



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

The Wisconsin Light

HRL to Host Public Officials Reception and Local Coming Out Day Awards, Events

Milwaukee—As part of the Milwaukee community's recognition of National Coming Out Day, the Human Rights League for Lesbians and Gays (HRL) is sponsoring the Annual Public Officials Reception.

Scheduled to be held on Wednesday, October 11, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Village Church, 130 E. Juneau Avenue, the Reception is offered each year as an opportunity for members of the LesBiGay community to meet with local as well as state elected and appointed government officials.

Previous years' Receptions have seen over 40 public officials attend the Reception.

Coming Out Day Awards

New to this year's event are the National Coming Out Day Awards. Recognizing the efforts of local community members and businesses who promote and reflect a positive Gay or Lesbian image through their active participation in the community, the Awards are to be presented during a portion of the Reception.

To be recognized this year are: Steve Bronfino, AfterWords Bookstore, Ujima and SAGE.

Other Events

The Public Officials Reception and Awards presentation are only two of a series of events sponsored by HRL in celebrating National Coming Out Day, annually recognized across the country on October 11.

Other events in Milwaukee include:

- Straight But Not Narrow Reception for Family, Friends and Allies, to be held on Saturday, September 30, from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the Milwaukee Art Museum.
- Town Hall Meeting with Candace Gingrich to be held on Wednesday, October 4, from 6:20 to 8:30 p.m. at Centennial Hall located in the main library in downtown Milwaukee.
- Coming Out in the Public Eye: Media and the Lesbian and Gay Community, to be held on Thursday, October 5, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the UWM Student Union's Fireside Lounge.
- Coming Out in the Bars Community Forum, to be held Thursday, October 12, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. in Dance, Dance, Dance Night Club, 801 S. 2nd Street.
- Coming Out Dance to be held on October 13, beginning at 8:00 p.m. at Fannie's

For more information on these events, call (414) 228-1921.

Ryan White Bill Passes House with Equitable Funding Due to Nelson and Clarenbach

Washington, D.C.—The House on Monday, September 18, extended through 2000 the Ryan White Act, the federal government's main source of funding for AIDS programs.

The House bill, approved by voice vote, makes some changes in the existing act, including giving states more flexibility to provide a wide range of treatments and support services.

It requires states to provide mandatory AIDS counseling and voluntary HIV testing for pregnant women and supports state programs requiring mandatory HIV testing for newborns.

It modifies the distribution system that saved most of the funding for large urban areas that have been hit hardest by the AIDS epidemic, but ensures that no city currently receiving aid will face a reduction greater than 1 percent of its 1995 funding level.

Hill staffers told Wisconsin Light that this new, equitable funding was largely due to the lobbying efforts of Doug Nelson, Executive Director of the AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin and David Clarenbach, former Acting Executive Director of the Madison AIDS Support Network.

While working hard for equitable funding, Nelson and Clarenbach were also among those leaders whose successful lobbying efforts targeted at moderate Republicans and key Democrats prevented anti-Gay zealots from attacking the bill with hostile amendments.

Health advocates had worked to avoid a repeat of the midsummer attack on the bill by Sen. Jesse Helms (R-NC), who offered amendments on the Senate floor designed to gut funding for the program and deny life-sustaining medical care for Lesbian and Gay

Full Federal Appeals Court to Hear Case Challenging 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' Policy



Records Broken—Tipper Gore represented Vice President Al Gore and herself as she cut the ribbon at the start of AIDS Walk Wisconsin on September 17th on Milwaukee's lakefront. Both served as the event's honorary co-chairs. Pictured (l-r) are: Stan Kokos, Green Bay Center Project; Doug Nelson, ARCW; Congressman Tom Barrett; Gore; Carole Meekins, Today's TMJ4; and Mary Turnquist, MASN.

Record-Breaking Crowd Raises Over Three Quarters of A Million Dollars in AIDS Walk

Mrs. Gore Praises Gays Who Are Out

Milwaukee—AIDS Walk Wisconsin, held September 17, 1995 along Milwaukee's lakefront, raised more money than any other AIDS fundraising event ever held in Wisconsin. A record-breaking crowd of 10,028 turned in an unprecedented number of pledges to help push the total dollars raised to \$783,748. The money will be used throughout the state to fund AIDS care, prevention, research and advocacy.

Honorary Co-chairs for this year's historic event were Vice President Al Gore and his wife Tipper. While constraints of schedule

prevented the Vice President from attending, Mrs. Gore was there. According to Doug Nelson, Executive Director of the AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin (ARCW), AIDS Walk Wisconsin is only one of two such events Mrs. Gore has attended.

Mrs. Gore attended the AIDS Walk Breakfast held at the Italian Community Center, where she was introduced to the crowd by Sen. Herb Kohl.

Kohl spoke of his close personal friendship with the Gores. He praised Mrs. Gore for having "carved out for herself her own identity and interests, primary among which is AIDS."

Kohl further praised Mrs. Gore for being representative of the "woman of today, the woman of tomorrow. She is truly a special woman," he said.

Kohl's introduction was followed by a standing ovation of the same kind she had received when she'd entered the room.

Mrs. Gore praised the public officials who attended the breakfast, showing, she said, their determination in the fight against AIDS.

Those elected officials at the head table included Reps. Tom Barrett and Gerald Kleczka. Others seated in the audience included State Reps Tammy Baldwin and Tim Carpenter; Milwaukee Alderpersons Marlene Johnson and Paul Henningson.

She also praised Doug Nelson for his work in lobbying for equitable funding for AIDS.

"I am here today," Mrs. Gore said, "because I want to show support and solidarity with those who are infected with HIV and AIDS, with all those who are giving care and with all those who are trying to find a cure. And with all those who make it possible to live every day with hope in their hearts."

She said that she wanted to "emphasize very strongly" that "AIDS is a human disease, affecting families, women and children." She added that "the fight against AIDS truly is the Administration's number one priority."

She assured the audience that the Clinton Administration would "keep the pressure on" to see that the fight continued. She urged others to do the same.

"Everything," she said, "must be brought to bear to find a cure."

Meanwhile, at the Henry Maier Festival Park (Summerfest grounds), the crowd of walkers was assembling. Before the ribbon cutting, speakers addressed the vast, enthusiastic crowd.

Carole Meekins, of Today's TMJ4, who had

Washington, D.C.—The full 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals will hear a case challenging the Clinton administration's "don't ask, don't tell" policy on Gays and Lesbians in the military.

The court issued an order saying all 13 of its active members would hear oral arguments in the case of former Navy Lt. Paul Thomasson sometime between December 4-8. A three-judge panel of the court requested the action after a hearing in the case on September 12.

The 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals sits in Richmond, Virginia. A copy of its order was obtained Friday, September 22.

Thomasson, who worked for the admiral administering "don't ask, don't tell," told his commander about his sexual orientation days after the policy went into effect. After the Navy moved to discharge him, he challenged the policy in federal court and lost. He then appealed to the 4th Circuit, which heard his case in a special, expedited session.

It is the first case challenging the administration's policy to reach the federal appeals court.

Noting that circuit courts rarely hear cases with all active members present, Allan B. Moore, Thomasson's attorney, called the court's order unusual and encouraging.

"If the court were not troubled by the government's position, they would see no reason for the full court to come into the case and sit with them and hear it again," Moore said. "It clearly is a signal that they have some very, very serious concerns."

In a statement issued Friday, September 22, the Justice Department said, "The court is obviously taking seriously the parties' arguments. We welcome the opportunity to present this matter to the full court and look forward to a resolution of this important case."

In Hawaii

Meanwhile, a Gay airman stationed at Hickam Air Force Base in Honolulu said he was discharged Friday, September 22, by a military review board after it determined that he had had sex with another man.

The Air Force said the Privacy Act prevented it from releasing information on decisions the board made in the case of Airman 1st Class Prentice Watkins.

Watkins, 25, said he had received a general discharge at the end of a three day hearing. Watkins said he will sue the Air Force, claiming he deserves an honorable discharge.

Even if he would have been allowed to remain in the military, Watkins said he doesn't think he could have handled the stress anymore. "I'm tired, so tired. I feel like I've been harassed," he said.

Watkins said he enlisted last year to pursue a career in the civil engineering field, not to reform the military policy on Gays. "No one had a problem with me," he said.

No one cared about his sexuality, he said, until a civilian Mainland man, whom Watkins had a relationship with last year, sent a letter to Watkins' supervising officers disclosing his sexuality.

Watkins said the man wanted revenge because he had broken off their relationship.

After receiving the letter, Watkins said military officials searched his room and found such things as a picture of him kissing another man.

Watkins said he is getting a lot of support from Gay friends, who are mostly in the military in Hawaii.

"Believe it or not, since I've been on this island, which is going on six months, I've met hundreds of Gay military members here," he said.

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