

MORNING EDITION

NFL boss, Dayton to meet

By Brian Lambert | Tuesday, May 17, 2011

Smelling support for one of his employers, NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell will meet with Gov. Mark Dayton this morning, hoping to add a little stickiness to the stadium plan out in Arden Hills. [Don Davis of the Forum papers writes](#): "Goodell is in Minnesota to discuss the \$1 billion stadium project, which the Vikings want to build in the northwestern Ramsey County community of Arden Hills. Rep. Morrie Lanning, R-Moorhead, said he and Sen. Julie Rosen, R-Fairmont, are among those on the pre-breakfast guest list at Dayton's official state residence. It was not clear if others also would attend."

Today in Bachmannia: One line of thinking is that with Mike Huckabee finally declaring he's not going to run for president that Michele Bachmann now has a pretty clear shot at winning the Iowa caucuses, and this would actually make Mitt Romney happy, because having a native Iowan win there would take the heat off him for losing.

Fortunately, our favorite congresswoman also has Rush Limbaugh fighting her fights. [Jeff Poor of the Daily Caller website](#) writes: "Limbaugh dismissed Bachmann's conservative critics on his Monday show and explained the source of such criticisms directed at the Minnesota Republican congresswoman. 'There is a little game being played by the establishment-Republican commentariat, the what I call 'the inside-the-beltway conservative intelligentsia, the Republican intellectual elite,' Limbaugh said. 'And it is aimed at muddling conservatism and discrediting — taking down, if you will, conservative Tea Party candidates in the Republican presidential primary process. And the way to do it, by the way, is a page out of the Democrat-left's playbook.'"

Limbaugh theorized that the Republican establishment is motivated by the belief that a principled conservative can't win elections."

[Michael Gerson of the Washington Post looks at the Huckabee decision and sees opportunities for Tim Pawlenty](#): "Nowadays there is limited Republican demand for economic populism. Among the current crop of GOP candidates, past activism on issues such as health reform is a more damaging scandal than past adultery. But beyond the primaries, a Republican nominee will require a more hopeful message than just budget cuts. A failing education system and a skills deficit have left America with lower socioeconomic mobility than many European countries. A winning candidate will need to talk not only about austerity but about opportunity. Which Republican has the best chance of crafting a general-election message of economic mobility? **A serious case can be made for Tim Pawlenty. Pawlenty is both less vivid and more conservative than Huckabee.** In Minnesota, he was a budget-balancing, anti-tax governor who presided over his own government shutdown. He received a "A" on the fiscal scorecard of the libertarian Cato Institute. Huckabee got a "D." The former Minnesota governor was introduced at the 2010 CPAC conference by [Americans for Tax Reform's

Grover] Norquist, who stated that Pawlenty had 'governed as a conservative.' ”

Tracee Tolentino of Fox21 in Duluth covered a **rally there in favor of gay marriage legislation**: “Holding signs and cheering on Monday, dozens rallied in Duluth showing they support the right for everyone to get married. “Marriage equality for all people, regardless of sexual orientation,” said marriage equality supporter John Pegg. However, the Defense of Marriage Act bans gay marriage. After a State Senate vote to amend the constitution last week, the issue could be up to voters in 2012 if passed in the House. ‘It should not be put up to a vote for the people because this is not about popularity; it’s about the rights of a minority,’ said marriage equality supporter Jay Newcomb. **This has DFL lawmakers fighting back with the Marriage and Family Protection Act.** ‘The constitution has always been to preserve rights and this would be the first time that we would have an amendment that would limit rights,’ said District 7B Rep. Kerry Gauthier. ‘It’s just a matter of fairness that if we’re going to have a discussion, we should have it on both sides.’ Though this repeal bill will likely not even be discussed this session, supporters feel it’s a step in the right direction.”

Meanwhile, in St. Paul, anti-gay marriage activists are putting the hammer down on their legislators. Andy Birkey of the Minnesota Independent writes: “Religious conservatives are stepping up the pressure on Republican legislators as the final week of the legislative session approaches and a proposed amendment to add a ban on gay marriage to the Minnesota Constitution appears stalled. The Minnesota Family Council threatened Republicans that any effort to stall the bill will be redefined as a vote against the bill, while the National Organization for Marriage pleaded that if the bill doesn’t go forward, it will encourage ‘gay marriage activists.’ ... Brad Brandon, a pastor and talk show host who endorsed a slate of conservative candidates last fall, sent an alert out to his ministry’s membership. ‘Right now the Marriage Amendment is in grave danger of being lost in the House of Representatives,’ he wrote. **‘A few rouge [sic] Republican State Reps are trying to stall the Marriage Amendment in the House.** We are urging everyone to call their State Reps and urge them to support the Marriage Amendment today!’ He added, **‘Let’s all stand up and be the SALT and the LIGHT Christ called us to be.’** ” FYI, That’s SALT and LIGHT, not “lightly salted.”

On the topic ... **Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker is moving on domestic partnership rights.** Patrick Marley of the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel reports: **“Walker believes a new law that gives gay couples hospital visitation rights violates the state constitution and has asked a judge to allow the state to stop defending it.** Democrats who controlled the Legislature in 2009 changed the law so that same-sex couples could sign up for domestic partnership registries with county clerks to secure some — but not all — of the rights afforded married couples. Wisconsin Family Action sued last year in Dane County circuit court, arguing that the registries violated a 2006 amendment to the state constitution that bans gay marriage and any arrangement that is substantially similar. ... In 2006, 60% of state voters signed off on changing the constitution to ban gay marriage and a ‘legal status identical or substantially similar to marriage’ for same-sex couples. Wisconsin Family Action advocated for the amendment. The group first sued the state over the same-sex registries shortly after they were created in 2009, taking its case directly to the state Supreme Court in hopes of

getting a quick verdict. The high court declined to hear the case, and the group then filed a lawsuit last year in Dane County circuit court.”

Finally, a big outdoor amphitheater in the south metro. [Jon Bream of the Strib reports](#): “It’s not a behemoth in Burnsville or Jordan. It’s the modest-sized 8,357-seat Mystic Amphitheater at Mystic Lake Casino in Prior Lake. The first event is a July 4 free concert with country band Diamond Rio. Actually, this is a test run. Although the land has been graded for an amphitheater, the stage will be erected for this summer only and the seats will be rented. If the planned six or seven concerts draw well, then Mystic intends to build permanent facilities, casino officials said.” I say it’s less than two weeks before Alabama, the Oak Ridge Boys and a Three Dog Night re-enactor act are booked.

Walter Mondale and Dave Durenberger co-author a Strib commentary on perils facing the 72-mile Mississippi National River and Recreation Area: “In 1988, Congress established the (MNRRA), a 72-mile corridor from Dayton to Hastings, to protect and enhance the unique natural and cultural resources of the Mississippi River in the Twin Cities. ... Unfortunately, important state protections put in place in 2009 are now threatened with repeal by the Legislature. ... In 2009, the Legislature took steps to fulfill the promise to MNRRA, passing legislation authorizing the Department of Natural Resources to establish new standards for the Critical Area through state rulemaking. ... **But earlier this legislative session, two bills passed the state Senate that would repeal the 2009 law, stripping the DNR of its authority to adopt these rules.** Some members of the majority in the House of Representatives were reluctant to take this drastic measure. But unfortunately, House members recently agreed to accept the Senate’s position in their conference report.”

Darrell Ehrlick, [editor of The Winona Daily News](#), is a good op-ed read. He looks at [the flare-up between GOP Rep. John Kriesel and Roman Catholic priest Fr. John Echert](#) over the priest’s declaration he was going to campaign for the anti-gay marriage bill, to which Kriesel responded by pointing out the IRS has rules against that sort of thing. Enter Ehrlick: “There’s no question that a church has the right and even the responsibility to state its moral and ethical position to parishioners. Stating a position is one thing. A campaign is something different. The church is launching a concerted campaign that directly seeks to influence the political landscape. If it doesn’t violate the letter of the IRS tax exemption, it certainly runs contrary to the spirit. Yet, I am not going [to] tsk-tsk the church for what I think are misguided efforts. Instead, **I would like to publicly encourage the church to continue. I’d like to see it up its spending and maybe print some bumper stickers, clever buttons and even a few novelty foam hands and keychains.** Besides a bunch of celibate men giving marriage advice, I think the church should dispense with the game it’s playing. Be honest, be political. Let Catholic Church leaders admit just what Father Echert did: They’re launching an all-out political campaign. Granted, if the Catholic Church admitted that what it’s doing jeopardizes its nonprofit status, it would be subject to taxes. Lots of ‘em. **And that would mean at least something good would come out of this mean-spirited, decidedly un-Christian debate.** The Catholic Church could start paying into state tax coffers. And who said gay marriage wasn’t part of the budget solution?”

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