

# Executive Update

Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker's Weekly Newsletter

November 7, 2008

## Message from County Executive Walker

*The referendum on the sales tax passed 51% to 49% on Tuesday. While some may suggest that part of the reason for the victory was the confusing language that left some voters wondering if they had voted for or against a tax increase, the reality is that the measure did win.*

*Now, proponents of the measure will seek to find support in the State Legislature for passage and from the Governor to enact a law to enable the county to pass a 1% increase in the sales tax. During that process, I will work to insure that rock-solid language is included to attempt to insure that the tax levy would go down by (at least) \$67 million and that the County Board would not be able to back fill in the tax levy in the future.*

*Once passed, I will still object to a \$130 million increase in the sales tax. This is a position I clearly took before the April 1 election and a position that I will continue to hold throughout this process.*

*As mentioned, I think a \$130 million sales tax increase at a time when the economy is in such bad shape will not be good for jobs in our county.*

*Finally, if the county board wants to provide property tax relief now – while improving our parks, maintaining our transit system and protecting the EMS system, they need only pass our budget (it does all of those things without cutting core services).*

Scott



## Domes' lighting spectacular!



County Executive Walker hosted a Grand Reopening ceremony at the Mitchell Park Horticultural Domes, attended by Donald Grieb, the original architect. The spectacular new lighting and light show wowed the crowds who lined up on the red carpet to catch the first glimpse of the high-tech LED lighting system.

A generous donation of more than \$550,000 from Chris Abele, Michael Cudahy and an anonymous donor paid for the initiative. It features halo lights at the top of each dome, floodlights that colorize the Domes and special effect pixel lighting. Computer controlled and programmable, the Show Dome lights can create snowflake and starlight scenes. The Arid and Tropical domes have landscape lights to accent plantings. The lobby has been renovated and can now accommodate larger corporate or wedding gatherings.

Visit [www.countyparks.com](http://www.countyparks.com) for more information.

## USS Freedom arrives



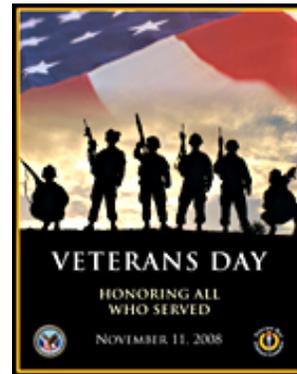
County Executive Walker welcomed the LCS 1 Freedom, a littoral combat ship built in Marinette, as it docked at Milwaukee County Veterans Park. The ship will be commissioned on Saturday, November 8. The LCS 1 Freedom is the first of its kind and is designed for near-shore environments to defeat threats such as mines, submarines and fast surface craft.

The principal speaker will be the Honorable Donald Winter, Secretary of the Navy, the Commanding Officers will accept the ship, followed by a hoisting of the commissioning pennant, the setting of the first watch, and the charge of the Ship's Sponsor to "Man our ship and bring her to life." At that, the crew runs up the brow and mans the rail of the ship, radars turning, lights flashing and alarms ringing as the ship becomes the USS Freedom.

While the Navy has already distributed tickets for the event, a large display about the ship is on view in the public lobby at Discovery World Pier Wisconsin through November 30. Visit [www.ussfreedom.org](http://www.ussfreedom.org).



County Executive Walker will participate in the 45<sup>th</sup> annual Veterans Day Parade in downtown Milwaukee on Saturday, November 8. The parade steps off at 11am. This year's special guests of honor are the Army, Reserve and National Guard. Information about the parade and route can be found at <http://www.veteransdayparade-milw.org/index.html>



## Community Events

County Executive Walker gave the opening remarks at the Medical Examiners Convention, addressed the County Board Finance & Audit Committee meeting on actions they are taking with his 2009 proposed budget, and toured the LCS 1 Freedom docked at Milwaukee County's Veterans Park just north of the War Memorial Center.

This weekend he will attend the USS Freedom Commissioning Ceremony, walk in the Veterans Day Parade, attend the St. Marcus School benefit and present a proclamation for the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the F. Dohmen Company.