

MADISON'S PRIDE WEEKEND ISSUE

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

▼ The Wisconsin Light

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Tom Martin: A Life of Pride and Service, A Life Dedicated to the Community

By Terry Boughner

Milwaukee—Thomas E. Martin, 47, died on the evening of June 25, 1997, ending his life in an apparent jump from Milwaukee's Hoan Bridge. According to one source, he was doing some legal work for St. Luke's Hospital and was expected there that night.

Tom was a native of Milwaukee, a prominent attorney, who expended himself in untold hours of service and support to the LGBT community. He leaves behind his life partner, Gary F. Swartz, his mother, Anna, brothers Albert and Robert, numerous other relatives and uncounted friends.

By all accounts, Tom was a brilliant man. He attended the University School of Milwaukee before going on to graduate Phi Beta Kappa from Brown University. After which, he attended the University of Wisconsin Law School.

There are those who believe in a Providence that acts in human lives. If so, Tom's life was proof. He began his career in 1975, working for the Milwaukee law firm of Shellow & Shellow before becoming a Federal prosecutor with the Justice Department. The way, Tom said one time, seemed "bright and clear."

His life took a sharp, right angle turn. Charges were brought. He resigned from the Justice Department. After some little time, he began what some would call his real calling, that of service to his own people in the cause of justice in which he so strongly believed.

The day after the news of his death was received, many phone calls came to this office. These were not from "prominent" people, but from "average" Lesbians and Gays who testified to Tom's unflagging efforts on their behalf.

For example, one woman, who did not give her name, said she "just wanted to talk." She told of Tom's drawing up her
Please See Martin Page 2



Tom Martin

The MAGIC Picnic, the Pride Parade and Festival and More

Madison Gears Up For a Big Pride Weekend of Events

By Bill Meunier

Madison—Gay and Lesbian organizations and businesses in Madison are gearing up for the biggest weekend in their history.

The Madison Pride Weekend July 17 through July 20 will offer a wide variety of food, fun, parties, and events.

This year for the first time there is an effort to co-ordinate all of the various events taking place around the MAGIC picnic and Pride celebrations. Mary McBride, Chairperson of GALVANize is co-ordinating that effort.

"Our hope in the years to come is to promote sponsorships of this very special weekend," said McBride.

The center pieces of the celebration are Madison's M.A.G.I.C Picnic held on Saturday July 19 and the Madison Pride Parade and Festival held on Sunday July 20.

The M.A.G.I.C. picnic was begun as a customer appreciation party for patrons of the Backdoor Bar. It quickly grew into a community wide event that raises funds for a variety of community groups from the United to PFLAG, Apple Island and Lesbian mothers.

Please See Madison Page 2

AIDS Activist Found Murdered in Green Bay Hotel Room

By Bill Meunier

Green Bay—Jeff Whalen, a 45 year old AIDS Activist was found stabbed to death in his hotel room on Green Bay's East Side on Tuesday June 24th.

Whalen who had been working with the Center Project to form an AIDS Task Force in Marinette County received multiple stab wounds to his chest. He was found lying next to his bed by the staff of the Motel 6 in the early afternoon hours. Whalen had checked into the motel alone earlier.

He was last seen alive at Brandy's II. Patrons there say that he left that bar alone, in a jovial mood at about 1:30 a.m. early Tuesday morning. There were only four or five other customers in the bar at that time. No one else left the bar until closing time.

Lt. Craig Schyndle of the Green Bay Police Department told **The Wisconsin Light** that his department was pursuing a number of leads but had no "solid suspect at this point in time."

"We do not have a suspect, we have a lot of people of interest. We are getting a lot of information from the community and from his relatives and friends. As yet a solid suspect," said Schyndle.

He added, "Right now the investigation is very wide open. We are looking at it, as a possible hate crime, a total stranger, an acquaintance or a friend."

Schyndle asked that anyone with any possible lead in the case contact the Detective Devloy or the Department by calling (414) 448-3300.

Whalen was a big man, 6 feet and 200 pounds. **The Wisconsin Light** received reports that an autopsy report suggested that the murder was a hate crime because of the number of stab wounds, but was unable to confirm this before it went to press.

Please See Murder Page 2

GALVANize & MAGIC Picnic Presents



July 18-20 ▼ 1997

Madison Mayor Susan Bauman Speaks About Madison, the LGBT Community

An Exclusive Wisconsin Light Interview
By Mark Pocan

Mayor Sue Bauman has been in office as the new Mayor of Madison for just over nine weeks, and she is gaining a reputation from the media, city employees, elected officials and the community in general for her openness and accessibility. She sat down with Mark Pocan just one day after returning from the U.S. Conference of Mayors meeting in San Francisco to discuss Madison, the local LGBT community and other issues.

In the nine short weeks that Mayor Sue Bauman has been in office after defeating former Alderman Wayne Bigelow, she has been immersed with information and advice from a wide range of people on how to keep Madison the special place that it is.

During this brief period which she has been Mayor, she has met with city council members, department heads, staff, media and others. She has appointed local citizens to city commissions. She has hired her key staff.

She has arrived on the scene of local fires. She is negotiating a hotel site for Monona Terrace as well as arranging for the convention center's grand opening. She has approached state government leaders for more revenue for the city. She has spoken to dozens of area groups. And, in her spare time, she has been running one of America's top cities.

Her historic election as the first female Mayor of Madison would not have been possible without the support that she received from the LGBT community. The Mayor recognizes that one of the reasons that she is in office is due to the support she got from community Gays and Lesbi-



Mayor Susan Bauman

ans. She had the backing of both of the openly Gay/Lesbian elected officials on the city council, Alders. Mike Verveer
Please See Mayor Bauman Page 22

Wilde Oscar's Happy Puzzle

"All authority is quite degrading."
19th century Irish wit Oscar Wilde

- ACROSS**
- 1 large church
 - 9 Postal Service abbr. for islands
 - 12 7th tone of diatonic scale
 - 14 burgh of S.W. Scotland at the mouth of the river of the same name
 - 15 gay resort town in Mass.
 - 17 agreement
 - 19 objective case form of 'we'
 - 20 epochs
 - 21 S. Calif. gay resort in the desert, 2 words
 - 26 time zone of N.Y.C.'s Greenwich Village, abbr.
 - 27 last letter of the alphabet plural
 - 29 noun suffix for realm
 - 30 MAO in a mirror
 - 31 Mary Tyler Moore's TV friend that had her own spin-off as Morgenstern
 - 33 S. Fla. gay resort on an island, 2 words
 - 36 seed of a leguminous vine
 - 38 TIA in a mirror
 - 39 conglomerate that once owned NBC
 - 40 cast light back; ponder
 - 43 master of ceremonies at a drag show

- 56 First State, abbr.
 - 57 official Postal Service abbr. for address 'trace'
 - 59 departed sitcom host will become new talk-show host
 - 60 'Somewhere over the
- DOWN**
- 1 historic Spanish Atlantic port city
 - 2 yes to a ship's captain
 - 3 catch an animal
 - 4 20th century American poet Pound, initials ("Great literature is simply language charged with meaning to the utmost possible degree.")
 - 5 'Mr.' con-

- 6 Perot's middle name
- 7 audio-visual abbr.
- 8 7th sign of the zodiac
- 9 religious image
- 10 direction S.F.'s Castro to L.A.'s West Holly-
- 11 hide
- 12 rough woolen fabric
- 13 at once; forthwith
- 16 Officer of the Guard abbr.
- 18 woman of authority
- 22 ignoble
- 23 thick soup
- 24 not correct

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
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	49			50	51					52		
53	54		55		56		57	58				
59						60						

- 46 sticky stuff
- 48 savage; wild
- 49 'City of Brotherly Love'
- 52 relating to me
- 54 FDR's wife, initials ("No one can make you feel inferior without your consent.")
- 55 slang for no

- 2 wood, abbr.
- 11 hide
- 12 rough woolen fabric
- 13 at once; forthwith
- 16 Officer of the Guard abbr.
- 18 woman of authority
- 22 ignoble
- 23 thick soup
- 24 not correct

MURDER

Continued from Page 1

Wisconsin Light sources say that Whalen's wallet and credit cards were not taken ruling out robbery as a motive for the crime.

Sylvia Lee-Thompson, Director of Life Services for the Center Project called Whalen's death "A blow to the community." "He was someone we were working with. We had collaborated with Jeff's efforts to get an AIDS Task Force in Marinette Wisconsin. His death was a loss for the AIDS community and for North East Wisconsin." Said Lee-Thompson.

Whalen had in recent months tried to form an AIDS task force in Marinette county and served on the northeast regional Ryan White Consortia. He had recently joined the Wisconsin HIV/AIDS Prevention Planning Council, AIDS Action Wisconsin and Action Wisconsin.

Whalen worked at Lutheran Social Services in Marinette as a social worker and nurse's aid. He had recently moved into a one bedroom apartment in his mother's apartment building so that he could assist in taking care of her following her recent successful bout with cancer.

MADISON

Continued From Page 1

As it has in the past, the picnic will be held at Madison's Brittingham Park (a few blocks from the site of the former Hotel Washington.) There will be booths selling pride wear, picnic games (like the infamous purse toss and drag races) and other activities as Mad Town goes crazy for the day.

Those in attendance can purchase a ticket for \$10.00 and enjoy a fine meal and unlimited beverages throughout the afternoon.

Last year the picnic disbursed over \$5,000 to 15 different organizations serving the Madison area.

The Pride Celebration sponsored by GALVANize, is Wisconsin's fastest growing Gay Pride event. According to GALVANize, last year thousands of people were in attendance for the Pride Parade easily making it Wisconsin's largest Gay march.

There will be a pre-march rally at 1:30 p.m. at the State Street entrance to the State Capitol. Openly Lesbian State Representative Tammy Baldwin will be among the speakers.

In a change from previous years, this year's Pride Parade will head down W. Washington instead of State Street. A festival with entertainment, at Brittingham Park will follow the parade.

For Puzzle Answers See Page 3

But those aren't the only events taking place. Perfect Harmony, Madison's new Gay chorus will hold its first ever concert on Thursday July 17. The concert will feature a variety of American music. It will be held at the First Universal Unitarian church.

On Friday, July 19, the United will honor those who have contributed to the community. The United's Annual Awards dinner held at the Grand Ball Room of the Sheraton Hotel on John Nolan Drive will feature newly elected County Executive Kathleen Falk as its keynote speaker.

Also on Friday UW's 10% Society will host a free dance featuring Funkadesi on the U.W.'s open-air terrace at the Memorial Union. Funkadesi is a reggae/funk band.

On Saturday evening Dykeasaurus, a Lesbian improv comedy troupe will perform at the Wil-Mar Neighborhood Center.

Boyfriends, a Gay themed movie will be shown at the UW-Memorial Union on Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

The UW Gay and Lesbian Bisexual Alumni Brunch will be held on Sunday at the UW Memorial Union from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Among other benefits of the joint effort are Madison's Pride Weekend T-Shirts, a Pride Guide and joint advertising in state wide publications.

"Madison offers something for everyone with a variety of events including the largest Gay Rights March in the State of Wisconsin. I know everyone who comes to Madison that weekend will have a great time," said McBride.

See the SpotLight section of this issue for more detailed information on all of the events taking place during Madison's Pride Weekend

MARTIN

Continued From Page 1

will. Not a big thing, perhaps, "but when he found out I didn't have much money, he did it for free."

With an intensity that was typical of him, he devoted much time to defending those accused of police entrapment in the parks and elsewhere.

Several years ago, I attended a meeting at Tom's office in downtown Milwaukee that was to concern itself with the ongoing problem of entrapment. Something had to be done.

I remember distinctly riding up in the elevator that morning with a woman who I knew. She'd been having some legal problems. "Tom saved my rear end," she said gratefully. She was far from being the

only one who might have said this. In the meeting, I remember Tom's fervent determination that the abuse of entrapment and the consequence of lives ruined, must stop. "The community must know what's going on," he told us. "It must stop." This was the passion of an eminently decent man, a man who understood suffering and wanted it stopped. I remember thinking that at the time.

Afterward, Ron Geiman, who was also present, and I went for coffee in the Grand Avenue Mall. I told him what I thought. He agreed.

Doug Nelson, the Executive Director of the AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin (ARCW), said much the same thing. Entrapment was continuing. Tom called him only a few weeks ago. They must meet. Something had to be done. Doug told me of the "caring and compassion" he heard in Tom's voice. Sadly, the meeting was never held.

In addition to all this, Tom gave of himself and his money to many, many community projects, groups, organizations and causes.

To cite only a few examples, he served on the Board of the Brady Street Clinic (See Letter to the Editor, "In Memoriam" this issue). He was a strongly supporting member of the Cream City Business Association. He gave to and supported the Cream City Foundation. He gave to ARCW, both in money and time. He attended political fundraisers, such as the recent one for Sen. Feingold. He supported the Community Center.

In fact, the last time I talked with Tom was at the Oriental Theater where he was attending a showing of *Love! Valour! Compassion!* that was being sponsored by this paper as a Community Center benefit.

After the movie, we stood in the lobby talking. He seemed thinner than I remembered, almost frail, but though we were only discussing Gay movies in general—and this one in particular—there was the same fire in his eyes that I'd seen always before. It was as if his body was barely keeping in the fire.

Tom loved his father, Dr. Albert Martin, deeply. The latter had been a longtime Milwaukee surgeon who had retired to Sarasota, Florida. When he died in March, 1996, at the age of 86, Tom took the death

very hard and, as reported in the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, he seemed to find it hard to cope.

After Tom died, there were many who asked "Why?" There is no other answer than the death of a beloved parent. Many of us have been there. That can rip you apart.

None of us know what turns life may bring. We might say that Tom was laid low so that he could raise high. We might also say that in his life of service, he shot his arrow into the sky. It may have come down in flames, but oh, what a glorious light.

On July 1st, a picture-perfect, metallic bright day, a memorial service was held for Tom at Lake Park Lutheran Church on Milwaukee's upper East Side. It was the church where Tom had been baptized and where he had been confirmed. The congregation numbered approximately 250 of Tom's family and friends—including the State Attorney General John Doyle and Milwaukee Alderman Paul Henningson—filled the the gracious sanctuary to overflowing.

Eulogies were delivered by Tom's elder brother, Robert, Tom's colleague and friend Tom Zander, and Dr. Mark Huffman, a close personal friend. The organist was Gary Wood. The soloist was Mark Schmandt.

Robert spoke of the deep love he had for his "little brother," and of his brother's many accomplishments. Zander told of the respect he had for Tom and the influence Tom would always have on his life.

Dr. Huffington recounted personal memories of a dear friend now gone. Huffington spoke with great emotion of Tom's love for his life partner Gay Swartz.

The eulogists and the minister, Rev. Judith A. Crowley, in one way or another, asked "why?" I sat there thinking perhaps none of us can know "why."

Perhaps we must bow in deep humility, knowing that we cannot tell what life will bring, what turns it will take. Of Tom, I think, we can say this: he was laid low so that he could raise high. We might also say that in his life of service, he shot his arrow into the sky. It may have come down in flames, but oh, what a glorious light.

Where in Madison Are You?

Commentary by Brian Harder

Wisconsin Light

Madison Correspondent

It's a case of simple math. How many Gay people are there in Madison?

If statistics are anything, we have two options. Option one is to take the more widely accepted figure of 10% and calculate that out of 200,000 people in Madison proper, (350,000 in Dane county), Madison should have about 20,000 homosexuals in it's midst, 10,000 Gay men if I take out the Lesbians on a 50/50 basis.

If we follow the rebuttal argument that the number is more like 3%, then perhaps we should have only 6,000 Gay people, 3,000 Gay men in Madison.

My question for either figure is- Where Are You?

As a bartender I've seen the desperate look on people's faces come the end of the night when the same people are ready to leave at bar time. Either they've had 'em, don't know 'em or don't want to know 'em. I know people who are always looking for Mr. Right. And when he doesn't show up week after week, they get frustrated. Give me a break, it's a bar!

I know full well that some great relationships have come out of chance meetings at Gay bars, including one I was in for three and a half years and my current one which has lasted a year. But there are many of you out there we never see who I'm sure have other stories to tell.

If I were to guess how many regulars we have at Manoeuvres and the Mad Bar, I'd have to say about 150. That would be 150 Gay men who come out at least once a week.

If I were to figure in the once a month crowd, I would say 400, maybe. So you can't find one person out of 400 to develop something good with? Well what's the problem?

The problem is you should have between 3,000 and 20,000 to choose from.

OK, according to a recent *Isthmus* newspaper survey of Madison's Gay and Lesbian population, 40% of the Gay males in Madison are in a relationship. That leaves between 1,800 and 12,000 single Gay males in Madison. I know lots of people that would love to meet you! Granted, many of you aren't bar people. Many of you prefer to keep to yourself. Many of you prefer to go to other cities. Maybe you're married, perhaps you hang in different circles or maybe you feel past your prime. But

again I ask you, Where are you?

It's long been a curiosity of mine to wonder where all the men are. My roommate is Gay and hangs out with a different crowd than I do. He goes to potlucks and group meetings at other people's homes. There are lots of segments of the Gay society out there that each of us long to discover. But would you dare invite a stranger to the door and perhaps threaten the stability of your little groups?

It's a tough step to take but haven't we all wondered about other avenues to meet people? And I'm not just talking about finding sex but meeting new people for fun and growth!

When Madison holds it's annual pride weekend, you won't find 3,000 Gay men or 3,000 Lesbians at the Magic Picnic. You won't find 6,000 Gay people lining the parade route. You won't find 6,000 Gay people participating in a mass wedding, a drag race, a disco happy hour, a pride march or a candle light vigil. And if the other figure is correct, you certainly won't find 20,000 homosexuals all together in Madison. I ask you- Why Not?

We need to be proud in Madison. We need to discover our differences and our commonalities and get to know one another. We need to get over our self consciousness as individual groups and find the love of a community. We need to replenish the dating pool (I do have a boyfriend but my friend Vern is looking).

Unfortunately, while I'm pointing out what I'd love to experience, I don't have the answers to the dilemma of how to accomplish all I foresee.

I can urge you to attend Madison's Pride Weekend festivities. I can try to convince you to stop by Manoeuvres and introduce yourself to me or Ed or Patrick or Brad or any stranger you might meet there. Perhaps you could plan a huge pot luck some fine summer day. Or advertise in the classifieds that you're planning a bus trip to a Gay themed play in Chicago.

Reach into your heart and then reach out to those thousands of Gay people in Madison. Those people we never see. If we all attended the Pride Festivities, went to the next rally on the capitol steps, if we all implement one idea, one social experiment, our cup and our lives could runneth over. So I ask you once again - Where are you?

Editorial

Pride Madison Style

It's called Pride and Madison rightfully has it. The schedule of events for Madison's Pride weekend show that. Sure there are no big names and no fireworks. There is instead a simple, grass roots-based series of events that clearly, simply and eloquently states, "This is who and what we are." This is more than a Gay party with Rainbow flags.

Madison's Pride Weekend will see the first ever performance of its new Gay chorus, Perfect Harmony, the Wisconsin premier of a fine Gay movie, *Boyfriends*, recognition of those who have made contributions to its community, Wisconsin's largest Pride March and of course the famous MAGIC picnic.

There is something for everyone to enjoy and thousands will take the opportunity to enjoy it all. We offer our congratulations and our thanks to all of those who have worked so hard to make the Madison Pride Weekend possible. We hope that at some point they find the time to enjoy the fruits of their labor.

We also urge everyone who can to make the trip to go to Madison. Join in the fun and the pride. Together we can help send a message of pride to our State Government. If it's loud enough, that message might even get through to those State Legislators who voted for AB-104.

Tom Martin

Tom Martin has left us, going, we don't know why. He has left us grieving, but before his leaving, he did what too few do. He left this world better than when he found it by giving of himself. If, as is said, morality is to be judged by how deeply one is willing to sacrifice one's self for others, Tom Martin was one of the finest people this community of ours has known. Put through the furnace, he came out gold. He found in himself a great willingness to give himself in the fight for the dispossessed, the down-trodden, the frightened, those oppressed by a system that threatened to take them, grind them up and spit them out with no concern at all. Tom was concerned. He understood. He stood by their side.

Tom gave of himself to the whole community. If there was a fundraiser for some cause that would benefit us all, he was there. If there was an organization or enterprise that needed support, Tom was there to give his help. If there was a battle that needed fought, Tom was on the front lines.

His family has left it to each of us to memorialize him as we will. We agree with Ross Walker and Erv Uecker that a most appropriate way to do this would be by giving a contribution to Tom's beloved LGBT Community Center.

There are other ways. In addition to money, follow Tom's example and give yourself. Go out into the community and get involved. Support a cause, back an organization with your time.

Follow Tom's example. There is no more fitting memorial to any person than that.

Editor's Note

Three Young Men

The other evening, Jerry and I went to watch the fireworks display that opens Summerfest. For those of you out-state and elsewhere in the nation, Summerfest is the country's biggest music festival and is held at Maier Festival Park on the shores of Lake Michigan. This year, the pyrotechnic display was to be really spectacular, marking as it did, the 30th anniversary of the festival.

The fireworks happened. Boom, pop, up they went. Ohhhh. Ahhhh. It was great.

Afterwards, we were walking up Mason Street, going along slowly because the street was packed with people heading home. Suddenly, I heard a male voice from behind me exclaim, "Look at all the straights!"

I turned to see three young men—early 20s, college students perhaps, walking along, laughing, having a good time for themselves.

As they came abreast of me, I heard one of them say to his friends, "You think there are any Gays here?"

I grinned. Jerry smiled. "Oh, I think you can count on it," he said.

There was an exchange of smiles and on they went. As they did, the three of them holding hands, I had to shake my head in wonder. How far we have come.

When I was their age, I would no more have acted like that than I would have gone to the moon. Talk about being Gay? In public? Right out loud? Right.

Holding hands with another man on a well-lit street with hundreds of people all about? Yeah, right. No way. I mean just to go to a Gay bar, I parked my car five blocks away.

But a lot's happened since then; a lot that has resulted in the fact that LGBT people like these three young men can walk along, being themselves, having fun, and not be afraid.

We, as a community, have stood up. We have marched on Washington. We lobby our legislators. We fly the rainbow flag. And we have our Pride Festivals, in Milwaukee, Madison, Chicago and elsewhere across the county. Every one of those festivals, every single one, large and small, is testimony to the fact of our celebration of ourselves as human beings.

Oh yeah, I know, I know too well, that there's an awful lot of hatred, bigotry, ignorance and discrimination still out there, but it's less, a lot less than it was 30 years ago—and it's going to get even less as the years roll on.

That's another thing I thought as I watched those three young men.

We of the older generation, "wrinkled" though we now may be, can rest content in the thought that we have passed the torch successfully. These three young Gay men—and uncounted thousands more like

them—are living testimony to that.

We, of the older generation, stood up slowly. It's almost as if these young men and their LGBT peers were born standing up, heads high, proud, confident, seizing the human dignity that is theirs by Heaven's right.

The bigots may rage, but they imagine a vain thing if they think they can ever down us again. It's not possible, and they won't.

Jerry and I walked on, eventually winding up at This Is It. I was standing there at the end of the bar, having a beer, when the three young men walked in. We exchanged smiles of recognition before they went to be with some friends; an older man, a young Latino, a couple of African-Americans.

That's good, I thought, before going back to my beer and cigarette. In my day and age, we weren't nearly as inclusive as that. They are, and because they are, and because a lot of people like them can ignore ethnic background and age, there is a marvelous hope for this great country of ours.

Hope and confidence that it is not the bigots who will define our culture in the 21st century, it is young people like these. I'd love to be around to see it.

Letters

On Crawling

TO THE EDITOR:

"Crawling into bed with a member of the same sex." That is what an irate letter writer to a local paper said was the specific part about (presumably Gay) "love" that he "didn't understand."

But instead of just a neat rejoinder, his mis- sive is really a mega-sized insult! I, for one, have never "crawled" in my whole life! Nor "groveled," either. Oh, "climbed" in, maybe, when the bed was large. (You know some queen's apartments.) "Clambered" in often, as befits my athletic, macho physique. "Lighted" or "pirouetted" in even more often as befits my androgynous, light-in-the-loafers "tendencies." More recently, alas, "lumbered" in, as my "washboard abs" bloated up to become "washtub abs" and I became rotundly de- buffed. But, "crawl?" Not this individual "de- viant" individual!

Indeed, "straight is great—if you are straight! Likewise, "Gay" is "more that just okay"—for those who are Gay. Simple garden- variety complexity, diversity, pluralism. Our letter writer missed it. But we know, and that's the important thing.

Brian Kevin Beck
Whitewater, Wisconsin

Presbyterians Wanted

TO THE EDITOR:

Thank you for your recent article about the Presbyterian Church and its continuing struggle with the issue of ordination for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered persons. The action reported by the Milwaukee Presbytery in opposing the Church's new restrictions on ordination was indeed a bold step. By approving the Covenant of Dissent with the national church and declaring its intent to ignore the recent amendment to the church's Book of Order, they have sent a clear message to the Church's General Assembly meeting in Syracuse, New York.

Delegates from the Milwaukee area will certainly be questioned about their actions. Proposals to change the wording of the amendment will be discussed. The Milwaukee Presbytery may be asked to rescind its vote or face legal action in church courts.

As a Gay Presbyterian who has been denied ordination, I would like to meet with other Presbyterians in the Milwaukee area who support full participation in the church, with the initial goal of starting a local chapter of Presbyterians for Lesbian and Gay Concerns (PLGC). This group has been working for over 20 years on a national level to foster acceptance within the church.

Anyone interested in forming a local chapter of PLGC or supporting this issue, should contact me at (414) 228-7466.

We need to work now to make sure the bold step the Milwaukee Presbytery has taken is not withdrawn, and the national Church will follow the motto of your newspaper "Give the People Light, and They will Find Their Own Way."

Richard A. Myers
Bayside, Wisconsin

Tom Martin In Memoriam

TO THE EDITOR:

It will take a long time for the reality of Tom Martin's death and the depth of loss to the Community to sink in and truly be felt. Tom touched and supported the lives of those who knew him and countless others who didn't. As a professional, he stood at the side of those who felt the pain of domestic abuse, entrapment, discrimination and vindictive actions following the disintegration of a relationship.

Several weeks ago, Tom spoke to us about his deep feelings regarding the LGBT Community Center soon to be a reality in Milwaukee. He saw it as both a refuge for those who had been shut out of many areas of society and also a clear message to our City of who we are and the significant role we play in the life of the broader community.

Since Tom's family has left the choice of memorializing him up to each of those so moved, we, along with BestD Clinic (on whose Board he served and for which he performed many services), and several others, have decided to make contributions to the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center.

Perhaps others might wish to consider doing the same. We ask the permanent Community Center Board, when it is seated, to consider using these funds in an appropriate way to both pay tribute to, give thanks to, and remember this giving man.

Ross Walker and Erv Uecker
Milwaukee

Reconstructionism

TO THE EDITOR:

Lieutenant Flinn is very lucky that Ralph Ovadal is head of Wisconsin Christians United and not Secretary of the US Air Force. From recent remarks of Mr. Ovadal, we're led to suspect that under his control, Lt. Flinn would not have been discharged from the Air Force for her adultery, but would have been stoned to death.

The inference stems from Rev. Ovadal's recent admission on his radio program that he believes in the goals of the Christian Reconstruction movement. That group seeks to establish in the United States a government that operates strictly according to Christian law, by which they mean Old Testament Law.

Christian Reconstructionists doubtless have the variety in their beliefs that characterizes most religious movements in a country where religious freedom is absolute, but some leaders of the movement have called for literal implementation of Old Testament Law in the United States, including the death penalty for adultery, fortune telling, and many other offenses.

Rev. Ovadal said Reconstructionists are his "very, very close friends" and "fine, fine people." He doesn't consider himself a Reconstructionist "in the strictest sense of the word," however, because he differs with them on theological points of "prophecy and end times and things like this." The implication one is tempted to draw from those remarks is that Pastor Ralph endorses the death penalty provisions of Reconstructionism.

While Lt. Flinn is lucky, Wisconsin is not.

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July 17th Issue

Articles Friday, July 11th
Ads

Non-Camera Ready—July 11th
Camera Ready—July 14th
5:00 p.m.

July 31st Issue

Articles—July 25th
Ads

Non-Camera Ready—July 25th
Camera Ready—July 28th
5:00 p.m.

Caution

The fact that someone's name appears in this paper in no way implies sexual orientation.

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

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