

THE KEY

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Volume 16, Number 10

FREE

January 2006

McCarthy Replaces Sherman as Packers Coach

The Green Bay Packers fired head coach Mike Sherman January 2. Ten days later, they had a new coach – and a familiar face.

Green Bay hired Mike McCarthy to replace Sherman.

McCarthy was the top offensive coach for the San Francisco 49ers last season. Before that, he was the offensive coordinator for the New Orleans Saints.

McCarthy also coached for the Packers. He served as the quarterback coach in 1999 before going to New Orleans.

McCarthy is hopeful about 2006, despite Green Bay's struggles last season. The team won just four games while losing 12.

"I'm purchasing my dream house," he said of the team. "We may knock down a few walls and give all the rooms a fresh coat of paint, but this definitely is not a rebuilding process."

Favre might retire

One key issue McCarthy must deal with quickly is Brett Favre. The Packers quarterback is not sure if he will return next season. Favre may retire.

McCarthy said he hopes Favre will be back. Favre has yet to comment on Sherman's firing or the new coach.

Many think Sherman's firing assures Favre's retirement. Sherman and Favre were close, although McCarthy was Favre's position coach seven years ago.

Sherman had good record

Before last season, Sherman succeeded in Green Bay. He won three division championships in his six seasons. The team won 59 games and lost 43.



Mike McCarthy was named the new head coach for the Packers. He replaces Mike Sherman, who was fired after a 4-12 season. (AP Photo/Mike Roemer)

Still, General Manager Ted Thompson said it was "time for a new face."

"I didn't really base this decision on our record this year or the play of our players," he said. "This is more thinking in terms of where we are and where we need to get to. It was what I thought was best for the Green Bay Packers over the long haul."

Sherman said no one told him why the Packers chose to fire him. He said the team would have won 10 games in 2005 if not for injuries.

"This team knows what it takes to win. They know what it takes to play," he said.

Sherman thinks the Packers will win again next year.

"I don't think this team is very far away," he said. "Having a good draft, getting guys back, getting guys healthy, the Packers will be fine next season."

Source: Green Bay Packers, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

Supreme Court Nominee Causes a Lot of Political Disagreements

The nomination for the next Justice to the United States Supreme Court is causing a lot of political disagreements. Many Democrats in the Senate say they may vote against the nomination of Samuel Alito.

Almost all of the 55 Republicans in the Senate are expected to vote for Alito. The Senate has 44 Democrats. Alito would be confirmed if he got more than half of the votes.

The Judiciary Committee of the Senate held four days of hearings on Alito's nomination. The hearings ended January 12.

Alito spent 18 hours over the four days before the committee. He answered about 700 questions.

The Judiciary Committee has 10 Republican members and eight Democrats. All of the Republicans say they will vote to recommend that Alito be confirmed. Most of the Democrats said they were not sure how they would vote. Many said they were not pleased with Alito's answers.

Alito often refused to say how he would vote on issues, like the president's powers. He said things he wrote 20 years ago reflected how he felt at the time. He mostly refused to say if he still believed the same way now.

Alito's nomination will go to the full Senate after the Judiciary Committee votes. The vote in committee was

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scheduled for January 24th. The full Senate was expected to begin debate on the nomination the next day.

Wisconsin Senators on the Committee

Wisconsin's two Senators are both on the Judiciary Committee. Senators Russ Feingold and Herb Kohl are Democrats. Both said they were not totally pleased with Alito's answers.

Feingold and Kohl said they had not made up their minds how they would vote. But both said they were not sure the Senate would delay the nomination with a move that would keep Senators from voting.

Alito has been a federal appeals court judge for 15 years. Before that, he was an attorney in the federal government. He worked for the government when Ronald Reagan was president in the 1980s. Reagan and Alito were Republicans.

Supreme Court Justices are supposed to give up their political beliefs when they sit on the Court. Justices are supposed to decide cases based on the facts presented in each case.

Democrats ask forceful questions

Democrats asked tougher questions of Alito than they did last year when John Roberts was nominated to the Court.



A panel set up to testify at the Senate Judiciary Committee's confirmation hearing for Supreme Court nominee Samuel Alito. From left are, New York attorney Kate Pringle; Rep. Charles Gonzalez, D-Texas; Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz, D-Fla.; San Francisco attorney Jack White; National Bar Association President Reginald Turner Jr.; and NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund President Theodore Shaw. (AP Photo/Dennis Cook)

Roberts also is considered to be conservative, But Roberts was replacing a Justice who was more conservative than Justice Sandra Day O'Connor.

Alito would replace O'Connor, who is retiring. Many political observers said Democrats were willing to save their greatest opposition for the nominee who would replace O'Connor.

President George Bush nominated Alito to replace Justice O'Connor.

Alito is considered to be more conservative than O'Connor. She is considered to be a moderate.

The Supreme Court has nine Justices. Each of them gets one vote on a court case. Many of the most important cases are decided on 5-to-4 votes.

O'Connor often provided the swing vote

in 5-to-4 decisions.

Supreme Court is the most powerful court

Almost all of the cases that come before the court are appealed to the court. That means they were decided in lower federal or state courts. The Supreme Court only holds trials very rarely.

Each of the 50 states has a separate court system.

Each state also has a state Supreme Court. But cases decided in all state courts can be appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Decisions made by the U.S. Supreme Court are final. The Supreme Court is often called "the court of last resort." Some decisions by the court can be changed if Congress later changes the law that was considered by the Court.

DeLay Resigns as Majority Leader of the House

A key Republican in Congress has resigned his leadership job.

Tom DeLay was the House of Representatives' Majority Leader. He stepped down on January 7 amid corruption charges.

DeLay, 58, will keep his seat in Congress. He plans to run again in November.

The House is one of two branches of Congress. The Majority Leader oversees the majority party – now the Republicans – and is an important leader in his party.

A major figure in Republican politics

DeLay is a major figure in Republican politics. He led the charge to impeach former President Bill Clinton. He is active in Republican fundraising.

DeLay's work raising money has put him in trouble.

DeLay received criminal charges last fall.

Some say he misused corporate donations made to fellow Texas lawmakers.

DeLay temporarily stepped down as House majority leader when charged. He planned to return to his leadership job eventually.

Now, DeLay says that his current decision to step down is permanent.

Tied to Abramoff scandal

DeLay is tied to another scandal in Congress. The scandal involves lobbyist Jack Abramoff.

Lobbyists work for special interest groups like utilities, oil companies and casino supporters. Lobbyists help these groups get government contracts and laws written that favor their interests.

Abramoff pleaded guilty on January 4 to three felonies. He gave trips and other gifts

to lawmakers to get them to vote a certain way on an issue. It is not legal for lawmakers to accept gifts for favors.

Some of the gifts, including cash, may have gone to DeLay or his aides.

DeLay claims he has always acted ethically. He also said the charges against him are too distracting to stay on as majority leader.

Democrats strongly criticized DeLay. Rep. Nancy Pelosi of California noted a "culture of corruption" with him.

The competition to replace DeLay will be fierce.

Three other House members say they want to become the majority leader. They are Reps. Roy Blunt and John Boehner of Ohio and John Shadegg of Arizona.

Republicans will likely choose their new leader in early February.

Leaving Home: Florida Teen Sneaks Into Iraq

A 16-year-old high school student from Florida spent much of December in Iraq. However, he did not even tell his parents he was going.

The teen's name is Farris Hassan. He is a junior at Pine Crest School in Fort Lauderdale. Hassan learned about "immersion journalism" in class. He wanted to practice it with his Middle East trip.

Immersion journalism stresses living the life of the people you write about.

Hassan wanted to write about the Iraq war for a class project. So he thought he would travel to the country.

He risked his life to travel to Iraq

He risked his life to go to Iraq. The U.S. State Department says travel to the war zone is "very dangerous." Kidnappings are a big problem in Iraq. Dozens have been killed.

Still, Hassan bought a \$900 plane ticket and left the U.S. on December 11. He told only two high school friends where he was going.

Hassan landed in Kuwait City, in the neighboring country of Kuwait. He called his parents who were born in Iraq to tell them he was in the Middle East. His mother said she

was "shocked and terrified." She asked him to come home. He said no.

Tried to cross border

Hassan twice tried to cross the border into Iraq. Both times border patrols turned him away. Luck was on his side. The country is unsafe, especially for Americans.

"If they'd let me in from Kuwait, I probably would have died," Hassan said. "That would have been a bad idea."

Hassan found time to e-mail an essay to his class on Dec. 15.

His family arranged for him to go to Beirut in Lebanon to stay with relatives.

Then, on Christmas, Hassan flew to Baghdad in Iraq. He stayed in a hotel near the airport. Hassan only left it once, to get food at a local diner. He felt uncomfortable and quickly returned to his room.

Hassan later went to the Baghdad office of The Associated Press. He told workers



Farris Hassan poses for a portrait in front of the Ramadan 14th mosque in Baghdad, Iraq. Hassan traveled on his own to Iraq. (AP Photo/Peter Dejong)

there what he was doing. They called the American embassy, and he was taken into custody. Hassan returned to the U.S. January 1.

"I don't think I will ever leave him in the house alone again," his mother told The Associated Press "He showed a lack of judgment."

Get Ready to Enter the 2006 Readers as Writers Contest

Do you love to write? Do you have a story to tell? The Key Newspaper is announcing its annual Readers as Writers Contest, and we want you to participate.

You qualify if you are an adult student enrolled in a Wisconsin Basic Skills, GED/HSED, Adult High School, or English as a Second Language class or adult tutoring program, including education programs at Wisconsin correctional institutions.

You may submit an essay, poem, short story, opinion, rap, song lyric, or journal entry. Your entry can be a writing assignment chosen by your instructor or you may choose the one to submit. Write about something in your past, your home country, an experience that changed your life, or a tribute to someone you love. If you prefer, write your opinion about world events, voting, or becoming a citizen.

You may submit up to two entries, but

each entry must be in a different writing category. If you can use a computer, or if your teacher or tutor can help, please submit your entry on a diskette or as an email attachment (balistrv@matc.edu).

Each entry may be no more than two typewritten pages.

Print your name, home address and phone number, literacy program and location, and the name of your instructor clearly at the top of each page. We ask that teachers or tutors send us the entries and review and approve the work beforehand.

Must be appropriate for family reading

The work must be original and appropriate for a family publication. We will not accept work that includes profanity, sexual themes, or that glorifies violence or illegal activity.

The deadline for all entries is March 13,

2006. Winning compositions will be published in a book of the best entries selected by a panel of independent judges.

Students and their instructors will receive recognition for their efforts at an awards ceremony at the Milwaukee Public Library on May 3 or at Northcentral Technical College in Wausau. Northcentral Technical College is hosting an event for students and teachers who are in the northern part of the state. The date will be announced later.

Start planning now. Entry forms and other details about the contest will be sent to your instructors by mail. Check with your instructor or tutor for more information.

The Key Newspaper, Milwaukee Area Technical College, Journal Communications, Inc., the Wisconsin Technical College System Board, the Milwaukee Public Library, and Northcentral Technical College sponsor the Readers as Writers Contest.

Polar Bears Ignore the Cold to Take Plunge into Lake Michigan

On New Year's Day, the polar bears show up on beaches along Lake Michigan and other lakes around the country to jump into the frozen water.

These human "polar bears" are members of a national club of cold water swimmers. Others join in for a New Year's Day thrill.

Dy Godsey recently moved from Florida to Waukesha. She thought she would try out the local cold-weather tradition. She took part in the annual polar bear plunge on Lake Nemahbin in Waukesha County.

"It was kind of a rush, starting your day like this," she said.

Godsey is not alone. Thousands of people all around the country take part in "polar bear" events on January 1. Some do it for fun. Some do it for charity. They come out whether the temperature is a balmy 30 degrees or, when the temperature dips below zero.

Lake Nemahbin jumper Marie Gummo raised money for the Shriner's Children's Hospital with her jump.

"It was great, and we did it for a good reason," she said.

Milwaukee jump

A similar event on the Lake Michigan shore in Milwaukee drew hundreds of people. Most said that alcohol helped make the jump bearable.

Dave Walsea, a 40-year-old firefighter from Burlington, wore a grass skirt, football helmet and bikini top for his jump.

He held a can of beer afterwards.

"How many drinks does it take to jump in the lake?" Walsea said. "Well, this is about my fourth."

Some, however, just like the experience. They like the feel of wading into icy-cold waters, if only for a few minutes.

Milwaukee jumper Troy Lewein does not drink before jumping in.

"It's more invigorating that way," he said.

Many cities on bodies of water hold Polar Bear jumps.

Members of the Coney Island Polar Bears Club in New York have jumped since 1903. The group is the oldest cold-water swimming club in the nation.

Sources: *The Freeman*, *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, *Wikipedia*

Kraft Changes Oreo Recipe to Make Them a Healthier Snack

Kraft Foods makes Oreo cookies. Kraft is a large food company. It sells products all over the world. Recently, it announced that it is changing the way it makes Oreos and about 650 other products to make them healthier.

Trans fats cause heart disease

Oreos are two chocolate-flavored wafers held together with a small amount of white frosting in the middle.

Each cookie is small enough to fit in a person's hand. Packages of Oreos advertise they are "America's favorite cookie."

In the past, Oreo cookies contained a substance called trans fats. Doctors and scientists decided that trans fats are not healthy for people. Trans fats are in the oils used to make many food products.

Kraft used soybean oil for Oreo cookies. The new formula for Oreos uses a blend of canola oil and palm oil. Canola oil comes from several types of plants matched to create a special kind of plant. Palm oil comes from palm trees.

Trans fats help give products a richer taste. Products made with trans fats also do not spoil as quickly as those made with other oils do. The old Oreos contained 2.5 grams of trans fats for every three cookies. The new Oreos do not have any trans fats.

A group of health experts recently told the federal government that people should try to consume as few trans fats as possible. The panel said people should eat two grams or less per day of trans fats.

Doctors say trans fats increase the



levels of bad cholesterol in a person's body. They also reduce levels of good cholesterol. Doctors also say trans fats make arteries more rigid, which can lead to strokes and heart disease.

New Oreos contain saturated fats

However, the new Oreos still contain another kind of fat.

The new Oreos still

contain saturated fats. Doctors say saturated fats also lead to heart disease and obesity.

Kraft said it tried 250 recipes for the new Oreos. The company said its employees spent 30,000 hours working on the new recipe. Kraft also said it tried 120 ways to manufacture the new recipe.

No one required Kraft to change the recipe. The company decided to make the change partly because of a new government policy.

In the past, food companies did not have to list trans fats on package labels. However, in July of 2003, the federal Food and Drug Administration decided that trans fats should be listed. The requirement to list the content of trans fats went into effect on January 1, 2006.

Laurie Guzzinati is a senior manager for Kraft Foods. Guzzinati said getting the new Oreos to taste as good as the old recipe was one of the toughest challenges the company faced in cutting trans fats in its products.

"Oreo, to many people, is such an icon," Guzzinati said. She said Oreos are an important part of what the company makes.

"It was important that we come out with an Oreo that would meet consumers' expectations."

Postage Increases Went Into Effect January 8

It now costs more to mail a letter.

The price of a postage stamp increased two cents on January 8. It now costs 39 cents to mail most letters. It was 37 cents.

The U.S. Postal Service increased other mailing costs and fees, too.

For example, it now costs 24 cents to mail a postcard. Formerly, it cost 23 cents. Priority mail and express mail also went up. International rates also increased.

The increases are the first since 2002

“I come here every day and I didn’t know an increase was coming until I tried to mail a letter with an old stamp,” one Atlanta woman told the newspaper there. “A lot of people are going to be surprised — just like me.”

Postal officials said they had no choice.

They said they had to find a way to raise \$3.1 million. Congress said the money must go into an escrow account. That is a place where money is held for future use.

Many affected

The increases affect many people. Many need to buy 2-cent stamps to go along with

their old 37-cent stamps.

Demand has forced many post offices to run low on 2-cent stamps. A post office in La Crosse ran out of its supply of 20,000 in just a few hours.

The increase also impacts companies. Businesses often spend a lot on postage. Even a small increase has a big effect. The Key Newspaper feels the impact. The Key mails about half of the 15,000 issues it sends out each month.

“The increase in postage rates means that we will have to cut costs in other areas of our program,” said Ginny Balistreri, editor of The Key. “We hope it won’t be services to our readers.”

Other postage increases may be coming.

The postal service faces a difficult future, the Washington Post reported.

Concerns include rising fuel costs. Also, fewer people are using the mail system these



It costs Americans two cents more to mail a letter. The letters shown above each have a 37 cent postage stamp and two one-cent postage stamps. Without the extra stamps, the letters will not be delivered. (AP Photo/Democrat and Chronicle, Max Schulte)

days. Many have turned to e-mail and paying bills on-line. That increases costs, too.

“Our costs are something we’re going to seriously have to begin to look at,” Gerry McKiernan, a Postal Service representative, told the Washington Post.

Sources: U.S. Postal Service, Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Washington Post, La Crosse Tribune

Plan Your Career

What do you want to be?

With so many career choices today, how do you make a decision? Once you know what career path you want to follow, how do you get there?

One way to answer questions about your future career is to develop a career plan. A career plan outlines the steps you need to take to reach your career goal.

Steps to developing a career plan

1. Develop a career plan to determine your interests and skills. Thinking about your skills and interests can help you find a satisfying career.

To determine your interests, think about what you like to do. Think about experiences you have enjoyed. Evaluate what you liked, what you found challenging, and what you may have learned from those experiences. Make a

list of activities you have enjoyed during the past few years.

2. Make a list of the skills you have. Your skills may include training you gained through part-time or full-time jobs. Even if you never worked before, you do have some skills, which will help you find a job.

For example, you may have skills you learned through volunteer work or a hobby.

Evaluate the skills and interests you have listed. Are there any experiences that could turn into a career? For instance, if you volunteered at a hospital and enjoyed the experience, you may want to consider a career in medicine as a nurse, a medical assistant, or lab technician. If you like to work with your hands, you might like a job as a carpenter, plumber, or in heating and air conditioning.

3. Find out about the types of careers

available to you. If you do not research careers, you may not know about the best occupations to fit your interests and skills.

It is also important to decide if the career you are considering is really what you expect and whether it offers the salary and benefits you want. One good way to learn about a career is to **network** by talking to someone who is in the career now.

4. Once you know what career path you want to follow, find out what you need to do to prepare for that career. Do you need special training? If so, look for schools that offer the kind of training you need. What kinds of experience will you need to be successful in the career?

A career plan can help you focus on what you want to do and how to get there. When you are ready to write your resume for your job search, or to apply to a school for training, you will have a better understanding of your skills and experiences.

Let Your Money Work for You with a Savings Account

There are many reasons Americans do not save money. Maybe we feel we have plenty of time to save later, or that we already waited too long to start. Yet, if we started saving today, we will have more money tomorrow.

Starting a savings account is a first step to taking control of your financial future.

You might decide to save for a specific reason such as a car, home, or education. Setting aside money on a regular basis can help achieve those goals.

"I can't afford to save," is another argument against saving money.

Try taking careful note of how and where you spend your money. You will be surprised to learn that by doing without certain things you can save quite a bit. If you spend \$1 each day on a cup of coffee, that adds up to \$365 a year.

Earning interest

Banks pay you to let them use your money. They pay interest on your money. Earned interest can give you a good start on your savings plan.

Then there is the power of "compound" interest. You earn interest on the money you save. You also earn interest on the interest your money earns. It is letting your money work for you.

Many people find it easier to save if they allow a bank to take money directly from their paychecks and deposit it into savings accounts.

You might make a rule that you will always wait 24 hours to buy things that are not necessities. You might decide you do not want those things. You could save your spare change at the end of the day. It adds up quickly.

Opening an account

Requirements to open a savings account vary. You need to provide: Proof of your identity in the form of a driver's license, state identification card, or county ID. You also can use your Social Security card or a check stub with your Social Security number on it.

Most banks require a minimum deposit ranging from \$50 to \$100. They might require you to maintain that amount.

Some banks charge a fee for exceeding a certain number of transactions per month, \$5 to \$10. Some might charge you \$1 or \$3 a transaction for using their ATM machines. Shop around for banks with the lowest fees and any special offers that eliminate some fees.

Saving money can help you handle emergencies. It will make you feel better about your financial situation. It can teach you healthy habits on handling money.

Source: Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation

Tips to Protect Your Money

1. The next time you order checks, have only your initials instead of your first name and last name put on them. A thief will not know if you sign your checks with just your initials or your first name. However, your bank will know how you sign your checks.
2. Do not sign the back of your credit cards. Instead, write in the space "Photo ID Required."
3. Do not put your full account number on your check when you pay your credit card accounts. Just include the last four numbers. The credit card company knows the rest of the number.
4. Put your work phone number on your checks instead of your home phone.
5. Never print your Social Security number on your checks.
6. Keep a record of the cards you carry in your wallet. Photocopy both sides of your driver's license and every credit card. This will give you a record of what you had in your wallet and all of the account numbers and phone numbers to call and cancel if your wallet is lost or stolen. Keep the photocopy in a safe place. Also, carry a photocopy of your passport when traveling either here or abroad.
7. Do not return your key cards to the hotel when you check out. Take them with you, and destroy them at home. Those little cards contain all of the information you gave the hotel, including address and credit card numbers and expiration dates.
8. Cancel your credit cards as soon as you know they are lost or stolen.
9. File a police report immediately in the area where the theft took place. This proves to credit card companies that you took steps to protect yourself from loss. A police report is also the first step toward an investigation.
10. Call the three national credit reporting organizations immediately to place a fraud alert on your name and your Social Security number.

The alert warns any store or business that receives a credit application or a charge that someone else might be applying in your name. The businesses have to contact you by phone to approve the new credit.

Call these numbers to report lost or stolen credit cards:

Equifax
1-800-525-6285

Experian
(formerly TRW):
1-888-397-3742

TransUnion
1-800-680-7289

Social Security Administration
(fraud line):
1-800-269-0271

Credit Card Costs Are Going Up

Many credit card users will have to pay more to use credit cards this year. The federal government is requiring that people make higher minimum payments on the money they owe on credit cards.

The new rules for using credit cards went into effect on the first day of 2006.

The rules affect some people more than others. People who owe large amounts of money on their credit card balances pay much more each month if they only pay the minimum.

People who do not have extra money to pay their bills in full also may have trouble under the new rules.

Credit cards allow people to buy things without paying cash. Card users receive a bill each month for the amount charged to the credit card.

Many people pay off the entire amount each month. However, between seven percent and 14 percent of credit card users pay only the least amount required each month. They then carry the remainder of the bill to the next month and beyond.

Each time the bill carries over into the next month, the credit card company adds an interest charge onto the bill

Less than half pay off their balances

The American Bankers Association says less than half of the people who use credit cards pay off their entire balance each month. The average household in the United States has about \$9,000 in debt on credit cards.

The new rules affect people who carry balances the longest and who pay the least.

In the past, credit card users had to pay at least two percent of the debt on their cards. Now the rules require people to pay enough to cover the interest and at least one percent of the principal. The principal is the amount of the purchase charged before adding on the interest.

The new rules make people pay off their debts faster. The new rules are to help people save money owed on credit and the added interest.

New rules help people pay debt faster

Nick Jacobs is a representative for the National Foundation for Credit Counseling. He says the main reason for the new rules is to help people get out of debt faster. He also says that is a good thing.

Jacobs says if a person has a \$1,000 balance and pays \$15 each month, the balance takes 17 years to be re-paid. During that time, the person also pays \$3,000 in interest.

However, if the person pays \$20 each month, it takes only seven years to pay back the whole amount. The interest costs are only \$1,750.

People with credit card debt can learn to deal with the new rules by trying harder to manage their spending. They can do so by keeping track of their daily, weekly and monthly spending.

The easiest way to track spending is by setting up a budget.

A budget starts with the total amount of income expected each month. By subtracting the amounts needed monthly for such items as rent, telephone, heat, water, food, and other necessary expenses, the difference is the amount available for extras, like entertainment.

The people who live within their budget keep expenses below their income and put some of the difference into savings.

People following a budget use credit cards with caution.

Last Laugh

'Twas the month after Christmas,
And all through the house,
Nothing would fit me, not even a blouse.

The cookies I'd nibbled, the eggnog I'd taste
At the holiday parties had gone to my waist.

When I got on the scales there arose such a number,
when I walked to the store(less a walk than a lumber),
I remember the marvelous meals I prepared;
The gravies and sauces and beef nicely rare,
The wine and the rum balls, the bread and the cheese
And the way I should say, "No thank you, please."

As I dressed myself in my husband's old shirt,
And prepared once again to do battle with dirt,
I said to myself, as only I can
"You can't spend a winter disguised as a man!"

So, away with the last of the sour cream dip,
Get rid of the fruit cake, every cracker and chip.

Every last bit of food that I like must be banished
Until all the additional ounces have vanished.

I won't have a cookie, not even a lick.
I'll chew on only a long celery stick.

I won't have hot biscuits, or corn bread, or pie.
I'll munch on a carrot and quietly cry.

I'm hungry, I'm lonesome, and life is a bore.
But isn't that what January is for?

Unable to giggle, no longer a riot.
Happy New Year to all
And to all a good diet!

Source: Author
Unknown



Bus Fares Go Up in Milwaukee County



Anne Hassman, a bus driver with the Milwaukee County Transit System, talks to bus riders. (AP Photo/Journal Times, Scott Anderson)

The cost of riding the bus in Milwaukee County is more expensive for some people. Fares for some tickets increased on January 1.

The cost of a weekly bus pass increased one dollar to \$14. Weekly passes are good from Sunday morning until late Saturday. They also are good for an unlimited number of rides on regular routes.

The cost for 10 student tickets also increased \$2. The cost is now \$13. A single cash fare for students stayed the same at \$1.30 per ride.

The cost of a strip of 10 tickets for adults increased one dollar. The new price is \$14. The cost of a single adult fare on the Freeway Flyer increased 20 cents. The new price is \$2.25.

A strip of 10 Freeway Flyer tickets increased in cost by \$3. The price is now \$19. The price of a single adult cash fare stayed the same. That price remained at \$1.75.

A fare of 85 cents for some riders remains the same. Riders 65-years-old and over continue to pay 85 cents.

The 85-cent fare also applies to children between ages 6 and 11. Riders with disabilities also continue to pay 85 cents.

A strip of 10 tickets for people 65

and over, children 6 to 11 and those with disabilities stays at a cost of \$8.50.

Operates 470 buses on 55 routes

The Milwaukee County Transit System operates buses in Milwaukee County and parts of nearby counties. The Transit System has 470 buses. Those buses run on 55 routes.

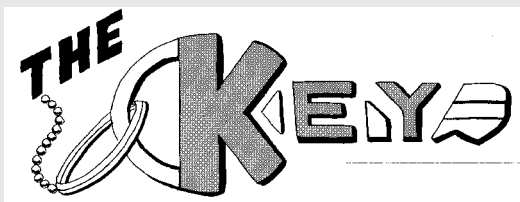
The Transit System planned to spend \$6 million on fuel in 2005. However, higher fuel prices cost an extra \$2.5 million.

Officials of the Transit System said fares needed to increase to keep the buses running on all of the routes. Fares pay for about 35 percent of the cost of running the bus system.

The other 65 percent of the funds come from federal, state and county governments. The amount of money that comes from government sources has not increased in a long time. The only other ways to stay within the budget required raising rates or reducing service.

The Transit System said in its December newsletter that it was necessary to raise fares. The newsletter said customers say they prefer to pay higher rates instead of losing service on some routes.

The Key is published and distributed free to adult basic education programs throughout Wisconsin by Milwaukee Area Technical College. Printing for The Key is generously donated by Journal Communications as a public service. Many articles are adapted with permission from stories that appear in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel. The project is supported by a grant under the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act through the Wisconsin Technical College System Board. The views expressed within The Key are not necessarily those of MATC or of sponsors of The Key. The editorials and letters are the views of the writers.



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Printing by Journal Communications
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