



# HPI's All-Political Hoops All-Stars

*Basketball stardom in the Hoosier state rarely translates to political power*

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

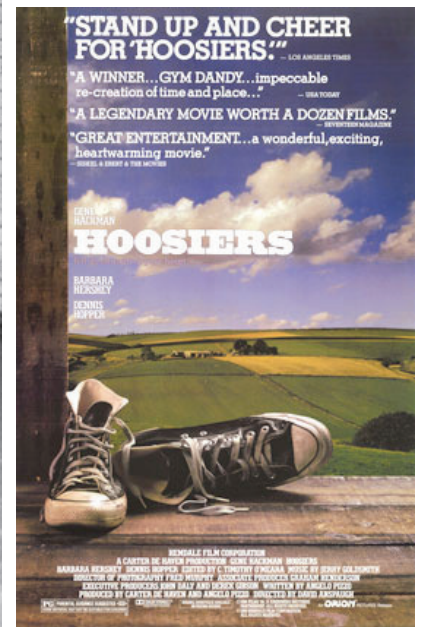
NASHVILLE, Ind. - Basketball season is upon us and hope abounds. Purdue is ranked No. 7 in the nation. Butler's Bulldogs are 10th. Things are looking up for the Hoosiers in Bloomington. The Final Four returns to Indianapolis next March. And the Peru Tigers are returning to historic TigArena for the first time in a generation.

So in the spirit of Indiana's passion, I thought it was time to compile the first HPI All-Politics Basketball All-Stars (not to be confused with the annual HPI "Power 50" published in January).

Two events prompted me to put together this list. First, U.S. Reps. Baron Hill and Brad Ellsworth played a pickup game with President Obama earlier this fall. Then, a few



DePauw Tiger (and future congressman) Lee Hamilton led Evansville Central to the state title game, won the Trester Award, but had to accept the award in the locker room during an injury. (DePauw University Photo)



See Page 4

# Sarah, Oprah & me

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

ELKHART - I watched Sarah on Oprah the other day. The ex-governor of Alaska didn't come off as bad as I thought she would, me being one of those "lamestream media" types.

Actually, I found Gov. Sarah Palin before most Americans did. When there was rampant speculation on whether Barack Obama would put Hillary Clinton on the Democratic ticket, I wondered: Is there a Republican woman ready for a national ticket?

Sadly, the names within the Big Tent Grand Old Party were sparse on the gender front. There was Sen. Kay



**"This is not good public policy. It is good politics."**

- SEN. VI SIMPSON, on the property tax caps legislation that will come up during the 2010 Indiana General Assembly





## HOWEY POLITICS INDIANA

is a nonpartisan newsletter based in Indianapolis and published by NewsLink Inc. It was founded in 1994 in Fort Wayne.

**Brian A. Howey, publisher**  
**Mark Schoeff Jr., Washington**  
**Jack E. Howey, Editor**  
**Beverly Phillips, Associate Editor**

### Subscriptions:

\$350 annually HPI via e-mail;  
\$550 annually HPI & HPI Daily  
Wire.

Call **317-627-6746**

### HOWEY POLITICS INDIANA

PO Box 40265  
Indianapolis, IN 46240-0265.

### Contact Us

**www.howeypolitics.com**

bhowey2@gmail.com

Howey's Mobile: 317-506-0883.

Indianapolis Fax: 317-254-0535.

Washington: 202-256-5822.

Business Office: 317-627-6746.

©2009, **HOWEY POLITICS**

**INDIANA.** All rights reserved.

Photocopying, Internet forwarding, faxing or reproducing in any form, in whole or part, is a violation of federal law without permission from the publisher.

Bailey Hutchison, former Gov. Christine Todd Whitman, or the two Maine senators, Olympia Snowe and Susan Collins, although they are those suspicious moderates.

Beyond that, not many Republican women came to mind.

But I remembered Gov. Palin; went to the State of Alaska website and found the Palin family. I liked what I saw: First Dude Todd Palin, a fisherfolk of the north slope. The governor was a reformer who took on the calcified Republican establishment there, and won! She is attractive. (Am I sexist for saying so?)

After watching Sarah on Oprah, I began to see all sorts of grays emerge for this Palin story. It has a Dan Quayle tinge to it. An obscure but talented politician is plucked out of the masses and immediately put on the Big Stage with the glare of the klieg lamps and a tormented, craving news media, pissed that they didn't get the scoop. The campaign handlers lose their grip and the nominee twists and twirls in the gale.

There were all those adoring fans, like the 24,000 Hoosiers who showed up during rush hour at Verizon Music Center, or the male Hoosier Republican delegate who quickly anointed Sarah "one hot chick" at the national convention.

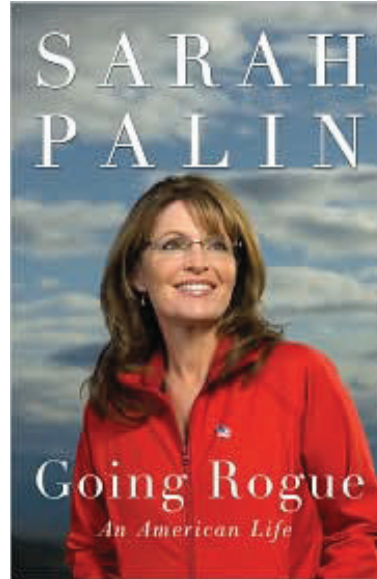
**That was not what** the Lugar Series on Public Excellence had in mind. If the Republican Party wants to regain enduring power, it needs to not only expand the Big Tent into regions of America (like New England) but also into demographics. It needs more women in statehouses and Con-

gress. I don't believe Hoosiers have ever sent a female Republican to Congress. The Republicans need to take note of the Indiana Senate, where some half dozen female senators have ascended into leadership.

### What we're seeing this

week - including today in Fort Wayne and Noblesville - is a Republican love affair with the ceiling shatterer. They love Sarah Palin. I can see why. When she talks of learning her child Trig had that "extra chromosome" as she told Oprah, she asked, "Why us?" Todd replied, "Why not us?"

As the step-dad to a lovely autistic 9-year-old, the sequence hit a deeper spot within me than the torrent of Palin fan lust and media feeding frenzy. She talked



about her grandson's father - Levi - who had just finished his photo shoot with Playgirl Magazine in New York. This is the full thrust of the Palin tabloid glare. But Sarah Palin left the family door open for teenage Baby-Daddy Levi (or is it Ricky Hollywood?), even if Oprah had to coax her into inviting him over for Thanksgiving dinner.

**She talked about** the infamous Katie Couric interviews. It was those disastrous sessions (along with the infamous turkey decapitation presser after the election) that gave me great concern that someone this unsophisticated could have become a heartbeat away from a presidency that would have to deal with two vicious wars, the Wall Street meltdown, the auto industry collapse, and the Great Recession of 2009 that pushed the jobless rate up to 10 percent (some statistics say it's more like 17 percent).

Yet, on Oprah, Sarah Palin talked about Couric as "the perky one" who didn't just get an hour or so with the veep nominee. According to the



ex-governor, Katie kept popping up in some four different interviews. And the governor was saying things the McCain campaign handlers cringed at because she was out of the loop. According to Palin, the worst moments of someone in the deer-in-the-headlamp mode got stitched together in several 2 minute packages on the CBS Evening News.

This has that Jim Baker handling Dan Quayle greek tragedy written all over it. The McCain campaign had wrapped up the nomination essentially in February 2008 and then it wasted time, money and ultimately the vice presidential nomination luster. And it wasn't Sarah Palin's fault. She simply got swept up in the whirlwind.

**Now her book, "Going Rogue,"** which seems to be more intent on settling scores as opposed to pondering the great dilemmas of the day and providing great thoughts and enduring solutions, has hit the stands. It will be No. 1 on the New York Times best seller list. Why didn't Sarah just tell Katie that she reads Newsweek, the Weekly Standard, Rolling Stone and the New York Times?

Today, Hoosiers will adore Sarah Palin. They will stand in long lines outside bookstores and extra cops will have to come in to keep the crowds orderly. Lots of TV cameras will show up. She will get lots of publicity and there will be rampant speculation that she will run for president (even though she told Oprah the thought hadn't

crossed her mind).

**She is a political celebrity.** But she is not presidential material, even though William Kristol thinks she is. Kristol, a former aide to Vice President Quayle, explained, "I don't think it is foolish for Palin to think, 'You know what, if that's the world we live in now where people don't value — maybe correctly — years of experience in Washington, or two terms counts more than two and half years as governor of Alaska.' Maybe she thinks she gets out there and becomes a leader of the conservative movement, and then a leader of the Republican Party, and then conceivably a nominee of the Republican Party, and then conceivably a president just as Obama did."

Say what? If he really, truly thinks this - particularly after the Sarah-inspired debacle in New York 23, which contributed to the razor thin health care vote in the House - then Bill Kristol should come and run the Sarah Palin presidential campaign.

**As for Sarah and me,** I still can't erase the great unease with the thought that she came perhaps one quote ("the fundamentals of the American economy are sound") away from the heartbeat away.

But after watching Oprah, I found a real, compassionate woman. I hope the Republican Party brings us even more. ❖

## Daniels GOP speech reignites '12 speculation

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

CARMEL - Gov. Mitch Daniels speech to Indiana Republicans Monday night has reignited speculation that he has his eyes on the White House, something the governor has consistently denied.

Friends of the governor have told HPI that while 2012 is still off the drawing board, they wouldn't rule out 2016. But even that notion seemed to take a hit Monday when Daniels said, "I want to close with just a few thoughts that fall outside our borders. Because around America tonight people are noticing Indiana. When I get down to Texas tomorrow, people will have questions. They're writing about us in the press as Murray (Clark) made mention. I'm personally getting some very strange phone calls, emails, and letters these days."

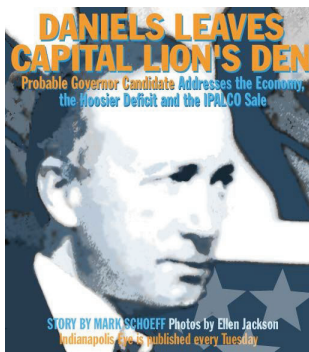
**Daniels said some callers** are concerned because their own states are in a wreck. Others are tired of losing. "They want to know, how is it you approach your

fellow citizens in a way that seems to work even in years when things are going against our party?" Daniels said.

**This kicked off speculation** of a preordained "Draft Mitch" movement, similar to the one that began as a whisper campaign in 2002, reaching a crescendo in 2003 and finally the candidacy.

Then came the crux of his remarks. "Many of them are alarmed at the direction of our nation and they're right to be. I am too," Daniels said. "To the very great surprise of many Americans we are facing now a radical program. An extreme program that Americans did not vote for. Around America right now a lot of people are saying, 'Who signed me up for that? I don't recall signing up for a takeover of the housing industry, the banking industry, the insurance industry, or the student loan industry.' People say, 'I didn't understand my government was going to go into the automobile industry. Let alone it was going to steal money from the retired teachers and government workers of

Indiana in order to pay for it.' And right now people are asking, 'Did I really sign up to see 17 or 18% of the American economy that is now wrapped up in health care taken over by the federal government? Did I really sign up to have utility rates double in Indiana, to undo





so much of the economic progress we've made in pursuit of nothing? In pursuit of no environmental improvement through a Cap-and-Trade bill so called that by its own computer models will not budge the world thermometer. Will not save one polar bear. But will enrich undeserving states on the coast at the expense of Hoosiers. I didn't sign up for that."

**Daniels then turned to President Obama.** "If you watch the trajectory, the statements, the votes of our new president, you knew that he sincerely believes these things. I have been surprised, and I'm saddened to see all this abetted by some members of Indiana's congressional delegation, who have voted in recent days for some of the worst of this. Jackie, you can't get there in time. You can't get there too soon." That was an aside to State Rep. Jackie Walorski, who will challenge U.S. Rep. Joe Donnelly, one of three Blue Dog Democrats in the state who voted for the recent health care reforms in the House.

"I mean, the pose is over," Daniels said. "I don't know what color these dogs are, but friends, it ain't blue, I'll tell you that right now."

Finally, Daniels spoke to the point that many see as a potential entry into national politics. "So people around America are looking for a different model," Daniels said. "So our first concern is, and always will be, the good people of this state. The struggling people of this state, and especially the young people of this state toward whom we've always aimed everything we did. America may be determined, or some people, to hand over to the next generation an unsustainable set of bills and unaffordable debt. And entitlement programs that plunder the young to benefit those of us who are older. I hope we can turn away from that while there's time."

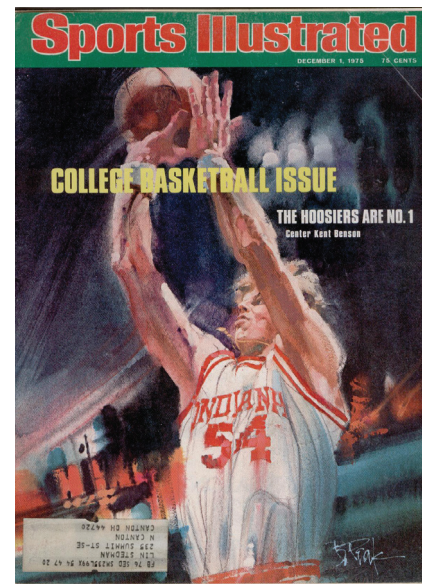
The governor then told a story. "In the book 'Lee's Lieutenants,' the classic study of Civil War generals under Robert E. Lee, there's a great line. It's about Gen. Beauregard, whose best battles were his first ones. Bull Run. Early days of the war. Then he gets cautious. Then he gets timid. Then he's always looking at the newspapers to see how it's all playing. Freeman, the author, says, 'A soldier is on the wane from the moment he begins to think more of reputation than opportunity.'"

**The questions Daniels subsequently** asked will bring more questions about himself. "A soldier is on the wane from the moment he begins to think more of reputation than opportunity. He meant if you start thinking more about yourself than the people you're there to serve, the cause you're there to serve, if you start worrying more about how it'll look, how it'll play, than about what's the next challenge? What's the next hill? What's the next battle? What am I going to do for the benefit of the cause I'm a part of? Then you're not the soldier you used to be. You're not the soldier you ought to be." ❖

## All Stars, from page 1

weeks later, I was at a gathering of Indiana House Republican candidates and there sat Bob Heaton and Kyle Hupfer, both of whom led their college teams to a title game.

I started to ponder the link between athletic prowess and how it transfers to political power. I came up with a list of 10 players and one fabled coach who entered the political arena. For some, like Bobby Cantrell, it provided a career as a kingmaker, and a hard downfall. For Kent Benson, the fame ignited some initial curiosity when he turned to politics, but it wasn't enough to propel him into the realm of credibility. At Benson's campaign kickoff



**IU's Kent Benson was a Mr. Basketball and NCAA All American, but he didn't last long in the political arena.**

outside the NCAA headquarters, he read his scripted speech as Jim Bopp stood nearby. I remember telling Bopp, "He can't be reading his stump speeches." The Benson candidacy didn't last long.

Others, like junior high school, turned Mr. Basketball, turned IU star Damon Bailey - who rose to national fame in John Feinstein's book "Season on the Brink" - have been courted by political parties. Bailey, now a Bedford businessman, has resisted thus far. So he's not on this list. If Damon ever runs, he'd be our 11th man.

For others, like congressmen Baron Hill and Lee Hamilton, it was an entry into the public mindset - high school basketball star goes to Congress - and eventually a small line on the resume. Neither Hill nor Hamilton boast about their athletic careers, though it's sometimes mentioned at political appearances, usually by others. Occasionally you might hear them use an anecdote from their playing days to make a political point. Hill has one picture from his Seymour HS days on his congressional website.

I also realize that in the more than a century of Indiana's love affair with basketball, there were other stars or players who moved into city hall, the county courthouse or even Congress. If you know of any others, let me know.

This list, however, appears to be the cream of the



crop from the "modern era" (1950 forward). So, here's HPI Political Basketball All-Stars, listed in alphabetical order:

**Kent Benson, secretary of state candidate:**

Benson's past flirtation with politics was brief. He entered the 2002 secretary of state race as a Republican and then dropped out shortly thereafter. He was the No. 1 NBA draft pick for the Milwaukee Bucks after a sensational career at IU, where he was an All-American and led the team to the 1976 national title. Benson scored 25 points in the final game victory over Michigan and was named the Final Four's outstanding player. Benson was a consensus All-American pick that year, and the next, winning the Big Ten's Most Valuable Player Award. He scored 1,740 points. He starred at New Castle HS and was the 1973 Mr. Basketball. In his first NBA game, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar cold-cocked him, breaking Benson's jaw and Jabbar's fist.

**Ron Bonham, Delaware County commissioner:**

Bonham was a Democratic two-term commissioner and superintendent of a local reservoir. He was a member of two NBA title-winning Boston Celtics teams and played on the first edition of the Indiana Pacers. Bonham was a two-time, first-team all-stater at Muncie Central and graduated in 1960 as the all-time leading Bearcats scorer with 2,023 points and a Mr. Basketball title. Bonham helped the University of Cincinnati to one national championship, and the runner-up spot the next season (losing to Bobby Knight's Ohio State), and was a first team All-American as a junior, second team as a senior. He is a member of the Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame.

**Bobby Cantrell, Lake County political kingmaker:**

Cantrell became the man behind the curtain of Lake County politics until he was convicted on corruption charges earlier this year and is now



From top, Larry Bird and Bob Heaton (right) at ISU; Baron Hill at Seymour HS; and Kyle Hupfer at Manchester College where he played for Coach Steve Alford.

in prison. Cantrell played with the 1960 East Chicago Washington state championship team for Hall of Fame Coach John Baratto, winning the Arthur L. Trester Award. He was a three-year starting guard for the University of Michigan, playing for Hall of Fame Coach David Strack, and captained the 1964 Big Ten champs. He coached at East Chicago Washington from 1965 to 1968 before diving into Lake County's rough and tumble politics. Cantrell is in the Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame.

**Lee Hamilton, U.S. House, 911 Commission:**

The congressional Democratic legend began his public career as a basketball legend. Hamilton was a two-year starter for Evansville Central HS and as an All-Stater led his team to the 1948 Final Four. He scored 16 points in an afternoon victory, but a fourth-quarter leg injury knocked him out of championship game, according to the Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame, where he is enshrined. He was named Trester Award winner, but his injury was so severe that the presentation was made in the locker room. Hamilton went on to be a four-year starter at DePauw, graduating in 1952. He was elected to Congress in 1964.

**Bob Heaton, Indiana House candidate:**

He was a Clay City HS basketball star who played at the University of Denver and then transferred to Indiana State, where he played on the 33-1 NCAA runner-up with Larry Bird in 1979. His left-handed shot with time expiring gave ISU a 73-71 upset victory over Arkansas that sent ISU to its first NCAA finals and paved the way for the classic Bird vs. Magic Johnson showdown against Michigan State. Heaton challenged and lost to State Rep. Vern Tinchler in 2008 and is trying again this cycle.

**Baron Hill, U.S. House:**

Hill was a three-sport star at Seymour High School, where he was all-state in football and basketball and set records in track. He attended Furman University in South Carolina. He was inducted into the Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame in 2000. He was the leading scorer in Seymour history, 1,724 points, first team all-state and fifth team Parade



All-American. Hill was elected to Congress in 1998 (as well as the Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame) and has served all but one term since then. Hill is a potential 2012 Democratic gubernatorial candidate.

**Kyle Hupfer, candidate for Indiana House:** Hupfer is challenging State Rep. Scott Reske. He served two years as commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources under Gov. Daniels. He was a Pendleton HS basketball star who went on to Manchester College, where he played under Coach Steve Alford. That team advanced to the NCAA Division III national championship game, where it fell to Wisconsin-Platteville, 69-55. Hupfer was named to the all-tournament team as Manchester finished 31-1.

**Drake Morris, Indiana House candidate:** He was the eighth leading scorer during the single class era at East Chicago Washington HS, graduating in 1977. He then starred for Purdue on the Final Four team that played at Market Square Arena in 1980. Morris scored 20 for Purdue as the Boilers upset Indiana 76-69 in the only meeting between the two schools in the NCAA Tournament. Morris challenged State Rep. Earl Harris in the 2008 Democratic primary, losing by about 2,800 votes.

**Frank O'Bannon, governor, Indiana Senate:** The Corydon HS star played one year for Indiana University on the team that included the first Big 10 black basketball player, Bill Garrett. The Democrat went on to follow his father into the Indiana Senate and then served as lieutenant governor under Evan Bayh (a dedicated pickup hoops player himself) and then governor. HPI never witnessed O'Bannon on the court, but a campaign TV ad had him drilling a three-pointer.

**Rod Roberson, Elkhart City Council:** Roberson, a Democrat, is an Elkhart Central HS grad who played at Northwestern University, once scoring 21 points to upset No. 4 ranked Michigan in 1981. He scored more than 1,300 points at NU. He has served as president of the Elkhart City Council, but his latest b-ball fame came when he shot hoops with candidate Barack Obama at Riverview Elementary School a few days before the 2008 presidential primary. Obama campaign manager David Plouffe told HPI the photos of Obama at Riverview were some of the best



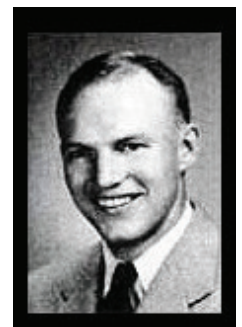
Coach Marvin Wood (center, top) with the 1954 Milan Indians state champs. Below, Reps. Hill and Ellsworth join President Obama for a pickup game at the White House. (White House Photo)



taken during the campaign. It's worth noting that Obama is probably the most basketball-obsessed president.

### Coach

**Marvin Wood, Indiana House candidate:** Wood ran against State Rep. Craig Fry in the late 1980s and lost. He had moved to Mishawaka, where he coached the girls basketball team. During the campaign, he was diagnosed with cancer. He was a friendly, magnificent person when I covered his campaign. Wood played for Morristown HS and then Butler's Bulldogs. But his 22-year coaching career was highlighted by the fabled 1954 performance of his Milan Indians team that struck a blow for small schools everywhere by beating mighty Muncie Central for the state title. Wood inspired the Gene Hackman character in the movie "Hoosiers," considered one of the best sports movies ever by experts and readers of ESPN. ❖





## The hurricane flags are up at the Statehouse

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - Listening to legislative leaders, Indiana Chamber and Fiscal Policy Institute prognosticators earlier this week, you'd think Hurricane Mitch was careening across the state's bureaucracies, funds and the legislative chambers.

Hurricane Mitch was the 1998 category 5 storm that formed in the Caribbean Sea, dumped historic amounts of rain (up to 75 inches) in Honduras, re-formed and eventually ended up in Florida as a strong tropical storm.



It killed up to 18,000 people. At one point it was called a "storm with malice" as it unpredictably wound across the tropics.

In Indiana Statehouse parlance, the "perfect storm" is an oft-used phrase when the economy intersects with the workforce and, ultimately, impacts the budget. Throw on top of that the 2010 elections along with the Tea Party movement drawing large crowds across the state and you have a script that could defy conventional wisdom. There are signs that the "Hurricane Mitch" likely to blow into the Indiana General Assembly in January could be the milder version. Or it could be a terror, with the 33 Department of Administration layoffs late last week serving only as a precursor to what might be in the offing.

Revenues are already off \$310 million in the early part of the biennium. A trending chart provided by Chamber Vice President Cam Carter at Monday's legislative preview shows a worst case scenario of close to a billion dollar shortfall "assuming we have no acceleration in the deterioration or uplift. It's just a hair's breadth under a billion dollars by June of next year."

"It will certainly have an impact on the debate in the Indiana General Assembly," Carter said.

But there are signs suggesting a recovery. Moody's Economy.com lists Indiana as one of 11 states that are in recovery. It determines where a state is in the recession based on employment rates, home prices, residential construction and manufacturing production figures. Some or all of these indicators are stable or improving in these

states. IU's Kelley School of Business is predicting 3 percent growth, though with a largely "jobless" recovery. But there are signs of life in the RV belt, with Heartland RV joining several other firms this week in announcing 400 coming new jobs.

Legislative leaders are girding for the worst. "Any spending bill is dead on arrival," said Senate President Pro Tempore David Long. "We're going to clamp down as hard as we can and weather the storm."

The Indiana Fiscal Policy Institute characterized the state's fiscal status in terms of a "hurricane." IFPI Director John Ketzenberger explained, "While Indiana has weathered the recession so far, there is no end in sight. The decisions only get tougher for policy makers." He suggested legislators "stay out of the way" as Gov. Daniels tries to

stanch the hemorrhaging situation.

Legislators "will have to face some very difficult choices going forward in this coming session," said Ketzenberger. "As much as nobody around here wants to talk about it, the state may have to consider increasing revenue, which means a tax increase of some sort." He suggested a tax on services could generate in excess of \$2.3 billion.

Bauer and Long agreed to hold December hearings on seven pieces of legislation they deemed important, including Bauer's ethics package (HB1001), the Unemployment Insurance Trust (SB23), the tax caps (SJR1), a bill requiring 80 percent of any public works project to employ Hoosiers (HB1002), an anti-FSSA privatization bill (HB1003), and capping assessments (HB1004).

But just about every legislative leader has taken tax hikes off the table, including the \$300 million Unemployment Insurance trust tax passed last April.

## Unemployment Insurance

The UI Trust is an area where the legislature could do the opposite of what Ketzenberger suggests. Senate Republicans are calling for a delay in instituting the program, saying the \$300 million in annual tax increases on businesses could cost the state jobs. House Minority Leader Brian Bosma said he agrees with Long on the need to delay the program, saying there will likely be a federal bailout. On Tuesday, Long promised to "fast track" that legislation.

It's an interesting twist on who favors what fed-





eral bailout. Republicans (like Gov. Daniels) have been harshly critical of the government bailout of General Motors and Chrysler, calling it the "biggest political payoff in history," but less so of the \$780 billion federal bailout of Wall Street that included firms that almost collapsed a decade ago.

Long acknowledged that instead of the legislation hammered out last year bringing the state to solvency in four years, it would be more like a decade. He noted that 40 other states are in the red and suggested that the government could forgive the states on that bailout or treat it as an interest free loan.

Speaker B. Patrick Bauer was critical of the state rejecting \$140 million by not adopting federal standards on sexual harassment.

Senate Minority Leader Vi Simpson warned that the downside to a delay is that the bill will run up to \$1 billion by the end of this fiscal year and \$3 billion by the end of 2010. That could be disastrous if there is no federal bailout.

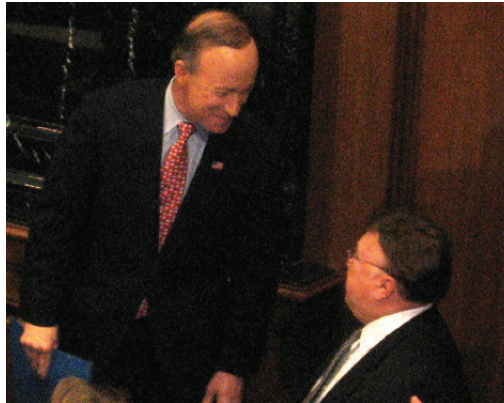
## Property tax caps

The property tax caps, too, will play a huge role. Just about everyone acknowledges the popularity of the caps. Sen. Simpson said, "If it comes up, it will pass. It will pass in my caucus. It will pass in referendum."

Carter noted that if a vote on the caps is denied by Speaker Bauer, "populism will overrun the political consideration."

Bauer will certainly exact some price for the caps. On Monday, he was quoting the late pop singer Michael Jackson. "If you're 1-2-3 for Michael Jackson, you've got to do A-B-C. 'A' stands for assessment. Assessment is out of control. Let's make it a song we all love." Long shared his concern on Tuesday. "While you can be for tax caps, you can also be for improving the assessing or tightening scrutiny, or whatever is going to require us to make sure that the long-term objective, fair assessing standards, are in place across the board," he said.

Republican leaders see more than political populism if the caps are denied. Long said denying an election vote on the constitutional amendment "will open the door to a constitutional challenge. The chaos that would ensue would be a disaster." House Democrats do not appear to be monolithic in allowing Bauer to stonewall that vote. "I'm in favor of it," said State Rep. Dave Cheatham, D-North Vernon. "I voted for it last time and will vote it for it again. I think it's a real good chance it will pass. I'll say it's almost certain, but you never know for sure around here."



Long said the caps are the key to government reforms, mostly at the local level. "Local governments are holding back on changes because they are waiting to see what we do," he said. Bosma called the caps a "catalyst for local government reform," for once the caps are placed in the constitution "they will set off a wave of consolidations."

But Bauer said "the catalyst to reform is to get it right" and the growing assessments are evidence that the caps are wrong.

## Kernan-Shepard

This issue showed some diversity between Republicans Long and Bosma. "If we do take steps on Kernan-Shepard, they will be small," Long said. He uses township trustees as an example. Long believes that heavily populated urban townships like Wayne in Fort Wayne and Center in Indianapolis are redundant government, calling them "duplicative and expensive."

Long mentioned that he tends to favor one county commissioner instead of the current three. But, he said, in smaller counties like Blackford, folks in the rural area fear that one commissioner would likely come from Hartford City and dominate county decision-making. In Blackford County, township trustees are more effective than in urban areas, he said.

Bosma, too, predicted "small strides" on Kernan-Shepard, but said there are plenty of areas where House Republicans will support change. He mentioned anti-nepotism, preventing municipal employees from serving on councils and boards that fashion budgets, and the consolidation of township government. On that front, he said Republicans supported legislation that did away with township boards (and some 5,000 of the 11,000 locally elected officials) but would keep the trustee, with the county councils approving budgets and ensuring reporting requirements.

Gov. Daniels has yet to articulate what the administration will push for in 2010. Mark Lawrence, the Indiana Chamber's point man on Kernan-Shepard, told HPI on Wednesday that at least two major bills are being drafted. "The governor's staff is quietly floating it around with various legislators," Lawrence said.

Two Senate bills and one or two in the House will deal with similar concepts. Lawrence said the House bill "will be bipartisan" likely involving State Rep. Ed DeLaney. It will focus on township government transition regarding poor relief and other services. Another bill would deal with an optional single county executive replacing some of the three-person boards of commissioners, nepotism, school





board elections in the fall, and municipal elections in even numbered, non-presidential years.

**During the 2009 session,** Daniels and supporters like the Indiana Chamber and the Indiana Association of Realtors were blindsided by the Bartlett/Bauer circus. And other than a few town halls that featured the governor and former Gov. Joe Kernan, there was no media campaign to push the reforms.

The Democrats were critical of the reforms in 2009, though many reformers believe they allowed flawed bills to surface only to be voted down. Simpson, for instance, said she couldn't vote for legislation that exempted Lake and Marion counties, though those provisions were put in as

the proverbial "poison pills."

Bauer defended the almost comical actions of House Government Reform Committee Chairman John Bartlett, who killed all the reform legislation during a Keystone Cop committee hearing last February. He referred to the legislation as "the whole lump" and said "they would have been beaten on the floor 80-20."

**Bauer hinted at what** he might allow. "Everyone should have to pay for one police department, one fire department, one park department. If you live in the city, you pay for two. If you live in the county, you pay for one."

Simpson said that the "proper approach is incremental." ❖

## Sen. Simpson open to ed reform 'discussion'

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - Battle lines on controversial issues are mostly predictable at the Statehouse. But with seismic education reforms poised for hearing during the 2010 Indiana General Assembly, Senate Minority Leader Vi Simpson issued a cautionary warning that the game is changing.

Simpson told the Indiana Chamber's Legislative Preview Conference on Monday that while she has "long been a supporter of public education" there were "tough issues for Democrats, who have a long history of support for teachers."

"I think there's a turn in a different direction," Simpson said. "I look forward to that discussion."

On Nov. 3, Nate Schnellenberger of the Indiana State Teachers Association warned his membership that Gov. Mitch Daniels and Supt. Tony Bennett were intent in pushing dramatic change during the 2010 session. "After sitting through today's Roundtable meeting, I believe the groundwork is being laid for legislative efforts in the upcoming session of the General Assembly that will advance the same agenda that was shared at today's meeting," Schnellenberger said.

**These reforms included:** elimination of tenure and seniority, meaning that every teacher would only be issued a one-year license; evaluation of teachers by student test scores; pay based on those evaluations; school choice; teacher licensure retention tied to passing a test; allowing multiple and non-traditional paths to become a licensed



educator; and elimination of collective bargaining in Indiana.

**Earlier in the week, Bennett** said Indiana hoped to win \$225 million in President Obama's Race to the Top program. "Our reform efforts already under way closely mirror the pillars of Race to the Top, because they have been crafted with the goals of increasing accountability, freedom and competition in our schools to increase students' academic achievement," Bennett said.

Indiana DOE spokesman Cam Savage told the Associated Press, "We'll be very bold in what we propose. We'll have an aggressive program that really attempts to move the needle on student achievement."

Simpson asked rhetorically, "Do I agree with Supt. Bennett? No." She mentioned the efforts to lift professional licensing standards and added, "It's a profession."

However, Simpson appeared to be moved by President Obama's strategy that tends to mirror many of the Bennett arguments. "President Obama has opened the door to look at these issues in different ways," Simpson said. "It deserves to have the discussion. There may be new ways.

Democrats will be more open to these changes, not because of Tony Bennett, but Barack Obama. I think you'll be surprised at our willingness to have a discussion."

**Senate President David Long** acknowledged that Bennett "is an agent of change" and added, "Some believe that he's a bull in a china shop. We need one."

House Minority Leader Brian Bosma called Indiana's graduation rates and other education dilemmas "our state's most daunting challenge" saying that the status quo "has retarded our economy. It will be THE topic of 2010." Bosma said the education reforms "can't be small steps. It will be leaps and bounds." ❖



## Murphy to co-author ethics bills with Bauer

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - If there's a set of legislation that will get marquee billing next January through March, it's House Speaker B. Patrick Bauer's ethics package. It will likely get political billing as well now that State Rep. Mike Murphy has signed up as a co-author.

And that will bring a lot of free, contrasting earned media for the Indianapolis Republican challenging U.S. Rep. Dan Burton. "All public servants, be they in the legislative or executive branches, need to maintain the highest standards of ethics," Murphy said on Tuesday.



Murphy's campaign will certainly use this high road on ethics to contrast with Burton's various rounds on golf courses and use of taxpayer paid franked mail. It will also provide a contrast with former State Rep. Luke Messer, who left the legislature and became a lobbyist before establishing his own Shelbyville law practice.

Murphy has also signed on to the House GOP's Taxpayer Protection Plan unveiled on Tuesday that advocates passing the property tax caps, no new tax increases, and a clamp on spending.

### 5thCD: McVey proposes tax holiday

Brose McVey proposed the first element of a new Jobs 2020 economic growth plan today that he said he would pursue if elected to Congress next year.

The initial phase of McVey's plan: Calls on Congress to enact a six-month Payroll Tax Holiday; calls on Washington to cancel and suspend the remainder of the "stimulus" plan and use the unused funds from that program to pay for the payroll tax holiday, and; Recommends that payback to the federal government of bail-out funds by banks and financial institutions be sent to strengthen the beleaguered Social Security Trust Fund.

"A payroll tax holiday will reduce the cost of labor, put real cash in the pockets of every American worker within weeks, allow employers to keep more folks on their payrolls, and requires no bureaucracy to administer. It is the kind of economic injection we should have enacted six months or a year ago," said McVey.

"For the average Hoosier family earning \$50,000 per year, this tax holiday would put over \$1,900 in their pockets in the next six months, and it would do the same for their employers," said McVey. According to the Ameri-

can Community Survey from the U.S. Census Bureau, there were nearly 400,000 people employed in the Fifth District from 2006 to 2008.

### 5thCD: Nasser eyes Democratic nod

On a related 5th CD item, Dr. Nasser Hanna, an IU Medical Center oncologist, is signalling he will seek the Democratic nomination. Hanna is making the rounds in the district and will announce soon, according to Indiana Democratic Chairman Dan Parker.

### Politics of health care

Americans United for Change and AFSCME are coming to the defense of U.S. Reps. Baron Hill and Brad Ellsworth for their vote on the health care reforms that passed the House earlier this month.

A new TV ad in the Evansville, Terre Haute and Louisville media markets will spend \$115,000 and will attempt to counter ads from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the 60 Plus Association that began late last week.

Gerald McEntee, president of AFSCME, explained, "The health care crisis is dragging down our economy, yet all the insurance industry cares about is their profits. The House passed a strong bill that lowers costs, improves quality, covers more Americans and stops insurance company abuses."

"We will stand with the members who stood for real reform and the middle class against the powerful interests of the insurance companies," he added.

A television ad counter-offensive was launched yesterday backing Ellsworth (D-8) and Hill (D-9) who voted for the Affordable Health Care for America Act and now find themselves in the cross hairs of the special interests and the ads from the Chamber of Commerce and 60 Plus Association. Americans United for Change and AFSCME yesterday unveiled a response ad called "Not Happy," which will air for a week on a mix of broadcast and cable television in the Evansville, Terre Haute and Louisville media markets.

Tom McMahan, acting executive director of Americans United for Change, said, "We're not going to sit by and let these special interests push around Congressmen Baron Hill and Brad Ellsworth for ... voting for real health insurance reform that will guarantee all Hoosier families access to the quality and affordable health care they deserve."

The 60 Plus ad running against Hill says, "The House passed a 2,000-page health care bill that: cuts Medicare \$400 billion; raises taxes on small business, killing jobs, and makes insurance you have cost more."

"This bill adds hundreds of entitlements and only cuts one - Medicare," said Jim Martin, president of 60 Plus. "By voting 'yes' these Members betrayed seniors and the best interests of their district. I have a warning for Con-



gress. There is a senior citizen tsunami flooding toward the halls of Congress, unless it subsides, they can expect their offices to be flooded with angry voices."

The U.S. Chamber has spent \$2 million on its Indiana ad campaign against the House health care package.

### **U.S. Senate: Stutzman starts TV ads**

State Sen. Marlin Stutzman's U.S. Senate campaign has launched a new television message it says will reach over 1.1 million Hoosiers across the state. The spot, entitled "Empty Suit," draws attention to Senator Bayh and his weak check on government spending. "Senator Bayh is the definition of an 'empty suit.' Indiana's junior senator is a Washington Millionaire who has proven incapable of making tough decisions," Stutzman said. "Senator Bayh is simply more interested in the idea of being Senator and enjoying the lifestyle that comes with that than he is actually being a leader for the people of the Hoosier state. We have got to have a Senator who will balance President Obama's reckless spending. Senator Bayh is merely a bystander," Stutzman stated.

When asked about the release of an ad nearly a year from Election Day, Stutzman added, "Evan Bayh has forced the 2010 campaign on Hoosiers early. People across this state are concerned about the runaway spending and the lack of balance in Washington right now, and he's characteristically silent. I want Hoosiers who are concerned right now to know help is on the way."

### **8CD: Buschon critical of stimulus**

Republican candidate Dr. Larry Buschon reacted to ABC News reports that stimulus funding has taken place in congressional districts that don't exist. "The false and misleading stimulus figures are outrageous," said Buschon. "It demonstrates either dishonesty or incompetence, but neither scenario gives us much confidence in Congress. This is government bumbling at its worse."

### **2012 Governor: Ellsworth doing more JJs**

Rep. Brad Ellsworth continues to travel the state far beyond his southwestern Indiana district, stoking up more speculation that he is eyeing the 2012 gubernatorial race. Last week he toured the AM General plant in Mishawaka and spoke to the St. Joseph County Jefferson-Jackson Dinner. On Friday, Ellsworth will keynote the Jennings County JJ in the 9th CD.

### **HD17: Ellert to challenge Rep. Dembowski**

Informed and reliable Republican sources tell HPI that Francis Ellert of Plymouth will challenge State Rep. Nancy Dembowski in HD17 in 2010. Ellert is owner of the Coca-Cola distribution center in Plymouth.

### **HD21: Nappanee mayor won't run**

Nappanee Mayor Larry Thompson has no interest in running for State Rep. Jackie Walorski's seat in the Indiana General Assembly. If Walorski leaves to challenge U.S. Rep. Joe Donnelly in the 2ndCD, that is. "I'm staying home and taking care of things in Nappanee," Thompson told the Elkhart Truth on Wednesday.

The fourth-term mayor said he's recently been contacted by several people and organizations, asking if he's mulling a run for higher office. The inquiries made by individuals, Thompson said, seem to be from people interested in the seat themselves. Walorski, R-Elkhart, has formed a committee to explore the viability of her candidacy against the two-term incumbent Donnelly, a Democrat. The thought of a new campaign wasn't one he'd considered much, he said. Given the economic struggles of the city, he said, now would not be the time to leave Nappanee. "I'm very content," said Thompson, up for re-election in 2011. "I've got the best political job there is."

The uncertainty of the redistricting process that will occur after the 2010 Census is another reason to avoid a campaign, Thompson said. He's just a "stone's throw" into Walorski's current district, he said, and what district he will fall in for the 2012 election is anyone's guess. Walorski's HD21 covers part of the southern half of St. Joseph and Elkhart counties, including sections of Mishawaka, Elkhart, Nappanee, Jimtown and Wakarusa.

### **HD46: Heaton will announce in January**

Republican Bob Heaton tells HPI that he will likely wait until January to officially kick off his challenge to State Rep. Vern Tinchler.

### **SD46: Sipes retires; 3 candidates line up**

State Sen. Connie Sipes, D-New Albany, announced last Thursday at a Democratic dinner in New Albany that she will not seek a fourth term, ending a 14-year run next year. Floyd County Commissioner Charles "Chuck" Freiberger used the event to announce that he will run for the District 46 seat. Already, two Republicans – Jeffersonville City Councilman Ron Grooms and New Albany-Floyd County Schools Board member Lee Ann Wiseheart – have announced they will seek the seat. (Louisville Courier-Journal)

### **Rokita lauds movement on redistricting**

Indiana Secretary of State Todd Rokita likes what he's seeing in the Indiana General Assembly thus far. "I find it very promising that we now have representatives in both chambers expressing their commitments to redistricting reform," Rokita said Tuesday. "This tells me that they are hearing the message from Hoosiers that partisan redistricting is no longer acceptable." ❖



## Buyer has many questions to answer

By **DAVE KITCHELL**

LOGANSPORT - It came as no surprise when Jon Schwantes said on Indiana Week in Review earlier this month that a controversy will continue to follow Rep. Steve Buyer for a while.

In fact, it followed him right into the next week when CBS News pursued the story with a one-on-one interview with Buyer, R-Monticello.



What we know is this: A foundation set up via connections to Buyer, including an office in his campaign headquarters, collected more than \$800,000 for college scholarships. We know that Buyer has gone on record indicating he wanted to raise a large initial sum before awarding any scholarships. We know that more than \$100,000 has been spent from the

amount donated to his Frontier Foundation, yet none of it has been used for a scholarship.

First, in Buyer's defense, even Ben Franklin looked ahead, leaving a huge sum of money to accrue over time so that it would leave substantial assets to benefit his homeland in future decades. And there is a certain "let no good deed go unpunished" facet of this story that makes it sound as if Buyer simply was called on the carpet before he reached his goal.

But the fallout from this story is that there are more questions than answers about the foundation and where it is headed. One of the primary questions is how the fallout will affect Buyer politically. If he had hopes of succeeding Sen. Richard Lugar in the future, the scholarship foundation controversy could impede him from ever being seriously considered. It's hard to imagine Lugar handling something like Buyer's foundation in the same fashion.

Perhaps the other questions that concern people inside the Washington beltway more than in Indiana are "Isn't this just a front for donations from companies that receive favorable treatment from Buyer?" If so, point made, but that's the way business and legislation is transacted in this country, legal or not, like it or not.

Perhaps the greater questions back home in Indiana involve priority. When Buyer defeated the late Rep. Jim

Jontz of Monticello back in 1992, he defeated a congressman who turned down congressional pay raises and gave that money back to a 5th District scholarship fund. A board comprising representatives from the district awarded scholarships based on the funding. Buyer, however, didn't turn down pay raises. And he didn't continue the scholarship fund Jontz established.

**There are other priority questions**, such as who will benefit from future scholarships from the foundation? Will they be paybacks to volunteers and Republican voters? Will they be awarded based on need and not political connectedness? Will they be awarded in counties Buyer served both in the 5th and 4th Districts?

And why, in a state that lags behind the nation in college attainment for residents 25 and older, did Buyer not decide to award at least some scholarships by now to help struggling families?

If his own county was decimated by another tornado like the one that destroyed the county courthouse that once stood across from his Monticello office, would he want immediate federal aid and response? Yes.

If his own county was flooded along the Tippecanoe River, would he want immediate disaster assistance for his friends and neighbors? Yes.

If a major employer in his county such as Monon Trailer went out of business and left pensions hanging in the balance, would he act immediately to help those who needed it? Yes, and in fact, he did.

**The greatest question lying** before Buyer now

is how he exits from a mess that has drawn national attention all the way to MSNBC. His best course of action now may be to forget about connecting any golf courses to the foundation and dispersing foundation money raised to community foundations in each of the counties he has served – and walk away. It would preserve the original intent of his foundation, help the people who elected him and kept him in office and remove a stigma from a foundation that will be challenged to create any posi-



tives for him in the near future.

Sometimes the way money is raised for scholarships says more about stewardship than scholarship. ❖

**Kitchell is an award winning columnist based in Logansport.**

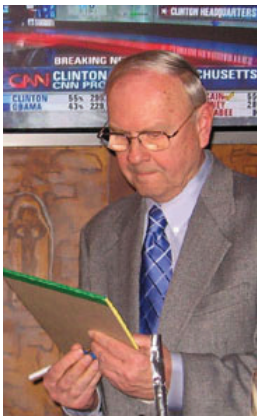


## Joe Kernan heads back to Hanoi

By JACK COLWELL

SOUTH BEND - Joe Kernan will fly into Hanoi in February.

Hasn't Joe flown into Hanoi before? "I have," the former governor says. "I flew into the neighborhood." Actually, Kernan floated by parachute, unconscious, into a city south of Hanoi after his Navy reconnaissance plane was shot down during the war in Vietnam. He was captured, beaten and taken for an extended stay in the infamous Hanoi Hilton.



Kernan anticipates a smoother landing and a friendlier greeting when he returns to Hanoi in February for his first visit there since he was held for nearly 11 months as a prisoner of war.

While Kernan long has wanted to return to Vietnam \_ and was ready as lieutenant governor

to lead a trade delegation there, until state legislative business forced cancellation \_ he just didn't find the right opportunity, until now. Kernan and his wife, Maggie, will be hosts for an "Innovative Immersions" travel tour organized by Mike Cloonan of Granger, who has been involved in trips to Vietnam in connection with the University of Notre Dame.

Tour stops will include the site where Kernan's plane was shot down and the preserved portion of the prison referred to by Americans held there, including Sen. John McCain, as the Hanoi Hilton.

**What does Kernan expect** his reaction to be as he walks into the portion of the prison now turned into a museum?

"Well, I don't know," he says. "It's been a long time."

His plane was shot down on May 7, 1972, and he was held prisoner until March 27, 1973.

Kernan isn't sure what he will recognize at the prison. "I understand some walls have been preserved. The site is preserved."

Most of the old Hoa Lo prison was torn down to make way for an upscale office and apartment complex. A museum has been established, with displays giving a portrayal of POW treatment that leaves out mention of harsh interrogation, torture and lousy living conditions.

"We were just taking pictures, minding our own

business," Kernan jokes of what he and the pilot were doing in the Navy reconnaissance plane that flew from the aircraft carrier Kitty Hawk in the Gulf of Tonkin to assess damage to an important bridge targeted in a bombing raid.

When the plane was hit, Kernan and the pilot ejected and both survived, though injured.

**Kernan regained consciousness** on the ground, surrounded by angry Vietnamese who treated him harshly.

But Kernan says he has no hatred toward North Vietnamese for what happened at a time of war. He explains:

"If somebody from somewhere else parachuted down in this country after 33 planes were dropping bombs on their neighborhood, what kind of reception would they get?"

Sure, he adds, "I didn't like some of them I met along the way."

For Maggie Kernan, too, the trip will bring back memories of when that Navy plane went down. They weren't married yet or even formally engaged, but friends figured they would wed when Joe returned from military service.

Joe's family received notification that his plane was down, but no word initially on whether he survived.

When later it was confirmed that he was a prisoner and some letters could be exchanged, Kernan wrote home: "Tell Riley and Magee to not wait for me to have their wedding."

"Magee," pronounced as "McGee," was a nickname for Maggie, and the coded message was that she shouldn't wait for him.

He didn't dare reveal he had a girlfriend back home named Maggie because such personal information was used in the rough interrogation.

The tour won't involve just reminders of war and POW life.

A Halong Bay cruise, a tour of sites in Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) and side trip to Cambodia to see Angkor Wat will be included.

**And Kernan says he will** be involved in efforts to promote trade with Northern Indiana.

There will be meals scheduled in restaurants in Vietnam, and Kernan has one strict requirement for the cuisine.

"There will be no pumpkin served on this tour," he declares. He has no lingering hatred for any Vietnamese, but he hates pumpkin. Won't eat it. Not after two meals a day of pumpkin soup at the Hanoi Hilton. ❖

**Colwell has covered Indiana politics over five decades for the South Bend Tribune.**



**Mary Matalin, CNN:** Though there is much, much more in Palin's book that fleshes out her inner core, her grounding in faith and family, as well as her policy achievements and forward-thinking philosophical framework of common sense conservatism, so far the coverage of it has constrained her in a defensive backward-focused box, re-litigating the darkest days of the campaign and reliving difficult family moments. Though all the breathless chatter about 2012 is premature, the way Palin lays out her world view throughout the book and especially in the eloquent closing pages is sure to attract conservatives yearning for an unapologetic articulation of first principles. But because of the inordinate mainstream media focus on the political insiders' tiff, the Political Palin is getting sucked down and mucked up by the Published Palin. Listening to her on Rush Limbaugh as I write, she is digging out of the box her detractors would like to bury her in for once and all and needs to keep on it: Get off their message and onto her own. Now, for a point of personal privilege. I have been and will continue to be an advocate of Sarah Palin and her principles. Had I been asked about how to use her publishing opportunity to maximum political benefit, I would have proffered to Palin the received wisdom of the unlikely duet of my mother and Lee Atwater: Never burn bridges. As campaign memoirs go, "Going Rogue" napalms bridges, incinerates detractors, hoses gas on what were smoldering embers. It is without refutation anywhere, even among rabid Palin haters, that she received political hazing of a magnitude previously unimaginable. More mother wisdom: Two wrongs don't make a right (to which my Obama-loving daughter always replies, "Yes, but three rights make a left"). There was a way to defend her honor, make her case, pivot to the future while showcasing her moral foundation by doing unto others as she wished they had done unto her, so to speak. ❖

**Gary Gerard, Warsaw Times-Union:** You may have noticed some advertisements in your Times-Union dealing with newspapers. The thrust of the advertising campaign is kind of a takeoff on that sage old Mark Twain quote: "The reports of my death have been greatly exaggerated." The campaign was developed by the Hoosier State Press Association to drive home the point that "Newspapers Still Deliver." Newspapers make most of their money by selling advertising. Our advertising representatives are always telling their clients that advertising is key to success. Ironically, newspapers traditionally have done a poor job of advertising themselves. It's as if we are scared or embarrassed to blow our own horns. Well, it might be time for a bit of a change in that regard and as self-serving as it sounds, "Newspapers Still Deliver" certainly rings true.



I think now, more than ever, is a good time to be informed. Lots of decisions you make will be influenced and affected by the stewards of your tax dollars. The decisions about whether to build more schools or hire more policemen or buy more fire trucks all have a direct and measurable effect on the amount of taxes you pay. During these troubled economic times, knowledge is power. And there simply is no better way to inform yourself of your local government's activities than through the eyes and ears of our reporters. But let's get back to Mark Twain for a moment. Everyone has heard about all the newspapers that have been filing for bankruptcy or closing down or cutting their days of publication. But if you look closely, it is mainly large newspapers in large markets that are having trouble. I believe that is mainly for two reasons - neither of which generally apply to small-market newspapers. First, most of them are highly leveraged - meaning they have a mountain of debt to service. Servicing that debt with a 16 or 18 percent profit margin was no problem. But when profit margins slipped to 8 or 9 percent, there were problems. Second, large market dailies have to cater to readers in a completely different way than small dailies do. Large dailies have to provide comprehensive coverage of local, national and world events. Small dailies don't. ❖

**Doug Ross, Times of Northwest Indiana:** When I drove across the state line Thursday, no border guards greeted me. The road didn't change colors, the landscape was unchanged, and the people spoke the same languages. The state line was physically invisible. Neither Lynwood nor Lansing nor Munster is the Emerald City. I don't think we're in Oz, Toto. That's a very welcome development. Also welcome are the increasing efforts to reach across the state line in cooperative efforts. Governors State University is among these groups. The university's Board of Trustees is eliminating the out-of-state tuition multiplier for Indiana students. "Students should have choices," GSU President Elaine Maimon told The Times editorial board this week. "They have good choices in Northwest Indiana, but now they can look across this thin border and particularly at Governors State." GSU has been working with Ivy Tech, in particular, to help students in career and technical programs further their education at GSU and receive bachelor's degrees. Maimon and the GSU board deserve credit for their efforts to erase that artificial boundary between the two states. Likewise, the South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association is carefully watching what goes on in Northwest Indiana. Economic development on either side of the state line helps communities and residents throughout the area. Nearly one-third of Porter County's labor force commutes to jobs outside the county. ❖



## **Bayh will vote to allow health bill floor debate**

WASHINGTON - Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid unveiled his \$848 billion health reform bill Wednesday to broad support from fellow Democrats - and the move quickly turned up the pressure on the last few wavering moderates to support the plan, which includes a sizable chunk of deficit cutting (Politico).



"If the bottom line is what it appears to be, that's an encouraging thing. But you've got to trust but verify," said Sen. Evan Bayh (D-Ind.), who said he would vote to allow debate.

Reid's plan would expand coverage to 94 percent of Americans through a government-run health insurance option - allowing states to opt out — and other features, all while reducing future federal deficits by \$130 billion over the next 10 years, according to a Congressional Budget Office report released late Wednesday.

"Tonight begins the last leg of this journey" to bring health reform to the nation, Reid said in announcing the bill. But Reid's plan contains considerable differences from House legislation passed earlier this month - with a more limited public option and different ways to pay for the bill. Reid included an excise tax on insurers who offer "Cadillac" health plans, not the "millionaire's tax" that's in the House bill. And one of the biggest differences between the bills - on language restricting federal funding for abortion - could prove problematic for Reid.

His bill doesn't include as many limits as the House bill and already is drawing fire from anti-abortion activists. Democrats on Wednesday were clearly hoping that the deficit figures - the biggest deficit reduction

of any health bill to date, Reid's office noted - would knock down one of the last remaining obstacles to winning the votes of key centrists, at least to go ahead with debate on the bill as early as this weekend. Reid's office said the bill could reduce the deficit by \$650 billion in its second 10 years.

And, in fact, the strategy seemed to be working. Nebraska Sen. Ben Nelson and Louisiana Sen. Mary Landrieu both sounded more positive about voting to allow debate to proceed. Nelson told reporters he still had problems with the public option plan - he prefers a plan that would allow states to opt in instead - but signaled he'd wage that fight on the floor. He also made clear the vote to allow debate wouldn't be the final fight on the bill. "There will be opportunities to amend the legislation, and if it is amended to the satisfaction of several people, then it will have enough votes to pass on the back end," Nelson said. "If not, it won't. That is the risk." One holdout appeared to be Sen. Blanche Lincoln of Arkansas, who faces a tough reelection fight next fall. On her way in to the briefing with Reid, Lincoln was asked how she will vote on the motion to proceed: "We'll wait and see," she said.

Rahm Emanuel, the White House chief of staff said Mr. Reid's bill was impressive (New York Times). It "meets the president's objectives, provides protection from insurance companies, contains true cost controls and extends coverage to working families," Mr. Emanuel said. "It's going to be a holy war," said Senator Orrin G. Hatch, Republican of Utah.

## **FSSA, Crouch critical of Riecken bill**

EVANSVILLE - A day after Democratic Rep. Gail Riecken of Evansville filed a bill to stop privatization in Indiana's human services agency, critics said the move was ill-considered political ploy that indicates

she has no interest in helping remedy her complaints (Bradner, Evansville Courier & Press). Riecken said Indiana's Family and Social Services Administration should have to prove, in legislative hearings that will take place in December, that private companies can do a better job than the state can. "What I've seen is that it doesn't meet the smell test," Riecken said. "It hasn't been efficient, and the quality of service has gone down the tubes. My feeling is that they need to justify what they're doing, and they need to tell me why it cannot be done within their own administration." But the agency said Wednesday that her bill would have devastating effects that reach far beyond her intended target, an effort to update the way Indiana determines who is eligible for food stamps and Medicaid. "She doesn't actually want to sit at the table to help solve the problems," said FSSA spokesman Marcus Barlow. "She's making an ideological stand, and that's unfortunate." Other Southwest Indiana lawmakers didn't see Riecken's move coming. "I guess I'm just really surprised, and I think the timing is somewhat suspicious," said Rep. Suzanne Crouch, R-Evansville. "We don't want to politicize the issue, And I think as legislators, we have to try and not micromanage other branches of government." Riecken faces what could be a tough 2010 re-election battle against Cheryl Musgrave, who previously headed the state Department of Local Government Finance under Daniels. Barlow said it is obvious Riecken's bill is about politics.

## **Palin cites 'lamestream media' on book tour**

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. - Former Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin smacked the "lamestream media" on Wednesday for allegedly distorting what she writes in her book (Politico). Speaking on Sean Hannity's radio show, Palin said that "some on the left, that lamestream media, they're



contradicting what I wrote in the book." Hannity jumped in to ask, "did you say lamestream media?" "Yeah, lamestream," Palin responded. "They are contradicting those facts that I laid out regarding what Reagan had to say. Anyways, it's been nonsense to hear some of the criticism of that principle there, and that is what history shows us is what Ronald Reagan did was put American back on the right path," she continued. "We need to emulate that. We need to repeat that instead of going back to the 1930s and think that some growth of government, New Deal spending is going to get us out of a recession," she said. "It is, of course, going to cause greater problems." Palin did not specify who she was accusing of distorting her view of Reagan's policies during her interview with Hannity. Arriving at a bookstore in Grand Rapids, Mich. on Wednesday to kick off her book tour, Palin encouraged the crowd to "read truth" in her book.

## **Thousands line up to see Palin today**

FORT WAYNE - Hundreds of people lined up before dawn for a chance to meet former vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin and have her autograph her new book in Fort Wayne and Noblesville this morning. Palin is not scheduled to be at a Noblesville bookstore before 7 p.m., but her excited fans ventured into the morning cold to show their support. "She is a rising star in the Republican, conservative party, and she's new, she's refreshing, she talks about common things, and things I'm interested in," Joy Tindall, told WTHR (Channel 13). The Borders bookstore at Noblesville's Hamilton Town Center is bracing for a barrage of Sarah Palin fans today. The former vice presidential candidate will sign copies of her new book, "Going Rogue," from 6 to 9 p.m. at the bookstore, 13145 Levinson Lane, off I-69 Exit 10. General Manager Marty Beck expects 2,000 to 3,000 people to show up to see Palin.

Noblesville police will be at the mall to help direct traffic, and Borders enlisted extra security for today's event.

## **Lake Council, sheriff in budget showdown**

CROWN POINT - A special meeting of the Lake County Council next week could turn into a showdown between the seven-member board and Sheriff Rogelio "Roy" Dominguez over \$1.6 million in 2010 spending cuts the board is demanding he make (Dolan, Times of Northwest Indiana). The sheriff said he already has proposed nearly \$8 million in budget reductions. However, the County Council has rejected the majority of the sheriff's plan, which includes breaking a labor contract with county police and corrections officers to freeze scheduled salary increases and reduce overtime pay. The council said other measures in the sheriff's plan involve cuts and revenue increases the council already assumed while creating next year's budget.

## **Mary Kay Orr dies**

INDIANAPOLIS - Gov. Robert D. Orr's widow, Mary Kay Davis Orr, passed away Sunday - the governor's birthday - after a battle with cancer. Visitation will be from 1 to 5 p.m. Sunday at Crown Hill Funeral Home. Funderal services will be 2 p.m. Monday at Crown Hill Funeral Home and Cemetery.

## **Obama family home up for preservation**

KEMPTON - The owner of the rural Tipton County house that is accredited as once belonging to President Barack Obama's ancestors wants to turn the property into a nonprofit organization, even if that means moving out of his home (Kokomo Tribune). Shawn Clements, who owns the Dunham House in Kempton, told about a dozen Tipton County Chamber of

Commerce members at a luncheon Wednesday he would be willing to turn the keys and deed to the house over if that meant its history would be preserved. "It belongs to history. It doesn't belong to me," said Clements, who is a professional historical preservationist.

## **Indiana gets \$4M to aid auto workers**

WASHINGTON - Indiana has won a \$4 million federal grant to lead an effort with Michigan and Ohio to help laid-off autoworkers find jobs in the renewable-energy industry and related occupations (Indianapolis Star). The U.S. Department of Labor awarded the grant Wednesday to the Indiana Department of Workforce Development as part of \$55 million in green jobs grants announced nationwide. The Indiana agency will work on the joint effort with the Michigan Department of Energy, Labor and Economic Growth and the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services.

## **Charlene Lugar arrested on DUI**

WASHINGTON - Indiana Sen. Richard Lugar's wife was arrested Wednesday evening on a drunken-driving charge, Lugar's office said today (Indianapolis Star). Charlene Lugar's vehicle collided with an unattended car in the suburban Virginia neighborhood where the Lugars live, according to a statement released by Lugar's office. No one was injured. "We are deeply sorry and embarrassed that this accident has occurred," Sen. Lugar said. Charlene Lugar is scheduled to appear in court in January.

