

A LOOK BACK | STATE JOURNAL'S EIGHT TO WATCH IN 2008

Eight who had an eventful 2008

SHIRLEY ABRAHAMSON
WISCONSIN SUPREME COURT CHIEF JUSTICE



Her goal got tougher

Wisconsin Supreme Court Chief Justice Shirley Abrahamson's goal of keeping public trust in the state's highest court got tougher in 2008 when six of the seven justices were forced to decide whether to discipline their newest member, Annette Ziegler. "The court did have a difficult case because for the first time, it was asked to review the conduct of one of our own. That was unprecedented," said Abrahamson, 75. The court handed down a public reprimand to Ziegler, who acknowledged having had conflicts of interest when she heard cases as a Washington County Circuit Court judge. A second justice, Michael Gableman, also faces possible sanction from his colleagues. Abrahamson faces her own election challenge in April for another 10-year term on the bench from Jefferson County Circuit Judge Randy Koschnick.

— Dee J. Hall

TOM CANE
ACCOUNTABILITY BOARD CHAIRMAN



New group has been active

When the Government Accountability Board began its work a year ago, its chairman, Tom Cane, 69, told the State Journal that the group of six retired judges overseeing elections and ethics laws would be independent and nonpartisan. Over the year, the group took steps to regulate campaign ads, barred public officials from hiding assets in blind trusts, reviewed lawmakers' daily living payments and stared down Attorney General J.B. Van Hollen over his lawsuit on voter registration checks. "They have shown their independence," said Mike Wittenwyler, a Madison lawyer who has argued before the board. Conservatives have criticized the board over its plans to regulate ads and for its refusal to conduct expansive voter registration checks prior to the Nov. 4 election.

— Mark Pitsch

GABRIELA CEZAR
UW-MADISON STEM-CELL SCIENTIST

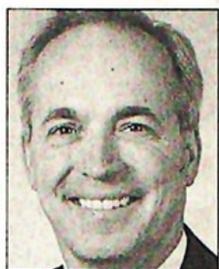


Autism research yields results

How are the brains of people with autism different? UW-Madison stem-cell scientist Gabriela Cezar, whose goal for 2008 was to study tissue samples from 20 autistic patients, says the results have been "compelling." She hopes to publish the findings in early 2009 and expand the study. But that's not all the Brazilian scientist has been up to. Cezar, 36, and Fred H. Gage, professor at the Salk Institute for Biological Studies in La Jolla, Calif., used human embryonic stem cells to create brain cells with characteristics like those in people with ALS, or amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, a degenerative neuromuscular disease. The findings are expected to help screen for drugs to better treat ALS patients. Meanwhile, Stemina Biomarker Discovery, the Madison biotech co-founded by Cezar, has its first product due out in early 2009. It's a test to see if drugs being developed will cause birth defects.

— Judy Newman

MATT FRANK
WISCONSIN DNR SECRETARY



He pushed deals for Great Lakes

In his first full year as Department of Natural Resources secretary, Matt Frank helped push through landmark agreements to protect Great Lakes water and cut mercury pollution. The Great Lakes Compact approved by both the state Legislature and Congress will prevent their fresh water from being diverted. The mercury rules passed in October will cut coal plant emissions of that pollutant by 90 percent by as early as 2015. "Wisconsin is about water and it's really important that we protect our waters," Frank said. Former DNR secretary George Meyer, now executive director of the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation, praised Frank's accomplishments but said the state must act to keep invasive species out of the Great Lakes. Frank, 52, said Wisconsin intends to have a "strong state permit" in place to prevent invasives before the beginning of the 2009 shipping season.

— Jason Stein

JULIE JENSEN
MADISON REPERTORY THEATER ADMINISTRATOR



Arts' fiscal dive cost her job

Julie Jensen knows firsthand what the economy's nosedive has done to the arts. For one thing, it did away with her job. As Madison Repertory Theatre's top administrator, Jensen holds one of six positions cut in November. Although the Rep had achieved what Jensen laid out a year ago as its most important goal — recruiting more season ticket holders — this fall, single-ticket sales bombed. "When the economy really took a dive, we went from selling around 100 tickets a day to, one day, selling nine," said Jensen, 38. She'll leave the Rep at the end of February, perhaps for a career intermission. "I have two kids (ages 5 and 18 months), so I might stay home with them for awhile," she said. "I certainly plan to stay in the nonprofit world. I love the arts and I have a strong arts administration background, so I hope to stay connected to the arts in one form or another."

— Gayle Worland

MARK OLINGER
MADISON PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR



City planner has been busy

Mark Olinger has been a busy man. Olinger, director of the Madison's Planning and Development Department, has guided progress on some of the most ambitious efforts in years. The city:

- Started construction on phase one of the \$28 million redevelopment of Allied Drive.
- Began to redevelop the Villager Mall on South Park Street.
- Updated its Economic Development Plan and will finish an update of the Downtown Plan by summer.
- Adopted a Capitol Gateway Corridor Plan.

 But Olinger, 52, didn't anticipate effects of a fast changing economy. "The way that the markets affected major redevelopment projects such as Union Corners and Hilldale was amazing in how quickly the development landscape in Madison changed," he said.

— Dean Mosiman



His field: "Cardiology is a field that changes rapidly—we know more about the heart today than we did yesterday. Each new discovery and innovation translates to better care and more lives saved," says Benjamin Kleiber, MD.

"EMPOWERING PATIENTS
— gives them the ability —
TO LIVE BETTER,"

says cardiologist Benjamin Kleiber.



His approach: "I make sure my patients understand what their diagnosis means and what they can do to live better. There are so many different treatment options that it's crucial to answer all their questions so they can make the best decisions."



On Dean: "Dean is different. It's the healthcare system of the future because the doctors make the business decisions, so you know the focus stays on patients," says Dr. Kleiber.

- Medical School: University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
- Residency: Georgetown University Medical Center, Washington, DC
- Fellowship: Georgetown University Medical Center/Washington Hospital Center/Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Washington, DC



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NOBLE WRAY
MADISON POLICE CHIEF

New cops help

Madison Police Chief Noble Wray said a dozen new officers in 2008 and an increased focus on burglaries and gangs helped him address a citywide clamor for police attention to quality-of-life complaints. Most of the 12 new officers who hit the streets in June were assigned to patrol, heading off issues such as loitering, loud parties, unattended children, drugs, public drunkenness and drug-dealing, Wray, 48, said. But the new officers also allowed for another neighborhood officer for a troubled Southwest Side area, Wray said, and for extra support for Toki Middle School and Brittingham Park. A task force headed by Lt. Mark Brown uncovered ties to gangs and drugs in the growing number of commercial and residential burglaries since 2007. A second gang officer, Lester Moore, also was added. "That's been tremendously helpful," Wray said.

— Karen Rivedal



NED YOST
MILWAUKEE BREWERS MANAGER

Team made playoffs, he didn't

It was expected that Ned Yost would be a lightning rod for Wisconsin sports fans in 2008, but who knew he would generate so many sparks in his sixth season as manager of the Brewers? Milwaukee had a breakthrough performance, going 90-72 in the National League Central Division and qualifying for the playoffs for the first time since 1982. But Yost, 53, wasn't around when the Brewers beat the Chicago Cubs 3-1 on the final day of the regular season to clinch the NL wild-card berth. He was fired Sept. 15 — even though the Brewers were 15 games over .500 with 12 games remaining — reportedly at the behest of owner Mark Attanasio because the team had lost 11 of its last 14. Yost was replaced on an interim basis by bench coach Dale Sveum, who coached the Brewers into playoffs, where they lost to eventual World Series champion Philadelphia in the NL Divisional Series.

— Andy Baggot



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