-work bill there will be a public outcry of the sort that followed his busting of public unions in 2011. While that would enhance his standing as a hero among tea party militants, it would probably scare off other voters. They'd see him as too divisive and politically incompetent.

For this reason, Walker has been coy about enacting right-to-work legislation in Wisconsin. He's dismissed his GOP colleagues' efforts as a "distraction."

That's one subject on which Assembly Democratic Leader Peter Barca agrees with him. "As the governor himself previously indicated, this would be an extremely polarizing policy at a time when we should be working together to improve Wisconsin's economy," Barca said in a statement. He went on to urge Walker "to put the brakes on this divisive issue that clearly will damage Wisconsin's middle class."

The issue has prematurely thrust Walker in the first major political quandary of his second term. There's no doubt that he supports such laws: He sponsored a right-to-work bill as a freshman Assembly member in 1993, and he's said that his position on the issue has not changed.

But it appears from his statements that Walker either wants to play the issue both ways or would like to put off acting on it

WALKER next page

MALE LOOK OF THE YEAR

Is it nostalgia for the Civil War Era that once again has made the lumbersexual the defining male look of the year? Urban Dictionary contributors define "lumbersexual" as a metrosexual who has the need to hold on to some outdoor-based ruggedness," thus opting to keep a finely trimmed or ruggedly masculine beard. Lumbersexuals generally have long, disheveled hair and dress in denim and flannel.

Lumbersexuals' fashion accessories include stretched ear lobes and a constellation of tattoos. Their vernacular is distinguished by frequent use of the words "dude" and "douche." For some lumbersexual people-watching, grab a table in the window of any Riverwest coffee shop or restaurant and watch them strolling — or in the summer, skateboarding — down the streets. Note: For older men, this style is rather costly and uncomfortable, requiring frequent applications of Just for Men beard dye.

— Louis Weisberg

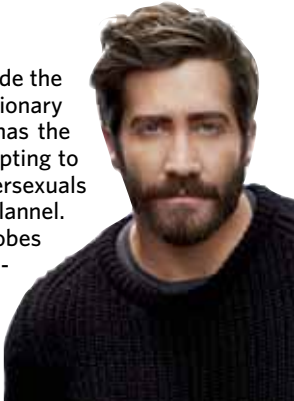


PHOTO: HDWALLPAPERSINN.COM
Jake Gyllenhaal sports the lumbersexual look.

FEMALE LOOKS OF THE YEAR



PHOTO: COURTESY

Lupita Nyong'o on the July cover of Vogue.

When it comes to women, whose styles are microscopically dissected daily by the media, there is no such thing as a single defining look. But it's safe to say that during 2014, icons such as Kim Kardashian and Niki Minaj helped to solidify the reemerging curvy-booty look. And plus-size

models made appearances on catwalks. Meanwhile, Michelle Obama's bare, muscular arms launched a thousand sleeveless gowns. Kate Blanchette's red-carpet choices helped to bring back long, flowing gowns and skirts, even as cleavage contrarily stood front-and-center in necklines that plunged.

The pixie haircut sported by Anne Hathaway and *Girls* star Lena Dunham reinforced the popularity of the short 'do. Lupita Nyong'o's short-cropped hair and fresh, natural beauty were strong influences, especially after her *Vogue* cover and contract with Lancome. The Oscar winner's bright, colorful fashion choices — ranging from solid reds to vivid Latin and African-inspired patterns and embroidery, also made her an influential fashion icon. *Glamour* magazine named her "woman of the year."

— Louis Weisberg

WALKER from prior page

until he's had time to craft his public image on a national stage. If Walker really wanted to stop right-to-work, he could simply threaten to veto it, which he refuses to do.

"I feel as if the right hand does not know what the far-right hand is doing on this," said Wisconsin Senate Minority Leader Jennifer Schilling, D-La Crosse, "Walker could in one pronouncement put an end to this by saying, 'I will not sign this.' But to back off and say, 'This is something the Legislature is doing and it's not on my agenda' — that is not accurate."

MICHIGAN MODEL

Walker's reluctance to take a firm stand mirrors how Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder dodged the issue in 2012 before he signed that state's bill into law.

Snyder repeatedly insisted during his first two years in office that right-to-work was not on his agenda. He reversed course in December 2012, a month after voters defeated a ballot initiative that would have barred such measures under the state constitution. He refused to say whether he would sign such a bill but never closed the door, saying he had other priorities.

Introduction of Michigan's right-to-work bill generated mass protests. But the Leg-

islature moved at lightning speed to pass it just five days later with no public testimony. Snyder signed it into law the same day.

Paul Secunda, labor law professor and program coordinator for Marquette Law School's Labor and Employment Law Program, thinks there may be a benefit for Walker if there's quick action on the issue. "If I were Scott Walker ... I would think that signing it in a lightning-quick manner would be less detrimental to my national political aspirations," he said.

That appears to be exactly the way that right-to-work will become law in Wisconsin in January. Pundits expect Walker to claim that he was merely following the wishes of elected officials and to deny responsibility for the bill. They also expect him to sign it late on a Friday afternoon or evening in an attempt to minimize its impact on the news cycle.

How the strategy works for Walker politically could depend on the vehemence of the opposition's response. It's generally believed that a replay of the 2011 fracas would be detrimental to his presidential prospects.



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FLASHBACK: POP CULTURE

STREAMING ON SPOTIFY

Singer-songwriter Ed Sheeran was 2014's most streamed artist on Spotify, while Eminem topped the list in the United States.

Pharrell Williams' ubiquitous "Happy" was the most streamed song of the year globally.

In the United States, Iggy Azalea's "Fancy" was the most streamed song.

Katy Perry the most streamed female artist and Coldplay was the most streamed group around the world.

SEARCHING THE WEB

The No. 1 search topic on Yahoo in 2014: "Ebola." Followed by "Minecraft," "Ariana Grande," "Jennifer Lawrence," "Kaley Cuoco," "Kim Kardashian," "Frozen," "Miley Cyrus," "iPhone 6" and "Jennifer Aniston."

SPORTING NEWS

The top-searched sports events on Yahoo in 2014 were: No. 1, Brazil falls to Germany in the semi-finals of the World Cup; No. 2, San Francisco Giants win a third title in five years in the World Series; No. 3, Seahawks triumph over Broncos in the Super Bowl; No. 4, Sochi plays host to the Winter Olympics; No. 5, NFL rocked by domestic violence cases.

ONLINE OBSESSIONS

The ALS Ice Bucket Challenge topped the list of most viral campaigns in 2014, according to Yahoo. Flappy Bird came in at No. 2, followed by *Frozen*, *Fifty Shades of Grey*, *American Ninja Warrior*, *The Duggars*, "All About That Bass," Katniss Everdeen, *Cleances* and *Polar Vortex*.

STARS WITHOUT MAKEUP

Searching for stars sans makeup apparently is a popular way of passing time on the Internet. On Yahoo in 2014, surfers most wanted to see Sofia Vergara without makeup, followed by Mila Kunis, Jennifer Lawrence, Joan Rivers, Faith Hill, Marilyn Manson, Iggy Azalea, Kim Kardashian and Ariana Grande.

SEEKING TO SING-ALONG

The top-searched song lyrics in 2014: "Let It Go" from *Frozen*.



PHOTO: AP PHOTO/DOUGLAS GORENSTEIN

Jimmy Fallon dumps ice water over the head of Lindsay Lohan on his NBC show as part of the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge.

TOPS ON TUMBLR

The most viral blogs on Tumblr in 2014: Taylor Swift, Ghost Photographs, Will It Beard, Literary Starbucks, Crying New York, Jerry Seinfeld Skeleton, Museum of Selfies, Sochi on Tinder, If They Gunned Me Down and B4-16. Check them out before the ball drops on 2015.

— Lisa Neff

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Study links coal ash to contaminated groundwater

By Lisa Neff

Staff writer

The use of coal ash as fill material for roads, parking lots and buildings can be linked to contaminated groundwater in four southeastern Wisconsin counties.

This is the finding of a new study recently released by Clean Wisconsin, which has called for a moratorium on coal ash spreading until there is more research and regulation.

Don't Drink the Water — said to be the first study showing the extent of molybdenum contamination in drinking water wells in southeastern Wisconsin and the first examining the reuse of coal ash waste for construction projects — arrived just before the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is due to release a new regulatory rule. The rule, ordered by a consent decree in a lawsuit brought by a coalition of environmental groups represented by EarthJustice, is due on Dec. 19, after WiG went to press. The groups sued after the EPA's work on the rule stalled, despite public outcry following a disaster in Tennessee in which a billion gallons of coal ash sludge destroyed 300 acres and dozens of homes.

Tyler Cook, CW's director of science and research, said, "Toxic coal ash spills from landfills and retention ponds are not the only ways that coal ash can pollute the environment. It is also regularly placed under construction projects, often with no barrier between the ash and the groundwater."

It's the carpeting of southeastern Wisconsin with coal ash — the "beneficial reuse" of the material — that the Clean Wisconsin study focuses on in an attempt to determine how and why more than one in five wells in Waukesha, Milwaukee, Racine and Kenosha counties are contaminated with molybdenum above the state health advisory level.

Coal ash is an industrial byproduct — produced by coal-fired power plants — that contains toxic chemicals such as arsenic, boron, mercury, lead, hexavalent chromium and molybdenum. Producers may store coal ash on plant sites, but more often the waste is shipped to landfills or reused in construction. Wisconsin is recognized as a leader in the "beneficial use" of coal ash, a practice currently encouraged by the EPA.

Don't Drink the Water identifies 1.6 million tons of coal ash used in more than 575 "beneficial use" projects in southeastern Wisconsin, projects in which coal ash was placed under roads, trails and buildings.

CW's yearlong research built upon prior study and testing in the area conducted by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, which reviewed elevated molybdenum levels in drinking water and focused on coal ash landfills in the Caledonia region. In 2013, the DNR said it could not identify a single source — like the We Energies Oak Creek plant — for the high levels.

This is where the CW study — which used data from the DNR — took off. "When the DNR was unable to point to the nearby coal ash landfills as the definitive sources of

molybdenum contamination, it suggested that the molybdenum was likely either naturally occurring or coming from multiple anthropogenic sources," the report says. "Since the evidence points away from natural sources being the cause, we conducted an analysis" to see if the contamination was associated with other man-made sources."

The conclusion: "Wells closer to known coal ash reuse sites, particularly those larger than 500 tons, tended to have higher molybdenum levels than wells farther away."

"Our research helps to fill some of the gaps and indicates a link between coal ash waste in the region and molybdenum contamination," Cook said.

At Yorkville Elementary School in Racine, where bottled water is supplied and the DNR confirmed contamination in 2013, molybdenum levels were tested and found to be as high as 138 parts per billion — 70 percent higher than the one-day exposure level that the EPA says is safe for kids. In 2000, according to DNR records, some 856 tons of coal ash were used as fill in the school parking lot.

A second school, North Cape Elementary, is supplying bottled water and testing has shown elevated levels of molybdenum. About 191 tons of other ash were used to stabilize the soil at a construction project there in 2007 and about 654 tons of coal ash were employed in 2005 in a project about a half-mile from the school.

DNR CRITICAL

Don't Drink the Water drew criticism from the DNR, which said the researchers did not "legitimately explore the potential for the natural occurrence of molybdenum" and the report did a poor job of looking at the types of coal ash and distinguishing the different uses. When it is used in concrete, asphalt and wallboard, coal ash doesn't leach into groundwater, and that's how about 90 percent of the material has been used in the region.

A statement from the DNR said, "The department does not concur that there is a clear correlation between the elevated molybdenum in groundwater in southeast Wisconsin and the beneficial use of ash from coal fired power plants.

"As Clean Wisconsin acknowledged in their report, it is challenging to determine the sources or causes of elevated molybdenum in groundwater in southeast Wisconsin."

The DNR said, "The sources may be human caused and/or naturally occurring, but the data currently available are inconclusive."

Both the DNR and Clean Wisconsin said more research is needed.

"Much more evaluation is required," the study states. "While we can't definitively point to a sole cause of the molybdenum contamination in southeastern Wisconsin, the analysis ... provides strong evidence that the coal ash spread throughout the region was at the very least contributing to the drinking water contamination."

The findings led those involved in the



PHOTO: COURTESY

Coal ash from the Oak Creek generating complex may be linked to groundwater contamination in the region.

project to issue a series of recommendations, including the call for a moratorium.

"We need to halt the use of coal ash where toxins can leach into groundwater, put better protections in place and clean up the drinking water in southeastern Wisconsin," said Clean Wisconsin general counsel Katie Nekola.

She said the report supports a call for more testing of groundwater in areas where coal ash was placed, requiring more testing of coal ash, establishing reporting requirements for the use of coal ash and enacting a moratorium on the reuse of coal ash until new safeguards are in place.

Some regulation may come from the federal government.

The rule, following a White House review, is due from the EPA this month and could address whether to label coal ash as "hazardous" waste. "A strong federal coal ash rule could help ensure safe drinking

water not only in Wisconsin but across the nation," said Nekola.

Ann Coakley, the DNR's Waste and Materials Management Program director, said after the EPA issues its plan the DNR will "compare the new law to our existing state framework in the weeks and months that follow."

We Energies spokesman Brian Manthey said the utility believes "the current DNR rules concerning coal ash landfills and beneficial use rules are appropriate regulations for the protection of human health and the environment" and no moratorium is needed.

He added, "The EPA encourages the beneficial use of coal ash, citing positive environmental, economic and performance benefits."

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Opinion

SHARON E. DAVIS

We as human beings had the ability to dig ourselves into this ditch of racism and we can dig ourselves out. Here are seven things I know for sure about racism:

- It is not the fault of people today that we are in this ditch. There's no room for blame.
- More laws won't fix the problem.
- Racism is very young in our human history and only went global in the 1600s. It is not innate.
- If we can't successfully talk about race, we can't learn. And if we can't learn, it won't go away.
- A next Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. or a new common enemy like space aliens will not save us.
- Every race and culture has a role and work to do in healing the problem.

DID THE '60S FAIL US?

Leaders in the 1960s set a good foundation for upholding the Constitution's commitment to the pursuit of happiness for everyone. But our society still experiences some of the most violent acts imaginable — and not just against people of color. Do we not get the connecting violence dots of race, heterosexism (homophobia) and almost exclusively white suburban school



Beginning the journey to racial healing

shootings? What happens to the most vulnerable in our society also visits the most privileged in one form or another.

In some ways, the 1960s were easier for us to wrap our head around. Civil rights folks from all races and cultures had a common focus — upholding the Constitution and its mandate for equality under the law. The law was expected to be colorblind. But the ideal of colorblindness will not stop the murders in places like Ferguson and Milwaukee.

WHAT'S DIFFERENT TODAY?

The new watchword is equity — the recognition that it is a human virtue like truthfulness and kindness. Equity recognizes the oneness of the human species and demands "justice for all."

Unfortunately, we have all grown up in an environment that teaches us some people aren't quite as deserving as others. We see this played out as racism, heterosexism, sexism and all the other -isms we know. When the -isms are addressed, we all benefit. Consider the movement among physically challenged people to demand sidewalks and curbs suited to their needs. Everyone benefited — new fathers with baby strollers, the elderly, bicycle riders, etc.

When we address the inequities reserved for the most vulnerable people, then everybody moves ahead. The Milwaukee that only benefits some will not attract the

growth and development that will provide a comfortable future for all.

THE PATH FORWARD

We fear the emotions surrounding dealing with racism because we haven't been taught how to discuss it. The penalties for making mistakes can be embarrassing and severe. Here's the path I took to break my own "don't-talk rule":

- It's not my job to fix other people as it relates to race. I have enough work to do on myself. The incorrect stuff I learned is emotionally set in me, but I can redirect my thinking and response. The incorrect stuff is a distortion of reality.
- I made a conscious decision to learn and grow. I pay attention to times when I'm tempted to let my fear or judgments override my value system. I refuse to leave a legacy of racism for my grandson.
- I know that if I was born a white woman in the United States, I would act like her, talk like her and think like her. That realization not only changed my attitude but how other people sense me.

There are four fundamental things to know about racial healing:

- Only talking about one side of the coin distorts our worldview.
- Accept that white people of goodwill don't know what they don't know. Remember the white s/heroes of racial civil rights.
- People of color must not internalize the lie of inferiority and stop acting it out. This includes not using the "N" word and believing that it's not cool to excel in school.
- Consider what the oneness of humankind means physically, intellectually, socially, psychologically and spiritually.

I decided I wouldn't give up when dealing with racism got hard. I read everything I could. I learned more about myself than anybody else, and I accepted the fact that I will make mistakes. Some have been embarrassing, but my efforts and willingness to learn have gotten me many passes with people. I ask that they help me grow.

I discovered my new role and talents as

part of fixing the problem. It is completely different from what I imagined. A radio talk host and author? My, my.

I found people and racial healing tools that made sense to me and I trust them.

I don't have all the answers, but I found experts who do have pieces of the answer. That's why I wrote a book as a racial healing learning tool. You don't have to buy my book. The interviews are available free online.

There's a big difference between entertainment, talking and actually dialoguing with one another. We will never be able to learn all of the written and unwritten rules of various cultures — they are way too complex. My fellow human beings can trust that I will continue to be in a learning mode.

There is an architecture and design to racial healing, just as there's an architecture and design to racism. Once I started replacing fear and embarrassment with the desire to engage in the healing process, my life opened up to more people. It feels good to continue to grow into my new role — and perhaps leave a contribution that will last for generations.

The business community and nonprofits hold great promise. For the most part, these sectors are less segregated than our neighborhoods. This is where we have one of the greatest opportunities to learn new ways and unlearn some very bad habits.

I have faith in our human family. We have demonstrated that we can get better and do better — just not always fast enough.

Sharon E. Davis is a former Information Technology executive and now president of SeDA Consulting, which provides strategic people planning, executive coaching and change management. She also has hosted the VoiceAmerica radio show, A Safe Place to Talk about Race and is author of the book A Safe Place to Talk about Race, 10 Thought-Provoking Interviews. She recently moved to Milwaukee to be close to her grandson. For more about Davis and her work, go to seda-consulting.com.

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CEO/PRINCIPAL

Leonard Sobczak
lsobczak@wisconsin-gazette.com

PUBLISHER/EDITOR IN CHIEF

Louis Weisberg
lweisberg@wisconsin-gazette.com

SENIOR EDITOR

Lisa Neff, lmneff@wisconsin-gazette.com

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

Mark Richards
mrichards@wisconsin-gazette.com

BUSINESS MANAGER/ PRODUCTION COORDINATOR

Kaity Weisensel
kweisensel@wisconsin-gazette.com

GRAPHIC DESIGNERS

Eric Van Egeren, Maureen M. Kane

ASSISTANT EDITOR

Matthew Reddin
mreddin@wisconsin-gazette.com

COPY EDITOR

Stephen DeLeers

SALES INFORMATION

sales@wisconsin-gazette.com or call 414.961.3240

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

Jeff Kerr, jkerr@wisconsin-gazette.com
Logan McDermott,
lmcdermott@wisconsin-gazette.com

CIRCULATION MANAGER

Jake Case, jcase@wisconsin-gazette.com

DISTRIBUTION

Andy Augustyn, Shauna Boswell, Charles Leonard, Thomas Now, Greg Tomasetti, Robert Wright

OFFICE ASSISTANT

Anita Gielow

CONTRIBUTORS

Jamakaya, Bill Lamb, Kat Murrell, Mike Muckian, Jay Rath, Anne Siegel, Gregg Shapiro



Wisconsin LGBT
Chamber of Commerce

EDITORIAL

A streetcar named desired

Urban areas today are once again thriving engines of economic activity where Americans want to live, work and play. Large numbers of people, especially young people, don't want to waste time and money on automobile commutes in exchange for a few more square feet of living space in isolated suburbs with strip malls and big-box stores. They prefer to live near where they work and enjoy the amenities that cities offer, including live entertainment, unique restaurants and shops, and a vibrant atmosphere.

That's certainly the case with Milwaukee, but a key ingredient in the success of other cities is missing: Milwaukee is the most densely populated city in the country without a rail component in its transportation system.

Integrated, multi-modal transportation systems are major contributors to the phenomenal resurgence of urban centers throughout the nation — and the world. These systems utilize and connect with other modes of mass transit — trains, busses and streetcars — that are suitable for different lengths of travel and different areas of population density. For moving people around the most heavily populated areas, nothing beats streetcars.

Streetcars are coordinated to have stops along bus routes, encouraging more use of public transportation and thus less traffic congestion and pollu-

tion. Pedestrians, bus riders, train travelers, automobile drivers and bicyclists use the streetcars as a link to their final destinations. Streetcars are also useful to people who only want to park once and then go several places without having to move their cars.

Milwaukee's proposed streetcar system eventually would cover an extensive area, but it would begin with a \$124-million loop route connecting the densest residential neighborhood in the state of Wisconsin (north downtown) with the densest collection of jobs in the state of Wisconsin (east downtown); the loop would also encompass the Third Ward, the Lakefront and the Milwaukee Intermodal Station (Amtrak station).

According to Rocky Marcoux, commissioner of the department of city development, this starter route reaches 90 percent of major downtown employers and 80 percent of hotel rooms.

Research shows that streetcars are especially desirable to the kind of talented young people who are leaving Wisconsin in droves because of its shrinking educational and employment opportunities. This is one of the grayest states in the country, and it's growing grayer all the time.

Streetcars have proven to be outstanding economic generators in other cities. They leverage an astounding

amount of private sector development activity, which is why the business community supports them so strongly. A major bank or other corporate entity is more likely to develop a downtown building if there's an easy, convenient way to get people to work without having to build massive parking structures. New shops and restaurants will develop along the streetcar stops, expanding the city's tax base as well as its amenities.

Milwaukee has been sitting for decades on a \$54-million federal grant that can only be used for rail. Mayor Tom Barrett plans to use those funds for the streetcar system and raise additional money through tax incremental districts, so businesses that stand to benefit from the project will pay most of the rest. Money raised in this way helped construct Manpower International headquarters, the Harley-Davidson Museum, the Riverwalk and other projects that have proven vital to the city.

Conservative Ald. Bob Donovan, who clearly fails to grasp this key trend in urban development, is leading the charge against securing the final sources of funding. Contact your city representatives and other elected officials and urge them to quickly build and expand the proposed streetcar system.

Milwaukee will ride it into the future.

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There is something significantly wrong in America when the Conservatives try to take away Voting, Civil, Human, Religious, Social and Constitutional Rights while persuading people to take up arms in the fear that "government" is taking away our rights.

THANK YOU, PRESIDENT OBAMA



ON THE RECORD



“Leather is everywhere, it’s so cheap a material, it’s so mass produced. Over 50 million animals a year are killed just for fashion. For me it doesn’t have a luxury element to it.”

— Superstar fashion designer STELLA MCCARTNEY responding to critics who say her apparel line can’t be described as “luxury” because she refuses to use leather and other unsustainable materials. McCartney’s parents, former Beatle Paul McCartney and the late Linda McCartney, were known for their vegetarian and environmental activism.

“I have always been proud of my association with Temple University. I have always wanted to do what would be in the best interests of the university and its students. As a result, I have tendered my resignation.”

— BILL COSBY in a statement announcing his resignation as a trustee of Temple University. The move followed reports that numerous women over many years have accused Cosby of drugging and sexually assaulting them.

“It’s not really about what I think. It’s about what you’re going to do. What are you going to do? He’s a teen who is gone. He was gunned down. What are you going to do? You understand what I’m saying? That’s why it hurts. Because you have no answer. None of us do. He’s gone. That hurts.”

— Recording star PHARRELL WILLIAMS responding to a reporter who asked what he thought of the situation in Ferguson, Missouri, where protests have followed the announcement that former police officer Darren Wilson would not be indicted for gunning down unarmed black teenager Michael Brown in August.

“WHY MUST U TORTURE PREG.PIGS? U PUT THEM IN CRATES & LOCK EM DOWN SO THEY CANT MOVE! C. CHRISTIE, UR DESPICABLE BULLY 4GET POTUS.”

— CHER tweeting about New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie’s veto of a law to ban confinement of pregnant pigs to crates so small that they can’t lie down or move. Christie’s handling of the bipartisan bill is seen as an attempt to curry favor for Republican voters in Iowa, which holds the first 2016 presidential caucuses.

“I don’t want to hear about this hands-up crap. That’s not what happened. I don’t know exactly what did happen, but I know that’s not what happened. This policeman’s life is ruined.”

— Former Chicago Bears coach MIKE DITKA expressing his dismay over the “hands up, don’t shoot” gesture that St. Louis Rams players made prior to their Nov. 30 game. Da Coach shared his insights with the *Chicago Sun-Times*, for which he writes a weekly column.

“I’ve been sober for 24 years now, and one of the best lessons it taught me is to listen. When it comes to people like Rush Limbaugh, or people who might enrage you sometimes, dialogue is the only way. You have to reach out. Whether you make an impact in one year or 30 years, it doesn’t matter. You have to put your foot in the water and start the process.”

— ELTON JOHN talking about his relationship with Rush Limbaugh in an interview with *The New York Times*.



Toasts to lesbian, gay artists and divas of 2014



Congrats are due to two bona fide lesbian geniuses: artist Alison Bechdel and legal eagle Mary L. Bonauto. Both received prestigious MacArthur Foundation genius grants in 2014.

Bonauto is a longtime legal advocate for LGBT rights who is credited with devising the legal strategies that resulted in the expansion of marriage equality. Bechdel captured the lesbian universe with her beloved cartoon series *Dykes to Watch Out For*. A musical version of her award-winning memoir *Fun Home* is headed for Broadway in 2015.

Rest in peace, Storme DeLarverie, 93, legendary singer, cross-dresser and bouncer, who may have thrown the first punch at the Stonewall rebellion in Greenwich Village in 1969. Farewell too to Nancy Garden, 76, who penned the

lesbian classic about teen romance *Annie on My Mind*, in 1982.

Apple’s Tim Cook was touted as “courageous” and “a pioneer” for coming out as a gay man in 2014. Cook, 54, is a millionaire and CEO of one of the biggest companies in the world. Anyone coming out is a good thing, but let’s reserve our kudos for the trans kid in Wausau and the little dyke in Oconto who struggle to come out against much tougher odds.

There are always multiple contenders for “Villain of the Year.” We Energies comes to mind for its proposed imposition of extra fees on customers who use solar energy. How about the Staten Island cop, exonerated by a grand jury, who choked Eric Garner to death for selling cigarettes for a few extra bucks? Or the cities that passed laws prohibiting people from feeding the homeless? How low can you go?

Right-wing politicians continued to rail against government regulations while restricting women’s

rights to control their own bodies. This year pols again misidentified women’s body parts and functions. One even compared women’s decisions about abortion to his own decision about buying carpeting!

Here’s an idea: If you don’t know the difference between a uterus and a vagina, don’t pass laws about them. If you are against abortion, don’t have one.

Two of the best writers in the world who just happen to be lesbians published long-awaited books in 2014. Sarah Waters’ *The Paying Guests* and Emma Donoghue’s *Frog Music* were ambitious historical melodramas combining crime stories with sexual identity issues. *The Paying Guests*, a slow-moving, complicated tale steeped in irony, triumphed. *Frog Music* croaked.

Openly gay crooner Sam Smith appears to be heading toward multiple Grammys for his debut single “Stay with Me” and his CD *In the Lonely Hour*. Actress Ellen

Page came out as a lesbian and spoke up for feminism. Joining her in feminist sisterhood were Emma Watson, Angelina Jolie, Taylor Swift and Beyonce, although the gyrating female derriers that accompanied Bey’s pronouncement made for a rather mixed message!

We love our divas partly for their ups and downs. Idina Menzel separated from hubby Taye Diggs while “Let It Go!” soared to triple platinum in sales. Menzel choked at the Oscars, then killed at the Tony Awards (Google “Always Starting Over+Tonys”) before losing the Tony to Jessie Mueller. Happily, at year’s end Menzel is still headlining in *If/Then* on Broadway.

Finally, hats off to Disney for undoing 80 years of damage to girls’ psyches by redefining “true love” as something other than the kiss of a handsome prince. And for following up *Frozen* with the feminist revenge epic *Maleficent* — priceless.

Let’s work for peace and progress in 2015!

O’Donnell Park sale leaves public out in the cold



Public parks are rarely sold to for-profit corporations. But Milwaukee County may soon sell the postcard-perfect Lakefront promontory O’Donnell Park to Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Co. On Dec. 18, county supervisors will vote to approve or reject the proposed sale.

This is a bad financial deal for taxpayers. It removes from the parks’ budget an annual \$1.3-million-dollar income stream. It denies the public all future rights to a priceless park with some of downtown Milwaukee’s best views.

O’Donnell Park is often dismissed as just a “parking garage.” At the east end of Wisconsin Avenue, Mark Di Suvero’s sunbeam sculpture boldly greets you. From there, you see the Milwaukee Art Museum’s soaring Calatrava-designed

pavilion. Perhaps you’ve attended an event at the Miller Room or Coast restaurant, or you’ve taken young friends or family to the Betty Brinn Children’s Museum. If this deal closes, all O’Donnell Park facilities will become Northwestern Mutual property, to use as the corporation wishes.

So will the two garden plazas that extend from Mason to Michigan streets. Both are popular settings for weddings. (If you want to get married there, book soon, because a private buyer will have no obligation to rent out the gardens or pavilion venues.) O’Donnell Park may evolve into a private playground, a 9-acre extension of NML’s campus.

In its proposed contract, NML guarantees only two things. A specified number of parking spaces will be made available to the public at certain times at market rates. People will also be able to walk through the site to get to the Milwaukee Art

Museum. But those options end in 2033, when the “useful life” of O’Donnell’s parking structure will expire, according to the contract (or even sooner, if NML decides).

A legal analysis by attorney William Lynch confirms that, despite vague reassurances by NML reps, the public will be left out in the cold with this sale. NML probably won’t raze the park immediately, but its officials acknowledge they will ultimately redevelop the site as they choose. The contract says nothing about keeping this prime Lakefront acreage a public park. The public will lose any future possibility to re-imagine O’Donnell.

The proposed selling price is jaw-dropping. Taxpayers and other donors invested \$36 million to build O’Donnell in 1992. Based on the recent sale of the nearby Irgens’ site, O’Donnell’s land alone is worth about \$40 million. Conservatively, the land and facilities are now worth perhaps \$76 mil-

lion. But Milwaukee County Executive Chris Abele has agreed to sell the park complex to NM, one of the richest companies in America, for \$12.7 million. As a career real estate investor, I would never sell on those terms. But it’s a buyer’s dream.

NML is a terrific Milwaukee employer but does not deserve this kind of taxpayer subsidy. The City of Milwaukee already granted the corporation \$73 million in tax credits to rebuild its headquarters.

Urge your county supervisors to vote “no” on this pending sale (it’s easy to contact them online). Yes, it’s the season of giving, but we need not give away an irreplaceable community asset. Only a lease or conservancy arrangement will preserve this inherited gem for future generations.

Pat Small, a longtime landlord, believes in vigorously protecting public assets, such as parks, for the common good.

REGIONAL BRIEFS

MILWAUKEE'S TRIXIE MATTEL TAPPED FOR 'DRAG RACE'

The seventh season of Logo TV's reality show *RuPaul's Drag Race* will feature a distinctly Wisconsin flair. Trixie Mattel, a Milwaukee-area drag queen who's a frequent performer at Hamburger Mary's in Bay View as well as at Plan B in Madison, will join 13 other performers in an attempt to become America's Next Drag Superstar. Trixie Mattel and her competition were announced during Logo's NewNowNext Awards, where last season's victor, Bianca Del Rio, took home the competition's Best New Television Personality award. *RuPaul's*

Drag Race will return in January 2015.

WALKER OPPOSES EPA'S CLEAN POWER PLAN

The EPA closed public comment on its Clean Power Plan on Dec. 1 after receiving more than 1.6 million comments. Among them was one from Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker, who is opposing the increased regulation to reduce CO2 emissions.

The plan would cut carbon emissions from the power sector approximately 30 percent from 2005 levels by 2030 and sets out state-specific goals for lower carbon emissions.

The Republican governor said the proposed rule would have a detrimental effect on the state's manufacturing-based economy, as well as household ratepayers. Those ratepayers, however, already are seeing rate increases from the utilities under Walker's watch.

Walker, in his statement, claimed, "We have made major investments to ensure we are providing our citizens with reliable, clean, affordable power. If enacted, the EPA's Clean Power Plan would be a blow to Wisconsin residents and business owners, and I join business leaders, elected officials, and industry representatives in opposing this plan. I urge federal officials to carefully consider our concerns and the adverse economic impact this plan could have on our state, as well as the nation."

ASHLAND HARBOR PRESERVATION INCLUDED IN DEFENSE BILL

U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin applauded the inclusion of a measure to preserve the history of the iconic Ashland harbor in the National Defense Authorization Act for 2015. The measure, introduced by Baldwin in bipartisan legislation earlier this year, transfers ownership of the Ashland Harbor Breakwater Light from the Coast Guard to the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore.

"Maintaining our public lands, including our National Parks, is not only important to preserving our history, but is crucial for economic development, outdoor recreation and education in our communities," Baldwin stated. "The Ashland Light is a public

treasure and distinctive marker of Ashland's role in the region. I'm proud to help preserve the lighthouse so that visitors can continue to experience all of the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore."

The U.S. Coast Guard has been looking for an organization to take over management of the Ashland Breakwater Light, which is on the National Register of Historic Places. The National Park Service, the only public or private entity to express interest in obtaining and maintaining the Ashland Light, is not able to accept a transfer of the property without legislation to provide a boundary adjustment. The National Park Service already manages eight light stations on six of the Apostle Islands.

The House approved a National Defense Authorization bill in early December. The Senate was expected to vote on the bill the week of Dec. 8-12, after WiG went to press.



PHOTO: COURTESY

COMIC CRUSADE: Transgender comic Dina Nina Martinez is the producer and creator of *Alphabet Soup*, Madison's first LGBT stand-up comedy show. On Dec. 19, the 7 p.m. show will welcome Kelly Mantle of *RuPaul's Drag Race* to the stage and raise money for AIDS Network.

In other regional news ...

- **Nearly 70,000 pages of emails** and attachments were released in late November, collected as part of the first secret John Doe investigation into former aides and associates of Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker when he was Milwaukee County executive. The emails show, once again, that Walker was deeply involved with decision-making by his county and 2010 gubernatorial campaign teams.
- **The Wisconsin Department of Justice** hired more workers and began a pricey renovation of its Madison crime lab to handle tens of thousands of additional DNA samples. A Republican-backed law set to take effect on April 1, 2015, dramatically expands the grounds for collection despite concerns from civil liberties groups.
- **The Madison Common Council**, after a lengthy meeting that went past midnight on Dec. 3, accepted the police chief's report that outfitting officers with body cameras would cost about \$1 million. The council continues to explore the issue.
- **Chicago's minimum-wage workers** will earn \$13 an hour by 2019 under a plan the Chicago City Council approved overwhelmingly on Dec. 2. Pushed by Mayor Rahm Emanuel, the change makes the nation's third-largest city the latest to raise its rate.
- **The U.S. Supreme Court** has let stand an Iowa Supreme Court ruling that said residents could sue a corn processing plant in Muscatine. The lawsuit accuses the Grain Processing Corp. of routinely blanketing homes with soot and harmful chemicals.
- **Health officials have designated 35 hospitals** across the country as Ebola treatment centers, including three in Wisconsin — Children's Hospital of Wisconsin and Froedtert Hospital in Milwaukee and University of Wisconsin Hospital in Madison.

— from WiG and AP reports

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NATIONAL BRIEFS

**SAM SMITH, BEYONCÉ, PHARRELL
TOP NOMS FOR 2015 GRAMMYS**

The National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences recently announced the nominees for the 57th annual Grammy Awards, and the final list counts Beyoncé, Pharrell Williams and newcomer Sam Smith among the nominees for Album of the Year and the most nominated artists all-around.

The three were nominated for albums *Beyoncé*, *G I R L* and *In the Lonely Hour*, respectively. Pharrell stands the largest chance of winning a statue of any sort, listed as a producer on Beyoncé's album as well as on Ed Sheeran's *x*, another nominee. Beck's *Morning Phase* rounds out the Album of the Year nominees.

Smith also joins the female-heavy list of Best New Artist contenders. Iggy Azalea, Brandy Clark and sister-trio HAIM were nominated, alongside British band Bastille.

The 2015 Grammys will be aired on CBS on Feb. 8, 2015.



PHOTO: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

QUEEN B: Beyoncé has been nominated for multiple Grammy Awards for her 2014 recordings.

said the CDC's Dr. Jonathan Mermin.

But "the scientific evidence is clear that the benefits outweigh the risks," added Mermin, who oversees the agency's programs on HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases.

These are the first federal guidelines on circumcision, a medical procedure that involves cutting away the foreskin around the tip of the penis. Germs can grow underneath the foreskin, and CDC officials say the procedure can lower a male's risk of sexually-transmitted diseases, penile cancer and even urinary tract infections.

The CDC started working on the guidelines about seven years ago, when a cluster of influential studies in Africa indicated circumcision might help stop spread of the AIDS virus.

In other national news ...

• **Center for American Progress'** latest study looks at the threat sea-level rise and severe weather pose to the United States' aging sewage system. More than 75,000 sanitary sewage overflows a year already pollute U.S. waters and inadequate systems already result in the discharge of 900 billion gallons of untreated waste a year.

• **The U.S. Department of Education** recently released guidance for single-sex classrooms in co-educational public

schools. The guidance makes clear that programs based on sex stereotypes that employ radically different teaching strategies based on gender violate Title IX. The guidance is in response to complaints and challenges brought by the ACLU, including concerns from Wisconsin.

- **The Democratic National Committee** announced the finalists to host the 2016 Democratic National Convention. They are Columbus, Ohio; New York City and Philadelphia.
- **Congress**, in its annual defense policy bill, omitted a provision giving the president the authority to transfer terror suspects to the United States. The omission sets back the president's plan to close the federal prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.
- **The Miami-Dade County Commission** voted in early December to amend the existing human rights ordinance to prohibit discrimination in housing, public accommodations and employment based on gender identity or gender expression. In the 1970s, the Christian right organized to fight a gay rights ordinance in Miami-Dade. It was one of the first local battles waged by the Christian right against equality advocates.

— from WiG and AP reports

**CDC REVIEW SUPPORTS HEALTH
COVERAGE FOR CIRCUMCISION**

U.S. health officials recently released a draft of long-awaited federal guidelines on circumcision, saying medical evidence supports having the procedure done and health

insurers should pay for it.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines stop short of telling parents to get their newborn sons circumcised. That is a personal decision that may involve religious or cultural preferences,

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DisH it Out!

Say 'cheese' when holiday entertaining

By Michael Muckian

Contributing writer

In Wisconsin, cheese isn't merely a food — it's part of the lifestyle. As such, a well-considered cheese platter should be a staple of your holiday entertaining.

California may produce more milk than America's Dairyland, but Wisconsin still outpaces it in cheese production. In 2013, Wisconsin produced 2.8 billion pounds of cheese, or about 25 percent of total U.S. production, according to the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board. Wisconsin also is home to the largest number of artisan cheese makers in the United States.

Here a few guidelines to help you design the perfect cheese board for holiday entertaining.

First, realize that while there are literally hundreds of different cheeses to choose from, they are categorized according to four foundational styles:

- Aged cheeses, which include various familiar styles like cheddar, Swiss and Gouda, have been aged from several months to as many as a dozen years. The rule of thumb here is the older the cheese, the more pronounced its characteristics.
- Blue cheeses, like Roquefort, Gorgonzola and Stilton, are injected with a culture of the mold penicillium (yes, much like the antibiotic penicillin) that produces their piquant flavor and blue veining. Cheese eaters are often strictly divided between

love and hate when it comes to blue cheese.

- Firm cheeses, a group that includes Parmesan and manchego, also have devout followers and detractors due to the cheeses' "hard" nature and sometimes nutty flavors. There also are semi-firm cheeses, including brick, cheddar and Gouda.
- Soft cheeses, the most popular of which may be Brie and Camembert, are enjoyed for their spreadable quality. Cheese in the semi-soft category includes baby Swiss, colby, fontina, havarti and other familiar types.

Your cheese platter can contain a cross-section of all four types of cheese and their variables, or it can focus on one or two specific styles. When serving, separate the cheeses to keep the strongly flavored varieties apart from the more subtle types.

Your cheese choices can focus on cheeses made from the milk of cows, sheep or goats, each of which has its own characteristics. Cheese is also produced from the milk of yaks, camels and other mammals, but chances are you will have

You want your holiday party to be memorable, and your cheese platter should be too.

less luck finding those at your local supermarket.

The amount of cheese your event requires depends on the role of your cheese platter in your holiday spread. Plan on offering 3-6 ounces of cheese per guest. Cheese can be served before and after dinner, but if cheese is the focus of your hors d'oeuvre, you'll want to increase the amount substantially.

All cheeses should be served at room temperature for maximum flavor. That means taking them out of the fridge at least an hour prior to your party. And label the cheeses you serve. That gives guests something to talk about as they try famil-

CHEESE next page



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CHEESE from prior page

iar and unfamiliar varieties.

Make sure to have different knives for the different kinds of cheese served. A knife crusted in blue cheese will quickly change the flavors of all other cheeses into something that may or may not be pleasant.

Always provide some form of conduit for the cheese. Sliced French bread, unflavored crackers and breadsticks tend to be the most popular, complementary and not competing with flavor.

There is an old wine industry adage, "Buy with bread, sell with cheese," that applies here. Bread cleanses the palate, while cheese flavors it.

You may want to complement your cheese selection with other finger foods.

Candied or salted nuts add a different array of textures and flavors to the mix, while cured meats, such as prosciutto, or pickled vegetables fill the appetizer tray's flavor profile, adding sweet, salty and bitter items to the mix.

Finally, shop local in choosing your cheeses and make sure you have at least one variety that's familiar to your guests and one variety that is completely new and different. You want your holiday party to be memorable, and your cheese platter should be too.



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French vs. American wines? Vive la différence!

By Michael Muckian

Contributing writer

In 1976, a handful of California winemakers entered a wine competition in Paris hoping to gain attention from the elites who governed the European wine trade. No one was more shocked than the French judges themselves when the series of blind tastings resulted in overwhelming wins for American viticulture.

The so-called "Judgment of Paris" had immediate and enormous ramifications for the global wine industry. American producers continue to win awards worldwide and have never looked back.

As you schedule your parties this holiday season, consider hosting your own "judgment," pairing U.S. wines with their French counterparts. Your goal should not be to find one wine better than the other, but to look for complementary pairings that expand your tasting horizons as well as those of your guests.

Here are five complements to get you started:

One of the most consistent, yet versatile varietals is sauvignon blanc. The **2013 Pascal Jolivet Sancerre** (\$27) hails from France's Loire Valley, considered the home of sauvignon blanc. Along with Pouilly Fumé, Sancerre is considered one of the region's finest brands. The Pascal Jolivet winemakers practice their own version of biodynamic wine-

making, using 100 percent sauvignon blanc grapes. The result is a bright, youthful wine with refined fruit flavors, subtle sweetness and vibrant acidity. It's an excellent accompaniment to lighter foods.

Our corresponding California wine, the **2013 Duckhorn Napa Valley Sauvignon Blanc** (\$29), calls to mind New Zealand's vivid, flavorful sauvignon blancs. The nose and flavor palate offer strong essences of grapefruit, melon and lime zest. The wine, which also contains 16 percent sémillion grapes, benefits from its time in French oak barrels, giving it a rich undertone that complements the wine's natural flintiness.

As ubiquitous as sauvignon blanc has become, nothing beats chardonnay in a white wine popularity contest. It can be bright, light and reedy, or fully oaked and filled with vanilla overtones. Our complementary pairing strikes a middle ground between the two styles.

The **2012 J.J. Vincent Bourgogne Blanc** (\$19) comes from France's Mâconnais area in Burgundy and is named for the chateau's winemaking patriarch Jean-Jacques Vincent. After the grapes are harvested, 70 percent are vinified in stainless steel tanks, while the remaining wine spends six months in oak barrels. The blended result is a straightforward wine, more fruit-driven than many

French wines, with a light acidity and tropical overtones.

The **2012 Frog's Leap Napa Valley Chardonnay** (\$28), JJ's partner wine, paints a brighter picture both in terms of nose and palate. Having been fermented in both casks and concrete tanks — in the later case *sur lie*, or resting with the dead yeast and other grape byproducts to extract more flavor — the resulting wine is clean, with notes of slate, peach and citrus on the palate. Balance and acidity combine to make this a great wine for seafood.

Sometimes wine varietals don't have to match exactly to make a good impression. Consider pairing the **2012 Chateau Fuissé Juliéna Domain de la Conseillère** (\$29), from France's Beaujolais region, and the **Wollersheim Domaine Reserve** (\$30), grown in the Lake Wisconsin viticultural area just north of Madison.

Wollersheim winemaker Philippe Coquard was born and raised in Beaujolais, and his Domaine Reserve has an extremely dry palate and a clean finish, much like wines from Chateau Fuissé. But that's where comparisons end.

The French wine, produced exclusively with Gamay grapes, has a delicate, subtle nose that favors raspberries with a hint of smoke. Its American counterpart is bolder and deeper, made primarily of

Maréchal Foch, with a touch of Millot grapes. The fruit-forward wine has a structure similar to the Chateau Fuissé, but with a flavor palate of blackberry and spice. Neither is truly better than the other, and they are a delight to sample side by side.

In addition to Burgundy, France's other great wine region is Bordeaux, the source of Andre Lurton's **Chateau De Cruzeau Red** (\$27). Like so many of Bordeaux's great growths, the wine is a blend — in this case, 55 percent cabernet sauvignon, 43 percent merlot and 2 percent cabernet franc. The result pours a deep garnet with a nose of black cherry and other stone fruits. The wine is well structured, with a velvety mouthfeel of blackberry, a touch of tobacco on the back palate and a lingering finish.

Not surprisingly, the **2011 Girard Artistry Napa Valley Red Wine** (\$42) is more fruit forward in its assertions. The blend is more complex, with 55 percent cabernet sauvignon, 18 percent cabernet franc, 10 percent malbec, 9 percent petite verdot and 8 percent merlot, all harvested from different Napa Valley vineyards at different times. Expect a complex nose of licorice, cherry, cocoa and a little coffee when pouring this deep red beauty into the glass. A palate

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supported by fine tannins brings to mind dark fruits, such as plums and currants with bright cherry notes.

Your tasting wouldn't be a holiday event without a bit of the bubbly to help ring in the New Year. Only wines that come from the French region of Champagne can be labeled as such, but the U.S. bottles its own sparklers worthy of note.

The non-vintage **Piper-Heidsieck Cuvee Brut** (\$39) is a product of one of France's great Champagne producers and a multi-award winner in various global competitions. An extended maturation period provides the light, lacy bubbles that characterize the bright, golden wine. Its blend is a variety of dark, juicy pinot noir and pinot meunier grapes from more than 100 top vineyards in the region.

The nose is alive with the subtle presence of pears, apples and a light citrus-grape flush. Those notes carry over to a palate with a fine mouthfeel and flavors of pear, grape



and even grapefruit. The wine's finish is crisp, clean and leaves you wanting more.

Even though it can't technically be called "champagne," the sparkler **J Cuvee 20 Brut** (\$19) from the Sonoma Valley's J Vineyards & Winery is in the same vein. Winemaker Melissa Stackhouse alters the blend to include 54 percent chardonnay, 44 percent pinot noir and 2 percent pinot meunier, with the juice of each grape kept separate until blending.

The more complex mix adds greater character, with a nose of hazelnut and apricot. The flavors carry over to the palate, which offers notes of pear, lemon and lime zest, and even mousse, all bracketed by a lively acidity and a lingering presence.

When it comes to tasting French and American wines, *vive la différence*, but cheers to the similarities.

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Pot-dining in Colorado pits chefs against law

By Kristen Wyatt

Associated Press writer

Acclaimed chef Chris Lanter is talking a crowd of eager foodies through a demo on cooking with marijuana. As he prepares steak au poivre, he describes how to deglaze the pan with pot-infused brandy. How to pair marijuana with fine foods. How to make marijuana's skunky tang work for a dish, not ruin it.

One catch — there's no actual weed at his demonstration.

Marijuana aficionados paid \$250 for a weekend-long celebration of marijuana and food, yet state and city regulations prohibit any "open and public" use of the drug, even at licensed businesses holding private events.

It's a strange dichotomy. The nascent marijuana industry in Colorado is moving well beyond pot brownies. Dispensaries are doing a booming trade in cookbooks, savory pot foods and frozen takeout dishes that incorporate the drug. But for now, halting attempts at creating a marijuana dining scene have had mixed results.

Colorado may have legalized marijuana, but it still prohibits "on-site consumption," a caveat aimed at preventing Amsterdam-style coffee shops where pot can be purchased and consumed in the same place. Recreational or medical marijuana is now legal in 23 states and Washington, D.C. — though each state prohibits on-site con-

sumption and pot sales in bars or restaurants.

As Colorado's recreational industry nears its anniversary, authorities increasingly are cracking down on attempts to push the pot-dining envelope.

The city of Denver, where the marijuana industry is concentrated, wrote 668 tickets for "open and public consumption" through September, up from 117 the year before, when marijuana was legal, but sales were not. And the county that includes Colorado Springs is trying to crack down on so-called "smoke-easies," or private clubs that allow marijuana use, sometimes paired with refreshments.

Even private events at restaurants aren't safe. Denver authorities are using permit codes and alcohol laws to fine and even press charges against people trying to throw private events at which pot foods are served.

The result has been that chefs interested in infusing foods with pot, or pairing regular dishes with certain strains thought to accent a particular flavor, are unable to try it outside catered events at private homes. Even chefs who will talk publicly about doing "medicated" catered house parties, like Lanter, are skittish about sharing details.

"There's so much potential here, and the interest is unbelievable. But right now, everybody's kind of scared to be doing it,"

says Lanter, owner and executive chef at Aspen's tony Cache Cache restaurant.

Which isn't to say folks aren't experimenting with the limits of the law.

A bed-and-breakfast in Denver offers guests samples of cannabis strains alongside regular breakfast dishes. Guests at The Adagio get marijuana samples at daily happy hours, too, where strains of pot are paired with crudites and bacon-wrapped

chicken bites, complete with tasting note presentations from growers.

"It's a way to bring our guests together and move away from campy, stereotypical pot foods," says Joel Schneider, CEO of the MaryJane Group, which operates two marijuana-friendly hotels.

But Schneider has to be careful. The pot he hands out goes only to paying hotel guests over 21, allowing him to argue the tastings aren't public. His attempts to do more public events have been shut down by police. He also avoids serving any foods that contain marijuana, something that could land him a criminal citation.

Chefs worried about criminal charges point to Amy Dannemiller, owner of Denver-based Edible Events, which helped organize last summer's cannabis-friendly concerts with the Colorado Symphony Orchestra.

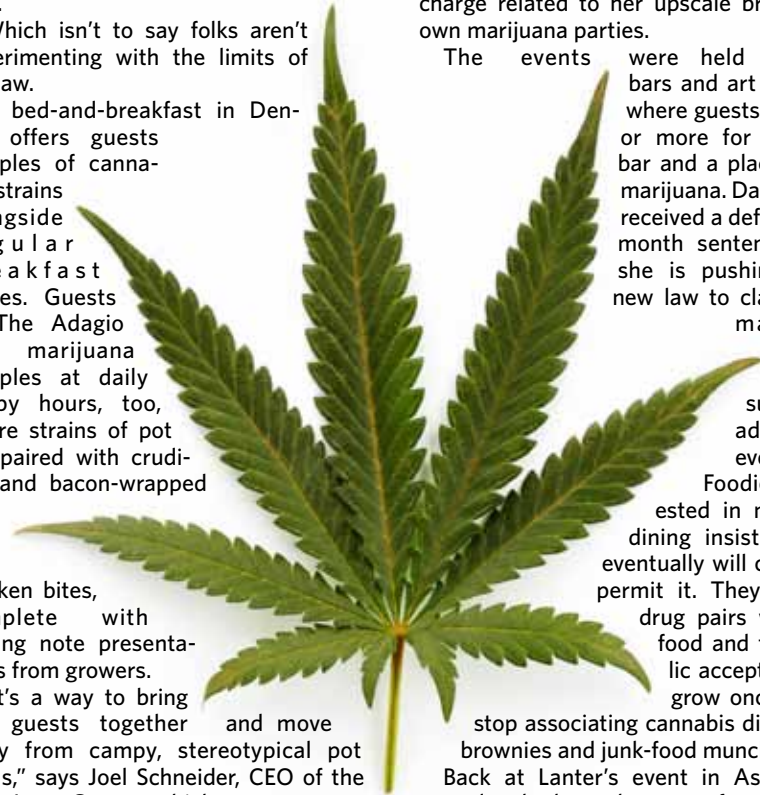
Dannemiller, known professionally as Jane West, recently pleaded guilty to an alcohol charge related to her upscale bring-your-own marijuana parties.

The events were held at tony bars and art galleries, where guests paid \$95 or more for an open bar and a place to use marijuana. Dannemiller received a deferred six-month sentence. Now she is pushing for a new law to clarify how marijuana can be consumed at adults-only events.

Foodies interested in marijuana dining insist the law eventually will change to permit it. They say the drug pairs well with food and that public acceptance will grow once people stop associating cannabis dining with brownies and junk-food munchies.

Back at Lanter's event in Aspen, one attendee had good reason for optimism about fine dining with cannabis. Marcy DiSalvo attended the first iteration of Aspen's noted Food & Wine Classic, held in 1983, and found similarities with this year's cannabis cooking celebration, called the Cannabis Grand Cru.

"You know, it was a lot like this — just a couple hundred people getting together to talk about their love of food. And wine. Or in this case, marijuana," DiSalvo said. "This is classy. It's done right. It's not a bunch of stoners; it's people with a gourmet approach."



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The 'hair of the dog' won't cure a hangover, but other methods help

By Michael Muckian
Contributing writer

When you wake up on Jan. 1 after partying hearty on New Year's Eve, what kind of shape will you be in?

If you don't have any unexpected facial tattoos or a tiger roaming around your apartment like the hapless characters in *The Hangover* movies, then chalk one up for your side.

But if you feel like a piece of chalk, with a head that's been scraped across too many blackboards, know there are things you can do — or things you should have done the day before — to help you ease more comfortably into 2015.

Here are a few ideas and potential remedies that have worked to relieve other revelers in search of redemption, and may work for you as well.

BEFORE YOU GO OUT

Experts will tell you that the only way to truly avoid a hangover is to completely abstain from alcohol consumption. There is no magic pill, no super food that can keep you sober and safe if you overindulge. Don't want to be hung over? Don't drink. Period.

If you do plan to drink, eat heartily before you go out. Food won't stop you from over-imbibing, but a full belly will slow the absorption of alcohol, and the longer you have to metabolize what you drink, the longer you will remain (relatively) sober.

WHILE YOU'RE OUT

Metabolism plays an important role once the festivities are underway. In most cases, the human body metabolizes an alcoholic drink in 60 to 75 minutes. Pace yourself with these guidelines in mind and you will

remain (relatively) sober for a longer period of time.

Many people don't realize that the more alcohol you drink, the more dehydrated you become. Try to alternate drinks with a glass of water. Not only will you curb that dehydration, but you'll also moderate your consumption altogether.

Eating something while you drink also helps absorb the alcohol and fills you up, which presumably will slow your alcohol consumption down.

THE MORNING AFTER

The most important rule of beating back a hangover is not to do anything that makes the hangover worse. So don't fall for the "hair of the dog" cure or start throwing back Bloody Marys. Pouring a morning drink may provide a temporary numbing effect, but it also will prolong alcohol saturation in a body that is desperately trying to heal itself from overindulgence. It won't sober you up and can lead to alcohol dependency.

Eating a greasy breakfast, another folk remedy, is also largely a fallacy. But eggs are the exception, says Tammy Lakatos Shames, R.D., author of *The Secret to Skinny*. Eggs are gentle on your stomach, packed with protein and contain large amounts of cysteine, a semi-essential amino acid that can help clean up the alcohol's leftover toxins.

Whether or not you took this advice the first time, drink water to stave off the dehydration that causes much of a hangover's misery. The more water you drink before, during and after your night of debauchery, the better you will feel.

Toast, crackers or other carbs will help settle a queasy stomach. It worked when you were a kid with the flu and it works when

your illness is self-inflicted. Bananas are another, unexpected solution. The fruit is cheap, easy on your stomach and will help replenish the potassium you lost during a night of drinking, says Shames.

Even better, say some, is coconut water. In addition to being highly hydrating, it's an excellent source of potassium, covering two must-haves for recovery. If you don't like the taste, Shames says, dose it with some fruit flavors.

Mothers have prescribed soup for all sorts of ills, and hangovers are no exception. Commercially made soup has some nutritional value, but it's the sodium content that's really important, says Sarah Krieger, R.D., a Tampa-based nutritionist. Salt will not only help you retain water and rehydrate, but also will return your electrolytes back to their baseline. Sports drinks can do the same thing.

Coffee gets mixed reviews, but it can be beneficial for the right person. In addition to making you more alert and perking up your brain functions, caffeine dilates blood vessels, which can help you shed your headache, Krieger notes. Black is best if your stomach can handle it.

Green tea, packed with antioxidants, is good for your cells and organs. Add rosemary and lavender to your tea if you need to calm your stomach. Fruit and fruit juices can also be soothing, as well as providing much needed nutrients depleted by your night of excess.

If you're looking for some pharmaceutical headache relief, stick to anti-inflammatory drugs like aspirin, ibuprofen and naproxen. But steer clear of acetaminophens like Tylenol. The drug is hard on the liver, and that poor organ doesn't need any more abuse.

And if all else fails, you can follow the advice of musician Jason Isbell, formerly of Drive-By Truckers. According to an article in *The New York Times*, Isbell's favorite hangover cure is Pedialyte, an over-the-counter drug given to infants to replenish electrolytes and fluids lost during vomiting and diarrhea. There are even fruit-flavored Pedialyte Freezer Pops that you can freeze and eat.

It's an odd cure, but anyone who's been hungover knows no cure is too strange to try — anything to get you through Day One of 2015.



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WIGOUT!

By Gregg Shapiro

Contributing writer

National Coming Out Day is in October, but two country music artists waited until late November to share their good news. Ty Herndon was the first one out of the gate on Nov. 20, followed shortly thereafter on the same day by Billy Gilman, who cited Herndon's announcement as an inspiration to him.

The two artists come from different generations of country music. Herndon, a country chart-topper in the 1990s, built his career on hits including "What Matters Most," "Living in a Moment," "It Must Be Love" and "Loved Too Much," but has

been out of the big-time spotlight for most of the past decade. Gilman got his big break as a kid, releasing his major-label debut album *One Voice* in 2000 at the age of 11, featuring a hit single of the same name and a shockingly spot-on reading of Tammy Wynette's "'Til I Can Make It On My Own."

Today, both artists are working to redefine their careers, and each has chosen to do so as an openly gay artist, role models for fellow LGBT musicians and audiences alike. I spoke with both Herndon and Gilman in November, talking about their individual coming out stories, career thus far and hopes for the future.

Ty Herndon 'extremely happy' to finally live an authentic life

It's been about five days since your coming out story ran on People.com and the ensuing media attention. How has the experience been so far? I feel so incredibly blessed. I have struggled with being gay my entire career and life. Of course, I've had so much support from my friends and close family that supported me, that knew I was gay. But it's been so freeing for the fans to know, the fans in country music especially.

There are always going to be the naysayers and we've had a few of those. Ninety-nine percent of the feedback from the fans and in Nashville has been incredibly supportive. It's blown my mind, to be honest with you. I feel extremely happy. And I feel extremely excited about the future because, really, at the end of the day I just want to be authentic and continue to make great music. That's what I was what put on this planet to do, that's my gift. I'm singing better than I ever have. There's lots of music coming in the new year. That really makes me happy.

You performed at the Grand Ole Opry last night (Nov. 24). How was that show?

I was nervous. To my knowledge, no openly gay man has ever walked on the Ryman stage and performed. That is the Mother Church. I have so much respect for it. I've performed at the Grand Ole Opry 25 times in my career, but this one was a big deal to me simply because I am a part of the fabric of country music and I was hoping that I would be accepted. I told my manager last night, "If there's security at the back door, I hope they're just there to shake my hand and say come on in." That's exactly what happened. All of the artists were extremely supportive. We walked onstage to a full house and a big, loving, cheering crowd.

Did you consult with other out coun-

try artists, such as Brandy Clark or Chely Wright, before deciding to come out?

Chely Wright and I have been friends for many years. Our paths are so similar in country music. We went to great lengths to hide the fact that we were gay. Five or so years ago when Chely came out, I was so incredibly blown away by her bravery and courage. About six months later, we started talking about it. I didn't want her to be alone out there. It took a while for me to get my courage up, just to wrap my brain around it.

I was really fearful about being able to continue working and doing my job, working 200 tour dates a year. That was my main fear. If I don't get to continue to do my job that I love, my passion, I don't know what I'd do. Through Chely, I was able to get educated about all of the fans out there and the new landscape of what my life would be like. I became very comfortable with the fact that I wasn't going to let who I authentically am stop me from making the music I love. God gave me great courage and Chely was my godfather through all of it and we did it together.

Shortly after coming out, Chely was invited to be the grand marshal at the Chicago Gay Pride Parade. What would it mean to you to be the grand marshal of a Pride parade in any city? I would be so incredibly honored. Just to know that my LGBTQ brothers and sisters would welcome me in that. I would be extremely blessed and honored to be a part of something like that. It would be very humbling.

Billy Gilman credits you with helping him with the coming out process. What does that mean to you? I have known Billy since he was 12. We were on the same record label, Epic/Sony. I had had a few hit records when they signed Billy. He has been like



PHOTO: COURTESY

Ty Herndon was only the first country star to come out in November.

a kid brother over the years. We had lost contact and all of a sudden he's 26 years old. Last year, he reached out to me and we started talking about his sexuality. I began mentoring him a small amount because Chely was mentoring me. I was trying to pay it forward. It's a big decision to take that step. I was really happy that he chose to do that — two hours after I did. That we could take this journey together and be a support system is pretty awesome. Between Billy and Chely and me, who knows, maybe we'll do us a little world tour next year.

That would be great. Do you see this as a potential domino effect or more of an anomaly in country music and Nashville? Nashville, in general, is growing up a lot now. Country is so big now, they're on the world stage. If you're going to be on the world stage, you have to be able to have a different mentality. I credit Nashville a lot. They're moving forward at a great pace.

I know one of the things I would love to see happen, and Chely would too, is starting a better coalition here in Nashville of affirmative hearts so we can get an LGBT center open, that we can see Pride and GLSEN come to town. All of these kids, in these

Southern states that we're surrounded by in Nashville, when they're kicked out of their homes and the churches, (need to know) they have a place to go, that suicide is not an alternative, that they know that they can come and find love and acceptance. That coalition is important to a lot of us in Nashville behind the scenes as well as the few that have bravely come out.

You mentioned people being kicked out of their homes and churches. How much influence did your religious background have in the process?

I grew up in a great church, with a lot of affirming people. I never had to worry about being kicked out of anything. I grew up in bluegrass and gospel and country music. I had this amazing grandmother who had her own radio show on WPRN in Alabama. My grandmother was broadcasting live from the senior citizens' center at 90 years old, talking about controversial things. She was awesome. You didn't mess with Grandma Myrtle. But I had no one to talk to about my feelings of being gay at 10 years old.

I was 20-something when I came out to my mom. I think moms always know. My

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mother was more concerned about the profession I had chosen to be in. Her main concern was that I live an authentic, good life and that I was healthy. Of course, I went down some roads and that was not the case. She was right to worry about that. But, to answer your question, I grew up with a very loving God in my life and that's something I want to pass on to these kids that don't have that.

You released your major label debut almost 20 years ago and have been a country music mainstay since that time. Was there ever a point that you considered recording and performing in a genre where there are more openly gay artists? I considered doing a pop record. I actually went to my record label and talked about it. But when you're a country artist through and through and it's in your blood, all you accomplish is a pop sounding record with a country singing fella. It just didn't fit for me. I just had to buckle down and fight harder. The harder I fought, the more lies I created and it was uncomfortable to be in my own skin. At that point, I made a lot of mistakes, a lot of bad choices, and I take full responsibility for those choices. Looking at it from today, the addiction and the hard stuff I put myself through, it is now a part of the fabric of my story. God bless the broken road that has led me to sit here talking to you today. If it's fair to say, sometimes I'm grateful for my mistakes because I don't think I'd be the man I am today if it wasn't for them.

If there was a movie version of your life story, who would you like to portray you? There are very few actors who have great singing voices. I think Hugh Jackman or Neal Patrick Harris would do a great job playing me in a movie about my life. We would have to bring them to Nashville and teach them the cowboy ways (laughs).

You are embarking on a 2015 concert tour with Andy Griggs and Jamie O'Neal. What are you most looking forward to about that? I love those two, number one. We're three very different people. Andy's very much the bow-hunting, beer-drinkin', redneck fella. He's got a great girlfriend, so he's not a woman-chaser. Jamie, on the other hand, is definitely our diva. She's not a diva-in-training; she's a full-blown diva. And I'm the gay guy who's probably just about as country as they come. The dynamic is the crazy friendship. Those guys will play a Pride festival with me, they'll go anywhere I go. And I will go anywhere with them. I feel protected and loved.

Finally, Ty, as same-sex marriage continues to make strides across the country, if you and your boyfriend Matty were to marry, to what song would you like to walk down the aisle? That's an easy question for me. There's a Rascal Flatts song that I referred to, "Bless The Broken Road." That would be our wedding song. And if I had my wish, I would have my friend LeAnn Rimes come and sing it.

Billy Gilman adds his voice to gay country artists' ranks

How does a Rhode Island native, a New Englander, become a Nashville star? I grew up singing country music. Country music is so huge in my neck of the woods, believe it or not. There's no memory of not having country music in my life. The Grand Ole Opry and watching the awards shows that would come on and listening to Garth Brooks and Pam Tillis, it was just part of my life and always has been. It's easier than you think.

As someone who got his start as a child star in country, did you ever cross paths with LeAnn Rimes, another country music child star? Was she someone you looked to as a role model? Absolutely! LeAnn Rimes was so great to me, and we are still great friends to this day. I met her first when I was 11. I'm sure she took a liking to me because she saw me going through what she went through a few years before being a child herself. There's a common factor with her and whatnot. She's always been a great support system.

Do you have any advice for budding child stars? The one thing I always go back to is that you really have to love it. It has to be what you are, because there are going to be many wonderful opportunities. There

are going to be huge ups and corresponding downs to a career. You have to love it to sustain yourself and to put up with what you're going to have to put up with. If it's what you are and you live and breathe it, like I have my whole life, you'll be fine. You're going to do well because you have what it takes. You can't just wake up one day and go, "I'm going to be a singer!" It's tougher than that.

You cited Ty Herndon in your coming out message. Would you say his coming out the same day helped you through this? It was amazing! I've known Ty for a while. He was on the same record label as I was a few years back. He's a great singer. This was something that I have been going back and forth with for about a month. I was nervous and reluctant. You never know what's going to happen. I was set to do it that day and was reading Twitter and read that he had come out. I was like, "Oh, wow! This is very coincidental and very odd."

But things happen for a reason. (Ty) really helped me push the pedal to further it. He put me into high gear. He gave me enough confidence to do what I needed to do. He's a very brave person and a courageous artist. He did help immensely in my

COUNTRY next page

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Singer Billy Gilman says Ty Herndon's coming out was an encouragement to do the same.

COUNTRY from prior page

situation. My hat's off to him and my thanks to him always for that.

How has the response been from your fans? My fans have been amazing. Even people that just followed my career a little bit have been amazing. No matter what you do in life, it doesn't matter if it was this situation or I wanted to change genres, whatever — someone is always going to have an opinion. You have to brace yourself for a good opinion or a bad one. Everyone is entitled to whatever they feel. You have to keep a positive head and do your thing. So far, the comments and support have been amazing and I'm so grateful for that.

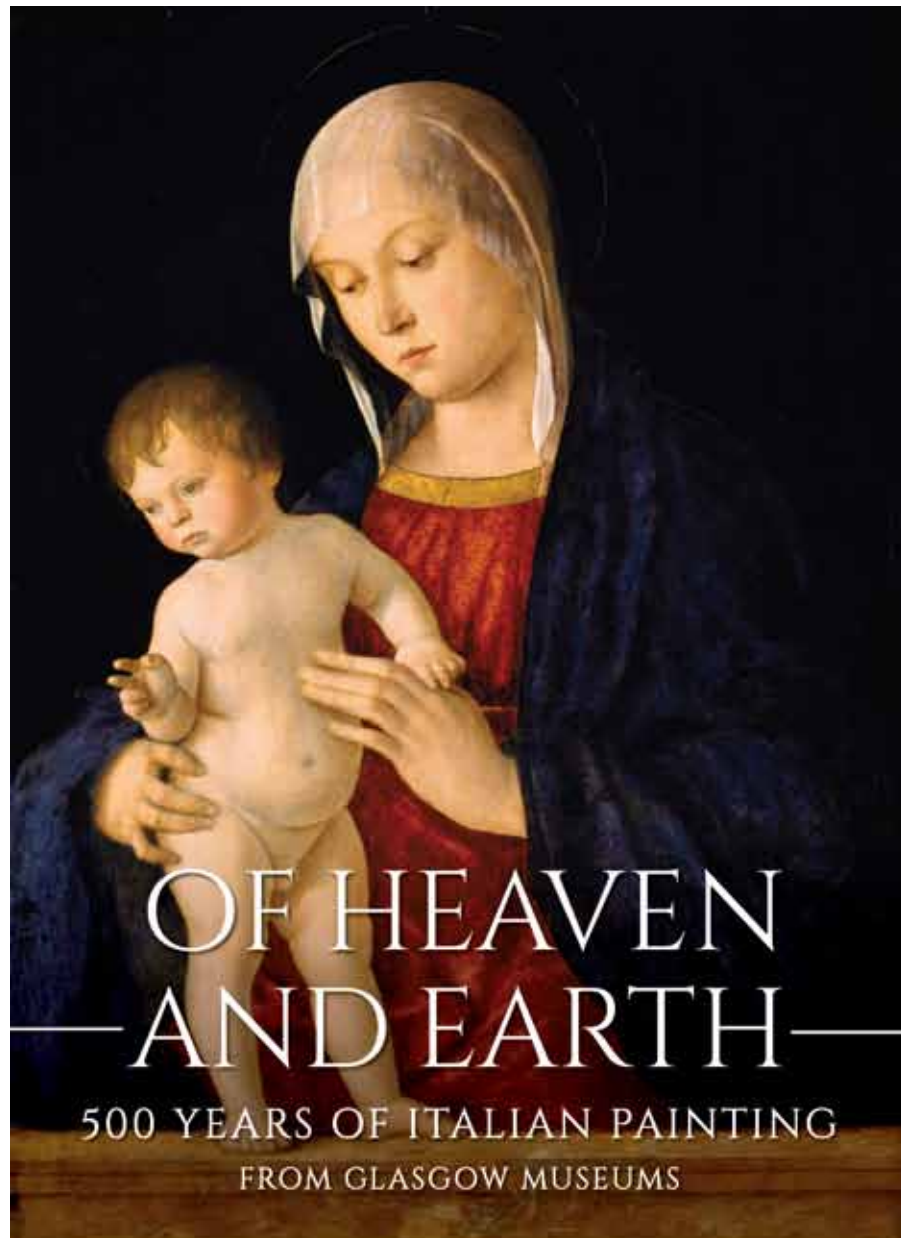
How did your family react to your coming out? My family was nothing but supportive. That was really amazing to me. They have not changed. Their support has stayed the same. I am so grateful for that.

Was there ever a point that you considered recording and performing in a different genre where there are more openly gay artists? I never thought of it because country is what I love. But having it be so difficult a situation, you have to be tough. If they still don't understand, you have to move on. That's just life and business. I would be saddened to know that country isn't ready. Luckily my music does lean toward country-pop, so there is the potential for crossover if that should happen. But my love is for country and always will be.

Chely Wright, who came out a few years before you did, was the grand marshal of the Chicago Gay Pride in 2010. What would it mean to you to be a grand marshal of a gay Pride parade? I would, of course, be grateful. The important issue for me is to be a voice for so many young adults my age and older adults that are struggling who may not have the love and support that I have — to advocate for a young woman or young man going through this in a part of the country that's maybe a little more conservative or something. That is always my main goal, my main focus. To be a grand marshal or this or that, that's an added bonus. The core of it is to be an advocate for people who don't have a significant or big voice in the situation. It's about coming together and creating one voice.

Would you ever perform at a Pride festival if you were asked? Absolutely. If the situation is correct and it's in a respectful manner. That's how I've conducted my business for the past 15 years. I would have no problem doing that. It's for the greater good and that's what it's about.

You mentioned your partner in your coming out video. With same-sex marriage continuing to make strides across the country, if at some point you and your partner were to marry, to what song would you like to walk down the aisle? One of mine (laughs)! I hadn't thought about that. "At Last," maybe. No, I'm kidding (laughs).



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Top albums of 2014

By Bill Lamb

Contributing writer



POP ALBUM OF THE YEAR TAYLOR SWIFT — 1989

In her own words, *1989* is Taylor Swift's first official pop album, and it leaves her country roots behind. So far it's the only album released in 2014 to go platinum, and *1989* reached that million-mark in just one week. The key question from most pop fans was, "Is it really that good?"

For the most part, the answer is, "Yes." Working with Swedish pop mastermind Max Martin, his American counterpart Ryan Tedder, and rising star Jack Antonoff of fun. and Bleachers, *1989* is a blast of self-assured contemporary pop, that retains Swift's knack for highly personal lyrics.

Swift's songs on *1989* occasionally stray from that formula (in "Bad Blood," about her feud with Katy Perry, she especially goes for the jugular). But she's at her best, as always, when singing about herself, especially on hit singles "Shake It Off" and "Blank Space." Both are two of the catchiest pop melodies of the year; the first tells us all to ignore the "haters" as we move forward in life, and the second is an incisive exploration of her noto-

rious romantic failures. *1989* is not only a distillation of the latest in contemporary hit music, it is the idiosyncratic work of today's most successful pop artist.

Honorable mentions go to two British singer-songwriters: Ed Sheeran and Sam Smith.

On his second full-length album, *x*, Sheeran has matured into a consistently likable pop artist, able to stretch in different musical directions while still maintaining his own distinctive voice. He dives into funky R&B with Pharrell Williams on "Sing," and shows off his ingratiating sing-speak styling on "Don't." It's his intimate ballad "Thinking Out Loud" that will have most mainstream pop fans swooning though.

Smith kicked off the year as the BBC's choice for the top new artist of 2014. He first hit pop radio in the U.S. as the featured vocalist on Naughty Boy's catchy dance-pop hit "La La La." But audiences didn't really understand what the BBC saw until Smith's debut album *In the Midnight Hour* hit physical and virtual shelves. The LP is a beautifully melancholic collection of songs that focus on his haunting voice, best epitomized in his first solo hit, "Stay With Me."

ROCK ALBUM OF THE YEAR U2 — SONGS OF INNOCENCE

It may have generated huge controversy with its free rollout to all iTunes customers, turning off many of the band's otherwise devoted fans, but *Songs of Innocence* is U2 at the top of their game.

The world's greatest rock band took William Blake's 18th century collection of poems about childhood, *Songs of Innocence*, as inspiration to create some of their most personal music. That doesn't mean the songs are inaccessible. This is U2 after all, and the album is bursting with rock 'n' roll hooks.

Honorable mentions in this category go to

ALBUMS next page

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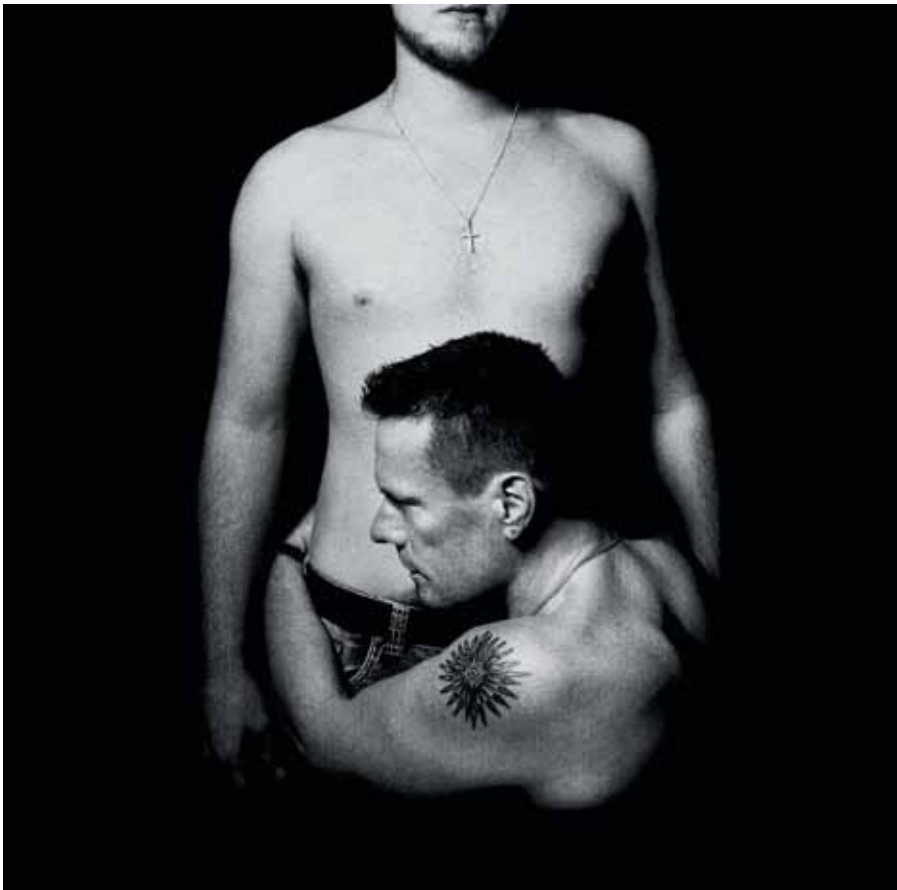


PHOTO: COURTESY

U2 drummer Larry Mullen Jr. and his son Elvis, 18, on the cover of *Songs of Innocence*.

ALBUMS from prior page

the arresting St. Vincent and punk's Against Me!

On St. Vincent's self-titled album, front-woman Annie Clark anoints herself the quirkiest of rock superstars. She can shred with the best on guitar, but her song sensibility, while ultra-catchy, lies firmly outside the mainstream.

Punk rockers Against Me! turned in one of the bravest albums of the year: *Transgender Dysphoria Blues*. In 2012, the band's lead vocalist came out as transgender, changing her name from Tom Gabel to Laura Jane Grace. *Transgender Dysphoria Blues* is a concept album inspired by Grace's transition, about the emotional journey of self-discovery and evolution. Notably, it sacrifices none of the band's trademark energy and in-your-face punk attitude.

R&B ALBUM OF THE YEAR
MARY J. BLIGE — THE LONDON SESSIONS

Few would dispute Mary J. Blige's status as a reigning queen of R&B. With a string of chart-topping albums released over the course of two decades, she doesn't have to prove anything as an artist. Yet *The London Sessions* is her most consistently engaging work in nearly a decade, and perhaps some of the most adventurous in her career altogether.

The album got its start back in July, when Blige moved to London to work with some of the hottest young British songwriters and producers. Among her more memorable collaborations: the Naughty Boy-produced

"Whole Damn Year," Disclosure's uptempo dance work on "Follow," and "Therapy," co-written with Sam Smith.

Honorable mentions go to living legend Prince and rising talent Jhene Aiko.

This year, Prince made up with Warner Brothers after nearly 20 years and released two new albums on the same day. The standout is the supremely funky *Art Official Age*. Some fans may see this as the long-delayed true successor to his glory days in the 1980s.

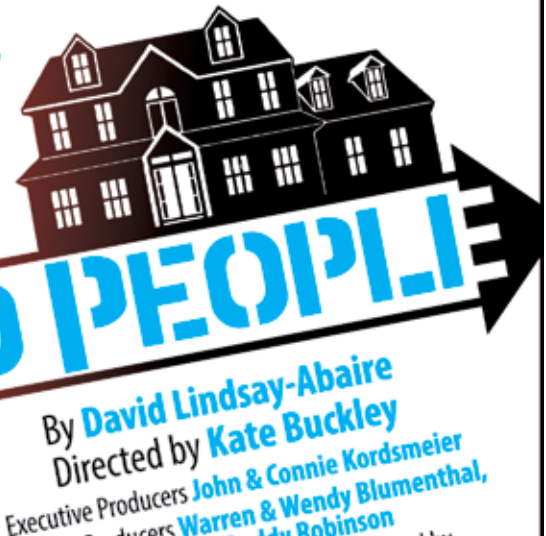
26-year-old Jhene Aiko very quietly heads into refreshingly fresh directions while respecting the past on her album *Souled Out*. The overall feel is a chilled, new age-influenced style of soul, but the intimate words are often frustrated and even angry in speaking about interpersonal relationships. This is an album for repeat listening, after which its many riches slowly emerge.



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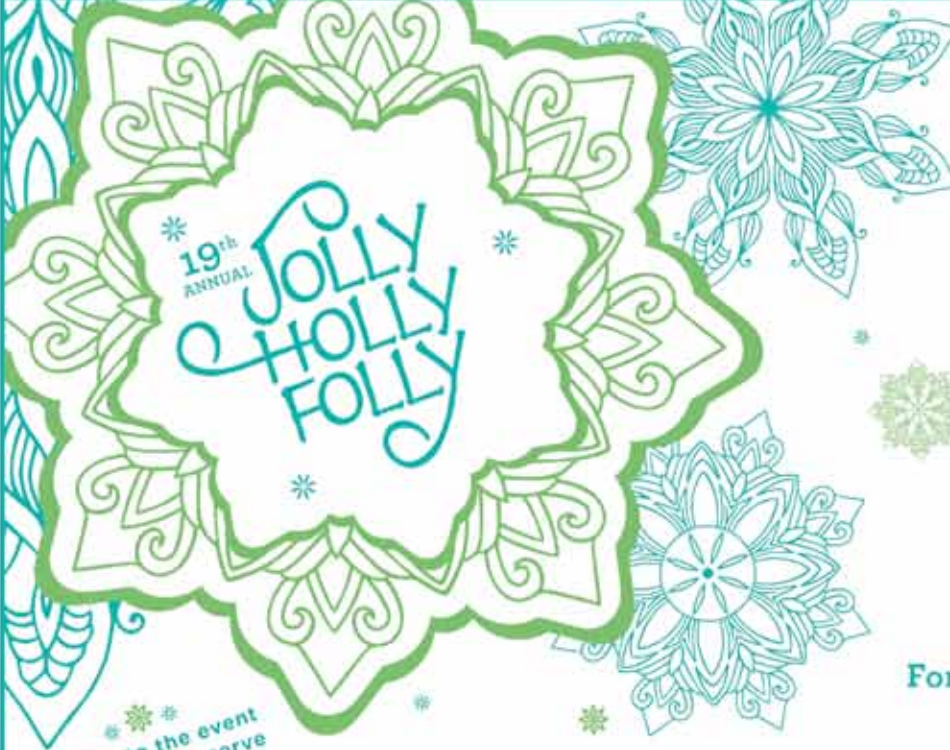
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The Get Down brings New Year's grooves back to Turner Hall Ballroom

By Michael Muckian

Contributing writer

On New Year's Eve, Milwaukee musician Andy Noble will be doing what he loves best: introducing fans old and new to his collection of classic soul and funk 45 rpm records at The Get Down, Turner Hall Ballroom's traditional end-of-the-year dance party.

Veterans of The Get Down, now in its fifth year, know that Noble doesn't play the latest pop hits amped-up with added rhythm tracks and indistinguishable disco beats. Noble spins from an extensive collection of vinyl — much of it irreplaceable — that represents one of modern music's most influential periods.

"I probably have 4,000 45s and 2,000 LPs in my personal collection," Noble says.

Noble says his emphasis is on quality, and he knows his subject. The founding bass player for the now-disbanded Kings Go Forth, a 10-piece soul group, he was also owner of the former Lotus Land Records in Riverwest.

The store closed its doors during the recession but still exists online at lotuslandrecords.bigcartel.com.

Noble also spins monthly at Mad Planet, 533 E. Center St. in Riverwest.

It's not just his knowledge, but also his treasure of a collection that makes his gigs so popular. His vinyl holdings include obscure labels, limited pressings and first-rate artists who never made it big. That latter category includes a number of Milwaukee musicians.

"There are hundreds of independent black releases from Milwaukee," Noble says. "I probably have 300 secular releases from here, and as many gospel recordings."

Noble was first exposed to those genres of music by his parents, who were Milwaukee art dealers. His mother went on to become manager and booking agent for the local band Harvey Scales and the Seven Sounds, which provided Noble with an entry into the 1960s Milwaukee soul music scene.

He began playing bass at age 11 or 12, he says, picking up licks from the late Albert Vance, Scales' bassist and a longtime friend. His eclectic taste in music includes 20th-century American composer Steve Reich and English folk singer Nick Drake, along with Bach harpsichord compositions and French lute music. But classic R&B, funk and soul have captured and captivated him the most.

"First off, it's the rhythm. It's still the wellspring," says Noble. "Even the latest music is using the vocabulary of rhythm used in the 1960s. The funk drumbeat is still the rhythm of our era."

Add to that the vocals — which are sometimes hard to come by in a musical genre known primarily for instrumentals

— and you have music that touches both the feet and the heart.

The music found on 45s also tells the tale of a long-gone era, Noble says.

"It's 45s that were the cheaper way to go for bands that had small budgets," Noble says. "They were a foot in the door, something to sell to get gas money to the next show, and a business card for the managers to hand out to say, 'These are my guys that I am trying to promote.'"

The singles in Noble's collection are generally unfamiliar to listeners. Topping Noble's list of favorites are: "Give Me Love" by The Sisters Love, a group of former backup singers for Ray Charles; "Kill the Pain" by Junior and The Classics, co-written by Lenny LaCour, owner of the Milwaukee-based soul label Cuca Records; and "Trying to Survive" by Scales and his group.

"We're not vinyl fetishists, we're fetishists from the music of that era, and vinyl is where you're going to find it," he says.

Noble also sees his role promoting an integration of musical tastes as a way to support racial integration in Milwaukee, one of the nation's most segregated cities.

"Milwaukee's biggest thing is the racial divide and intense social segregation. Everyone knows about it but doesn't get

ON YOUR FEET

The Get Down runs from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. on Dec. 31 at the Turner Hall Ballroom, 1034 N. Fourth St., Milwaukee. Tickets are \$60 and include a limited open bar, Champagne toast, party favors and a midnight pizza buffet. VIP tickets for \$85 include additional amenities. Visit pabsttheater.org for more details.

talked about that often," Noble says. "Being a white dude working in black music you can do a lot of good things."

One of the best things Noble can do is play the music that has informed subsequent generations of performers and composers. He's shone a much-needed light on artists who never were properly recognized during their lifetimes.

"I am a firm believer that you go out to hear a DJ and music you haven't heard before," Noble says. "I don't want to stress our importance so much. It's the records that are important. Our job is to unearth great music from the depths."

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'Guys on Ice' is quintessential Wisconsin theater

By Michael Muckian

Contributing writer

If you've ever cheered the Green Bay Packers, sipped a cold one — or a cold six-pack — in subzero temperatures or worn a Styrofoam cheese wedge on your head, then *Guys on Ice* is the holiday show for you.

And, if you've ever wondered what goes on in all those ice-fishing shanties perched on Wisconsin's frozen lakes every winter, then this show's for you, too.

The musical, which runs at Madison's Barrymore Theater Dec. 17-31, was created in 1998 by composer James Kaplan and librettist Fred Alley for American Folklore Theatre (now Northern Sky Theatre) in Door County. Publicity for the show claims that *Guys on Ice* is "the nation's favorite ice fishing musical comedy," which is probably true given that it's likely the only one.

Buddies Marvin (Doug Mancheski) and Lloyd (Steve Koehler) wile away their time on the ice musing about life, liberty and whether the Packers will make the playoffs this year. Their biggest challenge is keeping Ernie the Moocher (Ted Tyson) away from their stash of Leinenkugel's.

Kyle Nelson accompanies their outbursts of song on his trusty piano.

Guys on Ice was born in Wisconsin, but its creative team involves artists with serious national cred. Alley, for example, is

well-known for collaborating with composer James Valcq on *The Spitfire Grill*, which won the Academy of Arts and Letters' prestigious Richard Rodgers Production Award in 2001. His work for AFT, which he co-founded and where he served as artist-in-residence, was gaining national attention when he suddenly collapsed and died while jogging near his Door County home in 2001.

Marvin, Lloyd and host of other characters help keep Alley's creative legacy alive. We convinced actors Mancheski and Koehler to set down their Leinies long enough to fill us in on the *Guys on Ice* backstory.

It seems an actor would need the right blend of credentials to play the roles of Marvin or Lloyd. Can you tell us about yours?

Doug Mancheski: I was born and raised in Green Bay, but graduated with an MFA in acting from New York University. I trained with Uta Hagen, David Mamet, Mike Nichols, and for many years with Second City founder Paul Sills. After graduating, I appeared in many New York productions, including a number directed by Broadway's Diane Paulus.

I moved back to Wisconsin about 10 years ago and have worked with the Milwaukee Rep, Madison Rep, Milwaukee Chamber Theatre, as well as American Folklore The-

atre. Fred Alley wrote the role of Marvin for me. In fact, many of the things I said to him outside of rehearsal were filtered through his dramatist's mind and landed in the play. My father actually talked like Marvin and the farther north you go in Wisconsin, you can still hear that thick accent.

Steve Koehler: I'm a lifelong Wisconsinite, born and raised in a family of hunters and fishermen in Fond du Lac. That's "foot of da lake" in French, "doncha know."

I got my undergrad in science education with a minor in physics from UW-Madison in 1988 and went on to get my MFA in acting at the Professional Theatre Training Program at UW-Milwaukee in 1992. I've been acting in and around Milwaukee since then.

I started teaching at Milwaukee High School of the Arts in 1993, and I've been teaching physics and acting as my day job for the last 21 years. They like that I'm a working Equity actor and are gracious and helpful with my teaching schedule.

Tell us a little bit about the show and what motivates your character.

Mancheski: I play the role of Marvin, who believes his life will change when he is interviewed by a regional fishing show on cable television. He's certain he will become an instant celebrity, that he will never have to buy a beer again, and, most importantly, he

will finally get a date with Bonnie, the check-out girl at the Pick 'n' Save.

Marvin asks his best bud Lloyd to be on the show with him, since the host said he could bring a guest. So the show becomes a quasi *Waiting for Godot*, as the two friends await the arrival of Cubby and his television crew at the shanty.

The two of you have played Marvin and Lloyd for some time. How has that changed you?

Mancheski: I've played Marvin since the show's premiere in 1998 and stopped counting after 1,000 performances. What has changed is that the "clown" bits have been toned down, and I now believe the subtle behavior and expressions are just as important as the lines. Not to mention, just as funny.

Consequently, there is a realism that underscores the whole production and anchors all the far-fetched aspects of the play. Lloyd and Marvin become real people that the audience recognizes and come to love. How else do you explain audience members seeing the show for the seventh or eighth time? It always astonishes me that, after two hours onstage, people will treat me as part of the family, as if they have known me all their lives.

GUYS next page

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Guys on Ice is rife with Wisconsin references and colloquialisms. Does it play well outside the Badger State?

Mancheski: The show has been successful outside of Wisconsin, especially in Boston and Detroit. Some of the show's biggest fans are British! It really doesn't matter if you are from Wisconsin or ice fish or not. *Guys on Ice* is really about two friends looking out for each other, and both realizing that friendship and having someone to love is all that matters in life. And all the time, laughing until it hurts.

How would you alter the play, if you could?

Mancheski: I would not change a word in the musical. Since seemingly nothing happens plot-wise, one might be tempted to introduce a silly sitcom device or two. But that would defeat the whole gist of the play. This play is about relationships and life's great adventure. That's something that is the hardest to dramatize compellingly, and Fred Alley succeeded wildly.

After 1,000-plus performances, what keeps you coming back to *Guys on Ice*?

Mancheski: It's the audience. Fred actually said the audience is the other character in this play. How they respond will dictate how to proceed, and they usually respond with waves of laughter. Ultimately, the play is a celebration of Wisconsin and its people, hard workers with hearts of gold who love to laugh.



Actors Steve Koehler, left, Lee Becker and Doug Mancheski in the 2011 production of *Guys on Ice*.

PHOTO: LEN VILLANO

Koehler: No show is closer to my heart than this one. What the cast and crew have created is special, simple and authentic — not to mention hilarious. I never tire of it or fail to be surprised and moved by it. Fred's words speak to me as much as through me.

Do you think *Guys on Ice* plays well in Madison?

Mancheski: It's my personal theory that what has made *Guys on Ice* so popular is that every Wisconsinite has had a relative

who has talked that way the characters do, and the show becomes nostalgic for them. The Madison crowd boasts a plethora of Ph.D.s, but they pack the theater because they probably came from a working-class family Up North where the "dees" and "dohs" were part of their family's vernacular. Hiding behind every advanced degree is a cheesehead longing for the days when all that mattered were the Packers, a brat and a cold Leinie's in hand.

ON STAGE

Guys on Ice runs from Dec. 17 to Dec. 31 at the Barrymore Theatre, 2090 Atwood Ave. on Madison's East Side. For tickets and more information, call 608-241-8633 or visit barrymorelive.com.

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Broadway for the holidays *Critic's choices*

By Anne Siegel

Contributing writer

The lights of Broadway glow brighter during the holiday season. For proof, look no further than the third week in November: It was the highest-grossing and best-attended Thanksgiving week in Broadway history. Ticket buyers shelled out \$34.1 million.

Part of the explanation is that there are more shows available this year than the last — 36 plays and musicals in 2014 versus 32 in 2013 — and many are quite good.

In addition to vibrant reboots of vintage classics such as *On the Town*, with music by Leonard Bernstein, book and lyrics by Betty Comden and Adolph Green, and choreography by Jerome Robbins — there are a number of new, continuing and revised shows worth a trip to the Big Apple this season. Below are some of my favorites:

'KINKY BOOTS'

The flamboyant drag queens featured in *Kinky Boots* are a hit from the moment they strut onstage. The Tony Award-winning musical is based on a true story and a 2005 film about drag queens and kindnessaving a family-run shoe factory. They want to purchase well-made, high-heeled boots to complement their flashy outfits, and a failing shoe factory owner recognizes the niche market they represent.

But what style of boots will suffice? The

show-stopping production number by Tony Award-winning Billy Porter, "Sex Is In the Heel," puts this question to rest. Porter plays star drag queen Lola (birth name Simon), eventually asked by owner Charlie to be the factory's new designer.

A superstar combination of writers, composers and directors contributed to the wild success of *Kinky Boots*. Harvey Fierstein (*Torch Song Trilogy*, *La Cage aux Folles*) wrote the book, in collaboration with Cindy Lauper ("Girls Just Wanna Have Fun"), who wrote the songs. The show is directed and choreographed by Jerry Mitchell (*La Cage*, *Legally Blonde*, etc.).

Those familiar with the show will recall the Chicago pre-Broadway tryout. The show returns to Chicago's Cadillac Theatre July 14-26, shortly after the Broadway production closes in January 2015.

'A GENTLEMAN'S GUIDE TO LOVE AND MURDER'

Who would have thought the mad mind of a killer could be so hilarious? Taking its cue from the English music-hall tradition, *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder* is so stylishly clever audiences are swept along.

Sweet-faced young Monty (Bryce Pinkham) learns after his mother's death that he isn't what he thought he was — an impoverished child of unfortunate circumstances. In fact, Monty discovers he is ninth in line to a prestigious earldom. This revelation puts Monty on a hilarious path to the title, killing every relative in his way. All eight of his victims are represented by actor Jefferson Mays (*I Am My Own Wife*). The plot moves so swiftly that by the end of Act I, seven relatives in the line of succession have already bit the dust.

The remarkable Mays takes on both male and female roles with equal success. His split-second timing makes *Love & Murder* fun to watch and earned him a Tony Award. One minute Mays is portraying a somewhat demented, elderly cleric; the next, he's a gay collegian or a snooty socialite.

A three-way romance folded into the story provides further comical complications. *Time Out New York* dubbed the show "the undisputed king of musical comedy," a title once reserved for *The Producers*. This musical is all that and more.

'SIDE SHOW'

The musical *Side Show*, based on a true story about conjoined twins, has remained a curiosity since its first Broadway run in 1997. It flopped, despite top talent (Alice Ripley) and a couple of fabulous songs, including "I Will Never Leave You."

The show refused to die, however, and a reworked version was a hit in San Francisco and Washington, D.C. The new Broadway revival hopes to further improve the show's maligned reputation.

Side Show has undergone extensive changes since 1997. Some of the songs have changed, and the book has been substantially rewritten.



PHOTO: JOAN MARCUS

Jefferson Mays as Lord Adalbert in a scene from *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder* at the Walter Kerr Theater.

Still, the current version remains true to the actual lives of Violet and Daisy, conjoined twins who rose to fame during the Depression.

During their early years and at the end of their lives, the twins faced immense hardships. Initially sold to the midwife who delivered them (though there's some dispute about this), the twins were set out for dis-

play in a tavern run by the midwife. They eventually became part of a circus, nurtured by the other side show attractions. This close-knit group is linked by their physical deviation from "normal" society, a theme underscored throughout the show.

With some skimpy sets and so-so lighting, *Side Show* doesn't produce the razzle-dazzle usually associated with Broadway musicals. But this may be the secret to the show's success. It puts all its bets on the audience falling in love with the stars. One twin longs for a husband and a quiet, married life, while the other seeks fame and fortune. They sacrifice the former for the latter, deciding that if no men are up to the challenge (in real life, both twins were married and divorced), they would at least have each other.

Interestingly, the show ends just as the girls transfer from a dying vaudeville to the burgeoning movie industry. That may be a good place to say goodbye to the girls. The real sisters never were able to successfully make the transition to film, other than to star in the cult 1930s film *Freaks*.

'THE LAST SHIP'

The Last Ship, featuring music by Sting, faces an uncertain future. The show loosely follows Sting's youth in the shipyards of an impoverished, working-class community. For generations, the men there viewed themselves primarily in the context of their jobs as shipbuilders. But cheaper foreign competition depleted the industry to a shell of its former glory. Undaunted, the men use money from their local Catholic parish



PHOTO: JOAN MARCUS

Emily Padgett and Erin Davie play conjoined sisters in the revival of *Side Show*.



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BROADWAY next page



PHOTO: SEAN WILLIAMS

Billy Porter (left) plays Lola in *Kinky Boots*, originally alongside Stark Sands and Annaleigh Ashford as shopowner Charlie and his romantic interest Lauren.

BROADWAY from prior page

(donated by Fred Applegate, an aging priest who mirrors the salty language of his flock) to build one last ship.

The show also follows a heartbreaking love story about a teenage boy and girl (Gideon and Meg), who are torn apart when the boy seeks his fortune at sea. Since he never rises to a position of any importance, he is reluctant to return to her. Finally, he comes home for his father's funeral 15 years later and finds that an older, wiser Meg (the excellent Rachel Tucker) has taken matters into her own hands. She must decide whether to stick with her present course or lose

herself in the romantic dreams of her past.

The show is spectacularly staged and has a large cast, which means a sizable operating budget. With ticket sales lagging, Sting joined the cast on Dec. 9, taking over for Jackie White, who plays Jimmy Nail, a thinly veiled analog of Sting. So far, the ploy has worked. Sting's announcement boosted advance ticket sales to \$3 million, giving hope to backers who would like to see *The Last Ship* sail into a long run.

With or without Sting, however, this is a cleverly spun tale graced with eloquent ballads. It should be a top pick for theater lovers and Sting fans alike.

Budget tickets more available than ever

Dreaming of seeing a Broadway show on a limited budget? The good news is that more discount tickets are floating around than ever. If you're willing to take a risk, many shows offer \$20 to \$30 day-of-performance tickets through a lottery. (Some lotteries are limited to students or younger ticket buyers.)

Find the show you want and check out the lottery policy at the box office. Many lottery programs don't draw "winners" until an hour or two before show time. While you're at it, also check out the standing-room-only policy. Typically, shows that are sold out will offer standing-room tickets on a first-come, first-served basis. Standing-room prices are comparable to ticket lottery prices.

Don't forget to check out the TKTS booth in Times Square. You can save 20-50 percent off same-day tickets. However, be prepared to wait in long lines. The earlier you arrive, of course, the better. Have more than one option in mind, since your first choice might be sold out by the time you reach the window.

The TKTS booth used to accept cash only, but now takes credit cards. If you want to see a play — as opposed to a musical, dance or music performance — look for the special line marked "plays only." Those lines typically move more quickly.

TKTS also sells tickets to off-Broadway shows, which can be as good (or better) than their counterparts on the Great White Way. There's a phone app with real-time information on ticket availability.

If you want guaranteed advance tickets, many reliable discount ticket sites exist on the Internet. Among those I would recommend are: theatermania.com (which has tickets to almost every performance of every show) and travelzoo.com (which has more limited ticket availability). Ticket discounts start at \$15 per ticket, depending on the day. You get to choose your seats.

Warning: Do not purchase tickets from someone selling them on the street. They may be counterfeit.

— Anne Siegel

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Pop music superstar Ariana Grande	February 28 th
Neil Diamond	April 9 th
The Who	October 13 th

bmoharrisbradleycenter.com

ART GAZE — MADISON

MMoCA, Chazen offer gift of art

By Michael Muckian

Contributing writer

If the weather outside is frightful, the art inside is delightful. So if you've no place to go, two of Madison's best art venues have a show, and a show, and another show.

'NARAYAN MAHON'

Earlier this month, the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art (227 State St.) opened *Narayan Mahon: Lands in Limbo*. This is the first museum exhibition of the award-winning photographer's trek through the unrecognized and largely unknown countries of Abkhazia, Northern Cyprus, Transnistria, Nagorno Karabakh, and Somaliland, each subject to porous and ever-changing borders.

Mahon's work explores the day-to-day realities of living in countries that remain unacknowledged by the larger international community. He captures individuals grappling with matters of cultural and ethnic identity, economic devastation and self-determination in the face of extreme international isolation. In doing so, he raises questions about the meaning of national sovereignty in the increasingly globalized 21st century and contributes to the ongoing dialogue about the role of documentary photography in contemporary art.

Mahon's work echoes that of other documentary photographers such as Robert Capa and Henri Cartier-Bresson. Their more expressive styles allow room for personal vision and point of view. If the goal of documentary photography is not to capture truth but rather, in the words of Cartier-Bresson, to uncover "the poetry of life's reality," then Mahon's photographs clearly celebrate this dictum.

Narayan Mahon: Lands in Limbo runs through March 15. For more information, visit mmo.ca.org.

'ILLUMINATING THE WORD'

UW-Madison's Chazen Museum of Art (750 University Ave.) opens two shows this month, one of which has particular seasonal appeal.

Illuminating the Word: The Saint John's Bible displays the work of celebrated calligrapher Donald Jackson and a team of talented scribes and illuminators who, over a 15-year period, created handwritten and illuminated scriptures as part of a brand-new edition of the Bible.

The project was commissioned by the monks of St. John's Abbey in Collegeville, Minnesota. The new edition utilized techniques employed by medieval scribes who illuminated and wrote out copies of the



PHOTO: NARAYAN MAHON PHOTOGRAPHY.

Narayan Mahon's Store, Stepanakert, Nagorno Karabakh depicts everyday life in a country the bulk of the world's nations deny exists.

Bible by hand before the invention of the printing press.

But, in the Benedictine tradition of inclusion, it employs those techniques with a modern intent, interpreting scripture from a contemporary perspective that reflects our increasingly multicultural world and humanity's strides in science, technology and space travel. Elements of other world religions are incorporated in some of the illuminations, as are Native American cultures and Minnesota flora and fauna.

The new Saint John's Bible's content is 21st-century, but its components are less so. The Bible's seven volumes comprise 1,150 pages of calfskin vellum. The script is written using hand-cut goose, turkey and swan quills, and the ink is hand-ground lamp black from 19th-century Chinese ink sticks. Egg tempera and gold leaf provide vivid color to the illuminations.

Illuminating the Word: The Saint John's Bible runs Dec. 19-March 15 in the Chazen's Pleasant T. Rowland Gallery.

'AMERICAN MONOTYPES'

The Chazen is also hosting *American Monotypes from the Baker/Pisano Collection*, a series of works by American artists who found inspiration in a centuries-old painting technique.

Monotypes, minimally detailed prints, are made by rolling paint or inks onto flat, non-absorbent surfaces and pressing them

onto paper. Images can be created either additively, by adding paint directly where it's desired on the finished print, or (more commonly) subtractively, by covering the surface with paint and removing paint with brushes or rags.

While monotypes were independently developed across Europe in the Renaissance, American fascination with them began in 19th century Florence, where a group of American artists in the circle of Frank Duveneck regularly met and experimented with the medium. The American artists' enthusiasm for the ancient technique spread the monotype from Florence to America. It was an American writing about the style, in fact, who first called it a "monotype."

This exhibition traces the popularity of the monotype in America, defining the technique, explaining its refinements, and situating the artists into historical context. The breadth of monotype's popularity in the United States stretched through the 20th century and is shown in the exhibition with examples by artists like Joseph Stella, Milton Avery, Red Grooms and Mark Tobey.

American Monotypes from the Baker/Pisano Collection runs Dec. 19-Feb. 22 in the Chazen's Leslie and Johanna Garfield Gallery.

For more information on both exhibits, visit chazen.wisc.edu.

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White cast of 'Exodus' reflects poor cinema tradition

By Sandy Cohen

AP Entertainment writer

Put "ancient Egyptian people" into a Google image search, and none of the resulting photos resemble Christian Bale or Joel Edgerton, stars of Ridley Scott's biblical epic *Exodus: Gods and Kings*.

The director inflamed calls for a boycott of the film with his comments that he couldn't have made such a big-budget movie if "my lead actor is Mohammad so-and-so from such-and-such."

"I'm just not going to get it financed," he told the trade paper *Variety*. "So the question doesn't even come up."

The question, perhaps, being: Should Hollywood be concerned about casting white actors to portray people who were definitely not white?

It's an institutional problem, said professor Todd Boyd, chair for the Study of Race and Popular Culture at the University of Southern California. Hollywood is a place where profit is king, he said, and it rarely takes big-budget risks on casts of color.

"The way movies get financed, and the overall ignorance in this country about Africa, explains why you'd have a big budget film with a very well-known director backed by a well-known studio mogul and get this problematic representation in 2014," he said.

However, the financial argument doesn't hold up. What might make a movie successful is speculative, and those with diverse

casts are just as likely to become global box-office hits. Consider the *Hunger Games* and *Fast & Furious* franchises. The latter has made more than \$2 billion worldwide.

Exodus stars Bale as Moses, Edgerton as pharaoh-to-be Ramses, John Turturro as the Egyptian leader and Sigourney Weaver as his queen. Actors of color occupy minor, mostly non-speaking roles.

There's a long history of such casting in Hollywood. Moses — who the Bible and historians would say came from the north African nation of Egypt — was only brown-skinned on the big screen as an animated character in 1998's *The Prince of Egypt*. Otherwise, Hollywood's version of the biblical hero has been white, played by actors such as Charlton Heston in 1956, and Christian Slater more than 50 years later.

Rupert Murdoch, who owns the studio that produced *Exodus*, defended its casting on Twitter.

"Since when are Egyptians not white?" he wrote.

He followed up with, "Of course Egyptians are Middle Eastern, but far from black. They treated blacks as slaves."

Representatives from 20th Century Fox declined comment and Scott was not available for an interview for this story.

Another biblical epic, *Noah*, also faced criticism for its all-white cast led by Russell Crowe and Jennifer Connelly. At the time

CASTING next page



PHOTO: 20TH CENTURY FOX

Christian Bale plays the role of Moses in *Exodus: Gods and Kings*, director Ridley Scott's updated version of the biblical tale. Scott has been criticized for casting white actors as characters who would have historically been people of color.

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CASTING from prior page

of its release earlier this year, screenwriter Ari Handel said the filmmakers opted for an Anglo cast so as to avoid calling attention to issues of race.

"They're supposed to be stand-ins for all people," he said. "Either you end up with a Bennetton ad or the crew of the Starship Enterprise."

It's not unusual for some ethnicities to play others on screen. Mexican actor Gael Garcia Bernal portrays the real Iranian journalist at the center of *Rosewater* and Japanese actor Ken Watanabe played the fictional Arabic villain in 2005's *Batman Begins*. Yet Boyd notes that actors of color are rarely, if ever, cast as white figures.

For example, he said, Hollywood wouldn't make a movie about Princess Diana with Kerry Washington in the lead role.

"That's basically the equivalent of what's going on, but in reverse," he said. "They would never neglect to cast a white actor as a (white) historical figure just because

there were box office concerns."

As Chris Rock wrote in his recent essay in *The Hollywood Reporter*, Hollywood's reputation as a liberal place doesn't seem to extend to casting actors of color in leading roles.

"We're never 'in the mix,'" he said. "When there's a hot part in town and the guys are reading for it, that's just what happens. It was never like, 'Is it going to be Ryan Gosling or Chiwetel Ejiofor for *Fifty Shades of Grey*?"

While Will Smith and Denzel Washington are as bankable as Brad Pitt or Tom Cruise, Hollywood has been historically reluctant to cast minority stars in tentpole leading roles. While *Hercules*, starring Dwayne Johnson, failed to recoup its budget earlier this year (as did *The Legend of Hercules*, which featured Kellan Lutz in the title role), Washington's *The Equalizer* was a \$190 million international hit. Kevin Hart has also proven to be box-office gold, scoring successes this year with *Ride Along* and *Think Like A Man Too*.

A recent USC study of race and ethnicity in film found that while non-Caucasians make up 44 percent of moviegoers, they're represented less than half that much on screen. Among the 100 top-grossing films of 2012, almost 11 percent of speaking characters were black, five percent were Asian and just over four percent were Hispanic. Do these statistics mean non-white stars aren't making money at the box office? Or do they reflect a lack of opportunities in big-budget projects for actors of color?

Actor and producer Harry Lennix, who appeared in last year's *Man of Steel* and now stars on NBC's *The Blacklist*, believes the casting of *Exodus* had everything to do with profitability.

"In their minds, they have the best shot at making the most money if they have white

actors," he said.

Lennix has started making his own movies — including one that features a black Jesus — and advocates for artists to create and fans to support the kind of movies they'd like to see, where quality transcends color.

"There's an untapped, underserved market of highly cultured people of color and other marginalized people that have a golden opportunity to take advantage in this digital age of ours to create this content," he said. "There's little hope that all of a sudden, a business like show business is going to start doing the right thing by underserved markets."

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New Year's Eve

GUIDE

2014 - 2015

Finding a New Year's Eve party in Wisconsin isn't hard. It's finding the right one for you and your friends and family that can be tough. Before you wander blindly into the night, give this guide a glance — the perfect event might be tucked away in its listings.

And if your New Year's plans include more than a champagne toast, don't drink and drive. Instead, take advantage of the temporarily free bus service in Milwaukee and Madison, to make sure you get to and from your festivities safely. For more information on Milwaukee's routes, visit ridemcts.com or call 414-344-6711. For more information on Madison's routes, visit cityofmadison.com/metro or call 608-266-4466.

MILWAUKEE

Downtown

42 Lounge NYE Party

The wonders of technology bring an exclusive stream from Long Island DJ Seanlogic to 42's dance floor. 9 p.m. at 326 E. Mason St. \$5. 42lounge.com.

Belmont's NYE Party

Sophisticated downtown bar opens its doors for New Year's, without the typical upcharge. 8 p.m. at 784 N. Jefferson St. No cover. thebelmonttavern.com.

Best Place Formal Pajama NYE Party

Milwaukee's most playful party returns for a fourth year, with the same dress code: suits and cocktail attire before midnight, comfy 'jamas after. 8 p.m. to 4 a.m. at 901 W. Juneau Ave. No cover. bestplacemilwaukee.com.

"Blu" Year's Eve

The Pfister Hotel's swanky 23rd floor lounge goes exclusive for NYE, with a variety of seating packages to hear Janet Mahoney perform and to sample international desserts and cheeses. 8:30 p.m. at 424 E. Wisconsin Ave. \$250, \$350 and \$450 packages. blumilwaukee.com.

Bugsy's NYE Masquerade Ball

This speakeasy won't be the only thing in disguise for New Year's Eve, though don't let your masks blind you to the complementary appetizers from Bugsy's "front," Gouda's Italian Deli. 7 p.m. at 218 N. Water St. No cover. bugsysbackalleysaloon.com.

CLEAR Seven Deadly Sins New Year's Eve Party

Singer Alyce Hart performs while seven

drink specials offer you the opportunity to indulge your vices for the evening. 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. at InterContinental Milwaukee, 139 E. Kilbourn Ave. Free. intercontinentalmilwaukee.com.

'A Cudahy Caroler Christmas'

In Tandem's South Milwaukee carolers let you sing along, and offer a champagne toast with "fireworks" after the show. 9:30 p.m. Tenth Street Theatre, 628 N. 10th St. \$35. intandemtheatre.org.

Distil New Year's Eve Noir

High-class, film noir party with pre-fixe bourbon flights and cocktail progressions floating about. 7 p.m. at 722 N. Milwaukee St. No cover. distilmilwaukee.com.

EVO Milwaukee NYE

New York's ball won't be the only one dropping at EVO Milwaukee, where exclusive 10-person packages earn you your own ping-pong table as well as an open bar and hors d'oeuvres. 8 p.m. at 233 E. Chicago St. \$800. evolutionmke.com.

Harlem Globetrotters

Unrivaled basketball entertainers return to Milwaukee for their annual New Year's Eve engagement. 1 and 6 p.m. at the BMO Harris Bradley Center, 1001 N. Fourth St. \$20-\$132. bmoharrisbradleycenter.com.

Mi.key's NYE 2015

FM radio's Energy 106.9 takes over this all-inclusive Cathedral Square party, with Cousin Ed hosting and DJ Ekin mixing tracks. 10 p.m. at 811 N. Jefferson St. \$55. mikeysmilwaukee.com.

New Year's Eve @ OAK Lounge

Midwest-born DJ duo Milk N Cookies ring in the new year at this hot Third Ward

PHOTO: COURTESY



JIM GAFFIGAN AT THE PABST THEATER

Jim Gaffigan's annual show at the Pabst Theater has become the Holy Grail of New Year's celebrations for comedy-loving Milwaukeeans, and for good reason. The comedian's Comedy Central specials and appearances on film and television have earned him a reputation as one of the best in the business today, and in Milwaukee he proves it not just once, but three times: on New Year's Eve, New Year's Eve Eve and New Year's Eve Eve Eve. 7 p.m. Dec. 29 and 30; 10:30 p.m. Dec. 31 at 144 E. Wells St. \$55, \$85 for premium NYE seats. pabsttheater.org.

dance club. 7 p.m. at 231 E. Buffalo St. \$25. oakmilwaukee.com.

NYE 2015 @ LUCID

SURG's brand-new downtown hotspot and hookah lounge makes its debut in a flash of New Year's glory, with the help of Newauke. 9 p.m. at 729 N. Milwaukee St. \$85, 4-person packages for \$500 or \$650. lucidmke.com.

Plastered with Plaster

Learn to paint and sculpt with plaster at Splash Studios, but don't get any in the complementary snacks or on the blacklight dance floor. 9 p.m. 184 N. Broadway. \$65. splashmilwaukee.com.

Shag on New Year's Eve!

Less sexual than the title suggests (presumably), Milwaukee Ale House's New Year's Eve celebration invites one of Milwaukee's most talented cover bands, Shag, to perform. 9:30 p.m. at 233 N. Water St. No cover. ale-house.com.

Skylight NYE Sing Along: 'The Wizard of Oz'

A usual night at Skylight's hit holiday musical, except if you chime in on "Over

the Rainbow," an usher won't drag you out of the theater. 8 p.m. at the Broadway Theatre Center, 158 N. Broadway. \$77. skylightmusictheatre.org.

Stellar Spark 12: Carnage

The Eagles Ballroom goes even more EDM than usual for NYE. 8 p.m. at The Rave, 2401 W. Wisconsin Ave. \$45. therave.com.

Toast Around the wWorld Party

Afternoon-long festivities, toasting the new year in Moscow, Greece, Paris and London before buckling down to celebrate our own midnight. 1 p.m. to bar close at the Safe House, 779 N. Front St. \$15, \$5 for children under 12. safe-house.com.

Trampled by Turtles

Genre-defying string band takes the Riverside stage, accompanied by surreal R&B singer/songwriter Har Mar Superstar and British shoegazers Fever Dream. 8 p.m. at 116 W. Wisconsin Ave. \$44, \$99 VIP. pabsttheater.org.

New Year's Eve GUIDE 2014-2015



NEW YEAR'S EVE WITH THE GET DOWN

Joining the Get Down at Turner Hall Ballroom has practically become a New Year's Eve tradition in Milwaukee, so if you haven't yet patronized this dance party, get with it this year. The funk and soul DJs will be spinning real 45s all night long, and the all-inclusive event comes with an open bar, midnight pizza buffet and a bunch of exclusive bonuses if you bump up to VIP tickets. 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. at 1040 N. Fourth St. \$60, \$85 VIP. pabsttheater.org.

PHOTO: BENJAMIN WICK

'Valley of the Dolls'

Dale Gutzman of Off the Wall Theatre turns one of film's greatest fiascos into a terribly wonderful musical romp through show business, with drag, deliberately mediocre songs and a whole lot of drugs — for audience members too. 7 and 10 p.m. Dec. 31, with additional shows through Jan. 11, at 127 E. Wells St. \$40, \$30 for January shows. offthewalltheatre.com.

Whiskey Bar's Huge NYE Celebration

Classy Cathedral Square bar hosts its hottest dance party of the year with, of course, its usual bounteous whiskey selection. 8 p.m. at 788 N. Jackson St. \$30, \$20 in advance, \$295 VIP. whiskeybarmilwaukee.com.

East Side/Riverwest

Brew City Bass NYE

Big beats by mashup artist Manic Focus turn this classic concert venue into a night to remember. 8 p.m. at the Miramar Theatre, 2844 N. Oakland Ave. \$40, VIP \$100. themiramartheatre.com.

Hybrid NYE

The Brady Street gay bar goes for the laughs with an array of stand-up comedians throughout the night. 8 p.m. at 707 E. Brady St. No cover. hybridlounge.net.

The Jazz Estate NYE

Evan Christian's Wednesday residency lines up with New Year's, making him the de facto headliner for the final show of 2014. 10 p.m. at 2423 N. Murray Ave. \$5. jazzestate.com.

Lux NYE Masquerade Party

Brand-new lifestyle lounge Lux makes a splash this NYE, with patrons partaking in hookah, an open bar and a contest for the best mask. 9 p.m. at 2712 N. Martin Luther King Dr. \$40, \$200 four-person VIP pack-

age. luxnye2015.eventbrite.com.

Mad Planet's NYE Dance Party

A dance club where most nights feel like New Year's Eve goes all out for the real thing, with complementary champagne and food. 9 p.m. to 4 a.m. at 533 E. Center St. \$15. mad-planet.net.

New Year's Eve with Chris Barnes

Hometown comic gone national headliner closes the Comedy Cafe's year. 8 and 10:15 p.m. 615 E. Brady St. \$15-\$25. milwaukeecomedycycafe.com

NYE with Upside Groove Coalition

Funk/soul/rock 'n' roll collective takes residence at BBC's Upper Level for the night, with extra drink specials if you get there early. 10 p.m. at G-Daddy's BBC Bar & Grill, 2022 E. North Ave. \$10. bbcmilwaukee.com.

'Party Till You Sweat' Dance Party

Milwaukee's "Godfather of Soul" Harvey Scales headlines this groovy party and charity raffle. 8 p.m. at Shank Hall, 1434 N. Farwell Ave. \$40, \$30 in advance. shankhall.com.

Riverwest Public House NYE

Milwaukee's collectively owned bar invites Cream City for a night of drag, burlesque and dance partying. 10 p.m. at 815 E. Locust St. \$5. riverwestpublichouse.wordpress.com.

School Yard NYE 2015

Collegiate-themed bar for the collegiate at heart breaks open the kegs for the evening, with all-you-can-drink specials. 9 p.m. at 1815 E. Kenilworth. \$25. schoolyardmke.com.

South Side/BayView

Brew Year's Eve

DJs Kid Cut Up and Mighty Thor, a five-hour open bar, free food and complementary entry into an afterparty at OAK's make this a heck of a party, even with the high price tag. 8 p.m. to 2 a.m. at Potawatomi Hotel & Casino, 1721 W. Canal St. \$99. brewyearevevmke.com.

Cafe Lulu NYE

Milwaukee favorites I'm Not a Pilot and the Fatty Acids are joined by newcomers Parallel to rock in the new year, with a late night snack buffet. 10 p.m. at 2261 S. Howell Ave. \$15. lulubayview.com.

ComedySportz NYE

Longtime Milwaukee comedy tradition celebrates 2014 with two improv shows, all the champagne you can drink and an end-of-show New Year's countdown. 8 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. at 420 S. 1st St. \$35. comedysportzmilwaukee.com.

Dead Man's Carnival NYE Party

Steampunk DJs, sideshow spectacles, midway games and burlesque performers spread across multiple rooms make this perhaps Milwaukee's most eclectic New Year's option. 9 p.m. at Hot Water/Wherehouse, 818 S. Water. \$50, \$40 in advance, \$150 VIP. deadmancarnival.com.

Horny Goat NYE

Local country band Bella Cain is the big headliner at Horny Goat Brewing Company's NYE party, unless you count Milwaukee's largest balloon drop. 9 p.m. at 2011 S. First St. \$65. hghideaway.com.

Iron Horse Hotel's New Year's Eve Boogie

88Nine's 2012 Artist of the Year Klas-

sik and his band Fresh Cut Collective bring hip grooves to the Iron Horse for a night of dancing and midnight balloon drops. 7 p.m. to 1 a.m. at 500 W. Florida St. \$20. theironhorsehotel.com.

The Packing House NYE

South side supper club invites the smooth Lem Banks Quartet to join its patrons for dinner. 7 p.m. at 900 E. Layton Ave. No cover. packinghousemke.com.

Studio 54 New Year's Party

Vintage disco tunes, dance cages and go-go galore transform the Alchemist Theatre lounge into '70s New York for the evening. 9:30 p.m. at 2569 N. Kinnickinnic Ave. \$40, \$30 in advance. thealchemisttheatre.com.

For Families

Ice Skating in Red Arrow Park

Extended hours mean you can act out your inner Johnny Weir and Tara Lipinski fantasies even longer on NYE. Through 1 a.m. at 920 N. Water St. Free. county.milwaukee.gov.

Mitchell Park Domes NYE Family Celebration

One of the only family-friendly indoor New Year's parties in Milwaukee, with authentic Irish/Scottish music, children's activities, and food by Zilli's Hospitality. 6 to 9 p.m. at 524 S. Layton Blvd. \$10 adults, \$5 kids ages 4-17. milwaukeehomes.org.

New Year's Eve at Noon

Little ones ring in 2015 fashionably early with Father Time, Baby New Year and a (juice) toast at 12 sharp. 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Betty Brinn Children's Museum, 929 E. Wisconsin Ave. Free with regular \$8 admission. bbcmkids.org.

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MADISON

Downtown/State Street

Cardinal Bar NYE Party

One of Madison's danciest clubs gets even dancier for New Year's Eve. 8 p.m. to 5 a.m. at 418 E. Wilson St. No cover. cardinalbar.com.

DLUX New Year's Eve

High-class burger joint flips the script to feature an open bar, hors d'oeuvres and dance beats from Eugene Craven. 9 p.m. at 117 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. \$75. dluxmadison.com.

Electric Winter Wonder Land

The two Milwaukee DJs of Antics head west to headline a fancy Segredo dance party. 9 p.m. to 5 a.m. at 624 University Ave. \$20, \$25 under-21, \$85 and up for VIP. segredomadison.com.

Frequency New Year's Bash

Punk metal rockers Whiskey Pig drag themselves out of the "sleazy underbelly of Madison" they call home for this gritty NYE dance party. 9 p.m. at 121 W. Main St. \$5. madisonfrequency.com.

High Noon New Year's Eve Bash

Jesus Lizard, Turbonegro, Iron Maiden, Social Distortion, Hanson and Oasis show up to celebrate New Year's in Madison — in spirit, at least, thanks to a half-dozen bands performing tribute sets. 8 p.m. at 701 E. Washington Ave. #A. \$10. high-noon.com.

Ivory Room NYE Masquerade Ball

The pianos will duel as fiercely as ever, but only a mask will get you into the open bar. 8 p.m. at 111 State St. \$75. ivoryroompianobar.com.

Merchant NYE Dinner & Party

The main event is a three-course dinner, but this Madison hotspot will also open its doors to the public at 11 p.m. for a high-class dance party with craft cocktails on hand. 5 p.m. at 121 S. Pinckney St. \$50 for dinner with optional \$25 cocktail/wine pairing, or \$10 cover at 11 p.m. merchantmadison.com.

Natt Spil NYE

DJ Foshizzle helps this cozy, tucked-away bar celebrate NYE with style. 10 p.m. at 211 King St. No cover. nattspil.com.

New Year's Eve Extravaganza

Double the NYE festivities, with two bars (Come Back In/Essen Haus), two bands (Live at Nine/Tom Brusky) and two buffets.



NEW YEAR'S EVE ARTPOP

This NYE event is less Lady Gaga, more bottles and bottles of bubbly champagne from around the world. Entry at this Fresco event gets you three pours from the 20 varieties of sparkling wine behind the Bubbly Bar, as well as hors d'oeuvres and grooves from DJ Billy the Kid. 9:30 p.m. at Madison Museum of Contemporary Art, 227 State St. \$60. artpopfresco.eventbrite.com.

6 p.m. at 514 E. Wilson St. \$65, \$70 after Dec. 26. essen-haus.com.

YPNYE

Upscale, all-you-can-drink event designed for young professionals but themed around "Old Hollywood," benefiting the Special Olympics. 9 p.m. at the Hilton Monona Terrace, 9 E. Wilson St. \$99. ypnye.com.

Woof's Masked Madness NYE

The best-disguised will win a prize at Woof's house-beat-infused masquerade, although it's safe to say they won't be the only one going home with a party favor. 10 p.m. at 114 King St. No cover. woofsmadison.com.



Join us for a special 4-course meal to ring in the New Year!
Menu options include:

Pork Chop with Apple Glaze

Char-Grilled Filet of Beef and Cold Water Lobster Tail

Grilled Veal Chop with Marsala Cream

Pan Seared Red Snapper

Oyster, Shrimp, Andouille Sausage and Tomato Fettuccine

Pan Seared Red Snapper

Duck & Wild Mushroom Risotto

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DECADANCE: A NEW YEAR'S CELEBRATION

The Majestic Theatre once again hosts this chronological journey through more than 100 years of dance music, chaperoned by Madison DJs Nick Nice and Mike Carlson. The evening will kick off in the early days of jazz, and work its way through the decades an hour at a time, culminating with the hottest songs of 2014 as 2015 begins. 8 p.m. at 115 King St. \$15. majesticmadison.com



home for tipsy patrons). 9 p.m. at 1915 Branch St., Middleton. No cover. clubtavern.com.

Great Dane NYE Party

Major Madison pub shakes up its usual routine by bringing in local rockers Mighty Wheelhouse and DJ AudioMaxx to celebrate the New Year. 9 p.m. at 357 Price Place. \$5. greatdanepub.com.

Irish New Year

Live Irish music segues into the traditional American dance/karaoke party. 6 p.m. at Claddagh Irish Pub, 1611 Aspen Commons, Middleton. No cover. claddaghirishpubs.com

For Families

Olbrich's Holiday Express

Big trains and miniature landscapes make these botanical gardens a hit for young children. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. at 3330 Atwood Ave. \$3 adults, \$2 kids 3 to 12. olbrich.org.

U.S. Bank Eve

Monona Terrace, U.S. Bank Plaza and Middleton's Keva Sports Center find themselves packed with alcohol-free family entertainment. 6 to 10 p.m. in Madison, 4 to 8 p.m. in Middleton. 1 John Nolen Dr.; 1 S. Pinckney St.; 8312 Forsythia St. (Middleton). Free. usbank.com.

Willy Street/Atwood/East Side

Brink Lounge NYE Party

Fancy banquet hall stages a "Cowgirls and Gangsters" show, by putting both Madison rocker Beth Kille and blues band Aaron Williams and the Hoodoo on the same stage. 9 p.m. at 701 E. Washington Ave., Suite 105. \$15. thebrinklounge.com.

Harmony NYE with People Brothers Band and Rev. Eddie Danger

The beloved Harmony Bar and Grill hosts soul and folk artists and breaks out its famous buffet. 9:45 p.m. at 2201 Atwood Ave. \$25. harmonybarandgrill.com.

Lazy Oaf Lounge NYE Party

Classic rock cover band Saturday Morning Cartel performs hits from across five decades on Madison's east side. 10 p.m. at 1617 N. Stoughton Rd. No cover. lazyoafloounge.com.

Nasty New Year's WORT Benefit

Alchemy Cafe supports community radio with the help of seven-piece funk band The Mustache. 11:30 p.m. at 1980 Atwood Ave. \$10. alchemycave.net

New Year's Eve Gigantic MasQUEERade Ball

Madison's premier gay dance bar Plan B says goodbye to 2014 in style, with a midnight buffet and champagne toast amid the festivities. 9 p.m. at 924 Williamson St. \$10. planbmadison.com.

One Night, One Community New Year's Eve Celebration

Elegant gala designed to bring a diverse Madison community together for food, dancing and fun. 8 p.m. at the East Side Club, 3735 Monona Dr. \$40. ulgm.org.

West Side/Middleton

African Association of Madison New Year's Eve Gala

The AAM celebrates those who've strengthened the Madison community, and

then the music and dancing starts up. 7 p.m. at the Sheraton Hotel, 706 John Nolen Dr. \$35. africanassociationofmadison.org.

Badger Bowl NYE 2015

'80s cover band Cherry Pie entertains attendees, one of whom will win \$2,015 before midnight. 9:15 p.m. at 506 E. Badger Rd. \$12, \$35 VIP. badgerbowl.com.

Club Tavern NYE Party

Come to dance to the sound of the soulful Blue Olives, stay to get taken home by a moose (bar owner "Moose" offers free rides

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ACROSS

- Good for biceps
- ___ alive!
- *Many Kurds did this from Syria in 2014
- Unctuous Heep, of David Copperfield
- Not pre-owned
- It made Harry Potter's invisible
- Common Thanksgiving Day action
- ATM extra
- Reduce, ____, recycle
- *Captured drug lord
- Zoo section
- Go wrong
- Hat part
- Old age, archaic
- Musical compositions for one
- African equines
- *Suspect in PA police ambush was denied this
- Kosher establishment
- Davy Crockett's last stand
- Popular Creole vegetable
- ___ Miss hot chocolate
- Auditory
- MC Hammer's "2 ___ 2 Quit"
- Last two words of certain shoe company's famous slogan
- "Rambling Wreck From Georgia ___"
- *Beyonce and Jay Z performed

- in them together in '14
- Antonym of #14 Across
- "Big Island" flower necklace
- Leave them behind for riches?
- Grazing area
- *Animated Oscar-winner
- *Billboard Music Awards hologram guest
- Indian restaurant condiment
- Schiller's "___ to Joy"
- Got up
- Remove, as in a Pinterest post
- A cool ____, as in money
- Takes it easy
- They're famous for being busy
- Snake-like reef dweller
- Arrogant one

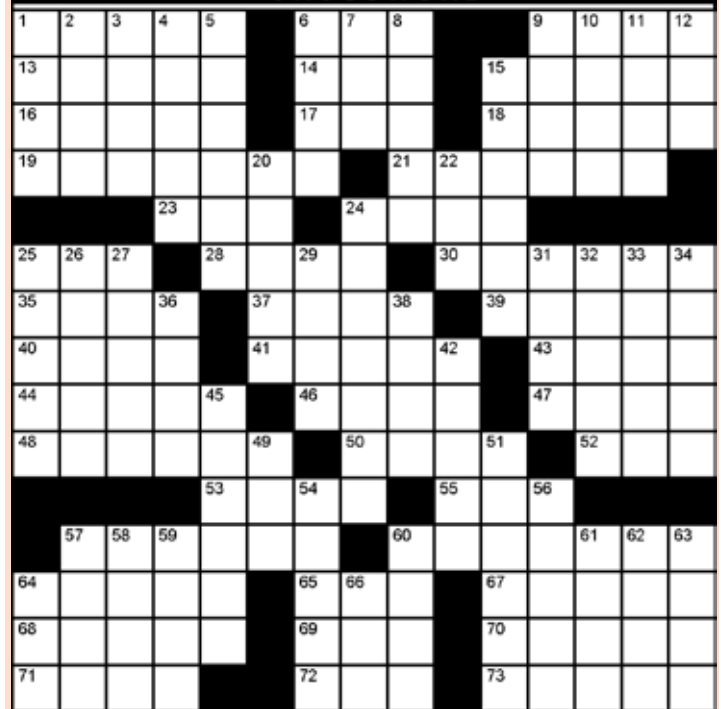
DOWN

- 27 is the ___ of 3
- Russia's ___ Mountains
- Reduced Instruction Set Computer
- Wood-shaping device
- Barn scissors
- Facts and figures
- Tiger's peg
- Take an oath
- Bloodsucking hopper
- Displeasure on one's face
- "Piece of cake!"
- Obtain or create, barely
- *Russia/Ukraine "apple of discord"
- Cattle control, pl.
- "That is to say"
- Suffering from gastric distress
- *It caused a scare globally in 2014
- Kobe, e.g.
- Sad song
- Off-color
- The Phantom ____, Mickey Mouse's nemesis
- a.k.a. honey badger
- White liturgical neckwear
- *2014 Olympic site
- Been in bed
- *Infamous terrorist group
- Type of monument
- Jane's mate
- Sigma Alpha Epsilon
- Type of sticker, pl.
- *Washington Nationals gave away a Jayson Werth garden ___
- Ohio rubber hub
- Olden-day temple
- ___ for the picking
- Elevator inventor
- Come together
- *Hope ___ set U.S. soccer record for career shutouts
- Norse capital
- Egg holder
- Cause friction
- Bond movie *Live and Let ___*

Answers on pg. 47

YEAR IN REVIEW

CROSSWORD

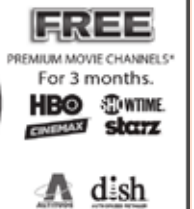


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