

Who's On Our Side?

By Tom Chamberlain



As President Obama meets with U.S. Congressional leaders and our nation moves closer and closer to an impending government shut down in the first or second week of August, most of America wonders why.

Why is the Republican leadership steadfast on cutting programs that impact the poor and middle class (such as Medicare), while refusing to discuss any roll back on the Bush tax cuts? Why can't we discuss reductions to the defense budget when we have a secretary of defense willing to look for cuts? Why aren't we putting the needs of the poor and middle class — the vast majority of Americans — first?

First we have to understand that one of the biggest drivers of the deficit is the Bush tax cut. Almost 50 percent of the tax cut went to America's wealthiest 5 percent, cutting their taxes by \$8,613 per year. In fact, the wealthiest 1 percent on average enjoy a tax reduction of more than \$68,000. By 2018, Bush's tax cut will result in a \$588 billion loss of tax revenue.

In 2011, the cost of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq was \$170 billion. The Defense Department will spend \$895 billion this year. Defense spending, at 25 percent, is the largest component of the federal budget.

The 2011 federal deficit is projected to be \$1.27 trillion. Over half of the federal deficit could be eliminated by ending the Bush tax cuts and

exiting the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

But the newly-elected tea baggers in Congress are laser-focused on reducing spending, and on no new taxes.

Demanding elimination of the Medicare program and implementing a voucher program that will shift the cost to Medicare recipients and increase profits to insurance carriers as Medicare is converted to a private system, they are holding Republican "leadership" hostage.

While the federal debate is centered on the deficit, the American economy is still stalled. Only 54,000 jobs were added to the economy last month when we need 125,000 new jobs a month to meet the demand for new workers entering our economy. The privatization of Medicare or the continuation of the Bush tax cuts or continuing to fight unwinnable wars will not fix our economy, nor will it put Americans back to work.

On the other hand, passing the Transportation Reauthorization Act will rebuild America's crumbling infrastructure and put hundreds of thousands of people back to work. Construction workers, workers who make the material needed for the project, drivers to transport the material, and the people who work where they all spend their earnings would all be better off. Those new jobs would pay

more in taxes to state and local government, increasing funding for essential services like public safety, schools, and health care, and ultimately help pay down our debt.

As the deficit debate continues, we need to remember our history. To counter the impact of the 1929 Depression, President Roosevelt and the New Deal Congress passed sweeping legislation spending vast sums of money to rebuild the economy and get America back to work. By 1937, Roosevelt and Congress felt the worst was past and cut spending. In just a few months, industrial production fell by 40 percent, unemployment rose by 4 million, and stock prices plunged 48 percent.

President Obama and Congressional leaders need to hear from America that the highest priority for our nation is to rebuild our economy and put America back to work. The deficit is important. But the best way to fix the deficit is to fix our economy first.

Job creation: on the side of a strong economy, on the side of long-term deficit management, and on our side.

Tom Chamberlain is president of the Oregon AFL-CIO.

...Poker run

(From Page 1)

draw a playing card for a poker hand. At the end of the ride — in this event, a 90-mile course that took riders on country roads through Sandy and Carver — the highest and lowest hands win a cash prize. The high hand of five aces was held by Larry George, a member of IBEW Local 48. In the photo right, George's co-rider Stefany Lawrence draws an ace of spades at the third stop at the Carver Hanger. Cheering her on are Willy Myers and Kelli Hollister. Myers is a union rep for Sheet Metal Workers Local 16.

The low hand of 1-2-3-4-5 was won by Bob Sundstrom, a member of Plumbers and Fitters Local 290.

Tony Kriss of Sheet Metal Workers Local 16 won the chili cookoff against five other contestants. In the photo far right, Tim and Jackie Copp sample an entry. Tim is a member of International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 8.

A first for the poker run this year was co-rider Rocky, a golden retriever owned by Kenny Tallmon of ILWU Local 92. Rocky is pictured at right resting after the ride with Alice Sterpa, a member of the Oregon School Employees Association.

The National Guard Color Guard had to cancel its flag presentation due to a military funeral it had to attend. However, the national anthem was played by Kelsey Aronstein. She is the daughter of Bill Hoffmann, a retired organizer for the Laborers Union.



FREE

BARGAIN COUNTER

Free classified ads to subscribers

DEADLINE: Friday prior to publication
Published 1st and 3rd Fridays

Now accepting e-mail

Send to: Michael492@comcast.net

Mail to: NWLP, PO Box 13150, Portland OR 97213

(Please include union affiliation)

- 15-20 words • No commercial or business ads • 1 ad per issue
- All lower case (NO CAPITAL LETTERS, PLEASE) •

Ads MUST include area code *or they will not be published*

AUTOMOTIVE

CLASSIC '78 Mercury Cougar Brougham, 4-door, 2nd owner, 51K orig miles, air, V8, vinyl top, \$1,350. 503-359-7526

PARTING OUT '75 Dodge Power Wagon, body parts, front end, 2 doors, 1/2 ton, 4x4, 6 cyl. 503-630-4177

'96 CHEV BARETTA, 1 owner, 105k miles, good cond., \$2,000. 503-620-0411

'78 STAR CRAFT motor home, class C, 350 V8 w/35,900 miles, clean, runs great, \$3,250. 503-577-3280

HOUSING

LINCOLN CITY vacation rental, 3 bdrm, 2 bath, \$115/night, slips 8, wi-fi, 2 blocks to beach, 4 blocks to casino. 503-804-7976

ROCKAWAY BEACH rental, 3 bed, 2 bath, sleeps 10, Jacuzzi, 5 min to beach and shops. Vacationhomerentals.com/43026, 503-754-6101

GOLF ANYONE? Bandon, OR vacation rental, 3 bedroom 2 bath, 2 blocks to beach \$150/night 541-391-9918.

ROCKAWAY ocean front 503 777-5076, 5 bdrm, 2 ba, call now for summer rentals! <http://home.comcast.net/~rockaway.beach>

TOP FLOOR STUDIO, renovated, rent or buy in Boston, Ma. www.bostonfenwayma.com. 503-381-4014

TWO - 200 ACRE parcels, take all or half, \$775 per acre, terms, will carry contract. 1-541-468-2961

NICE SE PORTLAND single fm home, 1096 sqft, 3bd, 1 1/2ba, w/w over hardwood, many upgrades, patio, air & more, \$137,500. 503-390-9433

SHARED HOUSING; large bdrm for rent \$500/mo, small bdrm \$450/mo, in SE PDX 503-774-9587 (Connie)

YUMA, ARIZONA, mobile home in 55+ park, \$15,000, space rent \$300/mo, includes water, sewer, garbage, cable, pool. 360-256-1449

MISCELLANEOUS

WATER BOTTLE DISPENSER, commercial type, refrigerated, big water bottles, Cordley/Temp

Rite brand (most common), Ron. 503-777-9143
BLUEBERRY BUSHES, Bluecrop & Berkley, 20-25 y.o., 5-6' tall, 125-200lbs, dug and tied w/ burlap, \$38 and \$65. Dave@503-312-1518

DRILL BITS fractional and letter drills. 503 743-6897 (Dale)

SPORTING GOODS

STREET LEGAL GAS BIKE, \$595, cash only, beach cruiser and 48cc gas engine. 503-310-1814 call 9 a.m. to 9 pm

19' BLUE WATER CUDDY, overnigher '91, V6, 4.3 Merc Alpha 1 outdrive, VHF, ship/shore radio, depthfinder, cabin heat, \$5,000. 503-659-3297

'76 HOLIDAY RAMBLER, 30', air, newer tires, no leaks or bad floor, excellent shape, \$1,800. 503-852-6791

WANTED

OLD WOODWORKING tools, planes, levels, chisels, handsaws, slicks, adzes, wrenches, folding rulers, leather tools, tool chests. 503-659-0009

LIFE-LONG Union man and coin collector wants US and world coins to add to collection, paying fairly, any amount welcome. 503-939-8835

COLLECTOR, WWII German or Japanese military items, helmets, uniforms, swords, daggers, rifles, pistols, etc. 503 852-6791

MILK CRATES, plastic or metal, old style measuring 19"l x 13"w x 11"h. 503-691-6395

HAM RADIO and short wave radio equipment, particularly older 1950s/60s equipment that uses tubes, 503-823-4577

COLLECTOR PAYS cash for older and unique items. 503 703-5952

SILVER COINS, US and Canadian, 1964 and older dimes, quarters, half-dollars and dollars for top silver prices. 503-806-6287

SMALL ELECTRIC lawn mower, in good condition. 503-473-4706

LOOKING FOR parts for 1938 Ford pickup, fenders, bumper, headlight ring, etc. 503-887-3388

