



Post ceiling polling in the basement

Voters showing anger with just about everyone in Washington

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - The dog days of August are showing just about everyone associated with Washington, D.C., is in the doghouse.

Gallup's daily tracking on Sunday had President Obama at just 39 percent approval, with 54 percent disapproving. Obama's predecessor, President George W. Bush, never saw his approval rating dip below 46% in Gallup polling in his reelection year of 2004. Obama was above Gallup's 50% mark in only 16 states.

Congressional Democrats? CNN/Opinion Research had it at 45/49% fav/unfav. And that's the high mark.

Since the debt ceiling debate wound up on Aug. 2 and then Standard & Poor's downgraded the U.S. credit rating three days later, Americans are showing thorough disapproval. The Republican Party? A CNN/Opinion Research Poll released six days ago had just 33% approving and 59% disapproving. Speaker John Boehner? CNN had his numbers at 33/40%. Nancy Pelosi? 31/51%.



Gallup found that only 24% of those surveyed say most members of Congress deserve reelection, the lowest percentage since Gallup began asking the question in 1991. Gallup's Congressional generic stood at 51% Democrat and 44% Republican. The seven-percentage-point edge for Democratic congressional candidates, nationally, contrasts with ties or Republican leads in most Gallup polls leading up to the 2010 midterm elections. However, the Democratic advantage is not as large as those

they enjoyed in the 2006 and 2008 congressional election cycles – each of which produced a Democratic majority in Congress. The Democrats averaged a 10-point lead over Republicans among registered voters in the year before the

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Cruel winds of fate

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - I awoke Saturday morning to a distant, but familiar hissing sound. It took me back to my adolescence when my Peru High School band director, Dave Bobel, flew the Indiana State Fair hot air balloon, a source of benevolent local pride.



I recalled the sound of propane-heated air rushing into the cavernous space that kept the balloons delightfully defying gravity.

I rushed to the window of my house across from Broad Ripple Park and saw the Oliver Winery balloon



“Individual Hoosiers ran to the trouble, not from the trouble, by the hundreds, offering in many cases their own professional skills.”

- Gov. Mitch Daniels, on the State Fair tragedy Saturday night



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softly floating above the house, soon joined by others in the gentle breeze.

About 12 hours later, a deadly wind struck our beloved Indiana State Fair, killing five at the grandstand and injuring more than 40 others.

It was a cruel twist, even in the political realm. On Sunday morning, we watched an emotional Gov. Mitch Daniels join Fair director Cindy Hoyer, Indiana State Police 1st Sgt. Dave Bursten and First Lady Cheri Daniels discuss the tragedy. "What you saw last night was a display of best qualities, both public and private, of Hoosiers," a choked-up Daniels said. "Individual Hoosiers ran to the trouble, not from the trouble, by the hundreds, offering in many cases their own professional skills. I've heard it from everybody I've debriefed this morning. People rushing up, 'I'm a nurse, I'm a doctor, I'm a trained EMS responder.'"

The irony of local news reports of people killed and injured at the State Fair comes after the First Lady made her unprecedented speech before the Indiana Republican Party Spring Dinner last May, spending 30 minutes talking about her vivid friendship with Hoyer and her love for the Indiana State Fair. It came during the media frenzy of a prospective Daniels presidential bid, and reporters from CNN, the New York Times, Washington Post and many others heard Cheri Daniels talk about flipping pancakes at the fair, spitting watermelon seeds, driving dump trucks and milking cows.

It was sort of a homespun invasion of the body politick, and to tell you the truth, the national reporters weren't sure what to make of it. I wasn't sure either. I (along with most of the Hoosier Republicans in the room) thought it was a prelude to a Daniels presidential campaign. But it turned out to be a kind of trial balloon for the First Family, a peering out of the political foxhole to determine what kind of incoming arrows would be slung by the national media over the Daniels divorce and remarriage.

Just days later, after an unrelenting media obsession with the private lives of Mitch and Cheri Daniels, he bowed out of the race many of us thought he could win. It was another example of the poisonous politics and media taking out a potentially capable national problem-solver at a time when we need more of that class. There was vivid disappointment with the Daniels family decision not to run, but most understood. How many of us could make such a sacrifice with potentially mortal and personal consequences?

Had Gov. Daniels run for the White House, he would have been at the Iowa State Fair in Ames on Saturday, participating in a goofy straw poll – or the first social conservative caucus of the 2012 presidential race – which was won by U.S. Rep. Michele Bachmann, who most pundits believe has no chance of winning the nomination or the general election (they were saying the same thing about Barack Obama four years ago). It came on the same day that Texas Gov. Rick Perry entered the presidential race, immediately joining the top tier of contenders, along with Mitt Romney and Bachmann. Perry finally entered the vacuum that Daniels created by not running. The so-called Bush/Texas money that had been primed for Daniels is in dispersal, but much of it will probably end up in Perry's coffers.

What if Daniels had been in Ames, instead of Indianapolis on this tragic Hoosier Saturday? An array of incomparable timelines might have been altered. The First Lady daughter Meredith were at the Sugarland concert and witnessed the tragedy. Hoyer barely escaped injury.

On a Sunday morning when Daniels might have been celebrating a first-tier triumph in Iowa, he was at home, assuaging the bruised Hoosier psyche that took a blow at one of its most prized venues – the Great Indiana State Fair.

It's been a tough couple of



weeks here, and across America.

We live in twisted times, with a jobless rate that takes a more silent toll than the howling winds that cut through the grandstand Saturday night. The political discourse has been bruising here (earlier this year we reported on physical threats made to Daniels and other Indiana public officials). We endured a week of puzzling character

deficits as the allegedly bizarre story of Rep. Phil Hinkle surfaced. And we watched from afar as the presidential race began sorting itself out without the favorite Hoosier son.

At the memorial service this morning, Daniels said, "There was a hero every 10 feet." It was comforting that the governor was back home in Indiana. ❖

Polls, from page 1

2008 elections and an 11-point advantage leading up to the 2006 elections, with individual polls showing them ahead by as much as 23 points. CNN had Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid at 28/39%. Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell? He sits at 21/29%.

Real Clear Politics composites for Congress stood at 16.8% approve and 77% disapprove, a huge 60.2% difference. President Obama stood at 43.5% approve and 50.3% disapprove.

The Tea Party? CNN puts its fav/unfav at 31/51 percent. Pew Research in an Aug. 4-7 survey shows that more Americans now think that members of Congress who support the Tea Party are having a negative effect than said that in January, at the start of the new Congress. Currently, 29% judge the impact of Tea Party supporters as mostly negative compared with 22% who see their impact as mostly positive. At the beginning of the year, the balance of opinion was just the opposite: 27% said that Tea Party members in Congress would have a positive impact, while 18% expected a negative effect. Only 42% of Republicans favor the Tea Party. The balance of opinion has changed the most among political independents. In January, by a margin of 29% to 14% independents expected that Tea Party members would have a positive effect. Currently, about as many independents say Tea Party members in Congress are having a negative effect (28%) as a positive effect (24%). The new poll also finds that those who followed the debt ceiling debate very closely have more negative views about the impact of the Tea Party than those who followed the issue less closely. Gallup also asked registered voters how a Tea Party endorsement would affect their likelihood of voting for a congressional candidate. The effect is nearly 2-to-1 nega-

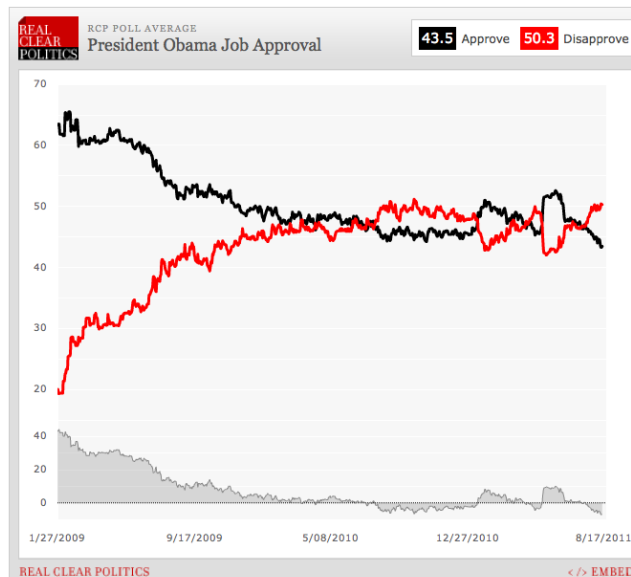
tive, with 42% saying they would be less likely to vote for such a candidate versus 23% saying they would be more likely. About a third said it would make no difference or are unsure.

A Washington Post poll showed that nearly eight in 10 of Americans polled are dissatisfied with the way the political system is working, up dramatically from late 2009. The unhappiness is intense, with 45% saying they are very dissatisfied. That feeling is shared widely across party lines. Independents are the most disgruntled, with 51% calling themselves very dissatisfied. More than seven in 10 said Washington is focused on the "wrong things." That is sharply higher than it was just 10 months ago. Two-thirds of Republicans who see the government as focused on the wrong things said Obama and the Democrats are to blame, and Democrats were nearly as likely to point the finger at the GOP. Among independents, a plurality – 43 percent – volunteered that both sides are at fault.

A Reuters/Ipsos Poll released last Wednesday showed 73% believe the U.S. is on the "wrong track" and nearly half believing the worst is yet to come. The poll reflects growing anxiety about the U.S. economy and frustration with Washington after a narrowly averted government default last week, a credit rating downgrade by Standard & Poor's, a stock market dive and a stubbornly high 9.1 per-

cent jobless rate. President Barack Obama was politically bruised in the brutal, weeks-long debt debate, and negative views on the economy are worrisome signs for his 2012 reelection bid. His approval rating dropped to 45% from 49% a month ago, according to the poll conducted from Thursday to Monday. Obama's predecessor, President George W. Bush, never saw his approval rating dip below 46% in Gallup polling in his re-election year of 2004.

So, what does all this troubling data mean?





The New York Times' John Harwood observed: Here is the bad news for President Obama and incumbents in both parties: it can get worse – and stay that way for a long time. That might sound like catastrophic thinking after Mr. Obama's nerve-jangling birthday week, during which he got several gag gifts: a near default, a 500-point market drop and the first-ever downgrade of United States debt by a major credit ratings agency. But step back from events this month, this year or even this decade, and a more ominous portrait comes into focus. It shows an American economy under ever-increasing competitive pressure, demographic trends making those pressures more acute and a voting public facing repeated disappointment as it yearns for better times.

For a generation, "our economy has been, for the majority of people, a slow-growth economy," said Robert D. Reischauer, who was the director of the Congressional Budget Office in the early 1990s (New York Times). "But our standards of living have improved much more, due to some factors that can't and won't be repeated." Republicans felt the voters' wrath in 2008, as Democrats did last year. There is no sign of a Morning in America in 2012, or anytime soon. "We're going to see turbulence" in more elections, Reischauer concluded. "It's a very grim picture."

In Bill Bishop's book "The Big Sort," in 1976, some 26.8% of Americans lived in "landslide counties" where the Republican or Democratic presidential candidate won by 20% or more. In 2008 that skyrocketed to 47.6%. Bishop was exploring "why the clustering of like-minded Americans is tearing us apart." Of Indiana's 9 CDs, only the 8th CD is seen as truly competitive in the early cycles of the new maps.

The puzzling aspect of all this disapproval on the Indiana landscape is that candidates sensing an opening aren't stepping up. U.S. Rep. Todd Young has seen the most potent Democratic challengers duck the race.

Tea Party affiliated freshman like U.S. Reps. Marlin Stutzman and Todd Rokita don't have anyone stirring in either the primary or general elections. Only one Democrat

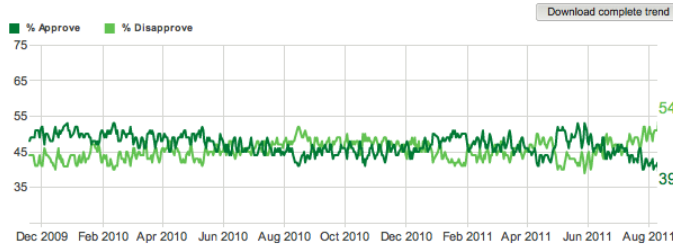
has surfaced in the open 2nd CD, where Democrat Brendan Mullen is preparing to take on Republican Jackie Walorski, a Tea Party favorite.

Only freshman Republican Larry Bucshon appears to be facing a top-tier Democrat, but that isn't decided as former legislator Dave Crooks has a primary opponent in Warrick County Democratic Chairman Terry White.

While the Tea Party's marks are sagging nationally, that may not be in the case in Indiana, though there has been no independent media polling in the state. The alleged most potent Tea Party favorite – Indiana Treasurer Richard Mourdock, who is challenging U.S. Sen. Dick Lugar – presides over a mediocre campaign that may draw in State Sen. Mike Delph

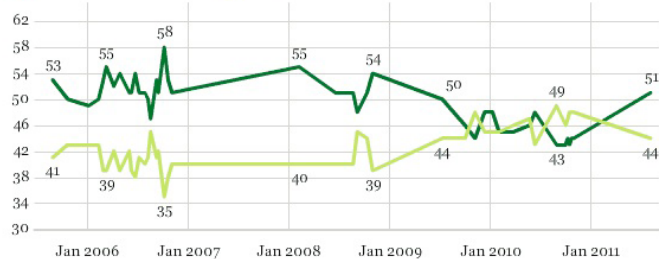
Gallup Daily: Obama Job Approval

Each result is based on a three-day rolling average



Generic Congressional Ballot -- August 2005-August 2011

% Democratic candidate (green line), % Republican candidate (blue line)



GALLUP

(See page 12).

Based on the Gallup polling, USA Today and Politico speculated on a "wave" election building for 2012. But who does the wave take out? President Obama? The Republican House? The Democratic Senate? All of the above?

No one knows.

CNN/Opinion Research found that Americans want compromise on the debt and deficits. According to the poll, 62% say they think taxes on the wealthy should be hiked so the government can fund programs that help lower-income Americans. Just 34% said taxes should be kept low for the wealthy because they help create jobs. The Congressional supercommittee also should seek cuts to domestic government programs, 57% of voters say. Slashing defense spending is acceptable for only 47%, with 53% saying cuts should not hit the military. Just 35% think the supercommittee should propose significant changes to Social Security and Medicare, the CNN poll found.

And Obama has yet to have a defined opponent and what that opponent stands for. With Texas Gov. Rick Perry now in the race, Mitt Romney the presumed frontrunner and U.S. Rep. Michele Bachmann winning the Iowa straw poll, the top tier of the GOP race has been established. Four years ago, Hillary Clinton was the presumed frontrunner.

The best case scenario for Obama is a sustained GOP nomination battle – going beyond the May Indiana primary – and an elusive improvement in the economy. ❖



Debt ceiling debate raised roof on patience

By **DAVE KITCHELL**

LOGANSPORT - It's symbolic that Congressmen and children are the people we most often associate with recess.

Americans who followed the debt ceiling debate over the past month have to wonder if some of the people they elected are really more like children than adults. At the end of a tumultuous week in which our American conscience collectively had to be wishing Congress would put the country down before they broke it, an 11th hour deal to raise the debt ceiling was reached. But more questions than answers remain in the aftermath of a final vote before 435 legislators went home for the rest of the summer.



It's hard to find a winner in the aftermath of an historic, hot summer in Washington when Congress rushed through so many proposals and compromises it left millions invested in needed federal transportation projects in limbo on their way out of town. Whoops, that must have been the note in the "In Basket" for House Speaker John Boehner and Senate President Harry Reid. Meanwhile, the nation lost \$400 million in ticket taxes because of a congressional snafu.

It's hard to find a winner in the debt ceiling debate. Tea partiers? They didn't get what they wanted, which was a balanced budget amendment – an impossible demand given the time constraints. Republicans? They didn't get what they wanted. Even though they succeeded in preventing tax increases, that may be only temporary, depending on what a 12-member Congressional "super committee" recommends. Democrats? They didn't get what they wanted either. They didn't close loopholes, including the Bush tax cuts and a tax break for corporate jet manufacturers.

The reality of this situation is that it represents political theater and nothing more. For those who have been watching the debt situation closely over the past decade, there ought to be outrage. During the Clinton Administration, a Democratic president and a Republican Congress quietly enabled the country to be on a track to pay off the national debt. Where have those days gone? What has transpired in Washington has done little to take

us back a decade when there was realistic hope for ending our national debt.

As Hoosiers know, even a balanced budget amendment here doesn't really balance a budget. Some expenses can be delayed. Other obligations go unpaid, unfunded or substantially cut. Bonding enables some gaps to be covered. In the end, the "smoke and mirrors" people on both sides of the aisle refer to make up for shortfalls.

As a percent of Gross Domestic Product, our debt is high, but not any higher than it was during World War II when we ended the Depression. And if we had defaulted on our debt, the similar experience in Russia and Argentina suggest the economy would have been stronger in a year.

What this episode tells us is that the 12-member committee which eventually deals with this issue will have some serious clout and exposure. Feet will be held to the fire. But whether we as a nation are able to structure our income with our expenses is another matter. With wars ending, we have a realistic chance if there isn't another Hurricane Katrina or 9/11 in the offing. That can happen if Americans who are unemployed or returning from military service are back on the payrolls and generating tax revenue. It can happen if American companies sitting on reserves are willing to take a chance on an economic recovery in which the automakers have already recovered. It can happen if the housing market can finally right itself and find the magnetic north of real home value and not the inflated values we became so accustomed to for the sake of refinancing and second mortgages.

It can happen if we don't default on what really matters in this country – stabilizing a peaceful nation so that it becomes more prosperous with infrastructure, education, health care and a goal of full employment, even if that goal isn't attainable.

To a certain extent, what we just witnessed in Washington was a game of chicken much like what we witnessed in late Hoosier James Dean's role in "Rebel Without a Cause."

Some may remember the scene in which two teens play chicken with their hot rods – and one lost. In that movie, somebody went over a cliff. Last week, the nation could have, but we really witnessed the same kind of entertainment Dean gave us on the big screen. Congress gave it to us on our television screens, even if most members never saw the big picture of what needs to happen in this country. ❖

Kitchell is an award-winning columnist writing from Logansport. He is a regular HPI contributor.



London calling

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

NASHVILLE, Ind. - It was fascinating to watch the "Arab Spring" go viral over the Internet last winter, from Tunisia to Egypt, Bahrain, Jordan and Syria. This is the reality of the interconnected world we live in.

This past week, we've witnessed something our parents and grandparents did: London is burning.

The spark that ignited riots in London was a police shooting. But at this writing, the rioting had spread to Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool and Bristol. The shooting was a mere trigger in Britain, which underwent an austerity program well before the Tea Party forged a Republican takeover of the U.S. House last November.

We've witnessed this in Athens, where the corrupt Greek government tried to rein in spending and was met by riots. There have been massive protests over cost of living, pension cuts and corruption in Spain, the Philippines, Israel and even China.

America, these are shots across our bow.

We are mired in a jobless rate hovering around 9.1 percent. In Indiana, it has been above 8 percent since 2009 and there appears to be no light at the end of this tunnel. Experts say these figures don't truly reflect the jobless rate which would include people too discouraged to look for work anymore. Others have slipped into the underground economy, selling drugs, doing construction work and other day jobs for cash, and a myriad of off-the-books commerce as they try to survive.

And I'll remind you of a statistic the Washington Post reported earlier this summer: the top .1 percent of Americans earn 10 percent of all income, and the top 1 percent earn 20 percent.

Folks, this income disparity is as unsustainable as this nation's balance books.

Since President Obama took office in January 2009 and the GOP lash back of 2010, the message from this writer has been the same: Government needs to be doing all it can to create jobs.

Some, like U.S. Sen. Dick Lugar, are advocating a thorough reworking of our federal tax code - the Fair Tax - which would create the greatest incentive in the world for job creation to take place here and not in violent Mexico or authoritarian China.

"The current tax code warps household and business decisions, discourages investment, is constantly evaded, is arduous to enforce, and is disconnected from the need to stimulate growth, savings and investment in

our economy," Lugar explained.

He strongly believes, "Without strong growth, new jobs are not created, wages are not increased and wealth for all Americans will not grow."

Sponsored by U.S. Sen. Saxby Chambliss (R-Ga.), The FairTax Act (HR 25, S 13) abolishes all federal personal and corporate income taxes, gift, estate, capital gains, alternative minimum, Social Security, Medicare, and self-employment taxes and replaces them with one simple, visible, federal retail sales tax administered primarily by existing state sales tax authorities.

The danger today is that the Republican/Tea Party emphasis is about cutting debt and deficits. To its credit, the Tea Party movement has elevated this true national threat to the forefront of debate. The problem is that they want to do it by just cutting government spending. Over the past year, 340,000 state and local government jobs have been eliminated. Federal government employment has been mostly flat; 3.1 million in 1992 to 2.8 million in 2010.

This past week, Congress created a new Super Committee (officially named the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction) to determine how America can live within its means. According to a CNN/Opinion Research Poll released last Tuesday, 62 percent think taxes on the wealthy should be hiked so the government can fund programs that help lower-income Americans. Just 34 percent said taxes should be kept low for the wealthy because they help create jobs. Just 35 percent think the Super Committee should propose significant changes to Social Security and Medicare.

During the debt ceiling debate, poll after poll showed Americans favoring a mix of tax hikes and spending cuts. But it is hard to find a House Republican who even wanted to close tax loopholes to raise more revenue. When President Obama finally signed the debt ceiling bill into law, House Speaker John Boehner bragged that he got "98 percent" of what Republicans wanted. This was greeted by Standard & Poor's historic downgrade of U.S. credit on Aug. 5.

S&P is hardly a font of credibility, having missed the 2007-08 mortgage bubble fiasco (as well as the fall of Lehman Brothers). But as flawed as S&P is, there is more than a kernel of truth when it explained, "The downgrade reflects our view that the effectiveness, stability, and predictability of American policymaking and political institutions have weakened at a time of ongoing fiscal and economic challenge."

And what I fear now, during these dog days of August, is the anxiety moving from the family kitchen table and into the streets of America. If you don't believe it, London is calling. ❖





A date with a Hoosier we call 'Victory'

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - One never forgets seeing the Statue of Liberty for the first time. Or the Lincoln Memorial. The memory of seeing the Pietà by Michelangelo Buonarroti still brings reverence and inspiration.

As a lifelong Hoosier, the figure that has stood above us all in the center of the state is Victory. And earlier this month I came face-to-face with the statue that for 117 years towered atop the Indiana Soldiers and Sailors Monument. Last spring, a Manitowoc crane lowered her to the street in decrepit condition and she was transported to a hangar at Stout Field. It was there that I found Victory, disassembled.

In this summer of discontent, I wanted to break away from the tempests that have rocked Washington, Cairo and London, get beyond all the bad news we confront every day and look into the core of the Hoosier soul. There is so much that Victory embodies in the Hoosier spirit - and its potential.

You read this very newsletter in search of triumph and loss ranging from the campaign trail, to the halls of the U.S. Capitol, the Indiana Statehouse, the White House and scores of city halls and county courthouses. Many of us spend much time gauging the victors on the gridiron, the baseball diamonds and the basketball courts. There is irony that Victory stands on a star-adorned ball, even though the sports were only beginning to emerge when she was hoisted atop the Soldiers and Sailors Monument in 1893.

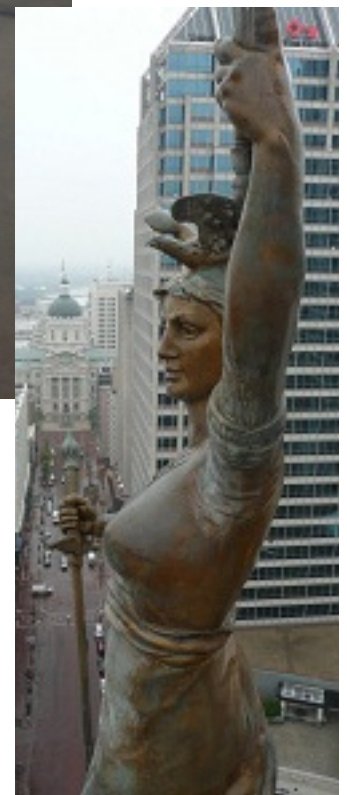
Six years earlier, the Indiana General Assembly appropriated \$200,000 for the monument to honor the Civil War veterans who streamed south and east out of our state in the highest per capita numbers, and who fought heroically in places like Gettysburg (where Hoosiers helped secure the crucial Cemetery Ridge on the first day), Stone River and Chickamauga.

On the Indiana Department of Administration's website, it is noted that German designer Bruno Schmitz won a competition to create Monument Circle. "His concept for Circle Park in Indianapolis was uplifting, inspirational and celebratory," the citation says. "Atop the monument, he envisioned the classic sculpture of a winged Nike (Greek

goddess of war), representing victory in battle."

The DOA recounts the emergence of Victory: Notice of a sculptural competition for the figure "Liberty" to crown the Soldiers and Sailors Monument went out in late November 1889. The winner was a 29-year-old Boston native and New York City resident named George Thomas Brewster. It drew praise from Indiana artist T.C. Steele, who served on the Committee of Experts that awarded

contracts for the monument's various sculptures and adornments: "In the figure we find a simplicity and harmony of outline and a grace of movement, combined with vigor and strength superior to any of the other," Steele observed. "Its expression in the simple grandeur and harmonious strength of the figure is a guarantee that the artist is in



full sympathy with the object and purpose of the monument."

The crowning figure is "a marriage of the classical Greek Victory image (a sense of action and triumph; adorned with flowing drapery) with the American image of Liberty with its torch symbolizing the light of civiliza-



tion and its sword symbolizing justice. The eagle on the sculpture's brow represents freedom."

Victory was to join a statue of Gov. Oliver P. Morton on the Circle. In many ways, Morton formed a line of defense against the Confederacy, helping pro-Union forces in neutral Kentucky, dismissing the Copperhead Indiana General Assembly, sending Republican legislators to Madison, while privately financing the state and war effort until Republicans retook the legislature in 1864. Morton was the "Soldier's Friend," after he formed the General Military Agency of Indiana, and homes for returning veterans, as well as the Ladies' Home, and Orphans' Home to salvage or rebuild torn Hoosier families.

While reporters at the time referred to the goddess as "Miss Indiana," Steele and others preferred "Victory" and that became her identity.

And thus, Victory stood above us for 117 years, a distant figure, with only a few thousand of us perched in the emerging skyscrapers that rose above her, getting intimate views.

That changed in January when contractors for the Public Works Division of the Indiana Department of Administration discovered water infiltration was affecting the Victory sculpture, as well as limestone carvings below the observation deck. It was determined that damage had reached a critical level. "Structural issues were noticed last year during some other work being done on the monument," said Department of Administration Commissioner Robert Wynkoop. "As we investigated, we realized the statute was in pretty bad shape and these issues needed to be addressed promptly."

Thus began a \$1.5 million restoration. At 6:30 p.m. April 23, Victory was lowered, then transported to Stout Field. It is due back atop the Monument on Nov. 4 in time for the annual Circle of Lights celebration and will preside over the NFL Super Bowl next February when she will have a worldwide audience. DOA notes that detailed planning and hands-on problem-solving are the responsibility of Glenroy Construction Company's Lane Slaughter and Jim Kojetin. As primary contractor, Glenroy assembled a team of 11 subcontractors with specialties ranging from bronze conservation to scaffolding and rigging specially designed to manage the repairs at great height (284 ft.). There are also heavy erection equipment, steel manufacturers, ma-

sonry contractors, lightning protection specialists, hazardous materials abatement and roofing.

Coming face-to-face with Victory, I pondered what it should mean to us during these turbulent times. While Victory's base, her feet and legs under flowing robes, was being reassembled under a towering crane outside Building 8 at Stout Field, most of the statue was in the final stages of restoration, scattered about the hangar on wooden pallets, girded by steel bracing. Welders put on finishing touches while gold-leaf was reapplied to the torch apex.

With our nation running huge budget deficits and

mounting debt, there has been angst that America entering the second decade of the 21st Century can no longer build defining public works projects like the interstate highway system or Hoover Dam, contrasting with the world's tallest buildings emerging in places like Dubai, Shanghai and Malaysia, or China's massive water diversions and high-speed rail. NASA's space shuttle program is now history and the private sector will have to pick up space exploration. Indeed, during this summer we've seen the remnants of one of America's best-known structures – beams from the World Trade Center – being transported across Indiana under Harley escort as monuments to terror victims.

But it would be unfair to say that Hoosiers no longer do big things. Anyone driving from the new mid-field terminal at Indianapolis International Airport to downtown bears witness to the House that Peyton Built - the cavernous Lucas Oil Stadium - that dominates the downtown's southwest skyline. We've added other gems in recent times, like the Indiana Historical

Society and Conseco Fieldhouse. And there's the surge in Major Moves highway construction that is connecting Evansville to the capital, turning U.S. 31 into a freeway, and forging new bridges at Madison and Jeffersonville. But this generation also has been restorative, as Bill and Gayle Cook led efforts to revive the West Baden Springs Hotel and the Old Centrum, and we've watched places like the Athenaeum and the Jefferson County Courthouse in Madison come back to life after neglect and fire.

Victory, to me, embodies both our past and future.

Victory's Ball

It's appropriate that Victory stands astride a star-





adorned ball. At about the time Victory was hoisted over Indianapolis' emerging industrial skyline, the wars on the North American continent drew to a close. Americans were to take up their domestic quarrels and settle issues of pride on Big Ten gridirons and basketball courts. The war between the states became New Years Day dramas between Ohio State and Florida, or Butler and Duke as March Madness churned into April. The stars on the ball in the minds of Hoosiers could be sports heroes named Robertson, Manning, Bird and Miller. They could be our patriots in the foreign battles we fight, Medal of Honor recipients named Antrim, Biddle, Shoup, Sterling and de la Garza, or a reporter named Pyle.

Legs of Victory

Her foot astride the ball, her knee bent to provide flexibility and strength, with flowing robes settling around her ankles, Victory has the stance of battle. She is shoeless, much like our frontiersmen who cleared acres of timber without modern power and hydraulics, muscling out massive oak stumps, only to stand behind a beast with blade to sow the crops. Tens of thousands of Hoosier soldiers fought with little more on their feet in the depths of the siege of Petersburg or the cruel Ardennes Forest winter of 1944-45. Today's young Hoosiers practice their footwork and are told to stand tall, as Victory so vividly does.

Breasts of Victory

A little over half of the Hoosier population is female. We invoked the defense of women and children as Hoosier men headed off to war. Lincoln urged charity for the widows and orphans. In Victory, we find a voluptuous woman. Her breasts are subtle. Her torso stands with shoulders raised, ready to bear torch and sword, like a Hoosier Joan of Arc. Women are the state's future, as child-bearers and, perhaps, some day as governors and senators. Only a handful have been elected to Congress, and only two, named Davis and Skillman, have been lieutenant governor.



In the coming century, just a few generations after emerging from the parlors and kitchens to build weapons, and as the Baby Boom matured, women headed full flight into the general workforce. The suffrage and temperance movements flared across Hoosier prairies when Victory was hoisted. During her second century, women will further amass political and cultural power and we might be calling them "Governor" and "Madam President."

Arms of Victory

Her arms are smooth and subtly muscular, holding aloft the torch, and grasping the sword below. Her sectioned wrist suggests leverage. At the time of her installation, Indiana was in a cultural and political prime, supplying a parade of vice presidents with names like Colfax, Hendricks, Marshall, and Fairbanks, a president named Harrison, and authors named Riley and Tarkington. Her robe clings tightly to a streamlined bicep. The ball of her wrist juts out as she grasps the torch, never losing her grip.

Fist of Victory

Victory's fist is impressive. Her knuckles are textured like a career laborer's. The bronze is porous. Her fingers are robust. She seems to bear scars of labor, battle and child rearing. Her ample fingers firmly grasp the torch, ringed with grooves and a band of stars, forefinger pointing skyward. The hand holds steady despite howling winds, blizzards, ice and rain. She has



withstood the droughts of 1936 and 1988, scores of limb-breaking ice storms, the super tornado outbreak of 1974, and even the downtown twister that hit just a few blocks away several years ago.

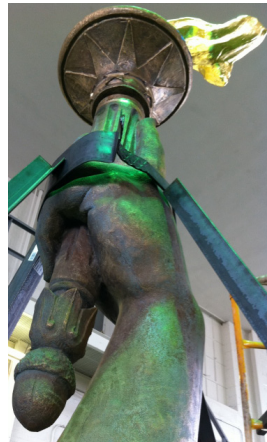


Sword of Victory

I found Victory's sword scattered around in four parts, lying on a blanket, surrounded by torch masks, goggles and wrenches. The sword symbolizes justice, tip on the pedestal as if lowered after battle. It is a non-threatening pose. The Reaganites among us might recall the phrase "peace through strength."

Torch of Victory

This is our beacon, adorned with fresh gold-leaf at a time when gold is selling for \$1,800 an ounce. It rises nearly 300 feet into the air. A welder from Detroit, Chuck Jeffcoat, spent seven weeks grinding out cracks, rewelding Victory, "taking her back to her original shape." Jeffcoat explained, "She was in pretty bad shape. There were cracks all over the place, going all the way up. She was 80 feet in diameter. She's an amazing piece of work. I can't believe back in 1900 they were able to stick something this heavy 300 feet up in the air. It's remarkable how they did that."



Face of Victory

Few Hoosiers have had the opportunity I had, looking Victory straight in the eye. She changes expression depending on your angle. Peering at her head-on, she is compassionate and warm. There is a chiseled handsomeness to her, a resolute jaw, a tall forehead adorned with wavy curls, a sturdy chin, though she never loses her femininity. Her hair is rolled into a braided bun, a common look among Hoosier women of her day. Looking up, there is a gaze of sturdy resolve, strength and Romanesque resilience. Steadfastness, be it looking into a squall line or a skirmish line. Peering at Victory from just below her chin suggests calmness in the face of danger. She would be someone to follow in battle or even share a foxhole with.



Eagle of Victory

On this day, the eagle with wings flared atop her head was in canvas bondage, though the bird's look is

fierce. Between the time Victory arose and came down, the bald eagle in Indiana disappeared, and then has made a comeback. Just weeks earlier I saw one fly by in close range at Eagle Creek Reservoir 10 miles from the monument. Brewster captured the essence of this splendid fowl, and atop Victory, it adds a magnificent American toughness to our skyline.

The Immigrant and Victory

Greek immigrant Giorgio Gikas, who learned about metals at his grandfather's bronze art factory in Athens, has overseen the conservator aspects of restoring Victory. The irony here is that immigration has been an intense political issue in the United States and Indiana. In Gikas we find an artisan who has found a home in



the American Midwest.

Asked what makes Victory unique, Gikas explained, "The size. The dedication. The quality of the work makes restoration a challenge. It's a beautiful piece. It had a lot of cracks, a lot of separations from the castings."

"Water was getting trapped inside and was freezing. We took her apart and inspected each section, and



welded, and now we'll put her back together."

He works out of Detroit and has restored many bronze works, but Victory will be one of his career highlights. "She's probably the largest Civil War monument in the United States," Gikas said. "I have not seen anything larger than this. I am so happy to have the opportunity to work on something like this. It's the opportunity of a lifetime."

Epilogue

When we arrived at Stout Field, a towering crane hovered above as workers were fitting Victory's waist to her thighs. When we left 90 minutes later, they had pulled the waist section off and shuttled it back into the hangar for adjustments. Within the next six weeks, Victory will gradually be reassembled, then slowly transported back to Monument Circle for her return engagement. It will be a dramatic event to watch her slowly rise back to her pedestal on Monument Circle. It is something I will not miss.

Thousands of Hoosiers will have the chance of a lifetime to do what I did: look her in the eyes, admire her figure, strength and calmness. The events around us and throughout the world have brought great anxiety to many Hoosiers who have watched Greek



Artesian Giorgio Gikas stands with Victory, preparing for her reassembly and delivery back to Monument Circle by November. (HPI Photos by Brian A. Howey)

cities explode and London burn, have experienced long unemployment lines, seen withered crops and engorged rivers, and depopulating towns. We've watched our young men and women march off to battle across great oceans. Most return safely to reclaim the fruits of liberty. Some come home in coffins, banking into the airport a dozen miles away, passing Victory from above.

We evolve as a society, debate the critical issues of the day and make our stands and forge our compromises.

The skyline shifts below Victory's feet, and always will. Hoosiers will become browner and more diverse. New industry will take root. Opportunity and fate will flow like her robes.

We will always need her beacon. ❖



More Mourdock curiosity as Delph ponders an entry

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - Indiana Treasurer Richard Mourdock, the man responsible for the state's investments, has pulled much of his personal money out of the stock market. "Ten days ago, I sold all my stock," Mourdock told the Huffington Post earlier this week. "I spend two hours every morning looking at market indicators."



He had a different version for the Indianapolis Star on Sunday, saying, "I kept my energy stocks, my oil stocks, but everything else I sold, because I kept looking at what was happening in Washington,

D.C., and I saw what its potential was on the markets, and I'm too old to have the volatility that we see today and what I expect the longer term will be." Mourdock, 59, said he is "sitting" on his cash rather than investing it elsewhere.

It was just another curious twist in Mourdock's U.S. Senate campaign of Mourdock. He kicked off his race last February wearing a "stars and bars" Confederate style necktie, ran into an array of campaign miscues in June that included an anemic second quarter fundraising total of just \$300,000, and now faces the specter of State Sen. Mike Delph entering the race.

The potential Delph entry is the last news the Mourdock campaign needed. It has the potential of keeping the forces aligning against U.S. Sen. Dick Lugar from consolidating their efforts behind Mourdock, who has lost congressional campaigns in 1988 and 1990, as well as a secretary of state showdown with Delph in 2002.

Delph referred Fort Wayne's Journal Gazette to a statement he issued in December in which he said he was "deeply moved by the encouragement and attention" he had received amid speculation he might be a candidate. At that time, he said about Lugar, "I have supported him in the past, but have become increasingly concerned with his actions on my behalf and on behalf of Indiana within the last few years." He told HPI Sunday he had nothing more to add to that statement.

Republican sources tell HPI that Delph is in the process of lining up campaign assets for a potential Senate run.

A few days later Delph issued a statement calling on 2012 candidates to put aside their campaigns this year and help 2011 municipal candidates. "We seem to be speeding past 2011 to 2012," said Delph, "but the impact on the citizens from the 2011 municipal election couldn't be clearer. We have party chairmen all the way down to precinct committeemen who are moving past their 2011 duties for 2012. Not a smart move, in my view, which is why I have spent most of my political time assisting 2011 friends and candidates."

Delph added, "So Sen. Lugar, Richard Mourdock, John McGoff, David McIntosh, Susan Brooks, Dan Burton, Mike Pence, Jim Wallace, and whoever else may have an interest in 2012, stop campaigning for yourselves and start helping your teammates who stand for election in just about 90 days. That is my aim and afterward I will let all inquiring minds know my own 2012 intentions, assuming they have crystallized by then."

A potential Delph entry is the kind of perfect storm development the Lugar forces hope for. It has the potential to further crimp Mourdock's already poor fundraising ability, and split the challenger forces two ways. While the Indiana Tea Party movement has scheduled an endorsement caucus on Sept. 24 in Greenfield, it is unclear who gets to vote and how it will handle a Delph entry into the race following the Nov. 8 municipal election, which Delph appears to be suggesting.

The danger for the Lugar campaign is that a Delph entry into the race could mean a better-financed and operationally more credible opponent.

Meanwhile, as the Indiana pension funds Mourdock presides over lost 11.2 percent of value since June – or \$1.2 billion, according to the Indianapolis Business Journal – Mourdock unloaded his personal stock portfolio on Aug. 2, the day Congress passed and President Obama signed the debt ceiling deal into law. The Washington Post is reporting today that the SEC is looking into whether certain market participants learned of the downgrade before its announcement. The inquiry, which is in preliminary stages, may not result in a referral to the SEC's enforcement division, the person said.

On Aug. 5, Standard & Poor's downgraded the U.S. credit rating from AAA to AA+. Hours after the debt ceiling vote, Mourdock called for the resignation of Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner and suggested the Senate remove its consent of the secretary to serve. "The Senate confirmed Mr. Geithner in January of 2009," said Mourdock. "They ought to now take a vote of no confidence and withdraw that confirmation."

Lugar, however, voted against the Geithner nomination. When WISH-TV reminded Mourdock of that, he responded, "He did? Well, he gets a chance to lead now to vote to withdraw the confirmation of the entire Senate."



The problem with that statement is the Constitution does not give Congress the ability to “withdraw a confirmation,” a surprising gaffe from a candidate who claims to be a student of the Constitution.

David Willkie, political director for the Friends of Lugar campaign, said of Mourdock personally pulling out of the stock market, “While the Indiana pension funds are taking a bath, this is not a way to promote market stability.”

It’s not the first time that Mourdock has found controversy with Indiana pension investments. He invested in Chrysler stocks at a time when they were at junk bond status, then sought to kill the Chrysler/Fiat merger, maintaining that it hurt Indiana teacher and police pension funds. The U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear the case. Critics like U.S. Rep. Joe Donnelly, the Democrat running for U.S. Senate, say that Mourdock’s position would have done even more damage to the pension funds and could have cost the state millions of dollars in lost Chrysler and supplier company jobs, and state revenue.

After the downgrade, Mourdock said, “The downgrade by S&P of our debt from AAA to AA+ is a serious event that will impact all Americans. Financial markets will open Monday to see the United States with a credit rating of less than AAA for the first time ever. How the markets will respond is impossible to predict. This downgrade is the direct result of raising the debt limit on August 2 without providing for substantive cuts in spending. The White House and many in Congress failed in their jobs by settling for a political compromise rather than seeking a fiscal resolution. They avoided the tough decisions on real cuts in spending by simply kicking ‘the tin can of responsibility’ further down the road. The downgrade reminds us that failing to act has consequences. Of no surprise to many Hoosiers, Dick Lugar was counted among the majority of senators who agreed to the debt-ceiling compromise that was quickly signed by President Obama.”

However, U.S. Rep. Mike Pence, the leading GOP gubernatorial contender, and U.S. Reps. Larry Bucshon and Todd Young also voted for the debt ceiling deal.

While Mourdock traipsed along at his puzzling gait, it wasn’t all smooth sailing for Lugar. A torpid economy and the inertia in Washington will trouble all incumbents.

Democrats spent much of the week flagging an interview Lugar did with WDRB-TV in Louisville in which they highlighted the senator saying, “The American economy is still strong.”

Democrats suggested it was Lugar’s “McCain moment,” a reference to the 2008 GOP presidential nominee insisting in September “the fundamentals of the American economy are strong” as Wall Street tanked. Many believe that McCain lost the presidential race to Barack Obama that week.

Lugar’s quote, in more context, was that, “The

American economy is still strong, we’re making progress although it’s very slow in terms of job creation, and we still have a dollar that is the world currency and we are still selling bonds to everybody all over the world despite the S&P downgrade.”

Willkie added more perspective, saying, “Dick Lugar believes the American economy is resilient and will come back from the damage done by President Obama and the Democrats. Even with the damage done, the underlying basis for the American economy is strong, and we Republicans have full faith in our free market.”

Murdock pounced, with spokesman Chris Conner saying, “Hoosiers have sensed for years that Dick Lugar has been out of touch on a host of issues. (Tuesday’s) comments show his lack of understanding regarding the debt vote, the S&P downgrade and the current state of the economy.”

And the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee appeared to tag team with Mourdock, saying of Lugar, “His remarks are nothing short of insulting to the Hoosier families who are very worried about what’s happening on Wall Street and don’t feel that the economy is strong.”

Primary Horse Race Status: Leans Lugar.

Governor: Pence, Gregg in the Region

Both Republican gubernatorial candidate Mike Pence and Democrat John Gregg spent time courting voters in The Region this past week.

Gregg appeared at the Lake County Democratic Party’s Circle Breakfast meeting Tuesday morning (Dolan, NWI Times). “People don’t want to talk about these social issues that divide us, they want to talk about going to work and they want family wage jobs. Jobs like steelworkers, autoworkers, building and trades. Jobs to pay for that second car, to help their kids go to college and go on vacations,” Gregg told a gathering of nearly 100 local Democrats and merchants.

The speech helped inaugurate Lake County into the 2012 gubernatorial campaign. Five Northwest Indiana mayors have endorsed Gregg’s run, including Hammond’s Thomas McDermott Jr., the county Democratic chairman and host of Tuesday’s meeting. McDermott called Gregg the consensus candidate for his party. “He traveled up here extensively and loves to beat up on Republicans,” McDermott said.

The breakfast club, an outgrowth of the Lake County Democratic Central Committee, also voiced its support of Gregg after his speech. “This is an important election. The extremists in the Republican party are now doing what I’ve done at a smorgasbord,” Gregg said. “They have overreached. They’ve decided the word ‘union’ is a bad word. There is nothing wrong with unions. There is nothing wrong with public education or collaboration. I tell people if you want someone in Indianapolis who fights just



for the sake of fighting, that's not me. I think it's important to get people to sit down and talk and cooperate and move us forward – all of us, not just the top – and hope it trickles down. I've been waiting on the trickle since 1980 and it's not reached Sandborn, and I don't think it's reached Lake County."

Pence visited the Port of Indiana in Porter County Tuesday afternoon. "I came up here to see if you guys are as good as I heard you were," Pence said at Burns Harbor. "Before I was elected to Congress, I had no idea we had a port of this significance here. Looking at the port, the potential for growth is particularly exciting for me."

Pence also appeared in Lafayette on Wednesday. "It's all about jobs now," he said (Lafayette Journal & Courier). "I think this country is ready for some serious stuff to get the economy moving." He wasn't specific about the "serious stuff" but said a balanced budget amendment to the U.S. Constitution would be a good start.

"The cost of entitlements will consume more than our revenues," he said. "The reality is that we are not Greece yet. We need to embrace some entitlement reforms." He said the nation cannot "cut our way back to a healthy economy." Pence said many in Congress, including himself, would consider eliminating "historic loopholes" for big companies that pay very little in taxes. He also wants to foster the "entrepreneurial culture" for Indiana. "The pillars of the American economy are sound money, tax reforms, access to low-cost energy and trade. I'm convinced that Indiana can be the fastest-growing economy in the state."

2nd CD: Chocola's awkward moment

Club for Growth's Chris Chocola showed up at a Jackie Walorski fundraiser at Lake Maxinkuckee last week, but left early and without speaking. Why? Sources tell HPI it's because he got a cold reception from Walorski's Lugar supporters, many of whom didn't know Chocola was to be a co-host. Chocola has been actively opposing Lugar.

5th CD: McIntosh raises six figures

Former Congressman David McIntosh raised well into "six figures" at a fundraising event at former GOP Chairman Jim Kittle Jr.'s Carmel home. The list of attendees included former Vice President Dan Quayle, former Republican Chairman Al Hubbard, former GOP executive director Devin Anderson, former State Rep. Dan Dumezich, U.S. Rep. George Radanovich, Rich and Renee Ackley, Bob and Cindy Koch Dick, and Mary Beth Oakes, Asheesh Agarwal, Larry Mackey, John and Sharon Raine, Jason Beal, Steve Calabresi, Steve Jones Russ, Dena Willis, Fred and Judy Klipsch, Dane and Mary Louise Miller, Terrance and Joy Smith, Bryce Bennett Clyde and Kate Hurst, and Jeff and Betsy Knight. HPI was told that internal polling shows that McIntosh is in the best position to challenge U.S. Rep. Dan

Burton. Anderson said that McIntosh has "good residual name ID," while challenger Susan Brooks has virtually none and Dr. John McGoff is low. "They will have to spend a great deal of money just to get their name ID where David's is now." Anderson also characterized Burton's support as "super soft." **Primary Horse Race Status:** Tossup

6th CD: Siekman withdraws

Lane Siekman withdrew his name from consideration for the 6th CD Friday morning before a crowd of supporters, party members and elected officials on the steps of the Switzerland County Courthouse in Vevay. "I am withdrawing from this race and giving my support to Bradley Bookout of Delaware County," Siekman said. "Brad is a proven leader. He has served as president of the Delaware County Council. He understands the issues facing this new district and its residents. More importantly, he shares my values and goals for this state and this nation."

8th CD: Draft Risk movement

Supporters were handing out a flyer "drafting" Kristi Risk at the Strassenfest Parade this past weekend in Jasper (Hoosier Pundit). Risk, a Tea Party advocate, came in second in the Republican Party primary in the old 8th District in 2010 by about 2,000 votes to Larry Buchson, who went on to win the general election. The flyers seek to "draft" her to run again for an encore match against Buchson. Buchson reported \$389,000 in his June 30 FEC report.

HD82: Banks, Yoder endorse Ober

State Sens. Jim Banks (R-Columbia City) and Carlin Yoder (R-Middlebury) announced their endorsement of David Ober in HD82, which covers all of Noble County and parts of Allen, Elkhart, LaGrange and Whitley counties. "The Indiana General Assembly needs more young conservatives like David Ober in the Statehouse," they said. "As 3rd Congressional District Young Republican chairman, David has worked very hard to grow our party. He is thoughtful about the issues and will hit the ground running upon his election to state representative. David is pro-life and believes in limited government. He signed a pledge not to raise taxes if he is elected. We are proud to endorse David Ober."

Presidential: Cain at Columbia Club today

Indiana Republican Party Chairman Eric Holcomb announced that the overwhelming response to Herman Cain's visit to Indianapolis has not only required a venue change, but also resulted in a "sold out" event. In less than one week since first announcing today's event, over 500 Hoosiers signed up to attend today's event that has been moved to the Columbia Club. ❖



Pence tax program is good theater, bad policy

By **MORTON J. MARCUS**

INDIANAPOLIS - Scene one: Mike Pence, Republican, and his advisors lounge in air conditioning on a hot summer day. They have glasses of imported, cold sparkling water before them. They are bantering cheerfully about the coming campaign for governor against John Gregg, Democrat.



"Let's throw the bomb," says one.

"Isn't it early?" asks another. "Mike did say no policy statements until later."

"Well, it is later, technically," says the first, "and no matter. Our campaign song should be 'Now, not some forgotten yesterday. Now

tomorrow is too far away."

"Never," shouts the third advisor. "That song is from Broadway's 'La Cage aux Faux,' a musical favorable to homosexuality."

The first sips from his glass. "The bomb," he says. "Let's keep focused. Now, when no one is looking, we toss the bomb. Mike sweeps the headlines. He grabs the high ground and Gregg is left throwing nut shells at our fortress position."

"The bomb is beautiful," he continues. "Lower income tax rates and make the individual and corporate rates the same. You can't get any more bang than that."

"It will be sensational," admits the second. "It makes folks happy and it allows us to continue crippling government services while giving more tax breaks to our friends in big business."

"Business friendly is what we are," the third chimes in.

Scene two: John Gregg's sun-baked front porch in Sanborn. Political advisors sit about using newspapers as fans. An empty lemonade pitcher sits on a nearby table. John is heard inside on the telephone.

"Well," says the first advisor, "they really dropped the bomb on us."

"Bomb?" says the second. "It was more like a trash bag filled with rotten veggies. We're not destroyed or even hurt; we're just left cleaning up the mess."

"And what a mess it is," says the third advisor. "Individuals and corporations in Indiana pay very little in income taxes already. Generous credits and deductions see to that."

Advisor one looks furtively at the door then cocks an ear to make sure the candidate is still on the phone. "Then why," he asks in a whisper, "did John issue that weak-kneed response to Pence's proposal? If your opponent says something outrageous, you need to respond with outrage."

"**John's too much the quiet** hometown guy to do that," the second says.

"Hometown quiet," the third says, "is not what we need. Listen to John's response to Pence: 'I support tax cuts as does every Hoosier living, dead and not yet born.' OK, that's almost funny. Good light touch. But then he goes on and cites his anti-tax stand in legislatures past."

"What's wrong with that?" says the second.

"First," the third answers, "the past was a different time when tax cuts may or may not have been good policy. Second, securing fiscal stability should be a priority. Tax cuts threaten revenues that may be needed in hard times."

"Third, there is no reason for the tax rates of corporations and households to be the same. It's just a big gift to the corporate contributors who are behind our opponent. Fourth, according to the current administration, Indiana is already so friendly to business that firms are flocking to locate here. What is to be gained if we are so well-positioned already?"

"**Fifth and foremost, Indiana** suffers from a deficit of neglect. We have both deficiencies in maintenance and denial of services to those in physical, emotional and material need. If there are 'spare' revenues, don't benefit the affluent when our state has decades of governmental delinquency to overcome."

Scene three: A solitary Hoosier stands under a sycamore tree, immobilized by inaction yet pondering possibilities.

Fade to black. ❖

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



Pence tax proposal would gut safety net

By **SHAW FRIEDMAN**

LAPORTE - Haven't we heard this song before? Congressman Mike Pence (R-Columbus) who is now running for Governor proposed last week that the way to job growth was to reduce Indiana's already anemic receipts from corporate taxes? As if lowering state corporate tax rates or gutting living wages (through the misnamed)



Right-to-Work laws will create any more jobs in our state.

Mike Pence has an almost abiding, religious faith and hope in the willingness of Wall Street to create jobs and opportunity. To paraphrase one of the Congressman's Tea Party allies. Sarah Palin, "how's that hopey, changy thing going for ya?"

Not so good. Turns out unemployment sits at 9.1%, gas and food prices are high and consumer confidence is low. But the balance sheets of many of our largest corporations couldn't be better. According to a July 27th Moody's Investor's Service report, U.S. non-financial companies were sitting on \$1.2 trillion in corporate cash holdings at the end of 2010, up 11% from a year earlier. Not only are many Fortune 500 firms not using their cash to hire U.S. workers, many are instead parking profits offshore, shifting jobs overseas and actually cutting jobs here at home.

In one high-profile case, profitable pharmaceutical giant Merck & Company announced the elimination of 13,000 jobs after posting second quarter 2011 net income of \$2 billion at the end of July. So much for trickle-down economics, huh, Mike?

Indiana's currently sitting on a \$1 billion surplus thanks largely to efforts to gut K-12 public education, rip holes in the safety net and starve infrastructure development. The Children's Coalition, representing 25 service providers and advocacy organizations, recently released a report charging the state surplus was largely built on the backs of Hoosier kids - not the result of good fiscal management. When you're determined to gut K-12 funding or cut millions from programs like Healthy Families (which helps new parents at risk of abusing their kids) or terminating adoption subsidies or reducing mental health and child

protective funds, you're going to save some money. But we have we done then as a state? Aren't public investments and the safety net part of what makes life livable in a state? What are we doing to plow funds back into real job creation?

Maybe Mike Pence doesn't care there's a danger Indiana falls back into being the 'Mississippi of the Midwest' again? Maybe guys like Pence are so eager to blindly rail against government and the basic services that are delivered to Hoosiers that he just doesn't care. How else to explain his proposal last week to even do away with the state's inheritance tax that also helps provide needed state tax revenues?

Can we really trust the levers of state government to a congressman who six months ago threatened to force a government shutdown over \$300 million in federal (non-abortion related) funding for Planned Parenthood? Remember, at the end of last year, Pence led a group of House Republicans who were willing to force a government shutdown rather than continue funding for Planned Parenthood over pre-natal care and preventative health care like breast cancer screenings. Can we afford that kind of rigid ideologue running state government?

The view from the well manicured lawns of his donors in places like Carmel, Avon and Fishers doesn't give Pence an adequate understanding that there are a lot of Hoosiers out there hurting. These are people who depend on their Social Security check, who desperately need the help that Medicare provides. It may be that veteran in Brookston who relies on help from Medicaid. That public school teacher in Crown Point needing a cost-of-living adjustment to help put her child through college. That retired cop in Corydon who depends on Meals-on-Wheels.

Mike Pence's world of country clubs and exclusive, gated communities, where his big donors live, doesn't understand or feel the need and hurt of average Hoosiers. According to former I.U. economics professor Morton Marcus, Indiana now has 195,000 fewer jobs than just four years ago. That translates into real pain being felt on Main Street.

Relying on Wall Street 'captains of industry' to steer new jobs our way hasn't worked, Congressman Pence. Showering Wall Street companies with more tax breaks isn't the answer. Rather, public investments in job-creating projects like roads, bridges, parks and schools is a start. How about carefully targeting tax cuts and incentives to those companies really willing to create Hoosier jobs? Pence's trickle-down program of simply awarding more revenue-losing tax breaks to Big Business, without expecting something in return, means more offshoring of jobs and more shifting of profits to overseas tax havens.

That's not the change that Hoosiers need, Congressman. ❖



Donnelly, Chocola read different tea leaves

By JACK COLWELL

SOUTH BEND - When I told Congressman Joe Donnelly that the president of the conservative Club for Growth gave him no chance of election to the U.S. Senate, Donnelly spied no angry words of attempted refutation. He laughed and said: "Say 'Hi' to the fifth-term congressman."



Thus did Donnelly reply to the political prognostication of Chris Chocola, now Club for Growth leader and former congressman from Indiana's 2nd District.

The zing in the "Say 'Hi'" is that Chocola now likely would be a fifth-term Republican congressman

if Donnelly had not defeated Chocola in the district in the 2006 election.

Chocola, however, may be more powerful now than he would be if still in Congress. The Club, seeking to "purify" the Republican Party in primary elections by defeating Republicans deemed not sufficiently conservative, has knocked off significant targets. And the Club was a force in persuading Tea Party members and other conservatives in Congress to oppose compromise proposals to raise the debt ceiling.

Once more Donnelly and Chocola could be opponents. Twice they were for Congress, Chocola winning reelection to a second term in their first match and losing to Donnelly in the rematch.

This time, it could be over the Senate seat now held by Sen. Richard G. Lugar.

The Club for Growth has spent some \$160,000 for negative TV attacks on Lugar, who faces a challenge in the 2012 Republican primary election from Tea Party favorite Richard Mourdock, the state treasurer.

Donnelly appears likely to win the Democratic nomination for the Senate unopposed.

Chocola's assessment of Donnelly having no chance for the Senate came when I asked about the possibility of a repeat of situations in which the Club was instrumental in nomination of a Republican that went on to lose to a supposedly weak Democrat in the fall election. Nevada comes to mind. The Club choice proved to be so inept that she lost to Harry Reid, who went into the election as the most unpopular political figure in that state.

No repeat of that in Indiana, Chocola said. Even though some critics of Mourdock regard him as someone

about as flaky as that ill-fated Nevada choice, Chocola said Republicans won't lose the Indiana seat. Period.

"There's no way he (Donnelly) can win," Chocola said flatly.

Chocola had no negative words about Donnelly. He was just giving a political assessment that any Democrat running for the Senate in Indiana next year is a goner because it will be a big Republican year.

"I don't think even (President) Obama thinks he can carry Indiana," Chocola said.

He figures that Obama cannot again carry Indiana and won't even target the state next year and that Republican Congressman Mike Pence will win big for governor. Could a resulting Republican tide bring in Mourdock, no matter what, and wash away Donnelly, no matter what?

Donnelly sees the tide flowing differently.

He sees voter disgust over Tea Party tactics in Congress, including refusal to compromise on efforts to keep the nation from economic default and support jobs creation. And he sees Republican chances in the Senate race diminished by a nasty GOP civil war over whether to renominate Lugar or turn to the Tea Party favorite.

Donnelly isn't about to voice a choice in the Republican primary. "I'm running for the Senate," Donnelly said, insisting that he's not looking ahead now to running against a specific opponent, Mourdock or Lugar.

No matter the opponent, he said, "My message is going to be about jobs."

Won't the campaign be different if he's running against Mourdock, with an uncompromising Tea Party attack orientation, or Lugar, known for thoughtful presentation of conservative philosophy, a thoughtfulness that gets him in trouble with the right wing of his party?

No, Donnelly insisted, not in terms of his campaign message. He repeated: "My message is going to be about jobs."

Donnelly seeks election to the Senate after Republican redistricting left the 2nd Congressional District very Republican.

But Donnelly, envisioning a tide different than the one Chocola sees, predicted that Brendan Mullen, likely Democrat for Congress in the 2nd, will defeat the expected Republican nominee, Jackie Walorski, another Tea Party favorite. Chocola and Donnelly obviously aren't reading the same tea leaves. ❖

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



Mark Kiesling, NWI Times: I have not in the past, nor do I now, understand all the fussin' and fightin' over the proposal to give parents vouchers to help their children attend private schools. No dog in this fight have I: My children all attend public schools except for my elder son, who goes to a private college, which is a horse of a different color. But I once did send the kids to a parochial school, and got no help financially from the government whatsoever. Next week, a Marion County judge is expected to rule on the constitutionality of Indiana's new voucher program. Without the dog in the fight, I say give people the vouchers if they opt to send their kids to private schools. There are people trapped by circumstance of geography and economy who cannot afford to get their kids the best education possible in the local public schools. There are others who, by circumstance of geography and economy, get top-quality education in their local public schools. And both pay taxes to support the school districts. Investment in the local public schools will continue to pay dividends in the quality of the citizens the schools turn out. Face reality. Even if the kids get the vouchers, their parents will still pay the exact same amount of taxes they would have if their students had gone to a public school. ❖

Maureen Dowd, New York Times: Even the Butter Cow at the Iowa State Fair is not enough to sweeten the mood. Three years ago, Barack Obama's unlikely presidential dream was given wings by rapturous Iowans — young, old and in-between — who saw in the fresh-faced, silky-voiced black senator a chance to leap past the bellicose, rancorous Bush years into a modern, competitive future where we once more had luster in the world. "We are choosing hope over fear," Senator Obama told a delirious crowd of 3,000 here the night he won the Iowa caucuses. But fear has garroted hope, as America reels from the latest humiliating blows on the economy and in Afghanistan. The politician who came across as a redeemer in 2008 is now in need of redemption himself. Faced with a country keening for reassurance and reinvention, Obama seems at a loss. Regarding his political skills, he turns out to be the odd case of a pragmatist who can't learn from his mistakes and adapt. Many of his Democratic supporters here, who once waited hours in line just to catch a glimpse of The One, are disillusioned. "We just wish he'd be more of a fighter," said one influential Democrat with a grimace. Another agreed: "You can't blame him for everything. I just wish he would come across more forceful at times, but that is not the dude's style. Detached hurts you when things are sour. You need some of Clinton's 'I feel your pain' compassion." His inability to grab a microphone and spontaneously assuage Americans' fears is strange. If the American servicemen had died on a Monday, he wouldn't have waited

until Wednesday to talk about it. He doesn't like the bully pulpit, just the professor's lectern. After failing to interrupt his Camp David weekend to buck up the country on one of its worst days in history, he tacked on his condolences for the soldiers' families to his economic pep talk, in what had to be the most inept oratorical segue of his presidency. He long ago should have gone out into the country to talk to Americans in person and come up with a concrete plan that people could print out from the White House Web site and study. Hasn't he learned how dangerous it is to delegate to Congress? His withholding and reactive nature has made him seem strangely irrelevant in Washington, trapped by his own temperament. He doesn't lead, and he doesn't understand why we don't feel led.

Matt Tully, Indianapolis Star: Standing before an overflow crowd at the Carmel Public Library on Wednesday evening, U.S. Rep. Dan Burton repeatedly insisted he did not want the town hall meeting his office had arranged to turn into a partisan event. Even though he used the word "socialistic" several times to describe President Barack Obama and freely expressed his hard-line conservative views, Burton truly seemed to try to keep the event from turning into a raucous political rally. But it was a hard task.

The crowd was filled almost solely with Republicans who occasionally quoted Rush Limbaugh and wanted most of all, it seemed, to urge Burton and his fellow House conservatives to put up better fights against Democrats. John Cadwallader, Carmel, summed up the room's sentiment best when he told Burton that the Republican leadership didn't seem to "get it" and that he'd like to see the Republicans "be more assertive and in-your-face" when it comes to reducing federal spending. Others criticized the notion that Republicans, who control the House, need to compromise with Democrats, who control the Senate and White House. On that point, Burton agreed, promising to compromise only if the compromise is based strictly on four House Republican principles: a balanced-budget amendment, no new taxes and spending cuts. He then apologized for not being able to remember the fourth principle. He won hearty applause, though, when he noted he had voted against the recent debt-ceiling bill and when he said that, with two parties that have vastly different fiscal views, "There's nothing to compromise about. You have to stand your ground." While I didn't agree with a lot of what was said Wednesday, I was struck by the deep concern in the voices of those in the audience. Although the specific complaints and thoughts on who is to blame might vary, you can find that same level of concern across all different ideologies these days. That helps explain Obama's weak approval ratings and the even weaker approval ratings of Congress. ❖





Pawlenty drops out of GOP race

INDIANAPOLIS - Former Minnesota Gov. Tim Pawlenty is dropping out of the race for the GOP presidential nomination (Associated Press). Pawlenty told supporters on a conference call Sunday morning that he would announce on ABC's "This Week" that he was ending his campaign after a disappointing finish in the Iowa straw poll on Saturday. The poll was a test of organizational strength and popularity in the state whose caucuses lead off the GOP nomination fight. Pawlenty had struggled to gain traction in Iowa, a state he had said he must win, after laying the groundwork for a campaign for nearly two years. He's been eclipsed in polls in recent months by his Minnesota rival, Rep. Michele Bachmann. She won the straw poll on Saturday.



Stutzman money lags other frosh

FORT WAYNE - Of Indiana's four Republican freshmen in the U.S. House, one is lagging far behind in raising money for his re-election effort (Francisco). But perhaps Rep. Marlin Stutzman, R-3rd, doesn't need the cash. "Stutzman is not on Democratic target lists, and so it doesn't look like he has had to make a fundraising push," said Nathan Gonzales, political editor of the non-partisan Rothenberg Political Report. Stutzman so far has no challengers in either the Republican primary election next May or the general election the following November. Two Democrats - Dave Crooks and Terry White - have filed to run in the 8th District to try to unseat first-year

Rep. Larry Bucshon, and freshman Rep. Todd Young can expect to see a Democratic opponent in the 9th District. Both southern Indiana districts are considered swing districts; in the past five elections, Democrats have three victories and Republicans two in the south-central 9th District. "I'm sure they are being encouraged by Republicans here in Washington to make sure their fundraising is on pace to get ready for a potentially competitive race," Gonzales said about Bucshon and Young. Bucshon's campaign has raised nearly \$389,000, and Young's has collected nearly \$264,000. Fellow freshman Rep. Todd Rokita, R-4th, has attracted more than \$303,000. Stutzman has raised less than \$143,000. More than two-thirds of it is from political action committees. "I've got some work to do ... to make sure that I have the resources to get our message out," Stutzman said.

Daniels says smoke ban could pass

INDIANAPOLIS - State Rep. Charlie Brown (D-Gary) said he will propose a statewide smoking ban next session - for the sixth year in a row - and Republican Gov. Mitch Daniels said he thinks the legislation has a chance to pass this time (Seward, Evansville Courier & Press). "I'm a very big supporter of anything that helps people avoid cigarettes," Daniels said. "I would say each year there's been growing public support for (a ban) and so I think there's a chance next year."

Students worried about new law

MUNCIE - Indiana's new immigration law is raising concerns among international students who worry they won't be eligible for tuition waivers or fellowships that help pay for their U.S. educations. The law that took effect

July 1 states that "public assistance" for postsecondary education is only available to U.S. residents or "qualified aliens." International students using the F or J visa aren't included in the definition of qualified alien. International graduate students often receive tuition waivers or fellowships as part of payment for teaching and research duties. Many rely on the money to attend school. The bill was meant to model Indiana's immigration law on Arizona's tough crackdown on illegal immigration. But the bill was stripped of provisions requiring local and state police to enforce federal immigration laws, leaving its focus on denying tax breaks to businesses that knowingly hire illegal immigrants. The law's sponsor, Republican Sen. Mike Delph, said the law was designed only to target illegal immigrants. "Students on a student visa are not illegal immigrants," he told The Star Press.

South Bend official claims 2 credits

SOUTH BEND - South Bend's executive director of community and economic development, Jeff Gibney, claimed a homestead exemption on two separate properties in 2009 and 2010, according to information obtained by The Tribune. The exemptions applied in each case to a home on West Washington Street in South Bend and a condo on Columbia Avenue, in Rogers Park, in Chicago, according to St. Joseph and Cook county property tax records. In both Indiana and Illinois, a property owner is allowed to claim one exemption but no more, not even outside of the state. It must be applied to the person's primary residence. "I'm not trying to cheat anybody at all," Gibney said Friday. "I just didn't know that I couldn't do it (claim an exemption) in two states. "I guess they'll just send me the bill and I'll pay the bill," he said, referring to



St. Joseph or Cook county - or possibly both.

McShurley upset by rib fest

MUNCIE - Part of last weekend's downtown RibFest celebration was in "poor taste," Mayor Sharon McShurley said on Friday, and left her "embarrassed" to be a member of the Downtown Development board (Muncie Star Press). Especially poor etiquette on the part of some Muncie rib-eaters? No, what irked the Republican mayor, seeking a second term in the Nov. 7 election, was who she saw greeting RibFest visitors, and actually taking admission fees from festival-goers at the event's two main entrances. Democrats. Not just your run-of-the-mill Democrats, but actually Muncie Democratic candidates and their representatives, wearing campaign T-shirts. At one gate, McShurley said, she saw a half-dozen festival workers wearing T-shirts touting the candidacy of her opponent, Dennis Tyler. At the other, Democratic candidates -- among them Muncie City Council at-large hopefuls Alison Quirk and Nora Powell -- were among the event volunteers. The mayor said she raised concerns about that level of campaigning with Cheryl Crowder, program manager for Downtown Development, and suggested such activity could endanger the organization's nonprofit status. Crowder maintained the Democratic candidates and their supporters had simply been among those responding to a call for volunteers to help out at RibFest, the mayor said. "At least let's have a level playing field," McShurley added.

White county commissioner dies

MONTICELLO - A White County commissioner and well-known community member was found dead in

his Monticello home Saturday morning, officials confirmed (Lafayette Journal & Courier). Ronald "Ron" Schmierer was 73. Involved in county politics for the past 14 years, Schmierer was re-elected to his post in November and had more than three years left on his term, said Buzz Horton, past president of the White County Council. Those who knew the Republican commissioner described him Saturday as a man who was firm on principles and treated everyone fairly -- even those who disagreed with him.

Caps take away from maintenance

KOKOMO - Property tax caps mean less money to maintain buildings for Indiana's schools (Kokomo Tribune). Eastern Superintendent Tracy Caddell said his corporation's capital project fund is its "most distressed fund," with little money available to maintain buildings. Caddell and corporation treasurer Teresa Vester presented the proposed 2012 budget to school board members during Tuesday's meeting. The general fund money mostly comes from the state, based on enrollment, Vester said. However, the capital projects fund, debt service fund, pension debt fund, transportation operations and bus replacement funds are all funded through property taxes. The debt service and pension debt funds don't have room for reductions, so the capital projects fund takes the biggest hit if property owners hit the maximum tax rate they can pay based on the assessed value of the home. Anything over that amount is lost by the local taxing units, Caddell said. The capital projects fund pays for building maintenance, classroom equipment and technology costs, and can be used to supplement costs for utilities. Caddell said after technology and other costs are taken out of capital projects, there is about \$219,000 left for building maintenance. "There's

not enough there to maintain the buildings. The property tax caps have severely impacted capital projects," he said. Caddell said with the country's economic troubles, assessed valuations of homes have decreased, which then lowers the property tax cap. There is no way under current state law to recoup any of the losses, he said. He's written letters to area legislators, he said, "not that it will do any good in this political climate."

Libertarians celebrate 40 years

INDIANAPOLIS - Forty years ago today, President Richard Nixon froze all wages and prices for three months and permanently ended the convertibility of dollars to gold to cope with an economic crisis (Carden, NWI Times). Watching in Colorado, a handful of Americans, disturbed by Nixon's actions, took one of their own and established the Libertarian Party -- vowing to restore the nation's founding principle of individual liberty. The Libertarian Party today is the third major political party in most states and popular among Americans drawn to the party's message that individuals should be free to do what they want, without government interference, so long as it does not restrict others from doing what they want. Support for that idea among Hoosiers has led to Libertarians being the only political party other than Democrats and Republicans guaranteed ballot access in Indiana. As the nation copes with another economic crisis, Indiana Libertarian Party Chairman Chris Goldstein said the issues that prompted creation of the Libertarian Party remain just as relevant today as they were 40 years ago. "We now have the government printing trillions of dollars with nothing standing behind it," said Goldstein, of Indianapolis. ❖