



PROGRESSIVE. ALTERNATIVE.

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Wisconsin Public Radio tallies the miseries of gun violence in the state.



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Latest iteration of UWM French film festival covers multiple cultural issues.

News with a twist

WIGWAG

By Lisa Neff, Louis Weisberg & Matthew Reddin

BANNED

A "patriot" restaurant owner in Wyoming, Michigan — a town that appears to suffer from identity issues — has banned Michael Moore and Seth Rogen from his Brann's Steakhouse and Grille for their outspoken criticism of the Oscar-nominated movie *American Sniper*. Our hunch is the two well-fed celebrities can find elsewhere to chow.

BUTCHER THAN MILEY

Justin Bieber unknowingly crashed a meeting of the Log Cabin Republicans' Los Angeles chapter in West Hollywood. Bieber turned up at State Social House restaurant and was given his usual table, not realizing it was located within a private area that had been sectioned off for the gay GOP group's event. "He looked like kind of a butcher version of Miley Cyrus," group member Ben Coleman said in an audio from *TMZ*.

BIRTH CONTROL: FOR THE BIRDS

Officials in Wayne County, Ohio, plan to spike birdseed with "birth control chemicals" in an effort to decrease the population of pigeons spoiling the 19th-century courthouse and its decorative statues. Officials said they could reduce the flock with just one application.

HOLY HEROIN

The sheriff's office in Hamilton County, Ohio, says officers arrested two people attempting to smuggle heroin into the county judicial center — packed in a Bible. A K-9 caught a scent from the book and then a deputy noticed a coffee-like stain. Turns out the stain contained about 40 units of the drug.

BIG DEAL IN GERMANY

Germany tops the world when it comes to a penis enlargement procedure known as penoplasty. The



International Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery said an estimated 2,786 such procedures were performed there last year out of an estimated 15,414 worldwide, which comes out to one in five.

CAPTIVE BREEDING

The pope's comment that Catholics don't have to breed "like rabbits" has caused offense, especially among Germany's rabbit breeders. The president of Germany's central council of rabbit breeders told news agency dpa that only rabbits living in the wild are sexually overactive. Captive rabbits, he said, have tamer repro habits.

NIPPLES NIXED?

The Sun, the British tabloid owned by Rupert Murdoch, apparently has ceased featuring the topless models known as the Page 3 girls. The offensive newspaper-peddling gim-

mick has long drawn protests from feminists. But don't look for complaints to end. One recent issue's Page 3 showed model Rosie Huntington-Whitely wearing a bra.

SEX ED VIDEO RAISES EYEBROWS — AND EYELASHES

In Sweden, an educational video for children featuring dancing genitals has become an online hit. Producers say many parents have found it's a great way to explain private parts to children. While some called it inappropriate for a program aimed at children ages 3-6, others complained that it's not progressive because it portrays the penis with a mustache and the vagina with long eyelashes. Critics said the video reinforced gender stereotypes.

WON'T TAKE THE CAKE

A man is accusing Denver baker Marjorie Silva of discriminating against him

based on religion because she refused to add an anti-gay message to his Bible-shaped cake. The customer wanted Silva, owner of Azucar Bakery, to decorate a cake with two men holding hands and an X on top of them, plus what Silva described as "hateful words about gays." She told the customer she'd make the cake and provide him the icing and pastry bag to add his message. Instead, he filed a complaint with the state, alleging he was "discriminated against by the bakery based on my creed."

NO MERCI

Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo said she intends to sue Fox News in the wake of the channel's coverage of supposed "no-go zones" for non-Muslims. Hidalgo said the channel "insulted" her city. A Fox News executive called the warning about a lawsuit "misplaced" and numerous retractions were issued on the network.

NO SNOW

A prominent Saudi Arabian cleric stirred a flurry of controversy by issuing a religious rule forbidding the building of snowmen, because they're anti-Islamic. Asked on a religious website if it was permissible for fathers to build snowmen for their children after a snowstorm in the country's north, Sheikh Mohammed Saleh al-Munajjid replied: "It is not permitted to make a statue out of snow, even by way of play and fun."

NOT THE PERFECT CRIME

Two men arrested in Houston are accused of stealing an iPad and using it to take selfies that they unknowingly uploaded to the owner's iCloud account. The men appeared in the photos displaying money they are accused of taking from the victim. The photos ended up online, helping authorities identify the suspects.

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Bullets exact terrible toll on children, African Americans

Wisconsin Public Radio tally tracks a sorrowful but ordinary year with more than 100 deaths

By Bill Lueders

Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism

Lt. Mark Stanmeyer's son wanted to know why his dad was going into work on a Sunday. And although the boy is only 9, Stanmeyer, spokesman for the Milwaukee Police Department, decided to tell him.

"A little boy was in his home and someone shot bullets into it and he was killed," Stanmeyer related of the incident. He found it difficult: "How do you look your child in the face and tell him that?"

Bill Thao, 13 months old, was killed Dec. 27, when his mother took him to visit relatives at a house on Milwaukee's northwest side. A fusillade of gunfire erupted

from the street. He was hit in the lower torso and died at a hospital soon afterward. It was the third death of a child from stray gunfire in Milwaukee last year.

Stanmeyer thought he should be honest with his son: "I want my children to grow up knowing that there are bad people in the world and how to avoid them."

The need of parents to explain such realities to their children is one facet of the vast impact of gun violence. In Wisconsin last year, 111 people were victims of gun homicides, according to a preliminary tally by Wisconsin Public Radio, part of a yearlong project by reporters Chuck Quirnbach and Gilman Halsted.

A Wisconsin Center for

Investigative Journalism analysis of the homicide tally and other data shows:

- African Americans, who make up 6.5 percent of the state's population, accounted for about two-thirds of its firearm homicide victims. Blacks in Wisconsin were more than 30 times as likely as non-Hispanic whites to die in gun homicides. From 2008 to 2012, federal statistics show, this ratio was 20 to 1 for Wisconsin and 10 to 1 for the nation.

- Of the 111 victims, 89 were male, which is comparable with past state and national averages. The average age for all victims was 32, which is in line with past national averages.

- Gun homicides



PHOTO: MARK HOFFMAN/MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL

Robert Petersen holds a photo of his 5-year-old daughter, Laylah, who was killed Nov. 6 in Milwaukee while sitting indoors on her grandfather's lap.

occurred in 15 of the state's 72 counties and were concentrated in urban areas.

The city of Milwaukee, with just over 10 percent of the state's population, had two-thirds of its gun homi-

cides, at 76. Beloit had the second-highest total, with six, followed by Racine, with four.

While WPR did not track all state homicides, the experience of Milwaukee

shows that guns are by far the most common cause. According to the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel's "Homicide Database," firearms were

BULLETS next page

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BULLETS from prior page used to commit 87 percent of that city's homicides last year. Nationally and in Wisconsin from 2008 to 2012, about two-thirds of homicides were firearm-related.

Consistent with national crime reporting standards, the WPR tally does not include suicides, accidental deaths that did not lead to criminal charges, "justified" shootings by law enforcement and shootings ruled to be in self-defense.

The WPR tally also does not include firearm-caused injuries, which in the city of Milwaukee occurred seven times more often than gun homicides. While statewide numbers regarding firearm-caused injuries are not yet available, data from the Milwaukee Homicide Commission show that while homicides in that city were down 16 percent from 2013, non-fatal shootings were up 10 percent to 581, the highest number since 2006.

'NOT EXTRAORDINARY'

Unfortunately, in terms of the overall numbers of gun homicides in Wisconsin, 2014 was a typical year.

"It's not extraordinary," said Stanmeyer, a 24-year police veteran who has been involved in releasing information on most of Milwaukee's gun homicides over the past two years. "That's a sad thing."

According to a U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention tracker, Wisconsin annually averaged 106 gun homicide deaths from 2008 to 2012, the last year for which official numbers are available. The highest number of gun homicides during this time was 132, in 2012. During this same period, an average of 353 people a year used guns to commit suicide.

Wisconsin's overall gun homicide rate during this five-year span was half the national average, 1.87 compared to 3.84 deaths per 100,000 residents.

Many of the homicides generated too little media attention to be clearly characterized. Of those that can be, many involve drug deals or altercations. At least a dozen people were killed during what police said

were armed robberies.

Twenty of the year's gun homicides fall into the category of "domestic," most involving spouses or domestic partners. In four cases, the killer then committed suicide. The suicides were not counted in the tally.

YOUNG VICTIMS

The details of the shooting deaths are often repugnant.

Dulonden Ratliff, 21, of Kenosha, was shot to death in March in an argument on a Racine street that allegedly began over a request for a cigarette. Tommy Canady, a 15-year-old charged with killing Semar McClain, 19, in Racine, reportedly posted a rap video in which he bragged about it.

Stanmeyer says the questions he most often grapples with when dealing with gun homicides are: Why did this have to happen? Why did somebody reach for a gun and begin firing, with no regard for human life? How did they become so apathetic about their own futures?

In all, there were five deaths involving people hit with stray bullets, including the three children in Milwaukee: Bill Thao, 13 months, Sierra Guyton, 10, and Laylah Petersen, 5. Sierra was shot in the head in May while playing in a playground across the street from her home; she died nearly two months later. Laylah was killed in November while sitting indoors on her grandfather's lap.

An additional 12 children age 13 and under were wounded by gunfire in 2014 but survived, the Milwaukee Homicide Commission reported. The same number of children have been killed by stray gunfire in Milwaukee since 1995.

GUNS: PROBLEM OR SOLUTION?

Jeri Bonavia, executive director of the advocacy group Wisconsin Anti-Violence Effort, or WAVE, laments what she sees as a societal failure to address what are essentially preventable deaths.

"If any other problem were related to this many deaths of our young people, we as a nation would stand up and demand solutions,"

she said. "But because it's guns, we say this is an acceptable price to pay for somebody's notion of freedom."

WAVE supports mandatory background checks on all gun sales, including those that occur at gun shows and between individuals.

Nik Clark, the chairman and president of Wisconsin Carry Inc., a group that advocates for less restrictive state gun laws, said the underlying problem is one of violence, not guns. In fact, he sees guns as part of the solution.

"If we put a gun in the hands of law-abiding citizens, we'd have fewer victims of crimes," Clark said. He also thinks the justice

system is too lenient on people who commit "gateway crimes" like auto theft and armed robbery. "There is no deterrent until you actually do something like shoot a 13-month old."

Gov. Scott Walker, in an interview with the Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism, was dismissive of calls to require universal background checks, saying many guns find their way into the hands of criminals through "straw buyers" who can pass these checks.

But he did tout the state's support of Milwaukee's ShotSpotter program, which allows police to pinpoint through sound the locations in which firearms have been discharged. He hopes this

technology will help police crack down on people who discharge weapons on city streets.

Walker added that what amazed him, as much as the technology itself, was the finding that only 14 percent of the shooting incidents it identified had been called in to police. Most of the time, he said, the people who hear these shots are afraid of retaliation or else "were just so immune to it" that they did not bother to act.

"In either case," Walker said, "that's a really damning scenario about just how horrific it is for many people to live in those neighborhoods."

Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism reporter Kate Golden contributed to this report, which was supported by The Joyce Foundation. The nonprofit Center (WisconsinWatch.org) collaborates with Wisconsin Public Radio, Wisconsin Public Television, other news media and the UW-Madison School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

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Amid presidential campaign, Walker's deficit balloons to \$2B

By Louis Weisberg

Staff writer

Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker will have to plug a roughly \$280 million budget shortfall by the end of June, and the state faces a two-year deficit that could be as large as \$2 billion, based on new estimates released from the nonpartisan Legislative Fiscal Bureau.

When Walker took office in 2011, the state faced a roughly \$3 billion budget shortfall, based on agency requests. Walker declared that the state was "bankrupt" then, an assertion that was supported by the media.

Somehow, there's no mention of "bankruptcy" in the right-wing media this time around.

Walker used the 2011 deficit as an excuse to dismantle public unions, an action that was high on the agenda of right-wing groups such as the Koch-backed Americans for Prosperity. His Act 10 forced public workers to pay more for their health care and pension benefits and ended nearly all their collective bargaining rights. He made deeper cuts to education than any other governor in the nation, including cuts to public schools, the University of Wisconsin and technical colleges. He also cut the state workforce, taking millions of dollars in income out of the state's economy.

Over his first term, Walker turned down hundreds of millions of federal dollars for expanding Medicaid, building high-speed

rail and expanding high-speed Internet service in the state. Those were among the decisions that put the state on the slowest track in the region for job creation.

But Walker's Act 10 brought the largest demonstrations to Madison in decades, making him an instant sensation with the tea party acolytes Fox News. Now Walker is using his fame to mount an exploratory campaign for the 2016 Republican presidential nomination.

The governor has spent a great deal of time since his re-election pulling together his presidential campaign, visiting other states and raising funds. The latest budget figures were released just a day before Walker joined other GOP presidential hopefuls at separate events in Iowa and California. Democrats renewed their criticism that Walker is distracted by his political ambitions and instead should be focused on fixing the state's budget problem.

"The Scott Walker claiming that he cut taxes and balanced the budget faces a different reality at home," said WisDems communication director Melissa Baldauff

in a press release. "While Walker is campaigning in Iowa and promising caucus voters he'll be back there soon and often, Wisconsin is facing a \$2.2 billion budget deficit for the next biennium that is well on its way to \$3 billion and higher. Worse, the state is expected to end the current fiscal year with a \$283 million shortfall."

The state Constitution requires a balanced budget, meaning that \$283 million will have to be found over the next five months to make up the deficit.

Baldauff continued: "Instead of bragging to Iowans about how he busted unions with an unnecessary budget repair bill in 2011, Walker needs to start

talking to his Republican Legislature about a budget repair bill right now to address this staggering deficit. The \$283 million shortfall for this year is more than three times the \$79 million threshold in state law to trigger a budget repair and is more than double the amount of the deficit Walker used as justification to pass his contentious Act 10 legislation. Wisconsinites need to start hearing real, serious solutions from Scott Walker about how he will close this deficit without gutting critical services or raising taxes on the middle class."

Walker will not release an emergency budget plan to balance the \$283 million

shortfall for the year that ends June 30, his spokeswoman Laurel Patrick said in an email to The Associated Press. The state constitution requires the budget to be balanced, meaning that savings will have to be found over the next five months to make up the deficit.

Walker's deficit will likely spur deep cuts across state government, which would please conservatives, but make it difficult for him to follow through on additional promised tax cuts. Walker and Republican legislative leaders have stressed for weeks that difficult decisions lie ahead.

Wisconsin's two-year shortfall hits about \$2 billion when state agency requests — which will certainly not be filled in full by Walker or the Legislature — are taken into account. The budget will be about \$650 million short by mid-2017 just to continue spending at current levels.

Walker is set to release his roughly \$68 billion, two-year budget on Feb. 3 and the Legislature will make changes to it over the next several months.

Co-chairs of the Legislature's budget committee issued a statement attributing the budget woes to the \$2 billion in tax cuts passed during Walker's first term, which they supported. Large cuts went to the wealthiest Wisconsinites, while cuts for the middle class were minimal and taxes for some poor residents increased under their plan.

The Associated Press contributed.

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High court sets stage for historic ruling on marriage



PHOTO: COURTESY

April DeBoer and Jayne Rowse and their children, Nolan, Jacob, Rylee and Ryanne.

By Lisa Neff

Staff writer

The U.S. Supreme Court this spring will take up cases seeking to overturn bans on same-sex marriage in four states, setting the stage for a national — and historic — ruling on the freedom to marry in America.

"This is the moment we've long been working toward," said Evan Wolfson, of the Freedom to Marry, a national LGBT civil rights group.

The high court in mid-January agreed to review cases from Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio and Tennessee. In November 2014, the U.S. Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals upheld anti-gay bans from those states.

Briefs are due this winter, oral arguments likely in mid-spring and a decision expected before the court's July recess.

In June 2013, in two decisions, the court allowed to stand a federal ruling overturning California's ban on same-sex marriage and overturned the provision in the U.S. Defense of Marriage Act that barred federal recognition of same-sex marriage. The high court hasn't taken up the merits of a marriage case since then, but many lower courts have, and most have ruled for marriage equality.

Consider: Just 12 states and the District of Columbia allowed gay and lesbian couples to marry in the summer of 2013. Same-sex couples now can marry in 36 states plus D.C., mostly as a result of legal rulings.

The Supreme Court, in an order accepting the cases out of the Sixth Circuit, said it would consider two questions:

- Does the 14th Amendment require a state to license a marriage between two people of the same sex?
- Does the 14th Amendment require a

state to recognize a marriage between two people of the same sex when their marriage was lawfully licensed and performed out-of-state?

"We are thrilled the court will finally decide this issue," James Esseks, director of the ACLU Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender & HIV Project, said in a statement. "The country is ready for a national solution that treats lesbian and gay couples fairly. Every single day we wait means more people die before they have a chance to marry, more children are born without proper protections, more people face medical emergencies without being able to count on recognition of their spouses."

DID YOU KNOW?

The 14th Amendment, one of the Reconstruction amendments, was ratified on July 9, 1868. The amendment contains five sections and multiple clauses. The first section, with the Equal Protection and Due Process clauses, is one of the most litigated parts of the U.S. Constitution. It reads, "Section 1. All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."

— L.N.

THE IMPACT

The Williams Institute at UCLA School of Law, which researches LGBT issues, estimated in 2013 there were at least 690,000 same-sex couples in the United States raising 200,000 children. The number of married same-sex couples, estimated at 130,000 in 2013, has increased by more than 50 percent over the past three years. But an estimated 25 percent of same-sex couples are living in one of the 14 states where they cannot legally marry or where same-sex marriage is not recognized.

"Our families, communities and the schools all see us as a family," said Jayne Rowse, one of the plaintiffs in the Michigan equality case. "We juggle our jobs and a houseful of children and wouldn't have it any other way. Soon, we hope to have the same recognition and share the same protections and responsibilities as all other families."

Rowse and April DeBoer are raising four children and they went to trial for nine days last winter to fight for a license to marry, seeking legal safeguards and status for their family. They won in U.S. District Court, a victory that opened a window for hundreds of gay couples in Michigan to wed. The window closed with the state's appeal to the Sixth Circuit, which upheld the anti-gay ban.

"This opportunity for our case to be heard by the Supreme Court gives us and families like ours so much reason to be hopeful," said DeBoer.

In addition to *DeBoer v. Snyder*, the Supreme Court, which has extended the time allowed for oral arguments, will be considering *Obergefell v. Hodges* from Ohio, *Tanco v. Haslam* from Tennessee and *Bourke v. Beshear* from Kentucky.

"I can't wait to walk up those steps and have the Supreme Court understand that we're just like everyone else," said James Obergefell, a plaintiff in the Ohio case.

In 2013, Obergefell flew to Maryland with

his dying partner, John Arthur, so they could marry before Arthur's death. When the couple returned to Ohio, they sued to force the state to list Arthur, who died 15 months ago, as married on his death certificate.

The AP contributed to this report.

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Science of love *Studies of sex, romance and commitment*

Compiled by Lisa Neff

Staff writer

Birds do it.

Bees do it.

But why do we fall in love? How do we stay in love? What do we gain from love?

To explore those questions and more, WiG poured some wine, unwrapped a box of truffles, lit a candle and delved into a year's worth of science and health journals.

SEX OR NO SEX?

Jesse Hollister and colleagues at the University of Toronto were captivated by the elegant, showy evening primrose because 30 percent of the species in the genus have evolved to reproduce asexually. This made the primrose the right plant to test a theory that biologists have long promoted: Species that reproduce sexually are healthier over time than species that reproduce asexually, because they don't accumulate harmful mutations.

The researchers, working with teams in Canada and China, examined 30 pairs of the primrose species — one in the pair reproduced asexually; the other sexually.

"What we found was exactly what we predicted based on theory," Hollister stated.

"This is the first genetic support for the theory that a significant cost to being asexual is an accumulation of deleterious mutations," said University of Toronto professor

Mark Johnson. "This study has allowed us to unlock part of the mystery of why sex is so common. It's good for your health, at least if you are a plant."

GOING PITTER-PATTER?

Falling in love really does make the heart go pitter-patter and takes one's breath away, say scientists with the Loyola Sexual Wellness Clinic at Loyola University's Stritch School of Medicine in Chicago.

Clinic co-director Pat Mumby said falling in love releases a flood of feel-good chemicals — dopamine, adrenaline and norepinephrine.

"This internal elixir of love is responsible for making our cheeks flush, our palms sweat and our hearts race," said Mumby.

Credit dopamine for that euphoric feeling.

Credit adrenaline and norepinephrine for that pitter-patter of the heart and the preoccupation with that other person.

NOT SO TOTAL RECALL

Think you remember the details of a love at first sight?

Maybe.

Maybe not, according to research from Northwestern University that was conducted with the support of the National Institutes of Health and published in the *Journal of Neuroscience*.

The researchers showed that fragments of the present get inserted into the past to form faulty memories. Memories get adapted and updated, reframed to fit the now, according to lead author Donna Jo Bridge, who led the research at the Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine.

For the study, people viewed object locations on a computer screen with varied backgrounds. When asked to place the objects in the original location, the participants always placed them incorrectly. Next participants were shown the objects in three locations on the original screen and asked to choose the correct location. They placed the objects in the misremembered location because they had reformed the memory.

ing in Chicago. "That isn't to say that people didn't want love from their marriage; it just wasn't the point of marriage."

Today, according to Finkel, "Americans look to their marriages to help them 'find themselves' and to pursue careers and other activities that facilitate the expression of their core self."

TABLE FOR FOUR?

A study presented at the Society for Personality and Social Psychology annual conference in Austin, Texas, this past year suggested that double dating can help spark romance for a couple—provided the double date involves deep, revealing conversation.

Passion can decrease for a couple over time, but research shows that self-disclosure in a couple affects closeness and passion.

So what happens when two couples form a fast friendship and go beyond small talk to discuss deeper, personal topics?

"The more that the other couple responds to your self-disclosures in a validating and caring way when on a double date, the more passionate you feel about your own relationship," said study author Keith Welker of Michigan's Wayne State University. "Although we still need to investigate why responsiveness from other couples predicts increases in passionate love, one possibility is that having another couple respond positively to yourself and your partner may provide you with a fresh, positive view of your partner and relationship."

A caution: Be sure that other couple is going to make you look good before you book a table for four on Valentine's Day.

FAITH-BASED FRISKY

A study from the University de Porto in Portugal published in *Applied Research in Quality of Life* indicates that people of faith and regular churchgoers are positive about their love lives and tend to express greater

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THE LOOK OF LOVE, OR LUST

Researchers with the University of Chicago, working with the University of Geneva, analyzed the eye movements of test subjects studying black-and-white photographs of strangers.

They found that people tended to fixate on the face, especially when they said an image elicited a feeling of romantic love.

However, subjects' eyes moved from the face to the rest of the body when images evoked sexual desire.

MARITAL INVESTMENT

Professors with the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences and the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, examined changing expectations of marriage and relationships — from the 18th century to the 21st.

They reported that Americans, on average, are making smaller investments of time and energy in their relationships than in the past and they have very different expectations from the couples of yesteryears.

"In 1800, the idea of marrying for love was ludicrous," stated psychology professor Eli Finkel, the lead author of a paper presented at the American Association for the Advancement of Science annual meet-




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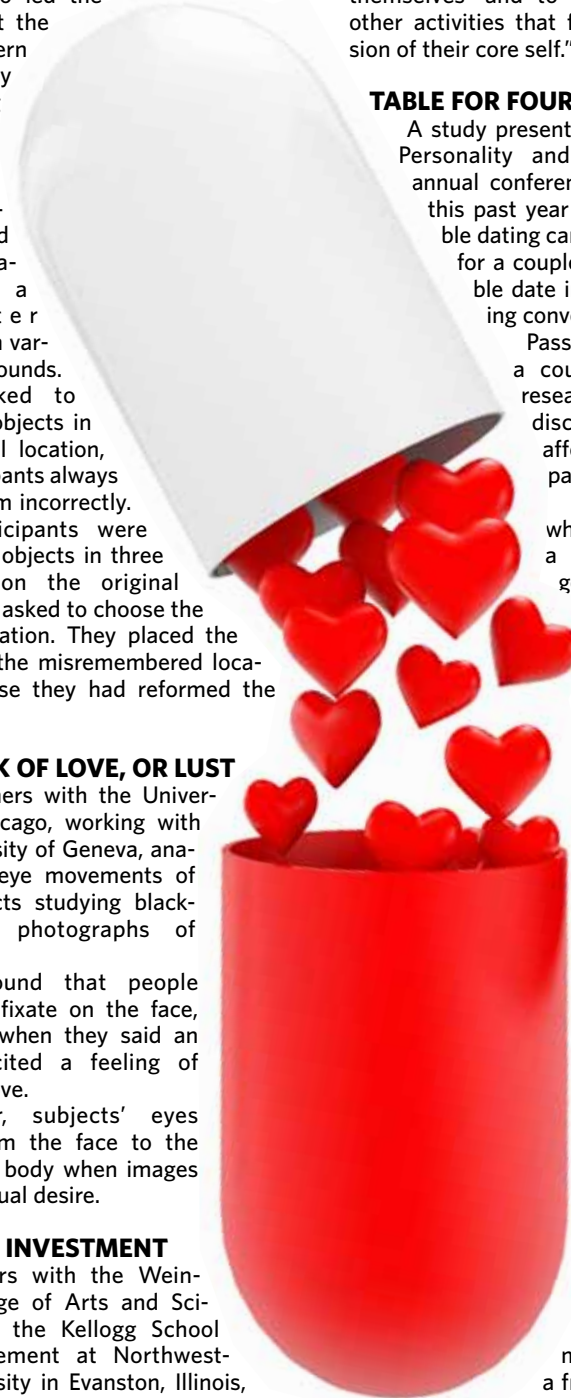
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satisfaction with life and sexual relationships than the average adult.

The research involved nearly 1,300 Portuguese adults between 18 and 90 years old and used the "Satisfaction With Love Life Scale."

LOVE, AND LOVING SEX

For her study on sexual pleasure, Penn State sociologist Beth Montemurro conducted a series of interviews with heterosexual women between the ages of 20 and 68.

Most women in the study said being in love made sex physically more pleasurable. Women in love said they felt less inhibited and more willing to explore.

Montemurro said the women interviewed "seemed to say you need love in sex and you need sex in marriage."

ROMANCE AND RIGHTS

A team at Indiana University looked at attitudes toward couples and found that people generally think of loving relationships in a hierarchy: heterosexual couples being the most "in love," followed by lesbian couples and then gay couples.

And these attitudes, the IU researchers wrote, led people to form beliefs about who should enjoy what rights and liberties — from holding hands to legally marrying.

The paper was titled "(Double) Standards for Granting Formal and Informal Privileges."

MATCHED UP

Nearly all the gay and bisexual men involved in a first-of-its-kind study on love and sex said their most recent sexual event occurred with a relationship partner and that they felt "matched" in feelings of love with that partner.

The study, "Sexual Health in Gay and Bisexual Partners" was published in the *Archives of Sexual Behavior* and conducted by Virginia's George Mason University's Department of Global and Community Health and Indiana University's Center for Sexual Health and Promotion.

"These findings highlight the prevalence and value of loving feelings within same-sex relationships," Joshua G. Rosenberger, lead investigator and George Mason professor, said when releasing the research.

The study was based on an Internet survey of 25,000 men.

"Very few people had sex with someone they loved if that person didn't love them back," said research scientist Beth Herbenick. "This 'matching' aspect of love has not been well explored in previous research, regardless of sexual orientation."

THINKING OF CHEATING, AND CHEATING

Cheating — is it worse to think about it than to do it?

Well, researchers of a newly published study report that heterosexual men are more likely than heterosexual women to be most upset by sexual infidelity — 54 percent of heterosexual men, 35 percent of heterosexual women.

However, heterosexual men are less like-

ly than heterosexual women to be upset most by emotional infidelity — 46 percent of heterosexual men, 65 percent of heterosexual women.

Bisexual men and women, gays and lesbians did not differ significantly.

"Heterosexual men really stand out from all the other groups: They were the only ones who were much more likely to be upset by sexual infidelity rather than emotional infidelity," stated lead author David Frederick, who suggested insecurity about paternity may have something to do with the emotions.

The study was conducted by Chapman University in California and involved a survey of about 64,000 people.

COUPLE COUNSELING

Psychologists at the German Universities of Jena and Kassel reported last fall that a romantic relationship helps neurotic people find stability.

The researchers interviewed 245 couples several times over nine months. Using a questionnaire, the researchers gauged changing degrees of neuroticism and relationship satisfaction. Participants also were asked about fictitious everyday life situations and their possible significance for their own partnership.

"This part was crucial, because neurotic people process influences from the outside world differently," study author Christine Finn stated, noting that neurotic people react more strongly to negative stimuli and have a tendency to interpret ambiguous situations negatively.

The researchers found that over time, neurotic tendencies decrease as a romantic relationship builds.

Finn stated, "The positive experiences and emotions gained by having a partner change the personality — not directly but indirectly — as at the same time the thought structures and the perception of presumably negative situations change."

REVEALING 'LIKES'

A report in the journal *PNAS* indicated that computer models might know a person's personality as well as his or her significant other.

Researchers at the University of Cambridge and Stanford University said a computer model using a person's likes on Facebook can predict a person's personality more accurately than most friends and family and well enough to rival the judgment of a partner.

In the study, the computer more accurately predicted a person's personality than a work colleague based on just 10 likes, more than a friend based on 70 likes, better than a parent or sibling with 150 likes and as well as a spouse with 300 likes.

"People may choose to augment their own intuitions and judgments with this kind of data analysis when making important life decisions, such as choosing activities, career paths or even romantic partners," said lead author Wu Youyou of Cambridge's Psychometrics Centre. "Such data-driven decisions may well improve people's lives."



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Senate says climate change is real, but build XL

By Lisa Neff

Staff writer

The Republican-controlled Senate on Jan. 21 voted 98-1 for a measure declaring, simply, "Climate change is real and not a hoax."

But the Senate, taking a series of votes that set the stage for an upcoming major vote on the Keystone XL Pipeline, ultimately turned away from the mountain of evidence that puts much blame for climate change on humans.

The votes in the Senate came as scientists revealed that 2014 was the hottest year on record and less than a day after President Barack Obama called global warming one of the greatest threats to future generations.

The votes came as residents along a section of the Yellowstone River in eastern Montana were dealing with the pollution from a ruptured pipeline and as a federal court attempted to determine how much BP must pay in fines for the catastrophic Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico.

And the Senate votes came as a Canadian company moved to grab, via eminent domain, Nebraska farm and ranch land that is needed in the event the Keystone XL Pipeline gets approved.

While overwhelmingly approving the measure declaring climate change "real," the Senate majority rejected measures that said human activities — in particular

the burning of fossil fuels to power plants, vehicles and factories — contributed to the warming of the planet.

"Climate is changing and climate has always changed and always will," said U.S. Sen. James Inhofe of Oklahoma. "There is archeological evidence of that, there is biblical evidence of that, there is historical evidence of that." Inhofe said those who believe in man-made climate change are "arrogant."

The day before, in his sixth State of the Union address, Barack Obama challenged deniers like Inhofe, saying, "The best scientists in the world are all telling us that our activities are changing the climate."

Polls show a majority of Americans also believe human activities are changing the climate.

"We wouldn't be shocked if the Senate decides to vote against gravity, amend the periodic table or express its sense that two plus two might actually equal five," said environmental activist Jason Kowalski, police director of the group 350 Action. "While it's certainly clear ... that these senators are not scientists, it's also clear that they have no interest in science as a basis for public policy. That's why no one is surprised that climate deniers have made it their mission to shill for Keystone XL."

POLITICS AND THE PIPELINE

The GOP leadership placed approval of



PHOTO: MARY ANNE ANDREI

KXL opponent and landowner James Tarnick: "Landowners have been bullied by TransCanada as our political leaders have looked the other way. ... This is an outstanding way to rise up against big money and say, 'We aren't going anywhere. Ever!'"

the KXL at the top of its agenda for 2015, claiming the pipeline will generate jobs and reduce U.S. dependency on foreign oil. The pipeline would send about 80,000 barrels of crude oil each day from Canada across the United States to refineries on the Gulf of Mexico.

Meanwhile, the State Department has indicated it will close a public comment period on the pipeline review in early February. After the review, the State Department will make a recommendation on the issue to the

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president.

For now, TransCanada, the pipeline's developer, is pushing forward with securing the land needed to finish the project. The company, on Jan. 20, filed papers in nine Nebraska counties to seize by eminent domain the land of farmers and ranchers resisting the project.

"This is just another bullying move by the foreign corporation that swears they are going to be a good neighbor," said Nebraska landowner Jim Tarnick. "From the Kalamazoo to the Yellowstone rivers and all across the United States, tar sands are a horrible danger and threat that the president must reject."

Meghan Hammond is a Nebraska landowner who says her family-owned clean energy project would have to be torn down to make way for the KXL.

She's also concerned about the potential for environmental damage if the pipeline is approved.

"My family farms and ranches every day in order to put food on Americans' tables," she said. "We cannot survive as a family business without clean water. Our government has no solution to clean up tar sands and benzene from our water. Our land is not



PHOTO: BY MARY ANNE ANDREI/GE

KXL opponent Meghan Hammond enjoys a hayride to the site of the groundbreaking ceremony for the Build Our Energy solar- and wind-powered barn project on the proposed route of the pipeline, which traverses the Hammond family's land in York County, Nebraska.

for sale and we will keep fighting TransCanada until we see their taillights go back across our border."

As Hammond was voicing concerns about water contamination, residents in eastern Montana were dealing with benzene in their public water

supplies. The cancer-causing component of oil was detected downstream from a Yellowstone River pipeline spill.

"It's scary," Mickey Martini of Glendive, Montana, told the AP. "I don't know how they're going to take care of this."

OFFSHORE WIND V. OFFSHORE DRILLING

Offshore wind could produce twice the number of jobs and twice the amount of energy as offshore drilling in the Atlantic Ocean, according to the environmental group Oceana.

The group challenges recent claims by the oil and gas industry that opening the East Coast to offshore drilling would lead the United States to energy independence, generate millions of dollars in revenue for states and create thousands of jobs.

Oceana said in its analysis, the benefits projected by the industry are exaggerated, due to the inclusion of oil and gas resources that are not economically recoverable. Industry estimates also rely on an assumption of a state revenue-sharing system that does not exist.

Oceana, in a report released in mid-January, also finds that offshore oil and gas development along the Atlantic could put at risk some of the nearly 1.4 million jobs and over \$95 billion in gross domestic product that rely on healthy ocean ecosystems, mainly through fishing, tourism and recreation.

Other key findings:

- In 13 years, offshore wind could generate more energy than could be provided by all of the economically recoverable offshore oil and gas resources.
- In the next 20 years, offshore wind could create about 91,000 more jobs than offshore drilling — about double the job creation potential of offshore oil and gas.
- A modest and gradual development of offshore wind on the East Coast over the next 20 years could generate enough energy to power over 115 million households.

— Lisa Neff

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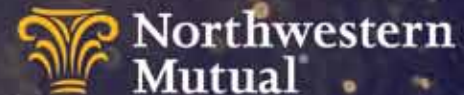
Evan Wolfson is founder and president of Freedom to Marry, the campaign to win marriage nationwide, and author of *Why Marriage Matters: America, Equality, and Gay People's Right to Marry*. In 2004, *Time* magazine named him one of the "100 most influential people in the world." Prior to founding Freedom to Marry in 2003, Wolfson launched the ongoing global movement for the freedom to marry as co-counsel in the landmark Hawaii marriage case, *Baehr v. Miike*.

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NEWS ANALYSIS

Right-wing bias, political jockeying conspire to derail Milwaukee's streetcar proposal

By Louis Weisberg

Staff writer

Streetcars and light rail systems are central to America's growing re-urbanization — the counterpunch to last century's urban flight. Although critics often dismiss them as "trendy," you'll find such systems today in down-to-earth cities such as Oklahoma City, Kansas City and Cincinnati. Leaders in conservative metro areas such as Salt Lake City rave about them. They're an integral part of 21st-century urban landscapes in nearly every corner of the nation — Portland and Seattle, Tucson and Phoenix, Atlanta and Nashville, Philadelphia and Boston.

Many of the cities that have added streetcars or light rail to their public transportation options over the past couple of decades consider them great successes. Portland, Oregon, which pioneered the streetcar's return, reports that \$3.5 billion has been invested within two blocks of its streetcar lines, resulting in 10,212 new housing units and 5.4 million square feet of office, institutional, retail and hotel construction.

Not every city can report the spectacular results of Portland's streetcar, and some systems do have flaws that are touted by naysayers intent on finding them. But it's accurate to say that the scores of streetcar projects that have been built over the past two decades have proven overwhelmingly popular. They've benefited their local economies and provided an additional mode of transportation that gets large numbers of people out of their cars and into their streets, where they can get around and spend money without dealing with parking hassles.

Milwaukee is the most densely populated city in the nation without any rail component in its public transportation mix — yet.

THE TASTE OF KOCH

Approval for Milwaukee's streetcar initially seemed like a slam-dunk. The city's major business interests are so firmly behind it that several of them took out a full-page ad supporting the project in the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*.

The ad, headlined as an "open letter to the City of Milwaukee," read: "We have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to propel Milwaukee forward in a bold new direction that will positively impact the future of our great city for decades. If we don't reinvest in our community, fewer people will locate here, existing citizens will leave, and it will leave a deep hole in the pool of resources available to take care of people."

The highest-profile business leaders in

Milwaukee, including Michael Cudahy, Greg Marcus, Barry Mandel, David Lubar, Jeffrey Jorres, Alex Molinaroli, Gary Grunau, Linda Gorens-Levey and Greg Wesley, signed the letter.

The *Milwaukee Business Journal* reported that Johnson Controls Inc. is taking a "keen interest" in the Milwaukee streetcar as it considers places for possible expansion. Development giant Jon Hammes said the streetcar could spur construction of an \$80-million building he's proposed for downtown.

But there's a name that's missing from that list, and it's not because he's reluctant to get involved in the state's local issues: David Koch. His groups got involved in two school board elections last April in Kenosha, turning them into pro-voucher boards. They also tried to derail an expansion of that city's streetcar expansion, Christopher Naumann, executive director of Downtown Kenosha, told *WIG*.

As in Milwaukee, there were few objections to Kenosha's streetcar up until the weeks before the vote, despite the fact that it had been a priority for city planners since 2012. Unlike in Milwaukee, Kenosha's aldermen stood up to the special interests and refused to play politics with their streetcar. They voted to move forward.

Kenosha's streetcar development will cost \$10 million — \$8 million of which is coming from a federal grant.

"The momentum this thing took in the last weeks and the personalities that got involved were very interesting," Naumann said. "Things seemed to be more about politics than about the streetcar."

"The streetcar isn't nearly as impactful as other issues, but they were going after this as low-hanging fruit," he added.

In the scale of things, a \$2-million expen-

Mayoral challengers to Tom Barrett have joined forces with Koch brothers allies to turn Milwaukee's streetcar project into the hot-button local political issue du jour.

diture on building a streetcar line in a small Wisconsin city seems small potatoes for the mighty Kochs. But it's an issue for which Koch and his fossil-fuel cronies have a distinct distaste. Any advancement of transportation that replaces driving is bad for their business.



PHOTO: AP/DAVID GOLDMAN

Passengers look out from an Atlanta streetcar as it makes its inaugural trip through downtown Dec. 30, 2014. The journey marked the first time streetcars have regularly traversed Atlanta streets since 1949. The city is just the latest to climb back aboard streetcars, which are the hottest new urban transportation trend along with light rail systems.

In fact, the involvement of Koch interests in fighting streetcars seems to counter opponents' claims that they're underutilized. If the tea party and its fossil-fuel backers really thought no one would use the streetcars, then why would they waste so much effort trying to prevent them from being constructed?

LOCAL OPPOSITION

Nevertheless, two 2016 challengers to Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett's re-election have joined forces with Koch brothers allies to turn the streetcar project into the hot-button political issue du jour. After several delays on voting for the project, the Milwaukee Common Council approved it on Jan. 21. But in a convoluted parliamentary move, aldermen also voted to delay its final approval until Feb. 10.

The delay is designed to give Ald. Bob Donovan and Ald. Joe Davis, both of whom want to unseat Barrett in 2016, a chance to

collect 31,000 signatures to compel a binding referendum that would mandate voter approval for any rail spending over \$20 million. A similar attempt to halt a streetcar in Kansas City failed.

But Citizens for Responsible Government, the ad hoc group led by Donovan that's spearheading the referendum effort, has said it will not provide the needed signatures until Feb. 9. Milwaukee City Clerk Jim Owczarski said that he's entitled to — and needs — up to 15 days to review the petitions for accuracy.

So, even though the Common Council has approved the streetcar, it's unclear what its members will do on Feb. 10. The fate of the streetcar remains up in the air, and the project could ultimately wind up on a court docket.

One possibility is that the referendum would apply to future rail decisions but not this one, Owczarski said.

"You can't use direct legislation to undo something that's already been done," he explained.

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Meanwhile Americans for Prosperity, a Koch-brothers-advocacy group, is reportedly trying to steer the city away from the project. Their efforts are benefiting from the support of right-wing radio hosts such as Charlie Sykes, who's provided a soap box for Donovan (who has formerly run for political office as a Republican).

Why are the Koch brothers and their interests so terrified of a 2.1-mile streetcar system that they would resort to denigrating the program as catering to the rich and would feign concern over public funding for the poor?

'UGLY WIRES'

The rhetoric against Milwaukee's modest streetcar starter plan has been all but apocalyptic. The plan, which would connect downtown Milwaukee to the lower East Side and the lakefront, has been blasted as everything from a racist plot to a rape magnet to a careless waste of taxpayer dollars. (The longterm plan for the streetcar would extend it up the east side of the city and west of the Milwaukee River.)

The introductory price for a ticket would be \$1.

Steve Hiniker, president of 1,000 Friends of Wisconsin, and former Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist are infuriated that right-wing leaders have positioned the streetcar as "waste of taxpayer dollars," while ignoring the \$1-billion plan to expand I-94 through downtown Milwaukee. Traffic studies have proven the expansion is not needed, and it would be financed partially through Wisconsin's property taxes and federal money that Republican leaders usually make a great show of turning down. It will cause countless accidents, delays and loss of productivity but will offer no necessary benefits at a time when traffic on the corridor is declining.

The difference between the I-94 expansion and the streetcar is that road builders give millions of dollars to elected officials, but the streetcar does not offer them a comparable payday, according to Hiniker and others.

It's telling that Donovan wasn't even aware of the I-94 expansion project when WiG spoke with him recently by phone.

"I haven't looked at that issue, quite frankly," said Donovan, who announced his mayoral candidacy for 2016 on Sykes' radio program.

On the other hand, Donovan and Davis have looked very, very hard at the \$124-million Milwaukee streetcar line. They've bashed the project with distortions and outright lies.

Donovan's complaints about the project are among the quirkiest. He said they represent "old-fashioned technology that's going to take Milwaukee backwards."

"It's going to put ugly wires out in the streets," lamented the alderman.

But the prize for most bizarre objection goes to Ald. Joe Dudzik, who called in to a live radio program to warn listeners that the streetcar would be a magnet for shootings, assaults and rape.

RE-URBANIZATION

The geography and sociology of the United States during the second half of the 19th century were transformed by the construction of vast interstate highway system made possible by cheap oil and environmental blindness — and racism. From coast to coast and border to border, nature was resurfaced with thousands of miles of tar offering safe passage to white urbanites fleeing black and Latino newcomers.

The white-flight generation littered the nation with ugly, chain-store-studded strip malls and cookie-cutter housing developments that crowded out the plant and animal life that occupied the continent for eons. The one-two punch of chopping down the nation's trees and filling the air with automobile exhaust helped change the global climate.

But in time, everything old becomes new again. Unpredictable gas prices, the lost productivity resulting from ever-longer drive times to ever-farther suburbs, falling real estate prices and the sociocultural sterility of the suburbs have grown tiresome to growing numbers of their residents.

Farsighted developers revitalized cities like Milwaukee, and empty nesters began opting to live in the vibrant new urban pockets they created, such as the Third Ward, which offers close proximity to entertainment, culture, chic boutiques and gourmet dining.

Their kids, meanwhile, began gravitating to their own urban neighborhoods such as Bay View and Walker's Point, places that offer low-cost housing, diverse social interaction and freedom from wasting so much of their lives in automobiles, inhaling toxic fumes and contributing to the planet's demise.

"People want to be close together for social and culture and business interactions," Norquist told WiG by phone. "The city is a cultural creative soup that creates value. Even the great conservative think tanks are in cities. Being in the middle is important. The urban environment and transit brings people together."

Norquist, who said the streetcar is a no-brainer for Milwaukee, has witnessed up-close and personal the decades-long struggle to bring rail back to Milwaukee. He notes that automotive interests eliminated the city's streetcars in the first place.

According to Norquist, business interests connected with Firestone and General Motors owned Milwaukee streetcar systems for a while before eliminating them and the competition they represented.

"A lot of the people who participated in this were progressive," Norquist said. "They thought streetcars were old-fashioned."

Norquist said the final owner of a rail system that offered direct service from downtown Milwaukee to the Chicago Loop every hour not only ended the service but "burned down all the trains and equipment because they didn't want the cars to go anywhere else."

The federal grant that would cover nearly half of the proposed Milwaukee streetcar project has a long and checkered history, Norquist said.

DEBUNKING OBJECTIONS

Ald. Bob Donovan claims Milwaukee's streetcar project would divert \$100 million of taxpayer money from education and other beneficial programs, but that's simply not true. Here are some of the other popular objections to the streetcar, followed by responses from Jeff Fleming, spokesman for the Milwaukee Department of City Development.



PHOTO: CITY OF MILWAUKEE

Right-wing Ald. Bob Donovan opposes the Milwaukee streetcar project. He hopes to unseat Mayor Tom Barrett next year.

- 1. The streetcar project will raise property taxes.** This is false. Two downtown Tax Incremental Districts will issue \$20 million in bonds to borrow money for the project. The money will be repaid by taxes that are based on the increase in value on properties in those districts only. That's only fair, because real-estate owners in those two districts will benefit from an increase in value resulting from the streetcars. No one else's taxes will be used for the streetcar.
- 2. The money for the streetcar project should be reallocated to something else, such as education.** That's not how it works. The \$54 million federal grant for the project has been allocated specifically for rail in Milwaukee, and the city must either use it that way or lose it. The rest of the money cannot be reallocated, because it doesn't exist. It's being raised specifically to finance the streetcar. If the streetcar brings more economic activity and jobs to Milwaukee, however, it will increase the city's tax base in a good way. The extra money could be used to finance other projects or provide property tax relief.
- 3. Streetcars have been colossal failures in other cities.** While not everyone in every city with a streetcar system loves it, streetcars have been successful in measurable ways in most of the cities that have adopted them. Many of those cities have either expanded their lines or are in the process of doing so.
- 4. The tracks are going to hurt my tires and cause traffic jams.** This hasn't been a problem in the scores of other cities with streetcars. Streetcars reduce traffic in dense areas, so they are far more likely to thwart traffic jams than cause them.
- 5. Taxpayers will have to pay to maintain the streetcar.** This is true. Taxpayer money is used to pay for all forms of public transportation, including highways, buses, airports and rail. There is no mode of public transportation that pays for itself. Most people mistakenly believe that gas taxes pay for highways, but that is not true. Gas taxes don't begin to pay for the massive cost of maintaining roads. The money comes from a variety of funds, including your property taxes.
- 6. The strong economic development trajectory that downtown Milwaukee is on right now would continue without infrastructure improvements such as streetcars.** There's no way to respond to this definitively, but a large number of important business leaders want the streetcars. Some of them are unwilling to commit to locating their workforces downtown without a way to avoid building massive parking structures or a way to move people easily around the downtown area. Streetcars help resolve both of those concerns. According to city estimates, building the streetcar system could clinch several billion dollars worth of development deals, bringing more money and jobs to Milwaukee. That's one of the reasons why hardcore Republicans and people in rural areas are against the streetcar: They don't want to see the Democratic stronghold of Milwaukee succeed, even though the city is the state's primary economic engine and its success benefits them, too.

— Louis Weisberg

Back in the 1970s, the federal government appropriated \$500 million for transportation in Milwaukee, Norquist said. The money was frittered away by a succession of governors until there was only \$125 million left, part of which was used to tear down the Park East Freeway, he said.

"By the time I left there was \$95 million left," Norquist added. That amount is now down to \$54 million.

No one seems to know what will happen to the money if it's not used for the streetcar. Like the millions that Republicans turned down to build a high-speed rail corridor and expand Medicaid in Wisconsin, it might just go to another city and state with leaders who are more interested in their citizens than their political careers.

OPPOSING VIEW

Ald. Tony Zielinski says Milwaukee streetcar is a luxury the city can't afford

By Ald. Tony Zielinski

First and foremost, I am opposed to the streetcar because a majority of my constituents are opposed. No doubt, I have some vocal supporters but they are not the majority.

My constituents are telling me their taxes are too high. Furthermore, we are in such apparent fiscal constraints that the police are being furloughed, the fire department are experiencing brown outs and we cannot even maintain our roads adequately. The potholes in particular are especially bothersome.

Moreover, the city has been gradually cutting the work force in general due to tougher budget challenges. The city is struggling just to maintain the integrity of the delivery of its existing services.

How is it then that we have tens of millions of dollars to start a new project? And that is just the capital side of the price tag. There is also the excessive cost of operating the system into the foreseeable future.

Proponents say this will not affect your property taxes. The money is coming from

tax incremental financing districts. They are flat-out misleading the public. TID's forgo tax revenue to pay for projects.

To illustrate, the cost of the streetcar project is around \$124 million and we are getting \$54 million from the federal government. Meaning the city has to come up with the remaining money. And as I mentioned earlier, we will have to pay the shortfall for the annual operating budget.

Nearly all my constituents believe we need a strong mass transit system that includes buses with rubber wheels, which are a lot less expensive. But the problem with that is the county has been so strapped for money they have continually been cutting back on their services.

Lastly, I have a number of constituents who cannot afford our continually escalating property taxes. A number of people are being taxed out of their homes.

Milwaukee cannot move forward with reckless spending practices. Detroit was spending money all the way to bankruptcy. The streetcar did not help them. If anything, their spending on the streetcar dramatized their reckless and irresponsible spending habits.

People say the streetcar has worked in other cities. We are not other cities, just like we are not Detroit. We are one of the 10 poorest cities in the country. Every city has a unique set of variables that determines whether it is a right fit for them or not.

Other cities such as Arlington, Virginia, voted down their streetcar proposals because of the cost.

In summary, I do what the majority of my constituents want. A few years ago I voted



PHOTO: COURTESY

Ald. Tony Zielinski is one of the members of the city council opposing construction of a streetcar line in downtown Milwaukee.

for the streetcar because I received a lot of phone calls in support. When I started my door-to-door efforts, however, I quickly found out a majority of my constituents do not support the streetcar. So afterwards I let people know I will not be supporting the streetcar.

I understand our economy is beginning to bounce back. However, until we can provide the necessary services to provide to our citizens, our city cannot afford this luxury.

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Plan for Milwaukee-area private rail company released

By Louis Weisberg

Staff writer

For five years, a group of individuals has been quietly gathering input from Milwaukee-area residents and civic leaders to develop plans for a private passenger rail that would link key areas across Milwaukee and Waukesha counties.

On Jan. 21, the Milwaukee Passenger Rail Company published its plans for the B-Line, which will link such destinations as the Summerfest Grounds, Marquette University, UWM, Miller Park, Wisconsin State Fair Park and Mayfair Mall.

"We think it's about time for Milwaukee to have a system like this," MPRC president Michael Garven told *WiG* by phone. He went on to say that conservatives have nixed rail plans in the past because they've depended on public funding to operate, but his company's private, for-profit plan would negate such objections.

"After the initial funding, we would operate as a private company," Garven said. "That's very important to us and to conservatives."

Garven said he did not want his announcement to have any effect on the Milwaukee streetcar proposal and the timing of his release is purely coincidental. Neither he nor his company has a position on the project, he added.

According to an MPRC press release, the project initially would require public funding to improve 58 miles of existing rail tracks in coordination with the Union Pacific and Canadian Pacific Rail companies and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. Using existing rail infrastructure would save \$500 million in startup costs, the press release added.

In the master plan for B-Line, which can be found at milwaukeeblines.com and on Facebook under the name Milwaukee Blines, its organizers say the project would generate \$1.3 billion in new economic development activity, creating more than 10,000 jobs in a 10-year period.

The plan includes use of the former Talgo facility at Century City and a site at the Milwaukee Port Authority. Passenger rail cars would be built at Avalon Rail Company in West Allis.

The B-Line would use fuel-efficient

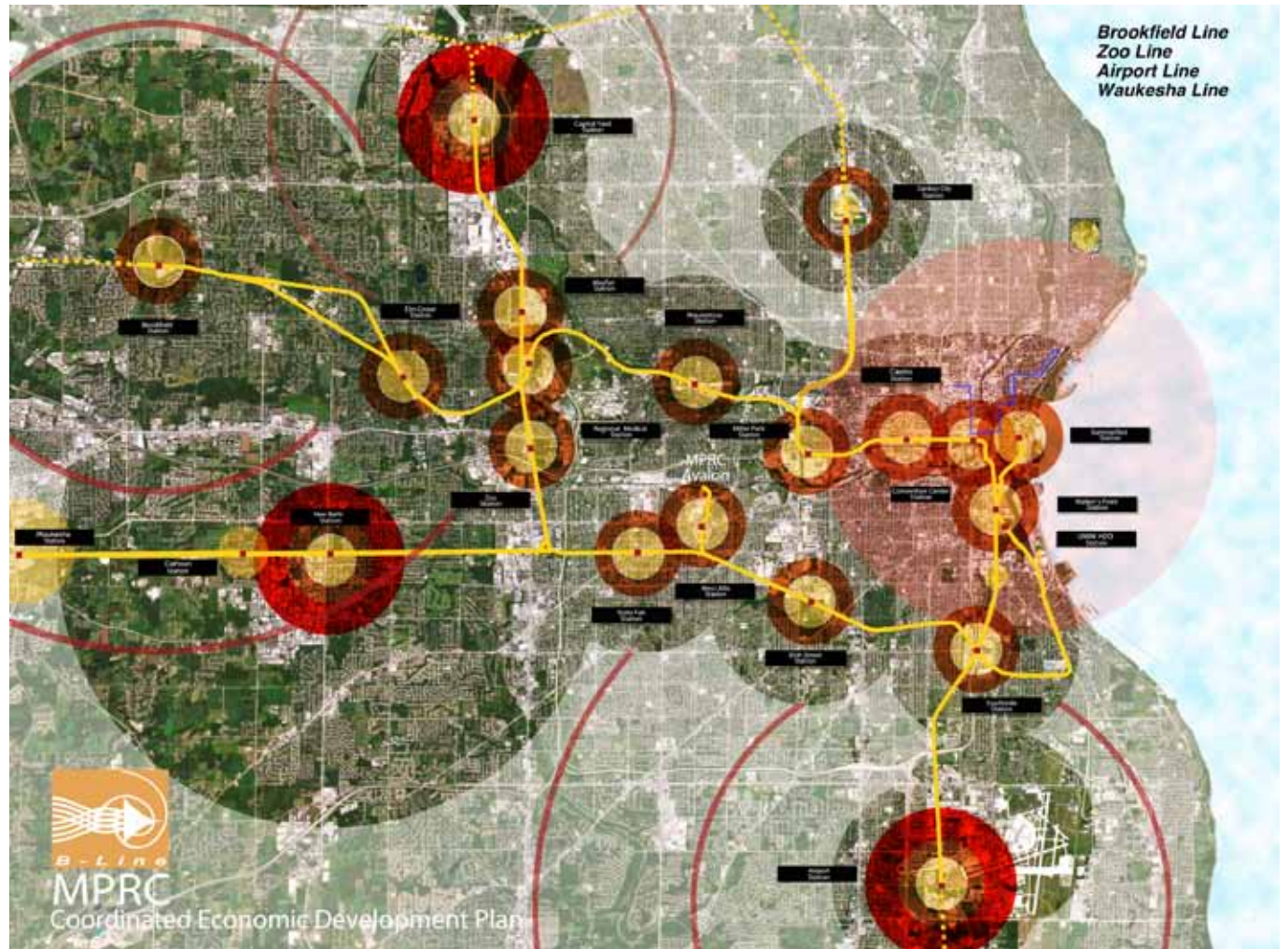


ILLUSTRATION: COURTESY MILWAUKEE PASSENGER RAIL COMPANY

A map showing the proposed route of the B-Line, a proposed private passenger rail system that would connect main attractions in the Milwaukee metro area.

diesel-electric locomotive motors, according to the plan. Ticket prices would range from \$2.85 to \$8.85, depending on the distance traveled.

"This is an urban transit system for the economic-minded that will benefit Milwaukee and Waukesha County for many years to come," said MPRC technical advisor Dave Henry in a press statement.

Company CEO Brian Kliesmet said in the statement, "MPRC planners were careful to

reach all constituencies. The B-Line is an innovation that crosses all boundaries and jurisdictions and is a model for economic success."

Garven said he planned to meet with state and local officials in the coming weeks to obtain their approval of the plan, which would require some of its start-up funding from cities reached by the train. He said prior meetings with business leaders and elected officials have been largely positive.

'An urban transit system that will benefit Milwaukee and Waukesha County for many years to come.'



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NATIONAL BRIEFS

FBI COMPLETES INVESTIGATION OF FERGUSON SHOOTING

The FBI has completed its investigation into the police shooting of an unarmed, black 18-year-old in Ferguson, Missouri, a U.S. official confirmed.

The Justice Department, as of *WiG* press time, had not announced whether it will file a federal civil rights charge against former Ferguson police officer Darren Wilson. But officials and experts have said such a prosecution would be highly unlikely, in part because of the extraordinarily high legal standard federal prosecutors would need to meet.

The official was not authorized to discuss the case by name and spoke to the Associated Press on condition of anonymity. Justice Department spokeswoman Dena Iverson declined to comment.

Wilson, who is white, was cleared in November 2014 by a state grand jury in the Aug. 9 death of Michael Brown, a shooting that touched off protests in the streets and became part of a national conversation about race relations and police departments that patrol minority neighborhoods. Attorney General Eric Holder visited Ferguson in the days after the shooting to try to calm tensions and to meet with Brown's relatives and federal law enforcement.

Wilson, who shot Brown after a scuffle in the middle of a street, told the St. Louis County grand jury that spent months reviewing the case that he feared for his life during the confrontation and that Brown struck him in the face and reached for his gun. Some witnesses have said Brown had his hands up when Wilson shot him.

To mount a federal prosecution, the Justice Department would need to show that Wilson willfully deprived Brown of his civil rights. That standard, which means prosecutors must prove that an officer knowingly used more force than the law allowed, is challenging for the government to meet. Multiple high-profile police-involved deaths, including the 1999 shooting in New York City of Amadou Diallo, an unarmed West African immigrant, have not resulted in federal charges.

VIDEO SHOWS MAN SHOT BY NEW JERSEY POLICE RAISING HIS HANDS

Another police killing is stirring anger in a U.S. city, this time in New Jersey, where a traffic stop captured on video ended with a passenger shot to death as he stepped out of a car with his hands raised at shoulder height.

The footage from a police dashboard camera shows police in a Dec. 30 stop that escalates quickly after one officer warns his partner about seeing a gun in the glove compartment of the Jaguar.

Bridgeton, New Jersey, officer Brahe Days screams over and over at the passenger, Jerame Reid, "Show me your hands!" and "If you reach for something, you're going to be f----- dead!" The officer appears to reach into the car and remove the gun. But the brief standoff ends with Reid disregarding Days' order to not move, stepping out and getting shot.

The shooting has touched off protests in Bridgeton, a struggling city of about 25,000 people outside Philadelphia.

Days is black, his partner white. The passenger was black, as was the driver.

Both officers have been placed on leave pending an investigation.

JUDGE ISSUES LARGEST FINE EVER IN DOG-FIGHTING CASE

A federal judge in Alabama ordered participants in a high-stakes dogfighting operation to pay a record \$2 million in restitution for their animals' care.

U.S. District Judge Keith Watkins imposed the payments in mid-January on people who pleaded guilty in the multi-state case. Officials with the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and the Humane Society of the United States said it was the largest restitution amount ever ordered by federal judge in a dogfighting case. It came after the judge earlier imposed the longest prison sentence ever in a federal dogfighting case.

The restitution will go to the two animal welfare organizations, which provided care for the 451 dogs seized in the case. But

even if all the money is paid, which they doubt, it won't come close to covering the \$5.5 million they reported spending on the dogs' care, including veterinary treatments, housing, food, and retraining to try to make them adoptable pets. The operation involved more than 700 people.

Federal agents raided locations in Alabama, Georgia and Mississippi in August 2013 and seized 367 dogs, nearly all pit bulls. Many were found underfed and attached to heavy chains. Many of the dogs were pregnant and animal welfare groups ended up with 451 dogs by the time the puppies arrived.

In other news in the U.S. ...

- **Republican House leaders** on Jan. 22 — the anniversary of the Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* decision — voted to permanently forbid federal funds for most abortion coverage and block tax credits for many people and employers who buy abortion coverage under President Barack Obama's health care overhaul. The day before, the leadership abruptly postponed debate on another anti-abortion bill after a revolt by female GOP members.
- **Idaho's wolf population** has dropped to levels where the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service says it again may require protection under the Endangered Species Act. The announcement comes four years after Congress attached a rider to a spending bill to remove federal protections for wolves in the state. The population may be as low as 550 individuals with 15 breeding pairs, according to the Center for Biological Diversity.
- **The "Run, Warren, Run" campaign** to draft U.S. Sen. Elizabeth Warren into the 2016 presidential race has moved into New Hampshire, traditionally the site of the first-in-the-nation primary. MoveOn.org and Democracy for America are leading the drive.
- **The NRA** is suing Pennsylvania cities over gun-control measures, alleging Philadelphia, Pittsburgh and Lancaster "openly defied" a 40-year-old state law prohibiting municipalities from regulating firearms.
- **Kentucky state Sen. C.B. Embry Jr.**, a right-wing Republican, has filed legislation that would allow students to recover \$2,500 in damages from schools where transgender students can use restrooms, locker rooms or showers that are not designated for their birth gender. In introducing The Kentucky Student Privacy Act, Embry schools should be liable for the "psychological, emotional and physical harm suffered" by students who use the same facilities as transgender students.
- **Alabama state Rep. Patricia Todd**, the state's only openly gay lawmaker, is threatening to expose state politicians who have extramarital affairs but say gay marriage is immoral or bad for children. Todd says she was furious over some of the comments made by some colleagues after they learned gay couples might soon be able to get married in Alabama. She vowed to "out" politicians who cheat on their spouses or have other ethical lapses, but cite family values to oppose gay marriage.
- **A South Carolina judge** on Jan. 28 overturned the convictions of the men known as the Friendship Nine, who were arrested for integrating a whites-only lunch counter in the segregated town of Rock Hill. The men were arrested and sentenced to hard labor in a chain gang 54 years ago.
- **U.S. Reps. Mark Pocan, D-Wis., and Keith Ellison, D-Minn.**, on Jan. 22 introduced a constitutional amendment to guarantee the right to vote for every American. The Pocan-Ellison Right to Vote Amendment would amend the U.S. Constitution to provide all Americans the affirmative right to vote and empower Congress to protect the right. — from AP and *WiG* reports

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Walker proposes \$300-million cut, more freedom to UW system

The Associated Press

Gov. Scott Walker's plan to give the University of Wisconsin System more freedom would allow it to impose unchecked tuition increases that could price students out of college, one of the system's toughest critics and student leaders said.

Walker's proposal would strip the system of \$300 million in funding — in addition to the \$250 million that the governor slashed from the system four years ago. In exchange, he would give more autonomy to the governor-appointed Board of Regents, which oversees the system's 26 campuses, on a wide range of issues, including raising tuition without Legislative approval starting in 2017.

Walker, who's mulling a 2016 presidential bid, proposed the plan as he struggles to resolve a projected \$2 billion deficit in the 2015-2017 budget. The deficit undermines his presidential campaign boasts that he balanced Wisconsin's budget after inheriting a \$3-billion projected deficit.

The Associated Students of Madison, UW-Madison's student government organization, issued a statement saying tuition increases would be inevitable under Walker's plan.

UW System administration needs to

assure students ... that the ... institutions will not increase tuition as a way to absorb these cuts on the backs of students after this budget," ASM vice chair Derek Field said.

UW System President Ray Cross has acknowledged each institution will feel the \$300 million cut but contends more autonomy is an opportunity to operate more efficiently. System leaders believe it's in no one's interest to "simply jack up" tuition, Cross said in an email to The Associated Press.

Under the plan, system leaders would control employee salaries, tenure and procurement contracts, among other things. Future state funding would come through a block grant fueled by sales tax revenue with annual increases tied to inflation. Right now, the state money that goes to the system is a combination of different taxes. The governor and Legislature set the payout amount during budget negotiations every two years.

Walker wants to keep a tuition freeze that the Legislature imposed last year in place until 2017. Then lawmakers would have no ability to limit increases. The system had raised tuition 5.5 percent each of the six years leading up to the freeze.

Oxfam: Richest 1 percent sees share of wealth jump

The combined wealth of the richest 1 percent will overtake that of the other 99 percent of people next year unless the current trend of rising inequality is checked, according to an analysis from Oxfam International.

Oxfam's study was released on Jan. 19, in advance of the annual World Economic Forum meeting in Davos, Switzerland.

The international agency, whose executive director Winnie Byanyima co-chaired the Davos event, warned in a statement that the explosion in wealth inequality is holding back the fight against global poverty. Oxfam reported that one in nine people do not have enough to eat and more than a billion people live on less than \$1.25 a day.

Byanyima called for urgent action to stem the rising tide of inequality, starting with a crackdown on tax dodging by corporations and pushing for progress toward a global deal on climate change.

"Do we really want to

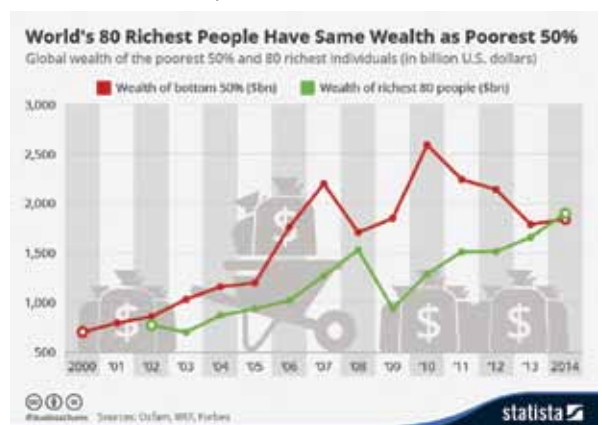
live in a world where the 1 percent own more than the rest of us combined?" she asked. "The scale of global inequality is quite simply staggering and despite the issues shooting up the global agenda, the gap between the richest and the rest is widening fast."

The study shows that the wealthiest 1 percent in the world have seen their share of global riches increase from 44 percent in 2009 to 48 percent in 2014. At the present rate, their share will be more than 50 percent

in 2016. Members of what Oxfam described as the "global elite" had an average wealth of \$2.7 million per adult in 2014.

Of the remaining 52 percent of global wealth, 46 percent is owned by the rest of the richest fifth of the world's population. The other 80 percent share just 5.5 percent and had an average wealth of \$3,851 per adult — that's 1/700th of the average wealth of the 1 percent.

— Lisa Neff





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Wisconsin LGBT Chamber of Commerce

EDITORIALS

Plan to drug test the poor is senseless

Gov. Scott Walker and his fellow Wisconsin Republicans threw some red meat to their tea party supporters with a proposal to require recipients of public aid to pass drug tests. The law, which Walker touted during his gubernatorial campaign, is certain to pass the GOP-controlled Legislature. It will apply to people who receive food stamps, jobless benefits and public health care.

The hypocrisy of the drug-testing proposal is impossible to justify.

Walker said the bill would include providing free drug treatment and job training for those who test positive for drugs but failed to say how he'd pay for those services, indicating that part of the plan has not been thought through seriously. We fear it will never materi-

alize, because it would take the edge off the kick that some people on the far right would get from the legislation.

We have multiple objections to the proposal, beginning with its focus on the poor. What about the millions of other recipients of taxpayer dollars, including elected officials, public workers and government contractors? The latter can do a lot of damage to the state working under the influence of drugs. Consider, for instance, engineers in charge of major public works, such as bridges and highway overpasses. We should be more concerned about the possibility of mind-altering substances floating around in their bloodstreams than those of the poor.

Maybe drug use could explain how tens of millions of taxpayer dollars

vanished from the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation. People who are handling such massive sums of taxpayer dollars without financial controls in place can inflict a lot of harm if they're not able to think clearly.

Targeting the poor for drug testing is not only discriminatory, it's also degrading and useless. Let's say some welfare recipients are caught using drugs and their insufficient safety nets are taken away as punishment. What would happen to them? What would happen to our communities?

Putting drug users out on the street with no money, no health care and no place to live does not sound like a good plan for anyone.

Survey: MPD is failing at public relations

Successful community policing is built on positive relationships between law-enforcement officials and the public. So the results of a recent ACLU of Wisconsin survey about attitudes among Milwaukeeans toward the police are concerning.

Milwaukeeans who live in heavily patrolled black and Latino neighborhoods and who have had contact with the police are less likely to trust law enforcement than people who haven't had contact with officers. The survey's subjects were primarily 14 to 24 years

old.

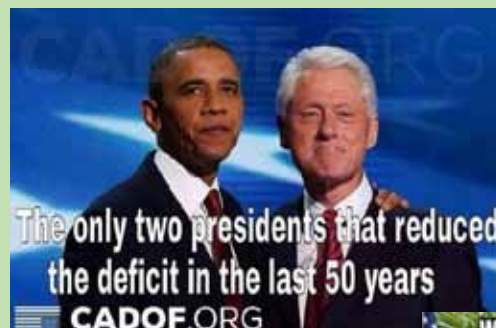
Survey respondents who've had contact with officers are less likely to think that calling the police is helpful or to assist with an investigation. Even survey respondents who said they've had significant contact with police that wasn't negative said they were less likely to alert police to a crime or help solve it.

ACLU of Wisconsin executive director Chris Ahmuty said the sheer volume of officer-initiated stops — 243,328 (in 2013) in a city of about 600,000

people — could be undermining the public's trust in Milwaukee police.

We agree with Ahmuty that the goals of community-policing programs are not being served by MPD's aggressive program of targeted stops — neither the volume of stops nor the way they're being handled. If MPD hopes to curb the terrible crime rates in some minority neighborhoods, leaders in the department need to rethink and refine the program.

WiG's WEB PICKS



Some of our favorite recent pictorials from cyberspace



ON THE RECORD



“Please forgive the brevity, but because of my limitations I have to keep this short. I did not die. I did not go to heaven. I said I went to heaven because I thought it would get me attention.

— ALEX MALARKEY, a 10-year-old quadriplegic, recanting his story about dying and going to heaven in an open letter to Christian bookstores asking that they stop selling his hit book *The Boy Who Came Back From Heaven*.

“When I heard this, frankly, I choked on my porridge and I thought it must be April Fools Day. This guy is clearly a complete idiot.”

— BRITISH PRIME MINISTER DAVID CAMERON responding to a Fox News’ commentator’s statement that English people won’t go to the city of Birmingham, England, because it’s been taken over by Muslims.

“We changed the name because the Constitution covers our most basic rights, including civil and human rights.”

— U.S. SEN. CHUCK GRASSLEY, R-Iowa, who chairs the Senate Judiciary Committee, explaining why Republicans dropped the terms “civil rights” and “human rights” from the name of the subcommittee formerly known as the Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights and Human Rights. It’s now called the Subcommittee on the Constitution.

“I’m one of those Republicans who thinks we are getting warmer and that we contribute to that.”

— MITT ROMNEY, former Republican presidential candidate, speaking to a sold-out crowd of about 3,000 at an investment management conference in Salt Lake City.

“I’ve got a master’s degree in taking on the big government special interests, and I think that is worth more than anything else that anybody can point to.”

— GOV. SCOTT WALKER speaking with radio host Hugh Hewitt about the value of his experience working in government for almost his entire adult life. Walker dropped out of Marquette University and never completed a bachelor’s degree.

“As I watched the speech last night, Sean, the thought going through my mind is, ‘I owe America a global apology.’ Because John McCain, through all of this, John McCain should be our president.”

— SARAH PALIN, former GOP vice presidential candidate, acknowledging to Fox News’ Sean Hannity after President Barack Obama’s State of the Union address that she’s responsible for Sen. John McCain’s 2008 loss.

“Stephane Charbonnier, the paper’s publisher, was killed today in the slaughter. It is too bad that he didn’t understand the role he played in his tragic death. In 2012, when asked why he insults Muslims, he said, ‘Muhammad isn’t sacred to me.’ Had he not been so narcissistic, he may still be alive.”

— BILL DONOHUE, Catholic League president, commenting on the killing of 12 people at *Charlie Hebdo*.



‘Right to work’ is a step backward for workers

Opinion

JAMAKAYA

Republican politicians, their corporate patrons and their cheerleaders on hate radio are gearing up to push “right to work” legislation on Wisconsin.

Everyone deserves the right to work. Sounds pretty good, doesn’t it?

Not.

“Right to work” is another perverse construction from the people who apply the euphemism “wise use” to environmental destruction and “class warfare” to appeals for economic justice.

“Right to work” laws are another kick to the guts of the already-reeling labor movement, and attacks on labor unions are attacks on all working people, including you and me.

Union members are the folks whose blood, sweat and persistence over many generations won us all the right to collective bargaining, eight-hour workdays, weekends off (what a con-

cept!), occupational safety regulations, workers’ compensation and child labor laws. None of these reforms would have been achieved without the power of organized labor.

Gov. Scott Walker’s Act 10 dealt a strong blow to public employee unions and the GOP-controlled Legislature is now poised to push “right to work.” Here’s what you need to know about this legislation in a nutshell:

When the majority of employees in a workplace vote to form a union to represent them in negotiations with management, all employees are required to pay to cover the expenses of that representation.

This is only fair because all employees — even those who don’t like unions — benefit from the higher wages, improved working conditions and other advantages that result from collective bargaining. If a worker is fired and thinks he got a raw deal, for example, his union pays for the legal representation to appeal that firing.

“Right to work” legislation allows individual work-

ers to opt out of paying union dues despite the services their unions provide for them. It undermines the financial viability of unions and the entire concept of unions. That’s why “right to work” is so strongly supported by Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce and other business groups. They’re working overtime — and without time-and-a-half pay — to push the legislation with the help of their many front groups and their talk radio shills.

“Right to work” campaigns use the brutally effective corporate tactic of divide and conquer to destroy worker solidarity and to cripple the ability of unions to stand up to management.

This affects us all, because organized labor may be the only countervailing force to the excesses of unrestrained capitalism.

This is not Marxist rhetoric — the struggle is real. You can see it worldwide in the race to the bottom engaged in by huge corporations that make increasingly exorbitant profits by

squeezing workers with the lowest possible wages. You can see it in secret trade agreements that exempt corporations from taxes, environmental regulations and the most elemental labor standards.

Proponents claim “right to work” will encourage job growth and prosperity. In fact, “right to work” laws drag down the wages and working conditions of all workers. In states with “right to work” laws, there is a higher percentage of jobs in low-wage occupations than there is in non-“right to work” states. On average, workers in “right to work” states make about \$5,000 less than workers in states without such laws. There are higher rates of poverty, and the rate of workplace deaths is a whopping 36 percent higher in states with “right to work” laws.

If you would rather not see Wisconsin become the “Mississippi of the North,” contact your state legislators and the governor’s office today to say “no” to “right to work” legislation.

Wisconsin fights back against ‘Citizens United’

Opinion

MATTHEW ROTHSCHILD

Jan. 21 marked the fifth anniversary of *Citizens United* and Wisconsinites are fighting back against that awful U.S. Supreme Court decision as never before.

In the 5-4 decision, conservatives on the court ruled that corporations are persons and money is speech, and therefore corporations, unions and other associations can spend as much as they want on their candidates.

The results have been disastrous for our democracy. Outside spending in federal races quadrupled in 2012 to a staggering \$1 billion. And get this: About 60 percent of that came from just 195 individuals and their spouses.

It didn’t even come from the top 1 percent. It came from the top 0.01 percent.

This is not democracy.

This is plutocracy.

Here in Wisconsin, we’ve seen the pernicious effect of *Citizens United* as the Koch brothers have spent \$5.5 million in our state, not only helping Scott Walker but knocking out two Keno-sha school board members.

The school privatizers spent \$850,000 to elect Republicans to the state Legislature last fall.

And mining company Gogebic Taconite sent \$700,000 to the Republican Party of Wisconsin during the recalls. It was a good investment, since the Republicans subsequently rammed through a bill that was partially written by GTac and gave the company all it wanted.

This is blatant corruption. We all pay the price when the environment that we treasure gets wrecked, when our public schools get destroyed and when unions get busted — pushing down wages and workplace safety.

There’s a scene in the documentary *As Goes Janesville*

in which Diane Hendricks, the billionaire co-founder of ABC Supply in Beloit, urged Walker to make Wisconsin a “right-to-work” state. She gave the Republican Party of Wisconsin \$1 million last fall after Judge Rudolph Randa, relying on *Citizens United*, threw out the \$10,000 limit that any individual could give in one political season. Randa’s decision also prompted a liberal Milwaukee philanthropist to give \$1 million to the Democratic Party of Wisconsin.

Citizens United has reduced the vast majority of Americans to mere bystanders.

But Wisconsinites are not standing for it. In 54 villages, towns, cities and counties, they have voted by overwhelming margins to overturn *Citizens United* and to amend the U.S. Constitution to state, unequivocally, that corporations are not persons and money is not speech.

From Douglas County to the city of Elkhorn, from Eau

Claire County to the city of Waukesha, Wisconsinites have been rising up.

And we are not alone. Citizens have made this happen in about 600 places around the country, including 16 states.

Wisconsin has a chance to join that list of states.

Two weeks ago, state Assemblywoman Lisa Subeck introduced a bill to bring a statewide referendum to the people, asking Wisconsinites whether we want to amend the U.S. Constitution to get rid of the falsehoods that corporations are persons and money is speech.

As Subeck said, “The Supreme Court effectively sold our democracy to the highest bidder.”

We need to take our democracy off the auction block and return it to the people. Amending the U.S. Constitution is the way to go.

Matthew Rothschild is the executive director of the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign at wisdc.org.

REGIONAL BRIEFS



ENVIRONMENTALISTS ANGRY OVER WALKER'S INTENT TO SUE EPA

The Associated Press

Environmentalists are balking at Republican Gov. Scott Walker's plans to sue the federal government over new limits on power plants' carbon emissions. He announced during his State of the State address that he's working with Attorney General Brad Schimel on a lawsuit challenging the emissions limits.

Environmental supporters charge that Walker is ignoring climate change to endear himself to tea party voters as he mulls a presidential bid. Walker has been working to paint himself as a reformer who opposes big government and government regulations since he won re-election in November.

The governor claims that government efforts to lower carbon emissions would result in soaring electric bills as utilities spend billions to comply and threaten the state's manufacturing sector.

But Walker and the state's Republican leadership have enacted policies that discourage development of clean, alternative energy sources, such as solar and wind. The fossil fuel industry has funneled millions into Walker's campaign coffers.

Shahla Werner, the Sierra Club's Wisconsin chapter director, said the announcement of Walker's lawsuit was disappointing but not surprising given his presidential aspirations. She said warnings of excessive compliance costs and job loss are overblown. Moving to more renewable energy sources will create local jobs and reduce health ail-

ments such as asthma over the long run, she said.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in June announced specific carbon dioxide emissions targets for all states as part of its effort to reduce pollutants blamed for global warming. The agency expects to issue finalized rules this summer.

The plan for Wisconsin calls for lowering emissions to 1,203 pounds per megawatt-hour of energy produced by 2030, down 34 percent from the 1,827 pounds of emissions in 2012, according to the EPA.

Walker sent a letter to the EPA in December arguing that compliance with the limits could cost as much as \$13.4 billion in Wisconsin alone, sending electric rates climbing by as much as 29 percent.

"(Walker) argues against anything the federal government proposes. I really think this is the playbook, and you have to follow the script if you run for president," Werner said. "They're crying like the sky is falling when in actuality we can do this pretty easily."

The Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters said Walker is in denial about climate change, saying he was "trying to score political points with his polluting allies by putting his national ambitions ahead of what's right for Wisconsin."

In other regional news ...

• **A group of business leaders** opposed to making Wisconsin a so-called right-to-work state announced 50 new members in mid-January. Meanwhile, Republican Senate Majority Leader Scott Fitzgerald said any debate over the right-to-work legislation likely won't happen before the April 7 election.

• **A Republican debate** for the 2016 presidential candidates will be held in Wisconsin. The *Wisconsin State Journal* reported that the debate — one of nine planned — will be in November, but the Republican National Committee didn't immediately announce a location.

• **Wisconsin lawmakers** may consider this session bills to curb the amount of plastic pollution affecting area waters. Evidence shows plastic microbeads getting into the Great Lakes, according to the Clean Wisconsin environmental group. The plastic microbeads are added to body scrubs, toothpastes and other products. Because of their size, they can work through water treatment

systems and into waterways and aquatic life, as well as human bodies.

• **Wisconsin Democratic Party chairman Mike Tate** will not seek another term when his contract expires on June 6. "I've got a 3-year-old and I feel it's the best decision for my family," he said. The job "places an undue burden on my wife, because I'm gone so many nights during the week. When it's time to move on, I think you know."

• **Smoking in Wisconsin** annually costs \$3 billion in health care expenses and \$1.62 billion in lost productivity, according to the 2015 "Burden of Tobacco in Wisconsin" study by UWM's Center for Urban Initiatives and Research. The total cost of \$4.62 billion marks an increase of \$100 million from the last "Burden" report released in 2010.

• **School administrators** have raised concerns over Gov. Scott Walker's plan to create a new pathway for people with "real-life experience" to get licensed to teach in Wisconsin. His plan would allow teachers to forego collegiate-level education courses and permit those with a bachelor's degree who can demonstrate proficiency in the areas they want to teach to be licensed. "We've got some significant concerns about its philosophical underpinning," said John Forester, lobbyist for the School Administrators Alliance, adding that evidence shows high-quality preparation for teachers is what really matters for schoolchildren.

• **Wisconsin wildlife officials** say a deadly bat disease has spread into Dane County. State Department of Natural Resources officials announced that swabs taken from two eastern pipistrelles from a single cave in November tested positive for the white-nose syndrome fungus.

• **The Wisconsin State Assembly** has voted to make the act of secretly taking a photo of someone's genitals, buttocks or breasts a felony. In a voice vote, the Assembly approved a bill that would make what is known as "upskirting" a Class I felony. That is punishable by up to three and a half years in prison. The offense is currently handled as an invasion of privacy in Wisconsin courts. That is a misdemeanor that carries up to nine months in jail as a penalty.

— from WiG and AP reports

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COMMUNITY BRIEFS

DIVERSE & RESILIENT ANNOUNCES LEADERSHIP AWARDS

Diverse & Resilient recently announced the recipients of the group's LGBT Leadership Awards — honors presented to individuals and organizations "who have demonstrated leadership in improving the health and well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people in the state of Wisconsin."

Leonard Sobczak was named the recipient of the Bayard Rustin Leadership Award in recognition of "his longstanding commitment to LGBT wellness, environmental issues and civic and political causes. Sobczak is a quiet yet strong force for change and he leads as an out gay man."

Sobczak is the president-principal of Eastmore Real Estate Management, Inc. and the president/CEO of the *Wisconsin Gazette*. He is vice president of the Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters. He also chaired the Milwaukee Fire and Police Commission and served on the Wisconsin Transportation Projects Commission.

Sobczak organized the investment group that purchased the warehouse that became the Broadway Theater Center, a catalyst that spurred development in Milwaukee's Third Ward. After being outed nationally in an AP photo taken at the 1993 March on Washington, Sobczak organized a public Milwaukee coming-out event and wrote an article for the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* about the transformative effect of being publicly outed.

Diverse & Resilient said Sobczak has "made lasting contributions to nonprofits in the health and environmental sectors. He is a longstanding board member at Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters and has served on Diverse and Resilient's board since the agency's inception."

The award is named for Bayard Rustin, a leader in the civil rights movement.

Other leadership awards include:

- Youth Leadership Award, Joshua-Paul Miles, student.
- Young Adult Leadership Award, Austin Kieler, student.
- Adult Leadership Award, Chris Ahmuty, executive director, American Civil Liberties Union of Wisconsin.
- Acceptance Journeys Award, Melissa Bollow-Tempel, editor at *Rethinking Schools* and educator at Milwaukee Public Schools.
- LGBT Sustainability Award, Proud Theater.
- LGBT Staff Award, Kathy Flores, diversity and inclusion coordinator for the city of Appleton.
- Community Partner Award, AIDS Resource Center of

Wisconsin.

The awards will be presented at "Reviving the Dream" on March 19 at Discovery World at Pier Wisconsin.

MEDICAL COLLEGE TO STUDY USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKS TO ENGAGE PEOPLE WITH HIV

The Medical College of Wisconsin has received a three-year, \$675,000 grant from the National Institutes of Health's National Institute of Mental Health to explore the use of social networks to engage people living with HIV infection who have not sought treatment or who have ceased seeking medical care.

The second phase of the research will determine the efficacy of social networks for intervention strategies.

Nearly half of the 1 million Americans living with HIV are not in medical care. The use of antiretroviral medications suppresses the viral load, which results not only in better health for patients with HIV, but reduces the spread of the virus. Currently there is no successful strategy to reach these people and connect them to care options.

In other community news ...

▪ **The Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network** sponsored "No Name-Calling Week" Jan. 19-23 to raise awareness of the climate of intolerance in the nation's schools. GLSEN says 65 percent of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students report regularly hearing homophobic remarks from other students and more than half have heard negative remarks about sexual orientation and gender expression from school staff.

▪ **Helen Boyd**, the author of *My Husband Betty* in 2003 and *She's Not the Man I Married* in 2007, will speak at Lawrence University 6:30-8:30 p.m. on Feb. 18 for PFLAG of Appleton's first meeting of the year. The event is free and open to the public.

— from AP reports



PHOTO: DOWNY WOODPECKER COURTESY CHARLIE PRINCE

LOVE BIRDS? The 18th annual Great Backyard Bird Count takes place nationwide Feb. 13-16. Information gathered from the citizen-science effort helps track changes in bird populations on a massive scale. Tens of thousands of volunteers participate each year, spending at least 15 minutes on one or more days counting the birds in their yard and reporting the sightings on BirdCount.org. The Cornell Lab of Ornithology, National Audubon Society and Bird Studies Canada partner on the project.

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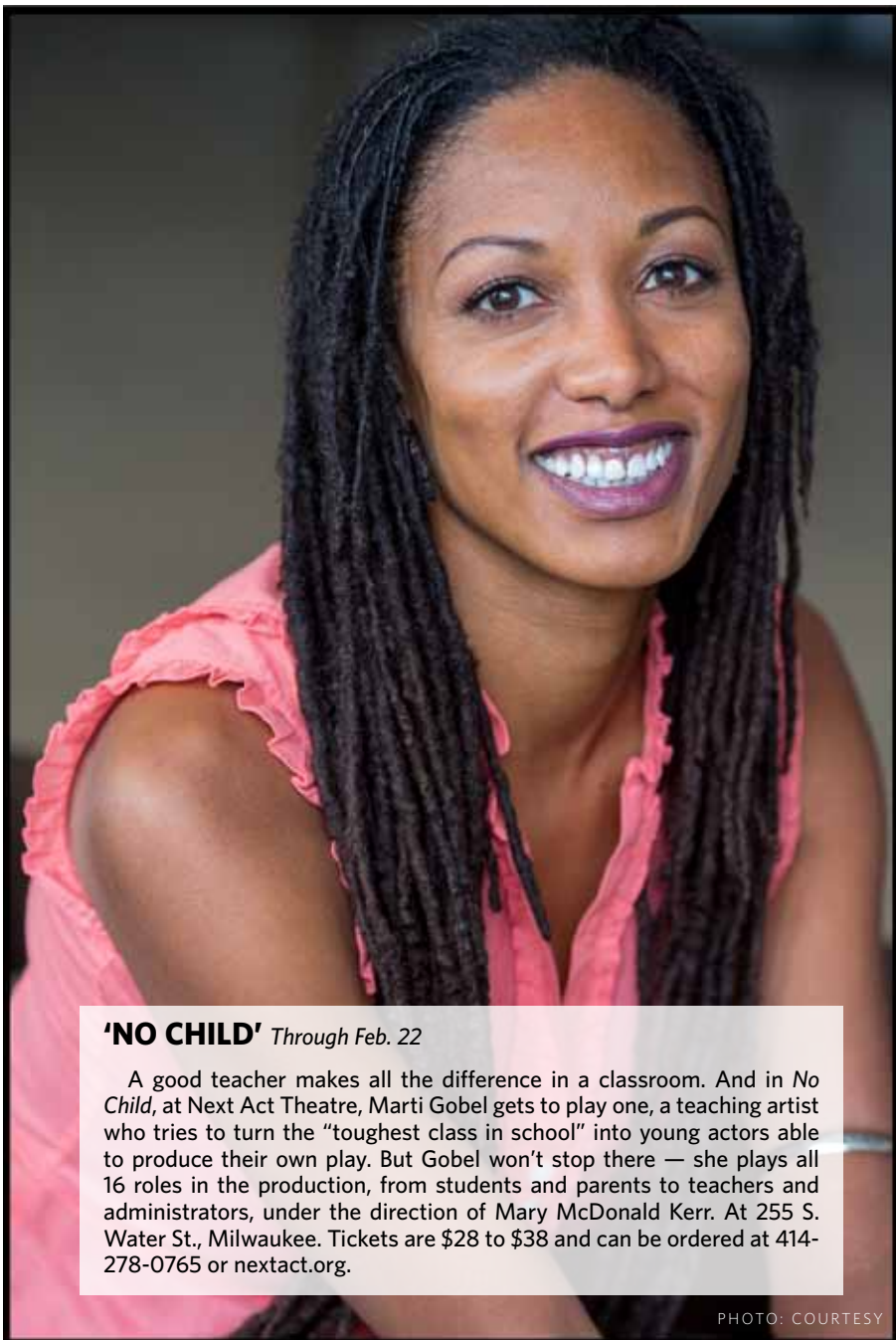
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➤ out on the town *Jan. 29 - Feb. 12*

A curated calendar of upcoming events



'NO CHILD' *Through Feb. 22*

A good teacher makes all the difference in a classroom. And in *No Child*, at Next Act Theatre, Marti Gobel gets to play one, a teaching artist who tries to turn the "toughest class in school" into young actors able to produce their own play. But Gobel won't stop there — she plays all 16 roles in the production, from students and parents to teachers and administrators, under the direction of Mary McDonald Kerr. At 255 S. Water St., Milwaukee. Tickets are \$28 to \$38 and can be ordered at 414-278-0765 or nextact.org.

PHOTO: COURTESY

'ONCE ON THIS ISLAND'

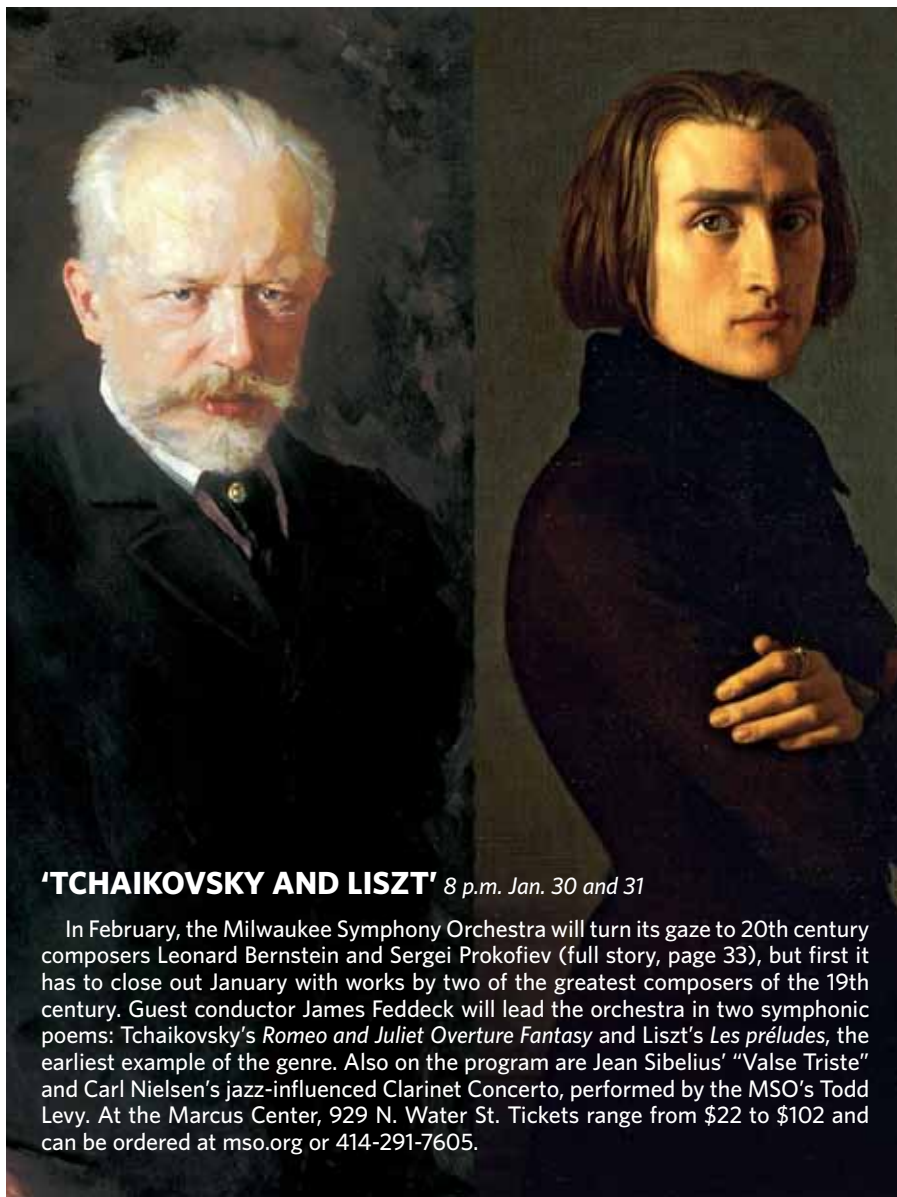
Jan. 30 to Feb. 22

In *Once On This Island*, an 80-minute epic inspired by *Romeo and Juliet* and "The Little Mermaid," the Skylight depicts a forbidden love between two members of opposing social classes, with enchanting, Caribbean-influenced music from the duo responsible for creating *Ragtime*. Better still, this production features a near-entirely local cast of actors, and marks the return of former Skylight artistic director Bill Theisen (full story, page 37). At the Broadway Theatre Center, 158 N. Broadway, Milwaukee. Tickets range from \$23 to \$64 and can be purchased at 414-291-7800 or skylightmusictheatre.org.

THE COMEDIC RELEASE SHOW, VOL. 4

8 p.m. Jan. 30

There's a comedy show of some sort almost every day in Milwaukee, but by its very nature, the medium's an ephemeral one, with comedians performing gigs and departing without much record of their presence. The *Comedic Release Show* is Milwaukee's exception, the only local show recorded live for distribution after the fact. The first three installments of the series saw packed houses, so it's likely this fourth recording session/performance will be equally popular, a boon for its eight local stand-up artists. At the Underground Collaborative, 161 W. Wisconsin Ave. Tickets are \$5 and can be purchased at milwaukeeecomed.com.



'TCHAIKOVSKY AND LISZT' *8 p.m. Jan. 30 and 31*

In February, the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra will turn its gaze to 20th century composers Leonard Bernstein and Sergei Prokofiev (full story, page 33), but first it has to close out January with works by two of the greatest composers of the 19th century. Guest conductor James Feddeck will lead the orchestra in two symphonic poems: Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet Overture Fantasy* and Liszt's *Les préludes*, the earliest example of the genre. Also on the program are Jean Sibelius' "Valse Triste" and Carl Nielsen's jazz-influenced Clarinet Concerto, performed by the MSO's Todd Levy. At the Marcus Center, 929 N. Water St. Tickets range from \$22 to \$102 and can be ordered at mso.org or 414-291-7605.

PHOTO: COURTESY

The MSO will perform symphonic poems by Tchaikovsky (left) and Liszt Jan. 30 and 31.

ADULT SWIM: THE WEDDING ZINGER *6 to 10 p.m. Jan. 30*

Most days of the year, the Madison Children's Museum is all about the kids. But for Adult Swim nights, the museum kicks the under-21 crowd out of the pool for a more "grown-up" evening of fun. So save the date for this wedding-themed event, with a fashion show for wedding dresses, tuxes and bridesmaids dresses; Newlywed and Dating Games; and Mad City Mobile DJ playing the Electric Slide and other wedding party favorites. At 100 N. Hamilton St. Tickets are \$12 and can be ordered at madisonchildrensmuseum.org.

ORCHID QUEST *Jan. 31 and Feb. 1*

Winter bringing you down? Venture out to find Orchid Quest, a two-day celebration of the famously complex and gorgeous plant family hosted by the Madison Orchid Growers Guild. The event will feature orchid displays and various artworks for the more casual orchid lovers, along with vendors and guest speakers for orchid fanatics. At the Marriott Madison West, 1313 John Q. Hammons Drive, Middleton. Admission is \$9, \$14 for a two-day pass. Visit orchid-guild.org for more details.

Out on the town



PHOTO: LIONSGATE

Tessa Thompson stars as biracial student filmmaker and radio host Sam White in *Dear White People*.

'DEAR WHITE PEOPLE'

7 p.m. Feb. 4

Film debuts aren't expected to be as explosive as *Dear White People*, but in choosing to make a satire about the intersection of elite higher education and racial identity in the modern era, writer and director Justin Simien wasn't likely to get any other result. Yet this story of four different African-American students isn't just controversial, it's a great film in its own right — one that'll make you laugh even as it proves its value in our not-yet-post-racial society. UW-Milwaukee will screen the film as the first part of its 10th Annual African-American Film Series, with a post-screening discussion. At UWM Union Theatre, 2200 E. Kenwood Blvd., Room 323. Admission is free. Visit uwm.edu/union/union_theatre for more information.

'INSPIRING BEAUTY'

Feb. 5 to May 3

A gorgeous dress can be stunning. So a gallery full of them can be exponentially more so. Or so hopes the Milwaukee Art Museum, which will be making up for its lack of access to the permanent collection with this breathtaking exhibit that displays outfits and images from 50 years of the influential *Ebony* Fashion Fair. The multisensory display will include haute couture ensembles by designers like Christian Dior, Patrick Kelly and Vivienne Westwood, which helped redefine beauty and empower black women across the nation. At 700 N. Art Museum Drive. Entrance is included in museum admission: \$14, \$12 for students, seniors and active military and free for kids under 12, K-12 educators and museum members. Visit mam.org for more information.



PHOTO: INTERNATIONAL ART AND ARTISTS


Alexander McQueen's Fall/Winter 1997-98 Evening Ensemble, for Givenchy, is one of the many outfits appearing from 50 years of the *Ebony* Fashion Fair at MAM's *Inspiring Beauty* exhibition.

'WINTERDANCES' Feb. 5 to 8

The UW-Milwaukee Dance department will pay homage to postmodern dancer Trisha Brown in their annual *Winterdances* concert, when they restage her famous work, *Set and Reset*. Directed by former Trisha Brown Dance Company member Melinda Myers, the performance serves as the focal point of a yearlong research project on Brown's creative ideas, and will feature student dancers collaborating with visual art and design professor Leslie Vansen. Works by faculty Simone Ferro, Luc Vanier and Darci Wutz will also be on the program. At UWM's Mainstage Theatre, 2400 E. Kenwood Blvd. Tickets are \$17, \$15 for seniors and UWM staff, \$8 for students. Visit arts.uwm.edu/tickets or call 414-229-4308 to order.


'REPERTORY I' Feb. 6 and 7

The Madison Ballet's first contemporary show of the season will pack four diverse works into the intimate Bartell Theatre. On tap are a bolero-influenced ballet, an avant-garde analysis of the male/female gaze, an intense and minimalist exploration of human emotions and tribulations, and *Nuoto* ("swimming" in Italian), artistic director W. Earle Smith's lighthearted world premiere ballet. At 113 E. Mifflin St. Tickets are \$30, \$25 for children under 12 and seniors. Call 608-278-7990 or visit madisonballet.org to purchase.




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PHOTO: DICK BLAU

'POLKA HEARTLAND' Jan. 31 to March 29

Polka is as Wisconsin as beer or cheese, but it's not a trademark that always gets the respect it deserves. Under the lens of photographer Dick Blau, that changes. His series of 30 photographs depicting present-day performers and dancers are anything but dated, embodying the live, vibrant energy of the polka culture they depict. Saturday's opening will additionally feature a polka party right at the Museum of Wisconsin Art itself, with live polka music by the Squeezettes from 2 to 5 p.m. At 205 Veterans Ave., West Bend. Free with museum membership, \$12 a year. Visit wisconsinart.org for more information.

A curated calendar of upcoming events **Jan. 29 - Feb. 12**

'GENESIS' Feb. 5 to 8

Michael Pink's choreographic competition *Genesis* is the only contemporary program on the Milwaukee Ballet's schedule this year, but it's as contemporary as it gets — inviting three artists at the top of their game to produce three world premiere works. This year's competitors are Riccardo De Nigris, Garrett Smith and Matthew James Tusa, one of whom will be voted the victor and offered a commission to present another world premiere this time next year. At the Pabst Theater, 144 E. Wells St. Tickets range from \$34 to \$103 and can be ordered at 414-902-2103 or milwaukeeballet.org.



'SWEENEY TODD' Feb. 6 to 8

The Demon Barber of Sondheim's revenge epic travels from Fleet Street to State Street this February, the latest masterpiece taken on by the Madison Opera. The show has always straddled the line between musical and operetta, but conductor John DeMain, who introduced *Sweeney Todd* to the opera canon 30 years ago (full story, page 35), will make the company's case for the latter. At Overture Center, 201 State St. Tickets range from \$25 to \$110. Call 608-258-4141 or visit overturecenter.org to order.

WIZARD WORLD Madison Feb. 6 to 8

The Wizard World convention tour has been bringing fandom the pop culture artists and creators they love for years, expanding from a single comics con in Chicago to more than two dozen shows across the country. This year, for the first time, that list includes Madison. There are too many actors, comic book artists and pop culture bigwigs coming to list, but the handful of top-level talent worth squeezing into this blurb — *The Vampire Diaries'* Ian Somerhalder, *Deadpool* creator Rob Liefeld, *Evil* Dead star Bruce Campbell and *True Blood's* Kristin Bauer — is hopefully enough to draw you in for more. At the Alliant Energy Center, 1919 Alliant Energy Center Way, Madison. Admission ranges from \$35 to \$45 for one-day admission, and weekend admission is \$75. Visit wizardworld.com for more information or to order.



PHOTO: COURTESY

'MARTHA GRAHAM: IN HER FOOTSTEPS' Feb. 6 to 8

In the world of modern dance, Martha Graham is the equivalent of a Picasso or Stravinsky: a trailblazing artist who changed the very way we think about her medium. Kanopy Dance is one of the many companies that trains and performs using her methodology (full story, page 31), and their latest concert pays tribute to the artist in multiple ways, including recreating her work for Aaron Copeland's *Appalachian Spring*. At Overture Center, 201 State St., Madison. Tickets are \$14 to \$29 and can be ordered at 608-258-4141 or kanopydance.org.

LYNDEN WINTER CARNIVAL

10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Feb. 7

The grounds of the Lynden Sculpture Garden may not have their summer verdancy, but they're still an exciting, gorgeous place to spend a few hours — and never more so than during their annual Winter Carnival. This year's extravaganza will feature an interactive sculptural event by visiting artist Claire Ashley, guerrilla movie-making with Wes Tank and a *Winter Forest* created by artist-in-residence Pegi Christiansen in Lynden's "portable think-space" Sightseer, along with other indoor and outdoor art and games. At 2145 W. Brown Deer Road, Milwaukee. Admission is \$9, \$7 for seniors, students and children ages 6 to 17. Visit lydensculpturegarden.org for more information.



NO CHILD

BY NILAJA SUN

JANUARY 29 -
FEBRUARY 22, 2015

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DisH it Over!

Salvatore's brings tomato pies to Madison

By Michael Muckian

Contributing writer

A young Bob Dylan, passing through Madison in the late 1960s, is rumored to have said that the best things about Wisconsin's capital city were its pizza and its Qualudes.

We have no insights into the pharmaceutical side of Dylan's statement, but were he to stop in today at Salvatore's Tomato Pies, he might wonder just how such a good pizza scene has gotten so much better.

The original Salvatore's was launched in Sun Prairie by former Dane County Supervisor Patrick DePula in October 2011 to rave reviews. His new restaurant at 912 E. Johnson St. barely opened its doors in December

2014 before area residents were waiting up to 90 minutes for DePula's "tomato pies" — as they call pizzas in Chambersburg, the Italian neighborhood of Trenton, New Jersey, where DePula grew up.

DePula takes a stylized Neapolitan approach to what has become America's most highly commoditized food product. Fans of cracker-crust collections of vegetable bits and meat byproducts capped by a half-inch of gooey mozzarella cheese would do better to look elsewhere.

A member of the relatively new Madison Area Chef Network (a loose organization of 50-odd Madison chefs designed to foster community and collaboration), DePula draws on fresh produce from local providers

in making his pies. He favors quality over quantity, and emphasizes a broad flavor palate that showcases ingredients.

On any given night, cooks at Salvatore's are seen hand-tossing crusts made from un-bromated flour. The vegetable toppings are locally grown, as are the heirloom tomatoes used to make DePula's sauce. Sausage and pesto are made in-house.

The double storefront on East Johnson Street, home to several other pizza restaurants before Salvatore's, has an attractive, contemporary dining room that seats about 30. Weekend traffic has already gotten so large that the Johnson Public House, located next door, is allowing diners to bring Salvatore's pizza inside to eat.

Knowing that, we chose the takeout option one recent Friday, arriving at 4 p.m. to order our pies. The pair took 20 minutes to make, during which time we enjoyed craft beers pulled from two of about eight taps. The restaurant also has an extensive bottled beer selection, as well as wines and soft drinks.

The backbone of Salvatore's menu is the tomato pie itself, a customizable 12- or 16-inch pizza that features an extensive menu of vegetables, fruits, cheeses and proteins, including organic eggs. The tomato sauce is created using a 100-year-old family recipe, and the crust is made from locally grown wheat. DePula's even

PIES next page



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PHOTO: DANIELLE CHAVIANO

Salvatore's pies can sometimes go by fanciful names, like their "Kim Jong Ill'n," featuring Acadian redfish, ssamjang (a spicy Korean dipping sauce), shiitake mushrooms, carrots, radishes and cilantro.



PIES from prior page

offered a variety of dietary alternatives on the list, for vegans as well as the gluten-intolerant or dairy avoiders.

But despite all that promise, we picked two of the seven specialty pies offered by Salvatore's, a decision difficult in its own right given the flavorful ingredients and unique combinations.

We could have ordered the Forestiere (\$14 for a 12-inch, \$23 for a 16-inch), which features thinly sliced onions, bacon lardons, crème fraiche, Pleasant Ridge Reserve artisanal cheese, fresh thyme and local mushrooms. We also considered the Carbonara (\$14/\$23), topped with Farmer John's colby caliente, mozzarella, mushrooms, Neuske's bacon, scallions, three soft-cooked organic eggs and finished with fresh arugula.

But ultimately, we opted for the Vegetarian (\$13/\$22), topped with roasted beet pesto, kale, goat cheese, parsley and red wine reduction sauce. We also ordered the popular Fig and Bacon (\$15/\$22), featuring cabernet-poached mission figs, Gorgonzola cheese, balsamic red wine reduction sauce and bacon.

Both pies' minimal ingredients support and showcase the pies' flavor perhaps more than a greater number would have. In the case of Salvatore's pies, less is indeed more.

With the Vegetarian, the pesto did little to mute the beets' natural sweetness,

but the reduced content favored by the Neapolitan approach never allowed it to overwhelm the pie. The crisp, somewhat woody kale and brighter parsley flavors were well matched, providing a multi-dimensional vegetal undercurrent that also helped frame the piquant goat cheese.

The same subtlety of approach showed up in the Fig and Bacon. The figs' natural sweetness, enhanced by their red-wine poaching, was a strong counterpoint to the smoky bacon and the savory Gorgonzola.

In both cases, the red wine reduction sauce served to make the flavor palette cohesive, and the slightly puffy crusts were equally superb.

In addition to pies, Salvatore's also offers appetizers, gelato and even three kinds of tacos, all made with the same locally sourced ingredients. If they're as good as DePula's pies, then it's clear an East Johnson Street food renaissance may be well underway.

ON THE TABLE

Salvatore's Tomato Pies is located at 912 E. Johnson St. on Madison's near-east side. The restaurant is open Tuesday-Thursday, 4-10 p.m., Friday-Saturday, 4-11 p.m. Call 608-238-6040 or visit salvatorestomatopies.com.

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Bipartisan effort seeks to ban powdered alcohol in Wisconsin

By Dana Ferguson
AP writer

Powdered alcohol may be banned in Wisconsin before the product, known as Palcohol, ever hits store shelves.

Wisconsin Sen. Tim Carpenter, a Democrat from Milwaukee, said he hopes to enact a ban before Palcohol becomes available this spring.

"The potential for abuse outweighs quite heavily the need for that type of product," Carpenter said. "It would just make life a lot less complicated if we just didn't go there."

Carpenter said he will seek co-sponsorship from Senate Health and Human Services Committee Chairwoman Sen. Leah Vukmir, a Republican from Wauwatosa. Vukmir said she had not seen a draft of the bill as of mid-January.

Mark Phillips, the owner of the Arizona-based company Palcohol, said on the company's website that he created the product to avoid lugging liquor bottles on hiking trips. The 1-ounce powder packets can be stirred into water to make one shot of vodka or rum, or a serving of one of four different cocktails, the website says.

Carpenter said people would likely snort the powder to try to achieve an instant high, could sneak the substance into sporting

events or high school classrooms, or could mistake the powder for something else and ingest it accidentally.

Carpenter said he hopes to avoid the confusion that came when synthetic hallucinogenic drugs referred to as bath salts were first allowed by the state if they were labeled "not for human consumption," then outlawed in 2011. He hopes to act proactively to ban Palcohol before Wisconsinites have the chance to abuse it.

Tavern League of Wisconsin executive director Pete Madland said the organization does not see a need for Palcohol and is supportive of the ban.

"I don't see the upside to it," Madland said. "I see a big downside."

Lynne Barbour, a spokeswoman for Palcohol, said lawmakers fail to see the benefits. She said if properly regulated, Palcohol would not be abused. The product's website says Palcohol could be used on airplanes to reduce liquid weight and maltodextrin — the powder used to absorb alcohol — could be used to make lightweight medicine.

"It confounds us and makes us lose faith in the legislative process that states are banning a product they know nothing about and don't seek to learn about it before making their decisions," Barbour said.

Democratic Sen. Minority Leader Jennifer Shilling, of La Crosse, and Assembly Democratic Leader Peter Barca, of Kenosha, said the bill allows a discussion of the risks associated with powdered alcohol.

Sen. Majority Leader Scott Fitzgerald, R-Juneau, and Assembly Majority Leader Jim Steineke, R-Kaukauna, did not respond to a request for comment.

Kayla Leibl, a medical student at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, said lawmakers should permit Palcohol sales.

"The dangers of Palcohol are hardly different than those of traditional liquid alcohol ... regardless of physical form, alcohol will be abused," Leibl said. "I don't see a problem with marketing it."

Chris Rink, 25, of Madison, said banning powdered alcohol could lead to a black market if the product gained enough demand. But he said he would not seek it out if it was sold in Wisconsin.

"I vastly prefer beer over other types of alcoholic beverages and I do not think beer would translate very well into a powdered format," Rink said.

The bill was expected to be heard by the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services this month.

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Romantic recipes for your Valentine

Looking for something romantic to cook for your partner this Valentine's Day? *WiG* has two possibilities you can set your heart on, one sweet and one savory.

If you've already picked up some roses for the floral portion of the evening, consider turning to them for the dessert course as well. Rosewater, made from the distillation of real rose petals, is an easy way to add a touch of the exotic to your baking. It's a frequent component of Persian, Middle Eastern and Indian dishes, and was even used at the finest bakeries of Paris for years before the vanilla bean nudged it out of contention.

A few drops of rosewater can transform whipped cream or rice pudding from mundane to sublime. Adding it to a strawberry, raspberry or rhubarb dessert immediately evokes the essence of springtime. Rosewater can also be paired with its regional compatriots cardamom and pistachio in a number of desserts, although the simplest is to mix them in with readymade vanilla ice cream at home.

But for Valentine's Day, the sweetest solution is to pair it with a more familiar soul mate, lemon, in these easy shortbread cookies. They're sure to add as much romance to your kitchen as a bouquet, and with less thorns. Just make sure you don't dress them up with rose petals — unless they're of the edible variety, which can be found online or at most Middle Eastern markets.

The simpler of the two recipes, though it might not sound that way at first glance, is mussels. With a pleasantly briny flavor, mussels pair well with clean, simple flavors, such as fresh herbs with melted butter and lightly cooked onions or leeks, or a sauce made from white wine, heavy cream and garlic. But they also can stand up to more robust partners, such as basil pesto or spicy tomato sauces.

And, rumor has it, they're potent aphrodisiacs — if that's the sort of Valentine's treat you're after.

However you dress your mussels, they are a breeze to prepare. We've provided you a slightly more creative option to the right, but if simplicity is what you're after, follow these steps:

Start by washing them under cold water. Next, pull out the "beards," the fibrous strips that stick out from the shells. Meanwhile, in a large pot combine ¼ inch or so of white wine with a generous few tablespoons of melted butter. Bring to a simmer, then add the mussels, cover and cook, shaking the pan frequently, for 3 to 4 minutes, or until the mussels have opened.

Be sure to check on the mussels during cooking. As they open, use a slotted spoon to remove them and set aside while the remaining mussels cook. This prevents those that open first from overcooking. Don't feel like getting fancy with a sauce? The juices left in the pan make a delicious one. Add some fresh herbs and a splash of lemon juice, then pour it over the mussels in serving bowls.

— from *WiG* and AP reports

ROSEWATER SHORTBREAD COOKIES

Start to finish: 1 ½ hours

Makes 18 cookies

½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, room temperature

¼ cup (1 ounce) powdered sugar

2 teaspoons lemon zest

2 teaspoons rosewater

1 cup (4 ¼ ounces) all-purpose flour

Generous pinch of salt

7 ounces white chocolate chips

2 teaspoons vegetable shortening

¼ cup minced raw, unsalted pistachios

2 tablespoons finely chopped dried edible rose petals (optional)

In a large bowl, use an electric mixer to beat butter, powdered sugar, lemon zest and rosewater until smooth and creamy. Add the flour and salt, then beat gently until just combined. Tumble the dough onto a large piece of plastic wrap and form into a disc. Cover with another large piece of plastic wrap and use a rolling pin to roll into a rectangle about ¼ inch thick.

Transfer the dough to a baking sheet and chill in the refrigerator for 20 to 30 minutes.

Heat the oven to 350 F. Line a baking sheet with kitchen parchment.

Remove the top sheet of plastic wrap. Using a 2-inch heart-shaped cookie cutter, cut out as many hearts as possible from the dough. Re-roll dough scraps to cut additional cookies. Transfer the hearts to the baking sheet, leaving 1 inch between them. Bake for 15 minutes, or until golden brown on the bottoms and lightly browned around the edges. Transfer the cookies to a wire rack to cool.

To decorate the cookies, bring a medium saucepan filled with about 1 inch of water to a simmer. Set a medium bowl over it. Add the white chocolate chips and vegetable shortening to the bowl and melt, stirring frequently, until smooth. Remove from heat. In a small bowl, mix together the pistachios and rose petals.

One at a time, dip one side of each cookie into the melted chocolate, allowing any excess to drip off. Before the chocolate on the cookie has time to cool and set, sprinkle it with the pistachio-rose petal mixture. Pause for a few seconds to let it solidify, then place on a wire rack to cool. Store cookies in a single layer in a paper towel-lined airtight container at room temperature.

MUSSELS IN DIJON-ORANGE SAUCE WITH ARUGULA

Start to finish: 30 minutes

Servings: 2

2 pounds mussels

1 cup white wine

2 cloves garlic, minced

¼ cup chopped shallot

Zest and juice of 1 orange

1 tablespoon Dijon mustard

½ teaspoon ground black pepper

3 tablespoons butter

2 tablespoons chopped fresh chives

2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley

2 cups packed baby arugula or watercress

1 red chili, thinly sliced (optional)

Crusty bread, to serve

Scrub the mussels with a coarse brush and remove the beards. Rinse thoroughly.

In a large pot over medium heat, combine the wine, garlic, shallots, orange zest and juice, mustard and black pepper. Bring to a simmer, cover, and cook for about 5 minutes, or until the shallot is tender and the wine is fragrant. Add the mussels and cover, cooking over medium heat for 5 to 6 minutes, or until the mussels open up. Remove the mussels as they open, discarding any that don't.

Stir in the butter until melted, then divide between 2 serving bowls. Top with chives, parsley, arugula and chili slices, if using. Serve hot with hunks of crusty bread.

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The show is free and open to the public. Her art will be on display through March 4, in the 2nd Floor Art Gallery.

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WIGOUT!

By Michael Muckian

Contributing writer

As a student of noted choreographer Martha Graham, Lisa Thurrell learned early the power and grace found in her mentor's works. Now, as the co-artistic director of her own company, Kanopy Dance, Thurrell will recreate that power and grace in Madison.

The company will perform *Martha Graham: In Her Footsteps*, a tribute to the choreographer, who died in 1991, at the Overture Center's Promenade Hall Feb. 6 -Feb. 8.

Thurrell first experienced Graham's influence as a student and dancer with the Martha Graham School of Contemporary Dance and its performance company, based in New York City. She arrived in 1988, when Graham was still alive, to participate in the company's three-year professional training program. After graduation, she stayed until 1995, performing with the Martha Graham Dance Company in the United States and overseas.

"I feel that Graham's work is seminal and very important," Thurrell says. "She created a technique, a way of training and a way of moving and molding the body that is considered the foundation of techniques for the modern dancer."

Thurrell says the modern dance movement owes much of its existence to Graham's influence, both as teacher and choreographer. Acclaimed dancer/choreographers Erick Hawkins, Paul Taylor and Merce Cunningham all danced for Graham at one time before going on to create their own companies and bodies of work, most of which bear the unmistakable Graham stamp.

"We see the moving through space, her strong individual expression and the permission to create all over our dance today," Thurrell says of Graham's influence.

Kanopy dancers are trained by Thurrell and her husband/co-artistic director Robert E. Cleary in Graham's technique, and their concerts this February will showcase those influences. The centerpiece of the show will be selections from the ballet *Appalachian Spring*, a work Graham commissioned from composer Aaron Copland in 1944.

Initially performed as World War II came to a close, the composition, also adapted as an orchestral suite, brought renewed hope and a uniquely American vision to a war-weary public. It earned Copland a Pulitzer Prize for Music and became a cornerstone in Graham's repertoire.

In addition to the Copland ballet, Thurrell has invited guest Miki Orihara, a principal dancer with the Martha Graham Dance Co., to offer her own performance of *Resonance*, a solo dance she created and performed

last year at New York's famed LaMama theater. Pianist Senri Oe, who accompanied Orihara there, will join her for this performance as well.

Kanopy company members will perform three additional works of their own. Thurrell will dance *Miserere* (Have Mercy), an International Bonnie Bird Choreography Award-nominated work that illustrates humankind's struggle to reach the divine. Cleary will premiere a new work created in homage to Graham. And the full company will perform New York choreographer Stanley Love's *Bonewash*.

Kanopy, an Overture Center resident company, began as a dancer's collective in 1976 and has since grown to include the Kanopy Academy for aspiring young dancers and the Kanopy Studio, rehearsal space for 16 different dance and movement groups.

During its time onstage, the performing troupe has brought in dozens of guest artists, created more than 50 original works and commissioned more than a dozen individual compositions.

Madison's Kanopy Dance channels Martha Graham



ON STAGE

Martha Graham: In Her Footsteps will be presented by Kanopy Dance Co. Feb. 6-Feb. 8 at Overture Center for the Arts' Promenade Hall, 221 State St., Madison. Performances are at 7:30 p.m. Friday, 5 and 8 p.m. Saturday and 2:30 p.m. Sunday. Call 608-258-4141 or visit kanopy-dance.org to order tickets.

A birthday party fit for a Stradivarius, at Frankly Music



PHOTO: FRANK ALMOND

Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra concertmaster Frank Almond, with his "Lipiński" Stradivarius.

By Kirstin Roble

Contributing writer

From roughly 1700 until his death in 1737, Italian luthier and crafter Antonio Stradivari produced more than 1,000 instruments, considered to be "bold and innovative" even in his lifetime. To call a Stradivarius bold and innovative today is an understatement. The nearly 450 violins that have survived are considered some of the finest ever produced, and many of them are considered museum-quality pieces, on display at major cultural institutions across the world.

Other, luckier violins find themselves in the hands of talented violinists like Frank Almond, the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra concertmaster who performs with a loaned Stradivarius called the "Lipiński" Strad.

Produced in 1715, the Lipiński, named for its most famous owner, Polish virtuoso Karol Lipiński, comes from one of Stradivari's greatest periods of work, according to Almond. The violin is designed with arching on the front and back sides to create an optimal sound, and is meant to be played in large concert halls.

It gets that opportunity often when Almond plays at the Marcus Center's Uihlein Hall, but it's equally at home at the Wisconsin Lutheran College. Almond's

Frankly Music project will hold a concert there on Feb. 10 — a 300th birthday concert for the fabled violin.

Almond said in a recent interview that the concert will feature works that place the Lipiński in its best light, by artists like Giuseppe Tartini, Amanda Röntgen-Maier and Robert Schumann.

"(This concert) will provide audiences a chance to get to hear rarely heard music on one of the world's greatest violins," Almond says.

Each piece earned its place on the program for different reasons. The Tartini piece, a Trio Sonata in D, has never been performed in Milwaukee, according to Almond. But another work by Tartini, the famous "Devil's Trill" sonata, is the classical work most commonly associated with the Lipiński Stradivarius, because Tartini was one of the first owners. Premiering the Trio Sonata gives Frankly Music the exciting opportunity for improvisation, Almond says, because it was originally written for piano and violin only, and the cello part will be added in.

The Schumann piece, a piano quartet, also has close ties to the violin. Schumann was a close friend of Lipiński, and even dedicated another piece to him, a solo piano work called *Carnaval*.

But Almond's simplest explanation is

left for the Röntgen-Maier piece. He says it's just "a fantastic sonata that's worth hearing."

Almond says the concert is special in one extramusical way as well: as a thank you to the many police officers and detectives who helped recover the Lipinski Strad when it was stolen after a Frankly Music concert last January.

"We've never been able to properly thank them for all of the work that they put into this case and making sure the violin was returned safely. It was wonderful how much went into solving the case, so this concert is dedicated to them," Almond says.

ON STAGE

Frankly Music's *Happy 300th, "Lipiński" Strad* concert will be performed at 7 p.m. on Feb. 10, at Wisconsin Lutheran College's Schwan Concert Hall, 8815 W. Wisconsin Ave., Wauwatosa. Special guests include pianist William Wolfram, cellist Robert deMaine and violist Mara Gearman. Tickets range from \$10 to \$35, and can be ordered at franklymusic.org.

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MSO performs Leonard Bernstein's 'Age of Anxiety'

By Kirstin Roble

Contributing writer

Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra veteran guest William Wolfram returns to Milwaukee on Feb. 6 and Feb. 7 to perform one of the best Leonard Bernstein pieces you may have never heard.

Completed in 1949, *The Age of Anxiety* (Bernstein's Symphony No. 2) drew inspiration from Anglo-American poet W.H. Auden's poem of the same name. Bernstein said the Pulitzer Prize-winning poem left him "breathless" when he first read it. Almost immediately, Bernstein said, he put pen to paper hoping to compose a work that captured the brilliant quality of the poem.

Age of Anxiety consists of two parts, each containing six movements. The movements have names that reflect the moods and events of the poem.

The symphony opens with four individuals in a bar, alone but aware of one another. The characters tell the story of their lives through a set of variations.

American pianist Wolfram is no stranger to the work, having performed it in several different venues over the last few years. In a recent phone interview, Wolfram explained why he keeps returning to the symphony.

"It's an amazing piece," he said. "So many people don't know this work. The centerpiece (the second part) especially is very heart wrenching."

The second part of the symphony begins with a solo piano section, based on a 12-tone row and then moves into a middle section that evokes Romantic composer Johannes Brahms.

The four nameless individuals share a cab to an apartment. Determined to have a party, the four quickly change their minds and retire to bed. The journey of the characters is revisited during a section simply titled "The Epilogue."

The piece is a rare gem, one that has not quite found the popularity that other Bernstein works have. Wolfram said that's not due to the quality of the work, which he considers brilliant. The pianist said the way Bernstein assimilated the poem into the piece is particularly impressive.

"It seems that he was able to do this in an enormous way," he said. "Bernstein's



PHOTO: MILWAUKEE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Guest pianist William Wolfram will join the MSO once again to perform Leonard Bernstein's *Age of Anxiety*.

Age of Anxiety further displays the composer's gift to assimilate musical content and present it in an approachable, simpler way that does not insult the audience. The effect created is brilliance."

Wolfram hopes the MSO audience will find the symphony's magic by letting "the sound bathe over them."

ON THE PROGRAM

Guest pianist William Wolfram performs Leonard Bernstein's *Age of Anxiety* with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra on Feb. 6 and Feb. 7 as part of a program that includes works by Samuel Barber and Sergei Prokofiev. For more information or tickets, call 414-291-7605 or go to mso.org.

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Florentine Opera sings to the heart for Valentine's Day

By Michael Muckian

Contributing writer

From a little light music to *A Little Night Music*, Milwaukee's Florentine Opera will once again celebrate Valentine's Day by offering a selection of songs that speak directly to the heart.

From *Vienna to the Great White Way*, a Valentine's Day-themed concert at the Marcus Center's newly renovated Wilson Theater at Vogel Hall, will take listeners from English and Viennese light opera and operettas to the best-loved music of Broadway.

The song list stands as a "best of" selection of familiar favorites, like Franz Lehar or Lerner and Loewe, and also offers less well-known numbers that will be brand-new to most listeners, according to Florentine Opera general director William Florescu.

"I particularly like the melodic content of the early 20th century American musical theater composers like Victor Herbert and Jerome Kern," Florescu says. "A lot of popular singers from the '40s and '50s have taken those songs and turned them into their own popular works of their day, and we try and do that as well."

The company's February recital, which Florescu first staged in 2008, is designed to feature the Florentine Opera Studio Artists, four rising talents selected to temporarily join the ranks of the Florentine.

Now in its seventh season, the Studio

Artists program is designed as a stepping-stone for young post-conservatory singers ready to become full-time professional performers. It's also a chance for Florentine patrons to have a first look at American opera's future stars, Florescu says.

"These are front-line ambassadors for the company and they have to be able to perform at a very high level," says Florescu, who interviewed a field of 60 performers chosen from a national pool of 200 applicants for the four slots. "We're looking for that spark, for performers who have a natural stage presence and a lot of potential."

This year's Studio Artists include soprano Julie Tabash, mezzo-soprano Lindsay Metzger, tenor Aaron Short and baritone Pablo Siqueiros. Metzger is in her first year as a Studio Artist, while Tabash, Short and Siqueiros are all in their second and final years with the program.

"We try and exploit the strength of the singers in choosing our material," Florescu says. "This year's group sounds so good together that we've tried to include as many ensemble pieces as possible in the program."

Early 20th century arias like Victor Herbert's "Neath a Southern Moon" and "Live for Today," both from *Naughty Marietta*, top the playlist, as does Lehar's "Dein ist mein ganzes Herz" from *Das Land des Lächelns* (*The Land of Smiles*) and "Wie eine Rosen-



PHOTO: DANIELLE CHAVIANO

The Florentine Studio Artists (from left, Julie Tabash, Pablo Siqueiros, Aaron Short and Lindsay Metzger) will perform a Valentine's Day concert at the Marcus Center.

knospe" from *Die lustige Witwe* (*The Merry Widow*).

There also are more familiar numbers, including Al Dubin and Harry Warren's "Lullaby of Broadway" and "42nd Street" from *Gold Diggers of 1935* and "42nd Street," respectively, and Stephen Sondheim's "Agony," from *Into the Woods*, and "In Praise of Women," from *A Little Night Music*.

The February recital has become very popular both among Florentine regulars and people unfamiliar with opera but interested in expanding their musical horizons, Florescu says.

"I'm a real sucker for the musical areas we're covering," Florescu says.

It also helps both the general director and his audiences to have a themed approach to the performances, he adds.

"Being able to move thematically from the Viennese epicenter to the Great White

Way give me a pretty broad brush with which to paint," Florescu said. "But I think it's the breadth of material and the level of talent of these young singers that makes the show as good as it is. Frankly, this year's group is phenomenal."

ON STAGE

The Florentine Opera's production of *From Vienna to the Great White Way* runs Feb. 13-Feb. 15 in Vogel Hall's Wilson Theater at the Performing Arts, 929 N. Water St., Milwaukee. Performances are at 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 2:30 p.m. Sunday. Tickets range from \$27 to \$55 and can be ordered at 414-273-7121 or visit florentineopera.org.

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Madison Opera's John DeMain: 'Sweeney Todd' cuts to the quick

By Michael Muckian

Contributing writer

When Stephen Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* opened on Broadway in 1979, its murderous themes caught the attention of audiences and critics alike and helped them sharpen their appreciation for less cheery musicals.

Perhaps one of Sondheim's grimmest musicals, *Sweeney Todd* tells the tale of a Victorian-era barber, wrongly imprisoned for 15 years, who returns to London to take revenge on his accusers. The musical's sharpened, lethal straight razors and tasty meat pies of dubious content helped set it apart from its contemporaries, creating a modern American masterpiece for Sondheim and librettist Hugh Wheeler that won them eight Tonys in its original production.

But it's not a work limited to the musical theater world, as Madison Opera will prove when it mounts its first-ever production of *Sweeney Todd* Feb. 6-Feb. 8 at Overture Center.

The production has a talented creative team, including director Norma Saldivar, a faculty member at UW-Madison, baritone Corey Crider as barber Sweeney Todd and contralto Meredith Arwady as his partner-in-crime Mrs. Lovett.

But the team member who's had the longest history with the show is maestro John DeMain, who introduced the work to the opera canon in 1984 with the Houston Grand Opera just months before the New York City Opera's production. *Sweeney Todd's* a show that's always been close to his heart, and it's one he says he's pleased to be leading the Madison Symphony Orchestra in this February.

How did you originally encounter *Sweeney Todd*? I was first introduced to *Sweeney Todd* on Broadway in 1979, where I attended a performance by the original cast. I remember being blown away at the time.

Sondheim was my hero. He was willing to write for real classically trained voices at a time when they seemed to be fading from the Broadway stage. I couldn't believe I was hearing such a work on Broadway.

I then went on to conduct the show at the Houston Grand Opera immediately after it finished its national tour. We were the first opera company to produce *Sweeney*, and we did it on our main season, using the original Broadway sets and costumes. Our production was directed by Harold Prince, the original director. Sondheim came out for the final week of rehearsals.

***Sweeney Todd* has been described as the most "operatic" of all Sondheim's musicals. Do you agree?** It was probably his most operatic work to date, coming on

the heels of *A Little Night Music* and *Pacific Overtures*. He later wrote *Passion*, which is also quite operatic.

Sondheim describes *Sweeney* as a "dark operetta." For me, this makes a lot of sense.

What operas would you compare *Sweeney Todd* to? I think there is a direct connection with the operettas of Gilbert and Sullivan, with all those amazing lyrics. The same can be said for Sondheim. Although, he also writes in a contemporary classical vein using aleatory passages (which combine musical elements in seemingly random ways), polytonalities, and complicated harmonies. It's the quality of this music that makes people feel it is an opera.

If we want to view it as such, then we have to compare it to Mozart's *Magic Flute* and *Abduction from the Seraglio* and Beethoven's *Fidelio*. What is added is a constant presence of leitmotiv that was developed by the late romantic composers, most notably Wagner. *Porgy and Bess* is composed along similar lines. It is a numbers piece, strewn with leitmotiv, although *Porgy* has less spoken dialogue.

This is the first time Madison Opera is performing *Sweeney Todd*. Why this production and why now? Madison Opera is dedicated to bringing as part of its overall repertory scheme important works from the American canon, such as the recent presentation of Jake Heggie's *Dead Man Walking*. Like any great work that stands the test of time, and grows in stature, *Sweeney Todd* is being presented as part of the operatic repertory in so many of our American opera houses at the present time.

This year alone, the Virginia Opera, the Hawaii Opera, the Madison Opera and the San Francisco Opera each will mount a new production of it. Opera Theater of Saint Louis had it as a major part of its season a few years ago.

Is *Sweeney Todd* as musically complex as a typical opera? What are its musical strengths and weaknesses? *Sweeney* is both musically and technically complex. It requires split-second timing between the pit and the stage. There are marvelous ensembles, duets and quartets, with intricate harmonic writing as well as complex and aleatoric rhythms and melodies.

Sondheim is a classically trained composer, as we know, and he spares no difficulty if the music warrants it. I think there are some aching beautiful melodies in *Sweeney*, and my head is filled with earworms these past few days as I get ready to go into rehearsal. I don't perceive weaknesses in the work, as I think it has exactly what it needs.



PHOTO: PRASAD PHOTOGRAPHY

Madison Opera conductor John DeMain was the first conductor to present Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd* as an operatic piece, in Houston. He'll stage it in Madison this February.

ON STAGE

Madison Opera's production of *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* runs Feb. 6-Feb. 8 at the Overture Center for the Arts' Capitol Theater, 221 State St., Madison. Performances are at 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 2:30 p.m. Sunday. Call 608-258-4141 or visit madisonopera.org for more information.

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'Good People'? More like 'Great People'

By Matthew Reddin

Staff writer

There's a funny contrast at the heart of *Good People*. Its heroine is Margie, a South Boston mother working paycheck to paycheck who runs out of paychecks. She earns our sympathy almost immediately, with a can-do spirit and relentless drive. But most of us in the audience aren't Margies.

At best, we resemble Mike, her former love interest who made it out of Southie, who Margie guilts into inviting her to a party of his wealthy friends. Maybe our bank accounts aren't as large, or we didn't originate from the same level of poverty, but it's safe to say very few, if any, opening night attendees at the Milwaukee Rep's Quadracci Powerhouse are in as precarious a financial position as Margie. So when that night turns sour, as all the signs and scenes leading up to it suggest it will, it feels like she's turned on us, the good people who offered her the kindness of our interest for a single evening — despite the fact that we know, deep down, she's firmly, firmly in the right.

It's an unsettling masterstroke, but not the first nor the last. David Lindsay-Abaire's script is full of class, race and culture clashes, and the Rep's cast, led by Laura Gordon as Margie, has absolutely no trouble mining them for comedy and pathos alike.

The Rep's been promoting the show as a star vehicle for Gordon, and it's well-deserved. They can't claim credit for having picked her for the role first — she first stepped into Margie's shoes at Madison's Forward Theater in 2013 — but giving her a second shot at the character under the direction of Kate Buckley is worth applause in itself.

Margie's not a woman in a position to make a lot of decisions. Things just happen to her: Guardians for her mentally disabled daughter run late; bosses begrudgingly fire her; landlords threaten to put her on the street. Gordon's Margie hasn't stopped believing she can change that, though. She carries herself with the weight of every chain reaction that's brought her to the present moment, and throws herself at every chance that comes her way, including pursuing Mike (Michael Elich) when she discovers he's returned to Boston.

What keeps Gordon's Margie heroic instead of desperate is she's so damn likable. She lets her old boss sit next to her at bingo; firing her wasn't his call. She cuts the landlord slack for trying to push her out; her son's having trouble paying his rent too. She even tries to stick to her script with Mike — "I just need a job" — instead of pulling out her trump card: Her daughter might be his.

Likely to be underrated are Gordon's



PHOTO: MICHAEL BROSILOW

Margie (Laura Gordon, right) visits ex-boyfriend Mike and his wife Kate (Michael Elich and Jennifer Latimore) in the hopes of securing a job.

co-actors. None of them rises to challenge Margie's position as the central character (Mike seems written to vie with her, but Elich and Buckley have wisely made him more a foil than a rival viewpoint), and the production is the better for it. Margie's best friend Jean (Tami Workentin), landlord Dottie (Laura T. Fisher) and ex-boss Stevie (Bernard Balbot) flesh out the world Margie lives in, with local legends told over and over and names of longtime Southies repeated like talismans or warnings. Mike and his wife Kate (Jennifer Latimore) get to paint in a more familiar picture of wealth, easily translatable from Boston to Milwaukee, but they too give it their own particular shadings.

Margie alone with Stevie or Mike is captivating, or expositionally necessary, but the play lights up with three or more players. Workentin gets the best laugh lines, delivered wearing coordinated leopard-print shirts and leg warmers that are a few laughs in and of themselves (many thanks to costume designer Rachel Healy). And when Margie, Mike and Kate are together, Latimore threatens to steal the show, an admirable achievement for the Rep Intern Company actor. She's alternately a sym-

pathetic ally for Margie scandalized by her husband or an unexpected adversary adamant that her husband's despicable Southie ex leave their home immediately — but maintains a fierce, calculated demeanor no matter who she's chastising.

As critical to *Good People's* success as any piece of dialogue or scathing glance is Kevin Depinet's set, one of the best I've ever seen at the Powerhouse. Modular and automated, the set is built around a tall pillar with a doorway, which spins to coordinate with sliding-in walls — a kitchen counter here, a long bookshelf there, a bingo hall that drops from the ceiling. In its slick transitions, from grimy bingo hall to opulent homestead and back, it's a visual reminder of how little choice Margie — or Mike — has had in what scenes their lives are set.

ON STAGE

The Milwaukee Rep's production of *Good People* runs through Feb. 15 at the Quadracci Powerhouse, 108 E. Wells St. Tickets start at \$20 and can be ordered at 414-224-9490 or milwaukeeerep.com.

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'Once On This Island's' story pits love vs. death

By Matthew Reddin

Staff writer

Former artistic director Bill Theisen is back at the Skylight, and boy, does he have a story to tell.

It's not his — though it's likely Theisen, artistic director for nine years and a frequent performer in the decades prior, could have a lot to say about his time with the company and subsequent departure to serve as the director of opera at the University of Iowa. Instead, the story Theisen will present this winter is that of a girl named Ti Moune, the heroine of *Once On This Island*, a Caribbean-infused one-act musical about a tussle between the powers of love and death.

The first Broadway success of music-and-lyrics team Stephen Flaherty and Lynn Ahrens, *Once On This Island* depicts two communities on the island of Haiti, the Jewel of the Antilles. One, the lighter-skinned *grandes hommes*, are the wealthy, urbanized descendants of the island's original

French planters and their slaves. The other consists of darker-skinned peasants, who live in close-knit villages on the other side of the island and worship gods like Erzulie (Cynthia Cobb), goddess of love, and Papa Ge (Bill Jackson), god of death. Ti Moune (Kanova Johnson) is the bridge between them, an orphaned girl whose prayers to the gods make her the subject of a bet between Erzulie and Papa Ge. They will grant her love — in the form of the *grande homme* Daniel (Sean Jackson) — but promise her death should he ever leave her for another.

It's a tale Theisen says is strongly inspired by Hans Christian Andersen's "The Little Mermaid," by way of the novel *My Love, My Love*, but has been made more universal by Ahrens and Flaherty. "Everyone can relate to the journey that Ti Moune takes — what she comes up against, what she is able to conquer and what she learns along the way," he says.

He's loved the musical since it first pre-

miered in the early '90s. Remembering the original Broadway run, Theisen's tone perks up as he recalls watching the departing audience literally dancing in the street.

Yet this production marks the first time he's had the opportunity to direct it. Blame timing: When he joined Skylight as the company's artistic director in 2004, they had just staged it in 1998. When he was leaving the company nine years later, he had to set it aside in order to cross a different show off the top of his bucket list: a critically acclaimed staging of *Porgy and Bess*.

But when new Skylight AD Viswa Subbaraman called to invite Theisen back for this season, the moment was finally right.

One of the reasons Theisen thinks *Once On This Island* works so well onstage is its framing device, conceived by Ahrens, Flaherty and original director Graciela Daniele: telling the story to a young child on the island. It's a device he's allowed to inspire the entire production. Narration to the little girl can be directed in part to the audience members, bending the fourth wall. Costumes, set and prop design are more suggestive than explicit, inviting viewers to let their imaginations fill in the blanks and travel alongside Ti Moune.

"I can't say it's the way it's always done," Theisen says, "but it seems like you'd be missing a great opportunity if you didn't do it, because (the audience) is really taking the journey with you. To exclude them from

that would be unfortunate."

That's a sentiment bolstered when the play is staged in its original form, as a one-act. Theisen says the play "just moves" as a single piece, with scene transitions effortlessly transporting the story from one moment to the next. "It's quite simple but really effective, because people go from character to storyteller and weave back and forth."

Many of those storytellers will be familiar to Milwaukee audiences. Theisen's cast of 11 features nine local actors, some of whom, including Sheri Williams Pannell and Lee Palmer, he's known for years. It wasn't an intentional decision, but it's one Theisen sees as a perfect fit for the musical. "It's a real celebration of a lot of Milwaukee talent. To see them all come together on a piece that is so much about community and storytelling and lives as they grow and are enriched ... to see their journeys and have them come back together in this, it's a dream come true."

ON STAGE

Skylight Music Theatre will perform *Once On This Island* Jan. 30-Feb. 22 at the Broadway Theatre Center, 158 N. Broadway, Milwaukee. Tickets range from \$23 to \$64 and can be ordered at skylightmusictheatre.org or 414-291-7800.



PHOTO: MARK FROHNA

In Skylight's *Once on this Island*, Kanova Johnson plays Ti Moune, a young girl whose desire for love draws her into a tussle between gods, with her life held in the balance.

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UWM French film festival prompts cultural dialogue



PHOTO: COURTESY FABIENNE BULLOT

Director Jean-Pierre Thorn will visit UWM's Festival of Films in French for screenings of two of his films, *Pleasure to the People* and *93 Beautiful Rebel*. Thorn's works are rarely shown in the United States.

By Michael Muckian

Contributing writer

Fabienne Bulloot knew she had found a city of kindred spirits when she left the 2013 Milwaukee Film Festival screening of *Earth*. The visiting assistant professor of French at UWM had been pleased, shortly after her arrival in Milwaukee, to learn Mil-

waukee Film would be screening Ukrainian film director Alexander Dovzhenko's silent Soviet-era film about the process of collectivization, with live musical accompaniment by postrock band Group of the Altos. But she was more pleased when the film received a thunderous standing ovation.

"I immediately thought, 'This is a city

of movie lovers,'" says Bulloot. "It seems to me that the political, social, and economic history of the city is what makes it unique in the States. It is a very diverse, open, and lively city where film is right at home."

Such recognition was critical to Bulloot, a native Parisienne who is coordinating UWM's Festival of Films in French. Now

entering its 18th year, the festival offers 17 diverse films from France or French-speaking countries over a 10-day period: Feb. 6-Feb. 15. All films will be shown for free at UWM's Union Theatre.

The film series, which looks at a variety of social issues, provides an opportunity for significant cultural and political discourse, says Bulloot, who established the French Theater Workshop while at Smith College and is currently researching the history of French political cinema. Among the topics addressed are an increasingly multicultural France, women's lives, the commemoration of World War I and LGBT issues.

But while those issues are shared by only small groups of films, Bulloot says there's one thread all the films in the program have in common: "They all respond in a variety of ways to the question, 'How can we represent reality?'"

Two of the films — *The Night is Young* and *Tom at the Farm* — are sponsored by the LGBT Film/Video Festival. Their inclusion demonstrates not only the festival's diversity but also the cross-pollination among various departments at UWM in contributing to the festival's content, Bulloot says.

"(LGBT Film Festival director) Carl Bogner and I share the same passion for film and the same desire for freedom and discovery in film," Bulloot says.

FESTIVAL next page



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FESTIVAL from prior page

The Night is Young, featuring a young Juliette Binoche, is director Leos Carax's second film. Filmed at the height of the AIDS crisis, it is the first French film to reference AIDS, in the form of a similar virus called STBO that affects the lead characters.

"It became a cult classic because it is a poetic thriller that shunned the commercial aesthetic popular in 1980s cinema and is full of 'quotes' from other films that film buffs have had fun identifying," Bullof says.

Tom at the Farm is a more recent film by the young filmmaker Xavier Dolan and has never been screened in Milwaukee, although other works by Dolan — including *Laurence Anyways* — have been shown at the LGBT Film/Video Festival and Milwaukee Film Festival. It's a psychological thriller about a gay man who visits the family of his deceased lover, unsure if they are aware of their late son's sexual orientation. The film is set in a rural landscape very similar to Wisconsin, which hides brutal secrets.

Among the festival's other highlights are the films of director Jean-Pierre Thorn, whose works are rarely shown in the United States.

Pleasure to the People and *93 Beautiful Rebel*, the two films being shown, stress multicultural themes in contemporary France and "the creativity and energy of French youth, whose spirit French society has persistently tried to break through its scorn," Bullof says.

"Thorn's films challenge the discourse of

the powerful," she adds. "These documentaries are nothing like the ones shown on television: There is no hidden camera, no voice-over by a Hollywood actor, no specialists next to potted plants talking about the world. Thorn's camera watches and listens to people and spaces, their desires, their energy. It does justice to its subjects."

Thorn himself will appear at the festival to introduce his films and participate in talkbacks after their screenings. The showing of *93 Beautiful Rebel*, which chronicles France's contemporary hip-hop culture, will also be accompanied by a live hip-hop dance featuring local Milwaukee groups, what Bullof says is a first for the festival.

Thorn also will travel to UW-Madison to screen his films and lead a master class, Bullof said. The director's contemporary themes echo the recent terrorist killings of *Charlie Hebdo* journalists in France, she added.

"I spoke with (Thorn) on the phone after the terrorist attacks, and he said he had been in touch with many of the people who have appeared in his films and who are particularly concerned by the recent events," Bullof said. "He will share their reactions and his own analysis of the situation as an activist filmmaker who has always fought the good fight with festival-goers."

Social commentaries always play an important role in the festival, but there are also silent films, comedies, thrillers, a road movie and a film based on a comic book. There will also be a few "crowd-pleasers,"



PHOTOS: COURTESY
The Night is Young (alternately titled **Mauvais Sang**, or **Bad Blood**), and **Tom at the Farm** will both be shown on Feb. 14 at Union Theatre.

NOW SCREENING

UWM's 18th annual Festival of Films in French will run Feb. 6-Feb. 15 at the UWM Union Theatre, 2200 E. Kenwood Blvd. Screenings are free and open to the public, and a full schedule can be found at uwm.edu/french-film-schedule.



designed as a convenient bridge for those less familiar with French cinema.

"Festival fans will come in great numbers to see films with Catherine Deneuve, Josh Charles or Juliette Binoche, because they know these actors," Bullof says. "But they will probably be surprised by the performances given by them and the tone of the comedy-dramas in which they appear."

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Art at a bug's eye view

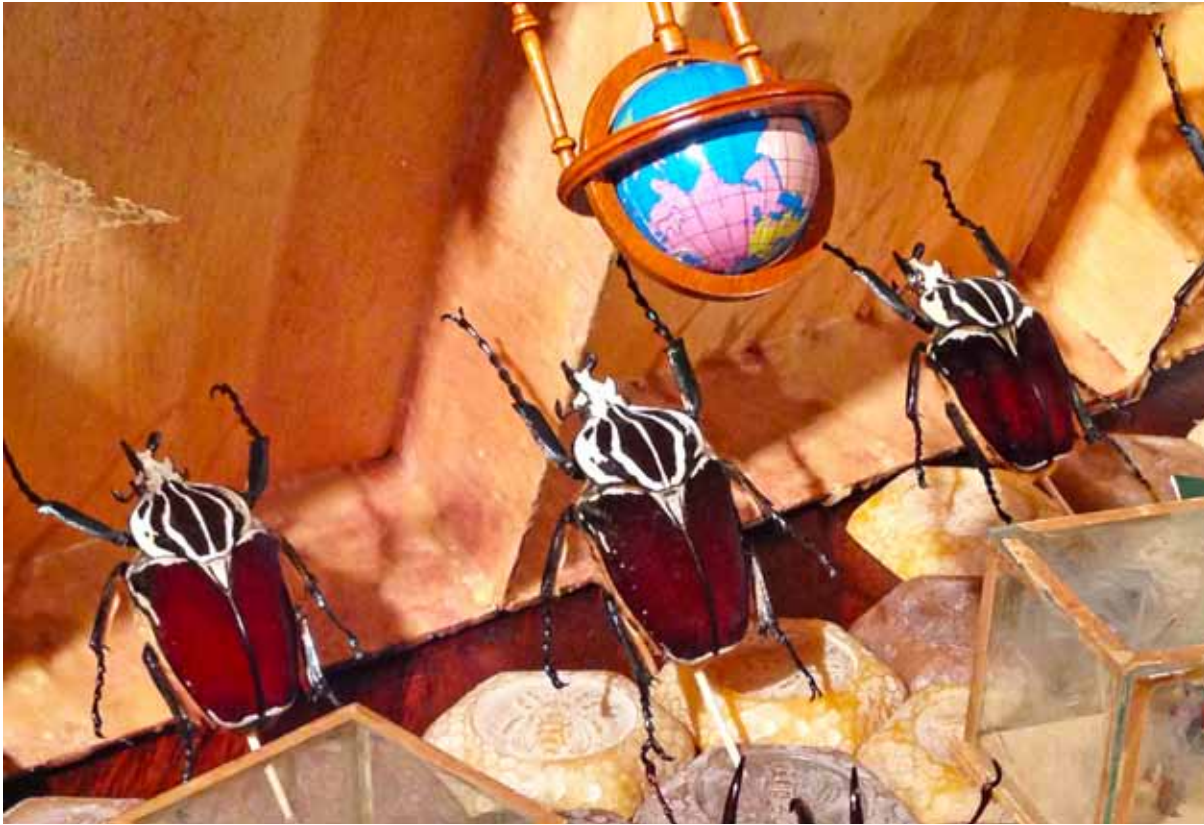


PHOTO: KAT MURRELL

Bugs are worldly critters in Jennifer Angus' *Tell Me A Story* at Villa Terrace Decorative Arts Museum through Feb. 8.

By Kat Murrell

Contributing writer

We are all just creatures here — you, me, and the art in *Tell Me A Story* at Villa Terrace Decorative Arts Museum.

Tell Me A Story features the work of Jennifer Angus, who has made a name for herself thanks to her unique materials, or more accurately: creatures. Angus makes monumental wall installations, dioramas and prints liberally decorated with preserved insects from tropical locales.

These are not tiny little bugs but sizable critters of strange, exotic shapes and extraordinarily brilliant colors. The rainbow colors of their bodies — luminous greens and yellows, earthy browns and reds — are employed for their visual impact. The insects are elegantly arranged, pinned to the walls or onto two-dimensional art in patterns recalling the stylized and formal tastes of Victorian interior decoration.

Angus, who received her MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and is a professor in Design Studies at the University of Wisconsin – Madison, says in her artist's statement that her work is intended to prompt wonder and apprehension in the viewer.

Tell Me a Story takes these intentions to their grandest expression yet. The large wall pieces are beautifully installed as dense, richly orchestrated shapes, spilling from one room of the historic mansion to the other. They feature preserved insects, choreographed like synchronized swarms that neatly coalesce into medallions, rosettes and rhombuses. It's like walking into a surreal landscape where insects are anthropomorphized, arranged in tiny tableaux vivants where they converse, collaborate and entertain each other like characters in a children's storybook or make-believe world.

On two-dimensional prints illustrated with various animal characters, pinned insects seem to leap off the page. Secretive boxes that open to reveal arrangements of bugs, shaped in circles and loops like jewelry, have less narrative effect but no less allure.

The effect is overwhelming, but even if you have a phobia

of things with more than four legs, the aesthetic quality of Angus' work will quickly quell any heebie-jeebies, replacing that faint revulsion with surprise for the beauty and logistical sophistication of her designs. Usually we do not peer closely at bugs but instead reach for a fly swatter or run out of the room. Angus' approach is a charm offensive. She takes that which is unknown, unseen and undesired, and makes it worthy of admiration instead.

This is not an unfamiliar tactic in art. Using rubbish, junk, or other disdained materials can be a powerful tool for an artist, who can transform stuff refused into objects of desire.

In the early 20th century, Marcel Duchamp's famous *Fountain*, a signed urinal submitted to an exhibition as a sculpture, was an opening salvo for the expansion of ideas concerning the materials for making art, and a broadening of viewers' perceptions of said materials in their finished forms.

Angus follows in this tradition, though her practice is not for irony or provocation, but as a way of introducing us to an unfamiliar world we often dare not enter. *Tell Me A Story*, with its innocently sweet title, is filled with characters that seem inspired by childhood fantasy. But it is just as much about the grown-up story of art, crossing the intersections of apprehension and beauty, nature and narrative.

ON DISPLAY

Tell Me A Story continues through Feb. 8 at the Villa Terrace Decorative Arts Museum, 2220 N. Terrace Ave., Milwaukee. A closing reception will be held that evening from 6 to 8 p.m. The evening will include a tour of the exhibition with Jennifer Angus and the curatorial staff, plus a silent auction of insect-inspired jewelry by UWM art department students. Admission is \$7, \$5 for seniors, military and students and free for members and children 12 and under. Visit villaterracemuseum.org for more information.

ART GAZE — MILWAUKEE

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PHOTO: COURTESY

Andrea Guzzetta's works, including "Let's Eat Cake!," blend Neoclassical imagery with vibrant colors.

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Opening reception, Jan. 30, 6-8 p.m.

The artist meets the farm, or vice versa, through works of sculpture, video, photography and more by Los Angeles-based artist Mateo Tannatt.

WILLIAM ZUBACK AND DAVID PRESS: 'SHUTTERS/DEAD ENDS/LENS/PENS'

Inspiration Studios, 1500 S. 73rd St., West Allis

Opening reception, Jan. 31, 5-9 p.m.

Visual artist William Zuback and writer David Press spar, collaborate, and carry on creative dialogue through presented works, projected images and narrative performance.

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Bundle up for a good cause, great tunes at Mitten Fest

By Bill Lamb

Contributing writer

Why wait until the temperatures warm to enjoy an outdoor music festival? On Feb. 7, Bay View bar Burnhearts will present its third annual Mitten Fest — a free, one-day music festival benefiting the Hunger Task Force.

Burnhearts owner William Seidel says the idea came as a result of an annual summer block party, a giant bash that takes over more than a block of Potter Avenue at the end of June. Two years ago, Seidel and the Burnhearts team got tired of waiting a whole year to host another event and realized there was nothing more Wisconsin than holding a music festival in the middle of a February afternoon.

Seidel said there were some doubts. He and the bar were inundated with comments like, "This is not going to work, and nobody's gonna show up."

But the first two years proved the doubters wrong. Both concerts featured strong attendance and last year, Mitten Fest collected more than \$2,500 for the Hunger Task Force, along with a ton of food and 36 giant bags of winter clothing.

"(The winter placement) gives people a little bit of light before the end of a dark tunnel," Seidel said. "Going on its third year, it has become quite a big event."

This year's concert will feature Canopies, Greatest Lakes, Towers and Sin Bad. DJ Chris Schulist, a co-founder of local hip hop rarities

record label Dope Folks Records, will provide music between sets.

Seidel said deciding who to select "boils down to who hasn't played at the festival yet," in part, but he also likes to pick acts that are on the upswing.

This year's bands certainly qualify.

Synthpop quintet Canopies was recently featured on college radio tracker *CMJ*, thanks to promotion from WMSE. Greatest Lakes' dreamy single "Looking In" was listed as one of the 10 best Milwaukee songs of 2014 by the *Journal Sentinel's* Piet Levy. And both Towers and Sin Bad made waves when they debuted in the garage rock scene this year.

Seidel said playing in the cold can be daunting for bands, but he's able to convince them to sign on by reminding them that "people who come don't forget that show."

In addition to the music and a craft fair, Mitten Fest will feature specialty drinks provided by the event's sponsors: Central Waters Brewery, in Amherst, Wisconsin, and Founders Brewing Company, in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Seidel said Founders was invited because you can't have a Mitten Fest without inviting a brewery from the "Mitten State."

The tastiest beverage might be Burnhearts' own concoction: a specialty brandy old-fashioned. "We take old used bourbon barrels and fill them with Korbel brandy," Seidel says. "In one of them we put 40



PHOTO: BURNHEARTS

Last year's Mitten Fest, despite temperatures that dipped into the single digits, collected more than \$2,500 in donations to Hunger Task Force, as well as almost a ton of food and 36 bags of winter clothing.

pounds of fresh ginger and simple syrup, and then we age it for quite a few months. The other one we put in all the fixings for a traditional Wisconsin old-fashioned." The cocktails are sold at Mitten Fest and then the empty barrels are turned over to Central Waters, which will age beer in them for a year and sell the result at next year's Mitten Fest.

It's a tantalizing treat that Seidel said always draws attendees into Burnhearts — but they're not the only local beneficiaries. "There are lots of other bars and restaurants in the neighborhood, and they love it when people show up to get warm, have something to eat or drink, and then head back,"

Seidel said.

First-timers, take heed of Seidel's parting suggestion: "Bring three pairs of socks, and make sure you have nice warm boots."

ON STAGE

Burnhearts' third annual Mitten Fest is noon-8 p.m. on Feb. 7, at 2599 S. Logan Ave. Attendance is free, but food, clothing and cash donations for Hunger Task Force are encouraged. Visit facebook.com/burnheartsbar for more details.

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PHOTO: BURNHEARTS

The Sets List

JON MUELLER'S DEATH BLUES

8 p.m. Jan. 31 at Alverno College's Pitman Theatre, Milwaukee. \$25. alvernopresents.alverno.edu.

Percussionist Jon Mueller (Pele, Collections of Colonies of Bees, Volcano Choir) rallies the troops yet again for his latest installment of Death Blues, a musical project he formed with San Fran composer William Ryan Fritch in 2012. The post-rock act is tough to describe — their mission statement is to “address the inevitability of death as impetus to become more present in each moment,” after all — so if you're on the fence, google Death Blues' latest release Ensemble and meditate on it for a bit. Just don't wait too long; rumor has it this might be Death Blues' own inevitable last performance.



FLEETWOOD MAC

8 p.m. Feb. 12 at BMO Harris Bradley Center, Milwaukee. \$60 to \$196. bmoharrisbradleycenter.com.

The reason Fleetwood Mac is the towering classic rock juggernaut it is today is because the band can't get along worth a damn. So it's not an understatement to say this is very possibly the last time the whole band will tour together. But here they are, showing up at the Bradley Center: Mick Fleetwood, John McVie, Lindsey Buckingham, Stevie Nicks and (for the first time since 1998) Christine McVie. At this point, the only thing keeping you from the show should be the high ticket prices — and honestly, for a band like this, they might be a bargain.

RIFF RAFF

8 p.m. Feb. 6 at The Rave, Milwaukee. \$22. therave.com.

Guys, be cool. Riff Raff is not just that guy who thought he was going to make a splash doing a Britney/Justin all-denim tribute with Katy Perry at this year's VMAs, but ended up getting edged out by her awesome, impromptu best-friendship with Sam Smith. He's also one of the strangest rappers in the business, an uber-tattooed, zigzag-bearded Vanilla Ice-devotee with tracks like “Tip Toe Wing In My Jawwdzin.” Even if you don't walk away from the Eagles Ballroom a Riff Raff fan, it's certainly going to be an experience of some kind.



WILD CHILD

9 p.m. Feb. 3 at Mad Planet, Milwaukee. \$12, \$10 in advance. mad-planet.com.

9 p.m. Feb. 4 at The Frequency, Madison. \$15, \$13 in advance. madisonfrequency.com.

You can count on Austin to churn out indie rock stars with some regularity, and Wild Child could be the latest. The six-piece has been touring like mad since releasing their self-recorded debut *Pillow Talk* in 2011 and signing a deal for sophomore record *The Runaround* in 2013, and they'll be passing through Wisconsin this February. So give these traveling gypsies a try — especially since they've picked two of the region's dance-friendliest venues to stop in at.

CARNAVAL 2015

8 p.m. Feb. 7 at Majestic Theatre, Madison. \$15. majesticmadison.com.

Carnaval comes early in Madison this year, with the Majestic's celebration of the Brazilian pre-Lenten party. Percussionists from across the city — including the Handphibians and Ótimo Madison Brazilian Dance — will show off three different styles of Brazilian rhythm and dance. Not that you'll know that in the moment, with all the Carnaval-ing, but it's nice info to make your friends jealous the morning after.



YONDER MOUNTAIN STRING BAND

8 p.m. Jan. 31 at the Barrymore Theatre, Madison. \$30. barrymorelive.com.

YMSB is one of the biggest names in bluegrass, largely because they are not afraid to be something other than a bluegrass band. Touring for almost 15 years, the band has cultivated a passionate fanbase as well as critical acclaim, all while experimenting with the addition of rock 'n' roll and folk influences to their sound. Indie folk artists Horse Feathers open.

Music reviews

FALL OUT BOY :: 'AMERICAN BEAUTY / AMERICAN PSYCHO'

With all four members now in their 30s, Fall Out Boy are no longer kids, but it doesn't seem like anyone's told them that. On their sixth studio album, the group arrives armed with big anthems, and the rock star ambitions of lyricist/bassist Pete Wentz crash into lead singer Patrick Stump's '80s pop-soul fixations in exciting fashion across the album. The band's pop culture metaphors are especially blatant this venture, recycling past pop culture motifs like Suzanne Vega's intro to “Tom's Diner” (on lead single “Centuries”) or the theme song from *The Munsters* (“Uma Thurman”). Even the title comes from two films of the early 21st century, each exposing an ugly rot in American culture. When it all works, especially on songs like “Centuries” and the adrenaline-soaked rock-disco of “Novocaine,” Fall Out Boy reveals itself to be one of the most exciting acts in mainstream pop rock today.



SLEATER-KINNEY :: 'NO CITIES TO LOVE'

Committed fans of trailblazing all-female punk trio Sleater-Kinney were always convinced the group's hiatus wasn't forever. Nine years after the band's last studio album, *The Woods*, fans' patience has been rewarded. The trio has returned with *No Cities to Love*, an album that looks to the future and echoes the fire and energy of their best work. There are no slow, poignant songs here — the closest is the album-ending “Fade,” which at times approaches the arena rock fury of



Metallica in its ambition. For the most part, it is only bristling energy, delivered in a brief 32 minutes and 10 tracks. *No Cities to Love* is also arguably the most consistently melodic and accessible of all of the group's efforts. The album reaches a peak on the fierce “Surface Envy” with a chorus shouting, “We win, we lose, only together do we break the rules.” Sleater-Kinney sounds excited to be back together, and *No Cities to Love* is the sort of album worth getting excited for them to be back. Sleater-Kinney will bring their live act to eager fans on Feb. 15, at a sold-out Riverside Theater show in Milwaukee.

THE DECEMBERISTS :: 'WHAT A TERRIBLE WORLD, WHAT A BEAUTIFUL WORLD'

If you've found The Decemberists' past work difficult or aimless, then *What a Terrible World, What a Beautiful World* is the album for you. But don't take my word for it. Lead vocalist and songwriter Colin Meloy cheekily tells longtime fans himself on opening track “The Singer Addresses His Audience” that things are different now, singing, “We know we belong to ya / we know you grew your arms around us / and the hopes we wouldn't change / but we had to change some.” It's largely

a change for the better. The album is filled with catchy melodies and accessible arrangements, dense with horns, strings and vocal harmonies, but still retains the distinctive wit and contemplative lyrics the band is loved for. It's a major evolution for The Decemberists as they further embrace the crowd-pleasing indie pop path blazed by groups such as R.E.M. but keep enough integrity and intellect to avoid getting dubbed sellouts.

— Bill Lamb

'Empire' challenges black community's homophobia



PHOTO: CHUCK HODES/FOX

Terrence Howard stars as the patriarch of a multimillion-dollar record label in *Empire*, created by gay director Lee Daniels. Howard's character clashes with his gay son, a dynamic Daniels hopes will shine light on homophobia in African-American communities.

By David Bauder

AP television writer

The creator of Fox's prime-time drama *Empire* said he wants to "blow the lid off homophobia" in the African-American community with a depiction of the show's lead character's hostile relationship with his gay son.

Lee Daniels, the out gay director who was also behind the movies *The Butler* and *Precious*, said that his father's hostility toward gays frightened him and he knows the same attitudes are being passed on from one generation to another in households around the world.

"What we're trying to do is to give people the opportunity to see that what they're doing is painful," Daniels said at a recent television conference.

Empire, the story of a strong-willed music family whose patriarch, Lucious Lyon, is portrayed by actor Terrence Howard, has gotten off to a strong start this month at the ratings-challenged Fox network. The series had the unusual feat of growing in viewership from its premiere week to its second, compelling Fox to quickly give the go-ahead to a second season.

During the show's first episode, Lucious learns he has a fatal disease and is battling with his just-released-from-jail wife over which of their three sons will take over their music empire. Lucious is openly hostile to his gay son Jamal. During a flashback, he is shown stuffing Jamal into a garbage can

when he sees the boy trying on his mother's high heels.

"I'm glad that I can show the African-American community that this is what you're doing to your son, this is what you're doing to your nephew, this is what you're doing to the kid down the street," Howard said.

Daniels said that he believes if his father were alive today, he would have evolved in his thinking.

Jussie Smollett, the actor who portrays Jamal, said he's been overwhelmed by the response to the storyline that he has seen in social media.

If there are viewers who can see themselves in Jamal, "that's incredibly dope and I embrace that," Smollett said.

At a time the movie industry is under fire for its commitment to diversity — only white actors received nominations when 2015's Oscar contenders were announced — *Empire* is seen as making strides in that area.

Taraji P. Henson, the actress who plays Lucious' wife Cookie, said entertainment executives take notice when shows dominated by minority cast members make money.

Viewers want to see people who look like them on television, Smollett said. They're also interested in people that don't look like them, he said.

"Right now we're seeing people enjoy the culture of America, the culture of the world," Daniels said. "We're showing real life now."

Empire airs Wednesdays at 8 p.m. on Fox.

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ENTERTAINMENT BRIEFS

MILWAUKEE HACKERS DOC 'THE 414s' ACQUIRED BY CNN AFTER SUNDANCE PREMIERE

CNN will launch a short documentary film series this spring through its digital channels and the first film in its roster will have a distinctly Milwaukee flair.

The 414s: The Original Teenage Hackers, which made its world premiere at the Sundance Film Festival on Jan. 23, was acquired by CNN Films, and will be one of at least four films released as part of the brand.

The 11-minute documentary tells the story of a group of Milwaukee teens who terrified the nation in 1983 when they broke into dozens of computer networks in one of the first hacks covered by the media.

SCOTT WALKER GETS DROPKICK MURPHYS' IRISH UP

The GOP has a longstanding tradition of using liberal musicians' songs in their campaigns without permission, and Gov. Scott Walker's has joined the fold. During his entrance to a speech at the Iowa Freedom Summit — a precursor to his possible run for the presidency in 2016 — Walker played "I'm Shipping Up To Boston," a song recorded by working-class advocates Dropkick Murphys and written by even bigger working-class advocate Woody Guthrie. The choice didn't go over well with the band, who tweeted at the governor's two Twitter accounts: "please

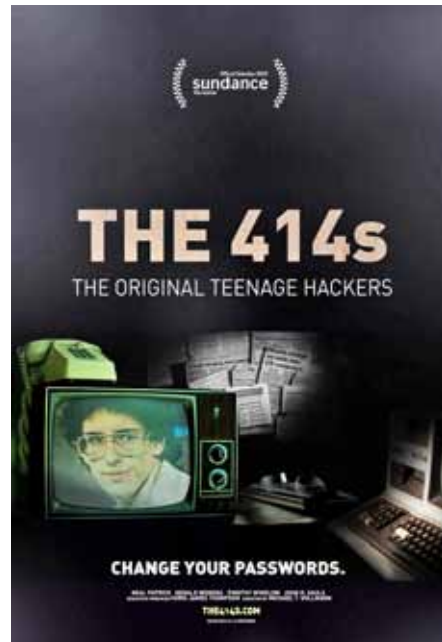


PHOTO: COURTESY

stop using our music in any way...we literally hate you !!! Love, Dropkick Murphys."

This isn't even the first time Dropkick Murphys showed displeasure with Wisconsin politicians co-opting the band's music. In 2012, the band posted a Facebook message about state Rep. Jeff Fitzgerald using the same song for his walk-on at the Wisconsin

GOP convention, an act the band compared to "a white supremacist coming out to gangsta rap."

DUSTIN DIAMOND PLEADS NOT GUILTY IN BAR FIGHT

Cue the Very Special Episode trailer now: Dustin Diamond, the actor who played Screech in the '90s TV show *Saved by the Bell* appeared in Ozaukee County Circuit Court this month and pleaded not guilty to charges that he stabbed a man in a bar fight on Christmas Day. Diamond and fiancée Amanda Schutz were both at the Grand Avenue Saloon in Port Washington when she and the man stabbed allegedly got into an altercation. The stabbed man told police he shoved Diamond forcefully and didn't realize he was cut until later. Diamond pleaded not guilty to two misdemeanors and a felony, second-degree reckless endangering safety, and was released on bond.

ICE SCULPTOR AIMS TO CREATE WALL RIVALING ICE CAVES

A northern Wisconsin man is on a quest to build a freestanding wall of ice outside the city of Superior, with nothing more than self-taught engineering skills and a robot-controlled spray gun parked just feet from the St. Louis River.

Roger Hanson, dubbed the "Iceman," has been working on the wall since December,

according to the *Wisconsin State Journal*.

He hopes to build a record-breaking 75-foot-tall, 90-foot-wide wall at Festival Park on Barker's Island.

The project, financed in part by Superior's City Council, is meant to be a tourist attraction for the area, comparable to the nearby ice caves of the Apostle Islands and the 380-foot-long Whaleback ship S.S. Meteor, moored near the sculpture.

Hanson expects to finish the sculpture in February and light shows are planned for three Saturday nights in February. The finished project will use an estimated 1 million gallons of water and weigh 6-7 million pounds.

— from WiG and AP reports



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- Track _____
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- Feudal laborer
- Like humor or martini
- Charades action
- 401(k) alternative
- *Super Bowl host state
- Fracas
- Precedes birth
- Former measure of U.S. economy
- Made cow noise
- Mixtures
- Earned at Wharton or Kellogg
- "_____ it!" said the accused
- *Hendricks and Ginn Jr.
- Make a scene
- Type of car

DOWN

- Wound, eventually
- South American monkey
- All excited
- Vampire's feature, pl.
- One who _____ out at the site of a snake
- Curved molding
- "The Raven" writer
- Airy spirit

- Dropped or fell
- Source of artist's inspiration
- ____-friendly
- Understands
- Alfresco meal
- Unhealthy vapors
- *Teams rely on this kicker sense
- To the point
- Lady of *Applause*
- Poppy product
- Opera composer Giuseppe _____
- *Cleats, helmet, pads
- Pack like sardines
- Was violently angry
- Shade of yellow
- *49
- Copenhagen native
- *Super Bowl halftime performer
- Finno-_____ language
- Malignant or benign ones
- Bowling target
- Drab and unattractive people
- Molten rock
- Before, in the olden days
- Sir Mix-_-_-
- Rapid series of short loud sounds
- Footnote acronym
- Menageries
- A quarrel
- *Not a Super Bowl party without it?
- Bulgarian money
- Place of forbidden fruit
- *Where to watch

Answers on page 45

myART myiDENTITY myPECKSCHOOL

"The Peck School of the Arts' faculty welcomed me in a way that made me comfortable to take risks, be a leader, grow as an individual, and expand as an artist."



Jade Taylor, BFA Musical Theatre
Anticipated graduation Spring 2015

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