



Donnelly eyes jobs, campaign finance

Senator elect says New Albany debate turned the tide

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – About 12 hours after Democrat Joe Donnelly won an improbable U.S. Senate victory, I conducted a telephone interview with the congressman from Granger.

Donnelly began the 2012 election cycle looking at new 2nd CD maps that most observers believed would be tough for a Democrat to run in. Donnelly had gutted out a 2,500-vote victory over Republican Jackie Walorski in 2010.

He had originally lined up against U.S. Sen. Dick Lugar, but Democratic Party polling in late 2010 revealed that Lugar's reelection chances among Republicans were abysmally low. So Donnelly entered the Senate race, Indiana Democratic Chairman Dan Parker and other party leaders cleared the primary field, then sat and watched the GOP fratricide with Treasurer Richard Mourdock taking out the legendary



Republican senator.

While most national observers believed the Senate seat would remain in the GOP column even with Lugar out of the picture – perceiving Indiana to be a dogmatically

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Rape, change and an election

By **CHRISTINE MATTHEWS**

WASHINGTON – “It was what God intended.”

Social media was not kind to Republican U.S. Senate candidate Richard Mourdock on Election Night. Countless tweets and posts saying that Mourdock’s loss was “what God intended” (and many more unquotable things) represented the visceral reaction to his comments in the final moments of the first U.S. Senate



“The election season is over. Now a season of service begins.”

- Gov.-Elect Mike Pence



Howey Politics Indiana

is a non-partisan newsletter based in Indianapolis and Nashville, Ind. It was founded in 1994 in Fort Wayne.

It is published by
WWWHowey Media, LLC

Brian A. Howey, Publisher
Mark Schoeff Jr., Washington
Jack E. Howey, editor

Subscriptions

\$350 annually HPI Weekly
\$550 annually HPI Weekly and
HPI Daily Wire.

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debate that interrupted whatever momentum and message he had in the final

weeks. It seemed for many, a more urgent question than who would win the presidency was whether "the two GOP rape guys" (Akin and Mourdock) would win.

If you are one of the GOP rape guys, how could you possibly win an election? Early in the Bellwether barometer social media monitoring and well before the debate, a lot of the news coverage and buzz was that Todd Akin and Mourdock were similarly positioned Tea Party candidates who might cost the GOP safe Senate seats. The Todd Akin connection gradually dissipated as the campaign got under way and themes like "my way or the highway," the auto bailout, and the constitutionality of Social Security were more prevalent. Mourdock was also starting to get traction linking Donnelly to Obama, Harry Reid, and Obamacare – all of which were unpopular in the state.

It would have been a close election (leaning Donnelly in my opinion), even if Mourdock had not made his debate comments, because he was already suffering from the impression that he was not mainstream, that his views were extreme, and he wanted to inflict them on others. One-third of

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voters in our last poll said that Mourdock was extreme versus 5 percent

who said the same of Donnelly. By a 10-point margin, voters expressed more concern about Mourdock's rigid partisanship than Donnelly voting the Democratic party line.

In the final Howey/DePauw poll, nearly half (49%) of voters had an unfavorable impression of Mourdock. Most (87%) had heard his rape remark and four in 10 said it made them less likely to vote for him. Things were looking grim.

Whether it was spin or true belief, the Mourdock campaign insisted their polling had Mourdock up over Donnelly (+2) and was quite intent on proving other polls wrong.

Our last Howey/DePauw poll overshot the Donnelly margin, which I knew, but was very clear that Donnelly would win the U.S. Senate race. None of us – Fred Yang, Brian Howey or myself – thought it would end up a double digit win for Donnelly, but thought it looked like the mid to high single digits.

A thesis about who would turn out or, possibly, a bad polling practice had the electorate pegged at 56% over the age of 55 in the Mourdock polling. All the Republican candidates had big margins among seniors and,



in fact, they were the only age group that Mourdock won. Our final poll had a more accurate composition by age with 41% over 55. Presidential elections are younger than off-year elections so 2012 would be closer to 2008 than 2010.

We also interviewed 27% of voters on cell phones and the increase in cell phones had an impact on the data, I think making our independents a little too Democratic leaning in our final poll. In July, when the Wall Street Journal/NBC poll bumped their cell phone composition up to 30% from 25% and their data showed a bigger lead for Obama and a +11 Democratic party advantage, there was an outcry in Republican circles. Republican pollster Bill McInturff thought it might be a bit too Democratic, although their polling, in general, was quite accurate.

McInturff said and I completely co-sign this: "A little humility these days goes a long way, considering how complex and difficult this job is becoming."

Every time I do a poll, I know there is a margin of error and, of course, that it might fall outside of that too. But, nearly always, we get much more right than we get wrong.

For example, in the presidential race there were no surprises.

Our final Howey/DePauw poll had Romney up by 9 and he won by 10. According to exit polls, he won both men (+17) and women (+5) and results show he averaged in the mid to high 60% range in the doughnut counties.

Mourdock underperformed Romney in the doughnut counties by 10-13%. In our final Howey/DePauw poll, Romney was polling 57% in the doughnuts and Mourdock polled 10 points lower – 48%.

While Romney narrowly won women (+5), Mourdock lost them by 10 points, a gap which closed from our final poll which had Mourdock losing women more significantly. Our final poll had Mourdock virtually tied among men – a result that remained on Election Day.

What was really notable is that in our September poll, Republican gubernatorial candidate Mike Pence was leading women 46%-33% and he basically never improved upon that. In our October poll he was tied with John Gregg among women at 42%, although I wasn't expecting him to lose women by the 47%-52% he did and I think there was definitely a "Mourdock" impact on his race. In our final social media analysis, the words "rape, pregnancy, and abortion" were prominent for Mourdock, but unfortunately for Mike Pence, they also factored into his image and the perception that he was standing behind Mourdock.

On our final poll, Mourdock was getting 70% of the GOP vote – a losing proposition in a final survey. According to the exit poll, he ended up with 80%, while Pence had 87% and Romney 93%. Romney won independents 52%-41%, as did Pence (barely) 46%-44, while Donnelly won them 49%-40%.

Talk about a bellwether predictor of the Indiana results: Unfortunately for Mourdock it was his home county of Vanderburgh which he lost by 46%-50% while Romney won (54%-44%) and Pence won (51%-46%).

Putting on the Ritz

In the superintendent of public instruction race, we found incumbent Tony Bennett in a very tight race with Glenda Ritz. He was up only 40%-36% with one in four undecided. What concerned and puzzled me was that Bennett had less than 70% of the GOP vote, which was what Mourdock was polling and not a recipe for success. I was hopeful for him because our 2008 polling also showed a tight race and a high undecided.

Women – more likely the mom/teacher grassroots network I strongly suspect – were the reason Bennett lost. His Democratic opponent, Glenda Ritz, led 39%-35% among women in our last poll and by a very large 47%-30% margin among college educated women. Bennett led men by 46%-33%, but there were more undecided women (27%) than men (21%).

Usually a statewide office like this benefits from the strength of the Republican at the top of the ticket. Bennett was getting just two-thirds of Romney's voters in our last poll, just a little worse than Mourdock. But, as we know, there was a lot of ticket-splitting in the U.S. Senate race and so the benefit from the top of the ticket was mitigated.

We didn't ask any question beyond the ballot in this race, so our ability to demonstrate with data exactly why Bennett lost is limited. I think, anecdotally, that when you make teachers mad, even if the reforms benefit students, you get in hot water.

When former Washington, D.C., mayor Adrian Fenty lost his reelection bid, it was widely seen as a repudiation of his hard-charging, reform-enacting school chancellor Michelle Rhee. Change – too much, too fast – is hard to take. ❖

Matthews is president and CEO of Bellwether Research and Consulting.



Democrat Glenda Ritz celebrates her upset of Supt. Tony Bennett Tuesday.



Donnelly, from page 1

red state – the first Howey/DePauw Indiana Battleground Poll in March revealed the Donnelly/Mourdock race to be a tossup, tied at 35%. And it stayed that way until the fateful Oct. 23 debate when Mourdock uttered his infamous “God intended” rape remark, which not only turned the race on its ear, but gave Donnelly enough traction to get a 50-44 victory, with Libertarian Andrew Horning coming in at 6%.

Indiana joined Delaware, Nevada, Colorado and Missouri as states where Tea Party Republican nominees self-destructed. Donnelly was able to lay a strong campaign in place, and then withstood a withering assault of almost \$20 million in Super PAC and Republican Senatorial Committee money under the new Citizens United/Speech Now campaign finance environment. Donnelly’s win over Mourdock will go down in Hoosier history as one of the epic and improbable victories.

Here is my conversation with Donnelly:

Donnelly: Anything going on in your life?

HPI: I didn’t think anything could top 2008. But this year did. I’m trying to absorb everything that happened. Nobody could have written a script like this.

Donnelly: You could not have written this book.

HPI: When we came out with the poll last Friday and had you up by 11%, were your internals showing anything like that?

Donnelly: Yeah, our internals were just a couple points different than that. We were in the same exact place. The only difference was the Libertarian had a couple more points. You had 47-36, and we were 9 points up in our poll.

HPI: We were in the field Oct. 28-30. After that, \$9 million spilled into this race. Absolutely unprecedented. That’s an incredible amount of money. We expected our numbers to change. Put that into perspective.

Donnelly: Somebody told me they were driving yesterday and listening to Indy radio and it was a 20- to 25-minute drive and the only commercials were attack ads from the NRSC. He said, “Is there anything they haven’t bought yet?” I said, “I don’t know.” If you look at the amount of advertising, it is like nothing we have ever seen. Obviously it is a direct result of Citizens United decision.

But here’s what I found so inspiring: You had groups who decided the Indiana Senate seat was a piece of property and they were going to take it. And the people of Indiana said this is not a piece of property. This is ours. And we’re going to determine this election, thank you very much.

HPI: Will campaign finance reform be a legislative priority for you? As a journalist, I see smoke emanating from every window, vent and crack in the system.

Donnelly: It is broken. The Supreme Court decision brought us this system that simply doesn’t work, that has tried to take elections out of the hands of the people of our state. If we can make some reforms in that, I think



that would be a tremendous service to everybody.

HPI: What are your legislative priorities?

Donnelly: I am focused like a laser on jobs and job creation. As you know, President Ronald Reagan said the best social program is a job for Mom or Dad. That’s my priority. That’s the top of my list. We can’t get any of that done unless we work together. And so I have great relations with Republicans and Democrats. I don’t just represent Indiana Democrats. I represent every person and each person is equally valuable to the next person. I want to make sure I am the hired help, will hear everybody and serve everyone.

HPI: Do you have relationships in the Senate?

Donnelly: On both sides, actually. I plan to continue to grow those. When we work together, I think we can get a lot done.

HPI: And your relationship with Sen. Coats?

Donnelly: It has always been good. In his previous life Sen. Coats stopped by the office and tried to be very helpful in what can we do to make our state stronger.



We've had a very cordial relationship. I look forward to that and of course when you go to Washington as a senator, all you want to do is live up to the legacy and the example that Sen. Lugar and Sen. Bayh have given us. When I traveled with Evan about a month ago, we were just traveling along and we stopped at a Dairy Queen and he looked at me and said, "You know, one of the things about serving in the Senate was Richard Lugar and I, during our time there, worked closer together than any other two senators from any other state. That to me is, in bright lights, our tradition. This is not only what we expect of ourselves, but what the nation expects of us. It is to be a leading case for common sense.

HPI: We have the fiscal cliff and sequestration coming up here. Do you expect that to be dealt with between now and Dec. 31, or does the process go into next April or even August to get a comprehensive deal?

Donnelly: Actually the process has already begun with some folks talking to each other. We'll begin the process. I don't know the exact time lines on that. Everybody knows how serious this is. By getting the election out of the way, I think everybody can also leave all of the politics behind and solve this problem. I think this problem will be solved.

HPI: There was Sen. McConnell's quote that his top priority was to make President Obama a one-term president. Doesn't Obama have to really step it up and forge relationships with Republicans, who will begin to realize he'll be in office for the next four years?

Donnelly: He's the president for all of us. He understands that. He definitely needs to reach out to all the Republicans and all the Democrats. This will only get done



by everybody pitching in and working together. For me, I am going there feeling I represent what is best for America. Common sense, head down, work hard, that's who we are in Northern Indiana. I think that's where this kind of problem will be solved. The election is over. The president isn't going to run again. We can just focus on getting the work done.

HPI: Was the turning point of the campaign the New Albany debate? I know you don't want to pile on here, but our September poll showed the race to be neck and neck and then

after New Albany, it really seemed to break your way.

Donnelly: We were still ahead but our polling was still close at that time. After the debate our polling moved out a little bit more. I don't want to dwell on that. My focus is to bring Hoosiers together and stop worrying about Democrats or Republicans. That's what I want to tell everyone around the state. I'm the hired help. I don't want to work for just Democrats or Republicans. I want to work with every family in our state and you can expect my best every day.

HPI: I believe the Hoosier senatorial ice cream commitment actually began with Birch Bayh. Have you talked to him yet?

Donnelly: Yes, I did. I kid Evan saying we need to create a Dairy Queen app. ❖



The origins of defeat: Why Richard Mourdock lost

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

NASHVILLE, Ind. – A couple of days after Richard Mourdock upset U.S. Sen. Dick Lugar in the May primary, Howard County Republican Chairman Craig Dunn called me. Would I be open to a “clear the air” meeting with Mourdock?



My response was, “By all means.”

You know this story. I did something this cycle that I don’t normally do, which is to openly support a candidate in my weekly newspaper column that reaches about 300,000 readers and web viewers. I was very upfront with my readers about this. I told them why, and it mostly centered on

Lugar’s work dealing with weapons of mass destruction and the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat program, which I believe has made America much safer than it would have been had the Soviet nuclear, biological and chemical arsenal hit the black market.

But Mourdock won, in a landslide. HPI published two polls that not only showed how politically vulnerable Lugar was among Republican primary voters – an important distinction – but that he would likely lose.

I followed up with Dunn a few days later. Would there be a meeting? Wellllll, Dunn said, Mourdock was open to it, but his campaign manager, Jim Holden, nixed the idea. It was told to me later that Holden’s response was: “Only if Howey profusely apologizes and then gets down on his knees and kisses my ass.”

Not only would there be no meeting, but the Mourdock campaign subsequently dropped me from their media email lists.

In gauging political candidates and campaigns, an important element to me is “temperament,” particularly with someone who wants to serve in the U.S. Senate.

There were elements of the Mourdock campaign that immediately struck me as not only odd, but potentially destructive. From his February 2011 campaign kickoff onward, he pronounced himself an ardent opponent of “bipartisanship.” I’ve been covering politics since 1985 and

most candidates embrace the concept.

In the 48 hours after his primary victory, Mourdock doubled down on this with his now infamous CNN and MSNBC interviews that continued this take on deliberative legislative politics and his observation that he would work with Democrats only if they came over to his point of view. He told the Indianapolis Star he intended to become a partisan warrior, traversing the nation recruiting like-minded “zealots,” as he once put it.

I looked at gridlocked Washington and a polarized Congress – with a 12% approval rating – and as an opinion leader/shaper, viewed the Mourdock candidacy with alarm.

This happens to journalists who care about their states and communities. The classic example was Al Spiers, long-time Michigan City News-Dispatch editor, who saw his city being overrun in the post World War II era by illegal gambling and prostitution. He recruited a sheriff for La-Porte County, helped get him elected, and the hustlers and whores were run out of town. By the early 1960s, Michigan City was honored as an “All-American City.”

In the self-described zealot Mourdock, I saw that kind of character reaching Capitol Hill and becoming transfixed on an issue. This is how a Joseph McCarthy was created: A combination of zealotry, ambition and narcissism, with a bit of megalomania thrown in for good measure. Mourdock had traversed the Tea Party circuit in 2010,



Richard Mourdock Election Record

1988	8th CD	Lost primary
1990	8th CD	Lost general
1992	8th CD	Lost general
1994	Vanderburgh Co. Commission	Won general
1998	Vanderburgh Co. Commission	Won general
2002	Indiana Secretary of State	Lost convention
2004	Vanderburgh Co. Council	Lost general
2006	Indiana Auditor of State	Withdrew
2006	Indiana Treasurer of State	Won general
2010	Indiana Treasurer of State	Won general
2012	U.S. Senate	Lost general



and was adored. Despite his 50-44% loss to Joe Donnelly, he is still admired by the movement, Though Greg Fettig of Hoosiers for a Conservative Senate was scampering away from Mourdock Wednesday on WTHR-TV, finally viewing the man his group endorsed in Greenfield as "flawed."

In his honor, I will even acknowledge a "Murdock wing of the Indiana Republican Party" because it's really there. It exists. The people who fuel it are patriots. They are worried about America's future. They were right to get involved in the process. But at some point a movement's leader has to distill the coarse issues that motivate the people, and refine them to the point where they play to the mainstream.

You can make the case that by earning 44% of the vote on Tuesday, part of this Mourdock wing is mainstream. But 44% will rarely win you an election.

In Indiana, you have to play to the independents and get a sliver of the other party. Exit polling shows that Donnelly carried 14% of the Republican vote and won independents 49-40%. That Mourdock won 40% of the independents was amazing, because the figure rose from a dismal 17% in the final Howey/DePauw Indiana Battleground Poll. This can happen when almost \$6 million is spent in just a week to hammer home a point.

Murdock tried to change his core message of partisanship to one of teamwork, which most voters didn't buy. He lost 6% to the Libertarian. He angered a considerable segment of the Lugarites by citing the senator's "betrayal" of conservatives. Had Mourdock nuanced his message after the primary, courted Lugarites, attended forums to convince independents of his views, and developed relationships with key opinion shapers, you could make the case he could have covered that 6% deficit to Donnelly and won the election.

And as I pointed out in previous analyses, while Republicans tried to link Donnelly to President Obama – often with TV viewers seeing the Democrat's smiling face – Mourdock was done in by his own words, in his own voice, most famously by his "God intends" remark at the New Albany debate.

And then came the ultimate backlash. The Obama campaign ran radio ads in battleground Virginia and Colorado in the final days of the campaign featuring the Mourdock "God intends" quote. Mitt Romney lost both states by tiny margins. Will history reveal Mourdock as the proverbial straw/camel element in the 2012 presidential race? Perhaps. Any way you cut it, it's a fascinating arc for a geologist from Darmstadt.

Murdock and other conservatives will blame the "liberal media," but last Saturday morning when a Brown County guy named Brad, driving a beat up red 1979 Chevy pickup, dropped off a rick of wood at my cabin (he had

been deer hunting the night before) he asked me who I was going to vote for in the presidential race. He professed his allegiance to Mitt Romney and suggested my answer could influence the price of the wood.

I said, "Why, Romney, of course."

"Good answer," Brad replied.

When I asked him about the Senate race, his response stunned me: "I don't know about that Mourdock guy," he said, validating our polling that showed 87% had heard of Mourdock's debate quote.

Perhaps the most valuable player in this Senate race was a video tracker Indiana Democrat Chairman Dan Parker hired named Brandon Herget, who captured the "zealot" and Social Security and Medicare constitution comments that would be fodder for TV ads.

There is no question that Mourdock was a political disaster to himself and Indiana Republicans, who kicked away a Senate seat because they embraced a zealot. Indiana is a conservative state, and while we had the John Birch Society form here, it's been about 85 years since a radical movement took over.

As for Mr. Holden and his political instincts, I have something here for him, but it just slipped off my desk and landed on the floor. I'll just have to get up and bend over . . . ❖

Fettig blasts Mourdock

FISHERS - the aftermath of Mourdock's surprise loss, tea party leaders distanced themselves from him. Greg Fettig, a tea party leader who co-founded Hoosiers for a Conservative Senate, said Mourdock's campaign went awry as soon as he defeated Lugar (LoBianco, Associated Press).



"Murdock's campaign began unraveling the night of the primary when they tried to distance themselves from the tea party," Fettig said. "We lost about half our movement that night and they refused to have anything to do with them."

Fettig said he also believed Mourdock's campaign was poorly managed and allowed Democrat Joe Donnelly to paint Mourdock as an extremist. But, despite Mourdock's loss, he said, the campaign still succeeded in getting rid of Lugar, who he said had become "a fixture of Washington, big government bureaucracy." ❖



Pence survives a scare from surging John Gregg

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

NASHVILLE, Ind. - In 2011, the Mike Pence gubernatorial campaign was asked about Richard Mourdock's gathering insurgency against U.S. Sen. Dick Lugar.

Are you worried about potentially losing the most prolific Republican vote getter at the top of the ticket?

The answer from Pence spokesman Matt Lloyd was "no." There was no concern.

But in reality, the Mourdock challenge to Lugar, the primary upset and then the chaotic campaign that followed sucked out the energy from just about every other race on the Indiana ballot, including the gubernatorial contest. A \$30 million circus will eclipse anything in proximity.

The gubernatorial race - normally the most important in the state - played second banana. It became the under card.



By the time Pence was declared a 51-46% winner over Democrat John Gregg after 10 p.m., the damage of the Mourdock candidacy was dawning on everyone.

Pence ended up giving his victory speech in the cavernous end zone of Lucas Oil Stadium, which dwarfed the small crowd that remained to hear Pence give his speech. He was surrounded by grim looking family and friends. "This is really an overwhelming night for me," said Pence, who watched as Gregg came much closer than just about any Republican had expected. "This is not about us. This is not our moment. This is Indiana's moment."

On Monday night, Pence was shown on a Louisville TV station fleeing a reporter who questioned him about Mourdock. After his victory speech Tuesday night, the Pence campaign which had planned press availability, according to WTHR-TV, rushed the candidate away without an additional word.

For a congressman who came from news media origins - he hosted TV and radio programs before his Congressional career began - and had carried media shield legislation, it was a strange sequence. The normally gregarious campaign happy warrior found himself under his campaign's own shield.

To his credit, Pence had vowed to run a positive

campaign, and steadfastly refused to engage as Gregg attempted to tie the Republican to Mourdock and the Tea Party. Like Gov. Daniels, Pence can claim the high road even as the Senate race splattered mud across the entire spectrum.

As governor, Pence is already facing some unique challenges.

First, Republican Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Bennett was upset by Democrat Glenda Ritz, who ran a low-budget campaign that was sharply critical of many of the Bennett education reforms that had been backed by Gov. Mitch Daniels. It may have been yet another casualty of the Mourdock disaster.

Pence based much of his policy on education, vowing to expand vocational education while improving reading and math scores. Now he will have to work with Glenda Ritz. So now Hoosiers will have a Republican

governor and a Democratic superintendent. While this has happened before with Republican Suellen Reed serving with Democrat Govs. Frank O'Bannon and Joe Kernan, the new dynamic was certainly something not expected by Republicans.

With a 50-46% victory over Gregg, it will be tougher for Pence to claim a "mandate,"

particularly when the perception through the summer and early fall was that he was in a commanding lead. And since he refused to address any part of the "moral agenda" he spoke so frequently about in Congress, he will find himself in potentially politically dangerous territory when such legislation starts heading toward his desk in the coming six months from eager conservatives in the House and Senate.

On that front, it appears that Pence will have a super majority in both chambers, which could be a blessing or a curse. House Republicans believe they could end up with 69 seats, nine more than the current majority.

With President Obama's victory, Pence will now be faced with daunting questions about the installation of the Affordable Care Act - Obamacare.

He met with Gov. Daniels last summer and urged him to reject the state health exchanges.

"There is too much uncertainty surrounding the Affordable Care Act for Indiana to even consider implementing our own exchange," said Pence. "The national debate is far from over and the regulatory, fiscal and legal implications have the potential to cost Hoosier taxpayers and employers millions."

Pence now faces a future with Obamacare, and there will be an array of tough decisions that his new administration must face, along with writing a biennial bud-



get.

Gov.-Elect Pence told the crowd at Lucas Oil that he was "humbled" by the events of the day.

And he should be, for a variety of reasons. ❖

Pence makes pivot from candidate to planner

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - Gov.-elect Mike Pence made the quick pivot from candidate to administration builder as he met with Gov. Mitch Daniels just hours after winning the election.

Actually, Pence will be wearing another hat - congressman - with a little less than two months left on his term in the 6th CD. On top of putting together his new administration, he will also be in Congress where he and his colleagues must confront the "fiscal cliff" between now and the end of the year. Pence said he intended to finish his term in Congress.

When he met with Daniels and Statehouse reporters, Pence said he did so with a "great sense of humility and gratitude."

"The election season is over and the season of service begins this morning in this office," he said.

Longtime Chief of Staff Bill Smith will lead the transition and will be joined by longtime Pence associate Van Smith, Lt. Gov. Becky Skillman, Lt. Gov.-elect Sue Ellspermann, and Daniels Chief of Staff Earl Goode.

"We hope you see this victory as much as a vote of confidence in your leadership as an affirmation of our vision and our plans for the future," Pence said.

Pence will be confronted with an array of issues, ranging from putting together a biennial budget, to how to deal with Obamacare - with the likelihood of its repeal nil now that President Obama and a Democratic U.S. Senate have been elected - along with education issues and how to deal with Democratic Superintendent-elect Glenda Ritz, who upset Supt. Tony Bennett on Tuesday.

Pence said he was prepared to work with Ritz. "We'll sit down with our superintendent-elect and look for areas of common purpose," he said, but added that the House and Senate super majorities represent "a strong affirmation of the progress of education reform. I will look for

partners in both political parties to lead on education and that includes the new superintendent of public instruction."

Ritz based much of her campaign attacking many of the Daniels/Bennett reforms. And Pence reminded reporters that his wife and Ellspermann's husband are both educators.

Asked if Ritz's election would prompt him to seek legislation for an appointed superintendent - both Republican and Democratic party platforms this year called for that - Pence wouldn't commit to that.

As for agency heads, Pence said he would consider current Daniels administration officials and will bring in others. He said his victory Tuesday "was as much a vote of confidence in this administration as well as plans we articulated." He added that he had a "commitment to continuity and a commitment to aspiration."

Pence said he was committed to achieving his 10% across the board income tax cut, adding, that his proposal was "not just a campaign agenda, but a governing agenda. Yes, we're going to sit down with leaders in both parties in General Assembly." He said if the tax cut is achieved, Indiana would have the lowest tax rate in the nation and added, "We may put it on a billboard facing out from every Indiana interstate."

In August, Pence announced his opposition to the creation of the Obamacare state health exchanges. It could become one of the most dramatic decisions of his new administration. If the state doesn't create the exchange, the federal government will do so. "We provided a very thoughtful recommendation" to Gov. Daniels, he said. "We continue to believe that will be the right policy for this administration and the next."

The only social issue that came up concerned a possible "personhood" amendment. "We'll listen to members of the state legislature on issues of a very broad nature. We ran with a focus on jobs and schools."

Curt Smith of the Indiana Family Institute told HPI that because the appellate court struck down the defunding of Planned Parenthood, legislation is likely to be proposed by State Rep. Eric Turner and is in the works. As a congressman, Pence urged the defunding, and that could become the first type of that legislation to come to his desk, now that Republicans control both chambers with super majorities. ❖





Social media became path for Ritz upset

By **CHRISTINE MATTHEWS**

WASHINGTON - Glenda Ritz relied on a grassroots social media campaign that really picked up in the week before the election, with a very significant surge of comments on social media from Nov. 3-6 including mentions of Bennett cutting music and fine arts, privatizing schools, too many standardized tests, and a call to "stop Bennett."

Indiana Bellwether Barometer
Howey Politics Indiana

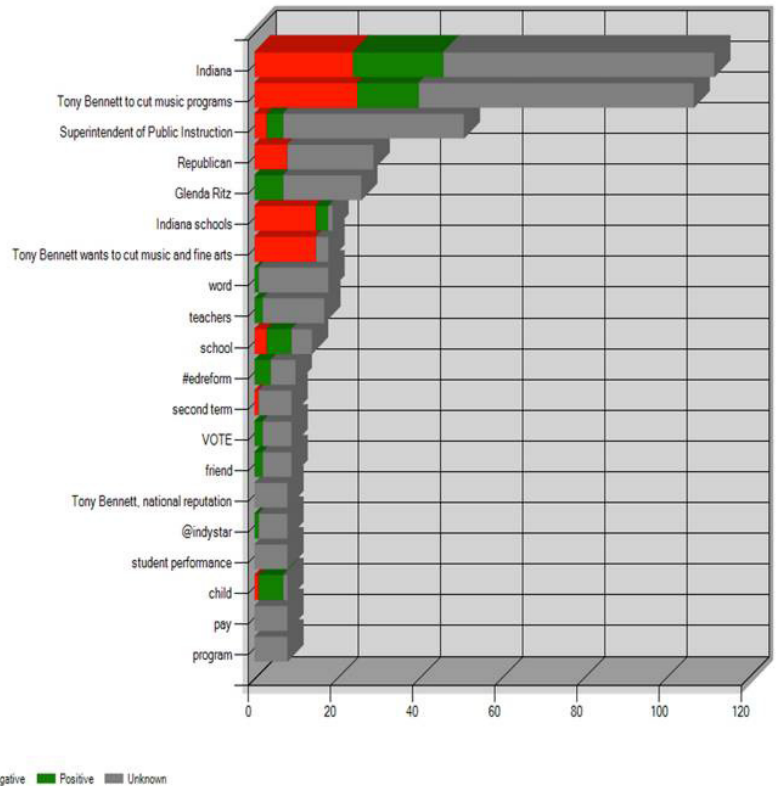


While the Bennett campaign raised so much more money, they spent it on television while Ritz invested in the very powerful mom/teacher grassroots network to spread her message.

These charts are actually probably the most interesting of the entire social media monitoring program we conducted because Ritz's campaign was almost entirely grassroots and social and this analysis offers an explanation of her key messages and how they took

hold the week before the election when one in four voters was still undecided in this race.

Categories in the same sentences as Tony Bennett (20)



Categories in the same documents as Tony Bennett (219)

A-F system Bennett campaign - heavy advantage in funding Bennett concedes to Giltz Bennett grading system too complex, favors affluent Bennett supported charter school expansion Bennett wants to cut music education Bennett's approach may not work for poor kids Bennett's merit pay plan criticized for-profit schools Glenda Ritz Glenda Ritz, award-winning teacher READ-3 - High stakes 3rd grader test criticized National education experts: will public support Bennett? Privatization of the public education system Public education for all children Ritz attacks bottom-line approach Superintendent of Public Instruction superintendent race **Tony Bennett to cut music programs** Tony Bennett wants to cut music and fine arts Tony Bennett, national reputation Too much emphasis on standardized tests veiled attempt



The senate and gubernatorial elections were waged - by both parties and countless outside groups - predominantly on television so what the campaigns were doing and how they were messaging was more transparent. ❖



Despite the Mourdock effect, House Republicans gain 69-seat super majority

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – Some House Republicans didn't know if a super majority was such a good idea. But Speaker Brian C. Bosma embraced it.

And now, here it is, 69 Republican seats, an increase of nine, fueled mostly by 10 newly created open seats that went overwhelmingly Republican. There are now 19 new Republicans.

"We have had excellent candidate recruitment, and Hoosiers have elected a group of leaders who already have a track record of job creation," said Speaker Bosma. "The majority of our new members are small business owners who have experience meeting payroll, balancing budgets, thinking about the bottom line, and creating and retaining jobs.

"Hoosiers told us they want their state to live within its means, promote job creation and prepare today's students for tomorrow's jobs. Hoosiers have spoken, and have elected 19 new members to our caucus," said Bosma.

Even though the Richard Mourdock Senate disaster helped defeat State Reps. Cindy Noe, Bruce Borders and Timothy Motsinger in the open HD92, the GOP was to defeat several incumbent Democrats on their way to a historic night.

Borders lost the only incumbent-on-incumbent race to State Rep. Greg Battles, who won by just a few dozen votes. Democrat State Reps. Win Moses, Phil Pflum and Peggy Welch all lost, as did former State Rep. Trent Van Haften, who lost to State Rep. Wendy McNamara. Pflum was defeated by Republican Dick Hamm of Richmond, who finally won a seat after multiple attempts going back more than a decade.

Republican State Rep. Jack Lutz won a narrow race and the GOP held on to Lt. Gov.-Elect Sue Ellspermann's HD74, which was won by Lloyd Arnold. St. Joseph County Councilman Dale DeVon won HD5, the seat vacated by State Rep. Craig Fry, who coordinated the House campaigns after Democrats deposed B. Patrick Bauer as head of the caucus. Bauer is expected to seek to regain control of the tiny caucus today.

The last came when Schererville President Hal Slager (pictured below) upset Democrat Tommy O'Donnell in HD15 by a little over 500

votes early this morning.

Bosma and HRCC director Mike Gentry tweeted and texted the new majority around 1 a.m. Wednesday.

Incoming freshmen helped fuel the super majority as the GOP swept through most of the 10 open seats as John Price, Todd Huston, Steven Braun, Timothy Harman, Rick Niemeyer, Sharon Negele, Dennis Zent, Ben Smaltz, Cindy Meyer Ziemke, Thomas Washburne, and David Ober all won mostly uncompetitive races.

Republicans Jim Lucas and Alan Morrison - like Negele both making a second attempt - also won.



Indiana State Rep - Dist 15 100% Reporting

Candidate	Percentage	Votes
Slager, Hal	51%	13,926
O'Donnell, Thomas (i)	49%	13,362

Indiana State Rep - Dist 42 100% Reporting

Candidate	Percentage	Votes
Morrison, Alan	50%	12,617
Spelbring, Mark	50%	12,490

Indiana State Rep - Dist 45 100% Reporting

Candidate	Percentage	Votes
Battles, Greg (i)	50%	12,487
Borders, Bruce (i)	50%	12,398

Indiana State Rep - Dist 60 100% Reporting

Candidate	Percentage	Votes
Mayfield, Peggy	59%	13,844
Welch, Peggy (i)	41%	9,594

Indiana State Rep - Dist 87 100% Reporting

Candidate	Percentage	Votes
Hale, Christina	50%	16,237
Noe, Cindy (i)	50%	16,193



Incoming House Republican freshmen include (from left) Jim Lucas, Sharon Negele, Peggy Mayfield and Dick Hamm.

Going into Tuesday, Gentry fretted that Mourdock's "God intends" rape remark in an Oct. 23 debate would impact down ballot races.

Indiana Democratic Chairman Dan Parker said that the Mourdock controversy played out mostly in Indianapolis, helping to defeat Rep. Noe. It might have had a role in the defeat of Motsinger, but Democrats hit him with a weekend mailer tying him to campaign contributions by convicted financier Tim Durham. It was that reason that GOP allies like the Indiana Chamber had backed Motsinger's primary opponent in May.

Parker said that the Mourdock issue also had legs in Northern Indiana, though Rep. Lutz was able to out-distance Democrat Melanie Wright.

Bauer to battle Pelath for leadership

A dramatically shrunken caucus of Indiana House Democrats will decide Thursday whether their leadership looks to the future or the past (Carden, NWI Times). The Times has learned state Rep. Pat Bauer, D-South Bend, who was removed as House Democratic leader this summer due to his dictatorial style, is actively seeking restoration to his former leadership post. Opposing him is a core group of six Democratic representatives, including state Rep. Linda Lawson, D-Hammond, who became leader after Bauer was deposed. They plan to elect as leader state Rep. Scott Pelath, D-Michigan City, during a party meeting Thursday afternoon. Lawson would become Pelath's deputy, but with more responsibility than that position traditionally entails.

Schneider, Waltz survive

State Sen. Scott Schneider survived an intense challenge from Democrat Tim DeLaney, winning 34,388 to 33,413. In HD36, State Sen. Brent Waltz defeated State Rep. Mary Ann Sullivan by a 53-47% margin, winning by more than 5,000 votes. Appointed State Sen. Pete Miller, taking the seat of Secretary of State Connie Lawson, won a

comfortable 68-32% victory. State Sen. Patricia Miller easily defeated former representative John Barnes 59-41%. State Sen. Vaneta Becker defeated Terry White in HD50 60-40%. Rodric Brayh won the race for his father's Senate seat by a 71-29% margin.

Senate leadership chosen

The Indiana Senate Majority Caucus met Wednesday in Indianapolis to elect their leadership team. Thirty-five incumbents and two senators-elect gathered to re-elect State Sen. David Long (R-Fort Wayne) as their choice for Senate President Pro Tempore and State Sen. Jim Merritt (R-Indianapolis) as Majority Caucus Chair.

Long has served as President Pro Tempore since 2006, and Merritt has held his leadership post since 2004.

Earlier this year, Long appointed State Sen. Brandt Hershman (R-Buck Creek) as Senate majority floor leader and State Sen. Ryan Mishler (R-Bremen) as Senate majority whip.

Long said he expects the 2013 Indiana General Assembly to be productive on a variety of issues, but the top priority will be passing a fiscally responsible, balanced budget. "Senate Republicans look forward to working with our colleagues in the General Assembly and Governor-elect Pence to craft commonsense pro-growth policies that will build upon Indiana's foundation of job creation and fiscal responsibility," Long said. "The cornerstone of these efforts will be the passage of another honestly balanced two-year budget for our state."

Anderson Democratic Senator Tim Lanane, who Wednesday was voted leader of the Senate's minority caucus, has experience dealing with a quorum-proof majority in his chamber and says super majorities can be dangerous. "The responsibility on the minorities under those circumstances. It really rises to make sure that the public hears all sides of a debate," Lanane says. ❖



Walorski barely wins in 2nd CD; money floods in to help Bucshon win

By **MARK SCHOEFF JR.**

WASHINGTON – In September, Dave Crooks was feeling good about his chances to win the 8th CD.

The Democrat said that an internal poll showed him within six points of incumbent Republican Rep. Larry Bucshon. Then outside money started pouring into the district to buy ads on Terre Haute and Evansville television.

The avalanche of Super Pac spending on Bucshon's behalf – including \$750,058 from Citizens for a Working America and \$114,340 from the American Action Network – was too much for Crooks to overcome.

"We felt the earth move in a very short amount of time – and we just couldn't climb out of it," Crooks said in an HPI interview. "They did a great job of tying in the president and somehow connecting him at my hip. It drove my numbers down."

In the end, Bucshon prevailed, 53.4%-43.1% with 3.6% going to libertarian Bart Gadau. Bucshon also bested Crooks in fundraising -- \$1.2 million to \$971,978, according to Federal Election Commission filings as of Oct. 17.

"It took me more than a year-and-a-half to raise \$1 million," said Crooks, a radio executive and former state representative. "In less than a month, there was \$1 million of outside money hammering away at my name and voting record."

Crooks also benefited from independent expenditures. The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee spent \$516,483, according to the Center for Responsive Politics.

"The outside influence was pretty much a wash," Bucshon said in an HPI interview.

A cardiovascular surgeon, Bucshon said he won his first re-election because he consistently communicated to voters that he is a fiscal conservative who wants to reform social insurance programs, rein in the Environmental Protection Agency and overturn the health care reform law.

His office also was fastidious in responding to tens of thousands of constituent inquiries.

"We were able to get our message out over the last few years," Bucshon said. "People appreciated that level of communication with their member [of Congress] and they awarded it with a win."

Crooks acknowledges he may not have won even if outside spending was not a factor. He was running in a difficult political environment, where President Barack Obama only drew 24% of the vote in Daviess County, where Crooks lives.



Republican Jackie Walorski celebrates after narrowly winning Tuesday. She will almost certainly face a well-financed challenge in 2014. (South Bend Tribune Photo)

"It's tough for a Democrat to get a [ticket] split in southern Indiana, unless you're running against someone talking about rape and God," Crooks said.

He was referring to Democratic Senate candidate Joe Donnelly's victory over Republican Richard Mourdock, whose campaign tanked after he said in a debate that pregnancies resulting from rape are God's will.

Donnelly gave up his 2nd CD seat in order to run for the Senate. The race to replace him was the closest in the state. Republican Jackie Walorski edged Democrat Brendan Mullen, 49% - 47.6%, with libertarian Joe Ruiz taking 3.4%.

The money competition between Walorski, a for-



mer state representative, and Mullen also was close. Walorski had raised \$1.6 million and Mullen, an Iraq war veteran, had raised \$1.1 million as of Oct. 17. Outside groups spent about \$600,000 on each candidate.

When every vote counts, ground operations are decisive.

"I attribute the victory to an awesome grassroots network," Walorski said in an HPI interview. "It's that team effort that makes the difference in these kinds of races."

The day after the vote, Mullen was exhausted but proud of what he accomplished as a rookie.

"As a first-time candidate, I'm so thrilled with what we put together," Mullen said in an HPI interview. "We marched the ball down the field. We turned it over on downs on the one-yard line."

Despite the negative ads and tough rhetoric that highlighted the contest that stretched from South Bend to Wabash, Walorski suggested that voters were looking for someone who could bridge the partisan chasm in Washington.

"Our message resonated – what we've done in the state of Indiana we can do at the federal level," Walorski said. "We can work across the aisle. That has to be the attitude that prevails in Congress."

During the campaign, Mullen asserted that Walorski was changing her political stripes to appeal to an electorate seeking moderation. He said that Walorski, the former assistant Republican floor leader, had been a fierce partisan in the Indiana House.

The day after the election, Mullen was conciliatory.

"I salute and applaud Jackie Walorski and her husband Dean for wanting to serve our country," Mullen said. "I urge her to govern in the moderate voice she campaigned on."

It sounds as if Mullen will be monitoring whether she does. For the time being, he plans to concentrate on raising his young family and running a business that assists Indiana National Guard members and their families. But he's not ruling out another run.

"This is not the last you guys are going to see me," Mullen said. "I'm going to continue to serve our country in one capacity or another."

It's also almost certain that the 8th and 2nd districts will be competitive in 2014. ❖



BRENDAN MULLEN

Lessons, winners & losers from Tuesday's election

By **CHRIS SAUTTER**

WASHINGTON - Lessons/Winners & Losers From 2012:

Lessons

■ Elections matter—The country would likely be a very different place had Al Gore become president—no war in Iraq and no tax cuts for the wealthy that the country couldn't afford. Obama and Romney gave the country two very different visions. No president can implement it all, but the president provides direction and tone. The same is true for other offices. Joe Donnelly will be a much different senator for Indiana than Richard Mourdock would have been.

■ Democrats can win in Indiana—It is still a red state, but Joe Donnelly and Glenda Ritz demonstrated Democrats can still win in Indiana. Now the Democrats who run for Congress and General Assembly have to learn from their success.

■ Republicans have a Latino problem—Obama won 70% of the Latino vote. Republicans cannot continue to demonize people who come to America to seek a better life.

■ Republicans have a women problem—Obama carried women by double digits again, in spite of an economy that has hit women hard. The reason is the Republican pre-occupation with laws that restrict the ability of women to make their own health care decisions. The gender gap will grow unless Republicans change their focus.

■ The youth vote will remain a force—Voters between 18-30 made up an even larger percentage of the total electorate in 2012 than 2008. So much for the theory that 2008 was an aberration.

■ Hoosier Democrats have an identity problem—Evan Bayh controlled the Indiana Democratic Party from the late 1980's until 2010 when he left the U.S. Senate. During that time, the party rose to new heights, but now has atrophied. When Bayh was in control, the party was about him. With Bayh gone, Democrats have to re-establish an identity or settle for occasional wins that happen largely because the Republican opponent was unusually flawed.

Winners

■ Barack Obama—Badly underestimated by Republicans, Obama won an impressive victory with the





coalition (minorities, young people, and women) he built in 2008 as reliable as ever.

■ **Bill Clinton**—The “Persuader-in-Chief” proved to be the most important surrogate of the campaign. His hour-long speech was the hit of the Democratic National Convention and he continued to sway voters on the campaign trail. He is arguably the most talented American political figure alive today.

■ **David Axelrod & David Plouffe**—The twin leaders of the Obama political operation for the 2nd time ran a nearly flawless campaign. They turned the election into a choice on terms most favorable to Obama. And, along with campaign manager Jim Messina and others in the Obama senior command, they assembled an organization in swing states that delivered the vote in numbers few believed would be possible for a president saddled with a struggling economy and high unemployment.

■ **Joe Donnelly**—Donnelly bet his political career that Richard Mourdock would defeat Dick Lugar, giving him a decent shot at a Senate seat. Donnelly’s friendly personality, moderate politics, and well-delivered message made him an attractive alternative to the dour and unappealing Mourdock, especially when Mourdock stumbled at the end.

■ **Mike Pence**—Despite winning by only 4 points, Pence ran a solid campaign with well-produced TV ads. For the most part, he kept his worst instincts under wraps. Pence now faces the challenge of following a very skilled and popular governor.

■ **Glenda Ritz**—Ritz is the 1st Democrat to win the office of Superintendent of Public Instruction since John Loughlin did it in 1970 (Loughlin was recruited to run by Larry Conrad at a South Bend Dingus Day celebration that year). Ritz, a veteran teacher and teacher’s association leader, put together an impressive coalition of parents, teachers, and unions to gain the upset despite meager funding.

■ **Indiana State Teachers Association**—ISTA may no longer be the power of years past, but proved it still had enough muscle to oust conservative Republican incumbent Tony Bennett who had been implementing changes that went too far too fast.

■ **The Ground Game**—Both Obama’s campaign nationally and Glenda Ritz’s campaign in Indiana showed that field remains critical to winning.

■ **Women**—Women went for Obama by 11% and

gave the president an advantage that was critical to his re-election. Women won key U.S. Senate races in Massachusetts (Elizabeth Warren), Wisconsin (Tammy Baldwin), North Dakota (Heidi Heitkamp), and Missouri (Claire McCaskill). Indiana will have two women in the congressional delegation for the 1st time as Republicans Jackie Walorski and Susan Brooks won replacing Joe Donnelly and Dan Burton.

Losers

■ **Republicans (nationally)**—Republicans can’t continue to run on the Tea Party platform and survive. Senate candidates like Mourdock and Todd Aiken have badly damaged the party brand. And a demographic clock is ticking that will soon place once pure red states into contention while turning contested states more blue.

■ **Democrats (Indiana)**—The Indiana Democratic congressional delegation is down to an historic low of just two members. Democrats are completely irrelevant in the Indiana General Assembly. It’s

time for Indiana Democrats to build upon the successes of Donnelly and Ritz and become a real player in the state again.

■ **The Tea Party**—The Tea Party cost Republicans sure-bet U.S. Senate seats in Indiana and Missouri making it 5 Senate seats in the past two cycles.

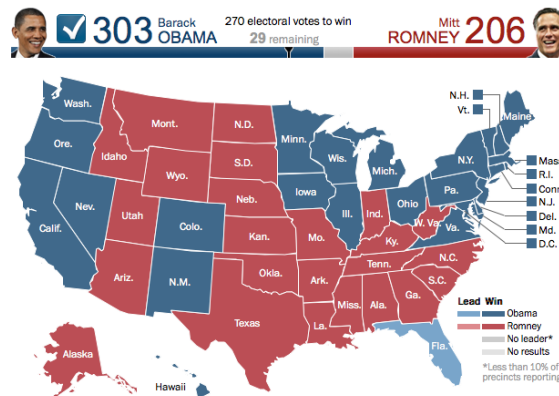
■ **Karl Rove**—George W. Bush’s political savant and his Super Pac American Crossroads spent over \$100 million on attack ads and lost big.

■ **FOX News**—FOX News had been as assiduous as Mitch McConnell in trying to make Obama a 1-term president. Now FOX is one of the year’s biggest sore losers.

■ **Voter Intimidation**—The Republicans dual strategy for 2012 was to overwhelm voters with Super Pac funded attack ads and pass laws that constrict the electorate by passing restrictive voter ID laws and scaling back early voting. The strategy failed and voters showed themselves willing to wait in line for hours.

■ **Billionaires**—Billionaires Sheldon Adelson, the Koch brothers, and others spent a fortune trying to defeat Obama and Democratic Senate candidates to no avail. Unfortunately, the millions they spent amount to spare change to these guys.

■ **Election Administration**—Once again election officials in many locations were unprepared for the high turnout. There is no excuse for Americans to have to stand in line for two and three hours to vote. ❖





Two wins keep Indiana Democrats from irrelevance

By **SHAW FRIEDMAN**

LaPORTE - With wins in two big statewide races on Tuesday, Indiana Democrats are proving the naysayers wrong who said the party was headed to "irrelevance" over the next couple of election cycles.

State Chair Dan Parker was right on the money when he stated on Election Night that Hoosier voters have become far more discerning and despite the state's normal inclination to be among the first to "light up red" on presidential election nights, a peek behind the numbers shows just how many voters actually split their tickets.



From a party building standpoint, having U.S. Senator Joe Donnelly to rally around will be huge. Donnelly's solid 140,000 - vote statewide win not only captured a fair share of independents and Lugar Republicans,

but what was not mentioned much in media reports was the rock-solid support Donnelly enjoyed from his own Democratic base.

It was a campaign that rallied the faithful. LaPorte County provided a 12,000-vote margin for Donnelly and St. Joseph (Donnelly's home county) gave him an impressive 25,000 vote margin. Lake County Chairman Tom McDermott and his powerful precinct organization delivered an astounding 72,000 vote margin which reflected both organizational strength and Donnelly's tremendous appeal to blue collar Democrats.

Joe Donnelly's name proved a powerful motivating tool for Democrats in northern Indiana to help spur voters to the polls. Sure, Mourdock's meltdown in the final debate was icing on the cake, but the Donnelly camp was astute in knowing how to rally the base and had actually pulled even with Mourdock at the time of the debate gaffe. The Donnelly camp also never overplayed their hand and consistently rallied the faithful while not sending messages that would cool support among independents or Lugar Republicans.

Then there's "Glenda the Good" and what a heart-warming story of a grassroots campaign that showed that Hoosier voters do reject the politics of extremism embod-

ied by School Superintendent Tony Bennett. With hardly a nickel to rub together, but shoelace and a well run campaign by the teachers' union and the Winston-Terrell campaign shop, the Ritz success story is one that bears repeating.

It's a tale of hard work, strong messaging (through radio ads) and the ability to ride a powerful resentment that had developed statewide against Bennett (and the governor's) incessant attacks on teachers, on public schools and on school unions. This was a powerful rejoinder to those who wished to declare the ISTA and its allies as "dead or dying." The ISTA and its members quietly went to work rallying their troops and spreading their message via emails and other communications to their members and their families and friends. Tony Bennett's defeat ought to send a real shudder to the powerful voucher backers and for-profit school entities who thought Indiana was full of a bunch of rustic hicks ripe for the picking for their privatization schemes.

To see a flummoxed state GOP chair have to explain the Ritz loss, particularly at a time when the outgoing governor was claiming his privatization initiatives in education as signature achievements, gives some real encouragement to those who want an effective rejoinder to this right wing crowd's attack on the public schools.

Although redistricting took its expected toll on both Indiana House Democrats and congressional races, Democrats still showed the flag in some remarkable places demonstrating there is potency and viability in the Hoosier Democratic brand. Despite Republican efforts to gerry-mander the 2nd District into something thought unattainable for Democrats, Brendan Mullen came within a wisp of beating heavily favored Tea Party Republican Jackie Walorski.

Both the Donnelly win and the Glenda Ritz wins ought to hearten Hoosier Democrats and reinforce that we can compete and win at the state level. We've gone through cycle after cycle without a win statewide and both of these victories show that strong candidates combined with powerful messages can motivate our base and bring over enough free-thinking Republicans and independents to win. ❖

Shaw R. Friedman is former legal counsel for the Indiana Democratic Party and a regular contributor to Howey Politics Indiana.



The Mourdock mistake was costly

By JACK COLWELL

SOUTH BEND - The Mourdock mistake was costly.

It cost Republican Richard Mourdock his chance for a seat in the U.S. Senate. His race with Democrat Joe Donnelly had been a toss-up. Mourdock was expecting tens of millions of dollars from super PACs to break the tie in his favor.



Then, in an Oct. 23 debate, he said that a pregnancy from rape "is something God intended to happen."

But "Murdock mistake" has another meaning, one beyond his delving unnecessarily into controversial views about God's intent in rape. The other meaning of "Murdock mistake" is that the Club for Growth and other conservative groups instrumental in securing the Republican nomination for Mourdock made a mistake.

A costly mistake for Republicans.

The forces seeking to buy the seat for Mourdock - and themselves - thought they could keep him quiet and let the 30-second TV ads do the talking. They also underestimated Donnelly, figuring they could destroy him with claims that the moderate Democrat really is a far-left liberal.

Sen. Richard G. Lugar, defeated by Mourdock amid attacks from conservative groups that resented Lugar reaching across the aisle in bipartisan efforts, would have won Tuesday.

So, Indiana is another example of Tea Party fervor in nominating uncompromising Republicans who turn off general election voters in the fall. This has helped for two elections now to assure that Harry Reid remains majority leader in the Senate.

Remember Christine "I am not a witch"

O'Donnell last time in Delaware and tea party choices that threw away victory in Nevada and Colorado?

Now, we have Mourdock. And Todd Akin in Missouri, who told of the wondrous way women's bodies prevent pregnancy in "legitimate rape." Indiana and Missouri were states where Republicans couldn't possibly lose for the Senate - until Mourdock and Akin did.

The Mourdock mistake cost Republicans a lot of votes in other races in Indiana, a factor in holding down the victory margin in the race for governor, in defeat of the incumbent superintendent of public instruction and in

enabling Democrat Brendan Mullen to come close to upset of Republican Jackie Walorski in the 2nd Congressional District, a district redrawn to be solidly Republican.

The Mourdock mistake cost Republicans in races beyond Indiana. Tens of millions of dollars and other resources spent by conservative super PACs and party organizations in an effort to salvage the unsalvageable Mourdock could have been used elsewhere, perhaps with decisive effect, if Indiana had remained a "sure bet." It could have, with Lugar again sweeping through Republican and independent voter ranks and getting significant support from moderate Democrats.

The Mourdock mistake even affected the presidential race.

On Oct. 25, two days after the "something God intended" remark by Mourdock, the Associated Press reported that Mitt Romney "has erased President Barack Obama's 16 point advantage among women." The story was based on an AP nationwide poll, conducted Oct. 19-23, and thus not affected by what occurred in an Indiana debate on the night of Oct. 23.

While the findings were criticized as reflecting too much closing of the gender gap, other polls also were showing that women, so much more in support of Obama than men, were becoming less supportive after that first debate. Women, especially the young, single woman counted on heavily by Obama, were paying more attention to Romney's stress on jobs and the economy.

Then the Mourdock mistake. National news. Subject of ridicule on late night television shows.

Romney, unfortunately for him, had just provided a TV ad endorsing Mourdock. Although Romney quickly said he disagreed with Mourdock's opposition to abortion in cases of rape or incest, he would not withdraw his endorsement. And the Obama campaign ran ads in other states combining Mourdock's words on rape and Romney's words of endorsement.

Focus was off Romney's talk of the economy and back on social issues. On Democratic claims of a "war on women." On what Mourdock just said. On what Akin had said.

Obama won in the key battleground states, though by slim margins, with women voters making the difference. The gender gap was back, was big.

This is not a claim the Mourdock mistake cost Romney the presidency. But it was one of the factors in the presidential race. And in many ways it was a very costly mistake. ❖

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



McDermott turned out massive Democrat vote

By **RICH JAMES**

MERRILLVILLE – If the Tuesday election in Northwest Indiana had been a prize fight, they would have stopped it in the first round. Democrats taught a somewhat cocky bunch of Republicans a thing or two about politics. It was a shining night for Thomas McDermott Jr., Lake County Democratic chairman, who turned out massive numbers of Democrats.



U.S. Rep. Peter J. Visclosky, D-Merrillville, led the ticket in Lake County, pulling more than 125,000 votes. The only Democrat to garner more votes in the county was President Obama with almost 127,000 votes. Democrats ran the table in Lake County, including a 72,000-vote plurality for Joe Donnelly, who won the U.S. Senate race.

Things weren't much better for Republicans in Porter County, which no longer can claim to be a stronghold for the GOP. Democrats won all statewide races and all county races that were contested.

It was the worst of nights for Kim Krull, Lake County Republican chairwoman, who made an egregious error in supporting Richard Mourdock over U.S. Sen. Richard Lugar in the primary. Krull and the Lake County Tea Partiers have been in a freefall since.

The only outcome that can be considered a success for the GOP in Lake County was Hal Slager's win over Democrat Thomas O'Donnell in the 15th House District. But Krull and company can't do too much boasting in that the GOP-controlled General Assembly drew that district to favor a Republican. And the state Republicans flooded the race with money. Republicans spent a good deal of money around the county, both for state and local races.

There were large Joel Phelps signs across the 1st Congressional District in his race against Visclosky, who is perhaps the most popular Democrat in Northwest Indiana. Before the election, Phelps was quoted as saying he felt from the response he was getting that he was going to do what no one has been able to do in 30 years – beat Visclosky. And as the first numbers trickled in Tuesday evening, Phelps told the Times of Northwest Indiana, "People are ready for something new."

So ready are people for something new that Visclosky won by 91,011 votes. After he lost, Phelps said,

"I think we showed that Lake County and the region (are) starting to wake up to a new vision." Hello? By a margin of 91,000 votes the region just said it is quite happy with the vision Visclosky is providing.

Then there is the county surveyor's race in Lake County where Republican Eric Krieg ran a brash, reckless campaign against incumbent Democrat George Van Til. It was Krieg who early in the campaign blamed Van Til for the West Nile virus in the county because there was water in roadside ditches. Although Krieg threw a ton of mud, none of it stuck.

If the voters already didn't know what Krieg was made of, he showed his true colors in the last week of the campaign. Krieg said that if elected he wouldn't quit his job as an engineer at the BP refinery in Whiting. I guess he was going to do the surveyor's job while the rest of the world was at home for dinner.

But Krieg apparently caught a bit of static for that comment and a few days later said that he would indeed quit his job at BP. Fortunately, he won't have to make that decision. It also was good to see Van Til win in spite of the dog and pony show the FBI put on when agents seized records from Van Til's office during the summer. To this day, we haven't heard the first word about wrongdoing, despite what a former employee had to say. Despite all the hullabaloo, Van Til won by 46,000 votes.

And Lake County Councilman Rick Niemeyer, R-Lowell, will be heading to the General Assembly in January after winning the newly created 11th District state representative seat. It seems like yesterday that Rick's father, the late Ernest Niemeyer, was serving in the state Senate. The word in the wind is that Larry Blanchard may replace Niemeyer on the county council. Niemeyer won that seat after Blanchard decided not to seek reelection two years ago.

And, finally, there seemed to be a political rebirth for unions in Lake County. Signs reading "Proud Union Home" dotted the landscape. I guess the right-to-work legislation and the attack on teacher unions got the attention of a good number of folks. ❖

James is the former editorial page editor for the Post-Tribune.



Mark Bennett, Terre Haute Tribune-Star: Vigo County came through again Tuesday night, just as it has for the past 124 years, with just two fluke exceptions. A majority of the county's voters picked President Obama over Republican challenger Mitt Romney, mirroring the national outcome. Going into Tuesday, Vigo County had favored the overall presidential winner in every election since 1888, except for misses in 1908 and 1952. The chances of extending that streak — by far the most accurate in the nation — seemed dicey. Obama looked likely to win reelection, but Romney seemed a sure thing to carry Indiana by a wide margin. If so, even politically fickle Vigo County would be hard-pressed swim against the Hoosier tide. Yet, it happened. Romney won big in Indiana, but the president carried Vigo County and the nation — just like predecessors George W. Bush, Clinton, George H.W. Bush, Reagan, Carter, Nixon, Johnson, Kennedy, Eisenhower (the second time), Truman, FDR, Hoover, Coolidge, Harding, Wilson, Teddy Roosevelt, Cleveland and Benjamin Harrison. The only two non-winners favored by Vigo County were Adlai Stevenson in '52 (the Democrat senator from neighboring Illinois who lost to Dwight Eisenhower) and William Jennings Bryan in '08 who lost to Republican William Howard Taft). Vigo missed those by narrow margins — Stevenson polled 35 more votes than Ike, and Bryan topped Taft by 462. The margin between Obama and Romney was close, too, but the president prevailed. As of Wednesday afternoon, the county's unofficial tally gave Obama 19,707 local votes to 19,368 for Romney. Of Vigo's 30 correct picks in the past 32 presidential elections, only two carried the county by a slimmer margin — John Kennedy over Richard Nixon (by 165 votes) in 1960, and Harrison over Grover Cleveland (by 171) in 1888. ❖



Matt Tully, Indianapolis Star: Tuesday's outcome will have a tremendous impact on the closely divided Senate, where a narrow Democratic majority will rule for the next two years and every vote will be crucial. But the outcome also will have a lasting and immediate impact on Indiana politics. For mainstream Republicans, the outcome holds a bright sliver lining. It gives credence to party leaders who have argued that the party must nominate candidates who don't stray so far from traditional Hoosier principles, collaboration, moderation, common sense. A candidate who excites the primary base is not always a winning general election candidate. If Richard Mourdock had won despite all of his troubles, mainstream Republicans would have had an even harder time trying to sell center-right candidates in future primaries. For Indiana Democrats, Tuesday's election was a lifeline. The party entered Election Day on the verge of irrelevance. It is now essentially a nonentity in the General Assembly, and

its minority status statewide was exposed in the brightest lights by the ease with which Mitt Romney claimed the state's electoral votes. But Donnelly's win is critical. In recent weeks, as the campaign got away from Mourdock, he and his backers tried to turn the issue away from him and toward the broader question of party control of the Senate. That message fell flat, however. As one conservative friend noted, if Mourdock's supporters truly had been concerned about the big-picture issue of Senate control, they would have re-nominated Lugar. ❖

Gerald Seib, Wall Street Journal: Tuesday's results showed that the campaign played out against a backdrop of powerful demographic changes that the Democrats—led by the nation's first black president, son of an African father and white mother from Kansas—have adjusted to more deftly. Whites, who accounted for 87% of the vote in 1992, were 72% of it this year, exit polls indicated. Hispanics, who were 2% then, were 10% this time. While 24 Latinos are in the House of Representatives now, that number is likely to be higher as a result of this year's election, in which 49 Latinos were seeking House seats, according to the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials. Republicans have their own cast of Hispanic leaders with star quality—Florida Sen. Marco Rubio and New Mexico Gov. Susana Martinez among them—but they haven't been sufficient to change the party's image, or to move its position legislation to overhaul immigration laws in a way that might give some illegal immigrants or their children legal status. ❖

Jennifer Ruben, Washington Post: Right Turn has made the point repeatedly that the issue of gay marriage is a generational one, a battle that social conservatives have lost. That was crystal clear yesterday. Maine, Minnesota, Washington and Maryland handled gay marriage the right way in a democracy — proponents went to the voters, made their case and won the support of a majority of their fellow citizens. Minnesota rejected a ban on gay marriage; the other states acted affirmatively to approve it. Conservatives can have no principled opposition to a exercise of democracy that embodies the principles of federalism. Add to that the election of Tammy Baldwin, the first openly gay member of the U.S. Senate and the end of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" in the U.S. military and you have a sea change. Conservatives can make their case at the state level and can in principled fashion insist that voters, not appointed judges, make the decision, but as a national issue there is no other way to put it: The ship has sailed. Conservatives don't have to like gay marriage. But they campaign on it at their own risk. ❖



McLaughlin cites propaganda polls

WASHINGTON - Imagine a U.S. Senate with Charlie Melancon, Jack Conway and Elaine Marshall. If internal Democratic polls released for public consumption during the 2010 cycle were to be believed, it seemed entirely plausible (Politico). The numbers commissioned by the campaigns and published in the closing months showed them ahead or within striking distance of victory. All three lost badly. But that isn't stopping campaigns from pushing a new batch of internal data to the media this year. The goal, by all appearances, is to frame the latest round of second-tier Senate races as much more competitive than conventional wisdom suggests they actually are.

The release of the internal data is becoming an increasingly common campaign tactic that's here to stay — regardless that they're hardly predictive. And both sides play the game, of course. Republican candidates such as Sen. Scott Brown of Massachusetts and Sen. Dean Heller of Nevada have also turned to internals this cycle to project strength at early points in their races. But those poll releases weren't as potent because there's widespread agreement on the competitiveness of their contests. The practice has been more pronounced among Senate Democratic contenders this cycle and in 2010 as they try to hang on to their four-seat majority by making Republicans sweat in GOP-friendly states. "The major reason is to affect media coverage and fundraising. People like to be with a winner and if you have a poll that says you're going to win, you can fire up your supporters and demoralize your opponents,"



veteran GOP pollster John McLaughlin said. Democrats also tapped the power of the internal in the aftermath of Richard Mourdock's defeat of Sen. Dick Lugar in Indiana. A week following Mourdock's victory, the Democratic firm Global Strategy Group came out with Rep. Joe Donnelly deadlocked at 40 percent against the newly minted GOP nominee. Based on returns in 2008 — a banner Democratic year — Republicans made up 41 percent of the electorate in the Hoosier State. Curiously, in this poll, Republicans made up only 31 percent. "It's an easy pushback. It was 10 points off for Republicans," said McLaughlin, Mourdock's pollster. "I think they were doing this to create something that was not there." Democrats contend the partisan breakdown in the poll reflected the growth of independents in the state over the past two years. What Democrats ended up creating was a fundraising appeal to fortify their narrative that Indiana would be one of the closest Senate contests on the map, one well worth investing in. "It's all over the news," Donnelly spokeswoman Elizabeth Shappell wrote in a fundraising email the morning after the poll was published. "The first post-primary poll was released yesterday, and Joe Donnelly and Richard Mourdock are dead even, 40 percent to 40 percent."

Porter County trending Demo

VALPARAISO - From president on down to the County Council, every Democratic candidate who ran county-wide Tuesday won more local votes than their Republican challengers (NWI Times). While the local votes did not add up enough to stand in the way of several Republican victories at the state level, including the governor's office, they did result in a sweep of the County Council and commissioner

races. Michael Simpson, vice chairman of the Porter County Republican Party, said Wednesday he believes Porter County is starting to trend more Democrat. Part of the reason for the easing of the GOP stronghold on the county is the influx of residents from such traditionally Democratic areas as Lake County and Illinois, he said. The GOP itself is also responsible, he said. "Our message did not resonate," Simpson said. He said GOP officials will go back to drawing board and refine their approach, as well as review the tactic of sending out last-minute fliers that some Democrats criticized as negative campaigning.

Boehner now open to new revenue

WASHINGTON - Less than 24 hours after the election, President Obama and congressional leaders moved with alacrity Wednesday to show flexibility in solving the nation's biggest economic problems and recast Washington's often divisive politics (Washington Post). With a sluggish economy facing major threats, House Speaker John A. Boehner (R-Ohio) opened the door to increased tax revenue as part of a bipartisan deal to tame the soaring national debt. Republicans are "willing to accept new revenues," Boehner said, suggesting he is willing to break with the orthodoxy of many influential Republicans out of a desire to "do what's best for our country." Earlier Wednesday, Obama called Boehner and other top lawmakers to urge them to put aside partisan interests to bolster the economy and advance the interests of the American people. Obama favors raising taxes on the wealthy to help close the nation's yawning budget hole. Senate Majority Leader Harry M. Reid (D-Nev.) also extended a hand, saying: "It is better to dance than to fight. ... It is better to work together."