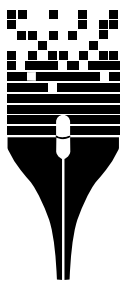


The Howey Political Report



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“QUOTE” OF THE WEEK

“King Kong falls off a very tall building and hits the ground with a very big thud.”

- SD36 Republican challenger Brent Waltz, to State Rep. Woody Burton, who said that Sen. Borst’s campaign was coming on like ‘King Kong’

2004 dynamic takes shape this week

Poll shows Kernan up by 1 percent

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY** in Indianapolis

Indiana’s political scene was in deep flux this week.

The governor’s race returned to the scandal front with Republican Mitch Daniels telling the press at a Shula’s press conference with the Statehouse looming over his shoulder that “it is really not possible for a regime that old to reform itself.” Gov. Joe Kernan responded this morning with a 10-page report from former marshal Michael Carrington on reforms to be taken at BMV. It was expedited from an original April target date.

A new Indiana Manufacturers Association poll showed the governor’s race a statistical deadheat with Kernan leading Daniels 37-36. No independent source has polled a Daniels-Eric Miller primary matchup.

Indiana Democrats were conducting a push poll by GarinHart in which they were testing opponents for Attorney General Steve Carter that included Lake County Prosecutor Bernard Carter and Democratic Chairman Joe Hogsett. “The governor will make the attorney general decision,” said party executive director Dan Parker.

And in the battle of the House, Democrats are targeting the open Republican seats of HD26 (Sue Scholer), HD31 (Dean Young) and HD46 (Brooks LaPlante). Blackford County Commissioner Larry Hile is expected to file in HD31 by Friday’s noon deadline. Democrats were still searching for someone other than former Rep. Vern Tincher in HD46, one that Tincher has lost twice.

Republicans were taking aim at Southwestern Indiana incumbents that included Reps. Alan Chowning, David Crooks, John Frenz, Terry Goodin, Jerry Denbo and

INSIDE F E A T U R E S

Ticker: More indictments Friday	p. 2
Columnists: Backlund, Gerard	p. 5
Horse Race: Hogsett vs. Carter?	p. 6
Perhaps: Victor Hugo & Rep. Kruse	p. 8

Covering 10 years of Indiana politics

TICKER

T A P E

VAN BOKKELEN TO ANNOUNCE MORE INDICTMENTS: A federal grand jury is expected to issue indictments as early as today in the U.S. Attorney's ongoing investigation of public corruption in Northwest Indiana (Bill Dolan, Times of Northwest Indiana). Sources within the federal government said a grand jury is prepared to release indictments either this afternoon or Friday. The U.S. Attorney's office is expected to have a news conference Friday to discuss the charges. Chris Balzer, a spokeswoman for the office, said she could neither confirm nor deny future indictments. Rumors of indictments have been echoing throughout local government offices. The indictments could cover more than one of a variety of areas that has attracted the attention of the Public Integrity Unit, a group of investigators from the FBI, IRS and the Indiana State Police. U.S. Attorney Joseph Van Bokkelen predicted last month in an interview with The Times that numerous upper-echelon Lake County political figures will unfold this year.

BUYER TO HELP BUSH: The Bush/Cheney campaign has asked U.S. Rep. Steve Buyer to take the lead publicly in defending attacks by the Democrats on the

possibly recently appointed Trent Van Haaften. That's in addition to HD86 in Indianapolis where everyone has Democratic Rep. David Orentlicher on the endangered species list. The GOP is also trying to lure Matt Kelty into a rematch with Rep. Winfield Moses and was seeking challengers to Reps. Ron Herrell in Kokomo and Ron Liggett in Redkey. Kelty's decision could come down to whether he might want to position himself to run for the 3rd CD in 2006 if U.S. Rep. Mark Souder decides to retire, informed and reliable GOP sources tell HPR.

Key players in both parties expect control of the 51-49 Democratic House to come down to fewer than 10 seats this fall.

In addition, House Democrats such as Rep. Bob Kuzman in Crown Point, the ailing Tom Kromkowski in South Bend, and Rep. John Aguilera in either Munster or East Chicago could face challengers seeking oxygen from the property tax issue. South Bend School Board member Joanna Blacketer is challenging Kromkowski, who has never had to run a campaign. House Speaker B. Patrick Bauer, and Reps. Connie Lawson of Hammond and Matt Pierce in Bloomington are facing primary opponents in districts rocked by dramatic property tax increases.

Governor's race

An IMA poll has Kernan leading Daniels 37-36. Since the *Indianapolis Star*/13 poll (Kernan 49-36), Daniels has had three weeks of self-defining TV, including the last one with a tie-in to the Milan Miracle, which is being celebrated this week on its 50th anniversary. Good marketing.

Daniels stayed stationary between the two polls despite the media buy. Could Kernan have lost a 13-point lead so quickly? Maybe. Remember, the "webcam scam" in which Republicans saw a governor uncharacteristically "slick" consumed the media? Most voters we know thought

the whole thing was more funny (or absurd) than scandalous. Then there was Kernan unsuccessfully pushing for full-day kindergarten in the Senate. The issue had a 56 percent favorable rating in the Star/13 poll and the Republicans killed it. So, would Kernan decline after that?

Between the two polls, Daniels rolled out big programs on economic development and state bureaucracy reform (a big difference from government restructuring) and got some earned media, though most of the earned media came off the daylight-saving time issue that quickly involved Gov. Kernan taking the same position.

With the Kernan and Daniels campaign engaged, and the new dynamic of Bernie Toon and Bill Oesterle going at each other on the "manager" side, give this race early benchmarks for behavior.

Kernan and Daniels are remaining diplomatic. Daniels is being shrewd about that, delivering some harsh criticism without seeming mean-spirited. Of Kernan's responsibility for O'Bannon agencies under fire, Daniels explained, "He's been No. 1 or No. 2 for eight years. It is really not possible for a regime that old to reform itself. It takes new people with a fresh approach seeing things in new ways, with new ideas. Same crew, same shipwreck." That will be an enduring theme of the Daniels candidacy.

Kernan responded by expediting Carrington's report on BMV. "Mike accomplished what he set out to do," Kernan said this morning. "Now, we're ready to take action on some of what he has suggested and reform the way the BMV works. This is the start of a complete overhaul of the BMV.

"This is an opportunity of a lifetime. We have seized it and we recognize the sense of urgency. Over the course of the last few weeks and now today, I've taken the steps to make it happen."

Toon explained, "While Gov. Kernan is taking action to bring change to state government, Mitch Daniels is just

Continued on page 3

Indiana 2004 Gubernatorial

Governor 2004: Republican: Mitch Daniels, Eric Miller. **Democrat:** Gov. Joe Kernan. **1996 Results:** O'Bannon (D) 1,075,342, Goldsmith (R) 997,505, Dillon (L) 35,261. **2000 Results:** O'Bannon (D) 1,230,345, McIntosh (R) 906,492, Horning (L) 38,686. **2004 Forecast:** What was striking this week was how Daniels attempted to move in on the gubernatorial bully pulpit. His Tuesday press conference at Shula's steakhouse with a panoramic view of the Statehouse had Reagan-Deaver-Czonka-Kuchenberg written all over it. Daniels is deftly using images and harsh criticism in a matter-of-fact manner that will take some thought to deflect or penetrate by the Kernan campaign. And here's a funny story. While at Shula's, a reporter asked Daniels why he chose a steakhouse for a press conference on bureaucracy reform as the Statehouse domed loomed over candidate's dome.

Duh. Daniels joked that he might have another one at Morton's. So at this point, Daniels isn't afraid to engage the Indiana media in a place full of steak knives. This afternoon, Daniels was going to highlight problems with the Department of Corrections at New Castle, scene of one of the big controversies during Gov. O'Bannon's era. The vanity candidates -- Randy Harris and Bob Parker -- go poof! Was this due to a wave of humility? Nope, more like getting the signatures needed to qualify. The nagging question for the GOP is ... is there any chance that Miller could knock off Daniels in the primary? Party pros consistently say they don't think so. But Miller is sitting on more than \$1 million and has a network he can unleash on primary day. We wouldn't be surprised to see Miller get 25 to 30 percent of the vote, but the two-man race certainly favors Daniels, who is chalking up big gross rating points in every TV market but Chicago. **Republican Primary Status:** *Likely Daniels*; **General Status:** *Tossup*. ❖

talking. Both the governor and Lt. Gov. Davis are taking aggressive actions -- and have from day one in office -- to change and improve the effectiveness and efficiency of state government."

Kernan has gone on the offensive with Toon issuing talking points on the record federal deficit Daniels presided over at OMB, the 27-percent increase in spending, the largest increases in federal discretionary spending since the 1960s, and the \$25,000 cash bonuses for federal political appointees. Kernan is using the gubernatorial bully pulpit to announce jobs and training grants for his Indiana@Work program in Marion and Muncie. Kernan is getting some earned media on the economic front, and almost nothing on his criticism of Daniels' stewardship at OMB ... so far.

The Kerry factor

The other big factor is the full emergence of U.S. Sen. John Kerry as the

HORSE R A C E

challenger to President Bush. "Kerry will be a drag in Indiana," said IMA political director Ed Roberts. "McGovern and Dukakis didn't sell here. Bush will file him as an extreme leftist."

And, Roberts points out in the Indiana House context, "There are 83 seats where George Bush polled 45 percent or higher. It's a target rich environment and you have a lot of Democrats sitting in Republican majority seats."

But Dan Parker explained, "George Bush will have to defend the economy, the loss of manufacturing jobs and the \$500 billion deficit."

As for Kerry's impact on the Indiana House, Parker isn't going to have to defend any open seats. "Speaker Bauer did a great job in getting the incumbents to run," he said.

By Friday, this will be the week when major components of the 2004 dynamic fell into place. ❖

TICKER T A P E

President's service in the National Guard. Buyer will work behind the scenes to help solidify the base with veterans in '04 as he did in '00. Buyer was instrumental in mobilizing many veterans and retired military in Florida in very short order during the recount.

POLL SHOWS MOST BELIEVE BUSH STRETCHED TRUTH ON WAR: A majority of Americans believe President Bush either lied or deliberately exaggerated evidence that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction in order to justify war, according to a new Washington Post-ABC News poll. The survey results, which also show declining support for the war in Iraq and for Bush's leadership in general, indicate the public is increasingly questioning the president's truthfulness -- a concern for Bush's political advisers as his reelection bid gets underway. Barely half -- 52 percent -- now believe Bush is "honest and trustworthy," down 7 percentage points since late October and his worst showing since the question was first asked, in March 1999. At his best, in the summer of 2002, Bush was viewed as honest by 71 percent. The survey found that nearly seven in 10 think Bush "honestly believed" Iraq had weapons of mass

continued on page 4

TICKER T A P E

destruction. Even so, 54 percent thought Bush exaggerated or lied about prewar intelligence.

BAUER DELUGED WITH CALLS: State Rep. B. Patrick Bauer's Indianapolis office has been deluged with calls, but a resolution seeking a constitutional amendment defining marriage as the union of a man and a woman still isn't getting a hearing. Bauer, who is Speaker of the House, was targeted earlier this week by Family Research Council, a Washington, D.C.-based group, that tried to pressure him into using his position to force a hearing on the resolution by taking out a full-page advertisement in the South Bend Tribune. The advertisement, which ran Monday, criticized Bauer and urged those in favor of the resolution to call Bauer's office. Several dozen did, but nothing has changed. "I'm not going to do it," Rep. Scott Pelath, D-Michigan City, said Tuesday in response to the group's push for a hearing. Pelath, as chairman of the House Rules Committee, has the power to order a hearing on the bill and was the indirect target of the Family Research Council's attack on Bauer. Today is the deadline for holding committee hearings, and Pelath remains adamant in his decision not to hear the measure. "It's already

continued on page 5

COLUMNISTS ON INDIANA

Gary Gerard, *Warsaw Times-Union* -

Well, now we know W's teeth were in Alabama. This week, in response to Democrat criticism that W didn't fulfill his Air National Guard obligation in Alabama in 1972 or 1973, the White House trotted out some dental records. These records prove that W was, in fact, in the dental clinic at the Air National Guard base in Alabama where he was supposed to be serving. Of course, the Democrats say that doesn't prove anything. It doesn't prove he served. That, I suppose, is true. It doesn't prove he served. But I mean, really. If you were AWOL from the Air National Guard, would you go to the air base to have your teeth cleaned? ❖

Jack Colwell, *South Bend Tribune* -

Indiana Republicans made a political mistake when they decided to trash Gov. Joe Kernan's proposal for expanding voluntary full-day kindergarten. The strategy, which leaves them perceived as putting politics ahead of kids, first became clear at Kernan's State of the State address. Everybody in the House chamber, site of the annual speech, knew that Kernan would plug for his proposal for expanded opportunity for Hoosier children of kindergarten age to be in school for a full day. Anyone interested in Indiana's long-range economic future, should so desire. Kernan called for expanding full-day kindergarten for 20,000 more children this year and long-range availability for all children. "Early education is a sound and necessary investment in our future," the governor said. "For every dollar we invest in high-quality, comprehensive early learning initiatives, we will save \$7 in welfare, special education and criminal justice costs. Early education. It's the right thing to do. And the time is now." The center aisle in the House chamber, with

Republican legislators seated to Kernan's right, Democrats to his left, became as wide as an ocean separating two different cultures. Democrats jumped to their feet, applauding. Republicans sat, silent. No applause. This is a political mistake for Republicans. Polls show that expanding opportunity for full-day kindergarten is popular. ❖

Mike Backlund, *Indianapolis Eye* -

Do you think the framers of the constitution merely forgot to add the authority for the federal government to be the guardian of marriage and other societal institutions? No, they realized that strong religious and other private institutions could not coexist with an overbearing central government. Only through individuals self-policing their institutions would a strong moral fiber for the nation be formed. In fact government stayed out of the business of marriage in early America, and only when Mormons began to openly practice polygamy and whites and blacks began to marry did government first rear its head. Don't get me wrong, I'm all for monogamy, but as Thomas Paine said. "My rights end, where your nose begins." If those of a different faith wish to have multiple wives, no harm to me, and no business of mine. Moreover, it is with almost unanimity that we all feel not allowing whites and blacks to marry was another vestige of a backward mentality. As is the standard, once government gets its sticky fingers into something rarely does it withdraw. No, it instead started levying taxes and assigning rights of inheritance to those of some groups and denying others the same. This, my friends, is the crux of the issue. Neither Washington nor the states has the constitutional proclamations to deny any group the rights afforded to others. To amend the constitution to allow for such would be an abomination. ❖

2004 Racing Form

Trendline: GarinHart is conducting a push poll for Indiana Democrats that is probing a Joe Hogsett or Bernard Carter challenge to Attorney General Steve Carter.

Indiana 2004 Congressional

U.S. Senate: Republican: Marvin Scott, Dwight Wilkerson. **Democrat:** U.S. Sen.

Evan Bayh. **1992 Results:** Coats (R) 1,267,972, Hogsett (D) 900,148. **1998 Results:** Bayh (D) 1,012,244, Helmke (R) 552,732. **2004 Forecast:** U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh will kick off his re-election campaign with stops in Fort Wayne, South Bend, Gary and tonight at the Murat in Indianapolis. On Friday, Bayh stumps in Lafayette, Terre Haute, Jeffersonville and Evansville. Scott has raised \$1.2 million, but only had \$49,023 left at the beginning of the year (Lafayette Journal & Courier). Carmel lawyer Dwight D. "Ike" Wilkerson reported raising \$9,635 and having \$8,929 in the bank. Scott's campaign manger, Todd Tolson, explained, "We have done a majority of our fund-raising to date via mailings. That is very costly. We are now scheduling events inside the state and the cost of those will ber very minimal. To date we have Katherine Harris and Tommy Lasorda scheduled for April and hope to have one or two more VIPs scheduled soon. Trust me, we have no Sharpton-like hotels or expenses, but until Marvin is the official nominee against Bayh we always knew fund-raising would be hard. We hope it will turn around now as the press focuses a bit more on the campaign and Marvin gets his message out to Hoosiers." Bayh, on the other hand, had \$6.5 million in his campaign treasury. As for a potential veep nomination, Bayh told the *Indianapolis Star*, "It's flattering to have my name mentioned, but it's totally beyond my control. I'm just putting it out of my mind." **Status:** *Solid D.*

Congressional District 2: Republican: U.S. Rep. Chris Chocola, Tony Zirkle.

Democrat: Joe Donnelly. **Geography:** South Bend, Michigan City, Mishawaka, Elkhart, Kokomo, Plymouth, Logansport; LaPorte, St. Joseph, Starke, Marshall, Pulaski, Fulton, Cass, Carroll and parts of Howard, Porter, Elkhart and White counties. **Media Market:** South Bend-Elkhart, Indianapolis, Lafayette, Chicago. **People:** Urban/rural 73/27%; median income\$40,381; Poverty 9.5%; Race 84% white, 8% black; 5 Hispanic; Blue/white collar: 34/50%. **2000 Presidential:** Bush 53%, Gore 44%; **Cook Partisan Voting Index:** R+5; **2002 Result:** Chocola 95,081 (50%), Long Thompson 86,253 (46%); **2002 Money:** Chocola \$1.69m, Long Thompson \$1.535m. **2004 Outlook:** Donnelly said Friday that as a member of Congress, he would try to repeal the North American Free Trade Agreement and seek ways to create more American jobs (James Wensits, *South Bend Tribune*). Donnelly also took issue with the "misplaced budget priorities" of the incumbent. "Four years ago, we had record surpluses. Today, we have record deficits. It is time to end this fiscal madness and protect the financial future of our country and our children." **Status:** *Leans Chocola.*

Congressional District 6: Republican: U.S. Rep. Mike Pence. **Democrat:** Open.

Geography: Anderson, Muncie, Richmond; Wells, Adams, Blackford, Jay, Madison, Delaware, Randolph, Henry, Wayne, Rush, Fayette, Union, Decatur, Franklin, and parts of Bartholomew, Shelby, Johnson and Allen counties. **Media Market:** Indianapolis, Fort Wayne, Dayton, Cincinnati. **People:** urban/rural 59/40%; median income \$39,002; poverty 9.7%; race: 93% white, 3.8% black, 1.3% Hispanic; blue/white collar 35/49%; **2000 Presidential:** Bush 58%, Gore 40%; **Cook Partisan Voting Index:** R+10; **2002 results:** Pence 118,436 (64%), Fox 63,871. **2002 Money:** Pence \$1.2m, Fox \$342,987. **2004 Outlook:** Pence files for re-election, but has no opponent. Mel Fox remains mum. **Status:** *Likely Pence.*

Congressional District 8: Republican: U.S. Rep. John Hostettler. **Democrat:** Jon Jennings, Bill Pearman. **Geography:** Evansville, Terre Haute, Greencastle; Posey, Vanderburgh,

TICKER T A P E

against the law in Indiana," Pelath said, referring to the same-sex marriages the resolution seeks to prevent.

DAVIS TOURS FIRE DAMAGE: Jeffersonville learned Wednesday the state would commit at least half a million dollars to do something about the facades damaged after the big fire. Lt. Gov. Kathy Davis toured the damaged area on Wednesday (WHAS-TV). "This is a very worthy project," she said. "Mayor Waiz has been very aggressive on the part of the city and the business owners to get some decisions made quickly about how the state can help Jeffersonville and the business owners start to rebuild."

HILL DECRIES FEDERAL DEBT: The U.S. government's national debt -- the accumulation of past budget shortfalls -- totaled more than \$7 trillion for the first time as of Tuesday, according to a Treasury Department report. Rep. Baron Hill of Indiana, part of a centrist group of Democrats said, "It is simply immoral to run a national debt exceeding \$7 trillion, every penny of which our children and grandchildren will be responsible for paying back."

HORSE TRACKS MAY GET BOOST: Lawmakers could

continued on page 6

HORSE R A C E

TICKER

T A P E

give horse breeders and racetrack owners in Indiana a reprieve today as Republican leaders in the state Senate propose an increase in the state's horse-racing subsidy. Sen. Robert Jackman, R-Milroy, said he will propose an amendment to House Bill 1365 in a Senate Finance Committee hearing this morning. The amendment would raise the subsidy to \$44 million from \$27 million, he said (Indianapolis Star). A majority of the money would be used to increase the prize money for winning horses, Jackman said. The subsidy is funded with riverboat casino admissions and wagering taxes.

MOSES AMENDS FORCED MERGER: Rep. Win Moses Jr., D-Fort Wayne, managed to amend a Senate bill Wednesday to avoid an Indianapolis-style forced government merger in Allen County (Fort Wayne Journal Gazette). Under current law, a merger is required when a city's population reaches 250,000, which Fort Wayne's is expected to do in 2006 with the annexation of much of Aboite Township. Moses' amendment would change the base population of a first-class city to 499,000 - which would make Allen County safe from a forced merger for the foreseeable future. The bill now moves to the full House. In a related development, an effort to

Warrick, Gibson, Pike, Martin, Daviess, Knox, Sullivan, Greene, Owen, Clay, Vigo, Vermillion, Parke, Putnam, Warren and part of Fountain counties. **Media Market:** Evansville, Terre Haute, Indianapolis. Lafayette. **People:** Urban/rural 58/42%; median income \$36,732; poverty 10.7%; race white 93.7%, black 3.7%, Hispanic .9%; blue/white collar: 32/52%. **2000 Presidential:** Bush 56%, Gore 42%; **Cook Partisan Voting Index:** R+8. **2002 Results:** Hostettler 98,952 (51%), Hartke 88,763 (46%), **2002 Money:** Hostettler \$573,220, Hartke \$395,840. **2004**

Outlook: Hostettler is announcing his intentions to seek re-election to a fifth term during a series of stops this week throughout the 18 counties he serves. Hostettler was to meet at noon today at the Bloomfield-Eastern Greene Library to declare his candidacy. Jennings officially kicked off his congressional campaign last Thursday. Jennings criticized Hostettler for voting against funding for college grant programs and veterans health care and said the 10-year incumbent is out of touch with Southwestern Indiana values. "My friends, it's time for a change," Jennings said in a speech to supporters at the Old Vanderburgh County Courthouse, "We need someone in Washington who will vote to make our lives better, not more difficult ... We need someone who understands your lives, your values." **Status:** *Leans Hostettler.*

HORSE R A C E

Indiana 2004 Legislative

Senate District 36: Republican: Sen. Larry Borst, Johnson County Council President Brent Waltz. **Democrat:** Terry Rice. **1996 Results:** Borst (R) 26,593, Satterthwaite (L) 2,035. **2000 Results:** Borst 24,621, Reno (D) 12,095, Williamson (L) 1,061. **2004 Forecast:** Borst was slated by 48 precinct officials in Perry Township, out of 160 eligible to vote. Borst was taping a TV ad on Sunday. Waltz decided not to participate in slating and did not show up at the convention. But he related the story at the Johnson County Lincoln Day dinner when State Sen. Mike Young asked State Rep. Woody Burton how the Borst campaign was doing. "Larry's coming out like King Kong," Burton replied. To which Waltz responded, "Woody, if I remember correctly, King Kong falls off a very tall building and hits the ground with a very big thud." **Primary Status:** *Tossup.*

House District 7: Republican: South Bend School Trustee Joanna Blacketer. **Democrat:** State Rep. Tom Kromkowski. **2002 Results:** Kromkowski 10,846. **2004 Forecast:** With property taxes as a scary backdrop, this is the kind of race that gives Democrats nightmares: An ailing incumbent untested in a competitive race, facing a credible opponent hoping to tap voter ire. Are we predicting an upset? No, but if this race is still on our radar next fall, it could signal a wave. **General Status:** *LIKELY D.*

House District 12: Republican: Dan Fagen. **Democrat:** Rep. John Aguilera, Alicia Lopez-Rodriguez. **2002 Results:** Aguilera 7,343. **2004 Forecast:** Fagen comes from a family that owns a chain of pharmacies and funeral homes in the Munster and Hammond area. While this is a heavily Democratic area, it has been hit hard by property tax increases. Aguilera also has a controversy over whether he lives in East Chicago or Munster. Plus, Aguilera has made many enemies in the Democratic House caucus. This one will be worth watching. **General Status:** *LEANS D.*

House District 17: Republican: Rep. Steve Heim. **Democrat:** Open. **2002 Results:** Heim 10,073, Winters 7,422. **2004 Forecast:** We hear that Mark Gidley, who lost the 2002 Democratic primary, will file. **Primary Status:** *LEANS R.*

House District 19: Republican: Ron Cooper. **Democrat:** State Rep. Bob Kuzman. **2002 Results:** Kuzman 7,620, Roth (R) 6,355. **2004 Forecast:** Cooper is a Cook County, Illinois, policeman. **General Status:** *LEANS D.*

House District 31: Republican: Tim Harris **Democrat:** Blackford County Commissioner Larry Hile. **2002 Results:** Rep. Dean Young 9,046, Raju (D) 3,909. **2004 Forecast:** Hile is expected to file today. He has his base in Blackford County and has family

ties in Marion. **General Status:** *LEANS R.*

House District 45: Republican: Bruce Borders **Democrat:** Rep. Allen Chowning. **2002 Results:** Chowning 9,627, Borders 9,337. **2004 Forecast:** Borders, the former mayor of Jasonville and an Elvis impersonator, actually led this race until former Speaker John Gregg did an 11th hour TV ad for Chowning. Democrats also did a direct mail piece that said, "We don't need another hound dog in the House" (featured in *Campaign & Elections* magazine as an effective direct mail piece). While this race was close, Chowning now has a voting record and this should be competitive. Bush won the district in 2000 with 58 percent and McIntosh had 38 percent that same year. With Gregg leaving the Vincennes University presidency, he may be in a position to assist Chowning, Frenz and Crooks if any are in danger next fall. **General Status:** *TOSSUP.*

House District 56: Republican: Richard Hamm, Brian Ingermann, Ed Yanos. **Democrat:** Rep. Phil Pflum. **2002 Results:** Pflum 6,511, Hamm (R) 6,096. **2004 Forecast:** Pflum had filed for re-election prior to being diagnosed with cancer. **Primary Status:** *Leans Yanos; General Status:* *Tossup.*

House District 62: Republican: Lawrence County Commissioner Janie Chenault. **Democrat:** State Rep. Jerry Denbo. **2002 Results:** Denbo 10,009, Patton (R) 6,339. **2004 Forecast:** This district went 62 percent for Bush in 2000. **General Status:** *LEANS D.*

House District 63: Republican: Martin County Commissioner Paul McFeaters. **Democrat:** Rep. David Crooks. **2002 Results:** Crooks 10,984. **2004 Forecast:** McFeaters won commissioner and a Loogootee School Board seat in a Democratic county. Bush carried the district with 67 percent in 2000 and McIntosh had 47 percent, so the seat is trending Republican. **General Status:** *TOSSUP.*

House District 64: Republican: Troy Woodruff. **Democrat:** State Rep. John Frenz. **2002 Results:** Frenz 10,516, Davis (R) 8,774. **2004 Forecast:** Woodruff will concentrate on three issues: The state's budget, the drug problem and economic development. "Dealing with the state government, I was disappointed to see the state in the condition it is in now," Woodruff said (*Washington Times-Herald*). "I don't think of John Frenz as a bad person; I just don't think he is getting the job done." Woodruff says there is a structural problem in state government, and the state needs to "get our books balanced." Woodruff will also talk about the drug crisis. "The drug (methamphetamine) is destroying our families, our children, our communities." Bush carried this district in 2000 with 57 percent and McIntosh had 38 percent. **General Status:** *LEANS D.*

House District 69: Republican: Billy Bright, Ben Newell. **Democrat:** State Rep. Markt Lytle. **2002 Results:** Lytle 9,777, Newell 7,678. **2004 Forecast:** Bright owns a couple of pizza parlors in North Vernon and Seymour and his family has been in the restaurant business for a long time. Bush carried this district with 58.8 percent in 2000 and McIntosh had 40 percent. This district could potentially be in play. **General Status:** *LEANS D.*

House District 81: Republican: Open. **Democrat:** Rep. Winfield Moses Jr. **2002 Results:** Moses 4,718, Kely 4,654. **2004 Forecast:** Polling shows that 2002 challenger Matt Kely still has high favorables in his razor close challenge to Moses. Kely, a former aide to U.S. Sen. Dan Coats and a Fort Wayne architect, is still deciding whether to offer up a rematch or keep his powder dry when U.S. Rep. Mark Souder might retire in the 3rd CD in 2006. Sources say Kely and Souder have discussed that scenario. If Kely runs this year, Republicans believe that Moses could be vulnerable. Moses, however, pledges not to take this re-election bid lightly. If Kely gets in, this one will bear watching. **General Status:** *LEANS D.*

District 86: Republican: Andy Miller, Mort Large. **Democrat:** State Rep. David Orentlicher. **2002 Results:** Orentlicher 9,909, Atterholt (R) 9,872. **2004 Forecast:** Large won the slating by a 33-28 vote, but Miller has filed. Miller picked up the endorsements of State Treasurer Tim Berry, Judy Singleton of the Lugar Series, State Sens. Jeff Drozda, Luke Kenley and State Reps. Bob Cherry, Bill Friend and Tom Saunders. We see both the primary and general elections as a tossup. Bush won the district with 51 percent in 2000 and McIntosh carried 40 percent. **Primary Status:** *TOSSUP.* ❖

TICKER

T A P E

study the structure of local government moved forward Wednesday with a unanimous committee vote on Senate Bill 223. The measure - authored by Sen. David Long, R-Fort Wayne - would establish a two-year statewide study commission on local government efficiency and financing. Long earlier this week withdrew a more contentious bill that could have resulted in a more immediate, major consolidation of Allen County government specifically.

DEMS CONSUMED BY 'INSANE RAGE' SAYS COLUMNIST: The Democrats' campaign for the presidency is fueled by an insane rage, a conservative columnist told more than 100 people on Wednesday night at a Valparaiso University speech (Post-Tribune). Jonah Goldberg, a contributing editor to *National Review*, blasted the Democrats for trying to choose a president based on a perceived ability to beat President Bush. He also made light of the theme of his speech, "Give War a Chance," a title he once gave a column. A supporter of the war in Iraq, Goldberg said the leading candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination, U.S. Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass, has taken several different positions on national security in his 19 years in the U.S. Senate.

TICKER T A P E

Kerry opposed the first Gulf War, but voted for the second war. Then he opposed spending money to stabilize the regime change, Goldberg said. And Goldberg made light of Kerry's attempt to portray himself a populist, saying Kerry is known in Boston as a person who cuts to the front of lines. "Nobody likes him," said Goldberg, a resident of Washington, D.C. "It's not reported on."

ROKITA CONFIDENT OF NEW VOTING MACHINES: Lafayette-area voters, election officials and Indiana's secretary of state say they remain confident in touchscreen voter equipment, despite recent national reports of skepticism toward the technology (Lafayette Journal & Courier). The touchscreen monitors -- more widely used after the 2000 presidential election was disrupted by confusion over reading punch card ballots -- have attracted their share of cynics, including some election officials, computer scientists and the National Association of Secretaries of State. Indiana Secretary of State Todd Rokita said adequate checks and balances are included in the electoral process to prevent inaccurate or fraudulent ballots from being cast. He hand-delivered a \$325,584 check to Tippecanoe County last month as its first reimbursement for the touchscreen monitors, under the Help America

PERHAPS... W E W A N D E R

By Brian Howey

Victor Hugo and Rep. Kruse

What happened on Jan. 27 was, by Indiana standards, both incredible and promising. On that night, the Fort Wayne and Allen County councils voted 14-0 on a resolution endorsing the merger of city and county governments. Republican City Council President Sam Talarico Jr. was quoted in the Fort Wayne Journal Gazette as saying, "This unanimous vote alone should send a signal on how far our city and county have come. It is audacious in its scope." And Democrat City Councilman Tim Pape said, "It is breathtaking."

About 90 miles to the west, new Valparaiso Mayor Jon Costas, a Republican, was putting the finishing touches on a sweeping reorganization of his city's government. Costas quoted Victor Hugo: "There's nothing quite as powerful as an idea whose time has come."

Any time a Hoosier officeholder quotes Victor Hugo at a public meeting, it grabs my attention.

What happened last week in the small town of Grabill northeast of Fort Wayne was -- unfortunately -- totally predictable.

There at the Grabill Fire Station, 400 mostly angry people gathered to denounce the merger notions. And it was stoked up by State Rep. Dennis Kruse, the Auburn Republican who doesn't even represent the legislative district for Grabill or any of Allen County.

The *Journal Gazette* quoted Kruse's rants that included this gem: "It may take a few years, but the Amish way of life will have a demise in Allen County. Each community is going to lose its identity."

Kruse also said, "We're going to be the losers and common sense ought to be telling us that. Bigger is not better."

How does Rep. Kruse know that?

Most of the 400 people attending lapped up Kruse's Chicken Little premonitions and hooted at State Sen. David Long, who does represent Grabill and had written a bill in the legislature that would allow all of the Allen County communities to explore the merger issue.

The *Journal Gazette* quoted Long as telling the crowd, "All of you have the right to live in rural areas without a bunch of new laws being laid on you. I don't think any monolithic Unigov-type government should have the right to change the way you live."

But it didn't matter. Sen. Long was blown off by the crowd whose fears had been stoked up by Rep. Kruse. In pulling his bill, Long said, "As I have talked with a variety of local officials and citizens over the past few weeks ... it has become clear to me that this community is not yet ready to move forward with this proposal. We simply need more time."

Grabill's relevancy

The reason what happened in Grabill is relevant to the rest of Indiana is that Victor Hugo's ancient quote is actually prophetic. Gov. Joe Kernan has assigned Lt. Gov. Kathy Davis to study ways to reform Indiana government, both state and local. There were a number of bills in the legislature that called for government reforms, including the elimination of townships. Republicans Mitch Daniels and Eric Miller are open to reform, perhaps dramatic reform. Daniels favors a constitutional convention and says that "nothing should be left off the table."

Evansville and Vanderburgh County are going to study the merger idea. A similar movement is underway in Lake County. Louisville and Jefferson County in Kentucky merged last year, one of the 25 sets of cities and counties that have

done so, including Indianapolis 30 years ago. Pittsburgh, Buffalo, and Cleveland are headed in that direction.

Why?

Because some of these cities have declining tax bases. There was the realization that a depopulating urban core can destabilize an entire region. But more importantly, some progressive conservative Republicans are taking their own rhetoric seriously. Run government like a business, they say. Make government more efficient. Root out duplication.

Why should the Fort Wayne and Allen County street departments operate separately? Or the code enforcement? Or the health departments? Why is there an Allen County Homeland security director and a Fort Wayne homeland security director? Duh. Want to pay fewer taxes and get more services? Look for efficiencies. Show me a single business that still runs on an 1851 model.

Now, why would Rep. Kruse stick his nose into the business of Allen County?

Losing power

Because it will be people like Rep. Kruse who stand to lose ... power.

David McIntosh, the 2000 Republican gubernatorial nominee who favors government restructuring, said he sees three barriers to progress. One is what he calls the "innate sense of Hoosier conservatism" that is skeptical of change, any change. McIntosh noted, "That can be overcome by good leaders who, with foresight, will lay out a vision for how changes would be better."

Then there are current leaders who see their roles changing in a system where they have already mastered their role. "They will be fearful of change from a personal standpoint," McIntosh explained. "Good leadership can harness that dynamic."

And the third barrier comes with people such as Rep. Kruse. "They are the people who have mastered the cumber-

some existences," McIntosh observed. "They have the niche advantage because they know how the system works and they've figured it out in their careers and they will be reluctant to give that up."

All Sen. Long and the Republicans and Democrats on the city and county councils want to do is "study" the issue of merging some duplicative government functions.

Spreading fear

But Rep. Kruse is not a good leader. He is fulfilling the role of a fear mongerer. He's got his part of the system figured out. He never faces a credible challenger for re-election. His seat secure, he's there in the Indiana General Assembly consuming all the free lunches and dinners, snapping up the free tickets, and he helps preside over the inertia that has helped create a state that leads the nation in bankruptcies, and loses more than 100,000 manufacturing jobs, while falling further and further behind the increasingly more competitive global economy. A good part of the problem lies with the Indiana General Assembly.

He will tell people that their way of life will be rubbed out when, in fact, reform of government will do no such thing. We're not talking about communism here, folks. We're talking about combining street departments to cut out the duplication and overhead and set a scenario to cut the tax rate. Rep. Kruse may have had the choir in the district next to his singing his suspicious, reactionary song; but he will quickly find himself out of step with his party's gubernatorial nominee, almost certainly the next governor, and that global economy that will require state and local governments to become as efficient as they can.

It will be amusing to watch Rep. Kruse twist in the gale force winds of a good idea whose time has come, regardless of the dust devil he stirred up at the Grabill Fire Station ❖

TICKER

T A P E

Vote Act of 2002.

GREGG NOT INTERESTED IN VU PRESIDENCY: John R. Gregg is not interested in becoming the permanent president of Vincennes University (Vincennes Sun-Commercial). "It's been nothing but a great experience serving in this position, and I've had a great time," he said Tuesday. "But when the board makes its decision then I'm going to do what I said I would do back in August: Go back to practicing law." A search committee chaired by VU board chairman Rod Morgan hopes to select a new president by the end of May.

CARTER, KRUSE TO ADDRESS SAME SEX MARRIAGE: Attorney General Steve Carter, along with State Rep. Dennis Kruse, Sen. Brandt Hershman and other legislators will hold a press conference today at noon to discuss same-sex marriage. They will call on House Speaker B. Patrick Bauer and Chairman of the House Rules Committee Scott Pelath to give a hearing to HJR 6, which would prohibit same-sex marriages in Indiana.

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