



## A New Era Begins

IT all began with Skype on my TV. Some news guy was touting some device, coming soon, that will ring your TV when you get a call on Skype, then relay the call to your 56" LCD, World Wide Web capable, 'telly'. For an instant I thought, 'How cool is that?' Having spent hours over the past couple years keeping up with my globetrotting kids, my wife and I peered into Skype from my desktop, on my laptop. We soon should be able to gaze from our Lazy-Boy chaise, hand firmly locked on my ergonomically designed remote. Holly-lou-yah! A dream come true!

Then I thought: What's next—"Mirror-Mirror on the Wall" that might enable you to take Skype from the com-mode? "She came in through the bathroom window"—a Beatle interlude plays in the background. And as I thought about all this cool personal technology driving our sputtering economy, Ipods, I-Pads, Androids and Blackberries, DVRs with Netflix— all taking us further away from each other, more into ourselves, to slouch on the couch turning into a grouch, surfing Drudge on my Droid from the throne.

Do we even remember why we got onto this tech bandwagon? Machines to eliminate human tech is not a job creator. Machines, computers, put people out of jobs and there is a disturbing fundamental disconnect between our obvious need for jobs and our utter, unstoppable reliance on a technology-driven economy, to overcome human sloth, to boldly produce faster and cheaper than we could by hand; . "In-a-gadda-da-vida, baby...."—play an Iron(ic) Butterfly interlude.

Then I saw the headline: Supreme Court endorses Walker's Law, but what does collective bargaining have to do with the budget? Wages and benefits, that's what; collective bargaining has driven those costs ever upward—and that's the fact, Jack! Walker's Law will hold them down, abate the upward spiral, so why did the GOP have to grimace and whisper this simple argument? They were, are, doing a good thing for all taxpayers, even those of us who may pay public worker union dues....or should we say, paid dues. Only now they have a choice, and after all, isn't that the 'Original Idea' - equality of opportunity, freedom to choose. More coin in ALL pockets.....NO class warfare here, Dems.

And how does WEAC respond? They are asking school districts to hand over teachers' email and street addresses so local union honchos can contact them, to extract bank account info, then setting up ACH bank draft forms to collect their due(s). How very capitalistic of them. However, home and email addresses are personal information; so are school districts even permitted to release this? Is WEAC asking districts to break the law for them, or have they become a 'prima facie' arm of the state?

Then there's the new budget, private school vouchers are gone from Green Bay, since Joint Finance axed them for the time being. Well, Fine! Let's get rid of all vouchers, and instead, let's go through the looking glass and make all schools, voucher schools, market-based education. The state will offer a per-pupil price and schools will take it or leave it. Any qualified school can play. "Born to be wi-i-i-ild, Born to be wi-i-i-ild!"—turn up a Steppenwolf interlude.

I wonder what the WEAC schools would do when such a market education plan makes public schools into private schools, with WEAC as the employer, rather than simply a tax-syringe. How much would WEAC pay their teachers when they, WEAC are the employer? And as employer, they can handle their own deduction of dues, the best of both worlds.

It all makes me wish I could just take a week off and set up a tent down in the vacant Walkerville. How would the fruit flies respond to my "Great Scott!" banner or would it drive them away like Pepe Le Pew? Or would they forcibly expel me for being a loyalist of what libs like to call FitzWalkerstan, then return to sipping "Po-cans" of Miller in their Erpen-back, Barca-loungers? Let's enjoy the new Era of Fiscal Responsibility in Government. "I've got to admit it's getting better (Better), A little better all the time (It can't get more worse), Better, better, better, Getting so much better all the time".....fade to quiet, the Beatles, let the new era begin.

*Richard Parins*—President

**The BROWN COUNTY TAXPAYERS ASSOCIATION**

*In our 26th Year of Promoting Fiscal Responsibility in Government.*

## Budgeting for Future Generations.

### *Getting Wisconsin Back on Track #1 Priority.*

The biennium budget passed by the legislature and sent to the governor will cover the dates July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2013. This budget will eliminate the state's current \$3.6 billion structural deficit. And, projections by the non-partisan legislative fiscal bureau forecast Wisconsin's finances will in the black for the first time in decades.

Gone are past gimmicks of fund raids, tax and fee increases, and plugging in one time federal stimulus money. Instead, the legislature replicated the same tough decisions families throughout Wisconsin make every day when balancing their own budgets.

Although tough choices on spending cuts had to be made, our state's core values and traditions of protecting seniors, veterans, education, and families were maintained. Following are some aspects of the 2011-2013 biennium budget.

Education remains a top priority. Forty-four cents of every state tax dollar collected will be applied toward educating our children. School districts are provided tools such as increased employee contributions toward their own healthcare and pension to offset appropriation cuts.

For the next two years, the maximum allowable levy increase for municipalities will be 0% plus new construction, meaning property taxes will be essentially frozen.

SeniorCare, the popular prescription drug assistance program for Wisconsin's low income seniors will be fully funded providing those in need their life saving medication.

Veterans' tuition remission will be restored back to its original intent. Moreover, online classes will be added to the list of eligible courses, giving additional higher education flexibility to our service men and women.

The Veteran Trust Fund will receive \$5 million of General Purpose Revenue (GPR) ensuring programs our veterans and heroes rely upon are fully funded.

The Department of Administration's oversight on higher education will be decreased, giving universities more flexibility in their building projects, more independence in purchasing supplies, and more freedom on determining staff salaries.

Wisconsin's Department of Health Services which provides funding for Medical Assistance (aids blind and disabled), BadgerCare Plus (aids pregnant women, children and families, and impoverished adults), Family Care (aid in caring for elderly or disabled family members), and SeniorCare, will receive an 11% increase in funding.

State appropriations for women's health services will be shifted from Planned Parenthood to local counties. If a county does not have a program in place, it will be allowed to contract with a third party provider, so long as the provider does not perform abortions.

A transfer of assets, liabilities, and personnel from the State Treasurer and Secretary of State offices into other departments will effectively begin the shutdown of these two offices.

Changes in the budget give investors a tax break on the rate they would pay on their capital gains taxes if those gains are re-invested into Wisconsin companies.

A corporate income tax break for manufacturers will promote manufacturing sector growth and continue Wisconsin's national ranking as a leader in family supporting jobs in the industry.

This budget puts Wisconsin's fiscal house in order and stops pushing off until tomorrow what can and must be done today. Living within our state's means, we are cutting up the credit card and eliminating the burden of debt on future generations.

State Representative Kevin Petersen

## National Debt Update.

### *All The Gold In The World Not Be Enough.*

As of the end of June, 2011, the United States National Debt has climbed to a total of \$14,456,075,722,912. This is an increase of about \$110 Billion during the last 2 months and shows no signs of slowing down as long as Congress can get someone to borrow more money from. In addition states and municipal governments owe another \$14.3 Trillion and individuals owe about \$16.2 Trillion.

Debate is presently going on whether to increase the limit again so we can "invest" more money to keep the country going. This limit has been increased over 75 times since 1962 and we are sure that every time it was going to be the last time pending spending cuts and an improved economy.

President Obama and his advisors simply don't seem to get it. As long as Congress is willing to approve increases to the National Debt limit, they will spend the money. The Debt limit has already been increased over 100 times since 1940 so what's the problem. The problem is they do not seem to realize the immensity of the amount of money the country owes or how we will ever pay for it. Here's some idea.

Since the dawn of civilization gold has been the standard of wealth and value in the world. It has been fought for, hoarded, traded and buried and is supposed to guarantee the value of our currency.

An article in the June 13, *Fortune* Magazine reports that historians and geologists estimate that since the beginning of civilization, a total of 166,000 tons of the stuff have been mined, panned, and otherwise extracted from the earth. That sounds like a reasonable figure. While that sounds like a lot, remember it is heavy. All of the 166,000 tons would only be enough to cover the playing surface of Lambeau Field to a depth of five and a quarter feet. It would still be an impressive sight.

What would all of the gold in the world be worth? According to my math, which you can double check, a little under \$8 Trillion, or a little over half of our National Debt. Gold is presently trading in the vicinity of \$1,500 an ounce. Assuming there are still 16 ounces in a pound, a pound of the stuff would be worth \$24,000.

A two thousand pound ton would be worth \$48,000,000. Multiply that by 166,000 tons and you have \$7,968,000,000,000. or just a few billion under \$8 Trillion. The U.S. Government owns about 4.9% of the world's gold supply worth \$388 Billion, stored in Fort Knox. This is supposed to guarantee the value of our currency, but obviously would not go very far if all of our creditors want their money.

What does this prove. For one thing the United States National Debt is climbing faster than the value of the gold in the world. Next, our government has no concept of responsibility when it comes to handling money. Several political columnists have theorized that the present administration is ignoring and actually aggravating the situation for political and ideological reasons.

Whether by design or incompetency it is a problem they must take the responsibility for. The results.

Jim Frink—BCTA.

"POLITICS: A strife of interests masquerading as a contest of principles." . . . Ambrose Bierce

"The nine most terrifying words in the English language are, I'm from the government and I'm here to help you."  
. . . Ronald Reagan

## Answers for the Brown County Taxpayers Association. From Rep. Reid Ribble

*At the May meeting of the Brown County Taxpayers Association meeting, we asked Marc Savard, Congressman Ribbles Field Contact who was in attendance to ask him about some items of concern to our members. Following is his response.*

### **Q: Is there a 3.8 percent tax on new home sales included in the new health care law?**

**A:** Yes, the tax does exist. However, certain benchmarks must be met before the tax kicks in. It is not a tax on the sale of every home. The tax acts more like a capital gains tax on the increased value of your home. For instance, if you buy your house for \$100 and sell it for \$200, the tax would apply to the \$100 of "unearned income" from the improved value of the home. Further, this tax only applies to individuals who make \$200,000 or more, or married couples who make more than \$250,000 or more per year. There are also restrictions on the value of the house and/or if it's the family's first home or not.

The tax is not indexed for inflation, so as the housing market recovers and demand for houses increases, prices will rise and more families could get hit with this tax. I have already voted to repeal and defund the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act this year, and I will work to continue to undo the many harmful effects of this legislation, including this tax. Here is a link with further information: .

### **Q: What is Congressman Ribble's stance on immigration?**

**A:** I am gravely concerned about the disastrous implications of illegal immigration for our national and economic security. A number of bills have been introduced in the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress to repair and reform America's immigration problem. I am willing to support any bill introduced by a member of Congress that will secure our borders to prevent illegal immigrants from coming into our country and fix our legal immigration system.

The federal government has failed in virtually every aspect of immigration and our immigration system is broken. Because of its failure to act, Americans suffer from continued unemployment and drug wars continue along our unsecured Southern border.

I believe we in Congress should implement three reforms to the current immigration system. First, we must secure our borders. Upon doing so, I will support efforts that reward the patience and hard work needed to become a U.S. citizen and reject proposals that would grant amnesty to those who have broken the law. Thirdly, we must reform our legal immigration system. I believe that the government gets what it incentivizes, and right now we are currently incentivizing illegal activity. We make it easy to break the law and hard to do things the right way. As long as government refuses to act, this misalignment in our system will continue and the problem will worsen.

### **Q: What are Congressman Ribble's plans to return more taxpayer dollars to Wisconsin?**

**A:** As a member of the House Agriculture and Transportation & Infrastructure Committees, I will work to craft national policy that effectively meets Wisconsin's needs. This means making sure that Wisconsin receives its fair share of federal infrastructure dollars to repair our aging roads and bridges, and also fighting for our state's unique agriculture priorities as part of the 2012 Farm Bill. Many of the fights we face in Congress are regional rather than strictly partisan, so I look forward to working on behalf of my District and State.

However, it is also important that we prevent our tax dollars from leaving Wisconsin in the first place by lowering rates across the board. Wisconsin is current a "donor" state, receiving less in federal tax dollars than it pays in to Washington, DC. Therefore, I look forward to working with my colleagues to pass tax reform that allows Wisconsin taxpayers to keep more of their money, thereby getting their fair share.

### **Q: What is Congressman Ribble's view on state and local tax deductibility from an individual's federal tax returns?**

**A:** As a general rule, the federal government should keep taxes simple and low. I believe the deductibility of state and local taxes is an important component of our current tax code and I will work to keep it in place. This deduction helps individuals and working families keep more money in their pockets at a time when they need it most.

Wisconsin 8th District Representative Reid Ribble

## 50 State Comparisons, 2011 Edition.

At the June 16, BCTA meeting, Cate Zeuske of Taxpayers Network, Inc., passed out copies of her organizations 50 State Comparisons. Each year this booklet is distributed to legislators and other interested parties throughout the country and contains tables comparing the states on various demographic, economic, and tax policies of each state.

While Wisconsin is generally average in regards to size, population and average income, there are a few items which are disturbing or out of proportion compared to other states.

One item is that we rank #4 in the country with an average of 11% of income going to state and local taxes. This is simply unacceptable. Our tax freedom day comes April 12, which is the 13th worst in the nation. Our state Debt per capita ranks 19th meaning 31 states are in better shape financially.

Our state employees receive the 16th highest pay nationally. We commend Taxpayers Network for compiling and making this information available.

We still have a few copies available and you get one at our July 21, membership meeting.

"POLITICS: The conduct of public affairs for private advantage." . . . **Ambrose Bierce**

Articles and views appearing in the "TAX TIMES" do not necessarily represent the official position of the Brown County Taxpayers Association. We want to encourage discussion and input on current issues of taxpayer interest and invite your comments or articles suitable for future "TAX TIMES." Please send them to the BCTA, P.O. Box 684, Green Bay, WI 54305-0684, or call Jim Frink at 336-6410. E-Mail BCTA@ExecPC.Com.

## May Meeting Notes.

Monthly Brown County Taxpayers Assn. meeting May 18, 2011 at Tiletown Brewing.

New Brown County Executive Troy Streckenbach presented his observations of the state of Brown County. He began by reviewing the three priorities of his campaign for election: Freezing property taxes, Creating jobs, Improving quality of life

He stated that he will be meeting with each of the County departments to understand their needs and priorities. He explained that his policy is not to micromanage, but to expect fiscal responsibility and accountability from each department.

He noted that the County has to deal with a \$3.6 million shortfall for the next budget. He estimates that the County would only be faced with a \$500,000 shortfall if the County Board had acted to reduce the budget last year instead of taking \$1.7 million from the reserve balance. He explained that the County pays \$16 million annually for debt service, of which \$6 million is for interest. Reducing the County's debt would free up debt service dollars for current operations or property tax reductions.

Mr. Streckenbach stated that he will focus on the 2013 budget. He has a goal of finding \$5 million for a one time investment in technology to improve efficiency and lower the costs of future operations. Responding to questions about specific County departments, he stated that department leaders must manage.

Brown County Board vice chair Mary Scray addressed the proposal to increase the County Board membership to 29. She explained that this proposal would keep the representation for 20 communities whole.

Marc Savard, District Representative for Congressman Reid Ribble, reported that Congressman Ribble is facing three major challenges: a difficult freshman budget, the proposal to increase the federal debt ceiling (he opposes without significant spending cuts), and passing the next budget. Marc explained that Congressman Ribble sits on three important House committees. He was requested to join the Budget Committee by Congressman Paul Ryan.

On the Agriculture Committee, he is working to develop a five-year plan. On the Transportation Committee, he is looking to improve District roads and highways. Congressman Ribble is supporting a freeze on business regulations, stopping all new regulations for 24 months. Congressman Ribble also supports English as the official language.

**Dave Nelson-Secretary**

## June Meeting Notes.

Monthly BCTA Meeting June 16, 2011 at Tiletown Brewing Co.

Cate Zeuske, Director of Administration and Finance for The Taxpayers Network, distributed copies of the 2011 Edition of the Taxpayers Network's *50 State Comparisons* booklet. Statistics included in the the *50 State Comparisons* include demographics, taxes & revenues, government, education, natural resources, transportation, and health & welfare. This publication has been an annual report card for states since 2004.

Cate pointed out some highlights of Wisconsin's report card. At \$54,896, Wisconsin ranks 16<sup>th</sup> in average state government employee pay. Conversely, Wisconsin ranks seventh in state residents per state employee with 81 residents per FTE. Hawaii ranks last with one state employee for each 23 residents.

School choice was another topic Cate addressed. Explaining the history of school choice in Milwaukee, she noted that it only applied to students from homes with less than \$67,000 of annual income. Presently, 102 schools enroll almost 21,000 students in the Milwaukee program with per-pupil payments of \$6,442, saving taxpayers several thousand dollars per student. There were hopes of extending school choice to the Green Bay area, but the new state budget did not include that.

John VanderLeest, representing State Senator Frank Lasee, presented some highlights of the new state budget. The new budget is balanced for the first time in many years. It eliminated a \$3.6 billion deficit without raising taxes or fees. Spending increases only 1.8 percent and bonding is reduced by 20 percent. Wisconsin is in its best fiscal shape in decades.

This taxpayer friendly budget has a two-year property tax freeze. It lowers overall state taxes by \$24 million compared to the previous budget. It supports transportation infrastructure without raiding other funds. It sends a message to job creators that Wisconsin is a great place to start, grow, or relocate a business.

County/Municipal: Schreiber Foods plans to build new \$50 million corporate headquarters and Global Technology Center at the site of the closed Washington Commons mall, formerly the Port Plaza Mall. A total of \$14.5 million in assistance to the project is expected from the City of Green Bay, subject to approval by the City Council. Mayor Schmitt said the deal will be done without raising property taxes. The City plans to use \$5 million from the tax-incremental finance district around the mall and \$7 million from the I-43 Business Center area tax-incremental finance district.

The next meeting will be July 21, at Tiletown Brewing. Elaine Wilman will speak on Tax Incremental Financing. (TIF). Details on the last page of this Tax Times.

**Dave Nelson-Secretary**

"If you put the federal government in charge of the Sahara Desert, in five years there would be a shortage of sand." . . . **Milton Friedman**

"Government's view of the economy could be summed up in a few short words: If it moves, tax it, if it keeps moving, regulate it, and if it stops moving, subsidize it." . . . **Ronald Reagan**

"We contend that for a nation to try to tax itself into prosperity is like a man standing in a bucket and trying to lift himself up by the handle." . . . **Winston Churchill**

"There are laws to protect the freedom of the press's speech, but one that are worth anything to protect the people from the press." . . **Mark Twain**

## Doing Nothing Is No Longer An Option With Medicare.

Medicare is a solemn promise of health and retirement security that I believe must be kept. But there has been a vigorous and organized attempt to distort the Republican's fact-based plan to save Medicare.

Republicans don't want to end Medicare - we want to save it. Few can argue that Medicare is not in crisis. More doctors than ever are refusing to see Medicare patients. Today, one in three doctors are limiting new patients, one in eight doctors are refusing Medicare patients altogether, and 10,000 baby boomers retire every day, adding more strain to an already fragile system.

Here are three important facts to remember about the Medicare debate and our plan to save it.

Fact No. 1 - Medicare changed drastically with the newly enacted Obamacare law. Starting next year, President Barack Obama will appoint a panel of 15 nonelected bureaucrats to price-control and ration Medicare for current seniors. Our plan repeals Obamacare and doesn't force 15 nonelected bureaucrats between doctors and their patients.

Fact No. 2 - Taking no action is the surest way to end Medicare. By its own admission, Medicare will go bankrupt in less than nine years. Something must be done to modernize this program. The Republican budget actually increases spending every year on Medicare payments, but it bends the cost curve down, saving the program for future generations.

Fact No. 3 - Our plan makes no changes for those 55 years or older. For the younger generation, Medicare will function as a premium support system, similar to the insurance plan Congress receives. Just like the Medicare Advantage or the Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit program seniors use today, we offer seniors a choice of Medicare approved insurance plans with guaranteed coverage benefits. Medicare then subsidizes the costs of those plans - a lot less for the wealthy and a lot more for those who are low income or sick.

The Republican budget preserves Medicare both for today's seniors and future generations. I welcome a debate on the merit of those ideas and call on those opposed to offer a plan of their own.

**U.S. Rep. Reid Ribble**

"I predict future happiness for Americans if they can prevent the government from wasting the labors of the people under the pretense of taking care of them."  
.. . **Thomas Jefferson**

"Have you ever wondered if both the Democrats and Republicans are against deficits, Why do we have deficits?"  
.. . **Charley Reese**

## As Promised: Truth In Budgeting.

We have always believed that cuts to government should constantly be pursued and carried out, whether or not we are in a recession. The problem is, over the last 15 years, Wisconsin's total money management situation deteriorated to the point where 'only' cutting spending or even 'only' raising taxes would not get us in the black.

It got so bad that we had to do a lot more than make major cuts to the state budget; we had to completely restructure the state's finances to stop spending money we don't have. We had to finally stop "budgeting by credit card." Drafting a state budget every two years is extremely difficult, because each new biennium we must deal with the situation left to us by the previous one. This time, Gov. Jim Doyle left the new legislature with a \$3.6 billion dollar hole in the middle of a bad economy forcing us to make many very tough decisions.

This is the job I was elected to do on behalf of more than 55,000 people who live in the 90th Assembly District. With a 1,500 page document that spends \$66 billion, no one will be happy with every single part of the final result, not even the legislators who voted for it. However, I think we can be proud of the giant steps we took this year.

Together, my colleagues and I eliminated the \$3.6 billion deficit without raising taxes or fees, without raiding segregated funds, without using accounting gimmicks to fake a balanced budget, without relying on one-time stimulus funds, and without going overboard and borrowing into the future. We instituted a permanent property tax freeze that will provide all Wisconsin families with some certainty and stability at a time when they need it most. And to top it all off, we worked so hard to get control of the current situation and set up a framework for a more successful financial future that the next state budget will begin with a surplus, not a gaping deficit. This was a monumental feat.

Because it is crucial to preserve beneficial programs and services, we made tough cuts while still maintaining programs my constituents said should be a priority. People were clear that they wanted to keep SeniorCare, and we fully funded the popular and successful SeniorCare prescription drug program, ensuring access to medication for low-income seniors. You asked us to hold off on cuts to WiseNet, a non-profit association providing high-speed digital communications, including network access and supporting services to the University of Wisconsin System, the Wisconsin Technical College System, private colleges, school districts, libraries, local and state government, and public service and related agencies. These are just a few of many examples where we listened and agreed the Governor's budget could be improved. Sometimes, we disagreed with the governor and his ideas for the budget.

When you hear claims that Republicans are Walker rubber-stampers, think again. It's simply not the case. One of several examples is the governor's proposal to repeal the recycling mandate. You wanted to keep the mandate requiring local governments to provide recycling services, and our caucus went against the governor to make sure that local units of government will be able to continue their recycling programs.

This session brought a lot of debate, a lot of input with various viewpoints, and a high degree of emotional expression on many issues. That means people are listening, reading, and engaging in our representative democracy. Whether or not you voted for me, whether or not you even vote, I represent you when it comes to state issues. I believe strongly that this budget finally takes our state in a better direction. We fulfilled the promises we made to restore fiscal sanity, accountability, and honesty in our state budgeting practices. At long last, we are on the road to living within our means  
**Rep. Karl Van Roy**

## Things That Make Us Wonder.

Did you ever wonder why when government talks about cutting expenses their potential savings might sound good but are spread over 10 or 20 year period of time. This makes it sound good even though no one will remember in 20 years.

However whenever an "urgent" need for spending arises it is always an immediate need whether or not it is in the budget with little concern over how or when it will be financed.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Obama Administration along with the Dept. of Agriculture have established rules requiring the nation's schools to serve healthier and more balanced meals as part of their lunch programs.

Probably not a bad idea insofar as there seems to be an epidemic of obesity affecting the countries health.

It was estimated that offering the healthier meals would add .14 cents to the cost of each meal. While if true this sounds like a small cost to pay. One problem is that due to established poverty levels about half of the nation's school students already receive subsidized lunches at taxpayer expense. All over the country schools are being forced to trim their budgets while competing with other government services for limited funding sources.

The big problem may be convincing students to accept and enjoy healthier meals with more veggies whether President Obama says it's good for them or not.

\* \* \* \* \*

Serious work is beginning this summer to bring the Highway 41 Corridor up to freeway standards. We will probably all be inconvenienced from time to time and will trust the DOT to give us a better designed and safer road when they finish.

Does anyone know if the Billion or so Governor Doyle "borrowed" from the segregated transportation fund was ever returned. This maneuver made it necessary for the DOT to borrow replacement funds and pay interest accordingly only adding to the cost of highway construction,

\* \* \* \* \*

One problem is that Congress no sooner gets through authorizing an increase in the National Debt ceiling when "urgent" needs for more spending force

them to raise it again. Don't worry, we will figure out a way to pay for it later.

This tactic has been used about 100 times since 1940, when the total National Debt was something like \$43 Billion. Even in 1946 at the end of World War II the debt was only about \$260 Billion. It took 205 years, until 1981 for the debt to reach the first trillion. Is it possible that government spending is actually the cause rather than the result of runaway inflation? Something to think about.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Brown County Board of Supervisors has voted to increase the size of the board to 29 members from the present 26. Reasons being to spread committee duties out more and provide more equal representation as a result of the 2010 Federal Census.

At present there are 12 members from the City of Green Bay each representing about 8,800 citizens while the 14 from the remainder of the county represent about 142,000 people or over 10,000 each. While equal representation may not be a determining factor, there will no doubt be squabbling when new districts are established. It wasn't too long ago the Board was reduced from 36 members due to cost factors.

\* \* \* \* \*

With unemployment numbers edging upwards again, and most other economic indicators on the negative side, President Obama seems to remain upbeat and offering a positive image of our country to the rest of world.

A London newspaper gave a report on his recent trip to attend the G-20 Summit claiming he had about 500 people in his entourage, including 200 secret service agents. He also brought 6 doctors and the White House kitchen staff with a supply of food and water.

Also included were 4 speech writers, 12 teleprompters, a "fleet" of automobiles and his personal helicopter.

We can understand the need for security but wonder how the rest of the world and American taxpayers view these examples of extravagance. I believe it was up to the 1950's or so the President had to follow a very strict entertainment and travel budget requiring Congressional permission to override. They didn't have 747's at their disposal either. You can look it up.

\* \* \* \* \*

The voter ID bill recently signed by Gov. Walker is designed to prevent abuses in public elections. While some people may be discouraged from exercising their voting rights as a result, many more have probably been discouraged due to the negative tone that political advertising in recent years. It is also discouraging that so few people even bother to vote even though most seem to be very opinionated on the subject of politics.

It was not too many years ago that state law required that taverns remained closed until the polls closed to prevent office seekers from buying patrons drinks in exchange for votes.

While a lot has changed since then, it seems there have been more shenanigans and attempts to alter the outcome than ever on election days.

\* \* \* \* \*

The recent recount of the states supreme court race ballots is estimated to have cost taxpayers over \$500,000. There was no change in the results when done.

Now we are facing a number of state senate recount races that will cost taxpayers another pile of money that was not in the budget and could have been used for other purposes. Even more if primaries are involved.

Regardless of the outcome of these unprecedented elections, the money spent could just as well been saved until 2012 as most of the positions will be up for election anyway. Then we wonder why the rest of the country laughs at us.

\* \* \* \* \*

Some of our Democratic State Senators in particular have been complaining about a lack of input and debate in the preparation of the State Budget. They forgot that last years budget was approved in the middle of the night and policy items and new taxes effecting all of us are still surfacing from the depths of the massive document crafted by the Doyle administration.

At that time at least all of our representatives attended the sessions to offer debate whether they agreed with the Governor or not. It is difficult to debate or represent your constituents from a hideout someplace in Illinois.

• \* \* \* \*

The recent Lambeau Field concert was an apparent success and no

doubt beneficial to many local businesses.

We always wonder though, when the economic benefit of such events is touted by the promoters and media to justify their existence if they also factor in the cost paid by attendees which comes largely from local citizens. It could make a difference in the bottom line.

For example, a crowd of 45,000 paying an average of over \$100 each to attend would result in a gate of \$4.5 Million. Doesn't much of this actually leave the area along with the truckloads of equipment and entertainers when the show is over?

It was still a great show but who came out best financially?

\* \* \* \* \*

The Green Bay City Council is considering an ordinance requiring gas stations to collect payment in advance. This necessitated by the increase in the number of "drive-offs" and the high price of gas. While probably an inconvenience to most of us it is common in other locations.

However it would seem it should be a decision by the business owner as they are competing with stations from outside the city limits .

While many stations use surveillance cameras to record license plates and "immigrants" settled here but that could just be California as far we know. The problem is nobody seems to know or for that matter care. In the meantime we continue to pay for their health care, education, food, housing and transportation and keep their criminals in our prisons.

\* \* \* \* \*

During political campaigns desperate candidates take glee in pointing out their opponent's sources of contributions as representative of shady special interests.

The Washington D C, Center For Responsive Politics has disclosed that from 1990 and 2010 National Labor Unions contributed a total of over \$486 Million to the Democratic party and it's interests and candidates. They also gave \$28 Million to Republican interests during the same time. A ratio of 28 to 1.

The largest contributor was the Fed. Of State, County, & Municipal Employees, who have been active in Wisconsin politics in recent months. Two national teachers unions were also in the top 10.

Unfortunately in politics these days it seems that whoever pays the tail the most gets to wag the dog.

\* \* \* \* \*

As world population grows feeding everyone is becoming more of a challenge. In the meantime, a report commissioned by the United Nations estimates that 1/3 of the food intended for human consumption is somehow wasted.

\* \* \* \* \*

Results of the 2010 U. S. Census have been trickling in as the Census Bureau tries to analyze or perhaps justify their results.

They spent a lot of time preparing radial statistics as indicated by their results for Green Bay, but we wonder if they may have overlooked some of the illegal or "Undocumented" aliens we have in our midst.

Time magazine estimates there are 11.2 Million nationally, but that could be just California for all we know. Our politicians do not seem to have a solution and it won't go away by itself.

We are all by nature a very compassionate nation ;but seem to have enough problems without feeding, housing, providing health care, policing, incarceration and schooling for 11.2 million people who place themselves in our midst illegally.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Presidential election year is creeping up on us rather rapidly and so far there is no clear or outstanding opponent to President Obama who will be running for re-election.

Although the system of state primaries and caucuses gives voters an opportunity to share in the candidate nomination process it forces candidates to raise and spend huge sums of money which could probably be better spent for the final election.

Is the best candidate in the running? Being President is a job that requires great leadership and organizational skills as well as being accepted by the general public as a leader everyone has faith and confidence in to deal with all of the domestic and world problems facing us. His pr jer agenda must be fair to everyone and the future of our country.

Whether that person is one of the people or is some governor, senator, or other qualified person remains to be seen. At one time before the era of TV and the internet the parties selected their

candidate at their national conventions, often behind the scenes, and often someone not known to the general public.

Although some of these people turned out to be incompetent embarrassments the country somehow survived. None the less the intent was and should be select a nominee with a platform that people believe in and support with a chance of winning and leading the country. Amen.

\* \* \* \* \*

Interesting that when the price of gasoline jumped over a dollar a gallon in a short period of time with no particular reason we all suffered from the additional cost at the pump and in the goods we purchase which depend on fuel to produce and deliver. Now that the cost has started to go down a little it seems like a real bargain..

That's the way the prices of a lot of things, including taxes are permanently increased. We wonder if the airlines will cut any of the annoying surcharges they recently imposed blaming the cost of fuel?

\* \* \* \* \*

Who has the largest army in the world? The 600,000 registered hunters in the state of Wisconsin would be the eighth largest army if formed as a military unit.

However, add the 250,00 hunters from West Virginia, 700,000 from Michigan and 750,000 from Pennsylvania and these four states alone could form the worlds largest present standing army.

Add the hunting population from the other 46 states and you probably have all of the world's armies combined.

Something to think about when gun control freaks explain national defense.

\* \* \* \* \*

It will be interesting to see how the State Senate recall elections will turn out.

If you live in Senate District 2, a primary to determine the Democrat candidate will be held on Tuesday, July 12., with the final election to be held on August 9. This is the seat currently held by Senator Robert Cowles.

Voters in the 30th District currently held by Dave Hansen will choose the Republican candidate on July 19, with the final election on August 16.

You must be a registered elector in these districts to vote. In addition to the additional cost to the county of conducting these elections the winners will have to run for election again in the 2012 elections.

# The TAX TIMES

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

PRSR STD  
U. S. Postage  
PAID  
Green Bay, WI  
Permit No. 255

Address Service Requested.

## *Inside This Issue*

- A New Era Begins.
- Budgeting for Future Generationw.
- National Debt Update.
- Answers From Rep. Ribble.
- 50 State Comparisons.
- May and June Meeting Notes.
- Doing Nothing No Longer a Medicare Option.
- As Promised: Truth in Budgeting.
- Things That Make Us Wonder.

## The TAX TIMES - July-August, 2011

### BCTA Meeting and Events Schedule - MARK YOUR CALENDARS.

- Tuesday - July 12, 2009. Primary election, 2d Senate District.  
*NOTE: Extremely important to vote in these recall Elections if you live in the 2d or 30th Senate Districts.*
- Tuesday - July 19, 2009. Primary election, 30th Senate District.
- Thursday - July 21, 2011. BCTA Monthly Meeting, 12:00 Noon.  
Titledown Brewing Co. Speaker, Elaine Willman/TIF Financing.
- Tuesday - August 9, 2011, Recall Election, 2d Senate District.
- Tuesday - August 16, 2011, Recall Election, 30th Senate District.
- Thursday - August 18, 2011. BCTA Monthly Meeting, 12:00 Noon.  
Titledown Brewing Co. Speaker, Green Bay Mayor Jim Schmitt.
- Thursday - September 15, 2011. BCTA Monthly Meeting, 12:00 Noon.  
Titledown Brewing Co. Speaker, Lynn Stainbrook  
Director of Brown County Library System.

Unless otherwise notified, BCTA monthly meetings are held the third Thursday of Each month, 12:00 Noon at Titledown Brewing Co., 200 Dousman St.

Meetings are open to the public. Guests are Welsome!  
COST: \$8.00- Payable at meeting. Includes Lunch, Tax & Tip.  
Call Tom Sladek—499-7701 for information or to leave message.



July -  
August  
2011

“George Washington reputedly never told a lie, making a person wonder how he got to be president.” . . . Doug Larson

“In politics, stupidity is not a handicap.” . . . Napoliean

### **SUPPORT THE BCTA**

New Members are Always  
Welcome. Call 336-6410  
Write us at P. O. Box 684  
or visit our website  
[www.BCTaxpayers.Org](http://www.BCTaxpayers.Org)  
for Details.