

DAYBREAK

Wisconsin State Journal

Coming Thursday
We provide day-by-day highlights of the Wisconsin Film Festival. In Daybreak.



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AYSO gets in the Kids Zone

By Sandra Kallio
Wisconsin State Journal

Madison parents eager to preserve fun in children's sports are declaring their soccer fields a "Kids Zone." That's the name of a national campaign by the American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO), which the Madison region is adapting for its upcoming outdoor soccer season.

The Kids Zone poster to be displayed at games says it all: "Alert! You are entering an AYSO Kids Zone. By entering this Kids Zone, you agree to the following:

- ◆ Kids are #1.
- ◆ Fun — not winning — is everything.
- ◆ Fans only cheer, and only coaches coach.
- ◆ No yelling in anger.
- ◆ Respect the volunteer referees.
- ◆ No swearing.
- ◆ No smoking.
- ◆ Leave no trash behind.
- ◆ Set a proper example for our children.

"If you can agree to the above, we welcome you. If not, we ask that you leave now."

"AYSO — it's for the kids!"

The program is AYSO's response to accounts of negative behavior by players, coaches and parents involved in youth sports. There has not been a problem at Madison AYSO games, said Elisa Gibson, child and volunteer protection advocate for the local organization.

"We've been very fortunate," she said. Still, the group plans to introduce Kids Zone at parent orientation meetings, although with a few modifications from the national campaign. They do not plan to distribute Kids Zone buttons, temporary posters will be erected until the official posters arrive, and they will drop the "only coaches coach" rule in case parents need to respond to a coach on a "power trip." Gibson explained, "Some coaches think that they have the ability to be rough and tough and AYSO isn't really about that."

AYSO's focus is on having fun, developing skills and learning teamwork, rather than on competitive play. It's a recreational league run by parent volunteers like Gibson and her husband, Herb, who is referee administrator.

Parents who find that approach appealing may also like the Madison AYSO pledge to schedule siblings' games at the same park on the same night and to offer sibling discounts on registration fees. (Scholarships also may be available.)

The summer outdoor soccer program is for children who are at least age 4½ by April 30. Parents are required to attend one of two upcoming meetings, which include a Kids Zone presentation: 6 to 7 p.m. April 22 at Van Hise Elementary School, 4747 Waukesha St., and 6 to 7 p.m. April 25 in Room C17 at La Follette High School, 702 Pflaum Road. Practices begin May 20. The season kick-off is a family picnic at 11 a.m. June 8 at Vilas Park. The first match is on June 10, and subsequent games will be Monday or Thursday evenings at one of three Madison fields. The season ends with a family event at which every player gets an award.

Information is available through www.madisonayso.org and 661-8833.

Native son Tom Wopat rolls up his sleeves, but keeps his shirt on, to star in CTM's "South Pacific"



JOSEPH W. JACKSON III/WJSJ

Tom Wopat, who's in Madison to play Emile de Becque in CTM Madison Family Theatre Company's production of "South Pacific," stands in the balcony of Music Hall on the UW-Madison campus. Twenty-eight years ago, he performed in his first "South Pacific" in Music Hall, playing Lieutenant Cable, in a production directed by Gilbert Hemsley and Karlos Moser.

Dressed rehearsal

By Nadine Goff
For the State Journal

The last time Tom Wopat and Lee Waldhart shared the same stage, Wopat was bare-chested. Waldhart was not.

Now that the two are again sharing the same stage, it's Waldhart's turn to be sartorially challenged.

In May 1975, Wopat and Waldhart appeared on the stage of the Capitol Theater in a production of the musical "Jesus Christ Superstar" produced by Madison Area Technical College's music department. Buff, bearded and bare-chested, Wopat played Judas. As Pilate, Waldhart wore a costume that revealed very little.

This week, Wopat, 50, and Waldhart, 52, are appearing on the same stage — now called the Oscar Mayer Theatre — in CTM Madison Family Theatre Company's production of "South Pacific." Wopat plays the romantic lead, the sophisticated French planter Emile de Becque. He keeps his shirt on at all times.

Waldhart, who many Madison theatergoers believe is one of the

funniest actors to walk across a stage, plays the rude and rowdy Luther Billis. A Seabee, Billis sometimes sports a grass skirt and an almost-bare chest, accented by some strategically placed halves of coconut shells.

"South Pacific" will be Waldhart's 112th production, but it is only the fourth musical on his resume.

Wopat, who earned a 1999 Tony nomination for his portrayal of Frank Butler in the Broadway production of "Annie Get Your Gun," starring Bernadette Peters, has appeared in scores of musicals since he made his Madison debut in 1973, playing Tony in a Madison Theatre Guild production of "West Side Story."

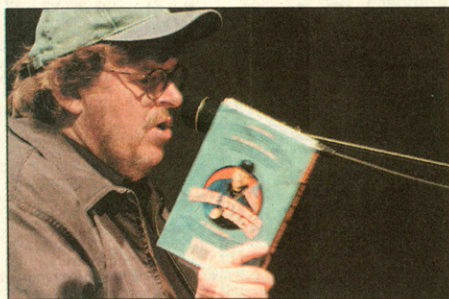
Born and raised on a farm in Lodi, Wopat has carved out a successful career as an actor and singer. He also became an enduring icon of American pop culture for his portrayal of Luke Duke in the enormously popular '80s television series "The Dukes of Hazzard." But, he says he's never found a place he likes better than Madison and he always loves coming home.

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L. Roger Turner/photo

Wopat, right, played Judas in the May 1975 production of "Jesus Christ Superstar" at the Capitol Theater.



Michael Moore reads from his latest book, "Stupid White Men and Other Sorry Excuses for the State of the Nation."

Associated Press

Moore doesn't spare Bush, war or no war

By John Flesher
Associated Press

TRAVERSE CITY, Mich. — The publisher almost pulled the plug on Michael Moore's latest book, fearing a backlash because of its bare-knuckle attacks on President Bush.

So now that "Stupid White Men and Other Sorry Excuses for the State of the Nation" is atop the New York Times best seller list, Moore is feeling a bit more charitable toward his No.

1 target — right? Nah.

"This 80 percent approval rating — this is not about 80 percent of the country approves or loves George W. Bush," Moore said Monday during a stop on his promotional tour. "This is more like love the one you're with. This is who we're stuck with."

Moore, known for a wicked humor that skewers conservatives and corporations such as General Motors, was true to

form in a speech at Northwestern Michigan College. A capacity crowd of about 400 packed Milliken Auditorium, and hundreds watched through closed-circuit television in another campus building.

By turns jocular and indignant, Moore hammered Bush, Enron and the administration's handling of the war on terrorism. He also provided a sneak preview of his coming film, "Bowling for Columbine," which pokes fun at the gun

culture and features interviews with members of the Michigan Militia.

The first chapter of his book describes the 2000 presidential election as "a very American coup." As far as Moore is concerned, Al Gore is the rightful president of the United States.

"People say, 'Get over it.' Well, I'll never get over it," he said. "There's nothing more basic in a democracy than the

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Wopat

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"I love doing stuff back here," says Wopat, who last year was a guest artist at the 27th annual Wisconsin Varsity Band Spring Concert at the Kohl Center. "There's a whole different vibe here."

Wopat says one of the nice things about his whole career is that he's still pretty much the same guy he was back before he became famous.

Speaking about his career during a backstage interview in New York in 1999, he said: "For me it's a job. I've been lucky enough to do something I love to do, but it's nothing more than that. My profession has defined me, but I'm still the farmer that I was. On the deck of my apartment I'm growing tomatoes, cucumbers and roses."

During an interview last week, Wopat said career advancement, fun and money are his usual criteria for determining whether or not to accept or pursue a particular opportunity. But sometimes, particularly when it comes to work in places where his career began, it becomes a matter of "karmic payback."

Wopat first performed in

"South Pacific" in a 1974 production by The Opera in Music Hall at the UW-Madison. The late Gilbert Hemsley, who became one of Wopat's mentors, was the stage director. Karlos Moser was the music director.

Moser, a professor emeritus and former director of the University Opera, says: "Tom played Lieutenant Cable and I now understand he's playing Emile de Becque. That's a proper progression."

Wopat was 23 when he played Cable, a young Marine Corps officer sent to an island in the South Pacific during World War II on a dangerous mission to collect intelligence about enemy ship movement. Moser says Wopat's voice was not deep enough at the time to play de Becque, whose memorable numbers in the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical include "Some Enchanted Evening."

"His presence was notable," remembers Moser. "Tom made a terrific impact, partly because of his body — and as Lt. Cable he had a chance to show it off when he took off his shirt."

Waldhart says when Wopat performed at Wilson Street East, a Madison dinner theater that was open from 1975 until the mid-'80s, women used to throw hotel keys at him.

A bemused Wopat says he's

not sure that actually happened. "I think it's apocryphal," he says when confronted with the story.

Wopat does, however, remember baring a bit more than his chest during a Wilson Street East production of "What the Butler Saw," a comedy by Joe Orton. "I played a policeman who went down to his underwear," he says.

It was Wopat's wonderful baritone singing voice, however, that convinced Nancy Thurow to cast Wopat in CTM's production of "South Pacific" after she saw him perform in "Annie Get Your Gun."

"I want everyone to know Tom for his beautiful voice and great stage presence," says Esther McIntosh, who's the rehearsal pianist for CTM's "South Pacific."

McIntosh, who's worked with CTM since 1970, first met Wopat when the two worked together on "West Side Story." She also worked with him during Theatre Guilds' critically acclaimed production of "Godspell" in 1975, when he played

If you go

◆ **What:** "South Pacific," featuring Tom Wopat.

◆ **When:** Friday, 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, 3:30 and 7:30 p.m.; Sunday, 2:30 and 7 p.m.

◆ **Where:** Oscar Mayer Theatre at the Madison Civic Center.

◆ **Tickets:** \$19-39, 258-4141.

Judas and John the Baptist. The two also served as co-musical directors for a production of "The Fantasticks," where Wopat demonstrated his musical acumen behind the scenes.

"Anyone who's ever worked with Tom could tell he had talent," says Waldhart. "He obviously loves the stage and he's so good on it."

Wopat didn't begin rehearsing with the CTM cast until last week, but Waldhart says he impressed everyone because he was so prepared for his role, and because, when he first arrived, he got down on the floor with the rest of the cast to participate in pre-rehearsal warm-up exercises.

"Tom's always been very professional, but never arrogant," says Waldhart. "Working with him on this production raises the bar for all of us. He obviously loves the stage and he's so good on it."

Wopat says, "I love what I do and musical theater is my favorite."

He is, however, eager to work in other, new areas. Wopat is currently in the final negotiations for his first dramatic role, playing a fire captain who has lost most of his men in the Sept. 11 attack in "The Guys," a critically acclaimed new play by Anne Nelson, now playing at The Flea Theater in New York City. He also hopes to one day make a documentary film.

In addition, he's continuing to carve out a niche as a crooner, singing in nightclubs and promoting his CD, "In the Still of the Night."

"If you listen to this album, the image of Luke Duke is gone," Wopat says.

For many Madisonians, es-

pecially those who knew him before his professional career took off, Wopat will always be much more than a pop culture icon. They remember him as many things, including a student, a truck driver, a self-employed roofer, a musician, an actor and a director, as well as a gifted singer who once auditioned for the Houston Grand Opera.

Many Vang, who plays Liat in CTM's production of "South Pacific," wasn't even born when Wopat took off his shirt in The Opera's "South Pacific" in 1974. But she watched reruns of "The Dukes of Hazzard" while she was growing up, and, she says, "I thought he was really cute." Now that she's had a chance to work with Wopat, she says: "He's still hot."

She's right on all counts. Last week, during an interview, Wopat, encouraged by Waldhart, briefly lifted his polo shirt to reveal his still impressive abs and pecs. He could still play Lt. Cable, but it's his beautiful baritone, not his bare chest, that's bound to melt hearts in this production of "South Pacific."

Very important papers

Martha Stewart is asked by a reader for advice on storing important documents — credit-card statements, bills and the like. How long to keep them, and how to organize them? Martha has answers. In **Daybreak Sunday**

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Double Anytime