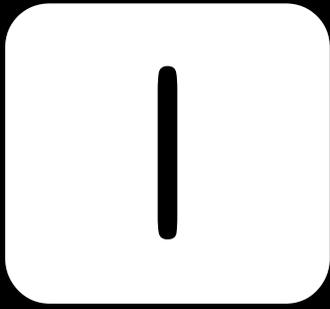


our lives



Madison's LGBTQA Magazine

One Tough Pirate

AIDS Activism through the eyes of one of our biggest allies, Bob Bowers

Remembering Felicia & Ed

A personal tribute

Monty's Blue Plate

The diner rolls out something special

Melissa Etheridge

The rock icon on stage at Overture Center

Bob Bowers

Founder, HIVictorious.org

Your Financial Future

Jaime Zimmerman on investment planning

the Status

HIV

An AIDS Network Report by Executive Director **Karen Dotson**
Dustin Smith after testing positive

OPPOSITES ATTRACT Sporty type seeks couch potato for donation. I'll do the ride and you stay in your sweats. We're a perfect match! Find out more at www.actride.org.

THE WISCONSIN AIDS RIDE™
AUGUST 7-10, 2008

WWW.ACTRIDE.ORG
608.252.6540

Support the Wisconsin AIDS Ride.
No spandex required.

DONATE at www.actride.org.

VOLUNTEER for a day or longer.

ATTEND the Opening and Closing Ceremonies.

Join us!

Opening Ceremonies
 Thursday, August 7th at 6:15 am
 Olin Park Pavilion

Closing Ceremonies
 Sunday, August 10th at 3:00 pm
 100 block of Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
 on the Capitol Square

ACT6



Brought to you by:
 Sponsors: Isthmus, Firepower Design, SprintPrint, American Family Insurance, Club 5, The Builder's Group, Inc., Becker Law Offices, Stick People Productions, UW Health, Group Health Cooperative of South Central Wisconsin, FASTFRAME, Penske Truck Rental, Sheraton Hotel, Budget Signs & Specialties, TIBIA Massage School, Our Lives Magazine, UMOJA Magazine, Dean/St. Mary's, The Mic 92.1 and Pride Radio 92.1-2



YOUR COMMUNITY...
YOUR PHARMACY



Worker owned & cooperatively run since 1972
 Featuring a remarkable array of vitamins, herbs,
 chemical-free bodycare, safer sex supplies
 plus a full prescription pharmacy

Community Pharmacy

341 State Street (Entrance On Gorham) (608) 251-3242
www.communitypharmacy.coop

BAIRD

Great outcomes.
 Done well.

Enriching experience.

Diversity enriches our lives.
 Baird is proud to work with the LGBTQA community.



Jaime Zimmerman
 Vice President
 Senior Investment Consultant
 One South Pinckney Street, Suite 900
 Madison, WI 53703
 608-252-5757 . 800-937-8625
jzimmerman@rwbaird.com
www.jzimmermanfinancialadvisor.com

©2008 Robert W. Baird & Co. Incorporated. Member SIPC. MC-23347

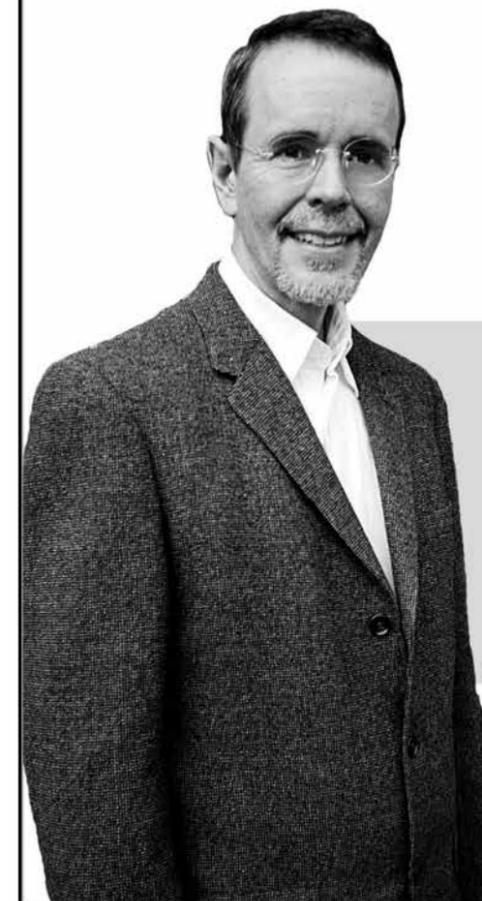


KELLER WILLIAMS®

R E A L T Y

Three Point Place Madison, WI 53719

- ✓ *Serving you with pride*
- ✓ *Knowledgeable, courteous, with an aim to sell*
- ✓ *Working to make your property sale known to the widest audience*
- ✓ *Specializing in historic & vintage properties*



Geoffrey Gyrisco
 REALTOR

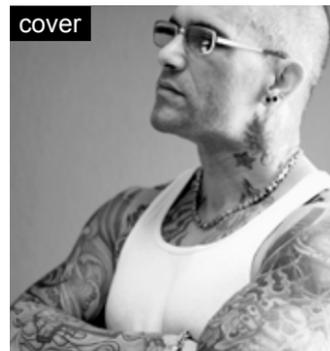
Office 608.276.5531 • Mobile 608.354.9456

www.GeoffreyHomes.com

Each office is independently owned and operated.

Features

JULY / AUGUST



21 A Pirate's Crusade
One the few remaining from the first known cases of HIV, **Bob Bowers** is a man who brings Carpe Diem to life.



23 The Test
One day changed the life of **Dustin Smith**. In his own words he talks about learning when he tested positive.



24 The Status of HIV
New AIDS Network Executive Director **Karen Doston** reports on the trends in HIV infection, prevention and client care

Departments

- 6 Editor's Letter** Our First Anniversary
- 7 Contributors** The faces behind the pages of *Our Lives*
- 8 Farewell** Celebrating the lives of Felicia Melton-Smyth and Ed Grunewald

Community

- 11 Introducing Ourselves** Meet Alexis M. Rouge
- 12 Our Calendar** Melissa Etheridge, Madison Pride, and ACT 6
- 14 Our Thoughts** Mike Meholic is in search of Madison's elusive gay community
- 16 Our Businesses** Learn new tricks from Bad Dog Frida

Quality of Life

- 26 Our Mental Health** Dale Decker on methods to help cope through grief
- 28 Our Rights** Tamara Packard on what protects your privacy
- 30 Our Money** Jaime Zimmermann starts you investing
- 32 Eating Well** Amy VanKauwenbergh goes for the full Monty

Finding Pride

- 34 Why I Came Out**
Zach Strong on what it means to be yourself

Cover Photo by **Jessica Horn**
shooterforhire@gmail.com

our lives Thoughts and Suggestions Forum
COLUMN IDEAS?
Submitted by **Tamara**

So in every issue of *Our Lives*, Patrick invites me to write about legal issues of interest to the LGBT Community. I'm just handing in my fourth column, for the July-August issue, and I think I'm starting to get the hang of this. So far, though, I've written about legal issues that I THINK you'll be interested in, and that I think are important for you to know about--without even asking!

So, I'm asking: what legal issues are interesting or important to you?

[Read the entire thread online](#)



Madison's LGBTQA Magazine

Patrick Farabaugh
Publisher / Editor-in-Chief

Jessica Horn
Photo Editor

Amy VanKauwenbergh
Dining Editor

Daña Alder
Copy Editor

Contributing Writers
Dale Decker
Karen Dotson
Michael Meholic
Jill Nebeker
Tamara Packard
Dustin Smith
Zachariah Strong
Gretchen Treu
Jaime Zimmermann

Contributing Photographers
Mark Baran
George Jura
Emily Mills
Jenn Rotman
Paul Swanson

Matt Jelinek
Business Manager

Advertising Production
Jay Peñaflo
Tim Spires

Jason Reid
Distribution

Cory Moll
Webmaster

Paul Dickey
Assistant Webmaster

©2008 All Rights Reserved.
July/August 2008 Volume 2, Issue 1.
Life in the Middle Publishing, LLC
Patrick Farabaugh & Joseph Patane,
Publishers. 215 Martin Luther King Jr Blvd.,
Box 1202, Madison, WI 53703

Any reproduction of OL: Our Lives Magazine in part or in full without the written permission of the publisher is strictly prohibited. OL: Our Lives Magazine shall not be held responsible for any claims made by our advertisers. Submission of photographs or other images to OL: Our Lives Magazine may be published without providing image credit. Appearance of any person, business or organization within photographs, advertisements, or editorial content neither implies nor infers any indication of their sexual orientation.

Share your story ideas with us. Consider contributing to *Our Lives*. Tell us your interests at: OURLIVESMADISON.COM

our lives
Featured January/February '08

SMART DENTAL

www.SmartDentalMadison.com

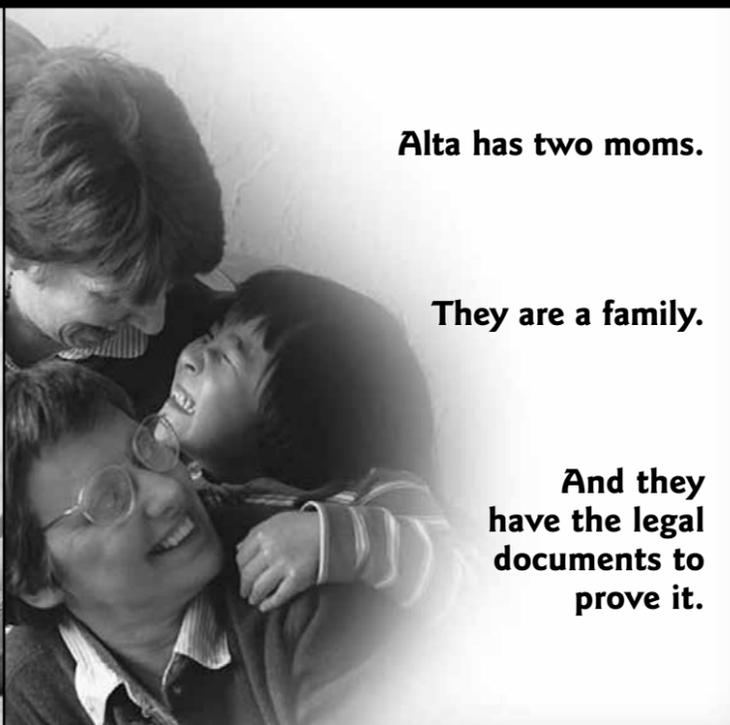


Tamim Sifri, DDS
608.241.8782
2317 International Ln, Suite 101
Madison, WI 53704

General, Cosmetic and Implant Dentistry for Today's Family



Two Dads. Twin Daughters. One Family.



Alta has two moms.

They are a family.

And they have the legal documents to prove it.



The Surrogacy Center
HELPING FAMILIES GROW

450 S. Yellowstone Dr.
Madison WI 53719
608-821-8230
surrogacycenter.com

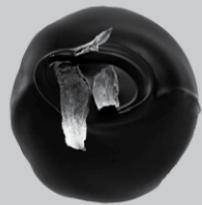


the LAW CENTER *for*
CHILDREN & FAMILIES

450 S. Yellowstone Dr.
Madison WI 53719
608-821-8200
law4kids.com

Judith Sperling-Newton • Carol M. Gapen • Lynn J. Bodi • J. Alberto Quiroga • Emily Dudak Taylor

Gail Ambrosius
CHOCOLATIER — MADISON



Inspired Globally,
Made Locally

CATERING & CUSTOM
BOXES AVAILABLE

2086 ATWOOD AVE | MADISON
P 249 3500 | GAILAMBROSIUS.COM

First Congregational United Church of Christ



Embracing
Diversity
Among God's
People

An Open and Affirming
congregation welcoming
all persons into full
participation in church life

www.firstcongmadison.com

1609 University Ave at Breese Terrace
233-9751

editor

Our First Anniversary



I have to be honest. If I had any idea of how much commitment, sacrifice and strength would be necessary to set this project in motion, I am not entirely certain I would have had the courage to take that first step one year ago. A lesson learned is that first steps are sometimes frightening, and not always voluntarily initiated—especially when they require us to embrace who we are. When I made the decision to introduce Felicia Melton-Smyth as our first profile in the first issue of *Our Lives*, it was because I saw someone *personally* committed to something larger than herself, and I *personally* wanted to understand why. What she shared was profound to me. Fundamentally, it was about love. Life put her path in front of her, and somehow she found the necessary courage to take each step to walk it.

It is with a very heavy heart that I write this—now in our first anniversary issue—as a memorial to her, and ask you to return to that first issue to learn for yourself about what pushed her to take her first step.

I love you, Felicia.

Thank you to everyone who has embraced, supported and found a place in their lives for this magazine over the past year—from our contributors, to our readers, to the greater community at large. Maturing its identity is a journey, and I truly couldn't be more grateful for the opportunity to travel down this path with you.

With love,
Patrick Farabaugh
PUBLISHER / EDITOR

our lives
ourlivesmadison.com
user Patrick

Help me ride: ACTIVE.COM/DONATE/ACT6RIDE/PFARABA

contributors



To contact all **OURLIVESMADISON.COM** users, visit their profiles at:
www.ourlivesmadison.com/user/username

Jaime Zimmerman is a Vice President, Senior Investment Consultant, at the Madison office of Robert W. Baird & Co., member SIPC. He has been in the financial services industry since 1987, having earned a bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Minnesota. He's also attended the University of Wisconsin for continued coursework in business administration and finance. Outside of work, he devotes a great deal of time to involvement with non-profit organizations. His other interests include golf, exercise, the arts and his family. For more information, visit www.jzimmermanfinancialadvisor.com, or call him at (608) 252-5757 or (800) 937-8625.



our lives
OUR MONEY
ourlivesmadison.com
user Jaime

Jill Nebeker is a small potato in a big field. For her day job, she heads up a web team at a magazine publisher. In the off-hours, she builds small web sites for small businesses (www.small-potatoes.net). Jill is an avid yoga practitioner, a sometime writer, and an occasional student of modern dance. She moved to Madison in 2003 and only hockey has gotten her through the Midwestern winter. After four years of playing, only now can she lift the puck—and then usually when she's not trying. Jill would like to be good at things without needing to practice.



our lives
COVER PROFILE
ourlivesmadison.com
user jillneb

Michael Meholic has lived in Madison for five years and enjoys the range of activities the city has to offer. Whether cycling, running, hanging at the bark park, water skiing, hockey, softball, Concerts on the Square or just catching the sunset over one of the lakes, he likes to take advantage of the variety of things to do here. Working for an active travel bike-tour company gives him opportunities to satisfy his wanderlust with jaunts to places like Tuscany and Provence. His golden retriever, Riley, keeps him honest and is a good sounding board for his writing hobby.



our lives
OUR THOUGHTS
ourlivesmadison.com
user Miker

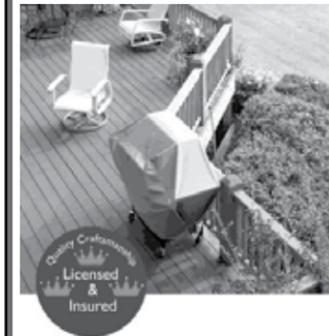
Please Welcome New Advertisers:

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 13 indieQueer | 30 Bonnie Raimy |
| 12 Madison Minotaurs | Personal Shopping |
| 17 The Century House | 33 Monty's Blue Plate Diner |
| 27 Forward Realty Group | 33 Madison Originals |
| 27 Reproductive Health and Fertility Center | 35 Madison's CW Network |
| 28 Fair Wisconsin | 36 Melissa Etheridge |

To advertise, contact us at: OURLIVESMADISON.COM



608.577.4277 | www.quigleydecks.com



- **DECKS & PORCHES:** Escape to your backyard to dine under the stars, enjoy a sunrise, dig into a good book, or chat with friends.
- **FENCES:** Add to your landscape with a privacy fence, garden fence, or deck fence made from quality durable wood or composites.
- **GAZEBOS:** A gazebo is your backyard refuge, a hand-crafted pavilion perfect for picnics or a private nook to enjoy a good book or a dip in the hot tub.
- **ARBORS & PERGOLAS:** Display climbing roses on your garden arbor, or host a soirée under a beautiful shade-giving latticework pergola.
- **TRELLISES:** Hydrangeas and honeysuckles crawling up a trellis bring dimension and charm to your home.

Outdoor Kitchens
Fences
Arbors
Decks

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

POWERFUL RESULTS.

REAL PEOPLE

The Experienced Real Estate
Agents You Want On Your Side!



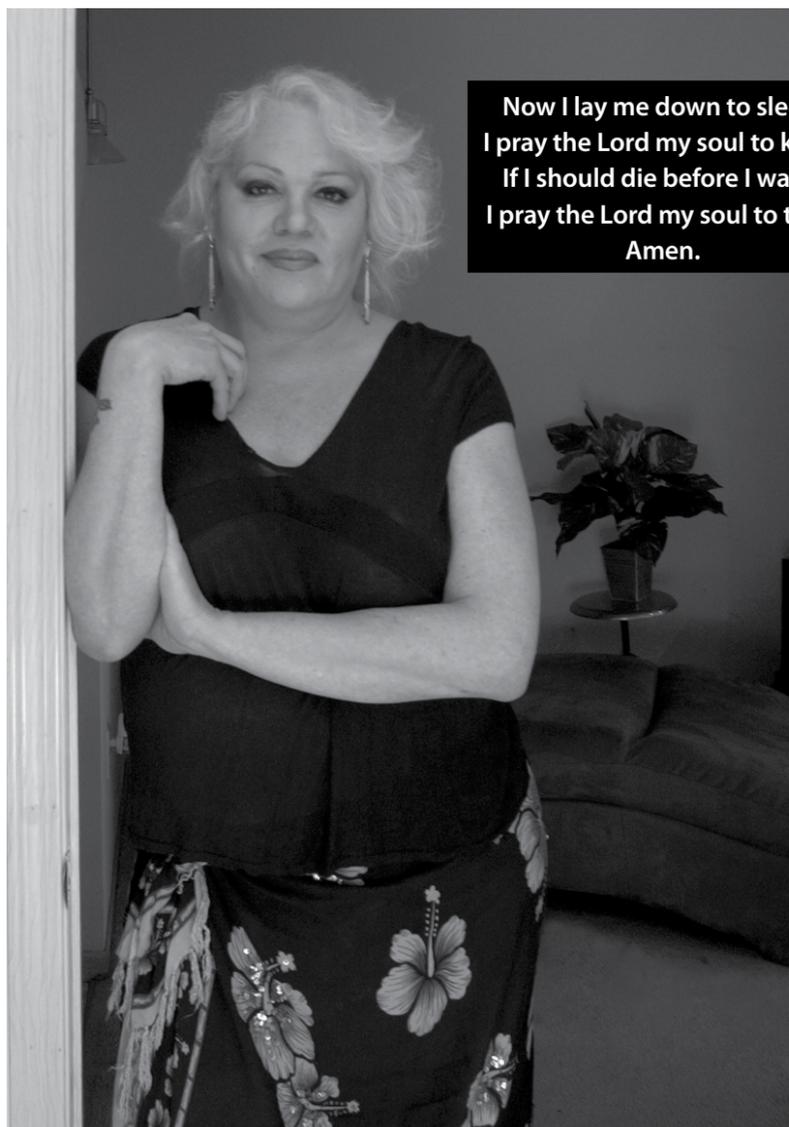
WWW.LIZLAUER.COM



NINA LEBWOHL 608.712.2725
LIZ LAUER 608.444.5725
KIM NEMACHECK 608.213.2906

Bunbury & Associates Realtors

In Loving Memory of Felicia Melton-Smyth



Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep.
If I should die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take.
Amen.

BEING BROUGHT UP BAPTIST, I RECITED RELIGIOUSLY THE SAME PRAYER FOR many years every night before I went to sleep.

This prayer scared me that I might not make it through the night. Saying it would make the Lord keep my soul. I feel that fear was the motivation of this prayer. I wish someone would have comforted me instead of scaring me. I ask you, with all the religions out there—who is right? How did the Universe get created? What happens when we die? These are questions I see that no one can answer. Whether you believe in prayer or not, I believe in a higher power of love rather than a world of fear and hate.

Some people say that it is morbid to write my own obituary, but I see it as a way to say what I want said about me. I've been very lucky as an individual that I have a loving family and friends, very successful career, a home, car and material things. Most people like me aren't as lucky and struggle in life. My father once said that I am the only person that can make me happy. It's true, I have lived every day to its fullest and have no regrets. I want everyone to know that I loved being alive. Now that I am gone, I want to invite everyone to meet my family and friends at a gathering at the Westside Businessman's Club. Come meet my family and friends and help celebrate my life. And now I will say goodbye, my friends. **Love, Felicia Melton-Smyth**

To make a donation in support of her memory, please visit: AIDSNETWORK.ORG

Photographed by Paul Swanson

In Memoriam

Birth Name Withheld
February 28, 1967 – December 31, 1999
Black Earth / Madison



I was born in Dodgeville, WI and raised by a loving, caring and supportive father, Gerald Lee Frame. I was raised with a sister, Tammy, who has two children, Benjamin and Kyla

Ashbacher. I graduated from Wisconsin Heights High School, Mazomanie, in 1985. I attended college at Capri Cosmetology College and MATC-Madison for computer programming, accounting and fashion design. After college I moved to Phoenix, AZ, for two years but missed the four seasons, family and friends. I started working at the Shamrock Bar, Madison, in 1987 and at the UW Health Medical Foundation in 1994. One other noteworthy employment was at the Café Palms in the historic Hotel Washington. During this time I became a very well-known female impersonator and won many city and state beauty/talent pageants. In the early 80s I assisted with the care of several people living with HIV/AIDS and became an advocate for HIV/AIDS through the Madison AIDS Network.

Felicia Melton-Smyth
January 1, 2000 – May 26, 2008
Madison



With the support of my father, family and friends, I became who I was always meant to be. I continued to work at the Shamrock and the UW Health Medical Founda-

tion. My volunteer work continued with the AIDS Network as well as for GLSEN and Action/Fair Wisconsin. I started working for an online travel agency, JustTerry.com in 2005 and traveled frequently to Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. I served on two different gay athletic boards, the Madison Gay Hockey Association, and the Madison GLBT Softball League. In 2002 I started a holiday gift-giving project for families that have at least one person infected with HIV/AIDS and granted holiday wishes to those families, both the adults and children. I was also recognized by Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin and former President of the United States, Bill Clinton, for the work I had been doing with families with HIV/AIDS in 2005.

In Appreciation of His Vision

SIX YEARS AGO I WALKED into Club 5 for the very first time. Nervously, I walked through the club and found a stool near the end of the bar. I sat taking in the people and surroundings and wondering if this is where I really fit in. Directly across from me, at the entrance to the bar, was a man not smiling much. He was taking in all that was happening, too. He



glanced in my direction and I'm sure sensed my nervousness. He walked behind the bar, gave me another beer, smiled and told me to relax, it wasn't all that bad. This was my first experience with Ed Grunewald.

One year later I started working for the man and learning all about that man at the end of the bar. Ed, although quiet to most, had strong convictions and beliefs on what he wanted from his club. He wanted a safe environment for the community to come and celebrate who they are. He always talked about the gay community needing to stick together and reminded us how far we'd come, and how far we still needed to go. I still remember the disappointment in his eyes after the marriage amendment vote and how he said we need to keep making our voices heard and not give up.

Ed taught me a new meaning for two words; community and family. Through him I became part of a bigger family than I ever could have imagined, and a community that never ceases to amaze me with its heart and spirit. My hope is that his vision and Club 5 continue to offer that environment to that next person new to our community. I hope my greeting them to this new experience lets me become that man at the end of the bar who welcomed me. I miss you, Ed. Thank you!

Dave Eick
Club 5 Manager

In Memoriam

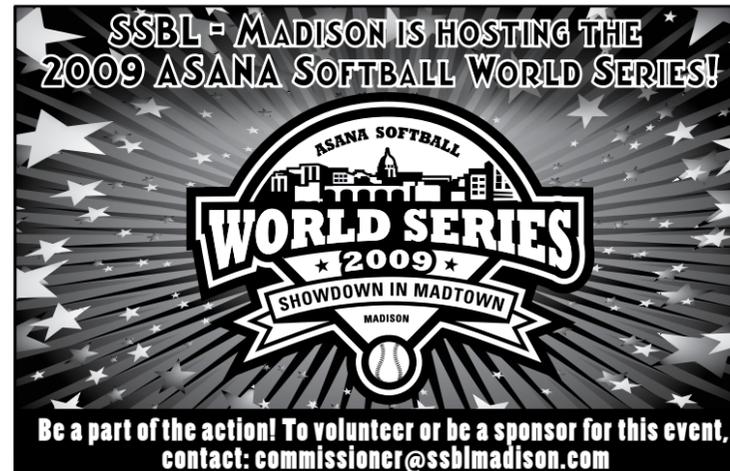
Ed Grunewald
March 2, 1955 – April 21, 2008
Marshall, WI

Edward P. Grunewald, age 53, of Fitchburg, passed away on Monday, April 21, 2008, at home after a brief illness of pancreatic cancer. He was born on March 2, 1955, in Marshall, the son of Elmer and Ethel (Frentzel) Grunewald. Ed attended Marshall High School. After high school he became active in the restaurant industry. He worked at a restaurant in South Dakota before returning to Madison to work as a manager at the Essen Haus. He then opened Manoeuvres at 150 S. Blair St.—a year before the 1996 fire at the Hotel Washington. He also opened We Are Family, a gay gift shop at 524 East Wilson St., and went on to close Manoeuvres and open Club 5 on September 3, 1998. He is survived by four siblings, many nieces and nephews, and his partner, Yohandi Ortega. Ed was preceded in death by his parents.

PHOTO BY LISHA TERRE

To donate in his memory, visit: AIDSNETWORK.ORG

JULY / AUGUST 2008



Le Dame Footwear

Where style and fit matter.



Le Dame Footwear is a line of feminine styled footwear built to fit a masculine foot and designed specifically for **transgender**, **drag queen** and **crossdressing** customers.

Call 877-365-6147 or visit www.ledame.com

INTRODUCING OURSELVES



THE HOME IS THE CLOSEST THING WE WILL EVER
CREATE NEXT TO SOMETHING THAT IS ALIVE



Darin Scott Thomas
REALTOR



Changes Are Temporary
RESULTS Are Permanent.

3 Point Place, Madison, Wisconsin 53719 • Direct Line 608.219.7267 • Fax 608.831.0825



Life is a Cabaret

Meet Alexis M. Rouge, performer extraordinaire and
co-founder of Lexi Ravyn Productions

Tell us a little about yourself and where you're from?
I am a 24-year old transsexual born and raised in the Badger State. I'm a home-grown cheese-and-bratwurst kind of girl (laughs). I'm a graduate of MATC Madison, but considering going back for business or nursing.

What do you do by day? I work with developmentally disabled individuals as a Job Coach for REM WI Inc.

I am also a peer counselor at OutReach (you can come see me during my Monday shift, 3-6 p.m.), I've been on their Speaker's Bureau and have been working with youth programming and transgender advocacy/ally training. I try to do my part to give back to our community.

For five years I've served on the board for Madison Pride. I co-hosted last year's event with Cass Marie Domino. I hope to continue to work with Pride to create an event for people of all ages and backgrounds to enjoy!

The entertainers with staying power are continually reinventing themselves

And by night? A few years ago I launched Lexi Ravyn Productions with one of my best friends, Brian Ponce. I'm an entertainer, performing in Wisconsin and now across the greater Midwest. After performing for over three years, I still get a rush of excitement and adrenalin each time I step on stage. I've competed in over 30 pageants and currently have the honor of being the reigning Miss Gay Great Lakes Regional USofA, my first major system title. I just returned from Miss Gay USofA nationals in Dallas! I travel extensively for shows, touring Wisconsin and working on deals in Ohio, Iowa and Illinois.

From Myspace.com/lexiravyn: Lexi Ravyn Productions is an entertainment troupe whose founders/principal performers search the drag and entertainment world, adding others to their shows and events. Lexi Ravyn consists of a variety of entertainers like Candi Stratton, Jazmyn, Kurtis Ryan, Bryanna Banxs, Cass Marie Domino and Alexis M. Rouge. Lexi Ravyn also has a strong team of people working behind the scenes. Our photographer and diva-extraordinaire, Ms. Tina, our road assistant and host in training, MC Ravyn, and our seamstress, Mr. Jezebel, all help Lexi Ravyn continue to grow.

What makes drag work? Variety helps to foster individuality—from "skag drag" to "glam/pageant"—the entertainers with staying power are continually reinventing themselves. The world of entertainment is constantly evolving and changing based on trends in music and fashion. The trick is finding what you are comfortable with as an individual and staying true to that vision. It is exciting to know that I am doing my part to foster that growth. ■



Alexis M. Rouge
ourlivesmadison.com
user AlexisRouge

Be proud of who you are. Express your individuality, create a profile and tell us what makes you unique at: OURLIVESMADISON.COM

Cultural, Social, Service and Nightlife listings edited by Patrick Farabaugh



Madison Pride
July 20, Brittingham Park
 Pride heads back to basics. Look for a scaled-back event as the group rebuilds and prepares for its anniversary next year. Come celebrate community and visibility over a magic weekend that returns the idea of pride to its roots with an old-fashioned picnic in the park.
madisonpride.org



Melissa Etheridge
July 30, Overture Center
 Melissa Etheridge makes her return for *The Revival Tour 2008*. "I love to perform live, and I am on a new journey in my life," she says. "I'll be playing the favorites along with album cuts and songs from *The Awakening* to tell my story. I hope you enjoy it."
melissaetheridge.com



ACT 6: The Wisconsin AIDS Ride
August 7-10, Southern Wisconsin
 The 6th annual Wisconsin AIDS Ride covers 300 miles over four days and seeks to raise over \$275,000 for the AIDS Network. Trivia: the Ride is the nation's third largest HIV/AIDS ride, after California's LifeCycle and Minnesota's Red Ribbon Ride.
<http://actride.org>

ORGANIZATIONS

- A Representative Sampling
- AIDS Network**
 600 Williamson St., Madison (608) 252-6540
aidsnetwork.org
- Bowling Out Loud**
 dand1957@earthlink.net
- Dairyland Cowboys and Cowgirls**
 dcandc.org
- Fair Wisconsin**
 122 State St., Madison (608) 441-0143
fairwisconsin.org
- First Congregational Church**
 1609 University Ave., Madison (608) 233-9751
firstcongrmadison.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
- LGBT Business Alliance**
madisonbusinessalliance.com
- Madison Gay Hockey Association**
madisongayhockey.org
- Madison Minotaurs Gay Rugby**
madisonminotaursrfg.org
- New Harvest Foundation**
newharvestfoundation.org
- OutReach Community Center**
 600 Williamson St., Madison (608) 255-8582
outreachinc.com
- PFLAG - Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays**
 (608) 848-2333
pflag-madison.org
- Perfect Harmony Men's Chorus**
perfectharmonychorus.org
- Proud Theatre**
proudtheater.org
- Rural Dykes Association**
pswfarm@juno.com
- StageQ**
stageq.com
- UW - Madison LGBT Campus Center**
 800 Langdon St., Madison (608) 265-3344
wisc.edu/lgbt
- Women Across Wisconsin**
womenacrosswisconsin.org

35 Years Over the Rainbow: Outreach 16th Annual Awards Banquet
July 18, Monona Terrace, Madison U.S. Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin is the keynote for Outreach's annual fundraising event. Awards given recognize outstanding achievement on behalf of the LGBT communities by individuals and organizations. General admission tickets cost \$60 per person or \$110 per pair. Tickets can be purchased for \$30 for people with a limited income. A sliding scale is also available.
outreachinc.com

Maxwell Street Days
July 18-20, State Street, Madison Over 100 shops, boutiques, galleries and restaurants—many locally owned—offer bargains on clothing, jewelry, gifts, artwork, food and drink in this festive annual sidewalk sale.
maxwellstreetdays.org

Jazz at Five
August 6-September 3, 100 block of State Street, Madison
 A downtown tradition. The series provides exceptional free concerts in a stunning locale.
jazzat5.org

Taste of Madison
August 30-31, Capitol Square, Madison Join us for Taste of Madison 2008! Labor Day weekend—Saturday and Sunday, August 30 & 31—on Capitol Square.
madisonfestivals.com

HOT MESS: The best drag kings and burlesque in the Midwest
July 26, Majestic Theatre, Madison A one-night only engagement featuring some of the finest performers from Madison, Milwaukee and Chicago! With performances by the MadKings, Miss Tamale, Cherry Pop Burlesque, the Miltown Kings, plus drag and burlesque from Chicago. Show starts at 8:00 p.m. Tickets are \$10/person (18+).



The MadKings

Expand your reach and Get Seen. Have your business included in *Our Lives*. For rates and info, contact us at: OURLIVESMADISON.COM



PHOTO BY JESSICA HORN

Scenes from GSAFE's Celebration of Leadership on May 4, and Milwaukee PrideFest, June 6-8



The Indigo Girls at PrideFest on June 8



PHOTOS BY JENN NOTMAN

Natasha Bedingfield at PrideFest on June 7



A Room of One's Own Serving the LGBT community for over 30 years

A Room of One's Own Feminist Bookstore
 307 West Johnson St., Madison, WI 53703
 608/257-7888 room@chorus.net
www.roomofonesown.com

LIKE MOVIES?
 we do, too.

Specializing in foreign-language, documentary, anime, LGBT, local and independent films

Your business keeps us in business - Thank You! ★★★★★

Four Star Video Heaven
 315 N. Henry -Just off Johnson & State Street, downtown Madison
 (608) 255-1994 www.fourstarvideoheaven.com

MISSY HIGGINS
 ERIC HURT
MAJESTIC THEATRE
THURSDAY JULY 10 8:30PM

She & Him
MAJESTIC THEATRE
FRIDAY AUG 8 8PM

THE DANDY WARHOLS
 WITH SPECIAL GUESTS... **Darker My Love** & **UPSIDEDOWN**
MAJESTIC THEATRE
SEPT 10 8PM
 For show and ticket info visit TrueEndless.com

INDIEQUEER MADISON PRIDE
 All iQ PRIDE Events are 18+ and open to everyone: LGBTQ+XYZ
 For specific iQ party info visit www.indieQueer.com

THU JULY 17 HIGH NOON SALOON
PRIDE PREMIER PARTY
 Featuring a Drag Show Hosted by **GINGER DIVINE** with special guests: **The BATTLE ROYALE (mnpls)** & **TIZZY (nyc)**

FRI JULY 18 MAJESTIC THEATRE
IQ DISCOTECH
 madison's monthly indieQueer party w/ DIAMONDS & OCD Automatic
 MAJESTIC THEATRE

SAT JULY 19 CARDINAL BAR
IQ FOAM PARTY
 *The First Ever! Tickets ON SALE July 1st @ Cardinal Bar. Limited Capacity!

MON AUG 4 CARDINAL BAR
ATHENS BOYS CHOIR
 w/ ACTOR SLASH MODEL & iQ DJ TBD

After years in California, moving to Wisconsin left **Mike Meholic** in culture shock and unable to identify gay life in the Midwest. Then, his search led to a revelation.

I think I probably had an easier coming-out process than most people, although it wasn't a cake walk. I came out in a whole different place than I grew up in, and it was an open and diverse environment far away from family, friends and any ties to a past. After growing up in Michigan and going to college in Milwaukee, I went west to what, at first, felt like another planet—Planet L.A.

Going from the Midwest to L.A. was a bit of a culture shock, but after three months I came out, broke up with my fiancée and dropped out of law school—all in about a four-week period. I guess I was inspired by the carefree life of the West coast and the beach, and the fact that there were thousands of gay men and lesbians living out their lives as normally as straight people back home. You couldn't get more "other worldly" than that, and as you might have guessed, I got used to my new exciting city and life quickly.

After several years out there, I found myself moving back to the Midwest and to Madison for the first time. Needless to say, after all that time in L.A., and it being the only place I had ever lived as an "out" gay person, coming back to the Midwest was a whole other culture shock. Welcome to Planet Madison.

What was perfectly innocuous beach garb in L.A. was apparently some kind of gay calling card or "scarlet letter" here in Madison. So, I shouldn't be wearing shorts and a tank because it makes me look too gay? What is "too gay" anyway?

My first few years in Madison were spent hanging out with straight friends on the east side. I was content and thankful to have such a cool group of friends form so quickly, but as time passed I became increasingly anxious that there didn't seem to be much gay life or community in Madison. At least not one I was able to find. It wasn't that I needed or wanted gay life to be my sole focus—I went through that when I first came out. The first few years I was "out," my full time job was being gay. But by this time in my life, I was comfortable enough with myself to realize being gay was an aspect of, but by no means the "total" me. But it was still an important part of my life that I was feeling totally cut off from. And I felt it all the time.

The few gay guys that I did come into contact with via the bars or internet also were perplexing. Overall they didn't seem very comfortable with their sexuality—their homosexuality. There seemed to be an inner censor constantly monitoring their "gayness" with respect to how they could act, what they could wear, how they could dance and so on. I had never looked to my environment to dictate how "gay" I



could be. I just acted as my normal self in my daily life. Meeting these guys who seemed hyper-aware of how they looked and acted was strange, as was the concept of me thinking about mitigating my "gayness" so I would blend in more. Isn't that kind of like turning your back on a part of who you are? Why would anyone do that?

Last summer I was at the mall with a friend, and we ran into a friend of his. Since it was summer,

I was dressed in my standard beach uniform: flip flops, cut-off cargo shorts, a ribbed tank top and sun glasses. While they were talking, I took the opportunity to duck into a nearby store and check out some t-shirts. When my friend caught up to me, he said the guy he had been talking to thought that I was being "too obviously gay." I was surprised and asked why anyone would think that. He replied, "Because of what you are wearing." I started to laugh because I thought he was kidding—but he was serious. What was perfectly innocuous beach garb in L.A. was apparently some kind of gay calling card or "scarlet letter" here in Madison. So I shouldn't be wearing shorts and a tank because it makes me look too gay? What is "too gay" anyway? It wasn't like I was walking down State Street in a sequin bikini with a tiara on.

I had hit my lowest point of "woe is me" and "this place sucks." In my experience, when you hit rock bottom in an area of your life, you are free to see things for what they are, not what you want them to be or hope them to be. But rather, you see the naked truth. From this vantage point, I began to really look at what Madison was all about instead of trying to see it through some kind of gay prism as I had been.

I saw things like people in the supermarket striking up conversation with me and chatting me up to pass the time while we waited in line. This, at first, was alarming to me. You see, in L.A., everyone politely ignores each other whenever they are in line for anything rather than chatting. All of a sudden I had people actually speaking to me and expecting me to speak back. After a while though, I found that it made my day much more enjoyable and less draining. And I usually met really nice, genuine people who, regardless of how different from me they looked on the surface, always seemed to have more in common with me than not. This was a new experience, not just sharing space with un-named, unknown people, but actively communing with them in small, and sometimes not-so-small, ways. Somewhere inside I was finding and dusting off my Midwestern roots and putting them to good use again. They were both familiar and fresh all at the same time.

I started to notice other things, too. Like how I couldn't mow my lawn without a neighbor or two coming over to say hi. When it snowed and I was traveling, my neighbor would shovel my walk for me. When I got stuck outside my brother's place last winter, within two minutes two of his neighbors appeared out of nowhere with shovels and helped push me out. And people went out of the way to hold doors open for each other. I noticed that everywhere I went in

Madison people were friendly, courteous and when they said, "Have a nice day," I knew they meant it. As I took all these things in, I again wondered what planet I was on—but for a different reason than before. I still wasn't 100% sure, but I knew I kinda liked it.

Perhaps the biggest thing I realized about Madison was that LGBT and straight people seemed to be very integrated, but in a subtle way that I believe is very indicative of the Midwest. In this respect Madison seems to be pushing the envelope ahead of the curve. Sure, Madison has a couple of LGBT bars that are pretty much exclusively populated with LGBT people, but the other bars, restaurants and venues are always comfortably mixed. Whether it is the Weary Traveler, State Street, the Tornado Room or Concerts on the Square—I see all kinds of people just doing their thing and letting others do the same.

It seemed Madison has very comfortably settled into functioning independently of sexual orientation. With a "safe" environment for gay and lesbian people, I was surprised that there weren't more gatherings of gay men and lesbians in these or other venues. This further vexed me as to why I was having such a hard time finding LGBT communities. It wasn't quarantined to some gay ghetto as I had seen in bigger cities, but that would almost make it easier to find. Here I was, in a city that seemed ready and willing to support a diverse and a vibrant community—the foundation of tolerance, acceptance and an integrated community were already in place. So where was it? I thought back to the whole "gay censor" thing I had experienced here and wondered if the gay men and lesbians in Madison were the ones holding themselves back. The straight community certainly didn't seem to be.

Well, last summer I stumbled into one of the newest venues for LGBT people. I heard that Madison had a gay hockey league (who knew?), and they were looking for players for the 2007-2008 season. I was intrigued. I played hockey for years growing up, so I felt it would be a pretty safe thing to check out, with a lower risk of making myself look stupid. So I signed up and was pretty astonished at what I found.

That elusive Madison LGBT community—a big part of it was apparently playing hockey. About 100 people in fact. All ages, LGBT people, straight, students, working professionals—all walks of life and gay personas were represented in what, at times, can be a pretty rough sport. My first gay hockey season truly was a quintessential Midwest LGBT experience. The main focus wasn't on being gay or lesbian, but that was certainly an aspect of it. Yeah, most of us in the league fell somewhere in the LGBT spectrum, but the point of us getting together on the ice every Sunday night was to play hockey. And we did. And it was fun. And it was a safe and supportive environment where people who had never skated were learning, not only how to skate, but also how to play a pretty complex sport. The sense of community this fostered was both really amazing and overwhelming at times to me. For the first time in Madison, I had connected with what I had been missing the whole time I had been here. What I found was more real, more comforting and safer than any past LGBT communities I had encountered. I finally felt like I was getting Planet Madison.

As I look to the future here as a gay person, I sense a lot of potential and opportunity. After stumbling around for years trying to get my bearings and figure out what Madison life was all about, I feel good about what I have seen, learned and experienced. I have a hunch that I've just seen the tip of the iceberg so far. I personally would like to see the LGBT communities here have more of a presence and be more visible so someone else who moves to town can connect and feel the support sooner than I did. I feel that the greater Madison community stands poised and ready to support even more vibrant and active LGBT communities that transcend Madison's size. ■



Kittleson Real Estate Team, Inc.



DIRECT
608-662-9510

TOLL FREE
866-348-7604

E-MAIL
darrenk@kw.com
devery@kw.com

Your Real Estate Specialists

We are a dedicated, full-time **REALTOR** team with over 15 years experience helping families of all types find the right home. Call us today and let us show you why we stand above the rest

our lives
Featured Sept./Oct. '07



SPAWOOF

We pamper your pup from head to tail

Boarding • Day Care
Grooming • Massage Therapy
BARK-N-RIDE™
Drop Off/Pick-up Dane County Airport

MADISON'S PREMIER DOG SPA

608-663-9663(WOOF) • www.spawoof.net
2250 Pennsylvania Avenue • Madison, WI



Where the Good Dogs Go

Holding service to high standards, Bad Dog Frida adds color to canine care.

On a bright summer day on Madison's east side, while you sit outside enjoying a meal at Monty's or on your way to a show at the Barrymore, you might notice a bright little storefront tucked in next to the theater, with a friendly logo and the name Bad Dog Frida skipping over the entryway. It's not a big store, but, like its clientele both two- and four-legged, it has a huge heart.

It's a whimsical little business that seeks to provide "really cool things for good dogs and their people." The owners, Sue Hunter and Carmen Alcalde, began the business as an online venture and jumped at the opportunity to expand into a storefront space on Atwood Avenue. Sue has a background in social work and was born in the Atwood area, so starting a business there was a little like coming home.

Sue was born in the Atwood area, so starting a business there was a little like coming home.

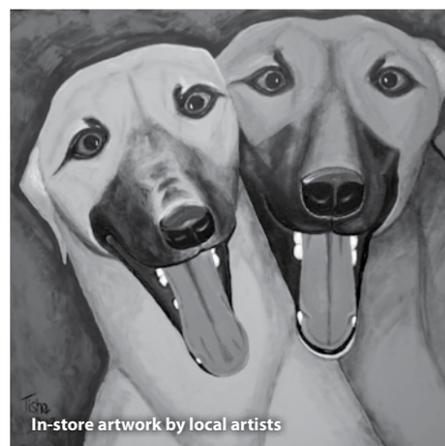
Carmen is a transplant from Seattle, where she worked for years at a humane society providing animal adoption counseling. The impetus for the store came from her, as she felt Madison lacked the unique dog stores she was accustomed to on the West Coast. Their complementary backgrounds make them ideal for quality service and knowledge for both dogs and their owners. They agree that they

have also "learned a lot from being dog owners ourselves," and love to talk to dog owners about the things they have learned from their pets, from simple stories to practical advice.

Bad Dog Frida has a little bit of everything a dog owner might need, from food and treats, collars, toys and beds for the canines, to t-shirts, art and books for the humans. A great deal of their stock is chosen with sustainability in mind—they even have very affordable, biodegradable tote bags to use instead of plastic, and they carry a number of "green" products. They have a lot of work by local artists, authors and suppliers, including several useful books on dog training by renowned local trainer Patricia McConnell, a rotating selection of dog-themed art by local artists, and "Bark Angels" bandanas ingeniously designed by a young girl from the neighborhood. Sue and Carmen keep up on all the latest advances in canine nutrition and health, and they work hard to ensure that all of the products they offer are of the highest quality. Fortunately, they've also found some suppliers who do this in fun and creative ways, including ice cream, cookies and cupcakes designed to taste great while still being healthy.

Most importantly, Bad Dog Frida is more than just a store; it's also a community space. They sponsor a different rescue group each quarter, highlighting the group on their website and donating a certain amount of their profit for the quarter to that group. Members of rescue groups come in and give talks about

OUR BUSINESSES



specific breeds or shelters and let the public interact with rescue dogs. Bad Dog Frida also has a monthly Coffee Hound Hour, a social for dogs to meet one another and let their owners mingle as well, and workshops on topics such as nutrition, acupuncture, health and behavior.

Sue and Carmen's passion for dogs is evident in the meticulous care they put into every aspect of their business, from the products they carry to the events they host. Sue says, "I love the store being a resource to the community, having a sense of community. People come in and tell us stories about their pets and keep us updated on how their animals are doing." Carmen laughs and interjects, "Yeah, we recognize the dogs who come in and know their names, but not always necessarily the names of their owners." Rest assured, though; if you stop by this cheery store (with or without your dog), you will be impressed. —Gretchen Treu

Gretchen Treu works at A Room Of One's Own Bookstore and is happy to chat about books with anybody who stops in.

what if your home made you **Happy?**



inspiring interiors

THE CENTURY HOUSE

Modern | Scandinavian Interiors

3029 university ave. madison 608.233.4488

www.centuryhouseinc.com

ARTISANAL CHEESES & PERFECT COMPANIONS FROM LOCAL PASTURES



VISIT OUR SUSTAINABLE SPACE FOR CAREFULLY SELECTED CHEESES, CHARCUTERIE & CONDIMENTS MADE BY LOCAL ARTISANS

fromag|nation

artisanal cheeses & perfect companions™

TWELVE SOUTH CARROLL, ON MADISON'S CAPITAL SQUARE • 608.255.2430 • FROMAGINATION.COM

Expand your reach and Get Seen. Have your business included in *Our Lives*. For rates and info, contact us at: OURLIVESMADISON.COM

TO SIT. TO SLEEP. TO DREAM.

On sale for a limited time...
American Upholstery
Comfort Sleepers.

Introducing the new Comfort Sleeper™,
engineered to provide more sleeping space in
a smaller sofa. Sleeping is a dream with
the Tiffany 24/7 system which provides excellent
support with no bars and no springs.

Experience the world's most comfortable sofa sleeper!



*Complimentary Professional
Design Service Available*

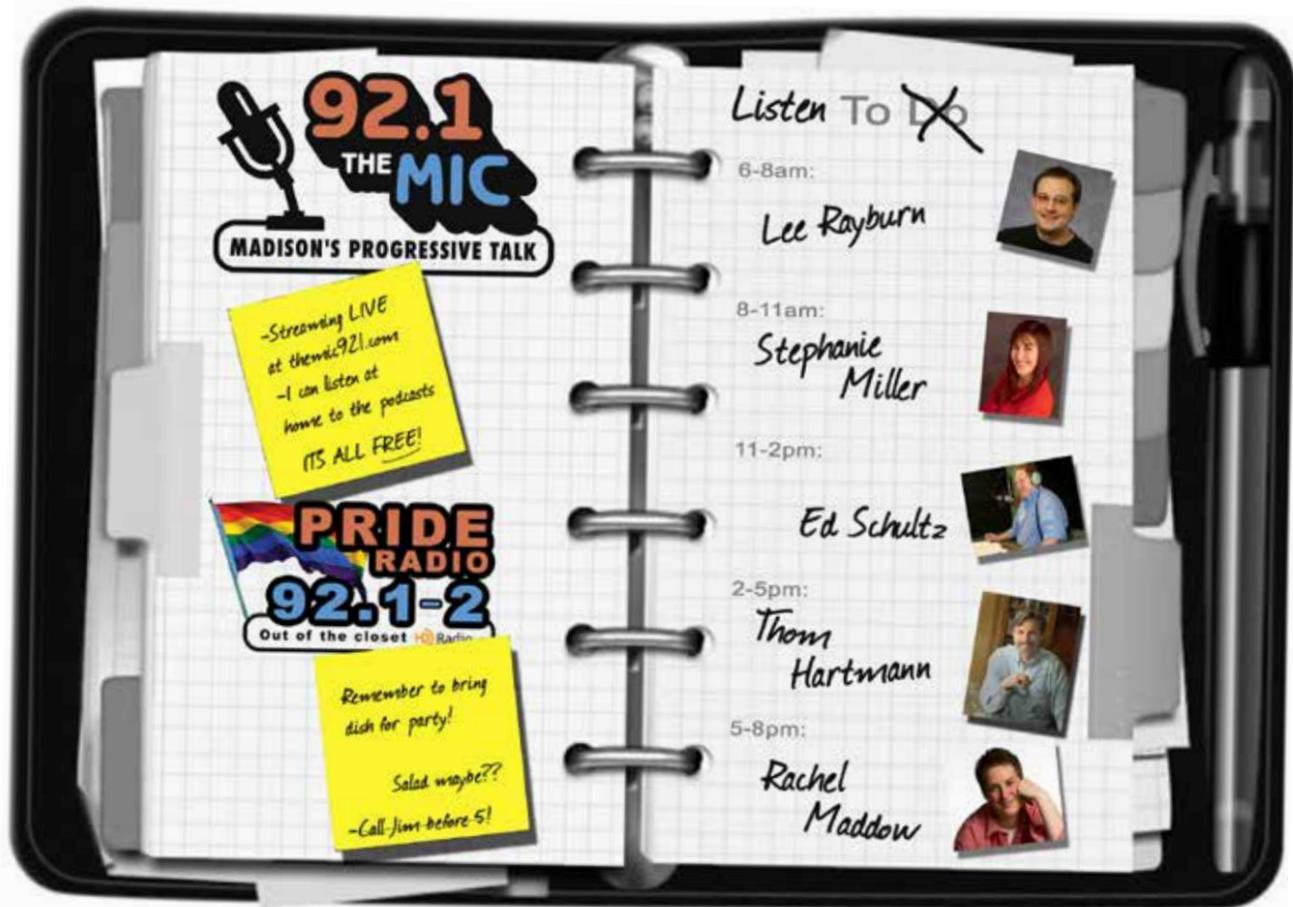
6641 Watts Road • 274.8199

Down the hill from Woodman's West
woodworksfurniturestore.com

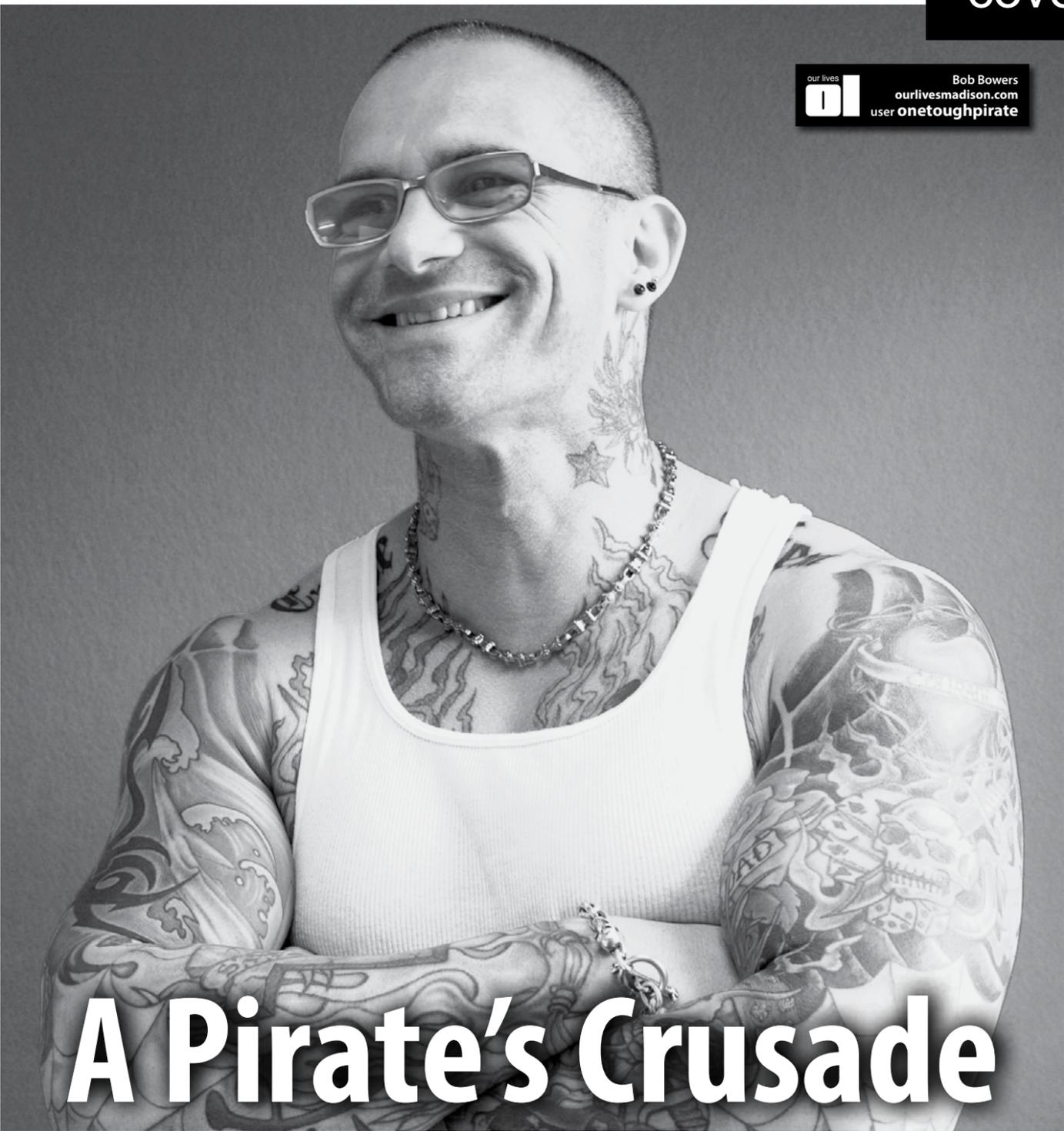
M,TH 10-8 • T,W,F 10-6 • SAT 10-5 • SUN 12-5



WOODWORKS
FURNITURE & DESIGN



our lives
 Bob Bowers
 ourlivesmadison.com
 user onetoughpirate



A Pirate's Crusade

At 19 years old, Bob Bowers became one of the first cases of HIV documented. Now, at 45, he looks back at whom he's become after living longer with the disease than without.

FIRST, SOME PERSPECTIVE. IMAGINE IT IS 1983. YOU ARE 19 YEARS OLD, living in southern California. Your idea of the basics isn't food, shelter and clothing but sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll. You don't have much in the way of family, but friends make up for that. You are unattached and hungry. You can go anywhere and do anything. In a word, you're free.

Then, you get sick. At first, no one knows why. You are told it is cancer or an autoimmune disease. It takes a couple of years and a newly developed test to determine your diagnosis: AIDS. What do you do? If you're Bob Bowers, your illness becomes your crusade.

Fast forward to 2008. Bob Bowers is a mainstay in Wisconsin's HIV/AIDS activist community. If you've been to an ACT Ride or an AIDS Network benefit, you cannot

Friday, July 18th
 DJ Tony Ritschard
 A Pride Review Show
 NO COVER CHARGE

Saturday, July 19th
 Boston DJ
 JOE BERMUDEZ
 in the Main Bar \$5 Cover
 XM Host and remix radio songs
 for Janet Jackson, Kelly Clarkson,
 Celine Dion, Bobby Brown and J-Lo

On the Patio
 DJ Tim W and
 the Miss Club 5 and
 Miss Planet Q Drag Review

Sunday, July 20th
 CUSTOMER
 APPRECIATION DAY
 FREE picnic style
 buffet 5pm -8pm
 Beer bash and Half price
 Drinks 4pm -10pm
 D'Jay Panda on the patio for a
 pride tea dance 6pm-10pm
 Miss Madison Josie Lynn's
 Act 6 Aids Ride
 Fundraiser Show 10pm

have missed him.

Bob's head is shaved, and his glasses are thick-rimmed. What he lacks in height, he makes up for in muscle (think tree trunk or Marine arms). And then there are the tattoos. Like Bob, they are vibrant and bold: waves and skulls, webs and flames, a bluebird, a phoenix, a heart with a banner reading "Courage"—one tat for every year he has been positive.

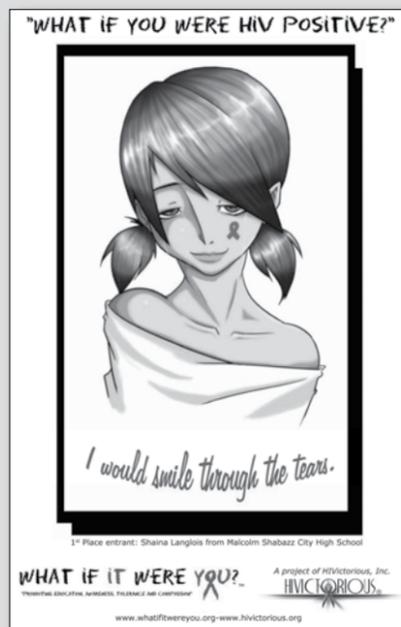
Bob—aka One Tough Pirate—looks like gym freak meets ultimate fighter meets beatnik. That's not too far off because Bob travels in all those circles—and more.

Bob has been living with AIDS for 25 years — a quarter century with a disease that owns his body and his life. Twenty-five years with a

The (ACT) Ride pushes everybody. It breaks down façades. There is nothing else that can mirror what it is like to live with HIV or how we should respond to it.

disease that has a stigma like no other. Twenty-five years with a disease that has no cure, only experimental drug after experimental drug. In those 25 years, Bob has made HIV/AIDS awareness his cause. And although not gay, he has also become an outspoken activist for gay causes.

Da Pirate on Da Web



• HIVICTORIOUS.ORG

Web site for the HIV/AIDS awareness non-profit

On the site: Bob Bowers' speaking schedule; information about Bob Bowers and founding of HIVictorious; photos of fundraisers, awards and other events; press clips; how to donate.

• WHATIFITWEREYOU.ORG

Web site for the poster contest "What If It Were You?"

On the site: Rules for the contest, winning posters, photos of winners, HIV/AIDS resources, Congresswoman Baldwin's answers to the question, "What if you were HIV positive?" and a video of Mayor Cieslewicz's answer.

• ONETOUGHPIRATE.COM

Web site for Bob Bowers' intellectual property.

On the site: the story behind his nickname; photos of Bob, his friends, his tats; videos; OTP merchandise; memory wall; Bob's web graphics and design.

• An easy way to help HIVictorious:

The next time you are searching the Web, go to **goodsearch.com**. Enter your search term and then type in HIVictorious in the, "Who do you Goodsearch For?" box. For each search, HIVictorious receives \$0.01.



Above: With camper from Camp Heartland 2006 in Malibu, California. Below: At closing skit at Camp Heartland in Willow River, MN 2005



After being diagnosed, Bob felt fear sink in. AIDS-related complex (or ARC, as it was often called then) causes severe fatigue, swollen glands, compromised immunity and a lot of unanswered questions. He was told he'd have maybe ten years to live. For Bob, this conjured up his mother's short life. When he was ten, Bob's mom died of breast cancer. She was only 35. Bob was certain that, like her, he would not live to see much more than 30. In his words, "I thought, 'I'm dead at 32. I'm fucking dead.'"

By the late 80s, Bob was receiving treatment for HIV/AIDS. The disease made him sick, and the drugs made him sick. He also began participating in the culture of the disease. He went to walkathons and dance-athons. He kept on being Bob: loud, uncompromising and passionate about life, if a little lost. He just did it as someone with AIDS.

Then in 1999, a friend convinced him to watch the Tanqueray California AIDS Ride. He resisted. In fact, he says, "I went only out of guilt." But it turned out to be something he never forgot. "Looking into the eyes of the riders when they came in ... it was life changing."

The next year, his wife, Shawn, whom he had married in 1990, cycled the 575 miles from San Francisco to Los Angeles as part of the Seventh California AIDS Ride, now called AIDS/LifeCycle. By 2002, Bob was enmeshed in the rides. Although he doesn't cycle — Bob happily admits he'd rather be on a Harley — he lives for the rides. He explains, "The Ride pushes everybody. It breaks down façades. There is nothing else that can mirror what it is like to live with HIV or how we should respond to it."

In 2004, after a divorce and a stint living in Kenosha, Bob moved to Madison. It didn't take long for him to get involved in ACT, the Wisconsin AIDS Ride. He volunteered to speak at Ride orientations; he crewed; he looked the riders in their eyes when they came in. Today, he is the check-in lady. Whether in shorts or a skirt, Bob is there to make sure all the riders come in — and to give them each a hug.

Before moving to Madison, Bob often spoke at high schools and fundraisers about HIV/AIDS awareness. Once in Madison, he founded HIVictorious, a nonprofit organization dedicated to creating HIV/AIDS awareness. But it's more than that. It is a career, a calling, a catalyst. Through HIVictorious, Bob lectures, gives interviews, and volunteers his time to other organizations, such as Camp Heartland in Willow River, MN. He encourages, educates and challenges his audiences. He wants people, especially young people, to know that sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) are serious business. In the way only Bob can, he holds up his experience as a warning.

Given the choice, Bob chooses Madison over anywhere else, hands down. He is amazed by the access he has to the media and to politicians. He says, "There's no way I could walk into the L.A. mayor's office and have a talk with him about HIV/AIDS."

And it's not just talk. Bob conceived of a contest where students created posters answering the question, "What if it were you?" (meaning, "What if you were HIV positive?"). Madison Mayor Dave Cieslewicz and Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin got involved. Both have given written answers to the question, and both have hosted the contest winners at their offices. Bob is proud of these connections. He says, "We've affected them as well. They have stepped outside of their comfort zones."

Bob says that starting HIVictorious and its various projects "wasn't business, it was personal. It's not work, but an extension of me." He likes what he's doing and will continue to come up with new campaigns, but he doesn't want to expand. He's content with his small volunteer staff and the small amount of monthly revenue from private donations. He explains, "I don't want more overhead. I want it to be grassroots and heartfelt. I don't want to lose myself. You start taking federal or state dollars, and your hands are tied."

Even after how far he's come, Bob continues to deal with fear. He takes about 15 pills each day, and on some days, such as the day of our interview, he still pukes. But he says, "Today I barf, and I take it in stride. I don't give up and think I'm done for the day. Instead, I think 'That's how today turned out.'" He credits the good doctors he has, the gay community, and the people closest to him for helping him put fear aside.

To be sure, Bob is driven. In all he does, he pushes himself. Why? That's just who Bob is. "If it wasn't AIDS, it'd be something else. Who knows? I might have gone to school. Or been a CEO. Or a Hell's Angel." But because of a shared needle or unprotected sex — he's not sure which ultimately caused him to contract HIV/AIDS — he is HIV positive. And so he fights the only way he knows how: continuously, inventively, and genuinely. Thinking ahead to turning 45 this May, he says, "Given the hand I've been dealt, I've played it pretty well." ■



Bowers in Iowa showing off his most recent tattoo

The Test

Thrown into a sobering reality, in his own words **Dustin Smith** tells what it was like when he learned he tested positive.

It was a day I won't forget.

I have always been a healthy child; very few illnesses to speak of and very few of the "unwanted visitors" that come along with being a sexually active gay man. I'm referring to HIV/AIDS, the worst of the unwanted visitors, the one that can kill your social life, your mental well-being and throw you into the fire without a moment's warning.

I spent several years as an advocate, spending time with those who have HIV and were in need of an ear to listen or educating those who knew little to nothing about it. I have been a safe player, using protection when necessary.

I moved into the area about two months ago and routinely got an HIV test. I went into AIDS Network and told the volunteer I was there for their free testing. She called one of the testing guys up, and I went back to the room for the test.

We started talking about the test, and I mentioned I knew it took 20 minutes. We talked a little about gay Madison as I have been looking for social outings in the area. It was a fun talk and in no time the 20 minutes were up. The entire time the test was facing away from us, then he flipped it around and said, "It's reactive." I was in a complete state of shock. My response was, "Are you kidding?"

He said no.

I looked as white as a ghost and was thinking, "Oh my god, what am I supposed to do now?" Everything I knew from years of prevention and advocating caused my mind to go blank. I was then told that a city nurse had to draw blood for the second test to make sure that the first was correct.

While waiting, my mind flashed to a picture of my partner, family and friends and past conversations we had about this, and some of the worst comments I got from them. I was so upset, but I couldn't cry. It was a dead silent scream in my head.

When I realized about five minutes had passed, I told the testing person I needed to step out and go to my partner who was next door to let him know. He asked me if I was ok going by myself. I said, "Yep, I'll be back in a few. Come get me when the nurse gets here." I stepped outside and for a moment, and I stopped breathing. When I caught my breath, I walked over to my partner. He instinctively asked if something was wrong. I responded by saying, "I need to talk to you outside."

I was still stone-faced and pale when we got outside. I said exactly what had transpired moments before. As soon as I told him it came back positive, I let out the tears that wouldn't come out in the office. I told him that I had to run back to the Network for the nurse. I got in there and they had four people telling me not to jump to conclusions, that we wouldn't know for sure for a week.

That week passed so slowly. I returned, and the test had come back positive. I completely blanked again as the director of life services came in and asked me if I had questions. She told me the services they offered for positive clients. She talked for a few minutes, which seemed like hours in my mind and then said, "A lot of people don't remember this information, so we have it in print." I still have it in my night stand.

I have many times since that day had quite a few interesting conversations with my partner and about his supportive efforts in this struggle. Which makes the days easier, but then ugliness rears its head and people who I thought were friends shut me out, make me cry and disown me because of something inside me that has nothing to do with who I am as a person.

I got online and was bombarded with questions asking how I got it. Most assumed I barebacked. A few even suggested I was a bug chaser—one of those people who go after the disease. It made me furious. I wanted to reach through the computer and choke the idiot saying it. I logged off feeling a bit angered and annoyed. Just because I am 22 and HIV-positive they think it was something I did to provoke heartache and pain into my life. My infection was not from barebacking or cheating. To my knowledge it was from some date I had; even with protection the infection occurred.

My message to anyone out there who thinks like that is this: Put yourself in my shoes, and even if you try, you will have no understanding of how I feel.

It's like standing on top of a cliff... some days you feel like you're falling... others, you're on top of the world. I still don't know a lot about what's going on inside me with this disease, but soon enough I will find out more and know where this will lead me.

My parting thought is this: Be nice to someone you don't know, as you don't know their story. You don't know how close to the edge of falling off they are. ■



our lives | Dustin Smith | ourlivesmadison.com | user BoyPoz



New Executive Director Karen Dotson offers a comprehensive look at the emerging needs in HIV/AIDS prevention and care, and how the AIDS Network is responding to that demand.

The Status of HIV

AS THE NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, I am thrilled to have the opportunity to work at AIDS Network and devote my energy, skills and knowledge to Wisconsin's HIV/AIDS community. I am proud to lead the agency and optimistic about what we can achieve for people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS.

I have more than 25 years of senior-level managerial experience and consulting in the public health and human services field, including over ten years of working in HIV/AIDS and related areas. I have chaired and participated in various board of director committees for local community health centers and served on numerous grant review panels as chairperson and reviewer, for federal and state government programs. In addition, I have taught over seven years as an adjunct college professor for graduate and undergraduate students in areas of organizational transformation, cultural competency and program budgeting.

One of the many things I have learned through the years is the importance of building relationships in the community to achieve common goals. With this knowledge, I am happy to put my experience to work on behalf of AIDS Network's important mission.

Our board and staff are committed to our mission. We provide comprehensive HIV/AIDS services including prevention, case management support, and legal services in an effort to enhance the well-being and quality of life for people affected by and living with HIV/AIDS and related illnesses. The challenges we must confront together are many: apathy, ignorance, stigma, poverty, homelessness, mental illness and AODA issues, access to health care, public benefits and social support.

The Case Management team serves around 500 people, including almost 400 living with HIV on an ongoing basis. From the initial referral or contact, to medical care, transportation vouchers, and daily support for clients with significant mental health challenges, the services AIDS Network provides are as diverse as our clients. To keep up with growing needs, our case managers continually improve the services we offer.

Stable housing continues to be a major challenge for many of our clients. AIDS Network case managers consider client housing as one of the top priorities. To meet this chronic need, case managers work closely with clients to help them obtain and secure housing. AIDS Network also collaborates with a network of local agencies that provide housing assistance.

Emergency Shelter is a frequent need. Thanks to funding support from grantors such as the Rotary Foundation, case managers are sometimes able to provide vouchers for a limited number of nights in a motel. This service enables homeless clients in fragile health to avoid overcrowded shelters and gives them the stability to secure stable housing.

Navigating health and disability benefits is one of the most complicated and challenging tasks our clients face. The variety of programs available might include employer-sponsored insurance, medical assistance, social security benefits and Wisconsin's Health Insurance Risk Sharing Plan. Each client's unique employment and health history add to the complexity of benefits.

To better assist clients with the myriad of benefit issues, a Benefits Specialist position has recently been added to the case management team

to focus on public benefits counseling, including Medicaid, Medicare, and Social Security and other public and private benefit programs. This specialist position is crucial in helping clients make the best possible choices about employment, health insurance and disability benefits.

AIDS Network strives to provide services that reach beyond the practical needs. We also address the social and emotional concerns that affect people living with HIV.

Support groups are essential in helping clients looking for community to live well with HIV. Two new groups were launched in 2007 serving the Latino and women of color HIV communities. These groups provide social and emotional support, HIV education, fun activities like movie and game nights, and open conversation. A weekly harm-reduction-based relapse prevention support group also meets at AIDS Network.

For clients newly diagnosed with HIV, trained peer supporters are available to give one-on-one emotional support and information. Peer supporters are volunteers living with HIV who provide a voice of experience and hope. Two new supporters were trained last fall and more supporters will likely be added this year.

When counseling is the most appropriate way to manage the burdens of living with HIV, case managers refer clients to experienced mental health providers and provide funding for several therapy sessions. Thanks to Ryan White funding distributed by the Wisconsin AIDS/HIV Program, this benefit has been expanded to assist not only uninsured clients, but also clients unable to access mental health services due to unaffordable co-pays and deductibles.

Case management and all other services provided by AIDS Network are provided to our clients free of charge.

One constant thing since the epidemic began in 1981 is the knowledge of how the virus is transmitted. Early on, officials were able to conclude that the majority of cases were the result of unprotected sexual activity and the sharing of intravenous needles. Today, unprotected sexual activity and the sharing of needles account for 90% of all AIDS Network cases. HIV testing, needle exchange and educational outreach are critical services we provide to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS in our community.

AIDS Network utilizes two methods for HIV testing. One is Orasure, an oral test where an individual has a testing paddle placed in their mouth for approximately 3 to 4 minutes with results available in two weeks. The second is rapid testing, where a small amount of blood is collected from the tip of the finger with test results available in 15 minutes. All testing is done without charge and the individual can choose between anonymous and confidential testing options.

We conducted 809 tests in 2007, 515 of those were by the rapid testing method. Of those, 221 were individuals having an HIV test for the first time. Each year we educate about 500 people about the risk of HIV/AIDS in alcohol and other drug addiction (AODA) treatment centers within our 13 county service area. These individuals are provided with information about HIV and other sexually transmitted infections, offered HIV counseling and testing services. Another high risk group we specifically target is men having sex with men (MSM). We provided education and outreach to almost 3,000 individuals in this category in 2007.

Two new prevention support groups started this year are Hermanos Latino—a group for gay and bisexual Latino men, and Same Gender

Loving/Liking for gay and bisexual African American men. In addition to our Poz Lite group for HIV gay or bisexual men, these groups help participants cope with day to day challenges.

Needle exchange is another major and important component of our prevention program, helping halt the spread of HIV and Hepatitis. Last year we had 2,643 total contacts for needle exchange and took in 70,000 used syringes and distributed 75,000 clean syringes, protecting thousands of individuals, partners and families.

Starting in June, AIDS Network's prevention department begins providing a new service. Hepatitis C testing will be available at our agency thanks to a collaborative agreement with the Madison/Dane County Public Health Department.

Prevention staff members received phlebotomy training at Madison Area Technical College (MATC) through a joint effort involving the Wisconsin State HIV/AIDS Program, MATC and AIDS Network. This training allows an enhanced, comprehensive approach to our needle exchange services. We will provide in addition to clean syringes and HIV

testing, Hepatitis C testing all at one central location, a location that intravenous drug users know they can trust.

We are very excited to be able to offer Hepatitis C testing at AIDS Network. By offering Hepatitis testing we will provide a much needed service to individuals who may not otherwise be tested due to lack of insurance or trust of a traditional medical setting. This is something our consumers have been requesting. The prevalence of Hepatitis C Virus may be as high as 30% among people living with HIV/AIDS.

The last couple of months I have had the opportunity to meet with various AIDS Network partners, community leaders and public health and elected officials. These meetings are integral as we share common goals including, fighting HIV/AIDS, exploring funding opportunities to better serve our clients, and assessing how we can work together to improve services. Community relationships help gauge current services and evaluate our potential to develop and grow to better serve our consumers.

Like most nonprofits, AIDS Networks depends on the generosity and financial support from numerous individuals, organizations and corporations. As government funding and private grants decline and become more restrictive, fundraising events are increasingly more important as a source of revenue. Our oldest event (started in 1992), Red Ribbon Affair, took place in early April at the Monona Terrace. This annual gala dinner and silent auction attracted 449 attendees this year, the largest Red Ribbon Affair ever. Our biggest fundraiser is the ACT Wisconsin AIDS Ride coming up August 7 – 10. Over 160 riders have already registered to participate in ACT 6. To date, this four-day, 300-mile bike tour through South Central Wisconsin has contributed over \$1.3 million for agency services. More information about AIDS Network events and how to support our work is available at aidsnetwork.org.

As we move forward, more networking and collaboration are needed for the 13 counties we serve. Building new and enhancing ongoing relationships will enable AIDS Network to increase opportunities for the people we serve throughout our region. This can be accomplished as long as we continue to work together and strategically develop a plan to provide excellent programs and services for the people of Wisconsin. ■

HIV/AIDS at a Glance

- AIDS Network distributed over **150,000** condoms in 2007.
- In South Central Wisconsin there were **88** new cases of HIV reported in 2007—a **22% increase**.
- There are **1,175 people** known to be living with HIV in South Central Wisconsin.
- An estimated **one million people** are currently living with HIV in the U.S., with approximately **40,000** new infections occurring each year.
- **75%** percent of the new infections in women are heterosexually transmitted.
- Half of all new infections in the U.S. occur in people **25 years of age or younger**.
- Prevalence of the Hepatitis C Virus may be as high as **30%** among people living with HIV/AIDS.

We conducted 809 tests in 2007. Of those, 221 were individuals having an HIV test for the first time.

Getting in too deep?



Sue Gill, PhD
Licensed Psychologist

Proud member of the LGBT community

608-250-2492 • www.dr.suegill.com
6314 Odana Rd, Ste E, Madison, WI 53719



Archie and Susan are out looking for your next new home
Direct: 608-443-2532 | Office: 608-221-4000
Mobile: 608-206-1440 | Fax: 608-221-4031

soshman@starkhomes.com
www.putdownnewroots.com

In Times of Grief

Are there manageable ways to make it through losing someone close?
After our recent losses, Dale Decker offers methods to help cope.

Our community has lost two beloved members in the past few months. Ed Grunewald, owner of Club 5, died from pancreatic cancer in April. Felicia Melton-Smyth, prominent AIDS activist, was murdered during a robbery while vacationing in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, in May. Even if you didn't know them, chances are you're helping friends get through their pain and shock. Since many of us are struggling to cope with these events, I thought a discussion about grieving might help us support each other. I have personally witnessed the immediate and strong response in our



Many people have the notion that grief should only last a few weeks. The loss of someone dear to you can take years to process completely.



community to help and heal those affected by the recent tragedies. We are all too familiar with grief, considering our losses to illness and violence over the decades. I hope that these humble words can be of assistance to a community already expert in coping with death.

The most important thing to remember is that people move in and out of several different states as they grieve. There are no rules for grieving, but there are some

similarities that most of us experience. Often, the first state is denial or shock, which leaves us feeling blank and disoriented. As our intellect begins to process the reality, shock gives way to pain as the situation slowly reaches our emotional centers. Pain is interspersed with fond remembrances about the loved one or a return to normal routine for a period of time. After time, the unbearable feelings decrease, and the sadness is placed in context with the rest of our lives. Eventually, our pain arises only when we are reminded of the loss.

The most important piece of advice to remember is that there no set time limit for grieving. Many people have the notion that grief should only last a few weeks. The loss of someone dear to you can take years to process completely. Do not rush yourself. Conversely, some people feel guilty that they are not more upset by the death of their loved one and feel they are betraying them if they return to regular activities "too soon." If a loss is expected, such as with a long illness, much of the grieving process may have occurred before the death itself. The caregiver in this situation experiences many smaller losses and periods of grief before death. Consequently, much of their pain has already been emotionally processed. Move forward at your own pace.

Grieving is a normal psychological process, not an illness. Friends and family are the best people to help with bereavement. However, grief can become entwined with depression, a problem that can be treated. How do you tell the difference? Well, even professionals can have trouble telling them apart but here are some broad outlines to guide you. If you notice the signs of depression, contact a health professional for help.

How to Tell the Difference

Grief: Sadness, pain, anger
Depression: Intense guilt or worthlessness

Grief: Passive thoughts of wanting to die and join the loved one.
Depression: Active plans to harm self

Grief: Periods of being unable to feel pleasure or experience happiness
Depression: Consistent lack of capacity to feel pleasure

Grief: Exhaustion and fatigue
Depression: Moving, speaking and even blinking at a slow rate

Grief: Needs help organizing tasks and support to continue
Depression: Unable to finish even simple tasks

Grief: Experiences visions of the deceased person or hears their voice
Depression: Has frightening hallucinations or behaves erratically

The vast majority of people will never become depressed from grief, and social support is the best way to prevent problems. Everyone wants to help, but people feel awkward around grieving people. To some extent, this is to be expected. Thankfully, most of us don't have to deal with grief on a daily basis and consequently lack practice in grieving or supporting others through the process. Everyone needs different things though, so I'll leave you with some general ideas to start with if someone near you needs support.

How to Help a Grieving Person

- **DO** allow expression of emotions through listening.
- **DO** offer specific, practical assistance such as house cleaning or meal preparation.
- **DO** show your own emotions if you share in the loss.
- **DO** be available for important dates that could trigger another round of grieving such as birthdays, anniversaries.
- **DON'T** avoid bringing up the loss.
- **DON'T** attempt to justify the loss by saying, "It was for the best."
- **DON'T** offer passive assistance such as "Call me if you need anything."
- **DON'T** urge the person to "move on" or "get over it."
- **DON'T** pry for details or insist on talking.

Dale Decker has been a psychotherapist and substance abuse counselor in our community since 1994. He can be found online at www.daledecker.net



Mark Gladue
239-5593



Jane Schmidt
217-1427



Brandon Grosse
577-9860

Moving You Forward from Middleton to Monona & The Isthmus In Between

www.ForwardRealtyGroup.com
Downtown Office: 119 W Washington Ave. • Madison, WI • 53703

"We are a Family Business"

- Comprehensive reproductive services and treatments
- Registered assisted reproductive technology center
- Board-Certified Physicians

Madison Special Pricing for IUI's:
If you're not pregnant after two cycles, the third is complimentary*!

www.wemakefamilies.com • 236 Corporate Drive • Madison, WI 53714 • 877-373-7552
*Medications not included, cash paying patients only, with no insurance benefits

Proudly serving your legal representation and advice needs since 1995.



MEMBER:
The Business Alliance (Greater Madison's LGBT Chamber of Commerce) & US Referral Network

Wills & Partnership Planning
Traffic and Criminal
Civil Litigation
Special Education
Landlord-Tenant
Estates and Probate
Construction Liens
Corporations and LLC's
Real Estate Transactions
Small Business

(608) 288-7859
smickels2@mailbag.com

2817 Fish Hatchery Road • Madison, WI • 53713
P.O. Box 259125 • Madison, WI • 53725-9125

fair wisconsin salutes the recipients of the first annual

FAIR WISCONSIN LEADERSHIP AWARDS

Tamara Packard
Michael Childers
Tony Sheehan
Tim O'Brien
Dan Ross
F. Mike Fitzpatrick
Walt Jackson
Patrick Prudlow
Norah Cashin
Juliet Brodie

still fighting for a
fair wisconsin

www.fairwisconsin.org

quality of life

OUR RIGHTS

An Indecent Disclosure

What keeps your HIV status and other personal information safe from the public?
Tamara Packard outlines a statute in place that protects your privacy.

In these days of blogging, YouTube and cell phone plans designed so you can talk to anyone and everyone, at all times and for unlimited minutes, it can be hard to remember that some people prefer to keep some things private. In these days of the Patriot Act, Homeland Security and the diminishing rights of citizens to remain free of government scrutiny, it can be hard to believe that we still have laws that protect our privacy. But back in the mid-1980's, when our elected officials began paying attention to HIV/AIDS as a real problem, and the victimization and stigmatization of people with AIDS was rampant, Wisconsin enacted a number of laws to protect against the misuse of a person's HIV information.

For instance, Wisconsin employers are prohibited from requiring employees to take an HIV test or disclose their HIV status. Healthcare providers who intentionally and inappropriately disclose the results of a patient's HIV test results can be severely punished by the licensing agency. And while a person has the right to disclose his or her own HIV test results to anyone they wish, no one else, without that person's express permission, may share that information with anyone else except in very limited circumstances. Disclosure of another's HIV test results without their permission, depending on the circumstances, is punishable as a misdemeanor, a felony or with a civil forfeiture (i.e., a fine).

Unfortunately, the laws protecting against disclosure of HIV test results have very limited usefulness, as courts have read those laws very narrowly to find that they do not forbid disclosure of another person's HIV status. Rather, they forbid only disclosure of the information obtained through authorized access to the written record—the literal results.

Wisconsin does, however, have a statute which guarantees all of us privacy, not only around our medical information that we may reasonably wish to keep private, such as HIV status, but also all other matters concerning our private lives that most people would find offensive if disclosed to the public. That is, the statute protects against public disclosure of private facts. A person whose right-to-privacy has been violated in this



The court did not allow him to pursue his case under the HIV test results law, but did allow the privacy claim to go forward.



way can sue the violator for the harm done, both emotional and financial, by the disclosure and can seek a court order directing the violator to stop any ongoing or further disclosures. If the victim wins the lawsuit, a court can order the violator to pay the victim's reasonable attorney fees.

One of the earliest court decisions interpreting the privacy statute was brought in the late 1980's by an HIV positive prisoner in the Columbia County Jail who suffered with several symptoms of HIV infection. After being hospitalized during his jail stay, he became aware that his HIV status was general knowledge among jail staff and inmates, and suspected that some jailers had learned of his status by looking at his private records and then shared the information with others. He brought a lawsuit under the law governing confidentiality of HIV test results, as well as the more general privacy statute. The court did not allow him to pursue his case under the HIV test results law, but did allow the privacy claim to go forward.

This inmate's case is important in the development of the law of privacy in Wisconsin because it established that one's privacy can be violated by the transmission of private

information to a relatively small group of people, in his case, the employees and inmates in a jail. It is not necessary for the newspapers or TV news to publish one's private information for that information to be made "public." This case is also important because the court did not allow the jail officials to escape liability for their behavior by claiming that they had a "need to know" the inmate's HIV status. The court rejected that theory and also noted that even if that were true, there was no good reason for sharing the information with non-medical staff and other inmates.

While there can be no doubt that life for people with HIV/AIDS has become better, easier and longer, there should also be no doubt that plenty of stigma, prejudice and fear remain. As I often tell my clients, it is better to have a job and your emotional health than a claim. When it comes to your personal information, whether it be your HIV status, the illegal things you did in college, or your financial health, be careful about whom you share it with. ■

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

Make your dream home a reality.

our lives
Featured May/June 08



Mike Fumelle
4402 East Towne Blvd.
(608) 259-4263
michael.fumelle@associatedbank.com

To find out how you can get into the home of your dreams, call Mike today.

- Buyers Edge® – first time homebuyers program
- Conventional, FHA and VA financing
- New construction loans
- Refinancing
- Jumbo financing

Associated Bank provides statewide support to the community.



Subject to credit approval. Equal Housing Lender.
Member FDIC and Associated Banc-Corp (6/08) 3837

associatedbank.com



Sheraton
Madison
HOTEL

Belong

Memories are invited. At the Sheraton Madison Hotel. Our guestrooms have the celebrated "ahhhh" of the Sweet Sleeper™ Bed. Offering free transportation to make getting around just a little easier. For relaxing at last, enjoy the indoor pool and whirlpool. Conveniently located with complimentary surface parking. Because you don't just stay here. You belong.

Book today at sheraton.com/madison or for more information call 608-251-2300.

STARWOOD PREFERRED GUEST®

© 2007 Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc. All rights reserved. Sheraton is the registered trademark of Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc., or its affiliates.

Have *Our Lives* mailed directly to you. **Subscribe at: OURLIVESMADISON.COM**

Family is why
WE DO IT ALL.

We all feel the same commitment to care for our families. As your good neighbor agent, I can help you meet your insurance needs. Call me today.



Jim Hartman Ins Agcy Inc

Jim Hartman, Agent
5706 Highway 51, McFarland, WI 53558
Bus: 608-838-4171 Res: 608-838-5202
jim@jimhartman.com



LIKE A GOOD NEIGHBOR,
STATE FARM IS THERE.™

State Farm Insurance Companies • Home Offices: Bloomington, Illinois
P02640 statefarm.com® 11/04

quality of life

OUR MONEY

The Investment Equation

What are the initial steps to creating a financial future? Where do you start?
Jaime Zimmerman shows how to take stock of your current finances.

I'm often asked, "How do I start investing?" Since we all have unique circumstances, the answer isn't always straightforward. There are, however, some basic rules and strategies for building wealth.

If you want to be prepared for the future you need to know where you stand today. Sit down and push a pencil through the process outlined below. Once you've done that, you'll have a much better vantage point from which to start.

Think of your household as a small business and prepare your **financial statements**. Make a game of it and you just might enjoy it. First, what is your income? Break it down to include all of your monthly income by source: your salary, rental income, bonuses, social security and others. Detail each month of the year and then total the twelve months to calculate your **annual income**. (Companies call this **annual revenue**.)

Then, compile a list of all of your expenses. Start with your mortgage or rent, property taxes and life insurance premiums. Do you have tuition payments or child-care expenses? Include household expenses such as your homeowner's insurance, utilities and transportation costs (including car payments, insurance, gas and predictable maintenance). Calculate what you spend on groceries, entertainment and dry cleaning. Don't forget vacations or Scooter's pet supplies. Remember to list credit card payments, charitable contributions and other expenses.

Total your monthly expenses to determine **annual expenses**. Then subtract your annual expenses from your **annual income**. This is your **personal income statement**, which is like the income statement of a business. We'll assume you've calculated a positive number. This is the amount available to invest or save; a business would consider a positive number its **profit**.

Next, compile a **personal balance sheet**. List all your **assets**: your home's current value, savings accounts, checking accounts and any stocks or mutual funds that you own. Add certificates of deposit and bonds, the Blue Book value of your car(s) and the value of any retirement accounts: 401k (403B), IRAs, Roth IRAs and Simple or SEP plans. Include your valuables and vacation or rental property. When your list of assets is complete, calculate the total value.

Finally, list your **liabilities** or what you owe: the balance on your mortgage, student and



Once you have a handle on where you stand, you'll be better equipped to start saving, investing and building personal wealth.



home-equity loans, credit-card balances, car loans and medical expenses. Include any personal debts or obligations. Total your liabilities and subtract the value from the value of your assets. This is your "**total net worth**," what a business would call **shareholders' equity**.

If you're the techie type, you can easily find guides and forms to help determine your cash flow and net worth on websites like *Yahoo Finance* and *MSN Money*. If you're really crazy, like me, set up a spread sheet and keep track of your inflows and outflows on a monthly basis. It's surprising how much this recordkeeping helps you plan and it's relatively easy. You'll get a better handle on upcoming expenses and whether you can afford that new flat-screen TV now or in another month or two.

Once you have a handle on where you stand, you'll be better equipped to start saving, investing and building your personal wealth. You'll also have a better sense of how and when money is coming in and going out—your personal **cash flow**. That's what everyone should know *before* investing. ■

Jaime Zimmerman is a Vice President, Senior Investment Consultant, at the Madison office of Robert W. Baird & Co., member SIPC. For more information, visit www.jzimmermanfinancialadvisor.com

Have *Our Lives* mailed directly to you. **Subscribe at: OURLIVESMADISON.COM**

Do you need help with the Macs in your business?



Joe Rhodes Consulting
608.332.7066
www.joerhodes.com

Making Macs and PCs Work for Your Business

The Choice Is Yours...

WOOF'S

NOW OPEN!

Sundays Noon-Midnight
Mon-Tue 4:00-Midnight
Wed-Thu 4:00-2:00
Fri-Sat 4:00-Close

MEN • WOMEN • POOL • DARTS
FUN • SPORTS • HUNKS • HOTTIES
LEAGUE PLAY • SPORTS FANS • BABES
COMMUNITY • BEARS • DAILY SPECIALS

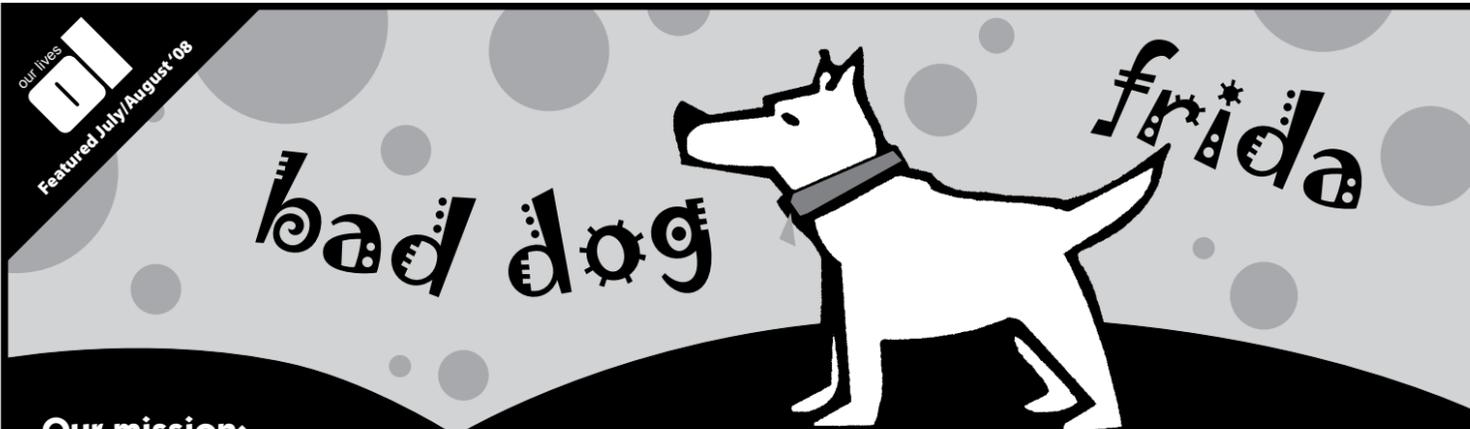
114 King Street
www.woofsmadison.com



It's Your Money.
It's Your Time.

Get the Most Out of Both.

Bonnie Raimy
Personal Shopping
for Men and Women, LLC
bonnieraimy.com
608-203-5343



Our mission:

To honor dogs by offering quality products that support canine health and well being and strengthen the human-canine bond.
To give visibility to artists and their creations.
To support and promote companion animal rescue organizations.

Please visit our store and bring your 4-legged friends, too.

See website for monthly events

healthy food & treats, unique collars, toys, beds, t-shirts, baseball hats, books, cards and artwork.

2094
Atwood Avenue
Madison
Parking available behind building
608.442.6868
www.baddogfrida.com

our lives
Featured July/August '08



Monty's Meatloaf of the Gods

Monty's Blue Plate Diner
2089 Atwood Ave., Madison
foodfightinc.com (608) 244-8505

Blue Plate Specials

Preserving the great diner tradition while offering a variety of healthier options, Monty's Blue Plate Diner knows how to liven up the classics.

MONTY'S BLUE PLATE DINER HAS FOUND A WAY TO KEEP the great diner tradition alive while incorporating healthier options and an adventuresome palate for today's consumer.

The eclectic menu offers all the classics: hearty breakfasts, juicy burgers, waffle-cut fries and hand-dipped malts. But alongside this slice of Americana you'll find some astonishing recreations of classic dishes that can have you walking out the door not only satisfied, but just a bit smug about your dining decisions.

In true diner-style, breakfast is offered all day. The time-honored Corned Beef Hash is represented in all its glory as well as a Vegetarian Hash, which incorporates the soy-based tempeh with red peppers and potatoes. Both hashes are served alongside eggs, served however you like, or may be substituted with a flavorful, cumin-scented tofu scramble.

Sandwiches include the GBLT (pun intended): a fun twist on the Bacon Lettuce and Tomato sandwich, with guacamole added to the other acronymic ingredients, enhanced by cumin-chipotle mayo and jalapeño cheddar toast. Its vegetarian equivalent, the Heathen Vegan Shoplifter's Delight sandwich, marries Portobellos and tempeh in a savory duo, served on a crusty sourdough baguette.

But can Monty's Meatless Loaf of the Gods really hold its own against their delectable Meatloaf of the Gods? Surprisingly so! Made from onions, carrots, mushrooms, cheddar and spices, served under a ginger cashew "gravy," this vegetarian version is perfectly textured, savory and slightly sweet.

Finish your meal with a selection from a bakery case of pies and cakes that would do Grandma proud. Once again, options range from the traditional to the nouveau. The Hummingbird cake is a delightful introduction to the traditional Southern recipe, and the carrot cake and strawberry-rhubarb pie are both among the best in Madison. Or, go avant-garde with the Fat Elvis cake: reminiscent of banana bread, with peanut-butter filling and topped by decadent fudge. Of course, any of these options can be served a la mode, with locally-made ice cream in traditional or soy flavors.

Whatever you choose, it's a fitting ending to Monty's marriage of the old and the new... a taste of tradition with a delicious new spin.

—Amy VanKauwenbergh

EATING WELL

Central

Amy's Cafe
414 W. Gilman St., 255-8172
American \$
www.amyscafe.com

Angelic
322 W. Johnson St., 257-2707
American, Pizza \$
angelicbrewing.com

Bab's French Quarter Kitchen
1353 Williamson St.,
251-1222
French, Creole \$

Bandung Restaurant
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 \$
thebrassingmadison.com

Brocach Irish Pub
7 W. Main St., 255-2015
Irish \$\$
brocach.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 Montmartre
127 E. Mifflin St., 255-5900
French, Tapas \$
themomo.com

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

Crave Restaurant
201 W. Gorham, 268-2728
Seafood, Burgers \$\$\$
cravemadison.com

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
130 S. Pinckney St., 257-8325
Steak, American \$\$\$
johnnydelmonicos.com

Jolly Bob's
1210 Williamson St., 251-3902
Caribbean, Jamaican \$\$

Kabul Restaurant
541 State St., 256-6322
Afghanistani \$

Lazy Jane's Cafe
1358 Williamson St., 257-5263
Sandwiches, Deli \$

Le Chardonay
320 W. Johnson St., 268-0372
Mediterranean, French \$\$\$
lechardonaymadison.com

L'Etoile
25 N. Pinckney St., 251-0500
French, American \$\$\$
letoile-restaurant.com

Maharani
380 W. Washington Ave.,
251-9999
Indian \$\$

Marigold Kitchen
118 S. Pinckney St., 661-5559
Sandwiches, Soup \$
marigoldkitchen.com

Michael's Frozen Custard
2531 Monroe St., 231-3500
Frozen Custard, Burgers \$

MoCo Market
804 Williamson St., 250-6626
Modern Deli \$
mocomarket.com

New Orleans Takeout Dowry
1517 Monroe St., 280-8000
New Orleans Cuisine \$
eatmobettah.com

Ocean Grill
117 MLK Jr. Blvd., 285-2582
Seafood \$\$
oceangrillmadison.com

The Old Fashioned
23 N. Pinckney St., 310-4545
Steak, American \$\$
theoldfashioned.com

Opus Lounge
116 King St., 441-6787
Tapas \$\$
opuslounge.com

Parthenon Gyros
316 State St., 251-6311
Greek \$

Restaurant Muramoto
106 King St., 260-2680
Asian Fusion, Vegetarian \$

Roman Candle
1054 Williamson St., 258-2000
Pizza \$
theromancandle.com

Sardine
517 Williamson St., 441-1600
French \$\$\$

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

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

Takara
315 State St., 268-0188
Japanese, Sushi \$

Tornado Club
116 S. Hamilton St., 256-3570
Steak \$\$\$
apartmentrenting.com/tornado

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

Wisconsin Union
800 Langdon St., 265-3000
American, Sandwiches \$
www.union.wisc.edu

East

Bunky's Cafe
2827 Atwood Ave., 204-7004
Italian, Mediterranean \$\$
bunkyscafe.net

Ella's Deli
2902 E. Washington Ave.,
241-5291
Kosher/Deli, Ice Cream \$
ellasdeliandicecreamparlor.com

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

Glass Nickel
2916 Atwood Ave., 245-0880
Pizza \$
glassnickelpizza.com

Harmony Bar & Grill
2201 Atwood Ave., 249-4333
Pizza, Burgers \$

Lao Laan-Xang
2098 Atwood Ave., 819-0140
Laotian, Vegetarian \$\$

Mariner's Inn
5339 Lighthouse Bay Dr.,
246-3120
Seafood \$\$
vrv-madison.com/mariners

Monty's Blue Plate
2089 Atwood Ave., 244-8505
American, Pies \$
montysblueplatediner.com

Nau-Ti-Gal
5360 Westport Rd., 246-3130
Seafood \$\$
vrv-madison.com/nautigal

Tex Tubbs Taco Palace
2009 Atwood Ave., 242-1800
Tex-Mex \$
textubbstacos.com

Alchemy
1980 Atwood Ave., 244-8563
American, Burgers \$

West

Bar Bistro 608
430 N. Midvale Blvd., 316-6900
Seafood, Steak \$\$\$

Biaggi's
601 Junction Rd., 664-9288
Italian, Pasta \$\$
www.biaggis.com

Bluephies
2701 Monroe St., 231-3663
American, Vegetarian \$\$
bluephies.com

Captain Bill's
2701 Century Harbor Rd.,
831-7327
Seafood \$\$
vrv-madison.com/capbills

Flat Top Grill & Wine Bar
538 N. Midvale Blvd., 236-4008
Asian Fusion \$\$
flattopgrill.com

Fleming's Steak & Wine Bar
750 N. Midvale Blvd.,
233-9550
Steak, Seafood \$\$\$
flemingssteakhouse.com

Glass Nickel
5003 University Ave.,
218-9000
Pizza \$
glassnickelpizza.com

Great Dane
357 Price Place, 661-9400
Brewery, Burgers \$\$
www.greatdanepub.com

Mediterranean Hookah Lounge
77 Sirlin Strip, 251-7733
Mediterranean \$\$

gourmet coffee • fresh bakery • authentic gelato

always the purrfect cup

100% Fair Trade



Stop in and cool off!

Read a newspaper, enjoy quiet conversations, study or hop online (we have free wi-fi & computers), as you sip an iced coffee while enjoying our fresh, creamy gelato.

www.javacatcoffee.com

3918 Monona Drive • Madison, WI 53716 • 608-223-5553

SANDWICH SEEKING EATER
Fresh GLBT seeks partner to appreciate its guacamole, lettuce, bacon and tomato, served on jalapeño-cheddar bread. Looking for LTR. Share SI, P, SOH. Small appetites need not apply. Ready for happiness?

Monty's Blue Plate Diner
(608) 244-8505
2089 Atwood Avenue, Madison, WI

Monty's Blue Plate Diner
montysblueplatediner.com

GRAB-N-GO AT

moco MARKET
A GENERAL STORE FOR MODERN FOLK

AM: freshly brewed coffee from Anodyne in Milwaukee • oatmeal and yogurt bar • DIY Gotham Bagels fruit sushi

PM: sushi prepared fresh daily good soup • bagel sandwiches • DIY salad mix/match microbrew

804 williamson street www.mocomarket.com
weekdays 7am to 8pm • sat 8pm to 5pm • sun 10am to 5pm

Dedicated to Preserving the Madison Area's Unique Local Flavor

MADISON ORIGINALS
madisonoriginals.org

I Am Strong

Zachariah Strong comes out about identity, being himself, and the strength it takes to resist labels.

my mom tells me that I have always been a boy. She got quite a laugh trying to raise me as a girl. Whenever we talk about it, she thinks of a new story. "We put you in that dress, and you turned around and played baseball in it."

Around the age of seven I told my mom I wanted to be a boy. She responded with compassion, but thought it was something to talk about "when you're older." She didn't know the right thing to say. She didn't have to. She loved me and let me express myself. Ok, she did insist on telling me that years ago, her best friend was a lesbian. Then she asked me, "So are you straight, then?" Also, she admitted to not knowing why my generation uses "queer" since it will be hard for her to stop using it to mean "strange." Family members have their cute ways of telling you they are there for you. I can't knock my mom for her efforts.

It was great when I was seven, and a family who loved me was all I needed—well, that and maybe a Ninja Turtle. But as we all know those days are short and gone before we know it.

I'm 22 now and it already feels like the weight of the world is going to cave my head in, smash my heart and reduce my soul to mush. On top of everyday life I still have to figure out who I am. How do you find a label to describe, at least for now, who I am? Isn't who I am hard enough without labeling it?

Putting labels on people can, in no way, be inclusive. So why use them? As Audre Lorde would say, "The master's tools will never dismantle the master's house."

Why can't I just identify as "me?" I don't believe anyone really fits a label completely. What is being gay or a man or black anyway? Who gets to define "me?" Sometimes I play EA Sports NCAA 07 Football and Guitar Hero III all night with my guy friends while wearing frilly pink pajama pants, and after I win I use an exaggerated lisp to scream "S-S-S-SUPER!" Sure, I fit some stereotypes. But that



our lives **oi** Zach Strong
ourlivesmadison.com
user zakattak

is all they are. Ok, so I don't own frilly pink pajama pants but my friends wouldn't doubt I would wear them especially while doing my signature "S-S-S-SUPER!" victory cheer. I'm SUPER special like that.

That doesn't mean we all don't use labels. It doesn't mean I want it to work that way or that it should. Putting labels on people can, in no way, be inclusive. So why use them? As Audre Lorde would say, "The master's tools will never dismantle the master's house." In other words, I can only tell you how I identify and why.

I come out because I have faith that the more people that stand up and say, "Hey, I'm different, I was meant to be this way, and I think it's great," the more all people might learn to respect differences in others and themselves. I identify because saying, "I'm questioning," is more than saying nothing at all. I would argue that it is rather powerful because it acknowledges that identity is confusing and requires more thought than most put into it. I hope each person I come out to might learn something from me

or, better yet, want to learn more. And if each of those people learned something that helps them to respect the next person that comes out to them, they can even learn to support them, or, at the very least, not to judge them.

Right now, I identify, in no particular order, as a lower socio-economical class able-bodied athlete female gender queer student man questioning twenty-something queer person of color christian stud. It could change tomorrow or in 13 minutes. It could have changed yesterday, and I haven't gotten around to checking on it yet. I could think of another facet in retrospect and wish I could have shared it with you. But that's okay. If it doesn't make complete and total sense to you, then there are two of us. I don't need you to understand it; I need you to respect it. My identity and expression are fluid, I am fluid, and labels aren't.

I only hope that by continuously educating myself, I will help educate others as they continue to educate me.

Peace be with you. ■

Get "Buzzed Into Madison" with Emmy Fink...



Local Coverage That's Only Positive!



BROADCAST CHANNEL 57 OR CABLE CHANNEL 57 OR CABLE CHANNEL 15

During the **Daily BUZZ**

News & Local Weather Delivered with Personality



Weekday Mornings 6-9

Ask questions, find support and learn more about the coming-out process in our forums online at: OURLIVESMADISON.COM



MELISSA ETHERIDGE
The Revival Tour 2008
LIVE

JULY 30 • 8 PM
OVERTURE HALL



Overture Center
FOR THE ARTS

608-258-4141 or overturecenter.com

melissaetheridge.com