



## Financial Crisis Hits Gay Center as Pledges Drop

By Ron McCrea

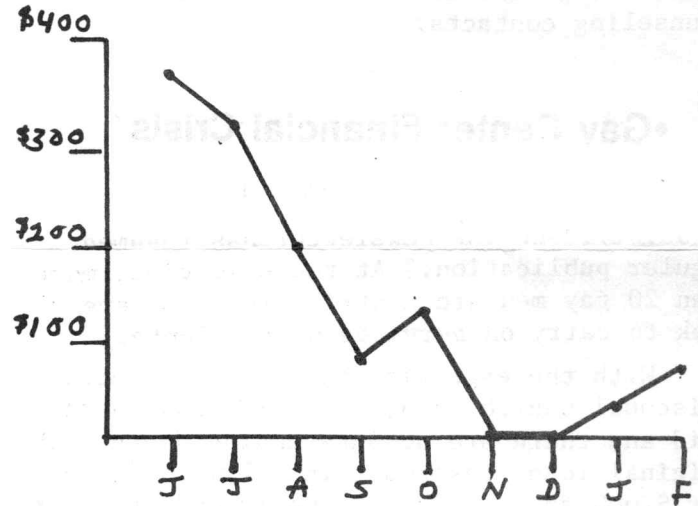
A sudden drop in pledges has plunged the Renaissance Gay Center into financial trouble. Regular contributions, which have maintained levels of \$300 to \$400 per month for several years, dropped to \$30 in January and \$80 in February.

There were no contributions at all in November or December because the Renaissance post office box expired and all checks were returned to contributors before the box was rented again.

The Renaissance Executive Committee has issued a call for all lapsed pledges to be resumed, and is urging members of the Madison gay community to send donations immediately so that Center services will not be jeopardized.

The Center budget requires \$100 a month for phone, office expenses, and state fees; \$100 a month to produce the Renaissance Newsletter; and \$100 a month for loan payments. No loan payments have been possible since November, and \$850 in principal and \$240 in interest is due the St. Francis Episcopal Church in July.

All Center services have been functioning at high levels without interruption but two administrative transitions appear to have created the appearance of a breakdown and disrupted the flow of pledges.



Gay Center Contributions, June-February

One was a change of treasurers. During the transition in November and December, the Renaissance Post Office box rental expired and many checks were returned to contributors, leaving them to wonder whether the Gay Center was still in operation. At the same time, the Newsletter changed hands and there were several months in which no newsletters were published. This undoubtedly compounded the impression that the Center had folded.

The Post Office box has been re-rented with the old number (P.O. Box 687, Madison,

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## The Warmth of Ashes: Two Tales of a City

By Jacob Stockinger

The first story concerns three Madison gays. On the night of March 1, their apartment was totally gutted by the fire that raced through the 200 block of State Street. They lost everything--literally everything--save themselves and their cats and the good will of some other gays.

The second story concerns the Pirate Ship, a bar just a block away from the disaster. When the Back Door first opened in 1972, the Pirate Ship took on the appearance of a

ghost bar overnight. As the BD disco has grown oppressively louder and louder, and as the BD crowd has become annoyingly and dangerously large (especially on weekends, when it appears to exceed the fire limit), the Pirate Ship has become a refuge of sorts.

The two stories met over the weekend of March 4-6. Although activities went on as usual in most gay places, the plight of the fire victims did not go unnoticed at the Pirate Ship. Led by friends and bartender Patty, the

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# Who Uses the Gay Center? Hundreds of Gay People

Who uses the Gay Center? Hundreds of people. Here are the latest figures compiled by the counseling staff on contacts made with gay people during the 35 hours each week that the Center is open:

## July 1, 1976-December 31, 1976

Information contacts: 342  
Counseling contacts: 114

## •Gay Center Financial Crisis

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WI 53701), and the Newsletter has resumed regular publication. At the same time, more than 20 gay men are contributing time every week to carry on services of the Center.

With the exception of the St. Francis Episcopal Church loan, all bills have been paid and there are no outstanding debts. The original loan, taken out in July, 1975, was for \$2000 to make up the unpaid and contractually agreed-to salary of the Center's last full-time director, George Wetzel. Since then, Renaissance has paid \$1,150 toward the retirement of the debt. The loan was received at 6 percent interest with the interest to be paid cumulatively this July.

The Church, in addition to helping out Renaissance with the loan, also provides rent-free office space to the Gay Center and receives contributions in behalf of the Gay Center--two important and much appreciated services.

Since March, 1976, contributions have been received from some 70 individuals and organizations. Many of the contributions were on a one-time basis, however, and the number of regular pledging contributors has never exceeded 30. In January and February, fewer than 10 contributions were received, and some of these were one-time gifts.

There are several thousand gay people in Madison, and even small regular donations would be more than enough to supply the modest budget required to carry on the information, counseling, and community outreach activities of the city's only gay social services organization for men.

Individuals contributing \$5 or more receive the Renaissance Newsletter through the mail, if they wish. The mailing list is kept absolutely confidential, with only the treasurer having access to it

Total 456  
Number of calls taken: 336  
Number of visitors: 120

## January 16-31, 1977

Information contacts: 20  
Counseling contacts: 12

Total 32

Number of calls taken: 25  
Number of visitors: 7

## February 1-28, 1977

Information contacts: 58  
Counseling contacts: 27

Total 85

Number of calls taken: 72  
Number of visitors: 13

## Staff

Experienced counselors: 10  
Counselors in training: 7

Total 17

## VD CLINIC

The Renaissance VD Clinic screens and treats gay men every Tuesday night from 7:30 to 9:30 at 913 Spring St. In 1976, the Renaissance clinic discovered and treated the second highest number of positive cases of venereal disease of any clinic in the city.

## July 1, 1976-December 31, 1976

Individuals examined: 355  
Positive results: 6.5%

## Staff

Gay volunteers: 6  
Volunteer physicians: 3

# State Bills May Legalize Gay Sex in Private

Gay sex between adults in private will be decriminalized if current bills in the Wisconsin Legislature succeed. The sponsors are expressing some optimism this year, but letters are needed from constituents to push the bills along.

The Senate on Feb. 10 accepted an amendment offered by Sen. David Berger to drop criminal penalties for "sexual perversion" between consenting adults in private and reduce the penalty for public acts to a maximum \$200 fine and 30 days in jail. The amended Senate Bill 14 was passed by an overwhelming 25-7 vote and sent to the Assembly.

(State criminal code now considers "sexual perversion" to be a felony and the maximum penalty is a \$500 fine, five years in prison, or both.)

In the Assembly, Reps. David Clarenbach (D-Madison) and Richard Flintrop (D-Oshkosh) introduced a similar bill on Feb. 10. Assembly Bill 323 drops penalties for private acts to a misdemeanor carrying a maximum \$200 fine and a maximum six months in jail. According to Clarenbach, the six-month jail term is an error and he will move to amend the bill to line it up with the Senate bill's 30-day penalty.

Clarenbach and Flintrop's bill also changes the coverage of the crime of "sexual perversion" so that convicted persons may no longer be denied a driver's license. Under present law, a person so convicted can lose driving privileges for a year, or for the duration of probation or parole.

In addition to Clarenbach and Flintrop, Reps. Marcia Coggs (D-Milwaukee), Steve Gunderson (R-LaCrosse), Peter Tropman (D-Milwaukee) and Stephen Leopold (D-Milwaukee) have signed the bill as co-sponsors.

A broad-based group called the Wisconsin Alliance for Sexual Privacy was formed Feb. 5 in Milwaukee to lobby for Assembly Bill 323. The constituency of the group is intended to include not only gay activists but women's groups, church organizations, civil liberties groups, and other citizens concerned with barring police from the bedrooms of adults.

To join WASP and receive its mailings, write to Wisconsin Alliance for Sexual Privacy, c/o Roger Durand, 1704 E. Kane Pl., Milwaukee, WI 53202.

Assembly Bill 323 has been referred to the Judiciary Committee. The chairman of that

committee, Rep. James Rutkowski of Hales Corners, has agreed to report the bill out of committee with a negative vote. This means it will go to the floor for action, but the negative vote will prejudice the success of the bill. Letters to members of the Judiciary Committee might change that situation.

Here are the members and their current positions:

For: Peter Bear, Madison; David Clarenbach, Madison; and Mary Lou Munts, Madison.

Against: James Rutkowski, Hales Corners; John Gower, Green Bay; Tobia Roth, Appleton; Harry Snyder, Oconomowoc; Louise M. Tesmer, St. Francis; and Tommy G. Thompson, Elroy. (Thompson is considered the most extreme opponent of the bill.)

Undecided: Michael R. Ferrall, Racine; and Phillip J. Tuczynski, Milwaukee.

Position Unknown: Thomas A. Hauke, West Allis; and Steven C. Brist, Chippewa Falls. (Hauke is vice-chairman of the committee.)

Letters should go to members c/o the State Capitol Building, Madison, WI 53702.

If you do write, WASP would appreciate receiving a copy of your letter.

## Two Tales of a City

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tavern crowd raised almost \$400 through donations and a raffle.

For the first time in a very long time, I saw a genuine display of concern by members of the gay community for each other. In what seemed to be the most unlikely of places-- at least as local legend would have it-- the callousness of the bar scene became a generosity that left more than just a residue of good feelings.

Of course if you go to the Pirate Ship, you will find the surface unchanged. You will not find disco or dancing, and you will find a somewhat older crowd with an element of leather. But if you take time off from cruising to talk, and more, to listen, you will find something still absent from the Back Door: a closeness.

\* \* \*

A final note: Contributions are still needed and are still being collected since \$400 doesn't go far in helping three people start all over again. Whatever you can give will be appreciated.

# Coach and Teacher: The Difference a Gay Makes

EDITOR'S NOTE: Gay teachers are in a sensitive situation, particularly at the elementary and junior high school levels where parents are concerned about their children being influenced by unhealthy sexual attitudes or role models. The myth of the homosexual child molester is still strong, and fears of "enlisting" children into homosexuality were so strong a few years ago that gay speakers were banned from Madison high schools.

Following are interviews with two gay male teachers employed in Madison area schools. One is a junior high school coach. The other is an elementary school teacher. At their request, their true names have not been used.

\* \* \*

John and George are professional educators, not professional homosexuals. But being gay makes a difference for them in the way they deal with children. Here is how John, an elementary school teacher, illustrates it:

"I have one boy in particular who always sits with another boy when we are reading a story. He'll constantly rub the other boy's arm, scratch his leg or back. I don't make anything of it. What people would generally mistake as a sexual encounter I let continue. I don't see it as necessarily sexual but as something very natural, and I'm not going to stop it.

"I'm sure the other teachers, especially the males, would stop it. Some would say something to the effect that 'Boys don't do that... we aren't supposed to touch other boys.' This includes activities including the girls as well. I let it go where a straight teacher might get very upset about it and think, 'Oh my God, these kids are having sex in the classroom.'

"I think I can sit aside and naturally let these things go along. If they become disruptive to the point where they are paying too much attention to each other and missing what I'm working on, I have to stop it."

John consciously tries to keep stereotyped sex roles from developing. "Whatever I have the boys do, I have the girls do also. Again, a straight teacher might be inclined to say, 'A good little girl does this' or 'A good little boy does that.' I've always thought that I'm more aware, or more attuned to a unisex approach, because I am gay."



Why should that make a difference? "Once you discover your own gayness it gives you such a good feeling to be able to talk to another gay person and not be judged. You can openly express many things and have people accept them. In turn you become more accepting. I think gay people are more accepting in general about anything, not just gay things, because they expect to be accepted themselves. I would like my kids to be able to feel the same way."

John also feels that being gay has made him more sensitive to value questions in the classroom. "We are all of a sudden confronted with values slapped right in our face," he says. "Straight people don't have to confront many of the feelings we do. We live with something within ourselves that makes us more aware of our values."

John has not had any child ask him yet whether it is normal for boys to marry boys or girls to marry girls. "If this should arise I would try to be very honest," he says, "but things like that are very difficult because you always wonder what the kids are going to take home to their parents. Kids are find, but the parents create a hassle."

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# The Difference a Gay Makes

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Would exposure cost John his job? "If I told my principal that I was gay I think he could accept it, could tolerate it," John says. "But he would say, 'Don't tell anyone else. Keep it under your hat.' I think if it was in the administration's confidence I would be fine."

But John expects that if knowledge of his gayness ever became public the school would be forced to fire him and cite his "moral character" as the reason. "It would give a bad name to the entire school district," John says, adding, however, that "it could go both ways, depending on how discreet I was."

\* \* \*

George, the coach, works with older children who already know of the taboos against homosexuality. Sometimes the taboos put them in conflict with their feelings.

One day a boy confessed to George that he had engaged in mutual masturbation with a friend. He told George he was worried that it might mean he was homosexual.

"The kid had such a serious, guilty face and all," George recalls. "I told him he was at an age of exploration and that he needed to find his own sexual identity. All kinds that age are going through the same thing. I told him there was nothing wrong with what he did, but that he should find out what suits him best, and that could include being gay."

"A straight coach would have laughed at the kid or told him it was wrong. It might get a kid in trouble."

Like John, George is interested in breaking down rigid stereotypes so that genuine friendship bonds can develop. His style shows you how he does it.

For example, George says, "I'll change from my street clothes into a uniform in front of my kids. There's nothing gay here. I just feel that if I want to be close to my kids and earn their respect I shouldn't put myself up on a pedestal. Most straight coaches I know wouldn't dream of doing something like this."

"Also, I'm not afraid to tell my kids when they've done a good thing. I show them physical affection to get the point across. Most coaches wouldn't say a kid has done well, and they would be very sparing with their physical affection. I feel one of the most important

things kids should learn is that physical contact is not bad. I guess a lot of it has to do with homosexual stereotypes. They should know that it's important for men to touch, even if they aren't homosexual. I try to get the point across that there is nothing wrong with being macho and sensitive at the same time."

So far George has not told the administration at his school that he is gay. But he's not as apprehensive as one might expect a gay coach to be.

"I'd rather not have it found out, but I'm relatively at ease with the knowledge that I might be found out one of these days," George says. "If the administration found out I wouldn't lose my job, but there would be a lot of hassles. I'm sure the administration would lay down the law. And if the parents found out I think they'd put up a big stink."

One reason George feels secure is that his coaching record is outstanding. But he adds, "A lot of the reason I feel sure I wouldn't lose my job is that I'm not feminine. If I were, then it could be a lot different."

## Tea Dances Every Sunday at the Cardinal

Gay "tea dances" are being held every Sunday at the Cardinal Bar & Cafe from 4 to 7 p.m. Lunch is available, and the disco features Lenny Tropp in the booth. The dances are not being publicized except by word of mouth and this newsletter in order to preserve their gay character.

## Anita's Sex Crime Reforms

Anita Bryant is waging a campaign to repeal Miami's gay rights ordinance. If she succeeds, someone in Madison may be encouraged to try the same thing with our ordinance.

Anita lost a television contract briefly because of her anti-gay crusade. Now she has the job, and the Arkansas legislature has gone on record supporting her fight. One of the Arkansas legislators who sponsored the resolution of support said that "People who go against God's law have no human rights."

You can protest Anita's crusade by writing to the Florida Citrus Commission, for whom she does promotional work, and tell them you're giving up oranges in favor of fruits. Write to: Edward Taylor, executive director, Florida Citrus Commission, 1115 E. Memorial Blvd., Lakeland, FL 33801.

## THE INDIAN WIDOW

Your absence  
feels like sharp razors  
against my flat belly.  
My neck tingles  
from bits of nails  
I clipped  
from your dead fingers.  
I powder my face  
with your ashes  
Freely I wear  
the musk of loss.

At dusk  
when bats gather  
I play religious songs  
so that your spirit  
may enter me freely.

I am the Indian widow  
I rub the smell of your genitals  
on my forgetful lips.

## WILD DAFFODILS

The sky is heavy  
as army regulation blankets.  
The ground is damp,  
thick bandages are futile  
against this moisture.  
My mind tries to follow  
the bullet's path  
through my stomach,  
enters instead  
a collapsed  
tunnel.

Yesterday I witnessed  
our whole company  
wiped out.  
We dug furiously  
and night came  
like a run-away projector  
in movie-houses  
back home  
running a clip faster  
than blood  
then slowing down.

Now I see  
these wild daffodils  
by my bedside explode  
like flares over the war zone  
as splinters of light hit them.  
Then the brief silence  
and my body  
tenses for the kill.

**Poems by Credo Enriquez**

## THE EX-SOLDIER

makes love  
to the point.  
He employs no music  
no delicate balms  
no shuddering light.

His tongue is tentative  
His movements precise  
he knows exactly  
the body's tender spots.

As you enter his room  
you notice that his bed  
is a field of blue cotton  
with white  
mechanically-printed stars,  
silent stars,  
silent as a soldier  
meeting the enemy face-to-face  
recognizing the common fear  
in each other's eyes  
yet overpowered by the sense  
of duty.

Above his bed the ex-soldier  
hangs  
the obligatory painting:

thunderclouds  
pressing closely  
against the darkened  
farmland.

# Yeadon Campaign Fag-Baited by Badger Herald Editors

The aldermanic campaign of James Yeadon has been fag-baited in print by the editor-in-chief of the Badger Herald, and a gay signer of a protest letter to the newspaper has been told personally by another editor that "there are some of us on the staff who feel that you people shouldn't be allowed to walk the streets."

The news columns of the Feb. 14 Herald, which appeared the day before the Feb. 15 primary election, carried a reasonable interview with Yeadon and his two rivals for the 8th District final election. Staff writer Christopher Hardwick talked to Yeadon about rent control, parks, the State Street Mall, and the 8th District Neighborhood Association.

But on the editorial page of the same issue, Editor Robert E.A.P. Ritholz attacked Yeadon as one of the "political loonies" and "certifiable head cases" that were "coming out of the woodwork" for the election.

After first leveling a blast at Mayor Paul Soglin as a "recycled radical" and a "political transvestite," Ritholz continued:

"However, Madison's political oddities are not confined to the mayoral race...A splendid example of this is the race in the 8th aldermanic, which includes much of the downtown area. In very few other cities besides Madison could a self-confessed homosexual like James Yeadon be considered anything but a protest candidate.

"Here, however, he is a serious contender, largely because he was appointed alderman for the 8th last autumn by a Common Council which felt that it was better to select a candidate than the voters of the district. It thus refused to hold a special election and wound up with Yeadon, who had cleverly waited to reveal his sexual perversities until after he was appointed by the Council."

A letter of protest was written immediately. It appeared in the Feb. 24 Herald, signed by Dennis Carlson and David Carter, of the Madison Committee for Gay Rights; Eve Mokofoff and Mary Berthold of the Lesbian Switchboard; Mark McNare of the Gay Law Students Association; Attorney Karla Dobinski; Rev. William Landram of St. Francis Episcopal Church; Eric Bingen, a Wisconsin Student Association senator; Joel Federman, vice president of the WSA; and Kathy Anderson of the United Council of Student Governments.

The letter expressed "dismay over the irresponsible treatment of all gay people and

alderperson Jim Yeadon." It went on to challenge Ritholz's main points:

"First of all, a number of openly gay people have been elected to both state and local offices around the country over the past few years, and their sexual orientation has not generally been a significant campaign issue. Yet Ritholz chooses to make it an issue.

"Second, Yeadon has never hidden the fact that he is gay. In fact, he has always been quite open about it, and was an active member

**'There are some of us on the staff who don't think you people should be allowed to walk the streets.'**

of the Gay Law Students while a student at the University. If the Common Council saw no reason to publicly question his sexual orientation, it is to their credit.

"Finally, we would like to believe that just as the Herald should take some responsibility for insuring that blatantly racist comment does not appear on its 'opinion' page, it should also avoid homophobic tirades."

(The mention of "Blatantly racist comment" referred to a previous Ritholz column in which he made the case that Rhodesian blacks are unfit to govern themselves and that white civilization was a boon to the continent. Madison blacks and others picketed the Herald after the column appeared.)

Before the gay protest letter appeared, Dennis Carlson received a call from Richard Voss, editorial page editor of the Herald.

"He wanted me to know that the Badger Herald would continue to speak its mind, that it did not support equal rights for gay people, and that further comment about homosexuals was likely to occur in the future," Carlson said.

"Then he said: 'There are some of us on the staff who feel that you people shouldn't be allowed to walk the streets. And there are those of us who certainly feel that you shouldn't be allowed to hold public office,'" Carlson related.

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## Yeadon Campaign Fag-Baited by Badger Herald Editors

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Carlson said Voss told him that he thought the protest letter was a "typical tactic of the leftist community in Madison to question the Badger Herald's right to print what it wants."

When the letter appeared, it carried a reply from Ritholz which was more moderate than Voss' reaction. Ritholz said:

"Your letter carries with it an interesting contradiction. On the one hand, you claim that it is perfectly acceptable for an individual to be a homosexual. However, if this curious proposition is true, then I fail to understand how you can raise any objection to my mention of Yeadon's sexual proclivities last week.

"I am afraid that you cannot have it both ways. Either a candidate's sexual attitudes are a significant piece of information, like one's financial holdings, which the voters deserve to know, or else it is of no particular importance. In the latter case your letter is superfluous, since no harm could have been done.

"I might also point out that you evidently misunderstood the essential thesis of my column. It was not that Yeadon should not have been elected to office because of his sexual deviancies, but rather that these would place him into the category of a fringe candidate in all but a few other cities besides Madison.

"For example, imagine a self-confessed homosexual running for alderman in a city like Chicago or Houston.

"In conclusion, however, I would like to remind you that the Badger Herald recognizes no sacred cows and we will not permit, as you presume to do, anyone to tell us what issues we should or should not discuss on the editorial page."

Ritholz's reply was a significant retreat from his attack on Yeadon as a "certifiable head case" who had "cleverly waited to reveal his sexual perversities." And it dodged his main point--that Yeadon should be considered a "fringe" candidate not to be taken seriously because of his "deviancies."

If there was any remaining doubt about where the Badger Herald stood, it was eliminated in the following issue, March 3, where another Herald editorial writer, Thomas Faber, listed WSA donations to the Madison Committee for Gay Rights and to a "Lesbian-Feminist Women's Day celebration" as two examples of misguided transfers of funds to "the political lunatic fringe."

### Help Elect a Gay Alderperson

The best reply to the fag-baiting campaign against Jim Yeadon is to help him beat dormitory resident and frat man Robert Eska April 5.

Yeadon needs volunteers to canvass neighborhoods before the UW spring break. He also needs campaign contributions.

Yeadon lives at 123 W. Gilman St. His phone number is 256-2174.

Sirs:

Received a copy of the February Newsletter. I am enclosing a five dollar bill as a token of my appreciation for your efforts. It will not go far in your cause and mine--mine has to be done from within a closet as yet--but maybe the day will come--I can only hope!!

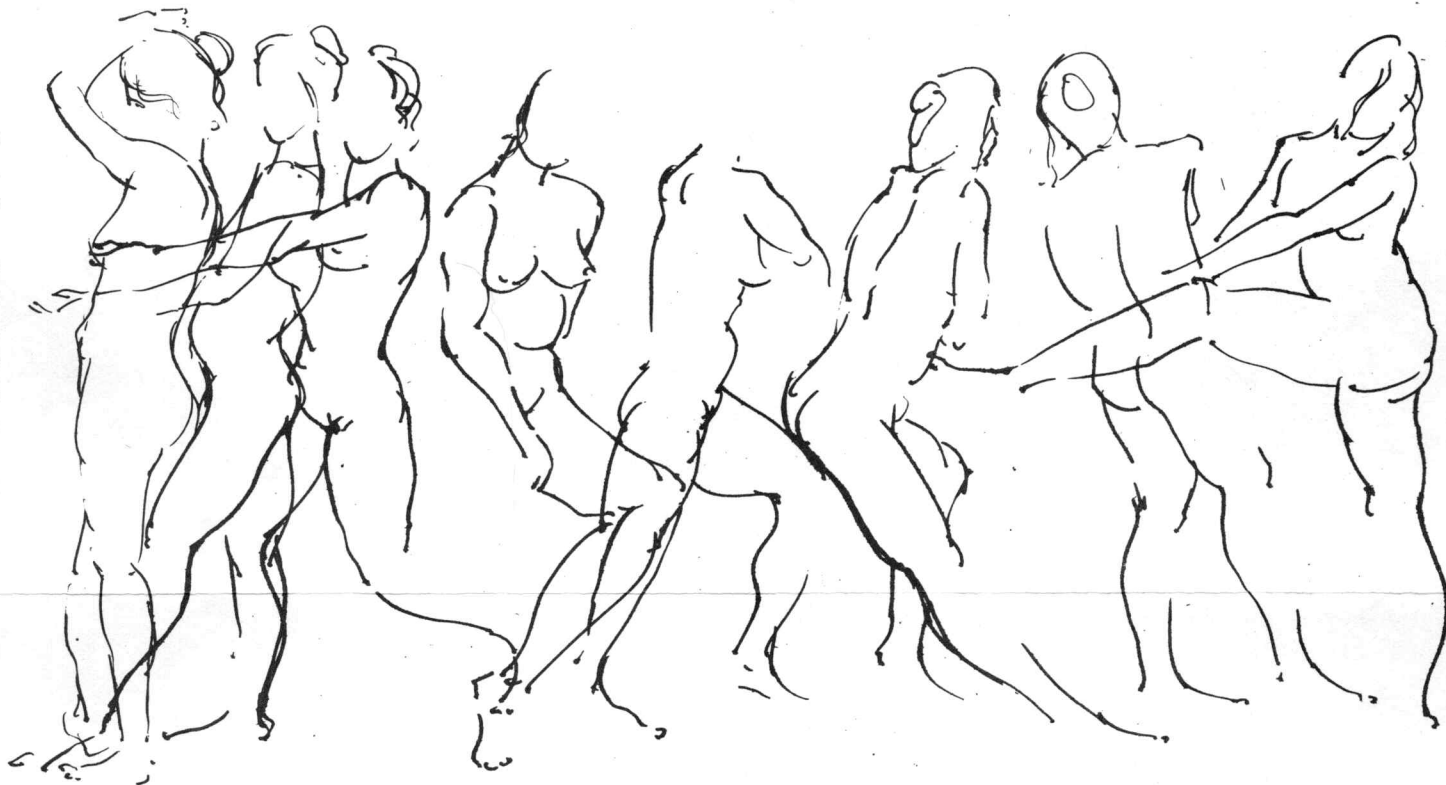
Really appreciate being kept on your mailing list--don't get to Madison as much as I used to but it is still one of my favorite spots. Hope that I can at least talk to somebody the next time I make it to town. Living up-state as I do, I just have to keep hoping that organizations like yours will help to break down the years of prejudice that we've all been living with for many years.

Again, thanks--add me or more correctly keep me on your mailing list--I wish I could become more active.

Sincerely,

(A reader)  
Boyceville, Wisconsin 54725





Sketch by Steve Applequist

## Gay Arts Festival Set for May Day in Great Hall

The gay community is invited to contribute its talents to a Gay Arts Festival scheduled for Sunday, May 1, in the Great Hall of the Memorial Union.

The all-day festival will include dance presentations, poetry readings, musical performances, and theater. Gallery areas are also planned so that artists and craftsmen may exhibit their work. "Gay Arts" embraces all work by gay artists and performers—not necessarily on gay themes.

Several groups and persons have already committed themselves to participate. The Arena

Theater will present portions of the play "Coming Out," including a Madison segment based on the "62 Purge" interview in the last Renaissance Newsletter.

Lesbian and regional participation is desired. Help of all kinds is invited for coordinating the various parts of the festival, including art, film, music, and photography committees.

The event is being sponsored by the Madison Committee for Gay Rights. To get in on the planning of the festival, call David Smith at 251-2937.

## Help Keep the Gay Center Working for You—Send a Contribution Today!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ \$10 and up  
Individual membership

\_\_\_\_\_ \$5 Basic membership  
(Newsletter and postage only)

\_\_\_\_\_ \$300 and up (\$25 per month)  
Benefactor membership

\_\_\_\_\_ \$120 and up (\$10 per month)  
Sponsor membership

\_\_\_\_\_ \$50 and up (\$4 per month)  
Sustaining membership

\_\_\_\_\_ \$15 and up  
Household membership

# ***Renaissance of Madison***

**P.O. Box 687, Madison, WI 53701 (608) 257-7575**