

# Grandma's 'Shirley Temple' finally emerged

She sings what may be the state ballad

MAUSTON — It's hard to feel too romantic about Wisconsin after two hours cursing in Labor Day Weekend traffic, and yet there it was, an actual tear in my eye, as Shari Sarazin's sweet voice soared through the chorus of "Wisconsin, Land of My Dreams."

For a minute or two, I forgot the thundering of I-90/94 a few blocks away, and was transported back to the wonder that a Wisconsin farm girl found in the land. The song is being pushed as Wisconsin's "State Ballad" and will be heard at a legislative hearing



SUSAN  
LAMPERT  
SMITH  
ON WISCONSIN

on Sept. 21.

The story behind the song is really about Sarazin's grandmother, Erma Barrett, one of those farm ladies born at the beginning of this century who lived a life both common and remarkable.

Through her granddaughter, Sarazin, the "Shirley Temple" that Barrett had been waiting for,

her music is still being heard at area graduations, weddings and funerals.

Barrett was born Erma Howland in 1904, and grew up one of 13 children in a very musical family in New Lisbon. She could sing and play piano, violin and other instruments by ear. She graduated from teacher's college, married Tom Barrett and moved to the farm near Hustler that his family had homesteaded as Irish immigrants in the 1850s.

Despite the hard work of farming and raising seven kids, Erma Barrett always made time for music.

"After supper," says her daughter, Mary Barrett LaDuke, "She'd have dishes all over and just get up from the table and go

to the piano and play and sing and play and sing." Adds her other daughter, Margie Barrett Lowe, "She would be singing when we would be coming in from the barn."

Barrett always brought her "stomper," a pole with a tambourine and other noisemakers on stage during family weddings — and sometimes the band would have to take an unscheduled break so they could get her back off the stage. She founded the Hustlin' Hustlers 4-H group and for 40 years directed musicals and performances.

"She was never more in her glory than when there was someone she could direct in perform-

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Erma Barrett



Shari Sarazin

## 'OH WISCONSIN, LAND OF MY DREAMS'

By Erma Barrett

*Oh Wisconsin, land of beauty  
With your hillsides and your plains  
With your jackpine and your birch tree  
And your oak of mighty frame,  
Land of rivers, lakes and valleys,  
Land of warmth and winter snows,  
Land of birds and beasts and humanity,  
Oh Wisconsin, I love you so.  
Oh Wisconsin, land of my dreams,  
Oh Wisconsin, you're all I'll ever need.  
A little heaven here on earth could you be,  
Oh Wisconsin, land of my dreams.  
In the springtime robins singing,  
In the autumn flaming colors show.  
Oh I wonder who could wander  
Or who could want to drift for long,  
Away from all your beauty,  
All your sunshine, all your sweet song.  
And when it's time to let my spirit run free,  
In Wisconsin, land of my dreams.*



CRAIG SCHREINER/WSJ photo

Adebanke Lesi, a junior at Madison West High School who aspires to be a pediatrician, has benefited from programs offered by the Wisconsin Center for Academically Talented Youth. Through a new endowment fund, the Madison nonprofit organization hopes to increase the number of low-income and minority students participating in its programs.

## Goal: To help bright minority kids sparkle

By Doug Erickson  
Education reporter

Adebanke Lesi says she's no genius, but she likes to think of herself as smart.

It doesn't hurt that she devours textbooks with uncommon hunger, studying four to five hours nightly.

"It's my obsession," she says of getting good grades at Madison's West High School, where she's a junior. "When I get that 'A' — aah, it feels good."

For two years, Adebanke, 15, a Nigerian native, has augmented her school courses with programs offered by the nonprofit Wisconsin Center for Academically Talented Youth.

The center, begun in 1991 and based in Madison, is not a school itself. It offers summer residential and mentorship programs, weekend workshops and other rigorous academic opportunities on college and university campuses through-

### To help

For information on donating to the Children of Promise Funds, contact Kaleem Caire or development director Jodi Bender at the Wisconsin Center for Academically Talented Youth, 271-1617. The endowment will be managed by the Madison Community Foundation.

out the state for students in grades four through 12.

This month, it begins a major fund-raising campaign for an endowment called Children of Promise Funds, which is intended to increase the number of minority and low-income students from the Madison area participating in cen-

Please see **BRIGHT**, Page 4C

## Jefferson County farmers may get to sell little pieces of land

By Richard W. Jaeger  
Regional reporter

JEFFERSON — Landowners in Jefferson County would no longer have to "sell the farm" to improve their cash flow if the county's new land-use plan gets adopted.

Instead of being forced to divide a minimum of 35 acres for a residential building site on prime agricultural land, the plan would allow a minimum of one acre for the landowner who has less than 50 acres and two such splits for more than 50 acres. The maximum size of the newly created rural residential lot would be two acres.

"This not only helps the landowner, but it helps the county and towns to guide site development and helps preserve prime agricultural land," said Bruce Haukom, Jefferson County zoning director.

After nearly four years of haggling over a countywide land-use plan, the County Board is expected to vote on a final draft at its Sept. 21 meeting.

The Jefferson County Towns Association paved the way for a vote on the plan when it gave approval to some of the more controversial provisions of the plan — namely the Ag Preservation

section.

The major feature of that section is the small acreage splits of prime farmland to parcels less than 35 acres.

Haukom said that under present land-use rules, landowners have to sell a minimum of 35 acres in order to sell part of a farm for development of a residential lot on land determined to be prime agricultural.

Prime agricultural land is defined by soil ratings developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

One of the biggest complaints of current land-use policies has been the 35-acre requirement, Haukom said.

"Farmers with only prime agricultural land wanting to sell a portion of their farm whether it be to help their cash flow or whatever, were forced to sell 35 acres," Haukom said. "That was a big chunk and hard to sell unless to another farmer. Now they can take a minimum of one acre and rezone to rural residential."

Such divisions require review

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## A bite of this and that



STEVE APPS/WSJ photos

About 100 people wait in line at the Taste of Madison on Saturday to sample culinary delights from the Top of the Park booth. Below, the restaurant posts its bill of fare.



### Today

- The 17th Annual Taste of Madison wraps up (10 a.m. to 6 p.m.) with plenty of food, music and entertainment.
- The Waiters' Race begins at 2 p.m. on State Street.

## About 80,000 show up for Taste of Madison

By Cary Segall  
Wisconsin State Journal

Plenty of fat and plenty of beer.

Brats. Pizza. Beer-battered cheese curds. Ice cream and frozen custard. Even Oscar Mayer wieners.

The 17th Annual Taste of Madison has the right taste for Wisconsin.

The Oscar Mayer wieners, a state staple made in Madison, were hawked on the Capitol Square Saturday by effervescent Mary Lee Steinmueller, as a fund-raiser for the YMCAs in Dane County.

"Hot dogs. Our own Oscar Mayer all-beef hot dogs," Steinmueller, program center director at the East YMCA, yelled to

### 'Everybody likes Oscar Mayer wieners.'

Barbara Jones  
member services administrator  
at the East YMCA

prospective tasters.

"Way to go. Way to be an American," she said after making a sale, before leading buyers in the Oscar Mayer wiener song.

There was no line, and sales of the \$1 dogs seemed slow, but Barbara Jones, member services administrator at the East YMCA, said volunteers would sell 2,000 to 3,000 wieners, do-

nated by Oscar Mayer, by the time the two-day festival ends after a final serving from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. today.

"We have a lot of kids up here and they don't like the fancy foods," Jones said. "Everybody likes Oscar Mayer wieners."

About a block away from the YMCA booth, people who wouldn't settle for hot dogs waited 15 minutes to half an hour in the longest line of the festival for fancy food from the Top of the Park.

Chef Ann Kozina served up stuffed pork tenderloin and couscous pasta for \$3; a wild mushroom sampler over puff pastry for \$2; and Devonshire

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## UW adviser: Make decisions with care

By Elizabeth Brixey  
Higher education reporter

For the almost 2,000 freshmen at UW-Madison who have no idea what they want to do with their lives — or have so many ideas that they don't know where to begin — Greg Medina has this advice:

Stop. Be quiet.

And think about it.

"I don't mean to sound overly cosmic," says Medina, director of the university's Cross-College Advising Service, "but the best piece of advice I know is to find a moment of solitude and reflect on the decisions that you are making. Try to make them decisions that you will be proud of, and comfortable with, tomorrow."

Medina speaks from many years of advising and working with students, not only at Madison, but at Cornell University and the universities of Iowa and Texas at Austin.

He also speaks from the memory of a rough freshman year.

"It was a large university. I was barely 17. I was working. I was commuting," Medina says. "The pressures on freshmen

are extraordinary."

He now finds himself in a position to help influence the freshman experience at UW-Madison. The Cross-College Advising Service, created five years ago by legislative mandate, works only with those students who don't know what they want to study or those who can't decide between, say, brain surgery or copy editing or animal husbandry.

This year, there are about 1,800 of them. The remaining 4,000 or so freshmen are assigned advisers in their areas of study.

"When you come to a university of this size, with a dozen colleges and many, many majors and certificate programs, the decision-making process is quite complex," Medina says. "It requires informed and timely information, and that's what we try to provide."

Medina urges students to try to land in a profession they feel passionate about.

"When you have that, you are ultimately much more satisfied in life," he says.

In advising, Medina especially pushes study-abroad programs and internships

that blast students into a new environment and force a changing perspective.

"Sometimes the process of decision requires them taking time off, away from school," he says.

And then there are the family expectations.

"A student might say, 'Mom and Dad want me to be a vet, but I don't like animals,' or 'Mom and Dad want me to be a teacher, but I don't like kids.' So we temper that and we listen," he says.

Medina is an evangelist for universities in general.

"In a democratic society, the university is the main avenue of social equity," he says. "Higher education affords students the perfect forum for decision-making and examining their values."

"We all come in from different bearings and locations, but the university setting gets you to re-examine who you are and where you are going in this place we call America," Medina says. "And that holds true for everyone. You can't attend a university and not be changed by the experience. I think it's our duty as educators to see that the experience is as positive as possible."



BACK TO  
THE BOOKS

■ This is the last in a series of stories about students and student life at UW-Madison, Edgewood College and Madison Area Technical College.



## Bright

Continued from Page 1C

ter programs.

Kaleem Caire, the center's special projects director, views the fund as a way to attack the racial achievement gap in area schools and the perception that gifted-and-talented programs are the exclusive domain of financially well-off students.

"My ultimate goal is to disprove the naysayers, those who think that low-income students and students of color — students who just don't have the money to participate in these programs — are in some way intellectually disadvantaged as well," says Caire, who joined the center last month after two years as the minority student achievement consultant for the state Department of Public Instruction.

In Madison, as in just about every large school district in the nation, the average grades and test scores of black, Hispanic, Southeast Asian and American Indian students lag behind those of their white counterparts.

The center's endowment will address this achievement gap through an outreach component that will include part-time staffers working one-on-one with low-income students,

and through scholarships for center programs. The scholarships will offer partial support to middle-income students and full support to the financially disadvantaged, Caire says. The fund is part of a broader effort by the center to diversify its student base.

"(The center) has served over 11,000 kids in the state since 1991, but if you'd look at those 11,000 students, you'd see very few students of color," he says.

Adebanke is the kind of student the center wants to reach. Although her parents now are solidly in the middle-income ranks, they were struggling financially three years ago after moving from Nigeria to the United States. They left their native country to provide better educational opportunities for their four children, says Adebanke's father, Adetunji.

A scholarship from the center allowed Adebanke to attend an intense, three-week accelerated learning program on biology at Lawrence University in Appleton during the summer of 1997. The family could not have afforded the \$1,500 cost, says Adebanke's father.

"That is a beautiful program," he says of the summer session. "When kids are encouraged, when they're selected for that program, they get spurred into education. They get challenged, and that's what kids

need."

He says he's long known that his daughter excelled intellectually. As a fifth-grader, she scored 588 out of a possible 600 points in the national test in Nigeria that determines a student's future academic track.

"I believe she scored the highest in the country, although that was difficult to confirm," he says.

Adebanke, who plans to be a pediatrician, returned to Lawrence for a 1998 summer session that focused on chemistry. The same summer, she placed second nationally in a poetry contest sponsored by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

At West High, she is on the staff of "Tapestry," the school literary magazine, and she tutors peers in Spanish, computer programming and geometry.

Students like Adebanke often come to the attention of the center after scoring in the 95th percentile or above on standardized tests — a requirement for participation in a majority of the center's programs. Students who are referred to the center by parents or teachers are encouraged to take a test such as the ACT or SAT college admissions exam to determine their ability. Students in grades four through six can take the Explore ACT, designed for lower grades.

One endowment goal is to iden-

tify gifted minority and low-income students as early as second-grade, when their expectations for success are still largely unaffected by society's stereotypes, Caire says.

"By fourth- or fifth-grade, a sense of failure already has set in with some of these students," he says.

Caire, who is black, counts himself among those who didn't apply themselves in school. Pinned in front of him at his work desk is his transcript from West High School, where he graduated in 1989 with a 1.57 grade-point average out of 4.0.

His peers discouraged academics back then, he says, because they weren't having good experiences themselves in school and didn't feel the curriculum was relevant.

"I grew up believing that if you tried in school, you'd fail anyway," says Caire, 28. "When I got to high school, I had to put on this tough-kid image. I was angry. If you were my teacher and ticked me off, I wouldn't come to your class. And that's the way a lot of these kids are."

A stint in the Navy and several adult mentors helped him focus on higher education, and he later earned a bachelor's degree in urban education from UW-Madison.

He keeps that high school transcript in front of him at all times now — "a reminder that grades don't always reflect a student's potential," he says.



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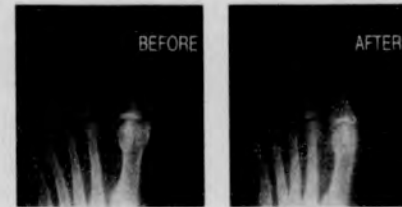
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