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MILWAUKEE update

A Monthly Publication of Gay People's Union, Inc.

*****CELEBRATE GAY & LESBIAN PRIDE WEEK IN MILWAUKEE--JUNE 21-29, 1980*****

JUNE/JULY 1980

CITY PANEL SUPPORTS GAY RIGHTS ORDINANCE: It was a small step in the legislative process, but it was a giant leap for gay rights in Milwaukee. The city's Commission on Community Relations voted UNANIMOUSLY June 11th to recommend that the Common Council's Judiciary and Legislative Committee approve a proposed gay rights ordinance. The committee will conduct a hearing on the proposal June 20th at 10:30am in City Hall. The proposed law would prohibit private employers, who supply goods and services to the city, as well as city officials, from discrimination on the basis of sexual preference. Violation of the ordinance could result in a fine of up to \$100 and/or imprisonment for up to 30 days. Despite this initial victory, the proposal must still be approved by the Council committee, the full Common Council, and the mayor. Undoubtedly, anti-gay forces have begun to mobilize to defeat the proposed law. Therefore, you gay rights supporters, who really want this proposal to pass, should call or write your alderperson immediately (phone 278-2221).

KUDOS FOR GAY RIGHTS VICTORY: Much of the credit for a city commission's support of a proposed gay rights ordinance should go to Leon Rouse who organized an inter-denominational committee of local clergy to work FOR the proposal. Special thanks to all those who testified for the proposed law. Among those testifying were Father Eugene Pocernich, the associate director of the Milwaukee Archdiocese's Office of Human Concerns, Reverend Robert A. Young Jr. of the Wisconsin and Upper Michigan Synod of the Lutheran Church of America, August (Ace) Backus of the Citizen's Coalition (a group of 40 community-based organizations), and many leaders of Milwaukee's gay and lesbian community.

"OUST BREIER" PETITIONS CIRCULATING: Remember Police Chief Harold Breier's obstinate insensitivity to the growing rape problem in Milwaukee? Remember his resistance to the formation of a special rape task force and the recent merger of that task force with the vice squad? Remember the vicious police

(cont'd)

"OUST BREIER" (cont'd)

raids on the baths and health clubs? What about harassment around the bars, and continued surveillance (and arrests) in the adult "peep shows"? Want to do something about these outrages? The COALITION TO OUST CHIEF BREIER is circulating a petition demanding Breier's removal from office. This petition should be signed by everyone concerned about the indignities that have been suffered by gays, women, and other groups because of this callous, backward police chief. If the coalition can gather 27,400 signatures, it can force the Milwaukee Common Council to vote on a resolution calling for Breier's ouster, and could ultimately put the question of Breier's life-time tenure before the voters in an advisory referendum on the November ballot. If you want to help circulate the petition call 562-4288 or 445-5816. If you want to sign the petition, it is circulating all over town, as well as at the Farwell Center, the bars, and the baths.

"JUSTICE FOR HOMOSEXUAL SOLDIERS" Federal Judge Terrence Evans has ruled that the Army may not constitutionally discharge a homosexual soldier solely because of the soldier's sexual preference. We think Evans is right. The Army had not accused the soldier of making advances to members of her own sex or of causing any disciplinary problems. It simply declared her unsuitable for military service because she had acknowledged being a lesbian. 'Constitutional privacy principles clearly protect one's sexual preferences, in and of themselves, from government regulation,' the judge asserted. He rejected the government's contention that the military must be free to decide--without interference from Congress or the courts--on the fitness of individuals to serve in the armed forces. That argument is the same specious reasoning used in the past to justify racial segregation in the military and to largely exclude women from military careers. Obviously, the armed forces have to impose certain standards in the selection and retention of troops, but the standards should be related to the actual needs of the service. In a democratic society, the services cannot be given absolute and capricious power to decide who will serve. If a homosexual soldier is otherwise qualified, performs his or her duties properly and creates no threat to military order, there is no valid cause for exclusion. The same test should hold in civilian life. A schoolteacher, for example, shouldn't be penalized for sexual preference unless the preference intrudes on the normal teacher-student relationship or otherwise impairs professional performance. The crucial distinction is between what a person simply feels and what a person actually does. So far, Evan's decision apparently affects only his own district, the eastern part of Wisconsin. However, we think it deserves to be adopted by the Supreme Court as the law of the land." Reprinted from the May 21, 1980 Milwaukee Journal.

MIRIAM BEN SHALOM VS. THE ARMY: A battle is won, but the war is not over. Although Federal Judge Terrence Evans ruled the Army's gay ban unconstitutional, the Army has declared it will probably appeal the decision. Consequently, funds are vitally needed to help Miriam fight any government appeal. In addition, Miriam needs donations to help meet her burdensome legal expenses, costs which amount to more than \$50,000. Your tax-deductible donation can be made through the Gay Peoples Union (GPU) Legal Defense Fund, P.O. Box 208, Milwaukee, WI 53201. Please specify that your donation is to help Miriam Ben Shalom meet legal expenses.

ROLLER SKATING: GAMMA is sponsoring a night of roller skating Thursday, June 26 at 9:00pm at the Rollaero Skating Center, 5200 S. Pennsylvania Avenue in Cudahy. Admission is \$3.00 and all are welcome.



GAY & LESBIAN PRIDE WEEK, JUNE 21-29, 1980: Milwaukee area gays and lesbians will be proudly celebrating and commemorating the 11th anniversary of the modern gay liberation movement with a week-long calendar of events and activities, including the Milwaukee Gay & Lesbian Pride Parade from Juneau Park to the MacArthur Square on Saturday, June 28th. Other scheduled events include: a "potluck" picnic at Mitchell Park, Entertainers Club of Milwaukee presentation of "Hello Dolly" at the Ball Game, the "Into the Street" Festival (on Menomonee Street, next to the Factory), a Sunset Ecumenical Worship Service (following the street festival), Gay Visual Arts Show at UWM Union Art Gallery which runs through July 11th, a "Gay Town Meeting" to discuss the needs of the lesbian and gay community of Milwaukee at the Farwell Center, a Gay and Lesbian Film Festival featuring "A Taste of Honey" and "Six Unnatural Acts" at the Factory, a Gay Performing Arts Show featuring original gay and lesbian talent at the Wisconsin Room of the UWM Student Union, and a charter bus trip to participate in the 11th Annual Chicago Gay/Lesbian Pride Parade. A complete calendar of events for Milwaukee's Gay and Lesbian Pride Celebration is available throughout the gay community, in the Milwaukee Calendar, or by calling the GPU HOTLINE 271-5273. Show Milwaukee that we're proud of who we are, participate in Gay & Lesbian Pride Week activities!

"GUST BREIER" (cont'd)

PROGRAM FOR GAY TEENAGERS: Under the supervision of the UWM Dean of Students, the Gay Community at UWM is sponsoring an outreach program to lesbian and gay teenagers (18 and under) in the Milwaukee area. Recognizing the limited support systems available for these teenagers, the group will offer a supportive atmosphere to discuss and examine the "gay subculture" and how this relates to the development of one's personhood. Milwaukee Gay Teens are presently meeting on the 1st and 3rd Saturday from 1:00pm to 3:00pm in the UWM Student Union Room E-301, 2200 East Kenwood. More information may be obtained by phoning Joan 277-9471 or Gene 264-0450 (Tuesday and Thursday evenings).

"MILWAUKEE UPDATE" IN YOUR MAIL BOX? It's easy. Gay Peoples Union has, for the past six months, been publishing this our monthly newsletter to keep YOU informed. We also maintain a confidential mailing list (never sold, rented or traded). If you would like to receive our mailings, which include "Milwaukee Update", drop a line to GPU-Milwaukee Update, P.O. Box 208, Milwaukee, WI 53201. Although Milwaukee Update is distributed free, a small contribution to help defray mailing costs would be gratefully accepted.

Gay & Lesbian Pride Week MILWAUKEE JUNE 21-29

CLIP AND MAIL TO: G.P.U., INC., P.O. BOX 208, MILWAUKEE, WIS 53201

YES, I'D LIKE TO BECOME A MEMBER OF GAY PEOPLES UNION. Enclosed is my contribution for:

_____ \$12 BASIC MEMBERSHIP

_____ \$100 SUSTAINING MEMBER

_____ \$20 HOUSEHOLD MEMBERSHIP (FOR TWO)

_____ \$500 SUPPORTING MEMBER

_____ \$50 CONTRIBUTING MEMBER

_____ \$6 LOW INCOME MEMBER

_____ I DO NOT WISH TO BECOME A MEMBER AT THIS TIME, HOWEVER, PLACE MY NAME ON YOUR MAILING LIST FOR "MILWAUKEE UPDATE" AND ACCEPT THIS DONATION OF \$ _____.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

ZIP _____

_____ I AM INTERESTED IN DOING VOLUNTEER WORK FOR G.P.U. Please have a representative contact me at: Phone _____

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO G.P.U., INC. Contributions are tax deductible under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.