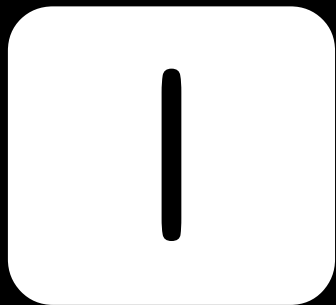


our lives



Madison's LGBT&XYZ Magazine

November
December
2009

the making of



open

Out Professional and Executive Network

by founding co-president

James Tye

INTRODUCING THE

Corporate Diversity Initiative Report

A beginning analysis on
the state of equality in our
local companies

Gender Freedom

How to shed the effects of socialization

by **Dr. Sue Gill**





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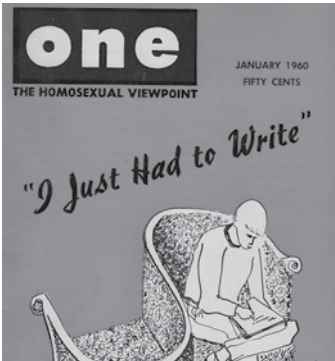
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Cover Photo by David Nevala

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Getting Down to Business



July 31, 2008. Our Lives had just celebrated our first anniversary and I was in Chicago for a Community Marketing, Inc. Gay & Lesbian Market Symposium. At this one event I was able to meet and talk to the regional Human Rights Campaign and GLADD affiliates. I had the chance to network with Tracy Baim of the Windy City Times and with the founder of the

National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce. I walked away from that day overwhelmed, yet excited. The biggest value for me was getting a glimpse of what we could do here in Madison, and a sampling of what resources would be available.

This issue is a culmination of the many ideas that I left with that day. In it you'll see a sample of the results from the first in depth marketing profile we've ever had of our community. The full report is almost 100 pages! I was astounded that an e-blast sent out over our mailing list yielded almost a 45% response rate, and by how powerful a message those numbers send. I'm happy to share a copy of the full report with anyone interested in seeing it. Just e-mail me at pfarabaugh@ourlivesmadison.com to ask for it.

You'll also see our first major corporate initiative rolled out. The idea for the Corporate Diversity Initiative Report was born at that Symposium, too. I was really curious how our local employers fair on equality issues, and what the initial steps are to create that level of workplace advocacy in a corporate climate. I'm indebted to the recently retired Executive Director of the Alliant Energy Foundation, Marty Fox, for the work she has done to help spark a conversation about how our community can begin that bridge-building process with area companies.

Another significant unveiling in this issue is the debut of the Out Professional and Executive Network (OPEN). The more I listened to these dynamic speakers in Chicago, the more I recognized how valuable their voices would be to everyone in our community. So, when James Tye approached me a year ago to help facilitate the early formation of this organization, I couldn't refuse. In his narrative, he details the creation of the group that has been built to bring those voices here. The professional leaders that OPEN has been able to engage have already had a strong influence on how I see myself and the work that this magazine can do to connect, educate and further develop our community. I feel honored to be able to consider many of them my personal and professional mentors already and look forward to the work that lies ahead of this group.

With love,
Patrick Farabaugh
PUBLISHER / EDITOR



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our lives
Marty Fox
ourlivesmadison.com
user **mfox50**

Corporate Diversity Initiative Report:
Marty Fox is newly retired from Alliant Energy where she was Executive Director of the Alliant Energy Foundation. While working at Alliant she organized the Alliant Energy Pride organization and worked on corporate diversity issues. She is currently a member of the O.P.E.N. board and the GSAFE board. She also volunteers at the Nature Conservancy and enjoys spending time with her life partner, Catherine and their five adult children.

Our Advocates: Scott Seyforth is an administrator at UW-Madison. He is also a PhD student there in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis where he is writing his dissertation on immersion courses on civil rights. For the university, he has twice coordinated a seminar on the LGBTQ Civil Rights Movement, out of which this article grew. In his spare time, he enjoys singing with the Madison Symphony Chorus, the Madison Opera Chorus, and in the shower.



our lives
Scott Seyforth
ourlivesmadison.com
user **seyforth**



Our Advocates: Lukas Keapproth is currently a full-time student at UW-Madison and a freelance photographer. He grew up in a small town just outside of Madison. While exploring his town as a child, he discovered his passion for photography and people. Since that discovery, Lukas has been pursuing photography with the hopes of becoming a documentary photographer. Until then, he is always looking to meet new people and learn from the world around him.

Letter to the Editor

Thank you for your article on Michele, Tyler, and Johnny (**Love Makes a Family, Sept/Oct 2009**). When my son became friends with Johnny, I had the privilege of meeting and getting to know this wonderful family. Michele and Tyler have it right: Johnny is one special kid, and he is lucky to have such a loving, supportive set of parents. The love letters each member of this family wrote to each other for this article were really moving, beautiful, and lovely to read. Thanks!

Peggy Hurley



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headlines

All stories can be found online at: ourlivesmadison.com
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News, Politics, and Social Issues

Baldwin Senate Testimony on Domestic Partner Benefits
Baldwin Lauds Passage of Matthew Shepard Act
Baldwin Seeks to Improve Care for People Living with HIV/AIDS
Doyle picks Madison attorney Pines to represent state in domestic partner lawsuit
\$75,000 Awarded to Fight Gay Youth Homelessness
Lambda Legal Joins Fair Wisconsin in Fight to Save Legal Protections for Same-Sex Couples and Their Families
Representatives Berceau and Parisi Introduce Gender Violence Legislation

Books, Stage, Screen and Sound, and The Arts

Cleve Jones' Speech in Madison

Community

Runyon "Nothing to Hide" Video Archive Planned
Peacemakers honored Oct. 3rd
Call for scripts for Queer Shorts 5
AIDS Network Opens Food Pantry

Your Life

NY TIMES: The High Price of Being a Gay Couple
Marriage Equality Ireland: Sinead's Hand

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A collaborative reporting project of
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All Together Now is a collaborative journalism endeavor by news media in Madison, Wisconsin, to produce print, broadcast and online reports on a common theme. Following an initial meeting in early April 2009, media members picked health care access as the inaugural topic. More than two-dozen Madison area outlets agreed to cover obstacles to access encountered by people here, and to explore the underlying issues and opportunities for improvement. The project aims to call attention to prior reporting as well as topics undertaken specifically for this project. This website presents the reports generated by group members during the Oct. 18-30, 2009, run date, as well as previous relevant coverage on this topic by participating media.

Read *Our Lives'* contribution by past Fair Wisconsin Board President **Dan Ross** online at both atnmadison.org and ourlivesmadison.com

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our lives

Reader Survey

Gay & Lesbian Consumer Index™

Community Marketing, Inc. (CMI), the San Francisco-based gay and lesbian research, marketing and communications firm, released the most comprehensive LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) market research report ever conducted, the **Gay Consumer Index™** and the **Lesbian Consumer Index™**, in September 2009. The study was co-produced by Rivendell Media and sponsored by Absolut.

Community Marketing, Inc.'s Gay & Lesbian Consumer Index™ study gathered a total of 30,338 complete responses. Over 400 respondents reside in the Madison area, and some of the respondents are bisexual, transgender or straight allies.

Our Lives Demographics

To request a copy of the full report (almost 100 pages), contact the publisher at **pfarabaugh@ourlivesmadison.com**. Please put **LGBT Consumer Index Results** as the subject of your e-mail.

Total Respondents	422
Sample Demographics Include...	
Median age	45
In relationships and living together	50.4%
Have a bachelor's degree or higher	73.2%
Have children under age 18 living in home	10.8%
Approx. annual household income	\$75,000
Is mid to senior level management at work	57.6%
Owns a single family home	59.0%
Rents an apartment	38.1%
Sample Key Findings Include...	
Probably/Definitely want to get married	64.6%
Already are married	15%
Works out 3+ hours per week	54%
Spends \$20+ weekly in restaurants	83.8%
Spends \$50+ weekly in restaurants	47.8%
Owns their car	85.8%
Took 2+ vacations or leisure trips in the past year	67.1%
Took 1+ round trip flights in the past year	70.5%
Lives with a cat	30.9%
Lives with a dog	27.3%
Responded from ZIP Code 53703	12.6%
Responded from ZIP Code 53704	15.5%
Responded from ZIP Code 53711	6.7%
Responded from ZIP Code 53713	5%
Responded from ZIP Code 53714	4.1%
Responded from ZIP Code 53719	3.8%

communityOUR FACES

our lives

Ellen Berz
ourlivesmadison.com
user EllenBerz

Networking Nutrition

Meet **Ellen Berz**. As AIDS Network Board President, she shares her pride in the Network's ability to address the ever-changing needs of clients, including the reopened food pantry.

creasing HIV infections in the country). Not surprisingly, members of our LGBT community who are not HIV+ are nonetheless more likely to know someone (brother, sister, friend) living with HIV/AIDS.

AIDS Network now has a food pantry. What is the mission of the pantry and what is your involvement? Nutrition plays a significant role in maintaining the health of those living with HIV/AIDS. Due in part to the economy and the special dietary needs of our clients, the Board of Directors worked with Executive Director Karen Dotson and her amazing staff to revive the AIDS Network food pantry. In addition to providing healthy food, our staff Nutritionist counsels clients on optimal food choices and habits. We are confident that this investment will prove very beneficial to clients, nutritionally as well as psychologically.



What is the most important aspect (or aspects) to consider when addressing the needs of people with HIV/AIDS? Those living with HIV/AIDS require a wide variety of care, support, and services. Obviously, proper medication and medical care are essential (Madison is extremely fortunate to have nationally renowned HIV/AIDS specialists). Helping to ensure access to care, connecting to the various local and federal medication assistance programs, and providing a safe place to share some of the challenges of treatment are all critical services we provide. Furthermore, we address important related areas such as nutrition, dental care, housing, psychological counseling, alcohol/drug treatment, social support, legal services, and fighting societal stigma. AIDS Network endeavors to provide a coordinated approach through the delivery of direct services combined with services delivered by our network of specialized partners. As the needs of our clients evolve, so too do our services, approaches, and collaborations. I am immeasurably proud of the work we do at AIDS Network and of the LGBT community's strong support. ■

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Gay Firsts

Scott Seyforth provides highlights from the first year of the Madison Alliance for Homosexual Equality as the organization celebrates the 40th anniversary of the birth of gay liberation in Wisconsin.

During the fall of 1969, several men gathered at the St. Francis House (the Episcopal student center on University Avenue) to form what would become the first gay liberation organization in Wisconsin: the Madison Alliance for Homosexual Equality (MAHE). Like so many of the gay liberation groups formed around the country in the wake of the Stonewall Rebellion that summer, the creation of MAHE (alternatively pronounced “May” or “May-he”) marked a major change, as gay men and lesbians would begin to demand their rights more vocally and assertively than ever before.

A Shift Toward Integration

During the 1960s, most gays and lesbians in Madison lived two lives—one private, gay life, and one public life, “passing” as straight because of the severe hostility and stigma that was then associated with homosexuality. The Madison gay and lesbian community was largely a series of private social networks, with mixing between homosexual undergraduate and graduate students, Madison professionals and working-class people, with little town/gown split. But by the late 1960s, perhaps related to the larger youth culture’s quest for authenticity, younger gays and lesbians in Madison began a shift toward integrating their private and public lives and became more open about their homosexuality.

The First Meeting

When a card announcing the first open meeting of homosexuals in Wisconsin was posted on a bulletin board in the Memorial Union in late October 1969, a small group of students (and a few community members) answered the invitation. The experience of Jim Yeadon, an early member

of the group, is typical of many going to their first meeting at St. Francis House. “The first time I went there, I had to circle around the building three times before I could get up the nerve to go in,” says Yeadon. “I looked in the basement window, and I saw some people down there, and they didn’t really look that scary to me, so I figured it was okay to go in.”

Jess Anderson, who attended the first meeting, remembers there being a group of about 12 at the first gathering, which appears to have occurred on November 5, 1969. “People went around and gave their names (and most did feel like saying their name) and what their connection to the community was,” remembers Anderson. “Most were from the University, but some people from town were there. As we went around and did that, people seemed to loosen up a little bit with each other. People seemed to think, ‘Well, this is going to be okay.’” Over the next few months, the group continued to meet weekly on Wednesday nights in the basement of St. Francis House, providing an opportunity to socialize, receive support, and “raise consciousness.”

Attendance at the group was almost exclusively male during the first year, with only a few women attending the meetings. “I don’t think they really felt comfortable,” Jim Yeadon says of women attending the group. Yeadon adds, “I think they felt it was more of a men’s group than a women’s group.” One of the regular women attendees was Pam Green, who would become one of the spokespersons for the group. “I stayed because a lot of the people involved were enjoyable to be around. I tended to see myself as unique, and therefore valuable, rather than alone and unsupported.” Green says of the first meetings, “These were more social life than actual meetings. We still had a number of people who weren’t real keen on going public.”

Pictured recently in the basement of St. Francis house are original MAHE members (L to R):

Chuck Bauer, Howard Preizler, Chuck Beckwith, Michael Lutz, Jess Anderson and Marty Garment. Other MAHE members quoted in the article, but unable to appear in the photo, are Pam Green and Jim Yeadon.

Greater Organization and Visibility

Originally calling itself the Student Homophyle League, by January 1970 the group changed its name to the Madison Alliance for Homosexual Equality. As they continued, members began to be more “out” in the Madison community, creating a statement of goals, and taking on a more educational and political agenda. MAHE would go on to achieve many firsts in Wisconsin, including the first appearance of openly gay individuals on television and radio, the first gay dance, and the first public gay protest.

MAHE on TV

MAHE appeared on WHA-TV on February 12, 1970, in the first television appearance by openly gay people in Wisconsin. MAHE was to be the focus of the half-hour WHA-TV nightly news program SIX-30 News that night. Three days before the MAHE program was to air, SIX-30 News caused a sensation when Alderman Paul Soglin announced on the program that he was considering a campaign to recall William Dyke from the office of Madison Mayor. Because of the amount of media coverage following Soglin’s announcement, WHA-TV cut the MAHE program from thirty minutes to three. “The TV station figured the episode with Mayor William Dyke stirred enough controversy without having us on the air,” a MAHE member is quoted as saying in *The Daily Cardinal*.

Call-in Radio Appearance

The first appearance of openly gay individuals on the radio was scheduled to occur on March 3, 1970, when members of MAHE were asked to appear on WKOW’s popular Night-Line program with Ira Fistel, between 10 p.m. and midnight. But WKOW management canceled the appearance on the day of the event because of what it termed “the group’s highly controversial nature.” After some lobbying from MAHE, WKOW rescheduled the show for March 25, but requested that it not be publicized anywhere except *The Daily Cardinal*, and that MAHE representatives go on at midnight instead of the regular time of 10 p.m. to “avoid the possibility of children hearing the discussion.” Four MAHE members did go on the program that night, discussing homosexuality and then taking questions from callers. Pam Green, one of the guests that night, says, “It was a fairly cordial affair.” Green remembers getting the closing word on the program, encouraging others to “Come out, ye gifted kings and queens,” quoting a line from the Bob Dylan song *I Dreamed I Saw St. Augustine*.

Coming Out Dance

The first gay dance in the state was organized by MAHE on March 13, 1970 in the Top Flight Room of Memorial Union (a small meeting room located on the fourth floor). MAHE member Michael Lutz says that as a gay person at the time, “The only place you could dance, that you could touch and hold somebody else, would be in a private home.” In response to this, recalls Lutz, “MAHE said, ‘This has got to stop.’” MAHE planned what *The Daily Cardinal* at the time called a “precedent-setting” Coming Out dance. A MAHE member is quoted in the *Cardinal* as saying the dance was being held to get gay people used to expressing themselves publicly as straight people do. And, when Jess Anderson showed up at the dance, he was delighted to see “a lot of men, and some women, dancing as couples in a public place.” Lutz says there were “many curious straight people who came to gawk, but stayed to dance.” “It was very, very crowded,” remembers Anderson.

Public Protest

MAHE sponsored the first public gay protest in Wisconsin the weekend of May 15, 1970, when members leafleted the opening of the film, *The*

Boys in the Band, playing at The Atwood Cinema (now The Barrymore). The flyer distributed at the protest explains that MAHE objected to the way characters in the film perpetuated gay stereotypes “which have little relevance to the liberated and guiltless feeling prevalent in the contemporary segment of the gay community which matured during the socially turbulent Sixties.” Jess Anderson says this “was the first time that any of us said, ‘I’m going to stand on a public street and it’s going to be obvious that I’m a gay man.’” There were about six MAHE members leafleting, and another group of MAHE members there as “bystanders.” Many moviegoers took the leaflets and looked at them, while others would look at the leaflet and throw it down. Anderson recalls, “[The protest] was a kind of nervy thing to do, because the high school boys were cruising up and down the street in their cars hollering ‘faggot’ as we were handing out our leaflets.” Anderson recalls that the protest created a feeling of solidarity among MAHE members.

The Gay Liberation Front

The group would continue to evolve into a more politically active organization called the Gay Liberation Front, achieving more queer firsts in Madison and in Wisconsin—opening the first Gay Center, offering the first gay hotline, the first class on homosexuality, the first local gay and lesbian speaker panels, the first gay conference held in the state, and more. Gay Liberation became a mass movement because people all across the country started to advocate for themselves where they lived.

Many of the members of our intrepid first local liberation organization continue to live in Madison, including Jess Anderson, Chuck Bauer, Chuck Beckwith, Marty Garment, Michael Lutz, Howard Preizler, Jim Yeadon, and others. On MAHE’s 40th anniversary, let’s give these local gay pioneers their due, recognizing them for their trailblazing, and thanking them for making a better world for all of us. ■



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A Novel Collaboration

New Harvest Foundation awards grant to the University of Wisconsin Press to distribute *Gay American Autobiography: Writings from Whitman to Sedaris*

With library usage up and library budgets down in difficult economic times, libraries are finding new ways to provide their readers with continuing supplies of new and important reading material.

Hoping to make a broad range of reading available for their patrons, 81 public and college libraries in a seven-county area of south central Wisconsin will receive copies of the book *Gay American Autobiography: Writings from Whitman to Sedaris* as gifts from The University of Wisconsin Press.

The donation is made possible by a grant from the New Harvest Foundation. The grant application submitted by UW Press said in part, “The presence of the books in the public libraries and colleges will provide opportunities for public education and reading pleasure of both gay and straight citizens, including family members of LGBT individuals.”

“Public libraries make books freely available to everyone,” said UW Press Director Sheila Leary. “They provide a safe place to read and seek information without judgment or censure.”

NHF Grants

Grants fall into several focus areas: social service, social change, public education, health care, arts and culture, and development of LGBT communities.

NHF makes grants to organizations that ... provide services that benefit the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and/or transgender communities in South Central Wisconsin.

... are not-for-profit and exempt from federal taxes under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Service code, or who use a qualifying fiscal sponsor.

NHF gives preference to proposals that ...

- ... are from small organizations without ready access to other funding sources.
- ... increase LGBT visibility.
- ... are new or innovative, and respond to unmet needs in our communities.
- ... continue projects/programs of proven value.
- ... demonstrate cooperation or collaboration with others engaged in similar efforts.

NHF solicits grants twice per year.

The grant application process begins on April 1 and again on October 1 of each year. Please consult the NHF website for more details.



Gay American Autobiography documents a range of life experiences that encompass tattoo artists and academics, composers and drag queens, hustlers and office clerks. Each selection provides important insight on the wide spectrum of ways gay men have defined and lived their lives, highlighting how self-awareness changes an author’s experience.

A sampling of writers includes: Henry James, David Sedaris, Edmund White, Martin Duberman, John Rechy, Justin Chin, and Ned Rorem.

These writings are selected and introduced by David Bergman, Professor of English at Towson State University. Bergman is the author and editor of over a dozen books on gay literature.

UW Press Senior Acquisitions Editor Raphael Kadushin said, “The Living Out series, celebrating its twelfth anniversary next year, is the only book series in the world devoted to gay and lesbian autobiography. Gay American Autobiography is one of the fitting high points of the series, presenting the rich tradition of gay life writing and underscoring the continued importance of telling our own stories.”

Striving to fulfill this mission, the UW Press and the New Harvest Foundation hope that the presence of Gay American Autobiography in these libraries will provide opportunities for public education and reading pleasure of both gay and straight citizens.

New Harvest Foundation Co-chair Woody Carey said, “New Harvest is very happy to support the distribution of this book, hoping that it will broaden the public’s awareness of how our lives have been enriched by LGBT authors, often without awareness of their orientation. In one way it does not matter, but at a deeper level it very much matters because it honors these persons for who they really are.”

UW Press has published almost 100 books of gay and lesbian memoir, fiction, poetry, essays, travel writing, and social/political issues. These books have received many, many national awards, not only from LGBT organizations, but from academic and library organizations as well. A recent memoir, Butterfly Boy, won an American Book Award. UW Press has received both the national Publisher Service Award from the Lambda Literary Foundation and the local Organization of the Year award from OutReach. UW Press’s Kadushin, who acquires and develops the list of LGBT titles, received the Distinguished Alumnus Award from the UW-Madison GLBT Alumni Council for his work. ■

New Harvest Board of Directors

The New Harvest Foundation is managed by a 16-member Board of Directors, all of whom are volunteers.



Lisa Hart works for the Wisconsin Conference of the United Church of Christ as their Coordinator

for Youth Ministries. Hart was involved in Fair Wisconsin’s work against the Marriage Amendment and helped fundraise for the Verona Public Library building campaign. She has a husband and two teenagers.



William Heiss is the Assistant Director of the School of Social Work at UW-Madison. He

is serving on his second term on the Board and Chairs the Grant Screening Committee.



Crystal Hyslop has been a Madison LGBT activist since 1980. She has been with her partner for

29 years. She has two daughters in Madison—Carmen and Miranda.



Kem Kemmerer recently retired after 25 years with the Madison Police. She’s enjoying greater

involvement in the activities of the LGBT community. Her activism began in Chicago in the early 70s and has included a prior term on the NHF board in the mid 80s.



Leilani Robertson-Hoyt is in her second year on the NHF board and is involved with the grants and

dinner dance committees. She is also currently leading the LGBT parents group at Outreach. She has lived in Madison with her partner and daughter since 2006.



Sande Janagold has lived in Madison for over 20 years. She is a C.P.A. who has been involved with many

nonprofits and currently works for the Rainbow Project.



Dr. Steven Rush has been involved in LGBT social action for many years including HIV/AIDS activism

and education in Chicago and San Francisco. Steve continues his social action and social justice efforts through his teachings at Edgewood College in Madison. Steve and his partner have two young sons.



Andrew Irving has lived in Madison for 20 years. He’s a Senior Lecturer and Advisor in French at

UW-Madison and Director of the French House.



Rick Petran has lived in Madison since 1979. He is a Managing Analyst at the State of Wisconsin.



Susan Frikken practices massage and plans to enter physical therapy school. Her camera is

permanently attached to her face, and her three dogs and one cat are attached to her. She and her partner have lived on Madison’s east side since 2006.



Tret Fure is a touring singer/songwriter and a guitar teacher when she’s home. She has been

co-chair of New Harvest for two years and has been on the board for four. She lives in Madison and Monroe, where her partner is VP of Clinic Operations.



Mark Porter lives with his partner and their six cats in the Town of Rutland. He is surprised and

pleased to join New Harvest again after a 15-year absence. When not volunteering, Mark manages IT Services for Flad Architects.



Kent Mayfield brings to New Harvest wide experience in strategic planning, planned

giving, and the management of charitable, non-profit, and professional organizations. Ordained as an American Baptist minister, Mayfield has served congregations in the Unitarian-Universalist tradition. Now retired, he and his partner of 30 years breed Arabian horses on their farm in rural SW Wisconsin.



J. Keith Eccarius is a native of Chicago and moved to Madison eight years ago. A Research Program

Manager in the School of Education at UW-Madison, Keith has sung with Perfect Harmony Men’s Chorus for more than seven years and served as President for more than five years.



Michael Shoultz has served on the NHF board for the past three years as one of the Vice Co-Chairs.

He works as an autism consultant for the Madison school district, has two wonderful adult children, and lives in Cambridge with his partner.



Ellwood (Woody) Carey, a native of Pennsylvania, moved from upstate NY to Madison in 1985 to

serve as Pastor of Parkside Presbyterian Church. He is serving his second stint on the New Harvest Board and currently is co-chair, which enables him to work for justice and equality.

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Madison's Own Fairy Godmother

Michael Bruno shares his theatrical journey with Tara Ayres.

Michael Bruno's life in theater and television has an almost fairy tale quality to it, which makes sense for someone who describes himself as a fairy godmother.

Raised in Madison, Michael started acting with Stagecoach Players in seventh grade. By the end of his junior year of high school at Edgewood, he had joined the Stagecoach staff as assistant director. Then he became the assistant artistic director and choreographer for Madison Theater Guild, when MTG was still part of the Madison School and Community Recreation Department and had a large paid staff. It was a different era for theater, with public support for the arts and a booming economy. He moved on to the Wisconsin Children's Theater and travelled all over the state doing theater in the schools. In the summer, he started working at a gay bar and shortly thereafter was cast in, "The Boys in the Band," and came out. He laughs and describes it as art imitating life imitating art. He was 20.

Michael moved to San Diego in 1976. He worked at the Old Globe Theater doing children's theater. Returning to Madison in 1978, he established a comedy duo, and emceed shows at the Hotel de Wash and Going My Way, and then became the Going My Way manager until it folded in 1983. Michael, who hated winter, returned to California to live in Los Angeles.

Immediately Michael got on a game show, and won \$16,000. That led to a real job, and he worked on a series of game shows until 1989, when he became the gossip columnist for gay paper in LA. In his column, he reviewed a show called "Party" and said that it was great, but doomed to failure because the venue was wrong. The show lost money, and a few months later one of the writers contacted Michael and asked if he would be willing to produce "Party" in San Francisco. Michael's response: "I just said yes, because I figured that I couldn't do any worse than the guy who brought it to LA. My ex and his new boyfriend lived in SF, were part of the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, and I tapped into that connection. They found me the venue and helped me find a place to live. In return, I let the Sisters pass the hat at every show to raise money."

Then Michael met Tom Orr. "This adorable kid from Seattle was a genius at re-writing show tune lyrics into brilliant, scathing, funny gay parodies. 'Party' had posted its closing notice, and the theater owner asked me if I had anything I wanted to produce there. I was loving San Francisco, producing theater, and living in a beautiful old hotel. I suggested that we do a review with Tom's songs, kind of like 'Forbidden Broadway'



our lives **Michael Bruno**
ourlivesmadison.com
user Bruno

for fags. We developed 'Dirty Little Show Tunes,' a six-man musical." The show was a hit, and played several venues. Michaels said, "The cast was completely thrilled, since they were getting paid. I couldn't afford Equity rates, but I paid the performers. Everywhere else, the actors were the last ones to get paid. We opened a Seattle version of the show. Then the Bailiwick called from Chicago and asked if they could do an after-hours version of the show. It was the first time the show was produced without our involvement, and it failed miserably. At the same time, it was running successfully in Seattle and San Francisco. So I went flying into Chicago like the Wicked Witch of the West."

Michael re-staged the Chicago show, and opened it two weeks later with the same actors. The revised version was a hit. There was a wonderful review in the Chicago Tribune, which caused the estate of Rodgers and Hammerstein to issue a "cease and desist" letter. Luckily it was closing week in Chicago and San Francisco. It closed the Seattle show, too.

In 2001 Michael's mom was having health problems, and he came back to Madison. He had HIV seroconverted in 1993, and sings the praises of the AIDS Network here, who provide services that just weren't available in San Francisco. Michael went to work at the Overture Center, and started doing community theater again. He also launched WhoopDeeDoo Productions. Their latest production "Sweet Cannoli Nuptials," was recently licensed by two other regional troupes.

Michael continues to be committed to the care and feeding of actors. He says, "They are the first paid."

For his next project, Michael and writing partner Tony Ritano have developed "'The Game Show' Show," about the live taping of a game show in Madison. People in the audience will be contestants, play the games, and get actual prizes. You'll see the backstage scurrying around, and then the real game. Watch for it in a theater near you! ■

OUR STAGES

CALENDAR

THE STOPS: A MUSICAL

by Eric Lane Barnes
StageQ
Madison, 10/30-11/21
stageq.com

DOG SEES GOD: CONFESSIONS OF A TEENAGED BLOCKHEAD

by Bert V. Royal
Out!Cast Theater
Madison, 11/6-11/14
madstage.com

CARMEN

by Georges Bizet
Madison Opera
Madison, 11/6-11/8
madisonopera.org

McBETH

By William Shakespeare;
contemporized by Callen Hart
Broom Street Theater
Madison, 11/13-12/20
broomstreet.org

THE SANTALAND DIARIES

by David Sedaris
The Laboratory Theatre
Madison, 11/27-12/19
madstage.com

TIDINGS FROM THE SEASONALLY AFFECTED

by Wendy Prorise and KelsyAnne Schoenhaar
Encore Studio for the Performing Arts
Madison, 12/10-12/19
encorestudio.org

THE NUTCRACKER BY PETER ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY

Madison Ballet
Madison, 12/18-20
madisonballet.org

RANDOM HARVEST

by Richard Willett
StageQ
Madison, 12/31/2009-1/16/2010
stageq.com

OUR EVENTS

October 10 | Madison Gay Hockey Association's Blades Against AIDS



October 11 | GSAFE's Run/Walk/Eat at the Goodman Community Center



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\$4 LONG ISLANDS

FRIDAY
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(*1ST & 3RD FRIDAY OF THE MONTH)
RESIDENT DJ BROOK
\$4 BACARDI MIXERS/\$3 BOMBS
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RESIDENT DJ PAIN & DJ SCOOLEY
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Out & Equal



Felicia Melton-Smyth



O.P.E.N. breakfast with Out & Equal Regional Co-Chair, James Huberty
November 6, Madison Club, Madison

Co-Chair of the Out & Equal Chica-goland Regional Affiliate and a Vice President, Sales Training Manager for JPMorgan Chase, Jim Huberty is the former Chair of PRIDE Global, JPMorgan Chase's 2,000 member LGBT Employee Networking Group. He's presenting on Business Diveristy Resources that advocate for LGBT workers.
rsvp@openmadison.org

Transgender Day of Remembrance
November 20, Madison

Trans Monologues and a candle light vigil. On Wednesday, November 18th, at 7:00 pm, Eli Clare will be speaking in the Memorial Union Play Circle. Check the UW-Madison's LGBT Cam-pus Center's website, as additional events are still being added.
lgbt.wisc.edu

Holiday Art Fair
November 20–22, Overture Center, Madison

To kick off the holiday season, the Art League and the Overture Center for the Arts will present an expanded Holiday Art Fair. Shoppers will be able to browse over 100 booths—more than twice as many as in recent years. The event will present gifts and gourmet treats from artists and vendors around the country.
overturecenter.com

ORGANIZATIONS

A representative sampling

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

Bowling Out Loud
beckwith.matt@yahoo.com

Dairyland Cowboys and Cowgirls
dcandc.org

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

Frontrunners/Frontwalkers
personalpages.tds.net/~tmcdurg

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

Gay Softball League
ssblmadison.com

Gay Volleyball League
madisongayvolleyball.com

Hermanos Latinos
sneal@aidsnetwork.org

Lez Talk Yahoo Group
leztalkmadison@yahoo.com

LGBT Business Alliance
madisonbusinessalliance.com

Madison Gay Hockey Association
madisongayhockey.org

Madison Minotaurs Gay Rugby
minotaursrugby.org

New Harvest Foundation
newharvestfoundation.org

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

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

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

Perfect Harmony Men's Chorus
perfectharmonychorus.org

Rural Dykes Association
pswfarm@juno.com

StageQ - Madison's Queer Theater
stageq.com

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

Wisconsin Rainbow Families
wirainbowfamilies.com

September 14 | O.P.E.N. Luncheon with UW Chancellor "Biddy" Martin



Photos by Marc Korobkin

our lives



LGBT Market Facts

In focus groups and other consumer research conducted by Prime Access over the past 15 years, gay and lesbian consumers, regardless of geography, report a strong preference for advertising and other marketing communications that address them directly and portray them openly for who they are and how they live their lives. They consistently find this targeted advertising the most arresting, persuasive and memorable of all the marketing messages they are exposed to.

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A Solstice Celebration

Saturday, December 5 • 7:30 p.m.

Middleton Community UCC
645 Schewe Rd (2 miles west of Beltline off of Old Sauk Road)
Audience reception following performance

Sunday, December 6 • 3:30 p.m.

St. Stephen's Lutheran Church,
5700 Pheasant Hill Road, Monona

Tickets: \$15 Adult, \$12 Student/Senior
Available via PayPal at perfectharmonychorus.org, from chorus members and at the door

perfect
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MEN'S CHORUS • MADISON, WI

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

Wisconsin Dog Fair
November 8, Alliant Energy Center, Madison

The twenty-first annual fair is presented by the Badger Kennel Club. Enjoy demonstrations, vendors, educational seminars, and breed rescue information. Over 150 breeds.
badgerkennelclub.com

The Santaland Diaries
November 27–December 19, The Bartell Theater, Madison

Based upon biting, satirical essayist David Sedaris's actual diaries documenting his stint as "Blisters," a bitter, depressed Macy's elf, The Santaland Diaries is an irreverent, philosophical, thought-provoking, and hilarious social commentary on the modern, commercialized Christmas. Presented by The Laboratory Theater.
madstage.com/bartell

Fair Trade Holiday Festival
December 5, Monona Terrace, Madison

This is one-stop holiday shopping with a conscience. The thirteenth annual Fair Trade festival is presented by Community Action on Latin America and features arts, crafts, clothing, home decorations, pottery, weavings, food gifts, and more from Africa, Latin America, Palestine, Wisconsin, and beyond.
calamadison.org

Perfect Harmony Men's Chorus Solstice Concerts
December 5 at Middleton Community UCC, and December 6 at St. Stephen's Lutheran Church in Monona

A Solstice Celebration features the World Premier of a new work by Arthur Durkee titled "Weavers of Light" with

traditional and original texts as well as a solstice chant written by Deena Metzger. They will also sing the Madison premier of "Solstice" by Tim Sarsany. This work, based on a Native American chant, was commissioned for the Columbus Gay Men's Chorus.
perfectharmonychorus.org

Big Daddy Christmas Show benefiting Porchlight, Inc.
December 13, Club 5, Madison

Madison's Favorite drag performers Past and Present will perform a benefit with LIVE singing in remembrance of Brian Femrite (Big Daddy/ Simply Divine) who began the show with Miss Caroline back in the days of Hotel Washington. All proceeds will be donated to Porchlight, Inc. This is the 20th year of the Christmas show to benefit the homeless of Dane County. To date this group has raised over \$40,000.00.
club-5.com

Madison Ballet's The Nutcracker
December 18–20, Overture Hall, Madison

Amid the lavish sets, dynamic lighting, and breathtaking costumes, Artistic Director W. Earle Smith's choreography takes the spotlight with its elegance and energy.
madisonballet.org

Winter Solstice Celebration
December 18, Aldo Leopold Nature Center, Monona

Feed winter birds, gather around the campfire to burn a Yule log, sip cocoa, eat a Yule Log cake, and listen to inspirational readings and stories.
naturenet.com/alnc

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THE CORPORATE DIVERSITY INITIATIVE REPORT

How do Madison companies fair on equality? **Marty Fox** surveys the local corporate climate and lays a foundation for building a bridge between area employers and LGBT workers.



In this, the very first *Our Lives Corporate Diversity Initiative Report* we are looking at an overview of the current corporate landscape for LGBT workers, suppliers, and customers with a goal to begin a conversation that will improve the local business climate, create a safer and more productive workplace, and develop a relationship of trust between the LGBT and business communities.

Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin. Home to progressive ideas and forward thinking. Many would expect that this would be a community leading the way for corporate LGBT diversity. In many ways, the idea of the Madison area as an oasis of diversity in the Midwest remains a work in process. Many of us enjoy working in a supportive atmosphere of acceptance while others in our community walk through their workplaces on eggshells unsure about their status and fearing the consequences of exposure. The world of work is changing in Madison as it is in other parts of the country, but not fast enough to assure LGBT employees fair and equal access to opportunity and not thoroughly enough to truly welcome the millennials who have grown up through the GSA movement.

Bridging LGBT Employees and their Employers

Imagine a bridge that connects the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community with the larger, private corporate employers. Let's assess the current condition of that bridge, talk together about how that connection might look and feel, and begin an open conversation in our community about how to make that connection stronger.

Where we are... (condition of the bridge)

Policies and Benefits: *The State of the Workplace* is an annual report, published by the Human Rights Campaign Foundation. The 2010 Index, released in September, listed ratings for 588 employers across

the country. An "unprecedented" 305 major U.S. businesses earned the top rating of 100 percent.

How did our local corporations do in this year's survey? Eight Wisconsin-based businesses are among those rated and just three have a 100 percent rating. For companies headquartered in the Madison area, only three are rated and none of them has a 100 percent rating. A number of Madison workplaces are regional offices or operations centers whose corporate headquarters are elsewhere and a number of these organizations have a 100 percent rating.

Included is a list of the businesses with headquarters here and a longer list of companies that have an office or outlet in the area. Our local companies generally lose points in the areas of gender identity discrimination, gender identity training, transgender benefits, and transition guidelines. The HRC Foundation offers assistance in identifying best practices and how to put inclusive policies in place, but gender identity and transgender treatment are still treated as touchy topics. Progress in this area is disappointing. Madison area companies must include the entire LGBT community in their corporate diversity programs as leading companies across the country have done.

Climate: The HRC metric serves as a benchmark of policies and benefits that are necessary to build an organization that is supportive to its gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender constituencies. However, it cannot provide a true measure of how an organization's culture feels to its employees, suppliers, and customers. This might be measured by the gap between the number of total LGBT employees and the number of employees who feel safe enough to be out at work. It takes a good amount of effort to keep your private life entirely separate from your work life. Some make this effort because they are inclined to keep their private life private, but many stay closeted at work because they are afraid. Afraid of harassment, afraid of being

Some local companies have established employee resource groups or employee networks that provide a format for supporting LGBT workers and their allies.

passed over for promotions or opportunities, and sadly, afraid for their personal safety.

Employees continually assess the climate of their surroundings. Are there allies who would step forward to stop inappropriate "jokes" or follow up to make sure that a staff meeting or social event felt welcoming? Are leaders comfortable saying "lesbian-gay-bisexual-transgender" out loud? Are there LGBT role-models? There are subtle and not-so-subtle messages that send a clear signal—"it is safe to bring your whole being to work"—or not. All of these are part of the harder-to-measure corporate climate and are key factors LGBT employees use when they determine how much of their lives they can safely share.

Degrees of Equality, a new report by the Human Rights Campaign Foundation finds that the majority of LGBT workers hide their LGBT identity to most people at work. While there is currently no comparable measurement for workers in the Madison area, it is safe to say that far too many people in our community struggle to keep their lives tucked away into compartments. Both employees and their employers lose in this old solution driven by suspicion and lack of understanding.

Some local companies have established employee resource groups or employee networks that provide a format for supporting LGBT workers and their allies. Most of our local organizations are new and struggling. Hats off to companies like Kraft Foods for helping these groups find their voice. Kraft's Rainbow Council provides a forum for support and networking among gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender employees, raises awareness within the Kraft organization, and promotes involvement in the community.

Many organizations rely on diversity training to bring their employees the information they need about the LGBT community. The quality and extent of diversity training varies a great deal between training vendors. Some is life changing and some barely touches the surface, failing to provide adequate information and resources. Without effective training, little changes and leaders do not develop enough cultural sensitivity to address LGBT issues with confidence.

We have more work to do to create a climate that will enable all employees to be whole beings at work. When employees feel enough fear and alienation to hide their sexual orientation from their employer and their co-workers, their creativity and productivity are diminished. We waste some of our most precious resources every time fear causes someone to stay in the closet at work.

Business Responsibility: In addition to policies and benefits and organizational climate, the best practices would include recognition of LGBT-owned businesses and consideration of HRC metrics when making corporate purchasing decisions. Supplier diversity programs need to expand their focus to include LGBT organizations. The National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce began certifying LGBT-owned small businesses in 2002, a process that requires majority LGBT ownership of a business and verification of a business's good standing in the community. It is not too late to be the first Wisconsin company listed in the NGLCC directory.

Gay families should be proportionally visible and included in advertising and customer outreach.

Strong business allies of the LGBT community should stand firm-

ly on the side of fairness when relevant public policies are being debated. There are currently opportunities to become members of the Business Coalition for Workplace Fairness and the Business Coalition for Benefit Tax Equity through the HRC Foundation. Companies with a local presence that have joined these groups are shown on the attached table. Thank you to Cullen Weston Pines & Bach LLP for standing up to support Benefit Tax Equality.

Companies should consider sponsoring LGBT events and non-profit organizations.


There are no current measurements for these business responsibility issues in total, but they impact the image of a business in the eyes of LGBT customers, suppliers, and employees. Many local companies have done a good job of reaching out to sponsor or support LGBT events and non-profit organizations, and some have taken a stand to support LGBT issues, but there is more effort required to create a strong environment of business responsibility.

So, we are not where we would like to be in terms of policies and benefits, corporate climate, or business responsibility. According to Robert South, "Problems can become opportunities when the right people come together." Let's come together to take on this opportunity to step forward and build a pathway to better understanding and more inclusive workplaces.

First, I invite you to participate in this endeavor by thinking about the goal. Are there other pieces that are missing?

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Out Professional and Executive Network

A blueprint for the Bridge - What is the goal?

Fully welcoming and inclusive workplaces which would have:

- An employee network organization, resource, or affinity group
- A set of employee benefits that mirror those offered to straight employees and their families
- Policies that support a safe workplace for all individuals

Fully welcoming and inclusive workplace climates which would assure that:

- Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people would not have to fear for their personal safety or their dignity
- All employees would be evaluated on their contributions rather than on the gender of their loved ones or their gender identity
- Those in leadership would have the tools to treat employees, suppliers, and customers with cultural confidence

Fully welcoming and inclusive corporate community partners that:

- Consider equal opportunities for LGBT-owned businesses in sourcing decisions
- Provide financial and leadership support for LGBT events and organizations
- Speak up for fairness on issues that impact their LGBT customers, suppliers, and employees

A venue to connect LGBT people in our business community—something like O.P.E.N. See the article on the next page.

In short, a community where business and LGBT leaders work together for greater understanding and a brighter future.

Secondly, I invite you to think about what you can do as an individual, what companies can do, and what we can do together.

Bridge building work plan - Next Steps

LGBT Individuals and Their Allies: How can an individual work to improve the local climate for LGBT employees? Members of the LGBT community and allies all need to be involved in efforts to make this happen. This is our community, our opportunity, and our responsibility to make this the kind of place where we want to live and work. So roll up your sleeves and ...

- Talk with your Human Resources or Diversity departments about forming an Employee Resource Group (ERG).
- Speak out against inappropriate jokes and harassment.
- Educate others when you have the opportunity. Say “lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender” out loud; it is the name of our community.
- Join your ERG if your company has one and attend meetings.
- Take a leadership role in the organization.
- Join/attend an LGBT community or leadership organization.
- Provide feedback to the Our Lives Corporate Diversity Initiative on the goals and process for this project. Volunteer to work on this ongoing project.

Get Involved

If you are interested in taking the first steps at your company, or if you would like to send a story about your experience in a corporate setting please contact Marty Fox at mfox@ourlivesmadison.com

Companies Can ...

- Provide support for an ERG.
- Commit to revising policies so they are truly inclusive of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender employees.
- Provide employee benefits for LGBT employees that mirror those offered to straight employees and their families.
- Include the LGBT population in advertising, outreach, and sourcing.
- Work with your ERG to develop thorough and effective diversity training.
- Speak up on fairness issues.

Conclusion

This is a first look at the issues facing Madison area businesses and their LGBT employees, suppliers, and customers. Together we have an opportunity to bring our community together to discuss and address the areas of shortfall. While it is difficult to get a real assessment of how LGBT employees feel, we invite feedback from you our readers. What is it that makes your workplace welcoming? How does your workplace make you feel? Let us know.

Resources for Bridge Building

Employee Resource Groups: Several local companies have employee resource groups or affinity groups for LGBT employees and allies. Starting an ERG can be a daunting task, even with senior leadership support. Work schedules, communication, and turnover of steering team members can make this effort a challenge. There are national support organizations that can help with guidelines and information about how to do get a group going. A successful employee network is a voice that can help business leaders better understand our community and is a great platform for strengthening ally relationships.

- **Out and Equal**, San Francisco, CA 94104 (outandequal.org) 4-Day Annual Summit in October
- **Kraft's Rainbow Council**

Policies and Benefits: Samples of corporate policies and benefit considerations are available on the HRC site:
Human Rights Campaign Foundation
Workplace Project (hrc.org/issues/workplace.asp)
Washington, D.C. 20036

Supplier Diversity: Information about how to be a part of the NGLCC Diversity Program
National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce
Supplier Diversity Program (nglcc.org/programs)
Washington, DC 20009

Public Policy Issues: Human Resources Campaign, Lambda Legal
Fair Wisconsin

Other Resources: AFL-CIO Pride at Work

our lives



Corporate Report 2009

Headquarters in Wisconsin

	2009 HRC Corporate Equality Index	Fortune 1000 Rank	In Business - Dane County's Top 100 Employers	Employee Resource Group	Member, Business Coalition for Workplace Fairness	Member, Business Coalition for Benefits Tax Equity	Participants in NGLCC's Supplier Diversity Initiative	City	State
Foley & Lardner LLP	100		97	●				Milwaukee	WI
Quarles & Brady LLP	100			●				Milwaukee	WI
S.C. Johnson & Son Inc.	100			●				Racine	WI
Robert W. Baird & Co. Incorporated	90							Milwaukee	WI
American Family Insurance Group	88	352	2					Madison	WI
Alliant Energy Corp.	80	607	14	●				Madison	WI
CUNA Mutual Insurance Group	65	566	7	●				Madison	WI
Wisconsin Energy Corp.	55	534		●				Milwaukee	WI
Cullen Weston Pines & Bach LLP					●			Madison	WI

— Presence in Wisconsin —

Ameriprise Financial Inc.	100	296		●	●			Minneapolis	MN
Apple Inc.	100	103		●				Cupertino	CA
Bank of America Corp.	100	9		●				Charlotte	NC
Barnes & Noble Inc.	100	446						New York	NY
Best Buy Co. Inc.	100	66		●	●	●		Richfield	MN
Borders Group Inc.	100	549		●				Ann Arbor	MI
BP America Inc.	100			●	●			Houston	TX
Cardinal Health	100	19	70	●				Dublin	OH
Charles Schwab Corp.	100	402		●	●	●		San Francisco	CA
Clear Channel Communications Inc.	100	339						San Antonio	TX
Deloitte LLP	100			●	●	●		New York	NY
Gap Inc.	100	162		●	●			San Francisco	CA
Hyatt Hotels Corp.	100			●			●	Chicago	IL
J.P. Morgan Chase	100	12		●	●	●	●	New York	NY
Kraft Foods / Oscar Mayer	95	63	8	●				Northfield	IL
Macy's Inc.	100	91		●				Cincinnati	OH
Marriott International Inc.	100	197			●	●	●	Bethesda	MD
Morgan Stanley	100	21		●		●	●	New York	NY
Price Waterhouse Coopers LLP	100			●	●	●		New York	NY
Prudential Financial Inc.	100	74		●				Newark	NJ
Sears Holdings Corp. (Lands End)	100	45		●				Hoffman Estates	IL
Starbucks Corp.	100	277		●				Seattle	WA
Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide	100	396					●	White Plains	NY
Target Corp.	100	31		●				Minneapolis	MN
U.S. Bancorp	100	122						Minneapolis	MN
United Parcel Service Inc. (UPS)	100	46					●	Atlanta	GA
Walgreen Co.	100	40		●				Deerfield	IL
Wells Fargo & Co.	100	41		●			●	San Francisco	CA

OPEN for Business

J. James Tye III shares the opening sequence of the Out Professional and Executive Network.

Photographed by Paul Baker Prindle

growing up here, I was always aware of Madison’s visible gay communities: the professors, artists, elected officials—and other stereotypical Madison professions—but the LGBT business professionals or executives were harder to identify as I looked for business leaders and mentors. I was an employee of Downtown Madison Inc. (DMI), an organization with hundreds of members in the late 90’s, and the only gay members I could identify were Chuck and Chuck of the landmark business *The Soap Opera*. I was “out” at work and it was never an issue, but if I had known other gay business professionals, I wonder what other doors might have been opened for me at DMI, or subsequently at Capital Newspapers.

At the time, I didn’t know other out gay professionals so I developed my own network of open-minded business people. I am not defined by my sexuality, but finding a place were I could be all of who I am—and not have to censor what I was saying—was needed. Something was missing, although I couldn’t exactly say what.

Last fall I was attending the Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce’s annual dinner as an ambassador. The Chamber chooses ambassadors from each major industry that drives their constituency, and I was asked to serve in this role as an employee of Capital Newspapers and then as president of Verve Media. During the dinner, I mulled over the program and it dawned on me that, besides myself and one woman, there weren’t any known LGBT representatives on the board of directors, the ambassador’s list, the small business advisory board, or even the minority business group. Moreover, not one of the Chamber’s subcommittees actively included LGBT advocacy.

I thought to myself, “There are over 100 people officially named in this program ... and there are only two of us?” At the end of the evening I shared my thoughts with friend and Bunbury & Associates Realtor Liz Lauer who agreed that something should be done. We went to talk to the Chamber. To my surprise and dismay, the official response was that the minority business group was (and continues to be) exclusively for racial minorities. You could say that set the wheels of the Out Professional and Executive Network (OPEN) in motion.

I asked Patrick Farabaugh if he could meet me at Genna’s for a drink. He was instantly en-

gaged by the potential of a business organization with a high level of programming, speakers and professional development that would foster connections in the business community. We each left committed to reaching out to six people for a causal lunch at the former Crave Lounge to see what the group might look like. To my surprise, those who attend perhaps knew one of us plus maybe one other at a table of about 12. Business cards and conversation were exchanged about who people knew in common; we were all making connections. It was clear that something was forming, and we agreed a second lunch was necessary. We each committed to bringing two people to the next meeting. At this point, things started moving fast.

Within a month, Patrick and I sent out an email inviting business colleagues and friends to join us for lunch. When I realized that we could have 30 people in the room, I arranged for a meeting facilitator to make sure that the grassroots business group forming would allow everyone to be heard. As the room filled you could feel the excitement as people were seeing a large group of LGBT professionals meet for the first time in a business setting.

As our group began to grow, the next lunch at the Madison Club sat 76 people. We held an organizing retreat at the Sheraton and created an interim board. We have had over 15 strong leaders step forward to serve on the board and share in the development of our organization, and countless other volunteers give their time



I love watching the evolution of OPEN. We built an organization from scratch with only four to five meetings and within a six-month period. This is proof that with a solid idea, enthusiasm, and strong leadership things can happen.

and ideas to various committees. Now we have over 300 people on our Facebook page, and our events bring in more than 50 attendees on a consistent basis. Our most recent programming was the introduction of Chancellor Carolyn “Biddy” Martin to OPEN.

OPEN is empowering to me—both personally and professionally. If we are to build a vibrant city, it has to include a deeply connected LGBT community. If we don’t have a dynamic LGBT culture, then Madison is not going to be able to recruit and keep top talent. Yes, we do have amazing LGBT non-profits, a few world-class LGBT-focused sports organizations, and a handful of other resources. These are all very important groups that I feel OPEN augments in important ways. OPEN is a cultural tool for our communities, building and connecting a net-

work of people with similar attributes, skills, and drive.

Connecting professionals through strong programming and professional development means that members will have peer support for some very complex workplace issues. I can’t deny there can be personal benefits to OPEN membership, too. The workplace is a highly social experience. For our community, this can be challenging if you don’t work with other LGBT people. I’m pleased to have made many new friends through this organization. My reality is that I am a gay man living in a straight world and I have a lot of straight friends, but at some point, I also need a gay network to support and grow personally as well as professionally. I really wish I had a group like OPEN when I was entering the workforce, but it’s never too late, right? ■



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Our History by Richard Wagner

Brotherhood Makes All Men *One*

One: The Homosexual Viewpoint, a Southern California magazine from the 1950s, provides a lens into pre-Stonewall gay Wisconsin.



While there was no organized gay community in Wisconsin until after Stonewall there is ample of evidence of gay life long before. In this piece I want to write about how one source gives us a lens into pre-Stonewall Wisconsin.

The earliest public efforts of gay activism after World War II (then referred to as homophile) were located in Southern California. Folks involved launched the first truly national publication in 1952 called *ONE*. The name derived from a quote of English writer Thomas Carlyle “a mystic bond of brotherhood makes all men one....” From searching the pages of the magazine one gets a glimpses of the good, the bad, and the ugly of gay life in Wisconsin in the 1950s and early 1960s. I want to deal primarily with the good.

In *Unspeakable: the rise of the gay and lesbian press in America* Rodger Streimatter notes while most of their 5,000 monthly copies were sold in newsstands of the larger cities they did have about 1,000 subscribers. In 1954 they were so bold as to publish a list by state and Wisconsin appeared with 26 subscribers. This was a ranking of 11th in the states a little better than our population rank of 14th but not by much. California was first with 276 so we were about

one-tenth of their home base but not a negligible number. So in the 1950s there were enough interested folks to boldly take a magazine that on its front proudly proclaimed itself “The Homosexual Viewpoint.”

In a recent interview with Henry Eichhorn, an early 1950s Wisconsin subscriber who is still active with the gay community, he recalls no reservations about having a subscription, especially since it came in the proverbial plain brown wrapper. Reading the monthly issues helped end the isolation of the period or sense of being the only one dealing with homosexuality.

The publication followed in the general tradition of little magazines and included literary work, both fiction and poetry, plus book reviews for those volumes with gay subject matter. Serious policy discussions and polemics on the

topic of homosexuality appeared. Some writers were nationally known (such as Norman Mailer) and others of more limited renown. Editorials spoke to issues and conditions. A section labeled “Tangents” contained news tidbits from clippings sent by subscribers since the staff proclaimed they could not afford a clipping service (a feature of libraries and journalism now past).

Additionally the publication printed letters from subscribers and other correspondents. Five brave Wisconsin folks appear in the letters, though here the discernment is clouded by only initials used for identification. And the question pops up is Mr. R from Madison the same Mr. R. from Milwaukee a few years latter. A Mr. B from Milwaukee is a frequent writer who appears. Additionally a Doctor K., an M.D. from a blocked out small Wisconsin town writes. A Mr. B.H. from Milwaukee also pops up.

The poignancy of the overall letters from across the country is quite stirring and the magazine features on its cover of January 1960 a young man with pen in hand under the subscription “I Just Had to Write.”

The Wisconsin letters finds some of the good of gay life. These are people who find their homosexual lives as positive. Mr. B from Milwaukee, who is in his fifties, writes in 1959 “I have for many years considered myself fairly well adjusted.”

Doctor K. notes “It may be of interest to you that though everyone in this small town is convinced that I am ‘queer,’ I have a huge practice. I never date girls; I have many boys who come to visit; my lover comes up often enough to be recognized and greeted on the streets and no one seems to mind. Quite tolerant I feel.” So in addition to a quiet acceptance the good doctor is reporting on a successful professional life, a social circle of gay friends, and a domestic partner all in 1962.

Mr. R of Madison is eager for his monthly copy because he believes the magazine is “certainly to be congratulated upon its wonderful work in the field of advancement of the homosexual’s lot.”

Mr. B. of Milwaukee in April 1963 reports on discussions with friends from Illinois after the new state law revision that decriminalized homosexuality there. While most answers were non-committal he notes “one couple who lived

together were a little relieved or had less inward guilty feeling or tenseness about their condition.” Thus we can see gay folk from Wisconsin were in connection with other nearby gay communities and had networks for information and evaluation of public policy changes.

Mr. B. had other sources of information he tracked and reported in a letter on an article in a 1963 issue of *SEXOLOGY*. The article noted same sex behavior among male dolphins and Mr. B. concluded “So who says it’s unnatural?” Thus he had access to multiple sources for reinforcing his positive views on his homosexuality.

Mr. R. of Madison wrote to comment on an article of November 1958 entitled “Homosexuals without Masks.” In the story, a homosexual named Tom, complained about a slim young man who minced past. Other complaints were about disgusting queens, flaming faggots, and short-haired, stomping dykes. Mr. R. writes, “if the attitude of many homosexual men is such as that, then we may as well give up the ship. How can this man ever hope that the world will ever accept the gay crowd when even individuals among them refuse to accept others of their own kind.” Mr. R. shows that the fight against internal homophobia and the fight for an inclusive community was serious work even in 1959. Mr. R. concludes with a patriotic flourish by using a quote from Ben Franklin “We must all hang together or most assuredly we shall all hang separately.”

The well-adjusted Mr. B. in his letter of June 1959 takes to task another writer who feeling himself at age 37 no longer needing the magazine. “I do agree wholeheartedly with him that it must be a great help to younger men—so what’s wrong with continuing to support it, hoping it will reach more of the younger men and help them get on the right track? *ONE* can’t do that without help from some of us adjusted ones.” Presumably this was not just a chicken-hawk outlook but an intergenerational view of the need for community.

Mr. B. in one of his earliest letters in March 1958 had congratulated *ONE* on winning its postal case. Further he noted “It must make all you people feel as though your work is not in vain. It will take a long, long time, but I hope that just as in this case, one, by one, you aims will be accomplished.” One cannot know what Mr. B considered a long time but in 24 years from the date of his letter Wisconsin would be the first state in the nation to enact a gay rights law. But his expression of hope and progress expressed in the 1950s was the base upon which to build for future gains for the “homophile” community. ■

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

OUR ISSUES

Embracing our “Genderness”

What gender role do you take on in your relationship?

Your workplace? **Dr. Sue Gill** suggests we examine if our internal gender matches our external gender expression.

Many years ago, I met with a therapist because I was struggling with a growing awareness that I was a lesbian. He told me to look and act more like a lady and I would feel better. It didn’t work.

If I had known then what I know now, I may have avoided a lot of unnecessary pain. I wish that the therapist had explained that sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender roles are all separate aspects of self-identity. I wish I had known then that sexual orientation and gender identity seem to be biologically-determined and cannot be changed. Peace in those areas eventually came from learning to respect that inner voice that guided my romantic attractions and informed my inner sense of “gender-ness.” From that place of inner self-respect, it became easier to express my attractions and gendered self in ways that felt congruent.

Gender roles are different from sexual orientation and gender identity in that gender roles are socially-determined and change over time. Picture for a moment someone who works as a secretary. What does this person look like to you? Did you picture a female? The majority of us probably did associate “secretary” with “female” because post-World War II American society decided that secretary was an appropriate job for women. However, prior to WWII, that was a job typically held by men.

Gender roles are deeply socialized from early in life and are difficult to escape. The blue or pink blankets as baby gifts. The proud comments about a solid male toddler: “He’s all boy.” The messages we give children about appropriate expression of emotion that may differ from boys and girls. Even societal dress codes for boys and girls, men and women subtly socialize people toward traditional expression of gender roles. It would be difficult for someone wearing a skirt and heels to play a pickup game of basketball.

Cognitive psychologists tell us that the human brain naturally categorizes things. This is how the brain quickly recognizes something as a chair or as a dog with very little effort, even if we have never before seen

that specific type of chair or dog. Gender roles may be another example of the brain’s attempt at categorization of “things that men do” and “things that women do.” Although this may be an efficient way for the brain to operate, it can cause cognitive dissonance when a person encounters something that does not fit neatly into a category. While some respond to this dissonance by softening their definitions for that cognitive category,



Do you interact with your friends and family in ways that correspond with your true sense of yourself, or do you fill roles that you or your family or society have constructed for you?



others respond with anger. Unfortunately, many of us have faced painful taunts when we have looked or acted in a way that did not fit someone else’s concept of how a male or female was supposed to be. Many of us have also experienced significant cognitive dissonance as we recognized parts of ourselves that did not fit our inner categories for men and women.

You may have already done significant work in your life to identify your sexual orientation and gender identity. I hope that you have found many ways to express those aspects of yourself so that your public self matches your inner self as closely as pos-

sible. Have you also done the work of identifying the aspects of yourself that make up your gender expression? Do you dress, act, and look in a way that really works for you? In your consideration of career, extracurricular activities, and relationships, have you really checked inside to make sure that you are doing these things because they are the best fit for you? Do you interact with your friends and family in ways that correspond with your true sense of yourself, or do you fill roles that you or your family or society have constructed for you?

If you think that you want to do some work in this area, you can start by identifying those areas in your life where you feel your inner sense of self matches really well with your expressed self. There might be certain aspects of your job where you feel particularly competent; tasks around your house or apartment that you really enjoy; a physical activity that helps you to feel particularly connected to your body. Notice what it feels like emotionally and physically right now as you remember doing these things. This is what it feels like to have your external expression of self aligned with your inner self. Now think of some areas in your life where you may not be in such sync. Tasks you do on the job because they have to be done. How you feel when wearing something because it fits the situation instead of fitting your sense of self. Roles you play in relationships because they are expected of you. Now notice how you feel physically and emotionally. This is how it feels to be following roles that do not fit for you.

All of those years ago when that therapist told me to look and act more like a lady, I did what he said. I bought dresses, figured out how to walk in heels, and started putting on make-up. I joined a women’s bible study group, made friends with people who seemed to be “real ladies,” and spent more time sitting around talking and less time tromping around in the woods with my dog. The more time I spent filling these stereotyped gender roles, the more miserable I became until I just couldn’t stand it any longer. That was the beginning of the journey to health for me. I encourage you to look inside, identify those aspects of yourself that you are not fully expressing, and find ways to gently change. ■

Sue and her partner Sheri have lived in Madison since 2000. They keep busy with their two dogs, Frankie and Maslow. Sue is a psychologist in private practice and can be found online at www.madisontherapy.com.

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OUR APPAREL

Mary Alice McGreevy

Compliance Officer, Department of Employee Trust Funds (ETF)

Years in the Industry: 5 years as a legislative attorney, right around 4 as a compliance officer

Years in Madison: Native, returned 4 years ago from living in Nevada

Best professional advice you've ever received?
Don't be intimidated by anyone.

What community organizations are you involved with?

- Madison Gay Hockey Association - Chairperson, Funds Development Committee
- Out Professional & Executive Network (O.P.E.N.)

Personal Shopper Bonnie Raimy on dressing Mary Alice:

Ms. Mary Alice McGreevy is a self-describe nerd. A crossword-loving, geeky knitter who cooks a mean roast chicken... I loved her immediately.

Moreover, the fact that she made a reference to *Even Cowgirls Get the Blues* in regards to her "big hands" was just about enough to make me want her autograph. Mary Alice is a witty, self-assured, intelligent, super-cool lady; therefore, **Patricia Shoppe** and **Fontaine** interiors were no-brainers when it came to finding clothes and interiors unique and smart enough to match her personality.

Patricia Shoppe, owned and operated by Jessica O'Conner, is a boutique whose style mixes vintage 50s feel with a modern twist. O'Conner focuses on smaller designers to keep costs reasonable, and mainly looks to enhance an individual's current wardrobe with accessory pieces. The boutique is classic, unique, and most importantly, affordable.

Mary Alice fell in love with two ensembles at Patricia Shoppe that represented both the feminine side of her personality as well as her intellectual, professional side. **T. Bleu's** cream/taupe ruffled collar dress paired with **Angeles' t-strap ruffled heels** is the epitome of good taste. Paired with nude fishnets and pearls, the outfit is timeless, beautiful, and elegant.

As an attorney, Mary Alice often finds herself trapped in the land of bland when it comes to business attire. **T. Bleu's** black metallic pencil skirt with ruffled kick pleat, coupled with **Weston Wear's** "cate top" in antique white and lace (with Young at Heart's cream cami) makes not only a solid, professional ensemble, but also packs a fashionable punch. **Angeles'** purple and black Mary Janes add just the right amount of spunk, too. Use the same pearls and fishnets for both outfits, or change up nude fishnets for black and add a vintage brooch instead of pearls.

For the shoot, we ventured down Johnson Street. As best described by owner Barry Avery, Fontaine is a glam, decadent, whimsical slice of a big city design boutique.

Patricia Shoppe, 137 W. Johnson Street, Madison, WI

- T. Bleu** ruffled collar dress, Retail, \$108.00
- Weston Wear** antique white "cate top", Retail, \$136.00
- Young at Heart** antique white cami, Retail, \$18.00
- Angeles** khaki t-strap ruffled heels, Retail, \$58.00
- Angeles** black and purple Mary Janes, Retail, \$58

Fontaine, 811 East Johnson Street, Madison, WI

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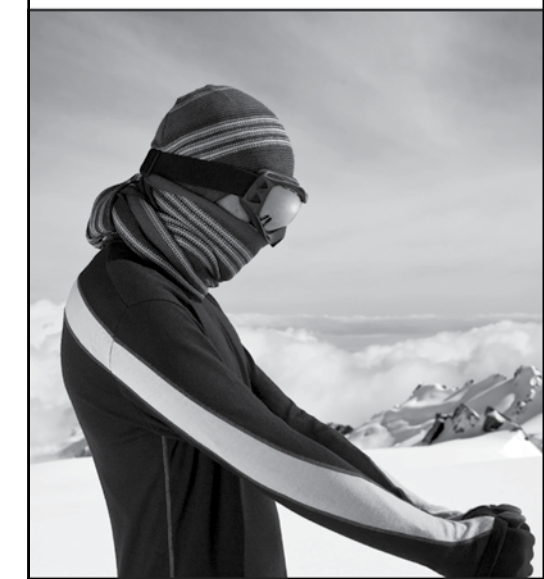
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Promises, Promises.

President Obama made a campaign promise to repeal the 1992 Don't Ask, Don't Tell law. **Tamara Packard** looks at the ongoing impact of DADT on queer service men and women.

Gays and lesbians have been prohibited from serving in the United States military since at least World War I. Although President Clinton promised in 1992 to eliminate the ban, his legacy is what is commonly known as the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" law ("DADT"). In essence, DADT allows gay, lesbian, and bisexual people to serve in the military, but only so long as military officials do not learn that those people (1) have engaged or attempted to engage in "homosexual acts," (2) have told someone that they are gay, lesbian, or bisexual, or (3) have married or attempted to marry someone of their same sex.



Today over 70 percent, including a majority of conservative Republicans and weekly churchgoers, believe that gays, lesbians, and bisexuals should serve openly in the military.



And, despite the law's name, there is no prohibition against asking service members about their sexual orientation. Thus, DADT requires gay, lesbian, and bisexual members of the military to lie about and hide an essential aspect of their personhood in order to make extreme sacrifices for our nation—including sacrificing their very lives—and to receive the training, benefits, and opportunities that are available through military service. In the 16 years of DADT, over 12,500 people have been invol-

untarily removed from military service simply for revealing, in one way or another, that they are gay, lesbian, or bisexual. Tens of thousands of others remain in the military today. They are constantly at risk of being exposed and losing the training they signed up for, the careers they have built, and the benefits they have earned. It is high time for Congress to repeal DADT, and for gays, lesbians, and bisexuals to begin serving openly in our military.

In 1992, when DADT was enacted, it was built on a foundation of assumptions about the effects of the presence of gays, lesbians, and bisexuals serving alongside heterosexuals in the armed forces. It is probably fair to say, as Congress did in the DADT legislation, that "Success in combat requires military units that are characterized by high morale, good order and discipline, and unit cohesion." Success in any team or group effort surely includes these qualities. It is not fair to say, however, as Congress also did in that legislation, that the presence of gays, lesbians, and bisexuals in the armed forces creates an unacceptable risk to that all-important high morale, good order, discipline, and unit cohesion. It is this foundation that is crumbling.

Virtually every gay, lesbian, and bisexual service member who has been discharged under DADT was discharged merely for his or her sexual orientation—there was no evidence of disruption of the members' military units, no failure of morale attributed to the gay lieutenant, no loss of order because the drill sergeant was bisexual, no lack of cohesion because a lesbian commanded the wing. Retired senior officers, both gay and straight, have observed and stated publicly that morale and unit cohesion do not suffer from the presence of service members known within their units to be gay, lesbian, and bisexual. Survey after survey of heterosexual active military personnel shows very little discomfort with the idea of serving with openly gay people. And every scientific study performed confirms that there is no negative impact on moral, order, discipline, or cohesion by the presence of openly gay service members. Indeed, this is not news: a 1993 RAND report said that openly gay people in the military had no effect on unit cohesion or

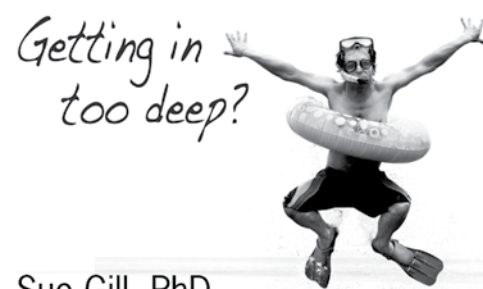
morale. Congress just decided to ignore that report and pass DADT anyway, perhaps fearful of keeping their own jobs if they supported nondiscrimination in the military.

Like President Clinton, President Obama also promised while running for office to allow gays, lesbians, and bisexuals to serve openly in the military. Fortunately, it is no longer the early 1990s. This time the political and social will to help fulfill that promise is strong. While in 1993, only 44 percent of Americans supported nondiscrimination in military service, today over 70 percent, including a majority of conservative Republicans and weekly churchgoers, believe that gays, lesbians, and bisexuals should serve openly in the military. The military brass are also coming around: an article in the next Joint Force Quarterly, a scholarly journal published by the Pentagon's Joint Chiefs of Staff, reportedly calls for the repeal of DADT. The article acknowledges the utter lack of any evidence of harm to the military due to the presence of openly gay, lesbian, and bisexual service members.

At the time of this writing, the Military Readiness Enhancement Act, which would repeal DADT and replace it with a policy of nondiscrimination, had 174 co-sponsors in the House of Representatives. Currently, Wisconsin Representatives Tammy Baldwin, Gwen Moore, and Steve Kagen are co-sponsors. The other five Wisconsin Representatives have not yet become co-sponsors and need to hear from their constituents: Paul Ryan, Ron Kind, James Sensenbrenner, Thomas Petri, and David Obey.

For more information about this issue, go to **www.sldn.org**, the website of the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network. SLDN is leading the charge to repeal DOMA and secure nondiscrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in the United States military and provides up-to-the-minute information on the latest developments. ■

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



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OUR HEALTH

Dispelling Myths

Amber Ault examines the common assumptions about the H1N1 virus and urges caution.

As I write this in mid-September, my friend X is very sick. Her doctor thinks she has the novel H1N1 virus along with a nasty case of bacterial pneumonia. They often go together. She’s been going to the hospital every day for intravenous antibiotics, with little impact. She’s been tested for H1N1, but tests are still negative, so she’s not being treated for flu. The scary thing is: she may be positive anyway. The outrageous thing is: if she does have it, someone carelessly infected her.



A significant percentage of people who get it have the cough, sore throat, and body aches, but no fever.



All summer, X and I exchanged notes about the likelihood of this pandemic causing serious trouble. We are both community-minded lesbians interested in public health and both of us were around during the early days of the AIDS crisis. That experience gave me a healthy dose of skepticism about the government’s ability to do the right thing when it comes to public health. My friend X saw it differently. She trusted the the CDC; she thought comparing how the government had handled the HIV pandemic to how it might handle an influenza pandemic was comparing apples and oranges. She may be right, but as I know about her suffering with an infectious illness she describes as being unlike anything else she’s ever experienced, I continue to worry that we have been given a false sense of complacency about this thing, or that people have become

“immune” to information about it while we haven’t yet gotten physical immunities to a virus that is widespread, highly transmissible, and is killing young and middle-aged adults in ways that are different from seasonal flu. So here’s my quick list of myths and facts about the flu, at the time of this writing, with a note that these things could change quickly.

MYTH 1: You test negative for the flu, you don’t have it.

FACT: A significant percentage of people who have H1N1 test negative for it for quite awhile, then eventually test positive ... The “false negative” rate may be as high as 30%. This means that if physicians wait until someone tests positive on the test to give them anti-viral medications, there may be a treatment delay that has serious consequences. Some have tested positive only post-mortem.

MYTH 2: H1N1 is no worse than seasonal flu.

FACT: While many people experience mild symptoms, others become ill enough that they are hospitalized, treated in ICUs, or die. Research at the University of Wisconsin-Madison has confirmed that H1N1 is actually very different from seasonal flu and potentially more lethal because it burrows deeper into the lungs. **MYTH 3:** Only people with “underlying conditions” need worry.

FACT: While people who have asthma or other chronic health conditions, including being overweight, tend to be over-represented in the mortality statistics, nearly 40% of the people who have died from H1N1 have no known underlying conditions. Young, healthy people are among those dying from this flu.

MYTH 4: Only kids and elderly are at serious risk. **FACT:** The majority of people infected with H1N1 at this point are people under the age of 20, but the majority of people who have died from it are people in the prime of life, people in their college, working, and parenting years, from 20 to 40. While H1N1 may ultimately have no higher of a death rate than seasonal flu, it will infect more people, so the absolute numbers of deaths will be much higher.

MYTH 5: If you have H1N1, you’ll have a fever.

FACT: A significant percentage of people who get it have the cough, sore throat, and body aches, but no fever.

MYTH 6: No fever equals not contagious.

FACT: Unfortunately, people who are infected are contagious a day or so before being symptomatic, and many continue to shed virus many days after a fever, if they have one, ends. A better gauge seems to be coughing; if you are coughing, you are likely putting others at risk.

MYTH 7: As God’s chosen people, members of the LGBTQ community are immune.

FACT: Unfortunately, we have not been given this particular break at this time.

MYTH 8: Social distancing, closing schools, and canceling events won’t help because “the horse is already out of the barn,” as President Obama said last spring.

FACT: In the absence of widespread immunity and the absence of widespread vaccination, “social distancing” is the most powerful tool we have. Since influenza spreads through close contact, and through handling objects touched by others who are infected, reducing close contact reduces its spread. This strategy has social and economic consequences that our government has opted to avoid by not recommending social distancing for those who are well. Still, such measures have the impact of slowing the pandemic and protecting individuals’ health while we wait for vaccine availability. We know this from the history of other pandemics.

What can we do to protect our health?

Staying informed is crucial, because viruses can change very quickly. Taking care of your own health and the health of others includes the usual self-care—eating well, sleeping well, exercising, and getting sun if you can—along with the good hand hygiene and “cough etiquette” that’s in the news. If you feel flu-ish, remove yourself from social interactions—this is called “social distancing” or “self-isolation.” While you may have a mild case of the flu, the person next to you in your cube or car or bed or class may have a much more difficult response. Line up a “flu buddy” who could drop off medicine or groceries for you and check on you by phone if you live alone. Figure out how to order your groceries on line (the Willy Street Co-op lets you do this, as do some other places) if you need to avoid exposing others or want to steer clear of some public spaces for a while.

The pandemic paradox is that in getting through this together, by trying to stay well and prevent others from being infected, we may need to spend more time apart. As a community, we’ve faced difficult health challenges before with collective intelligence and an ability to do difficult things in the interest of taking care of one another. If we educate ourselves and watch out for each other, we can pull through again, and lose fewer folks along the way.

Get well, X. This one’s for you. ■

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Fromagination offers an intimidating selection of artisan cheeses in an environment that is anything but.

FROMAGINATION OWNER KEN MONTELEONE is as much a cheesemonger as he is a matchmaker. It is clear upon glancing at biography placards of featured cheesemakers or simply talking with him that he loves pairing cheeses with people as much as the “perfect companions”—beer, wines, and other food specialties—that line the meticulously designed interior of his shop.

“We want our store to be inclusive,” he said, adding that what he loves about his location on the Capitol Square is the diverse community.

Monteleone’s Italian roots show in his philosophy: food was what was always shared. Fromagination is where figuratively and geographically, “all walks of life” meet in the middle.

“We want to create an environment that’s true to Madison, whether that’s gay, straight, or transgender,” he said.

Customers are encouraged to sample the cheeses. Monteleone firsts looks locally, hunting down full-flavored, traditional products such as the heavily decorated Pleasant Ridge Reserve—Uplands cheese, made only when cows are grazing on pasture.

“What’s most fulfilling is when you have people coming in from all walks of life taste things they haven’t had before,” he said. He notes that one day a homeless woman came in with just a few dollars. She wanted a Swiss because she was originally from Monroe. A few bites later, she left with an Emmenthaler.

“It opens their world to what they may have been missing,” Monteleone said.

It was not too long ago that Monteleone discovered what he was missing in his past life as a retail executive for Famous Footwear and Lands’ End. It was on his business travels that he started to see that his passions and profession were misaligned as he found himself browsing European markets instead of shoe stores.

Monteleone left the corporate world to spend a year traveling the globe pursuing what his gut had been telling him.

“I had a very supportive partner who allowed me to take the time to do this,” Monteleone said, noting that his late partner was instrumental in making the dream of Fromagination possible.

Monteleone became a self-educated cheesemonger who sought the advice of the cheesemakers themselves to ask what they would do if they opened a specialty cheese store. He has gone to great lengths to put “cheese in an environment they’d like to see their cheese live in.”

Each cheese is given scrupulous care—right down to the rustic-printed wrapping paper that hugged the Sartori Reserve Bellvitano Black Pepper cheese I brought home to pair with the Buffalo Bill’s Pumpkin Ale in my fridge. After stealing a small nibble on my drive back, it wasn’t much past 10:30 that morning before I paired the cheese and the beer with me. If that isn’t love I don’t know what is.

Not ready to commit? Adopt a bite-sized piece of “orphan” cheese near the checkout and see what develops. —**Marcelle Richards**

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600 Williamson St., 255-6910
Indonesian \$\$
bandungrestaurant.com

Bellini Restaurant
401 E. Washington Ave.,
250-0097
Italian, Pasta \$\$\$
bellinirestaurant.com

Blue Velvet Lounge
430 W. Gilman, 250-9900
American, Tapas \$
thebluevelvetlounge.com

The Brass Ring
701 E. Washington Ave.,
256-9359
American, Burgers \$
thebrassringmadison.com

Buraka
543 State St., 255-3646
East African \$
buraka.com

Burrito Drive
310 S. Brearly St., 260-8586
Mexican \$
burritodrive.com

Cafe Continental
108 King St., 251-4880
Continental \$\$

Cafe Costa Rica
141 S. Butler St., 356-9830
Costa Rican \$

Cafe Porta Alba
15 N. Butler St.,
441-0202
Pizza \$\$
cafeportaalba.com

Cafe Soleil
25 N. Pinckney St., 251-2700
Bread, Sandwiches/Deli \$
letoile-restaurant.com

Cardinal Bar & Cafe
418 E. Wilson St., 251-0080
Lunch \$
cardinalbar.com

Dayton Street Grille
1 W. Dayton St. 257-6000
American \$\$
concoursehotel.com/dining

Dotty Dumpling’s Dowry
317 N. Frances St., 259-0000
American, Burgers \$
dottedumplingsdowry.com

Eldorado Grill
744 Williamson St., 280-9378
Tex-Mex \$\$\$
eldoradogrillmadison.com

Fresco
227 State St., 663-7374
American \$\$\$
frescomadison.com

Frida Mexican Grill
117 State St., 256-4000
Mexican, Southwestern \$\$
fridamexicangrill.com

Great Dane
123 E. Doty St., 284-0000
Brewery, Burgers \$\$
greatdanepub.com

Harvest
21 N. Pinckney St., 255-6075
American, French \$\$\$
harvest-restaurant.com

Himal Chuli
318 State St., 251-9225
Nepalese, Vegetarian \$

Husnu’s
547 State St., 256-0900
Turkish, Italian \$

Johnny Delmonico’s
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Steak, American \$\$\$\$
johnnydelmonicos.com

Kabul Restaurant
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Afghanistani \$

Lazy Jane’s Cafe
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Sandwiches, Deli \$

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Mediterranean, French \$\$\$
lechardonnaymadison.com

L’Etoile
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letoile-restaurant.com

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251-9999
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New Orleans Cuisine \$
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Steak, American \$\$
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Tapas \$\$
opuslounge.com

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Pizza \$
theromancandle.com

Sardine
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French \$\$\$

Shamrock Bar
117 W. Main St., 255-5029
Sunday Brunch \$
shamrockbar.com

Sunprint Cafe
1 S. Pinckney St., 268-0114
Sandwiches, Vegetarian \$

Tornado Club
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Steak \$\$\$
apartmentrenting.com/tornado

Weary Traveler
1201 Williamson St., 442-6207
International \$

East

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Italian, Mediterranean \$\$
bunkyscafe.net

Ella’s Deli
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241-5291
Kosher/Deli, Ice Cream \$
ellasdeliandicecreamparlor.com

Fork and Spoon Cafe
1133 E. Wilson St., 257-7216
Italian, Pasta \$
forkandspooncafe.com

Glass Nickel
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glassnickelpizza.com

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montysblueplatediner.com

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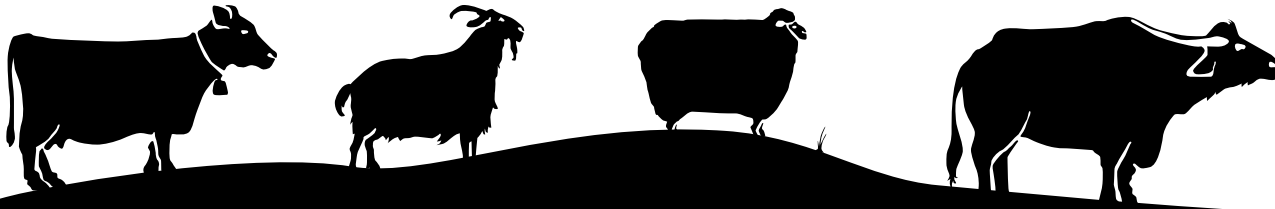
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My Evolution

Antoinette Coles poetically describes how she continually comes out to herself and others.

Life is too short to live these lies. Besides, this was like holding a beach ball under water. It always surfaces.

When I was a toddler someone told my mother she had a lovely daughter. I was mad but I liked feeling like I was thought of as pretty. Mom said, "It's because of your long eyelashes." When I was a tween someone told my mother she had a lovely daughter. I was curious why they said that and a little mad but more accustomed to it. Dad looked at me and lovingly told me "I see your mother in your eyes." When I was a teen someone told my mother that she had a lovely daughter. Being quite accustomed to it, I thought it was funny and was curious why they'd said it. Mom said, "It might be because of your long hair and flowered shirt. You do have high cheek bones & long eyelashes." When I was in my twenties someone told me I was a lovely woman. I understood why they said that, but not why I preferred wearing a dress. Mom asked, "What did you do to that hair I gave you? I don't like the blonde. By the way, you are wearing too much make-up." At fifty-three I mostly wear dresses and am a lovely woman. I hope that my mother is proud of her lovely daughter. I wish I could tell her how much she has shown me how to be a graceful lady.

I never came out to my parents. I hardly ever came out at all. At least not in the ways that everyone says you should. My gender and sexuality have evolved through the years. The fluidity has taken me from so in the closet that I couldn't admit any of it to myself; to a cross-dressing, bi-identified male; to where I am now. I currently identify as a femme lesbian, polyamorous transwoman.

That isn't to say that it was in any way a constant flow. In the later 1980s, three friends died. One was a lover. AIDS sent me back in the closet. I tried to live life as a heterosexual. I tried again to hold in everything that would even show I was queer.

In 2003, my mom died. That event caused me to realize that life is too short to live these lies. Besides, this was like holding a beach ball

under water. It always surfaces.

I opened up my self again to being bisexual and started acting on it. I shared with a few. Through that, I was outed as being bi by a coworker. At first I was scared, but it was freeing. I could let my soul show. Like I had previously, I just did it: no letters to family, no big announcements at work ... I just started living in the new iteration of who I became. In doing that, I came to realize that my clothing choice was really a bigger thing.

I am a woman. I have a birth defect—it's my body. Hormone replacement therapy has helped my body look mostly right. I no longer have any outing to do, but I out myself anytime I meet someone, and I often out my primary partner. I don't want there to be any surprises. ■

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