

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



# The Wisconsin Light

## Wisconsin Governor Thompson Signs Historic Hospital Visitation Bill

**Madison**—Following in the footsteps of Republican Governor Lee Dreyfus who signed into law the first state Gay rights bill in the country, GOP Governor Tommy Thompson has become the first governor to sign into law a piece of legislation (Assembly Bill 397) which protects Gay men and Lesbians who wish to visit their partners in the hospital.

The "hospital visitation bill," as it came to be known, was drafted by Assembly Speaker Scott Jensen (R-Brookfield) after hearing stories of Gays and Lesbians being denied access to their loved ones in the hospital because they were not blood relatives.

Scott Evertz, Legislative Director of Log Cabin Republicans (an organization which strongly supported the bill), praised Governor Thompson upon his signing the bill, saying, "Governor Thompson has just provided Gay and Lesbian couples with a right we previously did not have and in so doing, has shown once again that Republicans are the true leaders of the Gay and Lesbian cause here in Wisconsin."

Evertz continued, "We all know that Governor Thompson is a very decent man committed, as are most Wisconsin citizens, to fairness. The idea that anyone—straight or Gay—may not be able to see someone they love in the hospital just struck him as mean and unfair and he corrected that."

Mike Gifford, Director of Public Policy for the AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin (ARCW), was excited upon learning the Governor had signed AB 397, commenting from the Washington, DC offices of the AIDS Action Council, "ARCW is pleased Governor Thompson has signed the hospital visitation bill. It reaffirms his commitment to people living with HIV and AIDS. The Log Cabin Republicans should be applauded for their leadership in this issue."

The passing and signing of the bill was not, however, free from controversy. Upon learning that Rep. Jensen was going to introduce this bill co-authored by Rep. Shirley Krug (D-Milwaukee), many Democratic legislators long cited as strong advocates for the Gay and Lesbian cause, began voicing opposition to the bill, arguing that it was unnecessary and was, as Rep. Sheldon Wasserman (D-Milwaukee) said, "a do-nothing bill."

At the time, Evertz expressed disbelief at what he was hearing from Democrats. "I find it absolutely unbelievable that Democrats—particularly those who are said to be friends of the Gay and Lesbian community—would try to sabotage this bill simply because they did not draft it and introduce it."

Asked to comment on the controversy surrounding the bill and suggestions that

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## Sharon Dixon, Fannie's Owner, Responds to Recent Article, "Fanning the Flames"

An article about Fannie's bar owner Sharon Dixon appeared in the May issue of *Milwaukee Magazine*. The article, written by Paul Burkhardt, was titled "Fanning the Flames," referring apparently, to the disastrous fire Fannie's bar suffered in October, 1997. Amidst all the work getting Fannie's ready to reopen, Sharon sat down to talk about the article; to give the community her side of the story.

**Wisconsin Light:** Sharon, what do you think about the recent article in "Milwaukee Magazine?"

**Sharon Dixon:** I was somewhat upset by it to say the least. It's very inaccurate in many ways and I believe that it tried me, convicted me and sentenced me.

**WL:** Can you give some examples?

**SD:** Yes. If the question is, have I had financial difficulties, I have. The problem

# March On Washington Set For April 30, 2000

## Billy Rosenbaum, Popular Milwaukee Man, Found Murdered in Chicago

**Milwaukee**—Wisconsin resident William "Billy" Rosenbaum, died Saturday, April 25, 1998. He was 33.

According to the *Chicago Tribune*, Billy had left his home in St. Francis, Wisconsin on Friday, April 24, with a friend to go to Chicago. One report said that Billy gave his wallet to his friend for safe-keeping. The paper reported that Billy spent some time at The Eagle, a popular bar in the city's North Side. The *Windy City Times* reported that Billy was last seen alive at The Eagle, where he was allegedly spotted with Patrick Bailey, 33, of Des Plaines, Illinois.

About 2:00 a.m. on April 25, Bailey checked into the Eden's Motel, 6020 N. Cicero Avenue. Billy was with him, police report. Bailey used his own name and address to register at the motel.

The *Tribune* reports that police say there was an altercation between Billy and Bailey. During or after that, Bailey allegedly strangled Billy and mutilated the body. A cleaning woman discovered the body on Sunday morning and reported it to police.

The *Times* reported that using information from the motel's register, detectives apprehended Bailey and charged him with first degree murder. Bailey was ordered held on \$1 million bond at the Cook County jail. As of press time, he awaiting arraignment.

The *Times* reported that Eagle owner Chuck Renslow said that detectives had interviewed bartenders at his bar on April 25, but that no one who worked there remembered seeing the alleged murderer.

Investigators are reported to be creating a psychological profile of Bailey to see if they can link him to other unsolved murder cases in the area. One of those cases involved another Gay white man who was killed in Chicago late last year in a similar fashion.

Toni Carrigan, anti-violence director of Horizons Community Services, said "When a killer goes well beyond what it takes to end the person's life and carries out added aggression, it often has something to do with some kind of bias."

Billy was well-known in both Madison and Milwaukee. The news of his death shocked and greatly saddened all who knew him.

"He was one of the nicest guys I've met in Milwaukee," Tony said. "He was doing well in school (UW-Milwaukee). He was a lot of fun."

Many others echoed Tony's sentiments. Along with Ruthie, Billy had ridden in Wisconsin Light's float at the Madison

Gay Pride parade last year. A friendly wave and a telling smile were characteristic of him.

Billy is survived by his parents, William F. and Sylvia B. Rosenbaum, his brothers Lee, Keith, Michelle (Joe), Wolf, the late Gregory, Thomas (Carol) Rosenbaum and Alex Rosenbaum.

Funeral services were held on Sunday, May 3, 1998, at the Schramka-Rembowski Funeral home in St. Francis. There was a private burial on Monday, May 04, 1998, at Holy Trinity Cemetery.

The family asks that memorials be sent in Billy's name to the AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin.

**WL:** The article speaks about you having a "monopoly" on the Lesbian bar business. What's your response?

**SD:** (chuckles softly) I take issue with that. There are other bars that cater to

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Billy Rosenbaum

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The Federation of Statewide Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Political Organizations will sponsor an historic, coordinated week of actions focused on state government and statewide organizing.

The Federation is a network of statewide LGBT political organizations whose purpose is to facilitate cooperation and communication between groups; establish a clearinghouse for the exchange of information and ideas; and assist existing and new groups in addressing their organizational development needs. The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) serves as the Federation's coordinator.

After many national and statewide discussions and after conducting a state-by-state assessment of its members, the Federation has decided to focus its energy on the states.

Under the theme "Equality Begins At Home," each state is being called upon to plan an activity—a march, rally, lobby day, press conference, or any other visibility campaign—in their respective state capitals during the week of March 21-27, 1999.

Equality Begins At Home will provide an opportunity to focus the national spotlight on the organizing challenges and legislative battles faced by LGBT people in state houses across the nation. The goal is to build statewide organizing capability across the nation and promote LGBT equal rights in every state.

"Clearly more and more battles are fought in the states," said Paula Eitelbrick, Co-Chair of the Federation and Legislative Director of New York's Empire State Pride Agenda.

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**Washington, DC**—Organizers for the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered community's fourth March on Washington have announced that the event will be held on April 30, 2000. The march aims to articulate the concerns of our community and focus our nation's attention on our quest for equality in all aspects of life.

"We expect one million of my Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgendered sisters and brothers and our enlightened allies to stand on the Mall and call upon our nation to live out the promise of equality under the law," said Rev. Troy D. Perry, long-time Gay activist and founder of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches.

Organizers have taken to begin incorporation of a non-profit entity to handle planning, production and financial arrangements. Efforts are underway to make this a democratic process where all segments of our community are represented.

"The millennium march promises to continue its bold commitment to all people of color. I am hearing from Native Americans, Asians, African Americans, Latinos and Pacific Islanders who are ecstatic about participating," said Martin Ornelas-Quintero, executive director of the Latino Latina/o, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, & Transgender Organization.

**March on State Capitals**  
Organizers also expressed their support for the "Equality Begins at Home" actions on all 50 state capitals set for 1999.

"The Equality Begins at Home" actions enjoy the full and enthusiastic support of the organizers of the Millennium March," said Elizabeth Birch, executive director of the Human Rights Campaign. "It's imperative that we focus our energies as a movement at both the state and federal level. These two events will complement each other as together we build the momentum to achieve equality in the next century."

"I am glad to see both of these events moving towards a more collaborative process," said Judi Headley, executive director of the National Black Lesbian and Gay Leadership Forum. "This is a positive sign of progress."

"Our greatest hope as a movement lies in our commitment to work together for social change. Our passion for justice and our pledge to lift up every voice has the potential to transform town halls, state houses, and our nation's capitol," said Kerry Lobel, executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.

"I remain hopeful that the "Equality Begins at Home" actions and the Millennium March will help build our grassroots movement at the state, local and national level," said Dianne Hard-Garcia, executive director of the Lesbian Gay Rights Lobby of Texas and co-chair of the Federation of Statewide Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered Organizations. "I believe that working together these actions can strengthen the state and federal organizations that fight daily to end discrimination."

Paula Eitelbrick, legislative director of the Empire State Pride Agenda and the other co-chair of the Federation added, "The Equality Begins At Home actions will fortify our strength at the statewide level and set the stage for the millennium march event in Washington in 2000."

For further information regarding accommodations, travel agents and groups please call the March on Washington, (818) 891-1748.

**Anti Gay Bill  
AB 104 Dies  
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