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The Wisconsin Light

MAP to Open 33-Bed Housing Facility for AIDS, HIV Patients

[Milwaukee]- In a major expansion of its housing program, the Milwaukee AIDS Project (MAP) will open a new, long-term, independent living facility as a residence for up to 33 men and women with AIDS and HIV disease. The facility, which was originally built as a convent, is located on Milwaukee's northwest side and is scheduled to begin admitting residents this coming April.

The AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin (ARCW) has leased the building and the residential program will be run by MAP.

Doug Nelson, ARCW's Executive Director, was clearly elated. "This new facility enables us to keep our pledge that no one with AIDS will be homeless in Milwaukee," he said.

He told *Light* that the new residence was the first of its kind in Wisconsin and praised it as "the best example of a community coming together to support people living with AIDS."

A Tale of Two Cities

The new facility comes after long and sometimes frustrating series of negotiations with politicians in West Allis for the use of a convent in that city for



ALDERMAN MARVIN PLATT

people living with AIDS and HIV disease. "We have experienced truly a tale of two cities," Nelson said, adding that "We continue to be disappointed that the politicians in the West Allis City Council are blocking the use of Immaculate Heart of Mary Convent for HIV housing."

The political barrier in West Allis, Nelson said, "is based on political reaction to unwarranted public fears."

TURN TO HOUSE, PAGE 7

250 Madisonians Plan To Attend March on Washington April 25

[Madison]- On April 25, 1993, between 1 and 1.5 million Lesbians, Bisexuals, Gay men and supporters will converge on Washington, D.C. to demonstrate for civil rights. The Madison contingent is being organized by Charles Squires, Civil Rights and Concerns Director, Wisconsin Student Association (WSA).

Squires has announced that information and registration forms are available to the general public. Squires said that he expects that over 100 Madison area residents plan on traveling to the March on their own, and about 150 will travel together in chartered buses. Everyone traveling alone should pick up a form and register at no cost so they can be informed about where to meet for the March and other related details.

Squires said also that the forms will allow people to sign up for low-cost bus travel and hotel rooms in the D.C. area. Non-students can ride the buses for only \$95 round-trip. Hotel accommodations

Rep. Baldwin To Introduce Domestic Partnership Bill

By John Quinlan

[Madison, WI]- Every day, in ways both profound and routine, Gay men and Lesbians are reminded that their relationships are less legitimate than heterosexual relationships in the eyes of the law. Ultimately, the law must be changed. However, until that happens, there are many steps we can take to protect ourselves, a distinguished panel of experts told an overflow crowd at

Achieving Basic Civil Rights Is Goal For Proposed Statewide Coalition

By John Quinlan

[Madison]- At a time when Lesbians, Gay men, bisexuals and our allies are becoming an increasingly powerful political force nationwide, State Rep. Tammy Baldwin (D-Madison) is offering a blueprint for the building of a new statewide coalition here in Wisconsin. If all goes as she hopes, dozens of activists from around the state will be joining her by the end of the summer for an organizing conference at the State Capitol, where they will celebrate the birth of a new organization.

"A network like this could take shape over the next 6-12 months, but it won't happen without a commitment of time and energy from the Gay, Lesbian and bisexual community," Baldwin told the *Light*. "We begin by building a statewide network of persons willing to make a fairly basic commitment to Gay and Lesbian rights, that commitment being a willingness to place telephone calls and write letters to elected and appointed officials on issues of importance to Gays and Lesbians."

"We then need to develop a mechanism for mobilizing that network: action postcards, phone trees, newsletters, contacts in the Gay and Lesbian media, etc. And as the organization grows, its board could be creative in finding still other ways to get out the word," she added.

"Of course, we need such a network in place to support the lifting of the military ban and the lifting of the travel ban against non-citizens with AIDS. But we also need it for the wide range of other issues that we will visit in the future relating to our civil rights, health needs, legal recognition for Gay and Lesbian families, etc."

While Baldwin has only just begun discussing this idea with supporters, she's especially excited by the prospect of an organizing conference in late summer at the State Capitol. As a prelude to this conference, Baldwin would like to

Border's Bookstore on Feb. 10.

Wisconsin Domestic Partnership Bill

State Rep. Tammy Baldwin (D-Madison) said that she would be introducing a "domestic partnership" bill in the state legislature before the end of the year. This would be ground-breaking legislation, and a first step will be to arrive at a consensus in the Gay and Lesbian community over the form the law might take. Noting that Gay

invite a steering committee composed of activists from around the state to Madison in early May (a week or two after the March on Washington) for a planning meeting.

This will be the second such organizing conference of its kind held in the Capitol. In November of 1990, Baldwin helped organize events open to local activists in conjunction with Madison's sponsorship of the annual conference of the National Network of Openly Lesbian and Gay Officials.

Baldwin envisions the new group expanding to include many people who are not necessarily Lesbian, Gay or bisexual. "Our history in Wisconsin has shown us that we need to build coalitions in order to achieve our most basic civil rights," she said. "Over a decade ago, there was a tremendous amount of coalition-building here that led to the passage of the nation's first Gay and Lesbian civil rights bill."

"The bill had been introduced for many sessions, but it wasn't until Gay men and Lesbians joined forces with women's rights groups, people of color, peace activists, and many prominent members of the religious community that the political will was born to pass this landmark legislation."

People interested in working on the coalition are encouraged to contact Rep. Baldwin's office at (608) 266-8570.

Homophobic Candidates Running In Madison School Board Race

By John Quinlan

[Madison]- At a time when homophobia-driven violence and harassment are on the increase in the public schools, the April 6 Madison school board races have taken on a new importance. "These races are very important to the community, whether we have children or not," Rep. Tammy Baldwin said. "The school board races pit some people against each other with some pretty extreme views on what we should be talking about with our children in schools and whether there should be a tolerant atmosphere for Gay and Lesbian youth."

"I am endorsing Carol Carstensen and Peter Williams in the spring races," Baldwin announced. "I encourage you to research the issues, to know who the candidates are and to know that some of the candidates in this race have some pretty homophobic views."

Progressive incumbents Carstensen and Williams are opposed by candidates backed by the archconservative Citizens Advocating Responsible Education (CARE) committee. CARE co-founder Sarah Kidd is waging a strong campaign against Carstensen, and CARE member Scott Fromader (a former aide to Gov. Tommy Thompson) is launching an equally strong campaign against current board president Williams.

Carstensen and Williams have been strong advocates for education that respects the diversity of cultures and family forms found in the Madison schools. Their candidacies are being backed by a wide range of progressive

"marriage" may not be everyone's goal, Baldwin said that "we may want to construct something that looks entirely different."

Legislation recognizing Gay and Lesbian couples' rights in areas such as zoning, health insurance, and family memberships has passed in about a half dozen cities nationwide, Baldwin noted. While each city confers different rights, all require Gay and Lesbian couples to register as "domestic partners." While a good beginning, Baldwin described Madison's own "alternative families ordinance" as "one of the weakest that I've seen" because of the political compromises that occurred prior to its passage.

"An extraordinary statewide lobbying and coalition-building effort will be required to pass a strong domestic partnership law in Wisconsin," Baldwin said, predicting that passage could come after several years of hard work.

Financial Planning Issues

Gay and Lesbian partners, even those who've been together for many years, shouldn't take for granted that institutions will recognize the joint nature of their finances. "Register jointly" and "make choices together" was the advice of Middleton-based financial consultant Tom Stam in regards to all investments and bank accounts. Additionally, partners should list each other as beneficiaries on all accounts.

When shopping around for life insurance, it's extremely important to find a company that's sensitive to the needs of Gay and Lesbian couples. "I recently talked to an agent who said right up front that, of course, there'd be a lot of extra questions, naturally, about AIDS issues," mimicking the agent's homophobic hesitancy. "And I told him, of course, that we wouldn't be referring anybody, naturally, to him in the future...." To be "one hundred percent sure" that a partner's rights will be recognized, Stam recommends that the

TURN TO PARTNERS, PAGE 11

groups, including Gay and Lesbian educators, and the membership of the Lesbian Parents Network.

In 1990, CARE co-founder Earl Kielley waged a campaign filled with homophobic invective — waving a guide to Madison Gay and Lesbian organizations at a McCarthyesque press conference to protest its presence in the schools. A top advisor sent out a letter of support calling Gays and Lesbians "weeds who must be removed from our community." The blatantly homophobic rhetoric was a tactic that backfired in 1990, when Gays and Lesbians and progressives rallied with a massive get-out-the-vote effort, producing wins for Carstensen and Williams.

Since that time, critics charge, CARE has gone into a "stealth" mode, concealing its more intolerant positions. A CARE candidate has won in each of the last two elections. If CARE won both seats this year, they would hold a majority on the seven member school board.

With hundreds of children from Gay and Lesbian families in the schools, and hundreds more who may be Gay or Lesbian themselves, the stakes are high. "We must rally behind Carstensen and Williams for the sake of our children and our community," said Sunshine Jones of the Lesbian Parents Network. "It's a low turn-out election and the other side is extremely well-organized. We've got to do everything we can possibly do to get out the vote."

For more information on how to help, call Carol Carstensen at (608) 255-5931 or Peter Williams at (608) 256-9092.

cost only \$20-\$31 extra.

Travel Subsidies

To encourage student participation, the Ten Percent Society at UW-Madison that is celebrating its tenth anniversary, has made \$4,500 available in student travel subsidies, and is providing financial services in the organization of the local March contingent.

The Society has reserved 3 buses and about 70 hotel rooms, as a service to both students and the local community that has helped support the group for so long.

UW-Madison students can join the buses to the March for only \$20 round-trip, plus \$20-\$31 for lodging. Student subsidies are limited, and are granted on a first-come, first-served basis to any UW-Madison student without regard to his or her sexual orientation or group affiliation.

The buses will leave Madison at 8:00

TURN TO MARCH, PAGE 8