



The Love List: Celebrating Wisconsin's LGBTQ Relationships

A YEAR IN REVIEW























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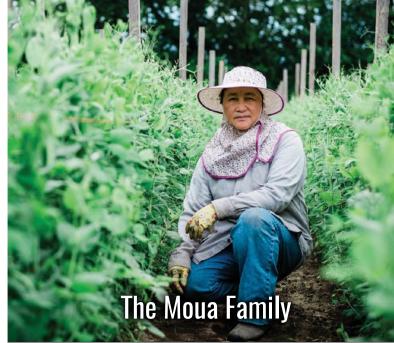
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Patrick Farabaugh, Publisher.

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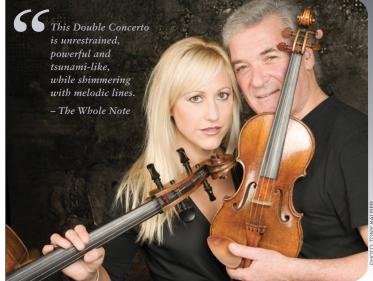
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Between the brash phalanx of Berlioz's swashbuckling brass and the thundering gravitas of Copland's iconic "Fanfare for the Common Man" (in Symphony No. 3), we welcome Pinchas and Amanda as they reprise their fabulous performance of the Brahms Double Concerto, with which the duo made their Madison Symphony debut in 2001. More: madisonsymphony.org/romantic

John DeMain, Conductor Pinchas Zukerman. Violin Amanda Forsyth, Cello

Berlioz Le Corsaire Overture

Brahms Concerto for Violin and Cello in A minor

Copland Symphony No. 3

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DON'T GET LEFT BEHIND

The nature of a movement is that it is always moving. If you set your sights on a finish line, you may be choosing personal comfort over your continued growth.

WE ARE A DIVERSE COMMUNITY. Maybe the most diverse community, inclusive of every identity, race, gender, age, ability, and class to name a select few. That's a lot to try to bring together under one tent, but that's our goal. And that goal is always moving.

Since we achieved federal marriage equality in 2015, a host of other issues are finally getting their much-overdue attention. For years, our culture as a community was tethered to the mantra that love is love, and marriage is a human right. Marriage as our flagship sucked the life out of more urgent and complicated issues, namely HIV/AIDS and home-

lessness, both disproportionately devastating to our trans and LGB POC communities. White LGB folks were socialized to see how they were being oppressed, how to target, address and fight back against that specific oppression, but not to see how they could also embody the role of the oppressor at the same time. White cisgender lesbians, especially, understand that they live at the intersection of multiple opressive forces—sexism and homophobia just to name two.

There have been many instances post-marriage equality that Our Lives has had the privilege to serve witness to. Many have been celebratory, marking advances in visibility and expanding equitable systems. Others have been painful, as we've had to see how fractured our community is, often around creating equitable access to power. The overwhelming cisgender whiteness in a place like Madison—and truly almost all of Wisconsin—has made it especially

> challenging to address and unpack our ongoing participation in systems that are oppressive to many within our community.

The theme of this issue is love, and beautifully enough, that is also our solution. We need to learn to make our hearts grow bigger, and how to make space and place for everyone under our huge, diverse tent. If you are white and cisgender, open your heart by listening more than talking. Try to understand that your perspective might be different due to oppressive systems that you benefit from. Listen to the folx who are more marginalized than you, the way you expect allies to listen when you tell them how they marginalize you.

Especially because this issue will be out during February, I also don't want to miss the opportunity to point out that as we work to build this more inclusive, intersectional movement, it's worth remembering that the term "intersectionality" itself came from Black legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw. She first coined it in 1989 to describe the oppressive connection of race and gender. This is one of many, many ways that our POC communities have been showing us the way, whether we give the time and space to recognize them. We're better when we learn to work together, and to let those impacted the most—often by us white cisgender LGB folks—lead the way. ■



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VIRGINIA HARRISON was Our Lives Editor 2009–2013, then returned as Copy Editor in 2015. With this issue, Virginia begins her additional role as Features Editor. Virginia is a Wisconsin native and full-time Madison resident since 1994. She spends most of her work life supporting adults with developmental disabilities to lead fuller lives and connect to community through the nonprofit LOV Inc. (Living Our Visions Inclusively). Virginia lives with her partner, Melissa, and their daughter, Ellie, plus four fur babies. Her happy places are anywhere with her family, out in nature, or on her yoga mat.

JAMAL PERRY was born in Gary, IN, but he moved to Milwaukee in 2003. He is a proud alumnus of Milwaukee Public Schools and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee where he earned his bachelor's degree in broadcast journalism. Jamal first got involved in Milwaukee's LGBTQ+ community through UWM's LGBT Resource Center as a student volunteer at PrideFest. After graduating, he served as an AmeriCorps member with City Year Milwaukee where he worked as a near peer mentor, tutor, and advocate for youth in Milwaukee Public Schools. Jamal has a passion for all forms of media and communication and making an impact and serving his community—specifically LGBTQIA communities of color.

ROBERT A. GODERICH is an out professional opera singer and musical theater actor based in Madison. He's performed regionally with Madison Opera, Skylight Music Theatre, Capital City, CTM, Four Seasons Theatre, and even with San Francisco Opera.

OBITUARIES



PRUDENCE ANNE "PENNY" MAGLIO, age 76, died on December 9 after a courageous battle with dementia. She was born on June 10, 1943 in Madison. Penny was bar manager at Lysistrata, located at the corner of Gorham and Broom streets. It was a popular feminist and lesbian meeting spot before it was destroyed by fire in 1982.

Penny leaves behind many family and friends; her brother Ted; many nieces and nephews; loving partners, Vida Groman and Sammy Corr; and other family and friends too numerous to name.



RON MCCREA, an award-winning journalist and author who served as The Capital Times' city editor for a decade, died of cancer Saturday December 14. He was 76.

Ron was a member of the Madison Alliance for Homosexual Equality—the first gay liberation organization in Wisconsin, formed just months after the Stonewall Rebellion in 1969. He helped found the city's first Gay Center, donating

10 percent of his income for the first year to pay for a director. This was a predecessor organization to the current Outreach LGBT Community Center.

Another example of Ron's activism was his work as a strike leader and organizer of the "strike paper," the Madison Press Connection. The newspaper was run by striking members of The Capital Times and Wisconsin State Journal to provide competition and pressure management for change. Ron was elected to editor of the Madison Press Connection—a vote of confidence from his peers who made him an early out gay editor of a local daily newspaper in the United States.

In 1982 Gov.-elect Anthony Earl appointed Ron as his communications director. The Milwaukee Sentinel led the paper with the headline, "Avowed homosexual named Earl press chief."

For the past 26 years, he was married to Elaine H. DeSmidt, his partner, passion, and love. She survives him.

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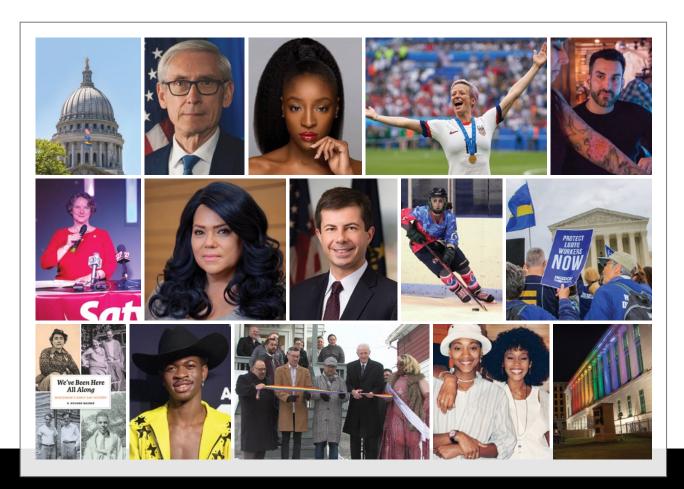
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Out with a Bang

We take a look back at some of the local, national, and international events and **people** that made headlines throughout 2019.

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 20 YEARS, we're in a decade where we can all agree on what to call it. The past 19 years have been a heck of a ride, with advances and setbacks—both of which have been unimaginable even as early as the end of the last century. With so many highs and lows it only seems fitting that 2019 gives this century's adolescence a grand send-off.

Even while we continue to endure the dumpster fire that is the Trump Presidency, 2019 started to give us some real visions of hope that we might finally be turning a corner. Locally, Madison elected Satya Rhodes-Conway as our new Mayor, making her our



first openly LGBTQ-and only second female-mayor. Statewide, we finally said goodbye to Scott Walker and welcomed Governor Tony Evers. And nationally we've a bounty of candidates eager to challenge Trump.

In sports, Megan Rapinoe won our hearts with her confidence and rebuke of a White House visit. Madison helped to lead with both the NHL focusing on the Madison Gay Hockey Madison Gay Hockey Association (MGHA) and three MGHA players making up the largest contingent on Team Trans, America's first all-transgender sports team. All in all, not too shabby. Now bring on the raging 20s!

JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2020 Written by Stacy Harbaugh.

The city of Cudahy on Wednesday becomes the fourth city in Wisconsin to pass an ordinance to protect youth from so-called "conversion therapy."

Madison's Latino Academy of Workforce Development welcomes Baltazar de Anda Santana as the new executive director, de Anda Santana is also one of the leaders of Orgullo

Latinx LGBT+ and has been involved in a number of great community organizations.

Democratic Governor Tony Evers is inaugurated and sworn into office.



Rico Sabatini announces that he is taking over popular but troubled LBGTQ nightclub, Plan B. Sabatini bought out all three coowners, returning to the club he co-founded. Later he brought on



Local trans actress and comedienne Dina Nina Martinez announces her major role in a new comedy starring Dermot Mulroney.

New Jersey becomes the second U.S. state (after California) to require that public schools include LGBTQ history in their lessons.

CONNECT → OUR NEWS

APPLETON LOOKS TO PASS BAN ON CONVERSION



HERAPY, MET WITH ANTI-LGBTQ RESISTANCE

APPLETON MAY BE the next city to ban licensed medical and mental health professionals from practicing conversion therapy on minors. Submitted by the first out transgender elected official in the state, Appleton alder Vered Meltzer, along with aldermen Brad Firkus and Katie Van Zeeland, the resolution defines conversion therapy as "the practice of trying to change a person's sexual orientation or gender identity."



When up for discussion in December, opinions from the 25 people who spoke varied. Ultimately the board decided to postpone action until their Jan. 8 meeting. The decision at that meeting

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will move forward to the full Appleton Common Council.

Appleton's resolution contains the following statements:

- Science recognizes that being lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender is part of the natural spectrum of human identity and is not a disease, disorder or illness.
- The practice of conversion therapy is based on scientifically unfounded approaches not subject to peer review and is often conducted in a violent and damaging manner.
- The American Psychological Association issued a report in 2009 that concluded that conversion therapy can pose critical health risks to lesbian, gay and bisexual people including depression, suicidality, substance abuse, stress and disconnection with family and friends.
- The American Academy of Pediatrics revealed alarming levels of attempted suicide among transgender youth because of society's oppression and lack of acceptance.

Supporters described the harm conversion therapy causes on LGBTQ people.

"The notion that we can somehow fix trans people or change them or keep them from being trans is a myth, the same as sexual-orientation changes," said Helen Boyd Kramer, gender studies instructor at Lawrence University. "It's not possible."

Opponents tried to argue that the ban would impede on a parent's right to choose what they feel is best for their children, going as far as to call the proposed resolution fascist.

"It's using government power to tell someone you cannot speak on this, you cannot help someone who's gender-confused to embrace

February

19 🛚

United Airlines and American Airlines, among others, offers new gender options for non-binary passengers.

Democratic Senator Elizabeth Warren announces a potential run for president in 2020 with a video highlighting her support for LGBTQ

Mark Gabriel of Appleton said.

rights and other progressive causes.

At its international conference, the United Methodist Church votes to keep prohibiting churches from conducting same-sex marriages or confirming LGBTQ clergy.

UnityPoint Health-Meriter staff create a parenting class designed specifically for LGBTQ parents.

Courage MKE opens Courage House, a safe dropin space for LGBTQ youth experiencing homelessness. Courage MKE was featured on "The Today Show" and in People magazine.



ent the Loud 'N Unchained Black Theater

Currently Sheboygan, Milwaukee, Madison, Eau Claire, Cudahy, Shorewood and Racine have passed bans on conversion therapy. A similar ban in Neenah died in committee.

LOUD 'N UNCHAINED AND BROOM STREET THEATER PRESENT THE LOUD 'N UNCHAINED **BLACK THEATER FESTIVAL**

FOR THE FIRST TIME, Madison will have a theater festival exclusively promoting the work of Black artists. Loud 'N Unchained and Broom Street Theater are proud to presFestival. This festival will be produced at



Broom Street Theater and will have performances on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays for three weeks starting June 12 through June 28.

"I envision being able to create this space for

members of the Black artist community for a long time and I wanted it to be in a way that is accessible and a way for new artists who haven't had the opportunity in the past to be able to experiment and to showcase

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Sandy Eichel, financial advisor professional speaker



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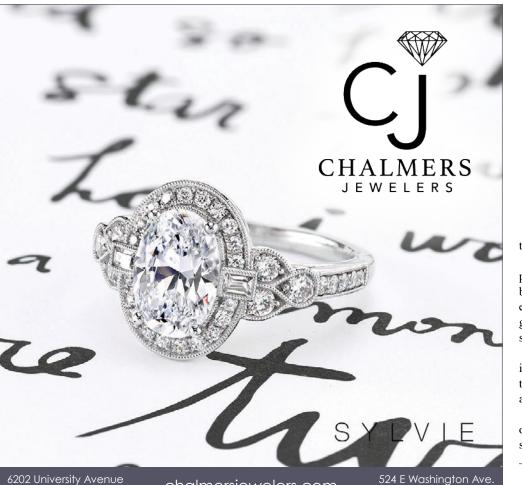
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the way God made them, and that's wrong,"

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March

Stories under the hashtag #ExposeChristianSchools spread after news broke of Karen Pence, working for a Christian school that has explicitly anti-LGBTQ policies. Stories shed harsh light on the ways some schools create traumatizing experiences

for students.

Wisconsin's own Blair Braverman, who wrote for *Our Lives* back in 2016, races in her first-ever Iditarod and



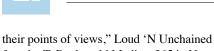
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House Speaker Or Nancy Pelosi introduces the Equality Act. Comporations how express support and civil rights af groups, including the NAACP, endorse the bill.

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OutReach LGBT
Community Center
announces it will not
coordinate a Pride
parade in 2019, but will
host a festival at Warner
Park. The decision comes
after a tumultuous
2018 event and major
changes to the City of
Madison's event policies.

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founder T. Banks told Madison365 in November. "We're going to have so many different submissions and so many different genres of black writers, so this is very exciting."

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They are currently accepting submissions to the festival for a variety of performance arts. Submission period is open until January 31. All artists will be notified by March 1.

Loud 'N Unchained, founded by Banks, is



a theater company, publishing house, and a community for Black creatives in Madison. It is organized around gender, queer, and disability justice—all issues Banks has advocated for years on.

Once the selections have been made, there will be a call for artists and actors. Auditions for the production will be in late March/early April with rehearsals running from the end of April through opening weekend. All theatrical submissions will be directed by Dana Pellebon, who also serves on the board of directors for OutReach LGBTQ Community Center. The artistic committee of T Banks, Dana Pellebon, Janine Gardner and



Doug Reed will review all alternative performances for inclusion and those performances will have rehearsal time with the director.

Guidelines for Submission:

- 1 Work must be written/originated by a Black artist.
- 2 All submissions will be reviewed to ensure that content is not transphobic, racist, misogynistic, or otherwise harmful to the Black community in its intent.
- 3 Submissions can include the following:
- a) Full length theatrical play (60-90 minutes long)
- b) Short theatrical play (5 to 20 minutes long)
- c) Spoken word (0-5 minutes long)
- d) Dance (0-5 minutes long)
- e) Musical performance (10-25 minutes long)
- f) Drag or Burlesque (0-5 minutes long)
- g) Other (5-25 minutes long)
- 4 All plays and spoken word pieces must be submitted via pdf or word document. This document should not have your name printed on the document. Title and Contact information will be on the Google Form submission.
- 5 Dance or Musical Performance must be submitted via video. It can be a link to a performance or an actual video.

"Last year, [UW-Madison student] Shasparay [Lighteard] did the Black Arts Festival, and that was amazing. We want to build upon that idea," Pellebon tells Madison365. "So many people have been clamoring and wanting to celebrate Black arts in Madison in a variety of different ways. This is the perfect opportunity to do that."

JOSÉ REA ANNOUNCES RUN FOR DANE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS DISTRICT 5

LIFELONG DANE COUNTY resident, José Rea, has announced their candidacy for the April 2020 election for Dane County Board of Supervisors District 5.

Growing up on the South Side of Madison and attending Madison Public Schools,

April

Satya Rhodes-Conway becomes Madison's first lesbian mayor and its second female mayor.



Trump's transgender military ban takes effect and could impact 13,763 people in the

12 1



serious issues Dane County residents are facing. They were raised in a low in-

come household with two hard working parents that supported their desire to

José understands the very

get involved from a young age. Attending People Program and UW-Madison's Information Technology Academy, gave them their foundation. In 2016 José ran for Alder of Madison's South Side District 14. Although their race was unsuccessful they have not allowed that setback to discourage them from staying involved in community organizing

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April

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Conde Nast's them Out South launches a print edition with a cover story featuring Janelle Monáe.



Milwaukee's oldest gay bar, This Is **Bend Mayor** It!, announces a semi-permanent Pete Buttigleg LGBTQ history exhibit curated by the Wisconsin LGBTQ History Project. launches his campaign for

26 I

The United Methodist Church's Judicial Council upholds anti-LGBTQ provisions passed by the denomination's General Assembly The move is almost certain to provoke a schism.

Brigham Young valedictorian Matt Easton comes out as gay in his graduation speech. The text was pre-approved by school administration.



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and protests. This led them to be nominated and appointed to the Dane County Equal Opportunities Commission, where they now serve as the Vice Chair.

José is energized to tackle the issues faced by students and residents living in District 5. This race is historic in that Dane County has yet to elect not only a Latinx, but an openly LGBTQ-identified Latinx. José has already received the endorsements of Madison Metropolitan School District Board of Education President Gloria Reyes, out MMSD Board of Education member Ananda Mirilli, out Dane County District 4 Supervisor Richard Kilmer, and Dane County Board District 2 Supervisor Heidi Wegleitner.

The campaign looks to focus on the needs of all residents living in District 5 students and non students alike. José looks forward to discussions with neighbors and community leaders on affordable housing, public safety,



climate change, equity and inclusion, homelessness, and the racial disparities that affect everyone living in Dane County.

To learn more visit: votejoserea.com.

EDGEWOOD COLLEGE'S REMOVAL OF PLANNED PARENTHOOD FROM WEBSITE LEADS TO **COMMUNITY OUTCRY AND STUDENT PROTEST**

IN WHAT APPEARS to be caving from pressure from a far-right, aggressively anti-LGBTQ group, Tradition Family Property Student Action, Edgewood College attempted to quietly remove Planned Parenthood from the college's website of student health resources.

TFP Student Action isn't subtle about their strong anti-LGBTO positions. They center anti-LGBTQ messages and photos their website and social media.

"It just looks like the college is bowing to this traditional family values group," Sean O'Brien told the Wisconsin State Journal. O'Brien, president of SAFE, the campus' main LGBTO group, has said he's experienced slurs on campus related to his sexuality. "What bothers me isn't so much the fact that they removed the links, but that someone in the college listened to an anti-LGBTQ group when the college is struggling to step into the 21st century with its own LGBTQ

JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2020



May June

The highest court in international sport issues a ruling that agrees it's discriminatory to bar female athletes with naturally elevated testosterone levels from competition—but that such discrimination is "a necessary, reasonable and proportionate means' of achieving track and field's goal of preserving the integrity of women's competition." 15 ı

The LGBTQ Equality Act passes out of the House Judiciary Committee, with zero Republican support. This marks progress for the bill as the first time it's been voted through any committee or moved

forward at all.

Local historian Dick Wagner publishes the first of a two-volume book on Wisconsin LGBTO history, We've Been

Here All

28

son how to

shave.

30 🛮 Gillette releases **New York City**

a TV ad featuring announces Marsha P. Johnson and a father teaching Sylvia Rivera (both his transgender key figures in the gay liberation movement) will be honored with a permanent installation in Greenwich Village

Mayor Rhodes-Conway hosts rainbow flag-raising and lighting ceremonies for local government buildings.



population."



Interim Edgewood president Mary Ellen Gevelinger has tried to suggest that the decision to remove the provider was largely an internal one, and not related to pressure from the outside petition. Many are suspicious of those motives given the timing of the removal to the petition. The student senate along with SAFE organized a large protest, and plan to

continue pushing back when the spring semester resumes.

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13 •

Governor raises rainbow flag for the first time over the state capitol. Later in the month Wisconsin Family Action delivers 10K signatures to the Governor asking him to remove the flag.



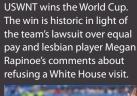
18 I The National Hockey League features the Madison Gay Hockey Association in their Pride spotlight on LGBTQ athletes and organizations.

Sen. Tammy introduces a Senate resolution honoring the 50th anniversary of Stonewall.

Lil Nas X comes out as gay at a concert in the UK on the heels of his bia hit "Old Town Road."

Over 200 major corporations and businesses sign on to a brief urging the U.S. Supreme Court to rule that existing federal civil rights laws ban job discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender

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The City of Racine

votes to ban

ı 16 i

Sheboygan's city council

votes to ban the discredited practice of conversion therapy for LGBTQ youth.

12 I

Madison's TeKema **Balentine** wins Miss Black USA. TeKema was featured in our 2019 OTPOC Pride List and this issue's

U.S. visa.

16 **I**

judge

A federal

overturns the

provision that

had barred

coverage

for gender

affirming

surgery.

Wisconsin

Medicaid

Michael Dix, Diego Campoverde-Cisneros, longtime owner of member of Orgulla Michael's Latinx LGBT+, becomes Frozen Custard. announces he the first Diversity. is closing their Equity and Inclusion Monroe Street Manager for Quartz location after Health Solutions, Inc. his husband was denied a





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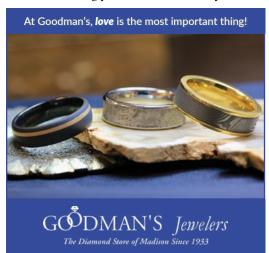
TRANSGENDER ICE HOCKEY SUPPORT & INCLUSION



Team Trans Breaks the Ice

When **Team Trans** took to the ice in Boston last November, **Madison Gay Hockey Association** (MGHA) made up the largest contingent on what is thought to be America's first all-transgender team to ever compete in any sport. Past MGHA President **k8 Walton** recounts what it was like to be a part of that history-making team.

WHEN YOU WALK INTO a hockey rink as a queer person, you walk in with your guard up. It doesn't matter if it's your home rink or one you're playing at for the first time. It's a defense mechanism, it's armor, it's preparation for the ways you might be challenged or called out as not belonging. Sometimes it's benign the hockey dad who held the door for me and asked how long it had taken me to tape the rainbow stripes on my stick blade, unfamiliar with the fact that Pride Tape is made specifically to pattern out that way. Sometimes it's realizing that you're the only person in your locker room who isn't straight. Sometimes it's teammates asking why you have the same last name as your spouse, because it never occurred to them that you could be married. Sometimes it's realizing you came to the rink in your



binder and the only bathrooms are segregated by sex and right off of a lobby busy with kids and parents. Sometimes it's walking to the ice

passing to you and making sure everyone knows how incompetent they think you are. So you can imagine my friend William and I standing in the corner of a rink lobby in Boston, surrounded by cisgender folks who were there to watch a youth hockey tournament, doing our best to look like we belonged as we

tried to figure out who was safe to approach.

in your gear past a junior team and pretending

you don't hear the homophobic and transpho-

bic jokes. Sometimes it's teammates never

COMING TOGETHER

We'd traveled to Boston from the Upper Midwest to play with Team Trans, the first team comprised entirely of transgender players to ever play in North America—in any sport. Team Trans formed after a hockey player started looking for trans folks on social media who might want to come together as a team. After months of organizing and an incredibly generous offer by Boston Pride Hockey (BPH), an LGBTQ hockey organization, we were finally getting together for the first time as a team to play a Friendship Series against BPH.

A pair of hot pink sneakers with blue laces caught my eye, followed a second later by a hockey stick taped with the blue, pink, and

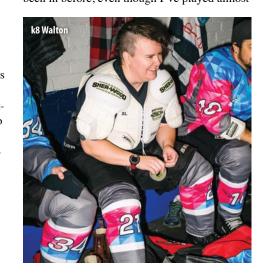
white stripes of the trans flag. "I think those are our people," I said to William. Now my anxiety about finding the rest of Team Trans disappeared, but it was quickly replaced with a different kind of anxiety. Most of Team Trans had been playing for decades, and a couple of our teammates had even played at the professional level. Would we be able to keep up? Would there be a place for us, even here?

Soon enough, though, there were 16 of us in the locker room pulling on our gorgeous new Team Trans jerseys. That first night was just for us to get to know each other, as we sorted out who wanted to play what position and ran a few drills to get used to each other. We had a wide range of skaters from beginner to professional, and while the pace was fast, we were able to relax and have a good time.

WALLS DOWN, SPIRITS RAISED

I have to admit that it wasn't until midway through our first game, the next day, that it all clicked for me.

I already knew the locker room felt easier and more relaxed than any locker room I'd been in before, even though I've played almost





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entirely in inclusive and queer spaces. I knew that everyone on the team was great at playing inclusively and cheering each other on. But suddenly, seven or eight minutes into a hard-fought game against Boston Pride, it hit me. It wasn't a coherent thought, exactly—instead it was an overwhelming awe-tinged feeling, like the first time you really look up at the stars and realize how big the universe is. It was happiness. It was belonging. It was the first time I didn't have to keep my guard up.

And it was happening in a hockey rink.

We didn't win that game, but it didn't matter. It wasn't about whether or not we would win. It wasn't about us versus them, in any form. It was about having that space on the ice, on the bench, in the locker room, where no one had to worry what anyone might say about their name or their pronouns or their body. It was about skating across the ice and feeling more free than any of us had felt before, without the weight of difference on our shoulders. It was about saying whatever we wanted without having to worry about self-censoring anything, because we knew we were safe. It was like looking up at the stars, and realizing how big the universe is, and knowing for the first time exactly where you fit in among the cosmos.

I can't wait to do it again. ■



food trucks, and community fundraisers

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Appleton City

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National Coming

Out Day for the

Hall flies the

Merriam-Webster adds the singular, non-binary "they" pronoun. The pronoun will also be named Merriam Webster's 2019 Word of the Year

The Advocate holds a presidential forum on LGBTQ issues hosted by Wisconsin's own Angelica Ross.



After a decade of efforts by students, faculty, and staff, Edgewood College opens their first Queer Student Center.

Mattel announces the launch of online sales of Creatable World, gender-neutral dolls. With gendered toy aisles, there's still the question of where to place

28

The first **National** Trans Visibility March is held in Washington





Cher announces a tour date in Madison in April, shortly after she made public comments in support of MMSD security guard, Marlon Anderson.

Danica Roem reelected The first allto the Virginia House of transgender hockey Delegates. She is one of team plays its first six transgender people match in Cambridge MA including three elected to office and is the first transgender team members from person to be reelected to a statewide office.



stage areas are safe spaces for artists and crew

alike to make their art. The debate can go on for

hours on what to include and what not to, exact

phrasing, word choice, formatting, distribution

methods, and the list goes on. Then of course

are budgets, analyzing ticket sales from last

season then projecting them and deliberating

on what amount of money each show that the

artistic committee finally decided on should

be allotted. Once that number is calculated,

the board puts on its fundraising hat and turns

to making sponsorship calls. StageQ has been

lucky to have so many generous sponsors in the

past that keep the lights on. These businesses—

along with individuals and community part-

ners-allow us to create the art we do and put

queer stories on a public stage. Simply put, it

doesn't happen without them, and the quest for

more donations and resources is never-ending.

All these decisions are far from easy. Part of

the art of working on committees and boards is

working on compromises so that the company

While all that is in the works a new show—

such as Next Fall—begins rehearsals. Procur-

time for set builds, finding designers and crew,

ing rehearsal space, scheduling scene shop

finalizing show art and marketing materials,

and more, are on a producer's itinerary before

the actors even read the script. With as much

that goes into theater, its various pieces begin

compile a rehearsal schedule, and then bring

in actors. Lighting designers study the script,

scour the various storage areas and thrift shops

costume designers take measurements and go

set designers draft up plans, prop designers

in isolation. Stage managers and directors

can move forward in the best fashion.

PLAYING THE GAME

11 |

Robyn Crawford, longtime friend to singer Whitney Houston, publishes a memoir on their love affair and

12



Sports Illustrated names Megan Rapinoe the 2019 Sportsperson of the Year.

December



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STAGEQ COMMUNITY THEATER BOARD OF DIRECTORS

In the Room Where it Happens

StageQ's Board President **Zak Stowe** gives us a look at the process and decisions that go into their productions, organizational priorities and goal-setting.

APPROACHING ITS 20TH ANNIVERSARY season.

StageQ, the Madison-based LGBTQ+ community theater reflects on where the company is today and where it wants to go.

As of this writing, Madison is just coming off of Hamilton-fever. After two years of build-up, the three-week run of this smash-hit bio-musical is coming to a close. As a new addition to Overture Center's tech team, I've had the lyrics of this epic ode to the "ten-dollar founding father" running through in my head the entire time. One of the show's most familiar epitaphs has been circling through my brain: "Who lives, who dies, who tells your story?"

Hamilton teaches us that it certainly is a weighty responsibility to be charged with telling someone's story; to ensure that story is told in perpetuity. It reminds us as individuals to ponder how our own story, our own narrative, will be passed on. StageQ, as an organization, has tasked itself with a similar mission and it's in the tagline: Your Stories Told Here.





This mission comes with its own challenges and weighty responsibility. We have an entire community—diverse in every aspect possible—to

represent and it is a reality that is ever-present in our minds production after production.

StageO's gears are now beginning to turn once more as rehearsals begin for our next production, Next Fall—a play about a gay couple, a tragic accident, and questioning everything you thought you knew about yourself—which runs January 24th through Febrary 8th at the Bartell Theatre. As this production gets underway, and we begin planning for our upcoming 20th anniversary season, it occurs to me it might be noteworthy to offer readers an inside glimpse at this all-volunteer machine and to see how it and our entire season come together. So allow me take you behind the curtain to "the room where it happens" and show you "the art of the trade; how the sausage gets made."



THE ART OF THE COMPROMISE

StageQ's season begins with our artistic committee examining responses we received from the public about our current and previous seasons. What did people respond to? What did they want to see but didn't? What demographics did you not represent last season that you need to this time around? What new ground can you break? These conversations can take a committee down a rabbit hole of ideas and pretty soon you have a growing checklist that the new season you are about to craft must meet. It can be daunting to say the least.

StageQ has the unique platform and mission to advance representation of the queer community on a public stage. The company has not been perfect when it comes to representing all aspects of our community, and we have made it a point in recent years to take as much public feedback as possible into the committee meetings so that we can continue to improve. The first step is taking yourself out of the season selection. You aren't creating a season of shows that you want to see; you are creating a season of shows for others, and that means not always seeing yourself in the shows.

Themes are discussed—a unifying thread that the shows might all revolve around. Then comes the script search and readings....

Meanwhile, the board of directors might be busy looking at policies like our newly



crafted—and ever evolving—Anti-Harassment shopping, and sound designers sample sound Policy. A large topic of debate last season was effect clips and music. This is the calm before creating a document that would help strengthen the storm: Tech week. Together we work so the safe, family-like atmosphere StageQ shows that a show emerges from the chaos. have enjoyed in the past. Policies like this allow DREAM OF A BRAND NEW START us to make sure our rehearsal rooms and back-

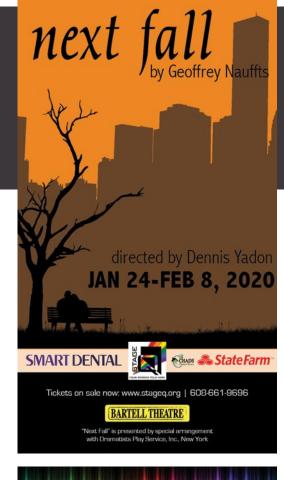
StageQ has been a part of the Madison community for almost 20 years now. How are we going to keep going? How are we going to change with the times and keep up with the community and where it is going? The first step is getting a group of people around us that have a passion to see us succeed. StageQ is building a new board, which means we need people who want to lead and give back to the community and the arts. We are exploring creating staff positions for artistic and production directors so that the board is free to focus on fundraising policy creation, and development. We are looking at programs that open us to the community more and give young people more opportunities to work with us on stage and behind the scenes.

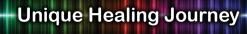
StageQ will announce our 20th anniversary season in early May, but until then we invite people who would like to join our board of directors to email us at president@stageq.com or check out the application found on our website, stageq.com. We also are always looking for non-board, committee members for people who want to help in specific, limited areas like artistic, finance, fundraising, and operations. Interested people can email the above as well.

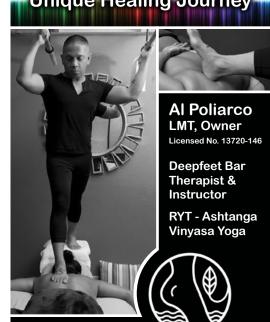
Wisconsin, and indeed queer theater companies around the country "have there eyes on us," and StageQ is dedicated to not letting those people down. We want to tell your stories on stage, advance queer representation, and be a part of our beautiful and diverse community. We are not throwing away our shot. ■



ZAK STOWE is a local lighting designer and producer. He serves on several boards including President of StageQ and Vice-President of the Bartell Theatre. He is a pyrotechnician for ToraToraTora Air Shows and house technician for the Overture Center.







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IN 1953 PRESIDENT Dwight D. Eisenhower signed Executive Order 10450 into law, which set security standards for federal government employees. The Lavender Scare, taken from the term "lavender lads," was an order passed to fire federal government employees who were thought be homosexual, or have homosexual tendencies. Homosexual men and women were felt to be more susceptible to being manipulated by Communism, and thus caused a national security risk. Hundreds lost their jobs.

The new opera "Fellow Travelers" by Gregory Spears and libretto by Greg Pierce, is based on the novel of the same name by Thomas Mallon. The opera centers around two men working for the federal government during the Lavender Scare: Hawkins "Hawk" Fuller, a State Department official; and Timothy Laughlin, a young English major at Fordham University working as an intern in Washington, D.C.

"We wanted to focus on the love story," said Spears. "Opera is about people, not about abstract ideas. You can find a lot of truth if you just watch people living their lives."

Spears wanted to ensure that the true focus was on the central love story, and the novel showcases the personal connections but also a lot about actual historical events. This doesn't necessarily lend itself to a successful opera. According to Spears, it was most important to make this as natural as possible. This piece contains a fair amount of dialogue, which is not typical of the usual opera.

"I had to build and grow new tools," Spears said, "and it is a lot of work to keep it natural like a conversation. To find the

simplicity you have to work through a lot of complexity, finding the nuances to allow the singer to bring the character to life."

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Director Peter Rothstein, who graduated with his MFA from UW-Madison, is directing this piece for the third time. "The central characters in this opera are three-dimensional, complex characters," Rothstein said. "With each new cast, it has been important to build a process where the artists have the space to find their personal place in the story,





ters from a place of honesty and integrity. As a result, the performances have been quite different from company to company." He also feels a close connection to the story. "As a gay man, it's been exciting to finally direct gay characters. I directed my first opera while doing my MFA at UW-Madison 25 years ago, but not until 'Fellow Travelers' have I directed a queer story for the stage. I have

building these rich charac-

a profound gratitude for the gay women and men who came before me. Too many of them were forced to live their lives in the shadows, and that's where their stories remained. It's an honor to shed light on both the victims and heroes of the Lavender Scare," he said.

Cuban-American tenor Andres Acosta sings the role of Timothy Laughlin, the collegiate intern discovering and struggling with his own sexuality. This is Acosta's third time playing the leading male, and he's excited to reconnect with this character once again.

JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2020

"I have strong personal ties to this role," Acosta stated. "As a gay man who was outed in an environment that was not welcoming or knowingly supportive, I connect to the horror of life-altering repercussions imposed on queer individuals who are openly put under trial for their behavior.

"This story is so relevant and current on so many levels. It is a love story set in a period of queer history that is often overlooked in education, and it fiercely demonstrates the expansive effect that officials in office can have over oppressed groups. I am ecstatic to play Tim again," Acosta continued. "Playing this role was very healing to me."

Kathryn Smith, General Director of Madison Opera, knew immediately that she wanted to bring this piece to Madison after seeing it performed at the Minnesota Opera in 2016. "My immediate response to it was tears," Smith described. "I had already fallen in love with the music and the characters, and while I was expecting an emotional payoff, the one that came was more powerful than I anticipated. I walked out of the theater and said, 'We will be doing this in Madison next season.' Great operas can be moving, thought-provoking, and entertaining—sometimes all at once. I think 'Fellow Travelers' fits that model, and I hope audiences will



their lives in the shadows, and that's where their stories remained. It's an honor to shed light on both the victims and heroes of the Lavender Scare.

walk away with both emotional catharsis and an understanding of how vibrant the American opera scene has become."

This opera is about people and the natural and environmental complexities of a relationship. You see the good parts and the bad parts; they are flawed, their relationship is flawed, and their world is flawed. The characters are very strong, very real.

All great operas have an emotional core, which allows audiences to connect to them in their own way dependent on their personal

these human relationships, and enjoy this ever-evolving artform.

"Music steps in where words fail." Rothstein explained, "The characters are often unable to speak the truth, sometimes because of ignorance and other times because of fear. I hope audiences are moved by the story and hear the truths it has to tell in both words and the more universal language of music."



ROBERT A. GODERICH is an out professional opera singer and musical theater actor based in Madison. He's performed regionally with Madison Opera, Skylight Music Theatre, Capital City, CTM, Four Seasons Theatre, and even with San Francisco Opera.



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METHAMPHETAMINE SUBSTANCE ABUSE RECOVERY

The ParTy Killer

Crystal meth, or Tina, is ravaging the gay community worldwide, and Madison is far from immune. **Kirsten Schultz** dives into the history of the drug, its rise in the queer community, and paths to recovery for those impacted.

IN 1887, WHEN GERMAN pharmacologist L. Edeleono first synthesized methamphetamine, he could have no idea what this discovery would lead to by 2019. Throughout World War II, German, American, and Japanese troops relied heavily on meth to maintain energy and stave off depression. Studio 54 and other clubs in the disco era saw meth use meet the needs of people looking to dance all night. Fast-forward to the 1990s, and meth was growing in popularity in the gay party scene.

Gay and gueer men are up to four times more likely to use meth than their heterosexual peers.

It's not hard to see why. Crystal meth increases the release of dopamine, serotonin, and norepinephrine. These are the pleasure, happiness, and alert chemicals respectively. This leads to not only feeling immense pleasure, but sustained sexual performance, increased libido, more focus, appetite suppression, and increased self-esteem.

Reasons people use can be varied. Searching for an escape from trauma, grief, or even internalized shame isn't uncommon. The loss of the early days of HIV/AIDS substance use can also bring joy during tumultuous times, especially if it has taken place within a community. For meth, specifically, those more extroverted and sexual benefits may also be a draw. The uptick in self-esteem alone can be enough to draw people to occasionally using.

Naturally, there are negative side effects from using, too, including tremors, hypothermia, erratic and irregular heart rates, insomnia, and decreased lung capacity if smoking meth. When meth leaves the system, it brings a number of negative side effects including depression, irritability, hallucinations, paranoia, and fatigue.

Eric Stanko, a social worker in UW Health's HIV Clinic, added his input. "The manner in which methamphetamine is used





will impact the side-effects," he said. "For people who smoke it, it has implications for cardiovascular and dental/oral health. You may have heard of 'Meth Mouth.' For people who inject methamphetamine, there is significant risk of infections; particularly Hepatitis B and C, as well as HIV."

As with many drugs, people tend to overestimate their ability to stop using meth at any time. Long-term use of meth leads to damage of various functional parts of

the brain. The thalamus and striatum both see negative effects, leading to more difficulty regulating emotions, motor signals, and impulse control. The pleasure center, which processes both dopamine and serotonin, struggles to operate at normal levels. The brain becomes dependent on the outside supply of these chemicals to function properly.

Notice that dependent does not necessarily mean addicted. Dependence is the point at which someone's physical body begins to rely on a drug or medication. This can happen with many medications from gluticosteroids to antidepressants to prescribed pain medications. Sometimes, this means increasing a dose or taking a drug more often. What defines substance misuse/abuse or addiction is that their drug use is being done in the face of harmful consequences such as using bill money to buy drugs or failing to accomplish tasks at work.

That doesn't mean safe drug use exists, though. As overall use of meth goes up, so do deaths from overdoses of the drug.

METH USE IN THE GAY COMMUNITY

Meth use in the gay community specifically has been rising steadily over the last several years. In fact, gay and queer men are up to four times more likely to use meth than their heterosexual peers. And this isn't just an issue for adults - adolescents in the larger LGBTQ+ community are around 90% more likely to try illicit substances than their peers.

Things like uncontrolled chronic pain, systemic discrimination, poverty, and homelessness all contribute to this potential increase in meth use. "LGBTQ+ folks are already a vulnerable population," Stanko shared, "and a very addictive substance like methamphetamine often adds to the vulnerability." This can be a dangerous addition to the challenges we face, especially when we take into account the impact of our identities on our mental health. According to NAMI, nearly 40% of people in the LGBTQ community have one of more mental health conditions. Stanko illustrates that this is extra concerning when we consider meth use: "Because it can interfere with the ability to keep medical appointments and make it to work, it can jeopardize [one's] health and employment and housing stability. Using meth can also impair someone's ability to adhere to medical regimens (i.e., forgetting to take your medication every day as prescribed). And of course, methamphetamine use significantly raises the risk of HIV infection."

When asked about meth use locally, Stanko said that it's "quite prevalent among queer men, and this is true internationally." He added that "research does suggest that transgender women use substances at a higher rate than

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Written by Kirsten Schultz.

JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2020

cisgender women, which includes methamphetamine use."

Across some of the academic literature around meth use, a few overarching themes pop up. Those who want to bottom for a longer time or who are more interested in being submissive during sex and/or BDSM play are more likely to utilize meth. The same is true for those looking or expecting to have sex with multiple partners over the course of an evening.

represent other substances. Sellers will often make the first move, messaging other app users to ask if they want to 'parTy.'

Grindr doesn't take steps to remove drug dealers from its platform. This is despite both research showing these key phrases involved in drug deals and other app goers reporting these profiles. Grindr is under no legal obligation to take down these profiles, either. Recent research suggests that dating apps increase substance use and abuse as

Those who want to bottom for a longer time or who are more interested in being submissive during sex and/or BDSM play are more likely to utilize meth. The same is true for those looking or expecting to have sex with multiple partners over the course of an evening.

GRINDR MAKES IT EASY TO FIND

Access to technology has only increased the ability to buy and sell illicit substances like meth quickly and easily. Grindr and other dating apps make it easy to find someone selling meth if you know what to look for. Key phrases like parTy, play, Tina, and PNP all refer to meth use. Diamond emojis reference meth use while snowflakes and leaves

ALEXANDER EINSMAN
MS LMFT



ATLASMADISON.COM 608.535.9285 well as avoiding utilizing protection during sexual activity.

The ability of meth to lower inhibitions can lead to having less control over situations than with a sober mind. This often leads to unprotected sex with more partners. It can, unfortunately, also look like a lowered adherence to medications like PrEP. Combine these factors with the potential of meth use to contribute to a higher viral load, using this specific drug increases risk of HIV infection and transmission.

IMPACT OF SHAMING

Negative messages about meth posted within queer nightlife spots doesn't lead to a reduction in meth use. In fact, it leads to a lack of engaging in safer queer spaces. This is especially true when bathroom stalls are covered in fear-mongering posters highlighting abstinence. People will go where they aren't being made to feel ashamed over engaging with these issues. As Stanko shared, "There is already so much shame and stigma around substance use, so adding to that can very much make it worse. To be clear, there is nothing to be ashamed of regarding substance use. It's a behavior; it does not define someone or their worth as a person. Shame is often more harmful than helpful; it certainly can motivate some people to make changes, but it frequently exacerbates issues related to substance use and can lead to further resistance to change."

Combine the ease of getting meth, leaving safer queer spaces, and engaging in chemsex, and the result are higher STI rates—including those for HIV/AIDS. Someone regularly using meth can increase their risk of contracting HIV by up to 400%. This can

be even higher for black and brown people, those who are already immuno-compromised, or those who engage in sex work.

IMPACT ON RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships often take a toll when meth use is involved.

Our Lives spoke with Mark, a local gay man who has been involved with the party scene in the past. He shared the following about a friend named Sam, who currently uses: "He had described himself as a recreational user," he said, "but a year or so ago admitted that he'd become hooked. In his case, the allure of the dance floor and rough sex were what he came to find from meth. His ex was also heavily addicted, affecting his ability to run his own business and eventually leading them to break up."

Another of Mark's friends, Al, recently lost his partner to an overdose after a relapse.

RESOURCES FOR RECOVERY

There is hope for the future. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and other organizations have released guides to LGBTQ+ affirming treatment in substance use. These guides can help providers create spaces that promote self-acceptance and work to eliminate many of the underlying reasons people use meth. The same can be said of the ever-increasing understanding of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), trauma, and systemic discrimination on a person's chances to misuse substances.

But what happens to those using in the meantime?

"When we have people who are not ready to change," Stanko shared, "we talk about ways to reduce risk and harm from substance use. Particularly when it comes to injection drug use, helping people access needle and syringe exchange programs. It's important that people are able to make informed decisions, so if people are going to inject drugs, they should be aware of the risks in doing so. It's not just the needles or syringes that can spread infection; cookers, cleaners, water, cotton, etc. can be vectors for transmission."

One harm reduction method, called Safe Use sites, has gained popularity across Europe, Canada, and some cities in the United States. These sites have been proven to lower the number of overdoses by providing not only a safe space to use but people to watch over those using for safety. In case of accidental overdose, the individuals working

there can administer life-saving treatment and get the person emergency medical care.

The Harm Reduction Incubator, part of the Harm Reduction Coalition, can help grow safe use programs in communities quickly and sustainably. Additionally, they have a wide variety of training materials and resources on their site to help create safe use spaces and active steps to take to prevent overdose. One such resource is a variety of instructions on how to administer naloxone as well as how to create kits to step people up for maximum safety while using.

SOBER SPACES

With how many queer spaces are centered around substance use, one major potential change lies in creating more sober spaces. There are more and more sober queer spaces popping up around the country. Of course, most of these spaces are in California or New York City, making them woefully inaccessible to those of us living in the Midwest. Perhaps there are a few brave souls in the party town that Madison is who would consider opening up such a space here.

SEX-POSITIVE COUNSELING

Since sex can be such a major instigator for meth use, people need connections with mental and sexual health providers who are both well-versed in substance abuse issues and in helping people find healthy connections with themselves and others. Often, people may need to relearn what their relationship with sex and sexuality needs to be. Since Madison has a major lack of inclusive and financially accessible health providers, finding that type of much-needed care can be incredibly difficult.

Overall, we have to keep in mind that support and compassion go a long way toward helping our loved ones lower or stop using illicit substances like meth. That doesn't mean we should eliminate boundaries to keep ourselves safe, though. What it does mean is that we need to remove our judgment of people in the community who are using.

"Just because someone is using methamphetamine (or any other substance) does not mean that they are 'broken' and need 'fixing.," Stanko said. "I want people to know that they do not have to go it alone. There is help out there, if and when they want it."



KIRSTEN SCHULTZ is a world-renowned queer and disabled writer, activist, and sex educator. They hold an MS in Healthcare Administration from Utica College. You can learn more about them and their work at kirstenschultz.org and on Twitter @kirstie_schultz.

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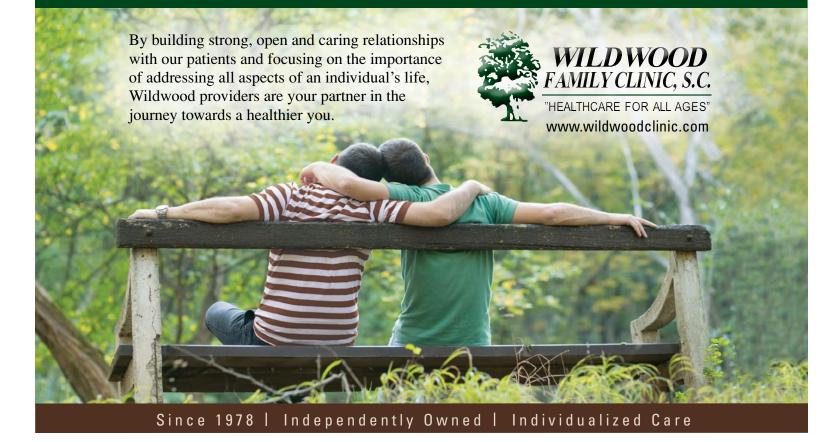
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QTPOC DIVERSE & RESILIENT MILWAUKEE

A Place for Us

Diverse & Resilient's Intersectionality Among Men has

been creating a space where 18-29-year-old same-gender-loving black and brown men can come together, build community, and grow as leaders.

MANY TIMES, WHEN WE THINK of sexual health and HIV/STI prevention, we think of presentations, testing, condoms, or pamphlets. What might not come to mind is community, healthy relationships, and a strong self-identity. These are all protective factors that might sneak past someone's radar in the world of public health and combating the transmission of HIV. But the Intersectionality Among Men or (IAM) for short, has been able to implement HIV prevention by providing same-gender-loving black and Latino men with knowledge and tools to maintain healthy and lasting relationships with peers.

SAFE SPACE

It's pretty evident that there is a lack of safe spaces for LGBTQ folks of color in Milwaukee. There have been issues surrounding racism and lack of representation in many of Milwaukee's LGBTQ spaces. IAM has been a safe space for 18-29-year-old same-gender-loving black and brown men for three years as one of the many prevention efforts at Diverse & Resilient in Milwaukee.

MPOWERMENT PROJECT

What makes IAM unique is that the program is modeled after the Mpowerment Project. Mpowerment is an evidence-based HIV intervention project that has been recognized by the Center for Disease Control, and has been implemented nationwide by various CBO's. What also makes the Intersectionality Among Men special is that it is the only federally funded program of its kind in the entire state of Wisconsin.

CORE GROUP AND COORDINATORS

The heart of the program is its core group, which is made up of 15 young men. The core are the driving force behind IAM, and help to make decisions involving the project. These 15 are also peer health educators and advocates. They play a huge part in recruitment and outreach for the project, and for IAM's large events. These larger events include everything from PrideFest to barbeques to skill-building workshops.

Intersectionality Among Men is under the leadership and guidance of its two coordinators, Stacy Clark and Jamal Perry. Both Clark and Perry come from different professional and personal backgrounds, but share the same goal and vision for IAM—to keep community first and to continue to provide a safe space for same-gender-loving men of color in Milwaukee.

One of IAM's most recognizable events is The Get Down. The original title for The Get Down is M-groups as part of the Mpowerment curriculum. The group is full of personality and creativity, so "M-groups" quickly changed to "The Get Down" in order to be more appealing to the community that IAM is serving. The Get Down is a monthly peer



lead event full of discussion, community building, and sexual health education. It is one of the more formal ways to be introduced to Intersectionality Among Men.

In 2019 the program grew and saw engagement like never before. Those involved with IAM gained a sense of pride around black identity and their own sexuality. Combined with knowledge and tools around sexual health, these became protective factors for core group members and those participating in all our larger events.

With the project's spike in engagement came one of its most successful and promising events: Spirit Week, which was created in collaboration with the Empowering Community Action Institute, a capacity and leadership initiative that is a part of the Wisconsin Aids/HIV Program.

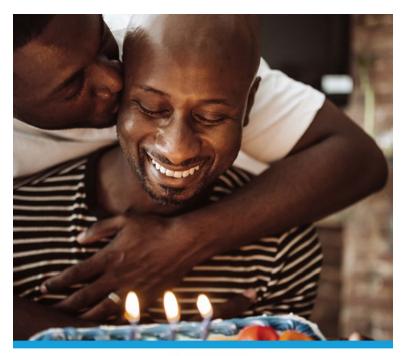
IAM helped coordinate a week of events that addressed health disparities among black and Latino same-gender-loving men, and did so with a non-traditional approach. Sprit Week left the community talking for weeks after, and left queer communities of color wanting more.

"Spirit Week was an amazing experience! It was great seeing something positive in our community. The sense of unity, support, and love was seen throughout each event. It amazes me what we can accomplish together," Kyle Hayes, a community member and participant said.

Overall Spirit Week reached nearly 400 people, and put Intersectionality Among Men on many people's radar. IAM plans to continue to bring support, education, and community-based HIV prevention to Milwaukee and will always be a safe space for black and brown men to thrive and seek brotherhood.



JAMAL PERRY was born in Gary, IN, but moved to Milwaukee in 2003. He is a proud alumnus of Milwaukee Public Schools and the University of Wisconsin— Milwaukee where he earned his bachelor's degree in broadcast journalism. Jamal first got involved in Milwaukee's LGBTO+ community through UWM's LGBT Resource Center as a student volunteer at PrideFest. Jamal has a passion for all forms of media and communication and making an impact and serving his community—specifically LGBTQIA communities of color.





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Kate Krakow & Melissa Losiniecki

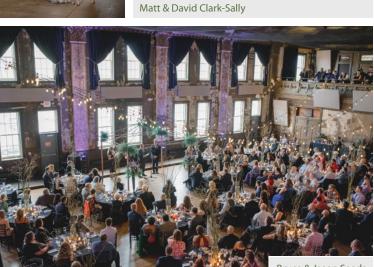
LGBTO MARRIAGES

Celebrating Your Special Day, Done Your Way

Wisconsin's LGBTQ newlyweds share their wedding day experiences.









Emma & Kelsey Sweet





Love & Kindness // Jamie & Dawn Suchomel

October 19, 2018 // Engaged 12 months // Las Vegas

We eloped to Las Vegas to get married and celebrated with our family and friends May 18, 2019 at the Fluno Center. When you share your love, strangers will connect in ways they wouldn't know was possible. Our celebration was filled with the love and kindness that truly exists in this world. Photographer: Spencer Micka

A Learning Curve // Cassie Getz & Julia Eyers

November 10, 2018 // Engaged 29 months // Windsor/Sun Prairie

Being Christian women, it was important to us to have a church wedding. Our church elders wouldn't allow us to marry at our home church, so we went on a long hunt of locating a church who would willingly marry an LGBT+ couple who were non-members. Finally, we found Windsor United Church of Christ. This was a learning curve, but we knew God would lead us to where we should be. One thing that made our day unique, was that we wanted Cassie's deceased father to be included. Julia gave Cassie a card that was written as though her dad was speaking to her. We have her reading it on video. Cassie's mom was also able to carry a memory book up the aisle and seat it beside her the entire ceremony. Cassie's dad also got a place at the head table. He was with us every step of the way. Photographer: Phoenix & Rose Photography

Fire & Earth // Andy Best & Jake Kindwall

November 1, 2019 // Engaged 18 months // Madison

We've always liked symbolism (we're writers, go figure), and decided to theme our wedding after the elements Fire and Earth. Andy is fire and wore red, while Jake is earth and wore green. The wedding bands we gave each other have different colors on the inside representing how we gave parts of ourselves for each other. On top of being grateful for

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an evening with family and friends, we were really happy to show off how we cared about each other on a level that inspires us both every day. **Photographer:** Samantha Dutcher

The Joining of Lives // Michelle & Alice Chang-Der Bedrosian

August 9, 2019 // Engaged 7 months // Shorewood Hills

We had a small, 25-person wedding in a friend's back yard overlooking the lake on Friday and a potluck bonfire reception at our church (St. Dunstan's) on Saturday with about 100 of our closest friends, including a six-foot tall rainbow unicorn sprinkler! Our wedding vows were not just to each other, but also to Michelle's (now our) daughter. We made our vows to her and asked her consent to becoming a family. This was a very important day for everyone, signifying the joining of lives to become a family. We had dinner that night watching the sun set; a beautiful and perfect evening. **Photographer:** Samantha Dutcher

An Expression of Love // Matt & David Clark-Sally

April 14, 2019 // Engaged 9 months // Bloomington, IN

Our wedding was an intimate, casual day with family and friends from all over traveling to celebrate our love. We both grew up closeted because of deep religious ties, so marrying the person we wanted was something neither of us imagined would ever happen. We recognized that not only was our wedding a union for the two of us, but for our daughters as well. We poured different colors of sand into a vase to symbolize that this new family will be a beautiful, colorful mix of four individuals coming together. The entire celebration was a beautiful expression that love does indeed win! **Photographer:** Keely Smith, Brownstones Photography

Everyone Together // Davette Baker & Brian Mounce

August 17, 2019 // Engaged 12 months // Milwaukee

Weddings truly bring people together. Being queer and marrying someone who is not a person of color could have been a disaster. But on our special day, we had everyone we love and who loves us in the same space. We had the blessings we wished for, and it went so much better than I expected. We didn't want Jesus in our ceremony, so we took our vows from Jane Eyre, *The Sandman*, Vol 9: "The Kindly Ones" and *The House at Pooh Corner*. These readings describe how we relate to each other and how amazing our courtship was. **Photographer:** Michael Blake

Love of Family & Friends // Juliette Bruce & Kit Newton

May 25, 2019 // Engaged 20 months // Blue Mounds State Park

When we were planning our wedding, we certainly thought having our friends and family present was important, but it turned out that this was one of the most important aspects of our wedding. Whether it was our friends and family officiating the ceremony, performing a reading, providing the music, or helping us set up, there is no way we could have done our wedding without their support. Looking back, we wouldn't have done it any different. Driving away from our wedding we both were struck how our wedding wasn't just a celebration of our love for each other, but a celebration of the love and importance of all our friends.

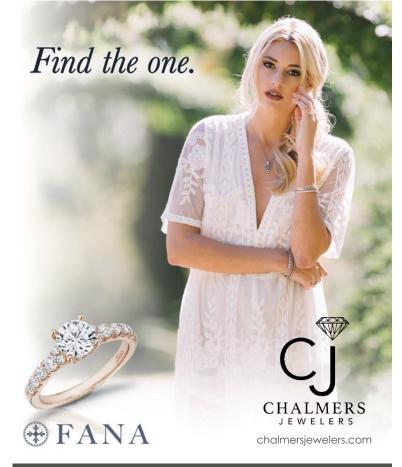
Photographer: Ruthie Hauge

JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2020

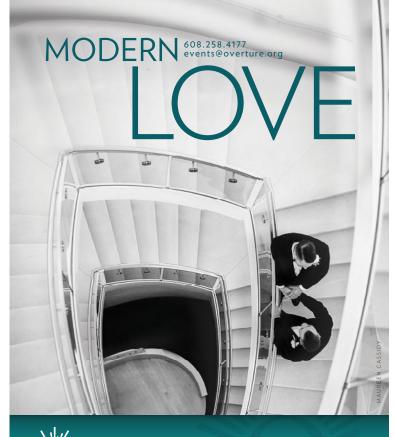
Amazing Support Network // Emma & Kelsey Sweet

August 24, 2019 // Engaged 38 months // Sun Prairie

We planned our whole wedding in 60 days when we found out Kelsey was getting deployed, and we learned that we can do anything together and that we have an amazing support network. Our family and friends helped us plan an absolutely perfect day. Everything went perfectly, everything was as we would've wanted it if we had taken a year to plan it, and the weather was absolutely beautiful. We incorporated a lot of



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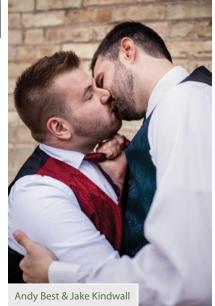
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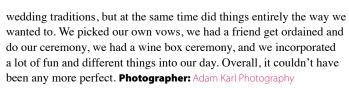












Visible & Joyous // Linn Jennings & Emma Carpenter **June 29, 2019** // Engaged 15 months // Madison

We both had complicated ideas about weddings and reservations about having our own wedding, given that it's a tradition rooted in patriarchy. But the day of our wedding was so joyous, and it was so easy to focus on our love and the community we created. It was special to have guests from around the world attend and to have family and friends ranging from Emma's 8-month old cousin to Linn's 88-year-old grandmother from Sweden. We had little kids there for who this was their first wedding and older gay and lesbian family members who were gay rights activists. It felt so special to celebrate queer love and honor those who worked so hard so that we could get married in such a visible and joyous way! Photographer: Cate Barry Photography

Thank You for Finding Me // Kathy & Paula Meyer

June 8, 2019 // Engaged 21 months // Madison

When you find the person who completes you, your heart knows. There were ups and downs, but our wedding was magical, and we wouldn't have wanted anything different. We were amazed that neither of us were nervous, which proved to us that it was right. Yes, there was a ceremony venue change, hotel construction, a broken shower, family conflict, and wedding party drama, but also fun things like a waterfall, a wedding crashing t-rex, rubber chickens everywhere - and we were blessed to

celebrate with family and friends. We chose a DJ and photographer who both turned out to be great friends. Love does always win, so respect others but follow your heart. As Paula said in her vows; thank you for finding me. I waited a long, long time. Photographer: Spencer Micka

$Breathtaking \ {\it //} \ Jessica Braun \& Julie Nahrgang$

October 5, 2019 // Engaged 19 months // Madison

It was a bit cold and rainy on our wedding day, so the previously planned rooftop ceremony was moved inside nestled between two walls of floorto-ceiling windows. All but our wedding party and immediate families stood. And those standing family and friends folded in and moved towards us, enveloping us, after we walked the aisle. It was a literal show of support and love the way they just came closer. Our officiant was one of our dearest friends and her words were all a surprise and all perfect. And while we were standing, facing each other, holding hands and taking in the ceremony, people walking by stopped and watched the ceremony through the windows. Some clapped. Some smiled. And some took pictures. But they saw us and we saw them; anonymous strangers watching our love while smiling. It was breathtaking. Photographer: Sharon Vanorny

Fireworks // Sarah Ade & Anna Spafford

June 29, 2019 // Engaged 10 months // Madison

We had lots of guests with children, and we planned to keep them (and ourselves) entertained. We had a blast at our wedding, starting with a bounce house and ending with fireworks. Photographer: Ruthie Hauge

Life Lesson // Kate Krakow & Melissa Losiniecki

October 5, 2019 // Engaged 7 weeks // Oconomowoc

We had spent a considerable amount of time setting up a 30' x 30' party

tent to accommodate the outdoor October wedding that we were hoping for. We sealed up all of the seams to keep out the forecasted rain. We were quite proud of the final product: twinkling lights, flowers, and all. But, the weather wanted to teach us the important life lesson on the day of our wedding that there are things that are ultimately out of our control. In the afternoon, the wind lifted the tent into the air and flipped it over, leaving it skewered by some trees and a fence. We called in a team of friends and were able to set the tent back up. Shortly thereafter, a deluge of rain came and collapsed our newly reconstructed tent. Needless to say, the reception was moved inside...and it was perfect!

Photographer: Brandi Rondinelli, Soulshine Photography

Church & State // Mark Spreitzer & Philip Gorman

September 14, 2019 // Engaged 12 months // Deerfield

We like to cook and bake. We over-ordered dessert from two different bakeries. We had a cake (having a topper with two grooms was very important to us), rainbow macarons, chocolate hedgehogs, a cream puff croquembouche, and more. By the time we made it to the dessert table there were crumbs left. Lesson learned: You cannot over-order dessert. Our officiants were our friend and pastor Carol Taylor and Justice Rebecca Dallet. They had such a good time, they joked about going on the road together performing weddings. We are lucky to be part of a supportive faith community and live in a state and country that recognizes our marriage. We both campaigned for marriage equality and being able to have such wonderful representatives of the church and state perform our marriage was incredibly special. Photographer: Sable Park Photography

Unity & Bourbon // Ethan Hahn & Christopher Groce

July 6, 2019 // Engaged 15 months // Cottage Grove

I didn't expect how helpful our wedding party would be in setting up and handling various tasks during our big day. They took care of so much for us without us even knowing and made the day that much more relaxing for us. One of the most unique parts of our ceremony was our unity ceremony. We had each of our mothers pick their favorite bourbon and mix it together in a small barrel we bought inscribed with our names and wedding date. We took our first bottle out of it a few weeks ago and it is turning out amazing! Photographer: Andi Stempniak

Love, Commitment, Community // Bruce & Jason Seeds

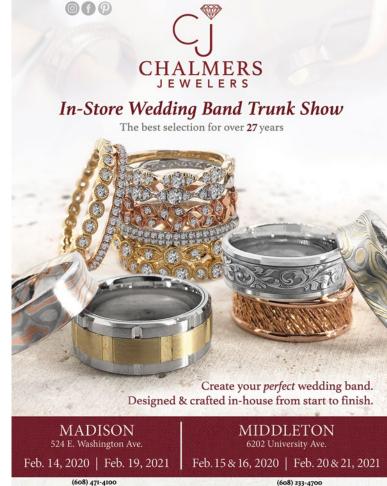
July 13, 2019 // Engaged 16 months // Milwaukee

We first met on a brewery tour in the summer of 2016. Marriage equality was barely a year old. Before that day, neither of us imagined we might find the one we were meant to share our lives with. But here we are today: not just together, but husbands. Married men. Friends and family gathered from all parts of our lives and from around the world. We were humbled by the outpouring of joy and happiness they brought. We didn't expect it, but the energy in the ballroom was palpable. We feel we succeeded in capturing and celebrating the essential elements of marriage: love, commitment, and community. Photographer: Front Room Studios

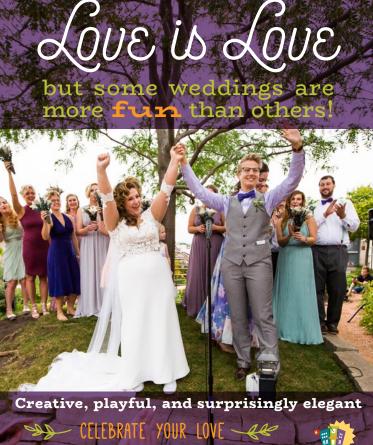
Wedded Bliss // Misty Sjachrani-Swift & Riki Sjachrani

September 7, 2019 // Engaged 8 months // Madison

Riki and I were surprised with how easily we were able to work as a team to create a day that fit both of our expectations and desires. We decided to skip the wedding planner, which could have been a disaster. We also decided to prepare the dinner and cake, create and mail save-the-dates and invitations, sew my wedding dress and veil, and arrange the flowers and decorations ourselves. With the support of an amazing officiant and her virtual planning binder, and a photographer that gave amazing support, our day went beautifully. We were both happily surprised at the love







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Additional Weddings 2019

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lovelist via open calls to readers in our November issue and on our newsletter, Facebook, and Instagram.	
BARABOO	
September 14	John Shumaker & Clint Zurbuchen
EDGERTON	
August 10	Brian Rennar & Patrick Zimmerman
ELKHORN	
November 10	Kristi Rogers & Katie Young
JANESVILLE	
November 16	Jenna Lazzaroni & Casandra Robbins
LACROSSE	
October 5	Deb & Jo Bassett
MADISON	
March 23 April 19	Micah Dombroe & Sylvia Ildsjel Jason Fowler & Grant Stroobants
May 26	Christa & Scarlett Russell
August 31 September 14	Evan Heath & Dan Jonovic Julie Beauchamp & Brenda Stanley
September 30	Lili Hernandez & Ashley Hiebing
MANITOWOC	, , ,
October 26	Sapphire & Stephanie Garcia
MILWAUKEE	
	John Harmon & Karter Wilkening
November 20	John Harmon & Karter Wilkening
November 20 SOUTH MILWAU	
SOUTH MILWAU	JKEE



and joy shared by all, and decided we would not have changed a thing. One unique piece of our day was the B-cycle ride from Olbrich Gardens to our reception at Tenney Park with some of our closest guests. It was blissful! **Photographer:** Spencer Micka

Lucky // Lena & Cary Olson

August 31, 2019 // Engaged 16 months // Madison

We were lucky enough to have Lena's family's pastor marry us, whom we've known for years. It gave the ceremony a personal touch that was easy to shape to fit us both. We were also lucky to be allowed to use the gorgeous newly renovated Madison Municipal Building for our wedding photos—it's a true gem of the city! **Photographer:** Dutcher Photography

So Much Happiness // Shawna & Johanna Heineman-Pieper

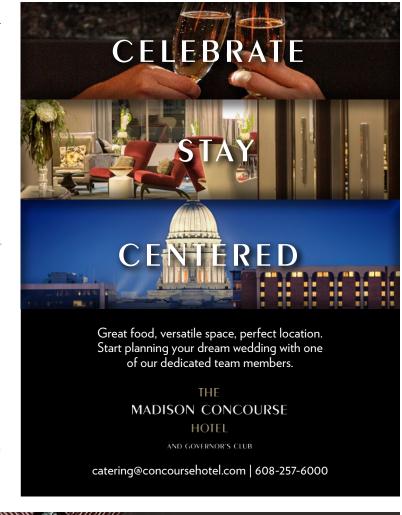
September 13, 2019 // Engaged 33 months // Hartland

Johanna was fortunate enough to have her birth family, whom she just met that year, come to the wedding. Both her birth father and mom walked her down the aisle. **Photographer:** Cate Barry

On the Same Page // Ian DeGraff & John Andrew Olson

September 21, 2019 // Engaged 6 months // Madison

We wanted our wedding to be a reflection of ourselves while keeping it from turning into an expensive circus. We incorporated feathers from my Macaw, Kalliope, into our outfits as she is our baby, and we couldn't have her there the day of the wedding. We had a taco bar for dinner to keep things fun and casual and had amazing cake from Bloom. We each wrote our own vows privately and were amazed how much overlap there was, almost like we were on the same page. My advice to others is to keep your wedding fun and simple, cut out unnecessary or expensive things, and focus on your love together. **Photographer:** Spencer Micka







Courage to Love Fearlessly

2020 LOVE LIST: CELEBRATING WISCONSIN'S LGBTQ RELATIONSHIPS

By being a part of the Love List, hundreds of LGBTQ relationships from across Wisconsin are helping us recognize and celebrate LGBTQ love while also creating connections and visibility for our entire community. We hope this helps to create a portrait of love that reflects our diverse community.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE: To protect against trans* and bi erasure, only LGBTQ-identified relationships are represented in photos. Allies only appear in text list.

28 Shelley Anderson & Nancy Burzell

14 David MacIntyre & Michael Wirth

27 Lizz Miller & Maureen O'Gara

- 21 Helen Boyd & Rachel Crowl
- 16 Heather & Natalie Starr
- 16 Joshua Cobbs & Benjamin Rinehart 13 Kathy Flores & Zephyr Kendierski
- 13 Charles Erickson & E-Ben Grisby

- 10 Patrick & Ryan Platta
- Brent Mecikalski & Nick Ross

3 Randy Anhalt & Nick Rich

9 Travis Christie & Preston Weiler

ATHELSTANE

30 Teresa Dziak & Mary Willard

BAILEYS HARBOR

20 Michael Meulemans & Doug Smith

























- 19 Dave & Ryan Berahn
- 7 John Shumaker & Clint Zurbuchen
- 5 Casy Netzloff & Jenn Severson

10 Jinx & Micah Ogé

- 30 Ken Cameron & Brian Thompson
- 5 Andrea & Sheena Hirschfield
- 2.5 Cindy & Stephanie Jorenby

18 Joanne & Tina Lenz-Mandt

44 T.J. Meehan & Larry Ortt

19 Wayne Graff & Steven Sobiek

BROOKFIELD

19 Lynn Carlson & Lisa Rouskey

21 Huck Gent & Courtney Jenkins ★

10 Kristine Gotch & Jennifer Holm

- 30 Karen & Preston Baker ★
- 30 Marilyn Krump & Gloria Krysiak
- 9 Carlos & Perry Edge-Gross

2 Brianna Freed & Jodi Schoenemann

- 19 Lynn Johnson & Charlene Strouf
- 18 Holly Anderson & Colleen Marsden 7 Annie Getsinger & Andrea Weinstock ♥
- 4 Emma & Kelsey Sweet

- 18 Lisa Herrmann & Jane Schley
- 14 Daniel Djubenski & Brandon Litwiller
- 3 Alicia & Jean Belden

EDGERTON

- 15 Brian Rennar & Patrick Zimmerman
- 15 Amy Kongslie & Michelle Paulman

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6 Kristi Rogers & Katie Young

7 Carol & Kim Foglestad

- 23 Andrea & Nancy Murleau
- 22 Eric Schmidt & Carrie Waters Schmidt ★
- 20 Cindy Byczek & Kristin Fiore
- 15 Brian James & Wade Richardson
- 13 Ryan Parkos & Christopher Sina
- 10 Jill Muenich & Laura Webster
- 9 Ryan Crose & Steven Heller 7.5 David Ryan-Sukup & Justin Sukup
- 7 Rebecca & Sara Bender
- 5 Phillip & Michael Meland
- 4 Erin Anderson & Kate Wicker ♥
- 3 Markus & Tyler Kingswan

FOND DU LAC

20 Steven Cahee & Randy Veeser ♥

12 James Doran & Kelly Monigal

FORT ATKINSON

18 David Buggs & Mark Meisegeier

- Matthew Bowe & Kevin Woodard ♥
- 7 Phillip Bailey 7 Jason Rae

GREEN BAY

- 28 Todd Crapser & Gregory Diring
- 18 Angie & Deanne Kowalzek-Adrians
- 16 Kevin Garrity & Michael Larkey
- 10 Justin Pearson & Cory Nicklaus ♥

9 Jennifer Enriquez & Erin Hansen ♥ 1.75 Jarrod Rogisienski & Andrew Sawyer ♥ 1 Stephanie Murkve & Elizabeth Soto

HOLMEN

14 Aaron & Scott Klawiter-Grosskopf

- 17 Jay Schleker & Josh Siedschlag
- 9 Jenna Lazzaroni & Casandra Robbins
- **Daniel & David Malchow-Davis**
- 2 Avery Morris & Jen Schuler

JEFFERSON

11 Sheryl & Tarrah Spooner

JOHNSON CREEK

7 Beth & Naomi Zaccard

7 Megan & Rachel Quiroz

36 Francie Ball & Mary O'Sullivan

1.5 Joe Northwood & Rosanne St.Sauver ♥

Submissions were requested at ourlivesmadison.com/lovelist via open calls in our November issue, and through our newsletter, Facebook, and Instagram.

An Adventure of Love



Shaun's mother always told him, "Life is a journey, an adventure of choosing which path to go down and taking what may come with it. Often it's much easier to have a travel companion to guide you." He may have taken her words a bit too seriously because he found himself trying to find that "path" to see if maybe somewhere he might find that "travel companion."

Along that path, however, you'll find that fate has a way of leading you to where you need to be at the exact right time. Shaun had done nothing but gained empty wallets and broken hearts. This wasn't the adventure he had signed up for, and once again he began to pack up to go to a new destination. And then he saw him. A tall, handsome, dark haired man with the most beautiful crystal blue eyes and deep dark brown beard. (Of course, this was on Tinder.) But there was something different about him, his honesty and love of travel, his humble nature...so Shaun nervously said hi.

This man was Ryan. An intelligent, driven graduate of George Washington University, native of Door County, and lover of yes, travel! But Ryan wasn't planning on staying long and was adventuring elsewhere himself. Almost defeated, Shaun figured this was the wrong fork in the road, but something kept him in, wanting more. A little time later we found ourselves at the same show at the Comedy Club. Ryan came over to the table confident and absolutely stunning and said hello (although he recalls being nervous), and that was it. Shaun knew this was the road he was supposed to take.

Often, Shaun looks back at what his mother said. It wasn't until meeting Ryan, a traveler of the world himself, that Shaun realized the journey is more than just a plane ticket or a Facebook check-in. Life is that path, and finding someone, your travel companion, who you can fall in love with every day, who challenges you, helps you grow, makes you laugh till you almost pee, and looks into your eyes like they can see your soul.... That is the adventure.



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Bold



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LA POINTE

28 Glenn Carlson & Michael Childers

1 Deb & Jo Bassett

LA FARGE

28 David & Joseph Rogan-Nordstrom

LAKE GENEVA

1 Amy Funderburk & Lisa Szalanski ♥

LONE ROCK

20 Ted Haglund & Charles Munch

- 58 Clarence Cameron & Robert Lockhart
- 50 Chuck Bauer & Chuck Beckwith
- 46 Raphael Kadushin & Thomas McGhee 44 J. Corkey Custer & Betty Harris Custer ★
- 41 Lee Melahn & Rick Shaver
- 39 Brian Schultz & Louie Phillips
- 39 Nancy Buckwalter & Sue Hughes

- 38 Danielle Dresden & Donna Peckett
- 38 Kyle Schiedermayer & Robert Thurmer
- 38 Sue Currier & Janis Senungetuk
- 37 John Cannon & John Fritsch
- 37 Melissa Keves & Ingrid Rothe
- 36 Tom DeChant & Paul Gibler
- 36 Keith Stephens & Larry Seeman
- 35 Darren & Stephanie Bush ★
- 35 Phil Biebl & Kevin Grohskopf 35 Valerie Hodgson & MC Reisdorf
- 34 Elizabeth Petty & Karen Milner
- 34 Michael Bemis & Duane Hansen 34 Todd Hill & Thomas Jacobson
- 33 Rob Latousek & Brian McCormick
- 33 Stella & Vica Steel 32 Lois Bradley & Pat Framke
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 - 27 Kenneth Kaiser & Richard Schober
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 - 22 Jennifer Wagner & Rebecca Wennlund
 - 22 Liz Dannenbaum & Donna Winter
 - 22 Mary Hitchcock & Michelle Sawyer 21 Bob Klebba & David Waugh
 - 21 Thomas Gillen & Brian Widder

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High Fives & Love Notes



We met in Seattle in 2009 both out to support a friend's new single life. At the end of the night, we started playing pool and talking about Gina's graduate studies in couples counseling. We played for hours and talked about the relationship we both hoped to have in the future, you know, someday when we met someone special.

We both wanted someone we could travel with, savor great food with, pay bills, fight clean, and still have fun. We both wanted something both easy and exciting.

Little did we know we were setting intentions for the rest of our lives in that very first conversation. We've celebrated incredible career highs as Gina got her dream job in higher education, finished masters and PhD studies, and founded a thriving couples therapy practice. Rae worked for 10 years as a scientific illustrator and creative director before transitioning to full-time fine artist (a dream come true) in 2019.

Thankfully, that solid foundation has helped us weather struggles that tear many couples apart. In 2011 we began a gender transition from lesbian couple to queer/trans couple. In 2012 we began a heartbreaking six-year process through infertility, adoption, and miracle pregnancy to start our family. And in 2015 Rae was diagnosed with cancer—which changed us both forever.

Through infertility, cancer, career changes, house sales, and a move from Oregon to Wisconsin in the summer of 2019, nothing has slowed us down. Rae is now touring the world as a fine artist as he carves out space for trans representation in the fine art world. And Gina has created a thriving international relationship coaching practice.

We love exploring our new city on date nights and exploring the parks in Wisconsin with our sweet little kiddos. We've made it through more than most in just 10 years and have managed to stay deeply connected and committed no matter what.

Our bodies have changed, our homes have changed, our careers have changed—but our love remains strong.

Every day we celebrate our pride in each other as parents of two small children with high fives, love notes on the fridge, and our nightly gratitude practice. We like each other so dang much we've have five separate wedding ceremonies and soon hope to make it six. This time we hope to celebrate with wonderful community who has welcomed us so warmly in Wisconsin.

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- 19 Rick Bristol & Eric Appleton
- 20 Keith Borden & Johannes Wallmann
- 20 Scott Bennett & Landon Petersen
- 20 Carol Nelson & Nancy Speir
- 19 Daniel Lippitt & Glenn Mitroff 19 Patrick Hoeth & Keith Lupien
- 19 Becki & Jessica Ralyn
- 19 Jane Bettner & Joan Jung
- 19 Jen Ferstl & Jamesetta Fousek
- 19 Terry Heiliger & James Moe
- 18 Barb Arnett & Ellen Sullivan
- 18 Christopher Meyer & Heather Wentler ★
- 18 Renee Herber & Tamara Packard
- 17 Carol McCann & Carrie Tobin
- 17 Lindsav Raftis & Alicia Stevenson
- 17 Daisy Quintal & Jocelyn Lepinski
- 17 Jonathan Garber & Derek Tyus
- 16 Amanda Berg & Becca Schmitz
- 16 Jacinda Tessmann & Theresa Weiland
- 15 Jess Salek & Randy Cornell
- 16 Megin & Scott McDonell ★
- 15 Jennifer Cox & Lela Ann Cunningham
- 15 Kathy Janda & Berlinda Lopez
- 15 Dorothy Rietzler & Kari Sievert
- 15 Karen Darcy & Beth McConnell ♥
- 15 Nicholas Baillies & Craig Kramer
- 15 Randy Cornell & Jess Salek
- 15 Scott Rogers & Rod Rotar
- 15 Virginia Harrison & Melissa Peyton
- 14 Donald Haar & Steve Starkey 14 Robin Bechhofer & Pat Lambert
- 14 Charles McLimans & Richard Merrion
- 14 Eric Borchert & Timmo Dugdale
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- 14 Heidi Beatty & Kathy Kreutzer
- 14 Jason Hoke & Dino Maniaci
- 14 Julie & Monika Nischik

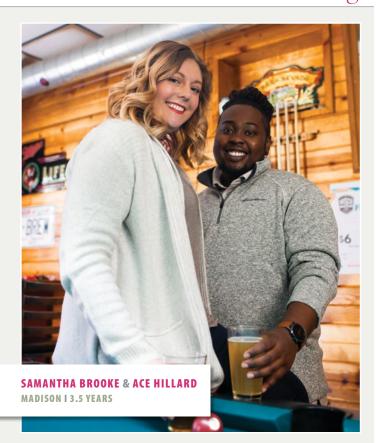
- 13 Carolyn & Ruth Barker-Bowman
 - 13 Jeff Clark & Tim Hagen
 - 13 Cindy Desch & Lynn Olson

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- 13 Judy Davidoff & Rhonda Lanford
- 13 Marco Torrez-Miranda & Philip Renner
- 13 Philip Keller & Steven Sievert
- 13 Melanie Rider & Jennifer Lawrence
- 13 Stacey Minter & Amanda Schwersinske
- 13 Amanda & Dawn Siebert-Evenstone
- 12 Julie Beauchamp & Brenda Stanley
- 12 Lana Lawrence & Louise Stout
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- Melissa Dittmer-Herrmann
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- 11 Donald & Jeremy Backman-Aurit
- 11 Elisa Derickson & Daniel Krueger
- 11 James & Shawnee Parens
- 11 Jay Edgar & Joshua Feyen
- 11 Jason Crawford & Jimmy Kohler
- 10 Cody Warner & Sean Voigts
- 10 Jamie & Joe Rady
- 10 Kris & Robert Kalb-Von Rutenberg
- 10 Jesse & Michael Hoffmeister
- 9.5 Emily & Ginger Francis
- 9.5 Ilsa May & Megan Watt
- 8 Larry Palm & JD Dean
- 9 Chelsea & Dana Rowe
- 9 Diana Love & Kim Prine
- Alyssa Brinkman & Kate Schultz
- Juanita Davis & Maria Lewis Lukas Dietz & Jordan Siegler ♥
- Mabel & Sarah Carr
- Nick & Shannon Ballhorn-Wagner ★
- Owen Karcher & Chelsea O'Neil Karcher Lisa D. Schoenwetter &
- KelsyAnne Schoenhaar
- Shawn Ramsey & Kelly Staerzl

- 8 Eric Ignarski & Michael Ruiz
- 7.5 Abby Churchill & Chris Swomley
- 7 Ali & Lorrie Hurckes Dwyer
- **Jason Fowler & Grant Stroobants**
- Martin Batchelor & Jeremiah Kasdorf
- 7 Roz Klaas & Käri Rongstad
- 7 Stephanie Ricketts & Kelly Schultz
- 6.5 Patrick Farabaugh & Sedrick Huppert 6.5 Elizabeth & Krista Hagermoser-Bayley
- 6 Jaclyn & Kiara Nyhus
- 6 Evan Heath & Dan Jonovic
- 6 Jennifer & Melissa Fish
- 6 Karen Hoffman & Vicki Shaffer
- 6 Megan Bentley & TeKema Balentine 6 Samantha & Savanna Strennen
- 5.5 Hayley Freimuth & Madeline Tyner
- 5.5 Sandy Eichel & Nancy Noet
- 5.5 Shari Henning &
- Laura Henning-Perkins 5 Angela Baerwolf & Abigail Swetz
- Ashlev Jorgenson & Brooke McKelvev ♥
- Christa & Scarlett Russell
- Lili Hernandez & Ashley Hiebing
- Noemi Cepeda Riva & Hilda Riva
- Peg & Rachel Zizmann
- Johanna & Shawna Heineman-Pieper
- 5 Stephanie Budge & Megan McDonald
- 4.5 Emma Carpenter & Linn Jennings
- 4.5 Michael Bruno & Jim Smith
- 4 Ashley & Rebecca Radue
- Claire Lind & Kurt Nicholson ♥
- Ginny Hesness & Marissa Landgraf
- Andy Best & Jake Kindwall
- Jillian & Katy Werginz
- Oriana Amakobe & Elizabeth Tymus ♥
- Tracy Fitch & Helen Hazelmare
- Libby Hallanger-Bernstein &
- Hannah Hankins
- 3.5 Christine Elaine & Caroline Wray ♥

Our Differences Make Us Strong



Not all Tinder dates fail. We swiped "right" on each other in June of 2016,

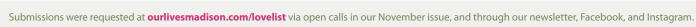
As a couple, it's been really important for us to acknowledge and embrace our individual identities. We have a strong understanding of both the systematic and social disadvantages and privileges that lay within our relationship. We are not only accepting and aware of our own identities, but we make a large effort to do the same for others around us. We believe in karma and that the good energy we put out there will be reciprocated in one way or another.

grounds. However, we've come to learn that these differences complement each other, and these same differences are what make us strong as a unit. Communication has been key in developing and growing together, which has taken a lot of patience and cultural understanding. But we feel if you love someone, no obstacle is too big to overcome together. We love each other so much, we will be saying "yes" to each other as partners in life in 2020, and we could not be more excited for this new journey!

met in July 2016, and have pretty much been inseparable ever since. Before meeting for the first time, Ace wanted to FaceTime so we could be familiar with one another before formally meeting. Being new to identifying and living as a transman, this would have been the first date since beginning hormonal replacement therapy for Ace. Luckily, Sam very nervously agreed. The next day, Sam picked up Ace as a song by the Weeknd was playing on the car radio which turned out to be one of both of our favorite songs. We went on our first date at Eldorado Grill where we found out we have a lot more in common than just our taste in music.

Fast forward to today, and we've attended more than 20 concerts together and have more on our list to see. We enjoy concerts in town, but we also love when we can travel to other cities to explore and indulge in local foods, craft cocktails, and experience the different social scenes from city to city. All of these things have become important aspects in the way we bond and learn from and experience the world around us.

Not everything has been easy for us, coming from two very different back-

































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- 3.5 Oakleigh Aguirre & Sean O'Brien
- 3 Leslie Mckinney & Duke Virginia ♥
- 3 Chezarae Dickson, Nick Drake, & Emily Mills M♥
- Brian & Ryan Maulana-Ponce
- Christine & Elaine Pasinski Thomas
- Davette BakerMounce & Brian Mounc
- Joey Muenich & Gary Tipler
- Zack Henderson & Riley Willman
- 2.5 Lydia & Sara Colopy
- 2.5 Micah Dombroe & Sylvia Ildsjel
- 2 David & Matt Clark-Sally
- 1.6 Janelle Asselin & Jenny Pfaff ♥
- 1.5 Ann De Tienne & Rene Simon ♥
- 1.5 Bill Beaudreau & Victor Crentsil
- 1.5 Danny Atwater & Sid Richards
- 1.5 Kyle Mills & Steve Wright 1.5 Monica Cook & Cindy Hogan ♥

- Cody Ackerman & Abigail LePar ★ Jessica Monroe & Laura Steigerwald ♥
 - Kim Bursaw & Emer Gallagher
 - 1 Mady Greene & Robin Matthies
 - .75 Mitchell Pralle & Tyler Steffensen
 - .5 Lori Karst & Tia Kneebone

3 Sapphire & Stephanie Garcia

39 Mark Blume & Thomas Voss

MAZOMANIE

15 Carolyn Antonie & Minda Engel

- 28 Chuck Mocco & Thomas Scheid
- 19 Leslee & Lori Spatola

MENOMONEE FALLS

1.8 Sandra Swan & Stephanie Wise

- 11 Renee Cowdery & Amber Jakes
- 7 Minta Dwyer & Camden Hargrove

41 John Flynn & Michael Novak

- 37 Larry Seeman & Keith Stephens
- 23 Ronald Meerhoff & Michael Rhoads
- 22 Joyce & Leilani Robertson-Hoyt
- 15 Lisa Koenecke 7 Angela Prestil
- 12 Andrea & Genia Stevens
- Edwin & Jeffrev Roman-Carnev
- Spencer Micka & Ed Rector
- Patty Montgomery & Amanda Paus
- 6 Vivienne Andersen & Kye Richards
- 5.5 J. Belmont, Alexander Garcia & Nicholas Juris ♥

Ticking all the Boxes



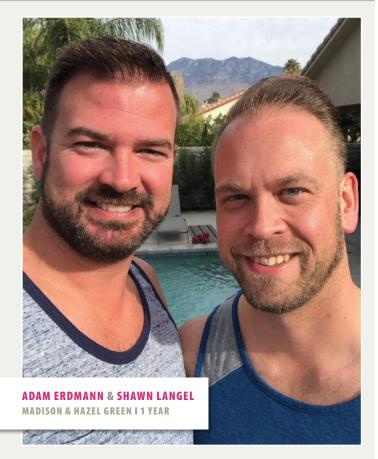
Like many queer people, it took Becca a long time before she was able to cultivate meaningful friendships and romantic relationships. She approached new connections in her mid-twenties as a polyamorous queer woman on the asexual/demisexual spectrum—not an easy feat for compatibility. Becca had a wonderful partner in Madison, Ada, but had decided she wanted a partner whom she could build a life with. She found Aaron on a dating site, and struck a conversation where they talked about their favorite flowers.

At the time, Aaron had two partners in California, Autumn and Ethan. Aaron had moved from California just a few weeks prior to Becca's message, and had no plans to pursue any new romantic relationships any time soon. They'd recently left a romantic-turned-abusive relationship, but was excited to make new friends in shiny new Madison. It was fortuitous that one of the friends Aaron ended up making was someone who ticked all the boxes and then some. It wasn't long before Aaron's feelings grew for the relationship in a way that felt even more right than friendship. And

Our first meeting at a coffee shop in the middle of Badger football territory on a Saturday was hectic, but Aaron was so patient with the whole ordeal. The spark between us was immediate. We started seeing each other as frequently as we could with Aaron's rigorous academic schedule and Becca's full-time work. We navigated the bus system (Aaron) and downtown traffic (Becca) for almost two years before renting a place together with a friend this last August, and it's been a dream. We both still see the partners we had before we dated and have cultivated shared and independent friendships since.

One of the greatest things about our relationship is how we encourage each other to grow. We both love independent animators and unique music. We love to cook for each other and collaborate on new dishes and flavors. We watch movies and analyze them together. Both of us have a multitude of artistic projects and ideas, and we support each other along the way. We both appreciate a lot of verbal affirmation and touch, so it's great to come home to lots of hugs.

Rooted in Travel



From the beginning, our relationship has been rooted in travel. Adam met Shawn on a work trip visiting Dubuque. Neither of us were ecstatic about a long-distance relationship. Adam lives in and Madison and Shawn now divides his time between Madison and Hazel Green, Wisconsin, just outside of Dubuque. Here we are a year and a half later, making travel and adventure a key theme in our relationship.

Our social media accounts have become awash with photos of places we go and things we do together. Friends consistently remark, "You two go everywhere!" Admittedly, we both like to stay active. Vacations and long weekends are great, but most of the time we simply seek out local events

It helps that we have so many common interests and are both willing to try anything once. We see a lot of shows at American Players Theatre or Forward Theater. You might find us at a hockey game, biking, hiking, or taking in a comedy show. When spending a weekend in Hazel Green, Shawn will take Adam to a casino for live music and some slots, or head to downtown Galena for drinks and dinner.

A weekend getaway to La Crosse last fall for a friend's wedding meant Adam could share some of his favorite sites and local spots with Shawn. Adam went to school at Viterbo University and lived there for six years.

Last February, we booked a vacation to Playa del Carmen. We spent plenty of time soaking in the sun with poolside cocktails. We love a little adventure too. Our first Valentine's Day together included zip-lining and driving ATVs. It was an amazing day! At that point, we both knew we had found someone to experience the world with.

When we travel, we also like to learn about local history and culture. In Mexico, we visited Tulum. It was at that point we made a goal to see all Seven Wonders of the World together. Where our adventures will take us next is anyone's guess, but it's certain to be together. ■

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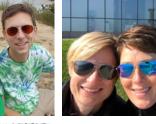


"It has been great to know that I could refer to my husband without fearing that weird look people get on their faces when they aren't expecting that." CHAD & DALE

































Bold 63 Erv Uecker & Ross Walker 44 Ronald Coleman & Tom Thresher





25 TJoan Fecteau & Kari George 123 23 Ernesto & Scott Valdes

23 John Harmon & Karter Wilkening 20 Tim Baack & John Sheaffer

39 Steven Sanders & Rand Schmidt

33 Gerry Coon & Stewart Dempsey

30 Becky Burton & Sue Robinson

26 Will Fellows & Bronze Quinton

25 Don Martinson & Steve Scragg

28 Marie Johnson & Laura Kraemer

32 Rose Barke & Dottie Renier

18 Mark Janetski & Ed Mullins

15 Scott Jones & Thomas Zigan

13 Jesus Bisoso & Pedro Garcia ♥

10 Dana & Jessica Langill

8 Ethan & Faith Parnell

Gary & Jeremy Cooper-Sperber

Jennifer & Natalie Zanoni

6 Donny & Keith Gray-Dozal 6 Gatlin Dresidan & Gerald Hyler

Aaron Carreno & Ryan Piaskowy ♥

4 Shelly Doolittle & Dianna Jones

2 Erin Eggers & Kathryn Moore ♥

Krystal Livingston & Alisa Streets

Kyle Caldwell & Ben Chadwick ♥

.8 Shay Bowman & Lisa Mendez

MINDORO

4 Beth & Kayla Stuhr

MINERAL POINT

18 John G Greenwood & Fred E. Vaughn

11 Beth & Jamie Kernan

4.5 Maggie Augustin & Ames Barker ♥

3.5 Kjersten & Stephanie Bakke

MOUNT PLEASANT

12 Thomas Darrow & Michael Houle

38 David Bluma & Brad Morrison

NEW AUBURN

23 Scott McCracken & Abe Zeman

NEW BERLIN

15 Nancy Biker & McGee Steffes

25 Pat Cline & Patty McKenzie

13 Charlie Nash & JR Witt

2 Olivia Nieves & Tabitha Nieves

4 Tim Tender & Paul Weber

1 Nicole Engerman & Amanda Schram PLEASANT PRAIRIE

15 Terry Cowles & Timothy Zimmer

3 Cara & Cooper Thomas

13 Ann Kelso & Sarah Mueller

8 Brent & Jeffrey Schramer

6 Thomas Hessey & Travis Teigen ♥

RIVER FALLS

4 Ryan Peterson & Markie Twist SHIOCTON

10 Berri & Lisa West

SHOREWOOD

16 Laura Maker & Susie Seidelman

SOUTH MILWAUKEE 8 Jeighsen Christiansen & Aaron Mayo

35 Daniel Clements & Joseph Melton

SPRING GREEN 53 Tom Alfini & Bob Charley

STEVENS POINT

15 Sandi & Sarah Lakewood

STOUGHTON

46 Judy Captain & Kate Stormer

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43 Ann Jakel & Peggy Stormoen 21 James Candler & Paul Lorentz

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10 Timothy Lom & Steven Noll

8 Maggie & Molly Censky

Julia Eyers & Cassie Getz

Kara Christenson & Stacey Dudley ♥

13 Derek Aimonetto & Glenn Rowe

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Barbara Murray-Charging Crow & Brandy Reding

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2 Charity Chandler & April Christie

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11 Brandy & Kari Konkol

11 Ryan Merkel & Jake Tulogeski

17 Linda Aumann & Deb Nies

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7.5 Brad & Nick Schlaikowski

Jake Christian & Dave Connell

2 Ross Beattie & Jonathan Foht

43 Garth & Roy Badger

Claire Brace & Melanie Barker ♥

10 Anne Marie Arroyo & Tamela Greene WHITEWATER

22 Robin Fox & Kim Simes

1.75 Megan Van Haren & Kaya Saia

7 Paul Fritsch & Jim Hartman

WISCONSIN DELLS

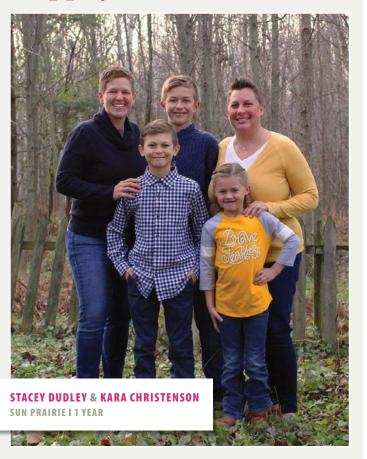
12 Annie & Stephanie Helmer WISCONSIN RAPIDS

3 Brittany & Emily Raczek

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Happily Ever After



Kara and Stacey are not the fairy tale type, but fate had other plans. It was love at first sight when Stacey saw a picture of Kara on social media. There was a love and a light in Kara's eyes, and Stacey had to meet her. Kara's sister and Stacey's sister have been friends since high school and wanted us to get together for some time; however both Kara and Stacey were previously married for a number of years. It was during our first date that Stacey knew Kara and she would have a future together. We both felt it and knew something very special was in the works.

We complement each other so well. We have similar interests, values, and work ethic. We are up for new adventures, and we truly enjoy each other's company. We support each other in our careers and family decisions, we communicate through our problems, and we deeply respect and appreciate each other. We have a lot of fun together, and we make each other laugh. Kara calls Stacey the fourth kid; in a loving way of course! Stacey is blessed to co-parent Kara's three beautiful children with her, and Stacey loves being silly with them and making as many memories as we can.

We love family; it's very important to us. We both make time to spend with each other, our kids, and both families. Her family is mine and mine, hers. When Stacey proposed to Kara this past November, the kids were involved. When Kara said, "Yes," the kids surrounded us, and it was a lovefilled moment we will never forget.

Our traditions are shared, and we make new ones all the time, whether it's Stacey taking each of the kids on individual date nights, or making dinners together, or our new Christmas morning family breakfast with green, Christmas-shaped pancakes. Between soccer practices, baseball games, and cross country meets, we always make time to spend as a family.

When we face any type of adversity, we do so together. Fate brought us together. Our sisters cheered us on and have become each other's best friends. We can't wait to see what's ahead. The best is yet to come!

JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2020



It's our differences that make us great.

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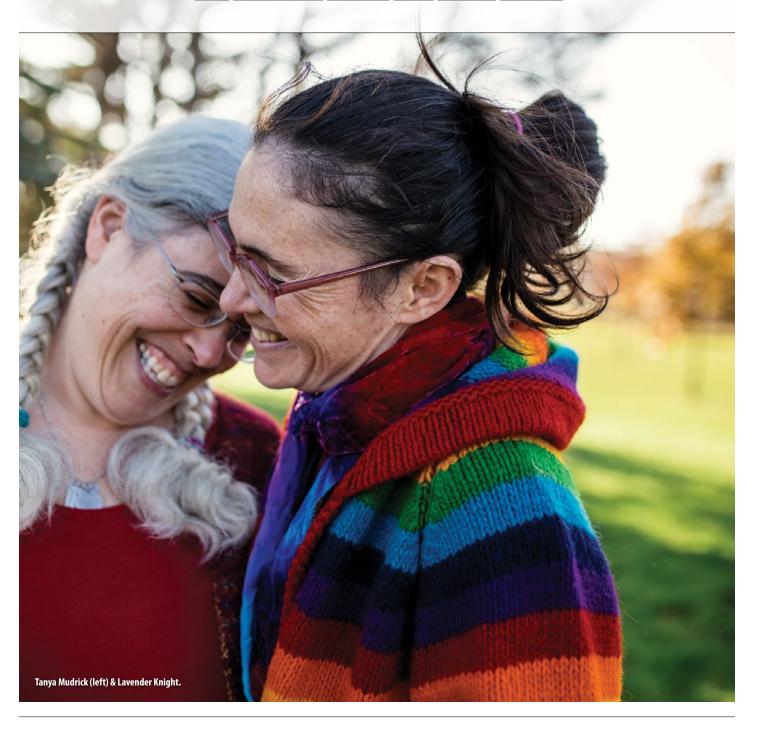
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Loving through Adversity

Lavender Knight and Tanya Mudrick's love for one another is a bond that has survived and deepened despite everything they have been through.

GRIEF TERMINAL CANCER INFERTILITY FAMILY RESILIENCE ACCEPTANCE



None of us can predict what will come our way on the rollercoaster of each lifetime. Lavender and Tanya wrote these love letters to each other to remember how they keep coming back, over and over, to a deep belief that love is stronger than fear. In their decade together they have navigated through pregnancy/ baby loss, the beauty and magic of adding a living child to their family, and now a terminal cancer diagnosis (not to mention all the other ups and downs). Their love grows stronger because they are willing to keep learning and growing together, and their community of support rallies around them when the going gets rough. It is with humble gratitude that they share their words with you.

DEAR TANYA,

You are not the woman I fell in love with a decade ago.

I thought I loved you then, but I had no idea what love could be, I had no idea the depth of love I would find with you as our lives exploded, dreams crushed and deemed impossible, as we picked ourselves up over and over again. The dust never really brushes away, the scars still twinge and zing sometimes, and yet, my heart only grows bigger, holding more,

When our babies died, I wondered at times if you would come back to me. I tried to keep things together, protect your tenderness while it healed. I screwed up. I lost my patience with you. With the process of grief. With the unknown of it all. I put myself between you and the harshness of those who were more afraid than me. I pushed you too hard when I too was afraid. I pushed myself harder. You did your own thing through it all. You tumbled and fell. And got back up again. You never did come back to me. The woman you became after was not the you I had known before. But I found that I loved her, too. I learned her nuances and learned to dance with



her, as I had danced with the you from before. Her raw and tender scars needed to be tended and watched. As they got tougher, you did too. There was a new determination to you, a new steadiness. This would come in handy.

As time moved on, we wove our way through so much joy and pain: Infertility, the struggles of step parenting, the building of close friendships and community



Lavender and Tanya after the stillbirth of their son, Oren Jasper, in 2012.

around us, the legalization of queer marriage, and our fabulous wedding. Things appeared to settle a couple years ago, stability looked like a

possibility with a new baby on the way, my chronic pain finally managed, and a new career in the works for me.

Cedar arrived. A bundle of love and healing for us. We learned a new kind of love. Our family had been tied up with a rainbow ribbon and tucked in a basket of bliss (and dirty diapers and sleepless nights).

And then it all exploded again. When I look back over this last year,



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I am in awe at your ability to move through these days. That steadiness I mentioned earlier? It's real handy now. My body demands my full attention, my mind is lost in looking for answers and getting things in order. But my heart doesn't question the stability of us. My heart rests in that love we have built through laughter and tears.

We've been through so many impossibles. Burying a child (and surviving the grief of it). Getting married (the legalization of same-sex marriage!). The easy and healthy birth of another child (a donated embryo from across the country!). A decade together (who lasts that long anymore?). I have no doubt in my heart that we will get through this journey of my impossible metastatic cancer, too!! Keep being impossible with me, my love.

Always, Lavender

MY DEAREST LAVENDER,

I have never been able to love with trepidation, which would be akin to singing with laryngitis. Instead, I go wildly bounding into love; rolling in it, reveling in the heady rush, not thinking of what is to come. Giving myself over fully to that which elevates my spirit and brings out delight and desire for living. I remember one night in my early 20s lying in bed taking stock of my strengths and weaknesses. "I am good at loving," I declared to all the unseen forces in the room.

I am, and so are you. And it is that which has held us together. Over and over we have been buffeted by forces that attempt to pull us apart: Shifting family structures, work and career uncertainty and change, death, mental illness, addiction, physical illness, infertility, and cancer. Throughout it all, I have witnessed the power of love, our love for each other, our shared love with our children—those living and those not, and our love of, and from, our families and community of friends. Love transcends death. Love is stronger than fear.

So how do we continue to love? How do we stay open when the demons pick at our barely healed scars, and exhaustion and sorrow threaten to pull us into despondency? I heard somewhere that love is a verb. We must do the work of loving. Part of that work is acceptance.

This is what is. Three of our babies are dead. It doesn't mean I like it. It means I see the truth of it and acknowledge that truth. You have kid-

ney cancer. I accept it. This partly means that you and I are doing different work. I am preparing to say goodbye, to take care of the family, the finances, the house, in short—the work of the living. You are preparing to say goodbye to everything, dancing in an unfamiliar body, moving deeper into your heart and soul, preparing to die. Of course we hope and pray for a miracle, that you will be here to see the baby grow to adulthood, but



Photo taken after they were awarded legal parentage of Cedar Aden, who was donated as an embryo from their friends and birthed by Lavender.

you are doing the personal work you must do to be ready to leave when it is your time. Acceptance—we are on different paths. We are different people.

This was a gift you gave me when our babies died. You were hurting. Your grief was enormous, yet it was yours, different from mine. We grieved differently. We are different people grappling with acceptance. You have shown me great compassion. A part of my soul was torn away still connected to the little ones who had grown in me. I wept milk. I screamed and cried oceans of tears. I couldn't ask for what I needed because I couldn't articu-



late the rawness of my wound. I knew nothing that could fill that void. But in time, your acceptance of me, of my grief, which was only love, deep primal love with nowhere to go, helped anchor me in the land of the living.

I strive to show the same compassion to you as you engage with your changing body and the waves of pain and challenges cancer brings. Acceptance, compassion, and flexibility. We have to change with the changes. A weeping willow dancing in the wind.

None of this is easy, except for loving you. Loving you is as easy as sighing deeply while curling up in front of a warm fire. Loving you is as automatic as the beat of my heart. Yes, trauma and loss have changed us. But you have a seemingly endless well of patience that brought you back repeatedly to sit quietly beside me and hold my hand. And when we fight or pull apart, we both remain committed to the work of loving and call on resources and others who can help us find our way back to each other. Couples therapy has been a lifesaver, hasn't it, my dear? It illustrates that one of our secrets to staying together is being open to help, being vulnera-

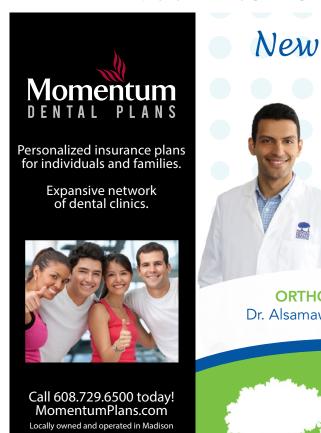
ble. After all, when it seems you are losing everything, what more do you have to lose by opening to help?

We might be a couple, but deep down we are also pack animals. We need each other. I need other parents who have lost children. I need connection with others who have cared for loved ones with cancer. I need advice, support, hope, perspective, and definitely help maintaining a sense of humor. I am grateful for Gilda's Club, which provides us with the opportunity to get support from others who are in similar shoes. They even provide childcare for Cedar, an enormous blessing for a tired family. Also, Bereaved Parents of Madison, an organization that has been there to connect us to others who parent children who live on in their hearts. These parents have shown us how our love can truly transcend death, how we can take our grief and turn it in to service, remembrance, and yes, even celebration that we are parents to all of our children. We are blessed to have access to these resources and more, and we know that we are privileged in so many ways.

And our love expands and expands, shared with our children and our friends and family. I am proud to have a grown foster daughter and stepson who model resilience and forgiveness to me. And a baby who surrounds me daily with wonder and delight. Our family proves that differences can be strengths and that simple traditions can provide security and include all of us, despite illness and death. We are a strong family. Our parents, too, have always been supportive of us as a couple and have given support to us in ways too numerous to mention. Our friends also recognize our bond and reach out to help when we ask for support.

And so we continue to love and to stay together as a couple in our love; to accept, be flexible, open, compassionate, and to come back together time and time again when we fight or drift apart in our separate worlds. At our wedding Shulamit sang *Olam Chesed Yiboneh*, "I will build this world with love..." and we do, over and over again, time after time.

Yours, Tanya







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FEATURE → OUR HISTORY

HISTORY JEWISH ACTIVISM LESBIAN NEW HARVEST FOUNDATION

Evi Beck Asked Me to Dance

Historian **Richard Wagner** recounts the life and activism of out Jewish Lesbian Evi Beck, and her impact both locally and across the nation.

EVI BECK INVITED ME to dance—and I think I blushed. The occasion was the first annual New Harvest Dinner Dance in 1986 at the restored Fess Hotel, now the Great Dane Pub on King Street. As an elected official, a Dane County Supervisor, and an out gay man, I went to many community dinner/celebrations. It was sort of being on the circuit. The Urban League had a great dinner, the Chamber of Commerce had one, and there were many others. At these dinners, elected officials would hear about the successes of a community and what their concerns were. Basically, a way to connect.

COMMUNITY DINNER DANCE

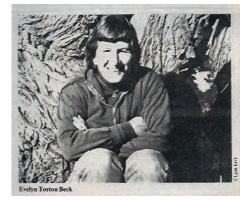
As a founder of the New Harvest Foundation, which was kicked off with a community launch event at the old Civic Center, I felt the absence of such an event for the LGBTO community. So I urged the New Harvest Foundation to continue to contribute to civic life by hosting an annual dinner dance. The early gay liberation movement in Madison had stressed the importance of men and men and women and women dancing together in public as an aspect of liberation. Luckily the board of New Harvest agreed with me, so we planned the first community dinner/dance. Later there would be many annual events for our community adding the United/Outreach Dinner, Sweet Sunday, the Red Ribbon Affair, and GSAFE's Annual Celebration of Leadership.

NICE JEWISH GIRLS

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The speaker for this first dinner dance was Evelyn Torton Beck. While a professor at UW-Madison from 1972 to 1984 in the Departments of Comparative Literature, German, and Women's Studies, Evi Beck published, Nice Jewish Girls: A Lesbian Anthology. She also lectured on Women and the Arts for Women's Studies. Her book, begun in 1979, was published in 1982. The work's acknowledgement included "special thanks to the Madison Jewish Lesbian Group for providing years of a loving environment which allowed me to explore and affirm my Jewish lesbian identity."

Beck would recall she was committed to the politics of visibility and that coming out



"publicly as a lesbian did not feel dangerous to me, especially not among the radicals of Madison. Wisconsin." Her book sold out an initial printing of 10,000 in the first year. To speak for New Harvest, Beck returned



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to Madison from her new post as director of Women's Studies at the University of Maryland. The notice in Gay Madison had called her book important and thought-provoking. OUT! conducted an author interview in July, 1984. Beck stated that Jewish university groups like Hillel had been very receptive to her book. She commented that dozens of informal Jewish lesbian groups like Madison's had formed around the country.

JEWISH INVISIBILITY

In the introduction, "Why Is This Book Different from All Other Books," Beck describes reactions of startled laughter and disbelief about her project and being asked, "Are there many?" She struggled to avoid silencing herself completely about her project. A roadblock to claiming both identities was that it exceeded the normal limits and thus appeared threatening. She rejected this and proclaimed, "Jewish invisibility is a symptom of anti-Semitism as surely as lesbian invisibility is a symptom of homophobia." She discussed "outsiderhood" as a formative experience. She also mentioned a May 1979 Madison workshop on "Jewish Lesbians and Anti-Semitism." There she noted.

"The gentile lesbians' stories about their anti-Semitic backgrounds were creating great anxiety and pain for Jewish women." The two groups split with an observation, "The non-Jewish lesbians were loathe to discuss their anti-Semitism with each other and found it difficult to do so; some expressed jealously of the developing close ties they sensed among the Jewish lesbians who were, for the first time, coming together around their common heritage, as lesbians and as Jews."

Beck tried to find "a sense of congruence for the pieces of my life." She writes, "The truth is that it is extremely difficult to identify oneself as a Jew outside the long shadow of anti-Semitism. It is like trying to imagine what it would feel like to be a lesbian in a non-homophobic world." She believed Jewish survival skills helped some to learn to survive as lesbians. Her belief was, "It is a radical act to be willing to identify publicly as a Jew and a lesbian." The struggle against invisibility was a strong theme of her work. Beck ends her introduction with a description of the 1981 Madison funeral service for Blanche Goldberg which merged "Jewish tradition with lesbian-feminist beliefs." She credited Rabbi Alan Lettofsky with supporting "a dialogue about Jewish gays and lesbians" at the University of Wisconsin Hillel and who agreed to lead services. The rabbi acknowledged the loving care provided to Blanche by the lesbian community. The verdict on the joint visibility was the mourning ceremony had been "healing and strengthening."

The speaker for this first dinner dance was Evelyn Torton Beck. While a professor at UW-Madison from 1972 to 1984 in the Departments of Comparative Literature, German, and Women's Studies, Evi Beck published, Nice Jewish Girls: A Lesbian Anthology.

Evi Beck had powerful messages, and she was a great dinner speaker. After the speaking part of the 1986 evening, there was dancing. And, she asked me to dance. I think I stammered something about not being a dancer despite actually being seen many Saturdays at the discos. But it had been since the 8th grade in Miss Bott's dance class that I danced with a female person. Awkwardness about doing something seemingly heterosexual came over me—my goodness. ■



DICK WAGNER (rrdickwagner@gmail. com), openly gay former Dane County Board Chair and co-chair of Governor Earl's Commission on Lesbian and Gay Issues, is the author of We've Been Here All Along: Wisconsin's Early Gay History.

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News from the UW LGBTQ+ Archive

The UW LGBTQ+ Archive received a donation from Joyce Rose, the partner of Cynthia Cauthern, longtime Madison resident, community activist, black woman, and out lesbian, who passed away in April 2019. The



donation, comprised of two shirts from the Women of Color Take Back the Night March from September 27, 1985, represents the intersection of many of Cynthia's communities: women of color, feminism, the campus community, and urban activism.

Cynthia continued to be dedicated to improving Madison in the following decades, including serving on the board of the Urban League, the Madison Development Corporation (MDC), and as a member of the Madison Lesbian Herstory Project. Cynthia gave a two-hour-long oral history interview to Pat Calchina, oral historian with the UW LGBTQ+ Archive, in 2017.

The UW LGBTQ+ Archive is seeking donations especially from LGBTQ+ people of color. This contribution helps us tell stories like Cynthia's to future generations. For more information about Cynthia's donation, how you can donate, or any other questions, please contact the UW Madison Archives at (608) 262-5629 or uwarchiv@library.wisc.edu, or visit our website at library.wisc.edu/archives/exhibits/madisons-lgbtcommunity-1960s-to-present. ■







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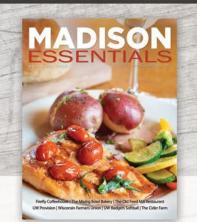


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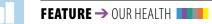
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PRIDE IN PREVENTION COALITION OPIOIDS RECOVERY SOCIAL SERVICES

On Your Side

<u>If you're seeking help with an opioid problem, it might be worth considering a recovery coach—a program of Safe Communities Madison-Dane County .</u>

YOU MIGHT KNOW ME. I'm your brother, your best friend, or your girlfriend. I told part of my story in the previous issue of Our Lives. The basics of that part of my story: I hurt my back in an accident, was prescribed stretching and pain pills by my doctor, and the pills worked. I got one refill on the pain pills, but started taking them more often than prescribed, and more pills than prescribed, just to keep the pain manageable so I could work, walk my dog, etc. My prescription ran out and couldn't be refilled. My pain was still constant, so I got some more pills from a friend of mine. As of last week, I was taking up to four pills at a time, every couple of hours. Then the pills I got from my friend ran out, too. The pain has not let up.

My story continues. I felt desperate. I took some pain pills from my mom's medicine cabinet. They lasted a while, then someone I met at a bar a couple of months ago sold me some more pain pills. When they ran out, I got some more from the same person. I found that I needed to take more and more of them to relieve the pain. It's been four months since my accident, and my life now seems to revolve around finding and taking more pain pills. Last week my boyfriend complained that I seem out of it much of the time, and pointed out that I was late to work four times in the last three weeks because I overslept.

I got more pain pills from the same person yesterday. Last night I woke up in the emergen cy room. The doctor told me I had overdosed on opioids and could have died. Maybe I took too many at once, or maybe the pills had something else in them too, or maybe it was because I was drinking shots after work with some friends on top of the pills I took. My boyfriend is here with me; he told me he called an ambulance when he came home last night, found me on the floor, and couldn't wake me up. I feel ashamed; my life seems so out of control. The ER doc just told me they will be releasing me soon, and asked if I wanted to meet with a recovery coach prior to being discharged. My boyfriend is encouraging me to do this. What should I do? Who is this "recovery coach," and what happens if I agree to meet the person? Can this person really help?



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The story at the beginning of this article is an all-too-common scenario... a story that starts with an injury and becomes a story of abusing pain pills (opioid pain medication)...and then ends in unintentional overdose.

Safe Communities Madison-Dane County started an emergency department-to-recovery project (the ED2Recovery Project) as a pilot program in 2016 through a partnership with SSM/Dean St. Mary's hospital. Here's how it works: When a person presents in the emergency room as experiencing an overdose, a recovery coach is called and responds to the hospital. The individual is then offered the opportunity to connect with the recovery coach prior to discharge from the emergency room. All of the recovery coaches have the shared experience of waking up in the emergency room after an overdose. If the individual accepts a coach, the coach will typically sit with the person and provide support and recovery resources. (After leaving the emergency department, a person can also request that the recovery coach connect them to an LGBTQ recovery coach). After the person is discharged from the hospital, the recovery coach has daily contact with them until a confirmed treatment intake date is established. After the individual is connected with treatment, the coach remains in contact with the person for a few months until the person has a solid foundation of recovery. Recovery coaches can also go with the person to attend appointments with health

care providers and discuss ways to manage pain responsibly.

During the pilot phase of the project, recovery coaches from Safe Communities were able to obtain a 90% success rate in connecting individuals to treatment and their beginning to a life in recovery.

Safe Communities has now partnered with Wisconsin Voices for Recovery to continue offering coaching services. Through this partnership Safe Communities is now able to work with any individual who comes to the Emergency Department and identifies they have opioid use disorder. Since the pilot program, Safe Communities recovery coaching has expanded to 3 more emergency departments within Dane County.

But, you don't have to end up in the emergency room in Dane County to work with a recovery coach. Safe Communities Madison-Dane County, in partnership with OutReach LGBT Community Center, has an LGBTQ recovery coach available for anyone in the LGBTQ community who is struggling with drugs or alcohol and wants to find a better way forward. The recovery coach is available to meet at Outreach, or at a mutually arranged location with any person in Dane County wanting help. Email dlane@safercommunity.net for more information, or call OutReach at (608) 255-8582.

The story at the beginning of this article is an all-too-common scenario...a story that starts with an injury and becomes a story of abusing pain pills (opioid pain medication)...and then ends in unintentional overdose. According to the National LGBTQ Health Education Center, the LGBTQ community is at three times greater risk of addiction to opioid use disorder than our heterosexual counterparts. This may be due to minority stress, brought on by living with stigma, discrimination, marginalization, and victimization, based on our sexual and gender minority statuses. For some of us, the stigma we face becomes internalized. This can lead to feelings of worthlessness, fear of rejection, and self-concealment. Consciously or not, some of us try to deal with these challenging emotions by turning to alcohol, opioids, or other substances that provide a sense of euphoria or relief.

If you or someone you know in the LGBTQ community is struggling with drugs and/or alcohol—there's help available. Recovery is worth it. You're worth it. ■



JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2020

CANDACE PETERSON, PhD, has worked for more than three decades in training and technical assistance for substance abuse prevention. She currently coordinates Partnership for Success, an opioid misuse prevention grant, at Safe Communities Madison-Dane County.

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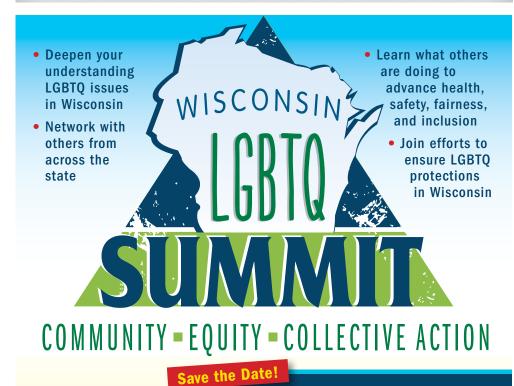


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OP-ED TRANSGENDER TRANSANTAGONISM

Problems with A Woman's Touch

Readers respond to our Q&A with A Woman's Touch co-owner Ellen Barnard in the November 2019 issue to highlight a history of transantagonistic incidents.

WE ARE DISAPPOINTED to see the positive feature for A Woman's Touch in the November/December 2019 issue of Our Lives magazine. The transmisogyny and transantagonism of A Woman's Touch have been known in the Madison LGBTQ+ community for quite some time. A Woman's Touch should not be given a platform to promote their business and educational services as being trans friendly. While many in the Madison community have only heard whispers and rumors of the oppressive issues experienced at A Woman's Touch, Ellen Barnard has now done us a favor by outlining her prejudices for us in print. Even as she admits her ignorance, cisgender communities continue to patronize A Woman's Touch and contribute to the exploitation and erasure of trans, gender non-conforming, and nonbinary communities.

Many trans people were dismayed when this article was released and took to social media to discuss their experiences as trans folks working or shopping at A Woman's Touch. These discussions were not made public for fear of backlash from the owners, as well as how even sharing these stories privately opened trauma and wounds that have not had time to heal.

It became immediately clear from the shared experiences that there is a pervasive pattern of oppressive behavior—with the majority being anti-trans-from former employees, customers, and would-be customers. Several folks discussed experiences of misgendering, ableism and inaccessibility, hostility towards non-binary employees and the use of correct pronouns, body shaming and fatphobia, and choosing their clientele over the safety and well-being of their employees.

For a store that bills itself as inclusive of all gender identities and sexualities, there are several associations made in the article that don't support this claim. Language is important, especially for a store that claims to provide inclusive sexual education and inclusive sexual products.

"We realize gay men may be put off by the name, but when they come in they realize that we carry a lot of products for those who



For a store that bills itself as inclusive of all gender identities and sexualities, there are several associations made in the article that don't support this claim. Language is important, especially for a store that claims to provide inclusive sexual education and inclusive sexual products.

have penises." Firstly, while "those who have penises," is more inclusive than saying men, the association is already made by mentioning gay men and "those who have penises" in the same sentence. People may argue this is an issue of semantics, but "those" are people, not some abstract concept, and not all gay men have penises, as gay men are not a monolith.

Additionally, how are men or masculine-presenting folks supposed to feel welcome in their store when in another paragraph they claim that masculine folks make their clients uncomfortable, specifically calling out older cis het women. Blaming prejudice against masculine-appearing folks on older cis het women is also problematic in many ways, and it tells us a lot about who

they value in their clientele and who they are focused on serving. It's also not entirely true or fair to throw older cis het women under the bus of prejudice when one of our known local anti-trans reactionary, or Trans Exclusionary Radical Feminists (TERFs), is a cisgender queer woman, a main demographic of anti-trans reactionaries (TERFs). However, anyone who isn't emphatically and enthusiastically pro-trans rights is problematic, not just one demographic.

"So we've always had a staff person present who appears female—if we have a trans feminine person who can pass, they would probably be perceived as being safe enough." Who gets to determine whether or not a trans feminine person, or any trans person, "passes?" And why aren't they using this opportunity to educate their customers on the realities of who is more safe in that situation and in society in general? And how are they ensuring the safety of their trans feminine staff and clientele, especially those who may not "pass" (according to whatever standards they seem to have set)?

When asked point-blank about non-binary identities, the co-owner did not even address the existence of genders outside the binary or outside of the femme/masc construct. Instead she used the question as an opportunity to advertise their patented product geared towards trans women who've had bottom surgery and post menopausal women, with the tag-line, "so anyone with a vagina benefits from it." But what about people with vaginas who are not women? Can they still benefit from this device? And if so, are you being sensitive to the language used to describe the anatomy and physiology of people with vaginas who are not women? Who maybe don't refer to their anatomy and physiology in those terms? What about the vaginas of trans folks who haven't had bottom surgery?

"We have struggled more with finding people of color to work in our store and it is our wish to be able to have more representation available in that way." How is it appropriate to bring up race in a question about employee training? And what are they doing to recruit people of color? How are they making their store more racially just? What kind of anti-racism training do they provide? What kind of resources do they have for people of color? Do they recognize the level of violence that queer and trans people of color experience? And what partnerships with local anti-racist, QTPOC organizations do they have to help become anti-racist and QTPOC inclusive? What do they have to offer people of color to make them feel wanted and welcome beyond representation (which arguably benefits the

57

store and owners more than the employees)?

If their goal is, "to provide such a place where sexuality and pleasure were defined by each customer, regardless of what the wider cultures preached/taught/pushed," then the owners need to own up to their transmisogyny and transantagonism. How can "sexuality and pleasure" be "defined by each customer" if they prioritize the comfort of some cis customers over the comfort of trans customers and/or employees?

Who gets to determine whether or not a trans feminine person, or any trans person, "passes?" And why aren't they using this opportunity to educate their customers on the realities of who is more safe in that situation and in society in general?

We need to see A Woman's Touch work to repair the harm done to the trans community, whether their transantagonism was intentional or not. They need to start with a formal acknowledgement of the harm they've caused the trans community, and how they plan to repair the harm they've done. Perhaps they could use the money they make off of their patented dilator for consulting fees

and training—for the owners and employees-regarding trans identities, trans health issues (including anatomy, physiology, sexual pleasure, and use of products), and how to deal with transphobic customers. Additionally, they could use the funds to diversify the products and information made available for trans folks and their partners.

The unfortunate reality is that most spaces are anti-trans, even spaces owned and operated by members of the LGBTQ+ community. If businesses and organizations want to change their anti-trans reputations, they need to dig deep and address the root causes of their anti-trans behavior and rhetoric. If businesses want to be considered just they need to take care to ensure proper training of staff, including how to respond to customers and clients who are hostile towards all trans folks. If you want to be seen as supportive of the trans community, you have to put in the effort, and not just for capital gain, but because trans rights are human rights.

We hope that A Woman's Touch considers this response a gift for change. Our hope is that they do the work that is needed to regain trust, not just patronage, of all included in the trans, gender non-conforming, and nonbinary communities, as well as the intersections

—Jill Nagler, Jay Botsford, Jess Draws, Aaron Giblin



About 7% of LGBTQ high school students in Dane County reported misusing prescription pain relievers this month alone.

Over 70% reported having prescription drugs at home in an accessible place.

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Have a question that could be addressed in a future column? E-mail: DearQueerWhitePeople@gmail.com

QTPOC WINNEBAGO NATIVE AMERICAN RACIAL JUSTICE

Not Yours to Use

After an outcry from the community, east side venue **The Winnebago** has agreed to change their name. Nibiiwakamigkwe helps us understand the problems with non-indigenous owners profiting by using native names for their businesses.



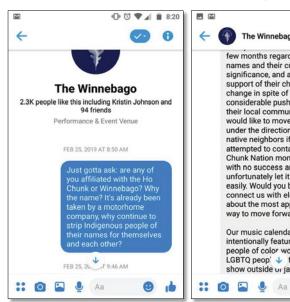
AANIIN, BOOZHOO NIINDINAWEMAGANIDOG.

Hello, my relatives! My Anishinaabe name is nibiiwakamigkwe, which means watery ground or wet earth woman. I am an Anishinaabe (Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, marten clan), Onyota'a:ka (Oneida Nation of New York, bear clan), and Métis (Red River Settlement) Two-Spirit and uninvited guest of 7 years here in Tee Jop, on HoCaak Land. Dr. Sami Schalk has created space here for me to talk about the intersection of queer and Indigenous issues. Ambe! (Let's go!)

On February 25, 2019, I read about a new music venue opening on the near east side. As an artist and consumer of art, I wanted to be happy, but couldn't get past the name. Winnebago??? Do they know? It's an easy enough fix, I thought. They aren't even fully open yet. The same day I sent off a quick Facebook message on the venue's page.

What followed was an extended exchange with whom I later learned was John DeHaven,





co-owner. He asked to learn more. I further explained the colonial implications behind using the name. He asked to talk with my Elders about a name change. I stopped responding. Our Elders are sacred to us, and we don't rent them out to people. I gave up replying: I had explained, in detail, and he still didn't want to take action to change the name. Months passed. While artists I adore and queer friends found a fantastic, seemingly inclusive space, I was never able to bring myself to go. Their name alone meant the space could not include me or other Indigenous folks. Representation matters, and how we define ourselves and who defines us have lasting impacts on our history and sovereignty. I am connected with three separate Indigenous nations, and when I google them, the primary searches are: a Louis Vuitton handbag (Métis), an upstate New York cult that decided to make flatware (Oneida). and an immediate redirect to a Lakota/Dakota exonym (Anishinaabe to Ojibwe). These kinds of cultural dissonance—who we are versus

what society associates with us—are incredibly problematic and especially damaging to Native youth and those that are vulnerable. I couldn't support this kind of disrespect to the Ho Chunk that I had experienced so heavily.

In October 2019, after the success of GenderFest and strong community support, one of my non-Native friends rhetorically asked if anyone would ask The Winnebago to change its name. It was a completely real question to me, and I finally shared those transcripts from months ago. People saw, people shared, and many of Madison's queer folks and artists agreed a name change was necessary and a boycott was needed to back the effort. Within

● ③ ▼ ▲ ■ 8:25

few months regarding our

significance, and are in full

considerable push back from their local community. We

would like to move forward

native neighbors if possible.

attempted to contact the Ho Chunk Nation months ago

under the direction of our

with no success and

way to move forward?

Our music calendar has

intentionally featured many people of color women, and

LGBTO peop' J fact, every show outside or jazz nights

unfortunately let it go too

easily. Would you be able to

connect us with elders to talk about the most appropriate

support of their choice to

names and their cultural

change in spite of

a week of the band announcements and media questions, the venue announced that it would no longer be known as The Winnebago. Most patrons have been supportive, many have been confused, and some have been downright racist, citing the venue's other diversity work as an excuse for cultural appropriation. But there has been a desire, and most certainly a need, to know more.

What follows are three of the most common questions from these events.

I'VE HEARD THAT WINNEBAGO IS A SLUR, SO WHY IS THERE A WINNEBAGO TRIBE IN NEBRASKA?

Winnebago is an exonym/xenonym, a name given to a group of people by people who are not a part of the named group, in this case my own people, the Anishinaabeg. Win-, comes from wiinad, meaning it is dirty, -neba- comes from nibiig, meaning waters, and -go is an emphatic word or a descriptor. So basically, it translates to "Dirty Waters, UGH!" (Winnipeg, Manitoba has the same etymological roots). Exonyms are often made to belittle, which is why they were used and later nearly permanently solidified by white settlers as a way to further colonize and degrade Native nations. Ojibwe/Chippewa, Eskimo, and Winnebago are all common exonyms, and Native nations have begun to shift back to our demonyms and names for ourselves as we have been able. Anishinaabe, Inuit, and Ho Chunk are all

better descriptors than stuttering or puckered people, raw fish eaters, and people of the filthy water, but some nations have decided to keep the exonyms for historical, legal, and personal reasons. Such choices are incredibly significant to our communities and are insular to our own nations: non-Natives should always use a people's demonym unless told otherwise. I am from the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, but I identify as Anishinaabe. Ho Chunk in Nebraska (where they were forcefully relocated) must still scroll past pages and pages on recreational vehicles whenever they look up their own nation, Winnebago.

BUT THE VENUE IS ON WINNEBAGO STREET, AND THEY JUST BASED THE NAME ON IT. HOW IS THAT WRONG? HOULDN'T THE STREET NAME CHANGE TOO?

This question has come up a LOT. Often it's queried as a way to defer blame from the venue owners, but they have even stated they realized the name was an issue early on and still used it. Also, Winnebago Street colloquially sounds a lot different from The Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska, often shortened to The Winnebago. The venue completely overlaps with this name, which is why it is more egregious than a street name. It is erasure. While it is odd that street names are often derived from what they destroyed or displaced (trees, flowers, wildlife, Indigenous nations), streets never gain enough popularity to replace their namesakes. Martin Luther King Jr. will always be more important than MLK Boulevard. Streets do not develop their own websites or social media accounts that pull attention away and ultimately profit from their originators. Unfortunately, the east side venue already has these, and so is pulling attention and mental capacity away from the Ho Chunk/Winnebago. If I search "Winnebago" on any social media platform, I see their venue first instead of the people and organizations who carry the name they stole. This is Ho Chunk land, their ancestral territory, and they deserve the right to their own names.

You can still have street names based on Indigenous words! Odana Road is taken from the Anishinaabe word oodena, which means town. I'm happy to see my language here in Madison, especially when the name makes sense with its owner. Town Road? Yup, that describes it pretty well. Using our languages appropriately and in collaboration with us is totally acceptable. As for the east side street name, I cringe a little bit whenever I say it because I understand its history, and I know what the Ho Chunk prefer to be called. But the existence of Winnebago Street does not allow for businesses to use and capitalize off "Winnebago" itself.

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OK, THEY CHANGED THE NAME, AREN'T YOU HAPPY?

I'm glad the owners have decided to no longer profit from the identities of Indigenous peoples. But it took them nine months after my initial contact, and coincidentally around the time that multiple predominantly-white bands (miigwech Dumpster Dick and Sylvia), producers, and patrons decided to no longer attend the venue with its original name. The name change is in response to their anger and the potential loss of white people's money rather than misrepresentation of and education from Indigenous peoples. Once again, white folks emotions, labor, and intentions carry more weight than ours. This is why allyship and accountability are so important, but holding these prejudices is not something that is easily forgivable of the owners. So I'm glad the name is going, but I'm not happy the institutions that allowed it to be stolen in the first place remain.

For over 500 years, Indigenous Peoples have not controlled our narratives and representations. Our exclusion has been built into inclusion for others. The foundation of any equality work cannot be oppression. Let's do better.

Miigwech bizindawiyeg! (Thanks for listening!) ■

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DINO MANIACI JASON HOKE GASTROPUB WINE BAR

just be with friends.

An LGBTQ "Third Space," Italian-style

Dino Maniaci's latest endeavor, **D'Vino**, aims to blend a wine bar and an Italian gastro pub into an inviting space where you can

HAVE YOU EVER WANTED an Italian grandmother to smother you with wonderful food, great wine, and an inviting place to be with friends after work? If you have, and if you are willing to accept Dino Maniaci in the role of grandmother, you are in luck. Dino (who also owns WOOF's bar, and has been running pop-up restaurant "Mangia Mangia" as an occasional fundraiser for more than five years) is opening



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a wine bar/gastro pub with his partner Jason Hoke (a French chef by day and AKC judge by night). When I sat down with Dino to get a feel for the place, he kept using the phrase "NOT STUFFY" over and over.

Despite Dino's protestations, the concept is appropriately upscale. D'Vino has crafted an artisanal Cicchetti menu from local fare that transcends traditional Italian specialties with an array of appetizers, small plates, and specialty baskets served in a rustic style with a nod to current gastropub sensibilities. Select wines come from a variety of small, family-owned and community-supported and -operated wineries throughout Italy, France, and Switzerland. Cicchetti, for those not familiar (I was not), are Italian finger foods often paired with a small sample of wine (about 100ml) called "shadows." Think of it as Italian tapas. While Dino is serious and knowledgeable about his wine, he is also very clear that customers need not be. He promises that he will not be snobby, "the way



the french are about Italian wine." NOT STUFFY, remember.

D'Vino (which will occupy the space next door to WOOF'S on King Street) is aiming to be a "third space"—the sort of place a

person might stop on their way home from work, to grab a light snack, to enjoy a shadow of wine, or to meet with friends, before heading home. The goal is to be a comfortable environment for conversation, a quiet space to meet and discuss. But that is not all. Once a month, Dino plans to have a night he is calling "Vino and Vinyl" which promises to involve a live DJ spinning old-school lounge classics along with wine tastings and education.

"We are hoping to have wine makers come and tell us about their wine and what makes it special," Dino said.

Most exciting to me, is that Dino also plans to do a once-a-month "family style" dinner at the restaurant. Something he described as a traditional Italian family Sunday meal.

"We will push the tables together to make one or two long tables, and everyone will sit together and talk," he said.

Reservations will likely be required. Dino is expecting to have two seatings a night during these events.

When I asked Dino what the menu would look like, he told me it would be something you would expect to see in Italy. He talked about a charcuterie board that is a real plate of food, not a pretentious sampling. Spedini, arancini, calamari, octopus prepared several different ways, polenta, mini calzones. The menu will be seasonal and modified based on what is in season

Dino told me it will be rustic, with pictures of his family on the walls. There will be no pretext. —Vivienne Andersen





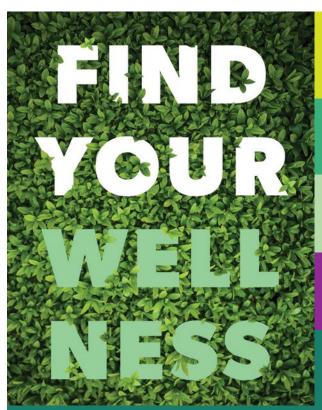


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PHOTO YEAR IN REVIEW

At a Glance

Visual highlights from our 2019 issues.

1. Charles McLimans leads the River Food Pantry. 2. Vica Steel brings transgender visibility to elementary education. 3. A Room of One's Own Bookstore's Bookstores Against Borders campaign goes viral.

4. Human Rights Campaign's Davette Baker debriefs after the successful 2018 midterms. 5. Satya Rhodes-Conway becomes Madison's second female Mayor, and first LGBTQ one. 6. The Madison Municipal Building lights up for first time for Pride Month. 7. A profile in service: Out local firefighters. 8. Gretta and Garnet Grimm-Deville keep drag weird at the Cruicible. 9. Jewish lesbian Jenny Pressman is a fundraising powerhouse for equity and justice. 10. Black, gay, and disabled veteran Keith Streicher. 11. Governor Tony Evers declares June Gay Pride month in Wisconsin alongside community advocates and out elected state leaders. 12. Rico Sabatini, Lili Luxe, and Apollo Marquez rebirth troubled nightclub Plan B as PRISM. 13. The Pride flag flies over the Wisconsin State Capitol for the first time in history. 14. The Madison Mintaurs Gay Rugby Club.





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