

should read "Your Responsibilities as a Madison Cat Owner" that accompanies license renewals, she said she never licenses her cat. A long-time friend, also a cat owner, said: "I don't license mine, either."

While I know dogs have owners and cats have entourage, many cat owners appear to be either ignorant or brazen scofflaws. The city should have uniform enforcement.

— *Paul W. Schlecht, Madison*

## Fund languages of future, not past

A recent letter asked why, since the governor and Legislature allocate funds for English as a second language programs for immigrants and their children, why aren't our native-born Indians and their children given the same consideration?

The reason is that English is the language that people need to know to succeed in the U.S. and in the global economy.

And we are not doing a good enough job of teaching it now, as recent studies of the Madison schools demonstrate.

If we spend more money on teaching languages other than English, it should be on those languages that Americans will need to know in the future, not the past. That means Chinese and Arabic as the first choices.

If American Indians want to teach their kids other languages, they should do it on their own, just as Jews teach their kids Hebrew, some traditional Catholics teach theirs Latin, or as some families teach their Polish or Greek.

— *Jim Blair, Madison*

## Keep manual recount for election security

After the recent broadcast of the HBO movie "Recount," we should evaluate how well Wisconsin would hold up under intense scrutiny.

Start with the Government Accountability Board's recount manual, which provides guidance to recount boards. It's poorly organized, with no page numbers; no table of contents and no index.

And what of the procedure itself? There is an important feature of Wisconsin law that needs to be changed.

Under current law, all recounts of optical scan ballots must be done by machine. The programmed memory cards that were used on Election Day are usually used for the recount, so if they made an error on Election Day, they

## Pick politics or religion - not both

If nothing else happens this election year, one thing will always be known — that there is a principle in our system that separates church and state.

Has there ever been more public display of hatred and bigotry than that shown recently by men of the cloth? Hypocrites tell us the Bible says to love, and then tell us to hate, all in one Sunday morning.

These men are not examples of the religion they speak of, but politicians with a following of morons who won't speak up to stop the hatred. Maybe the tax-exempt status of their churches should be revoked. If they want to be politicians, treat them like politicians.

— *John F. McKay, Waterloo*



Associated Press archives

Rev. Michael Pfleger, left, with Rev. Jesse Jackson in 2007.

will make the same error for the recount. They are tested before the election. But since Wisconsin has no statewide standards for testing, we have no idea how thorough the testing is.

The Wisconsin Legislature should change the law to allow the option of manual counts of the optical scan ballots as a cross check of the machine counts. (This was the law from 1982 until 2006.) If machines are used, there should be at least a partial manual count, to verify the machine count.

Recounts must be transparent and thorough, and Wisconsin does not meet this standard.

— *Paul Malischke, Madison, member of Fair Elections Wisconsin*

## Be self-sufficient, but don't live in fear

The recent "In Depth" piece on the new wave of survivalists was interesting but dismaying in its redundancy.

I remember the 1970s with the gas shortage, food shortage, inflation — the world seemed to be falling apart around us. My parents recall the 1950s when people built bomb shelters in their backyards for when the Russians dropped the big one.

The apocalyptic mentality of 1999 is still fresh in the memories of many. Cash out your savings and retirement. Get paper copies of everything. All power and emergency services might be gone.

People stockpiled food, water and gas for generators, and they of course had weapons and ammo to protect their supplies from the marauding hordes who were not prepared. They ended up buried under a year's supply of candles and Spam.

Most adults remember the endless information after the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks on how to insulate our homes from the biological weapons of mass destruction. Buy lots of duct tape and plastic!

There is certainly nothing wrong with striving to become more self-sufficient in gas and food. But when groups describe their lives as panic-stricken and fearful, think the government is perpetuating the disaster and contemplate living in communities to self-protect, that's more like Jonestown, Waco or Ruby Ridge. If that is what the citizens of America become, we might as well declare ourselves the Middle East of the new millennium right now and get it over with.

— *Carmen Brunet, DeForest*

Using E-85 fuel is even worse. On a trip out west, driving the interstate, I used E-85 for the first half of the trip and got 15 to 16 mpg. When I switched to straight gasoline for the remainder, I got 20 to 21 mpg.

Needless to say, I will never use E-85 in my truck again. What would be the point?

— *George Eckert, Wisconsin Dells*

## Blame corporate greed, not workers

Regarding a recent article reporting that workers in Wisconsin earn less than the average wage nationwide, it was noted by a Department of Workforce Development official that Wisconsin is working to raise wages by training a highly skilled workforce.

How will this help most displaced workers in the 21st century Wal-Mart economy? Based on this logic, it appears the DWD's position is that Wisconsin is losing higher paying jobs because workers here are not skilled.

Why is the blame for lower wages placed on the shoulders of workers with no mention of corporate policies that promote higher profits for executives and shareholders, often at the expense of frontline employees?

— *Corporate greed, coupled*

## Test drive proves