

**GOOD MORNING.**

**THANK YOU, BOB (Handel, handle), FOR THAT WONDERFUL, WARM, WALWORTH COUNTY INTRODUCTION ... AND THANK YOU REVEREND (WALLACE) CHRISTIAN, FOR THOSE MOVING, SPIRITUAL WORDS.**

**WHAT A WONDERFUL DAY FOR A FAIR!**

**IT'S GREAT TO BE BACK HERE TODAY IN ELKHORN FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE 150<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL WALWORTH COUNTY FAIR. I UNDERSTAND THE FAIR ORGANIZERS WANT ME TO STAY AWAY FROM THE TERM "SESQUICENTENNIAL" BECAUSE FOLKS ARE STILL SUFFERING A HANGOVER FROM WISCONSIN'S 150<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY LAST YEAR. SO LET'S CALL IT THE "DOUBLE DIAMOND JUBILEE."**

**BEFORE I BEGIN MY REMARKS, I WANT TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO PERSONALLY THANK EACH AND EVERY ONE OF THE FAIR VOLUNTEERS FOR THEIR THANKLESS AND TIRELESS HARD WORK. YOU ARE HELPING CARRY ON A PROUD CENTURY-AND-A-HALF TRADITION OF SUCCESSFUL WALWORTH COUNTY FAIRS.**

**THANK YOU WALWORTH COUNTY FAIR BOARD MEMBERS NORM MEYER, WHO AT 82 YEARS YOUNG IS DOING AN OUTSTANDING JOB AS FAIR BOARD PRESIDENT ... DWAYNE KATZMAN (cats-man), ED SOKOLOWSKI (soak-ole-iski), JUDY VANCE, TERRY SCHMALING, DENNIS DUESTERBECK (doo-steer-beck), ROBERTA ZESS, BOB HANDEL, LEN BADGERTSCHER (bad-ger-sure), AND ALL THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE DONATED THEIR TIME AND TALENT BEHIND THE SCENES.**

**BECAUSE OF YOUR COMMITTED, UNPRETENTIOUS  
YEAR-ROUND HARD WORK AND DETERMINATION,  
THE WALWORTH COUNTY FAIR IS ONE OF THE  
BEST, IF NOT THE BEST, COUNTY FAIR IN THE  
MIDWEST.**

**PLEASE GIVE YOURSELVES A HUGE ROUND OF  
APPLAUSE FOR A JOB WELL DONE!**

**(applause)**

**AS I WAS SAYING, IT IS GREAT TO BE BACK IN  
WALWORTH COUNTY... A PLACE WHERE THE  
ECONOMY IS BOOMING AND THE OPEN FOR  
BUSINESS SIGN IS ALWAYS OUT. JUST LISTEN TO  
THESE EXAMPLES:**

- **EMPLOYERS LIKE GENERAC, STA-RIGHT (stay –  
right) INDUSTRIES AND KIKKOMAN (keek-o-man)  
FOODS ARE PROVIDING THE GOOD PAYING**

**JOBS THAT ALLOW WORKING FAMILIES TO  
SAVE FOR A HOUSE, A CHILD'S EDUCATION  
AND RETIREMENT.**

- **WALWORTH COUNTY'S MOST RECENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IS 2.3 PERCENT... A  
TENTH OF A POINT LOWER THAN THE SAME  
TIME LAST YEAR.**
- **RIGHT NOW, THERE ARE ONLY ABOUT 20  
WELFARE CASES IN WALWORTH COUNTY, AN  
AMAZING 97 PERCENT DROP FROM WHEN I  
BECAME GOVERNOR IN 1987.**

***(((IN FACT THE JOB MARKET IS SO TIGHT, MANY  
EMPLOYERS SAY THEIR BIGGEST PROBLEM IS  
FINDING ENOUGH WORKERS. A FARMER FRIEND OF  
MINE WAS TELLING ME ABOUT THE DIFFICULTIES  
HE WAS HAVING IN FINDING SOME HIRED HELP.***

**ONE APPLICANT CAME IN, AND SAID HE WAS INTERESTED IN THE JOB, BUT DIDN'T LIKE TO GET UP EARLY, DIDN'T LIKE TO WORK OUTSIDE, AND HAD A PROBLEM WITH TAKING ORDERS.**

**MY FARMER FRIEND WAS TAKEN ABACK, BUT REALLY NEEDED THE HELP, SO HE ASKED "WHAT STARTING SALARY ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?"**

**THE APPLICANT SAID, "IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF \$50,000 A YEAR, DEPENDING ON THE BENEFITS PACKAGE."**

**THE FARMER RESPONDED, "WELL, WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO A PACKAGE THAT WOULD ALLOW YOU TO SET YOUR OWN HOURS, GIVE YOU 5-WEEKS OF VACATION EVERY YEAR, AND SET YOU UP WITH A NEW COMPANY CAR ... SAY, A RED CORVETTE?"**

**THE APPLICANT SAT UP STRAIGHT AND SAID, "WOW! ARE YOU KIDDING?"**

***MY FRIEND THE FARMER REPLIED, "YEAH, BUT YOU STARTED IT.))***

**I AM NOT KIDDING WHEN I SAY I AM HONORED TO BE NAMED, ALONG WITH MY WIFE SUE ANN, WALWORTH COUNTY FAIR MARSHALS. AND I AM HONORED TO BE HERE TODAY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RIBBON CUTTING FOR THE WALWORTH COUNTY FAIR DOUBLE DIAMOND JUBILEE.**

**I REMEMBER MY FIRST APPEARANCE AT THE WALWORTH COUNTY FAIR IN 1984, EVEN BEFORE I WAS ELECTED GOVERNOR, WHEN I PARTICIPATED IN THE ANTIQUE CAR FAIR.**

**I FELT THEN --AND BELIEVE EVEN MORE SO TODAY -- THAT COUNTY FAIRS ARE A CRITICAL ELEMENT OF RURAL LIFE IN WISCONSIN. AS YOU KNOW I HAVE ALWAYS SUPPORTED AND PARTICIPATED WITH THE F-F-A, 4-H FOUNDATIONS AND THE**

## **GOVERNOR'S BLUE RIBBON AUCTION HELD AT THE STATE FAIR EVERY YEAR.**

**LOOKING AROUND, I AM AMAZED BY HOW MUCH  
THIS FAIR HAS CHANGED SINCE I WAS FIRST HERE  
OVER TEN YEARS AGO. I AM MORE AMAZED BY  
HOW FAR THE FAIR HAS COME IN THE PAST 150  
YEARS.**

**THE FIRST ANNUAL FAIR AND CATTLE SHOW WAS  
HELD IN 1849, THE YEAR AFTER OUR STATE WAS  
BORN, IN THE VILLAGE OF EAST TROY.**

**BACK THEN, SO MANY FAIR VISITORS CAME BY  
TRAIN THAT 19 SPECIAL TRAINS WERE DEDICATED  
TO TAKING PEOPLE FROM AS FAR AWAY AS  
MADISON, MILWAUKEE AND ROCKFORD, ILLINOIS  
TO AND FROM THE FAIR.**

**THROUGHOUT THE PAST 150 YEARS, THE FAIR HAS  
WEATHERED CIVIL AND WORLD WAR,**

**DEPRESSIONS, AND FINANCIAL HARDSHIPS. EACH CHALLENGE HAS HELPED MAKE THE FAIR STRONGER, BIGGER AND BETTER.**

**TODAY THE FAIR ASSOCIATION OWNS APPROXIMATELY 94 ACRES. THE LAND AND BUILDINGS ARE NOW VALUED MORE THAN \$2 MILLION.**

**THOUSANDS COME TO THE FAIR FOR THE TRACTOR AND TRUCK PULLS, CARNIVAL RIDES, HARNESS RACING, MUSIC, LIVE ENTERTAINMENT, AND OF COURSE THE ANIMAL JUDGING.**

**I UNDERSTAND THAT A NEW ATTRACTION THIS YEAR IS A TIME CAPSULE THAT WILL BE FILLED WITH PREMIUM BOOKS, FAIR SCHEDULES, POSTERS, A CAP, PHOTOS, AND OTHER MEMENTOS. THE TIME CAPSULE WILL BE BURIED, AND DUG UP FOR THE FAIR'S BICENTENNIAL.**



Source: Marquette University Libraries; Tommy G. Thompson Collection; Series 2:  
Gubernatorial Speeches

***(((BY THAT TIME, I COULD VERY WELL BE IN MY 17<sup>TH</sup>  
TERM AS GOVERNOR.)))***

**UNFORTUNATELY, THE MOST IMPORTANT ITEM  
FROM OUR TIME WON'T BE SENT TO THE PEOPLE  
OF 2049. WHAT I AM REFERRING TO CAN'T BE  
BURIED, OR BOTTLED, OR WRAPPED FOR FUTURE  
GENERATIONS. I AM REFERRING TO THE PEOPLE  
OF WALWORTH COUNTY'S SENSE OF CARING.**

**CARING IS WHAT BUILT THE SOLID FOUNDATION  
UPON WHICH THE WALWORTH COUNTY FAIR IS  
CONSTRUCTED.**

**CARING IS WHAT BRINGS EVERYONE TOGETHER IN  
KEEPING THE LEGACY OF THE FAIR ALIVE.**

**CARING FOR THE RURAL WAY OF LIFE.**

**IT HAS BEEN SAID THAT WITHOUT A SENSE OF CARING, THERE IS NO SENSE OF COMMUNITY.**

**THE CARING YOU POUR INTO THE FAIR IS WHAT MAKES WISCONSIN SUCH A WONDERFUL PLACE TO LIVE, WORK, PLAY, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, RAISE A FAMILY.**

**IN CLOSING, I AGAIN WANT TO COMMEND ALL THOSE INVOLVED IN MAKING THIS ANNUAL EVENT SO SUCCESSFUL. THE HARD WORK AND PREPARATION YOU HAVE PUT FORTH IS TRULY COMMENDABLE AND SETS A SHINNING EXAMPLE FOR OTHERS TO FOLLOW.**

**THANK YOU FOR ALLOWING ME TO BE A PART OF TODAY'S CELEBRATION, AND BEST WISHES FOR CONTINUED SUCCESS IN THE NEXT 150 YEARS.**