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STATE OF MIND
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A&E G1

*** **Wisconsin State Journal** ***
WWW.MADISON.COM/WSJ JULY 2, 2006 MADISON, WISCONSIN

**Madison Pride event will emphasize
gay and lesbian couples and their children**



LEAH L. JONES — State Journal
Patti Thompson, left, and her partner, Lynette Margulies, watch as their son, Jeremy Margulies, 6, practices tee ball at their Madison home. The trio will be marching in the Madison Pride parade with other gay and lesbian families next Sunday.

**Woman
diagnosed
with high
manganese**
Health director says
city water probably
isn't the cause

By RON SEELY
rseely@madison.com
608-252-6131
For 76-year-old Alice Speth, manganese has become something more than a pesky mineral in the city's water mains. Speth was recently diagnosed with elevated manganese levels and her doctors suspect the finding could account for numerous physical problems she has struggled with in recent months. Walking is painful and difficult for her and she's taken to using a walker. Her hands shake.

WHO TO CALL
Call the Madison-Dane County Health Department at 266-4821 if you're worried that you have been exposed to too much manganese.

Her fingers and mouth are numb. "I never had tremors before," Speth said last week. "And I've lost my equilibrium. I felt like I was getting off a ship all the time. And I used to be able to knit. I was one of those women who always carried her knitting around with her." Speth was diagnosed with elevated manganese in April and is now being treated by a neurologist at UW Hospital. While Speth is convinced that her condition is from drinking contaminated city water, her physicians are less certain. And city health officials say it is unlikely that Speth could have been exposed to enough manganese in the drinking water to account for her condition.

Complained about water
The only real fact we have is that she has high levels of manganese," said Dr. Benjamin Brooks, Speth's neurologist at UW Hospital. "Where it's coming from, we don't know for sure."

Rally to focus on families

By JASON STEIN
jstein@madison.com
608-252-6129
Madison attorney Leslie Shear went to gay pride rallies in her youth, and today she speaks out at events about the effects a proposed state constitutional amendment would have on gay and lesbian families like hers. Although she's looking to go to the Madison Pride event being held next weekend, Shear said she's more reluctant about her and her partner taking their twin 8-year-olds. "To the extent that I've been at pride events in the past, there is more sexual suggestion than I want to introduce them to," said Shear, 46, who

What: Madison Pride
When: From noon to 6 p.m. Saturday, July 8, and Sunday, July 9.
Where: Brittingham Park
Cost: \$5 on Saturday, free on Sunday
For more information, go to www.madisonpride.org or contact Outreach at 608-255-8582
Parade: The gay pride parade will start at noon Sunday and go from Proudfit Street to Brittingham Park. A map of the route is available on the Web site.

**Fight over gay marriage
amendment will be big**

By JASON STEIN
jstein@madison.com
608-252-6129
Both sides are opening offices around the state, have pulled in thousands of volunteers to canvass neighborhoods and given signs that they could unleash a torrent of TV ads this fall with as much as several million dollars in combined donations. "I think it's fair to say that the bar's opponents in Wisconsin are leaps and bounds above any organization in any other state that

IN DAYBREAK/I-1
**How not
to ruin
a wedding**

Dearly Beloved, when you gather to witness the holy estate of marriage, honor the bride and groom by keeping your mouth and cell phone snappy shut during the ceremony and bearing in mind that the couple's parents, grandparents and clergyman are listening to your toast at the reception.



There are more ways to mar wedding memories through boorish behavior, so we're offering a refresher course in wedding etiquette in Daybreak. And we're trusting our beloved readers are among the 60 percent of wedding invitees who send gifts even when they can't attend.

Many black men feel pressure to look gentle

State Journal staff and wire report
Ken Haynes tries not to frighten other bicycle riders in the early morning when he pedals through the UW Arboretum. He's 6 feet 4 and weighs 290 pounds. And he's a black man. "I've always been very conscious of not making people fearful," he said. "I don't know where that comes from."

are dangerous, aggressive, angry. Some smile a lot, dress conservatively and speak with deference: "Yes, sir," or "No, ma'am." They are mindful of their bodies, careful not to dart into closing elevators or stand too close in grocery stores. It's all about surviving, and trying to thrive, in a nation where biased views of black men stubbornly hang on decades after segregation and



or their high school friends? But for black men, there's more at stake. If they don't carefully calculate how to handle everyday situations — in ways that usually go unnoticed — they can end up out of a job, in jail or dead. "It's a stressful process," said Keith Borders of Mason, Ohio. He's black, 6 feet 7, a garrulous lawyer who gestures with his hands. "I have a very keen sense of my size and how I communicate," says Borders. "I end up putting my hands in my pockets or behind me. I stand with my feet closer together. With my feet spread out, it looks like I'm taking a stance. And I use a softer voice."

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Gentle

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Steadfast in identity

In Dane County, black men are painfully familiar with stereotyped reactions. But they're steadfast in their identity, regardless of how they're perceived.

"I don't dress to please anybody but myself," said Richard Davis, a UW-Madison professor of music and a renowned bass player. "It's not my problem, it's theirs."

He teaches courses that try to combat racism, or what he calls racial conditioning, by addressing the roots of stereotypes, assumptions and rationalizations based on race.

Madison likes to think it's a liberal place, Davis said, but it's not. "Racial profiling exists, it exists on State Street. I can tell because I am a person of color. I am very sensitive to knowing when people are not comfortable around me."

Madison's School Board President Johnny Winston Jr., who is black, always wears a suit and tie at board meetings. He

has two reasons. First of all, there's respect for the position.

"Number two, people will respect the more on how I'm dressed," Winston said. "One of the first things people do see is your face. Then they look at the clothing and they don't see this person as a threat."

He often visits schools where people don't recognize him.

"They say 'can I help you?' but it's not really 'can I help you?' It's 'want to identify you?'" he said.

'Able to shift'

Melissa Harris Laceywell, a political scientist at the University of Chicago, says learning to adapt is at the heart of being an American black man.

"Most black men are able to shift from a sort of relaxed, authentically black pose into a respectable black man pose. Either they develop the dexterity to move back and forth or ultimately they founder."

It's a lot like a game of chess, says 43-year-old Chester Williams, who owns a game of Electric in New Orleans. He has taught his three sons, ages 16, 14 and 11, to play.

"The rules of the game are universal: White moves first, then black moves," he said. "Black has to respond to the moves that the whites make. You take the advantage when it's available."

"I make sure they're aware that these kinds of things occur," he said. "I want them to talk to me about them, to help them better assess what's going on. Sometimes they're quick to attribute it to racism, and sometimes it's not."

"But when it is we talk about how they might respond. You have to be very thoughtful and measured. A very angry manner tends to turn off people."

Henry Sanders Jr., president of the Madison Area Growth Network, a civic leadership group for young adults, is a black man running for the state Assembly in the mostly white 81st District in northern Dane County.

"I know I'm always conscious about how I present myself publicly," he said. "When someone sees me, if I'm wearing just a T-shirt and jeans, they might see me differently than if I'm wearing a dress shirt and slacks."

Voters may see his race first, he said, but he believes "they don't care what color you are once they know that you are competent, that you care. Race goes out the window."

history of slavery and segregation.

Davis, the music professor, won't use the term "master class" for his teaching sessions with advanced students because "that word comes from slavery days." Jay Carrington Chunn's mother taught him "how to read 'Whites Only' and 'Negro Only' before she taught me anything else," said the 63-year-old, who grew up in Atlanta. "Black parents taught you how to react when police stopped you, how to respond to certain problems, how to act in school to get the best grade."

Twenty years ago, Carol Taylor's teenage son — now a lawyer — was mugged twice near their Brookline home, but police officers "treated him like he had done the mugging," she said. She wrote and self-published "The Little Black Book: Survival Commandments for Black Men" filled with tips on how to deal with police: keep your hands visible, carry a camera, don't say much but be polite.

Water

Continued from Page A1

Speth said she eliminated several foods known to contain manganese from her diet and does not take vitamins or other dietary supplements that might harbor the mineral.

She has lived in an apartment in the Meriter Retirement Community at 110 S. Henry St. for about 2 1/2 years and has registered complaints with the Madison Water Utility and the Madison-Dane County Health Department about her water there being discolored and containing the black flakes indicative of high manganese levels.

sary part of a healthy diet, too much of the mineral has been shown to cause neurological ailments with symptoms similar to Parkinson's disease.

The Madison Water Utility has embarked on a citywide, high-velocity flushing program to cleanse pipes of the mineral, which settles in the bottom of mains and can be knocked loose by disturbances such as water main breaks.

Most susceptible to manganese poisoning are people with liver problems, who can't properly process the mineral, and infants up to six months old, who may be drinking formula that already contains high levels of manganese.

Spangler's extrapolated data, would be exposed to doses 50 percent higher than the rodents.

The research showed, according to Spangler, that exposure at levels lower than the EPA's recommended safe levels could potentially cause brain injury.

But Schlenker called the research "highly artificial." He said that in order to be exposed at the levels used in Spangler's study, people would have to shower in water that is nearly black. He also said Spangler's extrapolation of data from rats to humans was suspect.

"I think this is very, very far removed from having anything to say about human health," Schlenker said.

Conscious decisions

Darrell Bazzell, a vice chancellor at UW-Madison and president of 100 Black Men of Madison, said he's made a conscious decision not to dress up on casual occasions to impress people.

He tries not to lash out in anger or frustration when he confronts face-to-face racism and shares that message as a mentor to young black men.

Coping strategies

Historians agree that black stereotypes and coping strategies are rooted in America's

'Race always matters'

One selective business program at historically black Hampton University in Virginia directs black men to wear dark, conservative suits to class.

Please see GENTLE, Page A8

Before moving to Meriter, Speth lived for four years in another apartment on the 18th-mus where she said her water was also frequently discolored. Both that apartment and the Meriter Retirement Community have received water from well No. 3, one of the city wells that has tested high for manganese.

But John Hataebek, an epidemiologist with the Madison-Dane County Health Department said that in December of 2005 and January of 2006, water at the Meriter retirement apartments was tested in response to Speth's complaints and found to have relatively low levels of manganese.

A drinking fountain in the building tested at 14 parts per million and water from a faucet in an apartment tested at 25 ppb. The federal Environmental Protection Agency sets advisory standards for manganese of 50 ppb for aesthetics and 300 ppb as a recommended lifetime health standard.

Surveillance form

Still, people such as Speth remain concerned about their possible exposure to manganese in Madison's water. Hataebek said he fields between five and seven calls a week from residents with concerns about their drinking water and health problems.

Despite the concern — and the cases of manganese toxicity that have arisen — Schlenker said an ambitious screening program for more patients with elevated manganese would not be a good idea. Such screening efforts are controversial in the field of public health, he added, because testing, especially for a mineral such as manganese, can be suspect.

"You could identify people incorrectly," Schlenker said, "and potentially lead them down a long road of useless medical workups."

Still, he added, it is a good thing for doctors to be aware of the manganese situation. He said he has sent all clinics and hospitals in the city information about the manganese health advisories at least twice, along with his contact information.

In addition, Schlenker said, he has created a surveillance form that anyone calling with concerns is being asked to complete. The form seeks information about manganese exposure, including water use and dietary and medical information.

"With that," Schlenker said, "we should be able to do a good job of analyzing each concern."

Spangler agreed that his work is theoretical, based on animal data and has so far not been tested in humans. But he said there is also other data surfacing from other research projects that raises the same possibility — that perhaps ill effects from exposure to manganese can happen at lower levels than were previously suspect.

"The verdict is still a little bit out on this one," Spangler said. "However, more and more evidence is showing that manganese is not as harmless as we previously believed."

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