



Who's that in the basement?

I spent most of last week in Milwaukee studying to improve myself, and not become a dull knife in the drawer. So while stuck in Milwaukee traffic, thank God for the relatively traffic jam free Green Bay, I spent my windshield time listening to the rich talk radio environment that is Milwaukee's.

Then I heard a statistic that upwards of 36% of the now 20-31 yr. olds in our Country still "lives" with their parents. And I heard this, and read this many more times that week. They can't or won't find work, employment that pays more than beer money and time playing video games. Many of these Millennials, as their generation is often referred, have graduated from college, probably in the Social Sciences with some pretty lame course work possessing little or no practical skills. At least when the Boomer generation left school some worked a full-time job, the now defunct 40 hr. work week, and the paycheck paid for more than a case of PBR, and a bag of Doritos.

The reason I bring this up in the BCTA Tax Times has to do with maintaining a productive working class that pays taxes because they work, they produce. And this month, these likely Obama voters will face the penalty-ridden requirements of ObamaCare, the Affordable Care Act, and guess what kids! You are expected to fund most of it from your part-time, fewer than 30 hr. work week, as well as for anyone who can't, or won't pay themselves.

Saddled with school debt, the meter most likely running on that, working in a low or un-skilled job for less than 30 hrs a week, it's no surprise you live in your parent's basement. How have we let our education establishment, establishment being the operative word, fail our society so egregiously? Just think of it, over "one-third" of what should be the most vibrant and promising sector in our economy, live with their parents. What are we heading for? My fear is social collapse

As a Brown County taxpayer whose highest earnings years are likely just a memory, I can't see where the future taxpayers will be coming from. So be warned public workers, the source of your earning is drying up, and over one-third are not able to fund your jobs. Who ever thought smaller government would come from this economic fact? And the best news is the country is about to enter the most expensive, far-reaching public welfare program the world has ever known. Well, the Romans had such public-assistance programs and when the Roman citizens were all found to be on the dole, the working immigrant class took over and the Decline of the Holy Roman Empire began.

Where is the GBMSD or NEW Water as they call themselves now, to find funds to pay for the EPA mandates about to be imposed, and none of these mandates of little of these issues is being addressed with the current construction about to commence; I hope you saw the projected 13% increase to your water & sewer bills we sent out in an email to the BCTA addressees. We still have not begun to pay for the other necessities of civil life in Brown County, police and fire, sanitation, roads, and a whole host of social programs we used to call welfare. The social programs mostly carry Federal mandates so trying to trim budgets here is impossible, Washington says you gotta pay up.

And come January 1, and more of ACA, ObamaCare, starts up, the denizens of the basements in America, won't have noticed the hammer has fallen. The question remains, why are so many of our young Millennial's generation, having graduated with expectations of a job, and a future, living with their parents? Is this a question without an answer?

Richard Parins — President

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

September Meeting Notes,

Notes from regular Brown County Taxpayers Association meeting September 19, 2013. The following committee reports were presented.

SCHOOLS: For several years the Brown County Taxpayers Association (BCTA) has been questioning the legality of substantial public expenditures by the Green Bay School District in the Community Service Fund, commonly identified as Fund 80. For 2014, the Green Bay School Board has indicated it plans expenditures of more than \$2.5 million from the Community Service Fund. Community Service Fund expenditures are 100 percent funded from local property taxes, with no state aid. The attractiveness of the Community Service Fund for school district spending is that it is not subject to levy limits.

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) has established criteria for an activity to be funded by the Community Service Fund:

- The activity takes place outside of the usual K-12 instructional and extracurricular time periods.
- The activity is open to everyone (age appropriate) in the community.
- Additional direct cost is incurred in operating the program.
- The cost of the activity is recovered through user fees unless the school board makes a policy decision that program operations should be subsidized by a separate community service tax levy.

The school board may establish and collect fees to cover all or part of the costs of such programs and services. Costs associated with such programs and services shall not be included in the school district's shared cost (state aid) On August 30, 2013, the Green Bay Area Public School District reported to the DPI that it would be spending over \$2.5 million of Community Fund expenditures on things such as middle school extracurricular activities and administrative office positions.

The Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty (WILL) is now providing the BCTA with legal support to challenge the inappropriate Community Service Fund expenditures being made by the Green Bay School Board. WILL is a not-for-profit, public interest firm that seeks to protect and advance our common interests in individual liberty, constitutional government, the rule of law, and a robust civil society.

On September 11, 2013, WILL sent letters to Green Bay School Board members giving notice that Community Service Fund expenditures they are approving may be unlawful, and recommending that they reconsider the proposed Community Service Fund expenditures for the upcoming budget year.

COUNTY/MUNICIPAL: The Brown County Board has approved refinancing almost \$15 million of bonds to save about \$2 million of interest costs over the next nine years. About \$425,000 of the savings will benefit the airport, which is managed as an enterprise fund. The remainder should benefit Brown County property taxpayers.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 17, at Titledown Brewing Co. The program will include David Fiorenzo, President of MediaCheck and Jerry Bader of WTAQ Radio

Dave Nelson—Secretary

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. Or E-Mail BCTA@ExecPC.Com.

National Debt Update.

Your share is only \$57,233.

That would be the good news if everybody in the country, all 316 million of us, decided to pay our share and start all over again. The bad news is that not everyone benefitting from our government services is a taxpayer. Each taxpayer would owe \$148,202. under the assumption everyone earns the same. You can check www.Usdebtclock.com, and watch the total rise right before your eyes, along with a lot of other interesting and vital statistics.

At the end of September, the debt was about \$16.9 Trillion, with an increase of 60 Billion, or two Billion a day since the first of the month. That means spending sixty thousand million more than we took in during one month, and the President and his followers want us to spend even more! Just like that.

Hopefully by the time you read this a budget agreement will have been reached, and the Government will be operating, but don't hold your breath,

Abraham Lincoln is credited for the quote, "The best way to get a bad law repealed is to enforce it strictly," and that might be what will have to be done with Obamacare. Nancy Pelosi said we should "wait to see what is in it for us." Despite little enthusiasm from the public, we seem to be having it forced down our throats, like it or not. Just like things used go be done in Chicago. Obamacare is a bad law, and while the President tries to make it sound good no one really knows what all it contains.

The President's threat to close down the government in order to save Obamacare is not a credit to his office. Neither is spending more money than is available by borrowing \$2 Billion a day. While he makes threats to close our National Parks, shut down federal hospitals, and delay essential paychecks, he forgets that food stamps and other entitlements, and even the government golf course he enjoys and the 747s he uses to fly to give speeches and photo ops around the country may also be in jeopardy if he sticks to his word.

Politics is politics. However, all of the name calling and partisan maneuvering we have seen in efforts to place blame on the other side of the aisle for their inability to compromise is a disgrace to our system of government and our people.

"Any fool can criticize, condemn and complain and most fools do." . . . Benjamin Franklin

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

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

www.BCTAxpayers.Org

E- Mail, BCTA@Execpc.com.

Things That Make Us Wonder.

Observing that 36 other states have already done so, the Wisconsin Legislature has been discussing a proposal to raise the speed limit to 70 MPH on certain state highways. This could shorten your trip from Green Bay to Milwaukee by about 11 minutes.

Pro and con considerations are that most people seem to drive at that speed or higher already so what's the difference. Gas mileage in many vehicles decreases dramatically at higher speeds and one reason for limits was conservation of energy resources for future generations as well as environmental concerns. The DOT probably will like the idea of more gas tax revenue though.

Some highways are designed for safer higher speeds while many are not. Highway 41 north and south from Green Bay is always busy and will be busier if improvements are ever completed. Driving at most times can be demanding. Some people drive as if they received their drivers education from watching NASCAR,

There should be more to consider than saving 11 minutes between Green Bay and Milwaukee.

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The price of residential water has increased dramatically in recent years. Part of this can be attributed to increased demand resulting in the expensive pipelines to Lake Michigan. Part can be blamed on mandates establishing quality standards for our protection. However the biggest increases have probably resulted from the addition of storm water handling facilities to our monthly billings, and the cost of operating sewage facilities.

We understand sewage district prices could go up as much as 13% citing plant improvements, and

"Giving money and power to government is like giving whiskey and car keys to teenage boys."
... R. J, O'Rourke

"I don't make jokes, I just watch Government and report the facts."
... Will RogerS

the loss of a large industrial customer seeking a less expensive alternative,

While an ample supply of potable water and environmentally acceptable methods of waste disposal are expected by all of us, we should expect that the costs to provide these services be controlled. This includes their employee benefits and costs.

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Green Bay's Broadway District has seen considerable improvement in recent years. The direction provided by "On Broadway", addition of the Farmers Markets and other events, new restaurants and retailers, plus the elimination of parking meters have all been positive factors creating an asset to the entire city.

While there is still work to do, the question seems to be, is adding a Walmart store to the mix the way the district should go? While providing jobs and everything else from soup to nuts in a rather depressed neighborhood what are the negative factors to be considered?

Residents and business interests of the area have been actively debating the issue, These are the people who will either welcome and benefit from a Walmart in their midst or prefer the neighborhood as it is without drastic changes. Their consensus for or against the project should be as important of a factor as Green Bay's concern for its tax base or profits being sent to Walmart headquarters in Arkansas.

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Unfortunately providing for the homeless is a problem faced by about every city in the world, including Green Bay. For some reason or other we seem to make more of a project out of solving it.

St. John's Church has undertaken the task and expense of providing shelter, which likely saves taxpayer money as well. The big problem seems to be they were attracting more people than they were allowed by the city, especially on cold nights, thereby creating other problems with clientele in their residential neighborhood.

We realize the problem will not go away by itself any more than you can outlaw homelessness, but limiting the number allowed at any time in a shelter doesn't seem to work.

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It appears Charging sales taxes on all internet sales will some day become a reality. Local merchants rightfully complain about losing business because customers are avoiding sales tax on their purchases and taxing jurisdictions claim they are losing millions in lost revenues.

The winners are those who patronize out of state mail order retailers even though they still pay shipping in many cases and risk penalties by not reporting their purchases on their income tax returns.

One problem may be the paperwork burden imposed on internet retailers which could eliminate much of their price advantage which surely become a reality if Washington sets all of the rules. Another cause of inflation and disruption of the way we buy goods and do business.

There are thousands of jurisdictions charging various rates of sales taxes in the country and more thousands of retailers, some large and some small making sales through the internet. In some cases only on an occasional basis. In some cases even ZIP codes do not draw the lines.

Next, every state with the tax has their own list of what is taxable or not, when and where exemption apply, and even how the purchase is to be used by the buyer. While politicians tend to think in terms of restaurants of entertainment venues where it is simple to add tax to all purchase in many cases it is not that simple.

Solutions offered by big brother include having retailers report sales tax receipts to Washington for them to report to the individual jurisdictions, a universal tax rate which would apply to everyone and everything, or forcing all retailers to deal with each state individually with compliance up to the IRS or individual state auditors.

As a former state sales tax enforcer and business owner dealing with all sorts of exemptions I can

Continued on next page →

guarantee there are no perfect or for that matter palatable solutions.

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While on the subject of sales tax a local newspaper recently brought up the subject of using our present .5% Lambeau Field sales tax for county purposes after it expires. While we realize government can spend every penny at its disposal, we still believe citizens have a right to expect them to be fiscally prudent.

Remember that Brown County was the first in the state to enact a county sales tax and shortly afterwards when people realized what had happened the tax was withdrawn. Our County Government has managed to provide a high level of necessary services ever since through good management and responsible budgeting.

Sometime back we prepared an extensive survey comparing the total county taxes per capita paid in counties with the sales tax with those without it. We positively concluded that most of the sales tax county residents paid more per capita taxes due to the combination of sales and property taxes, and in many cases the property tax rate did not decrease as promised and remained higher than counties without the sales tax.

We further concluded that sales tax revenue only encouraged additional but not necessarily essential spending and question if the results would be any different if the survey were taken today.

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Environmental interests are quick to blame industry and Republicans for many of the natural disaster we have had in recent years. These include hurricanes, floods, drought, fires, and just about anything else that kills or leaves a mess.

In the meantime, *TIME Magazine* noted there was a 60% increase in ice covered ocean water during the last year leading some scientists to believe we are actually experiencing global cooling.

If blame can be placed on natural phenomenons, who was responsible for the 1930's droughts, the 1912 iceberg that sunk the Titanic, the 1900 Galveston hurricane with

8,000 fatalities, or even the destruction of Pompeii in 79 A.D. and everything else that happened in between.

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After a recent surge in the stock market Pres. Obama explained in one of his speeches that it was unfortunate that not all Americans but only the rich were benefitting.

While the wealthier citizens are more likely to invest in stocks, they also pay taxes on any profits to be made and also absorb any losses which often occur.

A healthy stock market is what grows most private and public retirement funds, including Social Security which we all depend on. A healthy stock market provides the optimism for business to expand, provide jobs, and grow the economy to the benefit of all of us.

It certainly shouldn't be used as an excuse for another of the Presidents speeches preaching divisiveness to the masses.

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Inflation seems to be the driving force behind many of our economic problems, and we are all probably somewhat responsible.

No matter where we work or what we do, we expect and demand annual wage and benefit increases. Why? To meet the rising costs of everything else we buy or do. At one time the laws of supply and demand controlled the price of specific items. Now it is across the board on everything we buy feeding the bottom lines to keep retailers in business while meeting the salary and benefit requirements of their employees.

Government on all levels must take some if not most of the blame.

Big brother is constantly adding rules and specifications to just about everything we buy or services we use, While we acknowledge many of these are for the common benefit that is not always the case. However they all become hidden costs of living. There have been hundreds of "hidden" taxes added at the state and federal level in recent years. The price of postage is a cost that is passed on to customers.

Government itself has grown

dramatically, along with dozens of new programs we pay for. We are paying an average of \$120 Million per day and growing just for interest on the national debt, and the only solution we get is to raise the debt limit. This all ends up contributing to inflation. Sorry, we don't have a solution or even see the light at the end of the tunnel. How about you?

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One thing you can say about Pres. Obama, and right or wrong, like him or not, good or bad, is that he has made dramatic changes to the way our government operates,

A recent article in the *National Review* gives their analysis. First, was the expansion of federal powers beyond established constitutional limits. Second was to delegate more power to government agencies and away from elected officials in Congress. Civil servants in those agencies are able to wield power by imposing rules and regulations at their discretion without any real accountability. (*It's their job.*) The final step was to convince the courts to support Congress's acts of delegation and agency regulation.

One result of these changes can be seen in the implementation of the affordable care act, more commonly referred to as Obamacare.

After the law was quickly signed by the President, Congress vested power to regulate it to the Dept. of Health and Human Services for fine tuning, and the IRS for compliance. The result being several thousand more pages being added to a massive document very few people bothered to read in the first place.

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Perhaps even more troubling is the way the government is trying to control and regulate business corporations. Where government and business cooperated for their mutual benefit, more regulation means more control. The stimulus act of 2009 provided over \$850 Billion in federal funds to "troubled industries", largely in the automotive and financial fields. In return they received more government regulation and control.

The government is setting more standards for education. "Affordable

Health Care” will give more control over the entire healthcare system, while *Dodd-Frank* has regulated the banking home mortgage and other financial industries.

We acknowledge that a certain amount of responsibility and regulation is necessary within our system of free enterprise but we need a better example than the postal service.

Unfortunately we also suspect that campaign contributions may have an effect on how legislation is written or who profits from government spending. That however is an entirely different subject.

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We were rather puzzled by the recent incident in Appleton where two young men were stopped while walking around downtown with assault rifles on their backs. They claimed they were in their legal rights “to carry” which may be true. Most people seem comfortable with the concealed carry law but it doesn’t say you can just wander around anyplace in Wisconsin with an uncased rifle even during deer season.

Even though there was no way to determine if the guns were loaded or not, or what their intentions were, they made a fuss about their rights when the police apprehended them and no charges were filed.

They may have been within their rights, but certainly exceeded their common sense. If this had happened in a school zone they probably would have called out the National Guard and all area swat teams.

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The unfortunate closure of the Leo Frigo bridge along with ongoing construction on highway #41 will require cooperation from the DOT to maintain alternate routes through construction and the patience of all of us until repairs have been made.

Approaching winter weather will undoubtedly cause complications so it may take a while.

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The US Postal Service has asked Congress to authorize a three cent increase to mail a first class letter. Other rates and services would likely be increased accordingly. Typical of

Congress to OK price increases but not find ways to save money.

Unfortunately more first class mailers will find alternate ways to communicate, while the things that cost the postal service money such as Saturday delivery, underperforming post offices and bargain rates for non-profit and political advertising continue.

In the meantime, you might want to stock up on “forever stamps.”

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Back in the 70’s, 80’s, and 90’s, while the cost of health insurance was rising rapidly, it was accepted that the insurance companies were the ones responsible for the high costs of health care. During that period of time providing health insurance for employees and dependents became more of a necessity and part of the cost of doing business.

Recall the Health Care Act of 1993 sometimes referred to as *Hillarycare*. This plan was designed by a committee that provided for every possible medical condition from a hangnail to mental diseases, with the intent of making it available to everyone. Those who could afford it would require insurance, and the committee then proceeded to set artificially low rates as they all believed insurance companies made too much profit. The government would back the plan.

During debate it became obvious that public support wasn’t there and the numbers just didn’t add up.

The National Debt at the time was less than 25% of what it is 20 years later but people were rightfully concerned. Anyway *Hillarycare* was soon forgotten and most of us are probably just as happy with our health care system as it is.

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Legislation has been proposed in the Legislature that would require that a total representing 10% of a school districts student enrollment be required to sign a petition to request to change the name of the schools mascot. At present only one person has to file a complaint due to a law passed during Gov. Doyle’s tenure. As a result several schools have adopted homogenized names de-

signed not to offend anybody.

Recall several years ago PETA even objected to the name “Packers” because meat packers represented death to animals.

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Different sources have been floating the idea that some major colleges should pay salaries to their star football players. Their rationale being that their huge football programs support the schools athletic program and more and star athletes are the attractions that attract crowds.

Maybe true, but more than likely would soon get out of hand, with more cost than profit and deterioration in both athletics and academics.

It seems that as a rule good athletes are quite well compensated after they leave school and turn pro with no expense to their alma mater.

As usual, lots of 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.”

“We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children.” . . . **Chief Seattle**

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

“It’s awful hard to get people interested in corruption unless they can get some of it.” . . . **Will Rogers**

The TAX TIME\$

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The TAX TIME\$ - October, 2013

BCTA Meeting and Events Schedule – MARK YOUR CALENDARS.

- Thursday, October 17, 2013 BCTA Monthly Meeting, 12:00 Noon,
Tiletown Brewing Co. Program
David Fiorenzo, Pres. Media Check
And Jerry Bader, WTAQ radio
- Thursday, November 21, 2013 BCTA Monthly Meeting, 12:00 Noon,
Tiletown Brewing Co. Program:
Tentative: Presentation by Walmart
On store proposal.. Local Budgets.
- Thursday, November 28, 2013 A Day for Thanksgiving.
- Thursday, December 18, 2013 BCTA Monthly Meeting, 12:00 Noon,
Tiletown 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 Tiletown 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,
2013

“The politician's promises of yesterday are the taxes of today.”
. . . W. L. Mackenzie King

“We have two worries. One is that we may never get back to the ‘good old days’, the other is that these might by them.”
. . . American Legion Magazine

SUPPORT THE BCTA

New Members are Always Welcome. Call 499-7701
Write us at P. O. Box 684
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for Details.