

Give the People Light and they will find their own way.



# The Wisconsin Light

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## MAP Seeks Multilevel Care Facility By 1990

It took a lot of caring. It took a lot of work. But, long-time Milwaukee Gay activist Alyn Hess who is living with AIDS has been accepted for long-term care by Greentree Hospice.

The fact that this has happened is due to the Milwaukee AIDS Project (MAP). It is due to those who work there and give their time and talents and those who, over the years, have raised money in countless fundraisers that allow MAP to help people like Alyn.

Perhaps some are not aware of the situation. You should be, for if you've given money to MAP, you made it happen.

Alyn was at Milwaukee's St. Joe's Hospital. According to his doctor there, he was "medically stable." But he needed a place to live where he could receive help in daily living. Greentree Hospice wanted to help. According to Doug Nelson, Executive Director of MAP, Greentree was "very, very good, very caring."

The problem was a couple of HMO's bickering over which one would pay the hospice. In Nelson's words "it was the private insurance industry not responding to care needs. The business focus was getting in the way of the care focus."

The situation was resolved when MAP, represented by Nelson, brought its weight to bare on the decision makers in the two insurance companies. An agreement was reached that the two HMO's would split the cost and argue later. In the meantime, Alyn would receive the help he needed.

The weight that MAP has and uses for the benefit of its clients is largely due to the support the organization receives from the Lesbian/Gay community, Nelson said.

Nelson told *Light* that "No issue is more important [to Map] than getting quality care for clients." Alyn is an example of this, but only one example.

A huge problem that MAP confronts now and in the future, Nelson said, is that of long-term care such as Alyn needed for the untold numbers who are now or who will find themselves in his situation.

The question is, why couldn't Alyn and other PWA's in similar need be admitted to a nursing home? The answer is, according to Nelson, that at present, there is a "chunk of the health care system that is not responding [to the needs of AIDS patients], the nursing homes," said Nelson.

In December, with Alyn and people like him in mind, MAP and the Milwaukee Urban League sponsored a lunch for 100 Black leaders. The purpose was to talk  
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## NURSING HOMES CONTINUE TO REFUSE PERSONS WITH AIDS



Arnold (Harvey Fierstein) and Alan (Matthew Broderick) share a quiet breakfast in the film "Torch Song Trilogy" which opens January 20 at Milwaukee's Oriental Theatre.

## Exhilarating, Poignant "Torch Song Trilogy" Comes to the Screen

By Geno

The award winning Broadway play is now a movie! Harvey Fierstein's "Torch Song Trilogy" won two Tony awards — best play and best actor — and as Fierstein's labor of love (he wrote the play, appeared in it and wrote the screenplay) it comes triumphantly to the screen. The film will begin an exclusive showing in Milwaukee at the Oriental Theatre on Friday, January 20th, and openings elsewhere in the state will be announced shortly in local newspapers.

From its first birds-eye view of Brooklyn in the 60's, the movie throbs with life and energy as the camera zooms in on Mama finding little Arnie Beckhoff putting on her make-up and trying on her dresses. This first part of the trilogy immediately takes the viewer into the life of Arnold the drag queen (Harvey Fierstein) belting out torch songs as Virginia Hamm (a.k.a. Anita Boy and Bang Bang La Dash). Rowdy scenes of Arnold and "the girls" performing are rapidly inter-cut with Arnie talking intimately to the camera about his frank, funny, and sometimes angry demands for respect and love. He meets Ed, a bisexual school teacher in a Gay bar, and life takes on a rosy, romantic hue for a while until Arnie suspects that Ed is dating someone else, only to discover that the "other man" is a young woman, Laurie (Karen Young). End of romance, and Part I.

The second wing of the triptych focuses on Alan (Matthew Broderick), the young lover whose death Arnold will mourn for the rest of his life. We also meet Arnold's family — father, mother and lawyer brother — who try to understand and accept his lifestyle. The theme of family dominates this section and the poignant scene of Alan accompanying Arnold to his father's funeral will hit home for many. Alan and Arnold decide to adopt a son to create their own family, then another family situation is explored when Alan and Arnold are invited to spend a weekend in the country with Ed and Laurie. Another comic disaster.

Part three is dominated by Mama (Anne Bancroft). Now widowed, she comes up from Florida to visit Arnold only to learn that Arnold and Alan had been lovers and that Alan is dead. When she discovers that David (Eddie Castrodad), a

Gay fifteen-year-old is Arnold's adopted son and that Ed has left his wife, Laurie, and is living with Arnold, she explodes. This unconventional menage outrages all her ideas of family, and she and Arnold confront each other, battling toe to toe until they reach a new understanding and respect for each other.

At the end of the film, Arnold is happily surrounded by the symbols of the most important forces in his life — a portrait of Alan, oranges that Ma brought up from Florida, Ed's eyeglasses, David's baseball cap, and his rabbit ear bedroom slippers.

Fierstein has assembled a dynamic cast to bring his play to life, and most cast members have taken less than their usual salaries to take part in this labor of love. Paradoxically, the "names" in the cast are least satisfying. The almost legendary Bancroft acts her heart out, but you are always aware that she is acting and no matter how much she "kvetches" she is simply not a convincing Jewish mother. Still, her confrontation with Arnold in the cemetery as she mourns her husband and Arnold says Kaddish at Alan's grave is devastating, gut-wrenching.

Matthew Broderick as the male model Alan is sweet and attentive and probably that is all the role demands.

But the really appealing portrayal is Brian Kerwin's as Ed — he and Fierstein have the most expressive faces so that even their inner thoughts can be read in them. They are real, they are themselves, they don't seem to be acting. And this is largely true of the rest of the cast.

Eddie Castrodad is delightful as the adopted son (the role which Matthew Broderick played in the original state version); the "girls" seem completely at home onstage and off; and even the two eye-catching chorus boys (Robert Neary and Nick Montgomery) are right at home and enjoying themselves.

The dialogue is hip, clever, fast-moving and many lines are virtual throwaways ("A thing of beauty is a joy till morning"), but, again, its naturalness adds to the reality of the film. Additional scenes and dialogue have been added to this screen version, and the set decor (Arnold's apartments are a treat in themselves), the background music, and  
TURN TO TORCH SONG, PAGE 10

[Madison]- Four prominent Wisconsin lawmakers have expressed sharp criticism and "deep concern" over the policy of Milwaukee area nursing homes barring persons with AIDS from admission.

In a letter to Wisconsin's nursing home associations, State Reps. Tom Barrett (D-Milwaukee), Peter Bock (D-Milwaukee), Tim Carpenter (D-Milwaukee) and David Clarenbach (D-Madison) cited the policy of 62 nursing homes in the Milwaukee area of denying admission to persons with AIDS as "disturbing" evidence that "we have not met the challenge of the existing AIDS cases, let alone be prepared for the future."

According to the National Centers for Disease Control, the number of AIDS cases will increase in the coming years.

The nursing homes reported their AIDS policies in response to a Milwaukee AIDS Project (MAP) inquiry regarding such policies. While some homes said they were in the process of developing policies regarding AIDS admissions, none, to date, have admitted a person with AIDS.

According to Douglas Nelson, Executive Director of MAP, the nursing homes that provided a reason for refusing admission stated their employees were not "properly trained" to care for persons with AIDS.

All nursing homes contacted, however, accept persons with hepatitis-B virus.  
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## Ben-Shalom Wins Army Battle

[Milwaukee]- Federal Judge Myron L. Gordon declared unconstitutional January 10 a US Army Reserve regulation that bars Lesbians and Gays from re-enlisting in the Reserve.

The ruling came in the case of Milwaukee's Miriam Ben-Shalom who has waged a 12 year battle against the military for her right as an open Lesbian to serve in the armed forces.



Sgt. Miriam Ben Shalom

The decision stated that a person could not be prevented from serving in the military based on his/her sexual orientation.

Ben-Shalom told *Light* that this ruling is "one in a series of victories that she has achieved. However, it would appear to this reporter that Ben-Shalom is being too modest.

This legal victory over the Army which is unique has been won by a woman and a woman from Wisconsin. While men often pride themselves in being the "flag-bearers" in the cause of civil rights, it should be pointed out and pointed out strongly, that a woman, fighting alone and at great sacrifice, won this landmark victory. No man did this. Our Gay male pride is high, but women's pride should be greater yet.

In the next issue of *Light* Sue Burke will be writing an in-depth article on this decision.