Dedicated to God, our providers & sponsors, our family & friends, plus subjects, readers, archivists, counselors, medics, publishers, & sellers.

“To change the world that one lives in, one must start with where one lives.”

-- “Call the Nurse Midwife.”

Original New Pioneers Lunch Club Meeting (L-R: Yale Ph.D. Mark Felker, SA96 Author-Photog DvJM, former Mayor John Medinger, & MU MA David W. Johns visiting from KS), ca. May 2014 (Photo by Joe Kotnour).

With SA96, his 181st book, & his many other writings & photos, David Joseph Marcou is WI’s most prolific author.

SA96 BW Front Cover Pic IDs:
Muslim Man Walking, LaX, ca. 2008 (DvJM); St. Pat’s Parade, St. Pat’s Parade, LaX, 3-16-19 (DvJM); LaX Aquinas HS Girls BB State Champion Team, Green Bay, WI 2019 (Photo by Jeff Scheidt).
La Crosse, WI was once Wisconsin's second-largest city (after Milwaukee), and is still a decent-sized community, which draws in US presidents & presidential candidates fairly often, as it did in 2016, when “America's Mayor”, Rudy Giuliani traveled w/ Donald Trump. Many nationalities have called it home over the years—from Native American, German, Irish, Scandinavian, British, & Russian to African-American, Middle Eastern, Hmong, Korean, Japanese, Chinese, and Hispanic. The city touts its diversity, including its many festivals—especially Oktoberfest, Riverfest, Irishfest, People's Fest, Jewish, Muslim, and Hmong holidays, and Folk Fest. La Crosse has 7 international sister cities. including Epinal, France (boy-pulling-thorn-out statue).

A visitor to or a resident in La Crosse in the last decade could view/hear Irish dancers and musicians in many local spots and at various times; rock and folk musicians performing in abundance throughout the decades; visits by national and international celebrities, including Presidential candidates, Presidents, and Nobel Laureates also. Although La Crosse has never spawned a US President, we’ve seen many of them come through here; and many La Crosse natives/residents have gone on to become Wisconsin governors (including Cadwallader Washburn, who funded the start of our public library and also founded the General Mills Co.) and US Senators and Congressmen.

Three good colleges, Viterbo, UW-L, and Western Tech offer coursework in a wide range of subjects and draw in students and faculty from around the nation and world. Doctors and nurses come from many locales to work at Gundersen Healthcare and the La Crosse branch of the Mayo Clinic/St. Francis Hospital. Police and fire personnel give workshops around the nation and world (my brother Dan, who was in charge of training for the LaX Police Department many years, has presented many of them along with authoring some of his own books); our police (including my sister Diane Skifton & her son, Dan) and fire personnel do great work daily. The US military does business here via Logistics Health; and nearby Camp McCoy’s troops visit La Crosse often.

World-class artists make regular visits to La Crosse; Elmer Petersen has executed some of this city’s most dramatic sculptures, some of the best in the nation in fact; Paul Granlund has done some nice ones here too; so has Mike Martino. Triple Grammyist Bill Miller attended UW-La Crosse in his youth; the world debut for his well-received “Last Stand Symphony” was at Viterbo University in April 2008, and featured the La Crosse Symphony Orchestra and Native American dancers and musicians. (Your author photographed that world debut’s dress rehearsal for the Smithsonian National American Indian Museum, where 32 of my photos are in the SI NAIM permanent collection and online there too.)

The world’s first widely-famous hijabi-wearing model, the Brit Mariah Idrissi, spoke to a large audience or two at UW-L in 2017. And the Viterbo University Holocaust Survivors Series has drawn in some of the world’s most famous holocaust survivors, including Elie Wiesel, a survivor of Auschwitz, author of more than 50 books (including his very famous best-seller “Night”); Mr. Wiesel was also a Nobel Peace
Laureate, a Presidential Medal of Freedom winner, and the founding chair of the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC; I was Viterbo’s official photographer for his visit on Elie Wiesel Day Sept. 27, 2006, and have photographed that VU series ever-since. In addition, the La Crosse-based FSPA nuns draw in acolytes & nuns globally.

Two world-famous film directors attended high school in La Crosse: Nick Ray went on to direct “Rebel Without a Cause”, starring James Dean; and Joe Losey, son of a famous La Crosse family, went on to direct Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton in “Boom”, among many top films he directed. Both men were blacklisted for political reasons in the 1950s and had to move about considerably to work at all for a while.

In athletics, stellar performers have emerged from local schools over time. George Coleman Poage graduated from the former La Crosse High School and the UW-Madison, and went on to earn the first two medals (both bronze) by an African-American in Olympic history (in hurdles events at the St. Louis Summer Olympics in 1904). Jim Temp starred at Aquinas HS and the UW-Madison, and was a Green Bay Packer lineman until a career-ending shoulder injury; Jim went on to serve on the Packers Board of Directors and used to write sports columns too for the La Crosse Tribune. Recent AHS star basketballers Scott Christopherson and Bronson Koenig enjoyed stellar careers at Iowa State and UW-Madison, as did nearby Onalaska’s Matt Thomas at ISU. Bronson starred on two AHS State Championship teams and also holds UW Men’s record for most career 3-pointers. He played on two NCAA Final Four teams for UW. And AHS Girls BB Team won a 2019 state title. Plus current La Crosse Central basketballer Johnny Davis is a highly sought recruit leaning towards signing with UW; his brother Jordan also stars in football.

Not to be outdone by Aquinas and Central, LaX Logan’s former basketball coach and teacher D. Wayne Lukas went on to become the world’s biggest money-making racehorse trainer. And former UW-L Football wide receiver and national champ track and field star Bill Schroeder would play for the Green Bay Packers and Detroit Lions. In baseball, two former La Crosse Catbird pitchers have gone on to be MLB All-Stars, Max Scherzer and Chris Sales; Scherzer has even won three Cy Young Awards so far; Max attended one of my alma maters, the University of Missouri-Columbia. (In addition to AHS, UW-Madison, and Mizzou, I also graduated from Iowa with an MA in Amer.Studies.)-- 1st Written by DvJ M 3-27-19 and revised by DvJ M later too.