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The Wisconsin Light

Godre Endorsed By Victory Fund For County Board

[Madison]- Friends of Cathreen Godre is proud to announce that Cathreen Godre has been endorsed by the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund.

Godre, who is running for the Dane County Board of Supervisors in the 6th District, is thrilled with the endorsement. "The Victory Fund is one of the most powerful Lesbian and Gay organizations in the country and their support and resources mean a great deal to my campaign."

The Victory Fund, founded in 1991, is a national membership organization formed for the purpose of getting openly Lesbian and Gay candidates elected to office. Each member of the organization pledges to donate \$200 a year to candidates endorsed by the Victory Fund.

"This is a very important endorsement for Cathreen," said State Rep. and former Victory Fund endorsee, Tammy Baldwin (D-Madison). "It demonstrates that a network of Lesbians and Gay men in Wisconsin and across the country stand firmly behind her."

This week the Victory Fund will send out thousands of letters to its members eliciting their support for Godre. While the financial assistance is important to Godre, she says that the symbolic support that this endorsement offers is more important. "Gays and Lesbians around the country are united by the Victory Fund to elect future leaders. I am honored to be a part of that."

"Cathreen Godre is a tremendous individual and will be an excellent Supervisor for Dane County," said Kathleen DeBold, Victory Fund's Political Services Coordinator. "We have done a great deal of research on her campaign and standing in the community and we firmly believe that she can and will win this race."

"Gay men and Lesbians around the nation must be a unified force to accomplish our goals, including running for office," said Godre. "I will be a voice for Gays and Lesbians who are in my district, around Wisconsin and across the nation. I believe that if we are to achieve our equal civil rights, we must have our voices heard at all levels of government."

Godre is an attorney and a Guardian Ad Litem for Dane County. The bulk of her practice consists of working with children in abuse and neglect cases. She is 32 years-old and lives on Madison's east side with her partner Mary and their 4 cats.

State Supreme Court Begins Hearings on Lesbian Adoption Case

Madison [AP]- Today, March 2, 1994, the Wisconsin State Supreme Court will begin hearing a case involving Lesbian adoption.

The case concerns Angel LouAnne Grinkey, (10) who is the adopted daughter of Georgie Grinkey. Angel has lived most of her life with her mother and Georgie's life partner, Anne Grinkey.

Two years ago Georgie and Anne went to court in Green Bay, Wisconsin, so that Anne could adopt Angel too.

"We didn't go after any Gay or Lesbian rights or anything," Georgie said. "We sought the adoption so if something happened to me, Angel would be secure."

The proposed adoption had the approval of Angel's court-appointed lawyer and an adoption agency social worker.

The case was heard by Brown County Circuit Court Judge Richard Dietz. Dietz gave it as his opinion that the adoption would be in the best interests of the child, but unfortunately, Wisconsin State law did not permit the adoption. Therefore, Dietz ruled against the adoption.

Anne couldn't adopt Angel unless she was Angel's legal stepparent and that couldn't be because state law doesn't

State Health Care Reform Sought For Chronic and Terminally Ill



FAMILY TIES— Johnny Depp stars in the new film, "What's Eating Gilbert Grape" which opens at theaters on March 4, including the Oriental in Milwaukee. The film takes places in Endora, Iowa where the citizens don't necessarily lead tranquil and ordinary lives — especially Gilbert Grape.

Furor Greeted Proposed Gay Studies Certificate Program at UWM

[Milwaukee]- "One of the real struggles facing Lesbians and Gay men is the silence that faces them... noticeably in our educational institutions. When you look at the prejudice and hatred that exist, one can track that to our educational institutions. If you don't have factual information, people form stereotypes that are uncontradicted by scholarly research." State Rep. Tammy Baldwin (D-Madison) was speaking about the certificate program in Gay and Lesbian Studies that is proposed to be offered to undergraduates at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee in the coming Fall Semester.

In the last week in February, Christopher Lane, Ph.D., an Assistant Professor in the English and Comparative Literature Department at UW-M, announced a program in Gay and Lesbian Studies. The certificate program would begin in the Fall Semester, 1994 and would include three courses: AIDS

Literature, Gay and Lesbian Literature in the 20th Century and Lesbian Literature. All these courses, Lane explained, have been taught before, "some as many as three times." Gay studies was not created out of thin air," he said.

"Contrary to certain assumptions, we are not a department. We are not offering a major or a minor. The certificate program is designed to compliment students' majors in a number of different fields," Lane explained.

Some people found objection to the new program on academic grounds. David Mulroy, Chair of the Classics Department at UW-M, said that he did not think Gay and Lesbian studies should constitute an academic discipline. "In the classics, for years before it was fashionable, we were teaching that it was not taboo in ancient Greece and Rome to be homosexual," he said.

But others objected for other reasons.

On March 2, 1994, State Reps Bonnie Ladwig (R-63), Steve Nass (R-31) and John Dobyms (R-52) sent a joint letter to their legislative colleagues condemning the program, saying the "occupational therapy and nursing programs" should be funded instead. The letter asked that those who agreed should call Ladwig's office by Friday, March 4 if they wished to sign a letter to George Steil, President of the University of Wisconsin Board of Regents which must give final approval to the new program asking them not to approve the program.

In part the letter reads, "Undoubtedly issues affecting a certain group of people who choose a particular type of lifestyle should not constitute an academic

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Reports to Cover Life at Camp Sister Spirit

Wisconsin Light is proud to announce that it has commissioned a series of special articles on life in Camp Sister Spirit in Overt, Mississippi.

Carolyn Drexler will be going to Camp Sister Spirit on March 8 to live there for two months. She has agreed to write a series of articles about her experiences there for publication in Light. She will be writing the articles while she is there and sending them back to the paper. The first one, she said, should be ready for publication by the end of March.

[Milwaukee]- As we go to press, the AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin (ARCW) is making a major effort in the Wisconsin State Assembly to improve the hotly debated Health Care Reform Bill (AB 1160) for the AIDS community. ARCW is aggressively seeking Assembly support for an amendment to AB 1160 that would guarantee periodic open enrollment in all health insurance plans regardless of health conditions such as AIDS and HIV disease.

"This is a huge issue for the AIDS community," said Doug Nelson, ARCW's Executive Director, "and a rare opportunity to make private health insurance much more accessible for people living with HIV and AIDS."

"We are aggressively working to gain State Assembly support for a biennial open enrollment which the Assembly Democratic leadership has not yet supported," Nelson said, adding that he was "disappointed" that recent developments on the Health Care Reform Bill removed the ban on pre-existing condition exclusions that had originally been in AB 1160.

"This is a critical issue for us," Nelson said with force. "And it appears that Wisconsin's powerful insurance industry has the upper hand in this debate."

Nelson continued, "The purpose of health care reform must, at a minimum, make the system more accessible for people with chronic and terminal illness and that's why we are working hard in the Assembly to gain support for an amendment."

Nelson indicated that the Open Enrollment Amendment will be "immediately" offered to the Assembly and, he said, he expects full-floor debate to occur on March 8.

"The Open Enrollment and pre-existing conditions issues are among the few issues that the legislature is addressing that truly make a difference for people living with AIDS, and we are determined to be successful in winning these issues for the AIDS community."

Because of the vital nature of this amendment, Nelson strongly urged everyone to contact their State Representative to encourage their support of the Open Enrollment Amendment.

Nelson added that there were many issues surrounding health care reform, that the legislature is not addressing. This one they are. That is why everyone's support is crucially important.

Nelson Testifies Before Health Care Reform Committee

Earlier, in testimony to the Wisconsin State Assembly Special Committee on Health Care Review on February 22, Nelson urged the Committee to support Assembly Bill 1160, which at that time would have banned pre-existing condition exclusions and support community rating for all health insurance companies.

"In Wisconsin and throughout the country, we have a health insurance system that is well intentioned, but one that far too often fails to meet the clinical needs of people who are sick," said Nelson.

"It is a system that works fairly well for people who are healthy, but not so well at all for people with chronic and fatal disease." He added that the system works to avoid coverage of people with terminal illnesses like AIDS through exclusions from coverage for pre-existing conditions, limitations in coverage whereby costly services like prescription drugs are not covered and extremely high payments and deductibles that make coverage virtually unaffordable.

"Probably the worst way the health insurance system operates," continued Nelson, "is in its exclusion for people with pre-existing conditions. Denying or limiting health care coverage for 12 months for people who are very sick with

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