



The Miller/Wenhold Wisconsin Report

Vol. 1 Issue 4

September 2008

In This Edition:

- **Why Can't Mom's Be Vice President**
- **Property Taxes, the Economy, and the Real Problem**
- **Universal Healthcare: Campaign Rhetoric or Reality**
- **John McCain Takes Stand Against Russia**
- **Obama for Labor, Obama for Wisconsin**
- **LeMahieu Faces Stiff Challenge**
- **81st District Is Crowded Field**
- **First District Focuses on Anti-Bush Themes**



Why Can't Mom's Be Vice President

By Paul A. Miller

At both national party conventions we saw history being made. For the first time an African American was nominated as President and for only the second time a woman was selected as her parties Vice Presidential nominee. Both historic and encouraging events.

I don't know if the quiet announcement of Governor Sarah Palin just caught the national media off-guard or they were playing pay-backs to the McCain campaign, which put out false information to the media prior to the official announcement. Either way, the media's handling of the Sarah Palin announcement was appalling.

Let me start with the medias handling of Gov. Palin's daughter. It has been an unwritten rule that children are off limits during campaigns. It appears the only one's listening this campaign season are the two candidates. I applaud Senator Obama for immediately coming out and condemning the attacks on this young girl. As Sen. Obama pointed out that his mother had him at a young age of 18.

Forget about what your personal feelings are about the pregnancy. It is out of bounds to target this girl because it's all you have to run with to point out so-called flaws of her mother. Every family in this country deals with issues that are private and between them – this is one of those.

Why is it that the press never reported on Amy Carter in the same way or Chelsea Clinton? It seems that the only time the press feels the need to attack children of candidates is when they are Republican's. It happened early on in the Bush administration with Laura and Barbara and is now continuing with Gov. Palin's daughter.



The Miller/Wenhold Wisconsin Report

Vol. 1 Issue 4

September 2008

Continued from page 1

As a journalist and “respected” member of the media you don’t get a pass because you say to your audience that you didn’t break the story, but you’re forced to report on it. That’s nothing more than an excuse. Stand-up and say no. The media expects candidates to be of higher character; why shouldn’t they expect it from themselves.



The bigger question for the media is why do they feel that a woman shouldn’t be able to be a mother and serve her country? For some reason Gov’ Palin having five children should preclude her from being Vice President. Yes, I will agree with you that having young children is a juggling act, but it can be done. Gov. Palin proved that during her term as Governor.

For some in the media to say that she’s not a good Mom because her daughter is pregnant is a ridiculous claim. Parents can’t be held accountable for the actions of their children. I don’t hear the press writing about and praising the Palin’s for the accomplishments of their son, who has decided to serve his country. You won’t because it won’t sell papers or bring in viewers.

Kids make mistakes. We all have and as a parent you hope the mistakes your kids make are not devastating and that they learn from them. I wonder how many in the media know or have in their family someone in the same situation?

Will Gov. Palin be a good Vice President if elected? Only time will tell, but let’s not count her out just because she’s a woman. I didn’t see the press today or in the past question Senator Joe Biden for being a single parent when his first wife died. Why is it okay for a man to be a single parent and hold a high level government or private sector position, but not okay for a woman?

This is an historical time in politics. Let’s not diminish the role of anyone, man or woman. Let’s support these people and hope they will begin to really make the changes we all want in Washington. Changing the culture is key to our country’s ability to solve the critical issues facing all Americans. Partisanship has become the norm in Washington and it’s time for change and I hope either Senator McCain or Obama begin to change that culture.

Let’s get beyond the gender and race question this election and focus on what’s important – the issues.

And, let’s not discount a woman being Vice President just because she’s a Mom. Where would we all be without the love and care of our Mom’s.



The Miller/Wenhold Wisconsin Report

Vol. 1 Issue 4

September 2008

Property Taxes, the Economy, and the Real Problem

By Brandon VerVelde

In 2008, property taxes in southeastern Wisconsin rose by 6.1%. Surprised? Your answer to that question is probably a big “N”-“O.”



That’s because it’s been rising at a steady pace for years. According the Public Policy Forum, southeastern Wisconsin’s tax levy has increased by at least 2.5% each year since 2002, with this year being the most in five years.

Last year total property taxes in southeastern Wisconsin went from an already astounding \$3.4 billion to \$3.6 billion.

The basic conservative argument when it comes to the economy is that less taxes equals more money in the taxpayer’s hands to spend on the economy, increasing consumer spending. Sooner or later, these nonstop tax increases to Wisconsin property owners are going to start to hurt the economy.

Then again, that may be happening now. With the Tax Foundation reporting that Wisconsin is back in the Top Ten most taxed states, and now this report showing that property taxes increased at five-year high, maybe our economy is faltering already due to the taxes.

I write a lot about the state legislature and Republicans and Democrats, but when it comes to property taxes, the problem is much more local. Each county and local municipality decide what the property tax levy will be.

Most county boards and municipalities have members that are just average residents with full-time jobs, yet those average people are the ones that are raising the tax levies year after year. Yet I don’t blame them, because the people of the counties and municipalities keep reelecting them without challenge, year after year after year.

While the problem may end with the boards that raise the taxes, it originates with the people that refuse to challenge the members that continue to vote for more taxes and spending. It’s time for the Wisconsinites to not only vote for the best candidate, but also to be willing to challenge the incumbents themselves.



The Miller/Wenhold Wisconsin Report

Vol. 1 Issue 4

September 2008

Universal Healthcare: Campaign Rhetoric or Reality

By Brandon VerVelde



Healthcare is a hot issue this year. From State Assembly races all the way up to the Nation's highest office, the candidates are talking about it, coming up with ideas, and clarifying just what they want to do and their stances on the big ideas being floated around. One of the biggest ideas is that of universal healthcare. And that's also where the biggest rift in the public discussion of this most important subject is formed.

Wisconsin is not exempt from being thrown into the fray about healthcare, either. Just last year the Democratic-controlled State Senate passed a budget that created a \$15 billion universal healthcare program that they dubbed "Healthy Wisconsin." Without going into too many details about this very complex idea, the program would essentially place a massive tax on the every business's payroll to provide the billions to pay for the universal healthcare coverage.

Republicans were adamantly opposed to the program, with good reason. The \$15 billion that the program would generate would have been the largest tax increase in the history of Wisconsin, and by percentage, the biggest tax increase in the history of the United States. Even Governor Doyle didn't endorse the program, instead pushing his much more modest healthcare initiatives that he included in his original budget recommendation.

My point is, while healthcare is such an important issue, I don't think that the conversation is finished, yet. I don't think that the United States, let alone Wisconsin, is ready for a government-run healthcare system. The millions in the United States that are uninsured are a massive problem, but do we really want a DMV-esque system to handle our healthcare? Take Canada for example, thousands of to-be mothers come over the border into the U.S. every year to give birth to their babies in our top-notch hospitals where they know they can get the best care as soon as they need it.

And on the Republican side, there really haven't been all-around good ideas thrown out there, yet. The common theme among Republicans is that we should let the free market take its course in healthcare, and prices will drop and insurance will become more affordable. While I identify with that ideology, I feel like the healthcare industry is different than most of the rest of the economy.



The Miller/Wenhold Wisconsin Report

Vol. 1 Issue 4

September 2008

Continued from page 4

For example, if you hire a painter to paint your house, and he does a bad job, you either don't pay until you're satisfied, or you never hire that painter again. But in healthcare, it's life or death. If you don't get the top-notch heart surgeon, you could die. There are rarely, if ever, do-over's in most areas of healthcare.



What we need to do is continue the conversation. There is a rift between liberals and conservatives when it comes to healthcare, and the millions of uninsured are stuck in the middle.

We need to not do something hasty, like the Democrats in the State Senate did when they plowed through Healthy Wisconsin without so much as a public hearing on it, but we also need to not sit around hoping that the problem fixes itself, like the Republicans have been doing.

It's time to build a bridge over the rift, and come together to fix it. We should take nothing off the table on either side, and do what's best for the country and our state.

John McCain Takes Stand Against Russia

By Brandon VerVelde

Russia, Medvedev, and Putin. Those words invoke images of invading armies and the days of corny government films urging you to get under your desk when the siren sounds. Many thought that those days were long gone, and never coming back.

In comes Prime Minister Putin and his pawn President Putin. Russia is flush with cash from their ever-expanding oil industry, and realizing that they are now back in the exclusive superpowers club. With their recent invasion of the small neighboring country of Georgia, many feel like Russia is merely flexing their muscles for the world to watch.

Next on the list is Russia's strong response to President Bush's push for a missile defense system in Poland. As soon as Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice formally announced that the plans were finalized and agreed upon, a senior Russian defense official came out saying that 'such action cannot go unpunished' (*The New York Times*, Aug. 21, 2008) in response to the move.



The Miller/Wenhold Wisconsin Report

Vol. 1 Issue 4

September 2008

Continued from page 5

With the election approaching faster and faster, the real question is which presidential candidate would be better to handle the rising tensions between the U.S. and Russia. I think the difference is stark and the choice is clear. While, one candidate has repeatedly stated that he favors diplomacy and has refused to even commit to any sort of action, military or otherwise, against countries that could threaten our security or the security of our closest allies, the other candidate isn't taking anything off the table, and that includes diplomacy.



While diplomacy should almost always be the first option, a president needs to be willing to take further action, including sanctions and even military peacekeeping if necessary. When our national security is at risk, I want a president that has taken nothing off the table. With the first candidate, I can't be confident in his ability to keep our nation safe. With John McCain, as his Vice Presidential nominee put it, has fought for every single American – literally. He served his country for 22 years of his life; I feel pretty confident that he will do everything necessary to keep every single American safe in the future.

Obama for Labor, Obama for Wisconsin **By Cassandra M. Schmiling**

On Labor Day, Democratic presidential nominee Barack Obama to center stage in Milwaukee to celebrate Labor Day. Although Hurricane Gustav interfered with his planned speech, the message was clear: Obama will stand by unions and work hard for Wisconsin's workers. Obama's strong support of labor is what makes him the best candidate for Wisconsin.

So far in 2008, 10,000 Wisconsinites have lost their jobs to mass layoffs. These layoffs have been mostly from corporations cutting a large percentage of their work force, and most of these workers are unionized. The General Motors plant in Janesville cut 850 United Auto Workers. Wisconsinites depend on these jobs to support their families and sustain a strong state economy. These types of layoffs are becoming the norm, and are a product of the Bush Administration's failed trade policies.

Free Trade has been costly to Wisconsin's labor force. Layoffs are the highest in recent years, and hearing about jobs moving overseas is almost a daily headline. Free Trade policies have left Wisconsin workers with no where to turn. If American policies cut jobs, there need to be policies to create jobs and offer adequate job training. Barack Obama supports Wisconsin workers, and will work to fix the failed free trade policies.



The Miller/Wenhold Wisconsin Report

Vol. 1 Issue 4

September 2008

Continued from page 6

Free Trade has been costly to Wisconsin's labor force. Layoffs are the highest in recent years, and hearing about jobs moving overseas is almost a daily headline. Free Trade policies have left Wisconsin workers with no where to turn.



If American policies cut jobs, there need to be policies to create jobs and offer adequate job training . Barack Obama supports Wisconsin workers, and will work to fix the failed free trade policies.

Wisconsin will benefit from Obama's plans to change trade policy. He will return job security to Wisconsin's workers by ending tax breaks to corporations who ship jobs overseas.

Obama will reward companies that support American workers by providing a tax credit to companies that offer good benefits and maintain or increase their full-time workers in America. He will also invest in the manufacturing sector and create 5 million new green jobs.

America must expand its workforce to include green jobs and will also ensure that workers have the skills necessary to be successful in their green jobs.

Free trade has been costly to Wisconsin. As the next president, Barack Obama will change American trade policy. He will stand up for Wisconsin's workforce, restoring financial security in Wisconsin's families.

The choice is clear, Obama's plan will end the economic hell placed on American families.



The Miller/Wenhold Wisconsin Report

Vol. 1 Issue 4

September 2008

Primary Special

LeMahieu Faces Stiff Challenge

Incumbent Dan LeMahieu of Oostburg will face off against Karl McCarty of Campbellsport this Tuesday.

McCarty claims that while he and LeMahieu have similar values, he would give better results than what LeMahieu has delivered. McCarty says about the Republican party: “Our party needs to be a more active party, show leadership and energy, and win the support of the Wisconsin people by getting things done.”

In response, LeMahieu said that he has brought results, citing the Assembly’s fight against the \$15 billion universal healthcare program that the Senate passed.



81st District Is Crowded Field

A few month’s ago I highlighted the 81st Assembly district, which is currently held by Dave Travis (D-Waunakee), and the astounding primary race that is taking place. All the way back in June there were six Democrats facing off, and I thought that at least one or two would drop out by the time of the primary, but I was wrong.

There are still six candidates in the race, and only one will make it past the primary, and, knowing the district, will probably not face a Republican challenger. On a side note, to win the primary, the candidate with the most votes will win, but that doesn’t necessarily have to be the majority, which means that the candidate to win the primary could do so with as little as 17% of the vote.

First District Focuses on Anti-Bush Themes

The 1st Congressional district also has Democratic primary, with three candidates facing off this Tuesday. The candidates are Paulette Garin, Marge Krupp (I wrote about her back in July), and Mike Hebert. Garin and Krupp are the frontrunners, with Hebert in a distant third (from my research, he is not being taken seriously by most critics).

Most of Garin’s and Krupp’s stances are based around opposing all that President Bush supports, with the main themes being opposing the War in Iraq and the “No Child Left Behind” program. While times might have changed, I’m not sure if that mantra will click with a congressional district that voted for Bush in 2004 by a pretty good majority.