

# Somethin' stinks in Madison

*Gov. Thompson deserves a dead fish for his environmental policies.*

By GEORGE VUKELICH

I've been thinking about Sally Franz ever since the Republican-dominated Legislature voted in lockstep to execute the orders issued by Gov. Tommy Thompson and carry out the most cynical assault on the Wisconsin environment since the lumber barons clear-cut the state on their way west.

Sally Franz is a true earth mother and a charter member of the Ladies' Auxiliary & Terrorist Society, Madison Chapter. She has a way of getting through to elected officials when even the people who elected those officials can't seem to get through anymore. Often without saying a word, Sally makes her point with the incisiveness of a deerfly zeroing in on the plump rump of a moose. Sally simply speaks a language that everybody can understand.

When the Dane County Board voted against something Sally wanted preserved—I can't remember if it was a marshland or a meadowland—Sally showed up at a subsequent board meeting and threw a carp on the presiding officer's rostrum.

"A dead carp," Steady Eddy notes. "A very dead carp."

Naturally, certain of the county supervisors were offended and said that Sally was a low character and certainly no lady. Sally felt that the elected representatives had already stunk up the place so much with their shenanigans that one more rotten presence would hardly draw their no-



## NORTH COUNTRY NOTEBOOK

By GEORGE VUKELICH

*George Vukelich died on the evening of July 4. There will be a memorial service this Sunday, July 9, at 2 pm at the Unitarian Universalist Society at 900 University Bay Dr., Madison.*

tice, let alone their overweening concern.

I confess that I thought seriously of providing a dead carp to each and every Wisconsin legislator who voted for Gov. Thompson's budget and the god-awful changes it will bring to our relatively enlightened environmental policies.

I must also confess that I thought seriously of providing Gov. Thompson and Associate Gov. Klauser with larger, greater dead carp of their own in appreciation of their larger, greater efforts to create a better environment here for us all. Not

only for Exxon, the Milwaukee Brewers and the American Legion Bar in Three Lakes, but for us all.

"For Republicans to be doing that for all of us," Steady Eddy says, "is truly democratic of them."

But one must be responsible for one's action. Not that Republican legislators led by Thompson-Klauser don't deserve dead carp all over place. They do. They deserve the smell of dead fish wherever they hang out. In their golf bags. In their safe-deposit boxes. In their churches. They're in a smelly line of work.

But sure as hell the Republicans would blame Sally Franz for their dead carp, and she shouldn't be blamed for something she didn't do. Still, Sally had a great idea there, and there's probably a lot of life left in the old dead carp. Of course, if you put a dead carp on the governor's desk now, chances are there would be a big fight between Leno, Letterman and the governor to see who would book you first.

Hugo Willie over at Percy's Service Station says he just can't understand why men who are only going to be on this beautiful earth a few more years would spend all their time pursuing more money, more power and making the earth ugly and un-beautiful in the process.

Besides, he asks, "How many canoes do you need to own? How many paddles?"

Then again, perhaps all the governors and all the associate governors and all the legislators who carry the water and the spears for them realize more fully than anyone that they do indeed have only a precious few years left before death extinguishes their bright eyes. Oh, yes! But un-

til then, they are going to stay on the greatest high money can buy, and that high is power. The power of life and death over people, animals, land, air, water, you name it. Power to bend everything and everyone to your will whether they want to be bent or not.

"Money isn't everything," Jack Eigen used to say on Chicago radio, "but it quiets the nerves."

The arrogance of this Republican bunch is déjà vu all over again. Ronald Reagan told us that when you've seen one redwood, you've seen 'em all.

This bunch of Republican lawmakers has hook-and-bullet guys all over the state on the verge of making common cause with the bird watchers in Madison, for chrissakes. Pam Porter, the director of Wisconsin's Environmental Decade, says 36 environmental groups in the state are so upset with the Thompson environmental policies that they vow action to make damn sure this doesn't happen again.

Steady Eddy says that's right. Folks are pissed.

Of course, Steady appends, not all Republicans are assholes on the environment. You know good ones you hunt and fish with, and so do I. These Republicans you trust with your life and your kids' lives. We must remember President Teddy Roosevelt was a Republican, and without him, no National Parks, period. Aldo Leopold was a Republican, too, and without him, no land ethic. We should reread Aldo's *A Sand County Almanac* right now. Better yet, we should see that all living Wisconsin Republicans read it.

"Especially," Steady Eddy says, "those living among us—but not with us—in these parlous times." ■