



Incumbents survive primary tumult

Coats wins Senate nod easily, while Young upsets Sodrel

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY, JULIE CROTHERS** and **KATIE COFFIN**

INDIANAPOLIS - A tumultuous primary night kept political observers on the edge in Southern Indiana as Orange County Deputy Prosecutor Todd Young fended off Travis Hankins and upset Mike Sodrel in the 9th. Next door in the 8th CD, Tea Party activist Kristi Risk came close to upsetting Dr. Larry Bucshon, with the cardiologist winning 33 to 29 percent over the Spencer housewife.

The night marked the return of Dan Coats as he held off State Sen. Marlin Stutzman for a comfortable 39 to 29 percent victory and the nomination to reclaim the U.S. Senate seat he vacated in 1998.

And U.S. Reps. Dan Burton and Mark Souder continued their congressional careers. Souder walloped self-funded and transplanted auto dealer Bob Thomas by a 48-34 percent margin. Burton led throughout the evening, clipping former state representative Luke Messer with just 30 percent of the vote while Messer got



Dan Coats is congratulated after his 10 percent win with 39 percent of the vote on Tuesday. (HPI Photo by Steve Dickerson)

28 percent.

Secretary of State Todd Rokita easily cruised in the 4th CD, defeating State Sen. Brandt Hershman 42-17. In

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Year of the short order cook

By **DAVE KITCHELL**

LOGANSPOUT - If 2008 was the year of "Joe the plumber" nationwide for the Republican Party, primary night of 2010 proved this year could be the one for short order cooks.

That's short order, as in raising campaigns and candidates in short order.

Exhibit A: Chef Dan Coats. Six months ago, he was under the radar and out of the political arena. Even after a video in which he proclaimed he was happy to be retiring in North Carolina instead of



"Baron Hill is a competitor. That's why he stayed in Congress for a number of terms, but I'm a fighter too."

**- 9th CD Republican nominee
Todd Young**



Howey Politics Indiana

is a non-partisan newsletter based in Indianapolis and published on the campus of Franklin College. It was founded in 1994 in Fort Wayne.

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Subscriptions

\$350 annually HPI Weekly
\$550 annually HPI Weekly and HPI Daily Wire.
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the state he represented from 1989 to 1999, Coats overhauled his political personae, ditching the trappings of a lobbyist for his previous life as a U.S. senator. Voila! He becomes the Republican candidate for U.S. Senate again, besting a handful of candidates.

Exhibit B: Short order cook Todd Rokita. In short order, he put together an instant campaign for the 4th District GOP nomination. It's been only a couple of months since Rep. Steve Buyer announced his retirement. While Rokita was exploring other career options, he charted an abrupt change of course and plunged into an 11-candidate field to become Buyer's successor. Voila! Now he is the Republican candidate for the 4th District, and a prohibitive favorite to succeed Buyer.

And then there's the field of candidates out to oust Dan Burton. Sprinkle in competition, fold it with financing, let simmer a few months, spiced graciously with the history of difficult races for Burton of late and ... voila. We have Burton fricassee, slightly braised, but tenderized by the hammering from other candidates ranging from Dr. John McGoff to Luke Messer

to Brose McVey, et. al. The Indianapolis Star endorsed (virtually) any of the Republican contenders except Burton, and the Star Editorial Board got its wish. The contenders won the majority of the vote in the district, but Burton won a narrow plurality. In the end, he claimed yet another nomination by a margin close enough that he could have lost the race in one of the smaller townships in his district.

Yes, these are short order cook times, but keep in mind that a certain senator from Massachusetts was a nobody just a few months ago when Ted Kennedy died. Today, he serves in his seat. Such are the times in which we live when campaigns are launched on Facebook and You Tube and candidates may Tweet you before they shake your hand.

There are some other observations worth noting about Tuesday's results. The first is that Rokita virtually exploded the political ambitions of State Sen. Brandt Hershman, who has been one of Buyer's closest staffers since he first ran for Congress in 1992. Hershman was as close to a hand-picked successor as Buyer could



possibly have, yet Buyer's coattails and influence did not deliver. In the end, Hershman lost by a margin that was closer to 3-1 than 2-1, and Buyer is accustomed to being on the other side of that margin in his previous races.

Another observation worth noting is that Marlin Stutzman proved that taking a page from Howard Dean is not a bad thing. It was Dean, many may recall, who said the secret to winning the White House was in running a 50-state campaign and not writing off any states that were likely Republican leans. The strategy worked. Barack Obama claimed several traditional GOP strongholds, including Indiana in 2008. Stutzman had signs in counties all over the state, and in the end, easily outdistanced former Rep. John Hostettler, who looked like he would claim the nomina-

tion with ease before Coats entered the field.

And then there's Burton, who looks like a Hoosier as comfortable in polyester as any other and poised to play golf at the drop of a golf cap. Yet, he has just endured a veritable shot across his bow that will likely mean he has fought his last fight as a congressional candidate. He may survive in November if Democrats give him a pass and the Republicans he narrowly defeated don't mount an independent campaign against him. If there is a lesson to be learned from Burton's campaign, it's that his opponents were too many and their individual resources too few – and the voters are finally on to the idea that the field of candidates he ran against rallied more support collectively than he did individually. ❖

Primary, from page 1

the 7th CD, slated candidate Carlos May lost to perennial candidate Marvin Scott for the right to take on U.S. Rep. Andre Carson.

And in a year when incumbents were supposed to be an endangered species, only two legislators lost - embattled State Rep. Jacquie Clements to former legislator Heath Van Natter, and Bill Ruppel who was defeated by Rebecca Kubacki.

The Tea Party appeared to exert its strength in the 8th and 9th CDs where Risk and Hankins ran far better than anyone expected. But Tea Party favorites in the Senate race - Stutzman and Richard Behney - never made things close.

U.S. Senate: Coats cruises

When Dan Coats re-emerged on Feb. 2, he had already made the decision to run on the merits of his career that included two Senate victories, four U.S. House terms, an ambassadorship to Germany, and a close brush with history when President George W. Bush nearly made him secretary of defense.

Coats refused to attack his opponents, figuring that he would need to close ranks with supporters of Stutzman, Richard Behney, John Hostettler and Don Bates Jr. Campaign sources tell HPI that the GOP field will likely come together within the week to close ranks behind Coats.

There was a dearth of public opinions polls during the campaign, but internal Coats polling by Public Opinion Strategies showed Coats with as much

as a 30 percent lead. The campaign, however, tried not to raise expectations and refused to go negative, choosing to trade a blow-out victory for party unity.

"He pledged to support whoever won and he said that from the very beginning," said Coats campaign strategist Kevin Shaw Kellems. "The conventional wisdom in Washington was that the Indiana Senate primary would be a nail-biter. Washington was wrong again."

On Tuesday, national pundits and Republican pollster Christine Matthews told Politico, "If I were the Coats people, I would say anything less than 55 percent is unacceptable. If he comes out with less than 55 percent and manages to squeak by, he looks bad."

The campaign wasn't buying that and Coats squarely looked toward a race with U.S. Rep. Brad Ellsworth. Coats is traveling to Evansville this morning to directly take on the Democrat who will be handed the nomination on May 15 by the Indiana Democratic Central Committee.

"In light of the damage that President Obama's





policies have already done to the United States of America, as Hoosiers we cannot afford to be any part of this," Coats told a somewhat subdued crowd at the Downtown Marriott at 9:45. "We cannot and we will not stand idly by and watch as our personal liberties are diluted, our national security diminished, and our fiscal health destroyed. And we absolutely cannot afford to elect someone to the United States Senate who will enable this radical move to the left."

Coats then delivered a broadside at Ellsworth, saying, "Folks, anyone who has voted to reappoint Nancy Pelosi as speaker of the House cannot be trusted to protect Indiana's interests. This is going to be a pivotal and a healthy exercise in democracy because the choice will be very, very clear – the differences between the two philosophies are indeed dramatic."

"Congressman Brad Ellsworth and I are going to offer Hoosiers two very different views of the direction our country should be taking."

The Ellsworth campaign released this statement Thursday night: "I know Hoosiers are frustrated with Washington," Ellsworth said. "I am too. That's why I'm running, because we need folks who will listen and work together to get things done no matter what party you're from -- that's been my approach as Sheriff, in Congress, and it's what I'll do in the Senate. Over the next six months, I'll keep listening and give Indiana a clear choice in this election. I'll keep working for everyday Hoosiers and their priorities and not the big special interest lobbyists in Washington."

Kellems noted that the GOP field "agreed on many, many issues. We have a common opponent now and that's Brad Ellsworth."

Stutzman attempted to ride a wave of endorsements from the American Conservative Union and U.S. Sen. Jim DeMint and actually came close to matching Coats' TV

buys in the final week.

But it was the anemic fundraising by Stutzman and Hostettler (who reported only \$37,000 on his first quarter FEC report) that alarmed state and Washington Republicans and drew Coats into the race.

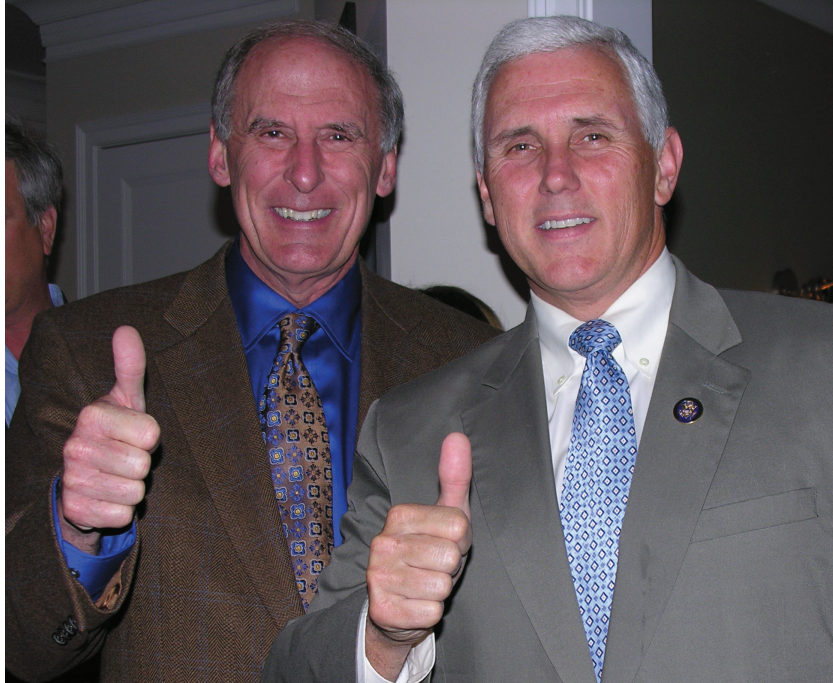
Coats' entry may have been enough to force a dispirited Sen. Evan Bayh to retire. Bayh allies said he had pondered retirement after his presidential and vice presidential bids faltered between 2006 and 2008, only to find President Obama's dynamic change creating a potential political firestorm back home. Bayh managed his father's 1980 campaign that lost to Dan Quayle. He also faced the prospect of his wife becoming a campaign issue after she made \$2 million by sitting on the boards

of companies like Wellpoint, which had dramatically raised insurance rates just as the Obama health reforms entered the homestretch into law.

Sources like U.S. Sen. John Coryn said they believed that Coats' entry forced Bayh out.

Now with Coats the GOP nominee, he will directly challenge the Obama presidency and take aim at a Democratic Senate seat that, going into 2010, many assumed was safely on the ruling party's ledger.

Coats, who received the endorsement of U.S. Rep. Mike Pence, and a wink and a nod from Gov. Mitch Daniels. "Dan Coats is squarely in the mainstream of Hoosier opinion in his concern about the direction Washington is trying to take our country," Daniels said. "He is going to win this election and be an important voice in countering the extremism we've witnessed the last year and a half."



Dan Coats and U.S. Rep. Mike Pence give the thumbs up. Pence endorsed Coats late last month.

3rd CD: Souder wallops Thomas

The race that appeared to be closing fast ended in a 48-34 percent route with U.S. Rep. Mark Souder winning despite expressing angst about the race to Howey Politics last week.



Thomas spent an estimated \$500,000 on the race and Souder spent close to \$250,000. "It's humbling," Souder said from Washington to WANE-TV Tuesday night. "I knew it was going to be a tough year for incumbents. I knew I took some controversial votes. I spent the campaign trying to explain why I fought for the district. Obviously I'm battling the Obama administration, but I focused on fighting for the district and my values."

WANE-TV reported that Thomas spent the evening at the Fort Wayne Country Club and refused to concede, though his campaign said he would close ranks behind Souder in the fall, when Souder faces a rematch with Dr. Tom Hayhurst. Souder defeated Hayhurst in 2006.

Souder expressed his frustration at Thomas' self-funded campaign. Souder told HPI that he was "miserable" about the campaign, though he expected to win. He added that he had pondered retiring after this term and added, "This just sealed it."

When Fort Wayne TV stations began reporting that Souder had disavowed retiring and Thomas accused him of not being up to the job, HPI posted those comments on its website Friday. HPI had asked if Souder was thinking about this being his last race or just speaking in the heat of the moment

Souder said, "No. The variables that are coming up are this is a redistricting time. I've got to sort through redistricting. Let's say I run two more times (2010 and 2012) because I said I would run one or two more times. If I run two more times, if we take Congress and the presidency, then I would be handing over the seat in a bad Republican year. Another option I don't really want to do and this is a legitimate concern: back in the district I've been beaten up for being a liberal. I was only one of 23 people who voted for (Rep. Mike) Pence against (Majority Leader John) Boehner. Let's just say I'm not their fair-haired boy.

"If we take over the majority and I became Homeland Security chairman, I would evaluate. At this point I like what I'm doing but at some point you go, OK. I'm going to see. Let me be honest with you, one of the big factors was my dad and his brothers all died between 55 and 60 of heart attacks. My mom's dad died at age 45. And the combination that I'm a conservative with this administration has been much more upsetting here. I've had two tough generals in a row, although this one should be better even though (Dr. Tom) Hayhurst has more money than me. I've had these nasty elections and I've got grandkids six houses away who I hardly see. Nathan is having one in Colorado this summer and you kind of think about not enjoying



THOMAS

them."

Souder talked about potential Republican candidates who could succeed him. He added, "I think we need a congressman in a manufacturing and industrial district like ours, a swing district. We need a congressman who can build seniority for 15 or 20 years."

Souder also said about primary opponent Bob Thomas: "This is about, increasingly, consulting firms and self-funders who have the arrogance to think they can drop in on a market like ours with anybody who's got money; NRCC has been looking at two or three guys who can spend two or three million dollars to buy a seat. I am angry about it. I am angry about it at the national level and the local level. It isn't that it's wrong to have some wealthy people in Congress, but most of them have stayed in their communities and invested there. To have somebody wander in and drop a bunch of bucks on us and the people buying it, what does it say for the future? There won't be any Marlin Stutzmans or Jim Banks or Matt Bells in the future unless we fight this off."

4th CD: Rokita in a landslide

After barely winning re-election in 2006, Secretary of State Rokita blitzed State Sen. Brandt Hershman by 12,000 votes and a 42-17 percent margin. No one else in the 14-candidate field got more than 8 percent.

"All I know is that we as soon as we filed we put our nose down, ran real hard," Rokita told WIBC's Steve Simpson late Tuesday night. "These kinds of races cost money to do well. We stayed positive the whole time when one of my opponents didn't. Serious candidates, good leaders, face some serious problems, not politics as usual. And so we got that done."

Rokita entered the race having won two secretary of state races as well as a four-man GOP convention floor fight in 2002 in a field that included the current State Treasurer Richard Mourdock, State Sen. Mike Delph and 5th CD challenger Dr. John McGoff.

"Having run statewide twice, we had experience," Rokita said. "But it's true it was a sprint. People who picked up the phone and who had known me for years said, 'We want to help.' We had some very qualified people. The energy and experience all coming together at the right time really gave us a push. Hoosiers want substance, they want serious candidates and they don't want politics as usual."

Rokita noted the Hershman campaign ran ads "with negativity. We didn't do it."

Hershman received the endorsement from Rep. Steve Buyer, but simply posted it on Facebook and didn't put out a press release. It had been expected to be a factor in the race, but it wasn't.

The irony for Rokita is that he spent the last year seeking redistricting reform. Now he is the heir apparent



to retiring Buyer in "frankendistrict," the bizarre looking 4th CD that extends from Bedford to Monticello and will almost certainly not exist in its current form in 2012.

5th CD: Burton survives with 30%

Luke Messer conceded victory to Republican Rep. Dan Burton late Tuesday night after a brush with an upset. The race was expected to be easily Burton's due to 5th CD voters having six other candidates to spread the vote over. In the end, it came down to less than 2,500 votes that gave Burton the victory. John McGoff pulled 19 percent of the vote while state Rep. Mike Murphy and Brose McVey each received 9 percent.

There was disappointment for the supporters who packed into Bear Chase Country Club near Shelbyville, but also a sense of accomplishment and hope at the closeness of the race. Messer, with his teary-eyed yet smiling wife Jennifer and three young children by his side, said the important step forward is to make sure Republicans take a collective and positive stand.

"I'm very proud of the race that we ran, and I do believe that people all across this state and all across this country are worried about the explosive growth of government and the creep toward socialism that they're seeing in Washington," Messer said. "But they want more out of Republican leadership than just fighting that fight. They want the Republican Party to be a party of reform, the party that goes out there and grabs the shirttail of Washington and shakes that place up and lets the American people know that we're back in charge."

Linda Sanders, Shelbyville, said she has known the Messers since they moved into her community and was disappointed at the loss. "Luke is just really always ready to jump in and help out with things, and they (the Messers) have really strong family, moral beliefs. They're just wonderful, down-to-earth people," Sanders said. "It would've been very refreshing to have him in Congress."

Messer said this year was challenging but worthwhile with the support he had from friends and that he has much to be thankful for.

"One of the things that I have always believed and I've said to my kids through their young lives is win or lose, you honor God. And we didn't win today, but we still

honor Him and we thank Him for giving us the peace and strength to tackle this challenge."

For Burton, it was a victory with 70 percent of Republicans - including dozens of 5th CD county chairmen, sheriffs, mayors and commissioners - lining up with his opponents and voting against him.

"There's no question there was a lot of anti-incumbency sentiment," Burton told WIBC late Tuesday night. "I think 65 to 70 percent of the people said just throw 'em all out. But I'm glad I'll be serving another term in Congress."

Burton called it a "happy night" and added, "I feel some great sympathy for my opponents who ran such hard campaigns. It was a tough night for them and I wish them well."

And that, essentially, was the crux of the crowded field of challengers against the 28-year veteran. If Brose McVey or State Rep. Mike Murphy had dropped out and endorsed Messer, or Dr. John McGoff (who finished with 19 percent, compared to 9 percent for the other two), Burton would have gone down in defeat.

"Any time you go through this kind of campaign and you're not successful, it really hurts," said Burton, who had lost two congressional runs before winning an upset in 1982. "All you need is a plurality. I'm happy we won. I was hoping we'd run stronger. There's no doubt people disagree with me because I've been pretty outspoken on a lot of issues."

Burton vowed to work to "stop this radical move by the Obama administration for European-style socialism."

Burton will face Democrat Tim Crawford, who defeated Dr. Nasser Hanna 61-39 percent. Hanna was the Democratic establishment candidate.

With an almost certain victory in the fall, it won't take too long before the retirement talk for Burton begins. One thing is almost assured: after close to \$2 million spent on this race, Burton will be unlikely to face such a large field in 2012 if he chooses to run again.

7th CD: Scott defeats May

Carlos May, the slated GOP candidate in the 7th CD, lost to perennial candidate Marvin Scott, 44-37 percent with Wayne Harmon getting 19 percent.

Scott, a sociology professor at Butler University, attributes his victory to "name recognition and hard work" (WIBC). Scott also ran for the 7th District seat in 2000 and



Luke Messer and family greet supporters after being narrowly defeated by U.S. Rep. Dan Burton. (HPI Photo by Katie Coffin)



was defeated by Carson's grandmother, Julia Carson. But Scott thinks his chances are better this time around because his opponent has less experience.

Scott also has unsuccessfully run against U.S. Rep. Andy Jacobs Jr. and U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh.

8th CD: Bucshon barely defeats Risk

In 2008, Spencer house wife and community activist Kristi Risk heeded the call of Rush Limbaugh and participated in Operation Chaos. She voted in the Democratic presidential primary. That move put her at odds with the party, with the Owen County GOP chairman initially threatening to keep her from running in the 8th CD. He relented.

On Tuesday, it was Risk who provided her own brand of chaos, almost upsetting establishment supported Dr. Larry Bucshon of Newburgh. At 9:16 p.m. with 79 percent reporting, she and Bucshon were tied at 30 percent each in what looked like a monumental upset in the making. It was a big victory in Vanderburgh County that allowed Bucshon to escape with a 33-29 percent victory by just under 2,000 votes. It was hardly the kind of push Bucshon envisioned in his attempt to take the Democratic seat held by Rep. Ellsworth that will be defended by State Rep. Trend Van Haaften in November.

Indiana Republican Party Chairman Murray Clark said on Tuesday, "We're excited about the prospect of working with Larry Bucshon this fall as Republicans seek to reclaim the 8th congressional district seat. As a conservative who understands and believes in the principles of lower taxes and spending, smaller government, and more personal freedom, he is the best candidate to run against Trent Van Haaften. Voters this fall will have a clear choice between electing another rubber stamp for the liberal Washington Democrat agenda, or electing a leader who will fight to protect their tax dollars. Larry Bucshon is clearly such a leader."

Had Risk won, even with her support from the Tea Party movement, the idea of the GOP retaking the Bloody 8th would have been severely tested.

9th CD: Young pulls off the upset

Republican Todd Young pulled ahead in the polls,

scraping up support in Monroe and Washington counties and narrowly fending off opponents Mike Sodrel and Travis Hankins in what might be the upset of the night.

"It was a close race all the way down to the wire," Young told HPI Tuesday night as the final results came in, showing Young with just over a 1,000 vote lead.

Young said he wasn't surprised by how close the race came in the end.

"Hankins has put in a lot of time as well, so it makes sense that we'd be up against each other going into the home stretch," he said.

"In terms of voter turnout, this is definitely an all time high for a Republican primary in this district," Campaign Manager Ryan Burchfield said.

"At this point, we're taking nothing lightly," Young said. "I think we're prepared for a very big and strong battle ahead of us as we face Baron Hill in the coming months."

Young said he plans to target Hill's stance on issues of fiscal responsibility, one that Young said Hill is "very weak" at defending. He also said voter turnout seems to suggest that they are sick of politics as usual.

"I'm elated that we've been at this 16 months and were able to overcome our competition to win this nomination. This could have gone either way, but we're glad for our chance to preserve the American dream," Young said.

Geography played a large role in Young's win, said campaign manager Burchfield, with opponent Travis Hankins picking up support in the North and Northeast sections of the district.

"Baron Hill is a competitor that's why he stayed in Congress for a number of terms... but I'm a fighter too. I'm a U.S. marine and I'm prepared for this fight," Young said.

Hill vowed to put up a fight. "I have a record of tackling critical issues like energy independence, health care and fiscal responsibility. And, I want to continue serving as an independent voice for the people of Indiana's Ninth Congressional District, fighting for more and better jobs for hard-working Hoosiers, enhanced fiscal reform, a clean-energy jobs package that will create homegrown jobs while significantly strengthening our national and economic security, and ensuring our troops and veterans have the benefits they need and deserve." ❖



Todd Young grimaces during a long Election Night that turned into a three-way battle with Mike Sodrel and Travis Hankins. (HPI Photo by Julie Crothers)



2 House Republicans go down in defeat

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

FRANKLIN - Two House Republican incumbents lost to challengers on Tuesday.

State Rep. Bill Ruppel was defeated by Rebecca Kubacki in HD22 by a 54-46 percent, or just over 700 votes. Kubacki had been endorsed by the Indiana Chamber.

In HD38, former State Rep. Heath Van Natter easily defeated State Rep. Jacqué Clements, 58-42 percent. The Van Natter victory brings to a close one of the more bizarre chapters in House Republican politics.



Van Natter had been chosen to finish the term of State Rep. Jim Buck after he was selected to finish the term of Sen. Jeff Drozda. But in a feud between Clinton and Howard County Republicans, the caucus decided to seat Van Natter

for the rest of Buck's term, then nominated Clements for the fall election. Howard County GOP Chairman Craig Dunn quickly vowed to retake the seat for Van Natter, who never attended a floor session of the House while in office.

Van Natter said he was not surprised by the victory, telling the Kokomo Tribune's Ken de la Bastide, "I knew it could be done. I had a lot of support in Clinton County. I knocked on 5,000 doors. We had a great team that worked hard. This was a grassroots campaign. It was a hard-fought primary. It would be nice to have an easy campaign in the fall."

Clements took a philosophical view of her defeat. "That's the game," she told the Kokomo Tribune. "One door closes and another door opens." Her defeat to VanNatter was not a surprise, and she noted the large sums of money he received from the builders' association and Indiana Chamber of Commerce.

"They didn't like my stance on local government," said Clements, who said she is opposed to the eliminating local township offices. Additionally, Clinton County officials filed a civil lawsuit against Clements when she served as county auditor after a software contract was awarded to a New York-based company. The lawsuit is still pending.

"The lawsuit filed in Clinton County played a big part," she said of ethical con-

duct that brought about a rebuke from the Clinton County Commissioners

In HD35, State Rep. Jack Lutz easily defeated Eric Welch, 64-36 percent in a race some thought would be closer due to the split between Madison and Delaware county Republicans.

A couple of other incumbents who appeared to be in danger won easily. State Rep. Don Lehe blasted Art Anderson 62-38 percent. The HRCC ran TV ads in Lafayette on behalf of Lehe. Mike Gentry of HRCC told HPI that while Lehe was never seriously in danger, there were a high number of undecideds in a district that was under the 55 percent Republican threshold.

In HD50, State Rep. Dan Leonard easily dispatched Ron Fusselman, a Huntington businessman, 66-34 percent. This race is significant because Leonard was one of the few Republicans to vote against the constitutional property tax caps.

In HD19, Democratic State Rep. Shelli Vandensburgh defeated Dennis Meeks 80-20 percent. Former Crown Point mayor Dan Klein easily defeated Frances Katz 66-34 percent in the GOP primary.

In HD20, State Rep. Tom Dermody defeated Todd Reinert, 65-35 percent.

In HD67 that is open due to the retirement of State Rep. Cleo Duncan, Indianapolis firefighter Randy Frye won a close race with 29 percent, topping Tami Wenning and Cindy Ziemke, both who had 28 percent.

In another open seat, HD73 vacated by State Rep. Dennie Oxley, Ryan Bower defeated Doug Leatherbury 62-38 percent in the Democratic primary. Bower will take on Republican Steve Davisson, who defeated Hank Taylor 56-44 percent.

The seat vacated by State Rep. Jackie Walorski - HD21 - was won by Timothy Wesco, 68-32 percent over Mishawaka Councilman Dave Wood.

In a race that will be a priority for HRCC in the fall - HD70 - Republican Rhonda Rhoads defeated Brett Lloyd 63-37 percent. She will challenge State Rep. Paul Robertson.

In HD92, labor activist Brett Voorhies defeated Phillip Harrison 72-28 percent in the Democratic primary. Voorhies will challenge Republican State Rep. Phil Hinkle.

In HD74, Sue Ellspermann defeated Angela Sowers 80-20 percent. Ellspermann won a challenge before the Indiana Election Commission after Democrats charged she improperly filled out her candidacy declaration form. ❖



Rebecca Kubacki defeated State Rep. Bill Ruppel



Winning means more than just being an anti-politician

By **JACK COLWELL**

SOUTH BEND - Winning takes more than saying your opponent is a politician and you aren't. At least it did in three key Republican primary election contests Tuesday.

Former U.S. Sen. Dan Coats won the big one, the Republican nomination for the Senate seat being vacated by Evan Bayh, even though opponents hammered at him during the campaign as being a Washington politician — worse, a Washington lobbyist.

Coats, facing the wrath of four opponents and Tea Party activists, got 50 percent of the Republican vote in St. Joseph County. Second in the county as well as in statewide totals was state Sen. Marlin Stutzman, who could cite political experience of his own in the Indiana General Assembly.

The two GOP candidates who bragged the most about having no political experience, one a Tea Party organizer, finished pretty much in a tie way back in last place.

Congressman Mark Souder won the Republican nomination for a ninth term in Congress in the 3rd District, staving off a well-financed challenge by car dealer Bob Thomas, who contended that Souder had been in Washington too long and had lost touch with conservative principles.

In Elkhart County, where voters were barraged with Thomas TV spots, Souder, the experienced politician, got 55 percent of the vote; Thomas, the experienced car salesman, got 30 percent.

State Rep. Jackie Walorski won the Republican nomination for Congress in the 2nd District, getting over 60 percent of the vote and defeating principal challenger Jack Jordan by better than two-to-one. Jordan stressed that he offered a "non-politician" alternative to Walorski, the choice of the

National Republican Congressional Committee and a self-proclaimed "pit-bull" in political battle.

In St. Joseph County, Walorski got 71 percent of the Republican vote. She got 80 percent in Elkhart County. Jordan did come close in his home county, Marshall County, the only place he started with some name recognition, getting 42 percent.

Walorski, who still needs to convince Republicans nationally to provide all-out targeting of her fall race with Democratic Congressman Joe Donnelly, had much to gain by an impressive victory, much to lose if she had been embarrassed by winning unimpressively. Her margin should be impressive enough to merit further attention from the national strategists picking races that could determine control of the House.

Donnelly, unopposed, had nothing at stake in terms of vanquishing opponents. Some Republicans were hopeful, however, that Donnelly's ballot listing would be skipped by some Democratic voters as a sign of dissatisfaction with Congress or of his support for health care reform. But Donnelly got more votes than anyone else, opposed or unopposed, on the Democratic ballot in St. Joseph County.

The three Republicans who won over contentions that they are, gasp, politicians, all face tough races in the fall. A key to success there will be how well they overcome any negative effects from the primary and whether they can get the Republicans who voted for opponents on their side now. ❖

Colwell has been covering Indiana politics over five decades for the South Bend Tribune. He is a regular HPI columnist.





Fort Wayne hosts an extravaganza

By **MORTON J. MARCUS**

FORT WAYNE - It was a cool Thursday morning with a suggestion of rain, but no actual precipitation. The time was 5:30. Five-thirty a.m.! Semi-retired men in good health and of sound mind normally do not awaken, except for Nature's call, at this hour.

The excursion director, however, had issued the summons and was threatening disciplinary action if all feet were not on the floor immediately. By 6:00 a.m., the garage door was closing and the blue bargain-buggy was headed for Interstate 69. Less than two hours later, a \$4.00 fee was being paid for the privilege of parking in the massive lot adjacent to the Fort Wayne Coliseum.



Morton Marcus
Column

There was a line of women that stretched alongside this multi-purpose exhibition facility. Every second, the line lengthened with more women cheerfully joining their eager sisters waiting for the Annual Vera Bradley Outlet Sale.

Let me not misrepresent the situation. There were men there. Perhaps one of every hundred persons was of the male persuasion. But this was the feminine mystique triumphant, a demonstration of extraordinary branding, and a consummate celebration of consumerism.

How many women were in line? I don't know. In pairs, they snaked through the parking lot. Up one side of an aisle and out the other, the line twisted around to the next aisle and going on and on and on. The cool weather was a blessing, but temperatures in the 90s or a torrential rain would not have diminished the enthusiasm of the breath-bated pre-baited buyers.

They came from Cleveland and Cincinnati. They arrived from Illinois, Michigan and Kentucky the night before and filled the hotels of Fort Wayne. Some came from Florida with lists made by friends and relatives. Others were on their cell phones, taking orders with the professional cool of market makers in the pits of the Chicago Board of Trade.

Stories were told of vans, holding six persons, each prepared to buy the daily limit of \$2,500 for each of the four days the sale would last. These were said to be resellers who would be on e-bay within hours or holding bag parties in their homes the following week. Some might even be preparing (horrors) to resell in retail stores these

prizes obtained at discounts said to be as deep as seventy percent.

Vera Bradley is a women-owned Indiana business that produces handbags and sundry containers, placemats, napkins, and headbands. The fabric patterns are suggestive of the Victorian era. My grandmothers would have considered them old-fashioned. However, they are beloved by today's women of ages ranging from texting teens to sizzling sixties.

The line began to move just after 8 a.m., but it grew faster than the Coliseum absorbed shoppers. The spirit was joyous. The ushers (older men, well-rehearsed in herding) kept the line orderly. They also distributed a four-page orange, pink, and white brochure that gave the waiting women opportunity to plan their attacks on the stock when they were entitled to enter the magic portal.

After an hour and a half in line, I was paroled with-



out entering the holy-of-holies. Less than an hour later, at a nearby coffee shop, the call came and I promptly retrieved our resident shopper with her collection of granddaughter gifts.

The experience of the Vera Bradley Outlet Sale proved again that American businesses can be successful if they offer products that consumers want. Indiana communities can enjoy the benefits of that success if they are populated by imaginative and persistent entrepreneurs. Now all we need do is encourage imagination, persistence, and risk taking.

Hmmm? Is that the reason Indiana has a state lottery and numerous casinos? ❖

Mr. Marcus is an independent economist, speaker, and writer formerly with IU's Kelley School of Business.



Sylvia Smith, Fort Wayne Journal Gazette:

How do you feel about the helicopter candidate? The guy who swoops in, drops down and says he'd be a top-notch representative for you in Washington? Bob Thomas says even though he hasn't lived in northeast Indiana for 25 years, he has deep, deep ties to the area because he's met a payroll and sold oodles of cars to area folks. Also because he lives here now. Rep. Mark Souder, the incumbent whom Thomas wants to beat for the region's congressional seat, says that's bunk. Souder says he has a much keener understanding of and connection to the area because he grew up here, lives here (except for the 10 years in Washington before running for Congress and a few years going to school and working elsewhere), goes to church here, eats out here, shops here, plays with his grandkids here. He sniffs that Thomas owns a mansion in Carmel, rents an apartment in Fort Wayne – and how connected can that be? The same logic might apply to Senate candidate Dan Coats. Coats used to represent Indiana in Congress, but that was more than a decade ago. Since then he has lived in the Washington area (when he was in the Senate, Coats had an Indianapolis apartment) and famously bought a place in North Carolina for retirement. It is not unfair to say Indiana has not been the center of Coats' universe for quite some time. Does where they live (or lived until they rented apartments in new cities) make Coats and Thomas unqualified or underqualified for the jobs they're seeking? This answer will be different for different voters and for varying reasons. You might conclude that owning a home in an area or state is just one consideration to take into account. Or it might seem like where a person lives is at the core of who they are. For instance, you might think that Thomas has a compelling biography that overshadows the length of time he's lived in northeast Indiana: business experience, academic training at Ivy League schools, personal wealth (which might make him impervious to temptations that are abundant in Washington), an approach to issues that mirrors yours. You might think the same of Coats – that his 18 years in Congress blends nicely with eight years as a lobbyist and four as an ambassador to Germany, creating the broad world-view and experience important for senators. Like Thomas', Coats' fortune might insulate him from personal grubbiness, and his shift from the "compassionate conservatism" he advocated in Congress to a more hard-line approach. Or you might think of both men: Carpetbagger. Political opportunist. And how about longevity? Is that a good thing or a bad thing in an occupation? ❖



few random thoughts on candidates great and small and what this low-key, off-year contest may mean for some of them. First, I don't understand why there isn't greater opposition from either the Republicans or the Democrats in the contest for the seat of longtime Democratic U.S. Rep. Pete Visclosky, of Merrillville, who is at what is possibly the most vulnerable point of his career. He has been and continues to be under investigation for possibly steering money -- "earmarks" in the Beltway lexicon -- to clients of one of his largest contributors, the now-defunct PMA Group, a Virginia-based lobbying firm that at one time was headed by a former Visclosky staffer. Instead of a contest, we have a rerun of the same old same old. Visclosky has no opposition in the Democratic primary, and his Republican opponent in the fall likely will be Mark Leyva, a perennial candidate whose losses to Visclosky are about as sure as Lucy pulling that football out from under Charlie Brown. Now would have been the time to strike if either party was interested, but they apparently are not. Although Visclosky has not been found to have done anything improper, he remains under investigation. But, of course, this is Lake County, where a federal probe is about as significant as the sniffles. ❖

Thomas Friedman, New York Times:

There is only one meaningful response to the horrific oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico and that is for America to stop messing around when it comes to designing its energy and environmental future.

The only meaningful response to this man-made disaster is a man-made energy bill that would finally put in place an American clean-energy infrastructure that would set our country on a real, long-term path to ending our addiction to oil. That is so obviously the right thing for our environment, the right thing for our national security, the right thing for our economic security and the right thing to promote innovation. But it means that we have to stop messing around with idiotic "drill, baby, drill" nostrums, feel-good Earth Day concerts and the paralyzing notion that the American people are not prepared to do anything serious to change our energy mix. This oil spill is to the environment what the subprime mortgage mess was to the markets — both a wake-up call and an opportunity to galvanize a constituency for radical change that overcomes the powerful lobbies and vested interests that want to keep us addicted to oil. If President Obama wants to seize this moment, it is there for the taking. We have one of the worst environmental disasters in American history on our hands. We have a public deeply troubled by what they've seen already — and they've probably seen only the first reel of this gulf horror show. And we have a bipartisan climate/energy/jobs bill ready to be introduced in the Senate. ❖

Mark Kieling, Times of Northwest Indiana: Just before the primary election Tuesday in Indiana, here are a



Daniels not seeking presidency

INDIANAPOLIS - Gov. Mitch Daniels offered some opinions on the importance of Indiana's primary election with a particular mention of Republican primary contender Dan Coats before an audience of 200 at the Union League Club of Chicago on Tuesday morning (Benman, Times of Northwest Indiana).

"A former Senator and an eminent figure in our state became overcome with concern about the way our nation was going, and I think probably Sen. Coats in the view of many people will be nominated," Daniels said in an ornate dining room before the breakfast crowd. Coats faces a crowded field in the Republican primary for U.S. Senate, facing a particularly stiff challenge from State Sen. Marlin Stutzman and former U.S., Rep. John Hostettler. Whoever wins the Republican primary will face Democratic Rep. Brad Ellsworth, of Evansville, in the November election. The prize is the seat held by retiring Democratic U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh. Also in response to an audience question, Daniels disavowed any desire to run for U.S. President, a subject of ripe speculation in light of his close association with the Bush family. "Honestly I'm not planning to run and I don't expect to run," Daniels said. "I am concerned as many people are about the direction of the country," Daniels added. "And I would like to have a little input into that. But there are other ways to do that."

Obama says storm is receding

NEW YORK - The past two years of recession have been "dif-

ficult," but "the storm is receding," President Obama said in a speech to private-sector business leaders Tuesday (CNN). At the annual meeting of the Business Council, comprised of 150 executives from private businesses, Obama said the recession was "not just an economic problem - it's a human tragedy." The president touched on several major topics throughout the 35-minute speech, including the labor market, education, health care reform and financial reform. "Last year the economy was in freefall," Obama said. "Now it's growing again. In fact, we've seen the fastest turnaround in growth in nearly three decades." Obama said his administration "has a relentless focus" on recovery, and that "spurring job creation and economic expansion continues to be our No. 1 priority." He emphasized the importance of business leaders seeking common ground. Obama also said he was "pleased" Republican legislators dropped a filibuster on debate of Wall Street reform, which he considers "a reasonable, non-ideological approach to target root problems in our financial sector."

Indiana revenues dip once again

INDIANAPOLIS - Indiana's budget revenues were down last month, despite spending cuts, and continuing a trend of shortfalls in all but one of the last 18 months (Indianapolis Star). Indiana collected \$1.437 billion, down \$14 million (1 percent) from April 2009, according to a report issued by the State Budget Agency while many politicians were involved in today's primary elections. April's loss played against March's modest gain, which had reversed a 17-month trend of shortfalls and led to hopes that the sagging Indiana economy might be ready to rebound. Individual income tax collections totaled \$578 million

in April, \$18 million below collections for the same period last year and the lowest in five years, the report said. The report showed April sales tax collections were \$517 million, \$30 million above collections for the same period last year, an indicator people may be making purchases they had put off during the worst of the recession. Gov. Mitch Daniels said in a statement accompanying the report, "Anyone attacking the reduction measures we've been forced to take is demanding a tax increase and should identify which taxes they want to go up."

Settlement in LaPorte assessing

LAPORTE - The LaPorte County Council on Monday voted for a settlement agreement that would finally put to rest the lingering property tax reassessment mess. Now, other parties involved in the legal challenge must also agree before the settlement becomes official. The LaPorte County Commissioners scheduled a special Wednesday session to vote while the Michigan City School Board is expected to decide whether to accept the terms on Friday. Three other officials, including LaPorte County Auditor Craig Hinchman and LaPorte County Assessor Carol McDaniel also must sign off on the measure. Details of the proposed settlement are not being released unless it becomes official. But, LaPorte County Councilman Scott Ford made it seem as if payment of McDaniel's legal fees are included in the accord. In a written statement, Ford said he is opposed to paying her attorneys but for the good of all local taxing agencies hurt financially by the reassessment still unfinished after three years, he voted in favor of the pact. "Our county attorneys and case law point us to the fact that we owe nothing to Mrs. McDaniel's attorneys," Ford said.

