

September/October 2013

our lives



ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Out on the Z104 Airwaves

On-air host **Aaron Rogers** finds his voice in Madison radio

Gay Soldiers from World War II

Richard Wagner on LGBT life in the "Greatest Generation"

Children's Theater of Madison

Get to know **Roseann Sheridan**, CTM's artistic director

Madison's LGBT&XYZ Magazine



A Veteran's Vision

Artist and Veteran Yvette Pino creates a link between both artists and veterans with her Veteran Print Project

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AARON ROGERS

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8p-12: **BIG D**

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Madison's LGBT&XYZ Magazine

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2013

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A Veteran's Vision

Cover photographed by **Lois Bielefeld** at **Wisconsin Veterans Museum**.

Hair and makeup by **Daisy Quintal-Lepinski**, KODE salon. Clothing and prop styling by **Yvonne Lopez**.

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I might be calling you a racist.
You'll have to read this to find out.



I'm writing this to white people. Please read Linda Ketcham's column in this issue. I don't know if you'll feel comfortable doing so, but that's really why you should. She brings to the surface a few of the ways that our society and white culture continue to oppress and exploit people of color. She also makes the connection that as white LGBT people, we are well-positioned to be advocates and allies for people of color because we've experienced what oppression feels like and know the harm it can cause. I am on the board for GSAFE, the Gay Straight Alliance for Safe Schools. About a year ago as a board we began a series of racial justice trainings. I would not be honest if I said I was comfortable 100% of the time during them, or even 50% of the time for that matter. But what I can say is that they lifted my consciousness. For that I am grateful. Understanding white privilege takes intentional work. Because you have a choice to do this work is an example of how you benefit from it. If you choose not to learn where privilege exists in your life, perhaps you're unknowingly contributing to the problem instead of the solution. When I was first challenged to educate myself on issues of racial inequity, I was scared because I didn't know where or how to begin. I was also afraid of learning how I might have contributed to it. I'm hoping that by introducing it here and using this magazine to keep these issues in front of us, together we can begin moving towards a more true understanding of equality for all.

Patrick Farabaugh
Publisher

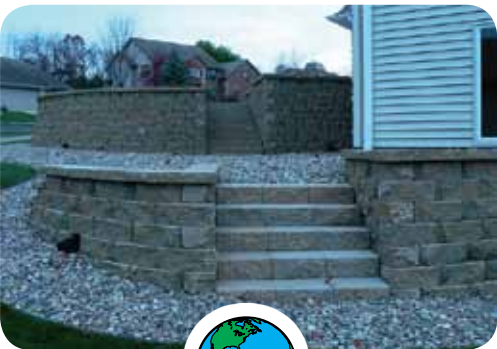
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contributors



Lois Bielefeld grew up in Milwaukee, WI. She graduated from Rochester Institute of Technology in 2002, receiving her BFA in advertising photography. Soon after, she migrated to Brooklyn, which became home for seven years. Recently she returned with her daughter to Milwaukee, where Lois shoots commercial, editorial, and fine-art work. She is currently a Nohl fellow recipient and is working on Concealed Carry portraits in Wisconsin, as well as a documentary film on Ladies Night Out.



Linda Ketcham holds a master's degree in criminal justice sciences with a concentration in counseling from Illinois State University. She was a certified alcohol and other drug addiction counselor with the Illinois Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Professional Certification Association, Inc. from 1986-2006. Linda has over 30 years of experience in human services, including work with incarcerated parents, men and women experiencing alcohol and other drug addiction, and abused and neglected children. Prior to her work with Madison-area Urban Ministry, Linda worked with ATTIC Correctional Services, ARC Community Services, and the Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups. Linda currently serves on the board of Construction Training Inc. and the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, and serves on Madison's Affirmative Action Commission. She is a member of the PTA at Kennedy Elementary, where her daughter attends school, and is a member of First Congregational United Church of Christ in Madison, where she also serves on the Ministerial Relations Committee.

The Importance of Giving Back

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Brittany Graber

President of Ulla Eyewear

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On the business side, my membership in and support of **Dane Buy Local** really exemplifies my belief that supporting businesses and organizations is a win/win, and that we all grow stronger by helping one another. On a more personal note, I've been so grateful for the opportunities I've had at Ulla Eyewear and want to "pay it forward" to help open doors for other young women.

I recently made a long-term commitment to Madison's **A Fund for Women**, which is committed to creating social change by tackling difficult issues that women and girls in our local community face daily, and is based on the belief that when women combine their financial resources through focused philanthropy, social change becomes a reality. Participating in their work has already been so rewarding. But as much as I love our local community and making a difference right here, I also had a desire to do something bigger-picture. Since our world is so wired and connected, it's now possible to make a big difference in the lives of people on the other side of the world who face poverty and a whole host of health issues—including eye issues. So, last year we had a program in which we donated \$20 to **Combat Blindness International** for any purchase over \$600. In all, we donated enough to cover 300 cataract surgeries through that organization! And last month, with the help of CBI, we donated over 600 eyeglass frames to kids in need.

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special recognition

A Historic Call to Ministry

On Sunday, October 6, Rev. Eldonna Hazen will be installed as senior minister of

First Congregational United Church of Christ of Madison. Founded in 1840, First Congregational is an Open and Affirming church with a long commitment to social justice and diversity. Eldonna is the church's first female senior minister as well as its first openly gay senior minister.

As associate minister, Eldonna helped to revitalize the church's pastoral ministry and helped steer a successful capital campaign. She has also been active in ecumenical and social justice issues in Madison, including the AIDS Network, Madison Area Urban Ministry, National Homeless Memorial Services, and United Way delegation on health and safe aging.

How did your faith journey begin? *My faith and life journey began in the small village of Sterling, Nebraska. After earning bachelor's and master's degrees in education, I taught choral and instrumental music before cofounding a deli and restaurant in Lincoln, Nebraska. I first felt a call*



to be a minister while I was in high school but believed, from the Lutheran church in which I practiced my faith, that being a minister and living a life true to my sexuality was not possible. Eventually, however, I found a nurturing congregation that enabled me to again feel assured of God's love. With the support of my minister and my partner Cathy Noth, I answered my long-felt call to ministry and received my Master of Divinity degree in 2005 from United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities.

What brought you and your family to Madison? *In 2006, I was called to become associate minister at First Congregational in Madison, where Cathy continued her career as a volleyball coach and trainer. We and our three children—Spencer, Aiden, and Carlyn—are looking forward to this new chapter in our lives.*

Eldonna's installation will take place at 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, October 6, and is open to the public. First Congregational United Church of Christ is located at 1609 University Avenue in Madison. For more information, visit www.firstcongmadison.org.



OutReach LGBT Community Center has also named Hazen their 2013 Woman of the Year.

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community

OUR ORGANIZERS

Speaking Out

Author and artist **Bridget Birdsall** talks about the need for representing more diverse voices in literature for young people, and how that drove her to start the **Q-Voices Conference**.

Tell us a bit about yourself—where are you from, what do you do with your time, and what do you like about the Madison community? I am an author, artist, teacher, and healing-arts practitioner. I believe in the transformative power of words to change lives. I was raised in Milwaukee and attended Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska, on a basketball scholarship. Since 1992, Madison has been my home. It has been a great place to raise my son and to be who I am in the world. I now live with my partner, Roseann Sheridan, on the near-west side, where I have easy bike-path access to my office at the UW, where I teach writing classes for the Division of Continuing Studies. Any spare time I have is spent writing books that tackle tough topics; issues often overlooked or not considered “commercial” enough for younger audiences. In 2011, I independently published *Ordinary Angels* (available at A Room of One’s Own and on Amazon), a book about siblings surviving the death of a sibling, based on my own life experience. It attracted the interest of a New York literary agent who is now tweaking a traditional publishing contract for a Young Adult novel called *Double Exposure*, about an Intersexed teen athlete. Both stories, set in Wisconsin, have generated oodles of e-mails from readers who connect deeply with the places and people in these books.

What is the Q-Voices Conference all about? When and where is it being held? Who all is involved in supporting and organizing it? On January 1, 2012, I learned that my sister-in-law’s nephew, Jeffrey Fehr, hung himself in the foyer of his family’s home. Jeffrey’s suicide was part of a devastating trend that hit close to home. He was a handsome 18-year-old, a former cheer-leading-squad captain who had endured years of anti-gay bullying that his parents believe contributed to his decision to take his life.

Having a son close to that age, who is not gay but who took flak for having a gay mom, my heart went out to Jeffrey’s parents. His dad told a Sacramento Bee reporter, “For years and



years, people knocked [Jeffrey] down for being different. It damaged him. It wore on him. He could never fully believe how wonderful he was, and how many people loved him.”

I knew that Jeffrey’s story was one of many—too many. I’d been reading story after story about young lives lost to suicide. The stories seem to stick with me; Tyler Clementi, Asher Brown, Seth Walsh.

Reputable reporting agencies countered claims in the press, saying that this was not necessarily a new trend, and that gay teens or teens perceived to be gay are four times more likely to commit suicide due to verbal, physical, and cyber bullying. When I read that every year in our country between 4,000-5,000 teens take their own life, many of them, like Jeffrey, because they have been marginalized, rejected, excluded, and tormented for being gay, a deep sorrow lodged in my heart. This is what ultimately compelled me to do something in my own little pocket of the world.

The first thing I did was present a paper at an Association of Writing Professionals Conference in Chicago in April of 2012. There I spoke of a need for young people to see their lives reflected positively in literature. I even made a call for LGBTQ heroes and heroines. I stressed a responsibility we all share to create conscious, caring communities by being inclusive of diversity and difference in young adult and children’s literature.

Together with several author friends of mine, we challenged cultural, social, and racial assumptions in literature by turning the old adage on its head: “sticks and stones can break your bones...but words can actually kill you.”

My personal goal was to encourage all writers, especially Q-identified writers, to widen the pool of characters in books for young people, and to empower both their characters and their readers to use words in the service of healing instead of hate.

Our audience’s response was so overwhelmingly powerful that Q-Voices was born.

The conference will feature a dozen presentations, performances, readings, and workshops, with presenters from as far away as Texas, New York, and Canada. It will run from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. on September 28 at the Pyle Center in Madison.

Though it is self-funded through registrations, we’ve intentionally kept the fee low to allow as many people as possible to attend: including lunch, it is \$85 before September 6, and \$100 after that. Students with IDs pay \$75. LGBTQ Narratives will host an open mic at 7:30 p.m., which is free and open to the public.

We are looking for individuals and organizations interested in sponsoring admission scholarships and welcome any and all support.

Why do you think it is important to hold a conference like this? How do you think it serves the community?

I believe that sharing our stories can save lives. This is why I believe it is so important for

Q-identified people to be “out” in the world. That just by being ourselves, we serve the world. And I know that there are many places where this is still not possible! But those of us who have learned to advocate for ourselves must now advocate for those who are still struggling to find their own voices in the world.

The purpose of the conference is to provide a platform for Q-identified writers, artists, students, faculty, staff, and our allies to share our stories and successes, so that we can help create a world where our words will build healthy, vibrant communities in which all people have a place at the table.

The whole event sounds exciting, but are there any particular aspects of it or guests that you’re especially keen to experience yourself? This conference wouldn’t be happening without the insightful wisdom and generous heart of Patrick Fara-baugh, the publisher of *Our Lives*. He helped me formulate plans in its fledging stage and he has agreed to share his own inspiring story as our keynote.

A must-see would be the plenary session with Nathan Manske, who founded I’m From



Driftwood (imfromdriftwood.com), a non-profit that “aims to help LGBTQ people learn more about their community, straight people learn more about their neighbors, and everyone learn more about themselves through the power of storytelling and story sharing.”

He has collected queer stories from every state in our union and from around the world. The Smithsonian has recently expressed interest in these stories, many of which are in book and video form.

Where can folks go to find out more about the conference? GO TO: continuingstudies.wisc.edu/conferences/q-voices **OR CONTACT:** Bridget Birdsall (bbirdsall@dcs.wisc.edu) or Helen Klebesadel (hklebesadel@dcs.wisc.edu). ■

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community

A League of His Own

Lee Kampa talks finding acceptance, community, and a place to grow as an out gay man and athlete in the world of Madison softball.

Sports have always been a large part of my life. Growing up in a small rural town in west-central Wisconsin, there wasn't much else to do. I was the youngest of four children, and my brother and two sisters excelled at multiple sports in high school. It was in my genes to be good and carry on the tradition. In high school, I knew there was something different about me, that there were feelings that I was experiencing that were strange. At the time, I couldn't be sure what these feelings were. I knew I wasn't the same as all the other kids. I saw life and sports as a community, but I never really seemed to be part of that community. Instead, it seemed that I was on the outside looking in. How could I carry on these traditions while being different?

I studied meteorology at the UW. Madison was a complete culture shock. My dorm had more people living in it than the population of my town. Here I was able to understand and explore these differences I had been feeling in high school. I was able to meet my first gay person. I found out that there was a community for people like me, a place where I could feel accepted for who I was.

It wasn't long after I started to be comfortable with myself that I began looking for outlets to express myself. In 2005, a friend asked me to sub for a softball game. I didn't blink an eye. I had been playing either baseball or softball since I was five years old. This was my first experience playing gay softball, though. It was a blast. It gave me a whole new perspective on sports. It opened up the possibilities of what and who I could be.

I was later asked to be a regular player on the Madison Rough Riders team, which played in the Madison School Community Recreation men's league. We were an openly gay team playing against heterosexual players. It was the first time I actually felt that I was part of the commu-

Madison was a complete culture shock. My dorm had more people living in it than the population of my town.



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**Felicia Melton-Smyth softball tournament
scheduled for September 14-15**

The Badgerland Softball League holds an annual softball tournament to raise money for local charities as a way to give back to our community. The tournament is named for Felicia Melton-Smyth, who was tragically taken away from us in 2008. Felicia inspired us, leading by example and working hard to give back to the community. It is in her honor that we carry her tradition forward with our tournament. She was a great friend to many of us and we want her passion to live on forever. In the four years of the tournament, we have raised more than \$10,000 for local charities. As an added benefit, the winners of each division receive a donation to a charity of their choice. Donations have gone out to charities in Minneapolis, Chicago, and Alabama. This year, the tournament will be held September 14-15 at McGaw Park in Fitchburg. Concessions are available and we encourage everyone to come out, watch, support, and remember a great friend in Felicia.

For more information about the Badgerland Softball League, please visit us online at www.badgerlandsoftball.com

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community

OUR ATHLETES

of softball. I felt like I was at home. I knew at that time I wanted more. I wanted to share this experience with everyone. This inspiration led me to become the commissioner of the league in 2011.

I knew as commissioner that it was time for Madison to have its own identity in the gay softball world. The board of directors decided that branding a new identity was the right path to success, and so the Badgerland Softball League was formed. We became a registered nonprofit organization and applied and were accepted to be a member of the North American Gay Amateur Athletic Alliance. We expanded our league to have three divisions: Open Recreational (Mondays), Women's Competitive (Tuesdays), and Open Competitive (Sundays).

The Badgerland Softball League has been growing ever since. We welcome all player ages, skills, genders, and sexual orientations. Our mission is that we are an LGBTQ and supportive alliances social organization structured around the sport of softball and designed to promote and advance the health, social structure, and equality of the Madison-area LGBTQ community. In 2012, we sent the first Madison team to the NAGAAA Gay Softball World Series in Minneapolis, and we are sending a team to the 2013 Gay Softball World Series in Washington, D.C. The league has grown and expanded to 25 teams across all three divisions and has an average of about 300 players. These leagues have created the community that I wanted as a kid. I now feel part of a group where I can excel as a player, coach, and leader of an organization. ■



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.

CONNECT with LGBTQ sports

MADISON GAY HOCKEY ASSOCIATION MADISONGAYHOCKEY.ORG/JOINING

RECRUITING, Plays **SUNDAY** nights New player clinics starting.

BADGERLAND LGBT SOFTBALL LEAGUE BADGERLANDSOFTBALL.COM

Plays **MONDAY & TUESDAY** nights Felicia Melton Smyth Tournament is Sept 14-15th at McGaw Park Fitchburg. Fall General Council Meeting in October.

MADISON GAY VOLLEYBALL MADISONGAYVOLLEYBALL.COM

Plays **FRIDAY** nights Fall season Fridays at Pooley's. Cost is \$30 per person or \$200 per team. Skill clinics are offered to everyone.

MADISON MINOTAURS GAY RUGBY MADISONMINOTAURS.COM

Practices Tuesdays and Thursdays at 5:30, 513 Clark St. Cottage Grove. Fall season games: 9/7 vs. Black and Blue; 9/14 vs. Oshkosh (away); 10/5 vs. Fox Cities; 10/12 vs. Milwaukee (away); 10/19 vs. Barbarians. 2014 calendar available soon!

HONEYMOONERS LGBT BOWLING LEAGUE

RECRUITING, Plays **MONDAY** nights Starts September 9! Free bowling, teams are 3 people each. Village Lanes in Monona.

MAD ROLLIN' DOLLS ROLLER DERBY MADROLLINDOLLS.COM

Dairyland Dolls play in the Women's Flat Track Derby Association (WFTDA) Division 1 Tournament in Asheville, NC September 20-22.

FRONTRUNNERS/Frontwalkers

RECRUITING, Meets **SATURDAY** mornings Meets Saturdays at 9 a.m. in the parking lot at Wingra Park for a 3-to-6-mile circuit around the Arboretum.

WOMEN'S BLAZE FOOTBALL MADISONBLAZEFOOTBALL.COM

Tryouts & Mini Camps: Sunday Oct. 20th and Sunday, Nov. 3rd, 1-2:30

WISCONSIN WOMEN'S RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB WWRFC.COM

9/7 vs. Chicago North Shore; 9/14: vs. UW-Madison (away); 9/21 vs. Minneapolis Menagerie (away); 9/28 vs. Saint Cloud Sirens; 10/5 vs. Milwaukee Scylla (away); 10/12: Bye Weekend; 10/19 vs. Twin Cities Amazons; 10/26 vs. Minneapolis Menagerie.



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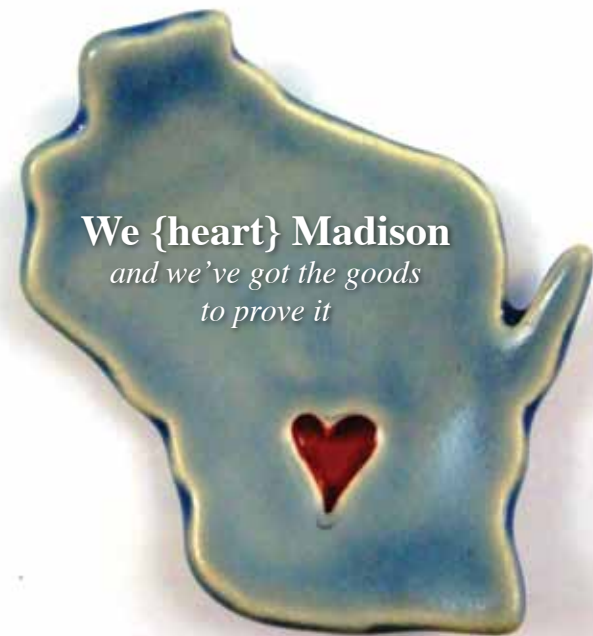
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The Artist Teacher

Max White has blazed a trail as artist and teacher from the queer punk streets of San Francisco to the spiritual reflection of Madison.

Max White has forged an enviable life for herself as a widely exhibited artist and a full professor of art. She has maintained a 13-year long-distance relationship with her partner while keeping one foot in Madison and the other in San Francisco. How does she do it all? "It's not easy," the self-identified nonconformist says, when asked about her accomplishments.

White grew up in Cape Ann, Mass., and completed her schooling on the East Coast. She received her BA from Colby College in Maine and an MFA from University of Pennsylvania-Philadelphia. Soon after graduation, she landed in San Francisco and moved into a one-room-storefront-queer-artist-co-op. Several influences, including punk, street queer, Buddhism, and the clouds molded her into an eclectic artist and teacher. After decades of living a fulfilling counterculture lifestyle, she seems almost bewildered to admit that home is now a near-east-side flat in Madison on a tree-lined street, with two cats who greet her every time she walks through the door.

Her art runs the gamut from "physical to metaphysical." The physical is represented by a strident hard edge that is maintained throughout her body of work and includes lines of energy, emotional-but-direct colors, and manipulation of ink and textures. The metaphysical is depicted in pieces like "The Fire Within," a monotype that some viewers may read as a landscape, but actually depicts a more internal mindscape.

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Since 2000, Max has lived in Madison and taught art at UW-Whitewater. Academic confinement can be stuffy for those who, by their very nature, poke air holes in the status quo just so they can breathe. Max concedes there are challenges, but despite them she has excelled in her position at Whitewater and was recently promoted to full professor.

The reality, she points out, is that the experience of teaching in a university has afforded her many artistic freedoms and career opportunities. A quick glance at her curriculum vitae reveals project collaborations with other feminist and LGBT scholars, learning trips in China, and teaching trips in Oaxaca, Mexico. She clearly has academic freedom when it comes to developing her courses, too. The intaglio unit she created for Introduction to Printmaking is titled "Living the F Word, From Ms. to Bitch: Reflections on Feminism Today."

Max's identity as an artist is inseparable from her overall being. The same rebellious spirit that she embodied when she took on San Francisco in the '90s is what continues to push her into new artistic territory to this day. Twenty-some odd years ago, she was producing promotional graphics for lesbian and feminist journals in the Bay Area, for everything from *Off Our Backs* to *On Our Backs*. Her current work looks at "the intersection of sensuality and spiritual experience." Beautiful bodhisattvas, those who self-sacrifice their one path to nirvana to help others attain happiness, float above the tables in the Winnebago studio she shares with another artist.

Max White has long lived authentically. She is a strong feminist grounded in the intersection of art, life, education, and open expression. She continues to build upon her many accomplishments and push herself artistically. Fortunately, for those who admire her work and for her students, like a modern bodhisattva, she brings us along the way. ■



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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community

OUR ENTERTAINERS



Sing to Live

Gay men's choruses across the country, and most recently **Perfect Harmony Men's Chorus** in Madison, have provided places of comfort and revitalization for **Arthur Durkee.**

*We sing because we love
We sing because we must*

The experience that sparked a lifelong love of singing in men's choruses occurred when, as a college freshman, I joined the University of Michigan Men's Glee Club. The Club went on tour in Europe for several weeks the next summer, and won first place as the best male chorus in the world at the annual International Choral Eisteddfod in Llangollen, Wales.

Music has always been the core of my life and creative work. My mother was a concert pianist and teacher, my father an opera fan. I began music lessons very young, and wrote music from the beginning. I eventually graduated from Michigan with a degree in music composition.

Years later, after I came out, I joined the Twin Cities Gay Men's Chorus, then the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus. I worked with excellent artistic directors and was surrounded by musicians.

That's how I discovered the GALA Choral movement: LGBT people singing to make a better world. I dove in and never looked back. It's not often that you can combine your activism with your artistry. It was heaven grounded in making music. I hope to always sing in a GALA Chorus, wherever life's journey takes me.

*We sing because we suffer
We sing so we can fly*

In 2006, I left California to become full-time live-in caregiver for my parents in Wisconsin until their deaths. There was a GALA Chorus in Madison, but I knew little about it. I'd lived in Madison in the 1990s and was active in the improvised music scene, playing in jazz and rock

bands. But being a caregiver leaves little time for your own needs, and moving from San Francisco to small-town Wisconsin meant going from feast to famine. Some time passed before I contacted many people with whom I used to play music.

Then, just as my parents passed over, I was diagnosed with a life-threatening chronic illness. That was the last straw, pushing me past being able to cope. I felt isolated, lost, afraid. I needed a social outlet as well as a musical one. I was shattered by illness, grief, depression, and an uncertain future. I needed to come back to life again. I needed to sing.

I sought out Perfect Harmony Men's Chorus and signed up.

*When we sing
We feel alive
When we sing
We are free*

Singing is full-body music-making, inherently somatic and spiritual. It has deep power to unify groups through the body's rhythms, muscles and blood and soul all dancing together, as natural as breathing. I can enter a sung performance tired and weak, and come out energized, alive, and aware. Music unites.

Renewing social and musical connections through joining a gay men's chorus was healing and fulfilling. When I first discovered the Radical Faeries, I felt like I had come home. When I joined my first GALA Chorus, I came home, again, to a large, noisy extended family of cousins and brothers. As a boy I was painfully shy, bullied for years just for being different. I can still be socially awkward, so some days I marvel at this direction my life has taken.

*When we sing
Nothing can hurt you
When we sing
You are safe*

I now believe that singing in Perfect Harmony saved my life.

As I was journeying through chronic illness that became life-threatening, Perfect Harmony commissioned me to write words and music for "Heartlands," a large choral work telling the stories of members of the Chorus: what it is like to grow up and live as LGBT people in the rural and small-town Midwestern heartlands. During the writing period, I went through major surgery. Working on "Heartlands" gave me reason to get up in the morning, and reason to keep going, through all the medical hell and depression I was experiencing. Without exaggeration, I can say that writing "Heartlands" literally kept me alive.

I continue to feel supported by Perfect Harmony. I write new choral works and songs, and we keep on performing them. I sometimes get introduced nowadays as our "resident composer," which makes me both blush shyly and feel proud.

I know how lucky I am, and grateful beyond words to convey. And so, I write music to give back, to pay the favor forward. To pass on the welcoming acceptance I have received. To give comfort, to inspire.

Writing music for the LGBT choral movement is both activism and artistry. We sing to make a better world.

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It gathers in our skies
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community

OUR STORYTELLERS

Crafting a Community

Prior to joining the LGBTQ Narratives group, I was a graduate student steeped in academic writing. When I first joined, I was interested in writing creatively (rather than academically) about what it’s like to be queer. The space created by the group became one in which I explored not only my own queer identity and how it was changing and fluid, but also my fears and anxieties about relationships and graduate school, hopes and dreams about myself and my future, and musings about what it means to be queer.

I’m now living in a new city with a very different scene. My current city of Boston contains a much larger queer population and greater rights and support for LGBTQ people, but simultaneously less of a queer community. At my job and socially, I’m surrounded by queer people, but at the same time, I don’t feel a sense of the closeness to the community that I experienced while I was living in Madison—largely attributed to my involvement in the Narratives group. I’ve looked for a similar group in my new city without success. So I decided to start a new chapter of the Narratives group. The process of starting Narratives Boston has taught me that building a community takes time, but I have high hopes that the group will become the sort of safe space that I found at LGBTQ Narratives in Madison.

Is It Clean Yet?

by Sabra L. Katz-Wise

I feel tired. Muscles aching, my heart beats fast. I’ve just spent the last hour frantically cleaning my apartment, doing laundry, watering the plants. It’s Friday night and I’m cleaning. One of many things on my to-do list for the weekend, it’s moved up to be the number one, immediate priority.

Sometimes I think cleaning is an unhealthy habit.

People often remark, “How do you keep your apartment so clean?” I want to tell them the truth.

I clean because I can feel my world spinning out of control.

I clean because I feel so overwhelmed about all the things on my plate that I can’t focus to get any of them done.

I clean because it gives me pleasure to make my surroundings beautiful.

I clean because I want to hit something.

I clean because I feel so sad that I want to curl into the fetal position and lie on the cool wood floor beneath my bed, where it’s safe.

I clean because I cannot stand the thought of you in the same space as someone else that I know you are attracted to.

I clean because I feel so lonely.

I clean because I’m at the end of my graduate school career and I don’t know what I want to do with my life.

I clean because I feel angry that you’ve been gone for so long and I’ve been left here alone.

I clean to procrastinate.

I clean because I feel so anxious that I can’t sit still.

I clean because I can’t stop thinking about you – not you, but you.

I clean because the sheer amount of emotions that I’m feeling doesn’t allow for anything with more thought than this.

I clean to gain control over myself.

I clean because I want to.

I clean to avoid writing something to you that I will regret tomorrow.

I clean to quiet the voices of doubt in my head.

I clean because I’m trying to restore order to my life.

I clean because I don’t know what else to do.

I look around my apartment, at everything in its place, smelling of lime and lavender. I take a breath. I sit still and assess myself. Did it work? I can’t tell yet. So I wait. ■

Looking for the Gulf Motel

by Richard Blanco

In January, Richard Blanco became the first Latino and the first openly gay Inaugural Poet. In his third book of poems he offers vivid memories of his Cuban family and reflects on his current life in Maine with his husband. Blanco writes in a relaxed, conversational style, so that I often felt like I was listening to the author tell stories on his porch. A cooking lesson from his mamá becomes something much more. His grandmother’s homophobic complaints are shown as abusive and yet comical in their foolishness. Conceived in Cuba, born in Spain, and raised in Miami, he laughs at the seeming contradiction of “A Cuban like me living in Maine” with snow and icicles—concluding that “love is thicker than any country.” This is a fine book of poems, worthy of many readings. Published by University of Pittsburgh Press, 2012.

Paradise, Indiana

by Bruce Snider

“I love / the smell of gasoline when, shirtless, / he drives the combine.” Bruce Snider’s second book is a sequence of interconnected poems that gradually reveal the story of his high school love, Nick. Each poem is grounded in details of rural life, where “cornfields interrupt / the hard beauty of the gas pumps” along Interstate 70, and “cows drool green in a lather of gnats.” Although Nick’s life was brief, the poet’s memories of their fishing, cars, and sex serve as one kind of afterlife for his friend. For the reader, the 44 poems record the contradictions and consequences that result when desire must be kept hidden. Published by Pleiades Press, 2012.

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SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2013

Cultural, Social, Service, and Nightlife listings



**Kathy Griffin, live in concert
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**OutReach 40th Anniversary
Awards Banquet
September 20, Monona Terrace**

OutReach celebrates 40 years of service to LGBT people in Madison and south-central Wisconsin. Hosted by Aaron Rogers of Z104, with speakers US Rep. Mark Pocan, State Rep. Chris Taylor, and State Rep. David Clarenbach. lgbtoutreach.org



**Cyndi Lauper
October 29, Overture Center**

'80s pop and gay icon Cyndi Lauper makes a stop in Madison for her "She's So Unusual" tour, part of a commemoration of the 30th anniversary of her debut album of the same name. Rock outfit Hunter Valentine opens. overturecenter.com

ORGANIZATIONS

A representative sampling

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

Alianza Latina
facebook.com/alianzalatinamadison

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)
122 E. Olin Ave., Madison (608) 661-4141
gsafe.org

Gay Softball League
badgerlandsoftball.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
lgbtoutreach.org

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

Perfect Harmony Men's Chorus
perfectharmonychorus.org

StageQ - Madison's Queer Theater
stageq.com

UW - Madison LGBT Campus Center
800 Langdon St., Madison (608) 265-3344
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Wisconsin Rainbow Families
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January 26: AIDS Network Camp Bingo
February 23: AIDS Network Camp Bingo
March: New Harvest Dinner
March 30: AIDS Network Camp Bingo
April: AIDS Network's Red Ribbon Affair
May 2: OUT at the Symphony
May 10: GSAFE Leadership Conference
May: GSAFE Celebration of Leadership
June: Milwaukee PrideFest
June: FruitFest
August: ACT 12: Wisconsin AIDS Ride
August: Wisconsin Capitol Pride

Felicia Melton-Smyth Softball Tournament, September 14, McGaw Park, Fitchburg To honor Felicia Melton-Smyth, Badgerland Softball League hosts the 5th Annual Felicia Melton-Smyth (FMS) Memorial Softball Tournament to remember how much she enjoyed the games and how the games brought the community together, and to thank her for encouraging and inspiring us. fmstournament.com

Out Professional & Executive Network (OPEN) New Member Welcome and Networking Event, September 19, location TBD Join the Out Professional and Executive Network for an evening of networking, speakers, and new-member welcoming. openmadison.org

Dancing at Lughnasa, October 4 – 19, University Theater, Madison This Tony- and Olivier-Award-winning memory play chronicles a brief period in the lives of the five Mundy sisters, a close-knit group of women living in rural Ireland in the 1930s. theatre.wisc.edu

Annual GSAFE Walk/Run/Eat, October 13, Goodman Community Center, Madison Do your part to benefit the Gay Straight Alliance for Safe Schools. The fundraiser includes a 5K walk, a 5K run, and a 10K run—and good food afterward. gsafe.org

Out In October Pride Picnic, October 20, Janesville The Ruby Project invites you to join in the first annual Out in October Pride Picnic. The goal is to have a fun, free, family-friendly event to empower the LGBTQ community in and around Janesville by coming together for one purpose: to celebrate who we are. Exact location TBA. therubyproject.us

Out Professional & Executive Network (OPEN) LGBTQ Career Fair, October 24 at 4 p.m., Union South, Madison Join OPEN at a career fair focused on connecting LGBTQ workers to Dane County's inclusive employers. There will be workshops to help with interviewing skills, resume writing, and transitioning in the workplace. Plus, Yelp's Corey Dane hosts a seminar showing you how to put social media to work for you. openmadison.org

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did you hear?



StageQ welcomes Audrey Lauren Wax as new artistic director

After helping the local queer-focused theater troupe for eight years, Tara Ayers stepped down from the position of artistic director earlier this year. A search was launched to fill the position, and Edgewood College alumna Audrey Lauren Wax was eventually chosen for the job.



"The day they announced it, I turned in my application!" Wax explains enthusiastically. "Since I came to Madison, I've been searching for a theater where I believed wholeheartedly in their mission statement, and StageQ just happened to be that company. It's a home for theater with a different

perspective than what we're seeing in the other companies. We're able to take risks; at times we're going to do scripts that aren't as well known. Yet what we do with those scripts can set us apart from other companies."

Some of Audrey's long-term goals for StageQ include applying for grants, bringing in guest playwrights to premiere their work, and making sure the seasons accurately reflect the community. "Tara has left the company in excellent financial condition," Wax notes. "I'd like to expand upon her work by looking into grant writing. In the future, I'd like to increase our show budgets and possibly offer small stipends to designers. It's also important that we honor the LGBTQIA spectrum by producing thought-provoking materials that continue to challenge our audiences and attract new patrons. I'd love for there to be a season with Angels in America only to be followed by a premiere of a new work. The possibilities are endless and I am so excited to explore them with everyone at StageQ."

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found IN translation

Yvette Pino's "Veteran Print Project" builds bridges between communities by pairing military veterans with artists to create unique and powerful works of art.

Iong before I laced up my combat boots and joined the Army, and even longer before I experienced my first Pride Festival, I learned that my art would be the driving force of my existence. Monumental life experiences that I recall include the fast-ball to the head that ended my Junior Olympic softball career; the accident that left my mother a quadriplegic and then my ensuing

abandonment of her to pursue a career in theater; the moment I quit my NCAA mascot career over gender biases; the moment I chose to join the Army after September 11, 2001; and the moments when I came out to my family.

I do not speak of these experiences to be self-indulgent; rather, I share them as reference to the path that has led to what I am doing now as an artist and founder of the Veteran Print Project.

The Veteran Print Project brings veterans and artists together to share in the veteran's experiences through a fine art print. It is an opportunity to bridge the gap between veteran and civilian by offering a focal point (the print) to encourage a collaborative effort of historical storytelling. The process is simple: a veteran meets an artist. A conversation happens. A print is made. The community is brought into the discussion through the exhibition of the artwork and influential stories. The Project, in its third year, continues to gain strength through its simplicity, but its journey has not been so simple.

Follow the signs or fall off of the cliff

After years in the Army and two deployments to Iraq, I entered back into college life as an art student. I had made a name for myself in



Military innuendo kept creeping into my work no matter how hard I tried to avoid it. I had to make a decision to embrace the muse and get it out of my system or to deny it and find myself stunted for an inconceivable amount of time.

the 101st Airborne Division painting murals for my commanding officers, including General David Petraeus. At the end of my tenure I had painted more than 30 murals, which included three sets of helipads that ranged in sizes up to 30' x 60'. I had mastered the art of compromise and improvisation using rudimentary tools and mediocre paint. I never wanted to create another unit crest or military emblem again.

"No more military subject matter." That was the motto I entered art school with, and I was determined to make it so. I worked diligently to avoid the subject matter at all costs. The cost was high, however, as I felt my creativity lacking and my motivation weak. Military innuendo kept creeping into my work no matter how hard I tried to avoid it. I had to make a decision to embrace the muse and get it out of my system or to deny it and find myself stunted for an inconceivable amount of time.

When I embraced the military subject matter, things started to take off, and art was once again flowing through my veins. I found metaphor and catharsis with each thing I did, and I looked forward to the class critiques to discuss my process and obtain feedback. In those critiques, however, I realized there was a disconnect between me and my fellow students. I was much older not only in age, but also in experience. At first, they responded with interest, but that eventually led to blank stares. I grew frustrated by the lack of interest from a group of youth who did not seem to acknowledge the fact that our country had been at war for nearly 10 years in two regions. I began to withdraw and become isolated. I found consolation in my student veteran organization, where other returning vets were experiencing the same isolation. We understood one another, and we created a community that no longer needed the acceptance from those who just couldn't understand what we had been through and who we were.

Telling your story with no audience is mere ephemera

It didn't take long for me to realize that isolation only led to a greater disconnect and muted my story. I had to find a way to tell not only my story, but also the stories of my fellow vets. And I needed to find a way to encourage civilians to be interested. Thus, the Veteran Print Project was born. Through the development of the project, I have learned several key lessons:

1. It's important that artist and veteran engage in a conversation to encourage discourse from both points of view, and politics should not play a significant role. There is only one rule in VPP: This is NOT a political opportunity.



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Arts & Entertainment

Local doctors and other health care providers share recent trends and identify current needs.

Going back to our handmade, crafty roots



ANTHOLOGY

LAURA T. KOMAI, CO-OWNER

There is a movement toward a more creative life. Millennials are taking traditional materials and incorporating recycled or contemporary design elements.

Related to this is a trend that is important for Anthology, which is the strength of cards and letter writing. I think it is easy to look around at everyone typing texts on their smartphones and think that paper goods are a dying commodity. But we still have a great appreciation for that which is made/cooked/written by hand. We recently traveled to the New York Stationery Show to buy goods for the store. We were especially delighted by the young artists and printers who were showing their wares. The letterpress artists were numerous and lively.

Support for a thriving local music scene



MAJESTIC THEATER

MATT GERDING, CO-OWNER

I've seen some really cool things happening with the music scene in Madison. There are a lot of bands emerging that are gaining national attention, like

PHOX, Masked Intruder, and Count This Penny. But more im-



It didn't take long for me to realize that isolation only led to a greater disconnect and muted my story. I had to find a way to tell not only my story, but also the stories of my fellow vets. And I needed to find a way to encourage civilians to be interested.

2. Traditional printmaking techniques are the only allowed mediums because of their ability to create multiples, and because the process itself mimics military disciplines.

3. No Art Therapy: As a veteran, it often feels like everyone is trying to fix you. Though the Veteran Print Project embraces the healing factor, our mission does not seek it out.

4. You cannot compare trauma. That statement is one of the greatest lessons learned from this project. The importance in bridging the gap between veteran and civilian is to validate the experiences of both parties. A civilian may not understand what it is like in combat, but that does not mean that he or she doesn't understand trauma. The creation of the portrait provides a conduit for open discourse so that participants can exchange experiences without feeling like there is an ulterior motive.

Looking within, reaching out

The key factors that I have taken away from working with veterans mimic experiences I have encountered in the LGBTQ community. We often choose to isolate and to exist within our own established communities because it is comfortable and safe. We find comfort in

the common experience of concealing our true selves for the sake of society's status quo. Sometimes we choose not to engage in dialogue with those who reject our lifestyle because we automatically assume that they do not understand.

However, sometimes that dialogue may result in another person's new understanding. I created the Veteran Print Project to draw me out of my veteran isolation. For the last seven years I have had the wisdom of my partner, Denita, to guide me in the important lessons of living an out lifestyle, and she has gradually drawn me out of the isolation that I so often define as privacy. By living honestly, every day, we energize the idea that the LGBTQ community is not much different, if at all, from everyone else. In fact, we are often far less queer than our society's depiction of us. But we must first introduce ourselves and allow discourse to exist.

In the months to come I would like to host a Veteran Print Project that features the stories of our LGBTQ veterans. This, I believe, will assist those of us who encounter two types of isolated life, often at the same time. We must tell our story. We must engage in discourse with communities outside of our own. Perhaps this will assist me in confronting my own demons as well. Perhaps it will give me the strength to demand my partner's presence at the next military gala or function where I am the keynote speaker or special guest. The Veteran Print Project has taught me that we all have those monumental life experiences that linger in the depths of our psyche. Individual experience is unique to one's self, but common experiences are universal and filled with imagery that draws out the patterns of our lives.

We all have stories to tell. By giving someone a forum to have a conversation, we open up the possibility that we may find common ground or a new perspective. I believe in the power that art has to accomplish this. ■

The Crossman Gallery at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater presents:

Civil Rights Under Three Hats: Photographs by Matt Herron



In the summer of 1964, Herron organized a team of eight photographers, The Southern Documentary Project, in an attempt to record the rapid social change taking place in Mississippi and other parts of the South as civil rights organizations brought northern college students to work in voter registration and education.

Some Movements of the 1970s & 1980s: Selected Photographs by Cathy Cade



This exhibit is made up of thirty key images from the 1970s and 1980s, selected by Cathy Cade from her archives at the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley. Her main interests, as depicted in the photographs, are: women at work, building a lesbian feminist culture, and LGBT and Disability Rights demonstrations.

Both exhibits will be on display from:

October 15 – November 16

Diversity Forum: November 7 and 8, the artists will be present

For additional information: <http://blogs.uww.edu/crossman/> or call 262.472.5708. The gallery is located in the Greenhill Center of the Arts, 950 West Main Street, Whitewater, WI.

did you hear?

Oregon School Board passes trans-inclusive nondiscrimination policy

At its July 8 meeting, the Oregon School Board unanimously voted to pass an updated anti-harassment/anti-discrimination policy that now has trans-inclusive language. Specifically, the policy states that "the Board prohibits discrimination or harassment based on transgender status including gender expression, gender identity, and gender non-conformity."

Among others, Madison and Middleton-Cross Plains added similar language in 2005, and McFarland followed suit earlier this year. The move by Oregon came at the urging of students, teachers, and community members alike.



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portantly, I'm seeing the community rally behind them. They're turning out to support them and taking a great deal of pride in building their individual scene. Madison seems to be embracing the idea that live music can be an incredibly positive thing for the community. It brings economy, younger people wanting to live here ... and it just really improves the quality of life overall.

Variety and bite sizes are the spice of life



DANE ARTS CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION

MICHAEL BRUNO, HOST OF "BRUNO'S BEST BETS" ON WISC-TV

The latest trend in local theater is "an evening of short plays." From StageQ's Queer Shorts to Playwright's Ink, it seems audiences are liking the idea of seeing short one act plays presented by local playwrights, actors, and directors. Also trending is the marathon page-to-stage presentations, a la Mercury Players' "BLITZ" and Tony Trout's "Are We Delicious?" These are conceived, written and performed within a few days and are presented for one or two nights only. It gives an opportunity for local writers and actors who want to take part in the theater but can't or don't want to commit to several weeks of rehearsals and six to eight performances.

Broad representation of LGBT lives in books



UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN PRESS

RAPHAEL KADUSHIN, SENIOR ACQUISITIONS EDITOR

While more LGBT characters and voices are popping up in TV and movies—and online, of course—books have always offered the richest, broadest representation of LGBT lives and voices, and that's

member profile



NAME:
Steve Mendez
TITLE:
Director of Marketing
EMPLOYER:
United Way of Dane County

Like all United Way of Dane County volunteers, donors, partners and employees, Steve stays focused on solving the root causes of issues identified and prioritized by the community in the areas of Education, Safety and Health. Since 2008, he has been working to invite everyone in Dane County to join the LIVE UNITED movement – which positively impacts all our residents. Part of the local community since 2002, Steve lives on Madison's east side.

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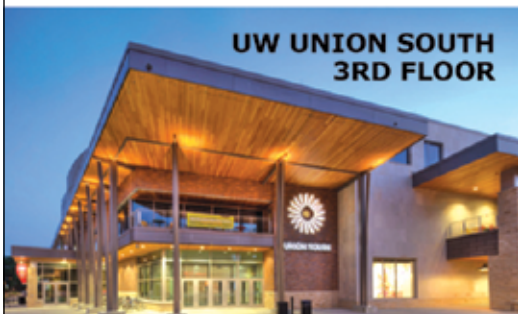
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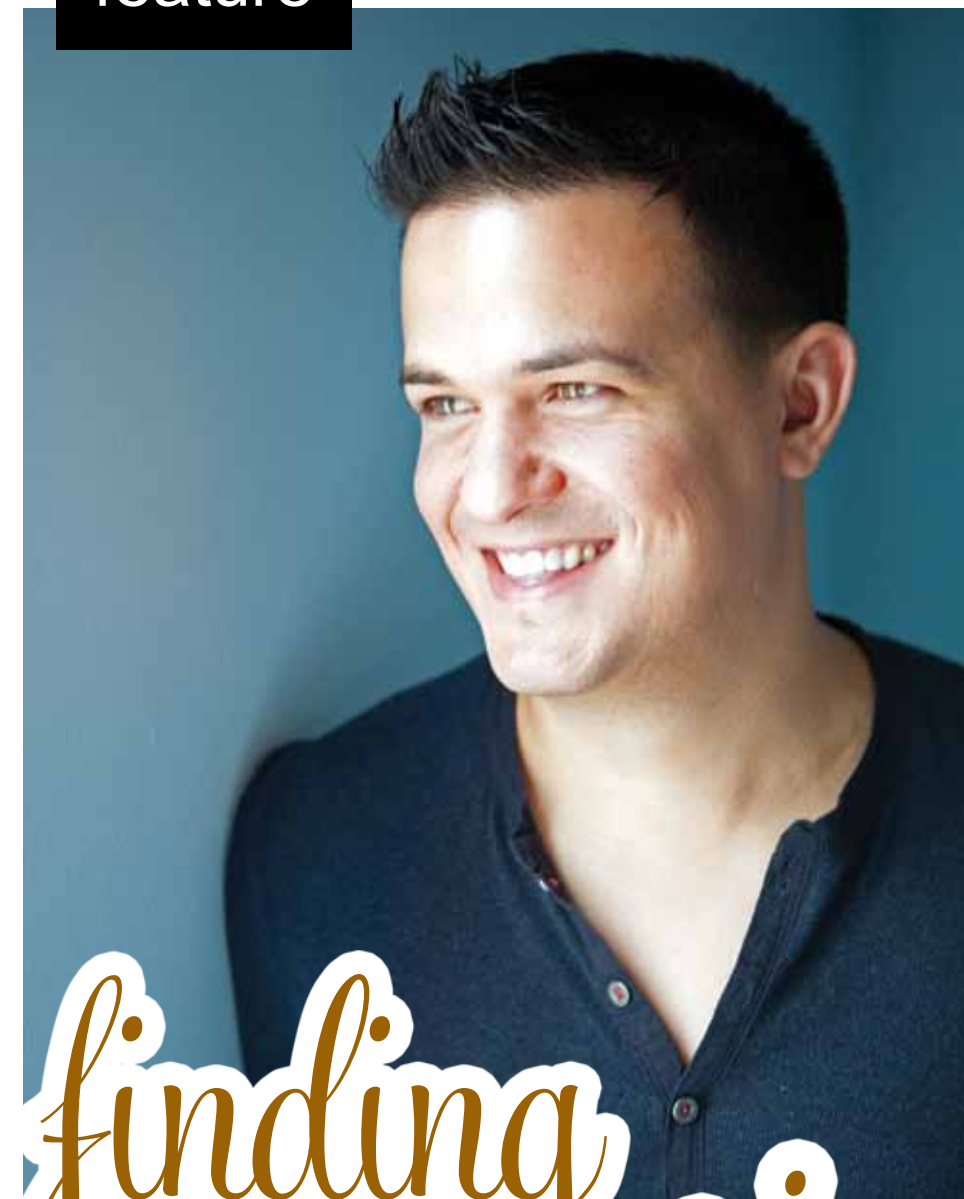
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feature



finding HIS voice

Z104 radio host **Aaron Rogers** traces a curving path to chasing his dream of being an out professional on-air personality.

It all began back when I was in third grade. Me, my Super Nintendo, and the Madden NFL franchise. In general, I was quite the shy kid, with few friends. However, after rushing home from elementary school to pop in this video game, you'd have never guessed. I would begin a contest, select my team (the Packers, of course) and mute the volume. Why didn't I want to hear the cheering fans in the background of my TV after scoring a touchdown? The reason was simple: I was providing the play-by-play, all while vigorously hitting the "X" and "Y" buttons on my controller. From that moment on, I knew I wanted to talk for a living.

I grew up in small-town Plymouth, Wisconsin, right in the center of Sheboygan County. Most of the people I grew up with moved back home after school, pursuing careers in many different occupations from plumbing to nursing to working at the cheese factories to, well, farming. But in all seriousness, I knew none of those career paths were my cup of tea. I wanted to do some-



I was fascinated by everything I observed while shadowing Mark. The soundboard, the selection of music, the tone and conversations he was sharing with listeners live on the radio. I remember thinking to myself, "I can do that!"

thing different, utilizing all the tools and pockets of information people had put in my head growing up and turning that into my own product.

I left for college and attended UW-Green Bay for a semester before transferring to the local community college. Although I enjoyed the campus life, living with peers in a dormitory, and constant partying, I wanted to focus all my attention into my work. So I moved into a cheap apartment and started attending classes at Northeast Wisconsin Technical College for...wait for it...law enforcement. "Law enforcement?" said my parents. "Well, I need a degree in something," I said. My parents (my mom especially) were baffled by the idea of me becoming a police officer. Needless to say, after graduating and spending a year and a half as a community-service intern for the Green Bay Police Department, I decided it wasn't the career for me.

Fast-forward to summer of 2008, and I'm not only struggling with my parents accepting me as an openly gay 21-year-old, but also struggling to figure out what to do with my life. Around the same time, I befriended a man by the name of Mark Turner who worked at WIXX-FM Green Bay (Northeast Wisconsin and Fox Valley's Top 40 station). The station happened to be a block away from the police department, so it was convenient for me to come over around 11 p.m. and shadow him. I found myself actually getting home around 3:30 a.m. I was fascinated by everything I observed while shadowing Mark. The soundboard, the selection of music, the tone and conversations he was sharing with listeners live on the radio. I remember thinking to myself, "I can do that!"

My creative juices started flowing. I can recall wanting more. I shadowed Mark well into the summer, and was inspired to move to Milwaukee and complete my bachelor's degree at UWM for communications in mass media.

In the fall of 2008, while in school, I landed an internship at 99.1 The Mix (WMYX-FM). After a few months of interning at one of the stations I grew up listening to, my boss called me around 11:30 p.m. the night before Thanksgiving to fill in on sister station 103.7 KISS-FM. Let's just say I ended that phone call and nearly passed out. KISS-FM? I couldn't believe it. I was a few hours away from going LIVE on the air at one of the biggest Top 40 stations in Milwaukee.

After a few years sharpening my on-air skills and studying the ins and outs of the industry, I wanted to take my new life to the next level and become a full-time on-air personality. I ended up back in Green Bay and started out overnight live on the air, quickly becoming the nighttime personality, taking over a shift previously held by someone

[A&E] WHAT'S TRENDING

truer now than ever. What's coming up? Locally, the University of Wisconsin Press has a lot for fall. Just out is Joel Derfner's very funny *Lawfully Wedded Husband: How MY Gay Marriage Will Save the American Family*, which is by turns a very comical and very poignant memoir about Derfner's gay marriage in Iowa, which underscores the absurdity of the current situation; gays can get married just over the border—we can almost see them—but not in Wisconsin. Coming up next month from the Press is Christopher Hennessy's *Our Deep Gossip: Conversations with Gay Writers on Poetry and Desire*, which includes smart but fun and downright gossipy interviews with a who's who of American gay writers, including Wayne Koestenbaum, John Ashbery, and Dennis Cooper.

Small-scale projects with big impact



INDEPENDENT ARTIST
MICHAEL VELLIQUETTE

Independent, artist-run projects that have emerged recently have the potential to create webbing between some of the individuals and institutions invested in contemporary art in Madison.

This past year saw the creation of Spackle Madison (spacklemadison.com), a blog where artists list and review their favorite local and regional exhibitions. The ever-so-charming Little Galleries (littlegalleries.org) also opened. These are literally small glass vitrines sited outdoors at locations on both Mifflin and Monroe Streets that exhibit small-scale works. Speaking of tiny, Lovey Town (loveytown.org) is another Lilliputian project space opening, featuring quarterly exhibitions of artworks at miniature

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WHAT'S TRENDING [A&E]

scale. Lastly, in tandem with the “Wisconsin Triennial” exhibition this fall at the MMoCA, the duo Spatula and Barcode are organizing a series of intimate, tabletop performances at coffee shops. Visit their website to sign up for a slot. These kinds of projects offer new and engaging opportunities to experience art, while also providing more platforms for our art community to cohere.

Queer youth theater goes nationwide



PROUD THEATER
BRIAN WILD, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Looking back as we enter our 15th season this fall, I can't help but feel blessed to have been involved for so long in one of the oldest queer youth theater (QYT) groups to exist in the United States.

It was, of course, inevitable that other QYT troupes would develop around the country, and in 2011, Proud Theater became involved in a fledgling consortium of 21 likeminded organizations, which would later become known as the Pride Youth Theater Alliance (www.prideyouththeateralliance.org).

Hollywood comes to Broadway



OVERTURE CENTER FOR THE ARTS
TIM SAVERS, VICE PRESIDENT OF PROGRAMMING AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The key demographic for a Broadway ticket buyer is female Caucasian, between the ages of 50-64 with an average household income between \$50,000-\$150,000. So, what type of shows does she like to see? Broadway producers think it is hit feature films turned into Broadway musicals. To



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Emceeing the Out Professional and Executive Network (OPEN)'s annual dinner; hosting AIDS Network's Camp Bingo with WIBA's Chandra Lynn and Cass Marie Domino; emceeing FruitFest and hanging with Cazwell backstage; driving the Z104 Hummer in Madison's Pride 2012 Parade; with Katie Kruz at WET Nightclub in the Wisconsin Dells.

for over 10 years at WIXX-FM. Everything seemed to have fallen into place between work and my personal life until the day after seeing Lady Gaga in Milwaukee in September 2010. I walked into my program director's office only to find that the station had decided to go in a "different direction." Frustrated, feeling as if I had failed, I immediately called all of my old contacts and got back on my feet doing part-time work for a few weeks until I landed a full-time gig again, this time at Z104 in Madison. Merely three weeks had passed, and I already networked my way to a new opportunity and a breath of fresh air. Little did I know this move would be the one that would change my life.

When I moved to Madison I was broke, clueless, and missing a sense of community and family. My relationship with my parents had improved, but it wasn't the same love and affection you get from peers in a territory foreign to your comfort zone. It wasn't long before I began to call Madison my home. From getting involved in the Out Professional and Executive Network to emceeing Fruit Fest, I have been blessed with all of the open arms this community has presented me with. For me, having a successful radio show as an openly gay man is merely a fragment of who I am and how the public perceives me. I enjoy spending time at area shows, festivals, hanging out with friends, exploring small communities around southern Wisconsin, and spending time with my boyfriend, Michael, who continues to inspire me to achieve new heights. Nevertheless, I'm still blown away by the love and generosity of this community.

Since living here, I've learned how vital it is to find mentors. These are people who may have walked in your shoes, provide you with opportunities for personal growth, and connect you to people who share the same values that you do. I can honestly say I'm not sure I would be the person I've become without those key individuals in my life.

Being someone in the media, I continually try to integrate our station's brand into the lives of individuals both adolescent and adult. In addition, I find it extremely valuable in a world of syndication to have someone local who walks, eats, breathes, and experiences the same aspects of the community that you do. There is something so powerful and unique in knowing that you can listen to your favorite station, attend a station event, participate in community fundraisers or organizations, and develop a special connection with the personality you've grown accus-

Since living here, I've learned how vital it is to find mentors. These are people who may have walked in your shoes, provide you with opportunities for personal growth, and connect you to people who share the same values that you do.

tomed to listening to. That in itself is a good feeling beyond words. I am sincerely fortunate and never do I take a single day for granted.

Through all my personal and professional fluctuations, I've learned a lot about myself. I've figured out that if you truly believe in something, you are the only one who has the ability to affect whether it happens. You alone are responsible for the energy you bring into the room. If you want something bad enough, work hard, and you'll be rewarded with many exceptional things. It's never an easy journey, but the reward outweighs the complications it takes to get there. You hear that phrase now and again from people as you mature, but seriously, it's true. I'm in the heart of doing what I had always dreamed of accomplishing since I was that third-grade boy playing Madden—talking, sharing, and imagining. To be honest, I'm actually off to pick up this year's copy of the game. ■

[A&E] WHAT'S TRENDING

take this trend even further, a deal has been signed between a team to develop nine stage musicals based on the 20th Century Fox film catalogue. What's this mean for touring Broadway? If they're hits you'll see them locally. Two such examples will play Overture this season—Flashdance the musical and Sister Act.

Shattering stereotypes, one musician at a time



MADISON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
TERI VENKER, DIRECTOR OF MARKETING

I love when stereotypes are shattered. And Tine Thing Helseth does just that. Tine is the fast-rising female Norwegian trumpet star of the classical music world—and she's only 25!

Tine has an inspiring philosophy about the music she plays. "You should try to tell a story when you play music. When I do it, you won't hear the lyrics, but I still want people to feel that I am telling them a story. My voice is the trumpet."

She'll be performing her youthful brand of music magic with the Madison Symphony Orchestra Feb. 14-16.

Adaptations are all the rage



STAGEQ
AUDREY LAUREN WAX, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Adaptations are HOT! Theatrical adaptations of favorite novels, films, short stories, poetry, and even classical plays are being written and performed all over the world. These reworkings are enticing a whole new audience to come out and experience theater for the first time and they are enthusiastically re-energizing the typical theatergoer.



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PHOTOGRAPHED BY JESS DENNIS

THE circle OF art

Children's Theater of Madison's **Roseann Sheridan** found acceptance and a lifelong passion among the drama geeks.

my freshman year of high school, I went to New York for the first time on a bus trip with the drama club. I saw the original production of *Jesus Christ Superstar* and was blown away. It was so compelling, so mind-blowing, so cool! It was like the first taste of something you are forever craving afterward.

In so many ways, being involved in theater in high school really shaped and saved me. I was pretty much a tomboy and rode a motor-

cycle. I remember getting to school early so other kids wouldn't see me with my helmet on and razz me about it. I wasn't cool, or popular, or interested in dating (though I never thought about why!).

The drama class was where everyone was welcome, and where I felt I could really be myself. We were all into the "touchy-feely" kind of drama exercises, and our drama teacher was especially interested in avant-garde theater. There were no desks in the classroom, nothing traditional at all. It was very much a feeling of belonging to a community of people who were like me. My first acting role was in ninth grade as Edward Emerson in *The Night Thoreau Spent in Jail*. The boys were really miffed that a girl had gotten the part instead of them. Needless to say, playing a boy's part was not hard for me!

When I was a junior in high school, I had to choose between playing varsity softball and being involved in the school plays. I chose the latter, and I really think that set me on my career course, even though I never thought I could make a living in the arts.

Living in the Washington, D.C., area in the early '70s was a great time to be in the arts. I remember in high school seeing everything from traditional theater at the Kennedy Center to avant-garde theater in a little basement black-box space. It really exposed me to a wide variety of

styles and material.

I always loved working backstage and assisting the directors. I was on every crew there was and spent all my after-school and Saturday hours in the auditorium—painting scenery, building sets, hanging lights, and taking notes for the director at rehearsals. Even though I felt comfortable around the drama gang, I was pretty insecure when it came to being on-stage. In college, I was able to get work-study jobs in the theater department as a stage carpenter and electrician.

I didn't plan on majoring in theater in college. I thought I would be a translator and majored in Russian Studies. But I kept taking theater courses, and soon I had enough to double-major. In the summers I worked for an outdoor theater in Richmond, Virginia. I was a true techie—proudly wore a tool belt, overalls covered in paint, and work boots. I loved to be around the people and the art, and I loved being perched up high in the back of the theater running the followspot for the musicals. Again, I found family with my theater friends. And now I was even getting paid to do all this cool stuff!

The director of the summer theater was openly gay, and he and I had many long talks about "being yourself." He knew long before I did where my orientation was—and so did everyone else. Finally, at 22, I came out. Not through a relationship, but just through reflection and realization. Looking back at my life to that point, so many things made sense. It also was true that there was a general sense of acceptance of being gay in the theater community. This helped a lot.

After college I worked for a touring educational theater company called Theatre IV, a company run by some alumni of my college. We did a lot of original material that toured to schools and rural communities in Virginia and West Virginia; theme-based plays and contemporary adaptations of well-known stories, like "The Ugly Duckling," about being or feeling different. I was the stage and road manager and coordinated all the logistics. We traveled in a van and went from sunrise to late at night. It was a great experience, and I was struck by how engaged the kids were and how much the messages of the plays impacted them. I think about that experience a lot now that I'm running Children's Theater of Madison. I know my commitment to theater as an educational tool is directly related to my work with Theatre IV.

I'm proud of the mentorship aspect of CTM—where adult actors can role model for younger actors; and young actors can demonstrate for adults how to be free of self-editing and joyfully let their imagination lead the way.

A year after college, I went to grad school to get my MFA in directing. I really wanted to focus on the craft of being a director. After grad school I worked with a film company as a casting assistant, which led me to working at a TV station in Charlottesville, Va. It was there that I entered into my first "serious" relationship. My then-partner graduated from UVA and decided to come to the UW for her doctorate. I came up to visit and then moved here in February. From Virginia. In February. I had NO IDEA how cold it could be!

Shortly after moving here, I got involved with Madison Rep as a stage manager. I also started knocking on the door of American Players Theatre. It took about two years, but I finally got my foot in the door of APT and was hired as an Equity stage manager. I spent the next 17 years of my life out there, helping to build the company both literally and figuratively. In my tenure there, I went from stage manager to production manager to associate producer to associate artistic director. I was involved

Maker spaces, shared spaces, & placemaking



MADISON ARTS COMMISSION
KARIN WOLF, ARTS PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR

Access to both the seeds and fruit of the creative economy is a growing trend. Maker spaces like Sector 67, shared work spaces such as 100 State, and pop-up maker programs like the Madison Public Library's "Bubbler" are cutting the edge of innovation and creativity. Also part of the buzz are "lighter, quicker, and cheaper" placemaking projects that help define neighborhood character and simultaneously make Madison more alive and vibrant.

Public art to add to a neighborhood's identity



INDEPENDENT ARTIST
LYNN LEE, PAINTER AND BUSINESS OWNER

I've been noticing welded sculptures and structural building accents popping up all over Madison. I was surprised to find out they were not by a single artist, but by the local husband and wife team of Aaron Howard and Erika Koivunen. Both participated in the construction and finishing of the big Birds sculptures between the tracks on South Paterson designed by the well-known local artist Dr. Evermor.

Aaron, a blacksmith, creates beautifully detailed custom ironwork. He is responsible for the Dragon Slide and the recently installed garden trellis at the Madison Children's Museum. Erika, who specializes in art created from scrap metals, designed and built the sculptural benches at B.B. Clarke beach, and built the flowering shrub sculpture in front of the Madison Sourdough



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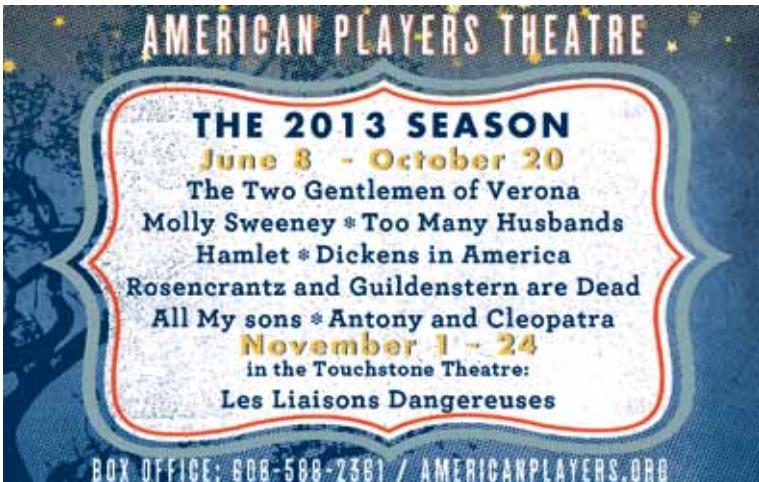
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WHAT'S TRENDING [A&E]

Company on Williamson. Both artists are collaborating on the Williamson Gateway Sculpture that will welcome all to the Marquette Neighborhood.

Using art to solve real-world problems



UW ARTIST INITIATIVE
KATE HEWSON, INTERDISCIPLINARY ARTS
RESIDENCY PROGRAM MANAGER

"Placemaking" is a hot concept right now among city planners and those seeking to reinvigorate blighted urban neighborhoods. Artists are usually among the first to be called upon in efforts to activate spaces and create healthy communities. We need to highlight the ways in which the arts are essential to solving real-life problems.

New blood, new exhibits, new possibilities



EDGEWOOD COLLEGE ART GALLERY
DAVID WELLS, GALLERY DIRECTOR

I'm thrilled to succeed Paul Baker Prindle (big loss to Nevada for the Madison community) as the new Gallery Director at Edgewood College. He set a very high bar for quality of exhibitions in the new Stream art building. This year's calendar opens with an exhibit of the second-largest collection of tinsel art in the U.S., donated to Edgewood College by the Kohler Foundation [August 15 – Sept. 20.]

The year will carry on by featuring several exciting up-and-coming visual artists from Madison, Chicago, and our sister state of Kassel, Germany. I am excited to develop greater outreach programming for the Edgewood College Gallery for all our exhibits.

in the planning and building of bathrooms, dressing rooms, audience seating, the stage, and production facilities. I went around the country auditioning actors. I hired designers, directors, and technicians. I did a lot of different things over the years and still consider APT my artistic home. It was a tremendous experience and was instrumental in forming my artistic aesthetic, focusing on the power of clear, honest storytelling, and respecting the text. If there's one thing I strive to achieve in every production it's that the words are clear, well spoken, and integral to the telling of the story onstage. My years at APT solidified that core value.

I never seriously thought about running a children's theater company. But when I heard that Children's Theater of Madison was going to suspend its season in 2006 and potentially close, I got in touch with an APT board member who was also connected to CTM, and urged him to find a way to bring me on to direct *A Christmas Carol*. In September of 2006, CTM was resurrected (thanks to the philanthropic support of many Madisonians) and I produced and directed *A Christmas Carol*. It was a big success, and I got hired back in the spring to direct *To Kill A Mockingbird*, featuring Richard Ganoung as Atticus. It also did really well. CTM reorganized, formed a new board, and launched a search for a new producing artistic director. I applied and was hired.

I've been running CTM for six years now, and it has been more rewarding than I ever thought possible. I feel like I've really come full circle. Back to my roots, I guess, by providing a place for young people to find themselves, to express themselves, and to belong. A place to do high-quality theater productions and exceptional educational programs. A place to fulfill the mission to "create vibrant theater experiences that engage, educate, and inspire young people and their communities." I have now seen kids grow up from being shorter than me to towering above me, from being shy and awkward to being "loud and proud." I've seen talents and self-confidence grow right before my eyes. I've been told that I've

been instrumental in their lives. And I believe I've done this by creating respectful, professional, creative, fun environments for young people to learn about and participate in high-quality theater. I'm proud of the mentorship aspect of CTM—where adult actors can role model for younger actors; and young actors can demonstrate for adults how to be free of self-editing and joyfully let their imagination lead the way.

I feel like what I do makes a huge difference in our community. Not only does CTM do great theater and offer outstanding educational programs, but also it really does nurture the next generation of innovators, creators, risk-takers, and leaders. It may sound cliché to say "stage skills are life skills," but they really are. Art, and for me theater especially, breaks open barriers, welcomes differences, and celebrates uniqueness. What a great way to make a living...to make a life.

Roseann lives on the near-west side with her partner, Bridget Birdsall.

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[A&E] WHAT'S TRENDING

Of particular interest to our LGBT+ community will be Paul Baker Prindle's "Memento Mori" photographs at MMOCA from Sept. 21, 2013 to Jan. 5, 2014, which document murder crimes scenes against our community across the U.S.

Growing engagement at the grass roots level



MADISON BALLET
W. EARLE SMITH, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Will it get easier to raise money and increase your audience in the performing arts? When pigs fly.

I remain optimistic. Supported by a number of studies, the performing arts industry is prospering.

I see a growing engagement in the performing arts. Smaller arts organizations are cropping up with innovative programming catering to specific communities. However, in the study, *The Performing Arts in a New Era*, by Kevin McCarthy et al., ballet companies, symphony orchestras and opera companies are facing challenges to stay relevant and viable. McCarthy notes:

"Likely reductions in demand, rising costs, and static or even declining funding streams will force many of these institutions either to become larger and more prestigious — which many lack the resources to do — or to become smaller and more community-oriented adapting programming to local audiences."

I remain vigilant and hopelessly optimist. It is clear that growth and prosperity in the performing arts will occur at the grass roots level.

"When pigs fly?"

They may need glitter on their wings and a tiara on their heads, but pigs do fly.

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Were Asked, Didn't Tell ... Much: Wisconsin Gays and World War II, Part 1

LGBT soldiers' stories are largely erased or forgotten, but some fascinating and important accounts of life as a gay man in the Greatest Generation do exist.



In America's mainstream memory, the young men who fought and won World War II have become the Greatest Generation. Though the qualifiers are never stated, it is implied that this is the greatest, straightest, white, male generation. Sometimes there are all-too-brief nods to the women who served, and occasionally we hear of minorities like the Tuskegee Airmen or the Navajo code talkers.

Without taking away from the legend of the Greatest Generation, it's clear that not all have been treated equally in historical memory. Gay soldiers and sailors were not part of the World War II narratives, at least not a positive part, for many decades following the war.

This silence was broken in a big way by the 1990 publication of Allan Berube's *Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War Two*. He based much of his research on oral interviews conducted with gay and lesbian veterans. He shows that despite not being wanted, many gay Americans were still an important part of the Greatest Generation. And some of them hailed from Wisconsin. Reviewing their history reveals not only a spirit to serve, but also some early stirrings of gay liberation.

Bob Neal and Edgar Hellum, two gay men who had undertaken pioneering historic preservation work in the Cornish settlement of Mineral Point, were two who wanted to help the war effort. They wanted to do something "essential." Neal and Hellum closed up Pendarvis House, where they had served Cornish cuisine, and moved to the east side of Madison, where they got jobs at Truax Air Field, Bob as a cook and Edgar as a stores manager.

Journalist Betty Cass, an early fan of Pendarvis, in her *Wisconsin State Journal* column "Day by Day" of Feb. 14, 1943, described their transition. They'd been used to serving guest parties of four to 12. Now they were cooking "for a thousand to 1,500 people every day." There were 500 soldiers and civilian workers who had to be fed three times a day. But, as she quoted Bob Neal, "We wanted to do something useful...." She described how they learned about quantity cooking; not quite the same as the artistic dishes they had prepared for the last eight years. In a Truax booklet the large mess sign says "Eat all you want BUT you must eat all you take." Bob Neal did such a good job at Truax that after the war the Army asked him to help set

up a new cafeteria at another base in Florida.

A yearbook-type publication for the base had a section on "MESS." It noted, "Without a doubt one of the most important parts of any Army post is the 'good ole mess hall.'" Recreation was important, too. One photo shows a male dressed as a woman with a long cone covering the nose. The caption reads, "A soldier asks advice from 'the woman with the paper nose.' This character, first made famous in *Radio Post*, Truax's own newspaper, later went on the air." As a sign of the times there was also a separate Service Club with a dance for black troops, or as it was called in another publication, the "Colored Detachment."

The booklet also describes the City of Madison, a "capital city that eats cheese three times a day." An aerial shot of downtown includes a caption that reads, "This is the area known as 'the square.' It is Madison's heart." The military maintained buses that ran directly from the base to downtown. That things must have gotten a little rowdy in the city is indicated by a group shot of 12 MPs who reported to the Madison Police for duty downtown.

While no direct connection has yet been made, a study at Truax Field in 1945 of 20 homosexual servicemen who had indicated their orientation showed some soldiers at the base considered themselves members of a local gay club. The study noted the best Madison gay cruising ground was the Capitol Square. That the base ran busses for military personnel to get downtown made it oh-so-convenient. This networking among gays in Madison during the war appears surprising some full two-and-a-half decades before Stonewall.

Allan Berube notes there were many bars around the country that served as cruising grounds for gay military personnel. Among them was Milwaukee's Royal Hotel at Fifth and Michigan Streets. The website on the History of Gay and Lesbian Life in Milwaukee indicates this was a popular place from the mid-1930s and through the war. Later in the '60s it had names like The Stud and even later Club 546, or was billed as Michelle's. Its last day as reported in Milwaukee's *GPU News* was September 23, 1973, when the building was torn down.

There were Northwoods Wisconsin connections for gays and the war as well. In 1995, the University of Wisconsin Press published *For You, Lili Marlene: A Memoir of World War II* by poet, scholar, and gay man Robert Peters from Eagle River.

Next door in Oneida County was the Rhineland home of Wally Jordan, a gay soldier of

23. Jordan's nearly 40 wartime pen-pal letters to James Kepner, then a young man of 19 working in the dockyards of San Francisco, provide a rare, revealing picture of gay life in the war. Jordan was a dreamer of schemes and, by his own account, very socially and sexually active with other gays throughout his service, ranging from an Arizona military camp to North Africa and Italy. Kepner, though having discovered his homosexuality just prior to the start of the correspondence, would go on to become a key gay activist in the early homophile movement and then help promote gay archives to preserve our community's history.

The Jordan correspondence has been cited as one of the first expositions of efforts to organize gay men into a national homosexual-rights network. James T. Sears in *Behind the Mask of the Matachine: The Hal Call Chronicles and the Early Movement for Homosexual Emancipation* chronicles the war buddies' letters. Lillian Faderman and Stuart Timmons, in *Gay L.A.: A History of Sexual Outlaws, Power Politics, and Lipstick Lesbians*, quote from Jordan's writing in 1943: "What lies ahead? Can we incorporate ourselves? Can we first organize into a defensive body to fight for our rights?"

While both the Peters' memoir and the Jordan letters are focused on the war from the eyes of Wisconsinites, they also reveal gay life "Up North." Both soldiers had Wisconsin sex experiences with men before going to the service. Peters talks of his neighbor friend, who died while serving in the Navy but in whose "barn one summer I discovered sex." The mother with her gold star for a lost son comments to him, "You two was friends, I know."

Wally Jordan in 1943 claims he had been "in the life" for nine years and describes an outrageous trip to gay Montreal in 1939. He claimed that a cousin in the Army Air Force and his younger brother at home were also gay. He also claimed many other queens who belonged to the nascent gay network in his hometown were in the service, "however some of the members being yet away from the induction notice or even the actual registration are still carrying on." Jordan, in another passage, writes of a letter from a friend back home who "finally after four years of genuinely sincere denial, admitted his condition to me."

Jordan maintained enough gay contacts back in Wisconsin that he could write in 1943, "From what I hear, the Homosexual Retreats are being invaded all over. In Milwaukee, seven different places have been raided, 4 or 5 others closed shop for the duration, and a number of others are saturated with undercover men. There are, thank heaven, a few places still open, still free of suspicion, but just how long will they last under the vulture-eye vigil of intolerance Squads."

Jordan talks of gay marriages happening in the early 1940s. For himself, after describing a crush on a higher-ranking enlisted man, he exclaims, "Oh to be a sergeant's wife!" Later he tells of what he terms an "informal marriage" he has to the

man. Though a bit later he receives a letter breaking their ties after one of them is transferred, noting, "it will be fatal to both of us to spend the duration waiting for each other, as it is damn certain that we'll never meet again while in the Army."

While Jordan was having a gay time, Peters was largely in denial. At one point, he claimed his sexual-identity crisis and self-denial was a means to personal growth. He noted, though, in his boyhood a girl would ask him if he "preferred boys." And he wrote that he admitted to himself his youthful attractions to boys. While the memoir finds male sex offered or occurring around him, no record is put down of his participation. Another soldier whose "tone is more educated than queer," attempted to bring him out. Peters declared to him, "I'm not queer," and gets as a response, "It'll be our secret."

Peters had his military status changed to a clerk typist before shipping out. Berube has noted these positions were often havens for the gay soldiers and where they could do administrative favors for other gays. Peters also volunteered as a chaplain's assistant, another role Berube claims was stereotypical for gays in the service.

Peters described being along with a friend in blacked-out London near the Eros Fountain where the friend received oral sex even though the friend knew the performer was a man in women's clothes.

He wrote of his own attraction to another soldier, the lanky, "well-proportioned, sandy haired" man who dominated his fantasies. As they are de-

mobilizing, this same soldier, who he presumed might be gay, subsequently introduces Peters to his own friend. Peters says, "You could be brothers." He gets the reply, "Other guys have said that." And then he is told, "We plan to meet in Chicago. We'll go to the university there—if we can get in on the GI Bill." He paused. "It's a lifetime thing."

The war would change America in many ways. Gay men experienced part of that change—by being taken out of their hometowns with tight social structures, by being put in a single-sex environment with other men, and by facing an immediate mortality that might make them more open to things otherwise hidden. That some used this to learn about the broader experiences of life seemed bound to occur.

Yes, the gay men from Wisconsin in the 1940s were part of that Greatest Generation and perhaps had more at stake than most in the outcome of the war. Wally Jordan wrote, "My cousin joined the Army to fight and die, if necessary, for our Free Country. But he's fighting more for freedom of the Middle-Sex than anything else. His idea is that if we lose the war the middle-sex will be lost too, along with everything else."

Jordan's expressed concern was that if America lost the war, freedom-loving people would be the real losers. And Jordan personally knew how deeply homosexuals in the 1940s facing constraints needed to be freedom-loving people.

How Great is that dedication and vision? ■



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OUR PETS

Say hello to Steven Sievert, Philip Keller, and Diesel

What kinds of animals are part of your family? We both have had dogs (and other pets) as part our families most of our lives. Currently Diesel occupies a special place in our hearts. He is a 2.5-year-old Weimaraner.

Who are the other members of your family? Steven has lived in Madison for 30 years. He currently works for National Dairy Herd Improvement Association as general manager. Philip works for Zimbrick Automotive Group, including the last three as service manager for MINI of Madison.

We've been in a domestic partnership for six wonderful years. In addition to careers and family, we are strong supporters of AIDS Network & the ACT Rides, along with Canine Assistants and Great Lakes Weimaraner Rescue.

We are also honored with a great extended family that is an important part of Diesel's life. Whether it is a vacation when Diesel cannot join or riding/crewing in the ACT Ride, Uncles Steve (Beavers), Bill (Strelow), and Nick (Moon) have been there for our little man.

How did you come to have these animals in your family? We discussed both the adoption of a rescue or starting with a young dog and ultimately decided on working with a quality breeder in Southern Illinois.

We were both extremely lucky to have employers that embraced the addition and the responsibilities associated with a new puppy. Steven's office is dog friendly, and Diesel became a regular there. Philip's coworkers at MINI of Madison threw a "baby" shower at work for Diesel with a dog-themed lunch buffet and the works.

How does Diesel meet your needs? While everyone has said this many times, the short answer is unconditional love.

How do you meet his needs? It goes without saying that great food, exercise, and grooming are essential. Weimaraners love to run and play, so we make sure there are opportunities for both. As he has no undercoat we make sure he has jackets (stylish, of course) to keep him warm. Started at five months of age, Diesel spends at least two days a week at SpaWoof, enjoying exercise, mental stimulation, and socialization with other dogs. In addition to the crew at SpaWoof, keeping an eye on Diesel's health is Dr. June Brooks and her awesome staff at Northside Animal Hospital.

On the more practical side, we set up a joint savings account for Diesel at UW Credit Union to provide for the usual and unexpected expenses. Further, we have included provisions for custody and care in our estate planning documents for him (or any other dogs that may be part of our family in the future).

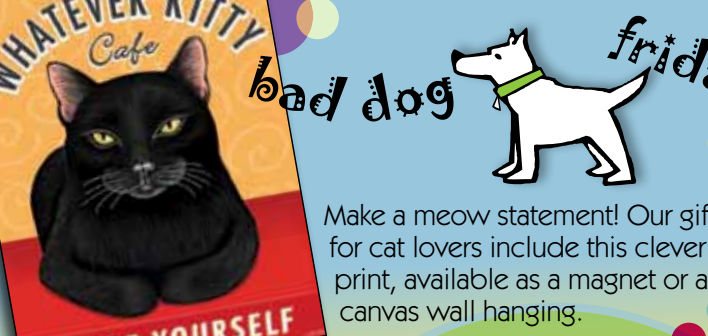


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OUR ISSUES

Stressing Out

Dennis Christoffersen identifies the things that cause us stress in our day-to-day lives and offers a first step toward finding peace.

“health & wellness” is a big topic that includes many things. So where to begin? With stress! The more we learn about the negative effects of stress, the more we know that stress affects everything from our physical functioning to our emotional wellbeing.

The neurological, biochemical, and psychological effects of stress affect our heart and other organs, as well as our weight, sleep,



Begin with awareness of your “favorite” self-putdowns, then practice immediately interrupting them and replacing them with more realistically self-enhancing and solution-oriented statements like a compassionate and effective coach.

and mood; our ability to fight infection and to interpret and respond effectively to our environments; and our sense of security and self-esteem. Stress can trigger all sorts of not-so-good habits and can wreak havoc in our relationships. I believe the appropriate response here would be, “Yikes!”

Since we know that stress is so bad for us, here are a few things to consider in better understanding and managing our stress levels along our journeys to inner peace, tranquility, and all-around grooviness (OK, or just getting through the day):

Stress related to social-justice challenges

In addition to all of the typical sources of

stress people have to navigate in their daily lives, LGBTQ people and other members of stigmatized groups are also exposed to the stress associated with discrimination, prejudice, oppression, inequities in civil rights and legal protections, fear of violence, and safety concerns. Often referred to as “minority stress,” the negative effects on physical and mental health of chronic exposure to these sorts of stressors have been well documented. Some recent studies have documented negative health impacts related to specific institutional discrimination such as marriage inequality, and the differences in the health of LGBTQ people living in states with or without a ban on same-sex marriage.

“Microaggressions” is another useful concept in appreciating sources of stress that refers to experiences in daily interactions with others (intended or not) of prejudice, put-downs, marginalization, or other insult. More subtle in nature than overt aggression or discrimination, the impacts of these sorts of messages and experiences can be harder to identify and harder yet to respond to. A colleague of mine likens the cumulative impact over time of these sorts of insults to “death by a thousand paper cuts.” In contrast, when we know we are entering overtly hostile surroundings, we can at least somewhat better prepare ourselves and usually feel clearer about what transpired, who is responsible, and how we need to respond.

It is important to recognize, name, and talk about this sort of stress when it occurs so it doesn’t build up, you don’t blame yourself, and you can consider your options. If you don’t already have safe people and spaces in which to vent, consider contacting your local or regional LGBTQ community center to see about options for connecting with others in your community, contacting one of the national hotlines or organizations available for peer support and self-care options (e.g., the LGBT National Help Center at 1-888-843-4564, and others), and/or working with a psychotherapist.

Stress related to our internal dialogue

How are we talking to ourselves? What kind of a self-coach are we? Our internal dialogue can greatly affect our interpretations and reactions

to external events for better or worse. Negative, harsh self-statements can become automatic and debilitating. Begin with awareness of your “favorite” self-putdowns, then practice immediately interrupting them and replacing them with more realistically self-enhancing and solution-oriented statements like a compassionate and effective coach. If you get stuck, imagine what a mentor or other helpful figure (real or fictional) might say in that situation. Changing habitual negative self-talk takes repeated practice over time to change, but it most certainly CAN be done and makes a difference!

Other stress-management strategies

Yes, a health-promoting diet, regular exercise, getting enough sleep, avoiding overindulging in alcohol or other things, and not smoking are very important considerations in boosting our resilience to all of those stressors constantly swirling about us. Like a kitchen sponge soaks up water and needs to be regularly wrung out to get rid of the excess and be effective again, so too do we humans tend to absorb stressors and need regular release to keep our stress levels from building up and having a toxic effect on our health and wellbeing. Strive to incorporate simple, health-promoting practices that are really doable every day or nearly every day. Be protective of your time and boundaries. Psychotherapy and self-help groups can be very helpful. Other wellness activities to explore include meditation, mindfulness, yoga, acupuncture, creative self-expression, laughter, stimulating conversations, and learning new things.

“Tension is who you think you should be. Relaxation is who you are.” —Chinese proverb

Dr. Dennis Christoffersen is a licensed psychologist in private practice (Child & Family Psychological Services located in Madison, WI) whose specialty areas include LGBTQ concerns. He is also a senior psychologist at University Health Services and a clinical professor in the Department of Counseling Psychology at the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

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OUR INTERSECTIONS

Black, White, and Clear

Linda Ketchum shows us why white progressives need to work harder to check their privilege and listen to the stories and needs of their neighbors of color.

Recent Supreme Court decisions have encouraged the LGBTQ community that we're moving forward in the struggle for civil rights. At the same time, the verdict in the Zimmerman trial clearly demonstrated that racism is still pervasive. We in the LGBTQ community are no strangers to discrimination. We know it when we see it or experience it, even though many of our allies may not see it. There's a certain privilege in our society that comes with being heterosex-



**In Madison we have
our own personal and
systemic issues of racism.
It takes the form of
whisper campaigns against
candidates of color.**

ual, just as there's a certain privilege in our society that comes with being white.

From the day I was born it was inevitable and invisible. I could enter a store, get on a bus, or walk through any neighborhood without suspicion. I was seen by teachers as capable of succeeding. It was inevitable and invisible to me and others like me because of our nation's history. However, for too many of my brothers and sisters it is inevitable but far from invisible. In fact, to them it's as clear as black and white.

The facts in the Zimmerman case were clear. An unarmed teenager walking home from the store is stalked by an armed adult who targets the child because he's black. The man calls the police and is told to stay in his car. Ignoring the police, he gets out of his car, armed, and confronts the child; then, when the unarmed child attempts to protect himself he is shot and killed. Zimmerman

was begrudgingly prosecuted by the same DA who tried a black woman who, when threatened in her home by her batterer, went to another room and fired two warning shots to get her abuser to leave. Zimmerman was acquitted; the woman was sentenced to 20 years. As clear as black and white.

I have an acquaintance I'll call "John Smith." When John's 7-year-old son had a friend come over, the friend, who is black, called John "Mr. Smith." However, John Smith, good white progressive that he is, said "call me John." The child explained that he was not allowed to call grown-ups by their first names, to which John replied, "You can in my house, because those are my rules." John's rationale was that the child's family was simply carrying over a vestige of slavery, requiring the use of "Mr." or "Mrs." in deference to the white man. It never occurred to him that the child's parents might have many reasons for not allowing their child to call adults by their first name. One reason may have been the reality that in certain settings, a child of color deemed as not showing proper respect might be treated differently or targeted. John never asked the child's parents about their reasons; he simply decided that he was more enlightened than the child's parents. In John's mind it was black and white.

A recent school board election in Madison saw a well-qualified Latina candidate enter the school board race in November. In December a white progressive woman entered the race, forcing a primary. During the primary a whisper campaign began in white progressive Madison, a whisper campaign that the candidate of color didn't support the teachers' union and supported Madison Prep (a not-so-subtle racist attempt to discredit the candidate). A primary was held; the white progressive woman received the most votes and two days later dropped out of the general election because she and her husband were moving to the west coast for him to attend graduate school. When she entered the race she knew that there was a good chance she would not be remaining in Madison, but she ran anyway. As one of my friends said, "Wow, it takes a special sense of privilege to see a school board seat as

plan B." It's called white privilege.

It's easy to lament what happened in the Zimmerman trial as just one more example of how Florida is unwelcoming to minorities. But in Madison we have our own personal and systemic issues of racism. It takes the form of whisper campaigns against candidates of color; of huge racial disparities in the criminal justice system; of disparities in employment rates, graduation rates, and the achievement among students of color.

This country was built on the backs of slaves to benefit white people, and white privilege is a component of racism. We must acknowledge that the conversation on race that this community needs to have is not happening, and that we white progressives should be participating in but not leading the conversation. White progressives must be willing to seek out and listen to the stories of our neighbors of color, to build relationships by showing up places where we may not be the majority, to listen and to learn and to understand that, when it comes to racism, we're not the experts, we're the perpetrators. White privilege is real, it's here, and we white queer folks are used to it. ■

Linda Ketchum is the Executive Director of Madison-Area Urban Ministry (emum.org).

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Living Long, Living Well

Caroline Werner gets the scoop on local LGBT-friendly senior housing.

does Madison have LGBT-friendly senior housing? Yes, some; and the number will gradually increase over time, especially as we begin to ask and facilities are expected to be friendly.

In 2011, funded by the Area Agency on Aging of Dane County and the New Harvest Foundation, OutReach held four very successful senior-specific sensitivity trainings. Ninety-five staff members and health-care workers attended from a variety of facilities in Dane County and around the state, including Eau Claire and Milwaukee.



If you like the idea of living on the east side of Madison, housing is being planned in an LGBT-friendly neighborhood—Union Corners, located at East Washington Avenue and Milwaukee Street.

In 2012, all assisted-living facilities and nursing homes that accept Medicaid were required by the federal government not to discriminate. That spring, I gave an introductory-level LGBT sensitivity training to approximately 30 assisted-living managers from Wisconsin.

In July 2013, OutReach was notified that the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services in Washington, D.C., and SAGE (Services and Advocacy for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Elders) are putting together an on-line educational tool aimed at people who work in long-term care (LTC) facilities regarding LGBT seniors. We don't know when this tool will be available, but it is nice to know the feds are following up on their non-discrimination policy and keeping us in the loop.

Part of my role as the LGBT senior advocate (funded by the City of Madison at 10 hours/

week) is to bring sensitivity trainings to local senior centers and retirement centers. In addition, we help them offer LGBT-friendly programming. For example, senior center directors asked to have the Gay and Gray discussion group (held bi-monthly at the Madison Senior Center) rotate between all the senior centers.

Regarding the friendliness of specific retirement centers, the Gardens Apartments (formerly Attic Angels), on North Segoe Road in Madison, is owned by an LGBT-friendly agency, Independent Living, Inc. Last year their management and OutReach discussed providing consultation as is necessary, knowing their staff is sensitive.

While other retirement centers are known to have LGBT residents, OutReach does not have funding to survey all the retirement centers to learn to what extent they are LGBT friendly. Hence, OutReach has no directory of LGBT-friendly retirement centers or assisted-living facilities. If you're living in a friendly place, let OutReach know. Relying on feedback from the community, I'd be happy to start a listing.

More retirement facilities might be LGBT-friendly, since they advertise that they are "welcoming and friendly." Are the words "welcoming and friendly" the same in this context as they are for churches? We won't know exactly until we ask the questions: Do you accept people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender? Would all staff and other residents be friendly to "families of choice"? Do you have any LGBT staff or offer any specific LGBT programs? I suggest that everyone ask these questions as you begin your search for friendly local housing.

If you like the idea of living on the east side of Madison, housing is being planned in an LGBT-friendly neighborhood—Union Corners, located at East Washington Avenue and Milwaukee Street. The developer is also friendly. Through an LGBT housing survey distributed by OutReach this spring, several respondents indicated they would like cooperative housing, where younger and older LGBT people can help each other. As building plans begin, LGBT community members will be invited to help in the planning process. In September, a widely publicized meeting will be held for people who may be interested in cooperative or co-housing. If interested, contact carolw@lgbt Outreach.org.

A lot of information-gathering goes into

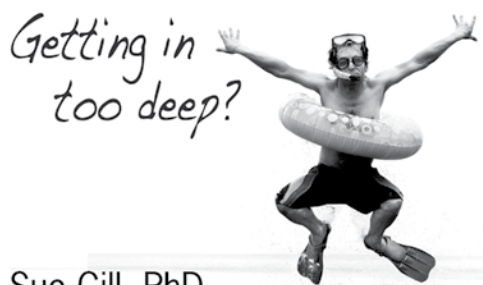
locating and then moving into senior housing. This decision-making would ideally begin several years before one actually moves. In reality, however, for many people a move from one's primary residence happens only when a crisis occurs. Then the decision needs to be made quickly, and the person in crisis may not have much control over the decision.

I suggest you begin by looking at the Dane County Senior Caregiver's Resource Guide, available at MadisonCaregivers.com, or the Senior Resource Directory (by United Newspaper Group). Visit some facilities in locations that appeal to you and that meet your individual needs and desires. Check with friends to learn what they've researched or visit a place they moved into. Ask about their experiences.

While heterosexual seniors might rely on their children for their care, fewer of us have children. We have to make our own plans. Include your friends and families of choice as you consider retirement living options.

In January, I'll tell you about a local agency that can help you figure out what you can afford and help you find the right place for you. ■

Caroline Werner has a master's degree in social work. She did case management with Dane County seniors before retiring. Now she is a part-time LGBT senior advocate for the OutReach LGBT Community Center, funded by the City of Madison.



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OUR RIGHTS

Big Decisions

Fair Wisconsin Executive Director **Katie Belanger** explains how the recent Supreme Court decisions affect same-sex marriage here, and what the next steps are in the fight for full equality.

The Supreme Court of the United States of America has ruled that same-sex couples who have been married in a state granting marriage equality should not be treated any differently than their opposite-sex counterparts.

It was a bold decision. As Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg noted in oral arguments, anything less than full federal recognition of these marriages amounts to “skim milk” marriages.

We’ve known it all along, and now we have the highest court in our country on our side. But what does this mean for Wisconsin?



In the past 18-24 months, Appleton, Racine, Manitowoc, Eau Claire, Janesville, Kenosha, and now Stevens Point have started offering domestic-partner benefits to their employees.

The positive outcomes in both the DOMA and Prop 8 cases are victories, to be sure. In the Windsor case, the court struck down section 3 of DOMA, which prohibited the federal government from recognizing validly enacted marriages in states with full marriage equality. With 1,138 rights, obligations, and protections previously unavailable to those couples, this is a monumental step forward.

Proposition 8, which passed in California in 2008, was a constitutional ban on marriage equality similar to more than 20 other state bans currently on the books. It was not as broad as Wisconsin’s ban, which covers both marriage and civil unions. However, Prop 8 was the only ban in the country that actively took away legal protections that had been granted by the

state. No other state that bans marriage equality previously allowed same-sex couples to join in marriage. It was a unique situation that limited the impact of the court’s decision to California.

As more states pass marriage equality, the federal government must determine the exact impact of its recognition of couples who are legally married in a marriage equality state but live elsewhere, like Wisconsin. As the Obama administration continues to work through the 1,138 ways in which the federal government already recognizes married couples, more information will surface. We already know that couples, regardless of their current residence, will be able to obtain visas for their bi-national spouses. At Fair Wisconsin, we are working with our partners at Lambda Legal to sort out the impact of the Supreme Court and subsequent administrative rulings on Wisconsin’s many caring, committed same-sex couples.

In late July, members of the Fair Wisconsin staff and I were able to join with state leaders from across the country at the Equality Federation’s annual Summer Meeting. Since 1997, the Equality Federation has worked throughout the country, strengthening state-based LGBT organizations, building the leaders of today and tomorrow, and making critical progress on the issues that matter most. More than 40 state-based LGBT advocacy organizations from 40 states joined with leaders of 24 national organizations to discuss the impact of these rulings, as well as share strategies, tools, and tactics with our peers to learn some of the best practices for advancing LGBT equality in our state.

As Wisconsin’s representative in the Equality Federation, we were able to participate in this convening, connect with leaders in states near and far, and share some of the work we’re doing in Wisconsin to advance equality.

Marriage was certainly a hot topic, but non-discrimination was also a core issue throughout the sessions, and it is something that we at Fair Wisconsin see as a critical step in moving our state forward. Though we have the first law in the country that included sexual orientation as a protected class, until gender identity and expression are included, the law does not go far enough to protect everyone, including transgender Wisconsinites, from discrimination.

Expanding our statewide nondiscrimination laws to include gender identity and expression, and repealing our constitutional amendment banning marriage equality and civil unions, are two of Fair Wisconsin’s top priorities in the years ahead. The path forward to achieve these victories is long, and we have much to do to build the legislative majorities we need to support these measures. But the path is also clear.

Unlike the state legislature, local communities are ready and willing to tackle issues of importance to the LGBT community. Stevens Point, for example, just joined a growing list of public employers to offer domestic-partner benefits to their employees. In the past 18-24 months, Appleton, Racine, Manitowoc, Eau Claire, Janesville, Kenosha, and now Stevens Point have all taken this important step forward.

We are only going to see this pace increase. As we travel around the state, the Fair Wisconsin staff and I are excited to see a growing number of towns, cities, and counties preparing to take action. Just this month, domestic-partner benefit measures were introduced in Portage and Outagamie Counties and the City of Beloit.

What is exciting is that a number of cities will be rolling out their fully inclusive nondiscrimination ordinances. These laws will ensure that individuals are protected from discrimination in housing, employment, and public accommodations on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity and expression, in addition to race, age, sex, creed, ability, and more.

As more communities stand up for fairness, we will continue to put pressure on our elected leaders in Madison to move our state forward.

To that end, Fair Wisconsin just finalized a merger with Equality Wisconsin, creating one unified statewide LGBT advocacy organization. Over the past few months, teams from our Boards of Directors have engaged in a facilitated dialogue about how best to serve the LGBT community. We realized a natural alignment between our missions and our values that led us to take this important step.

By combining forces, we will maximize our collective impact and leverage the resources—both people and capital—to build the statewide capacity necessary to lead the LGBT equality movement now and in the years ahead.

From the Supreme Court of the United States of America to main streets across Wisconsin, we are moving our state and our country forward. ■

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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Happy Guy, Happy Fry!

Steven Lawrence's Fried and Fabulous food cart creates smiles for customers and business-owners alike.

It's face it—fried food tastes really good. Steven Lawrence, owner and creator of Madison's Fried and Fabulous food cart, certainly knows how to put the love into his fried delicacies. From the super-sweet deep-fried Oreo cookies and PB&J sandwiches to the savory sweet-potato fries and cheese curds, Steven is serving up late-night fried fare to satisfy the belly and the soul. He purports that he is in the business of selling happiness, and you feel his joy every time you visit the Fried and Fabulous food cart.

The bright-red cart can be found all over town serving up his various concoctions, but Thursday through Saturday nights you can usually find him at the top of State and Broom Streets from midnight until 3 a.m. As one can imagine, he has seen (and heard) some seriously hilarious vignettes from the sometimes slightly cocktailed patrons who are out at that time of night. In our interview, he explains how he channels his inner storyteller by posting some of these boozy interactions on his Facebook page, and how many people follow him there just to read the latest drunk stories. I've been following him for a while now and entertaining doesn't begin to describe his posts. But as good as his stories are, it's his food that has patrons coming back for more.

Fried and Fabulous got its start as Steven was getting close to college graduation (he just turned 25), and he wanted to make a living doing something that he loved. He'd watched friends go into jobs that made them miserable and wanted no part of it. Steven comes from a family of entrepreneurs, and that work-hard-reap-the-benefits spirit has clearly been passed down to him as well. While on a trip to visit a friend in Berkeley in 2008, he stumbled onto a place that was serving freshly fried doughnuts at bar time. "Those doughnuts were magic doughnuts! We went back four out of seven nights to pound hot doughnuts!" he exclaims. And from those magical doughnuts, a seed was planted in his mind to return home and determine whether that magic would sell in Madison. Are you kidding? This is Wisconsin, land of cheese curds, baby! Lucky for all of us, his idea took root and is thriving. I asked him if he had other plans for his business, and let's just say I don't have room in this article to discuss them all, but do look for great things in the future from Steven.

One of the primary reasons I was so impressed by Fried and Fabulous was that Steven is not afraid to be an out business owner. In fact, he flew the Pride flag from his cart for the whole month of June to celebrate

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OUR TASTE



Gay Pride Month. He hopes that, by his example, other LGBTQ business

owners will follow suit. As a lesbian business owner myself, I share his hope. Our communities can only grow and flourish by supporting successful, bright LGBTQ entrepreneurs like Steven Lawrence.

Want to see if Fried and Fabulous will be where you are anytime soon? Follow him on Facebook (facebook.com/FriedandFabulous). He posts at the beginning of the week where he'll be that week, with hours and other important morsels of information. Oh yeah, and try the deep-fried Oreos—you won't regret it. —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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Outspoken

Joining Proud Theater helped **Adrian Connor** find his voice and a calling to help give that gift to future generations.

When I was in sixth grade, my friend took me to see Proud Theater’s production of “Loud and Clear,” a collection of skits, poetry, and music written by LGBTQ youth. It was unlike anything I’d seen before, and I was infatuated. My friend and I walked out of the theater wide-eyed. We couldn’t wait to join.

We were finally old enough at 13. I was petrified. Arriving at the church where Proud Theater rehearsed, my friend and I made our way down flight after flight of stairs, into the lowest basement level. I was sure we were a half-mile underground when we finally came to the room. It felt cavernous after the claustrophobic staircase, and, feeling exposed and vulnerable, we shuffled quickly into a corner. Someone with five-o’clock shadow and a tutu rode over on a tricycle and gave us high fives. My hand shook, and missed theirs twice. After introducing myself, I didn’t speak the rest of the night.

The truth was, I was terrified of my own voice. It was more than low self-esteem or shyness; I genuinely hated how it sounded. I hated what it said. My words weren’t things I wanted to listen to; why would anyone else want to hear them? I didn’t speak at school. I hardly spoke at home. And at Proud Theater, an eighth-grader surrounded by high school seniors, the most I could manage was a mumbled name-pronouns-age-and-school I had to reiterate at the beginning of every rehearsal.

I’m about to be a high school senior now myself, and the changes that have taken place in me since then are almost inconceivable. I learned to stop hiding in my slouching shoulders, denying myself eye contact, quieting what I wanted to say. I came out as transgender (for the second time—the first time didn’t go so well), I got involved with multiple activism fronts, and I even spoke up in class! I attribute these changes, unquestionably, to Proud Theater. The group not only gave me back my voice, but also made me actually proud of it.



For the first time in my life, I felt talented. Even gifted. And, most significantly, purposeful. I had the power and the means to make change in unexpected ways. It was incredible. It still is.

I had started with a monologue my first year, about that “middle-school crush” experience. I remember sending it in and being so scared the adult mentors were going to send it back saying it wasn’t good enough, or wasn’t interesting enough, or was too juvenile of an experience to put in the show. They didn’t. They loved it. And during the show, the audience loved it. I was astounded, frankly. But I kept writing.

It was addictive. I wrote skits and poems, and, most terrifyingly, songs (music was my favorite medium, and also the one I found most daunting). The act of creating something that made other people—people I had never met in my life—laugh, cry, and think was exhilarating. For the first time in my life, I felt talented. Even gifted. And, most significantly, purposeful. I had the power and the means to make change in unexpected ways. It was incredible. It still is.

I’ve been a member of the youth artistic committee since my freshman year, and became youth music director as a junior. Leadership feels like a way to give back to the group, helping them out as they’ve helped me out. The fact

that this will be my final year feels unreal, but I’ll give everything I’ve got during it. I don’t know how else to thank the group that has watched me grow up. ■

Proud Theater is looking for interested youth, ages 13–18, for its 2012–13 season. The group meets every Wednesday evening starting September 11, and meets from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Enrollment is open until November 27.

Proud Theater meets at James Reeb Unitarian Universalist Congregation located at 2146 E. Johnson Street, Madison. Call 608-222-9086 or write to info@proudtheater.org for more information. www.proudtheater.org

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