March/April
2011

our lives

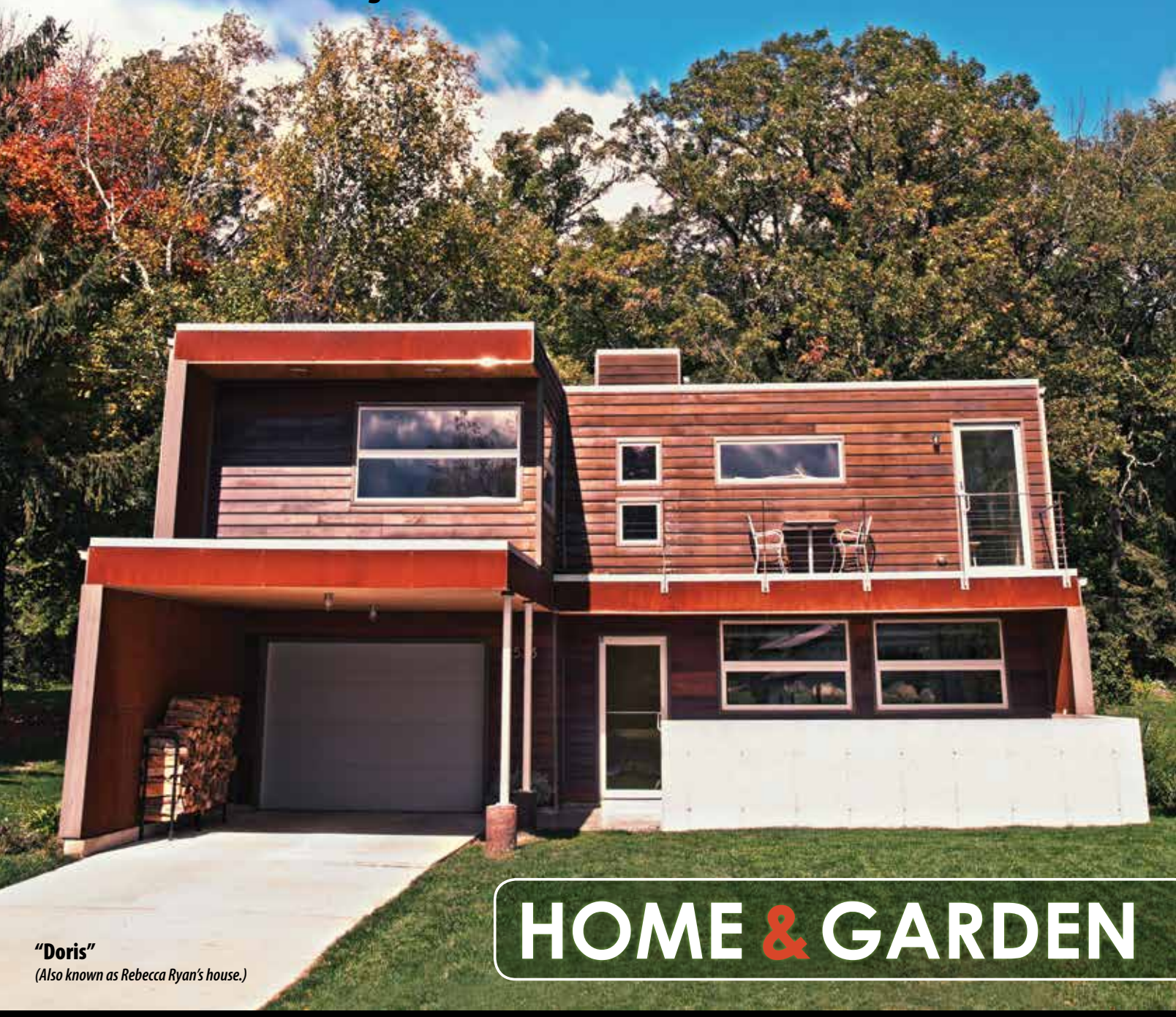
Madison's LGBT&XYZ Magazine

Inside:

Designing a Home for Living
Rebecca Ryan on building a place that inspires creativity

Gardening Tips for Beginners
Local Enthusiasts share their first steps into **Garden Design**

Manage Your Long-Distance Love
Jimmy Owen's strategies to support your relationship



"Doris"
(Also known as Rebecca Ryan's house.)

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Features

MARCH / APRIL 2011

18 Our Home

Rebecca Ryan and **Ms. Marti** welcome readers into their home to see what can happen when creativity and planning intersect.

21 New Harvest Foundation 2009 Annual Report

The complete, 8-page document.

29 Garden Confessions

Ed Lyons and other area gardeners share how they got started in gardening and what feeds their passion for plantings.

Departments

6 Publisher's Letter and **Contributors**

Community

8 Our Artists Trent Bader's Eclectic, Artistic Home

10 Our Stages Fresco Opera Theater's Summer Grest

12 Our Organizers LGBT Campus Center's Robin Matties

14 Our Prose Pieces from the LGBTQ Narratives group

15 Our Pages and **Poems** A plea for support from *A Room of One's Own* Bookstore and "First Dance with a Man" by local poet Brian Powers

16 Our Calendar UW Theater's Rocky Horror Show, New Harvest Foundation's Dinner Dance and Madison Opera's "Out at the Opera"

Quality of Life

36 Our Issues Jimmy Owen on keeping your long-distance relationship close

38 Our Apparel Bonnie Raimy dresses animal communicator Asia Voight

40 Our Careers Marty Fox imagines "corporate" and "gay" as a blended concept

42 Our Rights Tamara Packard breaks down the February election results and calls us to action

44 Our Plates Marcelle Richards features Yahara Bay Distillery and Spirit of Wisconsin

46 Our Future Gabe Peeples works for universal acceptance and for those without a voice

Our History

34 Male Physique Magazines

Richard Wagner pages through early homoerotic magazines in search of an early gay identity in Wisconsin.

Cover Photographed by: **Eric Baillies, ericbaillies.com**

our lives OL

Madison's LGBT&XYZ Magazine

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March/April 2011 Volume 4, Issue 5
Life in the Middle Publishing, LLC
Patrick Farabaugh & Joseph Patane, Publishers. 215 Martin Luther King Jr Blvd., Box 1202, Madison, WI 53701

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Help Us Build Local Capacity

I don't think I could hide how developing and creating this magazine (and our expanding communication tools) have changed my life over the years. Its caused significant growth for me, both professionally and personally. One of the lessons that float to the top almost every time I organize my thoughts around *Our Lives* is how far my eyes have opened and become aware of the importance of supporting local—local people, youth, business and organizations. Every decision I make as a publisher is driven by how it answers these questions: **How will this be relevant to building our local capacity and how does it improve the lives and health of our local community?**

That word community is all–embracing, too. It's shape and scale are organic and evolving. We have communities by age, gender and race. We have them by economic status and industry. All of these, and countless more, sit in the front of my mind as I make decisions that I hope move us towards creating and sustaining relationships across all of those lines.

I want to speak specifically to two communities. The first is the **business community** that continues to step forward and support the work we are doing. Thank you for seeing, believing and investing in the potential of our community. I have a tremendous amount of respect and affinity for you. Secondly, to our **family of readers**: Thank you for sharing your hearts, ideas and passions so that we can all find, build and grow this shared sense of togetherness.

To both combined: You have been some of the best teachers, mentors and family that I've found in life. I do hope that we've been able in some ways to be the same for you.

Patrick Farabaugh, PUBLISHER

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Rebecca Ryan is founder of Next Generation Consulting (NGC), a research and consulting firm that helps clients engage the next generation. Ryan summarized her firm's research in her 2007 book, *Live First, Work Second: Getting Inside the Minds of the Next Generation*. Rebecca was raised in West Bend and returned to Wisconsin after living, working, and playing professional basketball in Iowa, Minneapolis, Germany, and Hungary. Learn more at nextgenerationconsulting.com.

Karin Wolf works and plays in the small queer bubble of Madison, Wisconsin. She is the Arts Program Administrator for the City of Madison Department of Planning and Community and Economic Development and the Madison Arts Commission. She is a long-time supporter of the arts and arts education, and is involved with many community organizations in establishing exhibitions, film programs, temporary art, and permanent public sculpture projects. Her freelance arts writing has appeared in *Sculpture Magazine*, *Public Art Review*, and the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* as well as ongoing arts coverage for *Our Lives Magazine*.

Jessica Horn is a Midwestern artist, focusing on documentary and portrait photography. She is full of enthusiasm and laughter, and would love to work with you, hear your story, and/or capture you from behind her lens. A sample of new work will be available on her website, jessicahornphotography.com, by March 15th. She can be contacted at shooterforhire@gmail.com.

Lukas Keapproth is currently a student at UW-Madison and a freelance photographer. While exploring his small town as a child, he discovered his passion for photography and people. Since then, Lukas has been pursuing photography with the hopes of becoming a documentary photographer. Until then, he is always looking to meet new people and learn from the world around him.

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What a Gem

Trent Bader views others' trash as a treasure-trove of creative possibility—finding ways to make his home a paradise of repurposed beauty.

It is hard to describe the style of Trent Bader's home: a small, sustainable, and artsy residence on Madison's eastside. An eclectic mix of décor and furnishings, his home is best described as cottage meets contemporary, craft meets art, a little "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang" intermingled with a sprinkling of mid-Victorian-era taxidermy. In other words, it is one funky jewel of a house.

Whether he has taken time-worn objects and re-purposed them into something new with the addition of shiny castors or created a backyard oasis out of field stones, shipping pallets, and his neighbor's discarded broken mirror, Bader's process can be described as nothing less than magical. While results like his can only come from a great sense of design, creative brilliance, and an intense work ethic, his process is fairly straightforward. He imagines what he wants and creates what he imagines.

Growing up in the rural Wisconsin woods and having an auto body repairman for a father helped shape Trent into an artist. His father's profession depended on the simple artistic principle that if you can sketch it, you can build it. According to Trent, "If Dad didn't have the part he needed to make an idea work, he would make it himself or weld it."

The Baders passed their belief in can-do-ism on to their two sons. If the brothers wanted to build a fort, they would just go find the sticks and start stacking them up. Everything Trent and his brother found in the woods, from nature to refuse, became building material for the wild inventions of youthful imagination.

The creativity that was cultivated and encouraged in Trent as a child only grew as his abilities developed. His undergraduate degree in commercial art and many credits of study in scene design taught him even more about the tools of sculpting and building. He learned to read blueprints and create sculptures. In college he built a human-scale man from an old spool of barbed wire he found near his parents' home, a piece that now resides in his backyard, still standing with its beautifully aging, rusty patina.

Last year's project: the conversion of his tiny backyard into a private oasis complete with tropical flora and a rock-lined stream spilling into a prominent pond.

The interior of Bader's home has been completely remodeled to suit his lifestyle and aesthetic. Virtually every item was made or remade by him. For example, by placing double-hanging hinges on his kitchen door he made it possible to move back and forth to the dining room while keeping the production area hidden. Not completely satisfied, he inserted a corrugated lens into the door so natural light could still pass between the rooms. His kitchen windowsill is made from the coffee table that he once made out of driftwood. His basement workshop is his parent's old kitchen. He made his bathroom sink by creating a mold and pouring concrete into it. Art—some his, some found, some from friends—adorns every surface.

During summer months, Trent lives in the large, airy, screened-in porch off his kitchen. Over a few months of relaxing and daydreaming on a bench he created by pulling elastic bands around a wooden armature, he visualized last year's project: the conversion of his tiny backyard into a private oasis complete with tropical flora and a rock-lined stream spilling into a prominent pond. A tall privacy fence encloses a space bursting with ferns, hostas, flowers, and other plants. Yard ornaments created from cast concrete and an old cast iron stove (that now serves as Bader's outdoor fireplace) are placed to make visitors feel as if they are in a peaceful sanctuary rather than a couple of blocks off one of Madison's main arteries. He even installed a private outdoor shower a few years ago, which is perfect for rinsing off after working in his garden on a hot summer day.

"People throw out cool things," Bader mused, unapologetically attempting to explain his fascination with all things discarded. The beauty of reuse is that it encourages innovation and creativity while turning trash into treasure. While Bader acknowledges that recycling old items is good for the environment and his budget, his primary motivation to re-purpose clearly comes from a compulsion to convert things into cooler things. With his incredible eye and hands-on abilities, Bader has definitely brought his artistic vision to life and simultaneously turned his home and garden into a creative paradise. **—Karin Wolf**

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Spotlight by StageQ Artistic Director **Tara Ayres**

Summer Grest gets ready for Fresco Opera Theater's "Dueling Divas II" on March 19

Putting Up a Fight

Fresco Opera Theater's **Summer Grest** is helping produce opera that would KO traditional opera-goers.

Since opera singer Summer Grest blew into Madison in 2007, she has helped re-shape the face of opera, and has been an enthusiastic worker for OPEN (Out Professional and Executive Network).

Raised Southern Baptist in Ponchatoula, Louisiana, Summer was singing before she could talk. She remembers using song to distract her parents from the strife in their marriage. Growing up, she sang in a lot of community choruses, and, of course, the church choir. By the time she was 12, she was in demand as a featured soloist in churches around town. She didn't know or understand opera, and cites Amy Grant as an early influence.

Summer's high school choir director encouraged her to audition for the Solo and Ensemble Festival at nearby SE Louisiana State. One of the festival judges, Scharmel Schrock, thought that Summer was a senior and tried to recruit her for the music program at SE Louisiana. When she discovered how young she was, she recruited her for their summer music camp. Summer's first musical theater experience was playing the title role in the Rodgers and Hammerstein version of "Cinderella" at the camp.

Scharmel became Summer's teacher and mentor, offering to let her come and stay with her so that she could study music seriously. Summer said, "My mom just wanted me to be a professional Christian pop singer, and didn't see any need for classical or operatic training."

It had never occurred to Summer that she could go to college, much less to study music. She thought that she'd get married, and maybe become a hairdresser because she didn't believe that she could be a singer. Schrock and her high school choir director, Jude Wilson, both encouraged her to audition for the music program at SE Louisiana State. Summer was accepted and awarded a full scholarship, which she said is the only way she could have gone to college.

Her family's conservative religious background and the town's homophobia made accepting her lesbianism difficult for her. She said, "I came out my freshman year. But I also partied too much, drank too much; when I realized my life was out of control I equated that with lesbianism. I dropped out of school, went back to school, and married a Bulgarian baritone. I wanted to be normal, and I wanted my mom to approve. After four years of marriage I told him that being gay was something I couldn't change about myself, and he agreed."

"I got my masters at UNC-Greensboro. I changed my major from voice performance to choral directing because I thought it would make me more marketable," said Summer. "I performed in operas, taught voice, and directed. I performed with the Capitol Opera in Raleigh and did a couple of roles with them."

After her divorce, Summer started another graduate program in Knoxville, in the Opera Studio program. She performed as Beth in "Little Women" with the Knoxville Opera and understudied Madame Butterfly. But it wasn't a good place to come out; she couldn't find a community or anyone suitable to date. She moved to Chicago where she met her current partner at a Queer Dating for Nerds event.

Summer met Frank Cain at a work party, where they clicked right away. By the end of their conversation, he had invited her to the initial board meeting for Fresco Opera Theater.

Summer got a day job and an agent. She did some roles with a chamber orchestra company that did staged opera productions in churches in Chicago, and she auditioned. On her agent's advice, she decided to focus on Chicago because it cost so much to get to New York to audition.

Summer described her last professional experience performing opera: "The Capitol Opera in Raleigh kept in touch with me after I left school. A couple of years later they called me and asked me to come and do 'Madame Butterfly.' I was working at Roosevelt University in Chicago as an administrator, and my boss let me use all of my vacation and sick time to go do 'Butterfly' in Raleigh. It was wonderful."

But the months of rehearsal and performance netted Summer $300. She said, "After that I realized what a never-ending uphill battle it was going to be to support myself with opera. It was all money out, no money in. It began to dawn on me that I couldn't make a living doing this, and my priorities began to shift to making a living and being able to pay my student loans."

Summer's partner decided to come to Madison for grad school, and Summer came with her. "I got a job as a temp and still went to Chicago to audition. It became clear that it wasn't going to happen, and I was really okay with that. I performed with the Stoughton Opera, understudying Nedda for 'Pagliacci.' And I didn't sing for two years. Now, I'll just go home and sing a couple of arias."

At the end of those two years off, Summer met Frank Cain at a work party, where they clicked right away. By the end of their conversation, he had invited her to the initial board meeting for Fresco Opera Theater, an avant-garde opera company that he was launching with his wife Melanie.

Summer related, "What united us was how tired we were with the status quo of opera, that regional singers can never get cast or paid in opera. They can only be in the chorus and not get paid. We decided to take it into our own hands. We all have really high standards. Frank, Mel, and I want to include amazingly talented regional singers who are being turned down by local opera companies. We also wanted to have fun; we were so tired of opera being stuffy. We launched our first season with 'Dueling Divas.' And Fresco Opera Theater was born."

Fresco followed up "Dueling Divas" with "Ding Dong the Diva's Dead" last fall. A campy but high quality production, it featured death arias from operas reinterpreted through the medium of horror movies. It was a great show.

Fresco concludes their second season with "Dueling Divas II" on March 19 at the Barrymore Theater. ■

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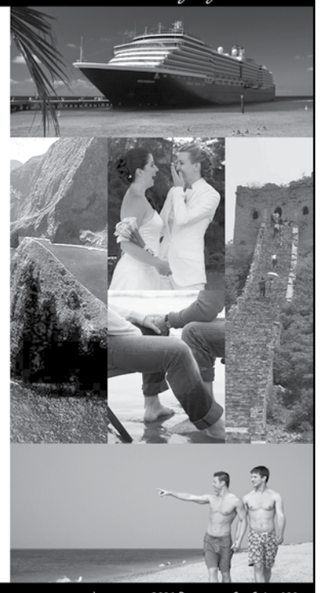

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Speaking Up, Speaking Out

Robin Matthies, as Interim Director of the LGBT Campus Center, is spearheading a statewide Day of Silence.

Who are you and where are you from? My name is Robin Matthies, and I was born and raised in Chicago, Illinois. Go Cubs!

What activist work did you do before you were hired by the LGBT Campus Center? Before being hired at the LGBT Campus Center, I did a lot of activist and advocacy work in Chicago. I was a facilitator of smoking cessation groups for LGBTQ individuals at Howard Brown Health Center. I used to smoke and went through this particular program myself. It changed/saved my life. Working as a facilitator was my opportunity to give back to the community and help others through a process that was probably one of the most difficult I have ever been through. While in college, I was the president of the LGBT organization on campus and the co-chair of the feminist organization on campus. That is really where I got my first taste of what it was to be an activist and from that point forward, I never looked back!

How you came to be involved with the LGBT Campus Center? I was hired as the LGBT Campus Center's Assistant Director in August 2009, and I took on my role of Interim Director in March 2010.

What are your priorities moving forward as the Center's interim director? I want to promote the LGBT Campus Center's visibility, both on campus and in the community. We are working to build more intentional collaborations with organizations across campus and in Madison to help us meet the needs and provide resources for the LGBTQ students at UW-Madison. I hope to set an example for students to work for change in their communities and actively take a stand against the oppression that the LGBTQ community faces.

What services and resources does the Campus Center offer students? The Campus Center facilitates a plethora of social, educational, and leadership programs throughout the year. We offer students many resources for exploring their own identity, including a mentorship program; for developing cultural awareness; and for building leadership skills, such as our Queer Emerging Leaders Program. The Center hosts large meet-and-greet socials and regularly holds discussion sessions focused on a variety of topics. Lastly, the Center serves as a safe space for students to hang out, do homework, and watch movies.

Can non-students access the above-mentioned services/resources? How? Our services are provided mainly for students but we have community members participate in some of our discussion/support groups.

What prompted you to organize a statewide Day of Silence? After last year's Day of Silence, we began brainstorming what the event could become if we gathered as a state to take a stand against the silence that the LGBTQ community faces. Last fall, the LGBT Campus Center launched the Stop the Silence campaign to raise awareness about LGBTQ bullying, harassment, homophobia, and transphobia. The Day of Silence (which we have entitled Break the Silence, Wisconsin) is really focused on breaking the silence together, as a state, and is directly linked to our Stop the Silence campaign.

Please share the details about the Day of Silence so readers can participate. Break the Silence, Wisconsin is a statewide gathering to raise awareness about the impact of bullying, homophobia, and transphobia in our schools. On April 15th, students from campuses across Wisconsin will march to the capitol together. As a statewide event, Break the Silence, Wisconsin will promote visibility of campus climate concerns and will energize and unite students, alumni, and community members from across the state. Together, united ... we will STOP THE SILENCE! For more information, go to lgbt.wisc.edu/stopthesilence/dayofsilence.

How do you envision the future of the LGBT Campus Center? I envision us becoming more involved in the campus community through extended resources and outreach efforts. I also would like to see the Center becoming more action oriented. I believe that we should be more involved in grassroots organizing and hopefully helping students to engage in creating change with a social justice lens.

Break the Silence, Wisconsin will promote visibility of campus climate concerns and will energize and unite students, alumni, and community members from across the state.

ACTION ALERT

Can you share what organizations you are working with or hoping to collaborate with? We collaborate with many different departments and student organizations on campus. We have started collaborating with other UW System schools on different projects and work on events with Fair Wisconsin, GSAFE, New Harvest Foundation, and Outreach. We look forward to continued partnerships with organizations on and off campus!

How can readers learn more? They can go to our website: lgbt.wisc.edu. Also, they can check out the Stop the Silence Facebook page. ■

Photographed by **Jessica Horn**

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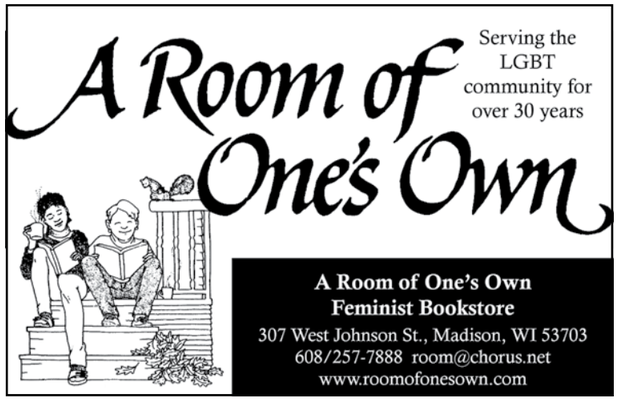

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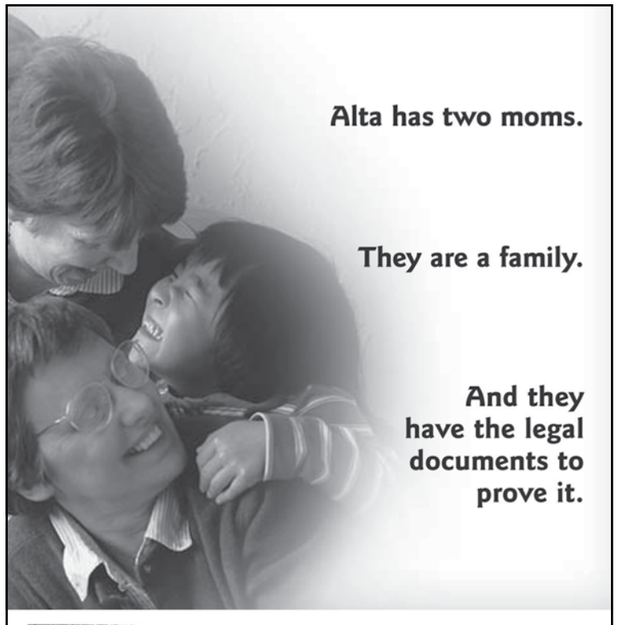

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Excerpt from the LGBTQ Narratives Group

lgbtqnarratives.blogspot.com

Jenny Hanson is a former teacher and current social worker in the Madison area. She is a member of the LGBTQ Narratives group, and her favorite piece of music is the Allegretto from Beethoven's Seventh Symphony in A Major.

Music

Once, there was a girl who had the misfortune of being fourteen years old.

She played the violin, this girl.

There was another girl, as well. Being seventeen years of age, this one found herself a bit less unfortunate.

They both played violin—as it turns out—side-by-side, in orchestra. The older girl was first violin, befitting her elder status. The younger girl was not jealous; she preferred things this way. To tell the truth, she admired the older girl. She found her to be dashing, brilliant, straightforward, sassy. The senior girl had spent the previous year studying in Germany. She didn't smile often and said exactly what she thought even when their director was interested in hearing no such thing. Her dry sense of humor did nothing to further endear her to those in authority, nor did the fact that she towered above most of their teachers. Unique in her bravery as in her height, it would have been impossible to ignore her.

Quite the opposite of the girl with whom she shared a music stand, she was.

The older girl had a habit of coming up behind the younger girl as she drank at the bubbler (a frequent occurrence, as the freshman often found herself sweating, red-faced, and unable to breathe when she spotted her music mate in the hallway), placing a mischievous hand just above each hip, and tickling mercilessly, an event which did nothing to drain the color from her junior counterpart's face.

The younger girl had a secret she told no one. She could never sleep until she had completed her nightly journal entry, as she had done since she was ten years old. Even the journal was cryptic. She kept the secret under wraps, guarding it most closely from herself.

When she did the most courageous thing she would do that year, it was not when she recited "Shall I Compare Thee to a Summer's Day?" before her English class, nor was it when she kissed a boy. It was also not when she joined debate, sweating and gulping air before the judges with the terror of breaking her habitual silence. No, the most courageous thing she did that year happened when she asked the older girl to perform a duet with her.

The younger girl insisted that they practice on weekends, at the older girl's house, where she was told she was "charming" by the girl's mother, as well as in her own parent's basement, where they propped their music up on plastic cushions and shivered.

Each time they practiced, the younger girl told a story in stanzas and crescendos. Her instrument ached with her broken heart, wept at the horror and the tragedy of her condition, but soared achingly with the hope that the reason for her broken heart may also have been a reason for continuing to live.

It was not really a well-written or emotional piece of music, on paper, but that is beside the point.

As life changing as it felt then, it should not be such a surprise, perhaps, that twenty years later, I still wonder whether or not you heard me..

LGBTQ Narratives is a queer activist-writers' group open to all LGBTQ people interested in creative expression and social justice. To get involved, visit **lgbtqnarratives.blogspot.com**, write to **lgbtqnarratives@gmail.com**, or contact OutReach, Madison's LGBT Community Center.

To advertise, contact us at: **OURLIVESMADISON.COM**

An Important Message from *A Room of One's Own*

All of us at Room want to thank you for all the wonderful birthday wishes! We feel truly grateful to have such great customers for the past 36 years in business.

In this challenging and ever-changing bookselling climate, we are facing some difficult choices this year. Due to decreasing textbook sales and poor holiday-season sales, the past year in particular has been tough for us.

By the end of this year, we will need to decide whether to renew our lease. In order for us to feel confident doing this, we realized we need to sell a minimum of five more books per day to stay strong and vital in this marketplace.

We are hoping to find 365+ people willing to pledge to buy as few as five MORE books from us this year, and possibly to encourage your friends to do the same. If you already buy more books than you can read in a year, consider buying books as gifts, or purchase a gift certificate for your local public or school library. Would you be willing to help us? If so, please sign the pledge form at www.roomofonesown.com and return it to us, where it will be proudly posted on our pledge board.

We know our customers value Room and want to keep Room a strong, independent bookstore downtown. We are optimistic these pledges will help us achieve this goal.

With great thanks,
Sandi, Nancy and all the staff at Room

BRIAN POWERS is a lifelong resident of Madison, Wisconsin. He works as a publications coordinator, and spends his free time running and cycling. His favorite romantic song is Tina Turner's cover of *Let's Stay Together*.

FIRST DANCE WITH A MAN

The decor in Sam's Tavern doesn't scream *gay*: coin-operated
pool tables on one side, carpet-covered benches around

a little dance floor on the other. Tyler and his date
play several games of pinball on the machine that's free

if you know where to thump its side. Despite his distaste
for drinking, Ty tosses down two gin and tonics in a half-hour.

He isn't planning to rob the corner grocery or blow up a bridge.
He just wants to dance with a man. When Tyler was a boy, he'd seen

women polka in pairs Sunday afternoons on *Dairyland Jubilee*.
Men in his experience never waltzed or two-stepped together.

Now he watches the dancers at Sam's and waits for the alcohol
to find his defiance. When Tina Turner's sultry song begins to billow

from the jukebox, Ty sets aside his glass and follows his date
under the glitter ball. His movements at first are more *squirm* than *sway*

but with every twitch a Berlin Wall is coming down. *Whatever you want to do*, the singer insists, *is alright with me*, and by last call

Tyler's relaxed and happy under the floating flecks of light.
It's not just his body that's dancing.

Submit your poetry to: **LINDA LENZKE, llenzke@charter.net**

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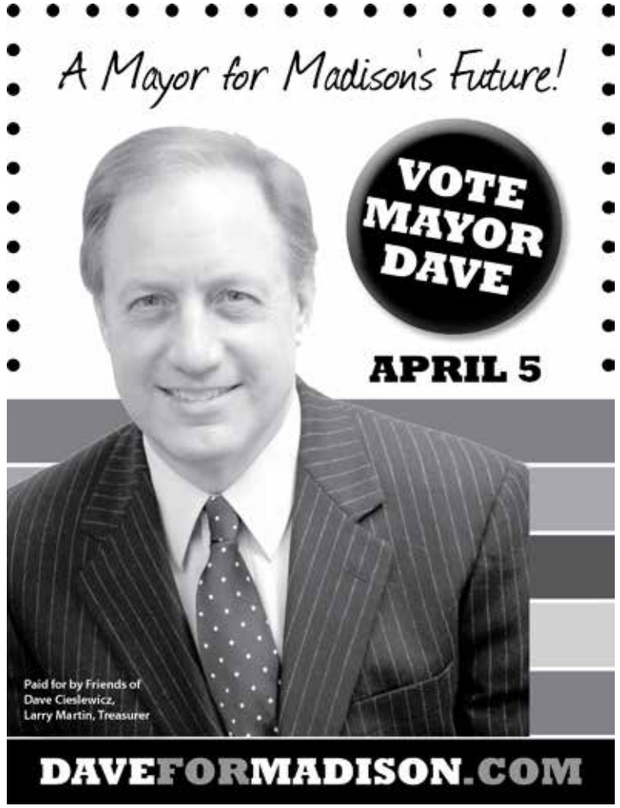

Cultural, Social, Service and Nightlife listings edited by **Virginia Harrison**

The Rocky Horror Show

March 3–5, Union Theater

Thirty-six years after Richard O'Brien's high-camp spoof of 1950's B-movies debuted in London, audiences are still hot for a little Frank-N-Furter action! Wear your costumes, bring your hotdogs, water pistols, and newspapers, and give yourself over to "absolute pleasure."
utmadison.com

Red Ribbon Affair

April 1, Monona Terrace

This year's black tie gala will honor Representative Mark Pocan for his commitment to those living with HIV/AIDS in Wisconsin and a Salute to the Arts recognizing the many local artists and organizations who have donated their talent to benefit AIDS Network and its clients.
aidsnetwork.org

Out at the Opera: La Traviata

April 29, Overture Hall

Madison Opera's new affinity group for the LGBT community will hold it's first annual outing on April 29 for the opening performance of La Traviata. Afterwards, a reception will be held for the group at Fresco, where they can mingle with out director Garnett Bruce.
madisonopera.org

GET LISTED To see your event on this page, be sure to post it on our community calendar **ourlivesmadison.com**

Save the Date

Fair Wisconsin Leadership Awards
May | fairwisconsin.com

GSAFE Celebration of Leadership
May 14 | gsaforsafeschools.org
GSAFE will award a Community Activist and an Educator at their 15th annual banquet. The awards honor the activism and courage of our schools' youth and adults.

FruitFest
June 18 | planbmadison.com

Milwaukee Pridefest
June 10, 11 & 12 | pridefest.com

ACT 9: The Wisconsin AIDS Ride
August 4–7 | actride.org

Wisconsin Capitol Pride
Aug. 20 & 21 | wisconsincapitolpride.org

19th Annual OutReach Awards Banquet
September 23 | lgbtoutreach.org

GSAFE Walk/Run/Eat
October | gsaforsafeschools.org

Fair Wisconsin Art Auction
December 1 | fairwisconsin.com

OPEN Annual Dinner
January | openmadison.org

New Harvest Dinner Dance: Come to the Masquerade, March 5, The Edgewater Hotel, Madison Join Mark Pocan and Tammy Baldwin and celebrate another year of empowering our communities with funding from the New Harvest Foundation. Dance to the music of Lynette Margulies and Four Chairs No Waiting redux. **newharvestfoundation.org**

A Night at the Moulin Rouge, March 5–6, West Side Club of Madison Perfect Harmony Men's Chorus Annual Cabaret will feature solos, silent auction, hors d'oeuvres and a dessert buffet and full bar. Reserved seating. **perfectharmonychorus.org**

Bike-O-Rama Bicycle Sale and Canoecopia, March 11–13, Alliant Energy Center Comparison shop, test ride, accessorize, and buy from all 2011 bicycle brands in one place! In the Exhibition Hall, check out canoes and kayaks of every size and shape at Canoecopia. **bikeorama.com & canoecopia.com**

Wisconsin Women's Studies Conference and Wisconsin LGBTQ Spring Conference, March 25–26, UW-Madison Pyle Center, Madison The conference brings together all whose lives are enriched by women's, gender studies, and LGBTQ research, as well as by pedagogy, and activism. **wsc.uwsa.edu/events/confer/annualconf/annualconf.htm**

Fantasy Island Bingo, March 27, The Edgewater Hotel, Madison Join hostess Cass Marie Domino and celebrity ball caller WKOW's Brian Olson to raise money for the AIDS Network. **madcampbingo.org**

OUTmedia's Queer Campus CultureFEST, April 8–9, La Crosse UW-La Crosse will be hosting in recognition of Emily Wunderlich's winning video from Campus Pride and OUTmedia's "Be Queer, Buy Queer!" video contest. **queercampusculturefest.weebly.com**

Kingstock V: The Mustache Strikes Back, April 9, Barrymore Theater, Madison This show rallies the LGBTQ community together for a night of fun. It promises plenty of gender-bending fun. Previous shows have featured plenty of faux queens and even tap-dancing, live singing, and a queer cheerleading squad from Texas! **themadkings.com**

ORGANIZATIONS

A representative sampling

AIDS Network
600 Williamson St., Madison (608) 252-6540
aidsnetwork.org

Bowling Out Loud
beckwith.matt@yahoo.com

Dairyland Cowboys and Cowgirls
dcandc.org

Fair Wisconsin
122 State St., Madison (608) 441-0143
fairwisconsin.org

Frontrunners/Frontwalkers
personalpages.tds.net/~tmcclurg

Gay/Straight Alliance for Safe Schools (GSAFE)
301 S. Bedford St., Madison (608) 661-4141
gsaforsafeschools.org

Gay Softball League
ssblmadison.com

Gay Volleyball League
madisongayvolleyball.com

Hermanos Latinos
sneal@aidsnetwork.org

Lez In Color Yahoo Group
LezInColor@yahoogroups.com

Lez Talk Yahoo Group
leztalkmadison@yahoogroups.com

LGBT Business Alliance
madisonbusinessalliance.com

Madison Gay Hockey Association
madisongayhockey.org

Madison Minotaurs Gay Rugby
minotaursrugby.org

New Harvest Foundation
newharvestfoundation.org

Out Professional and Executive Network (O.P.E.N.)
openmadison.org

OutReach Community Center
600 Williamson St., Madison (608) 255-8582
lgbtoutreach.org

PFLAG - Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays
(608) 848-2333
pflag-madison.org

Perfect Harmony Men's Chorus
perfectharmonychorus.org

StageQ - Madison's Queer Theater
stageq.com

UW - Madison LGBT Campus Center
800 Langdon St., Madison (608) 265-3344
wisc.edu/lgbt

Wisconsin Rainbow Families
wirainbowfamilies.com

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Photos by **Eric Baillies, ericbaillies.com**

January 26 | OPEN Annual Dinner

Our Home

Rebecca Ryan and partner **Marti** open their home to share what's inside: Creativity.

There's a Native American proverb that says your home is where your placenta is buried, and I believe there's a certain truth in that. Many people grow up, leave home, and eventually "boomerang" back to—or near—their place of birth.

For me, that place is Wisconsin. Although I've lived in many great cities: Freiburg, Germany; Budapest, Hungary; and the Twin Cities—I've always felt that Madison is the "it" place to live, in Wisconsin.

Marti wasn't born in Wisconsin; she was born in Iowa, but she often jokes, "Madison is perfect for a lesbian who loves to bike."

She's right. We love Madison's sensibility: access to organic, locally grown food; a culture that welcomes us as a couple; proximity to our families; access to Milwaukee, Chicago, and the Twin Cities; and a scale that feels right to us.

Building Doris

We never planned to build a home. We planned to remodel our current home. We loved our neighborhood on Memphis Avenue on the near-east side, and felt that remodeling was more eco-sensitive than building.

But as John Lennon said, "Life is what happens to you while you're busy making other plans."

Marti found the drawings for "Doris" (the name of our house) while trolling FSBO (For Sale by Owner) online. We both loved the flat roof and crazy number of windows. And when we visited the lot where Doris would be built, I knew we would own the house.

How did I know? There was a white birch tree on the perimeter of the yard, and at the time, Marti was exposing photographs on white birch bark. To me, that was the Universe saying, "This is it, Ryan."

Since neither of us had built a home, our architect Chris Gosch (Bark Design) deserves enormous praise. One of the tools he used to help us customize and prioritize was a multi-page design questionnaire that he instructed each of us to complete, separately.

One of the questions was, "How many people will you likely have as guests for dinner?" Another was, "What do you want to be homesick for?" These questions were a powerful way to think about how we'd live in the house, and took us away from (inane) discussions about square footage and countertop choices.

This was critical. Chris's design questionnaire was probably the single most important tool we used to co-create the space we now call "home."

Although we each completed our own questionnaires, both Marti's and my responses struck a common chord: sanctuary. Because of my work—traveling the country as a consultant—and Marti's natural tendency for privacy—we wanted a home that felt like a soothing, intimate den to restore and rejuvenate.

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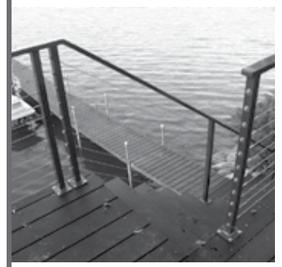

Cable Railings
Fences
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- **DECKS & PORCHES**
  Escape to your backyard to dine under the stars, enjoy a sunrise, dig into a good book, or chat with friends.
- **FENCES**
  Add to your landscape with a privacy fence, garden fence, or deck fence made from quality wood or composites.
- **CABLE RAILINGS**
  Enhance your view. Stainless steel cable rail is the perfect option to enjoy the beautiful views that surround your home, while relaxing on your deck.
- **DECK LIGHTING**
  Entertain into the night with the radiant glow from a deck lighting system, installed by Quigley Decks and Fence.
- **GAZEBOS**
  A gazebo is your backyard refuge, a hand-crafted pavilion perfect for picnics or a private nook to enjoy a good book or a dip in the hot tub.
- **ARBORS & PERGOLAS**
  Display climbing roses on your garden arbor, or host a soirée under a beautiful shade-giving latticework pergola.

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"Wisconsin can be Heaven,
weekends in your backyard and coffee at eleven"

I sometimes have corollary feelings about this house. We feel so incredibly lucky to live here that we feel a stewardship to live well in it.

This was an enormous task because we also wanted insane amounts of natural light!

Somehow, Chris designed a home that gets sun at all times of the day, and still feels private and secluded. He set the windows very high in some rooms, and created whole walls of windows that face the woods in the dining room and lounge. He also built "wing walls"—extensions of our house at just the right length—to make sure that passers-by and neighbors can't see into our home. In effect, he was able to design what Marti calls, "Privacy without curtains."

And of course we wanted a home that would be as "green" as possible. Doris has:

- **No basement. We have one storage unit in the garage that's 6' x 12'. This decreases our clutter, and helps us manage our inventories wisely.**
- **A single-car garage and carport. (We're now a single-car family.)**
- **Lots of natural or recycled materials like bamboo floors on the second floor, composite wood stairs, and 3form panels as risers and door panels.**
- **Gobs of windows that gather passive solar heat. (In the winter when it's sunny, the heater does not run.)**
- **A 12" x 12" Munchkin heat-on-demand unit that heats water as we need it. We don't pay to heat water in a traditional water heater.**
- **Radiant in-floor heat on the first floor.**
- **Low-flow toilets.**

We were able to build this house for $138 per square foot, including the cost of land. For comparison purposes, many homes in the area are built for $125–$250 per square foot, not including land.

Since we moved in, we've worked hard to extend the benefits of all these green features. We've:

- **Installed screens across all doors (including the garage door) for airflow and circulation in the summer. In 2010, we ran our air conditioning for only one week.**
- **Installed an outdoor clothes-drying system on the roof deck.**
- **Built two compost bins—one for organic vegetable matter and a second for our dogs' doo-doo.**
- **Planted raised beds on our front, south-facing lawn. In spring 2011, the entire front yard will become a garden.**

These are a few of our favorite things ...

Our kitchen—like yours—is the center of activity in the house. We wanted our kitchen to be functional for cooking yet open enough to connect us to guests while preparing meals. So, Chris made sure that from the kitchen we can see everyone on the first floor of our house. And because of the 19-foot ceilings, the kitchen and dining room feel much bigger than they actually are.

The glass garage door that opens from the dining room out to the patio is probably one of the finer features in the house. It can be completely opened, creating a 9' x 12' entrance to the backyard. Because we live in Wisconsin, we have a screen (the same size) that automatically drops down to prevent the rabid mosquito population from getting in. With the glass door open, you get a real sense of indoor-outdoor living. The breeze is great. The smells are terrific, and the woods are just outside. When Marti's 89-year-old grandfather—an outdoorsman—visits us, he sits looking out that 9' x 12' screen and says, "I could just sit here and watch the birds all day." And he does!

Marti loves the lounge because it's sunken. In the wintertime when there's a fire in the fire orb, it feels very womb-like. The in-floor radiant heating makes the lounge one of the warmest in the house. And with the mounted LCD projector that fills a 6' x 9' wall, the cinema comes to us.

The upstairs roof deck is our favorite outdoor space. It's completely private, and it is a great place to take a nap in the summer sun or share a glass of wine to wind down in the evening.

Marti adds, "We both came from homes that were very cut-up with small rooms and a lot of traditional, hinged doors. We hated this. Chris integrated mostly sliding doors throughout the house, making it feel more open."

Living and Creating in Doris

I saw a fridge magnet once that said, "Please let me be the person my dog thinks I am." I sometimes have corollary feelings about this house. We feel so incredibly lucky to live here that we feel a stewardship to live well in it.

I think one of the most interesting things about living here is that because of the incredible natural views it feels very grounding and centering. But because of all the natural light and fresh air, it's also a very inspiring place. My studio at home is in the front room on the second floor; it's just flooded with natural light, which helps me focus, create, and be productive. I lose all track of time in that space.

Marti puts it this way, "Because our house is so different, it doesn't seem like we can have average thoughts here. The house is already so out of the box that it warrants out-of-the-box thinking every time."

For more about Chris Gosch's unique living designs, go to: www.bark-design.com.

BUILDING ON GOOD IDEAS, COMMUNICATION

Chris Gosch of Bark Design shares the essentials to designing and building the house of your dreams.

Building a house can be fulfilling, frustrating, exciting, and challenging, but the results can be extremely rewarding if enough thought goes into the design and planning.

IDEAS Generating ideas about what your house should be and how you will ultimately use the house for living, entertaining, sleeping, relaxing, etc., is a good starting point.

DISCUSSION The next step is to begin discussing your goals and ideas with an architect or builder. They should engage in these conversations and work to provide solutions that complement your ideas and are economical and sustainable.

MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING Continued sharing of ideas is critical, so take the time to interview people who will be involved in your project to ensure a good match.

SHAPING THE VISION Rebecca, Marti, and discussed their ideas of what this house would mean to them—an escape and a place to be productive. Continued communication led to more ideas and refinement. The result provides them ongoing enjoyment and satisfaction.

2009 NEW HARVEST FOUNDATION ANNUAL LETTER FROM OUR CO-CHAIRS

"The status quo is not what we're here for."

With that bold statement, the New Harvest Foundation has begun to look toward the future. New Harvest is functioning smoothly; we have a cadre of dedicated volunteers, a generous donor base and regular grant requests. What more could we ask for? The Board of New Harvest asked ourselves that question along with these questions: "What more could we do? How can we make a difference? What should we do and when should we do it?" The answers to these questions are shaping the way New Harvest is approaching our support for South-Central Wisconsin's LGBT community in our third decade of existence.

We began by trying to identify unmet or under-resourced needs in our community. We asked other organizations for their input, asked our grant requestors and finally determined that our area of focus should be narrowed. To make the biggest difference in our community, we are focusing on two major areas: LGBT Youth Support and LGBT Senior Support. Both of these focus on people; helping us support our community as teens enter it and supporting those who have spent their lives contributing to the LGBT community.

Having decided our focus for the immediate future, we now must determine how we can put this into action. And, even more importantly, how we can obtain results that are meaningful! We're just starting on this part of our journey. We know that we'll need to partner with many local and regional organizations for this. We also know that we'll need to redouble our fundraising efforts as well. Simply identifying a need is not enough. We need also to determine how we can make substantive change.

You, as a New Harvest donor, prospect or supporter are key to our efforts. You can help by maintaining, increasing or starting your support for New Harvest. You can help by re-energizing and invigorating our events, initiatives and grants. You also can help by working with us to make our community even stronger, more vital, vigorous and complete. And you can help us spread the news of all our efforts.

As we look forward toward our third decade we're excited and thrilled! Won't you join us and help make our vision our reality?

OUR MISSION

New Harvest Foundation is the only foundation in Dane County that channels charitable contributions exclusively to organizations working to promote lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) rights, services, culture and community development. Founded in 1984, New Harvest Foundation is operated by an 14- member Board of Directors, along with other volunteers. It pools contributions of hundreds of donors each year to provide grant money to LGBT causes.

What We Do: Raise Money

As a Foundation, we raise funds from the broad community through events and fund raising campaigns. Contributors may designate their tax-deductible gifts to the Grants Program or to the Endowment. In 1996 the Foundation established an endowment to expand its financial base and to ensure a prosperous future.

New Harvest Foundation enjoys support from every segment of the community. Most contributors are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender, but we also receive support from straight but not narrow families and friends. In addition to cash, we receive contributions through workplace giving from Community Shares of Wisconsin, as well as electronic funds transfers, and wills/estate plans. Many contributors find giving to New Harvest Foundation an ideal way to channel funds to a variety of organizations that serve LGBT people. Contributors appreciate that our Board of Directors and Grant Screening committee take the guesswork out of identifying and supporting quality projects and programs. You may remain anonymous. New Harvest Foundation does not share its lists with other organizations.

Top: Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin inspires the crowd with a glimpse at NHF's history and heritage.

Below: Kathleen Falk congratulates NHF on the organization's work.

25TH ANNUAL DINNER DANCE

On Saturday, February 28, 2009, The New Harvest Foundation celebrated its 25th anniversary by hosting its annual New Harvest Dinner Dance at the Concourse Hotel. The Concourse Ballroom had an intimate feel, the warmth spreading throughout the rooms as friends reconnected and new friends met. We were treated to the piano work of Terry Watters as we mingled and greeted one another.

As we were seated, Kathleen Falk took the stage to help congratulate us on our achievements through the years, reminding us of the important work that we do. After dinner, Tammy Baldwin gave a very inspirational speech including a glimpse at our history and our heritage. Dick Wagner had reminded her that back in 1984 none of the existing community grant providers were funding LGBT oriented projects, in part because the grantors weren't seeking them out, in part because the prospective grantees weren't making applications. There were no LGBT fundraising groups.

But when Dick Wagner and Jerry Dahlke started asking whether an LGBT fund-raising organization could succeed in our area, the resounding answer was… NO! Fortunately they had the grit and the determination to create an organization that would speak to us.

For about six months a group of people that included, Dick, Jerry, Karla Dobinski, Paula Bonner, Claire Fulenweider, Dan Curd, Tess Meurer, Don Lamb and others discussed the possibilities of such an organization and then started the foundation that we know today as the New Harvest Foundation, a foundation that would teach LGBT groups how to apply for community-funded grants and then award grants to deserving recipients.

New Harvest implies planting seeds, nurturing a new crop of LGBT activists and reaping the benefits of our community. Now we have grown into a sustainable crop that feeds us all – grantors, grantees, and the greater community in which we live. We look forward to 25 more years of celebration!

New Harvest took root in 1983 when a group of young professionals met in the house at 739 Jenifer Street to discuss the creation of the foundation. Here the founders formed the structure, mission, and principles of what would be the New Harvest Foundation. A self-renewing board, which would have gender parity, would head the foundation. This board would work to pool funds from the potential donor community and award grants to organizations supporting the enrichment of LGBT communities in South Central Wisconsin. The founders recruited, among others, Dane District Attorney James Doyle, Jr., who had supported the Dane County nondiscrimination ordinance and agreed to lend support to the foundation.

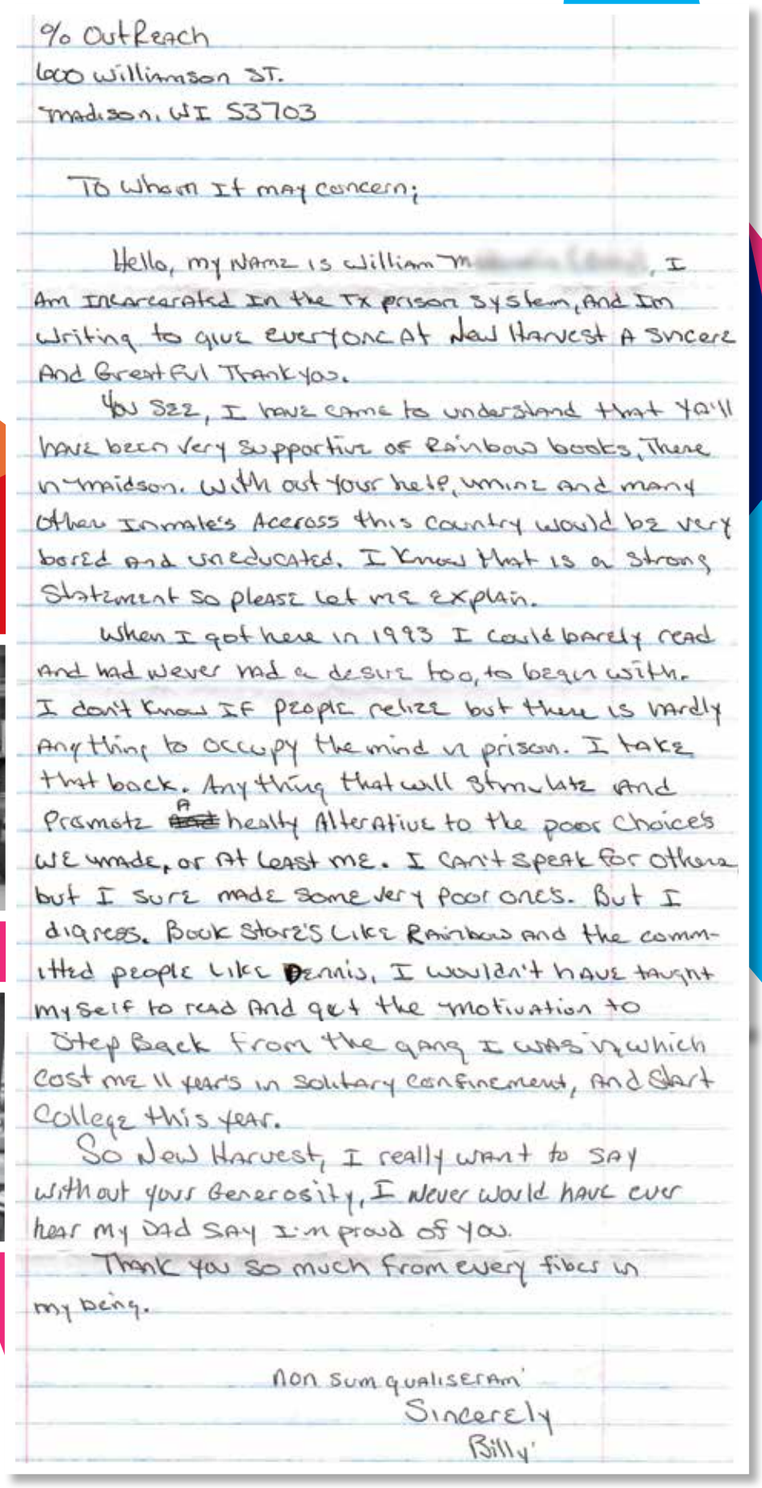
2009 GRANT RECIPIENTS

$2,500 OutReach Diversity and Racial Justice
$2,000 Ground Work, Freedom, Inc.; "Hurricane Season: The Hidden Message in Water"
$2,500 2009 Showdown in Madtown
$2,500 WI Books to Prisoners
$2,500 WI Capitol Pride
$1,538 UW Press, "Gay American Autobiography"
$4,000 "GSAFE School Climate Survey"

PREVIOUS GRANT RECIPIENTS

2009 Showdown in Madtown-Softball World Series
52 Splinters
AASPIN
Action Wisconsin Education Fund
AIDS Network (MASN)
Amber Ault
Apple Island
Avalon Cultural Work
Battered Lesbian Support Group
Beloit Inner City Council
Briarpatch
Broom Street Theater
Burning Bush Campus Women's Center
Christians for Equality in Wisconsin
Community Art and Athletics Organization
Community Coordinated Child Care
Community Thrift Store
Confronting Homophobia Guide
Congregation Shaarei Shamayim
Cream City Foundation "Shall Not Be Recognized"
Dairyland Cowboys
Dane County Advocates/ DAIS
David Runyon
Elected Officials' Conference
Family Services
Flaming Dykasaurus
Freedom Inc.-Queer Youth of Color
GALVAnize
Gay Father's Support Group
Gay Games Team WI
Gay/Lesbian Education Employees
Gillespie, Brown, Kaeser
GLADE
GSA for Safe Schools
GSAFE
GLSEN South Central Wisconsin
Groundwork
Hag Rag
Hillel Foundation
Jini Kai
Katherine Walker
Kissing Girls Production
LAVENDAR
Lesbian Health Issues Task Force
Lesbian Parents Network
Lesbian Variety Show Interpreters
LGB Business Alliance
Lives Unlimited
Madison Area Transgender Association
Madison Gay Men's Chorale
Madison History Project
Madison Interfaith Committee
Madison Minotaurs United
Rugby Football Club
Madison School Employees Support
Margo Ruark
MC Video
Mercury Players
MG/LRC
Midwest BLG Gay College Conference
MISL
Mixolydian Mode
Moon Tree
New Ventures of WI
Newist
Nothing to Hide
OutReach (The United)
Outreach-Diversity and Racial Justice
OutThere
Perfect Harmony Men's Chorus
PFLAG
PICADA
Pioneers
Progressive Magazine
Proud Theater
R Bean's Voice Theater
Rainbow Families Wisconsin
Rape Crisis Center
Raw Womyn
Rebekah Sneed
Re-formed Congregation
Robin Rowley
Rodney Scheel House
Sarah Newport
Sauk Prairie School District
Segal Sculpture
Shabazz High School
Speak Its Name
Stage Q
Starlight Cinema Symposium
TAPIT/New Works Inc.
Teens Like Us
Ten Percent Society
The Writer's Place
Tina Murray
Tribade Productions
United Council of UW Students, Inc. 2008
LGBTQ Empowerment Summit "Pride at the Polls"
UW System LGBTQ Network
UW Women's History Program
WI Domestic Partnership Coalition
WI Early Childhood Association
Wisconsin Books to Prisoners
Wisconsin Capitol Pride
Wisconsin Center for Pluralism
Wisconsin Community Fund
Wisconsin Council of Churches
Wisconsin Research Center
Women's Transit
Womonsong
WORT
Young Auditorium – UW Whitewater
Youth Services of Southern Wisconsin
Youth Services of Southern Wisconsin-Teens Like Us & Top T.E.N.

Donations of books and postage money for the WI books to prisoners project are always needed and may be given to OutReach. Specify "Books to Prisoners" on memo line of checks and the book donations.



% OutReach
6000 Williamson ST.
Madison, WI 53703

To Whom It may concern;

Hello, my Name is William M[redacted], I Am Incarcerated In the Tx prison System, And Im Writing to give everyone At New Harvest A Sincere And Great ful Thank you.

You See, I have come to understand that Ya'll have been very Supportive of Rainbow books, There in Madison. With out your help, mine and many other Inmate's Acceross this country would be very bored and uneducated. I Know that is a strong Statement so please let me explain.

When I got here in 1993 I could barely read And had never had a desire too, to begin with. I don't know IF people relize but there is hardly Anything to occupy the mind in prison. I take that back. Anything that will Stimulate And Promote ~~best~~ A healty Alterative to the poor Choices We made, or At least me. I Can't Speak for Others but I sure made Some very Poor ones. But I digress. Book Store's Like Rainbow and the committed people like Dennis, I wouldn't have taught myself to read And get the motivation to Step Back From the gang I was in which cost me 11 years in Solitary Confinement, And Start College this year.

So New Harvest, I really want to say without your Generosity, I Never would have ever hear my DAD SAY I'm proud of You.

Thank You So much from every fiber in my being.

Non Sum qualiseram'

Sincerely
Billy'

APPLY FOR A GRANT FROM NHF

Grants fall into several focus areas: social service, social change, public education, health care, arts and culture, and development of LGBT communities. Grant proposals should address one or more of those areas.

New Harvest Foundation makes grants to organizations that:

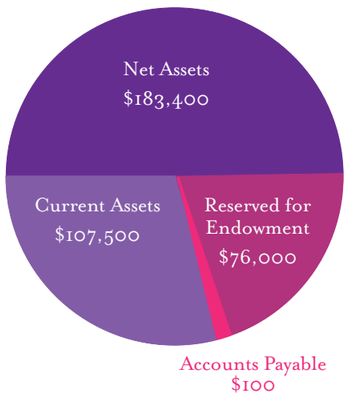
- provide services that benefit the gay, lesbian, bisexual and/or transgender communities in South Central Wisconsin;
- are not-for-profit and exempt from federal taxes under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Service code, or who use a qualifying fiscal sponsor.
- At this time, we are especially interested in supporting programs that support LGBTQ youth and the elderly.

For more information on NHF's funding priorities, screening criteria, limitations, size of grants, application process, and decision-making process, as well as to apply online, please visit newharvestfoundation.org.

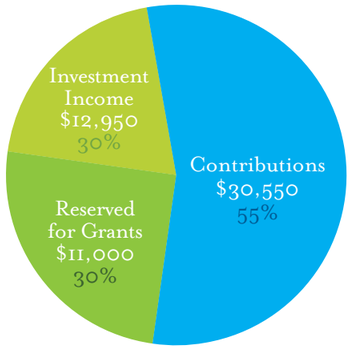
FINANCIALS

New Harvest Foundation's financial base is strong. The endowment continues to grow which will ensure New Harvest's ability to continue into the future. We do not have assets tied up in real estate or personal property and are virtually debt-free. We hired our first staff person to increase efficiency and maintain an office presence. Our expenses will remain fairly consistent in the coming years, so increases in income will result in giving more grants.

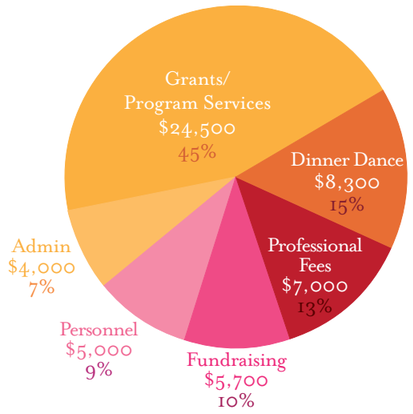
Financial Position



Income



Expenses



GIVE TO NEW HARVEST

You can make a cash contribution, attend a New Harvest Foundation event, enroll in an electronic funds transfer program, and/or include NHF in your will. Speak with us about joining the Board of Directors or consider becoming a community member on one of our committees.

Planned Giving: Beyond Now

New Harvest has a vision of shaping the future so LGBT people will be free to be themselves in a society that respects them for who they are. We are a long way from that goal and it may not be reached in our lifetime. That is why New Harvest challenges you to think of including the Foundation in your estate planning. A bequest in your name will speak for you beyond the length of your lifetime. Currently there are two bequests that New Harvest has received from the estates of Henry Dudek and Bill Miller; consequently, they are still impacting the cause of justice. Would you please remember New Harvest as you consider your estate options? Let us know if you have questions or want us to assist you in your planning.

Volunteer

Give a gift of your time! There are many opportunities to become involved with New Harvest Foundation: join a committee, help plan or volunteer at an event. Contact us to see how you can help!

Join our Board

We are currently looking for energetic people to join our Board of Directors. Contact us to find out how you can get involved.

www.newharvestfoundation.org

Henry X. Dudek

Twenty-five years ago a group of eight persons had the vision of creating a foundation "to raise and disburse funds for gay and lesbian community programs" (Articles of Incorporation) which became the New Harvest Foundation. One of those eight was Henry X. Dudek, whose commitment to the cause outlives his years with us.

Henry died on May 11, 2007, at his home overlooking Lake Monona in Madison. He assured that his values would be maintained as he named New Harvest as a benefactor in his will. By that action he becomes the first person to make a bequest to New Harvest Foundation, backing up his word and name with his resources.

The New Harvest Foundation is deeply grateful to Henry X. Dudek for his generosity, which now challenges all to give to empower the lives of LGBT people.

NEW HARVEST FOUNDATION BOARD

Monica Adams is a Black-gay-working class-gender-non-conforming woman, community organizer, scientist, and activist scholar. Her perspectives and skill-set create her life's work of combating oppression and moving toward social change and liberation for all peoples.

Steve Andersen is excited to be settling in the Madison area with her wife and cats. As a recovering member of the clergy, she brings years of experience in non-profit administration. As a transgendered woman, she brings an acute awareness of being the "other" and how much she has to learn. As a home brewer of wine and mead, she brings alcohol to parties.

Ellwood (Woody) Carey, a native of Pennsylvania, moved from upstate NY to Madison in 1985 to serve as Pastor of Parkside Presbyterian Church. He is serving his second stint on the New Harvest Board and currently is co-chair, which enables him to work for justice and equality.

Kelly Chambers comes to the New Harvest Foundation with experience in political fundraising and business marketing. Most recently, he has served on United States Senate campaigns in Indiana and Illinois, before moving back to Wisconsin to be closer to family and friends.

Tret Fure is a touring singer/songwriter with 13 CDs and albums to her credit. She also is a guitar teacher and painter when she's home. She has been co-chair of New Harvest for two years and has been on the board for four. She lives in Madison when not on the road, which she is most weekends.

Lisa Hart works for the Wisconsin Conference of the United Church of Christ as their Coordinator for Youth Ministries. Hart was involved in Fair Wisconsin's work against the Marriage Amendment and helped fundraise for the Verona Public Library building campaign. She has a husband and two teenagers

Andrew Irving has lived in Madison for 20 years. He's a Sr. Lecturer and Advisor in French at UW-Madison and also Director of the French House.

Sande Janagold has lived in Madison for over 20 years. She is a C.P.A. who has been involved with many nonprofits and currently works for the Rainbow Project.

Kem Kemmerer recently retired after 25 years with the Madison Police. She's enjoying greater involvement in the activities of the LGBT community. Her activism began in Chicago in the early 70s and has included a prior term on the NHF board in the mid 80s.

Mark Porter lives with his partner and their six cats in the Town of Rutland. He is surprised and pleased to join New Harvest again after 15 years absence. When not volunteering, Mark manages IT Services for Flad Architects

Michael Shoultz has served on the NHF board for the past three years as one of the Vice Co-Chairs. He works as an autism consultant for the Madison school district, has two wonderful adult children, and lives in Cambridge with his partner.

Kevin Sweeney recently moved back to Madison where he went to the UW and afterwards worked in a CPA firm and as an accountant for a non profit organization before moving to Chicago. In Chicago he worked as a managing director of a corporate entertainment company and then as a Senior Vice President of a design and advertising agency. Kevin will utilize his expertise in business management, accounting, marketing & advertising, human resources, IT and database management to benefit NHF.

Anders Zanichkowsky is a community organizer, non-profit event coordinator and Madison native. In 2008 they graduated from Hampshire College where they became involved in campus organizing around racial and reproductive justice. In 2009 they co-founded the group Genderqueer Madison, a community action group for transgender and gender non-conforming people and allies.

NEW HARVEST FOUNDATION

NEW HARVEST FOUNDATION
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NEWHARVESTFOUNDATION.ORG

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GARDEN CONFESSIONS

Edward Lyon, Director-Horticulture, Allen Centennial Gardens, is not just a gardener; he's an addict.

Here, he shares insight into his passion for plants and provides an introduction to our **collection of stories** from local gardening enthusiasts.

I'm a garden extremist. I'm not just an *avid* gardener, but more accurately a *rabid* gardener; certainly something bit me and took voracious hold. This isn't solely because of my role as a public garden director: my passion for home gardening directed me to horticulture as a second career. It isn't my job that drives the personal passion; gardening as hobby directed me to the career. My current home landscape reveals a lust for ornamental plants so strong that the addiction drives me to continue buying plants to shoehorn into areas I know they will outgrow.

My Main Street, Oregon, Victorian home is easily recognized for its lack of even a blade of grass and lush plantings from front to back. It is so obvious that when I describe where I live, the response from anyone who has traversed Main Street will be, "Oh, so that's YOUR house!" Planting the terrace has so confounded the village that the police have been called on me twice to discuss visibility down the street. My friends make jokes that only I would have the law called on me for plant materials that weren't even illegal.

Perpetuating the Stereotype

I've been asked why the gardening obsession and admit that more than once I have flippantly tossed back, "Well, I am a gay man, aren't I?" Yes, I know—stereotype. Male ornamental gardeners are just a step away from florists after all. But when someone asks you to write about why you garden, the stereotype must be tossed aside and the question taken seriously.

Here is a generality that is based on my experience lecturing and teaching in the horticulture industry and I don't know if it is backed by any research. I can tell you that *in general*, I can predict gender percentage in an audience based on gardening topic. Audiences for general gardening involving primarily ornamental plants tend to be highly dominated by women; usually I can count on 75–95%. I believe women do tend to garden more for the beauty, the inspiration, to create living spaces, and to embrace the challenges involved with nurturing and growth. Men take over classes on turf (lawns), chemical control and, of course, equipment. Interestingly, topics involving food, produce, and vegetable and fruit production seem to generate interest from both genders on a more even basis. In my experience, gay men do tend to have a passion for the ornamental, so there has to be something to the stereotype. However, whereas some of the top public gardens and horticulture departments in the country are run by gay men, the venues of ornamental horticulture—and the entire green industry—are both still dominated by heterosexual men.

I am at the tail end of the Baby Boomer generation, which marks the last segment of the "avid" gardening participants. Gardening as the number one recreational activity in America peaked in 2005 and has been on a rapid decline ever since. Unless we find ways to interest more members of generations X and Y in home gardening, I am part of a disappearing trend in homeowners.

Raised with a Green Thumb

I grew up on a struggling dairy farm in upstate New York. We were not only income limited but it was fairly standard for farm families to grow most of what they would eat. My mom managed a huge vegetable garden that provided fresh, frozen, or canned produce all year. Farm children all have tasks at early ages and as the eldest, around age ten I was delegated to assist her with planting and weeding a garden in excess of an acre. She was always my strongest supporter when she realized I was interested in something. At that time, Gurney Seed Company offered a packet of mixed seeds for kids for one penny with any order. She bought a packet for me and gave me my own "plot" in the garden, and I was hooked. I have since run children's gardening programs, and it is universal. Ask a child to plant a seed and care for it for you and it is a task; give the child a seed that he or she can own, and they become a nurturer.

Gurney packaged easy-to-grow seeds for the kids' packet, and mine included one of the easiest: nasturtium. Already a rampant and fast-

growing plant, a little potent chicken manure turned them into bushes! Never mind that all that growth came at other flowers' expense. With my mom and neighbors all praising me for the largest nasturtiums in the neighborhood, I was hooked!

The First Garden Plot

I currently teach horticulture and lecture across the Midwest but, to this day, I remember my first garden plot. Success makes for a positive experience and kindles passion. Had the manure been too potent and killed the seeds or had those seeds not germinated, I could be a much different person today. Certainly my views about gardening could have been altered.

Gardening has a fair number of challenges and landscaping can be costly. Not being armed with the right knowledge can lead to expensive failures. If the novice spends a fair amount on plants and materials without proper instruction and initial education, the resulting failures will discourage them from continuing, much less from developing gardening into a passion.

Ways and Reasons for Gardening

People garden for different reasons and at different levels of intensity. The most basic is to provide enough vegetation around the house and property to call it "landscaped" and add value to the property. But unless all of the maintenance is hired, it is still gardening on the most rudimentary level. Others landscape their properties for food, beauty, relaxation, solace, privacy, entertainment, or plant collections; for the challenge of making plants thrive; to provide wildlife with food; to reestablish native plants; to create exotic looks; as a backdrop for hardscaping (such as patios, ponds, and paths); and for a variety of other reasons.

Gardening constantly evolves as interests, skill levels, and trends change. My interest started with vegetables but went through "chapters" that included a fascination for roses, a declining interest in annuals in favor of perennials, the revelation that woody plants made a more complete landscape, the challenge of learning how to garden in shade, and many other phases.

Many Passions Fulfilled

Over time, I have developed a fascination with plant evolution and the ability of flora to adapt in special ways that continue to amaze me. I do love the challenge of making plants grow and, better yet, flourish. The artistic side of me is sated by putting together beds and combinations that flow with the eye and provide visual interest, inspiration, and stimulation. I actually love to weed and enjoy the quiet time it provides to reflect; I am exhilarated by the appearance of a weed-free, freshly-mulched garden. I love living in a garden and my favorite spot is sitting on my wrapped porch completely surrounded by garden. I'm constantly jonesing over the new, different, and exotic in shape, form, flower, or color much like an addict who can't get enough high out of what he already has. The ecologist in me wants to replenish and protect plants essential to the quality of our lives on the planet.

The simple act of planting that first seed has over time created a large number of reasons why I garden today. Fortunately, I have developed a career out what has become an obsession and thank goodness my partner, Darrell Hart, has the same passion for classic cars and supports what others might find extreme. What I love most about plants and gardening is the enormous diversity of pleasure they can provide to everybody in one way or another.

I encourage everyone to start with that first seed or plant and nurture it to its ultimate mature state. I don't expect everyone to develop the same addictive passion that I have, but I am willing to bet that the first bite out of a freshly picked tomato, the scent of angel trumpet wafting in the early summer evening, the excitement of wildlife viewed in your backyard, the freshly cut flowers gracing your table for a dinner party, the smell of rich organic matter after a warm rain—there's going to be some pleasure and sense of satisfaction in it for you as well.

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HOW I GOT INTO GARDENING …

John Beutel, retired university educator

I have been gardening for as long as I can remember. Helping my mother plant the larger vegetable seeds that could be manipulated by my tiny hands is one of my earliest memories. Seeing the seed sprout, grow, and produce a crop was magical and enchanting to me, even as a child. My mother was the vegetable and flower gardener; my dad grew the potatoes. I learned as I helped them both; I still have my mother's food preservation book in which the opening statement is, "Now that you have planted your Victory Garden, how are you going to preserve the harvest?"

As a five-year-old, I was enchanted by the beauty of a tiger lily that grew near the front porch, the opulent abundance of spring apple blossoms on an ancient tree in a pasture near the house, and the vast patches of bird's foot violets on a hill nearby. My interest never waned. By the time I was in high school, the garden became my domain when farm chores were done. I worked side by side with my mother canning, pickling, and freezing the bounty for a family of eight.

In my early years as a teacher, my gardening was confined to some carefully tended houseplants. When I finally purchased my own little home on an acre in the country, I had an empty canvas of a yard. Over my 30 years there, the yard and garden have gone through three major renovations and numerous lesser ones. The current edition began with my retirement and consists of a landscaped water feature and a dozen raised beds that grow an abundance of vegetables and cutting flowers nestled among favorite trees and shrubs. I find the process of tending the garden and preserving the harvest therapeutic, healing, spiritual, and very rewarding.

John Cannon & John Fritsch, retired educators

I have always been interested in plants and gardens. Growing up in northeastern Wisconsin, I used to go into the wooded areas adjacent to my neighborhood and dig up ostrich ferns, white trout lilies, and wood violets to create my first garden beds. I always loved flowers and nurtured many houseplants throughout the years. But, it wasn't until I had a house with a yard that I could begin to create the garden of my dreams. I took a few botany courses in college; however, I learned most of what I know about plants and gardens just by reading gardening books and visiting other gardens. Over the years, my interest in gardening developed into a passion. That passion is now shared by both John Fritsch and me as we each continue to learn and grow along with our garden.

We moved into our home in 1986 and have been working on the landscape ever since. Our garden has continually evolved over the 25 years we have cultivated our space. The plantings are ornamental, consisting of a few select trees, many evergreen and deciduous shrubs, and herbaceous flowering perennials surrounding a small waterfall and goldfish pond. As our trees have grown, our once-full sun garden has gained many shady areas, providing us an opportunity to explore new plants better-suited to the changing conditions. When choosing plants to grow, we always consider the plant's hardiness zone and its overall shape, form, texture, and color in context with the other plants. Our goal is to combine and contrast nearby plants to create interesting and long-lasting combinations. Ours is truly a four-season garden with something of interest to enjoy throughout the year.

Bill Hoernke, Web Developer.
Member, Dairyland Cowboys and Cowgirls.

My initial influence for gardening was from my mom. While I was growing up, she had a small vegetable garden that didn't really amount to much. She did like to harvest the tomatoes and green peppers from it, but what really seemed to inspire me was her love for flowers and perennials. She would enhance an unworthy area next to the driveway with colorful perennials like gaillardia and incorporate other bright annuals like petunias, but I especially remember her gorgeous clematis!

As a young adult, I was inspired by a wonderful friend, Rich Becher, who loved to garden. I rented a room from him in Madison when I was going to college. He had an amazing yard with woody ornamentals, hosta, and other perennials. His hosta were unbelievable. Rich had a wonderful ability to plant something and then move it around the yard until it was in "just the right spot."

After I bought my own home in Stoughton, I started to experiment with some of the plants that were my favorites in other gardens. I had to have some hosta. It's named the "friendship"

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Ash Wednesday Lenten Service
March 9 - 12:15 & 7 p.m.

Welcome Spring: Meal of Hope
March 20 - 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.
Tickets: office@fumc.org

"The Secret Garden" Musical
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www.brownpapertickets.com

Seder Meal
April 21 - 6:30 p.m.
Tickets: office@fumc.org

Easter Worship Celebrations
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Check out our March newsletter, online or in-store, for gardening ideas to help you get ready for the Eat Local Challenge this fall!

plant because most of them multiply quickly and are easy to share with friends. I started to learn which plants worked best in certain areas of the yard (due to lighting, moisture, and soil), and I continue to learn and watch what other gardeners are doing. I'm active in the Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society and the Wisconsin Hosta Society and now focus on lower maintenance gardening. I love it.

Richard Kilmer, Pharmacist at Community Pharmacy and Member, Dairyland Cowboys and Cowgirls. He spent many years volunteering with GALVAnize, The AIDS Network, OutReach, and others.

I started life on a Wisconsin dairy farm and have always been close to nature. My parents, aunt, and grandparents were avid gardeners, so it's in my blood. I grew up with my hands in the dirt, growing things. Even as a small child, I was always picking bouquets of flowers as gifts, or spending countless hours in gardens. The beauty of my mother's flower garden stopped traffic.

I lived in New York City for awhile and spent a lot of my free time at the Clinton Community Garden or the Brooklyn Botanical Garden. I came back to Wisconsin for a summer and realized how much I missed nature, and never moved back to New York. Gardening soon became one of my passions. I purchased my aunt's farm, Rocky Ledge, near Wonewoc, WI. There I have untold acres to cultivate and make more beautiful than I found them. The landscape in the Driftless area of the upper Baraboo Valley is ideal for creating gardens. I describe my gardens as English country meets gay farm boy.

There is a joy I get from seeing things in bloom, giving bouquets of my flowers, hiking my woodland trails lined with wildflowers, seeing bluebirds multiplying over the years from the nest boxes I provide, seeing a hillside in bloom with thousands of daffodils I planted, continuing to grow heirloom flowers my Aunt Evy brought from the family homestead in Minnesota or the special peonies my relatives packed with them when they emigrated from Germany in the 1870s, seeing my mother's special poppies bloom each spring, and sharing the beauty and bounty of my gardens with friends and family. It brings me peace and joy and helps create a special place where I find great happiness.

Bob Klebba, Morningwood Farm Nursery, Mt. Horeb

My mom got me started in the garden. I remember watching her planting annuals in those first warm days of spring. I was fascinated by

the process of buying small plants and watching them grow and bloom through the summer.

I got hooked on gardening in my own vegetable garden in grade school. I planted flowers from seed and vegetables ranging from radishes to tomatoes. My mom, the enabler, got me a subscription to Organic Gardening when I was in junior high school. I learned that soil was the key to success and talked my mom into hauling horse manure on an open trailer that dropped at least half the load on the 10-mile trip home. But efforts like these allowed me to brag about my tomatoes to my paternal grandfather, also a gardener.

As I started high school, I researched how to build a small greenhouse using storm windows. This allowed me to garden year-round in a space with a 5' by 5' footprint. I enjoyed this space as my own, cultivating tropical plants and starting seedlings early in the spring.

I'm now making a living from growing and selling plants at our nursery west of Madison: Morningwood Farm. My early start got me in touch with the process of gardening and that process now includes my customers' enjoyment of gardening.

Jane LaFlash, mother of a gay son and founder of the Madison chapter of PFLAG (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays)

I was nearly 50 when I bought a house on Madison's east side and decided I "wanted my yard to look nice." Before that, I could not have cared less about gardening. I asked a friend to show me the weeds versus the desirable plants in my yard, and my sister took me to the Garden Expo. I joined the Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society so I could go on garden tours, and things snowballed from there.

Now I am a total garden nut and a plantaholic. At the beginning, I became a different gardener each year due to all I had learned during that year by reading, attending lectures, visiting gardens, volunteering at Olbrich Botanic Garden and Longenecker Horticultural Gardens, enrolling in the Master Gardening program, and—of course—by trial and error in my own garden.

At first I would take any free plant anyone would give me, but now I am much more selective and work at one of my main gardening goals: landscaping for the six months of the year that perennials are dormant. Besides the real joy of working in my garden, the excitement of buying new plants, and the thrill of visiting other gardens, I have found satisfaction and strength in knowing that in my 50s and 60s I can become involved in a whole new activity, learn a new topic, and make a new set of friends.

Jaime Zimmerman, Vice President, Senior Investment Consultant, Robert W. Baird & Co.

I grew up in a big family in a little town. We had a large house that sat on about an acre of land, and my dad loved to "work" in the yard. Every Saturday morning we had to help until 1:00. Then, we could spend the rest of the day with our pals. I always saw those Saturday mornings as punishment. There were hundreds of feet of horsefly-infested shrub-borders, and my dad insisted the soil be turned over and the weeds be pulled constantly. It was hard work for a kid: slave labor, in my opinion.

Now that I have my own home, I can't wait to "work" in the yard. It's comforting and a form of creative expression. I get lost in my thoughts. There's the wonderful fresh air, exercise, and an overall feeling of accomplishment. My sister lives on a farm nearby, and I've taken to growing vegetables and herbs there. Last spring, we planted a small orchard. There's satisfaction and romance in taking nourishment directly from the earth.

I see now what drove my father. And without my realizing it, he taught me some very practical things: what a weed looks like and that a hat is a great deterrent to a horsefly. Now, I don't mind working in my yard well past 1:00. ■

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Our History by Richard Wagner

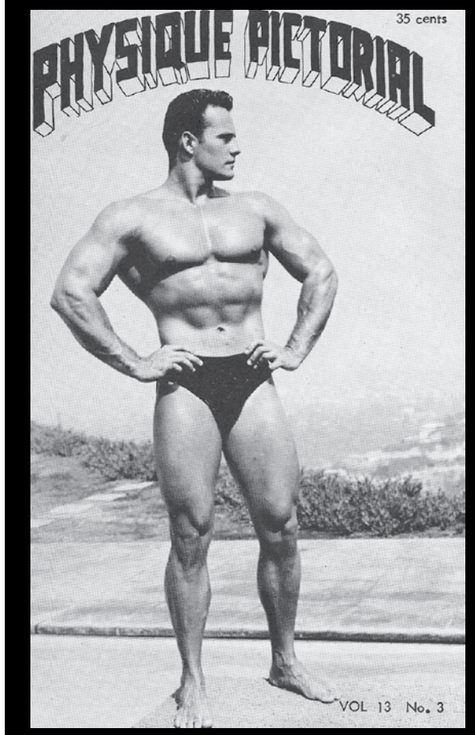
Male Physique Magazines

Finding Ourselves Pre-Stonewall in Physical Culture

Before there was a political gay movement in the late 1960s and the period following, one might wonder what gay identity existed prior to that decade. In a recent article published in the *Journal of Social History*, July 2010, David K. Johnson argues that gay identity was formed in the consumer culture of the mid-twentieth century. Among his arguments, he posits that physique magazines provided an early entree into gay life for many men. And the national gay commercial market for these magazines created a consumer network and gay identity well before Stonewall.

Citing John D'Emilio, Johnson noted while the political Mattachine Society in the 1950s numbered less than a thousand, physique magazines were selling in the hundreds of thousands. Though some gay historians have dismissed physical culture publications because they were not really gay or because they bordered on eroticism or pornography, there is little doubt that gay consumers were buying these materials.

In this column, I previously explored how Wisconsin citizens would participate in physical culture publications. After all, the German immigrants that dominated the state strongly encouraged physical culture and there was broad participation in the Turners movement, which encouraged the culture of physical exercise and comradeship.



The 1951 founding of *Physique Pictorial* by Mizer from the Athletic Model Guild became one of the popular magazines that featured male models posing with no weights in view.

A sampling of physical culture magazines available to Wisconsinites and of which there is evidence of their engagement reveals use of this proto-gay consumer market by Wisconsin men. In the September 1939 issue of the magazine *Strength and Health: Devoted to the Culture of Mind and Body* (S&H) we find some evidence.

The magazine was put out by the Strength and Health Publishing Co. of York, Pennsylvania, and promoted the York Barbell Company. In this period, physical culture periodicals could provide mixed signals for homosexuals. The September 1939 issue had a full-page advertisement for a book titled *Your Sex Life* by Bob Hoffman. A detailed table of contents shows one of the topics was "Homosexuality, such a common condition in modern life that it is discussed at length." While acknowledging plentiful same-sex activity, the overall tone of the contents list clearly presents and upholds the traditional view of sexual abstinence outside of marriage.

Yet, the magazine at this period had a section entitled "S&H Leaguers Page" with letters from readers. Several readers for example wrote in seeking a vacation companion. Others, like one Wisconsin S&H leaguer Paul E. Scheele, 927 Swift Ave., Sheboygan noted that he "would like to exchange physique photos with other leaguers." Or as a subtext: I want other photos of muscular men, of course nearly nude … and perhaps to make contacts for friendship.

The same 1939 issue also published a physique photo from Vernon Schenke at 153 pounds, described as a "husky newcomer," and listed as a Milwaukee City middleweight champ who presses 196 pounds. In the issue's back pages are the usual ads for various offers of posing photos. These include an ad for Tony Sansome "Nudleafs" photos. While the mention of "Nudleafs" presumes some discretely placed genital coverage, Sansome gets featured elsewhere with his full frontal nude photos also available from this same period, as noted in David Chapman's *Adonis: The Male Physique Pin Up 1870–1940*.

After World War II, S&H continues to run discretely worded posing ads in the back pages. They also start a section called "Especially for S&H Boys" which permits them to run photos of younger guys, which surely had an appeal for some gay readers. Yet the formal front of heterosexuality was carefully upheld including pictures of women weightlifters. One of the photos in the new boys section was of Robert R. Kordes with a description that he "had already built this wonderful body by the time he was 16." But any implication of homosexuality would be undercut by the added note that the photo was sent by "Miss Violet Tomczyk of 709 So. 6th St., Milwaukee, Wis. who signs herself 'an ardent S&H fan.'"

The traditional weightlifting physical culture magazines with their ambiguous approaches were challenged after World War II by newer physique magazines that made little pretense—other than posing young men—that they were into muscular physical culture. Now new gay entrepreneurs were reaching for a gay consumer market.

The Athletic Model Guild (AMG) founded in 1945 by Bob Mizer and others was originally a referral service for models. The 1951 founding of *Physique Pictorial* by Mizer from the AMG became one of the popular magazines that featured male models posing with no weights in view. Others followed in the 1950s including *The Male Figure* from Bruce of Los Angeles.

In a February 1963 issue of *Physique Pictorial* there was a photo spread on New Model Candidates for the magazine and its products. There were 18 men in the photos. The caption read, "On these two pages we bring you a

Among the 18 new models was John Baradin, 20, 5'8", 166 lbs, of Slinger, WI described as active in all sports including gymnastics and boxing.

number of new AMG models recently photographed who haven't yet been cataloged by AMG, but we are very eager to get your comments and appraisals so we will know which fellows to feature the most strongly, which to call back for more work (where possible), etc."

Among the 18 new models was John Baradin, 20, 5'8", 166 lbs, of Slinger, WI described as active in all sports including gymnastics and boxing. It was noted he trained to be a printer, but wants to be a cop. He was touted to be in one upcoming AMG film. The photo shows Bob Mizer's own neo-astrological system for some of the models' certain interests, as also described in *Physique: A Pictorial History of the Athletic Model Guild* by Timothy Lewis in the introductory essay. Unfortunately, we do not have the decoding ring to find out more on John Baradin.

While straight guys might have searched to find the bare breasts of *National Geographic* photo spreads, the physique magazines especially of the 50s and 60s provided an alternative for gay men. Thus it becomes clear that well before Stonewall, Wisconsin men found access to the emerging gay consumer market via the networks and photos of male models featured in physical culture publications. ■

Dick Wagner (rrdickwagner@gmail.com), openly gay former Dane County Board Chair and co-chair of Governor Earl's Commission on Lesbian and Gay Issues, is now working on gay Wisconsin history and welcomes topics and sources.

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Long Distance Love

Jimmy Owen shares his tips for surviving a long distance relationship.

A year ago, I never imagined I would be part of a long-distance relationship. However, due to the current economic circumstances, that is exactly what happened to my partner and me. Current statistics show an estimated 2.9% of U.S. marriages are considered long-distance, with 1 in 10 marriages reported to have included a period of long-distance within the first 3 years.

As I reflect on the situation, I have learned a lot about my partner, our relationship, and myself. Preparing for and maintaining a relationship across the country has had its surprises, rewards, and difficulties. Fortunately, we did our homework before the experience and (theoretically) knew what we were in for. Having

Talk about how it impacts each of you financially, emotionally, physically. Logistically, how exactly is it going to operate?

over 7 years invested in the relationship made the decision to try it easier, but it isn't for the faint of heart. Not having your partner in close physical proximity can be difficult and creates new challenges and opportunities as you grow together while apart. I would like to offer some suggestions should you find yourself considering long-distance love.

Communication is paramount. At the onset, make sure to ask the important questions and be certain you are both clear on the parameters of the relationship. Talk about how it impacts each of you financially, emotionally, physically. Logistically, how exactly is it going to operate?

Are you dating? Exclusive? Married? Is the relationship open? Closed? Exactly what does that mean to the two of you in terms of specific behaviors while you are apart? Having this conversation may be uncomfortable but can save conflict and confusion down the road.

Communicate every single day. At least once a day. Schedule it if you have to, but make sure to maintain a consistent connection. In addition to the phone, with the evolution of the Internet, we now have instant messenger and face-to-face options. If possible, let this communication become part of a loving ritual. Whether it is small talk, shop talk, deep talk, future talk, fun talk, sexy talk, be sure to make it happen often and don't take it for granted.

Be clear about an end point, and manage your expectations. Knowing there is a set time when the two of you will be permanently back under the same roof gives each of you something to look forward to. If possible, don't string it along indefinitely. Revisit and revise the agreement if the time frames change and be clear about whether or not you both are remaining on board with the plan.

Schedule visits often. This helps break up a large chunk of time into smaller, doable pieces. Don't let family and friends get in the way and make sure the time together isn't full of obligations with others. This is a time for the two of you to reconnect on an emotional and physical level. Take a vacation together.

Trust each other. Jealousy and drama can ruin a relationship—especially when you aren't in close physical proximity. Talk about your feelings and continue to manage the set of relationship standards you have mutually agreed upon. Many times a lack of trust is more about low self-esteem than what you imagine could be going on. If you've had a negative experience regarding trust in the past, be careful about lumping your partner into your past experiences. Talk freely about your vulnerability and ask for reassurance in those times of loneliness.

Talk about your future together. In doing this, you reinforce the ultimate goal of being together again and are reminded why you are choosing this temporary path. Share your future goals. Speak to the tangible payoffs and benefits of being together and remind one another that the short-term long distance is not in vain.

Reach out to your support systems to fill some of the free time. Take time to explore new hobbies, work out, or volunteer. Maintain your individuality and take time to enjoy yourself.

Maintain common interests, even while apart. Read a book at the same time and talk about it. Share music. Watch your favorite TV shows while on the phone. Go to the movie at the same time and then call to share your experience. Choose a game to play together over the Internet. If you are going out with friends, call your partner and pass the phone around. Let him feel a part of the event even if he is far away and let him experience it with you. Film a video or take pictures to share about how you are spending your day.

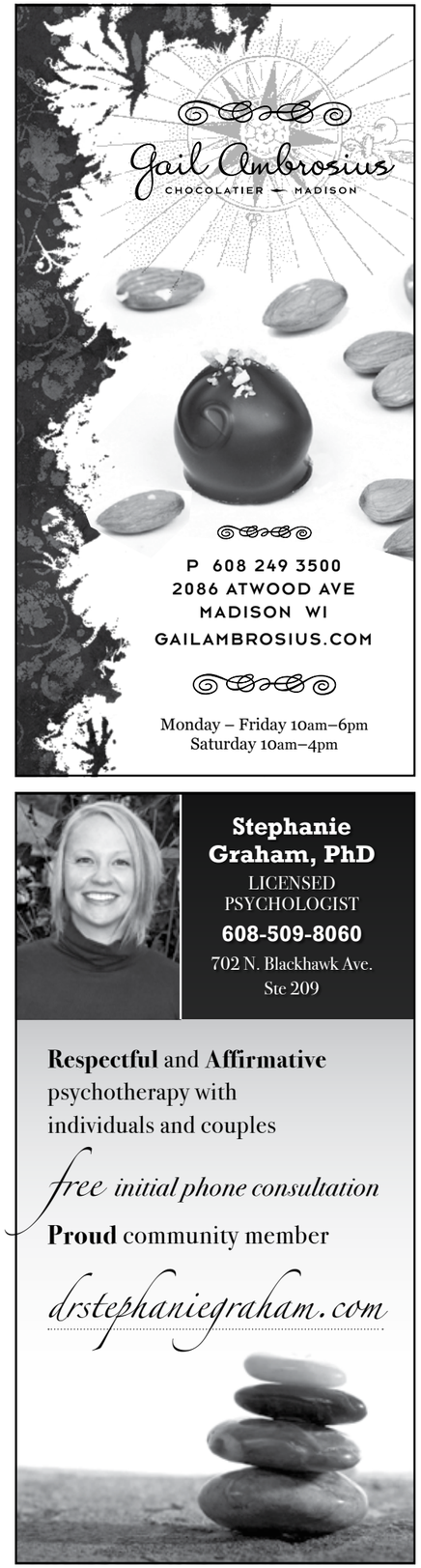
All of these suggestions have a common theme: creating closeness while apart.

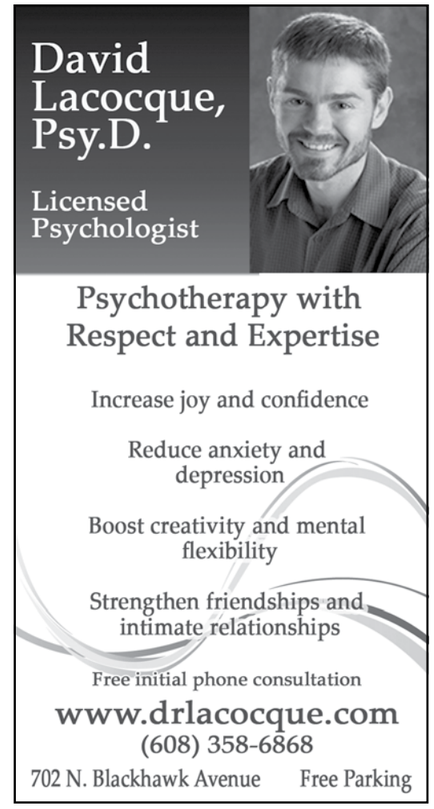
As Jim and I come to the end of a year of long-distance love, our lives are about to change once again: this time with a move back to Dallas, ironically, where we started our journey. It will be wonderful to have our family back together again—to say good morning in the same room instead of on the phone, to cook a meal together, to not be a single parent to three beagles.

I will miss Madison incredibly. Never have I lived in a more comfortable, welcoming city. I will miss living in a part of the country with four seasons, the world's largest farmer's market, Concerts on the Square, Tex Tubb's Taco Palace, my clients, colleagues, neighbors, and friends. I will miss my involvement with *Our Lives* Magazine and OPEN. And, yes, I will especially miss the snow. ■

Editor's Note: *Jimmy will be deeply missed by all of us at* Our Lives *as well as throughout the community. We thank him for his many contributions over the years.*

Jimmy Owen has been an LGBT therapist for over 20 years. He can be found online at **www.jimmyowen.com**





Beauty and Her Beasts

Stylist Bonnie Raimy Dresses Animal Communicator Asia Voight

Asia Voight is an internationally known Animal Communicator, teacher, and speaker who has worked with over 40,000 animals in the last 13 years. Asia's work has been featured on ABC, NBC, and Fox TV, in radio interviews with the Rick Lamb Show, Hay House Radio, and Olympic dressage rider Jane Savoie's tele-seminar. She has been featured in *Brava* Magazine, *Women* Magazine, the *Wisconsin State Journal*, and the *Fitchburg Star* with her amazing personal story and words of animal wisdom. Asia has published a chapter in Crossing the Rubicon: Celebrating the Human-Animal Bond in Life and Death, about the healing aspects of her animal communication work. Learn more at AsiaVoight.com.

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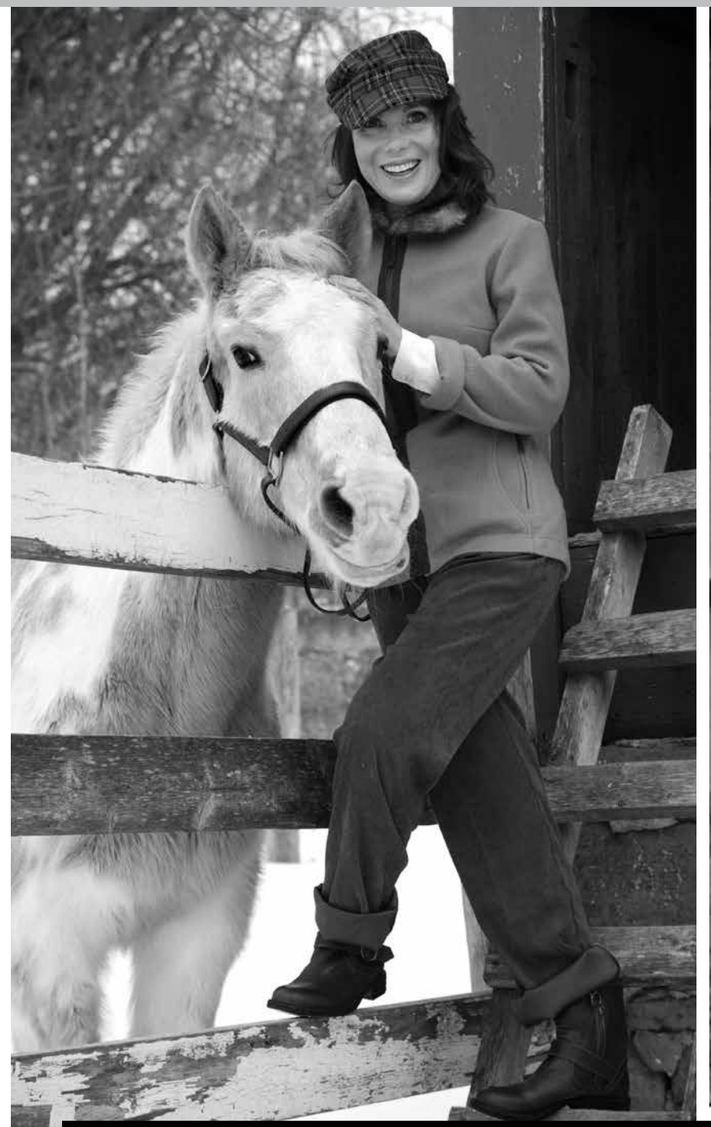

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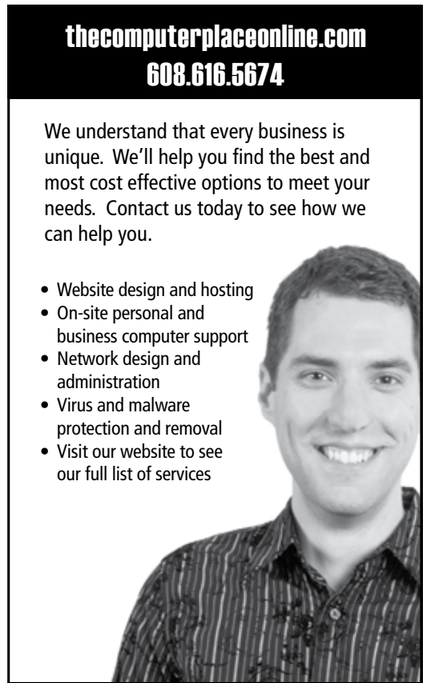

Coexist

Marty Fox details what it means to be both fabulously corporate & corporately fabulous.

The *fabulous* Wizard of Oz
Retired from his racket because,
What with up-to-date science,
To most of his clients
He wasn't the Wizard he was.
– Anonymous

I love the idea that "fabulous" and "corporate" can coexist. Imagine the business world and the gay community coming together, infusing businesses with energy, imagination, and color and bringing inclusion and new opportunities for equality and full expression to our community.

Learn to focus on the other as you listen. If you are thinking of a clever response, you are not listening closely. Hear what the other person is saying and listen for how they feel.

our lives
Marty Fox
ourlivesmadison.com
user mfox50

This is a journey that we travel individually and as a group, locally, regionally, and nationally. This is a journey toward greater wholeness for our economy and for each of us.

So, what does it take to bring your fabulous to work?

• Write your own vision, mission, and values statement. Honor what is most important to you with your time, your passion, and your effort. A strong core will keep you whole through any challenges you may encounter.

• Understand that we are all connected and you have more influence on others than you can imagine. Ask yourself how those around you feel after each interaction. Are you building others up or tearing them down?

• Do everything you can to leave your own phobias behind. You can't expect to convince anyone else if you can't convince yourself. Counseling, mentor relationships, and diversity training may all help you find the confidence to be authentically you. The more you can be you, the more fabulous you will be.

• Build allies. Look for ways to demonstrate your willingness to hear and understand those who may disagree with you, who have a different background, or may be disenfranchised in some way. Look for ways to build bridges by finding shared interests or history.

• Learn to focus on the other as you listen. If you are thinking of a clever response, you are not listening closely. Hear what the other person is saying and listen for how they feel. Ask questions that will show your interest.

How can we work together to be corporately fabulous?

• Connect with your colleagues in your company and in your community. Be active in an employee resource group and in the Out Professional and Executive Network.

• Network, network, network! Talking with others gives you a better understanding of how to move forward. This is the basis for building community.

• Some will love you from the start; others will come around in time. A few will never get there. Focus on the first two groups. Ignore the few. Many will admire your courage.

• Shared energy transforms an ordinary effort into a stellar performance. You can't be a part of the magic of shared energy if you have run out of passion. Plug in to those resources that keep you fired up.

I believe that a fabulous, creative community attracts economic development. Let's build on this correlation. It is is within our reach.

From School to Work

I would love to hear your stories of transitioning from the classroom to the workplace. Did you have a good experience? What did you find discouraging? Energizing? Send your responses to **mfox@ourlivesmadison.com**. ■

Marty Fox retired in 2009 as the Executive Director of the Alliant Energy Foundation.

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Out Professional and Executive Network

2011 calendar

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Happy Hour

MAY 11 7:30 - 9:00 AM
Breakfast Program

JUNE 15 5:00 - 7:00 PM
The Old Fashioned
Happy Hour

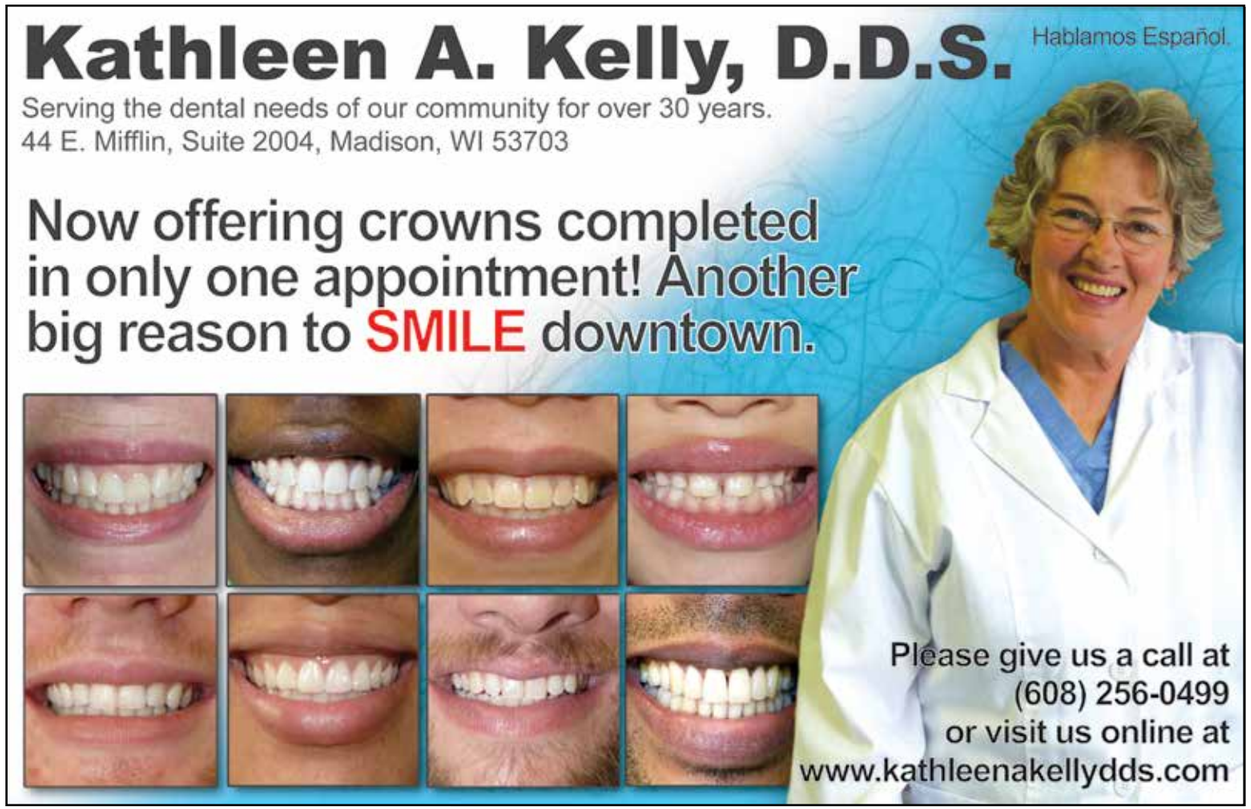
JULY 19 5:30 - 8:00 PM
Betty Lou Cruise

AUGUST 17 5:00 - 7:00 PM
The Old Fashioned
Happy Hour

SEPTEMBER 17 8:30 AM - NOON
OPEN Workplace Summit at CUNA

OCTOBER 19 5:00 - 7:00 PM
The Old Fashioned
Happy Hour

NOVEMBER 16 5:00 - 7:00 PM
The Old Fashioned
Happy Hour



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To the Barricades!

Tamara Packard breaks down the February election results and urges education and action.

a friend recently observed that the mood in Madison following November's Republican takeover of the state is how Paris felt after the German invasion of France during World War II; shock and fear that evolved into resistance. In this climate, leadership in local government becomes even more important to preserve our progressive values. When two of the three branches of state government are determined to roll back legislative protections, especially in the area of LGBT rights, the third branch (the court) must serve as a protector of dis-

How you vote on April 5 will help determine whether resistance or fear prevails in Madison during the Walker reign.

our lives | Tamara Packard ourlivesmadison.com user **Tamara**

favored minorities. How you vote on April 5 will help determine whether resistance or fear prevails in Madison during the Walker reign.

The race for Dane County Executive has garnered much attention since current Executive Kathleen Falk, a supporter of LGBT rights, announced her plans to step down. During Falk's administration, Dane County has provided domestic partner benefits for county employees. More recently, Dane County enacted a domestic partner registry and a cutting-edge law requiring county contractors to offer domestic partner health insurance coverage to their employees as a condition of receiving the privilege to do work paid for by our tax dollars. The next county executive will have the opportunity to strengthen our resistance by building on these successes, or contribute to a Walker-driven climate of fear by working to dismantle them.

The two County Exec candidates are Joe Parisi and Eileen Bruskewitz. **The clear choice for those who support LGBT rights here is Joe Parisi.** Parisi has a strong record of supporting the LGBT community as a member of the State Assembly representing the 48th Assembly District (portions of the cities of Monona and Madison, the Village of McFarland, and the Towns of Dunn and Blooming Grove), where he has served since 2004. In 2006, he voted against and publicly opposed the anti-gay marriage amendment to Wisconsin's Constitution. In 2009, he voted to create Wisconsin's Domestic Partnership Registry and provide for domestic partner benefits for state employees.

By contrast, County Supervisor Eileen Bruskewitz has a record of opposing our families. In the weeks leading up to the statewide referendum on the anti-gay marriage amendment in November 2006, the County Board voted on a resolution opposing the amendment. Bruskewitz was one of only a handful of Supervisors who voted against the resolution, i.e., she demonstrated support for the anti-gay amendment. She also opposed the county ordinance that requires county contractors to provide domestic partner benefits.

The other spring elections race that is key to our community is the Supreme Court race, where incumbent Justice David Prosser faces challenger Joanne Kloppenburg. Kloppenburg has served as an Assistant Attorney General for the State of Wisconsin since 1989. As a political newcomer, Kloppenberg does not have a record from which to draw conclusions about how she views LGBT rights. It can be safely said, however, that there is no evidence of any negative feelings from this candidate, and she has been endorsed by people who have supported LGBT rights, including Dane County Executive Kathleen Falk and Representatives Spencer Black and Fred Kessler.

There is no uncertainty about how Justice Prosser feels about the advancement of LGBT rights. Justice Prosser describes himself as a "judicial conservative," and prior to being appointed to the Supreme Court twelve years ago, he represented the City of Appleton in the Wisconsin Assembly as a Republican. Several years ago, Justice Prosser expressed his thoughts about gay rights advocates pursuing better legal protections through the courts. In the *Helgeland* case, several same-sex couples challenged the state's refusal to provide domestic partner health insurance benefits to state employees as a violation of Wisconsin's constitutional guarantee of equal protection. Before that issue was decided in the trial court, it took a side-trip up to the Wisconsin Supreme Court on a procedural issue that had absolutely nothing to do with gay rights. Justice Prosser authored a dissent in that decision, taking the opportunity to criticize the couples for bringing a lawsuit to obtain equal treatment under the law rather than using the legislative process.

Some might find that criticism harmless; after all, when a group can gain wide support for equal rights protections, doesn't the group have a better chance of achieving actual equality? Yet in this case, Justice Prosser's position appears disingenuous for two reasons. First, in 1982, while serving in the legislature, he voted against Wisconsin's landmark gay rights law, the first state law in the nation to protect against discrimination based on sexual orientation. Second, **Justice Prosser said recently that if re-elected, he intends to "complement" the new Republican governor and legislature.** Both Governor Walker and the new legislative leadership have signaled intentions to diminish our community's recent legislative gains. Given these two facts, it seems apparent that given an opportunity to rule on a gay rights issue, Justice Prosser would look for ways to align that ruling with the anti-gay-rights aims of the other two branches of Wisconsin's current government.

As people who support the advancement of LGBT rights, we must participate in the political process at every level: at a minimum, we must educate ourselves about the issues and candidates; share our knowledge with our friends, neighbors, and co-workers; and vote. We also should consider running for office, testifying at public hearings, litigating, and participating in protests and demonstrations. "Speak up, act up, fight back," as they used to say. To the barricades! Vive la résistance!

Tamara Packard is a Madison civil rights lawyer, activist and partner in the law firm of Cullen Weston Pines & Bach LLP, **www.cwpb.com**.

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That's the Spirit!

Yahara Bay Distillery and **Spirit of Wisconsin** take pride in going local.

Nick Quint may be one of those who never retire. He was quasi-retired when he visited his cousin's winery in Iowa, and a light turned on when he saw an old still used for making vodka.

"In Europe, any city of any size has at least one brewery, one winery, one distillery. With the wine and brewpub movements in this country, it just seemed like distilleries would be the next thing coming," he says.

Yahara Bay Distillery (YBD) is now three years in, and they currently produce vodka, gin, whiskey, and other seasonal spirits made from Wisconsin-grown ingredients. He has a goal to release two to three new products a year, as ideas are always in the works.

"Most of the distillers that start up are people in their 30s or 40s. I started up in my 60s, so I didn't set a big, 10-year goal. I have a four- and five-year plan. We're growing pretty fast because of that," he says.

YBD partners with Spirit of Wisconsin (SOW) to incorporate their spirits into gourmet jams, salsas, relishes, and truffles that are also made with local ingredients.

SOW's Kris Kalb has run with the memory of his German grandmother's rum balls to inspire his gourmet food line using Yahara Bay spirits.

"I want to create something not only for myself and my business partners, but for those I care about. That's a driving force behind me," he says.

Many of Kalb's flavor combinations weigh in on both the sweet and savory sides, which he says goes over well with people because the complexity that combination builds on the palate.

His delightfully tingly raspberry jalapeño jam is a must for any pantry; for chocoholics, check out his upcoming custom truffles to choose your own culinary adventure or pick up a ready-to-go box made from a variety of house spirits.

Tucked off the Beltline on the west side of Madison, YBD and SOW reside in a mostly commercial nook. Be sure to locate them, and take a casual tour or a drink in the gallery, which rotates artists including Quint's wife and Union Cab employees.

When I popped in on a quiet morning, Quint was working on a cocoa liquor amid a room full of stills, bottling equipment (he bottles for Vom Fass), and palettes of Death's Door products, which Quint also produces.

He said that just the other week, one of the farmers he supports brought over some fresh eggs and they cooked them in the hot water coming off the still. "Wish I had been there for that," I thought.

"The main thing I like to get out to people is that they're welcome here anytime. Just stop in and see what we're working on. No matter what we're doing, we're not going to stop doing it; you're just going to become a part of what we do. People enjoy that—we're very informal, and we love for people just to stop in," Quint said.

One of the newest additions to the Yahara Bay line is a "Wrapped in Pride" vodka made from apples grown in Gays Mills. A percentage of revenue it generates goes to community organizations based on distribution, which extends as far away as Florida and Colorado. Here in Madison, the AIDS Network and Fair Wisconsin are two major beneficiaries.

Kalb is also the label designer for Yahara Bay. He came up with the "Wrapped in Pride" label (look for a clear bottle hugged by a rainbow flag) and played a large role in the conceptualization for it.

"It's something very close to my heart mostly because being in the gay community, and being an out individual, I thought it would be important to have something the community could call its own. Making contributions back to the community was also an important part of this project—I wanted certain organizations within the community to benefit from the sale of this product," he says. ■

E-Mail Us Your Recipe In our May/June issue, we will be featuring recipes from moms and dads in light of Mother's Day and Father's Day. Submit a recipe either as a parent or in honor of one to Marcelle Richards (mrichards@ourlivesmadison.com) by March 30, and we'll select a handful of our favorites.

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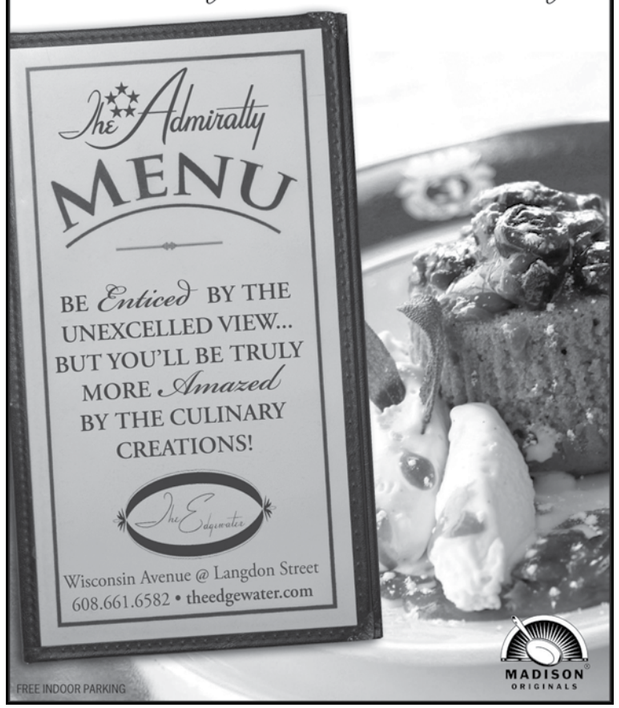

True Grit

Gabe Peeples on being true to oneself and taking care to honor one's process.

I used to make people uncomfortable merely by being present in a room. A lot of people were confused by my gender presentation, and I would get stared at almost constantly as people tried to puzzle out exactly what they thought I was. I did not mind making people uncomfortable; I would smile politely at whoever was staring at me and reassure confused patrons that yes, they were in the right bathroom. I felt that by being myself, I was forcing the people around me to expand their perceptions of gender to something more than a binary system, and I did not mind a little discomfort now and then if it was the price for being true to myself.

As I became more secure in my identity, it was my friends who became uncomfortable with other people's staring. I spoke to them about gender identity and sexual orientation and what those things meant to me and why I had not changed as a person. None of that really made a difference in their feelings, and my social life got reset back to where it was when I had first entered college. I started eating lunch and spending my free time in the LGBT Campus Center at UW-Madison because it was the only place where I felt that other people accepted me for who I was.

I became involved in the campus queer community and spent most of my free time attending queer events and working on making my surrounding community a little bit more accepting. A friend suggested that I attend meetings for the Ten Percent Society, the LGBTQ social organization on campus, and I was introduced to a lot of new and wonderful people who shared many of my interests. I had the good fortune to gain a leadership position in the organization, and shortly after that I was hired to work at the LGBT Campus Center.

I draw inspiration from the people who don't have the luxury that I do of passing and from the people who choose not to pass.

Being immersed in the campus queer community didn't make people any less puzzled by my identity. I still found myself constantly explaining my pronoun preferences and why I never did—and still do not—identify as a lesbian. The nice thing about the group of people that I surrounded myself with was that none of that really mattered. I had amazing friends and coworkers who stood by me through name and pronoun changes (though there were several of each) and never pushed me to move faster than I was ready to go.

I received some really good advice from a friend at the beginning of my coming out process that I now pass on to others at the start of their journey: "Take your time. Don't rush into anything too quickly. It's a lot easier to move slowly forward than it is to rush ahead and then find out too late that you can't go back." I did take my own time to examine myself at each point along my transitional path to decide if I was at a stopping point or if I needed to keep moving forward to feel comfortable in my own skin. I'm by no means at the end of that journey, but I've passed through some of the most difficult points and emerged more determined to continue forward.

Overall, I have been extremely lucky. I'm fortunate that I had the strength to laugh through those difficult times when I had to be my own advocate, to be surrounded by so many wonderful people who support me and see me for who I am, and I now have the ability to pass among strangers as the gender that I identify as. I haven't been given a strange look or an awkward reaction in several months. While I never really minded all the discomfort that my gender presentation prompted, it is really nice to be seen—really seen—for the person that I truly am.

I draw inspiration from the people who don't have the luxury that I do of passing and from the people who choose not to pass. I have a chance at relative safety because when I choose to, I can fit in with a crowd on the sidewalk and not have to worry about unfriendly remarks, shouts, or the occasional jostle. I can breathe a little easier when I walk around at night because I know that my gender presentation will not be the reason that someone chooses to pick a fight.

I work now at the LGBT Campus Center as the Social Justice Event Coordinator because while I have the safety of passing and the ability to pass, I know that not everyone has that safety, and passing isn't the end of the process for some people. I don't want to forget what it was like to live as androgynous because I think that it is important for everyone to understand that gender and sexual orientation are not binary systems. There are spectrums involved that cannot be counted on a two- or seven-point scale.

I am involved in LGBTQ activism because I do not believe that people should have to alter their identities to fit in with mainstream society. I am working toward the goal of expanding our society to accept people as they are regardless of background, race, religion, socioeconomic status, ability, gender identity, sexual orientation, or any other core identity that requires a battle just for someone to be able to make it through day-to-day life. I fight for the people who don't have the safety of passing (as whatever) and for the future where "normal" doesn't mean "safe." ■

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