

STRENGTH-VOICE-POWER

ACTION!

POLITICAL ACTION FROM MILWAUKEE AREA LABOR COUNCIL

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HE'LL KEEP LYING IF YOU KEEP BUYING

IS IT HARSH TO POINT OUT that Scott Walker's entire career has been built on two-faced deception? That he's something out of the Batman comics? Like the town boss Marlon Brando talked about in that old western ("You're a one-eyed jack around these parts but I've seen the other side of your face")?

It's time Wisconsin saw that hidden face.

Walker will not last long as Milwaukee County Executive. He's already said he's "out of there" win or lose.

YET SUDDENLY ALL PRETENSE of "no new taxes" for county residents has evaporated in his desire to be governor. There's been a series of hasty announced expensive reversals.

For decades he ignored the deterioration and bad management at the mental health facility, the one place the public relied on for this medical safety. He even wanted to replace one outdated and non-accredited facility with another. Now that newspaper and public investigations have exposed sexual assaults against patients, callous incapable management and neglected staffing levels, he suddenly supports a spanking new mental health facility that could cost the taxpayers \$400 million, perhaps 10 times as much as the cost of timely solution. He pledges to add \$5.5 million for nurses and other staff. This is known as closing the barn door. Damage control, not leadership.

O'DONNELL PARK? Unformed proposals by supervisors to knock it down and sell the land have his belated backing, largely to deflect the gathering storm clouds. Why under his watch has maintenance on all county properties and buildings been deferred by \$300 million? What else is waiting to fall down and kill people?

AND NOW A NEW CAMPAIGN PROMISE! That as county executive he would cut \$1 million from the 2011 budget. But he's promising something that's not there. He hasn't won the wage concessions he's building the budget on. And \$1 million of a \$258 million budget would amount to about 4/10th of 1% of that budget he can't deliver.

SO WE ARE NOT EXAGGERATING. As long as the public keeps buying, he'll keep lying about his record. He just wants to skip town and impose his methods on the entire state.

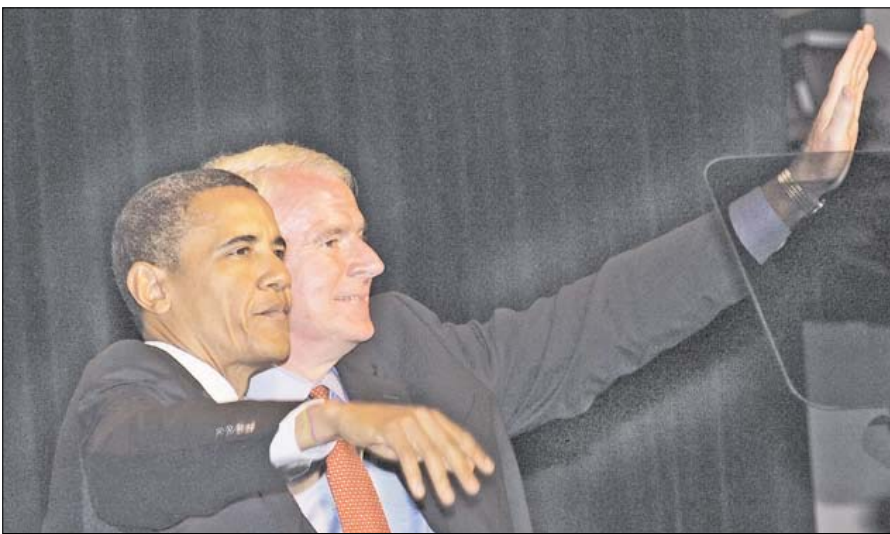
Yes, the reports and endorsements in **ACTION!** reflect strong opinion. **ACTION!** speaks its mind and hopes the public will take our analysis, our sources, check the public record and spread the word. Corner everyone with the truth before that Nov. 2 vote.

Include those hardy Wisconsin moderates who don't like how illogical gimmicks and big money are trying to drown out factual history with a loud and belligerent media voice.

**WE HAVE THE UNCENSORED VIEWPOINT.
AND YOU HAVE THE VOTE.**



Fight for Barrett, the only choice



OKAY, there is another choice in the governor's race, the guy in the other party. But honestly. Even if you're a lifelong Republican and can't quite cross over to the Democratic side, do you really think your party's choice has anything remotely to do with the sort of true conservatism and concern for good government that once drew you? Is your knee jerking but your heart really lies elsewhere?

ADMIT IT. Only Tom Barrett has come up with practical details to fix Wisconsin, not vague promises that have more to do with salesmanship than administrative competence.

Only Barrett has offered paths to new jobs, fixes for commerce that will put America first, projects to build our natural resources, health and schools -- a series of pragmatic and precise plans.

LOOK AT THE RECORD OF WHO'S REALLY DELIVERED. Then read the plans carefully and remember who keeps promises. Only Barrett, who is a liberal, but uncowed by extremists on either side.

He cares about businesses as well as working families. He believes the two must grow together. So do workers. We need good businesses that want to grow employment. So we need the only governor who will listen and respond.

Obama honors gubernatorial candidate Tom Barrett at an August fund-raiser in Milwaukee.

Feingold thinks! And he thinks about us

The other guy only has money to dupe with dead ideas

IT'S NOT JUST THAT RON JOHNSON is the ideal Tea Party cipher, it's that his slick TV handlers are trying to concoct Feingold-Lite.

Do you remember? Feingold burst on the Wisconsin political scene in 1992 with a series of self-disparaging TV ads, a debunking of political platitudes and a fun tour of things Wisconsin. He was authentic -- a serious intellectual "policy wonk" capable of making fun of himself, a true small-town Wisconsinite devoted for all these decades to holding listening sessions every year in all 72 Wisconsin counties and annually showing up on Labor Day afternoon for the labor festival in Janesville.

This year (to show how crazy-partisan this contest has become in the media), that devotion to Wisconsin rituals led the GOP to suggest he was ducking Obama's Milwaukee Laborfest appearance. Quite a laugh because Feingold has always shown up at Milwaukee's Laborfest in the morning before heading to Janesville, and did so again. But even for an afternoon with the president he wasn't gong to break his standing commitment to his hometown.

As strong for state business as for its people

JOHNSON SHOULD KNOW Feingold has always worked as hard for Wisconsin businesses as for Wisconsin workers. On Sept. 16, the senator took time off from the campaign trail to join Sen. Kohl in testifying before the US International Trade Commission on behalf of Wisconsin's pulp and paper industry, supporting allegations that China and Indonesia have dumped and subsidized coated paper in the world market, causing plant closings in Wisconsin.

Feingold noted how economic damage to Wisconsin's paper industry ripples through the economy. He called for further action to stop this practice.

But Johnson thinks the US should emulate China and has said as much. He praised Communist China in interviews for how that country runs its economy. He supports free trade, says that China has more "certainty" in its



Reasons to return Russ Feingold to the United States Senate

economy -- illegal dumping will do that -- and says the 50,000 plus jobs that Wisconsin lost due to free trade with China during George Bush's presidency was "creative destruction."

IN CONTRAST, FEINGOLD was one of a handful of bipartisan senators in those Bush years that opposed a policy that rewarded multinational corporations looking for cheap labor and no environmental standards. It's a view adopted by new president Obama, who for years has called Feingold the nation's best senator, even though they sometimes disagree on tactics.

Pundits agree: Feingold's the true maverick

FEINGOLD REMAINS THE TRUE MAVERICK in national and Wisconsin politics, a stubborn thinker who has sometimes infuriated the Democratic Party. He votes with Democrats on a lot of issues. He supported full bore the federal stimulus, he came around on health care reform though he

wanted more options -- but he opposed Obama's Wall Street reform regulations for an unusual reason: He didn't think they were tough enough. No wonder big business hates him.

His maverick ways caused long-time political reporter Craig Gilbert to conclude in the Journal Sentinel Sept. 19: "Feingold has voted with his party less often than most other Senate Democrats, and in some years less often than almost everyone on his side of the aisle. That includes times when he has voted to the right of his party as well as times when he had voted to the left of it."

FEINGOLD WAS A FORCE to reckon with even as a UW-Madison and then Harvard law student working his way through college and then entering private practice (oh yes, Johnson's ad lie; he has worked in the private sector) before devoting his life to public service. First elected to the Senate in 1992 he has won tough battles every six years largely because of his effectiveness and acumen on legislative

issues and the intricacies of government. And because of his backbone.

There are a lot of Democrats and even some Republicans who now wish they had his guts with that lonely stand against the Iraq war and against the overly broad 2001 Patriot Act -- worries about unfettered powers of the government that have sadly come to pass. There is also his willingness to work with the other party -- and yet he famously balked when they tried to run their games on his cooperation.

That streak of Wisconsin progressivism runs deep, including support of gun rights. He's hardly the tired career politician Johnson tries to paint in commercials.

Feingold's big flaw: Doesn't suffer fools gladly

TOUGH AS HE IS, he has also proven flexible to good arguments but unlikely to suffer fools gladly. Which may put him at a disadvantage against Johnson, who does say some crazy things.

In fact, that whole "career politician" critique has backfired, especially when you recall Johnson on TV with Liz Cheney criticizing career politicians, forgetting that was what her father assuredly was.

Of course, there are bad, tired "career politicians" in both parties but there are also models of people dedicated to their communities and unflagging after decades of commitment. Feingold is the dictionary definition of that commitment. The effort by an unknown out-of-touch businessman from Oshkosh to paint him as jaded angered many in both parties. They may not always like Feingold's conclusions but they respect his deep process, and they wonder if Johnson's political hires think Wisconsin voters can be so easily duped.

JOHNSON WOULD BE COMIC RELIEF, except for the amount of money and slick ads being poured four to one against Feingold and the blatant effort to capitalize on general anger over the slow pace of recovery from a disaster created by a GOP majority.

Now it's not a laughing matter. Feingold will need full bore Wisconsin at his back - the Independents, the Republicans, the Democrats, students, the workers, the retirees. They're the ones who could lose the most and who best appreciate his tireless thinking man's service.

We created ACTION! -- now YOU take action

WHY ARE WE DOING THIS? Why is the Milwaukee Area Labor Council talking to the entire Wisconsin community, not just unions, with ACTION! a brand new publication focused on the November 2 election?

Mainly it's fear of your frustration. Yes we are frustrated, too, at this economic tsunami that hit working families harder than anyone.

Real buying power is not just flat for the middle class, the new statistics indicate it has actually fallen. We are working harder for less return. The laws to protect those who work for a living have been so weakened over the decades that America is in danger of creating a permanent underclass of 10% unemployed.

ALL OF US CAN FIX IT, by rolling up our sleeves and fighting for good leadership. And frankly, if the leaders we want aren't working fast enough, we can kick-start them. But we can't kick-start those who make money off the status quo.

In 2008, we were unknowingly inches from the edge of a cliff, with an entrenched power elite that simply shrugged at our problems. But voters took enthusiastic steps to change direction and climb back.

THAT ENTHUSIASM DIDN'T KILL THE DRAGONS. They wrapped themselves around our flag and lay in wait. Now they hope their money and your frustration will keep you home Nov. 2, will curb your enthusiasm and

allow them to reverse all the real gains made since 2008.

We're in danger of waking up Nov. 3 and having to start all over to become America again. Let's take the US flag back now.

HERE ARE TWO FACTS THAT SHOULD WAKE YOU UP. The top 1% of wealthy Americans take home a quarter of the country's total income, an imbalance from decades of greed and grasp that have destroyed the fundamental fairness that should be the hallmark of a free society.

The other fact -- 1% may have the money to buy the ads and beat you up with their beliefs, but they don't have 99% of the votes that actually decide who runs the government. That's why they're screaming so loud. You may be frustrated, but they're scared.

BECAUSE REAL CHANGE IS HAPPENING despite the deep pit the US dug for itself -- and despite the junk most Americans hear. In Ronald Reagan's first two years in office, unemployment grew. By the end of Obama's first two years, we will have saved or created about four million jobs to counter the eight million lost under George Bush. We are no longer losing 700,000 jobs a month but gaining steadily. Do you think the other side would do anything near that if they got back in?

We've stopped combat missions in one of the two

foreign wars that bled our financial and human treasure. Would they have? We're slowing the growth of health care costs while adding coverage for 15 million and eliminating seniors' donut hole in prescription drugs. Would they have?

WE'VE RETURNED THE US AUTO INDUSTRY to profitability, are fixing the infrastructure, ended middleman profits in student loans, are now using our resources to build our own country while attacking that inherited deficit. They tried to block all of the above. Yet the party of no thinks you are too tired or complacent to take them on.

YES, BIG PROBLEMS REMAIN. There is no silver bullet. There is especially no magic wand if you believe the government should do nothing because it can't do everything. That's what our enemies want to bring back.

What is the key to this election? Turnout. We want it. They don't. That alone tells you a lot.

SO USE ACTION! Wave its stories and opinions in front of everyone you meet. Mainly, get everyone you know out to vote. All people -- blue collar, white collar, every collar -- have a crucial stake in this election. We're talking to you. You talk to them. Renew your hope and enthusiasm. Or be prepared to start fighting all over again from ground zero.

Can a mouthpiece buy Wisconsin?

Why you don't know who Ron Johnson is

BIG MONEY has been doing the talking, a precise resume and sufficient debates are near invisible, and Wisconsin is blanketed with radio and TV attacks on Feingold.

So here are some of the facts and quotes this media doesn't tell you about Ron Johnson:

The son-in-law also rises

HE MARRIED into money and business. He's the son-in-law of Howard Curler whose plastic shrink-wrap of beef and cheese put him in the Wisconsin Meat Industry Hall of Fame. He joined the company with family and partners. There's nothing wrong with marrying rich, but by definition this is hardly a self-made man.

That Curwood company spun off within the family to the Oshkosh area Pacur (named for his wife's family) where Johnson built his personal fortune -- partly because the company received federally-backed grants and loans to plunk a railroad spur up to its backdoor.

TODAY'S JOHNSON finds both federal funds and rail distressing though he and the company benefited over the years from government investment in business and infrastructure. Which is perfectly proper unless you're a hypocrite denying it happened.

No unions for Pacur

IT ALSO TURNS OUT that Johnson's company has a plantation mentality. Johnson vehemently opposes collective bargaining power for his workers. The company manual bluntly proclaims Pacur "a non-union plant dedicated to stay that way." It certainly *is* easier to force concessions from workers who don't stand together.

He also told interviewers that he is not concerned that worker pensions are underfunded because that simply means "benefits will have to be adjusted" -- downward. He has no problem keeping the tax breaks for the wealthiest but thinks unemployment benefits shouldn't be extended because "it's just too expensive."

STILL, YEARS IN THE BOARD ROOM and that country club view of life mean he can wear clothes well, handshake crowds and deliver a speech. Combined with a sudden willingness to spend his personal millions, and attract millions more from right-wing networks, he struck the Tea Party promoters as an ideal candidate for an angry nation, since



he's done nothing in public life to speak of and can pretend to be a "citizen legislator" without having legislated anything.

Puppet roots revealed

JOHNSON INITIALLY DENIED he was a Tea Party candidate who came out of nowhere to manhandle the state GOP, dodge in-depth answers and rely on sound bites to explain his concept of government. He modified his tune when journalists confronted him with history.

On his first trip to Washington, D.C., he sought advice on how to run from South Carolina Sen. Jim DeMint, already under attack from fellow Republicans for recruiting and saddling them with some of the most extreme candidates on the GOP ticket including Delaware's Christine O'Donnell, Kentucky's Rand Paul, Colorado's Ken Buck. Washington State's Dino Rossi and now Wisconsin's Ron Johnson, all in danger of losing, all with either dubious pasts or no proven track record of public service ability.

But Johnson has money and a timely plan. He made his inaugural speech before a friendly Tea Party crowd, tapped into the secret big business networks that organize the phone calls, placards and publicity surrounding the amorphous movement, scared off the best known opponents for the Republican nomination by waving his money, and

while not a "career politician" he now had the connections to hire their people -- career lobbyists, career political operatives and career image builders.

Among them are the slick TV hucksters and the guys who helped Bush in DeMint's backyard by spreading the rumor that John McCain had a black child.

So expect the nasty stuff to come out quickly on the heels of those Feingold-smart TV ads. The nasty stuff Johnson keeps saying in his ads he expects from Feingold? Apparently he means his own words. His high-paid handlers have been quite busy trying to keep his mouth shut -- and don't expect much independent expenditure of words on his own from this point forward. They're still spinning away his strangest remarks or trying to turn them into a TV ad.

DID YOU CATCH THE ONE WHERE JOHNSON LIKENS SOCIAL SECURITY to a Ponzi scheme? He claims there's no money there, just IOUs. He doesn't point out those IOUs are treasury notes, the same kind that Americans bought in World War II to defeat Hitler. By law the government can't default on these, never has, and Social Security can't be used to add to the national debt.

So the whole commercial just exposes Johnson's lack of understanding of how capitalism and insurance works -- a strange attitude from a businessman who seems to think the government would be better off to lock up the Social Security trillions in a vault rather than putting the dollars to work.

Johnson's global meltdown

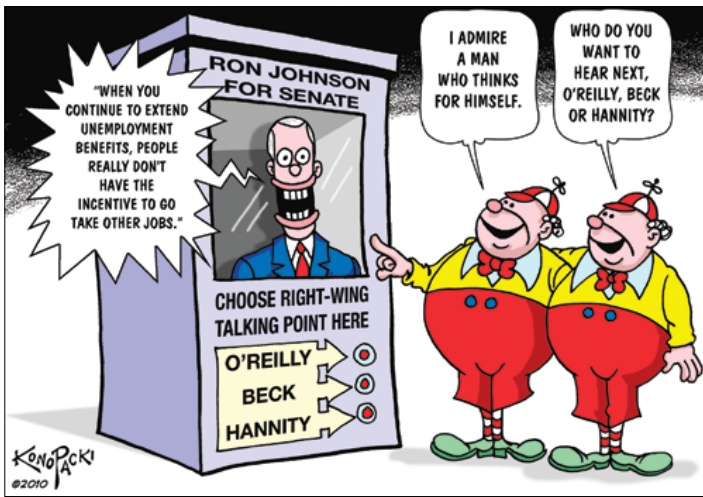
THE DAMAGE from his climate remarks may be unredeemable. It's crazy, he told interviews, to think mankind has anything to do with global warming. "It's just sunspot activity or just something in the geologic eons of time," he said, so trying to fix global warming is "a fool's errand."

Excess carbon dioxide, he added, is actually good in the atmosphere -- "gets sucked down by trees and helps the trees grow."

HE HAS ALSO SHOWN "a disdain for voters" by refusing to debate the issues -- "an established pattern of avoiding venues in which he might have to deviate from set talking point. He's repeatedly refused to debate, and he's canceled numerous sessions with groups who want to ask him hard, substantive questions."

That is not Feingold talking (though the senator in vain sought six debates; Johnson refused, saying he might do three). The quote is from the GOP primary opponent Johnson kept ducking, Dave Westlake.

LET'S CALL ON ERIC the Red for a final word. About 1010 years ago, Eric anticipated Madison Avenue by making up a friendly-sounding name for a product, in this case a country Red discovered. He was trying to lure unsuspecting settlers with a warm fuzzy name for a cold piece of land. He fooled a handful of Vikings back then but he sure suckered Johnson in 2010, who defended his climate views by stating: "There's a reason Greenland was called Greenland. It was actually green at one point in time. And it's been since; it's a whole lot whiter now." Eric the Red would have preened.



Hard truths are pursuing Walker

Walker runs on an 8-year-old myth

YOU HEARD IT AGAIN primary night when he beat Mark Neumann. Walker trotted out the mythology about how in 2002 he came in, threw the crooked politicians in jail, solved the pension mess and restored Milwaukee County to economic health.

Three falsehoods in one sentence. Oh, he did come in as county executive, unquestionably hailed as the non-partisan white knight channeling voter anger when they discovered that the so-called dropback pension would make millionaires out of some of the county's highest paid long-term executives.

Everything else in that sentence never happened.

CROOKED POLITICIANS tossed into jail and out of office? Not a one. Criminal charges hit one non-politician, the administrator who bamboozled many supervisors into accepting the scheme because it did save the taxpayers' money in the short-term. Citizens spurred by Walker voted out several supervisors who, time revealed, did not benefit from the pension scheme and thought they were saving taxpayers' money. Curiously enough they were, since the pension was doing so well back then that it allowed lesser pay for higher benefits to long-term workers without raising the property tax. The piper would be paid later, an idea that, as voters now see, Walker was quick to borrow.

(A side note: The scheme was unilaterally imposed on non-union employees, forcing unions to accept the same benefits lest their members fall behind. But Walker, relying as he so often does on his extremist supporters, convinced the voters that unions were behind the gimmick, though the historic record shows that unions were the first to question the pension scheme. And several of the new supervisors voted in quickly saw through Walker's game and have regularly opposed him.)

WALKER DID RIDE THE LEGITIMATE community anger to serve his own ends. The tactic worked so well that, to this day, the most vocal and easily stampeded of Walker backers need only a phone call, an email reminder or a hint from Walker to deluge and harass any supervisor (letters, emails, nasty phone calls in the night) who opposes his flawed budgets.



Wherever Walker goes and wherever crowds show up, the signs are sure to follow. They were at Laborfest, at deteriorating county buildings, at public rallies, at the rubble piles at the county's portion of the unbuilt Park East development, outside the mental health complex that he hired discredited management for, at the county call center that the state was forced to take over because of poor management. Citizens against Walker have been unfurling this banner and many other signs to get the message across that what happened to Milwaukee County awaits the entire state should he be elected instead of Tom Barrett on Nov. 2.

And guess what never got fixed and simply got worse for taxpayers?

THE PENSION ISSUE. Though still 85% healthy despite Walker, it does cost taxpayers to fulfill the legal obligations, an increase spurred in part by an excess exodus of workers who feared Walker would take the benefit away.

He never did despite his promises. He even pledged in 2002 to make his staff give the lucrative benefit back, which was in his power. But by 2004 he hadn't asked his staff to waive their rights -- until after his re-election. He revealed that failure after denying his opponent's requests to see those records. The delay also helped him in the re-election.

Then in 2007 - **five years into office** - Walker was forced to admit that 350 workers stood to gain \$50 million in extra pension benefits because of holes he hadn't closed. Many more management types and highest paid county workers continue to cash in the dropback to this day, all under Walker's watch and despite his promises.

In 2009 - **seven years into office** - Walker's solution was increasing county debt by \$400 million by borrowing in a Wall Street scheme to fill the pension hole.

Incidentally, while Walker was dancing and stalling, Mayor Tom Barrett fixed the city's pension problems without borrowing but by working with all sides and finding hard-nosed solutions including \$32 million in spending cuts.

THE STARK CONTRAST: Walker is trying to kick the pension can down

the road until after the governor's race. He wants your children who can't vote for him to foot the bill. But he regularly repeats his pension mythology on the campaign trail.

Even if you don't like trains, why lie about them?

WALKER HAS TO FUDGE both numbers and facts and then issue meaningless threats even with an issue Wisconsin residents have strangely mixed feelings about -- high-speed rail.

Around the nation a majority of the public supports passenger train travel and many Republicans in Congress come from regions that have learned to rely on passenger trains, higher energy efficiency and cleaner air.

BUT IN WISCONSIN, the GOP thinks it has a winning issue playing up Wisconsin's traditional love affair with the automobile, an emotional factor that leaves all politicians trepidatious. Barrett clearly supports adding the mix of trains with cars and planes, as most responsible citizens do, but Walker has never been concerned about responsibility if he senses a political advantage.

But he can't argue his case with facts or even ideology. He invents financial nightmares that can't survive the light of the day.

THE FIRST IS CALLING ON out of work politicians to back his contention that the \$810 million Wisconsin will receive from the federal government -- building a Milwaukee-Madison line as part of a national passenger train network -- can be used by him as governor for other things. The president, the US transportation secretary and virtually every responsible federal official have told him he's crazy.

He's even tried to recruit train buffs such as Tommy Thompson to suggest the same thing. As a backer of Walker, Thompson might say anything. But as a former federal official for Bush, he not only knows the rules, he helped write them and live by them. Congress enacted this money for trains. If Wisconsin doesn't take it, other states are eagerly lined up to get it. And if train haters think that an eventual change of control in Congress would bring an end to Amtrak funding, they forget how many staunch Republicans come from regions that depend on train travel.

WALKER IS AGAIN SELLING a fairy tale in an election year. But he dare not tell voters that. So once again, he lies about the price tag. His press releases say maintaining this Milwaukee-Madison train will cost state taxpayers \$10 million a year after it's built - which looks like about an 80% exaggeration, given how he inflates the actual cost and given the long-term

mass federal funding of Amtrak maintenance.

Walker doesn't reveal what news reports are finally exposing:

THE STATE WILL PAY VERY LITTLE to gain a lot. And right now it costs taxpayers about \$2 billion a year for Wisconsin's roads and highways - gasoline tax, federal, state and local taxes combined. We're paying a ton to sit and choke in ever increasing traffic jams. Trains are a far more efficient system and a hair of one percent of highway costs, so it's a low-cost addition to the mix despite the hullabaloo.

A RECENT NONPROFIT non-partisan report puts the case for trains in perspective at www.wispig.org. Walker might read it and then answer why he doesn't want to help the Midwest create 57,000 permanent jobs and support 15,200 jobs during the ten years that it will take to construct the high-speed rail project. The Madison to Milwaukee line would boost Wisconsin's economy enough to create nearly 13,000 jobs by 2013.

The network would eliminate \$10 billion in lost economy from Midwest traffic congestion. It would curb that congestion, reducing air travel by 1.3 million trips and car travel by 5.1 million trips per year by 2020.

An Amtrak passenger uses 30% less energy per passenger mile than a passenger car, reducing dependence on oil. The Milwaukee to Madison line alone would eliminate 780,000 car trips per year over a 10-year period. The Midwest passenger rail system would conservatively prevent 188,000 tons of carbon dioxide emissions each year.

WALKER DOESN'T WANT YOU to know all that, or even debate the real issue -- how low the cost and how gigantic the potential help for economy. So all he can do is insist that no one will ride the train and exaggerate both the costs and the reality. Maybe it's a political winner these days to not even discuss reality.

But can even train doubters take a chance on that sort of mentality in the governor's house?

BEHIND ACTION!

Paid for by Milwaukee Co Labor COPE, Sheila Cochran, Treasurer, as an in-kind contribution to the candidates listed. Milwaukee Area Labor Council AFL-CIO, 633 S. Hawley Rd., Milwaukee WI 53214.

Credits

Original Art: Mike Konopacki and Paul Noth.

Design Elements: League of Young Voters under Robert (Biko) Baker.

Research & Articles: Dominique Paul Noth.



Follow his deceptions step by step

A full timeline exposure of his misdeeds as County Executive, which he longs to carry into the governor's office, can also be found online at One Wisconsin Now's Scott Walker Failure Files, www.ScottWalkerFailureFiles.com



The fastest flippy-flopper in Wisconsin

IN AUGUST, WHEN President Obama headed a fund-raiser for Tom Barrett, the GOP opponent for governor, Scott Walker, issued a press release and held a conference demanding shifting federal money designated for high speed rail to roads instead. Of course, he knew full well it was not even Wisconsin money and completely impossible since it would just go to other states for mass transit, but still Walker trumpeted:

"I'd rather take that (federal) money and fix Wisconsin's crumbling roads and bridge."

OR MAYBE NOT. Because a few weeks later Obama was back in Milwaukee on Labor Day to announce \$50 billion in additional federal investment to fix the nation's crumbling infrastructure, including improving 150,000 miles of roads in every state.

Immediately Walker criticized the president for wanting to fix Wisconsin's roads and bridges.

That led many observers, including Eye on Wisconsin writer Cory Leibmann, to say, "Huh?" What gives?

WALKER IS CLEARLY against rails, but is he also against better roads?

No, as Leibmann realized, Walker is just a devout flip-flopper, afraid of offending his most conservative supporters and compelled to say no to anything Barrett or Obama support. Even stuff he secretly would love to grab. And actually has.

HERE IS A QUICK LITANY: Walker is against the federal stimulus - but he actually relied on it this year to plug the gaping holes in his county budget, to the tune of more than \$130 million.

He expressed reservations and concerns about the recent Arizona immigration law, but then changed course within 24 hours after testing the conservative winds -- now he backs a plan declared unconstitutional.

HE WAS BOTH FOR AND AGAINST concealed-carry. He was for and against smoke-free restaurants and bars.

He was against building a new mental health facility but after his mismanagement was exposed he now has agreed to a new facility. If he had acted years earlier, when the administrative and operational problems were first revealed, it all could have been

fixed for one-tenth the cost.

AT FIRST HE AGREED to let law enforcement officials finish their investigation of the O'Donnell parking pavilion fatality -- until it started coming out how much maintenance he had delayed or ignored in that structure and throughout the county buildings system. Then he jumped the gun and said maintenance issues had nothing to do with it - detailing with his own



investigators how all the blame should rest on the undetermined original installers of the questionable panels two decades ago. True? Who knows? Walker has never let facts interfere with his press conferences.

WHAT DOES HE BELIEVE? One thing is for sure. He believes in the finger in the wind. He tests conservative political currents, the money givers, and then decides what he believes depending on where he thinks the votes are.

Is this the character anyone wants as governor?

Walker the CEO wouldn't last in private world

IMAGINE YOU'RE A STAKEHOLDER in a Fortune 500 company, riled beyond sanity by executives who made themselves rich while fooling you into thinking they were saving your money.

So you hired a new CEO who promised to clean things up. But to the shock of your corporate board he did so by eliminating the research and development department, cutting back on products that worked and removing wages, health and retirement protection from your lowest-paid employees.

Naturally, your board balked, reversed the worst things in his budget and sought a pledge that the CEO would never do it again. But next year he did it again.

And again and again.

AT A FORTUNE 500 company the board wouldn't have waited past the first year. It would have fired the CEO on the spot and got a new one. Government is different, since political power ebbs and flows and misguided voters hand over control for years (until the next election). In government the CEO can continue to pass the buck and the board can only fume.

Worse, with a foolish media and a careless public, the board tends to be blamed while the CEO skates.

THIS IS THE EXACT PARALLEL to Milwaukee County government. County Executive Scott Walker's yearly games with the budget have won him a pass even from journalists who should know better. They blame the board for raising the budget every year, not Walker for deliberate ineptitude that forced the board to step in.

It's not as if the County Board increased his budgets to save their pet projects, unless like Walker you consider mental health, counseling for drugs and alcoholism, and basic bus routes as "pet projects."

In this manner he has forced the property tax level up by \$18 million in his eight years, while the board has actually helped control the increase his games allowed. PolitiFact and other web watchdogs are right to point out that raising the levy is not the same as raising the property tax, but you can't do the latter without the former, and



they are dead wrong not to blame Walker for this practice.

There's another irony here because Walker was actually called out on this game by his GOP primary opponent, rabid conservative Mark Neumann. He noted quite accurately that Walker had proposed increased spending at a faster rate than Gov. Jim Doyle over the past eight years - 35% by Walker versus

27%, "spending increases far in excess of the rate of inflation over the last eight years." But for crucial weeks that



cut into his votes, Neumann didn't pursue the attack because other Republicans forced him to stop, saying the criticism sounded too much like what the Democrats were saying.

ONLY THIS TIME, the Democrats were right, not just partisan. How Walker has escaped blame thus far is a mystery. But it should end now that he wants to run the same deception on the entire state.

The year-by-year chart below shows how Scott Walker every year introduced budgets with a higher tax levy than the previous year, forcing the county board to act like grownup accountants.

Tax Levies Proposed in Scott Walker's Budgets, 2003-2010

2003	\$218,708,524
2004	\$219,425,702
2005	\$219,416,093
2006	\$225,883,651
2007	\$232,592,517
2008	\$241,047,846
2009	\$249,889,950
2010	\$257,637,284

Total increase proposed: \$38,928,760



"The Picture of Dorian Gray" is a famous cautionary short story by Oscar Wilde about a handsome public figure who retains his looks over time while a portrait hidden in his attic reveals the actual blossoming ugliness of his corruption. It struck caricaturist Mike Konopacki as an apt metaphor for the career of Scott Walker, and we have used that vision as illustration for our reports on Walker's methods.

Determined cheerleader

WHEREVER SHE SPEAKS, Gwen Moore expects the crowd to respond as enthusiastically as she talks. And she usually gets or inspires that response.

Milwaukee's representative in the US House remains so popular a political figure that it's not President Obama's 2008 numbers in Milwaukee that Tom Barrett's campaign intends to emulate. It's Moore's, and she is determined to get the next governor there.

Politically that's a fascinating dynamic. The GOP opponent, Scott Walker, counted on Milwaukee numbers to win the primary, but flip that 73% he got and kiss it goodbye. That's Democrat Moore's sort of percentage and that what she is likely to help Barrett draw on Nov. 2. If she gets her supporters to the polls. When she does, Walker's toast.

And Moore, historians may recall, is the only Milwaukee leader to ever beat Walker in a partisan race in Milwaukee County. Back in 1990 in an Assembly race, she buried him with ... 73% of the vote.

A FURTHER IRONY. Moore is a big champion of Barrett, a longtime colleague in a mutual admiration society, despite the fact that she has been prominently on opposite sides from him on a few key issues. It's not just the disputes, but how both sides work through them, that she has made a major election selling point. Yes, she wants the KRM train line to Chicago he does, but only after the government helps fix the bus transit shortfall that Walker created at the county. She opposed Barrett on his public school approach.

But she's also the one who proclaimed the motto for public education that Barrett now needs in the governor's race: "All hands on deck!" And in those rousing speeches she puts the issues in the election squarely before voters.

"IT'S NOT REALLY ABOUT BARRETT or Feingold," she reminds the crowd. "This election is about you. Who will listen to you when elected? Do you think that other side will care a drop for your problems? Will they listen to anyone but that big business lobby funding their lunches and truly obscene commercials?"

"What you know about Barrett and Feingold is what they basically believe, and one part of that is that they will listen to people, to real working citizens, and they respond. If you don't like some of what they decide, get them in office and then whoop their butts. But those other guys? They don't have a clue, they won't budge and we don't have a chance."

THE DOWN-HOME BLUNTNES resonates not just because Moore is a tireless presence at working family events and union rallies. Not just because she transparently uses her position in Congress to talk up Wisconsin and bring home money for jobs, education, block by block community services. Reduced meals, school breakfasts, neighborhood stabilization programs, she's been a key voice getting help through Congress.

More quietly the business community also recognizes she's their go-to voice, actively promoting a better economic environment and taking detailed, often unreported steps to improve the financial climate.

FEW REALIZE THAT SHE SITS on the crucial House Committee on Financial Services and has proven amazingly knowledgeable and influential on international monetary policy, capital markets, financial oversight and government sponsored enterprises.



CAN'T HEAR YOU! Gwen Moore's humorous admonition to stir up the crowd, as she did at Laborfest. It's become a familiar burst of enthusiasm that many expect will help turn out Milwaukeeans to support not just her but also Russ Feingold and Tom Barrett in key numbers.

Moore cites vast Sept. 23 health gains

IN ALL THE PARTISAN HEAT, the sidetracked media has not told the public enough about these important changes, a failure that outrages lawmakers like Moore who brought it all about. To detail just some of the protections Sept. 23 brought:

NO DISCRIMINATING AGAINST KIDS WITH PRE-EXISTING CONDITIONS: Tens of thousands of families had been denied insurance each year for their children, but now plans cannot discriminate against kids with pre-existing conditions. By 2014, no one - any age - seeking coverage can be discriminated against because of a pre-existing condition. But right now, up to 72,000 uninsured children are expected to gain coverage by banning insurers from refusing them. Coverage for up to 90,000 children will no longer exclude benefits because of a pre-existing condition.

COVERING YOUNG ADULTS ON PARENT'S PLAN: As of Sept. 23rd, young adults will be allowed to remain on their parent's plan until their 26th birthday, unless they are offered coverage at work. Up to 2.4 million young adults, and nearly 600,000 who purchase coverage in the individual market, can now gain coverage through their parents.

NO DROPPING OF COVERAGE: Before reform, insurance companies could cancel your coverage when you got sick and needed it most because of a simple mistake on your application. They are now banned from cutting off your coverage due to an unintentional mistake on your application.

NO LIMITING COVERAGE: Before reform, cancer patients and individuals suffering from other serious and chronic diseases were often forced to restrict or go without treatment because of an insurer's lifetime limit on their coverage. Insurance companies can no longer impose such a lifetime limit. The use of annual dollar limits will be restricted, and in 2014 will be banned completely.

NEW PLANS BRING WIDER RIGHTS: As of September 23rd, if you purchase or join a new plan, insurance companies are banned from restricting emergency room doctors or charge more if you went out of network.

You will also receive recommended preventive care with no out-of-pocket cost. That includes services like mammograms, colonoscopies, immunizations, pre-natal and new baby care.

And if you purchase or join a new policy, you will be guaranteed the right to appeal to an independent third party an insurance company's decisions.

SHE'S THE ONE WISCONSIN Democrat who seems in no trouble this election cycle, yet she's working harder than anyone to get her colleagues elected. Ask her why and she is clearly distressed that, rather than the public championing the tremendous advances President Obama has brought to the county in less than two years, the citizens seem cowed by belligerent money and derisive voices on the other side. Those have forced Democrats to defend "major stuff we should be shouting from the rooftops, like real health care reform."

On that front, Moore and the president are fighting back to make people

see what was really accomplished in the Affordable Care Act signed into law last March 23.

DESPITE THE RAILING against the bill as a government takeover because it requires health coverage for virtually all, to lessen the pace of runaway costs, what has been missed is how it returns basic power to the consumer from the control of insurance companies.

A number of major protections for patients, improvements in drug coverage and protections against fraud were already in place but on September 23, six months into the bill, the "Patient's Bill of Rights" portion of the law took full effect.



Candidate Tom Michalski

A worker's voice for working families in District 21

THERE HAVEN'T BEEN a lot of partisan antics in the 21st Assembly District, just a quiet jockeying about who will best represent the hard-working citizens of Oak Creek, South Milwaukee and two southernmost slices of Milwaukee.

The incumbent Republican, Mark Honadel, may have committed an Internet boner in trying to look like the worker's best friend. He posed on his own website with his cross party buddy Jeff Pale, who just got soundly beaten by Chris Larson in the area's state senate race. One key issue was Pale taking credit for jobs he didn't have much to do with helping. Oh, oops.

EVEN WORSE FOR HONADEL, his opponent is a true working man's champion, Tom Michalski. For years on the St. Francis School Board, Michalski served as treasurer and helped push through vital referendums. He reduced tax rates sitting on the Oak Creek Common Council. And he worked nearly 40 years at Rockwell, rising to chief steward and vice president of UE Local 1111 where he was known as a committed advocate for fellow workers.

NOT ENOUGH? He also sits on the MATC board and is noted for pushing solar and energy efficiency. If you tried to invent a better candidate for organized labor you couldn't, notes one of his friends and chief supporters, UAW leader and University of Wisconsin regent John Drew. "When one of our brothers or sisters steps up to take on an anti-labor Republican like Honadel, we should show our support," said Drew.

But it's more than unions backing Michalski. Tirelessly working the doors in his district, he is making a point that resonates. His top priority "has to be retaining current business and attracting businesses - large or small - that are able to pay family sustaining wages," he says on the trail.

A NUMBER OF SUPPORTERS for a recent fund-raiser -- another such event was hosted by Lt. Gov. Barbara Lawton and Assembly leader Mike Sheridan - included Reps. Jon Richards and Sandy Pasch, along with Milwaukee Ald. Nik Kovac, who reminded the crowd of the importance of "changing the atmosphere" in Madison.

"I know there's this view that the city is liberal and the suburbs are conservative," he said, "but there are so many common themes that we need to hear real working people's voices in, and working people define this district."

Which echoes Michalski's main theme: Madison has to return to Job One -- putting people back to work.

A tale of two wives on campaign trail

FOR THOSE OF US WHO DARE ANSWER the telephone or watch television during an election season, the days before the Wisconsin primary brought quite different encounters with the families of candidates for governor.

The one I could justify -- and not just because I have long liked Tom Barrett -- was the rare but powerful appearance of his wife in a TV commercial, the first time Barrett's team deliberately used his beat-down outside the State Fair in a political context.

EVERYONE KNOWS THE STORY - how Barrett saw a beefy guy trying to rip a baby away from its grandmother. After asking a family member to watch his own kids, Barrett stepped forward to try to ease the situation and stop the violence. And suddenly the guy pulled a metal tire iron from under his shirt and beat Milwaukee's mayor to the ground and within an inch of his life despite Barrett's efforts to protect himself.

News footage, which made up much of Kris Barrett's TV ad, revealed the aftermath, a bloody Barrett with broken teeth and permanent damage to one hand.

THE BULK OF THE COMMERCIAL WAS HEARTFELT and a straight account of family reaction, and I had always been curious about that. Here was a moment we've all been through and here was how he behaved. I've been to the State Fair with my family and like many others I wondered what I would have done. Wade right in and try to calm an obviously violent situation? Protect total strangers? I'm pretty sure I would have looked around for a policeman, or rushed away with my family and later tried to call 911.

Tom Barrett didn't. He went right in. His wife held her emotions in check, she is no professional spokesman, but even a year later you could tell this was staggering to his loved ones. They may be proud of him, but they sure don't have to like what happened. Still, she noted, "There's people with the kind of character who don't think about circumstances, about what might happen to them. They just respond. And I don't think he ever thought about it."

NOT JUST ON TV BUT IN PERSON in a long career covering politicians, I've seen the reaction to trouble and violence. It takes a certain amount of hard-nosed wading in just to run for public office, and leaders of both major parties have acquitted themselves well, revealing something of their personal traits. I recall Ronald Reagan's humor after being shot and nearly dying. I recall an unpublicized moment I witnessed several years ago at the Pfister Hotel when a former vice president, Al Gore, leaped forward to help a falling TV cameraman while the rest of us media types stood frozen (or maybe wondering how such a big man like Gore could move forward so fast). But I've also seen politicians flinch at violence, or look around for an aide. I even saw one candidate, who shall go nameless, duck out a side door.

So the human side of the Barrett moment always struck me as something worth hearing more about. I had no problem with the campaign inserting something everyone was talking about anyway into a political race.

A FEW DAYS LATER, IN A TIMING hard to shake off as coincidence, particularly since Barrett's TV commercial had such a powerful immediate impact, I answered the home phone to find a robocall from another wife rarely visible in a campaign context. And it was bizarre and trivial by comparison. Tonette Walker was on the phone complaining, of all things, about something perfectly natural, how one Democrat was giving a million dollars of his campaign donations to another Democrat, Tom Barrett.

Was she going to complain that the well-heeled Jim Sensenbrenner hadn't done the same for her husband? No, it turned out. The weak purpose of the call was to state that Jim Doyle gave the money to Barrett to "get" her husband. Yes, it was all about Scott, she said. The donation was aimed at derailing Mark Neumann as a candidate.

IT WAS HARD NOT TO LAUGH. (It would also have been useless because the recorded voice wouldn't hear the ridicule.) I had just recently been talking to the Barrett camp, and off the record they were far more worried about Walker's opponent. Neumann may have been a conservative clone on key issues but he was also a wild card in political terms.

They were even chafing to expose Walker, aware that Neumann would have taken off the table the Milwaukeean vs. Milwaukeean thing and added the unknown element of Northern Wisconsin where Neumann had stronger following. (Don't just believe this liberal writer -- look at the county by county map after that GOP primary.)



Tom Barrett doesn't flinch talking about tight race and need for jobs

IT MAY HAVE LOOKED LIKE A PEP RALLY when Tom Barrett preceded President Obama at Laborfest's Miller Stage, and Barrett was almost physically pushed back by the waves of vocal approval from the largely union crowd.

But Barrett surprised the assembly by turning seriously to the hard uphill race ahead for governor. "The Republicans are measuring the drapes in the governor's mansion," he said, "so I need your help."

HE'S THE VICTOR IF JOBS ARE THE KEY ISSUE - and he was talking to working people particularly unhappy about the pace of the recovery. He didn't duck. He laid the facts of job creation directly in front of them, and is likely to pound away on that until Nov. 2.

SCOTT WALKER'S INDIFFERENCE to job creation, he noted, can't be reversed in a last-minute push to seem concerned in the governor's race. While Barrett has produced a specific comprehensive 67-page plan to create jobs as governor, Walker in the last month of the campaign produced a puff piece on job creation released in extremely large type so it would run just one page longer than Barrett's detailed vision. This childish ploy brought a pointed Barrett response: "Anyone can pluck numbers out of thin air and make grandiose promises, but Walker can't run from his record of failure."

THE RECORD, AS THE PRESS HAS NOTED, is that "county government has played virtually no role in the attraction of economic development and jobs in recent years." At the height of our economic collapse, Walker eliminated the county's economic and community development division and its director position (restored this September by the County Board). He also did not fight Barrett's dynamic takeover of the county-run workforce investment board, which now is advancing job creation on several fronts.

Walker's county-owned dominant portions of the Park East Corridor lie fallow or buried in rubble while Barrett's city-owned portions thrive with the additions of Manpower, Flatiron and other developments.

BARRETT HAS ALSO LED the remarkable conversion of the Menomonee Valley into the home for 4,000 jobs with new businesses. And while Barrett led efforts for regional cooperation on job creation, Walker described the cooperation as "putting lipstick on a pig."

The pace can be frustratingly slow for voters, and anger at anyone in authority may be natural, but Barrett is asking Wisconsin to look at who is actually doing something and who is not. It's not just campaigning to point out recent history, and it's not just rhetoric to note the enormous difference between Barrett's actions and Walker's indifference.

SO ONCE AGAIN, THROUGH HIS WIFE'S ROBOCALL, Walker was trying to deflect attention from reality, and maybe a little bit to counter the truly moving story of Barrett leaving State Fair.

WE ELECT GOVERNORS ON THE ISSUES AND THE IDEOLOGY. If we elected on moral character, on who steps forward instinctively to help people and who ducks and weaves, this wouldn't even be a race.

The author, Dominique Paul Nath, writes for ACTION! and is editor of the Labor Press and a longtime journalist on the Wisconsin political scene.



Senator Jim Sullivan

Sullivan restores sanity to Senate District 5

WHY DOES INCUMBENT Jim Sullivan feel he has a target on his back? Partly because of the stridency of his opponent, Leah Vukmir, and her inside track with loud and dominant conservative talk radio. They all suggest Senate District 5 "belongs" to the Republican Party and that Democrat Sullivan is the alien interloper.

Actually he fits the dynamic and changing district like a glove. If you want to speak of alien encounters, recall the 2002 partisan primary. The exciting Wisconsin race was on the Democratic side, a gubernatorial donnybrook among Jim Doyle, Tom Barrett and Kathleen Falk. History says the moderate Republicans that dominated District 5 did cross over to choose among them.

THAT ALLOWED MISCHIEF. Voters woke up to find moderate and highly regarded Republican Peggy Rosenzweig bumped out by an extreme right-winger whose views soon alienated members of his own party in Madison.

Sullivan's election over Tom Reynolds in 2006 was largely regarded in both camps as a breath of fresh air and sanity for the Wauwatosa-Waukesha district. What Vukmir is clearly saying now is she wants to take it all back to the Reynolds dark side. She wants to move up from tenure in the Assembly to try to knock off Sullivan.

When she raps the "do-nothing" state legislature, she neglects to point out she was a do-nothing for twice as long as Sullivan -- and even when the GOP had control. Her campaign platform is straight from a tired playbook -- eliminate regulations and taxes on businesses, fight any health-care reforms from D.C.

SHE REPEATS A MYTH refuted in 21st century statistics that Wisconsin's tax burden on Wisconsin's families is among the highest in the nation (we're actually in the middle among states). She wants out-of-state health insurers to be exempt from some laws affecting employers. If she can find a business creating good jobs, she wants to eliminate any laws preventing that -- well, who doesn't?

SULLIVAN IS OFFERING A STRAIGHTFORWARD alternative, asking if voters want "a common-sense moderate, someone who can work across the aisle and think independently?" In four years he certainly has, thinking through legislation rather than serving as a knee-jerk party line vote.

As member of the Wisconsin Tech Council, he has taken the lead for the emerging biotechnology industry. He helped pass the CORE Jobs Act - a comprehensive targeting of tax breaks and incentives to local businesses that create good-paying jobs in home communities.

IN PURSUIT OF THOUSANDS OF SUCH JOBS, he's backed improving the Zoo Interchange and developing UWM engineering school plans on County Grounds. He was named legislator of the year by both fire and police associations in the state for fighting to preserve their jobs.

Now 42, a lawyer and former Wauwatosa alderman, he served in the Naval Reserve before being elected to the senate. Job creation, improved public infrastructure and "reasonable cuts" to the state budget are key platforms.

THIS DISTRICT RACE HAS BECOME a battleground for control of the state senate, but the political realities have changed. At first, Vukmir expected to be a shoo-in, but now that facts are mounting up about Scott Walker's competence, the climate has changed to a tossup, and Democrats are freshly motivated not only by the strength of their candidates but also by Vukmir's annoying stridency and fading momentum.

It's still a remarkably tight race, but no party owns this district or ever will.

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