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# ◆ The TAX TIMES ◆

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Volume 13, Issue 4

February, 1998

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## County Board Candidates Respond to Sales Tax Pledge.

The Brown County Taxpayers Association has gone on record as opposing the .5% County Sales Tax. Although 48 Wisconsin Counties have imposed this tax to date, most of those in this area have not. (See related article on page 3 of this *TAX TIMES*.) With the Brown County Board of Supervisors up for election this year, we wrote all of the announced candidates and asked the following question.

### Sales Tax Opposition Pledge:

**“As a candidate for the Brown County Board of Supervisors in the April 1998 election, I declare my opposition to the county option sales tax. I pledge to the citizens that I will oppose any attempt to enact the county sales tax.”**

The following candidates signed and returned the pledge:

Larry Adams (Dist. 1)	Dan Jansen (Dist. 16)
Don Baenen (Dist. 1)	Dean Reich (Dist. 16)
Mary Ann Peterson (Dist. 4)	Bill Clancy (Dist. 17)
James Schmitt (Dist. 4)	Alice Daul (Dist. 17)
Jack Krueger (Dist. 5)	Robert Rowe (Dist. 19)
Gary VandenBush (Dist. 5)	Robert Wilmet (Dist. 19)
Dan Haefs (Dist. 6)	Pat Moynihan (Dist. 20)
David Hansen (Dist. 7)	Ken Simons (Dist. 22)
Harold Kaye (Dist. 8)	Steve Lasee (Dist. 23)
Tim Mangless (Dist. 8)	Henry Luxem (Dist. 23)
Hans Regnier (Dist. 8)	Carole Maxwell (Dist. 24)
Guy Zima (Dist. 9)	Richard Meeuwssen (Dist. 24)
Merlin VandenPlas (Dist. 13)	

John Withbroe (Dist. 9), Pat Collins (Dist. 15), Robert Dennis (Dist. 15), and two unidentified candidates did not commit to the pledge, but indicated they would support a referendum giving the public the right to vote on this issue.

We regret that we did not receive responses from candidates in Districts #2, #3, #10, #11, #12, #14, #18, and #21, and unfortunately cannot report their position. *IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU QUESTION CANDIDATES FOR THE BROWN COUNTY BOARD AND KNOW WHERE THEY STAND ON THIS IMPORTANT ISSUE.* We congratulate all the candidates who have committed themselves to representing their districts and thank those who responded to our questionnaire.

*Brown County Taxpayers Association*

## County Board Candidates Give Views on Other Issues.

In addition to the sales tax pledge, we asked candidates the following:

**#1 - Would you favor county guaranteed bonding to finance the arena and convention center?** Of the respondents, 74% said No., while 26% would favor it.

**#2 - Would you favor giving the public the right to vote on bonding to finance the arena and convention center?** 96% said Yes, while only 4% said No.

**#3 - Would you favor giving the public the right to vote on a county sales tax if the county board decided they needed it for additional spending?** Again, 96% said yes, while only 4% said No.

**#4 - It has been determined that delays in building a new jail are costing taxpayers dollars. Do you favor proceeding as quickly as possible in building a new jail?** 89% of the respondents agreed that we should proceed as soon as possible.

**#4A - If yes, where would you propose building a new jail, and what steps would you take to proceed as soon as possible?** Interestingly enough, 76% of those responding to our questionnaire said they thought the jail should be built at the Brown County Mental Health Center site. Several of the candidates made mention of possible savings available by sharing services between the proposed jail and the mental health center.

(More on next page)

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**The BROWN COUNTY TAXPAYERS ASSOCIATION**

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## County Board Candidates Speak Out On Issues.

In addition to the specific questions of the candidates, we asked them to address other pressing county issues of their choice. Some of the comments we received are as follows:

*"We must change our philosophy of how we do business. We need to adapt a plan of preventing a problem from occurring in the first place. It's cheaper for a community to provide activities for "at risk" youth than to arrest and jail them for a crime."*

*"Other pressing county issues - The \$44 million county debt."*

*"Start planning for future mental health hospital problems, i.e., New construction, updating, more patients, or perhaps sub-contracting with local hospitals."*

*"SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS . . . have no place in local government elections."*

*"Cap on spending of county services and hiring of new personnel."*

*"To promote a more professional attitude within the county board."*

*"I feel the county needs to seek proposals to find a way to build an arena/convention center principally using user fees/not through taxes."*

*"Mental health center - rebuild or privatize. Studies and proposals will upcoming and must be objectively analyzed to give taxpayers and those served, the best bang for the buck."*

*"The jail should be located where it will not cause excessive cost, for acquisition or transportation to and from and it should not be located in a neighborhood. "*

*"Other pressing issues - Reduction of the over \$44million county debt. Resolution of a suitable site for the county landfill. Gang related crime & gang influence."*

*"Unfunded and under funded state mandates and the limits of state aid to local units of government. Implement a 911 communication system for all of Brown County."*

*"The only real issues are a jail, county sales tax, and the arena."*

*"There is little if any proof that a 1/2% sales tax does any good. History proves it does nothing but increase both spending and debt. I could never support such a tax."*

*"Some people believe that delays are costing the county great*

*deals of money. At the same time forget that if we housed our out of county prisoners in Brown County it still would have cost. Keep in mind that the jail proposed by our past Sheriff would cost the taxpayers as much as \$114 per day per bed. At that price spending \$55 to \$60 dollars a day our of county is cheap. . . Building the proper jail is the true issue here."*

*"I feel the county needs to seek proposals to find a way to build an Arena/Convention Center principally using user fees - not through taxes. Management of these facilities should be through open bidding giving the county a share of gross - not net receipts."*

*"When the issue of a County Sales Tax was soundly defeated in a 1992 referendum, I guess some people didn't get the message. Also, by referendum, Brown County voters said "NO" to using tax dollars to fund a new arena. I believe a new arena is possible if we focus our funding efforts on ticket user fees, naming rights, dollars from UWGB for their share, etc. The special interest promoters have to realize that tax dollars are for services, and not for entertainment."*

*"A new initiative should be made that outside organizations requesting funds from the County be required to make certain disclosures of their affairs. It has been my observation that a lot of groups believe that the county has an endless source of money."*

*"While I like the allure of Las Vegas, the public does not want expanded gambling in our area."*

*"The county has legal and moral obligations to provide mental health services to its residents. . . . Much more open-minded study needs to be done on this issue before committing the taxpayers to a 20 to 30 year cost. . . . A real attempt should be made to contract for long term services from the private sector."*

*"I would favor a vote by the public on any additional taxation plans. I am not in favor of a county tax and I believe that we should always look to trim our budgets or modify current programs before asking for more. More money doesn't make for better government, better government makes more out of the money that it has."*

*"There are three areas we need to be concerned about in regard to a new jail. How much will it cost the average citizen of Brown County, will it work to the best interest of the Law Enforcement Officials, does it meet the needs of those prisoners being detained, in a humane, clean, cost efficient way?"*

It is obvious that there are a number of important issues facing the county board, now and after the election. It is important for you to know where the candidates representing your district stand and what they will do to represent you.

## County Sales Tax Does Not Reduce Property Taxes.

In 1994, the BCTA prepared a detailed study, in response to the threat of having a .5% county sales tax imposed in Brown County. Our primary conclusions were as follows:

#1 - The County Sales Tax does not reduce property taxes. (Property taxes remain as high or higher in counties with the sales tax as those without.)

#2 - The County Sales Tax Fuels Additional Spending. (Total taxes per capita are higher in counties with the sales tax than those without.)

#3 - The County Sales Tax Increases the Appetite for Debt. (Bonded indebtedness actually increases faster in counties with the sales tax than in those without.)

#4 - County "Effective" Tax Rates are Higher When the Sales Tax is imposed. (The sales tax is merely a substitute, and total taxes, sales plus property, are higher in counties with the sales tax.)

Although 4 years have passed since this study was made, we have seen little in current tax rates or comparisons to indicate that our findings would be any different if our study were done today.

For example, the Dec. 1997 issue of the "Wisconsin Taxpayer" printed the percentage of change in tax levies and property tax rates of all Wisconsin counties from 1996 to 1997.

The average tax levy for the 48 counties with sales tax increased 8.90% while the 24 counties without sales tax had a 6.44% increase. Brown County had a 7.8% increase compared with the overall state average of 7.2%.

The net tax rate (decrease) after application of the lottery tax credit was -.75% for the sales tax counties, and -1.72% for those without the tax. **JF**

## JUST HOW MUCH IS A PARK WORTH?

In the last issue of the Tax Times we shared information on the Baird Creek Parkway property. Since then the City Council has voted to approve purchase of this property. Prior to the vote, a letter was distributed to each member of the City Council requesting they insure due diligence be completed prior to entering into a purchase agreement. The City Council voted 8 to 2 to accept the negotiated price. We can thank Roger Vander Leest and Darlene Marcelle for supporting the taxpayer on this vote.

Here is information obtained to date. The land was purchased on speculation in April of 1993 at a cost of \$155,000. The listed fair market value on the property after the revaluation last year is \$84,400. An appraisal paid for by the city over a year ago indicated the property to be worth \$420,000. The city also received two additional appraisals completed by the seller and one indicated a price of about \$700,000 and the second one indicated a price of \$1,000,000. After negotiation the city agreed to pay \$1,000,000 for the property with the following breakdown, \$700,000 to be paid for a portion of the land, and a trade in property for the remainder. The value of the traded land is set at \$300,000. In addition, the city would change the proposed street layout to better fit the potential development and allow for delayed payment of improvements to the lots until they were sold. The bulk of this information was obtained in a discussion with the City Attorney who was very cooperative.

Does the city value all land well below its actual value? The fair market value for a piece of property being considered for a potential jail site, the corner of Ashland Ave. and Lombardi Ave. is \$716,200 after the reappraisal last year. The asking price on this property is \$1,800,000. That would seem in the realm of reasonableness to me that any final price would be within a factor of two from its listed fair market value. Looking up the price on the books for the University Ave. jail site took additional time. This property is a total of 15 parcels and each is still listed separately. The total valuation for the 15 parcels is \$818,900, not too far from the negotiated price of \$1,250,000 between the County and Procter & Gamble. The conclusion is that the city does value property at a reasonable level. A discussion with the City Assessor indicated that they just blew the estimate of the Baird Creek Parkway property. He also stated that the miss was due to the way they determine the value of undeveloped wooded areas. He indicated that the city will be making changes to similar properties in the near future. The Assessor was very helpful in the review of this matter.

On the surface it would appear that the city is very generous with the taxpayers money or not very good at negotiating for land purchases. On the question of due diligence, one could conclude that many of the necessary steps were taken and that the end point just doesn't make sense.

The Mayor contacted me prior to the City Council meeting on Jan. 20 and stated he would like to attend our next meeting. I concurred, and his plan is to attend our next meeting on Thursday, February 19, at the Days Inn downtown at noon. I hope to see many of you there.

*Frank Bennett*, President  
Brown County Taxpayers Association

**FROM OTHER TAXPAYER GROUPS:**

The following letter was sent by the Concerned Citizens of Fond du Lac County to the Wisconsin state Senate and Assembly Education Committee on Jan. 19, 1997.

**Re: Wisconsin Education**

We all seem to agree that our Educational System is in dire need of review and change.

What can a school do with the English teacher who can't spell, or the Science teacher who doesn't know a molecule from a mollusk? What about the disorganized teacher who can't compose a coherent lesson plan, or the listless one who can't capture kid's attention? Front-page cases about "tenure's power" to protect. As it stands, procedures for ridding schools of outdated or underprepared instructors are bogged down in a tangle of tenure protocol. The practice of granting tenure was once necessary to queried poorly paid teachers. Today, all American workers enjoy civil rights protection against arbitrary dismissal based on racial, gender, or religious discrimination. "TENURE HAS OUTLIVED IT'S USEFULNESS".

January 8, 1998 Milwaukee Journal. "Wisconsin ranks last nationally in ensuring it's teachers are prepared to bring those standards into the classroom." It also stated the study on public schools by Pew Charitable Trusts "Wisconsin has yet to develop a strong system to prepare and license teachers based on performance." Education Week gave Wisconsin a grade of D-minus in the category of "teachers who have the knowledge and skills to teach the higher standards" - - - down from C-last year. No other state received a lower score.

Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance, November 19, 1997. "Is Wisconsin training too many teachers? "Of 4,237 aspiring educators who completed teacher-education programs and sought jobs for the first time in 1996-97, 23% or 974, secured a public school position in their field. The success rate rises to 28%, or 1,213 when teachers with multiple licenses are included.

Report: Redbook's September 1997 arti-

cle about "incompetent, lazy, or even downright abusive" teachers protected by unions. "Undoubtedly, there are poor examples within the teaching ranks, and tenure reform is needed. One respondent, a parent of two-boys, thought that living in a nice community with high-taxes guaranteed good schools, but instead found teachers who were "burned out, played head games, yelled and put down students."

Our State Financed Institutions are the major sources of supply of the teachers oversupply? This raises the question:

- 1. - The U.W. System should reduce enrollments and/or to eliminate programs in certification where employment prospects are very poor.
- 2 - Continued softening of the market warrants further action by the 33 public and private colleges now training teachers.
- 3 - Last, but more important - - - Let's review the caliber of Professors at these colleges responsible.

Our children only have one life to lead. Let's make every effort to prepare them for their place and responsibility in the world.

**Paul W. Sylvester**  
Concerned Citizens of  
Fond du Lac County.

NOTE: The Brown County Taxpayers Association neither agrees or disagrees with the views expressed in the above, although there seems to be a consensus of opinion from all parties that there is room for improvement in our system of education. The question is, how to go about it. We do believe, however, that teachers should be qualified and earn their wages the same as any professional, with remuneration based on results. This is especially true considering that their wages are paid by the public.

"The American wage earner and the American housewife are a lot better economists than most economists care to admit. They know that a government big enough to give you everything you want is a government big enough to take from you everything you have."  
 . . . . .Gerald R. Ford  
 "The White House is the finest prison in the world."  
 . . . . .Harry S. Truman

**Mayor Jadin to attend February 19, BCTA Meeting.**

Green Bay Mayor Paul Jadin will attend the next BCTA meeting, scheduled for Thursday, February 19 at the DAYS INN - Downtown. We anticipate that he will discuss the plan for the city to purchase additional land for the Baird Creek Parkway, plus other current topics of interest.

Please plan on attending. Complete details are on the last page of this "TAX TIMES."

"If your mother is on the *Titanic* and the *Titanic* is sinking, the last thing on Earth you want to be preoccupied with is getting more passengers on the *Titanic*."  
 . . . . .Senator Phil Gramm,  
 (On proposed expansion of Medicare system.)  
 "My experience in government is that when things are non-controversial and beautifully coordinated, there is not much going on."  
 . . . . .John F. Kennedy

**New Resort Tax.**

Wisconsin's newest local sales tax, the premier resort area tax, has its first two takers. The communities that have already adopted the optional 0.5% sales tax on tourist-related businesses are the city of Bayfield and the village of Lake Delton. Both will begin collecting the tax, which was authorized in the 1997-99 state budget on April 1, 1998.

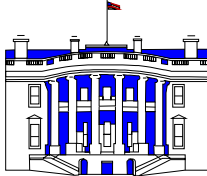
**State Keeps County Sales Taxes.**

In counties with the 0.5% sales tax, the state keeps 1.5% of the taxes collected for administrative purposes. The retailer, or the business person who is responsible for collecting the tax on his sales, only gets to keep .5% of the tax collected. He is also responsible for keeping complete records of his sales, sales tax exemptions claimed by category, and the taxable sales made to each county involved, which information has to be furnished the Dept. of Revenue by the 15th of the following month.

## New Year Rings in Higher Long Distance Fees. Thanks to Internet Access Plan for Schools. By Jim Moore

One of the goodies touted by the administration during their re-election bid was the idea to connect the nation's public schools to the Internet by the year 2000. On the surface, it sounds like a worthy and sound investment. Brilliant politically, too, as Mr. Gore could take credit for the accomplishment during his expected run for the presidency the same year.

It turns out that the plan is now underway - thanks to a provision in the Telecommunications Act of 1996 - and it's going to cost consumers of telecommunications services millions and millions of dollars over the coming years. The cost won't come directly, but indirectly in the way of recovery charges that companies like AT&T, MCI and others will be passing on to consumers.



The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has informed long distance companies that effective January 1, 1998, they must pay hundreds of millions of dollars of new contributions to an expanded Universal Service Fund. The USF will be the funding vehicle used to subsidize discounts for telecommunications services purchased by schools, libraries and rural health facilities - including internet access.

The Eau Claire school district is already in the race for high-tech Internet access with a \$1 million computer network project scheduled for completion by May of this year. Grant money from the USF will be used to help offset the costs, according to a source with the school district's information technology department.

Consumers will ultimately end up paying for these types of projects with higher usage charges, as long distance carriers seek to recover the millions of dollars they're being forced to pay by the FCC mandate. Congress and the FCC protected their political hides, choosing to not be so dumb as to require carriers to pass the cost along to consumers. Carriers, however, many struggling for revenue, will not eat the cost.

To date, carriers intend to apply a recovery fee of about 5% to consumers interstate and international long distance phone charges. That means a business averaging \$100 a month in interstate long distance charges will pay \$60 more this year to indirectly fund the program.

If you are stirred to phone your congressman to complain that this plan smells like yet another stealth tax-and-spend scheme, it is advisable to call when they're in your home district. Otherwise, expect to pay an extra 5% for your long distance phone call to their capitol office. It remains to be seen whether the nation's schools will be benefited.

## SURPLUS, SURPLUS — WHO GETS THE SURPLUS?

Grover Cleveland said in his second annual message (December, 1886) — “When more of the peoples sustenance is enacted through the form of taxation than is necessary to meet the just obligations of government and expenses of its economical administration, such exaction becomes ruthless extortion and a violation of the fundamental principles of a free government.”

Such is the tax environment in Wisconsin. Analysts have consistently reported that Wisconsin taxpayers rank near the top of tax and spend states in the nation. The time to reverse this infamous trend is long past due

Led by Frank Herzberg, the FWTO Executive Committee recently called on several legislators in Madison regarding the anticipated mounting surplus. Distributing the surplus appeared to confront the legislators with the perplexity of doing so in a fair and equitable manner.

Herzberg made a strong presentation to enact a meaningful income tax reduction. It was clearly pointed out that eventually this would ignite the means to **CUT** wasteful government spending. The FWTO presentation was well-received.

Our efforts now requires your support to add to the foundation that has been laid. Please advise and request your members to contact their legislators and ask for **TAX RELIEF NOW**. We can reverse this ignoble trend towards the cesspool of tyranny - - by teamwork now.

**The time is now - - don't waste it?**

**Don Kristopelt, President**  
Federation of Wisconsin Taxpayer Organizations

“The government's view of the economy could be summed up in a few short phrases: If it moves, tax it. If it keeps moving, regulate it. And if it stops moving, subsidize it.”

.... Ronald Reagan

“I can't make a damn thing out of this tax problem.”

.... Warren G. Harding

## Much to be Learned From State Budget.

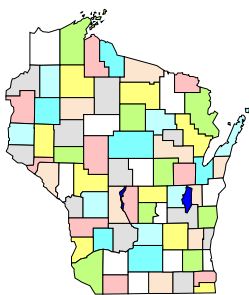
From "The Wisconsin Taxpayer"

**H**ow big is state government? Where does the money come from to run it, how is it used? Are we spending tax dollars the same way we did in years past? And are we budgeting and planning wisely for the future?

These are questions citizens, taxpayers and voters often ask. One of the best and easiest ways to get answers is to turn to the Wisconsin state budget.

At first glance, the budget is just a big bill filled with obscure statutory language and appropriations than run into the billions. But it is more. It is an outline, a plan, of what Wisconsin will do over the coming two years. It has many lessons to teach about how state government works and what the state's priorities are.

The 1997-99 budget is a case study. Proposed by the governor in February, 1997, it was changed and approved by the legislature's Joint Committee on Finance in early June. After a delay, the state senate and assembly passed it in late September. It became law with the Governor's signature in early October.



### Revenues

Press accounts of state budget deliberations can be confusing. Some news stories covering the 1997-99 state budget reported the state was going to collect more than \$38 billion (b) in revenues, while others cited a figure under \$20 billion.

Which was right? Actually, both. The larger figure reflects revenue from *all* sources over the two years ending mid-1999. The largest single source of income is \$19.74b in various state general purpose revenues (GPR) mostly taxes of the type which we are all familiar with.

Of the balance of the \$38.4 billion state

revenues, about \$8.65b comes from the U. S. government. An example is Medicaid contributions, which are over 60% federally funded.

Another \$4.7b comes from program revenue, or various fees and charges collected to run state programs. An example of this is UW system tuition charges.

About \$4.32b of state revenues comes from funds segregated or "earmarked" for special purposes. Motor vehicle fuel taxes and license fees are examples of these funds intended for special purposes such as highway construction.

In addition, the legislature also authorized \$1.03b of bonding for various purposes in the budget.

### Expenditures

During 1997-99, Wisconsin will spend with the exclusion of bonding \$37.40b. The four main areas of state expenditures are as follows:

The largest share, \$15.22b or 40.7% is for local assistance in the form of state aid to local governments, schools and technical colleges.

Aids to individuals is the second largest category, totaling \$8.99b in assistance to individuals and organizations. Medicaid and homestead property tax credits are included in this total. State Operations, or running state government accounts for another \$8.10b of the total while the 26-campus UW System accounts for \$4.87b or 13% of the total expenditures.

In addition to determining income and expenditures for the bi-ennium, this 2,472 page budget contains many policy changes effecting the operations of state government and other provisions which became law but may or may not be in the interests of taxpayers or Wisconsin citizens in general.

**For further information, contact the Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance, 335 W. Wilson St., Madison, WI 53703-3694 JF**

## January Meeting Notes.

**T**he directors again expressed concern that the million dollar parcel of land to be purchased for the Baird's Creek parkway by the City of Green Bay was assessed at less than \$85,000. The possibility that other parcels of land being held for development are similarly underassessed will be investigated.

No detailed financial plan for the arena and convention center project has been made public yet. With talk of construction to start soon, and no detailed financial plan made public, the BCTA is very concerned that the Brown County Board will be pressured to place the financial risk for these projects upon the taxpayers of Brown County. The importance of room tax revenues resulting from Indian casino gambling to the arena and convention center project appears to have increased dramatically since the directors were briefed on the projects' finances one year ago.

Also discussed was that a Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) district is being proposed in Ashwaubenon to finance infrastructure improvements necessary to support the new arena. This would be located in the area surrounding the arena. The question was raised that while TIF districts are usually intended to provide property tax revenues, the arena complex would be tax exempt.

The right of a county to site a jail could possibly receive a legal test before long. The question is whether the county seat's zoning overrides the county's right to site a jail.

The BCTA's sales tax opposition pledge has been prepared for mailing to county board candidates. With the appetite for local government spending, it is likely that a county sales tax will again be proposed. The BCTA will publish the candidates responses to this and other issues in the February "TAX TIMES."

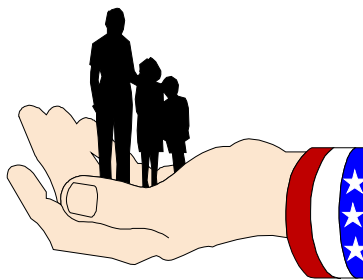
The next meeting of the BCTA is scheduled for February 19, 1998 at 12:00 Noon at the DAYS INN - Downtown.

**David Nelson - Secretary.**

*The last thing we need . . . . .*  
**More Federal Entitlements**

Despite growing awareness and consensus that federal entitlement programs are not yet under control and are the biggest contributor to our growing national debt, President Clinton is seeking more expansion of such programs. The President seeks to lower the age of eligibility for Medicare, and proposes sweeping expansions of federal subsidies for day care. Both proposals represent threats to taxpayers as they create more bureaucracy, a greater federal government role in people's lives, more dependency, and more government spending.

It's amazing, given the track record of Medicare, that anyone would advocate expanding the program. We've all read reports of fraud and mismanagement in the program, and Congress is forever debating ways to make Medicare solvent. Health care providers complain about insufficient reimbursement levels, and patient advocates rail against issues of quality and access. It's typical of most giant, federal-run social programs: nobody's satisfied, half the country's got their snout in the trough, and the burden on taxpayers just keeps "growing and growing and growing" like the Energizer bunny. The President claims the new enrollees will pay the cost of coverage through premiums. I don't believe him and neither should you. The program will attract the highest risk, most costly-to-insure people and there's no way Bill Clinton or anyone else can predict what it will cost to pay for their health care. Once they are on the program and the deficits begin, the President and the Congress will not have the political will to raise premiums, so they will raise taxes on everybody else. Anyone who doubts this scenario need only look back at previous federal government behavior.



As for day care, what makes that a federal issue? If accessibility and cost of day care represents a societal problem needing a solution it should be solved at the state and local levels. Federal involvement only guarantees additional costly bureaucracy and inequitable distribution of the funds (think Wisconsin's going to get our fair share of the dollars back?). The federal government screwed-up welfare for decades. Only when state and local control and influence was restored have we seen meaningful improvement in the abomination called AFDC. The President's proposed expansion of federal funding for day care is nothing more than a further march toward socialism.

Here's what to do. Call Congressmen Jan Johnson, Senator Herb Kohl and Russ Feingold and tell them you'll stand for no expansions of federal social programs. Tell them you want them to oppose any expansion of Medicare. Tell them there's no legitimate role for the federal government in day care. And tell them you'll be watching their votes on these matters (The **BCTA** will help you hold them accountable).

The phone numbers are listed below. Go to your phone now and let them know what taxpayers think.

- Congressman Jay Johnson (202) 225-5665  
(920) 430-1776 Green Bay Office
- Senator Russ Feingold (202) 224-5323
- Senator Herb Kohl (202) 224-5653

You can also call 1-800-522-6721, which is the toll free number to the U. S. Capitol and gives you access to **any** Congressman or Senator. **TOM SLADEK**

**Did you ever wonder?**

Why, if the state's economy is so good, with over \$300 million or so being projected as a surplus over budget, it was still necessary to raise taxes here and there. Examples are the 15 cent tax on a pack of cigarettes which is supposed to discourage smoking but none-the-less is projected to bring in \$108 million during the next two years, and the one cent per gallon gasoline tax increase. Other new sources of revenue include collecting additional sales taxes from catalog companies, repealing sales tax exemptions for certain interstate telecommunications services and specified telephone answering services and other small adjustments to the tax code with the net effect of increasing revenue sources. Where will the state go for money when times really get tough again?

We are fortunate to have had a mild winter so far. Will the municipalities manage to spend their snow removal budgets before it all melts or will they have money left over this year?

This will be an interesting year with the spring and fall elections providing plenty of opportunity for candidates to defend their records and/or tell the voters their intentions while in office. While it is difficult to conceive any candidate for public office running on a platform of tax increases, they are likely to have a lot of ideas that are going to cost you and me a lot of money. Don't be afraid to ask them just what motivates them to run for office, and what their agenda will be if elected. Is some special interest group likely to benefit from their election, or are they truly independent doing what they believe is best for the majority? **JF**

"Without economy none can be rich, and with it few will be poor."

. . . . .**Samuel Johnson**

**son**

"Legislators represent people, not trees or acres. Legislators are elected by the voters, not farms or cities or economic interests."

## BCTA Meeting & Events Schedule

**Thursday - February 19, 1998, DAYS INN - Downtown**  
**12:00 Noon - Monthly Business Meeting**  
Speaker - Green Bay Mayor Paul Jadin

**Tuesday - February 17, 1998, Primary Election Day**  
Be sure to vote if there is a primary in your district.

**Thursday - March 19, 1998, DAYS INN - Downtown**  
**12:00 Noon - Monthly Business Meeting**

**Thursday - April 16, 1998, DAYS INN - Downtown**  
**12:00 Noon - Monthly Business Meeting**

*Regular Business Meetings Scheduled the 3rd Thursday of each month.  
All members of the BCTA, their guests, and other interested persons  
are invited to attend and participate in these open meetings.  
Phone 499-0768 or 499-7373 for reservations.*

All meetings will be at the DAYS INN - Downtown (East Room)  
at 12:00 Noon. Price, \$6.50 per meeting (payable at door).

Includes hot buffet with all the trimmings.

## Support the BCTA

BCTA dues statements are sent on a cyclical basis determined by when you first became a member. Our dues structure has remained the same since we organized 13 years ago. \$12.00, (a dollar a month) for an individual, \$20.00 for a family membership, and \$25.00 for a business or corporate membership. We are strictly a volunteer organization, keeping our expenses at a minimum.

If you know of any individuals who may be interested in joining, please contact us at P. O. Box 684, Green Bay, WI 54305, or call Jim Frink at 336-6410.

Also, we are always seeking material for publication in the "TAX TIMES."

"You have the God-given right to kick the government around — don't hesitate to do so." . . . . . **Edmund Muske**

"When I was a boy I was told that anybody could become President; I'm beginning to believe." . . . . . **Clarence Dar-**

## The TAX TIMES

**Brown County Taxpayers Association**  
**P. O. Box 684**  
**Green Bay, WI 54305-0684**

**BULK RATE**  
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Green Bay, WI  
Permit No. 255

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