



Daniels gets a 'B+' in HPR's six-month report card

Agree or not, Indiana has a bold new governor

By BRIAN A. HOWEY in Indianapolis

The savings have been \$150 million.

The agencies are now measuring outcomes and performances via metrics.

The prisons and state hospitals are being privatized. The auto fleet is being sold. Agriculture is organized. Pork and biomass production are to be multiplied. The rainmakers are hunting jobs and corporate headquarters. And the BMV is getting leaner, lending hope that inertia is under attack.

Yes, folks, the times they are a changin'.

The administration of Gov. Mitch Daniels has been a fascinating eight-month experiment. The bull has entered the china shop, the molds are breaking, the ruts

are being graded. This governor has gonads. We give him a B+.

The 89-page progress report, released Friday after the governor met with his Cabinet at the Indiana State Fair, details about \$150 million in savings and metrics established for 30 agencies. "If you're not keeping score, you're just practicing, and we are keeping score," Daniels said. "Not bad, for a start."

The Daniels administration moved swiftly on its economic development package, which is beginning to bear results. But the governor's own report card didn't



Gov. Daniels issued a "report card" on the Kernan-Davis administration last October. Last Friday at the Indiana State Fairgrounds, Daniels issued his own report card. (HPR Photo)



"I don't know what she'll do with the wedding dress in her closet. She won it from a radio station for having the cutest wedding proposal story and it was custom made." — Columnist Rebecca Helmes, *Richmond Palladium-Item*, on her friend who lost her fiance in Iraq.

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Kathy Davis on tap for HPR Forum	p. 4
Howey: Dateline Stinkyville, Ind.	p. 5
Horse Race: 6 line up for Becker seat	p. 6
Baghdad Report from Capt. Jeffers	p. 7
Columnists: Helmes, Slater, Gerard	p. 8
Ticker: St. Joe, Daviess want Central	p. 9



mention the news media's favorite topics -- Daylight-saving time, the closure of BMV branches or the I-69 extension. Nor did it talk about the \$24.3 billion biennial budget.

It is that budget, along with the war in Iraq, that will likely establish the political template for the 2006 elections. That is where House Republicans are extremely vulnerable. It was a love/hate relationship with the House majority and the party's new activist governor. They passed the economic development and Inspector General packages quickly, but sealed off Gov. Daniels' budgetary options in February by taking gaming off the table. Since then, Gov. Daniels has displayed a willingness to put cherry masters on the table.

In recent days, the *HPR Daily Wire* has been monitoring news reports in more than a dozen locales where school corporations from Crown Point to Evansville to Zionsville are preparing to raise property taxes. The current severe gasoline price escalation has the potential to throw fuel on the fire because of previous state transportation cutbacks.

In Fort Wayne on Wednesday, Gov. Daniels said, "I look forward to the day we can go back to big increases in education" (*Fort Wayne Journal Gazette*).

Indiana counties are under the gun, not only facing skyrocketing fuel and health care costs, but an unfunded state mandate on Children in Need of Services. This could prompt more county officials -- many who are slashing millions of dollars from budgets and raising wheel taxes -- to consider primary legislative challenges in 2006.

"While he's talking about saving money on bottled water, schools are increasing prices on lunches," said House Minority Leader B. Patrick Bauer, D-South Bend (*Indianapolis Star*). Bauer likes to talk about pink-slipped teachers, but in the case of his hometown, all were hired back.

'A' budget deal

It was that budget deal and the handling of the BMV closures that prevented our awarding an "A" to the governor. Gov. Daniels opted for a budget deal that he and GOP legislators insisted was "balanced." Only time will tell. With gas prices prompting inflation and a wary consumer, and if the Medicaid situation can't be reined in at 5 percent instead of the 10 percent projections, then Democrats will have some 2006 election fodder.

The governor drew a line in the sand on the balanced budget, and with that deal, the press and legislators will be carefully watching the governor's nuanced statements on critical issues in the future.

The Indiana Fiscal Policy Institute analysis of the budget last May called it a "\$24 billion gamble." It notes that

reserves are at historic lows (only 5.7 percent of operating revenue) that haven't been seen since the severe recession in the early 1980s. Much of the budgetary restraint came via a cap on the 2002 property tax replacement credits, which have the potential of significantly raising local property taxes and reigniting that volatile issue for 2006.

"The slow recovery and low balances mean delayed payments to state and local governments," observed IFPI researcher Mark Brown. He is projecting 2.8 percent growth in 2006 and 5.3 percent by 2007. Brown warns that while some see the potential for more robust growth, "to do so, the current economic expansion will have to last through the end of FY 2007, at which time it will be nearly six years old. The length of an average expansion is five years.

"While we cannot predict the next recession," Brown says, "history says it is not all that far away."

The BMV closures have seemed like car bombs to some reporters who rarely leave the Statehouse and attend only press conferences, but in our estimation, will have the



Key players in the news administration include (from left) Lt. Gov. Becky Skillman, who played a significant role in the military base closures and the establishment of the Department of Agriculture, BMV Commissioner Joel Silverman, who has largely stuck to his guns on branch closures, IEDC Commissioner Mickey Mauer and Commerce Secretary Patricia Miller, who are attempting to lure more corporate headquarters to Indiana. (HPR Photo)

impact of firecrackers. They affect a tiny percentage of the population. For that reason, Gov. Daniels resisted Speaker Brian Bosma over halting BMV closures. Having said that, a firecracker can still blow off fleshy digits, and if there are full-blown property tax revolts and a squishy job market, there could be isolated political consequences associated with BMV that could impact a close battle for control of the House or the governor's own re-elect.

The Daniels administration is also facing the political realities of governing. For instance, Gov. Daniels proposed



800 new child welfare caseworkers, including 400 for this biennium. The *Indianapolis Star* reported that only 27 have been hired to date.

Another is the Colts stadium and Indiana Convention Center. Lead by Budget Director Chuck Schalliol and Chief of Staff Harry Gonso, the state wrested control of the billion dollar project from Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson, largely inspired by the procurement goodies that are now headed to friendly law firms like IceMiller and Barnes & Thornburg. But some in GOP circles fret that cost overruns and delays could create volatility during the re-elect.

Having said that, Gov. Daniels' town hall tour through eight donut counties resulted in seven food tax hikes, which was the most extraordinary expenditure of political capital in modern Hoosier politics. He has ushered in an era of regionalism with the establishment of the RDA in Lake and Porter counties.

The most important successes to date center on the Department of Corrections, which has taken up Stephen Goldsmith's philosophy of privatization, saving millions of dollars.

Spending capital

What we admire most in the new governor is his willingness to expend political capital on extremely controversial measures.

"We need to be a state of people who aspire to excellence," Gov. Daniels told Indiana-Purdue at Fort Wayne students on Wednesday (*Fort Wayne Journal Gazette*). "We need to take risks and not get stuck in the middle of the pack."

How the risk-taking manifests itself politically will be utterly fascinating to watch.

Daylight-saving time, which now has the potential of splintering the state into jagged pockets of Eastern and Central time zones, could create patchwork political dilemmas. For instance, Daviess to the south and St. Joseph and Marshall counties to the north are opting for Central time just in the past 48 hours. Kosciusko appears to be following suit, but not Elkhart or Allen counties, which want to stay in the Eastern zone. The feds will have the final say.

How all of that is resolved is anyone's guess.

Gov. Daniels urged the doubling of pork and biomass fuel production. But as you'll read on Page 5, there are NIMBY revolts going on in Hartford City and Muncie over industrialized dairy and biomass fuel operations. In

Morristown, a soy biodiesel operation appears to be embraced by locals who want an expanded tax base and more jobs. This comes in the week following a *New York Times Magazine* story that suggests that Saudi Arabia's oil reserves may be nearing production peaks, raising the potential of a severe supply and demand crisis that could impact every aspect of our economy.

Gov. Daniels is facing a cultural challenge when it comes to the agriculture sector. He spent 2003 and 2004 developing a dialogue with rural and small town citizens. He now must convince them to view the world globally, and not just over the cooling pies on the summer window sill.

Another challenge comes with education. He imposed a moratorium on school construction, igniting local debates from Indianapolis to Middlebury on education versus brick and mortar needs. Yesterday in Fort Wayne, Gov. Daniels explained, "Indiana does spend a fair amount on schools, and schools need to find ways to get more of that

money into the classroom." He suggested schools could consolidate services and make purchases together to save money (*Fort Wayne Journal Gazette*). "I'm in favor of smaller schools, smaller classes," Daniels said. "Part of the way we get there is less overhead."

How smaller communities deal with a new round of school consolidations is another example of a traditional way of life facing new changes and provoking tests of leadership.

Epilogue: Son of Lugar/Bowen/Bulen

Leadership does not come from the Indiana General Assembly. They are followers. It must come from a governor. Indiana now has a strong, decisive governor not obsessed with re-election, but more with a repositioning of a languished state that is growing older and fatter. He is taking on reactionary, intolerant conservatism. He is reaching out to minorities, while confounding them all the same.

How these issues are resolved is the unfinished story line. What is clear is a fresh, new leadership dynamic. Whether you agree with it or not, what is unmistakable is that it will be the most fascinating political/public policy experiment since the Bowen/Lugar/Bulen days of the early 1970s. ❖



A governor and a steer, both named Mitch, during a Hendricks County campaign stop in 2004. Gov. Daniels faces big cultural challenges in rural Indiana, where he is pushing industrialized livestock operations, biomass fuel production, while closing tiny BMW branches. (HPR Photo by Brian A. Howey)



Davis to speak at HPR Forum

Former Lt. Gov. Kathy Davis, who was charged with reviewing all of state government, has agreed to appear at the HPR Forum - *"Building an Indiana for the 21st Century"* - on Oct. 4. She will appear with House Speaker Brian Bosma, HPR's Brian A. Howey, Capt. Tim Jeffers, and State Sen. Vi Simpson on the Forum's final panel, *"Making the Case for a Constitutional Convention."*



"Former Gov. Kernan charged Davis to not only kick

the tires and look under the hood of state government, but possibly design a whole new car," said HPR Publisher Brian A. Howey. "In the wake of Gov. Kernan's loss, Lt. Gov. Davis's review and conclusions were lost in the transition. I suspect she will have some fascinating observations." Howey said the HPR Forum will be the first comprehensive review and projection of how state and local government could evolve to face 21st Century challenges. "We have the leaders of the three branches of state government, along with leading mayors, county officials and economic development players. They will give us historic and evolutionary perspectives." ❖



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'Get those outsiders outta here'

"And even the material progress of Indiana was arrested. It had seemed limitless in 1900, but it was stunted by some of the very men of vision who had created it -- the early capitalists. In almost every small city one can hear tales of how the Chamber of Commerce had discouraged outside manufacturers from building plants there." - **John Bartlow Martin**, "Indiana: An Interpretation," 1947

* * *

By BRIAN A. HOWEY

STINKYVILLE, Ind. -- "It's over," one remonstrator shouted. "Get 'em outta here."

Chilling words, really. Dutch dairy farmers Gerwin and Marinke Oolman's dreams of building a \$13.5-million concentrated animal feeding operation (CAFO) near Hartford City were dashed earlier this week when the



Blackford County Board of Zoning Appeals turned down their application, though they will receive an IDEM permit. About 200 people were at the BZA and hooted at the couple as they fled in tears. According to the *Muncie Star Press*, one sign read, "Welcome to Stinkyville. Population 2,000 cows."

At Muncie Wednesday, Ball State University chemistry Prof. James Rybarczyk called a proposed agricultural bio-enterprise park "terrifying." The 800-acre ag park is being promoted by grain farmer Joe Russell, grain elevator owner Fritz Schnepf and others hoping to attract an ethanol or soy biodiesel production facility and other agri-business (*Muncie Star Press*). An ethanol plant is a "chemical refinery," Rybarczyk said during the meeting organized by citizens. "Mr. Russell, have you ever worked in a chemical plant? Have you ever seen a refinery explode?"

Indiana has long history of telling outsiders to ... get the hell out. And don't come back.

My hometown of Peru, Ind., was a classic example. It stood at the intersection of two U.S. highways (31 and 24). General Motors approached the city about putting a Fisher Body plant there after World War II. It ended up in nearby Marion, which was located at the intersections of State Roads 9, 18 and 37. In the 1950s and '60s, Marion thrived; Peru relied on railroads and the U.S. Air Force until they fled in the final years of the 20th Century. Today, Peru is a prison town.

The progressives in town always lamented that missed opportunity with GM. Some of the long-time locals

preferred the isolation and the homegrown manufacturing plants, most of which have vanished in the global economy. I remember one progressive Peruvian observing, "There was always talk about 'they' were trying to come in, and then I realized that I was 'they.'"

John Bartlow Martin, in his 1947 book, "Indiana: An Interpretation," observed more than a half century ago, "A suspicion had arisen that bigotry, ignorance, and hysteria were as much a part of the Hoosier character as were conservatism and steadfastness and common sense. One of Indiana's chief exports had long been ideas, but so many of these had turned out to be wrong-headed, wicked or useless. Indiana lost its friendly tolerance, its conviction that things would work out, and it by no means fulfilled its magnificent promise."

Farming in Indiana is becoming industrialized, whether it's the sprawling Prudential operations along I-65 in the area I always imagined Cary Grant fleeing Alfred Hitchcock's menacing airplane in the classic "North by Northwest," or the new soy biodiesel plant that will be built in Morristown. "It shouldn't just be good for Morristown, but good for the state. We're proud to have them and Bunge in our industrial park," said Brent Fuchs, president of the Morristown Chamber of Commerce (*Shelbyville News*).

The *Muncie Star Press* quoted Blackford County BZA member Dick Thurman as saying the people don't understand that farming is big business these days. "They don't want to get their hands dirty," Thurman said of opponents. "But they don't want to go to bed hungry." Or drive on an empty tank.

This is another cultural challenge facing Gov. Mitch Daniels, who wants to double pork production in Indiana. How many more CAFOs will be hooted out of town in the coming years?

People have concerns about the stench. The new industrialized agriculture must address the issue.

But Daniels is facing some huge challenges from the very small town folks in Pink Houses from whom he harvested a bit of his plurality last year. They are fighting him on things they perceive as status (i.e. tiny BMV branches) while they lament the decline of their small towns, the loss of jobs, nursing homes, and the kids moving away.

The change appears to be coming easier in suburban Indiana, where Gov. Daniels was able to sell tax increases to pay for a new Colts stadium and Indiana Convention Center.

But there is a lot of education that must take place. Corn is becoming fuel; ethanol plants will spring up along with big pork and dairy operations. They will aim for someone's back yard. And if the NIMBY crowd preserves the status quo, then Indiana is destined to become ... the Backwater State. ❖



The 'Gray Davis' Presidency

TRENDLINE: Remember in 2004 when we talked about the second term of George W. Bush as the "Gray Davis Presidency?" A *Wall Street Journal* /Harris Interactive poll of 1,217 adults out this morning, but conducted between Aug. 9-16, shows "President Bush's job approval ratings are at their lowest point of his presidency as only 40% of U.S. adults have a favorable opinion of his job performance and 58% have a negative opinion." It "is a decline from just two months ago in June when the president's ratings were 45% positive and 55% negative. The war in Iraq "has climbed to the top of the most important issues list and the economy is now viewed as the second most important issue, according to the poll." Davis was the California governor who was re-elected, then saw his public support drop so precipitously that he was recalled from office.



Indiana 2006 Congressional

Congressional District 8: Republican: U.S. Rep. John Hostettler. Democrat: Vanderburgh County Sheriff Brad Ellsworth. **Geography:** Evansville, Terre Haute, Greencastle; Posey, Vanderburgh, Warrick, Gibson, Pike, Martin, Daviess, Knox, Sullivan, Greene, Owen, Clay, Vigo, Vermillion, Parke, Putnam, Warren and part of Fountain counties. **Media Market:** Evansville, Terre Haute, Indianapolis. Lafayette. **People:** Urban/rural 58/42%; median income \$36,732; poverty 10.7%; race white 93.7%, black 3.7%, Hispanic .9%; blue/white collar: 32/52%. **2000 Presidential:** Bush 56%, Gore 42%; Cook Partisan Voting Index: R+8. **2002 Results:** Hostettler 98,952 (51%), Hartke 88,763 (46%), **2004 Results:** Hostettler 145,576, Jennings (D) 121,522, Garvin (Green) 5,680. **2006 Forecast:** Ellsworth expressed condolences to families connected with a robbery convict who killed three people on a work release program. Judges who dealt with Travis Moore -- the robbery convict who, in April, killed himself and three other people while on work release -- made reasonable decisions in his case based on the information available (Martin, *Evansville Courier & Press*). Sheriff Brad Ellsworth, who leads the advisory board, repeated earlier condolences to families of Moore's victims and said the case received a thorough review. "Our mission is public safety, and we will always try by any means necessary," said Ellsworth, who is expected to seek the Democratic 8th CD nomination in 2006. **Status:** *Leans Hostettler*

Congressional District 9: Republican: U.S. Rep. Mike Sodrel. Democrat: Baron Hill. **Media Market:** Evansville (11%), Indianapolis (23%), Louisville (55%), Dayton, Cincinnati (10 percent). **People:** urban/rural 52/48%, median income \$39,011; race white 94%, 2.3% black, 1.5% Hispanic; blue/white collar: 34/50%; **2000 Presidential:** Bush 56%, Gore 42%; Cook Partisan Voting Index: R+8. **2004 Presidential:** Bush 59%, Kerry 40%. **2002 Results:** Hill 96,654 (51%), Sodrel 87,169 (46%). **2002 Money:** Hill \$1.144m, Sodrel \$1.62m. **2004 Results:** Sodrel 142,197, Hill 140,772, Cox (L) 4,541. **2006 Forecast:** Lingering concerns about Social Security and fresh worries about gas prices dominated a town hall meeting with Sodrel (*Louisville Courier-Journal*). Speaking in his hometown of New Albany, Sodrel told about 50 people that Americans must pursue alternative fuel sources such as ethanol and not rely as much on foreign oil. He also pointed to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge as a future energy source. He compared its size in Alaska to a briefcase on a football field, and the possible drilling area to a postage stamp. Laura Hansen Dean of the Community Foundation of Southern Indiana asked if there was an "exit strategy" for the war in Iraq. "I'm a child of the Vietnam era," she said, alluding to the length of the war. "I'm getting nervous." Sodrel said a pullout will be conducted only after elections and greater stability, and he said it would make little sense to share that timeline -- even if there was one, he said -- with insurgents. Sodrel is hosting town halls in all 20 CD counties, including four this past week. **Status:** *Tossup*.

2006 State Races

House District 78: Republican: Warrick County Commissioner Carl Conner; Vanderburgh County Commissioners President Suzanne Crouch; Alcoa mechanical engineer Jonathan Fulton; Don Mattingly; Evansville Chamber of Commerce lobbyist Steve Schaefer; and Evansville attorney Les Shively. Democrat: Open. **2004 General Results:** Becker (R) 28,261. 2005 Primary Results: Becker 3,429, Jonathan A. (Jon) Fulton 1,708. **2006 Forecast:** Becker will almost certainly be elected to State Sen. Greg Server's open Senate seat once he resigns for the IURC. The *Evansville Courier & Press* profiled those likely to succeed her. They include: Warrick County Commissioner Carl Conner, 60, who said people have approached him about getting into the race but he hasn't come to a final decision. "I've given it some thought," said Conner, who co-owns the Evansville architectural engineering firm Conner and Associates. Vanderburgh County Commission President Suzanne Crouch, 53, who has been county auditor. She said her experience as a local elected official would bring added insight when considering legisla-



tion. She also said that in countywide races, she has gotten strong votes in the House District 78 precincts in Vanderburgh County. "I think I could make a pretty good case that I am electable, and I can hold onto that seat (for Republicans)," she said. Alcoa mechanical engineer John Fulton, 41, ran a primary race against Becker in 2004 and said he would be a good fit for the district. "We're running as a conservative candidate for a conservative district," he said. Retired insurance agent Don Mattingly, who is a retired lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army. He said he has many issues he would like to tackle if appointed by the caucus. "I was raised on the philosophy that if you are capable of serving, your duty is to serve," he said. The 60-year-old also said he would have the freedom to

make the part-time legislative position his full-time concentration. Metropolitan Evansville Chamber of Commerce lobbyist Steve Schaefer, 26, worked in Washington for U.S. Rep. John Hostettler and then moved to his Evansville field office. Three years ago, he was hired as the Chamber of Commerce's vice president of government relations. "This is a chance to have an aggressive, fresh face in Indianapolis," Schaefer said. He said he would push hard on issues such as getting the Interstate 69 extension built. Evansville attorney Les Shively, 51, previously said he would like to follow in the footsteps of his father, who served in the House. When reached Tuesday, he said he is planning an official announcement on his decision soon. **Precinct Status:** *Tossup.* ❖

Report from our man in Baghdad

Capt. Tim Jeffers filed this report from Iraq on Aug. 19. Jeffers will appear at the HPR Forum on Oct. 4.

By TIM JEFFERS

BAGHDAD, Iraq - The end of this deployment in Iraq is drawing near. Two days ago, I sat through a series of out-processing briefings which will continue for several weeks. It is a good feeling to realize that the time has come to go home.

U.S. officials here in Iraq anxiously await progress on the Iraqi constitution as the deadline was extended for an additional week. U.S. Ambassador to Iraq Zalmay Khalilzad remains very optimistic as does Secretary of State Rice. In the meantime, we have experienced a lot of "big boom" activity in our sector. Four nights ago, Capt. Tom Morley (West Pointer from Florida) and I heard a mortar zoom over our heads as we sat in poorly crafted, plastic chairs smoking cigars near my old Edgewood trailerhood. The round landed just outside the wall in the far corner of my current trailer park. No one was injured. This morning three car bombs exploded,



killing roughly 40 people, before I had my first cup of coffee. Every time you hear an explosion you can't help thinking about the poor souls whose lives are ending somewhere in the distance. No faces, no names, just numbers clicking on a board somewhere. To date, over 180,000 Iraqi Security Forces have been trained.

Attacks against the Iraqi Security Forces remain robust with assassinations of police officers and various government officials every day. Many of the attacks are drive-by shootings with small groups of insurgents jumping out of a car and firing at these men as they make their way to and from work.

According to *USA Today*, National Guard and Reserve soldiers are having another bad month in Iraq. Since May 1, over 100 reserve soldiers have been killed. In the first two weeks of August, over 32 have already been killed. As many of you know, the state of Ohio has been hit particularly hard. Please remember the families of those soldiers killed in your prayers.

Soon.
Tim Jeffers
Hoosier Citizen Soldier

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YOUR ISSUES = OUR MANDATES



Rebecca Helmes, *Richmond Palladium-Item* - The war raging in Iraq fails to hit home for many in my generation. For me, that feeling lasted until 2½ weeks ago. When a roadside bomb ripped through Lance Cpl. Michael Cifuentes' lightly armored amphibious assault vehicle on Aug. 3 south of Haditha, Iraq, it also tore through the hearts of everyone who knew him. My mother called me at work, crying with the news that Wednesday afternoon. I ran to the Palladium-Item's back parking lot and sat on a curb while I called one of my best friends from college, Tara Reynolds, and cried with her, too. Michael was her fiancé. He was 25. They were supposed to be married next July. At 24 years old, I can count on my fingers the number of funerals I've attended. Intellectually, I understood the dangers of war. Now, seeing Tara cry and go through the motions of a funeral makes me sick to my stomach. She's 23 -- too young to be burying the man she loved. Unlike some others who enlist in the military, Mike had many other options in life. No person or situation forced him to be a Marine. He had a bachelor's of psychology from Miami University. He was also a substitute teacher in Oxford's Talawanda School District. When his reserve unit was called to active duty in 2004, just a few weeks after he proposed to Tara, he put his graduate studies in education at Miami on hold to serve in 2005. He was there because he wanted to be there. Tara has said knowing that he died doing something he loved and believed in is the only thing she has to hold on to. But nothing makes it easy. It's painful to see so many people, especially Tara, wading through so much grief. For me, the most emotional moments weren't the times when a priest was talking about Mike's life. He was my friend, and I didn't need anybody to tell me about how caring he was, or how much he loved kids and wanted to teach, or how devoted he was to Tara. It was when two Marines finally folded the flag that had been draped over Mike's casket for days. Slow, steady and meticulous, each of the folds made his death and Tara's grief more real. Until that point at the burial, I had been hoping and praying that somehow a mistake had been made. I don't know what she'll do with the wedding dress in her closet. She won it from a radio station for having the cutest wedding proposal story, and it was custom made. Some would question how you could keep it, but how do you give it up? ❖

Stephanie Salter, *Terre Haute Tribune-Star* - The first time I read "*Slaughterhouse Five*" I was in college, Richard Nixon was in the White House and the United States was hopelessly mired in Vietnam. Not that anyone in authority

would admit that in public. As we learned much later, all but the most war-addicted generals in the Johnson administration suspected as early as 1968 that Vietnam was unwinnable. That was back when U.S. troop deaths numbered about 25,000. Before the final pullout, another 33,000 G.I.s would be killed. So it goes. That phrase - if you have forgotten or never knew - runs through "*Slaughterhouse Five*" the way "Amen!" runs through a tent during an all-night revival meeting. Kurt Vonnegut, who wrote the novel, put the phrase in, over and over, to punctuate death. In Dresden they were not only blown apart, but burned alive or asphyxiated from the firestorm caused by incendiary bombs. Vonnegut "survived to tell the tale" (and to turn it into one of the most popular anti-war novels ever written) only because he and his fellow POWs were housed in a subterranean meat locker in a converted slaughterhouse. After the devastation, they dug out corpses until Germany's psychopathic leaders - the ones who didn't commit suicide - surrendered to the Allies. Some people see Vonnegut as a science fiction writer, some as a philosopher. Others view him as a kind of theologian of humanism.

For example, one of his most famous sayings is this: The good Earth - we could have saved it, but we were too damn cheap and lazy. Here's another one: There is nothing intelligent to say about a massacre. And there's this one: I still believe that peace and plenty and happiness can be worked out some way. I am a fool. So, here is one more passage. It's from "*Mother Night*." Vonnegut wrote it in 1961. "There are plenty of good reasons for fighting," I said, "but no good reason ever to hate without reservation, to imagine that God Almighty Himself hates with you, too. Where's Evil? It's that large part of every man that wants to hate without limit, that wants to hate with God on his side." ❖

Gary Gerard, *Warsaw Times-Union* - Beyond picking the wrong guy in 2004, I think the Democrats have a couple of problems. First, some of them are just really, really negative. I asked one of my liberal friends if there was one thing W has done right? Nope. Not one thing. Everything W has done is wrong. Of course, that's just not rational. But sometimes that's the feel I get from the Demos. Republicans continue to define themselves - especially on things like security, taxes, abortion, gay marriage and family, cultural and social issues. Those are the issues that carried W in 2004. On the flip side, Democrats are good at defining Republicans, but not so good at defining themselves. ❖





St. Joseph, Daviess Counties vote for Central Time

WASHINGTON, Ind. - The Daviess County Commissioners voted Monday to request the change to central time (*Evansville Courier & Press*). Commissioner Tony Wichman said constituents he spoke with favored Central time. Commissioner Steve Myers said only three of 23 people who called him favored Eastern time. "It seems to be an overwhelming majority," Myers said. Other Southwestern Indiana counties along the Central time zone line have not yet acted to start a petition. The St. Joseph County Council passed a resolution Tuesday in support of St. Joseph County being in the Central time zone (*South Bend Tribune*). The 5-2 vote, with one abstention, along with earlier votes in support of Central time by the South Bend and Mishawaka councils, is expected to trigger a request asking federal Department of Transportation officials to hold time zone hearings here. County Commissioner President Cindy Bodle, D-District 3, said that she will seek a meeting with county, South Bend and Mishawaka officials to pull together all information needed for the petition.



Indianapolis police merger plan passes committee

INDIANAPOLIS - With a 2-to-1 advantage over Republicans, Democrats on Wednesday easily advanced a plan to merge the city and county police departments into a single force (*Indianapolis Star*). The issue now goes before the full City-County Council. Few people were surprised by the party-line vote: six Democrats on the law enforcement consolidation committee voted in favor of merging the

Indianapolis Police Department and the Marion County Sheriff's Department, while the three Republicans opposed the plan.

150 jobs saved at Crane Naval

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The Crane Naval Surface Warfare Center in southern Indiana would keep 152 jobs it had been expected to lose under a recommendation approved Wednesday by the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission (*Associated Press*). The panel voted during hearings in Washington not to shift the electronic warfare jobs from Crane to a facility in Washington state. The jobs were among more than 600 that Crane stood to lose under an earlier Pentagon recommendation.

Pence defends the Iraq war

SELMA - Headed back to Iraq on a fact-finding mission in a few weeks, Congressman Mike Pence told Wapahani High School students Wednesday it would be a mistake to withdraw American troops amid growing anti-war protests. "Iraq would fall back into the hands of a murdering dictatorship," said Pence, explaining that withdrawing American troops would undo work already done and destroy Iraqis' hope for democracy (*Muncie Star Press*). Pence said he respected Cindy Sheehan's right to speak her mind, but the congressman said people should not forget that Iraq is "still the central battlefield in the war against terror." Referring to recent comments by President Bush and Defense Secretary Don Rumsfeld, Pence said, "We will draw down troops at a time their army stands up." Pence will be making his third visit to Iraq, where he will lead a congressional delegation in receiving military briefings and meeting with troops.

Hiller pleads guilty to two felonies

INDIANAPOLIS - Bradley R. Hiller pleaded guilty to theft and filing a fraudulent campaign finance report during a hearing in Marion Superior Court (*Indianapolis Star*). Prosecutors say Hiller, 33, whose last known address was in Mooresville, looted the Indiana Senate Majority Campaign Committee while he served as its director from January 2001 to November 2003. Under terms of a plea agreement, Hiller faces a maximum of 18 months in prison and must pay \$146,775 in restitution. His sentencing is scheduled for Sept. 21. "Corruption knows no political allegiance," Marion County Prosecutor Carl Brizzi said in a written statement. "He needs to be held accountable."

Carson takes aim at 'sleazy' entertainment

TERRE HAUTE - U.S. Rep. Julia Carson returned to St. Mary-of-the-Woods College and sounded something of a conservative alert when she spoke bluntly about the entertainment industry (*Terre Haute Tribune-Star*). "I believe in civil liberties," she said, "but they need to get some of this garbage off of television. We have to reinsert respect for our young people, especially our girls." In an interview after her speech, Carson expanded on that notion. She said she is dismayed watching many television programs in which women are portrayed sleazily and often collude in their own sexual objectification. The gains of the women's movement of the 1960s and '70s must be won again with each generation. "Kids repeat what is said and they learn to emulate what they see," Carson said. Mothers, fathers and other influential adults need to fight against the "profanity" and offer alternative models for womanhood. "The first thing all women need to do is respect and love themselves," she said. ❖