I t wasn't just unions that Scott Walker cut out of 50 years of a workable collective bargaining for public workers. A vital other party in the process was emasculated — the public.

So noted several labor historians, including UW-Madison author and associate professor Will Jones. "From the very beginning, the law was explicit that the public was the third party whose rights had to be recognized," Jones said. "That doesn't mean just the people the public elects. The public itself and its needs overlay any rational public bargaining system."

"You keep hearing Walker supporters misquote Franklin Delano Roosevelt," added Jones. "Those are the false claims that FDR opposed public unions. (One thing he actually said was that the desire of government workers for fair treatment and voice at work "is basically no different from that of employees in private industry.")"

What concerned FDR is that with public workers "you can't use the same procedures" established under the National Labor Relations Act for private industry in 1935, Jones noted. The companies are dealing with profits. In the public realm it is efficiency of service and even avoidance of profit motives.

So in private industry, only two parties are involved — the company and the workers, with the NLRB mediating and establishing laws for a level playing field.

"That's one reason it took longer to create a framework for public collective bargaining," said Jones. "And historians add that it is not a coincidence that public-sector collective bargaining grew in tandem with the civil rights movement between 1955 and 1965. Both movements were making a similar point — how could America grant basic human rights to some but not to all?"

As was often the case in labor history, said Jones, Wisconsin was a pioneer, establishing a state law more than 50 years ago (1959), three years before President Kennedy mandated collective bargaining rights for federal employees.

"The genius of the public bargaining law was to recognize that, unlike the NLRB, there are three parties involved — the workers (unions), the public officials and the public — and special rules had to be in place to understand the differences," noted Jones.

What concerned FDR was that more than profit-minded company and its workers were involved in the public realm. Two-party bargaining made sense at the NLRB, "but the same methods couldn't always be involved" — such as strikes by unions and lockouts by management.

"And it worked well for a half century," said Jones, looking at the history. "In the case of Wisconsin teachers, the most famous strike, Hortonville, was such a rarity because it took a violation of the bargaining law to cause it, the refusal of the school board to negotiate. Other than"
A mong the deceptions Scott Walker pulled on the Wisconsin public was frequent statements that he had nothing against private sector unions, practically loved them as “partners” and would be unaffected by the clobbering he was inflicting on public workers.

It only caused unions familiar with his blarney to wonder how long it would take for his regressive policies to bleed into the private domain. Wonder no more. Echoing the rules imposed in Walker’s Act 10, Manitowoc Crane abandoned some 60 years of mutual beneficial labor/management relations and sought to slip Walker’s “justify your right to live” agenda into its contract demands on its chief workforce, members of IAMAW District 10, AFL-CIO.

The company sought to require a costly “recertification” vote of the union every year. The company then tried to force a so-called “open shop” (who invents such reverse language?) allowing free hitchhikers -- employees who could opt out of paying union dues while still enjoying the benefits and wages won for them by union negotiators.

The workforce did not just decline to let their rights to voice the job disappear. They said no in a resounding 180-2 vote that they knew also would put them on strike. It’s been years since labor historians heard of such a lopsided decision to strike.

Interestingly enough, the machinists say they already agreed to the financial terms in the deal. The company is holding out for union-busting conditions. Glen Tellock, CEO of parent corporation Manitowoc Co. -- as did the previous CEO, Terry Growco -- sits on the board of directors of Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce, so it’s no stretch that the union regards this as a harbinger of difficult days ahead in private manufacturing. See related manufacturing story on Page 9.

On December 10 at the Manitowoc Cranes Municipal Baseball Field, 2200 Grand Ave., the machinists were joined for a rally by public and private union members on their own time and weekend. They chartered buses or doubled up in cars.

While the numbers involved in the marches and speeches were sizeable, the media reporting was certainly bizarre. One FOX station said “hundreds” joined the strikers while an ABC affiliate said “thousands” and had the footage to prove it.

Members of AFSCME councils, MTEA, boilermakers, laborers and steelworkers were there to wave their banners and flags and yell support.

The reaction of unions showed determination. The reaction of the company was typical, bringing in outside workers in order to stay in business despite the striking machinists.

Democratic state legislators also held press conferences ridiculing the company’s approach.

Private employers who thought Walker’s actions could be emulated and make unions run faster discovered how poorly they could read the tea leaves.

Walker had actually brought private and public sector workers together, strengthening the union image and reputation for standing up.

Significance added to annual installation dinner

A lways crowded and important annual gala dinner may be taking on special significance this January for incoming and outgoing officers of all the lodges affiliated with District 10 of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers. The January 28 installation was announced in the shadow of an overwhelming strike vote -- and immediate support from other private and public sector workers -- by the machinists at Manitowoc Crane.

The company demanded yearly recertification of the union as one of the conditions of a new contract and also sought an open shop.

The January installation dinner starts at 5:30 p.m. with cocktails, followed by dinner and program at the Wyndham Airport Hotel and Convention Center, 4747 S. Howell Ave. A block of 59 rooms has been set aside for the IAMAW. Music and dancing follow the 7 p.m. dinner and program. A $55 ticket includes a free cocktail and there is also free beer and soda for those attending.

A deadline of January 13 has been announced to ensure tickets and/or hotel room. Please contact Kathy Johnson as the IAMAW office, (414) 643-4334, ext. 10, or make checks payable to IAMAW Special Events Fund, 1650 S. 38th St., Milwaukee, WI 53215.

The holidays are a time to give thanks. . . .

This holiday season, the Milwaukee Teachers’ Education Association gives thanks for the individuals and communities who are working together to make Milwaukee’s public schools great and create a brighter future for us all:

Teachers and other education professionals who work in MPS

Our students and their families

The labor, activist, and education communities

Elected leaders

Great schools are the result of smart investments and teamwork.

We look forward to continuing our partnership to strengthen our schools and improve the lives of the children and families we serve.
The conditions of Act 10 were outlined in an analysis by the state AFL-CIO. They are devastating, including:

- Prohibited subjects of bargaining are sick days, seniority rights, transfer and promotion rights, health care, pension benefits, vacations, health and safety, layoff and recall rights, medical leave and work rules.
- Public employee unions are required to hold a decertification election every year and the union will be decertified if it does not receive a supermajority of at least 51% of ALL in the bargaining unit, regardless of how many actually vote.
- Payroll deduction of union dues are outlawed. Any employee can opt out of union representation and no public employer can make a “fair share” deal with a union.

Hold your nose, you’re diving into the Act 10 world

By Candice Owley
Special to Labor Press

Act 10, the so-called Budget Repair Bill, took effect on June 29, 2011. The bill has an immediate impact on public locals without a contract and, for those with a contract, it goes into effect when the existing contracts expire (or if extended, modified or renewed).

The following are some basic questions and answers about the “Act 10 world” as our union’s attorneys call it.

What are rights workers still guaranteed?

The law still gives public employees the right to organize and even bargain collectively, but the only area still legal to bargain over is base wages. We are still waiting for the final definition of base wages, but we know it does not include things such as wage steps, shift differentials, charge pay, etc. Employees can still engage in activity such as collecting and presenting petitions regarding wages, hours and working conditions, and it would be illegal to discriminate in any way toward an employee exercising those rights.

Employees can attend meetings of county boards and open government committees, and petition for changes to wages and working conditions, and the board can respond to those concerns. But what they cannot do is bargain with the employees.

Can employees discuss union and workplace matters and distribute flyers and other material at work?

The law still gives protection for concerted activity (concerted means activity by two or more employees) whether or not there is a certified union. Employees can engage in actions such as distributing flyers and information, picketing, holding vigils, etc., but not on work time. In addition, employees cannot be retaliated against for activities generally associated with unions, such as filing grievances and organizing protests.

Can the union or group of employees hold meetings at work?

Yes, if such facilities are open to the public.

Do employees still have the right to union representation when called into the boss?

Yes, while the union is still certified, but that could change if the union is no longer certified by the state.

How does the union become certified?

In order to be formally recognized as a certified union, each public employer must create a grievance procedure for the union and to include recommendations in the rules. In addition, if the procedure provides for employee representation in the grievance procedure, then the union can provide that representation. It is possible if the union does not get certified, either because it chooses not to or fails the required super-majority certification vote, then the employer can deny union representation.

Over the next months we will see how the law actually works as our local contracts expire. Our hope is that we will continue to represent workers in grievances and disciplines -- and that members will be active with the union in "lobbying" on a wide range of wages, hours and working conditions.

The author, cowley@wfnhp.org, is president of the nurses and health professionals union (WFNHP). This Q & A for the union's newsletter -- with the help of a legal expert in the area, Atty. Jeff Sweetland of Hawks, Quindel, S.C. - was adapted by the Labor Press staff.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

From

District No. 10 of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, AFL-CIO

Russell D. Kring, Directing Business Representative
Scott Part, Assistant Directing Business Representative
Benito Elizondo * Donald L. Griffin * Alex Hoekstra
Patrick T. O'Connor * Greg Pursell * John Rybkiewicz
Organizer Janice DeSmedt * JdM Assistant Denise Werlein
* Staff Assistants Kathy Johnson & Rayne Kasten

www.goiam.org

See Why It Pays to Belong to the IAM

AFSCME Council 48
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Happy Holidays

Local Lodges
Happy Holidays
From Plumbers Union
Local 75

SEASONS GREETINGS
International Union of Operating Engineers
Local 317

From our members working in skilled equipment operation, maintenance and mechanical occupations throughout Wisconsin. Happy Holidays!

Visit our Website at: www.317.org

Merry Christmas
From The Makers of Harley-Davidson

UNIVERS STEELWORKERS
Local 2-209
12034 W. Adler Lane
414-476-1069

HAPPY HOLIDAYS
from the
Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers
District Council
Of Wisconsin

Jeff Leckee
Director
Fred Hultquist & Ray Wersel
Field Representatives

MERR\Y CHRISTMAS

INTERNATIONAL UNION OF OPERATING ENGINEERS LOCAL 139

TERRANCE MCCOWN
President/Business Manager

N72 W23234 Roundby Drive
P.O. Box 120, Pewaukee, WI

Wishing You A Healthy Holiday Season!

Wisconsin Federation of Nurses and Health Professionals, AF-TE, AF-CIO
Candice Owley, President

MILWAUKEE BUILDING & CONSTRUCTION TRADES COUNCIL
5941 W. Bluemound Rd. • 475-5580
LYLE A. BALISTRERI
PRESIDENT

JOY TO ALL

Union Builders Are A Better Value.

BLAINE TOM, BUSINESS MANAGER

BOILERMAKERS & HELPERS CONSTRUCTION LOCAL 107

Blane Tom, Business Manager
and All Local 107 members

INTERNATIONAL LONGSHOREMEN’S ASSOCIATION

Local #815
ACD-GLDC
AFL-CIO

President: Wesley Miller & Tom Schwark
Business Agent, Financial Sec., Treas.: Tom Feitner
I.L.A. also means “I Love America”
**Fired janitors stir up Downtown**

When unions say an injury to one is an injury to all, that actually means they’ll go to bat big-time for a dozen. That’s what has been stirring up downtown in holiday season rallies and protests as SEIU Local 1 seeks fair dealing for fired janitors, “the most vulnerable of the 99%,” said SEIU organizer David Somerscales.

The story is this. The unionized workers were employed by Regency Janitorial, which in late November was suddenly replaced by a non-union firm to clean the office building at 875 E. Wisconsin Ave. owned by an affiliate of Wangard Partners, Inc. Janitors who handle the building were fired.

After switching to a firm that pays $8 an hour with no known benefits, Wangard representatives refused to let the new firm - not called Lowball but Purify -- rehire any of the laid off workers.

The building manager, employed by Wangard, says the change was made based on merit and competitive bidding but Wangard vice president Greg Martin said the company can say they didn’t want the jobs in the first place.

Other unions are joining SEIU in these winter rallies. Warning this could be along batlle.

**Voter ID myths stir major attack**

A new website, protectingthevote.org, makes the case that actual instances of voter fraud are rare, despite Republicans' success in passing stricter laws to combat fraud in dozens of states.

The Democratic National Committee (DNC) in announcing the site and national effort accused the Republican Party of trying to stifle minority votes as a way to win elections.

The site and an accompanying report, “A Reversal in Potential Election - as they have in past cycles.”

The Democratic National Committee reports that Republicans are “essentially trying to stifle minority votes as a way to win elections,” DNC Chairwoman and Florida Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz told the press Dec. 1.

“We’re aggressively engaged in making sure that we help voters remove these obstacles and barriers,” she said, adding that the voter ID laws favored by Republicans are “essentially designed to rig an election.”

In addition to registering voters and recruiting volunteers to help with voter-protection efforts, Democrats plan to begin organizing lawyers in January to help monitor the 2012 presidential election - as they have in past cycles.
that, the law made each side deal with the other and consider the public's needs.

In Wisconsin, overzealing law fell to a civil service division to interpret rules and provide arbitration, the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission.

One sign of Walker's meddling is that he has imposed political appointees rather than civil service neutrality and ethics in such key positions as the WERC general counsel.

Wiser heads prevailed on him to keep longtime general counsel Peter Davis, who himself joked at a Milwaukee luncheon in September that the change "doesn't affect me - everyone knows I'll keep operating as I always have" and he has a reputation for fair and open dealing.

"It's the next guy that could be a problem," smiled Davis, since that appointment is now political if Walker remains in office. The dangers of key political appointees in jobs that previously were civil service are becoming clear in many state divisions. Further affecting agencies like the WERC and the GAB, which oversees election procedures, is that Walker has given himself the kingsly authority of seeing and potentially vetoing without question new operational rules rather than trusting the experienced experts.

Looked at this way, Walker surprised even his supporters by cutting neutrality out of once respected agencies and procedures - and also cut the public out of the bargaining process while neutering WERC's responsibility in this regard. Substituting his vision of what the public is and needs is not the same.

The desire of government employees for (unions) is both natural and logical, but meticulous attention should be paid to the special relationships and obligations of public servants to the public itself.

A strike of public employees manifests nothing less than intent on their part to prevent or obstruct the operations of Government until their demands are satisfied. It is, therefore, with a feeling of gratification that I have noted in the constitution of the National Federation of Federal Employees the provision that "under no circumstances shall this Federation engage in or support strikes against the United States Government."

"Walker makes it sound (like I was) the wimp afraid to stand up to my duties, and I resent that."

Jones is also amused at how Walker inflamed the power of the unions in order to sell the public on his changes to the law. "The idea you can sit down at bargaining table and impose rules distorts what bargaining is and why the system was created," he noted. "It's a myth to say public officials were selling the farm away. Any who did were clearly violating his or her public duty.

Other historians and economic analysts describe this as a new kind of class warfare. Among other think tanks, the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities analyzes how, contrary to Walker's assertion, there is no direct correlation between public-sector collective bargaining and yawning state budget deficits. Such deficits -- and Wisconsin is in the middle of the pack -- reflect the varying impact of the recent recession on individual states, the integrity of fiscal monitoring and the fairness of revenue collection and dispensation.

So how did middle class health benefits and pensions get in there? Enter the old political adages of never letting the public into the room. It is really all about politics."

Walker carved the public out of Act 10 even as he exhibited the rights of union workers to bargain against the board as well as across the table. "He didn't campaign on this," one angry rural Republican official told me, insisting on anonymity because of his political situation.

"Frankly I'm not the only one upset. Listen I was never going to have the votes of these union workers and they knew if I sat down at the table they were facing a hard ass and they had to have damn good facts on their side. But they also knew I was concerned about service.

What FDR actually said

The desire of government employees for (unions) is both natural and logical, but meticulous attention should be paid to the special relationships and obligations of public servants to the public itself.

A strike of public employees manifests nothing less than intent on their part to prevent or obstruct the operations of Government until their demands are satisfied. It is, therefore, with a feeling of gratification that I have noted in the constitution of the National Federation of Federal Employees the provision that "under no circumstances shall this Federation engage in or support strikes against the United States Government."

"Walker makes it sound (like I was) the wimp afraid to stand up to my duties, and I resent that."

Jones is also amused at how Walker inflamed the power of the unions in order to sell the public on his changes to the law. "The idea you can sit down at bargaining table and impose rules distorts what bargaining is and why the system was created," he noted. "It's a myth to say public officials were selling the farm away. Any who did were clearly violating his or her public duty."

Other historians and economic analysts describe this as a new kind of class warfare. Among other think tanks, the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities analyzes how, contrary to Walker's assertion, there is no direct correlation between public-sector collective bargaining and yawning state budget deficits. Such deficits -- and Wisconsin is in the middle of the pack -- reflect the varying impact of the recent recession on individual states, the integrity of fiscal monitoring and the fairness of revenue collection and dispensation.

So how did middle class health benefits and pensions get in there? Enter the old political adages of never letting the public into the room. It is really all about politics."

It becomes an emotional as well as an ideological conflict, but it is a knife that cuts both ways. The Wisconsin public doesn't fully know it's bleeding. It's a case of punishing yourself in the delusion you're sticking it to someone else, in this case the unions.

No wonder that private sector unions are even angrier at Act 10 in their public pronouncements than public unions. They see the real target.

The paradox of course is that in attacking unions so broadly, Walker has emboldened and spread the union ideal. He went after the essence of Wisconsin's reputation. This is the state Theodore Roosevelt once called "the laboratory of democracy." It led in innovation for the workers and the middle class -- introducing workers' compensation, in 1911; unemployment insurance in 1932; and the public employee bargaining in 1959 that served as a model across the US because it worked.

Walker's Act 10 threw its essential elements away without warning and without having a substitute on hand. The result is described on all sides with such terms as "uncharted waters," "class warfare," "Armageddon."

Such terms may sound extreme, "but only if you are on the outside looking in."

WERC's Peter Davis said one state suburban teacher now facing double the class size without help and no paid time in her new handbook to prepare lessons, grade papers or talk to parents.

Historical perspective exposes the real offended party ought to be the public.

"I understand how a lot of moderates might be upset with Walker and anxious to oppose him," noted Sid Hatch, the new executive director of Milwaukee's public teacher union, MTEA. "But they balk at the idea of recalls as somehow not American."

Tt actually is American, he noted -- as does noted administrator Kathleen Falk in facing article on Page 7. Government is required to provide avenues of grievance and objection, says Hatch, and he points to Ohio. There, the legal process allowed the public to rise up in referendum and prevent destroying public bargaining rights before such a law took hold. No such avenue exists in Wisconsin, which means recalling an official from public office "is one way the public can speak out and fight back," said Hatch. "That's why it's there."

Labor historian Joseph A. McCartin an associate professor of history and labor studies at Georgetown University, is blunt about why Walker thinks he can get away with this. "Walker's inflammatory rhetoric" is just "a bald attempt to exploit the bad economy, undo 50 years of legal precedent on labor issues, and win a political victory, no matter the cost," said McCartin.

"What Republicans are now seeking in Wisconsin and elsewhere has nothing to do with helping put America back to work. It is really all about politics."
Kathleen Falk on why this recall is right, legit

By Kathleen Falk
Special to Labor Press

We are in uncharted waters here in Wisconsin. For the first time that anyone can recall, we have a governor who did not tell the truth about what he was planning to do as governor.

And Scott Walker would not have been elected if he had been truthful about his intentions.

Walker's deception isn't about politics or policy. This is about more than a politician making promises as a candidate - it is a fundamental duty of our elected officials.

I f a deception that was key to an election is not a recallable offense, then what is?

Walker did not need to throw away 50 years of workers' rights to balance the budget. In describing his attack on collective bargaining as the only way to fix the budget, he ignored the concessions on pensions and health insurance agreed to by the unions, he concealed his wholly partisan motivation and he knowingly misled Wisconsinites.

Walker used a big deception to get elected. Once elected, he has continued to try to mask his extreme agenda by saying one thing and doing another.

One of the most frequent comments I hear as I travel the state is: "I never would have voted for him if I had known what he was going to do."

"Walker never campaigned on disenfranchising public-employee unions," the Journal Sentinel editorial board noted. "If he had, he would not have been elected. He got a spare 52% of the vote - hardly a mandate for what he is trying to do."

Walker's failure to constituent bargaining as the only way to fix the budget, he ignored the concessions on pensions and health insurance agreed to by the unions, he concealed his wholly partisan motivation and he knowingly misled Wisconsinites.

Walker's deception is of a fundamental kind: Truthfulness is a fundamental duty of our elected officials.

I was born in Milwaukee, later raised in Waushesa County. The moral compass instilled in me by my Irish and German families made telling the truth a real clear and basic measure of character.

One of the most frequent comments I hear as I travel the state is: "I never would have voted for him if I had known what he was going to do."

"Walker never campaigned on disenfranchising public-employee unions," the Journal Sentinel editorial board noted. "If he had, he would not have been elected. He got a spare 52% of the vote - hardly a mandate for what he is trying to do."

We are in uncharted waters here in Wisconsin. For the first time that anyone can recall, we have a governor who did not tell the truth about what he was planning to do as governor.

And Scott Walker would not have been elected if he had been truthful about his intentions.

Walker's deception isn't about politics or policy. This is about more than a politician making promises as a candidate - it is a fundamental duty of our elected officials.

I f a deception that was key to an election is not a recallable offense, then what is?

Walker did not need to throw away 50 years of workers' rights to balance the budget. In describing his attack on collective bargaining as the only way to fix the budget, he ignored the concessions on pensions and health insurance agreed to by the unions, he concealed his wholly partisan motivation and he knowingly misled Wisconsinites.

Walker used a big deception to get elected. Once elected, he has continued to try to mask his extreme agenda by saying one thing and doing another.

He said during the campaign that he didn't intend to cut kids off health care, but he has. The nonpartisan Legislative Fiscal Bureau noted that Walker's cuts will mean 65,000 people, 29,000 of them children, will lose access to their current health care.

Walker said he would maintain the state's commitment to fund education that keeps our schools strong but then proposed the largest cuts to education in Wisconsin history.

He said after Republicans lost two seats in the state Senate that Wisconsinites want more bipartisanship on the very same day he signed into law the most partisan redistricting law that anyone can recall.

He said he is focused on creating jobs, but since Walker took office, we are losing jobs at rates not seen in decades, and his own administration recently admitted that he won't fulfill his promise to create 250,000 new jobs.

Walker - by what he's done and how he's done it - has pitted family member against family member, neighbor against neighbor.

He has grabbed power to enact an extreme agenda that satisfies his richest far-right donors. And he has done so in the most divisive manner imaginable.

There are serious problems before us - health care, education, the environment and jobs - that require leaders who bring us together to move us forward in tough times.

Our elected officials should be recalled when they violate their fundamental duty to their constituents. Walker's failure to be honest about his agenda violates that trust, and he should be recalled.

The author is the former Dane County Executive.
Another vision of how to help kids

In early November volunteers from Wisconsin Vision spent two days visiting Milwaukee public elementary schools, Clark Street and Gwen T. Jackson, to administer eye exams and provide free of charge prescription glasses as part of the company’s “Clearer Days Ahead” program for underprivileged children.

A special guest came along that really made the children’s eyes open up - Danny Gokey, the “American Idol” finalist and Milwaukee native, now Nashville recording artist who also serves as a spokesman for Wisconsin Vision.

Among the results of this program coordinated with the teachers’ union, the Milwaukee Teachers Education Association:

On Dec. 13, the MPS board presented Wisconsin Vision with its “Award of Excellence” for the “Clearer Days Ahead” initiative.

More lasting, those two days turned into 134 children receiving eye exams their economic circumstances would otherwise not allow and 111 of them received prescription glasses at no charge.

Readers of Labor Press will recognize Wisconsin Vision as a longtime advertiser and may also know its workers are represented by United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1473.

But this story of business-labor-community cooperation touches on an ongoing neglected “good news” reality in our society. People care in a way that puts to shame some of the partisan simplicities that dominate our media. Several stories in this issue reflect that.

Wisconsin Vision has been offering its services and outreach for 33 years. A test run of “Clearer Days Ahead” early this year at an inner city school provided 47 children with free eyewear.

The MTEA works with the company identifying the needs within MPS schools and coordinating with teachers and families. One of Wisconsin Vision’s suppliers, whose workers are also represented by the UFCW, sister company LBC Optics, donated the lens material, helped with the eye frames and did the finish work for the children’s glasses.

Even Gokey’s involvement was more than celebrity watching. He spent his time helping children find the “coolest” frames to be their own.

PHOTOS: Technicians give a Clark Street student an eye test while Danny Gokey helps another pick out the right frames.
Nice talk won’t keep manufacturing from flying away

By Michael Rosen
Special to Labor Press

Wisconsin’s manufacturers are facing a skilled labor shortage of machinists, operators, craft workers, distributors and technicians. In response, the Milwaukee 7, southeastern Wisconsin’s regional development of business and community leaders, has announced a public relations campaign.

News flash: It will take a lot more than branding to solve these labor shortages.

Another news flash — President Obama clearly knows that as he created a national Office of Manufacturing Policy Dec. 12 in the Department of Commerce.

Any solution must start with defining the scope of the problem. Why is there a shortage of the kind of skilled workers that for decades made Milwaukee a destination for manufacturers?

Outsourcing is a huge part of the answer. One day after the M-7’s announcement, Dana Corp. announced it was closing its Milwaukee operations and moving more than 150 jobs to low-wage Kentucky.

Similarly, the Thermo Fisher Scientifica in Two Rivers, which already had moved hundreds of jobs to a Reynosa, Mexico, plant, announced it may shut down entirely.

The list of companies that have offshored or outsourced production reads like a who’s who of Wisconsin’s manufacturing: Briggs & Stratton Corp., A.O. Smith, Rockwell, Badger Meter and many more.

The loss of manufacturing jobs has been going on since the early 1980s. Milwaukee’s working families have had their lives turned upside down by plant closings, downsizings, outsourcing and offshoreing — meaning job loss, declining wages and benefits and economic insecurity.

My former student, John, did everything we ask young workers to do, earning two journeyman cards while working and attending MATC full time. John left Briggs when it began moving jobs to low-wage states and Mexico. But his new employer, Rockwell, began outsourcing to nonunion, low-wage plants even before it eliminated all hourly workers last year. So John seemed to be back at Harley-Davidson.

But, a year and a half ago, Harley laid John off.

John’s experience is unfortunately not unique. Almost everyone with roots in this community knows family that experienced the instability. Nationally, manufacturers shed 2 million jobs during the Great Recession.

Wisconsin lost 58,300 manufacturing jobs, 11.6% of its total, between December 2007 and June 2009, the official end of the recession. The state continued to lose manufacturing jobs for several months after the recession ended. By September 2010, Wisconsin had lost 69,800 manufacturing jobs, 14% of its total.

The occupational programs at MATC most popular with waiting lists are culinary arts, automotive, heating and air-conditioning, physical therapy, barber and cosmetology, occupational therapy and nursing.

What do they all have in common? These are jobs that cannot be offshored.

Out of working-class students are voting with their feet by choosing careers that provide more secure employment. They’ll continue until manufacturers offer the same level of security as other occupations or sufficient compensation to justify the insecurity that has characterized manufacturing employment.

What can be done to address this? Manufacturers need to:

• Abandon human resource strategies that treat employees like variable costs instead of the bonuses. Enrollments in nursing programs soared, technical colleges invested in nursing education and students flooded to occupations that promised employment security and decent compensation.

It’s ironic that the area’s business leaders, who are among the fiercest proponents of market solutions to most problems, are reluctant to use pricing to solve the skilled worker shortage. Any Econ 101 student knows that pricing efficiently allocates resources.

As Melanie Holmes, a vice president at Manpower Group, said, “The No.1 reason why employers are having trouble filling these positions is they’re not offering the pay that the candidates are demanding.” I applaud the M-7’s decision to focus on advanced manufacturing. But it will take more than glossy brochures and television ads to persuade the next-generation workforce that becoming a skilled manufacturing worker is a stable and secure career path.

Michael Rosen, an economics professor at Milwaukee Area Technical College, is also president of the institution’s teachers union, AFT Local 212.

Economist Michael Rosen
Only those state antics make redistricting a dirty word

By Dominique Paul Neth
Labor Press Editor

The best known national story about redistricting occurred quite naturally in Massachusetts, where the population shifts and growths in the US Census changed almost half the area served by 71 year old Barney Frank in the US House.

Frank is one of the Democrats’ progressive lions who survived his own scandals decades ago to emerge as a noted wit, acerbic moral touchstone and fiscal expert. But he also takes seriously that citizens deserve to know their incumbent and vice versa, so he looked hard at whether he could do a good job for a district that after the 2010 census included 325,000 people who never before had a chance to know him or vote for him.

Frank was openly analytical. He hates raising money and he would need a lot. He loves to talk, but he would have to campaign hard among newbies. So he announced his retirement, noting that at least in retirement “I don’t have to pretend to be nice to people I don’t like.” There were salutes all around for his service and for accepting change without rancor.

Back in the city of Milwaukee, consider in contrast the reaction of Ald. Bob Donovan when the census added a mighty growth of Latinos to his district. And the new map moves his house out of his district into that of fellow board member Peter Blewett when the first pre-election map -- because this time he is facing some articulate opponents and has to defend a pretty lame track record.

To the south of his borders, there was a different reaction - enthusiasm and welcome. County of Milwaukee Supervisor Marina Dimitrijevic even introduced the resolution that would make her a minority white candidate in a majority Hispanic district.

High time to recognize change, said Dimitrijevic, whose politics and issues dovetail with those of Voces de La Frontera and other Latino’s that support her re-election. (It is the worst kept secret in Milwaukee politics that she is aiming not just for re-election but also for her peers to pick her as the new County Board chair, now that Lee Holloway has announced his retirement.)

Last summer there was another enthusiastic even if career-destructive embrace of the growth of Hispanic citizens at the Milwaukee school board, led by a cry of “Si Si puedo!” from longtime school board member Peter Blewett when the first pre-dominantly Hispanic district was redrawn to match the new population information. But that was District 6, where Blewett has served on the school board for a decade. And the new map moves his house out of his district into that of fellow board member Annie Woodward, leaving the choice in 2013 to run against her in a heavily African American area.

He could have fought rather than lead the change charge, but “I’m imagining 10 years down the road,” Blewett explained. “I’d rather be an example of what elected officials should do.”

Only a few months ago, the veteran liberal activist was unsure of a future path, but by December he had decided, announcing his candidacy for a county supervisor district that neatly meshes with the eastern half of his old school board district. Yes, he’s running for the seat being abandoned by Holloway, cheerfully entering a race against six other candidates. And with his entry and experience, he’s already a leading contender.

Such is the inevitable if sometimes wounding side of natural redistricting. For the nasty side we have to turn to state politics, and this one is a doozy.

Ostensibly, when the state legislature adjusts its own and US House district maps, it is for balance, to protect minority rights and ideally to encourage natural boundaries and competitiveness. Most often it’s partisan opportunity. Everyone understands that and looks away - unless the results are too warped, fabricated and blatantly politicized.

That happened when the GOP majority jammed through new maps for November 2012 elections - and now, faced with recalls of several GOP state senators, wants the new districts put in place immediately to protect themselves.

Even Republican observers know the maps are extreme, only they tend to chuckle gleefully at the legal snookery executed by their side. But here come the judges with some pointed questions about the two federal lawsuits and other maneuvers in state courts. Putting lawyerly niceties aside, the key questions may well be: “Were these insiders instructed to arrange the results so Democratic could never regain control?”

Quite naturally, the judges want to ask the people who did the maps. The Republicans scrambled mightily with every legal trick they could muster to keep them from being deposed.

The federal court is now demanding the key figures testify, which moves the cases from long shots - since the courts tend to defer to the people’s elected representatives, the legislature, on such issues -- to better than even money.

“Three months ago I wouldn’t have given the federal challenges more than a 30% chance,” one lawyer told me. “Now I think it’s likely the federal court will hear it through.”

But even the threat of this GOP redistricting has affected the April nonpartisan election and colored next November. See article opposite page.
Election board pieces and properties are shuffling

In a few months as supervisor, firebrand Eyon Biddle has stirred up the pace and temperature of the County Board. On Dec. 12, he announced intentions to attempt the same at the city, taking on Ald. Willie Hines (actually Common Council president and long rumored to be weighing other positions).

The news is just part of the ferment that always exists in politics but seems on steroids this season. Many factors are creating Monopoly board games.

In some cases, you can add fear to opportunity. If you look at the redistricting maps the GOP majority wants to push through — see Page 10 — they eliminate some Democrats’ entire bases of support. It doesn’t happen until November 2012 if current court rulings hold up, but it already is churning up April, where results could affect what several state legislators do next. It already has.

Democratic Rep. David Cullen envisions Republican communities dominating his region — his 13th Assembly District would extend way into Waukesha County. While some doubt the blatant redistricting will go through, Cullen is clearly not waiting.

He is already collecting signatures to run for County Supervisor District 15 against mainly Dan Cody, a fellow Democrat and Parks People president who has been working for years, doing doors and positioning himself to take over for retiring Lynne de Bruin in this nonpartisan (on paper) contest.

Other maneuvers may be influenced by the Democrats moving from the majority to the minority. But mainly they seem about change and fresh circumstance.

Not under threat of recall or challenge next November, two Milwaukee area state senators are seeking to move their political base close to home. Tim Carpenter and Spencer Coggs are two of the Fabulous 14 praised because of their flight to Illinois to prevent a financially-need quorum.

And they are only two of the four well known candidates fighting for the seat opened up by the retirement of Wayne Whittow. The others are socialist Rick Kissell, a tireless and frequent campaigner who first ran for treasurer in 1988, and former state treasurer Dawn Marie Sass. That brought an amusing but friendly moment when Carpenter and Sass bumped into each other in the cold outside Serb Hall Dec. 7, seeking nomination signatures from the Recall Walker town hall.

Change is in the air, and you can learn a lot about people watching the wheels go round.

-- Dominique Paul Noth

Carpenter (left) and Sass ply the crowd at Serb Hall Dec. 7 for the same nomination signatures.
Took effort to print voucher truth but city taxpayers now mailed facts

It’s hard to get government to reveal truth, but a distinctive moment of transparency in the face of bureaucratic roadblocks was celebrated by school, city and state officials Dec. 12 at City Hall. The real victor was the city property tax payer, finding out in mailed bills that over $50 million they thought was going to MPS was going to pay private school tuition in the voucher program -- a 22% increase!

Like the vouchers or not, the taxpayer has never before told its huge cost, assuming the state was picking up the tab. No indeed, homeowner. The 22,000 children in the misnomer Parental Choice school district are also excluded from the public school aid formula.

“I am glad taxpayers will finally see the effect the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program has on their property tax bills,” said Rep. Fred Kessler, who has fought for years to get the state to own up to the citizens. “Milwaukee taxpayers are forced to pay for public, private and parochial school programs. Public schools are the only ones required to educate students with special needs, not just when it’s convenient. Because of this, MPS is left educating a disproportionate number of special needs students at significantly higher costs.”

This simple change will clarify to what extent public schools have been bailing out their private and religious counterparts,” said Rep. Christine Sinicki.

The MPS had to pay $5,000 to create the mailed insert after bureaucrats argued that it might cost much more. (The same Dec. 12, the city revealed it had goofed up another part of the mailing, comparing and mislabeling this year’s tax levy to two years ago.)

Speakers agreed more transparency should be in the works and necessary so taxpayers no longer play dodgeball. – D.P.N.


Orthopedic Institute of Wisconsin

Thomas J. Perlewitz, MD
Orthopedic Surgeon
Spine Specialist
Fellowship Trained
2901 Kinnickinnic River Parkway
Suite 102
Milwaukee, WI 53215
414-384-6700
2323 N. Mayfair Road
Suite 310
Milwaukee, WI 53226
414-771-5080

“I offer comprehensive evaluation, diagnosis and treatment of all spinal conditions by utilizing state-of-the-art techniques, procedures and instrumentation. My ultimate goal is improved quality of life for the patient through both operative and non-operative measures.”

Specialty Procedures and Professional Achievements
◆ Fellowship trained in spinal surgery at Harvard with emphasis on treatment of conditions of the cervical, thoracic and lumbar spine
◆ Compassionate care focused on the whole individual
◆ Selected as Chief Resident in Department of Orthopedic Surgery at the Medical College of Wisconsin
◆ Alpha Omega Alpha medical honor society

Medical Education
Medical College of Wisconsin
Milwaukee, WI

Residency
Medical College of Wisconsin
Milwaukee, WI

For more information or scheduling, please call 414-384-6700.

www.TheOrthoInstitute.com

Your One-Stop Union Printer

Wells Print & Digital Service is constantly updating to give our customers the latest in technology for quality and convenience. We strive to give our customers the best ONE-STOP union print shop in Madison. Technology, union craftsmanship and pride in what we do has made us a leader in the printing field. Wells Print & Digital Service has been carrying on the union tradition in Madison since 1923 and proud of it.

So for all your printing and mailing needs Wells Print & Digital Service would like to be your ONE-STOP Union Printer.

Wells
Print & Digital
Services
3121 Watford Way
Madison, WI 53713
608-274-7774
www.printanddigital.com
Kleefisch recall: Why her 15 minutes of fame are up

By Dominique Paul Noth
Labor Press Editor

Unquestionably the recall of Gov. Scott Walker roars ahead, but ticking more slowly along with it is Rebecca why?

This is the under-the-radar state recall campaign—to the shock of both sides.

Her invisibility to the public is not just embarrassing to Lt. Gov. Rebecca Kleefisch, it emphasizes how even back in 2010 everyone was focused on the Humpty Dumpty atop the wall.

How disappointing for the perkry brutet, arch-conservative, self-described Palin-like Grizzly Mamma, former morning TV anchor with the deer-in-headlight stare who popped up with Scott Walker in 2010 campaign ads and boasted in her own commer-

cal that the state didn't need federal health care or $810 million in rail money ("I'm a mom, I've got a minivan").

Personally, I thought the public would laugh so hard at that one that they would have to remember her.

Turns out not. None of her media strutting apparently lit up the state's memory bank, judging from door to door responses.

Citizens are quick to sign up to recall Gov. Scott Walker — they fall all over themselves, they bury shivering clipboard holders with thousands of sign-ups in a six-block walk, they even leave signed petitions in the neighborhood bar (which obviously voids them).

But when it comes to Kleefisch — who would step in if the governor dies — they? I mean, leaving aside the governor with a lame duck vice election returns.

They keep asking petition dis-

tributors, "What's she done?" (Not much, alas). And "Why a separate petition?" For that, blame GOP Atty. Gen. J.B. Van Hollen. He ruled that while the duo was elected together (you could sign one box and get 'em both), separate petitions are now required. A constitutional night-

mare looms if the state recalls him and leaves a Democratic governor with a lame duck Republican heir no one can remember.

So let's remember a little. Despite her TV credentials, Kleefisch was nowhere as good at glossing over her real agenda and rabid intentions as Walker was. Her high energy social norms were actually starting to cost him votes until he gently cast her aside on the 2010 cam-
paign trail.

Kleefisch briefly side-tracked the Walker bandwagon in October 2010 with her extremist opinions in a radio interview when she com-
pared gays to a clock or chair. No kidding. Direct quote, which she later claimed was taken out of context: "At what point are we going to okay marrying inani-
mate objects? Can I marry this table, or this - you know, clock? Can we marry dogs?"

Out of context, eh? Her other claim to fame was cancer. She now says she beat it, despite pending constitu-
tional challenges. (Not much, alas). And "Why a separate petition?" For that, blame GOP Atty. Gen. J.B. Van Hollen. He ruled that while the duo was elected together (you could sign one box and get 'em both), separate petitions are now required. A constitutional night-
mare looms if the state recalls him and leaves a Democratic governor with a lame duck Republican heir no one can remember.

For more than nine years, M&I Taft-Hartley Services has been meeting the unique financial services needs of the labor community.

We are proud of the teachers, police officers, firefighters, nurses and other dedicated public employees who share our community. And we are committed to helping them and all union members build a financially secure future.

To learn more about M&I Taft-Hartley Services, please contact us at tafthartleyservices@micorp.com or 1-800-588-9330.


Investment products are:

No FOX (Insured) No Rate Guarantee (May Have Value)

Robert C. Angermeier Attorney

Social Security Disability

■ 30 years experience
■ No attorney fees unless the case is successful
■ Call now for your no obligation consultation

Law Offices of Angermeier & Rogers, LLP
414-289-9200

Specializing in:
1-4 Color Printing • Digital Printing
Newsletters • Brochures • Flyers
Election Materials • Stationary
with Full Service Bindery and Mailing Services

UNPARALLELED SERVICE AND VALUE

2979 South Howell Avenue • Milwaukee, WI 53207
(414) 489-0218

MILWAUKEE’S UNION PRINTER

Comment

We work with unions every day to give their members a better tomorrow.

For more than nine years, M&I Taft-Hartley Services has been meeting the unique financial services needs of the labor community.

We are proud of the teachers, police officers, firefighters, nurses and other dedicated public employees who share our community. And we are committed to helping them and all union members build a financially secure future.

To learn more about M&I Taft-Hartley Services, please contact us at tafthartleyservices@micorp.com or 1-800-588-9330.


Investment products are:

No FOX (Insured) No Rate Guarantee (May Have Value)

Derek Pleasants
Vice President & Relationship Manager
414-267-7310

Jim “Jimbo” Jorgensen
Vice President & Relationship Manager
414-471-8210

Institutional Trust Services

A part of BMO Financial Group

BMO

THE UNEMPLOYED MEMBERS of United Steelworkers Local 2-209 — hundreds of laid-off Harley-Davidson workers — learned by letter from the USW how their union brothers and sisters have not forgotten. “Many are our younger workers, last in seniority with lots of kids who need to feel the holiday spirit,” local leaders told me. If the company can’t give them work right now, at least the union can give them Christmas. Hundreds of the laid-off workers who registered received a frozen turkey and a $25 Pick n Save gift certificate and separate $15 Target gift certificates for each dependent under 18. The recipients and the USW helpers crowded into Iron Workers Hall all day December 10, with food and drink and coloring tables for the kids (left) as USW members helped tote out the turkeys from a waiting truck (photo at the top).

SOME VETERANS FROM SIX MAJOR CONFLICTS arrived in the third floor auditorium from the spinal repair unit. Others came from other medical wards at the Zablocki Veterans Center and hospital. Families and friends joined the 23rd annual holiday show. Old, young, in wheelchairs, with walkers or under their own steam, Milwaukee’s military veterans were in the spotlight of a caring community. Shouts of “Welcome!” and “Merry Christmas, sir!” echoed after them in the hallways, where the two-dozen Trinity Irish dancers were practicing their steps and staff was wheeling in more pies and feasts of food. Hundreds of veterans streamed in (photo at right). Gifts were supplied by a community of givers with a raffle awarding some nifty prizes. The helpers came from the staff, merchants and community but primarily from union veterans themselves, who posed in top photo for the Labor Press camera. NOTE THE GUY AT THE END on the right, top photo. Jeff (Doc) Dentice, the famous docdentice@wi.rr.com, came up with the idea for the annual event and remains its tireless organizer.

America's Union Printers
Wish You and Yours a Joyous Holiday Season
GCC/IBT Locals 577M and 23N
Graphie Communications Conference
International Brotherhood of Teamsters
District Council 1
633 S. Hawley Rd, #100, Milwaukee, WI 53214
email: dc1@577m.org

Best Wishes for Peace and Joy this Christmas Season
And a New Year of Health, Happiness and Prosperity

STEAMFITTERS LOCAL 601

Kevin La Mere, Business Manager • Joel Zielke, Financial Secretary-Treasurer
Jim O’Brien, Business Agent • Doug Edwards, Business Agent • Gary Cox, Business Agent
Dale Poweletti, President • John McGrath, Vice-President • Walter C. Kunde, Recording Sec.
Stephen Braley, Executive Board • Jim Stone, Executive Board
John Strom, Executive Board • Brian Toutant, Executive Board
A lesson for children about being stomped on

Wisconsin's public schools and then pretended that he hadn't done anything wrong. In fact, he made the incredible claim that he was merely balancing a budget -- even though funding in other areas was increased.

The problem for Mr. Walker is that people in Wisconsin can see what is happening for themselves. School districts across the state have been forced to hire fewer teachers and fewer staff. These are the facts -- a recent survey of school districts provided irrefutable evidence.

Incredibly, Mr. Walker sticks to his denials and even claimed that the majority of districts hired more staff. Schools are the same or better, he's said.

But according to a PoliticoFact piece in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, the governor's "fuzzy math turns reality on its head." Schools are hurting because of Walker's actions and everybody in touch with reality knows it. What Mr. Suh and Mr. Walker have in common is that they are learning that facts are indeed stubborn things.

Where they differ is that under the weight of the evidence even the snarling Mr. Suh finally saw the light and apologized for his actions. We're still waiting to hear from Mr. Walker.

Comment

On Thanksgiving Day, as much of Wisconsin and much of the country watched the Green Bay Packers take on the Detroit Lions before digging into turkey and stuffing, an outrageous thing happened. Ndamukong Suh, the huge defensive tackle for the Lions, stomped on a Green Bay Packers lineman as he lay on the ground and then pretended it didn't happen.

The problem for Suh was that everybody saw what he did. Other players saw it, the refs saw it, the announcers saw it and little kids, mothers, fathers, aunts and uncles watching at home saw it.

Even league officials saw it, suspending him without pay for two games on Nov. 29. It was obvious what happened, the replays showed it. After the game (one that he had been kicked out of, by the way) Mr. Suh denied that he did anything wrong and tried to flip reality on its head by claiming that he was merely trying to keep his balance.

Unfortunately, Wisconsinites have seen this kind of behavior before. This past spring Scott Walker slashed $1.6 billion in education funding from Wisconsin's public schools and then pretended that he hadn't done anything wrong. In fact, he made the incredible claim that he was merely balancing a budget -- even though funding in other areas was increased.

The problem for Mr. Walker is that people in Wisconsin can see what is happening for themselves. School districts across the state have been forced to hire fewer teachers and fewer staff. These are the facts -- a recent survey of school districts provided irrefutable evidence.

Incredibly, Mr. Walker sticks to his denials and even claimed that the majority of districts hired more staff. Schools are the same or better, he's said.

But according to a PoliticoFact piece in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, the governor's "fuzzy math turns reality on its head." Schools are hurting because of Walker's actions and everybody in touch with reality knows it. What Mr. Suh and Mr. Walker have in common is that they are learning that facts are indeed stubborn things.

Where they differ is that under the weight of the evidence even the snarling Mr. Suh finally saw the light and apologized for his actions. We're still waiting to hear from Mr. Walker.

By a Regular Reader who wants to stay anonymous Special to Labor Press
In or Out?

From Page 1

quietly working out their own strategies to maintain rela-
tionship with the state's hundreds of governmental units. Labor experts, even some associated with the state agency overseeing the process, the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission (WERC), con-
ceded that staying outside of Act 10 gives these unions some starting power to maneuver.

One unspoken power: Workers who don't stay within the union lose the right to have that representation on their side when managers treat them like at-will employees or target them without cause for replacement. If they leave a union and stop paying dues because Walker has forbidden more than a sliver of union bargaining, they may quickly discover the real limits of such rugged individualism. It is slowly dawning on some workers that it is self-protection to stick with the union as well as belief in solidarity.

"We've always had both kinds of union members," said an outspoken, colorful, newly energized union member. "There's one who believes that all workers are brothers and sisters and must stand up for each other. The other is the 'I'm all right Jack, I got my own' kind that only supports the union if the dues mean immediate rewards.

"Thank to Walker, I hope the Jack side is on its way out."

Another power? Many public officials want to main-
tain good relationships with their workers and rely on union expertise on all sorts of work rules and connections. Whatever Walker might say, even conserva-
tive officials don't want to throw that overboard and are seeking ways to consult with "employee representative groups."

Here's yet another. Walker thought he would splinter the union movement by creating special "protected class-
es" of workers, exempting select fire and police from loss

"There's one who believes that all workers are brothers and

Yet there are many elected leaders and public man-
gers around the state who have to live in the realitites. They know how it often takes years of bargaining and explanation across a table to work out efficient opera-
tions and effect savings and how many deviations come

from poor management or careless supervision as much if not more than worker failings.

Many of these leaders - the conservative ones refusing to be quoted on the record - fear what will now come to pass under Act 10: Fewer workers daring to take responsibility and more managerial naiveté and excess. "I don't want docile workers afraid to speak up and fix things," one city administrator told me. "I need their knowledge. Besides, I'll be buried in lawsuits."

One leader of a public works department described it to me: "- new office staff feeling their oats or playing up to an elected official, green about how work is done and pushing untested ideas. It's reinventing the wheel."

Many of these comments are not coming from Milwaukee and Madison where unions represent voting blocs. Even elected officials in conservative communi-
ties confess they want to maintain good relations with the workers they hire and are struggling to find ways to do so without breaking Walker's "version of the law," as one put it. Whatever the ideology, many are realists about how work gets done and how workers expect to be treated. The conversations with Labor Press over the last months are a potent signal of what is happening in the state.

Even Republicans who voted for Walker didn't expect this attack on what turned out to be their own neighbors. "We're going to drown in debt if we can't keep our best workers satisfied and our communication with their unions open," one community leader told me adding "I've voted Republican all my life and I am not a fan of your unions in the first place. But I don't like shifting the blame or the facts. People expect to be treated like people."

"If they've done the math," another manager told me. By cutting education and community aids so drastically, he believes, Walker has "negated the gains" in worker givebacks he keeps harping on.

"There's no reason to cost the taxpayers money by throwing out the good rules because the governor says we can't negotiate across the table. It's more important to maintain long-term harmony and respect."

-- Dominique Paul Noah

Even some in GOP are getting ticked

One thing conservative communities under-

stand is cost. Another is lost quality. In

November a detailed respected analysis from administrators found the state's public schools employing 3,368 fewer people (1,655 fewer teachers, 765 fewer aides, 776 fewer support staff and 772 fewer administrators) than in the previous school year, which dovetails with a Department of Workforce Development report -- yes, Walker's own appointees -- of 4,000 public school jobs lost within a year.

That sure saves costs, but what does it reveal about values and quality?

An even more chilling statistic -- 16,785 govern-
ment workers had filed retirement applications in Wis-
consin as of Oct. 31, while in all of 2010, 11,750 workers did so. "It's about fear," Jim Palmer, executive director of the Wisconsin Professional Police Association, told the New York Times. "A lot of people are seeing this war on public employees and saying, let's get out."

When Walker goes on TV to speak about scams, taziness, tricks with sick days and similar abuses he races through his insults against unions to make the work goof-offs seem particularly onerous if not just weird, one union leader told me -- until you remember how both sides agreed and how managers sometimes have reasons other than union contracts not to change.

"He never explains the management role in report-
ing abuse or how often the union moves in to correct it," one put it. Whatever the ideology, many are realists about how work gets done and how workers expect to be treated. The conversations with Labor Press over the last months are a potent signal of what is happening in the state.

Even Republicans who voted for Walker didn't expect this attack on what turned out to be their own neighbors. "We're going to drown in debt if we can't keep our best workers satisfied and our communication with their unions open," one community leader told me adding "I've voted Republican all my life and I am not a fan of your unions in the first place. But I don't like shifting the blame or the facts. People expect to be treated like people."

"If they've done the math," another manager told me. By cutting education and community aids so drastically, he believes, Walker has "negated the gains" in worker givebacks he keeps harping on.

"There's no reason to cost the taxpayers money by throwing out the good rules because the governor says we can't negotiate across the table. It's more important to maintain long-term harmony and respect."

-- Dominique Paul Noah
Greed trumped ideology in Walker's decisions

Walker has now undercut his own characterization of noble ideological concern in why he let police and fire unions continue as before in bargaining rights, claiming it was all about vital safety and protecting the public. He was amazingly selective about it all, somehow not missing a single union that supported him for governor and skipping several law enforcement entities that didn't.

Hence AFSCME's corrections officers were thrown out with the rest of AFSEMCE workers with hints of sending protective officers into the prisons, a nasty implication with no evidence that they might skip out on their duties. It was yet another effort to suggest some public workers were "lesser" than others.

But then Walker showed his true colors - in this case, green as in money. He belatedly realized that his law would immediately cost revenue because the federal government would not underwrite transit workers whose working conditions changed. Walker may pretend to hate federal money, but politically there are limits to how much taxpayers would tolerate in letting actual hard cash slip away.

Suddenly, Walker's legislature scrambled to change the bargaining law, clumsily defining a "transit worker" as merely one who might be paid with federal dollars. Not all are. So now only those so defined have full collective bargaining rights restored, though everyone is hard-pressed to explain how they are protecting public safety when nurses aren't. This change revealed the mercenary slime rather than principle that really motivates the governor. — D.P.N.

In or Out?

From Page 16

Others just had confidence in their own head counts. Six state units in November went through the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission election process. General counsel Peter Davis confirmed that all six recertified the unions with remarkable ease. In one case, with a scattered union of 655 employees around the state, the State Professional Education and Information Council No. 1 saw 82% of its members participate in the November WERC vote. 98% of those who showed up voted to stay within the union. The 18% of members who didn't show were automatically counted as a no under Walker's edict, but that still gave the union an official 80-20 win ratio.

"Had the governor decided to use fair rules for the election, the result would have been even more lopsided in favor of the union," said one member, Chip Brown, training specialist and member at the Wisconsin Historical Society.

The head count and union activism also dominates Wisconsin Education Association Council (WEAC), but with some difficulties given how small some of the units are - under two dozen in one case - and how elusive getting full turnout can be. (Remember, if an employee fails to call in for an election, that is a vote against, a legal standard that would prevent every politician in the legislature from being elected.)

Already because of Act 10, WEAC has been forced to radically cut its support staff - a problem hitting most public unions in or out of Act 10 participation. Many WEAC locals don't have to commit to recertification votes since two-thirds have existing union contracts that supersede the provision. But a third did. On December 8, 206 of these small education workforces around the state completed the WERC election process and Davis quickly reported the results as again strongly in favor of the unions. But not for 29 of the smallest and often most distant units, which found too many of its members failing to answer the bell (phone voting), thus succumbing to the Byzantine election rules.

In one case the vote was 31 to 1 in favor of the union but the union lost because the unit had 64 members and 32 failed to pick up the election call.

The cost of the recertification election is not that high for small units. Plus the teachers are sticking with the process because win or lose they can confront the local public with some horrifying results. Once community leaders realize how little teachers can bargain for the community's children (they share the same work conditions), once the taxpayers realize they must now absorb the human resource and grievance costs the unions once ran interference for, outrage is expected to wipe away any pretense of savings.

Walker tries to counter the reality facing schools in an ad blitz with easily debunked claims that it's all working. But the savings he cites in Kaukauna schools as one example come largely from increasing class sizes and making elementary school teachers provide six, not five, hours a day of class instruction, cutting into planning and lesson preparation. A new ad tried to paint Monona Grove schools as saving money and was immediately slammed by the officials in charge.

Note, too, that WEAC has other units that are stepping outside Act 10 and WEAC supports that approach as well.

Each case is different, says WEAC spokesperson Christina Brey. Pay-to-vote restriction and tight scheduling requirements "could understandably cause some local unions to opt out of the process." In some cases there are also influential ties to local school boards that encourage stepping away. So while WEAC President Mary Bell has said she sees "value in recertification" for many of her locals, she has expressed respect for those who don't.

Other unions resisting Act 10 recertification are often much larger and convinced that the tiny prize isn't worth the big price.

First this is an unbelievably high hurdle for many unions with scattered and even transient workforces or special circumstances. They may well make the 51% of all workers but why risk getting thousand of workers to the polls at your own expense, only for a skinny sliver of real bargaining? Only for the danger of losing on a gross technicality?

Whether fully in the Act 10, or legally insisting on staying a union but not submitting to Walker's interpretation, let's not pretend the loss of full collective bargaining rights hasn't hurt, as well as being so obviously unfair and divisive. Making workers pay directly, not on their paychecks, to support union activity isn't going to be easy. But while conservatives are confident that time is on their side, they apparently don't remember recent American history and an old union saying:

"One day longer, one day stronger."

That was the perseverance that changed the country. There were those back then who thought that harsh rules would make the workers cave. Instead they became more determined. Today's workers never thought they would have to go back and do it all again. But they will if they must. And Act 10 constitutes a must.
Come to the stables for this union’s amazing 125 years

The 1897 contract was published in German as well as English and stated “No workingman shall be employed who is not a member of the National Union of the Brewery Workmen."

Among the responsibilities it laid out was $12.70 a week for "stable men" but $15 a week for "route peddlers," and the contract established "ten hours in succession (including 15 minutes lunch time), only interrupted by one hour for dinner, shall constitute one day's labor."

Ah, as Newt Gingrich might say, those were the good old days.

That old contract, a sort of memento of what the brewery workers fought for and won back a couple of centuries, was distributed as a memento for the 125th anniversary - a remarkable record - of the continuation of the old union, Brewery Workers Local 9, part of the United Auto Workers family.

The local threw a big party Saturday, Dec. 10, appropriately in the Miller Coors Stables on State St. (photo above), though those "stables" have gone through quite some changes. Multiple video screens covered the event, strobe lights and digital starbeams accompanied the dancing, free beer and popcorn competed with conversation.

More than 160 dressed up people took part and a hired bus took people to their cars parked blocks away.

Other unions participated but this was the local's show - and UAW's. The international's secretary treasurer, Dennis Williams, posed for a photo (he's far right in photo at left) next to the local's new president, Lance Agbuis. Other regional and international UAW leaders attended. Among them UW regent John Drew (second from left).

Enjoying the festivities was (photo below) the local’s recording secretary Marie Britt-Sharpe and her husband. But then again, she helped organize the gala.

All these UAW leaders obviously have negotiated much better contracts over the years. Though in fairness, in the 19th century the brewers did agree to something many of today’s tycoons would balk at, that "during dull times nobody shall be discharged . . . and nobody shall be laid off over one week at a time."

-- D.P.N.

Happy Holidays

From Milwaukee Area Labor Council, AFL-CIO
Energized and angry teachers propel the recall

By Dominique Paul Noth
Labor Press Editor

"It's chaos. For teachers the situation with school boards is all over the map." That's the state map, according to Christina Brey, speaking for WEAC, the state teachers union.

Much of her union -- which is scattered in contingents around the state, some sizeable, others tiny -- is sticking with Act 10, going through the recertification process local by local and deliberately pointing out to the public what it is losing, not gaining, in the process. Several locals are not and recent events expose how a tiny handful of the smallest and least organized will be decertified because of those weird rules. Even when a vast majority show up to vote yes, the workers too distracted, lazy, unaware or opposed who don't show up are counted as no votes.

Walker lopped $1.6 million in education aid and government flexibility from schools while expanding the unproven voucher school program and also slashing half a billion dollars for Medicaid/Badger Care. If budgets are "a moral document," as so many religious leaders keep insisting, no one can find the morality in that.

Walker's policies handcuff not just teachers but nurses and others who can no longer work through their union to improve classrooms, clinics, basic safety, training policies and effective teamwork.

Instead of detailed, carefully worked out and bargained mutual contracts, "We have handbook rules being put together by people who have never worked in schools, who don't leave any time for lesson plans or any concern about class sizes or support staffs," said Brey. "When parents find out they are outraged."

"We can't pretend that handbooks are any kind of a substitute for collective bargaining and we don't. We are still a union despite Walker's limitations. Now many of our members are forcing changes and influencing these rules by going directly to parents and school boards and getting them to understand the problems."

Public school teachers around the state who never were politically active, or even engaged in union affairs, are among those feeling most betrayed and working to change their local school boards as well as recall the governor. In rallies and meetings from Saukville to Superior, where political fury among teachers had once been unheard of, many of the new speakers and voices that exist when you consider the current political turmoil, that gives the MTEA room to think, consult with other unions, with administrators and to work out a creative but unpublicized future.

Meanwhile, the ramifications of Walker's extremism made crystal clear to MTEA members the once elusive connection between union activism and political involvement.

"Act 10 really woke teachers up," said Hatch. "They got it." "It mobilized union leaders out of the rank and file members. They are energized and see the connection between classrooms and political activity."

The contracts MTEA bargained for have put them in the gun sights of the conservative media, which claims that these were the reasons the Milwaukee public schools had to levy slightly higher property taxes and "can't take full advantage of Walker's tools."

"It is an argument that Hatch is happy to take on."

"Tools?" he says. "Explain to me how cutting $82 million from Milwaukee's schools is any way a tool to help education or establish deficit priorities."

I would say these are clearly the wrong tools. Walker has just made it obvious to all what we are fighting for. If you look at what we want, our teaching conditions. It's all connected. We are attached at the hip. And while we don't have the deciding votes in this contest, the public sure does."
Given the feistiness of keynote speaker Russ Feingold’s “talking points,” the RECALL lights behind him were appropriate Dec. 11. It was the décor theme at the Italian Community Center as Milwaukee Democrats honored their own at a dinner that bulged with dignitaries and appeals to stir up the state.

Feingold, the former US senator now Marquette University law professor, was not only the star but the illuminator. He urged persuasion not flame-throwing. “This is not a power play” or sour grapes in political terms, he said, just the only road left to restore sanity to a great state.

Many dashed from watching a Packers victory to attend Judicial candidate Mark Sanders (below) buttonholed the crowd for nomination signatures, in this case landing Milwaukee County Clerk Joseph Czarnezki.

Democrats can read the signs


Aflac for Unions. See what Aflac can do for your fellow Brothers and Sisters. Aflac currently has several programs designed especially for Union members. We can set up plans by individual locals with group rates and in some cases statewide Union groups.

Some plans available are:

Short Term Disability, Cancer, Accident, Critical Illness, Life Insurance and more.

These plans pay cash directly to you!

Contact your Union Aflac Representative:

Frank Sauter: Member OPEIU Local 35
Wisconsin State Union Coordinator
414-587-0308 • email: frank_sauter@us.aflac.com

Aflac for Unions See what Aflac can do for your fellow Brothers and Sisters.

Wishing you PEACE FOR THE SEASON...

and PEACE of mind.

A WEA Trust insurance option is now available to public and municipal employees.

An insurance leader for more than 40 years in Wisconsin schools, the WEA Trust is now able to serve any town, village, city, or county with group health and dental insurance. We are also an option for employees covered by the State Health Plan.

Why consider the WEA Trust?

• A nationally known reputation for superior customer service. See our CAHPS scores in the “About WEA Trust” section at weatrust.com.
• We are a competitive, independent, not-for-profit company based in Madison, Wisconsin.
• We care enough to answer our phones. When you call our Customer Service at 800.279.4000 during business hours, a live person will answer your call.

If you’d like to find out more about the WEA Trust, please call Marketing Representative Larry Moldenhauer at 608.669.7352