

# Milwaukee **Pride** Life

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JUN 1 <sup>st</sup> :	THE ADVENTURES OF <i>Priscilla</i> QUEEN OF THE DESERT	AUG 3 <sup>rd</sup> :	<i>The Brady Bunch Movie</i>
JUN 8 <sup>th</sup> :	<i>the birdcage</i>	AUG 10 <sup>th</sup> :	<b>A VERY BRADY Sequel</b>
JUN 15 <sup>th</sup> :	<i>To Wong Foo, Thanks For Everything!</i> Julie Newmar	AUG 17 <sup>th</sup> :	<b>ROMY AND MICHELE'S HIGH SCHOOL REUNION</b>
JUN 22 <sup>nd</sup> :	<i>VICTOR Victoria</i>	AUG 24 <sup>th</sup> :	<b>Clueless</b>
JUN 29 <sup>th</sup> :	<b>XANADU</b>	AUG 31 <sup>st</sup> :	<b>SHOWGIRLS</b>
JUL 6 <sup>th</sup> :	<b>LEGALLY blonde</b>	SEP 7 <sup>th</sup> :	<b>CHICAGO</b>
JUL 13 <sup>th</sup> :	<b>EARTH GIRLS ARE EASY</b>	SEP 14 <sup>th</sup> :	<b>KILL BILL 1 &amp; 2</b>
JUL 20 <sup>th</sup> :	<b>SPICE WORLD</b>	SEP 21 <sup>st</sup> :	<b>Mrs. Doubtfire</b>

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FROM THE PUBLISHER'S DESK

Milwaukee, City of Queer Art

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By William S. Gooden, Publisher Milwaukee Pride Life Magazine

On the original Pride Flag created by artist Gilbert Baker, the color turquoise represented art – both our passion to create it and love for it. The LGBTQ community has always immersed itself with great art in all its forms. From the political paintings of Keith Haring to the erotic illustrations of Tom of Finland to our passion for music and theater. The LGBTQ+ community has supported and been a major part of the arts since time immemorial. As queer people we are lucky that we live in a city such as Milwaukee that supports the arts.

Take a casual stroll downtown and you will see countless public sculptures and art pieces on display thanks to our government-supported art programs. On many buildings there are murals depicting life in Milwaukee and its history as a city of industry. Should your preference lean towards life performance, then you are in luck, as Milwaukee is a city full of theaters from the Pabst to the new Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra

complex downtown. Naturally, for live music lovers nothing beats Summerfest on the lakefront, an event that thankfully will not be deterred by COVID-19 this year.

This issue we dedicate to the arts and to the artists that create it. Art can be many things, like for our own President of Advertising and Marketing Carmen Murguia, whose poetry speaks to her life and activism as a woman, a Latina and a lesbian.

Art is also ever-changing with each new medium that has developed. With Twitch.TV a wonderful creative and inclusive queer space has formed online. The platform presents an opportunity for creators and viewers to interact with one another and share their love of video games together.

Art has been an integral component to the queer way of life. We find a way to create no matter the challenges we face. This issue will clearly illustrate the organic relationship between the two.

## THE OPINION EDITORIAL

# Just Sayin': A Pandemic Provides Time for Reading and Reflection

By Beth V. Stromberg

I recently read an article about a library in Denmark where you “borrow” a person a book. No...it’s not what you think. I know Denmark is supposed liberal but not that liberal. The reader listens to the “book person’s life story” for 30 minutes. You can choose from a wide variety of topics from refugees, to being addicted to soap operas, to coming out in the 21st century. The goals are to increase awareness, tolerance and empathy and to ultimately prove you are not alone no matter how strange you think you are.

Reading this made me wonder what my own book title might be, and I’ve come to the conclusion that the title alone would take 30 minutes to read. For instance - “Adopted Lesbian Who Tried Marriage Because Her Mother Thought It Would ‘Cure’ Her Affliction, But It Didn’t And It Wasn’t (Fyi-Not A Choice!), Who Then Found Her Birth Family Through An Accidental Meeting In A Hair Salon, (A Story In Itself) And Found Out Her Ancestors Were Jewish, Etc.”

You get the picture. Maybe now my title might simply be – “Surviving 2020.” If you are reading this, you too have survived the “year that never was,” or as some call it “The horrible, terrible, year we learned how to love each other from 6 feet away and masked.” It was the year we were forced to become more introspective than we ever thought possible, or ever wanted to be. The year some of us would question everything and would sit on the couch and watch TV, not for movies, sitcoms, or sports but to check COVID-19 numbers; to help us decide whether or not we wanted to risk going out for ice cream. It was the year we got

to know our significant other in ways we wish we hadn’t and wore the same clothes five days in a row because... well... let’s face it - no one was coming over. And the only one that did was the food delivery person who dropped the food and literally ran for their life! The year that, just like Little Red Riding Hood, we all became painfully aware of the “wolf in the forest.”

Strange time. Scary time. Lonely time, even if you had family with you. We became prisoners of our own minds, caught in that confusing maelstrom of “what ifs,” and now here we are – free-sort of. We are released from our homes, our mental cages and free to distract ourselves by whatever means possible. Our priorities shifted and reordered themselves and maybe we became more grateful than before and realized what was really important to us and to the world. Or maybe not. Perhaps we dug in deeper to protect what was ours.

All I know is that my understanding of the things I took for granted changed. I realized that all the sings I saw saying “We’re all in this together,” were true. Relating to each other in our “together-aloneness” took a deeper commitment, a deeper understanding of the work it would take to bring us back from the edge. It would definitely take love and love as we all know is a damn hard emotion to live. The Beatles had a song that repeated “All you need is love,” and at the time I must admit I thought it trite and simplistic – not as much anymore.

When you strip away all we’ve been through it’s a good place to start...just sayin’.



### STAFF

**Founder, Publisher & Editor-in-Chief:**  
William S. Gooden

**Associate Editor**  
Jaye Syc

**President of Advertising & Marketing:**  
Carmen Murguia

**Sales & Distribution:**  
David Todd

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### Contact Us:

Milwaukee Pride Life  
Magazine

Milwaukee, WI 53207

Phone: (414) 559-6061

E-Mail:

mkepridelife@gmail.com

Web:

www.mkepridelife.com

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# In The News

LOCAL & NATIONAL LGBTQ+ NEWS

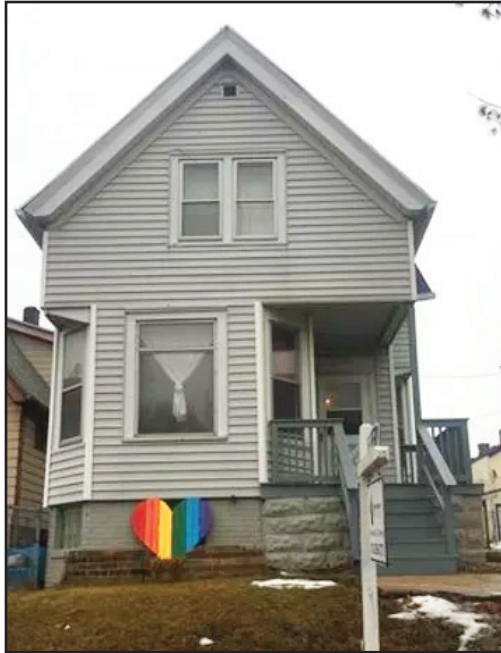


## Courage MKE Looks Like A House Divided

By William S. Gooden, Publisher  
Milwaukee Pride Life Magazine

When it officially opened its doors on February 28, 2019, Courage House was seen as a bright shining beacon in the city of Milwaukee. The group home and rehabilitation center for displaced LGBTQ youth was the first ever in the state of Wisconsin. The home was founded by Brad and Nick Schlaikowski, as an extension of their organization, Courage MKE, which raises awareness about LGBTQ teen homelessness. The group home seemed like a natural by-product of the organization's efforts to date. Joined by other couples who fostered LGBTQ teens, the group began holding fundraisers and collecting donations from businesses to raise funds to purchase a house that would serve as the group home. Soon a house was chosen and remodeled in the Walker's Point neighborhood, which is often seen as the heart of the LGBTQ community in Milwaukee. Courage House has around-the-clock staff providing group therapy, homework assistance, life skills coaching, and arts and crafts. More than just a youth homeless shelter, Courage House was primed to be a model for others around the country. Eventually, that bright shining beacon would find its light dimmed.

In early August, a petition was initiated on Change.org entitled, "*Hold Courage House Accountable!*" The petition was started by an unidentified staffer at Courage House who had worked there for several months. The basis for the petition was a resignation letter from a staffer sent to the board of directors in July 2021. The complaints outlined in the Change.org petition against Courage House, Courage MKE and the Courage House's Board of Directors are



numerous. They include accusations of nepotism, racism, transphobic and abusive employment practices, poor unskilled and uncaring staff and leadership, lack of training, lack of benefits for employees, and in some instances, outright neglect of the young and vulnerable residents. Many of the complaints focus around house supervisor, Jenna Sterr, and program director, Jean Northway. Many of the complaints listed in the petition against Jenna are distasteful, one in particular - an accusation of her strangling a black staffer, an incident to which Jenna later referred as a "joke." The staffer resigned the day after the incident. As for the allegations against Jean, many paint her as uncaring and unsuited for her position. In one of the complaints claims Jean listens in on residents' therapy sessions. While staff have made numerous complaints to executive director Brad Schlaikowski and directly to the board itself, they have been met with hollow promises and inaction. The clear divide between the leadership of Courage House and its

staff has led to distrust of the leadership amongst the staff and residents. In the petition it cites, "There is a clear divide of privilege between the leadership and the staff of Courage House. The leadership is comprised entirely of wealthy, cisgender white folks and the staff represents a diverse body of economic statuses, gender identities, etc. The divide between the staff and the leadership is so polarizing, which makes it even more confusing how the leadership seems to be so unaware."

While many of the allegations are shocking, the petitioner emphasizes that they still believe in the mission of Courage House and only posted the petition to incite change at Courage House for the sake of the residents. They also wanted to make the public aware of what was happening.

In response, executive director Brad Schlaikowski posted at length on Courage MKE's Facebook page last month. In the post Brad does not deny any of the allegations lodged in the Change.org petition and puts much of the problems at Courage House squarely on his failure as a leader, as well as apologizing on the board taking so long to address and respond to these issues. He also recognized that, "This organization was created and lifted up because of so many generous community supporters and we are forever grateful. However, our little community also lacked in diversity and therefore limited our perspectives. In our first year of being open, our employees held us accountable in pointing out that our entire leadership team was made up of cis, white, gay and straight people and did not mirror residents by any means.

(Continued on pg. 4)

## Courage House Divided

(Continued from pg. 3)

We recognized the lack of diversity. Our privilege blinded us and we prioritized moving forward with opening the house.” He continues in the post to explain what had happened and outlines plans to address each of the issues stated in the petition and pledges to take quick and decisive action to implement these changes.

Among the most notable of the changes is the removal of Jenna from the Staff section of the Courage MKE website. In her stead are two women of color, both listed as house supervisors. Though her bio is still part of the website and can be found via Google image search, her position on the bio has been removed. As for Jean, she is still listed as the program director. The board of directors page also has some new and more diverse faces added to it.

Courage MKE has good intentions with Courage House but as the old saying goes, “the road to hell is paved with good intentions.” It’s clear that somewhere along the way the leadership became so focused on their mission that they did not see the problems that their staff and residents were facing.

For the sake of the young residents at Courage House, I hope the board is able to follow through with their promises to remedy the issues. While that task seems monumental, the founders have faced no shortage of challenges in opening the home and committing to resolution. Let’s hope that they are able to do it again, and do it the right way this time.



## Visible, validated: UW-Green Bay Artist's Mural Sets Tone for LGBTQ+ Community's Weekend of Pride!

By: Jeff Bollier

**GREEN BAY** - The more Loschue “Chue” Lo worked on a mural to honor and celebrate northeastern Wisconsin’s LGBTQ+ community, the more his first public work of art became bigger than he initially realized.

A panel of judges selected Lo, a gay man from Oshkosh currently studying art at UW-Green Bay, to paint a 12-foot-tall, 24-foot-wide mural on the side of Napalese Lounge and Grille, Wisconsin’s second-oldest continually operating gay bar.

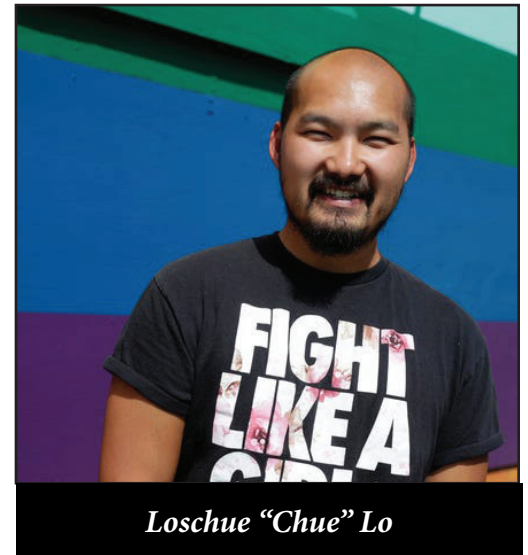
Nap’s, as regulars know it, serves as an LGBTQ+ community center as much as a bar. It has hosted wedding ceremonies, support groups and more since it opened on South Broadway in 1982 and relocated to 1351 Cedar St. in 2000.

Lo thought the public art project would give him a chance to explore his artwork and celebrate northeastern Wisconsin’s LGBTQ+ community.

“Then it developed more into doing this for the community, for the Black and brown people in this neighborhood,” said Lo, who is Hmong American and noted the Napalese is within a majority minority part of the city. “It became very personal, as well, to my identity as a queer person of color. This is no longer just about me doing artwork. This is about the community, about me giving back to the city of Green Bay.”

The mural was not the only thing that has blossomed into something more than originally planned. An idea to celebrate the mural’s completion with a party resonated with LGBTQ+ community members and the broader Green Bay community so much that it’s become a three-day event.

Lo’s mural will be unveiled during A Weekend of Pride!, a multi-faceted celebration of LGBTQ+ culture and support in the region, said Justis Tenpenny, who



Loschue “Chue” Lo

has helped organize the event along with Martha, a bi-gender member of United Artists, a group that seeks to give a voice to underrepresented artists. Tenpenny said community sponsors and the city of Green Bay have eagerly collaborated on the idea.

“This feels like a pivot point where it’s not just queer organizations doing queer things. It feels like a very important moment for us. Visibility is so important. It inspires others to do other things,”

(Continued on pg. 6)

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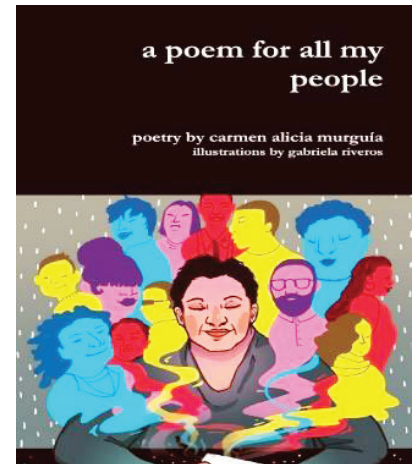
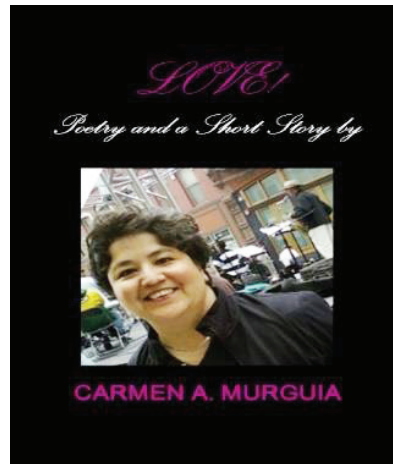
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# Women's Life

NEWS • HEALTH & LIFESTYLES FOR LGBTQ+ WOMEN



## Passion and Inspiration: A Discussion with Local Author Carmen Murguia



Pictured (from left) local activist, poet and author Carmen Murguia; and her three most recent books “*The New Carmen! ¡la nueva bizet! (in this opera, our heroine lives)*”, “*Love!*” and “*A Poem for All My People.*”

By Jaye Syc, Associate Editor,  
Milwaukee Pride Life Magazine

A lifelong passion for self-expression, the intensely heartfelt struggle for equality among the Latin community, the late great Chilean-born diplomat and poet Pablo Neruda, and the intuition of a woman who loves women have motivated the gifted writer Carmen A. Murguia for thirty years. Despite a demanding schedule, the author was kind enough to meet with me for a candid discussion three weeks ago.

Carmen acknowledges that society has not entirely accepted the gay and Latin communities but chooses to interpret these two obstacles as a source of creative reinforcement. She states, “We’re still fighting for a lot of the same things: civil rights, equality, inclusion...and then, when you add being an LGBTQ on top of being LatinX, it can be both (two strikes against you)...and a blessing. I see them as blessings, but our society isn’t really equipped.” Nev-

ertheless, the writing itself adequately reconciles her to said challenges.

Carmen also stated she learned how to write odes from Pablo Neruda, the Chilean ambassador to France, a term during which he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature (1971). Neruda had a massive body of published poetry spanning nearly fifty-six years until his death in 1973. Neruda is unequivocally Ms. Murguia’s favorite poet, known primarily for his *Love Sonnets* series.

Additionally, Carmen acknowledges that some of her best work was borne from pain. When asked if she has ever written through tears, she states, “Yes, quite a bit. For example, when I first was writing in Minnesota in 1991, some of my early poems had to do with my drinking, bar fights, incarceration, and conflict. My lifestyle back then was just so different from how it is now. However, now I may write through any pain and sorrow, heartbreak...any traumas that might have come up.” She agrees it

is a remarkably effective healing mechanism.

Carmen has had five collections published to date, the first two of which are “*The Voices Inside: Mi Alma, Mi Cuerpo y Mi Espiritu*” (1993) and “*Brown Pride*” (2002). Her third effort, “*The New Carmen! ¡La Nueva Bizet!*” (2008), is a clever and unique spin on the 1875 Georges Bizet opera wherein the gypsy heroine survives. Her fourth collection, a compact 44-page volume entitled “*Love!*”, was published in January 2012. Her most recent publication, “*A Poem for All My People*” (2017), was illustrated by Gabriela Riveros and is, by her own admission, her favorite.

Even an intense creative force such as Murguia has occasionally been afflicted by writer’s block. What matters most to her is that The Big Idea is never forced. She says, “You know what? It’ll come,” then adds, giggling, “and it usually

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# Visible, validated

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Ten penny said. “So much blossoms from one thing.”

Lo’s mural uses the Progress Pride Flag, designed in 2018 by non-binary artist Daniel Quasar, for a base. Lo overlaid that with paintings of Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera, which he hopes will spur people to learn about their importance to the LGBTQ+ community.

“They are two trans women of color who made huge contributions to the gay liberation era and never got any recognition for it,” Lo said.

Lo also added a phrase that means a lot to him: “We will be seen.”

“Even in my teenage years, even though I was out and open, I always felt like no one really wanted to see me being gay or me being a Hmong person. They just wanted to not talk about those things,” Lo said. “Your identity is really important and I believe you should be able to talk about those things. I hope the message I can convey is to basically help the trans youth of color here in this neighborhood feel visible, feel validated, feel like they’re being heard.”

A Weekend of Pride! took place Friday, August 20, 2021, it included live music, food trucks, a COVID-19 vaccination clinic, the mural unveiling, a drag show, and a ceremony to re-open Napalese Lounge’s front door to the public featuring Mayor Eric Genrich, a move made possible by a façade improvement grant from Green Bay’s Re-

development Authority.

Source: <https://www.greenbaypress-gazette.com/story/news/2021/08/19/weekend-pride-green-bay-lgbtq-festival-starts-napalese-mural/5475724001/>

# Carmen Murguia

(Continued from pg. 5)



comes at 3 am.” She intends to compose a commemorative poem, “An Ode to Thirty Years” soon.

Carmen somehow finds time to advocate for both the Latin and LGBTQ+ communities. She is the recipient of the



PrideFest Milwaukee Stonewall Leadership Award, and, in January 2021, she allied with MARN (Milwaukee Artist Resource Network) to mentor artistically inclined youth in Milwaukee.

What most impressed me about the discussion I had with Ms. Murguia was the full-on daily celebration of her womanhood which has sustained her through some challenging times. Yet she gradually adds to her list of accomplishments without feeling overwhelmed by the pressure to achieve. She exemplifies balance: work...with life...with creativity...with identity...with purpose. I genuinely enjoyed speaking with her.



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# Transgender Life

NEWS • HEALTH & LIFESTYLES FOR TRANSGENDER MEN & WOMEN

## Virginia school board to pay \$1.3 million in transgender student's suit

By Dennis Romero

A school district in Virginia has agreed to hand over \$1.3 million after fighting a discrimination lawsuit filed by a transgender student for more than five years ago.

The American Civil Liberties Union announced Thursday that the Gloucester County School Board has been ordered to pay the money to cover attorneys' fees and costs in the case involving onetime student Gavin Grimm, whom it represented.

The board said in a terse statement that its insurance provider has "addressed" the order. The board and the superintendent did not immediately respond to requests for comment Saturday.

The ACLU said in a statement that the board, in a court filing, has agreed to pay.

Grimm sued the district in 2015 in federal court, alleging that its policy of prohibiting him from using the boys' bathrooms violated a federal law, known as Title IX, that bans sex discrimination in school programs.

Grimm was assigned female at birth but legally changed his name and began hormone therapy as a freshman in high school. His school principal allowed him to use the boys' bathrooms, but the board overruled the decision and prohibited it.

Federal courts twice sided with Grimm, and the U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear the case in June.

The lack of action by the high court disappointed some conservatives, in-



*Transgender activist Gavin Grimm attends the GLAAD Rising Stars Luncheon at The Hilton Midtown on May 5, 2017 in New York City.*

cluding Justices Clarence Thomas and Samuel Alito, who said it should have heard the case. The conclusion came as conservative states and districts have focused on transgender bathroom rules as a base-rousing political issue.

"After a year in which state legislatures have introduced an unprecedented number of bills targeting trans youth, we hope that the fee award will give other school boards and lawmakers pause before they use discrimination to score political points," Josh Block, senior staff attorney with the ACLU LGBTQ & HIV Project, said in the organization's statement.

Grimm faulted the district for spending so much time and taxpayer money on the case.

"Rather than allow a child equal access to a safe school environment, the Gloucester School Board decided to fight this child for five years in a costly legal battle that they lost," he said in the ACLU's statement.

The civil liberties group urged Virginia districts to adopt the guidance of the state Department of Education, which states that students have "a right to learn free from discrimination and harassment."

Last year Grimm, now 22, announced he had been elected to the ACLU Board of Directors.

Source: <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/virginia-school-board-pay-1-3-million-transgender-student-s-n1277861>

# Pride Life Features

THE EVENTS AND PEOPLE THAT ARE SHAPING LGBTQ+ MILWAUKEE

## The Big Queer Creative World of Twitch.TV

*From shirtless 'gay'mers to your Dearest Granny, Twitch.tv is the web's biggest creative queer space*

By William S. Gooden, Publisher  
Milwaukee Pride Life Magazine

When I first discovered Twitch, it was as an app when I first got my Playstation 4. I had heard it was “that streamer app,” which at the time didn’t hold any real interest to me. I really didn’t want to watch a bunch of straight ‘bros’ playing “*Call of Duty*” for hours on end, as they tossed around phrases like, “Dude, that’s gay,” or used the word “fag” like most people use the word “the.”

It wasn’t until last year’s pandemic lockdown that I gave the app a chance, mainly out of sheer boredom with Netflix. I was particularly curious about Dave Marshall’s Twitch channel, ‘Gorillagayming.’ Marshall is the openly gay pro wrestler from Perth, Australia. Prior to the pandemic, Marshall had gained a lot of attention from numerous gay media websites after raising thousands of dollars for suicide prevention with his OnlyFans account. Facing comparatively tight pandemic related restrictions, Marshall was continuing his work on a decidedly more youth-friendly platform. With his muscles, charm, and Australian accent he has quickly amassed 9.8 thousand followers on Twitch, and more are signing up every time he streams.

### What is Twitch?

Twitch.tv is a live streaming platform, meaning content creators broadcast themselves via the web. While Twitch started as streaming platform for gamers, you can also find talk shows, chat discussions, art streams, cooking streams, DJ’s and much more. There seems to be no limit to what you can broadcast on Twitch, as long as it doesn’t violate Community Standards (so nothing offensive or pornographic). This openness



*Pictured (clockwise from top left) Dave Marshall a.k.a. Gorillagayming; Dearest Granny, drag streamer Deere; and Kilcannon along with many more are part of the great big, creative queer community on Twitch.tv.*

has led to the creation of large LGBTQ+ community on Twitch.

### It’s a big queer world...

No matter where your queer interest lies Twitch has you covered: pretty muscle boys (check); trans gamers (they got ‘em); Drag Race fan (Trixie Mattel, Orangina and several others have channels). Twitch is a smorgasbord of LGBTQ+ content right at your fingertips. They have apps in Windows store, Google Play store; and Apple app store. There are even large teams of queer streamers like the Rainbow Arcade, a family of LGBTQ+ creators and artists dedicated to building inclusive, safe, and welcoming communities on Twitch and in the greater gaming community.

With streaming being relatively simple and cheap to initiate, the only limitation is one’s imagination. Imagination is found aplenty on Dearest Granny’s channel.

### “Yer Doin So Well...”

Of all the big name streamers on Twitch, there is no one more unique and interesting as than Dearest Granny – a variety streamer, who as her name suggests is everyone’s *dearest Granny*, complete with platinum wig, old lady glasses, brooches and old lady blouses and sweaters. Granny, streams from her “Hobbit House” in New Zealand. She starts her streams with the Wendy Williams version of “*Native New Yorker*.”

(Continued on pg. 9)

# Queer Twitch

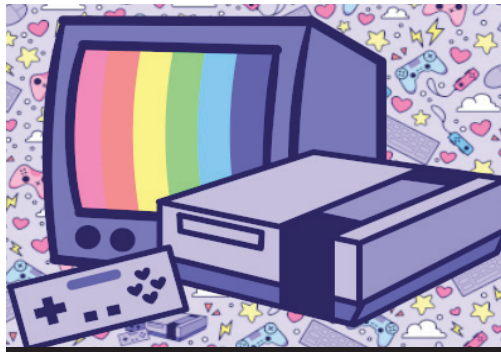
(Continued from pg. 8)

Additionally, she has more than 76 thousand followers that she refers to as her "grandkids." They are greeted with the message, "Yer Doin So Well!"

Broadcasting for over two years on Twitch, Granny's camera presence is effortlessly natural as she hosts her one-woman show. In an interview with *Paper Magazine* back in April 2021, she described the experience. "There is a weird artistry that comes with streaming that I don't think content creators quite know how to describe. I suppose it would be very similar to the feeling an actor gets when they're on a stage." That "weird artistry" is just one of the lovable oddities that attracts queer creators to Twitch.

### What attracts the creators?

In a recent in-stream chat with Twitch creator Kilcannon, I asked him what attracted him to the platform as a queer content creator.



The logo for the Rainbow Arcade.

"The fact that I grew up on a farm in the middle of nowhere. And I always love video games, it was a giant passion of mine. The fact that I am able to find and connect with other people who are queer and like video games and nerd culture was one of the biggest reasons why I gravitated to and stayed on Twitch. First and primarily as a viewer and then eventually as a streamer," he said.

While the sense of inclusion is a big draw for creators and viewers alike, there is a monetary draw to Twitch. Content creators can make a decent liv-

ing on Twitch from subscriptions, tips and bits. Some even quit their full-time jobs to become content creators.

### What attracts the viewers

As a frequent viewer of a number of streamers, I can attest to the fact that the feeling of acceptance and community on Twitch.TV is strong. The openness of the creators (often inviting users to chat interactively during broadcast) makes one feel not only as part of the show but of this grander community as well. The opportunity to grow and learn from these interactions is evident. Positive discussions frequently and organically on the platform. For example, Pup Amp Summers engages in discussions of kink-positive lifestyles on Watts The Safe Word's channel quite frequently during their game play.

Gay Twitch is united by three common things: a love of video games, inclusion and the desire to be a part of one big happy community.

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Steve Hall © Hall + Merrick Photographers



# Cordially Yours, Again!

YOUR MONTHLY DOSE OF WHO'S WHO AND WHAT'S HAPPENING

## To Those We Have Lost

By Michael Johnston

Are we still fearing the Deer? To a summer we shall never forget! Bravo Milwaukee Bucks after 50 years, you did it! As of this writing, our baseball team, our Milwaukee Brewers are quite impressive as well! Now this is not a Sports Column and I get my balls confused constantly. I do love this city, county, and state, as well as this Country this celebrating, and the revenue generated especially after COVID, so welcomed! Good Show Gentlemen, Thank You!

Just a short, sweet, but most sincere thank you to all that went out of their way to make my NU Decade Birthday so special and memorable. My heart is still full and carries me through ...

Since last we met our community has lost some outstanding contributors who helped us to become who we are today:

**Edwin "Eddie" Ernest Carver-Fitzpatrick**, he and his beloved husband, Gregg Fitzpatrick, are the hosts/owners of The Harbor Room, for the past 21 years. Eddie a talented artist, was always beyond gracious to me whenever I had the honor to host or participate in any function/event at the H.R. Condolences to Gregg, The Staff of The H.R. and Our Community at large.

**Bill Gans AKA Rosetta Stone**, Mr. Gans was a member of The Cream City Chorus, a popular organist in movie theaters, and lived to the ripe old age of 104 years old! He is now reunited with his Buddy.

**Ken Weske**, a man, I also met in the Chorus. Going all the way back to 1985 – Kenny was one of the original members and served on the board of directors. He was a very nurturing, mentoring man – always encouraging me. Not sure if I ever had the chance to say thank you, or I love you – I guess we always think there will be time ...

**Paul Scalcini**, dear Paul, I met him around the same time as Kenny, the



*Michael Johnston*

mid-1980's. We were so young! We were united and experiencing the onset of HIV/AIDS as it challenged our world. Paul was an antique dealer, an old soul, and we shared an unnatural fascination for the serial "One Life to Live", I guess he found that out first.

**Ray Bradford** of The Shorewood Players, Ray was The Shorewood Players – Director, Producer, Press Agent, Actor, Singer, Dancer, Writer, Lightening Man, the Stage was the love of his life. I met him ions ago at The M&M Club, engrossed by his history of directing Miss Jane Russell in "Mame"! He was an adventurer, a visionary – and kind to me. He cast me in "The Women" starring Dear Ruthie. And was always trying to figure a legal way to do a production of "Steel Magnolias" reuniting Ruthie and I on the boards. Alas that was not to be. Say hi to Jane Russell for me!

We've lost the incomparable **Dorothy Dombrowski** and the world is a dimmer place for it.

And before going to print, another painful passing that of La Cage fixture, Manager, father-figure, and just the Best – with a capital B **Mr. Michael Prentice**.

A great Mentor to the Young, and the not-so-young (me).

A Goodbye, Memorial was held at KRUZ to fondly remember, recall, and toast **David Howser**. We lost this Artist, Stylist, Visionary, Milwaukee's "Andy Warhol" if you will a while back. His BBF Bill (Ginger) Hoffmann was in the process of planning an Event and with David Howser it would have needed to be an Event and then COVID! Well, time and normalcy finally returned and a chance to gather and share, remember, tell stories, laughs, anecdotes, tears, hugs, cocktails, food, friends, and of course Miss Diana Ross and The Supremes made for this stylish, original, creative send off. And yes, an accordion and hum strum salute were included!

Farewells of a different nature that fabulous dynamo of energy, finance, and song **Marge Eiseman** is seeking her own "Northern Exposure" as she takes on the northwest.

And my piano man, confidante, and cabaret cohort Dr. Gino De Luca who is headed for the high seas! Yes, the Love Boat proposed a wonderful "Bobby Short Gig" where Gino will be singing and tinkling the ivories and serenading cruisers into the sunset! Bon Voyage, as you join the Jet Set on the water!

**The Wisconsin LGBT Chamber of Commerce** hosted a wonderful "Out In the Kitchen" at Discovery World. The Chamber has more than 675 businesses as members and connect with consumers who want to support LGBTQ and Allied owned businesses. To join or learn more: WisLGBTChamber.com. The fine eateries that participated included: BH42, The Brown Bottle, Kilwins, Pizza Man, Tall Guy, and Triskele's. Superb!

Save the date time, the first Gala – I've heard of - It's been a while, Saturday,

*(Continued on pg. 11)*

## Cordially Yours

(Continued from pg. 10)

November 06th, 2021. **The Skylight Music Theatre** will light up the sky once again, at The Women's Club of Wisconsin with cocktails, dinner, and Broadway's Stephanie J. Block in Concert! Ms. Block is a Tony, Drama Desk, and Helen Hayes Award Winning Performer. You would know her from such Broadway hits as: *"The Cher Show"*, *"The Mystery of Edwin Drood"*, *"Falsettos"*, *"Wicked"*, *"Anything Goes"*, *"9 to 5, the Musical"*, and *"The Boy from Oz"*. Ms. Block is a dear friend of Michael Unger, Executive Director of The Skylight, and the rest you will see in November. Brandon Herr, renowned Event Coordinator is going to make this evening unforgettable!

Currently, Skylight is busy prepping their season, to be one of the first theaters to open this season. Yes, the intermission, is finally over! Friday, September 24th the Skylight's Premiere of *"The Full Monty"* running through Sunday, October 17. Terrence McNally and David Yazbeck's twisted, Tony nominated tale of out of work steel workers baring it all, for the greater good!

*"Little Shop of Horrors"*, Craig Bloomfield's all-time favorite, blooms at The Cabot, just in time for the Holidays November 19th – January 02nd, 2022. What an ideal way to feed your need for Broadway!

2022, Brings a new year and a new show to The Skylight with the Regional Premiere of *"Ernest Shackleton Loves Me"*. An epic musical adventure, this 2017 Off Broadway smash hit crisscrosses continents and time in an improbable and enchanting love story, January 14th – January 30th.

Lorraine Hansberry's hit *"A Raisin in the Sun"* was put to music in the sensational 1974 Tony winning *"Raisin"*. Set in Chicago 1951, this musical message is even more significant today than in the early 1950's or 1970's the need to have a home, to fit in, to belong to have a piece of the American Dream.

How else to close out such a stellar season than with Dennis DeYoung's *"Hunchback of Notre Dame"* a Milwaukee Premiere – by Dennis DeYoung (of Styx) adapted from the novel by Victor Hugo and directed by Skylight's Michael Unger – recommended for ages 12 +, May 20 - June 12.

**The Milwaukee Repertory Theatre** never disappoints, as they complete their must-see season: *"Steel Magnolias"* November 09th – December 05th, you can go to Truvy's tell all salon, it's the place to be to find out what's happening in Chinquapin, LA. The unvarnished version, that is!

Something for the other side of the table if you will, *"Dad's Season Tickets"* a new musical comedy celebrating family, folly, and football! Maybe even the answers to Aaron Rodgers future?

*"My Way, A Musical Tribute to Frank Sinatra"* The voice returns to the Stacker 03/04 – 05/01 Everyone loves the Chairman of the Board – come see the Leader of The Rat Pack up close and let him Fly You to the Moon.

From the sublime to the *"New Age"* – a world premiere event of Dael Orlander-smith's story of four women, at different junctures in their lives, as they contend with their sexuality, insecurities, and legacies March 22nd – May 01st.

All aboard, for the *"Titanic, the Musical"* April 5th – May 12th the actual ship went down on April 15th, 1912 but in the capable hands of The Rep it will be smooth sailing.

Angela Ingersoll – *"Sings Judy Garland Get Happy"* an Artist Lounge Live Production. Ingersoll comes with some serious cred – a Chicago Jeff Award and L.A. Times Woman of the Year in Theatre Award. This Trolley rides May 5th – July 1st. Clang, clang, clang!

**Summerfest 2021** will take place on weekends in September this year. Three weekends, Three days September 02nd – 04th, 09th – 11th, and 16th – 18th. Celebrate the summer, celebrate the lake, celebrate Milwaukee, celebrate music!

*And as always, I'll remain still Cordially Yours, Again!*

## Next Issue



October 2021

- The Political Issue
- Exclusive interview with Hello Cake!
- Our LGBTQ+ political representation in WI.
- What are our biggest queer political issues?



# Events & Happenings

PHOTOS OF EVENTS • NIGHTLIFE • MILESTONES

## Milwaukee's own 'Stonewall' remembered Milwaukee's 'Black Nite brawl' was eight years before NYC riots

By Don Schwamb, Founder  
Wisconsin LGBTQ History Project

On the hot sunny afternoon of August 5, 2021, drivers exiting I-794 at Plankinton Avenue and HOP riders along St. Paul Avenue wondered why a press conference was being held in the vacant lot at the corner of Plankinton and St. Paul Avenues. TV cameras and other attendees were watching former Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist, Alderwoman JoCasta Zamarripa and other dignitaries gathered around a podium and display boards.

They were observing the 60th anniversary of Milwaukee's own 'Stonewall' type event: the August 1961 brawl at the gay bar known as The Black Nite. This pivotal event happened 8 years BEFORE the more famous New York City 'Stonewall' riot- but it awoke Milwaukee to the fact that there was a sizeable LGBT community that was large enough to have their own spaces and large enough to fight back when those spaces were endangered.

Sixty years ago, things in Milwaukee were very different for LGBTQ people. According to historian Michail Takach, it was not only illegal to serve homosexuals liquor in Wisconsin, it was also illegal to allow them to congregate on bar premises. Violating these laws could cost bar owners their licenses and bartenders their reputation. "The Black Nite throughout 1961 became a bit of a famous place because it wasn't a straight bar that allowed people of LGBT origin into the building. It was a LGBT bar that might allow straight people into the building — and this was something new



Photos by Joshua Sukkert

for Milwaukee," he explains.

So on the night of Saturday, August 5, 1961, four Navy servicemen on leave took a dare to harass the patrons of one of Milwaukee's 'gay' bars- the Black Nite. Entering the bar, they were asked to show ID's, and when they refused, were forcibly removed from the bar by the bouncer. The servicemen jumped the bouncer, but a patron and partner of the bouncer, Josie Carter, grabbed two beer bottles and went outside to help fend off the attack, knocking out and sending two of the men to the hospital.

Josie Carter lived her life as a gender non-conforming person of color at a time when that was unthinkable. So the embarrassed servicemen went back to the Brady Street bar where they had taken the dare, and decided they were going to round up some additional guys and go down and take revenge by 'cleaning up' the Black Nite for putting their friends in the hospital.

When the servicemen had arrived the

first time, the Black Nite bar had just opened for the night, and only three people were there. But when they got back, the bar was at full capacity with over 70 people. And each one knew what had happened earlier because Josie Carter had told them how she defended her husband earlier. "They thought that they were in for an easy fight. But they opened the door and said something along the lines of, 'C'mon you sick faggots!,' and every single person in the bar looked at them and that was it," says Takach. "The music stopped, and the battle was on."

In the brawl, nearly everything in the bar was destroyed — every bar stool, every bottle, the jukebox, the piano. People were even thrown through windows. In the end, the police came and took everyone away-- except the patrons of the Black Nite.

The charges against the servicemen were ultimately dismissed by one of Milwaukee's then homophobic judges. The Black Nite bar was soon forced to close by the City for the sake of appearances, but owner Wally Whetham later reopened the bar as Bourbon Beat, which remained as one of Milwaukee's recognized 'gay' bars until 1966. Eventually the bar and surrounding buildings were torn down, as the neighborhood declined. The site has been a vacant lot on the Milwaukee River (directly across from the Milwaukee Public Market) for the past 55 years.

But the legacy remains even if the building doesn't.

After Dr. Brice Smith rediscovered the story of the Black Nite brawl in an interview with Josie Carter some 10 years

(Continued on pg. 13 )

# Resource Guide

A SHORT GUIDE TO LGBTQ + MILWAUKEE



## Milwaukee's 'Stonewall'

(Continued from pg. 12)

ago, the Wisconsin LGBTQ History Project has been documenting the event through additional interviews and historical research, and resolved to mark the anniversary of the event with a press conference. Proclamations were issued by Governor Tony Evers, Mayor Tom Barrett, and County Executive David Crowley, all recognizing August 5, 2021 to remember the Black Nite Bar brawl. The Milwaukee Common Council and County Board both issued similar Resolutions.

At the press event, pink surveyor flags marked the approximate outline of the long-demolished bar, and photos of the area in the day were displayed alongside the proclamations. Speakers included Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett; Milwaukee Common Council Alderperson JoCasta Zamarripa; Brice Smith, coordinator of the Wisconsin Transgender Oral History Project; Elle Halo, transgender rights activist; Don Schwamb, founder of the LGBTQ History Project; and Michail Takach, the Project's curator. The event was covered by camera crews from WITI-TV6, WISN-TV12, and Spectrum News One.

At dusk that evening, the city's Hoan Bridge was illuminated in the colors of the LGBTQ+ and trans Pride flags, alternating every hour until 2 a.m.

For more information about the Black Nite Bar, the brawl, and other early LGBT bars in Milwaukee, visit the nonprofit Wisconsin LGBTQ History Project website at [WisLGBThistory.com](http://WisLGBThistory.com).



### Art Bar ♦

*Mixed bar with college-age crowd*

722 E. Burleigh St.  
Milwaukee, WI 53212  
(414) 372-7880

<https://www.facebook.com/artbarmke>

### DIX Milwaukee ♦

*Southern Style Video/Dance Bar*

739 S. 1st St.  
Milwaukee, WI 53204  
(414) 231-9085

<https://dixmke.com>

### Fluid Milwaukee ♦

*Gay Bar*

819 S. 2nd St.  
Milwaukee, WI 53204  
414-Oh-Fluid/(414) 643-5843

<https://fluidmke.com>

### Harbor Room ♦

*Levis' & Leather Bar*

117 E. Greenfield Ave.  
Milwaukee, WI 53204  
(414) 672-7988

<https://www.facebook.com/Harbor-Room-117-E-Greenfield-Ave-Milwaukee-WI-151982704821436/>

### Hunty's Social Club ♦

*Drag Bar inside*

*Hamburger Marys'*  
734 S. 5th St.  
Milwaukee, WI 53204  
(414) 488-2555

<https://huntysmke.com>

### Kruz ♦

*Levis' & Leather Bar*

354 E. National Ave.  
Milwaukee, WI 53204  
(414) 272-5789

<https://www.facebook.com/kruz.kruzbar>

### La Cage Niteclub ♦

*Gay Dance Club*  
801 S. 2nd St.  
Milwaukee, WI 53204  
(414) 383-8330

<https://www.facebook.com/LaCageNiteclub>

### This Is It! ♦

*Gay Bar with Drag Shows*  
418 E. Wells St.  
Milwaukee, WI 53202  
(414) 278-9192

<https://www.thisisitbar.com>

### Walker's Pint ♦

*Lesbian Bar*  
818 S. 2nd St.  
Milwaukee, WI 53204  
(414) 643-7468

<https://walkerspint.com>

### Woody's Sports Bar ♦

*Gay Sports Bar*  
1579 S. 2nd St.  
Milwaukee, WI 53204  
(414) 672-0806  
<https://www.facebook.com/woodys.mke>

### Zócolo Food Park ♦

*Bar with food trucks, gay friendly*  
636 S. 6th St.  
Milwaukee, WI 53204  
(414) 433-9747  
<https://www.zocalomke.com>



Image: *Sixteen Paths*, 2021. Photo credit: Daniel McCullough.

## Daniel Minter ROOTWORK

The Lynden and its collection of 50 monumental sculptures is open 10am-5 pm daily (except Thursdays). Admission is free.

*In the Healing Language of Trees*, of which this exhibition is a part, is supported by the Joyce Foundation through a 2021 Joyce Award to Daniel Minter and Lynden Sculpture Garden.

[lyndensculpturegarden.org](http://lyndensculpturegarden.org)

2145 W Brown Deer Rd, Milwaukee, WI 53217