



# Probe and reform, say state chairs

### Holcomb, Parker want investigation, say reforms may follow

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS — Indiana’s two major political party chairs have called for investigations into the apparent 2008 presidential ballot qualifying petitions, and both are open to possible reforms in the process.

And in reaction last Sunday’s Howey Politics Indiana and South Bend Tribune expose, the St. Joseph County Republican chairman is calling for the resignation of Democratic Chairman Butch Morgan.

“This does not surprise me,” said Deb Fleming, the GOP chair, to 95.3MNC, a news radio station. “Rumors of this type of activity occurring in St. Joseph County have been around for a long time. What does surprise me is that it has taken this long for anyone to bring it to the forefront. It is sad that the Democrat Party in St. Joseph County under the leadership of Butch Morgan thinks it can circumvent the rules and consequently do the people of this community a horrible disservice by allowing,



St. Joseph County Democratic Chairman Butch Morgan is also the 2nd CD chair and finds himself in the crosshairs of a county and possible a federal probe into 2008 presidential ballot petition forgeries. (HPI Photo by Brian A. Howey)

at the best, laziness, and at worst, political corruption. “In light of these serious allegations, I think there is no other option than the resignation of Butch Morgan as

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# Obama & the 7 dwarfs

By **JACK COLWELL**

SOUTH BEND - Polls show that many Republicans, not exactly enthusiastic about their field of presidential candidates, want another choice.

Herman Cain, a few weeks ago a virtual unknown with scant support, has moved up, tied for the lead in one national poll, as he becomes a resting place for Republicans searching for someone else, for THE choice, the one to go on to beat President Obama.

New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie was viewed as THE choice



**“No, not at all. Nor does the printing look like mine.”**

**- Former Gov. Joe Kernan, asked by the South Bend Tribune to authenticate his Obama ballot petition signature**



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by some of the big names and big donors in the Republican Party. Christie won't run. He was, however, more impressive in a wide-ranging news conference in which he said "no" than are most of those in the actual field shouting "yes."

If there was interest in Sarah Palin, and there wasn't much, she finally said "no."

If Indiana Gov. Mitch Daniels had said "yes," would he now be viewed as THE choice? Perhaps. Or as the rest of the field took shots at him and his record was searched for flaws and faults, would he instead be just another pretender back in the pack?

If Christie had instead said "yes," would he have won or just become the flavor of the month, soon falling from contention? Meanwhile, polls show Republicans still not satisfied. While they have leanings and longings, one poll found 80 percent with no definite choice. This party dissatisfaction - with the longing for somebody else - isn't unusual when there's a crowded field of candidates bickering and pandering in the quest for a presidential nomination. Happens in both parties.

Take the Democrats in 1988. Actually, the nation wouldn't take them. They lost to Republican George H.W. Bush after the field of seven guys seeking the Democratic nomination was ridiculed as "the Seven Dwarfs." The winning Demo Dwarf was Michael Dukakis, who was dwarfed further in image as he peered from a big tank while wearing a big helmet, symbolic of the way he secured defeat. Other "Dwarfs" then, some of whom perhaps would have fared better, were Al Gore, Joe Biden, Dick Gephardt, Jesse Jackson, Paul Simon and Bruce Babbitt.

Seven guys again seek a presidential nomination. This time it's for the Republican nomination. It's Snow Lite and the Seven Dwarfs.

Snow Lite is Michele Bachmann. No candidate could be more "lite."

The Seven Dwarfs, some of whom don't deserve to be belittled as they often are by their own party faithful, have different names. The winner could of course have a different fate than the hapless Dukakis.

They are:

**Bashful**, also known as Jon Huntsman. He just can't bring himself to shout out Tea Party rhetoric that he doesn't believe. So he's not Mr. Excitement.

**Dopey**, also known as Ron Paul. He isn't just saying some of those absurd things for political effect. He sincerely believes them.

**Happy**, also known as Herman Cain. He is quite personable and smiles - and why not - since he doesn't have to worry about a mistake that could cost him a nomination for which he has no chance.

**Sleepy**, also known as Newt Gingrich. He runs such a sleepy campaign that he lost his organization. But he still gets on stage, in the spotlight that his ego craves.

**Sneezy**, also known as Rick Santorum. His presidential chances are indeed something to sneeze at.

**Grumpy**, also known as Rick Perry. He is the mean mugger of Social Security who also alienated the Tea Party with views on illegal immigrants and vaccine mandates for young girls.

**Doc**, also known as Mitt Romney. He has long been considered the leader in terms of chances to beat Obama. But he doesn't excite the Tea Party, and the party faithful worry that he could be an unfaithful flip-flopper. As recently as 2008, Democrats seeking the presidency were described as "Snow White and Seven Dwarfs." Hillary Clinton was Snow White, certain it once seemed to dispatch the Dwarfs to oblivion and win the nomination.

But one of those brushed off then is now called "Mr. President."

Early disdain for a field of candidates doesn't always mean that no "Dwarf" in that field can gain in stature and gain the White House. ❖





## Probe, from page 1

chair of the Democrat Party in St. Joseph County. He has been their leader for years. A leader sets the tone of the organization and also takes responsibility if the organization falters. At a minimum he should be held accountable to answer questions about this scandal. Why won't Morgan answer the Tribune's questions? It makes one wonder if there is more to this story and that Morgan may be in some legal jeopardy, which is why he is referring the Tribune to his attorney."

Dan Parker, state Democratic chairman, told HPI on Monday, "Clearly someone did something wrong and they need to be found." He acknowledged that St. Joseph County Prosecutor Michael Dvorak has now initiated a probe into who ordered pages of forged signatures on Clinton and Obama petitions.

But Parker emphasized that even without the forged petition pages, both Obama and Clinton would have qualified for the primary ballot. "Both had their signatures in well in advance of the deadline," Parker said. "Both had more than enough signatures. Both would have qualified. If you look at every petition, both would have had more than 500 signatures."

Parker said that campaign officials tend to look at the backs of petitions for appropriate signatures from voter registration officials in both the Democratic and Republican parties. They don't spend much time looking at the actual signatures.

"None of the voter registration offices are equipped to deal with it," Parker said of the ballot qualifying petitions. He said that it is valid for presidential, gubernatorial and U.S. Senate candidates to show widespread appeal and he spoke against scrapping the petition requirements altogether.

Indiana Republican Chairman Eric Holcomb, who will send a letter to the Department of Justice later this week calling for a probe, said Wednesday, "There's a lot of who, why and when questions that need to be answered. Howey Politics and the South Bend Tribune deserve a lot of credit for uncovering this and it should have a lot of both Democrats and Republicans interested in the outcome. We all have a vested interest in this knowledge. I am interested in knowing how vast this operation was, whether it occurred across the state or whether it was just in one

county. The sooner the better, for us to realize the facts of the case."

Holcomb added that he believes Parker is acting responsibly. "I was encouraged by his response that he, in fact, supported an investigation as well," Holcomb said. "I am encouraged by that. It was troubling to learn on the second day that when one of the authorities was out of the office, her stamp was used. That's troubling. That opens up more questions that need to be answered."

The Tribune's Erin Blasko reported on Wednesday that Republican Linda Silcott of the St. Joseph County Voter Registration office was absent during the 2008 deadlines due to the death of her husband. On pages of the forged petitions, the stamped signature of Silcott is evident. Her first deputy, Mary Carrol Ringler, often stamped Silcott's signature on the pages.

Holcomb noted that St. Joseph County Prosecutor Michael Dvorak's signature had been forged, as well as that of former Gov. Joe Kernan, and was asked why not just appoint a special prosecutor.

Holcomb explained, "Typically it would be investigated by the county prosecutor. In this case, he is a participant in the wrongdoing that occurred, probably through no fault of his own. Because he is part of the investigation and because his signature was included, we think some other eyes besides his should be on this case and then it gets kicked

to the Department of Justice. Because this may be the tip of the iceberg I think the Department of Justice should be vested in the outcome of this as well. This was a very spirited campaign and we don't know the timeline yet of everything that occurred. That is what a thorough investigation will uncover."

Parker urged specific reforms, saying he believed the nominating petition process can be strengthened, making the following points:

### **1. Indiana should use "the online system"**

which is part of the Indiana Election Division with terminals in each of the 92 counties. The Help America Vote Act passed in 2002 and was signed into law by President George W. Bush in reaction to the disputed 2000 presidential election in Florida. HAVA mandated replacing punch card and lever-based voting systems, created the Election Assistance Commission and established minimum election administration standards, such as statewide voter files that



Indiana Republican Chairman Eric Holcomb will send a letter seeking a Department of Justice probe later this week. (HPI Photo by Brian A. Howey)



would prevent a St. Joseph County voter from also registering and voting in Elkhart County. Parker said he believes that the online system should be updated to "tag voters" who sign a presidential, gubernatorial or senatorial petition. "Voters could be tagged 'Signed Clinton' or 'Signed Obama,'" Parker said.

### **2. People dropping off ballot qualifying petitions to voter registration offices should sign for them, Parker said.**

That would establish responsibility for the accuracy of signature gathering. Signatories must sign petitions in their own hand, though often those circulating petitions will fill in other information such as addresses or dates of birth.

### **3. Allow campaigns to turn in petitions before January.**

Parker said that county clerks become "inundated" with candidate filings and other election year processes. Parker noted that candidates like U.S. Sen. Dick Lugar or Treasurer Richard Mourdock may have sufficient petitions completed, but cannot submit them to county officials until January.

Parker also noted that in the past the ballot qualifying process was often a volunteer effort, but said Indiana Democrats are advising campaigns to use paid staff. He noted that U.S. Sen. Dan Coats paid professionals to gather the 4,500 signatures he needed to qualify for the ballot in February 2010. Coats announced his Senate candidacy on Feb. 2, just 16 days before the ballot petitions were due. Parker said that using paid staff "gets you better, quicker results. But you pay more money."

Parker is not opposing the requirement to gain 500 signatures per congressional district for presidential, senatorial and gubernatorial candidates. He believes it "shows a minimum support level for the top three elected offices." Holcomb agrees. "This is not a good reason, but it's always been that way," the GOP chair said when asked about the 500 threshold. "It is a high bar, but it deters just anyone from running. It is doable as we've operated over the decades. I am willing to look at how we can strengthen it."

As far as submitting ballot petitions earlier, Holcomb said, "That could be something that could be tweaked. In 91 other counties – and I hope I'm correct here – they did it the right way. It requires you to have an organization all over the state and it allows you approximately one month to certify those signatures to get it done. Someone, for whatever reason, was cutting the corner. We



Democratic Chairman Dan Parker will look at ballot petition reforms. (HPI Photo by Brian A. Howey)

need to know why they were cutting, why they were duplicating, why they were forging and once we have those answers, I'm willing to sit down and say, these are the lessons learned, now where do we go?"

Holcomb added, "There's a gatekeeper and that's where the breakdown occurred. I want to know why it occurred and then who was involved and then we'll find ways to fix it. There is ample time and there are ample resources. It does require going line by line and keeping meticulous records. That has always occurred, to my knowledge. This recent exposure shows if someone wants to commit a crime, someone can sneak something through, for some reason. It's been my experience that people collect the forms, and over time, they wait until they get a big chunk of them and then they certify them."

With races for president, governor and U.S. Senate set for 2012, candidate filings will begin in January and will end on Feb. 17. ❖

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## Bayh says charge 'baseless'

WASHINGTON - Former U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh is calling voter-fraud allegations against him and his wife, Susan, "baseless." But whether the allegations, made in a criminal complaint filed by Secretary of State Charlie White on Tuesday, will lead to charges is difficult to say (Indianapolis Star). The law is open to interpretation, according to one legal expert. "(It depends) on how rigidly or flexibly you follow the law," said Dianne Pinderhughes, a political science professor at the University of Notre Dame.

The Marion County prosecutor's office is reviewing White's complaint, which alleges that the Bayhs shouldn't have voted absentee in the Indianapolis municipal primary in May. They own a condo in Indianapolis, but their main residence is a multimillion-dollar home in Washington, D.C., White contended. "Mr. White's assertions are baseless," Evan Bayh said in an email sent by his assistant Wednesday. Bayh, a Democrat, represented Indiana in the Senate.

White said in a news release Tuesday that since he has been charged with voter fraud, Bayh should be, too.

Bayh dismissed that claim in the email. "His situation is factually and legally different than mine," Bayh said, but he did not elaborate. ❖





## Perry comes to Indy as Cain surges in poll

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - The murmur in the background of Texas Gov. Rick Perry's visit to the Indiana GOP at the Columbia Club Wednesday was that the "front-runner" is going to come back later this month.

Herman Cain, that is, not Perry, not Mitt Romney.

Hours after Perry gave an initially subdued stump speech (he seemed to find his stroke as the speech went on), an NBC/Wall Street Journal Poll showed Cain leading the field with 27%, followed by Romney at 23%, while Perry fell from 38% in August to 16% now. Romney stood at 23% in the August poll. The poll concluded just as New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie endorsed Romney on Monday afternoon. Rasmussen Reports had Cain and Romney tied at 29% today.

"Cain is the leader ... That's the story," said Democratic pollster Peter D. Hart, who conducted this survey with Republican pollster Bill McInturff. But McInturff cautions that Cain's ascent - and Perry's decline - is probably not the last shakeup in a GOP race that has seen a series of sudden rises and abrupt falls (first Donald Trump, then Minnesota Rep. Michele Bachmann and now Perry) in the field. "There is still a long, long, long time to go," McInturff said.

In hypothetical match-ups for the general election, President Barack Obama leads Romney by two points, 46 percent to 44 percent, which is virtually unchanged from August. Forty-three percent of Republican primary voters say they have a less favorable impression of the former governor when told that he opposes the federal health care law requiring that nearly all Americans have or purchase health insurance - but that his Massachusetts law has similar requirements. USA Today reported this week that Obama used the Romney plan as a model for his reforms.

**Perry, after three subpar debate** performances, hit on the themes of border security, jobs and a four-point prescription for reviving the economy.

"We cannot have national security until we have border security," Perry said. "We need thousands more National Guard troops and border patrol, we need strategic

fencing (and) we need predator drone surveillance aircraft." But he warned against military cuts, saying, Congress needs to keep defense "off the chopping block for arbitrary budget cuts."

**Perry promised he would** announce his job creation plan in Pittsburgh on Friday. "The choice this election," Perry said, "is whether we're going to keep a president who has failed to create jobs . . . or whether we're going to change the course and elect a president who will give consumers greater freedom, who will protect us from job-killing carbon schemes, and who will support policies that are good for Main Street and not just Wall Street.

Green sources of energy are not abundant enough to fill the void that's going to be posed by these new constraints on conventional generation," he said. "It is a dangerous policy that jeopardizes our national and economic security, and I will reverse it."

"The next economic boom is right under our feet," Perry continued. "Our own oil resources alone are vast enough to meet the next 300 years of energy demand at today's levels. We have to have a president who truly understands what people are going through in this country, that there is real misery out there."

Perry added that government should "let the states come up with the solutions that best fit the needs in their states." He called for the repeal of Obamacare and tort reform. "To paraphrase both Abraham Lincoln and Ronald Reagan, American remains

the last, best hope of mankind," Perry said. "Like a lighthouse on the shore, we can still be a beacon of hope. We can remain the freest people on the planet if we remember that we are one nation under God."

**Former State Rep. Mike Murphy** coordinated a lunch where influential Republicans met with the governor. Former GOP Chairman Mike McDaniel was impressed with Perry, saying he was "thoughtful" and didn't have the swagger some have tagged him with.

But when it comes to where Hoosier Republicans stand with this field, both McDaniel and IMA's Pat Kiely have never seen a more divided state party. "In the Bulen days there would be someone in each camp," McDaniel said, ensuring the state would have a key tie no matter who emerged with the nomination.

But the buzz after Perry spoke is that Cain will be back at the Columbia Club for a fundraiser later this month. Whether he'll be the front-runner at that point remains to be seen. ❖



Texas Gov. Rick Perry poses with a supporter at the Columbia Club on Wednesday. (HPI Photo by Brian A. Howey)



## Sitting governor's rare book is heavy on fear and solutions

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

NASHVILLE, Ind. - We've seen books by Indiana governors, like Doc Bowen's "Doc: Memories from a Life in Public Service," and about Indiana governors, like Andrew Stoner's "The Life of Indiana's Frank O'Bannon."

There have been books by future Indiana governors, like Edgar Whitcomb's "Escape from Corregidor," published a decade before his 1968 election. And there have been post-gubernatorial books, like Evan Bayh's 2003 "From Father to Son: A Private Life in the Public Eye."

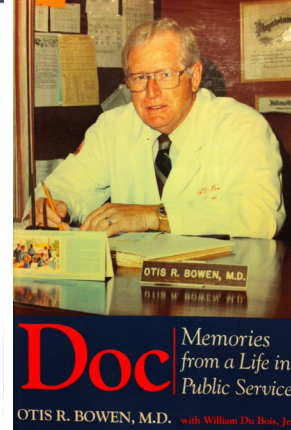
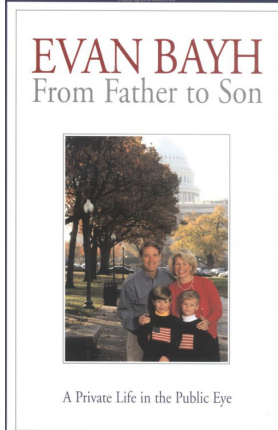
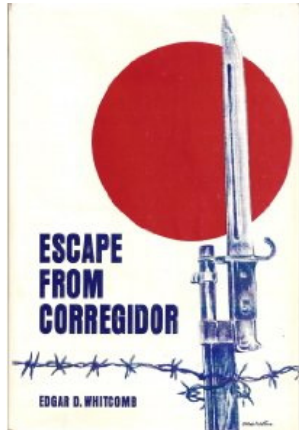
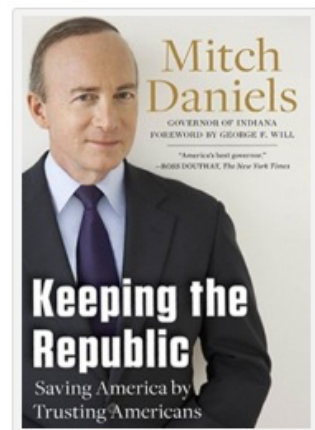
But in modern Hoosier political history, there has never been a book written by a sitting Indiana governor,

Daniels has done something that needed to be done for perhaps a decade or more: redefine conservatism. The word has been as definitive as "lager beer." Here in Indiana, everyone is a conservative, from the Republicans to Democratic governors to Blue Dog congressmen. Daniels insists he never used the "c-word" to define what his administration proposed to do, or the "l-word" to disparage someone else's ideas. If my memory holds true, Daniels is right. I cannot recall a speech or a presser where he lapsed into the lingo that entraps much of the political culture quivering around him and poised to succeed him.

"What's more, most of the citizens I encounter don't see the world through doctrinaire eyes," Daniels said. Again, ditto. The trap words have been worn out by radio talking heads, serial book-machines and smelly, brash operatives wearing suits and bragging over beers in trendy downtown hotel bars about how this Democrat has been screwed or that Republican has been dissed.

Daniels writes that the danger "is far greater than simple material well-being. The power of free institutions

has always rested on their ability to produce prosperity, which in turn powers free peoples to engage in personal and creative pursuits." All around us – from the newspaper industry, to the Catholic church, to Congress – we see venerable institutions gasp-



until Mitch Daniels' published "Keeping the Republic: Saving America by Trusting Americans." And there has never been a book in this setting that occupies such a relevant plank at such a critical moment in the history of the nation. It is very much a policy prescription. As Washington Post columnist George Will writes in the forward, "It takes a worried man to write a worried book and Daniels has done so," all while "speaking his well-stocked mind." In Daniels' opening pages, he acknowledges, "I am desperately alarmed about the condition and direction of the American republic."

**It comes after the Baby Boomers** – "self-centered, self-absorbed, self-indulgent and all too often just plain selfish" – borrowed and splurged after our parents scrimped and saved. "It's been a blast. Good luck cleaning up after us."

Thus, we have the "Daniels Doctrine" as Will puts it, or "conservatism for grownups."

ing under the weight of new realities. Corrupt practices are exposed as attention spans wane and policy grip loosens into the malfesance we bear witness to today.

Daniels does an excellent job in framing the dilemma as Americans have "amassed ruinous amounts of debt" (\$9.65 trillion or 62% of the national economy) in what Robert Samuelson calls "suicidal government" that we have witnessed in Washington, lurching from Republican spasms, to Democratic, and back again, each wave becoming more polarized. In our own Hoosier experience, we've gone from Evan Bayh's meager cries seeking "bipartisanship" to Richard Mourdock's outright and repeated denunciation of the concept.

Thus, Daniels brings us the nightmare scenario when the Red Menace – once something akin to the Cuban missile crisis – becomes one of mathematics and balance sheets but just as dangerous. "Monday, 6 a.m. – a Chinese





official issues a statement saying that China will no longer be buying Treasury securities because 'we see no evidence that the U.S. will take the steps necessary to grow its economy or limit its spending so it can afford to repay. Monday 9:30 a.m. – the dollar drops 10%; New York stock market opens in free fall. Monday afternoon – other nations' central banks begin to sell off U.S. Treasuries. . ."

**"This is not a matter of opinion** based on a preference for limited government," writes Daniels. "It's a brutally objective fact of life. For today, can we agree that the arithmetic here does not work?"

It reminded me of my attendance at Indiana University's Russian and East European Institute seminars in the mid- to late-1980s on the Soviet Union. None of the experts were predicting the implosions that would occur throughout the Warsaw Pact between 1989-91. Some empires, like the Ottomans and Romans, took centuries to unravel. And then there were the Venetians of 1490, Genoans of 1555, the Spanish of 1650, and the French of 1789 (weakened by the Seven Years War while financing the American Revolution) and the Soviets two centuries after the Bourbons, which vanished like our own Twin Towers.

Daniels finds "large majorities of Americans are clueless" and again, he is correct. How many times have we heard people say, "I don't vote" or "I don't follow the news" and just laugh? America is in the midst of a 10-year war in Afghanistan while nation building in Iraq. The parallels to the French are unnerving.

Thus the name of the book. As Jefferson and Franklin ignited the American revolution and then witnessed the Parisian precipice, Daniels quotes the latter in a scene right out of "John Adams." What kind of government do we have? "A republic," Franklin answered, "if you can keep it."

**In Daniels' mind, the "next few years"** may provide the answer to the way we spend the rest of our lives. The 42 workers in 1940 supporting each Social Security recipient, the 16 in 1950 have been reduced to three to one at this writing. The future benefits "grotesquely outstrip" the future taxes that will be needed to fund \$5.4 trillion for Social Security and \$46 trillion for Medicare. "Obamacare" adds several trillion more. All of it, Daniels says, is "enough to give Mr. Ponzi a bad name." A fiscal failure will lead to a defense decline.

The governor is a living, breathing policy wonk. And that's what drove him to write this book: policy rem-

edies that sometimes defy his own Republican Party's shallow presidential speak.

He puts it succinctly when he writes, "Government must serve as a referee, a definer of limits and an enforcer of rules. But there is an enormous difference between government as boundary setter and government as micro-manager."

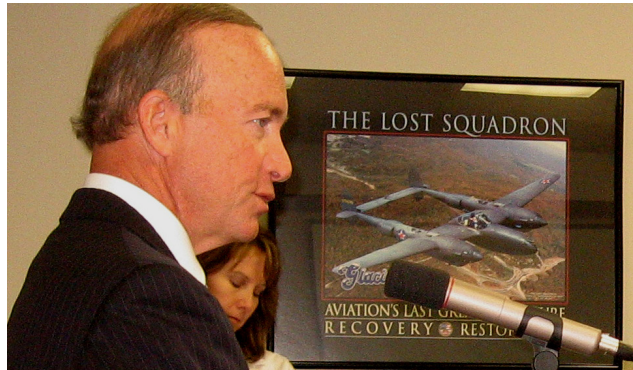
Appearing at the American Enterprise Institute promoting the book in September, Daniels was asked about the congressional super committee charged with finding more cuts and putting us on a path to a balanced budget. "You're gonna need more revenue," Daniels said in a report in *Slate*, defying the Republican line that "we have a spending problem, not a revenue problem," and looking to a future where Americans pay reasonable taxes to fund a partially privatized welfare state.

In the August Republican debate in Ames, Iowa, candidates were asked to raise their hands if they would oppose a long-term budget deal that included a 10-to-1 ratio of spending cuts to tax increases. They all did (and Rick Perry, who wasn't yet in the race, later affirmed that he would have joined them). Daniels was asked by CBS what he would have done. "I would not have raised my hand," he said.

**Much of what Daniels advocates** we in the Indiana press have witnessed over the past several years. Obamacare was "fraudulent," while Cap-and-Trade would have brought ruinous financial sanctions against coal states. "I could not find the common sense in a policy that would inflict immediate, immense and certain costs on a suffering economy in the hope of producing distant, infinitesimal and highly uncertain changes in world temperatures," he said. Daniels cites the "mad pursuit of zero" in water and air quality as "environmental absolutism," using the Chicago-based policy assault of BP's Whiting refinery as an example. Environmentalists might see this attitude as ruinous as ignoring the fiscal Red Menace.

Daniels calls for a new "reconstruction" that goes beyond just rebuilding infrastructure, though that is what he did with his Major Moves program. He uses the Civil War term as "the rebuilding of the union" that means "reestablishing the oneness of the nation" and "redefining the idea of citizenship."

The term "entitlement" needs to be replaced with "safety net reform." The retirement age of 65 is "utterly obsolete." He explains, "Social Security 2.0 should feature a gradually rising eligibility age that catches up with these





changed realities." Medicare 2.0 should be to convert the "safety net from a system rigged for over-consumption and open-ended runaway costs to one that focuses its dollars on the neediest seniors, encourages careful consumerist trade-offs, and reasonably limits the taxpayers' exposure." Daniels notes that 40% of Medicare costs occur in the last month of a beneficiary's life. The 30-second sound bite here is "means testing," with Warren Buffett as its poster boy, though the Sarah Palins of the world will reduce such talk down to the lowest political common denominator (i.e. "death panels").

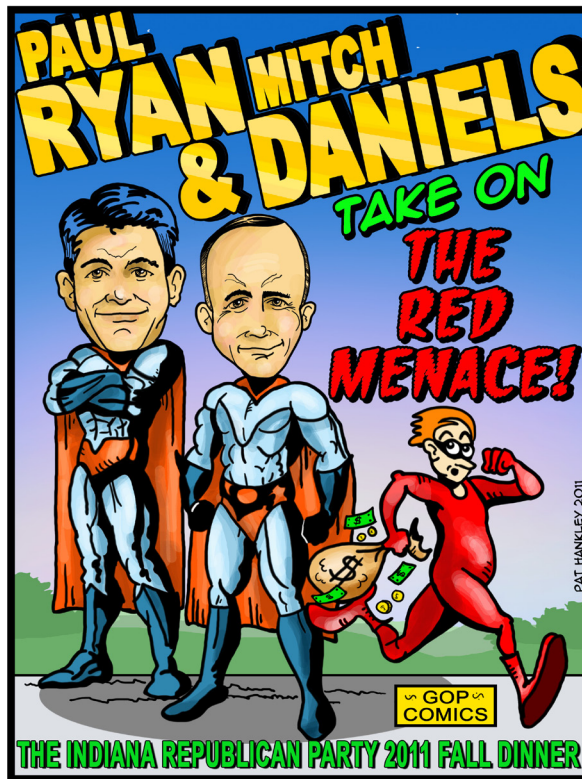
While left-of-center economists decry the deep cuts in public employment coming in the roiling economy, Daniels notes 25% Indiana agency reductions and his own 18% reduction of state employees on his watch and advocates that for the federal government, with the "obvious starting point" being a major downsizing of swollen federal agency manning tables and a long-lasting hiring freeze.

Obamacare must be repealed and "exchanged for a consumerist, true insurance model that reengages Americans in the unavoidable trade-off decisions that must be made when wants are infinite and means are finite." On defense, it will take a "reassessment of the myriad of worldwide tasks we have assigned our forces" with a "critical analysis of fundamental American interests" and those that are "truly vital."

Daniels writes that when a "pro-solvency Congress and president are elected, they would be well advised to reinstate the power of impoundment," asking, "In what other context in life does an enterprise lock itself into spending money it does not have?"

**Finally, Daniels calls for** three essential categories: tax reform, winnowing regulatory policy and the American energy opportunity.

He quotes William Simon on implementing "a tax code that looks like somebody designed it on purpose" and echoes Dick Lugar's 1996 presidential campaign, noting that Americans spend 6.6 billion hours and \$194 billion on tax compliance for a total annual cost of \$430 billion. His remedy here is a growth friendly system that eliminates all or most of current exclusions and deductions, a vastly



simpler system with lower rates, taxing compensation only, while using two or three tax rates that would keep the low income from paying much at all. Daniels adds that it would be almost impossible to understand the benefits of "liberating" people and time from tax compliance and into job-creating purposes instead of "government directed ones."

And Daniels reaches back to Milton Friedman's "negative income tax," where "any American or American family with less than a specified level of income would receive cash directly through the tax system. As earnings increased, the amount of subsidy would drop, but only by a fraction of the increase, so that the citizen would be encouraged to continue to work."

## Epilogue

The compelling thoughts after finishing Gov. Daniels' book boil down to this: If the crisis is so dangerous that the republic literally hangs in the balance and on the decisions of people running in the 2012 election, then why did the governor duck the presidential race, family considerations understood?

The current field comes up dramatically unprepared to deal with the looming crisis, as the raised hands in Ames in August revealed. Congress is caught in a polarized, twin ideological rut, and to play on his 2004 quip, cannot see the horizon. Despite torrents of post-debt ceiling sequence criticism, members came home to their landslide congressional districts and were goaded against compromise.

It's admirable that Daniels has identified and subtly amplified the lurking dangers. But the conclusion I've come to is that he should have taken the standard into battle, because no one else in the Republican field has risen to the challenge in a credible way.

The story of John and Abigail Adams and the sacrifice the second president's family made in forging the nation stands is an emphatic noble act of service and sacrifice. It may be unfair to compare the governor and his family to a founding father and mother, but in taking part of the national dance and sounding the alarm, scores of his supporters, admirers and even loyal opponents will find a decent dose of wist that he isn't on the front lines, employing his deep intellect and vision, and waging such a critical battle. ❖





## Devastating story could hurt Davis campaign as Winnecke eyes crossovers

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - A potentially devastating story in the Evansville Courier & Press appears to have boosted the prospects of Republican Lloyd Winnecke in the mayoral race there.

Vanderburgh County Democrats alleged on Monday the detainment of a local party officer moments before the Saturday Fall Festival parade by Evansville police was an attempt at retribution by Mayoral Candidate Rick Davis' campaign (Sarkissian, Evansville Courier & Press). However, Davis said the off-duty EPD sergeant who initiated the detainment of Vanderburgh

County Democratic Party Political Director Alex Jarvis over a traffic warrant was doing his job and within the boundaries of law. "His duty is to enforce the law; he did nothing wrong," Davis said. "If Mr. Jarvis had taken care of his legal obligations like any law abiding citizen, none of this would have happened."

The newspaper reported today that Evansville Police Sgt. Rick Hubbard actively sought the arrest of Jarvis on a misdemeanor warrant Saturday, according to audio recordings released by central dispatch officials Wednesday. Release of the police radio traffic recordings are the latest development in the Fall Festival incident that displayed fresh rifts in the local Democratic Party and have raised questions about whether the Jarvis' arrest was politically motivated. On the central dispatch recordings Hubbard is heard saying, "There's a guy on a warrant here, and I wanted to get him arrested here, and I've been calling for a car."

Jarvis claimed the

incident was an attempt by Davis' campaign leadership to humiliate him and the Democratic Party. "I feel it was a political vendetta by Rick Davis," Jarvis said, adding Davis tried to get him fired from his party position shortly after the primary.

The timing of the story, coming just three weeks before the election, could be particularly damaging to the Davis campaign, which has not garnered the endorsement of Evansville Mayor Jonathan Weinzapfel and has not had access to Indiana Democratic Party voter access files, according to multiple sources. Davis angered Weinzapfel by announcing his mayoral candidacy prior to the incumbent's decision not to run. Davis ran against the Weinzapfel administration during his primary race against Troy Tornatta.

At Wednesday night's debate with Winnecke, Davis tried to ram home the homestead tax credit issue, where Winnecke and Weinzapfel signed off on a secret rescinding of the tax. Davis sparred with former House Majority Leader Russ Stilwell in mock debates prior to the showdown.

Informed and reliable sources tell HPI that Winnecke has maintained a lead near the margin of error in internal polling. The Winnecke campaign is counting on crossover apparel with Democrats. Sources tell HPI that a number of prominent Democrats are poised to endorse Winnecke, a Vanderburgh County commissioner. **Horse Race Status:** Leans Winnecke

### U.S. Senate: Mourdock loans \$100k?

The Hill is reporting that Treasurer Richard Mourdock has loaned his U.S. Senate campaign \$100,000. Richard Lugar is reporting he raised \$840,000 during the third quarter. But U.S. Sen. Orin Hatch, who will not face a Tea Party opponent, raised \$1.6 million in the same period.

The Lugar campaign also reports holding \$3.8 million in the bank at the end of last month. They released the figures Wednesday a few days ahead of the federal filing deadline.

Murdock and U.S. Rep. Joe Donnelly have not released their FEC totals.

This Sunday's New York Times Magazine cover story, "Does Anyone Have a Grip on the G.O.P.?: The G.O.P. elite tries to take its party back," by Matt Bai, the chief political correspondent for the magazine: "It now seems like only a matter of time before the Republican empire,



The arrest of a Democratic Party worker has put mayoral nominee Rick Davis (right) in the crosshairs as Republican Lloyd Winnecke is preparing to roll out crossover endorsements. (Davis campaign photo)



overwhelmed by insurrection for much of the last two years, strikes back at last. "I think it's waning now," Scott Reed, a veteran strategist and lobbyist, told Politico's Mike Allen when we talked about the Tea Party's influence last month. Efforts to gin up primaries next year against two sitting senators - Utah's Orrin Hatch and Indiana's Dick Lugar - have been slow to gain momentum, Reed said, and it's notable that more than half of the 50-plus members of the Tea Party caucus in the House ultimately fell in line and voted with Speaker John Boehner on his debt-ceiling compromise (Politico).

Mourdock's scheduling of a Freedomworks endorsement a half hour prior to the Indiana GOP Fall Dinner featuring House Budget Chairman Paul Ryan has state Republicans biting their lips, though some steam is evident.

Lugar, meanwhile, joined the Republican majority in defeating President Obama's jobs package in the Senate on Tuesday. Lugar will be an original cosponsor of Republican legislation focused on creating jobs through real tax reform, controlling federal spending and regulation, promoting domestic sources of energy, and promoting exports of American products. The bill will be introduced later this week by Sens. John McCain, Rob Portman and Rand Paul. "The Senate should reject the President's costly and flawed jobs proposal and instead move forward with proposals that support private enterprise, America's job creation engine," Lugar said. "Once again the Democratic Party has missed some fundamental elements to a winning strategy for economic growth and job creation. Successful economic growth must take place in the private sector, and the reality is that businesses exist to make a profit. By placing more taxes and burdens on job creators, the President is taking money out of the private sector to divert it toward big government spending. The result: fewer investments are likely to be made and job creation will remain weak for the foreseeable future. With unemployment in Indiana still around 9 percent, continuing the failed stimulus policies of this Administration is simply untenable."

Mourdock completed the Chicago Marathon on Sunday, one day after turning 60 years old. To date, Mourdock has finished his 9th marathon in his running career. "It was very warm yesterday during the race so it did effect my time somewhat, but overall I felt good and the energy of the other runners and spectators along the route always keep you motivated," stated Mourdock. Mourdock's official time was 5:32:09, finishing 331st in the 60-64 age division and 29,376 overall. Curiously, Mourdock listed his hometown as "Indianapolis." That could bring renewed scrutiny on where Mourdock is filing for his homestead tax exemption. **Horse Race Status:** Leans Lugar

### **9th CD: Gen. George to run**

A former national security aide to President Barack Obama says he'll run for Congress in a Southern Indiana

district. Retired Brig. Gen. Jonathan D. George may be Democrats' best chance to retake the 9th District. Democrat Baron Hill lost the seat to Republican Todd Young in the GOP's 2010 sweep of the House. George is a former top Air Force officer who led transition efforts in Afghanistan and most recently served on the National Security Council. He and his family have maintained a small farm near Bedford about 65 miles southwest of Indianapolis, and he returned there full-time in August after retiring from the military. George told The Associated Press that he hoped to attract more life-science companies to the state if elected.

### **Indianapolis Mayoral: Kennedy rallies up**

Democrat Melina Kennedy has kicked off the home-stretch of her campaign for mayor with an early-voting rally at City Market (Berman, WIBC). Tuesday's second day of early voting coincides with the last day to register to vote. About 200 Kennedy backers cheered their nominee, then crossed the street to cast their votes for her. Campaign workers were ready with registration forms in case anyone was still unregistered. Kennedy says getting her supporters to the polls now frees them up to volunteer for her campaign on Election Day and turn out more votes. It also locks in those votes and ensures they won't get too busy to vote in November. Early voting in Marion County has gotten off to a brisk start, with 550 voters casting ballots at the clerk's office Monday and Tuesday (Indianapolis Star). Monday's total of 278 early voters compares with 57 on the first day of early voting in 2007, the last municipal election. The tally also exceeds the 164 ballots cast on the first early voting day before the 2010 election, according to Angie Nussmeyer, spokeswoman for the clerk's office. But the first-day total falls short of the 678 early ballots cast in 2008, when the presidential race was on the ballot. **Horse Race Status:** Tossup

### **Fort Wayne Mayoral: State money flows in**

We are hearing that the Indiana Republican Party is putting a lot of money into this race on behalf of challenger Paula Hughes. The mailer sent out by the Indiana GOP this past week says that "Tom Henry is taking the largest salary of any Mayor in Indiana." Henry "has spent over \$14 million of our tax dollars to get himself a fancy new office." And Henry "has spent our City into over half a billion in debt." And, finally, "Now he's running a NASTY CAMPAIGN against Paula Hughes." The Tom Henry for Mayor campaign released a new television ad, "Believe." The spot contrasts Paula Hughes's attempt to twist the truth about city finances with Mayor Henry's record of keeping city finances strong -- holding spending flat every year and putting us on track to cut 40 percent of city debt by 2015. The ad says, "Can you believe Paula Hughes? She supported tax increases for ten straight years. Hughes supported or voted for tax increases every year for ten years. And newspapers prove





the city's debt is only half the amount Paula Hughes and her political backers claim."

Indiana Republican Chairman Eric Holcomb said that the state GOP is preparing to invest heavily in Fort Wayne, as well as Indianapolis, Evansville and several other cities. He declined to say how much. The ad will begin airing on all major Fort Wayne stations starting today. While we've still got this as a tossup, remember that in the primary, late polls showed Hughes trailing, and she finished strong. There appears to be a real pickup potential here for Republicans. **Horse Race Status:** Tossup

### Terre Haute Mayoral: Sparks fly

The city's mayoral candidates differed dramatically in personal style, facts and figures during the election season's third debate Tuesday afternoon (Foulkes, Terre Haute Tribune-Star). Mayor Duke Bennett, a Republican, and challenger Fred Nation, a Democrat, squared off in front of the Terre Haute Rotary Club at the Holiday Inn on the city's south side in a 45-minute debate. Nation, 67, said he would be a "leader," making tough decisions and working full time as a "salesman" to bring jobs to the community. Bennett, 51, said economic development is just one of many jobs for the mayor and said bringing new investment and jobs to the area requires a team effort. "It's a team effort, but every team needs a leader," Nation responded. "When it comes to economic development, when it comes to being mayor, somebody's got to make the decisions. Somebody's got to articulate the vision." In response, Bennett said taking that approach will "begin to build the walls back up" between local government entities that he has worked to help tear down. Businesses and those controlling state and federal grants want to see multiple leaders and "community buy-in" on a project before investing, he said. "The key to what a mayor can do is make sure that we have a clean city, low taxes, low crime rate and we're at the table on every single thing that we do," Bennett said. "You don't strike out individually to try and recruit people on your own. Our goal and our mission will continue to be a team effort to draw business into our community." "I'm not striking out on my own. I'm going to provide leadership," Nation respond-

ed. "I'm going to make sure economic development people are responsive and work everyday and work with the county commissioners...They are a great group. They need leadership. They need someone who will respond today, not tomorrow, who will follow up leads today, not tomorrow. I can do this." Nation also repeated past criticism of the city's use of a financial consultant. That consultant has cost the city \$565,000 over the past four years, he said. Bennett responded that all "class-two" and above cities use financial

consultants. "There are 200 things that this company does for us," Bennett said. "I'm telling you, this guy is worth every penny." Why is there no contract with the consultant? Nation asked. Because the consultant, who also does consulting work for Plainfield, is used on an "as-needed" basis, Bennett said. **Horse Race Status:** Leans Bennett

### Mishawaka Mayoral: Fry, Wood debate

The two candidates for Mishawaka mayor stood their ground in a debate Monday, fielding 20 questions that spanned from discrimination to bike lanes to the city's code enforcement (Dits, South Bend Tribune). Between barbs, Republican Mayor Dave Wood and his Democratic challenger, Craig Fry, shed new light on their views. Written questions came from the audience of at least 80 people at Indiana University South Bend. One question mentioned the "decline of neighborhoods" and asked for the candidates' plans for code enforcement. Fry said many landlords live outside of the city - and some out of the country - and said he'd seek ordinances "with teeth ... because every once in a while you need to bite someone to make sure they're doing the right thing." Wood said, "I'm damn proud of our code enforcement folks because they work their butts off." He said the department has a "top 100" program where it makes a list of the 100 properties with the worst code violations and focuses on them. The staff has resolved about 65 percent of them over the past five years, Wood said. But, in a top 100 list drafted this winter, the staff has resolved about 80 percent, he said. Fry painted an image of crime growing in the city. He noted the recent night of fighting at the 100 Center parking lots and questioned whether there have been enough police on duty. Wood said the city's crime rates are going down and that the city



recently used a grant to add two officers to help with community oriented policing. **Horse Race Status:** Tossup

### **Anderson Mayoral: Crime and jobs**

About 75 people attended an Anderson mayoral debate to learn about incumbent Democrat Kris Ockomon, former Republican mayor Kevin Smith, and independent Libertarian Rob Jozwiak (Anderson Herald-Bulletin). Jozwiak, who spoke first, said he would bring a new perspective to local government. "Both of my opponents think things were great under their administrations," he said. "But people in the community beg to differ." He said Ockomon and Smith raised utility rates and then gave "voodoo explanations" for why they did so. He said he plans on lowering those rates by being responsible. Jozwiak said he would like to have more weekend activities downtown and reinstate the fair board to host more festivals and fairs. "People need to love living here," he said. The city has a low crime rate, which has to be maintained in order to keep the community safe, he said. He also thought it would be a good idea to promote the fact that Anderson is so close to Indianapolis, and piggy back off the bigger city's achievements. "We need to recapture the past glory," he said. "We need to look to the future and do better." Ockomon informed the group of some of his achievements during his administration, including infrastructure improvements. He told the group he spent \$5 million over four years in paving projects. "One group that was in full demise was Crime Watch," he said. "It was defunct and now it has over 1,000 members. And Senior Link is warming back up again." Ockomon, who took office in 2008 after beating Smith, said that he kept some of Smith's department heads because they were talented, no matter if they were Democrats or Republicans. He said he heard Kevin say that if he was elected he would start over with all new heads, and said he was disappointed that such talent would be let go. Smith did not touch on that subject during his time at the podium. Ockomon also said that anyone who wants to be mayor should not leave the city and then return seeking to become mayor. Smith worked for the Chamber of Commerce in Clinton County after losing his re-election bid in 2007. "You stay in the community and get involved in the community," Ockomon said. Smith spoke of the economic development achievements during his administration, and the team of people he had that helped produce quality results. He spoke of Affiliated Computer Services, which in 2006 was announced would bring 400 to 450 jobs, he said. It has now grown to 1,000 employees. "Nestle was a 300-job project," he said. "It continues to add people and lines and now employes over 500 people." Bringing those companies to the city, along with so many jobs, was a positive step for Anderson, he said. "One thing that came out of the Smith administration is that Anderson's best days are not behind us," he said.

"Anderson, Ind., is still in the running." Smith also touched on the issue of tax rates, saying he declined a new trash fee under his administration. "If I ask for a penny in taxes, I'll tell you where it will go," he said. **Horse Race Status:** Leans Ockomon

### **Muncie Mayoral: Bad press for Tyler**

A woman who says she was recruited by local Democratic Party leaders to run as a below-the-radar-but-top-of-the-ballot candidate for Delaware County commissioner wants you to know a few things about how politics works in Muncie (Muncie Star Press). But uppermost in Beverly Bilbrey's mind is how she feels betrayed by Dennis Tyler, former party chairman, state representative and the party's mayoral candidate. Bilbrey - who insisted this week that her recent small-claims lawsuit against Tyler was not timed to coincide with the Nov. 8 election - is angry at Tyler for failing to help her win Social Security disability benefits. It's a promise that Tyler says he never made. But during an interview with The Walker/Roysdon Report, Bilbrey spilled the beans about her 2008 candidacy for county commissioner -- an account that was later deemed not at all surprising by John Brooke, the incumbent commissioner whose candidacy Bilbrey was intended to blunt, paving the way for the election of the party's favored candidate, Don Dunnuck. **Horse Race Status:** Likely Tyler

### **SD28: Gard retiring, Crider to run**

Recently retired after serving as Gov. Mitch Daniels' appointee to head the Law Enforcement Division of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), life-long Hancock County resident Michael Crider, 52, announced Wednesday he is seeking the Senate District 28 seat currently held by Sen. Beverly Gard, who announced she is retiring at the end of her term in November 2012. Crider began his IDNR career as a Conservation Officer in Hancock County then advancing to Captain and Lieutenant Colonel before Gov. Daniels appointed him to head the IDNR Law Enforcement Division in 2006. "Mike Crider brings a variety of skills and experience to the director's office," said Gov. Mitch Daniels when appointing Crider to the top conservation officer post. "His background and familiarity with the staff and issues involved with running the law enforcement division make him a natural choice for the job."

### **HD98: Brown to replace Crawford?**

IndyPolitics is reporting that Indianapolis Councilman Vernon Brown will likely replace State Rep. Bill Crawford for the Democratic nomination. ❖





## Seeking the sins of corporate America

By **MORTON J. MARCUS**

INDIANAPOLIS - Nola Brisquette is a prominent opponent of corporate America. She has been "occupying" Wall Street recently as part of the demonstration in New York to call attention to the misdeeds of Big Business.

"What will you have?" I asked after I settled on a salad.

"My usual, a tribute to America: fried chicken, mashed potatoes, gravy, biscuits, and green beans with bacon in mushroom soup topped by dehydrated onions," she replied.

"I expected something more revolutionary, less revolting," I commented.

"Now is not the time to go vegan," Nola said. "Now, if the revolution is to succeed, we need to bond with traditional folks. If we are to change America, we cannot expect to change the diet of Americans. The fast fat food behemoths and the cold cola conglomerates will feel our wrath, but not in the first stages of this popular uprising."



"How popular is the uprising?" I questioned.

"Gigantic." She stretched her arms wide to express the enormity of her word. "It is only a matter of weeks before the masses converge on Indianapolis. Within months Fort Wayne, South Bend, and Evansville will find traffic stopped by consumer/worker protesters. Terre Haute will see a general strike greater than the nearly-forgotten event of the 1930s. The corrupt corporate corpus will be exposed in full and its rotting entrails displayed for all to see."

"That is very dramatic language," I said. "Exactly what are the crimes of big business?"

"**Excessive pay for executives** leads the list," Nola said. "Consider the gross disparity between those who are highly paid for doing so little and those who are paid so little for doing so much."

"Classic examples of enormous differences in pay do exist," I agreed, "but are those much publicized cases the norm or the exceptions?"

"Further," I continued, "is it the publicly-held companies, the private firms, or the family establishments that

have the greatest disparities in rewards for executives? Is it a matter of ownership or of size that determine rewards? For example, what is the spread in the rewards for leadership vs. workers in hospitals of a certain size when separated by type of ownership?"

"Are you denying the evils of the modern corporation?" Nola challenged. "Do you deny their indifference to ecological damage?"

**Before she could lengthen** what promised to be a long litany of sins, I asked, "Are small businesses or ordinary households more saintly ecologically-speaking than large corporations? Does the small merchant have a higher recycle score than the big box store? Are you looking at the form of the organization rather than the scale or opportunity to do mischief?"

"We don't have the data," Nola offered in defiant defense. "We know what we know from experience."

"Good," I said. "Then use what you know to be true and forget the general allegations against all members of a specific industry. The New York 'occupation' was an amusing, but useless and ineffective protest. It would have been more successful, but admittedly harder to choose one company and picket them nation- or world-wide for their specific and documented sins."

"You don't understand the theater of protest," Nola said.

"I don't understand this salad." I looked at my plate. "I too should have ordered the fried chicken." ❖

**Mr. Marcus is an independent economist, speaker, and writer.**





**Mark Kiesling, NWI Times:** Indiana does not need to become the nation's 23rd "right-to-work" state. We already provide a very business-friendly atmosphere, from lower taxes, the elimination of the inventory tax and the reduction of corporate taxes. Compare us with neighboring Illinois. We are far more business-friendly, although the infrastructure in place in Chicago and its suburbs continues to attract and retain businesses. But companies looking to relocate should take a look at Indiana, and many of them are. Recently, a longtime Illinois company relocated to Merrillville after deciding the climate here was friendlier than in our neighboring Prairie State. So why do organizations such as the Indiana Chamber of Commerce continue to push hard for right-to-work legislation, which essentially would erode benefits labor unions have fought for during more than a century? Because they have to, that's why. And I understand why. Labor unions have, for far too long, become fat, lazy, powerful and abusive. If you've lived in the Calumet Region for a while, there's no way you can get around stories of how people slept their way through their shift at a steel mill or "performed" do-nothing jobs for \$25 an hour. But those days are gone, at least for the most part. The mills and oil refineries, the backbone of our area, have become leaner and meaner. ❖

**Rich James, Post-Tribune:** There apparently is a good bit of George Bush in Lake County Chairwoman Kim Krull. They both seem to think it's OK to break the rules if it suits their purpose. And when you get caught, you blame it on someone else. What Krull and the county Republican Central Committee did is in violation of state statute that governs the Indiana Gaming Commission. The statute says an organization having a fundraiser with prizes valued under \$1,000 has to apply for what it calls "an exemption." It's a simple process. If the prizes are worth more than \$1,000, the organization has to jump through hoops and spend some bucks to get approval to raise the money. Krull lied about the prizes being valued under \$1,000. And she got caught. Rather than an administrative prosecution by the Gaming Commission, Krull agreed that the county party would pay a \$500 fine and attend a Charity Gaming Seminar — which is like going to driving school if you get a speeding ticket. The raffle winners were announced at the April 2 Lincoln Day Dinner. Here's the real kicker about the fundraiser: Republicans didn't buy those raffle tickets to win a television, a fancy phone or a three-night stay in Las Vegas. Nope. Folks bought those raffle tickets for the chance to win three guns. Guns. Can you believe it? Lake County Republicans raffle guns. Lake County Democrats raffle fruitcakes. ❖



**Eric Bradner, Evansville Courier & Press:** Madonna's the front-runner to sing at the Super Bowl halftime show in Indianapolis this February, according to a host of reports that emerged last week. The news evoked some 20-year-old memories that really boil down to this: She'll probably get a better reception at Lucas Oil Stadium than she would if she was playing Bosse Field. The last time Madonna spent much time in Indiana, it was 1991, and she was in Evansville for the filming of "A League of Their Own." How'd she like it? "I may as well have been in Prague," she told TV Guide magazine. "For the first time in my life I felt very disconnected." Jay Kenworthy recalled the Material Girl's time in Evansville in a post last week on the blog Capitol & Washington. He said two of his cousins, then in their early teens, ran into Madonna as she was dining with a group of men at a restaurant in Evansville. They nervously approached her and asked how she liked the city. Madonna's response, according to Kenworthy's story: "Evansville sucks." ❖

**Thomas Friedman, New York Times:** The melancholy over Steve Jobs's passing is not just about the loss of the inventor of so many products we enjoy. It is also about the loss of someone who personified so many of the leadership traits we know are missing from our national politics. Those traits jump out of every Jobs' obituary: He was someone who did not read the polls but changed the polls by giving people what he was certain they wanted and needed before they knew it; he was someone who was ready to pursue his vision in the face of long odds over multiple years; and, most of all, he was someone who earned the respect of his colleagues, not by going easy on them but by constantly pushing them out of their comfort zones and, in the process, inspiring ordinary people to do extraordinary things. There isn't a single national politician today whom you would describe by those attributes, which is why the fake Jobs' obituary published in The Onion, the satirical newspaper, struck such a nerve: "Steve Jobs, the visionary co-founder of Apple Computers" — and the only American in the country who had any clue what he was doing — "died Wednesday at the age of 56." It went on to quote President Obama as saying that Jobs "will be remembered both for the life-changing products he created and for the fact that he was able to sit down, think clearly, and execute his ideas — attributes he shared with no other U.S. citizen. 'This is a dark time for our country, because the reality is none of the 300 million or so Americans who remain can actually get anything done or make things happen.'" What is John Boehner's vision? I laugh just thinking about the question. What is President Obama's vision? I cry just thinking about the question. The Republican Party has been taken over by an antitax cult, and Obama just seems lost. ❖





## Clinton shoots down veep talk

WASHINGTON - Hillary Clinton shot down speculation she could join the Obama 2012 ticket as vice president in 2012 in an exclusive interview with TODAY. Switching positions with Joe Biden, per rumors swirling around Washington, is not "in the realm of possibility," the secretary of state told Savannah Guthrie. "I do not think it's even in the realm of possibility, and in large measure because I think Vice President Biden has done an amazingly good job," Clinton told Guthrie in an interview that aired partially on Thursday. "He has taken on the burden of, you know, selling the economic plan, of traveling the country, of answering people's questions." The possibility of an Obama/Clinton ticket in 2012 has not even been raised to her, she said. "It's maybe a subject for speculation on Google, but it's not a serious issue in the administration," Clinton said.



## Tax exemption expansion urged

NDIANAPOLIS - A panel of state legislators heard testimony Wednesday on increasing the number of groups in the state exempted from paying property taxes (Kelly, Fort Wayne Journal Gazette). The Commission on State Tax and Financing Policy made no immediate recommendation on the matter, which could come up in the 2012 legislative session. Sen. Brandt Hershman, R-Buck Creek, seemed concerned about the scope of the proposal, which could cost local governments property tax revenue. "This feels to me like it would be a

dramatic expansion," he said. Hershman said he understands that some charitable organizations are facing difficult economic times, but he also noted that a significant number of properties are now off the tax rolls, which is having a demonstrable impact on the property tax base. Rep. Milo Smith, R-Columbus, wants every charitable group that qualifies for a federal income tax exemption to automatically receive the property tax break. "We need to have a policy on who we want to exempt, use state guidelines and apply them evenly around the state," he said, noting some counties are stricter on charitable exemptions than others. Currently, about \$20 billion worth of property statewide is exempted from property taxes because it falls in government, education, religious or charitable categories.

## Porter Co. stunned by E911 costs

VALPARAISO - Porter County Communications Director John Jokantas shocked County Council members Tuesday when he announced the need for a new E911 system at a price between \$20 million and \$40 million (NWI Times). The county can continue patching up deficiencies in the current system into the near future, he said, but the new equipment and infrastructure will be needed to respond to changes in bandwidths coming in 2030. "I was stunned by that figure," said Porter County Councilman Jim Biggs, R-1st. The council already is faced with the challenge of funding a \$2.2 million shortfall in the E911 budget, in addition to many other needs, including the call for a new animal shelter, he said. While the easiest option would be to tap into the proceeds from the sale of the county hospital to fund a new E911 system, Biggs said a wiser approach would be to include the request in the comprehensive plan

now in the works. Jokantas, who took over his post in August, does not have a plan to fund a new system. But he said the major companies that sell public safety radio equipment generally offer help in finding grant money. The cities and towns also could be asked to help pick up the cost of purchasing the radios used by their emergency responders, he said. The computer equipment currently used at the E911 center is 10 years old, he said.

## Coats, Burton laud trade agreements

WASHINGTON - U.S. Sen. Dan Coats (R-Ind.) voted in favor of new trade agreements with South Korea, Colombia and Panama. The three trade pacts will create American jobs and increase U.S. exports. "This is a long overdue bipartisan step forward to help create private-sector growth," Coats said. "Increasing American exports is a vital part of staying ahead of our global competitors. These trade agreements will provide fair access to new markets for Hoosier manufacturers, farmers and service providers." Rep. Dan Burton said, "The passage of the Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) is a tremendous step towards getting our economy back on track and putting Americans back to work. While the agreements will undoubtedly serve as a boon to our National economy by demonstratively increasing exports, the most critical benefit of these agreements being signed into law will be more Americans back to work. In Indiana, Hoosiers should particularly benefit, given that we have seen a 138% increase in exports over the past thirteen years. It is no longer enough for us to simply buy American, to compete in this harsh environment globally." we are going to have to sell American as well.