



- Intro: 00:02 This is the Thank You 72 podcast, brought to you by the Wisconsin Alumni Association.
- Intro: 00:07 This podcast salutes outstanding Badgers from every one of Wisconsin's 72 counties. It's also our way of saying "thank you" to the people of this state for sending their best and brightest to the University of Wisconsin Madison. Our guest, Juneau County native, UW grad, and former Wisconsin governor Tommy Thompson. Here's your host, Tod Pritchard.
- Tod: 00:27 Tommy Thompson is about as Wisconsin as you get. Born in Elroy on November 18, 1941, Thompson earned his bachelor and law degrees from the University of Wisconsin Madison in 1963 and 1966, respectively. Fresh out of law school, he won a seat in the Wisconsin State Assembly in 1966 when the incumbent underestimated the young Thompson and went on an Alaskan cruise in the middle of the campaign. That was the last time anyone underestimated Tommy Thompson. He became the longest-serving governor in Wisconsin history and later joined the George W. Bush Administration as the US Secretary for Health and Human Services.
- Tod: 01:04 Thompson is best known for his welfare reforms. He reduced Wisconsin's welfare rolls by almost 90%, cutting welfare spending but increasing investment in childcare and healthcare, especially for low-income working families. In 1990, Thompson pushed for the creation of the country's first parental school choice program which provided Milwaukee families with a voucher to send children to the private or public school of their choice. He also created Badger Care, designed to provide healthcare coverage for those families whose employers don't provide health insurance but make too much money to qualify for Medicaid.
- Tod: 01:39 My Wisconsin Alumni Association colleague, Mike [Fahey 00:01:42], and I had a great talk with Governor Thompson and co-author of his new autobiography, Doug Moe.

Mike: 01:49 Tommy, Doug, thank you for joining us, and congratulations on the book "Tommy: My Journey of a Lifetime." So why don't you tell us a little bit about how this book came about?

Tommy: 01:57 [inaudible 00:01:57] Doug Moe, really the individual that really made it possible.

Doug: 02:02 A couple of mutual friends of Governor Thompson's reached out to me and asked if I would be interested. He was interested in having a book, and as a long-time journalist in Wisconsin, storyteller, I can't think of a better story in the last 50 years really than my co-author's "journey of a lifetime," s we called it in the book, so of course I said yes pretty quickly. We got together, talked about it, decided an autobiography book in Governor Thompson's voice, him telling his own story would be the best way to go. It only took us seven years.

Tommy: 02:49 Well, let me just add to that that I wanted a book. Not so much about me, but about all the accomplishments that we have made in Wisconsin under my administration. It was certainly not all me; I had great people, and when Pat Hackett, who did my scheduling in the governor's office, said, "You know, I know Doug Moe." I said, "Well, that's good. Why are you telling me?" "Well, he might be able to write your book." I said, "Well I would love it." He said, "Would you mind meeting him?" I said, "No, I think I know him but I would love to meet him and talk to him." We struck up, I think, a wonderful friendship. I couldn't be happier, and as I told our interview with Neil Heinen on Channel 3 a few weeks or months ago now, I said, "Doug is able to put lipstick on an 800-pound hog and make it look good." I really mean it. He's a gifted writer and just, to me, a wonderful human being. A great person. He has written many books, and I'm just very pleased to have participated with him and was able to tell the story, and he did it so well. I think it's turned out much better than I thought.

Tod: 04:11 It's a great book, and obviously Governor, you're so beloved in Wisconsin and you are all about Wisconsin, but a very special place in your heart is Elroy. Tell us why that's so special to you.

Tommy: 04:27 Well, you know, you grow up there. That's your formative years. I had my mother, who was Irish and a school teacher, and my German father, who was a grocery keeper and also a farmer. He was gruff and direct. His idea of life was everybody had to work, and my mother was much more pleasant and nice. I think I got the best genes out of both of them. I loved people, and from my father, I am absolutely a workaholic, and putting the two together makes you a good career politician, and retail. My

father taught me how to sell in the grocery store and my mother taught me how to be nice. Selling and being nice was part of being successful and running for election. That's where I started, and then of course going to school there and high school. Elroy was small enough, so even somebody like myself that didn't have any talents could play baseball, football, and basketball and make the team, because if I didn't, the girl next door had to play.

- Tommy: 05:40 I was able to have a great life, and the people in Elroy I think were fantastic individuals, and I still have my farm there, and I go back every weekend to Elroy to the farm and just love the people, love the area, and I love Elroy. It's very near and dear to me. I think most people who grew up in a small, well anywhere they grew up, it's always something special to go back home.
- Mike: 06:05 So let's talk about that in your early careers in politics; so you were a pretty young man when you first ran for state assembly, and you upset an incumbent, and you quickly got a spot on Joint Finance Committee. Tell us a little bit about those early years of politics and how you maneuvered some of that positioning.
- Tommy: 06:22 Well it was interesting. I decided to run because I was working in the state capital. I went up to the state capital, wanted to be interviewed by the individual that I subsequently ran against. He wouldn't even interview me because he thought I might run against him. Didn't even open up the door to interview me for the job. At that time, there was some money available to hire some students to do some clerk shifts and some research. I got wind of it, and so I went up there and applied, but he wouldn't have anything to do with me, but the state Senator who was home sick, and subsequently died, he never got a chance to meet me but he heard about me from my father, who was on the county board in Juneau County and he was the Senator for Juneau County, Richland County at that time, and he hired me. I worked in the state capital for my three years that I was in law school and I thought, "You know, I could do this. I'm smart enough to do this," and I saw what was going on at the state capital and I felt I could add something to it, so I decided to run.
- Tommy: 07:33 I went back home and borrowed \$500, bought a \$200 car, and my father gave me \$10 a day, \$5 for gas and the rest of the money to eat or whatever, and I used the money to campaign on. It was probably one of the most inexpensive campaigns ever in the history of the state of Wisconsin. The primary was won with less than \$500. I think we spent \$125 on signs. That was the only expense we had for the campaign, but it was shoe leather, knocking on every door, and going around and meeting

the people. I was just very fortunate to get elected. Then when I got elected, nobody thought I had a chance, so at that time, the Republicans took over. There were four candidates: Harold [Furley 00:08:25], Kirk [McKay 00:08:26], Paul Alfonsi, and Harold Clements were running for Speaker, and the only one that came to see me was Harold Furley. I talked to Harold, I still remember; it was 3:00 in the afternoon. He came in and sat down, and I sat next to him, and he says, "I want to be Speaker and I'd like to have you vote for me." I said, "Well I'd like to be on Joint Finance Committee." He says, "Absolutely not. Nobody gets on Joint Finance Committee."

- Tommy: 08:52 He says, "Can I count on your vote?" I said, "When you put me on Joint Finance, you can count on my vote," because I had been there and I saw that if you were going to really make an impact as a freshman, and I wanted to make an impact, you had to be on the most powerful committee in the legislature, and that was Joint Finance. Harold Furley left, and about a week later he called back and he said, "Have you considered supporting me for Speaker?" I said, "Have you considered me on Joint Finance?" He said, "Yes, and you're not going to get it." I said, "Okay. Then I'm not going to support you." Then about three days later, he said, "Well I'm considering you on Joint Finance. Can I...?" I said, "When you make up your mind to put me on Finance, then we'll talk." Two days later, he called back and said, "I think I'm going to put you on Finance," and I said, "Well, then I think I'm going to support you. When you find out for sure, then I'll be able to make up my mind." He called back and said, "I'm going to put you on Joint Finance." I said, "I'm going to support you," and I was the 13th individual to support him.
- Tommy: 09:51 By this time, two of the other candidates dropped out, and he was running against Harold Clements. He won by one vote and...
- Mike: 10:01 [inaudible 00:10:01].
- Tommy: 10:02 He put me in Finance, and so that's how the story began.
- Doug: 10:06 I've got to interject just quickly and say that 25 years later, President Bill Clinton called then-Governor Thompson and said, "I want you on the Amtrak." Governor Tom said, "You got to make me chairman of the Amtrak board." Right? I mean it's sort of the same thing. Clinton, what did he say? He said, "I can't do it."

Tommy: 10:29 He said, "I can't do it." This was on a Thursday. He wanted to put Mike Dukakis. The Senate was controlled by Republicans, so he couldn't get Mike Dukakis as chairman. Mike Dukakis wanted to be on Amtrak so badly that I'm sure that Bill Clinton talked to Dukakis over the weekend, because Mike could not get confirmed without me. They needed to put a Republican on with a Democrat to get him confirmed. Mike Dukakis told the President, he says, "That's fine. Let Tommy be chairman. I'll be vice chairman." The President of the United States called me back after being hustled by this governor from Wisconsin and made me chairman of Amtrak, and Mike Dukakis became the vice chairman and-

Doug: 11:19 And you guys became friends.

Tommy: 11:19 We became friends. Up until that time, we really didn't like each other, Mike Dukakis and myself, but working on that. Mike and myself were the ones who were instrumental in getting the Solo, the high-speed train from New York to Washington. We did that together, and that was quite an accomplishment back then. It was the board, it was Dukakis and Thompson that took the leadership, the chairman and the vice chairman, and now the Solo's really doing well. I don't know if you've ever ridden on it, but that was really Mike Dukakis and Tommy Thompson's initiative, so it worked out.

Tod: 11:56 So let's go back to your time as governor. What are you most proud of?

Tommy: 12:01 There's so many things that I'm proud of. One, I'm very proud of the young people I brought in that have distinguished themselves. Several are at the University of Wisconsin, several of them are in business themselves. Some of them are out in Washington DC. All of the young people I've brought in really have been successful. That's nice because I gave a lot of young people a chance, and a lot of people were surprised that I would hire so many young people to be in the governor's office, and the reason I did is I wanted young people that weren't married, not because they [inaudible 00:12:36]; I just wanted some people that didn't have any outside obligations that could spend all their time. I'm very happy about the fact that we rebuilt Wisconsin. We rebuilt the University of Wisconsin; a lot of the new buildings out there were started or completed when I was governor. Highway systems and the four-lane highways across the state east and west, and north and south, were really under my administration. I'm proud of that.

- Tommy: 13:08 Proud of starting welfare reform. That became a national program. I'm happy at the fact that we were able to attract a lot of businesses and drop our unemployment below 3%, and created over 250,000 jobs. Never been done before or since. Maybe with Fox gone they might be able to do it, but it hasn't been done yet. Then of course, be able to develop the programs like Badger Care, and still the best healthcare proposal in the country. It was started under my leadership. I've got so many things that I could be proud of, but I really liked the fact, we won the Rose Bowl too. Of course we hadn't done that, and won the Super Bowl. I didn't play but I certainly was certainly one of the loudest cheerers on the ground. It was a wonderful time, and I did it with Democrats, because most of the Democrats, it was usually support from the Democrats in the legislature. Nobody thought that that was possible, but I was able to show under my leadership bipartisanship does work. Still, to this day, I had lunch today with Tim Cullen and Tony Earl.
- Tommy: 14:23 Even though they were on opposite sides of me politically, we're still friends today and still see each other, and I think that's lacking in modern-day politics. I'm a big believer in reaching across the island and developing bipartisanship and solutions.
- Tod: 14:41 Doug, let me ask you: from your perspective, what do you think the major accomplishments of the Thompson Administration?
- Doug: 14:48 I think the Governor hit them pretty well, Tod. I would say when people found out I was doing this book with Governor Thompson, friends of mine, Democrats, Republicans, it didn't matter, smiled and recalled a time when they didn't always agree with him, but I think that everyone knew that he had the state's best interest at heart. He loved the state, he wasn't mean-spirited, he was always positive. I could tick off maybe a few: Taliesin he basically rescued. There's any number of ones like that, but I go more almost to just the tone that was set during that time. That's not to say there weren't fierce battles, because there were, but it was different, and no one doubted, as I say, I don't believe, his sincere love for the state and its people.
- Intro: 15:46 You're listening to the Thank You 72 podcast. The Wisconsin Alumni Association is honoring amazing Badgers from Wisconsin's 72 counties and thanking the people of the state for sending their best and brightest to UW Madison.

Intro:	15:58	For more amazing alumni stories, visit thankyou72.org . That's thankyou72.org .
Intro:	16:05	Now back to our interview with Juneau County native and former Wisconsin Governor Tommy Thompson along with author Doug Moe, chatting with Tod Pritchard and Mike Fahey from the Wisconsin Alumni Association.
Tod:	16:16	So, let's talk a little more about the University of Wisconsin. Doug and Tommy, both proud alums, and you have not been shy also about your great love for the university and what you did to help support the university, so maybe talk a little bit more about what you did, why you did that, what motivated you.
Tommy:	16:31	You got to realize that my high school graduating class was 55, and then coming to University of Wisconsin, having no minorities, so to speak, in my high school, and coming away. I always tell the story: I came down. We didn't have enough money for a suitcase, so I had a Thompson grocery bag with my shirts and underwear, and see this huge campus. I can't remember how many thousands of freshmen, the students that were at that time, but being thrown into that, and then knowing that you could survive and receive a tremendous education. That education is with you your whole life, and to have the opportunity to go from a small school like I did and attend the University of Wisconsin for four years undergraduate and three years in law school, and know that you could afford to go there, and I had to work my way through, but know that I was able to do it. It was just a tremendous thing for me. Then to see all the wonderful things that come out of this university and the proud alum, and to see the happiness and the fun by being association with Wisconsin, it's really quite a thrill.
Tommy:	17:52	If somebody like myself who would never have thought that I would amount to much and be able to graduate from the University of Wisconsin with two degrees and then go on and get elected to the legislature, and then be elected governor of this wonderful state, it's just been amazing. I don't think I would've been able to do it without going to University of Wisconsin. University of Wisconsin helped form the character and the leadership abilities, and the opportunity to speak and talk on several subjects, and be able to master them, whether it be the fact that you were able to read the law and have to be able to put it together and apply it served me very well in legislature as well as governor. I look back and find that the university time of being a student and working at the varsity bar and at the capital were great times and great experiences, and

those lifetime experiences are still with me and I'll never forget the role that the University of Wisconsin played.

- Tommy: 19:02 Then you look back and see how this university can mold the minds of so many young people and turn them from a country bumpkin like myself out of Elroy into a leader that's state and then national. It's amazing, and they've done that time and time again. All of us are associated with the university and we know what a great place this is. I love it dearly, and to me, people like Doug Moe and you, Tod, and Mike, are just amazing. Every time you get connected with somebody from the University of Wisconsin and talk to them, everybody's proud to [inaudible 00:19:39] with their association. Nobody is bashful or embarrassed about saying, "I went to school at the University of Wisconsin." Everybody is pretty proud of that, and when they start singing "Varsity," you see the tears in the eyes and the smile on the face, and see Buckey Badger, and know that that university helped you tremendously.
- Tod: 20:01 You know, your knowledge of the University of Wisconsin and the stem cell research that came out of here-
- Tommy: 20:07 [inaudible 00:20:07].
- Tod: 20:07 Oh yeah, was instrumental. I think that is a great story in your book, is how that all played out. It really played a major role in your time in the Bush Administration as the Health and Human Services Secretary. Can you tell that story a little bit, about how that unfolded?
- Tommy: 20:26 Well, it was not an easy time, to be in favor of embryonic stem cells. Being a governor, being a Republican governor, and being a Catholic Republican governor, being an Irish Catholic Republican governor, all of these things were working against me as far as embryonic stem cells. I had to stand up against a lot of opposition, but I also saw the tremendous opportunities. I can remember giving speeches with children with juvenile diabetes and talking to the parents how they got to bed at night and seeing their son or daughter, or grandson or granddaughter, and know that that child has got to have the right amount of insulin, and they've got to wake up some time during the night or several times during the night and prick the finger of that child to see if their blood glucose is correct, is in the parameters of being safe for that child. Knowing that and knowing that embryonic stem cells might be able to come up with a cure for juvenile diabetes, I just always go back to that because I see these little faces of these little kids.

- Tommy: 21:46 I spoke at their national organization and several of their state organizations, and they all say, you know, all dependent upon the opportunity for coming up with embryonic stem cures for themselves. Parkinson's, all of us know somebody with Parkinson's, or some kind of mental problems, or any kind of heart problems. Anything like this. The opportunities for cures for so many diseases and so many maladies with embryonic stem cells is just boundless. To think that we had a chance to do something here at Wisconsin, I could not let politics interfere or deter me from pushing it, so I was way out in front. I got beat up pretty badly, both sides because several members of my party wanted me to go farther. Several members of the Democratic Party certainly wanted me to go farther, and I wanted to go it in a steady path so that we could get it accomplished. I had to go and I debated Carl [Roven 00:22:58] in front of President George W. Bush.
- Tommy: 23:01 I still remember it, [inaudible 00:23:02] the lunchroom, and still remember that I ordered a hamburger and George Bush ordered a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. I thought I was losing the debate because Carl Roven kept saying, "The base, the conservative base is not going to appreciate us coming out with any kind of a program that's going to allow the use of embryonic stem cells," or what they indicated was killing the embryo or destroying the embryo to get to the embryonic stem cells. I said, "Mr. President," I still remember my closing argument, "Mr. President, you had a sister that died very young." I think it was Parkinson's; I'm not exactly sure about that but I think it was Parkinson's Disease, or some form of cancer. I said, "If your sister had a chance to live because of embryonic stem cells? No matter how much you spend on NIH or how much you spend on cancer research, if the people find out that you stopped the development of embryonic stem cells, you're going to be going down as somebody that is anti-science and anti-good healthcare.
- Tommy: 24:18 When I said that, I could see, you know how you could tell somebody is interested and how somebody's responded? I did, and I knew I had him then. He came out; he went halfway, didn't go as far as I had requested, but he allowed the embryonic stem cell research to go on. I compliment him for that. Today, they're able to develop embryonic stem cells and stem cells of all levels without killing the embryo. Everybody is happy now with the science of embryonic stem cells, but the problem is the cures have not come as fast as everybody thought they would. I knew that, but when you go through life, I'm a strong believer that if you've got a positive mind and believe something's going to happen for the good, and

embryonic stem cells is part of that. I just felt in my mind, even though I knew cures don't come that quickly, but it was the right thing and we're going in the right direction.

- Mike: 25:23 As we sit here almost 20 years to the day that Jamie Thompson first made those discoveries, that work was really impressive and made it a really big difference for the university. Wow.
- Tommy: 25:35 Mike, I introduced Jamie Thompson at one of my state speeches up at the capital. Several people applauded me for doing it, but several of the legislators really criticized me, and a lot of individual organizations that were anti-destroying the embryo came in and was really upset with me. It was not easy, but it was the right call then, and it certainly is the right call today.
- Mike: 26:05 Good. So the other good story in the book is-
- Tommy: 26:08 Well I hope there's a lot of good [crosstalk 00:26:10]-
- Mike: 26:10 Other than not getting your son to tie his shoe on the, [inaudible 00:26:13], which was my favorite kind of 11 year old, the story of 9/11 and what happened there and some risks you took, and [inaudible 00:26:22] is a great story, so maybe you can tell us a little bit about that day and that experience.
- Tommy: 26:28 It was a day like no other day in the history of our country. I was trying to bring together a group of scientists, and they had already started flying in. We were meeting the next day; we were going to meet at 10:00 in the morning. I had a breakfast meeting, I had to give a speech, and I was coming in through my office in the car, and I got this call saying, "There's just been a plane that's flown into one of the Twin Towers. You better get up to your office fast because we may have a lot of people entering." So I went there, went into my office, and about 15 minutes later, 16 minutes to be exact, 8:46, the second plane hit. Then you knew. Then everybody was just, you know, really beside themselves, what to do. Then a short time later, the Pentagon got hit, and then about 40 minutes later, Shanksville, Pennsylvania, a plane went into the ground where the people had overtaken the terrorists. I knew that because the president was in Florida and the vice president was, they have a place in the White House where it's very secured and only with top security you can get down there. That's where Vice President Cheney was.
- Tommy: 28:02 I knew I had to act because I knew there was a lot of people that were killed or dying and injured in New York and at the Pentagon. I took it upon myself to call up my lawyers at 9:30 in

the morning and say, "About 10:00, I want to declare a health emergency for the United States." I'm not sure if I had the authority to do so; I'm not sure if it's ever been done before, but I acted, and the lawyers didn't know. I said, "Well just figure it out. I want to declare a national health emergency by 10:00," and I did, and I was able, by doing that, to use that power to get a big plane to carry 50 tons of medical supplies. At that time, we had eight depots of medical supplies and equipment across America, which are all top secret. While I was there, I was able to increase that to 12, and now there are 12, which makes it easier to get to a city, but we took 50 tons of medical supplies and equipment up to New York. By 5:00 that afternoon and later on that evening, we got a hundred thousand masks and two hundred thousand latex gloves up there.

- Tommy: 29:23 I, of course, wanted to go. The following day, we made arrangements for me to go up on Amtrak, and I spent a day up there talking to the mayor, Rudy Giuliani, Governor Pataki, and the Chief of Police, and head of the fire department. Then I went down there. I'll never forget this; it's almost surreal: it was a blue day going up there. Sunshine was [inaudible 00:29:51] and the sun was out, and it was very calm. Great day in September. We went down closer to the Twin Towers, and you couldn't see. All this debris was all in the air, and everybody was wearing masks. All the stop-and-go lights were blown out, and people were parked in line. Everybody blew their horn. Everybody slowly let everybody else pass. Nobody got mad, nobody got ugly. In New York, nobody blew their horn. It was just people that were just so concerned and so considerate. I'll never forget that.
- Mike: 30:37 So what about the story of you being told to go into confinement and maybe not wanting to do that?
- Tommy: 30:48 I didn't. I knew I had so much to do, and Cheney ordered all Secretaries except for Colin Powell and Donald Rumsfeld to go out to what is called "Camp Weather." It's a-
- Doug: 31:02 Mount Weather.
- Tommy: 31:02 Mount Weather. It's in West Virginia, and it's a city 175 feet down in the mountain. There's a whole city down there. They wanted all the Secretaries down. In order to preserve the succession of government, the "continuity of government" is what it's called, and they didn't know where the terrorists were coming from. They didn't know if they had targeted cabinet officers and the president, vice president. What happens if the president got blown up in the plane and the vice president got

taken out? Who's going to take over? They have built and it's still there, Mount Weather, this place where it's the seat of government. They've got places for the Congress to come. All the departments are set up there, and they actually have working desks and computers and everything else. They ordered all of us to go out there, and of course I refused because I have things to do and I didn't want to go. That was the last place I wanted to do. Finally it got so serious that they were going to come and arrest me. They were outside when my security and my Chief of Staff Bob [Woodkin 00:32:16] says, "It's not going to look good for you being taken out of the Humphrey Building in handcuffs [crosstalk 00:32:22] 9/11. They'll probably think you were part of the terrorists."

- Tommy: 32:30 They convinced me I had to go, but I called a guy who was my closest security guy, a good friend, Mike [Lanetta 00:32:39]. I said, "Mike, you get out and find out where it is." He says, "I know where it's at. They think [inaudible 00:32:45]," because we were going on helicopters, "and don't obey any traffic. You get out there and get in the back. I'm going to walk in the front door and walk out the back, and you bring me back." I was shocked. They checked us in and they gave us each a billet, you know, a room. They gave you your wash cloths, your towels, and your bedding, and a pillow. They assigned billets because that's how big it is. 175 is a complete city. Got a whole hotel down there. They assigned us each rooms, all the cabinet secretaries. The cabinet secretaries were mad at me because they were sitting in the helicopters waiting-
- Mike: 33:27 Waiting for you to show up?
- Tommy: 33:28 And I was the last one, and so then they took off. I remember we took off a quarter to one and we got there at 2:30. I checked in and signed my name, and they assigned me my room. I went in the room and I asked one of guards there where was the backdoor. He says, "It's almost a mile away," and I said, "I don't care. Just tell me where it is." "Back there." So I could see where I was supposed to go, and there was this huge whole network of highways down there. I went to my room and threw my bedding and my wash towel and so on on my bed, and I turn over, closed the door, and walked out, and closed the door and walked down to the end. I walked out and there was some security people there, and they said, "Where you going?" I said, "I'm a little claustrophobic. I need some air." They said okay. So I walked out, walked right by them, and right there was my Mike Lanetta, was my squad. He was there, [inaudible 00:34:44] and he was turned around ready to go. I jumped in the backseat and

I said, "Go and don't stop. Just go." Nobody tried to stop us as we went.

- Tommy: 34:54 I was back in my office by quarter to four, much to the surprise of everybody, and then a lot of the individuals wanted to go home, and rightly so; they were afraid. I had sort of an assembly and I called them all together. I said, "I'm going to be here tomorrow. You don't have to come, but we've got a lot of work. A lot of people depend upon us, and I hope you come." So I shook hands with everybody that left that day and thanked them for staying because they didn't have to stay; they had the opportunity to leave in the afternoon after I left. I got there at 5:00 in the morning, went home at midnight, got up and was there at 5:00. Stood outside and shook hands with everybody that came to work the next day and thanked them.
- Tommy: 35:39 It was a fantastic experience but so absolutely depressing and sorrowful. Going up and seeing the people that were injured and sitting in the hospital talking to them about what they went through on 9/11, and then some of the people I had met with in the hospital subsequently died, and then going over to the morgue where relatives and husbands and wives were bringing things in for individuals at the morgue to identify pieces of the bodies. It was just so depressing.
- Tod: 36:22 Well Governor, you know, such an honor for us to have you here. We really appreciate you and Doug coming here to be on the podcast. I guess one final question would be, you love Wisconsin.
- Tommy: 36:37 Yes I do.
- Tod: 36:38 Why?
- Tommy: 36:40 It's the greatest state in America. You look around. Anything you want to look at, Wisconsin is the leader. Agriculture, you name so many things in agriculture. Manufacture, one of the best states for manufacture. Technology. This University of Wisconsin technologically, and now with [inaudible 00:37:05], for weeks I used to tell people, "Minnesota brags about 10,000 lakes. We have 15,000. We have fish in ours." The tourism, the beauty, the people. It's the people, you know, that are so darn nice, so productive and so caring. I think it probably goes back to some of the Germanic heritage; we're the most Germanic state in America. Great restaurants, great people, great hospitality-

Mike: 37:42 And he dedicated the book to the people of Wisconsin. Just one really quick one: after 9/11, you established a command center out at HSS in the Humphrey Building. I would love to know the reaction of the new Obama folks when they came in in 2008 because it's state-of-the-art and it's fabulous. Everybody loved it, but there's a big map there. Everything is normal-sized on the map except there's one thing that's hugely blown out into huge proportion, and of course it's somewhere in Wisconsin, and it's Elroy. Imagine that.

Tommy: 38:27 It was amazing. Cheney came over, Rumsfeld came over because they had heard about it, and they came over to see this thing. Has the whole world around in this huge room so that we could see anything and everything. It was an amazing thing, but right in the center, I had it labeled "Center of the Universe," Elroy. The center in the emergency center, they named it after me. It's still there in the Humphrey Building, but Elroy's gone.

Tod: 38:59 Oh no.

Tommy: 39:02 Somebody took [crosstalk 00:39:02]. All the time I was there, Elroy was the center of the universe.

Tod: 39:08 Well Elroy will always be the center of your universe-

Tommy: 39:10 Yeah.

Tod: 39:10 And we really, really appreciate you spending the time in talking to us on the podcast today.

Tommy: 39:14 Well thank you. It was wonderful.

Tod: 39:15 Thank you.

Tommy: 39:16 You guys are great.

Mike: 39:17 Thank you both.

Tod: 39:17 Thank you.

Doug: 39:18 [inaudible 00:39:18].

Intro: 39:19 Thanks for listening to the Thank You 72 podcast. For more interviews with amazing UW alumni, visit thankyou72.org. That's thanksyou72.org.