

Executive Update

Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker's Weekly Newsletter

September 5, 2008

Message from County Executive Walker

In 1991, the board passed a sales tax increase, yet property taxes went up 55% in the ten years that followed. This week, the county board overrode my sales tax referendum veto 13-6.

I do not support a \$130 million increase when families are struggling to manage their household budgets in the face of high fuel and food prices.

Issuing an advisory referendum that has no legal mandate on county or state government detracts from the real debate that must occur to find new ways to provide core county services.

Together with the city's latest wheel tax, those voting for a sales tax increase are well on their way to creating a tax island, and giving Milwaukee County the highest sales tax in the state.

Scott



Harley 105th wraps up



County Executive Walker and his wife, Tonette, joined 7,500 other riders for the Harley-Davidson 105th parade. Harleys covered in American flags and specialty bikes like the one pictured above built for five riders captured the attention of the thousands lining the route from Miller Park to the lakefront. The final concert at Milwaukee County Veterans' Park with Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band drew a huge crowd and received rave reviews.

Juror Appreciation

The Milwaukee County Courthouse Rotunda was the site of a news conference designating September as Juror Appreciation Month. Chief Judge Kitty Brennan and other county officials gathered to recognize citizens and companies who have participated in and supported jury service.

Brewers renovate park's baseball diamond



Lynn Sprangers, President – Brewers Charities (pictured above with Parks Director Sue Black, Milwaukee Brewers player Eric Gagne, and children from the Wisconsin Youth Sports Association), hosted a news conference to announce that Milwaukee Brewers players Jeff Suppan and Eric Gagne will fund \$40,000 to make improvements to the baseball diamond at Zablocki Park damaged by flooding earlier this summer.

\$5.6 million for bus communication system

County Executive Walker announced the successful negotiation of \$5.6 million in outside funding to replace the transit system's outdated voice and data communications system. "This agreement is a win for taxpayers and bus riders alike," said Walker. "A new, state-of-the-art transit communications system will be installed and taxpayers will save \$5.6 million." The new system includes an advanced security function that notifies dispatch of any public safety issues on the bus. The project was part of the Federal Communications Commission's 800 MHz Rebanding Program and is expected to be complete by 2010.

Walker congratulates Trinity Irish dancers



County Executive Walker congratulated the Trinity Irish Dancers at Irish Fest for winning the gold for the Under-13 Girls Ceili and the Under-13 Girls Figure Choreography at the 38th World Championships of Irish Dance in Belfast this spring. Walker presented a proclamation to their coach, Anne McCarthy (above).

Community Events

Family Farm Weekend, sponsored by Golden Guernsey Dairy and the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board, portrays life "Down on the Farm" at the Milwaukee County Zoo on Saturday, September 6 and Sunday, September 7. Activities include a pedal tractor pull contest, flavored milk samplings, milking a replica cow, family hayrides, and demonstrations by the Wisconsin Beekeepers Association. Family Farm Weekend activities are included in regular zoo admission.

Friends of Bradford Beach will hold a Family Fun at Bradford Beach event Saturday, September 6 from 1pm – 4pm featuring a sand castle contest, buried treasure hunt, obstacle course, and kite flying. A raffle of family-friendly items from Laacke & Joys, the Oriental Theatre, memberships to the Betty Brinn and Milwaukee Art museums, and gift cards to restaurants including Coast, Twisted Fork and Comet will be held.