

The Houdini Effect.

Harry Houdini’s alleged birthplace is just down the road in Appleton. Biographies say he was born in Budapest, Hungary. But if he loved Appleton enough to claim it, I won’t argue with him.

This came to mind as we said goodbye to actor Tony Curtis, who played Houdini in the 1953 eponymous classic. Houdini in turn reminded me of the modern escape artists amongst our midst – many of whom are running for election.

Neither Harry’s Chinese Water Torture Cell nor the Overboard Box Escape can match these escapologists. But always be reminded, watch their hands and feet not their mouths – watch what they do, not what they say -- for the blatherscape that fills the blogosphere is the grist for their mills of deception.

We have recently discovered a Houdini down in Calumet County, where a district attorney is preparing to resign after several months, privately then publicly, trying to escape the consequences of serious ethical breeches.

And his attorney said he had some medical issues to straighten out before he resigns. Medical? What’s he got up his sleeve? According to all public accounts available so far, his only medical problem is testosterone poisoning. I’d be wary of some disability angle, as long and hard as he fought to whitewash his dark abuses of power,

And UW-Madison just had a visit from an erstwhile Chicagoan who resides now at 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. He has been trying for almost 2 years to wipe his muddy soles off on George Bush’s doorstep. He promised unprecedented openness and change. But his healthcare fiasco was crafted behind closed doors, not on C-Span as he vowed publicly, on multiple occasions. And the final sausage had a familiar odor that voters thought they’d flushed.

And his feckless stimulus bill was more and more of the same old song and dance: Bailout Nation. Only he bailed out his union pals instead of banks and corporations. Gee, I guess that’s a change I can believe in.

I remember well a day last spring when a hundred of us went to a Feingold “listening session.” But I must have misunderstood “listening session,” because we did all the listening. Dr. Steve’s sessions went similarly – he spoke, we listened. But when we spoke, he changed the subject. He refused to catch anything we threw him. He escaped our scrutiny.

Folks, beware at the ballot box. Time is now for the Reid Ribbles and the Ron Johnsons, candidates who have actually created jobs, met payrolls, invested and grown businesses, lived within budgets and profited. Does it really matter that the loyal opposition rips at candidates, their public persona? Do we think the electorate really cares what the ads say? The pols, their election staffs and the 4th Estate think we/they do or should, reality says maybe not.

Not Houdini’s whose smooth banter seduces our vote, tricks our trust and escapes the accountability of our eyes will move people to the voting booth where truth happens. Will the folks see beyond the incessant banter, the non-stop accusations? Look hard where their footsteps can be seen, where they raised our taxes, where they haven’t hidden their accounting tricks and rely on your best sense of truth, only you can answer this question.

But it is time to elect the Walkers and not the talkers, the Johnson’s not the Talks-onsons; the Ribbles and forbid, the Babbles. I believe we are in the fight for our Republic, our trusted way of life; if you agree use your feet to vote, and most importantly because to care is just not enough, give your money. I will never believe a twenty, a tenner, a fiver, is beyond your means. Give something and you will feel like something.

Richard Parins — President

The BROWN COUNTY TAXPAYERS ASSOCIATION
In our 25th Year of Promoting Fiscal Responsibility in Government.

The following letter was sent by the Village of Hobart with concerns over a proposed 700 MHz communication system for Brown County.

**VILLAGE OF HOBART
BROWN COUNTY, WISCONSIN**

Captain Karl Fleury,
Director of Public Safety Communications
Brown County Government
Green Bay, WI 54311-4875

September 10, 2010

RE: FCC- Narrowbanding Migration Compliance

Dear Captain Fleury:

We are aware that the FCC has mandated changes to public safety radio operations that will affect Brown County community interoperability for emergency radio operations, and that compliance must be achieved before December 31, 2012. We understand that compliance can be achieved by either reprogramming public safety radio equipment that can be converted to 12.5 kHz, or replacing equipment to ensure compliance. The Village of Hobart served a Notice of Coordination (attached) upon Brown County on May 6, 2009 and by this letter, formally requests Coordination with the Village of Hobart on this subject.

It is our understanding that the current Brown County strategy proposed to secure FCC compliance includes countywide replacement of communications equipment that achieves interoperability utilizing the 700 MHz, and a discontinuance of VHF equipment currently in use by public safety agencies.


It is our information that steps have been initiated to secure a bond in the amount of approximately \$21 million dollars, and that Brown County will secure all new equipment for participating jurisdictions, costs for which will be allocated to respective jurisdictions. All public entities in Brown County are preparing their 2011 budgets; therefore the need for precise information is critical. If a total overhaul of the interoperability communication system is forthcoming, jurisdictions such as ours need a full explanation of what our respective communication system replacement cost will be to ascertain the respective budget impact in 2011.

Equally important, we need to be able to provide our taxpayers with a rational explanation as to why compliance strategies do not seem to include the more cost effective compliance strategy - that of reprogramming VHF communication systems to the 12.5 kHz narrowbanding spectrum. Village staff recently submitted questions to the FCC headquarters in Washington, D.C. One question asked about range and penetration comparisons of VHF versus 700 MHz. The response received from an FCC attorney was, "As a rule of thumb the lower the frequency the better the range and building penetration. So VHF signals (154-174 MHz) have greater range and better building penetration than 700 MHz signals."

Page 55-56 of the 2007 State Communications Interoperability Plan (SCIP) states: *"The Wisconsin statewide network consists of a large number of stand-alone systems interconnected into a larger system; a system of systems and as such will contain a number of gateways. Some of the gateways will be used as Radio Frequency to Radio Frequency interconnects and others as Radio Frequency to lower level system interconnections. Because the statewide system will use VHF, 700-800MHz and 4.9GHz RF bands, gateways will be designed into the system to provide the interoperability ports between systems."*

We believe that most public safety entities in Brown County utilize reprogrammable VHF radio systems, some very recently purchased. Before incurring exorbitant equipment replacement costs, we therefore submit the following questions and request a written response within fourteen (14) days:

1. Has an audit been conducted for all participating jurisdictions in Brown County to identify currently utilized communication equipment? If so, please provide the results of such audit, and the individual or entity that conducted the audit. For example, which jurisdictions are utilizing VHF, 700 MHz or 800 MHz? Also, the city of Green Bay, within the last three years, has replaced all of their radios with 800 MHz radios paid for by Nextel. Will these new radios be obsolete?
2. Specifically, which and how many jurisdictions are currently using VHF communication equipment that was purchased after 1996 and is capable of reprogramming to the 12.5 MHz narrow-banding requirements? Will those radios be obsolete?
3. Has an audit been conducted to identify currently utilized communication equipment in the adjacent counties of Oconto, Calumet, Outagamie, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, and Shawano? If so, please provide the results of such audit, and the individual or entity that conducted the audit. We understand that Shawano County utilizes VHF; is this the case for other surrounding counties? [See SPIC map attached]
4. Is Brown County's plan for countywide 700 MHz compatible with all adjacent counties?
5. What is the rationale for creating a countywide system utilizing 700 MHz when reprogramming options can ensure compliance without the costly installation of additional towers and the required cost for local jurisdictions to replace their VHF communication equipment?
6. Is a "gateway" component contemplated within Brown County's Interoperability scheme so that ports are available for interoperability of VHF, and 700-800 MHz communication systems?

Continued 

Hobart Letter Continued.

7. Recently, utilizing grant money, the village of Hobart along with Brown County had our VHF radios reprogrammed for state-wide fire interoperability. Will those radios be obsolete?

8. Assuming that radio equipment might need to be purchased, will Brown County require competitively bid proposals from at least three different manufacturers?

9. We understand that there is a 2017 rule for 700 MHz users to migrate to 6.25-channel equivalency. Will this require all 700 MHz users to purchase all new equipment again at that time?

10. What is the cost differential between VHP radios and pagers vs. 700 MHz radios and pagers?

11. What acts in furtherance of bonding for funds have been taken thus far? Additionally, have required bonding disclosure statements definitively justified the expenditure of +/- \$21 million in lieu of reprogrammable options utilizing existing equipment capable of compliance with the FCC narrow-banding Migration mandate?

While we understand the need for dialogue among public safety administrators and managers, we would ask that Village administrative staff be included in future dialogues for implementation of Brown County's Interoperability program, as the fiscal and public safety duties of local government fall ultimately upon local elected officials as served by their administrators.

Karl, the Village obviously supports the need for county and region-wide communication interoperability for optimal public safety efficiencies; it is the methodology and implementation for which we seek additional clarification. We look forward to your written response to this inquiry, and thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,
Richard R. Heidel, President
Village Board of Trustees

NOTE: The Village of Hobart received a reply to its list of questions from the Brown County Public Safety Communications Department on September 24. Statements in the reply include:

“Currently, Brown County has bonded for \$10.8 million for the initial phase of the project. The second phase of bonding for \$7 million, for the infrastructure, will be forthcoming. A set figure for the final phase of bonding, for portables and mobiles, has not been established at this time.”

“Meeting the [FCC narrowbanding] mandate is not the full driving force behind the move to 700 MHz.”

“Brown County has plans to Narrowband all current VHF radio networks in place with the County to comply with the FCC Narrowbanding Mandate.”

These replies have spawned yet additional questions from the village of Hobart, which were submitted to the Brown County Public Safety Communications Department on Sept. 30, 2010. Additionally, a meeting between the village of Hobart and the County has been requested by Hobart. The Brown County Taxpayers Association will be kept informed as to developments.

National Debt Update.

During September the U. S. National increased another \$150 Billion to \$13,545,076,611,319. That’s an increase of about \$15.00 a day for each and every one of us. Even the estimated 47% who don’t pay federal income taxes. Good thing there are plenty of rich people around.

The interest alone amounts to about \$500 Billion per year. Like the poor saps who fall behind in their credit card payments, it doesn’t take long before you have to borrow more money just to pay the interest.

A little bit of history. Back in 1930, at the start of the Great Depression the National Debt stood at about 16 Billion. We were still paying for WWI at the time. By 1940, at the beginning of WWII and the end of the depression the debt had climbed to 43 Billion. In other words, a climb of 27 Billion during a period of our history when employment was over 25%. Congress can now spend that much in one day. It was only \$258 Billion in 1945 at the end of the war and look at all the stuff we bought plus paying for all the military people.

It took until 1982 to reach the first trillion., and the rest is history. As Sen. Dirksen once said, “A billion here, and a couple of million there and pretty soon in starts to add up.” JF

Tuesday, November 2, 2010
Take time to
V O T E !
YOUR VOTE DOES COUNT.

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. BCTA@ExecPC.Com.

“George Washington reportedly never told a lie, making a person wonder how he got to be president.” . . Doug Larson
“When buying and selling are controlled by legislation, the first things to be bought and sold are legislators.” . . P.J. O’ourke

Local School Districts and Budgets.

Green Bay School District residents will not get any comfort from the latest budget request from the Administration. The Green Bay target is for 243.9 million Dollars for the 2010/11 school year, an increase of 10 million dollars over last years budget. A Public Forum to receive input is scheduled for 5:30 PM on October 11, at the district headquarters , 200 South Broadway. Taxpayers are urged to attend and voice opinions on this incredible demand. Final approval by the Board is scheduled for their subsequent meeting.

Green Bay and Wisconsin have had a difficult time these past two years with unemployment and home foreclosures at levels not seen since the great depression. This fact is apparently oblivious to the Green Bay School Board. For a comparison, We can look at Ashwaubenon which recently received approval for their 2010/11 budget with a more reasonable tax levy increase of 1.82 %. This compares to Green Bay at 3.9 % (or 7.1 % if you look at equalized Tax "Rates") which are more than double that level

Last year, The Green Bay District increased the levy by 5.1%, (or 7.2% on the equalized tax rate) so we will see a 9 % increase in levies over 24 months during these tough economic times. Remember, the Green Bay schools received 9 million dollars in Stimulus Funds last year which was in addition to the above 5.1 % increase, and it appears the *Press Gazette* did not factor that in when they reported a small increase in the "budget " of one million dollars for this year. What was missing from the headlines, was the extra millions that we taxpayers are expected to pay in order to match the loss of the stimulus funds.

The district had little publicized comment to make when they recently settled a teachers contract at 3.9 % for this year. Is it any wonder? When you consider that the District has also added 16 million dollars to their Fund Balance (cash account \$ 22M to \$ 38M) during the previous 2 years and also received 16 Million in the recent referendum for maintenance and technology improvements , you have to question the fiscal accountability and awareness the School Board has for the real world ?

Perhaps the Board will heed our thoughts, unlike last year when the Brown County Taxpayers requested a 8 million dollar reduction in taxes, and the presentation was ignored! They now want even more !

Richard Carlstedt – BCTA

September Meeting Notes.

Monthly Brown County Taxpayer Association meeting held Sept. 16, 2010.

Pres. Richard Parins reminded members in attendance that the November 2, election date is very important to taxpayers. It is vitally important that taxpayers educate themselves about candidates running in their jurisdictions in order to identify genuine taxpayer-friendly candidates.

Discussion was held on the new 700 MHz radio system being proposed for public safety communications within Brown County. Members expressed concerns about the estimated \$21 million cost of the new system. With the \$5 million estimated cost for moving the Sheriff's Department to the S&L site and the \$5.2 million (after the \$1.4 million cost overrun) cost of the new 911 Communications Center, the county's debt is growing. Adding another amount, close to \$20 million, to Brown County's debt will have a significant impact on the County's debt service costs.

Concerned about how present and future obligations for undefined costs of this new radio system will affect its budget. As an example, the Village of Hobart has sent a list of questions about the project to the Brown County Public Safety Communications Department. The Village requested a reply to its questions by September 24.

Rich Carlstedt explained that Friday, September 17, the third Friday in September, is the day used by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to establish enrollments for each of the public school districts in the state. The DPI uses the established enrollments in state aid calculations, making the established enrollment values of vital importance to state school districts. Therefor attendance in area schools on September 17 will affect our property taxes.

The next BCTA meeting will be Thursday, Oct. 21, at Titledown Brewing. The speaker will be Jim Abts. Green Bay Chief of Police. **Dave Nelson-Secretary**

Things That Make Us Wonder.

VOTING FOR THE STATUS QUO.

We note that public opinion polls intended to gauge public opinion on current subjects are often reported as the percentage for, the percentage against and the remainder with no opinion. The total is always 100%.

In case you didn't notice there was a recent, highly advertised and publicized primary election to narrow the choices as to will represent us in Madison and Washington. State election officials optimistically predicted 28% participation of eligible voters while the actual turnout was closer to just over 19%. We acknowledge some locations were higher or lower.

Nonetheless, considering that only less than 20% of us bothered to vote, is this an indication that the other 80% either don't give a damn or are satisfied with the status quo. Do we blame the 20% or 80% if we're not satisfied with our leaders?

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HEALTH CARE COST KEEP RISING.

A survey of 250 employers in the Milwaukee area representing about 150,000 workers disclosed the cost of health care benefits provided would increase from 11 to 13% this year. This despite the fact that many employers had been taking steps to control these costs.

It is probably too early to tell what Obamacare will do to help employers or improve coverage for employees, their families or anyone else for that matter.

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POLICE PROTECTION NOT FREE.

Apparently different rules apply to different events when it comes to providing police protection at taxpayer expense.

While Green Bay comprised on the EZ Lamheau event, it was reported the state patrol ran up a bill of \$435,252 for salaries/fringe benefits, housing, meals and other expenses for dozens of officers on duty at the recent PGA golf tournament.

While this was a great event for the state and was beneficial to our economy it would seem logical that profit making events should include police and security services as part of their expense.

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UNION JOBS OR NEW JOBS?

The agreements between Harley-

Davidson Mercury Marine and their union employees will at least keep the companies in Wisconsin for a while. In each case, state and local taxpayer money was part of the incentive packages to retain a union workforce. In Harleys case, the ransom was \$25 Million in tax incentives offered by the state to seal the deal.

While retaining workers in the state is important, hopefully some of the incentive money that is being thrown around will result in new jobs being created to reduce our unemployment rate.

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WHAT'S A CARP COORDINATOR?

The issue of Asian Carp migrating to the Great Lakes has caught the attention of President Obama, and it was announced that there is now an advisor to work between the EPA and the White House on the issue. This would make the administration the first in history to have an official Carp Coordinator.

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FIRST COLLECT YOUR BILLS.

The state of Wisconsin leaves no stone unturned in its quest for revenue to fund its many programs. While many of their annoying fees and taxes only result in a few million each year one source has already produced over \$100 Million without increasing taxes at all.

The Dept. of Revenue announced that since 2006 they have collected \$104,393,650 in delinquent taxes as a result of their website listing all delinquent taxpayers owing \$5,000 or more.

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FOOTBALL STADIUMS EXPENSIVE.

While the Lambeau Field Sales Tax has been a pain for Brown County business's and residents, other communities are having far worse problems.

A *New York Times* article relates that the old Giants Stadium which was recently razed and replaced still carries a debt of about \$110 Million, or about \$13 for every New Jersey resident possibly including Jimmy Hoffa. Seattle replaced its Kingdome in 2000 with \$80 Million in debt still remaining. Too bad the Packers weren't able to salvage their used stadium seats for Lambeau Field.

Complicating these debts are the fact that replacement stadiums have cost far more at a time when government budgets are stretched to the limit.

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EPA RULES TROUBLESOME.

The Wisconsin Paper Council estimates that new rules being mandated by the EPA could force the closing of 11 paper mills in the state employing 7,500 workers. The cost of compliance would not be cost effective for the mills.

No doubt compromises will have to be resolved on a case by case basis.

We often wonder what our economy would be if the DNR and the EPA were around at the time that most of our great paper mills were established. No doubt they would not have approved of their construction in any way whatsoever. For better or worse things would be different in this part of the country.

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NEW RULES FOR SENTENCING?

Most of us seem to agree that those who engage in criminal activity as established by our laws should be punished accordingly. In most cases this results in incarceration relative to the severity of the crime and disposition of the accused.

Unfortunately our prison system has become an industry of its own and a major item in both state and local budgets. A recent *New York Times* article relates a new approach by the State of Missouri. The states sentencing advisory commission has prepared a list of the costs of imprisonment for various lengths of time vs. parole or other means of rehabilitation.

This way the judge sentencing a criminal is able to put a price tag on what it will cost taxpayers, and whether this cost is completely warranted based on circumstances. While there are many pros and cons to the issue it could be a start in reforming the high costs of our legal system.

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THE POVERTY LEVEL.

The Census Bureau reports that 14.2%, or 1 out of 7 people in America are living in poverty, described as a family income of less than \$22,000 annually. With an unemployment rate of around 9% another 4.8 million fell to that level last year.

Although the income level is a loose level of determining poverty as there are probably people making less than who manage to live comfortably and many making far more who are deep in

debt. The question is at what point and to what extent do people qualify for government aid?

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SHOW US THE MONEY.

On one hand we keep hearing that the Social Security and Medicare Trust funds, based on present and projected withdrawals and contributions will be bankrupt in say 20 years or so, leaving time to work out some workable solutions.

On the other hand we keep hearing that the system is already bankrupt, as the reserves have been squandered on other government programs.

Is there any politician who will give us a straight answer on this? With a \$13 Trillion actual national debt and another \$100 Trillion or so in unfunded liability accounts isn't it about time Washington starts handling it's finances like they expect you and I to do.

No business would be allowed to operate with indebtedness far in excess of projected revenue, or give the IRS a balance sheet that doesn't balance.

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FIRST GIVE US MORE MONEY.

State School Superintendent Tony Evers is working on a new formula for school funding, but doesn't want to discuss it until after the November election. He did say his plan would call for an increase of up to 5% in spending, and do away with the \$900 Million in property tax credits home owners now receive from the state.

It will be interesting. This year schools received about \$5.3 Billion in aid, or 37% of the state budget. The state is also facing a \$2.7 Billion budget shortfall which will also have to be addressed.

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LEGAL IMMIGRANTS TAKE JOBS TOO.

The various resorts and attractions at Wisconsin Dells employ approximately 2,000 foreign students each summer through the U.S.Dept. of State work travel program. Others are employed in Door County and other tourist areas throughout the country.

This no doubt makes for a good experience for both the foreign students and the people of the US with whom they come in contact. What is hard to understand, especially at this time is the necessity of subsidizing the bringing in extra workers at a time when 155,000 of our own residents are unemployed and seeking jobs. We also have a lot of our own students seeking summer jobs.

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IT'S YOUR TAX MONEY.

Did you ever why a government construction job always seems to cost twice as much and take twice the time to complete as private construction.

One reason may be the layers of bureaucracy involved in designing and going ahead with a public project. The other is the high cost of construction labor.

Several counties are seeking a change in the state law that requires projects over \$25,000 using federal or state funding to pay the prevailing wages to all workers on the job. This law was part of the last state budget, and adds considerably to the cost of labor on construction projects, whether performed by union or non-union workers.

Although the justification of the law was to prevent out of state contractors from underbidding local contractors, the effect has been to raise construction costs of municipal projects sky high at a time when money is tight and public employees are being laid off of work as a result.

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WE NEED MORE OF "THE RICH."

It is difficult to imagine a tax system that provides all the money government can spend while being "fair" and acceptable to everybody.

Presently, the IRS claims that the top 1% of wage earners pay 22.83% of the total income tax. The top 10% pay 48.05%. The top 50% pay 87.74% while the bottom 50% pays only 12.26%.

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DECODING THE CODE.

Whatever course the country takes towards tax reform, there will be plenty of issues in the present tax laws to be addressed. Most if not all of them enacted at some time or other to benefit this or that industry, or special interest and for some reason they still exist.

One example is that credit unions are exempt from state and federal corporate income taxes. The rationale being they provided a public service by serving a limited clientele. However through the years many have grown in size and offer services rivaling commercial banks and the banks are complaining.

A *Journal/Sentinel* article claims there are six credit unions in Wisconsin alone with assets in excess of \$1 Billion.

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ALL ABOARD, MAYBE.

Despite calls from both Scott

Walker and Mark Neuman to oppose the high speed rail between Madison and Milwaukee if elected, Gov. Doyle is proceeding full steam ahead to get the project going while he is still in office.

Meanwhile supporters of the rail line sponsored a study which claimed that 13,000 new jobs would be created as a result. Interesting.

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SETTING AN EXAMPLE.

While we are all proud of the UW System and the prestige it brings our state, it seems it has never set at example of fiscal responsibility with taxpayer money. Even Gov. Doyle told the UW regents that more tough times are ahead and they must focus on how to move the system and its 17,000 Madison employees forward during difficult times.

The *Journal/Sentinel* reports their next proposed budget calls for \$83 Million in new spending.

A report by the *Goldwater Institute* claims that while Universities have been pressuring students, taxpayers, and private donors for more money claiming better education in most cases new hiring has been for administrators rather than teachers.

The reports stated that between 1993 and 2009 the number of full-time administrators per 100 students at UW-Madison increased 32%. The school has 14.4 full time administrators per 100 students compared to only 3.5 teachers and researchers.

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WHO PAYS FOR THE STUDY?

A Sept. 21, article in The *Capital Times* claims the University is seeking ways to operate more efficiently and effectively and was considering hiring a consulting firm to make a study and offer suggestions. The cost of the study is estimated to be about \$3 million. The question is, why do they have to squander \$3 Million to find out how to save money?

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TAKE THIS TO THE BANK.

Recently a consortium of Obamaeconomists proclaimed that the recession that had been plaguing our economy the past couple of years was officially over. Whether the coming elections was one of the criteria used in evaluating this announcement was not disclosed.

This news may also come as a

surprise to the fifteen million of so unemployed Americans who don't care what you call it as long as they find a job to use all of the education we have been giving them.

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NOT A GOOD RETIREMENT PLAN.

If you can beat the odds and come out a winner in the state lottery, congratulations.

According to the Dept. of Revenue, 2009 ticket sales totaled \$474.4 Million. Not a lot by state standards. \$341 Million went for prizes, advertising and expenses leaving \$132.4 for "property tax relief" which the state would have collected anyway from property tax collections. Despite all the hype tax relief was about \$22 per capita.

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THINGS BEYOND CONTROL

Has anyone wondered how BP could allow millions of barrels of precious crude oil to escape and mess up the entire gulf of Mexico, while in the meantime gas at the pump fell to a three year low?

Just recently there was a pipeline leak near Chicago which was quickly remedied but the pump price at all stations immediately rose about .25 cents a gallon as a result.

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PRIVATIZATION FOR PROFIT.

As big as the Federal Govt. is, it can still be difficult to figure out where to go for a passport, green card, social security info, help with obtaining federal aid for whatever purpose, applying for medicare, Medicaid, disability, or any of the other benefits and goodies they have available.

No problemo! Help in obtaining any of the above services, plus many more is offered unsolicited each day on the internet: by third party private enterprises. How many of these sources are legit is difficult to determine but the impression is there are a lot of ways to get around government authorities being offered by unscrupulous profiteers as long as you have the money.

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GOVERNMENT AT ITS WORST.

An example of why it is important for citizens to pay attention to how their tax money is being spent. An article in the *New York Times* reported that the officials of the City of Bell, CA, Pop. 36,664, were looting the cities treasury, and paying themselves huge salaries and benefits.

This included an \$800,000 salary for the city manager, \$457,000 for the po-

lice chief and \$100,000 for city council members. There were numerous loans and questionable expense items also.

The Los Angeles County DA has arrested and charged the guilty officials.

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GROWN IN THE USA.

We are all aware of the many products in our stores which are made in China. Many of them formerly produced by manufacturers in Wisconsin.

The good news is that the Ginseng Board of Wisconsin has announced a deal to sell Wisconsin grown ginseng to a Chinese dealer supplying about 1,000 drugstores. The article didn't disclose how many Chinese will lose their jobs as a result of the sale.

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PROPERTY TAX TIME COMING.

The Green Bay Board of Education has announced a \$243.9 Million budget which is "only" .6% over the previous year despite eliminating 27 full time teachers and administrators. They will ask for a 7.2% property tax increase which could be \$65.00 on a \$100,000 home.

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DON'T ALWAYS BELIEVE THE ADS.

Mostly when polls indicate a candidate or incumbent for political office is trailing, one of the widely used maxims is to publicly accuse your opponent of some of the abuses you may be guilty of yourself. Be it uncontrolled spending, new taxes, ethics, contribution sources or whatever. The results are often fabrications with the intent of discrediting the opponents motives or qualifications.

This usually catches the opponent off guard and right or wrong he may be at a loss to respond.

As expected we have already seen a record amount of negative ads in the present campaigns and will likely see a lot more before November 2.

It comes down to using your own better judgment as to what to believe and vote for the candidate YOU believe will be the most trustworthy and able to deliver the government YOU believe in the best interests of the state and nation.

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TABOR NOT DEAD YET.

In 1992 Colorado voters approved a state Taxpayers Bill of Rights law or TABOR, which worked to control taxes until repealed in 2006 for a five year period

by referendum C. This period has been marked by Billions of dollars in tax increases and unchecked spending.

TABOR is scheduled to go back in effect during 2011, and by most accounts it will be welcome news. Maybe it is time for Wisconsin to take another look.

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THE UNFRIENDLY SKIES

As if airlines don't have enough trouble due to fuel prices and security regulations, government agencies keep making things tougher.

While rules governing safety inspections and pilot qualifications may be in order, the Dept. of Transportation has proposed new taxes on the extra fees airlines charge, restricting the advertising of prices, and even banning peanuts as a snack. Some rules are also proposed to make it easier for unions to organize airline workers than at present. Happy flying.

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PUTTING GREEN IN GREEN BAY.

The Green Bay Packers sponsored a professional survey to reinforce the economic value of the team to the city. We are sure the intangible value of businesses relating to being from Green Bay and the team is worth several times what visitors spend during game days.

Questions the survey may not have answered is does any amount of money leave the city from ticket revenues used for player salaries which are ultimately spent or invested elsewhere, and does all money spent in hotels and retail establishment stay here or just go for employees salaries while the profits go to company headquarters elsewhere?

Also, does the fact that the Packer schedule is not released until May or so discourage conventions and trade shows from scheduling events in Green Bay during football season because of the uncertainty of hotel accommodations.

Obviously greater occupancy rates at hotels could bring even more tourist money to town. Many of these affairs are scheduled 1-2 years in advance. Perhaps the Visitors and Convention Bureau knows if this is true.

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TELL US YOUR REAL PLANS.

While Gubernatorial candidates Barrett and Walker spar over who Milwaukee's economy, the U. S. Census Bureau has declared it to be the 4th poor-

est large city in the country. Having the two top government officials blaming each other for conditions for which neither is probably to blame may be part of the reason people question politics. Both major parties may have good ideas but don't seem capable of sitting down and working out agreeable compromises because of catering to special interests and not realizing what may be best for the country.

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HELPING LOCAL BUSINESS?

The good news is that the Corp. of Engineers has awarded a contract to construct an 850 foot causeway to Renard Island. This project is long overdue.

The bad news is that the job went to a Milwaukee company with a bid about 3 times higher than that from 2 local contractors. One local company submitted a low bid of \$684,000 vs. \$2,423,336.

The Daily Reporter Business paper advises the contracted was awarded because the local firms failed to submit required paperwork to qualify the job as something called a HUBzone, or Historically Underutilized Business zones.

That's about it. Those who can figure out government paperwork and have the connections get the business and our money.

* * * * *

EVERY JOB HAS ITS PERKS.

By most accounts Pres. Obama's recent appearance at the UW was strictly a political show, The Democrats even paid \$10,500 to the University to rent the space.

No word however who will reimburse for the use of Air Force One for Prez. to get there, or the 498 police officers on duty from Madison, Dane County, State Patrol and others to provide security and protect the motorcade. Maybe they came to be energized but it's still our money.

As usual, lots of things to wonder about.
Jim Frink - BCTA

"Here comes he orator, with his flood of words and his drop of reason." . . . Benjamin Franklin

"He that goes a borrowing, soon goes a sorrowing." . . . Benjamin Franklin

VISIT OUR WEBSITE
www.BCTAxpayers.Org
EMail, BCTA@ExecPc.Com

The TAX TIMES

Brown County Taxpayers Association
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Things That Make Us Wonder.
and more.

The TAX TIMES - October, 2010

BCTA Meeting and Events Schedule – MARK YOUR CALENDARS.

Thursday - October 21, 2010. BCTA Monthly Meeting. 12:00 Noon.
Titledown Brewing Co. 2d Floor Meeting Room
Speaker – Jim Abts. Green Bay Chief of Police

Tuesday - November 2, 2010. **BE SURE TO VOTE !**

Thursday - November 18,, 2010. BCTA Monthly Meeting. 12:00 Noon.
Titledown Brewing Co. Program to be announced.

Thursday - December 16, 2010. BCTA Monthly Meeting. 12:00 Noon.
Titledown Brewing Co. Program to be announced.

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.



October,
2010

“You can’t legislate intelligence and common sense into people.”

. . . Will Rogers

“The best way to get a bad law repealed is to enforce it strictly.”

. . . Abraham Lincoln

“The government solution to any problem is usually at least as bad as the problem.”

. . . Milton Friedman

SUPPORT THE BCTA

New Members are Always
Welcome. Call 336-6410
Write us at P. O. Box 684
or visit our website

www.BCTaxpayers.Org
for Details.