

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



# The Wisconsin Light

## Governor Thompson Signs State Budget With Increase in Key AIDS Programs

Madison— Governor Tommy Thompson signed the 1995-97 budget last Thursday, July 27, with modest increases in key AIDS programs.

The increases came amidst major budget cuts in many areas to accommodate the Governor's \$1 billion property tax relief program.

"We are pleased and relieved," said Doug Nelson, Executive Director of the AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin (ARCW). "We are in an era of budget cutting and the governor's willingness to increase AIDS funding, even if it's below the increase we need, is a commitment we appreciate."

The most important state AIDS funding is for the life care services grant which funds social workers who provide case management at all nine Wisconsin AIDS service organizations. The new state budget will increase this grant by 4%.

Our case loads are increasing by 20% each year so state funding is not keeping pace with the epidemic," Nelson said.

"These funds go right to the front lines of the epidemic to help people with HIV and AIDS gain the resources and support they need. We cannot retreat and we are determined to maintain services," Nelson said.

Earlier in the state budget process, the Joint Finance Committee with the leadership of Sen. Mary Panzer (R-Ozaukee) increased the lifecare services grant by 7%. But in the final moments of the budget process, Rep. Scott Jensen (R-Waukesha) removed \$75,000 from the life care grant and \$75,000 from federal community aides to create a new \$150,000 AIDS Prevention Initiative.

Nelson expressed disappointment in the Jensen initiative stating that the lifecare grant is the highest priority of the AIDS community and that it was an unacceptable strategy to pull funds from this AIDS care and support program for the new AIDS Prevention Initiative.

Nelson also cited that the fact that \$700,000 of new CDC Prevention Funds have been awarded to Wisconsin this year and is likely to be continued next year, thus making the Jensen Prevention Initiative less needed and meaningful.

Wisconsin Light has learned that Nelson's views were endorsed by all nine of Wisconsin's

## MASN Board Excited About Their New Director Mary Turnquist

By John Quinlan

Madison— After an extensive nation-wide search, the Board of Directors of the Madison AIDS Support Network (MASN) has chosen Mary N. Turnquist of Madison as its new Executive Director. Bringing over 30 years of experience in community organizing, non-profit administration and social activism in Wisconsin to the job, Turnquist is expected to hit the ground running as she takes the helm of the 10-year-old, \$1.3 million organization.

"Our search committee was unanimous in its belief that Mary was the best candidate for this important position," said Mark Porter, MASN Board President. "She has what it takes to take MASN and guide it into the future."

"I am honored to become a part of this organization as it enters its second decade of service to communities in south central Wisconsin," Turnquist said. "MASN was born of a grassroots concern for individuals and families who were being devastated by this epidemic. This agency shines as a remarkable example of what can be accomplished when people are mobilized to care for one another."

Turnquist, who has spent the last year completing work on her Masters of Business Administration at Edgewood College, comes to MASN after 19 years with Lutheran Social Services (LSS) of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan. In her most recent position as Director of Human Resources, she oversaw management and training of 2000 employees at 180 program sites.

She has also served as South Central Wisconsin director of LSS, headquartered in Madison, where she has lived since moving from her long-time home of Wausau in 1988.

While in Wausau, Turnquist had served as a founder and the first board president of The

## Senate Sends Ryan White CARE Act to House with Overwhelming Vote of 97-3

A Triumph for ARCW Advocacy



Grand Opening— On July 18, ribbons were cut and the doors opened for the Rodney Scheel House in Madison. Ribbon cutters include: (l-r) Judy Wilcox, Eric Boberg, Cata Wilcox-Nash, Mark Pohan, MaryAlice Mowry, Warren Olson, Sherry Nelson, Melanie Ramey, Pam Geisler, Scott Christensen, Greg Scheel, Jo Scheel, and Eva Gallanter.

sin's AIDS service organizations, which signed a joint letter asking the governor to veto the Jensen provision.

"While I'm disappointed, I do applaud Rep. Jensen's good intention to help in the fight against AIDS," Nelson said. "I think this is a real opportunity for the AIDS community to work with him for meaningful AIDS policy in the future."

Women's Community, an agency serving low income women, including those experiencing domestic abuse. Begun as a grassroots effort that faced enormous obstacles in the conservative northern Wisconsin community, Turnquist worked side-by-side with about a dozen other dedicated women in making the dream of The Women's Community a reality. Under her leadership, it eventually grew to become a more than \$4 million agency with a state-wide reputation for success.



Mary Turnquist

At the same time, her work out of the Wausau office of LSS included developing programs with Indochinese refugees, developmentally disabled clients, runaway youth and latchkey children.

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## A Dream is Realized as the Rodney Scheel House Opens its Doors in Madison

By John Quinlan

Madison—As the red ribbons were cut and the doors of the 22 unit Rodney Scheel House were officially opened, both laughter and sighs of relief filled the air as more than 100 people celebrated the spirit of shared accomplishment that pervaded the dedication on July 18. Named for a Gay and Lesbian community leader and bar owner who died of AIDS five years ago, the house will provide subsidized housing and supportive services for people living with HIV and AIDS.

"People kidded around with me and said I was kind of pushy because I made a point of being the first resident," said John McCoy. "It was really important to me. One has to catch hold of a shooting star." McCoy's remarks were met with delighted laughter and applause.

McCoy discovered three years ago that he was HIV infected and said he wondered "Where will I live when I can no longer work to afford decent housing?"

McCoy was not a Madison resident, but moved to the city, he said, because it "had a great ASO, MASN. And when I found out they were working on the Rodney Scheel House, I had some hope."

He spoke of his current place, a second story apartment with no laundry facilities. "There's no air conditioning and last week for four or five days, the inside was greater than 110 degrees." His current apartment took two thirds of his low fixed income.

McCoy expects to move into the Rodney Scheel House in two weeks. "I feel privileged to live here," he said. "I did not know Rodney, but...I've met his friends and his family, and it's (the House) a fitting tribute to him that the house bears his name."

Thanks to Senator Kohl

While over \$60,000 was raised by family and friends of Rodney Scheel for the project, it was, in large part, the efforts of Sen. Herb Kohl that resulted in \$1 million in federal funding for the project. Former city council member Eva Galanter, of Sen. Kohl's Madison office, was ecstatic that five years after initial discussions, the project was now a reality.

"I did not know Rodney Scheel," Galanter

John Quinlan

Milwaukee— The first floor vote by the new Republican Congress on AIDS came last Thursday, July 27, when the U.S. Senate voted almost unanimously to support the Ryan White CARE Act.

The surprising 97-3 vote came after contentious and often draconian debate to gut the bill by Sen. Jesse Helms (R-NC).

One Helms amendment would have prohibited use of CARE Act funds from promoting "the homosexual lifestyle." The amendment passed by a 54-46 margin with Wisconsin's senators Herb Kohl and Russ Feingold in opposition.

But later, Sen. Nancy Kassebaum (R-KS) offered an amendment to gut the provisions of the Helms anti-Gay measure and it passed 73-27 with Kohl and Feingold in support.

It was with the leadership of Sen. Kassebaum that every Helms amendment was defeated bringing the Senate to its ultimate strong endorsement of the CARE Act.

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said. "But one day five years ago, I read in a newspaper a very moving account of his death as portrayed by his friend Pam Geisler. She talked about this dream Rodney had. And then, it was as if, by great serendipity, there was an answer from the government—ironically, perhaps—to a dream. At that time, the Department of Housing and Urban Development first made available funding for persons with AIDS for housing so that they could live in their communities just as Rodney had dreamed."

Galanter quoted the works of the 19th Century poet Edward Hale in evoking the can-do philosophy of those who had made the project a reality. "I am the only one, but still I am one," Hale wrote. "I cannot do everything, but still I can do something."

Madison Mayor Paul Soglin, who leads a city sometimes noted for civic projects that seem to take forever to become reality, noted the factors that had made the Scheel House exceptional.

"When we think about the long list of people who've made this project possible," Soglin said. "We come to realize that there's something going on here that is reflected in the people of our community. There's clearly an attitude here in Madison that recognizes that we don't expect government officials to do things for us. There's an attitude in this community that made this project work."

Soglin also praised the residents of the east side neighborhood where the house was built who had rallied behind the project in the last couple of years.

"Much has to be said for the residents of this neighborhood, who, despite the efforts of one or two individuals, have really been so cooperative in making sure that this project works," Soglin said.

Soglin was referring to the fact that two years before, after the site had been announced, more than a dozen phone threats of violence were received by board members.

On July 17, a special open house was held for neighborhood residents and residents have been encouraged to use the house's community room for neighborhood events.

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