



# We are water

*page 6*



PHOTO: COURTESY VISIT MILWAUKEE

Kayaks on the Milwaukee River. Milwaukee Water Commons wants to see every Milwaukeean have meaningful water experiences.

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# News with a twist



## WIGWAG

By Lisa Neff and Louis Weisberg



### DON'T LET IT GO

*Frozen* fans since the film debuted have been nudging Disney to deliver a sequel in which Queen Elsa finds true love — with a girlfriend. And Idina Menzel, the voice of Elsa, recently told *Entertainment Tonight* she thinks that's a great idea. Disney has to contend with a lack of LGBT characters in its productions. And *Frozen* director Chris Buck told MTV last year that there are plans to deal with issues of the day in the sequel.

### IS HE FOR REAL?

The Louisiana Legislature in May passed a bill setting the minimum age for dancers in strip clubs at 21. The measure was promoted as a way to fight human traf-

ficking and had unanimous support in both chambers. But it didn't pass without controversy. Republican Rep. Kenny Harvard suggested an amendment — to set the legal requirements for strippers at 21-28 years old and less than 160 pounds.

### PIGEONS ON THE PILL

Business owners in La Crosse are putting pigeons on the pill. Feeding stations atop downtown buildings include contraceptive feed aimed at lowering reproduction in the birds, who leave droppings on sidewalks, awnings and park benches. As of this writing, there have been no protests from Wisconsin Family Action or other religious groups.

### TOTALLY AIRY B&B

The rental company Home-Away will transform the first-floor of the Eiffel Tower into living space for four people to use as a vacation home in June. The competition for the unique lodging coincides with the UEFA Euro soccer tournament in Paris. Earlier this spring, the Art Institute of Chicago offered an opportu-

nity for "vacationers" to occupy Vincent Van Gogh's bedroom, begging the question: What's the most unique spot for temporary lodging in Milwaukee?

### FOOL ME ONCE ...

A huge tiger shark named Chessie hasn't learned her lesson about taking the bait. South Carolina local news outlets reported the 1,400-pound shark tagged a year ago was caught again in late May off Hilton Head Island by the same fisherman. Chessie has traveled 2,000 miles in the past year and also gained some weight. The shark weighed 1,200 pounds last year. The tracking is a project of the nonprofit OCEARCH, which works to learn about the movement of sharks.

### HOGAN'S PAY PAL

*Forbes* magazine and *The New York Times* reported that billionaire tech investor Peter Thiel is the financier behind Hulk Hogan's lawsuit against Gawker Media. Hogan sued over a sex tape published by *Gawker*, which is appealing a Florida jury's \$140 million verdict against the company. Thiel sits on Facebook's board of

directors and co-founded PayPal. Why back Hulk Hogan? *Forbes* said they have a "shared enemy."

### TEXAS TEACHIN'

Officials in Texas' North East Independent School District won't hand down any punishment after the circulation of a video showing high school students using a cat's intestines as a jump rope during an anatomy lesson. The district said the teacher used the lesson to illustrate the durability and length of intestines.

### BAD QUOTES

A Pennsylvania school district is apologizing after quotes from Adolf Hitler, Josef Stalin and an Islamic State terrorist leader were printed in this year's high school yearbook. School district officials told the *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*, "Though the content of the quotes was reviewed thoroughly, the attributions clearly were not." The Hitler quote is, "Words build bridges into unexplored regions." Stalin's statement is more menacing: "Ideas are more powerful than guns. We would not let our enemies have guns, so why would we let them have ideas?" Stu-

dents can get a refund on the books or stickers to cover up the quotes.

### NOT FAR FROM THE TREE

Matt Walker, son of Gov. Scott Walker, has taken a job working for North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory, who's at the center of a national firestorm over the anti-LGBT measure he signed. The law has cost the state tens of millions already in canceled business expansions, concerts and conventions. Matt Walker graduated in May from Marquette University, which also would have been his dad's alma mater if he hadn't dropped out.

### FROWN ON FACIAL HAIR

A Louisiana chapter of the NAACP wants a school superintendent and three school board members to resign after a high school valedictorian was blocked from participating in graduation for refusing to shave his beard. Andrew Jones says he had been allowed to wear facial hair all year, with no warning until the morning of graduation practice when he was told to shave or be barred from the ceremony.



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## Milwaukeeans unite behind water initiative

By Lisa Neff  
Staff writer

For some Milwaukeeans, summer begins with a dance in the Summerfest fountain during PrideFest.

For others, it begins with a starry night paddle on the Milwaukee River or the first beach day.

Water puts the sparkle in Milwaukee's summers and helps define the city's identity.

"I live to be on the water," says Bobby Lagerstrom, an avid kayaker and competitive swimmer. "That's what brought me here. Milwaukee is a great water town."

In mid-May, Milwaukee Water Commons, a project of the Milwaukee Environmental Consortium, brought several hundred people together at the Best Place at the Historic Pabst Brewery for the Confluence Gathering. The event was the culmination of a two-year process involving 1,300 people and more than 30 groups interested in shaping a vision to make Milwaukee a model water city.

"It was a very robust conversation," said Milwaukee Water Commons executive director Ann Brummitt. "We talked to people about water — what matters, what are the issues, what are the concerns. And then we really asked people about a vision going forward."

Milwaukee Water Commons' slogan is "Together, we're shaping Milwaukee's water



PHOTO: COURTESY VISIT MILWAUKEE

**A 2015 PrideFest visitor enjoys the fountain at Henry Maier Festival Park. A goal of the Milwaukee Water Commons is to encourage people to celebrate water in arts and culture.**

future." The nonprofit abides by these principles: Water is an essential element for all life on Earth. Water belongs to no one and cannot be owned. People have a responsibility to protect and preserve clean fresh water. Decisions about the care and use of water must involve everyone. And the Great Lakes are a gift, having "nurtured our ancestors and shaped us as a people and as a community. They continue to sustain us."

The group operates a water school that collaborates with other organizations on specific programs and cultivating neighborhood leadership. MWC also conducts town hall-style meetings and workshops

and works with local artists.

The Confluence Gathering provided the opportunity to launch six water initiatives under the "Water City Agenda." The vision is for Milwaukee to:

- Be a national leader in "blue-green" jobs. Work is underway to promote the blue-green economy in the city, but the scale needs to grow, according to Brummitt, who previously directed the Milwaukee River Greenway Coalition and worked as a school teacher.

- Make safe, clean and affordable tap water available to every Milwaukeean. A chief concern in Milwaukee, as it is nationally, is aging pipes. "While our tap water that comes out of Milwaukee Water Works is very good, by the time it gets to your kitchen faucet there's a chance of lead," Brummitt said.

- Advance green infrastructure practices

**WATER** next page

### BECOME A COMMONER

For more information or to get involved with Milwaukee Water Commons, visit [milwaukeewatercommons.org](http://milwaukeewatercommons.org).

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**WATER** from previous page

across the city. "There's a lot of really good energy going into this goal already," according to Brummitt, who said elements

### Carpenter raises concerns for pipeline spills

Wisconsin Sen. Tim Carpenter, D-Milwaukee, asked U.S. Sens. Tammy Baldwin and Ron Johnson to join with U.S. Sens. Gary Peters and Debbie Stabenow of Michigan to make sure the Department of Transportation classifies underwater pipelines in and around the Great Lakes as "offshore" facilities.

Why? Carpenter said under federal law cleanup for "onshore" facilities is capped at \$634 million but "offshore" facilities must have resources to cover all costs.

If there were a spill in the water from the pipeline that's transporting 23 million gallons of crude oil and liquid gas daily, the cleanup could be \$1 billion. The pipeline crosses the Straits of Mackinac, connecting Lake Michigan and Lake Huron.

"Our incentives should be to protect the waters and avoid economic catastrophe of spills," Carpenter said. — WiG

in new developments might include rain gardens and green roofs, bioswales and curb cuts.

- Make Milwaukee's three rivers and Lake Michigan swimmable and fishable.
- Offer every Milwaukeean meaningful water experiences. Brummitt made this observation: For all the sailing, kayaking, swimming, fishing and strolling that takes place in Milwaukee, there are children in the city who've never been to one of the rivers.

- Celebrate local waters in arts and culture.

"There's a lot of work to be done," said Brummitt. "As strong as our water culture is, we're still losing ground. We can't keep pace with the environmental degradation. So that's where we felt there was room to bring in more people and more perspective. Everybody has something to say about the future of water in Milwaukee."

In the coming months, think tanks will be established to tackle each initiative and, Aug. 7, an annual H2O happening — We Are Water — will be held at Bradford Beach on the Lake Michigan shore.

Institutional partners in carrying out the Water City Agenda include the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee School of Freshwater Sciences and the Metropolitan Milwaukee Sewerage District.

"The science is there, the tools are available and our water policy researchers are ready to help turn these transformative ideas into reality," Jenny Kehl, director of

the Center for Water Policy at UW-M, said in a news statement.

Nonprofit partners in the campaign include leading environmental groups, as well as community and neighborhood organizations such as Alice's Garden, a nonprofit in the Johnsons Park neighborhood.

"The work Milwaukee Water Commons has taken on is some of the most important work this city will do," said Venice Williams, director of Alice's Garden. "It is about preserving the dignity of the ancestral waters of Lake Michigan. It is also about helping every human being who quenches their thirst, bathes their body, rinses their clothes, mops their floors, enjoys their cup of tea to understand one cannot exist without water."

A sister project, with a regional focus, is the Great Lakes Commons, and organizers in other Great Lakes cities, specifically Toronto and Cleveland, are at work employing the "commons" concept.

"When we started this work, we started to look and see if there was a model for this kind of thing," said Brummitt. "But there just isn't a well established framework for a water city. This is our foray into creating that. It will be developed. That's coming. We're shaping the agenda in Milwaukee."

### Great Lakes group moves Waukesha water request forward

Representatives of Great Lakes states and provinces have given preliminary approval to a precedent-setting request by Waukesha to draw water from Lake Michigan.

The regional group agreed the water diversion application by Waukesha complies with a Great Lakes protection compact if certain conditions are met, including an average limit of 8.2 million gallons a day — 20 percent less than the original request.

The group includes eight states and two Canadian provinces. Minnesota abstained from voting during a conference call earlier this spring.

Governors of the eight states, or their representatives, will meet in Chicago later this month to consider the conditional approval and vote on Waukesha's request, which has drawn substantial opposition from environmental groups.

— WiG

### SAVE THE DATE

On Aug. 7, Milwaukee Water Commons will present We Are Water 2016, a communitywide celebration at the north end of Bradford Beach. The event will feature song and dance, artwork and spoken word, and the creation of a large, illuminated image of the Great Lakes in the sand.

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# Lawmakers take action against opioid abuse

By Lisa Neff

Staff writer

In mid-May, the U.S. House of Representatives took up 18 measures aimed at addressing the opioid crisis.

The House, led by Speaker Paul Ryan of Wisconsin, decided to deal with separate bills offered by various members instead of the far-reaching comprehensive legislation passed by the U.S. Senate by a vote of 94-1 earlier in the spring.

The Senate measure, the Comprehensive Addiction Reform Act, is sponsored by Republican Rob Portman of Ohio and Democrat Sheldon Whitehouse of Rhode Island.

Whitehouse said CARA "treats addiction like the illness it is."

CARA would:

- Expand prevention and educational efforts — particularly aimed at teens, parents and other caretakers — to prevent abuse and to promote treatment.

- Make the opioid antidote naloxone more widely available to law enforcement agencies and other first responders to help in the reversal of overdoses to save lives.

- Provide resources to identify and more effectively treat incarcerated individuals suffering from addiction disorders.

- Increase the number of disposal sites for unwanted prescription medications to keep them out of the hands of children.

- Launch an evidence-based opioid and heroin treatment and intervention program and promote treatment best practices throughout the country.

- Strengthen prescription drug monitoring programs.

Among the House measures that have bipartisan support is one sponsored by Republican Jim Sensenbrenner of Wisconsin and Democrat Sheila Jackson Lee of Texas that could provide about \$103 million in federal grants over five years to state and local law enforcement, training, treatment and drug-monitoring programs.

None of the bills passed by the House provided actual funding, however.

## THE OPIOID CRISIS

National rates of death from opioid-related overdose are almost four times higher

than they were in 2000, according to the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

Additionally, emergency room visits linked to misuse or abuse of prescription opioids are up by more than 50 percent since 2004 and more than 10 million Americans reported using prescription opioids for nonmedical purposes in 2014.

In Wisconsin, the Department of Health Services has said more residents died in 2013 as a result of drug overdose than from motor vehicle crashes, suicide, breast cancer, colon cancer, firearms, influenza or an HIV-related illness. Of those overdose deaths, opioid pain relievers such as oxycodone, hydrocodone and methadone contributed to 45 percent and heroin contributed to 27 percent, according to a September 2015 DHS report.

Overdose deaths in the state doubled from 2004 to 2013. The rate of overdose deaths is higher among males than females and, on average, people who died of a drug overdose were in their early 40s.

## WISCONSIN'S RESPONSE

When the DHS announced its findings, state health officials also announced an expansion of opioid abuse prevention and treatment efforts funded with state and federal dollars, including a \$3.8 million grant from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and \$8 million and \$3 million grants from the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

In 2015, the DHS awarded grants to opioid treatment services in northern Wisconsin using funding provided by the HOPE/Heroin and Opiate Prevention and Education legislative package signed into law in 2014 and offered by Republican Rep. John Nygren.

Earlier this year, Gov. Scott Walker signed additional HOPE bills introduced by Nygren, including AB 365, which requires law enforcement agents to report to their agency and the drug-monitoring program the name and birth date of any individual suspected of prescription drug violation, theft, overdose or death.

The governor also signed AB 660, which



PHOTO: PIXABAY

**National rates of death from opioid-related overdose are almost four times higher than they were in 2000, according to the *New England Journal of Medicine*.**

allows the state boards to issue guidelines regarding best practices in prescribing controlled substances.

Yet another measure aims to prevent the spread of "pill mills" in the state and creates a state pain clinic registry overseen by DHS.

A co-sponsor of the Senate CARA bill, Democratic U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin recently hosted a roundtable discussion in La Crosse on opioid addiction and urged an

end to delays in federal action.

"It's time to act immediately to supply emergency funding for prevention, treatment and recovery efforts," Baldwin said.

The next step at the federal level is for a joint committee to reconcile the House and Senate legislation into a bill that can win approval in both chambers. Lawmakers want to send a bill to the president before July 2.

## Public wants more government action

Two-thirds of Americans believe the federal and state governments should do more to combat the nation's heroin and prescription drug epidemic, according to new results from the Kaiser Health Tracking Poll.

Only a third in the Kaiser poll said heroin abuse is an "extremely serious" health problem in the United States and even fewer — only about a quarter — said abuse of strong prescription painkillers is an "extremely serious" health problem. This is despite 44 percent of Americans reporting that they personally know someone who has been addicted to prescription painkillers.

Still, two-thirds of Americans acknowledge prescription pain relief abuse as either "extremely serious" or "very serious."

The Kaiser poll showed Americans feel the effort to address the growing abuse of opioids is not aggressive enough at any level — not by federal and state governments and not by doctors and users. However, more Americans fault the users than government: About 70 percent said drug users aren't doing enough to deal with addiction and 60 percent said federal efforts are too small.

In the survey, about 80 percent said

the following steps would be at least somewhat effective:

- Increasing pain management training for doctors and students.
- Increasing access to addiction treatment programs.
- Increasing public awareness programs.
- Increasing research about pain and pain management.
- Monitoring how doctors prescribe prescription painkillers.

The poll, conducted in mid-April, also revealed most people don't know the Affordable Care Act mandates that insurance plans provide mental health benefits and substance abuse treatment under the same copays, deductibles and coverage limits they apply to other medical services.

"This survey is just the latest in a long line of evidence that this out-of-control epidemic is affecting every one of us — no matter our background, no matter where we live," said U.S. Sen. Rob Portman, R-Ohio. "I agree that the federal government must do more and be a better partner with state and local officials who are on the front lines every day."

— L.N.

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# Troubled frac sand mining company faces opposition over expansion on Wis. border

By Haley Henschel

Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism

A frac sand mining company that recently opened a site in Wisconsin is facing opposition to plans for a sevenfold expansion of its underground mine in Clayton County, Iowa.

Pattison Sand Co. has requested the rezoning of 746 acres of land from agricultural to heavy industrial. The land will be used for eventual expansion of its underground mine from its current size of about 100 acres. The site, which includes surface mining on some of its 1,600 acres, lies along the Mississippi River directly across the state line from Bagley, Wisconsin.

Many of the company's roughly 150 employees live in southwestern Wisconsin.

Since Pattison Sand's Clayton County site began operations in 2005, it has racked up more workplace violations than any other industrial sand mine in the United States, according to data from the Mine Safety and Health Administration analyzed by the Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism. Among the violations is a 2008 accident in which a front-end loader with a defective rear-view mirror backed over a worker, killing her.

In April, Patrick O'Shaughnessy, a professor of occupational and environmental health in the University of Iowa engineering college, told members of a county committee studying the expansion that it would be wise to review the mine's record and reputation.

"There are good apples and there are bad apples in every industry, from swine rearing to sand mining," O'Shaughnessy said. "Is this someone who has flagrant violations constantly, or is this someone who's typically got a good sense of safety for their workers, environmental consciousness, and they want to be a good neighbor?"

O'Shaughnessy said residents living around the proposed expansion face a low risk of inhaling airborne silica particles from the mine. Inhaling silica can cause silicosis, an irreversible and sometimes fatal disease that can cause cancer and tuberculosis.

The mine produces sand for hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, which involves injecting water, fine-grained sand and chemicals at high pressure to break apart underground rock and release trapped oil and natural gas.

## HISTORY OF VIOLATIONS

According to the Center's analysis, between April 2005 and January of this year, Pattison Sand's site in Clayton County had 934 violations from the Mine Safety and Health Administration. The company paid \$279,000 in fines. Wedron Silica Co. in Illinois — the industrial sand mine with the second most violations in that time period — received 501 violations.

According to the data, little has changed since a 2013 *Wall Street Journal* analysis found that mining safety officials had cited



PHOTO: KATHLEEN MASTERSON / HARVEST PUBLIC MEDIA

**At Pattison Sand Co., seen here in 2011, fine-grained silica sand is funneled onto conveyor belts that move it through a giant, hissing rotary dryer, which uses heat to dry any wetness the sand retains after being washed. Some residents living near the Pattison Sand's proposed expansion in Clayton County, Iowa, are concerned about being exposed to silica dust, which can cause lung damage if inhaled. The mine is on the Wisconsin border.**

Pattison Sand more than any other sand or gravel mine in the country.

The Center also found that 55 Pattison Sand employees filed workers' compensation claims for injuries sustained at the Iowa location between 2005 and January of this year. Claims include fractures, dislocations, sprains, hernias and heat prostration. Two of the claims were filed for respiratory problems.

In an interview, Christopher Hensler, district manager for MSHA's north central district, said the regulatory agency's inspectors have spent a lot of time at Pattison Sand's Iowa site, but the sheer number of violations does not necessarily indicate a larger problem.

"The bulk of their violations are very simple electrical violations and defects of equipment that affect safety," he said.

One 2008 violation involving defects of equipment, however, resulted in a fatality. In that incident, a front-end loader backed up, striking and killing a worker. MSHA's investigation found the accident was caused in part by the equipment's defective rear-view mirror and the lack of visible reflective material on the employee. Pattison Sand was fined \$70,000 for that violation.

A 2014 fire and multiple roof collapses in 2011 also generated violations that resulted in temporary shutdowns. The collapses and an ensuing legal battle shuttered the underground portion of the mine for several months in 2011 and 2012.

Other infractions at the Iowa site include exposing workers to harmful airborne contaminants, failing to have protective equipment and clothing, and neglecting to provide at least two escape ways to the surface in the mine.

Andy Garcia-Rivera, a former industrial

hygiene compliance officer for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, said although mines do tend to have many violations, the number of infractions Pattison Sand's Iowa location has amassed is "unusual."

"It tells me that there's something wrong," he said. "Sometimes employers do take shortcuts."

## OFFICIAL DEFENDS COMPANY RECORD

Tim Adkins, who joined Pattison Sand 14 months ago as health and safety director, said after the April meeting that claiming Pattison Sand's record is the worst in the industry is a "terrible, terrible, misconception" and an "out-of-context statement to make." He attributed some of the past violations to lack of experience by the Pattison family, who used to store and ship grain from the underground caverns that are now mined.

"When they (Pattison Sand) went into the mining industry, they didn't know about the mining industry," Adkins said. "They'd never dealt with MSHA. They didn't know MSHA regulations."

Adkins added that underground mines such as Pattison Sand's generate more violations because they are inspected twice as often as surface mines, four times a year versus two.

"Pattison Sand is a good player, good operator," Adkins said. "They care about their employees, they take extra steps to go above and beyond MSHA requirements, MSHA standards."

But even when compared to other similar underground mines, Pattison's track record is not stellar. In 2010, 2011 and 2014, the company's Iowa mine had above-average

rates among underground metal and non-metal mines of violations deemed "significant and substantial" by MSHA.

In 2011, Pattison Sand sued the agency after it shut down the majority of the underground mine following multiple roof collapses, including one in which at least 30 tons of rock fell onto an excavator. The miner operating it was unhurt. The lawsuit and appeals kept the underground part of the mine closed for several months.

Besides Pattison's Iowa mine, MSHA lists only two other underground industrial sand mines in the country. Both are located in Pierce County, Wisconsin, and operated by the Wisconsin Industrial Sand Co. Since 2005, one of the mines has received 279 violations — a fraction of the number racked up by Pattison. The other, operating since 2008, has received 127 violations.

## OPPONENTS CONTINUE TO FIGHT

At the April meeting in Elkader, 37 people submitted comments raising questions about Pattison Sand's record of MSHA violations, burning at the company's Iowa site, workers' respiratory problems, and conflicting results of air quality and dust studies.

Kathy Kachel, who attended the meeting, blames Pattison Sand's Iowa mine for the white sand she dusts inside her house. She lives in Bagley and can see the facility from her porch. Kachel would like to see it shut down.

"There is a proliferation of silica (sand) at this point for fracking," Kachel said. "It's not healthy for anybody — the environment, the wildlife, my grandchildren."

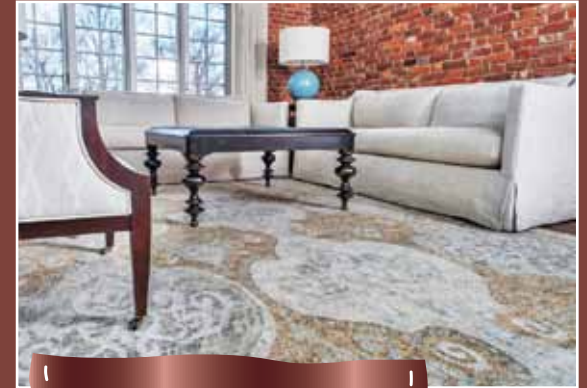
In Wisconsin, Pattison Sand operates a surface mine in Bridgeport, about a 30-minute drive northeast of its Iowa site. Four Bridgeport residents and the Crawford Stewardship Project, an environmental group that promotes sustainability and local control of natural resources, tried unsuccessfully to block that mine. Its status is currently listed as "intermittent," based on the number of hours worked at the site.

Since it began operating in August 2013, the Bridgeport mine has received seven violations for which the company paid \$824 in fines.

Garcia-Rivera said violations at mines that are not yet fully operational, such as Pattison Sand's Bridgeport site, are to be expected. MSHA is only required to inspect such intermittent surface mines once a year.

*Digital and multimedia director Coburn Dukehart contributed to this report. The nonprofit Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism collaborates with Wisconsin Public Radio, Wisconsin Public Television, other news media and the University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Journalism and Mass Communication.*

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# Walker ordered to release 82 pages of records that reveal the truth about his UW mission rewrite

By Scott Bauer

AP writer

Gov. Scott Walker released 82 pages of records he wanted to keep secret after a judge ordered them to be made public.

He released the emails and attachments just before 5 p.m. May 27, at the beginning of a three-day Memorial Day weekend.

The judge's ruling had come on the same day Walker wrote a tweet poking fun at Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton over questions related to her official emails when she was secretary of state.

In Walker's case, the records were related to his 2015 proposal to change the University of Wisconsin System's mission statement, known as the "Wisconsin Idea," by dropping references to public service and seeking a broader truth, while adding a reference to career readiness.

Walker last year said it was a "mistake someone made" and a "matter of confusion" to assume his desire to add career readiness to the mission statement meant

to also drop the other references.

But, in fact, the emails reveal conversations among Walker's staff, bill drafters and others in his administration working on the budget mostly in late 2014 and early 2015. One document, which includes comments from unnamed UW officials to a draft of the governor's proposal, shows they suggested to Walker's administration that the mission statement not be changed.

"The Legislature has been credited with crafting careful and wonderfully descriptive language to create the System," the UW comments said. "The language is frequently quoted. If the purpose of the System is largely unchanged, this language should remain unchanged as well."

But in a column labeled "SBO Decision," referring to Walker's budget office, the request from UW is marked as denied.

"The Gov requested a simplified and clearer mission and purpose statements," the document said. "The Board of Regents is free to adopt any additional statements

of mission or purpose."

The prospect of dropping the statement, a cherished part of the university's tradition, sparked an immediate and intense backlash when the Center for Media and Democracy first spotted it in the budget. Under fire, Walker backed away from the proposal and suggested he had nothing to do with it.

CMD filed a lawsuit against Walker, saying he was illegally withholding records related to the creation of the proposal to refocus the "Wisconsin Idea."

In her ruling, Dane County Circuit Judge Amy Smith rejected the argument that Walker could withhold the records because they were part of a "deliberative process." Smith said no such provision exists in Wisconsin state law.

"I have turned over all my emails. I have been incredibly open about doing that," Walker said, in an apparent reference to email disclosures he made related to a pair of investigations into his time as Milwaukee

County executive and his recall election campaign.

But Smith ruled that Walker, as governor, wrongly withheld 12 email exchanges and six attachments. The judge said Walker's concerns over releasing the records only outweighed the public's interest in disclosure on three other attachments.

"Wisconsin Open Records Law has long held that the public interest in disclosure — the right of the people of Wisconsin to know what their government is doing — is a strong presumption for every record," Smith wrote.

Brendan Fischer, attorney for the group that sued, praised the ruling for striking down Walker's attempt to create a "deliberative process" exemption to the open records law.

AP writer Scott Bauer contributed to this report.

## Jobs agency may have given millions in unearned tax credits

By Louis Weisberg

Staff writer

Millions of dollars disappeared from Gov. Scott Walker's embattled job creation agency and millions more were awarded to companies, many of them Walker supporters, that never followed through on creating new jobs. In fact, many of them shipped jobs out of Wisconsin.

Now a new review shows the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, which Walker no longer helms, erroneously awarded more than \$412,000 in tax credits to companies over how many jobs they created. But that's just how much that's been identified thus far. The final total could be in the millions, the review showed.

The WEDC revealed the tax credit issue at a board meeting earlier this spring, when it reported it was checking on discrepancies

in credits awarded and actual jobs created.

But the new report was the first time the size of the problem was detailed.

The investigation was prompted by an investigative report last fall that revealed the WEDC exceeded its authority and improperly awarded more than \$21 million in taxpayer funding, much of it to Walker's campaign contributors.

*The Wisconsin State Journal* reported in late May that the agency is reviewing 222 tax credits awarded since 2006 over the way jobs were counted. Based on 18 awards checked thus far, there was more than \$448,000 in over-awarded credits. About \$36,000 was under-awarded.

With so many more credits to check, the overage may go significantly higher. WEDC chief executive Mark Hogan declined to give an estimate to a board committee.

Hogan said the agency might try to recoup any excess credits by reducing the amount of tax credits that have yet to be verified.

The committee discussed the issue in open session before moving into closed session for further talks about the tax credit problem.

WEDC has been plagued by years of scandal. Last year, it handed out \$90 million in awards — much more than the previous year — but created even fewer jobs, according to its own annual report.

At the time, Democratic lawmakers on the WEDC board repeated a call for replacing the agency with a new public entity.

"I am deeply concerned that taxpayers



are not getting the needed bang for their buck at WEDC," Assembly Minority Leader Peter Barca said in a statement at the time.

During his first campaign, Walker promised to create 250,000 jobs during his first term in office — a number he still hasn't come close to attaining after nearly six years. WEDC was purportedly created to fulfill that promise.

AP contributed to this report.

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# Docs prescribe single-payer plan



PHOTO: PIXABAY

By Lisa Neff

Staff writer

More than 2,200 physicians are calling for a break from the private insurance model of financing medical care and the creation of a publicly financed, single-payer national system.

"Despite the passage of the Affordable Care Act six years ago, 30 million Americans remain uninsured, an even greater number are underinsured, financial barriers to care like co-pays and deductibles are rising, bureaucracy is growing, provider networks are narrowing and medical costs are continuing to climb," said Dr. Adam Gaffney, a Boston-based pulmonary disease and critical care specialist.

Gaffney co-chaired a working group of more than 2,000 physicians. The group endorsed a single-payer plan — sometimes called Medicare for All or universal care — in a proposal in the *American Journal of Public Health*.

Doctors in the District of Columbia and 48 states, including Wisconsin, signed on to the proposal, which calls for a national health program providing for:

- Patients to choose to go to any doctor or hospital and for most hospitals and clinics to remain privately owned and operated. Physicians would continue to practice on a fee-for-service basis or receive salaries from group practices, hospitals or clinics.
- Financing of the national health program would be from current sources of government health spending put into a single fund, with new taxes that would be offset by reductions in premiums and out-of-pocket spending. Co-pays would be eliminated, as would deductibles.
- A single-payer system that would save about \$500 billion annually by eliminating the overhead of insurance firms and the paperwork they inflict on hospitals and doctors.
- An administrative savings from a streamlined system that would offset the costs of covering the uninsured and upgraded coverage for others, including

**A single-payer system would save about \$500 billion annually by eliminating the overhead of insurance firms and the paperwork they inflict on hospitals and doctors, according to a statement by a group of more than 2,200 doctors.**

full coverage of prescription drugs, dental care and long-term care. Savings would be redirected to underfunded health priorities, particularly public health.

"Caring relationships are increasingly taking a back seat to the financial prerogatives of insurance firms, corporate providers and Big Pharma," said Gaffney. "Our patients are suffering and our profession is being degraded and disfigured by these mercenary interests."

The physicians' working group cited a 2008 survey showing 59 percent of Americans supported legislation to establish a national health plan, an increase of 10 percentage points from 2003.

More recently, surveys of Democrats show even higher support for a single-payer plan or an expansion of the Affordable Care Act.

Creating a national health program is a prominent and popular plank in presidential candidate Bernie Sanders' platform, but the physicians' group emphasized non-partisanship.

"Our nation is at a crossroads," Gaffney said.

Dr. Steffie Woolhandler, a co-author of the proposal and a professor of public health at City University at New York's Hunter College, said, "We can continue down this harmful path — or even worse take an alternative free-market route that would compound our problems — or we can embrace the long-overdue remedy that we know will work: the creation of a publicly financed, nonprofit, single-payer system that covers everybody."

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## COMMUNITY BRIEFS



PHOTO: COURTESY

**DIGGS TO CHAIR AIDS WALK:** Taye Diggs will serve as the honorary chair of the AIDS Walk on Oct. 1, which kicks off at the Summerfest Grounds in Milwaukee. For more, go to [aidswalkwis.org](http://aidswalkwis.org).

**HEY NEIGHBORS** The Democratic Party of Wisconsin opened a field office in Milwaukee at 2701 N. Martin Luther King Dr. and issued a call for summer interns and volunteers. Phone banks are being staffed Tuesday and Thursday evenings. For more, go to [milwaukee.dems.org](http://milwaukee.dems.org).

**RAINBOW REAL ESTATE** The Jay Schmidt Group of Keller Williams Realty recently contributed \$11,000 to the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center. The group created The Rainbow House Project and pledged the commission from the sale of

two homes per year. For more information about the project, call 414-517-7716.

**CYCLING INTO SUMMER** The 35th anniversary UPAF Ride for the Arts is June 5, starting at the Summerfest Grounds. Cyclists will ride 10, 25, 45 or 70 miles. To register to ride or volunteer to help, go online to [www.UPAFRide.org](http://www.UPAFRide.org).

**TRIBES AND TOURISM** The Native American Tourism of Wisconsin Conference takes place June 7 in Wabeno. Speakers include Forest County Potawatomi Chairman Gus Frank, Ed Hall of the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs and Paige Williams of Chickasaw Country Tourism. For more, go to [natow.org/conference](http://natow.org/conference).

**MILWAUKEE IN THE MOONLIGHT** Milwaukee Riverkeeper and River Alliance of Wisconsin co-host the 11th annual Milky Moonlight Paddle down the Milwaukee River to Lake Michigan and then back. The event is July 18. For more, go to [milwaukeekeeper.org](http://milwaukeekeeper.org).

**NEW DEAL DESIGNATION** Wisconsin state Rep. Mandela Barnes, D-Milwaukee, was selected as one of 12 people to join NewDEAL/Developing Exceptional American Leaders, a national network committed to highlighting innovative ideas from state and local elected leaders who are "pro-growth progressives." For more, go to [newdealleaders.org](http://newdealleaders.org).



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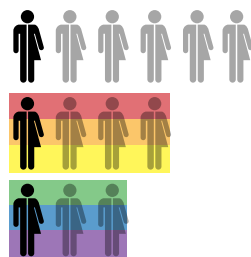
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## Why LGBTQ+ Tobacco Prevention?

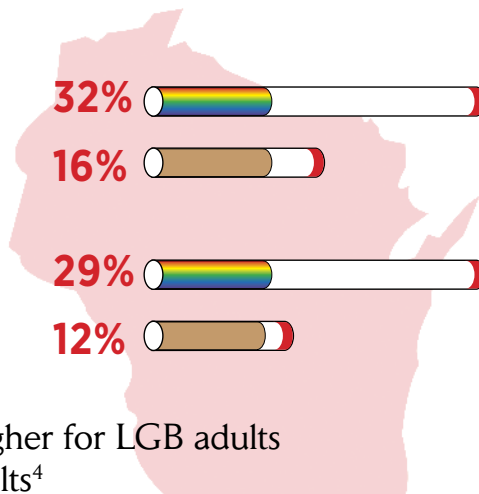
### National Statistics:

- **1** in **6** straight adults smoke<sup>1</sup>
- **1** in **4** LGB adults smoke<sup>1</sup>
- **1** in **3** trans\* adults smoke<sup>2</sup>



### Wisconsin Statistics:

- **Twice** as many LGB+ youth smoke compared to heterosexual youth<sup>3</sup>
- **3 times** as many LGB+ smoked before age 13 compared to heterosexual youth<sup>3</sup>
- Smoking rates remain higher for LGB adults compared to straight adults<sup>4</sup>



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The City of Milwaukee Tobacco-Free Alliance works to prevent and reduce death, disease and healthcare costs caused by tobacco through education and community mobilization.

Acknowledgments & References retrieved from:  
 1. <http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips/groups/lgbt.html> 2. [http://www.thetaskforce.org/static\\_html/downloads/reports/reports/ntds\\_report\\_on\\_health.pdf](http://www.thetaskforce.org/static_html/downloads/reports/reports/ntds_report_on_health.pdf) 3. <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p0/p00827-slides.pdf> 4. <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/P0/p00522w.pptx> 5. Oetting, E.R. et al. (2014) Community Readiness for Community Change, 2nd Edition. Tri-Ethnic Center for Prevention Research, Colorado State University.

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Wisconsin LGBT Chamber of Commerce

## EDITORIAL

# Exposing GOP's attack on the environment

Balancing environmental sustainability and commercial development is not easy. In fact, it's one of the thorniest issues that elected officials face. New development is critical to the state's economy, but our natural resources are vital to the economy and also to our health and quality of life.

Environmental and commercial interests don't have to be at odds. Development can — and often is — handled in sustainable ways. Still, in cases in which the two interests cannot be reconciled, the environment must be given primary consideration. Development is generally transient (look at Detroit), but our natural resources are impossible to replace. Just think of the thousands of extinctions that have been caused by habitat loss.

Under Gov. Scott Walker and the state's Republican leadership, the environment has been under constant attack, even though support for sustainability is strongly bipartisan. The moneyed interests, as represented by Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce, fossil fuel companies and the real-estate industry, have gradually gained the upper hand since Wisconsin came under one-party rule in 2011.

Instead of abiding by the state's strong environmental protections, which were created with input from evidence-based science, Wisconsin's ruling majority overturned them. When scientists at the Department of Natural Resources presented inconvenient truths about the effects of industrial projects, such as mines, on our air and water, Walker got rid of the scientists.

Wisconsin's Republican leadership also has dramatically reduced enforcement of environmental regulations that continue to exist. They simply took the teeth out of regulations they couldn't eliminate.

Data reported earlier this spring by the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation shows the extent to which this has happened. The federation obtained figures tracking forfeitures the state Justice Department collected between 2006 and 2015 for

infractions involving air and water pollution, farm animal waste and hazardous waste.

The data showed that fines for environmental violations were the lowest in 2015 for any year since 1986. Last year's environmental fines also were 86 percent lower than the 10-year average of nearly \$2.2 million a year, and 78 percent lower than the nearly \$1.4 million fines in 2014.

Even unofficial "warnings" issued to illegal polluters dropped 55 percent in 2015, from an average of 516 notices per year to just 233.

Walker has said that declines in the number of violations and fines are positive signs that the DNR is working with businesses and the public to avoid environmental problems.

But neither George Meyer, a former longtime DNR secretary, or Kerry Schumann, executive director of the Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters, are buying Walker's spin. They say it's not possible that actual environmental violations could have dropped 80-90 percent in just one year.

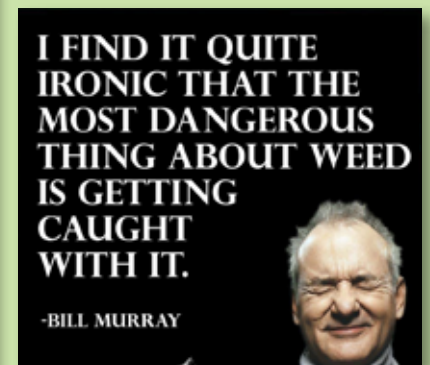
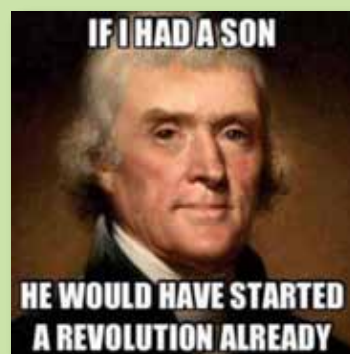
More likely, Meyer says, there are fewer DNR inspections being carried out due to agency staffing and budget cuts, a lack of follow-up by the DNR on violations that it does discover, and reductions in the prosecutions for environmental violations handled by the state Department of Justice.

WLCV says very few polluters pay penalties, even when they're caught. Instead, they're getting off scot-free.

WLVC recently put out a statement stressing its commitment to exposing Walker every time his administration fails to enforce a law meant to protect Wisconsinites, and WiG will continue to highlight his failures. That exposure must prompt us to react by putting pressure on the administration and our state representatives to enforce our air, water and public health laws.

Ultimately, the future of our natural resources depends on us.

## WiG's WEB PICKS *Some of our favorite memes*





## ON THE RECORD



“Homosexuality is a chosen behavior that is contrary to the fundamental unchanging truths that has (sic) been ordained by God in the Bible, recognized by our nations (sic) founders, and shared by the majority of Texans.”

— The TEXAS GOP PLATFORM unintentionally stating, through the use of bad grammar, that God ordained homosexuality and that most Texans are gay.

“Those who do that are true leeches, and they live by spilling the blood of the people who they make slaves of labor.”

— POPE FRANCIS, in a May 19 speech at the Vatican, referring to businesses that hire employees on part-time contracts to avoid providing health and pension benefits.

“I think he needs to release his tax returns. The only two we have show that he hasn't paid a penny in taxes.”

— HILLARY CLINTON on NBC's *Meet the Press* addressing a *Washington Post* report that showed Donald Trump didn't pay taxes for two years in the late 1970s.

“House Republicans' thirst to discriminate against the LGBT community is so strong that they are willing to vote down their own appropriations bill in order to prevent progress over bigotry. In turning against a far-reaching funding bill simply because it affirms protections for LGBT Americans, Republicans have once again lain bare the depths of their bigotry.”

— U.S. House Minority Leader NANCY PELOSI slamming right-wing Republican House members for voting down a routine spending bill over a nondiscrimination amendment.

“Don't hurt 'em. I say that for the television cameras. Do not hurt him even though he's a bad person.”

— DONALD TRUMP during a campaign rally in Anaheim, California, instructing security on how to escort protesters out of the convention center.

“We stand here in the middle of this city and force ourselves to imagine the moment the bomb fell. We force ourselves to feel the dread of children confused by what they see. We listen to a silent cry.”

— BARACK OBAMA in a speech he made at Hiroshima on his recent visit. He's the first serving U.S. president to visit the site of the world's first nuclear attack.

“I have turned over all my emails. I have been incredibly open about doing that.”

— A tweet sent out by SCOTT WALKER slamming Hillary Clinton over questions about her emails while she was secretary of state. The tweet was sent shortly before Dane County Circuit Judge Amy Smith found that Walker wrongly withheld 12 email exchanges and six attachments addressing his attempt to change the University of Wisconsin System's mission statement, known as the “Wisconsin Idea.”



# Infants in the Senate stall nominations

## Opinion

JOSEPH FLEGEL-MISHLOVE

When a teenager calls your actions infantile, you know you're doing something wrong. Still, there are currently some similarities between certain members of Congress and infants — though the comparison may not be entirely fair to infants. Infants inspire me; they are strong, creative and have impressive learning curves. Some senators, meanwhile, are using their stubbornness and creativity to block progress and write a new version of U.S. history that allows them to stave off confirmation hearings for the Supreme Court nominee. This has been discussed in many articles.

What has been less discussed is how U.S. youth are directly affected by the Senate's inaction. Global

climate change is a real and current threat, most directly affecting low-income communities and communities of color. In recent years, we've seen mass shooting after mass shooting in our schools. States like North Carolina pass harmful and oppressive anti-LGBT legislation. And states like Wisconsin enact voter suppression laws that disproportionately affect people of color and young people. Our nation's courts often have the final word on these laws and issues.

But the Senate is putting a strain on the courts at every level. Young people are hurt when we don't have fully-staffed, functioning courts. This is why Sen. Ron Johnson's current obstruction of the confirmation process, combined with his history of obstructing confirmations in Wisconsin district courts, is so dangerous.

I do not mean to sug-

gest that the president's Supreme Court nominee, Merrick Garland, should by default become our next Supreme Court justice. Garland must be asked serious questions, including questions about money in politics and habeas corpus rights. But he must not be silenced. Garland and every individual currently nominated for a judicial appointment — at every level — deserve a fair hearing and an up-or-down vote.

To achieve those hearings, I suggest we return to our infancy. We will be stubborn and strong-willed. We will not back down, and we will continue to demand that judicial nominees have hearings. We will be creative. Overwhelming Johnson's office with letters and phone calls. We will remind him to do his job and that we will head-ing to our

polling places in November. It may not sound creative, but in an age when apathy plagues our politics, voting is perhaps as innovative as it gets.

We will learn. We will reflect on past elections when obstacles were placed between us and our voting booths and we will help our neighbors to ensure that history does not repeat itself. We will reflect on Wisconsin's history of protest (Act 10 anyone?) and remember that we can come together in important ways. When we do, our legislators remember whom they represent and our voices are heard.

*Joseph Flegel-Mishlove is a native of Shorewood. In August, he will return for his second year at Oberlin College.*

WiG welcomes reader opinions. Email [weisberg@wisconsinazette.com](mailto:weisberg@wisconsinazette.com).

# Fire and Police Commission needs youth, diversity

## Opinion

ACLU OF WISCONSIN

*The Police Accountability Workgroup sent the following to Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett and copied the Common Council and Fire and Police Commission Board of Directors.*

The American Civil Liberties Union of Wisconsin defends the civil liberties and rights of all Wisconsin residents and, as you know, has worked on policing matters for many years.

We convene a police accountability workgroup composed of community-based organizations from across Milwaukee.

We expect that you will be considering up to three new candidates for appointment to the Milwaukee Fire and Police Commission Board of Directors and we strongly encourage you to

nominate individuals who possess several of the following attributes:

- Are under 35 years old and have knowledge about and experience with the issues young people are facing.
- Represent targeted populations that have high degrees of police contact.
- The ability to analyze data and think critically.
- The ability to ask difficult questions of authority figures.
- The ability to advocate for the community regarding police issues in the city of Milwaukee and work with diverse constituencies, i.e., the Milwaukee Police Department, Fire and Police Commission, other elected officials, and the community, in an oversight role.
- Experience with human resources and critical skill sets, such as implicit bias training, de-escalation techniques and mental health issues.

• The ability to make policy and procedural recommendations, including creating or evaluating policies and procedures for an organization of more than 100 employees.

• The ability to develop and utilize outreach strategies to obtain input regarding Milwaukee Police Department policy and procedures and their impact on the community.

We also encourage you to hold public listening sessions with prospective commissioners before their appointment.

We believe it is necessary to assure the public that the board of the fire and police commission will be representative of them and responsive to their concerns.

To reiterate: We urge the Mayor to appoint three qualified individuals to the Board of Milwaukee's Fire and Police Commission.

Thank you for your

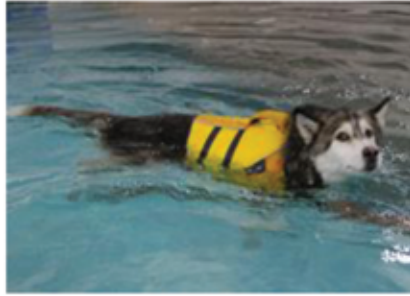
cooperation on behalf of the undersigned community leaders and organizational representatives: Chris Ahmuty, American Civil Liberties Union; Fred Royal, NAACP Milwaukee Branch; Coalition for Justice; Rev. Steve Jerbi, All Peoples Church; Black Student Union at MATC; The Dominican Center; Bishop Jeff Barrow, Greater Milwaukee Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; Hmong Human Rights; Martin Luther King Justice Coalition; Sr. Rose Stietz, MICAH; Milwaukee Christian Center; Milwaukee Public Theatre; Showing Up for Racial Justice - Milwaukee Branch; True Skool; Urban Underground; Voces de la Frontera; Wisconsin Black Historical Society; and YWCA Southeastern Wisconsin



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# Top dog gets dog

## Controversial Maine governor uses clout to adopt dog wanted by a private citizen

The Associated Press

A woman is angry with a local animal shelter for breaking its own rules to give Maine Gov. Paul LePage a stray dog on the day before the dog was put up for adoption. She'd had her heart set on the pooch.

Donna Kincer, development director of the Greater Androscoggin Humane Society, acknowledged the Jack Russell terrier mix was supposed to be made available a day later and on a first-come, first-served basis.

"The governor walks in your front door and it sort of shifts things a little," Kincer told the *Sun Journal*, acknowledging elected officials get special privileges over ordinary citizens at her shelter.

Kincer said she hoped for good publicity from the governor's adoption of the rescue dog from Louisiana.

LePage is a right-wing extremist who was dubbed "America's craziest governor" by *Politico*. His positions on a wide range of issues have put him at odds with the Legislature in a state known for centrism. As a result, LePage is Maine's veto champion.

With that in mind, the governor, who refused to attend a Martin Luther King Jr. Day Breakfast and then told the NAACP on camera to "kiss my butt," named his purloined dog Veto.

But what was a happy moment for the governor, who thinks windmills are run by electric motors, proved heartbreaking for Heath Arsenault. She burst into tears upon learning the governor adopted the dog she wanted.

Arsenault said she'd been going through

**Kincer said she hoped for good publicity from the governor's adoption of the rescue dog from Louisiana.**

an emotionally difficult time and hoped the adoption would boost her spirits. She'd already talked to shelter staff about the adoption and she'd taken the day off from work to be first in line when the dog now known as Veto became available for adoption.

"I felt like they lied to me," she said.

Meanwhile, the governor's family had been looking for a new dog after the death of LePage's Jack Russell named Baxter.

The governor's family alerted him to the dog after spotting him on the shelter website. The governor visited the shelter the day before Arsenault had hoped to adopt him.

"He just stopped in to see the dog," said LePage spokesman Peter Steele. "He was very pleasantly surprised when (the shelter) allowed him to take the dog home."

Arsenault says the shelter was wrong to give the governor the dog he wanted while other people must wait in line.

"No one should be given special privileges, even if they are the governor," she said.



PHOTO: STOCK

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# Out on the town

June 2 - June 16

## A curated calendar of upcoming events

### AMERICAN PLAYERS THEATRE OPENING WEEK

Season runs June 3 to Nov. 20 at American Players Theatre, Spring Green. Prices vary. [americanplayers.org](http://americanplayers.org).

Summer's finally arrived, and with it comes a brand-new slew of shows from American Players, the world-class classical theater company right in our own backyard. Over the course of six months, APT company members will produce nine shows in repertory at their outdoor Up-The-Hill Theatre and indoor Touchstone Theatre, with productions opening and closing one after another as weeks pass. First up: the post-Civil-War-set drama *The African Company Presents Richard III* (opening June 3, Touchstone), *The Comedy of Errors* (June 4, Up-The-Hill) and *Death of a Salesman* (June 10, Up-The-Hill). Check out those and the full schedule now, as APT shows sell out fast. (Matthew Reddin)



### FAMILY OPERA DAY

1:30 p.m. June 4 at Overture Center, Madison. Free. [operafortheyoung.org](http://operafortheyoung.org).

Parents know kids aren't always able to see the good in the unfamiliar — take broccoli for instance. So even though opera is a million times better than leafy mini-trees, it's not the easiest thing to introduce in 2016. Insert Opera for the Young's Family Opera Day, a free afternoon that will get kids excited with an art and music lesson before an original production of Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, designed just for them. Broccoli has its benefits, but it's never put on a show before dinner, right? (Matthew Reddin)



### BILL MAHER

8 p.m. June 5 at the Riverside Theater, Milwaukee. \$50, \$65 reserved seating. [pabsttheater.org](http://pabsttheater.org).

Bill Maher has had a lot of jobs: comedian, writer, producer, political commentator, actor, media critic, TV host. But they all boil down to the same thing — having an opinion and not giving a damn whether you like it. Maher's honesty and insight, on *Politically Incorrect* and his current HBO gig *Real Time*, have garnered him 34 Emmy nominations and a whole lot of controversy because of his stances on not politics and political correctness, as well as religion, legalization of marijuana and the mass media ... to name just a few. (Colton Dunham)

### LISA LAMPANELLI

8 p.m. June 4 at the Pabst Theater, Milwaukee. \$40. [pabsttheater.org](http://pabsttheater.org).

Stand-up comedian Lisa Lampanelli, best known from her appearances on Comedy Central roasts, will bring her no-holds-barred comedy to The Pabst. Known for her racy and raunchy comedy, the "Lovable Queen of Mean" is fresh off her first stand-up special for EPIX, *Back To The Drawing Board*, in which her signature brand of insult humor was mixed with personal anecdotes on her weight loss and divorce. (Colton Dunham)



### SOUL TRAIN

10 p.m. June 4 at Company Brewing, Milwaukee. \$5. [companybrewing.com](http://companybrewing.com).

It's a night for those who miss the '70s and for those who just missed them. Company Brewing will host this homage to the great show *Soul Train* and the R&B music it championed. Rapper AR Wesley's invited a range of guests, including hip-hop artist Mike Regal performing as Don Cornelius himself. Attendees can purchase \$1 wristbands as a donation to the SickLe Cell Clinic at Froedtert Hospital. (Matthew Reddin)



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# Out on the town



## CAGE THE ELEPHANT

7 p.m. June 8 at the Rave, Milwaukee. \$38. [therave.com](http://therave.com).

Alt-rockers Cage the Elephant have been bubbling under the mainstream, briefly surfacing when a single cracks radio charts. The year 2008 had "Ain't No Rest for the Wicked." The year 2011 had "Shake Me Down." And this year has "Mess Around," the Black Keysian (thanks to producer Dan Auerbach) single from new album *Tell Me I'm Pretty*. Hidden deeper beneath the proverbial waves is a diverse, eclectic body of work, sure to be on display at this gig, moved from the BMO Harris Pavilion on the lakefront. Opening is Portugal. The Man, an equally underrated if substantially more psychedelic band. (Matthew Reddin)



## BEETHOVEN'S 'EROICA'

11:15 a.m. June 10 and 8 p.m. June 11 at the Marcus Center, Milwaukee. \$17 to \$107. [mso.org](http://mso.org).

Beethoven's Third Symphony, *Eroica*, takes its name from the Italian for "heroic," and it certainly sounds worthy of the title, mixing victorious fanfare with a famous, reverential funeral movement. Guest conductor Carlos Kalmar will lead the MSO in the work, considered a turning point for Beethoven and the symphonic form itself. Also on the program: Vaughan Williams's Sixth Symphony, a haunting work long-considered the British composer's response to the World Wars. (Matthew Reddin)

Forest Home Cemetery, The Pabst Mansion, and the Milwaukee County Historical Society present:



## Brunch with the Barons

A New Beer Event Brewing in Milwaukee

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Forest Home Cemetery – 2405 W. Forest Home Ave.

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Blatz Mausoleum will be open for viewing inside.

Brunch with the Barons will bring Milwaukee's "beer royalty" alive in a new and unique way. Walk the cemetery's "beer path" during this event which will wind through the roads to Blatz, Schlitz, Pabst, Melm, and Gettelman among others. Entrance to the event includes: event activities, access to on-ground buildings and exhibits. Pabst Brand Beers will be available for sale as will brats, pastries, fruit, water, and juice.

Public is welcome. Tickets are on sale now at Forest Home Cemetery or [www.shepherdtickets.com](http://www.shepherdtickets.com).



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# A curated calendar of upcoming events June 2 - June 16

## 'THE SECRETARIES'

June 10 to 12 at the Underground Collaborative, Milwaukee. \$10. [ucmke.com](http://ucmke.com).

Sure, it seems great to score a job as a secretary for the Cooney Lumber Mill, but that's before you take into account the forced Slim-Fast diet, the other girls' weird clicking language and the fact that one lumberjack goes missing every month. This satirical take on exploitation horror may make liberal use of blood and gore, but not-so-subtly behind its murderous trappings it's also an unflinching look at the warping cultural expectations of femininity. (Matthew Reddin)

## MEL BROOKS

7 p.m. June 11 at the Riverside Theater, Milwaukee. \$50, \$80, \$90, and \$125. [pabsttheater.org](http://pabsttheater.org).

The one and only Mel Brooks will make a rare appearance in Milwaukee, providing insights into his life and career, including the making of the legendary *Blazing Saddles*. The evening will open with a screening of that film on the Riverside's big screen, followed by a live conversation and Q&A with Brooks. It'll be a deserved romp back in the saddle for the comedic genius — belly laughs included with the price of admission. (Colton Dunham)



## 'RUPAUL'S DRAG RACE: BATTLE OF THE SEASONS'

9 p.m. June 11 at the Pabst Theater. \$38, VIP packages available for \$200, \$300. [pabsttheater.org](http://pabsttheater.org).

Each season of *RuPaul's Drag Race* features a new set of queens vying for the crown, but their adventures with the show don't end when their last episode airs. *Drag Race's* worldwide *Battle of the Seasons* tour invites winners and losers alike to join the traveling show, hosted by judge and Ru's top squirrel friend Michelle Visage. Milwaukee's lineup of queens includes winners Sharon Needles, Jinx Monsoon and Violet Chachki, along with multiple other queens from prior seasons. If just seeing the show isn't enough, consider a VIP package — you'll get the opportunity to go behind the scenes before the show and get other bonuses. (Colton Dunham)



## BAY VIEW ART IN THE PARK

11 a.m. to 3 p.m. June 11 at Humboldt Park, Milwaukee. Free. [bvarinthepark.com/](http://bvarinthepark.com/)

Bay View's Art in the Park series continues in June, with more than 50 artisans, live music and delicious food coming to the St. Francis Brewery Beer Garden in Humboldt Park. A goal of the monthly festival is to celebrate local artists and help them make connections to others in their community. It's entirely free of charge, with the hope to provide an educational environment to the public through nonprofit workshops and activities. Future Art in the Park events are scheduled for July 9, Aug. 13 and Sept. 10. (Colton Dunham)

## LOCUST STREET FESTIVAL

11 a.m. to 8 p.m. June 12 in Milwaukee. Free. [locuststreetfestival.org](http://locuststreetfestival.org).

Summer festival season is finally approaching, and one of the most popular street festivals in Milwaukee is Locust Street Festival of Music & Art. From 11 a.m. to 8 p.m., there'll be six stages set up between Humboldt and Holton, featuring musical acts, including Space Raft, D'Amato and Foreign Goods, and a variety of vendors. The festival's most infamous tradition — the annual Riverwest Beer Run or Walk — begins at 11:30 a.m., and is a 1.8 mile run through the streets of Riverwest with four mandatory beer stops. It's drinking and exercise all at the same time. (Colton Dunham)

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For more information go to [MilwaukeeGaySports.com](http://MilwaukeeGaySports.com)

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# WIGOUT!

## Madison's classical summer

By Michael Muckian

Contributing writer

Ah, summer! The time when concert organs get their pipes cleaned, tympani get their drumheads tarped and maestros button up their batons until autumn's first leaves signal the start of the new music season, right?

Nothing could be further from the truth in Madison. Some classical music companies, like warm-weather vampires, only come out in summer. Others simply shed their stuffy tuxes and take their music to the streets for a healthy dose of classics al fresco.

No matter how you look at it, there is a wealth of classical performances only available during the season of maximum daylight. What follows is a guide that helps you make the most of sunshine and serenades.

### BACH DANCING & DYNAMITE SOCIETY

With a name like Bach Dancing & Dynamite Society and the motto "Chamber Music with a Bang!," it's no surprise this moveable feast of 25 classical musicians would present performances most comical and irreverent. But that doesn't mean they aren't talented. In fact, BDDS, celebrating its 25th season, is one of the most highly anticipated ensembles of the summer's classical music scene.

Founded by flutist Stephanie Jutt (UW-Madison School of Music and Madison Symphony Orchestra) and pianist Jeffery Sykes (San Francisco Piano Trio and UC-Berkeley), BDDS offers some of the best chamber music ever written, performed in three of the area's most interesting venues: The Playhouse at Overture Center, the Stoughton Opera House and the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Hillside School Auditorium at Taliesin in Spring Green.

Beginning June 10 and ending June 26, BDDS will perform 12 concerts comprising six programs performed by three combinations of musicians from the United States and Canada. Works range from compositions by Mozart and Haydn to Ravel and Schoenberg to Pulitzer Prize winner Kevin Puts and Pablo Zinger. If that isn't the classics with a bang, then nothing is.

Individual tickets for BDDS performances average \$40 for any of the three locations, with series prices ranging from \$102 for three concerts to \$204 for six performances. For more information and to purchase tickets, call 608-255-9866 or visit [bachdancinganddynamite.org](http://bachdancinganddynamite.org).

### MADISON SYMPHONY'S CONCERT ON THE GREEN

Madison's movers and shakers like to gather once every season for a little golf, some light classics, a picnic dinner and a complimentary margarita fountain at the Madison Symphony Orchestra's annual Concert on the Green at the Bishops Bay Country Club in Middleton. Proceeds from the June 27 daylong event benefit MSO's education and community engagement programs.

Presented by the Madison Symphony Orchestra League, the day's events begin with golf at 11 a.m. \$1,200 buys each foursome the golf tournament, box lunches, cocktail party, concert and picnic dinner. Non-golfers can still attend the cocktail, party, concert and diner for \$120. Yes, everyone has access to the margarita fountain.

Members of the Madison Symphony Orchestra will perform under the baton of guest maestro and UW School of Music faculty member James Smith, who conducts the UW Symphony Orchestra. The evening will include performances by guest marimbist

Robert Rockman, winner of the 2016 Bolz Young Artist Competition.

Concert on the Green will be held at the Bishops Bay Country Club, 3500 Bishops Drive, Middleton. For more information, visit [madisonsymphony.org/cog](http://madisonsymphony.org/cog).

### WCO'S CONCERTS ON THE SQUARE

Wondering why much of Madison is quiet Wednesday evenings from June 29 through Aug. 3? It's because residents and visitors alike crowd the Capitol Square for the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra's annual Concerts on the Square. WCO, under maestro Andrew Sewell, presents a broad array of classics under a different theme each week to upwards of 30,000 people, most of whom bring their blankets, bottles of wine and picnic dinners to the free concerts.

This year's events begin with *The Appian Way* June 29, with compositions by Respighi, Turina, Mendelssohn and Copland and featuring guest artist pianist Liam Mayo. *Bursts of Joy*, July 6, features operatic sopranos Kitt and Alli Foss, compositions by Delibes and Massenet, patriotic music and the annual performance of Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture.

The series continues with *Nature's Revelries* July 13, with WCO violinist Jerry Loughney performing Dukas, Sibelius, Gade and Dvorak. *Reel Sounds*, July 20, features movie music from *Star Wars*, *Lord of the Rings* and other films. *Eastern Elements*, July 27, invites Indian musician Chitravina N. Ravikiran to perform two Dikshitar works, with Beethoven also on the program. And the final program *Capriccio*, Aug. 3, with trombonist Mark Hetzler joining the WCO to perform work by Honegger, Tchaikovsky and Tommy Dorsey.

WCO performs at the corner of King Street at the Square. Admission is free, but

picnic blankets may not be put on the Capitol lawn before 3 p.m. For more information, visit [wcoconcerts.org](http://wcoconcerts.org).

### MADISON EARLY MUSIC FESTIVAL

One does not have to be a musicologist to appreciate music's evolution nor a historian to understand how music has helped advance civilization. At this year's Madison Early Music Festival, presented by the UW-Madison Arts Institute and the UW School of Music, both those truths come into sharper focus.

Now in its 17th season, this year's MEMF celebrates the 400th anniversary of William Shakespeare's death with a program of Elizabethan music. In addition to honoring the Bard of Avon, the July 9-16 series of workshops and concerts also will celebrate the 45-year reign of Elizabeth I, among the first European monarchs who realized music's value to her nation's culture.

The MEMF will feature early music performers, including the New York Polyphony and The Newberry Consort, performing period music on historically accurate instruments. Additionally, the closing concert, *The Cryes of London-Town: A Musical Day in the Life of Shakespeare's London*, features a program created especially for this year's event.

The Madison Early Music Festival offers workshops for musicians as well as seven concerts open to the public July 9-16. Workshop classes are held at the UW-Madison School of Music, located in the Mosse Humanities Building, with performances in Mills Concert Hall, 455 N. Park St. Individual concert tickets are \$25 (\$10 for students) and a weeklong festival concert pass is \$90. Tickets can be ordered by visiting [artsinstitute.wisc.edu](http://artsinstitute.wisc.edu).

**MADISON** next page



PHOTO: WISCONSIN CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra's Concerts on the Square series draws upwards of 30,000 people to the Capitol Square each week during the summer.

**MADISON** from previous page

### MADISON OPERA'S OPERA IN THE PARK

Now in its 15th season, Opera in the Park is one of the summer's highlights. On July 23, roughly 15,000 music fans will gather at Garner Park on Madison's west side to wine and dine picnic-style, while enjoying some of opera's greatest arias performed by some of the nation's most accomplished voices.

This year's guest artists include sopranos Emily Birsan and Angela Brown, tenor Scott Quinn and baritone Sidney Outlaw. Members of the Madison Symphony Orchestra will perform under the baton of guest conductor Gary Thor Wedow.

The full playlist is to be determined, but it's a good bet that preview selections from next season's productions of Gounod's *Romeo & Juliet*, Mozart's *The Magic Flute* and Daniel Schnyder's *Charlie Parker's Yardbird* will top the list, sung by the singers who will perform them during the regular season.

Four lucky entrants can win a pair of tickets each to the prelude dinner, which includes VIP seating for the performance followed by a post-concert reception. Entries are due June 30. For more information and to enter the contest, visit [madisonopera.org](http://madisonopera.org).

Opera in the Park takes the stage July 23 at 8 p.m. in Garner Park, 333 S. Rosa Road, Madison. The event is free and open to the public, and picnicking is encouraged. Visit [madisonopera.org](http://madisonopera.org) for more details.

### MADISON SAVOYARDS

Those interested in understanding what

makes the very model of a modern Major-General and other bits of Gilbert & Sullivan trivia need look no further than The Madison Savoyards, who have been producing the musical pair's best- and least-known comic operas every summer since 1963.

This year's production is *The Gondoliers*, written in 1927 and considered Gilbert & Sullivan's last great success. The narrative includes mixed-up identities, a drunken gondolier, a prince who can't be found and all sorts of very Gilbert & Sullivanian high jinks.

Directed by UW-Madison Opera's Bill Farlow with musical direction by Kyle Knox (who last conducted the score to Madison Opera's 2016 production of *Little Women*), *The Gondoliers* runs July 29 through Aug. 7. Tickets are \$30 to \$40.

Madison Savoyards' production of *The Gondoliers* will appear at Music Hall, located at the foot of Bascom Hill on the UW-Madison campus where Park Street intersects with the State Street Mall. For tickets, call 608-265-2787 or go to the Arts on Campus Box Office.

### TOKEN CREEK CHAMBER FESTIVAL

It's possible there's more than one place in the world where top-notch classical chamber music is performed in a barn. We know of just the one: the Token Creek Music Festival, which occurs annually every Labor Day weekend in DeForest, a community north-east of Madison.

The dairy barn in question is part of the old family farm of Rose Mary Harbison and her husband John Harbison. John is a music professor at the Massachusetts Institute of



PHOTO: ROBERT GRAEBNER

**The Token Creek Chamber Festival gives patrons the chance to see high-quality classical music performed in one of the unlikely locations: a converted barn.**

Technology, the composer of the Metropolitan Opera-commissioned adaptation of *The Great Gatsby*, and winner of a Pulitzer Prize, a MacArthur Fellowship and the Heinz Awards in the Arts and Humanities.

John and Rose Mary spend every summer at the converted dairy farm, capping each with the weeklong festival. This year's theme is "Water Music," with each piece on the program devoted to environmental efforts to reverse the impact of water pollution.

The concert's highlight will be the Wisconsin premiere of Harbison's "The Cross of Snow," which blends the ethereal lushness of

violas da gamba with the haunting clarity of the countertenor voice to explore the emotions of grief, loss and love. Chicago's Second City Musick, who were commissioned to perform the work by antiques dealer William John Wartmann in memory of his late wife Joyce, will give the piece only its second performance for festivalgoers.

The Token Creek Chamber Festival runs Aug. 27 to Sept. 4 on the festival grounds at 4037 Hwy. 19, DeForest. Single performance tickets are \$30, \$10 for students. For more information visit [tokencreekfestival.org](http://tokencreekfestival.org) or call 608-241-2525.

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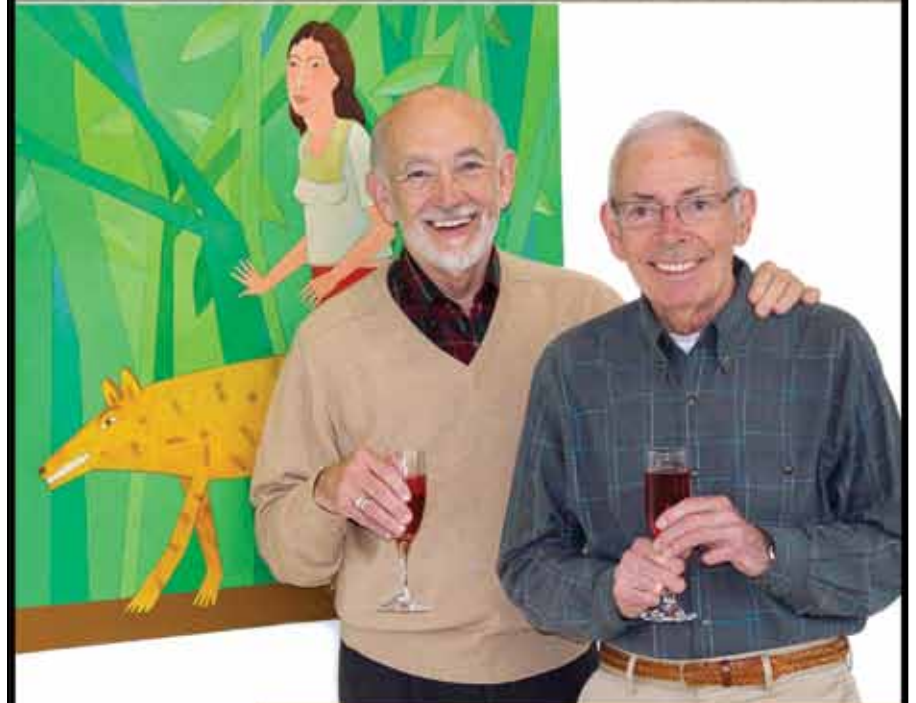
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# Sketch in these artistic summer reading recommendations

By Kat Minerath

Contributing writer

Whether or not you are an art aficionado, the stories of artists are interesting tales and told in many different ways — which makes them perfect possibilities for a summer reading list.

Ranging from the autobiographical, to the fictional, as well as more scholarly in tone, here are a few selections to consider for the beach, hammock or porch swing near you.

## IN THE ARTISTS' WORDS

To call Leonardo da Vinci “only” an artist is a bit dismissive. He was an inventor, a designer, a cartographer, a man with a constantly curious mind — and a prolific writer. He took copious notes and made drawings about his observations and ideas. His writings have survived for 500 years and become commonly known as Leonardo's notebooks.

There have been many variations and editions, but a wonderfully accessible version is edited by H. Anna Suh under the title *Leonardo's Notebooks: Writing and Art of the Great Master*. The writings are organized by chapters, which are headed by the larger categories of “Beauty, Reason and Art,” “Observations and Order,” and “Practical Matters.” The translation of da Vinci's words is handled in a conversational way. You could imagine sitting with the master as he chats about anatomy or architecture, or offers advice to young artists on the practice of their craft.

This particular edition is all the richer for the numerous drawings that punctuate the text. Some are meticulous studies for paintings and oth-

ers are quick sketches, but all in da Vinci's inimitable style.

Suh also is the editor of *Van Gogh's Letters: The Mind of the Artist in Paintings, Drawings, and Words, 1875-1890*. Organized chronologically, over 150 letters offer a first-person account of van Gogh's life and work. He is often philosophical as well as poignant in his deeply introspective demeanor. Images of the original letters, decorated with drawings, as well as repro-

ductions of other works referenced in the letters, are an intimate blend of text and visuals.

## ARTISTIC FICTION

If drifting into summer with stories suits your taste, Susan Vreeland can take you back into the art historical past in her novels *Luncheon of the Boating Party* and *The Passion of Artemisia*. Vreeland writes with a mix of fact and fiction as she builds out narratives that incorporate the lives and work of famous artists.

*The Passion of Artemisia* takes the Baroque painter, Artemisia Gentileschi, as protagonist and narrator. She was a rarity of her time, born in Rome in 1593 to an artist father and a prodigious painter herself. Her struggles as well as great successes offer a timeless quality to her story.

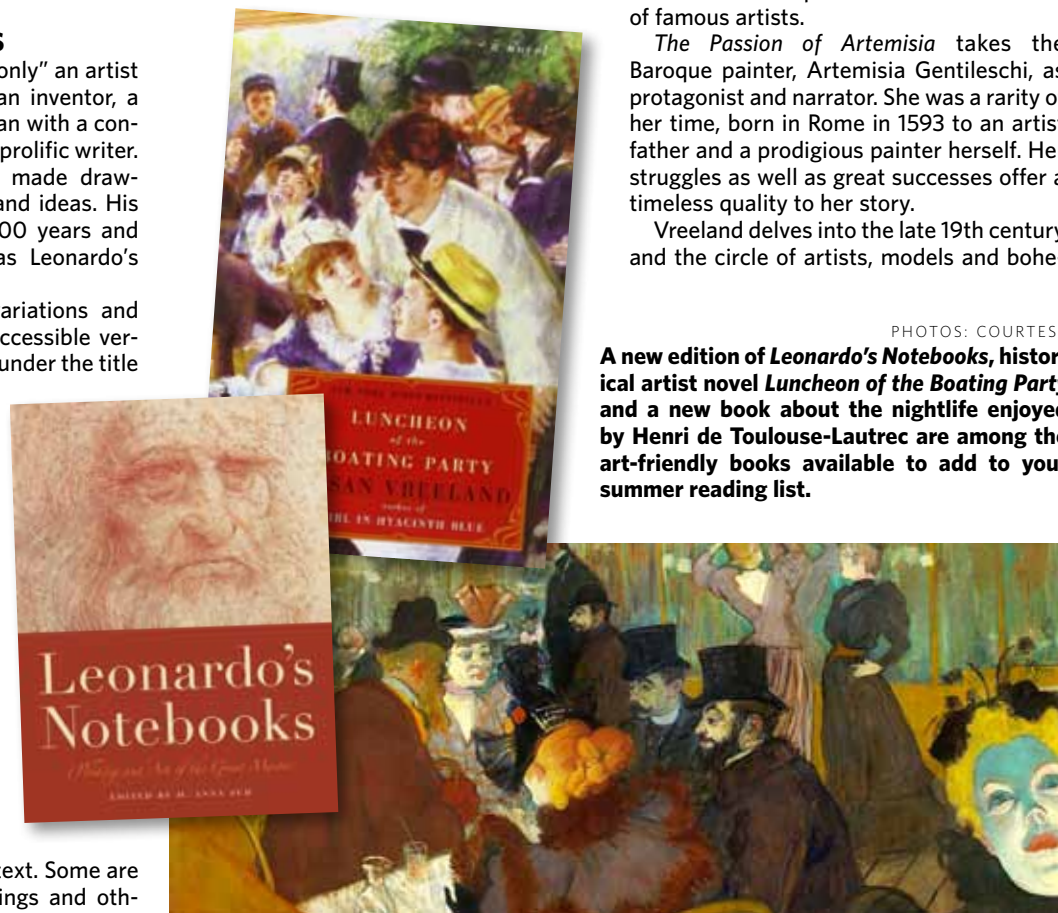
Vreeland delves into the late 19th century and the circle of artists, models and bohe-

mians of the Impressionist era. The famous painting *Luncheon of the Boating Party* by Auguste Renoir is both the title and inspiration for her novel. The author touches on real events and paintings while telling a story that imagines the voices of Renoir and his friends as characters romping through *la vie moderne*.

## PARISIAN STYLE

Author Ross King's book *The Judgment of Paris* also takes us into the world of the Impressionists in the late 19th century. Rather than spinning fiction, he offers a conversational and scholarly approach as he recounts the scandals, controversies and characters who were at the vanguard of modern art. He begins in 1863 with the famed academic artist Ernest Meissonier, a man most successful in his day. Meissonier represents the established tastes and traditions in art being directly challenged by artists like Gustave Courbet and especially Edouard Manet with his painting *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* (*Luncheon on the Grass*), a work that outraged and excited the art world. With ample illustrations and footnotes, it is an engaging work of nonfiction.

Similarly, David Sweetman's *Explosive Acts* is a thoroughly researched and informative book that brings to life the social circles of Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. He was a successful French artist as well as a member of the aristocracy. His associates included the writer Oscar Wilde and critic Félix Fénéon, as well as many other creative luminaries who populate the text. While the excesses and dark glamour of the fin-de-siècle are part of the period, Sweetman's focus brings us into the nightlife famously recounted in Toulouse-Lautrec's pictures, amplified by the artist's radical political edges.



PHOTOS: COURTESY

**A new edition of *Leonardo's Notebooks*, historical artist novel *Luncheon of the Boating Party* and a new book about the nightlife enjoyed by Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec are among the art-friendly books available to add to your summer reading list.**

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# Colectivo's Back Room becomes a treasured venue

By Colton Dunham

Contributing writer

Most Colectivos are exactly what they look like: fun, trendy coffee shops where patrons grab a beverage to start their day, cram before the next exam or get a quick bite to eat. The Colectivo on Milwaukee's East Side, at 2211 N. Prospect Ave., is special. In a back room, there's a concert venue.

Since last June, Colectivo has partnered with the Pabst Theater Group to bring in under-the-radar artists for "Live at the Back Room" shows, intimate performances where patrons get up close and personal with musicians and other artists. In the past year, the partners have brought in an improv music and art show with Wilco guitarist Nels Cline, feminist slam beat poet Andrea Gibson, live podcast recordings with *The Memory Palace* and *RISK!* And lots and lots of musicians — Basia Bulat, Caroline Smith, Avishai Cohen Quartet, Crystal Bowersox and many more — have played the Back Room.

Performance spaces have a personality and the Back Room is no different. Most music venues of this size are dark, but the Back Room floods with natural light, inside and throughout, illuminating the space from a skylight above. When the lights are dimmed, the room takes on a romantic glow, making the interaction between performers and the audience that much more personal.

Scott Schwebel, Colectivo's vice president

***'There's this very simple, open connection between the artist onstage and the people who are sitting in the audience. ... I think our room sets it up to be a wonderful exchange.'***

of brand marketing and retail, has been involved with the Back Room since its genesis several years ago. The room was used to house the company's roasting and wholesaling operations, from 1997 until 2008, when that part of the business moved to Colectivo's Riverwest location.

Then Schwebel and others at the company decided to use the space for special events, like guest speakers and Milwaukee Film Fest panels, in addition to small music performances.

"We started with the gospel brunch that we host on Sundays, which is a charita-



PHOTO: ADAM MISZEWSKI

**Matthew Logan Vasquez is one of many artists who've performed in the intimate Back Room space at Colectivo's Prospect location, thanks to a partnership between the coffee shop franchise and Pabst Theater Group.**

ble partnership with a city organization for health care," Schwebel says.

"We thought it was an underutilized and wonderful space," he adds, and one that was well-positioned to host larger events than they were booking.

Schwebel had a long-standing relationship with Gary Witt at the Pabst, so he asked Witt if he'd be interested in programming the Back Room as a music venue. Witt and others from the Pabst stopped by the space and instantly recognized its potential to bring in

interesting, eclectic talent — most of which had never had played a show in the market before.

"They build their spaces with an aesthetic of beauty in mind. That's why you kind of have the look and feel of the room," says Witt. "The space has always been available for people to be able to use in the city. ... We consistently get hit up by agents looking for smaller rooms in the city (for their artists)

**BACK ROOM** next page

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## Upcoming Back Room shows

### Five for Fighting

8 p.m. June 11. \$33.  
Grammy-nominated singer/songwriter John Ondrasik, best known for chart-toppers "100 Years" and "Superman (It's Not Easy)," brings a string quartet along.

### Lily and Madeleine

8 p.m. June 15. \$12.  
These Indianapolis-born sisters build stunning harmonies out of dreamy strings and keys.

### Hayes Carll

8 p.m. June 16. \$20.  
Both witty and sensitive, this Americana artist's set is a blend of well-crafted story-songs and heart-breaking ballads.

### Pure Bathing Culture

8 p.m. June 20. \$10.  
For the first time in Milwaukee, this duo from Portland will present their unique take on dream pop.

### Jessica Lea Mayfield

8 p.m. June 22. \$15.  
Her delivery is a perfect grunge deadpan, but her music is steeped in roots rock — making Jessica Lea Mayfield a truly distinct voice in rock 'n' roll.

### David Bazan

8:30 p.m. June 25. \$15.  
Bazan, formerly of indie band Pedro the Lion, performs in advance of his third album, out later this year.

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### BACK ROOM from previous page

and quite often they're not able to find that space."

For example, last year Witt was contacted by an agent with whom he had a long relationship, who'd booked shows at Pabst theaters for numerous other artists. He had a client, Olivia Chaney, who was interested in a space with a more intimate aesthetic, but wanted the promotion and marketing muscle the Pabst Theater Group could provide. She became the first artist to perform in the Back Room — on June 14, 2015.

That show was a success, but Witt and Schwebel say it didn't confirm the Back Room's viability as a performance space for national acts.

More experimentation was in order and the partners booked successive acts selectively to test the space and get feedback from the artists who used it.

"It was very exciting for us," Schwebel says. "We came out of there and everyone had a checklist of what we could do better. ... One year in, we're pleased, but we're not done. We're constantly trying to figure out ways to improve. You're going to see us test types of performances and I think you'll continue to see more interesting and more diverse programming come through."

For Witt and the Pabst Theater Group, the venue is a logical extension of what they've done with Turner Hall Ballroom, the Pabst Theater and the Riverside Theater: creating a loose hierarchy of venues for artists to ascend as their talent and popularity grow, both under their financial umbrella and at other locations in the city.

"Look at how the artist grows," Witt says. "One show we'll do at Turner and the next the artist will be at the Pabst and very often it moves beyond there. Amy Schumer is the perfect example of going from Turner Hall to the Pabst to the Riverside all the way to the Bradley Center."

Since that original Olivia Chaney show, performances in the Back Room have grown increasingly popular, with many selling near or all the way to capacity. And the talent level of the performers has grown as well, with Colectivo and Pabst Theater Group able to book more familiar acts like Five for Fighting and Jessica Lea Mayfield in upcoming weeks. They've found that many performers even at a national touring level like the opportunity the Back Room gives them to perform in a smaller space.

"Performers, especially at this level, like that direct connection with their audience," Schwebel says. "There's this very simple, open connection between the artist onstage and the people who are sitting in the audience. I think all performers get a charge and I think our room sets it up to be a wonderful exchange between artist and audience."

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# The fantastic Faux Fiction on their '90s DIY aesthetic

By Colton Dunham

Contributing writer

Gabby Kartz wasn't anywhere near the sound of her alt-power pop band Faux Fiction two years ago. True, she was dabbling in music, along with her husband Jason Kartz, but her inclinations were acoustic, not rock 'n' roll.

Then, they went to a Queens of the Stone Age concert. Gabby says it was like a switch flipped in her mind.

"After that point, I was like, 'I kind of should be playing electric guitar and writing rock music instead,'" she says.

The couple hit the ground running, building off musical ideas with their guitars in the living room. SDrummer Paul Tyree came aboard after listening to some of Gabby and Jason's demos and he recruited bassist Peter Hair. That quartet is Faux Fiction — named, the couple says, because it just sounded cool.

Two years after its formation, the band has recorded at Howl Street Studios its first full-length album, *Staring at the Sun*, and will be celebrating that accomplishment with an album release party at Riverwest Public House June 17. Before the show, *WiG* chatted with Gabby and Jason Kartz about their band name, '90s inspiration, their upcoming show and their perspective from within the Milwaukee music scene.

**Who came up with the name of the band and what's the meaning behind it?**

**Gabby Kartz:** I really liked the "FF" iteration (and) I really like the word "faux," so we were trying to figure out a combination of words that both started with F. It seems to work for other well-known bands (laughs). It was kind of just the process of trial and error. ... It's kind of a double negative. It makes it kind of fun.

**Jason Kartz:** It's a simple and stupid name.

**GK:** (laughs) Yeah, pretty much.

**You released your self-titled EP in June 2015. What was the experience of making that record like?**

**GK:** The big driver, I think, for doing it ourselves first, was fun. Because it takes a long time to save up to be able to go to a real studio. It just takes a whole chunk of time and money.

**JK:** We were super impatient and just wanted to get some music out. We ended up doing a seven-song EP and we probably could've done shorter, but we just wanted to put music out. At that point, we wanted music up (online) to get gigs, start getting our name out and start playing.

**You've said that your music is '90s-inspired, but focused on the alternative power pop sounds of that decade. Could you explain that in more detail?**

**GK:** We have so many influences that we just take bits and pieces from different genres that we like and blend them all together. There's a lot of indie rock in the city and I feel like



PHOTO: LEX ALLEN

**Faux Fiction will celebrate the release of *Staring at the Sun* at Riverwest Public House June 17.**

there's a lot of hip-hop that's really great right now. While they're both things that I love, I feel like what we're doing sounds a little bit different.

If you listen to our album, there's such a spread of the way the songs sound. It's not like you listen to it and every song sounds similar. I don't like keeping our sound in a box. ... We decided from the very beginning that whatever we write is what we write. We're not going to try to steer it in a specific direction.

**JK:** I think the descriptors we gave were after we decided what the hell we sound like. For me, my main era is the early '90s. It's when Nirvana and bands like Soundgarden and Pearl Jam broke through. That was a defining era for me when I was real young. That stuck with me and that's been engrained in how I play and the kind of music I come up with.

**You've been gaining momentum over the last few years by playing several area festivals. How have those experiences shaped you as artists?**

**GK:** I think it's just been cool getting asked to play things because we didn't really play any festivals (in 2014). We didn't start playing shows until late January of 2015. Nobody really knew who we were and we didn't have any music available online so it was hard to book gigs and to get on bigger festivals.

It makes you feel really good when people like your music enough to say, "Hey, I'm booking this event and we want you to be a part of it." In Milwaukee, sometimes it's hard to get people to come out to a show, especially when you're playing pretty frequently in the area. We've been trying to pull back from playing Milwaukee so much because even when you got your friends coming out to shows, nobody wants to come see you every single weekend (laughs). When you do a big festival, it just has a natural draw of people.

**JK:** When you're playing a show like that, in front of a larger audience ... there's a natural reaction you see when people come and tell you that they like your music. You can tell it's coming from a genuine place. If they didn't like your music, they wouldn't come up and say anything. You wouldn't see the crowd react. It's actually kind of flabbergasting when you play some of these shows and people are dancing and moving.

**Let's talk about the full-length album. What's the inspiration behind *Staring at the Sun*?**

**GK:** Seven of the songs are from the EP that we recorded and we added five songs that were previously unrecorded. We were originally thinking of titling the album *Good Things*. That was the last track on the album. But I think the overall tone of the album is not really reminiscent of good things.

Sometimes when something's bothering you, if you can just get it out on a piece of paper and turn it into a song, it turns that not-so-happy or negative experience into something that you can be excited about because you just wrote this awesome song out of it.

**How excited are you to finally be launching this album that you've been working on for such a long time?**

**GK:** I'm really excited about it. It's been a long time coming. ... I'm excited we're playing with two acts we haven't before ever: The Midwest Beat, who are fantastic, and Myles Coyne, who's also absolutely fantastic. They really have great sounds to match with ours so we think it's going to be a really awesome show.

## ON STAGE

Faux Fiction's album release party with Myles Coyne and The Midwest Beat begins at 9 p.m. June 17 at the Riverwest Public House, 815 E. Locust St., Milwaukee. Tickets are \$5. Visit [riverwestpublichouse.org](http://riverwestpublichouse.org).

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# Northern Sky's 'Doctor! Doctor!' inspired by writer's love of Door County

By Kirstin Roble

Contributing writer

Some of Matt Zembrowski's fondest childhood memories took place beneath the trees of Door County's Peninsula State Park, where he and his family frequently camped during the summer.

"My family has camped in that park since before I could walk," says Zembrowski. "It is still one of my favorite places."

That forest also nurtured Zembrowski's love of the theater, a passion he has transferred into a career as a teacher, performer and composer. His latest creation, the musical *Doctor! Doctor!*, will premiere at Northern Sky Theater in Door County this summer.

Zembrowski traces the spark back to a chilly night in August 1995, when he and his brother attended a Theatre Under the Stars production at Northern Sky (then known as American Folklore Theatre).

"My brother Zach and I attended a performance of *Bone Dance* that evening, which had me hooked even though I didn't realize it at the time," says Zembrowski. "At the time, I had no idea that this show would be so pivotal in my career path."

The ambience of Northern Sky's space, which presents theater outdoors with the forests of Door County as a backdrop, was something Zembrowski couldn't shake, even as an adult. In 2009, he finally got the chance to do something with it. That year, he was hired as a music director by the company, performing and co-writing songs with longtime idols and Northern Sky company members Fred "Doc" Heide and Lee Becker. "It was for a show called *Sunsets and S'mores*," says Zembrowski. "It was an amazing experience, which proved inspirational for me."

After that summer, Zembrowski channeled that inspiration into several scripts, which he sent to Northern Sky for consideration. None were accepted.

"As I look back on the rejections, I see why that was the decision," says Zembrowski. "At the time though, it was disappointing. But I tried not to let it discourage me, and persevered."

### ON STAGE

*Doctor! Doctor!* opens June 15 and runs through the summer with Northern Sky's other three summer shows: *No Bones About It*, *When Butter Churns to Gold* and *Lumberjacks in Love*. Tickets are \$22, \$11 for students, \$6 children 3 to 12. They can be purchased at 920-854-6117 or [northernskytheater.com](http://northernskytheater.com).

Northern Sky's homegrown musicals are rooted in Wisconsin-based themes. So Zembrowski spent the next few years keeping an eye out for the right story to tell. The answer came in 2012, while Zembrowski was flipping through *Door County Pulse* while waiting to be seated at a restaurant.

The article was about Dr. Joan Traver, a soon-to-be retired physician from Sister Bay. She was one of the last remaining "country doctors" and had spent most of her career making housecalls instead of working in a hospital setting.

"The story stuck with me," Zembrowski says, "and I realized that I may finally have the story for Northern Sky."

That story became *Doctor! Doctor!*, the play Zembrowski finished a few months later and sent to Northern Sky. This time, they accepted it — and that was when the real work began.

After several years of workshoping, including a public reading in 2015, the show is ready to take the stage. Its production in Northern Sky's 2016 season will be its first full performance.

*Doctor! Doctor!* follows the story of a retiring physician who is rewarding his years of hard work with a vacation. In his absence, he's called upon his nephew, also a doctor, to take his place. "It's very city mouse meets country mouse," says Zembrowski. "The nephew's take on modern medicine ruffles a few feathers at first, but slowly the rural community begins to embrace the new changes. The show explores the concept of change and how it isn't always a bad thing."

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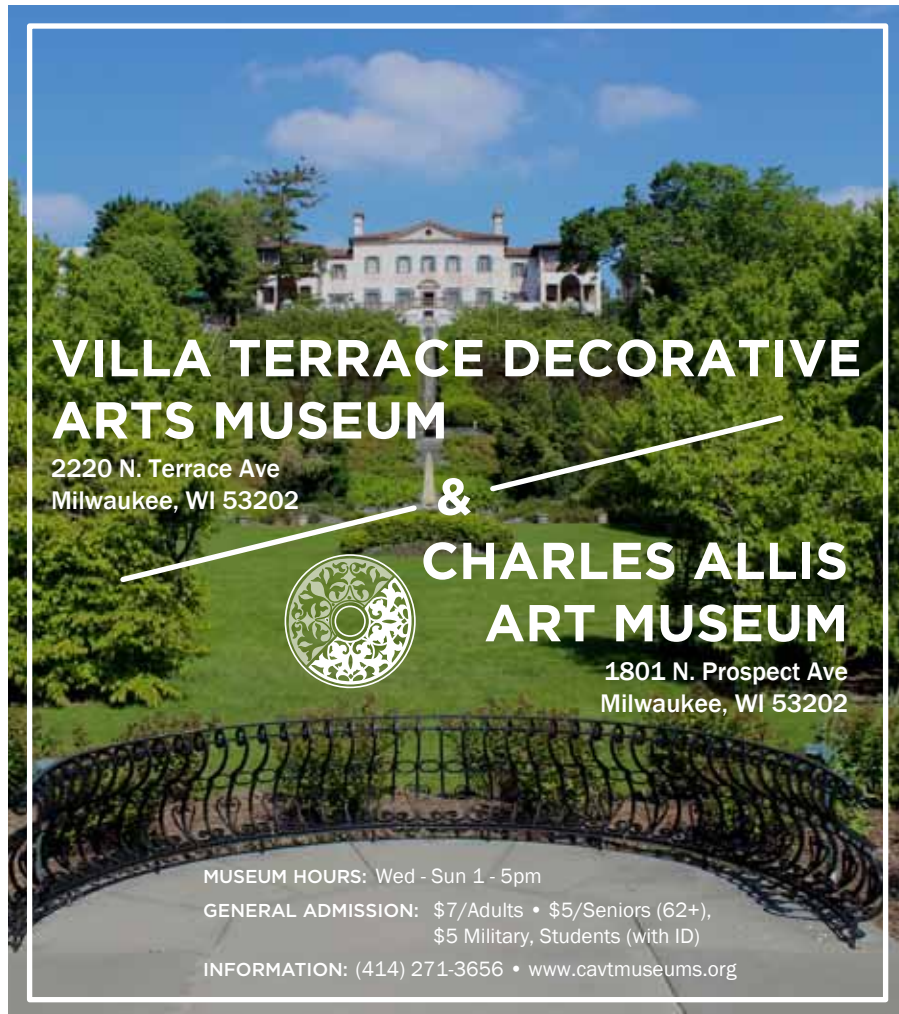
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# Dish it Out!

## The Halal Guys spices up Milwaukee with its first location in Wisconsin

**By Christina Craig**  
Contributing writer

The Halal Guys' food is so good an obsessed Midwesterner once used frequent flier miles to visit the original food cart in Manhattan, according to Dustin LeFebvre, who recently opened a first Wisconsin location.

Now Milwaukeeans can enjoy the Guys' famous sandwiches and platters in their hometown. The restaurant, 3133 N. Oakland St. offers a clean, bright dining environment that adheres to the original food cart's mustard yellow and ketchup-red color scheme.

The restaurant's name comes from Islamic law: The term "halal" refers to foods that Muslims are permitted to eat.

The restaurant's menu items combine chicken or beef with Mediterranean and Middle Eastern flavors over rice or enfolded into pitas. Both versions come with a dollop of Halal's three signature sauces. There's a nondairy mayonnaise-based white sauce blended with spices, which comes in regular and wickedly hot versions. And there's a simple barbecue sauce.

Lettuce and tomatoes round out the plate.

LeFebvre says the food truck was started out of necessity, with no plans for nationwide expansion.

"In 1990, the three founders of Halal Guys were sharing a New York City taxi medallion," LeFebvre explains. "They were Egyptian immigrants and devout Muslims who adhered to halal regulations. No one in Midtown was selling halal food, so out of necessity came innovation in the form of a food cart."

**HALAL GUYS** next page



PHOTO: THE HALAL GUYS

The Halal Guys' menu options offer chicken, beef or a combination of both in platters and sandwich wraps, along with falafel and hummus. The Milwaukee location on Oakland Avenue is the company's first in the state.

### THE QUICK BITE

**Name:** The Halal Guys  
**Location:** 3133 N. Oakland St., Milwaukee  
**Premise:** Fast-casual Middle Eastern food  
**Menu samples:** Combo chicken/gyro platter, served with rice, pita, lettuce, tomato (\$7.59 small, \$8.69 regular); falafel sandwich wrap with lettuce and tomato (\$6.29).  
**Bite-size review:** As a place to grab food fast on the way to class and as a restaurant in its own right, The Halal Guys is a smart, delicious addition to the Oakland corridor.

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**HALAL GUYS** from previous page

"Their initial clientele was other taxi drivers, because many of them were also Muslim. This became the best marketing device, because the taxi drivers recommended the Halal Guys' food cart to all of their passengers, locals and tourists alike."

Business bloomed. Halal Guys is now the most-Yelped restaurant in the United States and has almost two dozen locations across the country, as well as in Manila.

LeFebvre got involved in the business shortly after graduating from the University of Chicago Booth School of Business. He was in the market to open a business of his own, but a fast-casual restaurant wasn't really on his radar until he tried the Halal Guys fare.

"I thought it was awesome," he says. "If I wasn't passionate about the food, then I couldn't run this restaurant. When I met the founders in New York City, I felt that they were great people. They aren't focused on money. They are passionate about their food and they just want to share it with others."

It's clear LeFebvre picked the right business for him. He practically inhaled his platter of food during our conversation. I filled up too. I loved the combination of rice, meat and vegetables. And the white sauce was the perfect complement to the core ingredients. Vegetarians are welcome at Halal Guys, too — falafel and hummus also are on the menu.

Milwaukee's Halal Guys outpost is practically on the UW-Milwaukee campus, and the menu and prices should attract a lot of students. It's open until 3 a.m., so I predict the after-bar crowd will flock here to soak up a belly of beer with a hearty platter or sandwich.

During the restaurant's soft opening, two international students, one hailing from Jordan and the other from Saudi Arabia, were fork-deep into quickly vanishing platters. They liked the food a lot and said they'd certainly be back.

For a restaurant with a focus on Middle Eastern-inspired dishes, their comments might be the best review possible.



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### ACROSS

- Sisterhood of the Traveling \_\_\_\_\_
- Pavlova's step
- Southeast Asia food staple
- Fire starter
- My \_\_\_\_\_ Private Idaho, movie
- Red Cross supply
- Indian soldier in British Army, historical
- CSI evidence
- U in UV
- Climber support
- \*Light recommendation for some plants
- Computer network acronym
- Green stroke
- Olympic chant
- Cry like a baby
- Depletes
- X-ray units
- \*Organ of photosynthesis
- Nary a soul
- Doing nothing
- Reduce pressure
- Tolkien villains
- Spy's other name
- Judo gym
- Same as Celt
- \*Cross between plant varieties
- They don't mix with water
- Hi-\_\_\_\_\_ graphics

### DOWN

- Demeanor
- Black and white sea bird
- \*Homemade fertilizer
- \*Without synthetic chemicals
- Driver's 180
- Roswell debris?
- Speedily
- Alley cat
- Game day appetizer
- Zwiebacks
- Annoyingly slow
- Ensuing, for short
- Corset bones
- Attention grabber
- Copycat
- Back of neck
- Chatroom agitator
- First U.S. space station
- \*Where peas live
- Barley bristle
- Big mess
- Auction off
- \_\_\_\_\_ and crafts
- Buddhist teacher
- Yemen's neighbor
- Brunei's ruler, e.g.
- Altogether
- Beehive State native
- Stone's Oscar winner

- Dickens's \_\_\_\_\_ Heep
- Lamentably
- Impromptu
- \*Garden intruder
- Pippin's last name, *The Hobbit*
- More painful
- Cry of surrender
- \*Cabbage Worms and Potato Beetles
- One way to prepare Ahi
- \*Popular apple
- \_\_\_\_\_ bear
- Soliciting of a bribe for a church office
- Bad-mouth
- Glucose and fructose, e.g.
- Chopin's composition
- On the fritz
- Intersection of two arcs
- Hahn or von Bismark
- Fogginess
- Elizabeth Gilbert's *Eat, \_\_\_\_\_, Love*
- "My bad!"
- Org. with a mission
- Rotten and stinky
- \_\_\_\_\_pit
- Ice-T on *Law & Order: SVU*

answers on previous page

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