



The Manitowoc Progressive

The Voice of the Manitowoc County Democratic Party

Visit Our Website

www.mantydem.com

August 2011



FROM THE EDGE OF THE CHAIR

Kerry Trask - On Democracy

Not much good has come from the Walker regime. We all agree on that I'm sure. But from out of the wreckage has emerged at least one positive consequence — Walker has enabled Democrats to clearly identify what we oppose and abhor. That, in turn, has made us more certain about in what we believe and value.

For me the definition of a Democrat firmly rests upon the bedrock of three primary values —community, equality, and popular sovereignty.

Community

Our vision of society is one of community rather than of an atomized and unrestrained market system which functions primarily for personal gain. In such a dissolute place — where the winds of greed howl and hunger, and everyone is out for themselves — trust is uprooted and everyone must scream in order to be heard. We Democrats strive for a much more humane condition, one conducive to human well-being and happiness built upon the recognition that we are all in “this” together. None of us can make it completely on our own. We all need help. And while Republicans contend that “government is the problem”, Democrats accept government as an imperfect but necessary instrument. It is government that enables us to marshal our collective resources so that together, as a community, we can better provide for our common needs and pursue our shared aspirations, few of which could ever be met or achieved if the primary purpose in American life was the avaricious quest of our own narrow self-interests. Because we are truly interdependent people — we really are all in this together — we need to have a strong sense of social responsibility and the political will to enrich the quality of life for everyone and enhance the general well-being of the entire community.

Equality

It is especially easy these days to see that one of the basic

Volunteers still needed
for County Fair Booth!
August 23rd - 28th



Call or email Kerry Trask if you can
help for a few hours.
(920) 682-1710 or
kerry.trask@comcast.net

*There will be no
August Membership Meeting*

values that distinguishes us from Scott Walker and his supporters is our commitment to equality. The Republicans are unambiguously convinced that some people are much more worthy than others and therefore deserve to pay lower taxes, enjoy more privileges, and exercise far more influence and power than other people. According to them we are not all in this together, for, just as with George Orwell's animal farm, some pigs are more equal than others. As individuals none of us, of course, are the same, and few of us see any virtue in becoming interchangeable parts in some mechanistic state. But we Democrats remain convinced we should all have equal rights, equality before the law, political equality, and at least a reasonable crack at equality of opportunity without being marked down and put down because of our race, class, ethnicity, gender, religion (or lack of religion), or sexual orientation. We really believe that. They do not, and they work both deviously and deliberately to widen inequalities through their policies that give the richest 1% of the population control over more wealth than the entire bottom 90% of the people.

Continued on page 2

From the Edge *(continued from Page 1)*

Popular Sovereignty

This is an old fashioned term (*sometimes misunderstood*) that simply means rule of the people. Lincoln said it best when he described American democracy as being in essence, “government of the people, by the people, for the people”. Republicans used to believe in that. They no longer do. Now, and especially since George W. was in the White House appointing right wing activists to the Supreme Court, corporations have been in the saddle riding the rest of us into the ground. And, with Walker now in office, the corporate crew has more power and privilege in Wisconsin than at any time since before Bob LaFollette scourged them into line with his reforms. Corporations are by their very nature narcissistic institutions obsessed with their own interests and myopically focused on their own bottom lines. They are not even conscious of the general good. And we know from ubiquitous examples that corporations will exploit, pollute, repress, lie, steal, and even kill to make money. They now in America and Wisconsin write our laws, corrupt our electoral processes, invade our legislatures with their armies of high paid lobbyists, and poison our public discourse with their unrelenting propaganda made unlimited by the *Citizens United*

decision. And, in so doing, they are bankrupting both the state and national treasuries. Corporations are at the public trough swilling up copious amounts of “wealthfare,” as Mike McCabe calls it. Between 1992 and 2005 only one-third of all the corporations in this country paid **any** federal income tax. We, the people, have lost control over virtually everything that matters in public life and we Democrats demand that be changed. We want to end the legal fiction that defined corporations as “individuals” with all the rights of real people, and we want corporations out of our political lives so that we the people can get back to our proper business of creating a more perfect union for all of us who were created equal.

At no time since the Civil War has this country been more divided, its political system more dysfunctional, and the general wellbeing of its people more threatened. And not since the Great Depression has the whole country needed the Democrats more to get us back on track and heading in the right direction — towards a restoration of community, equality, and government of and for the people. ■

The Editor is pleased to present the following article (page 20) from the August 15/22, 2011 edition of The Nation” How Players Won the NFL Lockout. It is one of many in their magazine devoted to Sports – Views From the Left Field. With multiple articles on multiple sports, I highly recommend this issue not only for players and fans, but in this particular article, as a lesson on solidarity to all union members. This article also touches on the sport injuries including concussions so prevalent in football prompting the following remarks from our own Manitowoc County Coroner, Curtis Green, who was also interested in another article in the same edition - The NFL’s Concussion Culture. Check your newsstand for copies, or www.thenation.com .

Curtis Green, Coroner, on Brain Injury Research

“This article highlights some of the benefits of the new agreement with the Players and the Owners. As I reviewed the article I would like to point out that our Coroner’s office is in the process of assisting in research relevant to Post Concussion Syndrome. Recently the Manitowoc County Coroner’s office has been contacted by the Harvard Brain Institute and the Brain Injury Research Institute (BIRI) to obtain donations of brain tissue for research purposes.

I have recently been authorized by Harvard to obtain the samples and forward them to their non-profit organization to further their efforts to reduce future injuries. We currently have one donor registered in our area whose family has selflessly offered to allow this research.

I am currently in contact with BIRI to work with them as well. As my daughter was diagnosed with Post Concussion Syndrome following injuries suffered in a high speed traffic accident, this research is important to me personally. Anyone interested in obtaining more information regarding these programs, please feel free to call me at my office.”

Curtis Green, Coroner, F-ABMDI
1-920-683-4008 Office

How Players Won the NFL Lockout

By DAVID MEGGYESY and DAVE ZIRIN [Excerpted from one of the many sports articles from the August 15/22, 2011 *The Nation*.]

In 1987 Tex Schramm, then general manager of the Dallas Cowboys, told Gene Upshaw, executive director of the NFL Players Association (NFLPA), “Gene, here’s what you have to understand: we’re the ranchers and you’re the cattle, and we can always get more cattle.” Schramm’s statement perfectly reflects the arrogance of NFL owners and how they view player-employees and the collective bargaining game. It has been pointed out many times that the major sports leagues reflect the structure and operations of major corporations. In corporations, employees are essentially viewed as exploitable commodities and replaceable parts. It’s the same for professional athletes.

The difference is that while players may be seen as the cattle, they are also the workers who raise the cattle. They are the labor *and* the product, and therefore more difficult to replace. As former NFL great Brian Mitchell said, “The NFL is like going to a great steakhouse. The players are the chef. But they’re also the steak!”

During the most recent lockout – the longest work stoppage in NFL history – the owners neglected this fact, so they paid a terrific price. The owners, led by commissioner Roger Goodell, believed they could shut down the entire 2011 season. They believed they would be paid by the networks even if they didn’t deliver a product. They believed they could take the most successful product in the American entertainment landscape and get more. They wanted to expand the season from sixteen games to eighteen. They wanted dramatically reworked revenue distribution. They wanted more control over the lives of players. Make no mistake about it: they lost.

There are several reasons for this. First and foremost, the players, led by NFLPA executive director DeMaurice Smith, stood together. The hundreds of athletes showed extraordinary solidarity, considering that a typical pro career lasts only 3.5 years; the pressure to get back to work must have been intense. Divisions were more apparent on the ownership side, where many chief executives started to grumble that they were killing the golden goose, especially after a court ruled that they couldn’t receive network money for games that weren’t broadcast.

Second, the owners were wildly off in their prediction that fans would turn on the players. That’s the way it has always been in sports labor conflicts. At best, fans have seen it as “millionaires versus billionaires”; at worst, fans have jeered at anyone who could complain about “getting paid to play a game.”

But not this time. The most obvious reason for the profound shift in fan sentiment is that it was a lockout, not a strike. The players’ slogan, “Let us play”, reflected the fact that they – just like the fans – were happy with business as usual.

Also, there is far more consciousness now among fans about the physical toll – including concussions as well as the deadly disease ALS – that football takes on the human body. This is a sport with a 100 percent injury rate. The fact that

commissioner Goodell would express sympathy for the physical plight of players even as he demanded two extra games in the season (which, according to polls, fans didn’t even want) seemed immoral and greedy.

And finally, workers across the nation have taken it on the chin at the hands of big business. This lockout would have sent to the unemployment lines stadium workers, parking lot attendants and everyone else who scrapes by thanks to NFL, Inc. Steeler All-Pro Troy Polamalu seemed to capture the moment when he said, “It’s unfortunate right now. I think what the players are fighting for is something bigger. A lot of people think it’s millionaires versus billionaires, and that’s the huge argument. The fact is, it’s people fighting against big business. The big-business argument is, ‘I got the money and I got the power, therefore I can tell you what to do.’ That’s life everywhere. I think this is a time when the football players are standing up and saying, ‘No, no, no, the people have the power.’”

Standing strong together and going for the win is an attitude NFL players have been taught from day one. It served them well in a lockout that no one predicted they would win. In fact, one anonymous source in the union said, “these guys are so competitive, some of them don’t want to settle for a bigger piece of the pie. They want the whole bakery!”

Winning this battle didn’t only secure for the players a fair collective bargaining agreement. It didn’t only increase the earnings of veteran athletes, strengthen benefits and mercifully keep the season at sixteen games. It also raised even more important questions, which NBA players should be asking as well: What do we need owners for? Players *are* the game—no one shows up at Cowboys Stadium to watch Jerry Jones pace imperially up and down the sideline. We should be asking why we can’t have more fan-owned teams, similar to the Super Bowl Champion Green Bay Packers—that’s a team with 112,000 owners. Why can’t players get equity and even ownership of the franchises themselves? And why can’t a big chunk of the revenues that players produce go back to the communities where they play? A thick percentage of all proceeds at Green Bay’s Lambeau Field goes to local charities. Given the current state of our cities, this would be a huge benefit to urban America. Also, think about how this argument combines the logical and radical. It opens up discussions about economic democracy that the people who run the NFL – and the people who run our country – would prefer we not have.

Pro football is a players’ and fans’ game. The fans come to see the players, and taxpayers build the stadiums. The one irrelevant element is the owners. It’s time for a change. ■

David Meggyesy, a former linebacker with the St. Louis Cardinals, wrote the bestselling autobiography Out of Their League, co-founded the Esalen Sports Center and served as western director of the NFL Players Association. Dave Zirin, The Nation’s sports editor, is the author, with John Carlos, of The John Carlos Story, due out in October from Haymarket Books.

The Manitowoc Progressive

The Voice of the Manitowoc Democratic Party
PO Box 1373
Manitowoc WI 54221-1373

Calendar of Events

- August 23-28th Manitowoc County Fair – Please volunteer to serve a couple of hours at our booth – Contact Kerry Trask.
- Tues, Sep 6th Executive Committee Meeting, **6:30 PM**, Pizza Garden – *time and date changed due to Labor Day*
- Sat, Sep 10th Think Tank – 9:30 AM, St James Episcopal Church
- Mon, Sep 26th Monthly Membership Meeting, time and place to be announced

MantyDems Officers

Kerry Trask, Chair
kerry.trask@comcast.net
chair@mantydem.com
920-682-1710

Jon Buggs, Vice Chair
fluggs@ameritech.net

Dick Ekstrom, Vice Chair
ekstrom99@msn.com

Sherrie Richards, Secretary
s.irene63@yahoo.com

Bob Jome, Treasurer
rjome@sbcglobal.net

Nan Hallock, Past Chair
nanhallock@sbcglobal.net

Members-at-Large:
Kathie Fishbeck, Ted Zigmunt,
Ron Kossik, Laurie Burke,
Kate Schuette - Editor

Yes, I'll Join the Party and Help Democrats Win!

Mail to: Democratic Party of Wisconsin ■ 110 King Street ■ Suite 203 ■ Madison WI 53703
Or Join or Renew Online www.wisdems.org

Name/s _____

Address _____

City/Zip _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

Employer _____

Employer Address _____

Occupation _____

Fees include membership to both the State and County Parties.

- \$50 per Month* \$75 per Year*
- \$20 per Month* \$45 per Year Activist
- \$10 per Month* \$35 per Year Pairs
- \$25 per Year General
- Other _____ \$10 Limited Income

*includes all family members

For monthly contributions – renew online – www.wisdems.org

Contributions are not tax deductible. Your contribution is subject to the limitations and prohibitions of the Federal Election Campaign Act.

Federal law requires us to use our best efforts to collect and report the name, mailing address, occupation and name of employer of individuals whose contributions, in the aggregate, exceed \$200 in an election cycle. Please provide all information on the membership form.