

# Socialist Vanguard

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Edited by Dave Schall

Presenting Democratic Socialist Viewpoints

## Anita Ziedler (1944-2018)



On Labor Day, Milwaukee lost one of its most devoted citizens. Anita Ziedler, daughter of the late Milwaukee Mayor Frank Ziedler, passed away while sitting at an information booth at the 2018 Laborfest.

Anita was the ultimate caregiver. For most of her life, she lived with her parents and helped with various household duties, which became more strenuous as her parents aged. Anita and her mother Agnes (and the Milwaukee County Bus) provided most of Frank's transportation. In Frank's later years the chauffeuring became Anita's exclusive domain. Anita was always a loyal Socialist, though she seldom came to any events or meetings.

When her father passed away, Anita became an active participant in his many community organizations, including the SP. Anita was a good listener; she often would help find a common ground. Sometimes, she argued for what she thought best.

Anita's time was punctuated by some major changes for Wisconsin Socialists. The SP-WI's former landlord went through some major changes, resulting in closing down the

SP-WI office. Anita's university contacts (Anita earned a living as an Instructor in the UWM College of Education) helped save many of the archives in the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Library. A year later Abraham Bassford, the first National Secretary when the national party reconstituted itself in the early 1970s, called wanting to find a new home for many of his papers, when the SP-USA was located in Milwaukee. Again, Anita and UWM to the rescue.

Anita was helped develop socialist literature, namely an educational brochure, a brochure describing democratic socialism, and a history of Milwaukee Socialists. She was instrumental in finding a Spanish translator for some literature.

When it came time to organizing an event, Anita was always there. At the annual picnics, Anita made sure that we had table clothes and other picnic necessities.

Whenever someone contacted the Party, they usually contacted Anita, who was able to speak about the Socialist history in Milwaukee and about the current movement.

When our former Treasurer Gerry Shade had to step down, Anita willingly assumed his duties.

Lastly, Anita helped connect the SP-WI to the other organizations she belonged to. At the end of each SP meeting under "Good and Welfare", Anita would announce activities of other organizations.

At the SP-WI meeting following Anita's death, there was a lot of frustration expressed. Members realized that Anita's passing is a major blow to the organization. **SHE TOUCHED ALL OF OUR LIVES.** DS

## Michael Moore's Latest Film: Fahrenheit 11/9

On September 21, cinematographer Michael Moore released his latest film *Fahrenheit 11/9*. For 3 decades Moore has been producing humorous movies about problems in the USA, his first was *Roger and Me*, focusing on plant closings in Flint, Michigan by General Motors (CEO was Roger Smith).

A major theme of Moore's films is using humor to highlight injustice and insensitivity by those in power. *Fahrenheit 11/9* is one of Moore's most serious films, not as funny. Never-the-less one of his most thought provoking.

The prime theme of the movie is explaining Trump and the movement behind him.

Early in the film Moore focuses on the 2010 elections, which brought many GOP nightmares. Moore goes to his roots in Flint, Michigan and looks at the election of businessman Rick Snyder as Governor. Snyder wanted to run government like a business. Snyder oversaw the destruction of Flint's drinking water and the ensuing cover-up. This included a visit by President Obama deceiving the public about the safety of the water. Moore demonstrates the hypocrisy of Obama and many leaders of

the Democratic Party. Moore demonstrates the evils presented by the privatization of public services.

Another wake-up call in the movie was presented by Moore's skillful cinematic comparison of Hitler's Germany to Trump and his minions.

While Moore's portrayal is depressing, Moore provides hope in recent movements, calling for gun control, reducing educational expenses and demanding livable wages.

The attendance at the first day of showing was disappointing; this is a provocative film that must be seen. **It is an important wake-up call!** DS

*Words for thought*

**"I saw America's economy last night, people raiding dumpsters at a higher rate than normal in my home town. Digging through garbage shouldn't be a career. Thanks Democrats. Thanks Republicans." — Carroll Bryant**

**Is Walker (and the GOP) Deceptive or Delusional?**

We are getting close to mid-term election day and the political ads are taking over the media. Democrats are sending out 50-100 emails a day and even more on other social media. The common assumption is that each recipient is a dedicated team member willing to donate at each request. The claims range from sincere concerns to outrageous claims aimed at creating fear or some other emotion leading to a monetary transfer. The GOP is conducting business the same way. The results are “fake-news” and a growing distrust of government and the political system.

Here in Wisconsin we have GOP Governor Scott Walker running for election and facing potential defeat (if the polls are accurate). We also have a US Senate race with Democrat Tammy Baldwin leading her opponent, a GOP state legislator. There are several congressional contests.

Walker has seen the writing on the wall, and for most of this calendar year, has almost sounded like a socialist (Walker has always been devoid of honesty and has never been afraid to sound like a socialist, his actions are different.) Recently, he claimed that he was running a positive campaign. Walker touts Wisconsin’s superior educational system, employment growth, lower property taxes and recklessly smearing his opponent.

Traditionally, Wisconsin has boasted of its K-12 educational achievements. Try as hard as he has, the system and culture of Wisconsin has held strong in spite of Walker’s attacks on teachers by reducing the strength of their unions, lowering the state’s financial commitment to public education, both through property tax freezes and investments in private “choice” schools. Wisconsin’s racial educational achievement gap continued to widen. Walker has pushed a large increase in K-12 spending (averages over \$200/student). This is targeted at rural schools, while providing almost nothing for urban districts.

Thanks to lower teacher pay and reduced financial support, there is a shortage of teachers (and larger class sizes), as many leave for other areas of employment and fewer students are enrolling in state colleges’ educational schools. While Walker boasts of freezing the UW System tuition, he failed to provide the UW System with funds to compensate for the loss of tuition revenue, thus weakening the post-secondary education system.

Wisconsin, like most of the USA has enjoyed a strong economy, begun during the Obama administration, but Wisconsin’s growth lags behind most of its midwest neighbors. Walker is far short of his pledge to create 250,000 new jobs in his first term (he is now completing a second term). When Walker moved into the governor’s office he quickly turned down a grant to build a high-speed rail system through Wisconsin, connecting Chicago and Minneapolis, and cancelled a commitment to help a company build high speed rail equipment in the Milwaukee central city

(providing much needed high-paying factory jobs to Milwaukee). Now, Walker is throwing billions of dollars at companies promising to build factories producing components for telecom products. Construction is in its earliest stages. People are pushed out of their homes, often at less than market value, wetlands are destroyed and environmental protections cast aside.

Under Walker’s leadership, Wisconsin is one of about 20 states challenging the constitutionality of the Affordable Care Act, which includes provisions protecting citizens with pre-existing conditions (history of cancer, high blood pressure and other problems). If Wisconsin wins the suit, those with pre-existing conditions will lose health coverage. Rebecca Kleefisch, Walker’s Lieutenant Governor (and a cancer survivor) is featured in an ad promising that the Administration will never eliminate protections for those with pre-existing conditions. Support for the lawsuit means the state calls for the end of such protections. There are no guarantees that the state legislature would fund this expensive item.

The Democratic candidate Tony Evers, currently the Wisconsin State Superintendent of Public Instruction, has been attacked by Walker for allowing struggling schools to continue to struggle, ignoring the fact that Walker and the GOP legislature deliberately reduced support for public education. Walker accuses Evers of not revoking the licenses of teachers, who have been guilty of some type of sex offense (one was watching porn on a school computer). In one case the Wisconsin Supreme Court found that there wasn’t any law prohibiting the teacher’s actions and denied the right of a school district to fire the teacher. Evers, restrained by the decision, led the fight to change the law. In most of the cases, where teachers were fired, but the State did not revoke their licenses. While the teachers, in theory, could teach in another school, it is unlikely another school would rehire them.

Evers has endorsed re-establishing a Tommy Thompson commitment that the state fund 2/3 of K-12 public education. This will probably increase in property taxes. Evers has also called for increasing state aid to municipalities for maintaining local roads, some of which are in terrible condition, thanks to Walker’s cuts. **We get what we pay for,** Walker’s policies promote living in a out-house. **Most of us prefer a home with modern plumbing.**

Walker has blasted Evers’ commitment to reduce the prison population by 50%. (The prison population has tripled since the 1990’s without a corresponding reduction in the crime rates.) This is part of a movement to improve the effectiveness and reduce the cost of the criminal justice system. No one is calling for setting free violent criminals, but many inmates are serving time for non-violent offenses that are not a threat to society’s safety. *DS*

**SP-Wisconsin Local Meeting: Saturday, October 6 at 1:30 p.m. at the Eastside Library “Ellipse” Community Room, 2320 N. Cramer St., Milwaukee.**

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