



We grew up as a city with Julia Carson

Congresswoman helped break down political barriers in a racist city

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - In a political sense, Julia Carson's greatest legacy is that she established new mileposts for Indiana's capital city. From a diversity standpoint, Indianapolis matured with the congresswoman.

When she attended Crispus Attucks High School, the basketball team led by Oscar Robertson couldn't even play kids from local white high schools. They had to go to places like Smithville. There were many establishments from restaurants to clubs that wouldn't serve a black man or woman. Like much of Indiana, Jim Crow could easily find an address in the North. While black politicians could find their way to the city council and the legislature, the big plums - mayor, Member of Congress, U.S. Senator, governor - seemed distant.

That all began to change with Carson announcing



Rep. Carson wept during this ceremony where civil rights pioneer Rosa Parks was honored with the Congressional Gold Medal. Carson died on Dec. 15 of lung cancer. (C-Span Photo)

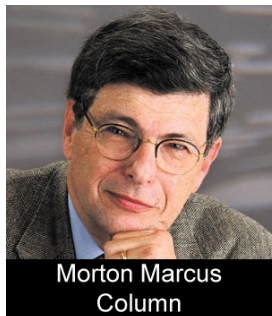
she intended to run for Congress when Andy Jacobs Jr. decided to retire in 1996. Some in the Democratic Party establishment told her the seat was unattainable. Former state chairwoman Ann DeLaney was supposed to be the establishment choice. But it was Carson who consolidated the support of the Marion County

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Submerged fiscal bombs

By **MORTON J. MARCUS**

INDIANAPOLIS - The Indiana Department of Local Government Finance (DLGF) issued a "Citizens' Guide to Property Taxes" on November 20th this year. That document contains the following paragraph:



Morton Marcus
Column

"What factors contribute to property tax increases? Local spending is the reason for property tax increases - or decreases - depending on local fiscal management. Other factors that contributed to increases during the 2006 Pay 2007 cycle include the



"My first reaction: it's over. We can all start moving forward."

- **Republican Muncie Mayor-elect Sharon McShurley, who won the recount Wednesday when 19 absentee ballots were thrown out**



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elimination of the inventory tax and the onset of the annual adjustment process, also known as 'trending'."

Got that? Property taxes rise or fall because of local fiscal management. That is not even a half-truth. Property taxes rise and fall because of policies put in place by the state legislature. The legislature decided to eliminate the inventory tax. The legislature authorized trending and DLGF monitored it. The legislature increases or decreases the deductions and exemptions to assessed values. That same body decides how much money flows from the state's general fund to property tax replacement credits and home-stead credits. The legislature issues unfunded man-dates.

DLGF is an arm of an administration that seeks to place local governments in a spending straight jacket. The governor has proposed that "Total local spending cannot grow faster than a county's average personal income growth over a six-year period, unless approved by taxpayers in a referendum." In addition, "The Tax Board in each county must review and approve spending plans of all taxing units."

We have not heard much about these proposals, but they are submerged bombs in the waters of local democratic processes.

The County Tax Board will oversee the spending of all cities, towns, schools corporations, library districts, county government, and any other governmental units. Who sits on such boards? They are people appointed by elected officials, but none

is elected to the Tax Board by the public. They will be the hidden final arbiters of decisions to improve our schools, parks, and police.

Plus, the amount that can be spent by all governmental units in your county can increase by only the average growth of personal income over a six-year period. At best, the most recent personal income data are

nearly two years behind the times. This means your county will be constrained by changes in a lagging number that reflects the past and has little to do with the needs and aspirations of today.

The latest data are for 2005 and show a range of six-year growth from 6.9% (Hamilton County) to 1.5% (White County). What of the simple need to

pay government employees fair wages and keep up with technology in White County?

Personal income is not a measure of the ability of a county's residents to support local government. It is not the sum of the income realized by those who live in the county. It leaves out income from pensions and capital gains. As these rise, shouldn't it be possible to increase local spending?

Personal income includes current payments for benefits citizens may not realize any time soon or ever in their lives. For example, the money you and your employer put into a retirement program is included in personal income. But it may be decades before you get to spend that money. Why should it be counted as part of your county's ability to support local



DLGF Commissioner Cheryl Musgrave: seeking a local straight jacket? (HPI photo by Brian A. Howey)



government today?

Funds put into benefit packages by your employer, like health insurance, are also counted as part of personal income, even if you do not take advantage of them. Unspent health insurance premiums become profits for shareholders of insurance stock. Do they live in your county?

If the governor wants to assess a county's ability to pay for local services, he should consider adjusted gross income as reported on the Indiana individual income tax form. All we have to do is get the Department of Revenue to make that number available in a timely fashion to all citizens. Dare we dream?

To spend more than the governor's six-year average of personal income growth, a county could have a referendum. We already have local elections to put people in office so that spending decisions can be made through

informed discussion. A referendum only opens the doors for highly impassioned, uninformed and expensive contests.

The fiscal problems of Indiana are not based solely on the antiquated aspects of our local governments. Those contribute, but they are not the root of our troubles. To correct our problems, we need legislators who will end the ceaseless manipulation of taxes as favors for friends and as bribes for an ignorant electorate.

New champions of reason and reform need to win in the primaries and knock out the old guard in the next general election. ❖

Mr. Marcus is an economist, writer, and speaker formerly with the Kelley School of Business at Indiana University.

Julia Carson, from page 1

Democrats and defeated DeLaney 49-31 percent. At one point, Carson said, "I am not your African-American candidate. I am the Democratic candidate for Congress. I don't allow opponents to stereotype me and confine me to a certain segment of the population."

That fall, she took on State Sen. Virginia Blankenbaker and won a 53-45 percent victory despite being out-spent \$638,000 to \$572,000. With the old 10th CD about 30 percent African-American, Carson became one of the first black members of Congress to represent a majority white district. She would declare, "This is a wonderful city. A lot of people see you beyond the color of your skin. That's become passé."

Yet, in her toughest election challenge - her 2002 campaign against Republican Brose McVey - she used the race card and stormed off a televised debate platform, accusing McVey of "racial polarization" after his campaign used grainy, distorted images of her in TV ads. It was a time-tested maneuver to ignite her base. She would say, "We were accustomed to negative campaigns. That's how they always try to beat me."

"They never did. Carson finished 26-0 in a career that began in the Indiana House in 1972 - a grand

arc of accomplishment for a single welfare mother from a segregated Northern school who ended her career in the citadel of democracy at the U.S. Capitol.

The machine Julia presided over - dubbed "The Carson Show" by the Wall Street Journal - became one of the best performing political organizations in Indiana. It had the ability to make or break mayors and legislators.

With Carson suffering from terminal lung cancer, her machine went AWOL during the defeat of Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson last month.

In the Indiana House, she had considerable influence over other members. One Democratic House leader recalled how Julia sat behind State Rep. Skinny Alexander, who often appeared in the chamber drunk. "When he would get up to speak, she would grab him from behind and pull him back to his seat," he said.

She operated as an effective urban party boss, at one point stepping in to admonish Democratic city council members who had helped defeat an ordinance that would provide benefits for gays and lesbians. On a Saturday morning, Carson convened councilmen and judges, precinct workers and legislators. "I think y'all reading the wrong polls," Carson bluntly told the assemblage. "I see the erosion of the Democratic Party, which makes me nervous. People want somebody who will stand up for their own convictions."

Robert Ferguson, president of Indiana Black Pride, described that memorable morning: "It was very powerful; very impromptu and it kind of ruffled people's feathers. I





think it made people stop and think." The ordinance would pass when the issue came up again several months later.

There were other indelible moments. She wept when President Clinton awarded the Congressional Gold Medal to civil rights pioneer Rosa Parks due to a bill Carson had authored. She teamed with Sen. Richard Lugar to mitigate bureaucratic roadblocks to child health insurance. "Congresswoman Carson's comments at the time exemplified her typical compassion for the most disadvantaged and vulnerable of our community," Lugar recalled.

Carson had said, "Money alone will not solve America's health care challenges. We must maximize our existing resources by being more creative and aggressive in our outreach efforts and making it easier for families to tap into these benefits. We all know that children who do not get routine, preventative health care will not reach their full potential. We simply cannot afford to put our children at that disadvantage."

In perhaps one of the most controversial moves of her congressional career, Carson voted against the October 2002 Iraq War resolution while trying to fend off McVey's well-funded, credible challenge. As Fran Quigley described in NUVO, "35 years ago when Carson worked in the office of Congressman Andy Jacobs, she would accompany heartbroken Indianapolis families to the airport. There they would receive the flag-draped coffins returning from Vietnam carrying the remains of their sons, husbands, brothers. Like Jacobs, she hated the war and vowed never to stand by and sanction senseless killings." She called Jacobs from the floor of the House on the night of the vote, crying and saying that the war vote might cost her the next election. It did not.

On the eve of the war in March 2003, she told a group of demonstrators in downtown Indianapolis, "Truly it is all in the name of greed and truly in the name of war. We should have learned by the Vietnam War, but we did not."

The irony is that she was one of 31 Democrats who voted opposing a move to keep her party's Ohio Electoral College votes away from George W. Bush in the deadlocked 2000 election, at one point bluntly advising Al Gore, "take the high ground and hand it

Services for Rep. Carson

U.S. Rep. Julia Carson's body will lay in repose in the Indiana Statehouse rotunda from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Friday. It military caisson will take her body from her Park Avenue home to the Statehouse between 7:30 and 9:30 a.m. Funeral services will be at 10 a.m. Saturday at the Eastern Star Church on East 30th Street. She will be laid to rest at Crown Hill Cemetery.

Other Hoosiers to lay in repose at the Statehouse: 2004: Gov. Robert Orr. 2003: Gov. Frank O'Bannon. 1921: James Bethel Gresham, Evansville, who was the first U.S. soldier killed in World War I. 1918: U.S. Sen. and Vice President Charles Warren Fairbanks. 1916: Hoosier poet James Whitcomb Riley. 1901: President Benjamin Harrison. 1891: Gov. Alvin P. Hovey. 1865: President Abraham Lincoln, in the old Statehouse Rotunda. ❖

over."

Julia Carson seemed to fade right before our eyes. Her speeches over the past couple years were rambling affairs that prompted reporters to put down their pens and admirers to laugh in a sad sort of way and say, "That's Julia." When the Colts won the Super Bowl last January, she said on the House floor, "See, we have good things in my district. They are not all drive-by shootings." She took to the House floor in a wheelchair and aides would accompany her to committees and help her vote. Columnists like the Indianapolis Star's Matt Tully urged her to retire ... on her own terms.

In the end, there were greater forces tugging on Rep. Carson's soul, one that she clearly recognized. On Nov. 5 she told Amos Brown in her final public statement, "When God gets through with me he will lay me down to sleep and I'll be somewhere praying the Lord my soul to keep. When I get

to the point where I come to the end of the road and talk to the Lord about what I'm going to do now, I think he'll show me the answers." ❖



Rep. Carson gathered with other Hoosier Democratic lions in October 2004, including former congressmen Lee Hamilton, Andrew Jacobs Jr., and U.S. Rep. Pete Visclosky. (Howey Politics Indiana photo by Brian A. Howey)



Timelines will be crucial in race to succeed Julia

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - The timelines for the 7th CD special election pose a vast debris field for anyone pondering an entry. Gov. Mitch Daniels will not announce a date until after Rep. Carson is resting in peace, which will be Saturday. Unless he makes the announcement this Sunday, it is unlikely he would do so on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day.

That makes Dec. 26 as the potential earliest day. That puts the 60-day special election timeline past the Feb. 22 filing deadline for the May primary. There are all sorts of other key dates, such as the 29-day absentee balloting window required by law. In this scenario, the Democratic Party caucus could take place within two or three weeks after the governor's announcement. The winner of the caucus for the special election would be the de facto nominee for the May primary. But there are scenarios that the winner of the special election could face primary opposition from a candidate who files on the Feb. 22 deadline and didn't run in the special election.

Here's where things stand at this writing: currently there are three declared candidates, Republican State Rep. Jon Elrod and Wayne Harmon, and Democrat Marion County Treasurer Michael Rodman. There are a slew of potential Democrats making phone calls and lining up support, including State Reps. David Orentlicher, Carolene Mays and Greg Porter, Center Township Trustee Carl Drummer, former Indiana and New York City health commissioner Woodrow Myers, former Indiana Democratic Chairman Robin Winston, Councilwoman Joanne Sanders, and the big one, Councilman Andre Carson. Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson took himself out, saying on WISH-TV, "I'm not going to run for Congress. It's not in the cards."

The congresswoman's grandson has the imprimatur of former Congressman Andy Jacobs Jr. and many elements of the Julia Carson machine. But the blogs have been pretty persistent in reporting that outside of the



Indianapolis Councilwoman Joanne Sanders (right) may be the best positioned when it comes to succeeding U.S. Rep. Julia Carson. (Sanders campaign photo)

Carson machine, many Democrats are looking for a fresh face and a new cast of characters. Plus, Councilman Carson has only had that position for a couple of months and hasn't even said he wants to be the candidate. We likely won't know his intentions until after the funeral and the Christmas holidays. The unknown factor here is what kind of emotional and political impact Rep. Carson's funeral - complete with military caisson and a long televised parade route from Park Avenue to the Statehouse - will have on the grandson and other potential African-American candidates who want the seat to stay in the minority ranks.

The **Advance Indiana** blog was reporting that IceMiller attorney Randall Pollard is being floated by parts of the Carson machine - including IceMiller partner Lacy Johnson - as a fallback. It notes that some segments of the Democratic Party don't want the Carson machine. It notes that the gay/lesbian community is upset with Rep. Mays over her support for SJR-7 (the gay marriage ban). Some African-Americans are concerned that if a credible black candidate isn't nominated and wins, it could be years - decades even - before a minority congressman gets back into office.

Winston told **HPI** that there is "too much fluidity" right now to make a decision on whether he will enter. "I'm not sure what I'm going to do or what I'm looking at," he said.

And remember, for Reps. Elrod, Orentlicher, Porter and Mays, this special election falls during an intense short session of the Indiana General Assembly where a solution to the property tax crisis is a paramount importance to all parties and will be so through mid-March ... or beyond. And depending on when the special and May primary filing deadlines fall, Reps. Orentlicher, Porter and Mays could find themselves locked out of their legislative seats ... and with no congressional nomination.

Perhaps the best positioned candidate is Sanders. She survived the 2007 slaughter as the top Democratic at-large vote getter with 73,180 and was the only at-large Democrat to survive. As a member of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, where she serves as an International Representative, Executive Board Member to the Central Indiana Labor Council, and delegate to the Indiana AFL-CIO, she is in a position to attract union support, as opposed to Councilman Carson, who voted against labor peace that was pushed by United Here. Sanders is also popular within the African-American community, though she is white. As one Democratic operative told **HPI**, "If Joanne Sanders was black, this would be over."



There's been plenty of speculation that Marion County Democratic Chairman Michael O'Connor could be the pivotal force here, having the ability to fill precinct vacancies. But O'Connor told **HOWEY POLITICS INDIANA** on Wednesday, "No vacancy that existed after mid-November can vote in the caucus." He was unsure as to how many precinct vacancies there are. O'Connor has been under fire from some parts of the party for his role in the defeat of Mayor Peterson in November. With the Peterson collapse and death of Rep. Carson, these are anxious and trying times for O'Connor and the Democratic Party hierarchy.

On the Republican side, there are concerns within the organization of Rep. Elrod's money-raising ability. Thus there's been a search for a bigger name. We've heard Prosecutor Carl Brizzi and Secretary of State Todd Rokita mentioned in this group. We're not getting many indicators that either one will seriously pursue the office. Ditto for 2004 nominee Eric Dickerson.

The Hill reported that the NRCC will not likely be helping 7th CD Republicans. It notes that the race to replace former House Speaker Dennis Hastert in Illinois will likely draw any resources in early 2008 and even those will be scant. To them, the 7th CD is much more of a longshot than Hastert's district. John Kerry carried the 7th over President Bush 58-42 percent in 2004.

The Hill quoted Marion County GOP Chairman Tom John as saying that while Elrod is a strong campaigner who has won his legislative and Center Township races in extremely Democratic districts, "Obviously, the amount of money you have to raise for a congressional seat ... is much different," John said. "One of Jon's big challenges will be raising that kind of money and the amount of time that it takes." And doing it during a legislative session which bans campaign fundraising by members. During the holidays, stay tuned to www.howeypolitics.com for 7th CD campaign updates and news. ❖

2008 Indiana Governor

Governor 2008: Republican: Gov. Mitch Daniels, La Ron Keith. Democrat: Jim Schellinger, Jill Long Thompson. **1996 Results:** O'Bannon (D) 1,075,342, Goldsmith (R) 997,505, Dillon (L) 35,261. **2000 Results:** O'Bannon (D) 1,230,345, McIntosh (R) 906,492, Horning (L) 38,686. **2004 Results:** Daniels (R) 1,302,912, Kernan (D) 1,113,900, Gividen (L) 31,644. **2008 Fore-**

cast: The Republican Governors Association released a poll - conducted 12/10-15 by Bellwether Research & Consulting (1,009 registered, +/- 3%) showing Daniels leading Thompson 46-33 percent and Schellinger 46-31 percent. It put Daniels' fav/unfavs at 51/41 percent.

Daniels was endorsed by 10 labor unions last Thursday.

Thompson was endorsed by the Communication Workers of America this week. And we keep hearing rumblings of a big campaign shakeup with Schellinger. **Democratic Primary Status:** TOSSUP. **General Status:** TOSSUP



Board member Rochelle "Shelli" VanDenburgh was selected by the Democratic Party to take over the rest of Kuzman's term. The 38-year-old said she hopes to retain that position in the next election. "It's been a very rewarding job, personally," she said. "You're vulnerable in your seat. I want to make sure I take advantage of being there now and change things for the better now." VanDenburgh said she will be carrying a full load of bills into the upcoming legislative session. Crown Point resident Dennis Meeks said he will challenge VanDenburgh for the Democratic nomination. "I think it's time for lanterns and pitchforks to make government accountable with their money," he said. "We need to eliminate some redundancies, have accountability and reduce taxes." Republican City Chairman John Moos said the party's chances to reclaim the seat are "excellent." Outgoing Crown Point Mayor Dan Klein said he is considering a run. "I've been approached by supporters that think I would be of value in the state Legislature based on my last four years of experience and trying to better the city of Crown Point," he said. "They think I could do much more at a higher level for the whole state, based on my private sector and public sector experience." Republican Andrew Webster plans to announce his candidacy for the District 19 seat Dec. 29, according to save-the-date invitations he sent out last week. Republican Jim Cuffia said he is "absolutely not" ruling out a run. **Status:** TOSSUP ❖

2008 Indiana Legislative

House District 19: Republican: Crown Point Mayor Dan Klein, Jim Cuffia, Andrew Webster. Democrat: Rochelle VanDenBurgh, Dennis Meeks. **2006 Results:** Kuzman (D) 9,796, Hammond (R) 5,581. **2008 Forecast:** Indiana's District 19 state House seat is ripe for the taking (**Times of Northwest Indiana**). Former Center Township

House District 95: Republican: Open. Democrat: State Rep. John Bartlett. **2008 Forecast:** Bartlett, a union official from Rolls-Royce, defeated Indianapolis Councilman King Ro Conley 26-9 in the caucus to replace the retired Mae Dickinson. This seat will not be competitive in the fall. **Status:** SAFE D ❖



Help us compile 2008 50 Most Influential List

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

There's no question about it, we went out on some limbs when the **2007 HOWEY POLITICS INDIANA 50 MOST INFLUENTIAL LIST**.

Some of them, like our "premature adulation" for Allen County Commissioner Nelson Peters, who lost in the Fort Wayne mayoral primary, were busts. It happens every year. But others like Long Beach native Chief Justice John Roberts, who has ushered profound changes to the U.S. Supreme Court, and UAW Presidents Ron Gettel-finger and Mo Davidson, who helped rework auto contracts and land the Getrag plant deal at Tipton, were right on the money.

Obviously there were profound changes in the November elections and people like Jim Schellinger, Jill Long Thompson, Greg Ballard and Tom Henry will emerge on the 2008 list. And that's where you come in. Send us your list, whether it be someone you think is deserving, a top 10 or an entire list to: brianhowey@howeypolitics.com. Keep in mind, our list is based on who will impact the events for the coming year. We'll publish the list on Jan. 17, 2008.



2007 HPI 50 Most Influential List

1. U.S. Supreme Court Justice John G. Roberts
2. Gov. Mitch Daniels
3. Speaker B. Patrick Bauer
4. Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson
5. U.S. Sen. Richard Lugar
6. Koichi Kondo
7. Senate President Pro Tempore David Long
8. UAW Presidents Ron Gettel-finger and Mo Davidson
9. Ways & Means Chairman Bill Crawford
10. U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh
11. U.S. Rep. Baron Hill
12. Carmel Mayor James Brainard
13. Evansville Mayor Jonathan Weinzapfel
14. Allen County Commissioner Nelson Peters
15. Marion County Prosecutor Carl Brizzi
16. Gary Mayor Rudy Clay
17. US. Rep. Pete Visclosky
18. Lee Hamilton
19. IEDC Director Nathan Feltman
20. State Sen. Bob Meeks

21. State Sen. Luke Kenley
22. U.S. Rep. Pete Visclosky
23. U.S. Rep. Brad Ellsworth
24. U.S. Rep. Joe Donnelly
25. U.S. Rep. Mike Pence
26. Indiana Democratic Chairman Dan Parker
27. Indiana Republican Chairman Murray Clark
28. U.S. Rep. Steve Buyer
29. U.S. Rep. Mark Souder
30. House Minority Leader Brian Bosma
31. Farm Bureau President Don Villwock
32. Tim Roemer
33. Marion County Democratic Chairman Michael O'Connor
34. Terre Haute Mayor Kevin Burke
35. U.S. Rep. Julia Carson
36. Republican Executive Director Jennifer Hallowell
37. Chamber President Kevin Brinegar
38. IMA President Pat Kiely
39. Lt. Gov. Becky Skillman
40. South Bend Mayor Dennis Luecke
41. U.S. Rep. Dan Burton
42. State Reps. Sheila Klinker and Peggy Welch
43. St. Joseph Democratic Chair-
man Butch Morgan
44. FSSA Commissioner Mitch Roob
45. IACT President Matt Greller
46. Lugar Chief of Staff Marty Morris
47. State Sen. Vi Simpson
48. Fort Wayne Mayor Graham Richard
48. Senate Minority Leader Richard Young
49. State Reps. Kreg Battles and Jon Elrod
50. John Gregg

Honorable Mention (alphabetical)

Marion County Sheriff Frank Anderson; 7th CD Chair Sherlonda Anderson; Warren Township Trustee Jeff Bennett; Betsy Burdick; Deputy Mayor Steve Campbell; Attorney General Steve Carter; Dan Coats; United Methodist Bishop Michael Coyner; Kathy Davis; Michael Davis; Shaw Friedman; State Rep. Craig Fry; Time Goeglein; Earl Goode; Bob Grand; Bill Haan; John Hammond III; Al Hubbard; Madison Mayor Al Huntington; Lacy Johnson; Joe Kernan; Joe Loftus; Hammond Mayor Tom McDermott; Kokomo Mayor Matt McKillip; LaPorte Mayor Leigh Morris; John Okeson; State Rep. Greg Porter; Jim Purucker; Indianapolis Councilman Isaac Randolph; Mishawaka Mayor Jeff Rea; Supt. Suellen Reed; Charles Schalliol; Dan Seitz; Tom Sugar; Hamilton County Republican Chairman Charlie White; Abdul Hakim-Shabazz; Mike Sodrel; Sen. Thomas Weatherwax; Gary Welsh; Robin Winston; Senate Minority Leader Richard Young. ❖



Doug Ross, Times of Northwest Indiana

- Tuesday morning, shortly after the Indiana Commission on Local Government Reform's report was released at 7:30, I began reading it. I reread it. And I reread it again. It was difficult to decide what I liked best about the report. It said many of the same things I've been saying about the need to peel away the layers of government and make it operate more efficiently at less cost. And then it came to me: What makes the most sense about the report is that it doesn't expect local officials to work their way out of this mess. That's good, because we've been disappointed so many times. I don't want to face the daunting task of counting the number of public officials in Lake County who have been convicted on public corruption charges over the years. The Lake County Council still has a convicted felon, Will Smith Jr., who refuses to resign. Council President Elsie Franklin, D-Gary, is on record for two boneheaded remarks -- that she would oppose eliminating any county jobs and that the council needs Smith. Which is more insulting to the taxpayers? That's like asking whether you want to be stabbed or shot. Either way, it hurts a lot. And don't forget the warnings Gov. Mitch Daniels repeatedly gave to local officials in Indiana. The state has too much government, he said. Either reform yourself, or the state will fix it for you. Local officials didn't rise to the challenge. No surprise there. They ignored a plethora of road maps for change, the latest being the Good Government Initiative's Maximus recommendations. So the blue ribbon panel headed by former Gov. Joe Kernan and Chief Justice Randall Shepard is recommending some sweeping changes. The number of elected officials would be slashed. And, perhaps best of all, government employees wouldn't be able to serve as elected officials for that unit of government. That last bit should seem obvious. Why would anyone want government employees running the government? ❖



work. And it pretty much hasn't changed since. In terms of county government, the constitution said there would be a clerk of the Circuit Court, auditor, recorder, treasurer, sheriff, coroner and surveyor. The constitution went on to say, "Such other county and township officers as may be necessary shall be elected, or appointed, in such manner as may be prescribed by law." Interestingly, the word "appointed" was used. The study headed by former Gov. Joe Kernan and Chief Justice Randall Shepard is heavy on "appointed." I don't buy into all of the recommendations, but think the majority have merit. ❖

Leslie Stedman Weidenbener,

Louisville Courier-Journal - Amos Brown: "Who sells this after today, knowing the special interests will stop at nothing to stop this?" he asked the group, somewhat incredulously. "Who is going to go out and educate Hoosiers?" Long pause. Long. Then laughter, even among the commission members. "I'll take it," someone whispered. "No, one of you should," the governor said quietly. "All three of us can speak to that," Indiana Chief Justice Randall Shepard, the other co-chairman, said slightly louder. Then Kernan was at the microphone. "It has already been said," he began. "One, there's access to this information. Two, this is important." And on he went, none of it really about anybody selling what would be the biggest overhaul in local government -- really the only overhaul -- since Indiana wrote its constitution in 1851. Daniels had already taken a pass, at least for the moment. He said he was withholding specific reaction to the commission's recommendation "for a while." Daniels did say he supports "the thrust of this very much." But he didn't say he'd be putting these recommendations into his legislative agenda. The issue is not about whether the ideas are good ones. It's about what is practical next year. ❖

Jack Colwell, South Bend Tribune

- Could it be Luke Puckett? Who? Well, not many 2nd District voters know the Goshen businessman who actually was running -- or at least walking fast -- back on Dyngus Day. He went to Dyngus events in South Bend and Mishawaka, proclaiming that he was seriously considering seeking the congressional nomination. Puckett designated a campaign treasurer, filed papers with the Federal Election Commission and loaned \$5,000 to his campaign committee to get started. In mid-June, however, Puckett sent out an e-mail telling supporters that he would not run due to "factors that range from family to finances." Puckett says he wants to enjoy the holidays with his family -- while giving more thought to a campaign as well -- and then make a final decision right after Jan. 1. "If I get in," Puckett says, "I'm in it to win the race." ❖

Rich James, Post-Tribune

- Wow! Talk about something to knock your socks off. The recommendations from the Indiana Commission on Local Government Reform did just that on Tuesday, following a five-week study commissioned by Gov. Mitch Daniels. The commission wants to turn Indiana local government inside out. Some of the suggestions have been made before, but never have the words come from so on-high. Local government in Indiana is old, stodgy and in need of an extreme makeover. Daniels put it into perspective, saying, "First of all, in terms of local government structure, Indiana skipped the 20th Century. We are dealing with a system that is a century and a half old, and it is in need of modernization. We have too many of everything and they all cost money." He's by and large on target. When the Indiana Constitution was adopted in 1851, it pretty much laid out how local government would



Potent brew of political crack & junkie light show

By **MARK CURRY**

WASHINGTON - With just 14 days remaining before the Iowa caucuses, the campaigns are pimping the expectations game, and analysts have gone loopy from the potent brew of political crack.

We've come to that strange and rare point in the electoral space-time continuum where conventional thinking collides with unconventional events. The shockwave could reverberate throughout the two-party system. Political junkies anticipate one helluva light show.

"[L]ife has suddenly become very confusing on the way to the 2008 presidential election," David S. Broder wrote for this morning's **Washington Post**, in a column that concluded, "It's going to be a crazy Christmas."

Voters in the early states are a fickle and unsatisfied lot. Caucus-goers and primary voters have shifted preferences so many times over the past few weeks that it's become unwise to speculate about what might happen in Iowa on Jan. 3rd or New Hampshire five days later.

The Republican spectacle

Consider what's happened in the Republican race in just the past few days:

- This morning, the Post reported on Page 1 that "The race before Iowa's Republican caucuses has narrowed to a two-person contest between former governors Mike Huckabee of Arkansas and Mitt Romney of Massachusetts, with Huckabee now perched atop the field, propelled by a big jump in support among religious women."

- Yesterday, an article in the **New York Sun** claimed former Mayor Rudy Giuliani, who leads the party in national polls, is abandoning New Hampshire and concentrating on Florida. "The more he campaigned in the Granite State and the more he spent on advertising there, the more his poll numbers dropped," according to the Sun.

- On Monday, news broke that Democratic Sen. Joe Lieberman of Connecticut had endorsed Republican hopeful, Sen. John McCain of Arizona, who is rising in the polls.

- Over the weekend, Rep. Ron Paul (R-TX), who polls somewhere out near Pluto, announced that his campaign's "Money Bomb" had collected more than \$6 mil-

lion in a single 24-hour period, with the median donation said to be \$50. He is now surpassing hapless and lazy Fred Thompson and gaining on the ethically-challenged Giuliani in Iowa and to some extent in New Hampshire.

And we're just now getting to down to the good stuff, namely the Holy Wars in Iowa between Romney and Huckabee, as each attempts to garner critical support among conservative Christian voters. Huckabee, an ordained Southern Baptist minister, has repeatedly prodded Romney on his Mormon faith, suggesting (incorrectly) during one interview that Mormons consider Jesus and Satan to be brothers. Yesterday, the Arkansan took another swipe with the release of a religion-laced, Christmas-themed television advertisement featuring a bookcase behind the candidate that glowed like a shining cross (and, perhaps, the trinity in Christmas ornaments). The reverend denied that had been his intention, telling the **Today Show**, "People are looking for anything in the world. It's almost like it's so

politically incorrect to say 'Merry Christmas' anymore, and I find this pretty amazing." Joanna Weiss of the **Boston Globe** reminded her readers not to be distracted by the real import of the ad. "Conspiracy theories aside," she wrote, "the ad has gained attention for what it represents: a deliberate, pointed salvo in a Republican primary campaign that has increasingly hinged on religion. The implied message, observers say, seems to be twofold: that there's one important religion and one candidate who represents it best."

Romney has run ads attacking Huckabee on immigration and criminal justice, and continues to voice themes known to be important to caucus-goers supporting the race leader. The **Baltimore Sun** reported on Mitt's visit to West Des Moines, where "he spoke about the importance of family and maintained that the country's culture helps to make it the most powerful nation on earth. The reason, he said, is 'what we learn in our homes, what moms and dads teach their kids.'"

ABC News reported on Huckabee's response. "He's been attacking me just ruthlessly in the mail and on television and distorting the record," Huckabee said. "And I think we need to get the record straightened up. And get the truth out. ... The attacks have been desperate, and I think they've been dishonest."

The Democratic circus

Reports out of the Hawkeye State indicate the Democratic contest may be moving into a three-way battle, though the campaign of Sen. Barack Obama (D-IL) disputes such claims. **Real Clear Politics** has the Illinois

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senator at 30 percent, Sen. Hillary Clinton (D-NY) at 27, and former Sen. John Edwards (D-NC), 24.

Clinton advisers have been pushing the notion that Edwards poses a growing threat, according to Anne E. Kornblut of the **Washington Post**. "Obama advisers have countered that it makes for a convenient storyline - and is evidence the Clinton campaign is threatened by a two-way race" with Obama, she wrote.

But Sam Youngman of **The Hill** is among those who think Edwards poses a challenge. "Throw out the polls," Youngman advises. "This is a three-way tie, and everybody agrees at this stage that the winner is the person who can turn out his or her supporters and convince them to stay loyal once they get to the high school gymnasiums." Also among the believers is Iowa's own political guru, David Yepsen. As evidence, the reporter for the **Des Moines Register** cites Obama's attack on Edwards during a campaign stop in Spencer. "Obama, who likes to fashion himself as Mr. Positive, wouldn't be attacking him like that if Edwards was road kill," Yepsen wrote.

And, there's talk of dirty tricks afoot. Yesterday, **MSNBC** reported on a negative mailing in Iowa from the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees. The ad states "For those without insurance, Barack Obama's band-aid solution is no change at all,"

according to reporter Carrie Dann, who noted the AFSCME backs Clinton. "Here's the kicker, though," Dann wrote. "The piece quotes Edwards from a **Sioux City Journal** article in November saying that 'as many as 15 million Americans would be without coverage' under Obama's plan." Clinton's name is nowhere to be found on the flier. "[T]hose in the know might think that this new negative mail is Iowa Nice playing a little dirty," Dann stated.

There will be plenty of time and space for more of the same beginning this weekend when the majority of Americans tune out the mainstream media machine and turn on the game over the Christmas holiday. Junkies will still be able to find their political fix online or via late-night TV, but the rest of us will be too busy gathering with family and friends to care or notice, at least until it's too late to make much of a difference. It may be a tempting time for campaigns to let slip with a

few blows below the belt. That may not be in the spirit of Christmas, but it's certainly in keeping with the history of presidential political campaigning. ❖



Indiana's Kyle Cox helped the Obama campaign in South Carolina work the world's largest phone bank after Oprah Winfrey campaigned there earlier this month and helped produce 36,426 white fliers for followup calls. (Obama campaign photo)

2008 State Presidential Polls

Iowa (R)	Date	Huckabee	Romney	Giuliani	Thompson	McCain	Paul
CNN	Dec. 14-18	33	25	11	9	9	6
Rasmussen	Dec. 17	28	27	8	8	14	6
ABC/Wash Post	Dec. 13-17	35	27	8	9	6	8

New Hampshire (R)

Rasmussen	Dec. 18	11	31	13	3	27	7
CNN/WMUR	Dec. 13-17	10	34	16	3	22	5
Fox News	Dec. 11-13	11	33	16	2	20	8

Iowa (D)

Date	Clinton	Edwards	Obama	Richardson	Biden
Dec. 14-18	30	26	28	7	--
Dec. 17	31	22	27	9	--
Dec. 16-17	24	26	27	--	--

N. Hampshire (D)

Rasmussen	Dec. 18	31	18	28	8	2
CNN/WMUR	Dec. 13-17	38	14	26	8	2
Fox News	Dec. 11-13	34	15	25	6	2



Story County Study

Precincts: 44
Population: 79,981
Registered Voters: 67,781

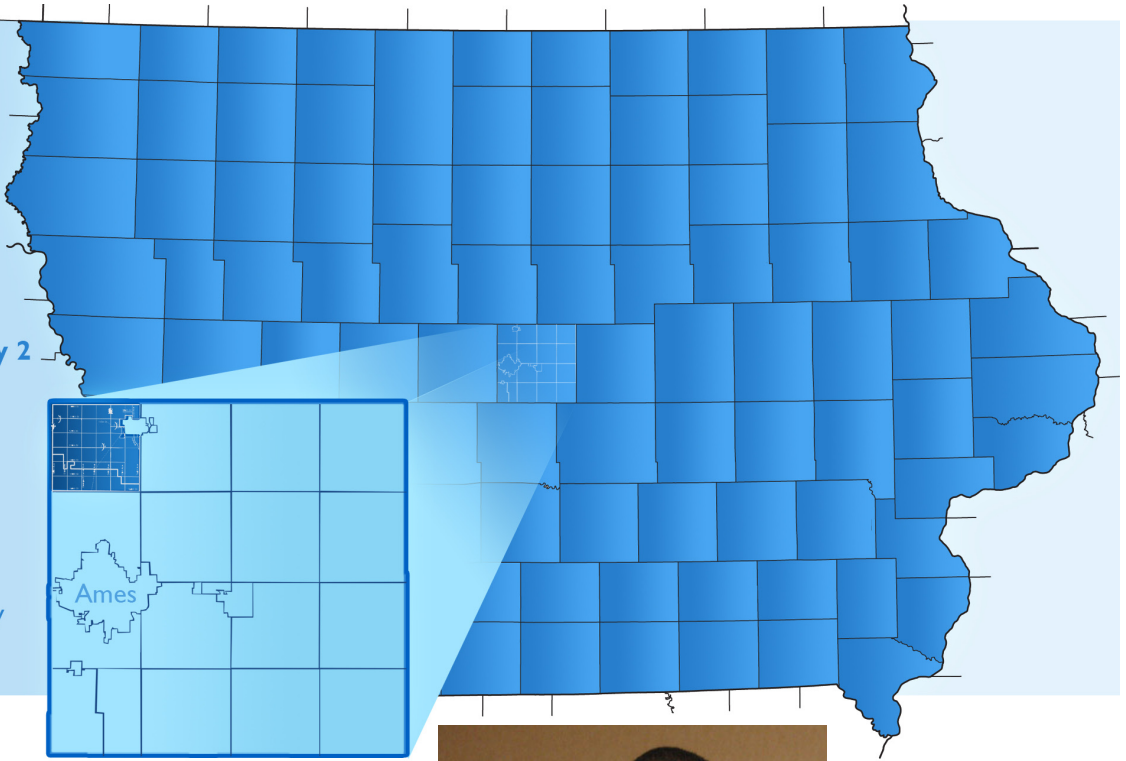
2006 Votes Cast: 30,144
Straight Ticket D: 5,675
Straight Ticket R: 4,355

Lafayette Twp/Story City 2

Population: 2192
Registered Voters: 1569

2006 Votes Cast: 719
Straight Ticket D: 93
Straight Ticket R: 129

Caucus Location: Story City
Hall community room



(HPI Graphic by Ryan Nees)

STORY COUNTY
Precinct Highlighted:
Lafayette Twp/Story City 2



pollsters, exit pollsters, and candidates pestering Iowans trying to do their civic duty. Yet, increasingly, those 125,000 or so people select the next President of the United States.

Caucuses are held at the precinct level in Iowa gyms, libraries, schools, community centers, and elsewhere. In all, there are 1,784 precincts in the state and 1,784 caucuses, all of which will begin at 7 p.m. sharp on Jan. 3. Caucus-goers must be registered Democrats, but registrations can be changed on site.

Here's how it works: caucus-goers show up and in a large room divide into "preference groups" for each candidate. The number of people in each group divided by the number of people caucusing, is the percentage each candidate wins at the caucus site, and must meet or exceed the percentage needed to win a single county delegate. An example will help.

Home to the Republican Ames Straw Poll, the city of Ames and Iowa State University, Story County is directly north of Des Moines and one of the nine most

Understanding the Iowa Caucuses

By RYAN NEES

"The Iowa Caucuses aren't democratic. In fact, they are so undemocratic they make the Electoral College seem like a triumph for those who believe in 'one man, one vote.' Caucus-goers aren't voting for Obama, or Hillary or John Edwards. They vote for delegates to a county convention, who then go on to vote for delegates to the state convention, who then go on to vote for delegates to the national convention," wrote the IowaProgress blog this year.

The Iowa Caucuses are so inexorably complicated only about 6 percent of registered voters in Iowa bother to turn out for them. High turnout can have the effect of marginalizing voters. If one supports a candidate too few others support, then the vote is likely to be tossed out. Then there's the pressure of public declaration, the time (some two hours) required to caucus, the sometimes snow and ice storms one must battle trekking to the caucus site, the tricks that can warp delegate counts more profoundly than gerrymandering, and the hordes of reporters, entrance



populated counties that will account for over half of the state's convention delegates (more on that later). The Iowa Democratic Party measures Democratic turnout performance in each precinct in the last two general elections (2006 gubernatorial in Iowa and presidential in 2004) and assigns delegates proportionally. Of the 2,500 delegates that will attend the Iowa Democratic Party Convention, Story County will send 77. Its own county convention will comprise 360 delegates, and these are the delegates elected on caucus night. In our example, the Story City 2 / Lafayette Township precinct contributes seven of the 360 county delegates.

So let's try some caucus math.

The fundamental mission of each caucus is electing delegates to each county's convention. Each of Iowa's 99 counties hold such conventions, which in turn elect delegates to the state convention (the winner of the plurality of state convention delegates is considered to be the winner of the night, the winning candidate's face will

	Votes	Percentage	Delegates
Clinton	21	21%	2
Obama	28	28%	3
Edwards	24	24%	2
Richardson	11	11%	0
Biden	8	8%	0
Dodd	8	8%	0

grace all the papers the next morning, although all of this happens before either convention happens, as the election night numbers are projections).

First, some context. Our Story City 2 precinct saw 91 caucus-goers in 2004, and they divided such that three delegates went to John Kerry, three to John Edwards, and one to Howard Dean. Kerry ultimately won 38% of Story County's delegates, roughly the same percentage he won statewide, which is the reason Story County makes such a good example.



Check out this scenario when 100 caucus-goers file into the Story City Hall community room and align into preference groups. The numbers pan out like this, based loosely on recent polling: Obama 28, Edwards 24, Clinton 21, Richardson 11, Biden 8, and Dodd 8. No other candidate has support. The delegate count would look like this: Obama 3, Edwards 2, Clinton 2, Richardson, Biden, and Dodd 0. (Here's a nifty calculator for converting raw votes to delegate counts.)

A candidate needs enough supporters to win at least one delegate at the precinct's caucus. Because this precinct has been given seven delegates to the county convention by the party, a candidate needs 1/7 (or approximately 14.2%) of the caucus-goers' support to achieve viability. In this example, Richardson, Biden, and Dodd all fail to achieve viability.

In the second round of voting, called realignment, supporters of non-viable candidates may choose to join another candidate's group. Dur-

The Iowa Three-Step

Caucuses aren't primaries. They're a little more town meeting and a lot less secret ballot. Instead, caucus-goers meet in 1,784 precincts and gather in groups to elect delegates to their county's convention.

Everyone gathers in support groups for their preferred candidates in a process called alignment.

After alignment, each candidate's viability is determined. Supporters of candidates unable to win a delegate (who are unviable) may join other candidates' groups in "realignment."

Delegates are awarded to each candidate based roughly on their proportional representation at the caucus.



ing the 30-minute realignment period, supporters of viable candidates pitch their neighbors to join their respective preference groups; it is one reason why campaign organization on the precinct-by-precinct level is so important in capitalizing on the leftovers. Occasionally the brainiest of political pollsters ask voters for their second choice, hoping to project the realignment, but seldom is the information sophisticated enough to be reliable. It's usually not important to know the second choice of a Hillary Clinton supporter because Clinton will almost always achieve viability, but there are some precincts so sparsely populated they elect but one delegate. In 2004, John Kerry was non-viable in over 200 precincts, generally ones that elected a single delegate by strict plurality vote.

But back to our Story County example. Let's say the Biden and Dodd folks decide to join other groups, but because the Richardson group is only four votes away from achieving viability, it sticks together. Of the 16 previously affiliated with Biden and Dodd, five go to Clinton, four to Obama, four to Edwards, and three to Richardson. Now the numbers look like this (see top graphic): Obama 32, Edwards 28, Clinton 26, Richardson 14. The delegate count would be Obama 3, Edwards 2, Clinton 2, and Richardson still 0.

But here's the devious part: if one of Clinton's 26 supporters moves to the Richardson camp, even if the person doesn't support Richardson at all, the New Mexico governor achieves viability. And because the number of delegates is fixed at seven, Richardson's gain is Obama's loss. Now the delegate count is Obama 2, Edwards 2, Clinton 2, and Richardson 1, a result that deprives Obama of a delegate despite his winning numbers. Score one for Clinton. (And they say she's cold and calculating!)

If you think these kinds of nasty tricks don't happen, think again. It's another reason why the Iowa ground game is so important. By most accounts, John Edwards has gone the furthest of any Democratic campaign to recruit a "precinct captain" for every one of the 1,784 caucus sites, and that's an advantage that shouldn't be overlooked. Beyond placing such trained message conduits in every caucus site who help to maximize realignment gains, each

	Votes	Percentage	Delegates
Clinton	26	26%	2
Obama	32	32%	3
Edwards	28	28%	2
Richardson	14	14%	0
Biden	0	0%	0
Dodd	0	0%	0

	Votes	Percentage	Delegates
Clinton	25	25%	2
Obama	32	32%	2
Edwards	28	28%	2
Richardson	15	15%	1
Biden	0	0%	0
Dodd	0	0%	0

captain will also be prepared to do the very sort of tricky caucus math presented here.

But just as the fixation of delegates and the fixation on delegates can misrepresent popular sentiment, there are also other problems, which will hit harshly Sen. Obama, the candidate whose message of a new kind of politics depends, at least more heavily than the other candidates, on a new kind of voter coming out to caucus. Because the number of delegates for each precinct is fixed and allotted according to past Democratic perfor-

mance, new voters don't matter much. In Story County, home to Iowa State University, whether 400 or 4,000 come to caucus, the number of delegates that can be won will always remain the same.

The IowaProgress blog put it this way: "The people who are most disadvantaged by this are students. Of the four counties where it requires the most caucus-goers to elect a delegate, three had significant student populations: Johnson, Poweshiek and Story. It is a system that favors the old over the young, the rural over the urban, Western Iowa over Eastern Iowa. It is a method of selecting a candidate that has a clear bias and to be successful, presidential candidates have to spend a disproportionate amount of energy on less populous rural areas."



Further, if indeed much of Obama's support comes from new, previously disaffected voters, polls now showing him leading the Democratic field could be deceptive. If turnout exceeds past performance in any given precinct, the effect of stagnant delegate counts is one of weighted democracy. In an energized urban area or college campus, it might take a hundred caucus goers to elect a single state delegate, whereas in a rural county with fewer voters, it might require only 20. (The party's algorithms for allotting delegates is already skewed in favor of less populated areas; the effect is exacerbated if turnout balloons.) And when pollsters survey hundreds of Iowans, even with the most statistically reliable models, they assume each vote is equal. It is not.

Which just might be the most important point to understand about the Iowa Caucuses. ❖



McShurley wins Muncie mayoral race recount

MUNCIE - The absentee ballot delivered victory to Democrat Jim Mansfield on Nov. 6 and took it away on Wednesday. Pending certification today by the recount commission, Republican Sharon McShurley beat Mansfield



by 13 votes -- 6,121 to 6,108. She will become the first female mayor in Muncie history (**Muncie Star Press**). "My first reaction was, it's over," McShurley told The Star Press after the commission announced its unofficial count Wednesday night. "We can all start moving forward." McShurley's reversal of fortune was prompted by the fact that about 20 absentee Mansfield votes were not endorsed with the initials of representatives from both political parties. Indiana law requires that political appointees, working in the county election room, endorse the absentee ballot cards with their initials before mailing them out to voters. The three-member recount commission decided unanimously to disqualify these votes, the majority of which came from Precinct 46. Democratic attorney Mike Quirk, who was Mansfield's campaign manager, called the omission "at best incompetence and at worst fraud." Democrats, Quirk said, would be studying their legal options Wednesday night and Thursday morning. "I don't think it's over yet," he said.

Judge Nemeth tells Daniels juvenile center not safe

INDIANAPOLIS - A St. Joseph County judge has stopped sending female offenders to the Indianapolis Juvenile Correctional Facility, claiming the state-run detention center

is understaffed and lacks adequate rehabilitative and educational services (**Indianapolis Star**). Judge Peter Nemeth also said he has received reports of sexual activity between inmates and between inmates and staff. "I have decided it is neither safe nor productive" to continue sending female juveniles to the Department of Correction facility on Girls School Road, Nemeth said in a letter he sent Monday to Gov. Mitch Daniels. Nemeth said he was appealing directly to the governor after attempts to work out problems with DOC Commissioner J. David Donahue were unsuccessful.

Lake Commissioners veto income tax

CROWN POINT - Lake County commissioners have vetoed a proposed 1 percent county income tax, but the County Council is expected to override (**Times**).

Waiz vetoes pay raises

JEFFERSONVILLE - Jeffersonville Mayor Rob Waiz has vetoed two ordinances that would give most of the city's elected officials large raises for 2008, boost the pay for a planning director Mayor-elect Tom Galligan wants to hire and create a communications director's position in city government. "The amount of increases for the salaries for elected officials is fiscally irresponsible," Waiz said of his vetoes, which he signed yesterday afternoon (**Louisville Courier-Journal**).

Councilmen asks county to save health department

HAMMOND - Two city councilmen asked Lake County commissioners on Tuesday to stop their takeover of the city Health Department (**Times of Northwest Indiana**). "We want the mayor and county commissioners to back off until there is a plan in

place," Councilman Homero "Chico" Hinojosa, D-6th, told the Board of Commissioners on Wednesday in Crown Point. The City Council voted 5-4 on Sept. 27 to write off the city Health Department by removing it from next year's city budget.

Judge Bolk weighs Hatch Act in TH mayoral race

TERRE HAUTE - Both sides in the legal challenge to Mayor-elect Duke Bennett's candidacy submitted documentation Wednesday afternoon that reiterated their arguments made in court (**Terre Haute Tribune-Star**). The sides now await a decision by Judge David Bolk.

Obama would consider Lugar for cabinet

MANCHESTER, N.H. - ABC's Sunlen Miller Reports: Barack Obama has often said he'd consider putting Republicans in his cabinet and even bandied about names like Sens. Dick Lugar and Chuck Hagel. He's added a new name to the list of possible Republicans cabinet members - Arnold Schwarzenegger. Obama regularly says he would look to Republicans to fill out his cabinet if he was elected, but at a town hall event in Manchester, N.H., he was pushed to name names. "It's premature for me to start announcing my cabinet. I mean, I'm pretty confident. but I'm not all that confident. We still got a long way to go," Obama said. But then the GOP names started to flow. Sen. Dick Lugar: "He's a Republicans who I worked with on issues of arms control, wonderful guy. He is somebody I think embodies the tradition of a bipartisan foreign policy that is sensible, that is not ideological, that is based on the idea that we have to have some humility and restraint in terms of our ability to project power around the world," Obama said about his Senate colleague. ❖