

## TIMELINE ON WISCONSIN LBGQT HISTORY – A SAMPLING

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Please see acknowledgements at end

Additions by GSAFE

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#### PART 1 - PRE-STONEWALL WISCONSIN (1894-1968)

1890s

1. 1894 The Badger State Banner of **Black River Falls** reports that Anna Morris, alias Frank Blunt, was sentenced to one year in the state penitentiary by Judge Gilson of **Fond du Lac**. She had been arrested in **Milwaukee** for stealing \$175 in Fond du Lac. Upon arrest it was discovered she was a woman who had worn masculine clothing nearly all her life. Gertrude Field, who claimed to have married her in Eau Claire, fell upon her neck and wept for half an hour. Field paid the money for the defense. Source Gay American History: Lesbians and Gay Men in the USA by Jonathan Katz.

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1910s

2. 1911 Ralph Warner, a never-married school teacher from Racine, buys a Federal style brick house on the square in **Cooksville** (Rock County, Town of Porter) for a summer home. He names it the House Next Door because it was next to Susan Porter's, another teacher who had introduced him to the village. In the antique-filled house surrounded by gardens Warner served luncheon, dinners and teas by reservation only. Customers were garden clubs and women's groups. A 1923 article in House Beautiful noted "paying guests who come for the first time to the house insist that there must be a wife or housekeeper somewhere concealed." In 1923 Warner meets Edgar Hellum of Stoughton and encourages him in antiques. And in 1933 the Ladies Home Journal a writer observes about Warner "A young man of this sort may well find himself a little lonely sometimes. Source: A Passion to Preserve: Gay Men as Keepers of Culture by Will Fellows.

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3. 1914 The Day Book of Chicago reports out of **Milwaukee** about Cora Anderson who had lived for thirteen years as Ralph Kerwinieo. Her longtime companion Marie White revealed her secret resulting in charges of disorderly conduct after Ralph left her and married before a Justice of the Peace a Dorothy Klenowski. After a hearing, Anderson was set free and commanded to wear women's clothes. Source Gay American History: Lesbians and Gay Men in the USA by Jonathan Katz.

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1920s

4. 1927 Glenway Wescott's novel, The Grandmothers: A Family Portrait about Wisconsin's pioneer generation and their descendants is published. Written while Wescott was an expatriate in Europe it draws on the Wisconsin of his youth as a farm boy. He had been born near **Kewaskum** and attended high school in **West Bend**, where he had his first gay experience and later went to **Waukesha** High School where he published a short story. Several relationships in the novel have a homosexual undercurrent. His book of short stories the following year Good-bye, Wisconsin shows why he and his partner settled in New York after seeing Paris rather than return to the Midwest. Sources: Glenway Wescott Personally: A

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## 1930s

Biography by Jerry Rosco and “Introduction” by Sargent Bush, Jr. for 1996 republication of *The Grandmothers: A Family Portrait*.

**5. 1935** Robert Neal, a **Mineral Point** native, and his partner Edgar Hellum buy an old decrepit Cornish stone house in Mineral Point. They begin to fix it up and serve tea and saffron cakes with plum preserves to raise money for the work. A Madison columnist enthused about the house and the charming young men who restored it. They soon bought two more houses nearby and sold antiques to keep up funds for the effort. More publicity about “Two young men with the soul of an artist...” helped and a more formal dining room was established with more Cornish items including pasties. They inspired other artistic types to interest themselves in restoration and history of the town. Source: *A Passion to Preserve: Gay Men as Keepers of Culture* by Will Fellows

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**6. 1936** Publication of *LaFollette Road to Communism—Must We Go Further Along That Road?* by John B. Chapple. Charges are made that Governor Phil LaFollette ally UW President Glenn Frank fired a Dean of the University Extension Division who later charged that Frank “Did not dismiss a sex pervert on the university staff who was making indecent and abnormal advances to male students and endangering the moral welfare and possibly the whole moral future of students.” In state Senate testimony the Dean noted “Unconventional standards on the part of persons not in the teaching profession are one thing, but we are teachers and advisors of young people and where such situations are concerned, it is quite another thing.”

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**7. 1930s** *Grunching Gravel: A Wisconsin Boyhood in the Thirties* by Robert Peters published in 1988 describes growing up in rural northern Wisconsin in **Eagle River** by a shy boy whose memoir shows he sought solace in friendships with other boys. In his later memoir *For You Lili Marlene: A Memoir of World War II*, published in 1995, he deals with his “buddying” and some aspects of homosexuality in the Army during the war.

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**8. 1941** Chester Holway buys the House Next Door in **Cooksville** (see above 1911) and after serving as an officer in the U. S. Army Air Corps during the war returns in 1945 to Cooksville with the man who will be his life partner of thirty-five years Marvin Raney. Raney lectures on antiques and collected the village’s history. He helped preserve the old village green or square when the town board was considering selling it. Other gay men including William Wartmann, Mike Saternus, and Larry Reed, joined them in the village and area as country gentlemen dedicated to preserving the village’s historic character. Source: *A Passion to Preserve: Gay Men as Keepers of Culture* by Will Fellows and personal discussions with Dick Wagner.

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**9. 1945** An article in the journal *Psychosomatic Medicine* “A Study of Homosexual Males,” which looked at the mental illness diagnoses for servicemen, reported on 20 gay men who were Air Corps patients at Truax Field in **Madison**, Wisconsin. Each “had participated apparently without conflict in a wide variety of homosexual practices” but none of them “requested or desired” therapy to change their homosexuality even though military practice was to treat it as at best a neurosis or worst a sexual psychopathy worthy of discharge. Source: *Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War Two* by Allan Berube.

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**10. 1948** A UW-**Madison** campus security officer arrests two students in a parked auto for engaging in sexual activities. A party invitation produced by one of the students led to a raid on a Madison Street home on the near Westside which was termed a “den” for lewd activities by a “ring” of men. In all, 12 were arrested through cooperation of university and city police. Four students were expelled by the university. The court convicted the four and sentenced them to one year’s probation with a stern warning about “abnormal sexual behavior.” They came from **Janesville**, **Slinger**, **Barron**, and **Covington**. Two Madison men were fined each \$300 (almost \$3,000 in 2008) on no contest pleas to the charge of

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possession of obscene literature with a further sodomy charge dismissed. Source: Newspapers of the day and interview with Robert Davis.

**11. 1949** An internal trial within the Taliesin Fellowship in **Spring Green** brings to light a circle of male homosexual activity among the apprentices of Frank Lloyd Wright when his chief draftsman Jack Howe was accused of predatory homosexual practices. There are suggestions that Mrs. Wright had encouraged the single you men living at the architecture school to engage one another for sexual activity rather than risk local scandals while sowing normal wild oats in town. While an internal reputation as a sex club might attract students and as well as the noted architect Phillip Johnson, Wright, seeking discretion, felt that “We should not be recognized as this kind of place. Source: The Fellowship: The Untold Story of Frank Lloyd Wright & The Taliesin Fellowship by Roger Friedland & Harold Zellman

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**12. 1949** Mint Bar opens in **Milwaukee** and survives until 1986 serving the gay community.

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**13. 1950** On August 8th Wisconsin Senator Joseph McCarthy of **Appleton** rises to read a letter in the Senate attacking an article in the Saturday Evening Post by Joseph and Stewart Alsop who had decried the “miasma of fear” that hung over Washington fostered by McCarthyites. McCarthy’s letter responded to an attack on Senator Kenneth Wherry of Nebraska for attempting to remove sexual perverts from sensitive positions in our Government. McCarthy defended Senator Wherry noting that the Roman Empire had come to end when the ruling class became “morally perverted and degenerate.” McCarthy wrote “I know some your editorial staff and frankly I can’t believe Senator’s Wherry’s attempt to accomplish the long overdue task of removing perverts from our Government would be considered either ‘vulgar’ or ‘nauseating’ to them.” The Saturday Evening Post editor wrote back and assured him they were against the employment of “traitors and perverts.” Source: Joe McCarthy and the Press by Edwin R. Bayley.

1950s

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**14. 1950s** Keith McCutcheon and his partner, Joe Koberstein, are the center of a gay circle in **Madison**. Keith a journalist, story writer, and poet privately publishes a poetry collection with the title poem “Two Pieces of Venetian Glass.” It reflects the hidden love lives of the period in its imagery

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Two pieces of Venetian glass a breath  
 Could break if carelessness betrayed; yet strong To hold  
 the wine-mad force of life and death Through many years  
 for toasts that love be long...

Source: Collection of Dick Wagner

**15. 1956** George Mosse, a young professor of European History and refugee from Nazi Germany, comes to the UW at **Madison**. As a Jew and closeted gay man he knew an outsiderdom on his new campus. In Confronting History: A Memoir published in 2000 he recalls of the faculty in the 50’s “The closet door had to be tightly closed, and was so even with members of this group whom I knew to have had some gay adventures when younger.”

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**16. 1959** William Wartmann, an art teacher, purchases an 1852 house near **Cooksville** and with his partner Michael Saturnus, an architect, begins restoration work. One of his ideas was that the house would be a safe compound away from the city. Source: A Passion to Preserve: Gay Men as Keepers of Culture by Will Fellows.

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1960s

17. **1962** Starting in October and lasting until February 1963 UW-Madison experiences “The Gay Purges.” Campus Protection and Security and/or the Dean of Men identify lists of those suspected or accused of homosexuality. Once charged with homosexual misconduct individuals were threatened to provide information about other men who engaged in homosexual conduct. Compiled lists were said to number hundreds. Some were pressured to leave or decided it was politic to go elsewhere. Some targeted students threatened lawsuits and the Department of Psychiatry weighed in on the mental health consequences. UW President Fred Harvey Harrington ordered an end to the investigations.

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18. **1965** The International Guild Guide, published annually, listed gay and lesbian friendly bars across the country including Fond du Lac, Green Bay, Kenosha, Madison, Milwaukee, and Oshkosh. Among the Madison places mentioned are the Kollege Klub, the Belmont Hotel Bar, Lombardinos Piano Lounge, the Fireside Lounge, Three Bells, and the Six O Two Club.

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19. **1965** Your Place opens in Milwaukee as a bar and lasts until 1995 serving the gay community.

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20. **1968** This Is It opens as a community bar in Milwaukee and has remained open until the present (2008).

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**PART 2: POST -STONEWALL TO PASSAGE OF WISCONSIN’S FIRST-IN-THE-NATION GAY RIGHTS LAW (1969-1982)**

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21. **1969** the Madison Alliance for Homosexual Equality founded in the fall after Stonewall (June 1969), the first gay organization in Wisconsin

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22. **1969** The Voice of Young Wisconsin: A Treasury of Writings by Wisconsin High School Writers is published and includes poems by a young woman of Madison.

Yet hiding in the shadows of my mind  
 Are Secrets lower than a mouse may creep,  
 And searching there for something soft and kind  
 I come to rustling darkness cold and deep;  
 May I not find a poem there that is me  
 And write it down, and set the rustlings free?

1970s

23. **1970** A student organization, the Gay Liberation Organization (GLO) at UW-Milwaukee is founded in February with an original name of Homosexual Freedom League by a dozen male students. The “UW Post” reported a spokesperson said they were tired of suffering the persecution of unjust and restrictive laws. The initial faculty advisor was Barbara Gibson, a lecturer in English, who also served as advisor to the campus women’s liberation group. Source: mkelgbthist.org

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24. **1970** Gay Liberation Front (GLF) founded in Milwaukee from more militant members of GLO basing their model on New York militants and lasts until 1971. Drawing on Marxist and feminist theory the GLF wanted to dismantle capitalism and create a re-eroticized world. Source: Michael Doylen in “Queer Life News” March 2, 2005

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25. **1970** The International Guild Guide in 1970 in addition to bars list cruising areas including Burrows Park in Madison and Juneau Park in Milwaukee. However, the guide notes that Juneau Park is a bad scene with muggings, beatings, and the vice squad.

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**26. 1971** Gay People’s Union (GPU) founded in **Milwaukee** becomes the main focus for the gay activism for the Southeastern Wisconsin urban area for the next decade. Initially a campus organization growing from the gay rights portion of (GLO) by September 1971 it was a community-based organization. GPU was primarily a social service organization that was also dedicated to educating the larger community about gays and lesbians.

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**27. 1971** Donna Burkett and Manonia Evans apply for a marriage license at the **Milwaukee** County Clerks Office. They are denied by Clerk Thomas Zablocki and file an initial lawsuit but soon withdraw it. They are wed on Christmas Day in the rite of the Holy Eastern Orthodox Catholic Church by Father Joe Felderhausen.

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**28. 1971** In October the GPU (Gay People’s Union, **Milwaukee**) started publication of GPU News which will last a decade and is a nationally recognized source of lesbian and gay news.

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**29. 1972** GPU (Gay People’s Union, **Milwaukee**) begins operating a telephone counseling service.

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**30. 1972** The “**Milwaukee** Journal” in February undertakes a six-part series “The Gay Revolution.”

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**31. 1972** A task force appointed by Governor Patrick Lucey to look at Judicial Organization suggests “crimes against sexual morality” be abolished, presumably as a way to relieve the courts of needless cases.

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**32. 1973** WTMJ-TV, **Milwaukee**, airs a five-part series titled “Some Call Them Gay” that shows early activists in Milwaukee. Among those shown putting the case for gay rights was Alyn Hess, a prominent leader in GPU. A Milwaukee brewery truck driver was also interviewed.

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**33. 1973** Wisconsin Supreme Court upholds the firing of a gay staff member, Paul Safransky, a GPU member, from Southern Colony state institution in **Racine County**. He was fired ‘due to problems associated with your homosexual lifestyle.’ Specifically, the Court noted he was an avowed homosexual. In upholding the firing at an earlier stage the State Personnel Board made a finding “That homosexual activity is contrary to the generally recognized and accepted standards of morality...”. The Supreme Court noted that no evidence was submitted as to support this finding. In its conclusions the State Personnel Board noted “He insisted on his right to discuss his way of life at work when asked to desist.” The case was argued for the defendant by the Wisconsin ACLU. Notably, an Amicus Curiae argument for the defendant was made by David J. Admany a close advisor to then Governor Patrick Lucey.

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**34. 1973** A **Milwaukee** Dignity chapter for gay and lesbian Roman Catholics forms.

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**35. 1973** An out lesbian, Judy Greenspan, files nomination papers for the **Madison** School Board. At a time when gays and lesbians were restricted from access to school audiences, as a candidate for the Board Greenspan gains access to many forums. She is not elected.

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**36. 1973** Two gay men, James Riske and Nick Gaglaino, are married in **Green Bay** by Father Bob in a private residence. They wore matching outfits of gold shirts and white slacks and each had a double rose corsage.

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**37. 1973** **Fox Valley** Gay Alliance is formed and lasts most of the 1970s.

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- 38. 1973** In September the **Madison** Gay Center opens at 550 State Street. It later moves to the University Methodist office on University Avenue. It is the first gay community center in the state.
- 39. 1973** Wisconsin First District Congressman Les Aspin (representing Racine, Kenosha, Walworth counties plus portions of Rock, Waukesha and Milwaukee counties) joins other representatives to seek an upgrade from dishonorable for the discharges for those cast out of the military for their homosexuality.
- 40. 1974** In **Milwaukee** two men's spas or bathhouses opened. One of them in particular, Club Milwaukee (a local affiliate of a national Club Bath chain), became a focus for parts of the gay community. They held promotional events for GPU and a gay church parish.
- 41. 1974** The **Milwaukee** GPU (Gay People's Union) hosts the GPU Ball at the Milwaukee Performing Arts Center in the Harry Lynde Bradley Pavilion. A Mardi Gras masquerade themed event with over 350 attending to show their pride in the community. The story following was "A Fabulous First for Milwaukee."
- 42. 1974** In October the **Milwaukee** GPU (Gay People's Union) opened its Venereal Disease Examination Center which becomes the Brady East STD Clinic.
- 43. 1974** Gay Renaissance newsletter begins in **Madison**.
- 44. 1975** **Madison** becomes the first place in Wisconsin and one of the earliest in the country to ban discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation when it amends its Equal Opportunities Ordinance, which had first been adopted in 1963 for fair housing regarding race.
- 45. 1975** The Homosexual Emancipation Movement in Germany by James D. Steakley is published in the Arno Press collection by the Ayer Company. Steakley goes on to become a leading scholar in gay studies at the UW-**Madison**.
- 46. 1975** **Milwaukee**'s GPU (Gay People's Union) rents a flat at 1568 N. Farwell on Milwaukee's eastside which becomes the state's first gay and lesbian community center and also houses the Brady East STD Clinic and GPU Library.
- 47. 1975** UW-**Madison** professor Harvey Goldberg, a radical historian, narrates a program on public television called "The Gay Response" about Madison gay life. Source: Confronting History: A Memoir by George Mosse.
- 48. 1976** Miriam Ben Shalom is discharged from the Army Reserves for declaring she was a lesbian. She had begun serving with the 84<sup>th</sup> Training Division of the Army Reserves in **Milwaukee** and completed drill sergeant training. Federal Circuit Court Judge Terrance Evans citing the first amendment will later order her re-instatement noting she was not discharged for conduct but for her speech. The Army balked. The US Court of Appeals in Chicago supported the ruling and threatened contempt of court fines. In 1988 Ben Shalom successfully re-enlisted but the Army went on appeal again with a different verdict that permitted a new discharge. The Supreme Court refused to hear her case, and the ruling on the second discharge was upheld. Ben Shalom has cited her Jewish heritage and the experience of Shoah as her motivation for the fight. Sources: mkelgbthist.org, Conduct Unbecoming: Gays and Lesbians in the U.S. Military by Randy Shilts, and Ask and Tell: Gay & Lesbian Veterans Speak Out by Steve Estes.

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**49. 1976** In October James Yeadon is selected by the **Madison** Common Council from among eight candidates to fill an unfinished term of an 8<sup>th</sup> district alderman. Yeadon, a founding member of the Madison Alliance for Homosexual Equality in 1969 and a member of the UW-Madison Gay Law School Students Association, was instrumental in helping to frame the revised Madison Equal Opportunities Ordinance to include non-discrimination against gay people. He tells the campus Daily Cardinal “I’m a vegetarian and I’m gay.... He is elected by the district in the Spring of 1977, becoming the first successful openly gay candidate elected to public office in Wisconsin and one of the first in the nation. The Badger Herald, then the conservative campus paper, gay baits Yeadon noting, “In very few other cities besides Madison could a self-confessed homosexual like James Yeadon be considered anything but a protest candidate.” The 8<sup>th</sup> district of Madison will go on to have over a half dozen openly gay city council and county board representatives in the next several decades.

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**50. 1976** The **Madison** Gay Activist Alliance has Attorney Mark Frankel represent them before the Wisconsin Insurance Commissioner Harold Wilde seeking a ban on discrimination that would include sexual preference as a basis for auto and property insurance.

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**51. 1976** Meetings take place with the **Madison** Gay Center counseling staff and UW-Madison Chief Ralph Hanson of Protection and Security and Dean of Students Paul Ginsburg for sensitivity training to be provided to campus police by the Gay Center and the Lesbian Switchboard.

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**52. 1976** A Symposium on Gays and the Law is held sponsored by the **Madison** Committee for Gay Rights and by the Gay Law Students Association. Speakers include Bruce Voeller, executive director of the National Gay Task Force

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**53. 1977** The Gay Community at UW-Stout (**Menomonie**) begins.

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**54. 1977** Four gay softball pickup teams begin competing at the Mitchell Park Domes fields (**Milwaukee**) thereby beginning the Saturday Softball Beer League. The losing team had to buy the winning team a half barrel at their home bar.

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**55. 1977** In May David Kopay is on the cover of GPU News (Gay People’s Union, **Milwaukee**) and note is made of the former **Green Bay** Packer history of this football player who came out. (In 2007, Mr. Kopay pledged \$1 million to the UW-Madison’s Q Center whose mission is to create an inclusive and celebratory environment for people of all sexual orientations.)

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**56. 1977** The Down Under Club bar in **La Crosse** opens with a gay extravaganza in April which included Mr. Club Baths. The bar burns at the end of the month.

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**57. 1977** An Integrity chapter for gay Episcopalians forms in **Madison**. It will become a joint Integrity-Dignity organization with affiliation also with the national gay Catholic group.

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**58. 1977** Patrick Batt, Chairperson of the Gay Peoples Union, is fired from his job as personnel director at Marion Heights Nursing Home (**Milwaukee** area) in view of his “private life” or because he is gay.

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**59. 1977** Governor Patrick Lucey, before departing to become ambassador to Mexico, speaking at Badger Girls (in **Madison**), responds to a question about Anita Bryant’s efforts to repeal gay rights ordinances. He says, “I really was not awfully pleased with her efforts in that regard. I think that sexual preference ought not to deny any American citizen of all the rights and privileges that other citizens enjoy.” It was noted that the audience of high school girls applauded approvingly.

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**60. 1977** “Survivor’s Notes: Memories of the ’62 Gay Purge” at UW-Madison are published in the Gay Renaissance Newsletter in **Madison**.

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**61. 1978** In May raids by police on **Milwaukee** gay bathhouses begin. Eighteen are arrested on the first raid of the Broadway Health Club. Two more raids occur in July. GPU (Gay People’s Union) members protest in the streets.

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**62. 1978** Rev. Wayne Dillabaugh launches efforts to repeal **Madison** Equal Opportunities Commission ordinance regarding non-discrimination for gays following the Anita Bryant successful repeal example in Dade County, Florida. The Milwaukee Journal editorializes that it “could produce an ugly McCarthy-like” atmosphere throughout the state. The repeal fails in Madison.

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**63. 1978** In **Madison**, The United is formed by gays/lesbians/allies to fight the repeal of the sexual orientation equal opportunities provisions. They meet at St. Francis Episcopal Church. The United goes on to become a social service organization and was the first group to receive public city funds for gay services, a crisis hotline.

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**64. 1978** The Wreckroom Classic was **Milwaukee**’s inaugural gay softball tournament on Memorial Day weekend. This led to the first National Gay Softball Tournament (NAGA) in 1979.

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**65. 1978** “Her Turn” appears on WORT-FM **Madison** and covers both lesbian and straight women’s news and issues.

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**66. 1978** The National Lesbian Feminist Organization draws 100 women to its national meeting in **Milwaukee**.

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**67. 1979** The Holiday Invitational Tournament (HIT) holds the first of many annual bowling tournaments in **Milwaukee**.

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**68. 1979** A UW-**Madison** Faculty Senate resolution adopts official policies prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

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**69. 1979** The First Annual Lesbian Gay Awareness Week is held at UW-**Stevens Point** sponsored by the UWSP Gay People’s Union

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**70. 1979** The **Milwaukee** Police Department under the homophobic Chief Harold Breier continues to raid gay bathhouses with dozens of arrests.

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**71. 1979** The Wisconsin Lesbian and Gay Network begins.

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## 1980s

**72. 1980** In November the **Milwaukee** chapter of Black and White Men Together forms several months after the founding of the first similar chapter in San Francisco. Their newsletter begins publication in Spring 1981. Among concerns were “Society’s threat to interracial couples.” Purposes included “To offer an opportunity for socializing between black and white gay men...” Another purpose was “To actively engage in the struggle for racial understanding in Milwaukee, the Milwaukee area, and the nation, especially in the gay community.” The organization lasts until 1988. Source: UWM LGBT archive files of organization.

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**73. 1980** The **Dane County** Board of Supervisors adopts an ordinance prohibiting discrimination against lesbians, gay men and bisexuals. A column written by Milwaukee Catholic Archbishop Rembert Weakland supporting non-discrimination on sexual orientation as public policy is on the desk of supervisors the night of the vote.

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**74. 1980** The Wisconsin Senate passes a bill decriminalizing sexual activity between consenting adults by a vote of 18-12. Seventeen Democrats and one Republican vote yes. The Assembly votes 54 to 41 against it and then adjourns.

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**75. 1980** Edmund White's States of Desire: Travels in Gay America tells the tale of a young baker who had to leave **Northern Wisconsin** "in desperation" for the Twin Cities. Even though he loved country life he almost never met other gay people in the northwoods. He also quotes the Director of the Minneapolis Gay Community Services center who had just moved from Milwaukee. "Milwaukee is nonpolitical, bar-oriented, whereas Minneapolis is progressive and there are more professionals in the gay community—of course that simply reflects the higher level of the community as a whole."

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**76. 1980** In May federal judge Terrence Evans (Eastern District of Wisconsin – all of **Eastern Wisconsin**) rules in the case of Miram Ben Shalom that the US Army may not discharge a soldier just because they are homosexual.

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**77. 1980** City of **Milwaukee** adopts an ordinance on non-discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. Among those speaking in favor of the change at the Committee level were numerous clergy including the Vicar for Human Concerns of the Milwaukee Roman Catholic Archdiocese. Milwaukee Police Chief Brier testifies in opposition. After the Common Council adopts it 9-7, Mayor Henry Maier signs it into law.

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**78. 1980** The Gay and Lesbian Alliance at UW **Platteville** is started.

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**79. 1981** The Cream City Business Association forms in **Milwaukee** for gay and lesbian business people and professionals. It soon launches the Cream City Foundation to award grants for gay and lesbian projects.

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**80. 1980** A petition drive is launched in **Milwaukee** to oust Police Chief Breier.

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**81. 1981** Leaping **La Crosse** News begins publishing in western Wisconsin.

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**82. 1982** Gov. Lee Sherman Dreyfus signs first-in-the-nation state gay rights law. The legislative sponsor State Representative David Clarenbach skillfully led the fight in the Assembly and Senate. A last-minute effort to urge Dreyfus not to sign with calls generated by a religious radio station was countered by an effort with calls generated by WORT community sponsored radio in Madison. In signing the bill Dreyfus takes note of the ordinances previously adopted in the cities of Madison and Milwaukee and Dane County.

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### **PART 3: POST-WISCONSIN GAY RIGHTS LAW TO THE ELECTION OF THE FIRST OUT LESBIAN TO CONGRESS (1982-1998)**

**83. 1982** Rodney Scheel opens The Back Door, **Madison**'s first truly open gay and lesbian bar. Rodney becomes a fixture for the community and later has the Hotel Washington entertainment complex. The MAGIC (Madison Area Gay Interim Committee) Picnic becomes one of his projects where he organizes high heel races and other activities, His bars organize trips and floats for the Chicago gay pride events.

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**84. 1982** “Out!” newspaper is published with volume one, number one in November in **Madison** lasting until 1987

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**85. 1982** The Wisconsin Lesbian Gay Network hosts a conference in **Stevens Point** July 30-August 1 with the title “Flaunting Our Virtues.” National figure discharged soldier Leonard Matlovich spoke. Also included were films, small group discussions, volley ball games and dances.

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**86. 1982** Governor-elect Anthony Earl announces the appointment of Ron Crea as his press secretary for his upcoming administration. The “**Milwaukee** Sentinel” headlines that Earl appoints an “Avowed Homosexual.” Other stories describe him as a practicing homosexual. McCrea jokes with folks that he does not need to practice.

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**87. 1982 Parents Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG)**, has its first Wisconsin chapter while the national organization is still young. Jane Laflash, just after her 16 year-old son came out as gay, helped to form a **Madison** PFLAG with Joann Elder. PFLAG promotes the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender persons, their families and friends through: support, to cope with an adverse society; education, to enlighten an ill-informed public; and advocacy, to end discrimination and to secure equal civil rights. PFLAG provides opportunity for dialogue about sexual orientation and gender identity, and acts to create a society that is healthy and respectful of human diversity. In 2008, there were PFLAG chapters in **Madison, Milwaukee, Kenosha/Racine, Eau Claire, Sturgeon Bay, Appleton, Oshkosh, Superior, Galesville, and Manitowoc.**

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**88. 1983** Evelyn Torton Beck, a member of the **Madison** Jewish Lesbian Group, is editor for the publication of Nice Jewish Girls: A Lesbian Anthology. In her introductory essay she writes, “Jewish invisibility is a symptom of anti-Semitism as surely as lesbian invisibility is a symptom of homophobia.” Beck was born in Vienna, Austria, emigrated to Italy, and grew up in Brooklyn. In Madison she was a professor of women’s studies, comparative literature and German at UW-Madison. The work was critically acclaimed except in the Jewish orthodox press.

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**89. 1983** The **Madison** Institute for Social Legislation (MISL) forms to promote local interest in recognition for alternative families and explore domestic partner legislation. Kate Nolan is one of their spokespersons.

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**90. 1983** Governor Tony Earl asks two openly gay/lesbian **Dane County** Supervisors, Kathleen Nichols and Dick Wagner, to visit gay communities around the state and make recommendations to him. They travel to Milwaukee, Racine and Stevens Point where visible community organizations exist. As a result of their recommendations Earl appoints the Governor’s Council on Lesbian and Gay Issues by executive order and names them as the co-chairs of the Council.

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**91. 1983** The Main Club, the first openly gay bar in **Superior** opens. The owner, Bob Jansen, was able to purchase the property after he won a sexual harassment suite after being fired for being gay. To obtain his license he has to overcome police opposition and reluctance from banks. BB gun shots are made to his home.

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**92. 1983** A gay/lesbian caucus of the Democratic Party forms at the State Convention held in **Milwaukee**.

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**93. 1983** “Strengthening Our Ties: A Conference of the Midwestern Gay Students Coalition” proudly displays its banner across the memorial union at UW-**Stevens Point**.

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**94. 1983** The Ten Percent Society is organized in the spring on the UW-**Madison** Campus by four students Matthew Alexander, Callen Harty, Larry Acherman, and Mark Prestegard. They hold their first of many Harvest Balls in the fall.

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**95. 1983** “Out!” Notes that campus or community groups are organized not only in **Madison** and **Milwaukee** but also at **Stevens Point**, UW Stout (**Menomonie**), **Racine**, Northland College (**Ashland**), UW **Platteville**, **Beloit** College, and **Rhineland**.

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**96. 1983** New Parents and Friends of Gay chapters (the precursor of PFLAG - Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) are formed in **Appleton** and **Fond du Lac**.

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**97. 1983** A Middleton dentist is fired from the **Dane County** Board of Health by County Executive Jonathan Barry for his homophobic remarks during a discussion on a resolution on an AIDS study. His comments occur at a public meeting attended by openly gay Dane County Supervisors Lynn Haanen and Dick Wagner who then ask Barry to remove the dentist.

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**98. 1983** In **Green Bay** a new chapter of Dignity for gay Catholics is formed with 30 attending, despite protesters. The chapter meeting is held at St. Norbert’s Abbey. Other chapters in the state are noted as Milwaukee and Madison.

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**99. 1983** “Out!” features the owners of the **Appleton** bar 1101 West following up on a story by the Appleton Post-Crescent on the bar. As in many smaller cities the bar becomes a place not only for socializing but also for politicking.

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**100. 1984** The newsletter of the **Milwaukee** chapter of Black and White Men Together publishes a two-part series “Mom, Dad; I’m Gay” by Michael Adams, a young Junior High African-American boy who finds his way into the Milwaukee gay community including the Brady Street Center, a Gay Convention at UWM, and a UWM gay youth group. He stated he wanted to talk about “being YOUNG, BLACK, GAY AND REBELLIOUS.” Source: UW-Milwaukee LGBT Archives of organization.

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**101. 1984** In January at **Madison** East High School the principal censors an editorial “Homophobia: A Social Disease” and prevents it from being printed as disruptive. The writer Jerry Dyer said that while he knew of no openly gay students at East “there are a lot of targets of abuse.” In March Glenn Borland, the school district area supervisor, overrides the principal and the editorial is printed.

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**102. 1984** The National Organization of Women (NOW) holds its first Lesbian Rights Conference in **Milwaukee** with 400 attending. National Gay Task Force Executive Director Virginia Apuzzo says, “We are not any organization’s nasty little secret anymore.” The theme is Power and Politics. This launches an effort “Lesbian and Gay Rights 84” aimed at the passage of state level legislation like Wisconsin’s banning discrimination on sexual orientation in selected states. Panelist included Kate Nolan of the Madison Institute for Social Legislation on the recognition of alternative families. Source: Timeline on NOW’s Work on Lesbian Rights at NOW website plus “Out!”.

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**103. 1984** Lesbian activist Cindi Lampman of **Racine** discloses she had been raped the prior September. Lampman who served on the Governor’s Council on Lesbian and Gay Issues quoted her assailant at calling her “the Governor’s dyke.”

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**104. 1984** The New Harvest Foundation is launched in **Dane County** for gay and lesbian philanthropy with a ceremony at the Madison Civic Center with Mayor Joe Sensenbrenner as guest of honor. At a time when gay bar coat checks were the prime revenue source and gay organizations had budgets of

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\$3,000 the campaign to raise \$25,000 over three years seemed wildly idealistic but was achieved. First Co-Chairs were Dick Wagner and Tess Meuer aided by gay fundraiser Jerry Dahlke and an active board with gender parity.

**105. 1984** In Step, also known as Wisconsin In Step begins publication out of **Milwaukee** and lasts until 2003.

**106. 1984** James Taylor, an African American and a member of Black and White Men Together **Milwaukee**, accepts a conciliated settlement on a firing on the basis of sexual orientation by the **Lake Geneva** Country Club. Taylor appeared in a Channel 12 News series “Gay In Milwaukee” which aired the evening before he was fired. The investigator of the Equal Right Division agreed there was probable cause to the discrimination complaint under the new state law. The settlement was for slightly more than \$1,000 in back wages, a letter of recommendation, and all reference on the firing removed from his personnel file. Taylor called it “a victory for the law.”

**107. 1984** Professor David Runyon offers a six week mini-course at UW-**Whitewater** on “Gay Coming-Out Issues.”

**108. 1984** Reprinted from the New York Native are memories of George Stambolian in a piece entitled “Lies, all lies.” He recalls the 1962 gay purge of UW-**Madison** and his interaction with the campus security office. “The professors they caught were denied promotion and tenure. The graduate students were immediately expelled. The undergraduates had to ask for another chance in the company of their parents and clergymen. Two men no one knew committed suicide. I survived.”

**109. 1984** The Gay Lesbian Organization at UW-**Eau Claire** begins meeting in March.

**110. 1984** A new **Janesville** lesbian and gay social group forms called “Gays Are Okay.” It starts when Mark Porter, a student at UW-Madison, and Tom Cox place an ad in a local shopper and ask folks to meet.

**111. 1984** In **Superior** Earl Greely, a Madison man, 28, is found dead along railroads tracks and had last been seen at the Superior gay bar the Main Club.

**112. 1984** A network of support for AIDS patients begins to form in **Madison** largely through the work of Chaz Pope, a nurse assistant at the UW hospital and a volunteer with the Gay Center.

**113. 1985** Governor Tony Earl’s proposed budget includes new provisions for non-discrimination in school services on the basis of sexual orientation. The Superintendent of Public Instruction had considered separate legislation which might have weakened chances for passage, but the Governor’s Council on Lesbian and Gay Issues urged Earl to include it in the budget. Earl is given the Torch Bearer Award by the Cream City Business Association for his many efforts on behalf of the gay community.

**114. 1985** **Milwaukee** hosted the Gay Softball World Series. Teams from 20 cities attended series 9 of the North American Gay Amateur Athletic Alliance (NAGAAA). It was the first series that had a women’s division. A highlight of the series was parachutists landing on the infield next to the Steinway on which was played the national anthems of Canada and the United States. Source: NAGAAA Fest website and “Out!”

**115. 1985** **Madison** activist Brooks Edgerton challenges Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Dane County over their overt discrimination of gays and lesbians. After a lengthy dispute the organization opens its doors.

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- 116. 1985** “Out!” reports that sexual orientation complaints exceed 100 under the new state equal rights law. While they came from around the state the majority were in the **Madison** and **Milwaukee** areas. Approximately 70% were from gay men.
- 117. 1985** George Mosse, UW-**Madison** professor, publishes Nationalism and Sexuality: Respectability and Abnormal Sexuality in Modern Europe. He fondly noted that his friend, Professor Jim Steakley called is his coming-out book. He has a chapter on manliness and homosexuality. Source: Confronting History: A Memoir by George Mosse
- 118. 1985** Earl Bricker, a **Dane County** Board Supervisor, is hired by Governor Anthony Earl as liaison to the lesbian and gay community and the Governor Office.
- 119. 1985** Open conference on lesbians and aging is held at the Daughters of the Earth Farm in **Norwalk**. Thirty-six women from around the country converged on the safe place for healing rituals, natural food, folk dancing, and workshops. The farm, 8 years old, on the highland of western Wisconsin east of La Crosse is managed by the Wisconsin Women’s Land Cooperative. The farm was envisioned as a cooperatively-owned, self-supporting womyn’s space. Five resident caretakers live on the farm and most neighbors accept or ignore their lesbian lifestyle.
- 120. 1985** Lawrence University Trustees in **Appleton**, prompted by a newly formed lesbian and gay alumni group, adopt a policy saying the institution “promotes equal opportunity for all.” University President Richard Ward in a letter to the school newspaper making it concrete said the policy guarantees freedom from discrimination based on sexual orientation.
- 121. 1985** The Lambda Connection is founded in **Oshkosh** as a gay and lesbian support group.
- 122. 1985** 118.13 pupil nondiscrimination law added to Wisconsin statutes (the statute includes sexual orientation as a protected group). Beginning of statute: “Except as provided in s. 120.13 (37m), no person may be denied admission to any public school or be denied participation in, be denied the benefits of or be discriminated against in any curricular, extracurricular, pupil services, recreational or other program or activity because of the person’s sex, race, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation or physical, mental, emotional or learning disability.”
- 123. 1986** Chapter PI 9 added to legislation. This chapter establishes procedures for compliance with s. 118.13. Included in PI 9 is an interpretation of harassment: “‘Pupil harassment’ means behavior towards pupils based, in whole or in part, on sex, race, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation or physical, mental, emotional or learning disability which substantially interferes with a pupil’s school performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive school environment.”
- 124. 1986** In February the UW-**Stevens Point** GPU Newsletter reports that no discrimination occurs at the local Big Brothers/Big Sisters agency despite there being a problem in Dane County.
- 125. 1986** In November the **Milwaukee Sentinel** reports that Governor-elect Tommy Thompson says he will abolish the Council on Lesbian and Gay Issues. He said “I don’t think government should be promoting an alternative lifestyle.” This fit with reporting in the same paper that suggested Governor Earl’s defeat should be attributed to the fact that “Many voters are secret bigots, welfare bashers and gay-baiters.”

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**126. 1987** Jerry Johnson and Terry Boughner begin publishing The Wisconsin Light out of **Milwaukee**. It lasts until 2002.

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**127. 1987** First cablecast in October of the **Milwaukee** Gay/Lesbian Cable Network on public access television. Executive producers Mark Behar and Bryce Clark did monthly 30 minute programs with a magazine style format. Called Tri-Cable Tonight it lasted until December 1989. New programming of panel discussions and comedy shorts was begun in 1990 and lasted until 1992.

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**128. 1987** At the March on Washington, Wisconsin’s three openly gay/lesbian elected officials carried a banner proclaiming Wisconsin “The Gay Rights State” as the only state with a non-discrimination law based on sexual orientation. The banner was carried by Dane County Supervisors Tammy Baldwin, Kathleen Nichols, and Dick Wagner.

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**129. 1987** The Lambda Rights Network (LRN) formed in **Milwaukee** to advocate on lesbian and gay issues with government officials and the general public. Formed in response to state legislation called the Rawhide Amendment that would have weakened the state’s gay rights law SB 301/AB527. LRN held Community Speak Outs to support the state Fair Employment Law. Changes were adopted by the legislature as a limited modified religious exemption in Feb. 1988 as AB 916. Organization dissolved in 1993.

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**130. 1987** The **Milwaukee** Chapter of Black and White Men Together hosts the annual national convention of the Association of Black and White Men Together at the Park East Hotel June 28<sup>th</sup> through July 5<sup>th</sup> with the theme “Celebrating Our Life, Liberty and Happiness.”. Attendees from 30 affiliated chapters across the country were expected to attend. The keynote speaker was Calvin Hernton author of the 1966 classic Sex and Racism in America. A Milwaukee tradition of the city hall sign welcomed the convention. A service was held at St Paul’s Episcopal Church honoring Fr. Maximillian Kolbe, a Franciscan, beatified for work in the concentration camps including wearing the pink triangle. Source: UWM LGBT archive files of organization.

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**131. 1987** Jim McFarland, an openly gay Republican is elected to the **Madison** City Council from District 8.

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**132. 1987** In April the UW system Board of Regents votes 9-6 to urge the federal government to revise its policies preventing gays and lesbians from participating in ROTC training. The regent’s action was in part a response to a faculty senate ad hoc Committee to study discrimination in ROTC programs. The study had been urged in 1986 by the Task Force on ROTC Policy Reform, Rick Villasenor among its founders.

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**133. 1987** The Cream City Chorus is founded in **Milwaukee**. Originally a chorus from the gay community the group has expanded its focus to a larger message of diversity and tolerance. An ensemble from the chorus is termed the Creamettes.

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**134. 1988** As a follow up to the 1987 March on Washington more formal pride events and marches occurred around the country. Milwaukee’s was hosted by the Milwaukee Lesbian/Gay Pride Committee. That year Milwaukee’s included a town hall meeting with elected officials, a film festival and softball tournament.

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**135. 1988** Out of All Time, a gay and lesbian history written by Terry Boughner of **Milwaukee** is published.

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**136. 1988** Rawhide Boys Ranch, located in **New London**, which sought to create a major loophole in the state gay rights law, instead is presented with a minor clarification of the religious exemption for bona fide occupational qualifications for legitimate religious associations.

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**137. 1988** Abe Lincoln on UW **Madison**'s Bascom Hill looks out over rows of pink triangles for National Coming Out Day. The pink triangle had been used by the Nazis for homosexuals in the Third Reich camps. Since then they have been adopted instead of a symbol of oppression into one of gay liberation. They were placed on Bascom by the UW-Madison Ten Percent Society.

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**138. 1989** **Milwaukee** pride event was a two-mile march from the bar district around city hall to Cathedral Square with 500 participating. Support for Pride from the Mayor and County Executive sparked talk of recall elections against them. In 1991 the Pride event was moved to Juneau Park.

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**139. 1989** UW-**Madison** Dean of Students Mary Rouse established a Gay and Lesbian Issues Committee charged with the responsibility to examine "those aspects of the UW-Madison academic and social life which contribute positively to the experience of gay and lesbian students as the problems which negatively affect the recruitment and retention of gay and lesbian students. In 1999 a LGBT Liaison is established in the Dean of Students Office. The position becomes the Director of the LGBT Campus Center.

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**140. 1989** The Lesbian Alliance of Metro **Milwaukee** works for lesbian rights and awareness and serves the political and social needs of its community. A sister organization is the LAMM Education Fund which provides picnics, social events, educational panels and workshops.

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**141. 1989** PFLAG **Milwaukee** founded. (For list of current chapters, see 1982 PLAG entry #87.)

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**1990s**

**142. 1990** The sculpture "Gay Liberation" housed in **Madison**'s Orton Park goes to New York to the Christopher Park near the Stonewall Bar where it was intended. It was exhibited for three years in Madison while New York was getting organized. Vandals attacked the work of art several times painting works like "Fag" on it, but no serious irreparable damage.

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**143. 1990** City of **Madison** passes a domestic partner ordinance that allows unmarried individuals to register. Over the next several years several hundred couples register. The law applies to housing, hotel rooms, and memberships in organizations like health clubs. Part of the effort began when Alix Olson and Martha Popp applied for a family membership in the YMCA

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**144. 1991** Writer John Champagne recalls growing up in **Greenfield**, Wisconsin in Hometowns: Gay Men Write About Where They Belong edited by John Preston. He recalls his youth. "I was told over and over again by my peers that my interests were unmanly. Whenever I achieved any academic recognition, I was called a fag. Whenever I played the piano for a school function, I was called a fag. Whenever I expressed my lack of interest in sports, I was called a fag." As he grew older he escaped to the gay bars of Milwaukee.

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**145. 1991** The Human Rights League (HRL) forms in **Milwaukee** "to advance the political interests of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and transgender people in the metropolitan Milwaukee area. In 1994 it resumed the Cream Brick Awards begun by the Cream City Business Association.

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**146. 1991** The Cream City Squares forms in **Milwaukee** and learns to square dane. They are members of the International Association of Square Dance Clubs. One of their members attended the Gay Callers Association Caller School in Chicago. Sometimes they perform in conjunction with gay rodeo events.

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**147. 1991** The UW-**Madison** admits gay and lesbian couples to grad housing. “The traditional family form is not dominant anymore.” said Hamilton McCubbin, Dean of the School of Family Resources and Consumer Sciences.

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**148. 1992** the Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Alumni Council at UW-Madison is established and becomes affiliated with the Wisconsin Alumni Association in 1994. The Council will establish scholarships for LGBT students.

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**149. 1992** Tammy Baldwin, **Madison**, is elected to the Wisconsin Assembly as the first out lesbian member of that body.

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**150. 1993** Dairyland Cowboys and Cowgirls forms in **Madison**. Hosting country dances with two-step, line, swing, folk, and square dancing, the organization has also sponsored barn dances.

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**151. 1993** The Human Rights League formed in **Milwaukee** to advance the political interests of LGBT members in the Milwaukee metropolitan area. The group surveyed candidates on LGBT issues and endorsed them for elections. They developed sensitivity training materials for new recruits to the Milwaukee Police Department and took over the Cream City Brick Awards in 1994. Dissolved in 1999.

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**152. 1993 - SAGE/Milwaukee** (Senior Action in a Gay Environment) is organized to advance quality of life for seniors who are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender.

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**153. 1994** Two Teenagers in Twenty: Writings by Gay and Lesbian Youth, Ann Heron editor, is published. Among the writers are Rachel Corbett, 16, of **Madison** and Jennifer Hanrahan, 18, **Milwaukee**.

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**154. 1994** Congressman Steve Gunderson, **Eau Claire**, is outed during a debate on the floor of the House of Representatives by a conservative Republican colleague who accused him of having “a revolving door on his closet. He’s in, he’s out, he’s in. I guess you’re out, because you went up and spoke to a huge homosexual dinner, Mr. Gunderson.” Gunderson, subsequently profiled as a gay man in the New York Times Sunday Magazine, went on to win re-election to Congress representing rural western Wisconsin. Source: House and Home: the Political and personal Journey of a Gay Republican Congressman and the Man With Whom He Created a Family by Steve Gunderson and Rob Morris with Bruce Bawer

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**155. 1994** A couple composed of a gay man and a lesbian lead the homecoming parade at UW-**Stevens Point**. Chancellor Keith Sanders says “I think it’s a compliment to the students who elected the homecoming king and queen. They did not discriminate on the basis of sexual preference.”

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**156. 1994** A gay cruising area in Turville Woods in **Madison** becomes the focus of a police cleanup effort.

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**157. 1994** Action Wisconsin, a statewide organization to promote LGBT civil rights, is founded in **Madison** as a result of Tammy Baldwin’s and other activists’ vision. In March 2006, Action Wisconsin with LGBT Center Advocates of Greater Milwaukee launched Fair Wisconsin as the political campaign that fought the constitutional amendment banning marriage and civil unions for gay couples, appearing on the November 2006 ballot. Following the election, Action Wisconsin and the Action Wisconsin Education Fund (formed in 2002) officially changed their names to Fair Wisconsin and Fair Wisconsin

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Education Fund. Today, Fair Wisconsin is the statewide organization dedicated to advancing and protecting the civil rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people.

**158. 1995** *Where Darkness Sleeps*, a debut mystery novel by Brian Rieselmann of **Madison** is published. The novel is set in part in a tiny fictional Blackburn County, Wisconsin, which the chief character contrasts with a different life in heady San Francisco.

**159. 1995** **Madison**'s "Isthmus" newspaper does a cover story titled "It's A Wonderful Life: Gays and Lesbians find Madison a good place to settle down." on the acceptance of the gay community in Madison. Featured on the cover are registered domestic partners Denise Matyka and Margaret McMurray, both long time gay and women community activists. The story notes Madison was one of 133 cities listed in "Great Gay and Lesbian Places to Live," a guide to gay friendly and gay supportive locales.

**160. 1995** The Wisconsin Supreme Court by a 4-3 decision permits the ex-partner of a lesbian couple to have visitation rights to the child the two were raising together for six years before their relationship ended. It was the first such ruling in the country. Justice Shirley Abrahamson wrote the majority opinion noting "The proceedings must focus on the child... When a non-traditional adult relationship is dissolving; the child is as likely to become a victim of turmoil and adult hostility as is a child subject to the dissolution of a marriage.

**161. 1995** *Diverse and Resilient* was founded by Gary Hollander in **Milwaukee**. The organization has played a major role in addressing high risk behavior in sexual minority adults and youth statewide. *Diverse and Resilient Youth* is a principle program of *Diverse and Resilient, Inc.*, with the mission of building capacity in Wisconsin groups and communities to assure the healthy development of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) youth. *Diverse and Resilient* serves as a catalyst to help LGBT youth groups get started, and continue to thrive, by providing mini-grants, consultations, adult and youth leadership training, and leadership coaching. Further, *Diverse and Resilient* provides resources for program evaluation, policy development, and program alignment with a broad health and development agenda fostered by the development of a network of LGBT youth organizations in Wisconsin known as the Youth, (RAY groups). *Diverse and Resilient* has supported RAY groups in La Crosse, Madison, Milwaukee, Appleton, Green Bay, Eau Claire and Wausau.

**162. 1996** Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs) began to emerge in the **Madison area**. GSAs are after school clubs that provide a safe space for students to discuss gender identity and sexual orientation. GSAs are more than support groups because they often are educational resources on LGBTQ issues and school safety for entire school communities. In 2008, there were approximately 90 GSAs in Wisconsin and they have formed a movement on the high school level in the state.

**163. 1996** Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network of South Central Wisconsin (GLSEN-SCW) forms. Founding members included former members of GLEE and GLADE and others who were inspired by a national GLSEN conference as well as by stories about the intense struggles and courage of sexual minority youth such as Jamie Nabozny (see #165). The founding executive committee was comprised of Larry Palm, Martha Popp, and Vicki Shaffer. The mission to make schools safer for sexual minority students and their allies focused on middle and high school levels, but also with attention given to elementary school. Crystal Hyslop and Janice Czynson of GLSEN-SCW were instrumental in bringing the movie "It's Elementary" to Madison. In 2006, the organization became an independent 501 (c) 3 with a new name, Gay Straight Alliance for Safe Schools (GSAFE). Today, GSAFE continues to organize statewide GSA conferences and Leadership Training Institutes and directly supports GSAs in South-

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Central Wisconsin. GSAFE also provides trainings for school professionals on LGBTQ issues and school safety statewide often in conjunction with the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

**164. 1996** The Hotel Washington complex burns in **Madison**. The popular institution had several bars frequented by the gay community and had been built up by Rodney Scheel. The cause was determined to have been an ashtray emptied into a trash basket.

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**165. 1996** Jamie Nabozny accepts a settlement of \$900,000 in a federal case the day after a jury found that three school officials violated his rights when they did not protect him from anti-gay harassment. The case marked the first time school officials were held liable for anti-gay violence. Nabozny was a student in **Ashland** Middle and High School from 1988 until 1993. He was beaten up, subjected to a mock rape, and kicked in the belly enough to require surgery because others thought him “girlish.” The Lambda Legal Rights and Education Fund represented him in the matter. The case had gone to the 7<sup>th</sup> U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals that overturned a district court ruling there was not enough evidence for the civil suit. Nabozny gets to tell his story to the U.S. House of Representatives Economic and Employment Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations.

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**166. 1996** In **Superior** a fire kills two male tenants who lived above the Main Club, the community’s gay and lesbian bar. The bar had a solid fire and building inspection record for four decades. Authorities did not rule out a hate crime.

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**167. 1996** Raphael Kadushin publishes a column in **Madison**’s “Isthmus,” titled “No place at the table: Condemned as an immoral choice being gay means a circumscribed life” Even for those in a privileged community he notes, “Hatred this pervasive touches every queer life every minute of every day, in personal and relentless ways.” Kadushin, an editor at the UW Press, is instrumental in the publishing of any number of gay books.

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**168. 1996** Hawthorne Elementary School parents in **Madison** agree to have a photo exhibit on gay and lesbian families displayed in the school library. The exhibit “Love Makes a Family: Living in Gay and Lesbian Families” was controversial. “We believe it is educationally sound and supports our... goals of prejudice reduction and inclusion,” said a letter by Hawthorne teachers to the parents.

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**169. 1996** Democratic Representative Tim Carpenter’s sexual orientation is raised as an election issue by an anti-gay group in leaflets they distribute in his **Milwaukee** district. Republican Assembly Majority Leader Scott Jensen, among others, respond to the group. The issue is the sort of thing that turns people off of politics, Jensen noted. “Criticism should always be addressed at policies, never at people making them...” said John Huebscher, executive director of the Wisconsin Catholic Conference.

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**170. 1996** Farm Boys: Lives of Gay Men from the Rural Midwest by Will Fellows is published by the UW Press and chronicles many stories from rural Wisconsin.

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**171. 1996** A **Middleton-Cross Plains** School District committee decides not to ban high school readings on homosexuality despite some parents’ complaints.

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**172. 1997** **Madison** Teachers Inc. ratifies a new contract that provides health benefits to domestic partners of both same-sex and opposite-sex couples.

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**173. 1997** A Domestic Partnership Task Force in **Milwaukee** composed of the Human Rights League, LAMM, and the Riverwest Rainbow Association seeks a city registry for domestic partnerships and benefits for partners of city employees.

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**174. 1997** Dane County Judge George Northrup, dying from abdominal cancer, describes his life in an interview and talks about being out in the law enforcement milieu. Well known within the gay community and bringing his partner to social functions in the law enforcement community, Northrup was open about his life without a formal declaration. He served on judicial task forces on courts and AIDS issues.

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**175. 1997** In Wausau the Assembly Committee on Children and Families holds a hearing on a bill to prohibit same-sex marriage. Over 500 attend. The bill’s author is Rep. Lorraine Seratti, R-Spread Eagle.

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**176. 1998** Mazomanie’s nude beach is targeted by the DNR for a crackdown due to reports of cruising and open intimate behavior.

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**177. 1998** Gays, Lesbians, and Allies for Diversity in Education (GLADE) of Madison produce a brochure on how teachers in Wisconsin can stop harassment of students based on sexual orientation. Safe Zone stickers featuring a pink triangle logo are also provided so LGBTQ students will know a teacher or staff is willing to help them.

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**178. 1998** The Green Bay Packers organization does not approve of Packer Reggie White appearing in anti-gay ads in his team uniform. They write to make clear this is not authorized and offer apologies to the gay community.

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**179. 1998** The City of Madison in face of a number of hate actions towards gays adopts a City of Tolerance resolution. Openly gay alder Mike Verveer noted the packed chambers with community members observes, “This is probably the first time we’ve been in the majority here.”

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**180. 1998** The Milwaukee LGBT Community Center was founded. The Milwaukee LGBT Community Center is a community-based organization represented by more than 150 volunteers and over 300 members. Its mission is to improve the quality of life for LGBT people in the Metro Milwaukee area. The RAY Group, Project Q, has been a thriving program of the center since 1999.

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**181. 1998** OutReach, Madison’s LGBTQ Community Center formed out of a long history of activism and support for sexual minority people through other names, including The United. The United was formed in 1978 as a political action organization to defend the city of Madison's non-discrimination ordinance against the anti-LGB campaign led nationally by singer Anita Bryant and locally by an evangelical minister. After that threat passed, The United identified new battles and issues. After working collaboratively for nearly 15 years, the two organizations merged into a new agency called OutReach, Inc., on July 1, 1998. Today, one of the emphases of the organization is to address high risk behavior of sexual minority people. Its mission is to promote equality and quality of life for LGBT people.

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**182. 1998** The election of Tammy Baldwin to the U.S. House of Representative represents the first time an openly gay or lesbian person is out before they are elected to Congress. She represents the Second Congressional District which includes Columbia, Dane, Green, and Rock Counties as well as parts of Sauk and Jefferson Counties. “Isthmus” editor Marc Eisen in an opinion piece had noted early in the campaign, “Reality is that being gay will hurt Baldwin district-wide. Some of it is homophobia, but most of it is probably ignorance, Gays and lesbians who are out are still exotic for many people.” But he thought her “mixture of unapologetic progressivism and roll-up-her-sleeves pragmatism” could be appealing.

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**183. 1998** Lesbian Step Families: An Ethnography of Love by Janet Wright, Social Work professor, UW-**Whitewater**, is published.

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**PART 4: NEW 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY - HISTORY NOW BEING MADE (1998-2008)**

2000s

**184. 2001** **Madison** Metropolitan School District created the first Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Resource Specialist position to address the needs of LGBTQ students and educate school professionals about sexual minority student issues in the district. Bonnie Augusta was the first LGBT Resource Specialist Teacher for MMSD.

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**185. 2001** LGBT Center Advocates was founded to improve the lives of lesbians, gays, bisexuals, and transgender people in the Greater **Milwaukee** community by advocating for the equal treatment of all people. The group seeks to educate, empower and energize its members and the broader community in order to create effective public policy of LGBT and related issues. is a community-based organization represented by more than 150 volunteers and over 300 members. The center helped to form the Fair Wisconsin Campaign in 2006.

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**186. 2003** **Middleton/Cross Plains** School District became one of the first Wisconsin school districts to add gender identity to its discrimination policy as a direct result of student action.

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**187. 2004** A Passion to Preserve: Gay Men as Keepers of Culture by Will Fellows, is published by Wisconsin Press.

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**188. 2005** Alliance High School founded to create a safe place for LGBTQ students and other students seeking a safe school environment in **Milwaukee**. Tina Owen and other teachers interested in teaching at Alliance High School founded the school. In September, 2008, approximately 77% of the student population was LGBTQ.

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**189. 2006** Despite the tremendous efforts of Fair Wisconsin and other groups throughout the state to fight an amendment to the state constitution to ban same-sex marriage, the amendment passed, writing bias into state legislation. The amendment reads, "Only a marriage between one man and one woman shall be valid or recognized as a marriage in this state. A legal status identical or substantially similar to that of marriage for unmarried individuals shall not be valid or recognized in this state."

G -

**190. 2007** "Shall Not Be Recognized," a photo exhibition created by Jeff Percy and Will Fellows, is offered as a traveling exhibition statewide. The exhibition was inspired by the battle surrounding legal recognition of same-sex marriages and civil unions. The photographs celebrate the relationships of same sex couples and their families.

I +

**191. 2008** UW-**Madison** hired the first openly lesbian chancellor, Biddy (Carolyn A.) Martin, in the Wisconsin university system.

O +

**192. 2008** **Dane County** Board creates a countywide domestic partner registry and requires that county contractors offer the same health and other benefits to domestic partners of their employees as they offer to spouses

G +

## Comments from GSAFE

This Wisconsin LGBT history does include a handful of bars. Gay and lesbian bars make up a concrete part of LGBT history and often provided the only centers for socializing among sexual minority people, many of whom have been closeted. Please notice that in more recent years, LGBT organizations that address high risk behavior of LGBT youth and adults have emerged. These organizations advocate for more data to be collected on high risk behavior of LGBT youth and adults and provide models for healthy living. The 2001 and 2007 Youth Risk Behavior Surveys administered by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction show correlations between high school students being harassed for being sexual minority and their participation in high risk behavior (the 2001 YRBS asked questions related to students being perceived as being gay, lesbian and bisexual).

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**Note:** All the items in Section 4 and a few items before that time were added by GSAFE staff and volunteer Mary Mullen.