

Dedicated to strengthening & preserving marriage, family, life & liberty in Wisconsin



Family News Connection

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APRIL 2009

One-Day
Training Event for
this Biblical
Worldview Study

Saturday, May 23
Elmbrook Church
in Brookfield

Register online at
thetruthproject.org or
by calling
1-800-A-FAMILY
(232-6459)

After June 1, WFC will
be able to do these one-
day events anywhere in
Wisconsin!

Call WFC toll-free at
888-378-7395
for more details!

"Do you really believe
that what you believe is
really real?"

☆☆☆☆☆☆

[Marriage] will produce
a home and family that
will contribute to good
society, to free and just
government, and to the
support of
Christianity.
~Texas Supreme Court
Grigsby v. Reib (1913)



Marriage on Trial...and in Trouble

On April 3, 2009, the high court in the heartland of America legalized "same-sex marriage" for the state of Iowa. The Iowa Supreme Court claimed the Defense of Marriage Act, passed in 1998 by a solid legislative majority with support from the citizens, violated the Iowa Equal Protection clause in the constitution.

Days later on April 7, in a stunning veto override vote, the Vermont state legislature summarily changed the meaning of marriage in Vermont to include two persons of the same sex. It's the first time a legislature has voted to legalize "same-sex marriage."

On the same day, Wisconsin voted on a 10-year term for a State Supreme Court justice. Two days later, on April 9, a Wisconsin Court of Appeals declined to rule on a challenge to Wisconsin's Marriage Amendment, referring the case to the State Supreme Court.

Coincidence? We may never know; but we can't ignore the national and state events surrounding the Appeals Court's move.

On November 4, 2006, the people of Wisconsin ratified our Marriage Amendment by a 59% to 41% majority. In 2007 Bill McConkey challenged the amendment in court on the single-subject rule in Article XII, Section 1 of our state Constitution.

McConkey claimed the amendment dealt with two issues, not one, as required by the state Constitution.

On May 30, 2008, Dane County Circuit

Court Judge Richard Niess ruled that the amendment does not violate the single-subject provision, accurately noting that the single purpose of the amendment was/is, "the preservation of the unique and historical status of marriage."

McConkey appealed the Circuit Court decision in July of 2008 and both sides submitted their briefs to the 4th District Court of Appeals by the end of January 2009. Working with Alliance Defense Fund, Wisconsin Family Council filed an amicus brief in support of the trial

court's ruling. On March 6th the Court of Appeals declared they would decide the case based on the briefs, without oral arguments.

On April 9, claiming that the case presents "several novel issues" and constitutes a matter of "significant public interest with statewide implications," a panel of three Court of Appeals judges referred *McConkey v. Van Hollen* to the Wisconsin Supreme Court.

Now the State Supreme Court, with newly re-elected Chief Justice Abrahamson at the helm, will determine first whether or not to take the case; and if it does, whether the court will uphold the law of the land as determined by the people of Wisconsin on November 4, 2006, or overrule the expressed will of the people.

If at any point the State Supreme Court strikes the amendment from the constitution, Wisconsin will have absolutely no Defense of Marriage Act language to protect this foundational societal institution from the will and whim of the state legislature and the courts.



The Case for Marriage—Part I ~ Eric Skelton, Director of Marriage & Family Ministries

In their excellent book *The Case for Marriage*, Linda J. Waite and Maggie Gallagher pull together literally hundreds of studies, surveys and polls looking at the impact marriage has on the main facets of our lives. They look at physical health, mental health, sexual pleasure, wealth, childrearing and more to determine if being married makes a measurable difference to the couple, their offspring and our society in general.

In the end, the evidence is overwhelming that marriage is unique in the benefits it offers all stakeholders. "Ideas and ideals are powerful forces....Our ideas about divorce are really only the flip side of ideals about marriage....[The reasons for divorce help to] define what the marriage commitment is." *The Case*

for Marriage, p. 182

In many ways the authors point out that marriage is in trouble today because "Americans have invested less moral, spiritual, cultural, political, and legal energy into supporting the marriage vow." Mike McManus of Marriage Savers and others note that while marriages are the foundation of a church and provide the greatest amount of resources, most churches lack any marriage ministry aimed at strengthening, reconstructing and reconciling marriages.

My pastor was at a conference a number of years ago where the presenter asked the several thousand participants if they had youth ministries. "Nearly all the hands went up in the room," my pastor recounted. "Then he asked how many had

someone in charge of the facility and then how many had someone in charge of the finances. Many hands kept going up. Finally, he asked how many had identified a person in marriage ministry. Out of the thousands of pastors gathered, only a handful of hands were raised," my pastor said in disappointment.

Since 86% of all marriages are performed in a church, marriage is in trouble largely because we as the body of Christ have failed to serve it. We have failed to see it as strategic to accomplishing our mission. We can and should change that.

In order to begin making that change, we need to first understand and internalize (*continued, bottom of page 2*)

We Built It; They Came! ~ Musings by Julaine K. Appling, CEO

Did You Know...

...WFC just released our new 2009-2010 Legislative Directory?

Stay connected with your elected officials!

Call WFC at 888-378-7395 for a copy or visit wifamilycouncil.org/publications.htm

...WFC is on Facebook?

Keep updated on events and connect with WFC and our "friends!"

Search for "Wisconsin Family Council" on Facebook

...Our Central Wisconsin Branch is on Facebook?

Search for "WI Family Council—Central Wisconsin Branch"



Wisconsin National Day of Prayer Events
Thursday
May 7, 2009

24-hour webcast
Appleton
Brodhead
Burlington
Cedarburg
Clear Lake
Dodgeville
Green Bay
Ladysmith

Walworth County
Madison (WFC CEO, speaker)
Menomonie
Milwaukee
Mineral Point
Monroe
Muskego
Oak Creek
Oconomowoc
Oshkosh
Plymouth
Racine
Richland Center
Sheboygan
South Milwaukee
Wautoma

(Complete list on wifamilycouncil.org)

"If you build the field, they will come," or so say the baseball movie makers! Personally, that idea always scares me. What happens if I "build" something and no one comes? It's the old risk/benefit idea. Well, in a sense, WFC took the risk and built a "field" recently, hoping "they" would come—and "they" did!

On Tuesday, March 31, over 130 Wisconsin citizens joined WFC for our first-ever "Day at the Capitol." In fact, we were "sold out" with standing-room only! We had families, couples and solo individuals come to Madison and spend the day connecting with their



elected officials, each other, and WFC staff.

We started the day with tours of the capitol. This wasn't your normal "brick and mortar" tour. Our tour focused on the process of governing and the references to religion, faith, Christianity, and the Bible in the building itself.

We then met in the Assembly Parlor for a time of prayer, and we also heard from several state senators and representatives about some of the important issues confronting them.

Then our guests visited their own officials, after which we met for lunch at the Inn on the Park in a

room that offered a breathtaking view of the capitol and downtown Madison. During lunch we got updates from various WFC personnel and representatives from Supreme Court and State Superintendent of Public Instruction campaigns.

According to the feedback we have received, the people enjoyed the day and appreciated the opportunity to connect with those who represent them, with us, and with other like-minded Wisconsin citizens. I'm glad we risked it and built this field—and I'm ecstatic people came and enjoyed the game.

We're planning on a repeat performance in two years—and we hope you'll join us then!

Spring Election 2009 Wrap-Up

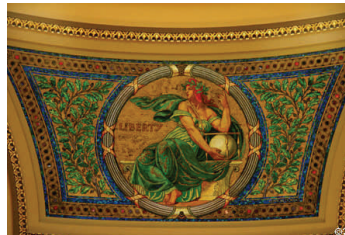
April 7th's election was a profound commentary on the power of donors and voters in low profile elections. Only two statewide races were on the ballot this spring: a 10-year State Supreme Court term and a 4-year Superintendent of Public Instruction term.

On April 7th, Chief Justice Shirley Abrahamson held her seat against challenger Judge Randy Koschnick with a 60% to 40% victory, and Deputy Superintendent Tony Evers overcame his tenacious opponent, Rose Fernandez, 57% to 43%.

At the time of publication, there is no official report, but it appears we at least achieved our typical 20% voter-turnout for spring elections. Both the Supreme Court and Superintendent races were intense, although decidedly low profile. After a high-profile, highly controversial 2008 Supreme Court race, the disparity in funding between the 2009 candidates is worth noting.

In the weeks before the election, Abrahamson outspent

Koschnick 19-to-1. Abrahamson received over \$98,000 from Political Action Committees (PACs), compared to Koschnick's \$300.



"Liberty" guarding the ballot box—mosaic in WI Capitol Rotunda

Abrahamson, who has 30 years of campaign experience, raised over \$1.3 million. Koschnick raised about \$124,000. Assuming both candidates spent everything they raised, Abrahamson spent roughly \$2.75 per vote to Koschnick's \$.39 per vote.

It's a similar story in the Superintendent race. Tony Evers received over \$97,000 in PAC contributions, while Rose Fernandez received about \$4,650 from PACs. Evers raised over \$200,000, while Fernandez raised about \$78,000. Roughly speak-

ing, Evers spent about \$.42 per vote to Fernandez's \$.24 per vote.

Abrahamson and Evers received the bulk of the special interest spending, though little has been said about that compared to the outrage over special interest spending last year. Notable outside spending included over \$15,000 from Planned Parenthood's PAC for Abrahamson and Evers and \$700,000 from WEAC for Evers.

We can only conclude that those who had a stake/interest in the outcome of these two races backed up that interest with money.

The individuals, interest groups and PACs that cared about the balance of the Supreme Court and the leadership in the Department of Public Instruction dug into their apparently deep pockets and got their people elected. Koschnick and Fernandez, who ran intense, passionate races on shoestring budgets, were left to foot the bill for two campaigns that, for one reason or another, did not receive the needed votes or the major fiscal support of conservative individuals, organizations and PACs.

The Case for Marriage—Part I (cont'd from p. 1)

the case for marriage. Do you really, in your heart of hearts, believe that marriage is the best alternative compared to all other male/female relationships?

If you have to say no, take heart. I wasn't always completely convinced either, and more importantly I didn't have solid rationale to confront an anti-family, anti-marriage

culture. In the next few articles I hope to arm you with the evidence that supports the truths of Scripture as they relate to God creating the institution of marriage.