



Lost Trust?

The Green Bay School just passed a \$253 million budget for 2013-14. This is a staggering 9% increase over last year's spending and a 7.1% increase over last year's budget. The student population is expected to increase by less than 2%.

Even more problematic is their continued abuse of the Community Services Fund (Fund 80). This is a separate category fund, created by the legislature, to allow districts to open up use of school facilities to the public. Activities are to take place outside of the normal school hours and are not to include curricular or extra-curricular programs of the schools.

Districts can charge user or rental fees to recover costs. This was a well intentioned program until some districts discovered there were limited checks and balances in the system. They could move programs out of their general fund, into Fund 80, and charge the full amount to their local taxpayers. If those programs were appropriately funded under the general fund, local property taxpayers would pay about a third of the costs, with the rest paid via state shared revenues. Moving spending from the general fund to Fund 80 also opens up more spending room under the general fund...a double whammy

Since 2009, Fund 80 spending in the Green Bay district has grown to \$3 million, with \$2.85 million of that levied directly against the local property taxpayers. User fees and building rentals recover less than \$150,000 of the costs. Full district programs are being carried under Fund 80, including wages and benefits.

Representative of our Taxpayers Association have made multiple appeals to the Green Bay board, over the past several years, to correct these abuses. We have seen only minor changes. We then sought legislative help, as this was a state wide issue. The result was a freeze in Fund 80 spending growth. Spending could not increase beyond previous year levels. The Green Bay district moved a number of staff positions from Fund 80 back to the general fund in their current budget, but they kept the spending the same and just shifted the money to other programs. We are currently discussing further options to end these abuses with attorneys from the Wisconsin Institute for Law and Liberty.

We all want quality schools in our area and in our state. As citizens and taxpayers, we have an obligation to support our schools and their leaders. However, we also have an expectation that those leaders are fiscally responsible and play by the rules. When we see this type of abuse of Fund 80, it is easy to lose trust, and very difficult to build it back.

Rod Goldhahn,
Schools Committee—BCTA

The BROWN COUNTY TAXPAYERS ASSOCIATION
In our 29th Year of Promoting Fiscal Responsibility in Government.

Victory by Deceit. *The Passing of Obamacare.*

We acknowledge that the concept of government sponsored and managed health care with varying degrees of control and success has long been accepted in many parts of the civilized world. Despite horror stories about the quality of health care in the other countries, including rationing, long waits to receive service, and extremely high tax rates as a result, it has often been proposed for the United States. For whatever reasons, advocates here were of the opinion Washington had the resources, know-how, and public support to overcome the problems encountered elsewhere.

While many if not most Americans were still comfortable with the present health care system, it was getting expensive out of proportion to other items contributing to the cost of living. This can be attributed to a number of factors including new and expensive technology, government mandates increasing insurance coverage, paperwork to comply with new laws, the high cost of malpractice insurance due to class action lawsuits, and the fact that many people in need of medical care were without insurance or otherwise able to afford services placing the burden on those with insurance. Much of the blame was aimed at private insurance companies.

Enter President Obama with his ambitious solution, officially known as the somewhat misnamed "*The Affordable Healthcare for America Act.*" We won't comment on the methodology used, the committees involved, the winners and losers selected for whatever reason, or the clandestine politics involved in turning it into law except it was decidedly not bi-partisan or representing all interests. What originally started out as 1,990 pages which very few people bothered to read or attempt to understand has since grown to somewhere between 20,000-30,000 pages with the additions of more rules and attempted clarifications. The lovable IRS has been designated as the official enforcer of rules in addition to their other duties.

In addition deadlines and communication with the public have been disgraceful at best as evidenced by the well publicized problems with their enrollment website. While the political maneuvering used to impose this law were partisan and overwhelming, some of the statements used by the President to convince the public to accept it are also questionable.

For example, *he promised Universal Coverage:* as the plan stands there will still be millions of citizens unable to obtain insurance coverage. The second promise was *no new taxes* on the middle class. This statement hasn't been sorted out yet, but estimates are that substantial taxes will be necessary to pay for the costs of subsidizing and administering this law. He promised *lower premiums by up to \$2,500 for a typical family* per year. Up to this time those that have checked have found dramatic increases in their insurance premiums. Much of this due to the addition of benefits not traditionally carried by most insurers at the present time. He promised *no increase in the deficit.* This is very unlikely if not impossible. Finally he said *you can keep your own plan if you like it.* So far many people have already had their present plans cancelled by their insurance carriers.

The President has made every effort to defend his plan at all costs, including a somewhat choreographed and expensive 16 day "closing" of the entire government. This because he personally flatly refused any meaningful discussion with Congress on the subjects of excessive Government spending or modifications to the healthcare law to make it more acceptable.

This was an overwhelming and confusing example of unnecessary government bureaucracy, and we commend those who saw it and its disastrous side effects coming who are seeking its repeal. There are better solutions available to fix our health care system: without partisan politics.

It all sounded too good to be true, and could possibly go down as the greatest con game in history. It may turn out that the well-publicized glitches in the Health Care website will prove to be a blessing in disguise.

Jim Frink—BCTA

October Meeting Notes.

Monthly Brown County Taxpayers Association meeting held Oct. 17, at Titledown Brewing.

David Fiorazo, president of Wisconsin Media Check, a 501c(4) non-profit organization, explained the mission of his organization. It will work to identify and document instances of media bias in local news reports. Working with a team of volunteer tipsters, Wisconsin Media Check will hold local media accountable for presenting unbiased news reports. Instances of presenting opinion as factual news will be identified and publicized. The Wisconsin Media Check website is www.wismediacheck.org.

Jerry Bader, host of the Jerry Bader Show on WTAQ Radio (1360 AM and 97.5 FM), gave strong support for the mission of Wisconsin Media Check. He explained that on the national scene PolitiFact and the soon-to-be PunditFact can be expected to find fault with conservative comments and find truth where it doesn't exist in liberal comments. The Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel has its own version of PolitiFact that regularly finds fault with statements by conservative talk show hosts and conservative writers. Some competition from a conservative media outlet would be valuable. Jerry noted that President Obama has 33 million followers on Twitter. He stated that citizen journalists terrify the established media.

County/Municipal: Green Bay Mayor Jim Schmitt has presented a \$101.8 million budget to the Green Bay City Council with no increase to the 2013 tax rate of \$8.95 per \$1,000 of property value. A \$25 million increase in the city's tax base during 2013 and a \$750,000 decrease in debt service for the budget year make the no property tax rate increase possible. Brown County Executive Troy Streckenbach has prepared a 2014 County budget that provides for a small property tax levy reduction and a \$3.5 million reduction to the County's general indebtedness.

Schools: The Green Bay School District has prepared a \$252.7 million budget proposal, an increase of about 7 percent from the \$238 million budget for last year. A debt restructuring provides a windfall of about \$5 million for the budget year. Enrollment grew by 410 students this school year, contributing to a state aid increase of \$5.3 million. To handle the increased enrollment, 65 teachers are proposed to be added.

State/Federal: Governor Walker has proposed a \$100 million property tax reduction for Wisconsin citizens.

The next BCTA meeting is scheduled for Thursday, **Thursday, November 21, 2013 BCTA Monthly Meeting, 12:00 Noon.**

Titletown

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.

National Debt Update. *Seventeen Trillion and Rising.*

At the end of October, the official U.S. National Debt reached another milestone by officially reaching \$17 Trillion. \$17,075,585,730,612., or an increase of \$100 Billion more or less over last month. Although it was not celebrated by the media, it is pretty much what all the fuss was about last month when the President got his way raising the debt limit and not worry about Obamacare until early next year when he can start blaming Congress for not compromising with him all over again.

Actually the \$17 Trillion isn't so bad considering all the other bills we have on the pile. All of the state and local governments owe about \$3 Trillion total, individuals owe about \$16 Trillion which includes mortgage and credit card debt. The real big problem could be an item called "unfunded liabilities" estimated at about \$126 Trillion, which includes future Social Security payments, plus Prescription drugs and Medicare liabilities. We truly doubt anyone has figured what Obamacare could cost.

Following is a chart we obtained from the internet illustrating the dramatic growth in our National Debt during the past few years. The country has always had a National Debt to contend with but it was always under control until the late 1950's and 1960's. We wouldn't fault any administration but government itself. There are a couple of items that could be added however, to indicate the seriousness of the problem.

First, we must understand the National Debt is not similar to a home mortgage loan or a municipal bond. Since it increases in size every day, rather than being paid off, the amount of interest payable also increases and keeps compounding on the unpaid portion. A graph showing the portion of existing debt showing the growth of both interest and principal would indicate how deep and how fast we are digging the hole. While the chart indicates federal revenues and debt growth, it does not indicate total federal spending, which obviously has to be higher than the total of revenue and deficit indicated for the debt to grow so dramatically. Time for an audit?

How Much is a Trillion?

We all know you can buy a lot of stuff with a million dollars and even more with a billion but when Congress and The President use the terms they seem to become meaningless and interchangeable. A quick refresher course.

$$\begin{array}{r} \text{A million is } \$1,000 \times 1,000. \\ \$1,000. \\ \times \quad 1,000 \\ \hline = \$1,000,000. \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} \text{A Billion is One thousand Million } \times 1,000. \\ \$1,000,000. \\ \times \quad 1,000 \\ \hline = \$1,000,000,000. \end{array}$$

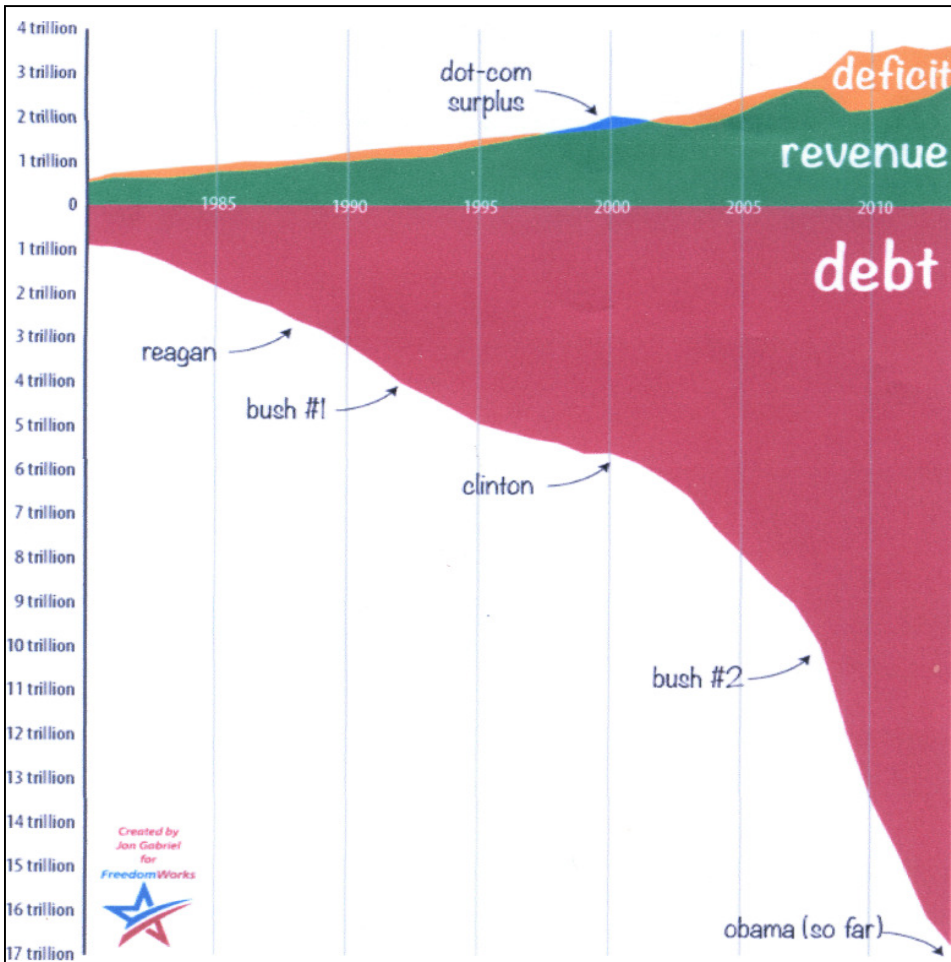
$$\begin{array}{r} \text{A Trillion is One thousand Billion } \times 1,000 \\ \$1,000,000,000. \\ \times \quad 1,000 \\ \hline = \$1,000,000,000,000 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} \text{It's also the same as a Million-Million.} \\ \$1,000,000. \\ \times \quad 1,000,000 \\ \hline = \$1,000,000,000,000 \end{array}$$

If you had a Trillion dollars in \$100 bills, neatly bundled in packs of 100, you could fit about \$100 million on a standard shipping pallet.

At this rate, it would take 10 pallets to hold one Billion dollars in the form of \$100 Bills. Since there are a thousand Billion in a Trillion it would take 10,000 pallets. Assuming you could jam about 40 of those pallets into a standard highway semi-trailer, you would need 250 semis to haul a trillion. Figure it out yourself.

The next level is Quadrillion which would be 1,000 Trillion but let's not worry about that for awhile. JF



"A million here and a couple of billion there and pretty soon it starts to add up." . . . Sen. Everett Dirksen

"Raising the debt ceiling, does not necessarily increase our debt." . . . Barack Obama

"A tax loophole is something that benefits the other guy. If it benefits you it's tax reform." . . . Russell B. Long

The enrollment process for Obamacare has gone about as smoothly as a Miley Cyrus performance at the Vatican." . . . Jonah Goldberg

EPA Announces New Standards.

The Environmental Protection Agency has announced new standards for electricity generators: standards that will in effect forbid the construction of traditional coal-fired plants and could force the closure of existing plants if, as planned, the new standards eventually are applied retroactively to them.

The legal basis for this action is questionable, based on a willful misreading of the Clean Air Act, while the economic basis is more questionable still—and the environmental basis is nonexistent. EPA administrator Gina McCarthy says that these new standards can be met through the installation of new carbon-capture equipment—which currently is in use in no commercial facility anywhere in the world—and that they are necessary to combat the menace of global warming.

The Clean Air Act requires a cost-benefit analysis of new rules issued under it, and it is impossible that a robust analysis has been conducted, since the costs cannot be known, given that the technologies are not in commercial use, their effectiveness and operating expenses untested in the real world. As for benefits: There are many greenhouse gases, and carbon dioxide, at issue here, is only one. About 85 percent of carbon dioxide emissions globally are from non-U.S. sources, and power generators are responsible for only about a third of U.S. emissions.

Given that global warming is, if it is anything, global, even substantial reductions in the emissions of new U.S. power plants will have negligible effects on the planet's atmosphere. All cost, no benefit: That is the Obama administration's energy policy. **The NATIONAL REVIEW**

"President Obama says he didn't know about the spying scandal with our allies because he was too busy not knowing about all of the problems with the Obamacare website."
 , , , **Jay Leno**

"A government big enough to give you everything you want is strong enough to take everything you have." . . . **Thomas Jefferson**

Things That Make Us Wonder.

Hopefully as you read this and make plans for the coming holidays we will have a functioning government serving us in Washington doing what they were elected to do which is working together in the interests of the American people.

Unfortunately what we have been seeing is a tragedy masquerading as a comic opera which reminds us of the Gilbert and Sullivan classics mimicking the rulers of Britain at the time. In the modern version while the main characters scurry about pretending to be performing their duties a chorus in the background keeps chanting "*Obamacare, Obamacare, Obamacare,*" which along with reckless government spending seems to be the driving issue behind the entire mess we have in the first place.

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The inability of Congress and the President to "*compromise*" has led to a so-called shutdown which if anything serves to illustrate how dysfunctional our government has become. The President's idea of compromise seems to be having both houses of Congress agree to raising the National Debt limit another notch or two to allow more spending and speed up the installation of "*affordable health care*" so that we all can see what's in it.

Problems are that we are already spending somewhere between \$2-3 Billion daily more than we have and daily interest alone has already gone past the \$100 Million mark. Some members of Congress who recognize this as a major problem that the President as the leader of the country should address.

Another problem is that while our health care system may need some improvement, the Affordable Care plan also known as *Obamacare* is not the answer. No one really knows what all is in the 20,000+ pages of conflicting regulations, or the ultimate cost to the government and the people,

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While the President promised the government shutdown if Congress

didn't meet his demands, he has disgraced respect for our government with its implementation. There is no one else to blame for "*making the cuts as painful as possible*" and then blaming others for all the backlash.

Thankfully he kept the FAA air traffic controllers and national security forces on duty rather than allow for real chaos. The National Park Services choreographed closing of their parks and monuments may have been more symbolic than practical as it is estimated they generate about \$75 million daily in admissions and fees and required maintenance in the meantime. Any foreign visitors will be sure to spread the word about their trip when they get home.

How much will be saved by not sending broadcasts of sporting events to our troops overseas hasn't been determined but we are sure they will know the score. The same as the WWII veterans who come to Washington to see their memorials and found them cordoned off.

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Recently the Federal Government had been "*sequestering*" employees for short periods of time without pay as a money saving gesture.

In the case of the shutdown, however, money was not saved by workers taking time off, even though the problem was lack of money in the first place. According to a *USA Today* article, 400,000 government employees didn't report for work while another 400,000 did report but all were paid full salaries for not doing anything. The message could have been cut some employees.

We realize that government employees are just doing their jobs like anyone else, but considering that excessive spending is at the core of the problem in the first place does anyone in Washington really know how to run the business?.

We am sure that if Congress and The President were serious about the deficit they could all go through the budget marking items that could be eliminated or reduced. A comparison of the results could produce a consensus to work with. Only problem is pleasing the folks back home with their want lists and special interests who make campaign contributions.

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Sometimes when you listen to the news you don't know what to believe. Recently the top story concerned a possible abduction attempt of a child walking home from school in an area city. We agree this is a danger we should all be aware of.

A couple of items later on the same newscast parents were being encouraged to have their children walk home from school whenever possible for the benefit of the exercise they would receive

Do we still have "Neighborhood Watch" programs?

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The unfortunate and unexpected closing of the Leo Frigo Bridge may or may not be one of those things that could have been prevented, but will create a lot of inconvenience and cost a bundle to fix. Possibly more than it cost to build back in the 1980's plus all the resurfacing and updating the past few years.

We certainly are not highway engineers, but all of the experts from the Wisconsin DOT and Washington who have been working on a solution should take a look at the old railroad bridge over the Fox River south of the Green Bay City Limits.

This bridge was built back in the 1870's when the railroad was extending north from Chicago. This was 100 years before the Frigo bridge and even 40 years before the Titanic was launched and is still used by railroad traffic. The piers are made of limestone, and so far haven't sunk into the ground or the river. All we can say is they just don't build things like they used to.

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Governor Walker has initiated a \$100 million property tax reduction by increasing state aids to school districts by that amount. How this would work out remains to be seen as the state itself has bills to pay, and the schools will likely find ways to spend it. At least it sounds better than announcing another tax increase.

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The UW Board of Regents has announced it could pay the next president of the University of Wisconsin System a \$600,000 annual salary which likely includes a generous benefit package.

We acknowledge that this is a very demanding position, and there is

competition for qualified candidates.

The UW System is a multi-billion operation with thousands of employees. If it were a private corporation you could think of the states taxpayers as being the stockholders, the Board of Regents with being it's directors, and the purpose or product being to provide education and prestige for the state. The Regents as directors are responsible for the people they select to manage the operation and the quality of the product produced.

They also should be responsible for the cost of operations and the cost for students to attend, just like any well run business.

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Amazon has announced it will construct a mega-distribution center in Kenosha County, and also start to collect sales taxes to Wisconsin sales.

The state claims it will receive \$30 million more in annual sales tax revenue as a result.

This is all good news for the number crunchers in Madison but question their optimistic methodology. We realize that sooner or later we will all have to pay sales tax on interstate sales, but it would take about \$575 to \$600 million of taxable sales in Wisconsin to bring in \$30 million for the state. We know Amazon is big, but do they actually sell \$100 per capita annually to everybody in Wisconsin?.

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As we noted previously the standoff between Congress and the President over raising the debt limit seems to be even more about implementing Obamacare as it is about digging our way deeper in debt. All hints of any compromise have turned out to be false alarms.

This is all very unfortunate as we are being warned that economic chaos could be the ultimate result.

The use of polls in attempts to gauge (formulate) public opinion have been used by the media in attempts to discredit Congress and blame them for closing our National Parks and any other government services of note,

While the issue at hand is the issue of Obamacare and uncontrollable spending it is being used to dis-

credit and weaken Congress and our system of compromise in government.

Perhaps many people who listen to the news are not aware that the term "Congress" refers jointly to both the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives. This was established in 1787 by Article 1, of the U.S. Constitution which set forth the responsibilities, rules, conduct and procedures of the two houses.

In this case the term "Congress" refers to both houses which in this case have opposing views on the situation. Perhaps rather than judging the performances of the President and just Congress, both faring poorly in polls the choices should be ways between The President, The House of Representatives, the U. S. Senate and the media who loves to put their own spin on what is going on.

Remember the whole debate is about political power, Obamacare, and fiscal responsibility, in that order.

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We have seen numerous articles regarding leadership qualities, both pro and con particularly as it applies to The President, and the attributes usually present in a successful leader, the most outstanding often being able to negotiate and compromise with those of different opinions.

There was an interesting article in the October 7, *TIME Magazine*, written by Chris Mathews, no less, explaining the differences and relationship between Speaker John Boehner and President Obama with Speaker Tip O'Neill and President Reagan 30 years previous.

The article points out that while the relationship between The President and The Speaker has been rather one-sided at times during the present administration, there was also budgeting, deficit, and policy differences to be resolved during President Reagan's tenure.

We acknowledge that presidents Obama and Reagan, along with speakers Boehner and O'Neill as extremely loyal to their parties, and believing their actions was what was right for the American people at the time. The biggest difference pointed

Continued on next page →

out by Mr. Mathews is how they treated, respected, and dealt with each other. It was not a matter of "My way or the highway." While Reagan and O'Neill both had strong beliefs and personalities, they also had respect for the voters, respect for each other, truly believed in compromise, and were not afraid to agree on solutions in a spirit of mutual achievement for the good of the country.

As a result much landmark legislation and important treaties were signed which still benefit us today. All without the theatrics of a government shutdown orchestrated to "create as much pain as possible."

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It has been announced that the "Hard Rock International", owned by the Seminole Tribe of Florida, has an agreement with the Menominee Tribe to develop the proposed \$808 million mega-casino complex near Kenosha: Provided it is approved. They already operate 175 similar venues in 54 countries according to an article in the *Business Times*.

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We don't know if the following story made the local papers or not.

"Last month (Sept.), members of the Kenosha Education Association, Wisconsin's third-largest teachers' union, voted against recertifying the union as a bargaining entity. According to news sources, only about 37 percent of the district's teachers voted to remain in a union, a result in line with what Governor Scott Walker predicted when he moved in 2011 to rein in public-sector collective bargaining.

According to the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, the Wisconsin Education Association Council, the state's primary teachers' union has lost more than 50 percent of its 98,000 dues-paying members since Walker implemented collective-bargaining reform. The powerful Wisconsin State Employees Union is now down from 22,000 members to between 9,000-10,000, according to the union's president.

During the high-profile protests that consumed the state for much of 2011, public workers surrounded the Wisconsin State Capitol in Madison

and unceasingly chanted, "This is what democracy looks like!" Now that workers are voting themselves out of forced unionization, organized labor is finally getting a taste of the genuine democratic process at work." *The National Review*

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Two of the more pressing problems facing our nation and even Green Bay, are first rampant drug abuse which often leads to violent crime, and consumes much of our law enforcement resources in a never ending battle to combat. The second is the high cost to taxpayers for the myriad of entitlement programs available on the local, state, and national levels for those who are able to qualify themselves.

We can be proud of ourselves as a nation for our compassion for the unfortunate, and realize that many are unable to survive without assistance. Nonetheless the cost of the many programs available is a major factor driving the National Debt, and is definitely a problem seeking better solutions than status quo.

One possibility brought up from various sources in the past would be to require applicants for certain assistance programs to take drug tests as a qualification. We realize this would no doubt cause an uproar, but is required by many employers today as well the military and pro sports. Those who pass would receive their benefits, while a good side effect could be less public money available to support the sale of illegal drugs.

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While the people of Green Bay ponder a new Walmart on the west side of the river, on the east side, in just 100 days, Costco has completely built, equipped, stocked, and opened a brand new store. By all accounts it will make a welcome addition to the areas retail mix. The Village of Bellevue cooperated by rebuilding the access road at the same time, which was a great example of cooperation between public and private interests to the benefit of everyone.

While Costco may provide some temporary disruption to existing business's the net result should be more

people coming to Green Bay to shop and attract even more investment.

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So far most of the preliminary municipal and schools budgets which will determine the property are coming in with only minor increases and a few with reductions.

If this holds true, it will be a compliment to out elected officials at a time when the economy is still weak and basic costs keep rising.

It is still important to attend scheduled budget meetings, ask question and express your thoughts.

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Stating "We can't afford to wait any longer," on October 24, The President announced he was renewing his call for immigration reform. He further stated "it would be good for the people, good for the economy, good for national security, and gives Congress a chance to show they can actually solve problems rather than create them."

While some of us may feel it is the president who is creating more problems than he is solving, this definitely is going to be a problem with no easy answers. A lot of thought and deliberation towards what could happen in the future with consideration for the past and what is happening at the present time will have to be weighed.

As usual it appears there are political considerations in The President's motives extending beyond the interests of the American people and national security. Let's get Obamacare settled someplace before we get involved with another political standoff.

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When reading about federal government financial matters there are always more questions than answers. Million and Billion sound alike so are treated the same by Congress and the spending agencies they are supposed to control. What comes and goes, or if it is spent legally or even accounted for seems of little concern as long as the blank checks in the treasury hold out. The attention of the public is easily diverted to the next crisis by the media and we soon forget yesterday.

One of President Obama's first initiatives while in office was to dispense

over \$800 BILLION Dollars to various financial and other interests to "strengthen the economy, get people back to work, and fix the mess that President Bush got us in to." We all said wonderful, and acknowledge that some of the money was repaid. One recipient was financial giant JPMorgan Chase who received \$25 Billion. (Yes, with a B).

In the meantime, a list of donors to Obama's 2008 campaign lists \$847,892 from JPMorgan PAC's which was only one of several corporate connections receiving taxpayer money and making political contributions. While this may be just a coincidence or by design where the recipient should have donated more would be a matter for the justice department to sort out.

Also, we just read that the justice department is pursuing JPMorgan for \$11 Billion in fines for "misconduct" in housing market loans. We realize these dealings are all rather complex, and probably within order. However, some of the TARP bailout seems to have been handed out with the same reckless abandon the government was accusing private lenders of doing. Do you still remember Solyndra?

What makes us wonder is how billions of dollars can be handed out with minimal oversight and how millions of dollars can be accepted as campaign donations without having a few strings attached. Money seems to be the heart of politics and we all end up paying for it.

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Various interests lobbying for substantial increases in the minimum wage keep pointing to fast food chains and claiming the lower wages their employees receive is a burden to taxpayers who are forced to support with public assistance programs. Unfortunately there are a lot of full time jobs that don't pay as well as others, but that is still the way the system works.

The number of people employed is still closely tied to the cost of doing business, which is usually more critical with food chains, retail stores, manufacturers, customer services, to name just a few. The more people that have jobs means a greater selection of jobs available, with more de-

mand for workers willing to qualify themselves for the jobs available. Some jobs will still be worth more than others regardless of minimum wage.

While we acknowledge that lower paying jobs can be a factor driving public assistance, the biggest problem is more likely the people who manage to do nothing whatsoever to support themselves except take advantage of every handout available.

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While on the subject of public assistance, we wonder if the welfare cost of supporting habitual gamblers ever been factored into the negotiations of new gambling casinos in the State of Wisconsin? A recent report from the Wisconsin Council of Problem Gambling claims they receive over 14,000 calls annually on their "hotline" with an average gambling debt in excess of \$40,000.

A casino complex near Kenosha could take mountains of cash from Illinois chumps on their way north for it's owners, but how much would trickle into state and federal accounts to help bankrupt state customers seeking public assistance?

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There seems to be no limits to what trade unions and/or members will do to suit their agenda.

New York's iconic Carnegie Hall is one of the most respected venues for the arts in the country. It is a non-profit corporation supported by private donors and events. They have a full-time, unionized, 5 man stagehand crew, making an average salary of \$419,000 annually. Additional stagehands are hired on a part time basis as needed.

This years big black-tie opening event had to be cancelled. Why? The stagehands were on strike protesting hiring part time stagehands.

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While President Obama has been calling critics of the Affordable Care Act "irresponsible" plus a few other things, he has been compelled to explain why the flagship website designed to sign enrollees has so far has not worked as planned.

While designing a workable software system to cover such a massive project was undoubtedly a major challenge, the government apparently got the wrong people to do the job with a no bid contract which so far has cost almost a billion dollars.

Like any government computer system it appears too many people wanted too much information. not easy to program. A classic example is the system they use for Social Security. It can record all income to your account, and keep track of payments made after you retire, but gets lost if an illegal alien steals your number and identity. In this case, several basic rules normally used when designing a website were overlooked.

Next time they should ask for advice from Amazon, the people who manage MasterCard and Visa, or the nationwide travel services. They all have systems handling millions of complex transaction a day without too much trouble.

Then again, how do you put 20,000 pages of government regulations very few people have read of care about in to a computer program?

As usual, lots if things to make us wonder. **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."

"In a time of universal deceit, telling the truth is a revolutionary act."
... **George Orwell**

"Much of the social history of the Western world, over the past three decades, has been a history of replacing what worked with what sounded good." . . . **Thomas Sowell**

The TAX TIME\$

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The TAX TIME\$ - November, 2013

BCTA Meeting and Events Schedule – MARK YOUR CALENDARS.

Thursday. November 21, 2013 BCTA Monthly Meeting, 12:00 Noon.
Titletown Brewing Co. Program,
Lisa Nelson, Walmart Stores Executive.

Thursday. December 18, 2013 BCTA Monthly Meeting, 12:00 Noon.
Titletown Brewing Co. Program.

Wednesday, December 25, 2013 Celebrate Christmas.
Wednesday, January 1, 2014 Happy New Year

Thursday. January 16, 2014 BCTA Monthly Meeting, 12:00 Noon.
Titletown Brewing Co. Program.

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 Titletown 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.



November, 2013



“The government is like a baby’s alimentary canal, with a happy appetite at one end and no responsibility at the other.” . . . Ronald Reagan

“Lottery: A tax on people who are bad at math.” . . . Bumper Sticker

SUPPORT THE BCTA

**New Members are Always Welcome. Call 499-7701
Write us at P. O. Box 684
or visit our website
www.BCTaxpayers.Org
for Details.**