

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



The Wisconsin Light

Wisconsin Youth Begin Leadership Training in S.F.

By Dan F. Schramm

The New Pacific Academy, founded by Cleve Jones, the founder of the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt, has announced the acceptance of four young men from Wisconsin into its month-long Gay/Lesbian leadership training program.

Attending the "Basic Training" program in San Francisco are Gregory Jay Hanson of Milwaukee who is active in the Milwaukee and Chicago chapters of ACT-UP, along with Robert James and Christopher Guadian of Madison. Tim O'Brien of Madison was also accepted but had to cancel due to medical problems.

Cleve Jones, who resigned from the NAMES Project to found the New Pacific Academy together with Luke Adams, a student organizer, has gathered together a class of 100 young Gay men and Lesbians, with a 50% representation of people of color, to undergo an intensive month long training program taught by such veterans as Virginia Apuzzo, Harry Hay, Andre Loude, Niles Merton, Holly Near and many others -- nearly 200 in all.

Beginning on June 15th, the Academy is a historic national effort to locate, encourage, and train the next generation of Lesbian and Gay Community helping professionals, activists, artisans and businesspeople with the basic community-based history, exposure to diversity, theoretical knowledge and hands-on practical skills necessary to be effective leaders in the 1990s and beyond.

The faculty will engage in a lively exchange with students in daily workshops, and, in small group discussions, the students will work with facilitators with a variety of resources, media, and texts to forge their own vision for the future. Students will also avail themselves of opportunities presented by the International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival, NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt, International AIDS Conference, San Francisco Lesbian and Gay Freedom Day Parade and Celebration, and the National Organization of Women Convention.

Hate Crimes Increase, Remain Serious Problem In Wisconsin

Anti-Semitism, Hate Crimes and Prejudice Repeated in History

By Terry Boughner, Ph.D.

In the 19th Century there occurred in the German states something historians refer to as "The Jewish Enlightenment." That fact and its consequences have something to say to Lesbians and Gays in America today.

Throughout Europe, ever since Christianity had become the state religion in the 4th Century, Jews had been subjected to every sort of persecution and discrimination. They were excluded from many jobs and denied the right to own land. They were forced to live in ghettos and subjected to ridicule, harassment and physical abuse of every kind.

Let it be said that the treatment of "sodomites" was no better. The Inquisition was founded to exterminate Gays, Lesbians as well as anyone else who didn't conform.

These minorities were regularly accused of all sorts of evil; with being spreaders of disease; the bringers of famine; abducting children, with being the destroyers of civilization and a great deal more — and all of this in the name of God.

But, in the 18th Century and the "Age of Reason", religion began to lose the grip it had had on Western Civilization. Thinkers began to put forth the idea that the segregation and persecution of the Jews was irrational and laws requiring their separation from society should be abolished. With the coming of the French Revolution, anti-Jewish laws were repealed.

Napoleon, in his conquest of Europe, carried the ideas of the French Revolution with him. Everywhere the Emperor's writ ran, the hateful laws of centuries past were abolished and Jews, for the first time in Western Christian history,

enjoyed a measure of freedom.

Imperial France went down, ultimately, to defeat and a conservative reaction took place. But, though they tried, the conservatives could not resurrect completely the old structures.

Still, though legal barriers had weakened or fallen away, social attitudes against the Jews remained strong. It was to counter these that the Jewish Enlightenment took place.

The idea was that if Jews could only be like everyone else, they would be accepted. This idea was most, if not wholly prevalent, among Western European Jews.

As a consequence, many Jews converted to one form of Christianity or another. Many Jews changed their names to be "less Jewish sounding" and, for awhile, it seemed to work, but it was nothing but an illusion.

Anti-semitism was still rife as the trial of Captain Dreyfus in France in the 1890's showed. Dreyfus, who was Jewish, was accused of selling French military secrets to the Germans. That wasn't true, but his trial brought forth a firestorm of anti-Semitism showing that, laws aside, the old attitudes of prejudice and hatred had not changed.

At the same time, in the Russian Empire, the Czar's government engaged

TURN TO HISTORY., PAGE 2

Gay Activists, Pastors Criticize AIDS Videotape

[Madison]- The Associated Press reports that a videotape on AIDS that is being promoted by some Wisconsin clergymen and churches fuels hatred toward Gay men who have been victimized by the fatal disease, clergymen and Gay activists say.

"The message that comes across is that anyone who has AIDS deserves it," said Doug Bauder, a pastor with the London Moravian Church and director of the United, a Gay service organization.

But the Rev. Richard Pritchard described it as an accurate documentary that portrays the results of "a dangerous lifestyle that needs to be overcome."

The videotape, called "AIDS: What You Haven't Been Told," was produced by Jeremiah Productions. About 10,000 to 15,000 copies have been distributed throughout the U.S., said the Rev. Charles Fiore.

Fiore said he has sold 30 to 40 copies of the tape in Madison, and at least seven or eight churches have noted its availability in church bulletins.

One of these churches is St. Mary of the Nativity in Marshall. A sentence used in the church's April 22 bulletin to publicize the tape read: "People's sexual habits are their own business, even when they demand that taxpayers spend millions of dollars to find a cure for them as a result of their promiscuity. Right? Wrong?"

The Rev. Alan Newton, associate pastor of the First Baptist Church in Madison, said on May 21, the tape promotes "more of the hate against the Gay community."

For example, Newton said, it represents pedophile groups "as being representative of the entire Gay community."

Newton said the tape also trivializes church debate by Christian scholars on the issue "and implies that churches have been brainwashed by the Gay community."

[Washington, D.C.]— Incidents of harassment and violence against Lesbian and Gay people remained a serious problem in 1989 in Madison, Milwaukee and across the U.S.

A report released on June 7, 1990, by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) documented 7,031 incidents — ranging from harassment to homicide — in 40 states and the District of Columbia.

In Madison incidents for 1989 were reported by the Madison Community United and Stonewall network.

In Milwaukee only two organizations were listed as reporting acts of anti-Lesbian/Gay violence: MCC/Milwaukee and Wisconsin Light.

Directed against persons because they are Lesbian or Gay or perceived to be so, reported acts in Wisconsin total 89. These include 1 bomb threat, 2 anti-Gay homicides, 1 Gay-related homicide, 1 case of police abuse, 6 cases of anti-Gay vandalism, 20 threats/menacing 22 physical assaults and 36 cases of verbal harassment. These figures represent a small increase over what was reported from the state in 1988.

According to the NGLTF report, Wisconsin is among those states having the lowest number of cases. At the top of the list is North Carolina with 1,205 cases followed by California with 563 and Illinois with 529.

While no campus incidents of anti-Lesbian/Gay violence were reported to NGLTF from Wisconsin, the nationwide total was 1329 cases.

NGLTF reports that the evidence suggests that AIDS continues to be a focus and justification for anti-Gay prejudice and violence. According to the Presidential Commission on the HIV Epidemic (1988), "increasing violence against those perceived to carry HIV is a serious problem. The Commission has heard reports in which Gay men in particular have been victims of acts that are indicative of a society that is not reacting rationally to the epidemic."

NGLTF has classified 15 percent of reported cases as AIDS-related. However, NGLTF notes that the actual extent of AIDS-related incidents is probably underestimated because most organizations reporting to NGLTF do not routinely note whether AIDS was a factor in the episodes they document.

The nationwide total of 7,031 cases is somewhat lower from the 7,248 cases reported to NGLTF in 1988, but still is an increase over incidents reported since NGLTF began gathering such statistics in 1985.

NGLTF cautions that incidents documented in 1989 reflect only the tip of the iceberg. Fear of reporting by victims and lack of systematic data collection prevent an accurate measurement of the problem's full scope. Accordingly, it is difficult to gauge whether the problem has grown, diminished or remains constant.

In recent years, a growing number of states and the Federal Government (Hate Crimes Statistics Act) have passed laws to monitor and counteract crimes motivated by bigotry. Although a 1987 report sponsored by the U.S. Department of Justice noted that "homosexuals are probably the most frequent victims" of hate violence in America today, only 9 states including Wisconsin have laws that include crimes based on sexual orientation.

The NGLTF report concludes by saying that statistics alone fail to adequately assess the impact of anti-Gay/Lesbian violence. They do not measure the profound impact of such crimes, not only on the victims, but upon all Lesbian and

TURN TO HATE, PAGE 2

Human Rights Efforts Need Vigorous, New Commitment Across Country

[Madison]- Gay and Lesbian organizations should make a new, vigorous commitment to state and local human rights efforts, State Representative David Clarenbach (D-Madison) told the Gertrude Stein Democratic Club in Washington, D.C. last month.

"We need to put the radical right and fundamentalist extremists on the defensive not only in the halls of the Congress, but in every statehouse and in every nook and cranny of every state in the nation," Clarenbach told the 300 people gathered for the 10th annual banquet of Washington's Gay and Lesbian political organization.

In his keynote address, Clarenbach declared that, "the heart of the question is whether all Americans are to be afforded equal rights."

Also speaking was Reverend Jesse Jackson, who called for more funding for AIDS research and sharply criticized President Bush, who he said has misplaced priorities.

Stein Club President Mauro Montoya introduced Clarenbach as "a legislator in the most progressive Wisconsin tradition. We look to Mr. Clarenbach's record of achievement for guidance and inspiration."

Clarenbach pointed to "Wisconsin's historic standing in the forefront of the Gay and Lesbian civil rights movement."

He cited state laws he authored ending criminal sanctions for private consensual sexual activity, the nation's first prohibition of discrimination based on

sexual orientation, and the recently enacted bill of rights for people with AIDS and HIV infection.

"More than 10 years ago, we set out to create a political and religious and community base of support to make Gay and Lesbian rights a mainstream issue," Clarenbach said.

"We found elected officials willing to take political risks to advance the cause of human rights. We successfully isolated the moral majority as the lunatic fringe that they are."

"And in Wisconsin, we had the most important part of the equation. We had a Gay and Lesbian community leading the way, demanding basic human rights," Clarenbach said.

He concluded that Wisconsin's civil rights protections, "increasingly affect the real lives of real people, making it easier and safer to live, to work and to come out."

Also appearing was Washington Mayor Marion Barry, Council Chair David Clarke, and other elected officials and candidates for D.C. mayor, council and congressional delegates.

**PRIDE WEEK
CALENDAR
PAGE 5**

NATIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

Gay Democrat Runs for Congress

[Columbus, OH]- Mike Gelpi, an openly Gay candidate for the US Congress in Ohio, won a primary victory against two fellow Democrats in May and will face conservative Republican John Kasich, a four term incumbent, in the November election. If he wins, Gelpi will be the third openly Gay member of Congress.

Gelpi said his primary victory sends an important message to Washington: "Gays and Lesbians are coming through the front door folks, and others are going to coming through the front door immediately after me."

Anti Bryant Attempts Comeback

[Memphis, TN]- Onetime pop singer and anti-Gay activist Anita Bryant is on the comeback trail, attempting to revive her dormant career and expressing "no regrets" about her homophobic crusade of the late 1970's. She led the campaign against a Gay rights ordinance in Dade County, Florida in 1977.

Bryant told the Associated Press: "I am not a crusader and an issue person. But you cannot be living in this day and age and not be involved. I don't regret that, because I feel like what I did was right." In an apparent reference to AIDS, Bryant said: "The good news is that alot has come out since about that particular lifestyle, and we know now that when you choose it, the ramifications are very destructive."

Gay Editor Fried For "Outing"

[San Francisco, CA]-The Advocate reports that Michelle DeRanleau, managing editor of the San Francisco Sentinel, a Gay newspaper, was fired by her publisher for revealing the homosexuality of a local school district official.

Publisher Ray Chalker, who fired DeRanleau, said: "She was the acting editor and she took it upon herself to speak for the paper, and I didn't give her permission." Chalker opposes "outing" as a McCarthy-like tactic.

In her defense, DeRanleau, 24, said: "I think that this generation that is coming up is saying, "No, we're not going to keep people's secrets for them if they're hurting us." The official she exposed had voted against a counseling program for Gay students.

Methodists Crack Down On Gays

[Madison, WI]- The Wisconsin Conference of the United Methodist Church has ordered Rev. Thomas Garnhardt to stop performing holy unions for Gay and Lesbian couples at his University Methodist Church in Madison.

A spokesman for the Methodist group, Rev. Russell May, declared: "The United Methodist Church does not affirm same sex unions. The issue is...the similarity to marriage." He said that services similar to the marriage ceremony in which couples exchange rings and vows, are not consistent with church policy and are not endorsed by the Methodist Church.

The crackdown may be part of a national wave of repression within Methodist congregations. In Washington, D.C. in May, Bishop Joseph Yeakel stepped in to prohibit the union of a Lesbian couple at Dumbarton Methodist Church in Georgetown, despite the minister's and the congregation's support of the couple. The women shifted their commitment ceremony to a local chapter of the Metropolitan Community Church which primarily serves Gay people.

Military Drops Repayment Demands

[Washington, D.C.]- The US Navy and US Army have decided to drop their requirements that former Reserve Officer Training Corps cadets Robert Bettiker, David Carney and James Holobaugh repay their ROTC scholarships.

The men had been dismissed by the ROTC program solely because of their homosexuality. The men had excellent records and wanted to pursue their military careers as commissioned officers. The Navy and Army had ordered each man to repay the ROTC for training. Bettiker was asked to repay \$38,612, Carney more than \$50,000, and Holobaugh, \$25,000.

Bettiker's attorney, Mary Bonauto of Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders, said: "This is a tacit admission by the Navy that its policy of requiring repayment of scholarship monies is unjust, punitive and without basis in the law."

News Briefs are compiled by Jamakaya from mainstream newspapers and wire services, organizational press releases and Gay and Lesbian papers from across the U.S.

HISTORY

Continued from Page 1

in regular pogroms or persecutions. Cossacks swept into Jewish settlements, killing everyone, young and old alike.

With a terrible irony, many "westernized" Jews chose to ignore the pogroms. The Eastern European Jews, they convinced themselves, were "different" from themselves; still living in ghettos, wearing "funny" clothes and doing other things that set them conspicuously apart. To many these "differences" were a distinct embarrassment.

World War I ended leaving society in ruins. Nowhere was this more true than in Germany. The old moorings seemed to have vanished; the old certitudes were gone and people were afraid. Lacking understanding of what was a terribly complex situation, many throughout Europe turned to one form of Fascism or another.

For the unthinking and the frightened, Fascism was attractive. It provided simple, clear answers to complex problems and in the German form, called "National Socialism" (Nazism), it offered scapegoats — homosexuals and Jews — on whom to blame what Himmler called "the moral decay of the West." The eventual result was the Holocaust.

The German Jews were among the least prepared for the Nazi onslaught. They had tried hard for so long to be "just like everyone else." They had failed, but even with the hideousness of Nazism glaring at them, red-eyed with horror, they could not bring themselves to believe that "their government," "their country" could do this to them. After all, went the argument, was not Germany one of the most advanced, most enlightened,

most civilized countries on earth?

Like Hitler and the Nazis themselves, the Holocaust of the Jews, of the Gays and Lesbians, of the Gypsies and others, was not a German phenomenon. It was a human phenomenon. It was not an aberration. It was a terrifying, yet logical culmination of centuries of European anti-Semitism, homophobia and hatred of all people different from the norm.

The Nazis alone did not cause the Holocaust of the Jews, Gays and hosts of others. They were joined in and supported by "good and decent" people who were frightened and confused; by people who believed the unrelenting storm of verbal abuse that was a direct prelude to the camps and ovens.

Finally, keep in mind that the Nazis were a minority in German society. What they had going for them was money, organization and the ability to publish and broadcast strident lies made to seem true because they were said loud and long and appealed to long-held unexamined prejudices.

Harry Truman once remarked that "The only thing new in the world is the history you don't know." He was unfortunately and terribly right.

HATE

Continued from Page 1

Gay people. Each anti-Gay episode, physical or verbal (done in person or on the TV and radio) aims to terrorize, silence and render invisible an entire community. In effect, says the NGLTF report, such violence denies to Lesbian and Gay citizens their full measure of equality, including the basic rights to speak out, associate and assemble.



Artist Tom Rezza signed this 1990 Pride theme charcoal sketch at Partners on June 2. Additional copies are still available by calling 271-5819.

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Regular engagement of "Long Time Companions" begins at the Oriental Theatre on June 22.

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The Wisconsin Light



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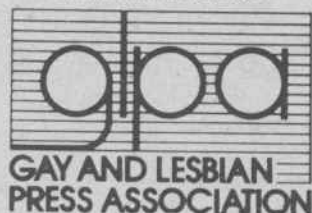
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Institutional Member



MASN To Move Offices To New Site Prior to July 1

[Madison]- The offices of the Madison AIDS Support Network (MASN) will be moving prior to July 1, 1990. The new location will be at 303 Lathrop St. in a three-story house owned by the First Congregational Church (United Church of Christ). The lease will run for five years.

The new location will provide easier access to the UW Hospital, Meriter-Madison General Hospital, and Blue Bus Clinic. Access to the new office will be no less convenient for those who utilize public transportation as a number of bus lines converge a block away.

Volunteer assistance with the move is necessary and will be appreciated. Contact Tim O'Brien, MASN Operations Manager at (608) 255-1711.

The Madison Community Foundation has awarded MASN \$4,650 for the purpose of conducting a study of the need for housing for people living with AIDS and HIV infection in the Madison area. An outside consultant will be retained to undertake the research and write the final report, assisted by MASN staff.

Men's Yacht Club Formed In Milwaukee

[Milwaukee]- A new social club has been formed in Milwaukee known as The Gay Men's Yacht Club/Greater Milwaukee Yacht Club (GMYC). It was founded in April, 1990 by Brian A. Giovanni with the idea of getting men together for activities with a maritime theme.

GMYC will offer year-round events of its own for members as well as co-hosting events with other clubs such as GAMMA. The theme season for maritime fun will be May-October. The remainder of the year will be devoted to a wide variety of social activities. The club anniversary will be celebrated on July 3 aboard boats to watch the Lakefront fireworks.

Club meetings will be held every second Wednesday of the month at 8:00 p.m. at the M&M Club, 124 N. Water St. Meetings are scheduled for July 11 and August 8. Membership applications can be obtained by mailing a SASE to: GMYC, P.O. Box 818, Milwaukee, WI 53201-818. A \$8.00 membership fee is good for one year and will not be due until you are an active member.

Activities planned include: sail/motor boating every Saturday and Sunday, a Great America trip for June 17, water skiing, wind surfing, sport fishing and scuba diving. Also in the works are X country skiing, a yearly cruise trip, a trip to Disney World and Key West, weekend get-aways to Chicago and much more. Canoe/raft trips, Great America trips, camping/hiking trips can be planned upon request.

LAMM Plans June 17th Pancake Breakfast

[Milwaukee]- If the Pride Celebration whets your appetite for community sustenance, don't forget to feed yourself at the all-you-can-eat Pancake Breakfast on Sunday, June 17, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Shorewood Woman's Club, 3565 N. Morris Blvd., in Hubbard Park. The event is a fundraiser for the Lesbian Alliance of Metro Milwaukee (LAMM).

Admission is \$4 in advance and \$5 at the door. Tickets are available from LAMM members and at People's Books, 1808 N. Farwell Ave. For information, call LAMM at (414) 264-2600.

"This grant award represents a new relationship between MASN and the Madison Community Foundation," said Earl Bricker, MASN Executive Director. "Their recognition of our efforts and acceptance of the proposal is only the first hopefully, of other awards to come in the future."

In another matter, Bricker announced the hiring of David Rompa as MASN's Director of Education and Outreach.

Rompa, currently a resident of Janesville, comes to MASN from the Stoughton Hospital SHARE Program, an agency he served as the Janesville Clinic Manager and Adolescent Project Coordinator.

The MASN Education and Outreach Department is responsible for developing and implementing programs regarding risk reduction aimed at Gay and bisexual men, people of color, teens, IV drug users as well as educating the public about AIDS and HIV so that anger can be directed at the disease and not at those affected by it.

Twins Needed For Study At Northwestern

[Evansville, IL]- Northwestern University's Family Studies Lab is looking for Gay or bisexual men who have a male twin. They are equally interested in identical and non-identical twins.

The Family Studies Lab is also looking for Lesbian and bisexual women who have a female twin. They would like to talk to you regardless of the sexual orientation of your twin.

You may call collect any day from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the following numbers: (708) 491-3820, (708) 491-4239 and (708) 866-9282.

GAMMA to Begin Water-Skiing June 24

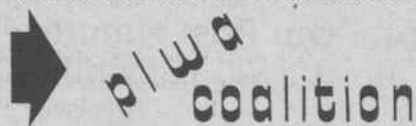
[Milwaukee]- Water-skiing Sundays begin for GAMMA on June 24 at a private home in Waukesha County. The fun begins at 1:00 p.m. and concludes with a brat and burger cook-out at 6:00 p.m. The price of \$3.00 includes use of boat, skis and safety vest. The event is open only to GAMMA members, but non-members and guests may join the organization at the site. Call Bob at 963-9833 for directions and reservations.

GAMMA's Summer sports schedule now also includes an after-work bike ride scheduled for June 18th at 6:00 p.m. at the Lake Park Pavilion and weekly informal tennis matches at Warnimont Park's Senior Center every Saturday at 9:00 a.m. These GAMMA events are open to the entire Wisconsin Gay and Lesbian community.

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The PLWA Coalition is an organization of people living with AIDS which has taken up the mission of advocacy on AIDS related issues. We are attempting to contact people living with AIDS or who are HIV positive to develop an agenda of their needs. Some of the issues include: Political Action, Medical Concerns, Social Issues, and Legal Concerns.

Please contact us at (414) 273-2437 and ask to speak to a coalition member.

The Taylor Times

By Brad Taylor

I can't stand seeing people putting us down, so I guess I'm becoming one of the new generation of Gay activists. That's important because without the new generation, what will happen to all that the people before us built?

We have to preserve and expand upon what we already have. We are gaining power, so now is the time for the young Gays to step forward, even a little bit, and help the cause that will further their lives. We can't stand back and hope and pray that things are going to happen. They won't unless people get involved.

It makes me angry when people sit back and do nothing and then complain that they have no rights. They expect everyone else to do the work for them. My friend and former roommate is like that.

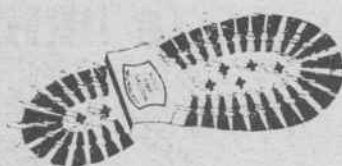
His parents don't know that he's Gay and he worries a lot about them finding out. He tells me that he'll probably be a "closet case" his entire life. When I thought I'd finally persuaded him to get involved, he decided that he would rather let everyone else do the work because his life is OK.

Forget OK. I want more than just OK. In my case, my mother and sister are the only family members who know that I'm Gay, but that's not stopping me. I am willing to do what I can to help our fight. But it is the "closet cases" that we need to help us. If we would all stick together, we would surely gain the power and influence that we need to get bills passed. We would finally have our deserved rights.

So, I offer my thanks to all the groups that are out there furthering our cause and helping the Gay community. I am proud of the people who actually have the guts to get off their asses and work towards the future. Because it's not only my future, but the future of the rest of the Gay population. It's everyone's future and if everyone sits around and does nothing, we're not going to have a future. So, take charge of your life and get involved in YOUR future.

If you have any comments, please write to me in care of this paper. I'd really like to hear from you.

Note: To all the people who have read the 1990 Pride Guide, I apologize for the complete chaotic state my article is in. It was in perfect, readable form when I turned it in. What happened to it from there, I don't know. I was irate when I saw my article so mixed up and confusing to read. But if you would please ignore the complete lack of editing, proofreading and whatever else was not done to maintain the quality it had when it left my hands, I think you may find it very interesting.



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SISTERNEWS AND VIEWS

Almost Heaven: National Women's Music Festival

By Jamakaya

The Sixteenth National Women's Music Festival held May 31-June 3 in Bloomington, Indiana, was bigger and better than ever! More women! More music! More fun!

Producers credited the fact that bigger "name" acts like Holly Near and Ferron appeared at this year's fest, bringing a dramatic rise in attendance. Holly and Ferron delivered the goods in their Friday night performances, blending old and new material in their usual crowd-pleasing manners. More than 3,000 women crammed the auditorium to share in the magic.

This year's fest may have set another, more dubious record: the first time an indoor concert has been postponed because of the weather! Tornadoes ripped through Indiana Saturday night wreaking havoc in the countryside and leaving at least 10 people dead.

The storms passed through Bloomington while dear, diminutive Adrienne Torf was playing her opening set. The speakers sputtered, the power faded in and out — something was obviously awry — but, like the trouper she is, Adrienne and her power piano played on!

Eventually, producer Mary Byrne came onstage to announce that because of tornadoes, the theatre had to be evacuated. Well, imagine our surprise! Clearing 3,000 women out of the auditorium into the basement and lobby could have been a logistical nightmare. Instead, it was done calmly and with great good humor. Girl Scout songs were sung in the basement while the spiritually inclined among us formed circles and danced and sang to the Goddess. The concert resumed after about an hour's delay. Adrienne, unfazed by the crisis, picked up where she had left off and got a well deserved ovation.

Buffy Sainte-Marie Performs

Another treat was hearing Buffy Sainte-Marie on Saturday night. She alternated on guitar, keyboard and mouth bow and performed everything from the "Sesame Street" theme (she's been a featured player on the show for years) to her classic Vietnam-era "Universal Soldier."

Buffy has an ascerbic wit and laced her set with political commentary on the Nicaraguan contras, Indian treaty rights and what she called "money addicts, power junkies and fallen angels." Between songs, some gutsy dyke in the front row yelled out: "Nice legs, Buffy!" (They were!) A blushing, but otherwise unruffled Buffy replied, "Why, thank you." Sweet, strong, talented woman, that Buffy Sainte-Marie!

Heather Bishop rounded out the show with her usual polished set. A high point here was the entire audience singing "Happy Birthday" to guitarist Sherry Shute.

Sunday's Mainstage included a filmed tribute to Lesbian writer May Sarton, 78, who was too ill to attend the Festival. Deidre McCalla then combined her mellow voice and guitar with a pleasant set of old favorites from her LPs *Don't Doubt It* and *With a Little Luck*, as well as some new numbers. One of these, a love song called "Blessings," was a particular stand-out.

(Deidre was a regular fixture in Milwaukee in the late 1970's and early 80's as a member of the all woman band Breakwater and as one half of the duo Gypsy, with Lena de Madrugada.

Two Nice Girls

Unquestionably, the highlight of the Festival's musical talent was the performance of Two Nice Girls. Two Nice Girls are actually four nice dykes from Austin, Texas: Kathy Korniloff and Gretchen Phillips on guitars and lead vocals, Meg Hentges on keyboard and guitar, and Pam "Bam-Bam" Berger on drums.

How to describe these gals? Young, funny, political, irreverent, very hip and very talented. A real crowd pleaser was their country-western spoof, "I Spent My Last \$10 on Birth Control and Beer (My life was so much simpler when I was sober and queer...)" The audience sang along with gusto!

Two Nice Girls also showed a harder edge with their biting political ode to George Bush, "A Kinder, Gentler Fuck." And they absolutely brought down the house with their encore tribute to 1970s music which featured a hysterical imitation of Donna Summer's multi-orgasmic disco tunes. Women rushed out of the theatre to be first in line to buy their records. **Two Nice Girls and Like a Version.** Yes, that's **Version.**

Two Nice Girls are playing Michigan this August, after which I'm sure their price and their bookings will multiply exponentially. Some wise producer with great foresight in our own town ought to book these gals ASAP.

Minnie Bruce vs. Jesse Helms

I attended several workshops and readings by writer Minnie Bruce Pratt. Minnie Bruce is in the midst of a controversy surrounding a creative writing grant she has been awarded by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).

Along with two other Lesbian writers, Audre Lorde and Chrystos, Minnie Bruce was awarded a \$20,000 grant at a time when Congress, under the influence of Sen Jesse Helms, has strictly forbidden federal arts funding for "homosexual" work. Helms has asked the Government Accounting Office to launch an investigation into the grants bestowed on these three women.

Ironically, Minnie Bruce submitted selections from her book, *Crime Against Nature*, for the NEA grant application. Winner of the prestigious Lamont Prize for Poetry in 1989, the collection focuses on Minnie Bruce's acceptance of her Lesbianism and the subsequent loss of her two sons because of her husband's threat of declaring her an "unfit" mother. It is a beautifully written, sometimes anguished book, with great emotional and intellectual depth.

In decrying her poetry as "obscene," Helms quoted a specific section of the book he found most offensive. Incredibly, the words he quoted came not from Minnie Bruce's pen, but from the North Carolina sodomy statute which she had incorporated into one of the poems! Now that's obscene!

Four months after the NEA grant was announced, Minnie Bruce Pratt has yet to see the check in the mail.

Margot Adler and Karla Jay

Another interesting speaker was Margot Adler, reporter for National Public Radio (NPR) who is also an out Lesbian and a practicing witch. She wrote the book *Drawing Down the Moon*, about modern witchcraft and paganism. She spoke to the conflicts inherent in her dual roles as journalist and radical Lesbian.

Margot won lots of applause for her reports about the Michigan Womyn's Music Fest which aired on NPR last year. Many women spoke of the pride and affirmation they felt hearing the Festival described so matter-of-factly on national radio. Shortly after the broadcast aired, the Governor of Michigan ran into the head of NPR and said that, until he heard Margot's report, he had no idea what was going on in his own state! Imagine his surprise!

I was also pleased to meet Karla Jay, the co-author of several Lesbian/Gay anthologies whose recent book, *The Amazon and the Page*, traces the lives of Natalie Barney and Renee Vivien, two dykes in turn-of-the-century Paris credited with the first efforts at establishing a distinctive Lesbian culture.

I got a chance to tell Karla the important role of her early books, *Out of the Closets: Voices of Gay Liberation* (1972), played in my coming out process. At a time I hadn't quite verbalized my Lesbianism yet, I proudly carried the book around to all my classes, a quiet symbol of my emerging consciousness and the community I was about to embrace. The book gave me strength and reinforcement at a critical time. Thanks for being there Karla!

The accessibility of the writers and performers at this festival always gives me a thrill. While I tried to be a mature and responsible reporter, I'm afraid I regressed at times into a shameless autograph hound!

TURN TO FESTIVAL, PAGE 11



Light columnist Jamakaya meets with Minnie Bruce Pratt at the Bloomington Festival.

1990 Pride Celebration Calendar of Events

June 16 • Saturday

MLGPC — 1990 Pride Celebration: Parade begins at 11 a.m.; Rally begins at 2 p.m.

Cream City Chorus — Concert: "Tomorrow Belongs to Me," Centennial Hall, 8 p.m.

June 17 • Sunday

Partners — Pride Prom: Get your gown, find your partner, plan on attending.

LAMM — Pancake Breakfast: Sponsored by LAMM at Shorewood Women's Club in Hubbard Park from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. Tickets are \$4 in advance, \$5 at the door. Information call 374-1073.

June 18 • Monday

LRN — Speakout: "Domestic Partnership" at the Milwaukee Enterprise Center, 2821 N. 4th St. For info, call 445-5552, 7-9 p.m.

June 19 • Tuesday

In Step/Wisconsin Light — Movie Premiere: "Longtime Companion" at the Oriental Theatre. Tickets are \$10.00. Advance sales at area businesses and by mail. Now on sale, see ad this issue.

M&M Club — Reception to follow film at M&M. Ticket holders free, others by donation.

June 20 • Wednesday

Interfaith Service — "Tomorrow's Promise Calls Us," The Village Church, 7 p.m.

June 21 • Thursday

Lavender Koffee Klotch — Presents "Financial Empowerment for Lesbians/Gays," 7-9 p.m. at M&M Club Banquet Room. For info call 272-4032.

MG/L Cable Network — Premiere & viewing at the Triangle. 9 p.m., Viewing Party, meet W.W. Wells and the production crew. 10 p.m., Viewing of "Yellow on Thursday," a 30-minute gay comedy show.

June 22 • June 23 • June 24

Bauer Ballet Studios — "Circus of a Queer Nature": performance art by Debbie Davis, Dominique Dibbell & Co., sponsored by Hurricane Productions, at the Bauer Dance Studios, 727 N. Milwaukee. Tickets are \$8. For info call 372-5192. Time is 8 p.m. June 22-23, 7 p.m. June 24.

June 23 • Saturday

Rockford, Illinois — Gay Pride Boat Float, 12 noon.

LAMM — Slideshow: "Dykes to Watch Out For", a slideshow presentation by Alison Bechdel, sponsored by LAMM. 8 p.m. at the Kenwood United Methodist Church, 2319 E. Kenwood. Tickets are \$9 in advance, \$10 at the door. For info call 264-2600.

June 24 • Sunday

Chicago — Gay Pride Parade

LaCrosse — 4th Annual Pride Picnic in the Park.

JUNE 16 PRIDE PARADE ROUTE



The Light LIVELY ARTS

“Longtime Companion” Is Honest, Compassionate Film Achievement

By Geno

Do you remember where you were when you first heard of AIDS? Do you remember what you were doing? Probably not. For most of us, the information that was to affect a whole segment of the population came to us in small, often confusing news releases. It was when someone we knew was affected that these facts became real and meaningful.

“Longtime Companion”, the film that Rolling Stone has called “the best American movie so far this year,” chronicles this process of growing awareness by introducing a group of eight friends as they learn about and are personally affected by the AIDS crisis. It is easy to identify with these individuals, and the recognizable portraits which result, make it possible to share their experiences.

We first meet the friends in 1981 during a weekend on Fire Island in the carefree ambiance of pre-AIDS socializing. Then as the first hints of the seriousness of the situation grow, we recognize similarities to our own growth of awareness. The friends are intelligent, informed professional people largely connected with the entertainment fields as writers, actors and agents. Soon their comfortable lives are changed when a casual friend, John (Dermot Mulroney), is stricken and dies.

But they are resilient individuals with a

great capacity for enjoying life. When Howard (Patrick Cassidy) is given the role of a Gay man in a daytime serial written by Sean (Mark Lamos), he worries whether he will be typed, but finally decides that it is chic to be “the first butch Gay person on TV.” The scene where the friends gather to watch a broadcast of the soap opera is spontaneous and warmly hilarious. It is this alternation of the pleasures of daily life with the realities of suffering and death that makes “Longtime Companion” such an honest, compassionate achievement.

The most unforgettable sequence in the movie occurs when Sean notices the first symptoms of the virus in himself. The life of his lover, David (Bruce Davison), becomes truly heroic as he cares for Sean, helps to conceal his illness so that he can continue to write his scripts and finally helps him to die in peace and with dignity in his home. Davison’s strength and naturalness is beautiful to see and stands for the many who have faced their own frightening situations with caring, friendship and love.

“Longtime Companion” will be shown at the Oriental Theatre as a special benefit co-sponsored by The Wisconsin Light and In Step for the Milwaukee Pride Committee on Tuesday, June 19 at 7:30 p.m. Following the movie, there will be a champagne and hors d’oeuvres reception

TURN TO FILM, PAGE 11



Amy Meadows

Lois Weaver and Peggy Shaw are shown in the Split Britches Company’s production, “Anniversary Waltz” which will be presented June 29 and 30 in Milwaukee.

“Anniversary Waltz” Traces Ten Year Relationship On Stage

By Sandy Winquist

[Milwaukee]- Meet Peggy and Lois, celebrating their ten-year relationship through performance and song!

Anniversary Waltz, a theatrical production of outrageously funny and seriously thought-provoking skits, ostensibly about a long-term Lesbian marriage, comes to Milwaukee June 29 and 30.

Katherine Dieckmann for The Village Voice called Anniversary Waltz “a witty homage to the pleasures and problems of long-term love.”

Peggy Shaw and Lois Weaver have been together a decade as lovers and colleagues. This entertaining revue portrays the excitement and banality of everyday living together with humor, insight and innuendo.

But the piece explores changes in Lesbian culture in general as much as the changes in committed partnerships: the too-familiar coming out stories and the tension between autonomy and enmeshment to intimacy.

Changing costumes — and roles — frequently, Shaw and Weaver use popular period love songs (and “unlove songs”) and famous romantic scenes to explore butch-femme stereotypes and the ups and downs of true love.

Anniversary Waltz’s satirical style will appeal to the most macho guy — and he won’t even notice the performance is genuinely and thoroughly feminist.

Lois Weaver and Peggy Shaw of the Split Britches Company, a Lesbian theatrical troupe in New York, have received dozens of recognitions and awards over the years. Shaw won the Obie Award for performance this year, the Off-Broadway equivalent of the film industry’s Oscar. She began her acting career in 1974 with the Gay theatrical company, Hot Peaches, and toured Europe and the U.S. with Spiderwoman Theatre from 1978 to 1981. Shaw has been a collaborator with The Split Britches Company since its beginning in 1980 and is a co-founder of WOW, a women’s performance space in New York City.

Lois Weaver is a founding member of Spiderwoman Theatre and a co-founder of Women’s One World (WOW) Cafe, where she directs and teaches acting. Weaver has worked with four Split Britches Shows: “Split Britches,”

“Beauty and the Beast,” “Upwardly Mobile Home,” and “Little Women — the Tragedy.” She made her film debut in McLaughlin’s “She Must Be Seeing Things.” Shaw and Weaver created and performed “Dress Suits to Hire” to wide critical acclaim.

Anniversary Waltz challenges even a Lesbian’s idea of Lesbian Theatre as much as it challenges the limits of traditional performance. It is a pleasure to see the expansion of cultural expressions of Gay and Lesbian life outside New York.

This piece is unabashedly Lesbian — a real celebration of life.

Anniversary Waltz will have four performances in Milwaukee — 7:00 p.m. and 9:30 p.m. nightly on Friday, June 29 and Saturday, June 30. Shows are at Walker’s Point Center for the Arts, 911 W. National Ave. Tickets are \$9 in advance from Outpost Natural Foods, 100 E. Capitol Dr., and People’s Books, 1808 N. Farwell Ave. To charge by phone or for more information, call (414) 372-5500.

Miss Cosmopolitan Pageant August 19 in Milwaukee

[Milwaukee]- Jeffrey Duerr has purchased the Miss Gay Cosmopolitan Wisconsin USA Pageant from King Productions. Miss Cosmopolitan is a preliminary to Miss Gay Wisconsin-USA which will be held in Milwaukee on August 19, 1990.

The first annual Miss Cosmopolitan Pageant will be held at LaCage, Thursday, June 28, 1990. Contestants will compete in Personal Interview, Talent Category and Evening Gown. Contestant registration will be at 8:00 p.m. and the pageant is scheduled to begin at 10:00 p.m.

Mistress of Ceremonies will be Bouji, Miss Chubby Wisconsin. Guest entertainers will include, Tania Michaels, Miss Gay Wisconsin-USA, and a special guest.

Applications are available at LaCage (414) 383- 8330; from Miss Chastity Belt at the Triangle (414) 383-9412 or from Jeff Duerr at (414) 276-0481.

The only way an entertainer may compete in the Miss Gay Wisconsin USA Pageant this year is to win one of the 12 preliminary pageants.

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Cartoonist Bechdel Is Enjoying Big Success With "Dyke" Strip

By Susan Schramm

Perhaps nothing chronicles aspects of Lesbian culture with as much concision and charm as Alison Bechdel's *Dykes to Watch Out For* cartoon strip. This beloved comic "soap opera" blends humor and politics in a way that moves us to step back from ourselves and laugh, and yet validates all the day-to-day struggle of Lesbian life.

Bechdel, who will appear in Milwaukee to present a slideshow on June 23, recently shared some observations on her work during a phone interview from her home in Minneapolis.

While she wasn't exactly doodling baby dykes as a child, Bechdel did know early on that she wanted to be a cartoonist, and she cut her comic teeth on the "formative influence" of MAD magazine. The pure pleasure of drawing cartoons preceded her interest in Lesbian social commentary, which eventually developed as a "fortunate by-product."

Funny drawings of early *Dykes* characters germinated in the margins of letters to a friend after college graduation, and the cartoon first appeared as a strip in a feminist paper in 1983. The rest, one might say, is herstory — Bechdel is now published in 25 newspapers and recently completed her third book.

It is her great popularity, ironically, that makes her wonder if she's doing something wrong (shouldn't she be offending someone?) Bechdel clearly has not settled into complacency, and she can talk about her work in terms of its limitations as readily as others praise its strengths.

She is "always looking at Lesbians," Bechdel said, and pays close attention to people and issues to feed her creative process. "*Lesbian Connection* is one of my big sources," she noted. She also reads a lot of other Gay and Lesbian publications.

There's a range of opinion, ethnicity, shape and personal style in *Dykes* that never fails to keep the visual and verbal dynamics interesting. But Bechdel points out that she is still working within a limited segment of the total community.

"It's really not that diverse," she commented. "They're all pretty much the same age and class background as me." However, she added, "I tried to make it as representative as I was capable of — given that in a comic strip you can only have so many characters, and given that I need to be writing from personal experience. Within that spectrum I try to represent different viewpoints."

Keeping characters "in character" and shepherding their development is "something I'm really learning about as I go," Bechdel said. "I look back at what I've done and see these glaring inconsistencies that I've created," she laughs. "I've never studied writing. It's kind of like a novel, but I'm not a writer per se, so I make mistakes."

The appropriate characters tend to "fall in" to the situations she decides to present in her script, since "their little ideological bents are pretty well established." But "sometimes it works another way," Bechdel said, "and I'll learn something about a character as I'm writing down her possible responses. That might change the direction that the script is going in."

The various "Dykes" each bring their own challenges to the writing.

"The ones that are less like me are more difficult to really connect with," Bechdel said, "like Jezanna, who runs the bookstore. I don't really have a good handle on her. Or Emma, the older married woman who Lois is having an affair with. I don't really relate to them as closely as I do to the other ones."

And what about Mo, whose political idealism and high standards, coupled with her personal insecurities and vulnerabilities, make her a community "type" that easily invites identification?

"She's pretty easy to write for," Bechdel said. "But also I think partly because she is so readily identified with, I probably get more hung up on whether she's staying in character, whether she's developing believably."

In her latest book, Bechdel introduces into her cast of lovable characters the person of Milkweed, someone who is decidedly less lovable.

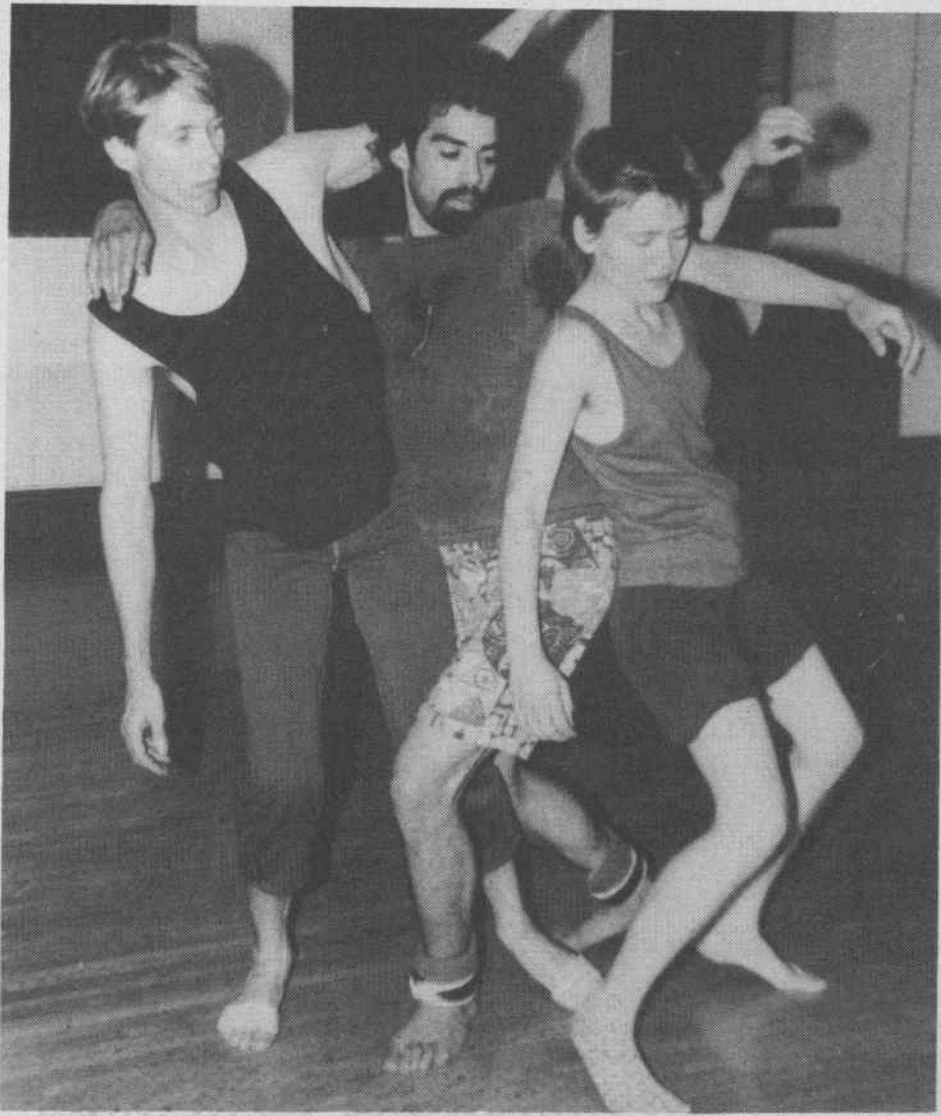
"That was very intentional," Bechdel said, "because I realized, God, all these characters are really nice. I want to have someone who's really a pain in the ass." Unfortunately, a woman Bechdel knows was convinced that the character was modeled after her and Bechdel had a difficult time convincing her it wasn't.

"That's the problem you get when you introduce unpleasant characters," she said, "and it's why I really try not to base my characters on real people."

A recent *Outweek* article on Lesbian cartoonists quoted Bechdel as saying "comics have great power for good or evil... they get absorbed directly into your bloodstream."

Asked to comment on this, and on whatever theory she might have on the role of cartoons in the culture, Bechdel said, "I get nervous about talking about the theory of it too much, as opposed to just doing it... But it's pretty basic — I just think cartoons are a really accessible medium." And that they are accessible in a very immediate way. "That's what I meant by going directly into your bloodstream," she said. "It really gets

TURN TO BECHDEL, PAGE 11



Tom Thoreson, David Figueroa and Debbie Davis are shown rehearsing "Circus of a Queer Nature" which will be presented June 22-24 in Milwaukee.

"Circus of a Queer Nature" Opens June 22 For A Three Day Run

by Jamakaya

[Milwaukee]- "Circus of a Queer Nature," a lively combination of theatre, dance and performance art by some of the country's finest Lesbian and Gay entertainers, will be presented June 22, 23 and 24 at the Bauer Dance Studio, 727 N. Milwaukee St.

The new production is Debbie Davis' fifth annual attempt at bringing Lesbian and Gay performance art into and out of the City of Milwaukee. This year, Davis works under the sponsorship of Hurricane Productions and the Wisconsin Arts Board.

Davis says she takes on "Circus" because: "It's outrageous. It's magical. It's gawdy. It's sensational...I love physical artists. The Circus and I are a subversive partnering."

In "Circus" Davis collaborates with dancers Tom Thoreson and David Figueroa and with New York guest artists Dominique Dibbell and Amy Pivar. The show will include solo and group pieces by all of these artists.

Amy Pivar, acclaimed by the New York Times as one of 1989's best dancers, will perform three solo pieces. Dominique Dibbell, well known to Milwaukee,

Chicago and Madison audiences, returns with "The Red Head," a gender-cross-gender persona piece focusing on sexuality, shame and desire.

Davis, fresh from successful engagements at Campfest '90 in Pennsylvania and the East Coast Lesbian Festival, will perform a new solo act as a birthday clown and reprise her stilt-walking, mind channeling Egyptian Cat Goddess, an act that nearly brought down the house in last year's Lesbian Variety Show in Madison.

Tom Thoreson, David Figueroa and Davis will collaborate with balls, stilts and movement to explore non-sexual relationships between the genders. Figueroa and Davis will close the evening with movement and flame, a routine that has dazzled audiences everywhere.

"Circus of a Queer Nature" is scheduled for 8:00 p.m. on Friday, June 22 and Saturday, June 23. It will begin at 7:00 p.m. on Sunday, June 24. Performances are at the Bauer Dance Studio, 727 N. Milwaukee. Tickets are \$8 and can be obtained from People's Bookstore, 1808 N. Farwell Ave., and from Outpost Natural Foods, 102 E. Capitol Dr.

Coggs-Jones To Speak At LAMM Meeting

[Milwaukee]- Milwaukee County Board Supervisor Elizabeth Coggs-Jones will be guest speaker at the monthly meeting of the Lesbian Alliance of Metro Milwaukee (LAMM) on Wednesday, June 20 at 7:00 p.m. The meeting will be held at the Milwaukee Enterprise Center, 2821 N. 4th St.

Coggs-Jones will address the group on the subject of lobbying local government. All interested Lesbians are invited to attend. For information, call LAMM at (414) 264-2600.

Upcoming Pageants Announced

[Milwaukee]- King Productions will present the 3rd Annual Miss Gay Racine Pageant on Saturday, June 30 at JoDee's in Racine and the 1st Miss Southern Gay Wisconsin Pageant on Sunday, July 1st.

Contestants will be judged in Personal Interview, Talent, and Evening Gown. The winners will compete in the Miss Gay Wisconsin USA Pageant to be held in Milwaukee on Sunday, August 19, 1990.

Applications are available from JoDee's and the New Leaf or King Productions. Please call (414) 342-1466.

"Yellow On Thursday" Opens June 21

[Milwaukee]- "Yellow On Thursday", a half-hour, fast-paced comedy show produced by The Milwaukee Gay/Lesbian Cable Network, premieres June 21, 1990, at 10:00 p.m. on Warner Cable Channel 14.

According to Co-Executive Producer, Bryce Clark, "Yellow on Thursday" can be best described as a cross between Saturday Night Live, The Tracy Ullman Show and SCTV. The cast features Jorge Cabal, Allan Kurth and syndicated humorist W.W. Wells, among others.

"The show is sort of a departure for our group," stated Clark. "We are trying new things and feel that there is more for our community in doing comedy and entertainment shows than politics and issues."

"Yellow On Thursday" got its name from a common Wisconsin idiom used in schools which stated that if you wore yellow clothes on Thursday, that meant that you were Gay.

The June 21st program could be a pilot for a series of special "Yellow On Thursday" programs.

"Yellow On Thursday" can also be obtained at Video Adventures, 1418 E. Brady St. in Milwaukee.

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POLITICALLY SPEAKING

Right Wing Fundamentalists Revving Up For More Verbal Bashing

By Bill Meunier

Well here we go again. Not content with their smashing "victories" last year, Milwaukee's own Right Wing fundamentalists are revving up for another verbal bashing of the Gay and Lesbian community.

I am sure you will all recall how last year, the good "Reverend" Vic Eliason, and his cohorts made such a big fuss over Milwaukee's Pride Week Celebration.

They demanded that Mayor Norquist, County Executive Schulz and the Milwaukee County Board retract their proclamations commemorating Milwaukee's Lesbian/Gay Pride Celebration. They threatened to recall any recalcitrant politician who refused to goose step I mean kow tow, I mean fall in line with their demands.

I am sure dear readers, that you remember how these political "titans" carried through on their threat. Do you remember how Vic Eliason, won the Mayors race trouncing John Norquist, while Jan Parshall and Tom Phillips were elected County Executive and County Board Chairperson respectively. Remember those daily bible readings given the City Hall press, by Mayor Vic's Press Secretary Mark Behling? Oh you didn't remember that? I can't imagine why after all with "God on their side" it must have happened.

Actually it didn't happen. Norquist told the press to cover some important issues instead of asking him why he was supporting the Gay/Lesbian community. Schulz said he wouldn't take back his statement of support "no matter how much they try to hold my feet to the fire." County Board Chairman Tom Ament accused (in one of the rare moments when he agreed with Schulz) accused Eliason and his bunch of being bigots. Meanwhile the County Board was so fearful of these masters of tact that they refused to rescind their proclamation.

So much for the political power of the "Right Reverend," huh. The only thing the Reverend and his WVCY station

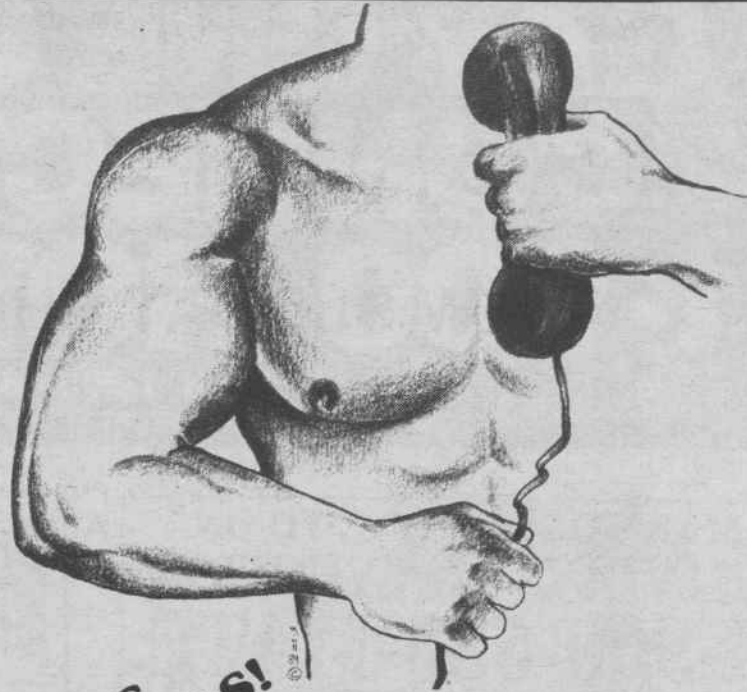
probably got for all of their trouble last year was some extra donations from the faithful who were frightened to death of those evil hordes of Lesbians and Gays who were about to descend upon them.

This year the Milwaukee Common Council passed a Pride Week resolution with only three dissenting voices, one of them Alderman Anderson proved what a good Christian he was recently when he challenged someone to a fight during a Common Council hearing. The Common Council passed this resolution despite all the phone calls and picketers the fundies could muster.

An outraged Reverend Eliason shaken by this show of defiance, has called for a Rally to be held on Friday June 15th. Buoyed by the success of last year's "Save the Family" rally where a whole 1,000 people (less than came out to the Pride Parade and Rally) turned out to hear all kinds of out of towners talk about what they were going to do to Milwaukee's politicians, the "Reverend" has been shooting off his mouth about how there will be all these people coming together to fight against this moral crisis, otherwise known as Pride Week.

For two weeks the Rev has been whipping up the faithful with his "Countdown to Crisis" television show. The basic message of which is that we "chose" to be Gay/Lesbian and that we recruit others to be Gay and Lesbian. Eliason has probably doubled his ratings with this claptrap, I personally know of five Gays and Lesbians who have tuned in for a good laugh.

I'm sure that June 15th will go down as a monumental event in Milwaukee's history. Once again we will see a lot of blustering, a lot of threats, and a total ignoring of the true message of Jesus Christ. Once again we will see a lot of threats being made against those who support equality. And once again the Reverend Eliason and his friends will make total fools of themselves.



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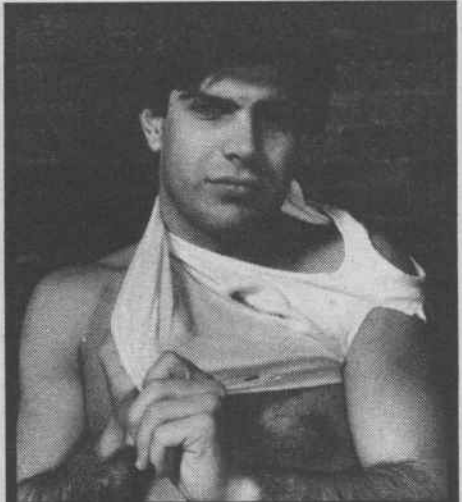
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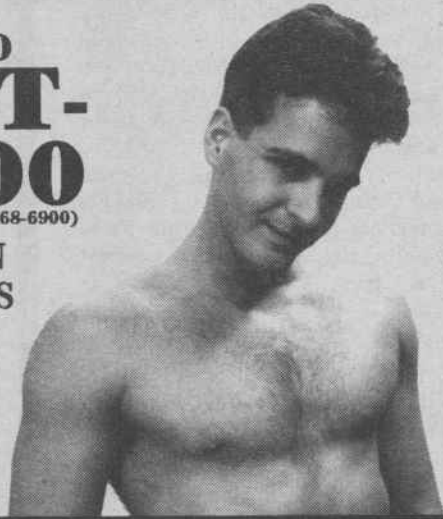
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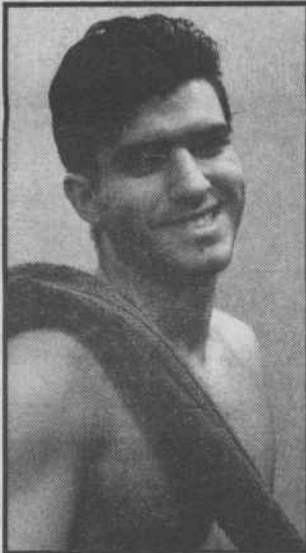
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BECHDEL

Continued from Page 7

to you in a way that reading an essay doesn't.

"I like the challenge of communicating something that directly to somebody. That's very exciting to me, to get a whole, complicated idea across in a small space, using a minimal amount of words."

Bechdel immediately suggests the similarity of this to propaganda. "I very much think my work is propaganda, just like Beetle Bailey is propaganda." As she believes cartoons have power for good or evil, she believes the cartoonist bears a responsibility to use them for good.

That she does, in fact, promote a particular viewpoint became clear to her recently, she said, after a local Minneapolis newspaper ran an article about her. One of the letters to the editor it elicited was from a Lesbian who said she was "fed up with seeing Lesbians all characterized as astrology-dependent leftists." Bechdel laughs, and that she identified herself as a "Gay laissez faire capitalist" who was tired of this kind of stuff.

"I think in a way the strip speaks more to the leftists of a certain persuasion," Bechdel said, "than to the Gay and Lesbian community as a whole, because it really does have a definite leftist slant to it."

While that may be true, those who aren't familiar with Bechdel's work shouldn't be misled into thinking there's a rigid ideology presented or that it's a forum for hammering home lessons in "political correctness."

In fact, while the characters themselves may be very opinionated, the tone of the strip as a whole, and the narrative "voice" behind it, are fairly gentle and nonjudgmental, within the political range it covers. Much of the great appeal of the strip is, of course, its **humor**, which necessarily leaves plenty of room for people to bump up against their own inconsistencies and fallibilities. In spite of frequently high ideals, each of these cartoon characters is, finally, "only human."

Bechdel describes herself as a "kind of wishy-washy personality," and not a person who takes stands. "Yes, I'm an out Lesbian and I do take this political perspective, but within that I'm pretty much of a wimp... It's just my nature; I'm kind of a Norman Rockwell kind of gal."

One of Bechdel's goals is to see **Dykes to Watch Out For** break into the alternative weekly market — papers that carry cartoonists such as Lynda Barry, for instance. But will those readers be willing and able to identify with a comic strip full of dykes?

"If we can do it," Bechdel said, "if

we can make those leaps of identity to extract meaning from Lynda Barry's work and Garfield — not to put them in the same category," then why shouldn't they be able to do the same? "Women and people of color are constantly reading strips about people who aren't anything like us... White men are not the majority, but they're asking people to make those same kinds of leaps."

She agrees that some Lesbian humor might not be accessible to people who are unfamiliar with the subculture. "Fine!" she says, "I want people to read it anyhow!"

Alison Bechdel will appear in Milwaukee to present "Dykes to Watch Out For: The Slideshow" at 8:00 p.m. on Saturday, June 23. The event, a benefit for the Lesbian Alliance of Metro Milwaukee [LAMM], will be held at Kenwood United Methodist Church, 2319 E. Kenwood Blvd. Tickets are \$9 in advance and \$10 at the door, with one dollar discount for LAMM members. Tickets are available at People's Books, 1808 N. Farwell Ave., Out post Foods Co-op, 100 E. Capitol Dr., or from LAMM members. For more information or to charge tickets [Mastercard or Visa] call LAMM at [414] 264-2600.

FILM

Continued from Page 6

at the M&M Club, second floor. Admission is free to ticket holders.

Please don't be put off by the thought of going to see a full length film which deals with the subject of AIDS. After the tears and the laughter, the final effect of this sympathetic and beautifully balanced motion picture is uplifting and life-affirming. The ensemble cast who gave up other professional commitments and who worked for reduced salaries deserve to be seen and appreciated for this labor of love. Executive Producer Lindsay Law, screen writer Craig Lewis and Director Norman Rene fought against great odds to produce this work on a relatively small budget.

The worth of their endeavors has been recognized by the Samuel Goldwyn Company which will distribute "Longtime Companion" and by the recent United States Film Festival Award. With its balance of humor and humanity and a serious subject, this movie is an inspirational recollection of the way we were with a hopeful look toward the future.

FESTIVAL

Continued from Page 5

Films and Videos

The Film and Video Series was expanded this year, with about a dozen diverse offerings along with the popular

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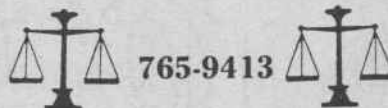
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Lesbian soap opera, "Two in Twenty." With the profusion of women's video projects around the country, films are a welcome and logical addition to our cultural festivals.

The traditional Thursday night panel discussion was a fizzle this year. The topic was much too broad ("Healing Ourselves, Our Community and Our Planet") and the speakers wandered aimlessly about trying to get a handle on it. It was a disappointment after last year's exciting discussion on the future of the women's movement which featured some heavyweight political leaders.

I played the devil's advocate on my evaluation form, suggesting the next year they hold a debate about S&M or orthodoxy and intolerance within the Lesbian Community. Those topics are guaranteed to cause sparks!

As usual I spent too much money in the crafts and merchants area. My favorite new item is a T-shirt with a Goddess image that proclaims "Must Be Venus Envy." I also, uncharacteristically, found myself anointed with sacred oils by a holy woman named Shekinah Mountainwater. I don't feel any different, but my friends insist that my aura has taken on brighter and broader dimensions. Is this stuff for real?

All told, the Bloomington Festival was incredibly stimulating this year. I've grown to depend on the creative energy and the warm sense of community the Festival generates to recharge my spirits and renew my commitment to women.

Women's festivals have now been institutionalized regionally throughout the US. If you haven't attended one, you owe it to yourself to do so. They are a profound expression of our Lesbian politics and culture. They are also a blast! Long may they prevail!

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