

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

# ▼ The Wisconsin Light

## Party of the Decade To Celebrate 10 Great Years of *The Wisconsin Light*

National Entertainers, Celebrities To Join In the Fun Sunday, November 9th

### Kevin Rotar, Popular Milwaukee Bartender, Presumed Drowned

Milwaukee—Kevin Rotar, one of Gay Milwaukee's most popular bartenders, is missing and presumed drowned after a boating accident which occurred on Saturday August 9, 1997.

The incident which occurred at around 4:00 in the afternoon took place about 50 yards from the Lake Michigan shoreline off of St. Francis, a Milwaukee suburb.

Kevin had joined a group of friends for a fun afternoon of boating on the lake.

According to Mathew Brooks, a spokesperson for the Milwaukee Coast Guard, Rotar and a group of friends were aboard a 30 foot cabin cruiser the "Just Right," owned by Club 219 Manager Chuck Cicarello. Rotar worked at the Club.

An eyewitness on the boat who asked not to be named in this story told *The Wisconsin Light* that the boat was heading south in choppy waters while the people on board debated whether to cruise the Milwaukee River or what is commonly called "Bare Ass Beach" when a baseball hat blew into the water.

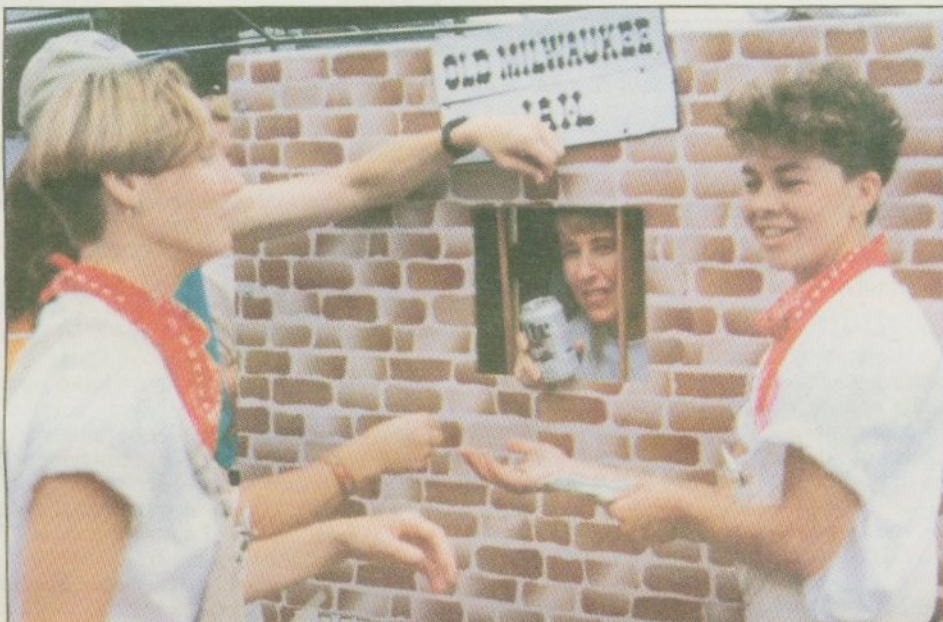
According to Brooks the hat was owned by Cicarello.

The eyewitness said "Everyone on the boat told Kevin to forget about the hat, but he kept insisting on retrieving it." Before anyone could stop him Rotar "executed a perfect dive into the Lake."

Rotar who was a good swimmer managed to fight strong currents and retrieve the hat. The witness said "Even as he swam, you could see the current was strong and the hat was drifting away, but he got it and turned to come back."

While swimming back to the boat, Rotar started bobbing up and down in the water and began calling out for help. The horrified group on board began throwing life jackets and ropes but Rotar was too far away to reach them.

Please See Rotar Page 31



**Doing Time**—The jail was a popular attraction at BreastFest, a fund raiser to help fight Breast Cancer. The day long block party was held outside of Fannies in Milwaukee, on Sunday, August 10. The event sponsored by Fannies drew hundreds of women and men and raised over \$6,000 for the cause. Over 180,000 American women and men will die from Breast Cancer this year. Lesbians are at higher risk for this killer which has no known cause, prevention or cure.

### Personal Pride Can Save Lives Says Medical College of Wisconsin Study

Milwaukee—A new research study shows that personal pride and a positive outlook toward the future play an important role in preventing HIV infections among Gay and Bisexual men.

The study, conducted by researchers from the Center for AIDS Intervention Research (CAIR) at the Medical College of Wisconsin, shows that Gay and Bisexual men who engaged in unprotected anal intercourse outside of a monogamous relationship were more dissatisfied with life, expected a shorter life for themselves, and had a more fatalistic outlook than men who practiced only safer sex. By contrast, men who avoided risk behavior had a greater satisfaction in their current life, had an optimistic outlook for their futures, and wanted to live a long life.

"The areas we surveyed involve elements of pride and self-esteem," said Seth C. Kalichman, Ph.D., the study's lead author. "Our results strongly suggest that HIV prevention programs that encourage personal pride and affirm self worth will be more successful."

The research results also raise the possibility that some Gay men may put them-

Please See Pride Page 31

### Victory Fund Backs Tammy Baldwin for Congress

Washington, DC—The Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund has endorsed Wisconsin State Representative Tammy Baldwin (D-Madison) for the Second District seat currently held by retiring four-term GOP Congressman Scott Klug.

"We're extremely proud to support a candidate of Tammy Baldwin's caliber," said Victory Fund Executive Director Brian Bond. "With the election more than a year away, Tammy has already built a phenomenal grassroots campaign and a war chest of over \$100,000."

Baldwin has high name recognition and a long history of community service in both the City of Madison and in the surrounding Dane County, which together account for 70% of the vote in this Congressional District. Baldwin was one of the Victory Fund's earliest winners, making history in 1992 as the first openly Gay person ever elected to the Wisconsin State Assembly.

The Victory Fund is the only national organization whose mission is to help qualified openly Gay and Lesbian candidates overcome the obstacles that have historically denied them fair and equal political opportunities.

Contributions to Tammy Baldwin's campaign should be made out to "Baldwin for Congress Committee, and mailed to the Victory Fund at 1012 14<sup>th</sup> St. NW, Suite 1000, Washington, DC 20005.

By Terry Boughner

Milwaukee—As the Publisher and Editor, respectively, of *Wisconsin Light*, Jerry and I are pleased and very proud to announce a major event titled "A Decade of Light," to celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the paper. "A Decade of Light" will be held at the downtown Milwaukee Hilton Hotel on Sunday, November 9, 1997.

And I do mean major event. I mean a star-spangled (in every sense of that word) event, a glittering gala. In fact, I have been told that it will be the largest LGBT event of its kind ever held in Wisconsin.

I can believe that because I know the names of some of the people who are coming, either to entertain (a star-studded cast, as they say), or to attend the celebration as guests. Guests will be coming from across the country and Wisconsin, including political leaders and members of the press.

I don't want to reveal the names now. Let that be for future issues of the paper. But I can tell you this. "A Decade of Light" is going to be an event that you will not want to miss.

Now before I go any further, let me say that I haven't worn a tie for over 30 years. I didn't even wear one to teach. This event is going to be a black-tie optional affair.

(I haven't had a tux on since I got dragooned by my mother into going to my high school prom. I went with Shirley Winnet. We had a "wonderful" time. I wanted to dance with Steve Hays, but that's another story.)

Things have changed. This is not the prom and I will make an exception. The reason is that this celebration is a benefit for the Cream City Foundation (CCF) endowment fund. Proceeds will go to CCF. In all seriousness, such is my respect for the Foundation and the work that it does, that I will stuff myself into a boiled shirt and undergo near strangulation for them.

There will be a VIP dinner in the hotel's Empire Room for 200 followed by a dance and entertainment in the Grand Ballroom upstairs. As you may know, the Ballroom has been beautifully restored; a room of candlelight and gold, a truly magnificent setting.

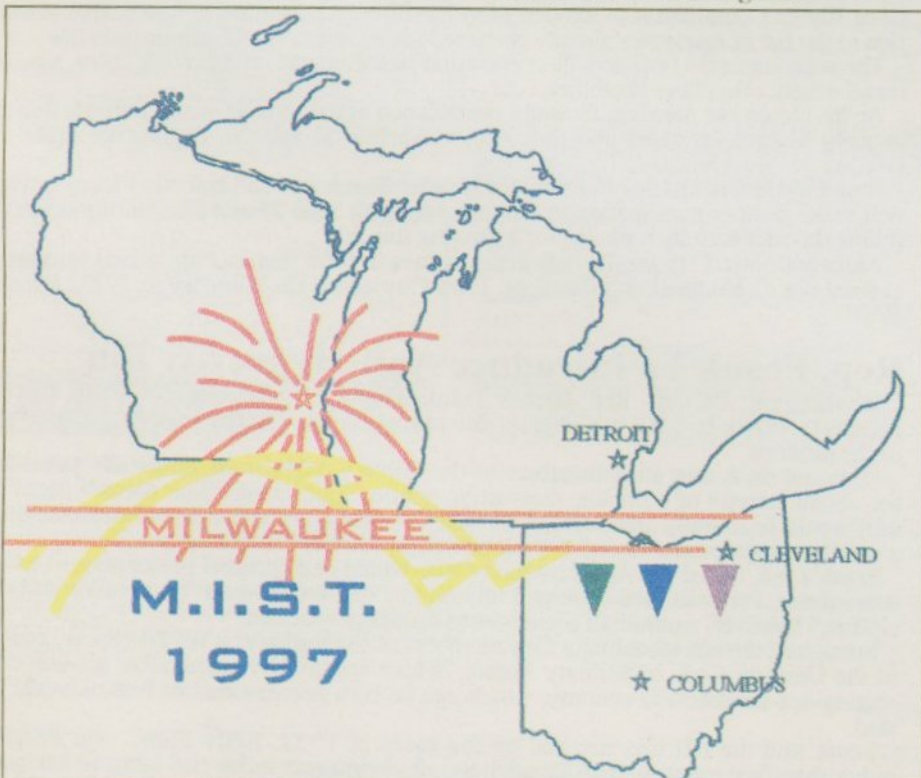
There will also be a room where every issue of *Wisconsin Light* from the past 10 years will be on display. There will also be framed photo displays and other artifacts and memorabilia from the paper's history.

To help commemorate the anniversary, a limited number of complete sets of the paper will be on sale. The price and availability of this slice of Wisconsin LGBT history will be announced soon.

That's about it. That's what I can say right now, except to add that more—and more—information will be published in the paper as the time goes on.

I do not say this lightly, not at all. This is going to be the party of the decade. From the information to which I am privy, this is going to be, as I've said, one very grand and glorious affair. It is something that you are not going to want to miss, not at all.

**For More Details on  
The Wisconsin Light  
Party of the Decade  
See Pages 16 & 17**



**MIST** - The Midwest Invitation Softball Tournament comes to Milwaukee for the first time on August 30 and 31<sup>st</sup>. The two day event will include 28 teams from around the country. It will be played at Wick Field.

**Rotar**  
Continued From Page 1

Unfortunately, due to the current, the boat and Rotar drifted further apart. Suddenly Rotar disappeared beneath the three foot high waves and was not seen again.

The witness told *The Wisconsin Light* "It all happened in a twinkling of an eye. There was no time to react." He said that all those on the boat could do was scream for help and throw what they could to Rotar. He also said that no drinking or drug use occurred during the cruise.

According to the Coast Guard, a boater from a nearby craft, Richard Linsky, saw the commotion and placed a cell phone call to the St. Francis Police Department. A rescue effort that included units from that Department as well as the Coast Guard and the Milwaukee Police Department was immediately organized.

Brooks speculated that Rotar may have developed cramps or become entangled in the large amount of seaweed in the area. Divers searching for the Rotar's body reported problems with accessing the area due to the high concentration of sea weed and the choppy, windy waters.

As we go to press, three days after the accident, the St. Francis Police Department reported that the search for Rotar's body is continuing with the assistance of the Milwaukee Police Department.

The body, however, remains missing. Officials say that due to lake conditions it may be some time before it can be recovered. The Milwaukee Police Department is making two passes a day over the area.

Kevin Rotar is survived by his partner Ricky, his family and his many friends.

Rotar was one of the few professional bartenders in Gay Milwaukee. In addition to his work at Club 219, his service to the community included stints at the Wreck Room, Your Place, the Triangle.

When asked about Rotar, *The Wisconsin Light's* Dusty Sass said, "I've known Kevin for about 20 years. He was some-

one who really cared about the community. Whenever I saw him he always had a smile and he would always make try to make everyone around him smile. He was one class person. He'll be missed."

**Pride**  
Continued From Page 1

selves at risk for HIV because they don't believe they have much of a future.

"We must counteract these beliefs by developing AIDS prevention programs that not only teach HIV risk reduction skills, but also reinforce the message that Gay men can achieve successful relationships and long, productive, and gratifying lives," said Jeffrey A. Kelly, Ph.D., the study's co-author and director of CAIR.

Under the best circumstances, people often find it difficult to change behaviors that put them at risk for HIV/AIDS. It is even more difficult if they have many life problems and do not have a strong, positive outlook for the future. People with goals and aspirations are likely to take greater steps toward protecting themselves from HIV and AIDS, the study findings indicate.

The research also surveyed relationship status among the men. The study showed that men in exclusive relationships were more likely to be satisfied with their current life situations and had more hope for the future. However, the study could not determine whether stable partnered relationships produce greater present life satisfaction or whether men who already have these characteristics are more likely to enter and sustain exclusive relationships.

The CAIR study was based on a survey of 430 Gay and Bisexual men at an urban Gay pride celebration in 1995.

Dr. Kalichman was formerly at CAIR, and is currently an assistant professor of psychology at Georgia State University. Dr. Kelly is a professor of psychiatry and behavioral medicine at the Medical College of Wisconsin.

In addition to Dr. Kalichman and Dr. Kelly, the study was co-authored by David Rompa, a Research Coordinator at CAIR and Michael Morgan, formerly a CAIR Research Associate.

For more information on the study, see the August issue of the *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*.

**Montana**  
Continued from Page 30

"Sodomy laws are the linchpin in every attack against the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered community. They are used to criminalize our behavior and as the basis for discrimination in employment, housing, health care and family issues. We applaud the court for its decision but salute the tireless work of Montana activists that made the victory possible," said National Gay and Lesbian Task Force executive director Kerry Lobel.

**Letters**  
Continued From Page 4

If anyone is interested in participating in these educational projects, either by relating personal school experiences, as parents of kids in school now, whatever—or who have family or friends who would help—please contact me at PFLAG-Milwaukee, P.O. Box 21853, Milwaukee, WI 53221-0853; (414) 299-9198.

Thanks for the continuous comprehensive sharing of information and inspiration.  
Elna Hickson, Youth Advocate  
PFLAG-Milwaukee

**LBGT Christians**

**TO THE EDITOR:**  
Responding to Terry Sanderson's commentary of July 31<sup>st</sup>.

Most of us GLBT Christians don't bang our heads on the church door asking to be let in. WE ARE THE CHURCH as are all of our sisters and brothers. In reference to "the authoritarians that constitute the Christian Church," the Pope, the Bishop, as much as I, admire and respect Archbishop Weakland, are not the church. THE CHURCH is the whole body of believers with our good points and our faults.

It is interesting that people who don't believe in the Scriptures of the work of modern Scripture scholarship, are so quick to accept the Fundamentalist interpretation of them. Most modern scholars and theologians see the Christian Scriptures as living documents, much as we see the U.S. Constitution. Therefore, our understanding and interpretation is constantly growing and evolving in light of the individual and collective experience.

We must also realize that the Bible is not a neat book of rules, but rather a sloppy collection of 72 books (66 if you're Protestant), that explore and explain individual and/or community faith experience; books that confirm and/or contradict each other; books, though inspired by God, are written by men with prejudices from their space in history.

This does not invalidate their faith experience, but must be understood to understand their writings. Because of this, it is easy to pull out phrases or passages that would indicate that the God of Abraham and Sarah, the God of Jews, Christians and Moslems, is a judgmental, cruel, blood thirsty and homophobic God.

When one reads the whole of Scripture, especially in the light of the Gospels, which we who claim the name of Christ are called to do, a very different God, and therefore a different people emerges. These are a people of caring and concern, love and inclusion.

Yes, there is homophobia in the church and there is homophobia in the nation. Does that mean that we should throw up our hands and opt out? Or are we called to be prophets to our churches and to our world?

If one is to believe the polls, it appears that the work of the early, openly GLBT missionaries is paying off. Poll after poll shows that the Christian in the pew is much more accepting, much more pro-Gay than they were only 10 years ago. In most traditional Christian churches this is the majority; up to 75%.

Realizing that there are many in our community who have been so hurt that they, like the young child that is excluded from the game says, "I don't want to play. I don't even like that game."

Many of us are like the little girls who were told they couldn't play Little League and said, "The hell we can't," and fought until they were put on teams.

Please don't be embarrassed by GLBT people of faith any more than we should be embarrassed by Gay Republicans or Gay or Lesbian soldiers, or any other life choices we make. Diversity is what makes us such a rich community. Let's continue to celebrate it and stop attacking each other.

Joe Zopp  
Milwaukee  
**No Reason to Leave**

**TO THE EDITOR:**  
Terry Sanderson's column advises Lesbians and Gays to give up on religion and head for the exit door. However, his commentary, and other commentaries like his, assume two fallacies pointed out by Alison Webster in the book, *Found Wanting* (pp. 164-165). One fallacy is that religion is irrelevant. Whether a given religion is "true" or "false," the widespread persistence of religion in all

human cultures indicates that it is far from irrelevant.

The second fallacy is that in escaping Christianity (or any other religion), we thereby escape patriarchy and homophobia. The assumption is ridiculous even within Queer ghettos, and utterly absurd for those of us who live outside the ghettos.

Oppression can survive quite nicely outside religion, and even without religious backing. Those of us who remain within even the most oppressive of religious communities are quite aware of the negative aspects of our choices, thank you.

We happen to be gaining something here in spite of the atmosphere of rejection or condemnation. Maybe we also are effecting some change. If we do decide to leave, I think we will have reasons with a bit more depth than those proposed by Sanderson.

Jim Miller  
Madison  
**Gays and Christianity**

**TO THE EDITOR:**  
This letter is in response to Terry Sanderson's article in the July 31-August 13 issue of the *Light*. I was originally going to respond with my usual smart-ass school of sarcasm style that I frequently use when writing to the papers. But this is too important for that.

I used to share Terry's view of religions in general and the Christian denominations more specifically. That has changed in recent years. I am happy to say that I have become active in religion again. I can thank two denominations for that; the Metropolitan Community Church and the Evangelical Church of America. As the tried and true saying goes: When God closes a door, He/She/It opens a window. Well, the windows are the MCC and the EACA.

Most Christian denominations have either rejected GBLTs or have some sort of tolerance agenda going on. I agree with Terry that this is an intolerable form of Christianity and I can't imagine anyone wanting to put themselves through the ordeal-by-guilt or the back-of-the-bus experience. But there are options out there.

Both the MCC and the EACA have emerged recently. The Metropolitan Community Church, which has an active parish in Milwaukee, led by Pastor Lew Broyles, doesn't tolerate the LGBT community, it celebrates it. The MCC does not allow the LGBT community to attend services, it beseeches, begs, invites, cajoles, and otherwise encourages anyone to visit or to join whether heterosexual, homosexual, or some-other sexual. This denomination has over 300 parishes world wide and celebrates diversity as evidenced by the variety of worship experiences one can have from one parish to the next. Decidedly Protestant, it offers a variety of spiritual environments and considerable flexibility of belief.

The EACA, or the Evangelical Anglican Church in America, is a more "catholic" denomination whose priests and bishops derive their apostolic succession through the Old Catholic Church. The headquarters of this denomination is near Los Angeles and is my own denomination, by the way.

This church follows the guidelines of the Book of Common Prayer of 1979 and the liturgy is virtually identical to what one would experience at St. James or All Saints Cathedral...on a somewhat more modest scale. While there is no parish in the Milwaukee area at this time, I hope to begin one following my ordination at some future date.

These are not efforts to "play church" and do "dress up." These are legitimate denominations that have a special outreach to the LGBT community, but encourage anyone who wishes to, to participate.

Terry, people may reject us, but God never would. I understand how you feel, having shared those feelings for nearly 30 years. There's plenty of information available on both those denominations and is available for those who want to learn more...God knows.

Richard Mence  
Milwaukee  
**Editor's Note:** Mr. Sanderson is a resident of the UK. I will forward this and other letters that came in response to his article to see if he would like to reply.

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