

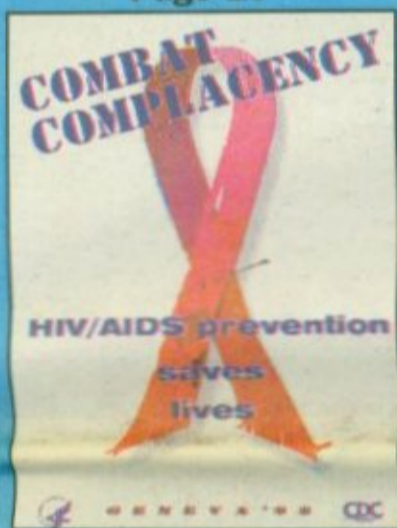
Give the People Light and they will find their own way.

Wisconsin Light

In This Issue...

Madison Common Council Responds to Billboard Controversy
Page 7

12th International AIDS Conference
POSITIVE OUTLOOK
Page 10



Dusty's Madison Pride Primer
SPOTLIGHT SECTION
Page 16

Tineality
Page 5

Just Us to Close
SPOTLIGHT SECTION
Page 16



The United + MGLRC (Madison Gay/Lesbian Resource Center) Outreach

A Historic Merger

by Bill Meunier

Madison — Two organizations with a combined 45 years of service to Madison's LGBT community will announce their merger at the United Award's Dinner on Friday, July 17. Officials of the Madison Gay Lesbian Resource Center, MGLRC, and The United have told *Wisconsin Light* that the two groups have agreed to merge into a new organization to be called Outreach. All services currently offered by both organizations will be continued.

MGLRC was founded in 1973 as the Madison Gay Men's Center. The United was founded in 1978. In 1997 their combined efforts brought a total of over 30,000 service contacts.

Chad LaFlash, President of MGLRC, told the *Light* that the merger process was set in motion "a little over a year ago." LaFlash said, "We were at the point where we needed to hire someone part-time if we wanted to continue to grow. We had even borrowed The United's staff and reimbursed them a few times. It just made sense to merge."

Richard Kilmer, President of The United agreed. "I thought it was a great idea when Chad first approached us. It was amazing to me how many people would come up and thank me for services done by the Resource Center. People thought the agencies were intertwined. We've been working very closely for two years."

Observers in Madison say that The United

has been more of a direct service agency than MGLRC has. Its programs include: support groups, peer counseling, a speaker's bureau, advocacy and a telephone referral and help line.

The Madison Gay Lesbian Resource Center's services include: a lending library, a video library, production of Madison's annual Community Directory, production and distribution of a monthly calendar of events, and the Pink Pages, a community calendar published in Madison's alternative weekly newspaper, *The Isthmus*.

LaFlash said there were some issues that the Merger Committee had to address. These included how the organizations functioned and the focus the new group would have. "The United has a very formal structure to its board. It has to because it gets government funding and has a staff," he said. "Our organization is totally based on voluntary contributions."

He added, "The United started with a focus centered more on women, while we were the Madison Gay Men's Center. For years there was a discomfort feeling."

That feeling started to disappear for good in 1987. That is when the two groups worked out an agreement not to duplicate services. Under the terms of that pact, MGLRC dropped its counseling and support group programs while The United ended its library. The groups also agreed to consult with each other on their program plans to avoid future

RELIGIOUS RIGHT ATTACKS BALDWIN'S CAMPAIGN

Madison — A Republican Congressional candidate, Ron Greer, has asked Christian fundamentalists around the country to send him money in order to keep openly Lesbian State Representative Tammy Baldwin from winning election to Congress.

The letter asks for "emergency donations" of \$25 or more. In it, Greer claims that Baldwin "wants to force her radical anti-family agenda on all Americans." The letter also says that Greer was asked to run for Congress by "very prominent Christian Conservatives" who "are scared to death" that Baldwin may win. Greer concludes the letter saying that he has the support of "Christian leaders across America."

A spokesperson for the Greer campaign, Mike Maxwell, told *The Wisconsin State Journal*, that the letter was sent to "tens of thousands" of conservatives. *The Capital Times* quoted a Republican insider as saying, "Greer's appeal could bring in as much as \$125,000 if sent to the right mailing list."

Greer is rumored to have raised tens of thousands of dollars to fund an appeal of his dismissal from the Madison Fire Department. Greer claims that he was fired because he was anti-Gay. Greer's supposed success at raising money for his legal fund, would mean that he has developed a solid list of contributors to turn to for support of his congressional bid.

Baldwin and Greer are running in Wisconsin's Second Congressional District. Baldwin faces two strong opponents in the Democratic primary. Greer has four opponents in the GOP primary. The primary election will be held on September 19. Republican Scott Klug currently holds the seat. Klug is not seeking re-election.

This is not the first attack the Baldwin campaign has received from the religious right. In July of last year, Ralph Overdahl, the leader of Wisconsin Christians United sent Baldwin a letter warning her that "We certainly have no intention of sitting as quiet bystanders while you flaunt God's law and attempt to assume an office which would put you in a position of direct authority over us and our loved ones."

On June 7 of this year, religious right protestors attempted to picket Baldwin's official announcement speech. The protestors carried anti-Gay and anti-abortion signs.

Kathleen Debold, a spokesperson for the Victory Fund, a national LGBT political group that has endorsed Baldwin, said the right wing attacks are not surprising. Debold told *The Light*, "Religious political extremists have transformed Gay bashing into an art form." Debold added "The only way to stop Ron Greer and the extremists that are bankrolling him is to put our time, money and votes where our convictions are. You can't sit at home and watch these things as they go by. You have to get involved."

Debold and others point out that those living outside the district can play a role in the campaign. Baldwin's supporters are urging those who want to send a message to the religious right by donating time and money to call the Baldwin campaign headquarters at (608) 258-9800.

Other candidates in the race — including some Republicans — have denounced the Greer letter. "This Greer letter is distasteful and we should all sign up on another letter that we are not going have this stuff in this campaign. We have to say 'no' to hate," said Don Carrig, a beer distributor and a candi-

Please see Merger, Page 13

Please see Attack, Page 6