




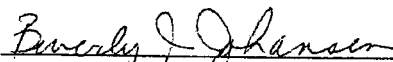
4. I previously worked as a public health nurse. Now, I work full time at a natural food store that Jayne and I own with another couple. The store opened in 2008, and all profits go back into maintaining and building the business. I am largely dependent on Jayne's income as an employee of the WI Department of Corrections.
5. Jayne and I jointly own our farm, where we also live. We are both named on the deed, the mortgage and the mortgage note. We also jointly own two cars, one farm truck, and bank accounts.
6. My mother, who lives alone in an apartment in Platteville, has chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. We anticipate that as she ages we will need to take a more active role in her life, which may require Family Medical Leave time for Jayne.
7. Jayne and I have each prepared Power of Attorney for Health Care documents, and we each appointed the other as our health care decision-maker. We also have wills naming one another as primary beneficiaries. The inheritance rights in the Domestic Partnership law will guarantee that, even if our wills are challenged, our wishes to protect one another in the event of death will still be carried out. Even if my will is not challenged, I understand Jayne has additional rights in the probate process, such as her ability to seek temporary support during the estate administration process, because of the fact that we are domestic partners.
8. In 2007, I had a head injury while working on the farm. Jayne called 911 and followed the ambulance to the hospital. I remained conscious and able to communicate with hospital staff; but Jayne was able to help answer questions and provide insurance information. Although we did not have problems with visitation or need to invoke Jayne's power of attorney, the visit made us realize our vulnerability and how important health care visitation and decision-making rights are to us. Although other family members are caring and supportive of us, we know one another's wishes better than anyone else.
9. Jayne is the person who knows me best, including my health history, medical conditions, and views about end-of-life decisions. If for some reason my power of attorney were to be unavailable to Jayne or a medical provider were to refuse to follow it, the legal protections to us as domestic partners make me feel safer. For example, I understand that Jayne could consent to my admission to a hospice for end-of-life care and could agree to my transfer from a hospital to a nursing home or community-based residential facility. Having consented to my admission to one of these facilities, Jayne would be able to make medical decisions for me during my stay there. Since there is no one in my family better suited to make those decisions, these protections are very important to me.

10. When Jayne and I learned of the enactment of Wisconsin's Domestic Partner law, we planned to register. At first, we viewed registration as a formality, a matter of doing the paperwork to secure the limited but important rights and benefits under the law. But as we went through the process, it took on greater importance. For what seemed like the first time, a government bureaucracy was helping protect our relationship, rather than making our lives more complicated and difficult. The county employees were working hard to get the process done right. We realized that Wisconsin has come a long way after all.
11. Domestic Partnership recognition, however important as a step toward equality, is a far cry from marriage recognition. The limited tangible rights and benefits of partnership, while helpful in our lives, represent only a small fraction of the rights and benefits of married couples.
12. Beyond the obvious differences in tangible rights and benefits between marriage and domestic partnerships, the recognition of our domestic partnership carries a different meaning for us, our family, our friends and our community than a marriage would. Unlike civil marriage, which has a long history, domestic partnerships are the result of recent legislation that seems vulnerable to repeal at the whim of the legislature. Similarly, while marriage is recognized everywhere, a Wisconsin domestic partnership will carry no weight in other states. And while our friends and family are happy that we have the additional protections that come with the registry and were invited to a party to celebrate, they do not view partnership recognition as equivalent to marriage recognition and no-one will mistake our party for a wedding. Although the registry represents a step toward government acknowledgement and protection of our relationship, it does not constitute the sort of external governmental and societal affirmation of equality and worthiness that marriage would provide.

Dated September 29, 2010.

  
Robin Timm

Subscribed and sworn to before me  
This 29th day of September \_\_\_\_, 2010.

  
Notary Public, State of Wisconsin  
My commission expires: is permanent

