

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



# The Wisconsin Light

## Christian Coalition Tries to Recruit 100,000 for War on LGBT America

A Commentary

Washington, DC—On a tense day (February 18) where—on the other side of the globe—a war-ready America again risks conflict, an openly religious war has been declared by the Christian Coalition.

The Coalition's leaders, basking in their February 10 Maine "victory" which struck down government-enacted civil rights for homosexuals at the polls, now are aiming, they say, to strike down the legitimacy of same-sex affection in all 50 states and to target and worsen the basic civil rights of people who are even suspected of defying same-sex taboos.

Boasting about Maine as "Coalition-style" evidence of a divine mission at hand, the Christian Coalition has thus declared war on Gay America, calling for 100,000 recruits to repeat the "Maine miracle" from coast to coast.

Calling its program "Families 2000" the Coalition says its strategy will be to work through local Christian Coalition chapters and churches to oppose any measures that extend anti-discrimination protections based on sexual orientation.

The group will circulate a menu which gives focus to other social "evils" including gambling, pornography, and late-term abortions with which its members may want to concern themselves.

People for the American Way Foundation charges that the Christian Coalition's aggressively declared agenda masks its real troubles—losses in both money and memberships.

"The Christian Coalition's 'new' agenda -- to return to the days of Gay-bashing and assaults on constitutional liberties -- is the most dramatic evidence yet that the era of former Executive Director Ralph Reed is indeed over," says People For the American Way Foundation President Carole Shields.

"Gone is the effort to persuade Americans that the Christian Coalition is a mainstream organization with a broader agenda than bashing Gays and trying to outlaw all abortions.

"Randy Tate's announcement that the Coalition will return to an emphasis on social issues is evidence that the Christian Coalition, when faced with a financial crisis  
Please See Recruit Page 23

## The Ex Files: A Former Follower Sheds the Light on Ex-Gay Ministries.

### The X Files



### The X Gay Ministries

A Three Part Series

**Editor's Note:** In this issue we begin the first of a three-part series on the ex-Gay ministries written by award-winning journalist Kyle Young.

By Kyle Young

Part I

For 12 years Doug Upchurch struggled to become heterosexual. It didn't work. For most of that period, he was heavily involved in ex-Gay ministries, a growing international movement of Christian groups whose purpose is to lead Gay people toward heterosexuality. While some Lesbians are involved in the groups, the movement is primarily directed at Gay men.

# Battles On Gay Relationships Rage Here In Wisconsin



**Speaking With Pride**—Former Dane County Supervisor and Openly Gay candidate for the Wisconsin State Assembly, Mark Pocan testifies against AB-759 at a hearing held by the State Assembly's Insurance, Securities and Corporate Policy committee at the State Capitol on Thursday, February 19<sup>th</sup>. AB-759 would forbid the use of state funds to pay for domestic partnership benefits if they are offered by local governments or state agencies. Pocan denounced the Republican sponsored measure as "mean spirited" and said it was being pushed only by the religious right. Only one person its main sponsor Republican Rep. Steve Nass spoke in favor the bill. Over 30 people were at the hearing in opposition. They included elected officials, union officials and the Madison City lobbyist. The bill is also sponsored by 15 other Republicans in the State Assembly and the State Senate.

## Congressman Barrett Announces Milwaukee to Get Federal Funds for AIDS Housing

**Milwaukee**—On February 12, Congressman Tom Barrett (D-WI) announced that the City of Milwaukee received approval from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for its \$30 million 1998 Consolidated Plan which includes various community development activities. Included in this money is \$363,000 to be used for housing for people living with AIDS.

"For the first time," Barrett said, "HUD is sending funds for a housing program for persons with AIDS."

Milwaukee will receive the Housing

Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA) grant for the first time because the City now has surpassed 1,500 AIDS cases.

The HOPWA grant is intended to help people with HIV disease and AIDS secure and maintain safe, affordable housing.

Since 1994, the State of Wisconsin has received HOPWA funds and granted them to local AIDS service providers throughout the state. The AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin (ARCW) has been a leading recipient of HOPWA funds and has built a comprehensive housing program serving 750 people with HIV and AIDS.

The \$363,000 that Milwaukee will receive is nearly equal to the amount of the HOPWA funding that the State of Wisconsin made available locally last year.

"While this is new funding for the City of Milwaukee, it is not new funding for people with HIV and AIDS in Milwaukee," said ARCW Executive Director Doug Nelson. "Our clients rely on these funds to help pay their rent and utilities so they can afford to stay in their homes. We have long been committed to the principle  
Please See Housing Page 23

## PrideFest Expands Area in Maier Park; New Entertainment Audition Material Needed

**Milwaukee**—Musicians, comedians, magicians, singers, dancers, and all other entertainers are encouraged to submit their promotional materials for consideration for this year's PrideFest celebration.

Entertainment coordinators Jill Clark and Charles Daniels are seeking new and past performers to bring hours of variety to the annual festival, which is scheduled for this August 28-30 at the Henry W. Maier Festival Park (Summerfest grounds) along Milwaukee's lakefront.

PrideFest mailed out nearly 2,000 surveys in January in an attempt to solicit community input on a variety of festival topics, including entertainment.

"The response we have had from our survey has been fantastic," commented Jill Clark. "We are seriously attempting to satisfy everyone's different tastes in

An Exclusive Wisconsin Light Report  
By Bill Meunier

**Milwaukee** - Political activity on issues related to Gay and Lesbian relationships has noticeably increased on both a state wide and local level as activists on both sides of the of Gay marriage and Domestic Partnership issues seek to advance their agendas. At stake is nothing less than the legal definition of Gay and Lesbian relationships.

At first glance it may seem like the issues of Same Sex marriage and Domestic Partnership are separate and distinct, but they are in fact related to each other. Both deal with the right of Gay and Lesbian relationships to be treated equally under the law.

Polls taken by independent researchers show that while Americans as a whole are opposed to allowing Same Sex marriages they agree with giving many of the rights and privileges of marriage such as spousal health insurance benefits, hospital visitation rights and probate rights to Gay and Lesbian couples.

A series of bills and proposals introduced both at the State Capitol and on a local government level show that the debate on Gay relationships has come to Wisconsin in a big way.

Among the items on a growing list of recent developments on the Domestic Partnership and Same Sex Marriage issues are:

- The introduction and passage by the State Assembly of AB- 104. Sponsored by Lorraine Serratti, (R-Spread Eagle), this bill would prohibit the state from recognizing Same Sex marriages even if they are legally performed in other states;
- The defeat of a proposal to grant domestic partnership health insurance benefits to City of Milwaukee employees;
- Approval of a contract between the Madison Unified School District and its teachers union granting domestic partnership health insurance benefits to Madison's teachers;
- The introduction of a State Senate bill that would amend the State of Wisconsin constitution to place a constitutional ban on recognizing same sex marriage.
- The passage and signing of a bill that requires hospitals to grant visitation rights to those who are designated by patients, thereby allowing patients to make sure their partners can see them in the hospital even if the facilities policy only allows for the immediate family to see a patient.

Please See Relationships Page 2

entertainment, and that includes recruiting new venues such as 50's & 60's bands, Blues and Jazz. There is a following for every type of entertainment, and we really want to put a little more variety into the mix."

Also requested in the survey were entertainers who performed Big Band, Classical, Country Western, Gospel, Punk, R&B, Rock, Show tunes and regional/ethnic music such as zydeco and Native American flute.

So as to heighten the PrideFest experience, the festival grounds is being expanded this year to include the Harley Davidson Area. The area comes with an five-star stage, bringing more seating for the audience and greater performing pleasure for the artists.

Please See PrideFest Page 2

Please See Ex Files Page 23