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Dennis's vision of helping LGBT inmates through literature. Dennis was also a board member of Art and Soul Innovations, the parent organization of Proud Theater, of which he was a longtime supporter. His work and contributions to the community are too numerous to name, but Dennis was recognized publicly for his dedication several times: he won the David Runyon Man of the Year award from OurReach in 2011 and the Linda Sundberg Civil Rights Defender Award from Community Shares of Wisconsin in 2012.

Dennis was a kind, caring, generous man, and a joy to work with. In the last few years his health was challenging, but he still thought about people that were less fortunate and gave back to his community.

Steve Starkey (OurReach) and Melissa Chienko (LGBT Books to Prisoners) contributed to this remembrance. ■



**Madison Gay Softball places second in national tournament**



The Madison Big Cheese, a team comprised of 11 athletes from Madison's Badgerland LGBT Softball League, battled away the naysayers and fought their way to an impressive second place finish in Division C of the 39th Annual NACAAA Gay Softball World Series (GSWS) in August.

The team had entered the division after pool play ranked as the 35 seed, but went on to defeat squads from Providence, Fort Lauderdale, Columbus, Minneapolis, and top three seeds including Knoxville, San Diego, and Seattle.

The Big Cheese went on to battle it out with Austin, Texas in the final game of the series and fell 14-3, making them the first team from Madison to both make it to the finals and finish as National Runners Up in the C Division.

A whopping 185 teams from all over North America competed in five divisions of tournament play, and Madison represents one of the smallest market members in the NACAAA.

Team member and Five Niphrudub owner Dave Eick had nothing but praise for his fellow players and the experience overall. "This team played for the pride of Madison and Wisconsin," said Eick in an email. "They had the smallest roster with 11 players in the series and five of the players played with torn hamstrings and never gave in. People throughout the GSWS community and in Columbus were referring to us as the Madison Miracles as NO ONE ever gave this small market team a chance to do this. By the end of the series, after a week of games, people from near and far were cheering our motto: Everything's Better with Cheese!" ■

**CONNECT → OUR AUTHORS**

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**Looking for Balance**

Will fellows interviews author **Ray Rigoglioso** about his new book aimed at gay men and the event Fellows is helping to organize in Milwaukee to feature the work.

**NOW THAT GAY MEN** have made so much progress toward equal rights and treatment, where do we go from here? Raymond Rigoglioso offers compelling ideas in his new book, *Gay Men and The New Way Forward*. In anticipation of the author's October 4 event in Milwaukee, organizer Will Fellows asked him a few questions about his work and the book.



**In this era of LGBT, why are you inviting gay men to focus on the G?** Each group in the LGBT umbrella has distinct gifts, shaped by our different lived experiences.

Many of gay men's distinct gifts derive from the fact that we are male, we are socialized as men, and we can serve as a bridge between men and women. In order to explore and embrace our distinct gifts and our social roles, we must sometimes gather with those who have the same lived experience.

**What's the essence of the New Way Forward?** Restoring balance between the masculine and feminine. Gay men possess an innate balance of masculine and feminine, and the ability to seamlessly invoke each as the need arises. When we honor the feminine and masculine within ourselves, we will honor it as it manifests in others and the natural environment. We will leave behind the hierarchies and patterns of dominance/subjugation that characterize patriarchy for more peaceful, collaborative and respectful ways of relating with each other.

**You say that even with societal acceptance, being a gay male will always be hard work. Why?** We will still grow up not seeing critical parts of ourselves reflected in our families. Our energy and ways of being are fundamentally different from that of other boys and men. We will always be a minority.

We occupy an in-between place: between men and women, bridging the masculine and feminine, integral to the human family yet with one foot on the outside. We will always straddle these two worlds. This position takes strength and courage to navigate. It's not an easy path.

**How ready are gay men for your message?** I've been really pleased with the strong, positive response from gay men of all ages. I've felt the palpable excitement in the rooms I've presented in. I believe that gay men are very ready for this message.

Ray Rigoglioso will present a book reading and workshop in Milwaukee on Sunday, October 4.  
Visit [www.gaymenofwisconsin.com](http://www.gaymenofwisconsin.com) for more information.



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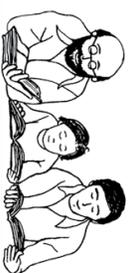
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