



Now, where were we?

Let's see, a conservative groundswell marked our last legislative, gubernatorial elections and sorely needed taxpayer oriented legislation, Act 10, was proposed and passed. Oh, I also seem to remember some recall stuff, again producing a strong affirmation for taxpayer's interests. With a couple of losses, the conservative majority held, and the power of doing what you said you would, confirmed our Governor's agenda. The voters said it was so, not the pols, not the power brokers that line the garbage cans like so many maggots, around the State Capitol.

With the books less cooked and some power restored to the people of the State, the next task at hand—the State's biennial Budget, where bad bratwurst and good kielbasa can be made, has taken up most of 2013. The BCTA took a bold step hand delivering to the Governor's offices, a list of four items leadership had agreed, were vital to taxpayer's interest in the upcoming budget. With Legislator help and a respectful request, the BCTA spoke to the seat of power that Fund 80 abuse by local school districts, Accountability for State Grants, the Unfairness of Wisconsin's prevailing wage, and the Negative effects of large scale wind turbines, require a look through the Budget process.

The Budget passed, and sits on the Governor's desk, veto pen poised at the ready, or not. But no matter, the journey has brought us to a significant crossroads where we may step into the kind of legislative work whereby whose truth may set us free. For the BCTA's efforts, we've at least frozen the utilization of Fund 80 until we can educate legislators throughout the State about the potential for abuse and the need to correct the lack of strict guidelines and rules in the Fall session. We hold out some hope for a renewed effort to seriously slowdown or stop to new wind turbine construction until a proper scientific study for the effects of such monstrosities on residents and the nearby environment.

The real question at hand is why Legislators failed to undo the slew of snaky taxes put in place by Democratic Dolyeites, like a Billion of them! Accompanying this push back the real prize of taxpayer fairness, originally acronymized (my word) as TABOR, a hard guttural word, later softened to become The Taxpayers Protection Act, should again be taken up. Isn't this what the whole notion of smaller government is wrapped around? Until some Constitutional protection from excessive, ever growing taxation is afforded our citizens, conservatives will continue playing "Where's Waldo," seeking out the elusive legislative construct guaranteeing protection from the next invasion of Doyelites.

So will fiscal conservatives rest on the satisfaction of Act 10, easily undone by the next liberal group of big government over spenders, or will our conservative leader pick up the challenge of Taxpayer Protection? Just as the Roman legions carried the Aquila, the eagle atop their standard, striking fear in those to whom they had brought the rule of law, and the Roman notion of individual freedom, we look for the conservative aquilifer, a standard bearer willing to bring the fight to Big Government. We only have to watch the daily news to recognize Big Government is real as the sun rising each day and whether visible or not its presence is known by all that lives.

I keep my Taxpayer Protection lapel badge in my desk eager to pick up the struggle because no matter all that has been done, there remains a question in my mind, after the initial run at the Constitutional Taxpayer Protection Amendment, "now where were we?" We are artfully poised to take it to the people and make it so.

Richard Parins — President

The BROWN COUNTY TAXPAYERS ASSOCIATION
In our 28th Year of Promoting Fiscal Responsibility in Government.

May Meeting Notes.

Americans for Prosperity

Address BCTA

Monthly Brown County Taxpayers Association meeting May 16, 2013 at Titledown Brewing Co.

AFP-Wisconsin State Director Luke Hilgemann, with associates, discussed current issues. Americans for Prosperity (AFP) is a grassroots movement of over 2.3 million activists nationwide who advocate and promote limited government, lower taxes, and more freedom. AFP has over 124,000 members in the state of Wisconsin.

Mr. Hilgemann discussed the \$60 billion state budget, noting that tax reform is an absolute necessity. He supports performance based budgeting. He stated that the government should not pick winners and losers.

Defending state control of education, he explained that Common Core mounts to federalization of education. He noted that we are spending \$11,000 per student now.

David Fladeboe, AFP Communications and Policy Director, stated that the \$576 million of newly found revenue should be returned to taxpayers. He supported flattening the tax code and eliminating 50 tax credits.

Nick Novak, Director of Communications for the MacIver Institute, spoke about tax reform. The MacIver Institute for Public Policy is a Wisconsin-based think tank that promotes free markets, individual freedom, personal responsibility and limited government. He explained that our tax code is too complex. Wisconsin has four tax brackets now. After Illinois, Wisconsin has the highest state and local property tax collections of surrounding states.

He supported expanding the school voucher system, noting that taxpayers have saved about \$300 million from the Milwaukee voucher program.

Dave Nelson—Secretary

VISIT OUR WEBSITE
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National Debt Update.

As of July 1, the U. S. National Debt reached \$16,893,946,455,094., which is a increase of only about \$68.6 Billion since we last reported 2 months ago at the first of May.

We say “only” because the increase was “only” a little over a billion dollars per day during the period whereas it had been averaging an increase of about 3 Billion a day for the past several years. Why the dramatic decrease? Part of it might that income tax returns along with estimated taxes 2013 were coming in. The government has taken in \$2.575 in revenue as of July 1. a lot of it just hasn’t been spent yet.

In the meantime unemployment is still high, inflation is high and government spending keeps increasing. As long as we keep spending \$73.9 Million to China every day don’t expect any miracles to happen. While sequestering may have helped a little at least by setting an example, President Obama’s sets an example by cutting back on flyovers at sporting events while he flies an entourage to Africa estimated to cost us \$100 Million. **JF**

Budget Summary.

This budget contains one of the largest tax cuts in Wisconsin history. The income tax totals over \$665 million dollars. Our tax code is simplified by reducing the five brackets to four and reduces all rates and eliminates deductions/credits. Nearly \$300 million was spent on K-12 public education, expanded school choice statewide and froze UW tuition for the next two years.

The budget provides for our communities also through investments in child support enforcement, treatment alternatives, drug courts, domestic abuse grants and mental health initiatives. It supports our veterans by stabilizing the Veterans Trust Fund, increasing staffing at veterans homes, maintains tax exemptions and provides additional reimbursement for veterans attending certain colleges.

State Representative John Nygren.

“It’s a recession when your neighbor loses his job. It’s a depression when you lose yours.” . . . Harry S. Truman

“Leaders do not sway with the polls, instead they sway the polls with their own words and actions.”

. . . Robert L. Ehrlich

Two Sides To School Choice.

School Choice opponents assert private schools are somehow inferior, because they are not bound by the same controls and oversight as public schools, and that public schools are underfunded. Both are inaccurate. Graduation rates and test score comparisons are readily available. Private schools often do not have all the amenities of public schools, but that is typically not the focus of a family with a struggling child. They want to improve the educational opportunity for that child. Many students thrive in a public school, but some do not.

Taxpayers already spend over \$12,000/student each year to support public schools in Wisconsin. The Governor's proposal provides only \$6,700 to move a student to a private school. Taxpayers understand how critical it is to have strong public schools, and that it takes money to provide them. Spending over \$12,000 per student is NOT underfunding, and allowing some small number of students the opportunity for a different option for their education will not bankrupt the public system.

So, when you consider the arguments for or against School Choice, do your own research. Do not be misled by an establishment that declares private schools as inferior, and who want you to think the taxpayers are not doing enough for public education.

Rod Goldhahn

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.

State Stewardship Land.

As my Grandmother used to say, "The road to hell is paved with good intentions." Perhaps the road to government overreach is paved with good intentions. Here is a classic example of government logic run amuck. Like a lot of these programs, it started out as an idea with good intentions.

It turns out the largest land owner in the State of Wisconsin is government.. We (meaning taxpayers) own six and a half million of the 35 million acres in the state (counties own nearly 3 million acres, the state owns nearly 2 million acres, and the federal government owns nearly one and a half million acres). In order to buy more land, the state created the Stewardship Program in 1989.<<https://www.wra.org/WREM/Dec10/PublicLand/>> The idea was good--to protect Wisconsin's pristine wilderness for future generations. The problem is the state racked up almost \$2 billion in loans (additional debt) to buy the land.

Say my neighbor Tom owns 100 acres, he pays property tax. That's real money going into local coffers. The more people who pay property taxes means the rest of us will pay a little less, the lower amount each payer has to pay. When the state buys Tom's 100 acres, it comes off the tax rolls. I bet you can guess what happens to my taxes, the guy next doors taxes, and the single mom down the roads taxes. They go up for everyone who pays.

Some argue we should go even further in debt to buy more state land, after all, it's for "the future," (so is debt management). For crying out loud, we already own enough land to start another small state, is it wise to buy more? Perhaps we should buy just the best land for future generations and sell the less desirable land that we already own.

Land stewardship started as a good idea, this good idea has us now nearly \$2 billion dollars in debt and growing, taking even more land off of the property tax rolls. Property taxpayer's bills go up. After all, the money for local governments, schools and tech colleges have to be paid.

Fans of the Stewardship Program say it buys land so it's available for recreational purposes. What's the recreational purpose of 20,000 acres of tillable farm land owned by the state? Wouldn't it make more sense to see those acres sold to someone who would actually, oh I don't know--farm them? Then the local community would take in more tax dollars, and in addition to creating more food, the farmer may add a job or two to the local economy.

In this budget, we will spend \$91 million on land spending. That's \$1.8 million dollars a million in 2013-14 and \$94.5 million in 2014-15 to pay off debt from previous week! The stewardship debt keeps growing because we keep borrowing. Property taxes keep climbing because we keep buying more land.

Now, the Governor wants to take money out of the Stewardship Program funding to pay for maintenance on the land that doesn't bring in any tax revenue? My colleagues in the Legislature who think the state owns too much land are right. But borrowing, in effect, to take care of the land they borrowed money to pay for in the first place just doesn't make sense.

The answer is to sell the least valuable land. Between the federal government, the state, and the counties, we have

almost six and a half million acres in Wisconsin set aside as public land. Think about that...six and a half MILLION acres. Six million acres is the land space of Connecticut, Rhode Island, Delaware and Washington DC There is even enough acreage left over to add in Barbados, the US & British Virgin Islands, Manhattan (NYC) and Antigua! Let's go to the beach! More than 1 in 5 acres is owned by a government in Wisconsin. It is time to sell off land for private use like farming (which generates revenue to help provide for future generations) and trade other land for only the best land for future generations.

Feel free to contact me Sen.Lasee@legis.wisconsin.gov or call me (608) 266-3512. **State Senator Frank Lasee**

JUNE MEETING NOTES.

BCTA Receives Tribal Land into Trust Update.

Monthly Brown County Taxpayers Association meeting held June 20, 2013 at Tiletown Brewing Co.

Elaine Willman, Director of Community Development & Tribal Affairs for the Village of Hobart, reviewed recent vents concerning conversion of taxable land into federal Indian "trust."

Mrs. Willman explained that the Village of Hobart Board is committed to protect the Village's tax base. When the Oneida Tribe of Indians packaged 3,000 acres, assembled from nine bundles of land, to place into federal trust and remove them from the Village's tax base, the Village objected to each and every one of them. The objections were based upon the failure of the Tribe and the Regional Bureau of Indian Affairs to follow its own regulations.

The Village of Hobart prevailed in every one of the nine decisions, preserving its property tax base and saving significant tax revenue for taxing entities in Brown County, including Brown County itself. The table below shows the property tax revenue retained by taxing jurisdictions as a result of the Village of Hobart's successful legal efforts from 2008–2012.

Total Property Tax Revenue Retained for Each Taxing Jurisdiction:

West DePere School District	\$297,614.04
Brown County	\$217,326.75
Village of Hobart	\$193,490.89
Pulaski Community School District	\$166,258.59
theast Wisconsin Technical College	\$ 72,256.46
tate of Wisconsin	\$ 7,728.46
TOTAL TAX REVENUE RETAINED	\$954,675.19

The two school districts, NWTC, and Brown County benefited greatly from the Village of Hobart's legal efforts without supporting the Village's efforts. Some of these jurisdictions were prohibited from objecting to trust land placements by concessions given within service agreements they had made with the Tribe.

The next BCTA meeting will be Thursday, July 18, and the topic will be the Green Bay Metropolitan Sewage District.

Dave Nelson—Secretary

"Leaders are responsible not for running public opinion polls but for the consequences of their actions."

. . . Henry A. Kissinger

"He that is good at making excuses is seldom good at anything else."

. . . Benjamin Franklin

Things That Make Us Wonder.

Conservation and protecting the environment mean different things to different people. Some of us seem devoted to preserving every little thing in its natural state regardless of the consequences to our way of living or the economy, while others destroy, consume to otherwise waste valuable resources for their own benefit with complete disregard for the present or future generations. There are usually two sides to every question but sometimes there is no in between.

The problem is maintaining a balance in order to both support the needs of our civilization and preserve valuable resources for the future. Current areas of conflict include construction of the Keystone Pipeline to move crude oil from newly developed sources in Canada and North Dakota to refineries in the south and development of iron ore reserves here in Wisconsin.

Hopefully at some point scientists, environmental advocates, necessity and common sense will prevail.

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One resource we are somewhat able to take for granted in this part of the country is our water supply, especially since levels in the great lakes have been trending dramatically lower in recent years. Many excuses are given but the most logical seems to have been caused by the Corp of Engineering dredging which increased the flow of water on the St. Clair River between Lakes Huron and Erie. Maybe all the money spent dredging deeper channels to accommodate shipping here could have been better spent putting a lock system on Lake St. Clair.

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The *New York Times* recently ran a story that the level of the High Plains Aquifer which supplies ground water to an area between Texas and South Dakota has dropped dramatically in recent years to the point where it was effecting cattle and crop production.

This does not necessarily mean a return to the dust bowl of the 30's, but it could eventually effect the cost of food and be a sign that our water resources are an asset to be better protected.

Let's hope it never gets to the point where we don't have to exchange water which we have plenty of for oil which we don't have in Wisconsin.

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The people who administer Medicare recently disclosed they discovered that some hospitals and providers across the country were charging as much as ten times as much as others to perform the same procedures. Now isn't that amazing!

Considering these are the same people who likely will administer Obamacare, perhaps this is a sign that health care providers could be positioning themselves to maximize their profits to the fullest assuming the law becomes fully implemented. It is no secret that in order to pass the law, concessions to gain support were inserted to gain support enhancing the bottom lines of hospital and medical associations, drug and related manufacturers and most of all health insurers. Unfortunately there is little provision in the bill to reduce the cost of healthcare or the efficiency of the system, regardless of what we are told.

Locally we have seen dramatic increases in the cost of health insurance, prescriptions and other services. We realize a quality hospital is expensive to provide but charging a thousand dollars a day for just the room is beyond the means of many.

Call it what you want but "*Obamacare*" seems to be a more accurate moniker than "*Affordable Health Care*" which it certainly isn't and never will be. It puts the blame for this monstrosity exactly where it belongs, on the President and Congress for misleading the people.

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Watching the TV ads by personal injury law firms gives you a warm feeling to know that someone is always there to help when you suffer injuries through no fault of yourself.

The question is where do you go for help when someone decides to sue you for everything you own?

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The Chicago based Taxpayers United of America conducted a study of pension benefits being paid to Illi-

nois state employees and found over 9,900 retirees with annual pensions in excess of \$100,000 with many receiving over \$200,000 annually.

While we would assume these are based on an approved formula approved by their generous legislature taking care of loyal state employees, estimates are that by 2020 the number of Illinois state employee retirees earning over \$100,000 will exceed 25,000.

Considering that their state is already deep in debt, and that reserves to cover these obligations have not been set aside, or that new sources of revenue are limited they could have a real problem on their hands down south.

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We don't know if this story is true or not as it's been around for a while but does sound like the way our government does things.

It seems a few years ago when the space program was starting our astronauts discovered the ball point pens of the time they used to take notes did not work in zero gravity.

Our top scientists gave top priority to the problem and spent millions before in desperation they asked the Russians how they handled the problem. Very simple they said, we use a pencil.

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While big brother may not be watching you specifically, they may soon be keeping better track of the meat you eat. A recent *Press-Gazette* article reports that new federal rules from the Dept. of Agriculture have been placed in effect mandating that cuts of meat such as steaks, ribs, and roasts carry labels stating where the animals were born, raised, and ultimately slaughtered. So far they have not asked that the animals name or ID# be included in this information, no doubt in respect to their privacy. Also, the rules do not apply to ground or processed meat.

Despite the fact this mandate will cost producers and retailers millions of dollars which will be passed on to consumers, the DOA claimed that people have a right to know where there food comes from.

While this may be true, we doubt that consumers, or for that matter grocers or producers were demanding new regulations that will accomplish little beyond making the price of food even more expensive.

As far as the Department of Agriculture is concerned, we have been hearing in recent years that they have cut back on their meat inspections at slaughterhouses, and also the grading of beef by quality grades like Prime, Choice, and Select so that consumers could tell what they were eating. Also, meat inspections at processing plants were reduced and sequestered just like other government services this year while the DOA management sat around dreaming up some new regulations to impose.

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Here's a story the media overlooked. In March of this year a West Allis, man whiles driving home one night saw a woman being assaulted and beaten along the side of the road. He pulled over and ordered the man to stop, but the assaulter then came forward threatening the driver who then pulled out his pistol and was able to restrain the man until police arrived.

The attacker was arrested, and fortunately the woman had only minor injuries. Wisconsin's new "right to carry" law was credited for the motorists actions and happy ending.

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Considering a national budget is virtually non-existent, our national debt is over \$16 trillion dollars, and the President and Congress have been unable to compromise on solutions, Pres. Obamas "sequestrioning" plan was greeted as a positive step in the right direction. However, the result is that things probably got worse.

While it would be logical for any business with a fiscal shortfall to impose a 10% cut in expenses there are simply far too many "untouchable" items to make it work in Washington.

While the President talked cutting expenses, his real plan was to impose cuts on a few items that the public would notice, such as closing parks, ending White House tours, food and meat inspections and other such items in the hope the public would

soon realize the many things Uncle Sam does for them and demand even more deficit spending. It didn't necessarily work out that way.

One good example could be with the FAA. Only 15,000 of their 47,000 employees are air traffic controllers, yet those are the ones the administration decided their hours should be reduced. While completely disregarding air safety and causing massive delays and major airports, the end result was immediate action by the White House to allow full staffing by the FAA air controllers.

In the meantime, there must be thousands of ways to cut government spending if our elected officials could and would simply agree on where it is really needed and where it was actually going.

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While the government backed student loan program was well intended as a means of making college education available to more people, and has been helpful to many, is it just another program that has possibly grown out of control? Student debt owed is now well in excess of a trillion dollars, and much of that is unlikely to ever be paid. This is more debt outstanding that all individual credit card debt. Proposals under consideration by the administration are to raise the interest rates on the loans, and more forgiveness for those that are outstanding. Both plans unacceptable to many for various reasons.

Many of these loans are made with a minimum of personal information or collateral required. The same same information the government requires to obtain a mortgage loan from a private vender. While we acknowledge these loans have made it possible for many to receive a useful education who has been the greatest beneficiary of the money spent, the students or the schools?

Public and private colleges and universities have never been noted for frugal spending habits, competing with each other to see who can build the most lavish facilities and well paid staff to attract new students and a record for achievement. Also, there are few restrictions on how much they

charge for tuition. As a result some schools are far more expensive than others, requiring students to go further into debt in order to attend.

As long as a student can get government loans to pay their ever rising tuition costs, it would seem we are actually subsidizing the college system itself more than the students attending to receive an education.

Not that this is all bad, but it makes for an expensive subsidy for taxpayers to support. What is really bad is that children of Congressmen and key government employees receive taxpayer assistance in payment of their student loans. A June 19, USA Today article disclosed that in 2011 alone the government spent \$72 million to pay off loans and interest due from federal employee dependents including members of Congress.

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New or improved venues and attractions are always met with optimism in the community in anticipation of bringing in more visitor money and providing other growth. Most people seem to support such projects as long as they are not in their own backyards and as long as they do not raise their taxes in order to pay for them.

A couple of projects were recently proposed that meet at least most of the criteria.

First was a plan to add an "adventure park" adjacent to the Brown County Zoo complete with ZIP lines and a climbing wall. Financing would be provided by a \$500,000 loan from the counties general fund surplus and repaid by users fees.

One handicap could be the suggested \$20 admission fee which would put it way over the Bay Beach range at a time when half the kids in town exist on food stamps and subsidized school lunches.

The other project is a \$28 million upgrade underway at the Oneida Casino. We acknowledge this will be great addition to the other attractions and events in the area, as well as providing employment and patronage for other businesses. Casino patrons are free to wager at their own option so theoretically at least this

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venue would not be tax supported.

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Senate Bill S-744, seems to be *slithering* its way through the senate on the fast track for prompt approval by the President. While its formal name is the “*Border Security, Economic Opportunity, Immigration Modernization Act,*” and referred to simply as “*Immigration Reform,*” which is as much of a farce as referring to Obamacare as “*Affordable Heath Care.*” The name is deliberately misleading and simply just isn’t true..

Similar to Obamacare, S-744 consists of over 1,000 pages of organized confusion which very few if any of our senators, for or against, have bothered to read or comprehend. The technique used is to make legislation sound good by publicizing proposals which may have bi-partisan public approval but inserting clauses here and there which may be overlooked until they become law.

It is no secret that President Obama’s ultimate goal is full amnesty for illegal aliens, and doing whatever is necessary to make that happen with little regard for the consequences thereafter.

There are an estimated 12 to 18 million illegal aliens residing in the United States, with a cost to federal taxpayers of \$50 billion annually of excess over tax revenues. However with amnesty this cost could rise dramatically because of the additional citizen benefits to which they would qualify with little increase in revenue.

There are probably thousands of arguments on a case by case basis for and against immigration reform, with moral, logistical, linguistic, economic, security but mostly political issues all entering the equation.

It seems that no other country on earth has allowed itself to get into such a mess in the first place. Amnesty has been tried on previous occasions with the result that many aliens still slip through the cracks for fear of deportation but encouraging even more to follow.

With the thought that Congress should not rush into this issue which could very well create more problems than it solves. Take a step by step approach, and leave political

balance out of the discussion which seems to be the primary motivation in the first place.

The bill also calls for 700 more miles of fencing and doubling the border which would be similar to locking the barn after the horse was stolen.

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As long as most of us can remember, the appearance of the Fox River shoreline and adjacent bay has been high on the list of things to be done some day. There have been a number of improvements made, but there is still a lot to be done.

It is difficult to make coal yards, paper mills, power plants and shorelines consisting of rocks and chunks of concrete attractive.

We note that in recent months the Public Service Corp. and Georgia Pacific have planted large numbers of trees along the shoreline which should provide a more natural shoreline in years to come. Planting and caring for trees wouldn’t work every place but is certainly a step in the right direction.

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While there was probably good cause and thought behind the NFL ruling further restricting carry-on items at all league games andt all stadiums. It is another example of a rule that will possibly be more difficult to enforce in some cities than others.

Fans attending games in warmer climates or domed stadiums do not have to bring large quantities of blankets and extra clothing in order to survive while sitting outside in zero degree weather such as we have in Green Bay. We also note that all other stadiums have more comfortable seating than the cold metal benches at Lambeau necessitating patrons to bring their own cushions, These new rules will undoubtedly create some long lines at the gates.

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“We’ll never change the name. It’s simple. NEVER—you can use caps.”
 . . . Daniel Snyder (Owner of Redskins.)

“When the people find that they can vote themselves money, that will herald the end of the republic. Sell not liberty to purchase power.”
 . . . Benjamin Franklin

Wouda, Coulda, and *Shoulda*, not necessarily in that order, seems to be the rallying cry of the opposition to any proposal, be it next years budget, new laws, or whatever the party in power at the time proposes as part of their mandate of serving the people.

While we all would probably agree that education, jobs and prosperity, healthcare, national security, and the environment are top priority items of all our elected officials, the priorities given and distributions of available government resources seems to be a constant item of contention.

Unfortunately, partisan politics, along with the power involved seems to dictate government actions for more than compromise and the good of the people. The Wisconsin State Budget was passed by the Legislature with little partisan debate.

Now that the budget has been signed into law, The Woudas, Couldas, and Shouldas will have an opportunity to state why their ideas are better.

We recall the last budget from Gov, Walkers predecessor, included dozens of significant policy changes including new taxes still haunting the people of Wisconsin.

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The government never runs out of ways to give away money. Several years ago in response to class-action suit mania the Dept. of Agriculture made \$50,000 payments available to black Americans who claimed they were farmers but where discriminated against because of race.

While this may have been justified at the time, the *New York Times* recently published a story disclosing that thousands of persons who in no way qualified for this program had filed claims, and under the Obama administration the program, referred to as “*Pigford*”, has been expanded to include women, Hispanics, and native Americans, or just about anyone who could fill and submit a claim form.

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While bullying by other students in schools has been receiving the blame recently for causing all sorts of social problems and studies

to suggest solutions, a new report in the "Pediatrics" Journal suggests that bullying by siblings in a home atmosphere can cause just as much psychological damage to youngsters.

While this could be a problem, but before the Government steps in and tries to fix it they should determine whether the authors of the article ever had children of their own to live with.

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Democratic lawmakers have been criticizing Gov. Walker for opting out of having Wisconsin participate in the *Affordable Health Care Acts* takeover of Medicaid programs. Their motives seem to be that unlimited federal funds are always available for any purpose needed, and we can always use the money.

However, the governments cash bribe offer would not cover the ongoing cost of the program to the state, or provide the level of service Medicare recipients in the state are now receiving.

For the record, the June 24, issue of *TIME Magazine* reported that so far 20 of the 50 states have accepted the plan, 10 (including Wisconsin) have refused, but 20 states have yet to announce a decision.

FORBES Magazine refers to Obamacare as "clearly an administrative monstrosity. The idea that our central government, particularly in this high-tech era, can manage something so immense and wide-ranging as health care is *beyond preposterous.*"

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The federal governments current scandal involving the IRS and conservative non-profit organizations will probably make headlines for some time. There are a lot of interests involved and cover-ups to be made.

While the IRS always ranks near the bottom of the governments popularity scale, for the most part they go about their business in a professional and efficient manner. It is Congress who establishes tax laws and it is the friends of Congress who push for special exemptions and for the IRS to give special considerations. In most cases an individual doesn't owe taxes or fear an audit unless he doesn't report income, or claims questionable

deductions. You have to make money in order to owe taxes, and actually the tax rates for most working people are really quite reasonable.

The IRS has enough work on the hands without stirring up controversy, and it is obvious that orders to provide information such as lists of members or contributors came from the top. Normally such information would be immaterial in the course of an ordinary audit. However it could be of great interest to anyone preparing a list of contributors to political opponents for any number of reasons.

In the computer age, politics has gone high tech with data bases organizing every bit of information to advantage. Are we headed for an age where voting will be declared unnecessary, or even worse yet impossible?

Is George Orwell really dead?

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While on the subject of the IRS, we read that hiring of an additional 12,000-15,000 agents who's duty will be to police Obamacare is proceeding on schedule. Their duty apparently is to assure compliance by individuals regarding their income and insurance coverage and eventually be merged with individual medical records creating a "super-record" base for government.

If improving health care is the problem, think of what we could do with 15,000 more doctors instead.

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"Happy Birthday" has been called the most famous song in the English language and we are all familiar with the words whether we look forward to having birthdays or not.

While its' origin could be lost in history and assumed by most of us to be in the public domain, a company called Warner/Chappell claims they own exclusive copyright to the song for years and has been actually collecting royalties for commercial use of the lyrics and melody for years.

While this doesn't necessarily mean that your next birthday party should be held in secret it goes to show how the legal system can insert into our daily lives, like it or not.

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While the IRS scandal was blamed on those designated to deter-

mine the tax exempt status of organizations, this is an area of the federal and state tax codes that should be closely examined and clarified.

Many categories of exemption where established at a time when property and income taxes didn't provide the variety of services of benefit to all of us as they do today. While most of us agree that religious, charitable and educational institutions should have tax breaks, the use of their finances is seldom questioned.

For example, some compete openly with private business who pay taxes on their revenues. Some pay outlandish salaries to executives, reducing funds available for their stated purpose, and many exempt organizations spend large amounts advertising political issues and donating to political candidates and clauses.

It was obvious however that the administration through the IRS was out to harass and obtain information such as donors and membership of organizations opposed to their policies.

In this computer age such information can provide a goldmine of data which can be used for all sorts of mischief beyond whether they qualify for tax exemption or not.

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Whether or not you are a fan of Paula Deen doesn't really matter. You will have to chalk one up to the political correctness police for their job of crucifying her.

While we do not question the specifics of the charges made, the public was told, not given the chance to draw their own conclusions on the propriety of the matter. While political correctness has possibly made us a more tolerant nation and is backed by federal and state laws, is it up to the medias kangaroo court mentality to ruin a persons career unless actual physical damage can be proven?

If the truth were known, and if this is truly the level at which our system is now operating, there is no doubt a great many of our public officials and media idols could be drummed out of office for statements or actions they made or did sometime during their shady careers.

Continued on next page 

This whole affair is a blow to the civil liberties of all of us. Amen.

* * * * *

It might take a while to sort out all of the details in the Edward Snowden saga, but at this time it appears to be another government case of the right hand not knowing what the left hand is doing. No matter how this plays out it appears our National Security does not seem very secure.

* * * * *

Most of the large and successful corporations in the world are under the leadership of a CEO who sets the standards to be followed from the top down. The chain of command is picked for their ability to perform, and instructed by the CEO exactly what is expected of them.

Expenses are dependent upon making a profit, and all personnel of the corporation are responsible for their part to achieve that goal. If a profit is not made the CEO takes the blame and if not the board of directors representing shareholders may exercise their option to replace him.

While running a government may not be quite as simple, there are some similarities. The CEO, in this case the President or Governor is responsible for picking qualified people to head the various departments and agencies under his command.

Somehow of other things just don't seem to work that way. This is nothing new, but too many political jobs are passed out on the basis of friendship and patronage more than experience and business ability.

* * * * *

To most retired Americans, Social Security benefits are hands off sacred no matter what the government does with any other programs they may tinker with. In the meantime, the checks keep coming despite predictions that the system cannot support itself indefinitely. In fact, with the \$16 Trillion National debt, one wonders if any real money is there at all.

One benefit of Social Security is the payment of disability income benefits to those unable to work. This is a fine benefit and necessary to many for their support. Only problem is that it comes from the Social Security

fund that workers contributed to for their retirement. For some reason new claims for disability income have increased dramatically with the economy. A 25% increase since 2007. The Social Security admits it can't properly examine new applicants due to the numbers involved.

While we note there is no shortage of lawyers willing to help you if your claim is denied, it would seem the government should make funds available from somewhere else other than the retirement fund reserve.

* * * * *

A reliable source sent me an E-Mail which was verified as being true. It seems the U.S. Government in its haste to get out of Afghanistan, has agreed to supply their air force with a fleet of helicopters. However, since their pilots were trained on Russian models, we are actually spending \$645 million to buy helicopters from Russia to give to Afghanistan. If this makes sense to you, let us know.

* * * * *

After the disastrous tornados in Oklahoma last month, Democrats began to blame the Bush administration for not doing enough to prevent the cause which they reasoned to be global warming. This despite the fact the National Weather Service reports a 50% decline in large tornados during the past half century and was able to give more than a 16 minute warning blaming sequestration budget cuts.

In the meantime Pres. Obama is preparing new stricter emission standards on existing power plants.

Whatever comes of this you can be sure it will be expensive to everyone and likely create more problems than it solves.

* * * * *

The National Transportation Safety Board has endorsed lowering the blood-alcohol content used to determine ability to drive from the present 0.08 percent to 0.05 percent.

This proposal will certainly be subject to debate. While statistics may show that accidents and fatalities have decreased since this limit was last lowered, and we all agree there is no justification for driving while under the influence. However, would simply low-

ering the limit accomplish a significant improvement or create an enforcement headache at traffic stops?

If this proposal is approved the next item on the agenda will probably be a return to prohibition, and we all know how well that worked out.

* * * * *

It is easy to criticize individuals and corporations who are able to take advantage of the federal tax laws. However every loophole was probably made possible at some time or other by Congress *claiming (on behalf of their constituents)* that the resulting benefits would be more jobs or other economic benefits. Trouble is these loopholes somehow are never updated.

Also, at times the complete story is not reported. A recent item revealed that Apple was able to avoid a huge tax liability by shifting some of its assets and profits overseas.

While this may be true, the *National Review* revealed in an article they also paid about \$6 Billion in U.S. corporate income tax for the same period of time.

* * * * *

Who paid what during the recent income tax filing season will not be known for months, but the Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance reports that information from state returns filed during 2012 indicates that. Half of filers (51.4%) had 2011 adjusted gross incomes below \$30,000 and paid 3.8% of \$6.4 billion in income taxes. More than half of state income taxes (55.2%) were paid by the 10.4% of filers with incomes at or above \$100,000.

* * * * *

My dictionary refers to the word *OMNIBUS*, as serving several purposes, or comprising several items. An *OMNIBUS BILL* is a political term for a proposed law that covers a number of diverse or unrelated topics. .

Contrary to the sound, it does not refer to a mode of transportation, but the political usage itself usually does take taxpayers for a ride.

An omnibus bill is a single document that is accepted in a single vote by a legislative body. It packages together several measures, often unrelated, and which may or may not be

approved on their own merits. As a result controversial items which would not be acceptable on their own merits are included with others for approval, which limits debate. In addition to questionable law, this technique is also responsible for partisan spending proposals being approved adding to unnecessary taxpayer expense.

Recall back in the days when politicians actually debated and compromised on legislation with a common goal of what was best for the people. Before the National Debt covered us like a storm cloud, and there was money in the treasury it was common practice for politicians supporting legislation of equal impact and public benefit to say, "you vote for my bill, and in return I could support yours."

Maybe this is oversimplification, but was this the beginning of the horrid legislation we have coming out of Washington and to a lesser extent Madison today?

We have bills so full of new laws and provisions inserted for this reason or that that even the people who supported the bill have no idea of what they are voting for. To make matters worse the bills are purposely misnamed to confuse the media and turn the gullible public into a frenzied cheering section with outstretched hands awaiting their passage.

Some recent and classic examples are the recent farm bill, called the "Federal Agricultural Reform and Risk Management Act of 2013 (FARRM)." This one proposes to help the farming industry by increasing food stamp spending and further enhancements to the federal farm subsidy programs which has always created some winners and some losers.

Next we have the "Border Security and Economic Opportunity Immigration Modernization Act." Doesn't that sound nice? Some type of legislation to control illegal aliens from entering the country, what to do with the 10-15 million already here, what citizen benefits should they receive and how to protect our borders are all questions that required answers.

There were several valid areas of disagreement between Democrats and Republicans to be addressed,

including but not limited to future border security, amnesty restrictions, citizen benefits, and what the whole program would ultimately cost. There were many differences of opinion along party lines.

Rather than attack the issues one by one a single bill was passed. While this approach may have been expedient, it incorporates a lot of issues, some good and some bad which may take years to find if they were the correct solution. Only time will tell.

The grand daddy of all Omnibus Bills is the "Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act," more commonly referred to as "Obamacare." As everyone should be aware by this time, this bill is huge, and no seems to clearly understand just how it will effect them. So far at least 15,000 pages of administrative instructions have been added to add to the confusion.

While the word "affordable" is in the title, it includes new taxes and business requirements the impact of which is yet to be determined. While the intent may be to streamline and make health care more accessible, there are some vital points which seem to be missing.

First, what controls will there be to control the costs encountered by providers of health care services? We all expect and appreciate the professional facilities but sometimes there seems to be no limit to how much is spent to provide them for us. The same goes for prescription medicines. The cost of services provided seems astronomical.

One cost we all pay for now is all the paper work imposed on medical providers. Much of it as a result of government regulations, and will likely be much more of an expense burden under Obamacare.

Finally, one huge overhead expense affecting the cost of healthcare which was not addressed by Obamacare is liability insurance due to the fear of malpractice lawsuits. It is no secret that the personal injury lawyer industry exists in part to medical issues. They are also very strong politically.

We realize this item rambled on and covered numerous issues. Our point is that good laws are those

that are passed on their own merits,

Bad laws are a result of good and bad laws being packaged together in order to get bad laws passed. A basic change in the way our laws are passed is in order.

Equally as bad is the Wisconsin's Governors ability to use his veto pen to make corrections at his discretion in the state budget.

While intended to allow the Governor to make minor corrections and adjustments to the budget presented by the Legislature, Governor Doyle added numerous new taxes and policy changes with his veto pen, and Gov. Walker likely will alter some controversial items. The June 19, Poll in the *Press-Gazette* indicated that about 80% of respondents disapproval of policy changes via the governors veto pen at budget signing time.

While the President does not have the line-veto power, he can make arbitrary executive decisions with the same effect as new laws.

As usual, lots if things to wonder about.

Jim Frink

"Things That Make Us Wonder," consists of taxpayer related thoughts that occur to us from daily news events. We use reliable, published information and statistics. Some items are unimportant and probably not worth commenting about while others could easily be expanded to full length feature articles worthy of future study and action to protect our interests as taxpayers. We try to cover a wide variety of subjects in limited space and perhaps put a different spin on items from what you read in the papers or see on TV. We acknowledge that our perspective on some items in this column may be contrary to some of our readers. However, one of our purposes is to encourage debate, as we realize there are two sides to every question. Comments or suggestions are welcome for inclusion in future "TAX TIMES."

"The people who vote decide nothing, The people who count the vote decide everything." . . . **Joseph Stalin**

"A liberal is someone who feels a great debt to his fellow man, which debt he proposes to pay off with your money." . . . **G. Gordon Liddy**

"The inherent vice of capitalism is the unequal sharing of the blessings. The inherent blessing of socialism is the equal sharing of misery." . . . **Winston Churchill**

The TAX TIME\$

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The TAX TIME\$ July/August—2013

BCTA Meeting and Events Schedule – MARK YOUR CALENDARS.

- Thursday, July 4, 2013. Independence Day,
Celebrate your countries birthday.
- Thursday, July 18, 2013 BCTA Monthly Meeting, 12:00 Noon.
Titledown Brewing Co., Speaker.
- Thursday, August 15, 2013 BCTA Monthly Meeting, 12:00 Noon.
Titledown Brewing Co., Speaker.

Public officials and candidates for public office are cordially invited to attend any of our meetings and be recognized.

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.

BCTA Members, their guests and other interested parties are cordially invited to attend and participate in our open discussions.

COST: \$8.00, Payable at meeting. Includes lunch, tax & tip.
Call Tom Sladek – 499-7701 for information or to leave message.

**JULY –
AUGUST**



2013

“When buying and selling are controlled by legislation, the first thing to be bought and sold are legislators.” . . . P. J. O’rourke

“Gun control is not about guns, it’s about control.” . . . John Adams

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Write us at P. O. Box 684
or visit our website
www.BCTaxpayers.Org
for Details.**