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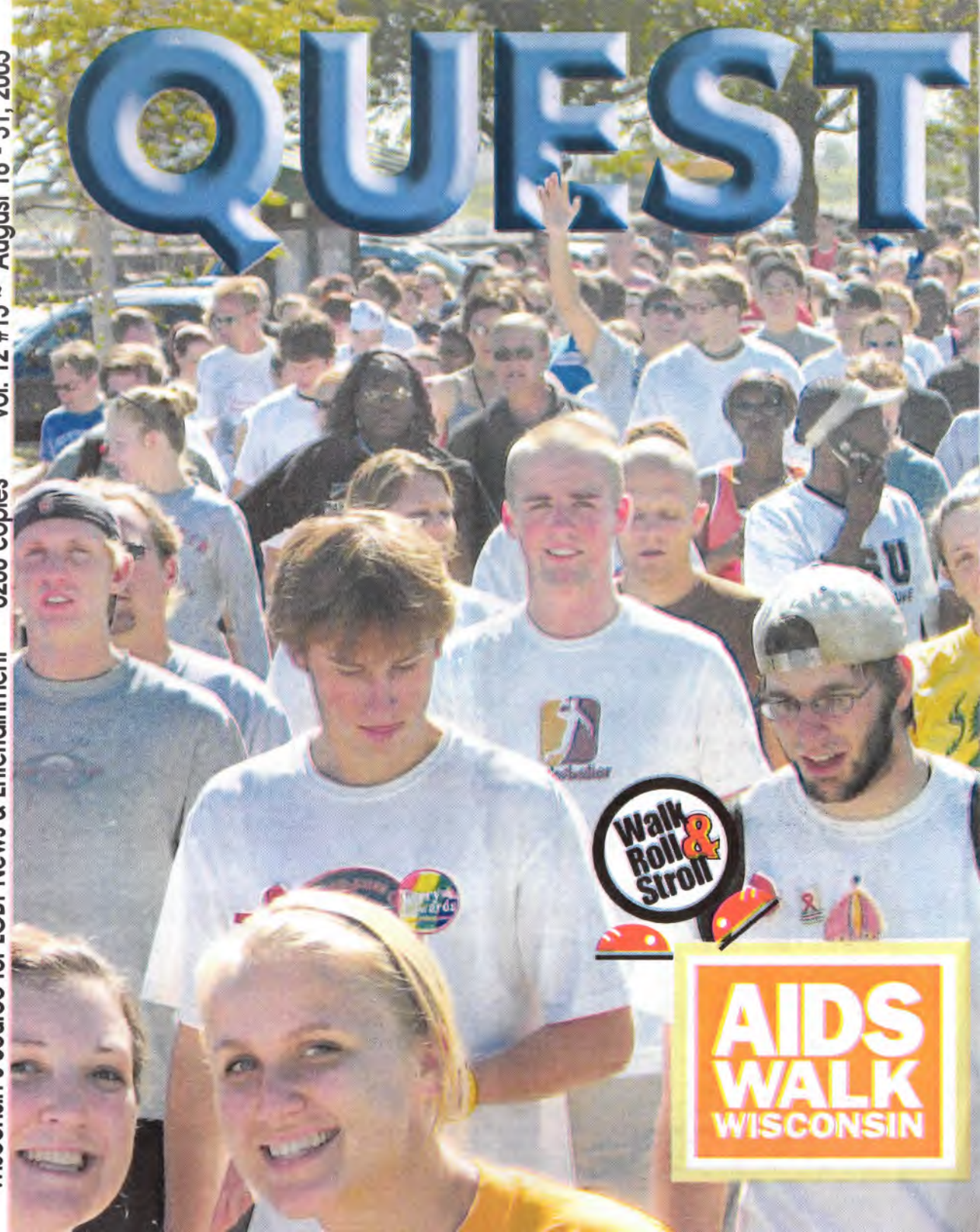
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## Diversion of the Day Community Calendar

**Thursday, August 18**

**Outwards Books (Milwaukee)** Mystery writer Mark Richard Zubro will read and sign copies of his latest book, *Nerds Who Kill*. Events is free and open to everyone! 7 pm  
**STD Specialties** free syphilis & HIV testing, 10pm-1am, at **Club Boom (Milwaukee)**; also Sept. 22

**Friday, August 19**

**Cricket's Fox River Lounge (Green Bay)** Acoustic Zoom, 7:30 patio show; no cover

**Saturday, August 20**

**Blue Lite (Sheboygan)** *An Evening of Elegance and Glamour*, featuring Jasmine Roberts - show starts 10 pm  
**Madison Gay Video Club**, 8 pm: *Queer As Folk* (episode #506), *Harry & Max / Bolt - Director's Cut*. (608)244-8675  
**Shelter (Green Bay)** 1st Annual Toga Party, 10 pm - \$2 domestic bottles, \$3 Lynchburg lemonade, \$2 Jack Daniels shots & \$9 fallout drink bust (9-1)  
**Crossroads (Appleton)** Crossroads Cast Show

**Tuesday, August 23**

**SAGE/Milw.** S(t)AGE Struck, 2:30 pm, *A Weekend Near Madison*

**Wednesday, August 24**

**STD Specialties** free syphilis & HIV testing, 10pm-1am, at **Woody's (Milwaukee)**; also Sept. 28

**Thursday, August 25**

**SAGE (Milw.)** Senior Law Medicare Part D Training (details to follow)

**Friday, August 26**

**Cricket's Fox River Lounge (Green Bay)** Past Due, 9 pm patio show; no cover  
**Crossroads (Appleton)** Stephanie with Livewire

**Tuesday, August 30**

**SAGE/Milw.** Canasta Nite at SAGE offices, 7 pm

**Monday, Sept. 5 - Labor Day**

**Boom (Milwaukee)** \$6 Beer Bust and Brat benefit for the Milwaukee Pride Parade for 2006 3pm - 8pm

**Wednesday, September 7**

**STD Specialties** free syphilis & HIV testing, 10pm-1am, at **Harbor Room (Milwaukee)**

**Tuesday, September 13**

**Outwards Books (Milw.)** Lesbian Reading Group meets 7 pm to discuss *Secret Service* by Zsa Zsa Gershick. New members always welcome.

**Wednesday, September 14**

**STD Specialties** free syphilis & HIV testing, 10pm-1am, at **Club North 94 (Kenosha)**

**Thursday, September 15**

**Outwards Books (Milw.)** Author/Performance Artist Craig Hickman will read and sign copies of his new book, *Fumbling Toward Divinity*. 7pm - Every welcome - free

**Monday, September 19**

**Outwards Book Club** meets 7:30 pm. Romance is in the air in September when the group will discuss *Hot Sauce* by Scott Pomfret & Scott Whittier. All welcome to join in the discussion

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## CENTRAL WISCONSIN PRIDE PACKS 'EM IN

**Stevens Point** - Central Wisconsin Pride 2005 drew over one thousand gay and straight party-goers over its 10-hour run at Pfiiffer Pioneer Park here August 6. The event, heavily co-sponsored by local businesses and media, featured numerous vendors, comedian Tanya Atkinson, alternative girl group Alpha Dogs, the headlining Wade Otis Band and a knockout drag show, in addition to a wide variety of beverages, ethnic and picnic foods.

"We're tired, we're happy its over but we're most elated at the huge turnout," committee chair Larry Steltenpohl told *Quest*.

Point's first-ever gay pride event happened just two blocks from the city's annual "Corn On The

Curb" festival. The pride festival was largely queer-populated during the day, but by evening - in a historic and amazing synergy - the two festivals actually appeared to merge. By drag show time, straight attendees appeared to outnumber the LGBT contingent.

Following the pride festival's close, gay and straight mixed at the city's famous public square taverns and clubs, many of which offered free or reduced-price drinks to Pride card holders. A live and drag show by the Entertainers Against AIDS also played to a nearly full house at gay-owned Club Night Out, which is located several miles west of downtown.



More photos later  
in this book



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Production & Printing

P.O. Box 1961  
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E-Mail for News, releases, calendar, advertising:  
editor@quest-online.com

Web Site:  
<http://quest-online.com>

Publisher: Mark Mariucci (ZA)

Contributors: News: Mike Fitzpatrick, Dan  
Ross, Jamie Steckelberg & Steve Vargas  
Arts Columns: Glen Bishop (alias)  
Leather Column: Jeff Hicks

Production: Mark Mariucci (ZA)

Photography: Steve Vargas, Mike Fitzpatrick  
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Advertising: Milw: Jeramie, Ian, Teddy  
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Washington, DC - While abortion may dominate next month's Senate hearings on whether to confirm John Roberts to the U.S. Supreme Court, gay rights will be the stealth issue.

Democrats aren't as eager to push for same-sex marriage as they are to protect abortion, but there is little question that the leading edge of civil rights law involves lesbians and gays rather than more settled questions of gender and racial equality.

Over the next decade or more — and if confirmed, the 50-year-old Roberts could be on the court for 30 years — activists on both sides expect the Supreme Court to decide the constitutionality of state bans on same-sex marriage, the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act denying gay and lesbian couples federal benefits conferred by marriage and the "don't ask, don't tell" ban on gays and lesbians in the military.

Several such cases already are moving through lower courts, though they may be several years away from the Supreme Court. "Whoever gets appointed is going to be on the court for a long time, and eventually, these issues are going to reach the Supreme Court," Jon Davidson, legal director of Lambda Legal said.

"I don't think there's any question" such cases ultimately will come before the Supreme Court, Tony Perkins, president of the Family Research Council concurred.

Although the stakes are high, both sides are downplaying the issue for strategic reasons. Some gay leaders warn against mak-

## BUSH'S SUPREME COURT PICK CRITICAL IN GAY RIGHTS STRUGGLE

### John Roberts' Confirmation Could Lead To Pivotal Votes On Marriage, Military And Civil Rights Equality

ing gay issues a focus of the confirmation hearings, fearing such a move could backfire. Very few Democratic senators support same-sex marriage, and the public remains largely opposed to the idea.

Religious conservatives want to avoid imposing a litmus test on gay rights so that liberals cannot demand one on abortion.



Bush himself has carefully avoided doing so. "We're not setting litmus tests; it's the other side doing that," Peter Sprigg, vice president for policy at the Family Research Council, said. "I would say that we would not want a candidate to say they considered Lawrence vs. Texas to be settled law or beyond the scope of review on constitutional grounds."

The sensitivity of the gay rights issue became clear last week with the revelation that Roberts provided free legal advice for gay plaintiffs on a groundbreaking 1996 Supreme Court case, *Romer vs. Evans*, which struck down a Colorado ballot initiative banning antidiscrimination laws for gays. The work sparked momentary alarm among religious conservatives that Roberts could harbor secret sympathies.

Most religious conservatives said they had been assured that Roberts would be reluctant as a judge to overturn the will of voters or legislators despite his work on *Romer*, although a Virginia group, Public Advocate of the United States, said August 9 it would oppose his nomination. Gay rights groups say his work on the case does nothing to reassure them.

The stakes are high for lesbians and gays. A Supreme Court ruling against same-sex marriage would be disastrous for the gay rights movement, which views marriage as a core right that could in one stroke eliminate nearly all other forms of discrimination.

Fearing such a setback, gay legal advocacy groups are deliberately holding back on challenges to the 1996 federal Defense of Marriage Act, even though the Massachusetts marriages present the first opportunity to challenge that law. Instead, they are concentrating on getting more state courts or legislatures to permit same-sex marriage or civil unions while waiting for cultural norms to shift in their favor.

The only gay rights-related case on next term's Supreme Court docket addresses whether colleges can keep military recruiters off their campuses because the military discriminates against gays.

Bigger issues may still be several years off. These include a challenge to Nebraska's constitutional amendment banning not only same-sex marriage but also civil unions, domestic partnerships or any similar contract between lesbian and gay couples.

Gay rights groups are highly skeptical of Roberts on the basis of his decisions in the District of Columbia Court of Appeals and his work for the Reagan and first Bush administrations that imply a narrow view of the judiciary's role in overseeing executive and legislative action. They will be concentrating on whether Roberts believes the Constitution contains a right to privacy, and whether he believes the *Romer* case he helped win was correctly decided.

"Judicial restraint is a buzzword just like activist judge," said Evan Wolfson, head of Freedom to Marry. "Everybody's in favor of judicial restraint, but what does it mean? If it means not acting as a check against majoritarian excesses or upholding constitutional rights against improper government action, then restraint is not something admirable."

Most of Roberts' work — such as a decision he joined in *Hamdan vs. Rumsfeld*

## New on DVD by Glenn Bishop "Harry & Max"



Glenn continues to be puzzled at the current state of Gay Cinema. Where are all of the romantic gay comedies that Glenn wants to see? "Beautiful Thing" was a smashing success, as was last year's "Latter Days." Glenn would even be happy to settle for a good murder mystery, maybe one featuring a hunky homo detective?

Instead there are curious cinematic ventures like Rob Moretti's intriguing yet often agonizing confessional, "Crutch" and now, Christopher Munch's "Harry & Max," an intense, dysfunctional love story between 23 year-old Harry (Bryce Johnson), a bisexual rocker whose career is on the wane and Max (Cole Williams), his 16 year-old brother and would-be pop star.

Are sexual relationships — even among gay siblings — at all common?

An only child, Glenn had no older or younger brother about whom to fantasize. Instead Glenn was left to obsess over his best friend's hunky older brother. Thinking some research must be done in preparation for this review, Glenn queried his nearest and dearest friends. Had any of them special relationships with their siblings growing up? Much to Glenn's surprise, none did.

Or so they say...

"Harry and Max" focuses on a two-day camping trip the lads take to Los Angeles' scenic San Gabriel Mountains.

The brothers are estranged and this weekend, long promised, oft-postponed, would seem an attempt for the two boys to regain at least some of the closeness they've lost.

They've barely hit the road, so to speak, and Harry and Max immediately begin to bicker. Knowing each other as well as they do, their jibes prove inevitably well placed. They may have once shared a sex-drenched, idyllic holiday in Bermuda but this campout isn't looking like such a hot idea. Glenn is here reminded of the cute television commercial where the two little girls on having a sleepover but things aren't going well. Then one of the little girls toddles down to the kitchen to make peanut butter sandwiches. Success! Lacking the necessary jar of peanut butter, Max decides that a little action under-the-covers might help break the ice between them. Or maybe Max is just trying to mess with his deeply conflicted brother.

Harry, in either case, is stuck in "responsible" mode and while he declines Max's offer, it is with evident reluctance.

Merely 23, Harry is clearly running on empty. Bitter, disillusioned and already an alcoholic, Harry's despondency is infectious — Glenn was certainly miserable watching this flick. Harry struggles to protect Max, presumably from making the same mistakes he himself made but finds his efforts both

## Buy it, rent it or forget it...

Munch, doing double duty as both screenwriter and director, is savvy enough to know such relationships as he offers in "Harry and Max" are inevitably messy but does neither himself nor his attractive cast any favors by making his story-telling equally messy. In the end, there's resolution of a sort but one is that unlike to satisfy either moviegoers or, for that matter Harry and Max.

## Just the facts...

"Harry and Max" runs an approx. 74 excruciating minutes.

Quest readers may remember Cole Williams from "Boys Life 4"

DVD extras include Director's commentary, a stills gallery and a "behind-the-scenes" featurette.

The official website is [tlareleasing.com/harryandmax/index.html](http://tlareleasing.com/harryandmax/index.html)



unwelcome and unheeded.

Curiously, in the course of the film, it is Harry who becomes increasingly obsessed with Max, going so far as to seduce Max's first lover, Max, meanwhile does likewise with Harry's on-again, off-again girlfriend.

Can these two complicated, self-absorbed lads ever make their peace with one another.

## AUTHOR CRAIG HICKMAN, "FUMBLING TOWARDS DIVINITY" AT OUTWORDS

Outwords Books is especially pleased to welcome back for an appearance Craig Hickman, an accomplished poet, dancer, activist and performance artist. Craig Hickman will read and sign copies of his poignant new memoir, "Fumbling Towards Divinity" at 7:00pm on Thursday, September 15th, 2005 at Outwords Books, Gifts & Coffee, located at 2710 N. Murray Ave. in Milwaukee.

Bestselling author Craig Hickman had had enough of the secrets and cover-ups and lies and was determined to solve the mystery of his roots. A brilliant and inspirational vision of love and spirituality, "Fumbling Toward Divinity: The Adoption Scriptures" chronicles his quest for his birth heritage and the aftermath in a one-of-a-kind, ambitious, and stunning new memoir. Part mystery, part history, part family saga, part divination—all of it true—"Fumbling Toward Divinity" bears witness to the transcendent power of spirit and love in an age of terror and madness. It delivers an emotional intensity that fiction-by-comparison-can only hope to achieve.

Hickman is a Madison native before later moving to Milwaukee. He began writing in 1992, winning numerous awards for his poetry and prose, includ-

ing the Gertrude Johnson Williams Literary Award from Ebony magazine. His poems have been published in Atelier 3, Harvard Gay and Lesbian Review as well as the anthology, "Gents, Bad Boys, and Barbarians." His articles, reviews, and essays have appeared in numerous publications, including The Phoenix, Gay Community News and the anthology "Taking Liberties: Gay Male Essays on Politics, Sex, and Culture."

In 1993, Hickman founded the independent publishing house Parfait de Cocoa Press. Committed to publishing queer writers of color from New England, Parfait de Cocoa has published his own chapbook, "The Language of Mirrors" (1993), a collection of his poetry and prose, "Rituals: Poetry and Prose" (1994) and Jay Critchley's artist book, "Playing Games: Zoa the Greek Fertility Goddess Shoots for the Gold" (1995). In 1996, Hickman incorporated the press as an imprint of Mojo Productions.

As a performance poet, he has been featured at venues in major US cities and universities including Brown, Bowdoin, Harvard & Yale; opened for pop recording artist RuPaul at Boston's PrideFest 1993; and co-organized and performed in "Rites & Permissions," a tribute to the late poet



and activist, Essex Hemphill, and "Celebrating Our Community: Remembering Our Lives," a poetry revival honoring the lives of gay men of color lost to AIDS, which he performed with poets Thomas Grimes and Philip Robinson.

In 1997, Hickman understudied "Angels in America" at the Milwaukee Repertory Theater; co-produced and starred in Gail Burton's original play "Muses" and appears in the independent feature film "Never Met Picasso" filmed on location in Boston, starring Margot Kidder.

Don't miss out on the chance to meet Craig Hickman at 7:00pm on Thursday September 15th, 2005. This is a free event and all are welcome. For further information, please call (414) 963-9089 or visit [www.outwordsbooks.com](http://www.outwordsbooks.com).

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allowing military tribunals -- shows "a very cramped view of constitutional protection for personal liberty," Wolfson said.

Among the gay groups skeptical of the Roberts nomination is Action Wisconsin, which is part of a new statewide coalition of labor groups, reproductive rights organizations and civil liberty groups that last week wrote U.S. Senators Herb Kohl and Russ Feingold expressing grave concern over the nomination of Roberts to the Supreme Court.

"Unfortunately, the record that is emerging shows that Judge Roberts is not the consensus nominee for whom we had hoped," wrote members of the Wisconsin Coalition for Fair and Independent Judges.

"Unlike Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, who was the deciding vote on a number of rulings that have protected the fundamental rights and freedoms of all Americans, Judge Roberts seems to have a judicial philosophy consistent with those who would overturn settled legal protections," they added. "This is especially true in such areas as affirmative action, environmental protection, the separation between church and state and reproductive rights, to name a few."

In addition to Action Wisconsin, coalition members include ACLU of Wisconsin, Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin, AFSCME International, Milwaukee County Labor Council, the Milwaukee chapter of the National Lawyers Guild, NARAL Pro-Choice Wisconsin and others.

Feingold and Kohl are on the Senate Judiciary Committee, which is scheduled to begin confirmation hearings on Roberts' nomination September 6.



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## 20 Reasons To Give To AIDS Walk Wisconsin

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2. One ton of food is provided by ARCW food pantries every day.
3. 800 people receive rent assistance annually through ARCW.
4. 100 homeless people find a home at ARCW housing facilities every year.
5. The ARCW housing program is recognized as a program of national significance.
6. The ARCW Medical Clinic is the largest HIV medical clinic in Milwaukee.
7. The ARCW Dental Clinic is the only HIV dental clinic in Wisconsin.
8. The ARCW Mental Health Clinic helps hundreds of patients find peace of mind.
9. ARCW provides legal assistance to over 500 clients every year.
10. ARCW attorneys fight AIDS discrimination all year long.
11. ARCW has never lost a Social Security benefit appeal for its patients.
12. Lifepoint needle exchange distributes 550,000 needles annually in Wisconsin.
13. Lifepoint has reduced new HIV cases among drug users by 66%.
14. 3,200 HIV tests are conducted annually by ARCW.
15. Over 10,000 gay men get AIDS prevention messages from ARCW every year.
16. ARCW is Wisconsin's official information center for HIV, STDs and Hepatitis C.
17. ARCW is the largest provider of HIV medical and dental care in Wisconsin.
18. New HIV infections in Wisconsin increased by 15% during the past year.
19. AIDS Walk Wisconsin benefits AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin, Camp Heartland, Common Ground Ministry / Elena's House, LGBT Center of the Chippewa Valley, Manitowoc County AIDS Task Force, Milwaukee LGBT Community Center, Milwaukee No Condom, No Way Campaign, and the Sheboygan County AIDS Task Force.
20. There is still no cure in sight for AIDS.





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ing has put pressure on both the state and the private sector in the last year," Gifford said. "In Wisconsin, a Democratic governor and a Republican legislature recently both agreed on a million dollar increase for AIDS services in the state over the next two years, including the funding in the new state budget."

Corporate giving is up for this year's AIDS Walk Wisconsin, according to ARCW Development Director Dan Mueller. "ARCW is delighted at the rate of Wisconsin companies that are lining up to support AIDS Walk Wisconsin 2005. We anticipate exceeding our high expectations for corporate donations to this year's walk," Mueller told Quest. Mueller noted among major founders for this year's walk are the Miller Brewing Company, Assurant Health, the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, and KISS FM 103.7.

Gifford noted overall private corporate giving to ARCW has increased as well in the last year. "Hopefully individual private giving will follow suit in the near future," he said.

Mainstream private giving has held steady or even increased in selective cases. AIDS Network's just completed Act III Ride saw a 13% increase in proceeds - up to \$303,500 from \$271,000 - and a 36% increase in ridership earlier this month. Almost half those funds were raised through the 4-day ride's mandatory thousand dollar registration fee.

However private giving in the gay men's community appears to have slackened in recent years. Highly visible gay community-wide AIDS fundraisers such as Milwaukee's Possum Queen contest and MAP Fest, or Madison's Cookie Jar project are history. Only Green Bay's Guernsey Gala and individual bar fundraising projects remain. Fund raising gay male participation in AIDS Walk Wisconsin has decreased from 33% to 28% of total contributors since 2001, according to Mueller.

Mueller declined to suggest reasons for the decline. However, a recently-diagnosed HIV+ 28-year old gay man offered his ideas for the lack of interest. "Everyone's been saying it's not a gay disease any more - all

you ever hear about is Africa or other places," Charles (not his real name) told Quest. "Everybody my age thinks 'Hey, AIDS not my problem, why should I give a f---?' And that was me up until about a year ago."

Two upcoming events will give individuals of all sexual orientations a chance renew or begin their involvement in supporting the end of AIDS in Wisconsin. On successive weekends in September ARCW and AIDS Network will each produce their annual versions of AIDS Walks.

AIDS Walk Wisconsin is the granddaddy of two. This year's event on Sunday, September 25 will be the sixteenth spin around Milwaukee's scenic lakefront.

Several changes are in store, including a shorter 5K version for those who find the historic 10K route too taxing.

As befitting an event that draws participants from the 59 counties that ARCW serves statewide, AIDS

Walk Wisconsin 2005 will be an event that makes the trip - often provided by donated bussing through Lamers and Van Galder Bus Lines - worth the commitment. Performances by regionally-known recording artists The Love Monkeys, KISS FM 103.7, Chicago's Spirit Brigade squad of gay cheerleaders and other local Milwaukee talent will welcome walkers to the Summerfest Grounds and keep them energized along the route at the Walk's five rest stops. Starbucks, Jewel-Osco, and Premium Waters have teamed up with ARCW to provide refreshments on the grounds and along the route.

ARCW is hoping the changes and added sizzle will spark an up-tick in the walks final numbers, which have declined annually since hitting the million dollar mark in 1996. According to Gifford, the key to that success will be individual involvement. "The heart and soul of the walk is individual involvement," Gifford said. "This year's AIDS Walk would be a wonderful opportunity for members of the gay community to renew their historic commitment in the fight against HIV/AIDS."

Mueller concurred. "We want and need all of Quest's readers to register for this year's walk and take part in the AIDS Walk experience. Your support will translate into aggressive HIV/ AIDS prevention and treatment services," he said. "A Wisconsin without AIDS truly begins with you!"

AIDS Network's approach to its 3rd Annual AIDS Walk, Roll & Stroll that will kick off in Madison's Brittingham Park on Saturday, September 17, is a marked contrast to ARCW's. "AIDS Walks are harder to do," AN's Power admitted. "This year we're focusing on the walk and the fund raising. Our goal is to double the \$20,000 net we achieved from last year's walk."

The 7K AIDS Walk, Roll & Stroll is billing itself as "Madison's Only AIDS Walk" and features T-shirts that say "Local Fun, Local Funds." Power added that AN has eliminated its big stage and events at the park will "focus on getting walkers registered and walking." However, beginning at 10 AM., the Walk will kickoff with a complimentary continental breakfast for all our supporters and participants. AN also has instituted a non-refundable \$15 registration fee to cover administrative costs for this year's event, with an additional \$10 fee for the walk's commemorative T-shirt.

Power also noted the agency's walk production staff is emphasizing team development. "We're hoping to get a few more teams like (Madison gay bar) Team Shamrock, who raised \$5500 in 2004," he said.

For more information about or to register for either or both walks, look for links on the Quest home page at: [www.quest-online.com](http://www.quest-online.com). Registrants wishing to participate in ARCW's Walk may also call 1-800-348-WALK or visit the AIDS Walk website at: [www.aidswalkwis.org](http://www.aidswalkwis.org). To participate in AIDS Network's AIDS Walk, Roll & Stroll registrants may call the agency's offices at 608-252-6540 in Madison, 608-756-2550 in Janesville and 608-364-4027 in Beloit or visit the Walk's website at: [walkrollandstroll.org](http://walkrollandstroll.org). Both agencies are strongly encouraging online registration as the most efficient means of getting involved.



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## CALIFORNIA SUPREME COURT REJECTS GAY MARRIAGE CASE

**San Francisco** - The California Supreme Court said August 10 it would not immediately decide whether a state ban on same-sex marriage is unconstitutional, keeping gay marriage 'off-limits while leaving the issue in legal limbo. Attorney General Bill Lockyer and others wanted to bypass an appeals court hearing to expedite a definitive ruling from the state's highest court. They asked the justices to directly review the trial judge's ruling.

"We're disappointed," said Nathan Barankin, a spokesman for Lockyer, who wanted the court to overturn the ruling and uphold state law. "We thought that the cases were ripe for a prompt and final resolution without having to go through the court of appeal."

The case will remain before the 1st District Court of Appeal in San Francisco,

where it is likely to take months for a decision on the controversial issue that voters could face next year.

Without comment, the 5-0 decision, with one justice not participating and one vacan-



cy on the court, came a week after the court ruled that gays and lesbian domestic partners are entitled to virtually the same benefits as married couples. The high court normally does not resolve cases until they have worked their way through the lower courts. One of the last times it did, however, involved gay marriage.

In August, 2004, the court ruled unanimously that San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom overstepped his authority when he issued same-sex marriage licenses during a monthlong wedding march that began in February that year. The court took the case at the time because gay and lesbian newlyweds were seeking spousal benefits not authorized by the state at the time. Many of those benefits are now available under the domestic partners law that took effect in January.

## EVANGELICAL LUTHERANS AFFIRM GAY CLERGY BAN

**Orlando** - A national meeting of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America rejected a proposal August 12 that would have allowed gays in committed relationships to serve as clergy under certain conditions. The measure would have affirmed the church ban on ordaining sexually active gays and lesbians, but it would have allowed bishops and church districts, or synods, to seek an exception for a particular candidate - if that person was in a long-term relationship and met other restrictions. Delegates voted against the measure 503 to 490. The proposal needed a two-thirds majority to pass.

Earlier in the day, delegates voted 851 to 127 to keep the church unified despite serious differences over homosexuality. They also rebuffed what many saw as an attempt to push the denomination toward approval of blessing ceremonies for same-sex couples.

All the proposals - the product of three years' work by a special church task force - were meant as a compromise that would satisfy both those who support gay clergy and those

who regard gay sex as sinful. The measures, however, drew immediate opposition from Lutherans on opposing sides of the debate.

Conservatives said the ordination proposal would have effectively overturned prohibitions against non-celibate gays in the Lutheran ministry. Advocates for gays were not satisfied, either. They said the measure would have created a second-class roster for gay and lesbian clergy in the church.

In a news conference immediately after the vote, Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson said he hopes gays and lesbians did not take the vote as a sign they are not welcome in the church, which has 4.9 million members. "They are. We have said that publicly and clearly," he said.

New Jersey Synod Bishop E. Roy Riley, chairman of the church's Conference of Bishops, said the vote was a good indicator of what the entire church was thinking: "This church is not ready to make major changes in its ordination practices."

Lutheran gay advocates were angered. A

coalition called Goodsoil accused the church of sacrificing gays "on the altar of a false and ephemeral sense of unity."

During the debate, the Rev. G. Scott Cady of the New England Synod said rejecting gays who feel a call to ministry was tantamount to questioning the will of God. "We have vacant pulpits and altars in congregations all over this country," Cady said. "The Holy Spirit has said, 'All right, here they are. Here they are.' Are we going to now say, 'Thanks, Holy Spirit, but we prefer something else?'"

Disagreement over what the Bible says about homosexuality has torn at Protestant denominations for years. The Episcopal Church consecrated its first openly gay bishop two years ago, and Anglicans worldwide are now struggling to remain unified.

Last month, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada voted against allowing local pastors to decide whether to bless same-sex couples. The other major U.S. Lutheran body, the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, is staunchly conservative on gay issues.

## IT'S A GAY DISEASE AGAIN

Upcoming AIDS Walks Give Men's Community A Chance To Renew Support

**Milwaukee** - "AIDS Kills Fags Dead" Those words, scrawled by an unknown vandal on the side of a building in the gay-friendly Walker's Point district caused a minor stir here recently. Local activists dutifully noted the hateful word choices, while others reiterated what has become the mantra in HIV prevention over the last ten years: "AIDS is not a gay disease."

Yet recently released statistics both nationally and in Wisconsin suggest the vandal's message may be more on target than the prevention pros'. The August, 2005 issue of the Journal of the America Medical Association and the August 10 issue of the

Center For Disease Control's (CDC) Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report both carry a report of a study concluded in April, 2005. In the summary prefacing the study report, the CDC noted that for the last full calendar year for which statistics are available, fully 63% of all new HIV cases are the result of men having sex with men (MSM).

Seroprevalence rates in the five major cities used in the study - Baltimore, Chicago, Los Angeles, Miami and San Francisco - range from 18-40% of the randomly selected population of volunteers reporting MSM behavior. HIV prevalence was 46% among blacks, 21% among whites, and 17% among Hispanics. Most unsettling, 76% those in the survey who were HIV positive were under 30.

Wisconsin statistics mirror the national

resurgence as well. The 16% increase in new Wisconsin HIV cases in 2004 may seem alarming enough, but the 48% rise among the state's gay men, and the more than 50% surge in those under 25 suggest the vandal's message may have been as prophetic as it was hateful.



Why the upsurge in new cases among gay men? HIV experts in Wisconsin point to a number of factors that collectively have created an environment where transmission can occur more frequently. "The resurgence is very troubling," ARCW's Vice President and CEO Mike Gifford told Quest. "Young gay men who did not live through the early days of this epidemic do not consider HIV a serious health threat."

Gifford also cited the marketing of AIDS medications creates a "misrepresentation that is leading many to believe the disease is a minor, manageable inconvenience."

Gifford noted that "AIDS fatigue" may be yet another factor. "The impact that twenty-five years of sustaining safer sex practices is having on the older gay male

population cannot be underestimated," Gifford said.

AIDS Network Executive Director Bob Power concurred with the "generational issue," but also noted that the loss of "AIDS 101" presentations may be a factor as well. "Years ago we did a lot of general school presentations," Powers said. "We do very few now because we cannot use money for that kind of work, for better or worse, AIDS is now a part of a comprehensive STD education unit in health classes, along with curable or nonlife-threatening diseases."

Power also thinks the new OraQuick test may be contributing to the statistical rise. "I hope that (part of the rise in new cases) is due to the increased efforts in testing with the rapid testing tool that is both convenient to use in non-clinical settings and reduces the number of people tested lost to follow-up," Powers said, adding that prevention outreach is "more critical than ever in the efforts to slow the spread of HIV in Wisconsin."

But federal funding for prevention work is not forthcoming, and when it is, its not directed to areas of greatest need, according to ARCW's Gifford. "Since 2002 there has been an effective decrease federal funding for prevention," Gifford said. "There have been stagnant levels of funding and funding for efforts based on political ideology instead of sound behavioral science."

Gifford noted that there has been a silver lining in the federal funding cloud. "The federal government's stalled fund-

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## ACT III AIDS RIDE TOPS \$300,000

**Madison** - AIDS Network's third annual Act III AIDS Ride held here August 4-7 saw 35% increase in ridership and an all-time high total of \$303,500 to benefit client and prevention services in the thirteen southern and southwestern counties served by the AIDS service organization. 148 riders took part in the four-day, 350 mile ride, whose route was kept secret almost to the day of the event.

AN Executive Director attributed the increased participation to the shorter ride. "We shortened the ride to allow more people to take on the commitment," Power told *Quest*. "Last year people had

to take a week off of work or more in order to be involved. This year's ride essentially took place over a weekend."

Power also noted the shorter walk also significantly reduced expenses, which in turn will result in a greater part of every dollar raised to go directly to providing services. "Though all the figures aren't in, it looks like we will range in a 90-92% pass through rate on this year's ride," Power said. "Our ride concluded at the Alliant Center the same day the seven-day MS Ride finished. Though they raised over a million dollars, they're expecting a pass through of only about 44%."



"It's a great way to celebrate our 20th anniversary," Power added. Since 1985, the AIDS Network - formerly the Madison AIDS Support Network - has provided critical AIDS care and prevention services to south central Wisconsin. With offices in Madison, Janesville and Beloit, AIDS Network is sustained in those efforts by the resources, expertise and passion of hundreds of volunteers and donors in addition to paid staff.

## SAGE RAFFLES OFF HARLEY

**Milwaukee** - A 2005 Harley Davidson XL 1200 C Sportster 1200 Custom from the House of Harley could be yours by Labor Day if you participate in SAGE's limited ticket auction currently under way through the end of August.

The two-toned, custom color black cherry and black pearl motorcycle features high-compression, high-flow heads and performance cams, a 4.5-gallon tank, and the new profile laced wheel. Only 550 tickets will be sold in the raffle. The drawing will be held on Friday, September 2 at 7:30 PM at the Out 'n' About Bar and Restaurant, 1407 S. 1st Street. Second Prize will be \$1,000 in cash and third prize will be \$500.

The tax-deductible ticket donation of \$50 - or 5 tickets for \$225 - will be used for the general operation of SAGE Milwaukee, a nonprofit organization that is committed to the promotion of quality of life for senior lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

For more information call SAGE at 414-224-0517 or email: [director@sagemilwaukee.org](mailto:director@sagemilwaukee.org).



## INFORMAL LGBT PARENT/CHILDREN GROUP FORMS

**Madison** - OutReach has announced the formation of an informal LGBT Parent/Children Group to be known as My Family Playgroup. Families were invited to participate in the group's first informal gathering at Vilas Park on August 13. Participants had the chance to meet new people and parents. The event allowed children to play and meet other children from LGBT families as well.

My Family Playgroup is for LGBT parents and their children ages 0-10 in south central Wisconsin. Older children are also welcome to socialize with other older children. All LGBT parent situations are welcome, includ-

ing same sex couples with children, both adoptive and natural, single parents with children from previous heterosexual or same-sex relationships and people that may be thinking of having children that would like to talk with other parents.

The playgroup is an informal organization with two purposes for LGBT parents and their children. First, the playgroup provides the children of LGBT parents an opportunity to have fun with similar children and their families to develop to new friendships. Many believe that it is crucial to children's mental health and emotional well being that they

interact with other families that are similar to their own family. The second goal is to provide LGBT parents with an opportunity to socialize and network with other LGBT parents. Parenting can be especially demanding and challenging for same sex couples, and socializing with other LGBT parents can provide a healthy, informative forum for the exchange of parenting ideas and resources.

For more information and details about the new group contact Jim Schmid by phone at 608-669-1657 or by email at: [jhs1120@yahoo.com](mailto:jhs1120@yahoo.com). Those interested may also contact Harry at Outreach by phone at 608-255-8582 or by email at: [programs@outreachinc.com](mailto:programs@outreachinc.com).

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## MATTHEW SHEPARD'S KILLER SEEKS NEW FEDERAL APPEAL

**Cheyenne** - One of the two men convicted of killing gay University of Wyoming student Matthew Shepard in 1999 has asked a federal court to reinstate his appeal. Russell Henderson is serving a life prison sentence.

His attorney asked a U.S. District Court in Cheyenne to allow Henderson to challenge the constitutionality of his conviction on the grounds that he had ineffective counsel. Henderson claims that his trial attorney didn't tell him he could appeal his sentence, conviction or both. An Albany County judge and the Wyoming Supreme Court have previously denied Henderson's attempts to appeal.



## TASK FORCE: SOCIAL SECURITY PRIVATIZATION WILL HARM LGBT AMERICANS

**Washington, DC** - The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force released a report August 9 that finds that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) Americans will be disproportionately harmed by President Bush's plan to privatize Social Security.

According to *Selling Us Short: How Social Security Privatization Will Affect Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Americans*, LGBT Americans, on average, have lower incomes than their heterosexual counterparts, which translates into lower Social Security benefits when they retire. In addition, same-sex couples are not eligible for Social Security's spousal and survivor benefits provisions, making the LGBT community disproportionately vulnerable to the benefit cuts and risks inherent to the president's plan.

"There is a widespread myth that gay people are economically advantaged compared to heterosexuals. U.S. Census data and other national surveys indicate the opposite. In fact, gay and bisexual men earn anywhere from 13 percent to 32 percent less than heterosexual men," said Sean Cahill, director of the Task Force's Policy Institute, which published the study. "If we earn less, we receive a lower Social Security payment in retirement. Any proposals that cut retirement benefits will disproportionately hurt gay people."

*Selling Us Short* finds that LGBT people of color, in particular, face an income disadvantage that leads to lower Social Security benefits. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, black same-sex couples earn roughly \$2,000 to \$9,000 less in median annual household income than black married opposite-sex couples, and Hispanic same-sex couples earn roughly \$1,000 to \$4,000 less in median annual household income than Hispanic married opposite-sex couples.

Discriminatory government policies, meanwhile, place gay people in an even more economically disadvantaged position, increasing the critical need to maintain the economic safety net Social Security is intended to provide.

"Gay people have to report domestic partner health insurance as income to the IRS, but married spouses don't have to report their health coverage as income," explained Cahill. "Gay people can't inherit their partner's pension plan, while a heterosexual widow or widower can be a beneficiary. Not only do we earn less, we are less able to keep what we earn. These are among the many inequities that make same-sex couples particularly vulnerable to cutbacks in Social Security benefits."

Added Many Hu, author of the report: "The federal Defense of Marriage Act continues to deny same-sex couples access to more than 1,000 federal benefits and protections of marriage that opposite-sex married couples currently receive, including Social Security spousal and survivor benefits. Even though LGBT Americans pay in to the Social Security system at the same rate as everyone else, our families and children receive fewer benefits, often in times of crisis. If Social Security is to be changed, it should be changed so that all families are treated fairly."

"Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people are more likely to age alone and less likely to have children than their heterosexual counterparts," said Amber Hollibaugh, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force's senior strategist and specialist on LGBT elders. "This, coupled with a lower rate of earning makes them particularly reliant on Social Security."

*Selling Us Short* finds that LGBT elders could be negatively affected by privatization. By 2030, the estimated population of LGBT seniors will range from two to eight million. LGBT elders may be especially dependent on public services for the elderly, including Social Security, because they may be without the same family support systems as heterosexual seniors.

"It is would be wrong to support privatization in exchange for opening a portion of Social Security to same-sex couples while overlooking the fact that marriage equality — which the Bush administration vehemently opposes — would guarantee all Social Security benefits to all same-sex couples. We are unwilling to trade illusory benefits against the benefits and rights of other Americans," said National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Executive Director Matt Foreman.

The full report is available at: [www.thetaskforce.org](http://www.thetaskforce.org).

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## MEL WHITE TO KEYNOTE "RECLAIMING MORAL VALUES" CONFERENCE SEPTEMBER 23-25

**Winona, MN** - The Rev. Dr. Mel White, author and co-founder of Soulforce, is the keynote speaker for the "Reclaiming Moral Values: Sexuality, Faith and Politics" conference, scheduled for September 23-25 at Winona State University's Tau Conference Center.

"Reclaiming Moral Values: Sexuality, Faith and Politics" is a three-day conference in which people of faith will join together for a series of workshops that will critically assess cultural- and faith-based assumptions; learn about the co-opting of value-based principles in the current political climate; and learn how to reframe issues of morality and sexuality toward social justice, among other things.

Raised as an evangelical Christian, the Rev. Dr. White was taught that homosexuality was a sin. He fought to overcome his own homosexual orientation for decades in all ways available to him: prayer, psychotherapy, exorcism, electric shock, marriage and family. That struggle and his halting, poignant steps to understand and accept his homosexuality, reconcile it with his Christian faith, and express his sexuali-

ty respectfully and responsibly, are described in his book *Stranger at the Gate: To Be Gay and Christian in America*, published in 1994.

He and his partner, Gary Nixon, founded Soulforce. Inspired by the nonviolence movements of Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr., White developed a program based on their principles. These principles were called satyagraha or "soul force" by Gandhi, who based many of them on the teachings of Jesus, and White adopted them to address the suffering of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people. In 1997, he was awarded the ACLU's National Civil Liberties Award for his efforts to apply the "soul force" principles of Gandhi and King to the struggle for justice for sexual minorities.

In addition, he ghost wrote several books for fellow evangelicals, including Billy Graham's *Approaching Hoofbeats*, Pat Robertson's *America's Date with Destiny*, Jim Bakker's *If I Should Die Before I Wake* and Jerry Falwell's *Strength for the Journey*.

Additionally, Action Wisconsin field direc-

tor Saad Akbar Khan will speak on a panel from a personal perspective about Islam and homosexuality. Action Wisconsin will also co-present a workshop with OutFront Minnesota on organizing for equality.

The registration fee for adults participating in the conference is \$125, which includes a reception and entertainment on Friday evening as well as meals and workshops. Students pay \$60 to attend the conference. Registration must be received no later than Friday, September 2, and should be mailed to Tracy Rahim, Tau Conference Center, 511 Hilbert St. Winona, MN 55987.

For more information, registration forms and information about housing, contact Cindy Killion at 608-687-8294, visit the 7 Rivers LGBT Center website at: [7riverslgbt.org](http://7riverslgbt.org) or the Lutheran Campus Center of Winona's website at: [lccwinona.org/conferenceflyer.htm](http://lccwinona.org/conferenceflyer.htm).

Funding for the conference is provided by the Philip N. Knutson Foundation, the Winona State University Foundation, the Elizabeth Callender King Foundation, The Lutheran Campus Center of Winona, the Christa Matter Memorial Fund and the LGBT Resource Center for the Seven Rivers Region.

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are banding together to strengthen our movement through respect, collaboration and unity."

Topics discussed at the meeting included marriage, legislative attacks on LGBT parents and their children, strategies for fighting ballot measure campaigns, the use of technology to build the movement, electoral strategies and political action committees, safe schools legislation, anti-discrimination policies, hate crimes laws, and strategies for increasing the diversity of our movement through work that increases participation of transgender people and communities of color.

"The Federation Meeting was a great opportunity for both well-established state groups and emerging new organizations to meet and share their knowledge," said newly elected Equality Federation Vice-Chair Jeremy Pittman, who serves as the Deputy Campaign Director for MassEquality. "I am excited to participate as a board member of this dynamic organization, and I look forward to sharing the strategies that have been successful in Massachusetts with other state leaders."

Equality Federation member organizations also elected a new Board of Directors—including the two Wisconsin directors—to lead their national coalition. Ian Palmquist, Executive Director of Programs for Equality North Carolina and Andrea Hildebran, Executive Director of Kentucky Fairness Alliance, were elected to serve second terms as Federation Co-Chairs. Sharon Semmens, past Board Chair of Georgia Equality, and Jeremy Pittman, Deputy Campaign Director of Mass Equality, were elected to serve as Vice-Chairs. Josh Freker, Communications Director of Action Wisconsin will serve a second term as Secretary, and Christopher Neff of Gay and Lesbian Activists Alliance in Washington, D.C. will serve as Treasurer.

Other Directors are: Geoffrey Kors, Executive Director of Equality California; Monica Meyer, Public Policy Director, OutFront Minnesota; Ron Wheeler, Equality New Mexico; Rhonda White, Tennessee Equality Project; Carmen Vazquez, Deputy Executive Director, Empire State Pride Agenda (NY); Lori Stone Sirtosky, Indiana Equality; Deon Young, Milwaukee LGBT Center; Stratton Pollitzer, Deputy Director, Equality Florida; and Julie Brueggemann, Executive Director, PROMO (MO).

This year's Equality Federation summer meeting was hosted by the Kentucky Fairness Alliance, which faced its own constitutional amendment battle in 2004. KFA's Executive Director, Andrea Hildebran, was re-elected at the meeting to serve her second term as a Co-Chair of the Federation.

Equality Federation is a network of state organizations committed to working together and with national and local groups to strengthen statewide lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender advocacy organizing and to secure full civil rights in every U.S. state

and territory. For more information, visit [www.equalityfederation.org](http://www.equalityfederation.org).

## OUTREACH DIRECTOR QUINLAN ON "EXTENDED LEAVE"

Madison - John Quinlan, the Executive Director of OutReach, is taking an extended leave from his position at the regional lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community center. The leave comes just weeks after the 13th annual OutReach Awards Banquet, the agency's signature fundraiser, which Quinlan missed for the second year in a row, citing a family emergency. Prior to the dinner, Quinlan had been actively promoting the successful event.



According to a report in The Capital Times, Quinlan said he is not being forced out by OutReach's board, but is discussing with them the conditions under which he would stay or go. "I'm talking to them and figuring out what my future is," said Quinlan, who declined to discuss specifics. Quinlan's assessment was confirmed by OutReach board President Bill Turner.

Quinlan is a veteran Madison activist, with a long history of experience in the areas of civil rights advocacy, print and broadcast journalism, and community organizing experience. Prior to his current three year tenure at OutReach, his extensive resume includes serving as the director of the city's Tenant Resource Center, public relations director at AIDS Network, and as a n editor and freelance journalist for a number of state and national LGBT publications. He also currently hosts Forward Forum, a weekly talk show on WXXM-FM, in Sun Prairie, better known as "Madison's Progressive Talk, The Mic 92.1."

Quinlan also has served on more than a dozen nonprofit boards and government committees, including as membership chair of the local Rainbow Coalition, president of the Fair Housing Council of Dane County, trustee for the ACLU of Wisconsin, president of the Wisconsin Community Fund, and co-chair of the city of Madison's Study Circles on Race program. He currently serves on the advisory committees for the Madison Mayor and the Madison Superintendent of Schools and Rainbow Families Wisconsin, on the civil rights coalition "Communities United," and as secretary for the LGBT interfaith group "Coming Out, Coming Together." In 2002, Community Shares of Wisconsin presented him its "Sally Sunde Award" for outstanding contributions toward social justice.

Quinlan succeeded Debra Weill at OutReach, which has had a history of turnovers at the agency's helm. Weill was fired in June 2002 by the board on a unanimous vote in her third year in the position.



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## INTERNATIONAL METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCHES DENOMINATION (MCC) CONDEMNS EXPULSION OF NEW ORLEANS CHURCH GROUP FROM ROMAN CATHOLIC FACILITY

New Orleans -- An international Christian church group has added its voice to the current controversy surrounding a decision by the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of New Orleans to evict a predominantly-gay church group from meeting at a Roman Catholic AIDS hospice.

Despite a signed rental lease for use of the facilities, Metropolitan Community Church of Greater New Orleans (MCCGNO) was evicted by the Archdiocese because the small church group believes in same-sex marriage.

The Reverend Dr. Troy D. Perry, Moderator of Metropolitan Community Churches, a Christian denomination with churches in 23 countries and the parent denomination of MCCGNO, said, "I am saddened that the Archdiocese is expelling the rent-paying, lease-holding congregation, not from a church building, but from an AIDS hospice. They are sending a clear message to people with HIV that the Roman Catholic Church welcomes you as a sick or dying person, but not as a living, loving person. We've grown weary of a church that will condescend to bury us but not have the simple courtesy to marry us."

"In fact, this is the continuation of a pat-

tern of hostility against gays and lesbians by the Archdiocese," added Perry. "In 1973, in the aftermath of the Upstairs Fire in which 12 members of Metropolitan Community Churches died, the Archdiocese refused to open the doors of any Roman Catholic Church for us to hold memorial services."

Perry was not the only MCC leader to speak out on the controversy.

The Reverend Jim Mitulski, Director of Leadership Development and Seminary Relations for the MCC denomination, added, "Here is yet another act of overt hostility against self-affirming gay people. I doubt the Archdiocese would expel a congregation affiliated with the United Church of Christ or the Episcopal Church, both of which accommodate the blessing of same-sex unions. It's time to stop using religion as a mask for prejudice against gay people."

Mitulski, a long-time AIDS activist, added, "As a person living with HIV/AIDS, let me say loud and clear: If the Roman Catholic Church won't honor our weddings, don't insult us by offering to conduct our funerals."

Perry, who has championed ecumenical relations and who met Pope Benedict XVI -- then Cardinal Ratzinger -- at the Bilateral Dialogue held during Pope John Paul II's

visit to Columbia, South Carolina in 1987, said, "This type of decision contradicts the Roman Catholic Church's own commitment. In 1987, the US Conference of Catholic Bishops published its own statement, The Many Faces of AIDS, and addressed the stigma too often associated with people with HIV/AIDS. The statement said, 'Made in God's image and likeness, every human person is of inestimable worth. All human life is sacred, and its dignity must be respected and protected.' The Archbishop of New Orleans should apply these same principles of respect and protection to the congregation of MCC of Greater New Orleans, which includes people living with HIV/AIDS."

"This action by the Roman Catholic Archdiocese is yet another reminder that the important work of Metropolitan Community Churches is not yet done," Perry said of the predominantly-gay Christian denomination. "I am challenging our brothers and sisters in other faith communities around New Orleans to receive a special offering this Sunday to help Metropolitan Community Church of Greater New Orleans locate and move into a permanent worship space. Gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people of faith in New Orleans need to know they have a permanent space in which to worship in openness and authenticity, and free from the prejudice and whims of homophobic bishops."

## NATION'S TOP EXPERTS TO DEBATE SAME SEX MARRIAGE IN WISCONSIN

**Madison -**

For the second time in less than a year, two of the top figures in the national same-sex marriage



debate will go head to head in a public debate in Wisconsin. Nationally recognized LGBT leader Evan Wolfson will debate equal marriage rights with Glenn Stanton, the vice president of Focus on the Family on Wednesday, September 21 at 7:30 PM in the Union Theater at UW-Madison.

In 2004, Wolfson was named one of the Time 100, Time magazine's list of the 100 most influential people in the world. After over a decade of litigating gay rights cases at Lambda Legal, Wolfson launched Freedom to Marry, the gay and non-gay partnership working to end discrimination in marriage nationwide. He now serves as executive director for that organization and is a chief national spokesperson for equal marriage rights. His book Why Marriage Matters: America, Equality, and Gay Peoples Right to Marry was recently released in paperback.

In 2000, the National Law Journal named Wolfson one of "the 100 most influential lawyers in America." Citing his national leadership on marriage equality and his appearance before the U.S. Supreme Court in *Boy Scouts of America v. James Dale*.

Stanton is Director of Social Research & Cultural Affairs for James Dobson's Focus



Compiled and written by Mike Fitzpatrick

on the Family, one of the most prominent organizations that is leading the charge against equal rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Americans. Stanton is currently serving the Bush administration as a consultant on increasing fatherhood

involvement in the Head Start program.

The September match-up is the second featuring top national figures in the marriage equality dialogue in the state. In October, 2004 former Human Rights Campaign Executive Director Elizabeth Birch debated Robert Knight, director of the Culture and Family Institute and one of the drafters of the Federal Defense of Marriage Act, at the University of Wisconsin - Green Bay. Wisconsin is viewed by both sides as a pivotal state in the current same-sex marriage debate. The Green Bay Press Gazette reported Birch "got more verbal support and applause during that debate on gay marriage than her anti-gay marriage counterpart."

Wisconsin is viewed by both sides as a pivotal state in the future direction of the same-sex marriage debate. Assembly Majority Leader John Gard (R-Peshtigo) indicated last June that the legislature will move in the Spring of 2006 to pass for a second time the proposed amendment to the state's constitution to ban legal recognition of unmarried couples regardless of sexual orientation and schedule the statewide referendum for the November 2006 election. Though 18 states have passed similar bans, most have done so in compressed time frames that have not permitted extended public debate on the issue.

Visit [www.actionwisconsin.org](http://www.actionwisconsin.org) to learn more.

## WISCONSIN'S FREKER, YOUNG ON NATIONAL LGBT GROUP'S BOARD

Equality Federation Hosts Largest Ever Meeting of State LGBT Leaders

Louisville, KY - Two of Wisconsin's top LGBT activists now serve on the nation's foremost coalition of state activists. Action Wisconsin's Josh Freker was re-elected Secretary of the Equality Federation at their annual summer conference here. Additionally, Center Advocate's Leon Young continues on the organization's

board of directors.

Leaders of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender civil rights movement returned to their home states from Kentucky August 8 after four days of meetings where they shared strategies, information, and resources to build stronger and more powerful statewide organizations. The annual

gathering of Equality Federation members was the largest ever, attended by 130 representatives of forty statewide and thirteen national organizations.

"Our movement has never been stronger," said Toni Broadus, Executive Director of the Federation. "The passion and determination of state LGBT leaders was evident in the packed meeting rooms and hallways and in the lively discussions about our work in every state in this country. While right wing extremists attempt to defeat us with the political tactics of fear and division, we

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Bi male, 43, 5'10", 190, disease free, 7" uncut, looking for a 40-60 y.o. male to orally service me weekly. Good kisser a plus. **Oshkosh** area. (920) 251-2343. [2]

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**La Crosse**: 44, beefy hairy guy looking for a top to paddle my butt. Not looking for sex, but would be oral for you. E-mail [pjohn39@msn.com](mailto:pjohn39@msn.com) [2]

Sexy 45 y.o. white pre-op transexual 36C bust, sexy body, in shape, seeking white or hispanic males 25-40 for erotic fun. Have strong fetish for man in sweaty sox. (262) 605-9508 5-10pm or all day weekends. [2]

A **Dodge County** area gay mens social group is attempting to form for those gay and bisexual men in or near Dodge Co. Please contact [lee53050@yahoo.com](mailto:lee53050@yahoo.com)

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Check us out! "Friends" is a new social & networking group for single & partnered guys to discover one another in East Central Wisconsin. Meet great guys at monthly get-togethers, have fun, connect, or just be *friends*. E-mail for info: [taurus574007@yahoo.com](mailto:taurus574007@yahoo.com) [2]

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