

DO OR DIE FOR BUCKS

What: Charlotte at Milwaukee
When: 2 p.m. TV: WMTV

SPORTS/D1

Sam Cassell



FUNERAL FINANCES

Baby boomers are shopping around and saving money

BUSINESS/E1



DREAM DEALS

Hunted down some second-hand steals

DAYBREAK/G1



\$1.75

★★★

SUNDAY



Wisconsin State Journal

SUNDAY, MAY 20, 2001

MADISON, WISCONSIN

WWW.MADISON.COM

A Wisconsin State Journal investigation finds legislative caucus employees use state work time, supplies and offices for campaign purposes, in possible violation of state law.

State employees secretly campaign

By Dee J. Hall

Wisconsin State Journal

Employees at four state agencies secretly campaign for legislative candidates on state time and from their state offices in apparent violation of the law, a Wisconsin State Journal investigation revealed.

The employees work for four partisan legislative caucuses that cost taxpayers an estimated \$3.5 million a year. The caucuses are staffed for Assembly Democrats and Republicans and one for each party in the Senate. They are officially charged with helping lawmakers with legislative tasks such as researching bills, drafting news releases and printing newsletters.

The State Ethics Board has advised legislators and their employees that it is illegal to campaign on state time or with state resources. But a State Journal investigation involving hundreds of records from the state ethics office found 70 people found that the caucuses operate as secret campaign machines, especially during the election season.

"It's not confined to either the Democrats or Republicans, but I would say it is largely the Republican caucus that's hardly disguised anymore," said Greg DiMiceli, who was ousted last year from the Senate Republican Caucus (SRC) along with three others when state Sen. Mary Lazich took over GOP leadership in the Senate.

"It (campaigning) is almost the reason now for the existence of the caucuses," he said.

Among the State Journal's findings:

◆ The state caucuses serve as campaign central for many legislative racers, performing a variety of campaign functions in their government offices including coordinating advertising, providing lists of supporters, creating bumper stickers and giving out advice.

◆ Most candidates interviewed by the State Journal said they were unaware that caucus workers were prohibited

Please see SECRET CAMPAIGNS, Page A6



STEVE APP/WSJ photos

When visitors arrive at two Assembly legislative caucuses, there is no government insignia that alerts them to the fact that they are entering a state office, where campaign activity is forbidden. The Assembly caucuses are at 17 S. Fairchild St. Similar offices for the Democratic and Republican caucuses are at 17 S. Pinckney St.

Tracking campaign activity at the caucuses

Former staffers, legislators and candidates say campaign activity is widespread inside the state's four legislative caucuses. Documents obtained by the State Journal support those claims.

This campaign bill for a Democratic campaign event was sent to Matthew Pagel at the taxpayer-funded Assembly Democratic Caucus office at 17 S. Fairchild St. Pagel said he was sent the bill by mistake after the organizer of the event failed to show up.



claims.

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