

March/April
2013

our lives



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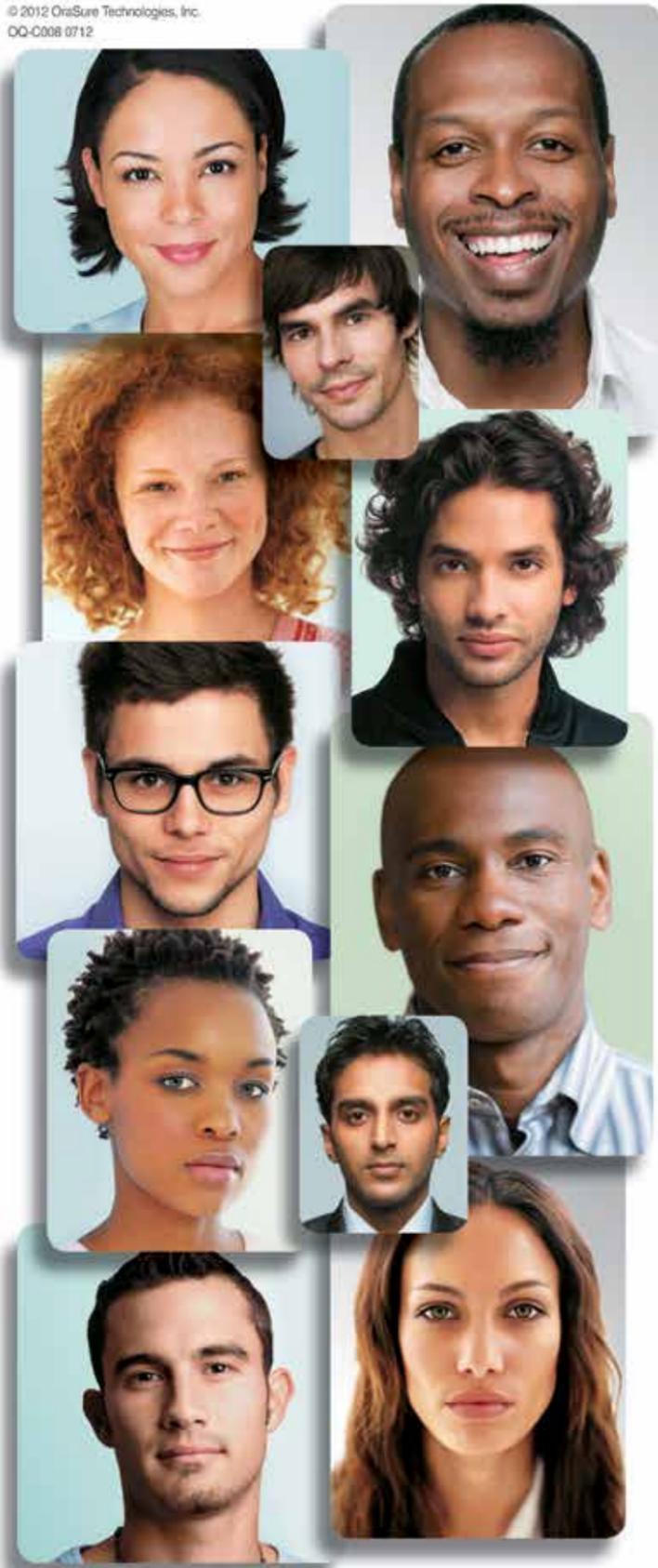
Tracing our preeminent historical community institutions

Madison's LGBT&XYZ Magazine

THE NEXT CHAPTER OF A MADISON LANDMARK

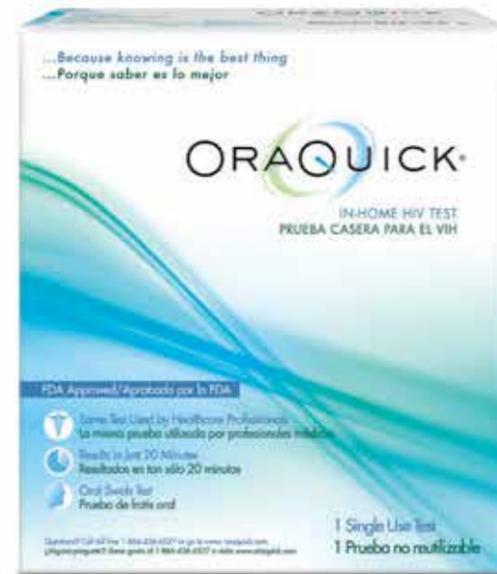


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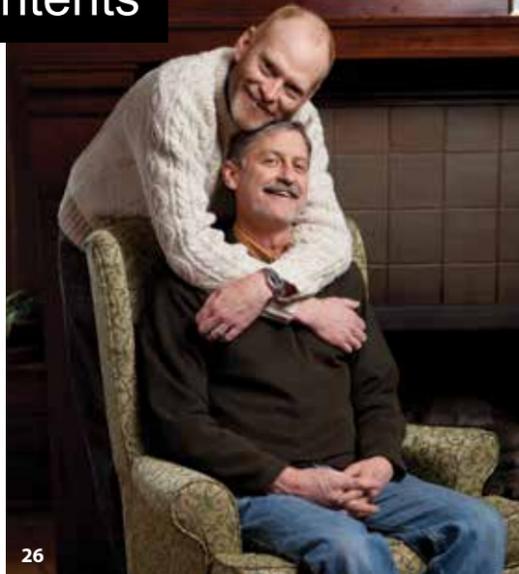
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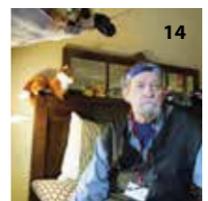
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Madison's LGBT&XYZ Magazine

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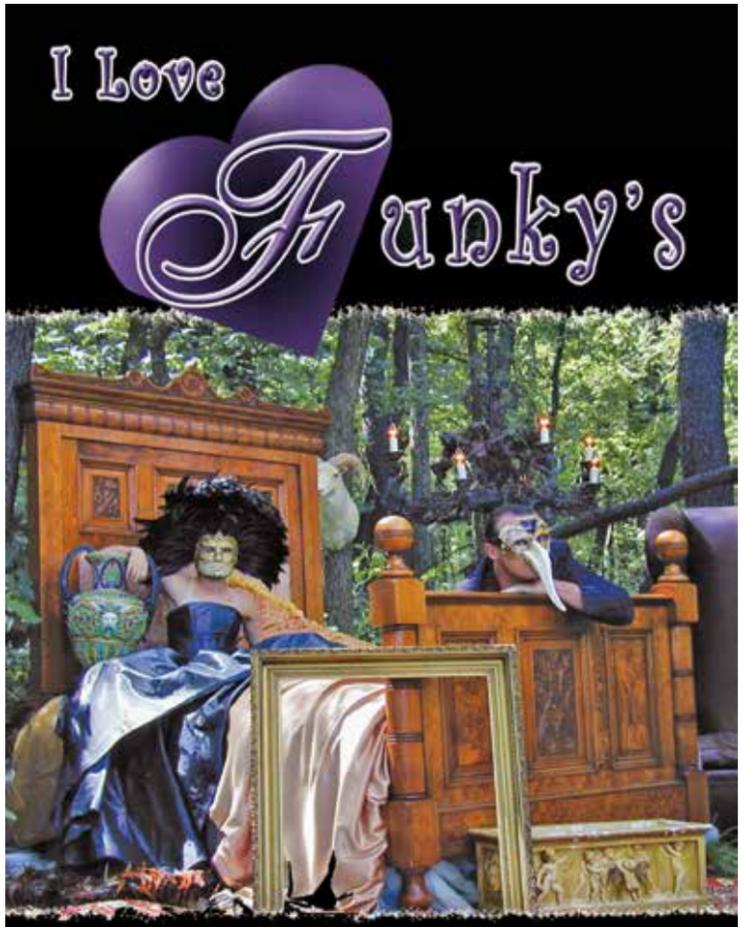
Introductions Galore



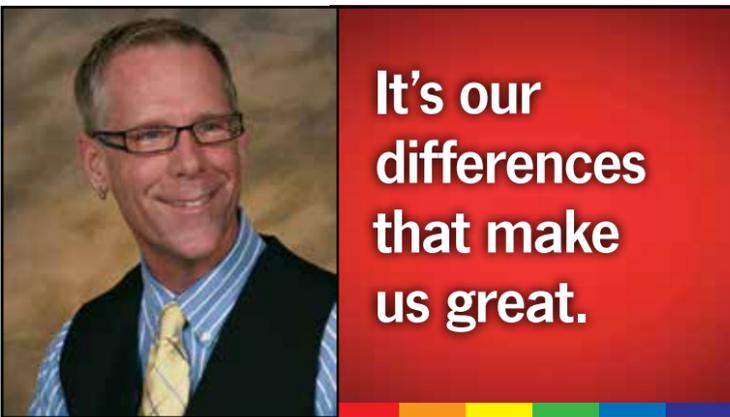
Virginia Harrison signed off her last letter from the editor under the heading, "A Labor of Love." Having just come on board with Our Lives in December, I can state without reservation that she was absolutely right. It's been a sort of whirlwind tour for me these past couple of months: learning the ropes of this particular publication, getting to know the dozens of dedicated volunteers who make the magazine tick, and meeting so many amazing members of our unique LGBTQA community.
I've lived in Madison since 2000, but I feel like only recently have I even begun to scratch the surface of what all our fair city has to offer. I can't tell you how excited I am to work with Patrick on this colorful little rag, and to continue getting to know all of you, and all about the amazing work you're doing. That's what I love most about this magazine - the focus on personal narratives, on the everyday role models in our community, on building people up. After years of covering some of the more negative side of the news, I can't tell you how refreshing this is.
A bit about me: I graduated from Edgewood College in 2004 and have since set about making my home in this beautiful, complicated little city. I spent the last several years as co-editor of Dane101.com, covering arts and culture but also a lot of news and current events as part of another mostly-volunteer team. I've also done a lot of freelance writing, I play drums and sing in local alt-country band Little Red Wolf, and I play for the Mad Wreckin' Dolls roller derby league. From time to time, I've also been known to produce (and sometimes perform in) drag, variety, and burlesque shows around town, including the Fire Ball, Geekesque Burlesque, and others.
I'm so proud of the work everyone has done to make Our Lives what it is, and am frankly humbled to be part of that effort now. I look forward to meeting more and more of you in person, and to doing whatever I can to help tell your stories, and to contribute to the building of a stronger, more diverse, more inclusive community. We'll get there - together.

DO YOU KNOW?
Conley-Kuhagen and Mielke lead sensitivity trainings for the city
The City of Madison requires that all public service drivers (including taxi drivers, bus drivers, and transit drivers) who provide transportation for the general citizens of Madison be trained in topics generally called "sensitivity." This program, formally titled "Passenger Assistance and Disability Awareness," is administered for the city by Goodwill Industries of South Central Wisconsin and Michael Conley-Kuhagen.
Conley-Kuhagen and Chuck Mielke have been teaching the course since the summer of 2010. Mielke is the safety and training supervisor for Union Cab Cooperative of Madison, and both are out gay men.
"I thought our community could use the information that 'family' is involved in advancing the safety and courtesy of our public service drivers, beyond the drivers who may, themselves, be gay," Mielke notes.

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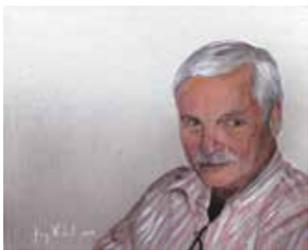


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contributors

Dick Wagner moved to Madison in 1965 to study American history at the University of Wisconsin. Deciding to stay in Madison, he worked for the state and got involved in local politics. In the 1980s, Governor Tony Earl appointed him in 1983 to co-chair the Governor's Council on Lesbian and Gay Issues. In retirement, he gardens, serves on boards, and researches and writes about Wisconsin gay history.



A recovered English major, **Jill Nebeker** has worked in the online world since 2000, including an eight-year stint with Merriam-Webster. She has been a web writer, designer, and project manager. She is now an interface designer, which she describes as, "Deciding what happens next when you click a button on a web page." For fun, Jill teaches and practices yoga, plays ice hockey, and is part of the Greasy Gears, Madison's bike-dancing troupe.



Jeanne Benink is the owner/chef of Simply Served Personal Chef Service (simplyservedpersonalchef.com), a role she considers a dream job. SSPC was born from a part-time endeavor (jobs mostly for family and friends) to supplement her "day job." Eventually, with the love and support of her partner, Helene, she left the corporate grind and went all in with SSPC. "It's the hardest work I've ever done, the hours are long, but I love it," says Benink. Maintaining a healthy work-life balance is a high priority for her. She and Helene both like to run, ski, kayak and swim to relax and reconnect.

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Being involved and supporting the community we live and work in comes naturally to our team [at Liz Lauer]. Our focus in real estate sales has been in the more urban areas of Madison, where communities and neighborhood associations are strong and the pressure on those areas for development and urban revitalization are constant.



In understanding the people and community goals, and sharing similar values, it has been rewarding to be active members in the community and help shape the future. Our team stays involved in our neighborhood associations and sponsors local events, arts, programs.

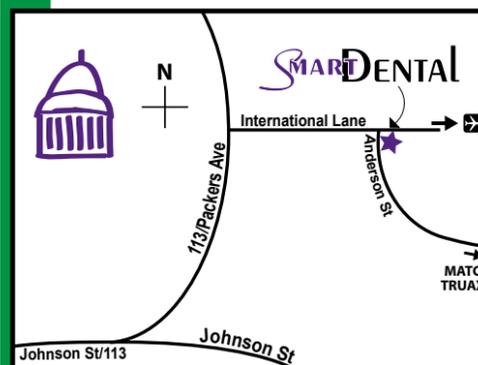
We volunteer with Habitat for Humanity, promote the Habitat ReStore, and just two years ago started an annual fundraiser for Goodman Community Center Thanksgiving baskets that has raised over \$14,000.

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is the only foundation in South Central Wisconsin 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 a Board of Directors, along with other volunteers. It pools contributions of hundreds of donors each year to provide grant money to LGBT causes. We raise money to give back!



Gay Straight Alliance for Safe Schools (GSAFE) received a grant for their "GSAs for Social Justice" project.

The goal of this project is to increase the capacity of Gay-Straight-Alliances to incorporate racial and economic justice and disability rights into their work. The curriculum for this project will be woven throughout all of their programming for the year and going forward.

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OUR ORGANIZERS



Coming Out with the Great Outdoors

Diane Schwartz talks about her work with the Madison LGBT Outdoor Group & Madison Area Women's Outdoor Network.

Who are you and where are you from? I grew up in Middleton, Wisconsin, and except for short stints in Wausau, Sauk City, and Mt. Horeb, I have lived in Madison most of my adult life. My parents grew up in rural Sauk County. I learned to love the outdoors while exploring the hills and valley around Sauk City. I learned to cross-country ski when I

In one month, the women's group grew to over 100 members. The LGBT group now has more than 288 members.

lived in Wausau in the 1980s and fell in love with the ski/bike lifestyle. In those days, I biked in the summer and skied in the winter and capped off the season with Kortelopet, a 23K race that runs with the Birkebeiner. When I moved back to Madison for grad school in 1987, I still played outside, but not as much. I now live on Madison's east side and run outdoor programs for kids through Get Kids Outside, my own company (getkidsoutsidenow.com). I also am the site coordinator at Schumacher Farm Park in Waunakee and a member of the Business Forum, a women's networking group in Madison.

How did you come to be involved in the Madison LGBT Outdoor Group, as well as the Madison Area Women's Outdoor Network? Prior to coming out about four years ago, I did most of my outdoor activities alone because I didn't know where I fit in. All that changed after I came out. I became more confident and sought out others to play with. Plus, I was nearing the big 5-0 and figured it was time for a new start. I started surfing the web for outdoor groups and discovered meetup.com. I instantly became a fan. In April 2010, I joined the Madison Area Outdoor Meetup (MAOM) and became an organizer. The first trip I planned was a day trip to ski Nine-Mile in Wausau. It had been years since I had been there and I missed it. Two people signed up and I never looked back. Was it a risk? Sure. I drove up with a complete stranger, but I knew in my heart that this was a good risk. That person has since become a friend. In December 2010, I discovered the LGBT Outdoor Meetup group and became an organizer. Jon Higgins had just started the group, and I was so grateful. While I love MAOM, it is great to be around other LGBT folks. Jon shared the sentiment. Jon is a longtime Sierra Club leader and started the group to provide a comfortable environment for LGBT folks to enjoy nature and meet others. In November 2012, I saw the need



for a women's group and started the Madison Area Women's Outdoor Network.

How do these groups support/serve the LGBTQ community? Getting outside is critical to maintaining healthy and happy lives, but we also need community to break the isolation so many of us feel. These groups offer the joy of outdoor play and the joy of meeting new people all in one place. The groups are safe and friendly and focused on the outdoors. The response has been very positive. In one month, the women's group grew to over 100 members. The LGBT group now has more than 288 members. The groups also give members opportunities for leadership. I am always looking for people to lead trips. At any given time, there may be three to five different events on the calendar.

How have these groups made a difference in your life and/or the lives of people you know? It is not an exaggeration to say that these groups transformed my life. I am ten times happier because I have found people to play with in the outdoors, and I think many people in

the groups share that feeling. Last spring, the LGBT group took a backpack trip to the Porcupine Mountains, a place I hadn't been to in over 20 years. There is something about Lake Superior that fills my soul and feeds me spiritually. In February, the women's group returned to the Porkies for a ski trip. Many women have thanked me for starting the women's group, just like I thanked Jon for starting the LGBT group. People are grateful that there is a community of people ready and willing to do outdoor activities. Plus, I love seeing women getting involved. I like nurturing leaders and encouraging women to try new things like snowshoeing, skiing, and backpacking. Jon said that the most rewarding aspect about leading trips is introducing people to places they've never been, like Baxter's Hollow or Parfrey's Glen.

How can readers learn more about these groups? Go to meetup.com and get a free account. Then search for the LGBT or women's group and join. Once you join a group, you can see all the outings, and you can e-mail me or Jon. There is no fee to join.



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Head Over Skates

Victoria Echeverria, aka Elle Machete of the Mad Rollin' Dolls, looks at a life lived on roller skates.

There is nothing rational about choosing to play roller derby.

You'll need to try for a few years before getting drafted into the league. You'll be devastated when you find out you didn't make it on the roster for that really important game. Then you'll work your ass off (five to six days a week) for a few more years to make it onto the all-star team, only to lose that spot a few months later to a more talented skater.

You'll spend too much time volunteering to help run the league business, and too much money on skates, wheels, gear, travel, chiropractor, massage, and partying. You'll likely have tough negotiations with your significant other about your commitments at home vs. derby. Inevitably, you will also have recovered multiple times over the years from broken bones and torn ligaments, and will probably need a knee replacement before the age of 50. Seven years ago, I didn't know all this when I found myself falling completely head over skates in love with the sport. And even now that I know it, of course I'm going to keep playing.

This is not going to be an article about the rules and the history of roller derby. You can Google that. This is about the Mad Rollin' Dolls and how it has been the most empowering experience of my life. I don't speak for every derby girl. Every league in the world is different, and



every skater's experience is her own. This is just my derby story.

Lacing Up

In 2005, my friend Jesse invited me to see Arizona's Tent City Terrors play against Madison's Dairyland Dolls, the all-star team from the Mad Rollin' Dolls roller derby league. It was the third or fourth inter-league bout ever played in the modern flat-track derby revival. I watched with admiration as the Arizona jammer (the player who scores points for her team) lapped around the track after powering her way through a brutal DD pack, flipping the audience the bird and yelling obscenities at us. She represented everything I hoped I could be as a woman: strong, beautiful, smart, and subversive. The decision for me was simple: to get involved with the league as soon as possible.

The short story: I signed up to volunteer as a scorekeeper, tried out, broke my tailbone, didn't make it, was a referee for a year, tried out again, tore my left MCL, was drafted by the Unholy Rollers anyway (thanks, team!), had a few good years, made it onto the all-star team (and then off, and then on again, and then off again), tore my left PCL, recovered, tore my right PCL...and, knock on wood, I'm going to skate this whole coming season without further injury, damn it.

During the last seven years, I was also the secretary for "The Bored" (not a typo), then the manager of the Rules & Play committee, then a team representative on the revamped Executive Board for two years, then the treasurer for two years, then a co-captain of the Dairyland Dolls for two years, and now, happily, no longer in charge of anything. I served on nearly every committee in the league and have just recovered from a serious case of helium-hand when it came to volunteering for anything and everything that needed doing.

The first and most dramatic transformation that I experienced as a derby skater was in my relationship to my body. Like many women who come into roller derby, I had no prior team sport experience and was not athletic. I did not wear fitted clothes or short shorts, and had a

This is not going to be an article about the rules and the history of roller derby. You can Google that. This is about the Mad Rollin' Dolls and how it has been the most empowering experience of my life.

generally shameful attitude toward my body. Within the first few weeks of what's called "baby-doll" training, I started to have quad muscles. Within a few months I had to go up a size in jeans to accommodate my growing booty.

At 200 lbs, I was never the fastest skater out there. I happily discovered when we started contact drills, though, that I could do serious damage as a blocker. We have skaters in our league who are barely 5 feet tall, and some amazons; some who weigh 100 lbs, and some over 200 lbs. Regardless of body type, women realize their potential to play a full-contact sport that requires endurance, agility, strength, and balance.

Additionally, you are given permission to wear fishnet stockings, booty shorts, cleavage-revealing tops, crazy makeup, fringe, glitter, or none of the above. You are encouraged to create a character—an ulterior personality—on the track who is distinct from Suzy Dayjob. You can decorate yourself any way you want, and you have 100 percent control over that representation. Some say the costu-forms and stage names harm the legitimacy of the sport. This expression of gender, sexuality, and female strength, which is determined by each skater for herself, is the icing on the confidence cake and is what makes us rockstars and not just athletes. I have every right to be rockstar, thank you very much. If I didn't like the performance aspect of roller derby, I'd be playing a different sport.

For the Love of DIY

Not only do I continue to grow as a skater, but I am also constantly learning to be a better person. If you've ever read an article about roller derby from the mainstream media, the basic thread is: mom (or librarian, or teacher) by day, roller girl by night. First of all, that's inaccurate. I am a research scientist by day and derby girl every available second of the day and night. And those articles don't go any further than that to explain why this is significant.

We have skaters (and referees, and support staff, and volunteers) from every socio-economic background, every educational level, every political stripe, every sexual and gender orientation, every religion, and every shade of unconventional on the cray-cray spectrum. All of these people, without being paid, run every aspect of the business, from ticket sales to training to marketing to bout production. Also, no one coming into the league has any experience running a roller derby league. Believe it or not, there is conflict.

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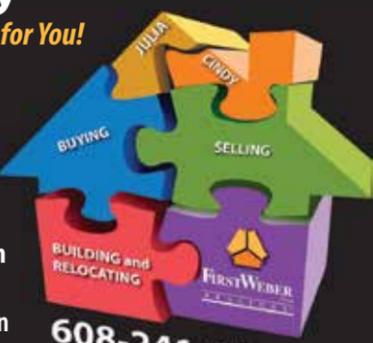
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I know from personal experience that if you're being an asshole, someone will let you know real quick. I've made my share of mistakes, said awful things to people and behind their backs, participated in counter-productive and passive-aggressive behaviors, and taken things personally when there was no reason to. It's to be expected, acknowledged, addressed, forgiven, and learned from. We have worked hard over the years to handle problems before they come to a head. We've sought out training for a handful of mediators who help solve conflicts in the league. We coach our rookies on how to be good league-mates. There are not many spaces in our lives where we are treated with such brutal honesty and forgiveness, which makes derby a great place to try something new, make mistakes, and learn from them.

The league is also a political experiment. Anyone with an idea can write a proposal, present it for a vote, and make change happen. Anyone. In my time, I helped reorganize league management by helping create the Executive Board. I also helped create Team Unicorn (our first non-chartered interleague team), a summer season at the Hartmeyer Arena, a league budget, and a Dairyland Dolls B-Team, and worked on countless other projects. I worked alongside teachers, accountants, baristas, and bartenders on committees and subcommittees and ad-hoc committees (remember, unpaid) to make things happen. I can't think of any other organization where all of its members are equally empowered and equally responsible for the success of their organization. I am so proud of the chutzpah of those women and men who first created this league, and how we've been able to grow and change in order to carry their mission forward.

GET INVOLVED: LGBTQ SPORTS

MADISON GAY HOCKEY ASSOCIATION MADISONGAYHOCKEY.ORG/JOINING
RECRUITING, Plays SUNDAY nights **EVENTS:** Public open skate, "BLADES AGAINST AIDS," on MARCH 16 at Hartmeyer Ice Arena to support AIDS Network. Our players are also challenging the Chicago Gay Hockey Association on April 20 at the All State Arena in Chicago, with AHL game to follow.

BADGERLAND LGBT SOFTBALL LEAGUE BADGERLANDSOFTBALL.COM
RECRUITING, Plays MONDAY nights Leagues run May through August: Open Recreational (Mondays), Womens Competitive (Tuesdays), and Open Competitive (Sundays). Register as an individual at FIVE Nightclub, Shamrock Bar, or badgerlandsoftball.com. All skill levels welcome!

MADISON GAY VOLLEYBALL MADISONGAYVOLLEYBALL.COM
RECRUITING, Plays FRIDAY nights We also host the Pride Volleyball Tournament during Pride Weekend. From its revival three years ago, it's exploded into a two-day tournament with 15 teams.

MADISON MINOTAURS GAY RUGBY MADISONMINOTAURS.COM
MARCH 30: St. Louis Spring Fever away
APRIL 13: Chicago home game, Cottage Grove Sports Complex
APRIL 27: St. Louis home game, Cottage Grove Sports Complex

HONEYMOONERS LGBT BOWLING LEAGUE
RECRUITING, Plays MONDAY nights We pride ourselves on having a fun no matter your walk of life or bowling skills. We bowl at Village Lanes (8 p.m. to 10 p.m.), starting in October, for approximately 25 weeks. Stop by if you're interested.

MADISON BLAZE WOMEN'S FOOTBALL MADISONBLAZEFOOTBALL.COM
HOME GAMES: May 4 (Iowa Crush), June 8 (Milwaukee Warriors), June 22 (Minnesota Vixens), and June 29 (Rockford Riveters). WE ARE LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS TO HELP WITH OUR FOUR HOME GAME DAY OPERATIONS.
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SEMI-FINALS: "DERBY DE LOS MUERTOS", APRIL 27, 6PM, VETERANS MEMORIAL COLISEUM

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OUR ATHLETES

For the Love

Finally, sappy as it sounds, I have grown in my heart. I am overwhelmed thinking of all the ways members of our league have shown love to each other and to our community. We signed up to make meals for a league-mate whose child was sick in the hospital. We arranged rides for a wheelchair-bound league-mate so that she could continue to attend practices while injured. My league-mates sent me flowers when my father passed away. We support each other through break-ups, divorces, last-place finishes at regionals, chemotherapy, surgeries, family deaths, and through the devastating loss of one of our own league-mates. I was donating blood once and told the phlebotomist about how a league-mate's brother's house had burned down and the kids had lost all their

I don't take it for granted that our continued existence as a league is a direct result of the support that we get from our community. It only makes sense that we give back.

toys in the fire. The league showed up with bags and bags of toys for those kids. "So, it's like church," she commented. I answered, "Yes, I do go to church on Sundays; I just call it roller derby practice."

We do the Polar Plunge, the ACT Ride, the GSAFE Run/Walk, and donate a portion of our proceeds from ticket sales to a variety of charities. I don't take it for granted that our continued existence as a league is a direct result of the support that we get from our community. It only makes sense that we give back.

And we celebrate. We celebrate weddings, babies, and the time I got engaged to my partner, Natalie, whom I met through roller derby (she has been the league videographer for six years and filmed the first-ever Roller Derby World Cup in Toronto). We celebrate the first time you jumped the apex, the time we sold 2,500 tickets for our season opener, the time Team Unicorn played the first-ever international roller derby bout, the time we broke even, the time we made a profit, the time Magic Missile got the lead against Joy Collision as a rookie jammer, the time we upset Cincinnati 286-91 at regionals last year, the time Mouse scored her 1,500th career point, the time Wildberry Punch made it on Team USA, the time you were able to knock over Sugalumps (it is NOT easy). We celebrate at every chance we get because we earned it.

I've also discovered interests that I did not know I had. I started leading practices in my second year of skating, and then moved into training baby-dolls. I also served in a coaching role when I was co-captain of the all-star team the last two years. More recently, I have been training skaters in the Mad Wreckin' Dolls, the recreation league. I love to see lightbulbs go off. I like breaking down complicated skills into their basic parts. I like troubleshooting technique. I love to see people smile when they can finally execute some move they've been working on for months.

I know now what roller derby has given me, and I love sharing that with other people. In short, I love witnessing the transformation and the confidence that comes with learning derby—in others, and in myself. ■



Tim Lom is our athletes editorial facilitator and a member of the Madison Minotaurs rugby club, Wisconsin's only International Gay Rugby Association and Board team. He's excited to help various members of the sports community have their voices heard and their stories told.

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Photographed by Amber Sowards

DO YOU KNOW?



Hazen named Senior Minister



Congratulations to **Eldonna Hazen**, who was recently named the new senior minister of First Congregational United Church of Christ in Madison. The UCC was the first mainline Protestant denomination to ordain an openly gay minister in 1972, and went on to pass a resolution in 1985 that urges all congregations to be "open and affirming" to the LGBTQ community.

According to her bio on the church website, "Eldonna was raised in the American Lutheran Church, but after coming out and getting disconnected from the church, she sought a different church where she and her partner, Cathy Noth, could be open and rekindle her relationship with the church. When she decided to pursue the ministry, she and Cathy looked for a denomination where their sexuality would not prohibit either of them from being both open and supported. The United Church of Christ not only has been welcoming, but also matches their beliefs in other areas, such as social justice. Eldonna answered her call to ministry in 2002 and attended United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities, completing her Master of Divinity degree in May 2005."

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OUR PROSE

Lamentation

My dad wanted a boy, a boy like boys are supposed to be. A little-leaguer, a cub scout, a chip-off-the-old-block. One of the guys. Isn't it like dads to want little boys to be one of the guys? Why can't boys just be little? Why can't boys be more like little girls?

My dad took me to the YMCA – one of those father&son bonding things – go swimming. He took me against my wishes. He caught me unawares; he told me that men didn't wear anything swimming at the Y. So I didn't need a suit. I could just do what other boys and dads did. Let everyone see me.

I was twelve years old, and my body was starting to change. I didn't want to be on display. I wanted me for myself. Dad wanted to show me off. Sons are important, and you want them to be little versions of you. Upright little male citizens.

He stole me away to the Y, and I wore my swim suit as though it were a little tutu, perhaps a girdle with snaps to hold up my stockings. I had no rights, but I refused to be a little-leaguer, a cub scout, a model little man. Dad looked at me, clad in my swim suit – he nude and trembling in the shower – and he wept.

Consumption

I succumb to the baby-oiled, glossy perfect flesh. The abs, pecs, shiny dicks, the angles and shadows creating those illusions.

These man-boys, some still acned and purple with non-airbrushed bodies, fascinate me. But I look again. These are photos of posing and porno boys.

They've never seen the planting of garlic, nor the digging of a grave to put to rest a beloved raccoon, nor the dirt-fresh smells of putting down of a root cellar, nor anything that gathers folks together.

So, my brothers, I have no gloss to share, no hot glamour to peddle. Rather I'll give you my dirty fingernails touching men in black-and-white portraits which consume me with life and reality and earth and real dicks and warts and paunches and hard-earned scars and stains and 2X4 poems.

Destiny

he enters my space almost every day. his glasses steamed up and his fingerless gloves pulled off, and right away a cigarette.

he sheds his scarves, hat and coat to show off his green corduroy pants hanging almost to his knees. his waist can't hold them up. but it carries one of those tribal leather and silver key holders. he fishes for cigarettes and drinks a latte.

he flicks his ashes vaguely against an ashtray and the smoke trails out of his mouth. and nostrils. he coughs. one of his admirers—not the lovely bartender—approaches him, her green and blue hair glued down. her pierced tongue and lips are wet from coffee and discolored from smoke. she swirls her finger in her coffee.

he fidgets, his tassled hair wet with sweat, he crosses, then uncrosses his legs, his feet jiggling.

he puts out what must be his fifth cigarette and throws his money on the bar. his coffee cup falls.

"man, check out my roommate when she comes in," he says in passing, to no one in particular. he yanks up his pants.

"you coming in later?" says the bartender. "not sure," says green corduroys, his coat on and his scarves masking his pasty face.

he's gone, then, into the winds of madison's winter – off to do what living, breathing guys do. doesn't bother to close the door.

"bye, brian," his friends say. a name now, a face, a boy's body wrapped up in wintry stuff, off to meet his destiny.

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When she digs into her clay she also digs deep into her emotions and unearths the treasures of her own expression: stories of political resistance and displacement, Catholicism and Vodou rituals, persistence and celebration.

Art and Independence

Babette Wainwright infuses her sculpture work with personal history and passion.



Imagine a woman alone in her studio. She turns on Haitian Vodou music and sits down before a daunting tub of earth as familiar to her as the land from which she comes and the dust to which she will return. She plunges strong fingers into the hard clay and kneads it until it turns into malleable dough.

The woman pays careful attention to the slippery mud she is molding between her fingers, and eventually it shows her what it wants to become. She listens to the magical sounds and powerful rhythms of her past. It is music her community danced to, finding their personal power and communal strength even as they endured brutality and oppression. It is sacred music passed down by her ancestors; an enduring gift that survived Christianity and patriarchy and slavery and dictators and hurricanes.

The artist is Babette Wainwright, and listening, watching, and channeling are part of her creative process. Slowly, from the clay, a figure emerges. Maybe it is a mother, a goddess, or a communion of spirits, but whatever the form, her work reclaims a pre-patriarchal veneration of femininity.

As a child growing up in Haiti, Babette was fiercely independent, articulate, and aware of the world around her. These traits were passed on by her activist grandfather and miraculously spared in her mother. Babette could not help but reject the Judeo-Christian god imposed upon her as a Catholic schoolgirl. Instead, she expressed her spirit in a way that validated who she was, and she did so by making art.

She was permitted unfettered access to her family's "salon," which in Haitian households was typically restricted to only the most special of guests. Self-sequestered in the parlor, Babette spent hours writing



and creating images of hope for a good life. She learned that art-making could help her cope with the maddening frustration of growing up under the shadow of a brutal dictatorship.

As a teen, Babette began to vocally oppose the oppressive regime of "Papa Doc" Duvalier, who murdered at least 30,000 Haitians during his despotic rule as "president for life." Under Duvalier's reign, dissent was forbidden and whole families could be destroyed by the expression of righteous pubescent rage.

Fearing the worst for her untamable 15-year-old daughter, but not wishing to stomp out her passion, Babette's mother found a way to send her to the U.S. to complete her education. But the Brooklyn, New York, high school near her father's apartment, where Babette landed in 1968, proved to be too foreign and hostile an environment; her father permitted her to drop out and move in with maternal aunts in upstate New York.

At that point in her life, she felt she was a burden to her aunts, who struggled to make ends meet in their own immigrant families. At 16, Babette met a young woman from Scotland who taught her how to get a job as a live-in domestic servant, which she did, but the personal cost was high. She felt very alone.

The following year, Babette and a couple of new Haitian immigrant friends walked into the high school near where they lived, registered themselves for classes, and started school again. She was put into 12th grade, finished the year, and graduated. From there, Babette went to beauty school, got a job as a hairstylist in Manhattan, and was able to meet many African American rising stars. She also met a wonderful young gay man who was trying to make it as a dancer. She ended up

marrying him and having a child with him. It was 1972.

Babette went home to have her daughter. While in Haiti she worked in a hair salon, knowing that her hairstyling career would be a bridge to college. Eventually she came back to the U.S., got a bachelor's degree and then a master's in social work, and in 1984, she landed in Madison where she met her partner of 20 years, Kathy.

Throughout her life, Babette never lost faith in her intuitive process and never ceased making art, but she also craved a technical education, a resource that self-taught artists often miss. Babette's parents had discouraged art school, preferring that Babette pursue a degree with a greater potential for financial independence.

When, as an accomplished adult, she was finally ready to fill this gap, she enrolled at UW-Madison and completed her MFA in 2000. It was there that her talents and passion for sculpture ripened.

Art has been a journey of survival and discovery for Babette Wainwright; when she digs into her clay she also digs deep into her emotions and unearths the treasures of her own expression: stories of political resistance and displacement, Catholicism and Vodou rituals, persistence and celebration.

For images of the artist's work, visit portalwisconsin.org and search for Babette Wainwright. She is also a member of Woman Made Gallery in Chicago and is connected to Schaller + Jaquish Art Projects in New York. ■



Karin Wolf is the arts program administrator for the City of Madison Department of Planning and Community and Economic Development and the Madison Arts Commission. Her freelance arts writing has appeared in *Sculpture Magazine*, *Public Art Review*, and the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*.

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Funny Woman

Dina Martinez blazes a trail through comedy, radio, and gender



I began transitioning shortly after moving to Los Angeles, and at some point I started feeling less like a “showgirl” and more like what I call a “Day Lady.”

during that time. I was nominated for the WeHo Awards Drag Diva three years in a row and spent a wonderful year as Miss Los Angeles USofA.

I began transitioning shortly after moving to Los Angeles, and at some point I started feeling less like a “showgirl” and more like what I call a “Day Lady.” In other words, my desire to “pretty up” by encasing my body in duct tape and donning bone-fracturing shoes waned and gave way to the desire to put on a muumuu and throw beer cans at the neighborhood kids.

My journey to becoming a comedienne was a little different. I’ve done almost every job imaginable, and at one point I was even a flight attendant. I recall a flight from New York to Los Angeles with a fun crew. We had a great time, and when we landed we had a long trip to our hotel. I had everyone laughing, and one of the ladies said, “You should be a comedian.”

“I’m only situationally funny,” I retorted. Still, those words stuck with me and really started my journey. It was a fairly smooth transition, since I had been onstage since I was small and have hosted drag and cabaret shows for years, but the first time was nonetheless nerve-racking. My friends in The Queens of Comedy asked me to host one of their shows, and I accepted. From that moment on, I was hooked.

I love making people laugh, and this was exactly what I wanted to do. Luckily, Los Angeles was the perfect place to learn and start. I was able to perform with some of the most amazing comedians—such as Sarah Silverman, Tony Tripoli, Fortune Feimster, Wendy Ho, the incredible Shawn Pelofsky—and on the stages of the world-famous Comedy Store and improv clubs.

Landing in Fly-Over Country

I decided to leave Los Angeles so that I could work a region and try to expand my audience. My intention was to go with my best friend to Little Rock, Arkansas, but first we came to Madison to work before we moved. When I got to Madison, people would say really strange things to me on the street like “Hi.” I had a guy come up to me and say, “I saw you at the zoo!” How bizarre this seemed to me.

I found this city to have both a big and little feel at the same time. At first I was apprehensive, but ultimately I decided I really liked it. So I decided that my bestie would have to go it alone in Little Rock.

I’ve been an avid Internet broadcaster for years: my bestie Gregg and I had a show together that ran for three years called “The Dina

& Gregg Show.” It was kind of hard to keep up, as he was living here and I was in LA—and now I’m here and he’s in Little Rock. So, as the proud co-owner of DiGN2ItRadio.com, I decided to keep our station going by doing my own show, “The D Word with Dina Martinez” (now with co-host Trina Avalon Piranha).

Finding Faith and Funny Bones

I’m also an Intuitive healer and spiritual teacher. Once I was finally able to figure out what I believed and what path was right for me, I was able to grow and learn amazing self-truths. I’ve been a healer since I was in the fundamentalist church, but have been able to incorporate my journey’s experiences into my practice, called Light of Love Consciousness

I speak on spirituality and trans issues frequently and would like to tackle the issue of LGBT faith. As a former fundamentalist, I think it would be great to create a spiritual community that is interfaith and radically inclusive with a more contemporary feel. I really want to create a safe space where people can come and get healing for their lives and interact with each other in a real way.

I had a group of ladies in stitches the other day, and I thought to myself, I am so blessed to be able to be a healer and a comic, because I get to heal people through energy work and through laughter. There couldn’t be a better job, ever! ■



Our Lives entertainment facilitator Trina Avalon-Pirahna (Christopher Wilford) is a local drag entertainer who has performed in various nightclubs and charity events around Wisconsin. She is the current Miss FIVE Nightclub Plus and introduces readers to other entertainers of interest to our local community.



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Cultural, Social, Service, and Nightlife listings



OPEN at the Ballet
"Dracula: A Rock Opera"
March 8, Overture Center

Join OPEN for the Madison Ballet's performance of Dracula. Included is a networking reception in the Promenade Terrace at 6:00pm. The performance follows the reception in the Capitol Theater. openmadison.org



New Harvest Dinner and Comedy fundraiser
March 2, Concourse Hotel

This annual dinner is not only to raise funds to support their grants program, but also to build community and acknowledge grantees. This year's event features comedian Chris Doucette. newharvestfoundation.org



Out at the Opera:
Mozart's "Don Giovanni"
April 26, Overture Center

Join Madison Opera's LGBTQ affinity group for MO's production of Don Giovanni! Enjoy pre-show cocktails and hors d'oeuvres in Promenade Lounge. Afterwards, join the artists for an after-party on Promenade Terrace. madisonopera.org

ORGANIZATIONS

A representative sampling

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

Alianza Latina
facebook.com/alianzalatnamadison

Bowling Out Loud
beckwith.matt@yahoo.com

Dairyland Cowboys & Cowgirls
dcandc.org

Fair Wisconsin
 203 S. Paterson Street, Madison (608) 441-0143
fairwisconsin.com

Frontrunners/Frontwalkers
personalpages.tds.net/~tmcdurg

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

Gay Softball League
ssblmadison.com

Gay Volleyball League
madisongayvolleyball.com

Hermanos Latinos
sneal@aidsnetwork.org

Lez In Color Yahoo Group
LezInColor@yahoo.com

Lez Talk Yahoo Group
leztalkmadison@yahoo.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
lgbt Outreach.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

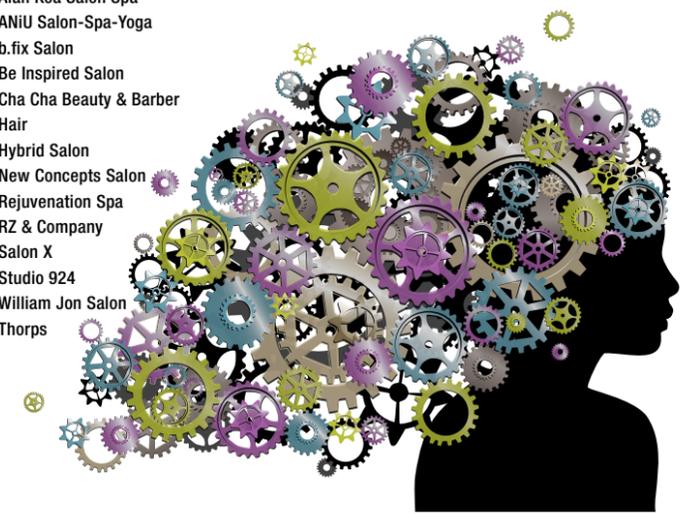
UW - Madison LGBT Campus Center
 800 Langdon St., Madison (608) 265-3344
wisc.edu/lgbt

Wisconsin Rainbow Families
wirainbowfamilies.com

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17 PLAN YOUR YEAR

- May 11:** GSAFE Celebration of Leadership
- May 21:** OPEN Breakfast Networking Event
- Aug 14-18:** GSAFE Leadership Training
- May 16:** OutReach Garden Party
- June 7-9:** PrideFest Milwaukee
- June 7:** AIDS Network Red Ribbon Affair
- June 11:** OPEN Betty Lou Cruise
- August 1 - 4:** Wisconsin AIDS Ride
- August (date TBD):** OPEN Pride brunch
- Sept 19:** OPEN Networking Event
- September 20:** OutReach Banquet
- October (date TBD):** OPEN Career Fair
- November 13:** OPEN Networking Event

Canoeopia, March 8 - 10, Alliant Energy Center Rutabaga Paddle Sports presents the largest paddlesports consumer event in the world, featuring over 250,000 square feet of kayaks, canoes, outdoor equipment and clothing. The event also includes speaks and clinics. canoeopia.com

MGHA's 5th Annual Blades Against AIDS, March 16, Hartmeyer Ice Arena Mingle with the local community on and off the ice. Food, drinks, and skate rental included with admission. Raffle prizes, games, entertainment and more! This open skate fundraiser helps raise awareness regarding HIV and its effects on the LGBTQ community. All proceeds benefit AIDS Network. madisongayhockey.org

Fresco Opera's "The Real Divas of Dane County," March 22-24, Overture Center "This is the true story of opera singers, picked to live in a house, to have their lives taped, to find out what happens when they exit the stage and get real." This power packed performance, featuring 15 opera singers who will fight, dance, drink, confess, and love - all within this two hour show. frescooperatheatre.com

Camp "Nerd" Bingo, March 24, Sheraton Hotel This AIDS Network Fundraiser features celebrity ball caller NBC15's Tim Elliot. Doors open at 1 p.m. and the first ball is called at 2:30 p.m. Price of admission includes bingo, prizes, entertainment, and fun with hostess Cass Marie Domino. madcampbingo.org

"Cloud 9" April 19-May 4, University Theater A race and gender-bending exploration of the struggle for sexual, political, and personal identity, Caryl Churchill's Obie-award-winning Cloud 9 presents a subversive satire about British politics, class, and sexual mores. Be titillated, be horrified, but in any case, be mindful of pleasure and power while you rest on Cloud 9. utmadison.com

Hair Affair: The Art of Hair, April 25, Madison Museum of Contemporary Art, 227 State St Exotic and artful hair sculptures designed by premier Madison-area salons will take center-stage as models descend the museum's stunning glass staircase and mingle with guests in the MMoCA lobby. Hair designs will reflect the theme for 2013: Time Travel. mmoqa.org

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Photo by Greg Anderson

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February 9 | Fair Wisconsin Education Fund Milwaukee Leadership Awards



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Department of Theatre and Drama
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN - MADISON



The LGBT Campus Center at University of Wisconsin-Madison is featuring UW alums making a difference in the LGBTQ community. Each of these proud Badgers have reinvested their UW educations and experiences towards making the world a better place for LGBTQ people to live, work, and learn. To learn how you can be involved with the LGBT Campus Center and reinvest in your community, visit lgbt.wisc.edu.

Alumni Spotlight



Lisa Aarli

Certification in Secondary Education '96

MA in Curriculum and Instruction '00

How have you stayed connected to the LGBTQ community in Madison as a UW Alumni?

Once I earned my certification in 1996, I started teaching at Middleton High School. That year a small group of students started the first **Gay Straight Alliance (GSA)** in Wisconsin. I listened as they told their stories to the entire faculty and I thought, *as a teacher I have to be at least as courageous as they are*. And so I got involved in the GSA and came out as a lesbian to my students and colleagues. Our high school was a hostile environment for LGBTQ people. As scary as it was for me, I knew that it was so important for all students to get to know LGBTQ adults and for that to be normalized for them.

My work at the high school led me to the **Gay Straight Alliance for Safe Schools (GSAFE)**, a statewide organization that supports those who want to create safer environments for LGBTQ students and their allies. That's when I started feeling like part of a larger movement. As a GSA, we built coalitions with student groups working on racial justice, women's issues and disability rights. That effort helped build new allies and many of those same students are out in the world doing all kinds of social justice work. It is exciting to know that it grew from their high school GSA experience.

In 2006 I started working at UW, first for the Associated Students of Madison and now for the School of Journalism and Mass Communication. I enjoy connecting with LGBTQ students here and being a person they can talk to about anything. We talk about how some diversity is obvious and some is invisible, and how through self-reflection we can check our assumptions about others. Plus, life gets much more interesting.

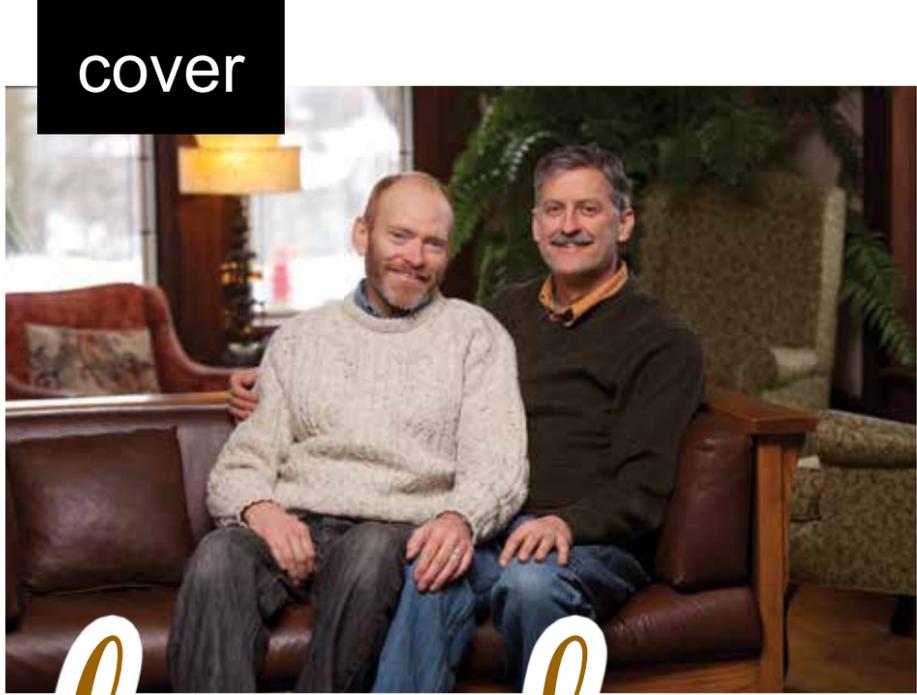
What is one piece of advice for graduating LGBTQ Badgers?

No matter where your life takes you, connect with people. It's the quality of relationships that keeps you grounded, especially when life feels challenging and overwhelming.

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dream home

REAL BUSINESS



David Waugh and Bob Klebba are pursuing their bed-and-breakfast vision on Lake Mendota, restoring a historic home while also looking to the future.

In the summer of 2011, my husband, Bob Klebba, and I took a boarder into our home. The first thing she wanted to do was read my astrological chart. I remember two things she told me—one, that big changes were coming; and two, that if I could make a career out of how I set up my home, I would be very successful. Five months later the historic Collins House went up for sale and I embarked on a mission to buy it and turn it back into a bed and breakfast. I guess it was in the stars.

The Dream and the Reality

I work full-time at UW-Madison, and Bob runs the plant nursery we own, Morningwood Farm. The idea of running a bed and breakfast has been on my mind for many years. At one point, I even took an eight-week bed and breakfast short course. Originally, I thought I would build a country B&B at our nursery. However, with the poor economy, the plan to build kept getting pushed back.

For 20 years, Bob and I lived less than a mile from what was then called the Collins House, a historic home being operated as a bed and breakfast. I rode my bike by that house every day on my way to work. When the house later sat empty, I would sometimes park my bike in back and peer through the windows, trying to get a glimpse of the inside.

The house had been owned by the city since the 1960s. Back then, the city was buying up all the lakefront properties in the area and tearing down the homes to create what is now James Madison Park. The Collins House became the City Parks Division office. In the '70s, the city approved landmark status for the house, because it is one of the finer examples from the Madison-based architectural firm of Claude and Starck. Ultimately, it was this landmark status that saved the house from the wrecking ball when the city later wanted it removed in order to expand the park.

In the mid '80s, the house was leased out as a bed and breakfast. When the lease came due in 2005, the city and the owners could not come to an agreement and the house was abandoned. It remained vacant until the city finally made the decision to sell the building but retain the land.

When I first heard of the sale, I thought the price tag would be way out of my range. Going through the sale documents, I noticed the city had appraised the building, without the land, at \$185,000. My heart leapt. This was doable. My dream home and my dream business were right there, and the opportunity was right in my own backyard!

The Process

In order to sell the building, the city formed a committee that consisted of neighborhood residents and three alders. We had a problem. All three alders were well known to us because they were all three big supporters of the controversial Edgewater Hotel redevelopment, which Bob and I had been very vocal opponents of. To me, it felt like the political cards were stacked against us, and I had little hope our proposal would make it.

Bob, on the other hand, got on the phone to rally the troops. At the final committee meeting where we gave our last pitch, I felt like George Bailey from the film *It's a Wonderful Life*. Our friends and supporters streamed into the meeting to testify on our behalf. In the end, two of those alders opposed us, but one of them, Ald. Mark Clear, turned out to be one of our biggest supporters. His vote and the other committee members' votes were in our favor. We had it.

All guest rooms are named after gay writers, and I'd like to have the décor match: The Oscar Wilde room is the biggest in the house, and I want it be over-the-top decadent.

But it was not over. The second-place proposal was from a wealthy woman in Washington, D.C., who wanted to buy the house for her daughter, her son-in-law, and their two young children, who were living in Madison. She had the historic restoration credentials and a strong offer. She was working through a well-known Madison attorney. When her proposal was not selected, she couldn't let it go.

Then there was our own alder, Bridget Maniaci, who decided to fight us, too. Because we had a number of other city committees that needed to weigh in, the battle had just begun. We were also up against a formidable alliance of the lawyer, the wealthy grandmother and her family and supporters, and a very tenacious and disruptive Maniaci. At one point Maniaci illegally used confidential tax records in testimony against us.

And the process was not without some coded homophobia. Early on, one alder informed us that he would not be supporting our proposal because his preference was for a young family with children. This is not something you say to a legally married gay couple raising a child. In

[HOME & GARDEN] WHAT'S TRENDING

Home & Garden Design

Home, interior, and garden design experts share what recent innovations excite them.

Transitional Styles



LEVY FURNITURE DESIGN
PHILLIP LEVY AND JILL RAU, INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE

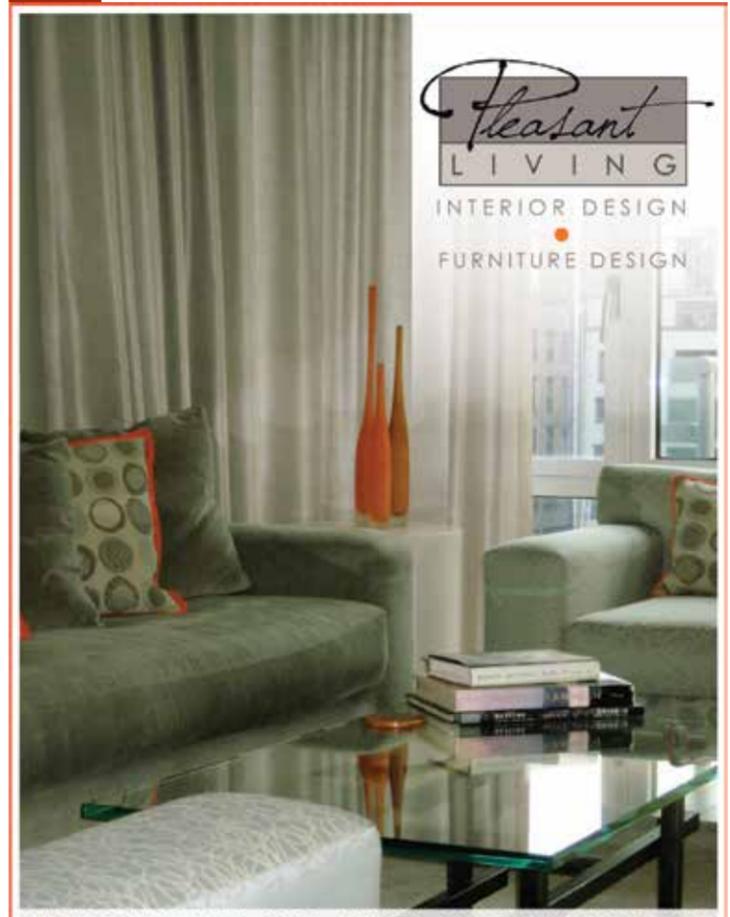
Our home furnishings showroom and design practice primarily focuses on classic, quality environments. We are not a trend house. However, we see a slowly emerging trend toward transitional styles in upholstery and case goods. Our clientele's interiors are often an eclectic mix of old and new, allowing transitional styles to perfectly complement collections. We've also noted that colorations of upholstery, walls, and other interior elements have decidedly become lighter; shades of off-whites and gray are the new story. As might be expected, the trends toward eco-green design and smart technology have also become innovative challenges for our design team.

Technology in the Home



GINGKO HOUSE ARCHITECTURE
ANDREW BRAMAN-WANEK, OWNER

From process to product, technology is informing design in new and dynamic ways. To begin with, the Internet helps homeowners to be more engaged in design development. Websites like Houzz.com stimulate ideas and make it easier for clients to better communicate their tastes



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WHAT'S TRENDING [HOME & GARDEN]

and priorities. And realistic 3D computer modeling helps people visualize their space in a way that floor plans alone cannot.

Within the home, charging stations and laptop cubbies are now on the "must have" list. And for some, e-readers have changed the nature of home libraries. There are thermostats on the market that can be controlled by our smartphones. And tablets can be used to remotely monitor homes and program lighting. With wireless components, retrofitting an existing home with these features has become much less expensive and puts the "smart home" within reach. The ways in which technology enhances form and function in our homes are always expanding.

Color and Optimism



SHAVER/MELAHN STUDIOS
RICK SHAVER AND LEE MELAHN, OWNERS

According to our teenage daughter, the trend is "vintage," where to her means Indian prints covered in sequins and beads, perforated lamp shades that cast patterns on the walls, and a whole palette of rich saturated color. We're seeing more and more color pop up, and the use of adornment is a sure sign that manufacturers and retailers are all feeling a bit more positive.

As we commute between New York and Madison, the trends seem to all point to a brighter future. Fashion usually leads the way, with interior design taking its cues from what's walking down the runways. If the windows of Fifth Avenue are any indication, there's a bright spring poking up through the dirt of the past few years. A nostalgic approach to design goes hand-in-hand with a brighter outlook when the point in the past is filled with the loud voice of '60s color and pattern. Our daughter's tastes have embraced this trend wholeheartedly. "Let the sunshine in."

Smaller Scale, Greater Efficiency



TZ OF MADISON, INC.
LAWRENCE J. TAFF, PRESIDENT

The prediction is that the cost of lumber and other construction materials will climb through 2014. Lumber prices have already increased 30 percent since the beginning of this year. Along those lines of economy, homeowners are opting for smaller-scale improvements to their homes. Project sizes seem to be smaller in scope and budget. Homeowners are choosing more functional and basic improvements versus higher-end projects. Improvements with energy efficiency and lowering carbon footprints are attractive projects, as are Universal Design improvements that will allow folks to remain in their homes beyond retirement.

fact, we started taking my son, Andrew, to the meetings to strengthen the image of our family – something we felt we should not have had to do (though it was a great civics lesson for him). And then there was the occasional e-mail or letter with the same coded homophobia. At one point in testimony, the wealthy D.C. grandmother testified, "God forbid the house should be painted pink and purple."

There was the occasional e-mail or letter with the same coded homophobia. At one point in testimony, the wealthy D.C. grandmother testified, "God forbid the house should be painted pink and purple."

At one particular low point—I think we had lost a committee vote—I became very discouraged. The injustice of being bullied by moneyed interests, combined with our alder sabotaging our efforts, made me very angry. We had to keep up the fight.

In the end, we prevailed. At the final meeting where we needed Common Council approval, Ald. Satya Rhodes-Conway issued a public apology to us for having to endure the coded homophobia that was there throughout the process. She said, "I'm sorry, you straight people don't hear it. But us queer folks do." I was so moved that tears welled up in my eyes. It was very powerful and something I will never forget. The council voted overwhelmingly in our favor. We won.

Getting to Work

We took possession of the house in mid-September. Because the house had been run as a bed and breakfast before, most of the infrastructure to get the business going again was in place. Furniture came mostly from

savvy Craigslist finds. Ironically, we did buy a number of things from the Edgewater Hotel liquidation sale. We decided if we waited for the restoration to be complete, it could take five years. We decided to open. We held a soft opening over the Thanksgiving holiday, with family members of friends. By mid-December we set up a fully functioning website and online reservation system. We currently are undergoing a rebranding exercise and will soon have a new name for the B&B: Mendota Lake House.

One area in which I feel deficient as a gay man is home decorating: I need an expert and will be hiring an interior designer to make over the rooms once we get better established. All guest rooms are named after gay writers, and I'd like to have the décor match: The Oscar Wilde room is the biggest in the house, and I want it be over-the-top decadent. Then there is the Walt Whitman room, which I want to be simple and grounded in nature. For the Tennessee Williams room, I'm thinking "Southern decadence" (traditional, not so much the modern gay leather festival of the same name). And what to do with the Gore Vidal room...?

There are still some rather large restoration items that need to be addressed, too. We have quite a bit of water damage that occurred because the city failed to turn off the water when the building was abandoned. Then there is the ancient heating system that we plan to replace with a geothermal heating and cooling system.

After the spring elections, we hope to work with a new alder to get some much needed zoning code updates that will allow us to bring back private functions such as weddings and special events. It is important to me for the house to be a community resource. At some point in the not-so-distant future, I am looking forward to hosting gay weddings. Oh, and we have a wonderful view of Lake Mendota! ■

What Makes a Family?

Alder Satya Rhodes-Conway supported David Waugh and Bob Klebba's bid to buy the old Collins House in the face of resistance.



When Bob Klebba and David Waugh applied to buy the Collins House and turn it back into a bed and breakfast, I think they knew they were taking a chance. I don't think they were expecting to put their family on display for public scrutiny.

Their proposal, to live in the house and operate a business (a bed and breakfast) in it, was up against another proposal from a family who wanted to live in the house and run a business (a sustainable food and farming operation) out of it. They were both good proposals, and should have been judged simply on their merits. If they had been, the decision-making process would have been a lot shorter and a lot less contentious than it was.

Instead, I believe the process was delayed by political retaliation and homophobia. Every time I heard the two proposals discussed, inevitably someone would say how nice it would be to have a family living in the house again—and they were never talking about Bob and David's family. While the outcome was a good one in the end, the way we got there wasn't pretty, and on the night of the council vote that gave Bob and David the right to purchase the house from the city, I felt I had to apologize to them. I told them that I was sorry for the ways in which their family was made invisible or discounted or made to seem less valuable than a straight family. Even if their proposal hadn't been the better one, the nature of their family should never have been a subject of discussion or a factor in the decision.

Too often, queer families are made invisible or assumed to be temporary. I know—I grew up in one, and my partner Amy and I make up one now. I hope the City of Madison will always be mindful of valuing all sorts of families—because all sorts of families are important to our community. I wish Bob and David's family years of happiness in their new home.

DO YOU KNOW?



Dane County Supervisor Chuck Erickson helps close loophole in county's domestic partner benefits policy



I am new to the Dane County Personnel and Finance Committee this term, and had asked to be appointed to it because I wanted to learn more about county operations overall and its finances.

I was in a meeting in November, and there was a proposal to support an economic development loan from Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, which our CDBG committee had approved, for a new pizza location in Sun Prairie.

The conservative reputation of the company or organization was pointed out to me, and that's when I raised the question of domestic partnership benefits. I asked if the organization provided those benefits to its employees. After much questioning, I learned they didn't. I also, to my dismay, learned that the Dane County equal benefits ordinance (one of few in the country back when we passed it, and the only one in the state in addition to the City of Madison), which we had worked so hard on five or six years ago, didn't cover economic development loans from Dane County.

It was then that I decided to introduce an ordinance amendment to change that. It eventually passed unanimously.

It really proves that we, the LGBTQ community, need a seat at the table, so that when issues like this arise we can work with our straight allies to change our communities and the world for the better.

[HOME & GARDEN] WHAT'S TRENDING

Go Ductless for More Comfort



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During last summer's extreme heat, interest in air conditioning soared. Holdouts changed their minds, and homeowners lacking modern ductwork asked for solutions. We were able to help many by installing "split-ductless" air conditioning. We expect demand to be strong again this summer. If you want air conditioning but your home lacks ductwork, or you have central air but a room that never comfortably cools, one or more split-ductless air conditioners may be the answer. Quiet and very energy efficient, ductless systems mount on the wall, high and out of the way. They can be installed without major remodeling, and the outside lines can be hidden by painting a low-profile cover to match your home's paint.

Social Media in Design



CRB INTERIORS
BILL BEAUDREAU, ASID

Social media's contribution to exploration and daydreaming was first seen through blogs. Apartment Therapy, Remodelista, and Better Living Through Design are great examples. The ideas in these places are plentiful, but the challenge is how to aggregate the ideas and figure out exactly what you want. Many interior designers now use new places to collect or put up ideas to share or simply gaze at others. Two particularly effective sites are Houzz and Pinterest. Check them out to start creating your own environment.

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NAME:
Rhonda Lanford
TITLE:
Shareholder
EMPLOYER:
Habush Habush & Rottier S.C.

Rhonda Lanford is proud to be one of the newest board members of OPEN. She is a shareholder at Habush Habush & Rottier S.C., and has been representing injured people and their families in Wisconsin circuit courts for over 16 years. Rhonda has been active in the LGBT community for many years, and she is currently a candidate for Dane County Circuit Court Judge Branch 16, with an upcoming election on April 2, 2013.



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feature



home values

AND THE HABITAT RESTORE

How **Jen Voichick** and a lot of volunteers helped start a home design recycling revolution in Madison.

if you haven't been to a Habitat ReStore, think secondhand shop where you'll find cabinets and windows, tile and flooring. Lighting, plumbing, and electrical supplies are in abundance, as are various knobs, fasteners, and doors.

And there's more: washers, dryers and stoves; furniture; even some tools. Items are new or gently used. You may not find exactly what you're looking for, but try again next week. You never know, that pedestal sink just might turn up—for a fraction of the cost of a new one.

In the U.S. and Canada, there are 825 Habitat ReStores (23 in Wisconsin). Madison's Habitat ReStore on Cottage Grove Road opened in 2001. Store Director Jen Voichick recalls that it was because of an ankle injury that the store was born. A carpenter who had been trained in the union-apprenticeship program, Jen had time to think as her ankle healed. If she continued heavy, physical work, she would need a bone fusion. In need of a career change, she had an idea. During her years in the business, she had seen literally tons of waste on commercial and residential job sites. Jen says, "I grew up in Madison. I knew we could do better than that."

She explored how to divert building materials out of the waste stream and into use. She decided early on to partner with a non-profit, and Habitat for Humanity was a great match. She drew up a business plan and a budget, worked with an organizational consultant to map out the steps and forecast the finances, and applied for and received several grants. After a year, Jen, her father, and a group of volunteers turned what was "a shambles" into Wisconsin's first Habitat ReStore. She says, "It was a group effort from day one."

Jen serves as store director with ten staff members, including a dedicated volunteer coordinator who organizes more than 125 volunteers who make all aspects of the store happen. Volunteers are primarily in the 65- to 75-year-old range, and many have a regular weekly shift. One volunteer from Lodi has decided to "retire" after 11 years.

Judy Mayer and Rene Markoff have been volunteering for more than four years. Judy likes the unusual reasons people purchase items, such as the cupola that became a chicken coop. Other volunteers include retired professors and ironworkers, those serving community service requirements, folks in between jobs, and people with disabilities who receive job training. Jen's face shows how much the volunteers mean to her. "They are role models for me. I want people who come in to thank them for supporting our community."

Donations are the backbone of the ReStore. The ReStore staff works hard to make it as easy as possible for people and corporations to donate.

Madison's ReStore is a bit of a big deal in Habitat for Humanity circles. Habitat consultants visit the store to learn about its operation; ReStore staff from other parts of the country come for management training. The store is a success financially, turning a modest profit. It also funds two Habitat for Humanity home builds annually.

Over the last few years, Jen entertained the idea of opening a second store. Last year, she presented a proposal to the Habitat Board. Solid numbers, the lack of competition, and Madison's bifurcated geography forecast success, and July 2012 saw the opening of Habitat ReStore West on Odana Road. The trick now is to keep enough donations coming in to maintain both operations.

[HOME & GARDEN] WHAT'S TRENDING

Aging in Place



TIME 2 REMODEL
CURT DIMMIG, OWNER

With economy turning around, customers are starting to do projects they've been putting off. Still cautious, some are starting with smaller rooms such as bathrooms before tackling a kitchen. Bathrooms are including larger walk-in showers with decorative tile. Taller toilets and vanity cabinets are becoming the norm to help many people "age in place." When homeowners want to remodel kitchens, they are working on tight budgets but are looking for better organization and easier-to-maintain products such as quartz countertops.

Clean & Simple, Eco-Friendly Design



DENISE QUADE DESIGN
DENISE QUADE, OWNER

Trends that have emerged in the last year: The use of LED lighting for energy efficiency and lower cost, suede finish on granite, increased demand for Quartz countertops, thicker floating shelving, gray everything as the new beige, rustic and textured woods, and painted white cabinetry.

Big things in the coming year will be personalized spaces mixing old with new, bringing in an appreciation of natural textures and finishes or a country style. Big ticket items like cabinetry and countertops will be in more neutral finishes due to homeowners buying for longevity. The use of luxury vinyl tile in lieu of real wood flooring like Adura by Mannington. This floor can be easily replaced in strips in case of damage and has become very realistic looking.

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WHAT'S TRENDING [HOME & GARDEN]

Eclectic and Organic



PURE + SIMPLE ONLINE INTERIOR DESIGN
NANCY HIGGS, OWNER + LEAD DESIGNER

Bold colors and graphic patterns ruled the roost last year. While both will endure, they will be used differently. Thankfully, the rise in popularity of organic elements (think weathered wood, stone and glass) has tempered the look. We are now seeing just a couple of coordinating patterns and maybe a bold color or two against a neutral background. You can ease into it with some new curtains, pillows, or artwork in your favorite color. If you are feeling brave, try Emerald Green, the Pantone Color of the Year. After your first spontaneous smile, you won't want to stop.

Add Drama and Illusion



EXCITING WINDOWS BY ANDREA HEDQUIST
ANDREA HEDQUIST, OWNER

Window fashion trends are simple but definitely not boring. Long, lean panels in bold, fun prints or luxury fabrics hung on well-proportioned hardware in sleek chrome finishes are dominating window treatments, mounted high above the natural line of the window to add drama and the illusion of height. Simple rings or grommets are still great choices, but ripplefold draperies are making the transition from a once commercial application to residential. Natural materials including grassy woven accents and bamboo are very popular choices for shades, offering privacy when closed yet allowing in diffused light.

THE FOCUS IS ON INTERIOR DESIGN

CONCEPTS IN INDIVIDUALITY
 AND PERSONAL STYLE

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Donations are the backbone of the ReStore. In a down economy, donations are more difficult to come by. The volume of building is less, contractors are lean in their ordering, and supply stores have started their own remnant sections instead of giving away remains. Craigslist is of no help either. The ReStore staff works hard to make it as easy as possible for people and corporations to donate. Their website lists the steps to making a donation and they offer online scheduling for donation pickups. And donations are tax-deductible. As a secondhand store, however, they cannot accept everything; only "what will go right back out the door."

Jen thrives on connecting people to what they need, whether for remodeling or connecting in a larger sense. Early on, the ReStore began an Earth Day celebration, combining Jen's loves of sustainability and community. She says that when they began the annual celebration, it was one of the only events of its kind, but she's happy to see many organizations in Madison now have them.

Throughout her career with the ReStore, Jen has come up with innovative ways to showcase community and sustainability. In April, ReStore will host the Salvage Art Show, its fifth annual fundraiser for Habitat for Humanity. Artists use reclaimed or used materials to create art in any medium. The pieces will be available for purchase in local galleries, including Madison's Absolutely Art and Hatch Art House, and Artisan Gallery in Paoli.

Jen praises Madison for being a place where you can turn an idea into a reality. "If you have an idea, you can make it happen here. People will be there to jump in." She is pleased to see other businesses with a positive community impact making it, such as B-Cycle and Full Spectrum Solar. And she points out the importance of working with other like-minded organizations such as Mpower, Sustain Dane, and Dane Buy Local. Reflecting on how she got her start 11 years ago, Jen says, "You never know where things are going to go."

People who have used the ReStore:

MIDWEST CLAY PROJECT

Commercial project, 918 Williamson Street, Madison, WI

The Midwest Clay Project on Williamson Street opened in 2010 after only ten weeks of renovation. Owner and founder Jennifer Lapham wanted to keep costs low and to conserve and reuse materials as much as possible. "Turning to the ReStore was an obvious choice."

The choice paid off. The renovation was economical, and 90% of the materials came from the ReStore. Jennifer, her partner Paul Sacaridiz, and staff built all of the furniture and shelves. Solid core doors covered with stretched canvas became table- and countertops. Carriage and lag bolts were used to build worktables—at a much lower cost than new hardware. Twelve-foot-long particle boards with multiple coats of sealant were made into durable and versatile shelves.

When Jennifer tells the story of how she found and used the materials, she sees "people's eyes light up as they realize, 'Hey, I could do that too!'" She has this advice for shopping at the ReStore: "You may find what you're looking for, but you may also find something unexpected that can become the seed for a project you'd never imagined."

FREDERICKA SCHILLING AND BONITA SITTER

Residential project, Blue Mounds, WI

In 2005, Fredericka Schilling and Bonita Sitter set out to sustainably build a house in rural Blue Mounds. They combed the ReStore twice a week for six months. At times, it felt like they came home weekly with a window of a different size. Their designer and builder were willing

to accommodate the finds, but Fredericka's father was genuinely concerned. "He thought we were out of our minds ... that we'd end up with a tree house of 23 different windows." Instead, people ooh and ahh over their 1,400 square foot home.

The couple bought flooring, granite countertops, cabinets, doors, a sink, beautiful tile, and even cedar shakes that now cover the north side of their home—all from the ReStore. The crown jewel of their build is reclaimed wood from an unusual source. The ReStore advertised a storage building deconstructed by Habitat ReStore volunteers, which could only be purchased sight unseen. The site? The Badger Army Ammunition Plant near Baraboo, WI. Fredericka and Bonita took a chance. Wood originally in the plant (and free of hazardous materials) now makes up the flooring and rafters in their second-floor loft. Fredericka says, "It feels pretty emotional that the blight of bomb-producing went into the construction of two houses. It really is guns to plowshares."



LYNN LEE & STEVEN SKAGGS (ABOVE)

Residential project, Madison, WI

You could easily walk past the old carriage house on Madison's near east side and not look twice. But behind its unassuming doors are 2,100 square feet of loveliness. In 2009 Lynn Lee and Steven Skaggs bought a falling-down apartment building, and in five months, they moved into a single-family restored gem.

Built in 1845 as a carriage house, the building had been a boarding-house during the Civil War, and much later was split into apartments. Lynn, an artist, and Steven took the old and made it their own. Some material was bought new, such as tile, wall finish, and lighting fixtures. But ReStore materials far outnumber the new: flooring, cabinets, wainscoting, tile, doorknobs, hardware, light fixtures, molding, and even paint.

Everything in the home appears to be carefully chosen, with seemingly one-of-a-kind light fixtures and an inviting modern kitchen...and then there's the playroom. Built in the attic, the playroom has Victorian ginger bread, making the space feel like a full-size dollhouse. The home was part of the first Habitat Sustainable Homes Tour, and as Lynn, Steven or Jen will tell you, it is a poster child for the ReStore. ■



A recovered English major, **Jill Nebeker** has worked in the online world since 2000, including an eight-year stint with Merriam-Webster. She has been a web writer, designer, and project manager. She is now an interface designer. For fun, Jill teaches and practices yoga, plays hockey, and is part of the Greasy Gears.



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WHAT'S TRENDING [HOME & GARDEN]

Taking Cues from Nature



MANI & COMPANY
DINO MANIACI, CREATIVE DIRECTOR

Trends in interior design are taking cues from nature: raw, natural wood accessories and decorative items such as lamps, candle sticks and stools paired with sleek finishes, textural fabrics and clear colors to bring the outdoors inside. Polished river rocks, statement making plantings such as tall, graphic sanseveria, or dishes of succulents say "nature" in a clean, organized way. Color plays an important part in helping to define spaces. Deep, rich tones such as rusts and reds make dramatic backdrops in entry ways and dining areas, greens make a big comeback with deep hues such as emerald and jade for living rooms, community spaces and bedrooms, warm grays with subtle hints of lavender and undertones of brown add warmth and intimacy to bedrooms and baths. Continuity from one room to the next make for a unified, well designed home.

Design for Comfort, Relaxation



ASHLEY FURNITURE HOMESTORES IN MADISON
TAMMY KNUTSON, STORE MANAGER

With more homes moving to one central eating area, we'll see more crossover looks this year; dining sets dressy enough for company, but casual enough for every day. Wrapping living rooms in comfort is getting easier than ever, and sectionals are our hottest items. These suit a growing casual approach to living spaces. We also plan to see bedroom renovations take center stage as we resolve to get more sleep.

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TISHA ERDMAN

eclectic

AT HEART

I Love Funky's is a wonderland for the adventurous decorator.

"The weirder the better."

Tisha Erdman tells me this with a smile, shortly after I wander into the Lake Geneva store on a bitterly cold day in January. It could easily be the shop's tagline or motto.

Occupying three stories of a hard-to-miss black and purple building in the downtown of this charming town of just under 8,000, I Love Funky's moved in two years ago after a 12-year stint in Fort Atkinson. What started as strictly an antiques operation has since evolved and grown to include everything from women's clothing to locally made chocolates, off-the-beaten-path gifts, new furniture, and an impressive array of home-design oddities.

Erdman grew up in Madison and was a hairdresser in the city for 20 years before changing course to become a fulltime antiques hunter and reseller. She and her husband spend countless hours on the road each year, in fact, searching for the perfect pieces to bring back to the shop.

"We don't really do anything else," she explains. "It takes an unbelievable amount of time because there is so much garbage out there to sort through."



They travel the country looking for the perfect items to bring back and sell, and have developed a keen eye for the truly worthwhile selections. Only the most interesting items, then, make it into the Funky's collection. Browsing the antiques section on the top floor can feel more like touring a particularly eccentric museum collection. There's a restored 1953 Whizzer motorbike nestled in one corner alongside a fully functional Wheel of Love machine and an incredible old jukebox. Nearby,

PHOTOS BY EMILY MILLS



an entire roulette wheel setup gleams under the lights.

Along one wall you'll find the full length of a 1920s soda fountain tile countertop and leather swivel seats. There's an enormous marble 1890s urinal pulled from a Masonic Temple. Ornate window frames, shutters, chandeliers, and lamps hang from the ceiling, over four-poster bedframes and cozy-looking couches. Inside a glass case there's a complete set of antique eyeglass lenses and optometrists' kit. Here and there, a few taxidermied creatures keep a watchful eye over the entire tableau.

Down in the basement, greeted by the sweet smell of new leather, one can find an array of new furniture to choose from. And on the main floor, gifts of every variety line the walls and shelves, including hats, fascinators, locally made art and postcards, clothing, jewelry, and more.

Erdman notes that while the store used to draw a lot of the upscale Chicago vacationer crowd, the downturn in the economy has brought a more local crowd through her doors. "People are taking more 'staycations' now," she says. "But the community has been, overall, very supportive of the business."

They moved the store to Lake Geneva hoping that it would see more foot traffic, including visitors from nearby Madison. With a variety of local restaurants and the waterfront close by, the town makes for an excellent day or weekend trip.

A stop at I Love Funky's is well worth the time, too. Erdman prides herself on offering a wide range of items for sale, with a special eye toward those people who might be looking to deck their halls with something a little more unique and unusual.

Erdman's passion for finding hidden treasures and interesting gifts is clear in every inch of the store. —Emily Mills



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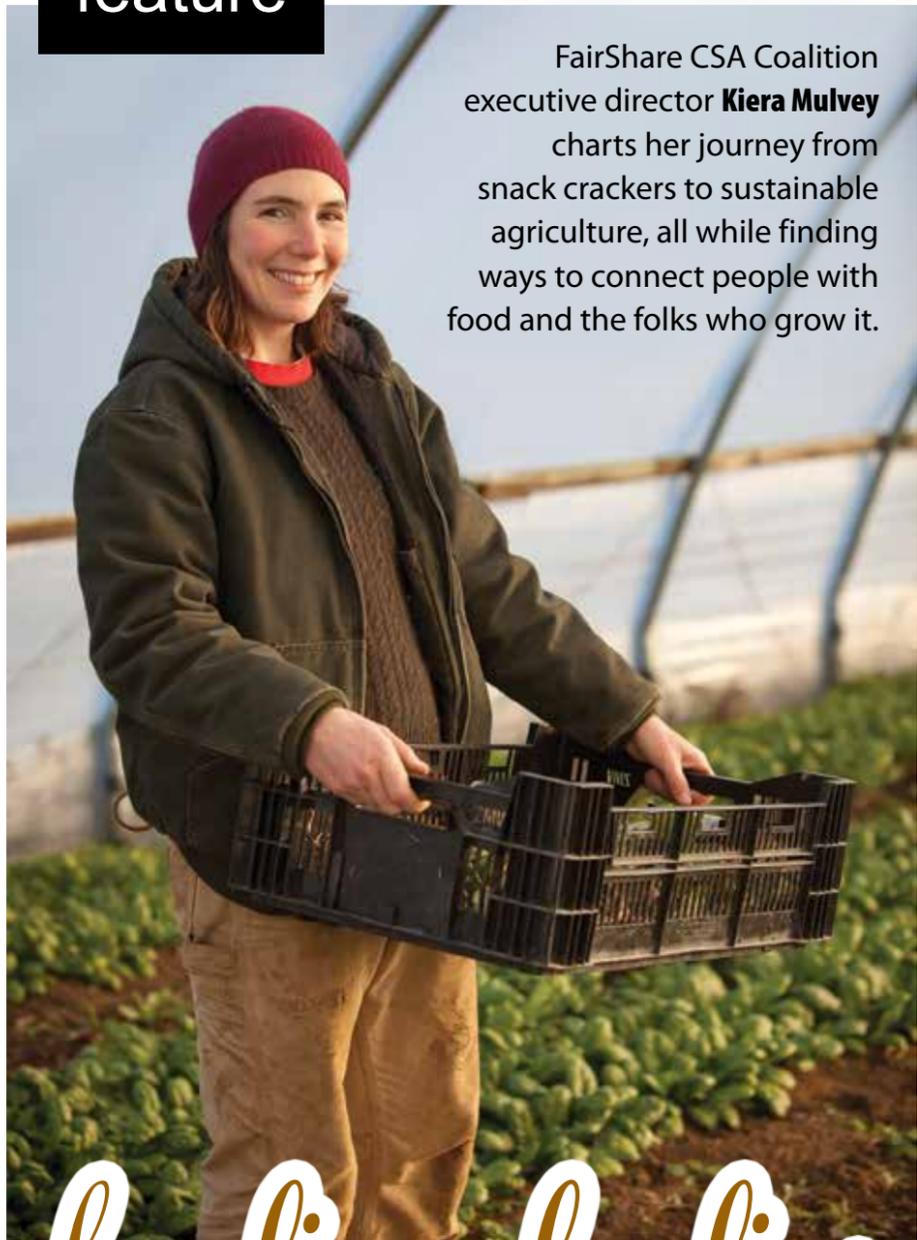
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FairShare CSA Coalition executive director **Kiera Mulvey** charts her journey from snack crackers to sustainable agriculture, all while finding ways to connect people with food and the folks who grow it.

feeding bodies

FEEDING THE SOUL

I vividly remember cocktail hour at Granny Muriel's house; while the adults entertained themselves with boozy Manhattans and Tab sodas, I gorged myself on Triscuits piled high with unreasonable quantities of cheese product. My mouth still waters when I think of those little wine-cheese balls encrusted with slivered almonds.

This food obsession persists to this day (I highly recommend the Dreamfarm spreadable goat cheese in all its delectable flavors), but, like a fine cheese, it has matured and aged as I have.

Despite my entrepreneurial efforts to sell green beans from our backyard garden to our soft-hearted neighbors in rural Connecticut, ending up a farmer and a food activist would probably have been a shocker to my 5-year-old self.

Many years later, a waterlogged summer job picking strawberries in low tunnels and thinning apples in soggy fields at Fiveways Fruit Farm in Colchester, England, was my first foray into the wild world of food production. It was an appropriate introduction—a rude awakening to the reality of repetitive motion and pick in any weather fast-as-you-can urgency (we were, after all, paid by the piece!), and a gradual understanding of the many hands and hours that go into food production.

In the midst of this summer of crawling and slogging, it was a quick jaunt across the Irish Sea to a Community Supported Agriculture Farm in Kilkenny County, Ireland, that really dug in deep and left an impression that I didn't truly recognize for many, many years. This was the first I had heard of Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), though it was alive and well in the United States, with the first CSA farms starting in the mid-'80s on the East Coast and quickly being adopted by some forward-thinking West-Coasters. We midlanders didn't get on the train until the early '90s, but farmers in Madison and the Upper Midwest have since established ourselves as pioneers and have spurred incredible growth and popularity in the CSA movement.

Hmong refugees, first-generation immigrants, old-school Rhode Island Italians, and more came together in the community and school gardens and at our tiny urban farm in New England.

Without even knowing the term CSA and with only a few weeks on the farm in Ireland, I connected back then with the core tenets of CSA that we hold so close in our own local movement: community, cooperation, and top-quality food. In the moment, those lofty ideals and the beautiful big picture may have been overshadowed by the ten hours weeding parsnips, but as with all good lifecycles, it came 'round again down the road.

As anyone who has successfully tended a wispy, wimpy seedling through to the realization of a juicy, real tomato eaten warm and ripe off the vine can tell you, growing food can provide a deep satisfaction. As that same person can also likely attest, for every plump, beautiful tomato achievement there are exponentially more sweaty curses uttered and countless sacrifices to the pests and diseases of the garden or farm. The hard-earned satisfaction and razor-sharp learning curve of growing food were never so apparent to me as when I truly first cut my teeth in growing food and community in Providence, Rhode Island, at the Southside Community Land Trust.

Without even meaning to, this small urban agriculture organization helped one misguided teacher (yes, for a brief stint post-college I dabbled in the classroom, but it didn't hold my attention for too long) pull the many strings of interest together and weave a solid fabric of passion and purpose. Sure, I liked to garden and had made a few bucks selling green beans to my neighbors on Cat Swamp Road, and I had paid for college expenses with a summer of wet picking, but in Providence, the amazing diversity of plants and people and knowledge and innovation sprung to life.

Every step into a community garden introduced a new vegetable or flower, every summer a new skill or friend. And in the heart of all this personal awakening arose a parallel awareness of the deep inequalities in access to good food, soil toxicity's impact on an urban resident's ability to grow their own food, and our wider societal disconnect from where our food comes from.

I distinctly remember, one early fall day, touring our ¾-acre "City Farm" in the heart of South Providence with my youth garden club from Bailey Elementary. They tasted mint grown in bathtubs and fed fat grubs

Innovations In Limited Space



ALLEN CENTENNIAL GARDENS
ED LYON, DIRECTOR

I just returned from two nursery trade shows, and the trend continues to highlight new systems to make it easy for homeowners to try raised bed, vertical, container, roof, wall, and other forms of limited-space gardening. Plants bred to thrive and yield in containers now include fruits with the new Brazelberries; pot veggies such as the Tumbling Tom tomatoes will continue to expand in selection. The biggest surprise is that chicken coops are now at every trade show, as keeping urban chickens continues to grow in popularity.

Outdoor Living



NOSTRA TERRA LANDSCAPES
ADOLFO CAMACHO, OWNER

Outdoor kitchens in conjunction with large patio spaces. The idea is to have kitchen, dining, and living conveniences all in one space. Patio space is typically extensive, and able to accommodate a fire pit or water feature along with tables and chairs for family or neighbors.

For years, rain and surface water was treated as a waste product. Finally gaining momentum is the idea of slowing or catching water, so it can better infiltrate the soil. In order to do this, homeowners and contractors are constructing rain gardens and other basin-type formations, in addition to more gradual slopes. The result of grading in this manner is reduced erosion, removed sediment, cleaner waterways and lakes, and recharged aquifers.

- SOFTSCAPES:** flower gardens and planting beds
- HARDSCAPES:** patios, walls, walkways
- GARDEN STRUCTURES:** arbors, pergolas, privacy screens, outdoor kitchens and living areas, low-voltage lighting and water features

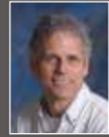


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WHAT'S TRENDING [HOME & GARDEN]

Edible Landscapes



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As far as concrete goes the industry is bringing out more products that look like natural stone and also introducing new color ranges. Companies are also changing their molds for pavers to be able to be permeable.

After last year's drought people are interested in drought tolerant, low maintenance plants, as well as rain water harvesting systems. There are some innovative drip irrigation systems for both pots and window boxes, as well as normal planting beds.

There's interest in edible landscapes that go beyond normal vegetables to look at trees, shrubs, evergreens, and perennials. We've introduced vegetables into planting beds that might have a stepping stone path and a bench as a destination, and are trying to extend a water source you don't have to schlep out 500 feet of hose every time they need to water—or better yet drip irrigation!

The Time Is Now



FIRST WEBER GROUP
JULIA WHITE AND CINDY ULSRUD, REALTORS

Growth in our economy and improving employment opportunities are improving real estate. I'm seeing increases in price appreciation and decreases in inventory. Now is the time to buy with interest rates staying low. I think the median home price increase in 2013, and even though rates are low they will increase a little. New and existing will increase, and distressed homes such as bank-owned and foreclosures will decrease a little.

to the sassy chickens under the silver maple while taking in the sights and the sounds (sirens, car alarms, thumping bass) of this urban oasis.

After the farm tour, we whipped up a fresh snack using farm products and questionably useful plastic knives on folding tables. Though skeptical to taste at first ("That looks naasssty", and "Ew, dude, you gonna eat that?"), one intrepid soul bit into his first sweet potato fry. Once the seal was broken, there were a lot more adventurous eaters in the group and the meal finished off with the oh-so-glowing review, "Dang, that's almost as good as Burger King." Okay, change is incremental; adventurous eaters are born one fresh French fry at a time.

I certainly learned much more than I taught in the gardens, farms, and classrooms of Providence, exchanging recipes, digging for potatoes with kindergartners (treasure hunt!), and meticulously planning to produce copious amounts of food in intensely limited spaces. Most profound was the transformative ability of growing, preparing, eating, and exchanging food to bring together people from intensely diverse backgrounds. Hmong refugees, first-generation immigrants, old-school Rhode Island Italians, and more came together in the community and school gardens and at our tiny urban farm in New England.

Nearly 1 in every 200 families in Wisconsin is a member of a FairShare Farm; that's a lot of families making a commitment to their local farms and a lot of farmers being supported by their communities.

But alas, all good things and wide-eyed, youthful awakenings must come to an end. Life swept me from gritty Providence to the breadbasket of the Midwest. It wasn't simply a blustery wind that blew me here, but more of a sweet puppy love with an ambitious farmer-turned-grad student with her eye toward a PhD at UW-Madison via research in China...but that's a different kind of love story for another day.

Frankly, I didn't know how good I had it. As we settled into our new home, I came to grasp the amazing network of farmers and food that supports and is supported by this community. The scope and scale of agriculture floored me: it's really possible here. This is a place where the region's farmers CAN feed us with fresh food from our local farms and do it well, as watchful stewards of the land and water.

Blue Moon Community Farm was my first farm home in Wisconsin. I spent my first summer as a full-time farm hand biking out to the farm and getting to know the soils and seasons of this intense new region. Summers are manic, soils are rich, and produce is plentiful and beautiful. I've stayed on at Blue Moon over the years and relish the opportunity to put my hands where my heart and head are as a farmer in the field, prepping for market and harvesting for our weekly member pick-up.

Eventually I found my way to a long-established organization, known at the time as Madison Area CSA Coalition (MACSAC), a place I've called home for the past five years. MACSAC is now FairShare CSA Coalition, but its mission is still focused firmly where it has been for over 21 years: in the support and connection of CSA growers and eaters; in the belief that good food is a basic human right; and in the knowledge that we, as a community, can create lasting social, health, and economic change through individual and collective action around food.

FairShare is a coalition of 49 CSA farms that serve 25,000 individuals the majority of their food throughout the growing season via harvests and deliveries of seasonal products fresh from the farm. Each farm is unique, each member an integral part of their farm's vitality, each farm community a living organism that weathers the challenges and the bounty of each season together.

I recently returned from an international CSA conference attended by farmers and organizers from six continents and 12 countries. The energy was inspiring, the enthusiasm was palpable, and the similarities of intention and action far outweighed our differences. In this group of international leaders, the terminology of solidarity economies and food sovereignty dominated the lexicon. While these terms are rarely used in our U.S. movements, the spirit of interdependence and our ability to change the way we are as a local, regional, national, and international community by changing the way we shop, eat, and think about food is very much alive and well in Wisconsin.

Nearly 1 in every 200 families in Wisconsin is a member of a FairShare Farm; that's a lot of families making a commitment to their local farms and a lot of farmers being supported by their communities. Wisconsin's CSA movement is a national inspiration; a true backbone of a thriving local foods movement that includes bustling farmers markets, a burgeoning farm-to-school movement, and an impressive commitment by restaurants sourcing locally.

I'm proud to farm and work on behalf of farmers in Wisconsin. Real change is at our fingertips by making informed and delicious food choices, committing to a farm through a CSA membership, shopping at our local farmers markets, and voting with our forks. We each have the potential to put our money and our passion where our mouth is every day at least three times—four if you count that Dreamfarm goat cheese freshly made in Cross Plains, Wisconsin.

For more information about Community Supported in Wisconsin or to find YOUR farm for the 2013 season, check out FairShare's website, www.csacoalition.org.

The annual CSA Open House will be on March 10 at Monona Terrace. It's a free event that's open to the public, and folks can meet farmers, sign up for shares, and attend sessions to learn more about CSA. ■



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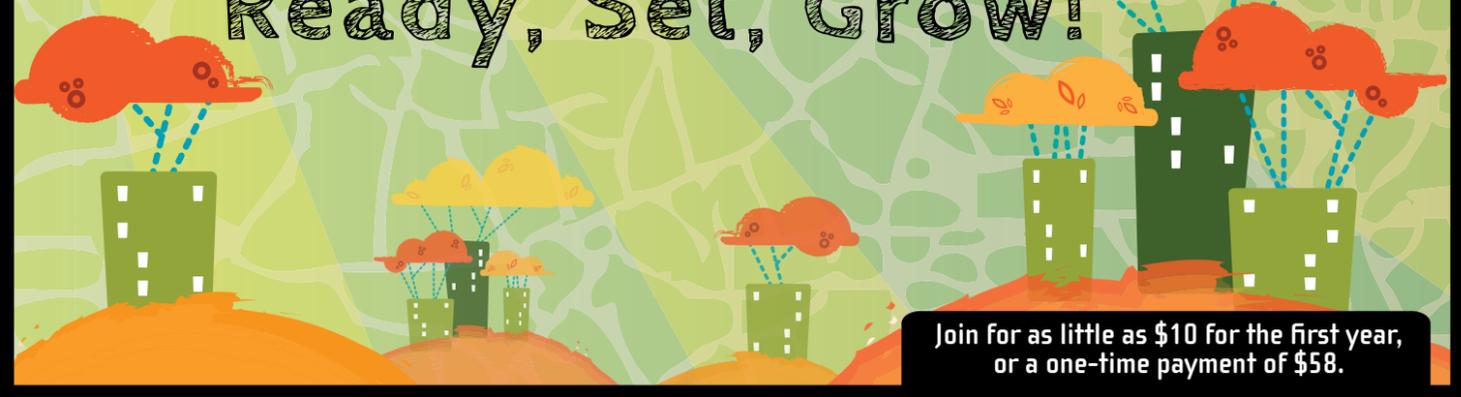
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Our History by Richard Wagner

Seneca Falls, Selma, Stonewall

A look at why gay bars have been added to America's icons of equality.



Encompassing the American journey for civil rights, this geographic litany was cited by President Barack Obama in his second inaugural to stir the hearts of Americans. Frank Bruni, in his column in *The New York Times*, calls these locations "A Map of Human Dignity." For those not who are not historians—and for the younger among us—they might not be totally clear references.

Seneca Falls in upstate New York was the site of the 1848 founding convention of the Women's Rights Movement. The convention, meeting in a Methodist church, adopted a Declaration of Sentiments, which included "all men and women are created equal." Among the complained grievances against men was that women were never permitted the "inalienable right to the elective franchise."

In 1965, Selma was the beginning point for the much-harassed march to Montgomery, Alabama, that state's capital, to ensure voting rights for African Americans. It inspired a nation, with clergy from the North joining Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Southern Christian Leadership Conference in the effort. Among those was white Unitarian Minister James Reeb from Boston, who, beaten with clubs and refused hospital help, died in Alabama. Today, a Madison church is named for Reeb.

King said what we seek is "a society that can live with its conscience." As an undergraduate at the University of Dayton that year, I organized a supportive demonstration for Selma in front of the campus memorial to John Kennedy (though I could not call a demonstration on the quiet Catholic campus but had to term it a rally).

Stonewall was a gay bar in New York City where patrons, many drag queens and transgendered people among them, fought back against persistent police harassment in 1969.

So a political convention, a prayerful march, and a gay bar are today's icons of equality. Why a gay bar? That's what we need to think about.

Nineteenth-century visionary reformers in New England and upstate New York frequently had as-

semblies with speakers for good causes. A whole book entitled *Freedom's Ferment* described the early 19th-century efforts to expand democracy's vision. It was a familiar venue for the polite middle classes for issues from abolition to prison reform. So why not women's rights at such a venue?

For African Americans, the black church has been a key institution. The nation's first free black community developed in Philadelphia in the late 18th century, and black churches were among the first institutions they created. Prior to the Civil War, the black churches were among the earliest groups petitioning on slavery issues. So the role of the black clergy in leading the Southern Christian



BAR MANAGER PENNY CARUSO (SEATED) AND BARTENDER MEIKA ALBERICI BEHIND THE BAR IN THE RESTAURANT LYSISTRATA

ing places as, again, they did not have their own spaces. Though they had created networks, sometimes even termed clubs, for communication, they had not created gay places. In the later 1940s and 1950s there is good evidence that certain houses in Madison had become centers of gay social activity. A 1948 police raid uncovered a near West Side home that was a locus of gay parties. A 1951 article, written in code, describes the artistic social circle that revolved around the gay couple who lived in the house that I now own. But these were private places, not necessarily open to all.

The first public places for the community were gay bars. And they emerged, they became a topic of discussion. In February 1958, *ONE*, the homosexual magazine published on the West Coast, had a cover article on "The Gay Bar." Author Robert Gregory noted, "The Gay Bar, while it by no means offers a total cross section of the homosexual population of a city or country, nevertheless goes farther, at present, than any other single social institution in collecting together a wide variety of types and temperaments." He cites

Helen Branson's recent book on her operation of a gay bar. A contemporary treatment of Branson's account is presented in Will Fellows's book *Gay Bar: The Fabulous, True Story of a Daring Woman and Her Boys in the 1950s*.

Gregory's article continued, "I concluded that the commodity dispensed by bars was not an alcoholic beverage, but something much more significant and less tangible." For him, this included "a temporary release from isolation," and he further noted, "Among homosexuals the feeling of isolation is exceptionally prevalent and often cruel." At the gay bar "they can be sure of finding some measure of kinship with others."

There was even scholarly recognition of the significance of gay bars. Joseph Harry, writing in the *Journal of Sex Research* in 1974, contributed an article on "Urbanization and the Gay Life." He noted that "the gay bar is one of the central institutions of the gay world, serving both as a sexual marketplace and as a meeting place for friends." His study of 1,980 gay bars in 426 cities was proclaimed to "constitute the only national data on gay institutions to date." He also noted, "Bartenders serve as excellent informants in the gay community because of their communicational centrality."

Edmund White, in his 1980 book *States of Desire: Travels in Gay America*, observes that often for the Midwest, "Gay bars are gay life, they believe. In a bar or a bed a man might be gay; otherwise he is straight—a person just like anyone else. The notion that affectional preference, sexual appetite,

shared oppression might color all of one's experience eluded them." He also has a quote on Milwaukee being a "bar-oriented" town.

Mad City, Gay Bars

The earliest places for gays in Madison were bars around the square, often associated with hotels where visiting men might be found. These were not yet gay bars, but places where gays would be tolerated. By the early 1960s, gay guides about Madison had six gathering spots for gays, and there were twelve in Milwaukee. One of the early popular Madison places that appeared in the 1970 gay guides was the *Pirate Ship*, with full swashbuckling décor, though it was gay only part-time.

A 1976 guide discussed the first real Madison gay bar: *The Back Door*. Opened in 1972, it was gay-owned and, for the gay community, not just a place that accepted gay custom. As its name implied, discretion was the chief character associated with early gay bars. The guide commented, "No sign just 4 blinking lights—use the rear entrance." And it called it "one of the friendliest bars anywhere."

The owners Rodney Scheel and his brother Greg went on to create the *Hotel Washington* entertainment complex with several gay bars and the *Café Palms*, a delightful late-night eatery. Bought in 1975, was expanded with an outdoor deck and a new dance bar addition.

Rodney was the center of a flurry of gay activity. He organized contingents and floats so Madison was represented in Chicago gay pride parades. He was a major force behind the early Madison Area Gay Interim Committee (MAGIC), which sponsored for many years Madison's annual gay pride events in nearby Brittingham Park. One well established gay man today recalls he spent his youth and fortune at the *Hotel Washington*. In later years, retired UW-Madison professor George Mosse on occasion could be found at the outdoor bar. Though Mosse, the noted historian who escaped the Nazis, came to UW in 1956 as a bachelor, he recalled in his memoir *Confronting History* that when he came to the city the "closet had to be tightly closed."

The *Hotel* burned to the ground on Feb. 18, 1996. Its central place in the affections of the gay community was shown in two events, both of which I attended—a memorial at the campus Methodist church and a rally at the state capitol. His memory lives on the Rodney Scheel House for PWA/HIV.

The community losing precious spaces was all too familiar. In 1977, *Lysistrata*, a restaurant with a bar and performance space, opened at the corner of Gorham and Broom Streets. The feminist board of the *Lysistrata* Cooperative included many known lesbians in the community. It was a central gathering space for the womyn's community. The space also welcomed men, though, as I attended community political and fundraising events there. The Madison police and fire departments used the location to recruit women, many of them lesbians, as they diversified their forces.

On January 8, 1982, the building containing *Lysistrata* burned down to a great sense of loss. In the *Lysistrata* case, arson was suspected (this was not the case with the *Hotel Washington* incident). Another gay bar in La Crosse also had burned down in

"I concluded that the commodity dispensed by bars was not an alcoholic beverage, but something much more significant and less tangible." For him, this included "a temporary release from isolation."

1977, and again arson was suspected. Anyone hear echoes of the burning of black churches across the South? While the broader straight community deplored the fire losses in Madison, they did not really comprehend that true institutions, once part of the very soul of the gay community, were no more.

Modern Connections

Today, gay bars still play important roles as community institutions in Madison and around the state. For example, on their website, *FIVE* nightclub has an excellent list of links to community organizations. *WOOFS* works with a variety of gay-friendly sports groups, sponsors its own block party with *Woof Pride*, and has sponsored a *MADD DAWGS* team for the *AIDS Ride*. *Sotto* and others provide prizes for *AIDS Network's Camp Bingo*.

One of the most ambitious bars with a community event is *Plan B* on Williamson Street. They've joined in the tradition of the *Marquette* Neighborhood's round of citywide-appealing creative summer festivals (think *Waterfront Festival* at *Yahara Park*, *Fete de Marquette* in the rail corridor, *Orton Park Fest* in the named park, and the *Willy Street Fair* on the nicknamed street, all of which *Plan B* also supports). To the festival roster, *Plan B* has added the rainbow-tinged *Fruit Fest*. The new summer music festival also has a 5K run/walk called the *Fruit Loop* with a route through the neighborhood. This past year, it was the summer site of *Camp Bingo*.

The Greek origins of the word philanthropy mean lovers of men—in order to do them good. Gay bars continue that tradition for our community with their good works.

Some of us today may not have connections to historic places that shaped American liberty such as *Lexington*, *Concord*, and *Yorktown* or *Antietam*, *Gettysburg*, or *Shiloh*. Few of us may have marched at the time of *Selma*, but as President Obama said, our American journey is not complete. We all continue on the march to find the geography of equality. For the gay community, our bars have been a most important part of that geography.

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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Support at the Hospital and Home

Caroline Werner explains the Share the Care program and important aspects of the Affordable Care Act.

The Share the Care program is helpful when someone, especially an LGBTQ senior, needs help with daily household chores or errand running, needs someone to accompany him or her to doctor or physical therapy appointments, is recovering from a hospitalization following a surgery or cancer treatments, or is weakened from surviving a flu or cold. Share the Care works in tandem with any professional nursing support that might be coming in.



The government considers [hospital] readmissions to be a prime symptom of an overly expensive and uncoordinated health system, in which hospitals have little financial incentive to ensure patients get the care they need once they leave.

When a person calls or e-mails OutReach to request Share the Care, someone will meet with that person to explain the process and help form a group of people he or she already knows to provide the range of support the ill person needs. There are already several Share the Care groups in Wisconsin.

This program is valuable when we don't all have traditional extended families to rely on, but may have a network of people we know—even if not everyone is especially close to us.

Share the Care should ideally be considered and the group organized before someone is admitted to a hospital, given the emphasis through the Affordable Care Act

that hospitals not readmit the patient within 30 days of discharge. Once discharge plans are in place, the group can then prepare for the return home.

It used to be that discharge planning happened as the patient was about to leave the hospital, but not anymore. The best time to start planning for discharge is just after your family member is admitted to the hospital or rehabilitation facility. The hospital wants to make sure that the patient stays at home following discharge, with more emphasis on care at home.

You should not leave the hospital or rehab facility until there is a safe and adequate discharge plan. This means the plan meets your family member's needs and that you can do what is expected of you.

If you are the caregiver, don't be afraid to tell the discharge team members (usually doctors, nurses, or social workers) such important details as: A) How much time you can devote to being a family caregiver; B) Whether you can continue to work at your job or must take time off; C) Whether you have any health problems or other limitations, such as not being able to lift; D) Whether you have commitments such as caring for children; and I add E) whether or not you have a Share the Care group in place.

As you get ready for the transition, consider such things as necessary equipment and supplies needed; how much room there is for a hospital bed; safety in the home; and what sort of basic care, food, or medications your loved one needs.

A member of the discharge team should answer every one of your questions before your loved one is sent home.

Whether you provide the care for your loved one, hire a professional agency to do so, organize a Share the Care group, or a combination thereof, make sure you know what to do, what limits or restrictions there may be, and whether the person can be left alone for a short period of time.

The government considers readmissions to be a prime symptom of an overly expensive and uncoordinated health system, in which hospitals have little financial incentive to ensure patients get the care they need once they

leave and, in fact, have benefited financially when patients don't recover and return for more treatment.

The Hospital Readmissions Reduction Act (HRRRA), part of the Affordable Care Act, contains a penalty that will be deducted from reimbursements each time a hospital submits a claim, based on the history of readmissions for that particular hospital.

The penalties are part of a multipronged effort by Medicare to use its financial muscle to force improvements in hospital quality. Hospitals will also be penalized or rewarded based on how well they adhere to basic standards of care and how patients rate their experiences.

Most of the HRRRA will affect elders, primarily because it is related only to Medicare (for now) and most of the people who are readmitted within 30 days are elders with chronic medical conditions. If it is considered to be effective, however, commercial insurers are sure to follow suit.

The HRRRA applies only to hospitals that receive reimbursement under Medicare's Prospective Payment System. Critical-access hospitals, long-term acute-care hospitals, inpatient-rehabilitation facilities, and psychiatric hospitals are exempt.

Causes of avoidable readmissions include hospital-acquired infections and other complications; premature discharge; failure to coordinate and reconcile medications; inadequate communication among hospital personnel, patients, caregivers, and community-based clinicians; and poor planning to provide "patient-centered care" in the home.

Fortunately for Dane County residents, this impact will be negligible for the three Madison hospitals. The three hospitals in Madison will be penalized, according to Kaiser Health News, as follows: Meriter 0.14%, St. Mary's Hospital Medical Center 0.0%, and University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics 0.01%. HRRRA doesn't consider patients who died with inadequate care while hospitalized.

[HRRRA information in this article is taken from an article by Stephen Rudolph (owner of Comfort Keeper of South Central Wisconsin) entitled "Cycle of ER, Discharge, Return Beginning to Change" published in Your Family magazine, Winter 2013. This is not an endorsement of Comfort Keeper.] ■

Caroline Werner has a Master's degree in Social Work and was a case manager working with seniors in Dane County before retiring. Now she is the Volunteer Senior Program Coordinator for OutReach.

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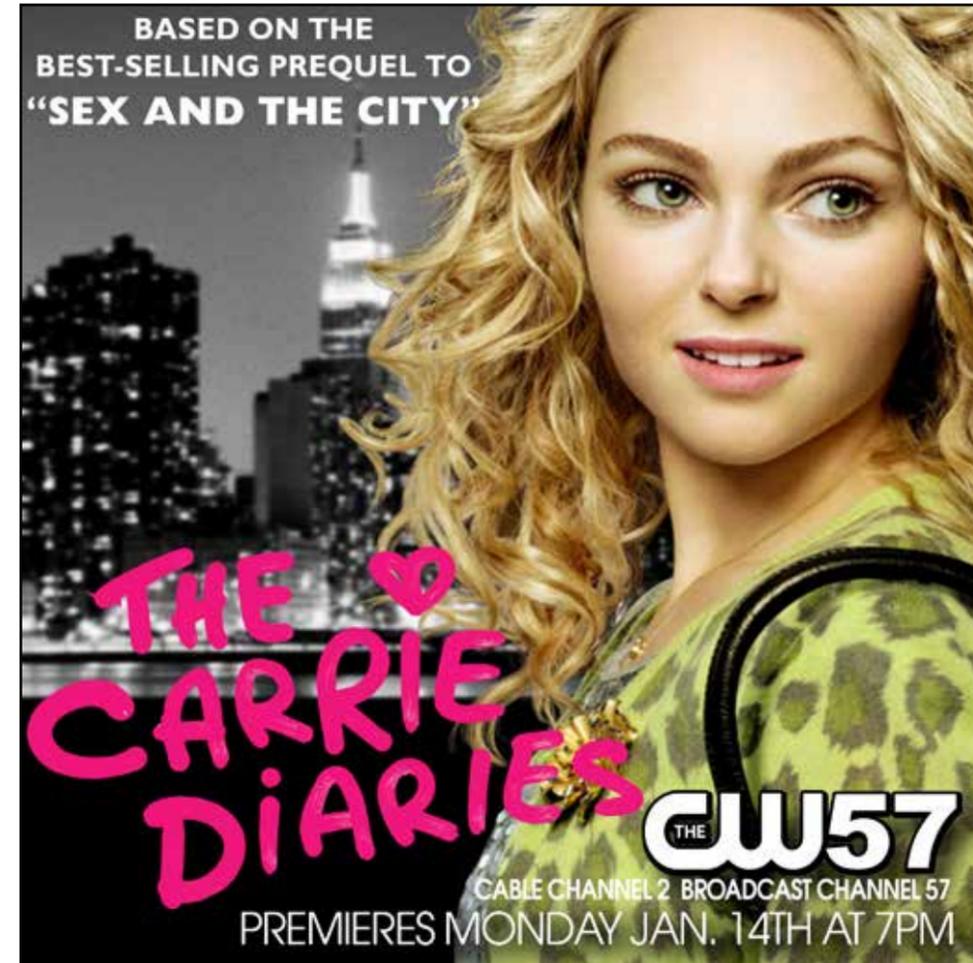
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Connecting the Acronym

Molly Herrmann looks at ways we can build better bonds between LGBs and Ts, and the need to destigmatize mental health issues for everyone.

Most of us are aware of the suicides among young LGB people, seeing them covered in both the national and local news in recent years. In our LGBTQ communities, though, there is a sub-population whose high rates of suicide and suicide attempts are not as well known: transgender people.

According to a study by National Center for Transgender Equality and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, 41 percent of



Nyle recommends addressing people by their preferred names and pronouns, asking questions only when they are relevant to your relationship with the person and not simply because you are curious, and avoiding comments on the person's body or ability to pass.

total transgender respondents indicated suicide attempts, versus just 1.6 percent of the general population. Suicide-attempt rates were higher among transgender people of color than among white transgender people. The survey also showed that suicide attempts increase with unemployment (51 percent); job loss due to bias (55 percent); work in the underground economy, i.e., sex work or drug sales (60 percent); sexual assault (68 percent); and assault on youth by teachers or staff (76 percent).

This article explores external and internal factors affecting these high rates as well as what LGB people can do to support the Ts in our lives. I consulted with Nyle Biondi, MS

LMFT, independent therapist in Madison; and Michael Munson, executive director of FORGE, a national organization focused on violence against transgender people and their significant others, friends, families, and allies, located in Milwaukee.

External factors such as acceptance, discrimination, victimization, and loss of friends, family, and jobs are some of the contributors to depression and anxiety. It's common for a transgender person who has not yet come out to fear and assume rejection and to therefore become depressed and anxious. As a clinician, Nyle says he encourages people to first come out to the people they know will have their backs to get a base of support, no matter how small, and to continue on from there, as acceptance can lead to relief and decreased depression and anxiety.

It's hard to separate the internal struggles from the external struggles. Many transgender people feel a deep sense of disconnection from their own bodies. Others feel fine about their bodies but are uncomfortable with the social roles assigned to those bodies and therefore struggle with being seen for who they are. Based on his experience, Nyle summarizes the influence of contributing factors this way: "Basically...anxiety, depression, and suicide rates are much higher correlated to external factors around acceptance than internal struggles. There's no doubt it my mind that that's true."

In his responses, Michael calls for more awareness of and compassion for mental-health issues in all people, challenging us all to commit to caring about each other even if we have differences. He says, "My overarching beliefs about suicidal thoughts and behaviors are much more about changing the culture in which we live—and that cultural shift is not specifically about trans people or any other demographic population." By noticing that someone is experiencing depression or suicidal thoughts, it is easier to make direct connections, offer support, and help that person find supportive resources. Everyone, urges Michael, should be more accountable and responsible, listen to and believe each other, start looking at mental health and suicidal thoughts/actions as public health issues, address inequalities of all kinds, and stop stigmatizing mental-health conditions.

SOURCES (L-R): Nyle Biondi, MS LMFT, independent therapist; Michael Munson, FORGE co-founder & Executive Director



Specific to transgender issues, LGB people can address their own feelings, attitudes, and behavior that may negatively affect transgender people. LGB and T people can also realize that not all suicidal thoughts or behaviors originate with trans identity; for example, they may be due to years of discrimination and microaggressions that have become integrated and customary.

I asked both how providers can support transgender people. Nyle addressed providers' treatment of transgender people, citing respecting their identities as most important. Speaking to providers, he recommends addressing people by their preferred names and pronouns, asking questions only when they are relevant to your relationship with the person and not simply because you are curious, and avoiding comments on the person's body or ability to pass. He also reminds providers to remember to listen to, validate, and respect clients and to take an open, non-judgmental stance. Finally, he says, "Educate yourself rather than expecting your client/patient to educate you; yet at the same time, listen to them and not assume they will be exactly like the people you read about."

In his response, Michael focuses more on the need for all providers to improve their approaches to mental health. He says providers need to be able to identify symptoms of depression or inferences of suicidal thoughts, take time to listen, and not rush in and out if someone is in distress. Providers need to be aware of the resources in their geographic communities, knowing which are trans-knowledgeable and which are not. All providers need to be unafraid to have discussions about mental health or talk with their clients about the health implications of living with chronic depression/suicidality.

In listening to Michael and Nyle, I was reminded that their suggestions are what we would all want, regardless of our gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation. We want someone to listen with respect and to recognize our struggles. We want someone to believe us and approach without stigma. In other words, whether provider or community member, let's offer others what we would want for ourselves. ■

Molly Herrmann is an activist, researcher, trainer, and consultant on LGBT intimate partner violence (IPV) with Humble Pie Consulting. She also currently works as a health educator in the state AIDS/HIV Program.

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What's Making Local Work

Fair Wisconsin Executive Director **Katie Belanger** gives a rundown of important spring elections and endorsements, and explains why local matters.

Local communities are the next frontier in the movement for full LGBTQ equality. In the past two years, we've seen the greatest gains in Wisconsin come at the local level, where fair-minded leaders made the connection between inclusivity and thriving communities.

And I'm not just talking about Madison and Milwaukee. Since 2011, the Cities of Appleton, Racine, Manitowoc, Eau Claire, Janesville, and Kenosha have extended domestic-partner benefits to their employees. Having personally witnessed some of these victories, I can attest



Do we endorse everyone with a 100 percent score, limiting the value of our endorsement to a mere rubber-stamp? Or do we endorse in order to communicate which candidate we believe is the strongest champion in a crowded field?

to the difficult choices local governments are making in the current economic climate. For example, minutes before approving domestic-partner benefits, the Manitowoc City Council debated whether they could afford to continue paying school crossing guards. These leaders, however, understand that building an inclusive community and investing in the future of their cities are not mutually exclusive proposals. In fact, they are quite dependent.

The stakes in these communities have never been higher. Nevertheless, the visionary leadership I've seen has been inspirational. The leaders we've worked with get it: Invest in your workforce, invest in your community, and

together we will become stronger.

But this change does not happen overnight. Fair Wisconsin PAC (FWPAC), Wisconsin's only LGBTQ political action committee, is one of a few issue-focused PACs that work on municipal-level elections in addition to state legislative, statewide, and federal elections.

It is not a coincidence that as we've identified more pro-fairness advocates at the local level, we've seen more local victories. Therefore, it is not surprising that as we've gained more momentum at the local level, identifying and supporting local candidates has become a key element of Fair Wisconsin's work to advance LGBTQ equality in Wisconsin.

This spring, we have the chance to move equality issues forward in several key races.

In early February, FWPAC formally endorsed Ed Fallone for Wisconsin State Supreme Court. A law professor at Marquette University, Fallone was a vocal supporter of his institution's efforts to build a more inclusive workplace and campus for LGBTQ faculty, staff, and students. This was during the same time I was building a partnership with Marquette that resulted in the extension of domestic-partner benefits for faculty and staff. The partnership also helped shape the creation of the new Marquette University Gender Resource Center.

Closer to home, FWPAC is incredibly proud to endorse Rhonda Lanford for Dane County Circuit Court Judge. Given her tremendous community involvement over the years, it's not surprising that she has racked up an impressive list of endorsements, including Congressman Mark Pocan, Dane County Executive Joe Parisi, State Senator Mark Miller, and some of the most fair-minded state legislators. Her background in the law, both in private practice and teaching, as well as her community leadership, including her role on the board of directors of the Out Professional and Executive Network, make her uniquely qualified to serve as judge.

In Madison, we have no shortage of pro-fairness leaders at the local level. In fact, we have yet to receive a questionnaire that received less than a 100 percent score from any of the candidates in Dane County who participated in FWPAC's endorsement process. It is truly an embarrassment of riches.

So when the FWPAC committee, a mix of

Fair Wisconsin Inc. board members and community leaders, voted on endorsements, we had a particularly difficult time with the Madison City Council decisions. Do we endorse everyone with a 100 percent score, limiting the value of our endorsement to a mere rubber-stamp? Or do we endorse in order to communicate which candidate we believe is the strongest champion in a crowded field? And how do we factor in a candidate's viability? After all, endorsements are also a tool to build relationships with elected leaders, so "picking the winner" is also important.

It is an equation with no simple answer.

We believe it is essential to stand with leaders who are already championing LGBTQ equality. Pro-fairness incumbents with a solid questionnaire and a track record of supporting the community are usually endorsed, regardless of whether they have pro-fairness challengers.

FAIR WISCONSIN PAC 2013 SPRING ELECTION ENDORSEMENTS

WISCONSIN SUPREME COURT: Ed Fallone

DANE COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT BRANCH 16: Rhonda Lanford

DANE COUNTY EXECUTIVE: Joe Parisi

MILWAUKEE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, DISTRICT 2 SPECIAL ELECTION: Khalif Rainey & Ravae Sinclair (dual endorsement)

MILWAUKEE PUBLIC SCHOOLS, BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS

DISTRICT 6: Tatiana Joseph
DISTRICT 7: Claire Zautke

MADISON COMMON COUNCIL

DISTRICT 1: Lisa Subeck
DISTRICT 2: Bryan Post & Ledell Zellers (dual endorsement)
DISTRICT 3: Lauren Cnare
DISTRICT 4: Mike Verveer
DISTRICT 6: Scott Thornton
DISTRICT 7: Steve King
DISTRICT 8: Scott Resnick
DISTRICT 11: Chris Schmidt
DISTRICT 12: Larry Palm
DISTRICT 13: Sue Ellingson
DISTRICT 14: John Strasser
DISTRICT 15: David Ahrens & Hawk Sullivan (dual endorsement)
DISTRICT 18: Anita Weier
DISTRICT 19: Mark Clear
DISTRICT 20: Matt Phair

MADISON METROPOLITAN SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION

SEAT 3: Dean Loumos
SEAT 4: James Howard
SEAT 5: Sarah Manski, TJ Mertz, & Ananda Mirilli (all endorsed)

Open seat primaries become difficult. We attempt to balance indicating who we believe is the best champion with validating everyone in a race who is solidly pro-fairness, all while hoping our choice is successful on Election Day.

The race in Madison's 6th City Council District has been particularly challenging this spring with an issue surrounding Plan B, an LGBTQ owned and operated business. Challenger Scott Thornton has entered the race to ensure that an LGBTQ person from the district has a seat at the decision-making table. He understands that from Stonewall to Plan B, gay bars have played a critical institutional role in the LGBTQ community, a tradition that Plan B has continued. Scott's support for Plan B as an outspoken neighborhood leader shows the community that this gathering place is a vital part of a vibrant and LGBTQ-friendly neighborhood.

By endorsing Thornton, FWPAC is acknowledging that his efforts to support an LGBTQ institution reinforce the importance of having a seat at the decision-making table. If you are not part of the conversation, they are talking about you, not with you. ■

Katie Belanger has been Fair Wisconsin's Executive Director since 2009. She also currently serves as the Board Co-Chair for the Equality Federation, the national alliance of state-based LGBT advocacy organizations.

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Java Cat Coffeehouse

"The Place Where Everybody Knows Your Name"

There's a coffeehouse on the scenic shores of Lake Monona that is truly noteworthy. So noteworthy, in fact, that both Madison and Monona try to claim it as their own (Madison wins).

Java Cat is that place. When you walk in, owners Renee Raspiller and Shari Olson are very likely to greet you by name if they've met you even once before. "Years ago, when I envisioned what our coffeehouse would be like," says Raspiller, "I always thought it would be like the Cheers bar where everyone knew everyone else."

Little did they know back in those early days that this vision would turn out to be a spot-on description of what their little slice of coffee heaven would grow to become. Today, Java Cat is thriving and has become a gathering place for old friends, new moms, graduates, neighbors, and anyone else who has time to drop in.

Prior to opening Java Cat in 2005, both women had stable "day jobs" (Olson as a teacher, Raspiller as a truck driver) but they both believed that there should be more to work than the daily grind that they were in. And from there, a plan started to take shape. From the onset of their planning, their business model had relationship-building tucked into every corner. And that priority is still felt today.

When I arrived for our interview, I was immediately greeted with their warm smiles and handed a steaming-hot mug of fresh coffee. Many of the seats in the house were taken, and people were still coming in despite the blizzard, and all the while the JC staff was greeting nearly everyone by name. Even while we sat at an out-of-the-way ta-



From the onset of their planning, their business model had relationship-building tucked into every corner. And that priority is still felt today.

ble for the interview, customers and friends took time to peek around the corner at us and to say hello to the owners. Clearly, their model is working.

One thing I really appreciate about Java Cat is their variety of menu offerings. This is not just a place to get a great latte (beans supplied by Just Coffee Co-op). They have different homemade soups each day of the week, a splendid assortment of sandwiches, and gorgeous pastries (some vegetarian or vegan and some gluten-free) to pair with your coffee. Honestly, though, what first brought me into their shop years ago was their homemade gelato. Of course, I've been back for the coffee, but even in the winter I rarely leave without a scoop of that amazing gelato. Shari really had to sell Renee on the gelato idea.

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Owners Renee Raspiller and Shari Olson with some of their team.

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As Renee was fond of saying, "This is a coffeehouse, not an ice cream parlor," but thank goodness for us all, Shari convinced her that it

was a sound business decision to offer it.

Another way that the Java Cat women stay connected to their community is through sponsorships of or donations to several local fundraising events, such as the ACT II AIDS Ride, the Java Jive, and the March of Dimes, to name a few. And while they never set out to be "the gay coffeehouse," they also never shied away from the fact that they are lesbians. What was important to them was that all people, young or old, gay or straight, bi, trans, and everyone in between could walk through their door and always feel welcome.

So if you're looking for an amazing cup of coffee, a place to be completely at ease with friends, or a place to indulge in a dreamy scoop of gelato, Java Cat really should not be missed. —**Jeanne Benink**

Photo by Roberto Amezcua



Jeanne Benink is a Madison chef and the sole owner of Simply Served Personal Chef Service. Her friends often call her the soup guru, and she truly does have passion for exploring soups and stews from all over the world. You can find her online at simplyservedpersonalchef.com

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Health-Care Crusader

James Lehman is working for better LGBTQ health care by every available means.

One idea that has become clear to me as a medical student at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health is that the distinction between social problems and health problems is arbitrary. The famous physician Rudolf Virchow said, "Medicine is a social science, and politics is nothing else but medicine on a large scale. Medicine, as a social science, as the science of human beings, has the obligation to point out problems and to attempt their theoretical solution ... The physicians are the natural attorneys of the poor, and social problems fall to a large extent within their jurisdiction." A physician's training allows him or her to be as much attorney as mechanic.

Health is a goal and an indicator of social justice, and the sexual minorities face unequal risks to their health. That is why my peers and I started the student organization PRIDE in Healthcare (Promoting Recognition of Identity, Dignity, and Equality in Healthcare). I have served as co-president since its founding. Our goals are to improve the conditions of healthcare for sexual minorities (LGBTQ and beyond), to increase integration of LGBTQ content in medical education, and to raise awareness of LGBTQ health disparities and their causes while cooperating with others to eliminate them. It's a mission bigger than the hot topics like HIV or suicide. It is about what happens when medicine's culture collides with a partially invisible, highly politicized, misunderstood minority.

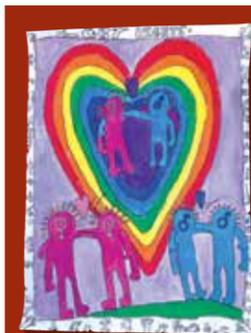
The answer is not just to change laws and policies to remove insurance barriers or give visitation rights; it's about ensuring conditions where all people can achieve health, empowering community members to take ownership of their own health, and helping every health professional bridge the gap between his or her own experience and the patient's.

I did not start medical school thinking I was an advocate. But I looked around and saw there was a lot of work to do. LGBTQ health issues do not get addressed in the medical curriculum until quite a long time after students have learned how to perform medical interviews. Discussions that focus on health disparities include race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status but hardly ever sexual orientation and gender identity. Weird misperceptions, like that lesbians do not need Pap smears (they do) and do not contract STIs (they can), are never addressed in a frank way.

So, if there is any lesson about moving medicine forward for the sexual minorities, it is this: it will take everyone. Patients must articulate their desires and demand better recognition, care providers must reflect on their own knowledge and biases, and health professional trainees must get the right training from the start.

Health is nothing less than a social justice issue. For ourselves and for each other, we should strive for better health by every available means. When we figure out the best way to bridge these important divides, we will feel it in our bodies. ■

It's about ensuring conditions where all people can achieve health, empowering community members to take ownership of their own health, and helping every health professional bridge the gap between his or her own experience and the patient's.



Painted in his Kromrey Middle School art class by 12-year-old Blake Gallay of Middleton.

Thanks to his mom and dad, Barbara Robinson-Gallay and David Gallay, for submitting this to us. Barbara said, "I was one proud mama when I saw this!"

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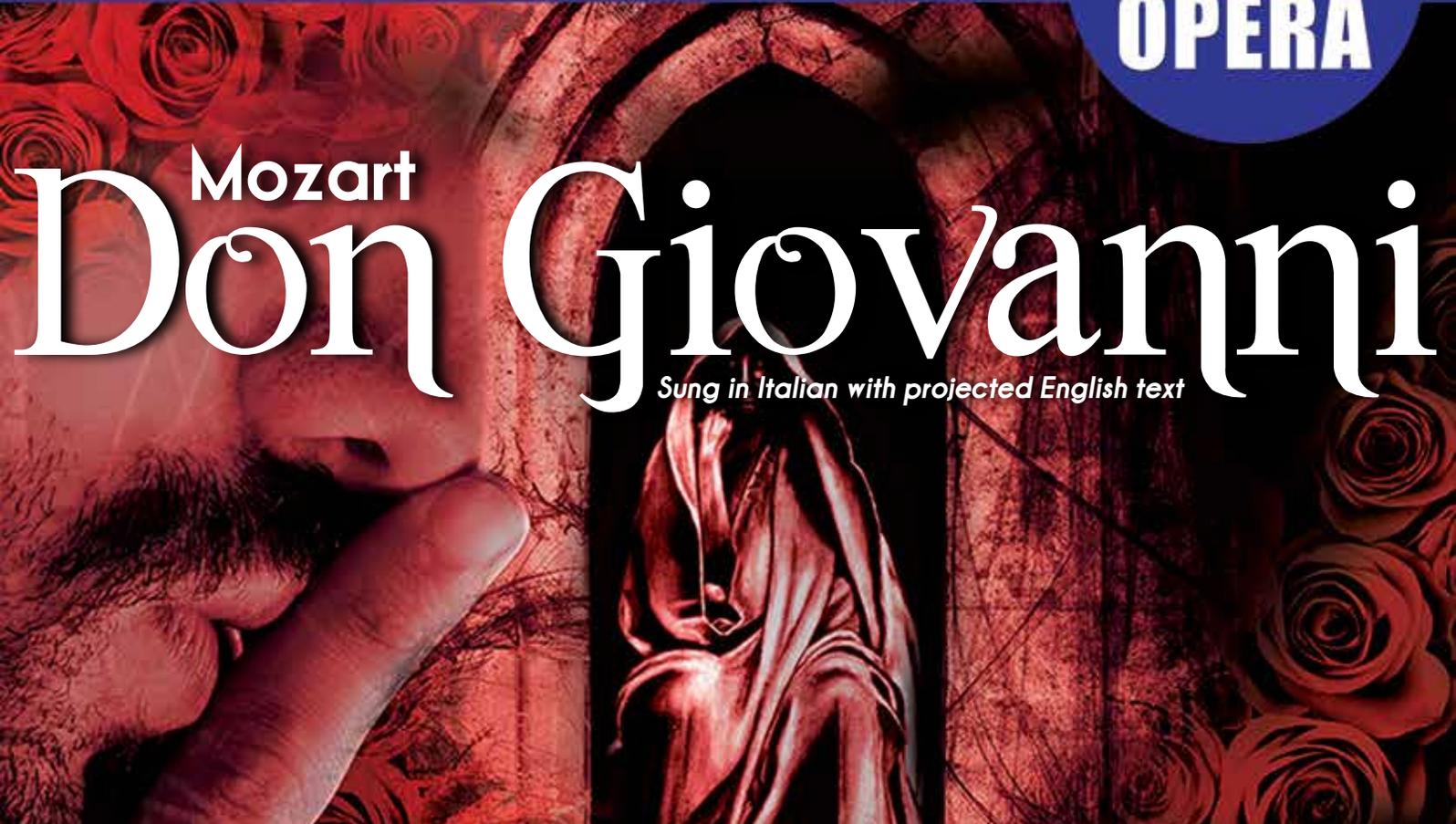
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