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A Comedy of Terrors

Mark Neumann Camp Backs Supreme Court Challenger

Analysis by Mike Fitzpatrick

The opening salvo in this year's battle for Wisconsin Supreme Court sounded like it had been crafted not for the ears of the state's electorate but for Jay Leno's *Tonight Show* audience.

Four of the Court's Justices — William Bablitch, Patrick Crooks, Donald Steinmetz and Jon Wilcox — publicly complained that the Chief Justice had destroyed the collegiality of the court. She allegedly did this by doing aerobics in the court's chambers, hanging a picture of a prominent woman lawyer on the wall and — horror of horrors — ordering computer games removed from the court's computer terminals.

It's now eight weeks and more than a million dollars in negative TV ads later. Next Tuesday, April 6 that same Wisconsin electorate, still shell-shocked from the bruising media blitz of last Fall's U. S. Senate race, will choose who will be one of the seven guardians of the State's Constitution and its Bill of Rights for the next ten years.

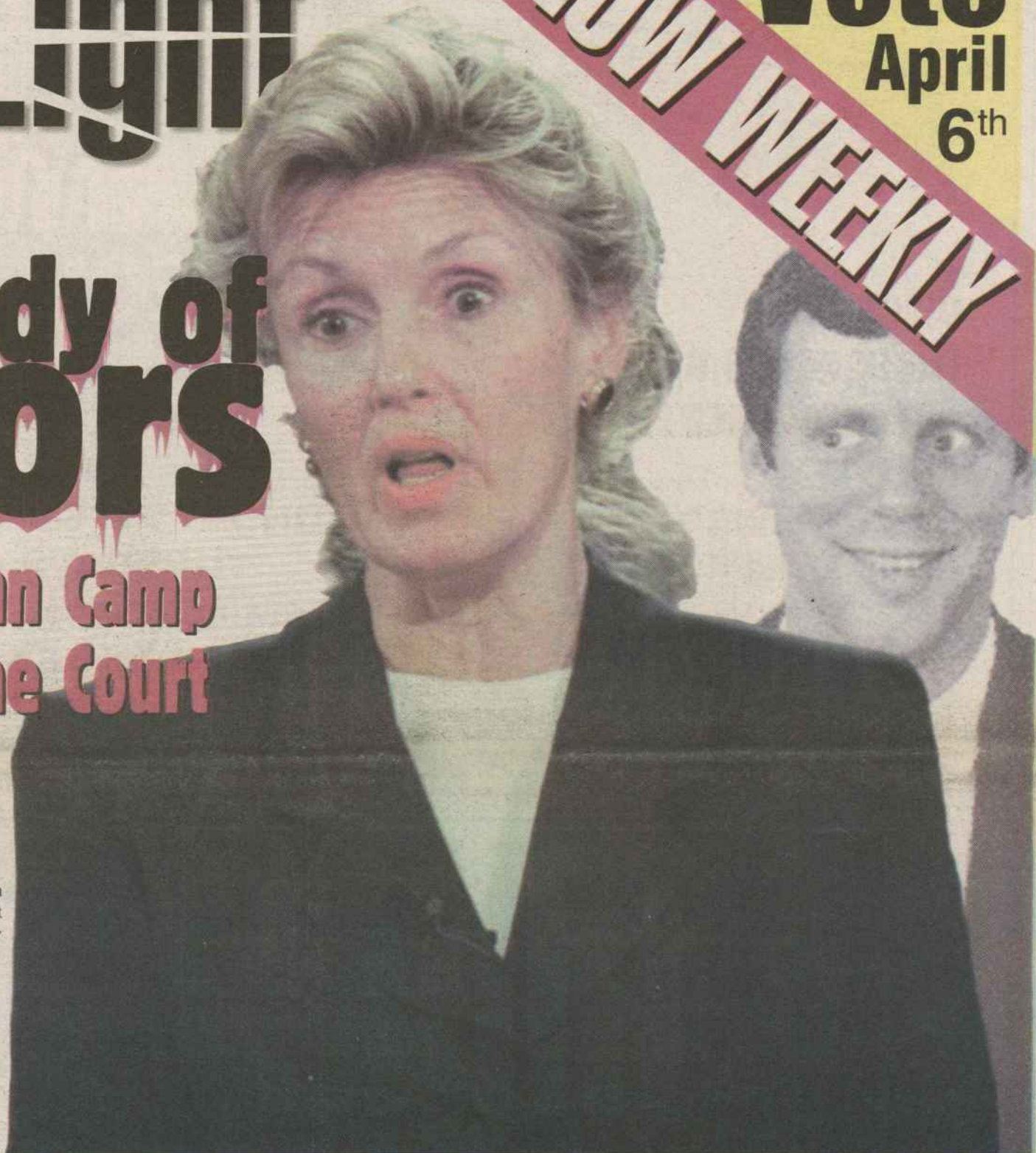
Shirley Abrahamson, 63, an incumbent Chief Justice with nearly a quarter century of judicial experience and a treasure trove of bipartisan endorsements, ranging from Wisconsin's First Lady Sue Ann Thompson to Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin, is running for re-election. Her challenger is Sharren Rose, 49, a Green Bay divorce lawyer whose professional conduct and

record as head of the state's watchdog group on lawyer's ethics is being questioned.

Some say that it shouldn't be a close race, but it is. And one man is the reason. He is a man whose name might well send a shudder down the spine of every LGBT citizen in the state: Mark Neumann.

As Madison's *Capital Times* Editor John Nichols pointed out in a January piece in Milwaukee's *Shepherd Express*, "without the Neumann organization, Rose would not be a serious contender for the top court." That organization has provided Rose with her campaign man-

continued on page 6



Inside

LGBT RELATIONSHIPS
A Wisconsin Light Report
Page 4



Ron Howard Interview
Page 12



Tammy Baldwin's Washington Report
Page 10



Celebrate Poetry Lifestyle Section
Page 18

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Contents**News & Commentary**

- 4 LGBT Relationships
- 7 State News
- 10 Tammy Baldwin's Washington Report
- 11 Election Endorsements

Spotlight Section

- 12 Ron Howard Interviewed
- 14 Deep Inside Hollywood

LifeStyle Section

- 18 Celebrate LGBT Poetry
- 19 Dear Ruthie

Nights Out Section

- 21 Dusty After Dark
- 21 Bar Pictures

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AP Associated Press**PUBLISHERS NOTES**

Greg Quindel

If you are not going to tell the readers (specifically) what the problem is, don't report your personal views. We the public just want the news.

XXXX XXXXXXX

Dear X

Thank you for your comments. I assume you are referencing my March 24th Publisher's Note in which I bemoaned the personal nature of criticism concerning LGBT leadership. I certainly did not want to further this by referencing specific examples of the politics of personal destruction.

As for your second point, newspapers combine reporting of the facts and personal opinion. They are both valuable. We, at Wisconsin Light, do not pretend to be unbiased. We want the world to be a better place for future generations of LGBT persons. While our editorials are clearly marked, and we have a sacred obligation to be accurate with the facts, even our news coverage is presented from a LGBT perspective.

We are not bystanders just reporting the news. How facts are reported is very important. The mainstream press did report the linkage between Mark Neumann and Sharren Rose, but it was given very little coverage. Wisconsin Light believes that the LGBT Community would want to know more about this. This week's cover and Mike Fitzpatrick's story reflects that.

Our community is not a monolith of opinion, nor is it a homogenous community. Our news and opinion writers are beginning to reflect that diversity. We have welcomed women, men, young, old, black, white and Hispanic. We are not done. A diversity of views is welcome, even encouraged. Continue to write your letters, if you agree, or if you do not.

Greg Quindel
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A message from...
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LGBT Relationships: Domestic Partnership

Part 2 of a Series

In the age of AIDS, increasing numbers of Gays and Lesbians are seeking stable relationships. From many, those relationships bring home the realization that America's LGBT citizens are not treated on an equal footing with their straight counterparts. With that realization comes growing pressure to put them there.

Marriage seems to be the last bastion of a heterosexual world. Even many of those heterosexuals who otherwise say they favor basic civil rights for Gays balk when the "M" word comes into the conversation.

Last year the electorate in Hawaii and Alaska voted overwhelmingly to amend their state constitutions in order to head off court decisions that would have legalized LGBT marriages. Despite the expenditure of over \$1,000,000 in Hawaii, the percentage of voters in the Aloha state who opposed Gay marriage was almost the same as that in Alaska, where very little was spent fighting the ban. This suggests that anti-LGBT marriage feelings run deep among the public.

If, at least for the time being, the option of getting married is out of reach for LGBT couples, some marriage like benefits, typically called "domestic partnership" benefits, are not. As the debate over legal recognition of LGBT relationships has heated up, the polls have shown that ever-growing segments of the public support extending some benefits to same sex couples.

There are many levels of domestic partnership. They range from simple registries to the attainment of basic marriage like rights such as health insurance, pension benefits, family leave and inheritance rights. The most common are registries and employer provided benefits that are similar in nature to those given to married employees.

There is only one place in the State of Wisconsin where LGBT couples can register as domestic partners — Madison. Its ordinance does more than provide a certificate (suitable for framing of course) that says a relationship exists between two otherwise unrelated people. Madison requires any business offering a discount to married couples to offer it registered domestic partners as well.

In Milwaukee, the Domestic Partners Task Force is currently lining up support for a registry. Many in the LGBT community say that we have moved past the days when simply registering their partnership is meaningful. Others, however, disagree.

They see a powerful symbolism in gaining any form of legal recognition for LGBT relationships. It's the old foot

in the door theory. If you can get governmental recognition of the validity of LGBT relationships, can other benefits be far behind? Madison's teachers have domestic partners health insurance benefits. The rest of its employees have bereavement and family leave benefits.

Advocates of registries say that they encourage private companies to provide health insurance benefits to the spouses of their LGBT employees. Indeed, most companies providing those benefits do require some proof that the relationship does in fact exist. A Domestic Partners certificate issued by a city can do that.

Six states, including two of the biggest, New York and California, offer domestic partners benefits to their employees. So too, do a growing number of cities including Chicago, Denver and Atlanta. In 1997, the Task Force made an unsuccessful effort to win these benefits for City of Milwaukee employees.

The argument put forth by advocates of domestic partnership benefits in the workplace is that they are "equal pay for equal work." Their proponents say that if married heterosexuals get family leave and health insurance coverage for their loved ones, it is unfair to deny those benefits to Gay employees.

In fact, employee benefits are considered employee compensation. The Society for Human Resource management says that benefits constitute 40% of an employee's compensation. It is undoubtedly true that LGBT employees are paid less so their employer can more easily afford to provide additional benefits to married employees.

The arguments against these benefits are twofold, cost and moral objections. Their opponents argue that they are too costly. Furthermore, they contend that when granted by a governmental agency and in some cases even by a corporation, those with religious objections to the LGBT relationships are forced to pay for them.

In fact, numerous studies have shown that Domestic partnership benefits add little to the overall personnel costs of those employers who grant them. Studies have shown that in general only around 1% of an employed workforce will apply for domestic partnership health insurance coverage.

Some might ask why the numbers are so small. There are many possible explanations including both partners in a relationship having their own

health insurance and a reluctance to "come out" at the workplace.

Cost to the employees applying for the benefits can also be a factor. Many employers require the employee to pay for the difference between their single person coverage and family coverage. Furthermore, unlike the benefits provided to the spouse of a married employee, those provided to the partner of an unmarried employee are taxable.

Still, if the numbers of employees taking advantage of these benefits are so small, why should effort be expended to get them? Domestic partnership benefit advocates have many answers to that question. Most boil down to one word, "fairness."

They point out that the partners of LGBT employees cannot get survivor benefits from their late spouse's pension plan even when those plans were built around employee contributions.

Furthermore, the benefits often include more than health insurance. Domestic partner benefit studies generally only track health insurance benefits. It seems logical to assume that many LGBT employees take advantage of those other benefits even if they don't obtain health insurance for their partners.

Other benefits include bereavement leave and emergency family leave to care for a sick partner or that partner's child. A retail employer may also offer discounts to family members when they make purchases. To allow some employees the right to claim this compensation while not giving it to others is, in the eyes of many, discriminatory.

Many of their advocates argue that simply offering the benefits makes LGBT employees feel welcome at the workplace. That can be a powerful incentive to employers, who want to keep their workers happy and recruit the best employees that they can.

A growing number of employers are providing domestic partnership benefits for their LGBT employees. They include some high profile names like IBM. A recent report by KPMG Peat Marwick found that 13% of all firms offer health benefits to domestic partners of the same sex.

Are domestic partnership benefits a worthy goal? Most LGBT couples would say yes. If nothing else, they offer a safety net if someone in a relationship loses their health insurance coverage. Moreover, their attainment does move LGBT couples closer to the rights given to heterosexual married partners.

Domestic partnership benefits do not offer the same legal protections and rights that marriage does. Even in Hawaii, which has the most comprehensive domestic partnership law of any state, only 60 marriage like benefits are provided to unmarried couples. That compares with literally hundreds of benefits given to legally married couples.

Not all of the issues faced by LGBT couples can be resolved by an employer provided domestic partnership benefit package. Many of the legal issues and challenges faced by LGBT couples are well outside the realm of workplace.

Next Week — Action on a statewide level

Getting DP Benefits at Your Workplace

The key to winning domestic partnership benefits is to understand what you are asking for and to line up as much evidence and support as you can. Here's a simple, very basic outline on how to proceed.

A. Get A Group Going — Meet with other LGBT employees and begin discussions about the benefits and how to get them. Develop a plan and assign tasks such as those listed below.

B. Gather Information

1. Find out about the benefits offered by your employer to married couples.
2. Determine who the decision makers are. If you work in a unionized position, approach your union and ask for a meeting with the bargaining committee.
3. Check with your employer's insurance company to see if they offer domestic partners health insurance coverage.
4. Check with your company's competitors to determine whether or not they offer DP benefits. The Internet can provide some sources of information about who offers these benefits on the Internet. Otherwise just call and ask.

C. Prepare

Once you have gathered all of the information above, begin preparing a presentation for the decision makers or your union bargaining committee.

Your presentation should include:

- Arguments for providing the benefits
- Expected cost
- How applicants can prove their relationship exists

D. Line Up Support - Get other employees, especially non-LGBT ones, to sign a letter or statement of support.

E. Set Up A Meeting With Your Employer
F. Meet With Your Employer

After you've prepared a carefully written presentation, set up a meeting with the decision makers in your company. Bring others with you to the meeting, but determine who will be the main spokesperson in advance.

During the meeting find out what objections your employer may have. To avoid confrontations, write them down and prepare written responses that you can go over at a follow up meeting.

Set up a follow up meeting where you can answer any objections and questions.

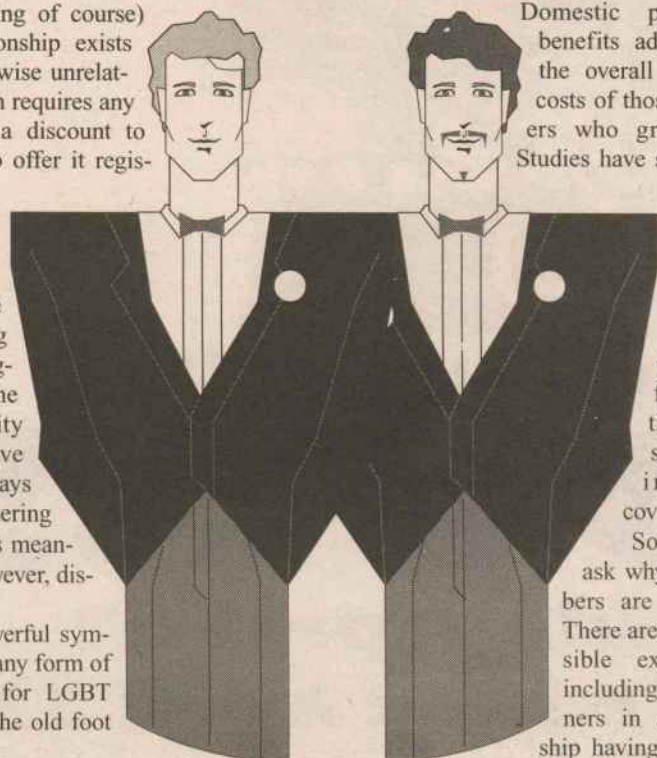
Be willing to compromise. You can always come back for more later.

If Your Workplace Is Unionized

Follow a similar procedure, but go to your union instead of your employer.

Find out what your union's national policy is on DP benefits. Most national unions do back them; insist that your local do the same.

Get your union to include DP benefits during contract negotiations.



AROUND THE NATION

Leading GOP Presidential Candidate Opposes Gays

Austin, TX – The *Dallas Morning News* reports that the leading Republican contender for the presidential election in 2000, Texas Governor George W. Bush, delivered a blow to those who hoped he would be moderate in LGBT issues. Bush, who leads every other Republican contender in the polls, announced that he opposes LGBT adoptions and the inclusion of Gays and Lesbians in hate crimes legislation.

"I'm against Gay adoptions," Mr. Bush said. "I believe children ought to be adopted in families with a woman and a man who are married." The Governor refused to say whether children living in LGBT homes should be removed from them.

He also said that he is against including Gays in hate crime laws. "I've always said all crime is hate crime," said Bush. "People, when they commit a crime, have hate in their heart. And it's hard to distinguish between one degree of hate and another."

Texas leads the nation in anti-Gay hate crimes. Authorities there are currently investigating the murder of two African American Gay men who were found shot in their burning car. Late last year a man convicted of murdering a Gay man received a light sentence for the crime. In 1990, a Texas judge sentenced two teens convicted of murdering a Gay man to five years in prison, saying that the boys "did society a favor." That judge is still on the Texas bench.

Advocates of Hate Crime laws say that special punishment is merited when someone is victimized because of their minority status. They say that attacks like those on Mathew Shepard terrorize entire groups of people.

Rich Tafel, head of the national Gay Republican group, the Log Cabin Republicans, denounced Bush's statements. Tafel said that Bush is wrong if he thinks that pleasing the religious right will get him to the White House.

In the latest polls, Bush leads second place finisher Elizabeth Dole by better than a 2 to 1 margin in the race for the GOP nomination. He also leads the top Democratic contender, Vice President Al Gore.

LA Starts Domestic Partners Registry

Los Angeles, CA – Los Angeles County has begun a registry for domestic partners. The registry offers no benefits. Its purpose is to help private employers providing DP benefits by offering an easy way to define whether or not a domestic partnership does exist.

Domestic partners can file an affidavit with the Los Angeles County registrar-recorder's office. The fee is \$20. Affidavits can be amended for \$13 or terminated altogether for \$15.

Milwaukee's Domestic Partnership Task Force is proposing that a similar registry be established there. Research shows that as many as 13% of all private employers are offering Domestic Partners health insurance benefits to their LGBT employees. An even larger number offers non-health insurance related domestic partnership benefits such as family leave.

Rainbow Hooded Sheets?

Hartford, CT – As part of the national Equality Begins At Home campaign, advocates of LGBT civil rights arranged to have the Rainbow Flag flown above the Connecticut State Capitol for one week. What seemed like a positive idea was marred when two Republican lawmakers demanded that the flag be taken down and compared Gay civil rights groups with the Ku Klux Klan.

T.R. Rowe told the media that he was concerned the KKK would ask that its flag also be flown. "Both have fringe agendas," Rowe said. "That's the difficulty. Where do you draw the line?"

Rowe's comments brought a sharp rebuke from a spokesman for Senate President pro-tem, Kevin Sullivan. He said that Connecticut citizens were wise enough to see the "thinly veiled message of intolerance" behind the demand.

Hank Stillson responded to Rowe's comparison of Gays and the KKK. "Our flag is about promoting equal rights for all the citizens of the state, he said. "We're not about hate, which the KKK flag symbolizes. We're about love and loving relationships. Precisely the opposite of the hate they espouse and symbolize."

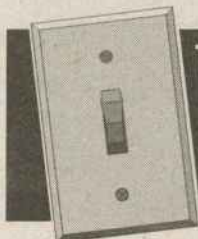
Rowe issued a statement saying that the flag was offensive to many citizens who think the Gay lifestyle is immoral.

Rep. Patrick Flaherty, a Democratic legislator who publicly came out of the closet during the Equality Begins At Home kick off, responded to it. "I don't want to get into an argument about whether or not people approve of the lifestyle," Flaherty said. "Whether you approve or not, it doesn't matter. We have accepted the fact that it exists and that all citizens of the state have a right to be free from discrimination. The flag is a symbolic statement that Connecticut is a state where discrimination is not legal."

HRC Changes Endorsement Policy

Washington, D.C. – The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) has announced changes in its endorsement policies. The group came under severe criticism last fall when it endorsed New York Senator Republican Al D'Amato in the November election.

Sources at HRC say that its Board of Directors will now be required to take into account the wishes of local groups. The D'Amato endorsement went against the wishes of nearly every one of New York's political groups. D'Amato lost the election to now Senator Charles Schumer. Post election polls show that Schumer received over two-thirds of the LGBT vote. He won by a 10% margin in a race that was expected to be much closer than that.



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Continued from cover

ager, R. J. Johnson. Rose's media team, William Eisner & Associates, concocted Neumann's "cow gas" and "Russian space monkey" ads among others.

Why would Neumann want Abrahamson off the court? Her record may provide the reason. Abrahamson is a staunch supporter of individual rights and diversity. For example, in June 1993, she joined then Chief Justice Nathan Heffernan and Justice Bablitch in the dissenting opinion on the Angel Lace (the so-called Lesbian adoption) case.

In that case the court ruled 4-3 against Annette Grinkey's right to co-adopt her same-sex partner's Georgianna's adopted daughter, Angel. Abrahamson concurred with Heffernan's opinion that "Annette and Angel have a functional parent-child relationship, but the majority's conclusion that the relationship cannot be accorded legal protection leaves Angel in a vulnerable position."

Some observers see the Neumann-Rose connection in many areas.

Rose's attack ads show what some call a Neumann-esque quality of sinister distortion. They mix two of Abrahamson's dissents with national statistics and violent sound effects. Their critics say the ads twist out of all proportion the meaning and impact of those minority opinions.

Rose is said to have an edgy, combative personality that mirrors Neumann's. During Wisconsin Public Television's *We the People* March 12 debate, Rose paced back and forth in front of the dais.

Throughout the hour, she appeared to struggle to suppress her contempt for her opponent. For many, Rose's performance echoed Mark Neumann's behavior during last fall's

Senatorial *We The People* debate during which he brought a college girl to tears and condemned a Madison man's Gay lifestyle.

The current race is Rose's fourth attempt to seek a judgeship. She was defeated

twice in races for the Brown County Circuit Court. Both campaigns were marked by attorneys who'd worked closely with Rose questioning her suitability and temperament for the court.

If Rose wins, the current 4-3 conservative majority on the Supreme Court would become a nearly insurmountable 5-2.

Rose also applied for an appointment to the Supreme Court following the resignation of Janine Geske in 1998. She failed to make the list of finalists.

In his biographical profile *The Iron Rose*, Madison's *Capital Times* reporter David Callender offered two career incidents, which illuminate Rose's personality.

He described Rose's successful two year legal battle to force a Milwaukee boutique to issue her a refund instead of a store credit for a pair of shoes she purchased but later decided she didn't like. He also detailed her 1990 personal loss of a \$7100 lawsuit, which prompted Rose to say that she "no longer takes

clients unless they pay a substantial retainer in advance."

The article anonymously attributed to several Green Bay attorneys a series of negative personal judgments about Rose. The candidate was assessed vengeful and petty, "a bar-racuda" who "has a knack for bringing out the worst in all of us."

Abrahamson's dissenting opinion on the sexual predator law has been half the focus of Rose's TV attacks on the Chief Justice. The law permits convicted sexual offenders to be committed to mental institutions if they are deemed unrehabilitated upon the completion of their prison sentences. In her dissenting opinion, Abrahamson questioned the law's validity for reasons of due process and double jeopardy.

In the *We the People* debate, Abrahamson defended her position noting that both the

In campaign speeches, Rose claims her efforts during her tenure on the Board of Planned Parenthood of Brown County restricted agency funded abortion services. That's music to the ears of pro-life voters statewide. They've watched Abrahamson consistently rule for a woman's right to choose an abortion over the last two decades.

If Rose wins, the current 4-3 conservative majority on the Supreme Court would become a nearly insurmountable 5-2. The newest member of that majority will be an uncompromising social conservative unlikely to rule in favor of any extension of human rights. Moreover, she will be on the court for the next ten years.

Many say that Neumann would win, too. His goal to head the state's Republican Party will gain significant, possibly unstoppable momentum. Worse yet, for those who oppose his politics, Neumann's campaign style, which critics say emphasizes mud and money over qualification and experience, will continue to be the life blood beating the heart of Wisconsin politics well into the next millennium.

Rose Role on Attorney Ethics Board Questioned

Questions are being raised about Supreme Court candidate Sharren Rose and her role with the Board of Attorneys Professional Responsibility (BAPR). The Board investigates citizen and judicial complaints against lawyers.

During Rose's tenure as head of BAPR, the Court spent at least \$35,000 in taxpayer money for a "facilitator" to mediate a dispute over the board's ethics.

The staff complained about what it saw as unethical practices by board members. Staff members claimed that the board refused to release lawyers' responses to citizens who had filed complaints against them, and made policy decisions in closed sessions while keeping incomplete minutes or no minutes at all.

Staffers also claimed that BAPR members made disciplinary decisions on matters in which they had conflicts of interest. Rose herself was the subject of an ethics complaint filed by a Manitowoc County Judge. The complaint was reviewed by the board while Rose was a member. It took no action against her.

The mediation ordered by the Court resulted in policy changes addressing each of the specific complaints.

According to Milwaukee's *Shepard Express* newspaper, Supreme Court Justice Ann Walsh Bradley has charged Justice Bill Bablitch with threatening Rose's opponent, Chief Justice Shirley Abrahamson over the dispute. Bablitch warned that Abrahamson could face an opponent in her re-election bid based on her decisions in dealing with the ethics board controversy.

"I took it as a threat that if the court and Chief Justice didn't back off from further investigation of the BAPR, there would be someone running against her," said Bradley.

Abrahamson has been critical of BAPR because she believes it favors lawyers. Bablitch, who opposed mediating the dispute, is actively supporting Rose.



AROUND THE STATE

First Statewide Lobby Day a Success

Madison — Gay, Lesbian and Transgendered "citizen volunteers" from throughout Wisconsin mixed with school groups, lobbyists and legislators at the State Capitol March 24 as Action Wisconsin conducted "Sweeten 'Em Up," Wisconsin's first ever LGBT lobby day.

Volunteers carrying plates laden with homemade cookies, bars and breads stopped at legislator's offices to let them know they have LGBT constituents. While they were there, the volunteers delivered letters that announced the national "Equality Begins At Home" week and thanked legislators "for doing the often challenging work of representing all the people who reside in your district." Attached to each letter were names of LGBT and supportive citizens who support equal rights for LGBT people.

Last minute surprises helped the event exceed its modest "meet and greet" expectations, according to Action Wisconsin president Mike Fitzpatrick. "The cancellation of scheduled Assembly and Senate sessions and last minute additions to our citizen volunteer ranks made it possible for representatives of the statewide group to have many more direct, informal meetings with state lawmakers than we had envisioned," Fitzpatrick said.

The overwhelming majority of the volunteers were visiting the Capitol for the first time and many were nervous about their first foray into the world of politics. "We decided to team the novices with more experienced people, but even our veterans rarely have made that many office visits," Fitzpatrick said.

The decision to team volunteer lobbyists together resulted in only two-thirds of the 132 legislative offices receiving a visit. "Every legislator for which we had a name of someone residing in their district who supports the LGBT community's goal of equal rights did receive a direct contact," Fitzpatrick said. "Prior to the event Action Wisconsin obtained permission to use literally hundreds of names from about 60% of the assembly districts and nearly 80% of the senate districts. If we had gotten ten more volunteer lobbyists, we could have reached everyone."

Action's efforts in preparing for the event did not go unnoticed by some legislators. As he flipped through his five-page letter and list of names, 57th Assembly district representative Steve Wieckert (R-Appleton) exclaimed, "Boy, you guys really have yourselves organized here."

Other legislators were tickled by the treats. "This is absolutely wonderful!" said 8th District Senator Alberta Darling (R-River Hills) between bites of a chocolate chip cookie. "I'm on a diet and limiting my carbohydrates, but those are too tempting," said 54th Assembly district Representative Gregg Underheim (R-Oshkosh) as he split a chocolate brownie in half.

Overall, the reception the LGBT lobbyists received was positive. "I received reports of only three encounters which were civil but strained," Fitzpatrick said. "Legislators and staffs were appreciative of our contacts. Most found our visits a welcome relief from the fierce lobbying going on over the budget bill."

Visits with legislators historically opposed to the LGBT community ranged from polite to cordial. Volunteers reported that meetings with anti-same sex marriage bill author Lorraine Seratti (R-Spread Eagle) and anti-domestic partnership benefits bill author Stephen Nass (R-Whitewater) went well. "Lorraine was polite but preoccupied — but we did interrupt her while she was working on her computer," said one volunteer. "We spent about five minutes with Mr. Nass, and I thought it went great," said another.


"Sweeten 'Em Up" day is part of the national Equality Begins At Home campaign launched by the National Gay Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF). It is the first national campaign for LGBT civil rights centered on the individual states.

Throughout the country, LGBT volunteers engaged in activities intended to bring attention to and support for equality under the law for members of the LGBT community. Action Wisconsin, a statewide organization of Gays, Lesbians, Bisexuals and Transgendered individuals, is coordinating the activities here.



"Sweeten 'Em Up" lobby day volunteers Don Schunke, Mike Fitzpatrick, Jacquie Bodle, Catherine Kloostr and Dan Ross during a break at OutReach offices in Madison, March 24.

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TIDBITS FROM TITLETOWN

by Mike Fitzpatrick

Gay Christians Net Presbytery Grant: The Gay, Lesbian, Open-Minded Bible Study (GLOBS) group at the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point has been awarded a \$5,000 Self-Development of People grant from the combined Presbyteries of Milwaukee and Winnebago. The grant represents about a quarter of the group's proposed \$19,310 budget for 1999. Additionally, the group has raised \$6,650 through funding from the United Campus Ministry, the Frame Presbyterian Church Mission Fund, Peace United Church of Christ and UW-SP.

GLOBS benefits the Gay and Lesbian community at UW-SP through programs of spiritual support, education and advocacy. Among the projects the year-old group has planned are two events of campus-wide interest, increased networking with Stevens Point area churches, continued involvement with the local AIDS Ministry Project, and assisting LGBT students to attend regional and national conferences.

About twenty students, including "open minded" heterosexuals, attend GLOBS' weekly Bible study sessions on campus. The group was also involved in the UW-SP vigil for Matthew Shepard, which was attended by nearly 500 students and has sponsored several speakers who have addressed over 450 students on the subjects of homophobia and Biblical interpretation.

GLOBS welcomes any student willing to accept an inclusive view of the Christian faith, especially Gay and Lesbian students rejected by other religious organizations. For more information, contact Terry Epling at (715) 341-0266 or (715) 341-9864.

Center of the Gay Universe? Why that's Sheboygan of course! Or at least it seemed that way the weekend of March 19-21 according to the Blue Lite's Dean Dayton.

Friday night the Entertainers Against AIDS blew into town with a busload of Green Bay folk to do their very first road show. Headlining the hour-long production was Mr. Gay Great Lakes USofA Jeff Jennings, Titledown's premier chanteuse Zoomie, the irrepressible Miss Kitty and dancer Robert.

Between acts ARCW staff members explained new programs at the agency and conducted anonymous HIV testing. Saturday the Blue Lite hosted the northeast Wisconsin Gay Sheepshead tournament. On Sunday Action Wisconsin kicked off "Equality Begins at Home" week with a town networking meeting at the bar.

Apple Polisher: Congratulations to Jeff Jennings for being selected as one of twelve finalists for the Golden Apple Awards, which honors outstanding teachers statewide.

Jeff, who reports he is "quietly open" to his students on LGBT issues, matched his recent first runner up showing in the Mr. Gay USofA competition by just missing the final cut. Don't feel too bad, Jeff — if there had been a swimsuit portion to the competition, you would have won hands down!

Hail to the Chief: Congratulations also go out to the new head of Perfect Pride, James Smet of Green Bay. The nearly two-year-old civic and social group for 18 to 24-year-old LGBT people and allies in northeastern Wisconsin has members from Titledown to Oshkosh. You may have seen James recently posing as Tinky Winky's "love slave" on the cover of *Quest*.

Northeast Wisconsin Bureau

AROUND THE STATE

Police Decide to Attend April 19 Meeting After All

Milwaukee — The meeting between Milwaukee's LGBT community and Second District Captain Joseph Whitten will take place after all. Last week, *Wisconsin Light* reported that the police had cancelled the 6pm, April 19 meeting due to the controversy over police raids on two Milwaukee LGBT bars.

On Friday, March 26, Milwaukee Police Public Information Officer Karen Pride Garvin contacted *Light* and said that the police, including Captain Whitten, would attend the meeting. Garvin said that the police had never really cancelled the meeting since they did not call it.

Stephanie Hume, a Milwaukee Lesbian who is active on police issues, confirmed Garvin's statement. Hume said that she had called the meeting, but did acknowledge that last week the police had told her that they would not attend it.

Hume said the meeting would include but not be limited to issues surrounding the controversial police actions at popular Milwaukee LGBT clubs, 219 and La Cage. She said that the agenda would include a number of areas that are open to discussion. "I hope that this meeting will lead to some proactive measures to strengthen and improve police community relations," said Hume. She added that all Milwaukee LGBT club owners will be specifically invited to attend.

The meeting, which is open to all members of the LGBT community, will take place at Milwaukee's LGBT Community Center. The Center is located at 170 S. Second Street.

Terry Boughner Hospitalized

Former Editor and current columnist and features writer for *Wisconsin Light*, Dr. Terry Boughner, was admitted to St. Joseph's Hospital in Milwaukee on Saturday March 27. Suffering flu-like symptoms, Boughner developed pneumonia and was listed in critical condition as the *Light* went to press.

Partner Jerry Johnson asked that friends not send flowers or plants without first checking with the hospital (414) 447-2280, as patients in intensive care can not receive such items. Cards can be sent to St. Joseph's Hospital, 5000 W. Chambers St., Milwaukee, WI 53210-1688.

First Ever AIDS Lobby Day Attracts 167

Madison — Bringing a message that further action is needed to combat AIDS and HIV in Wisconsin, 167 AIDS advocates from throughout the Badger State lobbied the State Legislature on Thursday, March 25. "The legislature must exert its leadership in the fight against AIDS," said Doug Nelson, Executive Director of the AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin (ARCW).

Nelson pointed out that Wisconsin allots \$180,000 for HIV prevention, an amount that is surpassed by the AIDS/HIV program's \$216,000 administrative costs. He stated, "It is unacceptable for the state to spend more on administering its HIV/AIDS programs than on preventing the spread of HIV."

Glen Turner, whose daughter died of AIDS last month, told legislators, "Many don't know that one of the fastest growing populations with HIV is young women." Dominic May, who was diagnosed with HIV in 1989, called for more money for services. She commented, "It is hard to get people to understand how difficult living with HIV is."

The volunteer lobbyists told legislators that they should use a \$500,000 reduction in state funding for the AIDS/HIV insurance continuation program. Wisconsin has not increased its funding for HIV prevention since 1989. Since then, reported HIV infections have risen by 800%.

The activists also talked about the need to increase funding for health and social services for people with HIV and AIDS. They pointed out that the number of people living with AIDS in Wisconsin has gone up by over 20% in the last four years. New infections combined with increased life expectancy brought out by new AIDS drug therapies are putting a strain on existing services.

In addition to ARCW, 11 other agencies and groups sponsored the day. They were: Action Wisconsin, Camp Heartland, Central Wisconsin HIV/AIDS Project, the East Central Wellness Project, the Human Rights League, OutReach, Inc., Richard's Place, the Rodney Scheel House Foundation, Sheboygan County AIDS Task Force, St. Camillus HIV/AIDS Ministry, and the UW Stevens Point 10% Society.

ARCW Expands Mental Health Program in Milwaukee Area

Milwaukee — The AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin and Acacia have announced a new program to expand ARCW's ability to provide mental health services to people with AIDS. The ARCW/Acacia collaboration will expand mental health services to include psychotherapy, a psychiatrist, oversight and increased standards of care.

"There are a tremendous amount of deep emotions an individual must deal with when he or she first learns of their HIV diagnosis. There are issues a client has to deal with when learning about a life-threatening situation such as an HIV diagnosis. In an instant, a client's worldview changes, and there needs to be caring individuals to help the client process that new information," said Doug Johnson, ARCW's Acting Director of Health Services.

Johnson said that the new collaboration enables ARCW to reach 50-60 clients per month who need psychosocial therapy. Dr. Craig Schneider, Ph.D., a psychotherapist with Acacia Clinic, will provide psychotherapy while Dr. Stanley Poreba, M.D. will provide psychiatric services.

"This will be a very effective approach to medicine management, as we continue to create a team of ARCW case managers, clinicians and the psychiatrist to help our clients," Johnson added.

Acacia provides services to clients and their families at ARCW's Milwaukee office as well as Acacia's six offices throughout the metropolitan area in Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Waukesha, Racine, Kenosha and Walworth counties. For more information about ARCW's mental health services, call (414) 225-1571.

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CommUNITY

Mil-M-AIDS Bowling Tournament April 17

Milwaukee — The Milwaukee & Madison Against AIDS 9-pin tap bowling tournament rotates back to Milwaukee this year for the 12th annual benefit event. Over 250 bowlers and non-bowlers are expected to participate in the noon, Saturday, April 17th tourney at Red Carpet Bowlero, 11731 W. Burleigh Street.

Mil-M-AIDS rotates between Madison and Milwaukee each year and raises funds for AIDS organizations in that host city. This year, it will benefit the Brady East STD (BESTD) Clinic and Camp Heartland. Since its inception, Mil-M-AIDS has raised over \$50,000.

The \$25 entry fee includes bowling, buffet, prizes and donation. To obtain an entry form, contact Bob and Rick at (414) 482-1964 or Cindy and Debi at (414) 328-3636.

Pride Milwaukee Meeting April 7

Milwaukee — Pride Milwaukee, the newly formed association of LGBT employees of the City of Milwaukee, will hold a short business meeting followed by a social on Wednesday, April 7. The meeting begins at 6pm in the M&M Club's 2nd floor banquet room.

At the meeting, the group will select its leadership and set priorities for the coming year. All employees of the City of Milwaukee are encouraged to attend. For more information, call (414) 225-1621.

Community Center Has Busy April Schedule

Milwaukee — The Milwaukee LGBT Community Center, 170 S. 2nd Street, has announced April special events as well as an ever-growing list of regularly scheduled groups.

- Book reading group starts up Thursday, April 1 at 6:30pm.
 - Volunteer Orientation meetings are slated for 10am, April 3 and 6:30pm April 13.
 - A Rainbow Swing Tea Dance is scheduled for 4:30pm, Sunday, April 4. The dance costs \$5 or \$3 for non-members.
 - Spring Fling at the Harbor Lights Room of the Downtown Transit Center, sponsored by the Community Center. DJ, dancing, snacks, cash bar, bonnet contest. \$10 per person/\$8 for center members.
 - Volunteer Feedback Pizza Party, 6:30pm, Thursday, April 22.
- The following groups meet regularly as indicated at the Community Center:
- Lesbian Singles Discussion Group, meets the third Thursday of each month from 7-8:30pm.
 - LGBT Entrepreneur Network, meets the fourth Thursday of each month from 7-8:30pm.
 - Saturday Night at the Movies, every Saturday from 6-10pm.
 - "Conversations with God" every third Sunday from 10am-noon.
 - Drumming Circle, every fourth Sunday from 10am-noon.
 - Mediation Circle, every second Sunday (except the first Sunday in June) from 10am - noon.

All meetings and events are held at the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center, 170 South 2nd Street, unless otherwise noted. For more information or questions, call (414) 271-2656. The Center's hours are Thursday and Friday from 6-10pm, Saturdays from Noon-10pm and Sunday from Noon-8pm.

Mr. Gay Wisconsin Holds Fundraising Show

Danny Dance, Mr. Gay Wisconsin of 1999, hosted a show at Cest La Vie on Saturday March 20 as a fundraiser for the BESTD Clinic. The two-hour show also featured Lady Simone, Nova Divine, Tracy Ross, Brittany Morgan, Joey Black and Tabitha Stevens. It's another example of where having fun can also serve the community with financial support.

At the end of the show, Danny Dance presented BESTD Clinic volunteer Paul Stabell with proceeds of \$212. Ross Walker, President of BESTD, expressed the gratitude of the clinic volunteers and especially the clients who will be served by the fundraising efforts and others like it. Walker said that the Clinic, which does not do direct fundraising, is always appreciative of such efforts.




Dominic May, living with HIV since 1989, spoke about the need for increased life care services during AIDS Lobby Day at the state capital.

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WASHINGTON REPORT *Tammy Baldwin*

SOCIAL SECURITY & MEDICARE... Not For Seniors Only

by Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin (D-WI)

There have been many satisfying moments in my first few months in Congress, from joining in the call for a comprehensive Patients' Bill of Rights to helping family farmers by extending fighting for better safety nets in times of economic crisis. But no experience was quite as exhilarating as one very special day in February when I was invited to speak at The White House in the presence of the President and Mrs. Clinton on a subject very dear to me, saving and protecting Social Security and Medicare.

I was proud to be invited to speak and offer an inter-generational perspective on saving Social Security and Medicare — to put a human face on this historic challenge. There's a photograph I often carry with me these days. It captures the moment my grandmother first held her very first great-grandchild, my cousin Jennifer.

There is a ninety-year age span between my grandmother and Jennifer, but to me they both represent the reasons we must rise to the challenge of protecting Social Security and Medicare.

I firmly believe that I would not be a Member of Congress, if it were not for Social Security and Medicare. You see, Social Security and Medicare together enabled my grandmother to live independently until she was ninety years old. As her primary care-giver for the last several years, I know the role Social Security plays in making ends meet and the vital role Medicare plays in protecting her health and assuring that a medical crisis will not lead to financial ruin.

It's not just a commitment we made to our seniors, it is a commitment we made to families. I would never turn my back on my grandmother. She helped raise me since I was two months old. Who among us would turn our backs on our parents or grandparents? It is just as important to young people that we have Social Security and Medicare as it is to our seniors because it keeps our families and communities strong!

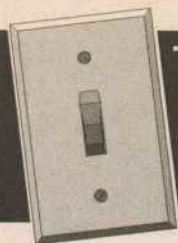
My grandmother has witnessed, sacrificed and experienced so much in her 92 years. She has lived through two world wars, a great depression, she has raised two daughters and then helped my mother raise me. Yet, when I look at that photograph of her with her great-grand daughter, I realize how much my grandmother and I see the future through the eyes of this young child, my cousin Jennifer.

If Jennifer is lucky enough to go to college, she will graduate in the year 2019. If she leads a full work life, she will retire somewhere around the year 2062. I don't know what the world will look like in 2062. None of us do. But we can dream of what we want to leave Jennifer's generation as our legacy. My grandmother and I do all the time.

We want Jennifer to have every opportunity, we want her to have the best education possible, we want her to have secure health care, a good job that pays a living wage, clean air and clean water. And we want Jennifer to know that the programs like Social Security and Medicare that protected her parents, her cousins, her aunt, her grandparents and her great-grandparents will still be there when she retires in the year 2062.

These are pretty basic dreams. And I dare say there are many grandmothers, like my own, who are looking to us right now. They are entrusting us with the sacred responsibility of fulfilling that legacy. To me, fulfilling that legacy means making absolutely certain that Medicare and Social Security will be a mainstay of families for generations to come.

Editor's Note: The Wisconsin Light is pleased to assist Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin in her efforts to stay in touch with the LGBT community. You can look for Tammy's monthly reports in the pages of Wisconsin Light.



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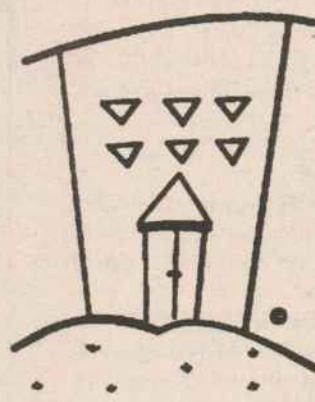
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LETTERS

Dear Editor:

I'm shocked that the Milwaukee Police Department is going around taverns late at night looking for "fruit flies" in liquor bottles. Isn't that a proper function of the health and/or licensing departments? Don't our police have some drug dealers to look for?

I heard that the Wisconsin Avenue McDonald's closed because there were too many fights at night. Wouldn't our police have been employed better to keep McDonald's open than to search taverns for "fruit flies"? Maybe it's time to cut back the MPD's budget if they have time for such frivolous activities. Did they do this on overtime?

This reminds me of an order once given by another Chief of Police long ago:

"All members of the SS and police must be in the forefront of the fight to eliminate homosexuality from the German people."

Heinrich Himmler, 3/7/1942 Memo-Imp. War Museum, London H/6/165

Is this what it's all about?

Yours,

Al Geiersbach

March 25, 1999
Alderman James Witkowiak
12th Aldermanic District
200 E. Wells St. Room 205
Milwaukee, WI 53202-3570

Dear Jim,

Reference is made to the problems in the Gay Community involving several taverns in your district.

I want to let you and the Police Chief know that I am disappointed that the April 19th meeting has been canceled.

Two years ago, police Chief Jones agreed to communicate with the Gay community anytime a problem came up. I would like to make him aware of his promise to us.

I agree with you that if this meeting is not rescheduled, and the harassment of our citizens and business continues, the gap and relations will widen and deteriorate.

I encourage you to help us in our efforts to build better relations between Captain Whiten and the business owners.

Sincerely

Si Smits

The Boot Camp Saloon
CC To: *Wisconsin Light*
Instep News
Chief of Police Arthur Jones

Editor's Note: After a February 27, 1999 article in Wisconsin Light concerning police "raids" at two popular Milwaukee Gay nightclubs, and subsequent coverage by WDJT (CBS-58) and especially WTMJ Radio, the Milwaukee Police Department scheduled a LGBT community meeting with 2nd District Police Captain Whiten.

As reported in the March 24, 1999 Wisconsin Light, Alderman Witkowiak reported that the meeting was canceled. Wisconsin Light learned that Police Chief Arthur Jones considered the whole incidence a "non-issue." On March 26, 1999 a Milwaukee Police Department LGBT liaison, Stephanie Hume, announced that the meeting, to be held at 6pm on April 19, 1999 at the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center, had been re-scheduled. Ms. Hume emphasized that the meeting is a proactive attempt to strengthen the bonds of the LGBT Community and the Milwaukee Police Department and will not just focus on recent events.

Dear WI Light

Thank you so much for being on line. Living in Watertown my partner and I miss a great deal of the LGBT news, this is refreshing for us to be able to read and see upcoming events that we may want to attend.

Kim Brunner

Watertown

LETTERS POLICY

We gladly accept letters and especially e-mail (those with more than 300 words are subject to editing). Please include your name, address and verifiable phone number. We will gladly withhold your name from publication upon request.

WI Light 225 S. 2nd Street

Milwaukee, WI 53204

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ENDORSEMENTS

Re-Elect Abrahamson.

When legal experts and jurists around the country think of Wisconsin, they think of the Chief Justice of its Supreme Court, Shirley Abrahamson. She has a well-deserved national reputation as an outstanding legal scholar, a staunch defender of individual rights and champion of jurisprudence.

Chief Justice Shirley Abrahamson is included on the short list of candidates whenever a vacancy occurs on the United States Supreme Court. She has the support and respect of Republicans and Democrats, civil libertarians and law enforcement officials, unions and commercial interests. Thoughtful voters should join them in re-electing her on April 6.

Abrahamson's opponent is Sharren Rose. Rose is a Green Bay divorce lawyer who on two occasions could not even get elected to the Circuit Court of Brown County. Many of the attorneys who have worked with Rose say that she is clearly unsuited for the bench. They and others have raised serious questions about her ethics, temperament and professionalism.

Given all that, one would think that Shirley Abrahamson was assured of another term on the Wisconsin Supreme Court.

Sadly, that is not the case. Rose is backed by former Congressman Mark Neumann. Her campaign has produced the same kind of nasty, unfair attacks that characterized Neumann's own Senate race last fall. Like Neumann, Rose has heavy backing from the religious right. Rose's media team is the same one that Neumann used. Her campaign manager was on Neumann's campaign staff.

Rose and her supporters hope that in the traditionally low turnout, off-year election, her religious backers, along with those fooled by her distortions of Abrahamson's record will put her on the court for a ten-year term. They are counting on fair-minded citizens to stay home.

If Shirley Abrahamson loses, we lose too. We lose a fair-minded Justice who leans towards civil rights for all. We lose a Justice who is nationally renowned. If Sharren Rose wins, it will be a sign that negative campaigning and the distortion of a fine public servant's record is all that it takes to win an election in Wisconsin.

Last fall, *Wisconsin Light* called on its readers to reject the negative, bigoted politics of Mark Neumann. Little did we know then that just a few months after his narrow defeat in November we would be calling upon them to reject Mark Neumann again.

We simply cannot afford to stay home on April 6. Just as they did last fall, fair-minded citizens must confound the strategists of the religious right. There is too much at stake to let Mark Neuman and his protégé Sharren Rose win. We urge you to cast your vote for one of America's finest judges. Re-elect Chief Justice Shirley Abrahamson next Tuesday, April 6.

Re-Elect Madison Mayor Susan Bauman

In her first term as Mayor of Madison, Susan Bauman has brought new energy to the State's Capitol City. Her fresh approaches to the challenge of maintaining and improving one of America's finest cities has gotten things moving in the right direction on many fronts.

Mayor Bauman has made a commitment to diversity a hallmark of her administration. When Wisconsin Christians United erected those hate filled billboards last summer, Sue Bauman responded within hours. She denounced the signs and those who put them up with such effectiveness that WCU began to attack her almost as much as they attack Madison's LGBT community.

Mayor Bauman did more than attack the religious right. She promoted the effort to make sure that Madison's Gay community understood that its contributions to Madison are valued and welcomed. Their Mayor sent Madison's LGBT citizens an unmistakable and needed signal that they did not stand alone.

On numerous occasions, Mayor Bauman has backed up her statements with visible support for those citizens. She has maintained direct and open lines of communications with them. She has attended numerous LGBT events. She has been the most approachable Mayor that Madison's Gays and Lesbians have ever had.

With her actions, Mayor Susan Bauman has repeatedly shown that her commitment to diversity is more than just words. She fully understands that like any other community, Madison can only thrive if all of its citizens work together as equal and valued partners.

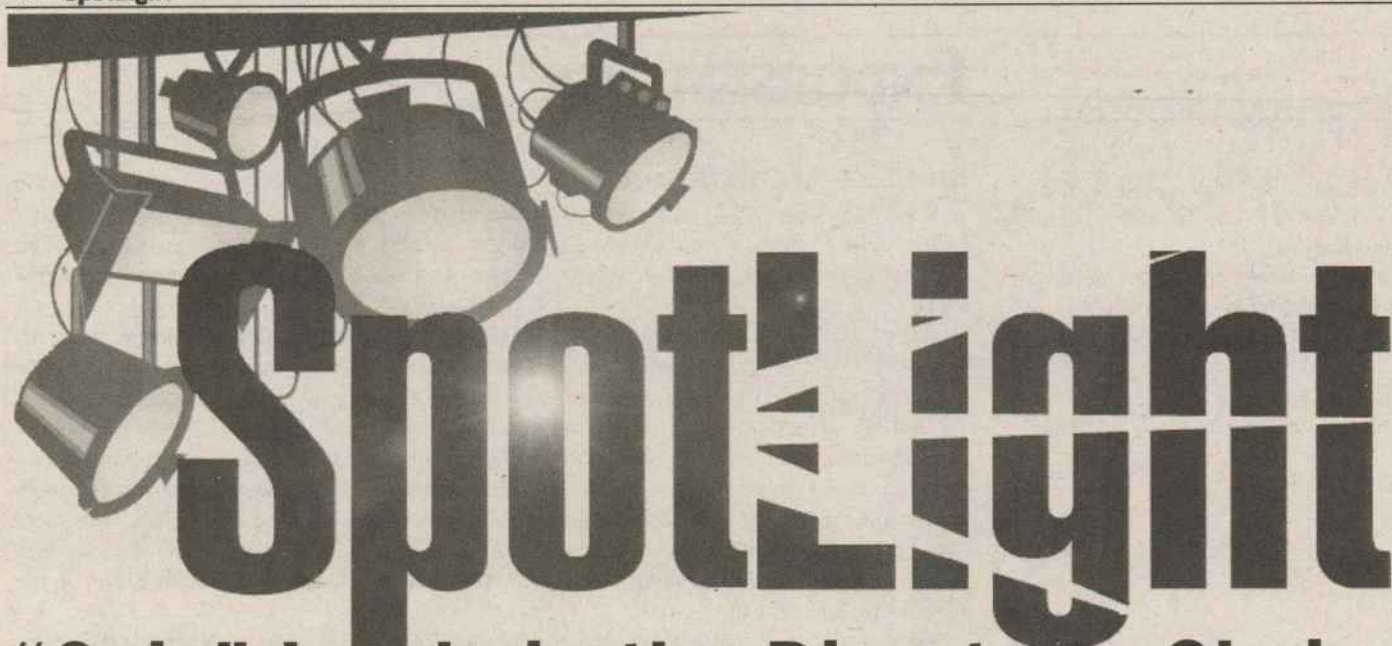
That understanding has brought solid results. It has won her praise from liberals and conservatives alike. Mayor Bauman's approach has brought together what can sometimes be contentious factions working together for the good of all.

Bauman's opponent, former Alderman Eugene Parks, cannot match the Mayor's qualifications or her broader vision of a vibrant Madison moving boldly and confidently into the next century.

Re-Elect Brown County Executive Nancy Nusbaum

Prior to the election of Republican Brown County Executive Nancy Nusbaum, rancor ruled in Brown county politics. Nusbaum's "big tent" style has restored civility to dealing with many contentious issues, including the site and scope of the badly needed county jail, a Downtown arena/convention center, and the state mandated upgrading of the county mental health center.

Nusbaum took on the radical religious right when a Michigan-based Christian group wanted a referendum on posting the Ten Commandments on the county court house lawn. She recommended that the referendum be moved to the November, 1998 election. In so doing, Nusbaum blunted the effect of the radical right on the spring County Board elections. The new Board then dumped the divisive referendum ally voters in the April 6 election.



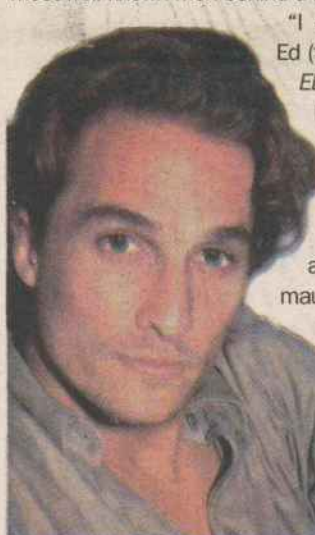
Spotlight

"Opie" Lands in the Director's Chair

Interview with Ron Howard
Director of *EDtv*
by Tim Nasson

Boston - On a drizzly mid-March afternoon, Ron Howard enters a suite at the Ritz Carlton, sporting a tweed blazer, beige pants and his trademark baseball cap; this one bears the name of his most recent film, *EDtv*.

Known to television audiences for the better part of his young adult life as Opie on *The Andy Griffith Show* and as Richie Cunningham on *Happy Days*, Howard fast became one of the most well known men behind a movie camera.



"I empathize with Ed (the character in *EDtv*). I related to him when I was shooting the film," says Howard, seated comfortably on a plush mauve couch in the hotel suite. "Ed had no idea of what the hell he was getting into. People go up to him, and after having seen him

Matthew McCaughnahey

on television, think that they know him well enough to say anything to him. Like his character, I had no idea who these people were. It is a very odd feeling."

That reason may be one of the many that compelled Howard to settle into the director's chair at an age that many current television stars

are making their foray into big screen films.

Today's crop of TV stars — the cast of *Friends*, *Saturday Night Live*, *Dawson's Creek*, and *Buffy*, to name a few — are well on their way to establishing themselves as tomorrow's big screen icons.

Even Ellen DeGeneres, who made waves and headlines when her self-titled sitcom was on ABC, features prominently in the group of TV actors come movie stars. She even steals *EDtv* away from its star Matthew McCaughnahey. "Towards the end of *Happy Days*, says Howard, "I knew I really wanted to be behind the camera."

The past 20 years, however, have been nothing other than magic for Howard, who rightfully could be called "little" Steven Spielberg. Just look at the resume of hits he has directed. Among the many: *Splash*, *Gung Ho*, *Willow*, *Cocoon*, *Parenthood*, *Backdraft*, *Far and Away*, *Ransom* and let one not forget *Apollo 13*.

While Howard may not be seen in *EDtv*, he has sympathy and admiration for actors whose lives resemble those of characters in the film.

"I certainly did not want to make *EDtv* a lament against celebrity," adds Howard. "But, there were some similarities between the actors in the film and their characters. You'll remember that Matthew McCaughnahey had a thing with Sandra Bullock a while back. Television cameras were poking their noses into their lives constantly. Just as they do in his life and his girlfriend's life in *EDtv*."

The McCaughnahey ordeal certainly is not the most remarkable coincidence. There is the Ellen thing, of course.

"Ellen, as did everyone working in *EDtv*, came to the film with wisdom and a sense of humor. Especially Ellen though," says Howard. "She loved the script. She found playing a television

executive exhilarating and cathartic. She even had a few ideas for lines in the film which I used. Lines that got some of the biggest laughs during test screenings."

"One of the actors who was working as a television station employee asked me if he could play his part 'Gay,'" says Howard. "Another actor also asked, and another. It was kind of funny. I didn't want the role to be stereotypically Gay and we had a Gay couple as audience members 'watching' Ed on TV," adds Howard. "When Ellen got wind that everyone wanted to play Gay, she says in her own funny, quirky way, 'Listen up everyone. I'm straight. I'm playing a straight woman. Of course everyone burst out laughing. She is just so funny.'"

Many are comparing *EDtv* to *Truman* or for the not so quick, last year's smash hit *The Truman Show*, starring Jim Carrey.

"The people squawking," says Howard, laughing, "are the ones who have not seen either film."

"1998 had room for a number of similarly plotted films, and each made a lot of money. There was *Armageddon*, *Deep Impact*, and *Antz*, *A Bug's Life* and *The Thin Red Line*, *Saving Private Ryan*. All of those films were similar in one way or another but each found its audience and went on to make a lot of money and/or get a lot of critical acclaim. The funny thing is that *EDtv* and *The Truman Show* are about as similar as a *Jerry Springer* episode and an *Oprah* show."

Opie has a point. The only tell tale similarity is the tag line, "The Truth Hurts." The film primarily tells the story

of Ed who is chosen to be showcased on television 24 hours a day for a month. He knows he is being filmed, unlike Jim Carrey's character in *The Truman Show*.

Ed (McCaughnahey) is white trash and in love with his brother's (Woody Harrelson) girlfriend (Jenna Elfman). The cameras follow "ED" everywhere he goes, from work at the local video store, to the confines of his one night stand's bedroom.

It is much more *The Real World*, but much more plot driven and coherent than anything else that one may think. "I am very happy with the finished product," says Howard.

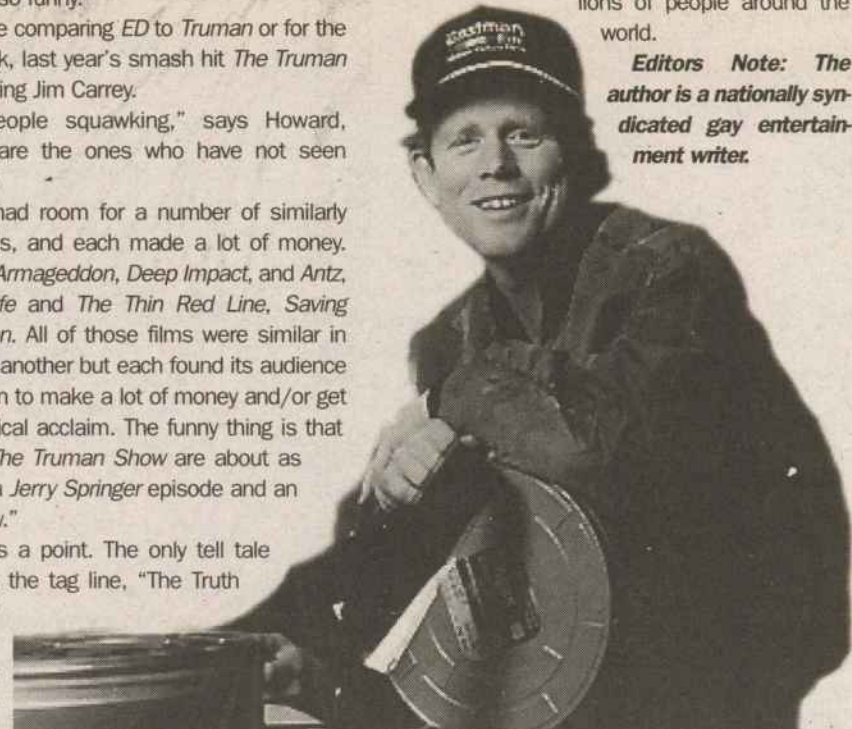
He is also happy with the finished product of *Star Wars: Phantom Menace*.

"I was honored to have been called by George Lucas," says Howard, "to take a look at the film. I saw it with 60% of the special effects. It is visually stunning to say the very least. The amazing thing, unlike the other three, is that this one leaves some loose ends. When Lucas did the first *Star Wars*, he didn't know if there would be a second."

"Now that he knows," he adds laughing, "that there will be two more films, he is having some fun with the screenplays of these new films. It almost makes the new ones mysteries. It is a lot of fun."

While Howard has no stake in any of the upcoming *Star Wars* films, he does have a big stake in his production company Imagine Films. A company that, in addition to releasing the films he directs, is responsible for hits such as *The Nutty Professor* and *Liar, Liar*. Not bad for a guy who himself literally grew up in the eyes of millions of people around the world.

Editors Note: The author is a nationally syndicated gay entertainment writer.



OUT in the Theatre

Don Pasquale

Reviewed by John Jahn

Nothing quite breathes new life into an old opera like changing its original setting. Sometimes it works, other times not. Happily, it was the former case with the recent production of Gaetano Donizetti's *Don Pasquale* by the Skylight Opera Theatre.

For one thing, this *Pasquale* sounded different — in English rather than its original Italian. But the big changes were in setting and costuming. Director Paula Suozzi creatively shifted the action from early 1800s Rome to New York's "Little Italy" of 1916. As a result, the characters seemed all the more real and the place significantly less alien.

With a timeless comedy centering on common people such as *Pasquale*, these alterations not only work well but also arguably improve on the original. Suozzi, the Skylight's Associate Artistic Director, also directed a highly acclaimed production of *The Threepenny Opera* last season.

Don Pasquale is the story of Ernesto, the title character's nephew, who loves a young woman that this uncle refuses to let him marry. Disinheriting Ernesto, Pasquale, a crusty old bachelor, decides to take a wife himself. But the cantankerous old man falls victim to an elaborate ruse to teach him a lesson about love. His friend, Dr. Malatesta, and Ernesto's lover, Norina, hatch the plot.

True to form, all ends well, with the characters living happily ever after. *Don Pasquale*, pedestrian story and all, nevertheless warms the heart.

This Skylight production was successful not only because of the fine directing but also superior singing and acting. Andrew Wilkowske, in his Skylight premiere, showed great comedic talent as Pasquale and Matthew Di Battista brought a fine tenor voice to his portrayal of Ernesto.

Elisabeth Comeaux's soaring soprano also enlivened the stage, but the show was nearly stolen by Steven Jepson's Malatesta, another Skylight premiere. The handsome, tall Iowan possessed great stage presence, well-enunciated singing and expressively broad acting, perfectly suiting his role.

The Skylight Opera Theatre's next production will be *The World Goes 'Round*, featuring the songs of Kander and Ebb, in May. For further information call the Broadway Theatre Center Box Office at (414) 291-7800.

OUT ON FILM

EDtv

Reviewed by John Jahn

EDtv, Director Ron Howard's latest film, just like last year's *The Truman Show*, explores the ramifications of one person's day-to-day activities being shown on a cable TV channel. No actors, just real life, unscripted and unedited. It's a fascinating premise, but it has already been tackled in *Truman*, a film that was both more ambitious and more entertaining.

The story starts in a corporate boardroom

in which a TV honcho (Rob Reiner) has decided that his cable station, San Francisco-based "TrueTV," needs something to kick-start the ratings. Cynthia (Ellen DeGeneres), an up-and-coming member of his staff, has the answer: a reality-based program that follows one man around every hour of every day of every week.

Eventually a subject is chosen: a video store clerk named Ed Pekurny (Matthew McConaughey). Ed squabbles with his family about the idea — his brother Ray (Woody Harrelson), mother Jeanette (Sally Kirkland), and stepfather Al (Martin Landau). Eventually the lure of fame and fortune win out, and *EDtv* is born.

It's fair to say that Jenna Elfman (as Ed's girlfriend Shari) steals the movie. Already known to millions of Americans for her title role in the TV show *Dharma and Greg*, Elfman proves here that her charisma is not limited to

the small screen. *EDtv* comes alive when she's on-screen, but tends to flounder otherwise. Not to criticize Matthew McConaughey, who gives one of his best performances to date in this part, but they swim upstream against a lame script.

Written by schmaltz-peddlers Lowell Ganz & Babaloo Mandel (whose last effort was the dreadfully unfunny *Fathers' Day*), *EDtv* turns into a saccharine affair. The writers' idea of vicious satire are some mildly amusing jabs at the TV industry. For a movie that should have used the take-no-prisoners attitude, *EDtv* comes across as unforgivably mild and optimistic.

No one will ever confuse Ron Howard with Robert Altman. So, instead of a potentially hilarious satire, we're left with, as one character in the film puts it, "a joyous celebration of boobery."

2 STARS

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DEEP INSIDE HOLLYWOOD

by Romeo San Vicente

Is a Kiss Still a Kiss?

That's the question actor-playwright **David Drake** must be asking himself as he prepares to bring his off-Broadway hit, *The Night Larry Kramer Kissed Me*, to the big screen. The semi-autobiographical one-man play, which netted its boyish creator an Obie, charted a naive Gay boy's growing political awareness.

In May, Drake heads to his hometown of Baltimore to film the show after a two-week run on a local stage. The final product will be a "live performance" film incorporating certain cinematic effects.

AIDS is still painfully with us, but the issues around the epidemic have undergone a sea of change since 1992 — so I'll be curious to see what sort of update Drake does, if any. After all,

he ended his play with a fantasy segment envisioning a Queer Revolution in the late 1990s. Oh, well, we've still got a few months left.

Mission: Impossible to Make?

While **Tom Cruise's** latest film *Eyes Wide Shut* took forever to finish, his sequel to *Mission: Impossible* is having a hard time getting started. The \$80 million film was supposed to be in production already. But the start date keeps getting pushed back until an acceptable script can be finalized.

Cruise is standing by in Australia (where the film will shoot) waiting for the project to begin. Also still fuzzy is whether Gay actor-cum-knight Sir **Ian McKellan** will join the cast. He's been

offered a role, but has not yet accepted. No word yet on what that role might be, but after his chilling turn as a Nazi in *Apt Pupil*, my bet is they want him to be the villain.

Fairy Godfathers

Gay and Lesbian filmmakers have two new fairy godfathers. **Clive Barker** and **Bill Condon**, who last teamed up on *Gods And Monsters*, will collaborate again, this time on a series of 15 short films by Gays and Lesbians called *Love and Taboo*.

The films are intended to bring to light queer directing talent as each filmmaker creates a piece inspired by a work by a Gay composer. While Barker and Condon will each direct a segment, there is no word yet on who the other lucky 13 filmmakers will be. Barker will then tie the shorts together with a "wrap-around" to make them suitable for theatrical release.

Romeo San Vicente has never kissed Larry Kramer. You can contact Romeo care of this publication or e-mail to **RomeoDeep@aol.com**. For more *Deep Inside Hollywood*, visit **www.gay.net** or **www.popcorn.com**.

OUT ON TV.

by Bill Meunier

The program they didn't want you to see is finally coming to the airwaves. After being rejected by The Odyssey Network, The Discovery Channel, Lifetime, BET, and The USA Network, the Dallas based Cathedral of Hope has finally been able to secure airtime on Chicago's WGN super station. WGN is broadcast on a majority of cable systems around the country.

The program *Cathedral of Hope* will air in April. It is intended to answer the myriad of religious programs condemning homosexuality. "For too long homophobia and religion has been synonymous on TV in this country," said Rev. Michael Piazza, senior pastor. "Although the Cathedral's first broadcast is only a small drop in a sea of oppression, we have discovered that a drop of hope can neutralize oceans of hate."

The timing of this program is designed to preempt the newly prepared anti-Gay television commercials from Reclaiming America for Christ Ministries, part of James Kennedy's Coral Ridge Ministries based in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Their TV commercials are a sequel to last year's full-page print ads, which appeared in numerous papers.

The Cathedral of Hope began production on its program nearly four years ago. It was originally titled

Holy Homosexuals. The title and much of its content had to be changed to satisfy broadcasters who feared a backlash from the radical right.

Last year, WGN accepted a \$12,000 check from the MCC church and agreed to broadcast the program. After the station had cashed the check, it reneged on the deal and tried to return the money. Cathedral of Hope sued the station. Earlier this month, the suit was settled when WGN agreed to broadcast the program.

The programming is the first religious program that allows Lesbian and Gay people to challenge the anti-Gay dogma being broadcast by many fundamentalist programs that claim that Gays cannot be Christians.

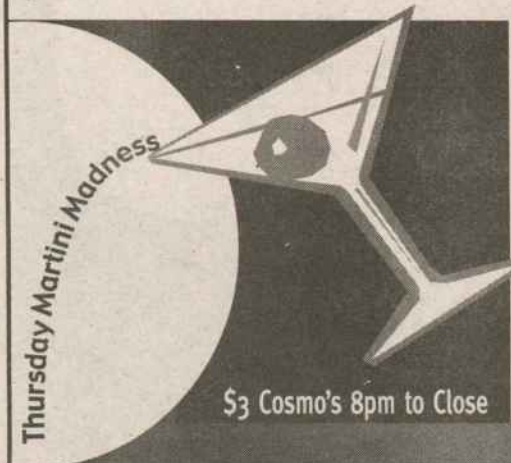
"We believe that it was only fair to tell both sides of the story and then allow people to make up their minds," said Rev. Michael Piazza senior pastor of the Cathedral. "We had no idea that broadcasters who used public airwaves could discriminate against you on the basis of your religion, race or sexual orientation."

The church anticipates a great deal of hate-filled mail and calls. It has been the victim of numerous bomb threats and visits by the Ku Klux Klan, pickets by Rev. Fred Phelps, and Operation Rescue. The objective of the program is not to change the minds of those people, but to offer hope to Lesbian and Gay teenagers who are at risk for suicide, and to ease the isolation of rural gay people.

Program air times are as follows: April 8, 1am; April 9, 4am; April 12, 1am; April 16, 4:30am; April 22, 1am. Check your local listings to find the WGN channel on your cable system.

Editor's Note: Our regular TV columnist, former editor Terry Boughner, has been taken ill and was not able to write his column for this issue. Our staff wishes him a speedy recovery. We hope that we will be able to present his insightful views in the near future.

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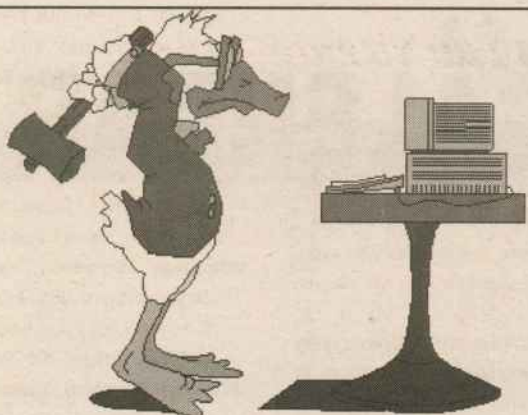


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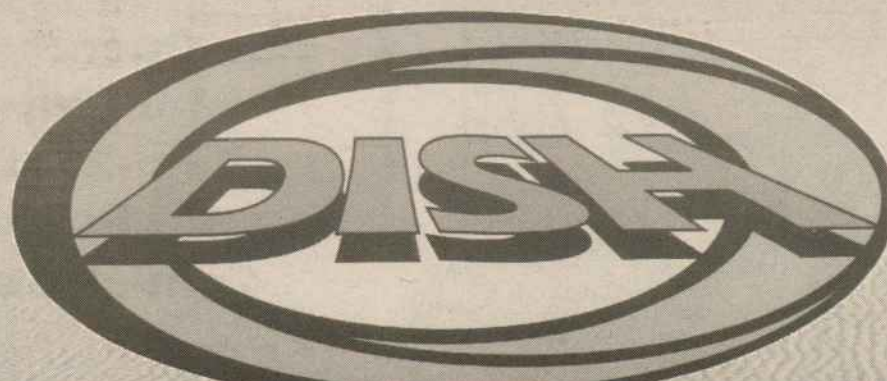
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Events CALENDAR

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 31

Afterwords Books (Milwaukee), Lesbian Reading Group, discussion of Rita Mae Brown's *Rita Will*. All welcome, 7pm.

Katie Gingrass Gallery (Milwaukee), Contemporary Group Exhibition representing the final stages of 20th century American Abstract Art through April 30. Variety of media including paintings, sculptures, mobiles, collages and glass works.

FRIDAY, MARCH 31

Milwaukee Repertory Theater (Milwaukee), *Twist the Night Away* with The Marvelous Wonderettes, a salute to the girl groups of the '50's and 60's in the Stackner Cabaret through May 9. Tickets can be purchased in-person at the Milw. Rep Box Office, 108 E. Wells, or by phone (414) 224-9490. Tickets \$12.50 weekdays and \$17 Fri. and Sat. Times vary, check box office for details.

Skylight Opera Theater (Milwaukee), The play *Don Pasquale* continues through April 4th. For tickets and further info call (414) 291-7800.

THURSDAY, APRIL 1

Milwaukee LGBT Community Center (Milwaukee), Book Reading Group startup meeting, 6:30pm, 170 S. 2nd St, FMI call 271-2656.

FRIDAY, APRIL 2

Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra (Milwaukee), Through April 3, *Ravishing Ravel*. Tickets \$16-48, call 291-7605, 273-7206.

SATURDAY, APRIL 3

Dairyland Cowgirls and Cowboys (Madison), Sapphire Ballroom, 1133 N. Sherman Avenue, FMI (608)245-0627, \$3 suggested donation. General Dance, lessons at 8pm, dancing from 9-close. Open to all.

Milwaukee LGBT Community Center (Milwaukee), 170 S. 2nd St., FMI call 271-2656: Volunteer Orientation, 10am-noon.

Woodland Patten Book Center (Milwaukee), Poet John Koethe reads from his new book, 720 E Locust St., 8pm, \$6 tickets for the general public, \$5 for members. FMI (414) 263-5001.

MONDAY, APRIL 5

Dish (Milwaukee), Pamela Means, Folk/Rock sensation, special Monday show, 8pm

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 7

Dairyland Cowgirls and Cowboys (Madison), Sapphire Ballroom, 1133 N. Sherman Avenue, FMI (608)245-0627, \$3 suggested donation. Beginning East Coast Swing couples lessons from 7-8pm; Advanced line Dance Lessons 8-9pm.

Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra (Manitowoc), *Run-Out*, Family Concert, Capitol Civic Centre, 913 S. 8th St., Call (920) 683-2184 for tickets.

Pride Milwaukee (Milwaukee), The newly formed association of LGBT City of Milwaukee employees short business meeting followed by socializing. M&M upstairs banquet room, 6pm. All city employees invited to attend, FMI 225-1621.

FRIDAY, APRIL 9

Milwaukee Repertory Theater (Milwaukee), Stephen Dietz's romantic drama, *Force of Nature*, Tues.-Sun. through May 9 in the Quadracci Powerhouse Theater. Tickets to this intriguing exploration of human ties can be purchased in-person at the Milw.

Rep Box Office, 108 E. Wells, or by phone (414) 224-9490. Tickets range from \$8 to \$32.

Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra (Manitowoc), Canadian Brass, Andrew Sills Conductor. 8pm show-time, continues through April 11. Uihlein Hall, tickets \$20-50; call (414) 291-7605 or 273-7206.

Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra (Manitowoc), Magical Mozart, Andreas Delfs, conductor, through April 17. Uihlein Hall, tickets \$16-48; call (414) 291-7605 or 273-7206.

SATURDAY, APRIL 10

Artist Series at the Pabst Theater (Milwaukee), Jazz All Stars, 8pm show, for ticket info contact the Box Office, 144 E. Wells, (414) 286-3663.

Gay Men's Singles Club (Madison), Monthly parties for men seeking LTR. Spring Fling, buffet brunch, 7pm. Call (608) 244-8675 FMI.

FRIDAY, APRIL 16

Dairyland Cowgirls and Cowboys (Madison), Sapphire Ballroom, 1133 N. Sherman Avenue, FMI (608)245-0627, \$3 suggested donation. General Dance, lessons at 8pm, dancing from 9-close. Open to all.

Katie Gingrass Gallery (Milwaukee), Gallery Night, meet Wisconsin artists Steve Haas, Nancy Marks and John Mominee. Contemporary Group Exhibition representing the final stages of 20th century American Abstract Art through April 30. Variety of media including paintings, sculptures, mobiles, collages and glass works.

SATURDAY, APRIL 17

"An Evening with Friends" (Madison), OutReach's wine tasting benefit & dance. Sapphire Ballroom, 1133 N. Sherman Ave. \$25 tickets, call (608)255-8582 for details/info.

SUNDAY, APRIL 18

LBGT Community/Police Meeting (Milwaukee), Milwaukee LGBT Community Center, 170 S. 2nd st, 6pm. All welcome to meet the 2nd District Captain.

Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra (Whitewater), Run Out, Magical Mozart, UW-Whitewater Young Auditorium, call (414) 472-4444 for tickets.

EVERY TUESDAY,

Boyz Nite/ARCW (Milwaukee), Meets every Tuesday from 6:30-8:30pm. Hang, dish, assemble safe sex kits, all ages welcome. ARCW Office, 820 N. Plankinton Avenue, FMI call Ed (414) 225-1595 or Yuri at (414) 225-1563.

Gay By God's Will (Milwaukee), Milwaukee's MCC on Warner Cable channel 47, live, 8pm.

Queer TV (Milwaukee), Warner/MATA cable channel 47, 7pm. Every Tuesday.

EVERY SATURDAY

GAMMA (Milwaukee), Social Volleyball, every Saturday from 1-3pm at UWM Engleman Gym, 2033 E. Hartford. \$2 for GAMMA members, \$3 for non-members. FMI John (414) 540-1202.

If your organization or arts group has items for the **April 7th** Issue Events Calendar, please fax, mail, or drop them off to our office by **March 31st**.
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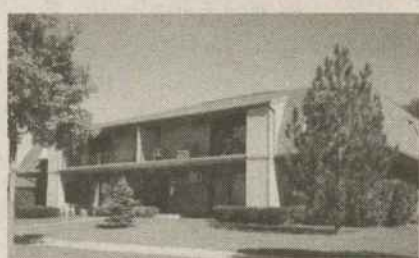
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WEEKLY issue of

WI Light

with a Cover Date of
April 7, 1999

Calendar Information

Thursday, March 25

Space Reservations and

Camera Ready Ads Due

Friday, March 26

This issue covers:

April 7-13, 1999

Deadlines for our weekly
schedule are as follows:

Calendar Information

Thursday prior to
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for a research study focusing on institutional climate for gay/lesbian/bisexual/ transgender people in Wisconsin's Adult Technical College system. The purpose of this research is an assessment of institutional climate; all data will be kept confidential and will be reported anonymously. To participate, write

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LifeStyle

Celebrate Poetry

by Carmen Murguía

of oppression with honesty and candor.

Fortunately, and in many places, hopefully, there are more educators today who introduce LGBT teens to poetry that speaks a language we long to find ourselves. A good example of this poetry is found in the work of great American poet Walt Whitman (1819-1892). Because of his celebration for sensuality and the mere mentioning of body parts, Whitman evoked hostility and admiration alike in the

**"Honestly, I wish I were dead!
Although she too cried bitterly when she left,
and said to me, Ah, what a nightmare it is now.
Sappho, I swear I go unwillingly..."**

Wrote Sappho, who was the first woman, and a lesbian in Western literary history to express her own individual ideas (*Sappho and the Greek Lyric Poets*, translated by Willis Barnstone, Schocken Books). Sappho and Homer were the first of many great poets whose works on women loving women and men loving men laid the groundwork for our rich Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender history. The feelings of freedoms, of desire and yearning, of triumph and tragedy were expressed through poetry, and to miss it is to miss a rich aspect of our culture. *Not to mention poetry readings, feminist and Gay owned bookstores are the ideal place to cruise or for meeting your soul mate!*

"Poetry can bring together those parts of us which exist in dread and those which have the surviving sense of a possible happiness, collectively, community, a loss of isolation." - Poet, feminist thinker, and political activist Adrienne Rich in an interview with Bill Moyers. *The Language of Life: A Festival of Poets*.

Unfortunately, for many of us, poetry and prose that was not forced upon us as a part of "our American literature" did not come until after high school - a time when we were able to choose what we wanted to read and formulate our own ideas about life as we understood it. Poets, scholars and essayists like Adrienne Rich, Walt Whitman, Audre Lorde, Tennessee Williams, and Cherrie Moraga questioned beliefs and reflected on subjects such as heritage, loving women and men, and the politics

mid-19th century. Here is Walt Whitman's *As Adam Early in the Morning*.

**"bad love last like a big
ugly lizard crawl around the house
forever
never die
and never change itself
into a butterfly."**

How different our lives would be without works that reflect *all* of who we are. Without knowing about the existence of *our* history through poetry, why would a young person be at all interested in literature? And why would we write without censoring ourselves for fear of being ridiculed for our experiences? Or how could we affirm any validation about being queer or Transgendered and being proud? Or think that as LGBT people of color, would our story be any different from that of our white brothers and sisters?

Discovering LGBT poetry reinforces both a need to uncover the truth about who we are and a desire for documenting our own unique stories in a clear and effective way.

"Writing produces anxiety. Looking inside myself and my experience, looking at my conflicts, engenders anxiety in me. Being a writer feels very much like being a Chicana, or being queer — a lot of squirming, coming up against all sorts of walls. Or its opposite: nothing

defined or definite, a boundless, floating state of limbo where I kick my heels, brood, percolate, hibernate, and wait for something to happen?" — Gloria Anzaldua, excerpt from *Something to Do with the Dark*, The Graywolf Annual Five: Multi-cultural Literacy.

For many, poems are the link to understanding each other; poetry is much like opening a vein and saying, "Here." So when we've read a coming out piece, we are able to understand our own coming out process and the feelings associated with feeling like the only one or, weird, or reaffirming our blessing and our uniqueness. And when we read poetry of tragedy, heartache and of finding a new love, there is something that impacts us in a quiet and victorious way.

Poems about Heartbreak That Go On and On by June Jordan, from Haruko/love poems

**"Walking forth from the bower
refresh'd with sleep,
Behold me where I pass, hear
my voice, approach,
Touch me, touch the palm of
your hand to my body as I pass,
Be not afraid of my body."**

As LGBT people, poetry also transcends a deeper level within us. Poetry speaks directly to us from our particular culture, our region of the country, written in our native tongue. As we are reading, we can often hear those poets who share our sense of humor and personal experiences. It's amazing when these complexities about how and where we grew up appear before us in black and white because it's as if we've come upon someone who has documented a part of our life story.

April is National Poetry Month in the United States. Celebrate another vital aspect of your LGBT history by attending a poetry reading or perusing your favorite library or bookstore's collection of LGBT poetry. If you're traveling to New York, I suggest visiting the Oscar Wilde Memorial Bookstore, the first Gay bookstore in America, 15 Christopher Street; and the International Gay Information Center inside the New York Public Library, Fifth Avenue between West 40th & 42nd Streets. In San Francisco, visit the San Francisco Women's Center - Women's Building, a resource for women of

color and Lesbian hosts readings, 3543 18th Street, between Valencia & Guerrero Streets; and the James C. Hormel Gay and Lesbian Center located in the San Francisco Public Library.

Join a LGBT version of the "dead poets society"...or why not start one! In fact, write a poem! Write a poem about coming out and share it with someone who you've been wanting to tell, or write a poem that begins with "Dear Lover, I hope this poem finds you, dear lover..."

Chicana Lesbian poet Carmen Alicia Murguía is the author of *The Voice Inside: Mi Alma, Mi Cuerpo y Mi Espiritu*. Carmen is the featured reader at *Poet's Monday, April 19* at Thai Joe's, 2239 N. Prospect Avenue, Milwaukee. Open mike begins at 7:30pm followed by the featured reader at 9pm. For more information call (414) 276-8546.

I've compiled a small selection of books that have made a difference in the lives of many people, including myself. Enjoy! They can be found at Afterwords books, gifts, and espresso bar in Milwaukee.

The Last Generation, prose & poetry by Chicana scholar and activist, Cherrie Moraga (South End Press).

Midnight Salvage Poems 1995-98 by Adrienne Rich (W.W. Norton), American poet and essayist, best known for her examination of the experiences of women in society.

Haruko/Love Poems: New and Selected Love Poems by June Jordan (High Risk Books), poet, essayist, political activist, scholar and author of 20 books.

Oral Tradition: Selected Poems Old & New by Jewelle Gomez (Firebrand Books). Jewelle presents her African American and Native American storytelling heritage in a collection about finding home, making love and learning history.

Things Shaped in Passing: More Poets for Life Writing from the AIDS Pandemic edited by Michael Klein and Richard McCann (Persea Books) is a passionate collection of 42 poets.

Our Dead Behind Us, poems by Audre Lorde (1934-1992), the author of ten volumes of poetry.

The Penguin Book of Homosexual Verse edited by Stephen Coote. Other poets in this inspiring collection include Homer (the first Gay man in Western literary history), Olga Broumas and Tennessee Williams.

Rituals by Milwaukee native Craig Hickman (parfait de cocoa press) who performs and reads in the voices of both men and women.

Across the Lines: Poems of Women Under Siege compiled and written by Jennifer Benka, Jennifer Geigel and Jennifer Morales.



Now where the hell are those olives? Pearl — did you eat those olives? I'm sorry folks. I'm getting ready for my post-Oscar party and I can't find a damn thing. Oh, here they are. Pearl, take these black olives and stuff them with little marshmallows and pieces of Captain Crunch.

Every year I throw a bash after the Oscars. It gives us another reason to drink, estimate how long it will be until the Academy fires Debbie Allen, light another votive for Barbra Streisand (Oscar, can you heard me?), guess who had her boobs done, and share fantasies about Danny DeVito and Mork. It's always the little, hairy ones that really know how to rock the trailer.

Harriet! Harriet! Wake up sweetie. Here, I need you to drain this cucumber mush before we spread it on the Cheeze-Its. Go over to the sink and drain the spread through these pantyhose. No wait. These are the ones Wayne Newton threw back at me. Use this pair instead; they were only rejected by Jerry Lewis. Okay, I've got Pearl working on the Olive Surprises, Harriet is draining the Little Bit'O Ruthie Cucumber Spread, and Hester... where's Hester? Hester Marie Shoveit! Stop flirting with Billy while he's snow-blowing my parking slab.

He can plow you after the party! Now finish decorating these Saltines until you run out of Cool-Whip and cough drops.

The trailer looks good. I've got gold fabric draped over everything including me. My Debbie Reynolds paint-by-numbers portrait is hanging over the Lazy Boy. Debbie deserved Oscars for that damn *Mother* movie and *In And Out*. Why does the Academy ignore the greats like that? That poor Debbie Reynolds. I need a moment. Where's the tequila?

Okay, what else? I have aluminum foil if the TV antenna goes out again. I wanted a red carpet rolled out in front of my door, but I couldn't find one. I decided to use my maroon toilet-seat cover instead.

Tonight's guests include: Chester, the nudist from next door; Emulio, my taxi driver from last night; the pizza delivery boy from the night before; my pedicure man, Mr. Kim; and Vicki, the 82-year-old owner of Vicki's Glamour Wigs and Soup Kitchen. Throw a few ex-husbands in the mix and you've got one big, pitiful post-Oscar party. My God! I've created a party that even Sally Struthers wouldn't attend.

Oh jeez. I gotta go! Harriet is face down in the cucumber spread. I think she mixed her medication with the rum-balls. Why don't you read a letter and I'll get back to you next time. God, I hope her dentures didn't fall down the disposal again. Pearl, I need you to make sure Harriet's breathing while I check the spread for fake eyelashes.

What? Of course, we can still serve it.

Dear Ruthie,

I'm an 18-year-old whose parents are recently divorced. I'm living with my Mom, who I love, but she has a hard time with me being a Lesbian. My Father is cool about it. My Mom gets mad because I have a good relationship with my Father, or when I spend too much time with him. She's always putting him down and makes me feel bad for seeing him. What should I do?

Signed

Dedicated Deanna

Dear Deanna,

While I have a master's degree in divorce, I can't say I know much about child raising

except that if done right, they will grow up to buy you lots of things and pay your bills.

Sorry to hear you're going through a tough time. I think divorce is hard on children no matter how old they are when it happens.

Remind your mom that her relationship with your dad is different than your relationship with him. Ask her to consider the same of you. Remind her that your relationship with him is different than hers, and that you aren't experiencing father-daughter problems.

Understand her need to vent, but let her know it hurts as your connection with your dad is very different. You may also want to calmly remind mom that this divorce effects you too, and that you're dealing with emotions also. Ask her to help you cope by not speaking badly about your father.

If the situation is that bad, you may want to consider moving out, whether that's with your dad or on your own. It may not be the best option, but it's there.

I'm not sure your sexuality has much to do with this. I would think if your mother had a hard time accepting it when she was married, that wouldn't change much after the divorce. If she suspects you spend time with your dad because of his acceptance, it should only help her reevaluate her attitude about the issue.

Okay. Now call up some girlfriends, go have a good time, and forget about this stuff for a little while!

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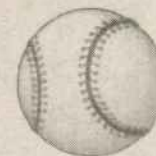
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CATCH IT . . .



So...

April showers bring more than just flowers, especially this year across the Gay Rights State. In Milwaukee, the Make A Promise Dinner presents an opportunity to don our Gay apparel for a night to benefit the AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin, on April 10.

Madison's OutReach hosts its annual wine tasting and dance benefit April 17 while on the same day Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) Fox Valley hosts an "Open Hearts, Open Minds" conference in Appleton.

The last weekend of the month will see over 350 men and women country dancers swing their way into Milwaukee for their Spring Round Up hosted by Shoreline.

Over 1,000 well-dressed supporters will descend upon the banquet room at the new venue for Make A Promise, the glittering new Midwest Express Center. The Dinner, Awards, Dance and Auction outgrew the Pfister Hotel last year when nearly 1,000 took over an entire floor of the grand old hotel.

The new facility allows the event to expand to include a new jazz and martini area. Also new this year is entertainment by a swing music band for your dancing pleasure after the dinner is over.

So... here's your chance to get all gussied up, enjoy a great meal, see and hear wonderful

entertainment, applaud the award winners, bid on an auction item and mingle with the glitterati as the Make A Promise Dinner moves into a new era.

Meanwhile, Madison's OutReach, the capitol city's LGBT center hosts it's annual wine tasting and dance benefit, An Evening With Friends, at the Sapphire Ballroom on March 17. Hundreds of attendees will have the opportunity to sample wines from around the world, nibble on hors d'oeuvres and mingle with others to the sounds of live jazz. A community dance will follow the benefit tasting to provide a well-rounded night on the town.

The Sapphire Ballroom is a new location for An Evening With Friends, too. This was an economic move to lower OutReach's costs and to make an already successful event even more of a money maker for the center. OutReach needs the funds to help support their programs at their new, double in size location in the Gateway Mall.

PFLAG's Open Hearts, Open Minds conference that day at Liberty Hall in Kimberly will draw a wide cross section of LGBTs, family members and supporters to hear speeches, attend workshops and network. Speakers include PFLAG Central Region Director Sandy Brown, Appleton Police Chief Richard Myers and Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin.

The 4th annual Shoreline Spring Round Up brings in dancers from throughout the country for a weekend of dancing, entertainment, lessons and camaraderie, April 30-May 2. Friday night's Boots and Boxers Ball is self explanatory. Believe me when I say it's a scream to see men and women doing line and couples dancing wearing boxer shorts and cowboy boots.

The 7th annual Country Dance Gala (Gay-la?) on Saturday night takes over the lakefront War Memorial Center and is the main event of the weekend. This year, the Cream City Foundation and Camp Heartland are the charitable recipients from the weekend festivities.

So... That's a wide variety of activities and special events, which should provide a diversity of diversions for event the most jaded in our community. Crawl out of your cocoon and enjoy!

OUT IN CYBERSPACE

by Michael Stewart

The calendar might say it's spring, but the cool temps and unpredictable weather suggest Mother Nature and Pope Gregory aren't quite in synch. When cabin fever runs rampant and there's nothing on television, it's time to crank up the computer and get online for some mindless fun.

The most outrageous thing to be seen in years is presented courtesy of Los Angeles' sketch-comedy group, the Van Gogh-Goghs. "Furniture Porn" (at www.fringenet.com/-vgg/fumporn1.html), is a riotous spoof on the zillions of hardcore porn sites that permeate the net.

If you've ever noticed how "boilerplate" most adult-oriented sites are — or been spammed by them while sitting in an AOL chat room — you'll wet yourself laughing at segments like "Hot Outdoor Action," featuring chaise lounges, or "The Office Party," where "Mr. Overstuffed decides to give a 'full interview' to a hot colonial number named Tawny!" Pay special attention to the faux click-through banners.

If dry wit and subtlety doesn't do it for you, head on over to the Centre for the Easily Amused at www.amused.com. One of the few vintage online sites from before the Internet got trendy. You could easily spend the entire month happily wasting time here. You'll find new brain-withering fun just about every day. Don't ignore some of the tried-and-true favorites, such as the "Amuse-O-Matic 2000" or the "Peeling Paint Web-Cam," which promises "hours of fun for the easily amused."

Another venerable Internet tradition with a years-long pedigree are the Darwin Awards, presented — posthumously — to those who "take themselves out of the gene pool in the most spectacular and stupid fashion." Many versions of the Darwin Awards can be found online. One of the most recently updated can be found at www.tiac.net/users/cr/darwin.html. If you've ever had the sense that

those you've dated hail from the absolute bottom of the barrel, you'll feel much better about yourself (and them), after reading the winners, nominees and honorable mentions for the annual dubious distinction.

Of course, not every moron is culled from the gene pool in some horrifying fashion; some just get computers and use the reach of the World Wide Web to demonstrate their idiocy. If you've ever been on the receiving end of one of those hoary chestnuts about Richard Gere and the gerbil or the \$250 cookie recipe, surf on over to the "AFU & Urban Legends Archive" at www.urbanlegends.com.

Culled from years of postings to the Usenet, this site carefully debunks all of those "true stories" your friends heard from their mother's hairdresser's assistant's cousin's best friend's boyfriend. Be sure not to miss the automatically updated "Top Urban Legends" page at www.urbanlegends.com/top10.

If you're one of those who feels compelled to send to all corners of the planet the chain letter about the little girl dying of cancer who wants e-mail or postcards, or the ICQ message that threatens your removal if you don't pass it on, this site will clue you in to what a ghastly no-no you've committed.

If low-brow hijinks that end in the trauma ward aren't your cup of tea, you can limit yourself to nothing worse than offenses against good taste by checking out the ever-popular "Worst of the Web" at www.worstoftheweb.com/. Updated daily, this compendium of crap is why some people should not be allowed to own computers. Accompanied by commentary ranging from the merely disparaging to the downright acerbic, this is a must-visit site if you've ever been tempted to put together your very own homepage and want a few clues on what not to do.

Till next time, surf on!

The author can be reached at michaelstewart.com

Dykesville by Tami Friday



BIFF 'N BUNKY by KEITH N ANDERSON



NIGHTS OUT

News... Well, I guess the on again off again meeting with the police is back ON again. The recent bar raids in Milwaukee will certainly be one, but not the only, topic of discussion. I hope there will be a good turnout. It's on April 19 at 6:30pm at the Community Center, 170 S. Second Street — that's the Downtown Warehouse building if you've never been there.

pool and other friendly folks, too. They have a strange pink thing on the bar there. I can't tell you what it is (this ain't Section X) but I can say that you can pet it for \$1. All the money goes to the SSBL.

There was a big crowd over at **219** and well there should be. They had some hot strippers.

Speaking of hot, **C'est La Vie** also had a hot show going on. Miss Joey Black and her friends were wowing a good-sized crowd. **Dish** was packed and owner Julie was all smiles. As usual, there were men and women dancing and having a good time together. Imagine that — Gay men and Lesbians actually enjoy-

ing the same bar together! Hope this starts a trend.

Over at **In Between**, Curt and Patrick forced me to beat them in a game of bar dice. That'll teach them to twist my arm and force me to play. BTW, they have a very nice, very cute new bartender. His name is also Curt, so they call him Tinky Winky. No, there aren't any triangles on top of his head — and he doesn't carry a purse!

We moved on over to **Fluid** which was mobbed with people. I think there was some kind of gorgeous model convention in town and Fluid was the host bar or something. It was hard to tear ourselves away and head next door to **La Cage**, but we managed. And a good thing we did. There were plenty of hot men over there,

too. DJ Dave and DJ Tanya were in fine form — like when aren't they? The next night, Sunday the 28th, there were some really good things going on. I started at the **M&M Club** where Terri Wedner was giving her final performance with **Singsational**. Terri is moving to Nashville. I will miss her wonderful voice, and I am sure I am not alone. Then I went to Sasha Mitchell's B-day party and benefit at **La Cage**. It was fabulous. Miss Mitchell is going to the Miss Great Lakes US of A pageant in Dallas. Don't be surprised if she does well there. She has the talent to make it. I finished the week by going to the anniversary at **Mugshots**. Yes, it is a straight bar, but it has a Gay owner and a mixed crowd, and I had a great time.



Paul, who holds down the fort in the back bar at **La Cage**, was back from his NY vacation. He only spent four days there and he says he was sick for two of them. Guess he missed us, huh? He told me he has "unfinished business" in the Big Apple. He refused to say who he didn't finish.

Recaps... I wasn't able to make it over to **La Cage** for the big titleholder celebration, but my spy tells me that a good time was had by all.

Our new photographer, Jim, is just the cutest thing. Last Saturday, we went on a bar crawl together so he could take pictures and I could... well never mind what I could do. At any rate, we had a great time with his friend Theresa, from Delafield no less.

Our first stop was **This Is It**. Two gorgeous hunks were working the bar, Tony and Peter. Then we went over to the **Ball Game** where we found a very nice looking foursome playing



A great time was had by all as **La Cage** celebrated it's recent title winners.

That's it for this week, folks. Hope to see you out and about really soon. Meanwhile, stay safe and be proud!

Going Out

THURSDAY, APRIL 1

Brady East STD Traveling HIV Testing (Milwaukee), La Cage from 10pm-1am.
Fannie's (Milwaukee), Ronnie Nyles, 7pm.

FRIDAY, APRIL 2

Milwaukee Eagle (Milwaukee), Fetish Night, this week, uniforms, 50 cents off drinks for those in uniform, 10pm-close; 2-4-1 on all mixed drinks from 8-10pm.
Mr. & Mrs. Mystique National 1999-2000 (Milwaukee), A Charles D. Production, hosted by Otis Mack. Centennial Hall, downtown library, 6pm tonight and tomorrow night Tickets \$15 tonight only.

SATURDAY, APRIL 3

Club 219 (Milwaukee), Kimberly Anne for Possum Queen benefit, 6pm.
Fannie's (Milwaukee), Annual Easter Egg Hunt. Win cash and prizes. We hear it's David's birthday.
Mr. & Mrs. Mystique National 1999-2000 (Milwaukee), A Charles D. Production, hosted by Otis Mack. Centennial Hall, downtown library, 6pm tonight, tickets \$25 (dinner included from 6-7pm).

SUNDAY, APRIL 4

Brandy's II (Green Bay), Argonauts Easter Egg Sale.
Club 5/Planet Q (Madison), Sugar and Spice exotic dancers, 10:30pm, \$4 cover.
Fannie's (Milwaukee), Karaoke at Fannies, hosted by Marlene.
La Cage (Milwaukee), Jackie Roberts birthday show, showtime 10:30pm.
M&M Club (Milwaukee), Live entertainment by Carl & Tammi.

MONDAY, APRIL 5

Dish (Milwaukee), Pamela Means, Folk/Rock sensation, special Monday show, 8pm

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 7

Brady East STD Traveling HIV Testing (Milwaukee), The Triangle, from 9pm-midnight.

FRIDAY, APRIL 9

Milwaukee Eagle (Milwaukee), Fetish Night, this week, hankies, 50 cents off drinks for those flagging, 10pm-close; 2-4-1 on all mixed drinks from 8-10pm.

SATURDAY, APRIL 10

Napalese (Green Bay), Gregory James.

SUNDAY, APRIL 11

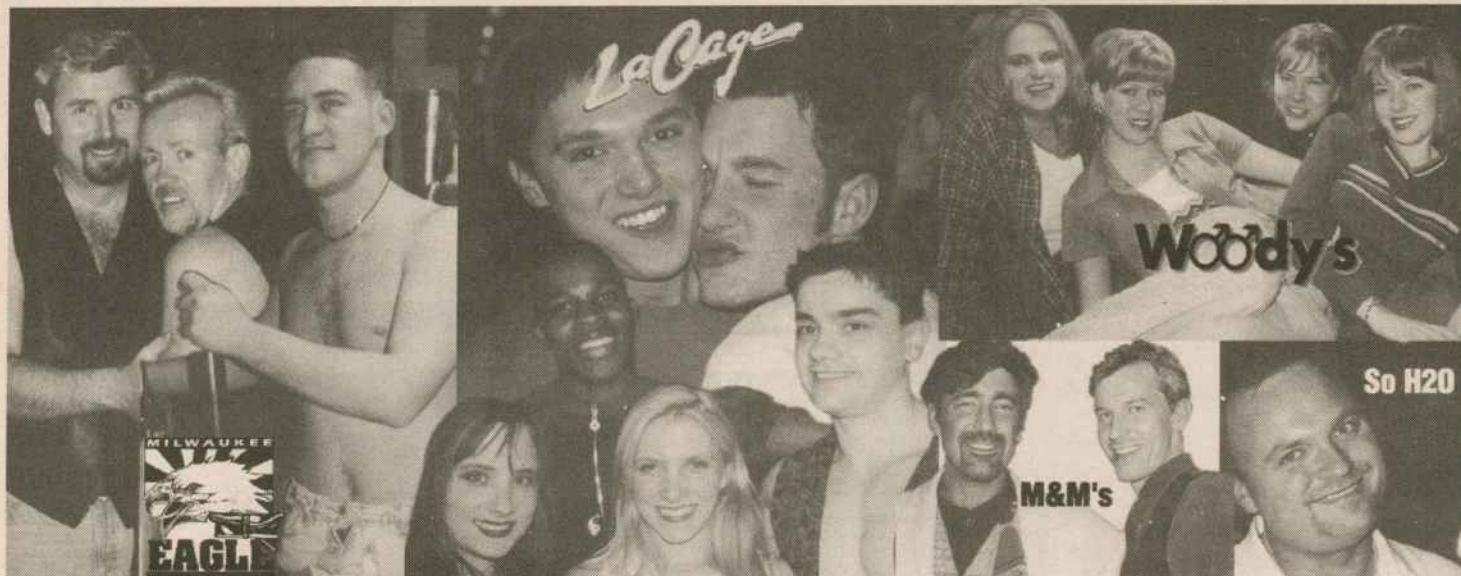
Club 5/Planet Q (Madison), Mr. Gay Capitol City Pageant, 9pm, \$5 cover.

FRIDAY, APRIL 16

Brandy's II (Green Bay), Retro Night. Come in older clothes, get drink discounts, mini-show, DJ follows.
Za's (Green Bay), Wisconsin Light presents the Man of the Year party for Za, a benefit for Rainbow Over Wisconsin.

LIVE WEEKLY ENTERTAINMENT

C'est La Vie (Milwaukee), Drag Shows on Sat. & Sun., 10:30pm.
Club 5 (Madison), Drag Shows on Sun., 10pm.
Club 219 (Milwaukee), Drag Shows on Thurs. & Sun., 11:30pm. Strippers every Wed., Fri. & Sat., 11pm.
Fannies (Milwaukee), Karaoke hosted by Marlene. First Sunday and second and fourth Wednesdays of the month.
Kathy's Nut Hut (Milwaukee), Lingerie and Bikini Revue, every Wed., 4:30-6:30pm.
Kirby's Klub (Madison), Drag Shows on Sat., 10pm.
La Cage (Milwaukee), La Cage Showcase every Fri. & Sun. at 11pm.
Shoreline (Milwaukee), Practices at La Cage, 8-11pm plus Free Lessons.
Quinn's Cabaret (Milwaukee), Mrs. Fun appears live every Fri. at 9:30pm.
This Is It! (Milwaukee), Sylvain appears live every Sun. night at 8pm.



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Brandy's II Mw 1126 Main St., 54304 437-3917
Buddies MW 1264 Main St, 54304 437-9256
Napalese Lounge MW, DJ 515 S. Broadway, 54303 432-9646
Sass WM, S 840 S. Broadway, 54304 437-7277
Za's/Java' MW, DJ, E, F, V 1106 Main St., 54301 435-5476

RESTAURANTS

Cafe Bourbon 1106 Main St., Upper, 54301 435-5476

LA CROSSE (608)

Cavalier Lounge Mw 114 N. 5th St., 54601 782-9061
Players G/S, MW 218 Main St., 54601 782-9279

MADISON (608)

CE's W,m 2415 Winnebago St. 53704 241-5042
Club 5 MW, F 5 Applegate Ct., 53713 277-9700
Kirby's Klub MW, DJ, S, E 121 W. Main St., 53703 251-5838
Mens Room M, L/L 3054 E. Washington, 53704 241-9335
(Open Fri & Sat, 9pm-Close)
Planet Q MW, V, DJ, E 5 Applegate Ct., 53713 277-9700
Ray's Bar & Grill WM, DJ, F 3054 E. Washington, 53704 241-9335
Shamrock MW, F 117 W. Main St., 53703 255-5029
The Barracks M, L/L 5 Applegate Ct., 53713 277-8700

RESTAURANTS

Club 5 Fine Dining 5 Applegate Ct., 53713 277-9700
Fyfe's Corner Bistro Fine Dining 1344 E. Washington 251-8700

MILWAUKEE (414)

1100 Club M, L/L, Food 1100 S. 1st St., 53204 647-9950
Ball Game M, S 196 S. 2nd St., 53204 273-7474
Barbie Dolls Playhouse MW, S 700 E. Meinecke, 53212 374-7441
Boot Camp M, L/L 209 E. National Ave., 53204 643-6900
C'est La Vie M, D, E 231 S. 2nd St., 53204 291-9600
Club 219 Mw, DJ, E, V 219 S. 2nd St., 53204 271-3732
Dish W, DJ 235 S. 2nd St., 53204 273-DISH
Emerald City D, DJ, E, V, G/S 1101 N. Old World 3rd 53202 226-2489
Emeralds Lounge MW 801 E. Hadley St., 53212 265-7325
Fannies Wm, DJ, E 200 E. Washington St., 53204 649-9003
Fluid MW 819 S. 2nd St., 53204 645-8330
In Between Mw, S 625 S. 2nd St., 53204 273-2693
Kathy's Nut Hut Wm, S 1500 W. Scott St., 53204 647-2673
La Cage Mw, DJ, E, V 801 S. 2nd St., 53204 383-8330
M&M Club MW, E, F 124 N. Water St., 53202 347-1962
Milwaukee Eagle M, L/L, DJ, D 300 W. Juneau, 53203 273-6900
Shaft Bar M, L/L 300 West Juneau 273-6900
(Open Fri & Sat, 10pm-Close, Dress Code)
South Water St. Docks M, L/L 354 E. National Ave., 53204 225-9676
Station 2 Wm, S 1534 W. Grant, 53204 383-5755
This Is It Mw 418 E. Wells St., 53202 278-9192
Triangle M 135 E. National Ave., 53204 383-9412
Woody's M 1579 S. 2nd St., 53204 672-0806
(Open 4pm-Close, 7 days a week)

RESTAURANTS

Annex Cafe Late Nite 1106 S. 1st St., 53204 384-7999
Glass Menagerie Fine Dining 124 N. Water St., 53202 347-1962

RACINE/KENOSHA (414)

Club 94 MW, DJ, E 9001 120th Ave., Kenosha, 53140 857-9958
Clubhouse Filling Station MW, F, DJ, E 6325 120th Ave., Kenosha, 53140 857-3744
Capers/Illusions MW, DJ, E 6305 120th Ave., Kenosha, 53140 857-3813
JoDee's MW, DJ 2139 Racine St., Racine, 53403 634-9804
What About Me? MW 600 6th St., Racine, 53403 632-0171

SHEBOYGAN (920)

Blue Lite MW 1029 N. 8th St., 53081 457-1636

SUPERIOR (715)

Bev's Jook Joint Wm 820 Tower Ave., 55880 392-5373
JT's Bar & Grill MW, DJ 1506 N. 3rd St, 55880 394-2580
Main Club MW 1217 Tower Ave., 55880 392-1756

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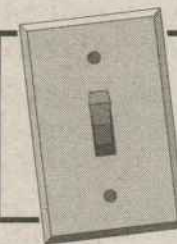
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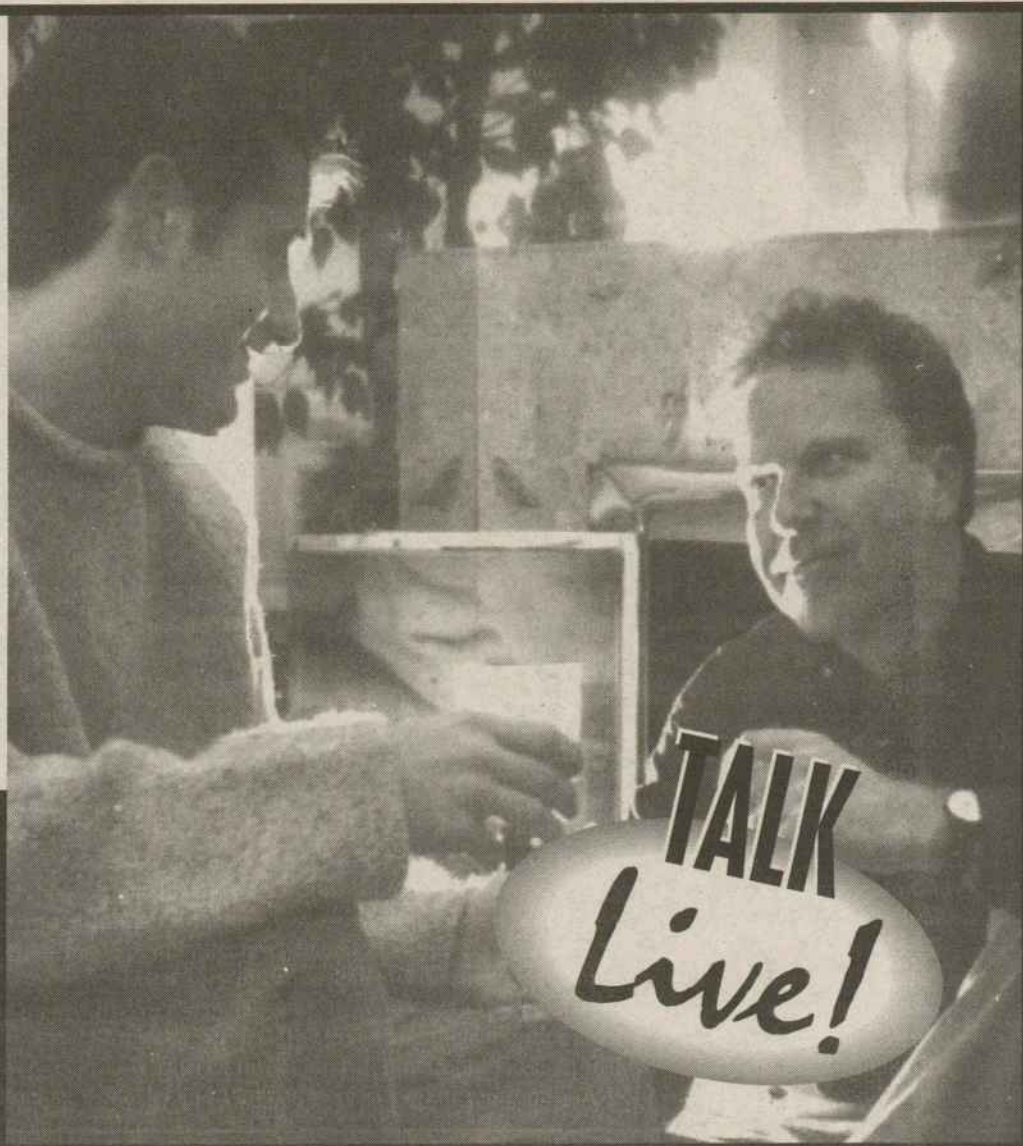
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